

**Christopher Marlowe's  
Complete Plays:  
Retellings**

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**SMASHWORDS EDITION**

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**Dedicated to Carl Eugene Bruce and Josephine Saturday Bruce**

**\*\*\***

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# Chapter 1: DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS (*Dido*)

### **Gods:**

Jupiter, King of the Gods.

Mercury (Hermes), the Messenger God. Mercury is the god's Roman name, and Hermes is the god's Greek name. Christopher Marlowe uses both names in this play.

Ganymede, Cupbearer to the Gods.

Cupid, God of Love.

### **Goddesses:**

Venus, Goddess of Love and Beauty and Sexual Passion.

Juno, Queen of the Gods.

### **Trojans:**

Aeneas, Leader of the exiled Trojans after the Fall of Troy.

Ascanius, his son.

Achates.

Ilioneus.

Cloanthus.

Sergestus.

### **Aeneas' Rival:**

Iarbas, King of Gaetulia.

### **Carthaginians:**

Dido, Queen of Carthage.

Anna, her sister.

Nurse.

### **Minor Characters:**

Trojan Soldiers, Carthaginian Lords, Attendants.

### **NOTE:**

Thomas Nashe may be a co-author of this play.

## ACT 1 (*Dido*)

### — 1.1 —

On Mount Olympus, Jupiter dandled Ganymede upon his knee and Mercury lay asleep.

“Come, gentle Ganymede, and play with me,” Jupiter said. “I love you well, and I don’t care what Juno says.”

Ganymede was a beautiful young boy, and Jupiter loved him. Jupiter was unfaithful to his wife, Juno, and had many affairs with goddesses and mortal women.

“I am ‘much better off’ because of your worthless love,” Ganymede said sarcastically, “that will not shield me from her shrewish blows. Today, when I poured nectar in your cups and held the fine napkin while you drank, she reached over and hit me so hard that I spilled the nectar, and she made the blood run down from my ears.”

The gods drank nectar and ate ambrosia.

“What!” Jupiter said. “Does she dare strike the darling of my thoughts? By Saturn’s soul, and this earth-threatening hair, that, shaken thrice, makes nature’s buildings quake, I vow that if she just once frowns on you again, to hang her, like a meteor, between heaven and earth, and bind her, hand and foot, with golden cords, as once I did after she harmed Hercules.”

Jupiter was a powerful god. To become the King of the gods, he had to overpower his father, Saturn, and just by shaking his hair three times he could cause earthquakes that would shake mountains.

Juno hated the children that Jupiter fathered with other goddesses and women. One of these children was the super-strong Hercules, whom Juno once caused to be shipwrecked. To punish Juno, Jupiter tied her with golden ropes, hung anvils from her feet, and let her hang suspended by her hands.

“If I might just see that pretty entertainment afoot,” Ganymede said, “oh, how I would laugh with Helen’s brother, and bring the gods to see and wonder at Juno’s punishment.”

Helen is Helen of Troy, and her brother would be either Castor or Pollux. They were her twin brothers, but Castor was mortal and Pollux was immortal. After Castor died, Pollux shared his immortality with him. The brothers took turns being alive: While one twin was happy and alive on Mount Olympus with the other gods, the other twin was in Hades, the Land of the Dead.

Ganymede continued, “Sweet Jupiter, if I have ever pleased your eye or seemed fair, walled in with eagle’s wings, grace my immortal beauty with this favor, and I will spend my time in your bright arms.”

Earlier, Jupiter had turned himself into an eagle, swooped down and seized the extremely good-looking Ganymede, and carried him to Mount Olympus to be his cupbearer. Although Ganymede had been born mortal, Jupiter gave him eternal youth.

“What would I deny your youth, you sweet boy,” Jupiter said, “whose face reflects such pleasure to my eyes, as I, burning with passion on account of the fire-darting beams from your eyes, have often driven back the horses of the night, when they would have haled you from my sight?”

Jupiter was saying that he had often kept back the horses of the night, but did he keep them from rising or from setting? If he kept them from rising and beginning the night, he did so because he wanted to spend more time with Ganymede before Ganymede got sleepy and went to bed. If he kept them from setting and ending the night, he did so because he wanted to spend more time with Ganymede in bed.

Jupiter continued, “Sit on my knee and call for whatever you want. Control proud Fate and cut the thread of Time.”

The three Fates determined the length of mortal lives. Clotho spun the thread of life, Lachesis measured it, and Atropos cut it. When a mortal’s thread of life was cut, the mortal died.

Jupiter continued, “Why, aren’t all the gods at your command and aren’t heaven and earth the territory of your delight? The lame blacksmith god Vulcan shall dance to make laughing entertainment for you, and my nine daughters — the Graces — shall sing for you when you are sad. From Juno’s bird the peacock I’ll pluck her spotted pride — her feathers — to make you fans with which to cool your face, and Venus’ swans shall shed their silver down to make sweet the slumbers of your soft bed. Hermes no more shall show the world his wings, if your fancy should dwell in his feathers, for, as I do this one, I’ll tear them all from him.”

Jupiter plucked a feather from one of the winged sandals or the winged cap that Hermes wore.

Jupiter continued, “Do just say, ‘Their color pleases me,’ and I will pluck them.”

He then gave Ganymede a necklace of jewels and said, “Hold this here, my little love. These linked gems my Juno wore on her marriage day. My own sweetheart, put this around your neck and decorate your arms and shoulders with my theft.”

“I also want a jewel for my ear and a fine brooch to put in my hat,” Ganymede said, “and then I’ll hug with you a hundred times.”

“And you shall have those things, Ganymede, if you will be my love.”

Venus entered and complained, “Yes, this is it! You can sit toying there and playing with that effeminate wanton boy, while my son Aeneas — a mortal — wanders on the seas and remains a prey to every ocean wave’s pride. He is in danger of being shipwrecked.”

Aeneas had become the leader of the surviving free Trojans after the fall of Troy. They had built 24 ships and were sailing in search of a new homeland.

Venus continued, “Juno, false and treacherous Juno, in her chariot’s pomp, drawn through the heavens by steeds of the brood of Boreas, the North Wind, ordered the goddess Hebe to direct the airy wheels of Juno’s chariot to the windy country of the clouds, where, finding Aeolus, guardian of the winds, entrenched with storms and guarded by a thousand grisly ghosts, she humbly begged him to be our bane, and told him to drown my son with all his fellow Trojans.”

Aeolus kept the winds locked up, releasing only the winds he wanted to be released for a while. If Aeolus kept the storm winds locked up, then ships could sail safely, but if he released the storm winds, then ships could sink.

Venus continued, “Then began the winds to break open their brazen doors and all Aeolia — Aeolus’ islands — to be up in arms.

“Poor Troy must now be sacked upon the sea, and Neptune’s waves be malicious men of war. Epeus’ horse, transformed to Mount Etna’s volcanic hill, stands prepared to wrack their wooden walls, and Aeolus, like Agamemnon, sounds the surges, his fierce soldiers, to the spoil.”

Venus was comparing the danger of the storm to the fall of Troy. Aeneas’ ships were Troy, and they were in danger of sinking. Epeus had built the Trojan Horse, which the Trojans had brought into their city, widening the entrance into the city to do so. The rocks around the island of Mount Etna would similarly poke holes in Aeneas’ ships. Agamemnon had led the Greek warriors in the war against Troy.

Venus continued, “See how the night, Ulysses-like, comes forth and intercepts the day, as Ulysses formerly intercepted Dolon.”

The storm clouds were making everything dark, and so night was surprising day. In Book 10 of Homer’s *Iliad*, Odysseus (his Roman name is Ulysses) and Diomedes make a night raid and surprise and capture Dolon, a Trojan spy.

Venus said, “Ay me! The stars surprised, like Rhesus’ steeds, are drawn by darkness from the tents of Astraeus, a Titan and the father of the stars.”

“Ay me” is an expression of grief.

Because the storm clouds were making everything dark, the stars came out early, although they could not be seen because of the storm clouds. They were surprised, just like the steeds of King Rhesus were surprised. After capturing Dolon, Ulysses and Diomedes extracted information from him, learning that a King named Rhesus had recently arrived. Ulysses and Diomedes killed King Rhesus and stole his horses. No one saw Ulysses and Diomedes killing the King and stealing his horses.

Venus continued, “What shall I do to save you, Aeneas, my sweet boy, when the waves are so high that they threaten our divine crystalline world above the clouds, and the sea-god Proteus, raising hills of floods on high, intends before long to entertain himself in the sky?”

“False, treacherous Jupiter, is this how you reward virtue? What! Isn’t piety exempt from woe? My son Aeneas is a pious man. But if you, Jupiter, reward his piety in this way, then die, Aeneas, in your innocence, since your religion and piety receive no recompense.”

She believed that her son deserved much better treatment than this because of his good personal character.

Jupiter said, “Be calm, Cytherea, despite your concern for your son.”

One of Venus’ names was Cytherea because she was born in the sea near the island of Cythera.

Jupiter continued, “Your Aeneas’ wandering fate is firm and fixed; we know what is fated to happen to him, both as he wanders and afterward.”

He now described Aeneas’ fate:

“His weary limbs shall shortly find repose in those fair walls I previously promised him. But his good fortune must first bud in blood before he becomes the lord of the town of Turnus, or force Juno to smile although she has hitherto frowned. Three winters shall he with the

Rutulians war, and in the end subdue them with his sword, and three full summers likewise shall he waste in taming those fierce barbarian minds. Once that is performed, then poor Troy, so long suppressed, from out of her ashes shall advance her strength and power, and the Trojans shall flourish once again, although they were 'dead' just after the fall of Troy."

As a god, Jupiter knew Aeneas' fate. Eventually, he would lead the free surviving Trojans to Italy, where they would fight a war for three years. Eventually, the Trojans would win the war, with Aeneas killing Turnus, the leader of the enemy forces. Then the Trojans would become important ancestors of the Roman people. Although Juno hated the Trojans, she would be forced to accept their success.

Jupiter continued to tell Aeneas' fate:

"But bright Ascanius, beauty's better work, who with the sun divides one radiant shape, shall build his throne in the midst of those starry towers that earth-born Atlas, groaning, underprops and supports."

Ascanius is Aeneas' son, beautiful and as radiant as the sun. Atlas is a Titan who was punished by being forced to hold up the sky.

Jupiter continued to tell Aeneas' fate, including the fate of his descendants:

"No boundaries but heaven shall bound his empire, whose azure — blue-as-the-sky — gates engraved with his name, shall make the morning hasten her gray uprise to feed her eyes with his engraved fame."

The Roman Empire would have no boundary except that of heaven, and Aeneas' name and the names of his important descendants would be remembered.

Jupiter continued to tell Aeneas' fate, including the fate of his descendants:

"Thus in brave Hector's race the Roman royal scepter shall remain for three hundred years, until a priestess of royal birth impregnated by Mars, shall yield to dignity a double birth, who will make Troy eternal with their undertakings."

Hector was the greatest Trojan warrior, but the greatest warrior of the Trojan War, the Greek Achilles, killed him.

Aeneas and his descendants were fated to build and rule cities in Italy. Three hundred years after Aeneas, the vestal virgin Rhea Silvia, also known as Ilia, would give birth to the twins Romulus and Remus, who would found the city of Rome.

Venus said, "How may I believe these flattering words of yours, when both sea and sands still beset the Trojan ships, and Phoebus Apollo refrains from tainting his tresses in the Tyrrhenian main just as he refrains from tainting them in Stygian pools?"

She was saying in a complex way what could be said simply. Phoebus Apollo is the sun-god, and in this case he is metaphorically the sun itself. "Tainting his tresses" meant "dipping his hair" or "shining on." The Tyrrhenian main is the Mediterranean Sea. The Styx is a river in Hades, the Land of the Dead. All that Venus was saying was that the sun was refraining from shining on the Mediterranean Sea just like it refrained from shining on the Styx River in the underground Land of the Dead.

“I will take care of that immediately,” Jupiter said to Venus.

He shook Hermes and said, “Hermes, wake up, and hasten to the realm of Neptune, King of the sea, where the wind god, Aeolus, warring now with Fate, is besieging the offspring of our kingly loins.

“Order him from me to turn his stormy powers back to his realm and fetter them in Vulcan’s sturdy brass restraints because these stormy winds dare to thus proudly wrong our kinsman’s peace.”

Aeneas was a kinsman because he could trace his ancestry back to Jupiter, who with Electra parented Dardanus, from whom Aeneas was descended.

Hermes exited to carry out his orders.

“Venus, farewell,” Jupiter said. “I will take care of your son Aeneas.”

He then said, “Come, Ganymede, we must set about this business.”

Jupiter and Ganymede exited.

Gods and goddesses can move quickly. Venus quickly flew through the air and landed on the shore of Carthage, where she knew that Aeneas would soon appear.

She said, “Restless seas, lay down your swelling looks, and court Aeneas with your calm cheer, whose beauteous burden well might make you proud, had not the heavens, made pregnant with hell-born clouds, veiled his resplendent glory from your view.

“For my sake pity him, Oceanus, you river that encircles the world. Pity Aeneas for the sake of me, who formerly issued from watery loins and had my being from your bubbling froth. I was born from the foam around the island of Cythera.

“The sea-god Triton, I know, has blown his trumpet on behalf of Troy, and therefore will take pity on Aeneas’ toil, and call both Thetis and Cymothoe, two Nereids who are minor sea-goddesses, to succor him in this extremity.”

When Triton blows his trumpet, waves calm. Venus must have thought — or known — that Jupiter had ordered him to calm the waves.

Aeneas arrived, accompanied by Ascanius and one or two other Trojans. Ascanius was Aeneas’ young son, and Aeneas was Venus’ adult son.

Venus said, “Do I see my son now come on shore? Venus, how you are enveloped with happiness while your eyes bring to you the joys your eyes have long sought!

“Great Jupiter, may you be always honored for this so friendly aid in time of need.

“Here in these bushes I will stand disguised as a mortal, while my Aeneas wearies himself in complaints and lets heaven and earth know about his disquiet.”

Aeneas said, “You sons of care, companions of my course, Priam’s misfortune follows us by sea, and Helen’s abduction haunts you at the heels.”

King Priam died when Troy fell. The cause of the war was his son Paris’ visit to Sparta, where he seized and ran away with Helen, the legitimate wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta.



“How many dangers have we passed through and endured!” Aeneas said. “Both barking Scylla and the sounding rocks, the Cyclopes’ sandbanks, and grim Ceraunia’s seat have you passed and yet remain alive!”

Scylla was a monster that lived in a rocky cliffside; she would snatch sailors from ships and devour them. The sounding rocks were rocks that crashed together, smashing to bits any ships that sailed in between them. The Cyclopes were one-eyed giants that ate humans. Ceraunia was a dangerous promontory.

“Pluck up your hearts,” Aeneas continued, “since fate still remains our friend, and changing heavens may return to us those good days, which Pergama did boast in all her pride.”

Pergama is another name for the citadel, aka fortress, of Troy.

Achates, one of Aeneas’ companions, said, “Brave Prince of Troy, you are our only god. By your virtues you free us from troubles and make our hopes survive to coming joys. If you just smile, the cloudy heaven will clear; the sky’s night and day descend from your brows. Although we are now in extreme misery and remain the picture of weather-beaten woe, yet the aged sun shall shed forth his hair — his blazing tresses — to make us live with our former heat, and every beast the forest shall send forth shall bequeath her young ones to augment our scanty food.”

Ascanius, hungry, said, “Father, I am faint. Good father, give me food.”

“Alas, sweet boy,” Aeneas said, “you must be hungry a while longer, until we have fire to cook the meat we killed.

“Gentle Achates, get the tinderbox, so that we may make a fire to warm us and roast our newfound food on this shore.”

Still unnoticed, Venus said to herself, “See what strange arts necessity finds out: Necessity is the mother of invention. To what troubles, my sweet Aeneas, have you been driven!”

“Wait, take this candle and go light a fire,” Aeneas said. “You shall have leaves and wind-fallen boughs enough, near to these woods, to roast your meat with.

“Ascanius, go and dry your drenched limbs, while I with my Achates rove abroad, to learn what coast the wind has driven us on, and whether men or beasts inhabit it.”

Ascanius and the Trojan men exited, leaving behind Aeneas, Achates, and Venus.

“The air is pleasant,” Achates said, “and the soil is most fit for the support of cities and society. Yet I much marvel that I cannot find any steps of men imprinted in the earth.”

Venus said to herself, “Now is the time for me to play my part.”

Disguised as a young woman, she called, “Ho, young men! Did you see as you came any of my sisters wandering here? Each sister would be wearing a quiver tied around her side and would be clothed in a spotted leopard’s skin.”

“I neither saw nor heard of any such,” Aeneas said. “But what may I, fair virgin, call your name, you whose looks set forth no mortal form to view, and whose speech does not betray anything human in your birth?”

“You are a goddess who is deluding our eyes and you are shrouding your beauty in this borrowed shape, but whether you are the sun’s bright sister — Diana, twin sister of Apollo — or you are one of chaste Diana’s attendant nymphs, live happy in the height of all content, and lighten our extremes with this one boon. Please tell us under what good heaven we breathe now, and what this world is called on which we are cast by the fury of the tempest.

“Tell us, oh, tell us, tell us who are ignorant, and this right hand shall make your altars crack with mountain heaps of milk-white sacrifice.”

Although Venus had disguised herself as a mortal, she was unable to hide all her beauty and so Aeneas knew that she was a goddess. He was asking her for information with the promise that he would reward her by sacrificing many milk-white — the most prized color — animals on her altars.

Still pretending to be mortal, the disguised Venus said, “Such honor, stranger, I do not care for. It is the custom for Tyrian maidens to wear their bow and quiver in this modest way and clothe themselves in these purple garments so that they may travel more lightly over the meadows, and overtake the tusked boar in chase.”

Venus was pretending to be a Carthaginian. The Carthaginians had come from Phoenicia, two of whose main cities were Tyre and Sidon. The Phoenicians were famous, among other things, for dyeing cloth purple.

The disguised Venus continued, “But as for the land about which you inquire, it is the Punic kingdom, rich and strong, adjoining on Agenor’s stately town, the kingly seat of southern Libya, where Sidonian — Phoenician — Dido rules as Queen.”

In other words, Aeneas had landed on the shore of the Punic — Carthaginian — kingdom, which was ruled by Queen Dido.

“But who are you who ask me these things?” the disguised Venus asked. “Whence may you come, or whither will you go? Where have you come from, and to where are you going?”

“I am Trojan. Aeneas is my name, who driven by war from my native world, put sails to sea to seek out Italy; I am divinely descended from sceptered Jove.”

Jove is another name for Jupiter. As King of the gods, he had a scepter.

Aeneas continued, “With twice twelve ships from Asia Minor, I plowed the deep sea and headed in the direction my mother, Venus, led, but of them all scarcely seven ships anchor safely here, and they are so ravaged and rolled by the waves that every tide makes them tilt on one or other of their oaken sides.

“And all of them, unburdened of their load, are ballasted with billows’ watery weight — they are filled with unwanted water.

“But hapless I, God knows, poor and unknown, do walk these Libyan deserts all despised, exiled from both Europe and wide Asia, and I haven’t any roof over me except heaven.”

“Fortune has favored you, whoever you are,” the disguised Venus said, “in sending you to this courteous coast. In God’s name, continue on, and hasten to the court, where Queen Dido will receive you with her smiles.

“And as for your other ships, which you suppose to be lost, not one of them has perished in the storm, for they have arrived safely not far from here.

“And so I leave you to your fortune’s lot, wishing good luck to your wandering steps.”

Venus, Aeneas’ mother, quickly exited. Mortals and immortals are quite different, and it is unusual for mortal children to communicate in any depth with immortal parents.

Aeneas said, “Achates, it is my mother who has just fled; I know her by the gait of her feet.

“Wait, gentle Venus! Don’t flee from your son! Too cruel, why will you forsake me thus, or in these disguises deceive my eyes so often?

“Why can’t we talk together, hand in hand, and tell our griefs in more familiar terms? But you have gone and left me here alone to dull the air with my disgruntled moans.”

— 1.2 —

The Trojans Cloanthus, Ilioneus, and Sergestus had just entered Carthage, where they saw Iarbas, King of Gaetulia. These Trojans were some of those who had been separated from Aeneas.

Ilioneus said, “Follow, you Trojans, follow this brave lord, and complain and explain to him the sum of your distress.”

“Why, who are you, and for what do you plead?” Iarbas asked.

“We are wretches of Troy, hated by all the winds,” Ilioneus replied. “We crave such favor at your honor’s feet, as poor distressed misery may plead.”

The Trojans knelt before Iarbas.

Ilioneus pleaded, “Save, save, oh, save our ships from cruel fire, ships that complain about the wounds of a thousand waves, and spare the lives of us whom every vexation pursues. We come not, we, to wrong your Libyan gods or steal your household Lares from their shrines.”

The Lares were household gods that protected the welfare of families.

Ilioneus continued, “Our hands are not prepared to lawlessly spoil and plunder, nor are our hands armed to offend in any way. Such force is far from our unweaponed — unarmed — thoughts, whose fading well-being, lacking victory, forbids all hope to harbor near our hearts.”

“But tell me, Trojans, if you are Trojans,” Iarbas said, “to what fruitful quarters were you bound before Boreas — the North Wind — battled with your sails?”

“There is a place, called Hesperia by us,” Cloanthus said. “It is an ancient empire, famous for arms, and fertile in fair Ceres’ furrowed wealth. That place now we call Italia, of his name who in such peace for a long time and long ago did rule the same.”

Hesperia — the Western Land — is an ancient name for Italy, which according to legend was ruled at one time by a King named Italia.

Cloanthus continued, “Thither made we, when suddenly gloomy Orion rose and led our ships into the shallow sands, where the southern wind with brackish breath dispersed them all amongst the wreck-causing rocks.”

The constellation Orion is associated with storms.

He continued, "From thence a few of us escaped to land. The rest, we fear, are enfolded in the floods and drowned."

"Brave men-at-arms," Iarbas said, "abandon fruitless fears because Carthage knows how to courteously treat distressed men."

"Yes," Sergestus said, "but the barbarous sort of people threaten our ships and will not let us lodge upon the sands. In multitudes they swarm to the shore and they keep our feet from land."

"I myself will see to it that they shall not trouble you," Iarbas said. "Your men and you shall banquet in our court, and every Trojan will be as welcome here as Jupiter to good Baucis' house."

The gods Jupiter and Mercury once traveled in disguise as poor peasants in order to test the hospitality of people. Most people did not give them hospitality, but married couple Baucis and Philemon did, sharing what food they had although they were an unsophisticated country couple.

Iarbas continued, "Come in with me. I'll bring you to my Queen, Dido, who shall confirm my words with further deeds."

The Trojans stood up.

"Thanks, gentle lord, for such unlooked-for grace," Sergestus replied. "If we could but once more see Aeneas' face, then we would hope to reward such friendly turns as shall surpass the wonder of our speech. We aren't able to describe well enough the good you do for us."

## ACT 2 (*Dido*)

### — 2.1 —

Aeneas, Achates, and Ascanius stood in front of a wall of a stone building in Carthage. The wall was decorated with bas-relief sculpture. The sculpture depicted the city of Troy, including its walls.

“Where am I now?” Aeneas said, looking at the depiction of Trojan walls. “These should be the walls of Carthage.”

“Why stands my sweet Aeneas thus amazed?” Achates asked.

“Oh, my Achates,” Aeneas said, “Theban Niobe, who for her sons’ deaths wept out life and breath and, dry with grief, was turned into a stone, had not such passions in her head as I.”

The mortal Niobe had several sons and several daughters, causing her to be proud and consider herself worthy of more respect than the goddess Latona, who had given birth to only one son and one daughter: Apollo and Diana. Unfortunately for Niobe, Apollo and Diana killed all of her sons and daughters.

Aeneas continued, pointing at various places in the bas-relief, “I think that town there should be Troy. Yonder is Mount Ida. There is the Xanthus’ stream. I know these things because here is Priam, King of Troy. But when I know it is not Troy, because Troy has been destroyed, then I die inside.”

Achates replied, “And sharing in this mood of yours is Achates, too. I cannot choose but fall upon my knees and kiss the hand of this bas-relief of King Priam.”

He kissed Priam’s hand and then continued, “Oh, where is Queen Hecuba?”

He pointed to the place beside King Priam and said, “Here she was accustomed to sit, but, except for air, there is nothing here. And what is this but stone?”

Aeneas said, “Yet this stone makes Aeneas weep! And I wish that my prayers (as Pygmalion’s did) could give this bas-relief of King Priam life so that under his command we might sail back to Troy and be revenged on these hardhearted Grecians who rejoice that nothing now is left of King Priam.”

Pygmalion was a sculptor who sculpted a perfect woman, with whom he fell in love. He prayed to the gods to make the sculpture live and the gods granted his request.

Aeneas engaged in wishful thinking, wishing that Priam were still alive and the Trojans could board ships and return home and get revenge on those who had conquered Troy: “Oh, Priam still exists, and this is he! Come, come aboard; pursue the hateful Greeks.”

“What does Aeneas mean?” Achates asked.

Aeneas replied, “Achates, though my eyes say this is stone, yet my mind thinks that this is Priam, and when my grieving heart sighs and says no, then it would leap out to give Priam life. Oh, I wish I were not alive at all, as long as you — Priam — might be alive! I would gladly lose my life in order to give you life.

“Achates, look! King Priam waves his hand! He is alive! Troy is not overcome and conquered!”

Achates replied, “Your mind, Aeneas, that wishes what you say were true, deludes your eyesight. Priam is indeed dead.”

Weeping, Aeneas said, “Ah, Troy has been sacked and Priam is dead, and why then should poor Aeneas be alive?”

“Sweet father, stop weeping,” Ascanius said. “This is not Priam, for if it were Priam, he would smile on me.”

Achates said, “Aeneas, look. Here come the citizens. Stop lamenting, lest they laugh at our fears.”

Cloanthus, Ilioneus, Sergestus, and others arrived.

The Trojans did not recognize each other. Cloanthus, Ilioneus, and Sergestus were now wearing rich Carthaginian clothing, while Aeneas, Achates, and Ascanius were wearing ragged, travel-stained clothing. The storm had been rough on their clothing.

Aeneas said, “Lords of this town, or whatsoever title belong to your names, out of compassion for us please tell us who inhabits this fair town, what kind of people and who governs them, for we are strangers driven on this shore and we scarcely know within what territory we are.”

“I hear Aeneas’ voice,” Ilioneus said, “but I don’t see him, for none of these men can be our general.”

“This noble man speaks and sounds like Ilioneus, but Ilioneus doesn’t wear such robes,” Achates said.

“You are Achates, or I am deceived,” Sergestus said.

“Aeneas, see Sergestus or his ghost!” Achates said.

“He says the name of Aeneas,” Ilioneus said. “Let us kiss his feet.”

“It is our captain!” Cloanthus said. “See Ascanius!”

“Live long Aeneas and Ascanius!” Sergestus said.

“Achates, speak, for I am overjoyed,” Aeneas said.

“Oh, Ilioneus, are you still alive?” Achates asked.

“Blest be the time I see Achates’ face,” Ilioneus replied.

Overcome with emotion, Aeneas turned aside.

“Why does Aeneas turn away from his trusty friends?” Cloanthus asked.

“Sergestus, Ilioneus, and the rest,” Aeneas said, “your sight amazed me. Oh, what destinies have brought my sweet companions in so good a situation? Oh, tell me, for I long to know.”

“Lovely Aeneas, these are the walls of Carthage,” Ilioneus said, “and here Queen Dido wears the imperial crown. She for Troy’s sake has entertained us all and clad us in these wealthy

robes we wear. Often has she asked us under whom we served, and when we told her, she would weep for grief, thinking the sea had swallowed up your ships.

“And now when she sees you, how she will rejoice!”

Cloanthus, Sergestus, and Ilioneus led Aeneas and the others into the building, which was Queen Dido’s palace.

Sergestus pointed and said, “See where her servants are passing through the hall, bearing a banquet. Dido is not far away.”

“Look where she comes!” Ilioneus said. “Aeneas, view her well.”

“Well may I view her, but she does not see me,” Aeneas replied.

Dido and her retinue walked over to the Trojans. Anna, her sister, was with her.

Aeneas was wrong: Dido did notice him and asked, “What stranger are you who eye me thus?”

“Formerly I was a Trojan, mighty Queen, but Troy no longer exists,” Aeneas replied. “Who then shall I say I am?”

“Renowned Dido,” Ilioneus said. “He is our general and leader: warlike Aeneas.”

“Warlike Aeneas, and in these lowly and base robes!” Dido said.

Due to travel, travail, and the recent storm, Aeneas’ clothing was ragged.

Dido ordered an attendant, “Go fetch the garment that Sichaeus wore.”

Sichaeus was her late husband.

The attendant exited and quickly brought back the robe, which Aeneas put on.

“Brave Prince, welcome to Carthage and to me, both happy that Aeneas is our guest,” Dido said. “Sit in this chair and banquet with a Queen. Aeneas is Aeneas, even if he were clad in clothing as bad and ragged as ever Irus wore.”

Irus was a beggar who appears in Homer’s *Odyssey*. He begged from and ran errands for the young men who were courting Odysseus’ wife, Penelope. Odysseus’ Roman name is Ulysses.

“This is no seat for one who’s comfortless,” Aeneas said. “May it please your grace to let Aeneas wait on you and serve you food, for although my birth is great, my fortune is mean — too mean to be companion to a Queen.”

“Your fortune may be greater than your birth,” Dido said. “Sit down, Aeneas, sit in Dido’s place, and if this is your son, as I suppose he is, let him sit here.”

She sat Ascanius on her lap and said, “Be merry, lovely child.”

“This place is not suitable for me,” Aeneas said. “It is too grand, pardon me.”

Aeneas’ humility irritated Dido, who said, “I’ll have it so. Aeneas, be content and don’t complain.”

Aeneas sat next to Dido.

“Madam, you shall be my mother,” Ascanius said.

His mother had died during the fall of Troy.

“And so I will, sweet child,” Dido said.

She then said to Aeneas, “Be merry, man! Here’s to your better fortune and good stars.”

“In all humility, I thank your grace,” Aeneas said.

“Remember who you are,” Dido said. “Speak like yourself. Humility belongs to common servants.”

Aeneas asked, “And who is as miserable as Aeneas is?”

“It lies in Dido’s hands to make you blest, so then be assured that you are not miserable.”

“Oh, Priam! Oh, Troy! Oh, Hecuba!” Aeneas said, mourning.

“May I ask and persuade you to discourse at large, and truly, too, about how Troy was overcome?” Dido asked. “Many tales are told of that city’s fall, and scarcely do they agree upon one point. Some say the Trojan Antenor betrayed the town. Others report that it was Sinon’s perjury that led to Troy’s fall. But all stories agree that Troy is conquered and Priam is dead. Yet how that happened, we hear no certain news.”

“A woeful tale Dido asks me to unfold,” Aeneas said, “whose memory, like pale Death’s stony mace, beats forth my senses from this troubled soul and makes Aeneas sink at Dido’s feet.”

“Does Aeneas faint to remember Troy, in whose defense he fought so valiantly?” Dido said. “Look up and speak.”

Aeneas replied, “Then speak, Aeneas, with Achilles’ tongue, and Dido and you Carthaginian peers hear me, but do so with the Myrmidons’ harsh ears, which were daily inured to broils and massacres, lest you be moved too much with my sad tale.”

Achilles and the warriors he led — the Myrmidons — were strong and tough and used to bloodshed, of which Aeneas’ story would include much.

Aeneas began his story:

“The Grecian soldiers, tired with ten years’ war, began to cry, ‘Let us go to our ships! Troy is invincible. Why do we stay here?’

“Atrides — Agamemnon, leader of the Greek soldiers — being appalled by their cries, summoned the Greek captains to his princely tent. Then the captains, looking on the scars we Trojans gave, and seeing the number of their men decreased and the remainder weak and out of heart, cried out their votes to dislodge the camp.

“And so all marched in troops to Tenedos, where when they came, Ulysses on the sand attempted with honey words to turn them back.”

Tenedos is an island. The Greek soldiers marched to the shore, from where they could see the island.

Aeneas continued:



“And as Ulysses spoke to further his intent, the winds drove huge billows to the shore, and heaven was darkened with tempestuous clouds. Then he alleged the gods would have them stay, and he prophesied Troy would be overcome.”

Ulysses claimed that the gods had sent contrary winds in order to keep the Greeks at Troy. The winds were contrary because they would not allow the Greeks to sail home.

Aeneas continued:

“For that purpose he called forth false Sinon, a man compact of craft and perjury, whose enticing tongue was made of Hermes’ pipe, to force a hundred watchful eyes to sleep.”

Hermes once played his musical pipe — a flute — to lull Argos, who had a hundred eyes, to sleep.

Aeneas continued:

“And once Epeus had made the horse, Ulysses sent lying Sinon, with sacrificing wreaths upon his head, to our unhappy town of Troy. Our Phrygian shepherds dragged Sinon, groveling in the mire of the banks of the Xanthus River, his hands bound at his back, and both his eyes turned up to heaven, like one resolved to die, within the gates of Troy and brought him to the court of Priam.”

Ulysses thought up the trick of the Trojan Horse, which Epeus built. The Trojan Horse was a huge, hollow, wooden horse that Sinon told the Trojans was dedicated to Minerva. The Greeks built the Trojan Horse and left it at Troy as they pretended to sail home, but instead of returning to Greece, they sailed behind the island of Tenedos, which hid them.

The Greeks left behind Sinon, who told the Trojans that he had escaped from being made a human sacrifice by Ulysses and the other Greeks.

Aeneas continued:

“Sinon acted in such a way that he aroused pity in King Priam of Troy. Sinon looked so remorseful and made so many seemingly forthright — but actually perjured — vows that the Greeks had treated him badly that the old King, overcome by Sinon, kissed him, embraced him, and untied his bonds. And then —

“Oh, Dido, pardon me!”

Aeneas was overcome by bad memories.

Dido said, “No, don’t stop telling your story! Tell me the rest!”

Aeneas continued:

“Oh, the enchanting words of Sinon, that base slave, made King Priam think Epeus’ pine tree horse was a sacrifice to appease the wrath of Minerva. In addition, Priam believed Sinon’s words because the Trojan Laocoon threw and broke a spear on the hollow breast of the Trojan Horse, after which two winged serpents stung him to death.”

Minerva was said to be angry because Ulysses and Diomedes had broken into Troy and had stolen a statue of her.

Aeneas continued:

“Aghast at Laocoon’s death, we were commanded immediately to draw the Trojan Horse with reverence into Troy. In this unhappy work I myself was employed. These hands did help to haul it to the gates, through which it could not enter because it was so huge.

“Oh, if it had never entered Troy, Troy would still stand today! But King Priam, impatient of delay, ordered that a wide breach be made in that fortified wall, which a thousand battering rams could never pierce, and so came in this fatal, deadly instrument, at whose accursed feet, overjoyed we banqueted until, overcome with wine, some grew ill and others soundly slept.

“Seeing this, Sinon caused the Greek spies to hasten to Tenedos and tell the military camp. Then he unlocked the Trojan Horse, and suddenly from out its entrails Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, setting his spear upon the ground, leaped forth, and after him came a thousand more Greek soldiers, in whose stern faces shined the quenchless fire that soon burnt the pride of Asia.

“By this time, the Greek army had come to the Trojan walls, and through the breach we had made they marched into the streets, where, meeting with the Greek warriors who had exited from the Trojan Horse, they cried, ‘Kill! Kill!’

“Frightened by this confused noise, I rose, and looking from a turret, I saw young infants swimming in their parents’ blood, headless carcasses piled up in heaps, half-dead virgins dragged by their golden hair and with main force flung on a ring of pikes, and old men with swords thrust through their aged sides, kneeling for mercy in front of Greek lads who with steel poleaxes dashed out their brains.

“Then I buckled on my armor and drew my sword, thinking to go down and fight, but suddenly came Hector’s ghost, with an ashy visage and bluish sulfurous eyes, his arms torn from his shoulders, and his breast furrowed with wounds, and — something that made me weep — thongs at his heels, by which Achilles’ horse drew him in triumph through the Greek camp.”

After Achilles had killed Hector in single combat, he cut holes in his feet through which he tied thongs so that he could drag Hector’s corpse behind his horse.

Aeneas continued:

“Yes, Hector’s ghost burst from the earth, crying ‘Aeneas, flee! Troy is on fire! The Greeks have conquered the town!’”

Dido said, “Oh, Hector, who does not weep when they hear your name!”

Aeneas continued:

“Despite Hector’s words, I flung myself forth, and desperate concerning my life, I ran into the thickest throngs of the enemy and with this sword sent many of their savage souls to hell.

“At last came Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, deadly and full of anger, his armor dropping blood, and on his spear the mangled head of Priam’s youngest son, and after him came his band of Myrmidons, with balls of wild-fire — incendiaries — in their murdering paws, which made the funeral flame that burnt fair Troy. All of them hemmed me about, crying, ‘This is he.’”

“Ah, how could poor Aeneas escape their hands?” Dido asked.

Aeneas continued:

“My mother, Venus, very protective of my health, conveyed me away from their malignant nets and bonds. So I escaped the furious wrath of Pyrrhus, who then ran to King Priam’s palace, and at Jove’s altar finding Priam, about whose withered neck hung Hecuba, enfolding his hand in hers, and jointly both beating their breasts and falling on the ground.

“Pyrrhus, with his sword’s point raised up at once, and with the eyes of Megaera, one of the Furies, stared in their faces, threatening a thousand deaths at every glance.

“To Pyrrhus the aged King Priam, trembling, said, ‘Achilles’ son, remember what I was, father of fifty sons, but they are slain; lord of my fortune, but my fortune’s turned; King of this city, but my Troy is on fire; and now I am not father, lord, or King. Yet who is so wretched but they still desire to live? Oh, let me live, great Neoptolemus!’”

Neoptolemus is another name for Achilles’ son, Pyrrhus.

Aeneas continued:

“Not moved at all, but smiling at Priam’s tears, this butcher, Pyrrhus, while Priam’s hands were yet held up, treading upon his breast, used his sword to cut off his hands.”

“Oh, stop, Aeneas!” Dido said. “I can bear to hear no more.”

Aeneas continued:

“At this the frantic Queen Hecuba leaped on Pyrrhus’ face, and in his eyelids hanging by the fingernails, for a little while prolonged her husband’s life. At last the soldiers pulled her by the heels and swung her howling in the empty air, which sent an echo to the wounded King Priam. Hearing the cries of his wife, he lifted up his bed-ridden limbs, and would have grappled with Achilles’ son, forgetting both his lack of strength and his loss of hands.

“Pyrrhus, feeling contempt for the aged King, whisked his sword about in the air, and the wind the sword created caused the King to fall down. Then from the navel to the throat at once Pyrrhus ripped old Priam, at whose last gasps Jove’s marble statue began to bend the brow and scowl to show his loathing of Pyrrhus for this wicked act.

“Yet Pyrrhus, undaunted, took his father’s battle flag and dipped it in the old King’s chill, cold blood, and then in triumph he ran into the streets, through which he could not pass because they were choked with slaughtered men.

“So, leaning on his sword, Pyrrhus stood stone still, viewing the fire wherewith rich Ilion — Troy — burned.

“By this time, I had gotten my father on my back, gotten this young boy who is now sitting on your lap in my arms, and, was leading fair Creusa, my beloved wife, by the hand.”

This sounds as if Aeneas had a third arm, but this is how he told the story.

Aeneas looked at Achates and said, “We met up with you, Achates, and while you with your sword made a way for us, and while we were surrounded by the Greeks, oh, there I lost my wife. If we had not fought manfully, I would not have lived to tell this tale.

“Yet manhood would not serve to achieve victory. We were forced to flee, and as we went to our ships, you know that we saw sprawling in the streets Cassandra, whom Little Ajax raped in Diana’s temple. Her cheeks were swollen with sighs, her hair was all torn, and I took her up to carry her to our ships.”

This sounds as if Aeneas were now carrying his father, his son, and Cassandra, but that is how he told the story.

Aeneas continued:

“But suddenly the Greeks followed us, and I, alas, was forced to let her lie. Then we got to our ships, and once we were aboard, from the shore Polyxena, one of Priam’s daughters, cried out, ‘Aeneas, wait! The Greeks pursue me. Stay and take me in your ship!’

“Moved by her voice, I leaped into the sea, thinking to bear her on my back aboard, for all our ships were launched into the sea, and as I swam, she, standing on the shore, was by the cruel Myrmidons surprised and captured and afterward Pyrrhus made a human sacrifice of her.”

Dido said, “I die with melting pity. Aeneas, stop.”

Dido’s sister, Anna, asked, “Oh, what became of aged Hecuba?”

Iarbas asked, “How did Aeneas get to the fleet again?”

Dido asked, “How did Helen, who caused this war, escape?”

Aeneas said, “Achates, speak. Sorrow has quite tired me.”

Achates said, “What happened to Queen Hecuba, we cannot tell. We hear they led her captive into Greece. As for Aeneas, he swam quickly back to the ship. Helena betrayed Deiphobus, who had become her lover after Alexander, aka Paris, died, and so she was reconciled to Menelaus.”

“Oh, I wish that enticing strumpet had never been born!” Dido said about Helen. “Trojan, your pity-arousing tale has made me sad. Come, let us think about some pleasing entertainment to rid me of these melancholy thoughts.”

They began to exit. As they were exiting, Venus showed up with Cupid, her son.

Venus took Ascanius, Aeneas’ son, by the sleeve, making him stay behind as the others left.

Pretending to be one of Dido’s serving women, she said to him, “Fair child, stay with me, Dido’s waiting maid. I’ll give you sugar almonds, sweet candied fruits, a silver belt, and a golden wallet.”

Pointing at Cupid, she added, “And this young Prince shall be your playfellow.”

“Are you Queen Dido’s son?” Ascanius asked.

“Yes,” Cupid lied, adding, “and my mother gave me this fine bow.” He nearly always carried a bow and a quiver of golden arrows.

“Shall I have such a quiver and a bow?” Ascanius asked.

“Dido will give to sweet Ascanius such a bow, such a quiver, and such golden shafts,” Venus said. “For Dido’s sake I now take you in my arms and stick these feathers, which are sparkling because bits of metal are embedded in them, in your hat. Eat candied fruits in my arms, and I will sing to you.”

She sang Ascanius a lullaby, and he fell asleep.

Venus said, “Now is he fast asleep, and in this grove among green bushes I’ll lay Ascanius and strew sweet-smelling violets, blushing roses, and purple hyacinth over him. These milk-white doves shall be his sentinels; if anyone seeks to hurt him, these doves will quickly fly to Venus’ fist.”

In addition to their other superpowers, the gods and goddesses are shape-shifters. Cupid also had the superpower of making people fall in love by shooting — or merely scratching — them with one of his arrows.

Venus said, “Now, Cupid, turn yourself into Ascanius’ shape and go to Dido, who instead of him will set you on her lap and play with you. Then touch her white breast with this arrowhead, so that she may dote upon Aeneas’ love, and by that means repair his broken ships, feed his soldiers, and give him wealthy gifts. He at last will depart to go to Italy, or else make his kingly throne in Carthage.”

“I will, fair mother,” Cupid said, “and I will so play my part that every touch shall wound Queen Dido’s heart.”

Cupid exited.

Venus set Ascanius down amid some bushes and said, “Sleep, my sweet grandson, in these cooling shades, free from the murmur of these running streams, the cry of beasts, the rattling of the winds, and the whisking of these leaves. All shall be still and nothing shall interrupt your quiet sleep until I return and take you away from here again.”

### ACT 3 (*Dido*)

#### — 3.1 —

Cupid alone, disguised as Ascanius, said to himself, “Now, Cupid, cause the Carthaginian Queen to be enamored of your half-brother’s looks.”

Venus was the mother of both Aeneas and Cupid by different fathers, and so they were half-brothers.

Cupid continued, “Carry this golden arrow in your sleeve, lest she realize you are Venus’ son, and when she strokes you softly on the head, then I shall touch her breast with this arrow and conquer her.”

He would conquer her by making her fall in love with Aeneas.

Iarbas, Anna, and Dido entered the room.

Iarbas asked, “How long, fair Dido, shall I pine for you? It is not enough that you grant me love, for I need to enjoy what I desire. That love is childish that consists only of words.”

Dido replied, “Iarbas, know that you of all my wooers (and yet I have had many mightier Kings wooing me) have had the greatest favors I could give you. I fear that I, Dido, have been thought to be promiscuous because I have been too familiar with Iarbas, although the gods know no wanton thought has ever had residence in Dido’s breast.”

“But Dido is the favor I request,” Iarbas said.

Dido replied, “Don’t fear, Iarbas. Dido may be yours.”

“Look, sister,” Anna said. “Look at how Aeneas’ little son plays with your garments and embraces you.”

Tugging at Dido’s skirt, the disguised Cupid said, “No, Dido will not take me in her arms; I shall not be her son, for she does not love me.”

“Don’t cry, sweet boy,” Dido said. “You shall be Dido’s son. Sit in my lap, and let me hear you sing.”

The disguised Cupid sang a childish song.

“No more, my child,” Dido said. “Now talk for a little while, and tell me where you learned this pretty song.”

“My cousin Helen taught it to me in Troy,” the disguised Cupid said.

“How lovely Ascanius is when he smiles,” Dido said.

The disguised Cupid asked, “Will Dido let me hang about her neck?”

“Yes, waggish boy, and she gives you permission to kiss her, too.”

“What will you give me now?” the disguised Cupid asked. “I’ll have this fan.”

The disguised Cupid took the fan, and as he did so, he lightly touched Dido with his golden arrow. Immediately, she fell in love with Aeneas. Her thoughts toward Iarbas wavered between

completely rejecting him and treating him well.

“Take it, Ascanius, for your father’s sake,” Dido said.

“Come, Dido, leave Ascanius,” Iarbas said. “Let us walk together.”

“You, go away,” Dido said. “Ascanius shall stay.”

“Unkind, cruel Queen, is this how you show your love for me?” Iarbas said.

He started to leave.

“Oh, stay, Iarbas, and I’ll go with you,” Dido said.

Iarbas stayed.

“And if my mother goes, I’ll follow her,” the disguised Cupid said. By “mother,” he meant Dido. Ascanius had earlier told her that she would be his mother.

Dido asked Iarbas, “Why do you stay here? You are no love of mine.”

“Iarbas, die, seeing that Dido abandons you,” Iarbas said.

“No, Iarbas, live,” Dido said. “What have you done that you deserve that I should say you are no love of mine? Nothing.”

She immediately changed her mind: “Yes, you have done something that made you deserve it. Go away, I say! Depart from Carthage. Don’t come within my sight.”

“Am I not King of rich Gaetulia?” Iarbas asked.

Dido replied, “Iarbas, pardon me and stay a while.”

“Mother, look here,” the disguised Cupid said.

Dido again changed her mind: “Why are you telling me about rich Gaetulia? Am I not Queen of Libya? So then depart.”

“I am leaving to satisfy this weird mood of yours, my love,” Iarbas said. “Yet I will not go from Carthage for a thousand worlds.”

Iarbas started to leave.

Dido changed her mind and called his name: “Iarbas!”

Iarbas turned around and asked, “Did Dido call me back?”

Dido again changed her mind and said, “No, but I order you never again to look at me.”

“Then pull out both of my eyes, or let me die,” Iarbas said.

He exited.

Anna asked Dido, her sister, “For what reason did Dido tell Iarbas to leave?”

“Because his loathsome sight offends my eye,” Dido said, “and because in my thoughts is enshrined another love. Oh, Anna, if you knew how sweet love is, very soon you would abjure this single life.”

Anna replied, "Poor soul, I know too well the sour of love. Oh, I wish that Iarbas could fancy me!"

"Isn't Aeneas fair and beautiful?" Dido asked.

"Yes, and Iarbas is foul and favorless," Anna said.

"Favorless" means "unattractive."

Anna may have been merely indulging the mood of her sister, or she may have been actively trying to make Dido no longer love Iarbas, whom Anna herself loved.

"Isn't Aeneas eloquent in all his speech?" Dido asked.

"Yes, and Iarbas is rude and rustic in his speech," Anna replied.

"Don't say the name 'Iarbas.' But sweet Anna, tell me, isn't Aeneas worthy of Dido's love?"

"Oh, sister," Anna said, "even if you were Empress of the world, Aeneas would well deserve to be your love. So lovely is he that wherever he goes, the people swarm to gaze at his face."

"But tell them that none but I shall gaze on him, lest their gross eyebeams taint my lover's cheeks," Dido said.

This society's theory of vision was that eyes shot out beams that allowed the eyes to see objects. Being stared at by a lower-class person could therefore taint an upper-class person.

Dido continued, "Anna, good sister Anna, go to him and bring him here, lest I melt clean away with these sweet thoughts."

"Then, sister, you'll abjure Iarbas' love?" Anna asked.

"Must I hear that loathsome name yet again?" Dido asked. "Run for Aeneas, or I'll fly to him."

The disguised Cupid said, "You shall not hurt my father when he comes."

"No, I won't," Dido replied. "For your sake I'll love your father well."

She then said to herself, "Oh, dull-brained Dido, who until now did never think Aeneas to be beautiful! But now, for quittance of this oversight, I'll make myself bracelets of his golden hair. His glistening eyes shall be my looking glass. His lips shall be an altar where I'll offer up as many kisses as the sea has grains of sands. Instead of music I will hear him speak. His looks shall be my only library, and you, Aeneas, shall be Dido's treasury, in whose fair bosom I will lock more wealth than twenty thousand Indias can afford.

"Oh, here he comes! Love, love, give Dido the ability to be more modest than her thoughts admit, lest I be made a wonder to the world."

Dido was worried about being the object of gossip.

Aeneas, accompanied by his fellow Trojans Achates, Cloanthus, Ilioneus, and Sergestus entered.

Pretending that she had not seen Aeneas, Dido asked, "Achates, how does Carthage please your lord?"



Achates motioned toward Aeneas and replied, "That is something Aeneas can tell your majesty."

"Aeneas, are you there?" Dido asked.

"I understand that your highness sent for me," Aeneas replied.

"No," Dido lied, "but now that you are here, tell me truly what Dido might do to highly please you."

"So much have I received from Dido's hands that I can ask for no more without blushing," Aeneas replied, "yet still, Queen of Africa, my ships are unrigged, my sails all torn apart by the wind, my oars broken, and my tackling lost. Yes, all the ships of my navy are split because of rocks and sandbars. Our maimed fleet has neither rudders nor anchors. Our masts the furious winds struck overboard. If Dido will supply us with these things we so piteously lack, we will account her the author of our lives."

God is often considered the author of all life. Aeneas was saying that if Dido would outfit his ships, he and the other Trojans would regard her as a goddess.

Dido replied, "Aeneas, I'll repair your Trojan ships, on the condition that you will stay with me and let Achates sail to Italy.

"I'll give you tackling made of twisted gold thread wound on the barks of odoriferous, sweet-smelling trees.

"I'll give you oars of massy ivory, full of holes through which the water shall delight to play."

Dido seems to have not known a thing about rowing. Or she may have meant that the oars she would give to Aeneas himself in particular would have holes so that they would be ineffective in taking him away from her.

She continued, "Your anchors shall be hewed from crystal rocks so that, if you loose or lose them, they shall shine above the waves."

When anchors are loosed, they are brought up from the ocean's floor to be stored on ship. Once above the waves, Aeneas' anchor would shine brightly. In addition, as Achates sailed away and Aeneas "lost" his ships, Aeneas could long see the shining anchors.

Dido continued:

"The masts whereon your swelling sails shall hang will be hollow obelisks of silver plate.

"The sails will be made of fine cloth folded over for thickness, and embroidered on the sails shall be scenes of the wars of Troy, but not of Troy's overthrow."

She may have been thinking that thicker sails would blow the ships faster away from Carthage and Dido — and Aeneas.

Dido continued, "As for ballast, empty Dido's treasury."

She then said to Achates:

"Take what you will, but leave Aeneas here. Achates, you shall be so manly clad that sea-born nymphs shall swarm about your ships and wanton mermaids shall court you with sweet songs,

flinging into your ship gifts of more sovereign worth than Thetis hangs about Apollo's neck, provided that Aeneas may stay with me."

Thetis is a sea-goddess who is the mother of the Greek Achilles, the strongest and best warrior of the Trojan War.

Apollo is the sun-god.

Aeneas asked, "Why would Dido have Aeneas stay here in Carthage?"

"To war against my bordering enemies," Dido said. "Aeneas, don't think that Dido is in love, for if any man could conquer me, I would have been wedded before Aeneas came to Carthage."

She pointed to a wall and said, "Look where the pictures of my suitors hang. Aren't these suitors as fair as fair may be?"

"I saw this man at Troy, before Troy was sacked," Achates said.

"I saw this man in Greece when Paris stole fair Helen," Aeneas said.

"This man and I were at Olympus' games," Illioneus said.

"I know this face," Sergestus said. "He is a Persian born. I traveled with him to Aetolia."

"And I, unless I am deceived, disputed with this gentleman once in Athens about a philosophical matter," Cloanthus said.

Dido pointed to another group of pictures and said, "But speak, Aeneas. Do you know any of these men?"

"No, madam, but it seems that these men are Kings," Aeneas replied.

Dido said, "All these and others whom I never saw have been most urgent suitors for my love. Some suitors came in person, and others sent their legates, yet none obtained me. I am free from all."

She thought, *And yet, God knows, I am entangled to one: you, Aeneas.*

As she spoke, she pointed to various pictures:

"This man was an orator and thought by words to win me, but yet he was deceived.

"And this man is a Spartan courtier, vain and wild, but his fantastic moods did not please me.

"This man was Alcion, a musician, but despite how sweetly he played, I let him go.

"This man was the wealthy King of Thessaly, but I had gold enough and cast him off.

"This man was Meleager's son, a warlike Prince, but weapons don't agree with my tender years.

"The rest are such as all the world well knows, yet now I swear, by heaven and by him I love, I was as far from loving as they were from hating."

Aeneas said, "Oh, happy shall he be whom Dido loves."

“Then never say that you are miserable, because it may be you shall be my love,” Dido said. “Yet don’t boast about it, for I do not love you. And yet I do not hate you.”

She thought, *Oh, if I speak, I shall betray myself. Aeneas, you speak.*

Dido continued, “We two will go hunting in the woods, but not so much for you — you are only one person — as for Achates and his followers.”

— 3.2 —

Juno looked at Ascanius, who was asleep in the midst of thick bushes, and she said, “Here lies my hate, Aeneas’ cursed brat, the boy wherein treacherous destiny delights, the heir of Fame, the favorite of Fate, that ugly imp that shall outlast my wrath and wrong my deity with high disgrace.”

Ascanius’ destiny was to go to Italy with his father, and along with his father, become an important ancestor of the Roman people.

Juno continued, “But I will take another order now and raze and erase the eternal register of time.”

She wanted to change what was fated to occur.

She continued, “Troy shall no more call Ascanius her second hope, nor shall Venus triumph in his tender youth, for here, in spite of heaven, I’ll murder him and feed infection with his left-out life.”

She wanted to murder him and to allow his stinking corpse — his body with his life left out — to infect the air.

Juno continued, “Say, Paris, now shall Venus have the ball? Say, Vengeance, shall her Ascanius die now?”

One reason why Juno hated the Trojans was the Judgment of Paris. Three goddesses — Juno, Minerva, and Venus — held a beauty contest with Paris, Prince of Troy, as the judge. The prize for the winner was a golden ball, often referred to as a golden apple. Each goddess attempted to bribe Paris to choose her, and Paris accepted Venus’ bribe: Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world. Helen was already married to Menelaus, King of Sparta, and Paris went to Sparta and ran away with Helen. Ancient authorities disagree about whether Helen went with Paris willingly.

Juno, however, had second thoughts about murdering a sleeping, innocent young boy:

“Oh, no! God knows, I cannot take advantage of this opportunity, nor requite with a double payment the ‘good turns’ — the insults — done to me. Bah, I am foolish, without a mind able to hurt this child, and I have no gall at all to use to aggrieve my foe, but lustful Jove and his adulterous child — Venus, who had an affair with Mars, the god of war — shall find it written on Confusion’s forehead that only Juno rules in the town of Rhamnus.”

Rhamnus, a town in Attica, was the site of a major shrine to Nemesis, goddess of vengeance and punishment. Juno meant that even though she could not kill Ascanius, she would still find a way to get major vengeance for what she considered major wrongs done to her.

Venus arrived, saying to herself, “What does this mean? My doves returned to me, and they warn me of such danger close at hand — danger that would harm my sweet Ascanius’ lovely life.”

Seeing Juno, Venus said, “Juno, my mortal foe, what are you doing here? Leave, old witch, and don’t trouble my mind.”

“For shame, Venus, that such words of wrath should without a reason ever defile so fair a mouth as yours,” Juno said. “Aren’t we both sprung of a celestial race, aren’t we both goddesses, and don’t we both banquet as two sisters with the gods? Why then should displeasure disjoin us two whom kinship and acquaintance do unite?”

“Out, hateful hag!” Venus said. “You would have slain my grandson, except that my sacred doves discovered your intention and came to me. But I will tear your eyes from out of your head and feast the birds with the bloodshot eyeballs, if you but lay your fingers on my boy Ascanius.”

“Is this then all the thanks that I shall have for saving him from snakes’ and serpents’ fangs that would have killed him, sleeping as he lay?” Juno said. “So what if I was offended with your son, and wrought him much woe on sea and land, when, because of my hatred for Trojan Ganymede, who was advanced by my Hebe’s shame — Jupiter made Ganymede his cupbearer, taking that honor from my daughter Hebe — and because of my hatred for Paris’ judgment of the heavenly ball, I mustered all the winds to wreck Aeneas’ fleet and urged each element — earth, air, fire, and water — to do him harm.

“Yet now I repent of causing his sorrow and I wish that I had never wronged him so. It is useless, I see now, to war with fate, which has so many irresistible friends, and therefore I changed my counsel with the time and have planted love where malice formerly had sprung.”

“Sister of Jove, if it is true that your love is such now as you protest it is, we two as friends will divide one fortune,” Venus said.

Juno was both Jupiter’s sister and his wife.

Venus continued, “Cupid shall lay his arrows in your lap and exchange his golden shafts for a scepter — that will show that he is a follower of yours. Fancy love and modesty — the fanciful amour of young lovers and the modesty of wives — shall live as mates, and fair peacocks, which are sacred to you, shall perch by doves, which are sacred to me. Love my Aeneas, and desire, which I control since I am the goddess of sexual passion, is yours. The day, the night, my swans, my sweets, are yours.”

“More than melodious are these words to me, these words that overfill my soul with their content,” Juno replied. “Venus, sweet Venus, how may I deserve such amorous favors from your beauteous hand?”

As the goddess of sexual passion, Venus could either help or hurt Juno. She could hurt Juno, a jealous wife, by making Jupiter fall in love with goddesses and mortal women. Or she could help Juno by making Jupiter fall and stay in love only with Juno.

Juno continued, “But so that you may more easily perceive how highly I prize this amity and friendship, listen to a motion of eternal league, which I will make as a reward for your love and friendship.

“Your son Aeneas, you know, now remains with Dido and feeds his eyes with favors of her court and courtship. She likewise spends her time in admiring him and can neither talk nor think of anything but him.

“Why shouldn’t they then join in marriage and bring forth mighty Kings to rule Carthage, these two whom a chance occurrence of the sea has made such friends?”

It wasn’t really a chance occurrence that made Aeneas come to the shore of Carthage; Juno had arranged for the storm that damaged the ships of Aeneas’ fleet.

Juno continued, “And, Venus, let there be a match confirmed between these two whose loves are so alike, and we two goddesses, working together as one, shall chain felicity to their throne.”

Venus replied, “I could well like this means of reconciliation, but I much fear that my son will never consent because metaphorically his armed soul, already on the sea, darts forth her light to Lavinia’s shore.”

She meant that Aeneas was still thinking about Italy. His soul is armed in case he needs to fight to establish himself there. Lavinia is the Italian woman whom he is fated to marry.

Juno said, “Fair Queen of love, I will divorce these doubts and find the way to weary such foolish thoughts. You need not worry: I will make Aeneas stop thinking about Italy.

“Today Aeneas and Dido will go forth to hunt and will ride into these woods next to these walls. When they are in the midst of all their entertaining sports, I’ll make the clouds discharge their water and drench Silvanus’ dwellings with their showers.”

Silvanus is the god of woodlands and fields.

Juno continued, “Then in one cave Queen Dido and Aeneas shall meet and mutually disclose their thoughts to each other, and quickly their hearts will be sealed with vows of love. Marriage will follow, I am sure, just as we propose.”

Venus said, “Sister, I see you savor of my wiles.”

Venus and Cupid were usually the ones whose wiles led to people falling in love. Juno, however, was doing a fine job of that right now.

Venus continued, “Be it as you will have it for this once. In the meantime Ascanius shall be my responsibility. I will bear him to the Idalian groves in Cyprus in my arms, and bed him in Adonis’ purple down.”

Adonis’ “purple down” was the purple flowers known as anemones. While he was hunting, a boar gored and killed him. From his blood grew purple anemones.

### — 3.3 —

Dido, Aeneas, Anna, Iarbas, Achates, the disguised Cupid, and some others met, ready to go hunting or to assist in the hunting.

“Aeneas, know that I honor you by thus in person going with you to hunt. My princely robes, as you can see, are laid aside. The glittering pomp of those clothes Diana’s outfit now supplies.”

Diana was the goddess of the hunt, and her clothing was the clothing of hunters.

Dido continued, "All of us are fellow hunters now, and we are all disposed alike to sport. The woods are wide, and we have plenty of game."

She said, "Aeneas, handsome Trojan, hold my golden bow a while until I tie my quiver to my side.

"Lords, go on ahead of us. We two — Aeneas and I — must talk alone."

Iarbus said to himself, "Cruel woman, can she wrong Iarbas so? I'll die before I allow a foreigner to treat me so cruelly. 'We two will talk alone' — what words are these?"

"What makes Iarbas stay here away from all the rest?" Dido said. "We can do without your company."

"Perhaps love and duty led him on," Aeneas said, "to remain within your sight despite your opposition."

"Why, man of Troy, do I offend your eyes?" Iarbus asked. "Or are you grieved that your betters come so near to Dido?"

"What is this, Gaetulian!" an angry Dido said. "Have you grown so bold that you challenge us with your comparisons? Do you think that you are better than Aeneas? Peasant, go seek companions like yourself, and don't meddle with anyone whom I love and respect.

"Aeneas, don't be angered by what he says, for now and again he will be out of joint."

Iarbus said to himself, "Women may wrong others by the privilege of love; a man who loves a woman will take much abuse from her. But if Aeneas, that 'man of men' — or anyone except Dido — had taunted me with these opprobrious terms, I would have either drunk Aeneas' dying blood immediately, or else I would have offered a challenge to Aeneas to fight to the death in single combat."

Dido said, "Huntsmen, why don't you set up your nets quickly and rouse the light-footed deer from out of their lair?"

Anna said to Dido, "Sister, look. See Ascanius in his pomp, bearing his hunting spear bravely in his hand."

"Hey, little son, are you so eager now?" Dido asked.

The disguised Cupid replied, "Yes, mother, I shall one day be a man, and better able unto other arms."

His words were ambiguous. The innocent meaning was that he would be a man and would be able to wield arms — hunting weapons — much better than he could now. The bawdy meaning was that he would be a man and would be able to render good service within other arms — the arms of a woman.

Cupid's words, however, applied only to Ascanius, who would grow up to be a warrior and have children. Cupid would never grow up. Gods and goddesses were born, and then grew to a certain age, which varied for each of them, and then stopped aging. Jupiter would always be a mature man. Mercury would always be a young man. Cupid would always be a young boy.

He continued, “Meanwhile these wanton weapons serve my war, and I will break my spear between a lion’s jaws.”

Of course, they were hunting deer, not lions, but these were brave words.

“What!” Dido said, laughing. “Do you dare to look a lion in the face?”

“Yes, and I will outface him, too, no matter what he does,” the disguised Cupid said.

“How like his father he speaks in all he says,” Anna said.

Aeneas said, “And if I could live to see him sack rich Thebes and load his spear with the heads of Greek Princes, then I would wish that I were with my late father, Anchises, in his tomb, and dead. That way I could bring news of Ascanius’ actions to honor the father who has brought me up.”

Iarbus said to himself, “And if I could live to see you, Aeneas, shipped away and hoisted aloft on the sea-god Neptune’s hideous hills — the sea’s tall waves — then I would wish that I were in fair Dido’s arms and dead.”

To “die” in a woman’s arms meant to have an orgasm while in her arms.

Iarbus continued, “That way I would scorn that which has pursued me so.”

What was pursuing Iarbus was jealousy of Aeneas.

Aeneas said, “Brave friend, Achates, do you know this wood?”

“I remember that here you shot the deer that saved your famished soldiers’ lives from death, when first you set your foot upon the shore,” Achates replied. “And here we met fair Venus, disguised as a human maiden, bearing her bow and quiver at her back.”

Remembering past troubles that he and his fellow Trojans had overcome, Aeneas said, “Oh, how these irksome labors now delight and overjoy my thoughts because of our escape from them. Who would not undergo all kinds of toil to be well stored with such a winter’s tale?”

Stories of past troubles well overcome are good to tell on a winter’s evening.

Dido said, “Aeneas, leave these reveries and let’s all go. Some go to the mountains, and some go to the wetlands. You people go to the valleys.”

Then to Iarbus, she said, insultingly, “You go to the house.”

Everyone except Iarbus exited.

He said to himself, “Yes, this it is that wounds me to the death: To see a Trojan Phrygian, fetched from far over the sea, preferred before a man of majesty — me!

“Oh, love! Oh, hate! Oh, cruel women’s hearts, that imitate the moon in every change and like the planets always love to range.”

According to Iarbus, women’s hearts are ever changeable like the moon, and they wander from man to man like the planets wander in the night sky.

He continued, “What shall I do, I who am thus wronged with Dido’s disdain? Should I get revenge on Aeneas or on her? On her? Foolish man, getting revenge on her would be the

equivalent of going to war against the gods of heaven. My shooting one arrow would provoke the gods into throwing ten thousand spears at me.

“Iarbus, this Trojan’s death will be your malice’s goal. His blood will make you happy again and will make love drunken with your sweet desire.

“But Dido, who now thinks of him so dearly, will ‘die’ with hearing the news of his death.

“But time will discontinue her love for Aeneas and mold her mind unto new fancy’s shapes. She will lose her love for Aeneas and seek a new man to love — women’s hearts are changeable! Oh, God of heaven, turn the hand of Fate to that happy day of my delight!

“And then — what then? Iarbas shall only love. So does he now, though not with equal gain. That rests in your rival, who causes your pain — Aeneas, who will never cease to soar until he is slain.”

— 3.4 —

Juno caused a storm, and first Dido and then Aeneas sought shelter in the same cave.

“Aeneas!” Dido said.

“Dido!” Aeneas said.

“Tell me, dear love, how did you find this cave?” Dido asked.

“By chance, sweet Queen, just like Mars and Venus met.”

He was referring to a story in which Mars and Venus committed adultery. Venus was married to Vulcan, a master blacksmith who found out about the adultery and created a fine net in which he trapped them in the act of love-making and then invited the other gods to come and laugh at them.

Vulcan had created a trap for Venus and Mars, and Juno had set a trap for Dido and Aeneas.

Dido said, “Why, that was in a net, whereas we are loose.”

“Loose” can mean “promiscuous.”

She continued, “And yet I am not free. Oh, I wish I were!”

“Why, what is it that Dido may desire and not obtain, as long as it is in human power to obtain?” Aeneas asked.

“The thing that I will die before I ask for, and yet desire to have before I die,” Dido said.

Another meaning of the verb “die” is “have an orgasm.”

“Is it anything Aeneas may get for you?” he asked.

“Aeneas?” Dido said. “No, although his eyes do pierce.”

She wanted another part of his body to pierce her.

“Has Iarbas angered her in anything, and will she be avenged on his life?” Aeneas asked, referring to Dido in the third person.



“He has not angered me, except in angering you,” Dido replied.

“Who, then, of all men so cruel may he be that he should make you notice his defects?” Aeneas asked.

“The man whom I see wherever I am, whose amorous face, like the face of Paeon — Apollo, god of the sun — sparkles fire, when he shoots his beams on Flora’s bed.”

Flora is the goddess of gardens and flowers, and so her bed is the earth.

Dido continued, “Prometheus has put on Cupid’s shape, and I must perish in his burning arms.”

Prometheus brought the gift of fire to human beings, and Cupid causes human beings to fall in love. Dido was saying that Aeneas was like a combination of these gods and that he was so magnificent that she would die in his arms.

Again, “the verb “die” means “have an orgasm.”

“Aeneas, oh, Aeneas, quench these flames!” Dido said.

“What ails my Queen?” Aeneas said. “Has she fallen sick recently?”

“Not sick, my love,” Dido said.

She thought, *But I am lovesick. I must conceal the torment that it will not profit me to reveal. ... And yet I’ll speak. ... And yet I’ll hold my peace. ... Let Shame do her worst. I will disclose my grief.*

She said out loud, “Aeneas, you are the man I mean. What did I say? Something it was that now I have forgotten.”

“What does fair Dido mean by this unclear speech?” Aeneas asked.

“Oh, nothing,” Dido said. “But Aeneas does not love me.”

“Aeneas’ thoughts dare not ascend so high as Dido’s heart, which monarchs might not scale,” Aeneas said.

Aeneas was not a King. As a Queen, Dido would be expected to marry a King.

Dido said, “It was because I saw no King like you, whose golden crown might balance and equal my happiness — you are the man who can make me happy. But now that I have found the man whom I should love, I follow a man who loves Fame more than he loves me, a man who would rather seem fair to the eyes of Sirens than to the Carthage Queen who dies for him.”

The Sirens sang beautifully to lure sailors to crash their ships on rocks.

Dido continued, “I love a man who would rather sail to Italy than stay at Carthage with me.”

“If your majesty can look so low as my despised worths that shun all praise,” Aeneas said, “with this my hand I give to you my heart and I vow by all the gods of hospitality, by heaven and earth, by my fair half-brother’s bow, by Paphos, Capys, and the purple sea from whence my radiant mother descended, and by this sword that saved me from the Greeks, never to leave

these newly built walls of Carthage, while Dido lives and rules in Juno's favorite town. I vow never to like or love any but her."

Aeneas was swearing a mighty oath. He was swearing by the gods of hospitality, especially Jupiter but also Mercury. He was also swearing by heaven and earth and by the bow of his half-brother, Cupid. He was also swearing by Paphos, where was located a temple to his mother, Venus. He was also swearing by his grandparents. Capys was his father's father, and his mother was born from the foam of the purple sea by Cythera and then traveled to Cyprus.

"What more than Delian music do I hear, music that calls my soul from forth his living seat — my heart — to dance to the measures of delight!" Dido said.

Delos is the birthplace of Apollo, god of music.

She continued, "Kind clouds that sent forth such a courteous storm as made disdain to flee to love's lap! Valiant love, in my arms make your Italy, whose crown and kingdom rest at your command. You shall command my body. Sichaeus, not Aeneas, shall you be called — you shall be called by the name of my late husband. You shall be called the King of Carthage, not the son of Anchises."

To love Dido and stay with her in Carthage would cost Aeneas much of his identity — and his destiny.

Dido continued, "Wait. Take these jewels from the hand of your lover, me. Take these golden bracelets, and this wedding ring with which my husband wooed me, while I was still a maiden, and be King of Libya by my gift."

They went deeper into the cave.

## **ACT 4 (*Dido*)**

### **— 4.1 —**

Achates, Cupid (still disguised as Ascanius), Iarbas, and Anna stood together after the storm.

"Have men ever seen such a sudden storm, or a day that was so clear become so suddenly overcast?" Achates asked.

"I think some powerful enchantress dwells here," Iarbus said, "who can call storms forth whenever she pleases and dive into black tempest's treasury whenever she means to mask the world with clouds."

"In all my life I never knew the like," Anna said. "It hailed; it snowed; it lightnined all at once."

"I think it was the devil's night to revel," Achates said. "There was such hurly-burly in the heavens. Doubtless Apollo's axle-tree cracked, or aged Atlas' shoulder got out of joint, the commotion was so excessively violent."

If the axle of Apollo's sun-chariot were to crack, he would have to repair it and the sun would be out of commission for a while, leading to the darkness of storms on the Earth.

Atlas was the Titan who held up the sky. If his shoulder were to get out of joint, he would have to adjust the sky on his shoulders, causing atmospheric disturbances.

"In all this turmoil, where have you left Queen Dido?" Iarbus asked.

"And where's my warlike father, can you tell me?" the disguised Cupid asked.

Seeing them, Anna said, "Look where both of them are coming out of the cave."

"Coming out of the cave!" Iarbus said.

He knew they had been alone together, and knowing that Dido loved Aeneas, he could guess that they had had sex.

He said to himself, "Can heaven endure this sight? Iarbas, curse that unrevenging Jove, whose flinty darts slept in Typhon's den, while these adulterers surfeited with sin."

Iarbus was angry because Jupiter, whom he worshipped, had not punished the fornicating Aeneas and Dido with his "flinty darts," aka thunderbolts. Instead of hurling them at the couple, Jupiter had left the thunderbolts under Mount Etna, where Vulcan the blacksmith god manufactured them, using Mount Etna as his forge. Typhon was a monster that was imprisoned under Mount Etna.

Iarbus continued, "Nature, why didn't you make me some poisonous beast instead of making me human, so that with my sharp-edged fang I might have staked them both into the earth, while they were fornicating in this dark cave?"

Aeneas and Dido walked over to the others.

"The air is clear, and southern winds are calm and still," Aeneas said. "Come, Dido, let us hasten to the town, since gloomy Aeolus ceases to frown."

Aeolus, King of the winds, was no longer in a bad mood and so had stopped the storm.

"Achates and Ascanius, we are well met," Dido said. "It is good to see you."

"Fair Anna, how did you escape from the rain shower?" Aeneas asked.

"As others did, by running to the wood," Anna replied.

"But where were you, Iarbas, all this while?" Dido asked.

"Not with Aeneas in the ugly cave," he replied.

"I see Aeneas sticks in your mind, and you can't stop thinking about him," Dido said. "But I will soon put aside that stumbling block and quell those hopes that thus employ your thoughts."

— 4.2 —

Iarbas was preparing to sacrifice an animal to Jupiter. Some servants were with him.

“Come servants, come,” Iarbus said. “Bring forth the sacrifice so that I may pacify that gloomy Jove, whose empty altars have enlarged our ills.”

According to Iarbus, Jupiter was gloomy and inclined to punish Iarbus because Iarbus had not been making enough sacrifices to him.

The servants brought in the animal to be sacrificed and then exited.

Iarbus prayed, “Eternal Jove, great master of the clouds, you are the father of gladness and all frolicsome thoughts.”

Jupiter dispenses both good things and bad things, and so he is the father of gladness although at times he can be gloomy.

Iarbus continued to pray: “You with your gloomy hand correct the heaven when airy creatures war amongst themselves.”

“Airy creatures” include such things as the planets and other heavenly bodies. When necessary, Jupiter takes action to make things right when the airy creatures get out of hand. For example, when Phaethon drove the sun-chariot, he could not control the immortal horses that pulled it, and the sun got too close to the earth and nearly burned it (and likely could have burned other airy creatures). Jupiter restored order by killing Phaethon with a thunderbolt, and then Apollo took over driving the sun-chariot.

Iarbus continued to pray: “Hear, hear, oh, hear Iarbus’ complaining prayers, whose hideous echoes make the welkin — the sky — howl and all the woods to resound with ‘Eliza!’”

Queen Dido had other names, including Elissa and Eliza.

Iarbus continued to pray: “Dido is the woman whom you willed us to entertain and to treat well when, straying up and down our borders, she craved a hide of ground to build a town. With her we shared both laws and land and all the fruits that plenty also sends forth.”

When Dido came to the shore of North Africa, she wanted land on which to build a city. She convinced Iarbus to allow her to purchase a hide’s worth of land. He thought that she wanted to buy the amount of land that an animal hide would cover, but she cut the hide into very thin strips that she tied into a circle. The amount of land within the circle of animal hide strips was enough for her to build a city — Carthage — on.

That is according to one story. Possibly, a “hide” of land was a measure of land amounting to 100 or 120 acres.

Iarbus continued to pray: “Scorning our loves and royal marriage rites, Dido yields up her beauty to a foreigner’s bed.”

Many North African Kings had wooed Dido, who rejected them.

Iarbus continued to pray: “This foreigner, having wrought her shame, is straightway fled.”

By agreeing to stay in Carthage with Dido, Aeneas had immediately fled from his destiny, which was to go to Italy, marry Lavinia, and become an important ancestor of the Roman people.

Iarbus continued to pray: “Now, if you are a pitying god of power, on whom pity and compassion forever attend, redress these wrongs and summon him to his ships. Take away from Africa this man who now afflicts me with his deceiving eyes.”

Anna entered and said, “How are you now, Iarbas! At your prayers so hard?”

“Yes, Anna,” Iarbus said. “Is there anything you want from me?”

“No,” Anna said. “I have no such weighty business of importance, just what may be put off until another time. Yet, if you would share with me the cause of this devotion that detains you, I would be thankful to you for such courtesy.”

“Anna, I am praying against this Trojan, Aeneas, who seeks to rob me of your sister’s love and dive into her heart by false, deceiving looks.”

“Alas, poor King, who labors so in vain for Dido, who so delights in your pain,” Anna said. “Take my advice and seek some other love, a love whose yielding heart may yield you more relief.”

“My eye is fixed on a woman whom I cannot make love me,” Iarbus said. “Oh, leave me, leave me to my silent thoughts that count the numbers of my woes, and I will either move the thoughtless flint — make hard-as-flint Dido love me — or drop both of my eyes out in drizzling tears, before the course of my sorrow stops.”

“I will not leave Iarbas, whom I love, in this delight of dying pensiveness,” Anna said. “You are taking delight in swooning sorrow. Away with Dido! Let Anna be your song — Anna, who admires you more than heaven.”

“I may not and will not listen to such a loathsome change — Anna for Dido! — that intercepts the course of my desire,” Iarbus said brutally.

He called, “Servants, come fetch these empty vessels here, for I will flee from these alluring eyes of Anna that pursue my peace wherever it goes.”

The vessels were empty because Anna had interrupted the sacrifice before Iarbas could slaughter the animal; the vessels were used to collect the animal’s blood.

As Iarbas left, Anna called, “Iarbas, stay! Loving Iarbas, stay, for I have honey to present to you. Hard-hearted man, won’t you hear me speak? I’ll follow you with outcries nevertheless and strew your walks with my disheveled hair.”

### — 4.3 —

Alone, Aeneas talked to himself:

“Carthage, my friendly host, adieu, since destiny calls me from your shore. Hermes this night, descending in a dream, has summoned me to fruitful Italy. Jove wills it so. My mother wills it so. Let my Phoenissa — the Phoenician Elissa, aka Dido — grant me permission to leave, and then I go.

“Whether she grants me permission or not, Aeneas must go. My golden fortunes, clogged with courtly ease, cannot ascend to Fame’s immortal house and cannot feast in bright Honor’s burnished — polished — hall, until Aeneas has furrowed Neptune’s glassy fields and cut a passage through his topless hills.”

To reach Italy, Aeneas would have to sail the sea, which he likened here to plowing a field and making a journey through mountainous territory. In Italy, he would find his destiny.

Aeneas called, "Achates, come here! Sergestus, Ilioneus, Cloanthus, hasten away! Aeneas calls you."

Achates, Cloanthus, Ilioneus, and Sergestus came over to Aeneas.

"What does our lord want?" Achates asked. "Why is he calling us?"

Aeneas answered, "The dreams, brave mates, that did beset my bed when sleep but newly had embraced the night, command me to leave these unrenowned realms, where nobility abhors to stay, and none but base Aeneas will abide."

Carthage was not where Aeneas was fated to find renown, and so for Aeneas to choose to stay here would show that he is a base and not a noble man. Later, Carthage would compete with Rome to dominate the Mediterranean, but now Carthage was just being built, and Rome would not exist for hundreds of years.

Aeneas said to his Trojan companions, "Aboard, aboard, since Fates do bid us go on board and slice the sea with sable-colored ships — ships with black sails on which the nimble winds may all day attend, and follow them, as footmen, through the deep.

"Yet Dido casts her eyes like anchors out, to prevent my fleet from leaving the bay. 'Come back, come back,' I hear her cry from afar, 'and let me link your body to my lips, so that, tied together by the striving tongues, we may, as one, sail to Italy.'"

Achates said, "Banish that enticing dame from your mouth; don't let her kiss you. Instead, follow your foreseeing stars in everything. Follow the destiny that the stars that reigned at your birth prophesized. This life in Carthage is no life for men-at-arms to live — here romantic dalliance consumes a soldier's strength, and wanton motions of alluring eyes make our minds, which have been inured to war, effeminate."

"Why, let us build a city of our own, and not stand lingering here for amorous looks," Ilioneus said. "Will Dido raise old Priam out of his grave and rebuild the town the Greeks burned? No, no; she doesn't care whether we sink or swim, as long as she may have Aeneas in her arms."

"To Italy, sweet friends, to Italy!" Cloanthus said. "We will not stay here a minute longer."

"Trojans, go on board the ships, and I will follow you," Aeneas said.

Everyone except Aeneas exited.

He said to himself, "I gladly would go, yet beauty calls me back. To leave Dido so quickly like this and not once say farewell would be to transgress against all the laws of love, but if I use such ceremonious thanks and words that parting lovers are accustomed to say on the shore, her silver arms will embrace me round about my neck and shedding tears of pearl, she will cry, 'Stay, Aeneas, stay.' Each word she says will then contain a crown, and every speech will be ended with a kiss. I may not endure this female drudgery. I cannot endure being held in slavery by a woman, and I cannot endure these words, hugs, and kisses that Dido will give me if she finds out that I am leaving. Go to sea, Aeneas! Find Italy!"

Dido and Anna talked together in a room of her palace.

“Oh, Anna, run to the shore where Aeneas’ ships are located,” Dido said. “They say Aeneas’ men are going on board. It may be he will steal away with them. Don’t stay to answer me. Run, Anna, run.”

Anna ran from the room.

Dido said to herself, “Oh, foolish Trojans who would steal away from here and not let Dido know ahead of time their intention of leaving. I would have given Achates a store of gold, and I would have given Ilioneus frankincense and Libyan spices. I would have given the common soldiers rich embroidered coats and silver whistles to control the winds, which the goddess Circe sent my late husband, Sichaesus, when he lived. They are unworthy of a Queen’s reward.”

Sailors used whistles to communicate during storms at sea.

Anna returned, bringing with her Aeneas, Achates, Ilioneus, and Sergestus.

Dido said to herself, “See where they come. How might I do to chide? Is criticizing Aeneas a good idea?”

“It was time for me to run,” Anna said. “Aeneas would have been gone; the sails were being hoisted up and he was on board the ship.”

Dido asked Aeneas, “Is this how you show your love to me?”

“Oh, princely Dido, give me permission to speak,” Aeneas said. “I went to take my farewell of Achates.”

Dido asked, “How does it happen that Achates did not tell me farewell?”

“Because I feared your grace would keep me here,” Achates answered.

“To rid you of that fear,” Dido said, “I tell you to go on board the ship again. I order you to go out to sea, and not stay here.”

“Then let Aeneas go on board with us,” Achates said.

“Get yourself on board,” Dido said. “Aeneas intends to stay in Carthage.”

“The sea is rough,” Aeneas said. “The winds blow to the shore.”

“Oh, false Aeneas!” Dido said. “Now the sea is rough, but when you were on board, the sea was calm enough. You and Achates meant to sail away.”

“Haven’t you, the Queen of Carthage, my only son?” Aeneas asked. “Do you, Dido, think I will go and leave him here?”

Aeneas made a good point. He had not left his son behind at Troy and was unlikely to do so in Carthage. It is possible, however, that he had recognized the disguised Cupid and realized that his son was somewhere safe and that Venus, his goddess mother, would later safely return his son to him.

Also, Anna may have misinterpreted what she had seen when she thought that Aeneas was ready to sail away from Carthage.

Of course, Aeneas had made up his mind to leave Carthage, but he had also at least seriously considered telling Dido that he was leaving.

“Aeneas, pardon me, for I forgot that young Ascanius slept in my bed last night,” Dido said.

She continued, “Love made me jealous, but to make amends, wear the imperial crown of Libya. Hold the Punic scepter in my stead, and punish me, Aeneas, for this crime.”

“This kiss shall be fair Dido’s punishment,” Aeneas said, kissing her.

She put the crown on his head and put the scepter in his hand.

“Oh, how a crown becomes Aeneas’ head,” Dido said. “Stay here, Aeneas, and command as King of Carthage.”

“How vain would I be to wear this diadem and bear this golden scepter in my hand,” Aeneas said. “A helmet of steel and not a crown, a sword and not a scepter are suitable for Aeneas.”

“Oh, keep them always, and let me gaze my fill,” Dido said. “Now Aeneas looks like immortal Jove. Oh, where are Ganymede to hold his cup and Mercury to fly and get what he calls for? May ten thousand Cupids hover in the air and fan Aeneas’ lovely face.

“Oh, I wish that the clouds were here, wherein you flee, so that you and I unseen might sport ourselves.”

During the Trojan War, Jupiter wrapped clouds around Juno and himself so that no one could see them making love on Mount Ida. Dido wanted this to happen to Aeneas and her. By spending his time having sex with Dido, Aeneas would be fleeing his destiny in Italy.

Treacherous Juno had slept with Jupiter to trick him into not paying attention to the Trojan War so that the Greeks could rally against the Trojans, who were fighting well. In her own more innocent way, Dido was treacherous to Aeneas because she was keeping him from pursuing his destiny.

Dido continued, “Heaven, envious of our joys, has grown pale, and when we whisper, then the stars fall down to be partakers of our honey talk.”

“Oh, Dido, patroness of all our lives, when I leave you, may death be my punishment,” Aeneas said. “Swell, raging seas. Frown, wayward destinies. Blow, winds. Threaten, rocks and sandbars. This is the harbor that Aeneas seeks. Let’s see what harm tempests can bring to me now.”

“Not all the world can take you from my arms,” Dido said. “Aeneas may command as many African moors as in the sea are little waterdrops, and now, to demonstrate my love for Aeneas, fair sister Anna, lead my lover forth and, with him seated on my horse, let him ride as Dido’s husband through the Punic — Carthaginian — streets, and order my guard with Mauritanian spears to wait upon him as their sovereign lord.”

“What if the citizens complain at this?” Anna asked.

“Command my guard to slay for their offense those who dislike what Dido orders,” Dido replied. “Shall vulgar peasants storm at what I do? The ground is mine that gives them sustenance. The air that they breathe, the water, fire, all that they have, their lands, their goods,



and their lives are mine. And I, the goddess of all these, command that Aeneas shall ride as the King of Carthage.”

Achates said, “Aeneas, because of his parentage, deserves as large a kingdom as is Libya.”

“Yes, and unless the Destinies — the Fates — are false, I shall be planted in as rich a land,” Aeneas said.

He may have been referring to Italy.

“Speak of no other land,” Dido said. “This land is yours. Dido is yours; henceforth I’ll call you lord.”

In this society, wives called their husbands lord.

Dido ordered Anna, “Do what I order you to do, sister. Lead the way, and from a turret I’ll behold my love.”

“Then here in me shall flourish Priam’s race,” Aeneas said. “And you and I, Achates, for revenge for Troy, for Priam, for his fifty sons, our kinsmen’s lives, and a thousand guiltless souls, will lead an army against the hateful Greeks and set on fire proud Sparta of Lacedaemon over their heads.”

Everyone exited except Dido and a Carthaginian lord.

“Doesn’t Aeneas speak like a conqueror?” she said. “Oh, blessed tempests that drove him to Carthage! Oh, happy sand that made him run aground here! Henceforth you shall be our Carthage gods.

“Yes, but it may be he will leave my love and seek a foreign land called Italy. Oh, I wish that I had a charm to keep the winds enclosed within a golden ball, or that the Mediterranean Sea were in my arms, so that he might suffer shipwreck on my breast as often as he attempts to hoist up sail.

“I must anticipate what he will do and stop him from leaving. Wishing will not serve.”

She commanded, “Go and order my nurse to take young Ascanius and carry him to her house in the country. Aeneas will not leave without his son.

“Yet, lest he should leave without his son, for I am full of fear, bring me his oars, his tackling, and his sails.”

The Carthaginian lord exited.

Dido said to herself, “What if I sink his ships? Oh, he’ll frown. Better he should frown than I should die for grief.

“But I cannot see him frown; it may not be. Armies of foes resolved to conquer this town, or impious traitors vowed to murder me and have my life, do not frighten me; only Aeneas’ frown is that which terrifies poor Dido’s heart.

“Not bloody spears, appearing in the air, that presage the downfall of my sovereignty, nor threatening blazing comets that foretell Dido’s death, but only Aeneas’ frown will end my days.

“If he does not forsake me, I will never die, for in his looks I see eternity, and he’ll make me immortal with a kiss.”

The Carthaginian lord returned, accompanied by some attendants carrying tackling, oars, and sails.

“Your nurse has left with young Ascanius,” the Carthaginian lord said, “and here’s Aeneas’ tackling, oars, and sails.”

“Are these the sails that, in despite of me, maliciously conspired with the winds to bear Aeneas away from Carthage?” Dido said. “I’ll hang you sails in the chamber where I lie. Drive if you can my house to Italy. I’ll set the window open, so that the winds may enter in and once again conspire against the life of me, poor Queen of Carthage. But although you blow my house to Italy, Aeneas will still be in Carthage because he will still be in my house. So let rich Carthage float upon the seas, as long as I may have Aeneas in my arms.”

Looking at the wooden oars, she said, “Is this the wood that grew on Carthaginian plains, and would be toiling in the watery billows to rob their mistress of her Trojan guest? Oh, cursed tree, if you only had the intelligence or sense to measure how much I prize Aeneas’ love, you would have leaped from out of the sailors’ hands and told me that Aeneas meant to go. And yet I don’t blame you; you are only wood.

“The water, which our poets call in poems a nymph, why did it allow you oars to touch her breast and did not shrink back, knowing my love was there in the ship? The water is an element, no nymph.

“Why should I blame Aeneas for his flight? Oh, Dido, don’t blame him, but break his oars. These were the instruments that launched him forth.

“There’s not so much as this base tackling, too, but dares to heap up sorrow to my heart. Wasn’t it you, the tackling, that hoisted up these sails? Why didn’t you ropes break so that the sails fell in the seas? Because you did not break, Dido will tie you ropes full of knots and cut you all asunder with her hands. Then you will be used to chastise shipboys for their faults — you will be used to flog sailors. No more will you offend me, the Carthaginian Queen.

“Now let him hang my favors — my ribbons — on his masts and see if those will serve instead of sails.

“As for tackling, let him take the chains of gold that I bestowed upon his followers.

“Instead of oars, let him use his hands and swim to Italy.

“I’ll keep these sails, oars, and tackling somewhere secure where Aeneas cannot get them.”

She ordered, “Come, carry them in.”

— 4.5 —

The nurse talked to Cupid, who was still disguised as Ascanius.

“My lord Ascanius, you must go with me.”

“Where must I go?” the disguised Cupid said. “I’ll stay with my mother.”

By “mother,” he meant Queen Dido.

“No, you shall go with me to my house,” the nurse said. “I have an orchard that has lots of plums, brown almonds, pears, ripe figs, and dates, blackberries and gooseberries, apples, yellow oranges, a garden where are beehives full of honey, musk roses, and a thousand kinds of flowers, and in the midst runs a silver stream, where you shall see the red-gilled fishes leap, white swans, and many lovely waterfowl. Now speak, Ascanius, will you go or not?”

“Come, come, I’ll go,” the disguised Cupid said. “How far from here is your house?”

“It’s nearby,” the nurse said. “We shall get there quickly.”

“Nurse, I am weary,” the disguised Cupid said. “Will you carry me?”

“Yes, as long as you’ll dwell with me and call me mother.”

“As long as you’ll love me, I don’t care if I do,” the disguised Cupid said.

The nurse picked him up; being so close to and touching the god of love affected her thoughts, turning them toward love.

“I wish that I might live to see this boy become a man!” the nurse said. “How prettily he laughs. Go on, you mischievous boy! You’ll be a ladies’ man when you come of age.”

Because Cupid was mischievous, he kept inflaming the nurse’s sexual desire and then putting it out.

The nurse said, “Let Dido say what she will, I am not old. I’ll be no more a widow. I am young; I’ll have a husband, or else a lover.”

The disguised Cupid said, “A husband, and no teeth?”

The nurse said, “Oh, what do I mean to have such foolish thoughts! Love is foolish, just a foolish toy.

“Oh, sacred love! If there be any heaven in earth, it is love. Especially in women of my years.

“Blush, blush for shame! Why should you think of love? A grave, and not a lover, befits your age.

“A grave? Why? I may live a hundred years; fourscore — eighty — is just a girl’s age. Love is sweet.

“My veins are withered and my sinews dry. Why do I think of love, now I should die?”

“Come, nurse,” the disguised Cupid said.

Thinking of a former suitor, the nurse said, “Well, if he come a wooing, he shall speed and succeed. Oh, how unwise I was to say no to him!”

## ACT 5 (*Dido*)

Aeneas drew on a piece of paper the layout of Carthage. With him were Achates, Cloanthus, Ilioneus, and Sergestus.

“Triumph, my mates,” Aeneas said. “Our travels are at an end. Here Aeneas will build a statelier Troy than that which grim Atrides — Agamemnon, the son of Atreus — overthrew.

“Carthage shall boast petty walls no more, for I will grace them with a fairer frame and clad her in a crystal livery wherein the day may forevermore delight. I will build higher walls made of glittering crystals.

“From golden India I will fetch the Ganges River, whose wealthy streams may wait upon the towers of Carthage and with three moats entrench her round about.

“The sun shall bring rich odors from Egypt. The sun’s burning beams, like laboring bees that load their thighs with honey from Hybla, shall here unburden their exhaled sweet scents and plant our pleasant suburbs with their fumes. Yes, the sun shall inhale sweet scents from Egypt and then exhale them here in Carthage.”

“What length or width shall this brave town contain?” Achates asked.

“Not past four thousand paces square at the most,” Aeneas said.

“But what shall it be called?” Ilioneus asked. “Troy, as before?”

“I haven’t decided on a name yet,” Aeneas replied.

“Let it be called Aenea, after your name,” Cloanthus said.

“Rather, call it Ascania, after your little son,” Sergestus said.

“No, I will have it called Anchisaeon,” Aeneas said, “after the name of my old father: Anchises.”

Hermes arrived with the real Ascanius.

“Aeneas, wait!” Hermes said. “Jove’s herald tells you to wait.”

Jupiter did not want Aeneas to build the walls of Carthage; Aeneas’ destiny was different.

“Whom do I see?” Aeneas said. “Jove’s winged messenger? Welcome to Carthage, this newly erected town.”

Both Aeneas and Hermes were related: Both Aeneas and Hermes could trace their ancestry back to Jupiter.

“Why, kinsman,” Hermes said, “do you stand building cities here and beautifying the empire of this Queen Dido, while Italy is clean out of your mind? You are too, too forgetful of your own affairs. Why will you so betray your son’s good destiny?”

Not only was Aeneas ignoring his own destiny in Italy, but he also was ignoring his son’s destiny in Italy.

Hermes continued, “Jupiter, the King of gods, sent me from highest heaven to sound this angry message in your ears: Vain man, what monarchy do you expect to have here, and with what thought do you sleep on the shore of Libya? If you have forsaken all thought of and you

despise the praise of such undertakings, yet think upon Ascanius' prophecy, and young Iulus' more than a thousand years of empire."

Another name for Ascanius was Iulus, from which the name Julius, as in Julius Caesar, derived. Ascanius was destined to found the town of Alba Longa in Italy, and from him would descend many Kings. Romulus and Remus would then found the city of Rome, and the Roman Empire and the Byzantine Empire (the eastern half of the Roman Empire) would last more than a thousand years.

Hermes continued, "I have brought Ascanius from the Idalian groves where he slept, and I carried young Cupid to the island of Cyprus."

Aeneas immediately knew, if he had not known earlier, what had happened: "This was my mother who beguiled the Queen of Carthage and made me mis-take my half-brother, Cupid, for my son. It is no marvel, Dido, that you are in love with me because daily you dandled Cupid in your arms."

This is an additional reason for Aeneas to leave Queen Dido and Carthage and go to Italy. Dido's love for him is not real love: Venus and Cupid made her love Aeneas. Dido had no choice: She did not fall in love of her own free will.

"Welcome, sweet child," Aeneas said to his son. "Where have you been this long while?"

"Eating sweets with Queen Dido's maid," Ascanius replied, "who ever since has lulled me in her arms."

Apparently, Hermes went to the nurse's house and substituted Ascanius for Cupid, flew Cupid to Cyprus, and then returned to take Ascanius to Aeneas.

"Sergestus, bear Ascanius to our ships," Aeneas ordered, "lest Dido, spying him, keep him for a hostage."

Sergestus exited with Ascanius.

Hermes said, "Do you spend your time thinking about this little boy, and do not think about Jove's order I bring you? I tell you that you must sail immediately to Italy, or else endure the wrath of frowning Jove."

Hermes exited.

Aeneas asked, "How can I set sail into the raging deep, when I have no sails or tackling for my ships? Would the gods have me, like Deucalion, float up and down wherever the billows drive?"

When Jupiter decided to cause a great flood, he allowed Deucalion and his wife, Pyrrha, to survive on an ark Deucalion built.

Aeneas continued, "Although Dido repaired my fleet and gave me ships, yet she has taken away my oars and masts, and left me neither sail nor rudder on board."

Iarbas arrived and asked, "How are you now, Aeneas? Sad? What is the meaning of your sad mood?"

“Iarbas, I am entirely beside myself,” Aeneas said. “Jove has heaped upon me such a desperate charge, which neither skill nor reason may achieve, nor can I devise by what means to contrive to carry out what Jove has ordered me to do.”

“What have you been ordered to do, may I ask?” Iarbus said. “May I persuade you to tell me?”

“Jove orders me to speedily sail to Italy,” Aeneas said, “but I lack both rigging for my fleet and equipment for my men.”

“If that is all, then cheer up your drooping looks, for I will furnish you with such supplies,” Iarbus said. “Let some of your followers go with me, and they shall have whatsoever things you need.”

Iarbus was happy to help Aeneas, his rival for Dido’s love, leave Carthage and sail to Italy.

“Thanks, good Iarbas, for your friendly aid,” Aeneas said. “Achates and the rest shall wait on you and gather the equipment, while I rest thankful for this courtesy.”

Iarbas and Aeneas’ companions exited.

Aeneas said to himself, “Now I will hasten to the Lavinian shore in Italy and raise a new foundation to old Troy. But let the gods witness, and let heaven and earth witness, how loath I am to leave this Libyan territory, but I must because immortal Jupiter commands me to.”

Dido, accompanied by attendants, entered the scene and walked over to Aeneas.

She said to herself, “I fear I saw Aeneas’ little son being led by Achates to the Trojan fleet. If it is so, his father means to flee from Carthage to Italy. But here he is. Now, Dido, use your intelligence in talking to Aeneas.”

She wanted to persuade him to stay in Carthage.

Dido said out loud, “Aeneas, why do your men go on board the ships? Why are your ships newly rigged? For what purpose, launched from the haven, do the ships float in the calm water? Pardon me, though I ask you. Love makes me ask.”

“Oh, pardon me if I tell you why,” Aeneas said. “Aeneas will not lie to his dear love: I must go away from here. This day, when I was laying a platform for these walls, swift Mercury, sent from Jove, his father, appeared to me, and in his father’s name rebuked me bitterly for lingering here, neglecting Italy.”

“But yet Aeneas will not leave his love,” Dido said.

“I am commanded by immortal Jove to leave this town and journey to Italy, and therefore I must obey,” Aeneas said.

“These words don’t come from Aeneas’ heart,” Dido said.

“Not from my heart, for I can hardly go,” Aeneas said. “Leaving you is difficult, and yet I may not stay. Dido, farewell.”

“‘Farewell?’ Is this the amends for Dido’s love?” Dido said. “Are Trojans accustomed to leave their lovers like that? Dido may fare well, as long as Aeneas stays. I will die if my Aeneas says farewell.”

“Then let me go and never say farewell,” Aeneas said.

“‘Let me go!’ ‘Farewell!’ ‘I must leave!’ These words are poison to poor Dido’s soul,” Dido said. “Oh, speak like my Aeneas, like my love. Why do you look toward the sea? The time has been when Dido’s beauty chained your eyes to her. Am I less beautiful than when you first saw me? Oh, if I am not, Aeneas, then it is out of grief for you. Say that you will stay in Carthage with your Queen, and Dido’s beauty will return again.

“Aeneas, say how you can take your leave. Will you kiss Dido?”

She kissed him.

Dido continued, “Oh, your lips have sworn to stay with Dido! Can you take her hand?”

She held his hand.

Dido continued, “Your hand and mine have plighted mutual faith.

“Therefore, unkind Aeneas, must you say, ‘Then let me go, and never say farewell?’”

“Oh, Queen of Carthage, even if you were ugly and black,” Aeneas said, “Aeneas could not choose but hold you dear.”

This society regarded black complexions as ugly.

Aeneas continued, “Yet Aeneas must not gainsay the gods’ behest. I must obey the gods’ orders.”

“The gods?” Dido asked. “What gods are those who seek my death? In what have I offended Jupiter that he should take Aeneas from my arms? Oh, no! The gods don’t care what lovers do. It is Aeneas who calls Aeneas away from here, and woeful Dido, by these blubbered cheeks, by this right hand, and by our spousal rites, desires Aeneas to remain with her.”

She then said in Latin:

*“Si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quidquam*

*“Dulce meum, miserere domus labentis, et istam,*

*“Oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.”*

These are lines 317-319 from Book IV of Virgil’s *Aeneid*.

Translated:

“If you owe me anything, if anything in me

“Ever pleased you, take pity on my fallen fortunes and our fallen house [— the family we made together]!

“If prayer is still possible, I pray that you will change your mind.”

Aeneas replied in Latin:

*“Desine meque tuis incendere teque querelis;*

*“Italiam non sponte sequor.”*

These are lines 360-361 from Book IV of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

Translated:

“Stop upsetting yourself, and me, with these complaints.

“I do not seek Italy of my own free will.”

Dido replied, “Have you forgotten how many neighboring Kings were up in arms because I made you my love? How the citizens of Carthage did rebel, Iarbas storm, and all the world call me a second Helen of Troy — a whore — for being entangled by a foreigner's looks?

“As long as you would prove to be as true to me as Paris did to Helen, I would wish, as fair Troy was, that Carthage might be sacked, and I be called a second Helen.

“If I had a son by you, my grief would be less because I could see you, Aeneas, in our son's face. Now, if you go, what can you leave behind except that which will augment rather than ease my woe?”

“In vain, my love, you spend your fainting breath,” Aeneas said. “If words could move me, I would have already been overcome by your words.”

“And won't you be moved with Dido's words?” Dido said. “Your mother was no goddess, perjured man, nor was Dardanus the author of your stock — he is no ancestor of yours. But instead you are sprung from the Scythian Caucasus mountain range — you are hard-hearted — and the tigers of Hyrcania nursed you when you were a baby.

“Ah, foolish Dido, to endure this long!

“Weren't you wrecked upon this Libyan shore, and didn't you come to me, Dido, like a peasant fisherman? Didn't I repair your ships, make you a King, and make all your needy followers noblemen?

“Oh, you serpent that came creeping from the shore and I out of pity harbored you in my bosom, will you now slay me with your poisonous fangs and hiss at Dido for preserving you?

“Go, go, and spare not. Seek out Italy. I hope that that which love forbids me to do — destroy your fleet — the rocks and sea-gulfs will fully perform, and you shall perish in the billowing waves to which poor Dido bequeaths revenge.

“Yes, traitor, and the waves shall cast you up on shore where you and treacherous Achates first set foot.

“If that happens, I'll give you burial and weep upon your lifeless carcasses, although neither you nor he will pity me now even a whit.

“Why do you stare at my face? If you will stay, leap into my arms. My arms are open wide. If you will not stay, turn away from me, and I'll turn away from you, for although you have the heart to say farewell, I have not the power to stop you and keep you here.”

Aeneas exited.

“Is he gone?” Dido said to herself. “Yes, but he'll come again. He cannot go. He loves me too, too well to treat me so. Yet he who in my sight would not relent will, being absent from my



sight, continue to be obdurate.”

She engaged in wishful imagining:

“By this time he has gotten to the shore, and, see, the sailors take him by the hand, but he shrinks back, and now, remembering me, returns as quickly as he can. Welcome, welcome, my love!”

She returned to reality: “But where’s Aeneas? Ah, he’s gone, he’s gone!”

Anna entered and asked, “Why does my sister rave and cry like this?”

“Oh, Anna, my Aeneas is on board ship, and leaving me, he will sail to Italy. Once you went after him, and he came back again. Now bring him back, and you shall be a Queen, and I will live a private life with him.”

“Wicked Aeneas!” Anna said.

“Don’t call him wicked, sister. Speak well about him, and look upon him with a mermaid’s eye.”

Mermaids often admire sailors.

Dido continued, “Tell him, I never vowed at Aulis’ gulf the desolation of his native Troy, nor sent a thousand ships unto the walls, nor ever violated faith and was disloyal to him.”

Aulis is the port in Greece where the Greek ships met before crossing the Mediterranean Sea to attack and conquer Troy.

Dido continued, “Request him gently, Anna, to return. I crave only this: He will stay a tide or two, so that I may learn to bear his departure patiently. If he will depart thus suddenly, I die. Run, Anna, run. Don’t stay to answer me.”

As she left, Anna said, “I go, fair sister. May the heavens grant us good success.”

Anna exited, and the nurse entered.

“Oh, Dido, your little son — Ascanius — is gone,” the nurse said. “He slept in my bed with me last night, and in the morning I discovered that he was stolen from me. I think some fairies have tricked me.”

“Oh, cursed hag and treacherous, lying wretch,” Dido said, “you kill me with your harsh and hellish tale. You for some petty gift — some bribe — have let him go, and I am thus deprived and defrauded of my boy.”

She ordered, “Take the nurse away to prison immediately.”

She then said to the nurse, “You are a traitoress, a too keenly cruel and cursed sorceress!”

“I don’t know what you mean by treason, I don’t,” the nurse said. “I am as true as any other servant of yours.”

“Away with her,” Dido ordered. “Don’t allow her to speak.”

An attendant took the nurse away.

Dido looked up and said, "My sister is coming. I don't like her sad looks."

Anna entered and said, "Before I arrived at the harbor, Aeneas was already on board the ship, and, seeing me, he ordered the sailors to quickly hoist up the sails. But I cried out, 'Aeneas, false Aeneas, wait!' Then he began to wave his hand, which because he continued to hold it up, made me suppose he would have heard me speak."

Anna may have been mistaken: The waving of his hand may have been part of Aeneas' giving orders to his men.

She continued, "Then they began to drive into the ocean, which when I viewed it, I cried, 'Aeneas, stay! Dido, fair Dido, wants Aeneas to stay!' Yet my tears and laments could not mollify a whit his heart of hard adamant or flint.

"Then heedlessly I tore out my hair for grief, which being seen by all the sailors, although he, having turned his back on me, did not see me doing it, they began to try to persuade him to remedy my grief and stay a while to hear what I could say, but he, imprisoning himself below deck, sailed away."

Anna may have been mistaken: The sailors may have been advising Aeneas to go below the deck.

"Oh, Anna, Anna, I will follow him," Dido said.

"How can you go after him, when he has all your fleet?" Anna asked.

"I'll make myself wings of wax like those of Icarus, and over his ships I will soar close to the sun, so that the wax of my wings will melt and I will fall into his arms."

Daedalus and his son, Icarus, were imprisoned on Crete. To escape, Daedalus made wings for himself and his son from wax and feathers. He warned his son not to fly too close to the sun, but impetuous Icarus did. The wax of his wings melted, the feathers fell out, and Icarus fell into the sea and drowned.

Dido continued, "Or else I'll make a prayer to the waves so that I may swim to him like Triton's niece."

Dido was mixing up mythological stories. Two Scyllas existed. The Scylla who was related to the sea-god Triton was a monster that devoured some of Ulysses' men as he returned home from Troy. The other Scylla was the daughter of King Nisus of Megara. She fell in love with King Minos of Crete, and when he sailed away from Megara, she attempted to swim after him but drowned.

Dido continued, "Oh, Anna, fetch Arion's harp so that I may entice a dolphin to the shore and ride upon its back to my love."

According to legend, Arion, a skilled musician, was on a ship that pirates captured. The pirates were going to force him to commit suicide, and Arion requested the boon of playing one last song. After playing the song, he jumped into the sea, but a music-loving dolphin brought him to shore.

Dido now began imagining things:

“Look, sister, look! Lovely Aeneas’ ships! See, see, the billows heave him up to heaven, and now down fall the keels into the deep. Oh, sister, sister, take away the rocks. They’ll break his ships. Oh, Proteus, Neptune, Jove, save, save Aeneas, Dido’s dearest love. Now he has come on shore, safe without hurt. But see, Achates wants him to put to sea, and all the sailors make merry for joy. But Aeneas, remembering me, shrinks back again. See, he comes! Welcome, welcome, my love!”

“Ah, sister,” Anna said, “leave these idle fantasies. Sweet sister, stop. Remember who you are.”

“I am Dido, unless I am deceived,” Dido said. “And must I rave like this for a runaway who renounces his vows? Must I make ships for him to sail away? Nothing can bear me to him but a ship, and he has all my fleet.”

She thought, *What shall I do but die in fury at this oversight? Yes, I must be the murderer of myself. No, but I am not; yet I will be very quickly.*

Dido said out loud, “Anna, be glad. Now I have found a means by which to rid me of these thoughts of lunacy. Not far from here is a woman who is famous for the occult arts and daughter to the nymphs called Hesperides, who are the guardians of the golden apples. This woman wants me to sacrifice Aeneas’ enticing relics — the things he left behind.

“Go, Anna, tell my servants to bring me fire.”

Anna exited, and Iarbas entered.

Iarbus asked, “How long will Dido mourn the flight of a foreigner who has dishonored both her and Carthage? How long shall I with grief consume my days, and reap no reward for my truest love?”

Some attendants entered, carrying wood and lit torches. They put down the items and then left.

“Iarbas,” Dido said, “don’t talk about Aeneas; let him go. Work with your hands, and help me make a fire that shall consume all that this foreigner left behind, for I intend to perform a private sacrifice that will cure my mind that melts for unkind love.”

“But afterwards,” Iarbus asked, “will Dido grant me love?”

“Yes, yes, Iarbas,” Dido said. “After this is done, none in the world shall have my love but you.”

They made a fire, and Dido said, “So! Leave me now. Let none approach this place.”

Iarbas exited.

Alone, Dido said, “Now, Dido, with these relics burn yourself, and make Aeneas famous throughout the world for perjury and the slaughter of a Queen.”

She began putting Aeneas’ relics into the fire as she said, “Here let lie the sword that in the dark cave he drew and swore by to be true to me. You shall burn first; your crime is worse than his.

“Here let lie the garment that I clothed him in when first he came on shore. Perish, too.

“These letters, lines, and perjured papers all shall burn to cinders in this precious flame.”

Having put the relics in the fire, she said, “And now, you gods who guide the starry universe and order all things at your high bestowal, grant, although the traitors land in Italy, that they may be still tormented with unrest. And from my ashes let a conqueror rise who may revenge this treason to a Queen by plowing up Aeneas’ countries with the sword. Between this land and that land of his let there never be peace.”

Later ages would say that the conqueror Dido called up was Hannibal, a Carthaginian general who warred against Rome and spent many years in Italy with an army hostile to Rome.

Dido said in Latin:

*“Litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas*

*“Imprecor, arma armis; pugnent ipsique nepotes.”*

Translated:

“Let your shores oppose their shores, let your waves oppose their waves, let your weapons oppose their weapons. That is my curse. Let them fight — they, and their sons’ sons, forever.”

Dido continued, “Live, false Aeneas! Truest Dido dies!”

She said in Latin:

*“Sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras.”*

Translated:

“Thus, thus I am pleased to go into the shadows.”

Dido threw herself into the flames.

Anna entered, saw what had happened, and screamed, “Oh, help, Iarbas! Dido in these flames has burnt herself. Ah, me! Unhappy me!”

