I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.
It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either’s moiety.
Is not this your son, my lord?  
His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.
I cannot conceive you.
Sir, this young fellow’s mother could: whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed.
Do you smell a fault?
I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.
But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?
No, my lord.
My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.
My services to your lordship.
I must love you, and sue to know you better.
Sir, I shall study deserving.
He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The king is coming.

Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester. I shall, my liege.

Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there. Know that we have divided In three our kingdom: and ‘tis our fast intent To shake all cares and business from our age; Conferring them on younger strengths, while we Unburthen’d crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall, And you, our no less loving son of Albany, We have this hour a constant will to publish Our daughters’ several dowers, that future strife May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy, Great rivals in our youngest daughter’s love, Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn, And here are to be answer’d. Tell me, my daughters,— Since now we will divest us both of rule, Interest of territory, cares of state,— Which of you shall we say doth love us most? That we our largest bounty may extend Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril, Our eldest-born, speak first.
Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;  
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;  
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;  
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;  
As much as child e’er loved, or father found;  
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;  
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

What shall Cordelia do?  
Love, and be silent.

Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,  
With shadowy forests and with champains rich’d,  
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,  
We make lady: to and Albany’s issue

Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,  
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Sir, I am made  
Of the self-same metal that my sister is,  
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart  
I find she names my very deed of love;  
Only she comes too short: that I profess  
Myself an enemy to all other joys,

Which the most precious square of sense possesses;  
And find I am alone felicitate  
In your dear highness’ love.  
Then poor Cordelia!

And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love’s  
More richer than my tongue.

To and hereditary ever  
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;  
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,

Than that conferr’d on Goneril. Now, our joy,  
Although the last, not least; to whose young love  
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy  
Strive to be interest’d; what can you say to draw  
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Nothing, my lord.  
Nothing!

Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.  
Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave  
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty  
According to my bond; nor more nor less.

How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,  
Lest it may mar your fortunes.  
Good my lord,  
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I  
Return those duties back as are right fit,  
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.  
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say  
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,

That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry  
Half my love with him, half my care and duty;  
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,  
To love my father all.
But goes heart with this?
    Ay, good my lord.
So young, and so untender?
So young, my lord, and true.
Let it be so; truth, then, be dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
    By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
    Be as well neighbour’d, pitied, and relieved,
As my sometime daughter.
Good my liege,--
Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I loved her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery. Hence, and avoid my sight!
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father’s heart from her! Call France; who stirs?
    Call Burgundy. Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters’ dowers digest this third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
    I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,
    With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain’d, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
The name, and all the additions to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part betwixt you.

Royal Lear,
    Whom I have ever honour’d as my king,
Loved as my father, as my master follow’d,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers,--
The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.
    Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
    When Lear is mad. What wilt do, old man?
Think’st that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows! To plainness honour’s bound,
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse doom;
    And, in best consideration, cheque
This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgment,
youngest daughter does not love least;
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.
    Kent, on life, no more.
My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against enemies; nor fear to lose it,
    safety being the motive.
    Out of my sight!
See better, Lear; and let me still remain
    The true blank of eye.
    Now, by Apollo,--
    Now, by Apollo, king,
swear’st gods in vain.
    O, vassal! miscreant!

| Dear sir, forbear.
| Do:
    Kill physician, and the fee bestow
    Upon foul disease. Revoke doom;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
    I’ll tell dost evil.
Hear me, recreant!
    On allegiance, hear me!
Since hast sought to make us break our vow,
Which we durst never yet, and with strain’d pride
To come between our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
    Our potency made good, take reward.
    Five days we do allot, for provision
    To shield from diseases of the world;
    And on the sixth to turn hated back.

Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
banish’d trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is death. Away! by Jupiter,
    This shall not be revoked.
Fare well, king: sith thus wilt appear,
    Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.

    The gods to their dear shelter take, maid,
That justly think’st, and hast most rightly said!

And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
That good effects may spring from words of love.
    Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
    He’ll shape his old course in a country new.

Here’s France and Burgundy, my noble lord.
My lord of Burgundy,
We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rival’d for our daughter: what, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
    Or cease your quest of love?
Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than what your highness offer’d,
    Nor will you tender less.
    Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;  
But now her price is fall’n. Sir, there she stands:  
If aught within that little seeming substance,  
Or all of it, with our displeasure pieced,  
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,  
She’s there, and she is yours.  
I know no answer.  
Will you, with those infirmities she owes,  
Unfriend’d, new-adopted to our hate,  
Dower’d with our curse, and stranger’d with our oath,  
Take her, or leave her?  
Pardon me, royal sir;  
Election makes not up on such conditions.  
Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,  
I tell you all her wealth.

For you, great king,  
I would not from your love make such a stray,  
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you  
To avert your liking a more worthier way  
Than on a wretch whom nature is ashamed  
Almost to acknowledge hers.  
This is most strange,  
That she, that even but now was your best object,  
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,  
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time  
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle  
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence  
Must be of such unnatural degree,  
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch’d affection  
Fall’n into taint: which to believe of her,  
Must be a faith that reason without miracle  
Could never plant in me.  
I yet beseech your majesty,--  
If for I want that glib and oily art,  
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,  
I’ll do’t before I speak,--that you make known  
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,  
No unchaste action, or dishonour’d step,  
That hath deprived me of your grace and favour;  
But even for want of that for which I am richer,  
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue  
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it  
Hath lost me in your liking.  
Better  
Hadst not been born than not to have pleased me better.  
Is it but this,--a tardiness in nature  
Which often leaves the history unspoke  
That it intends to do? My lord of Burgundy,  
What say you to the lady? Love’s not love  
When it is mingled with regards that stand  
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?  
She is herself a dowry.  
Royal Lear,  
Give but that portion which yourself proposed,  
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.
Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.
I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.
Peace be with Burgundy!
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.
Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised!
and virtues here I seize upon:
Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflamed respect.
dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy
Can buy this unprized precious maid of me.
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
losest here, a better where to find.
hast her, France: let her be ; for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again. Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.
Come, noble Burgundy.

Bid farewell to your sisters.
The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
And like a sister am most loath to call
Your faults as they are named. Use well our father:
To your professed bosoms I commit him
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.
Prescribe not us our duties.
Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath received you
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.
Time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides:
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!
Come, my fair Cordelia.

Sister, it is not a little I have to say of what
most nearly appertains to us both. I think our
father will hence to-night.
That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.
You see how full of changes his age is; the
observation we have made of it hath not been
little: he always loved our sister most; and
with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off
appears too grossly.
'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever
but slenderly known himself.
The best and soundest of his time hath been but
rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engraffed condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

There is further compliment of leavetaking between France and him. Pray you, let's hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

We shall further think on't.

We must do something, and i' the heat.

, nature, art my goddess; to law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word,—legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscribed his power!
Confined to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?
So please your lordship, none.

Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?
I know no news, my lord.
What paper were you reading?
Nothing, my lord.
No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.
I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not
fit for your o'er-looking.
Give me the letter, sir.
I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The
contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.
Let's see, let's see.
I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote
this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.
'This policy and reverence of age makes
the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps
our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish
them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage
in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not
as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to
me, that of this I may speak more. If our father
would sleep till I waked him, you should half his
revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your
brother, EDGAR.'
Hum--conspiracy!--'Sleep till I waked him,--you
should enjoy half his revenue,'--My son Edgar!
Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain
to breed it in?--When came this to you? who
brought it?
It was not brought me, my lord; there's the
cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the
casement of my closet.
You know the character to be your brother's?
If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear
it were his; but, in respect of that, I would
fain think it were not.
It is his.
It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is
not in the contents.
Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?
Never, my lord: but I have heard him oft
maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age,
and fathers declining, the father should be as
ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.
O villain, villain! His very opinion in the
letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested,
brutish villain! worse than brutish! Go, sirrah,
seek him; I'll apprehend him: abominable villain!
Where is he?
I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please
you to suspend your indignation against my
brother till you can derive from him better
testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain
course; where, if you violently proceed against
him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great
gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the
heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life
for him, that he hath wrote this to feel my
affection to your honour, and to no further
pretence of danger.
Think you so?
If your honour judge it meet, I will place you
where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an
auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and
that without any further delay than this very evening.

He cannot be such a monster--

Nor is not, sure.

To his father, that so tenderly and entirely
loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him
out: wind me into him, I pray you: frame the
business after your own wisdom. I would unstate
myself, to be in a due resolution.

I will seek him, sir, presently: convey the
business as I shall find means and acquaint you withal.

These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend
no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can
reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself
scourged by the sequent effects: love cools,
friendship falls off, brothers divide: in
cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in
palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son
and father. This villain of mine comes under the
prediction; there's son against father: the king
falls from bias of nature; there's father against
child. We have seen the best of our time:
machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all
ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our
graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall
lose nothing; do it carefully. And the
noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his
offence, honesty! 'Tis strange.

This is the excellent foppery of the world, that,
when we are sick in fortune,--often the surfeit
of our own behavior,--we make guilty of our
disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as
if we were villains by necessity; fools by
heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and
treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards,
liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of
planetary influence; and all that we are evil in,
by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion
of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish
disposition to the charge of a star! My
father compounded with my mother under the
dragon's tail; and my nativity was under Ursa
major; so that it follows, I am rough and
lecherous. Tut, I should have been that I am,
had the maidenliest star in the firmament
twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar--

And pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old
comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a
sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do
portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.
How now, brother Edmund! what serious
contemplation are you in?
I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read
this other day, what should follow these eclipses.
   Do you busy yourself about that?
   I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?
   Come, come; when saw you my father last?
   Why, the night gone by.
   Spake you with him?
   Ay, two hours together.
   Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?
   None at all.
   Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.
   Some villain hath done me wrong.
   That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance till the spied of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there's my key:
   if you do stir abroad, go armed.
   Armed, brother!
   Brother, I advise you to the best; go armed: I am no honest man if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard; but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away.
   Shall I hear from you anon?
   I do serve you in this business.

   A credulous father! and a brother noble,
   Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
   That he suspects none: on whose foolish honesty
   My practises ride easy! I see the business.
   Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
   All with me's meet that I can fashion fit.

   Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?
   Yes, madam.
   By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
   He flashes into one gross crime or other,
   That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
   His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
   On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
   I will not speak with him; say I am sick:
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.
He's coming, madam; I hear him.

Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'll have it come to question:
If he dislike it, let him to our sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-ruled. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be used
With cheques as flatteries,—when they are seen abused.
Remember what I tell you.
Well, madam.
And let his knights have colder looks among you;
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak: I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner.

A hall in the same.

If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I razed my likeness. Now, banish'd Kent,
If canst serve where dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, master, whom lovest,
Shall find full of labours.

Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready.

How now! what art?
A man, sir.

What dost profess? what wouldst with us?
I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve
him truly that will put me in trust: to love him
that is honest; to converse with him that is wise,
and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I
cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

What art?
A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.
If be as poor for a subject as he is for a
king, art poor enough. What wouldst?
Service.

Who wouldst serve?
You.

Dost know me, fellow?
No, sir; but you have that in your countenance
which I would fain call master.

What's that?
Authority.

What services canst do?
I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious
tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

How old art?

Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty eight.

Follow me; shalt serve me: if I like no worse after dinner, I will not part from yet.

Dinner, ho, dinner! Where's my knave? my fool?

Go you, and call my fool hither.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

So please you,--

What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back.

Where's my fool, ho! I think the world's asleep.

How now! where's that mongrel?

He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Why came not the slave back to me when I called him.

Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

He would not!

My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the duke himself also and your daughter.

Ha! sayest so?

I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wronged.

but rememberest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness:

I will look further into't. But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

No more of that; I have noted it well. Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her.

Go you, call hither my fool.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

My lady's father.

"My lady's father"! my lord's knave: your whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.
Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

I'll not be struck, my lord.
Nor tripped neither, you base football player.

I thank, fellow; servest me, and I'll love.
Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences:
away, away! if you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so.

Now, my friendly knave, I thank: there's earnest of service.

Let me hire him too: here's my coxcomb.

How now, my pretty knave! how dost?
Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.
Why, fool?

Why, for taking one's part that's out of favour:
  nay, an canst not smile as the wind sits,
'vet catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb:
why, this fellow has banished two on's daughters,
  and did the third a blessing against his will; if
follow him, must needs wear my coxcomb.
How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!
Why, my boy?
If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of daughters.
Take heed, sirrah; the whip.
Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.
A pestilent gall to me!
Sirrah, I'll teach a speech.
Do.

Mark it, nuncle:
Have more than showest,
Speak less than knowest,
Lend less than owest,
Ride more than goest,
Learn more than trowest,
Set less than throwest;
Leave drink and whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.
This is nothing, fool.

Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.
Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.
A bitter fool!
Dost know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?
   No, lad; teach me.
That lord that counsell'd
   To give away land,
Come place him here by me,
   Do for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
   Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.
Dost call me fool, boy?
All other titles hast given away; that wast born with.
This is not altogether fool, my lord.
No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching. Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give two crowns.
What two crowns shall they be?
Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When clouest crown i' the middle, and gavest away both parts, borest ass on back o'er the dirt: hadst little wit in bald crown, when gavest golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipped that first finds it so.
Fools had ne'er less wit in a year;
   For wise men are grown foppish,
They know not how their wits to wear,
   Their manners are so apish.
When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?
I have used it, nuncle, ever since madest daughters mothers: for when gavest them the rod, and put'st down own breeches,
Then they for sudden joy did weep,
   And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
   And go the fools among.
Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie.
An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.
I marvel what kin and daughters are:
   They'll have me whipped for speaking true, 't have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool; and yet I would not be, nuncle; hast pared wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle: here comes one o' the parings.
How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on?
Methinks you are too much of late i’ the frown.
Wast a pretty fellow when hadst no need to care for her frowning; now art an O without a figure: I am better than art now; I am a fool, art nothing.

Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,
He that keeps nor crust nor crum, Weary of all, shall want some.

That’s a shealed peascod. Not only, sir, this your all-licensed fool, But other of your insolent retinue Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth In rank and not-to-be endured riots. Sir, I had thought, by making this well known unto you, To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful, By what yourself too late have spoke and done. That you protect this course, and put it on By your allowance; which if you should, the fault Would not ‘scape censure, nor the redresses sleep, Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal, Might in their working do you that offence, Which else were shame, that then necessity Will call discreet proceeding. For, you trow, nuncle, The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long, That it’s had it head bit off by it young, So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling. Are you our daughter? Come, sir,
I would you would make use of that good wisdom, Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away These dispositions, that of late transform you From what you rightly are.

May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? Whoop, Jug! I love .
Doth any here know me? This is not Lear; Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes? Either his notion weakens, his discernings Are lethargied--Ha! waking? ’tis not so. Who is it that can tell me who I am? Lear’s shadow.

