

Fletcher & Shakespeare's
THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN

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NOBLE
KINSMEN:
Presented at the Blackfriars
by the Kings Maiesties servants,
with great applause:

Written by the memorable Worthies
of their time,
{M^r. John Fletcher, and} Gent.
{M^r. William Shakspeare.}



Printed at London by Tho. Cotes, for Iohn Waterston:
and are to be sold at the signe of the Crowne
in Pauls Church-yard. 1634

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Modern Spelling
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Words discussed in the glossary are underlined.
Run-ons (closing open ends) are indicated by ~~~

THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

PROLOGUE

THESEUS , *Duke of Athens*.

HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the Amazons, later wife of Theseus*.

EMILIA, *her sister*.

PIRITHOUS, *friend of Theseus*.

Cousins, *nephews of Creon, the King of Thebes*.

PALAMON

ARCITE

HYMEN, *god of marriage*.

BOY

ARTESIUS, *Athenian soldier*.

Three QUEENS, *widows of slain kings*.

VALERIUS, *a Theban*.

HERALD

WOMAN, *attendant of Emilia*.

GENTLEMAN

MESSENGERS

Six KNIGHTS, *three attending Arcite and three Palamon*.

SERVANT

JAILER

DAUGHTER

JAILER'S BROTHER

WOOER

Two FRIENDS

DOCTOR
Six COUNTRYMEN
SCHOOLMASTER
NELL, *a country wench*.
FOUR OTHER COUNTRY WENCHES
TABORER
EPILOGUE
NYMPHS, ATTENDANTS, MAIDS, EXECUTIONER, GUARD.

Scene: Athens.

Time: Mythological (ca. 1300-1200 b.c.); before the Trojan War.

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ACT I

Prologue

[*Flourish. Enter Prologue.*]

PROLOGUE: New plays and maidenheads are near akin:
Much followed both, for both much money giv'n
If they stand sound and well. And a good play,
Whose modest scenes blush on his marriage day
That after holy tie and first night's stir
Yet still is modesty, and still retains
More of the maid to sight than husband's pains.
We pray our play may be so, for I am sure
It has a noble breeder and a pure, ... [Pro.10]
A learned. and a poet never went
More famous yet 'twixt Po and silver Trent.
Chaucer, of all admired, the story gives:
There constant to eternity it lives.
Of we let fall the nobleness of this
And the first sound this child hear be a hiss,
Now will it shake the bones of that good man,
And make him cry from under ground, 'O fan

From me the witless chaff of such a writer,
That blasts my bays and my famed works makes lighter ... [Pro.20]
Than Robin Hood? This is the fear we bring,
For to say truth, it were an endless thing
And too ambitious to aspire to him,
Weak as we are, and almost breathless swim
In this deep water. Do but you hold out
Your helping hands and we shall tack about
And something do to save us. You shall hear
Scenes, though below his art, may yet appear
Worth two hours' travail. To his bones, sweet sleep;
Content to you. If this play do not keep ... [Pro. 30]
A little dull time from us, we perceive
Our losses fall so thick we must needs leave. [*Flourish. Exit*]

Scene I. 1

Music. Enter Hymen with a torch burning, a Boy in a white robe before, singing and strewing flowers. After Hymen, a nymph encompassed in her tresses, bearing a wheaten garland. Then Theseus between two other nymphs with wheaten chaplets on their heads. Then Hippolyta, the bride, led by Pirithous and another holding a garland over her head, her tresses likewise hanging. After her, Emilia holding up her train. Then Artesius (and other attendants).

BOY: [*sings during procession.*]
Roses, their sharp spines being gone,
Not royal in their smells alone,
But in their hue;
Maiden pinks, of odor faint,
And sweet thyme true;
Primrose, first-born child of Ver,
Merry springtime's harbinger,
With harebells dim;
Oxlips, in their cradles growing, ... [I.1.10]
Marigolds, on deathbeds blowing,
Lark's-heels trim;
All dear nature's children sweet,
Lie fore bride and bridegroom's feet.
Blessing their sense.
Not an angel of the air,
Bird melodious, or bird fair,
Is absent hence.
The crow, the sland'rous cuckoo, nor ... [I.1.20]
Nor chatt'ring pie,
May on our bride-house perch or sing,
Or with them any discord bring,
But from it fly.

[Enter three Queens in black, with veils stained, with imperial crowns. The First Queen falls

down at the foot of Theseus; the Second falls down at the foot of Hippolyta; the Third, before Emilia.]

1 QUEEN: [*to Theseus.*] For pity's sake and true gentility's,
Hear and respect me.

2 QUEEN: [*to Hippolyta,*] For your mother's sake,
And as you wish your womb may thrive with fair ones,
Hear and respect me.

3 QUEEN: [*to Emilia.*] Now for the love of him whom Jove hath marked
The honor of your bed, and for the sake ... [I.1.30]
Of clear virginity, be advocate
For us and our distresses. This good deed
Shall raze you out o'th' Book of Trespasses
All you are set down there.

THESEUS: [*to First Queen.*] Sad lady, rise.

HIPPOLYTA: [*to Second Queen.*] ~~~ Stand up.

EMILIA: [*to Third Queen.*] ~~~ ~~~ No knees to me.
What woman I may stead that is distressed
Does bind me to her.

THESEUS: [*to First Queen.*] What's your request? Deliver you for all.

1 QUEEN: [*kneeling still.*] We are three queens whose sovereigns
fell before
The wrath of cruel Creon; who endured ... [I.1.40]
The beaks of ravens, talons of the kites,
And pecks of crows in the foul fields of Thebes.
He will not suffer us to burn their bones,
To urn their ashes, nor to take th' offense
Of mortal loathsomeness from the blest eye
Of holy Phoebus, but infects the winds
With stench of our slain lords. O pity, Duke!
Thou purger of the earth, draw thy feared sword
That does good turns to th' world; give us the bones
And of thy boundless goodness take some note ... [I.1.50]
That for our crowned heads we have no roof,
Save this, which is the lion's and the bear's,
And vault to everything.

THESEUS: ~~~ Pray you, kneel not:
I was transported with your speech, and suffered

Your knees to wrong themselves, I have heard the fortunes
Of your dead lords, which gives me such lamenting
As wakes my vengeance and revenge for 'em.
King Capeneus was your lord: the day
That he should marry you -- at such a season ... [I.1.60]
As now it is with me -- I met your groom
By Mars's altar. You were that time fair,
Not Juno's mantle fairer than your tresses,
Nor in more bounty spread her. Your wheaten wreath
Was then nor threshed nor blasted; fortune at you
Dimpled her cheek with smiles; Hercules our kinsman --
Then weaker than your eyes -- laid by his club.
He tumbled down upon his Nemean hide
And swore his sinews thawed. O grief and time,
Fearful consumers, you will all devour. ... [I.1.70]

1 QUEEN: [*Kneeling still.*] O, I hope some god,
Some god hath put his mercy in your manhood,
Whereto he'll infuse power and press you forth
Our undertaker.

THESEUS: ~~~ O no knees, none, widow: [*The First Queen rises.*]
Unto the helmeted Bellona use them
And pray for me, your soldier. Troubled I am

2 QUEEN: [*kneeling still.*] Honored Hippolyta,
Most dreaded Amazonian, that hast slain
The scythe-tusked boar, that with thy arm, as strong
As it is white, wast near to make the male ... [I.1.80]
To thy sex captive, but that this, thy lord --
Born to uphold creation in that honor
First nature styled it in -- shrunk thee into
The bound thou wast o'erflowing, at once subduing
Thy force and thy affection; soldieress,
That equally canst poise sternness with pity,
Whom now I know has much more power on him
Than ever he had on thee, who ow'st his strength,
And his love too, who is a servant for
The tenor of thy speech; dear glass of ladies, ... [I.1.90]
Bid him that we, whom flaming war doth scorch,
Under the shadow of his sword may cool us.
Require him he advance it o'er our heads.
Speak't in a woman's key, like such a woman
As any of us three. Weep ere you fail.
Lend us a knee:
But touch the ground for us no longer time

Than a dove's motion when the head's plucked off.
Tell him, if he i' th' blood-sized field lay swoll'n,
Showing the sun his teeth, grinning at the moon, ... [I.1.100]
What you would do.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ Poor lady, say no more.
I had as lief trace this good action with you
As that whereto I am going, and never yet
Went I so willing way. My lord is taken
Heart-deep with your distress. Let him consider.
I'll speak anon. [*The Second Queen rises.*]

3 QUEEN: [*kneeling still, to Emilia.*] O, my petition was
Set down in ice, which by hot grief uncandied
Melts into drops; so sorrow, wanting form,
Is pressed with deeper matter.

EMILIA: ~~~ Pray stand up:
Your grief is written in your cheek.

3 QUEEN: ~~~ ~~~ O woe, ... [I.1.110]
You cannot read it there; there, through my tears,
Like wrinkled pebbles in a glassy stream,
You may behold 'em. [*The Third Queen arises.*] Lady, lady, alack --
He that will all the treasure know o'th' earth
Must know the center too; he that will fish
For my least minnow, let him lead his line
To catch one at my heart. O, pardon me:
Extremity, that sharpens sundry wits,
Makes me a fool.

EMILIA: ~~~ Pray you, say nothing, pray you.
Who cannot feel nor see the rain, being in't, ... [I.1.120]
Knows neither wet nor dry. If that you were
The ground-piece of some painter, I would buy you
T'instruct me 'gainst a capital grief, indeed
Such heart-pierced demonstration; but alas,
Being a natural sister of our sex,
Your sorrow beats so ardently upon me
That it shall make a counter-reflect 'gainst
My brother's heart, and warm it to some pity,
Though it were made of stone. Pray have good comfort.

THESEUS: Forward to th' temple. Leave not out a jot ... [I.1.130]
O'th' sacred ceremony.

1 QUEEN: ~~~ O, this celebration
Will longer last and be more costly than
Your suppliants' war. Remember that your fame
Knolls in the ear o'th' world: what you do quickly
Is not done rashly; your first thought is more
Than others' labored medittance; your premeditating
More than their actions. But, O Jove, your actions,
Soon as they move, as ospreys do the fish,
Subdue before they touch. Think, dear Duke, think
What beds our slain kings have.

2 QUEEN: ~~~ What griefs our beds, ... [I.1.140]
That our dear lords have none.

3 QUEEN: ~~~ None fit for th' dead.
Those that with cords, knives, drams, precipitance,
Weary of this world's light, have to themselves
Been death's most horrid agents, human grace
Affords them dust and shadow.

1 QUEEN: ~~~ But our lords
Lie blist'ring fore the visitating sun,
And were good kings, when living.

THESEUS: ~~~ It is true,
And I will give you comfort to give your dead lords graves,
The which to do must make some work with Creon.

1 QUEEN: And that work presents itself to th' doing ... [I.1.150]
Now 'twill take form, the heats are gone tomorrow.
Then, bootless toil must recompense itself
With its own sweat; now he's secure,
Not dreams we stand before your puissance
Rinsing our holy begging in our eyes
To make petition clear.

2 QUEEN: ~~~ Now you may take him,
Drunk with his victory.

3 QUEEN: ~~~ And his army full
Of bread and sloth.

THESEUS: ~~~ Artesius, that best knowest
How to draw out, fit to this enterprise
The prim'st for this proceeding and the number ... [I.1.160]
To carry such a business: forth and levy

Our worthiest instruments, whilst we dispatch
This grand act of our life, this daring deed
Of fate in wedlock.

1 QUEEN: [*to the other two Queens.*] ~~~ Dowagers, take hands;
Let us be widows to our woes; delay
Commends us to a famishing hope.

ALL THREE QUEENS: ~~~ Farewell

2 QUEEN: We come unseasonably, but when could grief
Cull forth, as unpanged judgment can, fitt'st time
For best solicitation?

THESEUS: ~~~ Why, good ladies, ... [I.1.170]
This is a service whereto I am going
Greater than any war -- it more imports me
Than all the actions that I have foregone,
Or futurely can cope.

1 QUEEN: ~~~ The more proclaiming
Our suit shall be neglected when her arms,
Able to lock Jove from a synod, shall
By warranting moonlight corslet thee! O when
Her twinning cherries shall their sweetness fall
Upon thy tasteful lips, what wilt thou think
Of rotten kings or blubbered queens? What care
For what thou feel'st not, what thou feel'st being able ... [I.1.180]
To make Mars spur his drum? O, if thou couch
But one night with her, every hour in't will
Take hostage of thee for a hundred, and
Thou shalt remember nothing more than what
That banquet bids thee to.

HIPPOLYTA: [*to Theseus.*] ~~~ Though much unlike
You should be so transported, as much sorry
I should be such a suitor -- yet I think
Did I not by th'abstaining of my joy,
Which breeds a deeper longing, cure their surfeit
That craves a present medicine, I should pluck ... [I.1.190]
All ladies' scandal on me. [*Kneels.*] Therefore, sir,
As I shall here make trial of my prayers,
Either presuming them to have some force,
Or sentencing for aye their vigor dumb,
Prorogue this business we are going about, and hang
Your shield afore your heart -- about that neck

Which is my fee, and which I freely lend
To do these poor queens service.

ALL THREE QUEENS: [*to Emilia.*] ~~~ O, help now,
Our cause cries for your knee.

EMILIA: [*Kneels to Theseus.*] ~~~ If you grant not
My sister her petition in that force ... [I.1.200]
With that celerity and nature which
She makes it in, from henceforth I'll not dare
To ask you anything, nor be so hardy
Ever to take a husband.

THESEUS: ~~~ Pray stand up. [*They rise.*]
I am entreating of myself to do
That which you kneel to have me. -- Pirithous,
Lead on the bride: get you and pray the gods
For success and return; omit not anything
In the pretended celebration. -- Queens,
Follow your soldier. [*to Artesius.*] As before, hence you, ... [I.1.210]
And at the banks of Aulis meet us with
The forces you can raise, where we shall find
The moiety of a number for a business
More bigger looked. [*Exit Artesius.*]
[*to Hippolyta.*] ~~~ Since that our theme is haste,
I stamp this kiss upon thy current lip --
Sweet, keep it as my token. [*to the wedding party.*] Set you forward,
For I will see you gone.
[*to Emilia.*] Farewell, my beauteous sister. -- Pirithous,
Keep the feast full: bate not an hour on't.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Sir,
I'll follow you at heels. The feast's solemnity ... [I.1.220]
Shall want till your return.

THESEUS: ~~~ Cousin, I charge you
Budge not from Athens. We shall be returning
Ere you can end this feast, of which, I pray you,
Make no abatement. -- Once more, farewell all.
[*Exeunt Hippolyta, Emilia, Pirithous, and train towards the temple.*]

1 QUEEN: Thus dost thou still make good the tongue o' th' world.

2 QUEEN: And earn'st a deity equal with Mars --

3 QUEEN: If not above him, for
Thou being but mortal mak'st affections bend
To godlike honors; they themselves, some say,
Groan under such a mast'ry.

THESEUS: ~~~ As we are men,] ... [I.1.230]
Thus should we do; being sensually subdued
We lose our human title. Good cheer, ladies.
Now turn we towards your comforts. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

Scene I. 2

Enter Palamon and Arcite

ARCITE: Dear Palamon, dearer in love than blood,
And our prime cousin, yet unhardened in
The crimes of nature, let us leave the city,
Thebes, and the temptings in't, before we further
Sully our gloss of youth.
And here to keep in abstinence we shame
As in incontinence; for not to swim
I'th' aid o'th' current were almost to sink --
At least to frustrate striving; and to follow
The common stream 'twould bring us to an eddy ... [I.2.10]
Where we should turn or drown; if labor through,
Our gain but life and weakness.

PALAMON: ~~~ Your advice
Is cried up with example. What strange ruins
Since first we went to school may we perceive
Walking in Thebes? Scars and bare weeds
The gain o'th' martialist who did propound
To his bold ends honor and golden ingots,
Which though he won, he had not; and now flirted
By peace for whom he fought. Who then shall offer
To Mars's so-scorned altar? I do bleed ... [I.2.20]
When such I meet, and wish great Juno would
Resume her ancient fit of jealousy
To get the soldier work, that peace might purge
For her repletion and retain anew
Her charitable heart, now hard and harsher
Than strife or war could be.

ARCITE: ~~~ Are you not out?
Meet you no ruin but the soldier in
The cranks and turns of Thebes? You did begin
As if you met decays of many kinds. ... [I.2.30]

Perceive you none that do arouse your pity
But th'unconsidered soldier?

PALAMON: ~~~ Yet, I pity
Decays where'er I find them, but such most
That, sweating in an honorable toil,
Are paid with ice to cool 'em.

ARCITE: ~~~ 'Tis not this
I did begin to speak of. This is virtue,
Of no respect in Thebes. I spake of Thebes,
How dangerous, if we will keep our honors,
It is for our residing where every evil
Hath a good color, where every seeming good's
A certain evil, where not to be ev'n jump ... [I.2.40]
As they are here were to be strangers, and
Such things to be, mere monsters.

PALAMON: ~~~ 'Tis in our power,
Unless we fear that apes can tutor's, to
Be masters of our manners. What need I
Affect another's gait, which is not catching
Where there is faith? Or to be fond upon
Another's way of speech, when by mine own
I may be reasonably conceived -- saved, too --
Speaking it truly? Why am I bound
By any generous bond to follow him ... [I.2.50]
Follows his tailor, haply so long until
The followed make pursuit? Or let me know
Why mine own barber is unblest -- with him
My poor chin, too -- for 'tis not scissored just
To such a favorite's glass? What canon is there
That does command my rapier from my hip
To dangle't in my hand? Or to go tiptoe
Before the street be foul? Either I am
The fore-horse in the team or I am none
That draw i' th' sequent trace. These poor slight sores ... [I.2.60]
Need not a plaintain. That which rips my bosom
Almost to th' heart's --

ARCITE: ~~~ Our uncle Creon.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ He,
A most unbounded tyrant, whose successes
Makes heaven unfeared and villainy assured
Beyond its power there's nothing; almost puts

Faith in a fever, and deifies alone
Voluble chance; who only attributes
The faculties of other instruments
To his nerves and act; commands men's service,
And what they win in't, boot and glory; one ... [I.2.70]
That fears not to do harm, good dares not. Let
The blood of mine that's sib to him be sucked
From me with leeches. Let them break and fall
Off me with that corruption.

ARCITE: ~~~ Clear-spirited cousin,
Let's leave his court that we may nothing share
Of his loud infamy: for our milk
Will relish of the pasture, and we must
Be vile or disobedient; not his kinsmen
In blood unless in quality.

PALAMON: ~~~ Nothing truer.
I think the echoes of his shames have defeated ... [I.2.80]
The ears of heav'nly justice. Widow's cries
Descend again into their throats and have not [*Enter Valerius.*]
Due audience of the gods -- Valerius.

VALERIUS: The king calls for you; yet be leaden-footed
Till his great rage be off him. Phoebus, when
He broke his whipstock and exclaimed against
The horses of the sun, but whispered to
The loudness of his fury.

PALAMON: ~~~ Small winds shake him.
But what's the matter?

VALERIUS: Theseus, who where he threats, appalls, hath sent ... [I.2.90]
Deadly defiance to him and pronounces
Ruin to Thebes, who is at hand to seal
The promise of his wrath.

ARCITE: ~~~ Let him approach.
But that we fear the gods in him, he brings not
A jot of terror to us. Yet what man
Thirds his own worth -- the case is each of ours --
When that his action's dregged with mind assured
'Tis bad he goes about.

PALAMON: ~~~ Leave that unreasoned.
Our services stand now for Thebes, not Creon,

Yet to be neutral to him were dishonor, ... [I.2.100]
Rebellious to oppose. Therefore we must
With him stand to the mercy of our fate,
Who hath bounded our last minute.

ARCITE: ~~~ So we must.
Is't said this war's afoot? Or shall it be
On fall of some condition?

VALERIUS: ~~~ 'Tis in motion,
The intelligence of state came in the instant
With the defier.

PALAMON: ~~~ Let's to the King, who, were he
A quarter carrier of that honor which
His enemy come in, the blood we venture
Should be as for our health, which were not spent, ... [I.2.110]
Rather laid out for purchase. But, alas,
Our hands advanced before our hearts, what will
The fall o'th' stroke do damage?

ARCITE: ~~~ Let th'event --
That never-erring arbitrator -- tell us
When we know all ourselves, and let us follow
The becking of our chance. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene I. 3

Enter Pirithous, Hippolyta, and Emilia

PIRITHOUS: No further.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ Sir, farewell. Repeat my wishes
To our great lord, of whose success I dare not
Make any timorous question; yet I wish him
Excess and overflow of power, an't might be,
To dure ill-dealing fortune. Speed to him;
Store never hurts good governors.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Though I know
His ocean needs not my poor drops, yet they
Must yield their tribute there. [*to Emilia*] My precious maid,
Those best affections that the heavens infuse
In their best-tempered pieces keep enthroned ... [I.3.10]
In your dear heart.