Iarbas, running, entered the room and said, “Cursed Iarbas, die to extinguish the grief that tears at your inward soul. Dido, I am coming to you. Ah, me, Aeneas!”

He jumped into the fire.

Anna said, “How can my tears or cries help me now? Dido is dead, Iarbas is slain. Iarbas, my dear love! Oh, sweet Iarbas, Anna’s sole delight. What fatal destiny hates me thus, to see my sweet Iarbas slay himself? But Anna now shall honor you in death and mix her blood with yours. This shall I do, so that gods and men may pity my death and bitterly regret our ends, senseless and without life or breath.

“Now, sweet Iarbas, wait for me! I am coming to you!”

She jumped into the fire.

## Chapter 2: EDWARD II

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*Edward II*)

#### Male Characters

King Edward II of England.

Prince Edward: His son. Later, King Edward III.

Edmund, Earl of Kent: King Edward II's half-brother. King Edward II and the Earl of Kent call each other "Brother."

Piers de Gaveston: Later, Earl of Cornwall. Favorite of King Edward II.

Guy, Earl of Warwick.

Thomas, Earl of Lancaster: Queen Isabella's uncle. He greatly dislikes Gaveston because he takes King Edward II's attention away from the Queen.

The Earl of Pembroke.

The Earl of Arundel: King Edward II's ally.

The Earl of Leicester.

The Earl of Berkeley.

Mortimer the elder. In this book he is called Mortimer Senior.

Mortimer the younger: His nephew. In this book he is called Young Mortimer.

Spenser the elder: Later, Earl of Wiltshire and Marquess of Winchester. In this book he is called Spenser Senior.

Spenser the younger: His son. Favorite of King Edward II. Lady Margaret de Clare's attendant. Later, Earl of Gloucester. In this book he is called Young Spenser.

Baldock: a scholar. Tutor to Lady Margaret. Later, King Edward II's Chancellor (Secretary).

The Bishop of Coventry.

The Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Bishop of Winchester.

Lord Beaumont: Supporter of King Edward II.

James: One of Pembroke's men.

Levune: A Frenchman.

Sir John of Hainault: Queen Isabella's ally.

Rice ap Howell: A Welshman. Today, his Welsh first name is more commonly spelled “Rhys.”

Mayor of Bristol.

Sir William Trussel: A representative of Parliament.

Sir Thomas Gurney.

Sir John Maltravers.

Lightborn: an assassin.

Three Poor Men.

Herald.

Abbot.

A Mower.

Champion.

### **Female Characters**

Queen Isabella of England: Queen to King Edward II. Sister to King Philip IV of France, aka King Philip the Fair. She is known in history as Isabella of France.

Lady Margaret de Clare: Betrothed to Gaveston. Later, married to him.

### **Minor Characters**

Lords, Ladies, Messengers, Soldiers, Attendants, Monks.

### ***NOTA BENE***

King Edward II's life dates are 25 April 1284 – 21 September 1327.

King Edward II reigned 8 July 1307 – 20 January 1327. He was deposed 20 January 1327.

King Edward III's life dates are 13 November 1312 – 21 June 1377.

King Edward III reigned 25 January 1327 – 21 June 1377.

One of King Edward III's sons was Edward the Black Prince.

Lightborn: The name is a translation of Lucifer.

Queen Isabella was French. She was King Philip IV of France's sole daughter, and she had three brothers who became Kings of France: Charles IV, Philip V, and Louis X. They were of the House of Capet; the House of Valois was a related house. Queen Isabella's cousin, Philip of Valois, became King Philip VI of France, succeeding Charles IV. Marlowe made a mistake in this play when he identified King Charles IV of France as being of the House of Valois. The word “House” means “Family.”

King Philip IV of France is also known as Philip the Fair.

Killingworth Castle is known today as Kenilworth Castle.

In this culture, a man of higher rank would use words such as “thee” and “thy” to refer to a servant. However, two close friends or a husband and wife could properly use “thee,” “thy,” “thine,” and “thou” to refer to each other.

Words such as “you” and “your” were more formal and respectful.

“Sirrah” was used to refer to a male of lower status, such as a servant, than the speaker. However, a father could properly call a son “Sirrah.”

## **PREFACE (*Edward II*)**

Since boyhood, King Edward II and Gaveston had been friends. When Edward II was just a Prince, he asked his father, King Edward I of England, to give the Frenchman Gaveston valuable land in France as a gift. This enraged King Edward I, and he banished Gaveston to Gaveston's home in Gascony on 26 February 1307.

On 7 July 1307, King Edward I died, and on 25 February 1308, King Edward II had his coronation. Even before that, in August 1307, Edward II recalled his friend Gaveston from exile.

As the play opens, Gaveston is re-reading a letter from Edward II that recalls him from exile.

Quickly, we learn that the relationship between King Edward II and Gaveston is more than platonic.



## ACT 1 (*Edward II*)

— 1.1 —

### [Scene 1]

Gaveston stood on a street in London as he re-read a letter from King Edward II.

He read out loud: “*My father is deceased. Come, Gaveston, and share the kingdom with thy dearest friend.*”

Gaveston then said, “Ah, words that fill me completely with delight! What greater bliss can happen to Gaveston than to live and be the favorite of a King!

“Sweet Prince, I come! These, these amorous lines of thine might have forced me to have swum from France, and, like Leander, gasped upon the sand, as long as thou would smile, and take me in thine arms.”

Gaveston was using words such as “thou,” “thy,” and “thine” to refer to King Edward II. These pronouns were the kind that intimate friends or married couples would use to refer to each other.

In Greek mythology, Leander was a man who loved the woman Hero. Leander swam across the Hellespont each night to visit her. She lit a lamp each night to guide his way across the narrow sea. One night, the winds blew out Hero’s light, and Leander drowned. When Hero saw her lover’s dead body, she committed suicide.

The modern name for the Hellespont is the Dardanelles.

Gaveston continued, “The sight of London to my exiled eyes is as Elysium to a newly come soul.”

Elysium is the part of the Land of the Dead that is reserved for people who have led good lives. It is a pleasant place to be.

He continued, “It is like Elysium not because I love the city of London or the men, but because it harbors him I hold so dear — the King, upon whose bosom let me die, and with the world be still at enmity.”

In this culture, “to die” means “to orgasm” as well as “to faint,” in addition to its most common meaning.

Gaveston continued, “What need do the Arctic people have to love starlight, when to them the Sun shines both by day and by night?”

During the summer in the Arctic, the Sun never sets and so the people of the Arctic need no starlight.

Metaphorically, the Sun is King Edward II, who shines on Gaveston. The stars that give starlight are the lordly peers, aka nobles. Because the Sun always shines on Gaveston, he has no need for the stars.

Gaveston continued:

“Farewell, base stooping to the lordly peers — I have no need to bow to them. My knee shall bow to none but to the King.

“As for the multitude of people, who are but sparks, raked up in embers of their poverty, *tanti!*”

As he said “*tanti!*,” which means “So much for you!” he made a rude gesture. He had little or no respect for the common people — for them to show even a spark of life, they had to be metaphorically raked like embers that had been covered with ashes in order not to go out at night.

He continued, “I’ll first fan and fawn on the wind, which glances at and glides off my lips, and flies away, before I’ll flatter the nobles.”

Gaveston believed that he could control and manipulate the common people. By fawning on — that is, flattering — them, he could fan their embers into a fire.

He then asked himself, “But what is this now? Who are these men coming toward me?”

Three poor men walked over to Gaveston.

The poor men answered the question: “We are such men as desire your worship’s service. We want to work for you.”

“What can thou do?” Gaveston asked the first poor man.

“I can ride,” the first poor man answered.

“But I have no horses,” Gaveston said, and then he asked the second poor man, “Who are thou?”

“A traveller,” the second poor man answered.

“Let me see,” Gaveston said. “Thou would do well to wait on me as I eat, and entertain me by telling me lies of the kind travelers tell, and if I like your stories, I’ll hire you.”

He then asked the third poor man, “And who are thou?”

“A soldier who has served in the campaigns against the Scot — Robert Bruce,” the third poor man said.

King Edward I fought many campaigns against the Scots, including Robert Bruce and William Wallace. He was known as the Hammer of the Scots. Many disabled soldiers became beggars after the wars ceased.

Gaveston said, “Why, there are hospitals for such as you. I have no war, and therefore, sir, be gone.”

The kind of “hospital” he meant was a charitable institution for poor and disabled soldiers as well as other poor and ill people.

“Farewell, and perish by a soldier’s hand, you who would reward them with a hospital!” the third poor man said.

Gaveston said quietly to himself, “Yes, yes, these words of his move me as much as if a goose should play the porcupine and shoot her plumes at me, thinking to pierce my breast.”

In this culture, people believed that porcupines could shoot their quills as if they were darts. If a goose were to shoot its feathers at Gaveston, the feathers were unlikely to cause much damage.

Gaveston added quietly to himself, “But yet it is no difficulty to speak fair words to men. I’ll flatter these men, and make them live in hope.”

He then said out loud to the three poor men, “You know that I recently came out of France, and I have not yet seen my lord the King. If all goes well, I’ll give all of you a job.”

“We thank your worship,” the three poor men said.

“I have some business,” Gaveston said. “Leave me to myself.”

“We will wait here about the court,” the three poor men replied.

Everyone except Gaveston exited.

“Do wait here about the court,” Gaveston said. “These are not men for me. I must have wanton poets who write about lascivious love, pleasant wits, musicians who with the touching of a string may draw the pliable King whichever way I please. Music and poetry are his delight. Therefore, for the King I’ll arrange Italian masques to be performed at night.”

Masques are short entertainments, usually with music and dancing.

He continued, “I’ll also have sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows; and during the day, when he shall walk outside, my pages shall be clad like forest nymphs.”

Pages are young male servants.

Gaveston continued, “My men, like half-man, half-goat, and all-horny satyrs grazing on the lawns, shall with their goat feet dance old-fashioned country dances. Sometimes a lovely boy in the shape of Diana, goddess of virginity and the hunt, with hair that gilds — covers in gold — the water as it glides, bracelets of pearl about his naked arms, and in his playful hands an olive branch, to hide those parts that men delight to see, shall bathe himself in a spring; and there, hard by” — besides the risqué meaning, ‘hard’ means ‘close’ — “another boy costumed like Actaeon, peeping through the grove, shall by the angry goddess be transformed, and running in the likeness of a stag and pulled down by yelping hounds, he shall seem to die.”

While hunting with his hounds, the Theban Actaeon unintentionally saw Diana bathing naked in a pool of water. Diana, a goddess who was fiercely protective of her virginity, turned him into a stag with a human mind, and then his hunting hounds picked up his scent, chased and caught him, and ripped him to pieces.

The goddess Diana’s Greek name is Artemis.

Gaveston continued, “Such things as these best please his majesty.”

He heard a sound, looked in that direction, and said, “My lord! Here comes the King and the nobles from the Parliament. I’ll stand to the side without being seen and listen to what they say.”

King Edward II, the Earl of Lancaster, Mortimer Senior, Young Mortimer; Edmund, Earl of Kent (Edward II's half-brother); Guy, the Earl of Warwick; the Earl of Pembroke, other lords, and many attendants entered.

The Earl of Lancaster, Mortimer Senior, Young Mortimer, and the Earl of Warwick were all opposed to Gaveston returning to England. They had been discussing this with King Edward II.

"Lancaster!" King Edward II said.

"My lord," the Earl of Lancaster answered.

Unseen and unheard, Gaveston said quietly to himself, "I abhor that Earl of Lancaster."

The Earl of Lancaster also abhorred Gaveston.

"Will you not grant me this?" King Edward II asked.

He said quietly to himself, "In spite of them, I'll have what I want, and these two Mortimers, who cross and obstruct me thus, shall know I am displeased."

"If you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston," Mortimer Senior said.

Gaveston said quietly to himself, "That villain Mortimer! I'll be his death."

Young Mortimer, whose uncle was Mortimer Senior, said, "My uncle here, and this Earl of Lancaster, and I myself swore to your father, King Edward I, at his death, that Gaveston should never return into the realm.

"And know, my lord, that before I will break my oath this sword of mine, which should fight off your foes, shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need, and underneath thy banners let march who will, for Young Mortimer will hang up his armor."

Young Mortimer was saying that he would refuse to fight for King Edward II if England were invaded — unless Gaveston remained banished from England. In saying that, he switched from the respectful word "your" to the less respectful word "thy."

Gaveston said quietly to himself, "*Mort dieu!*"

"*Mort dieu!*" means "By God's death!"

"Well, Young Mortimer, I'll make thee regret these words," King Edward II said. "Is it fitting for thee to contradict thy King?"

"Do thou frown at your King, aspiring, ambitious Lancaster? The sword shall plane the furrows of thy brows and make them completely flat, and hew these knees of yours that now are grown so stiff and make them bend so that you can kneel before me.

"I will have Gaveston, and you shall know what danger it is to stand against your King."

"Well done, Ned!" Gaveston said quietly to himself.

"Ned" is a nickname for "Edward." Gaveston was close enough to Edward II to refer to him by a nickname.

“My lord, why do you thus incense your peers, who by their nature and their high birth and social status would love and honor you, except for that base and obscure lowly born Gaveston?” the Earl of Lancaster said. “I have four Earldoms besides the Earldom of Lancaster: I have the Earldoms of Derby, Salisbury, Lincoln, and Leicester.

“These four Earldoms I will sell to give my soldiers pay, before Gaveston shall stay within the realm. Therefore, if he has returned to England, expel him immediately.”

The Earl of Lancaster was threatening to rebel (“give my soldiers pay”) if Gaveston were not exiled again.

The Earl of Kent, who was King Edward II’s half-brother, said, “Barons and Earls, your pride has made me mute and speechless. But now I’ll speak, and to the irrefutable point, I hope. I remember, in the days of my father, Lord Percy of the North, being highly angry, insulted and challenged Mowbray in the presence of the King. For this act, had not his highness loved him well, he should have lost his head; but with a single look from his King the undaunted spirit of Percy was pacified, and Mowbray and he were reconciled. Yet you dare oppose the King to his face.”

He then said to King Edward II, “Brother, revenge it, and let the heads of these men preach upon poles for the trespass of their tongues.”

Traitors to the King were often drawn, hanged, and quartered. They were drawn on a wagon to the place of execution, hanged, and then cut into four quarters. After all this, their heads were cut off and placed on the tops of poles to be displayed in public as a warning to others who might think about becoming a traitor.

“Oh, our heads!” the Earl of Warwick exclaimed.

“Yes, yours,” King Edward II said, “and therefore I would wish you to consent to Gaveston’s returning to England.”

The Earl of Warwick said quietly to Young Mortimer, “Bridle your anger, gentle Mortimer.”

Young Mortimer replied, “I cannot, and I will not. I must speak.”

He said to King Edward II, to whom he was distantly related, “Cousin, our hands I hope shall defend our heads, and strike off the head of that man — Gaveston — who makes you threaten us.”

In this society, the word “cousin” was used with a wider meaning than it has now. It was used to refer to many kinds of familial relationships.

Young Mortimer then said to Mortimer Senior, “Come, uncle, let us leave the brainsick King, and henceforth parley with our naked swords. Our swords will do the talking.”

“The Welch populace has men enough to save our heads,” Mortimer Senior said.

“All Warwickshire will love Gaveston for my sake,” the Earl of Warwick said sarcastically.

“And in the north of England, Gaveston has many friends,” the Earl of Lancaster said sarcastically.

He added, “Adieu, my lord, and either change your mind, or look to see the throne, where you should sit, float in blood, and see the fawning, flattering head of thy base minion — Gaveston — thrown at thy lovesick head.”

“Minion” has these meanings: 1) a favorite, and 2) a homosexual lover.

Everyone exited except King Edward II, the Earl of Kent, the still-unseen Gaveston, and the King’s guards.

“I cannot endure these haughty threats,” Edward II said. “Am I a King, and must be overruled?”

He added, “Brother, display my battle ensigns in the field of battle. I’ll bandy — exchange blows — with the Barons and the Earls, and either die or live with Gaveston.”

“I can no longer keep myself from my lord,” Gaveston said, coming out of hiding.

Seeing him, King Edward II said, “What! Gaveston, welcome.”

Gaveston knelt and kissed the King’s hand: This was a formal greeting to a King.

“Don’t kiss my hand,” King Edward II said as he hugged Gaveston. “Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee. Why should thou kneel before me? Don’t thou know who I am?”

“I am thy friend, thy other self, another Gaveston.

“Hylas was not more mourned by Hercules than thou has been mourned by me since thy exile.”

Hercules and Hylas, a youth who served as Hercules’ armor-bearer and page, sailed on the *Argo* with Jason in search of the Golden Fleece. Some water nymphs abducted Hylas, and he was never seen again. Distraught, Hercules searched a long time for Hylas, and the *Argo* sailed on without them.

Gaveston said, “And, since I was exiled from here, no soul in Hell has felt more torment than poor Gaveston.”

“I know it,” King Edward II said.

He said to the Earl of Kent, his half-brother, “Brother, welcome my friend home.”

He then said to Gaveston, “Now let the treacherous Mortimers conspire, as well as that arrogant and proud-minded Earl of Lancaster. I have my wish in that I enjoy thy sight, and sooner shall the sea overwhelm my land than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence.

“I here create thee Lord High Chamberlain, Chief Secretary to the state and me, Earl of Cornwall, and King and Lord of Man.”

King and Lord of Man referred to the Isle of Man, whose ruler had some authority like that of the King of England. “Lord of Man” may also include a reference to homosexuality since wives in this culture called their husbands “lord.”

“My lord, these titles far exceed my worth,” Gaveston said.

The Earl of Kent agreed with Gaveston. He said to King Edward II, “Brother, the least of these titles may well suffice for one of greater birth than Gaveston.”

He meant that just one of these titles, and that one the least valuable title, would be more than enough to satisfy a person with a better birth and higher social status than Gaveston.

“Cease, brother, for I cannot bear these words,” King Edward II said to the Earl of Kent.

He then said to Gaveston, “Thy worth, sweet friend, is far above my gifts to you. Therefore, to equal your worth, receive my heart. If for these high titles thou should be hated, I’ll give thee more, for only to honor thee is Edward pleased with kingly authority.

“Do thou fear that thou are not safe? Thou shall have a guard.

“Do thou lack gold? Go to my treasury.

“Would thou be loved and feared? Receive my seal, save or condemn and in our name command whatsoever thy mind desires or fancy likes.”

King Edward II was giving Gaveston immense authority: He could pardon or punish people as he wished, and he could make any orders he wanted to in the King’s name!

“It shall be enough for me to enjoy your love,” Gaveston said. “As long I have it, I think myself as great as Caesar riding in the Roman street with captive Kings walking behind his triumphant chariot.”

The Bishop of Coventry entered the room.

King Edward II and the Bishop of Coventry had a history. In June 1305, the Bishop of Coventry had criticized Edward — then a Prince because his father the King was still living — for invading his woods. King Edward I sided with the Bishop of Coventry, who was his Treasurer, and he banished his son the Prince from the royal court for six months.

“Where goes my lord of Coventry so fast?” King Edward II asked.

“To celebrate your father’s funeral rites,” the Bishop of Coventry answered.

King Edward I died on 7 July 1307. His body was taken to Waltham Abbey, and he was not buried at Westminster Abbey until 27 October 1307.

“But has that wicked Gaveston returned?” the Bishop of Coventry asked, seeing Gaveston.

“Yes, priest, and he lives to be revenged on thee, who was the only cause of his exile,” King Edward II said.

King Edward I had exiled Gaveston on 26 February 1307; the Bishop of Coventry had been then and for some time the King’s most trusted advisor.

“That is true,” Gaveston said, “and, but for reverence of these robes — these vestments — of thine, thou should not step one foot beyond this place. In other words, if you weren’t a Bishop, you would suffer my revenge.”

“I did no more than I was bound to do,” the Bishop of Coventry said. “And, Gaveston, unless thou be morally reformed, then, just as I did previously incite the Parliament, so will I now, and thou shall go back to France.”

Gaveston said sarcastically, “Saving your reverence, you must pardon me.”

In this society, people said “saving your reverence” to a superior when they were about to say something that might cause offence. Often, people used “sir-reverence” for “saving your reverence.” Another meaning of “sir-reverence” is “human excrement,” which is something that could be found in some channels.

“Throw off his golden miter, tear his stole, and in the channel christen him anew,” King Edward II said as Gaveston grabbed the Bishop of Coventry.

A miter is the tall headdress that a Bishop wears. A stole is a vestment that a Bishop wears over the shoulders. A channel could be a street-gutter or an open sewer, or both combined.

“Ah, brother, lay not violent hands on him,” the Earl of Kent said. “For he’ll complain to the Holy See.”

He meant that the Bishop of Coventry would complain to the Pope.

“Let him complain to the See of Hell!” Gaveston said. “I’ll be revenged on him for my exile.”

“No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods — his property and possessions,” King Edward II advised. “Be thou Lord Bishop, and receive his rents — his income — and make him serve thee as thy chaplain. I give him to thee; here, treat him as thou will.”

“He shall go to prison, and there die in shackles,” Gaveston said.

“Yes, to the Tower of London, the Fleet Prison, or wherever thou wish,” King Edward II said.

“For this offense be thou accursed and excommunicated by God!” the Bishop of Coventry said.

King Edward II asked loudly, “Who’s there?”

This was a way to summon attendants and guards. Some guards came over to the King.

He then ordered, “Convey this priest to the Tower of London.”

“True, true!” the Bishop of Coventry said.

One meaning of the word “convey” was “steal.” The King was basically kidnapping the Bishop of Coventry and putting him in the Tower of London. In addition, the King was stealing the Bishop of Coventry’s wealth. “Conveyance” means “transfer of property.”

The Bishop of Coventry exited under guard.

“But in the meantime, Gaveston, leave, and take possession of his house and goods,” King Edward II said. “Come, follow me, and thou shall have my body of guards to see it done, and bring thee safely back again.”

“What should a priest do with so beautiful a house?” Gaveston said. “A prison may be more fitting and appropriate for his holiness.”

The Bishop of Coventry was a very wealthy man, although saints such as Francis courted Lady Poverty by taking a vow of poverty. Religious people have often spent time in prison or have lived in small cells.



## [Scene 2]

Mortimer Senior and Young Mortimer met the Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Lancaster. They talked together.

“It is true,” the Earl of Warwick said. “The Bishop of Coventry is in the Tower, and his goods and body have been given to Gaveston.”

“What!” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Will they tyrannize upon the Church?”

King Edward II was acting like a tyrant over the Church because he had imprisoned the Bishop of Coventry.

The Earl of Lancaster continued, “Ah, wicked King! Accursed Gaveston! This ground, which is corrupted with their steps, shall be their untimely sepulcher or mine. Someone will die for this!”

“Well, let that spiteful, troublesome, foolish Frenchman Gaveston securely guard himself,” Young Mortimer said. “Unless his breast is sword proof, he shall die.”

“What is this?” Mortimer Senior said, looking at the Earl of Lancaster. “Why is the Earl of Lancaster drooping?”

The Earl of Lancaster was unhappy and depressed. So was the Earl of Warwick.

“Why is Guy of Warwick discontent?” Young Mortimer asked.

The Earl of Warwick’s given name was Guy.

“That villain Gaveston has been made an Earl,” the Earl of Lancaster answered.

Gaveston was a gentleman, but an Earl ranks much higher than a gentleman. Becoming the Earl of Cornwall was a major rise in social status for Gaveston.

“An Earl!” Mortimer Senior said.

“Yes,” the Earl of Warwick said, “and in addition he has been made Lord Chamberlain of the Realm, and Secretary, too, and Lord of Man.”

“We may not nor will we tolerate this,” Mortimer Senior said.

“Why don’t we ride posthaste from here to levy men and raise an army?” Young Mortimer asked.

The Earl of Lancaster said, “He must be called ‘My Lord of Cornwall’ now every time he is addressed.”

After making Gaveston the Earl of Cornwall, King Edward II had decreed that Gaveston must be addressed by the title “Lord of Cornwall.”

The Earl of Lancaster added, “And happy is the man whom Gaveston grants, in return for removing his hat to show him respect, one good look. Thus, arm in arm, the King and Gaveston do march. Nay, more, the guard waits upon his lordship — Gaveston — and all the court begins to flatter him.”

“Thus leaning on the shoulder of the King,” the Earl of Warwick said, “he nods and scorns and smiles at those who pass.”

“Does no man object to the slave?” Mortimer Senior asked.

“All resent him, but none dares speak a word,” the Earl of Lancaster answered.

“Ah, that reveals their baseness, Earl of Lancaster!” Young Mortimer said. “If all the Earls and Barons thought as I do, we’d drag Gaveston from the bosom of the King, and at the court gate we’d hang up the peasant, who, swollen with the venom of ambitious pride, will be the ruin of the realm and us.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury and one of his attendants entered the scene.

“Here comes his grace my Lord of Canterbury,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“His countenance reveals that he is displeased,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

The Archbishop of Canterbury talked to his attendant about what had happened to the Bishop of Coventry: “First, his sacred garments were torn, and then they laid violent hands upon him. Next, he was imprisoned, and his goods seized. This certify the Pope. Leave, take a horse.”

To “certify” the Pope meant to give the Pope certain — known to be true — information.

The attendant exited.

“My lord, will you take arms against the King?” the Earl of Lancaster asked.

“Why need I do that?” the Archbishop of Canterbury said. “God himself is up in arms when violence is offered to the Church.”

“Then will you join with us, who are the King’s peers, to banish or behead that Gaveston?” Young Mortimer asked.

The peers were nobles.

“What else, my lords?” the Archbishop of Canterbury said. “Of course I will. For it closely concerns me: The diocese of Coventry is his — Gaveston is now the Bishop of Coventry.”

Queen Isabella entered the scene.

“Madam, to where is your majesty walking so fast?” Young Mortimer asked.

Her husband, King Edward II, who preferred to spend time with Gaveston, cruelly neglected Queen Isabella.

Queen Isabella answered, “To the forest, gentle Mortimer, to live in grief and wretched discontent; for now my lord the King regards me not, but dotes upon the love of Gaveston.”

“To the forest” means “to the wilderness.” She was using the phrase metaphorically to mean that she would seclude herself.

Queen Isabella continued, “The King pats Gaveston’s cheeks and hangs about his neck, smiles in his face, and whispers in his ears, and when I come, he frowns, as if to say to me, ‘Go wherever thou will, seeing I have Gaveston.’”

“Isn’t it strange that he is thus bewitched?” Mortimer Senior asked.

“Madam, return to the court again,” Young Mortimer said. “That sly, deceiving, inveigling Frenchman we’ll exile, or lose our lives, and yet, before that day shall come, the King shall lose his crown; for we have power, and courage, too, to be revenged at full.”

“But yet do not lift your swords against the King,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said.

“No, but we’ll lift Gaveston away from here,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“To lift” means “to steal,” but there was an implied threat of lifting Gaveston after placing a rope around his neck.

“And war must be the means of removing Gaveston, or he’ll stay in England always,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“Then let him stay; for, rather than that my lord and husband shall be oppressed by civil mutinies, I will endure a melancholy life,” Queen Isabella said, “and let the King frolic with his minion.”

“My lords, to ease all this, only hear me speak,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said. “We and the rest, who are the King’s counselors, will meet, and with a general consent confirm Gaveston’s banishment with our hands and seals.

“What we confirm, the King will frustrate by annulling it,” the Earl of Lancaster predicted.

“Then we may lawfully revolt from him,” Young Mortimer said.

“But say, my lord, where shall this meeting be?” the Earl of Warwick asked.

“At the New Temple, home of the military order the Templars,” the Archbishop of Canterbury answered.

“I am happy with that,” Young Mortimer said.

“And in the meantime,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said, “I’ll entreat you all to cross the Thames River and go to the Palace of Lambeth, and stay there with me.”

The Palace of Lambeth was the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

“Come, then, let’s go,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“Madam, farewell,” Young Mortimer said to the Queen.

“Farewell, sweet Mortimer,” Queen Isabella said, “and, for my sake, don’t recruit soldiers to fight against the King.”

“Yes, if words will serve,” Young Mortimer said. “If words will not serve, then I must recruit soldiers.”

— 1.3 —

**[Scene 3]**

Gaveston and the Earl of Kent talked together. Gaveston was on close enough terms with the Earl of Kent that he could call him by his given name: Edmund.

“Edmund, know that the mighty Prince of Lancaster, who has more Earldoms than an ass can bear, and both the Mortimers, two goodly men” — he was being sarcastic — “along with Guy of Warwick, that fearsome knight, have gone towards Lambeth. There let them remain.”

— 1.4 —

[Scene 4]

The Earl of Lancaster, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Pembroke, Mortimer Senior, Young Mortimer, and the Archbishop of Canterbury talked together.

“Here is the formal document for Gaveston’s exile,” the Earl of Lancaster said to the Archbishop. “May it please your lordship to sign your name?”

“Give me the paper,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said.

“Quick, quick, my lord,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “I long to write my name.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury signed his name, and the others signed their names after him.

“But I long more to see him banished from here,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“The name of Mortimer shall frighten the King, unless he be turned away from that base peasant,” Young Mortimer said.

King Edward II, Gaveston, and the Earl of Kent arrived upon the scene.

“What! Are you angered that Gaveston sits next to me?” King Edward II said. “It is our will and pleasure; we will have it so.”

Normally, the Queen would sit by the King.

“Your grace does well to place him by your side, for nowhere else is the new Earl — Gaveston — so safe,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“What man of noble birth can endure this sight?” Mortimer Senior said. “*Quam male conveniunt!*”

This is Latin for “How badly they go together!” One reason he meant for this was that Edward II was the son of a King, while Gaveston was merely the son of a French knight. Another reason was that they were a homosexual couple.

He added, “See what a scornful, contemptuous look the peasant casts.”

“Can kingly lions fawn on creeping ants?” the Earl of Pembroke asked.

“Ignoble vassal, who, like Phaëthon, aspires to the guidance of the Sun!” the Earl of Warwick said.

Phaëthon went to his father, the god Apollo, and asked to be allowed to drive the Sun-chariot across the sky and bring light to the world. But Phaëthon was unable to control the stallions, and they ran wildly away with the Sun-chariot, wreaking havoc and destruction upon Humankind and the world by making the chariot come so close to the Earth that it scorched the Earth. The King of the gods, Jupiter, saved Humankind and the world by throwing a thunderbolt at Phaëthon and killing him.

Phaëthon overreached himself, and the Earl of Warwick was saying that Gaveston was overreaching himself. Just as Phaëthon fell, so would Gaveston fall.

“Their downfall is at hand, their forces down,” Young Mortimer said. “We will not thus be bullied and overpeered and scorned.”

“Overpeered” means “looked down on” and “condescended to.”

“Lay hands upon that traitor Young Mortimer!” King Edward II ordered.

“Lay hands upon that traitor Gaveston!” Mortimer Senior ordered.

King Edward II’s order was ignored, but several followers of Mortimer Senior obeyed his order. Many swords were drawn in the process.

“Is this the duty that you owe your King?” the Earl of Kent asked.

“We know our duties,” the Earl of Warwick said about the King. “Let him know his peers.”

“Where will you take him?” King Edward II demanded. “Stay, or you shall die.”

“We are no traitors; therefore, don’t threaten us,” Mortimer Senior said.

“No, don’t threaten them, my lord, but pay them back and punish them as they deserve,” Gaveston said. “If I were a King —”

“Thou, peasant!” Young Mortimer interrupted. “Why do you talk about being a King, you who are barely a gentleman by birth?”

Gaveston was the son of a French knight and therefore a gentleman, but Earls much outranked knights.

“Even if he were a peasant, I’ll make the proudest of you stoop and bow down to him because he is my minion,” King Edward II said.

“My lord, you may not thus disparage and dishonor us,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

He ordered, “Away, I say, with hateful Gaveston! Take him away!”

“And away with the Earl of Kent, who favors him,” Mortimer Senior said.

Guards took Gaveston and the Earl of Kent away.

King Edward II said, “Nay, then, lay violent hands upon your King!”

“Here, Young Mortimer, sit thou in Edward’s throne.

“Warwick and Lancaster, you wear my crown.

“Was ever any King thus overruled as I am?”

“Learn, then, to rule us and the realm better,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“What we have done, our heart blood shall maintain,” Young Mortimer said. “We will defend with our blood what we have done.”

“Do you think that we can endure this upstart pride?” the Earl of Warwick asked the King.

“Anger and wrathful fury stops my speech,” King Edward II replied. “I am speechless.”

“Why are you angry?” the Archbishop of Canterbury asked the King. “Be patient, my lord, and see what we your counselors have done.”

“My lords, now let us all be resolute, and either have our wills, or lose our lives,” Young Mortimer said.

This was an important moment. If the lords don’t get what they want now, they may be judged traitors and lose their lives.

“Did you meet for this, you proud foolhardy peers?” King Edward II asked. “Before my sweet Gaveston shall part from me, this isle shall float upon the ocean, and wander to the unfrequented India.”

“You know that I am the representative of the Pope,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said. “On your allegiance to the See of Rome, subscribe, as we have done, to his exile. Sign this formal document of exile.”

“Excommunicate the King, if he refuses to sign,” Young Mortimer said, “and then we can depose him, and elect another King.”

To excommunicate someone means to cut them off from the sacraments, such as communion, of the Church, and to cut them off from church services and religious rites. In the case of the King, it also means to release the King’s subjects from any duty and loyalty to him.

“Aye, there it goes!” King Edward II said. “But yet I will not yield. Curse me, depose me, do the worst you can.”

“Then do not delay, my lord,” the Earl of Lancaster said to the Archbishop of Canterbury, “but do it immediately.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury said to King Edward II, “Remember how the Bishop of Coventry was abused. Either banish the man — Gaveston — who was the cause of the abuse, or I will immediately discharge these lords of all duty and allegiance due to thee.”

The Catholic Church claimed the authority to release a King’s subjects from their duty and allegiance to their King. Such subjects need no longer be loyal to the King.

King Edward II said quietly to himself, “It is useless for me to threaten them; I must speak fair words to them.”

He said out loud, “The representative of the Pope will be obeyed.”

He then attempted to bribe his nobles with high offices:

“My lord Archbishop of Canterbury, you shall be Chancellor of the Realm.

“Thou, Lancaster, shall be High Admiral of our fleet.

“Young Mortimer and his uncle shall be Earls.

“And you, lord Warwick, shall be President of the North.

“And thou, Earl of Pembroke, shall be President of Wales.

“If this does not make you content, make separate kingdoms of this monarchy, and share it equally among you all, so I may have some nook or corner left to frolic with my dearest Gaveston.”

The President of the North is the King’s Deputy in the North. The President of Wales is the King’s Deputy in Wales.

“Nothing shall alter us,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said. “We are resolved.”

“Come, come, sign the formal document of exile,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“Why should you love him whom the world hates so?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Because he loves me more than all the world,” King Edward II said. “Ah, none but uncivilized and savage-minded men would seek the ruin of my Gaveston. You who are nobly born should pity him.”

“You who are princely born should shake him off,” the Earl of Warwick said. “For shame, sign the document of exile, and let the scoundrel depart.”

“Urge him, my lord,” Mortimer Senior said to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

“Do you agree to banish Gaveston from the realm?” the Archbishop of Canterbury asked the King.

“I see that I must, and therefore I agree,” King Edward II said. “Instead of ink, I’ll write my signature with my tears.”

“The King is lovesick for his minion,” Young Mortimer said.

King Edward II signed the formal document of exile.

“It is signed,” King Edward II said, “and now, accursed hand, fall off!”

“Give the document to me,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “I’ll have it proclaimed in the streets.”

“I’ll see Gaveston immediately dispatched away,” Young Mortimer said.

“Now is my heart at ease,” the Archbishop of Canterbury said.

“And so is mine,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“This will be good news to the common people,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“Whether it is or not, Gaveston shall not linger here,” Mortimer Senior said.

Everyone except King Edward II exited.

“How fast they run to banish him whom I love!” he said. “They would not act if it were something to do me good.

“Why should a King be subject to a priest?

“Proud Rome, which hatches such imperious grooms — servants — with these thy superstitious taper-candles for church rites and prayers, with which thy antichristian churches blaze, I’ll burn thy unsound buildings, and force the papal towers to fall and kiss the lowly

ground. With slaughtered priests I'll make the Tiber River's channel swell, and raise banks higher with their sepulchers!

"As for the peers who back the clergy thus, if I am King, not one of them shall live."

Gaveston entered the scene and said, "My Lord, I hear it whispered everywhere that I am banished and must flee the land."

"It is true, sweet Gaveston," King Edward II said. "Oh, I wish it were false! The representative of the Pope will have it so, and thou must go away from here, or I shall be deposed."

"But I will reign to be revenged on them, and therefore, sweet friend, take it patiently. Live where thou wilt, I'll send thee gold enough. And long thou shalt not stay in exile; or, if thou do, I'll come to thee. My love shall never turn away from you."

"Is all my hope turned to this Hell of grief?" Gaveston asked.

"Don't tear my heart with thy too piercing words," King Edward II said. "Thou from this land, and I from myself am banished."

Gaveston was King Edward II's other self, and so when Gaveston was banished, the King was banished.

Gaveston said, "To go from here grieves not poor Gaveston, but it grieves him to forsake you, in whose gracious looks the blessedness and supreme happiness of Gaveston remains. For nowhere else does he seek felicity and happiness."

King Edward II said, "And only this torments my wretched soul — that, whether or not I will it, thou must depart."

"Be Governor of Ireland in my stead, and there abide until fortune calls thee home."

"Here, take my picture, and let me wear thine."

They exchanged pictures, and the King said, "Oh, if I might keep thee here, as I do this picture, I would be happy, but now I am most miserable."

"It is something to be pitied by a King," Gaveston said.

"Thou shalt not go away from here," King Edward II said. "I'll hide thee, Gaveston."

"If you do, I shall be found, and then I will be hurt more," Gaveston said.

"Kind words and mutual talk make our grief greater," King Edward II said. "Therefore, with silent embracement, let us part."

They hugged, and Gaveston started to leave.

"Wait, Gaveston! I cannot leave thee like this!"

"For every look, my love drops down a tear," Gaveston said. "Seeing I must go, do not renew my sorrow."

"The time is little that thou has left to stay," King Edward II said, "and, therefore, give me leave to look my fill. But, come, sweet friend; I'll accompany thee on thy way."



“The peers will frown,” Gaveston said.

“I don’t care about their anger,” King Edward II said. “Come, let’s go. Oh, that we might as well return as go!”

Queen Isabella entered the scene. Accompanying her was Edmund, Earl of Kent, who would say nothing but would closely observe what happened.

“Where is my lord going?” Queen Isabella asked.

“Fawn not on me, French whore,” King Edward II, her husband, replied. “Get thee gone.”

“On whom but on my husband should I fawn?”

“On Young Mortimer,” Gaveston said, “with whom, ungentle Queen ....”

He then said to the King, “I say no more. You judge the rest, my lord.”

Rumors were circulating that Queen Isabella and Young Mortimer were having an affair.

“In saying this, thou wrong me, Gaveston,” Queen Isabella said. “Isn’t it enough that thou corrupt my lord, and are a pander to his desires and passions, but thou must call my honor thus in question?”

“I mean not so,” Gaveston said. “Your grace must pardon me.”

“Thou are too familiar with that Young Mortimer,” King Edward II said, “and by thy means Gaveston has been exiled, but I would wish thee to reconcile the lords and get them to agree that Gaveston should stay in England, or thou shall never be reconciled to me.”

“Your highness knows that it lies not in my power,” Queen Isabella said.

“Go away, then!” King Edward II said. “Don’t touch me!”

He then said, “Come, Gaveston.”

Queen Isabella said to Gaveston, “Villain, it is thou who rob me of my lord.”

“Madam, it is you who rob me of my lord by forcing me to go into exile,” Gaveston replied.

“Don’t speak to her,” King Edward II said. “Let her droop and pine. Let her waste away with suffering.”

“My lord, what have I done to deserve these words?” Queen Isabella said. “Witness the tears that Isabella sheds, witness this heart, that, sighing for thee, breaks. How dear my lord is to poor Isabel!”

King Edward II replied, “And may Heaven witness how dear thou are to me.”

King Edward II hugged Gaveston.

He added, “There weep, for until the order of exile for my Gaveston is repealed, assure thyself that thou will not come in my sight.”

King Edward II and Gaveston exited.

Queen Isabella said to herself, “Oh, miserable and distressed Queen! I wish, when I left sweet France, and was embarked, that charming Circe, walking on the waves, had changed my shape.”

In Homer’s *Odyssey*, the enchantress Circe changes the shapes of Odysseus’ men by turning them into swine. Because she charms men with spells and charms, she is literally charming. In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Book 14, Circe walks on waves.

Queen Isabella added, “Or I wish that on my marriage day the cup of Hymen had been full of poison.”

Hymen is the god of marriage, and the cup of Hymen refers to a wedding toast.

She continued, “Or I wish that with those — Edward’s — arms, which twined about my neck, I had been stifled, and I had not lived to see the King my lord thus to abandon me!

“Like frantic Juno I will fill the earth with ghastly murmur of my sighs and cries. For Jove never doted on Ganymede as much as my husband dotes on cursed Gaveston.”

Juno’s husband was Jupiter, aka Jove, who was charmed by the beauty of the young Trojan boy Ganymede. Jupiter assumed the form of an eagle and carried Ganymede away to Mount Olympus to be his cupbearer. Juno regarded Ganymede as a romantic rival for Jupiter’s love and filled the earth with cries of mourning.

“But that will more aggravate my husband’s wrath,” Queen Isabella said. “I must plead with him, I must speak fairly to him, and I must be a means to call Gaveston home. And yet my husband will always dote on Gaveston, and so I am miserable forever.”

The Earl of Lancaster, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Pembroke, Mortimer Senior, and Young Mortimer entered the scene.

“Look where the sister of the King of France sits wringing her hands and beating her breast!” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“The King, I fear, has ill entreated and ill treated her,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“Hard is the heart that injures such a saint,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“I know that she weeps because of Gaveston,” Young Mortimer said.

“Why?” Mortimer Senior asked. “He is gone.”

“Madam, how is your grace?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Ah, Young Mortimer, the King’s hate breaks forth now,” Queen Isabella said, “and he confesses that he doesn’t love me!”

“Cry quittance, madam, then, and don’t love him,” Young Mortimer said.

To “cry quittance” means 1) to get even, and 2) to renounce your marriage to him.

“No,” Queen Isabella said. “Instead, I will die a thousand deaths, and yet I love in vain. He’ll never love me.”

“Do not fear that, madam,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Now that the King’s minion is gone, his wanton humor — amorous disposition — will quickly leave him.”

“Oh, never, Lancaster!” Queen Isabella said. “I am forced by him to beg you all for the repeal of his exile. This my lord and husband commands, and this I must perform, or else be banished from his highness’ presence.”

“You must beg for Gaveston’s recall to England?” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Madam! He does not come back, unless the sea vomits up his shipwrecked body.”

“And to behold so sweet a sight as that,” the Earl of Warwick said, “there’s none here who wouldn’t run his horse to death in getting to the seashore.”

“But, madam, would you have us recall Gaveston home to England?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Aye, Mortimer,” Queen Isabella said, “for until Gaveston is restored to England, the angry King has banished me from the court, and, therefore, as thou love and care for me, be my advocate to these peers who are here with you.”

“What! Would you have me plead for Gaveston’s return out of exile?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Plead for Gaveston whoever will, I am resolved that he shall remain in exile,” Mortimer Senior said.

“And so am I, my lord,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Dissuade the Queen.”

“Oh, Lancaster, let Mortimer Senior dissuade the King from wanting Gaveston to return,” Queen Isabella said, “for it is against my will that Gaveston should return.”

“Then don’t speak for the King,” the Earl of Warwick said. “Let the peasant Gaveston go. Let him stay in exile.”

“It is for myself I speak, and not for him,” Queen Isabella said.

Although she would argue for Gaveston to return out of exile, she was doing that for herself — to get the King to like her again.

“No speaking in behalf of Gaveston’s return to England will prevail with us or avail you,” the Earl of Pembroke said, “and therefore cease to argue for his return.”

“Fair Queen, forbear to angle for the fish, which being caught, strikes dead him who takes it,” Young Mortimer said. “I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston, who now, I hope, floats on the Irish seas.”

A torpedo is an electric ray. It shocks its prey and its enemies.

“Sweet Young Mortimer, sit down by me for a while, and I will tell thee reasons of such weight and importance that thou will soon agree to Gaveston’s recall to England,” Queen Isabella said.

“That is impossible, but speak your mind,” Young Mortimer said.

“And so I will, but none shall hear it but ourselves,” Queen Isabella said.

They walked a little distance away and talked quietly together.

“My lords, if the Queen wins Mortimer over to her side, will you be resolute and hold with me?” the Earl of Lancaster asked.

“Not I, against my nephew,” Mortimer Senior said.

“Fear not,” the Earl of Pembroke said. “The Queen’s words cannot alter him.”

“No?” the Earl of Warwick said. “See how earnestly she pleads to him!”

“And see how coldly his looks show that he refuses to be persuaded by her words!” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“She smiles,” the Earl of Warwick said. “Now, on my life, she has changed his mind!”

“I’ll rather lose his friendship, I, than agree that Gaveston shall return to England,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

Young Mortimer and Queen Isabella walked over to the nobles.

“Well, of necessity it must be so,” Young Mortimer said to Queen Isabella.

He then said, “My lords, that I abhor base Gaveston I hope your honors do not question, and therefore, although I plead for his recall to England, it is not for his sake, but for our advantage. Nay, for the realm’s benefit, and for the King’s.”

“For shame, Young Mortimer, don’t dishonor thyself!” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Can this be true, it was good to banish him? And is this also true, it is good to recall him home again? Such reasons make white black, and dark night day.”

“My lord of Lancaster, consider the special circumstances,” Young Mortimer said.

“In no respect can contraries be true,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “One statement and its opposite cannot both be true.”

“Yet, my good lord, hear what he can argue,” Queen Isabella said.

“All that he speaks is nothing,” the Earl of Warwick said. “We are resolved that Gaveston will stay in exile.”

“Don’t you wish that Gaveston were dead?” Young Mortimer asked.

“I wish he were!” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“Why, then, my lord, give me permission to speak,” Young Mortimer said.

“But, nephew, do not play the sophister,” Mortimer Senior said. “Don’t twist words and logic to make a point.”

In classical Greece, Sophists taught rhetoric and argumentation. They were criticized, rightly or wrongly, for teaching their students how to make the weaker argument appear to be the stronger and for making fallacious arguments.

“This that I urge comes from a burning zeal to reform the King and do our country good,” Young Mortimer said. “Don’t you know that Gaveston has a store of gold, which may in Ireland purchase him such friends — soldiers — who will enable him to confront the mightiest

of us all? With all that gold, he can buy himself an army. And as long as he shall live and be beloved, it is hard for us to bring about his overthrow.”

“He is making a good point, my lord of Lancaster,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“But, if he were here, detested as he is,” Young Mortimer said, “how easily might some base slave be bribed to greet his lordship with a dagger; and no one would so much as blame the murderer, but rather praise him for that splendid undertaking and in the history books write his name for purging the realm of such a plague!”

“He speaks the truth,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“Yes, but how chances it this was not done before?” the Earl of Lancaster asked.

“Because, my lords, it was not thought upon,” Young Mortimer said. “Nay, more, when he shall know it lies in us to banish him, and then to call him home, it will make him vail the top flag of his pride, and fear to offend even the lowest-ranked nobleman.”

On the sea a ship sometimes lowered its top flag as a sign of respect to another ship.

“But what if he doesn’t, nephew?” Mortimer Senior asked.

“Then we may with some pretext rise up in arms,” Young Mortimer said, “for, despite however much we have endured, it is treason to be up against the King. So we shall need to have the people on our side or else the people would overwhelm us members of the nobility. The people lean to the King for his father’s sake, but they cannot tolerate such a night-grown mushroom as my lord of Cornwall is. We can, therefore, go up against Gaveston with the people’s support.”

Mushrooms grow overnight, and so they are a symbol for an upstart, a quickly rising man whom others resent.

He continued, “And, when the common people and the nobles join, not even the King can act as a buckler — a shield — for Gaveston. We’ll pull him from the strongest stronghold — castle — he has. My lords, if to perform this I should be slack, think that I am as low a creature as Gaveston.”

“On that condition Lancaster will agree,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“And so will Pembroke,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“And I,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“And I,” Mortimer Senior said.

“In this I count myself highly gratified and pleased, and I, Mortimer, will rest at your command,” Young Mortimer said.

“And when this favor Isabel forgets, then let her live abandoned and forlorn,” Isabella said. “But see, opportunely, my lord the King, having accompanied Gaveston, the Earl of Cornwall, to his point of departure, has newly returned. This news will much gladden him, yet not as much as me. I love him more than he can love Gaveston. I wish the King loved me only half as much as he loves Gaveston! Then I would be triply blest.”

King Edward II, mourning, entered the scene, along with Lord Beaumont, one of his supporters. The Clerk of the Court accompanied them.

King Edward II said, "He's gone, and for his absence thus I mourn. Did never sorrow go so near my heart as does the absence of my sweet Gaveston? And, if my crown's revenue could bring him back, I would freely give it to his enemies, and think I gained, having bought so dear a friend."

"Listen!" Queen Isabella said. "How he harps upon his minion!"

"My heart is like an anvil for sorrow, which beats upon it like the Cyclopes' hammers, and which with the noise upsets my dizzy brain, and makes me frantic for my Gaveston," King Edward II said.

The Cyclopes were one-eyed giants who helped the blacksmith god Vulcan forge Jupiter's lightning bolts with hammers and anvils.

King Edward II continued, "Ah, if only some bloodless Fury had arisen from Hell, and with my kingly scepter struck me dead, when I was forced to leave my Gaveston!"

The Furies were avenging spirits from the Land of the Dead.

"*Diablo!* The Devil!" the Earl of Lancaster said. "What passionate lamentations do you call these?"

"My gracious lord, I come to bring you news," Isabella said.

"That you have negotiated with your Mortimer?" King Edward II asked.

"That Gaveston, my lord, shall be recalled to England," Isabella replied.

"Recalled!" King Edward II said. "The news is too sweet to be true."

"But will you love me, if you find that it is true?" Isabella asked.

"If it is true, what won't Edward do?" King Edward II asked rhetorically.

"For Gaveston, but not for Isabel," the Queen said.

"For thee, fair Queen, if thou love Gaveston, I'll hang a golden tongue about thy neck, seeing thou have pleaded with so good success," King Edward II said.

A golden tongue is a piece of jewelry: a pendant in the form of a tongue — for example, a serpent's tongue decorated with gems.

He hugged and kissed her.

"Hang no other jewels around my neck than these arms of yours, my lord," Queen Isabella said, "nor let me have more wealth than I may fetch from this rich treasury that is your mouth. Oh, how a kiss revives poor Isabel!"

"Once more take my hand," King Edward II said, "and let this be a second marriage between thyself and me."

"And may it prove happier than the first!" Queen Isabella said. "My gentle lord, speak in a friendly way to these nobles who wait in attendance for a gracious look and on their knees

salute your majesty.”

“Courageous Lancaster, embrace thy King,” King Edward II said, “and, as thick mists perish by the Sun, even so let hatred perish with thy sovereign’s smile. Live thou with me as my companion.”

“This salutation overjoys my heart,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“Warwick shall be my chiefest counselor,” King Edward II said. “These silver hairs of his will adorn my court more than extravagant silks or rich embroidery. Chide me, sweet Warwick, if I go astray.”

“Slay me, my lord, when I offend your grace,” the Earl of Warwick replied.

“In solemn processions and in public entertainments, Pembroke shall bear the sword of state before the King,” Edward II said.

“And with this sword Pembroke will fight for you,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“But why does Young Mortimer walk apart from the others?” King Edward II said. “Be thou commander of our royal fleet, or if that lofty office does not please thee, I make thee here Lord Marshal of the realm.”

The Lord Marshall was the commander of the King’s armies.

“My lord, I’ll marshal so your enemies,” Young Mortimer said, “that England shall be quiet, and you safe.”

“And as for you, Mortimer Senior, Lord of Chirk, whose great achievements in our foreign war deserve no common place nor mean reward, you shall be the general of the levied troops who now are ready to assail the Scots,” King Edward II said.

Chirk is in Wales, just across the border from England.

“In this your grace has highly honored me,” Mortimer Senior said, “for with my nature war does best agree.”

“Now is the King of England rich and strong because he has the love of his renowned peers,” Queen Isabella said.

King Edward II said, “Yes, Isabel, never was my heart so light and carefree.

“Clerk of the Crown, to Ireland direct our warrant for Gaveston to return to England!”

The Clerk of the Crown would write the warrant for Gaveston to return out of exile.

“Beaumont, fly — go quickly — to Ireland as fast as Iris or Jove’s Mercury.”

Beaumont would carry the warrant to Ireland and give it to Gaveston.

Iris and Mercury were the as-fast-as-the-wind messengers of the gods.

“It shall be done, my gracious lord,” Beaumont said.

Beaumont and the Clerk of the Court exited.

King Edward II said, "Lord Mortimer Senior, we leave you to your duty.

"Now let us go in, and feast royally in anticipation of the coming of our friend Gaveston, the Earl of Cornwall.

"We'll have a general jousting contest and tournament, and then his marriage shall be solemnized; for don't you know that I have engaged him to be married to Lady Margaret de Clare, our niece and the Earl of Gloucester's heir?"

"Such news we hear, my lord," the Earl of Lancaster said.

"On that day, if not for him, yet for my sake — I who in the tournament will be the challenger and dare all comers to fight me — spare no cost," King Edward II said. "We will requite your love."

"In this or in anything your highness shall command us," the Earl of Warwick said.

"Thanks, gentle Warwick," King Edward II said. "Come, let's go in and revel."

Everyone except the Mortimers exited.

"Nephew, I must go to Scotland," Mortimer Senior said. "Thou will stay here. Cease now to oppose thyself against the King. Thou see that he is mild and calm by nature. And seeing his mind so dotes on Gaveston, let him without restraint have his will and do what he wants.

"The mightiest Kings have had their minions. Alexander the Great loved his lifelong friend Hephaestion. The conquering Hercules wept for Hylas, and stern Achilles languished for Patroclus."

When Hephaestion died suddenly, Alexander the Great mourned for him. When Hylas went missing, Hercules wept for him. In the Trojan War, Achilles' friend Patroclus was killed in battle, leading Achilles to mourn excessively.

Mortimer Senior continued:

"And not Kings only, but the wisest men. The Roman orator Marcus Tullius Cicero loved Octavius, who became Caesar Augustus, and the grave Greek philosopher Socrates loved the wild and beautiful Athenian politician and general Alcibiades.

"So then let his grace the King, whose youth is flexible and promises as much as we can wish, freely enjoy without constraint that vain lightheaded Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall. For riper years will wean him from such trifles. When he is older and more mature, he will reject Gaveston."

"Uncle, the King's wanton character and inclinations do not grieve me. But this I scorn, that one as basely born as Gaveston should by his sovereign's favor grow so impertinent, and engage in riotous living by spending the treasury of the realm, while soldiers mutiny for lack of pay.

"He wears clothing worth a lord's revenue in rents on his back, and, like Midas, for whom everything he touched turned to gold, Gaveston struts in the court, with base foreign rogues at his heels, whose proud fantastic outfits make such show as if Proteus, god of shapes, appeared."



Proteus, a god known as the Old Man of the Sea, could change shapes, as he does in Homer's *Odyssey* when Menelaus, King of Sparta, and some of his men capture him and hold on tight until he stops shape-shifting and agrees to tell Menelaus what will happen in the future.

Young Mortimer continued, "I have not seen a dapper jack so brisk. He wears a short Italian hooded cloak, extravagantly decorated with pearl, and in his fashionable cap from Tuscany he wears a jewel of more value than the crown. While others walk below, the King and he, from out a window, laugh at such as we, and mock our train of attendants, and jest at our attire.

"Uncle, it is this that makes me angry."

"But, nephew, now you see that the King has changed," Mortimer Senior said.

"Then so have I, and I live to do him service," Young Mortimer said. "But, while I have a sword, a hand, and a heart, I will not yield to any such upstart. You know my mind. Come, uncle, let's leave."

## ACT 2 (*Edward II*)

— 2.1 —

### [Scene 5]

Young Spenser and Baldock talked together. Young Spenser was Lady Margaret de Clare's attendant, and Baldock was her tutor. Now that their employer, the Earl of Gloucester, had died, they were deciding whom to serve. This involved deciding who would be able to do them the most good.

"Young Spenser, seeing that our lord, the Earl of Gloucester, is dead, which of the nobles do thou mean to serve?" Baldock asked.

"Not Young Mortimer, nor any of his side, because the King and he are enemies," Young Spenser replied. "Baldock, learn this from me: A factious, seditious lord shall hardly do himself good, much less us, but he who has the favor of a King may with one word advance us in our careers while we live. Therefore, the liberal Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, is the man on whose good fortune Spenser's hope depends."

The word "liberal" can mean 1) generous, 2) gentleman-like, and 3) licentious.

"Do you intend, then, to be his retainer?" Baldock asked.

"No, his companion, for he loves me well," Young Spenser said, "and he would have once recommended me to the King."

"But Gaveston is banished," Baldock said. "There's small hope of advancement coming from him."

"Yes, he is banished for a while," Young Spenser said, "but, Baldock, just see what will happen. A friend of mine told me in secrecy that Gaveston's exile has been repealed and he has been sent for to return to England again. And just now a post came from the court with letters to our Lady Margaret de Clare from the King. And, as she read, she smiled, which makes me think she was reading about her lover, Gaveston."

“It is likely enough,” Baldock said, “for, since he was exiled, she neither walks abroad nor comes within the sight of most people. But I had thought the match had been broken off, and that his banishment had changed her mind.”

“Our lady’s first love is not wavering,” Young Spenser said. “I’ll bet my life against thine that she will marry Gaveston.”

“Our lady” is the woman whom they had been serving: Lady Margaret de Clare, the sister of the Earl of Gloucester and the niece of King Edward II.

“Then I hope by her means to be advanced in rank, having been tutor to her since she was a child,” Baldock said.

“Then, Baldock, you must cease to behave like a scholar, and learn to court it like a gentleman,” Young Spenser said. “It is not a black coat and a little neckband, a velvet caped cloak, trimmed with an overlay of coarse serge cloth, and smelling a bouquet of flowers all the day, or holding a handkerchief in your hand, or saying a long grace at a table’s end” — the bottom of the table was for the guests with the lowest social standing. Salt was at the other end of the table for the use of the more important guests — “or making deep bows to a nobleman, or looking downward, with your eyelids closed in deep modesty, and saying, ‘Truly, if it may please your honor,’ that can get you any favor with great men.

“Instead, you must be proud, bold, jocular, and resolute, and now and then stab someone, as occasion serves.”

This kind of “stab” could be sexual, or it could be a betrayal or a biting remark, or it could be a figurative or literal stab in the back.

In other words, according to Young Spenser, if you want to get ahead in life, don’t be a scholar; instead, be proud at court and occasionally a lover or backstabber. But perhaps he was joking with his friend.

“Young Spenser, thou know I hate such trifling conventions of dress and behavior, and engage in them only out of complete hypocrisy,” Baldock said.

This may sound as if he is rejecting conventions of dress and behavior for attendants at court, but his next words make it clear that he is rejecting conventions of dress and behavior for scholars.

Baldock continued:

“My former lord, the Earl of Gloucester, while he lived, was so puritanical that he would take exceptions at my buttons and even when they were like pins’ heads, he would blame me for their bigness, which made me curate-like in my attire, although I was inwardly licentious enough, and ready for any kind of villainy.

“I am none of these common, ordinary pedants, I, who cannot speak without *propterea quod*.”

“*Propterea quod*” is Latin for “because of this.” Baldock was saying that he is not like a common, ordinary pedantic scholar because he always used phrases such as “*propterea quod*” and reasoned correctly.

“But you are one of those who say ‘*quandoquidem*,’ and you have a special gift to form a verb,” Young Spenser said.

“*Quandoquidem*” is Latin for “inasmuch.” Young Spenser was teasing Baldock by implying that he was more like a common, ordinary pedantic scholar than he thought. The use of fancy words does not necessarily mean that the person using them is reasoning correctly.

“To form a verb” meant “to make a nice turn of phrase” or, perhaps, “to conjugate a verb.” Again, Young Spenser was teasing Baldock.

“Leave off this jesting,” Baldock said. “Here comes my lady.”

Lady Margaret de Clare entered the room.

Not seeing Baldock and Young Spenser, she looked at a letter and said to herself, “The grief for his exile was not as great as is the joy of his returning home. This letter came from my sweet Gaveston. What need thou, love, thus to excuse thyself? I know thou could not come and visit me.”

She read out loud, “*I will not long be from thee though I die.*”

“This proves the entire love of my lord,” she said.

She read out loud, “*When I forsake thee, may death seize on my heart.*”

“But rest thee here where Gaveston shall sleep,” she said.

She put the letter in her bosom.

Looking at another letter, she said, “Now to the letter of my lord the King. He wants me to go to the court, and meet my Gaveston. Why do I hesitate, seeing that he talks thus of my marriage day?”

She called for an attendant: “Who’s there?”

Seeing Baldock, she said, “Baldock! See that my coach is made ready. I must go away from here.”

“It shall be done, madam,” Baldock said.

“And meet me at the park pale — the park fence — directly,” Lady Margaret de Clare ordered.

Baldock exited.

She then said, “Spenser, stay and keep me company, for I have joyful news to tell thee. My lord of Cornwall is coming over from Ireland to England, and he will be at the court as soon as we.”

“I knew the King would have him home again,” Young Spenser said.

“If all things work out as I hope they will,” she said, “thy service, Spenser, shall be thought upon and remembered.”

In other words, he would receive a reward.

“I humbly thank your ladyship,” Young Spenser said.

“Come lead the way. I am restless until I am there,” Lady Margaret de Clare said.

— 2.2 —

[Scene 6]

King Edward II, Queen Isabella, the Earl of Lancaster, Young Mortimer, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Kent, and some attendants were before the castle at Tynemouth on the coast in northern England, awaiting the return of Gaveston.

“The wind is good. I wonder why he is delayed. I fear that he is shipwrecked upon the sea,” King Edward II said.

“Look, Lancaster, how wracked by sorrow he is, and always his mind thinks about his minion,” Queen Isabella said quietly to the Earl of Lancaster.

“My lord,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“What is it? What is the news? Has Gaveston arrived?” King Edward II asked.

“Nothing but Gaveston!” Young Mortimer said. “What means your grace? You have matters of more weight to think upon. The King of France sets foot in Normandy.”

England and France were battling for control of this province.

“A trifle!” King Edward II said. “We’ll expel him when we please. But tell me, Mortimer, what’s thy device you made in preparation for use in the stately tournament we decreed?”

A device is a heraldic emblem — design and motto — on a shield. King Edward II had ordered the nobles to each make a device for the upcoming tournament.

“A modest one, my lord, not worth the telling,” Young Mortimer said.

“Please let me know it,” the King said.

“But seeing you’re so desirous,” Young Mortimer said, “thus it is: A lofty cedar tree fair flourishing, on whose top branches kingly eagles perch, and by the bark a cankerworm creeps up, and gets to the highest bough of all. The motto: *Aeque tandem*.”

The cankerworm is a parasite, which here represents Gaveston ambitiously climbing up the social ladder. The Latin motto “*Aeque tandem*” means “Equal at last.”

“And what is yours, my lord of Lancaster?” King Edward II asked.

“My lord, mine’s more obscure than Young Mortimer’s,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “The Roman scholar Pliny reports that there is a flying fish that all the other fishes deadly hate, and therefore when being pursued, it takes to the air. No sooner is it up, but there’s a fowl that seizes it: This fish, my lord, I bear. The motto is this: *Undique mors est*.”

The flying fish represents, of course, Gaveston, and the design and the motto present what the nobles have planned for him. The Latin motto “*Undique mors est*” means “Death is everywhere.”

“Proud Mortimer, ungentle Lancaster, is this the love you bear your sovereign?” King Edward II said. “Is this the fruit your reconciliation bears? Can you with words make a show of amity,

and yet in your shields display your rancorous minds that are filled with ill will? What call you this but private defamation against Gaveston, who is both the Earl of Cornwall and my figurative brother?"

"Sweet husband, be content," Queen Isabella said. "They all love you."

"Who hates my Gaveston does not love me," King Edward II said. "I am that cedar; don't shake me too much. And you are the eagles. No matter how high you soar, I have the jesses that will pull you down."

A "jess" is a strap attached to the leg of a hawk.

He continued, "And *aeque tandem* shall that cankerworm cry to the proudest peer of Britain."

King Edward II meant that even the proudest English nobleman would know that Gaveston was his equal.

He continued, "Though thou compare him to a flying fish, and threaten death whether he rise or fall, it is not the hugest monster of the sea nor the foulest Harpy that shall swallow him."

Harpies were mythological half-woman, half-bird creatures that would rush on food, eat some of it, and render the rest unsuitable for consumption. In Virgil's *Aeneid*, Harpies harass Aeneas and his men. In Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica*, Harpies harass King Phineus of Thrace.

"If in Gaveston's absence the King favors him like this, what will he do when Gaveston shall be present?" Young Mortimer said quietly to the Earl of Lancaster.

"That we shall see," the Earl of Lancaster replied. "Look! His lordship is coming!"

Gaveston arrived.

"My Gaveston!" King Edward II said. "Welcome to Tynemouth! Welcome to thy friend!"

In this culture, the word "friend" could mean "lover."

He continued, "Thy absence made me languish and waste away. Just as the lovers of fair Danaë, when she was locked up in a bronze tower, desired her more, and grew wild, so also do I."

Danaë's father, King Acrisius of Argos, heard a prophecy that Danaë's son would grow up and kill him, so he locked her in a tower. Zeus, King of the gods, saw her, lusted after her, and visited her after taking the form of a shower of gold. Danaë then gave birth to Perseus, who grew up and accidentally killed her father, King Acrisius of Argos.

King Edward II continued, "And now thy sight is sweeter far than thy parting from here was bitter and irksome to my sobbing heart."

"Sweet lord and King, your speech anticipates mine," Gaveston said, "yet I have words left to express my joy. The shepherd, nipped with biting winter's rage, frolics not more to see the colorful-with-flowers spring than I do to behold your majesty."

"Will none of you salute my Gaveston?" King Edward II asked the nobles.

"Salute him?" the Earl of Lancaster said. "Yes. Welcome, Lord Chamberlain!"

“Welcome is the good Earl of Cornwall!” Young Mortimer said.

“Welcome, Lord Governor of the Isle of Man!” the Earl of Warwick said.

“Welcome, master Secretary!” the Earl of Pembroke said.

Earlier, King Edward II had made Gaveston Lord High Chamberlain, Chief Secretary to the State and King, Earl of Cornwall, and King and Lord of Man.

The tone of the nobles’ voices showed that they were insincere in their welcomes.

“Brother, do you hear them?” the Earl of Kent asked the King.

“Will these Earls and Barons always treat me like this?” King Edward II complained.

“My lord, I cannot endure these injuries,” Gaveston said.

“Ah, me, poor soul, when these begin to quarrel!” Queen Isabella said.

“Reject their abuse and return it to their throats,” King Edward II said to Gaveston. “I’ll be thy protection.”

“Base, leaden Earls, who glory in your birth,” Gaveston said, “go sit at home, and eat your tenants’ beef.”

At the time, Frenchmen such as Gaveston regarded the English as eating lots of beef that rendered them slow-witted, aka beef-witted.

Gaveston continued, “Don’t come here to scoff at Gaveston, whose soaring thoughts did never creep so low as to bestow a look on such as you.”

“Yet I disdain not to do this for you,” the Earl of Lancaster said, drawing his sword.

King Edward II saw the sword and cried, “Treason! Treason!”

To draw a sword in the presence of the King was a serious offense.

In the turmoil that followed, he shouted, “Where’s the traitor?”

The Earl of Pembroke pointed at Gaveston and said, “Here! Here!”

“Take Gaveston away from here,” King Edward II said. “They’ll murder him.”

“The life of thee shall pay for this foul disgrace,” Gaveston said to the Earl of Lancaster.

“Villain, thy life shall pay unless I miss my aim,” Young Mortimer said.

Young Mortimer wounded Gaveston.

“Ah, furious Mortimer, what have thou done?” Queen Isabella asked.

“No more than I would answer — publicly justify — if he were slain,” he replied.

Gaveston exited with some attendants.

King Edward II said to Young Mortimer, “Yes, more than thou can answer — atone for — though Gaveston live. Dearly shall both you and the Earl of Lancaster abide — pay for — this riotous deed. Get out of my presence! Don’t come near the court.”

“I’ll not be barred from the court on account of Gaveston,” Young Mortimer said.

“We’ll drag him by the ears to the block so he can be beheaded,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“Look after your own heads,” King Edward II said. “Gaveston’s head is safe enough.”

“Look after your own crown, if you back Gaveston like this,” the Earl of Warwick said.

The crown could be the crown the King wore on his head, or it could be the crown of the King’s own head.

“Warwick, these words do ill beseem thy years,” the Earl of Kent said. “You are old enough to speak wiser words.”

“All of them conspire to cross and obstruct me thus,” King Edward II said, “but if I live, I’ll tread upon the heads of those who think with high looks thus to tread me down.”

He added, “Come, Edmund, let’s go away, and levy men to raise an army. It is war that must abate these Barons’ pride.”

King Edward II, Queen Isabella, and Edmund, Earl of Kent, exited.

“Let’s go to our castles, for the King is moved,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“Moved may he be, and perish in his wrath!” Young Mortimer said.

“Moved” can mean “angry,” but it can also mean “Moved from the throne.”

“Cousin, there is no dealing with him now,” the Earl of Lancaster said to Young Mortimer.

The word “cousin” was used in this culture to refer to many kinds of biological relationships and even to close friends.

He added, “He means to make us bow down and submit to him by force of arms. Therefore, let us here jointly vow to pursue that Gaveston to the death.”

“By Heaven, the contemptible villain shall not live!” Young Mortimer said.

“I’ll have his blood, or die in seeking it,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“The like oath Pembroke takes,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“And so does Lancaster,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Now send our heralds to defy and renounce allegiance to the King, and make the people swear to put him down.”

A messenger carrying letters arrived.

“Letters?” Young Mortimer said. “From where?”

“From Scotland, my lord,” the messenger replied.

Young Mortimer began reading the letters.

“Why, how is it now, cousin? How fare all our friends?” the Earl of Lancaster asked.

“My uncle’s been taken prisoner by the Scots,” Young Mortimer said.

“We’ll have him ransomed, man,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Be of good cheer.”

High-ranking prisoners were often ransomed for large amounts of money.

“They rate his ransom at five thousand pounds,” Young Mortimer said. “Who should pay the money but the King, seeing that my uncle has been taken prisoner in his wars? I’ll go to the King.”

“Do, cousin, and I’ll accompany thee,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“In the meantime, my lord of Pembroke and I myself will go to Newcastle here, and raise forces,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“Go about it, then, and we will follow you,” Young Mortimer said.

“Be resolute and determined and full of secrecy,” the Earl of Lancaster advised.

“I promise you that I will,” the Earl of Warwick said.

Everyone except Young Mortimer and the Earl of Lancaster exited.

Young Mortimer and the Earl of Lancaster went to see King Edward II.

“Cousin, if he will not ransom him,” Young Mortimer said, “I’ll thunder such a peal of words into his ears as a subject never did to his King.”

“Good,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “I’ll bear my part.”

He called, “Holla, who’s there?”

A guard entered.

“Yes, indeed, such a guard as this does well,” Young Mortimer said.

Young Mortimer could guess that the guard’s purpose was to keep him away from the King.

“Lead on the way,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

The guard asked, “Where do your lordships wish to go?”

“Where else but to the King?” Young Mortimer said.

“His highness is disposed to be alone,” the guard said.

“Why, he may be disposed to be alone,” the Earl of Lancaster said, “but we will speak to him.”

“You may not go in to see the King, my lord,” the guard replied.

“May we not?” Young Mortimer said.

King Edward II and the Earl of Kent arrived.

“What’s going on now?” the King asked. “What noise is this? Who have we there? Is it you?”

He started to leave.

“Wait, my lord,” Young Mortimer said. “I come to bring you news. My uncle’s been taken prisoner by the Scots.”

“Then ransom him,” King Edward II said.



“He was taken prisoner while fighting for you in your wars,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “You should ransom him.”

“And you shall ransom him, or else ...,” Young Mortimer said.

“What, Mortimer! You will not threaten him?” the Earl of Kent said.

“Quiet yourself,” King Edward II said to Young Mortimer. “You shall have the broad seal — letters patent — allowing you to gather money for him throughout the realm.”

The King meant that Young Mortimer would have an official document that allowed him to travel through England and raise money for the ransom of his uncle without being penalized for begging. This was an insult because it implied that Young Mortimer was impoverished and unable to pay the ransom himself. In addition, it made it clear that the King would not pay the ransom out of the royal treasury.

“Your minion Gaveston has taught you to treat us this way,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“My lord, the family of the Mortimers is not so poor,” Young Mortimer said. “If they were to sell their land, the money raised would levy men enough to anger you.”

The men levied would form an army.

Young Mortimer added, “We never beg, but instead use such prayers as these.”

He put his hand on the hilt of his sword.

“Shall I always be haunted and tormented like this!” King Edward II said.

“Now that you are here alone, I’ll speak my mind to you,” Young Mortimer said to King Edward II.

“And so will I,” the Earl of Lancaster said, “and then, my lord, farewell.”

“The foolish triumphs, masques, lascivious shows, and prodigal, extravagant gifts bestowed on Gaveston have drained thy treasure dry, and made thee weak,” Young Mortimer said. “The discontented common people break.”

Apparently, the common people were discontented and almost to the breaking point because of high taxes.

“Look for rebellion,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Look to be deposed. Thy garrisons are beaten out of France, and lame and poor, they lie groaning at the gates. The wild Ulster clan chieftain O’Neill, with swarms of Irish kerns — foot-soldiers — lives uncontrolled within the English pale.”

The English pale consisted of the regions of Ireland around Dublin where English settlers lived. This area was safer for English settlers than other parts of Ireland.

He continued, “To the walls of York, the Scots make raids, and, unresisted, draw away rich spoils.”

“The arrogant Dane commands the narrow seas, while in the harbor ride at anchor thy ships unrigged,” Young Mortimer said.

The narrow seas are the English Channel.

“What foreign Prince sends ambassadors to thee?” the Earl of Lancaster asked.

“Who loves thee, but a crew of flatterers?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Thy gentle Queen, sole sister to Valois, complains that thou has left her all forlorn and abandoned,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

Queen Isabella was French. She was King Philip IV of France’s sole daughter, and she had three brothers who became Kings of France: Charles IV, Philip V, and Louis X. They were actually of the House of Capet; the House of Valois was a related house. Queen Isabella’s cousin, Philip of Valois, became King Philip VI of France, succeeding Charles IV.

“Thy court is naked, being emptied of those who make a King appear glorious to the world — I mean the peers, whom thou should dearly love,” Young Mortimer said. “Subversive leaflets and pamphlets are cast against thee in the street. Ballads and rhymes are made about thy overthrow.”

The Earl of Lancaster said, “English citizens living on the northern borders by Scotland, seeing their houses burned and their wives and children slain by Scottish raiders, run up and down, cursing the name of thee and Gaveston.”

“When were thou in the field of battle with your military banners spread?” Young Mortimer said. “Only once, and then thy soldiers marched like stage actors, with garish robes, not armor. And thou thyself, decorated with gold, rode laughing at the rest, nodding and shaking the sparkling crest of your helmet, where women’s favors — tokens of affection — hung down like ribbons.”

“And because of that military campaign, the mocking, sneering Scots, to England’s high disgrace, have made this jig, this insulting piece of doggerel:

*“Maids of England, sore may you mourn,*

*“For your lemans [sweethearts] you have lost at Bannockburn,*

*“With a heave and a ho!*

*“What weeneth [hopes] the King of England*

*“So soon to have won Scotland?*

*“With a rumbelow!”*

The word “rumbelow” was a nonsense word used in ballads.

On 24 June 1314, in the Battle of Bannockburn, King Robert Bruce of Scotland defeated an army led by King Edward II of England.

“Wigmore Castle shall fly to set my uncle free,” Young Mortimer said.

Young Mortimer had a castle at Wigmore; he intended to sell it to raise money to free his uncle.

“And, when it is gone, our swords shall purchase — acquire — more,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “If you — King Edward II and the Earl of Kent — are angry, revenge it as you can. Look next to see us with our battle standards spread.”

Young Mortimer and the Earl of Lancaster exited.

“My swelling heart breaks from anger,” King Edward II said. “How often have I been baited by these peers, and dare not be revenged, for their power is great. Yet shall the crowing of these young cocks frighten a lion? Edward, unfold thy paws, and let their lives’ blood slake thy fury’s hunger. If I be cruel and grow tyrannous, now let them thank themselves, and regret it too late.”

“My lord, I see your love to Gaveston will be the ruin of the realm and you, for now the wrathful nobles threaten wars,” the Earl of Kent said. “So therefore, brother, banish him forever.”

“Are thou an enemy to my Gaveston?” King Edward II asked.

“Yes, and it grieves me that I favored him,” the Earl of Kent said.

“Traitor, be gone!” King Edward II said. “Whine with Mortimer.”

“So I will, rather than with Gaveston,” the Earl of Kent said.

“Get out of my sight, and trouble me no more!” King Edward II said.

“It is no wonder, though, that thou scorn thy noble peers, when I thy brother am rejected like this,” the Earl of Kent said.

He exited.

“Go!” King Edward II said. “Poor Gaveston, thou have no friend but me. Do what they can, we’ll live in Tynemouth Castle here, and as long as I walk with him about the walls, what do I care, although the Earls surround us?”

“Here comes the woman who is the cause of all these quarrels.”

Queen Isabella, Lady Margaret de Clare, and two ladies-in-waiting entered the scene. Gaveston, Baldock, and Young Spenser accompanied them.

“My lord, it is thought the Earls are up in arms and rebelling,” Queen Isabella said.

“Yes, and it is likewise thought you favor him,” King Edward II said.

Edward II was thinking of Queen Isabella’s reputed affair with Young Mortimer.

“Thus you still suspect me without cause,” Queen Isabella said.

“Sweet uncle, speak more kindly to the Queen,” Lady Margaret de Clare requested.

“My lord, deceive her,” Gaveston whispered to King Edward II. “Speak fair, courteous words to her.”

“Pardon me, sweet,” King Edward II said to his Queen. “I forgot myself.”

“Your pardon is quickly gotten from Isabel,” she replied.

“The younger Mortimer is grown so defiant that to my face he threatens civil wars,” King Edward II said.

“Why don’t you commit him to the Tower of London?” Gaveston asked.

“I dare not, for the people well love him,” King Edward II said.

“Why, then, we’ll have him secretly murdered,” Gaveston said.

“I wish that the Earl of Lancaster and he had both drunk a bowl of poison to each other’s health!” King Edward II said. “But let’s not talk about them. Tell me who are these two men.”

He was referring to Young Spenser and Baldock.

“They are two of my father’s servants while he lived,” Lady Margaret de Clare said. “May it please your grace to employ them now.”

“Tell me, where were thou born?” King Edward II asked. “What is thine coat of arms?”

“My name is Baldock, and my rank of gentleman I fetched from Oxford, not from heraldry.”

His title of gentleman came from the degree he had earned from Oxford; it was not a hereditary title.

“The fitter are thou, Baldock, for my needs,” King Edward II said. “Serve me, and I’ll see thou shall not lack what you need.”

In fact, Baldock would become King Edward II’s Chancellor, aka Secretary.

“I humbly thank your majesty,” Baldock replied.

Referring to Young Spenser, King Edward II asked, “Do you know this other man, Gaveston?”

“Yes, my lord,” Gaveston answered. “His name is Spenser; he is of a good family. For my sake let him wait upon your grace. Scarcely shall you find a man who is more deserving.”

“Then, Spenser, wait upon me,” King Edward II said. “For Gaveston’s sake I’ll grace thee with a higher social status before long.”

“No greater social status could befall me than to be favored by your majesty!” Young Spenser replied.

“Margaret, this day shall be your marriage feast,” King Edward II said. “And, Gaveston, think that I love thee well to wed thee to our niece, the only heir to the recently deceased Earl of Gloucester.”

“I know, my lord, that many will resent me,” Gaveston said, “but I respect neither their love nor their hate.”

“The headstrong Barons shall not limit me,” King Edward II said. “He whom I choose to favor shall be great.

“Come, let’s go, and when the marriage ceremony ends, then we will have at — fight — the rebels and their accomplices.”

## [Scene 7]

The Earl of Lancaster, Young Mortimer, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Pembroke, and the Earl of Kent talked together.

“My lords, because of our love for this our native land,” the Earl of Kent said, “I have come to join with you, and leave the King. And in your quarrel, and for the good of the realm, I will be the first who shall risk my life.”

“I fear that you are sent out of deceit as part of a plot to undermine us with a show of love,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“King Edward II is your brother; therefore, we have cause to suspect the worst, and to doubt that you are really revolting against your brother,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“My honor shall be the pledge of my truth and honesty,” the Earl of Kent said. “If that will not suffice, then farewell, my lords.”

“Wait, Edmund,” Young Mortimer said, using the Earl of Kent’s given name. “Never was a Plantagenet false of his word; and therefore we trust thee.”

Actually, King Edward II was a Plantagenet, and the rebelling nobles distrusted him.

The Plantagenet dynasty began with King Henry II in 1154, and ended with King Richard III in 1485.

“But what’s the reason you should leave him now?” the Earl of Pembroke asked.

“I have informed the Earl of Lancaster of my reason,” the Earl of Kent said.

“And his reason is sufficient,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Now, my lords, know this: Gaveston has secretly arrived, and here in Tynemouth he frolics with the King.”

Actually, all the nobles already knew this, and Gaveston’s return was not made in secret.

The Earl of Lancaster continued, “Let us with these our followers scale the walls, and suddenly surprise them unawares.”

“I’ll give the signal and lead the attack,” Young Mortimer said.

“And I’ll follow thee,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“This tattered ensign of my ancestors, which swept the desert shore of that Dead Sea from where we got the name of Mortimer, I will advance upon these castle walls,” Young Mortimer said.

According to Young Mortimer, the Mortimer family got its name from an ancestor who was a Crusader and saw the Dead Sea, which is *Mer Mort* in French and *Mortuum Mare* in Latin. Actually, the name came from the village of Mortemer in Normandy.

He continued, “Drummers, strike the alarum — the call to arms — and rouse them from their idle pastimes, and ring aloud the death knell of Gaveston!”

“None be so bold as to touch the King,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “But spare neither Gaveston nor his friends.”

[Scene 8]

King Edward II and Young Spenser talked together in a room of Tynemouth Castle, which was under attack and close to falling.

“Oh, tell me, Young Spenser, where is Gaveston?” King Edward II asked.

“I fear that he has been slain, my gracious lord,” Young Spenser replied.

“No, here he comes,” King Edward II said. “Now let them plunder and kill.”

Gaveston, Queen Isabella, and Lady Margaret de Clare walked over to them.

“Flee, flee, my lords,” King Edward II said. “The Earls have captured the stronghold. Board a ship, and flee to Scarborough. Young Spenser and I will ride quickly away by land.”

“Oh, stay, my lord,” Gaveston said. “They will not injure you.”

“I will not trust them, Gaveston!” King Edward II said. “Leave!”

“Farewell, my lord,” Gaveston said.

“Lady, farewell,” King Edward II said to Lady Margaret de Clare.

“Farewell, sweet uncle, until we meet again,” Lady Margaret de Clare replied.

Lady Margaret and her husband, Gaveston, wanted to sail about 70 miles south of Tynemouth to the castle at Scarborough.

“Farewell, sweet Gaveston,” King Edward II said, “and farewell, niece.”

“No farewell to poor Isabel thy Queen?” Queen Isabella asked.

“Yes, yes, for the sake of Young Mortimer, your lover,” King Edward II said.

Everyone except Isabella exited.

“Heavens can witness, I love none but you,” Queen Isabella said about her husband. “Thus he breaks away from my embracements. Oh, that my arms could enclose this isle round about, so that I might pull him to me — where I want him. Or that these tears that drizzle from my eyes had the power to mollify his stony heart, so that, when I had him, we might never part!”

The Earl of Lancaster, the Earl of Warwick, Young Mortimer, and others entered the room inside Tynemouth Castle. Much noise from the battle could be heard.

“I wonder how he escaped?” the Earl of Lancaster asked, referring to Gaveston.

“Who’s this?” Young Mortimer asked. “The Queen?”

“Yes, Mortimer, the miserable Queen, whose grieving heart her inward sighs have blasted, and whose body with continual mourning is wasted,” Queen Isabella said. “These hands of mine are tired with trying to drag my lord away from Gaveston, from wicked Gaveston — and all in vain; for when I speak fair words to my husband, he turns away, and smiles upon his minion.”

“Cease to lament, and tell us where’s the King,” Young Mortimer said.

“What do you want to do with the King?” Queen Isabella asked. “Is it him whom you seek?”

“No, madam, but we seek that cursed Gaveston,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Far be it from the thought of Lancaster to offer violence to his sovereign! We want only to rid the realm of Gaveston. Tell us where he remains, and he shall die.”

“He’s gone by water to Scarborough,” Queen Isabella said. “Pursue him quickly, and he cannot escape. The King has left him, and Gaveston’s train of attendants is small.”

“Don’t delay, sweet Lancaster,” the Earl of Warwick said. “Let’s march.”

“How comes it that the King and Gaveston have parted?” Young Mortimer asked.

“So that this your army, going separate ways, might be of lesser force, and with the army that my husband intends immediately to raise, your army might be easily suppressed,” Queen Isabella said. “Therefore, be gone in pursuit of Gaveston.”

“Here in the river rides a Flemish hoy, a small fishing ship,” Young Mortimer said. “Let’s all get aboard, and follow him quickly.”

“The wind that bears him away from here will fill our sails,” the Earl of Lancaster said. “Come, come on board the ship! It is only an hour’s sailing.”

“No, Mortimer,” Queen Isabella said. “I’ll go to my lord the King.”

“Nay, rather sail with us to Scarborough,” Young Mortimer said.

“You know that the King is so suspicious that, if he just hears I have talked with you, my honor will be called in question,” Queen Isabella said. “Therefore, gentle Mortimer, go.”

“Madam, I cannot stay to answer you,” Young Mortimer said, “but think of Mortimer as he deserves.”

Everyone except Queen Isabella exited.

She said to herself, “So well have thou deserved, sweet Mortimer, that Isabel could live with thee forever. In vain I look for love at the hand of Edward, whose eyes are fixed on none but Gaveston. Yet once more I’ll beg him with prayers. If he is distant to me and pays no attention to my words, my son and I will go over into France, and to the King my brother — Charles IV of France — there complain about how Gaveston has robbed me of my husband’s love. But yet, I hope my sorrows will have an end, and Gaveston shall this blessed day be slain.”

— 2.5 —

### [Scene 9]

Gaveston, pursued by his enemies, said to himself, “Still, insolent lords, I have escaped your hands, your threats, your alarums, and your hot pursuits. And, although separated from King Edward’s eyes, yet Piers of Gaveston lives unambushed and uncaptured by you, breathing in hope — *malgrado* all your beards that muster rebels thus against your King — to see his royal sovereign once again.”

“*Malgrado*” is Italian for “despite.” The word has a connotation of defiance.

The Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Lancaster, the Earl of Pembroke, and Young Mortimer entered the scene, along with some soldiers. Some attendants also arrived, including James, who served the Earl of Pembroke.

“Set upon him, soldiers,” the Earl of Warwick ordered. “Take away his weapons!”

“Thou proud disturber of thy country’s peace, corrupter of thy King, cause of these turmoils, base flatterer, yield — give up! — and, were it not for shame, shame and dishonor to a soldier’s name, upon my weapon’s point here thou should fall, and wallow in thy gore,” Young Mortimer said to Gaveston.

In this culture, a high-ranking man would often refrain from killing a low-ranking man, regarding such a deed as beneath him. Young Mortimer, of course, did not regard Gaveston’s title of Earl of Cornwall as legitimate.

“Monster of men,” the Earl of Lancaster said, “that, like the Greek whore Helen, who despite being legally married to King Menelaus of Sparta ran off with Prince Paris of Troy and lured to arms and bloody wars so many valiant knights, look for no other fortune, wretch, than death! King Edward is not here to buckler — shield and protect — thee.”

The Earl of Warwick said, “Lancaster, why are thou talking to the slave?”

“Go, soldiers, take the slave away from here; for, by my sword, his head shall come off.

“Gaveston, a short warning of your death shall serve thy needs.”

In this Christian culture, condemned prisoners were given some time before their executions to prepare themselves for death.

He continued, “It is our country’s cause that here severely we will execute upon thy person. Hang him at a bough.”

“My lord!” Gaveston said.

The Earl of Warwick said, “Soldiers, take him away.”

Then he said to Gaveston, “Because thou were the favorite of a King, thou shall have this much ‘honor’ at our hands.”

He made a motion for hanging.

“I thank you all, my lords,” Gaveston said. “I perceive that beheading is one way for me to die, and hanging is the other, and death is all the same for both of them.”

People of the upper classes were beheaded, while people of the lower classes were hung. Traitors were hung, drawn, and quartered. The hanging was in part an insult and in part a way to prolong the traitor’s pain since they were hung with a short rope that would not break their neck and give them a quick death.

The Earl of Arundel arrived on the scene as a messenger from King Edward II.

“How are you now, my lord of Arundel?” the Earl of Lancaster asked.

“My lords, King Edward II greets you all by me,” the Earl of Arundel said.



“Arundel, say your message,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“His majesty, hearing that you have taken Gaveston, begs you, by me, only that he may see Gaveston before he dies because, he says, and he sends you word confirming it, he knows that Gaveston shall die. And, if you gratify his grace as far as allowing him to speak to Gaveston, King Edward II will remember the courtesy.”

“What!” the Earl of Warwick said.

Gaveston said, “Renowned Edward, how thy name revives poor Gaveston!”

The Earl of Warwick said, “No, it ought not to revive you. There is no hope that you will live.”

“Arundel, we will gratify the King in other matters; he must pardon us in this matter. The answer is no.

“Soldiers, take Gaveston away!”

“Why, my lord of Warwick,” Gaveston said. “Won’t these delays give birth to my hopes?”

He may have meant that seeing the King would raise his hopes of staying alive, and that then the nobles could have the pleasure of crushing those hopes.

Gaveston continued, “I know it, lords. I know that it is this life you aim to take, yet grant King Edward II his request to see me.”

Young Mortimer said to Gaveston, “Shall thou decide what we shall grant?”

He ordered, “Soldiers, take him away!”

He then said to the Earl of Arundel, “To this extent, we’ll gratify the King: We’ll send Gaveston’s head to him by thee. Let him bestow his tears on that, for that is all he gets of Gaveston, or else we’ll send him Gaveston’s dead, unfeeling trunk.”

“No, my lord, lest Edward II bestow more cost in burying Gaveston than Gaveston has ever earned,” the Earl of Lancaster said.

“My lords, it is his majesty’s request, and by the honor of a King he swears that he will only talk with him and then send him back,” the Earl of Arundel said.

“When! Can you tell?” the Earl of Warwick said sarcastically.

In this society, this was a way of scornfully rejecting a proposal, as in our society saying “Yeah! Right!” is.

He continued, “Arundel, no. We know that that man — Edward II — who slackens in the care of the realm, and drives his nobles to these extreme measures for Gaveston, will, if he sees him once, violate any promise in order to possess him.”

“Then, if you will not trust his grace with the temporary custody of Gaveston, my lords, I will be the security for his return,” the Earl of Arundel said.

The Earl of Arundel was willing to offer his honor as security to the nobles. If he failed to return Gaveston, the Earl of Arundel would lose his honor. This society took honor seriously.

“It is honorable in thee to offer this,” Young Mortimer said. “But, because we know thou art a noble gentleman, we will not wrong thee in this way: to make away a true man for a thief.”

Young Mortimer did not believe that King Edward II would return Gaveston even if the Earl of Arundel had pledged his honor that Gaveston would be returned. Therefore, Young Mortimer was saying that he would not wrong the Earl of Arundel by allowing him to lose his honor for a thief such as Gaveston.

“What do thou mean, Mortimer?” Gaveston said. “That is overly base, too low, beyond the pale!”

He was objecting to being called a thief.

“Away, base servant, robber of the King’s reputation!” Young Mortimer said. “Debate the issue with thy companions and mates.”

“My lord Mortimer, and you, my lords, each one, to gratify the King’s request therein, concerning the sending of this Gaveston, because his majesty so earnestly desires to see the man before his death, I will upon my honor undertake to carry him and bring him back again,” the Earl of Pembroke said, “provided that you, my lord of Arundel, will join with me.”

“Pembroke, what will thou do?” the Earl of Warwick asked. “Cause yet more bloodshed? Isn’t it enough that we have captured Gaveston, but must we now leave him on ‘had I only known,’ and let him go?”

“Had I only known” expressed regret for a reckless deed. Taking Gaveston to King Edward II seemed a lot like admitting that the nobles had done wrong in capturing Gaveston.

“My lords, I will not overwoo and beg your honors,” the Earl of Pembroke said. “But if you dare trust me, Pembroke, with the prisoner, I give you my oath that I will return him back to you.”

“My lord of Lancaster, what do you say about this?” the Earl of Arundel asked.

“Why, I say, let him go on Pembroke’s word,” the Earl of Lancaster replied.

“And you, lord Mortimer?” the Earl of Pembroke asked.

“What do you say, my lord of Warwick?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Nay, do your pleasures,” the Earl of Warwick said. “Do what you want. I know how this will turn out.”

“Then give him to me,” the Earl of Pembroke said.

“Sweet sovereign, yet I come to see thee before I die!” Gaveston said.

The Earl of Warwick said to himself, “Yet not perhaps, if Warwick’s cunning and strategic plan prevail.”

“My lord of Pembroke, we deliver him to you,” Young Mortimer said. “Return him on your honor. Sound the trumpet! Let’s go!”

The trumpet sounded, and everyone exited except the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Arundel, Gaveston, and Pembroke’s men — James and three other soldiers, who began travelling to

King Edward II.

“My lord, you shall go with me,” the Earl of Pembroke said to the Earl of Arundel. “My house is not far from here, out of the way a little, but our men shall go along. We who have pretty wenches as our wives, sir, must not come so near and disappoint their lips.”

In this society, the word “wench” had a positive, not a negative, connotation.

“It is very kindly spoken, my lord of Pembroke,” the Earl of Arundel said. “Your honor has an adamant of power to attract a prince.”

An adamant is a magnetic stone; the Earl of Pembroke’s hospitality is an adamant of power: It is powerfully attractive.

The Earl of Pembroke said, “Just so, my lord.

“Come here, James. I commit this Gaveston to thee. Be thou this night his keeper; in the morning we will discharge thee of thy charge — we will relieve you of your responsibility. Leave now.”

“Unlucky Gaveston, whither are thou going now?” Gaveston asked himself.

As everyone exited, the boy who helped take care of the horses said to Gaveston, “My lord, we’ll quickly be at the village of Cobham.”

### **ACT 3 (*Edward II*)**

#### **— 3.1 —**

#### **[Scene 10]**

The Earl of Warwick had been following the Earl of Pembroke, hoping to find an opportunity to take Gaveston from him. Because the Earl of Pembroke was entertaining the Earl of Arundel at his home and so was separated from Gaveston and his guards, the Earl of Warwick and his men now had that opportunity and were surrounding Gaveston, James, and the rest of the Earl of Pembroke’s men.

Mourning, Gaveston said, “Oh, treacherous Warwick, thus to wrong thy friend!”

The Earl of Pembroke had pledged his honor to return Gaveston safely to Young Mortimer and the other rebelling lords, but Gaveston could guess that the Earl of Warwick was uninterested in keeping him safe.

“I see it is your life these soldiers pursue,” James said.

“Must I fall weaponless, and die in shackles?” Gaveston asked. “Must this day be the end of my life?”

He then said, “Center of all my bliss! If you are men, hurry to the King.”

“Center of all my bliss!” referred to King Edward II. He would send help if he knew that the Earl of Warwick had captured Gaveston.

The Earl of Warwick and his company of soldiers entered the scene.

“My lord of Pembroke’s men, strive no longer to keep Gaveston,” the Earl of Warwick said. “I will have that Gaveston.”

“Your lordship does dishonor to yourself and wrong to our lord, the Earl of Pembroke, your honorable friend,” James said.

“No, James,” the Earl of Warwick said. “It is my country’s cause I follow.”

He ordered, “Go, take the villain. Soldiers, come away. We’ll make quick work.”

He said to James, “Commend me to your master, my friend, and tell him that I watched it well.”

The Earl of Warwick meant that he had watched well for his opportunity to seize Gaveston.

He then said to Gaveston, “Come, let thy ghost talk with King Edward II.”

“Treacherous Earl, shall I not see the King?” Gaveston asked.

The Earl of Warwick replied, “The King of Heaven perhaps, no other King.”

He then ordered, “Let’s go!”

The Earl of Warwick and his men, with Gaveston, exited. The Earl of Pembroke’s men remained behind.

“Come, fellows, it was useless for us to fight to keep Gaveston,” James said. “We will go in haste to inform our lord the Earl of Pembroke about what has happened.”

— 3.2 —

### [Scene 11]

King Edward II, Young Spenser, Baldock, and some soldiers with drums and fifes gathered together.

“I long to hear an answer from the Barons regarding my friend, my dearest Gaveston,” King Edward II said. “Ah, Young Spenser, the riches of my realm cannot ransom him. Gaveston is marked to die. I know the malice of the younger Mortimer. I know Warwick is rough, and Lancaster is inexorable, and I shall never see my lovely Piers Gaveston again. The Barons oppose me with their pride.”

“If I were King Edward II, England’s sovereign, son to the lovely Eleanor of Spain, great Edward Longshanks’ son, would I bear these shows of defiance, this rage, and suffer uncontrolled these Barons thus to beard — openly oppose me — in my land, in my own realm?” Young Spenser asked.

To pull a man’s beard was a serious insult.

King Edward II’s father, Edward I, was called Edward Longshanks because of his height; he was over six feet tall. Edward II’s mother was Eleanor of Castile. King Edward II’s parents married in 1254.

Young Spenser continued, “My lord, pardon my speech. If you had retained your father’s courage and greatness, if you had retained the honor of your name, you would not tolerate like

this your majesty being rebuffed by your nobility. Strike off their heads, and let them preach on poles. No doubt, the heads on poles will teach the rest important lessons since by the severed heads' sermons the rest will profit much and learn obedience to their lawful King."

"Yes, gentle Spenser," King Edward II said, "we have been too mild, too kind to them; but now we have drawn our sword, and if they don't send me my Gaveston, we'll steel it on their helmet and poll their tops."

"To steel it on their helmets" means "to strike their helmets with steel swords."

To "poll their tops" literally means to "cut off the top of a tree." King Edward II was saying metaphorically that he would cut off the heads of the rebelling nobles.

"This proud resolve becomes your majesty, not to be tied to their desire, as though your highness were still a schoolboy and must be awed and frightened and governed like a child," Baldock said.

Hugh Spenser, an old man who was the father of Young Spenser, arrived on the scene. Some of his soldiers accompanied him. Hugh Spenser — Spenser Senior — was holding a truncheon, a staff that is a symbol of authority.

Spenser Senior said, "Long live my sovereign, the noble Edward, in peace triumphant, fortunate in wars!"

"Welcome, old man," King Edward II said. "Have you come to give Edward aid? If so, then tell thy Prince from where and who thou are."

"With a band of bowmen and of pikes, brown bills, and targeteers, four hundred strong, sworn to defend King Edward's royal right, I come in person to your majesty," Spenser Senior said.

The bowmen wielded long bows. A pike is a long thrusting spear; they were sometimes set up in front of bowmen to provide a defensive barrier. Brown bills are bronzed halberds. Targeteers carried small round shields that were called targets.

He continued, "I am Spenser Senior, the father of Young Hugh Spenser there. I am bound to your highness everlastingly for favors done to Young Spenser, and therefore to us all."

"Is he thy father, Young Spenser?" King Edward II asked.

"That is true, if it pleases your grace," Young Spenser said. "He pours, in return for all your goodness shown to me, his life, my lord, before your princely feet."

"Welcome ten thousand times, old man, again!" King Edward II said. "Spenser Senior, this love, this kindness to thy King, proves thy noble mind and disposition."

He then said, "Young Spenser, I here create thee Earl of Wiltshire, and daily I will enrich thee with our favor that like the sunshine shall reflect over thee. In addition, the more to demonstrate our love, because we hear Lord Bruce is selling his land and that the Mortimers are in the process of negotiating for it, thou shall have crowns — coins — from us to outbid the Barons. And, Spenser, don't be frugal, but instead lay out the coins."

Lord William de Bruce was arranging a sale of land that the Mortimers were negotiating for, but King Edward II was giving Young Spenser enough money to outbid the Mortimers and purchase the land.

King Edward II said, "Soldiers, a largess, and thrice welcome all!"

King Edward II was saying that he would give Spenser Senior's soldiers a gift of money.

"My lord, here comes the Queen," Young Spenser said.

Queen Isabella, Prince Edward, and Levune, a Frenchman, entered the scene. Prince Edward was the oldest son of King Edward II and Queen Isabella. Levune served as a messenger.

"Madam, what is the news?" King Edward II asked.

"News of dishonor, lord, and of discontent," Queen Isabella replied. "Our friend Levune, faithful and full of trust, informs us, by letters and by oral reports that lord Charles IV — our brother, the King of France — because your highness has been slack in homage, has seized Normandy into his hands.

"These are the letters, and this man is the messenger Levune."

"Welcome, Levune," King Edward II said. "Tush, Sib, if this is all, King Charles IV of France and I will soon be friends again."

"Sib" means "kin." In this context, it means "wife."

He continued, "But about my Gaveston: Shall I never see, never behold thee now?"

"Madam, in this matter we will employ you and your little son. You shall go negotiate with the King of France.

"Boy, see you bear yourself bravely to the King, and do your message and mission with a majesty."

"Don't commit to my youth things of more weight than are fitting for a Prince as young as I to bear," Prince Edward said. "And fear not, lord and father. Heaven's great beams on Atlas' shoulder shall not lie more safe than shall your command committed to my trust."

Atlas was a Titan who held up the sky. In Prince Edward's description, Atlas was supporting the sky's roof-beams on his shoulder.

"Ah, boy," Queen Isabella said, "this precociousness makes thy mother fear that thou are not marked to many days on Earth!"

"Madam, we command that you and our son with speed be shipped across the English Channel," King Edward II said. "Levune shall follow you with all the haste that we can dispatch him from here. Choose from our lords some to bear you company, and go in peace; leave us in the wars at home."

"Unnatural wars, where subjects defy their King," Queen Isabella said. "May God end them at once and for all! My lord, I take my leave to make my preparations for France."

Queen Isabella and Prince Edward exited.

The Earl of Arundel entered the scene.

"Lord Arundel, have thou come alone?" King Edward II asked.

"Yes, my good lord, for Gaveston is dead," the Earl of Arundel said.

“Ah, the traitors. Have they put my friend to death?” King Edward II said. “Tell me, Arundel, did he die before you arrived, or did thou see my friend take his death?”

“Neither, my lord,” the Earl of Arundel replied, “for as Gaveston was ambushed, surrounded all around with weapons and with enemies, I gave your highness’ message to them all, demanding him from them — well, pleading with them — and said, upon the honor of my name, that I would undertake to carry him to your highness, and to bring him back.”

“And tell me, would the rebels deny me that?” King Edward II asked.

“Proud recreants!” Young Spenser said.

“Yes, Spenser, traitors all!” King Edward II said.

“I found them at first unyielding,” the Earl of Arundel said. “The Earl of Warwick would not listen to me, Mortimer hardly; Pembroke and Lancaster spoke least. And when they flatly had denied my request, refusing to accept my pledge for him, the Earl of Pembroke mildly and gently thus spoke: ‘My lords, because our sovereign sends for him and promises that Gaveston shall be safely returned, I will undertake this: to take him away from here to see the King and then to see him redelivered to your hands.’”

“Well, and how does it happen that Gaveston did not come here?” King Edward II asked.

“Some treason or some villainy was the cause,” Young Spenser said.

“The Earl of Warwick seized Gaveston as he was on his way here,” the Earl of Arundel said. “After delivering Gaveston to his men, the Earl of Pembroke rode home, thinking that his prisoner was safe. But before he returned, Warwick lay in ambush, and took Gaveston to his death, and in a trench struck off his head, and marched to the camp.”

“A bloody deed, flatly against the law of arms,” Young Spenser said.

“Shall I speak, or shall I sigh and die!” King Edward II said.

“My lord, assign your vengeance to the sword upon these Barons,” Young Spenser said. “Hearten up your men. Let the rebelling nobles not unrevenged murder your friends. Raise your standards, Edward, in the battlefield, and march to use fire to smoke them from their starting-holes.”

Hunters used smoke to force animals from their starting holes, aka places of refuge.

King Edward II knelt and said, “By Earth, the common mother of us all, by Heaven, and by all the moving orbs thereof, by this right hand, and by my father’s sword, and by all the honors belonging to my crown, I will have heads and lives for Gaveston — as many as I have manors, castles, towns, and towers!”

In the Ptolemaic conception of the universe, the Earth is at the center of the universe and is surrounded by moving orbs — aka spheres — that contain the Moon, the Sun, each of the planets, and the fixed stars.

King Edward II rose and said, “Tracherous Warwick! Traitorous Mortimer! If I am England’s King, in lakes of gore your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail, so that you may drink your fill, and quaff in blood, and I will stain my royal standard with the same, so that my bloody

banners may suggest remembrance of revenge immortally on your accursed traitorous progeny, you villains who have slain my Gaveston!

“And in this place of honor and of trust, Spenser, sweet Spenser, I adopt thee here. Young Spenser will take Gaveston’s place. And purely of our love we do create thee Earl of Gloucester and Lord Chamberlain, in spite of the times, in spite of enemies.”

Seeing a messenger, Young Spenser said, “My lord, here’s a messenger from the Barons who desires access to your majesty.”

“Admit him near,” King Edward II said.

The Barons’ herald, with his coat of arms, came near and said, “Long live King Edward II, England’s lawful lord!”

“Those who sent thee here certainly do not wish a long life for me,” King Edward II said. “Thou come from Young Mortimer and his accomplices. A ranker rout — band — of rebels never was. Well, say thy message.”

“The Barons up in arms by me salute your highness with long life and happiness,” the herald said, “and they bid me say, as one who delivers an official complaint to your grace, that if without shedding of blood you wish to remedy the complaint of the rebelling lords, you will remove from your princely person this Young Spenser — this putrifying branch that kills the royal vine, whose golden leaves encircle your princely head, your diadem — your crown.”

King Edward II’s crown was decorated with strawberry leaves. Strawberry plants are not vines, although they may appear to be because they produce runners, aka daughter plants.

The herald continued, “The Barons up in arms say that such pernicious, dangerous upstarts dim the brightness of your crown, and they lovingly advise your grace to cherish virtue and nobility and to have old advisors who are held in high esteem, and shake off obsequious, false-faced, deceiving flatterers.

“This granted, they, their honors, and their lives are to your highness vowed and dedicated.”

“Ah, traitors, will they still display their pride!” Young Spenser said.

King Edward II said to the herald, “Leave! Don’t wait for an answer, but be gone! Rebels! Will they decide for their sovereign his entertainment, his pleasures, and his company? Yet, before thou go, see how I divorce Spenser from me.”

King Edward II embraced Young Spenser.

He continued, “Now get thee to thy lords, and tell them I will come to chastise them for murdering Gaveston. Hurry thee! Get thee gone! Edward with fire and sword follows at thy heels.”

The herald exited.

King Edward II said to Young Spenser, “My lord, do you see how these rebels swell with pride?”

He added, “Soldiers, good hearts, defend your sovereign’s right, for now, even now, we march to make them stoop and bow down before us.



“Let’s go!”

— 3.3 —

**[Scene 12]**

The battle was taking place with alarums, excursions, a great fight, and a retreat.

King Edward II, Spenser Senior, Young Spenser, and the noblemen on the King’s side gathered together.

“Why do we sound retreat?” King Edward II said. “Attack them, lords! This day I shall pour vengeance with my sword on those proud rebels who are up in arms and confront and oppose their King.”

“I don’t doubt it, my lord,” Young Spenser said. “Right will prevail.”

“It is not amiss, my liege, for both sides to rest a while and catch their breath,” Spenser Senior said. “Our men, with sweat and dust all well-near choked, begin to faint because of heat, and this withdrawal refreshes horse and man.”

“Here come the rebels,” Young Spenser said.

Young Mortimer, the Earl of Lancaster, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Pembroke, and other rebels entered the scene.

This was not a parley; instead, the two groups had come close to each other by chance.

“Look, Lancaster, yonder is Edward II among his flatterers,” Young Mortimer said.

“And there let him be,” the Earl of Lancaster said, “until he pays dearly for their company.”

“And he shall pay dearly, or Warwick’s sword shall smite in vain,” the Earl of Warwick said.

“What, rebels, do you shrink and sound retreat?” King Edward II shouted.

“No, Edward, no,” Young Mortimer said. “Thy flatterers faint and flee.”

The Earl of Lancaster said to King Edward II, “Thou should best at once forsake them and their intrigues, for they’ll betray thee, traitors as they are.”

“I throw the word ‘traitor’ back in thy face, rebellious Lancaster,” Young Spenser said.

“Go away, base upstart!” the Earl of Pembroke said. “Do thou insult nobles thus?”

“Is it not a noble attempt and honorable deed, do you think, to assemble aid and levy arms against your lawful King?” Spenser Senior asked.

“For which, before long, their heads shall atone to appease the wrath of their offended King,” King Edward II said.

“So then, Edward, thou will fight to the last and would rather bathe thy sword in your subjects’ blood than banish that pernicious company,” Young Mortimer said.

“Yes, traitors all,” King Edward II said. “Rather than thus be insulted, I will make England’s municipal towns huge heaps of stones and make plows go about our palace gates.”

Because these centers of civilization would be destroyed by war, their sites would become farmland.

“A desperate and unnatural resolution,” the Earl of Warwick said. “Sound the alarm to the fight! Saint George for England, and the Barons’ right!”

“Saint George for England, and King Edward’s right!” King Edward II said.

Saint George is the patron saint of England.

The two parties exited in different directions.

— 3.4 —

### [Scene 13]

The battle was over, and King Edward II’s army was victorious. His captives included the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Lancaster, and Young Mortimer. King Edward II, Young Spenser, Spenser Senior, and some soldiers on the King’s side were present. The Earl of Kent was also present.

“Now, insolent lords,” King Edward II said, “now not by chance and luck of war, but by justice of the quarrel and the cause, lowered and humbled is your pride. I think you hang your heads, but we’ll promote them, traitors.”

He meant that he would promote — raise — their heads by cutting them off, sticking them on poles, and displaying them in a high place where people could see them.

He added, “Now it is time to be avenged on you for all your insults, and for the murder of my dearest friend, to whom right well you knew our soul was knit — good Piers of Gaveston, my sweet favorite. Rebels, recreants, traitors, you killed him!”

The Earl of Kent said, “Brother, for the good of thee and of thy land, they removed that flatterer from thy throne.”

“So, sir, you have spoken,” King Edward II said. “Go away, leave our presence!”

The Earl of Kent exited.

King Edward II continued, “Accursed wretches, was it for the good of us, when we had sent our messenger to request that Gaveston might be spared to come to speak with us, and Pembroke undertook to be responsible for his return, that thou, proud Warwick, kept watch over the prisoner, poor Piers, and beheaded him against the law of arms? For which thy head shall overlook the rest as much as thou in rage outdid the rest.”

King Edward II was saying that the Earl of Warwick’s head would be set in a higher place on the London Bridge than the heads of the other rebels.

“Tyrant, I scorn thy threats and menaces,” the Earl of Warwick said. “It is only temporal, worldly punishment that thou can inflict.”

“The worst you can inflict on us is death,” the Earl of Lancaster said, “and it is better to die and live in Heaven than live in infamy under such a King as you are.”

“Away with them, Spenser Senior, my lord of Winchester!” King Edward II said.

He continued, "I command you without hesitation to cut off the heads of these lusty leaders, Warwick and Lancaster! Take them away!"

"Farewell, vain world!" the Earl of Warwick said.