I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters. Which they will make an obedient father.
Your name, fair gentlewoman? This admiration, sir, is much o’ the savour Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you To understand my purposes aright:
As you are old and reverend, you should be wise. Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires; Men so disorder’d, so debosh’d and bold, That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be then desired
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.
Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses; call my train together:
Degenerate bastard! I’ll not trouble.
Yet have I left a daughter.
You strike my people; and your disorder’d rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Woe, that too late repents,—

O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir. Prepare my horses.
Ingratitude, marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when show’st in a child
Than the sea-monster!
Pray, sir, be patient.
Detested kite! liest.
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How ugly didst in Cordelia show!
That, like an engine, wrench’d my frame of nature
From the fix’d place; drew from heart all love,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let folly in,

And dear judgment out! Go, go, my people.
My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath moved you.
It may be so, my lord.
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend purpose, if didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother’s pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is
To have a thankless child! Away, away!

Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?
Never afflict yourself to know the cause;  
But let his disposition have that scope  
That dotage gives it.

What, fifty of my followers at a clap!  
Within a fortnight!  
What's the matter, sir?  
I'll tell:

Life and death! I am ashamed  
That hast power to shake my manhood thus;  
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,  
Should make worth them. Blasts and fogs upon!  
The untented woundings of a father's curse  
Pierce every sense about! Old fond eyes,  
BewEEP this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,  
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,  
To temper clay. Yea, it is come to this?  
Let is be so: yet have I left a daughter,  
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:  
When she shall hear this of, with her nails  
She'll flay wolvish visage. shalt find  
That I'll resume the shape which dost think  
I have cast off for ever: shalt,  
I warrant.

Do you mark that, my lord?  
I cannot be so partial, Goneril,  
To the great love I bear you,--  
Pray you, content. What, Oswald, ho!

You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.  
Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry and take the fool  
with.

A fox, when one has caught her,  
And such a daughter,  
Should sure to the slaughter,  
If my cap would buy a halter:  
So the fool follows after.

This man hath good counsel:--a hundred knights!  
'Tis politic and safe to let him keep  
At point a hundred knights: yes, that, on every dream,  
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,  
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,  
And hold our lives in mercy. Oswald, I say!  
Well, you may fear too far.  
Safer than trust too far:  
Let me still take away the harms I fear,

Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.  
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister  
If she sustain him and his hundred knights  
When I have show'd the unfitness,--

How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?
   Yes, madam.
Take you some company, and away to horse:
   Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
   As may compact it more. Get you gone;
   And hasten your return.

   No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours
   Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask’d for want of wisdom
   Than praised for harmful mildness.
How far your eyes may pierce I can not tell:
   Striving to better, oft we mar what’s well.
     Nay, then--
Well, well; the event.

Go you before to Gloucester with these letters.
Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you
know than comes from her demand out of the letter.
If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.
I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered
your letter.

If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in
danger of kibes?
   Ay, boy.
Then, I prithee, be merry: wit shall ne'er go
   slip-shod.
   Ha, ha, ha!
Shalt see other daughter will use kindly;
for though she's as like this as a crab's like an
   apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.
   Why, what canst tell, my boy?
She will taste as like this as a crab does to a
   crab. canst tell why one's nose stands i'
   the middle on's face?
   No.
Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that
what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.
   I did her wrong--
Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?
   No,
Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.
   Why!
Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his
daughters, and leave his horns without a case.
I will forget my nature. So kind a father! Be my
   horses ready?
asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the
seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.
   Because they are not eight?
Yes, indeed: wouldst make a good fool.
To take 't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!
If wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have beaten
for being old before time.
How's that?
shouldst not have been old till hadst
been wise.
O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven
Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

How now! are the horses ready?
Ready, my lord.
Come, boy.
She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

Save, Curan.
And you, sir. I have been with your father, and
given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan
his duchess will be here with him this night.
How comes that?
Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad;
I mean the whispered ones, for they are yet but
ear-kissing arguments?

Not I pray you, what are they?
Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the
Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?
Not a word.
You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir.

The duke be here to-night? The better! best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act: briefness and fortune, work!
Brother, a word; descend: brother, I say!

My father watches: O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night:
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither: now, 't the night, 't the haste,
And Regan with him: have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.
I am sure on't, not a word.
I hear my father coming: pardon me:
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you
Draw; seem to defend yourself; now quit you well.
Yield: come before my father. Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother. Torches, torches! So, farewell.

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion.
Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport. Father, father!
Stop, stop! No help!

Now, Edmund, where's the villain?
Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress,--
But where is he?
Look, sir, I bleed.
Where is the villain, Edmund?
Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could--
Pursue him, ho! Go after.

By no means what?
Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father; sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanced mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found--dispatch. The noble duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.
When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
'unpossessing bastard! dost think,
If I would stand against , would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in

Make words faith'd? No: what I should deny,--
As this I would: ay, though didst produce
My very character,--'I'd turn it all
To suggestion, plot, and damned practise:
And must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make seek it.'
Strong and fasten'd villain
Would he deny his letter? I never got him.

Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;
The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have the due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make capable.

How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,
Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news.
If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord?
O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd!
What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father named? your Edgar?
O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!
Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?
I know not, madam: 'tis too bad, too bad.
Yes, madam, he was of that consort.
No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have the expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.
Nor I, assure, Regan.
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.
'Twas my duty, sir.
He did bewray his practise; and received
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.
Is he pursued?
Ay, my good lord.
If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.
I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.
For him I thank your grace.
You know not why we came to visit you,--
Thus out of season, threading dark-eyed night:
Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice:
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I least thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.
I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome.

Good dawning to , friend: art of this house?

Ay.

Where may we set our horses?

I’ th’ mire.

Prithee, if  lovest me, tell me.

I love not.

Why, then, I care not for .

If I had in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make care for me.

Why dost use me thus? I know not.

Fellow, I know .

What dost know me for?

A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave, a whoreson, glass-gazing, super-serviceable finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if deniest the least syllable of addition.

Why, what a monstrous fellow art , thus to rail on one that is neither known of nor knows !

What a brazen-faced varlet art , to deny knowest me! Is it two days ago since I tripped up heels, and beat before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I’ll make a sop o’ the moonshine of you: draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger, draw.

Away! I have nothing to do with .

Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity the puppet’s part against the royalty of her father: draw, you rogue, or I’ll so carbonado your shanks: draw, you rascal; come your ways.

Help, ho! murder! help!

Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike.

Help, ho! murder! murder!

How now! What’s the matter?

With you, goodman boy, an you please: come, I’ll flesh ye; come on, young master.

Weapons! arms! What’s the matter here?

Keep peace, upon your lives:

He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

The messengers from our sister and the king.

What is your difference? speak.

I am scarce in breath, my lord.
No marvel, you have so bestirred your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in: a tailor made.

art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?
Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter or painter could not have made him so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade.

Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?
This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of his gray beard.---
whoreson zed! unnecessary letter! My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him. Spare my gray beard, you wagtail?
Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?
Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.
Why art angry?
That such a slave as this should wear a sword, Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these, Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain Which are too intrinse t’ unloose; smooth every passion That in the natures of their lords rebel; Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods; Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks With every gale and vary of their masters, Knowing nought, like dogs, but following. A plague upon your epileptic visage! Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool? Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain, I’d drive ye cackling home to Camelot.
Why, art mad, old fellow?
How fell you out? say that.
No contraries hold more antipathy Than I and such a knave.
Why dost call him a knave? What’s his offence?
His countenance likes me not.
No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.
Sir, ’tis my occupation to be plain: I have seen better faces in my time Than stands on any shoulder that I see Before me at this instant. This is some fellow,
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he, An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth! An they will take it, so; if not, he’s plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends Than twenty silly ducking observants That stretch their duties nicely.
Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity, Under the allowance of your great aspect, Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire On flickering Phoebus’ front.--
What mean'st by this?
To go out of my dialect, which you
discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no
flatterer: he that beguiled you in a plain
accent was a plain knave; which for my part
I will not be, though I should win your displeasure
to entreat me to 't.

