The Tragedie of King Lear by William Shakespeare

Scanner's Notes: What this is and isn't. This was taken from a copy of Shakespeare's first folio and it is as close as I can come in ASCII to the printed text.

The elongated S's have been changed to small s's and the conjoined ae have been changed to ae. I have left the spelling, punctuation, capitalization as close as possible to the printed text. I have corrected some spelling mistakes (I have put together a spelling dictionary devised from the spellings of the Geneva Bible and Shakespeare's First Folio and have unified spellings according to this template), typo's and expanded abbreviations as I have come across them. Everything within brackets [] is what I have added. So if you don't like that you can delete everything within the brackets if you want a purer Shakespeare.

Another thing that you should be aware of is that there are textual differences between various copies of the first folio. So there may be differences (other than what I have mentioned above) between this and other first folio editions. This is due to the printer's habit of setting the type and running off a number of copies and then proofing the printed copy and correcting the type and then continuing the printing run. The proof run wasn't thrown away but incorporated into the printed copies. This is just the way it is. The text I have used was a composite of more than 30 different First Folio editions' best pages.

If you find any scanning errors, out and out typos, punctuation errors, or if you disagree with my spelling choices please feel free to email me those errors. I wish to make this the best etext possible. My email address for right now are haradda@aol.com and davidr@inconnet.com. I hope that you enjoy this.

David Reed

The Tragedie of King Lear

Actus Primus. Scoena Prima.

Enter Kent, Gloucester, and Edmond.

Kent. I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany, then Cornwall

Glou. It did alwayes seeme so to vs: But now in the division of the Kingdome, it appeares not which of the Dukes hee valewes most, for qualities are so weigh'd, that curiosity in neither, can make choise of eithers moity

Kent. Is not this your Son, my Lord? Glou. His breeding Sir, hath bin at my charge. I haue so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd too't

Kent. I cannot conceiue you
Glou. Sir, this yong Fellowes mother could; wherevpon she grew round womb'd, and had
indeede (Sir) a Sonne for her Cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?
Kent. I cannot wish the fault vndone, the issue of it, being so proper

Glou. But I haue a Sonne, Sir, by order of Law, some yeere elder then this; who, yet is no
deerer in my account, though this Knaue came somthing sawcily to the world before he was
sent for: yet was his Mother fayre, there was good sport at his making, and the horson must be
acknowledged. Doe you know this Noble Gentleman, Edmond?
Edm. No, my Lord

Glou. My Lord of Kent:
Remember him heereafter, as my Honourable Friend

Edm. My seruices to your Lordship

Kent. I must loue you, and sue to know you better

Edm. Sir, I shall study deseruing

Glou. He hath bin out nine yeares, and away he shall againe. The King is comming.

Sennet. Enter King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Gonerill, Regan, Cordelia, and
attendants.

Lear. Attend the Lords of France & Burgundy, Gloster

Glou. I shall, my Lord.

Enter.

Lear. Meane time we shal expresse our darker purpose. Gie me the Map there. Know, that we
haue diuided In three our Kingdome: and 'tis our fast intent, To shake all Cares and Businesse
from our Age, Conferring them on yonger strengths, while we Vnburthen'd crawle toward death.
Our son of Cornwal, And you our no lesse louing Sonne of Albany, We haue this houre a
constant will to publish Our daughters seuerall Dowers, that future strife May be preuented now.
The Princes, France & Burgundy, Great Riuals in our yongest daughters loue, Long in our
Court, haue made their amorous soiuerne, And heere are to be answer'd. Tell me my daughters
(Since now we will diuest vs both of Rule, Interest of Territory, Cares of State)
Which of you shall we say doth loue vs most, That we, our largest bountie may extend
Where Nature doth with merit challenge. Gonerill, Our eldest borne, speake first

Gon. Sir, I loue you more then word can weild y matter, Deerer then eye-sight, space, and
libertie, Beyond what can be valewed, rich or rare, No lesse then life, with grace, health, beauty,
honor: As much as Childe ere lou'd, or Father found. A loue that makes breath poore, and
speech vnable, Beyond all manner of so much I loue you

Cor. What shall Cordelia speake? Loue, and be silent

Lear. Of all these bounds euen from this Line, to this, With shadowie Forrests, and with
Champains rich'd With plenteous Riuers, and wide-skirted Meades We make thee Lady. To
thine and Albanies issues Be this perpetuall. What sayes our second Daughter? Our dearest
Regan, wife of Cornwall?
Reg. I am made of that selfe-mettle as my Sister, And prize me at her worth. In my true heart, I
finde she names my very deede of loue: Onely she comes too short, that I professe My selfe an
enemy to all other ioyes,
Which the most precious square of sense professes, And finde I am alone felicitate
In your deere Highnesse loue

Cor. Then poore Cordelia,
And yet not so, since I am sure my loue's More ponderous then my tongue

Lear. To thee, and thine hereditarie euer, Remaine this ample third of our faire Kingdome, No
lesse in space, validitie, and pleasure Then that conferr'd on Gonerill. Now our loy, Although our
last and least; to whose yong loue, The Vines of France, and Milke of Burgundie, Striue to be
interest. What can you say, to draw A third, more opilent then your Sisters? speake

Cor. Nothing my Lord

Lear. Nothing?
Cor. Nothing

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing, speake againe

Cor. Vnhappie that I am, I cannot heaue My heart into my mouth: I loue your Maiesty According
to my bond, no more nor lesse

Lear. How, how Cordelia? Mend your speech a little, Least you may marre your Fortunes

Cor. Good my Lord,
You haue begot me, bred me, lou'd me. I returne those duties backe as are right fit, Obey you,
Loue you, and most Honour you. Why haue my Sisters Husbands, if they say They loue you all?
Happily when I shall wed, That Lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall carry Halfe my loue
with him, halfe my Care, and Dutie, Sure I shall neuer marry like my Sisters

Lear. But goes thy heart with this? Cor. I my good Lord

Lear. So young, and so vntender?
Cor. So young my Lord, and true

Lear. Let it be so, thy truth then be thy dowre: For by the sacred radience of the Sunne, The
misteries of Heccat and the night:
By all the operation of the Orbes,
From whom we do exist, and cease to be, Heere I disclaime all my Paternall care, Propinquity
and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me, Hold thee from this for euer. The barbarous Scythian, Or
he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosome Be as well neighbour'd, pittied, and releeu'd, As thou
my sometime Daughter
Kent. Good my Liege

Lear. Peace Kent,
Come not betwixt the Dragon and his wrath, I lou'd 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 Fathers heart from her; call France, who stirres? Call Burgundy, Cornwall, and Albalie, With my two Daughters Dowres, digest the third, Let pride, which she calls plainnesse, marry her: I doe inuest you ioyntly with my power, Preheminence, and all the large effects That troope with Maiesty. Our selfe by Monthly course, With reservation of an hundred Knights, By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode Make with you by due turne, onely we shall retaine The name, and all th' addition to a King: the Sway, Reuennew, Execution of the rest, Beloued Sonnes be yours, which to confirme, This Coronet part betweene you

Kent. Royall Lear,
Whom I haue euer honor'd as my King, Lou'd as my Father, as my Master follow'd, As my great Patron thought on in my praiers

Le. The bow is bent & drawne, make from the shaft

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the forke invade The region of my heart, be Kent vnmanerly, When Lear is mad, what wouldest thou do old man? Think'st thou that dutie shall have dread to speake, When power to flattery bowes? To plainnesse honour's bound,
When Maiesty falls to folly, reserve thy state, And in thy best consideration checke This hideous rashnesse, answere my life, my judgement: Thy yongest Daughter do's not loue thee least, Nor are those empty hearted, whose low sounds Reuerbe no hollownesse

Lear. Kent, on thy life no more

Kent. My life I neuer held but as pawne To wage against thine enemies, nere feare to loose it, Thy safety being motiue

Lear. Out of my sight

Kent. See better Lear, and let me still remaine The true blanke of thine eie

Lear. Now by Apollo,
Kent. Now by Apollo, King
Thou swear'st thy Gods in vaine

Lear. O Vassall! Miscreant

Alb. Cor. Deare Sir forbeare

Kent. Kill thy Physition, and thy fee bestow Vpon the foule disease, reuoke thy guift, Or whil'st I can vent clamour from my throate, Ile tell thee thou dost euill

Lea. Heare me recreant, on thine allegeance heare me; That thou hast sought to make vs
breake our vowes, Which we durst neuer yet; and with strain'd pride, To come betwixt our sentences, and our power, Which, nor our nature, nor our place can beare; Our potencie made good, take thy reward. Fiue dayes we do allot thee for prouision, To shield thee from disasters of the world, And on the sixt to turne thy hated backe Vpon our kindome: if on the tenth day following, Thy banisht trunke be found in our Dominions, The moment is thy death, away. By Jupiter, This shall not be reuok'd,

Kent. Fare thee well King, sith thus thou wilt appeare, Freedome liues hence, and banishment is here; The Gods to their deere shelter take thee Maid, That iustly think'st, and hast most rightly said: And your large speeches, may your deeds approue, That good effects may spring from words of loue: Thus Kent, O Princes, bids you all adew, Hee'l shape his old course, in a Country new. Enter.

Flourish. Enter Gloster with France, and Burgundy, Attendants.

Cor. Heere's France and Burgundy, my Noble Lord

Lear. My Lord of Burgundie, We first addresse toward you, who with this King Hath riuald for our Daughter; what in the least Will you require in present Dower with her, Or cease your quest of Loue?

Bur. Most Royall Maiesty, I craue no more then hath your Highnesse offer'd, Nor will you tender lesse?

Lear. Right Noble Burgundy, When she was deare to vs, we did hold her so, But now her price is fallen: Sir, there she stands, If ought within that little seeming substance, Or all of it with our displeasure piec'd, And nothing more may fitly like your Grace, Shee's there, and she is yours

Bur. I know no answer

Lear. Will you with those infirmities she owes, Vnfriended, new adopted to our hate, Dow'rd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath, Take her or, leaue her

Bur. Pardon me Royall Sir, Election makes not vp in such conditions

Le. Then leaue her sir, for by the powre that made me, I tell you all her wealth. For you great King, I would not from your loue make such a stray, To match you where I hate, therefore beseech you T' auert your liking a more worthier way, Then on a wretch whom Nature is ashamed

Fra. This is most strange, That she whom even but now, was your object, The argument of your praise, balme of your age, The best, the deereest, should in this trice of time Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle So many folds of fauour: sure her offence Must be of such vnnaturall degree, That monsters it: Or your fore-voucht affection Fall into taint, which to beleuee of her Must be a faith that reason without miracle Should neuer plant in me

Cor. I yet beseech your Maiesty. If for I want that glib and oylie Art, To speake and purpose not, since what I will intend, Ile do't
before I speake, that you make knowne It is no vicious blot, murther, or foulenesse, No vnchaste action or dishonoured step That hath depriu'd me of your Grace and fauour, But eu'n for want of that, for which I am richer, A still soliciting eye, and such a tongue, That I am glad I haue not, though not to haue it, Hath lost me in your liking

Lear. Better thou had'st Not beene borne, then not t'haue pleas'd me better

Fra. Is it but this? A tardinesse in nature, Which often leaues the history vnspoke That it intends to do: my Lord of Burgundy, What say you to the Lady? Loue's not loue When it is mingled with regards, that stands Aloofe from th' intire point, will you haue her? She is herselvse a Dowrie

Bur. Royall King, Giue but that portion which your selfe propos'd, And here I take Cordelia by the hand, Duchesse of Burgundie

Lear. Nothing, I haue sworne, I am firme

Bur. I am sorry then you haue so lost a Father, That you must loose a husband

Cor. Peace be with Burgundie, Since that respect and Fortunes are his loue, I shall not be his wife

Fra. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich being poore, Most choise forsaken, and most lou'd despis'd, Thee and thy vertues here I seize vpon, Be it lawfull I take vp what's cast away. Gods, Gods! 'Tis strange, that from their cold'st neglect My Loue should kindle to enflam'd respect. Thy downeresse Daughter King, throwne to my chance, Is Queene of vs, of ours, and our faire France: Not all the Dukes of watrish Burgundy, Can buy this vnpriz'd precious Maid of me. Bid them farewell Cordelia, though vnkinde, Thou loosest here a better where to finde

Lear. Thou hast her France, let her be thine, for we Haue no such Daughter, nor shall euer see That face of hers againe, therfore be gone, Without our Grace, our Loue, our Benizon: Come Noble Burgundie.

Flourish. Exeunt.

Fra. Bid farwell to your Sisters

Cor. The Jewels of our Father, with wash'd eies Cordelia leaues you, I know you what you are, And like a Sister am most loth to call Your faults as they are named. Loue well our Father: To your professed bosomes I commit him, But yet alas, stood I within his Grace, I would prefer him to a better place, So farewell to you both

Regn. Prescribe not vs our dutie
Gon. Let your study
Be to content your Lord, who hath receiu'd you At Fortunes almes, you haue obedience
scanted, And well are worth the want that you haue wanted

Cor. Time shall vnfold what plighted cunning hides, Who couers faults, at last with shame
derides: Well may you prosper

Fra. Come my faire Cordelia.

Exit France and Cor.

Gon. Sister, it is not little I haue to say, Of what most neerely appertaines to vs both, I thinke our
Father will hence to night

Reg. That's most certaine, and with you: next moneth with vs

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is, the obseruation we haue made of it hath beene
little; he alwaies lou'd our Sister most, and with what poore iudgement he hath now cast her off,
appeares too grossely

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age, yet he hath euer but slenderly knowne himselfe

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath bin but rash, then must we looke from his age, to
receiue not alone the imperfections of long ingraffed condition, but therewithall the vnruuly way-
wardnesse, that infirme and cholericke yeares bring with them

Reg. Such vnconstant starts are we like to haue from him, as this of Kents banishment

Gon. There is further complement of leaue-taking betweene France and him, pray you let vs sit
together, if our Father carry authority with such disposition as he beares, this last surrender of
his will but offend vs

Reg. We shall further thinke of it

Gon. We must do something, and 'th' heate.

Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.

Enter Bastard.