"Sweet Mortimer, farewell!" the Earl of Lancaster said.

The Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Lancaster exited in the custody of Spenser Senior.

"England, unkind to thy nobility, groan for this grief," Young Mortimer said. "Behold how thou are maimed!"

"Go, take that haughty Young Mortimer to the Tower of London," King Edward II ordered. "There see him safely bestowed, and as for the others, do speedy execution on them all. Be gone!"

Young Mortimer said, "What, Mortimer? Can rough stony walls confine thy manly virtue that aspires to heaven?"

"No, Edward, England's scourge, it may not be. Mortimer's hope far surmounts his fortune."

Young Mortimer exited in the custody of guards.

"Sound drums and trumpets. March with me, my friends," King Edward II said. "Edward this day has crowned himself King anew."

King Edward II exited, leaving behind Young Spenser, Levune, and Baldock.

Young Spenser said, "Levune, the trust that we place in thee will produce quiet in King Edward's land. Therefore, be gone in haste, and with care bestow that treasure on the lords of France, so that, therewith all enchanted, like the guard who allowed Jove to pass in showers of gold to Danaë, all aid may be denied to Queen Isabel, who now in France makes friends, intending to cross the seas and come back to England with her young son, and step into his father's rule."

According to rumor, Queen Isabella was plotting to overthrow her husband: King Edward II. Therefore, Young Spenser wanted Levune to bribe some French noblemen in the King of France's court to stop Queen Isabella from getting French help.

"That's what these Barons and the cunning Queen have been aiming at," Levune said.

"Yes, but, Levune, thou see these Barons lay their heads on blocks together," Baldock said. "What they intend, the hangman — the executioner — frustrates completely."

"Don't have any doubts, my lords," Levune said. "I'll shake hands with and strike such bargains so secretly among the lords of France with England's gold that Isabel shall make her complaints in vain, and the King of France shall be obdurate with her tears."

"Then make for France at once," Young Spenser said. "Levune, away! Proclaim King Edward II's wars and victories."

## ACT 4 (*Edward II*)

— 4.1 —

### [Scene 14]

Near the Tower of London, the Earl of Kent, the King's half-brother, who had been exiled from the royal court, said to himself, "Fair blows the wind for France. Blow, gentle gale, until Edmund has arrived in France for England's good! Nature, yield to my country's cause in this! A brother, no, but a butcher of thy friends, proud Edward, do thou banish me from thy presence? But I'll go to France and cheer the wronged Queen and inform her of Edward's looseness."

"Edmund" is the Earl of Kent's name.

The word "looseness" referred to immoral conduct both in politics and in sexual relations.

The Earl of Kent continued, "Unnatural King, to slaughter noblemen and cherish flatterers. Young Mortimer, I await thy sweet escape. Gracious, gloomy night, be helpful to his plot."

Young Mortimer, disguised, entered the scene and asked, "Holla, who walks there? Is it you, my lord?"

"Yes, Mortimer, it is I," the Earl of Kent replied. "But has thy potion worked so happily?"

Young Mortimer had drugged his keepers' wine with sedatives.

"It has, my lord," Young Mortimer answered. "The warders — all asleep, I thank them — allowed me to pass in peace. But has your grace got us a ship to take us to France?"

"Don't fear that I haven't," the Earl of Kent replied.

— 4.2 —

### [Scene 15]

Queen Isabella and Prince Edward talked together.

"Ah, boy, all our friends fail us in France," Queen Isabella said. "The lords are cruel, and the King is unkind to his kindred. What shall we do?"

"Madam, return to England and please my father well," Prince Edward said, "and then give a fig for all my uncle's friendship here in France."

His uncle, King Charles IV of France, was declining to help Isabella. "To give someone the fig" was to make a certain obscene gesture at that person.

He continued, "I guarantee you that I'll win his highness King Edward II quickly. He loves me better than a thousand Spencers."

"Ah, boy, thou are deceived, at least in this: to think that we can still be tuned together and made harmonious," Queen Isabella said. "No, no, we jar too much to be reconciled."

"Unkind King Charles IV of France! Unhappy Isabel, when France rejects me, where, oh, where will thou direct thy steps? What should I do next?"

Sir John of Hainault entered the room and asked, "Madam, how are you?"

"Ah, good Sir John of Hainault," Queen Isabella said. "I have never been so cheerless nor been so far distressed!"

"I hear, sweet lady, of the King's unkindness," Sir John of Hainault said, "but don't droop, madam. Noble minds scorn despair. Will your grace go with me to the county of Hainault in the Low Countries, and there await an advantageous time with your son?"

He then said to Prince Edward, "What do you say, my lord? Will you go with your friends, and all of us equally cast off all our hope that we had of getting aid from the King of France?"

"As long as it pleases the Queen my mother, it pleases me," Prince Edward replied. "Neither the King of England, nor the court of France, shall move me from my gracious mother's side until I am strong enough to break a quarterstaff in battle, and then I will strike at the proudest Spenser's head."

"Well said, my lord," Sir John of Hainault said.

"Oh, my sweetheart, how do I mourn the wrongs done to thee, yet triumph in the hope of thee, my joy!" Queen Isabella said to her son.

She then said, "Ah, sweet Sir John, even to the furthest limit of Europe, on the shore of Tanais, we would go with thee, and so we will go with thee to Hainault, so we will."

Tanais is the Latin name of Russia's Don River, which the Elizabethans regarded as being the boundary between Europe and Asia.

Queen Isabella continued, "The Marquis of Hainault, your brother, is a noble gentleman. His grace, I dare presume, will welcome me.

"But who are these men coming toward us?"

The Earl of Kent and Young Mortimer walked toward them.

"Madam, long may you live," the Earl of Kent said, "much happier than your friends in England do."

"Lord Edmund and lord Mortimer! Still alive!" Queen Isabella said. "Welcome to France."

She said to Young Mortimer, "The news came here, my lord, that you were dead, or very near your death."

"Lady, the last was truest of the two," Young Mortimer said, "but Mortimer, reserved for better fortune, has shaken off the captivity of the Tower of London."

He turned to Prince Edward and said, "And he lives to advance your standard, my good lord."

"What do you mean?" Prince Edward said. "The King my father still lives! No, my lord Mortimer, not I, I assure you."

Prince Edward heard "advance your standard," which means "raise your banner in battle," and immediately realized that Young Mortimer was talking of invading England and fighting against King Edward II, Prince Edward's father. He did not want that. He did not want to become King of England while his father was still alive.

“Not, son! Why not?” Queen Isabella said. “I wish it would be no worse than putting you on the throne. But, gentle lords, we are friendless in France.”

“Monsieur le Grand, a noble friend of yours, told us, at our arrival, all the news,” Young Mortimer said. “How hard the nobles, how unkind the King of France has shown himself to you, but madam, right makes room where weapons are lacking.”

His words were ambiguous. They could mean 1) right finds a way to succeed in a situation where weapons for its side are lacking, or 2) right must retreat in a situation where weapons for its side are lacking.

He continued, “And, although many friends have been killed, such as the Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Lancaster, as have others of our party and faction, yet we have friends, I assure your grace, in England who would toss up their caps and clap their hands for joy to see us there equipped to battle our foes.”

“I wish that all were well, and Edward well reformed, for England’s honor, peace, and quietness,” the Earl of Kent said.

“But by the sword, my lord, it must be earned,” Young Mortimer said. “King Edward II will never forsake his flatterers.”

Sir John of Hainault said, “My lords of England, since the unchivalrous King of France refuses to give aid of arms to this distressed Queen, his sister, here, go with her to Hainault. Don’t doubt that we will find comfort, money, men, and friends before long to bid the English King a base.”

He was referring to a game called prisoner’s base, but his words “to bid the English King a base” meant “to challenge King Edward II to an encounter in which there is danger.” He may have meant that he wanted King Edward II to leave his home base and come out and fight.

The game prisoner’s base involved lots of running and the danger of being captured by the other team. “To bid a base” means to challenge a player to make a run. Also, “to bid the English King a base” includes a pun: “to bid the English King abase himself.”

Sir John of Hainault asked, “Tell me, young Prince Edward, what do you think of the game?”

“I think King Edward II will outrun us all,” Prince Edward replied.

“No, son, that is not so; and you must not discourage your friends who are so eager to come to your aid,” Queen Isabella said.

“Sir John of Hainault, pardon us, please,” the Earl of Kent said. “These comforts that you give our woeful Queen bind us all in kindness at your command.”

“Yes, Kent, gentle brother-in-law, and may the God of Heaven prosper your happy proposal, good Sir John,” Queen Isabella said.

“This noble gentleman, eager to fight, was born, I see, to be our anchor-hold,” Young Mortimer said. “Sir John of Hainault, be it to thy renown that England’s Queen and nobles in distress have been by thee restored and comforted.”

“Madam, and you, my lords, come along with me so that England’s peers may Hainault’s welcome see,” Sir John said.

[Scene 16]

King Edward II, the Earl of Arundel, Young Spenser, and Spenser Senior met together. Others were present.

King Edward II said, “Thus, after many threats of wrathful war, England’s Edward triumphs with his friends, and may Edward continue to triumph with his friends uncontrolled and without censure.”

Despite recent success, he still faced challenges from enemies.

“My lord of Gloucester — Young Spenser — do you hear the news?” King Edward II asked.

“What news, my lord?” Young Spenser asked.

“Why, man, they say there is great execution — much killing — done throughout the realm,” King Edward II replied.

He then asked, “My lord of Arundel, you have the official list, don’t you?”

“From the lieutenant of the Tower of London, my lord,” the Earl of Arundel said.

“Please, let us see it,” King Edward II said.

He took the list and then gave it to Young Spenser, saying, “Read it, Spenser.”

Young Spenser read out loud the names of those who had been executed.

King Edward II said, “Why, so it is. They embarked quickly on a journey to the afterlife a month ago. Now, on my life, they’ll neither bark nor bite.”

Some time had passed since the battle. After the battle, many traitors had been executed.

King Edward II continued, “Now, sirs, the news from France.

“Gloucester, I am confident that the lords of France love England’s gold so well that Isabella gets no aid from thence.

“What now remains to be done? Have you proclaimed, my lord, a reward for those who can bring in Young Mortimer?”

Young Spenser, who was the Earl of Gloucester, replied, “My lord, we have; and, if he is in England, he will be captured before long, I don’t doubt.”

“*If*, do thou say?” King Edward II said. “Young Spenser, it is as true as death that he is on England’s ground; our harbor-masters are not so careless of their King’s command.”

King Edward II believed that Young Mortimer was still in England because the harbor-masters would keep him from sailing to France.

A messenger arrived.

“How is it now?” King Edward II asked. “What is the news with thee? From where comes this news?”

The messenger said, “I have letters, my lord, and tidings from out of France. To you, my lord of Gloucester, I have a letter from Levune.”

“Read it,” King Edward II said.

Young Spenser read the letter from Levune out loud:

*“My duty to your honor — etc. I will skip reading out loud the formal introduction — I have, according to instructions in that behalf, dealt with the King of France’s lords, and brought it about that the Queen, all discontented and discouraged, has gone out of France; to where, if you ask, she has gone with Sir John of Hainault, brother to the Marquis of Hainault, into Flanders. With them have gone lord Edmund and the lord Young Mortimer, having in their company various people of your nation, and others; and, as reliable and consistent report goes, they intend to give King Edward II battle in England sooner than he can look for them. This is all the news of importance. Your honor’s in all service, Levune.”*

“Ah, villains, has that Young Mortimer escaped from England?” King Edward II said. “With him has Edmund, my brother, the Earl of Kent, gone as an associate? And will Sir John of Hainault lead the round?”

The round is a dance in which dancers form a circle. Sir John of Hainault’s brother, the Marquis of Hainault, would give much aid to Queen Isabella so she could invade England.

King Edward II added, “Welcome, in God’s name, madam and your son. England shall welcome you and all your rout of followers. Gallop your Sun-chariot quickly, bright Phoebus Apollo, through the sky, and, dusky Night, do the same in a rusty iron car. Between you both, shorten the time, I pray, so that I may see that most desired day when we may meet these traitors in the field of battle.

“Ah, nothing grieves me except that my little boy — Prince Edward — is thus misled to support their evil deeds.

“Come, friends, to Bristol, there to make us a strong army.

“And, winds, be as even-handed to bring our enemies back to England, as you were injurious to bear them away from England.”

— 4.3 —

### [Scene 17]

Queen Isabella, Prince Edward, the Earl of Kent, Young Mortimer, and Sir John of Hainault talked together in Harwich, a port-town in southeast England.

“Now lords, our loving friends and countrymen,” Queen Isabella said, “welcome to England, all of you, with favorable winds. We have left our kindest friends in Belgia so we can battle friends and relatives in England, our home.”

Belgia was then part of the Netherlands; now it is part of Belgium. It is the location of Hainaut.

She continued, “This is a heavy case, a sad predicament, when force to force is knit, and sword and glaive — sword and spear — in civil wars make kin and countrymen slaughter themselves in others, and their sides with their own weapons gored!”



In civil war, people kill their fellow citizens, sometimes including their relatives, thereby killing a part of themselves.

She continued, “But what’s the remedy? Misgoverning, lawless, immoral Kings are the cause of all this ruin; and, Edward II, thou are one among them all whose looseness — laxness and lewdness — has betrayed thy land to spoil and made the gutters overflow with blood. Of thine own people you should be the protector and father-figure, but thou ...”

“Nay, madam, if you are to be a warrior, you must not grow so passionate in speeches,” Young Mortimer said.

In this culture, people believed that showing extreme passion and being unable to control one’s emotions were signs of weakness.

Young Mortimer continued, “Lords, since we have, by the consent of providential Heaven arrived and armed in Prince Edward’s right, here for our country’s cause let us swear to him all homage, fealty, and zeal.

“And as for the open wrongs and injuries that Edward II has done to us, his Queen, and land, we come in arms to work destruction for them with the sword, so that England’s Queen in peace may repossess her dignities and honors — and moreover so that we may remove from the King these flatterers who havoc and waste England’s wealth and treasury.”

“Let the trumpets sound, my lord, and let us march forward,” Sir John of Hainault said. “If we stay here talking, Edward II will think we come to flatter him.”

“I wish that he had never been flattered more than we have flattered him,” the Earl of Kent said.

He believed that the flattery of such people as Gaveston and the Spensers had greatly harmed King Edward II.

— 4.5 —

**[Scene 18]**

King Edward II, Baldock, and Young Spenser talked together.

“Flee, flee, my lord,” Young Spenser said. “The Queen’s forces are very strong. Her friends multiply, and yours fail. Let us steer our way to Ireland, there to breathe and rest awhile.”

“Was I born to flee and run away, and leave the Mortimers behind me as conquerors?” King Edward II said. “Give me my horse, and let’s encourage our troops, and in this bed of honor die with fame.”

“Oh, no, my lord, this princely resolution is not suitable for the time,” Baldock said. “Let’s leave! We are pursued!”

They exited.

Alone, the Earl of Kent immediately entered the scene. He was carrying a sword and a target — a small, round shield.

He said to himself, "King Edward II fled this way, but I have come too late. Edward, alas, my heart relents for thee.

"Proud traitor, Mortimer, why do thou chase thy lawful King, thy sovereign, with thy sword? Vile wretch!

"And why have thou — I, myself — most unnatural of all because I oppose my brother, borne arms against thy brother and thy King? May showers of vengeance rain on my cursed head, I pray to God, to Whom in justice it belongs to punish this unnatural revolt.

"Edward II, this Mortimer aims at thy life. Oh, flee from him, then! But, Edmund, Earl of Kent, you must calm this rage. Dissemble, or thou die."

The Earl of Kent was saying that he needed to pretend that he had kind feelings for the rebellion of Queen Isabella and Young Mortimer.

He continued, "Young Mortimer and Isabel kiss while they conspire, and yet she bears a face of love in truth."

He was being sarcastic. Adultery is not love in truth.

The Earl of Kent, whose name was Edmund, continued, "Shame on that love which hatches death and hate.

"Edmund, run away!

"The town of Bristol to Longshanks' blood — his son Edward II — is false; it has gone over to the Queen's side.

"I must not be found alone, by myself, in case I arouse suspicion. Proud Mortimer pries closely into my movements."

Before he could leave, Queen Isabella, Young Mortimer, Prince Edward, and Sir John of Hainault entered the scene.

Queen Isabella said, "The God of Kings gives successful battles to them who fight with right on their side and who fear God's wrath. Since then successfully we have prevailed, may thanks be given to Heaven's great architect and to you, my allies.

"Before we farther proceed, my noble lords, we here create our well-beloved son Lord Warden of the Realm, out of love and care for his royal person, and since the Fates have made his father so unfortunate."

Because King Edward II was still alive, Prince Edward could not yet be made King.

The Queen added, "Proceed in this — the affairs of England — my lords, my loving lords, as seems fittest to all your wisdoms."

"Madam, if I may ask without offense, how will you deal with Edward in his fall?" the Earl of Kent asked Queen Isabella.

"Tell me, good uncle, which Edward do you mean?" Prince Edward asked the Earl of Kent.

He was saying that the Earl of Kent ought to use Edward II's title of King.

“Nephew,” the Earl of Kent answered, “I mean your father; I dare not call him King.”

“My lord of Kent, what is the need for these questions?” Young Mortimer asked. “It is not in the Queen’s power and control nor in ours to dispose of Edward II; instead, your brother shall be disposed of as the realm and Parliament shall please.”

He said quietly to Queen Isabella, “I don’t like this relenting, pitying mood in Edmund, Earl of Kent. Madam, it is good to keep a close eye on him earlier rather than later.”

He was worried that the Earl of Kent might change loyalties.

Queen Isabella said to the Earl of Kent, “My lord, the Mayor of Bristol knows our mind. He knows our intentions.”

“Yes, madam,” Young Mortimer said, “and they who fled the battlefield will not easily escape. The Mayor of Bristol’s men will round them up.”

“Baldock is with the King,” Queen Isabella said. “He’s an excellent Chancellor, isn’t he, my lord?”

She was sarcastic, as could be told by her tone.

“So are the Spensers: the father and the son,” Sir John of Hainault replied.

He was sarcastic, as could be told by his tone.

The Earl of Kent said, “This Edward II is the ruin of the realm.”

He was sarcastic, although no one could tell by his tone.

Rice ap Howell and the Mayor of Bristol arrived with Spenser Senior as their prisoner. A Welshman, Rice ap Howell had been a prisoner in the Tower of London until Queen Isabella freed him.

Rice ap Howell said, “May God save Queen Isabel and her princely son!

“Madam, the Mayor and citizens of Bristol, in sign of love and duty to this royal presence of Prince Edward, present by me this traitor to the state: Spenser Senior, the father to that wanton Young Spenser, who, like the lawless Catiline of Rome, reveled in England’s wealth and treasury.”

Catiline was accused of conspiring to overthrow the Roman Republic. In 62 B.C.E., he died in battle. Both Spensers were accused of enriching themselves with the royal treasury.

“We thank you all,” Queen Isabella said.

“Your loving care in this deserves princely favors and rewards,” Young Mortimer said. “But where have the King and the other Spenser fled?”

“Spenser the son, who was created Earl of Gloucester, is with that smooth-tongued, flattering scholar Baldock,” Rice ap Howell said. “Recently, they boarded ship with King Edward II for Ireland.”

“May some whirlwind fetch them back, or sink them all,” Young Mortimer said. “They shall be driven from cover there, I don’t doubt.”

“Shall I not yet see the King my father?” Prince Edward asked.

“Unhappy Edward, chased from England’s territory,” the Earl of Kent said quietly to himself.

“Madam, what remains to be done?” Sir John of Hainault asked. “Why are you in such a thoughtful muse?”

“I grieve over my lord and husband’s ill fortune,” Queen Isabella said. “But, sadly, care of — concern for — my country called me to this war!”

“Madam, have done with worry and sad complaint,” Young Mortimer said. “Your King has wronged your country and himself, and we must seek to right it as we may.”

He ordered, “Meanwhile, take this rebel to the block to be beheaded.”

He then said to Spenser Senior, “Your lordship cannot privilege your head.”

As the Earl of Wiltshire, Spenser Senior was a nobleman and so would not be hung as a commoner would; instead, he would be beheaded. Having high status would not keep him from being killed.

Spenser Senior said, “A rebel is he who fights against his Prince: King Edward II. Those who fought for Edward II’s rights did not rebel against him.”

“Take him away,” Young Mortimer said. “He prattles.”

Guards took away Spenser Senior.

Young Mortimer said, “You, Rice ap Howell, shall do good service to her majesty. Being of high standing in your country — Wales — here, you will follow these rebellious renegades.”

He then said to Queen Isabella, “We in the meanwhile, madam, must carefully deliberate about how Baldock, Young Spenser, and their accomplices may in their fall from power be pursued to their deaths.”

— 4.6 —

### [Scene 19]

On 16 November 1326, the Abbot of Neath, King Edward II, Young Spenser, and Baldock talked together. Some monks were present. The royal party was in hiding at Neath Abbey in south Wales. King Edward II, Young Spenser, and Baldock were disguised as monks.

“Have no doubt, my lord,” the Abbot of Neath said. “Have no fear. As silent and as careful will we be to keep your royal person safe with us, free from suspicion and free from deadly invasion from such people as are pursuing your majesty, yourself, and those of your chosen company, as the danger of this stormy time requires.”

“Father, thy face should harbor no deceit,” King Edward II said. “Oh, if thou had ever been a King, thy heart, pierced deeply with sense of my distress, could not but have compassion for my state.

“Stately and proud in riches and in attendants, once I was powerful and full of pomp, but who is he whom rule and empire have not in life or death made miserable?”

“Come, Young Spenser, Baldock, come, sit down by me. Now test that philosophy that in our famous nurseries of arts — Oxford and Cambridge — thou sucked from Plato and from Aristotle.”

Plato and Aristotle were ancient Greek philosophers. The contemplative life was much praised in medieval philosophy and in religious works such as Saint Augustine’s *City of God*. Kings led an active life, while monks led a contemplative life filled with religious devotion.

King Edward II continued, “Father, this contemplative life is Heaven. Oh, that I might lead this life in quiet, but we, alas, are chased. And my friends, they pursue your lives and my dishonor. Yet, gentle monks, not for treasure, nor for gold, nor for fee, do you betray us and our company.”

“Your grace may sit safe and secure, if none but we know of your abode,” a monk said.

“No one alive,” Young Spenser said, “but fearfully I suspect a gloomy fellow in a meadow outside the abbey. He gave a long look after us, my lord, and all the land, I know, is up in arms, arms that pursue our lives with deadly hate.”

“We were embarked for Ireland,” Baldock said. “With unfavorable winds and severe tempests, we were driven to fall on shore and become grounded, and here to pine in fear of Mortimer and his confederates.”

“Mortimer! Who talks about Mortimer?” King Edward II said. “Who wounds me with the name of Mortimer, that bloodthirsty man? Good father, on thy lap I lay this head of mine, filled with much worry and care. Oh, that I might never open these eyes again, never again lift up this drooping head — oh, nevermore lift up this dying heart!”

“Look up, my lord,” Young Spenser said. “Baldock, this drowsiness bodes no good: It is an evil omen.”

Seeing men coming, he said, “Even here in this abbey we are betrayed.”

Rice ap Howell, the Earl of Leicester, and a mower entered the scene. They were armed with Welsh hooks, a hedging tool that consisted of a long handle with a curved blade on one end: It resembled a scythe. A mower was a man who cut grass and hay with a scythe. The mower was the “gloomy fellow” whom Baldock had seen earlier. Holding a scythe, he looked like the personification of Death.

“Upon my life, those are the men you seek,” the mower said.

“Fellow, enough,” Rice ap Howell said to the mower.

He said to the Earl of Leicester, “My lord, please be short. Let’s get this arrest over quickly.”

He then said to all present, “A valid commission authorizes what we do.”

The Earl of Leicester said to himself, “He has the Queen’s commission, which Young Mortimer persuaded her to make. What cannot gallant Mortimer do with the Queen?”

The word “gallant” means both “bold” and “lover.”

He continued, “It’s a pity: See where King Edward II sits and hopes to escape unseen the hands of those who seek by force to take away his life. Too true it is: *Quem dies vidit veniens*

*superbum, hunc dies vidit fugiens jacentem.*”

The Latin quotation, which is from Seneca’s play *Thyestes*, means, “Him whom the rising Sun has seen exalted in his pride, the setting Sun has seen downfallen.”

The Earl of Leicester continued to say to himself, “But, Leicester, cease to grow so passionate and compassionate. Control your feelings.”

He then said out loud, “Young Spenser and Baldock, by no other names, I arrest you of high treason here.”

He was declining to address them by the titles that King Edward II had given them. Young Spenser was Earl of Gloucester and Lord Chamberlain, and Baldock was the King’s Chancellor.

The Earl of Leicester continued, “Don’t insist on my using your titles, but obey thy arrest. It is in the name of Isabel the Queen.”

He then asked King Edward II, “My lord, why droop you thus?”

“Oh, day, the last of all my bliss on Earth, center of all misfortune!” King Edward II said. “Oh, my stars, why do you frown unkindly on a King? Does the Earl of Leicester come then in Isabella’s name to take my life, my company, from me? Here, man, rip up this panting breast and palpitating heart of mine. Take my heart, and let it be the ransom for letting my friends go.”

“Away with them!” Rice ap Howell said.

“It may do thee honor yet to let us take our farewell of his grace the King,” Young Spenser said.

“My heart with pity grieves to see this sight: a King forced to bear these words and arrogant commands,” the Abbot of Neath said.

“Spenser, ah, sweet Young Spenser, thus then we must part,” King Edward II said.

“We must, my lord,” Young Spenser said. “So the angry heavens command it to be.”

“No, so command Hell and cruel Mortimer,” King Edward II said. “The gentle heavens have nothing to do with this.”

“My lord, it is in vain to grieve or storm in protest,” Baldock said. “Here humbly of your grace we take our leaves. Our lots are cast, and I fear, so is thine.”

“In Heaven we may meet again, but on Earth we shall never meet,” King Edward II said.

He then asked, “Earl of Leicester, tell us, what shall become of us?”

“Your majesty must go to Killingworth Castle in Warwickshire,” the Earl of Leicester replied.

“Must!” King Edward II said. “It is somewhat hard when Kings *must* go.”

“Here is a litter ready for your grace, awaiting your pleasure, and the day grows old,” the Earl of Leicester said.

A litter is a portable bed carried by people.

“It is as good to be gone as to stay and be overtaken by night,” Rice ap Howell said.

“A litter have thou?” King Edward II said. “A bed for me to be carried in? Lay me in a coffin, and convey me away from here to the gates of Hell. Let Pluto’s bells ring out my fatal death knell, and let hags howl for my death at Charon’s shore.”

Pluto is the god of the Land of the Dead, and Charon is the ferryman who ferries souls to the Land of the Dead.

King Edward II continued, “For friends has Edward none but these” — he pointed to the monks — “and these” — he pointed to Young Spenser and Baldock — “and these two must die under a tyrant’s sword.”

“My lord, let’s be going,” Rice ap Howell said. “Don’t care for these, for we shall see them shorter by the heads.”

In other words, Young Spenser and Baldock will be beheaded.

“Well, what shall be, shall be,” King Edward II said. “Part we must. Sweet Spenser, gentle Baldock, part we must.”

Taking off his disguise, he said, “Away, feigned clothing! Unfeigned are my woes.”

He said to the Abbot of Neath, “Father, farewell.”

He then said, “Earl of Leicester, thou are waiting for me, and go I must. Life, I say farewell to you, along with my friends.”

King Edward II and the Earl of Leicester exited.

“Oh, has he gone?” Young Spenser said. “Has noble Edward gone, departed from here, never to see us anymore?”

“Heavens, tear yourself to pieces, and fireball that is the Sun, forsake thy orbit! Earth, melt to air! Gone is my sovereign. Gone, gone, alas, never to make return.”

“Young Spenser, I see our souls departing from here,” Baldock said. “We are deprived of the sunshine of our life.”

In this society, Kings were often compared to the Sun.

Baldock continued, “Prepare for a new life, an afterlife, man. Throw up thy eyes and heart and hand to Heaven’s immortal throne.

“Pay nature’s debt — death — with a cheerful countenance.

“We can summarize all our life-lessons to this: We learn that we will die, sweet Spenser; therefore, we all live, Spenser, we all live to die, and we rise to fall.”

He was referring to the Wheel of Fortune. As the Wheel turns, those on the bottom rise high and those at the top fall low.

“Come, come, keep these sermons for when you come to the place appointed for your deaths,” Rice ap Howell said. “Keep those sermons for your last words. You, and such as you are, have made ‘wise’ work in England. Will your lordships leave?”

“Your lordship, I trust, will remember me,” the mower said. “Will you reward me?”

“Remember thee, fellow?” Rice ap Howell said. “Of course! What else? Follow me to the town.”

They exited.



## ACT 5 (*Edward II*)

— 5.1 —

### [Scene 20]

On 20 January 1327, King Edward II, the Earl of Leicester, the Bishop of Winchester, and Sir Trussel met in a room of Killingworth Castle in Warwickshire.

The Earl of Leicester said to King Edward II, “Be patient, my good lord, cease to lament. Imagine that Killingworth Castle is your court, and that you are staying here for a while for pleasure, not because of compulsion or necessity.”

“Earl of Leicester, if gentle words might comfort me, thy speeches long ago would have eased my sorrows, for kind and loving have thou always been,” King Edward II replied. “The griefs of private men are soon allayed, but not those of Kings. The forest deer, being struck, runs to an herb that closes up the wounds.”

People in this society believed that wounded deer would seek out and eat a healing herb named dittany.

He continued, “But when the imperial lion’s flesh is gored, he rends and tears it with his wrathful paw, and highly scorning that the lowly earth should drink his blood, rears up into the air.

“And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind the ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb, as does that unnatural Queen, false Isabel, who thus has shut up and caged me in a prison.

“For such outrageous, excessive passions overwhelm my soul, as with the wings of rancor and disdain, I am soaring up very often to Heaven, to complain to the gods against them both.

“But when I recall in my mind that I am a King, I think I should revenge the wrongs that Mortimer and Isabel have done to me.

“But what are Kings, when royal authority is gone, but mere shadows on a sunny day? My nobles rule; I bear the name of King; I wear the crown; but I am controlled by them — by Young Mortimer and my unfaithful Queen, who stains my nuptial bed with infamy while I am lodged within this cave of cares and worries, where sorrow at my elbow always attends and waits on me, to accompany my heart with sad laments that bleed within me for this my strange transformation from King to prisoner.

“But tell me, must I now resign my crown in order to make usurping Mortimer a King?”

“Your grace is mistaken,” the Bishop of Winchester said. “It is for England’s good, and for princely Edward’s right, that we crave the crown.”

“No, the crown is for Mortimer’s and not Prince Edward’s head,” King Edward II said, “for Prince Edward is a lamb, surrounded by wolves that in a moment will shorten his life. But if proud Mortimer should wear this crown, may the Heavens turn it to a blaze of quenchless fire.”

The mythological sorceress Medea was married to Jason of Jason and the Argonauts fame. When he abandoned her and married Creusa, Medea gave her a crown that burst into flame when she put it on her head.

King Edward II continued, "Or, like the snaky wreath of Tisiphone, may it encircle the temples of his hateful head."

Tisiphone was one of the Furies, who had snakes for hair.

He continued, "So shall not England's vine — the House of Plantagenet — be perished, but Edward's name will survive, although Edward dies."

The vine symbolizes royal lineage.

"My lord, why waste you thus the time away?" the Earl of Leicester said. "Members of Parliament are awaiting your answer. Will you yield your crown?"

King Edward II said, "Ah, Leicester, consider how hardly I can bear to lose my crown and kingdom without cause, in order to give ambitious Mortimer my right — Young Mortimer, who like a mountain overwhelms my bliss. My mind here is murdered in that extreme.

"But what the Heavens appoint I must obey. Here, take my crown; take the life of Edward, too."

He took off his crown, but he held on to it.

He said, "Two Kings in England cannot reign at once. But wait a while. Let me be King until night, so that I may gaze upon this glittering crown. So shall my eyes receive their last moment of contentment, and so shall my head receive the latest honor due to it, and then jointly both my head and eyes shall yield up their wished-for right."

Still not wanting to give up the crown, he said, "Continue always, thou celestial Sun. Never let silent night possess this land. Stand still, you watches of the element."

King Edward II meant that he wanted the Sun, the Moon, and the other planets to stand still and not let time pass. "Watches" are "watchers" or "sentinels" or "timepieces." Most often, the phrase used was "watches of the night," which meant "nighttime." By using "watches of the element," King Edward II was referring to all heavenly bodies, including the Sun. In this context, "element" means "sky."

He continued, "All times and seasons, rest yourselves at a standstill, so that Edward may be still fair England's King. But day's bright beams do vanish quickly away, and necessarily I must resign my wished-for crown.

"Inhuman creatures, nursed with tiger's milk, why do you greedily open your mouths for your sovereign's overthrow?"

This society believed that babies acquired some of their personal characteristics from their mother's milk. Tigers were known for being cruel, and so anyone who had nursed from a tigress would be cruel.

He continued, "You want to swallow my diadem, I mean, and my innocent life."

He put the crown on his head.

King Edward II continued, "See, monsters, see! I'll wear my crown again. What, don't you fear the fury of your King? But, unfortunate Edward, thou art foolishly mistaken that you can

change things. They don't care about thy frowns as they recently did, but instead seek to make a newly elected King."

Parliament would elect the new King.

He continued, "This fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts. These thoughts are martyred with endless torments, and in this torment I find no comfort but that which I get from feeling the crown upon my head, and therefore let me wear it yet a while."

"My lord, the Parliament must have quick news, so therefore tell us whether you resign the crown or not," Sir Trussel said.

King Edward II grew angry and said, "I'll not resign, but while I live —."

He could not finish the sentence due to excess emotion, but he said, "Traitors, be gone, and join with Young Mortimer. Elect, conspire, install someone else as King, do what you will. Their blood and yours shall seal — attest to and be the end of — these treacheries."

"This answer we'll return to the Parliament," the Bishop of Winchester said, "and so, farewell."

Sir Trussel and the Bishop of Winchester started to leave.

"Call them back again, my lord, and speak to them gently," the Earl of Leicester said, "for if they go, Prince Edward shall lose his right to succeed to the throne."

"Thou call them back," King Edward II said. "I have no power to speak."

"My lord of Winchester, the King is willing to resign," the Earl of Leicester said.

"If he is not, let him choose," the Bishop of Winchester said.

King Edward II said, "Oh, I wish I might, but the Heavens and Earth conspire to make me miserable. Here, receive my crown.

"Receive it? No, these innocent hands of mine shall not be guilty of so foul a crime. He of you all who most desires my blood and will be called the murderer of a King, take it."

No one wanted to take the crown from King Edward II's head.

He continued, "Are you moved to pity? Do you pity me? Then send for unrelenting Mortimer and Isabel, whose eyes being turned to steel will sooner spark with angry fire than shed a tear.

"Yet wait; for rather than I will look on them, I would rather give up my crown.

"Here, here!"

He handed over the crown.

He continued, "Now, sweet God of Heaven, make me despise this transitory pomp that is my earthly life, and make me sit forever enthroned in Heaven. Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes, or if I live, let me forget myself."

"My lord —" the Bishop of Winchester began.

The deposed Edward II said, “Don’t call me lord! Go away! Get out of my sight! Ah, pardon me. Grief makes me lunatic — mad! Don’t let that Mortimer be named the guardian of and Lord Protector for my son.”

If Young Mortimer were named Lord Protector, he would rule England until the new King — Prince Edward will become King Edward III — came of age.

The deposed Edward II said, “More safety is there in a tiger’s jaws than in Young Mortimer’s embraces.”

He wiped his teary eyes with a handkerchief and then said, “Carry this — wet with my tears, and dried again with my sighs — to the Queen.”

He handed over the handkerchief and said, “If with the sight of this she is not moved, return it back to me and dip it in my blood.

“Commend me to my son, and bid him rule better than I. Yet how have I transgressed, unless it be with too much clemency?”

He had allowed Young Mortimer to live rather than have him executed.

“And thus most humbly we take our leave,” Sir Trussel said.

The Bishop of Winchester and Sir Trussel exited.

“Farewell,” the deposed Edward II said. “I know the next news that they bring will be my death, and welcome it shall be. To wretched men death is felicity — it is happiness.”

Someone entered the room.

“Another messenger is coming,” the Earl of Leicester said. “What news does he bring, I wonder?”

“Such news as I expect,” the deposed Edward II said.

The Earl of Berkeley walked over to them.

“Come, Berkeley, come,” the deposed Edward II said, “and tell thy message to my naked breast.”

He meant that the Earl of Berkeley’s message would be a literal stab to his — Edward II’s — heart.

“My lord, don’t think that a thought so villainous can harbor in a man of noble birth,” the Earl of Berkeley said. “To do your highness service and duty and save you from your foes, Berkeley would die.”

He gave a letter to the Earl of Leicester, who read it and said to the deposed Edward II, “My lord, the council of the Queen commands that I resign my charge. I will no longer be your keeper.”

“And who must keep me now?” the deposed Edward II said.

He asked the Earl of Berkeley, “Must you, my lord?”

“Yes, my most gracious lord,” he replied. “It is so decreed.”

King Edward II took the letter, looked at it, and said, “Decreed by Young Mortimer, whose name is written here! Well may I rend the name of him who rends my heart.”

He tore up the letter and then said, “This poor revenge has somewhat eased my mind. So may his limbs be torn as is this paper. Hear me, immortal Jove, and grant my prayer, too!”

He was using the name “Jove” to refer to God.

“Your grace must go from here with me to Berkeley Castle immediately,” the Earl of Berkeley said.

“I will go wherever you want to take me,” the deposed Edward II said. “All places are alike, and every earth is fit for burial.”

“Treat him well, my lord, as much as lies in you,” the Earl of Leicester said. “Treat him as well as you are able to.”

“Even so betide my soul as I treat him,” the Earl of Berkeley said. “Let my soul be rewarded or punished in accordance with how I treat him.”

“My enemy has pitied my condition,” the deposed Edward II said, “and that’s the reason that I am now being moved from Killingworth Castle to Berkeley Castle.”

He was sarcastic; he knew that Young Mortimer did not pity him.

“And does your grace think that Berkeley will be cruel?” the Earl of Berkeley asked.

“I don’t know,” the deposed Edward II said, “but of this I am sure: Death ends all, and I can die but once. Leicester, farewell.”

“Not yet, my lord,” the Earl of Leicester said. “I’ll see you on your way.”

— 5.2 —

### [Scene 21]

Young Mortimer and Queen talked together in a room at the royal palace.

“Beautiful Isabel, now we have our desire,” Young Mortimer said. “The proud corrupters — the Spensers and Baldock — of the light-brained, frivolous King Edward II have done their homage to the lofty gallows, and the deposed King himself lies in captivity.

“Be ruled by me and take my advice, and we will rule the realm. In any case take heed of childish fear, for now we hold an old wolf — the deposed Edward II — by the ears, an old wolf that, if he is released, will seize upon us both, and seize us all the more grievously, being seized himself.

“Think, therefore, madam, that it is very important for us to raise your son — Prince Edward — to the throne and make him King with all the speed we may, and that I be made Lord Protector over him, for our authority will have the greater sway when we can exercise it under a King’s name.”

Prince Edward would be able to sign official documents as King of England, and Young Mortimer would be the actual ruler of England as Lord Protector. Young Mortimer was certain

that he could persuade Prince Edward to sign the documents that he wanted him to sign. Or Young Mortimer could sign the documents himself as Lord Protector.

“Sweet Mortimer, the life of me, Isabel, be assured that I love thee well, and therefore, as long as the Prince, my son, whom I esteem as dear as these eyes of mine, is safe, decide whatever you will against his father, and I myself will willingly subscribe and agree to it.”

Young Mortimer replied, “First I want to hear the news that he has been deposed, and then let me alone to handle him.”

A messenger entered the room, carrying letters.

“Letters! From where?” Young Mortimer asked.

“From Killingworth, my lord,” the messenger answered.

“How fares my lord the King?” Queen Isabella asked.

“He is healthy, madam, but full of sorrow,” the messenger answered.

“Alas, poor soul, I wish that I could ease his grief!” Queen Isabella said.

The Bishop of Winchester entered the room, carrying the King’s crown.

Queen Isabella said, “Thanks, gentle Winchester.”

She then ordered the messenger, “Sirrah, be gone.”

The messenger exited.

“The King has willingly resigned his crown,” the Bishop of Winchester said.

“Oh, happy news!” Queen Isabella said. “Send for the Prince, my son.”

“Further, before this letter of abdication was sealed, Lord Berkeley came, so that the deposed Edward II now has gone from Killingworth,” the Bishop of Winchester said. “And we have heard that Edmund, Earl of Kent, his brother, has laid a plot to set his brother the deposed King free. That is all that I have heard about that plot. The lord of Berkeley is as full of pity for the deposed Edward II as the Earl of Leicester, who had charge of him before.”

“Then let some other person be his guardian,” Queen Isabella said.

“Leave that to me,” Young Mortimer said, and then he motioned for the Bishop of Winchester to leave.

The Bishop of Winchester exited.

Young Mortimer said to Queen Isabella, “Here is the privy seal.”

The privy seal was the personal seal of the King of England. Young Mortimer could use the privy seal to sign important documents and letters, such as one directing that someone new guard the deposed King.

He called for some attendants, “Who’s there?”

A couple of attendants entered the room.

Young Mortimer ordered, "Call here Sir Thomas Gurney and Sir John Maltravers."

The attendants exited.

He said to Queen Isabella, "To ruin the heavy-headed, foolish Edmund, Earl of Kent's scheme, the Earl of Berkeley shall be discharged, and the deposed King moved to another location, and none but we shall know where he is staying."

"But, Mortimer, as long as Edward II survives, what safety remains for us or for my son?" Queen Isabella asked.

"Tell me, shall Edward II immediately be dispatched and die?" Young Mortimer asked.

"I wish that he would be," Queen Isabella said, "as long as it were not by my means."

"That is enough," Young Mortimer said.

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney entered the room.

Young Mortimer ordered, "Maltravers, write a letter immediately to the lord of Berkeley from ourself" — Young Mortimer was using the majestic plural — "saying that he will surrender the King to thee and Gurney, and when it is done, we will sign our name."

"It shall be done, my lord," Sir John Maltravers replied.

"Gurney," Young Mortimer said.

"My lord," Sir Thomas Gurney replied.

"If thou intend to be raised in fortune by me, Mortimer, who now makes Fortune's wheel turn as he pleases, seek all the means thou can to make the deposed King Edward II droop, and give him neither a kind word nor a good look," Young Mortimer said.

He wanted Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney to treat the deposed Edward II badly.

"I promise you I will, my lord," Sir Thomas Gurney replied.

"And this order is more important than the rest," Young Mortimer said. "Because we hear that Edmund, Earl of Kent, schemes to free the deposed King Edward II, move the deposed King always from place to place by night until he comes at last to Killingworth, and then from thence back again to Berkeley. And along the way, to make him fret the more, speak harshly to him, and in any case let no man comfort him. If he should chance to weep, do nothing but amplify his grief with bitter words."

"Fear not, my lord," Sir John Maltravers said. "We'll do as you command."

"So, now go away!" Young Mortimer said. "Leave! Ride that way at once."

"Where is this letter going?" Queen Isabella said. "To my lord the King? Commend me humbly to his majesty, and tell him that I labor all in vain to ease his grief and work for his liberty, and give him this as witness of my love."

She gave Sir John Maltravers a jewel.

"I will, madam," he said.

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney exited.

“Finely faked!” Young Mortimer said. “Continue to act like that, sweet Queen.”

Talking together, Prince Edward and the Earl of Kent entered the room.

“Here comes the young Prince Edward with the Earl of Kent,” Young Mortimer said quietly.

“The Earl of Kent whispers something in Prince Edward’s childish ears,” Queen Isabella said quietly.

“If the Earl of Kent has such access to the Prince, our plots and stratagems will soon be dashed,” Young Mortimer said quietly.

“Treat Edmund, Earl of Kent, in a friendly way as if all were well,” Queen Isabella said quietly.

“How is my honorable Lord of Kent?” Young Mortimer asked loudly.

“In health, sweet Mortimer,” the Earl of Kent replied.

He asked Queen Isabella, “How fares your grace?”

“I would be well, if my lord your brother were freed,” Queen Isabella answered.

The Earl of Kent understood her to mean “freed from prison,” but she meant “freed from life.”

“I hear that recently he has resigned his crown,” the Earl of Kent said.

“The more my grief,” Queen Isabella said.

“And mine,” Young Mortimer said.

The Earl of Kent said quietly to himself, “Ah, they are faking their grief!”

“Sweet son, come here,” Queen Isabella said to Prince Edward. “I must talk with thee.”

“Do thou, being his uncle and the next of blood, expect to be appointed Lord Protector over the Prince?” Young Mortimer asked the Earl of Kent.

“Not I, my lord,” the Earl of Kent replied. “Who should protect the son, but she who gave him life — I mean the Queen.”

“Mother, don’t persuade me to wear the crown,” Prince Edward said to Queen Isabella. “Let him — my father — be King; I am too young to reign.”

“But be content, seeing it is his highness’ pleasure,” Queen Isabella said. “Your father wants you to wear the crown.”

“Let me just see him first, and then I will,” Prince Edward said.

“Yes, do, sweet nephew,” the Earl of Kent said.

“Brother-in-law, you know it is impossible,” Queen Isabella said to the Earl of Kent.

“Why? Is he dead?” Prince Edward asked.

“No, God forbid!” Queen Isabella replied.



“I wish those words proceeded from your heart!” the Earl of Kent said.

“Disloyal Edmund, do thou favor him, you who were a cause of his imprisonment?” Young Mortimer asked the Earl of Kent.

Previously, Young Mortimer had addressed the Earl of Kent using the respectful “you,” but now he was using the less respectful “thou.”

“The more reason I have now to make amends,” the Earl of Kent said.

“I tell thee, it is not appropriate that one as disloyal as you should be allowed in the company of a Prince,” Young Mortimer said to the Earl of Kent.

He then said to Prince Edward, “My lord, he has betrayed the King, his brother, and therefore don’t trust him.”

“But he repents and sorrows for it now,” Prince Edward said.

“Come, son, and go with this gentle lord — Young Mortimer — and me,” Queen Isabella said.

“With you I will, but not with Mortimer,” Prince Edward replied.

“Why, youngling, are thou so disdainful of Mortimer?” Young Mortimer asked. “Then I will carry thee away by force.”

“Help, uncle Kent,” Prince Edward said. “Mortimer will wrong me.”

Young Mortimer carried Prince Edward away.

“Brother-in-law Edmund, don’t interfere,” Queen Isabella said. “We are his friends. I am nearer in blood to the Prince than you are, Earl of Kent. I am his mother.”

“Sister-in-law, Prince Edward is my responsibility,” the Earl of Kent said. “Return him to me.”

“Edward is my son, and I will keep him,” Queen Isabella said.

Queen Isabella exited.

The Earl of Kent said to himself, “Young Mortimer shall know that he has wronged me. From here I will hasten to Killingworth Castle and rescue the older Edward — Edward II — from his foes, to be revenged on Young Mortimer and thee, the Queen.”

— 5.3 —

### [Scene 22]

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney were talking with the deposed Edward II. Some soldiers were present.

“My lord, don’t be pensive,” Sir John Maltravers said. “We are your friends. Men are ordained to live in misery. Therefore, come; idle delay endangers our lives.”

“Friends, where must unfortunate Edward go?” the deposed Edward II said. “Will hateful Mortimer grant no rest? Must I be tormented like the nightly bird — the owl — whose sight is loathsome to all winged fowls? When will the fury of Young Mortimer’s mind lessen? When

will his heart be satisfied with blood? If my blood will serve, disembowel immediately this breast, and give my heart to Isabel and him. It is the chiefest target they aim at.”

“That is not so, my liege,” Sir Thomas Gurney said. “The Queen has given us this command to keep your grace in safety. Your emotional outbursts make your griefs increase.”

“This treatment makes my misery increase,” the deposed Edward II said. “But can my air of life — my breath — long continue when all my senses are distressed with stench? England’s King is kept within a dungeon, where I am starved for lack of sustenance. My daily diet is heartbreaking sobs that almost tear the chamber in which my heart resides. Thus lives old Edward not relieved by any, and so I must die, though pitied by many. Oh, water, gentle friends, to cool my thirst and clear my body from foul excrements!”

In this society, the word “excrement” meant both “feces” and “hair.” Sir John Maltravers deliberately misunderstood him as meaning “hair.”

“Here’s gutter water, as we have been ordered to use,” Sir John Maltravers said.

He said to the deposed Edward II, “Sit down, for we’ll be barbers to your grace.”

Some gutters were sewers, so Sir John Maltravers may have been intending to shave the deposed King with water contaminated by feces.

“Traitors, away!” the deposed Edward II said. “What, will you murder me, or choke your sovereign with puddle water?”

“No, but we will wash your face, and shave away your beard,” Sir Thomas Gurney said, “lest you be recognized, and so be rescued.”

“Why do you try to fight us like this?” Sir John Maltravers asked. “Your labor is in vain.”

“The wren may strive against the lion’s strength, but all in vain,” the deposed Edward II said. “So vainly do I strive to seek for mercy at a tyrant’s hand.”

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney washed the deposed Edward II with gutter water and shaved off his beard.

The deposed Edward II prayed, “Immortal powers Who know the painful cares that wait upon my poor distressed soul, oh, aim all your looks upon these daring men who wrong their liege and sovereign, England’s King!”

He added, “Oh, Gaveston, it is for thee that I am wronged. For me thou and both of the Spencers died, and for your sakes a thousand wrongs I’ll suffer. The Spencers’ ghosts, wherever they reside, wish well to mine; and so then bah! For them I’ll die.”

“Between theirs and yours shall be no enmity,” Sir John Maltravers said.

He meant that soon enough the deposed Edward II would be dead, and his ghost and the Spencers’ ghosts would be friends.

“Come, come away,” he added. “Now put the torches out. We’ll enter in by darkness to Killingworth Castle.”

The Earl of Kent arrived.

“Guard the King securely,” Sir John Maltravers said. “It is the Earl of Kent.”

“Oh, gentle brother, help to rescue me,” the deposed Edward II pleaded.

“Keep them apart,” Sir John Maltravers said. “Thrust the King in among yourselves.”

Soldiers surrounded the deposed Edward II to keep him and the Earl of Kent separated.

“Soldiers, let me but talk to him one word,” the Earl of Kent said.

“Lay hands upon the Earl of Kent for this assault,” Sir Thomas Gurney said. “Arrest him!”

“Lay down your weapons, traitors,” the Earl of Kent said. “Give the King to me.”

“Edmund, surrender thou thyself to us, or thou shall die,” Sir John Maltravers said.

Soldiers seized the Earl of Kent.

“Base villains, why do you seize me like this!” the Earl of Kent said.

“Bind him, and so convey him to the court,” Sir Thomas Gurney said.

“Where is the court but here?” the Earl of Kent said. “Here is the King, and I will visit him. Why do you prevent me?”

The court is where lord Mortimer resides,” Sir John Maltravers said. “There shall your honor go; and so, farewell.”

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney exited with the deposed Edward II.

“Oh, miserable is that commonwealth where lords keep courts, and Kings are locked in prison!” the Earl of Kent said.

“Why do we delay?” the soldier in command said. “On, sirs, to the court.”

“Yes, lead me where you will, even to my death, seeing that my brother cannot be released,” the Earl of Kent said.

They exited.

— 5.4 —

### [Scene 23]

Alone, Young Mortimer said to himself, “The deposed King must die, or Young Mortimer goes down. The commoners now begin to pity him. Yet he who is the cause of Edward II’s death is sure to pay for it when his son is of age, and therefore I will do it cunningly.

“This letter, written by a friend of ours, contains the deposed King’s death, yet also bids them save his life.”

Although a friend had composed the letter, Young Mortimer had copied the letter so that it was in his own handwriting. Or perhaps he had added in his own handwriting the Latin words “*Pereat iste!*” to the already written letter.

The Latin words mean, “Let him perish!”

Young Mortimer read out loud, “*Edwardum occidere nolite timere, bonum est.*”

He then said, “With the comma after *timere*, this is the translation: ‘*Fear not to kill the King, it is good that he die.*’”

“But put the comma after *nolite* instead of after *timere*, and there’s another sense.”

He read out loud, “*Edwardum occidere nolite, timere bonum est.*”

He then said, “With the comma after *nolite*, this is the translation: ‘*Kill not the King, it is good to fear the worst.*’”

He thought a moment and then said, “This letter, without any comma, shall be sent. That way, once the deposed Edward II is dead, if the letter should be found by chance, Sir John Maltravers and the rest may bear the blame, and we who caused it to be done will be acquitted of responsibility.

“Within this room is locked the messenger who shall convey it, and perform the rest. And by a secret token that he bears, he shall be murdered when the deed is done.”

The token could be a ring that Sir Thomas Gurney and Sir John Maltravers would recognize. The token would show that the letter is genuine.

Young Mortimer said loudly, “Lightborn, come forth!”

Lightborn entered the hall.

“Are thou still as resolute as thou were before?” Young Mortimer asked.

“What else, my lord?” Lightborn replied. “Of course, I will be — and far more resolute.”

“And have thou planned how to accomplish it?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Yes, yes, and none shall know how he died,” Lightborn said.

Lightborn knew ways of killing a man that would not leave evidence of how he was killed.

“But when you see his looks, Lightborn, thou will relent,” Young Mortimer said.

“Relent?” Lightborn said. “Ha, ha! I am much accustomed to relent.”

He was sarcastic: He was NOT accustomed to relent and show mercy. In addition, he was punning. In this society, one meaning of the word “relent” was “dissolve,” and he was much accustomed to dissolve poisons in drinks.

“Well, do it bravely and well, and be secret,” Young Mortimer said.

“You shall not need to give me instructions,” Lightborn said. “This is not the first time I have killed a man. I learned in Naples how to poison flowers so that anyone who smells them dies, to strangle with a piece of linen thrust down the throat, to pierce the windpipe with a needle’s point, or, while one is asleep, to take a quill — a small tube — and blow a little poison powder in his ears; or open his mouth, and pour quicksilver down his throat.”

Quicksilver is mercury, a poisonous metal that is a liquid at room temperature.

He added, “But yet I have a better way of killing a man than these.”

“What’s that?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Nay, you shall pardon me for not telling you,” Lightborn said. “None shall know my tricks.”

“I don’t care how you kill him, as long as it is not spied,” Young Mortimer said.

He handed Lightborn a letter and said, “Deliver this to Sir Thomas Gurney and Sir John Maltravers. At every ten miles’ end, thou will have a horse.”

A fresh horse every ten miles would enable Lightborn to ride quickly.

Young Mortimer then said, “Take this.”

He gave Lightborn a token, and then said, “Leave, and never see me anymore!”

“No?” Lightborn said, surprised.

“No,” Young Mortimer said, “unless thou bring me news of Edward II’s death.”

“That I will quickly do,” Lightborn said. “Farewell, my lord.”

Lightborn exited.

Alone, Young Mortimer said to himself, “The Prince I rule, the Queen I command, and with a lowly bow to the ground the proudest lords salute me as I pass. I seal official documents. I cancel official documents. I do whatever I want. I am feared more than loved; let me be feared, and when I frown, let me make all the court look pale from fear.”

In Chapter 17 of *The Prince*, Machiavelli states that it is much safer for a Prince to be feared than loved; however, he points out that a Prince ought to avoid being hated.

Young Mortimer continued, “I view the Prince with Aristarchus’ eyes, whose looks were as a whipping to a boy.”

Aristarchus was an ancient scholar, severe critic, and harsh schoolmaster. According to Young Mortimer, a harsh glance from Aristarchus to a young pupil was like a whipping to the pupil.

Young Mortimer continued, “They thrust upon me the Protectorship of Prince Edward — who is soon to be King Edward III — and they beg me to accept that which I desire. The Kings’ Council begs me to be Lord Protector, which is what I want.

“While at the council table, grave enough, and not unlike a ‘bashful’ — hypocritical — Puritan, first I complain of weakness, saying that the Protectorship of Prince Edward is *onus quam gravissimum*.”

The Latin means “the heaviest of burdens.”

He continued, “I do that until, being interrupted by my friends, *suscepi* that *provinciam* — or ‘I have accepted that office of government’ — as they term it. And to conclude, I am Lord Protector now.

“Now all is safe and secure: The Queen and I, Young Mortimer, shall rule the realm and the young King Edward III, and none shall rule us.

“My enemies I will plague, my friends I will promote to high office. And whatever I wish to command, who dares to check or restrain me?”

*“Maiores sum quam cui possit Fortuna nocere.”*

The Latin, from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Book 6, line 195, states, “I am too great for Lady Fortune to harm.” The quotation is ominous for Young Mortimer because in the *Metamorphoses* Niobe says it as she boasts of her seven sons and seven daughters while pointing out that the goddess Latona has only two children: Apollo and Diana. Shortly afterward, to punish Niobe’s excessive pride, Apollo and Diana kill all of Niobe’s seven sons and seven daughters.

Young Mortimer continued, “And that this should be the coronation day pleases me and Isabel the Queen.”

Prince Edward was crowned King Edward III on 1 February 1327.

Trumpets sounded, and Young Mortimer said, “The trumpets sound; I must go take my place.”

The young King Edward III, the Bishop of Canterbury, the Champion of the King, some nobles, and Queen Isabella entered the hall.

The ceremonial role of the Champion of the King was to challenge to single combat anyone who disputes the King’s right to be King.

“Long live King Edward III, by the grace of god, King of England and Lord of Ireland!” the Bishop of Canterbury said.

The Champion of the King said, “If any Christian, heathen, Turk, or Jew dares to assert that Edward III is not the true King, and will make good his saying with the sword, I am the champion who will combat him.”

“None comes,” Young Mortimer said. “Sound, trumpets!”

The trumpets sounded.

“Champion, here’s to thee,” King Edward III said.

He raised a toast to the Champion of the King.

Queen Isabella said, “Lord Mortimer, now take him to your charge.”

Her words meant two things: 1) She was telling Young Mortimer to take charge of the young King Edward III, and 2) She was telling him to pay the Champion of the People.

Young Mortimer took the gilt cup the new King had drunk out of and gave it to the Champion of the King; the cup was his pay.

Some soldiers entered the hall with the Earl of Kent as their prisoner.

“What traitor have we there guarded by soldiers with blades and bills — swords and halberds?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Edmund, the Earl of Kent,” a soldier answered.

“What has he done?” King Edward III asked.

“He would have taken King Edward II away forcibly as we were bringing him to Killingworth Castle,” the soldier said.

“Did you attempt his rescue, Edmund, Duke of Kent?” Young Mortimer said. “Speak.”

“Young Mortimer, I did,” the Earl of Kent answered. “He is our King, and thou compel this Prince to wear the crown.”

“Strike off his head!” Young Mortimer said. “He shall have martial law.”

In this case, martial law meant beheading without a trial.

“Strike off my head!” the Earl of Kent said. “Base traitor, I defy thee!”

King Edward III said to Young Mortimer, “My lord, he is my uncle, and he shall live.”

“My lord, he is your enemy, and he shall die,” Young Mortimer said.

“Stop, villains!” the Earl of Kent said.

“Sweet mother, if I cannot pardon him, beg my Lord Protector for his life,” King Edward III said.

“Son, be content,” Queen Isabella said. “I dare not speak a word.”

“Nor do I, and yet I think I should command,” King Edward III said. “But, seeing I cannot, I’ll beg for him.”

He then said to Young Mortimer, “My lord, if you will let my uncle live, I will repay it when I come of age.”

“It is for your highness’ good, and for the realm’s,” Young Mortimer said.

He then said to the guards, “How often shall I tell you to take him away from here?”

“Are thou King?” the Earl of Kent asked. “Must I die at thy command?”

“At our command,” Young Mortimer said. “Once more, soldiers, take him away.”

“Our command” could mean the command of Young Mortimer and Queen Isabella, or Young Mortimer could have been using the regal plural.

“Let me but stay and speak,” the Earl of Kent said. “I will not go. Either my brother or his son is King, and neither of them thirsts for Edmund’s blood. And therefore, soldiers, where will you drag me?”

They dragged the Earl of Kent away, and carried him to the place of execution to be beheaded.

“What safety may I look for at Young Mortimer’s hands, if my uncle shall be murdered like this?” King Edward III asked his mother, Queen Isabella.

“Fear not, sweet boy,” Queen Isabella replied. “I’ll guard thee from thy foes. Had Edmund lived, he would have sought thy death. Come, son, we’ll ride a-hunting in the park.”

King Edward III asked sarcastically, “And shall my uncle Edmund ride with us?”

“He is a traitor,” Queen Isabella said. “Don’t think about him. Come.”

They exited.

[Scene 24]

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney talked together.

“Gurney, I wonder that the King hasn’t died,” Sir John Maltravers said. “He is in a vault up to the knees in water, a vault into which the sewers of the castle run. From this vault a damp mist continually arises, which is enough to poison any man, and much more a King who was brought up so tenderly.”

“I wonder the same thing, Sir Thomas Gurney said. “I do, Maltravers. Yesternight — last night — I opened the door to throw him food, and I was almost stifled by the stink.”

“He has a body able to endure more than we can inflict on him, and therefore now let us assail his mind again for a while,” Sir John Maltravers said.

“Send for him to come out from there, and I will make him angry,” Sir Thomas Gurney said.

“But wait!” Sir John Maltravers said. “Who is this coming?”

Lightborn entered the room and said, “My Lord Protector greets you.”

He gave Sir Thomas Gurney the equivocal letter from Young Mortimer.

“What’s this?” Sir Thomas Gurney said, reading the letter. “I don’t know how to construe and interpret it.”

He handed the letter to Sir John Maltravers, who read it and said, “Gurney, it was deliberately left unpunctuated for the purpose at hand. ‘*Edwardum occidere nolite timere.*’ ‘Fear not to kill the King’: That’s his meaning.”

Lightborn showed them Young Mortimer’s token and asked, “Do you recognize this token? I must have the deposed King.”

“Yes, wait a while,” Sir John Maltravers said. “Thou shall have your answer very soon.”

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney went toward the place where the keys to the dungeon were hanging and talked quietly together so that Lightborn could not hear them.

“This villain’s sent to murder the deposed King,” Sir John Maltravers said.

“I thought as much,” Sir Thomas Gurney replied.

“And when the murder’s done, see how he must be handled for his labor,” Sir John Maltravers said.

He read quietly to Sir Thomas Gurney from Young Mortimer’s letter: ‘*Pereat iste!*’”

Translated: “Let him perish!”

They understood what the Latin means: Kill Lightborn after Lightborn had killed the deposed Edward II.

Sir John Maltravers said quietly to Sir Thomas Gurney, “Let him have the King.”



He then said out loud to Lightborn, "Of course! Here are the keys, and this is the pit where the deposed Edward II is staying. Do as you are commanded by my lord, Young Mortimer."

"I know what I must do," Lightborn said. "You two leave, yet don't be far off; I shall need your help. See that in the next room I have a fire, and get me a spit, and let it be red-hot."

"Very well," Sir John Maltravers said.

"Do you need anything besides those things?" Sir Thomas Gurney asked.

"What else?" Lightborn said, thinking. "A feather bed."

"That's all?" Sir Thomas Gurney asked.

"Yes, yes," Lightborn said. "So, when I call you, bring them in."

"Don't be afraid that we won't," Sir John Maltravers said.

"Here's a torch to take when you go into the dungeon," Sir Thomas Gurney said, giving Lightborn a torch.

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney exited.

"So, now I must go about this business," Lightborn said. "Never has there been any King as finely handled as this King shall be."

He opened the entrance to the dungeon, smelled the stench, and said, disgusted, "Foh, here's a place indeed, I say with all my heart."

In the dungeon, the deposed Edward II asked, "Who's there? What light is that? Why have thou come?"

"To comfort you and bring you joyful news," Lightborn said.

The deposed Edward II came out of the dungeon.

"Poor Edward finds small comfort in thy looks," the deposed Edward II said. "Villain, I know thou have come to murder me."

"To murder you, my most gracious lord?" Lightborn said. "Far is it from my heart to do you harm. The Queen sent me to see how you were treated, for she relents at this your misery. And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears to see a King in this most piteous state?"

"Do thou weep already?" the deposed Edward II said. "Listen a while to me, and then thy heart, even if it were as Gurney's is or as Maltravers' is, hewn from the rock of the Caucasus Mountains, yet thy heart will melt before I have finished my tale.

"This dungeon where they keep me is the cesspool wherein the filth of all the castle falls."

The toilets were above the dungeon and human waste fell into the dungeon where the deposed Edward II was kept.

"Oh, villains!" Lightborn said.

"And there in mire and puddle I have stood these ten days' time," the deposed Edward II said, "and lest I should sleep, someone plays continually upon a drum. They give me bread and

water, although I am a King. The result is that, for lack of sleep and sustenance, my mind's disturbed, and my body's numbed, and whether I have limbs or not, I don't know.

"Oh, I wish my blood had dropped out from every vein, as does this water from my tattered robes.

"Tell Isabel, the Queen, that I did not look like this, when for her sake I ran at tilt and jousted in France, and there unhorsed the Duke of Cleremont."

"Oh, speak no more, my lord; this breaks my heart," Lightborn said, bringing in the featherbed. "Lie on this bed, and rest yourself a while."

"These looks of thine can harbor nothing but death," the deposed Edward II said. "I see my tragedy and destruction written in thy brows. Yet wait a while, forbear thy bloody hand, and let me see the stroke before it comes, so that even then at the moment when I shall lose my life, my mind may be more steadfast on my God."

"Why is your highness mistrusting me like this?" Lightborn asked.

"Why are thou lying to me like this?" the deposed Edward II asked.

"These hands were never stained with innocent blood," Lightborn lied. "Nor shall they now be tainted with a King's blood."

"Forgive my thought for having such a thought," the deposed Edward II said. "I have one jewel left; receive thou this."

He gave a jewel to Lightborn; it may have been the jewel that Queen Isabella had sent him.

He continued, "Still I am afraid, and I don't know what's the cause, but every joint shakes as I give the jewel to thee. Oh, if thou harbor murder in thy heart, let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul. Know that I am a King — oh, at that name I feel a Hell of grief! Where is my crown? Gone, gone, and do I remain alive?"

Many Kings who lose their crowns end up dead quickly.

"You're exhausted from being up much too long, my lord," Lightborn said. "Lie down and rest."

"Except that grief keeps me awake, I would sleep," the deposed Edward II said. "For the past ten days, these eyelids of mine have not closed. Now as I speak they fall, and yet with fear open again. Oh, why do thou sit here?"

"If you mistrust me, I'll leave, my lord," Lightborn said.

"No, no, for if thou mean to murder me, thou will return again," the deposed Edward II said. "So therefore stay."

He slept.

"He sleeps," Lightborn said.

Waking, the deposed Edward II said, "Oh, let me not die yet. Wait! Oh, wait a while!"

"How are you now, my lord?" Lightborn asked.

“Something continually buzzes and whispers in my ears and tells me that if I sleep I will never wake,” the deposed Edward II said. “This fear is that which makes me tremble like this. Therefore, tell me: Why have thou come?”

“To rid thee of thy life,” Lightborn said.

He raised his voice and called, “Maltravers, come.”

Sir John Maltravers entered, carrying the red-hot spit.

“I am too weak and feeble to resist,” the deposed Edward II said. “Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul!”

“Run and get the table,” Lightborn said.

Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney brought in a table.

“Oh, spare me, or kill me quickly,” the deposed Edward II said.

“So, lay the table down on Edward II, and stamp on it, but not too hard, lest you bruise his body.”

They assaulted the deposed Edward II by putting the table on him, and then stamping on it and crushing him. Edward II screamed and died.

According to some chroniclers, the red-hot spit was inserted into the deposed King’s rectum, thereby cooking his insides and killing him.

“I am afraid that this cry will raise the town; therefore, let us take to horse and ride away,” Sir John Maltravers said.

“Tell me, sirs, was it not bravely and excellently done?” Lightborn asked.

“Excellently well,” Sir Thomas Gurney said. “Take this for thy reward.”

Sir Thomas Gurney stabbed Lightborn, killing him, and then he said, “Come, let us cast Lightborn’s body in the moat and take the deposed King’s body to Young Mortimer, our lord. Let’s go!”

— 5.6 —

### [Scene 25]

Young Mortimer and Sir John Maltravers talked together.

“Is it done, Maltravers, and is the murderer dead?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Yes, my good lord,” Sir John Maltravers asked. “I wish that it were undone!”

“Maltravers, if thou now grow penitent,” Young Mortimer replied, “I’ll be thy ghostly father; therefore, choose whether thou will keep this secret or else die by the hand of me, Mortimer.”

A ghostly father is 1) a priest who can listen to the confessions of sins by someone who is about to die, or 2) someone who can make a person a ghost by killing him.

“Sir Thomas Gurney has fled, my lord, and he will, I fear, betray us both; therefore, let me flee,” Sir John Maltravers said.

“Flee to the savages!” Young Mortimer said. “Flee beyond the boundaries of civilization!”

“I humbly thank your honor,” Sir John Maltravers said, and then he exited.

Alone, Young Mortimer said, “As for myself, I stand like Jove’s huge tree, the oak, and others are only shrubs compared to me. All tremble at my name, and I fear none. Let’s see who will dare to impeach me for his death!”

Queen Isabella entered the room and said, “Ah, Mortimer, the King my son has received news that his father’s dead, and that we have murdered him!”

As Sir John Maltravers had feared, Sir Thomas Gurney had talked about the murder of the deposed Edward II.

“So what if we have?” Young Mortimer said. “The King is still a child.”

Queen Isabella said, “Yes, yes, but he tears his hair, and wrings his hands, and he vows to be revenged upon us both. Into the council chamber he has gone, to ask for the aid and assistance of his peers.

“Ah, me, see where he comes, and they with him.

“Now, Mortimer, begins our tragedy and destruction.”

King Edward III entered the scene, accompanied by some lords.

“Fear not, my lord,” the first lord said. “Know that you are a King.”

“Villain!” King Edward III said to Young Mortimer.

“How are you now, my lord?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Don’t think that I am frightened by thy words,” King Edward III said. “My father’s murdered through thy treachery, and thou shall die, and on his mournful coffin thy hateful and accursed head shall lie to witness to the world that by thy means his Kingly body was too soon interred.”

“Don’t cry, sweet son,” Queen Isabella said.

“Don’t forbid me to cry,” King Edward III replied. “He was my father, and if you had loved him half as well as I, you could not bear his death calmly like this. But you, I fear, conspired with Young Mortimer.”

“Why don’t you speak to my lord the King?” the first lord asked Young Mortimer.

“Because I think it beneath me to be accused,” Young Mortimer replied. “Who is the man who dares to say I murdered him?”

“Traitor, in me my loving father speaks, and plainly says that it was thou who murdered him,” King Edward III said.

Now that King Edward II was dead, Prince Edward was truly King Edward III. He could speak with all the authority of a legitimate King.

“But has your grace no other proof than this?” Young Mortimer asked.

“Yes, if this is the handwriting of Mortimer,” King Edward III answered, displaying the equivocal letter that Young Mortimer had sent to Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney.

“False Gurney has betrayed me and himself,” Young Mortimer whispered to Queen Isabella.

She whispered back, “I feared as much; murder cannot be hidden.”

“It is my handwriting,” Young Mortimer said to King Edward III. “What do you conclude by that?”

“That thou did send a murderer to my father,” King Edward III said.

“What murderer?” Young Mortimer said. “Bring forth the man I sent.”

“Ah, Mortimer, thou know that he is slain,” King Edward III said, “and so shall thou be, too.”

He asked his attendants, “Why is he still here? Take him to a hurdle, and drag him to the place of execution. Hang him, I say, cut his body into quarters and display his quarters, and bring his head back quickly to me.”

The hurdle was a wooden frame or sled that would drag Young Mortimer to the place of execution. He would be hung, and then his body would be cut into four quarters and his head cut off.

“For my sake, sweet son, pity Mortimer!” Queen Isabella said.

“Madam, don’t beg for my life,” Young Mortimer said. “I would rather die than plead for my life to a paltry boy.”

“Hence with the traitor, with the murderer!” King Edward III ordered.

“Base Lady Fortune,” Young Mortimer said, “now I see that in thy wheel there is a point to which when men aspire, they tumble headlong down. That point I touched, and seeing there was no place to mount up higher, why should I grieve at my declining fall?”

“Farewell, fair Queen, weep not for Mortimer, who scorns the world and, as a traveller, goes to discover countries yet unknown.”

“What!” King Edward III said, angry at his orders being slowly carried out. “Do you allow the traitor to delay?”

Young Mortimer exited, guarded by the first lord.

“As thou received thy life from me, don’t spill the blood of gentle Mortimer,” Queen Isabella said to King Edward III, her son.

“This argues that you spilt my father’s blood, else you would not be begging for me to spare Mortimer,” King Edward III said.

“I spill your father’s blood?” Queen Isabella said. “No!”

“Yes, madam, you, for so the rumor runs,” King Edward III said.

“That rumor is untrue,” Queen Isabella said. “Because I love thee, this rumor has been fabricated against poor Isabel.”

“I do not think her so unnatural as to kill my father, her husband,” King Edward III said to his lords. His mother’s tears were affecting him.

“My lord, I fear it will prove to be all too true that she is involved in your father’s death,” the second lord said.

“Mother, you are suspected in his death, and therefore we commit you to the Tower of London until further investigation may be made thereof,” King Edward III said. “If you are guilty, don’t think that you will find me slack or pitiful, although I am your son.”

“Nay, you are committing me to my death, for I have lived too long when my son thinks to cut short my days,” Queen Isabella said.

“Away with her!” King Edward III ordered. “Her words cause these tears, and I shall pity her if she speaks again.”

“Shall I not mourn for my beloved lord, and with the rest accompany him to his grave?” Queen Isabella said.

Which “beloved lord” did she wish to mourn for? King Edward II? Or Young Mortimer?

“Thus, madam, it is the King’s will that you shall go from here,” the second lord said.

“He has forgotten me,” Queen Isabella said. “Wait, I am his mother.”

“Saying that will do you no good,” the second lord said. “Therefore, gentle madam, go.”

“Then come, sweet death, and rid me of this grief,” Queen Isabella said.

She exited, attended by some lords.

The first lord returned, carrying the head of Young Mortimer.

“My lord, here is the head of Mortimer,” he said.

King Edward III said, “Go fetch my father’s coffin, where Young Mortimer’s head shall lie, and bring me my funeral robes.

“Accursed head, if I could have ruled thee then, as I do now, thou had not hatched this monstrous treachery!

“Here comes the coffin. Help me to mourn, my lords.

“Sweet father, here unto thy murdered ghost I offer up this wicked traitor’s head. Let these tears, falling from my eyes, be witness of my grief and innocence.”

### **NOTA BENE (*Edward II*)**

— 2.5 —

The life dates of Piers Gaveston, 1st Earl of Cornwall, are c. 1284 – 19 June 1312.

His wife, Lady Margaret de Clare, survived him, remarried, and died on 9 April 1342 at age 48. She was born on 12 October 1293.

— 4.2 —

### [Scene 15]

This is a modern description of the game called Prisoner's Base:

#### **Prisoner's Base**

“This English game of chase and tag was banned in the 1300s by King Edward III. Before the twentieth century, the game was known as ‘Chevy Chase’ or ‘Chivy.’

“Object of the Game: The team with the most prisoners at the end of the time limit wins.

“You will need: A minimum of ten players. A stick or chalk. Large playing area.

How it was played: The group was divided in half and a line of chalk was placed down the middle between the two teams. About 20-30 feet behind each team a large square (prison) was drawn on the ground using chalk. Each team picked one person to be the prisoner of the other team (usually someone who could run fast). Then each team would try to free their prisoner by sending a team member to the prison through the opposing team to bring him/her back without being captured by a member of the opposing team. If the person attempting to rescue their own prisoner made it to the prison through the opposing team without being caught, he/she was safe while in the prison and could pick their own time to run with the prisoner back to their own side of the line. If the opposing team caught the team member, the team member also became a prisoner needing rescue. So each team was busy both trying to rescue their own prisoners and protect the prisoner(s) from the opposite side from being rescued. At the end of time, the team with the most prisoners won.”

Source: “Medieval Games and Recreation: Games Played in the Middle Ages. (Outdoor entertainment during the middle ages centered around the Village Green.)” Accessed 3 October 2018.

<http://castle.eiu.edu/reading/MEDIEVALGAMES.pdf>

Notes:

The above is lightly edited.

The letters “eiu” mean Eastern Illinois University.

— 5.5 —

### [Scene 24]

#### **Edward II's Dungeon**

According to the historian Raphael Holinshed, the deposed Edward II was kept for a while in “*a chamber over a foul filthy dungeon, full of dead carrion, trusting so to make an end of him, with the abominable stench thereof [...].*”

Note: I modernized the spelling.

Source: Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, Volume 2 (New York: AMS Press, 1965). Page 586.

Christopher Marlowe makes the deposed Edward II's lodging worse by having him live under the castle's toilets rather than above a foul dungeon. The deposed Edward II is up to his knees in sewage water.

### **Edward II's Death**

*"Whereupon when they saw that such practices would not serve their turn, they came suddenly one night into the chamber where he lay in bed fast asleep, and with heavy featherbeds or a table (as some write) being cast upon him, they kept him down and withal put into his fundament an horn, and through the same they thrust up into his body an hot spit, or (as others have) through the pipe of a trumpet, a plumber's instrument of iron made very hot, the which passing up into his entrails, and being rolled to and fro, burnt the same, but so as no appearance of any wound or hurt outwardly might be once perceived. His cry did move many within the castle and town of Berkeley to compassion, plainly hearing him utter a wailful [wailing] noise, as the tormentors were about to murder him, so that divers [many people] being awakened therewith (as they themselves confessed) prayed heartily to God to receive his soul, when they understood by his cry what the matter meant."*

Note: I modernized the spelling.

Source: Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, Volume 2 (New York: AMS Press, 1965). Page 587.



## Chapter 3: DOCTOR FAUSTUS (1604 A-TEXT)

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)

The Pope.

Cardinal of Lorraine.

Charles V, the Emperor of Germany, and Holy Roman Emperor.

Duke of Vanholt.

Duchess of Vanholt.

John Faustus, doctor of theology.

Valdes, friend to Faustus, and magician.

Cornelius, friend to Faustus, and magician.

Wagner, servant to Faustus.

Clown.

Robin, hostler at an inn. Hostlers looked after the horses of people staying at the inn.

Rafe, hostler at an inn, and friend to Robin.

Vintner.

Horse Trader.

A Knight.

An Old Man.

Scholars, Friars, and Attendants.

Lucifer.

Belzebub.

Mephastophilis.

Good Angel.

Evil Angel.

Spirits in the shapes of the Seven Deadly Sins: Pride, Covetousness, Wrath, Envy, Gluttony, Sloth, and Lechery.

Spirits in the shapes of Alexander the Great, of his Paramour, and of Helen.

Devils.

**NOTES:**

What are 2.1 and 2.3 in this retelling are in the A-text one long scene featuring Faustus and Mephistophilis. The text makes clear that this cannot be one scene because time must have passed so that famous ancient musicians would have been able to play for Faustus.

What are 2.2 and 3.2 in this retelling are in the A-text one scene featuring Robin and Rafe.

Many modern editors, following Bevington and Rasmussen (see next paragraph), use the first part of the scene featuring Robin and Rafe to break up the long scene featuring Faustus and Mephistophilis.

*Doctor Faustus A- and B- texts (1604, 1616): Christopher Marlowe and his collaborator and revisers.* Edited by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen. Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press; New York, NY, USA: Distributed by St. Martin's Press, 1993.

The name "Rafe" is often modernized to "Ralph."

Some editors think that the Clown in 1.4 is Robin.

Some editors think that Wagner is the Chorus.

The A-Text is not divided into Acts and Scenes. Some editors divide it into Acts and Scenes; some editors divide it into Scenes only.

## PROLOGUE (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)

### [Chorus 1]

The Chorus now introduces this book to the audience:

“You will not find in this book soldiers marching now in the battlefield by Lake Thrasymenus, where Mars, god of war, allied himself with the Carthaginians, whose general, Hannibal, defeated the Romans.

“You will not find in this book lovers sporting in the frivolity of love, in courts of kings where government is overturned.

“You will not find in this book the pomp of proud audacious deeds.

“No, not for these themes does our Muse — the poet and playwright Christopher Marlowe — intend to control and caress his Heavenly verse: the high style of tragedy.

“You will find in this book only this, gentlemen and ladies: We must perform the form of Faustus’ fortunes, good or bad.

“To patient judgments we appeal for our applause and speak about Faustus in his infancy.

“Now is he born, his parents base of stock, in Germany, within a town called Stadtroda. When he is of riper years, to Wittenberg — the university of Hamlet and Martin Luther — he goes, where his kinsmen chiefly bring him up.

“So quickly he profits in theology and graces the fruitful plot of intellectual pursuits that shortly he is graced with a doctorate and called Doctor, excelling all who have found sweet delight in disputes concerning Heavenly matters of theology, until his head becomes swollen with misapplied knowledge. Then he with his waxen wings mounts above his reach like Icarus flying too near the Sun, and the Heavens that melted his wings conspire his overthrow, because having fallen into a devilish exercise, and having glutted himself more with learning’s golden gifts, he surfeits upon the cursed black magic of necromancy.

“Nothing is as sweet as magic to him, magic that he prefers before his chiefest bliss — his hope of Paradise after death — and this is the man, Doctor Faustus, who is sitting in his study.”

## ACT 1 (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)

— 1.1 —

### [Scene 1]

Faustus, alone in his study, surrounded by books, said to himself, “Make a definite decision about your studies, Faustus, and begin to measure the depth of that which you will study in depth and teach.

“Having graduated, be a theologian in appearance, yet aim at the purpose of every discipline, and live and die in Aristotle’s works.

“Sweet *Analytics*, it is you who have ravished me!”

Aristotle wrote two volumes on logic: *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics*.

Faustus picked up a book and read out loud, "*Bene disserere est finis logices.*"

The book was *Dialecticae* by Petrus Ramus, a reformer and logician who was killed during the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572 in Paris. The Latin means, "The end — the purpose — of logic is to dispute well."

Faustus continued, "Is logic's chiefest end to dispute well? Doesn't this discipline have a greater miracle? Then read no more, for you have attained the end: You know how to dispute well.

"A greater subject will suit Faustus' intelligence.

"Bid *on kai me on* farewell, and bid Galen welcome, seeing *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus.*"

"*On kai me on*" is a transliteration of Greek words meaning "being and non-being" or "existence and non-existence." The words come from a book by the philosopher Georgias of Leontini (c. 483-376 B.C.E.).

Galen was a famous ancient physician and writer of influential books about medicine.

"*Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus*" means "Where the philosopher stops, the doctor begins." The quotation comes from Aristotle's *De Sensu et Sensibili*, a book about sense perception.

By saying farewell to *on kai me on*, Faustus meant that he had mastered philosophy.

Faustus continued, "Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold, and become eternally famous for some wondrous cure: *Summum bonum medicinae sanitas*. Let me translate: 'The end of the medical discipline is our body's health.'"

Faustus' translation into English of a Latin translation of Aristotle's Greek *Nicomachian Ethics* was not entirely correct. The Latin mentions "health," which can include mental health as well as bodily health. Faustus' translation mentions only bodily health.

Faustus continued, "Why, Faustus, haven't you attained that end? Isn't your common talk sound aphorisms?"

"Sound aphorisms" are "well-thought-out medical maxims." The ancient physician Hippocrates wrote a book titled *Aphorisms* about the discipline of medicine.

Faustus continued, "Are not your prescriptions hung up as commemorations, whereby whole cities have escaped the plague and a thousand desperate maladies been eased?"

"Yet you are still only Faustus, and a man. If you would be able to make men to live eternally, or if they were dead, raise them to life again, then medicine would be a discipline to be esteemed.

"Medicine, farewell! Where is Justinian?"

Justinian was a Roman Emperor who codified Roman law.

Finding the Justinian book, Faustus read out loud:

"*Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem, rei, etc.*"

This means, “If one and the same thing is willed to two men, then one man will get the thing, and the other will get the value of the thing, etc.”

Faustus said, “A pretty case of paltry legacies!”

He then read out loud:

*“Exhereditare filium non potest pater, nisi, etc.”*

This means, “The father may not disinherit the son, unless, etc.”

Faustus continued, “Such is the subject of the institute and universal body of the Church.”

Much canon law was based on Justinian’s codification of Roman law.

Faustus continued, “The study of Justinian befits a mercenary drudge who aims at nothing but external trash; it is too servile and illiberal for me.”

“External trash” is money and possessions.

Faustus continued, “When all is said and done, theology is best: Jerome’s Bible. Faustus, view it well.”

Saint Jerome translated the Bible into Latin; his translation is known as the Vulgate Bible.

Faustus read out loud:

*“Stipendium peccati mors est.”*

This means, “The wages of sin is death.”

Romans 6:23 states, “*For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus had translated only part of the verse, leaving out the part about the gift and mercy of God.

Faustus said, “Ha! ‘*Stipendium,*’ etc. The reward of sin is death: that’s hard.”

He then read out loud:

*“Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas.”*

The Latin passage is 1 John 1:8; Faustus did not read 1 John 1:9.

1 John 1:8-9 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and truth is not in us.*

*If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Again, Faustus had left out the part about God’s mercy.

Faustus continued, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there’s no truth in us. Why, then, in all likelihood we must sin, and so we must consequently die. Aye, we must die an everlasting death.”

The sound “Aye” has two applicable meanings: 1) Yes, and 2) I.

Faustus continued, “What doctrine do you call this? ‘*Che sera, sera.*’ Translation: ‘What will be, shall be.’

“Theology, adieu!”

He then looked at several large volumes in his study and said, “The metaphysics and occult knowledge of magicians are Heavenly, and these necromantic books are Heavenly.”

Necromancy is the discipline of communicating with the dead.

Faustus continued, “Here are the lines, circles, signs, letters, and characters used in black magic.

“Yes, these are those things that Faustus most desires. Oh, what a world of profit and delight, of power, of honor, of omnipotence, is promised to the studious artisan who practices the occult!

“All things that move between the quiet poles of the universe shall be at my command. Emperors and kings are obeyed only in their separate provinces, and they cannot raise the wind or rend the clouds, but the dominion of the man who excels in this black magic stretches as far as does the mind of man. A sound magician is a mighty god. Here, Faustus, test your brains and try to gain a deity.”

He then called his servant: “Wagner.”

Wagner entered the study.

Faustus ordered, “Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends, the German Valdes and Cornelius; request earnestly that they visit me.”

“I will, sir,” Wagner said.

He exited.

Faustus said, “Their conversation will be a greater help to me than all my labors, plod I never so fast.”

Faustus wanted an easy route to knowledge.

A Good Angel and an Evil Angel entered Faustus’ study.

The Good Angel pleaded, “Oh, Faustus, lay your damned book of black magic aside, and don’t gaze on it, lest it tempt your soul, and heap God’s heavy wrath upon your head! Read, read the Scriptures — that book you are holding is blasphemy.”

The Evil Angel said, “Go forward, Faustus, in that famous discipline in which all Nature’s treasure is contained. Be on Earth as Jove is in the sky — be the lord and commander of the four elements: earth, air, water, and fire.”

Jove is Jupiter, the chief Roman god who is king of the gods.

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel exited.

Faustus said to himself, “How I am glutted with the idea and conceit of this! Shall I make evil spirits fetch me what I please, resolve me of all ambiguities and answer all my questions, and perform whatever desperate enterprise I want them to perform?”

The word “desperate” means dangerous, but includes the idea of despair. Christian despair is lack of belief in Christian salvation.

Faustus continued, “I’ll have them fly to India for gold, ransack the ocean for lustrous pearls, and search all the corners of the newfound world — America — for pleasant fruits and Princely delicacies. I’ll have them teach me strange philosophy and tell me the secrets of all foreign kings. I’ll have them surround all Germany with brass walls and make the swift Rhine River circle fair Wittenberg. I’ll have them fill the universities with silk, with which the students shall be splendidly clad. I’ll levy soldiers with the money they bring me and chase the Prince of Parma from our land, and reign as sole king of all our provinces.”

The Prince of Parma was the Spanish governor-general of the United Provinces of the Netherlands.

Faustus continued, “Yes, more ingenious weapons for the assault of war than was the fiery keel at Antwerp’s bridge, I’ll make my servile spirits invent.”

While besieging Antwerp, the Prince of Parma built a bridge across the Scheldt River. The defenders of Antwerp used a fireboat to destroy the bridge.

“Come, German Valdes and Cornelius, and make me blest with your sage conversation.”

Valdes and Cornelius entered Faustus’ study.

Faustus said, “Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius, know that your words have won me at last to practice magic and the concealed occult arts. Yet not your words only, but my own imagination that will think about nothing else, for my head ruminates only on the necromantic skill.

“Philosophy is odious and obscure. Both law and medicine are for people with petty intelligence. Divinity is the basest of these three groups: It is unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile.

“It is magic, magic, that has ravished me.

“So then, gentle friends, aid me in this endeavor, and I, who with concise, short, direct, and logical syllogisms have confounded the pastors of the German church, and made the flowering pride — the best students — of Wittenberg swarm to my discussions of theological problems, as the infernal spirits swarmed to the sweet poet Musaeus when he came to Hell, will be as cunning as the magician Cornelius Agrippa was, whose shadows — the spirits he raised — made all Europe honor him.”

Musaeus appears in Virgil’s *Aeneid*, where he is greatly respected in Elysium, the part of Hell where the good souls go.

Valdes said, “Faustus, these books, your intelligence, and our experience shall make all nations canonize us. As the dark-skinned Native Americans obey their Spanish lords, so shall the spirits we raise in bodily form be always serviceable to us three.

“They in the form of lions shall guard us when we please. Or in the form of German cavalymen with their horsemen’s lances. Or in the form of Lapland giants, trotting by our sides. Sometimes the spirits will assume the form of women, or unwedded maidens, encompassing in their airy brows more beauty than have the white breasts of Venus, the Queen of Love.

“From Venice they shall drag huge argosies — mercantile ships, and from America they shall drag the golden fleece — the piles of gold and treasure — that yearly stuffs old King Philip II of Spain’s treasury.

“Yes, all this will happen — if learned Faustus will be resolute.”

To get devils to obey your will required payment: one’s soul. If Faustus were resolute and bargained away his soul, then he, Valdes, and Cornelius, could benefit. Apparently, Valdes and Cornelius lacked this kind of resolution.

Faustus replied, “Valdes, I am as resolute in this as you are resolute to live; therefore, make no objections.”

Cornelius said, “The miracles that magic will perform will make you vow to study nothing else. He who is well schooled in astrology, enriched with knowledge of various languages, and knowledgeable about the properties of minerals has all the principal knowledge that magic requires.

“So then, don’t doubt, Faustus, that you will be renowned, and more sought out for your knowledge of this mystery than heretofore the Delphic oracle has been.”

An oracle is a priest or priestess who is able to foretell the future. The oracle at Delphi was renowned in ancient times.

Cornelius continued, “The spirits tell me they can dry the sea and fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks. Yes, they can fetch all the wealth that our forefathers hid within the massive entrails of the earth.

“With that in mind, tell me then, Faustus, what shall we three lack?”

“We shall lack nothing, Cornelius,” Faustus said. “Oh, this cheers my soul! Come, show me some magical demonstrations, so that I may conjure in some pleasant grove, and fully possess these joys.”

Valdes replied, “Then hasten to some solitary grove, and carry there wise Bacon’s and Abanus’ works, the Hebrew Psalter and New Testament, and whatever else is requisite that we shall inform you about before our conversation ceases.”

Roger Bacon and Pietro d’Abano were thought to be great magicians.

The Psalms and the beginning of John’s Gospel were used in conjuring.

Cornelius said, “Valdes, first let him know the words of art, and then, after he has learned all the other ceremonies, Faustus may try his cunning by himself.”

Valdes said to Faustus, “First I’ll instruct you in the rudiments, and then you will be more perfect in conjuring than I am.”



This sounds as if Valdes did not know more than the rudiments.

Faustus said, "Come and dine with me, and after we eat, we'll explore every detail of conjuring, for before I sleep, I'll try and see what I can do. This night I'll conjure, although I may die for it."

They went into the dining room.

— 1.2 —

[Scene 2]

Two scholars arrived to visit Faustus.

The first scholar said, "I wonder what's become of Faustus, who was accustomed to make our schools ring with '*sic probo*.'"

"*Sic probo*" is Latin for "Thus I prove it." Faustus used to engage in much debate in the university.

The second scholar said, "We shall learn what has become of him, for look, here comes his servant."

Wagner, Faustus' servant, arrived. He was carrying wine.

"Oh, sirrah!" the first scholar said. "Where's your master?"

The word "sirrah" was used to address a man of lower social status than the speaker.

Wagner replied, "God in Heaven knows."

Usually, this means, "*Only* God in Heaven knows."

The second scholar asked, "Why, don't you know?"

"Yes, I know," Wagner said, "but that does not follow."

He meant that from "God in Heaven knows," it did not follow that he, Wagner, did know.

The first scholar said impatiently, "Come on, sirrah! Stop your jesting, and tell us where Faustus is."

Wagner said, "My knowing where Faustus is does not follow necessarily by force of argument, as you, who have one degree and a license to pursue a higher degree, should understand; therefore, acknowledge your error, and be attentive."

Wagner meant that since his knowing Faustus' whereabouts had not been logically established, it did not logically follow that the first scholar could demand that Wagner tell him where Faustus is.

The second scholar asked, "Why, didn't you say you knew where Faustus is?"

"Have you any witness to it?" Wagner asked.

The first scholar said, "Yes, sirrah, he has. I heard you."

Wagner replied, "Ask my friend if I am a thief."

Friends will stick up for one another, and so according to Wagner, the first scholar's backing up the second scholar means little.

The second scholar asked, "Well, won't you tell us?"

"Yes, sir, I will tell you," Wagner replied, "yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question, for is not he *corpus naturale*? And is not that *mobile*? Then why therefore should you ask me such a question?"

A "*corpus naturale*" is a "natural body," and natural bodies are "*mobile*," or capable of movement and change. As a natural body, Faustus was capable of moving and so could be anywhere, according to Wagner.

Wagner continued, "But except that I am by nature calm, slow to wrath, and prone to lechery — oops, I meant to say, prone to love — it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged at the next court sessions."

The deed being executed at this time was eating heartily. This execution was taking place in the dining room, where Faustus and his two guests were planning the execution of a deed of black magic. However, people convicted of using black magic could undergo another kind of execution. Wagner may have thought that the two scholars wanted to engage in black magic just like Valdes and Cornelius did.

Wagner continued, "Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a Precisian — a Puritan — and I will begin to speak like one:

"Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine I am holding, if it could speak, would inform your worships, and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren!"

Wagner exited to take the wine to Faustus and his two guests.

The first scholar said, "Then I fear that Faustus has fallen into that damned art for which Valdes and Cornelius are infamous throughout the world."

The second scholar said, "Even if Faustus were a stranger, and not allied in friendship to me, I still would grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector — the head of the university — and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim Faustus."

"Oh, but I fear nothing can reclaim him!" the first scholar said.

"Yet let us try and see what we can do," the second scholar said.

— 1.3 —

### [Scene 3]

Faustus was ready to conjure.

He said, "Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth, longing to view Orion's drizzling look, leaps from the Antarctic world to the sky, and dims the sky with her pitchy breath, Faustus, begin your incantations."

It was nighttime. According to Faustus, night was simply the time when the northern hemisphere was in the shadow of the Earth. The Sun would set in the West and go to the southern hemisphere (from the perspective of someone fairly high in the northern hemisphere), where it would shine and put the northern hemisphere in shadow.

The constellation Orion was associated with storms, and so Faustus called it “drizzling.”

Faustus continued, “Begin your incantations and test whether devils will obey your commands, seeing that you have prayed and sacrificed to them.”

He was standing in a circle, which was thought to protect the magician from the evil spirits he called up.

Faustus continued, “Within this circle is Jehovah’s name, forward and backward anagrammatized, the breviated names of holy saints, figures of every adjunct to the Heavens, and characters of signs and wandering planets, by which the spirits are forced to rise.”

Magicians would take the name “Jehovah” and make anagrams of it. They would also use such things as the signs of the Zodiac in their conjurations.

He continued, “So then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute, and try the uttermost magic can perform.”

He then said these Latin words:

*“Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovahae! Ignei, aerii, aquatici spiritus, salvete! Orientis Princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephastophilis.*

*“Quod tu moraris.*

*“Per Jehovaham, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephastophilis!”*

Translated, the Latin passage means this:

*“May the gods of Acheron be favorable to me! Farewell to the threefold spirit of Jehovah — the Trinity! Welcome, you spirits of fire, air, and water! Prince of the East; Belzebub, monarch of burning Hell; and Demogorgon, we ask that Mephastophilis may appear and rise.*

*“Why do you delay?”*

*“By Jehovah, Hell, and the holy water that I now sprinkle, and by the sign of the cross that now I make, and by our vows may Mephastophilis himself now rise, compelled to serve us.”*

The Prince of the East is Lucifer; Belzebub is a fallen Angel; Demogorgon is a deity of the underworld.

Faustus referred to only three of the four elements. Apparently one element is associated with each of the three demons he called upon. Lucifer is associated with air, and Belzebub with fire, leaving water for Demogorgon. The fourth element — earth — may be associated with Mephastophilis.

Acheron is a river in Hell.

Gehenna is a name for the destination of the wicked: Hell.

To gain the favor of the demons of Hell, Faustus rejected Jehovah.

Mephistophilis arrived; he was ugly.

Seeing him, Faustus ordered, "I order thee to return, and change thy shape. Thou art too ugly to attend on me."

He was using the words "thee," "thy," and "thou," words that a master would use to refer to a servant.

He continued, "Go and return in the form of an old Franciscan friar. That holy shape becomes a devil best."

Mephistophilis exited.

Faustus said, "I see there's virtue in my Heavenly words."

By "virtue," he meant "power," not "moral virtue."

He continued, "Who would not be proficient in this art? How pliant is this Mephistophilis; he is full of obedience and humility! Such is the force of magic and my spells. Faustus, you are a conjuror laureate, a conjuror who deserves the laurel of excellence, because you can command great Mephistophilis.

*"Quin redis Mephistophilis fratris imagine?"*

The Latin means, "Mephistophilis, why don't you return in the form of a Franciscan friar?"

Mephistophilis returned in the form of a Franciscan friar and asked, "Now, Faustus, what would you have me do?"

Mephistophilis' question is the same question that Saul (later Saint Paul) asked the risen Jesus in Acts 9:6: *"He then both trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou that I do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou shalt do"* (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus answered, "I order you to wait upon me while I live, to do whatever I, Faustus, shall command, be it to make the Moon drop from her sphere, or the ocean to overwhelm the world."

Mephistophilis said, "I am a servant to great Lucifer, and I may not follow you without his permission. No more than he commands must we perform."

Faustus had believed that he was Mephistophilis' master, but Mephistophilis told him straight-out that he follows Lucifer's orders.

Faustus now began asking questions to gain information: "Didn't Lucifer command you to appear to me?"

Mephistophilis answered, "No, I came here of my own accord."

Faustus asked, "Didn't my conjuring speeches raise you? Speak."

Mephistophilis answered, "That was the cause, but yet *per accidens*."

Yes, Mephistophilis had come to Faustus because of Faustus' conjuring, but not for the reason that Faustus supposed. Faustus thought that Mephistophilis had been forced to come to him because of Faustus' power as a conjuror, but as Mephistophilis will explain, he had come because he saw an opportunity to get Faustus' soul.

Mephistophilis continued, "For, when we hear one rack the name of God, as you did through rearranging the letters of His name, and when we hear him abjure the Scriptures and his Savior Christ, we fly in hope to get his glorious soul.

"Nor will we come, unless he use such means whereby he is in danger to be damned. Therefore, the shortest way for successful conjuring is to arrogantly abjure the Trinity, and devoutly pray to the Prince of Hell."

Faustus replied, "So Faustus has already done, and he believes this principle: There is no chief but only Belzebub, to whom Faustus does dedicate himself. This word 'damnation' does not terrify him, for he confounds Hell in Elysium. May his ghost be with the old philosophers!"

Faustus did not fear the damnation of Hell with all its tortures because he regarded the afterlife as being in Elysium, where the good pagans went and enjoyed lives much like the lives they had lived on Earth. At the end of Plato's *Apology*, Socrates, who has been condemned to die, says that he does not fear death because what follows death must be one of two things: 1) a long dreamless sleep, or 2) a life like this one, but one in which Socrates can seek out and converse with great people such as Homer, creator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, who have died before him. Faustus did not believe in the Christian Hell in which unrepentant sinners are tortured.

One meaning of "confound" is "smash." Faustus was saying that he was smashing the idea of Hell as a place of torture, and that Hell is actually a rather nice place, as is Elysium. However, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a then-current meaning of "confound" is this: "To mix up in idea, erroneously regard or treat as identical, fail to distinguish." Faustus was failing to distinguish between the Christian Inferno and the pagan Elysium. In Dante's *Inferno*, the good pagans go to Limbo, which is a place of sighs, not screams. The other circles of Hell are places of tortures.

Faustus continued, "But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls, tell me who is that Lucifer, your lord?"

Faustus also deviated from Christian theology in believing that his soul was only a vain trifle.

"Lucifer is arch-regent and commander of all spirits," Mephistophilis replied.

"Wasn't Lucifer an Angel once?"

"Yes, Faustus, and he was most dearly loved by God."

"How comes it, then, that he is the Prince of Devils?"

"Oh, because of his aspiring pride and insolence, for which God threw him from the face of Heaven."

Isaiah 14:12-15 (1599 Geneva Bible) tells us this about Lucifer:

12 *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning? and cut down to the ground, which didst cast lots upon the nations?*

13 *Yet thou saidest in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my throne above beside the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the North.*

14 *I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the most high.*

15 *But thou shalt be brought down to the grave, to the side of the pit.*

Faustus is another being with “aspiring pride and insolence.”

“And what are you who live with Lucifer?” Faustus asked.

“We are unhappy spirits who fell with Lucifer, conspired against our God with Lucifer, and are forever damned with Lucifer.”

“Where are you damned?”

“In Hell.”

“How comes it, then, that you are out of Hell?”

“Why, this is Hell, nor am I out of it,” Mephistophilis replied. “Do you think that I, who saw the face of God and tasted the eternal joys of Heaven, am not tormented with ten thousand Hells in being deprived of everlasting bliss?”

Saint John Chrysostom had written “*si decem mille gehennas quis dixerit, nihil tale est quale ab illa beata visione excidere.*”

The Latin means that knowing that one will never enjoy the everlasting bliss of the presence of God is worse than suffering ten thousand Hells.

Mephistophilis said, “Oh, Faustus, stop asking these frivolous questions, which strike a terror to my fainting soul!”

Such questions are not frivolous; frivolous questions do not strike terror in one’s fainting soul.

“Is great Mephistophilis so strongly emotional because he has been deprived of the joys of Heaven?” Faustus said scornfully. “Learn from Faustus manly fortitude, and scorn those joys you never shall possess.

“Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer. Seeing Faustus has incurred eternal death by desperate thoughts against Jove’s deity, say that he surrenders up to Lucifer his soul, provided that Lucifer will let him live in all voluptuousness for twenty-four years, with you to serve me always during that time, to give me whatsoever I shall ask, to answer any question whatsoever I ask you, to slay my enemies and aid my friends, and to always be obedient to my will.”

Faustus was calling God “Jove” — a name for the pagan god Jupiter, king of the gods. “Jove’s deity” means “Jupiter’s divine nature.”

Faustus continued, “Go and return to mighty Lucifer, and meet me in my study at midnight, and then inform me what your master’s answer is.”

Mephistophilis replied, “I will, Faustus.”

He exited.

Alone, Faustus said to himself, “If I had as many souls as there are stars, I’d give them all for Mephistophilis. With his help I’ll be great Emperor of the World, and make a bridge through the moving air in order to cross the ocean with a band of men. I’ll join the hills that enclose the African shore and join that land to Spain, closing the Strait of Gibraltar, and make both lands subject to my crown. The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V shall not live except with my permission, nor will any potentate of Germany.

“Now that I have obtained what I want, I’ll spend my time in contemplation of this art until Mephistophilis returns again.”

— 1.4 —

[Scene 4]

Wagner and the Clown talked together.

Wagner ordered, “Sirrah boy, come here.”

The word “boy” meant “servant.”

The Clown said, “Do you call me ‘boy’? By God’s wounds, ‘boy’! I hope you have seen many boys with such pickadevaunts as I have. ‘Boy,’ did you say?”

A pickadevaunt is a pointed beard.

“Tell me, sirrah,” Wagner asked, “have you any comings in?”

By “comings in,” Wagner meant “income.”

“Yes,” the Clown replied, “and goings out, too, as you may see.”

He thrust his hand through a hole in his ragged clothing.

“Alas, the poor fellow,” Wagner said to you the reader. “See how poverty jests in his nakedness. The villain is bare, and out of a job, and so hungry that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, even if it were blood raw.”

“What!” the Clown said. “Sell my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton even if it were blood raw? That is not so, good friend. By the Virgin Mary, I must have it well roasted, and with a good sauce, if I pay so dearly for it.”

“Well, will you serve me?” Wagner asked. “If you do, I’ll make you go like *Qui mihi discipulus*.”

“*Qui mihi discipulus*” is Latin for “one who is my pupil.”

“How, in verse?” the Clown asked.

“No, sirrah, in beaten silk and stavesacre,” Wagner said.

Silk is an expensive fabric. “Beaten silk” is embroidered silk: Expensive metals such as gold and silver could be beaten with a hammer into silk clothing to form a metal embroidery. Of course, such clothing would be only for the very wealthy. As you may expect, Wagner was obliquely saying that he would beat the Clown if the Clown were his apprentice.

Stavesacre is a lotion made from certain kinds of seeds; it is used to kill vermin such as lice. Wagner was saying the Clown was infested with lice; he also was obliquely saying that he would beat the Clown. A stave is a staff that can be used to give aches, so it is a stave-ache-er.

“What!” the Clown said, addressing you the reader. “What! Knave’s acre? Yes, I thought that was all the land his father left him.”

The Clown then said to Wagner, “Listen to me, I would be sorry to rob you of your living.”

Wagner replied, “Sirrah, I say I will pay you in stavesacre.”

“Oh, ho! Oh, ho! Stavesacre,” the Clown said. “Why then, it is likely that, if I were your apprentice, I would be full of vermin. Anyone who inherits only an acre will have lice-infested servants due to lack of money for hiring good servants.”

“So you shall be, whether you work for me, or not, but sirrah, stop your jesting, and bind yourself immediately to me as an apprentice for seven years, or I’ll turn all the lice about you into familiars, and they shall tear you in pieces.”

Witches, who could be male or female, had familiar spirits that would obey their commands.

“Listen, sir,” the Clown said. “You may save yourself that labor; you need not worry about lice tearing me into pieces. They are too familiar with me already. By God’s wounds, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for my meat and drink.”

The lice were already biting him and drinking his blood; it was as if they had bought a meal and a waiter had served them the Clown.

“Well, do you hear me, sirrah?” Wagner said. “Wait, take these guilders.”

The guilders were coins paid to a new apprentice to seal the bargain.

Guilders are Dutch gold and silver coins, but Wagner actually wanted to pay the Clown with French crowns, coins that at the time were usually counterfeit or debased. English citizens were legally encouraged to make holes in French crowns as a way to show their lack of worth. The French crowns Wagner wanted to give the Clown had holes and resembled gridirons. A gridiron is a grill used for cooking over a fire; it has holes for the fat to drip through.

“Gridirons,” the Clown said, taking and looking at the coins. “What are they?”

“Why, French crowns,” Wagner replied.

“By the Mass, but for the name of French crowns a man would be as well off to have as many English counters, and what would I do with these?”

English counters were tokens used in small financial transactions; they had no intrinsic value of the kind gold and silver coins did. The only reason to prefer French crowns to English counters was that “crowns” sounds fancier than “counters” — a counter is a prison, especially a prison for debtors.

“Why, now, sirrah, you are at an hour’s warning whensoever or wheresoever the devil shall fetch you,” Wagner said.

Part of Revelation 18:10 states that “*in one hour is thy judgment come*” (1599 Geneva Bible).



The Clown said, “No, no, take your gridirons again.”

“Truly, I don’t want them,” Wagner said.

“Truly, but you shall take them,” the Clown said.

“Bear witness I gave them to him,” Wagner said to you the reader.

“Bear witness I give them to you again,” the Clown said to Wagner.

“Well, I will cause two devils to immediately fetch you away,” Wagner said. He called, “Baliol and Belcher!”

“Let your Balio and your Belcher come here, and I’ll so knock them about and so beat them that they were never so knocked about since they were devils,” the Clown said. “Let’s say that I kill one of them. What would folks say? They would say, ‘Do you see yonder splendid fellow in the baggy pants? He has killed the devil.’ And so I would be called ‘kill-devil’ all the parish over.”

A “kill-devil” is a man who is reckless and daring.

The two devils arrived, frightening the Clown.

Wagner ordered, “Baliol and Belcher — spirits, go away!”

The spirits exited.

“Are they gone?” the Clown said. “A vengeance on them. They have long vile nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil. I’ll tell you how you should know them: All he-devils have horns, and all she-devils have clefts and cloven feet.”

Not all the horns of horny he-devils grow on their head. The clefts of she-devils are also known as vulvas.

“Well, sirrah, follow me,” Wagner said.

“But listen to me,” the Clown said. “If I serve you and become your apprentice, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?”

“I will teach you to turn yourself into anything,” Wagner said. “I will teach you to turn yourself into a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or anything.”

“What!” the Clown said. “Turn a Christian fellow into a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat?”

These are downward transformations; something good is transformed into something worse.

“No, no, sir,” the Clown added, “if you turn me into anything, let it be in the likeness of a pretty frisking flea, so that I may be here and there and everywhere. Oh, I’ll tickle the pretty wench’s plackets, I’ll be among them, in faith.”

Comic songs of the time celebrated the flea’s freedom of movement anywhere on the body of a pretty young woman.

A placket was an opening in a woman’s petticoat; metaphorically, it was a certain opening in a woman’s body.

“Well, sirrah, come,” Wagner said.

“But, listen to me, Wagner —” the Clown began.

Wagner called, “Baliol and Belcher!”

“Oh, Lord!” the Clown said. “Please, sir, let Banio and Belcher go and sleep.”

“Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let your left eye be diametrically fixed upon my right heel, with *quasi vestigias nostrias insistere*.”

Wagner was imitating his master’s — Faustus’ — way of speaking, and so was using, or rather misusing, the “word” “diametrically.”

The Latin words — some of which were incorrect; *vestigias nostrias* ought to be *vestigiiis nostris* — mean “as if to tread in our footsteps.” Wagner was putting on airs, using the majestic plural to refer to his footsteps.

Wagner exited.

The Clown said to himself, “God forgive me. He — Wagner — speaks Dutch fustian.”

“Dutch fustian” is bombastic gibberish.

The Clown continued, “Well, I’ll follow him; I’ll serve him, that’s flat. Yes, that’s for sure.”

The Clown had agreed to serve Wagner as an apprentice in return for some lessons in magic and some debased French crowns — a bad bargain, especially after being promised guilders instead of French crowns. He also would never get the beaten silk that had been promised to him, although he would probably get the stavesacre, especially in the form of stave-ache-er. His agreement, however, had a time limit: seven years. At that time, he would again be free. In this sense, he had made a better bargain than Faustus would make.

## ACT 2 (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)

— 2.1 —

### [Scene 5]

Faustus, alone in his study, was thinking about being damned. He said these words to himself:

“Now, Faustus, you must necessarily be damned, and you cannot be saved.”

He meant that he must be damned if he were to get what he wanted: the services of Mephistophilis for twenty-four years.

He continued, “What good is it, then, to think of God or Heaven? Away with such vain fancies, and despair. Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub.”

“Now do not go backward. No, Faustus, be resolute. Why are you wavering? Oh, something sounds in my ears, saying, ‘Abjure this magic, and turn to God again!’

“Yes, and Faustus will turn to God again.”

“To God? He does not love you. The god you serve is your own appetite and desire, wherein is fixed the love of Belzebub. To him I’ll build an altar and a church, and I’ll offer to him the lukewarm blood of newborn babies.”