What was the offence you gave him?
I never gave him any:

It pleased the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdued;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,

We'll teach you--
Sir, I am too old to learn:

Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;

On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,

Stocking his messenger.

Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honour,

There shall he sit till noon.
Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Sir, being his knave, I will.

This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks!

Let me beseech your grace not to do so:

His fault is much, and the good king his master

Will cheque him for 't: your purposed low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill,
That he's so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

I'll answer that.

My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abused, assaulted,
For following her affairs. Put in his legs.

Come, my good lord, away.

I am sorry for , friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for .
Pray, do not, sir: I have watched and travell'd hard;  
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.  
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:  
Give you good morrow!  
The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken.

Good king, that must approve the common saw,  
out of heaven's benediction comest  
To the warm sun!  
Approach, beacon to this under globe,  
That by comfortable beams I may  
Peruse this letter! Nothing almost sees miracles  
But misery: I know 'tis from Cordelia,  
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd  
Of my obscured course; and shall find time  
From this enormous state, seeking to give  
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'erwatch'd,  
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold  
This shameful lodging.

Fortune, good night: smile once more: turn wheel!

I heard myself proclaim'd;  
And by the happy hollow of a tree  
Escaped the hunt. No port is free; no place,  
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,  
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,  
I will preserve myself: and am bethought  
To take the basest and most poorest shape  
That ever penury, in contempt of man,

Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;  
Blanket my loins: elf all my hair in knots;  
And with presented nakedness out-face  
The winds and persecutions of the sky.  
The country gives me proof and precedent  
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,  
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms  
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;  
And with this horrible object, from low farms,  
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,  
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,  
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!  
That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am.

'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,  
And not send back my messenger.  
As I learn'd,  
The night before there was no purpose in them  
Of this remove.  
Hail to, noble master!  
Ha!  
Makest this shame pastime?  
No, my lord.
Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied
by the heads, dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by
the loins, and men by the legs: when a man's
over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden
nether-stocks.

What's he that hath so much place mistook
To set here?
It is both he and she;
Your son and daughter.
No.
Yes.

No, I say.
I say, yea.
No, no, they would not.
Yes, they have.
By Jupiter, I swear, no.
By Juno, I swear, ay.
They durst not do 't;
They could not, would not do 't; 'tis worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceived, had poison'd mine,--
Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,--
Having more man than wit about me, drew:
He raised the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.
Winter's not gone yet, if the wild-geese fly that way.
Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to the poor.
But, for all this, shalt have as many dolours
for daughters as canst tell in a year.
O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
Hysterica passio, down, climbing sorrow,
element's below! Where is this daughter?
With the earl, sir, here within.
Follow me not;  
Stay here.

Made you no more offence but what you speak of?  
None.
How chance the king comes with so small a train?  
And hadst been set i' the stocks for that  
question, hadst well deserved it.  
Why, fool?  
We'll set to school to an ant, to teach  
there's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow  
their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and  
there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him  
that's stinking. Let go hold when a great wheel  
runs down a hill, lest it break neck with  
following it: but the great one that goes up the  
hill, let him draw after. When a wise man  
gives better counsel, give me mine again: I  
would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.  
That sir which serves and seeks for gain,  
And follows but for form,  
Will pack when it begins to rain,  
And leave in the storm,  
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,  
And let the wise man fly:  
The knave turns fool that runs away;  
The fool no knave, perdy.  
Where learned you this, fool?  
Not i' the stocks, fool.

Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?  
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches;  
The images of revolt and flying off.  
Fetch me a better answer.  
My dear lord,  
You know the fiery quality of the duke;  
How unremoveable and fix'd he is  
In his own course.

Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!  
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,  
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.  
Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.  
Inform'd them! Dost understand me, man?  
Ay, my good lord.

The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear father  
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:  
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!  
Fiery? the fiery duke? Tell the hot duke that--  
No, but not yet: may be he is not well:  
Infirmity doth still neglect all office  
Whereeto our health is bound; we are not ourselves  
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind  
To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;  
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,  
To take the indisposed and sickly fit  
For the sound man. Death on my state! wherefore
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practise only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the duke and 's wife I'ld speak with them,
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.
I would have all well betwixt you.

O me, my heart, my rising heart! but, down!
Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels
when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she knapped 'em
o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cried 'Down,
wantons, down!' 'Twas her brother that, in pure
kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Good morrow to you both.
Hail to your grace!

I am glad to see your highness.
Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress.

O, are you free?
Some other time for that. Beloved Regan,
sister's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here:

I can scarce speak to ; 'lt not believe
With how depraved a quality--O Regan!
I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope.
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.
Say, how is that?
I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
My curses on her!
O, sir, you are old.

Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be ruled and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;

Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'
Good sir, no more; these are unsightly tricks:
Return you to my sister.
Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look’d black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart:
All the stored vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingratitude top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!
Fie, sir, fie!
You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck’d fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!
O the blest gods! so will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.
No, Regan, shalt never have my curse:
tender-hefted nature shall not give
o’er to harshness: her eyes are fierce; but
Do comfort and not burn. ’Tis not in
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And in conclusion to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
half o’ the kingdom hast not forgot,
Wherein I endow’d.
Good sir, to the purpose.
Who put my man i’ the stocks?

What trumpet’s that?
I know't, my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Is your lady come?
This is a slave, whose easy-borrow’d pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight!
What means your grace?
Who stock’d my servant? Regan, I have good hope
didst not know on’t. Who comes here? O heavens,

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!

Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?
O Regan, wilt take her by the hand?
Why not by the hand, sir? How have I offended?
All’s not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.
O sides, you are too tough;
Will you yet hold? How came my man i’ the stocks?
I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.
You! did you?
I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.
Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,--
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?

Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like; pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom.

At your choice, sir.
I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble , my child; farewell:
We'll no more meet, no more see one another:
But yet art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide ;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of to high-judging Jove:
Mend when canst; be better at leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.
Not altogether so:
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so--
But she knows what she does.
Is this well spoken?
I dare avouch it, sir: what, fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.
Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants or from mine?
Why not, my lord? If then they chanced to slack you,
We could control them. If you will come to me,--
For now I spy a danger,--I entreat you
To bring but five and twenty: to no more
Will I give place or notice.
I gave you all--
And in good time you gave it.
Made you my guardians, my depositaries;  
But kept a reservation to be follow’d 
With such a number. What, must I come to you 
With five and twenty, Regan? said you so?  
And speak’t again, my lord; no more with me. 
Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour’d, 
When others are more wicked: not being the worst 
Stands in some rank of praise.