Bast. Thou Nature art my Goddesse, to thy Law My seruices are bound, wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custome, and permit The curiosity of Nations, to depriue me? For that I
am some twelue, or fourteene Moonshines Lag of a Brother? Why Bastard? Wherefore base?
When my Dimensions are as well compact,
My minde as generous, and my shape as true As honest Madams issue? Why brand they vs
More composition, and fierce qualitie,
Then doth within a dull stale tyred bed Goe to th' creating a whole tribe of Fops Got 'tweene a sleepe, and wake? Well then, Legitimate Edgar, I must haue your land, Our Fathers loue, is to the Bastard Edmond, As to th' legitimate: fine word: Legitimate. Well, my Legittimate, if this Letter speed, And my invention thrive, Edmond the base Shall to'th' Legitimate: I grow, I prosper: Now Gods, stand vp for Bastards. Enter Gloucester.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus? and France in choller parted? And the King gone to night? Prescrib'd his powre, Confin'd to exhibition? All this done Vpon the gad? Edmond, how now? What newes? Bast. So please your Lordship, none

Glou. Why so earnestly seeke you to put vp y Letter? Bast. I know no newes, my Lord

Glou. What Paper were you reading?
Bast. Nothing my Lord

Glou. No? what needed then that terrible dispatch of it into your Pocket? The quality of nothing, hath not such neede to hide it selfe. Let's see: come, if it bee nothing, I shall not neede Spectacles

Bast. I beseech you Sir, pardon mee; it is a Letter from my Brother, that I haue not all ore-read; and for so much as I haue perus'd, I finde it not fit for your ore-looking

Glou. Giue me the Letter, Sir

Bast. I shall offend, either to detaine, or giue it: The Contents, as in part I vnderstand them, Are too blame

Glou. Let's see, let's see

Bast. I hope for my Brothers iustification, hee wrote this but as an essay, or taste of my Vertue

Glou. reads. This policie, and reuerence of Age, makes the world bitter to the best of our times: keepes our Fortunes from vs, till our oldnesse cannot rellish them. I begin to finde an idle and fond bondage, in the oppression of aged tyranny, who swayes not as it hath power, but as it is suffer'd. Come to me, that of this I may speake more. If our Father would sleepe till I wak'd him, you should enioy halfe his Reueneue for euer, and liue the beloued of your Brother. Edgar. Hum? Conspiracy? Sleepe till I wake him, you should enioy halfe his Reuennew: my Sonne Edgar, had hee a hand to write this? A heart and braine to breede it in? When came you to this? Who brought it?
Bast. It was not brought mee, my Lord; there's the cunning of it. I found it throwne in at the Casement of my Closset

Glou. You know the character to be your Brothers? Bast. If the matter were good my Lord, I durst swear it were his: but in respect of that, I would faine thinke it were not

Glou. It is his

Bast. It is his hand, my Lord: but I hope his heart is not in the Contents
Glo. Has he neuer before sounded you in this busines? Bast. Neuer my Lord. But I haue heard him oft maintaine it to be fit, that Sonnes at perfect age, and Fathers declin'd, the Father should bee as Ward to the Son, and the Sonne manage his Reuennew

Glo. O Villain, villain: his very opinion in the Letter. Abhorred Villaine, vnnaturall, detested, brutish Villaine; worse then brutish: Go sirrah, seeke him: Ile apprehend him. Abhominable Villaine, where is he? Bast. I do not well know my Lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my Brother, til you can deriue from him better testimony of his intent, you shold run a certaine course: where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your owne Honor, and shake in pcees, the heart of his obedience. I dare pawne downe my life for him, that he hath writ this to feele my affection to your Honor, & to no other pretence of danger

Glo. Thynke you so? Bast. If your Honor iudge it meete, I will place you where you shall heare vs conferre of this, and by an Auricular assurance haue your satisfaction, and that without any further delay, then this very Euening

Glo. He cannot bee such a Monster. Edmond seeke him out: winde me into him, I pray you: frame the Businesse after your owne wisedome. I would vnstate my selfe, to be in a due resolution

Bast. I will seeke him Sir, presently: conuey the businesse as I shall find meanes, and acquaint you withall

Glo. These late Eclipses in the Sun and Moone portend no good to vs: though the wisedome of Nature can reason it thus, and thus, yet Nature finds it selfe scourg'd by the sequent effects. Loue cooles, friendship falls off, Brothers diuide. In Cities, mutinies; in Countries, discord; in Pallaces, Treason; and the Bond crack'd, 'twixt Sonne and Father. This villaine of mine comes vnder the prediction; there's Son against Father, the King fals from byas of Nature, there's Father against Childe. We haue seene the best of our time. Machinations, hollownesse, treacherie, and all ruinous disorders follow vs disquietly to our Graues. Find out this Villain, Edmond, it shall lose thee nothing, do it carefully: and the Noble & true-harted Kent banish'd; his offence, honesty. 'Tis strange.

Exit

Bast. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sicke in fortune, often the surfets of our own behauiour, we make guilty of our disasters, the Sun, the Moone, and Starres, as if we were vllaines on necessitie, Fooles by heauenly compulsion, Knaues, Theeues, and Treachers by Spherical predominance. We have seene the best of our time. Machinations, hollownesse, treacherie, and all ruinous disorders follow vs disquietly to our Graues. Find out this Villain, Edmond, it shall lose thee nothing, do it carefully: and the Noble & true-harted Kent banish'd; his offence, honesty. 'Tis strange.

Exit

Pat: he comes like the Catastrophe of the old Comedie: my Cue is villanous Melancholly, with a
sighe like Tom o' Bedlam. - O these Eclipses do portend these diuisions. Fa, Sol, La, Me

Edg. How now Brother Edmond, what serious contemplation are you in?
Bast. I am thinking Brother of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these Eclipses

Edg. Do you busie your selfe with that? Bast. I promise you, the effects he writes of, succeede vnhappily.

When saw you my Father last?
Edg. The night gone by

Bast. Spake you with him?
Edg. I, two houres together

Bast. Parted you in good termes? Found you no displeasure in him, by word, nor countenance?
Edg. None at all,
Bast. Bethink your selfe wherein you may haue offended him: and at my entreaty forbeare his presence, vntill some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischiefe of your person, it would scarcely alay

Edg. Some Villaine hath done me wrong

Edm. That's my feare, I pray you haue a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower: and as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to heare my Lord speake: pray ye goe, there's my key: if you do stirre abroad, goe arm'd

Edg. Arm'd, Brother?
Edm. Brother, I aduise you to the best, I am no honest man, if ther be any good meaning toward you: I haue told you what I haue seene, and heard: But faintly. Nothing like the image, and horror of it, pray you away

Edg. Shall I heare from you anon?
Enter.

Edm. I do serue you in this businesse: A Credulous Father, and a Brother Noble, Whose nature is so farre from doing harmes, That he suspects none: on whose foolish honestie My practises ride easie: I see the businesse. Let me, if not by birth, haue lands by wit, All with me's meete, that I can fashion fit. Enter.

Scena Tertia.
Enter Gonerill, and Steward.

Gon. Did my Father strike my Gentleman for chiding of his Foole?
Ste. I Madam

Gon. By day and night, he wrongs me, euery howre He flashes into one grosse crime, or other, That sets vs all at ods: Ile not endure it; His Knights grow riotous, and himselfe vpbraides vs On euery trifle. When he returnes from hunting, I will not speake with him, say I am sicke, If you
come slacke of former services,
You shall do well, the fault of it Ile answer

Ste. He's coming Madam, I heare him

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please, You and your Fellowes: I'de haue it come to question; If he distaste it, let him to my Sister, Whose mind and mine I know in that are one, Remember what I haue said

Ste. Well Madam

Gon. And let his Knights haue colder lookes among you: what growes of it no matter, advise your fellowes so, Ile write straight to my Sister to hold my course; prepare for dinner.

Exeunt.

Scena Quarta.

Enter Kent.

Kent. If but as will I other accents borrow, That can my speech defuse, my good intent May carry through it selfe to that full issue For which I raiz'd my likeness. Now banisht Kent, If thou canst serue where thou dost condemn'd, So may it come, thy Master whom thou lou'st, Shall find thee full of labours.

Hornes within. Enter Lear and Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a iot for dinner, go get it ready: how now, what art thou?
Kent. A man Sir

Lear. What dost thou professe? What would'st thou with vs?
Kent. I do professe to be no lesse then I seeme; to serue him truely that will put me in trust, to loue him that is honest, to conuerse with him that is wise and saies little, to feare iudgement, to fight when I cannot choose, and to eate no fish

Lear. What art thou?
Kent. A very honest hearted Fellow, and as poore as the King

Lear. If thou be'st as poore for a subiect, as hee's for a King, thou art poore enough. What wouldst thou? Kent. Service

Lear. Who wouldst thou serue?
Kent. You

Lear. Do'st thou know me fellow?
Kent. No Sir, but you haue that in your countenance, which I would faine call Master

Lear. What's that?
Kent. Authority
Lear. What services canst thou do?
Kent. I can keepe honest counsaile, ride, run, marre a curious tale in telling it, and deliuer a plaine message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am quallified in, and the best of me, is Dilligence

Lear. How old art thou?
Kent. Not so young Sir to loue a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing. I haue yeares on my backe forty eight

Lear. Follow me, thou shalt serue me, if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner ho, dinner, where's my knaue? my Foole? Go you and call my Foole hither. You you Sirrah, where's my Daughter? Enter Steward.

Ste. So please you-
Enter.

Lear. What saies the Fellow there? Call the Clotpole backe: wher's my Foole? Ho, I thinke the world's asleepe, how now? Where's that Mungrell? Knigh. He saies my Lord, your Daughters is not well

Lear. Why came not the slaue backe to me when I call'd him?
Knigh. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not

Lear. He would not?
Knight. My Lord, I know not what the matter is, but to my judgement your Highnesse is not entertain'd with that Ceremonious affection as you were wont, theres a great abatement of kindnesse appeares as well in the generall dependants, as in the Duke himselfe also, and your Daughter

Lear. Ha? Saist thou so?
Knigh. I beseech you pardon me my Lord, if I bee mistaken, for my duty cannot be silent, when I thinke your Highnesse wrong'd

Lear. Thou but remembrest me of mine owne Conception, I haue perceiued a most faint neglect of late, which I haue rather blamed as mine owne iealous curiositie, then as a very pretence and purpose of vnkindnesse; I will looke further intoo't: but where's my Foole? I haue not seene him this two daies

Knight. Since my young Ladies going into France Sir, the Foole hath much pined away

Lear. No more of that, I haue noted it well, goe you and tell my Daughter, I would speake with her. Goe you call hither my Foole; Oh you Sir, you, come you hither Sir, who am I Sir? Enter Steward.

Ste. My Ladies Father

Lear. My Ladies Father? my Lords knaue, you whorson dog, you slaue, you curre

Ste. I am none of these my Lord,
I beseech your pardon

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you Rascal? Ste. Ile not be strucken my Lord

Kent. Nor tript neither, you base Foot-ball plaier

Lear. I thanke thee fellow.
Thou seru'st me, and Ile loue thee

Kent. Come sir, arise, away, Ile teach you differences: away, away, if you will measure your lubbers length againe, tarry, but away, goe too, haue you wisedome, so

Lear. Now my friendly knaue I thanke thee, there's earnest of thy servise.
Enter Foole.

Foole. Let me hire him too, here's my Coxcome

Lear. How now my pretty knaue, how dost thou? Foole. Sirrah, you were best take my Coxcome

Lear. Why my Boy?
Foole. Why? for taking ones part that's out of fauour, nay, & thou canst not smile as the wind sitts, thou'll catch colde shortly, there take my Coxcombe; why this fellow ha's banish'd two on's Daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will, if thou follow him, thou must needs weare my Coxcombe. How now Nunckle? would I had two Coxcombes and two Daughters

Lear. Why my Boy?
Fool. If I gaue them all my liuuing, I'd keepe my Coxcombes my selfe, there's mine, beg another of thy Daughters

Lear. Take heed Sirrah, the whip

Foole. Truth's a dog must to kennell, hee must bee whipt out, when the Lady Brach may stand by'th' fire and stinke

Lear. A pestilent gall to me

Foole. Sirha, Ile teach thee a speech

Lear. Do

Foole. Marke it Nuncl; Haue more then thou showest, Speake lesse then thou knowest, Lend lesse then thou owest, Ride more then thou goest, Learne more then thou trowest, Set lesse then thou throwest; Leaue thy drinke and thy whore,
And keepe in a dore,  
And thou shalt haue more,  
Then two tens to a score

Kent. This is nothing Foole

Foole. Then 'tis like the breath of an vnfeed Lawyer, you gau'e me nothing for't, can you make no vse of nothing Nuncle?
Lear. Why no Boy,  
Nothing can be made out of nothing

Foole. Prythee tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to, he will not beleuee a Foole

Lear. A bitter Foole

Foole. Do'st thou know the difference my Boy, betweene a bitter Foole, and a sweet one

Lear. No Lad, teach me

Foole. Nunckle, giue me an egge, and Ile giue thee two Crownes

Lear. What two Crownes shall they be? Foole. Why after I haue cut the egge i'th' middle and eate vp the meate, the two Crownes of the egge: when thou clouest thy Crownes i'th' middle, and gau'est away both parts, thou boar'st thine Asse on thy backe o're the durt, thou hadst little wit in thy bald crowne, when thou gau'est thy golden one away; if I speake like my selfe in this, let him be whipt that first findes it so. Fooles had nere lesse grace in a yeere, For wisemen are growne foppish,  
And know not how their wits to weare, Their manners are so apish

Le. When were you wont to be so full of Songs sirrah? Foole. I haue vsed it Nunckle, ere since thou mad'st thy Daughters thy Mothers, for when thou gau'est them the rod, and put'st downe thine owne breeches, then they For sodaine ioy did weepe,  
And I for sorrow sung,  
That such a King should play bo-peepe, And goe the Foole among.  
Pry'thy Nunckle keepe a Schoolemastre that can teach thy Foole to lie, I would faine learne to lie

Lear. And you lie sirrah, wee'll haue you whipt

Foole. I maruell what kin thou and thy daughters are, they'l haue me whipt for speaking true:  
thou'il haue me whipt for lying, and sometimes I am whipt for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing then a foole, and yet I would not be thee Nunckle, thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i'th' middle; heere comes one o'the parings.  
Enter Gonerill.

Lear. How now Daughter? what makes that Frontlet on? You are too much of late i'th' frowne

Foole. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning, now thou art an O without a figure, I am better then thou art now, I am a Foole, thou art nothing. Yes forsooth
I will hold my tongue, so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum, he that keepes nor crust, nor crum, Weary of all, shall want some. That's a sheal'd Pescod

Gon. Not only Sir this, your all-lycenc'd Foole, But other of your insolent retinue Do hourely Carpe and Quarrell, breaking forth In ranke, and (not to be endur'd) riots Sir. I had thought by making this well knowne vnto you, To haue found a safe redresse, but now grow fearefull By what your selfe too late haue 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 sleepe, Which in the tender of a wholesome weale, Mighty in their working do you that offence, Which else were shame, that then necessitie Will call discreet proceeding

Foole. For you know Nunckle, 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

Lear. Are you our Daughter?
Gon. I would you would make vse of your good wisedome (Whereof I know you are fraught), and put away These dispositions, which of late transport you From what you rightly are

Foole. May not an Asse know, when the Cart drawes the Horse?
Whoop Iugge I loue thee

Lear. Do's any heere know me?
This is not Lear:
Do's Lear walke thus? Speake thus? Where are his eies? Either his Notion weakens, his Discernings Are Lethargied. Ha! Waking? 'Tis not so? Who is it that can tell me who I am?
Foole. Lear's shadow

Lear. Your name, faire Gentlewoman? Gon. This admiration Sir, is much o'th' sauour Of other your new prankeis. I do beseech you To vnderstand my purposes aright: As you are Old, and Reuerend, should be Wise. Heere do you keepe a hundred Knights and Squires, Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold, That this our Court infected with their manners, Shewes like a riotous Inne; Epicurisme and Lust Makes it more like a Tauerne, or a Brothell, Then a grac'd Pallace. The shame it selfe doth speake For instant remedy. Be then desir'd
By her, that else will take the thing she begges, A little to disquantity your Traine, And the remainders that shall still depend, To be such men as may besort your Age, Which know themselues, and you

Lear. Darknesse, and Diuels.
Saddle my horses: call my Traine together. Degenerate Bastard, Ile not trouble thee; Yet haue I left a daughter

Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd rable, make Seruants of their Betters. Enter Albany.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents:
Is it your will, speake Sir? Prepare my Horses. Ingratitude! thou Marble-hearted Fiend, More hideous when thou shew'st thee in a Child, Then the Sea-monster
Alb. Pray Sir be patient

Lear. Detested Kite, thou liest.

My Traine are men of choice, and rarest parts, That all particulars of dutie know,
And in the most exact regard, support The worships of their name. O most small fault, How vgly
did'st thou in Cordelia shew?
Which like an Engine, wrencht my frame of Nature From the fixt place: drew from my heart all
loue, And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear! Beate at this gate that let thy Folly in, And thy
deer Judgement out. Go, go, my people

Alb. My Lord, I am guiltlesse, as I am ignorant Of what hath moued you

Lear. It may be so, my Lord.
Heare Nature, heare deere Goddesse, heare: Suspend thy purpose, if thou did'st intend To
make this Creature fruitfull:
Into her Wombe conuey stirrility,
Drie vp in her the Organs of increase, And from her derogate body, neuer spring A Babe to
honor her. If she must teeme,
Create her childe of Spleene, that it may liue And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her. Let it
stampe wrinkles in her brow of youth, With cadent Teares fret Channels in her cheekes, Turne
all her Mothers paines, and benefits To laughter, and contempt: That she may feele, How
sharper then a Serpents tooth it is, To haue a thanklesse Childe. Away, away. Enter.