The lukewarm blood of newborn babies? Faustus was serious about selling his soul.

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel entered the study.

“Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art,” the Good Angel said.

Faustus said, “Contrition, prayer, repentance — what about them?”

“Oh, they are means to bring you to Heaven!” the Good Angel said.

“Rather, they are illusions, the fruits of lunacy that make foolish the men who trust them most,” the Evil Angel said.

“Sweet Faustus, think of Heaven and Heavenly things,” the Good Angel said.

“No, Faustus,” the Evil Angel said. “Think of honor and of wealth.”

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel exited.

“Think of wealth!” Faustus said. “Why, the governorship of Emden shall be mine.”

Emden was a prosperous German port.

Faustus continued, “When Mephistophilis shall stand by me, what god can hurt you, Faustus? You are safe. Have no more doubts.”

Part of Romans 8:31 states, “*If God be on our side, who can be against us?*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus continued, “Come, Mephistophilis, and bring glad tidings from great Lucifer.”

In Luke 2:10, an Angel tells shepherds the glad tidings that Christ has been born: “*Then the Angel said unto them, Be not afraid: for behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus continued, “Isn’t it midnight? Come, Mephistophilis. *Veni, veni, Mephistophile!*”

An important hymn that dates back to the ninth century is “*Veni, veni, Emmanuel*”: “O come, O come, Emmanuel.”

The word “Emmanuel” means “Messiah.”

Mephistophilis entered the study.

Faustus asked him, “Now tell me what does Lucifer, your lord, say?”

“That I shall wait on Faustus while he lives, as long as he will buy my service with his soul,” Mephistophilis replied.

“Already Faustus has hazarded that for you,” Faustus replied.

“But, Faustus, you must bequeath it solemnly, and write a deed of gift with your own blood, for great Lucifer craves that security. If you will not bequeath your soul in a deed of gift, I will

go back to Hell.”

“Wait, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good my soul will do your lord?”

Mephistophilis answered, “It will enlarge his kingdom.”

“Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?” Faustus asked.

Mephistophilis answered, “*Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.*”

The Latin means, “It is a solace to the wretched to have had companions in misery.”

This is true. No one wants to feel alone in misery; however, Mephistophilis’ words are misleading. Notice the phrase “to have had.” Hell lasts forever; it will never end.

“Do you who torture others feel any pain?” Faustus asked.

“As great as have the human souls of men,” Mephistophilis said. “But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have your soul? If you give it to me, I will be your slave, and wait on you, and give you more than you have intelligence to ask for.”

Mephistophilis would give Faustus more than Faustus has intelligence to ask for; in other words, he would give Faustus things that a man of intelligence would not ask for.

“Yes, Mephistophilis, I give my soul to you.”

“Then, Faustus, stab your arm courageously,” Mephistophilis said, “and bind your soul in a contract saying that at some certain — specific and unavoidable — day great Lucifer may claim it as his own, and then you will be as great as Lucifer.”

The word “then” in the clause “then you will be as great as Lucifer” is ambiguous.

Faustus understood it to mean “after signing his name in blood to a deed of gift of his soul to Lucifer.” After signing the document, he would have great power not available to God-fearing mortals; however, he would not have all the power of Lucifer, but rather the use of one of the subordinate devils: Mephistophilis.

But Mephistophilis meant “then” to mean “after Lucifer claimed Faustus’s soul as his own.” After that happened, Faustus would be “as great as Lucifer” — as damned as Lucifer.

Faustus would have some of Lucifer’s powers for a few years, but then he would also be in the same situation as Lucifer — separated eternally from God.

Faustus stabbed his arm and said, “Look, Mephistophilis, for love of you, I cut my arm, and with my own blood I assure that my soul belongs to great Lucifer, the chief lord and regent of perpetual night! See here the blood that trickles from my arm, and let it be propitious for my wish.”

He collected some of his blood in a dish.

“But, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said, “you must write it in manner of a deed of gift.”

“Yes, so I will,” Faustus said, beginning to write a contract, using his own blood as ink.

He stopped and said, “But, Mephistophilis, my blood congeals, and I can write no more.”

Mephistophilis said, "I'll fetch for you fire that will immediately dissolve your blood."

He exited.

Such fire is not earthly fire, as no earthly fire will turn congealed blood to liquid form.

"What might the congealing of my blood portend?" Faustus asked. "Is it unwilling I should write this deed of gift? Why doesn't it flow and stream, so that I may write afresh?"

He began to write, *Faustus gives to you his soul.*

Again, his blood congealed, and he said, "Ah, there it congealed! Why shouldn't I write this? Isn't your soul your own?"

Again he began to write, *Faustus gives to you his soul.*

Mephistophilis returned with a chafer of burning coals and said, "Here's fire; come, Faustus, set the dish of your blood on it."

Faustus did, and then he said, "So, now the blood begins to be liquid again. Now I will make an end immediately."

He began to write.

Mephistophilis said to himself, "Oh, what won't I do to obtain his soul!"

Faustus said, "*Consummatum est.* This deed of gift is ended."

"*Consummatum est*" were Jesus' last words on the cross (in the Vulgate translation), uttered just before he died: "It is completed." The giving of his life and blood was propitious for Humankind.

John 19:30 states, "*Now when Jesus had received of the vinegar, he said, It is finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus added, "And Faustus has bequeathed his soul to Lucifer. But what is this inscription on my arm? '*Homo, fuge.*' Where should I flee?"

"*Homo, fuge*" means, "Man, flee."

1 Timothy 6:11-12 states (1599 Geneva Bible):

11 "*But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.*"

12 "*Fight the good fight of faith: lay hold of eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*"

Faustus continued, "If I flee to God, he'll throw me down to Hell."

Faustus was wrong. According to Christian theology, a man (or woman) can come to Christ in the final moment of his (or her) life and be forgiven. All it takes is sincere repentance.

According to Christian theology, God is not bound by such things as deeds of gifts of one's soul. Indeed, it can be argued that not even the Bible binds God, and that people who believe

that the Bible binds God are guilty of Bibliolatry — they make the Bible into an idol. “Bibliolatry” is “Bible-idolatry” or “Bibliolatry.”

Faustus may have been thinking of predestination, a belief that some souls are damned from the beginning of time, regardless of how they use their free will. God, however, sees past, present, and future time. God may know from the beginning of time that a soul will be damned, but God can see that person making free-will choices that end up damning that person.

The deed of gift that Faustus just wrote and signed is not one that God is bound to respect. Sincere repentance would make the deed of gift void.

Faustus continued, “My senses are deceived; here’s nothing written — no, I plainly see it; here in this place is written ‘*Homo, fuge.*’ Yet Faustus shall not flee.”

Mephistophilis said to himself, “I’ll fetch him something to delight his mind.”

He exited and then returned with some devils that gave crowns and rich clothing to Faustus, danced, and then departed.

Faustus asked, “Tell me, Mephistophilis, what is the meaning of this show?”

“It has no meaning, Faustus, other than to delight your mind, and to show you what magic can perform.”

“But may I raise up spirits when I please?” Faustus asked.

“Yes, Faustus, and do greater things than that,” Mephistophilis replied.

“Then there’s enough reward for the sale of a thousand souls,” Faustus said.

He held up the deed of gift and said, “Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll, a deed of gift of body and of soul, but it is conditional — you must perform all articles prescribed between us both.”

“Faustus, I swear by Hell and Lucifer to fulfill all promises made between us!”

Faustus said, “Then hear me read them.”

He read the deed of gift out loud:

“*On these conditions following.*

“*Firstly, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance.*

“*Secondly, that Mephistophilis shall be his servant, and be at his command.*

“*Thirdly, that Mephistophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever he desires.*

“*Fourthly, that Mephistophilis shall be invisible in his chamber or house.*

“*Lastly, that Mephistophilis shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in whatsoever form or shape Faustus pleases.*

“*I, John Faustus, of Wittenberg, Doctor, by this deed of gift, do give both body and soul to Lucifer Prince of the east, and his servant Mephistophilis; and furthermore grant unto them,*

*that, after twenty-four years has expired and the above-written articles inviolate and fulfilled in full, full power to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their habitation wheresoever.*

“Signed by me, John Faustus.”

“Answer, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said. “Do you deliver this as your deed of gift?”

“Yes, take it, and may the devil give you good on it!”

“Now, Faustus, ask me whatever you will.”

“First I will question you about Hell,” Faustus said. “Tell me, where is the place that men call Hell?”

“Under the Heavens,” Mephistophilis said.

“Yes, but whereabouts?” Faustus asked.

“Within the bowels of these elements, where we are tortured and remain forever. Hell has no limits, nor is it circumscribed in one place, for where we are is Hell, and where Hell is, there must we forever be, and, to conclude, when all the world dissolves, and every creature shall be purified, all places shall be Hell that are not Heaven.”

“Come, I think Hell’s a fable,” Faustus said.

“Continue to think so,” Mephistophilis said, “until your own experience changes your mind.”

“Why, do you think, then, that Faustus shall be damned?”

“Yes, of necessity, for here’s the scroll wherein you have given your soul to Lucifer.”

“Yes, and body, too, but what of that?” Faustus said. “Do you think that Faustus is so foolish as to imagine that, after this life, there is any pain? Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives’ tales.”

“But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary,” Mephistophilis said, “for I am damned, and I am now in Hell.”

“What!” Faustus said. “Now in Hell! If this is Hell, I’ll willingly be damned here. We are walking, disputing, etc.”

“But, setting this aside, let me have a wife, the most beautiful maiden in Germany, for I am wanton and lascivious, and I cannot live without a wife.”

“A wife!” Mephistophilis said. “Please, Faustus, don’t talk about a wife.”

Marriage is a sacrament, and Mephistophilis did not want to talk about or observe sacraments.

“Sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me a wife, for I will have one.”

“Well, so you will have one? Sit there until I return. I’ll fetch you a wife in the devil’s name.”

Mephistophilis exited and returned with a devil dressed like a woman. Fireworks sounded.

“Tell me, Faustus, how do you like your wife?”

“A plague on her for a hot whore!” Faustus said.

Already, the contract Faustus and Mephistophilis had made was violated. Faustus had asked for a wife, whom Mephistophilis was supposed to give him, according to the contract, but Mephistophilis had brought him a devil dressed in women’s clothing.

“Tut, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said. “Marriage is only a ceremonial trifle. If you love and respect me, think no more about it. I’ll cull out the fairest courtesans for you, and bring them every morning to your bed. She whom your eye shall like, your heart shall have, be she as chaste as was Penelope, as wise as Saba, or as beautiful as was bright Lucifer before his fall.”

Penelope was the wife of Odysseus, who went to the Trojan War and spent twenty years away from home; during those twenty years, she stayed faithful to him.

Mephistophilis would ensure that even a woman as chaste as Penelope would sleep with Faustus. Either Mephistophilis would corrupt the woman, or Faustus would rape her.

Mephistophilis, however, said he would bring courtesans to Faustus to sleep with. Presumably, courtesans would be very willing to have sex with Faustus in return for money.

Saba is known in the Bible as the Queen of Sheba. She appears in 1 Kings 10, and she showed her wisdom by recognizing Solomon’s wisdom.

Mephistophilis gave Faustus a book and said, “Here, take this book; peruse it thoroughly.”

He pointed to various places in the book as he said, “The uttering of these lines brings gold.

“The marking of this circle on the ground brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning.

“Pronounce this thrice devoutly to yourself, and men in armor shall appear to you, ready to execute your orders.”

“Thanks, Mephistophilis,” Faustus said, “yet I would much like to have a book wherein I might see all spells and incantations so that I might raise up spirits when I please.”

“Here they are in this book,” Mephistophilis said, turning to them.

“Now I would like to have a book wherein I might see all characters and planets of the Heavens, so that I might know their motions and positions.”

“Here they are, too,” Mephistophilis said, turning to them.

“Let me have one more book, and then I have done. I want to have a book wherein I might see all plants, herbs, and trees that grow upon the earth.”

“Here they are,” Mephistophilis said, turning to them.

“Oh, you are deceived,” Faustus said.

“Tut, I promise you that this one book holds all the knowledge that you have requested.”

Earlier, Valdes and Cornelius had thought that they would rule the world with Faustus, but Faustus has quite forgotten them.



## [Scene 6]

Robin the hostler, who was holding a book in his hand, said to himself, "Oh, this is admirable! Here I have stolen one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring books, and in faith, I mean to examine some circles for my own use. Now I will make all the maidens in our parish dance at my pleasure, stark naked, before me; and so by that means I shall see more than ever I felt or saw yet."

The circles he meant were 1) conjurors' circles, and 2) vaginas.

Rafe, another hostler, showed up, calling Robin: "Robin, please, come away; there's a gentleman waiting to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made clean. He keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it; and she has set me to find you; please, come away with me."

To "have his things rubbed" meant 1) to have such things of his as a saddle polished, and 2) possibly, to have such things of his as a penis and scrotum massaged, something he presumably wanted the hostlers' mistress — female boss — to do.

"Keep out, keep out," Robin said, "or else you are blown up — you are dismembered, Rafe. Keep out, for I am setting about doing a roaring — dangerous — piece of work."

"Come, what are you doing with that book?" Rafe said. "You cannot read."

"Yes, I can read," Robin said. "My master and mistress shall find that I can read, he for his forehead, she for her private study."

Robin was planning to use the book to get his mistress — his female boss — to sleep with him. She was married, and because Robin would cuckold her husband, horns would grow on his forehead. Robin's cuckolding of her husband would occur as he made a private study of her private parts.

He continued, "She's born to bear with me, or else my art fails."

According to Robin, she was born to bear his weight during sex, and to bear his children. In doing these things, she would also have to put up with him.

"Why, Robin, what book is that?" Rafe asked.

"What book is it?" Robin said. "Why, it is the most intolerable book for conjuring that ever was invented by any brimstone devil!"

"Intolerable" was a malapropism for "remarkable."

"Can you conjure with it?" Rafe asked.

"I can do all these things easily with it," Robin said. "First, I can make you drunk with the spiced wine known as hippocras at any tavern in Europe for nothing; that's one of my conjuring works."

"Our Master Parson says that's nothing," Rafe said.

Getting Rafe drunk is nothing to be proud of; in fact, it's rather easy to do, especially when someone other than Rafe is paying for the alcohol.

“True, Rafe,” Robin said, “and what’s more, Rafe, if you have any mind to Nan Spit, our kitchen-maid, then turn her and wind her to your own use, as often as you will, and at midnight.”

Robin had no compunctions about using magic to get sex for him and his friends.

“Oh, splendid, Robin!” Rafe said. “Shall I have Nan Spit, and for my own use? On that condition I’ll feed your devil with horse-bread as long as he lives, free of cost.”

Horse-bread was made of inexpensive ingredients such as bran and beans. Horses and very poor people ate it.

“No more, sweet Rafe,” Robin said. “Let’s go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then let’s go to our conjuring in the devil’s name.”

— 2.3 —

### [Scene 7]

Faustus said, “When I behold the Heavens, then I repent, and I curse you, wicked Mephistophilis, because you have deprived me of those joys.”

Psalm 8:3-5 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*3 When I behold thine heavens, even the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,*

*4 What is man, say I, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?*

*5 For thou hast made him a little lower than God, and crowned him with glory and worship.*

The 1599 Geneva Bible includes this introductory note for Psalm 8:

*The Prophet considering the excellent liberality and Fatherly providence of God toward man, whom he made as it were a god over all his works, doth not only give great thanks, but is astonished with the admiration of the same, as one nothing able to compass such great mercies.*

“Why, Faustus, do you think that Heaven is such a glorious thing?” Mephistophilis said. “I tell you that it is not half as fair as you, or any man who breathes on earth.”

“How do you prove that?” Faustus asked.

“It was made for man; therefore, man is more excellent,” Mephistophilis said.

“If it were made for man, then it was made for me,” Faustus said. “I will renounce this magic and repent.”

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel appeared.

“Faustus, repent,” the Good Angel said. “Even now God will pity you.”

“You are a spirit,” the Evil Angel said. “God cannot pity you.”

The Evil Angel was wrong when he called Faustus a spirit, and the Evil Angel was wrong when he said, “God cannot pity you.” Faustus had asked to be a spirit in form and substance in

his deed of gift, yet he was still a man. Apparently, he had wanted to at times have some of the powers of a spirit such as Mephistophilis, such as being invisible. The word “spirit” as used by the Bad Angel and when applied to Mephistophilis means “demon,” and Faustus was still a human being and not a demon. God wants all human beings to sincerely repent their sins before they die.

Faustus asked, “Who buzzes in my ears that I am a spirit? Even if I were a devil, yet God may pity me. Yes, God will pity me, if I repent.”

The Evil Angel agreed: “Yes, but Faustus never shall repent.”

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel exited.

Faustus said, “My heart’s so hardened, I cannot repent.”

In Exodus 7:3, God says, “*But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my miracles, and my wonders in the land of Egypt*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

This certainly sounds as if Pharaoh lacked free will and that God was controlling Pharaoh’s decisions. Is that true?

No. God is the Creator of all that exists, including the universe, the laws of physics, and the laws of psychology. We are born with free will, but our freely made decisions can over time make it extremely difficult to use our free will. A person who smokes a first cigarette has the freedom to keep on smoking or to give smoking; however, if the person freely decides to keep on smoking, the person will acquire a bad habit and an addiction that make it extremely hard to quit. We even say that people become slaves to their bad habits. True, they still have free will, but their bad habits are such that to act differently requires an effort of the will that they are unwilling to make.

What is true of smoking is true of sinning. A person can become so habituated to sinning that to act virtuously requires an effort of the will that they are unwilling to make.

A free person is a person who works to acquire good habits. Is it almost impossible for a free person who habitually exercises to exercise regularly? No, because they have doing that for years. Is it almost impossible for a free person who habitually acts virtuously to act virtuously? No, because they have doing that for years. Of course, a person who habitually exercises can sometimes take a day off, and a person who habitually acts virtuously can sometimes act sinfully.

Faustus has had enough time to go a long way toward forming the habit of always acting sinfully to satisfy his desires. The more time he spends acquiring this habit, the greater the effort of the will that will be needed to act otherwise. After twenty-four years of always satisfying his sinful desires, it may be almost impossible for him to sincerely repent.

Faustus continued, “Scarcely can I name salvation, faith, or Heaven, but fearful echoes thunder in my ears, ‘Faustus, you are damned!’ Then swords, and knives, poison, guns, hangmen’s nooses, and steel swords anointed with poison are laid before me to dispatch myself. And long before this I would have slain myself, had not sweet pleasure conquered deep despair.

“Haven’t I made blind Homer sing to me about Alexander’s love and Oenone’s death?”

Alexander is Paris, Prince of Troy, who ran away with Helen of Troy, thus starting the Trojan War. Before he ran away with Helen, his paramour was the nymph Oenone. When Paris was mortally wounded, he went to Oenone, who had the power to cure him. She refused, he died, and she then committed suicide.

Homer created the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but he didn't tell the story of Oenone's death in those epics, and in hearing Homer sing about those topics, Faustus had experienced something that no one alive now has ever experienced.

Faustus continued, "And hasn't he who built the walls of Thebes with the ravishing sound of his melodious harp made music with my Mephistophilis?"

Amphion was such a skilled harpist that when he played, stones rose of their own accord and built the walls of the city of Thebes.

Faustus continued, "Why should I die, then, or basely despair! I am resolved: Faustus shall never repent.

"Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again, and argue about divine astrology and astronomy.

"Tell me, are there many Heavens above the Moon? Are all celestial bodies only one globe, as is the substance of this centric Earth?"

Mephistophilis replied, "As are the elements, such are the spheres, mutually folded in each other's orb."

According to Mephistophilis, or at least according to what he said, the planet Earth is composed of four elements. The element earth is at the center. Water covers the earth, with the continents and islands being bits of earth poking out of the water. Above the water is air. Above the air is a sphere of fire that separates the Earth from the Moon.

So the Earth is composed of parts that make up one whole. According to Mephistophilis, the same is true of the universe.

At the center of the universe is the Earth, but nine spheres surround it: the seven spheres of seven planets, the sphere of the firmament, and then the Empyrean Heaven. The firmament is where the constellations and fixed stars are embedded. (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn are called "wandering stars" or "erring stars" because they wander in the sky; the word "planet" comes from a Greek term and means "wandering star." One meaning of "err" is "wander.") Furthest away from the Earth is Heaven.

The seven planets, in order of distance from the centric Earth, are the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Yes, this culture called the Sun a planet.

Mephistophilis said, "And, Faustus, all the spheres jointly move upon one axletree, whose terminus — boundary — is termed the world's wide pole. Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter feigned — they really are stars, but they are erring stars."

Faustus asked, "But, tell me, have they all one motion, both *situ et tempore* — in direction and time?"

Mephistophilis said, "Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn — the wandering stars — jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the poles of the world, but differ in

their motion upon the poles of the zodiac.”

All the wandering stars move from the east to the west each day — think of the Sun. The wandering stars, however, have additional movements.

In his deed of gift, Faustus had required Mephistophilis to be his servant and at his command, but the contract was being violated. As Faustus’ servant, Mephistophilis should have given Faustus correct answers, but he was simply repeating the erroneous opinions of the time — things that any first-year student at a university would learn.

Mephistophilis did not even tell Faustus that the Earth is not the center of the solar system — or of the universe.

“Bah,” Faustus said. “These slender trifles Wagner can arrive to a conclusion about. Has Mephistophilis no greater skill and knowledge? Who doesn’t know about the double motion of the planets?”

“The first motion is finished in a natural day; the planet travels from east to west.

“The second takes longer. Saturn completes its second motion in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve; Mars in four; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year; the Moon in twenty-eight days.”

Mephistophilis did not bother to correct Faustus’ errors. Mars’ orbit (around the Sun, not the Earth, as Faustus thought) takes one year and eleven months (687 days), Venus’ orbit takes seven-and-a-half months (225 days), and Mercury’s orbit takes three months (88 days).

Faustus said, “Bah, these are freshmen’s suppositions. But tell me, has every sphere a dominion or *intelligentia*?”

The *intelligentia* is Angelic influence. According to one theory of the time, every sphere has an order of Angels as its dominion: Each order of Angels is associated with a Heavenly Sphere.

The following information about Angels is according to Dante’s *Paradise*:

The first Triad of Angels consists of the Seraphim, who are associated with the Primum Mobile (the First Mover, a sphere that Mephistophilis does not acknowledge); the Cherubim, who are associated with the Fixed Stars; and the Thrones, who are associated with Saturn and contemplation.

The second Triad of Angels consists of the Dominions, who are associated with Jupiter and justice; the Virtues, who are associated with Mars and courage; and the Powers, who are associated with the Sun and wisdom.

The third Triad of Angels consists of the Principalities, who are associated with Venus and love; the Archangels, who are associated with Mercury and hope; and the Angels, who are associated with the Moon and faith.

All of the orders of Angels look toward God.

Mephistophilis had no desire to talk about orders of Angels who had not fallen, so he answered Faustus’ question very briefly: “Yes.”

Faustus asked, “How many Heavens or spheres are there?”

“Nine; there are the seven planets, the firmament, and the Empyrean Heaven.”

“Well, resolve this question for me: Why don’t we have conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at consistent times, but in some years we have more and in some years less? Why don’t we have consistency in such astronomical positions and events?”

Two planets are in conjunction when they are very close together; they are in opposition when they are very far apart. Aspects are positions in between conjunction and opposition. These are things that astrologers concerned themselves about.

Mephistophilis answered, “*Per inaequalem motum respectu totius.*”

The Latin means, “Through unequal motion in respect of the whole.” In other words, the Heavenly bodies don’t move at the same speed — some are faster, and some are slower.

Faustus said sarcastically, “I am answered well.”

He was not acquiring new knowledge: The answer was one that Wagner would know.

New knowledge would have been that the Sun is at the center of the solar system and that the planets have elliptical — not circular — orbits. That knowledge would have made the observed facts fit with the correct deduced theory.

Faustus then asked, “Tell me Who made the world?”

“I will not.”

“Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.”

“Don’t try to persuade me,” Mephistophilis said, “for I will not tell you.”

Faustus said, “Villain, have I not bound you to tell me anything?”

“Yes,” Mephistophilis said, “anything that is not against our kingdom, but this is.”

The agreement stated that Mephistophilis would tell Faustus anything that he wanted to know; there were no restrictions.

Mephistophilis continued, “Think about Hell, Faustus, for you are damned.”

Faustus replied, “Think, Faustus, upon God Who made the world.”

“Remember this,” Mephistophilis said.

He meant, *Remember that you are going to Hell.*

He exited.

Faustus said, “Yes, go, accursed spirit, to ugly Hell! It is you who have damned distressed Faustus’ soul. Isn’t it too late for me to repent?”

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel entered.

“It is too late,” the Evil Angel said.

“It is never too late, if Faustus can repent,” the Good Angel said.

“If you repent, devils shall tear you in pieces,” the Evil Angel said.

“Repent, and they shall never scratch your skin,” the Good Angel said.

The Good Angel and the Evil Angel exited.

Faustus said, “Ah, Christ, my Savior, seek to save distressed Faustus’ soul!”

That help is available; to get it, one must sincerely repent one’s sins.

Lucifer, Belzebub, and Mephistophilis entered.

Lucifer said to Faustus, “Christ cannot save your soul, for He is just. There’s none but I who has interest in your soul.”

He meant that he had a business interest in Faustus’ soul; he and Faustus had made a business agreement concerning Faustus’ soul.

“Oh, who are you who looks so terrible?” Faustus asked.

“I am Lucifer, and this is my companion-Prince in Hell,” Lucifer said, pointing to Belzebub.

“Oh, Faustus, they have come to fetch away your soul!” Faustus said.

“We have come to tell you that you injure us,” Lucifer said. “You talk about Christ, contrary to your promise. You should not think about God; think of the devil, and of his dam, too.”

Lucifer was capable of punning. “Dam” meant 1) woman, and 2) damn.

“I will not speak about Christ hereafter,” Faustus promised. “Pardon me in this, and Faustus vows never to look to Heaven, never to name God, or to pray to Him. He promises to burn His Scriptures, slay His ministers, and make my spirits pull His churches down.”

“Do so, and we will highly gratify you,” Lucifer said. “Faustus, we have come from Hell to show you some entertainment. Sit down, and you shall see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their own proper shapes.”

“That sight will be as pleasing to me as Paradise was to Adam, the first day of his creation,” Faustus replied.

“Don’t talk about Paradise or about creation, but pay attention to this show. Talk about the devil, and nothing else.”

He then ordered, “Come!”

The Seven Deadly Sins arrived.

Lucifer said, “Now, Faustus, ask them about their individual names and dispositions.”

Faustus asked, “What are you, the first?”

“I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents.”

Exodus 20:12 states, “*Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be prolonged upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

By disdaining to have any parents, Pride need not honor them. Pride can also say that he is a self-made man.

Pride continued, “I am like Ovid’s flea; I can creep into every corner of a wench. Sometimes, like a wig, I sit upon her brow, or like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips. Indeed, I do — what don’t I do?”

A Latin poem incorrectly ascribed to the Roman poet Ovid was about a flea that had free access to any part of a woman’s body.

Pride continued, “But, damn, what a scent is here! I’ll not speak another word, unless the ground is perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.”

Cloth of arras is very fine fabric, so fine that it was used as a wall hanging, aka a tapestry. Only a very proud man would walk on such a fine fabric.

In Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, the title character walks on very fine fabric that his wife lays down for him.

Faustus asked, “What are you, the second?”

“I am Covetousness, begotten of an old miser, in an old leather moneybag, and if I could have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold so that I could lock you up in my good chest. Oh, my sweet gold!”

Faustus asked, “What are you, the third?”

“I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother. I leapt out of a lion’s mouth when I was scarcely half an hour old, and ever since I have run up and down the world with this pair of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight with.”

Wrath looked at you people who are reading this book and said, “I was born in Hell, and watch out, for some of you shall be my father.”

To be Wrath’s father, male readers would have to adopt Wrath.

Faustus asked, “What are you, the fourth?”

“I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife, and so I am dirty and stink. I cannot read, and therefore I wish that all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. Oh, that there would come a famine throughout the entire world, so that all others would die, and I alone would live! Then you would see how fat I would be. But must you sit, and I stand?”

Envy was envious that Faustus was sitting while Envy stood.

Envy continued, “Come down from your high perch, with a vengeance! May God get vengeance against you!”

“Go away, envious rascal!” Faustus said.

He then asked, “What are you, the fifth?”

“Who am I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny — not a damn penny! — have they left me, but only a bare amount to pay my room and board, enough for



thirty meals a day, and ten snacks — a small trifle to satisfy the appetite. Oh, I come of a royal parentage! My grandfather was a gammon of bacon — a ham. My grandmother was a hogshead of claret wine. My godfathers were Peter Pickled-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef. Oh, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well-beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer.”

A gammon of bacon is a ham.

A hogshead is a barrel that holds sixty-three gallons.

Martlemas-beef comes from cattle that are slaughtered and salted around Martlemas, which is Saint Martin’s Day: November 11.

March-beer is strong beer that is made in March.

Gluttony continued, “Now, Faustus, you have heard all my ancestry; will you invite me to supper?”

“No, I’ll see you hanged first,” Faustus said. “You will eat up all my food.”

“Then may the devil choke you!” Gluttony said.

“Choke yourself, glutton!” Faustus said.

He then asked, “What are you, the sixth?”

“I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence. Let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I’ll not speak another word for a king’s ransom.”

“What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?” Faustus asked.

“Who am I, sir? I am one who loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stock-fish; and the first letter of my name begins with Lechery.”

“Mutton” was a term used to refer to prostitutes; “stock-fish” was a term used to refer to impotent men. Lechery preferred a little sex (an inch) to lots of non-sex (an ell, or forty-five inches).

Faustus said, “Go away, to Hell, to Hell!”

The Seven Deadly Sins exited.

Of course, Lucifer had not shown Faustus the Seven Christian Virtues that are opposed to the Seven Deadly Sins.

Humility is opposed to Pride.

Charity (Generosity) is opposed to Covetousness (Greed).

Patience is opposed to Wrath.

Gratitude is opposed to Envy.

Temperance is opposed to Gluttony.

Diligence is opposed to Sloth.

Chastity is opposed to Lust. Chastity includes ethical sex — sex engaged in by a husband and a wife.

Lucifer asked, “Now, Faustus, how do you like this?”

“Oh, this feeds my soul!” Faustus said.

This was the wrong kind of feeding: entertainment rather than education.

Lucifer said, “Tut, Faustus, in Hell is all manner of delight.”

“Oh, I wish that I could see Hell, and return again — how happy would I be then!” Faustus said.

“You shall,” Lucifer said. “I will send for you at midnight.”

He gave Faustus a book and said, “In the meantime take this book; read it thoroughly, and with the knowledge you learn you shall turn yourself into whatever shape you want.”

“Great thanks, mighty Lucifer,” Faustus said. “This will I keep as chary — carefully — as I keep my life.”

Faustus may quite forget to take care of the book. After all, Faustus had said that he would take care of the book as carefully as he took care of his own life, and he had recently bargained away all his remaining years of life except for twenty-four. Another meaning of “chary” is “sorrowful.” Unless Faustus sincerely repents, he will spend eternity feeling sorrow in Hell.

“Farewell, Faustus, and think about the devil,” Lucifer said.

“Farewell, great Lucifer,” Faustus said.

Lucifer and Belzebub exited.

“Come, Mephistophilis,” Faustus said.

Faustus and Mephistophilis exited.

### **ACT 3 (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)**

— Chorus —

[Chorus 2]

Wagner appeared and said, “Learnéd Faustus, to learn the secrets of astronomy engraved in the book of Jove’s high firmament, did himself mount to scale Olympus’ top. Being seated in a chariot burning bright, drawn by the strength of yoked dragons’ necks, he now has gone to put to the test cosmography and see whether the maps of the cosmos are correct, and as I guess, he will first arrive in Rome, to see the Pope and the manner of his court, and to take part in holy Peter’s feast, that to this day is highly celebrated.”

[Scene 8]

Faustus said, “We have now, my good Mephistophilis, passed with delight the stately town of Trier, which is surrounded with airy mountain-tops, with walls of flint, and with deep-entrenched lakes, and which is not to be won by any conquering Prince.

“From Paris next, exploring the realm of France, we saw the river Maine fall into the river Rhine, whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines.

“Then we went up to Naples and rich Campania. The buildings of Naples are fair and gorgeous to the eye, the streets are straight and paved with finest brick, and the town is quartered into four similarly sized sections. There we saw the golden tomb of the learned Publius Virgilius Maro, author of the *Aeneid*, and we saw the passage he cut, an English mile in length, through a huge mass of stone, in one night’s space, with the use of magic.

“From thence we went to Venice, Padua, and the rest, in one of which a sumptuous temple stands that threatens the stars with her aspiring top.

“Thus hitherto has Faustus spent his time. But tell me now what resting place is this? Have you, as earlier I commanded you, conducted me within the walls of Rome?”

“Faustus, I have,” Mephistophilis said, “and so that we will not be unprovided, I have taken up his Holiness’ personal chamber for our use.”

“I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome,” Faustus said.

“Tut, that doesn’t matter, man,” Mephistophilis said. “We’ll be bold with his good cheer. We’ll enjoy his hospitality whether or not he wants us to.

“And now, my Faustus, so that you may perceive what Rome contains to delight you with, know that this city stands upon seven hills that provide support for the groundwork of the same. Just through the midst runs flowing Tiber River’s stream with winding banks that cut it in two parts, over which four stately bridges lean that give safe passage to each part of Rome.

“On the bridge called Ponte Angelo is erected a surpassingly strong castle, within whose walls such store of ordnance are, and large-caliber cannon framed of carved brass, as match the days within one complete year — it has 365 cannon. In addition, it has gates, and it has a high obelisk that Julius Caesar brought from Africa.”

The Sistine Chapel was not among the delights of Rome that Mephistophilis enumerated.

“Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule, of Styx, of Acheron, and the fiery lake of ever-burning Phlegethon,” Faustus said, “I swear that I long to see the monuments and layout of brightly resplendent Rome.”

Souls cross the Styx River to reach the Land of the Dead. The Acheron River is the river of woe in the Land of the Dead. The Phlegethon, which is often described as a river, is made of liquid fire.

Faustus said, “Come, therefore — let’s go.”

“No, Faustus, stay,” Mephistophilis said. “I know you’d like to see the Pope and take some part of and in holy Peter’s feast, where you shall see a troop of bald-pate — bald-headed — friars, whose *summum bonum* is in belly-cheer.”

Saint Peter’s feast day is June 29.

God is the Highest Good — the *Summum Bonum*. According to Mephistophilis, however, the highest good of these monks is a full belly.

“Well, I’m content to contrive then some entertainment, and by their folly make us merriment,” Faustus said. “So then, charm me, so that I may be invisible, to do whatever I please, unseen by anyone while I stay in Rome.”

Mephistophilis, who was invisible to everyone except Faustus and anyone else either he or Mephistophilis wanted to see him (of course, God could see him), cast a spell that made Faustus invisible, and then he said, “So, Faustus, now do whatever you will, you shall not be discerned.”

A trumpet announced the arrival of important people. The Pope and the Cardinal of Lorraine arrived to partake of the banquet. Many friars were with them.

The Pope asked, “My lord of Lorraine, will it please you to draw near me?”

The invisible Faustus said, “Fall to, and may the devil choke you, if you don’t eat your fill!”

The Pope said, “What is this? Who’s that who spoke? Friars, look around and find him.”

“Here’s nobody, if it pleases your Holiness,” the first friar said.

The Pope picked up a dish of food and said to the Cardinal of Lorraine, “My lord, here is a dainty dish that was sent to me by the Bishop of Milan.”

The invisible Faustus snatched away the dish as he said, “I thank you, sir.”

“What is this?” the Pope asked. “Who’s that who snatched the food from me? Will no man look?”

He picked up another dish of food and said to the Cardinal of Lorraine, “My lord, this dish was sent to me from the Cardinal of Florence.”

“You say the truth,” the invisible Faustus said. “I’ll take that.”

He snatched away the dish of food.

“What, again!” the Pope said. “My lord, I’ll drink to your grace.”

The invisible Faustus said as he snatched away the cup of wine, “I’ll pledge your grace.”

“My lord,” the Cardinal of Lorraine said, “it may be some ghost, newly crept out of Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.”

“It may be so,” the Pope said.

He then ordered, “Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury of this ghost to rest.”

A dirge is a requiem mass — a mass for the repose of the souls of the dead.

The Pope then said to the Cardinal of Lorraine, "Once again, my lord, fall to."

The Pope crossed himself.

"Are you crossing yourself?" the invisible Faustus said. "Well, do that trick no more, I would advise you."

The Pope crossed himself again.

"Well, there's the second time," the invisible Faustus said. "Beware the third; I give you fair warning."

The Pope crossed himself again, the invisible Faustus hit him on his ear, and the Pope, Cardinal, and friars all ran away.

"Come on, Mephistophilis," the invisible Faustus said. "What shall we do?"

"I don't know," Mephistophilis said. "We shall be cursed with bell, book, and candle."

At the end of the ritual of excommunication, the bell is rung, the Bible is closed, and the candle is snuffed out.

"What!" the invisible Faustus said. "Bell, book, and candle — candle, book, and bell — forward and backward, to curse Faustus to Hell!"

"Soon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass bray because it is Saint Peter's holiday."

Apparently, Faustus was comparing the sounds of the ritual of an excommunication performed on Saint Peter's Feast Day to the sounds of a hog, a calf, and an ass.

All of the friars returned. Previously, the Pope had instructed them to sing a dirge, which is sung for the repose of souls, but apparently the Pope was very angry at the invisible Faustus because the friars sang a curse instead of a dirge.

The Pope had wanted to be merciful to Faustus, but Faustus' actions had convinced the Pope to be not merciful.

"Come, brethren," the first friar said. "Let's go about our business with good devotion."

They sang:

*"Cursed be he who stole away his Holiness' food from the table!*

*"Maledicat Dominus!*

*"Cursed be he who struck his Holiness a blow on the face!*

*"Maledicat Dominus!*

*"Cursed be he who struck Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate [head]!*

*"Maledicat Dominus!*

*"Cursed be he who disturbs our holy 'dirge'!"*

The invisible Faustus was interfering with the friars' singing.

The friars continued singing:

*“Maledicat Dominus!*

*“Cursed be he who took away his Holiness’ wine!*

*“Maledicat Dominus!*

*“Et omnes Sancti! Amen!”*

*“Maledicat Dominus”* means “May the Lord curse him!” *“Et omnes Sancti!”* means “May all the saints also [curse him]!”

Mephistophilis and the invisible Faustus beat the friars and flung firecrackers among them, and the friars all ran away.

— 3.2 —

### [Scene 9]

Robin and Rafe talked together. Robin had a silver goblet that he had stolen from the innkeeper at whose inn they were staying. Since Robin had stolen Faustus’ conjuring book, they had come up (in a material sense) in the world.

Robin said, “Come, Rafe, didn’t I tell you, we were forever made — permanent successes — by using this Doctor Faustus’ book?”

He pointed to the silver goblet and said, *“Ecce, signum!”*

The Latin means, “Behold, the sign!” Or: “Here’s the evidence!”

Robin continued, “Here’s a good haul for horse-keepers: Our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.”

Robin meant that their horses would eat well; however, horses are supposed to eat hay. Eating too much grain can be harmful for horses; it can give them colic. Good horse-keepers feed horses grain in small amounts.

“But, Robin, here comes the vintner,” Rafe said.

A vintner is an innkeeper who sells wine.

“Hush!” Robin said. “I’ll cheat him supernaturally.”

The vintner walked over to them.

Robin said, “Drawer, I hope all is paid. May God be with you!”

A drawer was a bartender.

Robin then said, “Come, Rafe.”

They attempted to leave.

“Wait, sir,” the vintner said. “I must have a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid for from you, before you go.”

“I, a goblet, Rafe! I, a goblet!” Robin said.

Then he said to the vintner, “I scorn you, and you are but an etc. I, a goblet! Search me.”

“I mean to do so, sir, with your pardon,” the vintner said.

Robin managed to secretly pass the goblet to Rafe, and then the vintner searched him.

“What do you say now?” Robin asked the vintner.

“I must say something to your friend,” the vintner said.

He then said to Rafe, “You, sir!”

“Me, sir!” Rafe said. “Me, sir! Search your fill.”

Rafe managed to secretly pass the goblet to Robin, and then the vintner searched him.

Rafe said to the vintner, “Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.”

“Well, one of you has this goblet about you,” the vintner said.

Robin thought, *You lie, drawer; it is before me.*

He had hidden the goblet under the front of his jacket.

He then said to the vintner, “Sirrah, you, I’ll teach you to accuse honest men.”

He said to Rafe, “Stand back.”

He said to the vintner, “I’ll scour you for a goblet.”

He said to Rafe, “You had best stand back a little.”

He conjured, “I charge you in the name of Belzebub.”

He managed to secretly pass the goblet to Rafe and whispered, “Look after the goblet, Rafe.”

“What do you mean, sirrah?” the vintner asked Robin.

“I’ll tell you what I mean,” Robin said.

He read out loud from Faustus’ conjuring book, “*Sanctobulorum Periphrasticon.*”

Apparently, he was mispronouncing the unfamiliar words both here and elsewhere, but the Latin “*periphrasis*” means “a roundabout way of speaking.”

Robin said, “I’ll tickle you, vintner. Yes, I’ll beat you.”

He whispered, “Look after the goblet, Rafe.”

He read out loud from Faustus’ conjuring book, “*Polypragmos Belseborams framanto pacostiphos tostu, Mephastophilis, etc.*”

The Greek “*polypragmon*” means “busybody.”

Invisible, Mephastophilis entered and placed firecrackers on their backs, and then he exited. As the firecrackers went off, Robin, Rafe, and the vintner jumped.

The vintner said, “Oh, *nomine Domine!*”

He meant, “Oh, *nomine Domini!*” — “In the name of God!”

The vintner said, “What do you mean by this, Robin? You have no goblet.”

He was willing to give up the goblet because he was afraid.

Also frightened, Rafe said, “*Peccatum peccatorum!* Here’s your goblet, good vintner.”

“*Peccatum peccatorum!*” means “sin of sins!”

He gave the goblet to the vintner, who left.

Robin said to Mephistophilis, “*Misericordia pro nobis!*”

He meant, “*Miserere nobis!*” This means, “Have mercy on us!”

He added, “What shall I do? Good devil, forgive me now, and I’ll never rob your library anymore.”

Who else but a devil would frighten them so?

Mephistophilis, now visible, returned and said, “Monarch of Hell, under whose black survey great potentates kneel with awed fear, upon whose altars a thousand souls lie, how I am vexed with these villains’ charms! From Constantinople have I come hither only for the pleasure of these damned slaves.”

Mephistophilis and Faustus had been doing much more traveling, but Mephistophilis had come in response to Robin’s summons. As usual, he hoped to get a soul, but Mephistophilis was an important demon and Robin’s soul was not worth his time. Faustus, on the other hand, had — or used to have — great potential to do good, and gaining Faustus’ soul was worth twenty-four years of servitude.

“What!” Robin said. “From Constantinople! You have had a great journey! Will you take sixpence in your wallet to pay for your supper, and be gone?”

Mephistophilis replied, “Well, villains, for your presumption, I will transform you into an ape, and you into a dog, and so be gone!”

“What!” Robin said. “Transform me into an ape! That’s splendid. I’ll have fine entertainment with the boys. I’ll get plenty of nuts and apples.”

“And I must be a dog,” Rafe said.

Robin said, “Indeed, your head will never be out of the porridge-pot.”

Dogs are known for sneaking people’s food.



## ACT 4 (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)

— Chorus —

[Chorus 3]

The Chorus arrived and said to you, the readers, “When Faustus had with pleasure taken the view of the most splendid things and the royal courts of kings, he ceased his journey, and so returned home, where such as had borne his absence only with grief, I mean his friends and closest companions, expressed joy at his safety with kind words, and in their conversation about what happened during his journey through the world and air, they put forth questions about astronomy that Faustus answered with such learned skill that they admired and wondered at his knowledge.

“Now his fame has spread forth in every land. Among these lands is the land of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, at whose palace now Faustus is feasted among the Emperor’s noblemen.

“What he did there, in trial of his art, I leave untold; your eyes shall read what happened.”

— 4.1 —

[Scene 10]

The Emperor and Faustus talked together with a knight and attendants near them. Mephistophilis, who was invisible, was present.

“Master Doctor Faustus,” the Emperor said, “I have heard strange reports of your knowledge in the black art and how none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with you for the rare effects of magic. They say that you have a familiar spirit by whom you can accomplish whatever you wish.”

Witches were supposed to have a supernatural spirit — a familiar — that would serve them. Faustus’ familiar spirit, of course, was Mephistophilis.

The Emperor continued, “This, therefore, is my request, that you will let me see some proof of your skill, so that my eyes may be witnesses to confirm what my ears have heard reported, and here I swear to you, by the honor of my imperial crown, that whatever you do, you shall be in no ways prejudiced against or injured.”

The knight said to himself about Faustus, “Indeed, he looks ‘much’ like a conjurer.”

The knight did not believe in sorcery, and so he was sarcastically saying that Faustus looked like a conman.

Although the knight was speaking quietly to himself, Faustus heard him.

“My gracious sovereign,” Faustus said, “although I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, and quite unequal to the honor of your imperial majesty, yet because love and duty bind me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.”

When Faustus had made a gift of deed of his soul to Lucifer, he believed that he would be Emperor of the World, and that Holy Roman Emperor Charles V would not live except with

his permission, but now Faustus was servile to Charles V.

The Emperor said, “Then, Doctor Faustus, pay attention to what I shall say. As I was recently sitting solitary in my study, sundry thoughts arose about the honor of my ancestors, how they had won by prowess such exploits, got such riches, and subdued so many kingdoms. These accomplishments are such as we who do succeed, or they who shall hereafter possess our throne, shall — I am afraid — never attain to that degree of high renown and great authority.

“Among these kings is Alexander the Great, chief spectacle of the world’s pre-eminent men; the bright shining of his glorious acts lightens the world with his reflecting beams, such that when I hear even just a mention made of him, it grieves my soul that I never saw the man.

“If, therefore, you, by the cunning of your art, can raise this man from the hollow vaults below, where this famous conqueror lies entombed, and bring with him his beauteous paramour, both in their right shapes, gestures, and attire that they used to wear during their time of life, you shall both satisfy my just desire, and give me cause to praise you while I live.”

The Emperor wanted to see both Alexander the Great and his paramour, by whom he meant Roxana, one of Alexander’s wives.

Raising the dead is black magic, but the Emperor was careful to say that his desire to see Alexander the Great and his paramour was a “just desire.” The Emperor was willing to benefit from Faustus’ magic, but the Emperor did not want to risk losing his own soul.

In Canto 27 of Dante’s *Inferno*, Guido da Montefeltro was a scammer while he was alive, but in the story he tells Dante, he is scammed by Pope Boniface VIII, who tells him that if he sins by giving advice that is unethical, “Don’t worry about the fate of your soul. I am the Pope, and I have two keys. These keys will unlock the gates of Heaven. I tell you now that the sin you will commit by answering my question is forgiven.” Guido da Montefeltro does give Pope Boniface VIII unethical advice, and after Guido da Montefeltro dies, he is punished in the *Inferno*. Only God can forgive sins: God can and will forgive sins that are sincerely repented. Neither Pope Boniface VIII nor Holy Roman Emperor Charles V can forgive sins.

Faustus replied, “My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request, as far as by skill and power of my spirit I am able to perform it.”

The knight said to himself, “Indeed, you are able to perform nothing at all.”

Faustus continued, “But, if it pleases your grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those two deceased Princes, who long since have been consumed to dust.”

A “Prince” could be either a male or a female.

The knight said to himself, “Yes, indeed, Master Doctor, now there’s a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth.”

The knight was correct. By confessing his limitations, Faustus was doing the right thing. Even now, if Faustus were to sincerely repent his sins, God would forgive him for committing them.

Faustus continued, “But such spirits that can realistically resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace in that manner that they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate. I don’t doubt that this shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.”

“Go to, Master Doctor,” the Emperor said, “let me see them immediately.”

“Go to” was a mild expression of impatience. The Emperor was accustomed to being obeyed and being obeyed immediately.

“Do you hear, Master Doctor?” the knight said. “You bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor!”

The knight smirked, implying that Faustus had said that he could do this, but he was unable to do this.

“What, sir?” Faustus asked.

“Indeed, that’s as true as Diana turned me into a stag,” the knight said.

“No, sir, but when Actaeon died, he left the horns for you,” Faustus said.

Actaeon was an ancient hunter who accidentally saw the virgin goddess Diana bathing nude in a stream. She noticed him, and she punished him by turning him into a stag; he had the body of a male deer with horns, but he kept his human mind. His own dogs caught his scent and they ran him down and tore him to pieces.

Faustus was threatening to give the knight horns on his forehead. A common joke of the time was that unfaithful wives gave their husbands horns.

Faustus ordered, “Mephistophilis, be gone.”

Mephistophilis exited to recruit two spirits to impersonate Alexander the Great and Roxana.

The knight said, “If you go to conjuring, I’ll be gone.”

He exited.

Faustus said to the departing knight, “I’ll be even with you soon for interrupting me so.”

He then said to the Emperor, “Here they are, my gracious lord.”

Mephistophilis returned with spirits impersonating Alexander the Great and Roxana.

The Emperor said, “Master Doctor, I heard that this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole on her neck. How shall I know whether it is so or not?”

“Your highness may boldly go and see,” Faustus replied.

The spirits stayed in character. Alexander the Great would have been too proud to allow the Emperor to inspect Roxana, and the spirits exited before the Emperor could see whether the spirit impersonating Roxana had a mole.

The Emperor, shocked at not having his wishes respected, said, “Surely, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased Princes.”

Faustus asked, “Will it please your highness now to send for the knight who was so insulting to me here recently?”

The Emperor ordered his attendants, “One of you call him forth.”

The attendant exited and immediately returned with the knight, who now had a pair of horns on his head.

The Emperor said, "How are you now, Sir Knight! Why, I had thought you had been a bachelor, but now I see you have a wife, who not only gives you horns, but makes you wear them. Feel your head."

Knight Bachelor is the lowest order of knights.

The knight felt the horns and said to Faustus, "You damned wretch and execrable dog, bred in the hollow of some monstrous rock, how dare you thus abuse a gentleman? Villain, I say, undo what you have done!"

When Faustus had written a deed of gift of his soul to Lucifer, he had thought he would become Emperor of the World, but now this member of the lowest order of knights did not respect him.

"Oh, not so fast, sir!" Faustus said. "There's no haste, but good sir, do you remember how you crossed me during my conversation with the Emperor? I think I have gotten even with you for it."

"Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him," the Emperor said. "He has done sufficient penance."

The Emperor was now treating Faustus with more respect than he had previously.

"My gracious lord," Faustus said, "not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, has Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight. Since that is all I desire, I am content to release him from his horns."

He then said, "And, Sir Knight, hereafter speak well of scholars."

He then ordered, "Mephistophilis, transform him immediately."

Mephistophilis removed the horns.

Faustus said to the Emperor, "Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave."

"Farewell, Master Doctor," the Emperor said. "Yet, before you go, expect from me a bounteous reward."

The Emperor, knight, and attendants exited.

Faustus said, "Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course that time runs with calm and silent foot, shortening my days and my thread of vital life, calls for the payment of my late years — the years I won't live because I have bargained them away. Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us make haste to Wittenberg."

Faustus' final twenty-four years of life were coming to an end.

Mephistophilis asked, "Will you go on horseback or on foot?"

"Until I'm past this fair and pleasant green, I'll walk on foot," Faustus replied.

A horse trader, aka horse-courser, arrived and said to himself, "I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian."

Fustian is a coarse kind of cloth used to make the kind of clothing the horse trader would wear. The word "fustian" also means bombastic language.

Horse traders had much the same kind of stereotype that used-car dealers have: They will lie and cheat in order to make money.

The horse trader then said, "By the Mass, I see where he is!"

He said out loud, "May God save you, Master Doctor!"

Faustus said, "Oh, the horse trader! You are well met. It's good to see you."

"Listen, sir," the horse trader said. "I have brought you forty dollars for your horse."

"I cannot sell him for that price," Faustus said. "If you like him enough to pay fifty dollars, take him."

"Alas, sir, I have no more!" the horse trader said.

He then said to Mephistophilis, whom he thought to be Faustus' servant, as in a way he was, "Please, speak up for me."

Mephistophilis said to Faustus, "Please, let him have the horse. He is an honest fellow, and he has great expenses, and neither wife nor child."

"Well, come, give me your money," Faustus said.

The horse trader gave Faustus the money.

Faustus then said, "My boy will deliver him to you."

By "my boy," he meant his servant: Mephistophilis.

"But I must tell you one thing before you have him," Faustus said. "Don't ride him into the water, for any reason."

"Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters?" the horse trader asked.

"Drink of all waters" means "go anywhere."

"Oh, yes, he will drink of all waters," Faustus replied, "but don't ride him into the water. Ride him over hedge or ditch, or wherever you will, but not into the water."

"I understand, sir," the horse trader said.

He thought, *Now I am a made man forever. I have made a very good deal. I'll not leave my horse for forty dollars. If he had only the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living out of him: He has a buttock as slick as an eel.*

"Hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding" was a song refrain; often it referred to sex.

Apparently, the horse trader had bought a gelding, not a stallion, and he was thinking that if the horse were a stallion, he could make a lot of money using it as a stud. A slick buttock is a sign

of potency.

The horse trader said, “Well, may God be with you, sir. Your boy will deliver it to me, but listen, sir; if my horse becomes sick or ill at ease, then if I bring his urine to you, you’ll tell me what’s wrong with it?”

“Go away, you villain!” Faustus said. “What do you think I am? A horse-doctor?”

The horse trader exited.

Faustus said, “What are you, Faustus, but a man condemned to die? Your time of death draws closer to its final end. Despair drives distrust into my thoughts. I will allay these strong emotions with a quiet sleep. Tush, Christ called the thief upon the Cross, so then rest yourself, Faustus, quiet in mind.”

Faustus was comforting himself with a Biblical story of a man who was saved from damnation at the end of his life: Jesus was crucified between two thieves, one of whom asked to be remembered when Jesus came into his kingdom. Luke 23:39-43 states (1599 Geneva Bible):

*39 And one of the evildoers, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be that Christ, save thyself and us.*

*40 But the other answered, and rebuked him, saying, Fearest thou not God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?*

*41 We are indeed righteously here: for we receive things worthy of that we have done: but this man hath done nothing amiss.*

*42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom.*

*43 Then Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

Faustus fell asleep in a chair.

The horse trader returned, wet and crying.

“Damn! Damn!” he said. “Doctor Fustian, said he? By the Mass, Doctor Lopus was never such a doctor; Doctor Fustian has given me a purgation — he has purged me of forty dollars; I shall never see them anymore.”

Doctor Roderigo Lopez was executed after being convicted of plotting to poison Queen Elizabeth I. The horse trader had gotten the name wrong.

The horse trader continued, “But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he told me I should ride the horse into no water, but because I thought my horse had some rare quality that Doctor Fustian would not have me know about, I, like a venturesome youth, rode him into the deep pond at the town’s end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bundle of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I’ll seek out my doctor, and have my forty dollars again, or I’ll make it the dearest horse!”

He was making a threat — he would make the horse very expensive for Faustus unless Faustus gave back his forty dollars.

The horse trader said to himself, “Oh, yonder is his snipper-snapper.”

A snipper-snapper is a presumptuous young fellow.

He then said out loud, “Do you hear? You, hey-pass — you, juggler. Where’s your master?”

A juggler is a trickster, aka a cheater.

“Why, sir, what do you want?” Mephistophilis said. “You cannot speak with him.”

“But I will speak with him,” the horse trader said.

“Why, he’s fast asleep. Come some other time.”

“I’ll speak with him now, or I’ll break his glass-windows — his eyeglasses — about his ears.”

“I tell you that he has not slept these past eight nights,” Mephistophilis said.

“Even if he has not slept these past eight weeks, I’ll still speak with him,” the horse trader said.

“Look,” Mephistophilis said, pointing, “there he is, fast asleep.”

“Yes, this is he,” the horse trader said.

He said loudly, “May God save you, Master Doctor, Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian! Forty dollars, forty dollars for a bundle of hay!”

“Why, you see that he doesn’t hear you,” Mephistophilis said.

“So-ho, ho! So-ho, ho!” the horse trader said loudly in Faustus’ ear. “Won’t you wake up? I’ll make you wake up before I go.”

He pulled Faustus by the leg, and Faustus’ leg came off in his hands.

He shouted, “Oh, no! I am ruined! What shall I do?”

He could be tried and convicted for maiming Faustus. The penalty would likely be death.

“Oh, my leg! My leg!” Faustus shouted. “Help, Mephistophilis! Call the police! My leg! My leg!”

Mephistophilis said to the horse trader, “Come, villain, you’re going to the constable.”

“Oh, Lord, sir, let me go,” the horse trader said, “and I’ll give you forty dollars more!”

“Where is the money?” Mephistophilis asked.

“I have none on me,” the horse trader said. “Come to my inn, and I’ll give it to you.”

The horse trader had lied to Faustus when he said that he had only forty dollars to pay for the horse.

“Leave quickly,” Mephistophilis said.

The horse trader ran away.

“Is he gone?” Faustus said. “Farewell to him! Faustus’ leg has magically already grown back, and the horse trader, I take it, has a bundle of hay for his labor. Well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.”

Before he had made his bargain with Mephistophilis to give his soul to Lucifer, Faustus had said about the spirits that would serve him, “I’ll have them fly to India for gold, ransack the ocean for oriental pearls ....”

Now, he was defrauding a horse trader for eighty dollars.

Wagner, Faustus’ servant, arrived.

“How are you now, Wagner?” Faustus asked. “What’s the news you bring?”

“Sir, the Duke of Vanholt earnestly requests your company.”

“The Duke of Vanholt!” Faustus said. “He is an honorable gentleman, to whom I must not be sparing with my magical conjuring. Come, Mephistophilis, let’s go to him.”

Previously, Faustus had entertained an Emperor; now, he was going to entertain a Duke.

— 4.2 —

**[Scene 11]**

The Duke of Vanholt, the Duchess of Vanholt, and Faustus talked together. They had been watching an entertainment. Mephistophilis was also present, but he was invisible to everyone except Faustus.

“Believe me, Master Doctor,” the Duke of Vanholt said. “This entertainment has much pleased me.”

“My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well,” Faustus replied.

He then said to the Duchess of Vanholt, who was visibly pregnant, “But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard that great-bellied women long for some dainties or other. What is it you long for, madam? Tell me, and you shall have it.”

“Thanks, good Master Doctor,” she replied, “and because I see your courteous intention is to make me happy, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires. If it were now summer, instead of being January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better food than a dish of ripe grapes.”

“Ah, madam, that’s nothing!” Faustus said.

He then ordered, “Mephistophilis, be gone.”

Mephistophilis exited.

“If you want a greater thing than ripe grapes, as long as it would make you happy, you will have it,” Faustus said to the Duchess of Vanholt.

Mephistophilis returned, holding ripe grapes.

“Here they are, madam,” Faustus said. “Will it please you to taste them?”

As his wife ate a few grapes, the Duke of Vanholt said, “Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder more than the rest of the things you have done: It is now the month of January — the dead time of winter — so how could you come by these grapes?”



“If it pleases your grace,” Faustus said, “the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, so that when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Sheba, and farther countries in the east, and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as you see.

India and Sheba (now called Yemen) are in the northern hemisphere, but as usual Mephistophilis did not correct Faustus.

“How do you like the grapes, madam?” Faustus asked. “Are they good?”

“Believe me, Master Doctor,” the Duchess of Vanholt replied, “they are the best grapes that I have ever tasted in my life.”

“I am glad they content you so, madam,” Faustus said.

“Come, madam,” the Duke of Vanholt said, “let us go in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he has shown to you.”

“And so I will, my lord and husband, and as long as I live, I will remain beholden to him for this courtesy.”

“I humbly thank your grace,” Faustus said.

“Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward,” the Duke of Vanholt said.

When he had made his bargain with Lucifer, Faustus had wanted to be the Emperor of the World. Now he was merely a court entertainer.

## ACT 5 (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)

— 5.1 —

### [Scene 12]

Wagner said about Faustus to you the readers, “I think my master intends to die soon because he has given me all his goods, and yet, I think, if his death were near, he would not banquet and carouse and swill among the students, as even now he does. They are at supper with such belly-cheer as I, Wagner, never beheld in all my life.”

Earlier, Mephistophilis had said that some friars’ *summum bonum* was belly-cheer.

Wagner continued, “See, where they come! Most likely, the feast has ended.”

Wagner exited as Faustus entered with three tipsy scholars. Mephistophilis was present, but he was invisible to everyone except Faustus.

“Master Doctor Faustus,” the first scholar said, “since our conversation about fair ladies, and who was the beautifullest in all the world, we have determined among ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady who ever lived; therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us the

favor of letting us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholden to you.”

“Gentlemen,” Faustus replied, “because I know that your friendship is unfeigned, and because Faustus’ custom is not to deny the just requests of those who wish him well, you shall behold that peerless dame of Greece, no different in pomp and majesty than when Sir Paris crossed the seas with her and brought the spoils to rich Dardania.”

Actually, it is clearer to say that Paris took Helen to Troy. Dardanus founded the kingdom of Dardania and the city of Dardanus (sometimes called Dardania or Dardanum) long before Troy was founded. Dardanus and Troy were both located in the Troad, located in the northwest corner on Turkey. As usual, the invisible Mephistophilis did not clarify Faustus’ assertion.

Faustus referred to “unfeigned friendship,” but the scholar was asking him to do something that would be a cause of getting him damned.

He also said that the scholars would see Helen of Troy, implying that they would see the real Helen of Troy rather than a demon that had assumed her shape.

Faustus then said, “Be silent, then, for danger is in words.”

Conjuring required silence.

Music sounded, and a demon that had assumed Helen of Troy’s shape passed in front of them and then exited.

In ancient times, Paris, a Prince of Troy, ran away with Helen, the legitimate wife of Menelaus of Sparta, Greece, and took her back to Troy with him, thus starting the famous Trojan War, which lasted for ten years. Helen was known as the most beautiful woman in the world.

The second scholar said, “Too simple is my intelligence to tell her praise. She is the woman whom all the world admires for her majesty.”

The third scholar said, “It’s no wonder that the angry Greeks avenged with ten years of war the forcible carrying away of such a queen, whose Heavenly beauty surpasses all comparison.”

“Since we have seen the pride of Nature’s works, and the only paragon of excellence,” the first scholar said, “let us depart; and for this glorious deed may Faustus be happy and blest forevermore!”

Ironically, it was deeds such as this that put Faustus at risk of damnation.

“Gentlemen, farewell,” Faustus said. “I wish the same to you.”

The scholars exited.

An old man arrived and said, “Ah, Doctor Faustus, I wish that I might prevail and guide your steps to the way of life, by which sweet path you may attain the goal that shall conduct you to celestial rest!

“Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears — tears falling from repentant heaviness of your most vile and loathsome filthiness, the stench whereof corrupts the inward soul with such extremely wicked crimes of heinous sin as no commiseration may expel except the mercy, Faustus, of your sweet Savior, Whose blood alone can wash away your guilt.”

Faustus said, "Where are you, Faustus? Wretch, what have you done?"

Genesis 3:9 states, "*But the Lord God called to the man [Adam, who had sinned], and said unto him, Where art thou?*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus said, "You are damned, Faustus, damned; despair and die! Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice says, 'Faustus, come; your hour is almost come,' and Faustus now will come to do you right and pay to you what is due."

1 Peter 5:8 states, "*Be sober, and watch: for your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

John 13:1 states, "*Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, forasmuch as he loved his own which were in the world, unto the end he loved them*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

Mephistophilis gave Faustus a dagger, tempting him to commit suicide.

The old man said, "Ah, stop, good Faustus, stop your desperate steps! I see an Angel who hovers over your head, holding a vial full of precious grace and offering to pour it into your soul. So then call for mercy, and avoid despair."

People commit suicide out of despair, which can be defined as the loss of all hope.

Faustus said to the old man, "Ah, my sweet friend, I feel your words you have spoken to comfort my distressed soul! Leave me a while to ponder on my sins."

"I go, sweet Faustus," the old man said, "but with heavy sorrow because I fear the ruin of your without-hope soul."

The old man exited.

Faustus said to himself, "Accursed Faustus, where is mercy now? I do repent, and yet I do despair. Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast. What shall I do to shun the snares of death?"

Mephistophilis said, "You traitor, Faustus, I arrest your soul for disobedience to my sovereign lord. Revolt, or I'll tear your flesh into pieces."

By "revolt" he meant, "Revolt against God, and return to the vow you made to Lucifer."

"Sweet Mephistophilis," Faustus said, "entreat your lord to pardon my unjust presumption, and with my blood I will again confirm my former vow I made to Lucifer."

"Do it, then, quickly, with unfeigned heart," Mephistophilis said, "lest greater danger attends your drifting away from Lucifer."

Faustus cut his arm and began writing with his blood.

"Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age — that old man who dared to dissuade me from following your Lucifer," Faustus said to Mephistophilis. "Torment the old man with the greatest torments that our Hell affords."

"His faith is great; I cannot touch his soul," Mephistophilis said. "But what I may afflict his body with, I will attempt, which is but little worth."

What “little worth” refers to is ambiguous. It can mean 1) the old man’s body is of little worth compared to the worth of his soul, 2) Mephistophilis’ attempt to torment the old man’s body is of little worth and effectiveness because the old man is protected by God, or 3) both #1 and #2.

(Earlier, the Good Angel had said to Faustus, “Repent, and they [demons from Hell] shall never scratch your skin.”)

“One thing, good servant, let me crave from you, to glut the longing of my heart’s desire,” Faustus said. “Let me have as my paramour that Heavenly Helen whom I saw just now, whose sweet embracings may extinguish completely those thoughts that dissuade me from my vow. That will help me keep the oath I made to Lucifer.”

“Faustus, this, or whatever else you shall desire, shall be performed in the twinkling of an eye,” Mephistophilis said.

“Helen of Troy” returned and stood in front of Faustus, who said these words:

“Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,

“And burnt the topless towers of Ilium [Troy]?”

“Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.”

He kissed “Helen,” and then he continued:

“Her lips suck forth my soul: See, where it flies!

“Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.”

He kissed “Helen,” and then he continued:

“Here will I dwell, for Heaven is in these lips,

“And all is dross that is not Helena.”

The old man entered and stood, listening.

Faustus continued:

“I will be Paris, and for love of you,

“Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sacked;

“And I will combat with weak Menelaus,

“And wear your colors on my plumed crest [helmet];

“Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,

“And then return to Helen for a kiss.

“Oh, you are fairer than the evening air

“Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

“Brighter are you than flaming Jupiter

“When he appeared to hapless Semele;

“More lovely than the monarch of the sky

“In wanton Arethusa’s azured arms;

“And none but you shall be my paramour!”

What is the answer to the question “Was this the face that launched a thousand ships, and burnt the topless [very high] towers of Troy?”

The best answer is, No. This is not Helen of Troy. This is a demon from Hell. Twenty-four years ago, Faustus had asked for a wife, and Mephistophilis had brought him a demon that had assumed the form and face of a beautiful woman. Faustus had called the demon dressed in women’s clothing “a hot whore.” Now, he was willing to have sex with a demon.

Can “Helen” make him immortal with a kiss?

Faustus’ soul is already immortal; the question that should be asked is where will his soul reside for all eternity. A kiss from “Helen” makes it more likely that Faustus’ soul will reside in Hell.

When Faustus was considering selling his soul to Lucifer, he thought that he would do good things for Wittenberg, but now he was willing for Wittenberg to be sacked, just like Troy was at the end of the Trojan War.

Faustus said that he will be Paris and he will combat “weak” Menelaus. In the *Iliad*, Paris and Menelaus met in single combat, and Menelaus defeated Paris; in fact, Menelaus would have killed Paris except that Aphrodite, goddess of sexual passion, helped Paris escape from him.

Faustus said that he would wound Achilles in the heel. Although this is not recounted in the *Iliad*, Paris, with the help of the archer god Apollo, did wound Achilles in the heel — a wound that killed him. Achilles was a much greater person and warrior than Paris.

Faustus said this about “Helen”: “Brighter are you than flaming Jupiter / When he appeared to hapless Semele.”

Semele was one of the many mortal women with whom Jupiter, king of the gods, had an affair. Jupiter made an inviolable oath to give Semele whatever she asked for, and she asked to see him in his true form. Because he had made an oath that he could not violate, Jupiter did as she asked, and the sight of Jupiter in his true form killed her.

Apollo the Sun-god is the monarch of the sky, and Arethusa is a nymph who bathed in a stream of blue — azure — water. Possibly, Faustus is saying that “Helen” is more beautiful than a scene of the Sun shining down on a blue stream of water.

Faustus and “Helen” left in order to go somewhere they could have sex.

The old man said to himself, “Accursed Faustus, miserable man, from your soul you exclude the grace of Heaven, and flee from the throne of his tribunal-seat!”

Some devils entered.

The old man said, “Satan begins to sift me with his pride.”

Luke 22:31 states, “*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired you, to winnow you as wheat*” (1599 Geneva Bible). Other Bibles, such as the Coverdale Bible of 1535, use the word “sift” instead of “winnow.”

The old man continued, “As in this furnace God shall try my faith, my faith shall triumph over you, vile Hell.”

He was referring to the Book of Daniel, chapter 6. God protected Daniel after he was thrown in the den of lions.

The old man continued, “Ambitious fiends, see how the Heavens smile at your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!”

Psalms 2:4 states, “*But he that dwelleth in the heaven shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision*” (1599 Geneva Bible). The Bishops Bible (1568, revised in 1572) states, “*He that dwelleth in heaven will laugh them to scorn.*”

The old man continued, “Hence, devils! Go to Hell! For from here I flee to my God.”

The old man exited in one direction, and the devils exited in another direction.

— 5.2 —

### [Scene 13]

Faustus was in his study in Wittenberg with the three scholars.

“Ah, gentlemen!” Faustus said.

A glance at Faustus showed that he was not well. His “ah” was a sound of mourning.

“What ails you, Faustus?” the first scholar asked.

“Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, if I had lived with you, then I would have lived always!” Faustus said.

Students at the university shared quarters.

Faustus continued, “But now I die eternally. Look, isn’t he coming? Isn’t he coming?”

The students thought that Faustus was ill and hallucinating.

The second scholar asked, “What does Faustus mean?”

“Perhaps he has acquired some sickness by being over-solitary,” the third scholar said.

“If that is so, we’ll have physicians in to cure him,” the first scholar said. “It is only a surfeit; never fear, man.”

A surfeit is an excess, often of food and drink.

Faustus said, “It is a surfeit of deadly sin, which has damned both body and soul.”

“Yet, Faustus, look up to Heaven,” the second scholar said. “Remember that God’s mercies are infinite.”

The second scholar was correct.

“But Faustus’ offence can never be pardoned,” Faustus said. “The serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus.”

Faustus was suffering from pride. He believed that he had committed sins so evil that they were unpardonable. But God can pardon any sin as long as it is sincerely repented. The only sin that is unpardonable is sin that makes the sinner unable to sincerely repent. A sinner who has continually sinned can grow hard-hearted and be unable to sincerely repent.

Faustus’ sins of commission may seem paltry. He has slept with women whom Mephistophilis has brought to him. He has defrauded a horse trader. He has pranked the Pope.

He has sold his soul to Lucifer, but the contract will be nullified if he sincerely repents.

Faustus’ sins of omission are great. He could have saved many cities from plague. He could have used his intellect to make advances in logic, law, and medicine. Instead, he became a practical joker and a court entertainer.

Faustus continued, “Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and don’t tremble at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, I wish that I had never seen Wittenberg and never read a book!”

Books are not evil in themselves. A book of magic can be read for other purposes than summoning demons from Hell. Faustus had been a great scholar and had delighted in pursuing knowledge, but he had made a choice to pursue knowledge the wrong way.

One way to pursue knowledge is through hard study: reading (and writing) the relevant books, thinking hard, and debating with others, including teachers, who can be good guides to knowledge but who are only guides. Teachers can’t learn for the student — they can only try to help the student learn. Another way to pursue “knowledge” is to take the easy way: Let someone tell you stuff without investigating whether that stuff is true or false.

Faustus had made a deal with Mephistophilis: Faustus would give Lucifer his soul, and Mephistophilis would tell Faustus stuff and would give Faustus books that would tell him stuff.

Although Faustus had written the deed of gift to give Lucifer his soul, Mephistophilis had not given Faustus the knowledge that Faustus had wanted. Instead, Mephistophilis had given Faustus answers that any first-year university student could give, and then he had distracted Faustus with frivolous entertainments so that Faustus would not pursue knowledge. In addition, Mephistophilis had not corrected Faustus’ erroneous “knowledge.”

Acquiring real knowledge and especially discovering new real knowledge often takes great effort, although yes, learning can often be pleasurable. In order for Isaac Newton to make many of his most important discoveries, he had to invent the calculus, which in itself is one of his most important discoveries.

Faustus had been choosing between Heaven and Hell, yes, but he had also been choosing between astronomy and astrology and choosing between chemistry and alchemy and choosing between science and magic and choosing between the hard way and the easy way.

Faustus continued, “And what wonders I have done, all Germany — and yes, all the world — can witness.”

Faustus had thought that he would use his knowledge and powers to become Emperor of the World; instead, he had become an entertainer for the Holy Roman Emperor and then for the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt.

Faustus continued, “And for these wonders Faustus has lost both Germany and the world — and yes, Heaven itself, Heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy — and Faustus must remain in Hell forever, Hell, ah, Hell, forever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in Hell forever?”

“Yet, Faustus, call on God,” the third scholar said.

“On God, whom Faustus has abjured!” Faustus said. “On God, whom Faustus has blasphemed! Ah, my God, I would weep! But the devil draws in my tears so that I cannot weep. Gush forth blood, instead of tears! Yes, gush forth life and soul! Oh, he stops my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they hold them — they hold them!”

“Who, Faustus?” the scholars asked.

“Lucifer and Mephistophilis,” Faustus said. “Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my magical cunning!”

“God forbid!” the scholars said.

“God forbade it, indeed,” Faustus said, “but Faustus has done it. For the vain pleasure of twenty-four years has Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I wrote them a deed of gift of my soul with my own blood. The twenty-four years have almost expired; the final time will soon come, and he — Lucifer — will fetch me.”

The first scholar asked, “Why didn’t Faustus tell us about this before, so that divines might have prayed for you?”

“Often have I thought to have done so,” Faustus said, “but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces if I named God and to fetch me, body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity.”

Anytime he was threatened with bodily pain from a devil, he backed off and backed down.

He added, “And now it is too late.”

No, he was wrong. He still had time to repent.

Faustus said, “Gentlemen, go away, lest you perish with me.”

This showed that some goodness remained still within Faustus.

The second scholar asked, “Oh, what shall we do to save Faustus?”

“Don’t talk about me, but save yourselves, and depart,” Faustus said.

This showed that some goodness remained still within Faustus.

The third scholar said, “God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.”

“Tempt not God, sweet friend,” the first scholar said, “but let us go into the next room, and there pray for him.”



“Yes, pray for me, pray for me,” Faustus said, “and whatsoever noise you hear, don’t come to me.”

This showed that some goodness remained still within Faustus.

He added, “Nothing can rescue me.”

He was despairing; he had lost all hope that he could be saved. This is the sin that can keep someone from Heaven by making it extremely difficult for that person to sincerely repent his or her sins.

The second scholar advised Faustus, “Pray, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon you.”

Prayer by other people helps, but what wins God’s forgiveness of sins is sincere repentance by the sinner.

“Gentlemen, farewell,” Faustus said. “If I live until morning, I’ll visit you; if not, Faustus has gone to Hell.”

“Faustus, farewell,” the scholars said as they exited.

The clock struck eleven. At midnight Faustus’ twenty-four years would be over.

Part of Revelation 18:10 states that “in one hour is thy judgment come” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus made a sound of mourning again: “Ah.”

He then said to himself, “Faustus, now you have only one bare hour to live, and then you must be damned perpetually!

“Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of Heaven, so that time may cease, and midnight never come. Fair Nature’s eye — the Sun — rise, rise again, and make perpetual day; or let this hour be only a year, a month, a week, a natural day, so that Faustus may repent and save his soul!”

Sincerely repenting one’s sins can take only a moment. Sometimes that moment is the last moment of one’s life. It was as if Faustus were asking to be saved — but not yet!

Faustus said, “*O lente, lente currite, noctis equi!*”

The Latin means, “Oh, run slowly, slowly, horses of the night.”

Ovid’s *Amore* (Liber I, XIII, line 40) states, “*Lente currite noctis equi.*” This is the prayer of a man who wishes to spend more time in the arms of his lover.

Faustus continued, “The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike, the devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.

“Oh, I’ll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?”

“See, see, where Christ’s blood streams in the firmament! One drop would save my soul, half a drop.”

He added, “Ah, my Christ!”

Was his “Christ” Jesus or Lucifer?

Then he added, “Ah, rend not my heart because of the naming of my Christ!”

Was his “Christ” Jesus or Lucifer?

Faustus continued, “Yet will I call on him: Oh, spare me, Lucifer!

“Where is it now? Christ’s blood is gone, and look, where God stretches out His arm, and bends His ireful brows! Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me, and hide me from the heavy wrath of God! No! No!”

Luke 23:30 states, “*Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us: and to the hills, Cover us*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Revelation 6:16 states, “*And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus continued, “Then will I headlong run into the earth: Earth, gape! Oh, no, it will not harbor me!

“You stars that reigned at my nativity, it is your influence that has allotted death and Hell to me.”

Faustus wanted to blame his stars for his damnation: He believed — or wanted to believe — that the stars that reigned when he was born were responsible for his death and for his punishment in Hell.

Many people of the time believed in astrology, but they also believed in free will. The stars could influence a person’s character, making that person wise or courageous, for example, but nevertheless that person still has free will and will make the decisions that lead to that person’s salvation or damnation. Today, many people believe both in genetics and in free will. Genetics may give a person certain characteristics, but nevertheless that person still has free will and will make the decisions that lead to that person’s salvation or damnation.

Faustus continued to address the stars: “Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist, into the entrails of yon laboring clouds, so that, when you clouds vomit forth into the air, my limbs may issue from your smoky mouths, so that my soul may then ascend to Heaven!”

He wanted the stars to draw him up into the clouds, which would form a thunderstone from his grosser parts. The thunderstone would be ejected when lightning flashed, leaving behind Faustus’ purer part — his soul — which would ascend into Heaven.

The clock stuck the half-hour.

Faustus said, “Ah, half the hour is past! All the hour will be past soon.

“Oh, God, if you will not have mercy on my soul, yet for Christ’s sake, whose blood has ransomed me, impose some end to my incessant pain in Hell. Let Faustus live in Hell a thousand years, a hundred thousand, and at last be saved.”

This was a prayer, but it was not the right kind of prayer. Faustus was not sincerely repenting his sins; he was praying to escape some of the punishment for committing his sins.

Faustus said, “Oh, there is no end to pain suffered by damned souls in Hell!

“Why weren’t you, Faustus, born a creature that lacks a soul? Why is this soul that you have immortal?”

“Ah, if Pythagoras’ metempsychosis — his transmigration of souls — were true, this soul would fly from me, and I would be changed into some brutish beast!

“All beasts are happy, for when they die, their souls are soon dissolved into the elements, but my soul must live always to be plagued in Hell.

“Cursed be the parents who engendered me!”

He gained some possession of himself and said, “No, Faustus, curse yourself, curse Lucifer who has deprived you of the joys of Heaven.”

1 John 1:9 states, “*If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Even now, Faustus’ soul could be saved. All it would take is sincere repentance of his sins. He would have to take responsibility for his sins, instead of blaming Lucifer, if he were to be able to repent them.

The clock began to strike twelve.

“Oh, it strikes! It strikes!” Faustus said. “Now, body, turn to air, or Lucifer will bear you quickly to Hell!”

Thunder sounded and lightning flashed.

Faustus said, “Oh soul, be changed into little drops of water, and fall into the ocean, never be found!”

Devils, including Lucifer and Mephistophilis, entered Faustus’ study.

Faustus said, “My God, my God, look not so fierce on me!”

Faustus’ “God” was Lucifer.

Faustus said, “Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while! Ugly Hell, gape not! Come not, Lucifer!

“I’ll burn my books!”

Those were the books that Mephistophilis had given him.

He uttered the sorrowful cry “Ah.”

The clock struck the eleventh of twelve strokes.

This was the last moment of Faustus’ life.

Even now, Faustus can be saved. According to Christian theology, a man (or woman) can come to Christ in the final moment of his (or her) life and be forgiven. All it takes is sincere repentance. In his *Purgatory*, Dante writes about meeting on the Mountain of Purgatory sinners who sincerely repented in their last moment of life. One such sinner was Buonconte of Montefeltro, who repented and in the last moment of his life uttered this word:

“M-M-M—

“Mary!”

In the last moment of his life, Faustus uttered this word:

“M-M-M—

“Mephistophilis!”

The clock struck twelve, and the devils carried Faustus off to Hell.

### **EPILOGUE (*Faustus* 1604 A-TEXT)**

#### **[Chorus 4]**

The Chorus said these words:

“Cut is the branch that might have grown full [completely] straight,

“And burned is Apollo’s laurel-bough [mark of excellence],

“That sometime [formerly] grew within this learned man.

“Faustus is gone: Regard his Hellish fall,

“Whose fiendful fortune [diabolical end] may exhort the wise,

“Only to wonder [To be content with only wondering] at unlawful things,

“Whose deepness does entice such forward wits [eager thinkers]

“To practice more than Heavenly power permits.”

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*Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.*

Translation: The hour ends the day; the author ends the work.

## Chapter 4: DOCTOR FAUSTUS (1616 B-TEXT)

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)

Chorus.

Dr. John Faustus.

Wagner, his servant.

Valdes, magician.

Cornelius, magician.

Three Scholars.

Old Man.

The Good Angel.

The Bad Angel.

Mephistophilis.

Lucifer.

Beelzebub.

Robin (the Clown), hostler at an inn. A hostler takes care of horses.

Dick, hostler at an inn. Dick is Robin's friend.

Vintner.

Horse Dealer.

Carter.

Hostess.

Pope Adrian.

Raymond, King of Hungary.

Bruno, the rival Pope.

Cardinal of France.

Cardinal of Padua.

Archbishop of Rheims.

Charles V, Emperor of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor.

Martino, gentleman at Charles V's court.

Frederick, gentleman at Charles V's court.

Benvolio, gentleman at Charles V's court. "*Bene volio*" means "I wish well" in Latin, but Benvolio is ill-tempered.

Duke of Saxony.

Duke of Vanholt.

Duchess of Vanholt.

Spirits presenting:

- The Seven Deadly Sins (Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth, and Lechery).
- Alexander the Great, and his Paramour.
- Darius, King of Persia.
- Helen of Troy.

Devils, Cupids, Bishops, Monks, Friars, Soldiers, Attendants, a Piper.

**NOTE:**

The B-Text is not divided into Acts and Scenes. Some editors divide it into Acts and Scenes; some editors divide it into Scenes only.

**PROLOGUE (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)**

— Chorus —

**[Chorus 1]**

The Chorus says this to you the reader:

"This book is not about marching in the fields of Thrasimene, where Mars did ally himself to the warlike Carthaginians, resulting in their major victory over the Romans.

"This book is not about sporting in the frivolity and dalliance of love, in courts of Kings where government is overturned.

"This book is not about the pomp of proud audacious deeds.

"Our Muse — who inspires the playwright Christopher Marlowe — does not intend to show off her heavenly verse on such topics.

"Only this, gentles, is intended — we characters in this book must now perform the representation of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad.

"And now to patient judgments we characters appeal, and I speak for all of us when I tell you about Faustus in his infancy and young days.

"He was born of parents base of stock in a town called Staddroda in Germany.

“When he achieved riper years, he went to Wittenberg, home of the university of Martin Luther and of Hamlet. This is where his kinsmen chiefly brought Faustus up.

“He succeeded so much in his study of theology that quickly he was graced with the title of Doctor.

“He excelled all other scholars, and he sweetly disputed in the heavenly matters of theology; however, he became swollen with conceit and pride in his knowledge and cunning, and with his waxen wings he mounted above his reach.”

Faustus is like Icarus, for whom his father, Daedalus, created wings made of wax and feathers. Daedalus warned Icarus not to fly too near the Sun, but Icarus did not heed the warning. The Sun’s heat melted the wax in his wings, causing the feathers to fall out. Icarus plunged into the sea and drowned.

The Chorus continued:

“Melting his waxen wings, the heavens conspired Faustus’ overthrow. For, falling to a devilish exercise, and glutted now with learning’s golden gifts, Faustus surfeits upon cursed necromancy.

“Nothing is as sweet as magic is to him. He even prefers magic to his chiefest bliss: his salvation and eternal life in Paradise.”

What does it mean for the heavens to “conspire Faustus’ overthrow”?

If the heavens are the planets and stars, then in this age, which believes in astrology, the planets and stars gave Faustus some elements of his character, including a high intelligence. Our age would use the word “genetics” instead of “astrology” in describing how we acquire some of our characteristics. Possibly, Faustus’ environment gave him a tendency toward pride.

But whether you use the word “astrology” or the phrases “genetics and environment” or “nature and nurture,” you can have a belief in free will. At times in our lives, we have to make important decisions, and we make them of our free will.

This is true even if the word “heavens” refers to spirits. Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistophilis are fallen Angels that can tempt and manipulate Faustus, but Faustus still uses his free will to decide whether to give in to temptation or to allow himself to be manipulated. As it happens, Faustus himself initiates his first contact with the devils.

The Chorus continued:

“Faustus is the man who now sits in his study.”

## **ACT 1 (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)**

— 1.1 —

### **[Scene 1]**

Faustus, alone in his study, surrounded by books, said to himself, “Make a decision about your studies, Faustus, and begin to sound the depth of that subject that you will profess. Having

graduated from the university, be a theologian in outward appearance, yet aim at the purpose and end result of every discipline and live and die in Aristotle's works.

"Sweet *Analytics*, it is you who have ravished me."

Aristotle wrote two volumes on logic: *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics*.

Faustus opened a book and said, "*Bene disserere est finis logicis*."

The book was *Dialecticae* by Petrus Ramus, a reformer and logician who was killed during the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572 in Paris. The Latin means, "The end — the purpose — of logic is to dispute well."

Faustus said, "Is to dispute well logic's chiefest end? Affords this discipline no greater miracle? Then read no more; you have attained that end. You know how to dispute well. A greater subject befits Faustus' intelligence. Bid *on-kai-me-on* farewell, and Galen come."

"*On-kai-me-on*" is a transliteration of Greek words meaning "being and non-being" or "existence and non-existence." The words come from a book by the philosopher Georgias of Leontini (c. 483-376 B.C.E.).

Galen was a famous ancient physician and writer of influential books about medicine.

Faustus continued, "Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold and be eternally famous for some wondrous cure. *Summum bonum medicinae sanitas*. Let me translate: The end of medicine is our body's health."

Faustus' translation into English of a Latin translation of Aristotle's Greek *Nicomachian Ethics* was not entirely correct. The Latin mentions "health," which can include mental health as well as bodily health. Faustus' translation mentions only bodily health.

He continued, "Why, Faustus, haven't you attained that end? Aren't your prescriptions hung up as records of remarkable achievements, whereby whole cities have escaped the plague and a thousand desperate maladies have been cured? Yet you are still only Faustus and a man. If you could make men live eternally, or if the men were dead, if you could raise them to life again, then this profession of medicine would be one to be esteemed.

"Medicine, farewell. Where is Justinian?"

Justinian was a Roman Emperor who codified Roman law.

Finding the Justinian book, Faustus said, "*Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem rei, etc.*"

This means, "If one and the same thing is willed to two men, then one man will get the thing, and the other will get the value of the thing, etc."

Faustus said, "A petty case of paltry legacies!"

He then said, "*Exhereditari filium non potest pater nisi....*"

This means, "The father may not disinherit the son, unless ...."

Faustus said, "Such is the subject of the institute and the universal body of the law."



Much canon law was based on Justinian's codification of Roman law.

He continued, "This study befits a mercenary drudge, who aims at nothing but external trash."

"External trash" is money and possessions.

He continued, "This is too servile and illiberal for me. When all is said and done, theology is best. Jerome's Bible, Faustus, view it well."

Saint Jerome translated the Bible into Latin; his translation is known as the Vulgate Bible.

Faustus said, "*Stipendium peccati mors est.*"

This means, "The wages of sin is death."

Romans 6:23 states, "*For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus had translated only part of the verse, leaving out the part about the gift of God.

He said, "Ha!" and then repeated the Latin words before saying, "The reward of sin is death? That's hard.

"*Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas.*"

The Latin passage is 1 John 1:8; Faustus did not read 1 John 1:9.

1 John 1:8-9 states this (1599 Geneva Bible):

*8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and truth is not in us.*

*9 If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Faustus had left out the part about God's forgiveness.

Faustus continued, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us. Why, then perhaps we must sin, and so consequently die. Aye, we must die an everlasting death."

The sound "Aye" has two applicable meanings: 1) Yes, and 2) I.

Faustus said, "What doctrine do you call this? *Che sera, sera.* Let me translate: What will be, shall be.

"Theology, adieu. These metaphysics of magicians and necromantic books are heavenly."

Necromancy is the discipline of communicating with the dead.

He continued, "Lines, circles, letters, and characters. Aye, these are those things that Faustus most desires."

Lines, circles, letters, and characters are used in magic.

Faustus said, "Oh, what a world of profit and delight, of power, of honor, and of omnipotence is promised to the studious artisan of the occult arts! All things that move between the quiet poles shall be at my command. Emperors and Kings are obeyed only in their own provinces,

but the dominion of an artisan who excels in the occult arts, stretches as far as does the mind of man. A sound magician is a demi-god. Here I will work and tire my brains to get a deity. I want god-like power.”

He called, “Wagner.”

Wagner, Faustus’ servant, entered the room.

Faustus ordered, “Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends, the German Valdes and Cornelius. Request them earnestly to come and visit me.”

“I will, sir,” Wagner said, and then he exited.

Faustus said, “Their conversation will be a greater help to me than all my labors, plod I never so fast.”

He was seeking a quick way to knowledge. Rather than finding out new knowledge for himself, he was asking for help from people who could teach him.

This can be a good thing, *if* the teachers are wise.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel entered Faustus’ study.

The Good Angel said, “Oh, Faustus, lay that damned book of black magic aside, and don’t gaze on it lest it tempt your soul and heap God’s heavy wrath upon your head. Read, read the scriptures: That book is blasphemy.”

The Bad Angel said, “Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art wherein all nature’s treasure is contained. Be you on Earth as Jove is in the sky: Lord and Commander of these elements.”

Jove is the King of the pagan gods.

This society believed that the world was composed of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel exited.

Faustus said, “How I am gluttoned with the idea of this! Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please, resolve me of all ambiguities by answering my questions, and perform whatever desperate enterprise I want them to perform?”

The word “desperate” means dangerous, but it includes the idea of despair. Christian despair is lack of belief in Christian salvation.

Faustus continued, “I’ll have them fly to India for gold, ransack the ocean for pearls from the orient, and search all corners of the newfound world of the Americas for pleasant fruits, and Princely delicacies.

“I’ll have them teach me strange philosophy and tell me the secrets of all foreign kings.

“I’ll have them wall all Germany with brass and make the swift Rhine River encircle fair Wittenberg.

“I’ll have them fill the universities with silk, wherewith the students shall be splendidly clad.

“I’ll levy soldiers with the money they bring me, and chase the Prince of Parma from our land, and reign as sole king of all the provinces.”

The Prince of Parma was the Spanish governor-general of the United Provinces of the Netherlands.

Faustus continued, “Yes, I’ll make my servile spirits invent stranger engines for the brunt of war than was the fiery keel at Antwerp’s bridge.”

While besieging Antwerp, the Prince of Parma built a bridge across the Scheldt River. The defenders of Antwerp used a fireboat to destroy the bridge.

Faustus said, “Come, German Valdes and Cornelius, and make me blest with your sage conversation.”

Valdes and Cornelius entered Faustus’ study.

Faustus said, “Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius! Know that your words have won me over at last! I will practice magic and the concealed occult arts.

“Philosophy is odious and obscure. Both law and medicine are for petty wits.

“It is magic, magic that has ravished me.

“So then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt, and I, who have with subtle syllogisms confounded the pastors of the German Church and made the flowering pride — the best scholars — of Wittenberg swarm to my academic discussions, as the infernal spirits swarmed to the sweet musician Musaeus when he came to Hell, will be as cunning as the magician Cornelius Agrippa was, whose familiar spirit made all Europe honor him.”

Valdes replied, “Faustus, these books, your intelligence, and our experience shall make all nations canonize us. As dark-skinned Native Americans obey their Spanish lords, so shall the spirits we raise in bodily form be always serviceable to us three.

“They shall guard us when we please, in the forms of lions, or of German cavalrymen with their horsemen’s staves, or of Lapland giants trotting by our sides.

“Sometimes they shall have the form of women or unwedded maidens, encompassing more beauty in their airy brows than have the white breasts of Venus, the queen of love.

“From Venice they shall drag huge argosies — merchant ships — and from America they shall bring us the golden fleece that yearly stuffed King Philip II of Spain’s treasury, if learned Faustus will be resolute.”

To get devils to obey your will required payment: one’s soul. If Faustus were resolute and bargained away his soul, then he, Valdes, and Cornelius could benefit. Apparently, Valdes and Cornelius lacked this kind of resolution.

Faustus replied, “Valdes, I am as resolute in this as you are to live, so therefore make no objections.”

Cornelius said, “The miracles that magic will perform will make you vow to study nothing else. He who is grounded in astrology, enriched with the knowledge of various languages, and very knowledgeable about minerals, has all the principal knowledge that magic requires.

“So then don’t doubt, Faustus, that you will be renowned and more sought after on account of this mystery than was the Delphic oracle.”

An oracle is a priest or priestess who is able to foretell the future. The oracle at Delphi was renowned in ancient times.

Cornelius said, “The spirits tell me they can dry the sea, and fetch the treasure of all foreign shipwrecks — yes, and all the wealth that our forefathers hid within the massy entrails of the earth.

“So then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three lack?”

Faustus answered, “Nothing, Cornelius. Oh, this cheers my soul.”

He then said to Valdes and Cornelius, “Come, show me some magical demonstrations, so that I may conjure in some bushy grove, and have in full possession these joys we have discussed.”

Valdes said, “Then hasten to some solitary grove, and carry there wise Bacon’s and Albanus’ works, the Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament, and whatsoever else is necessary that we will inform you about before our conversation ends.”

Roger Bacon and Pietro d’Abano were reputed to be great magicians.

The Psalms and the beginning of John’s Gospel were used in conjuring.

Cornelius said, “Valdes, first let him know the words of art, and then after he has learned all other ceremonies Faustus may try and test his cunning by himself.”

Valdes said to Faustus, “First I’ll instruct you in the rudiments, and then you will be more perfect in magic than I am.”

This sounds as if Valdes did not know more than the rudiments.

“Then come and dine with me,” Faustus said, “and after we eat we’ll discuss every detail of conjuring, for before I sleep, I’ll see what I can do. This night I’ll conjure even if I die because of it.”

Yes, he could die because of his conjuring; he could die and be condemned to spend eternity in Hell.

— 1.2 —

## [Scene 2]

Two scholars arrived at Faustus’ residence.

The first scholar said, “I wonder what’s become of Faustus, who was accustomed to make our schools ring with cries of ‘*sic probo*.’”

“*Sic probo*” is Latin for “Thus I prove it.” Faustus used to engage in much debate in the university.

Wagner, Faustus’ servant, arrived. He was carrying wine.

The second scholar said, “That shall we soon know, since here comes Faustus’ servant.”

“Oh, sirrah!” the first scholar said. “Where’s your master?”

The word “sirrah” was used to address a man of lower social status than the speaker.

Wagner replied, “God in Heaven knows.”

Usually, this means, “*Only* God in Heaven knows.”

“Why, don’t you know where he is, then?” the second scholar asked.

“Yes, I do know, but my knowing where he is does not follow,” Wagner said.

He meant that from “God in Heaven knows,” it did not follow that he, Wagner, did know.

“Bah, sirrah,” the first scholar said. “Stop your jesting and tell us where he is.”

“That does not follow by force of argument, which you two scholars, being licentiates, should stand upon,” Wagner said. “Therefore, acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

Wagner meant that since his knowing Faustus’ whereabouts had not been logically established, it did not logically follow that the first scholar could demand that Wagner tell him where Faustus is.

“Then you will not tell us?” the second scholar asked.

“You are deceived, for I will tell you,” Wagner replied. “Yet if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question. For isn’t Faustus *corpus naturale*? And is not that *mobile*? Then why should you ask me such a question?”

A “*corpus naturale*” is a “natural body,” and natural bodies are “*mobile*,” or capable of movement and change. As a natural body, Faustus was capable of moving and so could be anywhere, according to Wagner.

He continued, “But except that I am by nature calm, slow to anger, and prone to lechery — oops, I meant to say, love — it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt but to see you both hanged the next court sessions.”

The deed being executed at this time was eating heartily. This execution was taking place in the dining room, where Faustus and his two guests were planning the execution of a deed of black magic. However, people convicted of using black magic could undergo another kind of execution. Wagner may have thought that the two scholars wanted to engage in black magic just like Valdes and Cornelius did.

Wagner continued, “Thus, having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a Precision — a Puritan — and begin to speak like one:

“Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine I am holding, if it could speak, would inform your worships. And so may the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren.”

Wagner exited to take the wine to Faustus and his two guests.

The first scholar said, “Oh, Faustus, then I fear that which I have long suspected: You have fallen into that damned art for which Valdes and Cornelius are infamous throughout the world.”

The second scholar said, “If Faustus were a stranger to me, and not allied to me through friendship, the danger to his soul would make me mourn.

“But come, let us go and inform the Rector — the head of the university. Perhaps the Rector’s grave counsel may reclaim Faustus.”

“I am afraid that nothing will reclaim him now,” the first scholar said.

“Yet let us see what we can do,” the second scholar said.

— 1.3 —

**[Scene 3]**

Thunder sounded. Lucifer and four devils, all of whom were invisible, arrived and spied on Faustus.

Faustus said, “Now the gloomy shadow of the night, longing to view the constellation Orion’s drizzling look, leaps from the Antarctic world to the sky and dims it with her pitchy breath.”

It was nighttime. According to Faustus, night was simply the time when the northern hemisphere was in the shadow of the Earth. The Sun would set in the West and go to the southern hemisphere (from the perspective of someone fairly high in the northern hemisphere), where it would shine and put the northern hemisphere in shadow.

The constellation Orion was associated with storms, and so Faustus called it “drizzling.”

He continued, “Faustus, begin your incantations and test whether devils will obey your commands, seeing that you have prayed and sacrificed to them.”

He was standing in a circle, which was thought to protect the magician from the evil spirits he called up.

Faustus continued, “Within this circle is Jehovah’s name, forward and backward anagrammatized. Also here are the abbreviated names of holy saints, figures of every adjunct to the Heavens, and characters of signs, and evening stars, by which the spirits are forced to rise.”

Magicians would take the name “Jehovah” and make anagrams of it. They would also use such things as the signs of the Zodiac in their conjurations.

Faustus continued, “So then don’t be afraid, Faustus, to be resolute and try the utmost that magic can perform.”

Thunder sounded.

Faustus conjured, “*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovae! Ignei, aerii, aquatici spiritus, salvete! Orientis Princeps Beelzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat, Mephistophilis.*”

“*Quod tu moraris?*”

“*Per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!*”

Translated, the Latin passage means this:

*“May the gods of Acheron be favorable to me! Farewell to the threefold spirit of Jehovah — the Trinity! Welcome, you spirits of fire, air, and water! Prince of the East; Beelzebub, monarch of burning Hell; and Demogorgon, we ask that Mephistophilis may appear and rise.*

*“Why do you delay?”*

*“By Jehovah, Hell, and the holy water that I now sprinkle, and by the sign of the cross that now I make, and by our vows may Mephistophilis himself now rise, compelled to serve us.”*

The Prince of the East is Lucifer; Beelzebub is a fallen Angel; Demogorgon is a deity of the underworld.

Faustus referred to only three of the four elements. Apparently one element is associated with each of the three demons he called upon. Lucifer is associated with air, and Beelzebub with fire, leaving water for Demogorgon. The fourth element — earth — may be associated with Mephistophilis.

Acheron is a river in Hell.

Gehenna is a name for the destination of the wicked: Hell.

To gain the favor of the demons of Hell, Faustus rejected Jehovah.

The devil Mephistophilis arrived in the form of a dragon.

Seeing him, Faustus told him, “I order thee to return and change thy shape. Thou art too ugly to attend on me.”

He was using the words “thee,” “thy,” and “thou,” words that a master would use to refer to a servant. In other circumstances, they were used by intimate friends and by husbands and wives.

He continued, “Go and return in the form of an old Franciscan Friar. That holy shape becomes a devil best.”

Mephistophilis exited.

Faustus said, “I see there’s virtue in my heavenly words.”

By “virtue,” he meant “power,” not “moral virtue.”

He continued, “Who would not be proficient in this art? How pliant is this Mephistophilis! He is full of obedience and humility. Such is the force of magic and my spells.”

Mephistophilis returned in the form of a Franciscan Friar and asked, “Now, Faustus, what would thou have me do?”

He did not need Faustus to tell him his name.

Mephistophilis’ question is the same question that Saul (later Saint Paul) asked the risen Jesus in Acts 9:6: “He then both trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou that I do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou shalt do” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus replied, "I order thee to wait upon me while I live and do whatever Faustus shall command, whether it be to make the Moon drop from her sphere, or to make the ocean overwhelm the world."

"I am a servant to great Lucifer," Mephistophilis said, "and I may not follow thee without his permission. No more than he commands must we perform."

Faustus had believed that he was Mephistophilis' master, but Mephistophilis told him straight-out that he follows Lucifer's orders.

Faustus asked, "Didn't he order thee to appear to me?"

Mephistophilis replied, "No, I came here now of my own accord."

"Didn't my conjuring raise thee?" Faustus asked. "Answer me."

"That was the cause," Mephistophilis answered, "but yet *per accidens*."

Yes, Mephistophilis had come to Faustus because of Faustus' conjuring, but not for the reason that Faustus supposed. Faustus thought that Mephistophilis had been forced to come to him because of Faustus' power as a conjuror, but as Mephistophilis will explain, he had come because he saw an opportunity to get Faustus' soul.

Mephistophilis continued, "For when we hear one rack the name of God, abjure the scriptures and his Savior Christ, we fly in hope to get his glorious soul. Nor will we come, unless he use such means whereby he is in danger to be damned. Therefore, the shortest cut for conjuring is stoutly to abjure all godliness and pray devoutly to the Prince of Hell."

Faustus said, "So Faustus has already done, and Faustus holds this principle: There is no chief but only Beelzebub, to whom Faustus does dedicate himself. This word 'damnation' does not terrify me, for I confound Hell in Elysium. May my ghost be with the old philosophers."

Faustus did not fear the damnation of Hell with all its tortures because he regarded the afterlife as being in Elysium, where the good pagans went and enjoyed lives much like the lives they had lived on Earth. At the end of Plato's *Apology*, Socrates, who has been condemned to die, says that he does not fear death because what follows death must be one of two things: 1) a long dreamless sleep, or 2) a life like this one, but one in which Socrates can seek out and converse with great people such as Homer, creator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, who have died before him. Faustus did not believe in the Christian Hell in which unrepentant sinners are tortured.

One meaning of "confound" is "smash." Faustus was saying that he was smashing the idea of Hell as a place of torture, and that Hell is actually a rather nice place, as is Elysium. However, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a then-current meaning of "confound" is this: "To mix up in idea, erroneously regard or treat as identical, fail to distinguish." Faustus was failing to distinguish between the Christian Inferno and the pagan Elysium. In Dante's *Inferno*, the good pagans go to Limbo, which is a place of sighs, not screams.

Faustus continued, "But leaving these vain trifles of men's souls, tell me, what is that Lucifer, thy Lord?"

Faustus also deviated from Christian theology in believing that his soul was only a vain trifle.



Mephistophilis replied, “Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.”

Faustus asked, “Wasn’t Lucifer an Angel once?”

“Yes, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said, “and he was most dearly loved by God.”

Faustus asked, “How comes it then that he is Prince of Devils?”

“Oh, by aspiring pride and insolence,” Mephistophilis said, “for which God threw him from the face of Heaven.”

Isaiah 14:12-15 (1599 Geneva Bible) tells us this about Lucifer:

*12 How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning? and cut down to the ground, which didst cast lots upon the nations?*

*13 Yet thou saidest in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my throne above beside the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the North.*

*14 I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the most high.*

*15 But thou shalt be brought down to the grave, to the side of the pit.*

Faustus is another being with “aspiring pride and insolence.”

“And what are you that live with Lucifer?” Faustus asked.

“Unhappy spirits that live with Lucifer, conspired against our God with Lucifer, and are forever damned with Lucifer,” Mephistophilis replied.

“Where are you damned?”

“In Hell.”

“How comes it then that thou are out of Hell?”

“Why, this is Hell, nor am I out of it,” Mephistophilis replied. “Do you think that I who saw the face of God and tasted the eternal joys of Heaven am not tormented with ten thousand Hells in being deprived of everlasting bliss?”

Saint John Chrysostom had written “*si decem mille gehennas quis dixerit, nihil tale est quale ab illa beata visione excidere.*”

The Latin means that knowing that one will never enjoy the everlasting bliss of the presence of God is worse than suffering ten thousand Hells.

Mephistophilis pleaded, “Oh, Faustus, stop asking these frivolous questions, which strike a terror to my fainting soul.”

Such questions are not frivolous; frivolous questions do not strike terror in one’s fainting soul.

Faustus said, “Is great Mephistophilis so passionate and deeply emotional because of being deprived of the joys of Heaven? Learn from Faustus’ manly fortitude, and scorn those joys thou never shall possess.

“Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer, seeing that Faustus has incurred eternal death by desperate thoughts against Jove’s deity. Say that Faustus surrenders up to Lucifer his soul, provided that he will spare him for twenty-four years, letting him live in all voluptuousness, having thee always to attend on me, to give me whatsoever I shall ask, to tell me whatsoever I ask, to slay my enemies and to aid my friends, and always be obedient to my will.”

Faustus was calling God “Jove” — a name for the pagan god Jupiter, king of the gods. “Jove’s deity” means “Jupiter’s divine nature.”

He continued, “Go and speak to mighty Lucifer, and meet me in my study at midnight, and then tell me what thy master answers.”

“I will, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said.

He exited.

“Had I as many souls as there are stars, I’d give them all for Mephistophilis,” Faustus said. “By use of him, I’ll be the great Emperor of the World, and make a bridge through the moving air to cross the ocean. With a band of men I’ll join the hills that bind the African shore and join that country to Spain, closing the Strait of Gibraltar, and make both pay tribute to my crown. The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V shall not live except but by my permission, nor shall any potentate of Germany.”

The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V was also Emperor of Germany.

Faustus concluded, “Now that I have obtained what I desired, I’ll live in contemplation of this art until Mephistophilis returns again.”

— 1.4 —

#### [Scene 4]

Wagner, Faustus’ servant, saw the Clown, who had a beard, and said, “Come here, sirrah boy.”

“Boy?” the Clown said. “Oh, what an insult to my person. By God’s wounds! I say ‘Boy’ in your face! You have seen many boys with beards, I am sure.”

“Sirrah, have you no comings in?” Wagner asked.

By “comings in,” he meant “income.”

“Yes, and goings out, too,” the Clown said, “as you may see, sir.”

He thrust his hand through a hole in his ragged clothing.

“Alas, poor slave,” Wagner said. “See how poverty jests in his nakedness. I know the villain’s out of service — out of work — and so hungry that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, even if it were blood raw.”

“That’s not so, neither,” the Clown said. “I must have the mutton well roasted, and a good sauce to go with it, if I pay so expensive a price, I can tell you.”

“Sirrah, will you be my servant and wait on me?” Wagner asked. “If you do, I will make you go like *qui mihi discipulus*.”

“*Qui mihi discipulus*” is Latin for “one who is my pupil.”

“What, in verse?” the Clown asked.

“No, slave,” Wagner said, “in beaten silk, and stavesacre.”

Silk is an expensive fabric. “Beaten silk” is embroidered silk: Expensive metals such as gold and silver could be beaten with a hammer into silk clothing to form a metal embroidery. Of course, such clothing would be only for the very wealthy. As you may expect, Wagner was obliquely saying that he would beat the Clown if the Clown were his apprentice.

Stavesacre is a lotion made from certain kinds of seeds; it is used to kill vermin such as lice. Wagner was saying that the Clown was infested with lice; he also was obliquely saying that he would beat the Clown. A stave is a staff that can be used to give aches, so it is a stave-ache-er.

“Stavesacre?” the Clown said. “That’s good to kill vermin. So then probably if I serve you I shall be lousy.”

Two meanings of “lousy” are “inferior” and “infested with lice.”

“Why, so you shall be, whether or not you serve me,” Wagner said. “For, sirrah, if you do not immediately bind yourself to me for seven years, I’ll turn all the lice about you into familiar spirits, and make them tear you into pieces.”

Witches, who could be male or female, had familiar spirits that would obey their commands.

“No, sir, you may save yourself the trouble,” the Clown said, “for lice are as familiar with me as if they paid for their meat and drink, I can tell you.”

The lice were already biting him and drinking his blood; it was as if they had bought a meal and a waiter had served them the Clown.

“Well, sirrah, leave your jesting, and take these guilders,” Wagner said.

The guilders were coins paid to a new apprentice to seal the bargain.

“Yes, indeed, sir, and I thank you, too,” the Clown said.

“So, now you are to be at an hour’s warning, whenever and wherever the devil shall fetch you,” Wagner said.

Part of Revelation 18:10 states that “*in one hour is thy judgment come*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

“Here, take your guilders,” the Clown said. “I’ll have nothing to do with them.”

“I won’t take them,” Wagner said. “You are pressed — drafted — into service as my servant. Prepare yourself to accept this, for I will immediately raise up two devils to carry you away.”

He called the spirits: “Banio! Belcher!”

“Belcher? If Belcher comes here, I’ll belch him,” the Clown said. “I am not afraid of a devil.”

The two devils appeared.

Although the Clown may not be afraid of a devil, his actions and reactions showed that he is definitely afraid of two devils.

“How about now, sir?” Wagner asked. “Will you serve me now?”

“Yes, good Wagner,” the Clown said. “Take away the devil then.”

“Spirits, away!” Wagner ordered.

The two devils exited.

“Now, sirrah, follow me,” Wagner said to the Clown.

“I will sir, but listen, master,” the Clown said. “Will you teach me this conjuring occupation?”

“Yes, sirrah,” Wagner said. “I’ll teach you to turn yourself into a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or anything.”

“A dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat?” the Clown said. “Oh, brave, splendid Wagner!”

“Villain, call me Master Wagner, and see that you walk attentively, and let your right eye be always diametrically fixed upon my left heel, so that you may *quasi vestigias nostras insistere*.”

The Latin words — some of which were incorrect; *vestigias nostras* ought to be *vestigiiis nostris* — mean “as if to tread in our footsteps.” Wagner was putting on airs, using the majestic plural to refer to his footsteps.

“Well, sir, I promise that I will do as you say.”

They exited, with the Clown following Wagner.

The Clown had agreed to serve Wagner as an apprentice in return for some lessons in magic and some guilders. He would never get the beaten silk that had been promised to him, although he would probably get the stavesacre, especially in the form of stave-ache-er. His agreement, however, had a time limit: seven years. At that time, he would again be free. In this sense, he had made a better bargain than Faustus would make.

## ACT 2 (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)

— 2.1 —

### [Scene 5]

Faustus, alone in his study, was thinking about being damned. He said, “Now, Faustus, must you necessarily be damned? Can’t you be saved?”

He knew that he must agree to be damned if he were to get what he wanted: the services of Mephistophilis for twenty-four years.

“What good is it then to think about God or Heaven? Away with such vain fancies and despair! Despair in God and trust in Beelzebub.

“Do not go backward now, Faustus; be resolute.

“Why are you wavering? Oh, something sounds in my ear: *Abjure this magic, turn to God again*.

“Why, God doesn’t love you. The god you serve is your own appetite wherein is fixed the love of Beelzebub.”