EMILIA: ~~~ Thanks, sir. Remember me
To our all-royal brother, for whose speed
The great Bellona I'll solicit; and
Since in our terrene state petitions are not
Without gifts understood, I'll offer to her
What I shall be advised she likes. Our hearts
Are in his army, in his tent.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ In's bosom.
We have been soldiers, and we cannot weep
When our friends don their helms, or put to sea,
Or tell of babes broached on the lance, or women ... [I.3.20]
That have sod their infants in-and after eat them --
The brine they wept at killing 'em: then if
You stay to see of us such spinsters, we
Should hold you here forever.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Peace be to you
As I pursue this war, which shall be then
Beyond further requiring. [*Exit Pirithous.*]

EMILIA: ~~~ How his longing
Follows his friend! Since his depart, his sports,
Though craving seriousness and skill, passed slightly
His careless execution, where nor gain
Made him regard or loss consider, but ... [I.3.30]
Playing one business in his hand, another
Directing in his head, his mind nurse equal
To these so differing twins. Have you observed him
Since our great lord departed?

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ With much labor;
And I did love him for't. They two have cabined
In many as dangerous as poor a corner,
Peril and want contending; they have skiffed
Torrents whose roaring tyranny and power
I'th' least of these was dreadful, and they have
Fought out together where death's self was lodged; ... [I.3.40]
Yet fate hath brought them off. Their knot of love,
Tied, weaved, entangled with so true, so long,
And with a finger of so deep a cunning,
May be outworn, never undone. I think
Theseus cannot be umpire to himself,
Cleaving his conscience into twain and doing
Each side like justice, which he loves best.

EMILIA: ~~~ Doubtless
There is a best, and reason has no manners
So say it is not you. I was acquainted
Once with a time when I enjoyed a playfellow; ... [I.3.50]
You were at wars when she the grave enriched,
Who made too proud the bed; took leave o'th' moon --
Which then looked pale at parting -- when our count
Was each eleven.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ 'Twas Flavina.

EMILIA: ~~~ Yes.
You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love:
Theirs has more ground, is more maturely seasoned,
More buckled with strong judgment, and their needs
The one of th'other may be said to water
Their intertangled roots of love; but I
And she I sigh and spoke of were things innocent, ... [I.3.60]
Loved for what we did, and like the elements,
That know not what, nor why, yet do effect
Rare issues by their operance, our souls
Did so to one another. What she liked
Was then of me approved; what not, condemned --
No more arraignment. The flower that I would pluck
And put between my breasts -- O then but beginning
To swell about the blossom -- she would long
Till she had such another, and commit it
To the like innocent cradle, where phoenix-like, ... [I.3.70]
They died in perfume. On my head no toy
But was her pattern. Her affections -- pretty,
Though happily her careless wear -- I followed
For my most serious decking. Had mine ear
Stol'n some new air, or at adventure hummed one,
From musical coinage, why, it was a note
Whereon her spirits would sojourn -- rather dwell on --
And sing it in her slumbers. This rehearsal --
Which, seely innocence wots well, comes in
Like old 8empartment's bastard -- has this end: ... [I.3.80]
That the true love 'tween maid and maid may be
More than in sex dividual.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ You're out of breath,
And this high-speeded pace is but to say
That you shall never, like the maid Flavina,
Love any that's called man.

EMILIA: I am sure I shall not.

HIPPOLYTA: Now alack, weak sister,
I must no more believe thee in this point --
Though in't I know thou dost believe thyself --
Than I will trust a sickly appetite ... [I.3.90]
That loathes even as it longs. But sure, my sister,
If I were ripe for your persuasion, you
Have said enough to shake me from the arm
Of the all-noble Theseus, for whose fortunes
I will now in and kneel, with great assurance
That we more than his Pirithous possess
The high throne in his heart.

EMILIA: ~~~ I am not
Against your faith, yet I continue mine. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene I. 4

Cornets. A battle struck within. Then a retreat. Flourish. Then enter Theseus, victor. The three Queens meet him and fall on their faces before him. Also enter a Herald, and attendants bearing Palamon and Arcite on two hearses.

1 QUEEN: [*to Theseus.*] To thee no star be dark.

2 QUEEN: [*to Theseus.*] Both heaven and earth
Friend thee for ever.

3 QUEEN: [*to Theseus.*] All the good that may
Be wished upon thy head, I cry 'Amen' to't.

THESEUS: Th'impartial gods, who from the mounted heavens
View us their mortal herd, behold who err
And in their time chastise. Go and find out
The bones of your dead lords and honor them
With treble ceremony: rather than a gap
Should be in their dear rites we would supply't.
But those we will depute which shall invest ... [I.4.10]
You in your dignities, and even each thing
Our haste does leave imperfect. So adieu,
And heaven's good eyes look on you. [*Exeunt the Queen.*]
~~~ What are those?

HERALD: Men of great quality, as may be judged  
By their appointment. Some of Thebes have told's  
They are sisters' children, nephews to the King.

THESEUS: By th' helm of Mars I saw them in the war,  
Like to a pair of lions smeared with prey,  
Make lanes in troops aghast. I fixed my note  
Constantly on them, for they were a mark ... [I.4.20]  
Worth a god's view. What prisoner was't that told me  
When I enquired their names?

HERALD: ~~~ Wi' leave, they're called  
Arcite and Palamon.

THESEUS: ~~~ 'Tis right: those, those.  
They are not dead?

HERALD: Nor in a state of life. Had they been taken  
When their last hurts were given, 'twas possible  
They might have been recovered. Yet they breathe,  
And have the name of men.

THESEUS: ~~~ Then like men use 'em.  
The very lees of such, millions of rates  
Exceed the wine of others. All our surgeons ... [I.4.30]  
Convent in their behoof; our richest balms,  
Rather than niggard, waste. Their lives concern us  
Much more than Thebes is worth. Rather than have 'em  
Freed of this plight and in their morning state --  
Sound and at liberty -- I would 'em dead;  
But forty-thousandfold we had rather have 'em  
Prisoners to us, than death. Bear 'em speedily  
From our kind air, to them unkind, and minister  
What man to man may do -- for our sake, more,  
Since I have known frights, fury, friends' behests, ... [I.4.40]  
Love's provocations, zeal, a mistress' task,  
Desire of liberty, a fever, madness,  
Hath set a mark which nature could not reach to  
Without some imposition, sickness in will  
O'er-wrestling strength in reason. For our love  
And great Apollo's mercy, all our best  
Their best skill tender. -- Lead into the city  
Where, having bound things scattered, we will post  
To Athens fore our army. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

### **Scene I. 5**

*Music. Enter the three Queens with the hearses of their lords in a funeral solemnity, with attendants.*

### **Song**

Urns and odors, bring away,  
Vapors, sighs, darken the day;  
Our dole more deadly looks than dying.  
Balms and gums and heavy cheers,  
Sacred vials filled with tears,  
And clamors through the wild air flying:  
Come all sad and solemn shows,  
That are quick-eyed pleasure's foes.  
We convent naught else but woes,  
We convent naught else but woes. ... [I.5.10]

3 QUEEN: This funeral path brings to your household's grave --  
Joy seize on you again, peace sleep with him.

2 QUEEN: And this to yours.

1 QUEEN: ~~~ Yours this way. Heavens lend  
A thousand differing ways to one sure end.

3 QUEEN: This world's a city full of straying streets,  
And death's the market-place where each one meets. [*Exeunt severally.*]

## ACT II

### Scene II. 1

*Enter the Jailer and the Wooer.*

JAILER: I may depart with little, while I live; something I  
may cast to you, not much. Alas, the prison I keep,  
though it be for great ones, yet they seldom come;  
before one salmon you shall take a number of minnows.  
I am given out to be better lined than it can appear to  
me report is a true speaker. I would I were really that  
I am delivered to be. Marry, what I have -- be it what  
it will -- I will assure upon my daughter at the day of  
my death.

WOOER: Sir, I demand no more than your own offer, and ... [II.1.10]  
I will estate your daughter in what I have promised.

JAILER: Well, we will talk more of this when the solemnity  
is past. But have you a full promise of her?  
[*Enter the Jailer's Daughter with rushes.*]  
When that shall be seen, I tender my consent.

WOOER: I have, sir. Here she comes.

JAILER: [*to Daughter.*] Your friend and I have chanced to name you here, upon the old business -- but no more of that now. So soon as the court hurry is over we will have an end of it. I'th' mean time, look tenderly to the two prisoners. I can tell you they are princes. ... [II.1.20]

DAUGHTER: These strewings are for their chamber. 'Tis pity they are in prison, and 'twere pity they should be out. I do think they have patience to make any adversity ashamed; the prison itself is proud of 'em, and they have all the world in their chamber.

JAILER: They are famed to be a pair of absolute men.

DAUGHTER: By my troth, I think fame but stammers 'em -- they stand a grece above the reach of report.

JAILER: I heard them reported in the battle to be the only doers. ... [II.1.30]

DAUGHTER: Nay, most likely, for they are noble sufferers. I marvel how they would have looked had they been victors, that with such a constant nobility enforce a freedom out of bondage, making misery their mirth, and affliction a toy to jest at.

JAILER: Do they so?

DAUGHTER: It seems to me they have no more sense of their captivity than I of ruling Athens. They eat well, look merrily, discourse of many things, but nothing of their own restraint and disasters. Yet ... [II.1.40] sometime a divided sigh -- martyred as 'twere i' th' deliverance -- will break from one of them, when the other presently gives it so sweet a rebuke that I could wish myself a sigh to be so chid, or at least a sigher to be comforted.

WOOER: I never saw 'em.

JAILER: The Duke himself came privately in the night, [*Palamon and Arcite appear at a window above.*] and so did they. What the reason of it is I know not. Look, yonder they are. That's Arcite looks out.

DAUGHTER: No, sir, no -- that's Palamon. Arcite is ... [II.1.50]  
the lower of the twain -- [*pointing at Arcite.*] you may  
perceive a part of him.

JAILER: Go to, leave your pointing. They would not make  
us their object. Out of their sight.

DAUGHTER: It is a holiday to look on them. Lord,  
the difference of men!

## Scene II. 2

*Enter Palamon and Arcite in prison, (in shackles), above].*

PALAMON: How do you, noble cousin?

ARCITE: ~~~ How do you, sir?

PALAMON: Why, strong enough to laugh at misery  
And bear the chance of war. Yet we are prisoners,  
I fear, for ever, cousin.

ARCITE: ~~~ I believe it,  
And to that destiny have patiently  
Laid up my hour to come.

PALAMON: ~~~ O, cousin Arcite,  
Where is Thebes now? Where is our noble country?  
Where are our friends and kindreds? Never more  
Must we behold those comforts, never see  
The hardy youths strive for the games of honor, ... [II.2.10]  
Hung with the painted favors of their ladies,  
Like tall ships under sail; then start amongst 'em  
And, as an east wind, leave 'em all behind us,  
Like lazy clouds, whilst Palamon and Arcite,  
Even in the wagging of a wanton leg,  
Outstripped the people's praises, won the garlands  
Ere they have time to wish 'em ours. O never  
Shall we two exercise, like twins of honor,  
Our arms again and feel our fiery horses  
Like proud seas under us. Our good swords, now -- ... [II.2.20]  
Better the red-eyed god of war ne'er wore --  
Ravished our sides, like age must run to rust  
And deck the temples of those gods that hate us.  
These hands shall never draw 'em out like lightning  
To blast whole armies more.

ARCITE: ~~~ No, Palamon,  
Those hopes are prisoners with us. Here we are,  
And here the graces of our youths must wither,  
Like a too-timely spring. Here age must find us  
And, which is heaviest, Palamon, unmarried --  
The sweet embraces of a loving wife ... [II.2.30]  
Loaden with kisses, armed with thousand Cupids,  
Shall never clasp our necks; no issue know us;  
No figures of ourselves shall we e'er see  
To glad our age, and, like young eagles, teach 'em  
Boldly to gaze against bright arms and say,  
'Remember what your fathers were, and conquer.'  
The fair-eyed maids shall weep our banishments,  
And in their songs curse ever-blinded fortune,  
Till she for shame see what a wrong she has done  
To youth and nature. This is all our world. ... [II.2.40]  
We shall know nothing here but one another,  
Hear nothing but the clock that tells our woes.  
The vine shall grow, but we shall never see it;  
Summer shall come, and with her all delights,  
But dead-cold winter must inhabit here still.

PALAMON: 'Tis too true, Arcite. To our Theban hounds  
That shook the aged forest with their echoes,  
No more now must we holler; no more shake  
Our pointed javelins whilst the angry swine  
Flies like a Parthian quiver from our rages, ... [II.2.50]  
Struck with our well-steeled darts. All valiant uses --  
The food and nourishment of noble minds --  
In us two here shall perish; we shall die --  
Which is the curse of honor -- lastly,  
Children of grief and ignorance.

ARCITE: ~~~ Yet, cousin,  
Even from the bottom of these miseries,  
From all that fortune can inflict upon us,  
I see two comforts rising -- two mere blessings,  
If the gods please, to hold here a brave patience  
And the enjoying of our griefs together. ... [II.2.60]  
Whilst Palamon is with me, let me perish  
If I think this our prison.

PALAMON: ~~~ Certainly  
'Tis a main goodness, cousin, that our fortunes  
Were twined together. 'Tis most true, two souls  
Put in noble bodies, let 'em suffer

The gall of hazard, so they grow together,  
Will never sink; they must not, say they could.  
A willing man dies sleeping and all's done.

ARCITE: Shall we make worthy uses of this place  
That all men hate so much?

PALAMON: ~~~ How, gentle cousin? ... [II.2.70]

ARCITE: Let's think this prison holy sanctuary,  
To keep us from corruption of worse men.  
We are young, and yet desire the ways of honor  
That liberty and common conversation,  
The poison of pure spirits, might, like women,  
Woo us to wander from. What worthy blessing  
Can be, but our imaginations  
May make it ours? And here being thus together,  
We are an endless mine to one another:  
We are one another's wife, ever begetting ... [II.80  
New births of love; we are father, friends, acquaintance;  
We are in one another, families --  
I am your heir, and you are mine; this place  
Is our inheritance; no hard oppressor  
Dare take this from us. Here, with a little patience,  
We shall live long and loving. No surfeits seek us --  
The hand of war hurts none here, nor the seas  
Swallow their youth. Were we at liberty  
A wife might part us lawfully, or business;  
Quarrels consume us; envy of ill men ... [II.2.90]  
Crave our acquaintance. I might sicken, cousin,  
Where you should never know it, and so perish  
Without your noble hand to close mine eyes,  
Or prayers to the gods. A thousand chances,  
Were we from hence, would sever us.

PALAMON: ~~~ You have made me --  
I thank you, cousin Arcite -- almost wanton  
With my captivity. What a misery  
It is to live abroad, and everywhere!  
'Tis like a beast, methinks. I find the court here;  
I am sure, a more content; and all those pleasures ... [II.2.100]  
That woo the wills of men to vanity  
I see through now, and am sufficient  
To tell the world 'tis but a gaudy shadow,  
That old Time, as he passes by, takes with him.  
What had we been, old in the court of Creon,

Where sin is justice, lust and ignorance  
The virtues of the great ones? Cousin Arcite,  
Had not the loving gods found this place for us,  
We had died as they do, ill old men, unwept,  
And had their epitaphs, the people's curses. ... [II.2.110]  
Shall I say more?

ARCITE: ~~~ I would hear you still.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ Ye shall.  
Is there record of any two that loved  
Better than we do, Arcite?

ARCITE: ~~~ Sure there cannot.

PALAMON: I do not think it possible our friendship  
Should ever leave us.

ARCITE: ~~~ Till our deaths it cannot,  
[*Enter Emilia and her Woman (below). Palamon sees Emilia and is silent.*]  
And after death our spirits shall be led  
To those that love eternally. Speak on, sir.

EMILIA: [*to her Woman.*] This garden has a world of pleasure in't.  
What flower is this?

WOMAN: ~~~ 'Tis called narcissus, madam.

EMILIA: That was a fair boy, certain, but a fool ... [II.2.120]  
To love himself. Were there not maids enough?

ARCITE: [*to Palamon.*] Pray forward.

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes.

EMILIA: [*to her Woman.*] ~~~ ~~~ Or were they all hard-hearted?

WOMAN: They could not be to one so fair.

EMILIA: ~~~ Thou wouldst not.

WOMAN: I think I should not, madam.

EMILIA: ~~~ That's a good wench --  
But take heed to your kindness, though.

WOMAN: ~~~ Why, madam?

EMILIA: Men are mad things.

ARCITE: [*to Palamon.*] ~~~ Will ye go forward, cousin?

EMILIA: [*to her Woman.*] Canst not thou work such flowers in silk, wench?

WOMAN: ~~~ Yes.

EMILIA: I'll have a gown full of 'em, and of these.  
This is a pretty color -- will't not do  
Rarely upon a skirt, wench?

WOMAN: ~~~ Dainty, madam. ... [II.2.130]

ARCITE: [*to Palamon.*] Cousin, cousin, how do you, sir? Why, Palamon!

PALAMON: Never till now was I in prison, Arcite.

ARCITE: Why, what's the matter, man?

PALAMON: ~~~ Behold and wonder! [*Arcite sees Emilia.*]  
By heaven, she is a goddess!

ARCITE: ~~~ Ha!

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ Do reverence.  
She is a goddess, Arcite.

EMILIA: [*to her Woman.*] ~~~ Of all flowers  
Methinks a rose is best.

WOMAN: ~~~ Why, gentle madam?

EMILIA: It is the very emblem of a maid --  
For when the west wind courts her gently,  
How modestly she blows, and paints the sun  
With her chaste blushes! When the north comes near her, ... [II.2.140]  
Rude and impatient, then, like chastity,  
She locks her beauties in her bud again,  
And leaves him to base briars.

WOMAN: ~~~ Yet, good madam,  
Sometimes her modesty will blow so far  
She falls for't -- a maid,

If she have any honor, would be loath  
To take example by her.

EMILIA: ~~~ Thou art wanton.

ARCITE: [*to Palamon.*] She is wondrous fair.

PALAMON: ~~~ She is all the beauty extant.

EMILIA: [*to her Woman.*]

The sun grows high -- let's walk in. Keep these flowers.  
We'll see how close art can come near their colors. ... [II.2.150]  
I am wondrous merry-hearted -- I could laugh now.

WOMAN: I could lie down, I am sure.

EMILIA: ~~~ And take one with you?

WOMAN: That's as we bargain, madam.

EMILIA: ~~~ Well, agree then. [*Exeunt Emilia and her Woman.*]

PALAMON: What think you of this beauty?

ARCITE: ~~~ 'Tis a rare one.

PALAMON: Is't but a rare one?

ARCITE: ~~~ Yes, a matchless beauty.

PALAMON: Might not a man well lose himself and love her?

ARCITE: I cannot tell what you have done; I have,  
Beshrew mine eyes for't. Now I feel my shackles.

PALAMON: You love her then?

ARCITE: Who would not? ... [II.2.160]

PALAMON: And desire her?

ARCITE: Before my liberty.

PALAMON: I saw her first.

ARCITE: ~~~ That's nothing.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ But it shall be.

ARCITE: I saw her too.

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes, but you must not love her

ARCITE: I will not, as you do, to worship her  
As she is heavenly and a blessed goddess!  
I love her as a woman, to enjoy her --  
So both may love.

PALAMON: ~~~ You shall not love at all.

ARCITE: Not love at all -- who shall deny me?

PALAMON: I that first saw her, I that took possession ... [II.2.170]  
First with mine eye of all those beauties  
In her revealed to mankind. If thou lov'st her,  
Or entertain'st a hope to blast my wishes,  
Thou art a traitor, Arcite, and a fellow  
False as thy title to her. Friendship, blood,  
And all the ties between us I disclaim,  
If thou once think upon her.

ARCITE: ~~~ Yes, I love her --  
And if the lives of all my name lay on it,  
I must do so. I love her with my soul --  
If that will lose ye, farewell, Palamon! ... [II.2.180]  
I say again,  
I love her, and in loving her maintain  
I am as worthy and as free a lover,  
And have as just a title to her beauty,  
As any Palamon, or any living  
That is a man's son.

PALAMON: ~~~ Have I called thee friend?

ARCITE: Yes, and have found me so. Why are you moved thus?  
Let me deal coldly with you. Am not I  
Part of your blood, part of your soul? You have told me  
That I was Palamon and you were Arcite.

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes. ... [II.2.190]

ARCITE: Am I not liable to those affections,  
Those joys, griefs, angers, fears, my friend shall suffer?

PALAMON: Ye may be.

ARCITE: ~~~ Why then would you deal so cunningly,  
So strangely, so unlike a noble kinsman,  
To love alone? Speak truly. Do you think me  
Unworthy of her sight?

PALAMON: ~~~ No, but unjust  
If thou pursue that sight.

ARCITE: ~~~ Because another  
First sees the enemy, shall I stand still,  
And let mine honor down, and never charge?

PALAMON: Yes, if he be but one.

ARCITE: ~~~ But say that one ... [II.2.200]  
Had rather combat me?

PALAMON: ~~~ Let that one say so,  
And use thy freedom; else, if thou pursuest her,  
Be as that cursed man that hates his country,  
A branded villain.

ARCITE: ~~~ You are mad.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ I must be.  
Till thou art worthy, Arcite, it concerns me,  
And in this madness if I hazard thee  
And take thy life, I deal but truly.

ARCITE: ~~~ Fie, sir.  
You play the child extremely. I will love her,  
I must, I ought to do so, and I dare --  
And all this justly.

PALAMON: ~~~ O, that now, that now ... [II.2.210]  
Thy false self and thy friend had but this fortune --  
To be one hour at liberty and grasp  
Our good swords in our hands! I would quickly teach thee  
What t'were to filch affection from another.  
Thou art baser in it than a cut-purse.  
Put but thy head out of this window more  
And, as I have a soul, I'll nail thy life to't.

ARCITE: Thou dar'st not, fool; thou canst not; thou art feeble.  
Put my head out? I'll throw my body out  
And leap the garden when I see her next, [*Enter the Jailer, above.*] ... [II.2.220]  
And pitch between her arms to anger thee.

PALAMON: No more -- the keeper's coming. I shall live  
To knock thy brains out with my shackles.

ARCITE: ~~~ Do.

JAILER: By your leave, gentlemen.

PALAMON: ~~~ Now, honest keeper?

JAILER: Lord Arcite, you must presently to th' Duke.  
The cause I know not yet.

ARCITE: ~~~ I am ready, keeper.

JAILER: Prince Palamon, I must a while bereave you  
Of your fair cousin's company. [*Exeunt Arcite and the Jailer.*]

PALAMON: ~~~ And me, too,  
Even when you please, of life. Why is he sent for?  
It may be he shall marry her -- he's goodly, ... [II.2.230]  
And like enough the Duke hath taken notice  
Both of his blood and body. But his falsehood!  
Why should a friend be treacherous? If that  
Get him a wife so noble and so fair,  
Let honest men ne'er love again. Once more  
I would but see this fair one. Blessed garden,  
And fruit and flowers more blessed, that still blossom  
As her bright eyes shine on ye! Would I were,  
For all the fortune of my life hereafter,  
Yon little tree, yon blooming apricot -- ... [II.2.240]  
How I would spread and fling my wanton arms  
In at her window! I would bring her fruit  
Fit for the gods to feed on; youth and pleasure  
Still as she tasted should be doubled on her;  
And if she be not heavenly, I would make her  
So near the gods in nature they should fear her --  
[*Enter the Jailer, above.*]  
And then I am sure she would love me. How now, keeper,  
Where's Arcite?  
JAILER: ~~~ Banished -- Prince Pirithous  
Obtained his liberty; but never more,

Upon his oath and life, must he set foot  
Upon this kingdom. ... [II.2.250]

PALAMON: [*aside*] ~~~ He's a blessed man.  
He shall see Thebes again, and call to arms  
The bold young men that, when he bids 'em charge,  
Fall on like fire. Arcite shall have a fortune,  
If he dare make himself a worthy lover,  
Yet in the field to strike a battle for her;  
And if he lose her then, he's a cold coward.  
How bravely may he bear himself to win her  
If he be noble Arcite; thousand ways!  
Were I at liberty I would do things ... [II.2.260]  
Of such virtuous greatness that this lady,  
This blushing virgin, should take manhood to her  
And seek to ravish me.

JAILER: ~~~ My lord, for you  
I have this charge to --

PALAMON: ~~~ to discharge my life.

JAILER: No, but from this place to remove your lordship --  
The windows are too open.

PALAMON: ~~~ Devils take 'em  
That are so envious to me -- prithee kill me.

JAILER: And hang for't afterward?

PALAMON: ~~~ By this good light,  
Had I a sword I would kill thee.

JAILER: ~~~ Why, my lord?

PALAMON: Thou bring'st such pelting scurvy news continually, ... [II.2.270]  
Thou art not worthy life. I will not go.

JAILER: Indeed you must, my lord.

PALAMON: ~~~ May I see the garden?

JAILER: No.

PALAMON: Then I am resolved -- I will not go.

JAILER: I must constrain you, then; and for you are dangerous,  
I'll clap more irons on you.

PALAMON: ~~~ Do, good keeper.  
I'll shake 'em so ye shall not sleep:  
I'll make ye a new morris. Must I go?

JAILER: There is no remedy.

PALAMON: ~~~ Farewell, kind window.  
May rude wind never hurt thee, O, my lady,  
If ever thou hast felt what sorrow was, ... [II.2.280]  
Dream how I suffer. Come, now bury me.

### Scene II. 3

*Enter Arcite.*

ARCITE: Banished the kingdom? 'Tis a benefit,  
A mercy I must thank 'em for; but banished  
The free enjoying of that face I die for --  
O, 'twas a studied punishment, a death  
Beyond imagination; such a vengeance  
That, were I old and wicked, all my sins  
Could never pluck upon me. Palamon,  
Thou has the start now -- thou shalt stay and see  
Her bright eyes break each morning 'gainst thy window,  
And let in life into thee. Thou shalt feed ... [II.3.10]  
Upon the sweetness of a noble beauty  
That nature ne'er exceeded, nor ne'er shall.  
Good gods! What happiness has Palamon!  
Twenty to one he'll come to speak to her,  
And if she be as gentle as she's fair,  
I know she's his -- he has a tongue will tame  
Tempests and make the wild rocks wanton.  
Come what can come,  
The worst is death. I will not leave the kingdom.  
I know mine own is but a heap of ruins, ... [II.3.20]  
And no redress there. If I go he has her.  
I am resolved another shape shall make me,  
Or end my fortunes. Either way I am happy --  
I'll see her and be near her, or no more.

*[Enter four Country People, one of whom carries a garland before them. Arcite stands apart.]*

1st COUNTRYMAN: My masters, I'll be there -- that's certain.

2d COUNTRYMAN: And I'll be there.

3d COUNTRYMAN: And I.

4th COUNTRYMAN: Why then, have with ye, boys!  
~~~'Tis but a chiding --  
Let the plow play today, I'll tickle't out
Of the jades' tails tomorrow.