Alb. Now Gods that we adore,
Whereof comes this?
Gon. Neuer afflict your selfe to know more of it: But let his disposition haue that scope
As dotage giues it.
Enter Lear.

Lear. What fiftie of my Followers at a clap? Within a fortnight?
Alb. What's the matter, Sir?
Lear. Ile tell thee:
Life and death, I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus, That these hot teares, which breake from me
perforce Should make thee worth them.
Blastes and Fogges vpon thee:
Th' vntented woundings of a Fathers curse Pierce euerie sense about thee. Old fond eyes,
Bewepee this cause againe, Ile plucke ye out, And cast you with the waters that you loose To
temper Clay. Ha? Let it be so.
I haue another daughter,
Who I am sure is kinde and comfortable: When she shall heare this of thee, with her nailes
Shee'l flea thy Woluish visage. Thou shalt finde, That Ile resume the shape which thou dost
thinke I haue cast off for euer.

Exit

Gon. Do you marke that?
Alb. I cannot be so partiall Gonerill, To the great loue I beare you
Gon. Pray you content. What Oswald, hoa? You Sir, more Knaue then Foole, after your Master

Foole. Nunkle Lear, Nunkle Lear,
Tarry, take the Foole with thee:
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 Foole followes after.

Exit

Gon. This man hath had good Counsell, A hundred Knights?
'Tis politike, and safe to let him keepe At point a hundred Knights: yes, that on euerie dreame,
Each buz, each fancie, each complaint, dislike, He may enguard his dotage with their powres,
And hold our liues in mercy. Oswald, I say

Alb. Well, you may feare too farre

Gon. Safer then trust too farre;
Let me still take away the harmes I feare, Not feare still to be taken. I know his heart, What he hath vtt'er'd I haue writ my Sister: If she sustaine him, and his hundred Knights When I haue shew'd th' vnfitnesse.
Enter Steward.

How now Oswald?
What haue you writ that Letter to my Sister? Stew. I Madam

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse, Informe her full of my particular feare, And thereto add such reasons of your owne, As may compact it more. Get you gone,
And hasten your returne; no, no, my Lord, This milky gentlenesse, and course of yours Though I condemne not, yet vnder pardon
You are much more at task for want of wisedome, Then prais'd for harmefull mildnesse

Alb. How farre your eies may pierce I cannot tell; Striving to better, oft we marre what's well

Gon. Nay then-
Alb. Well, well, th' euent.

Exeunt.

Scena Quinta.

Enter Lear, Kent, Gentleman, and Foole.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these Letters; acquaint my Daughter no further with any thing you know, then comes from her demand out of the Letter, if your Dilligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you
Kent. I will not sleepe my Lord, till I haue deliuered your Letter.
Enter.

Fool. If a mans braines were in's heeles, wert not in danger of kybes?
Lear. I Boy

Fool. Then I prythee be merry, thy wit shall not go slip-shod

Lear. Ha, ha, ha

Fool. Shalt see thy other Daughter will vse thee kindly, for though she's as like this, as a Crabbe's like an Apple, yet I can tell what I can tell

Lear. What can'st tell Boy?
Fool. She will taste as like this as, a Crabbe do's to a Crab: thou canst, tell why ones nose stands 'th' middle on's face?
Lear. No

Fool. Why to keepe ones eyes of either side 's nose, that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into

Lear. I did her wrong

Fool. Can'st tell how an Oyster makes his shell? Lear. No

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a Snaile ha's a house

Lear. Why?
Fool. Why to put's head in, not to giue it away to his daughters, and leaue his hornes without a case

Lear. I will forget my Nature, so kind a Father? Be my Horsses ready?
Fool. Thy Asses are gone about 'em; the reason why the seuen Starres are no mo then seuen, is a pretty reason

Lear. Because they are not eight

Fool. Yes indeed, thou would'st make a good Foose

Lear. To tak't againe perforce; Monster Ingratitude! Foose. If thou wert my Foose Nunckle, I'd haue thee beaten for being old before thy time

Lear. How's that?
Fool. Thou shouldst not haue bin old, till thou hadst bin wise

Lear. O let me not be mad, not mad sweet Heauen: keepe me in temper, I would not be mad. How now are the Horses ready?
Gent. Ready my Lord
Lear. Come Boy

Fool. She that's a Maid now, & laughs at my departure, Shall not be a Maid long, vnlesse things be cut shorter.

Exeunt.

Actus Secundus. Scena Prima.

Enter Bastard, and Curan, seuerally.

Bast. Saue thee Curan

Cur. And you Sir, I haue bin
With your Father, and giuen him notice That the Duke of Cornwall, and Regan his Duchesse Will be here with him this night

Bast. How comes that?
Cur. Nay I know not, you haue heard of the newes abroad, I meane the whisper'd ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments


Cur. You may do then in time, Fare you well Sir.
Enter.

Bast. The Duke be here to night? The better best, This weaues it selfe perforce into my businesse, My Father hath set guard to take my Brother, And I haue one thing of a queazie question Which I must act, Briefenesse, and Fortune worke. Enter Edgar.

Brother, a word, discend; Brother I say, My Father watches: O Sir, fly this place, Intelligence is giuen where you are hid; You haue now the good aduantage of the night, Haue you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwell? Hee's comming hither, now i'th' night, i'th' haste, And Regan with him, haue you nothing said Vpon his partie 'gainst the Duke of Albany? Aduise your selfe

Edg. I am sure on't, not a word

Bast. I heare my Father comming, pardon me: In cunning, I must draw my Sword vpon you: Draw, seeme to defend your selfe,
Now quit you well.
Yeeld, come before my Father, light hoa, here, Fly Brother, Torches, Torches, so farewell.

Exit Edgar.

Some blood drawne on me, would beget opinion Of my more fierce endeauour. I haue seene drunkards Do more then this in sport; Father, Father, Stop, stop, no helpe?
Enter Gloster, and Seruants with Torches.
Glo. Now Edmund, where's the villaine? Bast. Here stood he in the dark, his sharpe Sword out, Mumbling of wicked charmes, conjuring the Moone To stand auspicious Mistris

Glo. But where is he?
Bast. Looke Sir, I bleed

Glo. Where is the villaine, Edmund? Bast. Fled this way Sir, when by no meanes he could

Glo. Pursue him, ho: go after. By no meanes, what? Bast. Perswade me to the murther of your Lordship, But that I told him the reuenging Gods, 'Gainst Paricides did all the thunder bend, Spoke with how manifold, and strong a Bond The Child was bound to'th' Father; Sir in fine, Seeing how lothly opposite I stood To his vnnaturall purpose, in fell motion With his prepared Sword, he charges home My vnprovided body, latch'd mine arme; And when he saw my best alarum'd spirits Bold in the quarrels right, rouz'd to th' encounter, Or whether gasted by the noyse I made, Full sodainely he fled

Glost. Let him fly farre:
Not in this Land shall he remaine vncaught And found; dispatch, the Noble Duke my Master, My worthy Arch and Patron comes to night, By his authoritie I will proclaime it, That he which finds him shall deserue our thankes, Bringing the murderous Coward to the stake: He that conceales him death

Bast. When I disswaded him from his intent, And found him pight to doe it, with curst speech I threaten'd to discouer him; he replied, Thou vnpossessing Bastard, dost thou thinke, If I would stand against thee, would the reposall Of any trust, vertue, or worth in thee Make thy words faith'd? No, what should I deny, (As this I would, though thou didst produce My very Character) I'ld turne it all To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practise: And thou must make a dullard of the world, If they not thought the profits of my death Were very pregnant and potentiall spirits To make thee seeke it.

Tucket within.

Glo. O strange and fastned Villaine, Would he deny his Letter, said he?
Harke, the Dukes Trumpets, I know not wher he comes; All Ports Ile barre, the villaine shall not scape, The Duke must grant me that: besides, his picture I will send farre and neere, that all the kingdome May haue due note of him, and of my land, (Loyall and naturall Boy) Ile worke the meanes To make thee capable.

Enter Cornewall, Regan, and Attendants.

Corn. How now my Noble friend, since I came hither (Which I can call but now,) I haue heard strangenesse

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short Which can pursue th' offender; how dost my Lord? Glo. O Madam, my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd

Reg. What, did my Fathers Godsonne seeke your life? He whom my Father nam'd, your Edgar?
Glo. O Lady, Lady, shame would have it hid

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous Knights That tended upon my Father?
Glo. I know not Madam, 'tis too bad, too bad

Bast. Yes Madam, he was of that consort

Reg. No marvel then, though he were ill affected, 'Tis they have put him on the old man's death, To have the expense and wast of his Revenues: I have this present evening from my Sister Beene well inform'd of them, and with such cautions, That if they come to sojourn at my house, I'll not be there

Cor. Nor I, assure thee Regan; Edmund, I hear that you have shewn your Father A Child-like Office

Bast. It was my duty Sir

Glo. He did bewray his practise, and receiv'd This hurt you see, straining to apprehend him

Cor. Is he pursued?
Glo. I my good Lord

Cor. If he be taken, he shall never more Be fear'd of doing harme, make your owne purpose, How in my strength you please: for you Edmund, Whose vertue and obedience doth this instant So much commend it selfe, you shall be ours, Nature's of such deepe trust, we shall much need: You we first seize on

Bast. I shall serve you Sir truely, how euer else

Glo. For him I thanke your Grace

Cor. You know not why we came to visit you? Reg. Thus out of season, thredding darke ey'd night, Occasions Noble Gloster of some prize, Wherein we must have use of your advise. Our Father he hath writ, so hath our Sister, Of differences, which I best thought it fit To answer from our home: the severall Messengers From hence attend dispatch, our good old Friend, Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow Your needfull counsail to our businesses, Which craues the instant use

Glo. I serve you Madam,
Your Graces are right welcome.

Exeunt. Flourish.

Scena Secunda.

Enter Kent, and Steward severally.

Stew. Good dawning to thee Friend, art of this house? Kent. I
Stew. Where may we set our horses?
Kent. 'T'h' me

Stew. Prythee, if thou lou'st me, tell me
Kent. I loue thee not

Ste. Why then I care not for thee
Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury Pinfold, I would make thee care for me
Ste. Why do'st thou use me thus? I know thee not
Kent. Fellow I know thee

Ste. What do'st thou know me for?
Kent. A Knaue, a Rascall, an eater of broken meates, a base, proud, shallow, beggerly, threesuited-hundred pound, filthy woosted-stocking knaue, a Lilly-liuere, action-taking, whoreson glasse-gazing super-serviceable finicall Rogue, one Trunke-inheriting slaue, one that would'st be a Baud in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a Knaue, Begger, Coward, Pandar, and the Sonne and Heire of a Mungrill Bitch, one whom I will beate into clamours whining, if thou deny'st the least sillable of thy addition

Stew. Why, what a monstrous Fellow art thou, thus to raile on one, that is neither knowne of thee, nor knowes thee?
Kent. What a brazen-fac'd Varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me? Is it two dayes since I tript vp thy heeles, and beate thee before the King? Draw you rogue, for though it be night, yet the Moone shines, Ile make a sop oth' Moonshine of you, you whoreson Cullyenly Barber-monger, draw

Stew. Away, I haue nothing to do with thee
Kent. Draw you Rascall, you come with Letters against the King, and take Vanitie the puppets part, against the Royaltie of her Father: draw you Rogue, or Ile so carbonado your shanks, draw you Rascall, come your waies

Ste. Helpe, ho, murther, helpe
Kent. Strike you slaue: stand rogue, stand you neat slaue, strike

Stew. Helpe hoa, murther, murther.
Enter Bastard, Cornewall, Regan, Gloster, Servants.

Bast. How now, what's the matter? Part
Kent. With you goodman Boy, if you please, come, Ile flesh ye, come on yong Master

Glo. Weapons? Armes? what's the matter here? Cor. Keepe peace vpon your liues, he dies that strikes againe, what is the matter?
Reg. The Messengers from our Sister, and the King? Cor. What is your difference, speake?
Stew. I am scarce in breath my Lord

Kent. No Maruell, you haue so bestir'd your valour, you cowardly Rascal, nature disclaimes in thee: a Taylor made thee

Cor. Thou art a strange fellow, a Taylor make a man? Kent. A Taylor Sir, a Stone-cutter, or a Painter, could not haue made him so ill, though they had bin but two yeares oth' trade

Cor. Speake yet, how grew your quarrell? Ste. This ancient Ruffian Sir, whose life I haue spar'd at sute of his gray-beard

Kent. Thou whoreson Zed, thou vnecessary letter: my Lord, if you will giue me leaue, I will tread this vnboulted villaine into morter, and daube the wall of a lakes with him. Spare my gray-beard, you wagtaile? Cor. Peace sirrah, You beastly knaue, know you no reuerence? Kent. Yes Sir, but anger hath a priuiledge

Cor. Why art thou angrie?
Kent. That such a slaue as this should weare a Sword, Who weares no honesty: such smiling rogues as these, Like Rats oft bite the holy cords a twaine, Which are t' intrince, t' vnloose: smooth every passion That in the natures of their Lords rebell, Being oile to fire, snow to the colder moods, Reuenge, affirme, and turne their Halcion beakes With every gall, and vary of their Masters, Knowing naught (like dogges) but following: A plague vpon your Epilepticke visage, Smoile you my speeches, as I were a Foole? Goose, if I had you vpon Sarum Plaine, I'd driue ye cackling home to Camelot

Corn. What art thou mad old Fellow? Glost. How fell you out, say that?
Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy, Then I, and such a knaue

Corn. Why do'st thou call him Knaue? What is his fault?
Kent. His countenance likes me not

Corn. Why do'st thou call him Knaue? What is his fault?
Kent. His countenance likes me not

Cor. No more perchance do's mine, nor his, nor hers

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plaine, I haue seene better faces in my Time, Then stands on any shoulder that I see Before me, at this instant

Corn. This is some Fellow, Who hauing beene prai'd for bluntnesse, doth affect A saucy roughnes, and constraines the garb Quite from his Nature. He cannot flatter he, An honest mind and plaine, he must speake truth, And they will take it so, if not, hee's plaine. These kind of Knaues I know, which in this plainnesse Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends, Then twenty silly-ducking observants, That stretch their duties nicely

Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity, Vnder th' allowance of your great aspect, Whose influence like the wreath of radiant fire On flickring Phoebus front

Corn. What mean'st by this?
Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much; I know Sir, I am no flatterer, he that beguild you in a plaine accent, was a plaine Knaue, which for my part I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me too't

Corn. What was th' offence you gaue him? Ste. I neuer gaue him any: It pleas'd the King his Master very late To strike at me vpon his misconstruction, When he compact, and flattering his displeasure Tript me behind: being downe, insulted, rail'd, And put vpon him such a deale of Man, That worthied him, got praises of the King, For him attempting, who was selfe-subdued, And in the fleshtment of this dead exploit, Drew on me here againe

Kent. None of these Rogues, and Cowards But Aiax is there Foole

Corn. Fetch forth the Stocks? You stubborne ancient Knaue, you reuerent Bragart, Wee'l teach you

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learne: Call not your Stocks for me, I serue the King. On whose imployment I was sent to you, You shall doe small respects, show too bold malice Against the Grace, and Person of my Master, Stocking his Messenger

Corn. Fetch forth the Stocks; As I haue life and Honour, there shall he sit till Noone

Reg. Till noone? till night my Lord, and all night too

Kent. Why Madam, if I were your Fathers dog, You should not vse me so

Reg. Sir, being his Knaue, I will.

Stocks brought out.

Cor. This is a Fellow of the selfe same colour, Our Sister speakes of. Come, bring away the Stocks

Glo. Let me beseech your Grace, not to do so, The King his Master, needs must take it ill That he so slightly valued in his Messenger, Should haue him thus restrained

Cor. Ile answere that

Reg. My Sister may recieve it much more worsse, To haue her Gentleman abus'd, assaulted

Corn. Come my Lord, away.

Enter.