If the “God” who doesn’t love him is the “god” who is his own appetite, then Faustus had spoken the truth. But if “God” meant the Christian God, then God did love him.

Faustus continued, “To him, I’ll build an altar and a church and offer him the lukewarm blood of newborn babes.”

The lukewarm blood of newborn babes? Faustus was serious about selling his soul.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel entered his study.

The Bad Angel said, “Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art.”

The Good Angel said, “Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.”

Faustus said, “Contrition, prayer, repentance? What of these?”

The Good Angel said, “Oh, they are means to bring you to Heaven.”

The Bad Angel said, “Rather, they are illusions, fruits of lunacy, that make foolish those who do use them most.”

“Sweet Faustus,” the Good Angel said, “think of Heaven and Heavenly things.”

“No, Faustus,” the Bad Angel said, “think of honor and of wealth.”

“Wealth?” Faustus said. “Why, the seigniorship — the governorship — of Emden shall be mine.”

Emden was a prosperous German port.

Faustus continued, “When Mephistophilis shall stand by me, what power can hurt me? Faustus, you are safe. Have no more doubts.”

Part of Romans 8:31 states, “*If God be on our side, who can be against us?*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

He continued, “Mephistophilis, come and bring glad tidings from great Lucifer.”

In Luke 2:10, an Angel tells shepherds the glad tidings that Christ has been born: “*Then the Angel said unto them, Be not afraid: for behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus continued, “Isn’t it midnight? Come, Mephistophilis. *Veni, veni, Mephistophile.*”

An important hymn that dates back to the ninth century is “*Veni, veni, Emmanuel*”: “O come, O come, Emmanuel.”

The word “Emmanuel” means “Messiah.”

Mephistophilis entered Faustus’ study.

Faustus said, “Now tell me, what does Lucifer, your Lord, say?”

“That I shall wait on Faustus while he lives, if he will buy my service with his soul,” Mephistophilis answered.

Faustus said, “Already Faustus has hazarded that for you.”

“Hazard” was a gambling term. Faustus’ soul was his gambling stake.

Mephistophilis said, “But now you must bequeath it solemnly and ceremoniously, and write a deed of gift with your own blood, for Lucifer craves that security and assurance. If you will not do it, I must go back to Hell.”

“Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me what good my soul will do your Lord,” Faustus said.

Mephistophilis replied, “Your soul will enlarge his Kingdom.”

“Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?” Faustus asked.

Mephistophilis replied, “*Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.*”

The Latin means, “It is a solace to the wretched to have had companions in misery.”

This is true. No one wants to feel alone in misery; however, Mephistophilis’ words are misleading. Notice the phrase “to have had.” Hell lasts forever; it will never end.

Faustus asked, “Do you devils who torture others have any pain?”

Mephistophilis answered, “As great as have the human souls of men.”

He added, “But tell me, Faustus, shall I have your soul? If you give it to me, I will be your slave and wait on you, and give you more than you have intelligence to ask for.”

Mephistophilis would give Faustus more than Faustus has intelligence to ask for; in other words, he would give Faustus things that a man of intelligence would not ask for.

Faustus said, “Yes, Mephistophilis, I’ll give my soul to Lucifer.”

Mephistophilis said, “Then, Faustus, stab your arm courageously, and bind your soul so that at some certain — specific and unavoidable — day great Lucifer may claim it as his own, and then you will be as great as Lucifer.”

The word “then” in the clause “then you will be as great as Lucifer” is ambiguous.

Faustus understood it to mean “after signing his name in blood to a deed of gift of his soul to Lucifer.” After signing the document, he would have great power not available to God-fearing mortals.

Faustus, however, would not have all the power of Lucifer, but rather the use of one of the subordinate devils: Mephistophilis.

But Mephistophilis meant “then” to mean “after Lucifer claimed Faustus’ soul as his own.” After that happened, Faustus would be “as great as Lucifer” — as damned as Lucifer.

Faustus would have some of Lucifer’s powers for a few years, but then he would also be in the same situation as Lucifer — separated eternally from God.

Faustus said, “Look, Mephistophilis. For love of you Faustus has cut his arm, and with his own proper blood he assures his soul to belong to great Lucifer, Chief Lord and Regent of perpetual night. View here this blood that trickles from my arm, and let it be propitious for my wish.”

“But, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said, “write it in the manner of a deed of gift.”

“Yes, so I do, but Mephistophilis, my blood congeals, and I can write no more,” Faustus said.

“I’ll fetch for you fire to dissolve it immediately,” Mephistophilis said.

He exited to get the fire.

Such fire is not earthly fire, as no earthly fire will turn congealed blood to liquid form.

“What might the congealing of my blood portend?” Faustus said to himself. “Is it unwilling I should write this deed of gift? Why doesn’t it stream so that I may write afresh?”

He started writing: “*Faustus gives to you his soul.*”

He stopped and said, “Oh, there my blood congealed. Why shouldn’t I write this? Isn’t your soul your own?”

“Then write again: *Faustus gives to you his soul.*”

Mephistophilis returned, carrying the chafer of fire.

He said, “See, Faustus, here is fire; set the dish of your blood on it.”

Faustus did, and then he said, “So, now the blood begins to become liquid again. Now will I make an end immediately.”

Mephistophilis said quietly to himself, “What won’t I do to obtain his soul!”

Faustus finished writing and then he said, “*Consummatum est.*”

“*Consummatum est*” were Jesus’ last words on the cross (in the Vulgate translation), uttered just before he died: “It is completed.” The giving of his life and blood was propitious for Humankind.

John 19:30 states, “*Now when Jesus had received of the vinegar, he said, It is finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus added, “This deed of gift is finished, and Faustus has bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.

“But what is this inscription on my arm? ‘*Homo, fuge!*’”

The Latin means, “Man, flee!”

1 Timothy 6:11-12 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

11 “*But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.*”

12 “*Fight the good fight of faith: lay hold of eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*”

Faustus said, “Whither should I flee? If I flee to Heaven, God will throw me down to Hell.”

Faustus was wrong. According to Christian theology, a man (or woman) can come to Christ in the final moment of his (or her) life and be forgiven. All it takes is sincere repentance.

According to Christian theology, God is not bound by such things as deeds of gifts of one's soul. Indeed, it can be argued that not even the Bible binds God, and that people who believe that the Bible binds God are guilty of Bibliolatry — they make the Bible into an idol. "Bibliolatry" is "Bible-idolatry" or "Biblidolatry."

Faustus may have been thinking of predestination, a belief that some souls are damned from the beginning of time, regardless of how they use their free will. God, however, sees past, present, and future time. God may know from the beginning of time that a soul will be damned, but God can see that person making free-will choices that end up damning that person.

The deed of gift that Faustus just wrote and signed is not one that God is bound to respect. Sincere repentance would make the deed of gift void.

Faustus continued, "My senses are deceived; here's nothing written — oh, yes, I see it plainly. Written here is '*Homo, fuge,*' yet Faustus shall not flee."

Mephistophilis said to himself, "I'll fetch him something to delight his mind."

He wanted to distract Faustus from serious considerations. He would do that with something trivial.

He exited.

Some devils arrived who gave crowns and rich apparel to Faustus. They danced and then departed.

Mephistophilis returned and Faustus asked him, "What is the meaning of this show? Tell me, Mephistophilis."

Mephistophilis replied, "Nothing, Faustus, other than to delight your mind, and let you see what magic can perform."

"But may I raise such spirits when I please?" Faustus asked.

"Yes, Faustus," Mephistophilis replied, "and you may do greater things than these."

Faustus gave Mephistophilis the deed of gift of his soul and said, "Then, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll, a deed of gift of body and of soul. But yet it is conditional — you must perform all covenants and articles between us both."

Mephistophilis replied, "Faustus, I swear by Hell and Lucifer to effect all promises between us both."

Faustus said, "Then hear me read it, Mephistophilis."

He read the deed of gift out loud:

*"On these conditions following.*

*"Firstly, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance.*

*"Secondly, that Mephistophilis shall be his servant, and at his command.*

*"Thirdly, that Mephistophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever he desires.*



*“Fourthly, that Mephistophilis shall be invisible in his chamber or house.*

*“Lastly, that Mephistophilis shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in whatsoever form or shape Faustus pleases.*

*“I, John Faustus, of Wittenberg, Doctor, by this deed of gift, do give both body and soul to Lucifer Prince of the east, and his servant Mephistophilis; and furthermore grant unto them, that, after twenty-four years has expired and the above-written articles inviolate and fulfilled in full, full power to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, into their habitation wheresoever.*

*“Signed by me, John Faustus.”*

Mephistophilis said, “Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed of gift of your soul?”

“Yes, take it,” Faustus said, “and may the devil give you good of it.”

“So, Faustus, now ask me whatever you will,” Mephistophilis said.

Faustus said, “First, I will question you about Hell. Tell me, where is the place that men call Hell?”

“Under the heavens,” Mephistophilis answered.

“Yes, so are all things else, but whereabouts is Hell?” Faustus said.

“Within the bowels of these elements, where we are tortured, and remain forever,” Mephistophilis answered. “Hell has no limits, nor is Hell circumscribed in one selfsame place, but where we are is Hell, and where Hell is there must we forever be. And to be short, when all the world dissolves, and every creature shall be purified, all places shall be Hell that are not Heaven.”

On the Day of Judgment, all souls shall be purified: They shall become purely good or purely evil.

“I think Hell’s a fable,” Faustus said.

“Continue always to think so, until experience changes your mind,” Mephistophilis replied.

“Why, do you think that Faustus shall be damned?” Faustus asked.

“Yes, of necessity, for here’s the scroll in which you have given your soul to Lucifer,” Mephistophilis answered.

“Yes, and body, too, but what of that?” Faustus said. “Do you think that Faustus is so foolish as to imagine that after this life there is any pain? No, these are trifles, and mere old wives tales.”

“But I am an instance to prove the contrary,” Mephistophilis said, “for I tell you I am damned and I am now in Hell.”

“If this is Hell, I’ll willingly be damned,” Faustus said. “What! Sleeping, eating, walking, and disputing?”

“But leaving this topic of discussion, let me have a wife, the most beautiful maiden in Germany, for I am wanton and lascivious and cannot live without a wife.”

Marriage is a sacrament, and Mephistophilis did not want to talk about or observe sacraments, but he said, “Well, Faustus, you shall have a wife.”

He brought Faustus a female devil.

Faustus said, “What is this!”

“Now, Faustus, will you have a wife?” Mephistophilis said.

“Here’s a hot whore indeed,” Faustus said, looking at the female devil. “No, I’ll have no wife.”

Already, the contract Faustus and Mephistophilis had made was violated. Faustus had asked for a wife, the most beautiful maiden in Germany, whom Mephistophilis was supposed to give him, according to the contract, but Mephistophilis had brought him a female devil.

Mephistophilis said, “Marriage is only a ceremonial trifle, and if you love and respect me, think no more of it. I’ll cull out for you the most beautiful courtesans, and bring them every morning to your bed. She whom your eye shall like, your heart shall have, even if she is as chaste as was Penelope, as wise as was Saba, or as beautiful as was bright Lucifer before his fall.”

Penelope was the wife of Odysseus, who went to the Trojan War and spent twenty years away from home; during those twenty years, she stayed faithful to him.

Mephistophilis would ensure that even a woman as chaste as Penelope would sleep with Faustus. Either Mephistophilis would corrupt the woman, or Faustus would rape her.

Mephistophilis, however, said he would bring courtesans to Faustus to sleep with. Presumably, courtesans would be very willing to have sex with Faustus in return for money.

Saba is known in the Bible as the Queen of Sheba. She appears in 1 Kings 10, and she showed her wisdom by recognizing Solomon’s wisdom.

Mephistophilis gave Faustus a book and said, “Here, take this book, and peruse it well.”

Pointing to various places in it, he said, “The recitation of these lines brings gold. The inscribing of this circle on the ground brings thunder, whirlwinds, storm, and lightning. Pronounce this three times devoutly to yourself, and men in armor shall appear to you, ready to execute whatever you command.”

“Thanks, Mephistophilis, for this sweet book,” Faustus said. “This will I keep as chary — carefully — as I keep my life.”

Faustus may quite forget to take care of the book, as the Clown, whose name is Robin, quickly steals one of Faustus’ conjuring books. After all, Faustus had said that he would take care of the book as carefully as he took care of his own life, and he had recently bargained away all his remaining years of life except for twenty-four. Another meaning of “chary” is “sorrowful.” Unless Faustus sincerely repents, he will spend eternity feeling sorrow in Hell.

By the way, Valdes and Cornelius had thought that they would rule the world with Faustus, but Faustus has quite forgotten them.

## [Scene 6]

The Clown called to his friend, "Hey, Dick, look after the horses there until I come again. I have gotten one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring books, and now we'll have such knavery as beats everything."

Dick walked over to the Clown and said, "Robin, you must come away and walk the horses."

The Clown, hereafter referred to as Robin, and Dick were hostlers; they took care of the horses at an inn.

Robin said, "I walk the horses! I scorn doing that, indeed. I have other matters in hand; let the horses walk themselves if they will."

He looked at the conjuring book and tried to read it out loud:

"A means *a*.

"T H E means *the*.

"O means *o*.

"Deny orgon, gorgon."

Apparently, he was trying to read the name of a demon: Demogorgon.

Robin said to Dick, "Keep further away from me, you illiterate and unlearnéd hostler."

"By God's fingernails, what have you got there: a book?" Dick said. "Why, you cannot understand even a word of it."

"You shall quickly see whether I can," Robin said.

Standing in a conjuror's circle he had drawn, he said, "Keep out of the circle, I say, lest I send you into the hostelry with a vengeance."

"That's likely, indeed," a disbelieving Dick said. "You had best leave your foolery, for if my master comes, he'll conjure you, indeed."

"My master conjure me?" Robin said. "I'll tell you what, if my master comes here, I'll clap as fair a pair of horns on his head as ever you saw in your life."

"You don't need to do that, for our female boss — his wife — has already done it," Dick said.

A joke of the time was that a cuckolded husband — a husband with an unfaithful wife — had an invisible pair of horns growing on his forehead.

"Yes," Robin said, "there are some of us here who have waded as deep into matters as other men, if they were disposed to talk."

He was hinting that he himself was one of those men who slept with other men's wives.

"May a plague take you!" Dick said. "I thought you didn't sneak up and down after her for nothing. But please tell me, seriously, Robin, is that a conjuring book?"

“Do but speak what you would have me do, and I’ll do it,” Robin said. “If you would dance naked, take off your clothes, and I’ll conjure you around. Or if you would just go to the tavern with me, I’ll give you white wine, red wine, claret wine, sack, muscadine wine, malmsey, and whippincrust — all the alcohol your belly can hold, and we’ll not pay one penny for it.”

“Oh, splendid,” Dick said. “Please, let’s go and do it right now, for I am as dry as a dog.”

“Come on, then,” Robin said. “Let’s go.”

— 2.3 —

[Scene 7]

Faustus and Mephistophilis were in Faustus’ study.

Faustus said, “When I behold the heavens, then I repent and curse you, wicked Mephistophilis, because you have deprived me of those joys.”

Psalm 8:3-5 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*3 When I behold thine heavens, even the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,*

*4 What is man, say I, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?*

*5 For thou hast made him a little lower than God, and crowned him with glory and worship.*

The 1599 Geneva Bible includes this introductory note for Psalm 8:

*The Prophet considering the excellent liberality and Fatherly providence of God toward man, whom he made as it were a god over all his works, doth not only give great thanks, but is astonished with the admiration of the same, as one nothing able to compass such great mercies.*

“It was your own seeking, Faustus, so thank yourself,” Mephistophilis replied. “But do you think that Heaven is such a glorious thing? I tell you, Faustus, that it is not half as fair as you, or any man who breathes on Earth.”

Faustus asked, “How do you prove that?”

“It was made for man,” Mephistophilis answered, “and so then man’s more excellent.”

“If Heaven was made for man, then it was made for me,” Faustus said. “I will renounce this magic and repent.”

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel entered Faustus’ study.

The Good Angel said, “Faustus, repent! God will yet pity you.”

The Bad Angel said, “You are a spirit; God cannot pity you.”

The Bad Angel was wrong when he called Faustus a spirit, and the Good Angel was wrong when he said, “God cannot pity you.” Faustus had asked to be a spirit in form and substance in his deed of gift, yet he was still a man. Apparently, he had wanted to at times have some of the powers of a spirit such as Mephistophilis, such as being invisible. The word “spirit” as used by the Bad Angel and when applied to Mephistophilis means “demon,” and Faustus was still a

human being and not a demon. God wants all human beings to sincerely repent their sins before they die.

Faustus said, "Who buzzes in my ears that I am a spirit? Be I a devil, yet God may pity me. Yes, God will pity me if I repent."

"Yes, but Faustus never shall repent," the Bad Angel said.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel exited.

"My heart is hardened," Faustus said. "I cannot repent."

In Exodus 7:3, God says, "*But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my miracles, and my wonders in the land of Egypt*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

This certainly sounds as if Pharaoh lacked free will and that God was controlling Pharaoh's decisions. Is that true?

No. God is the Creator of all that exists, including the universe, the laws of physics, and the laws of psychology. We are born with free will, but our freely made decisions can over time make it extremely difficult to use our free will. A person who smokes a first cigarette has the freedom to keep on smoking or to give up smoking; however, if the person freely decides to keep on smoking, the person will acquire a bad habit and an addiction that make it extremely hard to quit. We even say that people become slaves to their bad habits. True, they still have free will, but their bad habits are such that to act differently requires an effort of the will that they are unwilling and perhaps unable to make.

What is true of smoking is true of sinning. A person can become so habituated to sinning that to act virtuously requires an effort of the will that the person is unwilling or unable to make.

A free person is a person who works to acquire good habits. Is it almost impossible for a free person who habitually exercises to exercise regularly? No, because they have doing that for years. Is it almost impossible for a free person who habitually acts virtuously to act virtuously? No, because they have doing that for years. Of course, a person who habitually exercises can sometimes take a day off, and a person who habitually acts virtuously can sometimes act sinfully.

Faustus has had enough time to go a long way toward forming the habit of always acting sinfully to satisfy his desires. The more time he spends acquiring this habit, the greater the effort of the will that will be needed to act otherwise. After twenty-four years of always satisfying his sinful desires, it may be almost impossible for him to sincerely repent.

Faustus continued, "Scarcely can I name salvation, faith, or Heaven. Swords, poison, nooses, and steel swords anointed with poison are laid before me to dispatch myself, and long before this, I should have done the deed of suicide, had not sweet pleasure conquered deep despair.

"Haven't I made blind Homer sing to me of Alexander's love, and Oenone's death?"

Alexander is Paris, Prince of Troy, who ran away with Helen of Troy, thus starting the Trojan War. Before he ran away with Helen, his paramour was the nymph Oenone. When Paris was mortally wounded, he went to Oenone, who had the power to cure him. She refused, he died, and she then committed suicide.

Homer created the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but he didn't tell the story of Oenone's death in those epics, and in hearing Homer sing about those topics, Faustus had experienced something that no one alive now has ever experienced.

Faustus continued, "And hasn't he who built the walls of Thebes with the ravishing sound of his melodious harp made music with my Mephistophilis?"

Amphion was such a skilled harpist that when he played, stones rose of their own accord and built the walls of the city of Thebes.

Faustus continued, "Why should I die then, or basely despair? I am resolved: Faustus shall not repent.

"Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again and reason about divine astrology.

"Tell me, are there many spheres above the Moon? Are all celestial bodies only one globe, as is the substance of this centric Earth?"

Mephistophilis replied, "As are the elements, such are the heavens, even from the Moon to the Empyrean orb."

According to Mephistophilis, or at least according to what he said, the planet Earth is composed of four elements. The element earth is at the center. Water covers the earth, with the continents and islands being bits of earth poking out of the water. Above the water is air. Some people of the time believed that above the air is a sphere of fire that separates the Earth from the Moon.

So the Earth is composed of parts that make up one whole. According to Mephistophilis, the same is true of the universe.

At the center of the universe is the Earth, but nine spheres surround it: the seven spheres of seven planets, the sphere of the firmament, and then the Empyrean Heaven. The firmament is where the constellations and fixed stars are embedded. (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn are called "wandering stars" or "erring stars" because they wander in the sky; the word "planet" comes from a Greek term and means "wandering star." One meaning of "err" is "wander.") Furthest away from the Earth is Heaven.

The seven planets, in order of distance from the centric Earth, are the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Yes, this culture called the Sun a planet.

Mephistophilis continued, "And, Faustus, they are mutually folded in each other's spheres, and jointly move upon one axle-tree, whose terminus — boundary — is termed the world's wide pole. Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter feigned — they really are stars, but they are erring stars."

Faustus asked, "But have they all one motion, both *situ et tempore* — in direction and time?"

Mephistophilis replied, "All move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the poles of the world, but they differ in their motions upon the poles of the zodiac."

All the wandering stars move from the east to the west each day — think of the Sun. The wandering stars, however, have additional movements.

In his deed of gift, Faustus had required Mephistophilis to be his servant and at his command, but the contract was being violated. As Faustus' servant, Mephistophilis should have given Faustus correct answers, but he was simply repeating the erroneous opinions of the time — things that any first-year student at a university would learn.

Mephistophilis did not even tell Faustus that the Earth is not the center of the solar system — or of the universe.

“Bah,” Faustus said. “These slender trifles Wagner can arrive to a conclusion about. Has Mephistophilis no greater skill and knowledge? Who doesn't know about the double motion of the planets?”

“The first motion is finished in a natural day; the planet travels from east to west.

“The second takes longer. Saturn completes its second motion in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve; Mars in four; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year; the Moon in twenty-eight days.”

Mephistophilis did not bother to correct Faustus' errors. Mars' orbit (around the Sun, not the Earth, as Faustus thought) takes one year and eleven months (687 days), Venus' orbit takes seven-and-a-half months (225 days), and Mercury's orbit takes three months (88 days).

Faustus said, “These are freshmen's topics of discussion. But tell me, does every sphere have a dominion, or *intelligentia*?”

The *intelligentia* is Angelic influence. According to one theory of the time, every sphere has an order of Angels as its dominion: Each order of Angels is associated with a Heavenly Sphere.

The following information about Angels is according to Dante's *Paradise*:

The first Triad of Angels consists of the Seraphim, who are associated with the Primum Mobile (the First Mover, a sphere that Mephistophilis does not acknowledge); the Cherubim, who are associated with the Fixed Stars; and the Thrones, who are associated with Saturn and contemplation.

The second Triad of Angels consists of the Dominions, who are associated with Jupiter and justice; the Virtues, who are associated with Mars and courage; and the Powers, who are associated with the Sun and wisdom.

The third Triad of Angels consists of the Principalities, who are associated with Venus and love; the Archangels, who are associated with Mercury and hope; and the Angels, who are associated with the Moon and faith.

All of the orders of Angels look toward God.

Mephistophilis had no desire to talk about orders of Angels who had not fallen, so he answered Faustus' question very briefly: “Yes.”

Faustus asked, “How many heavens, or spheres, are there?”

Mephistophilis replied, “Nine, the seven planets, the firmament, and the Empyrean Heaven.”

Faustus asked, “But is there not *coelum igneum, et cristallinum* — the sphere of fire, and the sphere of crystal?”

Some scholars believed that a sphere of fire existed between the Earth and the Moon; other scholars disagreed. Some scholars believed that a sphere of crystal existed between the fixed stars and the Primum Mobile; other scholars disagreed.

*The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* defines “crystalline sphere” in this way: “ in ancient and medieval astronomy, a transparent sphere of the heavens postulated to lie between the fixed stars and the primum mobile and to account for the precession of the equinox and other motions.”

“No, Faustus,” Mephistophilis answered. “They are only fables.”

“Well, resolve this question for me: Why don’t we have conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at consistent times, but in some years we have more and in some years fewer?” Faustus asked. “Why don’t we have consistency in such astronomical positions and events?”

Two planets are in conjunction when they are very close together; they are in opposition when they are very far apart. Aspects are positions in between conjunction and opposition. These are things that astrologers concerned themselves about.

Mephistophilis replied, “*Per inaequalem motum respectu totius.*”

The Latin means, “Through unequal motion in respect of the whole.” In other words, the Heavenly bodies don’t move at the same speed — some are faster, and some are slower.

Faustus said sarcastically, “I am answered well.”

He was not acquiring new knowledge: The answer was one that Wagner would know.

New knowledge would have been that the Sun is at the center of the solar system and that the planets have elliptical — not circular — orbits. That knowledge would have made the observed facts fit with the correct deduced theory.

Faustus then asked, “Tell me Who made the world?”

Mephistophilis replied, “I will not.”

“Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me,” Faustus requested.

“Don’t make me angry, Faustus,” Mephistophilis said.

“Villain, haven’t I bound you to tell me anything?” Faustus replied.

“Yes, anything that is not against our kingdom,” Mephistophilis said. “This is.”

Their agreement stated that Mephistophilis would serve Faustus. This would include telling Faustus anything that he wanted to know: There were no restrictions.

Mephistophilis continued, “Think about Hell, Faustus, for you are damned.”

Faustus replied, “Think, Faustus, upon God Who made the world.”

“Remember this,” Mephistophilis said.

He meant, *Remember that you are going to Hell.*

He exited.



“Yes, go, accursed spirit, to ugly Hell,” Faustus said. “It is you who has damned distressed Faustus’ soul. Isn’t it too late?”

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel entered Faustus’ study.

“Too late,” the Bad Angel said.

“Never too late, if Faustus will repent,” the Good Angel said.

“If you repent, devils will tear you in pieces,” the Bad Angel said.

“Repent and they shall never scratch your skin,” the Good Angel said.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel exited.

“Oh, Christ my Savior, my Savior, help to save distressed Faustus’ soul,” Faustus prayed.

That help is available: To get it, one must sincerely repent one’s sins.

Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistophilis entered Faustus’ study.

“Christ cannot save your soul, for he is just,” Lucifer said. “There’s none but I who has interest in the same.”

He meant that he had a business interest in Faustus’ soul; he and Faustus had made a business agreement concerning Faustus’ soul.

Faustus said, “Oh, what are you who looks so terribly?”

“I am Lucifer.”

He motioned toward Beelzebub and added, “And this is my companion Prince in Hell.”

“Oh, Faustus, they have come to fetch your soul,” Faustus cried.

“We have come to tell you that you injure us,” Beelzebub said.

Lucifer said, “You call on Christ contrary to your promise.”

The contract that Faustus had written did not say this was forbidden.

Beelzebub said, “You should not think about God.”

Lucifer said, “Think about the devil.”

“And his dam, too,” Beelzebub said.

Beelzebub was capable of punning. “Dam” meant 1) woman, and 2) damn.

Faustus promised not to think about God: “Nor will Faustus henceforth. Pardon him for this, and Faustus vows never to look to Heaven.”

Lucifer said, “Show that you are an obedient servant, and we will highly reward you for it.”

Beelzebub said, “Faustus, we have come from Hell in person to show you some entertainment. Sit down and you shall see the Seven Deadly Sins appear to you in their own proper shapes and likenesses.”

“That sight will be as pleasant to me as Paradise was to Adam the first day of his creation,” Faustus replied.

“Don’t talk about Paradise or creation,” Lucifer said, “but watch the show.”

He ordered, “Go, Mephistophilis, fetch them in.”

The Seven Deadly Sins entered.

Beelzebub said, “Now, Faustus, ask them about their names and dispositions.”

Faustus replied, “That shall I soon.”

He then asked, “What are you, the first?”

“I am Pride; I disdain to have any parents.”

Exodus 20:12 states, “*Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be prolonged upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

By disdaining to have any parents, Pride need not honor them. Pride can also say that he is a self-made man.

Pride continued, “I am like Ovid’s flea: I can creep into every corner of a wench. Sometimes, like a wig, I sit upon her brow. Next, like a necklace, I hang about her neck. Then, like a fan of feathers, I kiss her, and then turning myself to a wrought smock I do whatever I wish.”

A Latin poem incorrectly ascribed to the Roman poet Ovid was about a flea that had free access to any part of a woman’s body.

Pride continued, “But bah, what a smell is here? I’ll not speak a word more for a King’s ransom, unless the ground is perfumed and covered with cloth of arras.”

Cloth of arras is very fine fabric, so fine that it was used as a wall hanging, aka a tapestry. Only a very proud man would walk on such a fine fabric.

In Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, the title character walks on very fine fabric that his wife lays down for him.

Faustus said, “You are a proud knave indeed.”

He then asked, “What are you, the second?”

“I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl in a leather bag, and if I might now obtain my wish, this house, you yourself, and everything else would turn to gold, so that I might lock you safe into my chest. Oh, my sweet gold!”

Faustus asked, “And what are you, the third?”

“I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife, and so I am dirty and stink. I cannot read, and therefore I wish all books to be burned. I am lean with seeing others eat. Oh, I wish that there would come a famine over all the world, so that all might die, and I live alone — then you would see how fat I’d be. But must you sit, and I stand? Come down off that chair with a vengeance.”

Envy was envious that Faustus was sitting while Envy stood.

“Leave, envious wretch,” Faustus ordered.

He then asked, “But what are you, the fourth?”

“I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother; I leapt out of a lion’s mouth when I was scarcely an hour old, and ever since I have run up and down the world with this pair of rapiers, wounding myself when I could get no one to fight with.”

Wrath looked at you people who are reading this book and said, “I was born in Hell, and watch out, for some of you shall be my father.”

To be Wrath’s father, male readers would have to adopt Wrath.

Faustus asked, “And what are you, the fifth?”

“I am Gluttony; my parents are all dead, and not a damned penny have they left me but only a bare amount to pay my room and board — that buys me thirty meals a day, and ten snacks: a small trifle to satisfy the appetite. I come from a royal pedigree: My father was a gammon of bacon, and my mother was a hogshead of claret wine. My godfathers were these: Peter Pickled-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef. But my godmother — she was an ancient gentlewoman. Her name was Margery March-beer.”

A gammon of bacon is a ham.

A hogshead is a barrel that holds sixty-three gallons.

Martlemas-beef comes from cattle that are slaughtered and salted around Martlemas, which is Saint Martin’s Day: November 11.

March-beer is strong beer that is made in March.

Gluttony said, “Now, Faustus, you have heard all my ancestry; will you invite me to supper?”

“Not I,” Faustus said.

“Then may the devil choke you,” Gluttony said.

“Choke yourself, glutton,” Faustus said.

He then asked, “What are you, the sixth?”

“Hey-ho, I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank. Hey-ho, I’ll not speak a word more for a King’s ransom.”

“Hey-ho” was a sigh.

“And what are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?” Faustus asked.

“Who, I, sir? I am one who loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stockfish, and the first letter of my name begins with Lechery.”

“Mutton” was a term used to refer to prostitutes; “stock-fish” was a term used to refer to impotent men. Lechery preferred a little sex (an inch) to lots of non-sex (an ell, or forty-five inches).

“Go away to Hell!” Lucifer ordered. “Go away! Onward, piper!”

The Seven Deadly Sins exited. One of them played a pipe as they marched out.

Of course, Lucifer had not shown Faustus the Seven Christian Virtues that are opposed to the Seven Deadly Sins.

Humility is opposed to Pride.

Charity (Generosity) is opposed to Covetousness (Greed).

Patience is opposed to Wrath.

Gratitude is opposed to Envy.

Temperance is opposed to Gluttony.

Diligence is opposed to Sloth.

Chastity is opposed to Lust. Chastity includes ethical sex — sex engaged in by a husband and a wife.

“Oh, how this sight delights my soul,” Faustus said.

This was the wrong kind of delight: entertainment rather than education.

Lucifer said, “But, Faustus, there is all manner of delight in Hell.”

“Oh, I wish I might see Hell, and return again safely,” Faustus said. “How happy would I be then!”

Dante saw Hell and returned safely; he sincerely repented his sins and enjoys eternal happiness in Paradise.

“Faustus, you shall,” Lucifer said. “At midnight I will send for you. Meanwhile, peruse this book, and view it thoroughly, and you shall turn yourself into whatever shape you will.”

“Thanks, mighty Lucifer,” Faustus said. “This will I keep as chary — carefully — as my life.”

As before, Faustus may quite forget to take care of the book. After all, Faustus had said that he would take care of the book as carefully as he took care of his own life, and he had bargained away all his remaining years of life except for twenty-four. Another meaning of “chary” is “sorrowful.” Unless Faustus sincerely repents, he will spend eternity feeling sorrow in Hell.

“Now, Faustus, farewell,” Lucifer said.

“Farewell, great Lucifer,” Faustus said. “Come, Mephistophilis.”

Faustus and Mephistophilis exited in one direction; Lucifer and Beelzebub exited in another direction.

### **ACT 3 (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)**

— Chorus —

## [Chorus 2]

The Chorus says this to you, the reader: “Learnéd Faustus, in order to find the secrets of astronomy, which are engraved in the book of Jove’s high firmament, scaled the top of Olympus mountain, where sitting in a burning bright chariot, drawn by the strength of yoked dragons’ necks, he viewed the clouds, the planets, and the stars, and the tropics, zones, and quarters of the sky, from the bright circle of the horned Moon, even to the height of the Primum Mobile.”

Unlike Dante, Faustus was unable to go past the Primum Mobile and view the Empyrean Heaven — the dwelling place of God.

The Chorus continued, “And whirling round with this circumference, within the concave compass of the pole, from east to west his dragons swiftly glide, and in eight days brought him home again.

“Not long did he stay within his quiet house to rest his bones after his weary toil, but new exploits haled him out again and he mounted then upon the back of a dragon, which parted with its wings the subtle, thin, and delicate air.

“He now has gone to test cosmography and see whether the maps of the cosmos are correct, and as I guess will first arrive at Rome to see Pope Adrian and the manner of his court and to take some part in and of holy Peter’s feast, the which this day is highly solemnized.”

Saint Peter’s feast day is June 29.

— 3.1 —

## [Scene 8]

Faustus and Mephistophilis talked together.

Faustus recounted his travels:

“My good Mephistophilis, we have now passed with delight the stately German town of Trier, which is environed round with airy mountain tops, with walls of flint and with deep entrenched lake-like moats, and which is not to be won by any conquering Prince.

“From Paris next, exploring the realm of France, we saw the Main River fall into the Rhine River, whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines.

“Then up to rich Campania and Naples, whose buildings are fair and gorgeous to the eye, and whose streets are straight and paved with the finest brick. There we saw learnéd Virgil’s golden tomb and the passage he cut an English mile in length through a huge mass of stone in one night’s space, with the use of magic.

“From thence to Venice, Padua, and the east, in one city of which a sumptuous temple stands that threatens the stars with her aspiring top, whose frame is paved with sundry colored stones, and which is roofed aloft with curious work in gold.

“Thus hitherto has Faustus spent his time.

“But tell me now, what resting place is this? Have you, as previously I commanded you to do, conducted me within the walls of Rome?”

“I have, my Faustus,” Mephistophilis said, “and for proof thereof, this is the goodly palace of Pope Adrian, and because we are no common guests, I choose his private chambers for our use.”

“I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome,” Faustus said.

“All’s one,” Mephistophilis said. “Whether he does or not, we’ll be bold with his venison.

“But now, my Faustus, so that you may perceive what Rome contains that will delight your eyes, know that this city stands upon seven hills that support the foundation of the city.

“Just through the midst runs the flowing Tiber River with winding banks that cut it into two parts over which two stately bridges lean that provide safe passage to each part of Rome.

“Upon the bridge called Ponto Angelo is erected a castle surpassingly strong, where you shall see such store of ordinance, as for example the large-caliber cannons forged of brass that match the number of the days contained within the compass of one complete year — there are 365 cannon. In addition, it has gates and it has a high obelisk that Julius Caesar brought from Africa.”

The Sistine Chapel was not among the delights of Rome that Mephistophilis enumerated.

Faustus said, “Now by the kingdoms of infernal rule, of Styx, of Acheron, and of the fiery lake of ever-burning Phlegethon, I swear that I long to see the monuments and layout of brightly resplendent Rome.”

Souls cross the Styx River to reach the Land of the Dead. The Acheron River is the river of woe in the Land of the Dead. The Phlegethon, which is often described as a river, is made of liquid fire. It also is in the Land of the Dead.

“Come, therefore,” Faustus said. “Let’s go.”

“No,” Mephistophilis said. “Stay, my Faustus. I know you’d like to see the Pope and take some part in and of holy Peter’s feast, the which with high solemnity this day is held throughout Rome and Italy, in honor of the Pope’s triumphant victory.”

Pope Adrian had recently achieved a notable victory, capturing a rival Pope named Bruno.

“Sweet Mephistophilis, you please me,” Faustus said. “While I am here on Earth, let me be cloyed — satiated to excess — with all things that delight the heart of Man.

“My twenty-four years of liberty I’ll spend in pleasure and in dalliance so that Faustus’ name, while this bright frame stands, may be admired throughout the furthest land.”

Mephistophilis replied, “That is well said, Faustus. Come, then, stand by me and you shall see them come very soon.”

“Wait, my gentle Mephistophilis, and grant me my request, and then I will go,” Faustus said. “You know that within the compass of eight days, we viewed the face of Heaven, the face of Earth, and Hell.

“So high our dragons soared into the air that as I looked down the Earth appeared to me to be no bigger than my hand in quantity. There we viewed the kingdoms of the world, and whatever might please my eye, I there beheld.

“So then in this show let me be an actor, so that this proud Pope may see Faustus’ cunning.”

“Let it be so, my Faustus,” Mephistophilis replied, “but first stay and view their triumphs as they pass this way. You can then devise what will best content your mind and make you happy.

“You can use your art to cross the Pope, or dash the pride of this ceremonious occasion.

“You can make his monks and abbots stand like apes, and point like clowns at his triple-crown — the diadem of the papacy.

“You can beat the beads about the Friars’ heads, or clap huge horns upon the Cardinals’ heads, or do any other villainy you can think of.

“Whatever it is, I’ll perform it, Faustus.

“Pay attention, here they come.

“This day shall make you be marveled at in Rome.”

The Cardinals and Bishops, some bearing crosiers and some bearing pillars, entered.

Crosiers resemble shepherds’ staffs.

Pillars are ornamental staffs.

Next the Monks and Friars, singing in their religious procession, entered. Then came Pope Adrian, and Raymond, King of Hungary, with Bruno the schismatic Pope led in chains.

Pope Adrian ordered, “Cast down our footstool.”

Raymond, King of Hungary, ordered, “Saxon Bruno, stoop while on your back his Holiness ascends Saint Peter’s chair and state pontifical.”

The state pontifical is the papal throne.

Bruno replied as he knelt, “Proud Lucifer, that state pontifical belongs to me. But thus I fall to Peter, not to you.”

Pope Adrian said, “To me and to Peter, you shall groveling lie and crouch before the papal dignity.”

He then ordered, “Sound the trumpets, for thus Saint Peter’s heir, from Bruno’s back, ascends Saint Peter’s chair.”

The trumpets sounded while Pope Adrian stepped on Bruno’s back and ascended the papal throne.

Pope Adrian said to Bruno, “Thus, as the gods creep on with feet of wool, long before with iron hands they punish men, so shall our sleeping vengeance now arise, and smite with death your hated enterprise.”

He then ordered, “Lord Cardinals of France and Padua, go without delay to our holy consistory, and read among the statutes decretal what by the holy council held at Trent, the sacred synod has decreed for him — Bruno — who assumes the papal government without election and without a true consent. Leave, and bring back this information to us speedily.”

The consistory is an ecclesiastical council. Statutes decretal are papal decrees. The Council of Trent had, among other things, condemned some Protestant ideas as heretical.

The first Cardinal replied, "We go, my Lord."

The Lord Cardinals of France and Padua exited.

Pope Adrian said, "Lord Raymond."

The two men talked together quietly.

"Go quickly, gentle Mephistophilis," Faustus said. "Follow the two Cardinals to the consistory, and as they turn the pages of their superstitious books, strike them with sloth and drowsy idleness, and make them sleep so soundly that we can assume their shapes and parley with this Pope, this proud confronter of the Emperor, and in despite of all his Holiness restore this Bruno to his liberty, and bear him to the states of Germany."

Mephistophilis replied, "Faustus, I go."

"Dispatch it quickly," Faustus said. "Pope Adrian shall curse that Faustus came to Rome."

Faustus and Mephistophilis exited.

"Pope Adrian, let me have some right of law," Bruno said. "I was elected by the Emperor."

"We will depose the Emperor for that deed, and curse — excommunicate — the people who submit to him," Pope Adrian said. "Both he and you shall stand excommunicate, and interdict — debarred — from Church's privilege, and all society of holy men."

The main Church's privilege that they would be debarred from was receiving the Holy Sacrament in the Mass.

Pope Adrian continued, "The Emperor grows too proud in his authority, lifting his lofty head above the clouds, and like a steeple overpeering the church. But we'll pull down his haughty insolence, and as Pope Alexander III, our progenitor, trod on the neck of the German Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I, adding this golden sentence to our praise, that Peter's heirs should tread on Emperors, and walk upon the dreadful adder's back, treading the lion and the dragon down, and fearless spurn the killing basilisk, so will we quell that haughty schismatic, and by apostolic authority depose him from his regal government."

In 1165, Pope Alexander III had excommunicated Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I. Now, Pope Adrian was engaged in a power struggle with Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.

Bruno said, "Pope Julius III swore to Princely Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund to regard the Holy Roman Emperors as the lawful lords for him and the succeeding Popes of Rome."

"Pope Julius III abused the Church's rites, and therefore none of his decrees can stand," Pope Adrian replied. "Isn't all power on earth bestowed on us? And therefore even if we were to wish to err we cannot."

He was referring to the doctrine of papal infallibility, but he had just said that Pope Julius III had made mistakes.



Pope Adrian continued, "Behold this silver belt to which are fixed seven golden keys fast sealed with seven seals, in token of our seven-fold power from Heaven: to bind or loose, lock fast, condemn, or judge, unseal, or seal, or whatsoever pleases us. So then he and you and all the world shall stoop, or be assured of our dreadful curse, which will alight as heavily as the pains of Hell."

Faustus and Mephistophilis entered. They were wearing the clothing and had assumed the forms of the two Cardinals who had left to carry out Pope Adrian's orders.

Mephistophilis said, "Now tell me, Faustus, aren't we outfitted well?"

"Yes, Mephistophilis, and two such Cardinals have never served a holy Pope as we shall do," Faustus said.

They intended to "serve" the Pope badly.

He continued, "But while the two real Cardinals sleep within the consistory, let us salute his reverend Fatherhood."

Raymond, King of Hungary, saw them and said, "Behold, my Lord, the two Cardinals have returned."

Pope Adrian said, "Welcome, grave Fathers, answer immediately: What have our holy council there decreed concerning Bruno and the Holy Roman Emperor, in quittance of their late conspiracy against our state and papal dignity?"

The disguised Faustus replied, "Most sacred patron of the Church of Rome, by full consent of all the synod of priests and prelates, it is thus decreed that Bruno and the German Emperor be regarded as Lollards and bold schismatics, and proud disturbers of the Church's peace."

Lollards are followers of the Protestant John Wycliff, some of whose ideas were condemned as heresies by Pope Gregory VII in 1377. Schismatics are people who cause a division in the church; for example, by setting up a rival Pope.

The disguised Faustus continued, "And if Bruno by his own assent, without being forced by the German peers, sought to wear the triple-crown, and by your death to climb up to Saint Peter's chair, the statutes decretal have decreed thus: He shall be immediately condemned as guilty of heresy, and on a pile of faggots burnt to death."

"It is enough," Pope Adrian said. "Here, take Bruno into your custody, and bear him immediately to Ponto Angelo, and in the strongest tower enclose him fast. Tomorrow, sitting in our consistory with all our college of grave Cardinals, we will determine whether he shall live or die.

"Here, take along with you the triple-crown he falsely wore, and leave it in the Church's treasury. Make haste and return back here again, my good lord Cardinals, and take with you our apostolic blessing."

Mephistophilis said quietly to Faustus, "Never was a devil thus blessed before."

Faustus said, "Leave, sweet Mephistophilis, be gone. The two Cardinals will be plagued for this very soon."

Faustus and Mephistophilis exited.

“Go immediately,” Pope Adrian ordered, “and bring a banquet forth so that we may celebrate Saint Peter’s feast, and with Lord Raymond, King of Hungary, drink to our recent and happy victory.”

All exited.

— 3.2 —

**[Scene 9]**

Servants brought in the banquet and exited, and then Faustus and Mephistophilis entered in their own shapes.

Mephistophilis said, “Now, Faustus, come prepare yourself for mirth. The sleepy Cardinals are close at hand to censure Bruno, who is riding away from here and on a proud-paced steed as swiftly as thought flies over the Alps to fruitful Germany, there to salute the woeful Emperor.”

The Emperor was woeful because Bruno had been captured.

Faustus said, “The Pope will curse the two Cardinals for their sloth today — they slept while both Bruno and his triple-crown got away. But so that Faustus may now delight his mind, and by their folly make some merriment, sweet Mephistophilis, so charm me here that I may walk invisible to all, and do whatever I please, unseen by anyone.”

“Faustus, you shall be invisible and do whatever you want,” Mephistophilis said. “Kneel down while on your head I lay my hand, and charm you with this magic wand. Before kneeling put on this belt, and after I charm you, you will appear invisible to all who are here.”

Mephistophilis then said the charm:

*“The planets seven, the gloomy air,*

*“Hell and the Furies’ forked hair,*

*“Pluto’s blue fire, and Hecate’s tree,*

*“With magic spells so encompass thee,*

*“That no eye may thy body see.”*

The Furies are avenging spirits of ancient Greece; they have snakes for hair.

Pluto is the ancient god of the Land of the Dead, a place where sulphur burns with a blue flame.

Hecate is the goddess of crossroads. Criminals were hung at crossroads, and a gallows was known as a Hecate-tree.

Mephistophilis then said, “So, Faustus, now for all these men’s holiness, do whatever you will; you shall not be seen.”

“Thanks, Mephistophilis,” Faustus said.

He then said, “Now, Friars, take heed, lest Faustus make your shaven crowns bleed.”

“Faustus, say no more,” Mephistophilis said. “See where the Cardinals come.”

Although Faustus could not be seen, yet he could be heard.

Pope Adrian and many Lords, including King Raymond of Hungary and the Archbishop of Rheims, entered.

The two Cardinals — the first Cardinal and the second Cardinal, whose forms Faustus and Mephistophilis had assumed — then entered, one of them carrying a book.

“Welcome, Lord Cardinals,” Pope Adrian said. “Come sit down. Lord Raymond, take your seat. Friars, wait on us and see that all things are in readiness, as best befits this ceremonious festival.”

The first Cardinal said, “May it first please your sacred Holiness to view the reverend synod sentence concerning Bruno and the Emperor?”

“Why do you need to ask this question?” Pope Adrian said. “Didn’t I tell you that tomorrow we would sit in the consistory and there determine Bruno’s punishment? You two Cardinals brought us word just now that it was decreed that Bruno and the cursed Holy Roman Emperor Charles V were by the holy council both condemned as loathed Lollards and base schismatics. Why, therefore, would you have me view that book?”

The first Cardinal said, “Your Grace is mistaken; we gave you and you gave us no such information.”

Raymond, King of Hungary, said, “Don’t deny it. We all are witnesses that Bruno here was recently handed over to you and his rich triple-crown was given to you to be set aside and put into the Church’s treasury.”

The two Cardinals said, “By holy Paul, we haven’t seen them.”

“By Peter, you shall die unless you bring them forth immediately,” Pope Adrian said.

He ordered, “Take them to prison, and load their limbs with fetters.”

He then told the two Cardinals, “False prelates, for this hateful treachery, may your souls be cursed to Hellish misery.”

Some attendants took away the two Cardinals.

The invisible Faustus said to himself, “So, they are safely out of the way. Now, Faustus, to the feast. The Pope has never had such a frolicsome guest, one so full of pranks.”

Pope Adrian said, “Lord Archbishop of Rheims, sit down with us.”

The Lord Archbishop of Rheims replied, “I thank your Holiness.”

The invisible Faustus said, “Fall to eating, and may the devil choke you if you eat sparingly.”

“Who’s that who spoke?” Pope Adrian said. “Friars, look around.”

He then said, “Lord Raymond, please fall to eating; I am beholden to the Bishop of Milan for this so rare a present.”

He lifted a plate holding a delicacy.

“I thank you, sir,” the invisible Faustus said as he snatched away the food.

“What!” Pope Adrian said. “Who snatched the food away from me? Villains, why don’t you speak?”

Calming down, he said, “My good Lord Archbishop, here’s a most dainty dish, which was sent me from a Cardinal in France.”

The invisible Faustus said, “I’ll have that, too.” He snatched away the food.

Pope Adrian said, “What heretics attend our Holiness that we receive such great indignity? Fetch me some wine.”

The invisible Faustus said, “Yes, please do, for Faustus is thirsty.”

“Lord Raymond, I drink to your grace,” Pope Adrian said.

The invisible Faustus snatched away the wine and said, “I pledge your grace,” and then he drank the wine.

“My wine gone, too?” Pope Adrian said. “You clumsy, stupid lubbers! Look around and find the man who is doing this villainy, or by our sanctitude you all shall die.”

He then said to his invited guests, “I ask my Lords to please have patience at this troublesome banquet.”

The Lord Archbishop of Rheims said, “May it please your holiness, I think some ghost has crept out of Purgatory, and now has come to your Holiness for his forgiveness of sins.”

“It may be so,” Pope Adrian said.

He ordered some attendants, “Go and command our priests to sing a dirge to allay the fury of this troublesome ghost.”

A dirge is a requiem mass — a mass for the repose of the souls of the dead.

Pope Adrian crossed himself.

“What!” the invisible Faustus said. “Must every mouthful of food be spiced with a cross?”

He hit Pope Adrian and said, “So, then, take that!”

Pope said, “Oh, I am slain; help me, my lords. Oh, come and help to bear my body away from here. Damned be this soul forever for this deed.”

Pope Adrian and his train of attendants exited.

Mephistophilis said, “Faustus, what will you do now, for I can tell you that you’ll be cursed with bell, book, and candle?”

Unperturbed, Faustus replied, “Bell, book, and candle. Candle, book, and bell. Forward and backward to curse Faustus to Hell.”

All of the Friars returned. One carried a bell, another a book (a Bible), and a third a candle. Previously, the Pope had instructed them to sing a dirge, which is sung for the repose of souls, but apparently the Pope was very angry at the invisible Faustus because the Friars sang a curse instead of a dirge.

The Pope had wanted to be merciful to the “ghost,” but Faustus’ actions had convinced the Pope to be not merciful.

“Come, brethren,” the first Friar said. “Let’s go about our business with good devotion.”

They sang:

*“Cursed be he who stole away his Holiness’ food from the table!*

*“Maledicat Dominus!*

*“Cursed be he who struck his Holiness a blow on the face!*

*“Maledicat Dominus!*

*“Cursed be he who struck Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate [head]!*

*“Maledicat Dominus!*

*“Cursed be he who disturbs our holy ‘dirge’!”*

The invisible Faustus was interfering with the Friars’ singing.

The Friars continued singing:

*“Maledicat Dominus!*

*“Cursed be he who took away his Holiness’ wine!*

*“Maledicat Dominus!”*

*“Maledicat Dominus!”* means “May the Lord curse him!”

Mephistophilis and the invisible Faustus beat the Friars and flung firecrackers among them, and the Friars all ran away.

— 3.3 —

### [Scene 10]

Robin and Dick talked together. Dick was holding a cup.

Dick said, “Sirrah Robin, it would be best that we make sure your devil can answer the charge of stealing this cup, for the Vintner’s boy is following us hard at our heels.”

“It doesn’t matter,” Robin replied. “Let him come. If he follows us, I’ll so conjure him as he was never conjured in his life, I promise you. Let me see the cup.”

Dick gave Robin the cup and said, “Here it is.”

The Vintner arrived; not just the Vintner’s servant had been searching for the thieves.

Seeing the Vintner coming toward them, Dick said, “Yonder he comes. Now, Robin, now or never, show your cunning.”

“Oh, are you here?” the Vintner said. “I am glad I have found you; you are a couple of fine fellows. Please tell me where the cup is that you stole from the tavern.”

“What! What!” Robin said, pretending to be outraged. “We steal a cup? Take heed what you say; we don’t look like cup-stealers, I can tell you.”

“Never deny it, for I know you have it, and I’ll search you,” the Vintner said.

“Search me?” Robin said. “Go ahead and search me thoroughly.”

He secretly passed the cup to Dick and said quietly, “Hold the cup, Dick. “

Robin then said to the Vintner, “Come, come. Search me, search me.”

The Vintner searched Robin and did not find the cup, so he turned to Dick and said, “Come on, sirrah, let me search you now.”

“Yes, yes,” Dick said. “Do, do.”

He secretly passed the cup to Robin and said quietly, “Hold the cup, Robin.”

Dick said to the Vintner, “I don’t fear your searching me; we scorn to steal your cups, I can tell you.”

“Don’t try to outface me in this matter,” the Vintner said, “for I am sure the cup is between you two.”

“No, there you lie,” Robin said. “It is not in between us; it is beyond us both.”

He held the cup out to the side furthest from Dick and showed the Vintner the cup.

“A plague take you,” the Vintner said. “I thought it was your knavery to take it away. Come, give it back to me.”

“Yeah, sure,” Robin said sarcastically. “When will I give it to you, can you tell? How about never?”

“Dick, make a circle for me, and stand close at my back, and don’t move for your life.

“Vintner, you shall have your cup ‘soon.’

“Say nothing, Dick.”

Robin then chanted some demons’ names: “‘O’ per se ‘o,’ Demogorgon! Belcher and Mephistophilis!”

Mephistophilis appeared and complained, “You Princely legions of infernal rule, how I am vexed by these villains’ charms! From Constantinople have their charms brought me now, only for the pleasure of these damned slaves.”

Mephistophilis and Faustus had been doing much more traveling, but Mephistophilis had come in response to Robin’s summons. As usual, he hoped to get a soul, but Mephistophilis was an important demon and Robin’s soul was not worth his time. Faustus, on the other hand, had — or used to have — great potential to do good, and gaining Faustus’ soul was worth twenty-four years of servitude.

Frightened, but not frightened enough not to grab his cup first, the Vintner ran away.

Robin said, “By Our Lady — Mary — sir, you have had a vexatious journey of it. Will it please you to take a shoulder of mutton to supper, and a sixpence in your purse, and go back again?”

“Yes, I ask you heartily to leave, sir,” Dick said, “for we called you but in jest, I promise you.”

Mephistophilis replied, “To purge the rashness of this cursed deed, first you will be turned to this ugly shape — for apish deeds, you will be transformed into an ape.”

“Oh, splendid!” Robin said. “An ape! Please, sir, let me have the carrying of him about to show some tricks.”

Mephistophilis replied, “And so you shall be intransformed to a dog, and carry him upon your back. Go away! Be gone.”

“A dog? That’s excellent!” Robin said. “Let the maids look well after their porridge pots, for I’ll go into the kitchen right away. Come, Dick, come.”

Robin carried Dick away on his back.

Mephistophilis said, “Now with the flames of ever-burning fire, I’ll give myself wings and immediately fly at full speed to my Faustus, who is in the great Turk’s court in Constantinople.”

#### **ACT 4 (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)**

— 4.1 —

#### **[Scene 11]**

Martino and Frederick, two gentlemen who served the Roman Emperor Charles V, met each other. Some officers and gentlemen were present.

Martino said, “What ho, officers, gentlemen! Hurry to the presence chamber to attend the Emperor.”

He then said, “Good Frederick, see that the rooms are cleared immediately. His majesty is coming to the hall. Go back and see that the throne is in readiness.”

Frederick asked, “But where is Bruno, our elected pope, who on a Fury’s back came posthaste from Rome?”

A Fury is an avenging goddess from Hell.

He continued, “Won’t his grace — Bruno — accompany the Emperor?”

“Oh, yes,” Martino said, “and with him comes the German conjuror: the learned Faustus, fame of Wittenberg, the wonder of the world for the art of magic.

“Faustus intends to show great Charles V the race of all his brave progenitors — predecessors and ancestors — and bring into the presence of his majesty the royal shapes and warlike semblances of Alexander and his beauteous paramour.”

Frederick asked, “Where is Benvolio?”

Benvolio was another gentleman at the court.

“Fast asleep, I assure you,” Martino said. “Last night, he drank his fill with goblets of Rhenish wine so kindly to Bruno’s health that all this day the sluggard stays in bed.”

Frederick said, “Look! See, his window’s open. We’ll call to him.”

Martino called, “What ho, Benvolio!”

Benvolio appeared at a second-story window, still wearing his nightcap and buttoning his clothing.

Benvolio said, “What the devil is the matter with you two?”

“Speak softly, sir, lest the devil hear you,” Martino said, “for Doctor Faustus has recently arrived at the court, and at his heels a thousand Furies wait to accomplish whatsoever the Doctor wants.”

Benvolio replied, “So what?”

Martino said, “Come and leave your chamber first, and you shall see this conjuror perform such splendid exploits before Pope Bruno and royal Holy Roman Emperor Charles V as were never yet seen in Germany.”

“Hasn’t Pope Bruno enough of conjuring yet?” Benvolio said. “He was upon the devil’s back recently enough, and if he is so much in love with him, I wish he would ride on him back to Rome again.”

Frederick said, “Tell us, will you come and see this entertainment?”

“Not I,” Benvolio replied.

“Will you stand in your window and see it then?” Martino asked.

“Yes, if I don’t fall asleep in the meantime,” Benvolio replied.

“The Emperor is close at hand,” Martino said. “He has come to see what wonders black spells may perform.”

Benvolio said, “Well, you go and attend the Emperor.”

Frederick and Martino exited.

Benvolio said to himself, “I am content for this once to thrust my head out at a window, for they say that if a man has been drunk overnight, the devil cannot hurt him in the morning. If that is true, I have a charm in my head that shall control him as well as the conjuror can control him, I promise you.”

Trumpets sounded, and the German Emperor Charles V, Bruno, the Duke of Saxony, Faustus, the invisible Mephistophilis, Frederick, Martino, and some attendants arrived.

Holy Roman Emperor Charles V said to Faustus, “Wonder of men, renowned magician, thrice-learnéd Faustus, welcome to our court. This deed of yours in setting Bruno free from his and our professed enemy shall add more excellence to your art than if by powerful necromantic spells you could command the world’s obedience.

“Forever be beloved by me: Carolus.”



Carolus is medieval Latin for Charles.

He continued, “And And if this Bruno you have recently rescued should possess the triple-crown in peace and sit in Saint Peter’s chair, in spite of fortune, you shall be famous throughout all Italy, and honored by me, the German Emperor.”

Faustus replied, “These gracious words, most royal Carolus, shall make poor Faustus to his utmost power both love and serve the German Emperor and lay his life at holy Bruno’s feet. For proof whereof, if your Grace will be so pleased, I the Doctor stand prepared, by power of art, to cast my magic charms that shall pierce through the ebony gates of ever-burning Hell, and hail the stubborn Furies from their caves to do whatsoever your grace commands.”

When Faustus had made a gift of deed of his soul to Lucifer, he believed that he would be Emperor of the World, and that Holy Roman Emperor Charles V would not live except with his permission, but now Faustus was servile to Charles V.

Benvolio, standing at a second-floor window, said, “By God’s blood, he speaks terribly, but for all that, I do not greatly believe him; he looks as much like a conjuror as the Pope looks like a costermonger.”

A costermonger is a fruit seller.

Emperor Charles V said, “Now, Faustus, as you recently promised us, we would like to behold that famous conqueror Alexander the Great and his paramour, in their true shapes and majestic state, so that we may wonder at their excellence.”

“Your majesty shall see them very soon,” Faustus promised.

He ordered, “Mephistophilis, leave, and with a solemn sound of trumpets, present before this royal Emperor, great Alexander and his beauteous paramour.”

Mephistophilis replied, “Faustus, I will.”

Benvolio said, “Well, Master Doctor, if your devils don’t come back quickly, you will make me fall asleep quickly. By God’s wounds, I could eat my anger to think I have been such an ass all this while, to stand gaping after the devil’s governor, and can see nothing.”

By “the devil’s governor,” Benvolio meant Faustus. The devil’s governor is one who can command the devil.

Benvolio was speaking loudly enough for Faustus to hear him.

Faustus said quietly to himself about Benvolio, “I’ll make you feel something soon, if my art does not fail me.”

He then said to Emperor Charles V, “My Lord, I must forewarn your majesty that when my spirits present the royal shapes of Alexander the Great and his paramour, your grace will ask no questions of King Alexander, but in silence let the spirits come and go.”

Using the royal plural, Emperor Charles V said, “Be it as Faustus pleases; we are content.”

“Yes, yes,” Benvolio said, “and I am content, too. If you really do bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor, I’ll be Actaeon, and turn myself to a stag.”

Overhearing Benvolio, Faustus said quietly to himself, "And I'll play Diana, and send you the horns very soon."

Actaeon was an ancient hunter who accidentally saw the virgin goddess Diana bathing nude in a stream. She noticed him, and she punished him by turning him into a stag; he had the body of a male deer with horns, but he kept his human mind. His own dogs caught his scent and they ran him down and tore him to pieces.

Faustus was threatening to give the knight horns on his forehead. A common joke of the time was that unfaithful wives gave their husbands horns.

Trumpets sounded as the spirits arrived.

A spirit portraying Alexander the Great and another spirit portraying Darius, King of Persia, arrived. Alexander had defeated Darius in 333 B.C.E.

The two spirits met and performed a dumbshow (a short, silent play): Alexander threw down Darius, killed him, and took off his crown. As he started to leave, his paramour met him. He embraced her and set Darius' crown upon her head. They then saluted Emperor Charles V.

Impressed by the dumbshow, Emperor Charles V left his throne and went to the spirits and wanted to embrace them, but Faustus quickly stopped him.

The trumpets stopped and music began.

"My gracious lord, you forget yourself," Faustus said to Emperor Charles V. "These are only shadows; they are not substantial."

"Oh, pardon me, my thoughts are so ravished with the sight of this renowned Emperor Alexander that in my arms I would have hugged him," Emperor Charles V said. "But, Faustus, since I may not speak to them, to satisfy my longing thoughts fully, let me tell you this: I have heard it said that this fair lady, while she lived on earth, had on her neck a little wart or mole. How may I prove that saying to be true?"

Faustus replied, "Your Majesty may boldly go and see."

Emperor Charles V went to the spirit portraying Alexander the Great's paramour, looked, and said, "Faustus, I see it plainly, and in this sight you have better pleased me than if I had gained another monarchy."

Faustus said to the spirits, "Away! Be gone!"

The spirits exited.

Faustus then said, "Look, look, my gracious lord, what strange beast is yonder that thrusts his head out the window."

Emperor Charles V looked up and saw the sleeping Benvolio, who now had horns growing from his head, which was outside his window.

He said, "Oh, what a wondrous sight! Look, Duke of Saxony, two widely spreading horns are most strangely fastened upon the head of young Benvolio!"

The Duke of Saxony asked, "Is he asleep? Or dead?"

Faustus said, "He is sleeping, my lord, but he doesn't dream that he has horns."

"This entertainment is excellent," Emperor Charles V said. "We'll call and wake him. What ho, Benvolio!"

Benvolio woke up, and not realizing that the Emperor was the one calling him, said, "A plague upon you! Let me sleep a while."

Emperor Charles V said, "I don't blame you for sleeping so much, considering that you have such a head."

"Look up, Benvolio," the Duke of Saxony said. "It is the Emperor who is calling you."

"The Emperor?" Benvolio said. "Where?"

He lifted his head and hit his horns on the window lintel (beam at the top of the window) and stiles (sides of the window sash) and said, "Oh, by God's wounds, my head!"

Emperor Charles V said, "No, don't worry about your head because it is very well armed."

Faustus asked Benvolio, "Why, how are you now, Sir Knight? What, hanged by the horns? This is most horrible! Pull your head in the window for shame; don't let all the world wonder at you."

Benvolio's horns were so big that he couldn't pull his head back through the window.

Feeling his head, Benvolio said, "By God's wounds, Doctor Faustus, is this your villainy?"

Faustus replied, "Oh, don't say so, sir. Remember what you said: Doctor Faustus has no skill, no art, no cunning, to present these lords or to bring before this royal Emperor the mighty monarch known as warlike Alexander. If Faustus does do it, you said that you are immediately resolved to do as bold Actaeon did and turn into a stag."

He then said to Emperor Charles V, "And therefore, my lord, if it will please your majesty, I'll raise a kennel of hounds that shall hunt him so as all his footmanship and skill in running shall scarcely prevail to keep his carcass from their bloody fangs."

Faustus then began to summon demons that would assume the shape of hunting dogs: "Ho, Belimote, Argiron, Asterote."

"Wait! Wait!" Benvolio said. "By God's wounds, he'll raise up a kennel of devils, I think, soon."

He then entreated Emperor Charles V, "My good lord, entreat for me."

The devils Faustus had raised attacked Benvolio.

"By God's blood," Benvolio said. "I am completely unable to endure these torments!"

Emperor Charles V said, "Good Master Doctor Faustus, let me entreat you to remove his horns. He has sufficiently done penance now."

Faustus replied, "My gracious Lord, not so much for injury done to me as to delight your majesty with some mirth has Faustus justly requited this injurious knight, which being all I desire, I am content to remove his horns."

He ordered, “Mephistophilis, transform him and remove his horns.

Mephistophilis did, and the devils exited.

Faustus said to Benvolio, “And hereafter, sir, make sure that you speak well of scholars.”

“Speak well of you?” Benvolio said. “By God’s blood, if scholars be such cuckold-makers as to clap horns on honest men’s heads in this fashion, I’ll never trust the smooth faces and small ruffs of scholars any more. But if I am not revenged for this, I wish that I might be turned into a gaping oyster and drink nothing but salt water.”

Scholars of the time wore a small ruff — a type of collar.

Emperor Charles V said, “Come, Faustus, while the Emperor lives, in recompense of this your high desert, you shall command the state of Germany, and live beloved by me, mighty Carolus.”

— 4.2 —

### [Scene 12]

Benvolio, Martino, Frederick, and some soldiers assembled.

Martino said, “No, sweet Benvolio, let us sway your thoughts away from this attempt at getting revenge against the conjuror.”

“Go away,” Benvolio replied. “You don’t respect me if you urge me to do that. Shall I let pass so great an injury, when every servile low fellow jests at my wrongs, and in their rustic goings-on proudly say that Benvolio’s head was graced with horns today?”

“Oh, may these eyelids never close again until with my sword I have slain that conjuror. If you will aid me in this enterprise, then draw your weapons and be resolute. If not, depart. Here Benvolio will die unless Faustus’ death repays my infamy.”

Frederick said, “We will stay with you, let happen what may, and kill that Doctor Faustus if he comes this way.”

Benvolio said, “Then, nobly born Frederick, hasten to the grove, and place our servants and our followers secretly hidden in an ambush there behind the trees.

“I know the conjuror is near by this time. I saw him kneel, and kiss the Emperor’s hand, and take his leave, laden with rich rewards.

“So then, soldiers, boldly fight. If Faustus dies, you can have the wealth; leave us the victory.”

“Come on, soldiers,” Frederick said. “Follow me into the grove. Whoever kills Faustus shall have gold and endless love.”

Frederick exited with the soldiers.

Benvolio said, “My head is lighter than it was by the horns, but yet my heart’s more ponderous than my head, and it pants until I see that conjuror dead.”

Martino asked, “Where shall we place ourselves, Benvolio?”

“Here we will stay to wait for the first assault,” Benvolio said. “Oh, if that damned Hell-hound were here now, you soon would see me get revenge for my foul disgrace.”

Frederick, who had hidden the soldiers, came back and said, “Hide! Hide! The conjuror is close at hand, and all alone comes walking in his gown. Be ready, then, and strike the peasant down.”

“Mine will be that honor then,” Benvolio said. “Now, sword, strike home. For the horns he gave me, I’ll have his head soon.”

Faustus arrived and walked close to the hidden Benvolio and his friends.

Martino said, “Look, look, he comes.”

“No words,” Benvolio said. “This blow ends all. May Hell take his soul; his body thus must fall.”

He struck Faustus, who fell and groaned.

“Are you groaning, Master Doctor?” Frederick asked.

“May his heart break with groans,” Benvolio said. “Dear Frederick, watch. Thus will I end his griefs immediately.”

“Strike with a willing hand,” Martino said.

Benvolio struck Faustus.

Martino said about Faustus, “His head is off.”

“The devil’s dead,” Benvolio said. “The Furies now may laugh.”

Because the Furies were avenging goddesses from Hell, Benvolio thought that they would applaud his getting revenge on Faustus.

Looking at Faustus’ severed head, Frederick said, “Was this that stern aspect, that awful frown that made the grim monarch of infernal spirits tremble and quake at his commanding charms?”

Martino said, “Was this that damned head, whose heart conspired to make Benvolio feel shame before the Emperor?”

“Yes, that’s the head and here the body lies, justly rewarded for his villainies,” Benvolio said.

“Come, let’s devise how we may add more shame to the black scandal of his hated name,” Frederick said.

Benvolio said, “First, on his head, in repayment for the wrongs he did me, I’ll nail huge forked horns and let them hang within the window where he yoked me first, so that all the world may see my just revenge.”

He had been yoked with horns that were so big that his head could not get back through the window.

Martino asked, “What use shall we put his beard to?”

“We’ll sell it to a chimney-sweeper,” Benvolio said. “It will wear out ten birch brooms, I promise you.”

“What shall his eyes do?” Frederick asked.

“We’ll put out his eyes,” Benvolio said, “and they shall serve for buttons to his lips to keep his tongue from catching cold.”

“An excellent plan,” Martino said. “And now, sirs, having divided him, what shall the body do?”

Faustus stood up.

Benvolio said, “By God’s wounds, the devil’s alive again!”

“Give him his head, for God’s sake,” Frederick said.

“No, keep it,” Faustus said. “Faustus will have heads and hands, yes, and all your hearts to recompense this deed. Didn’t you know, traitors, that I was given a span of twenty-four years to breathe on Earth? And if you had cut my body with your swords, or hewed this flesh and bones into pieces as small as grains of sand, yet in a minute my spirit would return and I would breathe as a man made free from harm.

“But why do I delay my revenge?”

He shouted the names of demons: “Asteroth! Belimoth! Mephistophilis!”

Mephistophilis and the other devils arrived.

Faustus ordered, “Go put these traitors on your fiery backs, and mount aloft with them as high as Heaven. From thence pitch them headlong to the lowest Hell.

“Yet wait, for the world shall see their misery, and Hell shall afterward plague their treachery.

“Go, Belimoth, and take this caitiff Martino hence, and hurl him in some lake of mud and dirt.

“Asteroth, take this one — Frederick — and drag him through the woods among the pricking thorns and sharpest briars.

“Meanwhile, this traitor — Benvolio — will fly with my gentle Mephistophilis to some steep rock, from which Benvolio may roll down and the villain break his bones, just as he intended to dismember me.

“Fly hence, obey my orders immediately.”

Frederick pleaded, “Pity us, gentle Faustus; save our lives.”

Faustus said, “Away with you!”

Frederick said, “He must needs go whom the devil drives.”

The spirits exited, carrying the knights on their backs.

The soldiers who had been lying in ambush arrived.

The first soldier said, "Come, sirs, prepare yourselves in readiness. Make haste to help these noble gentlemen. I heard them talking with the conjuror."

The second soldier said, "See where the conjuror comes! Let's follow our orders at once, and kill the wretch."

"What's here?" Faustus said. "An ambush to betray my life! So then, Faustus, test your skill."

"Base peasants, come to a halt, for look, these trees move at my command, and stand as bulwarks between yourselves and me to shield me from your hated treachery. Yet to encounter this your weak attempt against my life, behold an army that comes instantly."

Faustus struck the ground with a staff, and the ground opened and several devils came out. One devil was playing on a drum. Behind him came another devil bearing a battle flag, and several devils with weapons. Mephistophilis also showed up, carrying fireworks. The devils set upon the soldiers and drove them out.

— 4.3 —

**[Scene 13]**

Benvolio, Frederick, and Martino, their heads and faces bloody and besmeared with mud and dirt, and all having horns on their heads, were searching for each other.

Martino called, "What ho, Benvolio!"

Benvolio called, "Here I am! What ho, Frederick!"

Frederick called, "Oh, help me, gentle friend; where is Martino?"

Martino called, "Dear Frederick, here I am, half smothered in a lake of mud and dirt, through which the Furies dragged me by the heels."

They met and Frederick looked at Benvolio.

Frederick said, "Martino, look! Benvolio has horns again!"

"Oh, misery!" Martino said. "How are you now, Benvolio?"

Benvolio saw the horns on his friends' heads and said, "Defend me, Heaven. Shall I be haunted still?"

Martino said, "No, don't be afraid, man; we have no power to kill."

He meant that they weren't devils and would not harm him.

Benvolio looked at Frederick's horns and Martino's horns and said, "My friends transformed thus! Oh, hellish spite! Your heads are all set with horns."

Frederick said, "You hit it right, but it is your own head you mean. Feel on your head."

Benvolio felt the horns on his head and said, "By God's wounds, horns again!"

Frederick and Martino looked at each other and saw horns, and then each man felt his own head.

Martino said to Benvolio, “Don’t chafe, man; we are all in the same boat.”

Benvolio said, “What devil attends this damned magician, who, in spite of all that we can do, doubles the wrongs he does us?”

“What may we do so that we may hide our shames?” Frederick asked.

“If we should follow him to work revenge, he’d join asses’ long ears to these huge horns,” Benvolio said, “and make us laughingstocks to all the world.”

“What shall we do then, dear Benvolio?” Martino asked.

“I have a castle nearby, adjoining these woods,” Benvolio said. “Thither we’ll go and live obscure lives until time shall alter our brutish shapes. Since black disgrace has thus eclipsed our fame and reputations, we will rather die with grief than live with shame.”

— 4.4 —

[Scene 14]

Faustus and a Horse Dealer were bargaining about a horse that Faustus had for sale. Mephistophilis, invisible, was present.

The Horse Dealer said, “I beseech your worship to accept these forty dollars as payment for your horse.”

“Friend, you cannot buy so good a horse for so small a price,” Faustus said. “I have no great need to sell him, but if you like him enough to pay ten dollars more for him, take him, because I see you have a good mind to have him.”

“I beseech you, sir, accept this,” the Horse Dealer said. “I am a very poor man, and I have lost very much recently by trading in horse flesh, and this bargain will set me up again.”

“Well, I will not haggle with you,” Faustus said. “Give me the money.”

The Horse Dealer gave him forty dollars.

Faustus continued, “Now, sirrah, I must tell you that you may ride him over hedge and ditch without sparing him, but listen carefully — no matter what, don’t ride him into the water.”

“What, sir, not into the water?” the Horse Dealer asked. “Why, will he not drink of all waters?”

“Drink of all waters” means “go anywhere.”

Faustus replied, “Yes, he will drink of all waters, but don’t ride him into the water. Ride him over hedge and ditch, or wherever you will, but not into the water. Go tell the Hostler to deliver him to you and remember what I told you.”

“I promise you I will, sir,” the Horse Dealer said.

He then said quietly to himself, “Oh, joyful day, now am I a made man forever.”

The Horse Dealer exited.

Faustus said to himself, “What are you, Faustus, but a man condemned to die? Your fatal time — your day of death and damnation — draws to a final end. Despair drives distrust into my



thoughts. I will allay these passions with a quiet sleep. Tush, Christ called the thief upon the cross. So then rest yourself, Faustus, quiet in mind.”

Faustus was comforting himself with a Biblical story of a man who was saved from damnation at the end of his life: Jesus was crucified between two thieves, one of whom asked to be remembered when Jesus came into his kingdom.

Luke 23:39-43 states (1599 Geneva Bible):

*39 And one of the evildoers, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be that Christ, save thyself and us.*

*40 But the other answered, and rebuked him, saying, Fearest thou not God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?*

*41 We are indeed righteously here: for we receive things worthy of that we have done: but this man hath done nothing amiss.*

*42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom.*

*43 Then Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

Faustus sat in a chair to go to sleep.

The Horse Dealer, wet, came back and said, “Oh, what a cheating Doctor is this! Riding my horse into the water because I thought some hidden mystery had been in the horse, I found that I had nothing under me but a little straw, and I had much trouble to escape drowning. Well, I’ll go rouse him, and make him give me my forty dollars again.

“Ho, sirrah Doctor, you cheating scab! Master Doctor, awaken and rise and give me my money again, for your horse is turned into a bundle of hay, Master Doctor.”

The Horse Dealer grabbed Faustus’ leg and pulled on it to wake Faustus up. He pulled off the leg.

“Alas, I am ruined,” the Horse Dealer said. “What shall I do? I have pulled off his leg!”

Faustus shouted, “Oh, help! Help! The villain has murdered me!”

“Murder or no murder, now he has only one leg,” the Horse Dealer said. “I’ll out-run him, and throw his leg into some ditch or other.”

He ran away.

Faustus shouted, “Stop him! Stop him! Stop him!”

Then he laughed and said, “Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse Dealer has a bundle of hay for his forty dollars.”

Wagner, Faustus’ servant, entered Faustus’ study.

“Hello, Wagner,” Faustus said. “What is the news with you?”

“If it pleases you, the Duke of Vanholt does earnestly entreat your company, and he has sent some of his men to attend you with all the provisions needed for your journey.”

Faustus said, "The Duke of Vanholt's an honorable gentleman, and one to whom I must not be sparing with my magical conjuring.

"Let's go."

— 4.5 —

**[Scene 15]**

Robin, Dick, the Horse Dealer, and a Carter — a man who transported goods by cart, talked together.

"Come, my masters, I'll bring you to the best beer in Europe," the Carter said.

He called, "What ho, Hostess! Where be these whores?"

The Hostess of the tavern appeared and asked, "How are you now? What do you lack? What can I bring you? My old guests, welcome."

Robin said quietly to Dick, "Sirrah Dick, do you know why I stand so mute?"

"No, Robin, why do you?"

"I am eighteen pence in debt here at the tavern, but say nothing," Robin said. "Let's see if she has forgotten me."

"Who's this, who stands so solemnly by himself?" the Hostess asked, looking at Robin. Recognizing him, she said, "My old guest!"

"Oh, Hostess, how do you do?" Robin said. "I hope my tab stands still."

He meant that he hoped his credit was still good, but the Hostess took his words as meaning that he still owed her.

"Yes, there's no doubt of that," the Hostess said, "for I think you are in no haste to pay off your tab and wipe it out."

Dick said, "Why, Hostess, I say, fetch us some beer."

The Hostess said, "You shall have it immediately."

She called to an employee, "Look up into the hall there, ho!"

Then she exited.

"Come, sirs," Dick said. "What shall we do now until my Hostess comes back?"

"Indeed, sir," the Carter said, "I'll tell you the most splendid tale about how a conjuror served me. You know of Doctor Faustus?"

"Yes, may a plague take him," the Horse Dealer said. "Here's some of us have reason to know him. Did he conjure you, too?"

"I'll tell you how he served me," the Carter said. "As I was going to Wittenberg the other day, with a load of hay, he met me and asked me what he should give me for as much hay as he could eat. Now, sir, I, thinking that a little would serve his turn, bade him eat as much as he

would for three farthings. So he immediately gave me my money and fell to eating, and as I am a Cursen man, he never stopped eating until he had eaten up all my load of hay.”

“Cursen” was a dialectical form of “Christian,” but the word “cursed” is relevant here.

“Oh, monstrous!” the others said. “Eat a whole load of hay!”

“Yes, yes, that may be the truth,” Robin said, “for I have heard of someone who has eaten a load of logs.”

A log is a Hebrew measure that is mentioned in the Tyndale Bible: It is about three-quarters of a pint. Wine and ale were often served in wooden vessels.

The Horse Dealer said, “Now, sirs, you shall hear how villainously he served me. I went to him yesterday to buy a horse from him, and he would by no means sell him for under forty dollars. So, sir, because I knew the horse for sale to be such a horse as would run over hedge and ditch and never tire, I gave him his money. So when I had my horse, Doctor Faustus bade me ride him night and day, and spare him at no time. But, said he, no matter what, don’t ride him into the water. Now, sir, thinking the horse had some quality that Doctor Faustus would not have me know of, what did I do but ride him into a great river, and when I came just in the midst of the river my horse vanished away, and I sat straddling a bundle of hay.”

“Oh, brave Doctor!” the others said.

“But you shall hear how bravely I served him for it,” the Horse Dealer said. “I went to his house, and there I found him asleep. I kept a hallowing and whooping in his ears, but all I could do could not wake him. I, seeing that, took him by the leg and never stopped pulling until I had pulled his leg quite off, and now it is at home in my inn.”

“And has the Doctor only one leg then?” Robin said. “That’s excellent, for one of his devils turned me into the likeness of an ape’s face.”

“Bring some more drink, Hostess,” the Carter called.

“Listen,” Robin said. “We’ll go into another room and drink a while, and then we’ll go and seek out the Doctor.”

— 4.6 —

### [Scene 16]

The Duke of Vanholt, his pregnant Duchess, Faustus, and the invisible Mephistophilis stood together.

The Duke of Vanholt said, “Thanks, Master Doctor, for these pleasant sights. I don’t know how I can sufficiently recompense your great deserts in erecting that enchanted castle in the air, the sight of which so delighted me, as nothing in the world could please me more.”

Faustus replied, “I think myself, my good lord, highly recompensed, in that it pleases your grace to think only well of that which Faustus has performed.”

He then said to the pregnant Duchess of Vanholt, “But, gracious lady, it may be that you have taken no pleasure in those sights. Therefore, I ask you to tell me what is the thing you most

desire to have? If it is in the world, it shall be yours. I have heard that great-bellied women long for things that are rare and dainty.”

“True, Master Doctor,” the Duchess of Vanholt said, “and since I find you so kind, I will make known to you what my heart desires to have. If it were now summer instead of January, a dead time of the winter, I would request no better food than a dish of ripe grapes.”

“This is only a small matter,” Faustus said.

He ordered, “Go, Mephistophilis. Away.”

The invisible Mephistophilis exited.

Faustus then said, “Madam, I will do more than this for your contentment and happiness.”

The invisible Mephistophilis returned with the grapes.

Faustus gave the grapes to the Duchess and said, “Here, now taste these. They should be good for they come from a far country, I can tell you.”

The Duke of Vanholt said, “This makes me wonder more than all the rest of the wonders you have performed. At this time of the year, when every tree is barren of its fruit, from whence have you gotten these ripe grapes?”

“If it pleases your grace,” Faustus replied, “the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, so that when it is winter with us, in the contrary circle it is likewise summer with them, as in India, Saba, and such countries that lie far east, where they have fruit twice a year, from whence, by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had these grapes brought, as you see.”

India and Saba (now called Yemen) are in the northern hemisphere, but as usual Mephistophilis did not correct Faustus.

“And trust me,” the Duchess of Vanholt said, “they are the sweetest grapes that I ever tasted.”

Robin, Dick, the Horse Dealer, and the Carter — all of them drunk — knocked loudly at the gate.

“What rude disturbers have we at the gate?” the Duke of Vanholt asked.

He ordered a servant, “Go, pacify their fury. Open the gate, and then ask them what they want.”

Robin, Dick, the Horse Dealer, and the Carter knocked again and called out that they wanted to talk with Faustus.

A servant opened the gate and said, “Why, how are you now, masters? What a disturbance you are making! What is the reason you disturb the Duke?”

Dick said, “We have no reason for it; therefore, a fig for him.”

He made a fig in his hand: his thumb thrust between two fingers. This is an obscene gesture.

The servant said, “Saucy varlets, do you dare to be so bold?”

“I hope, sir,” the Horse Dealer said, “that we have wit enough to be more bold than welcome.”

They were not welcome, and so they were definitely more bold than they were welcome.

“It appears so,” the servant said. “Please be bold elsewhere, and don’t trouble the Duke.”

“What do they want?” the Duke of Vanholt asked.

“They all cry out to speak with Doctor Faustus,” the servant replied.

“Yes,” the Carter said, “and we will speak with him.”

“Will you, sir?” the Duke of Vanholt said.

He then ordered, “Commit the rascals.”

He meant to commit the rascals to prison, but Dick made a reply, using the word “commit” with another meaning: “commit sex.”

“Commit with us!” Dick said. “He would be as well off to commit with his father as commit with us.”

Faustus said to the Duke, “I beseech your grace to let them come in. They are good subjects for merriment.”

“Do as you will, Faustus,” the Duke of Vanholt said. “I give you permission.”

“I thank your grace,” Faustus replied.

Robin, Dick, the Carter, and the Horse Dealer walked through the gate.

Faustus greeted them: “Why, how are you now, my good friends? Indeed, you are too outrageous, but come near. I have procured your pardons. The Duke will not punish you.”

He charmed them and made them think that they were still in the Hostess’ tavern, and he made them not recognize the Duke and Duchess although they still recognized him, and then he said, “Welcome to you all.”

Robin said, “No, sir, we will be welcome for our money, and we will pay for what we take. What ho! Give us half a dozen beers here, and be hanged.”

“Listen,” Faustus said, “can you tell me where you are?”

“Yes, indeed I can,” the Carter said. “We are under Heaven.”

The servant asked, “Yes, but, Sir Sauce-box, do you know in what place?”

They were behaving wildly inappropriately in the Duke and Duchess’ home.

“Yes, yes,” the Horse Dealer said. “The house is good enough to drink in. By God’s wounds, fill our glasses with some beer, or we’ll break all the barrels in the house, and dash out all your brains with your bottles.”

He was treating Faustus like he would treat a bartender.

“Don’t be so furious,” Faustus said. “Come, you shall have beer.”

He then said to the Duke, “My lord, I ask you to give me permission to continue with this joke for awhile. I’ll stake my reputation that this will entertain your grace.”

“With all my heart, kind Doctor, please yourself,” the Duke of Vanholt said. “Our servants are and our court is at your command.”

“I humbly thank your grace,” Faustus said.

He ordered the servant, “Fetch some beer.”

“Yes, indeed,” the Horse Dealer said. “There spoke a Doctor indeed, and indeed I’ll drink a health to your wooden leg for that word.”

The Horse Dealer had pulled off Faustus’ leg, and so he thought that it must have been replaced with a wooden leg.

“My wooden leg?” Faustus asked. “What do you mean by that?”

The Carter laughed and said, “Do you hear him, Dick? He has forgotten his leg.”

“Yes, yes,” the Horse Dealer said. “He does not stand much upon that.”

“No, indeed,” Faustus said. “I do not stand much upon a wooden leg.”

“Good Lord, that flesh and blood should be so frail with your worship,” the Carter said.

He meant this: Good Lord, that you could forget such a thing as that your leg was pulled off, and Good Lord, that your leg could be pulled off.

The Carter continued, “Don’t you remember a Horse Dealer you sold a horse to?”

“Yes, I remember I sold one a horse,” Faustus said.

“And do you remember that you told him he should not ride into the water?” the Carter asked.

“Yes, I do very well remember that,” Faustus replied.

“And do you remember nothing of your leg?” the Carter asked.

“No, indeed,” Faustus said.

“Then I ask you to please remember your courtesy and your curtesy,” the Carter said.

“I thank you, sir,” Faustus replied.

“It is not worth so much,” the Carter said.

The male curtesy was a bow with a bent knee — something it would be difficult for a man with a wooden leg to perform.

The Carter then requested, “Please, tell me one thing.”

“What’s that?” Faustus replied.

“Are both your legs bedfellows together every night?” the Carter asked.

Since he believed that one of Faustus’ legs was wooden, he did not believe that it would be in bed with the flesh-and-blood leg.

Faustus replied, “Would you make a Colossus of me, you who ask me such questions?”

The Colossal of Rhodes was a huge statue. Some people believed that it straddled the entrance to the harbor of Rhodes, a Greek island. To do that, its feet would have to be very far apart.

“No, truly, sir, I would make nothing of you, but I would like to know that,” the Carter said.

As they talked, the Hostess entered, carrying beer. She was also charmed.

Faustus said, “Then I assure you my legs certainly are bedfellows.”

“I thank you,” the Carter said. “I am fully satisfied.”

He clearly did not believe Faustus, who asked, “But for what reason did you ask me that?”

“For no reason, sir,” the Carter said, “but I think you should have a wooden bedfellow of one of them.”

“Why, do you hear, sir?” the Horse Dealer said to Faustus. “Didn’t I pull off one of your legs when you were asleep?”

“But I have it again now I am awake,” Faustus said.

He pulled up both pants legs and said, “Look here, sir.”

The Carter, Horse Dealer, Robin, and Dick all cried, “Oh, horrible! Did the Doctor have three legs?”

The Carter complained, “Do you remember, sir, how you cheated me and ate up my load of —”

Faustus charmed him so that he could speak no more.

Dick complained, “Do you remember how you made me wear an ape’s —”

Faustus charmed him so that he could speak no more.

The Horse Dealer complained, “You whoreson conjuring scab, do you remember how you cheated me with a ho—”

Faustus charmed him so that he could speak no more.

Robin complained, “Have you forgotten me? Do you think to carry it away with your ‘hey-presto’ and ‘abracadabra’? Do you remember the dog’s fa—”

Faustus charmed him so that he could speak no more.

The Carter, the Horse Dealer, Robin, and Dick exited.

The Hostess said, “Who pays for the ale? Listen, Master Doctor, now you have sent away my guests, I ask who shall pay me for my a—”

Faustus charmed her so that she could speak no more.

The Hostess exited.

The Duchess said to her husband, “My Lord, we are much beholden to this learned man.”

“So we are, madam,” the Duke of Vanholt said. “We will recompense him with all the love and kindness that we may. His artful entertainment drives all sad thoughts away.”

When he had made his bargain with Lucifer, Faustus had wanted to be the Emperor of the World. Now he was merely a court entertainer.

## ACT 5 (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)

— 5.1 —

### [Scene 17]

Thunder sounded and lightning flashed. Mephistophilis led some devils carrying covered dishes into Faustus’ study.

Wagner entered and addressed you the readers:

“I think my master intends to die very soon. He has made his will and given me his wealth, his house, his goods, and his store of golden plate, besides two thousand ducats ready coined. I wonder what he intends. If his death were near, he would not frolic like this. He’s now at supper with the scholars, where there’s such belly-cheer as Wagner in his life never saw the like. And see where they come; probably the feast is done.”

Wagner exited as Faustus, Mephistophilis, and three tipsy scholars arrived.

The first scholar said, “Master Doctor Faustus, since our conversation about fair ladies and which was the beautifullest in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady who ever lived. Therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us so much favor as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholden to you.”

“Gentlemen,” Faustus said, “because I know your friendship is unfeigned, and because it is not Faustus’ custom to deny the just request of those who wish him well, you shall behold that peerless dame of Greece, no otherwise for pomp or majesty than when Sir Paris crossed the seas with her and brought the spoils to rich Dardania.”

Actually, Paris took Helen to Troy. Dardania was a city near Troy. As usual, the invisible Mephistophilis, who was watching, did not correct Faustus’ mistake.

Faustus referred to “unfeigned friendship,” but the scholar was asking him to do something that could be a cause of getting him damned.

Faustus also said that the scholars would see Helen of Troy, implying that they would see the real Helen of Troy rather than a demon that had assumed her shape.

He continued, “Be silent then, for danger is in words.”

Conjuring required silence.

Music sounded, and Mephistophilis brought in a demon that had assumed Helen of Troy’s shape. The demon passed in front of them, and then exited.



In ancient times, Paris, a Prince of Troy, ran away with Helen, the legitimate wife of Menelaus of Sparta, Greece, and took her back to Troy with him, thus starting the famous Trojan War, which lasted for ten years. Helen was known as the most beautiful woman in the world.

The second scholar asked, “Was this the fair Helen whose admired worth made Greece afflict poor Troy with ten years of war?”

“Too simple is my wit to tell her worth,” the third scholar said, “All the world admires her for her majesty.”

“Now that we have seen the pride of nature’s work,” the first scholar said, “we’ll take our leaves, and for this blessed sight may Faustus be happy and blest forevermore.”

As the scholars exited, Faustus said, “Gentlemen, farewell. I wish the same to you.”

Ironically, it was deeds such as summoning “Helen of Troy” that put Faustus at risk of damnation and so could keep him from being happy and blest forevermore.

An old man entered and said, “Oh, gentle Faustus, leave this damned art, this magic, that will charm your soul to Hell, and quite bereave you of salvation. Though you have now offended like a man, do not persevere in it like a devil.

“Still, still, you have an amiable — worthy of being loved — soul, if sin by custom does not grow into nature.

“If that happens, Faustus, repentance will come too late, and then you will be banished from the sight of Heaven. No mortal can express the pains of Hell.

“It may be that this my exhortation seems harsh, and entirely unpleasant; let it not be perceived that way. For, gentle son, I speak it not in wrath or out of malice toward you but in tender love, and in pity of your future misery.

“And so I have hope that this my kind rebuke, by checking your body, may amend your soul.”

Faustus said, “Where art thou, Faustus? Wretch, what have you done?”

Genesis 3:9 states, “*But the Lord God called to the man [Adam, who had sinned], and said unto him, Where art thou?*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus continued, “Hell claims his right, and with a roaring voice says, ‘Faustus, come, your hour is almost come, and Faustus now will come to do you right.’”

1 Peter 5:8 states, “*Be sober, and watch: for your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

John 13:1 states, “*Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, forasmuch as he loved his own which were in the world, unto the end he loved them*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Mephistophilis gave Faustus a dagger, tempting him to commit suicide.

The old man said, “Oh, stop, good Faustus. Stop your desperate steps.

“I see an Angel hovering over your head, and with a vial full of precious grace, the Angel offers to pour the same into your soul, so then, Faustus, call for mercy, and avoid despair.”

People commit suicide out of despair, which can be defined as the loss of all hope.

Faustus said to the old man, “Oh, friend, I feel your words comfort my distressed soul. Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.”

“Faustus, I leave you,” the old man said, “but with grief of heart, fearing the enemy of your hapless soul.”

The old man exited.

Faustus said, “Accursed Faustus, wretch, what have you done? I do repent, and yet I do despair. Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast. What shall I do to shun the snares of death?”

Mephistophilis said to him, “You traitor, Faustus, I arrest your soul for disobedience to my sovereign lord. Revolt or I’ll tear your flesh into pieces.”

By “revolt” he meant, “Revolt against God, and return to the vow you made to Lucifer.”

Faustus said, “I repent that I ever offended him.”

Unfortunately, he was referring to Lucifer.

He continued, “Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat your lord to pardon my unjust presumption, and with my blood again I will confirm the former vow I made to Lucifer.”

“Do it then, Faustus, with unfeigned heart,” Mephistophilis said, “lest greater dangers attend the way you are heading.”

By “greater dangers,” Mephistophilis meant various forms of bodily pain, but the old man knew that the soul’s damnation was a much greater danger than those.

Faustus cut his arm and began writing with his blood.

He said to Mephistophilis, “Torment, sweet friend, that base and aged man who dared dissuade me from your Lucifer, with the greatest torment that our Hell affords.”

“His faith is great; I cannot touch his soul,” Mephistophilis said. “But what I may afflict his body with, I will attempt, which is but little worth.”

What “little worth” refers to is ambiguous. It can mean 1) the old man’s body is of little worth compared to the worth of his soul, 2) Mephistophilis’ attempt to torment the old man’s body is of little worth and effectiveness because the old man is protected by God, or 3) both #1 and #2.

(Earlier, the Good Angel had said to Faustus, “Repent, and they [demons from Hell] shall never scratch your skin.”)

Faustus continued, “One thing, good servant, let me crave of you to glut the longing of my heart’s desire: that I may have for my paramour that heavenly Helen, whom I saw just now, whose sweet embraces may extinguish entirely those thoughts that dissuade me from my vow. This will help me keep my vow I made to Lucifer.”

Mephistophilis replied, “This, or whatever else my Faustus shall desire, shall be performed in the twinkling of an eye.”

Mephistophilis brought back “Helen of Troy,” accompanied by two spirits portraying Cupids. “Helen” stood in front of Faustus, who said these words:

“Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,

“And burnt the topless towers of Ilium [Troy]?”

“Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.”

He kissed “Helen,” and then he continued:

“Her lips suck forth my soul: See, where it flies!

“Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.”

He kissed “Helen,” and then he continued:

“Here will I dwell, for Heaven is in these lips,

“And all is dross that is not Helena.

“I will be Paris, and for love of you,

“Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sacked;

“And I will combat with weak Menelaus,

“And wear your colors on my plumed crest [helmet];

“Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,

“And then return to Helen for a kiss.

“Oh, you are fairer than the evening’s air

“Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

“Brighter are you than flaming Jupiter

“When he appeared to hapless Semele;

“More lovely than the monarch of the sky

“In wanton Arethusa’s azure arms;

“And none but you shall be my paramour!”

What is the answer to the question “Was this the face that launched a thousand ships, and burnt the topless [very high] towers of Troy?”

The best answer is, No. This is not Helen of Troy. This is a demon from Hell. Twenty-four years ago, Faustus had asked for a wife, and Mephistophilis had brought him a female demon. Faustus had called the female demon “a hot whore” and rejected it. Now, he was willing to have sex with a demon.

Can “Helen” make him immortal with a kiss?

Faustus' soul is already immortal; the question that should be asked is where will his soul reside for all eternity. A kiss from "Helen" makes it more likely that Faustus' soul will reside in Hell.

When Faustus was considering selling his soul to Lucifer, he thought that he would do good things for Wittenberg, but now he was willing for Wittenberg to be sacked, just like Troy was at the end of the Trojan War.

Faustus said that he will be Paris and he will combat "weak" Menelaus. In the *Iliad*, Paris and Menelaus met in single combat, and Menelaus defeated Paris; in fact, Menelaus would have killed Paris if Aphrodite, goddess of sexual passion, hadn't helped Paris escape from him.

Faustus said that he would wound Achilles in the heel. Although this is not recounted in the *Iliad*, Paris, with the help of the archer god Apollo, did wound Achilles in the heel — a wound that killed him.

Faustus said this about "Helen": "Brighter are you than flaming Jupiter / When he appeared to hapless Semele."

Semele was one of the many mortal women with whom Jupiter, King of the gods, had an affair. Jupiter made an inviolable oath to give Semele whatever she asked for, and she asked to see him in his true form. Because he had made an oath that he could not violate, Jupiter did as she asked, and the sight of Jupiter in his true form killed her.

Apollo the Sun-god is the monarch of the sky, and Arethusa is a nymph who bathed in a stream of blue — azure — water. Possibly, Faustus is saying that "Helen" is more beautiful than a scene of the Sun shining down on a blue stream of water.

Faustus and "Helen" left in order to go somewhere they could have sex.

— 5.2 —

### [Scene 18]

Thunder sounded. Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistophilis arrived.

Lucifer said, "Thus from infernal Dis do we ascend to view the subjects of our monarchy, those souls that sin seals the black sons of Hell, among which as chief, Faustus, we come to you, bringing with us lasting damnation, to lie in wait for your soul. The time has come that makes your soul forfeit to Hell."

Mephistophilis said, "And this gloomy night, here in this room will wretched Faustus be."

Beelzebub said, "And here we'll stay, to see how he conducts and demeans himself."

"How should he conduct himself, but in desperate lunacy?" Mephistophilis said. "Now that foolish worldling's heart's blood dries with grief; his conscience kills it, and his laboring brain begets a world of idle fantasies about how to get the better of the devil, but all in vain. His store of pleasures must be spiced with pain."

"He and his servant Wagner are nearby. Both come from drawing Faustus' last will. See where they come."

Faustus and Wagner entered.

Faustus said, "Tell me, Wagner, you have perused my will. How do you like it?"

"Sir, so wondrously well that in all humble duty, I yield my life and lasting service for your love," Wagner answered.

The three scholars entered.

Faustus said, "Thanks, Wagner."

Then he greeted his guests: "Welcome, gentlemen."

The first scholar said, "Now, worthy Faustus, I think that your looks are changed."

Faustus, who felt and looked ill, said, "Oh, gentlemen."

"What ails Faustus?" the second scholar asked.

"Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow," Faustus said, "if I had lived with you, sharing with you a chamber at this university, then I would have lived always, but now I must die eternally."

Possibly hallucinating, and afraid, he said, "Look, sirs, isn't he coming? Isn't he coming?"

"Oh, my dear Faustus, what is the meaning of this fear?" the first scholar asked.

"Has all our pleasure turned to melancholy?" the second scholar asked.

"He is not well because he has been excessively solitary," the third scholar said to the other scholars.

"If that is so, we'll have physicians, and Faustus shall be cured," the second scholar said.

"It is only a surfeit from over-eating and -drinking, sir," the third scholar said to Faustus. "Don't be afraid."

Faustus said, "It is a surfeit of deadly sin that has damned both body and soul."

"Yet, Faustus, look up to Heaven, and remember that God's mercy is infinite," the second scholar said.

Faustus replied, "But Faustus' offense can never be pardoned. The serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus."

Faustus was suffering from pride. He believed that he had committed sins so evil that they were unpardonable. But God can pardon any sin as long as it is sincerely repented. The only sin that is unpardonable is sin that makes the sinner unable to sincerely repent. A sinner who has continually sinned can grow hard-hearted and be unable to sincerely repent. And a sinner who has committed very many bad sins can be so terrified of Hell that he or she is unable to sincerely repent.

Faustus' sins of commission may seem paltry. He has slept with women whom Mephistophilis has brought to him. He has defrauded a horse trader. He has pranked the Pope.

He has sold his soul to Lucifer, but the contract will be nullified if he sincerely repents.

Faustus' sins of omission are great. He could have saved many cities from plague. He could have used his intellect to make advances in logic, law, and medicine. Instead, he became a

practical joker and a court entertainer.

Faustus continued, “Oh, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and do not tremble at my speeches. Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, I wish that I had never seen Wittenberg, never read a book!”

Books are not evil in themselves. A book of magic can be read for other purposes than summoning demons from Hell. Faustus had been a great scholar and had delighted in pursuing knowledge, but he had made a choice to pursue knowledge the wrong way.

One way to pursue knowledge is through hard study: reading (and writing) the relevant books, thinking hard, and debating with others, including teachers, who can be good guides to knowledge but who are only guides. Teachers can’t learn for the student — they can only try to help the student learn. Another way to pursue “knowledge” is to take the easy way: Let someone tell you stuff without investigating whether that stuff is true or false.

Faustus had made a deal with Mephistophilis: Faustus would give Lucifer his soul, and Mephistophilis would tell Faustus stuff and would give Faustus books that would tell him stuff.

Although Faustus had written the deed of gift to give Lucifer his soul, Mephistophilis had not given Faustus the knowledge that Faustus had wanted. Instead, Mephistophilis had given Faustus answers that any first-year university student could give, and then he had distracted Faustus with frivolous entertainments so that Faustus would not pursue knowledge. In addition, Mephistophilis had not corrected Faustus’ erroneous “knowledge.”

Acquiring real knowledge and especially discovering new real knowledge often takes great effort, although yes, learning can often be pleasurable. In order for Isaac Newton to make many of his most important discoveries, he had to invent the calculus, which in itself is one of his most important discoveries.

Faustus had been choosing between Heaven and Hell, yes, but he had also been choosing between astronomy and astrology and choosing between chemistry and alchemy and choosing between science and magic and choosing between the hard way and the easy way.

Faustus continued, “And what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness. Yes, and all the world can witness.”

Faustus had thought that he would use his knowledge and powers to become Emperor of the World; instead, he had become an entertainer for the Holy Roman Emperor and for the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt.

Faustus continued, “And for these wonders, for which Faustus has lost both Germany and the world, and yes, he has lost Heaven itself — Heaven, the seat of God, the Throne of the Blessed, the Kingdom of Joy — and he must remain in Hell forever. Hell! Oh, Hell forever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus being in Hell forever?”

“Yet, Faustus, call on God,” the second scholar said.

“On God, Whom Faustus has abjured?” Faustus replied. “On God, Whom Faustus has blasphemed? Oh, my God, I would weep, but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood instead of tears, yes, gush forth life and soul. Oh, he stops my tongue. I would lift up my hands, but see! They hold them! They hold them!”

“Who, Faustus?” the scholars asked.

“Why, Lucifer and Mephistophilis,” Faustus replied. “Oh, gentlemen, I gave them my soul in return for my magical cunning.”

“Oh, God forbid!” the scholars said.

“God forbade it indeed, but Faustus has done it,” Faustus said. “For the vain pleasure of four and twenty years has Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I wrote them a deed of gift with my own blood; the date my soul is due has come: This is the time, and he — the devil — will fetch me.”

“Why didn’t Faustus tell us about this before, so that divines might have prayed for you?” the first scholar asked.

“Often have I thought to have done so,” Faustus said, “but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces if I named God and to fetch me, body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity.”

Anytime he was threatened with bodily pain from a devil, he backed off and backed down.

He added, “And now it is too late.”

No, he was wrong. He still had time to repent.

Faustus said, “Gentlemen, leave, lest you perish with me.”

This showed that some goodness remained still within Faustus.

“Oh, what may we do to save Faustus?” the second scholar asked.

“Don’t talk about me, but save yourselves and depart,” Faustus said.

This showed that some goodness remained still within Faustus.

The third scholar said, “God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.”

The first scholar replied, “Tempt not God, sweet friend, but let us go into the next room, and pray for Faustus.”

“Yes, pray for me,” Faustus said. “Pray for me. And whatever noise you hear, don’t come to me.”

This showed that some goodness remained still within Faustus.

He added, “Nothing can rescue me.”

He was despairing; he had lost all hope that he could be saved. This is the sin that can keep someone from Heaven by making it extremely difficult for that person to sincerely repent his or her sins.

The second scholar said, “Pray, Faustus, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon you.”

Prayer by other people helps, but what wins God’s forgiveness of sins is sincere repentance by the sinner.

“Gentlemen, farewell,” Faustus said. “If I live until morning, I’ll visit you. If not, Faustus has gone to Hell.”

“Faustus, farewell,” the scholars said as they went into the next room to pray for him.

Mephistophilis said, “Yes, Faustus, now you have no hope of Heaven. Therefore, despair; think only upon Hell, for Hell must be the mansion in which you will dwell.”

“Oh, you bewitching fiend,” Faustus said, “it was your temptation that has robbed me of eternal happiness.”

“I do confess it, Faustus, and I rejoice,” Mephistophilis said. “It was I who, when you were on the right path to Heaven, damned up your passageway. When you picked up the holy book in order to view the scriptures, I turned the leaves and led your eye.

“What? Are you weeping? It is too late; despair. Farewell. Fools who will laugh on Earth must weep in Hell.”

Mephistophilis exited and rejoined the other devils.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel entered Faustus’ study.

The Good Angel said, “Oh, Faustus, if you had given ear to me, innumerable joys would have followed you, but you loved the world.”

The Bad Angel said, “You gave ear to me, and now you must taste Hell’s pains perpetually.”

The Good Angel said, “Oh, what will all your riches, pleasures, pomps, avail you now? What good are they?”

The Bad Angel said, “They will do nothing but vex you more, because you lack them in Hell, you who had on Earth such store.”

Music played while a throne descended.

The Good Angel said, “Oh, you have lost celestial happiness, unspeakable pleasures, bliss without end. If you had affected sweet divinity, then Hell, or the devil, would have had no power over you. If you had kept on that way, Faustus, you would have resided forever in Paradise. See in what resplendent glory you would have sat in yonder throne, like those bright shining Saints, and would have triumphed over Hell. You have lost that, and now, poor soul, your Good Angel must leave you.”

Because Faustus had behaved badly for twenty-four years, his heart had hardened. It is true that if he were to sincerely repent, God would forgive his sins, but a hard heart makes that extremely difficult and even almost impossible. Few people are capable of sincerely repenting at this point.

The Good Angel was correct in saying that Faustus had lost — it was true as of this moment — celestial happiness: Right now, Faustus was an unrepentant sinner, and he was far from being happy.

Still, some unrepentant sinners sincerely repent with their last breath.



The Good Angel had spoken about Faustus not following the path to Heaven. This is true: Faustus had lost the opportunity of serving God for twenty-four years. If he had done that, his faith would have grown and the devils could not harm him in any significant way.

Still, some unrepentant sinners sincerely repent with their last breath.

The mouth of Hell opened.

The Good Angel said, “The jaws of Hell are open to receive you.”

This is true: If Faustus died right now, he would go to Hell.

Still, some unrepentant sinners sincerely repent with their last breath.

The Good Angel exited.

To be honest, the Good Angel was too negative. Even if Faustus’ heart had hardened, the Good Angel could have encouraged Faustus to sincerely repent his sins. Damnation does not occur until after death occurs. Telling Faustus before his death that he has “lost celestial happiness, pleasures unspeakable, bliss without end” can be regarded as offensive. Is there a reason — bad or good — for this?

Is it possible that in this one case the “Good Angel” is actually a Bad Angel in disguise, trying to get Faustus to despair and not repent his sins?

It is possible, but not probable.

Another possibility is that God is setting up a final chance for Faustus to truly repent his sins. Repenting one’s sins because one is afraid of Hell is not true repentance. Repenting one’s sins because they are sins is true repentance. God could be giving Faustus a final chance to repent his sins at a time when he believes that he will be damned to Hell even if he repents. That would be true repentance, not repentance to scam God into giving you a Get-Out-of-Hell-Free card.

Because the mouth of Hell was open, Faustus could see into Hell.

The Bad Angel said, “Now, Faustus, let your eyes with horror stare into that vast perpetual torture-house.”

The Bad Angel described some of what Faustus was seeing:

“There are the Furies tossing damned souls on burning forks; their bodies broil in lead.

“There are live quarters broiling on the coals; those quarters can never die.”

The quarters were human bodies divided into four pieces: Each piece had an arm or a leg. Each quarter was still capable of feeling pain.

The Bad Angel continued, “This forever-burning chair is for over-tortured souls to rest themselves in.”

“Over-tortured” souls are souls that have been tortured past the point of endurance.

The Bad Angel continued, “These damned souls, who are fed with sops of flaming fire, were gluttons, and loved only delicacies, and laughed to see the poor starve at their gates.

“But yet all these are nothing; you shall see ten thousand tortures that are more horrid.”

Faustus said, “Oh, I have seen enough to torture me.”

The Bad Angel said, “Seeing is not enough. You must feel them; you must taste the smart of all. He who loves pleasure must for pleasure fall. And so I leave you, Faustus, for a short time. Then you will tumble into perdition.”

The Bad Angel exited.

The clock struck eleven. At midnight Faustus’ twenty-four years would be over.

Part of Revelation 18:10 states that “in one hour is thy judgment come” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Faustus said to himself, “Oh, Faustus, now you have only one bare hour to live, and then you must be damned perpetually!

“Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of Heaven, so that time may cease, and midnight never come. Fair Nature’s eye, the Sun, rise again, and make perpetual day; or let this hour be only a year, a month, a week, a natural day, so that Faustus may repent and save his soul!”

Sincerely repenting one’s sins can take only a moment. Sometimes that moment is the last moment of one’s life. It was as if Faustus were asking to be saved — but not yet!

Faustus said, “*O lente, lente currite, noctis equi!*”

The Latin means, “Oh, run slowly, slowly, horses of the night.”

Ovid’s *Amore* (Liber I, XIII, line 40) states, “*Lente currite noctis equi.*” This is the prayer of a man who wishes to spend more time in the arms of his lover.

Faustus continued, “The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike, the devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.

“Oh, I’ll leap up to Heaven! Who pulls me down? One drop of blood will save me. Oh, my Christ!”

One drop of Christ’s blood would save him — if he sincerely repented his sins.

Faustus continued, “Rend not my heart, for naming of my Christ.”

Was his “Christ” Jesus or Lucifer?

Faustus continued, “Yet will I call on him: Oh, spare me, Lucifer!”

Faustus continued, “Where is it now? It is gone.”

“It” was a drop of Christ’s — Jesus’ — blood. Faustus had called on the wrong “Christ.”

Faustus continued, “And I see a threatening arm, an angry brow.

“Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me, and hide me from the heavy wrath of God!”

Luke 23:30 states, “*Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us: and to the hills, Cover us*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Revelation 6:16 states, *“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb”* (1599 Geneva Bible).

Afraid of the wrath of God, Faustus shouted, “No! No!”

He then said, “You stars that reigned at my nativity, it is your influence that has allotted death and Hell to me.”

Faustus wanted to blame his stars for his damnation: He believed — or wanted to believe — that the stars that reigned when he was born were responsible for his death and for his punishment in Hell.