1st COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ I am sure ... [II.3.30]
To have my wife as jealous as a turkey --
But that's all one. I'll go through, let her mumble.

2d COUNTRYMAN: Clap her aboard tomorrow night and stow her,
And all's made up again.

3d COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ Ay, do but put
A fescue in her fist and you shall see her
Take a new lesson out and be a good wench.
Do we all hold against the maying?

4th COUNTRYMAN: Hold? What should ail us?

3d COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ Arcas will be there.

2d COUNTRYMAN: And Sennois, and Rycas, and three
better lads ne'er danced under green tree; and ye know ... [II.3.40]
what wenches, ha? But will the dainty dominie, the
schoolmaster, keep touch, do you think? For he does
all, ye know.

3d COUNTRYMAN: He'll eat a hornbook ere he fail. Go
to, the matter's too far driven between him and the
tanner's daughter to let slip now, and she must see the
Duke, and she must dance too.

4th COUNTRYMAN: Shall we be lusty?

2d COUNTRYMAN: All the boys in Athens blow wind
i' th' breech on's! And here I'll be and there I'll be, for ... [II.3.50]
our town, and here again and there again -- ha, boys,
hey for the weavers!

1st COUNTRYMAN: This must be done i' th' woods.

4th COUNTRYMAN: O, pardon me.

2d COUNTRYMAN: By any means, our thing of learning
said so; where he himself will edify the Duke most
parlously in our behalfts -- he's excellent i' th' woods,
bring him to th' plains, his learning makes no cry.

3d COUNTRYMAN: We'll see the sports, then every man
to's tackle -- and, sweet companions, let's rehearse, by ... [II.3.60]
any means, before the ladies see us, and do sweetly,
and God know what may come on't.

4th COUNTRYMAN: Content -- the sports once ended,
we'll perform. Away boys, and hold.

ARCITE: [*coming forward.*]
By your leaves, honest friends, pray you whither go you?

4th COUNTRYMAN: Whither? Why, what a question's that?

ARCITE: Yet 'tis a question
To me that know not.

3d COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ To the games, my friend.

2d COUNTRYMAN: Where were you bred, you know it not?

ARCITE: ~~~ Not far, sir --
Are there such games today?

1st COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ Yes, marry, are there, ... [II.3.70]
And such as you never saw. The Duke himself
Will be in person there.

ARCITE: ~~~ What pastimes are they?

2d COUNTRYMAN: Wrestling and running.
~~~[*to the others.*] 'Tis a pretty fellow.

3d COUNTRYMAN: [*to Arcite.*] Thou wilt not go along?

ARCITE: ~~~ Not yet, sir.

4th COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ Well, sir,  
Take your own time. [*to the others.*] Come, boys.

1st COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ My mind misgives me --  
This fellow has a vengeance trick o'th' hip:  
Mark how his body's made for't.

2d COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ I'll be hanged though  
If he dare venture; hang him, plum porridge!  
He wrestle? He roast eggs! Come, let's be gone, lads.  
[*Exeunt the four Countrymen.*]

ARCITE: This is an offered opportunity ... [II.3.80]  
I durst not wish for. Well I could have wrestled --  
The best men called it excellent -- and run  
Swifter than wind upon a field of corn,  
Curling the wealthy ears, never flew. I'll venture,  
And in some poor disguise be there. Who knows  
Whether my brows may not be girt with garlands,  
And happiness prefer me to a place  
Where I may ever dwell in sight of her? [*Exit.*]

#### **Scene II. 4**

*Enter the Jailer's Daughter.*

DAUGHTER: Why should I love this gentleman? 'Tis odds  
He will never affect me. I am base,  
My father the mean keeper of his prison,  
And he a prince. To marry him is hopeless,  
To be his whore is witless. Out upon't,  
What pushes are we wenches driven to  
When fifteen has once found us? First, I saw him;  
I, seeing, thought he was a goodly man;  
He has as much to please a woman in him --  
If he please to bestow it so -- as ever ... [II.4.10]  
These eyes yet looked on. Next, I pitied him,  
And so would any young wench, o'my conscience,  
That ever dreamed or vowed her maidenhead  
To a young handsome man. Then, I loved him,  
Extremely loved him, infinitely loved him --  
And yet he had a cousin fair as he, too.  
But in my heart was Palamon, and there,  
Lord, what a coil he keeps! To hear him  
Sing in an evening, what a heaven it is!  
And yet his songs are sad ones. Fairer spoken ... [II.4.20]  
Was never gentleman. When I come in  
To bring him water in a morning, first  
He bows his noble body, then salutes me, thus:  
'Fair, gentle maid, good morrow. May thy goodness

Get thee a happy husband.' Once he kissed me --  
I loved my lips the better ten days after.  
Would he would do so every day! He grieves much,  
And me as much to see his misery.  
What should I do to make him know I love him?  
For I would fain enjoy him. Say I ventured ... [II.4.430]  
To set him free? What says the law then? Thus much  
For law or kindred! I will do it,  
And this night; ere tomorrow he shall love me. [Exit.]

## Scene II. 5

*Short flourish of cornets and shouts within. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Pirithous, Emilia, Arcite disguised, with a garland, and attendants.*

THESEUS: You have done worthily. I have not seen  
Since Hercules a man of tougher sinews.  
Whate'er you are, you run the best and wrestle  
That these times can allow.

ARCITE: ~~~ I am proud to please you.

THESEUS: What country bred you?

ARCITE: ~~~ This -- but far off, prince.

THESEUS: Are you a gentleman?

ARCITE: ~~~ My father said so,  
And to those gentle uses gave me life.

THESEUS: Are you his heir?

ARCITE: ~~~ His youngest, sir.

THESEUS: ~~~ ~~~ Your father  
Sure is a happy sire, then. What proves you?

ARCITE: A little of all noble qualities. ... [II.5.10]  
I could have kept a hawk and well have hollered  
To a deep cry of dogs; I dare not praise  
My feat in horsemanship, yet they that knew me  
Would say it was my best piece; last and greatest,  
I would be thought a soldier.

THESEUS: ~~~ You are perfect.

PIRITHOUS: Upon my soul, a proper man.

EMILIA: ~~~ He is so.

PIRITHOUS: [*to Hippolyta.*] How do you like him, lady?

HIPPOLYTA ~~~ I admire him.  
I have not seen so young a man so noble --  
If he say true -- of his sort.

EMILIA: ~~~ Believe  
His mother was a wondrous handsome woman -- ... [II.5.20]  
His face methinks goes that way.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ But his body  
And fiery mind illustrate a brave father.

PIRITHOUS: Mark how his virtue, like a hidden sun,  
Breaks through his baser garments.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ He's well got, sure.

THESEUS: [*to Arcite.*] What made you seek this place, sir?

ARCITE: ~~~ Noble Theseus,  
To purchase name and do my ablest service  
To such a well-found wonder as thy worth,  
For only in thy court of all the world  
Dwells fair-eyed honor.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ All his words are worthy.

THESEUS: [*to Arcite.*] Sir, we are much indebted to your travel, ... [II.5.30]  
Nor shall you lose your wish. -- Pirithous,  
Dispose of this fair gentleman.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Thanks, Theseus.  
[*to Arcite.*] Whate'er you are, you're mine, and I shall give you  
To a most noble service, to this lady,  
This bright young virgin; pray observe her goodness.  
You have honored her fair birthday with your virtues,  
And as your due you're hers. Kiss her fair hand, sir.

ARCITE: Sir, you're a noble giver. [*to Emilia.*] Dearest beauty,  
Thus let me seal my vowed faith. [*He kisses her hand.*]  
~~~ When your servant,

Your most unworthy creature, but offends you, ... [II.5.40]
Command him die, he shall.

EMILIA: ~~~ That were too cruel.
If you deserve well, sir, I shall soon see't.
You're mine, and somewhat better than your rank I'll use you.

PIRITHOUS: [*to Arcite.*] I'll see you furnished, and, because you say
You are a horseman, I must needs entreat you
This afternoon to ride -- but 'tis a rough one.

ARCITE: I like him better, prince -- I shall not then
Freeze in my saddle.

THESEUS: [*to Hippolyta.*] ~~~ Sweet, you must be ready --
And you, Emilia, [*to Pirithous.*] and you, friend -- and all,
Tomorrow by the sun, to do observance ... [II.5.50]
To flow'ry May in Dian's wood. [*to Arcite.*] Wait well, sir,
Upon your mistress. -- Emily, I hope
He shall not go afoot.

EMILIA: ~~~ That were a shame, sir,
While I have horses. [*to Arcite.*] Take your choice, and what
You want, at any time, let me but know it.
If you serve faithfully, I dare assure you,
You'll find a loving mistress.

ARCITE: ~~~ If I do not,
Let me find that my father ever hated --
Disgrace and blows.

THESEUS: ~~~ Go, lead the way -- you have won it.
It shall be so: you shall receive all dues ... [II.5.60]
Fit for the honor you have won. 'Twere wrong else.
[*to Emilia.*] Sister, beshrew my heart, you have a servant
That, if I were a woman, would be master.
But you are wise.

EMILIA: ~~~ I hope too wise for that, sir. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

Scene II. 6

Enter the Jailer's Daughter.

DAUGHTER: Let all the dukes and all the devils roar --
He is at liberty! I have ventured for him,
And out I have brought him. To a little wood

A mile hence I have sent him, where a cedar
Higher than all the rest spreads like a plane,
Fast by a brook -- and there he shall keep close
'Till I provide him files and food, for yet
His iron bracelets are not off. O Love,
What a stout-hearted child thou art! My father
Durst better have endured cold iron than done it. ... [II.6.10]
I love him beyond love and beyond reason
Or wit or safety. I have made him know it --
I care not, I am desperate. If the law
Find me and then condemn me for't, some wenches,
Some honest-hearted maids, will sing my dirge
And tell to memory my death was noble,
Dying almost a martyr. That way he takes,
I purpose, is my way too. Sure, he cannot
Be so unmanly as to leave me here.
If he do, maids will not so easily ... [II.6.20]
Trust men again. And yet, he has not thanked me
For what I have done -- no, not so much as kissed me --
And that, methinks, is not so well. Nor scarcely
Could I persuade him to become a free man,
He made such scruples of the wrong he did
To me and to my father. Yet, I hope
When he considers more, this love of mine
Will take more root within him. Let him do
What he will with me -- so he use me kindly.
For use me, so he shall, or I'll proclaim him, ... [II.6.30]
And to his face, no man. I'll presently
Provide him with necessaries and pack my clothes up,
And where there is a patch of ground I'll venture,
So he be with me. By him, like a shadow,
I'll ever dwell. Within this hour the hubbub
Will be all o'er the prison -- I am then
Kissing the man they look for. Farewell, father;
Get many more such prisoners and such daughters,
And shortly you may keep yourself. Now to him. [Exit.]

ACT III

Scene III. 1

A bush in place. Cornets in sundry places. Noise and hollering as of people a-Maying. Enter Arcite.

ARCITE: The Duke has lost Hippolyta -- each took
A several laund. This is a solemn rite
They owe bloomed May, and the Athenians pay it

To th' heart of ceremony. O, Queen Emilia,
Fresher than May, sweeter
Than her gold buttons on the boughs, or all
Th'enameled knacks o'th' mead or garden -- yea,
We challenge too the bank of any nymph
That makes the stream seem flowers; thou, O jewel
O'th' wood, o'th' world, has likewise blessed a pace ... [III.1.10]
With thy sole presence in thy

[~~~] rumination

That I, poor man, might eftsoons come between
And chop on some cold thought. Thrice blessed chance
To drop on such a mistress, expectation
Most guiltless on't! Tell me, O Lady Fortune,
Next after Emily my sovereign, how far
I may be proud. She takes strong note of me,
Hath made me near her, and this beauteous morn,
The prim'st of all the year, presents me with ... [III.1.20]

A brace of horses -- two such steeds might well
Be by a pair of kings backed, in a field
That their crowns' titles tried. Alas, alas,
Poor cousin Palamon, poor prisoner -- thou
So little dream'st upon my fortune that
Thou think'st thyself the happier thing to be
So near Emilia. Me thou deem'st at Thebes,
And therein wretched, although free. But if
Thou knew'st my mistress breathed on me, and that
I eared her language, lived in her eye -- O, coz, ... [III.1.30]
hat passion would enclose thee!

[Enter Palamon as out of a bush with his shackles. He bends his fist at Arcite.]

PALAMON: ~~~ Traitor kinsman,
Thou shouldst perceive my passion if these signs
Of prisonment were off me, and this hand
But owner of a sword. By all oaths in one,
I and the justice of my love would make thee
A confessed traitor. O thou most perfidious
That ever gently looked, the void'st of honor
That e'er bore gentle token, falsest cousin
That ever blood made kin -- call'st thou her thine?
I'll prove it in my shackles, with these hands, ... [III.1.40]
Void of appointment, that thou liest and art
A very thief in love, a chaffy lord
Not worth the name of villain. Had I a sword
And these house-clogs away --

ARCITE: ~~~ Dear cousin Palamon --

PALAMON: Cozener Arcite, give me language such
As thou has showed me feat.

ARCITE: ~~~ Not finding in
The circuit of my breast any gross stuff
To form me like your blazon holds me to
This gentleness of answer -- 'tis your passion
That thus mistakes, the which, to you being enemy, [III.1.50]
Cannot to me be kind. Honor and honesty
I cherish and depend on, howsoe'er
You skip them in me, and with them, fair coz,
I'll maintain my proceedings. Pray be pleased
To show in generous terms your griefs, since that
Your question's with your equal, who professes
To clear his own way with the mind and sword
Of a true gentleman.

PALAMON: ~~~ That thou durst, Arcite!

ARCITE: My coz, my coz, you have been well advertised
How much I dare; you've seen me use my sword ... [III.1.60]
Against th'advice of fear. Sure, of another
You would not hear me doubted, but your silence
Should break out, though i' th' sanctuary.