Glo. I am sorry for thee friend, 'tis the Dukes pleasure, Whose disposition all the world well knowes Will not be rub'd nor stopt, Ile entreat for thee

Kent. Pray do not Sir, I haue watch'd and trauail'd hard, Some time I shall sleepe out, the rest Ile
whistle: A good man's fortune may grow out at heeles: Giue you good morrow

Glo. The Duke's too blame in this,
'Twill be ill taken.
Enter.

Kent. Good King, that must approue the common saw, Thou out of Heauens benediction com'st To the warme Sun.
Approach thou Beacon to this vnnder Globe, That by thy comfortable Beames I may Peruse this Letter. Nothing almost sees miracles But miserie. I know 'tis from Cordelia, Who hath most fortunately beene inform'd Of my obscured course. And shall finde time From this enormous State, seeking to giue Losses their remedies. All weary and o're-watch'd, Take vantage heauie eyes, not to behold This shamefull lodging. Fortune goodnight, Smile once more, turne thy wheele.
Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard my selfe proclaim'd,
And by the happy hollow of a Tree,
Escap'd the hunt. No Port is free, no place That guard, and most vnusall vigilance Do's not attend my taking. Whiles I may scape I will preserue my selfe: and am bethought To take the basest, and most poorest shape That euer penury in contempt of man, Brought neere to beast; my face Ile grime with filth, Blanket my loines, else all my haires in knots, And with presented nakednesse out-face
The Windes, and persecutions of the skie; The Country gives me proofe, and president Of Bedlam beggers, who with roaring voices, Strike in their num'd and mortified Armes. Pins, Wodden-prickes, Nayles, Sprigs of Rosemarie: And with this horrible obiect, from low Farmes, Poore pelting Villages, Sheeps-Coates, and Milles, Sometimes with Lunaticke bans, sometime with Praiers Inforce their charitie: poore Turlygod poore Tom, That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am. Enter.

Enter Lear, Foole, and Gentleman.

Lea. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home, And not send backe my Messengers

Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before, there was no purpose in them Of this remoue

Kent. Haile to thee Noble Master

Lear. Ha? Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime? Kent. No my Lord

Foole. Hah, ha, he weares Cruell Garters Horses are tide by the heads, Dogges and Beares by'th' necke, Monkies by'th' loynes, and Men by'th' legs: when a man ouerlustie at legs, then he weares wodden nether-stocks

Lear. What's he,
That hath so much thy place mistooke To set thee heere?
Kent. It is both he and she,
Your Son, and Daughter
Lear. No

Kent. Yes

Lear. No I say

Kent. I say yea

Lear. By Jupiter I sweare no

Kent. By Juno, I sweare I

Lear. They durst not do't: They could not, would not do't: 'tis worse then murther, To do vpon respect such violent outrage: Resolue me with all modest haste, which way Thou might'st deserue, or they impose this vsage, Comming from vs

Kent. My Lord, when at their home
I did commend your Highnesse Letters to them, Ere I was risen from the place, that shewed My dutie kneeling, came there a reeking Poste, Stew'd in his haste, halfe breathlesse, painting forth From Gonerill his Mistris, salutations; Deliuer'd Letters spight of intermission, Which presently they read; on those contents They summon'd vp their meiney, straight tooke Horse, Commanded me to follow, and attend The leisure of their answer, gaue me cold lookes, And meeting heere the other Messenger, Whose welcome I perceiu'd had poison'd mine, Being the very fellow which of late Displaid so sawcily against your Highnesse, Hauing more man then wit about me, drew; He rais'd the house, with loud and coward cries, Your Sonne and Daughter found this trespasse worth The shame which heere it suffers

Foole. Winters not gon yet, if the wil'd Geese fly that way, Fathers that weare rags, do make their Children blind, But Fathers that beare bags, shall see their children kind. Fortune that arrant whore, nere turns the key toth' poore. But for all this thou shalt haue as many Dolors for thy Daughters, as thou canst tell in a yeare

Lear. Oh how this Mother swels vp toward my heart! Historica passio, downe thou climing sorrow, Thy Elements below where is this Daughter? Kent. With the Earle Sir, here within

Lear. Follow me not, stay here.
Enter.

Gen. Made you no more offence,
But what you speake of?
Kent. None:
How chance the King comes with so small a number? Foole. And thou hadst beene set i'th' Stockes for that question, thoud'st well deseru'd it

Kent. Why Foole?
Foole. Wee'l set thee to schoole to an Ant, to teach thee ther's no labouring i'th' winter. All that follow their noses, are led by their eyes, but blinde men, and there's not a nose among twenty,
but can smell him that's stinking; let go thy hold when a great wheele runs downe a hill, least it breake thy necke with following. But the great one that goes vpward, let him draw thee after: when a wiseman giues thee better counsell giue me mine againe, I would haue none but knaues follow it, since a Foole giues it. That Sir, which serues and seekes for gaine, And followes but for forme; Will packe, when it begins to raine, And leaue thee in the storme, But I will tarry, the Foole will stay, And let the wiseman flie: The knaue turnes Foole that runnes away, The Foole no knaue perdie.

Enter Lear, and Gloster:

Kent. Where learn'd you this Foole? Foole. Not i'th' Stocks Foole

Lear. Deny to speake with me?
They are sicke, they are weary,
They haue trauail'd all the night? meere fetches, The images of reuolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer

Glo. My deere Lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke, How vnremoueable and fixt he is
In his owne course


Glo. Well my good Lord, I haue inform'd them so

Lear. Inform'd them? Do'st thou vnderstand me man

Glo. I my good Lord

Lear. The King would speake with Cornwall, The deere Father
Would with his Daughter speake, commands, tends, seruice, 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,
Infirmitie doth still neglect all office, Whereto our health is bound, we are not our selues, When Nature being opprest, commands the mind To suffer with the body; Ile forbeare,
And am fallen out with my more headier will, To take the indispos'd and sickly fit,
For the sound man. Death on my state: wherefore Should he sit heere? This act perswades me,
That this remotion of the Duke and her
Is practise only. Giue me my Seruant forth; Goe tell the Duke, and's wife, Il'd speake with them:
Now, presently: bid them come forth and heare me, Or at their Chamber doore Ile beate the Drum, Till it crie sleepe to death

Glo. I would haue all well betwixt you. Enter.

Lear. Oh me my heart! My rising heart! But downe

Foole. Cry to it Nunckle, as the Cockney did to the Eeles, when she put 'em i'th' Paste aliue, she knapt 'em o'th' coxcombs with a sticke, and cryed downe wantons, downe; 'twas her Brother, that in pure kindnesse to his Horse buttered his Hay.
Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gloster, Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both

Corn. Haile to your Grace.

Kent here set at liberty.

Reg. I am glad to see your Highnesse

Lear. Regan, I thinke you are. I know what reason I haue to thinke so, if thou should'st not be glad, I would divorce me from thy Mother Tombe, Sepulchring an Adultresse. O are you free? Some other time for that. Beloued Regan, Thy Sisters naught: oh Regan, she hath tied Sharptooth'd vnkindnesse, like a vulture heere, I can scarce speake to thee, thou'lt not beleuee With how deprau'd a quality. Oh Regan

Reg. I pray you Sir, take patience, I haue hope You lesse know how to value her desert, Then she to scant her dutie

Lear. Say? How is that?
Reg. I cannot thinke my Sister in the least Would faile her Obligation. If Sir perchance She haue restrained the Riots of your Followres, 'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end, As cleere's her from all blame

Lear. My curses on her

Reg. O Sir, you are old, Nature in you stands on the very Verge Of his confine: you should be rul'd, and led By some discretion, that discernes your state Better then you your selfe: therefore I pray you, That to our Sister, you do make returne, Say you haue wrong'd her

Lear. Aske her forgiuences? Do you but marke how this becomes the house? Deere daughter, I confess that I am old; Age is vnecessary: on my knees I begge, That you'v vouchsafe me Rayment, Bed, and Food

Reg. Good Sir, no more: these are vnsightly trickes: Returne you to my Sister

Lear. Neuer Regan: She hath abated me of halfe my Traine; Look'd blacke vpon me, strooke me with her Tongue Most Serpent-like, vpon the very Heart. All the stor'd Vengeances of Heauen, fall On her ingratefull top: strike her yong bones You taking Ayres, with Lamenesse

Corn. Fye sir, fie

Le. You nimble Lightnings, dart your blinding flames Into her scornfull eyes: Infect her Beauty, You Fen-suck'd Fogges, drawne by the powrfull Sunne, To fall, and blister

Reg. O the blest Gods!
So will you wish on me, when the rash moode is on

Lear. No Regan, thou shalt neuer haue my curse: Thy tender-hefted Nature shall not giue Thee o're to harshnesse: Her eyes are fierce, but thine Do comfort, and not burne. ‘Tis not in thee To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my Traine, To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes, And in conclusion, to oppose the bolt Against my comming in. Thou better know'st The Offices of Nature, bond of Childhood, Effects of Curtesie, dues of Gratitude: Thy halfe o'th' Kingdome hast thou not forgot, Wherein I thee endow'd

Reg. Good Sir, to' th' purpose.

Tucket within.

Lear. Who put my man i'th' Stockes?
Enter Steward.

Corn. What Trumpet's that?
Reg. I know't, my Sisters: this approues her Letter, That she would soone be heere. Is your Lady come? Lear. This is a Slaue, whose easie borrowed pride Dwels in the sickly grace of her he followes. Out Varlet, from my sight

Corn. What meanes your Grace?
Enter Gonerill.

Lear. Who stockt my Seruant? Regan, I haue good hope Thou did'st not know on't. Who comes here? O Heauens!

Corn. I set him there, Sir: but his owne Disorders Deseru'd much lesse aduancement

Lear. You? Did you?

Reg. I pray you Father being weake, seeme so. If till the expiration of your Moneth You will returne and soiourne with my Sister, Dismissing halfe your traine, come then to me, I am now from home, and out of that prouision Which shall be needfull for your entertainement

Lear. Returne to her? and fifty men dismiss'd? No, rather I abiure all roofes, and chuse To wage against the enmity oth' ayre,

Lear. Returne to her? and fifty men dismiss'd? No, rather I abiure all roofes, and chuse To wage against the enmity oth' ayre,

To be a Comrade with the Wolfe, and Owle, Necessities sharpe pinch. Returne with her? Why the hot-bloodied France, that dowerlesse tooke Our yongest borne, I could as well be brought To knee his Throne, and Squire-like pension beg, To keepe base life a foote; returne with her? Perswade me rather to be slaue and sumpter To this detested groome
Gon. At your choice Sir

Lear. I prythee Daughter do not make me mad, I will not trouble thee my Child; farewell: Wee'l no more meeete, no more see one another. But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my Daughter, Or rather a disease that's in my flesh, Which I must needs call mine. Thou art a Byle, A plague sore, or imbossed Carbuncle In my corrupted blood. But Ile not chide thee, Let shame come when it will, I do not call it, I do not bid the Thunder-bearer shoote, Nor tell tales of thee to high-iudging Ioue, Mend when thou canst, be better at thy leisure, I can be patient, I can stay with Regan, I and my hundred Knights

Reg. Not altogether so, I look'd not for you yet, nor am prouided For your fit welcome, giue eare Sir to my Sister, For those that mingle reason with your passion, Must be content to thinke you old, and so, But she knowes what she doe's

Lear. Is this well spoken? Reg. I dare auouch 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, Speake 'gainst so great a number? How in one house Should many people, vnder two commands Hold amity? 'Tis hard, almost impossible

Gon. Why might not you my Lord, receiue attendance From those that she cals Seruants, or from mine? Reg. Why not my Lord? If then they chanc'd to slacke ye, We could comptroll them; if you will come to me, (For now I spie a danger) I entreate you To bring but fiue and twentie, to no more Will I giue place or notice

Lear. I gaue you all

Reg. And in good time you gaue it

Lear. Made you my Guardians, my Depositaries, But kept a reseruation to be followed With such a number? What, must I come to you

With fiue and twenty? Regan, said you so? Reg. And speak't againe my Lord, no more with me

Lea. Those wicked Creatures yet do look wel favor'd When others are more wicked, not being the worst Stands in some ranke of praise, Ile go with thee, Thy fifty yet doth double fiue and twenty, And thou art twice her Loue

Gon. Heare me my Lord; What need you fiue and twenty? Ten? Or fiue? To follow in a house, where twice so many Haue a command to tend you? Reg. What need one? Lear. O reason not the need; our basest Beggers Are in the poorest thing superfluous. Allow not Nature, more then Nature needs: Mans life is cheape as Beastes. Thou art a Lady; If onely to go warme were gorgeous,
Why Nature needs not what thou gorgeous wearest, Which scarcely keepes thee warme, but for true need: You Heauens, giue me that patience, patience I need, You see me heere (you Gods) a poore old man, As full of griefe as age, wretched in both, If it be you that stirres these Daughters hearts Against their Father, foole me not so much, To beare it tamely: touch me with Noble anger, And let not womens weapons, water drops, Staine my mans cheeke. No you vnnaturall Hags, I will haue such reuenges on you both, That all the world shall- I will do such things, What they are yet, I know not, but they shalbe The terrors of the earth? you thinke Ile wreepe, No, Ile not wreepe, I haue full cause of weeping.

Storme and Tempest.

But this heart shal break into a hundred thousand flawes Or ere Ile wreepe; O Foole, I shall go mad.

Exeunt.

Corn. Let vs withdraw, 'twill be a Storme

Reg. This house is little, the old man and's people, Cannot be well bestow'd

Gon. 'Tis his owne blame hath put himselfe from rest, And must needs taste his folly

Reg. For his particular, Ile receiue him gladly, But not one follower

Gon. So am I purpos'd,
Where is my Lord of Gloster?

Enter Gloster.

Corn. Followed the old man forth, he is return'd

Glo. The King is in high rage

Corn. Whether is he going?
Glo. He cals to Horse, but will I know not whether

Corn. 'Tis best to giue him way, he leads himselfe

Gon. My Lord, entreate him by no meanes to stay

Glo. Alacke the night comes on, and the high windes Do sorely ruffle, for many Miles about There's scarce a Bush

Reg. O Sir, to wilfull men, The iniuries that they themselues procure, Must be their Schoole-Masters: shut vp your doores, He is attended with a desperate traine, And what they may incense him too, being apt, To haue his eare abus'd, wisedome bids feare

Cor. Shut vp your doores my Lord, 'tis a wil'd night, My Regan counsels well: come out oth' storme.
Exeunt.

Actus Tertius. Scena Prima.

Storme still. Enter Kent, and a Gentleman, seuerally.

Kent. Who's there besides foule weather? Gen. One minded like the weather, most vnquietly

Kent. I know you: Where's the King? Gent. Contending with the fretfull Elements; Bids the winde blow the Earth into the Sea, Or swell the curled Waters 'boue the Maine, That things might change, or cease

Kent. But who is with him?
Gent. None but the Foole, who labours to out-iest His heart-strooke injurys

Kent. Sir, I do know you, And dare vpon the warrant of my note Commend a deere thing to you. There is diuision (Although as yet the face of it is couer'd With mutuall cunning) 'twixt Albany, and Cornwall: Who haue, as who haue not, that their great Starres Thron'd and set high; Seruants, who seeme no lesse, Which are to France the Spies and Speculations Intelligent of our State. What hath bin seene, Either in snuffes, and packings of the Dukes, Or the hard Reine which both of them hath borne Against the old kinde King; or something deeper, Whereof (perchance) these are but furnishings

Gent. I will talke further with you

Kent. No, do not: For confirmation that I am much more Then my out-wall; open this Purse, and take What it containes. If you shall see Cordelia, (As feare not but you shall) shew her this Ring, And she will tell you who that Fellow is That yet you do not know. Fye on this Storme, I will go seeke the King

Gent. Giue me your hand, Haue you no more to say?
Kent. Few words, but to effect more then all yet; That when we haue found the King, in which your pain That way, Ile this: He that first lights on him, Holla the other.

Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.

Storme still. Enter Lear, and Foole.