Many people of the time believed in astrology, but they also believed in free will. The stars could influence a person’s character, making that person wise or courageous, for example, but nevertheless that person still has free will and will make the decisions that lead to that person’s salvation or damnation. Today, many people believe both in genetics and in free will. Genetics may give a person certain characteristics, but nevertheless that person still has free will and will make the decisions that lead to that person’s salvation or damnation.

Faustus continued to address the stars: “Now draw up Faustus like a foggy mist into the entrails of yonder laboring clouds, so that when you clouds vomit forth into the air, my limbs may issue from your smoky mouths, but let my soul mount and ascend to Heaven!”

He wanted the stars to draw him up into the clouds, which would form a thunderstone from his grosser parts. The thunderstone would be ejected when lightning flashed, leaving behind Faustus’ purer part — his soul — that would ascend into Heaven.

The clock stuck the half-hour.

Faustus said, “Oh, half the hour is past! It will all be past soon.”

He prayed, “Oh, if my soul must suffer for my sin, impose some end to my incessant pain. Let Faustus live in Hell a thousand years, a hundred thousand, and at last be saved.”

This is a prayer, but it is not the right kind of prayer. Faustus was not sincerely repenting his sins; he was praying to escape some of the punishment for committing his sins.

Faustus said, “Oh, there is no end to pain suffered by damned souls in Hell!

“Why weren’t you, Faustus, born a creature that lacks a soul? Why is this soul that you have immortal?”

“Oh, if Pythagoras’ metempsychosis — his transmigration of souls — were true, this soul would fly from me, and I would be changed into some brutish beast!

“All beasts are happy, for when they die, their souls are soon dissolved into the elements, but my soul must live always to be plagued in Hell.

“Cursed be the parents who engendered me!”

He gained some possession of himself and said, “No, Faustus, curse yourself, curse Lucifer who has deprived you of the joys of Heaven.”

1 John 1:9 states, *“If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1599 Geneva Bible).

Even now, Faustus’ soul could be saved. All it would take is sincere repentance of his sins. He would have to take responsibility for his sins, instead of blaming Lucifer.

The clock began to strike twelve.

“Oh, it strikes! It strikes!” Faustus said. “Now, body, turn to air, or Lucifer will bear you quickly to Hell!”

Thunder sounded and lightning flashed.

Faustus said, “Oh, soul, be changed into small waterdrops, and fall into the ocean never to be found.”

Thunder sounded, and Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistophilis revealed themselves to Faustus.

Faustus screamed, “Oh, mercy, Heaven!

“Look not so fierce on me! Adders and serpents, let me breathe awhile. Ugly Hell, gape not! Come not, Lucifer!

“I’ll burn my books!”

Those were the books that Mephistophilis had given him.

The clock finished striking twelve.

Faustus’ promised twenty-four years were over.

He screamed.

Nothing happened.

Faustus looked at Mephistophilis and Lucifer, both of whom were smiling at him.

Faustus felt his pulse, and he touched his head with both hands.

He took a sip of wine.

He felt fine.

Faustus was still alive, and so he could choose whether or not to sincerely repent his sins. At this particular time, he could repent his sins without fearing Hell.

He shook Lucifer’s hand and then he said, “Oh, Mephistophilis!”

He opened his arms wide and started to hug Mephistophilis like a brother.

Mephistophilis stabbed him in the belly, Lucifer stabbed him in the back, and as Faustus screamed the devils ripped his body to pieces and carried his soul to Hell.

Faustus had asked for more time to repent, and he had gotten it. This would have been a perfect time to repent. Repenting because of being afraid of spending eternity being tormented in Hell is not sincere repentance. Repenting to get into Heaven and to stay out of Hell is not sincere repentance. Sincere repentance is repenting your sins because they are sins.

Faustus could have repented by mourning that he had not used his life for good. Before making his bargain with Lucifer, he had been successful at curing diseases. He could have saved many, many lives. Instead, he had used his life to pursue pleasure and become a celebrity.

Before he died, Faustus had not sincerely repented his sins.

— 5.3 —

**[Scene 19]**

The scholars entered Faustus' study.

The first scholar said, "Come, gentlemen, let us go visit Faustus, for such a dreadful night was never seen since first the world's creation did begin. Such fearful shrieks and cries were never heard. Pray to Heaven that Doctor Faustus has escaped the danger."

He looked around the study and then said, "Oh, help us, Heaven! See, here are Faustus' limbs, all torn asunder by the hand of death."

The third scholar said, "The devils whom Faustus served have torn him thus, for between the hours of twelve and one, I thought I heard him shriek and call aloud for help, and at the same time the house seemed all on fire with the dreadful horror of these damned fiends."

The second scholar said, "Well, gentlemen, although Faustus' end is such as every Christian heart laments to think on, yet because he was a scholar, once admired for wondrous knowledge in our German schools, we'll give his mangled limbs due burial and all the students clothed in mourning black shall attend his sorrowful funeral."

**EPILOGUE (*Faustus* 1616 B-TEXT)**

— Chorus —

[Chorus 3]

The Chorus said these words:

“Cut is the branch that might have grown full [completely] straight,

“And burned is Apollo’s laurel-bough [mark of excellence],

“That sometime [formerly] grew within this learned man.

“Faustus is gone: Regard his Hellish fall,

“Whose fiendful fortune [diabolical end] may exhort the wise,

“Only to wonder [To be content with only wondering] at unlawful things,

“Whose deepness does entice such forward wits [eager thinkers]

“To practice more than Heavenly power permits.”

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*Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.*

Translation: The hour ends the day; the author ends the work.

## Chapter 5: THE RICH JEW OF MALTA

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*Jew of Malta*)

#### Male Characters

Machevil, the Prologue.

Barabas, the rich Jew of Malta.

Ferneze, Governor of Malta.

Selim Calymath, Son to the Emperor of Turkey.

Callapine, a Pasha (high-ranking Turkish official).

Don Mathias, Friend to Don Lodowick. In love with Abigail. “Don” is a Spanish title.

Don Lodowick, the Governor’s Son. Friend to Don Mathias. In love with Abigail.

Martin del Bosco, the Spanish Vice-Admiral.

Ithamore, a Turkish Slave to Barabas.

Friar Jacomo.

Friar Barnardine.

Pilia-Borza, a Thief in league with Bellamira.

Two Merchants.

Three Jews.

#### Female Characters

Abigail, Daughter to Barabas.

Katherine, Mother to Mathias.

Bellamira, a Courtesan.

Abbess.

#### Minor Characters

Nuns, Knights, Officers, Pashas, Turks, Guard, Slaves, Messenger, Carpenters, Attendants.

**Scene:** Malta.

#### NOTES:

Machevil is the spirit of Niccolò Machiavelli, author of *The Prince*. From his name we get the adjective “Machiavellian.” The name “Machevil,” a version of the name “Machiavelli” that

was used in Renaissance England, suggests “Make evil.” People of the time believed that Machiavelli’s ideas were immoral and that he was an atheist.

Barabbas was released to the Jews instead of Jesus in Matthew 27:15-26. Jesus was then crucified. Barabbas is described as a murderer in Mark 15:7 and Luke 23:19, and as a thief in John 18:40.

The name “Pilia-Borza” comes from the Italian *pigliaborza*, which means “pick-purse” or “pick-pocket.”

The name “Bellamira” is “*bella mira*,” which is Spanish for “beautiful — look!”

“Selim” is the name of a son of Suleiman the Magnificent, who ruled Turkey during the 1565 siege of Malta, which the Christian defenders won.

The play was first published in 1633, and the title on the title page is *The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta*. These days, the title is usually *The Jew of Malta*.

The Knights of Malta are the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem. In 1530, King Charles I of Spain, who was also King of Sicily, allowed them to settle on Malta, where they established their headquarters. Earlier, the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem had their headquarters on the island of Rhodes, but in 1522, after a siege, the Turks conquered the island.

In this culture, a man of higher rank would use words such as “thee” and “thy” to refer to a servant. However, two close friends or a husband and wife could properly use “thee,” “thy,” “thine,” and “thou” to refer to each other.

Words such as “you” and “your” were more formal and respectful.

The title “sirrah” was used to refer to a male of lower status, such as a servant or a slave, than the speaker.

Turkey is a country in which Islam is the majority religion.

### **THE PROLOGUE (*Jew of Malta*)**

Machevil says this to you, the reader:

“Although the world thinks that Machevil is dead, yet his soul has only flown beyond the Alps, and now that the Duke of Guise, leader of the 1572 Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in which Catholics murdered Huguenots, aka French Protestants, is dead, Machevil’s soul has come from France to view this land of England and frolic with his friends, devotees of *The Prince*.”

People of Christopher Marlowe’s day believed that Machiavelli’s ideas had been adopted in France after travelling from Italy, and they hoped that those ideas would not reach and be adopted in England.

Machevil continued, “To some perhaps my name is odious; but such people as love me guard and protect me from the tongues of my enemies — or they themselves do not mention me. Let



them — my followers, and my detractors — know that I am Machevil, and I don't value men, and therefore I don't value men's words.

“Admired and wondered at I am by those who hate me most. Although some speak openly against my books, yet they will read me and thereby attain to Peter's chair — the Papacy — and when they cast me off and abandon what I have taught them, my ambitious followers poison them.

“I regard religion only as a childish toy and trifle and hold that there is no sin but ignorance. Birds of the air will tell of murders past? I am ashamed to hear such fooleries.”

Machevil was referring to such stories as this: Robbers murdered the ancient Greek poet Ibykos in the 6th century B.C.E. Before dying, he exclaimed to the robbers that some birds — cranes — nearby would be his avengers. The robbers laughed at him. When the robbers entered a city later, one of the robbers saw some cranes and shouted, “Look — the avengers of Ibykos.” This aroused the curiosity of the citizens of the city, who — after investigating and discovering that the robbers had murdered Ibykos — put the robbers to death.

Machevil continued, “Many will talk of title to a crown, but what right had Julius Caesar to the empire?”

Machevil admired Julius Caesar for seizing power.

He continued, “Might first made kings, and laws were then most sure when, like the notoriously severe ancient Greek lawmaker Draco's harsh and draconian laws, they were written in blood.

“Hence comes it that a strong-built citadel commands much more than letters and literature — such as *The Letters of Phalaris* — can import: If Phalaris had only observed this maxim, he'd never bellowed in a bronze bull because of great ones' envy.”

Phalaris was a cruel ruler of the city Agrigentum in Sicily. He commissioned Perillus to construct a hollow bull of metal to be used as an instrument of torture. The victim was placed inside the bull, and then the bull was heated. As the victim roasted, the victim screamed. Phalaris ordered that the bull be constructed in such a way that the screams of the victims sounded like the bellowing of a bull.

After the craftsman Perillus constructed the bull — something that he ought not to have done — Phalaris made him the first victim to be placed in the bull and roasted. This is poetic justice. Additional poetic justice occurred when Phalaris was overthrown and also became a victim in the bull.

If Perillus had a redeeming feature, for most people it would be his love of letters and literature, but Machevil regarded that love as a defect: Better that he work to retain power than to study letters.

Machevil continued, “Let me be envied and not pitied by the poor petty people!

“But whither am I bound — what did I come here to say? I come not to give a lecture here in Britain, but instead to present the tragedy of a Jew who smiles to see how full his moneybags are crammed, which money was not gotten without my means.

“I crave only this. Honor the rich Jew of Malta as he deserves, and let him not be the worse received as a guest because he favors — resembles and sides with — me.”

Readers are unlikely to be inclined to like Barabas, the rich Jew of Malta, because of Machevil’s recommendation. In fact, if Barabas is the kind of person Machevil likes, readers will be inclined to dislike him.

## **ACT 1 (*Jew of Malta*)**

### **— 1.1 —**

Barabas was in his counting house — a place for working on his business accounts and storing his treasure — with heaps of gold before him.

He said to himself, “So in this venture thus much profit was made. A third part of the Persian ships was enough for the venture to be summed and satisfied — tallied up and paid off.”

Two-thirds of the money he had received from his venture was profit; the other one-third covered his expenses.

He continued, “As for those Samnites and the men of Uz who bought my Spanish oils and wines of Greece, here have I pursed their paltry silverlings — silver coins each worth a Jewish shekel. Damn, what a trouble it is to count this silver trash!

“May the Arabians continue to fare well — the Arabians who so richly pay with ingots of gold for the things they bargain for. A man may easily in a day count those gold ingots that may maintain him all his life.

“The needy servant who never fingered a groat — a small silver coin — would consider that many silver coins a miracle, but he whose steel-barred coffers are crammed full, and all his lifetime has been tired, wearying his fingertips with counting small silver coins, would in his age be loath to labor so, and for a pound to sweat himself to death.

“Give me the merchants of the Indian mines who trade in metal of the purest kind. Give me the wealthy Moor, who in the eastern rocks — the Arabian Desert — freely and without restraint can pick his riches up and in his house heap up pearls — precious stones — like pebbles. He gathers them for free and sells them not individually but by the gross weight: bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts, orange-red gems, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds, beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds, and seldom-seen costly stones of such great price that one of them, impartially valued and of a carat of this quantity, may serve in a time of calamity to ransom great kings from captivity.

“This is the merchandise wherein consists my wealth. And therefore I think that men of judgment should arrange their means of business away from the vulgar trade, and as their wealth increases, so enclose infinite riches in a little room.”

Barabas was talking about treasure stored in a small space, but Christian believers used “infinite riches in a little room” to refer to the unborn Christ in the Virgin Mary’s womb.

Stepping into the street outside his counting house, Barabas continued, “But where is the wind now blowing? Into what corner points my halcyon’s bill?”

In this culture, people would use the body of a halcyon — the bird known as the kingfisher — as a kind of weathervane, hanging it up in a place where the wind could blow against it.

He continued, “Ha! To the east? Yes — see how stands the weathervane! East and by south: southeast. Why, then I hope my ships I sent for Egypt and the bordering isles of Cypress and Crete have reached the Nile’s winding banks.

“My argosy — my large merchant ships — from Alexandria, laden with spice and silks, now under sail, are smoothly gliding down by Candy shore — along the coast of Crete — to Malta, through our Mediterranean Sea.”

“Candy” was “Candia,” which the Italians called Crete.

Hearing a noise, Barabas said, “But who comes here?”

A merchant arrived.

“What is the news?” Barabas asked.

“Barabas, your ships are safe,” the merchant said. “They are riding at anchor in the Malta roadstead — the harbor — and all the merchants with all their merchandise have safely arrived, and have sent me to learn whether you will come and pay their way through customs.”

“The ships are safe, you say, and richly laden with goods?” Barabas asked.

“They are,” the merchant confirmed.

“Why, then go tell them to come ashore and bring with them their bills of entry,” Barabas said. “I hope our credit in the custom-house will serve as well as if I were present there. Go send them sixty camels, thirty mules, and twenty wagons, to bring up the wares.

“But are you master of a ship of mine, and is your credit not enough for that?”

“The customs duties alone come to more than many merchants of the town are worth, and therefore far exceed my credit, sir,” the merchant said.

“Go tell them that the Jew of Malta sent you, man,” Barabas said. “Bah, who among them does not know who Barabas is?”

“I go now,” the merchant said.

Barabas said to himself, “So, then, there’s some of my ships arrived safely.”

He then asked the merchant, who was starting to leave, “Sirrah, which of my ships are you the master of?”

The word “sirrah” was used to refer to a man of lower social status than the speaker.

The merchant replied, “I am the master of the *Speranza*, sir.”

In Italian, “*speranza*” means hope.

“And didn’t you see my fleet of merchant ships at Alexandria?” Barabas said. “You could not come from Egypt or by Cairo, but at the entry there into the sea, where the Nile River pays his tribute by flowing into the Mediterranean Sea. You necessarily must sail by Alexandria.”

“I neither saw them nor inquired about them,” the merchant said. “But this we heard some of our seamen say: They wondered how you dared to trust such crazed and unseaworthy vessels with so much wealth, and during so far a journey.”

Barabas said sarcastically, “Tush, they are wise!”

He added without sarcasm, “I know my ships and their strength. But go, go on your way, unload your ship, and tell my commercial agent to bring his bill of lading in.”

The merchant exited.

Barabas said to himself, “And yet I wonder about this fleet of merchant ships.”

A second merchant arrived and said, “Know, Barabas, that your fleet of merchant ships from Alexandria rides in Malta roadstead, aka harbor, laden with riches, and an extremely great store of Persian silks, of gold, and of lustrous orient pearl.”

“How does it happen that you didn’t come with those other ships that sailed by Egypt?” Barabas asked.

“Sir, we didn’t see them,” the second merchant said.

“Perhaps they coasted round by the shore of Crete to take on a load of olive oil or they had some other business to do,” Barabas said. “But it was ill done by you to come so far without the aid and protective escort of their ships.”

Pirates infested the Mediterranean, and merchant ships needed protection.

“Sir, we were escorted by a Spanish fleet that never left us until we were within a league — three miles — of Malta,” the second merchant said. “The Spanish fleet was pursuing the galleys of the Turks.”

“Oh, they were going up to Sicily in pursuit of the Turks,” Barabas said. “Well, go and tell the merchants and my men to dispatch the customs business and come ashore and see the freight unloaded.”

“I go now,” the second merchant said, exiting.

Barabas said to himself, “Thus rolls and flows our fortune in by land and sea, and thus are we on every side enriched. These are the blessings promised to the Jews, and herein was old Abram’s happiness.”

Genesis 15:18 states, “*In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land: from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Exodus 3:17 states, “*Therefore I did say, I will bring you out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land that floweth with milk and honey*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Barabas continued, “What more may heaven do for earthly men than thus to pour out plenty in their laps, ripping the bowels of the earth for them, making the seas their servant, and making the winds drive their richly laden merchant ships with propitious blasts of wind? Who hates me but for my happiness, good fortune, and prosperity? Or who is honored now but for his wealth?”

“Rather had I, a Jew, be hated thus, than be pitied in a Christian poverty. For I can see no fruits in all their faith except malice, falsehood, and excessive pride, which I think doesn’t fit their profession of faith.”

Matthew 7:18-20 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

*19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

*20 Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

Barabas continued, “Perhaps some hapless, unfortunate man has a conscience, and for his conscience he lives in beggary.

“They say we Jews are a scattered nation.”

Deuteronomy 28:25 states, “*And the Lord shall cause thee to fall before thine enemies: thou shalt come out one way against them, and shalt flee seven ways before them, and shalt be scattered through all the kingdoms of the earth*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Barabas continued, “I cannot tell, but we have scrambled and gathered up more wealth by far than those who brag of faith.

“There’s Kirriah Jairim, the great Jew of Greece; Obed in Bairseth, Nones in Portugal, myself in Malta, some in Italy, many in France, and wealthy every one — yes, wealthier by far than any Christian.

“I must confess that we don’t become kings. That’s not our fault. Alas, our numbers are few, and crowns either come by succession or are gained by force, and often I have heard told that nothing violent can be permanent.

“Give us a peaceful rule; make kings of Christians, who thirst so much for sovereignty.

“I have no load of trouble, nor many children — only one sole daughter, whom I hold as dear as Agamemnon did his Iphigenia, and all I have is hers.”

Agamemnon was the leader of the Greeks against the Trojans during the Trojan War. The goddess Artemis forced him to sacrifice Iphigenia in order to get favorable winds to blow the Greek ships to Troy.

Barabas looked up and asked, “But who comes here?”

Three Jews arrived.

The first Jew said to the other, “Tush, don’t say that — it was done because of cunning political policy.”

“Come, therefore, let us go to Barabas,” the second Jew said, “for he can counsel best in these affairs — and here he comes.”

Barabas walked over to greet them, saying, “Why, how are you now, countrymen? Why do you flock like this to me in multitudes?”

The three Jews represented all the Jews of Malta.

Barabas continued, "What accident's happening to the Jews?"

"A fleet of warlike galleys, Barabas, have come from Turkey and lie in our harbor," the first Jew said, "and the rulers of Malta sit in the council house this day to receive them and their ambassador and his retinue."

"Why, let them come, as long as they don't come to make war," Barabas said, "or let them make war, as long as we are conquerors."

He thought, *Indeed, let them combat, conquer, and kill all, as long as they spare me, my daughter, and my wealth.*

"If they came here for confirmation of an alliance, they would not have come in such a warlike manner as this," the first Jew said.

"I fear their coming will afflict us all," the second Jew said.

"Foolish men, why do you dream of their multitudes?" Barabas said. "What need do they have to negotiate peace with those with whom they already have a peace treaty? The Turks and those of Malta are in league. Tut, tut, there is some other matter going on."

"Why, Barabas, they come either for peace or for war," the first Jew said.

"Perhaps for neither," Barabas said, "but to pass along Malta and head towards Venice by the Adriatic Sea. They have attacked the Venetians many times, but they never could reach their military goal."

"And that is very wisely said," the third Jew said. "It may be so."

"But there's a meeting in the Senate House," the second Jew said, "and all the Jews in Malta must be there."

"Hmm, all the Jews in Malta must be there?" Barabas said. "Yes, likely enough. Why, then let every man prepare himself and be there for fashion's sake — as a matter of form. If anything shall there concern our welfare, assure yourselves I'll look —"

He stopped and thought, *I'll look after me and my affairs.*

The first Jew interrupted, "I know you will."

He then said, "Well, brethren, let us go."

"Let's take our leaves," the second Jew said.

Barabas said to the second Jew, "Do so."

"Farewell, good Barabas," the second Jew said.

Barabas said, "Farewell, Zaareth; farewell, Temainte."

The three Jews exited.

Barabas said to himself, "And, Barabas, now search this secret out. Summon your senses; call your wits together: These foolish men mistake the matter completely. Malta did contribute for a long time to the Turkish Emperor."

True, but Malta was behind on the tribute: It had not paid the tribute for the past ten years.

Barabas continued, “This tribute — all in cunning political policy, I fear — the Turks have let increase to such a sum that all the wealth of Malta cannot pay it. And now by that advantage the Turkish Emperor thinks, probably, to seize upon the town — yes, that is what he seeks.

“However the world goes, I’ll make things sure for Number One, and seek in time to anticipate, intercept, and prevent the worst, warily guarding that which I have got. *Ego mihimet sum semper proximus.*”

The Latin means, “I am always nearest to myself”; in other words, “I always look out for Number One.” It is adapted from a line in Terence’s *Andria*, “*Proximus sum egomet mihi*” (IV.i.12).

Barabas said, “Why, let them enter — let them take the town.”

— 1.2 —

Ferneze, the Governor of Malta; the Knights of Malta; Selim Calymath, a son of the Turkish Emperor; and some Pashas of the Turkish Emperor met together. Pashas are Turkish aristocrats and military leaders. Some Maltese officers were also present.

Governor Ferneze of Malta said, “Now, Pashas, what do you demand from us?”

“Know, Knights of Malta, that we came from Rhodes, from Cyprus, Crete, and those other isles that lie among the Mediterranean seas,” Callapine said.

The Mediterranean seas are the Adriatic, Aegean, Euxine, Terrene, etc.

“What’s Cyprus, Crete, and those other isles to us or Malta?” Governor Ferneze of Malta asked. “What do you want from us?”

“The ten years of tribute that remains unpaid,” Callapine said.

“Alas, my lord, the sum is excessive!” Governor Ferneze of Malta said. “I hope your highness will be considerate toward us.”

“I wish, grave and worthy-of-respect Governor, it were in my power to favor you,” Selim Calymath said, “but it is my father’s cause, wherein I may not, nay, I dare not dally.”

“Then give us leave to talk privately, great Selim Calymath,” Governor Ferneze of Malta said.

“Everyone, stand to the side, and let the Knights of Malta determine what they will do,” Selim Calymath said.

The Turks moved to the side, and Governor Ferneze of Malta began to consult quietly with his advisors.

Selim Calymath continued, “And send word to keep our galleys under sail, for happily — if all goes well — we shall not tarry here.”

He then said, “Now, Governor, what have you decided?”

Governor Ferneze of Malta said, “We have decided this: Since your hard conditions are such that you must have the ten years of tribute that is past due, we ask that we may have time to

make a collection from among the inhabitants of Malta fort.”

“That’s more than we are authorized to do in our commission,” Callapine said.

“Callapine, show a little courtesy!” Selim Calymath said. “Let’s learn the amount of time they require to collect the tribute money; perhaps it is not long. And it is more kingly to obtain by peace than to enforce conditions by constraint.”

A proverb states, “It is better to obtain by love than force.”

Selim Calymath asked, “What respite are you asking for, Governor Ferneze?”

“Only a month,” he replied.

“We grant you a delay of a month, but see that you keep your promise,” Callapine said. “Now we will launch our galleys back again to sea, where we’ll wait during the respite you have taken, and then send our messenger for the money.”

“Farewell, Great Governor, and brave Knights of Malta.”

“And may all good fortune wait on Selim Calymath,” Governor Ferneze said.

The Turks exited.

“Go, one of you, and call those Jews of Malta here,” Governor Ferneze said. “Weren’t they summoned to appear today?”

“They were, my lord,” the officer said, “and here they come.”

Barabas and the three Jews arrived.

“Have you determined what to say to them?” the first Knight of Malta asked.

“Yes,” Governor Ferneze said. “Give me time to act.”

He then said, “Hebrews, now come near. Great Selim Calymath, who is the son of the Emperor of Turkey, has arrived to collect from us ten years of tribute that is past due. Now, then, here know that it concerns us.”

“Then, my good lord, to keep your quiet, peaceful state of affairs still, your lordship shall do well to let them have it,” Barabas said.

“Be quiet, Barabas, there’s more to it than that,” Governor Ferneze said. “We have calculated to what this ten years’ tribute will amount, but we cannot raise that amount of money because of the wars that have robbed our store of money and therefore we request your aid.”

Barabas deliberately misunderstood what Governor Ferneze had said. He pretended instead to believe that Governor Ferneze had asked the Jews to serve as soldiers.

“Alas, my lord, we are no soldiers,” Barabas said. “And what would our aid amount to against so great a prince?”

“Tut, Jew, we know thou are no soldier,” the first Knight of Malta said. “Thou are a merchant and a moneyed man, and it is thy money, Barabas, that we seek.”



In this society, “you” was a respectful form of address. People of high status used words such as “thou” and “thy” and “thine” to refer to a person of lower status.

“What, my lord? My money?” Barabas asked.

“Thine money and the money of the rest of the Jews, for, to be short, among you it must be obtained,” Governor Ferneze said.

“Alas, my lord, most of us are poor,” the first Jew said.

“Then let the rich give more,” Governor Ferneze said.

“Are foreigners to be taxed with your tribute?” Barabas asked.

The Maltese regarded the Jews as foreigners and not as true citizens of Malta.

“Have foreigners our permission to get their wealth?” the second Knight of Malta said. “Then let them with us contribute.”

“How?” Barabas said. “Equally?”

“No, Jew,” Governor Ferneze said, “Like infidels. For through our tolerance of your hateful lives, who stand accursed in the sight of heaven, these taxes and afflictions have befallen.”

Many Christians of the time believed that the Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Governor Ferneze was saying that because Malta had allowed the Jews to live there, God was punishing Malta.

He continued, “And therefore this is what we have determined to do —”

He ordered an officer, “Read there the articles of our decrees.”

The officer read out loud, “*First, the tribute money of the Turks shall all be levied among the Jews, and each of them to pay one half of his estate.*”

“What! Half his estate!” Barabas said.

He thought, *I hope don’t you mean mine.*

“Read on,” Governor Ferneze ordered.

The officer read out loud, “*Secondly, he who refuses to pay shall immediately become a Christian.*”

“What! A Christian!” Barabas said.

He then thought, *Hmm, what shall I do here?*

The officer read out loud, “*Lastly, he who refuses to do this shall absolutely lose all he has.*”

“Oh, my lord, we will give half of what we have,” the three Jews said.

Barabas said to the three Jews, “Oh, earth-mettled — dull-witted — villains, you are no Hebrews born! Will you basely thus submit yourselves and leave your goods under their control?”

“Why, Barabas, will thou be christened?” Governor Ferneze asked.

“No, Governor, I will be no convert,” Barabas said.

“Then pay thy half,” Governor Ferneze said.

“Why, do you know what you did by this trick?” Barabas said. “Half of my possessions is a city’s wealth. Governor, it was not gotten so easily, nor will I part so easily with it.”

“Sir, half is the fine of our decree,” Governor Ferneze said. “Either pay that, or we will seize all of your wealth.”

“*Corpo di Dio!*” Barabas said.

The Italian means, “By God’s body!”

Governor Ferneze made a sign to the officers, who exited.

Barabas said, “Wait! You shall have half of my wealth. Let me be treated just as my brethren are.”

“No, Jew, thou have denied the articles, and now your denial cannot be recalled,” Governor Ferneze said.

“Will you then steal my goods?” Barabas asked. “Is theft the ground and basis of your religion?”

“No, Jew,” Governor Ferneze said. “We take in particular thine wealth to save the ruin of a multitude, and it is better that one go without for a common good than that many shall perish for an individual man.”

John 11:50 states, “*Nor yet do you consider that it is expedient for us, that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Governor Ferneze continued, “Yet, Barabas, we will not banish thee, but here in Malta, where thou got thy wealth, continue to live, and if thou can, get more wealth.”

“Christians, what or how can I multiply?” Barabas said. “Of nought is nothing made.”

Christians believed that God created the universe *ex nihilo* — out of nothing.

“From nought at first thou came to little wealth,” the first Knight of Malta said. “From little thou came to more, from more to most. If your first curse falls heavy on thy head, and makes thee poor and scorned of all the world, it is not our fault, but the fault of thy inherent sin.”

The “first curse” occurred when the Jews demanded the crucifixion of Christ. Matthew 27:25 states, “*Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Some Christians at this time believed that this curse placed on Jews was hereditary.

“What! Do you bring scripture to confirm your wrongs?” Barabas asked.

A proverb stated, “The Devil can cite scripture for his purpose.”

He continued, “Preach me not out of my possessions. Some Jews are wicked” — he thought, *as all Christians are* — “but say that the tribe that I descended from were all in general cast

away and rejected and damned by God for sin, shall I be tried for their transgression? The man who deals righteously shall live.”

Proverbs 10:2 states, “*The treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Proverbs 10:16 states, “*The labor of the righteous tendeth to life: but the revenues of the wicked to sin*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Proverbs 12:28 states, “*Life is in the way of righteousness, and in that pathway there is no death*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Barabas added, “And which of you can charge me otherwise?”

John 8:46 states, “*Which of you can rebuke me of sin? and if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

“Bah, wretched Barabas!” Governor Ferneze said. “Aren’t thou ashamed to justify thyself like this, as if we didn’t know thy profession?”

The word “profession” means 1) “religious creed,” and 2) “occupation.”

Governor Ferneze continued, “If thou rely upon thy righteousness, be patient, and thy riches will increase. Excess of wealth is the cause of covetousness, and covetousness — oh, it is a monstrous sin.”

“Yes, but theft is worse,” Barabas said. “Tush, don’t take wealth from me then, for that is theft, and if you rob me like that, I must be forced to steal and gather more.”

“Grave Governor, don’t listen to his exclamations,” the first Knight of Malta said. “Convert his mansion to a nunnery. His house will harbor many holy nuns.”

“It shall be done,” Governor Ferneze said.

The officers returned.

“Now, officers, have you finished?” Governor Ferneze asked.

“Yes, my lord,” the first officer said. “We have seized the goods and wares of Barabas, which, being valued, amount to more than all the wealth in Malta. And from the other Jews we have seized half their wealth. Then we’ll take order for the residue.”

He meant that now they would start converting the property they had seized to cash so they could pay the tribute to the Turks. The “residue” was what remained to be done of their orders.

“Well, then, my lord, tell me, are you satisfied?” Barabas asked. “You have my goods, my money, and my wealth, my ships, my store of possessions, and all that I enjoyed. And, having all, you can request no more, unless your unrelenting flinty hearts suppress all pity in your stony breasts, and now shall move you to take my life.”

“No, Barabas,” Governor Ferneze said. “To stain our hands with blood is far from us and our profession.”

“Why, I esteem the injury far less to take the lives of miserable men than be the causers of their misery,” Barabas said. “You have my wealth, the labor of my life, the comfort of my old age,

and my children's hope."

Barabas had only one child: a daughter. He had said "children's hope" in an attempt to arouse pity.

He added, "And therefore never make distinctions about the wrong — don't try to minimize the wrong you have done to me by saying you won't kill me."

Barabas would agree with Machiavelli's observation that "above all things [the prince] must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony."

"Be content, Barabas," Governor Ferneze said. "Thou has received nought ... but right and justice."

In this culture, "nought" could mean "nothing," 2) "poverty," or 3) "evil."

"Your extreme right does me exceeding wrong," Barabas said.

Cicero wrote "*summum ius, summa iniuria*" in *De Officiis* I.x.33. Walter Miller translated this as "More law, less justice." In other words, the more strictly justice is enforced, the more injustice it creates.

Barabas continued, "But take it to you, in the devil's name!"

"Come, let us go in and gather from the sale of these goods the money for this tribute of the Turkish Emperor," Governor Ferneze said.

"It is necessary that that is looked to," the first Knight of Malta said, "for if we miss our deadline, we break the treaty, and that will prove to be only a foolish policy."

Governor Ferneze and the Knights of Malta exited, leaving behind Barabas and the three other Jews.

"Aye, policy?" Barabas said. "That's their profession, and not simplicity, as they suggest."

"Policy" meant "devious and cunning Machiavellian political policy," or in other words, "cunning trickery," while "simplicity" meant "honesty and straightforwardness."

Barabas was pointing out the hypocrisy of the Maltese Christians. They were practicing Machiavellian politics, not Christian simplicity and virtue.

2 Corinthians 11:3 states, "*But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupt from the simplicity that is in Christ*" (1599 Geneva Bible).

Barabas knelt and swore a curse: "Inflict upon them the plagues of Egypt and the curse of heaven, the earth's barrenness, and all men's hatred, thou great Primus Motor! And here upon my knees, striking the earth, I condemn their souls to everlasting pains, and extreme tortures of the fiery deep. I curse those who thus have dealt with me in my distress."

The Primus Motor comes from Aristotelian thought — the Primus Motor is the first cause of motion in the universe. Some Christians sometimes use the term "Prime Mover" to refer to God.

Barabas stood up.

“Oh, yet be patient, gentle Barabas,” the first Jew said.

“Oh, foolish brethren, who were born to see this day of my unhappiness,” Barabas said, “why do you stand thus unmoved with my laments? Why don’t you weep to think upon my wrongs? Why don’t I pine and die in this distress?”

“Why, Barabas, just as hard as you take your misfortune do we endure the cruel handling of ourselves in this affair,” the first Jew said. “Thou see they have taken half our goods.”

“Why did you yield to their extortion?” Barabas asked. “You were a multitude, and I was only one, and from only me have they taken all.”

“Yet, brother Barabas, remember Job,” the first Jew said.

In the Biblical Book of Job, Job is a good man whose prosperity, children, and health are taken away from him when God gives Satan permission to do these things. Job struggles with the Problem of Evil and asks God to explain His actions.

This is the Problem of Evil:

Premise 1: If God is omnipotent (all-powerful), then he could prevent evil.

Premise 2: If God is omnibenevolent (all-good), then he would prevent evil.

Premise 3: Evil exists.

Conclusion: Either God is not omnipotent, or God is not omnibenevolent.

“Why do you tell me about Job?” Barabas said. “I know that his wealth was written thus: He had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, and two hundred yoke of laboring oxen, and five hundred she-asses. But for every one of those, had they been valued impartially at a fair price, I had at home, and in my fleet of merchant ships and other ships that came from Egypt most recently, as much as would have bought his beasts and him, and yet have kept enough to live upon. So then not he, but I, may curse the day, thy fatal birthday, forlorn Barabas, that clouds of darkness may enclose my flesh, and hide these extreme sorrows from my eyes, for I have toiled to inherit here only the months of vain striving and loss of time, and painful nights have been appointed me.”

“Good Barabas, be patient,” the second Jew said.

“Aye, I ask you to please leave me in my patience — my stoic suffering,” Barabas said. “You who were never possessed of wealth are content without it. But give him liberty at least to mourn, he who in a field amid his enemies sees his soldiers slain, himself disarmed, and knows no way of gaining his recovery. Aye, let me sorrow for this sudden misfortune. It is in the trouble of my spirit that I speak. Great injuries are not so soon forgotten.”

“Come, let us leave him,” the first Jew said. “In his angry mood, our words will but increase his frenzy.”

“Let’s go, then,” the second Jew said. “But, trust me, it is a misery to see a man in such affliction.”

He then said, “Farewell, Barabas.”

“Aye, may you fare well,” Barabas said.

The three Jews exited.

Barabas said, “See the simplicity of these base slaves, who, because the villains have no intelligence themselves, think that I am a senseless lump of clay that will with every water wash to dirt.”

The image meant that the Jews regarded Barabas as a person who would fall to pieces at every crisis.

He continued, “No, Barabas is born to better fortune and framed of finer materials than common men who measure nought but by the present time. A person with far-reaching thought will exercise his deepest intelligence and cunningly plan and provide for the time to come, for evils are apt to happen every day.”

Seeing his daughter coming toward him, he asked himself, “But whither wends my beautiful Abigail?”

Abigail, Barabas’ daughter, walked over to him.

Barabas asked, “Oh, what has made my lovely daughter sad? What, woman! Don’t moan over a little loss. Thy father has enough in store for thee.”

She replied, “Not for myself, but aged Barabas, father, for thee laments Abigail. But I will learn to leave these fruitless tears, and, incited thereto by my afflictions, I will run to the Senate House with fierce protests, and in the Senate I will reprehend them all and rend their hearts by tearing my hair until they redress the wrongs done to my father.”

“No, Abigail,” Barabas said. “Things past recovery are hardly cured with exclamations.”

A proverb stated, “Past care, past cure.”

He continued, “Be silent, daughter. Patient endurance breeds ease, and time, which in this sudden crisis cannot help us, may in the future yield us an opportunity.

“Besides, my girl, think me not all so foolish as negligently to lose so much without making provision for thyself and me. Fearing the worst of this before it fell, I secretly hid ten thousand Portuguese gold coins, besides great pearls, rich costly jewels, and an infinite number of precious stones.”

“Where, father?” Abigail asked.

“In my house, my girl,” Barabas replied.

“Then they shall never be seen by Barabas,” Abigail said, “for the Maltese officials have seized thy house and wares.”

“But they will give me permission once more, I trust, to go into my house,” Barabas said.

“That they may not,” Abigail said, “for there I left the Governor placing nuns, displacing me, and of thy house the nuns intend to make a nunnery, where none but their own religious sect and sex must enter in; men are completely barred.”

“My gold, my gold, and all my wealth is gone,” Barabas said. “You unfair heavens, have I deserved this plague? What! Will you thus oppose me, unlucky and malignant stars, to make me desperate in my poverty? And knowing me impatient in distress, do you think that I am so mad that I will hang myself so that I may vanish over the earth into air and leave no memory that I ever existed?”

“No, I will live, nor will I loathe this my life. And since you leave me in the ocean thus to sink or swim, and to live by my wits and fend for myself, I’ll rouse my senses, and awaken myself.

“Daughter, I have it. Thou perceive the plight wherein these Christians have oppressed me. Be guided by me, for in extremity we ought to bar no policy. We must make use of any means, plan, and strategy that will help us.”

Abigail replied, “Father, whatever it is that will injure them who have so manifestly wronged us, what won’t Abigail do?”

“Why, good,” Barabas said. “Then thus: Did thou tell me that they have turned my house into a nunnery, and some nuns are there?”

“I did.”

“Then, Abigail, there must my girl entreat the abbess to be admitted.”

“How, as a nun?” Abigail asked.

“Yes, daughter, for religion hides many acts of evil-doing from suspicion,” Barabas said.

“Yes, but father, they will suspect me there.”

“Let them suspect, but thou shall be so precise and strict in religious matters that they may think your entreaty is done from holiness,” Barabas said. “Entreat them courteously, and give them friendly speech, and seem to them as if thy sins were great, until thou have gotten admitted to the nunnery.”

“If I profess that, father, I shall greatly lie,” Abigail said.

She meant 1) profess that she had converted to Christianity, and 2) profess that her sins were great. Barabas understood her to mean #1 only.

“Bah!” Barabas said. “It is as good to lie about a conversion you don’t mean as to at first tell the truth about being a Christian and then act in such a way as to make that truth a lie.”

He paused and then added, “A counterfeit profession is better than hidden, undetected hypocrisy.”

“Well, father, let’s say I am admitted into the nunnery, what then shall follow?” Abigail asked.

“This shall then follow: In my house — the nunnery — I have hidden, concealed underneath the plank that runs along the upper chamber floor, the gold and jewels that I kept for thee.”

Seeing two friars, the Abbess, and a nun coming, he said, “But here they come. Be cunning, Abigail.”

“Then, father, go with me.”

“No, Abigail, in this it is necessary that I not be seen,” Barabas said, “for I will pretend to be offended with thee for seeming to have converted to Christianity. Keep your true self hidden, my girl, for this must fetch my gold.”

Barabas hid himself as the friars Jacomo and Barnardine arrived with the Abbess and a nun.

“Sisters, we now are almost at the new-made nunnery,” Friar Jacomo said.

“All the better,” the Abbess said, “for we love not to be seen. It has been thirty winters since some of us did stray so far among the multitude.”

“But, madam, this house and the sources of water of this new-made nunnery will much delight you,” Friar Jacomo said.

Barabas’ property may have included a well and a pond.

“It may be so,” the Abbess said. “But who comes here?”

Abigail said, “Grave Abbess, and you happy virgins’ guides, pity the state of a distressed maiden.”

“Who are thou, daughter?” the Abbess asked.

“The hopeless, despairing daughter of a hapless, unfortunate Jew — the Jew of Malta, wretched Barabas — formerly the owner of a splendid house, which they have now turned to a nunnery.”

“Well, daughter, tell us, what is thy suit with us?” the Abbess asked. “What do you want?”

“Fearing the afflictions that my father feels proceed from sin or lack of faith in us Jews, I want to pass away my life in penitence and be a novice in your nunnery in order to make atonement for my troubled soul,” Abigail said.

“There is no doubt, brother, that this proceeds from the spirit,” Friar Jacomo said. “This proceeds from divine influence.”

John 3:5-6 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, except that a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

*6 That which is born of the flesh, is flesh: and that that is born of the Spirit, is spirit.*

Friar Barnardine replied, “Yes, and of a moving spirit, too, brother.”

A “moving spirit” is one that excites the passions. The spirit that could be moved is Abigail’s, spiritually, or Barnardine’s, sexually.

The word “spirit” can mean “soul,” 2) “Holy Spirit, aka Holy Ghost,” and 3) “semen (vital spirits).”

He added, “But come, let us entreat that she may be entertained.”

The word “entertained” can mean 1) “admitted (into the nunnery),” and 2) “seduced.”

The Abbess said to Abigail, “Well, daughter, we admit you for a nun.”



“First let me as a novice learn to shape my solitary life to your strict laws, and let me lodge where I was accustomed to lie,” Abigail said.

A novice has not yet taken the vows of a nun, but is serving a time of probation to see whether she ought to take those vows. Abigail was worried about committing sin by breaking the vows of a nun.

She continued, “I do not doubt, by your divine precepts and my own industry, but to profit much.”

Listening, Barabas said to himself, “As much profit, I hope, as all I hid is worth.”

“Come, daughter, follow us,” the Abbess said.

Coming out of hiding, Barabas said, “Why, what is this? Abigail, what are thou doing among these hateful Christians?”

“Don’t hinder her, thou man of little faith,” Friar Jacomo said, “for she has mortified herself — she has become dead to worldly things.”

“What!” Barabas said. “Mortified!”

“And she has been admitted to the sisterhood,” Friar Jacomo added.

“Child of perdition — child of sin and damnation — and thy father’s shame, what will thou do among these hateful fiends?” Barabas asked Abigail. “I command thee on my blessing that thou leave these devils and their damned heresy.”

Abigail moved toward him and said, “Father, give me —”

She had started to ask her father for his blessing.

“No, stay back, Abigail,” Barabas said loudly.

He whispered to her, “And think upon the jewels and the gold. The board under which they are hidden is marked thus” — he made a sign of an obelus that looked like a dagger although a Christian would say it looked like a cross.

He said out loud, “Stay away, accursed daughter, from thy father’s sight!”

“Barabas, although thou are in misbelief and do not think correctly about God and will not see thine own afflictions, yet let thy daughter be no longer spiritually blind,” Friar Jacomo said.

“Blind, friar?” Barabas said. “I am unmoved by thy persuasions and beliefs.”

He whispered to Abigail, who had stayed near him, “The board is marked thus” — he again made a sign of an obelus. “That sign marks the board that covers the treasure.”

He said out loud to Friar Jacomo, “For I had rather die than see her thus — a Christian.”

He then asked Abigail out loud, “Will thou forsake me, too, in my distress, seduced daughter?”

He was saying that Christianity had seduced Abigail.

He then whispered to her, “Go, and don’t forget what I have told you.”

He said out loud, “Does it become Jews to be so credulous? Is it fitting that Jews can be so easily persuaded by Christian arguments?”

He whispered to Abigail, “Tomorrow early I’ll be at the door.”

He said out loud to her, “No, don’t come near me. If thou will be damned, forget me, don’t see me; and so, be gone.”

He whispered to her, “Farewell; remember tomorrow morning.”

He said out loud to her, “Out, out, thou wretch! Get out of my sight!”

Barabas exited, and then the others exited in another direction.

Before they exited, Mathias had arrived and saw and heard some of their conversation.

He said to himself, “Who’s this? Fair Abigail, the rich Jew’s daughter, become a nun? Her father’s sudden fall has humbled her, and brought her down to this.

“Tut, she were fitter for a tale of love than to be tired out with prayers, and better would she far become a bed, embraced in a friendly lover’s arms, than rise at midnight to attend a solemn, ceremonious mass.”

Lodowick, the son of Governor Ferneze, arrived. Lodowick and Mathias were friends.

“Why, how are you now, Don Mathias?” Lodowick asked. “Down in the dumps?”

“Believe me, noble Lodowick, I have seen the strangest sight, in my opinion, that ever I beheld,” Mathias said.

“What was it, I ask you?”

“A fair young maiden, scarcely fourteen years of age, and the sweetest flower in Cytherea’s field.”

Venus was sometimes called Cytherea because she was born in the sea near the island of Cythera.

Mathias continued, “She has been cropped from the pleasures of the fruitful earth and strangely metamorphosed into a nun.”

“But tell me, who was she?” Lodowick asked.

“Why, the rich Jew’s daughter.”

“What! Barabas, whose goods were recently seized? Is she so fair?”

“And matchlessly beautiful,” Mathias said. “If you had seen her, it would have moved your heart even if it were countermined — defensively fortified with two walls of brass — to love her, or at the least, to pity her.”

“And if she is so fair as you report, it would be time well spent to go and visit her,” Lodowick said. “What do you say? Shall we?”

“I must and will, sir,” Mathias said. “There’s no alternative.”

“And so will I, too, or it shall go hard,” Lodowick said.

“It shall go hard” could mean 1) “there will be trouble,” 2) “it will happen unless opposed by overwhelming circumstances,” and 3) “I will get an erection.” Presumably, he would get an erection simply by thinking about her.

He said, “Farewell, Mathias.”

Mathias replied, “Farewell, Lodowick.”

## ACT 2 (*Jew of Malta*)

### — 2.1 —

Unable to sleep, Barabas arrived at the nunnery — his old house — carrying a light in the darkness.

Talking to himself, he made a reference to the superstition that ravens were ill omens and would announce with their cries the coming death of a person: “Thus, like the sad presaging, foreboding raven that tolls the funeral bell for the sick man’s passport to the Land of the Dead in her hollow beak, and in the shadow of the silent night shakes contagion from her sable wings, vexed and tormented runs poor Barabas with fatal curses towards these Christians.”

He then said, “The uncertain pleasures of swift-footed time have taken their flight, and left me in despair, and of my former riches no more than bare remembrance remains, like the scar of a soldier who has no further comfort for his maim.”

A maim is a serious, disabling wound such as one that results in amputation. Often, soldiers were not well compensated for suffering such wounds.

Barabas continued, “Oh, God, Thou Who with a fiery pillar by night led the sons of Israel through the dismal shades and out of Egypt, light the way for Abraham’s offspring; and direct the hand of Abigail this night, or let the day turn to eternal darkness after this.”

Exodus 13:21-22 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*21 And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might go both by day and by night.*

*22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people.*

Barabas continued, “No sleep can fasten on my watching, wakeful eyes, nor can quiet enter my agitated thoughts, until I have information from my Abigail.”

Abigail appeared at a window on the second story of the new-made nunnery.

She said to herself, “Now I have fortunately found a time to search under the plank my father did designate.”

She lifted the plank and said, “And here, behold, unseen, where I have found the gold, pearls, and jewels that he hid.”

Not seeing Abigail, Barabas sat and said, “Now I remember those old women’s words, who, in my days of wealth, would tell me winter’s tales — tales suitable for passing long winter hours — and speak of spirits and ghosts that glide by night about the place where treasure has been hid, and now I think that I am one of those spirits and ghosts, for while I live, here lives my soul’s sole hope, and when I die, here shall my spirit walk.”

Not seeing Barabas, Abigail said, “Now if only my father’s fortune were so good as to be here in this happy place! His fortune is not so happy. Yet when we parted last, he said he would see me in the morning. So then, gentle sleep, wherever his body rests, give charge to Morpheus, god of sleep and dreams, that he may dream a golden dream, and all of a sudden wake up, come, and receive the treasure I have found.”

In Spanish, Barabas said, “*Bueno para todos mi ganado no era.*”

This means, “My gain is not good for everybody.” In other words, he did not want everyone to take his wealth; instead, he wanted to keep it.

He continued, “It is as good to go on as to sit so sadly like this.”

He stood up, saw a candle that Abigail had lit, and said, “But wait! What star shines yonder in the east? It is the loadstar — guiding light — of my life. It is Abigail.”

He called, “Who’s there?”

“Who’s that calling?” Abigail asked.

“Be at peace, Abigail,” Barabas said. “It is I.”

“Then, father, here receive thy happiness,” Abigail said.

“Do you have it?” Barabas asked.

“Here,” she said, throwing down a bag of treasure. “Do you have it?”

As she threw down the other bags of treasure, she said, “There’s more ... and more ... and more.”

“Oh, my girl, my gold, my fortune, my felicity, strength to my soul, death to my enemy,” Barabas said.

He said to his bags of treasure, “Welcome, the first beginner of my bliss.”

He then said, “Oh, Abigail, Abigail, if only I had thee here, too, then my desires would be fully satisfied. But I will devise a way to get thee thy freedom from the nunnery.

“Oh, girl! Oh, gold! Oh, beauty! Oh, my bliss!”

He hugged his bags of treasure.

“Father, it draws close to midnight now,” Abigail said, “and about this time the nuns begin to wake in order to sing the matins. To shun and avoid suspicion, therefore, let us part.”

“Farewell, my joy, and by my fingers take a kiss from him who sends it from his soul,” Barabas said, blowing her a kiss.

He then said, “Now, Phoebus Apollo, open the eyelids of the day, and in place of the raven wake the morning lark, so that I may hover with her in the air, singing over these moneybags, as she does over her young, ‘*Hermoso placer de los dineros.*’”

The Spanish words mean “the beautiful pleasure of money.”

— 2.2 —

Governor Ferneze, the Knights of Malta, and some Maltese officers met together. With them was the newly arrived Spanish Vice-Admiral del Bosco, who had not yet identified himself.

“Now, Captain, tell us to where thou are bound, from where comes thy ship that anchors in our harbor, and why thou came ashore without our leave?” Governor Ferneze asked Martin del Bosco.

He replied, “Governor of Malta, to here I am bound. My ship, the *Flying Dragon*, is from Spain, and so am I. Martin del Bosco is my name, and I am Vice-Admiral to the Catholic King — the King of Spain.”

“It is true, my lord,” the first Knight of Malta said. “Therefore, treat him well.”

Vice-Admiral Martin del Bosco said, “Our freight is slaves — Grecians, Turks, and African Moors. Recently upon the coast of Corsica, because we declined to lower our sails in respect to the Turkish fleet, their creeping, slow-moving galleys chased us. Because of lack of wind, they had the advantage over us at first, but suddenly the wind began to rise, and then we luffed and tacked — turned and sailed zigzag into the wind to face the Turkish fleet — and fought at our ease.

“Some Turkish ships we set on fire, and many Turkish ships we sank, but one ship among the rest became our prize. The Turkish Captains were slain; the rest remain our slaves, of whom we would make sale in Malta here.”

The Spanish ship had not lowered its sails to show respect to the Turkish fleet, so the fleet had chased it. At first the slow-moving Turkish fleet more than kept up with the Spanish ship, but the wind grew stronger, and the Spanish ship, which with the wind was faster and more maneuverable than the Turkish fleet, turned and fought and defeated the Turkish fleet.

“Martin del Bosco, I have heard of thee,” Governor Ferneze said. “Welcome to Malta, and to all of us. But to admit a sale of these thy Turks, we may not, nay, we dare not give consent, by reason of a tributary treaty that we have made with Turkey.”

The tributary treaty was a peace treaty between Malta and Turkey, but it required the Maltese to pay tribute to the Turks.

“Martin Del Bosco, as thou love and honor us, persuade our Governor to act against the Turkish Emperor,” the first Knight of Malta said. “This truce we have was made only because of the Turks’ hope of gold, and with that sum the Turkish Emperor craves we would be able to wage war. We can use the tribute money to arm ourselves against the Turks.”

The Maltese could do that especially if they had Spanish support.

“Will the Knights of Malta be in league with Turks,” Vice-Admiral Martin del Bosco said, “and basely buy that peace, too, for sums of gold? My lord, remember that, to Europe’s shame,

the Christian isle of Rhodes, from whence you came, was recently lost, and you Knights were installed in office in Malta here to be at deadly enmity with Turks.”

The Knights of Malta are the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem. Previously, the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem had their headquarters on the island of Rhodes, but in 1522, after a siege, the Turks conquered the island. In 1530, King Charles I of Spain, who was also the King of Sicily, allowed them to settle at Malta, where they established their headquarters.

“Captain, we know it,” Governor Ferneze said, “but our force is small.”

Vice-Admiral Martin del Bosco asked, “What is the sum that Calymath requires?”

“A hundred thousand crowns,” Governor Ferneze answered.

“My lord and king has title to this isle, and he means quickly to expel the Turks from here,” Vice-Admiral Martin del Bosco said. “Therefore, take my advice, and keep the gold.

“I’ll write to his majesty the King of Spain for aid, and I will not depart until I see you free of compelled obligations to the Turkish Emperor.”

“On this condition thy Turkish captives shall be sold,” Governor Ferneze said. “Go, officers, and immediately put them on display in the marketplace.”

The Maltese officers exited.

Governor Ferneze continued, “Bosco, thou shall be Malta’s general. We and our warlike Knights will follow thee against these barbarous, misbelieving, pagan Turks.”

“So shall you imitate those you succeed,” Vice-Admiral Martin del Bosco said. “For when the Turks’ hideous force surrounded the island of Rhodes, small though the number of Knights of Rhodes was who kept the town, they fought it out, and not a man survived to bring the hapless news to Christendom.”

The important point was that the Knights of Rhodes fought the Turks, just as the Knights of Malta should and would.

Governor Ferneze said, “So will we fight it out. Come, let’s go.”

He then addressed Calymath, who was not actually present: “Proud daring Calymath, instead of gold we’ll send thee bullets wrapped in smoke and fire. Claim tribute wherever thou will, we are resolved to resist you. Honor is bought with blood and not with gold.”

— 2.3 —

Some Maltese officers arrived with the slaves.

“This is the marketplace,” the first officer said. “Here let them stand. Don’t be afraid that they won’t sell, for they’ll be quickly bought.”

“Everyone’s price is written on his back,” the second officer said, “and so much they must yield, or not be sold.”

Barabas arrived.

“Here comes the Jew,” the first officer said. “If his goods had not been seized, he’d give us ready cash for all of the slaves.”

Barabas said to himself, “In spite of these swine-eating Christians — an unchosen nation, never circumcised —”

The Jews were the chosen people — they were chosen to have a special relationship with God.

Psalm 33:12 states, “*Blessed is that nation, whose God is the Lord: even the people that he hath chosen for his inheritance*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

He continued, “— such as, poor villains, were never thought of until Titus and Vespasian conquered us —”

In 66 C.E., Vespasian, then the Roman commander in Palestine, put down a Jewish revolt against the Romans. In 69 C.E. Vespasian became Roman Emperor, and in 70 C.E. Titus, Vespasian’s son, conquered Jerusalem.

He continued, “— I have become as wealthy as I was. They hoped my daughter would have been a nun; but she’s at home, and I have bought a house as great and fair as is the Governor Ferneze’s. And there, in spite of Malta, I will dwell, having Ferneze’s hand, whose heart I’ll have, aye, and his son’s, too, or it shall go hard.”

Governor Ferneze had allowed Barabas to prosper, giving him the assurance of a legal document in his own handwriting or perhaps a handshake, but Barabas wanted revenge against him and his heart — and only overpowering obstacles would prevent him from getting that revenge.

Barabas continued, “I am not of the priestly tribe of Levi, I. The priestly tribe of Levi can very soon forget an injury.”

Joshua 21 names the towns the Levites were given to live in, including some cities that were refuges for people accused of murder.

Joshua 20:1-3 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*1 The Lord also spake unto Joshua, saying,*

*2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say, Appoint you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses,*

*3 That the slayer that killeth any person by ignorance [unawares, and without having a grudge against him or a reason to kill him], and unwittingly [accidentally], may flee thither, and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.*

Barabas continued, “We Jews can fawn like cocker spaniels when we please, and when we grin, we bite; yet our looks are as innocent and harmless as a lamb’s.

“I learned in Florence, the home of Machiavelli and of Machiavellian intrigue, how to kiss my hand, shrug my shoulders when they call me dog, and bow as low as any barefoot friar, all while hoping to see them starve upon a stall — an outside bench sometimes used as a place to sleep at night by the homeless — or else to see the collection plate be passed around for them in our synagogue, so that when the offering basin comes to me for my charitable offering I may spit into it.”

He looked up and said, “Here comes Don Lodowick, the Governor’s son, one whom I ‘love’ for his ‘good’ father’s sake.”

Lodowick said, “I hear the wealthy Jew walked this way. I’ll seek him out, and so insinuate myself into his favor that I may have a sight of Abigail, for Don Mathias tells me she is beautiful.”

Barabas said to himself, “Now I will show myself to have more of the serpent than the dove; that is, I will be more knave than fool.”

Matthew 10:16 speaks about serpents and doves: “*Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of the wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and innocent as doves*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

“Yonder walks the Jew,” Lodowick said. “Now for fair Abigail.”

Hearing him, Barabas said sarcastically to himself, “Aye, aye, no doubt but she’s at your command.”

Lodowick, who had recently shaved as preparation for seeing Abigail, walked over to Barabas and said, “Barabas, thou know I am the Governor’s son.”

“I wish you were his father, too, sir!” Barabas said. “That’s all the harm I wish you.”

Barabas seemed to others to be on good terms with Lodowick’s father, Governor Ferneze, but he wanted revenge on Ferneze, whom he regarded as a bad man. By wishing that Lodowick were the father of his own father, he was wishing that Lodowick were the father of a bad son.

Deuteronomy 5:9 states, “*Thou shalt neither bow thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, even unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me:*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Barabas said to himself, “The freshly shaven slave looks like a newly singed hog’s cheek.”

“Where are you walking, Barabas?” Lodowick asked.

“No further,” Barabas said. “It is a custom held with us, that when we speak with gentiles like you, we turn into the air to purge ourselves of spiritual defilement, for unto us the promise — the covenant that God gave to Abram — does belong.”

This was strong language, but Barabas was able to say it because he knew that Lodowick wanted something important from him: his daughter, Abigail.

The story of the covenant God gave to Abram is told in Genesis 17, which begins in this way (1599 Geneva Bible):

*1 When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am God all sufficient, walk before me, and be thou upright,*

*2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly.*

*3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,*

*4 Behold, I make my covenant with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations,*



5 *Neither shall thy name anymore be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham: for a father of many nations have I made thee.*

“Well, Barabas, can you help me to a diamond?” Lodowick asked.

“Oh, sir, your father has gotten possession of my diamonds in the past,” Barabas said. “Yet I have one left that will serve your turn.”

Barabas thought, *By “diamond,” I mean my daughter, but before he shall have her, I’ll sacrifice her on a pile of wood.*

The phrase “serve your turn” can mean “satisfy you sexually.”

Barabas thought, *I have the poison of the city for Lodowick, and the white leprosy.*

“White leprosy” is a stage of leprosy in which the skin turns into slimy white scales. The “poison of the city” could possibly be plague.

2 Kings 5:27 (1599 Geneva Bible) states, “*The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and to thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper white as snow.*”

“What sparkle does it give without a foil?” Lodowick asked.

Thin metallic foil is set under or behind a jewel to enhance its sparkle.

“The diamond that I talk of never was foiled,” Barabas said.

No jeweler had ever foiled his diamond — his daughter.

He thought, *But, when Lodowick touches it, it will be foiled.*

In this context, the word “foiled” meant “fouled or defiled.” Barabas believed that his daughter would defile herself by marrying Lodowick — indeed, by marrying a Christian.

Barabas added, “Lord Lodowick, it sparkles bright and fair.”

“Is it square and cube-shaped, or is it pointed?” Lodowick said. “Please, let me know.”

“Pointed it is, good sir,” Barabas said.

He thought, *But not for you.*

As used by Barabas, the word “pointed” meant “destined or appointed.”

“I like it much the better because it is pointed,” Lodowick said.

“So do I, too,” Barabas said.

“How does it look at night?” Lodowick asked.

“It outshines Cynthia’s — the Moon’s — rays. You’ll like it far better during the nights than the days.”

Cynthia is the Moon-goddess.

The words “like it far better during the nights than the days” had a sexual meaning when applied to Abigail.

“And what’s the price?” Lodowick asked.

Barabas thought, *Your life, if you take the diamond.*

He said out loud, “Oh, my lord, we will not quarrel about the price. Come to my house, and I will give it to your honor.”

He thought, *I will give it to your honor with a vengeance.*

The phrase “give it to your honor” was used with a double meaning: 1) “give the diamond — Abigail — to you,” and 2) “give you what you deserve.” Barabas continued to use double meanings during his conversation with Lodowick.

“No, Barabas, I will deserve it first,” Lodowick said.

“Good sir, your father has deserved it at my hands,” Barabas said. “He, out of utter charity and Christian compassion, to bring me to religious purity, and, as it were, as a kind of catechizing spiritual teacher, to make me mindful of my mortal sins, against my will, and whether I would or not, seized all I had, and thrust me out of doors, and made my house a place for nuns most chaste.”

A catechism summarizes the principles of Christianity in a set of questions and answers. It is often used as a form of education.

Barabas may have intended “most chaste” to modify “my house” rather than “nuns.”

“No doubt your soul shall reap the fruit of it,” Lodowick said.

“Aye, but, my lord, the harvest is far off,” Barabas said. “And yet I know the prayers of those nuns and holy friars, having money for their pains, are wondrous —”

He thought, — *and indeed do no man good.*

Catholic nuns and friars can receive money for spiritual services such as the singing of masses and the saying of prayers.

Barabas added, “And seeing they are not idle, but still doing, it is likely they in time may reap some fruit, I mean, in fullness of perfection.”

The phrase “still doing” means 1) “always working,” and 2) “always sexually active.”

The word “fruit” means 1) “spiritual benefits,” and 2) “children.”

The phrase “fullness of perfection” can mean 1) “state of perfect holiness,” or 2) “pregnant and ready to give birth.”

Recognizing Barabas’ double meanings, Lodowick said, “Good Barabas, don’t make insinuations about our holy nuns.”

“No, but I do it through a burning zeal —” Barabas said.

He thought, — *hoping before long to set the house afire, for although for a while they do increase and multiply, I’ll have something to say to that nunnery.*

The word “burning” can mean 1) “fervent,” and 2) “incendiary.”

Genesis 9:7 states, “*But bring ye forth fruit and multiply: grow plentifully in the earth, and increase therein*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Barabas continued, “As for the diamond, sir, I told you of, come to my home, and there’s no price shall make us part, even for your honorable father’s sake.”

He thought, *It shall go hard but I will see your death.*

He added, “But now I must be gone to buy a slave.”

“And, Barabas, I’ll bear thee company,” Lodowick said.

“Come then,” Barabas said. “Here’s the marketplace.”

Looking at a Turk for sale, Barabas asked the first officer, “What’s the price of this slave, 200 crowns — 200 gold coins? Is that his weight? Do the Turks weigh so much?”

“Sir, that’s his price,” the first officer said.

“What!” Barabas said. “Can he steal, and that’s why you demand so much money for him? Probably he has some new trick for stealing a purse. If he has, he is worth three hundred plates — Spanish silver coins — as long as, once he is bought, the town seal might be gotten to keep him for his lifetime away from the gallows.”

Barabas meant that the slave would be worth the asking price if he could steal without the risk of being caught, tried in court, and then hung. This could be done if the slave, once bought, stole the town seal — with it, the slave’s owner could create an official pardon for the slave’s crimes.

Barabas continued, “The trial-day is critical to thieves, and few or none escape except by being purged.”

A critical day in an illness is a dangerous day during which the patient could die. A critical day for a thief is the day spent in court. In this society, many thieves were found guilty and were hung.

The word “purging” may refer to being cleared of the crime. This would be an escape from the court.

The word “purging,” however, does have a medical meaning and a religious meaning that would result in or be a result of an “escape” from the court:

1) Being purged by a “doctor” who hopes to cure the “patient.” One such cure was to induce vomiting or evacuation of the patient’s bowels; although this was intended to lead to a cure, it sometimes resulted in the death of the patient. The purging of the thief was often his being hung — this cured the thief of being a thief.

2) Being punished for sins on the Mountain of Purgatory after death. This leads to being purged of those sins.

Looking at a Moor — a North African — for sale, Lodowick asked, “Do thou price this Moor only at 200 plates — Spanish silver coins?”

“No more, my lord,” the first officer said.

“Why should this Turk be more expensive than that Moor?” Barabas asked.

“Because he is young and has more abilities,” the first officer answered.

Barabas asked the Turk, “What! Do you have the philosopher’s stone? If thou have it, break my head with it — I’ll forgive thee.”

Some people believed that the philosopher’s stone could make gold out of base metals such as lead. Getting hit in the head was a small price to pay for the philosopher’s stone.

“No, sir,” the Turkish slave said. “I can cut and shave.”

“Let me see, sirrah,” Barabas asked. “Aren’t you an old shaver?”

A shaver can be 1) “a barber,” 2) “a fellow,” or 3) “a rogue or conman.”

The Turkish slave answered, “Alas, sir, I am really a youth.”

“A youth?” Barabas said. “I’ll buy you and marry you to Lady Vanity, if you do well.”

When Youth is married to Vanity, the results are bad.

The Turkish slave said, “I will serve you, sir —”

Barabas interrupted, “— some wicked trick or other. It may be that under pretext of shaving me, thou shall cut my throat for my goods.

“Tell me, do you have good health?”

“Aye, I am very well in health,” the Turkish slave answered.

“So much the worse,” Barabas said. “I must have a slave who is sickly, if only to save on money for feeding him. Not even a stone — fourteen pounds — of beef a day will maintain you and your fat cheeks.”

He said to the first officer, “Let me see a slave who’s somewhat leaner.”

“Here’s one who is leaner,” the first officer said. “How do you like him?”

“Where were thou born?” Barabas asked the leaner slave, whose name was Ithamore.

“In Thrace,” Ithamore answered. “I was brought up in Arabia.”

The Turkish Empire included part of the region that is now Saudi Arabia.

“So much the better,” Barabas said. “Thou are for my turn — you’ll do.”

He said to the first officer, “The price is a hundred crowns? I’ll have him; there’s the money.”

Barabas handed over the money.

The first officer took the money and said, “Now mark him as yours, sir, and take him away from here.”

Barabas thought, *Aye, mark him, you were best; keep an eye on him, for this is he who with my help shall do much villainy.*

He said to Lodowick, “My lord, farewell.”

He said to Ithamore, “Come, sirrah, you are my slave now.”

Mathias and his mother, whose name was Katherine, arrived at the slave market.

Barabas said to Lodowick, “As for the diamond, it shall be yours. Please, sir, don’t be a stranger at my house. All that I have shall be at your command.”

Seeing Barabas talking to Lodowick, Mathias thought, *What makes the Jew and Lodowick so private? I am afraid that they are talking privately about fair Abigail.*

Lodowick exited.

Barabas said to Ithamore, “Yonder comes Don Mathias. Let us stop here. He loves my daughter, and she holds him dear, but I have sworn to frustrate both their hopes, and be revenged upon the” — he paused for emphasis — “Governor.”

Barabas was talking openly to Ithamore about his plans. Because Ithamore was from Thrace, and the Thracians were famous for cruelty, Ithamore was a good person to assist Barabas in getting revenge.

Katherine said to Mathias, “This Moor is very attractive, isn’t he? Do you agree, son?”

“No, this slave is better, mother,” Mathias said. “Look carefully at this one.”

Barabas whispered to Mathias, “Pretend not to know me here before your mother, lest she suspect the match that is in hand. When you have escorted your mother home, come to my house. Think of me as thy father. Son, farewell.”

Mathias whispered to Barabas, “But why did Don Lodowick talk with you?”

Barabas whispered back, “Tush, man, we talked about diamonds, not of Abigail.”

“Tell me, Mathias,” Katherine said, “isn’t that the Jew?”

Pretending that he and Mathias had been talking about a book, Barabas said out loud, “As for the commentary on the first and second books of Maccabees, I have it, sir, and it is at your command. You can borrow it.”

“Yes, madam,” Mathias said, “and my talk with him was about the borrowing of a book or two.”

“Don’t talk with him,” Katherine said. “He is cast off from heaven.”

Katherine gave money to the first officer to buy a slave, saying, “Thou have thy crowns, fellow.”

She then said to Mathias, “Come, let’s leave.”

“Sirrah Jew, remember the book,” Mathias said.

“Indeed, I will, sir,” Barabas replied.

Katherine and Mathias left, accompanied by the slave whom Katherine had bought.

The first officer said to the other officers, “Come, I have made a reasonable market. Let’s leave.”

The officers and the remaining slaves left.

Barabas and Ithamore began walking to Barabas' home, which was nearby.

Barabas said to Ithamore, "Now let me know thy name, and also your birth, character, and profession."

"Indeed, sir, my birth is low, and my name's Ithamore. My profession is whatever you please."

He was willing to do whatever Barabas wanted, and so by telling Barabas, "My profession is what you please," he was also telling him about his character.

"Have thou no trade?" Barabas said. "Then listen to my words, and I will teach thee something worthwhile that shall stick by thee. First, be thou void of these emotions: compassion, love, vain hope, and cowardly fear. Be moved at nothing. See thou pity none, but to thyself smile when the Christians moan."

"Oh, splendid master!" Ithamore said. "I worship your nose for this."

Barabas had a large nose.

"As for myself," Barabas said, "I walk abroad at night and kill sick people groaning under walls. Sometimes I go about and poison wells, and now and then, to encourage Christian thieves, I am content to lose some of my crowns in a trap for thieves so that I may, walking in my upper gallery, see them captured and go with bound arms along by my door.

"When I was young, I studied medicine, and began to practice first upon the Italians. There I enriched the priests with burials and always kept the sexton's arms in use with digging graves and ringing knells to announce the deaths of men.

"And after that I was an engineer who constructed military devices, and in the wars between France and Germany, under pretense of helping Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Fifth fight against King Francis the First of France, I slew both friends and enemies with my stratagems.

"After that I was a usurious moneylender, and with extorting, cheating, causing borrowers to forfeit their property because of failure to repay a loan, and employing tricks belonging to dishonest brokers, I filled the jails with bankrupts in a year, and I placed young orphans in charitable institutions, and every moon — every month — I made someone or other insane, and now and then I caused someone to hang himself for grief after he pinned upon his breast a long great scroll about how I tormented him with the interest I charged him for loans."

Barabas could force forfeiture if someone could not pay the interest on a loan.

He continued, "But note how I am blest for plaguing them. I have as much money as will buy the town.

"But tell me now, how have thou spent thy time?"

"Indeed, master," Ithamore said. "I have spent my time in setting Christian villages on fire, chaining eunuchs, and binding galley slaves.

"Once I was a stable-man at an inn, and in the nighttime secretly I would steal into travellers' chambers, and there cut their throats.

“Once at Jerusalem, where the pilgrims kneeled, I strewed powder on the marble stones, and because of this powder their knees would so fester that I have laughed heartily to see the cripples go limping home to Christendom on crutches.”

“Why, this is something,” Barabas said. “Consider me your friend. We are both villains. We are both circumcised. We both hate Christians.

“Be true to me and secret; thou shall lack no gold.

“But stand to the side. Here comes Don Lodowick.”

Lodowick walked over to Barabas and said, “Oh, Barabas, we are well met. Where is the diamond you told me of?”

“I have it for you, sir,” Barabas said. “Please walk in my house with me.”

He called, “Abigail! Open the door, I say.”

Abigail opened the door and came outside.

“You have come at a good time, father. Here are letters come from the city of Ormus, and the messenger waits inside here.”

Located at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, the city of Ormus engaged in much trade.

“Give me the letters,” Barabas said.

She gave him the letters.

Barabas said, “Daughter, listen to me. Entertain Lodowick, the Governor’s son, with all the courtesy you can manage.”

He then whispered so Lodowick could not hear him, “That is, with all the courtesy you can manage provided that you keep your virginity. Treat him as if he were a Philistine.”

The Philistines were in conflict with the Jews in the Old Testament. Goliath was a Philistine.

Barabas continued whispering to his daughter, “Lie, swear, profess that you like him, vow love to him. He is not of the seed of Abraham.”

He said to Lodowick, “I am a little busy, sir; please, pardon me.”

He said out loud to his daughter, “Abigail, tell Lodowick he’s welcome for my sake.”

“For your sake and his own, he’s welcome here,” Abigail said.

Barabas whispered to Abigail, “Daughter, a word more. Kiss him, speak courteously to him, and like a cunning Jew so devise that you two are betrothed to each other before you come out of the house.”

Abigail whispered, “Oh, father, Don Mathias is my love.”

Barabas whispered, “I know it. Yet I say flirt with Lodowick and be irresistible. Do it — it is necessary that it should be done.”

Loudly, pretending that he and Abigail had been discussing the letters, Barabas said, “Nay, on my life, it is my agent’s handwriting.”

He then said to Abigail and Lodowick, “But you two go in. I’ll think upon the account.”

Lodowick thought he meant the business account mentioned in the letters.

Abigail and Lodowick went inside Barabas’ house.

Barabas said, “The account — the settling of scores — is made, for Lodowick dies.”

Referring to the letters, he said, “My agent sends me word that a merchant has fled who owes me for a hundred barrels of wine. I weigh it thus much” — he snapped his fingers — “I have enough wealth.”

He then said, “Now by this time Lodowick has kissed Abigail, and she vows love to him and he to her. As surely as heaven rained manna for the Jews, so surely shall Lodowick and Don Mathias die. Lodowick’s father was my chiefest enemy when as Governor he seized my property.”

Exodus 16:14-15 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

*14 And when the dew that was fallen was ascended, behold, a small round thing was upon the face of the wilderness, small as the hoary frost upon the earth.*

*15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is Manna, for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.*

Mathias arrived.

Seeing him, Barabas said, “Where is Don Mathias going? Stay here a while.”

“Where should I be going but to my fair love, Abigail?” Mathias said.

“Thou know, and heaven can witness that it is true,” Barabas said, “that I intend my daughter shall be thine.”

“Aye, Barabas, or else thou wrong me much,” Mathias said.

“Oh, heaven forbid I should have such a thought,” Barabas said. “Pardon me although I weep. Lodowick, the Governor’s son, will, whether or not I am willing, have Abigail. He sends her letters, bracelets, jewels, rings.”

“Does she accept them?” Mathias asked.

“She?” Barabas said. “No, Mathias, no. Instead, she sends them back, and, when he comes, she locks herself up securely. Yet through the keyhole he will talk to her, while she runs to the window, looking out to see when you should come and drag him from the door.”

“Oh, treacherous Lodowick!” Mathias said.

“Just now, as I came home, he slipped in past me,” Barabas said, “and I am sure he is with Abigail.”

“I’ll rouse him away from there,” Mathias said.



To rouse a game animal is to force it out of hiding. Mathias now regarded Lodowick as less than human.

“Not for all Malta; therefore, sheathe your sword,” Barabas said. “If you love and respect me, have no quarrels in my house, but sneak into my house, and pretend not to see him — avoid him.

“I’ll give him such a warning before he goes that he shall have small hopes of Abigail.”

Mathias did not have time to go in Barabas’ house at this time because Lodowick and Abigail came outside, holding hands.

Barabas said to Mathias, “Go, for here they come.”

“What, hand in hand!” Mathias said. “I cannot endure this!”

“Mathias, as thou love me, don’t say a word,” Barabas said.

“Well, let it pass,” Mathias said. “Another time shall serve.”

Mathias exited.

“Barabas, isn’t that the widow’s son?” Lodowick asked.

“Aye, and take heed, for he has sworn your death.”

“My death? What! Is the base-born peasant mad?”

“No, no,” Barabas said, “but perhaps he stands in fear of that which you, I think, never dream upon — my daughter here, a paltry, unsophisticated girl.”

“Why, does she love Don Mathias?” Lodowick asked.

“Doesn’t she with her smiling at you answer that question?” Barabas replied.

Abigail thought, *Mathias has my heart. I smile against my will.*

“Barabas, thou know that I have long loved thy daughter,” Lodowick said.

Actually, this was the first time he had seen her, at least since she was a child.

Barabas lied, “And so has she loved you, even from when she was a child.”

“And now I can no longer hold back from expressing my mind,” Lodowick said.

“Nor can I hold back the ‘affection’ that I bear to you,” Barabas said.

“This is thy diamond,” Lodowick said. “Tell me, shall I have it?”

“Win it, and wear it,” Barabas said. “It is yet unfoiled.”

“Unfoiled” means 1) “without a foil — in this case, a husband — to set it off,” 2) “unsullied,” 3) “virginal,” and 4) “unplowed.”

To Barabas, if Abigail were to marry a gentile such as Lodowick, she would be sullied.

Barabas continued, “Oh, but I know your lordship would disdain to marry the daughter of a Jew, and yet I’ll give her many a golden coin decorated with crosses and with Christian posies

inscribed round about the edge of the coins.”

This was an insult. Barabas was saying that Lodowick would not marry a Jew — except for money.

“Christian posies” are pious short sayings or mottos.

“It is not thy wealth, but her whom I esteem,” Lodowick said. “Yet I crave thy consent.”

Barabas would show he consented by giving a dowry to Lodowick.

“And my consent you have; yet let me talk to her,” Barabas said.

He whispered to Abigail, “This offspring of Cain, this Jebusite who never tasted of the Passover, nor shall ever see the land of Canaan nor our Messiah Who is yet to come, this gentle — well-born and gentile — maggot, Lodowick, I mean, must be deluded.”

Cain is the first murderer; he murdered Abel, his brother. The Jebusites lived in Jerusalem before King David captured it. They did not worship the one true God.

In this culture, one meaning of the noun “gentle” is “maggot.” According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “gentle” can mean “A larva of a blowfly (family Calliphoridae), esp. the bluebottle, *Calliphora vomitoria*, used as bait.”

Barabas said out loud to his daughter, “Let him have thy hand.”

He whispered to her, “But keep thy heart until Don Mathias comes.”

Abigail whispered to her father, “What! Shall I be betrothed to Lodowick?”

Barabas whispered back, “It’s no sin to deceive a Christian, for they themselves hold as a principle that faith is not to be held with heretics — that Christians need not keep their promises to heretics.”

On 6 July 1415, Jan Huss was burned at the stake although Catholics had promised him safe conduct; the Catholics excused the breaking of their promise by saying that Jan Hus was a heretic.

Barabas continued whispering to Abigail, “But all who are not Jews are heretics. This follows well and logically, and therefore, daughter, don’t be afraid to break your promise to a Christian.”

He said out loud to Lodowick, “I have entreated her, and she will agree to be your wife.”

“Then, gentle Abigail, plight thy faith and become betrothed to me,” Lodowick said.

Abigail thought, *I cannot choose what I want, seeing my father tells me to do otherwise.*

The vow of betrothal in this culture was a serious, binding vow. Two betrothed people would be married.

Abigail said to Lodowick, “Nothing but death shall part my love and me.”

Lodowick thought that “my love” referred to him, but Abigail used “my love” to refer to Mathias.

“Now I have that for which my soul has longed,” Lodowick said.

Barabas thought, *That is something I don't have; but yet I hope I shall.*

Abigail thought, *Oh wretched Abigail, what have thou done?*

Lodowick asked her, “Why has your color changed suddenly?”

“I don't know,” Abigail replied. “But farewell; I must leave.”

Barabas whispered to Ithamore, “Stop her from leaving, but don't let her speak one more word.”

Abigail overheard him.

Ithamore took her to one side. If necessary to keep her quiet, he would put his hand over her mouth; however, Abigail was an obedient daughter and kept quiet, although some tears trickled down her face.

“Mute all of the sudden!” Lodowick said. “Here's a sudden change.”

“Oh, don't wonder at it,” Barabas said, “It is the Hebrew custom that maidens newly betrothed should weep a while. Don't trouble her. Sweet Lodowick, depart. She is thy wife, and thou shall be my heir.”

“Oh, is it the custom?” Lodowick said. “Then I am satisfied. But rather let the brightsome heavens be dim, and nature's beauty choke with stifling clouds, than my fair Abigail should frown on me.”

He saw Mathias coming, and he said, “There comes the villain; now I'll be revenged.”

“Be calm and quiet, Lodowick,” Barabas said. “It is enough that I have made thee sure — engaged — to Abigail.”

“Well, let him go,” Lodowick said, and he left the house.

Mathias walked over to Barabas.

Barabas whispered to Mathias, “Well, if not for me, as you went in at these doors you would have been stabbed, but not a word about it now. Here must no speeches pass, nor swords be drawn.”

“Allow me, Barabas, to follow him,” Mathias said.

“No,” Barabas said. “If you follow him, I shall, if any hurt would be done, be made an accessory of your deeds. Get revenge on him when you next meet him.”

“For this I'll have his heart,” Mathias said.

“Do that,” Barabas said. “Lo, here I give thee Abigail.”

“What greater gift can poor Mathias have?” Mathias said. “Shall Lodowick rob me of so fair a love? My life is not as dear to me as is Abigail.”

“My heart makes me afraid that to thwart your love he's with your mother,” Barabas said. “Therefore, go after him.”

“Has he gone to my mother?” Mathias asked.

“If you want to, stay here until she comes herself,” Barabas said.

“I cannot stay,” Mathias said, “for, if my mother comes, she’ll die with grief.”

She would die with grief because her son was marrying a Jew.

Mathias exited.

“I cannot say goodbye to him because of my tears,” Abigail said. “Father, why have you thus incensed them both?”

“What’s that to thee?” Barabas said.

“I’ll make them friends again,” Abigail said.

“You’ll make them friends?” Barabas said. “Aren’t there Jews enough in Malta? Must thou dote upon a Christian?”

“I will have Don Mathias,” Abigail said. “He is my love.”

“Yes, you shall have him,” Barabas lied.

He ordered Ithamore, “Go put her in the house.”

“Aye, I’ll put her in,” Ithamore replied.

He pushed Abigail into the house.

“Now tell me, Ithamore,” Barabas said, “how do thou like this? What do you think about what you have heard and seen?”

“Indeed, master, I think that by doing this you will obtain both their lives — you are plotting to bring about both of their deaths,” Ithamore said. “Isn’t that true?”

“True, and it shall be cunningly performed.”

“Oh, master, I wish that I might have a hand in this!”

“Aye, so thou shall; it is thou who must do the deed,” Barabas said. “Take this letter and carry it to Mathias immediately, and tell him that it comes from Lodowick.”

“It is scented with poisoned perfume, isn’t it?” Mathias asked.

“No, no; and yet my goal might be accomplished that way,” Barabas said. “It is a feigned challenge from Lodowick.”

“Fear not. I will so set his heart on fire that Mathias shall truly think it comes from Lodowick.”

“I cannot choose but like thy readiness,” Barabas said. “Yet don’t be rash, but do this cunningly.”

“As I behave myself in this, employ me hereafter,” Ithamore said, and then he exited.

“Away, then!” Barabas said to the departing Ithamore.

He then said to himself, "So, now I will go to Lodowick, and, like a cunning devil, feign some lie until I have set them both at enmity."

### ACT 3 (*Jew of Malta*)

#### — 3.1 —

Bellamira, a courtesan, was complaining about the Turkish fleet that was near Malta. It had a bad effect on her profits; for one thing, much money had been collected to pay the tribute, thus reducing disposable income that could be spent on her.

She said to herself, "Since this town was besieged, my gain grows cold — my profits are low. The time has been that but for one bare — single and naked — night with me a hundred gold coins have been freely given, but now against my will I must be chaste. And yet I know that my beauty does not fail. From Venice merchants, and from Padua rare-witted gentlemen — scholars, I mean, learned and liberal — were accustomed to come to me."

"Liberal" means 1) "well-educated" and 2) "generous."

She continued, "And now, except for Pilia-Borza, there comes no one. Pilia-Borza is very seldom away from my house — and here he comes."

Pilia-Borza arrived on the scene.

"Hold out your hand, wench," he said.

He put a moneybag in her hand and said, "There's something for thee to spend."

Bellamira looked in the moneybag and said, "It is silver. I disdain it."

"Aye, but the Jew has gold, and I will have it, or it shall go hard," Pilia-Borza said.

"Tell me, how came thou by this information?" Bellamira asked.

He replied, "Indeed, walking the back lanes, through the gardens, I chanced to cast my eye up to the Jew's counting-house, where I saw some bags of money, and in the night I clambered up with my hooks; and, as I was taking my choice of moneybags, I heard a rumbling in the house; so I took only this one, and ran on my way."

Thieves carried a staff that had a hook at one end. Pilia-Borza had climbed up to Barabas' window and then had used his staff to hook and steal one of the moneybags. Possibly, he also had hooks to help him climb.

He said, "But here comes the Jew's man."

By "man," he meant "man-servant."

Ithamore arrived on the scene.

"Hide the bag," Bellamira said.

"Don't look towards him," Pilia-Borza said. "Let's go. By God's wounds, what staring thou keep making toward him! Thou will betray us immediately."

Bellamira and Pilia-Borza exited.

Ithamore said about Bellamira, “Oh, the sweetest face that I ever beheld! I know she is a courtesan by her attire. Now I would give a hundred of the Jew’s crowns so that I would have such a concubine. Well, I have delivered Barabas’ forged challenge to Mathias in such a way that he and Lodowick will meet and die fighting — this is excellent entertainment!”

— 3.2 —

Alone, Mathias arrived at the place that the forged letter — supposedly from Lodowick — had appointed for a duel.

He said to himself, “This is the place. Now Abigail shall see whether or not Mathias regards her as dear.”

Lodowick arrived, reading a letter that Mathias had written after reading the forged letter that he believed that Lodowick had written.

He said, “Does the villain dare write in such base terms?”

“I did it — and revenge it, if thou dare,” Mathias said.

The two men drew their swords and began to fight the duel.

Barabas arrived and watched the duel, saying, “Oh, bravely fought! And yet they thrust not home — to the heart. Now, Lodowick! Now, Mathias! So!”

Lodowick and Mathias wounded each other mortally, fell, and died.

“So, now they have showed themselves to be ‘splendid’ fellows,” Barabas said.

Voices called out as people ran to the duel, “Part them! Part them!”

“Aye, part them, now they are dead,” Barabas said. “Farewell, farewell.”

He exited.

Governor Ferneze and Mathias’ mother — Katherine — arrived, as did some attendants.

“What a sight this is!” Governor Ferneze said. “My Lodowick slain! These arms of mine shall be thy sepulcher.”

“Who is this?” Katherine said, looking at a corpse. “My son, Mathias, slain!”

“Oh, Lodowick, if thou had perished by the Turk, I, wretched Ferneze, might have avenged thy death!”

Governor Ferneze could not get revenge by killing Mathias because Mathias was dead. He also could not get revenge by killing Mathias’ next of kin because Mathias’ next of kin was a woman: his mother.

“Thy son slew mine, and I’ll revenge his death,” Katherine said to Governor Ferneze.

“Look, Katherine, look! Thy son gave mine these wounds.”

“Oh, cease to grieve me,” Katherine said. “I am grieved enough.”

“Oh, I wish that my sighs could turn to life-giving breath, and these my tears could turn to blood, so that my son might live,” Governor Ferneze said.

“Who made them enemies?” Katherine asked.

“I don’t know, and that grieves me most of all.”

“My son loved and respected your son.”

“And so did Lodowick love and respect your son.”

“Lend me that weapon that killed my son, and it shall murder me,” Katherine said.

“Nay, madam, stay,” Governor Ferneze said. “That weapon was my son’s, and on that weapon I, Ferneze, am the one who should die.”

“Wait,” Katherine said. “Let’s inquire about who were the causers of their deaths, so that we may avenge our sons’ blood upon the murderers’ heads.”

Governor Ferneze ordered, “Take up their corpses, and let them be interred within one sacred monument of stone, upon which altar I will offer up my daily sacrifice of sighs and tears, and with my prayers I will pierce the indifferent heavens until they reveal the causers of our sorrows — those who forced our sons’ hands to divide united hearts.

“Come, Katherine, our losses are equal, so then of true grief let us take an equal share.”

— 3.3 —

Alone, Ithamore said to himself, “Why, was there ever seen such villainy so neatly plotted, and so well performed? Both Mathias and Lodowick were held in hand and led on, and both were completely beguiled!”

He laughed.

Abigail arrived, saw him, and asked, “Why, how are you now, Ithamore? Why do thou laugh so?”

“Oh, mistress! Ha! Ha! Ha!”

“Why, what is wrong with thou?”

“Oh, my master!”

“Huh?”

“Oh, mistress, I have the most splendid, gravest, most secret and subtle, big-nosed knave for my master that any gentleman has ever had.”

“Tell me, knave,” Abigail asked, “why do you mock my father like this?”

“Oh, my master has the most splendid and most cunning policy,” Ithamore said.

“Policy to accomplish what?”

“Why, don’t you know?”

“Why, no.”

“Don’t you know about Mathias’ and Don Lodowick’s disaster?”

“No,” Abigail said. “What was it?”

“Why, the devil invented a challenge, my master wrote it, and I carried it, first to Lodowick, and *imprimis* to Mathias,” Ithamore said.

*Imprimis* is Latin for “in the first place,” and so Ithamore apparently didn’t know Latin. Ithamore had carried a forged challenge to Mathias, and then had carried Mathias’ reply to Lodowick. Mathias did not know that the challenge from “Lodowick” he had read had been forged, and Lodowick did not know that Mathias’ insulting letter to him was in reply to a forged challenge that Mathias had thought came from Lodowick.

Possibly, however, when Barabas had given him the written challenge, Ithamore had changed Barabas’ plot by making a copy of the challenge (changing names as necessary) and giving it to Lodowick, telling him that it had come from Mathias, his rival for Abigail. He then had given the *imprimis* (first and original) challenge to Mathias, saying that it had come from Lodowick. In this case, Ithamore may think that “*imprimis*” means “next.” He then had given Lodowick Mathias’ real reply to the forged challenge.

Ithamore continued, “And then they met, and as the story says, in doleful wise they ended both their days. They died.”

“And was my father the furtherer of their deaths?” Abigail asked.

“Am I Ithamore?”

“Yes.”

“As surely as I am Ithamore, your father wrote the challenge and I carried it.”

“Well, Ithamore, let me request that thee do this: Go to the new-made nunnery, and inquire for any of the friars of Saint Jacques, and tell them that I ask any of them to please come and speak with me.”

The friars of Saint Jacques were Dominicans. They were also called Jacobins because the Church of St. Jacques (in Latin, Saint Jacobus, aka Saint James) in Paris had been given to them. Near this church, they built their first monastery.

“I ask you, mistress, will you answer me one question?” Ithamore asked.

“Well, sirrah, what is it?”

“A very feeling one,” Ithamore said.

The word “feeling” means 1) “deeply felt” and 2) “erotic.”

He continued, “Don’t the nuns have fine sport — sex — with the friars now and then?”

“Bah, Sirrah Saucy Fellow!” Abigail said. “Is this your question? Get thee gone!”

“I will, indeed, mistress.”

Ithamore exited.



“Hardhearted father, unkind Barabas, was this the purpose of thy policy?” Abigail said to herself.

In addition to the usual meaning, in this culture the word “unkind” meant “unnatural.” A father should naturally care for his children, but Abigail’s father, Barabas, had greatly hurt her by causing the death of Mathias, the man she loved.

She continued, “Was your cunning plan to make me show favor to them separately, so that because of their love for me they should both be slain?”

“Granted that thou did not love Lodowick because of his sire, yet Don Mathias never offended thee. But thou were set upon extreme revenge because the Prior” — the Governor of Malta is the Grand Prior of the Knights of Malta — “dispossessed thee once, and you could not revenge it except upon his son, Lodowick. Nor could you revenge it on Lodowick except by means of using Mathias, nor could you use Mathias to accomplish your purpose except by getting him killed and thereby murdering me.

“But I perceive there is no love on earth, no pity in Jews, nor any piety in Turks.

“But here comes cursed Ithamore with the friar.”

Ithamore and Friar Jacomo walked over to Abigail.

Friar Jacomo bowed to Abigail and said, “*Virgo, salve.*”

The Latin means “Hail, maiden!”

Abigail curtsied.

Disgusted by a Jew showing courtesy to a Christian — Ithamore hated Christians — Ithamore said to her, “You duck, do you?”

“Welcome, grave friar,” Abigail said.

She then said, “Ithamore, be gone.”

Ithamore exited.

Abigail said to Friar Jacomo, “Know, holy sir, that I am bold to solicit thee.”

“To do what?”

“To get me admitted as a nun.”

“Why, Abigail, it is not yet long since I labored to arrange thy admission to the nunnery, and then thou did not like that holy life,” Friar Jacomo said.

“At that time my thoughts were so frail and unsettled because I was chained to follies of the world, but now experience, purchased with grief, has made me see the difference of things,” Abigail replied. “My sinful soul, alas, has paced too long the fatal labyrinth of misbelief, far from the Son — Jesus Christ — Who gives eternal life.”

“Who taught thee this?” Friar Jacomo asked.

“The abbess of the house, whose zealous counsel I embrace. Oh, therefore, Jacomo, let me be one, although unworthy, of that sisterhood.”

“Abigail, I will. But see thou change no more, for that will be most grievous to thy soul.”

“That was my father’s fault,” Abigail said.

“Thy father’s? How?”

“Nay, you shall pardon me for not telling you that.”

*She thought, Oh, Barabas, though thou deserve severity at my hands, yet never shall these lips betray secrets that will endanger thy life.*

“Come, shall we go?” Friar Jacomo asked.

“My duty waits on you,” Abigail said. “I will follow you.”

— 3.4 —

Barabas sat in a room in his home, reading a letter.

“What! Abigail has become a nun again!” he said. “False and unkind! Have thou abandoned and lost thy father? And, all unknown and unconstrained by me, have thou again got to the nunnery?”

“Now here she writes, and wishes me to repent.

“Repentance? *Spurca!*”

“*Spurca*” is the feminine form of the Latin adjective for “filthy.” “*Paenitentia*” is a Latin noun meaning “repentance”; it has a feminine form. (The Italian noun meaning “repentance” is “*pentimento*,” which is masculine.)

Barabas was calling repentance — not his daughter — filthy. This kind of repentance, of course, means converting to Christianity.

He continued, “What is the meaning of this?”

“I fear she knows — I see that it is so — of my plot that resulted in Don Mathias’ and Lodowick’s deaths.

“If so, it is time that it is looked into and dealt with, for she who varies from me in belief gives great grounds for presuming that she does not love me, or, if she still loves me, she dislikes something I have done.”

Ithamore entered the room.

“But who comes here?” Barabas said. “Oh, Ithamore, come near. Come near, my love; come near, thy master’s life, my trusty servant, nay, my second life, for I have now no hope except in thee, and on that hope my happiness is built.

“When did thou last see Abigail?”

“Today.”

“With whom?”

“A friar.”

“A friar!” Barabas said. “False villain, he has done the deed.”

“What, sir?” Ithamore asked.

“Why, the friar has made my Abigail a nun.”

“That’s no lie, for she sent me for him,” Ithamore said.

One meaning of “done the deed” is “have sex with.” Both Barabas and Ithamore believed that friars and nuns commonly have sex.

“Oh, unhappy day!” Barabas said. “False, credulous, inconstant Abigail! But let them go. And, Ithamore, from henceforward never shall she grieve me more with her disgrace. Never shall she live to inherit anything of mine. Never shall she be blest by me, nor come within my gates, but instead she shall perish underneath my bitter curse, like Cain by Adam, for his brother’s death.”

Actually, it was God Who cursed Cain after Cain murdered Abel, his brother. Although God cursed Cain, He also protected him by marking him so that others would not kill him. This story is told in Genesis 4.

“Oh, master!”

“Ithamore, don’t beg in behalf of her. I am angry, and she is hateful to my soul and me, and lest thou yield to this that I entreat you to do, I cannot think but that thou hate my life.”

“Who, I, master?” Ithamore said. “Why, I’ll run to some rock, and throw myself headlong into the sea. Why, I’ll do anything for your sweet sake.”

“Oh, trusty Ithamore, you are no servant, but my friend. I here adopt thee for my only heir. All that I have is thine — when I am dead. And while I live use half. Spend as if you were myself. Here, take my keys. Go buy thee garments.”

He held out his keys but then drew them to himself again, saying, “I’ll give them to thee soon.”

He then said, “But thou shall not lack. Only know this — that thus thou are to do in the future.”

In other words, in the future — but not now — Ithamore could spend half of Barabas’ money and buy garments.

Barabas said, “But first go and fetch me the pot of rice that for our supper stands upon the fire.”

Ithamore thought, *I bet my head that my master’s hungry.*

He said out loud, “I go, sir.”

He exited.

Barabas said to himself, “Thus every villain ambles after wealth, although he never becomes richer except in hope.”

In other words, Barabas most likely had no intention of allowing Ithamore to spend any of his money but was simply manipulating him by making him think he could soon spend Barabas’

money.

Hearing Ithamore returning, Barabas said to himself, "But, hush!"

Ithamore returned, carrying the cooking pot.

"Here it is, master."

"Well done, Ithamore. What, have thou brought the ladle with thee, too?"

"Yes, sir," Ithamore said. "The proverb says that he who eats with the devil has need of a long spoon. I have brought you a ladle."

Perhaps Ithamore should have brought a ladle for himself.

"Very well, Ithamore," Barabas said. "Then now be secret, and for thy sake, whom I so dearly love, now shall thou see the death of Abigail, with the result that thou may freely live to be my heir."

"Why, master, will you 'poison' her with a serving of rice porridge? That will preserve her life, make her round and plump, and make her thrive more than you are aware."

"Aye, but Ithamore, do thou see this?" Barabas said, holding up a small container. "It is a precious powder that I bought from an Italian in Ancona once."

Ancona was an Italian port whose inhabitants were tolerant toward Jews, but beginning in 1555, Pope Paul IV persecuted the Jews there. Twenty-three Jews who refused to convert to Christianity were hanged. Similarly, Barabas once loved his daughter, but now he wanted to kill her.

Italians had an international reputation as poisoners.

Barabas continued, "The effects of this poison are to bind the bowels, infect, and poison deeply, yet not appear until forty hours after it is taken."

"How will you poison her, master?"

"In this way, Ithamore," Barabas said. "This evening there is a custom in Malta here — it is called Saint Jacques' Eve — and then, I say, the Maltese are accustomed to send their alms to the nunneries. Among the others who are bringing food offerings, carry this, and set it there. There's a dark entry where they take it in, where they must neither see the messenger, nor make inquiry into who has sent it to them."

"Why?"

"Probably it is some customary observance," Barabas said. "There, Ithamore, must thou go and place this pot. Wait! Let me 'season' it first."

"Please do, and let me help you, master," Ithamore said. "Please, let me taste it first."

"Go ahead."

Ithamore tasted the food.

Barabas asked, "What do you say now?"

“Truly, master, I’m loath such a pot of pottage should be spoiled.”

“Pottage” can be 1) “soup,” 2) “stew,” or 3) “porridge.”

Barabas put in the poison and said, “Peace, Ithamore. It is better so than spared.”

He meant these things: 1) “It is better that we poison the food for this purpose than to spare it and eat it ourselves,” and 2) “It is better to do this than spare the lives of Abigail and the other nuns.” He may have also been sardonically referring to Proverbs 13:24: “*He that spareth his rod, hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betime*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

He added, “Assure thyself thou shall have broth — as much as your eye desires. My purse, my coffer, and myself are thine.”

“Well, master, I go,” Ithamore said.

“Wait! First let me stir it, Ithamore.”

Barabas stirred the poison to mix it with the food and then said, “As fatal may it be to her as the draught of wine that great Alexander drank and from which he died, and with her let it work like Borgia’s wine with which his sire, the Pope, was poisoned.”

These are historical inaccuracies. Alexander the Great did not die after drinking poisoned wine that Antipater, his general, supposedly gave him, and Pope Alexander VI did not die after drinking poisoned wine that Cesare Borgia, his son, had supposedly prepared to be drunk by someone else.

Barabas continued, “In short, may the blood of Hydra, the bane and plague of Lerna, the juice of hebon, and Cocytus’ breath, and all the poisons of the Stygian pool break from the fiery kingdom of Hell, and in this food vomit your venom and envenom her who like a fiend has left her father thus!”

The Lernaean Hydra was a nine-headed water-snake with poisonous blood that Hercules killed as one of his famous labors. Hebon is a poisonous plant. Cocytus and Styx (“the Stygian pool”) are rivers in the Land of the Dead. Their breath — vapor — was regarded as harmful.

Ithamore thought, *What a blessing has he given it! Was ever a pot of rice porridge so seasoned?*

He asked out loud, “What shall I do with it?”

“Oh my sweet Ithamore, go and set it down, and come again as soon as thou hast done, for I have other business for thee.”

“Here’s a drench to poison a whole stable of Flanders mares,” Ithamore said.

A drench is a dose of medicine given to a horse. A Flanders mare is either a Belgian horse or a lascivious woman. Ithamore regarded the nuns as lascivious women. Flanders mares were bred, and according to Ithamore, so were nuns.

He added, “I’ll carry it to the nuns with a powder.”

“With a powder” means “with great haste,” but Ithamore also had in mind the poisonous powder that Barabas had put in the food.

Barabas said, “And infect the nuns with the horse pestilence as well. Away!”

“I am gone,” Ithamore said. “Pay me my wages, for my work is done.”

He exited.

Barabas said, “I’ll pay thee with a vengeance, Ithamore.”

— 3.5 —

Governor Ferneze; Martin del Bosco, the Spanish Vice-Admiral; and some Knights of Malta were meeting with a Turkish Pasha.

“Welcome, great Pasha,” Governor Ferneze said. “How fares Calymath? What wind drives you thus into Malta harbor?”

“The wind that blows all the world besides: desire of gold,” the Pasha said.

“Desire of gold, great sir? That’s to be gotten in the Western Indies; no golden minerals are in Malta.”

By “the Western Indies,” Governor Ferneze was referring to the gold mines of Central and South America.

“To you of Malta, thus says Calymath: The time you took for respite is at hand for the performance of your past promise past, and I have been sent for the tribute money,” the Pasha said.

“Pasha, in brief, thou shall have no tribute here,” Governor Ferneze said. “Nor shall the heathens live upon the wealth they would get if they sacked our city. First we ourselves will raze to the ground the city walls, lay waste the island, hew the temples down, and, shipping off our goods to Sicily, open an entrance for the devastation-causing sea, whose billows, beating the unresisting banks, shall overflow it with their reflux of water.”

“Well, Governor, since thou have broken the league by flat denial of the promised tribute, don’t talk about razing your city walls. You shall not need trouble yourselves so far, for Selim Calymath shall come himself, and with brass bullets batter down your towers, and turn proud Malta into a wilderness for these intolerable wrongs of yours. And so, farewell.”

“Farewell,” Governor Ferneze said.

The Pasha exited.

Governor Ferneze said, “And now, you men of Malta, look about, and let’s prepare to welcome Calymath. Close your portcullis, charge your basilisks, and as you profitably — in a worthy cause that can gain you profit — take up arms, so now courageously encounter the Turks in battle, for by this answer of ours the league has been broken, and nothing is to be looked for now but wars, and nothing is to us more welcome than wars.”

A portcullis is a strong grating that protects a gateway. A basilisk is a large cannon.

— 3.6 —

Friar Jacomo and Friar Barnardine talked together.

“Oh, brother, brother, all the nuns are sick, and medicine will not help them,” Friar Jacomo said. “They must die.”

“The abbess sent for me to be confessed,” Friar Barnardine said. “Oh, what a sad confession will there be.”

“And so did fair Maria send for me,” Friar Jacomo said. “I’ll go to her lodging; hereabouts she lies and dwells.”

He exited.

Abigail entered the scene.

“What! All dead except only Abigail!” Friar Barnardine said.

“And I shall die, too, for I feel death coming,” Abigail replied. “Where is the friar who conversed with me?”

She had previously asked Friar Jacomo to help her get into the nunnery.

“Oh, he has gone to see the other nuns.”

“I sent for him, but seeing you have come, you shall be my ghostly father — my spiritual father and confessor. And first know that in this house I lived religiously, chaste, and devout, much sorrowing for my sins. But, before I came ....”

“What then?”

“I did offend high heaven so grievously that I am almost desperate and without hope of salvation because of my sins, and one offence torments me more than all the others,” Abigail said. “You knew Mathias and Don Lodowick?”

“Yes, what about them?”

“My father contracted me to be married to both of them. First to Don Lodowick: him I never loved. Mathias was the man whom I held dear, and for his sake I became a nun.”

“So tell me: How was their end?”

“Both, jealous of my love, were full of malice toward each other, and by my father’s cunning and treachery, the gallants were both slain. All the details are set down in full in this paper.”

She gave Friar Barnardine a paper.

“Oh, monstrous villainy!” Friar Barnardine said.

“To achieve my peace of mind and my absolution, this I have confessed to thee. Don’t reveal what I told you, for if it is revealed, then my father dies.”

“Know that confession must not be revealed. The canon law forbids it, and the priest who makes it known, being degraded and deprived of orders first, shall be condemned and excommunicated and so sent to the fire.”

Priests could be defrocked and excommunicated for revealing a religious confession. Excommunication is not equivalent to damnation, but it is something taken seriously —

especially by priests. Many priests believe that many unrepentant excommunicated sinners end up in the fire of Hell.

“So I have heard,” Abigail said. “Please, therefore, keep it secret. Death seizes on my heart. Ah, gentle friar, convert my father so that he may be saved, and witness that I die a Christian.”

She died.

Friar Barnardine said, “Aye, and you die a virgin, too; that grieves me most.”

He grieved most because no one had had sex with this nun before she died.

Friar Barnardine continued, “But I must go to the Jew, and exclaim against and denounce him and make him stand in fear of me.”

Friar Jacomo entered the scene and said, “Oh, brother, all the nuns are dead. Let’s bury them.”

Friar Barnardine said, “First help me to bury this.”

He meant Abigail’s body.

He added, “Then go with me, and help me to exclaim against the Jew.”

“Why, what has he done?” Friar Jacomo asked.

“A thing that makes me tremble to reveal.”

“Has he crucified a child?”

In this culture, rumors circulated that Jews did such things as kidnap and crucify Christian children.

“No, but a worse thing,” Friar Barnardine said. “It was told to me in a confession. Thou know it is death if it is revealed.

“Come, let’s go.”

#### **ACT 4 (*Jew of Malta*)**

##### **— 4.1 —**

Barabas and Ithamore talked together. Church bells rang for a funeral.

“There is no music compared to a Christian’s death knell,” Barabas said. “How sweet the bells ring, now the nuns are dead, that sound at other times like tinkers’ pans. I was afraid that the poison had not worked, or that, although it worked, it would have done no good, for every year the nuns swell” — he meant, in pregnancy as well as in numbers — “and yet they live. Now all are dead. Not one remains alive.”

“That’s splendid, master, but do you think that the cause will not be revealed?”

“How can it be revealed, if we two keep the secret?” Barabas asked.

“As far as my part is concerned, you need not fear,” Ithamore replied.



“I’d cut thy throat, if I did.”

“And with reason, too. But here’s a fine, first-class monastery close by us. Good master, let me poison all the monks there.”

“Thou shall not need to, for now that the nuns are dead, the monks will die with grief.”

“Don’t you sorrow for your daughter’s death?” Ithamore asked.

“No, but I grieve because she lived so long, a Hebrew born, and she would become a Christian. *Cazzo, diavola!*”

This was Italian for “Cock, she-devil!”

Friar Giacomo and Friar Barnardine entered the scene.

“Look, look, master,” Ithamore said. “Here come two religious caterpillars — religious parasites.”

“I smelt them before they came,” Barabas said.

Ithamore thought, *God-a-mercy, what a nose!*

He then said out loud, “Come, let’s leave.”

Friar Barnardine said, “Stay, wicked Jew; repent, I say, and stay.”

“Thou have offended, so therefore thou must be damned,” Friar Giacomo said.

According to Christian theology, sincere repentance leads to forgiveness of sins and eternal life in Heaven.

Barabas whispered to Ithamore, “I fear they know we sent the poisoned broth.”

Ithamore whispered back, “And so do I, master; therefore, speak courteously to them.”

Friar Barnardine began, “Barabas, thou have —”

Friar Giacomo interrupted, “Aye, that thou have —”

Barabas interrupted to keep them off the topic of the deaths of Mathias and Lodowick: “— true, I have money. What though I have?”

Friar Barnardine began, “Thou are a —”

Friar Giacomo interrupted, “Aye, that thou are a —”

Barabas interrupted, “Why need we talk about all this? I know I am a Jew.”

Friar Barnardine began, “Thy daughter —”

Friar Giacomo interrupted, “Aye, thy daughter —”

Barabas interrupted, “Oh, don’t speak about her; when I hear about her, then I die with grief.”

Friar Barnardine began, “Remember that —”

Friar Giacomo interrupted, “Aye, remember that —”

Barabas interrupted, "I must say that I have been a great usurer."

Friar Barnardine began, "Thou have committed —"

Barabas interrupted, "— fornication? But that was in another country, and besides, the wench is dead."

The excuses "that was in another country, and besides, the wench is dead" are irrelevant.

Friar Barnardine said, "Aye, but Barabas, remember Mathias and Don Lodowick."

"Why, what about them?" Barabas asked.

"I will not say that by a forged challenge they met," Friar Barnardine replied.

He had a religious duty to keep Abigail's confession secret.

Barabas whispered to Ithamore, "She has confessed, and we are both undone."

He said to the two friars, "My bosom intimates —"

He whispered to Ithamore, "But I must dissemble."

He then said out loud, "Oh, holy friars, the burden of my sins lies heavy on my soul, so then please tell me whether or not it is too late now to convert and be a Christian?"

"I have been zealous in the Jewish faith, hardhearted to the poor, a covetous wretch, and I would for the sake of money have sold my soul. A hundred for a hundred I have taken — one hundred percent interest — and now for store of wealth I may compare with all the Jews in Malta.

"But what is wealth? I am a Jew, and therefore I am spiritually lost. If penance would serve to atone for my sin, I could afford to whip myself to death —"

Ithamore thought, *And so could I, but penance will not work.*

A fake repentance would not get Ithamore and Barabas into Paradise — you can't scam God.

Barabas continued, "— or to fast, to pray, and to wear a shirt of hair, and on my knees to creep to Jerusalem."

Some penitents mortified the flesh and rejected worldly things by wearing uncomfortable clothing next to their skin. Often, penitents wore hair shirts made of horsehair under their other clothing.

Barabas continued, "Cellars of wine, and lofts full of wheat, warehouses stuffed with spices and with medicines, whole chests of gold in bullion and in coin, besides I know not how much weight in pearls that are orient and lustrous and round have I within my house.

"At Alexandria I have unsold merchandise. Only yesterday two ships sailed from this town: Their voyage will be worth ten thousand crowns. In Florence, Venice, Antwerp, London, Seville, Frankfort, Lubeck, Moscow — where do I not have debts owed to me — and, in most of these cities I have great sums of money lying in the bank.

"All this I'll give to some religious house, as long as I may be baptized, and live therein."