PALAMON: ~~~ Sir,
I have seen you move in such a place which well
Might justify your manhood; you were called
A good knight and a bold. But the whole week's not fair
If any day it rain: their valiant temper
Men lose when they incline to treachery,
And then they fight like compelled bears -- would fly
Were they not tied.

ARCITE: ~~~ Kinsman, you might as well ... [III.1.70]
Speak this and act it in your glass as to
His ear which now disdains you.

PALAMON: ~~~ Come up to me,
Quit me of these cold gyves, give me a sword,
Though it be rusty, and the charity
Of one meal lend me. Come before me then,
A good sword in thy hand, and do but say
That Emily is thine -- I will forgive
The trespass thou hast done me, yea, my life,
If then thou carry't; and brave souls in shades

That have died manly, which will seek of me ... [III.1.80]
Some news from earth, they shall get none but this --
That thou art brave and noble.

ARCITE: ~~~ Be content,
Again betake you to your hawthorn house.
With counsel of the night I will be here
With wholesome viands. These impediments
Will I file off. You shall have garments and
Perfumes to kill the smell o'th' prison. After,
When you shall stretch yourself and say but 'Arcite,
I am in plight', there shall be at your choice
Both sword and armor.

PALAMON: ~~~ O, you heavens, dares any ... [III.1.90]
So noble bear a guilty business! None
But only Arcite, therefore none but Arcite
In this kind is so bold.

ARCITE: ~~~ Sweet Palamon.

PALAMON: I do embrace you and your offer -- for
Your offer do't I only, sir; your person,
Without hypocrisy, I may not wish [*Wind horns within*]
More than my sword's edge on't.

ARCITE: ~~~ You hear the horns --
Enter your musit lest this match between's
Be crossed ere met. Give me your hand, farewell.
I'll bring you every needful thing -- I pray you, ... [III.1.100]
Take comfort and be strong.

PALAMON: ~~~ Pray hold your promise,
And do the deed with a bent brow. Most certain
You love me not -- be rough with me and pour
This oil out of your language. By this air,
I could for each word give a cuff, my stomach
Not reconciled by reason.

ARCITE: ~~~ Plainly spoken,
Yet -- pardon me -- hard language: when I spur [*Wind horns within.*]
My horse I chide him not. Content and anger
In me have but one face. Hark, sir, they call
The scattered to the banquet. You must guess ... [III.1.110]
I have an office there.

PALAMON: ~~~ Sir, your attendance
Cannot please heaven, and I know your office
Unjustly is achieved.

ARCITE: ~~~ 'Tis a good title.
I am persuaded this question, sick between's,
By bleeding must be cured. I am a suitor
That to your sword you will bequeath this plea
And talk of it no more.

PALAMON: ~~~ But this one word:
You are going now to gaze upon my mistress --
For note you, mine she is --

ARCITE: ~~~ Nay then --

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ Nay, pray you --
You talk of feeding me to breed me strength -- [III.1.120]
You are going now to look upon a sun
That strengthens what it looks on. There you have
A vantage o'er me, but enjoy it till
I may enforce my remedy. Farewell.
[Exeunt severally, Palamon as into the bush.]

Scene III. 2

Enter the Jailer's Daughter, with a file.

DAUGHTER: He has mistook the brake I meant, is gone
After his fancy. 'Tis now well nigh morning.
No matter -- would it were perpetual night,
And darkness lord o'th' world. Hark, 'tis a wolf!
In me hath grief slain fear, and, but for one thing,
I care for nothing -- and that's Palamon.
I reckon not if the wolves would jaw me, so
He had this file. What if I hollered for him?
I cannot holler. If I whooped, what then?
If he not answered, I should call a wolf [III.2.10]
And do him but that service. I have heard
Strange howls this live-long night -- why may't not be
They have made prey of him? He has no weapons;
He cannot run; the jangling of his gyves
Might call fell things to listen, who have in them
A sense to know a man unarmed, and can
Smell where resistance is. I'll set it down
He's torn to pieces: they howled many together
And then they fed on him. So much for that.

Be bold to ring the bell. How stand I then? ... [III.2.20]
All's chared when he is gone. No, no, I lie:
My father's to be hanged for his escape,
Myself to beg, if I prized life so much
As to deny my act -- but that I would not,
Should I try death by dozens. I am moped --
Food took I none these two days,
Sipped some water. I have not closed mine eyes
Save when my lids scoured off their brine. Alas,
Dissolve, my life; let not my sense unsettle,
Lest I should drown or stab or hang myself. [III.2.30]
O state of nature, fail together in me,
Since thy best props are warped. So which way now?
The best way is the next way to a grave,
Each errant step beside is torment. Lo,
The moon is down, the crickets chirp, the screech-owl
Calls in the dawn. All offices are done
Save what I fail in; but the point is this,
An end, and that is all. [*Exit.*]

Scene III. 3

Enter Arcite with a bundle containing meat, wine, and files.

ARCITE: I should be near the place. Ho, cousin Palamon!

PALAMON: Arcite.

ARCITE: ~~~ The same, I have brought you food and files.
Come forth and fear not, here's no Theseus.

PALAMON: Nor none so honest, Arcite.

ARCITE: ~~~ That's no matter --
We'll argue that hereafter. Come, take courage --
You shall not die thus beastly. Here, sir, drink;
I know you are faint. Then I'll talk further with you.

PALAMON: Arcite, you mightst now poison me.

ARCITE: ~~~ I might --
But I must fear you first. Sit down and, good now,
No more of these vain parleys. Let us not, ... [III.3.8]
Having our ancient reputation with us,
Make talk for fools and cowards. To your health, sir.

PALAMON: Do. [*Arcite drinks.*]

ARCITE: Pray sit down, then, and let me entreat you,
By all the honesty and honor in you,
No mention of this woman -- 'twill disturb us.
We shall have time enough.

PALAMON: ~~~ Well, sir, I'll pledge you. [*Palamon drinks.*]

ARCITE: Drink a good hearty draught; it breeds good blood, man.
Do not you feel it thaw you?

PALAMON: ~~~ Stay, I'll tell you
After a draught or two more. [*Palamon drinks.*]

ARCITE: ~~~ Spare it not --
The Duke has more, coz. Eat now.

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes. [*Palamon eats.*]

ARCITE: ~~~ ~~~ I am glad ... [III.3.20]
You have so good a stomach.

PALAMON: ~~~ I am gladder
I have so good meat to't.

ARCITE: ~~~ Is't not mad, lodging
Here in the wild woods, cousin?

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes, for them
That have wild consciences.

ARCITE: ~~~ How tastes your victuals?
Your hunger needs no sauce, I see.

PALAMON: ~~~ Not much.
But if it did, yours is too tart, sweet cousin.
What is this?

ARCITE: ~~~ Venison.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ 'Tis a lusty meat --
Give me more wine. Here, Arcite, to the wenches
We have known in our days. [*Drinking.*] The lord steward's daughter.
Do you remember her?

ARCITE: ~~~ After you, coz. ... [III.3.30]

PALAMON: She loved a black-haired man.

ARCITE: ~~~ She did so; well, sir.

PALAMON: And I have heard some call him Arcite, and --

ARCITE: Out with't, faith.

PALAMON: ~~~ She met him in an arbor --
What did she there, coz? Play o'th' virginals?

ARCITE: Something she did, sir --

PALAMON: ~~~ Made her groan a month for't --
Or two, or three, or ten.

ARCITE: ~~~ The marshal's sister
Had her share too, as I remember, cousin,
Else there be tales abroad. You'll pledge her?

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes. [*They drink.*]

ARCITE: A pretty brown wench 'tis. There was a time
When young men went a-hunting, and a wood, ... [III.3.40]
And a broad beech, and thereby hangs a tale --
Heigh-ho!

PALAMON: ~~~ For Emily, upon my life! Fool,
Away with this strained mirth. I say again,
That sigh was breathed for Emily. Base cousin,
Dar'st thou break first?

ARCITE: ~~~ You are wide.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ By heaven and earth,
There's nothing in thee honest.

ARCITE: ~~~ Then I'll leave you --
You are a beast now.

PALAMON: ~~~ As thou mak'st me, traitor.

ARCITE: [*Pointing to the bundle.*]
There's all things needful: files and shirts and perfumes --
I'll come again some two hours hence and bring
That that shall quiet all.

PALAMON: ~~~ A sword and armor. ... [III.3.50]

ARCITE: Fear me not. You are now too foul. Farewell.
Get off your trinkets: you shall want naught.

PALAMON: ~~~ Sirrah --

ARCITE: I'll hear no more. [*Exit.*]

PALAMON: ~~~ If he keep touch, he dies for't. [*Exit, as into the bush.*]

Scene III. 4

Enter the Jailer's Daughter.

DAUGHTER: I am very cold, and all the stars are out too,
The little stars and all that, that look like aglets --
The sun has seen my folly. Palamon!
Alas, no, he's in heaven. Where am I now?
Yonder's the sea and there's a ship -- how't tumbles!
And there's a rock lies watching under water --
Now, now, it beats upon it -- now, now, now,
There's a leak sprung, a sound one -- how they cry!
Open her before the wind -- you'll lose all else.
Up with a course or two and tack about, boys. ... [III.4.10]
Good night, good night, you're gone. I am very hungry.
Would I could find a fine frog -- he would tell me
News from all parts o'th' world, then would I make
A carrack of a cockle-shell, and sail
By east and north-east to the King of Pygmies,
For he tells fortunes rarely. Now my father,
Twenty to one, is trussed up in a trice
Tomorrow morning. I'll say never a word.
[*She sings.*]
For I'll cut my green coat, a foot above my knee,
And I'll clip my yellow locks, an inch below mine eye, ... [III.4.20]
Hey nonny, nonny, nonny,
He s'buy me a white cut, forth for to ride,
And I'll go seek him, through the world that is so wide,
Hey nonny, nonny, nonny
O for a prick now, like a nightingale,
To put my breast against. I shall sleep like a top else. [*Exit.*]

Scene III. 5

Enter Gerald (a schoolmaster), five Countrymen, one of whom is dressed as a Babion [baboon], five Wenches, and Timothy, a taborer. All are attired as morris dancers.

SCHOOLMASTER: Fie, fie,
What tediousness and disinsanity
Is here among ye! Have my rudiments
Been labored so long with ye, milked unto ye,
And, by a figure, even the very plum-broth
And marrow of my understanding laid upon ye?
And do you still cry 'how?' and 'wherefore?'
You most coarse frieze capacities, ye jean judgments,
Have I said, 'thus let be', and 'there let be',
And 'then let be', and no man understand me? ... [III.5.10]
Proh deum, medius fidius -- ye are all dunces.
For why, here stand I. Here the Duke comes. There are you,
Close in the thicket. The Duke appears. I meet him,
And unto him I offer learned things
And many figures. He hears, and nods, and hums,
And then cries, 'Rare!', and I go forward. At length
I fling my cap up -- mark there -- then do you,
As once did Meleager and the boar,
Break comely out before him, like true lovers,
Cast yourselves in a body decently, ... [III.5.20]
And sweetly, by a figure, trace and turn, boys.

1st COUNTRYMAN: And sweetly we will do it, master Gerald.

2d COUNTRYMAN: Draw up the company. Where's the taborer?

3d Why, Timothy!

TABORER: ~~~ Here, my mad boys, have at ye!

SCHOOLMASTER: But I say, where's these women?

4th COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ Here's Friz and Madeline.

2d COUNTRYMAN: And little Luce with the white legs, and bounding Barbara.

1st COUNTRYMAN: And freckled Nell, that never failed her master.

SCHOOLMASTER: Where be your ribbons, maids? Swim with your bodies
And carry it sweetly and deliverly,
And now and then a favor and a frisk. ... [III.5.30]

NELL: Let us alone, sir.

SCHOOLMASTER: ~~~ Where's the rest o'th' music?

3d COUNTRYMAN: Dispersed as you commanded.

SCHOOLMASTER: ~~~ Couple, then,
And see what's wanting. Where's the babion?
[*to the Babion.*] My friend, carry your tail without offense
Or scandal to the ladies; and be sure
You tumble with audacity and manhood,
And when you bark, do it with judgment.

BABION ~~~ Yes, sir.

SCHOOLMASTER: Quousque tandem? Here is a woman wanting!

4th COUNTRYMAN: We may go whistle -- all the fat's i' th' fire.

SCHOOLMASTER: We have, ... [III.5.40]
As learned authors utter, washed a tile;
We have been fatuous, and labored vainly.

2d COUNTRYMAN: This is that scornful piece, that scurvy hilding
That gave her promise faithfully she would be here --
Cicely, the seamstress' daughter.
The next gloves that I give her shall be dog-skin.
Nay, an she fail me once -- you can tell, Arcas,
She swore by wine and bread she would not break.

SCHOOLMASTER: An eel and woman,
A learned poet says, unless by th' tail ... [III.5.50]
And with thy teeth thou hold, will either fail --
In manners this was false position.

1st COUNTRYMAN: A fire-ill take her! Does she flinch now?

3d COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ What
Shall we determine, sir?

SCHOOLMASTER: ~~~ Nothing;
Our business is become a nullity,
Yea, and a woeful and a piteous nullity.

4th COUNTRYMAN: Now, when the credit of our town lay on it,
Now to be frampold, now to piss o'th' nettle!
Go thy ways -- I'll remember thee, I'll fit thee!
[*Enter the Jailer's Daughter.*]

DAUGHTER: [*sings*]
The George Alow came from the south, ... [III.5.60]
From the coast of Barbary-a;
And there he met with brave gallants of war,
By one, by two, by three-a.
'Well hailed, well hailed, you jolly gallants,
And whither now are you bound-a?
O let me have your company
Till I come to the sound-a.'
There was three fools fell out about an owlet --
The one he said it was an owl,
The other he said nay, ... [III.5.70]
The third he said it was a hawk,
And her bells were cut away.

3d COUNTRYMAN: There's a dainty madwoman, master,
Comes i' th' nick, as mad as a March hare.
If we can get her dance, we are made again.
I warrant her, she'll do the rarest gambols.

1st COUNTRYMAN: A madwoman? We are made, boys.

SCHOOLMASTER: [*to the Jailer's Daughter.*] And are you mad, good woman?

DAUGHTER: ~~~ I would be sorry else.
Give me your hand.

SCHOOLMASTER: ~~~ Why?

DAUGHTER: ~~~ ~~~ I can tell your fortune. [*She examines his hand.*]
You are a fool. Tell ten -- I have posed him. Buzz! ... [III.5.80]
Friend, you must eat no white bread -- if you do,
Your teeth will bleed extremely. Shall we dance, ho?
I know you -- you're a tinker, Sirrah tinker,
Stop no more holes but what you should.

SCHOOLMASTER: ~~~ Dii boni --
A tinker, damsel?

DAUGHTER: ~~~ Or a conjurer --
Raise me a devil now and let him play
Qui passa o'th' bells and bones.

SCHOOLMASTER: ~~~ Go, take her,
And fluently persuade her to a peace.

Et opus exegi, quod nec lovis ira, hec ignis --
Strike up, and lead her in.

2 COUNTRYMAN: ~~~ Come, lass, let's trip it. ... [III.5.90]

DAUGHTER: I'll lead.

3 COUNTRYMAN: Do, do.

SCHOOLMASTER: Persuasively and cunningly --
[*Wind horns within.*] ~~~ away, boys,
I hear the horns. Give me some meditation,
And mark your cue.
[*Exeunt all but Gerald the Schoolmaster.*] ~~~ Pallas inspire me.
[*Enter Theseus, Pirithous, Hippolyta, Emilia, Arcite, and train.*]

THESEUS: This way the stag took.

SCHOOLMASTER: Stay and edify.

THESEUS: What have we here?

PIRITHOUS: Some country sport, upon my life, sir.

THESEUS: [*to the Schoolmaster.*] Well sir, go forward -- we will edify. [III.5.100]
Ladies, sit down -- we'll stay it.
[*They sit, Theseus in a chair, the others on stools.*]

SCHOOLMASTER: Thou doughty Duke, all hail! All hail, sweet ladies.

THESEUS: This is a cold beginning.

SCHOOLMASTER: If you but favor, our country pastime made is.
We are a few of those collected here,
That ruder tongues distinguish 'villager';
And to say verity, and not to fable,
We are a merry rout, or else a rabble,
Or company, or by a figure, chorus,
That fore thy dignity will dance a morris. ... [III.5.110]
And I, that am the rectifier of all,
By title, pedagogus, that let fall
The birch upon the breeches of the small ones,
And humble with a ferula the tall ones,
Do here present this machine, or this frame;
And dainty Duke, whose doughty dismal fame
From Dis to Daedalus, from post to pillar,

Is blown abroad, help me, thy poor well-willer,
And with thy twinkling eyes, look right and straight
Upon this mighty 'Moor' -- of mickle weight -- ... [III.5.120]
'Ice' now comes in, which, being glued together,
Makes 'morriss', and the cause that we come hither.
The body of our sport, of no small study,
I first appear, though rude, and raw, and muddy,
To speak, before thy noble grace, this tenor
At whose great feet I offer up my penner.
The next, the Lord of May and Lady bright;
The Chambermaid and Serving man, by night
That seek out silent hanging; then mine Host
And his fat Spouse, that welcomes, to their cost, ... [III.5.130]
The galled traveler, and with a beck'ning
Informs the tapster to inflame the reck'ning;
Then the beest-eating Clown; and next, the Fool;
The babion with long tail and eke long tool,
Cum multis alits that make a dance --
Say 'aye', and all shall presently advance.

THESEUS: Ay, aye, by any means, dear dominie.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Produce.

SCHOOLMASTER: [*Knocks for the dance.*]

Intrate filii, come forth and foot it.

[*He flings up his cap.*] Music.

[*The Schoolmaster ushers in May Lord, May Lady, Serving man, Chambermaid, A Country Clown, or Shepherd, Country Wench, An Host, Hostess, A He-Babion, She-Babion, A He-fool, The Jailer's Daughter, as She-fool.*]

[*All these people appareled to the life, the men issuing out of one door and the wenches from the other. They dance a morriss.*]

Ladies, if we have been merry,
And have pleased ye with a derry, ... [III.5.140]
And a derry, and a down,
Say the schoolmaster's no clown.
Duke, if we have pleased thee too,
And have done as good boys should do,
Give us but a tree or twain
For a maypole, and again,
Ere another year run out,
We'll make thee laugh, and all this rout.

THESEUS: Take twenty, dominie. [*to Hippolyta.*] How does my sweetheart?

HIPPOLYTA: Never so pleased, sir.

EMILIA: ~~~ 'Twas an excellent dance, ... [III.5.150]
And for a preface, I never heard a better.

THESEUS: Schoolmaster, I thank you. One see 'em all rewarded.

PIRITHOUS: And here's something to paint your pole withal.
[*He gives them money.*]

THESEUS: Now to our sports again.

SCHOOLMASTER: May the stag thou hunt'st stand long,
And thy dogs be swift and strong;
May they kill him without lets,
And the ladies eat his dowsets.
[*Exit Theseus and train. Wind horns within.*]
Come, we are all made. Dii deaeque omnes,
Ye have danced rarely, wench. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene III. 6

Enter Palamon from the bush.