I’ll go with: 
fifty yet doth double five and twenty,  
And art twice her love.  
Hear me, my lord;
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,  
To follow in a house where twice so many  
Have a command to tend you?  
What need one?  
O, reason not the need: our basest beggars  
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:  
Allow not nature more than nature needs,  
Man’s life’s as cheap as beast’s: art a lady;  
If only to go warm were gorgeous,  
Why, nature needs not what gorgeous wear’st,  
Which scarcely keeps warm. But, for true need,--
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,  
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!  
If it be you that stir these daughters’ hearts  
Against their father, fool me not so much  
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,  
And let not women’s weapons, water-drops,  
Stain my man’s cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,  
I will have such revenges on you both,  
That all the world shall--I will do such things,--
What they are, yet I know not: but they shall be  
The terrors of the earth. You think I’ll weep  
No, I’ll not weep:
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart  
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,  
Or ere I’ll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!

Let us withdraw; ’twill be a storm.  
This house is little: the old man and his people  
Cannot be well bestow’d.  
’Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest,  
And must needs taste his folly.  
For his particular, I’ll receive him gladly,  
But not one follower.  
So am I purposed.  
Where is my lord of Gloucester?  
Follow’d the old man forth: he is return’d.

The king is in high rage.  
Whither is he going?  
He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.
'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.
My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.
Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.
O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors:
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abused, wisdom bids fear.
Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night:
My Regan counsels well; come out o' the storm.

Who's there, besides foul weather?
One minded like the weather, most unquietly.
   I know you. Where's the king?
Contending with the fretful element:
Bids the winds blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curled water 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.
   But who is with him?
None but the fool; who labours to out-jest
His heart-struck injuries.
   Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have--as who have not, that their great stars
Throned and set high!--servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings;
But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you:
   If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer
This office to you.
I will talk further with you.

No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,--
As fear not but you shall,--show her this ring;
And she will tell you who your fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the king.

Give me your hand: have you no more to say?
Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the king,--in which your pain
That way, I'll this,--he that first lights on him
Holla the other.

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench’d our steeples, drown’d the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Sing me my white head! And , all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o’ the world!
Crack nature’s moulds, an germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry
house is better than this rain-water out o’ door.
Good nuncle, in, and ask ’daughters' blessing:
here’s a night pities neither wise man nor fool.
Rumble bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call’d you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure: here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join’d
Your high engender’d battles ’gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!
He that has a house to put's head in has a good
head-piece.
The cod-piece that will house
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse;
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.
For there was never yet fair woman but she made
mounds in a glass.
No, I will be the pattern of all patience;
I will say nothing.

Who's there?
Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece; that's a wise
man and a fool.
Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves; since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
The affliction nor the fear.
Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,

Find out their enemies now. Tremble, wretch,
That hast within undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide, bloody hand;
perjured, and simular man of virtue
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practised on man's life: close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.
Alack, bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:
Repose you there; while I to this hard house--
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in--return, and force
Their scantied courtesy.
My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come,
your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for .

He that has and a little tiny wit--
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,--
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.
True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel.

This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.
I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
   When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to thongs;
When usurers tell their gold i' the field;
And bawds and whores do churches build;
   Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
   That going shall be used with feet.
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.

Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desire their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Most savage and unnatural!
Go to; say you nothing. There's a division betwixt the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have received a letter this night; 'tis dangerous to be spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet: these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home; there's part of a power already footed: we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privately relieve him: go you and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived: if he ask for me. I am ill, and gone to bed.
Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful.

This courtesy, forbid, shall the duke Instantly know; and of that letter too:
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me That which my father loses; no less than all:
The younger rises when the old doth fall.

Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, :
The tyranny of the open night's too rough For nature to endure.

Let me alone.
Good my lord, here.
Wilt break my heart?

I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, .
think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt. 'Idst shun a bear;
But if flight lay toward the raging sea,
'Idst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the
mind's free,
The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to't? But I will punish home:
No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,--
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.
Good my lord, here.
Prithee, go in thyself: seek own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.

In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,--
Nay, get in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.
Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!

Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit
Help me, help me!
Give me hand. Who's there?
A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.
What art that dost grumble there i' the straw?
Come forth.

Away! the foul fiend follows me!
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Hum! go to cold bed, and warm.
Hast given all to two daughters?
And art come to this?
Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and through ford and whirlpool e'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made film proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless five wits! Tom's a-cold,--O, do
de, do de, do de. Bless from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some
charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I
have him now,--and there,--and there again, and there.

What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?
Couldst save nothing? Didst give them all?
Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.
Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on daughters!
He hath no daughters, sir.
Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.
Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!
This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.
Take heed o' the foul fiend: obey parents;
keep word justly; swear not; commit not with
man's sworn spouse; set not sweet heart on proud
array. Tom's a-cold.
What hast been?
A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled
my hair; wore gloves in my cap; served the lust of
my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with
her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and
broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one that
slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it:
wine loved I deeply, dice dearly: and in woman
out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of
ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth,
wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey.
Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of
silks betray poor heart to woman: keep foot
out of brothels, hand out of plackets, pen
from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.
Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind:
Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny.
Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by.

Why, wert better in grave than to answer
with uncovered body this extremity of the skies.
Is man no more than this? Consider him well.
owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep
no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on
's are sophisticated! art the thing itself:
unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor bare,
forked animal as art. Off, off, you lendings!
come unbutton here.

Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night
to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were
like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all the
rest on's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire.
This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

S. Withold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint, witch, aroint!
How fares your grace?
What's he?
Who's there? What is't you seek?
What are you there? Your names?
Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;
But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.
Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin; peace, fiend!
What, hath your grace no better company?
The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.
Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord,
That it doth hate what gets it.
Poor Tom's a-cold.
Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands:
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventured to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.
First let me talk with this philosopher.
What is the cause of thunder?
Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.
I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.
What is your study?
How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.
Let me ask you one word in private.
Importune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin to unsettle.
Canst blame him?

His daughters seek his death: ah, that good Kent!
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!
say'st the king grows mad; I'll tell, friend,
I am almost mad myself: I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late: I loved him, friend;
No father his son dearer: truth to tell,
The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's this!
   I do beseech your grace.--
   O, cry your mercy, sir.
Noble philosopher, your company.
   Tom's a-cold.
In, fellow, there, into the hovel: keep warm.
   Come let's in all.
   This way, my lord.
   With him;
   I will keep still with my philosopher.
Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.
   Take him you on.
   Sirrah, come on; go along with us.
   Come, good Athenian.
   No words, no words: hush.
Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
   His word was still,--Fie, foh, and fum,
   I smell the blood of a British man.

I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.
How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.
I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reprovable badness in himself.
How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France: O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!
o with me to the duchess.
If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.
   True or false, it hath made earl of Gloucester. Seek out where father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.
   If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.--I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.
   I will lay trust upon; and shalt find a dearer father in my love.

Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.
All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience: the gods reward your kindness!

Frateretto calls me; and tells me
Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness.
Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.
Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?
A king, a king!
No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son;
for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.
To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em,--
The foul fiend bites my back.
He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.
It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.

Come, sit here, most learned justicer;

, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!
Look, where he stands and glares!
Wantest eyes at trial, madam?
Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me,--
Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to .
The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for .
How do you, sir? Stand you not so amazed:
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?
I'll see their trial first. Bring in the evidence.

robed man of justice, take place;

And , his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his side:

you are o' the commission,
Sit you too.
Let us deal justly.
Sleepest or wakest, jolly shepherd?
sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of minikin mouth,
sheep shall take no harm.
Pur! the cat is gray.
Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.
Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?
She cannot deny it.
Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.
And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast let her 'scape?
Bless five wits!
O pity! Sir, where is the patience now,
That so oft have boasted to retain?
My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting.
The little dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and
Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.
Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!
Be mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, grey-hound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,
Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.
Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and
fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, horn is dry.
Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds
about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that
makes these hard hearts?