Lear. Blow windes, & crack your cheeks; Rage, blow You Cataracts, and Hyrricanos's spout, Till you haue drench'd our Steeples, drown the Cockes. You Sulph'rous and Thought-executing Fires, Vaunt-curriors of Oake-cleauing Thunder-bolts, Sindge my white head. And thou all-shaking Thunder, Strike flat the thicke Rotundity o'th world, Cracke Natures moulds, all germaines spill at once That makes ingratefull Man
Foole. O Nunkle, Court holy-water in a dry house, is better then this Rain-water out o' doore. Good Nunkle, in, aske thy Daughters blessing, heere's a night pitties neither Wisemen, nor Fooles

Lear. Rumble thy belly full: spit Fire, spowt Raine: Nor Raine, Winde, Thunder, Fire are my Daughters; I taxe not you, you Elements with vnkindnesse. I neuer gaue you Kingdome, call'd you Children; You owe me no subscription. Then let fall Your horrible pleasure. Heere I stand your Slaue, A poore, infirme, weake, and dispis'd old man: But yet I call you Seruile Ministers, That will with two pernicious Daughters ioyne Your high-engender'd Battailes, 'gainst a head So old, and white as this. O, ho! 'tis foule

Foole. He that has a house to put's head in, has a good Head-peece: The Codpiece that will house, before the head has any; The Head, and he shall Lowse: so Beggers marry many. The man y makes his Toe, what he his Hart shold make, Shall of a Corne cry woe, and turne his sleepe to wake. For there was neuer yet faire woman, but shee made mouthes in a glasse.

Enter Kent

Lear. No, I will be the patterne of all patience, I will say nothing

Kent. Who's there?

Foole. Marry here's Grace, and a Codpiece, that's a Wiseman, and a Foole

Kent. Alas Sir are you here? Things that loue night, Loue not such nights as these: The wrathfull Skies Gallow the very wanderers of the darke And make them keepe their Caues: Since I was man, Such sheets of Fire, such bursts of horrid Thunder, Such groanes of roaring Winde, and Raine, I neuer Remember to haue heard. Mans Nature cannot carry Th' affliction, nor the feare

Lear. Let the great Goddes That keepe this dreadfull pudder o're our heads, Finde out their enemies now. Tremble thou Wretch, That hast within thee vndivulged Crimes Vnwhipt of Iustice. Hide thee, thou Bloudy hand; Thou Periu'r, and thou Simular of Vertue That art Incestuous. Caytiffe, to peeces shake That vnder couert, and conuenient seeming Ha's practis'd on mans life. Close pent-vp guilts, Riue your concealing Continents, and cry These dreadfull Summoners grace. I am a man, More sinn'd against, then sinning

Kent. Alacke, bare-headed?

Gracious my Lord, hard by heere is a Houell, Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the Tempest: Repose you there, while I to this hard house, (More harder then the stones whereof 'tis rais'd, Which euen but now, demanding after you, Deny'd me to come in) returne, and force Their scanted curtesie

Lear. My wits begin to turne. Come on my boy. How dost my boy? Art cold? I am cold my selfe. Where is this straw, my Fellow? The Art of our Necessities is strange, And can make vilde things precious. Come, your Houel; Poore Foole, and Knaue, I haue one part in my heart That's sorry yet for thee
Foole. He that has and a little-tyne wit, With heigh-ho, the Winde and the Raine, 
Must make content with his Fortunes fit, Though the Raine it raineth every day

Le. True Boy: Come bring vs to this Houell. Enter.

Foole. This is a braue night to coole a Curtizan: Ile speake a Prophesie ere I go:
When Priests are more in word, then matter; When Brewers marre their Malt with water; When
Nobles are their Taylors Tutors,
No Heretiques burn’d, but wenches Sutors; When every Case in Law, is right;
No Squire in debt, nor no poore Knight; When Slanders do not liue in Tongues;
Nor Cut-purses come not to throngs; When Vsurers tell their Gold i’th’ Field, And Baudes, and
whores, do Churches build, Then shal the Realme of Albion, come to great confusion: Then
comes the time, who liues to see’t, That goingshalbe vs’d with feet.
This prophecie Merlin shall make, for I liue before his time. Enter.

Scaena Tertia.

Enter Gloster, and Edmund.

Glo. Alacke, alacke Edmund, I like not this vnnaturall dealing; when I desired their leaue that I
might pity him, they tooke from me the vse of mine owne house, charg’d me on paine of
perpetuall displeasure, neither to speake of him, entreat for him, or any way sustaine him

Bast. Most sauage and vnnaturall

Glo. Go too; say you nothing. There is diuision betweene the Dukes, and a worsse matter then
that: I haue received a Letter this night, ’tis dangerous to be spoken, I haue lock’d the Letter in
my Closset, these iniuries the King now beares, will be reuenged home; ther is part of a Power
already footed, we must incline to the King, I will looke him, and priuily relieue him; goe you and
maintaine talke with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceiued; If he aske for me, I am
ill, and gone to bed, if I die for it, (as no lesse is threatned me) the King my old Master must be
relieued. There is strange things toward Edmund, pray you be carefull.

Enter.

Bast. This Curtesie forbid thee, shall the Duke Instantly know, and of that Letter too;
This seemes a faire deseruing, and must draw me That which my Father looses: no lesse then
all, The yonger rises, when the old doth fall. Enter.

Scena Quarta.

Enter Lear, Kent, and Foole.

Kent. Here is the place my Lord, good my Lord enter, The tirrany of the open night’s too rough
For Nature to endure.

Storme still

Lear. Let me alone
Kent. Good my Lord enter heere

Lear. Wilt breake my heart?
Kent. I had rather breake mine owne, Good my Lord enter

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storme Inuades vs to the skin so: 'tis to thee, But where the greater malady is fixt, The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a Beare, But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea, Thou'dst meete the Beare i'th' mouth, when the mind's free, The bodies delicate: the tempest in my mind, Doth from my sences take all feeling else, Saue what beates there, Filliall ingratitude, Is it not as this mouth should teare this hand For lifting food too't? But I will punish home; No, I will weep no more; in such a night, To shut me out? Poure on, I will endure: In such a night as this? O Regan, Gonerill, Your old kind Father, whose franke heart gaue all, O that way madnesse lies, let me shun that: No more of that

Kent. Good my Lord enter here

Lear. Prythee go in thy selfe, seeke thine owne ease, This tempest will not giue me leaue to ponder On things would hurt me more, but Ile goe in, In Boy, goe first. You houselesse pouertie, Enter.

Nay get thee in; Ile pray, and then Ile sleepe. Poore naked wretches, where so ere you are That bide the pelting of this pittilesse storme, How shall your House-lesse heads, and vnfed sides, Your lop'd, and window'd raggednesse defend you From seasons such as these? O I haue tane Too little care of this: Take Physicke, Pompe, Expose thy selfe to feele what wretches feele, That thou maist shake the superflux to them, And shew the Heauens more iust.

Enter Edgar, and Foole.

Edg. Fathom, and halfe, Fathom and halfe; poore Tom

Foole. Come not in heere Nuncle, here's a spirit, helpe me, helpe me

Kent. Giue my thy hand, who's there? Foole. A spirite, a spirite, he sayes his name's poore Tom

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i'th' straw? Come forth

Edg. Away, the foule Fiend followes me, through the sharpe Hauthorne blow the windes. Humh, goe to thy bed and warme thee

Lear. Did'st thou giue all to thy Daughters? And art thou come to this?
Edgar. Who giues any thing to poore Tom? Whom the foule fiend hath led through Fire, and through Flame, through Sword, and Whirle-Poole, o're Bog, and Quagmire, that hath laid Knives vnder his Pillow, and Halters in his Pue, set Rats-bane by his Porredge, made him Proud of heart, to ride on a Bay trotting Horse, ouer foure inch Bridges, to course his owne shadow for a Traitor. Blisse thy fiue Wits, Toms a cold. O do, de, do, de, do, de, blisse thee from Whirle-Windes, Starre-blasting, and taking, do poore Tom some charitie, whom the foule Fiend vexes. There could I haue him now, and there, and there againe, and there.

Storme still.
Lear. Ha's his Daughters brought him to this passe? Could'st thou saue nothing? Would'st thou giue 'em all? Foole. Nay, he reseru'd a Blanket, else we had bin all sham'd

Lea. Now all the plagues that in the pendulous ayre Hang fated o're mens faults, light on thy Daughters

Kent. He hath no Daughters Sir

Lear. Death Traitor, nothing could haue subdu'd Nature To such a lownesse, but his vnkind Daughters. Is it the fashion, that discarded Fathers, Should haue thus little mercy on their flesh: Judicious punishment, 'twas this flesh begot Those Pelicane Daughters

Edg. Pellicock sat on Pellicock hill, alow: alow, loo, loo

Foole. This cold night will turne vs all to Fooles, and Madmen

Edgar. Take heed o'th' foule Fiend, obey thy Parents, keepe thy words lustice, sweare not, commit not, with mans sworne Spouse: set not thy Sweet-heart on proud array. Tom's a cold

Lear. What hast thou bin?
Edg. A Seruingman? Proud in heart, and minde; that curl'd my haire, wore Gloues in my cap; seru'd the Lust of my Mistris heart, and did the acte of darkenesse with her. Swore as many Oathes, as I spake words, & broke them in the sweet face of Heauen. One, that slept in the contiuing of Lust, and wak'd to doe it. Wine lou'd I deereely, Dice deereely; and in Woman, out-Paramour'd the Turke. False of heart, light of eare, bloody of hand; Hog in sloth, Foxe in stealth, Wolfe in greedinesse, Dog in madnes, Lyon in prey. Let not the creaking of shooes, Nor the rustling of Silkes, betray thy poore heart to woman. Keepe thy foote out of Brothels, thy hand out of Plackets, thy pen from Lenders Bookes, and defye the foule Fiend. Still through the Hauthorne blowes the cold winde: Sayes suum, mun, nonny, Dolphin my Boy, Boy Sesey: let him trot by.

Storme still.

Lear. Thou wert better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies. Is man no more then this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the Worme no Silke; the Beast, no Hide; the Sheepe, no Wooll; the Cat, no perfume. Ha? Here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou art the thing it selfe; vnaccommodated man, is no more but such a poore, bare, forked Animall as thou art. Off, off you Lendings: Come, vnbutton heere.

Enter Gloucester, with a Torch.

Foole. Prythee Nunckle be contented, 'tis a naughtie night to swimme in. Now a little fire in a wilde Field, were like an old Letchers heart, a small spark, all the rest on's body, cold: Looke, heere comes a walking fire

Edg. This is the foule Flibbertigibbet; hee begins at Curfew, and walkes at first Cocke: Hee giues the Web and the Pin, squints the eye, and makes the Hare-lippe; Mildewes the white Wheate, and hurts the poore Creature of earth.
Swithold footed thrice the old,
He met the Night-Mare, and her nine-fold; Bid her a-light, and her troth-plight,
And aroynt thee Witch, aroynt thee

Kent. How fares your Grace? Lear. What's he? Kent. Who's there? What is't you seeke? Glou. What are you there? Your Names? Edg. Poore Tom, that eates the swimming Frog, the Toad, the Tod-pole, the wall-Neut, and the water: that in the furie of his heart, when the foule Fiend rages, eats Cow-dung for Sallets; swallowes the old Rat, and the ditch-Dogge; drinkes the green Mantle of the standing Poole: who is whipt from Tything to Tything, and stockt, punish'd, and imprison'd: who hath three Suites to his backe, sixe shirts to his body: Horse to ride, and weapon to weare: But Mice, and Rats, and such small Deare, Haue bin Toms food, for seuen long yeare: Beware my Follower. Peace Smulkin, peace thou Fiend

Glou. What, hath your Grace no better company? Edg. The Prince of Darkenesse is a Gentleman. Modo he's call'd, and Mahu

Glou. Our flesh and blood, my Lord, is growne so vile, that it doth hate what gets it

Edg. Poore Tom's a cold

Glou. Go in with me; my duty cannot suffer T' obey in all your daughters hard commands: Though their Injunction be to barre my doores, And let this Tyrannous night take hold vpon you, Yet haue I ventured to come seeke you out, And bring you where both fire, and food is ready

Lear. First let me talke with this Philosopher, What is the cause of Thunder? Kent. Good my Lord take his offer, Go into th' house

Lear. Ile talke a word with this same lerned Theban: What is your study? Edg. How to preuent the Fiend, and to kill Vermine

Lear. Let me aske you one word in pruiate

Kent. Importune him once more to go my Lord, His wits begin t' vnsettle

Glou. Canst thou blame him?

Storm still

His Daughters seeke his death: Ah, that good Kent, He said it would be thus: poore banish'd man: Thou sayest the King growes mad, Ile tell thee Friend I am almost mad my selfe. I had a Sonne, Now out-law'd from my blood: he sought my life But lately: very late: I lou'd him (Friend) No Father his Sonne deerer: true to tell thee, The greefe hath craz'd my wits. What a night's this? I do beseech your grace

Lear. O cry you mercy, Sir: Noble Philosopher, your company

Edg. Tom's a cold
Glou. In fellow there, into th' Houel; keep thee warm

Lear. Come, let's in all

Kent. This way, my Lord

Lear. With him;
I will keepe still with my Philosopher

Kent. Good my Lord, sooth him:
Let him take the Fellow

Glou. Take him you on

Kent. Sirra, come on: go along with vs

Lear. Come, good Athenian

Glou. No words, no words, hush

Edg. Childe Rowland to the darke Tower came, His word was still, fie, foh, and fumme, I smell the blood of a Brittish man.

Exeunt.

Scena Quinta.

Enter Cornwall, and Edmund.

Corn. I will haue my reuenge, ere I depart his house

Bast. How my Lord, I may be censured, that Nature thus giues way to Loyaltie, something feares mee to thinke of

Cornw. I now perceiue, it was not altogether your Brothers euill disposition made him seeke his death: but a prouoking merit set a-worke by a reprouable badnesse in himselfe

Bast. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be iust? This is the Letter which hee spoake of; which approues him an intelligent partie to the advantages of France. O Heauens! that this Treason were not; or not I the detector

Corn. Go with me to the Dutchesse

Bast. If the matter of this Paper be certain, you haue mighty businesse in hand

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earle of Gloucester: seeke out where thy Father is, that hee may bee ready for our apprehension

Bast. If I finde him comforting the King, it will stuffe his suspition more fully. I will perseuer in my
course of Loyalty, though the conflict be sore betweene that, and my blood
Corn. I will lay trust vpon thee: and thou shalt finde a deere Father in my loue.
Exeunt.
Scena Sexta.
Enter Kent, and Gloucester.
Glou. Heere is better then the open ayre, take it thankfully: I will peece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.
Exit
Kent. All the powre of his wits, haue giuen way to his impatience: the Gods reward your kindnesse. Enter Lear, Edgar, and Foole.
Edg. Fraterretto cals me, and tells me Nero is an Angler in the Lake of Darknesse: pray Innocent, and beware the foule Fiend
Foole. Prythee Nunkle tell me, whether a madman be a Gentleman, or a Yeoman
Lear. A King, a King
Foole. No, he's a Yeoman, that ha's a Gentleman to his Sonne: for hee's a mad Yeoman that sees his Sonne a Gentleman before him
Lear. To haue a thousand with red burning spits Come hizzing in vpon 'em
Edg. Blesse thy fiue wits
Kent. O pitty: Sir, where is the patience now That you so oft haue boasted to retaine? Edg. My teares begin to take his part so much, They marre my counterfetting
Lear. The little dogges, and all;
Trey, Blanch, and Sweet-heart: see, they barke at me
Edg. Tom, will throw his head at them: Auaunt you Curres, be thy mouth or blacke or white: Tooth that poysons if it bite:
Mastiffe, Grey-hound, Mongrill, Grim, Hound or Spaniell, Brache, or Hym:
Or Bobtaile tight, or Trouble taile, Tom will make him weepe and waile,
For with throwing thus my head;
Dogs leapt the hatch, and all are fled. Do, de, de, de: sese: Come, march to Wakes and Fayres, And Market Townes: poore Tom thy horne is dry, Lear. Then let them Anatomize Regan: See what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in Nature that make these hard-hearts. You sir, I entertaine for one of my hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of your garments. You will say they are Persian; but let them bee chang'd.
Enter Gloster.
Kent. Now good my Lord, lye heere, and rest awhile

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise, draw the Curtaines: so, so, wee'l go to Supper i'th' morning

Foole. And Ile go to bed at noone

Glou. Come hither Friend:
Where is the King my Master?
Kent. Here Sir, but trouble him not, his wits are gon

Glou. Good friend, I prythee take him in thy armes; I haue ore-heard a plot of death vpon him: There is a Litter ready, lay him in't,
And drieue toward Douer friend, where thou shalt meete Both welcome, and protection. Take vp thy Master, If thou should'st dally halfe an houre, his life With thine, and all that offer to defend him, Stand in assured losse. Take vp, take vp, And follow me, that will to some prouision Giue thee quicke conduct. Come, come, away.