PALAMON: About this hour my cousin gave his faith
To visit me again, and with him bring
Two swords and two good armors; if he fail,
He's neither man nor soldier. When he left me,
I did not think a week could have restored
My lost strength to me, I was grown so low
And crest-fall'n with my wants. I thank thee, Arcite,
Thou art yet a fair foe, and I feel myself,
With this refreshing, able once again
To out-dure danger. To delay it longer ... [III.6.10]
Would make the world think, when it comes to hearing,
That I lay fattening, like a swine, to fight,
And not a soldier. Therefore this blest morning
Shall be the last; and that sword he refuses,
If it but hold, I kill him with; 'tis justice.
So, love and fortune for me!
[*Enter Arcite with two armors and two swords.*]
~~~ O, good morrow.

ARCITE: Good morrow, noble kinsman.

PALAMON: ~~~ I have put you  
To too much pains, sir.

ARCITE: ~~~ That too much, fair cousin,  
Is but a debt to honor, and my duty.

PALAMON: Would you were so in all, sir -- I could wish ye ... [III.6.20]  
As kind a kinsman, as you force me find  
A beneficial foe, that my embraces  
Might thank ye, not my blows.

ARCITE: ~~~ I shall think either,  
Well done, a noble recompense.

PALAMON: ~~~ Then I shall quit you.

ARCITE: Defy me in these fair terms, and you show  
More than a mistress to me -- no more anger,  
As you love anything that's honorable.  
We were not bred to talk, man. When we are armed  
And both upon our guards, then let our fury,  
Like meeting of two tides, fly strongly from us; ... [III.6.30]  
And then to whom the birthright of this beauty  
Truly pertains -- without upbraidings, scorns,  
Despisings of our persons, and such poutings  
Fitter for girls and schoolboys -- will be seen,  
And quickly, yours or mine. Will't please you arm, sir?  
Or, if you feel yourself not fitting yet,  
And furnished with your old strength, I'll stay, cousin,  
And every day discourse you into health,  
As I am spared. Your person I am friends with,  
And I could wish I had not said I loved her, ... [III.6.40]  
Though I had died; but loving such a lady,  
And justifying my love, I must not fly from't.

PALAMON: Arcite, thou art so brave an enemy  
That no man but thy cousin's fit to kill thee.  
I am well and lusty -- choose your arms.

ARCITE: ~~~ Choose you, sir.

PALAMON: Wilt thou exceed in all, or dost thou do it  
To make me spare thee?

ARCITE: ~~~ If you think so, cousin,  
You are deceived, for as I am a soldier,  
I will not spare you.

PALAMON: ~~~ That's well said.

ARCITE: ~~~ ~~~ You'll find it.

PALAMON: Then as I am an honest man, and love ... [III.6.50]  
With all the justice of affection,  
I'll pay thee soundly. [*He chooses one armor.*] This I'll take.

ARCITE [*indicating the remaining armor.*] ~~~ That's mine, then.  
I'll arm you first.

PALAMON: ~~~ Do. [*Arcite arms Palamon.*] Pray thee tell me, cousin,  
Where gott'st thou this good Armour?

ARCITE: ~~~ 'Tis the Duke's,  
And to say true, I stole it. Do I pinch you?

PALAMON: ~~~ No.

ARCITE: Is't not too heavy?

PALAMON: ~~~ I have worn a lighter --  
But I shall make it serve.

ARCITE: ~~~ I'll buckle't close.

PALAMON: By any means.

ARCITE: ~~~ You care not for a grand guard?

PALAMON: No, no, we'll use no horses. I perceive  
You would fain be at that fight.

ARCITE: ~~~ I am indifferent. ... [III.6.60]

PALAMON: Faith, so am I. Good cousin, thrust the buckle  
Through far enough.

ARCITE: ~~~ I warrant you.

PALAMON: ~~~ ~~~ My casque now.

ARCITE: Will you fight bare-armed?

PALAMON: ~~~ We shall be the nimbler.

ARCITE: But use your gauntlets, though -- those are o'th' least.  
Prithee take mine, good cousin.

PALAMON: ~~~ Thank you, Arcite.  
How do I look, Am I fall'n much away?

ARCITE: Faith, very little -- love has used you kindly.

PALAMON: I'll warrant thee, I'll strike home.

ARCITE: ~~~ Do, and spare not --  
I'll give you cause, sweet cousin.

PALAMON: ~~~ Now to you, sir. [*Palamon arms Arcite.*]  
Methinks this armor's very like that, Arcite, ... [III.6.70]  
Thou wor'st that day the three kings fell, but lighter.

ARCITE: That was a very good one, and that day,  
I well remember, you outdid me, cousin.  
I never saw such valor. When you charged  
Upon the left wing of the enemy,  
I spurred hard to come up, and under me  
I had a right good horse.

PALAMON: ~~~ You had indeed --  
A bright bay, I remember.

ARCITE: ~~~ Yes, but all  
Was vainly labored in me -- you outwent me, ... [III.6.80]  
Nor could my wishes reach you. Yet a little  
I did by imitation.

PALAMON: ~~~ More by virtue --  
You are modest, cousin.

ARCITE: ~~~ When I saw you charge first,  
Methought I heard a dreadful clap of thunder  
Break from the troop.

PALAMON: ~~~ But still before that flew  
The lightning of your valor. Stay a little,  
Is not this piece too strait?

ARCITE: ~~~ No, no, 'tis well.

PALAMON: I would have nothing hurt thee but my sword --  
A bruise would be dishonor.

ARCITE: ~~~ Now I am perfect.

PALAMON: Stand off, then.

ARCITE: ~~~ Take my sword; I hold it better.

PALAMON: I thank ye. No, keep it -- your life lies on it. ... [III.6.90]  
Here's one -- if it but hold, I ask no more  
For all my hopes. My cause and honor guard me.

ARCITE: And me, my love.  
They bow several ways, then advance and stand.)  
~~~ Is there aught else to say?

PALAMON: This only, and no more. Thou art mine aunt's son,
And that blood we desire to shed is mutual:
In me, thine, and in thee, mine. My sword
Is in my hand, and if thou kill'st me,
The gods and I forgive thee. If there be
A place prepared for those that sleep in honor,
I wish his weary soul that falls may win it. [III.6.100]
Fight bravely, cousin. Give me thy noble hand.

ARCITE: Here, Palamon. This hand shall never more
Come near thee with such friendship.

PALAMON: ~~~ I commend thee.

ARCITE: If I fall, curse me, and say I was a coward --
For none but such dare die in these just trials.
Once more farewell, my cousin.

PALAMON: ~~~ Farewell, Arcite. [*Fight. Horns within; they stand.*]

ARCITE: Lo, cousin, lo, our folly has undone us.

PALAMON: ~~~ Why?

ARCITE: This is the Duke a-hunting, as I told you.
If we be found, we are wretched. O, retire,
For honor's sake, and safely, presently, ... [III.6.110]
Into your bush again. Sir, we shall find
Too many hours to die. In, gentle cousin --
If you be seen, you perish instantly
For breaking prison, and I, if you reveal me,
for my contempt. Then all the world will scorn us,
And say we had a noble difference,
But base disposers of it.

PALAMON: ~~~ No, no, cousin,
I will no more be hidden, nor put off
This great adventure to a second trial.
I know your cunning and I know your cause -- ... [III.6.120]
He that faints now, shame take him! Put thyself
Upon thy present guard --

ARCITE: ~~~ You are not mad?

PALAMON: Or I will make th'advantage of this hour
Mine own, and what to come shall threaten me
I fear less than my fortune. Know, weak cousin,
I love Emilia, and in that I'll bury
Thee and all crosses else.

ARCITE: ~~~ Then come what can come,
Thou shalt know, Palamon, I dare as well
Die as discourse or sleep. Only this fears me, [III.6.130]
The law will have the honor of our ends.
Have at thy life!

PALAMON: ~~~ Look to thine own well, Arcite!
*[They fight again. Horns, Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, Pirithous,
and train. Theseus separates Palamon and Arcite.]*

THESEUS: What ignorant and mad malicious traitors
Are you, that 'gainst the tenor of my laws
Are making battle, thus like knights appointed,
Without my leave and officers of arms?
By Castor, both shall die.

PALAMON: ~~~ Hold thy word, Theseus.
We are certainly both traitors both despisers
Of thee and of thy goodness. I am Palamon,
That cannot love thee, he that broke thy prison --
Think well what that deserves. And this is Arcite; ... [III.6.140]
A bolder traitor never trod thy ground,
A falser ne'er seemed friend. This is the man
Was begged and banished; this is he contemns thee,
And what thou dar'st do; and in this disguise,
Against thine own edict, follows thy sister,
That fortunate bright star, the fair Emilia,
Whose servant -- if there be a right in seeing
And first bequeathing of the soul to -- justly
I am; and, which is more, dares think her his.
This treachery, like a most trusty lover, ... [III.6.150]

I called him now to answer. If thou be'st
As thou art spoken, great and virtuous,
The true decider of all injuries,
Say, 'Fight again', and thou shalt see me, Theseus,
Do such a justice thou thyself wilt envy.
Then take my life -- I'll woo thee to't.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ O heaven,
What more than man is this!

THESEUS: ~~~ I have sworn.

ARCITE: ~~~ ~~~ We seek not
Thy breath of mercy, Theseus. 'Tis to me
A thing as soon to die as thee to say it,
And no more moved. Where this man calls me traitor ... [III.6.160]
Let me say this much -- if in love be treason,
In service of so excellent a beauty,
As I love most, and in that faith will perish,
As I have brought my life here to confirm it,
As I have served her truest, worthiest,
As I dare kill this cousin that denies it,
So let me be most traitor and ye please me.
For scorning thy edict, Duke, ask that lady
Why she is fair, and why her eyes command me
Stay here to love her, and if she say, 'Traitor', ... [III.6.170]
I am a villain fit to lie unburied.

PALAMON: Thou shalt have pity of us both, O Theseus,
If unto neither thou show mercy. Stop,
As thou art just, thy noble ear against us;
As thou art valiant, for thy cousin's soul,
Whose twelve strong labors crown his memory,
Let's die together, at one instant, Duke.
Only a little let him fall before me.
That I may tell my soul he shall not have her.

THESEUS: I grant your wish; for to say true, your cousin ... [III.6.180]
Has ten times more offended, for I gave him
More mercy than you found, sir, your offenses
Being no more than his. None here speak for 'em,
For ere the sun set both shall sleep for ever.

HIPPOLYTA: [*to Emilia.*] Alas, the pity! Now or never, sister,
Speak, not to be denied. That face of yours

Will bear the curses else of after ages
For these lost cousins.

EMILIA: ~~~ In my face, dear sister,
I find no anger to 'em, nor no ruin.
The misadventure of their own eyes kill 'em. ... [III.6.190]
Yet that I will be woman and have pity, [*She kneels.*]
My knees shall grow to th' ground, but I'll get mercy.
Help me, dear sister -- in a deed so virtuous
The powers of all women will be with us.
[*Hippolyta kneels.*] Most royal brother --

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ Sir, by our tie of marriage --

EMILIA: By your own spotless honor --

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ By that faith,
That fair hand, and that honest heart you gave me --

EMILIA: By that you would have pity in another,
By your own virtues infinite --

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ By valor,
By all the chaste nights I have ever pleased you -- ... [III.6.200]

THESEUS: These are strange conjurings.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Nay, then, I'll in too.
[*He kneels.*] By all our friendship, sir, by all our dangers,
By all you love most: wars, and this sweet lady --

EMILIA: By that you would have trembled to deny
A blushing maid --

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ By your own eyes, by strength --
In which you swore I went beyond all women,
Almost all men -- and yet I yielded, Theseus --

PIRITHOUS: To crown all this, by your most noble soul,
Which cannot want due mercy, I beg first --

HIPPOLYTA: Next hear my prayers -- ... [III.6.210]

EMILIA: ~~~ Last let me entreat, sir --

PIRITHOUS: For mercy.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ Mercy.

EMILIA: ~~~ ~~~ Mercy on these princes.

THESEUS: Ye make my faith reel. Say I felt
Compassion to 'em both, how would you place it? [*They rise.*]

EMILIA: Upon their lives -- but with their banishments.

THESEUS: You are a right woman, sister: you have pity,
But want the understanding where to use it.
If you desire their lives, invent a way
Safer than banishment. Can these two live,
And have the agony of love about 'em,
And not kill one another? Every day ... [III.6.220]
They'd fight about you, hourly bring your honor
In public question with their swords. Be wise, then,
And her forget 'em. It concerns your credit
And my oath equally. I have said -- they die.
Better they fall by th' law than one another.
Bow not my honor.

EMILIA: ~~~ O my noble brother,
That oath was rashly made, and in your anger.
Your reason will not hold it. If such vows
Stand for express will, all the world must perish.
Beside, I have another oath 'gainst yours, ... [III.6.230]
Of more authority, I am sure more love --
Not made in passion, neither, but good heed.

THESEUS: What is it, sister?

PIRITHOUS: [*to Emilia*] ~~~ Urge it home, brave lady.

EMILIA: That you would ne'er deny me anything
Fit for my modest suit and your free granting.
I tie you to your word now; if ye fail in't,
Think how you maim your honor --
For now I am set a-begging, sir. I am deaf
To all but your compassion -- how their lives
Might breed the ruin of my name, opinion. ... [III.6.240]
Shall anything that loves me perish for me?
That were a cruel wisdom: do men prune
The straight young boughs that blush with thousand blossoms
Because they may be rotten? O, Duke Theseus,
The goodly mothers that have groaned for these,

And all the longing maids that ever loved,
If your vow stand, shall curse me and my beauty,
And in their funeral songs for these two cousins
Despise my cruelty and cry woe worth me,
Till I am nothing but the scorn of women. ... [III.6.250]
For heaven's sake, save their lives and banish 'em.

THESEUS: On what conditions?

EMILIA: ~~~ Swear 'em never more
To make me their contention, or to know me,
To tread upon thy dukedom; and to be,
Wherever they shall travel, ever strangers
To one another.

PALAMON: ~~~ I'll be cut a-pieces
Before I take this oath -- forget I love her?
O all ye gods, despise me, then. Thy banishment
I not mislike, so we may fairly carry
Our swords and cause along -- else, never trifle, ... [III.6.260]
But take our lives, Duke. I must love, and will;
And for that love must and dare kill this cousin
On any piece the earth has.

THESEUS: ~~~ Will you, Arcite,
Take these conditions?

PALAMON: ~~~ He's a villain then.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ ~~~ These are men!

ARCITE: No, never, Duke. 'Tis worse to me than begging,
To take my life so basely. Though I think
I never shall enjoy her, yet I'll preserve
The honor of affection and die for her,
Make death a devil.

THESEUS: What may be done? For now I feel compassion. ... [III.6.270]

PIRITHOUS: Let it not fall again, sir.

THESEUS: ~~~ Say, Emilia,
If one of them were dead -- as one must -- are you
Content to take the other to your husband?
They cannot both enjoy you. They are princes
As goodly as your own eyes, and as noble

As ever fame yet spoke of. Look upon 'em,
And if you can love, end this difference.
I give consent. [*to Palamon and Arcite.*] Are you content too, princes?

PALAMON and ARCITE: With all our souls.

THESEUS: ~~~ He that she refuses
Must die, then.

PALAMON and ARCITE: ~~~ Any death thou canst invent, Duke. ... [III.6.280]

PALAMON: If I fall from that mouth, I fall with favor,
And lovers yet unborn shall bless my ashes.

ARCITE: If she refuse me, yet my grave will wed me,
And soldiers sing my epitaph.

THESEUS: [*to Emilia.*] ~~~ Make choice, then.

EMILIA: I cannot, sir. They are both too excellent
For me, a hair shall never fall of these men.

HIPPOLYTA: [*to Theseus.*] What will become of 'em?

THESEUS: ~~~ Thus I ordain it,
And by mine honor once again it stands,
Or both shall die. [*to Palamon and Arcite.*] You shall both to your country,
And each within this month, accompanied ... [III.6.290]
With three fair knights, appear again in this place,
In which I'll plant a pyramid; and whether,
Before us that are here, can force his cousin,
By fair and knightly strength, to touch the pillar,
He shall enjoy her; the other lose his head,
And all his friends; nor shall he grudge to fall,
Nor think he dies with interest in this lady.
Will this content ye?

PALAMON: ~~~ Yes. Here, cousin Arcite,
I am friends again till that hour.

ARCITE: ~~~ I embrace ye.

THESEUS: [*to Emilia.*] Are you content, sister?

EMILIA: ~~~ Yes, I must, sir. ... [III.6.300]
Else both miscarry.

THESEUS: [*to Palamon and Arcite.*] Come, shake hands again, then,
And take heed, as you are gentlemen, this quarrel
Sleep till the hour prefixed, and hold your course.

PALAMON: We dare not fail thee, Theseus.

THESEUS: ~~~ Come, I'll give ye
Now usage like to princes and to friends.
When ye return, who wins I'll settle here,
Who loses, yet I'll weep upon his bier.
[*Exeunt. The bush is removed.*]

ACT IV

Scene IV. 1

Enter the Jailer and his Friend.

JAILER: Hear you no more? Was nothing said of me
Concerning the escape of Palamon?
Good sir, remember.

FRIEND: ~~~ Nothing that I heard,
For I came home before the business
Was fully ended. Yet I might perceive,
Ere I departed, a great likelihood
Of both their pardons: for Hippolyta
And fair-eyed Emily upon their knees
Begged with such handsome pity that the Duke,
Methought, stood staggering whether he should follow ... [IV.1.10]
His rash oath or the sweet compassion
Of those two ladies; and to second them
That truly noble prince, Pirithous --
Half his own heart -- set in too, that I hope
All shall be well. Neither heard I one question
Of your name or his scape. [*Enter the Second Friend.*]

JAILER: ~~~ Pray heaven it hold so.

2 FRIEND: Be of good comfort, man. I bring you news,
Good news.

JAILER: ~~~ They are welcome.

2 FRIEND: ~~~ ~~~ Palamon has cleared you,
And got your pardon, and discovered how
And by whose means he scaped -- which was your daughter's, ... [IV.1.20]

Whose pardon is procured too; and the prisoner,
Not to be held ungrateful to her goodness,
Has given a sum of money to her marriage --
A large one, I'll assure you.

JAILER: ~~~ Ye are a good man,
And ever bring good news.

1 FRIEND: ~~~ How was it ended?

2 FRIEND: Why, as it should be: they that ne'er begged,
But they prevailed, had their suits fairly granted --
The prisoners have their lives.

1 FRIEND: ~~~ I knew't would be so.

2 FRIEND: But there be new conditions which you'll hear of
At better time.

JAILER: ~~~ I hope they are good.

2 FRIEND: ~~~ ~~~ They are honorable -- ... [IV.1.30]
How good they'll prove I know not. [*Enter the Wooer.*]

1 FRIEND: ~~~ 'Twill be known.

WOOER: Alas, sir, where's your daughter?

JAILER: ~~~ Why do you ask?

WOOER: O, sir, when did you see her?

2 FRIEND: ~~~ How he looks!

JAILER: This morning.

WOOER: ~~~ Was she well? Was she in health?
Sir, when did she sleep?

1 FRIEND: ~~~ These are strange questions.

JAILER: I do not think she was very well: for now
You make me mind her, but this very day
I asked her questions and she answered me
So far from what she was, so childishly,
So sillily, as if she were a fool, ... [IV.1.40]

An innocent -- and I was very angry.
But what of her, sir?

WOOER: ~~~ Nothing but my pity --
But you must know it, and as good by me
As by another that less loves her --

JAILER: Well, sir?

1 FRIEND: ~~~ Not right?

WOOER: ~~~ ~~~ No, sir, not well.

2 FRIEND: ~~~ ~~~ ~~~ Not well?

WOOER: 'Tis too true -- she is mad.

1 FRIEND: ~~~ It cannot be.

WOOER: Believe, you'll find it so.

JAILER: ~~~ I half suspected
What you told me -- the gods comfort her!
Either this was her love to Palamon,
Or fear of my miscarrying on his scape, ... [IV.1.50]
Or both.

WOOER: ~~~ 'Tis likely.

JAILER: ~~~ ~~~ But why all this haste, sir?

WOOER: I'll tell you quickly. As I late was angling
In the great lake that lies behind the palace,
As patiently I was attending sport,
I heard a voice -- a shrill one -- and attentive
I gave my ear, when I might well perceive
'Twas one that sung, and by the smallness of it
A boy or woman. I then left my angle
To his own skill, came hear, but yet perceived not ... [IV.1.60]
Who made the sound, the rushes and the reeds
Had so encompassed it. I laid me down
And listened to the words she sung, for then,
Through a small glade cut by the fishermen,
I saw it was your daughter.

JAILER: ~~~ Pray go on, sir.

WOOER: She sung much, but no sense; only I heard her
Repeat this often -- 'Palamon is gone,
Is gone to th' wood to gather mulberries;
I'll find him out tomorrow.'

1 FRIEND: ~~~ Pretty soul!

WOOER: 'His shackles will betray him -- he'll be taken, ... [IV.1.70]
And what shall I do then? I'll bring a bevy,
A hundred black-eyed maids that love as I do,
With chaplets on their heads of daffodillies,
With cherry lips and cheeks of damask roses,
And all we'll dance an antic fore the Duke
And beg his pardon.' Then she talked of you, sir --
That you must lose your head tomorrow morning,
And she must gather flowers to bury you,
And see the house made handsome. Then she sung
Nothing but 'willow, willow, willow', and between... [IV.1.80]
Ever was 'Palamon, fair Palamon',
And 'Palamon was a tall young man'. The place
Was knee-deep where she sat; her careless tresses
A wreath of bull-rush rounded; about her stuck
Thousand freshwater flowers of several colors --
That she appeared, methought, like the fair nymph
That feeds the lake with waters, or as Iris
Newly dropped down from heaven. Rings she made
Of rushes that grew by, and to 'em spoke
The prettiest posies -- 'Thus our true love's tied', ... [IV.1.90]
'This you may lose, not me', and many a one.
And then she wept, and sung again, and sighed --
And with the same breath smiled and kissed her hand.