You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I
do not like the fashion of your garments: you will
say they are Persian attire: but let them be changed.
Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.
Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains:
so, so, so. We'll go to supper i' he morning. So, so, so.
And I'll go to bed at noon.

Come hither, friend: where is the king my master?
Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.
Good friend, I prithee, take him in arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him:
There is a litter ready; lay him in 't,
And drive towards Dover, friend, where shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up master:
If shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
With, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss: take up, take up;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give quick conduct.
Oppressed nature sleeps:
This rest might yet have balm'd broken senses,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure.

Come, help to bear master;
must not stay behind.
Come, come, away.

When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind:
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'er skip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king bow,
    He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles,
    In just proof, repeals and reconciles.
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king!
    Lurk, lurk.

Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him
this letter: the army of France is landed. Seek
out the villain Gloucester.

    Hang him instantly.
    Pluck out his eyes.
Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund, keep you our
sister company: the revenges we are bound to take
upon your traitorous father are not fit for your
beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to
a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the
like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent
betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: farewell, my
lord of Gloucester.

How now! where's the king?
My lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence:
    Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
    Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lords dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover; where they boast
    To have well-armed friends.
    Get horses for your mistress.
    Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.
    Edmund, farewell.

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

    Though well we may not pass upon his life
    Without the form of justice, yet our power
    Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who's there? the traitor?

    Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.
    Bind fast his corky arms.
What mean your graces? Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.
    Bind him, I say.

    Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!
    Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.
To this chair bind him. Villain, shalt find--

    By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.
So white, and such a traitor!

Naughty lady,
These hairs, which dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse: I am your host:
With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.
And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king? Speak.
I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one opposed.

Cunning.
And false.

Where hast sent the king?
To Dover.

Wherefore to Dover? Wast not charged at peril--
Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.
I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

Wherefore to Dover, sir?
Because I would not see cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at gate howl'd that stern time,
Shouldst have said 'Good porter, turn the key,'
All cruel's else subscribed: but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.
See't shalt never. Fellows, hold the chair.
Upon these eyes of I'll set my foot.
He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods!
One side will mock another; the other too.
If you see vengeance,--
Hold your hand, my lord:
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.
How now, you dog!
If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?
My villain!

Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.
Give me sword. A peasant stand up thus!

O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. O!
Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!
Where is lustre now?
All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.
Out, treacherous villain!
call'st on him that hates: it was he
That made the overture of treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity.
O my follies! then Edgar was abused.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.

How is't, my lord? how look you?
I have received a hurt: follow me, lady.
Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.

I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.
If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.
Go: I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!

Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to blasts. But who comes here?

My father, poorly led? World, world, O world!
But that strange mutations make us hate,
Lie would not yield to age.
O, my good lord, I have been your tenant, and
your father's tenant, these fourscore years.
Away, get away; good friend, be gone:
comforts can do me no good at all;
they may hurt.
Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.
I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 'tis seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. O dear son Edgar,
The food of abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see in my touch,
   I'd say I had eyes again!
How now! Who's there?
O gods! Who is't can say 'I am at
   the worst'?
I am worse than e'er I was.
'Tis poor mad Tom.
And worse I may be yet: the worst is not
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'
Fellow, where goest?
Is it a beggar-man?
Madman and beggar too.
He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard
   more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods.
They kill us for their sport.
How should this be?
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others.--Bless, master!
Is that the naked fellow?
Ay, my lord.
Then, prithee, get gone: if, for my sake,
wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
   Who I'll entreat to lead me.
Alack, sir, he is mad.
'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid, or rather do please;
Above the rest, be gone.
I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will.

Sirrah, naked fellow,
Poor Tom's a-cold.

I cannot daub it further.
Come hither, fellow.
And yet I must.--Bless, sweet eyes, they bleed.
Know'st the way to Dover?
Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor
Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: bless
   good man's son, from the foul fiend! five
fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as
Obidicut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of
stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of
mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids
and waiting-women. So, bless, master!
Here, take this purse, whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes the happier: heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
   So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost know Dover?
   Ay, master.
There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
   Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
   And I'll repair the misery dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
   I shall no leading need.
Give me arm:
   Poor Tom shall lead.

Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
   Not met us on the way.

   Now, where's your master? Madam, within; but never man so changed.
I told him of the army that was landed;
   He smiled at it: I told him you were coming:
His answer was 'The worse:' of Gloucester's treachery,
   And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
   And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out:
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
   What like, offensive.
Then shall you go no further.
   It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
   Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
   If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;

Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
   Would stretch spirits up into the air:
   Conceive, and fare well.
   Yours in the ranks of death.
   My most dear Gloucester!

   O, the difference of man and man!
To a woman's services are due:
   My fool usurps my body.
   Madam, here comes my lord.

   I have been worth the whistle.
   O Goneril!
   You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition:
That nature, which contemns its origin,
Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.
No more; the text is foolish.
Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.
Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
Who hast not in brows an eye discerning
honour from suffering; that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
With plumed helm slayer begins threats;
Whiles, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest
'Alack, why does he so?'
See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.
O vain fool!
changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not feature. Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
flesh and bones: howe'er art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield.
Marry, your manhood now--

What news?
O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead:
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester.
Gloucester's eye!
A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Opposed against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.
This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But, O poor Gloucester!
Lost he his other eye?
Both, both, my lord.
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'Tis from your sister.
One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: another way,
The news is not so tart.--I'll read, and answer.

Where was his son when they did take his eyes?
Come with my lady hither.
He is not here.
No, my good lord; I met him back again.
Knows he the wickedness?
Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd against him;
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.
Gloucester, I live
To thank for the love show'dst the king,
And to revenge eyes. Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more know'st.

Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back
know you the reason?
Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger, that his personal return was most required and necessary.
Who hath he left behind him general?
The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far.
Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?
Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.
O, then it moved her.
Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears Were like a better way: those happy smillets, That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence, As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief, Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved, If all could so become it.
Made she no verbal question?
'Faith, once or twice she heaved the name of 'father' Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart:
Cried 'Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night?
    Let pity not be believed! There she shook
    The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
    To deal with grief alone.
It is the stars,
    The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?
    No.
Was this before the king return'd?
    No, since.
Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear's i' the town;
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
    What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.
    Why, good sir?
A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
    To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters, these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
    Detains him from Cordelia.
Alack, poor gentleman!
Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?
    'Tis so, they are afoot.
Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause
    Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
    Along with me.

Alack, 'tis he: why, he was met even now
    As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With bur-docks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
    Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth;
    Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye.

What can man's wisdom
    In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.
    There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
    The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.
    All blest secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
    Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.
’Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them. O dear father,
It is business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right:
Soon may I hear and see him!

But are my brother’s powers set forth?
Ay, madam.
Himself in person there?
Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
No, madam.
What might import my sister’s letter to him?
I know not, lady.
’Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,
To let him live: where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life: moreover, to descry
The strength o' the enemy.
I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.
Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.
I may not, madam:
My lady charged my duty in this business.
Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Something--I know not what: I'll love much,
Let me unseal the letter.
Madam, I had rather--
I know your lady does not love her husband;
I am sure of that: and at her late being here
She gave strange oeillades and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

I, madam?
I speak in understanding; you are; I know't:
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk’d;
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's: you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Would I could meet him, madam! I should show
What party I do follow.
   Fare well.