Exeunt.

Scena Septima.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gonerill, Bastard, and Seruants.

Corn. Poste speedily to my Lord your husband, shew him this Letter, the Army of France is landed: seeke out the Traitor Glouster

Reg. Hang him instantly

Gon. Plucke out his eyes

Corn. Leaue him to my displeasure. Edmond, keepe you our Sister company: the reuenges wee are bound to take vppon your Traitorous Father, are not fit for your beholding. Aduice the Duke where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our Postes shall be swift, and intelligent betwixt vs. Farewell deere Sister, farewell my Lord of Glouster. Enter Steward.

How now? Where's the King?
Stew. My Lord of Glouster hath conuey'd him hence Some fiue 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 toward Douer; where they boast To haue well armed Friends

Corn. Get horses for your Mistris

Gon. Farewell sweet Lord, and Sister.

Exit

Corn. Edmund farewell: go seek the Traitor Gloster, Pinnion him like a Theefe, bring him before
vs: Though well we may not passe vpon his life Without the forme of lustice: yet our power Shall do a curt'sie to our wrath, which men May blame, but not comptroll.
Enter Gloucester, and Seruants.

Who's there? the Traitor?
Reg. Ingratefull Fox, 'tis he

Corn. Binde fast his corky armes

Glou. What meanes your Graces?
Good my Friends consider you are my Ghests: Do me no foule play, Friends

Corn. Binde him I say

Reg. Hard, hard: O filthy Traitor

Glou. Unmercifull Lady, as you are, I'me none

Corn. To this Chaire binde him,
Villaine, thou shalt finde

Glou. By the kinde Gods, 'tis most ignobly done To plucke me by the Beard

Reg. So white, and such a Traitor?
Glou. Naughty Ladie,
These haires which thou dost rauish from my chin Will quicken and accuse thee. I am your Host, With Robbers hands, my hospitable fauours You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come Sir.
What Letters had you late from France? Reg. Be simple answer'd, for we know the truth

Corn. And what confederacie haue you with the Traitors, late footed in the Kingdome?
Reg. To whose hands
You haue sent the Lunaticke King: Speake

Glou. I haue a Letter guessingly set downe Which came from one that's of a newtrall heart, And not from one oppos'd

Corn. Cunning

Reg. And false

Corn. Where hast thou sent the King? Glou. To Douer

Reg. Wherefore to Douer?
Was't thou not charg'd at perill

Corn. Wherefore to Douer? Let him answer that

Glou. I am tyed to'th' Stake,
And I must stand the Course

Reg. Wherefore to Douer?
Glou. Because I would not see thy cruel Nailes Plucke out his poore old eyes: nor thy fierce Sister, In his Anointed flesh, sticke boarish phangs. The Sea, with such a storme as his bare head, In Hell-blacke-night indur'd, would haue buoy'd vp And quench'd the Stelled fires: Yet poore old heart, he holpe the Heauens to raine. If Wolues had at thy Gate how'd that sterne time, Thou should'st haue said, good Porter turne the Key: All Cruels else subscribe: but I shall see The winged Vengeance ouertake such Children

Corn. See't shalt thou neuer. Fellowes hold y Chaire, Vpon these eyes of thine, Ile set my foote

Glou. He that will thinke to liue, till he be old, Giue me some helpe. - O cruell! O you Gods

Reg. One side will mocke another: Th' other too

Corn. If you see vengeance

Seru. Hold your hand, my Lord:
I haue seru'd you euer since I was a Childe: But better service haue I neuer done you, Then now to bid you hold

Reg. How now, you dogge?
Ser. If you did weare a beard vpon your chin, I'ld shake it on this quarrell. What do you meane?
Corn. My Villaine?
Seru. Nay then come on, and take the chance of anger

Reg. Giue me thy Sword. A pezant stand vp thus?

Killes him.

Ser. Oh I am slaine: my Lord, you haue one eye left To see some mischefe on him. Oh

Corn. Lest it see more, preuent it; Out vilde gelly: Where is thy luster now?
Glou. All darke and comfortlesse?
Where's my Sonne Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparkes of Nature To quit this horrid acte

Reg. Out treacherous Villaine,
Thou call'st on him, that hates thee. It was he That made the ouverture of thy Treasons to vs:
Who is too good to pitty thee

Glou. O my Follies! then Edgar was abus'd, Kinde Gods, forgiue me that, and prosper him

Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell His way to Douer.
Exit with Glouster.

How is't my Lord? How looke you?
Corn. I haue receiu'd a hurt: Follow me Lady; Turne out that eyelesse Villaine: throw this Slaue
Vpon the Dunghill: Regan, I bleed apace, Vntimely comes this hurt. Giue me your arme.

Exeunt.

Actus Quartus. Scena Prima.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. Yet better thus, and knowne to be contemn'd, Then still contemn'd and flatter'd, to be worst: The lowest, and most dejected thing of Fortune, Stands still in esperance, liues not in feare: The lamentable change is from the best, The worst returnes to laughter. Welcome then, Thou vnsubstantiall ayre that I embrace: The Wretch that thou hast blowne vnto the worst, Owes nothing to thy blasts.

Enter Glouster, and an Oldman.

But who comes heere? My Father poorely led? World, World, O world! But that thy strange mutations make vs hate thee, Life would not yeelde to age

Oldm. O my good Lord, I haue bene your Tenant, And your Fathers Tenant, these fourescore yeares

Glou. Away, get thee away: good Friend be gone, Thy comforts can do me no good at all, Thee, they may hurt

Oldm. You cannot see your way

Glou. I haue no way, and therefore want no eyes: I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seene, Our meanes secure vs, and our meere defects Proue our Commodities. Oh deere Sonne Edgar, The food of thy abused Fathers wrath:
Might I but liue to see thee in my touch, I'ld say I had eyes againe

Oldm. How now? who's there?
Edg. O Gods! Who is't can say I am at the worst? I am worse then ere I was

Old. 'Tis poore mad Tom

Edg. And worse I may be yet: the worst is not, So long as we can say this is the worst

Oldm. Fellow, where goest?
Glou. Is it a Beggar-man?
Oldm. Madman, and beggar too

Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg. I'th' last nights storme, I such a fellow saw; Which made me thinke a Man, a Worne. My Sonne Came then into my minde, and yet my minde Was then scarce Friends with him.
I haue heard more since:
As Flies to wanton Boyes, are we to th' Gods, They kill vs for their sport

Edg. How should this be?
Bad is the Trade that must play Foole to sorrow, Ang'ring it selfe, and others. Blesse thee Master

Glou. Is that the naked Fellow?
Oldm. I, my Lord

Glou. Get thee away: If for my sake Thou wilt ore-take vs hence a mile or twaine 'th' way toward Douer, do it for ancient loue, And bring some couering for this naked Soule, Which Ile intreate to leade me

Old. Alacke sir, he is mad

Glou. 'Tis the times plague,
When Madmen leade the blinde:
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure: Aboue the rest, be gone

Oldm. Ile bring him the best Parrell that I haue Come on't what will.

Exit

Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow

Edg. Poore Tom's a cold. I cannot daub it further

Glou. Come hither fellow

Edg. And yet I must:
Blesse thy sweete eyes, they bleede

Glou. Know'st thou the way to Douer? Edg. Both style, and gate; Horseway, and foot-path: poore Tom hath bin scarr'd out of his good wits. Blesse thee good mans sonne, from the foule Fiend

Glou. Here take this purse, y whom the heau'ns plagues Haue humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched Makes thee the happier: Heauens deale so still: Let the superfluous, and Lust-dieten man, That slaues your ordinance, that will not see Because he do's not feele, feele your powre quickly: So distribution should vndoo excesse, And each man haue enough. Dost thou know Douer? Edg. I Master

Glou. There is a Cliffe, whose high and bending head Lookes fearfully in the confined Deepe: Bring me but to the very brimme of it, And Ile repayre the misery thou do'st beare With something rich about me: from that place, I shall no leading neede

Edg. Giue me thy arme;
Poore Tom shall leade thee.

Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.
Enter Gonerill, Bastard, and Steward.

Gon. Welcome my Lord. I meruell our mild husband Not met vs on the way. Now, where's your Master? Stew. Madam within, but neuer man so chang'd: I told him of the Army that was Landed:
He smil'd at it. I told him you were comming, His answer was, the worse. Of Glosters Treachery, And of the loyall Seruice of his Sonne
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, seemes pleasant to him; What like, offensiue

Gon. Then shall you go no further.
It is the Cowish terror of his spirit That dares not vndertake: Hee'l not feele wrongs Which tye him to an answer: our wishes on the way May proue effects. Backe Edmond to my Brother, Hasten his Musters, and conduct his powres. I must change names at home, and giue the Distaffe Into my Husbands hands. This trustie Seruant Shall passe betweene vs: ere long you are like to heare (If you dare venture in your owne behalfe) A Mistresses command. Weare this; spare speech, Decline your head. This kisse, if it durst speake Would stretch thy Spirits vp into the ayre: Conceiue, and fare thee well

Bast. Yours in the rankes of death. Enter.

Gon. My most deere Gloster.
Oh, the difference of man, and man, To thee a Womans seruices are due,
My Foole vsurpes my body

Stew. Madam, here come's my Lord.
Enter Albany.

Gon. I haue beene worth the whistle

Alb. Oh Gonerill,
You are not worth the dust which the rude winde Blowes in your face

Gon. Milke-Liuer'd man,
That bear'st a cheeke for blowes, a head for wrongs, Who hast not in thy browes an eye-discerning Thine Honor, from thy suffering

Alb. See thy selfe diuell:
Proper deformitie seemes not in the Fiend So horrid as in woman

Gon. Oh vaine Foole.
Enter a Messenger.

Mes. Oh my good Lord, the Duke of Cornwals dead, Slaine by his Seruant, going to put out The other eye of Glouster

Alb. Glousters eyes

Mes. A Seruant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse, Oppos'd against the act: bending his Sword
To his great Master, who, threat-enrag'd Flew on him, and among'st them fell'd him dead, But not without that harmefull stroke, which since Hath pluckt him after

Alb. This shewes you are aboue
You Iustices, that these our neather crimes So speedily can venge. But (O poore Glouster) Lost he his other eye?
Mes. Both, both, my Lord.
This Leter Madam, craues a speedy answer: 'Tis from your Sister

Gon. One way I like this well.
But being widdow, and my Glouster with her, May all the building in my fancie plucke Vpon my hatefull life. Another way
The Newes is not so tart. Ile read, and answer

Alb. Where was his Sonne,
When they did take his eyes?
Mes. Come with my Lady hither

Alb. He is not heere

Mes. No my good Lord, I met him backe againe

Alb. Knowes he the wickednesse?
Mes. I my good Lord: 'twas he inform'd against him And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment Might haue the freer course

Alb. Glouster, I liue
To thanke thee for the loue thou shew'dst the King, And to reuenge thine eyes. Come hither Friend, Tell me what more thou know'st.

Exeunt.

Scena Tertia.

Enter with Drum and Colours, Cordelia, Gentlemen, and Souldiours.

Cor. Alacke, 'tis he: why he was met euen now As mad as the vext Sea, singing alowd. Crown'd with ranke Fenitar, and furrow weeds, With Hardokes, Hemlocke, Nettles, Cuckoo flowres, Darnell, and all the idle weedes that grow In our sustaining Corne. A Centery send forth; Search euery Acre in the high-growne field, And bring him to our eye. What can mans wisedome In the restoring his bereaued Sense; he that helpes him, Take all my outward worth

Gent. There is meanes Madam:
Our foster Nurse of Nature, is repose, The which he lackes: that to prouoke in him Are many Simples operatiue, whose power
Will close the eye of Anguish

Cord. All blest Secrets,
All you vnpublish'd Vertues of the earth Spring with my teares; be aydant, and remediate In the
Goodmans desires: seeke, seeke for him, Least his vngouern'd rage, dissolve the life That wants the meanes to leade it.

Enter Messenger.

Mes. Newes Madam,
The Brittish Powres are marching hitherward

Cor. 'Tis knowne before. Our preparation stands In expectation of them. O deere Father,
It is thy businesse that I go about: Therfore great France My mourning, and importun'd teares hath pitied: No blowne Ambition doth our Armes incite, But loue, deere loue, and our ag'd Fathers Rite: Soone may I heare, and see him.

Exeunt.

Scena Quarta.

Enter Regan, and Steward.

Reg. But are my Brothers Powres set forth? Stew. I Madam

Reg. Himselfe in person there?
Stew. Madam with much ado:
Your Sister is the better Souldier

Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your Lord at home? Stew. No Madam

Reg. What might import my Sisters Letter to him? Stew. I know not, Lady

Reg. Faith he is poasted hence on serious matter: It was great ignorance, Glousters eyes being out To let him liue. Where he arrives, he moues All hearts against vs: Edmund, I thinke is gone In pitty of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life: Moreouer to descry The strength o'th' Enemy

Stew. I must needs after him, Madam, with my Letter

Reg. Our troopes set forth to morrow, stay with vs: The wayes are dangerous

Stew. I may not Madam:
My Lady charg'd my dutie in this busines

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you transport her purposes by word? Belike, Some things, I know not what. Ile loue thee much Let me vnseale the Letter

Stew. Madam, I had rather-
Reg. I know your Lady do's not loue her Husband, I am sure of that: and at her late being heere, She gaued strange Eliads, and most speaking lookes To Noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosome

Stew. I, Madam?
Reg. I speake in understanding: Y'are: I know't, Therefore I do advise you take this note: My Lord is dead: Edmond, and I haue talk'd, And more conuenient is he for my hand
Then for your Ladies: You may gather more: If you do finde him, pray you giue him this; And when your Mistris heares thus much from you, I pray desire her call her wisedome to her. So fare you well:
If you do chance to heare of that blinde Traitor, Preferment fals on him, that cuts him off

Stew. Would I could meet Madam, I should shew What party I do follow

Reg. Fare thee well.

Exeunt.

Scena Quinta.

Enter Gloucester, and Edgar.