2 FRIEND: Alas, what pity it is!

WOOER: ~~~ I made in to her;
She saw me and straight sought the flood -- I saved her,
And set her safe to land, when presently
She slipped away and to the city made,
With such a cry and swiftness that, believe me,
She left me far behind her. Three or four
I saw from far off cross her -- one of 'em ... [IV.1.100]
I knew to be your brother, where she stayed
And fell, scarce to be got away. I left them with her,
[Enter the Jailer's Brother, the Jailer's Daughter, and others.]
And hither came to tell you -- here they are.

DAUGHTER: [*sings.*] 'May you never more enjoy the light ...' --
Is not this a fine song?

BROTHER: ~~~ O, a very fine one.

DAUGHTER: I can sing twenty more.

BROTHER: ~~~ I think you can.

DAUGHTER: Yes, truly can I -- I can sing 'The Broom'
And 'Bonny Robin' -- are not you a tailor?

BROTHER: Yes.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ Where's my wedding gown?

BROTHER: ~~~ ~~~ I'll bring it tomorrow.

DAUGHTER: Do, very rarely -- I must be abroad else, ... [IV.1.110]
To call the maids and pay the minstrels,
For I must lose my maidenhead by cock light,
'Twill never thrive else. [*Sings.*] 'O fair, O sweet . . .'

BROTHER: [*to the Jailer.*] You must e'en take it patiently.

JAILER: ~~~ ÔTis true.

DAUGHTER: Good ev'n, good men. Pray, did you ever hear
Of one young Palamon?

JAILER: ~~~ Yes, wench, we know him.

DAUGHTER: Is't not a fine young gentleman?

JAILER: ~~~ 'Tis, love.

BROTHER: By no mean cross her, she is then distempered
Far worse than now she shows.

1 FRIEND: [*to the Jailer's Daughter.*] ~~~ Yes, he's a fine man.

DAUGHTER: O, is he so? You have a sister.

1 FRIEND: ~~~ Yes. ... [IV.1.120]

DAUGHTER: But she shall never have him, tell her so,
For a trick that I know. You'd best look to her,
For if she see him once, she's gone -- she's done
And undone in an hour. All the young maids
Of our town are in love with him, but I laugh at 'em
And let 'em all alone. Is't not a wise course?

1 FRIEND: ~~~ Yes.

DAUGHTER: There is at least two hundred now with child by him,
There must be four; yet I keep close for all this,
Close as a cockle; and all these must be boys --
He has the trick on't -- and at ten years old ... [IV.1.130]
They must be all gelt for musicians
And sing the wars of Theseus.

2 FRIEND: ~~~ This is strange.

[JAILER'S BROTHER] As ever you heard, but say nothing.

1 FRIEND: ~~~ No.

DAUGHTER: They come from all parts of the dukedom to him.
I'll warrant ye, he had not so few last night
As twenty to dispatch. He'll tickle't up
In two hours, if his hand be in.

JAILER: ~~~ She's lost.
Past all cure.

BROTHER: ~~~ Heaven forbid, man!

DAUGHTER: [*to the Jailer.*] Come hither -- you are a wise man.

1 FRIEND: ~~~ Does she know him?

2 FRIEND: No -- would she did.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ You are master of a ship? ... [IV.1.140]

JAILER: Yes.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ Where's your compass?

JAILER: ~~~ ~~~ Here.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ ~~~ ~~~ Set it to th' north.
And now direct your course to th' wood where Palamon
Lies longing for me. For the tackling,
Let me alone. Come, weigh, my hearts, cheerly all.
Uff, uff, uff! 'Tis up. The wind's fair. Top the bowline.
Out with the mainsail. Where's your whistle, master?

BROTHER: Let's get her in.

JAILER: Up to the top, boy!

BROTHER: ~~~ Where's the pilot?

1 FRIEND: ~~~ ~~~ Here.

DAUGHTER: What kenn'st thou?

2 FRIEND: ~~~ A fair wood.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ ~~~ Bear for it, master.

Tack about!

[Sings] 'When Cynthia with her borrowed light' . . . [Exeunt.]

Scene IV. 2

Enter Emilia, with two pictures.

EMILIA: Yet I may bind these wounds up that must open
And bleed to death for my sake else -- I'll choose,
And end their strife. Two such young handsome men
Shall never fall for me; their weeping mothers
Following the dead cold ashes of their sons,
Shall; never curse my cruelty. Good heaven,
What a sweet face has Arcite! If wise nature,
With all her best endowments, all those beauties
She sows into the births of noble bodies,
Were here a mortal woman and had in her ... [IV.2.10]
The coy denials of young maids, yet doubtless
She would run mad for this man. What an eye,
Of what fiery sparkle and quick sweetness
Has this young prince! Here love itself sits smiling!
Just such another wanton Ganymede
Set Jove afire once, and enforced the god
Snatch up the goodly boy and set him by him,
A shining constellation. What a brow,
Of what spacious majesty, he carries!
Arched like the great-eyed Juno's, but far sweeter, ... [IV.2.20]

Smoother than Pelops' shoulder! Fame and honor,
Methinks, from hence, as from a promontory
Pointed in heaven, should clap their wings and sing
To all the under world the loves and fights
Of gods, and such men near 'em. Palamon
Is but his foil; to him a mere dull shadow;
He's swart and meager, of an eye as heavy
As if he had lost his mother; a still temper,
No stirring in him, no alacrity,
Of all this sprightly sharpness, not a smile. ... [IV.2.30]
Yet these that we count errors may become him:
Narcissus was a sad boy, but a heavenly.
O, who can find the bent of woman's fancy?
I am a fool, my reason is lost in me,
I have no choice, and I have lied so lewdly
That women ought to beat me. On my knees
I ask thy pardon, Palamon, thou art alone
And only beautiful, and these the eyes,
These the bright lamps of beauty, that command
And threaten love -- and what young maid dare cross 'em? ... [IV.2.40]
What a bold gravity, and yet inviting,
Has this brown manly face? O, love this only
From this hour is complexion. Lie there, Arcite,
Thou art a changeling to him, a mere gypsy,
And this the noble body. I am sotted,
Utterly lost -- my virgin's faith has fled me.
For if my brother, but even now, had asked me
Whether I loved, I had run made for Arcite;
Now if my sister, more for Palamon.
Stand both together. Now come ask me, brother -- ... [IV.2.50]
Alas, I know not; ask me now, sweet sister --
I may go look. What a mere child is fancy,
That having two fair gauds of equal sweetness,
Cannot distinguish, but must cry for both!
[Enter a Gentleman.] How now, sir?

GENTLEMAN: ~~~ From the noble Duke your brother,
Madam I bring you news. The knights are come.

EMILIA: To end the quarrel?

GENTLEMAN: ~~~ Yes.

EMILIA: ~~~ ~~~ Would I might end first!
What sins have I committed, chaste Diana,
That my unspotted youth must now be soiled

With blood of princes, and my chastity ... [IV.2.60]
Be made the altar where the lives of lovers --
Two greater and two better never yet
Made mothers joy -- must be the sacrifice
To my unhappy beauty?
[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Pirithous, and attendants.]

THESEUS: ~~~ Bring 'em in
Quickly, by any means, I long to see 'em. [Exit one or more.]
[to Emilia.] Your two contending lovers are returned,
And with them their fair knights. Now, my fair sister,
You must love one of them.

EMILIA: ~~~ I had rather both,
So neither for my sake should fall untimely. [Enter a Messenger.]

THESEUS: Who saw 'em?

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ I a while.

GENTLEMAN: ~~~ ~~~ And I. ... [IV.2.70]

THESEUS: [to the Messenger] From whence come you, sir?

MESSENGER: ~~~ From the knights.

THESEUS: ~~~ ~~~ Pray speak.
You that have seen them, what they are.

MESSENGER: ~~~ ~~~ ~~~ I will, sir.
And truly what I think. Six braver spirits
Than these they have brought, if we judge by the outside,
I never saw nor read of. He that stands
In the first place with Arcite, by his seeming,
Should be a stout man; by his face, a prince,
His very looks so say him: his complexion,
Nearer a brown than black, stern and yet noble,
Which shows him hardy, fearless, proud of dangers. ... [IV.2.80]
The circles of his eyes show fire within him,
And, as a heated lion, so he looks.
His hair hangs long behind him, black and shining,
Like raven's wings. His shoulders, broad and strong;
Armed long and round; and on his thigh a sword
Hung by a curious baldrick, when he frowns
To seal his well with. Better, o' my conscience,
Was never soldier's friend.

THESEUS: Thou hast well described him.

PIRITHOUS: Yet a great deal short, ... [IV.2.90]
Methinks, of him that's first with Palamon.

THESEUS: Pray speak him, friend.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ I guess he is a prince too,
And, if it may be, greater -- for his show
Has all the ornament of honor in't.
He's somewhat bigger than the knight he spoke of,
But of a face far sweeter. His complexion
Is as a ripe grape, ruddy. He has felt,
Without doubt, what he fights for, and so apter
To make this cause his own. In's face appears
All the fair hopes of what he undertakes, ... [IV.2.100]
And when he's angry, then a settled valor,
Not tainted with extremes, runs through his body
And guides his arm to brave things. Fear he cannot --
He shows no such soft temper. His head's yellow,
Hard-haired and curled, thick twined: like ivy tods,
Not to undo with thunder. In his face
The livery of the warlike maid appears,
Pure red and white -- for yet no beard has blessed him --
And in his rolling eyes sits victory, ... [IV.2.110]
As if she ever meant to court his valor.
His nose stands high, a character of honor;
His red lips, after fights, are fit for ladies.

EMILIA: Must these men die too?

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ When he speaks, his tongue
Sounds like a trumpet. All his lineaments
Are as a man would wish 'em -- strong and clean.
He wears a well-steeled axe, the staff of gold.
His age, some five-and-twenty.

MESSENGER: ~~~ There's another -- ... [IV.2.120]
A little man, but of a tough soul, seeming
As great as any. Fairer promises
In such a body yet I never looked on.

PIRITHOUS: O, he that's freckle-faced?

MESSENGER: ~~~ The same, my lord.
Are they not sweet ones?

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Yes, they are well.

MESSENGER: ~~~ ~~~ Methinks,
Being so few and well disposed, they show
Great and fine art in nature. He's white-haired --
Not wanton white, but such a manly color
Next to an auburn, tough and nimble set,
Which shows an active soul. His arms are brawny,
Lined with strong sinews -- to the shoulder piece
Gently they swell, like women new-conceived,
Which speaks him prone to labor, never fainting ... [IV.2.130]
Under the weight of arms; stout-hearted, still,
But when he stirs, a tiger. He's grey-eyed,
Which yields compassion where he conquers; sharp
To spy advantages, and where he finds 'em,
He's swift to make 'em his. He does no wrongs,
Nor takes none. He's round-faced, and when he smiles
He shows a lover; when he frowns, a soldier.
About his head he wears the winner's oak,
And in it stuck the favor of his lady.
His age, some six-and-thirty. In his hand ... [IV.2.140]
He bears a charging staff embossed with silver.

THESEUS: Are they all thus?

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ They are all the sons of honor.

THESEUS: Now as I have a soul, I long to see Ôem.
[to *Hippolyta*.] ~~~ Lady, you shall see men fight now.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ ~~~ I wish it,
But not the cause, my lord. They would show
Bravely about the titles of two kingdoms --
'Tis pity love should be so tyrannous.
[to *Emilia*.] O my soft-hearted sister, what think you?
Weep not till they weep blood. Wench, it must be.

THESEUS: [to *Emilia*.] You have steeled 'em with your beauty.
[to Pirithous.] ~~~ Honored friend, ... [IV.2.150]
To you I give the field: pray order it
Fitting the persons that must use it.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Yes, sir.

THESEUS: Come, I'll go visit 'em -- I cannot stay,
Their fame has fired me. Till they appear,
Good friend, be royal.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ There shall want no bravery.

EMILIA: [*Aside.*] Poor wench, go weep -- for whosoever wins
Loses a noble cousin for thy sins. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene IV. 3

Enter the Jailer, the Wooer, and the Doctor.

DOCTOR: Her distraction is more at some time of the moon
than at other some, is it not?

JAILER: She is continually in a harmless distemper: sleeps
little; altogether without appetite, save often drinking;
dreaming of another world, and a better; and what
broken piece of matter soe'er she's about, the name
'Palamon' lards it, that she farces every business.

[*Enter the Jailer's Daughter.*]

withal, fits it to every question. Look where she comes --
you shall perceive her behavior. [*They stand apart.*]

DAUGHTER: I have forgot it quite -- the burden on't ... [IV.3.10]
was 'Down-a, down-a' and penned by no worse man
than Giraldo, Emilia's schoolmaster. He's as fantastical,
too, as ever he may go upon's legs -- for in the next
world will Dido see Palamon, and then will she be out
of love with Aeneas.

DOCTOR: What stuff's here? Poor soul.

JAILER: E'en thus all day long.

DAUGHTER: Now for this charm that I told you
of -- you must bring a piece of silver on the tip of your
tongue, or no ferry: then, if it be your chance to come ... [IV.3.20]
where the blessed spirits are -- there's a sight now! We
maids that have our livers perished, cracked to pieces
with love, we shall come there and do nothing all day
long but pick flowers with Proserpine. Then will I make
Palamon a nosegay, then let him mark me, then --

DOCTOR: How prettily she's amiss! Note her a little further.

DAUGHTER: Faith, I'll tell you: sometime we go to barley-break, we of the blessed. Alas, 'tis a sore life they have i' th' other place -- such burning, frying, boiling, hissing, howling, chattering, cursing -- O they ... [IV.3.30] have shrewd measure -- take heed! If one be mad or hang or drown themselves, thither they go, Jupiter bless us, and there shall we be put in a cauldron of lead and usurers' grease, amongst a whole million of cut-purses, and there boil like a gammon of bacon that will never be enough.

DOCTOR: How her brain coins!

DAUGHTER: Lords and courtiers that have got maids with child -- they are in this place. They shall stand in fire up to the navel and in ice up to th' heart, ... [IV.3.40] and there th'offending part burns, and the deceiving part freezes -- in truth a very grievous punishment as one would think for such a trifle. Believe me, one would marry a leprous witch to be rid on't, I'll assure you.

DOCTOR: How she continues this fancy! 'Tis not an engrafted madness, but a most thick and profound melancholy.

DAUGHTER: To hear there a proud lady and a proud city wife howl together! I were a beast and I'd call it good sport. One cries, 'O this smoke!', th'other, ... [IV.3.50] 'This fire!'; one cries, 'O that ever I did it behind the arras!', and then howls -- th'other curses a suing fellow and her garden-house.
[Sings] 'I will be true, my stars, my fate . . .' [Exit Daughter.]

JAILER: [to the Doctor.] What think you of her, sir?

DOCTOR: I think she has a perturbed mind, which I cannot minister to.

JAILER: Alas, what then?

DOCTOR: Understand you she ever affected any man ere she beheld Palamon? ... [IV.3.60]

JAILER: I was once, sir, in great hope that she had fixed her liking on this gentleman, my friend.

WOOER: I did think so too, and would account I had a great penn'orth on't to give half my state that both she and I, at this present, stood unfeignedly on the same terms.

DOCTOR: That intemperate surfeit of her eye hath distempered the other senses. They may return and settle again to execute their preordained faculties, but they are now in a most extravagant vagary. This you must ... [IV.3.70] do: confine her to a place where the light may rather seem to steal in than be permitted; take upon you, young sir her friend, the name of Palamon; say you come to eat with her and to commune of love. This will catch her attention, for this her mind beats upon -- other objects that are inserted 'tween her mind and eye become the pranks and friskins of her madness. Sing to her such green songs of love as she says Palamon hath sung in prison; come to her stuck in as sweet flowers as the season is mistress of, and thereto ... [IV.3.80] make an addition of some other compounded odors which are grateful to the sense. All this shall become Palamon, for Palamon can sing, and Palamon is sweet and every good thing. Desire to eat with her, carve her, drink to her, and still among intermingle your petition of grace and acceptance into her favor. Learn what maids have been her companions and play-feres, and let them repair to her, with Palamon in their mouths, and appear with tokens as if they suggested for him. It is a falsehood she is in, which is with ... [IV.3.90] falsehoods to be combated. This may bring her to eat, to sleep, and reduce what's now out of square in her into their former law and regiment. I have seen it approved, how many times I know not, but to make the number more I have great hope in this. I will between the passages of this project come in with my appliance,. Let us put it in execution, and hasten the success, which doubt not will bring forth comfort. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V

Scene V.1

An altar prepared. Flourish. Enter Theseus, Pirithous, Hippolyta, attendants.

THESEUS: Now let 'em enter and before the gods Tender their holy prayers. Let the temples

Burn bright with sacred fires, and the altars
In hallowed clouds commend their swelling incense
To those above us. Let no due be wanting.
[*Flourish of cornets.*] They have a noble work in hand, will honor
The very powers that love 'em.
[*Enter Palamon with his three Knights, at one door, and Arcite with his three Knights, at the other door.*]

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Sir, they enter.

THESEUS: You valiant and strong-hearted enemies,
You royal german foes that this day come
To blow that nearness out that flames between ye, ... [V.1.10]
Lay by your anger for an hour and dove-like,
Before the holy altars of your helpers,
The all-feared gods, bow down your stubborn bodies.
Your ire is more than mortal -- so your help be;
And as the gods regard ye, fight with justice.
I'll leave you to your prayers, and betwixt ye
I part my wishes.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Honor crown the worthiest.
[*Exit Theseus and his train.*]

PALAMON:[*to Arcite.*] The glass is running now that cannot finish
Till one of us expire. Think you but thus,
That were there aught in me which strove to show ... [V.1.20]
Mine enemy in this business, were't one eye
Against another, arm oppressed by arm,
I would destroy th'offender -- coz, I would,
Though parcel of myself. Then from this gather
How I should tender you.

ARCITE: ~~~ I am in labor
To push your name, your ancient love, our kindred,
Out of my memory, and i' th' self-same place
To seat something I would confound. So hoist we
The sails that must these vessels port even where
The heavenly limiter pleases.

PALAMON ~~~ You speak well, ... [V.1.30]
Before I turn, let me embrace thee, cousin --
This I shall never do again.

ARCITE: ~~~ One farewell.

PALAMON: Why, let it be so -- farewell, coz.

ARCITE: ~~~ Farewell, sir. [*Exeunt Palamon and his three Knights.*]

Knights, kinsmen, lovers -- yea, my sacrifices,
True worshipers of Mars, whose spirit in you
Expels the seeds of fear and th'apprehension
Which still is father of it, go with me
Before the god of our profession. There
Require of him the hearts of lions and
The breath of tigers, yea, the fierceness too, ... [V.1.40]

Yea, the speed also -- to go on, I mean,
Else wish we to be snails. You know my prize
Must be dragged out of blood -- force and great feat
Must put my garland on me, where she sticks,
The queen of flowers. Our intercession, then,
Must be to him that makes the camp a cistern
Brimmed with the blood of men -- give me your aid,
And bend your spirits towards him.

[*They kneel before the altar, fall on their faces, then on their knees again.*]

[*Praying to Mars*] ~~~ Thou mighty one,
That with thy power hast turned green Neptune into purple;
Whose havoc in vast field comets prewarn, ... [V.1.50]
Unearthed skulls proclaim; whose breath blows down
The teeming Ceres' foison; who dost pluck
With hand armipotent from forth blue clouds
The masoned turrets, that both mak'st and break'st
The stony girths of cities; me thy pupil,
Youngest follower of thy drum, instruct this day
With military skill, that to thy laud
I may advance my streamer, and by thee
Be styled the lord o'th' day. Give me, great Mars,
Some token of thy pleasure. ... [V.1.60]

[*Here they fall on their faces, as formerly, and there is heard clanging of Armour, with a short thunder, as the burst of a battle, whereupon they all rise and bow to the altar.*]

O great corrector of enormous times,
Shaker of e'er-rank states, thou grand decider
Of dusty and old titles, that heal'st with blood
The earth when it is sick, and cur'st the world
O'th' pleurisy of people, I do take
Thy signs auspiciously, and in thy name,
To my design, march boldly. [*to his Knights.*] Let us go.

Scene V. 2

Enter Palamon and his Knights with the former observance.

PALAMON: [*to his Knights.*] Our stars must glisten with new fire, or be
Today extinct. Our argument is love,
Which if the goddess of it grant, she gives
Victory too. Then blend your spirits with mine,
You whose free nobleness do make my cause
Your personal hazard. To the goddess Venus
Commend we our proceeding, and implore
Her power unto our party.