When shall we come to the top of that same hill?
You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.
   Methinks the ground is even.
   Horrible steep.
   Hark, do you hear the sea?
   No, truly.
Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
   By your eyes' anguish.
   So may it be, indeed:
   Methinks voice is alter'd; and speak'st
   In better phrase and matter than didst.
You're much deceived: in nothing am I changed
   But in my garments.
   Methinks you're better spoken.
Come on, sir; here's the place: stand still. How fearful
   And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!
   Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
   Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
   Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge,
   That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more;
   Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
   Topple down headlong.
Set me where you stand.
Give me your hand: you are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
   Would I not leap upright.
   Let go my hand.
   Here, friend, 's another purse; in it a jewel
   Well worth a poor man's taking: fairies and gods
   Prosper it with ! Go farther off;
   Bid me farewell, and let me hear going.
   Now fare you well, good sir.
   With all my heart.
Why I do trifle thus with his despair
   Is done to cure it.
   O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights,
   Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him!
Now, fellow, fare well.

Gone, sir: farewell.
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft: had he been where he thought,
By this, had thought been past. Alive or dead?
Ho, you sir! friend! Hear you, sir! speak!
Thus might he pass indeed: yet he revives.
What are you, sir?
Away, and let me die.

Hadst been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
'dst shiver'd like an egg: but dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which hast perpendicularly fell:
life's a miracle. Speak yet again.
But have I fall'n, or no?

From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height; the shrill-gorged lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.
Alack, I have no eyes.

Is wretchedness deprived that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.

Give me your arm:
Too well, too well.

This is above all strangeness.

Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?
A poor unfortunate beggar.

As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and waved like the enridged sea:
It was some fiend; therefore, happy father,

Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserved.
I do remember now: henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself

'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 'twould say
'The fiend, the fiend:' he led me to that place.

Bear free and patient thoughts. But who comes here?

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

No, they cannot touch me for coining; I am the
king himself.
O side-piercing sight!

Nature's above art in that respect. There's your
press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a
crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard. Look,
look, a mouse! Peace, peace; this piece of toasted
cheese will do 't. There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, bird! I' the clout, I' the clout: hewgh!

Give the word.
Sweet marjoram.
Pass.

I know that voice.
Ha! Goneril, with a white beard! They flattered me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say 'ay' and 'no' to every thing that I said!—'Ay' and 'no' too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.
The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is 't not the king?
Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life. What was cause? Adultery?
shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
To 't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.
Behold yond simpering dame,
Whose face between her forks presages snow;
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name;
The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though women all above:
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiends';
There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit,
 Burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie, fie, fie! pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination:
there's money for .
O, let me kiss that hand!
Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.
O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought. Dost know me?
I remember eyes well enough. Dost squiny at me? No, do worst, blind Cupid! I'll not love. Read this challenge; mark but the penning of it.
Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.
I would not take this from report; it is,
And my heart breaks at it.
Read.

What, with the case of eyes?
O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light; yet you see how this world goes.
I see it feelingly.

What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with ears: see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Ay, sir.

And the creature run from the cur? There mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office. rascal beadle, hold bloody hand! Why dost lash that whore? Strip own back; hotly lust'st to use her in that kind For which whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear; Robes and fur'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold, And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks: Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it. None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em: Take that of me, my friend, who have the power To seal the accuser's lips. Get glass eyes; And like a scurvy politician, seem To see the things dost not. Now, now, now, now: Pull off my boots: harder, harder: so.

O, matter and impertinency mix'd! Reason in madness!
If wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes. I know well enough; name is Gloucester: must be patient; we came crying hither: know'st, the first time that we smell the air, We wawl and cry. I will preach to: mark. Alack, alack the day!

When we are born, we cry that we are come To this great stage of fools: this a good block; It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe A troop of horse with felt: I'll put 't in proof; And when I have sto'n upon these sons-in-law, Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

O, here he is: lay hand upon him. Sir, Your most dear daughter--
No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even The natural fool of fortune. Use me well; You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons; I am cut to the brains.
You shall have any thing.
No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt, To use his eyes for garden water-pots, Ay, and laying autumn's dust.
Good sir,--
I will die bravely, like a bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial: come, come; I am a king,
My masters, know you that.
You are a royal one, and we obey you.
Then there's life in't. Nay, if you get it, you
shall get it with running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.
     Hail, gentle sir.
Sir, speed you: what's your will?
Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?
Most sure and vulgar: every one hears that,
     Which can distinguish sound.
     But, by your favour,
     How near's the other army?
Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
     Stands on the hourly thought.
     I thank you, sir: that's all.
Though that the queen on special cause is here,
     Her army is moved on.
     I thank you, sir.

You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me:
     Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
     To die before you please!
     Well pray you, father.
Now, good sir, what are you?
A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
     I'll lead you to some biding.
     Hearty thanks:
     The bounty and the benison of heaven
     To boot, and boot!

A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of was first framed flesh
To raise my fortunes. old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: the sword is out
     That must destroy .
     Now let friendly hand
     Put strength enough to't.

Wherefore, bold peasant,
Darest support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on . Let go his arm.
Ch'll not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.
     Let go, slave, or diest!
Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk
pass. An chud ha' bin zwaggered out of my life,
'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis by a vortnight.
Nay, come not near th’ old man; keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder: ch’ill be plain with you.

Out, dunghill!

Ch’ill pick your teeth, zir: come; no matter vor your foins.

Slave, hast slain me: villain, take my purse:
   If ever wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters which find’st about me
To Edmund earl of Gloucester; seek him out
Upon the British party: O, untimely death!

   I know well: a serviceable villain;
   As duteous to the vices of mistress
      As badness would desire.
   What, is he dead?
   Sit you down, father; rest you
Let’s see these pockets: the letters that he speaks of
   May be my friends. He’s dead; I am only sorry
   He had no other death’s-man. Let us see:
   Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies’ minds, we’d rip their hearts;
   Their papers, is more lawful.

‘Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered.
There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my goal; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.
   ’Your--wife, so I would say--
   ’Affectionate servant,
   ’GONERIL.’

O undistinguish’d space of woman’s will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband’s life;
And the exchange my brother! Here, in the sands,
   I’ll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers: and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death practised duke: for him ‘tis well
   That of death and business I can tell.
The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
   That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever’d from my griefs,
   And woes by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.
   Give me your hand:

Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum:
   Come, father, I’ll bestow you with a friend.

soft music playing; Gentleman, and others attending.
O good Kent, how shall I live and work,
To match goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.
To be acknowledged, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.
Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worser hours:
I prithee, put them off.
Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it, that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.
Then be't so, my good lord.

How does the king?
Madam, sleeps still.
O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untuned and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!
So please your majesty
That we may wake the king: he hath slept long.
Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?
Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep
We put fresh garments on him.
Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.

Very well.
Please you, draw near. Louder the music there!
O my dear father! Restoration hang
medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in reverence made!
Kind and dear princess!
Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face
To be opposed against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch--poor perdut!--
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast fain, poor father,
To hovel with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. He wakes; speak to him.
Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.
How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?
You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:
art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like moulted lead.
Sir, do you know me?
You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?
Still, still, far wide!
He's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.
Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?
I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus. I know not what to say.
I will not swear these are my hands: let's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured
Of my condition!
O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:
No, sir, you must not kneel.
Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
And so I am, I am.
Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.
No cause, no cause.
Am I in France?
In your own kingdom, sir.
Do not abuse me.
Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.
Will't please your highness walk?
You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.

Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?
Most certain, sir.
Who is conductor of his people?
As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.
They say Edgar, his banished son, is with the Earl
of Kent in Germany.
Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about; the
powers of the kingdom approach apace.
The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you
well, sir.