“Oh, good Barabas, come to our house,” Friar Jacomo pleaded.

“Oh, no, good Barabas, come to our house,” Friar Barnardine said. “And Barabas, you know \_\_\_”

Barabas said to Friar Barnardine, “I know that I have highly sinned. You shall convert me. You shall have all my wealth.”

“Oh, Barabas, the laws of Friar Barnardine’s house are strict,” Friar Jacomo said.

Barabas said to Friar Jacomo, “I know they are, and I will be with you.”

Friar Barnardine said about Friar Jacomo’s house, “They wear no shirts, and they go barefoot, too.”

He may have meant that the friars of Friar Jacomo’s house did not wear regular shirts but instead wore hair shirts. The friars were assuming that Barabas would want to live in a religious house whose rules were relaxed although he had mentioned a moment ago that if penance would serve to atone for his sin, he would do such things as wear a shirt of hair.

Barabas said to Friar Barnardine, “Then it is not for me; and I am resolved that you shall confess me and have all my goods.”

“Good Barabas, come to me,” Friar Jacomo pleaded.

Barabas said to Friar Barnardine, “You see, I answer him, and yet he stays. Get rid of him and make him go away, and go home with me.”

Friar Jacomo said to Barabas, “I’ll be with you tonight.”

Barabas said to Friar Jacomo, “Come to my house at one o’clock this night.”

Friar Barnardine said to Friar Jacomo, “Why, go, get away from here.”

“I will not go at your bidding,” Friar Jacomo said.

Friar Barnardine said to Friar Jacomo, “You won’t? Then I’ll make thee, rogue.”

“What!” Friar Jacomo said. “Do you dare to call me a rogue?”

Friar Barnardine and Friar Jacomo fought each other.

“Part them, master, part them,” Ithamore said.

“This is mere frailty — human weakness,” Barabas said. “Brethren, be content. Friar Barnardine, go with Ithamore.”

He then whispered to Friar Barnardine, “You know my mind; leave it to me to deal with him. I can handle Friar Jacomo.”

Friar Jacomo said to Barabas, “Why does he go to thy house? Let him be gone.”

Barabas whispered to Friar Jacomo, “I’ll give him something and so stop his mouth.”

Ithamore and Friar Barnardine exited.

Barabas said to Friar Jacomo, “I never heard of any man except Friar Barnardine who maligned the order of the Jacobins. But do you think that I believe his words? Why, brother, you converted Abigail, and I am bound in charity to requite it, and so I will. Oh, Jacomo, don’t fail, but come to my house tonight.”

The word “requite” can mean “charitably repay,” but Barabas used the word in the sense of “get revenge for.”

“But, Barabas, who shall be your godfathers?” Friar Jacomo asked. “For soon you shall be confessed.”

“Indeed, the Turk — Ithamore — shall be one of my godfathers,” Barabas said. “But not a word to any of your convent.”

Ithamore — a non-Christian Thracian brought up in the part of Arabia that was part of the Turkish Empire — was an unlikely choice for a godfather. Barabas used the word “Turk” to mean “unbeliever in Christianity.” This clearly revealed Friar Jacomo’s hypocrisy — he did not object to a Turk being one of Barabas’ godfathers.

“I promise thee I won’t say a word, Barabas,” Friar Jacomo said, and then he exited.

Alone, Barabas said to himself, “So, now the fear is past, and I am safe, for Friar Barnardine, who confessed Abigail, is within my house.

“What if I murdered him before Jacomo comes? Now I have such a plot for both their lives as neither the Jews nor the Christians have ever known the like. Jacomo converted my daughter; therefore, he shall die. The other — Barnardine — knows enough to have my life because Abigail confessed to him; therefore, it is not necessary that he should live.

“But aren’t both these men ‘wise’ to suppose that I will leave my house, my goods, and all, in order to fast and to be well whipped? I’ll have none of that.

“Now, Friar Barnardine, I come to you. I’ll feast you, lodge you, give you fair words, and after that, I and my trusty Turk ... just so. It must and shall be done.”

Ithamore entered the scene.

“Ithamore, tell me, is the friar asleep?” Barabas asked.

“Yes, and I don’t know what the reason is, but do what I can, he will not strip himself, nor go to bed, but sleeps in his own clothes. I am afraid that he suspects our intentions.”

“No; it is a religious observance that the friars follow,” Barabas said. “Yet, if he knew our intentions, could he escape?”

“No, none can hear him, no matter how loud he cries.”

“Why, that is true,” Barabas said. “For that reason, I therefore did place him there. The other chambers open towards the street.”

“You loiter, master,” Ithamore said. “Why do we delay? Oh, how I long to see him shake his heels as he is strangled.”

Barabas said quietly to the sleeping Friar Barnardine, “Come on, sirrah, off with your belt.”

He took off Friar Barnardine's belt, which was a piece of rope, and gave it to Ithamore, saying, "Make a handsome noose."

Ithamore made the noose, and handed it to Barabas, who shouted, "Friar, awake!"

Waking up, Friar Barnardine lifted his head, and Barabas slipped the noose around his neck.

"What!" Friar Barnardine said. "Do you intend to strangle me?"

"Yes," Ithamore said, "because you are accustomed to confess the sins of others."

"Don't blame us; instead, blame the proverb 'confess and be hanged,'" Barabas said.

Barabas said to Ithamore, "Pull hard."

"What! Will you have my life?" Friar Barnardine asked.

"Pull hard, I say," Barabas said to Ithamore.

He then said to Friar Barnardine, "You would have had my goods."

"Aye, and our lives, too," Ithamore said to Friar Barnardine.

He then said to Barabas, "Therefore, pull with all your strength."

They pulled, and Friar Barnardine died.

Ithamore said, "It was neatly done, sir. On his neck is no mark from the noose at all."

"Then it is as it should be," Barabas said. "Pick him up."

"Nay, master, take my advice a little," Ithamore replied.

He added, "So, let him lean upon his staff," while he leaned the corpse against a wall and kept it from falling by how he placed the staff.

Barabas placed another staff close by the corpse.

"Excellent!" Ithamore said. "He stands as if he were begging for bacon."

"Who would not think anything but that this friar lived?" Barabas said, and then he asked, "What time of night is it now, sweet Ithamore?"

"Close to one."

"Then Jacomo will not be far from here," Barabas said.

He and Ithamore hid themselves, and then Friar Jacomo entered the scene.

"This is the hour wherein I shall prosper," Friar Jacomo said. "Oh, happy hour in which I shall convert an infidel and bring his gold into our treasury. But quiet! Isn't this Barnardine? It is!

"And understanding that I should come this way, he stands here on purpose, intending to do me some wrong and to intercept my going to the Jew."

He called, "Barnardine!"

He then said, "Will thou not speak? Thou think I don't see thee? Away, I wish thee would go away, and let me go by thee.

"No, will thou not move out of my way? Nay, then I'll force my way.

"And I see that a staff stands ready for the purpose.

"If thou likes that, stop me some other time."

Friar Jacomo grabbed the staff that Barabas had placed by Friar Barnardine's corpse, and he struck Friar Barnardine's corpse. Barnardine's corpse fell, and his head hit the ground hard.

Barabas and Ithamore came out of hiding, and Barabas asked, "Why, how are you now, Jacomo?"

Seeing the corpse on the ground, he said, "Jacomo, what have thou done?"

"Why, I have struck a man who would have struck at me."

"Who is it? Barnardine? Now ... damn! Alas, he is slain."

"Aye, master, he's slain," Ithamore said. "Look how his brains drop out of his nose."

"Good sirs, I have done it," Friar Jacomo said, "but nobody knows it but you two. I may escape."

"So might my serving-man and I hang with you for company," Barabas said.

"No," Ithamore said. "Let us take him to the magistrates."

"Good Barabas, let me go," Friar Jacomo said.

"No, pardon me," Barabas said. "The law must have its course. I must be forced to give in evidence that being importuned by this Barnardine to be a Christian, I shut him out, and there he sat. Now I, to keep my word and give my goods and substance to your house, was up thus early, with intent to go to your friary because you were late in coming to me."

"Bah upon them, master," Ithamore said. "Will you turn Christian, when holy friars turn devils and murder one another?"

"No," Barabas said. "Because of this example of a Christian committing murder, I'll remain a Jew. Heaven bless me! A friar a murderer? When shall you see a Jew commit the like?"

"Why, a Turk could have done no more," Ithamore, who was a Turk, said.

"Tomorrow is the law-court sessions," Barabas said to Friar Jacomo. "You shall go to it and be tried."

He then said, "Come, Ithamore, let's help to take him hence."

"Villains, I am a sacred person," Friar Jacomo said. "I am a friar. Don't touch me."

"The law shall touch you," Barabas said. "We'll but lead you, we will. Alas, I could weep at your calamity."

He said to Ithamore, “Take the staff, too, for that must be shown. Law requires that each particular piece of evidence be known.”

— 4.2 —

The courtesan Bellamira and the thief Pilia-Borza talked together.

Bellamira asked, “Pilia-Borza, did thou meet with Ithamore?”

“I did.”

“And did thou deliver my letter?”

“I did.”

“And what do thou think? Will he come?”

“I think so. And yet I cannot tell, for, at the reading of the letter he looked like a man of another world — he looked like a ghost.”

“Why?”

“That such a base slave as he should be addressed by such a splendid man as I am, from such a beautiful dame as you.”

“And what did he say?” Bellamira asked.

“Not a wise word. He only gave me a nod, as if he would say, ‘Is it even so? Is this how it stands?’ And so I left him driven to a nonplus — a state of bewilderment — at the critical aspect of my terrible countenance.”

“Critical aspect” refers to astrology and the sinister influence that some planets and stars have in certain positions. Pilia-Borza had given Ithamore a look that daunted him.

“And where did thou meet him?”

“I saw him upon my own freehold, within forty foot of the gallows, memorizing his neck verse, I take it, while he was looking on at a friar’s execution.”

Pilia-Borza was a thief and pickpocket, and his freehold — ‘his’ land — consisted of public places, such as around a gallows, where he could ply his trade.

By what was known as “benefit of clergy,” people could escape hanging by proving that they knew Latin — in this culture, mainly priests knew Latin. According to Pilia-Borza, Ithamore was trying to memorize the fifty-first Psalm in Latin in case he ever needed to escape being hung.

In English, this is the first line of Psalm 51: “*Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according to the multitude of thy compassions put away mine iniquities*” (1599 Geneva Bible).

Pilia-Borza continued, “I saluted him — Ithamore — with an old hempen proverb, *hodie tibi, cras mihi*, and so I left him to the mercy of the hangman.”

The proverb, which means “Your turn today, my turn tomorrow,” is hempen because it is homespun and because it makes a reference to the hempen rope used by the hangman. As a

thief, Pilia-Borza would be hung if he were caught. He also was threatening Ithamore with hanging.

Pilia-Borza continued, "But, the exercise — the religious ceremony — being done, see where he comes."

Ithamore arrived on the scene.

He said to himself, "I never knew a man take his death so patiently as this friar. He was ready to leap off before the halter was about his neck."

Apparently, Friar Jacomo was so eager for death — perhaps because he had sincerely repented what he thought was the murder he had committed — that he had not taken advantage of benefit of clergy. Even if he had, he would have been tried in a different court: an ecclesiastical court.

Ithamore continued, "And when the hangman had put on the friar's hempen tippet — the noose — Friar Jacomo made such haste in his prayers, as if he had had another cure to serve — another parish to spiritually serve."

A tippet is a band or scarf of silk or other material worn around a priest's neck.

Ithamore continued, "Well, go whither he will, I'll be none of his followers in haste. And now I think of it, coming to the execution, a fellow met me with a mustache like a raven's wing, and a dagger with a hilt like a long-handled bed-warming pan, and he gave me a letter from one madam Bellamira, saluting me with a low bow as if he had meant to make clean my boots with his lips. The gist was that I should come to her house. I wonder what the reason is. It may be she sees more in me than I can find in myself, for she writes further that she has loved me ever since she saw me. And who would not requite such love? Here's her house, and here she comes, and now I wish I were gone. I am not worthy to look upon her."

Ithamore walked over to Pilia-Borza and Bellamira.

"This is the gentleman you wrote to," Pilia-Borza said to Bellamira.

Ithamore thought, "*Gentleman!*" *He mocks me. What gentry can be in a poor Turk worth only ten pence? I'll be gone.*

"Isn't he a sweet-faced youth, Pilia-Borza?" Bellamira asked.

Ithamore thought, *Again, a mock: "sweet youth."*

She continued, "Didn't you, sir, bring the sweet youth a letter?"

Pilia-Borza said to Ithamore, "I did, sir, and from this gentlewoman, who, like myself and the rest of the members of the household, stand or fall at your service."

"Though woman's modesty should hold me back, I can hold back no longer," Bellamira said to Ithamore. "Welcome, sweet love."

Ithamore thought, *Now am I clean, or rather foully, out of the way.*

One meaning of the word "clean" is "wholly."



By “out of the way,” Ithamore meant “out of my depth.” He did not think he was worthy of Bellamira.

He started to leave.

“Going away so soon?” Bellamira asked.

Ithamore thought, *I’ll go steal some money from my master to make me handsome.*

He said out loud, “Please, pardon me; I must go see a ship unloaded.”

He started to leave again.

“Can thou be so unkind as to leave me thus?” Bellamira asked.

“If only you knew how she loves you, sir!” Pilia-Borza said.

Ithamore replied, “Nay, I don’t care how much she loves me.”

He did not think that he was worthy of her love — unless he had money to give to her.

He then said, “Sweet Bellamira, I wish I had my master’s wealth for thy sake!”

“And you can have it, sir, if you please,” Pilia-Borza said.

“If it were above ground, I could and would have it,” Ithamore said, “but he hides and buries it as partridges do their eggs, under the earth.”

“And isn’t it possible to find it out?” Pilia-Borza asked.

“It is by no means possible,” Ithamore replied.

Bellamira whispered to Pilia-Borza, “What shall we do with this base villain, then?”

Pilia-Borza whispered back, “Leave it to me; you just speak nice, flattering words to him.”

He then said to Ithamore, “But you know some secrets of the Jew, which, if they were revealed, would do him harm.”

“Aye, and such as — ah, say no more!” Ithamore said. “I’ll make him send me half of the wealth he has, and he’ll be glad he escapes so easily, too. Bring me pen and ink! I’ll write to him. We’ll have money right away.”

“Send for a hundred crowns at least,” Pilia-Borza said.

“Ten hundred thousand crowns,” Ithamore said.

A servant brought him pen and ink and he began to write, saying, “Master Barabas —”

“Don’t write so submissively,” Pilia-Borza said. “Write threateningly to him.”

Ithamore scratched his words out and wrote as he said, “Sirrah Barabas, send me a hundred crowns.”

Coming from a servant and directed to a master, the word “sirrah” was disrespectful.

“Put in two hundred at least,” Pilia-Borza said.

Writing, Ithamore said, “I order thee to send me three hundred crowns by this bearer, and this shall be your warrant. If you do not — I write no more, but even so you know. You’ll suffer the consequences.”

The letter was the warrant — it authorized Barabas to give the bearer of the letter the money to carry back to Ithamore.

“Tell him you will confess,” Pilia-Borza said.

Writing, Ithamore said, “Otherwise I’ll confess all.”

He gave the letter to Pilia-Borza and said, “Vanish, and return in a twinkling.”

“Leave it to me to deal with him,” Pilia-Borza said. “I’ll treat him according to his kind.”

He meant that he would treat Barabas 1) as a Jew ought to be treated — in this culture, that meant badly, and 2) in accordance with Barabas’ character.

Holding the letter, Pilia-Borza exited.

“Hang him, the Jew!” Ithamore said.

“Now, gentle Ithamore, lie in my lap,” Bellamira said.

This was sexually suggestive.

He lay in her lap.

She called, “Where are my maids?”

She ordered them, “Provide a running banquet. Bring us a light meal.

“Send to the merchant: Tell him to bring me silks.”

She then said, “Shall Ithamore, my love, go in such rags?”

“And tell the jeweler to come hither, too,” Ithamore said.

“I have no husband, sweet,” Bellamira said. “I’ll marry thee.”

“Agreed, but we will leave this paltry land and sail from here to Greece, to lovely Greece. I’ll be thy Jason, thou my golden fleece.”

Jason and his Argonauts succeeded in getting the golden fleece.

Ithamore continued, “Where painted carpets — brightly colored flowers — over the meadows are hurled, and Bacchus’ vineyards overspread the world, where woods and forests are dressed in goodly green, I’ll be Adonis: thou shall be Venus, Queen of Love.”

William Shakespeare’s poem *Venus and Adonis* is a tale of unrequited love. Venus loves Adonis, but he wants nothing to do with her. Instead, he wants to go hunting. She has a vision that if he hunts the following day, he will be killed. He does hunt the following day, and a boar kills him. In other tellings of the myth, Adonis returns Venus’ love, but he still dies young.

Ithamore continued, “The meadows, the orchards, and the primrose lanes, instead of coarse sedge and reed, bear sugar canes. Thou in those groves, I swear by Dis above, shall live with

me, and be my love.”

Dis is the god of the Underworld — the Land of the Dead — and so Dis is not above.

“Whither will I not go with gentle Ithamore?” Bellamira said.

Carrying a moneybag, Pilia-Borza returned.

“How is everything now?” Ithamore asked him. “Have thou the gold?”

“Yes.”

“But did it come to you freely and easily?” Ithamore asked. “Did the cow let her milk flow freely?”

“While reading the letter, he stared and stamped, and turned aside. I took him by the beard” — this was an insult — “and looked upon him thus” — Pilia-Borza made a threatening face — “and told him it would be best for him to send the money,” Pilia-Borza said. “Then he hugged and embraced me.”

“Rather out of fear than love,” Ithamore said.

“Then, like a Jew, he laughed and jeered, and told me he loved me for your sake, and said what a faithful servant you had been,” Pilia-Borza said.

“The more villain he to keep me like this,” Ithamore said. “Look at the clothing I am wearing. This is goodly apparel, isn’t it?”

Ithamore was wearing poor-quality clothing.

“To conclude, he gave me ten crowns,” Pilia-Borza said.

This was either a tip or a bribe.

“Only ten crowns?” Ithamore said. “I’ll leave him not worth a grey groat.”

A grey groat is a small silver coin.

He said, “Give me a ream of paper. We’ll have a kingdom of gold for it.”

“Write for five hundred crowns,” Pilia-Borza said.

Writing, Ithamore said, “Sirrah Jew, as you love your life, send me five hundred crowns and give the bearer one hundred crowns as a tip.”

He then said to Pilia-Borza, “Tell him I must have the money.”

“I promise you, your worship shall have it,” Pilia-Borza said.

“And, if he should ask why I demand so much, tell him I scorn to write a line demanding anything less than a hundred crowns,” Ithamore said.

“You’d make a rich poet, sir,” Pilia-Borza said. “I am gone.”

He exited.

Ithamore gave the moneybag to Bellamira and said, “Take the money; spend it for my sake.”

“It is not thy money, but thyself I value,” she said. “Thus Bellamira esteems the gold” — she threw the moneybag to the side: her side, not Ithamore’s — “but thus I esteem thee.”

She covered his face with kisses.

Ithamore thought, *That kiss again. She runs division of my lips. What an eye she casts on me! It twinkles like a star.*

“Division” is a musical term used to denote a form of variation or ornamentation in which many short notes are rapidly played. Bellamira performed well with her lips; she was a virtuoso when it came to kissing.

“Come, my dear love, let’s go in and sleep together,” she said.

“Oh, I wish that ten thousand nights were put in one, so that we might sleep seven years together before we wake,” Ithamore said.

“Come, amorous wag; first we will banquet, and then we will sleep.”

— 4.3 —

Barabas was reading Ithamore’s first letter — the one in which he wanted three hundred crowns in blackmail.

He read out loud, “*Barabas, send me three hundred crowns.*”

He then said, “Plain Barabas? Oh, that wicked courtesan! He was not accustomed to call me ‘Barabas.’”

He read out loud, “*Or else I will confess.*”

He then said, “Aye, there it goes — there is the threat. But, if I get him, *coupe de gorge* — I’ll cut his throat — for that! He sent a shaggy, tattered, staring lowlife, who when he speaks draws out his grizzled beard and winds it twice or thrice about his ear, whose face has been a grindstone for men’s swords. His hands are hacked, some fingers cut quite off, and when he speaks he grunts like a hog, and looks like one who is employed in *catzerie* — roguery — and cross biting, aka wronging a wrongdoer. He is such a rogue as is the husband to a hundred whores, and I by him must send three hundred crowns.”

A pimp would pretend to be the husband of a whore in order to blackmail the whore’s clients.

Barabas continued, “Well, my hope is, Ithamore will not stay there always. And, when he comes — oh, I wish that he were only here!”

Pilia-Borza entered the scene and said, “Jew, I must have more gold.”

“Why?” Barabas asked. “Do thou lack any of thy tally? Is anything missing from the amount you have received?”

“No, but three hundred crowns will not serve his turn,” Pilia-Borza replied.

“Not serve his turn, sir?” Barabas said.

“Serve his turn” meant “meet his need.” Barabas could guess that Ithamore wanted more money so he could satisfy his sexual desires.

“No, sir, and therefore I must have five hundred crowns more.”

Angry, Barabas said, “I’ll rather —”

“Oh, speak calm words, sir, and send the money — it is best for you,” Pilia-Borza said. “See, there’s his letter.”

He handed Barabas Ithamore’s second letter.

“Might he not as well come in person to me as send you?” Barabas asked. “Please, tell him to come and fetch it himself. The tip that he wrote I should give you — one hundred crowns — you shall have immediately.”

“Aye, and the rest, too, or else —”

Barabas thought, *I must do away with — kill — this villain.*

He asked out loud, “Would it please you to dine with me, sir?”

He thought, *If you do, you shall be most heartily poisoned.*

“No, God-a-mercy,” Pilia-Borza said. “Shall I have these crowns?”

“I cannot do it,” Barabas replied. “I have lost my keys.”

“Oh, if that is all, I can pick open your locks.”

“Or climb up to my counting-house window?” Barabas said. “You know my meaning?”

Barabas guessed that Pilia-Borza was the person who had earlier climbed up to his window and stolen one of his moneybags.

“I know enough, and therefore don’t talk to me about your counting-house. Give me the gold, or know, Jew, it is in my power to get thee hanged.”

Barabas thought, *I am betrayed.*

He said out loud, “It is not the five hundred crowns that I esteem. I am not angered at that. This angers me — that he who knows I love him as myself should write in this imperious vein. Why, sir, you know I have no child, and to whom should I leave all I have but to Ithamore?”

“Here’s many words, but no crowns,” Pilia-Borza said. “The crowns!”

“Commend me to him, sir, most humbly, and commend me to your good mistress, who has not been introduced to me.”

“Speak, shall I have the crowns, sir?”

“Sir, here they are,” Barabas said, giving him the gold coins.

He thought, *Oh, that I should part with so much gold!*

He said, “Here, take them, fellow, with as good a will” — he thought, *As I would see thee hanged* — “oh, love stops my breath. Never has a man loved a servant as I do Ithamore.”

“I know it, sir.”

“Please, tell me when, sir, shall I see you at my house?”

“Soon enough to your cost, sir,” Pilia-Borza said. “Fare you well.”

He exited with the money.

Alone, Barabas said to himself, “Nay, to thine own cost, villain, if thou come.

“Was ever any Jew tormented as I am? To have a shag-rag — shaggy and unkempt — knave to come demand three hundred crowns, and then five hundred crowns!

“Well, I must seek a means to get rid of them all, and immediately; for in his villainy Ithamore will tell all he knows, and I shall die for it.

“I have it. I will in some disguise go see the slave, and I will see how the villain revels with my gold.”

— 4.4 —

Bellamira, Ithamore, and Pilia-Borza were drinking in Bellamira’s home.

Bellamira said to Ithamore, “I’ll offer a toast to thee, love, and therefore you shall drink it off.”

“Do thou say that to me? Have at it! And do you hear?” Ithamore said.

He whispered something in her ear, presumably about having at what couples do in bed rather than having at the drinking of wine.

“Ha!” Bellamira said. “Of course, it shall be so.”

“On that condition I will drink it up,” Ithamore said. “Here’s to thee.”

He drank part of the wine.

She said, “Nay, I’ll have all or none.”

She wanted him to drink all the wine in his glass because she wanted to get him drunk. Excessive alcohol consumption increases desire but takes away performance.

“There,” Ithamore said after draining his cup of wine. “If thou love me, do not leave a drop.”

He wanted her to drain her cup.

“Love thee?” Bellamira said. “Fill three glasses.”

“Three and fifty dozen!” Ithamore said. “I’ll drink to thee.”

“Knaveily spoken and like a knight at arms,” Pilia-Borza said.

“Hey, *Rivo Castiliano*, a man’s a man,” Ithamore said.

“*Rivo Castiliano*” means “Castilian stream or river.” Ithamore may have been drinking and/or calling for Spanish wine. Or he may have been using the phrase as a nickname for Pilia-Borza.

A proverb stated, “A man’s a man, though he have but a hose on his head.” The proverb meant that men are equal despite social distinctions such as the kind of hat a man has on his head.

“Now to the Jew,” Bellamira said.

“Ha! To the Jew!” Ithamore said. “And send me money — you had better do it.”

Pilia-Borza asked, “What would thou do, if he should send thee none?”

“Do nothing, but I know what I know,” Ithamore said. “He’s a murderer.”

“I had not thought he had been so brave a man,” Bellamira said.

“You knew Mathias and the Governor’s son,” Ithamore said. “Barabas and I killed them both, and yet never touched them.”

“Oh, splendidly done!” Pilia-Borza said.

“I carried the broth that poisoned the nuns, and he and I, snickle hand too fast, strangled a friar,” Ithamore said.

To “snickle” means to “catch with a noose,” so by “snickle hand too fast” Ithamore, now drunk, may have meant something such as, “Put the noose on him with a hand too fast to stop.”

Or, possibly, he meant, “The snare hand was too fast.”

Or, possibly, he meant spoken words: “Snickle! Hand! Too fast!” This passage would then mean something such as, “Put the noose over his head! Deal with him! Make the noose too tight!”

“You two alone murdered the friar?” Bellamira asked.

“We two. And it was never known, nor never shall be, as far as I’m concerned.”

Pilia-Borza whispered to Bellamira, “This information shall be delivered by me to the Governor.”

She whispered back, “And it is fitting it should be. But first let’s have more gold.”

She then said, “Come, gentle Ithamore, lie in my lap.”

Ithamore sang this song:

*“Love me little,*

*“Love me long;*

*“Let music rumble,*

*“Whilst I in thy incony lap do tumble.”*

The word “incony” means “fine” and “delicate,” but Ithamore was punning on “in-cunny.” A “cunny” is a “c\*nt.” To “tumble” is to “have a bout of sex.”

Barabas, disguised and carrying a lute, entered the room.

“A French musician!” Bellamira said. “Come, let’s hear your skill.”

Speaking with a fake French accent, the disguised Barabas said, “Must tune-a my lute for sound, twang, twang, first.”

“Will you drink, Frenchman?” Ithamore asked, hiccupping.

He added, "Here's to thee with — hic — a pox on this drunken hiccup!"

"Gramercy, monsieur," the disguised Barabas said. "Many thanks."

"Please, Pilia-Borza, tell the fiddler to give me the nosegay in his hat there," Bellamira said.

A nosegay is a small bouquet of flowers.

Pilia-Borza said to the disguised Barabas, "Sirrah, you must give my mistress your nosegay."

Barabas gave Bellamira the nosegay and said, "I am *à votre commandement*, Madame. I am at your command."

"How sweet, my Ithamore, the flowers smell," Bellamira said.

Ithamore smelled them and said, "Like thy breath, sweetheart; there is no violet like them."

"Yuck! I think they stink like a hollyhock," Pilia-Borza said.

Many people like the scent of a hollyhock.

The disguised Barabas thought, *Good, now I am revenged upon them all. The scent of the nosegay means death; I poisoned it.*

Ithamore ordered, "Play, fiddler, or I'll cut your cat's guts — your lute strings — into chitterlings."

"Chitterlings" are "pork sausages."

"*Pardonnez moi*, pardon me, be no in tune yet," the disguised Barabas said. "So now, now, all is in tune."

"Give him a crown, and pour out more wine for me," Ithamore said.

Pilia-Borza gave the disguised Barabas some money and said, "There's two crowns for thee. Play."

Barabas thought, *How liberally the villain gives me my own gold.*

"I think he fingers very well," Pilia-Borza said.

By "finger," he meant "play the strings."

Barabas thought, *So did you finger well when you stole my gold.*

By "finger," he meant "put your fingers on my gold in order to steal it."

"How swiftly he plays a run of notes," Pilia-Borza said.

The disguised Barabas thought, *You ran swifter when you threw my gold out of my window.*

"Musician, have you been in Malta long?" Bellamira asked.

"Two, three, four month, madam," the disguised Barabas said, using incorrect grammar.

"Do you know a Jew named Barabas?" Ithamore asked.

"Very mush, monsieur, you no be his man?" the disguised Barabas asked.



His fake French accent made “mush” out of “much.”

By “man,” he meant “man-servant.”

“His man?” Pilia-Borza asked.

Referring to Barabas, Ithamore said, “I scorn the peasant; tell him so.”

The disguised Barabas thought, *He knows it already.*

“It is a strange thing about that Jew,” Ithamore said. “He lives on pickled grasshoppers and seasoned mushrooms.”

Pickled grasshoppers and seasoned mushrooms are inexpensive food.

The disguised Barabas thought, *What a slave is this! Governor Ferneze does not eat as well as I do.*

“He has never put on a clean shirt since he was circumcised,” Ithamore said.

The disguised Barabas thought, *Oh, rascal! I change my clothing twice a day.*

“The hat he wears — it is the one Judas left under the elder tree when he hanged himself,” Ithamore said.

The disguised Barabas thought, *It was sent to me as a present by the Great Khan.*

“A masty slave he is,” Pilia-Borza said.

The adjective “masty” means “fattened on mast, aka food for pigs.”

Barabas started to leave.

“Where are you going now, fiddler?” Pilia-Borza asked.

“*Pardonnez moi*, pardon me, monsieur,” the disguised Barabas said. “Me be no well.”

He exited.

“Farewell, fiddler,” Pilia-Borza said.

He said to Ithamore, “One more letter to the Jew.”

“Please, sweet love, one more, and write it sharply worded,” Bellamira said to Ithamore.

“No, I’ll send by word of mouth now,” Ithamore replied.

He said to Pilia-Borza, “Order him to deliver to thee a thousand crowns. He will give it to thee if you say that the nuns loved rice or that Friar Barnardine slept in his own clothes. Either of them will do it.”

“Leave it to me to persuade him to give me the money, now that I know the meaning behind the words you said,” Pilia-Borza said.

“The meaning has a meaning,” Ithamore said, attempting to appear deep and mysterious and forgetting that he had already talked about these murders.

He said to Bellamira, “Come, let’s go in. To ruin a Jew is charity, and not sin.”

## ACT 5 (*Jew of Malta*)

— 5.1 —

Governor Ferneze, some Knights of Malta, Martin del Bosco, and some officers were meeting to discuss military defense and strategy.

“Now, gentlemen, take yourselves to your arms, and see that Malta is well fortified,” Governor Ferneze said. “And it behooves you to be resolute, for Calymath, having waited near here so long, will win the town or die before the walls.”

“And die he shall, for we will never yield,” the first Knight of Malta said.

Bellamira and Pilia-Borza entered the scene.

“Oh, take us to the Governor,” Bellamira said.

“Take her away!” Governor Ferneze said. “She is a courtesan.”

“Whatever I am, yet, Governor, hear me speak,” Bellamira said. “I bring thee news concerning by whom thy son was slain. Mathias did not do it: It was the Jew.”

“The Jew, besides the slaughter of these gentlemen, poisoned his own daughter and the nuns, strangled a friar, and committed I know not what other evil besides,” Pilia-Borza said.

“Had we but proof of this —” Governor Ferneze began.

Bellamira interrupted, “— we have strong proof, my lord. His serving-man’s now at my lodging. He was the Jew’s agent; he’ll confess it all.”

“Go fetch him immediately,” Governor Ferneze said. “I always feared that Jew.”

Some officers left and quickly brought in Barabas and Ithamore.

“I’ll go alone,” Barabas said to the officers. “Dogs, do not drag me thus.”

“Nor me either,” Ithamore said. “I cannot outrun you, constable.”

He grabbed his midsection and said, “Oh, my belly!”

He was feeling the effects of Barabas’ poison.

Barabas thought, *One dram of powder more had made everything safe and secure for me. What a damned slave I was not to use more poison!*

Governor Ferneze ordered, “Make fires! Heat irons! Let the rack be fetched!”

He was going to torture a confession out of Barabas and Ithamore.

“Nay, wait, my lord,” the first Knight of Malta said. “It may be the case that he will confess.”

“Confess?” Barabas said. “What do you mean, lords? Who should confess?”

“Thou and thy Turk,” Governor Ferneze said. “It was you who slew my son.”

Ithamore said, "I am guilty, my lord, I confess; your son and Mathias were both betrothed to Abigail. Barabas forged a counterfeit challenge."

"Who carried that challenge?" Barabas asked.

"I carried it, I confess," Ithamore answered. "But who wrote it? Indeed, even that man who strangled Friar Barnardine, poisoned the nuns, and with them poisoned his own daughter."

"Take him away!" Governor Ferneze ordered. "His sight is death to me."

Barabas said, "Away with me! For what? You men of Malta, hear me speak. She" — he pointed to Bellamira — "is a courtesan, and he" — he pointed to Pilia-Borza — "is a thief, and he" — he pointed to Ithamore — "is my slave. Let me have law, for none of this can be prejudicial against my life."

In this society, slave-owners had rights, such as the right to not have to legally respond to many accusations made against the slave-owner by his slaves and the slave's companions. Barabas wanted no trial.

"Once more, away with him!" Governor Ferneze said.

He then said to Barabas, "You shall have law."

In this society, Jews were second-class people. The "law" that Governor Ferneze meant was "punishment to the full extent that the law would allow."

"Devils, do your worst," Barabas said. "I live in spite of you. As these have spoken, so be it charged to their souls! May their souls suffer the torment that their words make them deserve!"

He thought, *I hope the poisoned flowers will do their work soon.*

Some officers led away Barabas, Ithamore, Bellamira, and Pilia-Borza.

Katherine, Mathias' mother, entered the scene and said, "Was my Mathias murdered by the Jew? Ferneze, it was thy son who murdered him."

"Be patient, gentle madam," Governor Ferneze said. "The murderer is the Jew. He forged the challenge that dared your son to fight a duel. That forged challenge made them fight."

"Where is the Jew?" Katherine asked. "Where is that murderer?"

"He is in prison until the law has passed sentence on him," Governor Ferneze said.

The first officer returned and said, "My lord, the courtesan and her man are dead. So are the Turk and Barabas the Jew."

"Dead?" Governor Ferneze asked.

"Dead, my lord," the first officer said, "and here they bring the Jew's body."

"This sudden death of his is very strange," Martin del Bosco said.

Some officers returned, carrying Barabas.

"Don't wonder at it, sir," Governor Ferneze said. "The heavens are just. Their deaths were like their lives; so then don't think about them. Since they are dead, let them be buried. As for the

Jew's body, throw that over the walls to be a prey for vultures and wild beasts.”

They threw Barabas over the wall.

“Good,” Governor Ferneze said, and then he ordered, “Now go away and fortify the town.”

Everyone exited.

The wall was low, and Barabas soon stood up. He had drunk a potion to make him sleep and appear to be dead.

Now outside the walls of the town, Barabas said, “All alone? Blessings on you, sleep-inducing drink! I'll be revenged on this accursed town, for by my means Calymath shall enter in the city. I'll help to slay Malta's citizens' children and their wives. I'll set on fire the churches, pull their houses down, take back my goods, too, and seize my lands. I hope to see Governor Ferneze made a slave, and, rowing in a galley, whipped to death.”

Selim Calymath arrived, accompanied by some Pashas and Turks.

Seeing Barabas, Selim Calymath asked, “Whom have we there? A spy?”

“Yes, my good lord, one who can spy a place where you may enter and take the town by surprise,” Barabas said. “My name is Barabas; I am a Jew.”

“Are thou that Jew whose goods we heard were sold for tribute money?” Selim Calymath asked.

“I am the very same, my lord,” Barabas said. “And since that time they have hired a slave, my serving-man, to accuse me of a thousand villainies. I was imprisoned, but I escaped their hands.”

“Did you break out of prison?”

“No, no. I drank a sleep-inducing potion made of poppy and cold mandrake juice, and as I slept, it seems they thought I was dead and threw me over the walls. In that way — or how else? — I the Jew am here and remain at your command.”

“It was splendidly done. But tell me, Barabas, can thou, as thou report, make Malta ours?”

“Fear not, my lord,” Barabas said, “for here against the sluice — the sliding-gate that controls the passage of sewage from the city — the rock is hollow. It was dug on purpose to make a passage for the running streams and public sewers of the city.

“Now, while you assault the walls, I'll lead five hundred soldiers through the vault and rise with them in the middle of the town, open the gates for you to enter in, and by this means the city will be your own.”

“If this is true, I'll make thee Governor.”

“And if it is not true, then let me die.”

“You have passed sentence on yourself,” Selim Calymath said. “We will carry out that sentence if what you say is not true. Carry out the assault quickly.”

The two sides fought the battle. Barabas led 500 Turks, and they and Selim Calymath took Governor Ferneze and the Knights of Malta prisoners. Now, they stood together. With them were some Pashas and some well-trained Turkish infantrymen who were known as Janizaries.

“Now humble your pride, you captive Christians,” Selim Calymath said, “and kneel for mercy to your conquering foe. Now where’s the hope you had of help from haughty Spain?”

“Ferneze, speak. Had it not been much better to have kept thy promise than to be thus taken by surprise?”

“What should I say?” Governor Ferneze said. “We are captives, and we must yield.”

Selim Calymath said, “Aye, villains, you must yield, and under Turkish yokes you shall groan and bear the burden of our anger.

“And, Barabas, as formerly we promised thee, for thy desert we make thee Governor. Treat these prisoners as you wish.”

“Thanks, my lord,” Barabas replied.

“Oh, fatal day!” Governor Ferneze said. “To fall into the hands of such a traitor and unhallowed Jew! What greater misery could heaven inflict?”

Selim Calymath said, “This is our command.”

He added, “Barabas, we give, to guard thy person, these our Janizaries. Treat them well, as we have treated thee.

“And now, brave Pashas, come. We’ll walk about the ruined town, and see the destruction we made.

“Farewell, brave Jew. Farewell, great Barabas.”

“May all good fortune follow Calymath,” Barabas said.

Selim Calymath and the Pashas exited.

Barabas said, “And now, as the first step to ensuring our safety, take the Governor and these Captains, his companions and confederates, to prison.”

“Oh, villain, heaven will be revenged on thee,” Governor Ferneze said.

“Away!” Barabas said. “No more! Let him not trouble me.”

Everyone except Barabas exited.

Alone, Barabas said to himself, “Thus have thou — me — gotten by thy cunning policy no humble position, no small authority. I now am Governor of Malta, true, but Malta hates me, and, because the Maltese hate me my life’s in danger. And what good does it do thee, poor Barabas, to be the Governor, seeing that thy life shall be at their command? Leaders can be assassinated.

“No, Barabas, this must be looked into and dealt with, and since by doing wrong thou got authority, bravely keep thy authority by making use of firm and cunning policy. At least, don’t lose it without first making a profit, for he who lives in authority, and neither gets himself

friends nor fills his moneybags, lives like the ass that Aesop spoke of: The ass labors with a load of bread and wine and when the load is taken off, the ass snaps at and feeds on thistle tops. Asses, who eat thistle, labor for the advantage of their masters, who drink wine and eat bread.

“But Barabas will be more circumspect.

“Begin quickly; seize Lady Opportunity by the forelock because the back of her head is bald. Don’t let thine opportunity slip past thee, for fear that too late thou will seek for much, but cannot acquire it.”

He then called, “Within here!”

Governor Ferneze, under guard, entered the room.

“My lord?” Governor Ferneze asked.

Barabas thought, *Aye, he said, “Lord”! Thus slaves will learn.*

He said, “Now, Governor, stand to the side there.”

He ordered the guard, “Wait outside.”

The guard exited.

Barabas said to Governor Ferneze, “This is the reason that I sent for thee. Thou see thy life and Malta’s happiness are at my disposal, and Barabas at his discretion may do with both as he wishes. Now tell me, Governor, and plainly, too, what do thou think shall become of Malta’s happiness and thee?”

“This, Barabas: Since things are in thy power, I see no reason to expect anything but Malta’s ruin, nor do I hope of anything from thee but extreme cruelty,” Governor Ferneze said. “Neither do I fear death, nor will I flatter thee.”

“Governor, speak good words — don’t be so furious. My taking your life will in no way help me. You still live, and you shall live as far as I am concerned, and as for Malta’s ruin, don’t you think it would be a stupid policy for Barabas to dispossess himself of such a place? For since, as once you said, within this isle, in Malta here, I have gotten my goods and acquired my wealth, and in this city I still have had success, and now at length I am grown to be your Governor, you yourselves shall see it shall not be forgotten. For, as a friend who is not recognized except when Malta is in distress, I’ll raise up and relieve Malta, which is now without hope of help.”

“Will Barabas recapture Malta?” Governor Ferneze asked. “Will Barabas be good to Christians?”

“What will thou give me, Governor Ferneze, to procure a dissolution of the enslaving bands wherein the Turk has yoked your land and you?”

“What will you give me if I deliver to you the life of Calymath, surprise his men, and in a building outside of the city shut his soldiers until I have consumed them all with fire?”

“What will you give the man who achieves this?”

“Do but bring this to pass that which thou propose, deal truly with us as thou intimate you will, and I will send among the citizens and by my letters secretly procure great sums of money for thy recompense. Nay, more, do this, and continue still to live as the Governor of Malta.”

“Nay, do thou this, Ferneze, and be free,” Barabas said. “Governor, I set thee free. Live with me. Go walk about the city; see thy friends. Tush, send not letters to them: Go thyself, and let me see what money thou can gather.

“Here is my hand promising that I’ll set Malta free” — he held out his hand — “and thus we devise a plan: To a ceremonial feast I will invite young Selim Calymath. There thou will be present only to perform one stratagem that I’ll impart to thee, wherein no danger shall happen to thy life, and I will promise that Malta will be free forever.”

“Here is my hand,” Governor Ferneze said.

They shook hands.

He continued, “Believe me, Barabas, I will be there, and do as thou desire. When is the time you will put your plan in action?”

“Governor, right away,” Barabas said, “for Selim Calymath, when he has viewed the town, will take his leave and sail toward the great Emperor of Turkey in the center of the Ottoman Empire.”

“Then, Barabas, I will set about raising this money,” Governor Ferneze said, “and I will bring it with me to thee in the evening.”

“Do so, but fail not,” Barabas said. “Now farewell, Ferneze.”

Governor Ferneze exited.

Alone, Barabas said to himself, “And thus far briskly and successfully goes the business. Thus, loving neither side, I will live with both sides, making a profit from my cunning and trickery.

“And he from whom my greatest advantage comes shall be my friend. This is the life we Jews are accustomed to lead — and with reason, too, for Christians do the same.

“Well, now about effecting this device. First to ambush great Selim’s soldiers, and then to make provision for the feast, so that at one instant all things may be done.

“My cunning plan detests detection that can lead to prevention. To what outcome my secret purpose drives I alone know — and they shall witness it with their lives. In other words, they will know that my plot succeeded when they die.”

### — 5.3 —

Selim Calymath and some Pashas talked together.

“Thus have we viewed the city, seen the plundering of the city, and caused the ruins to be new-repaired, where with the shot of our bombards and basilisks — two types of cannon — we rent in sunder at our entry two lofty turrets that command the town.

“And now I see the situation, and how secure this conquered island stands, surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, strongly countermured — double-walled — with other petty isles and,

toward Calabria in Italy, defended by Sicily, where Syracusan Dionysius reigned, I marvel that it could be conquered thus easily.”

A messenger arrived and said, “From Barabas, Malta’s Governor, I bring a message to mighty Calymath. Hearing his sovereign was bound for sea, to sail to Turkey, to the great Ottoman — the Emperor of Turkey — he humbly would entreat your majesty to come and see his homely citadel and banquet with him before thou leave the isle.”

“To banquet with him in his citadel?” Selim Calymath said. “I am afraid, messenger, that to feast my train of soldiers within a town by war so lately pillaged will be too costly and too troublesome. Yet I would gladly visit Barabas, for Barabas has deserved well of us.”

The messenger replied, “Selim, as for that, thus says the Governor: He says that he has in his possession a pearl so big, so precious, and so lustrous that if it is valued fairly and impartially, its price will serve to entertain Selim and all his soldiers for a month. Therefore, he humbly would entreat your highness not to depart until he has feasted you.”

“I cannot feast my men inside Malta’s walls,” Selim Calymath said, “unless he places his tables in the streets.”

“Know, Selim, that there is a monastery that stands as a house outside of the town,” the messenger said. “There Barabas will serve a banquet to them, but to thee at his home, with all thy Pashas and brave followers.”

“Well, tell Governor Barabas we grant his suit,” Selim Calymath said. “We’ll feast with him this summer evening.”

“I shall tell him, my lord,” the messenger said.

The messenger exited.

“And now, bold Pashas, let us go to our tents, and consider how we may prepare ourselves best to celebrate our Governor’s great feast,” Selim Calymath said.

#### — 5.4 —

Governor Ferneze, some Knights of Malta, and Martin del Bosco talked together.

“In this, my countrymen, take my advice,” Governor Ferneze said. “Take special care that no man ventures forth until you hear a culverin discharged by the man who bears the linstock, kindled thus.”

A culverin is a long-barreled cannon; a linstock is a staff with a forked head that holds a lighted match that is used to fire the cannon.

He continued, “Then issue out and come to rescue me, for perhaps I shall be in distress. Even if I am not in distress, you will still be freed from this Turkish servitude.”

“Rather than thus to live as Turkish slaves,” the first Knight of Malta said, “what will we not risk?”

“Onward, then,” Governor Ferneze said. “Take your positions.”

“Farewell, honored Governor,” the Knights of Malta said.



On a balcony in his home, Barabas was very busy with a hammer, as were some carpenters.

Barabas asked, “How stand the cords? How hang these hinges? Are they secure? Are all the cranes and pulleys sure?”

“All are secure,” the first carpenter said.

“Leave nothing loose; build everything according to my specifications,” Barabas said.

He looked over their work and said, “Why, now I see that you have skill indeed.”

He gave them money and said, “There, carpenters, divide that gold among yourselves. Go, swill in bowls of sack — Spanish white wine — and muscatel. Go down to the cellar; taste all of my wines.”

“We shall, my lord, and thank you,” the first carpenter said.

The carpenters left.

Alone, Barabas said after them, “And if you like them, drink your fill and die! For, as long as I continue to live, I don’t care if all the rest of the world perishes!”

He may have poisoned the wine in order to dispose of witnesses, or he may have meant for them to die whenever they would — he didn’t care.

He added, “Now, Selim Calymath, return to me word that thou will come, and I am satisfied.”

The messenger arrived.

“Now, sirrah,” Barabas said. “Will Selim Calymath come?”

“He will,” the messenger replied, “and he has commanded all his men to come ashore and march through Malta’s streets, so that thou may feast them in thy citadel.”

“Then now are all things as my wish would have them,” Barabas said. “There lacks nothing but Governor Ferneze’s money, and look, he is bringing it.”

Governor Ferneze arrived, carrying moneybags.

Barabas asked, “Now, Governor, what is the sum you have collected for me?”

Governor Ferneze replied, “With free consent, a hundred thousand pounds.”

“Pounds, say thou, Governor?” Barabas said. “Well, since it is no more, I’ll satisfy myself with that.”

A pound is worth much more than a crown.

Governor Ferneze offered Barabas the moneybags, but Barabas said, “Nay, keep it for now, for if I don’t keep my promise, don’t trust me.

“And, Governor, now learn my plot: First, as for Selim Calymath’s army, they have been sent ahead and have entered the monastery, underneath which in several places are light cannon pitched; bombards, aka large cannon; and whole barrels full of gunpowder that on the sudden

shall shatter the monastery and batter all the stones about their ears, from which none can possibly escape alive.

“Now, as for Selim Calymath and his consorts, here I have made a delightful balcony. The floor of the balcony, when this cable is cut” — he pointed to the cable, which was near Governor Ferneze — “will fall to pieces, so that what is on the floor will sink into a deep pit past recovery.”

From the balcony, Barabas tossed near Governor Ferneze a sheathed knife and said, “Here, hold that knife. And when thou see he comes and with his Pashas shall be cheerfully set down at the table, a signal-gun shall be shot off from the tower, to give thee knowledge when to cut the cord and fire off the explosives under the house. Tell me, won’t this be splendid?”

“Oh, excellent!” Governor Ferneze said. “Here, wait, Barabas.”

He again offered Barabas the moneybags, saying, “I trust thy word; take what I promised thee.”

“No, Governor,” Barabas said. “I’ll satisfy thee first. Thou shall not live in doubt of anything. Stand close by, hidden, for here they come.”

Governor Ferneze hid himself.

Barabas said to you, the readers, “Why, isn’t this a kingly kind of trade, to purchase towns by treachery, and sell them by deceit? Now tell me, worldlings, whether greater falsehood ever has been done underneath the sun?”

“Worldlings” are people who are devoted to their own self-advancement. Barabas was asking you worldlings to admire his Machiavellian cunning and deceit.

Selim Calymath and the Pashas entered the scene.

“Come, my companion Pashas,” Selim Calymath said. “Look, please, at how busy Barabas is there above to entertain us on his balcony. Let us greet him.”

He called, “May God save thee, Barabas!”

“Welcome, great Calymath,” Barabas replied.

Governor Ferneze thought, *How that slave Barabas jeers at Selim Calymath!*

“Will it please thee, mighty Selim Calymath, to ascend our plain, simple stairs?”

“Aye, Barabas,” Selim Calymath said. “Come, Pashas, ascend the stairs.”

Governor Ferneze stepped out from his hiding place and said, “Stop, Calymath! For I will show thee greater courtesy than Barabas would have afforded thee.”

A Knight of Malta, one of Governor Ferneze’s loyal followers, yelled, “Sound a trumpet charge there!”

The trumpet charge sounded, Governor Ferneze cut the cable, and Barabas fell through a trap door into a cauldron with a fire lit under it.

Some depictions of Hell show greedy sinners being boiled alive.

In addition, the signal-gun fired in the tower, and the explosives went off under the monastery. The Knights of Malta and Martin del Bosco entered the scene.

“What is this!” Selim Calymath said. “What is the meaning of this?”

“Help, help me, Christians, help,” Barabas screamed in the steaming water.

“Look, Calymath,” Governor Ferneze said. “This was devised for thee. Barabas wanted to boil you to death.”

“Treason, treason!” Selim Calymath said. “Pashas, flee!”

“No, Selim, do not flee,” Governor Ferneze said. “See Barabas die first, and flee then if thou can.”

“Oh, help me, Selim!” Barabas screamed. “Help me, Christians! Governor, why do you all stand so pitiless?”

“Should I in pity of thy lamentations or thee, accursed Barabas, base Jew, relent?” Governor Ferneze said. “No, I’ll see thy treachery thus repaid, but I wish thou had behaved otherwise.”

“You will not help me, then?” Barabas asked.

“No, villain, no,” Governor Ferneze answered.

“And, villains, know you cannot help me now,” Barabas said. “I know that I am going to die. So then, Barabas, breathe forth the last breaths that fate allows you, and in the fury of thy torments strive to end thy life with fortitude.

“Know, Governor, that it was I who slew thy son. I wrote the challenge that made them meet.

“Know, Calymath, I planned thy overthrow, and if I had only escaped this stratagem, I would have brought destruction on you all, damned Christian dogs and Turkish infidels!

“But now the extreme intensity of heat begins to torment me with intolerable pangs.”

The cauldron boiled.

Barabas screamed, “Die, life! Fly, soul! Tongue, curse thy fill, and die!”

He died.

“Tell me, you Christians, what does this mean?” Selim Calymath asked.

“This plot Barabas laid to have entrapped thy life,” Governor Ferneze said. “Now, Selim, note the unhallowed deeds of Jews. Thus he determined to have treated thee, but I have rather chosen to save thy life.”

“Was this the banquet he prepared for us?” Selim Calymath asked.

He said to the Pashas, “Let’s go away from here, lest further evil be intended.”

“Nay, Selim, stay,” Governor Ferneze said, “for, since we have thee here, we will not let thee part so suddenly. Besides, if we should let thee go, it would make no difference, for with thy galleys thou could not go away from here without different men to rig and garrison them.”

“Tush, Governor, don’t worry about that,” Selim Calymath said. “My men are all aboard, and they await my coming there at this time.”

This was a bluff.

“Why, didn’t thou hear the trumpet sound a charge?” Governor Ferneze asked.

“Yes, what of that?”

“Why, then the monastery was fired on by cannon and blown up, and all thy soldiers were massacred.”

“Oh, monstrous treason!”

“A Jew’s courtesy,” Governor Ferneze said. “For he who by treason brought about our downfall by treason has delivered thee to us. Know, therefore, that until thy father has made good the ruins done to Malta and to us, thou cannot depart. For Malta shall be freed, or Selim shall never return to his father, the Emperor of Turkey.”

“Instead, Christians, let me go to Turkey, in person there to mediate your peace,” Selim Calymath said. “To keep me here will bring no advantage to you.”

“Accept this, Selim Calymath,” Governor Ferneze said. “Here thou must stay, and live in Malta as our prisoner, for even if all the world were to come to rescue thee, so will we guard ourselves now, that sooner shall they drink the ocean dry than conquer Malta or endanger us.

“So let us march away, and let due praise be given neither to Fate nor Fortune, but to Heaven.”

## NOTA BENE

### Cast of Characters: Barabas

This is Matthew 27:15-26 (1599 Geneva Bible):

15 *Now at the feast the governor was wont to deliver unto the people a prisoner whom they would.*

16 *And they had then a notable prisoner called Barabbas.*

17 *When they were then gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whether will ye that I let loose unto you Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?*

18 *(For he knew well, that for envy they had delivered him.*

19 *Also when he was set down upon the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream by reason of him.)*

20 *But the chief Priests and the elders had persuaded the people that they should ask Barabbas, and should destroy Jesus.*

21 *Then the governor answered, and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I let loose unto you? And they said, Barabbas.*

22 *Pilate said unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all said to him, Let him be crucified.*

23 *Then said the governor, But what evil hath he done? Then they cried the more, saying, Let him be crucified.*

24 *When Pilate saw that he availed nothing, but that more tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it.*

25 *Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.*

26 *Thus let he Barabbas loose unto them, and scourged Jesus, and delivered him to be crucified.*

Mark 15:7 states, *“Then there was one named Barabbas, which was bound with his fellows, that had made insurrection, who in the insurrection had committed murder”* (1599 Geneva Bible).

Luke 23:18-19 (1599 Geneva Bible) states this:

18 *Then all the multitude cried at once, saying, Away with him, and deliver unto us Barabbas:*

19 *Which for a certain insurrection made in the city, and murder, was cast in prison.*

John 18:40 states, *“Then cried they all again, saying, Not him, but Barabbas: now this Barabbas was a murderer”* (1599 Geneva Bible).

John 18:40 states, *“Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber”* (King James Bible).

Recommended Reading: “Why was Barabbas in prison?” Biblical Hermeneutics Beta.

<<https://tinyurl.com/ydg5mxmd>>.

### The Prologue

The story about the cranes is retold from this book:

Barnstone, Willis, translator. *Greek Lyric Poetry*. New York: Schocken Books, 1967. Page 113.

Here is another story about birds revealing a murder:

*Bessus, it is said, killed his father, and escaped detection for a long time. But at length, going to supper among strangers, he shook down a swallow’s nest with his spear, and killed the young birds; and when those present asked, as was natural, what had provoked him to do so strange a thing, he said, “Do they not, even of old, bear false witness against me, and cry out that I killed my father?” Those who heard him, marvelling at what he said, told the king, and, on investigation, Bessus suffered due punishment.*

Source: *Plutarch on the Delay of the Divine Justice*. Andrew P. Peabody, translator. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1885.

The Plutarch book’s Latin title is *De Sera Numinis Vindica*. It is part of Book 7 of the 14 books of Plutarch’s *Moralia*.

— 1.2 —

*Barabas would agree with Machiavelli’s observation that “above all things [the prince] must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony.”*

The Machiavelli quotation comes from Chapter 17: “Concerning Cruelty And Clemency, And Whether It Is Better To Be Loved Than Feared” of *The Prince*. Here is the full paragraph:

*Nevertheless a prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated, which will always be as long as he abstains from the property of his citizens and subjects and from their women. But when it is necessary for him to proceed against the life of someone, he must do it on proper justification and for manifest cause, but above all things he must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. Besides, pretexts for taking away the property are never wanting; for he who has once begun to live by robbery will always find pretexts for seizing what belongs to others; but reasons for taking life, on the contrary, are more difficult to find and sooner lapse. But when a prince is with his army, and has under control a multitude of soldiers, then it is quite necessary for him to disregard the reputation of cruelty, for without it he would never hold his army united or disposed to its duties.*

Source: Machiavelli, N. *The Prince*. Translated by W. K. Marriott. 1908.

<<https://www.constitution.org/mac/prince17.htm>>

— 1.2 —

Cicero wrote “*summum ius, summa iniuria*” in *De Officiis* I.x.33. Walter Miller translated this as “*More law, less justice.*”

Walter Miller wrote this:

*Injustice often arises also through chicanery, that is, through an over-subtle and even fraudulent construction of the law. This it is that gave rise to the now familiar saw, “More law, less justice.”*

Source: An excerpt from Cicero, *De Officiis* I.x.33.

Source: M. Tullius Cicero. *De Officiis*. With An English Translation. Walter Miller, translator. Cambridge. Harvard University Press; Cambridge, Mass., London, England, 1913.

— 2.1 —

In Spanish, Barabas said this:

“*Birn para todos mi ganado no er.*”

The above are the words that appear in the original quarto; however, *birn* may be *bueno* or *bien*, and *er* may be *era* or *es*.

This could mean three sentences:

**Sentence #1:**

*Bueno para todos mi ganado no era.*

This can be translated in various ways:

1. “My flock or wealth, good for everyone else, was of no benefit to me.” — David Bevington.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. David Bevington, ed. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997. This is the Revels Student edition, which is based on the Revels Plays edition.

2. “My wealth does not avail me in every emergency.” — Spencer, from a note on p. 35 in the New Mermaids edition.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. T. W. Craik, editor. New York: Hill and Wang, 1967.

3. “It may be freely rendered ‘My flock (i.e., wealth) is not good for all.’” — H.S. Bennett.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. H.S. Bennett, editor. New York: Gordian Press, 1966.

4. “My gain was not good for everybody.” — Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Complete Plays*. Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey, editors. London: Penguin Books, 2003.

5. “My gain is not good for everybody.” — Mark Thornton Burnett.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Complete Plays*. Mark Thornton Burnett, editor. London and Vermont: Everyman, 1999.

6. “My flock (i.e. wealth), good for everyone else, is no good to me.” — David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, editors. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

**Sentence #2:**

*Bien para todos mi ganado no es.*

This can be translated in various ways:

1. “What’s good for everyone else is of no benefit to me.” — Richard W. Van Fossen.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. Richard W. Van Fossen, editor. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1964.

2. “My gain is not good for everyone.” — N. W. Bawcutt.

N. W. Bawcutt writes that this has “the implication ‘I don’t want to hand over the money I have gained to everyone’” (p. 100).

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. N. W. Bawcutt, editor. Manchester, England and Baltimore, Maryland: Manchester University Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

3. “My gain is not good for everybody — i.e. I don’t want to hand over the money I gained to everybody” — David Bevington.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. David Bevington, editor. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997. This is the Revels Student edition, which is based on the Revels Plays edition.

4. “My wealth is not good for everybody.” — Stephen J. Lynch.

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. Stephen J. Lynch, editor. Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2009.

**Sentence #3:**

*Bien, para todos mi ganado no es.*

This can be translated in this way:

“Well, my money isn’t for everybody.” — N.W. Bawcutt, who in a note gives credit to Dr. D.W. Lomax for the idea of putting a comma after “*Bien.*”

Source: Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. N. W. Bawcutt, editor. Manchester, England and Baltimore, Maryland: Manchester University Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.



*“If it were above ground, I could and would have it,” Ithamore said, “but he hides and buries it as partridges do their eggs, under the earth.”*

This mistaken idea comes from Pliny’s *Natural History*:

*Partridges fortify their retreat so well with thorns and shrubs, that it is effectually protected against beasts of prey. They make a soft bed for their eggs by burying them in the dust, but do not hatch them where they are laid: that no suspicion may arise from the fact of their being seen repeatedly about the same spot, they carry them away to some other place.*

Source: Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*. Book 10, Chapter 51. John Bostock and H.T. Riley, translators. London: H. G. Bohn, 1855.

Available online at Perseus:

<<https://tinyurl.com/y8r8vp9f>>.

— 5.2 —

*“Occasion’s bald behind.” (5.2.44) — Marlowe’s words.*

Here is some recommended reading:

“Seizing the Occasion: How an Early Modern Emblem Changed Our Luck.” Project Blog Archive. Posted by Mapping Metaphor on the 1st of November 2013. A guest post by Dr. Jennifer Craig, Wenatchee Valley College.

<<https://tinyurl.com/yblqn82x>>.

Here is an excerpt:

*When was the last time you “seized the occasion” or “grabbed the opportunity” to do what you wanted? “Seizing the occasion” brings up an image of grasping something before it passes you by, but rarely do we question exactly what we are trying to catch. The object of this metaphor is Occasio, the ancient Roman goddess of chance. In classical texts, the slippery deity is described as naked, mostly bald, and wearing a long lock of hair on the front of her head for people to catch as she rushes by, which explains the original phrase “seizing occasion by the forelock.”*

## Chapter 6: THE MASSACRE AT PARIS

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*Massacre at Paris*)

#### Male Characters

Charles IX, King of France. Born 27 June 1550. Reigned from 5 December 1560 to 30 May 1574. His mother, Catherine the Queen-Mother, wielded much power.

Duke of Anjou, his brother, later King Henry III of France. Born 19 September 1551. Reigned from 30 May 1574 to 2 August 1589. He was attacked on 1 August 1589 and died the following day. King Henry III was the last French King of the House of Valois. Before dying, King Henry III of France named the King of Navarre — aka King Henry III the Great of Navarre — as his heir.

The King of Navarre, later King Henry IV of France. He was the first French King of the House of Bourbon. (The word “House” means “Family.”) Before becoming King of France, he reigned as King of Poland from 16 May 1573 to 12 May 1575.

Minions of the Duke of Anjou:

- Duke of Joyeux.
- Mugeroun.

Duke of Epernoun, Friend to the Duke of Anjou, who became King Henry III. Attendant to Charles IX of France.

Duke of Guise. A Catholic. He helped plan the Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, which started on 24 August 1572 and then spread and lasted for over two months. He was murdered on 23 December 1588. He is Duke Henry I of Guise. In 1576, he formed the Catholic League.

Brothers to the Duke of Guise:

- Cardinal of Lorraine. He is Louis of Lorraine and is also known as Louis II, Cardinal of Guise. He was born on 6 July 1555 and murdered on 24 December 1588.
- Duke of Dumaine.

Son to the Duke of Guise.

Followers of the Duke of Guise:

- Gonzago.
- Retes.
- Mountsorrell.

King Henry III of Navarre, later King Henry IV of France. Born 13 December 1553. Reigned as King of Navarre from 9 June 1572 to 14 May 1610. Reigned as King of France from 2 August 1589 to 14 May 1610. Navarre is a Huguenot noble; he is a leader of the Huguenots.

Prince of Condé. A leader of the Huguenots.

Lord High Admiral. His name is Gaspard de Coligny, seigneur de Châtillon. Assassinated on 24 August 1572. A leader of the Huguenots.

The Admiral's servant.

Friends of King of Navarre:

- Pleshé.

- Bartus.

Cossin, Captain of the Guard.

Victims in the Massacre:

- Loreine.

- Seroune.

- Petrus Ramus. A philosopher and logician. He was also a convert to Protestantism. Killed on 26 August 1572.

Taleus, friend to Ramus.

### **Female Characters**

Catherine, Queen-Mother of France. Her name is Catherine de' Medici. Her children include Charles IX, King of France; the Duke of Anjou (later King Henry III); and Margaret, Queen of Navarre.

Joan, Old Queen of Navarre. Queen-Mother to the King of Navarre.

Margaret, Queen of Navarre, daughter to Catherine, wife to King of Navarre. Sister of Charles IX, King of France. She was a Roman Catholic. Before her marriage, she was known as Margaret of Valois.

Duchess of Guise.

Wife to Seroune.

Maid to the Duchess of Guise.

### **Minor Characters**

Apothecary.

Two Lords of Poland.

Cutpurse.

Friar.

Surgeon.

The English Agent.

Three Murderers.

Protestants, Schoolmasters, Soldiers, Attendants, and Messengers.

**NOTES:**

The massacre referred to in the title is the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, which occurred in 1572 during the French Wars of Religion. In this massacre, Catholics targeted Huguenots (French Protestants). The massacre began just before dawn on 24 August 1572 (St. Bartholomew's Day) in Paris. The violence spread from Paris and continued for over two months.

Christopher Marlowe, as did many other Elizabethan playwrights, collapses time. The events depicted after the massacre seem to take place very quickly, but they actually took place over years. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre began just before dawn on 24 August 1572, and King Henry III of Navarre became King Henry IV of France on 2 August 1589.

Joan, Old Queen of Navarre, was actually Queen-Regent of Navarre from 25 May 1555 to 9 June 1572. In history, she actually died two months before her son married Margaret of Valois, although in Marlowe's play she dies soon after the marriage. In Scene 2, when the Duke of Guise talks about poisoning the Queen of Navarre, he means Joan, not Margaret. In Marlowe's play, Joan is murdered; in history, she died of natural causes (but rumors stated that she was poisoned).

As always, we read Elizabethan history plays for drama, not history. Elizabethan playwrights, including Shakespeare, see no problems in changing history in order to serve dramatic needs.

Editors divide Marlowe's play into different numbers of scenes. This book has 25 scenes.

Probably the play as we have it is a memorial reconstruction. The original play would most likely have been much longer.

Scene 19 in this retelling combines the words of the undated octavo edition and the words of the Collier Leaf, which may be genuine and which contains additional passages. The Collier Leaf does not include the soldier's line about "if this gear hold."

Anywhere from 5,000 to 30,000 people died in France during the massacre. Some estimates are higher or lower.

**ACT 1 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

**[SCENE ONE]**

King Charles IX of France, Catherine the Queen-Mother, the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, the Lord High Admiral, and the Queen of Navarre, with others, stood outside the Notre-Dame Cathedral at Paris.

The date was 18 August 1572, and the King of Navarre, not yet nineteen years old, had just married Margaret of Valois: They were now King Henry and Queen Margaret of Navarre. The King of Navarre was a Huguenot (French Protestant), and Queen Margaret was a member of a

Roman Catholic family. Because of the marriage, King Charles IX of France and the King of Navarre were now brothers-in-law.

The marriage was arranged in part in an attempt to stop the discord between Protestants and Catholics, and the marriage ceremony was designed to satisfy both religions.

The marriage did not stop the discord between Protestants and Catholics. In a few days — just before dawn on August 24 — the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre would start.

King Charles IX of France said, "King of Navarre (who is now my honorable brother-in-law), Prince Condé, and my good Lord High Admiral, I wish this union and religious league and sacred alliance, knit in these hands of the King of Navarre and Margaret, thus joined in nuptial rites, may not dissolve until death dissolves our lives. And I wish that the natural sparks of princely love, which kindled first this desire in our hearts, may in the future be fed with fuel in our progeny."

The King of Navarre replied, "The many favors that your grace has shown from time to time, but especially in this, shall bind me forever to your highness' will in what Catherine the Queen-Mother or your grace commands."

King Charles IX of France was only twenty-two years old, and he had become King of France at the age of ten. His mother, Catherine the Queen-Mother, had wielded much power when he was an adolescent King, and she still had much influence and wielded much power.

"Thanks, son-in-law Navarre," Catherine the Queen-Mother said. "You see we love you well, we who link you in marriage with our daughter here; and, as you know, our difference in religion might be a means to cross you in your love."

The King of Navarre was a Huguenot (French Protestant), while Catherine the Queen-Mother was a Catholic.

King Charles IX of France said to his mother, "Well, madam, let that rest. And now, my lords, with the marriage rites performed, we think it is good to go and complete the rest of the ceremonies with the hearing of a holy mass. Sister, I think you will bear us company."

His sister, Margaret, now Queen of Navarre, who was also a Catholic, replied, "I will, my good lord."

"Those who will not go, my lords, may stay," King Charles IX of France said. "Come, mother, let us go to honor this solemn ceremony of marriage."

Catherine the Queen-Mother thought, *This marriage I'll dissolve with blood and cruelty.*

King Charles IX of France, Catherine the Queen-Mother, and Queen Margaret of Navarre exited to attend the mass.

The King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and the Lord High Admiral stayed. Since they were Protestants, they would not attend the mass.

They began to discuss politics, and especially the actions of the Duke of Guise, who was a Catholic and who was virulently anti-Protestant.

"Prince Condé, and my good Lord High Admiral," the King of Navarre said, "now the Duke of Guise may storm, but he will do us little hurt because we have King Charles IX of France and

Catherine the Queen-Mother on our sides. They will stop the malice of his evil-intending heart that seeks to murder all Protestants.

“You must have heard of how the Duke of Guise declared recently that if King Charles IX had given his consent, then all the Protestants who are in Paris should have been murdered the other night.”

“My lord,” the Lord High Admiral replied, “I marvel that the aspiring Duke of Guise would dare under any circumstances, without the King’s consent, to venture to attempt such dangerous things.”

“My lord, you need not marvel at the Duke of Guise,” Prince Condé said, “for what he does in murder, mischief, or in tyranny, the Pope will ratify.”

The Protestants greatly mistrusted many Catholics and Pope Gregory XIII. Prince Condé believed that the Duke of Guise had the support of the Pope, and so the Duke of Guise would be willing to attack the Protestants even without King Charles IX’s support.

The King of Navarre said, “But He Who sits and rules above the clouds hears and sees the prayers of the just, and will revenge the blood of innocents, that the Duke of Guise has slain by treason of his heart, and brought by murder to their untimely ends.”

The Lord High Admiral said to the King of Navarre, “My lord, but did you notice how the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Duke of Dumaine, both of whom are the Duke of Guise’s brothers, stormed at these your nuptial rites, because the House of Bourbon now comes in, and joins your lineage to the crown of France?”

Through his marriage, the King of Navarre now had a claim through the female line as an heir to the throne of France. Queen Margaret of Navarre was a Valois, a member of the French royal family. She was the sister of King Charles IX of France.

If the direct male line of the Kings of France were to end, it was possible for the King of Navarre, a member of the House of Bourbon, to also become King of France. If that were to happen, he would be France’s first Bourbon King.

The King of Navarre said, “And that’s the reason that Duke Guise so frowns at us, and racks his brains to find a way to catch us in his trap, which he has pitched within his deadly net.

“Come, my lords, let’s go to the church, and pray that God may still defend the right of France, and make his gospel flourish in this land.”

## ACT 2 (*Massacre at Paris*)

### [SCENE TWO]

Alone in a room in his house, the Duke of Guise said to himself, "If ever Hymen, the god of marriage, loured at marriage rites, and had his altars decked with dim and dusky lights, and if ever sun stained heaven with bloody clouds, and made it look with terror on the world, and if ever day were turned to ugly night, and the night given the semblance of the hue of hell, then this day, this hour, this fatal night, shall fully show the fury of them all."

He called, "Apothecary!"

The apothecary entered the room and asked, "My Lord?"

"Now I shall test and reward to the full the love you bear the House of Guise," the Duke of Guise replied. "Where are those perfumed gloves that I sent to be poisoned? Have you poisoned them yet? Speak! Will every act of smelling them breed a pang of death?"

In this society, gloves were expensive, and they were perfumed.

The apothecary pointed to the gloves and said, "See where they are, my good lord. Anyone who smells them dies."

"Then you remain resolute?" the Duke of Guise asked.

"I do, and I am resolute, my lord, in what your grace commands, until my death," the apothecary replied.

"Thanks, my good friend," the Duke of Guise replied. "I will requite your love and friendship. Go, then, present the poisoned gloves to the Queen of Navarre, for she is that huge blemish that is always in front of us and that foment these upstart heresies of Protestantism in France."

By the Queen of Navarre, he meant the old Queen: Joan. The Duke of Guise believed that she supported what he called Protestant heresies. The Queen-Mother Joan was Calvinist; she was a Huguenot.

The Duke of Guise continued, "Be gone, my friend, present the poisoned gloves to her immediately."

The apothecary exited.

The Duke of Guise called, "Soldier!"

A soldier entered the room and asked, "My lord?"

"Now go forth, and play your tragic part," the Duke of Guise said. "Stand in some window, opening near the street, and when you see the Lord High Admiral ride by, discharge your musket, and ensure his death. And then I'll reward you with a store of coins."

"I will, my lord," the soldier replied, and he exited.

The Duke of Guise began to talk to himself:

"Now, Guise, those deeply engendered thoughts of yours begin to burst abroad and spread on all sides those never dying flames that cannot be extinguished but by blood."

“Often I have thought and at last have learned that peril is the chiefest way to happiness, and that resolution is the best path to honor.

“What glory is there in a common good that hangs like easily plucked fruit for every peasant to achieve? I like best that which flees beyond my reach.

“Set me to scale the high pyramids, and on a pyramid set the diadem of France. I’ll either rend the pyramid with my fingernails to nothing, or mount to the top with my aspiring wings, even if my downfall would be the deepest hell.

“The crown of France is what I want.

“For this I stay awake, when others think I sleep.

“For this I wait, although I scorn to wait on anything or anyone else.

“For this, my quenchless thirst, whereon I build, has often debated and wrangled with the kindred to the King.

“For this, this head of my plots, this heart of mine imagines, and this hand and sword of mine fully executes, matters of importance aimed at by many, yet understood by none.”

In this society, the heart was considered the seat of imagination. The Duke of Guise’s heart had imagined the goal he wished to achieve. He was executing actions designed to make him King of France, although no one understood that.

The Duke of Guise continued:

“For this has heaven engendered me from earth.

“For this, this earth sustains my body’s weight, and with this weight I’ll furnish myself with a crown, or I will weary all the world with seditions.

“For this, from Spain the stately, princely, arrogant Catholics send me Indian gold to coin French crowns.

“For this I have a largess from the Pope, a pension, and a religious dispensation.”

A largess is a monetary gift. A pension is regular payments of money. The religious dispensation gave the Duke of Guise permission to perform actions forbidden by ecclesiastical law.

The Duke of Guise continued:

“And by using that privilege of religious dispensation, my political cunning has framed and shaped religion as if it were a building material; I am making religion serve political expediency.

“Religion: *O diabolè!* Oh, the devil!

“Oh, I am ashamed, however unashamed I seem, to think a word of such a simple sound should be made the foundation of so great matter — my ambitious scheme! It is religion that shall make me King of France!



“The uncontrolled pleasure of the gentle King Charles IX of France has weakened his body and will waste his realm unless I repair what he ruins.”

“As if he were a child, I daily win him with words, so that in practice he barely bears the name of his position; he is King in name only.

“I execute, and he sustains the blame.

“Catherine the Queen-Mother works wonders for my sake, and entombs and commits the welfare of France to my love, rifling the bowels of her treasury, to supply my wants and my necessity.

“Paris has in full five hundred colleges, such as monasteries, priories, abbeys, and halls, wherein are thirty thousand able men, besides a thousand sturdy student Catholics. And furthermore, of my knowledge, in one cloister dwell five hundred fat Franciscan friars and priests:

“I have all this, and more, if more may be included, to bring the will of our desires to an end. I have all of this to use to accomplish my goal of becoming King of France.

“So then, Duke of Guise, since you control so much — you have all the cards within your hands, to shuffle or cut — take this as a surest thing, that, right or wrong, you deal yourself a King.

“Yes, but Navarre, Navarre. It is only a nook of France, yet sufficient for such a petty King, a King who, with a rabblement of his Protestant heretics, blinds Europe’s eyes, and troubles our estate — the realm of France.

“The King of Navarre ... him will we” — he put his hand on his sword and then continued, “but first let’s pursue those in France who hinder our progression to the soon-to-be possession of the crown.

“As Caesar said to his soldiers, so say I, ‘Those who hate me I will learn to loathe.’

“Give me a look that, when I bend my eyebrows and frown, pale death may walk in the furrows of my face.

“Give me a hand that with a grasp may grip and lay hold of the world.

“Give me an ear to hear what my detractors say.

“Give me a royal seat, a scepter, and a crown that when people behold it, they may become like men who stand and gaze at the sun — let the sight of my crown strike them blind.

“The plot is laid, and things shall come to pass where resolution strives for victory. My resolution shall result in my victory.”

## ACT 3 (*Massacre at Paris*)

### [SCENE THREE]

The King of Navarre and Queen Margaret of Navarre were in a street with Joan (the King's Queen-Mother), the Prince of Condé, and the Lord High Admiral. They were on a street between the Louvre and the lodging of the Lord High Admiral.

The apothecary entered, carrying the poisoned gloves, and he gave them to old Queen Joan, saying, "Madam, I beg your grace to accept this simple gift."

"Thanks my good friend," old Queen Joan said. "Wait. Take this reward for yourself."

She gave him some money.

"I humbly thank your majesty," the apothecary said, and then he exited.

"I think the gloves have a very strong perfume, whose scent makes my head ache," old Queen Joan said.

Her son the King of Navarre asked, "Does your grace know the man who gave the gloves to you?"

"Not well," old Queen Joan replied, "but I do remember such a man."

"Your grace was ill advised to take the gloves, then," the Lord High Admiral said, "considering these dangerous times."

"Help, son Navarre!" old Queen Joan said. "I am poisoned!"

"May the heavens forbid your highness such misfortune!" Queen Margaret said.

The King of Navarre said, "The recent grounds we have had for suspecting the Duke of Guise might well have moved your highness to be careful how you did concern yourself with such dangerous gifts."

"It is too late, my lord, if that is true, to blame her highness," Queen Margaret said, "but I hope it is only some natural illness and not poison that makes her sick."

"Oh, no, sweet Margaret," old Queen Joan said, "the fatal poison works within my head! My brainpan breaks! My heart faints! I die!"

She died.

"My mother poisoned here before my face!" the King of Navarre said. "Oh, gracious God, what times are these? Oh, grant, sweet God, that my days may end with hers, so that I with her may die and live again in heaven!"

"Don't let this sorrowful event, my dearest lord — my soul is massacred because of your mother's death — infect your gracious breast with a fresh supply of what will aggravate our sudden misery."

"Come, my lords, let us bear her body away from here and see it honored with just solemnity," the Lord High Admiral said.

The Lord High Admiral and some others picked up old Queen Joan's body and started to carry it away. As they were leaving, from a window the soldier shot his musket at the Lord High Admiral and hit him. The soldier then fled.

The Prince of Condé asked, "Are you hurt, my Lord High Admiral?"

"Yes, my good lord," the Lord High Admiral replied. "I am shot through the arm."

"We are betrayed!" the King of Navarre said. "Come, my lords, and let us go tell King Charles IX of France about this."

"These malefactors are the cursed Guisians, who seek our death," the Lord High Admiral said. "Oh, fatal was this marriage to us all."

They carried away the body of old Queen Joan.

#### **ACT 4 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

##### **[SCENE FOUR]**

King Charles IX of France, Catherine the Queen-Mother, the Duke of Guise, the Duke of Anjou (the King's brother), and the Duke of Dumaine (the Duke of Guise's brother) met together in a room in the palace. The purpose of the meeting was to convince King Charles IX to approve of the massacre of Protestants that Catherine and the Duke of Guise were planning.

Catherine the Queen-Mother said, "My noble son, and princely Duke of Guise, now we have got the doomed, straggling deer — the Protestants — within the compass of a deadly trap, and we may perform what we recently decided to do."

King Charles IX of France replied, "Madam, it will be noted and stigmatized through the world chiefly as a bloody and tyrannical action since the Protestants justly claim their protection under safety of our word: They have the word of me the King that they will be safe."

The Protestants had come to Paris for the marriage of the King of Navarre and Margaret of Valois with the promise from King Charles IX of France that they would be safe.

King Charles IX of France continued, "Besides, my heart melts that noble men, corrupted only in religion, as well as ladies of honor, knights, and gentlemen, should, because of their religious conscience, taste such ruthless ends."

"Although gentle, noble, courteous minds should pity others' pains," the Duke of Anjou said, "yet the wisest will note their own griefs, and rather seek to scourge their enemies than be themselves base subjects to the whip."

"I think, my lord," the Duke of Guise said, "that the Duke of Anjou has well advised your highness to consider the thing and to choose to seek your country's good rather than to pity or relieve these upstart heretics."

"I hope these reasons may serve my princely son to take some care — some preventive action — for fear of enemies," Catherine the Queen-Mother said.

“Well, madam, I refer this matter to your majesty, and to my relative here, the Duke of Guise,” King Charles IX of France said. “What you decide, I will ratify and formally sanction.”

“I give thanks to my princely son,” Catherine the Queen-Mother said.

She then asked, “Tell me, Guise, what order will you set down for the massacre?”

The Duke of Guise replied, “This is the plan, madam. They who shall be actors in this massacre shall wear white crosses on their light helmets and tie white linen scarves around their arms. Whatever man lacks these, and is suspected of heresy, shall die, be he King or Emperor. Then I’ll have a peal of large cannon sound from the tower, at which all the actors in this massacre shall issue out, and be on the streets preparing to be a net to catch people. And then once the watchword is given, a bell shall ring; when they hear the bell, they shall begin to kill, and never cease until that bell shall cease. Then they shall rest for a while.”

A servant of the Lord High Admiral entered the room. He was acting as a messenger.

King Charles IX of France asked, “What is it now? What news do you bring?”

“If it please your grace, the Lord High Admiral, while riding in the streets, was traitorously shot, and he most humbly entreats your majesty to visit him, sick in his bed.”

“Messenger, tell him I will see him immediately,” King Charles IX of France said.

The messenger exited.

King Charles IX of France asked, “What shall we do now with the Lord High Admiral?”

“It’s best that your majesty go visit him, and act as if all were well,” Catherine the Queen-Mother replied.

“OK,” King Charles IX of France said. “I will go visit the Lord High Admiral.”

“And I will go make arrangements for his death,” the Duke of Guise said.

## **ACT 5 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE FIVE]**

King Charles IX of France was visiting the Lord High Admiral, who was in bed in his lodging. Some attendants were present, as was Cossin, the Captain of the Guard.

King Charles IX of France asked, “How is my Lord High Admiral? Have villains in the street hurt him? I vow and swear as King of France to find and to repay the man with death — with death delayed and torments never before used — who dared to presume, for hope of any gain, to hurt the noble man whom his sovereign loves.”

“Ah, my good lord, the malefactors are the followers of the Duke of Guise — the Guisians — who seek to massacre our guiltless lives!” the Lord High Admiral said.

“Assure yourself, my good Lord Admiral,” King Charles IX of France said, “that I deeply sorrow for the treacherous wrong done to you, and so assure yourself that I am not more safe and secure myself than I am careful that your life should be preserved.”

He then ordered, "Cossin, take twenty of our strongest guards, and under your direction see that they keep all treacherous violence away from our noble friend, repaying all attempts on our friend with immediate death upon the cursed breakers of our peace."

He then said, "And so be patient, good Lord High Admiral, and I will visit you every hour."

"I humbly thank your royal majesty," the Lord High Admiral said.

## **ACT 6 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE SIX]**

The Duke of Guise, the Duke of Anjou, the Duke of Dumaine, Gonzago, Retes, Mountsorrell, and some soldiers talked together just before the massacre, which would begin just before dawn on this day of 24 August 1572 (St. Bartholomew's Day) in Paris.

The Duke of Guise said, "Anjou, Dumaine, Gonzago, Retes, swear by the silver-white crosses on your light helmets to kill all whom you suspect of heresy. Kill all the Protestants."

"I swear by this cross to be unmerciful," the Duke of Dumaine said.

"I am disguised," the Duke of Anjou said, "and no one knows who I am, and therefore I intend to murder all I meet."

"And so will I," Gonzago said.

"And I," Retes said.

"Go, then!" the Duke of Guise said. "Break into the Lord High Admiral's house."

"Yes, let the Lord High Admiral be first killed," Retes said.

"The Lord High Admiral, chief standard bearer to the Lutherans, shall in the beginning of this massacre be murdered in his bed," the Duke of Guise said.

He ordered, "Gonzago, conduct them there, and then beset his house, so that not a man in his house may live."

"That charge of besetting the house is mine," the Duke of Anjou said.

By "charge," he meant "responsibility." Ironically, one meaning of "charge" is "responsibility for taking care of someone."

The Duke of Anjou and the people with him headed toward the Lord High Admiral's house.

The Duke of Anjou continued, "Switzers, keep in the streets, and the King's guard shall stand at each corner."

The Switzers are Swiss guards; they are mercenaries.

"Come, sirs, follow me," Gonzago said.

Gonzago and some soldiers exited.

The Duke of Anjou said, “Cossin, the Captain of the Guard that is supposed to protect the Lord High Admiral, placed there by my brother King Charles IX of France, will betray his lord.”

Cossin would definitely betray the Lord High Admiral, a leader of the French Protestants.

Arriving at the Lord High Admiral’s lodging with the Duke of Guise and others, the Duke of Anjou said, “Now, Guise, Catholics shall flourish once again. The head being off, the members cannot stand.”

“But look, my lord,” Retes said, “there’s some people in the Admiral’s house.”

He could see them through a window. Gonzago and some soldiers were already in the house. They were upstairs, where the Lord High Admiral was in bed.

“This is a lucky time to arrive!” the Duke of Anjou said. “Come, let us stay outside and keep this lane, and slay the Lord High Admiral’s servants who shall come out of the house.”

“Where is the Lord High Admiral?” Gonzago asked in the lodging.

Seeing them and realizing that they wanted to kill him, the Lord High Admiral, wounded and in bed, said, “Oh, let me pray before I die!”

“Then pray to our lady,” Gonzago said. “Kiss this cross.”

“Our lady” is Mary the Virgin Mother. The cross Gonzago meant was the one formed by the blade, hilt, and pommel of his sword.

Gonzago stabbed the Lord High Admiral, who prayed as he died, “Oh, God, forgive my sins!”

Because the Lord High Admiral was a Protestant, he prayed directly to God. As a Catholic, Gonzago had advised him to use an intermediary: Mary the Virgin Mother.

From the street outside, the Duke of Guise called, “Gonzago, is he dead?”

Gonzago went to a window and replied, “Yes, my lord.”

“Then throw his body down,” the Duke of Guise said.

Gonzago dragged the body to the window and threw it down.

“Now, kinsman, view the body well,” the Duke of Anjou advised. “It may be it is someone else, and the Lord High Admiral has escaped.”

The Duke of Guise wiped away blood from the corpse’s face and said, “Kinsman, it is he; I know him by his look. See where my soldier shot him through the arm. He nearly missed him, but we have struck him now.

“Ah, base Châtillon, you degenerate, chief standard bearer to the Lutherans, thus, in contempt of your religion, the Duke of Guise stomps on your lifeless bulk!”

He stomped on the corpse of the Lord High Admiral: Gaspard II de Coligny, seigneur de Châtillon.

“Take the body away!” the Duke of Anjou said. “Cut off his head and hands, and send them as a present to the Pope; And, when this just revenge is finished, we will drag his corpse to Mount Faucon, and he, who while living so hated the cross, shall, being dead, be hanged on a gallows-tree in chains.”

The bodies of criminals were left to rot on Mount Faucon. The Lord High Admiral’s headless corpse would be hung there by the feet.

The Duke of Guise said, “Anjou, Gonzago, Retes, if you three will be as resolute as the Duke of Dumaine and me, there shall not be a Huguenot left alive to breathe in France.”

The Duke of Anjou replied, “I swear by this cross, we’ll not be partial, but slay as many as we can come near.”

He would be impartial, and he would not be sparing of a part of the Protestants but would slay them all.

The Duke of Guise ordered, “Mountsorrell, go shoot the ordnance off so that they, who have already set their trap in the street, may know their watchword. Then toll the bell, and so let’s go forward to the massacre.”

Once the bell tolled, the general slaughter of Protestants would begin.

“I will, my lord,” Mountsorrell said, exiting.

“And now, my lords, let’s set about attentively to our business,” the Duke of Guise said.

“Anjou will follow you,” the Duke of Anjou said.

“And so will Dumaine,” the Duke of Dumaine said.

The ordnance sounded, and then the bell tolled.

“Come, then, let’s go,” the Duke of Guise said.

## **ACT 7 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE SEVEN]**

The Duke of Guise, along with all the others, had drawn his sword and was chasing the Protestants.

“*Tuez! Tuez! Tuez!*” the Duke of Guise shouted. “Kill! Kill! Kill! Let none escape! Murder the Huguenots!”

“Kill them!” the Duke of Anjou shouted. “Kill them!”

The Duke of Guise and the others pursued Loreine.

“Loreine, Loreine, pursue Loreine!” the Duke of Guise shouted. “Follow Loreine!”

The Duke of Guise was capable of black humor. “Follow Lorraine” was actually the rallying cry of the followers of the Cardinal of Lorraine, his brother.

They surrounded Loreine, and the Duke of Guise asked, “Sirrah, are you a preacher of these Protestant heresies?”

“Sirrah” is a term used to address a man of lower social status than the speaker.

“I am a preacher of the word of God,” Loreine answered, “and you are a traitor to your soul and to God.”

The Duke of Guise mocked him by saying a few words that could begin a Protestant sermon: “Dearly beloved brother.”

Then he said, “Thus it is written,” and stabbed Loreine.

The Duke of Anjou wanted to join in the mocking: “Wait, my lord, let me begin to sing the psalm.”

“Come, drag him away and throw him in a ditch,” the Duke of Guise said.

## **ACT 8 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE EIGHT]**

The Catholic Mountsorrell knocked at the Protestant Seroune’s door.

“Who is that who knocks there?” Seroune’s wife asked.

He answered, “Mountsorrell, from the Duke of Guise.”

Not knowing the danger, Seroune’s wife let him in and then called, “Husband, come down; here’s someone come from the Duke of Guise who wants to speak with you.”

She exited to give them some privacy.

As Seroune came down, he said to himself, “To speak with me, from such a man as he?”

“Yes, yes, for this, Seroune,” Mountsorrell said, showing him a dagger, “and you shall have it.”

“Oh, let me pray,” Seroune pleaded, “before I take my death!”

“Pray, then, quickly,” Mountsorrell said.

“Oh, Christ, my Savior!” Seroune began.

“You pray to Christ, villain!” Mountsorrell said. “Why, do you dare to presume to call on Christ, without the intercession of some saint? *Sanctus Jacobus*, he’s my saint; pray to him.”

*Sanctus Jacobus* is Latin for Saint James.

“Oh, let me pray to my God!” Seroune pleaded.

“Then take this with you,” Mountsorrell said, stabbing him.

“This” meant “this mortal wound.”

## **ACT 9 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE NINE]**



In his study Petrus Ramus said to himself, "What are the fearful cries that come from the river Seine and frighten poor Ramus, who is sitting and studying his book? I fear the Guisians have passed the bridge, and they mean once more to menace me."

The faction of the Duke of Guise had previously menaced Ramus, a convert to Protestantism. They had forced him to give them money.

Taleus, one of Ramus' friends, entered the study and said, "Flee, Ramus, flee, if you want to save your life!"

"Tell me, Taleus, why should I flee?" Ramus asked.

"The Guisians are close to your door, and they intend to murder us. Listen! Listen! They are coming! I'll leap out the window!"

"Dear Taleus, stay," Ramus said.

Gonzago and Retes entered the study.

"Who goes there?" Gonzago asked.

Retes said, "It is Taleus, Ramus' bedfellow."

In this society, people of the same sex often shared a bed. No sexual intimacy is implied.

"Who are you?" Gonzago asked.

"I am, as Ramus is, a Christian," Taleus said.

"Oh, let him go," Retes said. "He is a Catholic."

Gonzago said, "Come, Ramus, give us more gold, or you shall have the stab."

"But I am a scholar," Ramus said, "so how should I have gold? All that I have is only my stipend from the King, which is no sooner received than it is spent."

The Duke of Guise and the Duke of Anjou entered the study, along with the Duke of Dumaine, Mountsorrell, and some soldiers.

"Who have you there?" the Duke of Anjou asked.

"He is Ramus, the King's Professor of Logic," Retes answered.

"Stab him!" the Duke of Guise said.

"Oh, my good lord," Petrus Ramus asked, "in what has Ramus been so offensive to you?"

"Indeed, sir," the Duke of Guise replied, "in having a superficial knowledge of everything and yet never sounding anything to the depth. Wasn't it you who scoffed at the *Organon* and said it was a heap of vanities?"

The *Organon* is the name given to Aristotle's treatises on logic.

The Duke of Guise continued, "He who will be a complete and absolute dichotomist, and is expert in nothing but digests and summaries, is in your judgment thought to be a learned man."

Aristotle had criticized dichotomy, which involves dividing a whole into parts. We see dichotomy in the ancient Greek philosopher Zeno's paradox of the great warrior Achilles and a tortoise. Imagine that the two have a race, and Achilles gives the tortoise a head start. The race starts. By the time Achilles reaches the place where the tortoise started, the tortoise has moved further away. By the time Achilles reaches the place the tortoise had moved to, the tortoise will have again moved further away. And so on and so on to infinity. According to Zeno, logic says that we cannot complete an infinite series of actions, and so Achilles will never catch up to the tortoise.

Another example is Zeno's paradox that is actually called the Dichotomy Paradox. Imagine that Homer wishes to walk to the end of a path. First, he has to walk halfway there. Then he has to walk half of the distance remaining. Then he has to walk half of the distance that is still remaining. And so on and so on to infinity. According to Zeno, logic says that we cannot complete an infinite series of actions, and so Homer will never reach the end of the path.

Aristotle had also criticized another form of dichotomy, which is a form of logical classification that involves dividing a class into two subclasses. For example, students can be divided into those who study philosophy and those who don't. These subclasses can be further divided. Aristotle felt that often dichotomy doesn't work because the same thing can be placed in different classes or subclasses. For example, a biracial person can be placed in two classes of races.

Petrus Ramus had in fact severely criticized Aristotle's thought, which was greatly respected in the Middle Ages.

The Duke of Guise continued, "And the man you consider learned, indeed, must go and teach in Germany."

Ramus himself had taught at the University of Heidelberg.

The Duke of Guise continued, "The man you consider learned must take exception to doctors' axioms and actions, and must take exception to *ipse dixi* with this quiddity: *Argumentum testimonii est inartificiale*."

"*Ipse dixi*" is Latin for "I have spoken." Roughly, it means that something is true because the speaker said it. It is an assertion that is made without supporting evidence: "That's just how things are."

A quiddity is a subtlety: a little, picky point.

In this context, the meaning of "*Argumentum testimonii est inartificiale*" is basically "Argument based on the authority of the person making the argument is not of its own nature conclusive." In other words, it takes more than that authority to determine whether something is true: Even an expert can be wrong.

The Duke of Guise continued, "To contradict which, I say, Ramus shall die."

In other words, the Duke of Guise was saying this: Ramus shall die. *Ipse dixi*. It is true because I have said it. I shall prove that the statement is true by making sure that Ramus dies.

The Duke of Guise continued, "How do you answer that? Your *nego argumentum* cannot serve."

“*Nego argumentum*” is Latin for “I deny [the validity of] the argument.”

The Duke of Guise ordered, “Sirrah, kill him!”

Ramus said, “Oh, my good lord, let me but speak a word!”

“Well, speak,” the Duke of Anjou said.

“Not for my life do I desire this pause,” Ramus said, “but in my last hour I desire to clear myself of suspicion of guilt, in that I know the things that I have written, which, as I hear, one Jacob Scheckius — one of my major philosophical opponents — takes those things ill, because my places, being but three, contain all his.”

Jacob Scheckius is also known as Jakob Schegk. He was a German Aristotelian philosopher who lived from 1511 to 1587.

The word “places” comes from the Latin word “*loci*.” Sometimes “*loci*” is translated as “topics.” One of Aristotle’s six works on logic collected in the *Organon* was titled *Topics*. This work concerned topical logic and topical argumentation. In it, Aristotle developed heuristics — approaches and techniques — for developing arguments that started from positions (places, topics, places, *loci*) that had already been thought about and developed. This is useful in rhetoric.

Ramus continued, “I knew Aristotle’s *Organon* to be confused, and I reduced it into better form.”

To “reduce” something is to give it a certain form. Ramus had earlier been accused of being “expert in nothing but digests and summaries.” His excuse was that he was simply taking unclear thought and making it clear.

Ramus continued, “And I will say this for Aristotle: He who despises Aristotle can never be good in logic or philosophy. And I say that because of the blockheaded doctors and students at the Sorbonne — the faculty of theology in the University of Paris — who attribute as much to their works as to the service of the eternal God.”

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “attribute as much” means “to ascribe great importance to, to hold in high estimation.”

In 1543, Ramus had published his book *Dialectical Institutions*, which the doctors at the Sorbonne had suppressed because it criticized Aristotle.

Of course, Ramus had long been critical of Aristotle. According to his biographer Johannes Thomas Freigius, in 1536 Ramus defended in public the thesis “*quaecumque ab Aristotele dicta essent, commentitia esse.*”

Walter J. Ong, S.J., analyzed this Latin statement in his book *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (1958: 46-47) and paraphrases it in this way:

“*All the things that Aristotle has said are inconsistent because they are poorly systematized and can be called to mind only by the use of arbitrary mnemonic devices.*”

The Duke of Guise said, “Why do you allow that peasant to declaim? Stab him, I say, and send him to his friends in hell.”

“Never was there another collier’s son so full of pride,” the Duke of Anjou said.

Ramus was humbly born; his father was a charcoal-burner.

The Duke of Anjou killed Ramus.

The Duke of Guise said, “My Lord of Anjou, there are a hundred Protestants whom we have chased into the river Seine. They swim about, and so preserve their lives. What may we do? I fear that they will live.”

“Go place some men upon the bridge, with bows and arrows, to shoot at the Protestants they see, and sink them in the river as they swim,” the Duke of Dumaine said.

“That is good advice, Duke of Dumaine,” the Duke of Guise said. “Go and see to it immediately.”

The Duke of Dumaine exited.

The Duke of Guise then said, “And in the meantime, my lord, could we devise a way to get those schoolteachers away from the King of Navarre? They are tutors to him and the Prince of Condé.”

“As for that, leave it to me,” the Duke of Anjou said.

They went to the place where the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé were staying with their schoolteachers.

The Duke of Anjou said to the Duke of Guise, “Kinsman, stay here, and when you see me inside, then follow closely behind me.”

The Duke of Anjou knocked. The King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and their schoolteachers came outside.

The Duke of Anjou asked, “How are you now, my lords? How do you fare?”

“My lord, they say that all the Protestants are massacred,” the King of Navarre said.

“Yes, so they are,” the Duke of Anjou said, “but yet, what can be done? I have done what I could to bring this turmoil under control.”

His way of doing that was killing Protestants until no Protestants were left to kill.

“But yet, my lord, the report is that you were one of those who made this massacre,” the King of Navarre said.

“Who? I?” the Duke of Anjou said. “You are deceived,” he lied. “I rose out of bed just now.”

The Duke of Guise, with Gonzago, Retes, Mountsorrell, and some soldiers came forward.

The Duke of Guise ordered, “Murder the Huguenots! Take those schoolteachers away from here!”

“You traitor, Duke of Guise, lay off your bloody hands!” the King of Navarre said.

They fought, and then they broke apart.

The Prince of Condé said to the King of Navarre, “Come, let us go tell King Charles IX.”

The two men broke away and fled, but the schoolteachers were physically prevented from leaving.

The Duke of Guise said, “Come, sirs, I’ll whip you to death with my poniard’s point.”

The Duke of Guise was capable of black humor. Part of a schoolteacher’s job at the time was to whip misbehaving schoolboys. A poniard is a dagger.

He killed the two schoolteachers with his dagger.

The Duke of Anjou ordered, “Away with them both!”

He and some soldiers carrying the bodies exited.

The Duke of Guise said, “And now, sirs, for this night let our fury cease. Yet we do not wish that the massacre shall end.

“Gonzago, ride posthaste to Orleans. Retes, you ride posthaste to Dieppe. Mountsorrell, you ride posthaste to Rouen. Spare no one whom you suspect of heresy.”

They exited.

The Duke of Guise continued, “And now stop the ringing of that bell, that to the devil’s matins rings.”

“Matins” is a prayer service held in the morning. The St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre had occurred in the morning. The massacre would not stop here and now, but would spread to other cities in France. The killing of Protestants by Catholics would continue for over two months.

The Duke of Guise ordered, “Now every man put off his light helmet, and so steal covertly to his bed.”

## **ACT 10 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE TEN]**

The Duke of Anjou talked with two Lords of Poland.

“My Lords of Poland, I must necessarily confess that the offer of your Prince Electors for me to be King of Poland is far beyond the reach of my deserts. For Poland is, as I have been informed, a country of martial people, worthy of such a King as has sufficient counsel in himself to lighten doubts, and frustrate cunning foes. Such a King, whom practice long has taught to please himself with the management of the wars, the greatest wars within our Christian boundaries — I mean our wars against the Muscovites, who are led by Ivan the Terrible, and on the other side against the Turk. They are both rich princes, and mighty emperors.

“Yet, by my brother Charles IX, our King of France, and by his grace’s council, it is thought that, if I undertake to wear the crown of Poland, it may prejudice their hope of my inheritance of the crown of France once my brother dies. For, if the Almighty takes my brother away from here, by due descent the regal seat is mine.

“With Poland, therefore, I must make this covenant: If, by the death of Charles IX, the diadem of France would be cast on me, then with your permission, I may retire to my native home of France.

“If your commission serves to warrant this, I thankfully shall undertake the charge of you and yours, and carefully maintain the wealth and safety of your kingdom’s right.”

The first Polish lord said, “All this, and more, your highness shall command for Poland’s crown and kingly diadem.”

“Then, come, my lords, let’s go,” the Duke of Anjou said.

The Duke of Anjou reigned as King of Poland from 16 May 1573 to 12 May 1575.

In fact, the Duke of Anjou did succeed Charles IX as King of France, and he became known as King Henry III of France.

He reigned as King Henry III of France from 30 May 1574 to 2 August 1589.

**ACT 11 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

**[SCENE ELEVEN]**

Two soldiers who were carrying the Lord High Admiral's body were in the mood for black humor. They knew that their orders were to hang the body from a gallows-tree, but they joked about other ways to dispose of the body.

The first soldier said, "Now, sirrah, what shall we do with the Lord High Admiral?"

"Why, let us burn him for a heretic," the second soldier said.

"Oh, no, his body will infect the fire, and the fire will infect the air, and we will breathe the air and so we shall be poisoned with him."

This society believed that noxious odors could transmit disease.

"What shall we do, then?" the second soldier asked.

"Let's throw him into the river."

"Oh, it will corrupt the water, and the water will corrupt the fish, and we ourselves will be corrupted by the fish, when we eat them."

"Then let's throw him into the ditch," the first soldier said.

"No, no. To decide all doubts, take my advice: Let's hang him here upon this gallows-tree."

"Agreed."

They hung the headless body by the feet on the gallows-tree and exited.

The Duke of Guise, Catherine the Queen-Mother, and the Cardinal of Lorraine came to see the body. Some attendants accompanied them.

"Now, madam," the Duke of Guise asked, "how do you like our lusty Admiral?"

Meanings of "lusty" include "strong," "brave," and "healthy."

"Believe me, Duke of Guise, he becomes the place so well that I could have wished him there long before this," Catherine the Queen-Mother said. "But come, let's walk a little ways off because the air's not very sweet."

"No, it is not, by my faith, madam," the Duke of Guise said.

He ordered, "Sirs, take him away, and throw him in some ditch."

Some attendants carried away the Lord High Admiral's dead body.

The Duke of Guise then said, "And now, madam, I understand that there are a hundred and more Huguenots who in the woods hold their 'synagogue,' and daily meet about this time of day, and thither I will go to put them to the sword."

"Do so, sweet Guise," Catherine the Queen-Mother said. "Let us not delay, for if these stragglers regroup and gather strength again and disperse throughout the realm of France, it will be hard for us to work their deaths. Leave now; don't delay, sweet Guise."

“Madam, I go as whirlwinds rage before a storm,” the Duke of Guise replied.

He exited.

Using the royal plural, Catherine the Queen-Mother said, “My Lord Cardinal of Lorraine, have you noticed recently how Charles our son begins to lament the recent night’s work that my Lord of Guise made in Paris amongst the Huguenots? Now he regrets the massacre.”

“Madam, I have heard him solemnly vow, along with the rebellious King of Navarre, to revenge their deaths upon us all,” the Cardinal of Lorraine replied.

“Yes, but, my lord, leave that to me, for Catherine — I — must have her will in France,” she said. “As I do live, so surely shall he die, and the Duke of Anjou then shall wear the diadem as King Henry III of France.

“And, if he should grudge or cross his mother’s will, I’ll disinherit him and all the rest. For I’ll rule France, but they shall wear the crown, and, if they storm and complain, I then may pull them down and overthrow them.

“Come, my lord, let us go.”



**ACT 12 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

**[SCENE TWELVE]**

Five or six Protestants holding books knelt together in a wood to worship God.

The Duke of Guise and some other armed men crept toward them.

When they were close to the worshippers, the Duke of Guise shouted, "Down with the Huguenots! Murder them!"

The first Protestant pleaded, "Oh, Monsieur de Guise, just hear me speak!"

"No, villain," the Duke of Guise replied. "That tongue of yours that has blasphemed the holy Church of Rome shall drive no complaints and lamentations into the Guise's ears to make the justice of my heart relent."

He shouted, "*Tuez! Tuez! Tuez!* Kill! Kill! Kill! Let none escape!"

The armed men killed the Protestants.

The Duke of Guise then ordered, "Drag their bodies away."

## ACT 13 (*Massacre at Paris*)

### [SCENE THIRTEEN]

Very ill, King Charles IX of France stood with the King of Navarre and the Duke of Epernour supporting him. Catherine the Queen-Mother and the Cardinal of Lorraine walked over to them.

“Oh, let me stay, and rest me here a while,” King Charles IX of France said. “An agonizing pain has seized upon my heart, a sudden pang, the messenger of death.”

“Oh, don’t say that,” Catherine the Queen-Mother said. “You are killing your mother’s heart.”

“I must say that,” King Charles IX said. “The pain forces me to complain.”

“Comfort yourself, my lord,” the King of Navarre said, “and have no doubt that God will surely restore you to your health.”

“Oh, no, my loving brother of Navarre!” King Charles IX said. “I have deserved a scourge, I must confess. Yet there is patience of another sort than to misdo the welfare of their King. May God grant that my nearest friends may prove no worse!”

Because of guilt about the massacre, King Charles IX of France believed that he deserved a scourge from God. Humans, however, could take that responsibility on themselves by harming their King — for example, by poisoning him. The alternative, of course, was simply to be calm and patient and not harm their King — instead, wait and let God be the scourge. King Charles IX hoped that his friends would do no worse than to be calm and patient.

Charles IX said, “Oh, hold me up, my sight begins to fail, my muscles shrink, my brains turn upside down, my heart breaks. I faint and die.”

He died in their arms.

His mother, Catherine, said, “Are you dead, sweet son? Speak to your mother! Oh, no, his soul has fled from out his breast, and he neither hears nor sees us and what we do.”

She immediately turned to political business:

“My lords, what remains now to be done except that we immediately dispatch ambassadors to Poland, to call the Duke of Anjou — soon to be King Henry III of France — back again, so he can wear his brother’s crown and dignity.

“Epernour, go and see that it immediately is done, and tell him to come without delay to us.”

“Madam, I will,” the Duke of Epernour said, and then he exited.

Catherine the Queen-Mother then said, “And now, my lords, after these funeral rites are done, we will, with all the speed we can, provide arrangements for Henry’s coronation after he comes from Poland.

“Come, let us take Charles IX’s body away.”

Everyone exited except the King of Navarre and his friend Pleshé.

“And now, Pleshé, while these quarrels between the Catholics and Protestants continue, they give me a suitable opportunity to steal away from France, and hurry to my home in Navarre.

“There’s no safety in the French realm for me, and now that the Duke of Anjou is called from Poland to become King Henry III, it is my due, by just succession.

“And therefore, as speedily as I can perform, I’ll muster up an army secretly, for fear that the Duke of Guise, joined with the King of Spain, might seek to cross me in some enterprise.

“But God, Who always defends the right, will show His mercy, and preserve us still.”

The King of Navarre was thinking ahead. If King Henry III were to die, then he could become King of France. (Actually, if both King Henry III and his younger brother, the Duke of Alençon, were to die, then the King of Navarre would become King of France.) To eventually become King of France, however, the King of Navarre would have to stay alive, something that the Duke of Guise opposed. Therefore, the King of Navarre would quickly and secretly start to raise an army.

Pleshé replied, “The virtues of our true religion cannot but march with many more graces. That army shall discomfort all your foes, and in the end, that army shall crown you in Pamplona in spite of Spain and all the popish power that holds it from your highness wrongfully. Your majesty is Pamplona’s rightful lord and sovereign.”

Pamplona was the capital of Navarre, but Spain, a Catholic country, possessed and controlled Pamplona.

The King of Navarre replied, “Pleshé, that is the truth, and may God so prosper me in everything, as I intend to labor for the truth and for the true profession of His holy word.

“Come, Pleshé, let’s leave while the time for leaving is good.”

#### **ACT 14 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

#### **[SCENE FOURTEEN]**

On 13 February 1575, King Henry III of France stood, wearing a crown. Also present were Catherine the Queen-Mother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Duke of Guise, the King’s minions (the Duke of Joyeux and Mugeroun), with others, including attendants, and a cutpurse (a thief).

King Henry III had just been crowned and was now going to the palace.

Trumpets sounded, and a crowd of people all cried, “*Vive le roi!*” (“May the King live!” or “[Long] live the King!”) three times.

“Welcome home from Poland, Henry, once again,” Catherine the Queen-Mother said. “Welcome to France, your father’s royal seat. Here you have a country void of fears, a warlike people to maintain your right, a watchful and vigilant senate for ordaining laws, a loving mother to preserve your state, and all things else that a King may wish for — all this, and more, has Henry III with his crown.”

“And long may King Henry III enjoy all this, and more!” the Cardinal of Lorraine said.

The members of the crowd shouted, “*Vive le roi! Vive le roi!*”

Trumpets sounded.

“Thanks to you all,” King Henry III said. “May the Guider of all crowns — God — grant that our deeds may well deserve your loves. And so they shall, if fortune carries out my will and yields your thoughts to the height of my deserts.”

He meant that his deeds would in fact deserve the love and respect of the people if two things were to happen:

1) Lady Fortune would carry out his will to do deeds worthy of the love and respect of the people, and

2) Lady Fortune would make the thoughts of the people love and respect the King’s deeds — which would be worthy because of #1 — to the degree that they deserved.

He then said to the Duke of Joyeux and Mugeroun, “What say our minions?”

The word “minion” can mean “favorite,” but it can also mean “lover.”

King Henry III continued, “Do my minions think that Henry’s heart will not harbor both love and majesty? Put off that fear because love and majesty are already joined in my heart. No person, place, time, or circumstance shall slacken my love’s affection from its natural inclination. As you now are, so shall you still remain, persist, and continue to be irremovable from the favors of your King.”

He meant either that they would continue to be his favorites or continue to be his male lovers, or both.

Mugeroun replied, “We know that noble minds do not change their thoughts because of the wearing of a crown. We know that because your grace has worn the diadem of Poland, before you were invested in the crown of France.”

“I tell you, Mugeroun, we will be friends, and fellows, too, whatever storms arise,” King Henry III said.

For a person to be a “fellow” with a King, the two must have a very close relationship.

Mugeroun said, “Then may it please your majesty to give me permission to punish those who profane this holy feast.”

The cutpurse had been cutting off the gold buttons on Mugeroun’s cloak, and now Mugeroun cut off an ear of the cutpurse.