[*Here they kneel before the altar, fall on their faces, then on their knees again.*]

[*Praying to Venus.*] Hail, sovereign queen of secrets, who hast power

To call the fiercest tyrant from his rage ... [V.2.10]

And weep unto a girl; that hast the might

Even with an eye-glance, to choke Mars's drum

And turn th'alarum to whispers; that canst make

A cripple flourish with his crutch, and cure him

Before Apollo; that mayst force the king

To be his subject's vassal, and induce

Stale gravity to dance; the polled bachelor

Whose youth, like wanton boys through bonfires,

Have skipped thy flame, at seventy thou canst catch

And make him to the scorn of his hoarse throat ... [V.2.20]

Abuse young lays of love. What godlike power

Hast thou not power upon? To Phoebus thou

Add'st flames hotter than his -- the heavenly fires

Did scorch his mortal son, thine him. The huntress,

All moist and cold, some say, began to throw

Her bow away and sigh. Take to thy grave

Me, thy vowed soldier, who do bear thy yoke

As 'twere a wreath of roses, yet is heavier

Than lead itself, stings more than nettles.

I have never been foul-mouthed against thy law; ... [V.2.30]

Ne'er revealed secret, for I knew none; would not,

Had I kenned all that were. I never practiced

Upon man's wife, nor would the libels read

Of liberal wits. I never at great feasts

Sought to betray a beauty, but have blushed

At simp'ring sirs that did. I have been harsh

To large confessors, and have hotly asked them

If they had mothers -- I had one, a woman,

And women 'twere they wronged. I knew a man

Of eighty winters, this I told them, who ... [V.2.40]

A lass of fourteen bridged -- 'twas thy power

To put life into dust. The aged cramp

Had screwed his square foot round,

The gout had knit his fingers into knots,

Torturing convulsions from his globy eyes

Had almost drawn their spheres, that what was life
In him seemed torture. This anatomy
Had by his young fair ferè a boy, and I
Believed it was his, for she swore it was,
And who would not believe her? Brief -- I am ... [V.2.50]
To those that prate and have done, no companion;
To those that boast, and have not, a defier;
To those that would and cannot, a rejoicer.
Yea, him I do not love that tells close offices
The foulest way, nor names concealments in
The boldest language. Such a one I am,
And vow that lover never yet made sigh
Truer than I. O, then, most soft sweet goddess,
Give me the victory of this question, which
Is true love's merit, and bless me with a sign ... [V.2.60]
Of thy great pleasure.

*[Here music is heard, doves are seen to flutter.
They fall again upon their faces, then on their knees.]*

O thou that from eleven to ninety reign'st
In mortal bosoms, whose chase is this world
And we in herds thy game, I give thee thanks
For this fair token, which, being laid unto
Mine innocent true heart, arms in assurance
My body to this business. *[to his Knights.]* Let us rise
And bow before the goddess. *[They rise and bow.]*
~ ~ ~ Time comes on. *[Exeunt.]*

Scene V. 3

Still music of recorders. Enter Emilia in white, her hair about her shoulders, with a wheaten wreath; one in white holding up her train, her hair stuck with flowers; one before her carrying a silver hind in which is conveyed incense and sweet odors, which being set upon the altar, her maids standing apart, she sets fire to it. Then they curtsy and kneel.

EMILIA: *[Praying to Diana.]* O sacred, shadowy, cold, and constant queen,
Abandoner of revels, mute contemplative,
Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure
As wind-fanned snow, who to thy female knights
Allow'st no more blood than will make a blush,
Which is their order's robe: I here, thy priest,
Am humbled fore thine altar. O, vouchsafe
With that thy rare green eye, which never yet
Beheld thing maculate, look on thy virgin;
And, sacred silver mistress, lend thine ear -- ... [V.3.10]
Which ne'er heard scurril term, into whose port
Ne'er entered wanton sound -- to my petition,
Seasoned with holy fear. This is my last

Of vestal office. I am bride-habited,
But maiden-hearted. A husband I have 'pointed,
But do not know him. Out of two, I should
Choose one and pray for his success, but I
Am guiltless of election. Of mine eyes
Were I to lose one, they are equal precious --
I could doom neither: that which perished should ... [V.3.20]
Go to't unsentenced. Therefore, most modest queen,
He of the two pretenders that best loves me
And has the truest title in't, let him
Take off my wheaten garland, or else grant
The file and quality I hold I may
Continue in thy band.
*[Here the hind vanishes under the altar and in the place ascends
a rose tree having one rose upon it.][to her women.]*
See what our general of ebbs and flows
Out from the bowels of her holy altar,
With sacred act, advances -- but one rose!
If well inspired, this battle shall confound ... [V.3.30]
Both these brave knights, and I a virgin flower
Must grow alone, unplucked.
*[Here is heard a sudden twang of instruments and the
rose falls from the tree.]*
The flower is fall'n, the tree descends. *[to Diana]* O mistress,
Thou here dischargest me -- I shall be gathered.
I think so, but I know not thine own will.
Unclasp thy mystery. *[to her women.]* I hope she's pleased;
Her signs were gracious. *[They curtsy and exeunt.]*

Scene V. 4

Enter the Doctor, the Jailer, and the Wooer in the habit of Palamon.

DOCTOR: Has this advice I told you done any good upon her?

WOOER: O, very much. The maids that kept her company
have persuaded her that I am Palamon. Within
this half-hour she came smiling to me, and asked me
what I would eat, and when I would kiss her.
I told her presently, and kissed her twice.

DOCTOR: 'Twas well done -- twenty times had been far better,
For there the cure lies mainly.

WOOER: ~~~ Then she told me
She would watch with me tonight, for well she knew
What hour my fit would take me.

DOCTOR: ~~~ Let her do so, ... [V.4.10]
And when your fit comes, fit her home,
And presently.

WOOER: ~~~ She would have me sing.

DOCTOR: You did so?

WOOER: ~~~ No.

DOCTOR: ~~~ ~~~ 'Twas very ill done, then.
You should observe her every way.

WOOER: ~~~ Alas,
I have no voice, sir, to confirm her that way.

DOCTOR: That's all one, if ye make a noise.
If she entreat again, do anything --
Lie with her if she ask you.

JAILER: ~~~ Ho there, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Yes, in the way of cure.

JAILER: ~~~ But first, by your leave, ... [V.4.20]
I'th' way of honesty,

DOCTOR: ~~~ That's but a niceness --
Ne'er cast your child away for honesty.
Cure her first this way, then if she will be honest,
She has the path before her.

JAILER: ~~~ Thank ye, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Pray bring her in and let's see how she is.

WOOER: I will, and tell her her Palamon stays for her.
But, Doctor, methinks you are i' th' wrong still. [*Exit Jailer.*]

DOCTOR: Go, go. You fathers are fine fools -- her honesty?
An we should give her physic till we find that --

WOOER: Why, do you think she is not honest, sir? ... [V.4.30]

DOCTOR: How old is she?

WOOER: ~~~ She's eighteen.

DOCTOR: ~~~ ~~~ She may be --
But that's all one. 'Tis nothing to our purpose.
Whate'er her father says, if you perceive
Her mood inclining that way that I spoke of,
Videlicet, the way of flesh -- you have me?

WOOER: Yes, very well, sir.

DOCTOR: ~~~ Please her appetite,
And do it home -- it cures her, ipso facto,
The melancholy humor that infects her.

WOOER: I am of your mind, Doctor.
[*Enter the Jailer and his Daughter, mad.*]

DOCTOR: You'll find it so -- she comes; pray humor her. ... [V.4.40]
[*The Doctor and the Wooer stand apart.*]

JAILER: [*to Daughter.*] Come, your love Palamon stays for you, child,
And has done this long hour, to visit you.

DAUGHTER: I thank him for his gentle patience.
He's a kind gentleman, and I am much bound to him.
Did you ne'er see the horse he gave me?

JAILER: ~~~ Yes.

DAUGHTER: How do you like him?

JAILER: ~~~ He's a very fair one.

DAUGHTER: You never saw him dance?

JAILER: ~~~ No.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ ~~~ I have, often.
He dances very finely, very comely,
And, for a jig, come cut and long-tail to him,
He turns ye like a top.

JAILER: ~~~ That's fine, indeed. [V.4.50]

DAUGHTER: He'll dance the morris twenty mile an hour,
And that will founder the best hobbyhorse,

If I have any skill, in all the parish --
And gallops to the tune of 'Light o' love'.
What think you of this horse?

JAILER: ~~~ Having these virtues
I think he might be brought to play at tennis.

DAUGHTER: Alas, that's nothing.

JAILER: ~~~ Can he write and read too?

DAUGHTER: A very fair hand, and casts himself th'accounts
Of all his hay and provender. That ostler
Must rise betime that cozens him. You know ... [V.4.60]
The chestnut mare the Duke has?

JAILER: ~~~ Very well.

DAUGHTER: She is horribly in love with him, poor beast,
But he is like his master -- coy and scornful.

JAILER: What dowry has she?

DAUGHTER: Some two hundred bottles
And twenty strike of oats, but he'll ne'er have her.
He lisps in's neighing, able to entice
A miller's mare. He'll be the death of her.

DOCTOR: What stuff she utters!

JAILER: Make curtsy -- here your love comes.

WOOER: [*coming forward.*] Pretty soul, ... [V.4.70]
How do ye? [*She curtsies.*] That's a fine maid, there's a curtsy.

DAUGHTER: Yours to command, i' th' way of honesty --
How far is't now to th' end o'th' world, my masters?

DOCTOR: Why, a day's journey, wench.

DAUGHTER: [*to Wooer.*] ~~~ Will you go with me?

WOOER: What shall we do there, wench?

DAUGHTER: ~~~ Why, play at stool-ball --
What is there else to do?

WOOER: ~~~ I am content
If we shall keep our wedding there.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ 'Tis true --
For there, I will assure you, we shall find
Some blind priest for the purpose that will venture
To marry us, for here they are nice, and foolish. ... [V.4.80]
Besides, my father must be hanged tomorrow,
And that would be a blot i' th' business.
Are you not Palamon?

WOOER: ~~~ Do not you know me?

DAUGHTER: Yes, but you care not for me. I have nothing
But this poor petticoat and two coarse smocks.

WOOER: That's all one -- I will have you.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ Will you surely?

WOOER: Yes, by this fair hand, will I.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ We'll to bed then.

WOOER: E'en when you will. [*He kisses her.*]

DAUGHTER: [*Rubbing off the kiss*]
~~~ O, sir, you would fain be nibbling.

WOOER: Why do you rub my kiss off?

DAUGHTER: 'Tis a sweet one,  
And will perfume me finely against the wedding. ... [V.4.90]  
[*Indicating the Doctor*] Is this not your cousin Arcite?

DOCTOR: ~~~ Yes, sweetheart,  
And I am glad my cousin Palamon  
Has made so fair a choice.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ Do you think he'll have me?

DOCTOR: Yes, without doubt.

DAUGHTER: [*to the Jailer.*] ~~~ Do you think so too?

JAILER: ~~~ ~~~ Yes.

DAUGHTER: We shall have many children. [*to the Doctor.*]

~~~Lord, how you're grown!

My Palamon, I hope, will grow too, finely,
Now he's at liberty. Alas, poor chicken,
He was kept down with hard meat and ill lodging,
But I'll kiss him up again. [*Enter a Messenger.*]

MESSENGER: What do you here? You'll lose the noblest sight ... [V.4.100]
That e'er was seen.

JAILER: ~~~ Are they i' th' field?

MESSENGER: ~~~ They are --
You bear a charge there too.

JAILER: ~~~ I'll away straight.
[*to the others.*] I must e'en leave you here.

DOCTOR: ~~~ Nay, we'll go with you --
I will not lose the sight.

JAILER: ~~~ How did you like her?

DOCTOR: I'll warrant you, within these three or four days
I'll make her right again.
[*Exit the Jailer with the Messenger.*]
[*to the Wooer.*] ~~~ You must not from her,
But still preserve her in this way.

WOOER: ~~~ I will.

DOCTOR: Let's get her in.

WOOER: [*to the Jailer's Daughter.*] ~~~ Come, sweet, we'll go to dinner,
And then we'll play at cards.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ And shall we kiss too?

WOOER: A hundred times.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ And twenty.

WOOER: ~~~ Ay, and twenty. ... [V.4.110]

DAUGHTER: And then we'll sleep together.

DOCTOR: [*to the Wooer.*] ~~~ Take her offer.

WOOER: [*to the Jailer's Daughter*] Yes, marry, will we.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ But you shall not hurt me.

WOOER: I will not, sweet.

DAUGHTER: ~~~ If you do, love, I'll cry. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene V. 5

Flourish. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, Pirithous, and some attendants.

EMILIA: I'll no step further.

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ Will you lose this sight?

EMILIA: I had rather see a wren hawk at fly
Than this decision. Every blow that falls
Threats a brave life; each stroke laments
The place whereon it falls, and sounds more like
A bell than blade. I will stay here.
It is enough my hearing shall be punished
With what shall happen, 'gainst the which there is
No dealing, but to hear; not taint mine eye
With dread sights it may shun.

PIRITHOUS: [*to Theseus.*] ~~~ Sir, my good lord, ... [V.5.10]
Your sister will no further.

THESEUS: ~~~ O, she must.
She shall see deeds of honor in their kind,
Which sometime show well penciled. Nature now
Shall make and act the story, the belief
Both sealed with eye and ear [*to Emilia.*] You must be present --
You are the victor's meed, the price and garland
To crown the question's title.

EMILIA: ~~~ Pardon me,
If I were there, I'd wink.

THESEUS: ~~~ You must be there --
This trial is, as 'twere, i' th' night, and you
The only star to shine.

EMILIA: ~~~ I am extinct. [V.5.20]
There is but envy in that light which shows
The one the other. Darkness, which ever was
The dam of horror, who does stand accursed
Of many mortal missions, may even now,
By casting her black mantle over both,
That neither could find other, get herself
Some part of a good name, and many a murder
Set off whereto she's guilty.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ You must go.

EMILIA: In faith, I will not.

THESEUS: ~~~ Why, the knights must kindle
Their valor at your eye. Know, of this war ... [V.5.30]
You are the treasure, and must needs be by
To give the service pay.

EMILIA: ~~~ Sir, pardon me --
The title of a kingdom may be tried
Out of itself.

THESEUS: ~~~ Well, well -- then at your pleasure.
Those that remain with you could wish their office
To any of their enemies.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ Farewell, sister.
I am like to know your husband fore yourself,
By some small start of time. He whom the gods
Do of the two know best, I pray them he
Be made your lot. ... [V.5.40]
*[Exeunt all but Emilia. Emilia takes out two pictures, one from
her right side, and one from her left.]*

EMILIA: Arcite is gently visaged, yet his eye
Is like an engine bent or a sharp weapon
In a soft sheath. Mercy and manly courage
Are bedfellows in his visage. Palamon
Has a most menacing aspect. His brow
Is graved and seems to bury what it frowns on,
Yet sometime 'tis not so, but alters to
The quality of his thoughts. Long time his eye
Will dwell upon his object. Melancholy
Becomes him nobly -- so does Arcite's mirth. ... [V.5.50]
But Palamon's sadness is a kind of mirth,

So mingled as if mirth did make him sad
And sadness merry. Those darker humors that
Stock misbecomingly on others, on them
Live in fair dwelling.

[*Cornets. Trumpets sound as to a charge.*]

Hark, how yon spurs to spirit do incite
The princes to their proof. Arcite may win me,
And yet may Palamon wound Arcite to
The spoiling of his figure. O, what pity
Enough for such a chance! If I were by ... [V.5.60]
I might do hurt, for they would glance their eyes
Toward my seat, and in that motion might
Omit a ward or forfeit an offense

Which craved that very time. It is much better

[*Cornets. A great cry and noise within, crying, 'A Palamon'.*]

I am not there. O better never born,
Than minister to such harm. [*Enter Servant.*]
What is the chance?

SERVANT: The cry's 'A Palamon'.

EMILIA: Then he has won. 'Twas ever likely --
He looked all grace and success, and he is
Doubtless the prim'st of men. I prithee run ... [V.5.70]
And tell me how it goes.

SERVANT: ~~~ Still 'Palamon'.

EMILIA: Run and enquire. [*Exit Servant.*]

[*She speaks to the picture in her right hand.*]

~~~ Poor servant, thou hast lost.

Upon my right side still I wore thy picture,  
Palamon's on the left. Why so, I know not.  
I had no end in't, else chance would have it so.

[*Another cry and shout within and cornets.*]

On the sinister side the heart lies -- Palamon  
Had the best-boding chance. This burst of clamor  
Is sure the end o'th' combat. [*Enter Servant.*]

SERVANT: They said that Palamon had Arcite's body  
Within an inch o'th' pyramid -- that the cry ... [V.5.80]  
Was general 'A Palamon'. But anon  
Th'assistants made a brave redemption, and  
The two bold tilters at this instant are  
Hand to hand at it.

EMILIA: ~~~ Were they metamorphosed  
Both into one! O why? There were no woman  
Worth so composed a man: their single share,  
Their nobleness peculiar to them, gives  
The prejudice of disparity, value's shortness,  
To any lady breathing -- [*Cornets. Cry within, 'Arcite, Arcite.'*]  
~~~ More exulting?  
'Palamon' still?

SERVANT: ~~~ Nay, now the sound is 'Arcite'. ... [V.5.90]

EMILIA: I prithee, lay attention to the cry.
[*Cornets. A great shout and cry, 'Arcite, victory!'*]
Set both thine ears to th' business.

SERVANT: ~~~ The cry is
'Arcite' and 'Victory' -- hark, 'Arcite, victory!'
The combat's consummation is proclaimed
By the wind instruments.

EMILIA: ~~~ Half sights saw
That Arcite was no babe. God's lid, his richness
And costliness of spirit looked through him -- it could
No more be hid in him than fire in flax,
Than humble banks can go to law with waters
That drift winds force to raging. I did think ... [V.5.100]
Good Palamon would miscarry, yet I knew not
Why I did think so. Our reasons are not prophets
When oft our fancies are. They are coming off --
Alas, poor Palamon.
[*She puts away the pictures. Cornets. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta,
Pirithous, Arcite as victor, and attendants.*]