My point and period will be throughly wrought,
'Tis to be doubted, madam.
Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me--but truly--but then speak the truth,
   Do you not love my sister?
   In honour'd love.
But have you never found my brother's way
   To the forfended place?
That thought abuses you.
I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.
   No, by mine honour, madam.
I never shall endure her: dear my lord,
   Be not familiar with her.
   Fear me not:
   She and the duke her husband!

I had rather lose the battle than that sister
   Should loosen him and me.
Our very loving sister, well be-met.
Sir, this I hear; the king is come to his daughter,
   With others whom the rigor of our state
Forced to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
   I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king, with others, whom, I fear,
   Most just and heavy causes make oppose.
   Sir, you speak nobly.
   Why is this reason'd?
Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
   Are not the question here.
   Let's then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.
   I shall attend you presently at your tent.
   Sister, you'll go with us?
   No.
'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.
   O, ho, I know the riddle.--I will go.

If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
   Hear me one word.
   I'll overtake you. Speak.

Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you.
Stay till I have read the letter.
I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.
Why, fare well: I will o'erlook paper.

The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery; but your haste
Is now urged on you.
We will greet the time.

To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive: to take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then we'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.
Grace go with you, sir!

Away, old man; give me hand; away!
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en:
Give me hand; come on.
No farther, sir; a man may rot even here.
What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all: come on.
And that's true too.

Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.
We are not the first
Who, with best meaning, have incur’d the worst.
For, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?
No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When you ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of forgiveness: so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.
Take them away.
Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe your eyes;
The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see 'em starve first. Come.

Come hither, captain; hark.
Take this note;
go follow them to prison:
One step I have advanced; if you dost
As this instructs, do make your way
To noble fortunes: know this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword: great employment
Will not bear question; either say 'It do 't,
Or thrive by other means.
I'll do 't, my lord.
About it; and write happy when you have done.
Mark, I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.
I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I'll do 't.

Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: you have the captives
That were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.
Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
An turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are cursed
By those that feel their sharpness:
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.
Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.
That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.
Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.
In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.
That were the most, if he should husband you.
Jesters do oft prove prophets.
Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look’d but a-squint.
Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach. General,
Take my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are:
Witness the world, that I create here
My lord and master.
Mean you to enjoy him?
The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Nor in , lord.
Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Let the drum strike, and prove my title.
Stay yet; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest
On capital treason; and, in attaint,
This gilded serpent

For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife:
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me,
My lady is bespoke.
An interlude!
art arm’d, Gloucester: let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon head
heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge;
I'll prove it on heart,
Ere I taste bread, art in nothing less
    Than I have here proclaim'd.
    Sick, O, sick!
If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.
    There's my exchange:

    what in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
Call by trumpet: he that dares approach,
    On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
    My truth and honour firmly.
    A herald, ho!
    A herald, ho, a herald!
Trust to single virtue; for soldiers,
    All levied in my name, have in my name
    Took their discharge.
    My sickness grows upon me.
    She is not well; convey her to my tent.

Come hither, herald.--Let the trumpet sound,
    And read out this.
    Sound, trumpet!

    'If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet: he is bold in his defence.'
    Sound!

    Again!

    Again!

    Ask him his purposes, why he appears
    Upon this call o' the trumpet.
    What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
    This present summons?
    Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:
    Yet am I noble as the adversary
    I come to cope.
    Which is that adversary?
What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloucester?
    Himself: what say'st to him?
    Draw sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
    arm may do justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
    My oath, and my profession: I protest,
Maugre strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite victor sword and fire-new fortune,
valour and heart, art a traitor;
False to gods, brother, and father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high-illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of head
To the descent and dust below foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say 'No,'
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon heart, whereto I speak, liest.
In wisdom I should ask name;
But, since outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm heart;
Which, for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. Trumpets, speak!

Save him, save him!
This is practise, Gloucester:
By the law of arms wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguiled.
Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it: Hold, sir:
worse than any name, read own evil:
No tearing, lady: I perceive you know it.

Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not:
Who can arraign me for't.
Most monstrous! oh!
Know'st this paper?
Ask me not what I know.

Go after her: she's desperate; govern her.
What you have charged me with, that have I done;
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'Tis past, and so am I. But what art
That hast this fortune on me? If 'rt noble,
I do forgive .
Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than art, Edmund;
If more, the more hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where he got
Cost him his eyes.
hast spoken right, 'tis true;
The wheel is come full circle: I am here.
Methought very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness: I must embrace:
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
    Did hate or father!
Worthy prince, I know't.
Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
    By nursing them, my lord. List a brief tale;
And when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst!
    The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near,--O, our lives' sweetness!
That we the pain of death would hourly die
    Rather than die at once!!--taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags; to assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost: became his guide,
    Led him, begg'd for him, saved him from despair;
Never,--O fault!--reveal'd myself unto him,
    Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd:
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
    I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart,
    Alack, too weak the conflict to support!
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
    Burst smilingly.
This speech of yours hath moved me,
    And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.
    If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
    Hearing of this.
This would have seem'd a period
    To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
    And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour came there in a man,
    Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endured, with his strong arms
    He fastened on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he'd burst heaven; threw him on my father;
    Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear received: which in recounting
His grief grew puissant and the strings of life
Began to crack: twice then the trumpets sounded,
    And there I left him tranced.
    But who was this?
Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
    Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.
    Help, help, O, help!
What kind of help?
    Speak, man.
What means that bloody knife?
'Tis hot, it smokes;
    It came even from the heart of--O, she's dead!
Who dead? speak, man.
Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poisoned; she hath confess’d it.
I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.
Here comes Kent.
Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead:
This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity.

O, is this he?
The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.
I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night:
Is he not here?
Great thing of us forgot!
Speak, Edmund, where’s the king? and where’s Cordelia?
See' st this object, Kent?

Alack, why thus?
Yet Edmund was beloved:
The one the other poison’d for my sake,
And after slew herself.
Even so. Cover their faces.
I pant for life: some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,
Be brief in it, to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia:
Nay, send in time.
Run, run, O, run!
To who, my lord? Who hath the office? send
token of reprieve.
Well thought on: take my sword,
Give it the captain.
Haste, for life.

He hath commission from wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.
The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.

Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.
Is this the promised end
Or image of that horror?
Fall, and cease!
This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.
O my good master!
Prithee, away.
'Tis noble Kent, your friend.
A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have saved her; now she's gone for ever!
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is't say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging .
'Tis true, my lords, he did.
Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best: I'll tell you straight.
If fortune brag of two she loved and hated,
One of them we behold.
This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?
The same,
Your servant Kent: Where is your servant Caius?
He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too: he's dead and rotten.
No, my good lord; I am the very man,--
I'll see that straight.
That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
You are welcome hither.
Nor no man else: all's cheerless, dark, and deadly.
Your eldest daughters have fordone them selves,
And desperately are dead.
Ay, so I think.
He knows not what he says: and vain it is
That we present us to him.
Very bootless.

Edmund is dead, my lord.
That's but a trifle here.
You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied: for us we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power:

you, to your rights:
With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. O, see, see!
And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And no breath at all? 'It come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!
Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.
Do you see this! Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there!

He faints! My lord, my lord!
Break, heart; I prithee, break!

Look up, my lord.
Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him much
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.
He is gone, indeed.
The wonder is, he hath endured so long:
He but usurp'd his life.
Bears them from hence. Our present business
Is general woe.

Friends of my soul, you twain
Rule in this realm, and the gored state sustain.
I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me, I must not say no.
The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.