Glou. When shall I come to th' top of that same hill? Edg. You do climbe vp it now. Look how we labor

Glou. Me thinkes the ground is eeuen

Edg. Horrible steepe.
Hearke, do you heare the Sea?
Glou. No truly

Edg. Why then your other Senses grow imperfect By your eyes anguish

Glou. So may it be indeed.
Me thinkes thy voyce is alter'd, and thou speak'st In better phrase, and matter then thou did'st

Edg. Y'are much deceiu'd: In nothing am I chang'd But in my Garments

Glou. Me thinkes y'are better spoken

Edg. Come on Sir,
Heere's the place: stand still: how fearefull And dizie 'tis, to cast ones eyes so low, The Crowes and Choughes, that wing the midway ayre Shew scarce so grosse as Beetles. Halfe way downe Hangs one that gathers Sampire: dreadfull Trade: Me thinkes he seemes no bigger then his head. The Fishermen, that walk'd vpon the beach Appeare like Mice: and yond tall Anchoring Barke, Diminish'd to her Cocke: her Cocke, a Buoy Almost too small for sight. The murmuring Surge, That on th' vnnumbred idle Pebble chafes Cannot be heard so high. Ile looke no more, Least my braine turne, and the deficient sight Topple downe headlong

Glou. Set me where you stand

Edg. Giue me your hand:
You are now within a foote of th' extreme Verge: For all beneath the Moone would I not leape vpright
Glou. Let go my hand:
Heere Friend's another purse: in it, a liewell Well worth a poore mans taking. Fayries, and Gods
Prosper it with thee. Go thou further off, Bid me farewell, and let me heare thee going

Edg. Now fare ye well, good Sir

Glou. With all my heart

Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his dispaire, Is done to cure it

Glou. O you mighty Gods!
This world I do renounce, and in your sights Shake patiently my great affliction off: If I could
beare it longer, and not fall To quarrell with your great opposelesse willes, My snuffe, and
loathed part of Nature should

Burne it selfe out. If Edgar liue, O blesse him: Now Fellow, fare thee well

Edg. Gone Sir, farewell:
And yet I know not how conceit may rob The Treasury of life, when life it selfe Yeelds to the
Theft. Had he bin where he thought, By this had thought bin past. Aliue, or dead? Hoa, you Sir:
Friend, heare you Sir, speake: Thus might he passe indeed: yet he reuiues. What are you Sir?
Glou. Away, and let me dye

Edg. Had'st thou beene ought
But Gozemore, Feathers, Ayre,
(So many fathome downe precipitating) Thou'dst shiuer'd like an Egge: but thou do'st breath:
Hast heavy substance, bleed'st not, speak'st, art sound, Ten Masts at each, make not the
altitude Which thou hast perpendicularly fell,
Thy life's a Myracle. Speake yet againe

Glou. But haue I falne, or no?
Edg. From the dread Somnet of this Chalkie Bourne Looke vp a height, the shrill-gorg'd Larke
so farre Cannot be seene, or heard: Do but looke vp

Glou. Alacke, I haue no eyes:
Is wretchednesse depriu'd that benefit To end it selfe by death? 'Twas yet some comfort, When
misery could beguile the Tyrants rage, And frustrate his proud will

Edg. Giue me your arme.
Vp, so: How is't? Feele you your Legges? You stand

Glou. Too well, too well

Edg. This is aboue all strangenesse, Vpon the crowne o'th' Cliffe. What thing was that Which
parted from you?
Glou. A poore vnfortunate Beggar

Edg. As I stood heere below, me thought his eyes Were two full Moones: he had a thousand
Noses, Hornes wealk'd, and waued like the enraged Sea: It was some Fiend: Therefore thou
happy Father, Thinke that the cleerest Gods, who make them Honors Of mens Impossibilities, haue preserued thee

G lou. I do remember now: henceforth Ile beare Affliction, till it do cry out it selfe

Enough, enough, and dye. That thing you speake of, I tooke it for a man: often 'twould say The Fiend, the Fiend, he led me to that place

Edgar. Beare free and patient thoughts. Enter Lear.

But who comes heere?
The safer sense will ne're accommodate His Master thus

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for crying. I am the King himselfe

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's aboue Art, in that respect. Ther's your Presse-money. That fellow handles his bow, like a Crowkeeper: draw mee a Cloathiers yard. Looke, looke, a Mouse: peace, peace, this peece of toasted Cheese will doo't. There's my Gauntlet, Ile proue it on a Gyant. Bring vp the browne Billes. O well flowne Bird: i'th' clout, i'th' clout: Hewgh. Giue the word

Edg. Sweet Mariorum

Lear. Passe

G lou. I know that voice

Lear. Ha! Gonerill with a white beard? They flatter'd me like a Dogge, and told mee I had the white hayres in my Beard, ere the blacke ones were there. To say I, and no, to every thing that I said: I, and no too, was no good Diuinity. When the raine came to wet me once, and the winde to make me chatter: when the Thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go too, they are not men o'their words; they told me, I was every thing: 'Tis a Lye, I am not Agu-proofe

G lou. The tricke of that voyce, I do well remember: Is't not the King?

Lear. I, euery inch a King.

When I do stare, see how the Subiect quakes. I pardon that mans life. What was thy cause? Adultery? thou shalt not dye: dye for Adultery? No, the Wren goes too't, and the small gilded Fly Do's letcher in my sight. Let Copulation thrive: For Glousters bastard Son was kinder to his Father, Then my Daughters got 'tweene the lawfull sheets. Too't Luxury pell-mell, for I lacke Souldiers. Behold yond simpring Dame, whose face betwene her Forkes presages Snow; that minces Vertue, & do's shake the head to heare of pleasures name. The Fitchew, nor the soyled Horse goes too't with a more riotous appetite: Downe from the waste they are Centaures, though Women all aboue: but to the Girdle do the Gods inherit, beneath is all the Fiends. There's hell, there's darkenes, there is the sulphurous pit; burning, scalding, stench, consumption: Fye, fie, fie; pah, pah: Giue me an Ounce of Ciuet; good Apothecary sweeten my immagination: There's money for thee

G lou. O let me kisse that hand
Lear. Let me wipe it first,
It smelles of Mortality

Glou. O ruin'd peece of Nature, this great world Shall so weare out to naught.
Do'st thou know me?
Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough: dost thou squiny at me? No, doe thy worst blinde
Cupid, Ile not loue. Reade thou this challenge, marke but the penning of it

Glou. Were all thy Letters Sunnes, I could not see

Edg. I would not take this from report, It is, and my heart breakes at it

Lear. Read

Glou. What with the Case of eyes?
Lear. Oh ho, are you there with me? No eies in your head, nor no mony in your purse? Your
eyes are in a heauy case, your purse in a light, yet you see how this world goes

Glou. I see it feelingly

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Looke with thine
eares: See how yond lustice railes vpon yond simple theefe. Hearke in thine eare: Change
places, and handy-dandy, which is the lustice, which is the theefe: Thou hast seene a Farmers
dogge barke at a Beggar?
Glou. I Sir

Lear. And the Creature run from the Cur: there thou might'st behold the great image of
Authoritie, a Dogg's obey'd in Office. Thou, Rascall Beadle, hold thy bloody hand: why dost thou
lash that Whore? Strip thy owne backe, thou hotly lusts to vse her in that kind, for which thou
whip'st her. The Vsurer hangs the Cozener. Thorough tatter'd cloathes great Vices do appeare:
Robes, and Furr'd gownes hide all. Place sinnes with Gold, and the strong Lance of Iustice,
hurtlesse breakes: Arme it in ragges, a Pigmies straw do's pierce it. None do's offend, none, I
say none, Ile able 'em; take that of me my Friend, who haue the power to seale th' accusers
lips. Get thee glasse-eyes, and like a scuruy Politician, seeme to see the things thou dost not.
Now, now, now, now. Pull off my Bootes: harder, harder, so

Edg. O matter, and impertinency mixt, Reason in Madnesse

Lear. If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes. I know thee well enough, thy name is
Glouster: Thou must be patient; we came crying hither: Thou know'st, the first time that we
smell the Ayre We wawle, and cry. I will preach to thee: Marke

Glou. Alacke, alacke the day

Lear. When we are borne, we cry that we are come To this great stage of Fooles. This a good
blocke: It were a delicate stratagem to shoo
A Troope of Horse with Felt: Ile put't in prooфе, And when I haue stolne vpon these Son in
Lawes, Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill. Enter a Gentleman.
Gent. Oh heere he is: lay hand vpon him, Sir. Your most deere Daughter-
Lear. No rescue? What, a Prisoner? I am euen The Naturall Foole of Fortune. Vse me well, You
shall haue ransome. Let me haue Surgeons, I am cut to'th' Braines

Gent. You shall haue any thing

Lear. No Seconds? All my selfe?
Why, this would make a man, a man of Salt To vse his eyes for Garden water-pots. I wil die brauely, Like a smugge Bridegroome. What? I will be louiall: Come, come, I am a King, Masters, know you that? Gent. You are a Royall one, and we obey you

Lear. Then there's life in't. Come, and you get it, You shall get it by running: Sa, sa, sa, sa. Enter.

Gent. A sight most pittifull in the meanest wretch, Past speaking of in a King. Thou hast a Daughter Who redeemes Nature from the generall curse Which twaine haue brought her to

Edg. Haile gentle Sir

Gent. Sir, speed you: what's your will? Edg. Do you heare ought (Sir) of a Battell toward

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar:
Evvery one heares that, which can distinguish sound

Edg. But by your fauour:
How neere's the other Army?
Gent. Neere, and on speedy foot: the maine descry Stands on the hourely thought

Edg. I thanke you Sir, that's all

Gent. Though that the Queen on special cause is here Her Army is mou'd on. Enter.

Edg. I thanke you Sir

Glou. You euer gentle Gods, take my breath from me, Let not my worser Spirit tempt me againe To dye before you please

Edg. Well pray you Father

Glou. Now good sir, what are you?
Edg. A most poore man, made tame to Fortunes blows Who, by the Art of knowne, and feeling sorrowes, Am pregnant to good pitty. Giue me your hand, Ile leade you to some biding

Glou. Heartie thankes:
The bountie, and the benizon of Heauen To boot, and boot.
Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim'd prize: most happie That eyelesse head of thine, was first fram'd flesh To
raise my fortunes. Thou old, vnhappy Traitor, Breefeely thy selfe remember: the Sword is out
That must destroy thee

Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough too't

Stew. Wherefore, bold Pezant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd Traitor? Hence, Least that th' infection of his fortune take Like
hold on thee. Let go his arme

Edg. Chill not let go Zir,
Without vurther 'casion

Stew. Let go Slaue, or thou dy'st

Edg. Good Gentleman goe your gate, and let poore volke passe: and 'chud ha' bin zwaggerd
out of my life, 'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis, by a vortnight. Nay, come not neere th' old man:
keeepe out che vor' ye, or Ile try whither your Costard, or my Ballow be the harder; chill be plaine
with you

Stew. Out Dunghill

Edg. Chill picke your teeth Zir: come, no matter vor your foynes

Stew. Slaue thou hast slaine me: Villain, take my purse; If euer thou wilt thrue, bury my bodie,
And giue the Letters which thou find'st about me, To Edmund Earle of Glouster: seeke him out
Vpon the English party. Oh vntimely death, death

Edg. I know thee well. A seruiceable Villaine, As duteous to the vices of thy Mistris,
As badnesse would desire

Glou. What, is he dead?
Edg. Sit you downe Father: rest you. Let's see these Pockets; the Letters that he speakes of
May be my Friends: hee's dead; I am onely sorry He had no other Deathsman. Let vs see:
Leaue gentle waxe, and manners: blame vs not To know our enemies mindes, we rip their
hearts, Their Papers is more lawfull.

Reads the Letter.

Let our reciprocall vows be remembred. You haue manie opportunities to cut him off: if your
will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offer'd. There is nothing done. If hee returne the
Conqueror, then am I the Prisoner, and his bed, my Gaole, from the loathed warmth whereof,
deliuer me, and supply the place for your Labour.
Your (Wife, so I would say) affectionate Seruant. Gonerill.
Oh indistinguish'd space of Womans will, A plot vpon her vertuous Husbands life,
And the exchange my Brother: heere, in the sands Thee Ile rake vp, the poste vnsanctified Of
murtherous Letchers: and in the mature time, With this vngracious paper strike the sight Of the
death-practis'd Duke: for him 'tis well, That of thy death, and businesse, I can tell
Glou. The King is mad:
How stiffe is my Wilde sense
That I stand vp, and haue ingenious feeling Of my huge Sorrowes? Better I were distract, So should my thoughts be seuer'd from my greefes,

Drum afarre off.

And woes, by wrong imaginations loose The knowledge of themselues

Edg. Giue me your hand:
Farre off methinkes I heare the beaten Drumme. Come Father, Ile bestow you with a Friend.

Exeunt.

Scaena Septima.

Enter Cordelia, Kent, and Gentleman.

Cor. O thou good Kent,
How shall I liue and worke
To match thy goodnesse?
My life will be too short,
And euery measure faile me

Kent. To be acknowledg'd Madam is ore-pai'd, All my reports go with the modest truth, Nor more, nor clipt, but so

Cor. Be better suited,
These weedes are memories of those worser houres: I prythee put them off

Kent. Pardon deere Madam,
Yet to be knowne shortens my made intent, My boone I make it, that you know me not, Till time, and I, thinke meet

Cor. Then be't so my good Lord:
How do's the King?
Gent. Madam sleepes still

Cor. O you kind Gods!
Cure this great breach in his abused Nature, Th' vntun'd and iarring senses, O winde vp, Of this childe-changed Father

Gent. So please your Maiesty,
That we may wake the King, he hath slept long? Cor. Be gouern'd by your knowledge, and proceede I'fh' sway of your owne will: is he array'd? Enter Lear in a chaire carried by Seruants] Gent. I Madam: in the heauinesse of sleepe, We put fresh garments on him.
Be by good Madam when we do awake him, I doubt of his Temperance

Cor. O my deere Father, restauratian hang Thy medicine on my lippes, and let this kisse
Repaire those violent harmes, that my two Sisters Haue in thy Reuerence made

Kent. Kind and deere Princesse

Cor. Had you not bin their Father, these white flakes Did challenge pitty of them. Was this a face To be oppos'd against the iarring windes? Mine Enemies dogge, though he had bit me, Should haue stood that night against my fire, And was't thou faine (poore Father) To houell thee with Swine and Rogues forlorne, In short, and musty straw? Alacke, alacke, 'Tis wonder that thy life and wits, at once Had not concluded all. He wakes, speake to him

Gen. Madam do you, 'tis fittest

Cor. How does my Royall Lord? How fares your Maiesty? Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th' graue, Thou art a Soule in blisse, but I am bound Vpon a wheele of fire, that mine owne teares Do scal'd, like molten Lead

Cor. Sir, do you know me? Lear. You are a spirit I know, where did you dye? Cor. Still, still, farre wide

Gen. He's scarce awake, Let him alone a while

Lear. Where haue I bin? Where am I? Faire day light? I am mightily abus'd; I should eu'n dye with pitty To see another thus. I know not what to say: I will not sweare these are my hands: let's see, I feele this pin pricke, would I were assur'd Of my condition

Cor. O looke vpon me Sir, And hold your hand in benediction o're me, You must not kneele

Lear. Pray do not mocke me: I am a very foolish fond old man, Foure-score and vpward, Not an houre more, nor lesse: And to deale plainely, I feare I am not in my perfect mind. Me thinkes 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 haue 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 thinke this Lady To be my childe Cordelia

Cor. And so I am: I am

Lear. Be your teares wet? Yes faith: I pray weepe not, If you haue poyson for me, I will drinke it: I know you do not loue me, for your Sisters Haue (as I do remember) done me wrong.
You haue some cause, they haue not

Cor. No cause, no cause

Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your owne kingdome Sir

Lear. Do not abuse me

Gent. Be comforted good Madam, the great rage You see is kill'd in him: desire him to go in, Trouble him no more till further settling

Cor. Wilt please your Highnesse walke? Lear. You must beare with me: Pray you now forget, and forgiue, I am old and foolish.

Exeunt.

Actus Quintus. Scena Prima.

Enter with Drumme and Colours, Edmund, Regan. Gentlemen, and Souldiers.

Bast. Know of the Duke if his last purpose hold, Or whether since he is aduis'd by ought To change the course, he's full of alteration, And selfereproing, bring his constant pleasure

Reg. Our Sisters man is certainly miscarried

Bast. 'Tis to be doubted Madam

Reg. Now sweet Lord, You know the goodnesse I intend vpon you: Tell me but truly, but then speake the truth, Do you not loue my Sister?
Bast. In honour'd Loue

Reg. But haue you neuer found my Brothers way, To the fore-fended place?
Bast. No by mine honour, Madam

Reg. I neuer shall endure her, deere my Lord Be not familiar with her


Alb. Our very louing Sister, well be-met: Sir, this I heard, the King is come to his Daughter With others, whom the rigour of our State Forc'd to cry out

Regan. Why is this reasond?
Gone. Combine together 'gainst the Enemie: For these domesticke and particular broiles, Are not the question heere
Alb. Let's then determine with th' ancient of warre On our proceeding

Reg. Sister you'le go with vs?
Gon. No

Reg. 'Tis most conuenient, pray go with vs

Gon. Oh ho, I know the Riddle, I will goe.