THESEUS: Lo, where our sister is in expectation,
Yet quaking and unsettled. Fairest Emily,
The gods by their divine arbitrament
Have given you this knight. He is a good one
As ever struck at head. [*to Arcite and Emilia.*] Give me your hands.
[*to Arcite.*] Receive you her, [*to Emilia.*]
~~~ you him: [*to both.*] be plighted with ... [V.5.110]  
A love that grows as you decay.

ARCITE: ~~~ Emilia,  
To buy you I have lost what's dearest to me  
Save what is bought, and yet I purchase cheaply  
As I do rate your value.

THESEUS: [*to Emilia.*] ~~~ O loved sister,  
He speaks now of as brave a knight as e'er  
Did spur a noble steed. Surely the gods  
Would have him die a bachelor lest his race  
Should show i' th' world too godlike. His behavior  
So charmed me that, methought, Alcides was  
To him a sow of lead. If I could praise ... [V.5.120]  
Each part of him to th'all I have spoke, your Arcite  
Did not lose by't; for he that was thus good,  
Encountered yet his better. I have heard  
Two emulous Philomels beat the ear o'th' night  
With their contentious throats, now one the higher,  
Anon the other, then again the first,  
And by and by out-breasted, that the sense  
Could not be judge between 'em -- so it fared  
Good space between these kinsmen, till heavens did  
Make hardly one the winner. [*to Arcite.*] Wear the garland ... [V.5.130]  
With joy that you have won. -- For the subdued,  
Give them our present justice, since I know  
Their lives but pinch 'em. Let it be here done.  
The scene's not for our seeing; go we hence  
Right joyful, with some sorrow. [*to Arcite.*] Arm your prize;  
I know you will not lose her. Hippolyta,  
I see one eye of yours conceives a tear,  
The which it will deliver. [*Flourish.*]

EMILIA: ~~~ Is this winning?  
O all you heavenly powers, where is your mercy?  
But that your wills have said it must be so, ... [V.5.140]  
And charge me live to comfort this unfriended,  
This miserable prince, that cuts away  
A life more worthy from him than all women,  
I should and would die too.

HIPPOLYTA: ~~~ Infinite pity  
That four such eyes should be so fixed on one  
That two must needs be blind for't.

THESEUS: ~~~ So it is. [*Exeunt.*]

### Scene V. 6

*Enter, guarded, Palamon and his three Knights pinioned;  
enter with them the Jailer and an executioner with block and axe.*

PALAMON: There's many a man alive that hath outlived  
The love o'th' people; yea, i' th' self-same state

Stands many a father with his child: some comfort  
We have by so considering. We expire,  
And not without men's pity; to live still,  
Have their good wishes. We prevent  
The loathsome misery of age, beguile  
The gout and rheum that in lag hours attend  
The grey approachers; we come towards the gods  
Young and unwappered, not halting under crimes ... [V.6.10]  
Many and stale -- that sure shall please the gods  
Sooner than such, to give us nectar with 'em,  
For we are more clear spirits. May dear kinsmen,  
Whose lives for this poor comfort are laid down,  
You have sold 'em too too cheap.

1 KNIGHT: ~~~ What ending could be  
Of more content? O'er us the victors have  
Fortune, whose title is as momentary  
As to us death is certain -- a grain of honor  
They not o'erweigh us.

2 KNIGHT: ~~~ Let us bid farewell,  
And with our patience anger tott'ring fortune, ... [V.6.20]  
Who at her certain'st reels.

2 KNIGHT: ~~~ Come, who begins?

PALAMON: E'en he that led you to this banquet shall  
Taste to you all. [*to the Jailer*] Aha, my friend, my friend,  
Your gentle daughter gave me freedom once;  
You'll see't done now for ever. Pray, how does she?  
I heard she was not well; her kind of ill  
Gave me some sorrow.

JAILER: ~~~ Sir, she's well restored  
And is to be married shortly.

PALAMON: ~~~ By my short life,  
I am most glad on't. 'Tis the latest thing  
I shall be glad of. Prithee, tell her so; ... [V.6.30]  
Commend me to her, and to piece her portion  
Tender her this. [*He gives his purse.*]

1 KNIGHT: ~~~ Nay, let's be offerers all.

2 KNIGHT: Is it a maid?

PALAMON: ~~~ Verily, I think so --  
A right good creature more to me deserving  
Than I can quit or speak of.

ALL 3 KNIGHTS ~~~ Commend us to her.  
[*They give their purses.*]

JAILER: The gods requite you all, and make her thankful.

PALAMON: Adieu, and let my life be now as short  
As my leave-taking. [*He lies on the block.*]

1 KNIGHT: ~~~ Lead, courageous cousin.

2 and 3 KNIGHTS We'll follow cheerfully.  
[*A great noise within: crying, 'Run! Save! Hold!'  
Enter in haste a Messenger.*]

MESSENGER: Hold! Hold! O, hold! Hold! Hold! ... [V.6.40]  
[*Enter Pirithous in haste.*]

PIRITHOUS: Hold, ho! It is a cursed haste you made  
If you had done so quickly! Noble Palamon,  
The gods will show their glory in a life  
That thou art yet to lead.

PALAMON: ~~~ Can that be,  
When Venus, I have said, is false? How do things fare?

PIRITHOUS: Arise, great sir, and give the tidings ear  
That are most rarely sweet and bitter.

PALAMON: ~~~ What  
Hath waked us from our dream?

PIRITHOUS: ~~~ List, then: your cousin,  
Mounted upon a steed that Emily  
Did first bestow on him, a black one owing [V.6.50]  
Not a hair-worth of white -- which some will say  
Weakens his price and many will not buy  
His goodness with this note; which superstition  
Here finds allowance -- on this horse is Arcite  
Trotting the stones of Athens, which the calkins  
Did rather tell than trample; for the horse  
Would make his length a mile, if't pleased his rider  
To put pride in him. As he thus went counting

The flinty pavement, dancing, as 'twere, to th' music  
His own hooves made -- for, as they say, from iron ... [V.6.60]  
Came music's origin -- what envious flint,  
Cold as old Saturn and like him possessed  
With fire malevolent, darted a spark,  
Or what fierce sulfur else, to this end made,  
I comment not -- the hot horse, hot as fire,  
Took toy at this and fell to what disorder  
His power could give his will, bounds; comes on end;  
Forgets school-doing, being therein trained  
And of kind manage; pig-like he whines  
At the sharp rowel, which he frets at rather ... [V.6.70]  
Than any jot obeys; seeks all foul means  
Of boist'rous and rough jad'ry to disseat  
His lord, that kept it bravely. When naught served,  
When neither curb would crack, girth break, nor diff'ring plunges  
Disroot his rider whence he grew, but that  
He kept him 'tween his legs, on his hind hooves --  
On end he stands --  
That Arcite's legs, being higher than his head,  
Seemed with strange art to hang. His victor's wreath  
Even then fell off his head; and presently ... [V.6.80]  
Backward the jade comes o'er and his full poise  
Becomes the rider's load. Yet is he living;  
But such a vessel 'tis that floats but for  
The surge that next approaches. He much desires  
To have some speech with you -- lo, he appears.  
[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, and Arcite in a chair borne by attendants.]

PALAMON: O miserable end of our alliance!  
The gods are mighty. Arcite, if thy heart,  
Thy worthy manly heart, be yet unbroken,  
Give me thy last words. I am Palamon,  
One that yet loves thee dying.

ARCITE: ~~~ Take Emilia, ... [V.6.90]  
And with her all the world's joy. Reach thy hand --  
Farewell -- I have told my last hour. I was false,  
Yet never treacherous. Forgive me, cousin --  
One kiss from fair Emilia -- [*They kiss.*] 'tis done.  
Take her; I die. [*He dies.*]

PALAMON: ~~~ Thy brave soul seek Elysium.

EMILIA: [*to Arcite's body.*]  
I'll close thine eyes, Prince. Blessed souls be with thee.

Thou art a right good man, and, while I live,  
This day I give to tears.

PALAMON: ~~~ And I to honor.

THESEUS: In this place first you fought, e'en very here  
I sundered you. Acknowledge to the gods ... [V.6.100]  
Our thanks that you are living.  
His part is played, and, though it were too short,  
He did it well. Your day is lengthened and  
The blissful dew of heaven does arouse you.  
The powerful Venus well hath graced her altar,  
And given you your love; our master, Mars,  
Hath vouched his oracle, and to Arcite gave  
The grace of the contention. So the deities  
Have showed due justice. -- Bear this hence.  
[*Exeunt attendants with Arcite's body.*]

PALAMON: ~~~ O cousin,  
That we should things desire which do cost us ... [V.6.110]  
The loss of our desire! That naught could buy  
Dear love, but loss of dear love!

THESEUS: ~~~ Never fortune  
Did play a subtler game -- the conquered triumphs,  
The victor has the loss. Yet in the passage  
The gods have been most equal. Palamon,  
Your kinsman hath confessed the right o'th' lady  
Do lie in you, for you first saw her and  
Even then proclaimed your fancy. He restored her  
As your stol'n jewel, and desired your spirit  
To send him hence, forgiven. The gods my justice ... [V.6.120]  
Take from my hand, and they themselves become  
The executioners. Lead your lady off,  
And call your lovers from the stage of death,  
Whom I adopt my friends. A day or two  
Let us look sadly and give grace unto  
The funeral of Arcite, in whose end  
The visages of bridegrooms we'll put on  
And smile with Palamon, for whom an hour,  
But one hour since, I was as dearly sorry  
As glad of Arcite, and am now as glad ... [V.6.130]  
As for him sorry. O you heavenly charmers, --  
What things you make of us! For what we lack  
We laugh, for what we have, are sorry; still  
Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful

For that which is, and with you leave dispute  
That are above our question. Let's go off  
And bear us like the time. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

## **Epilogue**

*Enter Epilogue.*

EPILOGUE: I would now ask ye how ye like the play,  
But, as it is with schoolboys, cannot say.  
I am cruel fearful. Pray yet stay awhile,  
And let me look upon ye. No man smile?  
Then it goes hard, I see. He that has  
Loved a young handsome wench, then, show his face --  
'Tis strange if none be here -- and, if he will,  
Against his conscience let him hiss and kill  
Our market. 'Tis in vain, I see, to stay ye.  
Have at the worst can come, then! Now, what say ye? ... [Ep.10]  
And yet mistake me not -- I am not bold --  
We have no such cause. If the tale we have told --  
For 'tis no other -- any way content ye,  
For to that honest purpose it was meant ye,  
We have our end; and ye shall have ere long  
I dare say, many a better to prolong  
Your old loves to us. We and all our might  
Rest at your service. Gentlemen, good night. [*Flourish. Exit.*]

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# APPENDIX I - Glossary

**appalls** (n or v): shocks, dismays. FS (6-T&C, Ham, Mac, V&A, TNK (v); Mac (n)); Chapman (v) Iliad, Batrachom.

**armipotent** (a): mighty in arms (of Mars). FS (4-LLL, AWEW, TNK); Chaucer Kn Tale (1st OED citation).

**baldric** (n): belt worn from shoulder across to under other arm, to carry sword, bugle, etc. FS (2-Ado, TNK); Spenser FQ.

**beshrew** [*part of an imprecation*] (v): curse. FS (31); TNK. Common.

**calkin** (n): turned-down edge of a horse-shoe. FS (TNK).

**carrack** (n): merchant ship. FS (3-Errors, Oth, TNK); (anon.) Woodstock.

**casque** (n): helmet. FS (5-Rich2, H5, Cor, T&C, TNK).

**chaffy** (a): light, worthless. FS (1-TNK, 3d OED citation); (anon.) Willobie; Chettle Mourn Garm.

**chare** (v): accomplish (a turn of work). FS (1-TNK, 2d OED citation); 1570 Marriage Wit & Sc; (1622) Fletcher Love's Cure.

**corslet** (n): a piece of defensive armor. FS (2-Corio, TNK); (anon.) Locrine.

**dart**: spear, javelin (n). FS (Edw3, TNK); Golding Ovid; Marlowe T2; Kyd Sol&Per; (anon.) Fam Vic, Willobie, Mucedorus, Locrine, Leic Gh; Sidney Antony; Munday More, Huntington.

**deliverly** (adv): deftly, cleverly. FS (1-TNK, 2d OED citation). OED 1st citation: 1530 Palsgr. 550, I fynger, I handell an instrument of musyke delyverly.

**dividual** (a): divisible, separate. FS (1-TNK, 2d OED citation); Florio Divisible (1st OED citation).

**dowsets** (n): testicles. FS (1-TNK). 1st OED citation: 1611 Beaum. & Fl. Philaster

**dram** (n): poison. FS (6-R&J, Ham, WT, Cymb, TNK); (anon.) Woodstock, Arden, Leic Gh.

**dregged** (a): befouled, stemmed [#usually with lees of liquor]. FS (1-TNK). Not in OED. empourtment: transport of passion. FS (1-TNK). 1st OED citation 1734.

**emulous** (a): rival, competitive, jealous. FS (5-T&C, TNK); (anon.) Leic Gh.

**engraft** (v): attach, graft. FS (4-2H4, Sonnet 15, 37, TNK); Golding Ovid; Oxford Tournament speech; Marlowe T2; Nashe Almond.

**ferre** (n): mate, companion. FS (3-TA, Pericles, TNK); Golding Ovid; Brooke Romeus; Gascoigne Jocasta; Kyd Sol&Per; (anon.) Locrine, Penelope.

**ferula** (n): from use of the fennel-stalk in Roman times: a cane, rod, or other instrument of punishment, esp. a flat piece of wood. FS (TNK); (1580) North Plutarch.

**flurt** (v): reject, cast aside. FS (TNK).

**foison** (n): plenty, abundance. FS (6-MM, Temp, A&C, Mac, Sonnet, TNK); Peele Wives.

**frampold** (a): disagreeable, sour tempered. FS (2-MWW, TNK).

**friskin** (n): frolic. FS (1-TNK); Nashe Lenten Stuff. (v): gay, frisky person. Cf. Nashe Saffron.

**futurely** (adv): in the future. FS (1-TNK); Chapman Iliad (1st OED citation).

**galled** (v): (1) infected with venereal disease. FS (T&C). (2) gall/gaul (v): irritate, harass. FS (10); Cf. Gascoigne *Jocasta*. The meaning here is unclear.

**gaud** (n): trinket, trifle, sometimes slattern. FS (6-John, Shrew, MND, T&C, TNK); Lyly *Woman ... Moon*; (anon.) *Blast of Retreat*.

**gelt** (a): castrated, gelded. FS (2-MV, TNK); (anon.) *Weakest*.

**glister** (v): glitter. FS (9); Golding *Ovid*, Abraham; Brooke *Romeus*; Gascoigne *Jocasta*; Watson *Hek*; Lyly *Gallathea*, *Woman ... Moon*, *Midas*; Greene *Fr Bacon*; (anon.) *Lochrine*; (disp.) *Cromwell*, *Maiden's*. Almost identical to V&A (44): His eye, which scornfully glisters like fire. See also *Willobie* (In praise of.2): Yet Tarquin plucked his glistering grape, And Shake-speare, paints poor Lucrece rape.

**globy** (a): spherical, round. FS (TNK). 1st OED citation 1600, missed TNK.

**grece** (a): flight of stairs. FS (TNK); Golding *Ovid*.

**gyves**: fetters (n), fetters (v). FS (8); Udall *Erasmus*; Marlowe *Faustus*; (anon.) *Willobie*; (disp.) *Cromwell*, *Oldcastle*.

**hilding** (n): [#man] good-for-nothing. FS (4-R&J, AWEW, Cymb, TNK); Greene *Fr Bacon*. AWEW 1st use per OED.

**holiday** (n): treat, pleasure. FS (TNK).

**jean** [*judgments*] (a): jean is a coarse twilled cloth, also called fustian. Here possibly a play on words, indicating fustian (bombastic) judgments? FS (TNK). OED cites but indicates some puzzlement over meaning.

**ken** (v): espy, see. FS (4-2H6, T&C, Edw3, TNK); Golding *Ovid*; Greene *Alphonsus*.

**laund** (n): pasture, open field. FS (3-3H6, TNK, V&A); Golding *Ovid*; Lyly *Woman ... Moon*; Marlowe *Edw2*; Greene *Fr Bacon*, *Orl Fur*; (disp.) *Greene's Groat*; Nashe *Penniless*.

**lineament** (n): feature, esp. face. FS (8-Rich3, Rich2, MV, R&J, Ado, AsYou, TNK); Spenser *Shep Cal*; Jonson *Cynthia*.

**martialist** (n): person born under the influence of Mars, military man. FS (2-Edw3, TNK); Kyd *Sp Tr*; Lyly *Woman ... Moon*.

**mead** (n): meadow. FS (6); Golding *Ovid*.

**meed** (n): reward, prize. FS (19); Golding *Ovid*; Kyd *Sp Tr*; Lyly *Woman ... Moon*; Marlowe *T1*; (anon.) *Arden*; *Nobody/Somebody*.

**musit** (n): gap [*through the bushes*], FS (2-V&A, 1st OED citation; TNK); Markham Gent Acad.  
**operance** (n): operation. FS (1-TNK, 1st OED citation).

**pelting** (a): paltry. FS (7-Rich2, MND, T&C, MM, Lear, TNK); Golding Ovid; Lyly Campaspe, Gallatea, Endymion, Midas, Bombie; (anon.) Woodstock, Willobie; Harvey 4 Letters; Chettle Kind Hart.

**Philomel** (n): poetic name for nightingale. FS (MND, Titus, TNK); Golding Ovid (myth of Philomel); Gascoigne Philomene; Spenser Shep Cal.

**pie** (n): magpie, chattering person (usually female): FS (3H6, TNK); Golding Ovid.

**polled** (a): bald. FS (TNK).

**precipitance** (n): leaping from heights. FS (TNK).

**puissance** (n): power, military army/might. FS (7-2H6, 3H6, John, 2H4, H5, Lear, TNK); Golding Ovid; Greene G a G; (anon.) Locrine, Leic Gh; Spenser FQ. **puissant** (a): powerful. FS (11); Golding Ovid; Marlowe T1; Kyd Sp Tr; (anon.) Woodstock, Mucedorus, Leic Gh.

**scurril** (a): gross, coarse. FS (2-T&C, TNK); Nashe Almond.

**seely** (a): silly, innocent, vulnerable. FS (many); Ovid Golding; others.

**skiffed** (v): crossed, sailed over. FS (1-TNK, 1st OED citation).

**sod** (v): seethed. FS (2-Lucrece, TNK); Golding Ovid; Lyly Bombie.

**tell** (v): [*of horses*] keep in step. FS (H8, TNK).

**terrene** (a): earthy. FS (2-A&C, TNK); Udall (3d OED citation).

**tod** (n): bushy mass, cluster. FS (3-WT. TNK); Golding Ovid.

**uncandied** (v): melted. FS (TNK, only OED citation).

**unpanged** (a): unmoved by pain. FS (1-TNK, only OED citation). Cymb uses the base verb "panged".

**unwappered** (a): unexhausted. FS (TNK, only OED citation).

**videlicit** (lat): that is to say, namely. FS (AsYou, MND, TNK); Nashe Penniless; (anon.) Willobie; Chettle Kind Hart.

**visitating** (a): visiting. FS (1-TNK, only OED citation).

wot (v): know. FS (30). Common.

Length: 23,513 words

### Source

The primary source for this play is "The Knight's Tale" from Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The story can be accessed online at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/mideng/browse.html> (Canterbury Tales TOC) or search "Geoffrey Chaucer" and select links.

### Suggested Reading

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### Authorship and Dating

(For a list of very old, difficult to find books, consult Frey.)

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Hoy, Cyrus. "Review of Shakespeare and the Two Noble Kinsmen." by Paul Bertram. *Modern Philology* 67 August 1969): 83-88. (disputes Bertram)

Criticism

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Brownlow, F. W. *Two Shakespearean Sequences*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977.

Muir, Kenneth. *Shakespeare as Collaborator*. London: Methuen and Co., 1960.

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### Attribution of Scenes

Most, but not all, critics believe that Shakespeare was responsible for the formal scenes involving Palamon and Arcite: Act I; Act II, Scene 1; Act 3, Scenes 1 and 2; Act 5, Scenes 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. Fletcher is believed to have written scenes involving the Jailer's Daughter subplot, the rustics, the morris dance (with characters that first appeared in Beaumont's *Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*, 1613). Scenes involving the quarrels and rivalry of Palamon and Arcite are somewhat rude compared to the elegaic tone of acknowledged Shakespeare sequences.

## APPENDIX II: Connections

### Evil/Good

**Brooke** Romeus (To the Reader): So the good doings of the good, & the evil acts of the wicked  
**Gascoygne** Jocasta (I.1.395-96) ANTIGONE: Yet, for because itself partaker am  
 Of good and evil with this my country soil,

(II.1.456) JOCASTA: If the head be evil the body cannot be good.

(III.1..195) TIRESIAS: Though evil for thee, yet for thy country good.

**Edwards** D&P (1583): It is an evil wind that bloweth no man good.

**Lyly** Sapho & Phao (II.2.) SAPHO: It is pity in so good a face there should be an evil eye.

**Kyd** ST (I.2.339) ALEXANDRO: Nay, evil news fly faster still than good.

**Shakes** Rich3 (I.3.334): do good for evil. Also I.2.69 and I.3.315-16.(I.2.38-40) ARCITE: It is for our residing where every evil

Hath a good color, where every seeming good's / A certain evil,

**Anon.** Willobie (To the gentle & courteous Reader): That speak good of evil, and evil of goodseems a perfect inversion of both the Bible and Shakespeare citations.

**Geneva Bible** 1Thess. 5.15 See that none recompense evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good

Sam. 24,18 Thou art more righteous than I; for thou has rendered me good, and I have rendered thee evil. 12.21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with goodness.

## Mind ... Beat

**Anon.** Dodypoll (V.2.23): Yet since my mind beats on it mightily,

**Shakes** Tempest (I.2) MIR: For still 'tis beating in my mind ...

(IV.1) PROS: A turn or two I'll walk, to still my beating mind.

(V.1) PROS: Do not infest your mind with beating on ...(IV.3.75) DOCTOR: for this her mind beats upon --

other objects that are inserted 'tween her mind and eye become the pranks and friskins of her madness.

## Favored Words/Phrases

**had rather:** Scenes I.4, II.2, IV.2, V.5; Shakespeare (79); Marlowe Jew of Malta (1); (anon.) Edward Ironside (1), Arden of Feversham (2), Nobody and Somebody (5); Oxford letter (1); (anon.) Locrine (1), Dr. Dodypoll (1); none in Brooke Romeus; none in Edwards Damon and Pithias; none in Thomas Kyd plays; none in Robert Greene plays; none in Mucedorus, Willobie his Avis, Penelope's Sacrifice, Weakest Goeth to the Wall, Leic Gh

**pray speak:** Scene IV.2 (2); Shakespeare Henry VIII (2); Willobie (1); none in Brooke Romeus; none in Edwrds Dam&Pith; none in Thomas Kyd plays; none in Robert Greene plays; none in Marlowe plays; none in Ironside, Arden, Locrine, Mucedorus, Nob/Someb, Penelope, Weakest, Dodypoll; Leic Gh