Exeunt. both the Armies.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. If ere your Grace had speech with man so poore, Heare me one word

Alb. Ile ouertake you, speake

Edg. Before you fight the Battaile, ope this Letter: If you haue victory, let the Trumpet sound For him that brought it: wretched though I seeme, I can produce a Champion, that will proue What is auouched there. If you miscarry, Your businesse of the world hath so an end, And machination ceases. Fortune loues you

Alb. Stay till I haue read the Letter

Edg. I was forbid it: When time shall serue, let but the Herald cry, And Ile appeare againe.

Enter.

Alb. Why farethee well, I will o're-looke thy paper. Enter Edmund.

Bast. The Enemy's in view, draw vp your powers, Heere is the guesse of their true strength and Forces, By dilligent discouerie, but your hast Is now vrg'd on you

Alb. We will greet the time.

Enter.

Bast. To both these Sisters haue I sworne my loue: Each iealous of the other, as the stung Are of the Adder. Which of them shall I take? Both? One? Or neither? Neither can be enioy'd If both remaine aliue: To take the Widdow, Exasperates, makes mad her Sister Gonerill, And hardly shall I carry out my side, Her husband being aliue. Now then, wee'l vse His countenance for the Battaile, which being done, Let her who would be rid of him, deuise His speedy taking off. As for the mercie Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia, The Battaile done, and they within our power, Shall neuer see his pardon: for my state, Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

Enter.

Scena Secunda.
Alarum within. Enter with Drumme and Colours, Lear, Cordelia, and Souldiers, ouer the Stage, and Exeunt. Enter Edgar, and Gloster.

Edg. Heere Father, take the shadow of this Tree For your good hoast: pray that the right may thrive: If euer I returne to you againe, Ile bring you comfort

Glo. Grace go with you Sir. 
Enter.

Alarum and Retreat within. Enter Edgar.

Edgar. Away old man, giue me thy hand, away: King Lear hath lost, he and his Daughter tane, Giue me thy hand: Come on

Glo. No further Sir, a man may rot euven heere

Edg. What in ill thoughts againe? 
Men must endure 
Their going hence, euven as their comming hither, Ripenesse is all come on

Glo. And that's true too.

Exeunt.

Scena Tertia.

Enter in conquest with Drum and Colours, Edmund, Lear, and Cordelia, as prisoners, Souldiers, Captaine.

Bast. Some Officers take them away: good guard, Vntill their greater pleasures first be knowne That are to censure them

Cor. We are not the first, 
Who with best meaning haue incurr'd the worst:

For thee oppressed King I am cast downe, My selfe could else out-frowne false Fortunes frowne. Shall we not see these Daughters, and these Sisters? Lear. No, no, no, no: come let's away to prison, We two alone will sing like Birds i'th' Cage: When thou dost aske me blessing, Ile kneele downe And aske of thee forguienesse: So wee'l liue, And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh At gilded Butterflies: and heere (poore Rogues) Talke of Court newes, and wee'l talke with them too, Who looses, and who wins; who's in, who's out; And take vpon's the mystery of things, As if we were Gods spies: And wee'l weare out In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones, That ebbe and flow by th' Moone

Bast. Take them away

Lear. Vpon such sacrifices my Cordelia, The Gods themselues throw Incense.
Haue I caught thee?
He that parts vs, shall bring a Brand from Heauen, And fire vs hence, like Foxes: wipe thine eyes, The good yeares shall deuoure them, flesh and fell, Ere they shall make vs weepe? Weele see 'em staru'd first: come.
Enter.

Bast. Come hither Captaine, hearke.
Take thou this note, go follow them to prison, One step I haue aduanc'd thee, if thou do'st As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way To Noble Fortunes: know thou this, that men Are as the time is; to be tender minded Do's not become a Sword, thy great impovement Will not beare question: either say thou'l do't, Or thriue by other meanes

Capt. Ile do't my Lord

Bast. About it, and write happy, when th'hast done, Marke I say instantly, and carry it so As I haue set it downe.

Exit Captaine.

Flourish. Enter Albany, Gonerill, Regan, Soldiers.

Alb. Sir, you haue shew'd to day your valiant straine And Fortune led you well: you haue the Captiues Who were the opposites of this dayes strife: I do require them of you so to vse them, As we shall find their merites, and our safety May equally determine

Bast. Sir, I thought it fit,
To send the old and miserable King to some retention, Whose age had Charmes in it, whose Title more, To plucke the common bosome on his side, And turne our imprest Launces in our eies 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, t' appeare Where you shall hold your Session

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subiect of this Warre, Not as a Brother

Reg. That's as we list to grace him. Methinkes our pleasure might haue bin demanded Ere you had spoke so farre. He led our Powers, Bore the Commission of my place and person, The which immediacie may well stand vp,
And call it selfe your Brother

Gon. Not so hot:
In his owne grace he doth exalt himselfe, More then in your addition

Reg. In my rights,
By me inuested, he compeerees the best

Alb. That were the most, if he should husband you

Reg. lesters do oft proue Prophets
Gon. Hola, hola,
That eye that told you so, look’d but a squint

Rega. Lady I am not well, else I should answere From a full flowing stomack. Generall,
Take thou my Souldiers, prisoners, patrimony, Dispose of them, of me, the walls is thine:
Witnesse the world, that I create thee heere My Lord, and Master

Gon. Meane you to enioy him?
Alb. The let alone lies not in your good will

Bast. Nor in thine Lord

Alb. Halfe-blooded fellow, yes

Reg. Let the Drum strike, and proue my title thine

Alb. Stay yet, heare reason: Edmund, I arrest thee On capitall Treason; and in thy arrest,
This guilded Serpent: for your claime faire Sisters, I bare it in the interest of my wife,
‘Tis she is sub-contracted to this Lord, And I her husband contradict your Banes. If you will
marry, make your loues to me, My Lady is bespoke

Gon. An enterlude

Alb. Thou art armed Gloster,
Let the Trumpet sound:
If none appeare to proue vpon thy person, Thy heynous, manifest, and many Treasons, There
is my pledge: Ile make it on thy heart Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing lesse Then I haue
heere proclaim’d thee

Reg. Sicke, O sicke

Gon. If not, Ile nere trust medicine

Bast. There's my exchange, what in the world hes That names me Traitor, villain-like he lies,
Call by the Trumpet: he that dares approach; On him, on you, who not, I will maintaine My truth
and honor firmely.
Enter a Herald.

Trust to thy single vertue, for thy Souldiers All leuied in my name, haue in my name
Tooke their discharge

Regan. My sicknesse growes vpon me

Alb. She is not well, conuey her to my Tent. Come hither Herald, let the Trumpet sound, And
read out this.

A Trumpet sounds.
Herald reads.

If any man of qualitie or degree, within the lists of the Army, will maintaine vpon Edmund, supposed Earle of Gloster, that he is a manifold Traitor, let him appeare by the third sound of the Trumpet: he is bold in his defence.

1 Trumpet.

Her. Againe.

2 Trumpet.

Her. Againe.

3 Trumpet.

Trumpet answers within.

Enter Edgar armed.

Alb. Aske him his purposes, why he appeares Vpon this Call o'th' Trumpet

Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality, and why you answer This present Summons?
Edg. Know my name is lost
By Treasons tooth: bare-gnawne, and Canker-bit, Yet am I Noble as the Adversary
I come to cope

Alb. Which is that Adversary?
Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund Earle of Gloster? Bast. Himselfe, what saist thou to him? Edg. Draw thy Sword,
That if my speech offend a Noble heart, Thy arme may do thee justice, heere is mine: Behold it is my priuledge,
The priuledge of mine Honours,
My oath, and my profession. I protest, Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,
Despise thy victor-Sword, and fire new Fortune, Thy valor, and thy heart, thou art a Traitor:
False to thy Gods, thy Brother, and thy Father, Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious Prince,
And from th' extremest vpward of thy head, To the descent and dust below thy foote, A most Toad-spotted Traitor. Say thou no, This Sword, this arme, and my best spirits are bent To proue vpon thy heart, where to I speake, Thou lyest

Bast. In wisedome I should aske thy name, But since thy out-side lookes so faire and Warlike, And that thy tongue (some say) of breeding breathes, What safe, and nicely I might well delay,
By rule of Knight-hood, I disdaine and spurne: Backe do I tosse these Treasons to thy head, With the hell-hated Lye, ore-whelme thy heart, Which for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise, This Sword of mine shall giue them instant way, Where they shall rest for euer.
Trumpets speake
Alb. Saue him, saue him.  

Alarums. Fights. 

Gon. This is practise Gloster,  
By th' law of Warre, thou wast not bound to answer  
An vnknowne opposite: thou art not  
vanquish'd, But cozend, and beguild 

Alb. Shut your mouth Dame,  
Or with this paper shall I stop it: hold Sir, Thou worse then any name, reade thine owne euill: No  
tearing Lady, I perceiue you know it 

Gon. Say if I do, the Lawes are mine not thine, Who can araigne me for't?  
Enter. 

Alb. Most monstrous! O, know'st thou this paper? Bast. Aske me not what I know 

Alb. Go after her, she's desperate, gournerne her 

Bast. What you haue charg'd me with, That haue I done,  
And more, much more, the time will bring it out. 'Tis past, and so am I: But what art thou That  
hast this Fortune on me? If thou'rt Noble, I do forgiue thee 

Edg. Let's exchange charity:  
I am no lesse in blood then thou art Edmond, If more, the more th'hast wrong'd me.  
My name is Edgar and thy Fathers Sonne, The Gods are iust, and of our pleasant vices Make  
instruments to plague vs:  
The darke and vitious place where thee he got, Cost him his eyes 

Bast. Th'hast spoken right, 'tis true, The Wheele is come full circle, I am heere 

Alb. Me thought thy very gate did prophesie A Royall Noblenesse: I must embrace thee, Let  
sorrow split my heart, if euer I  
Did hate thee, or thy Father 

Edg. Worthy Prince I know't 

Alb. Where haue you hid your selfe? How haue you knowne the miseries of your Father? Edg.  
By nursing them my Lord. List a breefe tale, And when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst.  
The bloody proclamation to escape  
That follow'd me so neere, (O our liues sweetnesse, That we the paine of death would hourley  
dye, Rather then die at once) taught me to shift Into a mad-mans rags, t' assume a semblance  
That very Dogges 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, sau'd him from dispaire.  
Neuer (O fault) reueal'd my selfe vnto him, Vntill some halfe houre past when I was arm'd, Not  
sure, though hoping of this good successe, I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last Told him  
our pilgrimage. But his flaw'd heart (Alacke too weake the conflict to support) Twixt two  
extremes of passion, joy and greefe, Burst smilingly
Bast. This speech of yours hath mou'd me, And shall perchance do good, but speake you on, You looke as you had something more to say

Alb. If there be more, more wofull, hold it in, For I am almost ready to dissolue, Hearing of this. Enter a Gentleman.

Gen. Helpe, helpe: O helpe

Edg. What kinde of helpe?
Alb. Speake man

Edg. What meanes this bloody Knife? Gen. 'Tis hot, it smoakes, it came eu'en from the heart of- O she's dead

Alb. Who dead? Speake man

Gen. Your Lady Sir, your Lady; and her Sister By her is poyson'd: she confesses it

Bast. I was contracted to them both, all three Now marry in an instant

Edg. Here comes Kent. Enter Kent.

Alb. Produce the bodies, be they aliue or dead;

Gonerill and Regans bodies brought out.

This iudgement of the Heauens that makes vs tremble. Touches vs not with pitty: O, is this he? The time will not allow the complement Which very manners vrges

Kent. I am come
To bid my King and Master aye good night. Is he not here?
Alb. Great thing of vs forgot,
Speake Edmund, where's the King? and where's Cordelia? Seest thou this obiect Kent?
Kent. Alacke, why thus?
Bast. Yet Edmund was belou'd:
The one the other poison'd for my sake, And after slew herselfe

Alb. Euen so: couer their faces

Bast. I pant for life: some good I meane to do Despight of mine owne Nature. Quickly send, (Be briefe in it) to'th' Castle, for my Writ Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia: Nay, send in time

Alb. Run, run, O run

Edg. To who my Lord? Who ha's the Office? Send thy token of repreeue
Bast. Well thought on, take my Sword, Giue it the Captaine

Edg. Hast thee for thy life

Bast. He hath Commission from thy Wife and me, To hang Cordelia in the prison, and To lay the blame vpon her owne dispaire, That she for-did her selfe

Alb. The Gods defend her, beare him hence awhile. Enter Lear with Cordelia in his armes.

Lear. Howle, howle, howle: O you are men of stones, Had I your tongues and eyes, Il'd vse them so, That Heauens vault should crack: she's gone for euer. I know when one is dead, and when one liues, She's dead as earth: Lend me a Looking-glasse, If that her breath will mist or staine the stone, Why then she liues

Kent. Is this the promis'd end?
Edg. Or image of that horror

Alb. Fall and cease

Lear. This feather stirs, she liues: if it be so, It is a chance which do's redeeme all sorrowes That euer I haue felt

Kent. O my good Master

Lear. Prythee away

Edg. 'Tis Noble Kent your Friend

Lear. A plague vpon you Murderors, Traitors all, I might haue sau'd her, now she's gone for euer: Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha: What is't thou saist? Her voice was euer soft, Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman. I kill'd the Slaue that was a hanging thee

Gent. 'Tis true (my Lords) he did

Lear. Did I not fellow?
I haue seene the day, with my good biting Faulchion I would haue made him skip: I am old now, And these same crosses spoile me. Who are you? Mine eyes are not o'th' best, Ile tell you straight

Kent. If Fortune brag of two, she lou'd and hated, One of them we behold

Lear. This is a dull sight, are you not Kent? Kent. The same: your Seruant Kent, Where is your Seruant Caius?
Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that, He'le strike and quickly too, he's dead and rotten

Kent. No my good Lord, I am the very man

Lear. Ile see that straight
Kent. That from your first of difference and decay, Haue follow'd your sad steps

Lear. You are welcome hither

Kent. Nor no man else:
All's cheerlesse, darke, and deadly, Your eldest Daughters haue fore-done themselues, And desperately are dead
Lear. I so I thinke

Alb. He knowes not what he saies, and vaine is it That we present vs to him.
Enter a Messenger.

Edg. Very bootlesse

Mess. Edmund is dead my Lord

Alb. That's but a trifle heere:
You Lords and Noble Friends, know our intent, What comfort to this great decay may come, Shall be appli'd. For vs we will resigne, During the life of this old Majesty
To him our absolute power, you to your rights, With boote, and such addition as your Honours Haue more then merited. All Friends shall Taste the wages of their vertue, and all Foes The cup of their deseruings: O see, see

Lear. And my poore Foole is hang'd: no, no, no life? Why should a Dog, a Horse, a Rat haue life, And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more, Neuer, neuer, neuer, neuer, neuer.
Pray you vndo this Button. Thanke you Sir, Do you see this? Looke on her? Looke her lips, Looke there, looke there.

He dies.

Edg. He faints, my Lord, my Lord

Kent. Breake heart, I prythee breake

Edg. Looke vp my Lord

Kent. Vex not his ghost, O let him passe, he hates him, That would vpon the wracke of this tough world Stretch him out longer

Edg. He is gon indeed

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long, He but vsurpt his life

Alb. Beare them from hence, our present businesse Is generall woe: Friends of my soule, you twaine, Rule in this Realme, and the gor'd state sustaine

Kent. I haue a iourney Sir, shortly to go, My Master calls me, I must not say no

Edg. The waight of this sad time we must obey, Speake what we feele, not what we ought to
say: The oldest hath borne most, we that are yong, Shall neuer see so much, nor liue so long.

Exeunt. with a dead March.

FINIS. THE TRAGEDIE OF KING LEAR.