King Henry III asked, “What do you mean by that?”

“Oh, lord, my ear!” the cutpurse cried.

“Come, sir, give me my gold buttons back, and here’s your ear,” Mugeroun said.

Mugeroun grabbed the gold buttons and gave the cutpurse the ear.

“Sirrah, take him away,” the Duke of Guise ordered an attendant.

“Hands off, good fellow,” King Henry III said to the attendant. “I will be his bail for this offense.”

He then said to the cutpurse, “Go, sirrah, work no more until this our coronation day is past.”

The cutpurse exited.

King Henry III then said, “And now, our solemn rites of coronation done, what now remains but to feast for a while, and spend some days enjoying games of barriers, tourney, tilt, and such entertainments as are fitting for the court?”

Barriers were a martial exercise whose nature appears to have been varied, but which sometimes involved men fighting with short swords. Tourneys were tournaments and involved two groups of fighters. Tilts were combats between two men on horseback who were armed with spears or lances.

“Let’s go, my lords,” King Henry III said. “Our dinner waits for us.”

Everyone exited except Catherine the Queen-Mother and the Cardinal of Lorraine.

“My Lord Cardinal of Lorraine, tell me, how does your grace like my son’s pleasantness? His mind, you see, runs on his minions, and all his heaven is to delight himself.”

She added, “And, while he sleeps securely and overconfidently thus in ease, your brother the Duke of Guise and we may now make provisions to plant and establish ourselves with such authority as not a man may live without our permissions. Then shall the Catholic faith of Rome flourish in France, and none deny the same.”

The Cardinal of Lorraine replied, “Madam, as in secrecy I was told, my brother the Duke of Guise has gathered an army of men for the purpose, he says, of killing the Puritans, but it is the House of Bourbon that he means.”

The King of Navarre was a member of the House — the Family — of Bourbon. His father was Antoine de Bourbon: King Antoine of Navarre.

“Now, madam,” the Cardinal of Lorraine continued, “you must insinuate ideas and tell King Henry III this is for his country’s good and the common profit of religion.

“Tush, man, let me alone with him,” Catherine the Queen-Mother said, “and I will work the way to bring this thing to pass. And, if he refuses to do what I tell him to do, I’ll dispatch him and send him to his brother in Paradise immediately, and then shall Monsieur wear the diadem.”

By “Monsieur,” she meant the Duke of Alençon, King Henry III’s younger brother and the next in line to the throne of France.

She continued, “Tush, all shall die unless I have my will, for, while she lives, Catherine will be Queen.

“Come, my lord, let us go seek the Duke of Guise and then make our final decisions about this enterprise.”

## **ACT 15 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE FIFTEEN]**

The Duchess of Guise was in her private chamber with her maid.

“Go fetch me pen and ink —” the Duchess of Guise ordered.

“I will, madam,” the maid said and then exited.

“— so that I may write to my dearest lord,” the Duchess of Guise said to herself. “Sweet Mugeroun, it is he who has my heart, and the Duke of Guise usurps it because I am his wife.

“I would love to find some means to speak with Mugeroun, but I cannot, and therefore I am forced to write him in order that he may come and meet me in some place where we may each enjoy the other’s sight.”

The maid returned with ink and paper.

The Duchess of Guise ordered, “So, set it down, and leave me to myself.”

The maid placed ink and paper on the table and then exited.

As the Duchess of Guise wrote, she said to herself, “Oh, I wish to God that this quill that I write with here had lately been plucked from the fair god of love Cupid’s wing, so that it might print these lines within his heart!”

The Duke of Guise entered her private chamber.

“All alone, my love?” he said. “And writing, too? Please, tell me to whom you are writing.”

“To such a woman, my lord, who when she reads my lines, will laugh, I am afraid, at their ‘good array,’” his wife replied.

“Array” means “arrangement.” She was speaking ironically, and she meant that her letter would be laughed at because the words were improperly arranged — in other words, the letter would be laughed at because it was badly written.

“Please, let me see it,” the Duke of Guise said.

“Oh, no, my lord,” his wife said. “Only a woman must partake of the secrets of my heart.”

“But, madam, I must see your letter,” the Duke of Guise insisted.

He forcibly took it from her and read it.

Then he said, “Are these your secrets that no man must know!”

“Oh, pardon me, my lord!” his wife said.

“You disloyal, faithless, unjust, false, and perjured woman, what lines are these?” the Duke of Guise said. “Am I grown old, or is your lust grown young? Am I now too old for you?

“Or has my love been so obscured in you, that others need to comment on my text?”

Scholars of the Middle Ages often commented on obscure texts.

He continued, “Is all my love forgotten, which held you dear? Is that true, you who are dearer than the apple of my eye? Is Guise’s glory only a cloudy mist in the sight and judgment of your lustful eye?”

“*Mort dieu!* [God’s death!] I swear by the death of God that were it not for the fruit within your womb, on whose increase I set some longing hope, this wrathful hand would strike you to the heart.”

His wife was pregnant.

The Duke of Guise continued, “Hence, strumpet, hide your head for shame, and flee from my presence, if you want to live!”

His wife the Duchess exited.

Alone, the Duke of Guise said to himself, “Oh, wicked sex, perjured and unjust, now do I see that from the very first her eyes and looks sowed seeds of perjury.”

She had committed perjury because during the wedding ceremony she had vowed to be faithful to him, but her letter showed that at least in her heart she was not.

He continued, “But that villain — Mugeroun — to whom these lines were supposed to go, shall buy her love even with his dearest blood.”

## **ACT 16 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE SIXTEEN]**

The King of Navarre and his friends Pleshé and Bartus met together. The King’s train of attendants, as well as drummers and trumpeters, was present.

The King of Navarre said, “My lords, in a just and right quarrel we undertake to manage these our wars against the proud disturbers of the faith — I mean the Duke of Guise, the Pope, and the King of Spain — who set themselves to tread us under foot, and rend our true Protestant religion from this land.

“You, of course, know that our objective in fighting is no more than to ward off their strange, extreme religious inventions, which they will subject us to with sword and fire. If they are victorious, they will either kill us or force us to convert to Catholicism.

“Therefore, we must with resolute minds resolve to fight in honor of our God and our country’s good.

“Spain is the council chamber of the Pope, for Spain is the place where he makes peace and war. And the Duke of Guise in support of the King of Spain has now incensed and incited King Henry III of France to send his army to meet us in the field.”

Bartus said, “Then in this bloody brunt they may behold the sole endeavor of your princely care, which is to plant the true succession of the faith, in spite of the King of Spain and all his heresies.”

The King of Navarre said, “The power of Vengeance now encamps itself upon the haughty mountains of my breast, which plays with Vengeance’s gory colors of revenge. I regard Vengeance and her colors as metaphorical leaves of dark green that change their color to blood-red when the winter approaches — with that change of color to blood-red I shall vaunt

as victor in revenge. In other words, my metaphorical leaves have been dark-green and with the approach of this war they are changing to blood-red; I have been a man of peace, but soon I will be a man of war and vengeance.”

A messenger entered.

“What is it, sirrah?” the King of Navarre asked. “What news do you bring?”

“My lord, our scouts inform us that a mighty army is speedily coming from France. That army is already mustered in the land, and it intends to meet your highness in the field.”

“In God’s name, let them come!” the King of Navarre said. “This is the work of the Duke of Guise, who has incensed King Henry III of France to levy arms and make these civil wars. But can you tell me who is their general?”

“Not yet, my lord,” the messenger answered, “because they are waiting for their general to be appointed. But, as rumor has it, the Duke of Joyeux has mightily requested that King Henry III of England make him the army’s general.”

“His being named general will not countervail — be an equal return for — his pains, I hope,” the King of Navarre said.

In other words, the King of Navarre hoped that if the Duke of Joyeux were made general, he would fare badly on the battlefield.

The King of Navarre continued, “I wish the Duke of Guise might have come as general instead, but he hides himself within his drowsy couch, and makes his footstool out of overconfidence in his security. As long as he is safe, he doesn’t care what becomes of his King or his country; no, he doesn’t care about either of them.

“But come, my lords, let us go now with speed and place ourselves in order for the fight.”



## ACT 17 (*Massacre at Paris*)

### [SCENE SEVENTEEN]

King Henry III of France, the Duke of Guise, the Duke of Epernoun, and the Duke of Joyeux talked together.

King Henry III of France said, “My sweet Joyeux, I make you the general of all my army, which is now ready to march against the rebellious King of Navarre. You requested to be made general, and because of that I allow your leaving to lead the army, although my love for you can only with great difficulty allow it because I am always aware of the danger to your life that leading an army into battle entails.”

“I give thanks to your majesty, and so I take my leave,” the Duke of Joyeux replied.

He added, “Farewell to my lord Guise and to Epernoun.”

The Duke of Guise said, “I wish health and give a hearty farewell to my lord Joyeux.”

The Duke of Joyeux exited.

King Henry III said, “Kinsman of Guise, you and your wife both salute our lovely minions very lovingly.”

King Henry III, who was aware of the letter that the Duke of Guise’s wife had written to Mugeroun, used his forefingers to make horns on his head as he looked at the Duke of Guise. This was an insult. Cuckolds, aka men with unfaithful wives, were said to have invisible horns growing on their foreheads.

He added, “Do you remember the letter, gentle sir, that your wife wrote to my dear minion, who is her chosen friend?”

By “friend,” he meant “lover.”

“What is this, my lord!” the Duke of Guise, a very proud man, said. “Truly, by my faith, what you are saying is more than there is need for. Am I thus to be mocked at and scorned? This is more than is fitting for a King or an Emperor. And, to be sure, if all the proudest Kings in Christendom should bear me such derision, they would know how I scorned them and their mocking actions and speeches.

“I love your minions! Dote on them yourself! I know no one else who does; all others regard them as disgraceful. And here, I swear by all the saints in heaven that that villain for whom I bear this deep disgrace — even for your words that have incensed and angered me so — shall buy that strumpet’s favor with his blood, whether or not he has dishonored me.

“*Par la mort de Dieu, il mourra!* I swear by the death of God that he shall die!”

The Duke of Guise exited.

King Henry III of France said, “Believe me, this jest bites sore. It went much worse than I expected.”

“My lord, it is a good idea to make the Duke of Guise and Mugeroun friends, for the Duke of Guise’s oaths are seldom made in vain,” the Duke of Epernoun said.

Mugeroun entered the room.

“How are you now, Mugeroun?” King Henry III asked. “Didn’t you meet the Duke of Guise at the door?”

“No, my lord,” Mugeroun answered. “Why do you ask?”

“Indeed,” King Henry III said, “if you had met him at the door, you might have gotten stabbed, for he has solemnly sworn to kill you.”

“I may be stabbed, and still live until he is dead,” Mugeroun said.

His words had more than one meaning: 1) The Duke of Guise could stab him, and yet he could kill the Duke of Guise before dying, and 2) The Duke of Guise is not the man who will kill him.

In addition, the sentence can be interpreted bawdily. In this culture, the phrase “to die” can mean “to have an orgasm.” The stabbing could be a homosexual “stabbing,” aka sodomy.

“But why does he bear me such deadly hate?” Mugeroun asked.

King Henry III answered, “Because his wife bears you such kindly love.”

The word “bear” can mean to “bear Mugeroun’s weight while having sex with him.”

“If that is all, the next time that I meet her, I’ll make her shake off love with her heels,” Mugeroun said.

Heels can be held high and shook in the act of making love. He would make her repudiate her love for him and repudiate shaking her heels while with him. Or, possibly, he would make her repudiate her love for him by having rough sex with her and making her heels shake.

He then asked, “But which way has the Duke of Guise gone? I’ll go make a walk on purpose from the court to meet him.”

He exited.

King Henry III said, “I don’t like this. Come, Epernoun, let us go seek the Duke of Guise, and make him and Mugeroun friends.”

## **ACT 18 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE EIGHTEEN]**

On 20 October 1587, the Protestant army led by King Henry of Navarre won a decisive victory against the Catholic army led by the Duke of Joyeux, who was slain in the Battle of Coutras.

The King of Navarre said, “The Duke of Joyeux is slain, and all his army has been dispersed, and we are graced with wreaths of victory. Thus God, we see, always guides the right side in order to make His glory great upon the earth.”

His friend Bartus said, “I hope that the terror to the French of this happy Huguenot victory will make King Henry III of France abandon his hate, and either never manage an army any more, or else employ the army’s soldiers in some better cause.”

“How many noblemen have lost their lives in the prosecution of these cruel arms and savage war is a matter of grief and ruth, and almost death, to call to mind,” the King of Navarre said. “But we know God will always put down them who lift themselves against the perfect truth.

“I’ll maintain the perfect truth as long as my life does last, and I will join my force with Queen Elizabeth of England to beat the papal monarch from our lands and keep those Catholic relics from our country’s coasts and borders.

“Come, my lords; now that this storm is over and past, let us go away with triumph to our tents.”

## **ACT 19 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE NINETEEN]**

A soldier, holding a musket and waiting in ambush to kill Mugeroun in behalf of the Duke of Guise, talked to himself. Much of what he said had a bawdy double meaning:

“Now, sir, I turn to you who dares make a Duke a cuckold, and use a counterfeit key to enter his privy chamber. Although you take out none but your own treasure, yet you put in that which displeases him, and fill up his room that he should occupy.”

The word “occupy” had a then-current sexual meaning.

“Fill up his room” means “Fills the Duke of Guise’s wife’s vagina with semen.”

The soldier continued:

“Herein, sir, you forestall the market.”

One way to forestall the market is to buy up the goods ahead of time. It is a way to manipulate and change market prices.

The soldier continued:

“And, herein, sir, you set up your standing where you should not.”

The soldier was using the image of a merchant setting up a stall in a place that should be occupied by a different merchant's stall. With this image, the soldier is accusing Mugeroun of setting up a standing, aka an erection, in a forbidden place, aka the Duke of Guise's wife's vagina.

The soldier continued:

"But you will say you leave him room enough besides. That's no answer: He's to have the choice of his own free land — if it be not too free, there's the question.

"Now for where he is your landlord, you take upon you to be his, and will needs enter what is his by default.

"What though you were once in possession, yet coming upon you once unawares, he frayed you out again; therefore, your entry is mere intrusion. This is against the law, sir."

Apparently, the Duke of Guise had caught his wife and Mugeroun in the act of love-making, and he had then "frayed" — frightened and fought — Mugeroun and driven him out of the Duchess of Guise's vagina.

The soldier continued:

"And although I haven't come to keep possession, as I wish I might, yet I come to keep you out, sir — which I will, if this gear hold."

The soldier meant that he would keep Mugeroun out of the Duke of Guise's wife's vagina if this "gear" — this plan — works and if this "gear" — this musket — works.

Mugeroun appeared, walking nearby.

The soldier said, "What, have you come so soon? You are welcome, sir! Have at you, sir!"

"Have at you" is an exclamation indicating that the speaker is about to attack someone.

The soldier shot at Mugeroun, giving him a mortal wound.

"Traitorous Guise!" Mugeroun said, falling to the ground. "Ah, you have murdered me."

He died.

The Duke of Guise arrived and said to the soldier, "Wait, brave soldier!"

He gave the soldier some money and said, "Take this and flee."

The soldier took the money and exited.

The Duke of Guise said to Mugeroun's corpse, "Thus fall, you imperfect exhalation that our great son of France could not effect — you fiery meteor in the firmament. Lie there, King Henry III's delight and Guise's scorn!"

To the Duke of Guise, Mugeroun was like a malignant heavenly omen. He was also a favorite of King Henry III, a favorite whom the King could not protect.

The Duke of Guise wanted Mugeroun dead, something that King Henry III did not want. The King was unable to effect — accomplish — his intention of keeping Mugeroun safe.

By killing Mugeroun, the Duke of Guise was getting rid of a malignant omen. This is something that King Henry III was unable to effect, to accomplish — because the King wanted Mugeroun alive.

The Duke of Guise then said, “Revenge this death, Henry III, if you wish to or dare to. I did it only to spite you. Foolishly have you incensed the Guise’s soul that of itself was already hot enough to inflict your just digestion with the most extreme shame.

“The army I have gathered now shall aim at your end, your extirpation; and when you think I have forgotten this, and when you most have faith in my faith, then I will awaken you from your foolish dream and let you see that you yourself are my prisoner.”

The Duke of Guise carried away Mugeroun’s corpse.

## **ACT 20 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE TWENTY]**

King Henry III of France, the Duke of Epernoun, and the Duke of Guise met.

King Henry III said, “My Lord of Guise, we understand that you have gathered an army of men. What your intention is we cannot learn up to now, but we presume it is not for our good.”

“Why, I am no traitor to the crown of France,” the Duke of Guise said. “What I have done, it is for the gospel’s sake.”

“No, it is for the Pope’s sake, and for your own benefit,” the Duke of Epernoun said. “What peer in France, but you, ambitious Guise, dare to be in arms without the King’s consent? I charge you with treason in this matter.”

“Ah, base Epernoun!” the Duke of Guise said. “If his highness were not here, you would perceive that the Duke of Guise is angry.”

“Be patient, Guise, and don’t threaten Epernoun, lest you perceive that the King of France is angry,” King Henry III said.

“Why, I am a prince of the Valois’ line, and therefore I am an enemy to the Bourbonites,” the Duke of Guise said.

Actually, the Duke of Guise was a member of the House of Lorraine; the House of Valois was the royal family. He, however, was claiming to be related to King Henry III and the House of Valois because his cousin Mary Queen of Scots had married Francis II, Henry III’s older brother. King Francis II of France ruled from 10 July 1559 to 5 December 1560 and died at age sixteen.

The Duke of Guise continued, “I am a juror in and have sworn allegiance to the Holy League, and I am therefore hated by the Protestants.”

The Holy League was an organization designed to promote Catholicism; it is sometimes called the Catholic League.

He continued, “What should I do but stand upon my guard and be vigilant? And, being able, I’ll keep an army in my pay.”

“You able to maintain an army in pay!” the Duke of Epernoun said. “You who live by foreign monetary maintenance! The Pope and the King of Spain are your good friends; all France knows how poor a Duke you are if not for that.”

“Yes, those are they who feed him with their gold,” King Henry III of France said, “to countermand and oppose our will, and check and repress our friends.”

The Duke of Guise replied, “My lord, to speak more plainly, this is how it is: Being animated and inspired by religious zeal, I mean to muster all the power I can to overthrow those factious, sectarian Puritans.

“Know that before I shall lack anything the Pope will sell his triple crown, yes, and the Catholic Philip, King of Spain, will cause his Indians to rip into the golden bowels of America and send gold to support me.

“The King of Navarre, who cloaks those factious and sectarian Puritans underneath his wings, shall feel the House of Lorraine is his foe.

“Your highness needs not fear my army’s force and power. It is for your safety, and for your enemies’ ruin.”

King Henry III said sarcastically, “Guise, wear our crown, and be King of France and, as Dictator, make either war or peace, while I cry, ‘*Placet!* — It pleases me!’ — like a Senator!”

The ancient Romans would in times of crisis elect a dictator with very much power, including power that normally belonged to the Senate, to handle the crisis. Roman Senators voted “yes” by saying, “*Placet!* — It pleases me!”

King Henry III continued, “I cannot endure your haughty, arrogant insolence. Dismiss your camp of soldiers, or else by our edict you will find yourself proclaimed a traitor throughout France.”

The Duke of Guise thought, *The choice is hard; I must lie to the King.*

He said out loud, “My lord, in token of my true humility, and innocent intentions to your majesty, I kiss your grace’s hand, and take my leave, intending to speedily dislodge my camp of soldiers.”

King Henry III replied, “Then farewell, Duke of Guise. The King and you are friends.”

The Duke of Guise exited.

The Duke of Epernoun said, “But don’t trust him, my lord, for if your highness had seen with what pomp he entered Paris and how the citizens with gifts and shows entertained him, and promised to be at his command — indeed, they weren’t afraid to say in the streets that the Duke of Guise dared to stand in arms against the King — you — because you have not done what his holiness the Pope wants you to do.”

King Henry III had made some overtures of religious tolerance regarding the Protestants. The Edict of Beaulieu, which was promulgated on 6 May 1576, gave the Huguenots the right of public worship.

“Did they of Paris entertain him so?” King Henry III said. “Then he intends immediate treason to our state. Well, leave it to me.”

He summoned a servant: "Who's within there?"

An attendant entered, carrying a document, pen, and ink. The attendant was well prepared; a superior attendant knows what the master wants before the master asks for it.

King Henry III ordered, "Make a document of discharge of all my council immediately, and I'll sign my name and seal it immediately. That document will dismiss all the members of my council. My head shall be my council; they are false."

He added, "Epernoun, I will be ruled by you. I will listen to your advice and be guided by it."

The Duke of Epernoun immediately gave the King some advice:

"My lord, I think, for the safety of your royal person, it would be good if the Duke of Guise were made away with, and in such a way that your grace is free from all suspicion of causing his death. If the Duke of Guise were made away with, you will be free of all suspicion concerning him."

The attendant, who had already created the document that King Henry III wanted, handed it to him.

King Henry III said to the Duke of Epernoun, "First let us set our signature and seal to this, and then I'll tell you what I mean to do."

He wrote his signature, sealed the document, and ordered the attendant, "So, convey this to the council immediately."

The attendant exited with the document.

King Henry III of France then said, "And, Epernoun, although I seem mild and calm, think only that I am tragical within — I am willing to act in such a way as to cause death.

"I'll secretly go to the city of Blois on the Loire River, for now that Paris takes the Duke of Guise's part, here is no place for the King of France to stay, unless he intends to be betrayed and die.

"But, as I live, I swear that surely the Duke of Guise shall die."

## **ACT 21 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE TWENTY-ONE]**

With his friend Bartus present, the King of Navarre read a letter.

The King of Navarre said, "My lord, I am informed from France that the Duke of Guise has taken up arms against King Henry III of France and that Paris has revolted against the King."

"Then your grace has a fit and appropriate opportunity to show your love and respect to the King of France," Bartus said. "You can offer him aid against his enemies. This aid cannot but be thankfully received."

"Bartus, it shall be so," the King of Navarre said. "Ride posthaste, then, to France, and there salute his highness King Henry III in our name. Assure him that we will provide all the aid we

can against the Guisians and their accomplices. Bartus, leave. Commend me to his grace, and tell him that before long, I'll visit him."

"I will, my lord," Bartus said as he exited.

The King of Navarre called, "Pleshé!"

His friend Pleshé entered the room.

"Pleshé, go muster up our men with speed," the King of Navarre ordered, "and let them march away to France in full force, at full speed, and without delay, for we must aid King Henry III against the Duke of Guise. Leave, I say; it is time that we were there."

"I go, my lord," Pleshé said as he exited.

Alone, the King of Navarre said to himself, "I very much fear that the wicked Duke of Guise will be the ruin of that famous realm of France, for his aspiring, ambitious thoughts aim at the crown and he takes his vantage-ground on religion, to plant the Pope and Popelings — the Pope's followers, especially priests — in the realm, and bind it wholly to the See of Rome.

"But if God will prosper my attempts and send us safely to France, we'll beat the Duke of Guise back, and drive him to his death, that man who basely seeks the ruin of his realm."

## **ACT 22 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE TWENTY-TWO]**

King Henry III had been afraid that the Duke of Guise had much support from the King of Spain, but following the decisive defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English navy during the summer of 1588, he feared that support much less.

On 23 December 1588, Cossin, who was the Captain of the Guard, talked with three murderers in the room outside the King's private chamber.

"Come on, sirs," he said, "are you resolutely determined, you who hate the life and honor of the Duke of Guise? Won't you be afraid when you see him come?"

The first murderer replied, "Fear him, you said? Tush, if he were here, we would kill him immediately."

"Oh, I wish that his heart were beating and leaping in my hand!" the second murderer said.

"But when will he come, so that we may murder him?" the third murderer asked.

"Well, then," Cossin said, "I see that you are resolute and will kill him."

"Let us alone," the first murderer said. "Leave it to us. I promise you that you can rely on us."

"Then, sirs, take your standings — your positions — within this chamber for soon the Duke of Guise will come," Cossin said.

The word "standings" brings to mind stands from which hunters shoot game.



“You will give us our money?” the murderers asked.

“Yes, yes, don’t be worried about that,” Cossin said. “Stand concealed, so, and be resolute.”

The three murderers concealed themselves.

Cossin said, “Now falls the star — the Duke of Guise — whose influence governs France, and whose light was deadly to the Protestants. Now must he fall and perish in his height.”

King Henry III and the Duke of Epernoun arrived.

King Henry III asked Cossin, “Now, Captain of my Guard, are these murderers ready?”

“They are, my good lord,” Cossin replied.

“But are they resolute, and armed to kill, hating the life and honor of the Duke of Guise?” King Henry III asked.

“I promise you that they are, my lord,” Cossin replied.

“Then come, proud Duke of Guise, and here empty your breast, which is overburdened with an excess of ambitious thoughts,” King Henry III said. “Breathe out that life wherein my death was hidden, and end your endless treasons with your death.”

The Duke of Guise knocked at the door leading into this room, and he called, “Holla, page, hey!”

He expected a servant to open the door, which led to a room just outside the King’s private chamber, but the Duke of Epernoun opened it.

The Duke of Guise asked, “Epernoun, where is the King?”

“Gone to his royal study,” the Duke of Epernoun answered. Actually, the King was still present, but he was on the far side of the room, close to his private chamber.

“Please, tell him that the Duke of Guise is here.”

The Duke of Epernoun said to the King, whom he pretended had just entered the room, “If it please your grace, the Duke of Guise asks for access to your highness.”

“Let him come in,” King Henry III said loudly.

Then he said quietly, “Come, Guise, and see your traitorous guile outmatched. Come, and perish in the pit you made for me.”

The Duke of Guise walked over to the King and said, “Good morning to your majesty.”

Behind his back, two of the three murderers went into the room that the Duke of Guise had just vacated.

“Good morning to my loving kinsman the Duke of Guise,” King Henry III said. “How fares it this morning with your excellence?”

“I heard that your majesty was scarcely pleased that in the court I bore so great a train of attendants,” the Duke of Guise replied.

“Those who said I was displeased were to blame; and you, too, good kinsman, are to blame if you imagine that I was displeased,” King Henry III said. “It would be distressing if I would doubt my kin, or be suspicious of my dearest friends.

“Kinsman, assure yourself that I am resolute, whatever anyone whispers in my ears, not to suspect disloyalty in you, and so, sweet kinsman, farewell.”

King Henry III exited, along with the Duke of Epernoun and Cossin.

The Duke of Guise was still present, as well as one of the three hidden murderers.

“So,” the Duke of Guise said, and he paused to think.

Then he said, “Now the King sues for favor to me, the Duke of Guise, and all his minions stoop when I command. Why, this is the result of having an army in the field! Now, by the holy sacrament, I swear that as ancient Romans triumphed over their captive lords, so I will triumph over this wanton, lascivious King Henry III, and he shall follow my proud chariot’s wheels.”

Victorious ancient Roman generals were given triumphal processions in which they rode in a chariot while their most important prisoners walked, bound and humiliated, behind it.

The Duke of Guise continued:

“Now that I have an army, I begin to look about and see the greatness that is in store for me, and I feel that all my former time was spent in vain because I can now do so much more. Don’t break, sword, for in you is the Duke of Guise’s hope.”

The third murderer revealed himself. He had hidden in a spot close to where the Duke of Guise stood — the two other murderers were in the next room.

The Duke of Guise said, “Villain, why do you look so ghastly? Speak.”

The third murderer, who was suffering from an attack of bad conscience, said, “Oh, pardon me, my Lord of Guise!”

“Pardon you?” the Duke of Guise said. “Why, what have you done?”

“Oh, my lord, I am one of them who is set to murder you.”

“To murder me, villain?”

“Yes, my lord: the rest have taken their standings in the next room,” the third murderer said. “Therefore, my good lord, don’t go forth.”

“Yet Caesar shall go forth,” the Duke of Guise, a very proud man, said. “Let mean imaginations and intellects and baser men fear death! But they are peasants; I am the Duke of Guise, and princes just with their looks engender and produce fear.”

The Duke of Guise moved into the next room.

“Stand close,” the first murderer said. “The Duke of Guise is coming; I know that it is him by his voice.”

The Duke of Guise said about the third murderer’s complexion, “As pale as ashes.”

Then he said, “So then it is time to look about for danger.”

The first and second murderers appeared and said, "Down with him! Down with him!"

The first and second murderers stabbed him.

The third murderer fled or cowered or joined in the murder.

"Oh, I have my death's wound," the Duke of Guise said. "Give me permission to speak."

"Then pray to God, and ask for the forgiveness of the King," the second murderer said.

"Don't bother me," the Duke of Guise said. "I never offended Him, nor will I ask forgiveness of the King. Oh, that I lack the power to save my life, and I lack immortality to be revenged. To die at the hands of peasants, what a grief is this!"

"Ah, Pope Sixtus V, be revenged upon King Henry III.

"King Philip II of Spain, I am slain because of working for you and your general, the Duke of Parma.

"Pope Sixtus V, excommunicate the wicked branch of the cursed House of Valois, and King Philip II, depose the wicked branch of the cursed House of Valois!

"*Vive la Messe!* Let the Mass live! May the Huguenots perish!"

"Thus Caesar did go forth, and thus he died."

The Duke of Guise died, and Cossin, the Captain of the Guard, entered the room and asked the murderers, "Have you finished? Then stay a while, and I'll go call King Henry III."

King Henry III of France entered the room, and Cossin said, "But look, here he comes."

Accompanying King Henry III were the Duke of Epernoun and some attendants.

Cossin said to the King, "My lord, look, the Duke of Guise has been slain."

King Henry III said, "Ah, this sweet sight is medicine to my soul. Go fetch his son so he can see his father in death."

An attendant exited.

King Henry III continued:

"Overburdened with the guilt of a thousand massacres, Monsieur of Lorraine, sink away to hell!"

By "Monsieur of Lorraine," King Henry III meant the Duke of Guise, who was a member of the House of Lorraine.

King Henry III continued:

"And, in remembrance of those bloody wars, to which you did allure me, while you were alive, and here in presence of you all, I swear, I never was King of France until this hour.

"This is the traitor who has spent my gold in making foreign wars and civil battles.

"Didn't he draw a band of English priests from the seminary at Douai to the seminary at Rheims, in order to hatch forth treason against their natural Queen: Elizabeth of England?"

“Didn’t he cause the King of Spain’s huge fleet — the Armada of 1588 — to threaten England, and to menace me?”

“Didn’t he injure Monsieur, who is now deceased?”

By “Monsieur,” he meant the Duke of Alençon, King Henry III’s younger brother. He had been the next in line to the throne of France until he died on 10 June 1584.

King Henry III continued:

“Hasn’t he made me — in order to defend the Pope — spend the treasury in civil battles between the King of Navarre and me? That treasury should have been spent to strengthen my land!

“Tush, to be short, the Duke of Guise intended to make me monk, or else to murder me, and so himself become King of France.”

By “make me monk,” King Henry III meant that the Duke of Guise wanted him to be made poor like a monk who has taken a vow of poverty, or to be sequestered in a monastery almost as if he were a prisoner, or both.

King Henry III continued:

“Let Christian princes, who shall hear of this — all the world shall know that our Duke of Guise is dead — rest satisfied with this, that here I swear that never was there any King of France so yoked — restrained as if I were a beast of burden in a yoke — as I have been.”

The Duke of Guise’s son entered the room.

The Duke of Epernoun said, “My lord, here is his son.”

King Henry III said, “Boy, look where your father lies.”

“My father slain! Who has done this deed?”

“Sirrah, it was I who slew him,” King Henry III said, “and I will slay you, too, if you prove to be such a traitor as was your father.”

The Duke of Guise’s son said, “You are the King, and you have done this bloody deed? I’ll be revenged.”

He started to draw his dagger but was forcibly stopped.

“Away to prison with him!” King Henry III said. “I’ll clip his wings before he ever passes out of my hands. Take him away!”

Some guards took the Duke of Guise’s son away.

King Henry III continued:

“But what does it matter that this traitor’s dead when the Duke of Dumaine, his brother, is alive? And what does it matter that this traitor’s dead when the young Cardinal of Lorraine, also his brother, and who has grown so proud, is alive?”

He ordered an attendant, “Go to the Governor of Orleans, and order him, in my name, to kill the Duke of Dumaine.”

He then ordered Cossin and the murderers, "Go, now, and strangle the Cardinal of Lorraine."

Cossin and the murderers exited.

King Henry III continued:

"These two — the Duke of Dumaine and the Cardinal of Lorraine — will be as dangerous as one entire Duke of Guise, especially with our old Queen-Mother's help."

Catherine the Queen-Mother entered the room.

"My lord," the Duke of Epernoun said. "Look! See, she is coming, as if she drooped to hear this news."

"So let her droop," King Henry III said. "My heart is light enough."

He then said to her, "Mother, how do you like this plot of mine? I slew the Duke of Guise because I would be King."

"King, why, so you were before," Catherine the Queen-Mother said. "Pray to God that you continue to be a King now this is done!"

"No, the Duke of Guise was King of France," Henry III said, "and he countermanded me and opposed my orders, but now I will be King, and rule myself, and I will make the Guisians who are alive stoop."

"I cannot speak for grief," Catherine the Queen-Mother said. "I wish that I had murdered you when you were born, my son! My son? You are a changeling, and not my son. I curse you, and I proclaim loudly that you are a miscreant, a traitor to God and to the realm of France!"

A changeling is an inferior fairy baby that fairies leave in exchange for a promising human baby.

"Cry out, exclaim, howl until your throat is hoarse," King Henry III said. "The Duke of Guise has been slain, and I rejoice because of it. And now I will go to arms against the Catholic League, which supported the Duke of Guise."

"Come, Epernoun, and let her grieve her heart out, if she will."

King Henry III and the Duke of Epernoun exited.

"Go away, leave me alone to meditate," Catherine the Queen-Mother ordered the attendants, who exited.

Alone, Catherine the Queen-Mother said this:

"Sweet Guise, I wish that my son the King would have died as long as you were here and still alive. To whom shall I reveal my secrets now, and who will help to build religion?"

"The Protestants will glory and insultingly exult in their victory. The wicked King of Navarre will get the crown of France. The Popedom cannot last; all goes to ruin."

"And all because of your death, my Guise! What may I do?"

"But sorrow seizes upon my toiling soul, for since the Duke of Guise is dead, I will not live."

She died not long after, on 5 January 1589.

**ACT 23 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

**[SCENE TWENTY-THREE]**

On 24 December 1588, two murderers — the third murderer was not present — seized the Cardinal of Lorraine, one of the Duke of Guise’s brothers.

“Don’t murder me,” he said. “I am a Cardinal.”

“Even if you were the Pope,” the first murderer said, “you would not escape from us.”

“Will you defile your hands with churchmen’s blood?” the Cardinal of Lorraine asked.

“Shed your blood?” the second murderer said. “Oh, lord, no, for we intend to strangle you.”

“Then there is no remedy, and I must die,” the Cardinal of Lorraine said.

“No remedy,” the first murderer agreed, “and therefore prepare yourself.”

“My brother the Duke of Dumaine still lives, and many others do, who will avenge our deaths — mine and my brother’s — upon that cursed King Henry III, upon whose heart may all the Furies seize and with their paws submerge, drench, and drown his black soul in hell!”

“Your black soul, my Lord Cardinal, you should have said,” the first murderer said.

The two murderers strangled him.

“So, pull on the cord with full force,” the first murderer said. “He is hardhearted; therefore, pull with violence.”

The Cardinal of Lorraine died, and the first murderer said, “Come, take him away.”

**ACT 24 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

**[SCENE TWENTY-FOUR]**

The Duke of Dumaine was reading a letter. Some attendants were present.

He said, “My noble brother the Duke of Guise murdered by King Henry III! Oh, what may I do to revenge your death? The King’s death by itself cannot provide satisfaction.

“Sweet Duke of Guise, our prop to lean upon, now that you are dead, here there is no support for us.

“I am your brother, and I’ll revenge your death, and root the House of Valois out of France; and beat that proud member of the House of Bourbon — the King of Navarre — back to his native home. The King of Navarre basely seeks to join with such a King — Henry III — whose murderous thoughts will be the King of Navarre’s overthrow.

“King Henry III ordered the Governor of Orleans, in his name, to make sure that I speedily should have been put to death. But that’s been prevented by precautionary measures, leaving

me free to end the life of King Henry III and the lives of all those traitors to the Church of Rome who dared to attempt to murder noble Guise.”

A Friar entered and said, “My lord, I come to bring you news that your brother the Cardinal of Lorraine, by King Henry III’s consent, was recently strangled to death.”

“My brother the Cardinal is slain, and I am still alive?” the Duke of Dumaine said. “Oh, words of power that could kill a thousand men!”

He said to his attendants, “Come, let us go and levy men. It is war that must allay this tyrant’s pride.”

The Friar said, “My lord, hear me speak. I am a Friar of the order of the Jacobins.”

He was a French member of the Dominican order. They were called Jacobins because the Church of St. Jacques (aka Saint Jacobus, aka Saint James) in Paris had been given to them. Near this church, they built their first monastery.

The Friar continued, “I for my conscience’s sake will kill the King.”

“But what moves you, more than what you have said, to do the deed?” the Duke of Dumaine asked.

“Oh, my lord,” the Friar said, “I have been a great sinner in my days, and the deed is meritorious.”

“But how will you get the opportunity to kill King Henry III?”

“Tush, my lord, let me alone for that,” the Friar said. “Leave that to me.”

“Friar, come with me,” the Duke of Dumaine said. “We will go talk more about this in a more private place.”

## **ACT 25 (*Massacre at Paris*)**

### **[SCENE TWENTY-FIVE]**

King Henry III of France, the King of Navarre, the Duke of Epernoun, Bartus, and Pleshé stood together. Some soldiers and attendants were also present.

In 1589, King Henry III of France and the King of Navarre were fighting on the same side. After the murder of the Duke of Guise, the Pope and the Sorbonne no longer recognized Henry III as the rightful King of France. Right now, King Henry III and the King of Navarre were besieging Paris.

King Henry III said, “Brother of Navarre, I sorrow much that I ever proved to be your enemy.”

Kings often called each other “brother” despite not being biologically related. Kings also called Queens “sister.”

He continued, “And I sorrow much that the sweet and princely mind you bear was ever troubled with injurious wars. I vow, as I am lawful King of France, to recompense your

reconciled love with all the honors and affections that I have always bestowed upon my dearest friends.”

“It is enough if I, the King of Navarre, may be esteemed faithful to the King of France, who may always command my service until death.”

“I give thanks to my kingly brother of Navarre,” King Henry III said. “Here then we’ll camp before the walls of Lutetia.”

*Lutetia Parisiorum* is the old Latin name of Paris.

He continued, “We will encircle this strumpet — unfaithful to her rightful King — city with our siege, until, surfeiting with our afflicting arms, she casts her hateful and hate-full stomach to the earth.”

The image was of Paris vomiting out hate after getting more than her fill of warfare.

A messenger arrived and said to King Henry III, “If it pleases your majesty, here is a friar of the order of the Jacobins, sent from the President of Paris, who craves access to your grace.”

The President of Paris is the head of the Parlement or local assembly. He is the appointed Governor of Paris.

“Let him come in,” King Henry III ordered.

The friar, carrying a letter, arrived.

“I don’t like this friar’s look,” the Duke of Epernoun said. “It would not be amiss, my lord, if he were searched.”

“Sweet Epernoun, our friars are holy men, and will not offer violence to their King, for all the wealth and treasure of the world,” King Henry III replied.

He then asked, “Friar, do you acknowledge me as your rightful King?”

He asked that because so many people in Paris were now not regarding him as their rightful King.

“Yes, my good lord, and I will die therein,” the friar replied.

The words “will die therein” were equivocal and could mean either die for the King or die opposing the King. The word “yes” was equivocal in the sense of either he was telling the truth or he was lying when he acknowledged Henry III to be his rightful King.

“Then come near, and tell me what news you bring,” King Henry III said.

The friar came near and said, “My lord, the appointed Governor of Paris greets your grace and sends his duty by these hastily written lines, humbly craving your gracious reply.”

He gave the King of France the note.

“I’ll read the lines of writing, friar, and then I’ll answer you,” King Henry III said.

“*Sancte Jacobus*, now have mercy upon me!” the friar prayed.



He stabbed King Henry III with a knife as the King was reading the letter. King Henry III fought back, got possession of the knife, and stabbed the friar.

“Oh, my lord, let him live a while!” the Duke of Epernoun said.

He wanted the friar to be tortured.

King Henry III stabbed the friar again and said, “No, let the villain die, and feel in hell just torments for his treachery.”

The friar died.

“What!” the King of Navarre said, seeing blood on King Henry III. “Is your highness hurt?”

“Yes, I am, Navarre, but not to death, I hope,” King Henry III said.

“May God shield your grace from such a sudden death!” the King of Navarre said.

He ordered an attendant, “Go call a surgeon hither straightaway.”

“What irreligious pagans’ acts be these, by such men who believe themselves to be members of the holy church?” King Henry III said. “Take away that damned villain from my sight!”

Attendants carried out the friar’s body.

“Ah, if your highness had let him live,” the Duke of Epernoun said, “we might have punished him to the full extent of his deserts.”

“Sweet Epernoun, all rebels under heaven shall learn from the example of his punishment how they should think about bearing arms against their sovereign,” King Henry III replied.

He then ordered, “Go call the English ambassador to France to come here immediately.”

An attendant exited.

King Henry III then said, “I’ll send my sister Elizabeth the Queen of England news of this, and give her warning about her treacherous foes.”

A surgeon arrived.

“Does it please your grace to let the surgeon examine your wound?” the King of Navarre asked.

Part of the examination was probing the wound to see how deep and serious it is.

“The wound, I promise you, is deep, my lord,” King Henry III said.

He added, “Probe and examine it, surgeon, and tell me what you see.”

As the surgeon probed the wound, the English ambassador arrived.

King Henry III said, “English ambassador, send your Queen word of what this detested Jacobin has done. Tell her, for all this, that I hope to live. If I do live, the papal monarch will go to wrack and ruin, and the anti-Christian kingdom will fall. These bloody hands shall tear the Pope’s triple crown, and set on fire accursed Rome about his ears. I’ll set on fire his crazed,

shaky, unsound buildings, and incense — consume with fire — the papal towers until they kiss the lowly earth.”

He then said, “Navarre, give me your hand. I here do swear to rinate that wicked church of Rome, which hatches such bloody plots and conspiracies. And here I profess eternal love to you, and to the Queen of England specially, whom God has blessed for hating papistry.”

“These words revive my thoughts, and comfort me,” the King of Navarre said. “It is comforting to see your highness in this virtuous mind.”

“Tell me, surgeon, shall I live?” King Henry III asked.

“Unfortunately, my lord, the wound is dangerous,” the surgeon replied, “for you have been stricken with a poisoned knife.”

“A poisoned knife!” Henry III said. “Shall I, the French King, die, both wounded and poisoned at the same time?”

“Oh, I wish that that damned villain were alive again, so that we might torture him with some newly invented way of causing death,” the Duke of Epernoun said.

“He died a death too good,” Bartus said. “May the devil of hell torture his wicked soul!”

“Ah, don’t curse him, since he is dead,” King Henry III said. “Oh, the fatal poison works within my breast. Tell me, surgeon, and don’t lie to me — may I live?”

“I am sorry to say, my lord,” the surgeon said, “that your highness cannot live.”

“Surgeon, why do you say that?” the King of Navarre said. “The King may live.”

“Oh, no, Navarre,” King Henry III said. “I must die, and you must be King of France!”

“Long may you live, and still be King of France,” the King of Navarre said.

The Duke of Epernoun said, “If you don’t live, I pray that I, Epernoun, may die!”

“Sweet Epernoun, your King must die,” Henry III said. “My lords, fight on the side of this valiant prince, Navarre, for he is your lawful King, and my next heir.

“Valois’ line ends in my tragedy. Now let the House of Bourbon wear the crown, and may it never end in blood, as mine has done.”

King Henry III was the last Valois King of France. Navarre, who would be crowned Henry IV, would be the first Bourbon King of France.

King Henry III continued:

“Weep not, sweet Navarre, but revenge my death.

“Ah, Epernoun, is this your love to me? Henry, your King, wipes off these childish tears, and bids you to whet your sword on Pope Sixtus V’s bones, so that it may keenly slice the Catholics.”

To sharpen his sword on Pope Sixtus V’s bones, Epernoun would have to kill him first.

Henry V continued:

“He does not love me the most who sheds the most tears; he loves me the most who makes the most lavish outpouring of his blood in the fight against the Catholics.

“Set on fire Paris, where these treacherous rebels lurk.

“I die, Navarre; come carry me to my sepulcher. Salute the Queen of England in my name, and tell her that Henry III dies her faithful friend.”

King Henry III died.

The King of Navarre, soon to be crowned King Henry IV of France, said, “Come, lords, take up the body of the King, so that we may see it honorably interred. And then I vow to so revenge his death that Rome, and all those popish prelates there, shall curse the time that ever Navarre was King of France and ruled there because of King Henry III’s fateful death.”

They marched out. The body of King Henry III lay on four men’s shoulders. A solemn march played, and as they marched out, the attendants held their pikes near the spearhead and let the shafts drag on the ground.

## Chapter 7: TAMBURLAINE, PART 1

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 1)

The Prologue.

#### **Male Characters**

Mycetes, King of Persia.

Cosroe, his brother.

Persian Lords:

- Ceneus.
- Meander.
- Menaphon.
- Ortygius.
- Theridamas.

Tamburlaine, a Scythian shepherd.

His followers:

- Techelles.
- Usumcasane (nickname: Casane).

Bajazeth, Emperor of the Turks.

Bajazeth's Tributary Kings:

- King of Algiers.
- King of Fez.
- King of Morocco.

Alcidamus, King of Arabia.

Sultan of Egypt.

Governor of Damascus.

Median Lords (Lords of the country named Media):

- Agydas.
- Magnetes.

Capolin, an Egyptian military commander.

Philemus, a messenger.

A spy.

### **Female Characters**

Zenocrate, daughter of the Sultan of Egypt.

Anippe, her maid.

Zabina, wife to Bajazeth.

Ebea, her maid.

### **Minor Characters**

Virgins of Damascus, Messengers, Pashas, Lords, Citizens, Moors, Soldiers, Attendants.

### **TERMS**

Marlowe used the word “Soldan”; this book uses the word “Sultan.”

Marlowe used the word “Argier”; this book uses the word “Algiers.”

Marlowe used the word “Bassoos,” which means Bashaws or Pashas; this book uses the word “Pashas.” A Pasha is a high-ranking Turkish official.

Marlowe uses Roman names for the gods:

- Jupiter’s (Jove’s) Greek name is Zeus.
- Juno’s Greek name is Hera.
- Minerva’s Greek name is Athena.
- Diana’s Greek name is Artemis.
- Neptune’s Greek name is Poseidon.
- Dis’ Greek name is Hades.

### ***NOTA BENE***

The real Tamburlaine was named Timur, and he was known as Timur the Lame. (Marlowe’s Tamburlaine has no physical disabilities.) He was born in Uzbekistan, although Marlowe makes him a Scythian shepherd. His dates are 9 April 1336 – 18 February 1405. In real life, Timur was a Turko-Mongol conqueror.

In Marlowe’s play, the Ottoman Turks rule Asia Minor.

In Marlowe’s play, the Egyptians rule Syria.

In Marlowe’s play, to the East of Syria is Persia.

In Marlowe’s play, the country named Media is part of the Persian Empire.

In Marlowe’s play, the Persians rule Babylon.

In Marlowe’s play, Scythia is to the north.

In the Prologue, Marlowe says that his play will not have rhyming doggerel but will instead use a higher language. In fact, his play uses heroic blank verse.

### **THE PROLOGUE (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 1)**

From jiggling veins of rhyming mother-wits,  
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,  
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,  
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine  
Threat'ning the world with high astounding terms  
And scourging Kingdoms with his conquering sword.  
View but his picture in this tragic glass,  
And then applaud his fortunes as you please.

•••

*In more modern language:*

Away from jiggling doggerel verses of rhyming uneducated mother-wits,  
And away from such tricks with which buffoons and clowns earn their pay,  
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,  
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine  
Threatening the world with high astounding language  
And scourging Kingdoms with his conquering sword.  
View but his picture in this tragic looking glass,  
And then applaud his fortunes as you please.

### **ACT 1 (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 1)**

— 1.1 —

King Mycetes of Persia and Cosroe, his brother, were meeting at the Persian court, along with the Persian lords Ceneus, Meander, Menaphon, Ortygius, Theridamas, and others.

“Brother Cosroe,” King Mycetes said, “I find myself aggrieved, yet insufficient to express the same, for it requires a great and thundering speech.”

One meaning of the word “insufficient” is “incompetent.” This is a good description of King Mycetes of Persia. He is insufficient in many areas of expertise, including the making of speeches.

King Mycetes continued, “Good brother, tell the reason for my grief to my lords. I know you have a better intelligence than I.”

Instead of talking about the grief that afflicted King Mycetes, his brother talked about the grief that afflicted Persia: Persia had a weak King.

Cosroe, his brother, said, “Unhappy Persia, that in former ages has been the seat of mighty conquerors such as Cyrus the Great, who in their prowess and their diplomacy have triumphed over Egypt in Africa and the territory of Europe, where the Sun dares scarcely appear because of freezing sleet and congealed, frozen, cold snow, is now to be ruled and governed by a man at whose day of birth Cynthia with Saturn joined — and Jupiter, the Sun, and Mercury refused to shed their influence in his fickle brain!”

Cosroe was complaining that the planets were in unfavorable astrological positions when King Mycetes was born. The planets that had the most influence on him were the Moon (Cynthia) and Saturn. The Moon changes constantly, and the astrological result is that King Mycetes has a changing, fickle temperament. Saturn’s astrological influence resulted in King Mycetes having a melancholic temperament. (A saturnine person is dull and gloomy.) Cosroe wished that other planets had influenced King Mycetes. Jupiter, the planet associated with greatness and justice, would have made him majestic and magnanimous. The Sun, the “planet” associated with wisdom, would have made him wise. (This society called the Sun and the stars planets.) Mercury, the planet associated with a mercurial temperament, would have made him witty and eloquent.

Cosroe continued, “Now Turks and Tartars shake their swords at you, King Mycetes, and at Persia, meaning to mangle all your provinces.”

By “Turks and Tartars,” Cosroe meant the Ottoman Turks and the Scythian warriors led by Tamburlaine. Both groups were threatening Persia.

The Scythians were a branch of the Tartars.

“Brother, I see your meaning well enough,” King Mycetes said, “and through your citing of astrological planets I perceive you think I am not wise enough to be a King. But I refer myself to my noblemen who know my wit, and can be witnesses.

“I might command you, Cosroe, to be slain for this.

“Meander, might I not do that?”

The Persian lord Meander replied, “Not for so small a fault, my sovereign lord.”

“I don’t mean to command his death, but yet I know I might do it,” King Mycetes said. “Yet live, Cosroe; yes, live; Mycetes wills it so.

“Meander, you, my faithful counselor, declare the cause of my mentally produced grief, which is, God knows, about that Tamburlaine, who, like a fox in midst of harvest time, preys upon my flocks of travelers within Persia, and, as I hear, intends to pull my plumes and tear down my pride.

“Therefore, it is good and fitting to be wise and mentally prepared.”

“Often have I heard your majesty complain about Tamburlaine, that fierce, rebellious Scythian thief who robs your merchants from the capital city of Persepolis as they tread by land to the Western Isles,” Meander said. “And within your territory Tamburlaine with his lawless band of soldiers daily commits barbarous, uncivilized outrages, hoping (misled by dreaming prophecies) to reign in Asia, and with barbarous arms to make himself the monarch of the East.

“But before Tamburlaine can march in Asia or display his nomadic banners and army in the Persian fields, your grace ordered Theridamas, placed in command of a thousand horse-mounted soldiers, to apprehend and bring him captive to your highness’ throne.”

King Mycetes said, “Completely true to your nature you speak, and like yourself, my lord, whom I may term a Damon because of your love.”

By calling Meander a Damon, King Mycetes was calling him a friend. Damon and Pythias were close friends. Pythias was sentenced to death by Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, but he asked to return to his home for a while in order to settle his affairs. Dionysius agreed on the condition that someone else stay as hostage to be executed in his place if Damon did not return. Pythias volunteered to be the hostage, impressing Dionysius, and Damon in fact returned after settling his affairs, further impressing Dionysius, who pardoned him.

King Mycetes continued, “Therefore it is best, if so it pleases you all, to send my thousand horse-mounted soldiers immediately to apprehend that paltry Scythian.

“How do you like this, my honorable lords? Is it not a kingly resolution?”

Cosroe said, “It cannot be otherwise than kingly because it comes from you.”

“Then hear your orders, valiant Theridamas,” King Mycetes said. “You are the chiefest captain of King Mycetes’ army, the hope of Persia, and the very legs whereon our state leans, as on a staff that holds us up and foils our neighbor foes.

“You shall be the leader of these thousand cavalry, whose foaming spite, with rage and high disdain, have sworn the death of wicked Tamburlaine.

“Go frowning forth, but come smiling home, as did Sir Paris with the Grecian dame.”

Paris, a Trojan Prince, visited King Menelaus of Sparta and ran away with his wife, Helen, and took her to Troy. She became known as Helen of Troy; the Trojan War was fought over her.

King Mycetes continued, “Return with speed; time passes swiftly away. Our life is frail, and we may die today.”

Theridamas replied, “Don’t doubt, my lord and gracious sovereign, that before the Moon renews her borrowed light and one month passes, Tamburlaine and his Tartarian gang shall either perish at our warlike hands or plead for mercy at your highness’ feet.”

“Go, valiant Theridamas,” King Mycetes said. “Your words are swords, and with your looks you conquer all your foes. I long to see you return from there, so that I may view these milk-white steeds of mine all laden with the heads of killed men, and from their knees even to their hooves below smeared with blood — that makes a dainty show.”

“Then now, my lord, I humbly take my leave,” Theridamas said.

“Theridamas, farewell ten thousand times,” King Mycetes said.



Theridamas exited.

“Ah, Menaphon,” King Mycetes said, “why do you stay thus behind when other men press forward for fame and renown? Go, Menaphon, go into Scythia, and foot by foot follow Theridamas.”

“No, please let him stay,” Cosroe said. “A greater task is suitable for Menaphon than warring with a thief. Make him Viceroy of Assyria, so that he may win the Babylonians’ hearts, which will revolt from Persian government unless they have a wiser King than you.”

King Mycetes said, “‘Unless they have a wiser King than you’? These are his words, Meander; set them down.”

He wanted the insulting words to be written down so that they would not be forgotten. At some time in the future, King Mycetes might want to severely punish Cosroe for his misdeeds and insulting words.

“And add these words to them,” Cosroe said. “All in the Persian Empire lament to see the folly of their King.”

King Mycetes said, “Well, here I swear by this my royal seat, my throne —”

“You may do well to kiss it then,” Cosroe interrupted.

Cosroe insultingly wanted King Mycetes to kiss the part of the throne that he sat on.

King Mycetes continued, “— richly decorated with silk as best beseems my rank, to be revenged for these contemptuous words. Oh, where are duty and allegiance now? Fled to the Caspian Sea or the ocean? Shall I call thee brother? No, I shall call you a foe, a monstrous birth of nature, shame to thy ancestors, who dares to presume to mock thy sovereign.”

In this culture, a man of higher rank would use words such as “thee” and “thy” to refer to a servant.

King Mycetes continued, “Meander, come with me. I am abused, Meander.”

Everyone exited except Cosroe and Menaphon.

“How are you now, my lord?” Menaphon asked. “Daunted and amazed to hear the King thus threaten like himself? The King is acting like a King.”

“Ah, Menaphon, I don’t care about his threats,” Cosroe said. “Persian noblemen and captains of the garrisons of Media have laid a plot to crown me Emperor of Asia.

“But it is this that torments the very essence of my vexed and troubled soul: To see our neighbors who were accustomed to quake and tremble at the name of the Persian monarch now sit and laugh our rule to scorn.

“And this is that which might make me burst into tears: Men from the farthest equinoctial line — the equator — have swarmed in troops into eastern India, lading their ships with gold and precious stones, and they have gotten their spoils from all our provinces. They have looted us with impunity.”

“This should persuade your highness to rejoice,” Menaphon said, “since fortune gives you opportunity to gain the title of a conqueror by curing this maimed empire. Because Africa and Europe border on your land and touch your dominions, how easily may you with a mighty army pass into Greek-inhabited western Asia Minor, as did Cyrus once, and cause the Byzantines to withdraw their forces home to defend Constantinople, lest you subdue that city, which is the pride of Christendom.”

A trumpet sounded.

“But, Menaphon, what is the meaning of this trumpet’s sound?” Cosroe asked.

“Behold, my lord, Ortygius and the rest bringing the crown to make you Emperor!” Menaphon said.

Ortygius and Ceneus entered, bearing a crown. Others were also present.

“Magnificent and mighty Prince Cosroe,” Ortygius said, we, in the name of other Persian noblemen and commoners of this mighty monarchy, present you with the imperial diadem.”

Ceneus said, “The warlike soldiers and the gentlemen who heretofore have filled Persia’s capital, Persepolis, with African commanders captured on the battlefield, whose ransom made Persia’s soldiers so rich that they marched in coats of gold, with costly jewels hanging at their ears and shining precious stones upon their lofty crests, now are living idle in the walled towns, lacking both pay and martial discipline. They are beginning, in troops, to threaten civil war and openly exclaim against King Mycetes.

“Therefore, to prevent all sudden mutinies, we will crown your highness Emperor, at which the soldiers will experience more joy than the Macedonians did at the spoil of great King Darius III and his wealthy host.”

In 333 B.C.E., Alexander the Great and his Macedonian soldiers captured Darius III’s baggage train and his family at the Battle of Issus.

“Well, since I see the imperial rule of Persia droop and languish in my brother’s government,” Cosroe said, “I willingly receive the imperial crown and vow to wear it for my country’s good, in defiance of all who shall bear malice toward my position.”

Ortygius said, “And in assurance of desired success, we here crown you Monarch of the East, Emperor of Asia and Persia, Great Lord of Media and Armenia, Duke of Africa and Albania, Mesopotamia and Parthia, East India and the recently discovered isles, Chief Lord of all the wide, vast Black Sea, and of the ever-raging Caspian lake. Long live Cosroe, mighty Emperor!”

The Persian Empire was large, but these titles exaggerated the extent of that empire.

“And may Jove never let me longer live than I may seek to repay your love, and cause the soldiers who thus honor me to triumph over many provinces,” Cosroe said. “By the use of the soldiers’ desires of discipline in arms, I doubt not shortly but to reign as sole King, and with the army of Theridamas, to where we, my lords, immediately will hasten, to stand secure against my brother’s force.”

Cosroe had been crowned Emperor, but his brother was still alive, and so there was another claimant to the throne of Persia.

Ortygius replied, “We knew, my lord, before we brought the crown, intending your investiture so near the residence of your despised brother, that the lords would not be so exasperated as to injure or suppress your worthy title. But in case they would actually rebel, ten thousand cavalry are in readiness to carry you away from here in spite of all suspected enemies.”

“I know it well, my lord,” Cosroe said, “and I thank you all.”

“Sound up the trumpets, then,” Ortygius said. “God save the King!”

— 1.2 —

In Scythia, north of the Black Sea, Tamburlaine talked with Zenocrate (the daughter of the Sultan of Egypt), Techelles and Usumcasane (Tamburlaine’s followers), Agydas and Magnetes (lords of Media and attendants to Zenocrate), and other lords. Soldiers and treasure chests were present.

Tamburlaine, a bandit with 500 armed followers, had taken Zenocrate, Agydas, and Magnetes prisoner.

Dressed as a shepherd, Tamburlaine said to Zenocrate, “Come, lady, don’t let this dismay your thoughts. The jewels and the treasure we have taken shall be safeguarded and preserved, and you will be better treated and enjoy greater splendor than if you had arrived in Syria and were even in the circle of the arms of your father, the mighty Sultan of Egypt.”

In her reply, Zenocrate referred to Tamburlaine as “thou” because he seemed to be a man of lower social status than her own.

“Ah, shepherd,” Zenocrate said, “pity my distressed plight — if, as thou seem to be, thou are so lowly a man as a shepherd — and seek not to enrich thy followers by lawless theft from a defenseless maiden, who, travelling with these Median lords to Memphis, capital of Egypt, from my uncle’s country of Media, where all my youth I have been brought up, have passed the army of the mighty Turk, carrying a safe-passage document sealed with the official seal and bearing the signature of the mighty Turk himself — the head of the Turkish Empire. This document gives us safe and unimpeded passage as we travel through the Turkish Empire as we travel to Memphis in Africa.”

The Median lord Magnetes said, “And since we have arrived in Scythia, besides rich presents from the mighty Cham, the Emperor of Tartary, we have his highness’ letters to command aid and assistance if we stand in need.”

“Cham” is a now obsolete form of “Khan,” as in Genghis Khan (c. 1162 – August 18, 1227), the first Khan of the Mongol Empire, which after his death became the largest contiguous empire in history. (The British Empire was larger, but non-contiguous.) In the late 1200s, the Mongol Empire broke up into smaller territories that engaged in power struggles, but in 1304, all of the leaders of the various territories approved a peace treaty and accepted the supremacy — at least nominally — of Yuan Emperor Temür. Tamberlaine’s dates are 9 April 1336 – 18 February 1405.

This group of travellers was well prepared. It had safe-passage documents from both the mighty Turk who headed the Turkish Empire (the Ottoman Empire) and from a mighty Cham, aka Khan — the Emperor of Tartary.

“But now you see these letters and commands are countermanded by a greater man,” Tamburlaine said, “and through my provinces you must expect to have letters of conduct from me and my mightiness, if you intend to keep your treasure safe.

“But since I love to live at liberty, as easily may you get the Sultan’s crown as any prizes out of the territory in my sphere of control. For the prizes are friends that help to nurture my power, until men and Kingdoms help to strengthen it, and the prizes must maintain my life exempt from servitude.”

Tamburlaine needed loot to pay his soldiers and repel anyone who sought to capture or kill him.

He then asked Zenocrate, “But tell me, madam, is your grace betrothed?”

“I am, my lord,” Zenocrate replied. “I use ‘my lord’ because you imply that you are a lord.”

“I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove, and yet I am a shepherd by my parentage,” Tamburlaine said. “But, lady, this fair face and heavenly hue of yours must grace the bed of him who conquers Asia and means to be a terror to the world, measuring the limits of his empire by east and west, as Phoebus Apollo does his course as he drives the Sun-chariot across the sky.”

Tamburlaine, who intended to conquer the world, removed his shepherd’s cloak and revealed the armor he was wearing underneath. He dropped the shepherd’s cloak on the ground, and said, “Lie here, you clothes that I disdain to wear! This complete set of armor and this curved sword are equipment more suitable to Tamburlaine. And madam, whatsoever you think of this outcome — your capture — and this very expensive loss you have incurred, both may make you Empress of the East.

“And these men of mine — Techelles and Usumcasane — who seem to be only simple countrymen, may have the leading of so great an army as with their weight shall make the mountains quake, even as when windy exhalations, fighting for passage, joust within the earth.”

People in this society believed that the pressure of gasses within the earth causes earthquakes.

Techelles said, “As princely lions when they rouse themselves, stretching their paws and threatening herds of beasts, so Tamburlaine looks in his armor. I think I see Kings kneeling at his feet, and he with frowning brows and fiery looks kicking their crowns from off their captive heads —”

Usumcasane said, “— and making you and me, Techelles, Kings — we who even to death will follow Tamburlaine.”

“That is nobly resolved and decided, sweet friends and followers!” Tamburlaine said. “These lords — Zenocrate’s attendants, the lords from Media — perhaps scorn our value and worthiness, and think we prattle with deranged states of mind, but since they believe us — we who in our imaginations bear empires on our spears, with dreams that are as lofty as the clouds — to be of so little worth, they shall be kept our forced followers, until with their eyes they see us as Emperors.”

“The gods, defenders of the innocent, will never cause to prosper your intended plans, that thus oppress poor friendless travelers,” Zenocrate said. “Therefore at least allow us liberty, even as you hope to be made forever famous by becoming and living in the future as Asia’s mighty Emperor.”

The Median lord Agydas said, “I hope our lady’s treasure and our own may serve for ransom for our freedom. Return to us our mules and camels, without their loads of valuables, so that we may travel to Syria, where her betrothed lord, Alcidas, the King of Arabia, awaits the arrival of her highness’ person.”

This was possibly an arranged marriage because Zenocrate had spent her earlier life in Media. Chances are, Zenocrate and Alcidas have never met.

The Median lord Magnetes added, “And wherever we repose, we will report only good things about Tamburlaine.”

“Disdains Zenocrate to live with me?” Tamburlaine said. “And disdain you, my lords, to be my followers? Do you think I value this treasure more than you do and more than I value you? Not all the gold in India’s wealthy arms shall buy the meanest soldier in my train.

“Zenocrate, who is lovelier than Juno (the love of Jove), who is brighter than the Rhodope Mountains famed for their silver mines, and who is fairer than whitest snow on Scythian hills, your person is worth more to Tamburlaine than the possession of the Persian crown, which gracious stars have promised at my birth.”

At Tamburlaine’s birth, omens forecast a notable future for him.

Tamburlaine continued, “A hundred Tartars shall attend on you, who will be mounted on steeds swifter than Pegasus, the winged horse. Your garments shall be made of Median silk, adorned with precious jewels of my own, more rich and valuable than Zenocrate’s.

“With milk-white deer you shall be drawn upon an ivory sleigh amid the frozen pools, and scale the icy mountains’ lofty tops, which with your beauty will be soon melted.

“My martial prizes, with five hundred men won on the fifty-headed Volga’s waves, all of these we shall offer to Zenocrate, and then I will offer myself to fair Zenocrate.”

The Volga River has many heads, or major tributaries; it is continental Europe’s longest river.

Techelles asked, “What now? Are you in love?”

“Techelles, women must be flattered,” Tamburlaine said, “but this is she with whom I am in love.”

One of Tamburlaine’s soldiers arrived, shouting, “News! News!”

“What is it now?” Tamburlaine asked. “What’s the matter?”

“A thousand Persian horsemen are at hand, sent from the King of Persia to overcome us all,” the soldier answered.

“What now, my lords of Egypt and Zenocrate?” Tamburlaine asked. “Must your jewels now be restored again, and I who triumphed so be overcome? What do you say, lordlings? Is not this your hope?”

“We hope that you yourself will willingly restore them,” Agydas said diplomatically.

“Such hope, such fortune, have the thousand horsemen,” Tamburlaine said.

In other words, the thousand cavalry of the King of Persia have the same hope, and the same chance of a successful outcome, as you have — none at all. Tamburlaine was confident of victory against the cavalry although his men were outnumbered and on foot.

Tamburlaine continued, “Be quiet, my lords, and sweet Zenocrate. The only way you will leave me is for me to be forced to let you go.

“They are one thousand horsemen! We are five hundred foot soldiers!”

He added sarcastically, “Odds too great for us to stand against.”

He then asked the soldier-messenger, “But are they rich? And is their armor good?”

Tamburlaine was thinking about booty.

The soldier replied, “Their plumed helmets are made out of beaten gold, their swords are enameled, and about their necks hang massive chains of gold down to the waist. In every part they are exceedingly splendidly and richly dressed.”

Tamburlaine asked, “Then shall we fight courageously with them, or would you rather I should play the orator?”

He was mockingly asking if he should attempt to make a peace treaty with them. Or perhaps he was asking if he should defeat them with words.

Techelles took “play the orator” differently, as if Tamburlaine were asking whether he should make a big dramatic speech to persuade his troops to fight valiantly. In Tamburlaine’s case, his men did not need such motivation.

“No,” Techelles said. “Cowards and fainthearted runaways look for orations when the foe is near. Our swords shall play the orators for us. They will do the talking for us.”

“Come, let us meet them at the foot of the mountain,” Usumcasane said, “and with a sudden and hot alarm drive all their horses headlong down the hill.”

The foot of the mountain is its lower part. The Scythians could drive all their enemies’ horses down the rest of the mountain.

“Come, let us march,” Techelles said.

“Wait, Techelles,” Tamburlaine said. “Ask for a parley first.”

Tamburlaine’s soldiers entered.

Tamburlaine ordered, “Open the travellers’ trunks, yet be sure to guard the treasure securely. Lay out our golden wedges — our golden ingots — to view so that their reflections may amaze and dazzle the Persians.”

His men opened the trunks and spread out the wealth so that the Persians could see and be impressed by it.

Tamburlaine continued, "We will look friendly on the Persians when they come, but if they offer quarrelsome words or violence, we'll fight, even at odds of five hundred men-at-arms to one, before we part with our possession of this treasure.

"And against the Persians' general we will lift our swords, and either slit his greedy thirsting throat, or take him prisoner, and his golden chain shall serve as his manacles until he be ransomed home."

"I hear them come," Techelles said. "Shall we encounter them in battle?"

"Keep all your positions, and don't stir a foot," Tamburlaine ordered. "I myself will bide the danger of the brunt of any attack."

He would stand in front of his soldiers.

Theridamas and other Persians arrived.

"Where is this Scythian called Tamburlaine?" Theridamas asked.

"Whom do you seek, Persian? I am Tamburlaine."

Why ask "Whom do you seek?" when Theridamas had already said he sought Tamburlaine? Tamburlaine knew that Theridamas thought that he was seeking somebody who was only a Scythian shepherd and not at all impressive.

Surprised and impressed by Tamburlaine's looks, Theridamas thought, *Tamburlaine! A Scythian shepherd so embellished with nature's pride and richest equipment of body and mind! His looks menace Heaven and dare the gods. His fiery eyes are fixed upon the earth as if he now devised some stratagem, or meant to pierce Avernus' darksome vaults in order to pull the triple-headed dog from Hell.*

In one of his famous labors, Hercules had taken Cerberus, the three-headed guard dog, out of Hades and into the Land of the Living. Avernus was a lake located at one of the entrances into Hades. The "darksome vaults" are dark, gloomy cave passages through which souls pass on the way to the Land of the Dead.

"Noble and mild this Persian seems to be, if outward appearance allows us to judge the inward man," Tamburlaine said softly to Techelles. "He is gently noble."

Techelles replied softly, "His deeply felt emotions make him compassionate. His nature is inclined to pity."

Tamburlaine said loudly so that Theridamas could hear him, "With what a majesty he rears his looks!"

He then said directly to Theridamas, "In you, you valiant man of Persia, I see the folly of your Emperor. Are you only the captain of a thousand horsemen? I see by the character engraved in your brows, and by your martial face and splendid appearance, that you deserve to have the leading of an army."

Tamburlaine was playing the orator here and flattering Theridamas in an attempt to win a victory without killing anyone.

He added, "Forsake your King and join with me, and we will triumph over all the world. I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains, and with my hand I turn Fortune's wheel about, and sooner shall the Sun fall from his sphere than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome."

The mythological three Fates determined the length of human life. Clotho spun the thread of life, Lachesis measured the thread of life, and Atropos cut the thread of life.

Lady Fortune had a wheel that she spun and that determined one's success or lack of success in life.

The Ptolemaic theory of the universe put Earth at the center. The Sun, stars, and planets were encased in concentric spheres that revolved around the Earth.

Tamburlaine continued, "Draw forth your sword, you mighty man-at-arms, intending only to scratch my charmed skin, and Jove himself will stretch his hand from Heaven to ward off the blow and shield me safe from harm."

He pointed to the golden ingots and said, "See how he rains down heaps of gold in showers, as if he meant to give my soldiers pay; and as sure and grounded evidence that I shall be the Monarch of the East, he sends this Sultan's daughter, rich and splendid, to be my Queen and majestic Empress.

"If you will stay with me, renowned man, and lead your thousand horsemen under my military management, then besides your share of this Egyptian prize, those thousand horsemen shall sweat with the martial spoil from the Kingdoms we conquer and from the cities we sack.

"We both will walk upon the lofty cliffs, and Christian merchant ships that along with Russian ships plow up huge furrows in the Caspian Sea shall lower their topsails to show respect to us as lords of all the lake.

"We both will reign as consuls of the earth, and mighty Kings shall be our senators."

Tamburlaine was referring to ancient Roman times, when Rome was led by two consuls and had a senate. In those days, Rome had a great empire.

He continued, "Jove sometimes disguised himself in a shepherd's cloak, and by those steps by which he has scaled the heavens, we may become immortal like the gods."

For Jove to become King of the gods, he had to kill his father, Saturn.

Tamburlaine continued, "Join with me now in this my lowly condition — I call it lowly because, since I am still obscure, the nations that are far away don't admire and marvel at me — and when my name and honor shall be spread as far as Boreas, god of the North Wind, claps his as-strong-as-brass wings and blows, or as far as the fair northern constellation known as Boötes sends his cheerful light, then you shall be my partner and sit with Tamburlaine in all his majesty."

The constellation Boötes is also known as the Herdsman or the Plowman or the Wagoner. The brightest star in Boötes is Arcturus, which is known as the guardian of the constellation Ursa Major, the Big Bear, because it is so close to it in the night sky. The Big Dipper is part of Ursa Major.



“Not Hermes, god of eloquence and spokesman of the gods, could use persuasive speech more movingly,” Theridamas said.

“Nor are Apollo’s oracles more true than you shall find my boasts reliable and firmly based,” Tamburlaine said.

Apollo’s oracle at Delphi in Greece was famous for oracular sayings. People from all over the ancient world consulted it. Interpreting the oracle, however, could be tricky. In 546 BCE or 547 BCE, Croesus, the King of Lydia, was thinking about attacking Persia, then ruled by Cyrus the Great. He sent an emissary to the Delphic Oracle to ask whether he should do that. The Delphic Oracle responded that if he attacked Persia, “A mighty empire will fall.” Croesus regarded the oracle as propitious, and he attacked Persia. A mighty empire did fall; unfortunately, the mighty empire that fell was his own empire.

Techelles said, “We are his friends, and if the Persian King should offer us immediate dukedoms to exalt our social standing, we would think it a loss to accept a dukedom in exchange for that which we are assured of by our friend Tamburlaine’s success.”

Usumcasane said, “And we all expect Kingdoms at the least, besides the honor in assured conquests, where Kings shall crouch and bow to our conquering swords and armies of soldiers stand amazed at us, when with their frightened tongues they shall confess that these are the men whom all the world admires.”

“What strong enchantments entice my yielding soul!” Theridamas said. “Ah, these resolute noble Scythians! But shall I prove a traitor to my King?”

Tamburlaine said, “No, but you will prove to be the trusty friend of Tamburlaine.”

Theridamas said, “Won with your words, and conquered with your looks, I yield myself, my men, and my horses to you, to be partaker of your good or ill fortune, as long as life is in Theridamas.”

And so Theridamas became a traitor to King Mycetes of Persia. Soon, Tamburlaine and Theridamas would fight against King Mycetes.

“Theridamas, my friend, take here my hand, which is as good as if I swore by Heaven and called the gods to witness my vow,” Tamburlaine said.

They shook hands.

Tamburlaine continued, “Thus shall my heart be always combined with your heart, until our bodies decompose and return to the elements, and both our souls climb up to celestial thrones.

“Techelles and Casane, welcome him.”

“Casane” is a nickname for “Usumcasane.”

Techelles said, “Welcome, renowned Persian, to us all.”

Usumcasane said, “May Theridamas long remain with us.”

“These are my friends in whom I rejoice more than does the King of Persia in his crown,” Tamburlaine said. “And by the love of Pylades and Orestes, whose statues we adore in Scythia,

I swear that you — Theridamas — and they shall never part from me before I crown you Kings in Asia.”

Pylades and Orestes were close friends who were willing to die for each other. Pylades helped Orestes murder his mother, Clytemnestra, and then shared his exile. (Some versions of the myth state that Orestes alone murdered his mother and then visited Pylades; the two men then traveled together.) They were captured while in Scythia. Their captors wanted to offer the gods a human sacrifice, and Pylades and Orestes each offered to die to save the other.

“Make much of them, gentle Theridamas,” Tamburlaine said, “and they will never leave you until the death.”

Theridamas said, “Neither you, nor them, thrice noble Tamburlaine, shall lack my heart to be with gladness pierced to do you honor and offer you security and protection. I am gladly willing to die for you.”

Tamburlaine said, “A thousand thanks, worthy Theridamas.

“And now, fair madam, and my noble lords, if you will willingly remain with me, you shall have honors as your merits deserve, or else you shall be forced to remain with me as slaves.”

“We yield to you, fortunate Tamburlaine,” Agydas said.

“As for you then, madam, I have no doubt that you will choose to remain with me,” Tamburlaine said.

“I, wretched Zenocrate, must be pleased of necessity and have no choice!” she said.

## **ACT 2 (TAMBURLAINE, Part 1)**

### **— 2.1 —**

Cosroe and the Persian lords Menaphon, Ortygius, and Ceneus talked together. Other soldiers were present. Cosroe knew that Theridamas had defected to Tamburlaine’s side. Three armies were in play now: Cosroe’s, Tamburlaine’s, and King Mycetes’. Cosroe was planning on joining forces with Tamburlaine. Cosroe planned to be the main commander, and he planned to make Tamburlaine his regent — a deputy King under him.

Cosroe said, “Thus far are we towards Theridamas and valiant Tamburlaine, the man of fame, the man who in the forehead of his fortune bears figures of renown and miracle.”

Tamburlaine was an impressive-looking man, as Theridamas had earlier acknowledged. Some men look extraordinary.

Cosroe continued, “But tell me, Menaphon, since you have seen him, what is his stature, and what is his body like?”

Menaphon answered, “He is tall of stature, and straightly fashioned, which like his desire is aspiring upwards and divine. He is so large of limbs, his joints are so strongly knit, and he has such a breadth of shoulders as might by main force bear old Atlas’ burden.”

The mythological Atlas was a Titan who held the sky up on his shoulders.

Menaphon continued, “Between his manly shoulders is placed a pearl — his head — that is worth more than all the world. In his head ingenious sovereignty of art — divine creation — fixed his piercing instruments of sight, whose fiery circles bear encompassed a Heaven of heavenly bodies in their spheres that guides his steps and actions to the throne where honor sits invested royally.”

According to Menaphon, Tamburlaine’s eyes are spheres within which is a Heaven of fortuitous astrological planets that guide his ambitious career.

Menaphon continued, “He is pale of complexion, and when he was created, he was filled with passion so that he thirsts after sovereignty and loves weapons.

“When his lofty brows frown, they presage death, and when they are smooth, they presage amity and life.

“Above his brows hangs a knot of amber hair, wrapped in curls, as the fierce Greek warrior Achilles’ hair was. On Tamburlaine’s hair the breath of Heaven delights to play, making it dance with playful majesty.”

Achilles was the greatest warrior of the Trojan War.

Menaphon continued, “Tamburlaine’s arms and fingers, long and sinewy, betoken valor and excess of strength.

“In every part Tamburlaine is proportioned like *the* man who would make the world subdued to himself.”

“Well have you portrayed in your lively description the face and body of a wondrous man,” Cosroe said. “Nature’s gifts strive with good fortune and his positive astrological stars to make him famous in accomplished worth, and his merits well show him to be the master of his fortune and the King of men. He is the man who could persuade, at such a sudden critical moment, using his valor and his life, a thousand foes sworn to be his enemy to desert their King and join his side although the thousand foes outnumbered his army.

“So then, when our armies in points of swords are joined in battle against my brother, King Mycetes, and closed within range of the killing projectile, although the path and the gate are narrow that lead to the palace of my brother’s life, proud is my brother’s fortune if we don’t pierce it.”

Cosroe was metaphorically referring to King Mycetes’ body as a besieged city and his heart as a palace. No matter how well defended the palace was, Cosroe intended to pierce it.

Cosroe continued, “And when the princely Persian diadem shall overweigh my brother’s weary, witless head and fall, like ripened fruit, with shakes of death, then in fair Persia noble Tamburlaine shall be my regent, and remain as my deputy King.”

Ortygius said, “In a happy hour we will set the crown upon your kingly head. You are the man who seeks our honor by joining with Tamburlaine, the man ordained by Heaven to further every action to the best.”

Ceneus said, “He who with shepherds and a little booty dares, in disdain of wrong and tyranny, to defend his freedom against a monarchy, what will he be able to accomplish when he is

supported by a King, is leading a troop of gentlemen and lords, and is enriched with treasure to encourage and gratify his highest thoughts?”

“And worthy Tamburlaine shall get all of that,” Cosroe said. “Our army will be forty thousand strong when Tamburlaine and brave Theridamas have met us by the river Araris. All of us will be joined together to meet the witless King Mycetes, who now is marching near to Parthia and is weakly armed with unwilling soldiers, to seek revenge on Tamburlaine and me. To Tamburlaine, sweet Menaphon, direct me immediately.”

“I will, my lord,” Menaphon said.

— 2.2 —

King Mycetes and Meander talked together. Other lords and soldiers were present.

“Come, my Meander, let us get to this business,” King Mycetes said. “I tell you truly, my heart is swollen with wrath because of this same thievish villain, Tamburlaine, and because of that false Cosroe, my traitorous brother.

“Wouldn’t it grieve a King to be so abused and have a thousand horsemen taken away? And, which is worse, to have his diadem sought for by such contemptible knaves as do not love and respect him?”

“I think it would. Well, then, by the heavens I swear, Aurora shall not peep out of her doors until after I have captured Cosroe and have killed proud Tamburlaine with the point of a sword.”

He was using poetic language — “Aurora shall not peep out of her doors” — to say that he would accomplish these things before the next dawn.

King Mycetes then said, “You tell the rest, Meander; I have finished speaking.”

Meander said, “Then, having passed Armenian deserts now, and pitched our tents under the Georgian hills, whose tops are covered with Tartarian thieves who lie in ambush, waiting for a prey, what should we do but bid them to battle immediately and rid the world of those detested troops?”

“We should do battle now, for if we let them linger here a while, they may gather strength by power of fresh supplies of men. This country swarms with vile, fierce, violent, outrageous men who live by rapine and by lawless spoil. They would be fit soldiers for the wicked Tamburlaine.

“In addition, this man, who could with gifts and promises inveigle a man who led a thousand horsemen — Theridamas — and make him a traitor to his King, will quickly win such men as are like himself.

“Therefore cheer up your minds; prepare to fight. He who can capture or slaughter Tamburlaine shall rule the province of Albania along the west coast of the Caspian Sea.

“He who brings King Mycetes the head of that traitor, Theridamas, shall have a government in Media, south of the Caspian Sea, in addition to the spoils that will come from Theridamas and all his train of soldiers.

“But if Cosroe (as our spies say, and as we know) remains with Tamburlaine, his highness’ pleasure is that he should live and be reclaimed with princely lenity and mercy. Take him alive.”

A spy entered and said, “A hundred horsemen of my company, scouting abroad upon these level and open plains, have viewed the army of the Scythians. These hundred horsemen report that the Scythians’ army far exceeds King Mycetes’ army.”

Meander said, “Suppose the Scythians’ army has an infinite number of soldiers. They lack martial discipline, and they all will be running headlong after greedy spoil. They value booty more than victory, and so they will be like the cruel brothers of the earth, sprung from the sowed teeth of venomous dragons. Their careless swords shall lance their fellows’ throats as they fight over the booty and make us triumph in their overthrow.”

Meander was referring to an ancient myth:

The ancient Greek hero Cadmus slew a dragon, and he followed the goddess Minerva’s orders to sow the teeth of the dragon. He did so, and armed warriors grew from the teeth and were about to attack him. He threw a stone among them, and they attacked and killed each other over the stone.

Meander believed that winning booty would be more important than winning the battle to Tamburlaine’s soldiers, and the soldiers would even kill each other in their pursuit of booty.

King Mycetes asked about the armed warriors who grew from sowed dragon’s teeth, “Tell me, sweet Meander, were there really such brethren who sprang from the teeth of venomous dragons?”

“So poets say, my lord,” Meander replied.

“And it is a pretty toy to be a poet,” King Mycetes said. “Well, well, Meander, you are deeply read, and having you, I surely have a jewel.

“Go on, my lord, and give your orders, I say. Your intelligence will make us conquerors today.”

Meander ordered the troops, “So then, noble soldiers, we will entrap these thieves who live confounded and confused in disordered troops if wealth or riches may prevail with them.

“We have our camels laden with gold, which you who are only common soldiers shall fling in every corner of the field. While the base-born Tartars pick up the gold, you, who are fighting more for honor than for gold, shall massacre those greedy-minded slaves.

“After their scattered army is subdued and you march on their slaughtered carcasses, then you shall share equally the gold that bought their lives, and live like gentlemen in Persia.

“Strike up the drum and march courageously. Fortune herself sits upon our helmets.”

“He tells you truly, my masters,” King Mycetes said. “So he does.”

— 2.3 —

Cosroe, Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, Ortygius, and others talked together. Cosroe and Tamburlaine had agreed to fight together against King Mycetes.

“Now, worthy Tamburlaine,” Cosroe said, “I have placed in your proven good fortune all my hope. What do you think shall come of our undertakings, man? Just as if your words came from a sacred oracle skilled at foretelling the future, I will be satisfied with what you judge will happen.”

Tamburlaine replied, “And in doing so, you are not even a little mistaken, my lord, for fates and oracles of Heaven have sworn to royalize and make famous the deeds of Tamburlaine, and make blest those who share in his undertakings.

“And don’t doubt that if you favor me and let my fortunes and my valor exert some authority over your martial deeds, the world will strive with hosts of men-at-arms to swarm to the banner and side I support. The soldiers of Xerxes, who by fame and legend are said to have drunk dry the mighty Parthian river Araris, was only a handful to the number of soldiers we will have.”

King Xerxes of Persia invaded Greece in 480 B.C.E. with such a large army of soldiers that they were said to have drunk rivers dry. Three hundred Spartans (the total number of Greeks was approximately 7,000) slowed down his army enough at Thermopylae that the Greeks were able to unite and gather forces and then defeat the Persians at sea at Salamis.

Tamburlaine continued, “Our quivering lances shaking in the air and projectiles like Jove’s dreadful thunderbolts, enfolded in flames and fiery smoldering mists, shall threaten the gods more than Cyclopean wars.”

The Olympian gods defeated the Titans in the Battle of the Titans. Cyclopes were huge, as were the Titans. Apparently, Tamburlaine was confusing Cyclopes and Titans.

He continued, “And with our Sun-bright armor, as we march we’ll chase the stars from Heaven and dim their eyes that stand and muse at our admired arms. Our Sun-bright armor will shine so much that the night will be so bright that the stars can’t shine.”

Theridamas said to Cosroe, “You see, my lord, what working — effective — words he has, but when you see his actions top and surpass his speech, your speech either will be stopped with astonishment or will so extol his worth that I shall be commended and excused for putting myself and my poor army under his command.”

He pointed to Techelles and Usumcasane and said, “And these, his two renowned friends, my lord, would make one thrust against obstacles and strive to be retained in such a great degree of amity and friendship.”

Techelles said, “With duty and with amity we yield our utmost commitment and service to the fair Cosroe.”

Cosroe replied, “I esteem your service as much as I do a portion of my crown — a part of my empire.

“Usumcasane and Techelles both, when she — Nemesis, goddess of vengeance and punishment — who rules within the golden gates of her temple in Rhamnus, Attica, and makes a passage for and assists all prosperous arms shall make me the sole Emperor of Asia, then your merits and deservings and valors shall be advanced to positions of honor and nobility.”

Tamburlaine said, “Then hasten, Cosroe, to be King alone, so that I with these my friends and all my men may triumph in our long expected fate. The King, your brother, is now hard at hand. Meet with the fool, and rid your royal shoulders of such a burden as outweighs the sands and all the craggy rocks of the Caspian Sea.”

A messenger entered and said, “My lord, we have discovered the enemy ready to charge you with a mighty army.”

Cosroe said, “Come, Tamburlaine, now sharpen your winged sword, and lift your lofty arm into the clouds, so that it may reach the King of Persia’s crown and set it safe on my victorious head.”

Tamburlaine lifted his sword and said, “See where it is, the keenest sword that ever made passage through Persian arms. These are the wings — my arms — that shall make it fly as swiftly as does the lightning or the breath of Heaven, and kill as surely as it swiftly flies.”

“Your words assure me of fitting success,” Cosroe said. “Go, valiant soldier, go before and charge the fainting army of that foolish King of Persia.”

“Usumcasane and Techelles, come,” Tamburlaine said. “We are enough to scare the enemy, and more than needs to make an Emperor.”

— 2.4 —

The battle had started, and King Mycetes, standing alone, held his crown in his hand and tried to find a place to hide it.

King Mycetes said, “Accursed be whoever first invented war! They knew not, ah, they knew not, simple men, how those who were hit by pelting cannon shot stand staggering like a quivering aspen leaf fearing the force of the north wind Boreas’ boisterous blasts. In what a lamentable case would I be, if nature had not given me wisdom’s lore, for Kings are clouts that every man shoots at and our crown is the pin that thousands seek to cleave and split.”

A clout is the center of a target in archery. The pin in the center holds the target in place. Being able to hit and split the pin is a mark of an excellent archer.

He continued, “Therefore in policy I think it good to hide the crown secretly — this is a good stratagem, and uncharacteristic of any man who is a fool. This way I shall not be recognized, or if I am recognized, they cannot take away my crown from me. I will hide it here in this ordinary hole.”

Tamburlaine entered, saw him, and said, “Fearful coward! Straggling from the camp, when Kings themselves are present in the battlefield?”

King Mycetes said, “You lie.”

“Base villain, do you dare to call me a liar!” Tamburlaine said.

“Leave me!” King Mycetes said. “I am the King. Go! Don’t touch me! You break the law of arms, unless you kneel and cry to me, ‘Mercy, noble King!’”

“Are you the witty, intelligent, capable King of Persia?” Tamburlaine asked sarcastically.

“Yes, indeed, I am,” King Mycetes replied. “Have you any request to make to me?”

“I would entreat you to speak just three wise words,” Tamburlaine said.

This was an insult: Tamburlaine did not think that King Mycetes was capable of speaking even three wise words.

“So I can, when I see my time,” said King Mycetes, who had not had time to put his crown in the hole.

Tamburlaine took the crown from him and asked, “Is this your crown?”

“Yes. Have you ever seen a fairer crown?”

“You will not sell it, will you?”

“Say another such word, and I will have you executed,” King Mycetes said. “Come, give it back to me.”

“No,” Tamburlaine said. “I took it prisoner.”

“You lie; I gave it to you.”

“Then it is mine.”

“No,” King Mycetes said. “I mean I let you keep it.”

By “keep,” he meant “hold.”

“Well, I mean you shall have it again,” Tamburlaine said.

He gave King Mycetes the crown and said, “Here, take it for a while; I lend it to thee until I may see thee hemmed with armed men. Then thou shall see me pull it from thy head. Thou are no match for mighty Tamburlaine.”

Tamburlaine used “thee,” “thy,” and “thou” when talking to King Mycetes. In this society, these were words that a nobleman would use when talking to a servant.

He exited.

Alone, King Mycetes said, “Oh, gods, is this Tamburlaine the thief? I marvel much that he did not steal the crown and carry it away.”

Trumpets sounded for the battle to resume.

## — 2.5 —

Cosroe, Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Menaphon, Meander, Ortygius, Techelles, and Usumcasane met together. Others were present.

“Wait, Cosroe. Take this,” Tamburlaine said, handing him the late King Mycetes’ crown. “Wear two imperial crowns.”

Some Persian noblemen had crowned Cosroe Emperor of Asia — they also gave him many other titles — when he had first revolted against his brother, the King of Persia. Now he was about to wear the crown of the King of Persia.



Tamburlaine added, "Think yourself invested now as royally, even by the mighty hand of Tamburlaine, as if as many Kings as could surround you with greatest pomp had crowned you Emperor. Being crowned by me is like being crowned by as many Kings as could surround you."

"So do I think of it like that, thrice-renowned man-at-arms," Cosroe said, "and none shall protect the crown but Tamburlaine. I make you my regent of Persia and general lieutenant of my armies."

"Meander, you who were our brother's guide, and the chiefest counselor in all his acts, since he is yielded to the stroke of war and has died in battle, on account of your submission to us we with thanks pardon your former opposition to me and give you equal place in our affairs."

"Most fortunate Emperor, in humblest terms I vow my service to your majesty, with the utmost commitment and vigor of my faith and duty," Meander said.

Cosroe said, "Thanks, good Meander."

"So then, Cosroe, reign and govern Persia in her former pomp."

"Now send ambassadors to your neighbor Kings, and let them know that the Persian King has changed from one who didn't know what a King should do to one who can command what belongs to a King."

"And now we will go to fair Persepolis with twenty thousand proven soldiers. The lords and captains of my brother's camp with little slaughter take Meander's course of action, and gladly yield to my gracious rule."

"Ortygius and Menaphon, my trusty friends, now I will reward your good service and your allegiance and promote you to positions with greater power."

"And as we have always aimed at your benefit," Ortygius said, "and sought for your royal state all the honor that it deserved, so will we with our powers and our lives endeavor to preserve and prosper it."

"I will not thank you, sweet Ortygius," Cosroe said. "Better replies than mere words shall prove my purposes. Actions shall do that."

"And now, lord Tamburlaine, my brother's troops I leave to you and to Theridamas. You will follow me to fair Persepolis. Then we will march to all those Indian gold and jewel mines that my witless brother lost to the Christians, and we will ransom them and gain fame and profit."

"And until you catch up to me, Tamburlaine, since you are staying behind to bring to order all the scattered troops, farewell, lord regent and his happy friends."

"I long to sit upon my brother's throne."

"Your majesty shall shortly have your wish," Meander said, "and ride in triumph through Persepolis."

Everyone except Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane exited.

"And ride in triumph through Persepolis!" Tamburlaine said. "Isn't it splendid to be a King, Techelles? Usumcasane and Theridamas, isn't it surpassingly splendid to be a King, and ride in

triumph through Persepolis?”

“Oh, my lord, it is sweet and full of pomp,” Techelles said.

“To be a King is half to be a god,” Usumcasane said.

“A god is not as glorious as a King,” Theridamas said. “I think the pleasure the gods enjoy in Heaven cannot compare with kingly joys on earth:

“To wear a gold crown set with pearls,

“To wear a crown whose special powers carry with it life and death,

“To ask and have, command and be obeyed, and

“When looks breed love, with looks to gain the prize — such attractive power shines in Princes’ eyes.”

“Why, what do you say, Theridamas, will you be a King?” Tamburlaine asked.

“No,” Theridamas said. “Although I praise it, I can live without it.”

“What do my other friends say?” Tamburlaine asked. “Will you be Kings?”

“Yes, if I could, with all my heart, my lord,” Techelles said.

“Why, that’s well said, Techelles,” Tamburlaine said. “So would I. And so would you, my good sirs, would you not?”

“What then, my lord?” Usumcasane asked.

“Why then, Casane,” Tamburlaine replied, “shall we wish for anything the world affords in the greatest rarity and shall we then rest, faint and destitute, without trying to get it?

“I think we should not.

“I am strongly convinced that if I should desire the Persian crown, I could attain it with a wondrous ease. And wouldn’t all our soldiers soon consent, if we should aim at such a high office?”

“I know they would with our persuasions,” Theridamas said.

“Why, then, Theridamas,” Tamburlaine said, “I’ll first try to get the Persian Kingdom for myself. Then I’ll try to get you made King of Parthia, Techelles made King of Scythia, and Usumcasane made King of Media.

“And if I prosper, all shall be as sure as if the Turk, the Pope, Africa, and Greece came immediately creeping on their knees to us with their crowns.”

The Turk was the Turkish Emperor (Bajazeth), the Pope was the head of Christianity, the Sultan of Egypt represented the most powerful country in Africa, and most Emperors of the Byzantine Empire were from Greece. In the later centuries of the Byzantine Empire, Western Christians often called the Byzantine Emperor the Emperor of the Greeks. If these four potentates submitted to Tamburlaine, he could claim that he was Emperor of the (Known-to-Him) World.

“Then shall we send a messenger to this triumphing King, Cosroe, and ask him to battle for his new crown?” Techelles asked.

Usumcasane advised, “Let’s do it quickly then, before his room be hot.”

His advice was to battle Cosroe quickly before he had time to sit in his throne and make it hot with the heat from his butt. In this society, the word “room” could mean a seat set aside for someone.

“It will prove to be a pretty jest, indeed, my friends,” Tamburlaine said.

“A jest to charge on twenty thousand men!” Theridamas said. “I judge the enterprise to be far more momentous.”

“Judge by yourself, Theridamas, not me,” Tamburlaine said, “for immediately Techelles here shall hasten to tell Cosroe to fight before he travels too far and before we expend more labor than the gain will requite.

“Then you shall see the Scythian Tamburlaine make but a jest to win the Persian crown. Winning the crown will be like winning an easy game.

“Techelles, take a thousand horsemen with you, and tell Cosroe to turn back to war with us, who made him King only because it entertained us. We will not cowardly steal upon him, but instead give him warning and time to gather more warriors.

“Make haste, Techelles; we will follow you.

“Theridamas, what do you say about this?”

“Let’s do it, I say,” Theridamas said. “Count me in.”

This was the second time Theridamas was a traitor to a King of Persia.

## — 2.6 —

Cosroe, Meander, Ortygius, and Menaphon talked together. Other soldiers were present.

Cosroe said, “What does this devilish shepherd mean to aspire with such a Giantly presumption, to cast up hills — pile one mountain on top of another — against the face of Heaven, and dare the force of angry Jupiter?”

“But just as Jupiter thrust them underneath the hills, and pressed out fire from their burning jaws, so will I send this monstrous slave to Hell, where flames shall forever feed upon his soul.”

The Giants had fought to oust the Olympian gods and take their place as rulers. Cosroe was comparing himself to Jupiter, King of the gods, and Tamburlaine to one of the Giants.

The Giants piled Mount Pelian on top of Mount Ossa in order to reach the abode of the gods. Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* I.151-176 tells the story of The Battle of the Giants, in which Jupiter threw thunderbolts at the Giants and hurled Mount Pelian down from the top of Mount Ossa and buried the Giants. The Battle of the Giants ended with Jupiter and the other Olympian gods triumphant. Mount Pelian and Mount Ossa are in Greece.

According to mythology, the Giant Enceladus is buried under Mount Etna. According to Pseudo-Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca* 1.38, Enceladus fled and the goddess Minerva threw the island of Sicily, where Mount Etna is located, at him.

According to another myth, Typhon, who had a hundred heads that emitted fire, is buried under Mount Etna.

Many versions of myths exist, and they often conflate figures or contradict other myths. Also, of course, people sometimes misremember myths.

Meander said to Tamburlaine, "Some powers divine and heavenly, or else infernal and hellish, mixed their angry seeds at his conception, for he was never sprung from the human race, since with the spirit of his fearsome pride, he dares so without fears and doubts to rule, and openly professes his ambition."

Ortygius said, "No matter what god, or fiend, or spirit of the earth, or monster turned to a manly shape, or of what substance or temperament he is made, whatsoever star or state govern him, let us put on our fitting steeled-to-battle minds, and in detesting such a devilish thief, let us in love of honor and defense of right be armed against the hate of such a foe, whether he grows from Earth, or Hell, or Heaven."

"Nobly resolved, my good Ortygius," Cosroe said. "And since we all have sucked and inhaled one wholesome air, and since we will decompose with the same proportion of elements that make up our bodies, I hope we are similar in vowing our loves to equal death and life."

In other words: While alive we breathe the same air, and after death we decompose into the same elements, and therefore I hope that all of us will vow our friendships to each other to equal life and death. Let us be willing to live and to die together as we fight in battle.

Cosroe continued, "Let's encourage our soldiers to encounter him, that grievous image of ingratitude, that fiery thirster after sovereignty, and burn him in the fury of that flame that nothing can quench but bloodshed and absolute power.

"Resolve, my lords and loving soldiers, now to save your King and country from decay and destruction.

"Then strike the drum, drummer.

"All the stars that determine the extent of my mortal life, I ask you to direct my weapon to Tamburlaine's barbarous heart, his heart that thus opposes him against the gods and scorns the powers that govern Persia."

## — 2.7 —

In the battle, King Cosroe of Persia was wounded, captured, and defeated. After the battle, the wounded Cosroe was in the custody and presence of Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane. Others were present.

Cosroe said, "Barbarous and bloody Tamburlaine, thus to deprive me of my crown and life! Treacherous and false Theridamas, even at the morning of my happy state — the beginning of my reign as King — when I was scarcely seated in my royal throne, you worked my downfall and untimely end!

“A strange pain torments my grieved soul, and death arrests the organ of my voice. Death, entering at the breach your sword has made, sacks and pillages every vein and artery of my heart.

“Bloody and insatiate Tamburlaine!”

Tamburlaine replied, “The thirst of reign and sweetness of a crown, a thirst that caused the eldest son of heavenly Ops to thrust his doting father from his throne, and place himself in the imperial Heaven, moved me to command soldiers and wage war against your royal state. What better precedent is there than mighty Jove? Why shouldn’t I follow his example?”

Jupiter, aka Jove, led the rebellion of the gods against Saturn and supplanted him as the chief god. Ops was Jupiter’s mother. Tamburlaine was mistaken when he said that Jupiter was the oldest son of heavenly Ops; actually, Jupiter was the youngest son.

Tamburlaine continued, “Nature, that framed us from four elements (earth, air, water, and fire) warring within our breasts for supremacy, teaches us all to have aspiring minds. Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend the wondrous architecture of the world and measure every wandering planet’s course, always climbing after infinite knowledge, and always moving just like the restless spheres, direct us to wear out ourselves and never rest, until we reach the ripest fruit of all, that perfect bliss and sole happiness — the sweet fruition of an earthly crown.”

“And that is what made me join with Tamburlaine,” Theridamas said. “For gross and like the weighty Earth is a man who does not move upwards, and who does not intend to soar above the highest rank by princely deeds. Unless a man is ambitious, he is a clod of dirt.”

Techelles added, “And that is what made us, the friends of Tamburlaine, lift our swords against the Persian King.”

Usumcasane said, “For as when Jove thrust old Saturn down, Neptune and Dis each gained a crown, so do we hope to reign in Asia, if Tamburlaine is placed as King in Persia.”

After the god Saturn was overthrown, three gods cast lots to divide much of the world. Jupiter got the sky, Neptune got the sea, and Dis got the Land of the Dead. Now that Tamburlaine had become King of Persia, Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane hoped to become Kings.

Cosroe said, “The strangest men whom nature ever made! I don’t know how to take their tyrannies and outrageous actions.

“My bloodless body grows chill and cold, and with my blood my life slides through my wound. My soul begins to take her flight to Hell and summons all my senses to depart. The heat and moisture that did feed each other, for want of nourishment to feed them both, are dry and cold; and now does ghastly death with greedy talons clutch my bleeding heart and like a Harpy tears at my life.”

His blood was hot and moist, but it was leaving his body, leaving it cold and dry.

The mythological Harpies were rapacious birds with the heads of women.

Cosroe continued, “Theridamas and Tamburlaine, I die — and may fearsome vengeance light upon you both!”

He died.

Tamburlaine took the crown of the King of Persia from Cosroe's head and put it on and said, "Not all the curses that the Furies breathe shall make me leave so rich a prize as this."

The mythological Furies were avenging monsters that punished major crimes such as a son's murder of a father or a mother.

Tamburlaine then asked, "Theridamas, Techelles, and the rest, who do you think now is King of Persia?"

All shouted, "Tamburlaine! Tamburlaine!"

Tamburlaine, now the King of Persia, said, "Even if Mars himself, the angry god of war, and all the earthly potentates conspire to dispossess me of this diadem, yet I will wear it as great commander of this eastern world in despite of them, if you only say that Tamburlaine shall reign."

All shouted, "Long live Tamburlaine, and long may he reign in Asia!"

Tamburlaine said, "So; now it is more surer on my head than if the gods had held a parliament, and all the gods had pronounced me to be King of Persia."

### **ACT 3 (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 1)**

#### **— 3.1 —**

Bajazeth met with the King of Fez, the King of Morocco, and the King of Algiers in great pomp. Bajazeth was the Emperor of the Turks. The Kings of Fez, Morocco, and Algiers were tributary Kings who were subservient to him. Others, including Pashas, who were high-ranking Turkish officials, were present.

Fez, Morocco, and Algiers are all located on the north coast of Africa; this region is known as the Barbary Coast.

Currently, the Turks were besieging Constantinople.

Bajazeth said, "Great Kings of Barbary and my stately Pashas, we hear that the Tartars and the eastern thieves, under the conduct of one Tamburlaine, presume to skirmish with me, your Emperor, and think to tear us from our fear-inspiring siege of the famous Grecian city Constantinople.

"You know that our army is invincible. As many circumcised Turks we have, and warlike bands of apostate Christians who have converted to Islam as has the Ocean or the Mediterranean Sea small drops of water in high tides when the Moon begins to join into one her semicircle horns and become a full Moon.

"Yet we would not be challenged by a foreign power, nor raise our siege before the Grecians yield or breathless lie dead before the city walls."

The King of Fez advised, "Renowned Emperor and mighty general, what if you sent the Pashas of your guard to command Tamburlaine to remain in Asia, and if he does not, to threaten death and deadly arms as from the mouth of mighty Bajazeth?"

Bajazeth ordered a Pasha, “Hurry, my Pasha, and go quickly to King Tamburlaine of Persia. Tell him that your lord, the Turkish Emperor, the dread lord of Africa, Europe, and Asia, the great King and conqueror of Graecia, Ocean, Mediterranean, and coal-black Black Sea, the high and highest monarch of the world, wills and commands — do not say that I entreat, ask, or beg — him not once to set his foot in Africa or advance his banners in Graecia lest he incur the fury of my wrath.”

Some of Bajazeth’s titles were titular.

He continued, “Tell Tamburlaine I am content to make a truce because I hear he bears a valiant mind. But if, presuming on his feeble army, he would be so mad as to wage war with me, then stay with him — say that I ordered you to do so — and if, before the Sun has measured Heaven with triple circuit and three days have passed, you have not returned to greet us again, we intend to take the morning of the fourth day as a message that he, Tamburlaine, will not be reclaimed and obey me, and we intend to come and fetch you in despite of him.”

The Pasha replied, “Most great and powerful monarch of the Earth, your Pasha will accomplish your behest and show your pleasure to the Persian, as befits the legate of the stately Turk.”

The Pasha exited.

The King of Algiers said, “They say he is the King of Persia, but if he dares to attempt to disrupt your siege of Constantinople, it would be requisite that he should be ten times more powerful than he is, for all flesh quakes at your magnificence.”

“True, King of Algiers, and all flesh trembles at my looks,” Bajazeth said.

The King of Morocco said, “The spring is hindered by your smothering host of soldiers, for they are so numerous that neither can rain fall upon the earth, nor can the Sun cast his virtuous, life-giving beams thereon. The ground is covered as with a mantle with such multitudes of your soldiers.”

“All this is as true as holy Mahomet,” Bajazeth said, “and all the trees are blasted and laid waste with our breaths.”

The King of Fez asked, “What does your greatness think best to be done in pursuit of the city’s overthrow? What needs to be done for us to conquer Constantinople?”

Bajazeth said, “I will command that the drafted trench diggers and fortification builders of Algiers cut off the water that by leaden pipes runs to the city from the mountain Carnon. Two thousand horsemen shall forage up and down, so that no relief or succor can come by land, and my galleys will keep all the sea under control and countermand any approaches of the enemy by sea. Then shall our footmen lie within the trench, and with their cannons as large mouthed as the entrance of Orcus — Hell — batter the walls, and we will enter in, and thus the Grecians shall be conquered.”

— 3.2 —

Agydas and Zenocrate talked together. Zenocrate’s maid, Anippe, was present, as were others. Agydas, Zenocrate, and Anippe were all prisoners of Tamburlaine. Agydas was a Median lord who was doing his best to look after Zenocrate and keep her safe.

Agydas said, “Madam Zenocrate, may I presume to know the cause of these unquiet fits that work such trouble to your accustomed rest and keep you from sleeping? It is more than a pity that such a heavenly face should by heart’s sorrow grow so wan and pale, when your offensive abduction by Tamburlaine — which of your whole displeasures and troubles should be the greatest — has seemed to be digested and gotten over long ago.”

Zenocrate replied, “Tamburlaine’s abduction of me has been digested and gotten over long ago, just as his exceeding favors to me have deserved. They may even have made the Queen of Heaven — Juno, Jupiter’s wife — content just as they have changed my first-conceived disdain for Tamburlaine.

“But a deeper passion feeds my thoughts with ceaseless and disheartening thoughts that dye my looks so lifeless and pale as they are, and that might, if my extremes had full events — if my most violent fears fully became reality — make me the ghastly image of death.”

Agydas said, “May eternal Heaven sooner be dissolved, and all that pierces the Moon goddess Phoebe’s silver eye — all that the Moon looks down on — be dissolved before such an event happens to Zenocrate!”

Zenocrate addressed her own life and soul, “Ah, life and soul, always hover in Tamburlaine’s breast, and leave my body as without senses as the earth, or else unite yourselves to his life and soul so that I may live and die with Tamburlaine!”

Tamburlaine, along with Techelles and others, quietly entered the room. Unseen, they eavesdropped.

“With Tamburlaine?” Agydas said. “Ah, fair Zenocrate, don’t let a man so vile and barbarous, who withholds you from your father in contemptuous defiance and keeps you from the honors of a Queen, allowing you instead to be supposed his worthless concubine, be honored with your love except out of necessity — pretend to love him if you have to.

“Provided that now your father, the mighty Sultan of Egypt, hears of you, your highness needs not doubt but in short time he will, with Tamburlaine’s destruction, redeem you from this deadly servitude.”

Zenocrate said, “Agydas, stop wounding me with these words, and speak of Tamburlaine as he deserves. The treatment we have had from him is far from being indignity or servitude, and might in noble minds be accounted princely.”

“How can you fancy one who looks so fierce and is only disposed to martial stratagems?” Agydas said. “Tamburlaine is a man who, when he shall embrace you in his arms, will tell you how many thousands of men he slew, and when you look for amorous discourse and words of love, he will rattle forth his deeds of war and bloodshed, which are too harsh a subject for your dainty ears.”

Zenocrate said, “As looks the Sun through the river Nile’s flowing stream, or when the morning holds the Sun in her arms, so looks my lordly love, fair Tamburlaine. His talk is much sweeter than the Muses’ song that they sung for honor against the Pierides.”

Pierus, a Thracian, had nine daughters — the Pierides — whom he named after the nine Muses, goddesses of music, dance, and other arts. Out of excessive pride, they challenged the



Muses to compete with them in song. Of course, the Muses won, and they punished the Pierides by turning them into magpies. Book 5 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* tells this myth.

Zenocrate continued, "His talk is much sweeter than when Minerva did with Neptune strive."

Minerva and Neptune competed to see who would be the patron deity over the Greek region named Attica, which included Athens. The contest was to see who could confer the most benefit on Attica; that deity would become Attica's patron deity. Poseidon struck a rock and water poured out of it, but the water was salt water and not of much benefit. (Another version of the myth says that he gave the gift of Attica's first horse, but much of Attica is hilly.) Minerva then caused Attica's first olive tree to grow from the ground, and since olives are very beneficial, she won the contest. Minerva's Greek name is Athena (Athens is named after her), and she is the goddess of wisdom.

Zenocrate continued, "And higher would I raise my estimate of my worth than the worth of Juno, sister and wife to Jupiter, the highest god, if I were wedded to mighty Tamburlaine."

Agydas said, "Yet don't be so inconstant in your love, but let the young Arabian — the King of Arabia, Alcidamas, to whom you are betrothed — live in hope, after your rescue to enjoy his choice.

"You see, at first the King of Persia, when he was a shepherd, seemed to love you much. But now, in his majesty as King of Persia, he leaves behind those loving looks, those words of favor, and those comfortings, and he gives you no more than common courtesies."

Zenocrate said, "That is the reason for the tears that so stain my cheeks: I doubt his love through my unworthiness. I am afraid that I am unworthy of his love, and I am afraid that he does not love me."

Her fear of not deserving Tamburlaine's love was apparent in the mythological tales she told. The daughters of Pierus did not deserve to win the contest with the Muses, and Neptune did not deserve to win the contest with Minerva. Zenocrate was afraid that she did not deserve to win the contest with other women for Tamburlaine's love.

Tamburlaine went to her, and took her away lovingly by the hand. As he exited, he looked wrathfully at Agydas, but said nothing.

Everyone except Agydas exited.

Agydas knew that Tamburlaine was a formidable enemy. He could condemn Agydas to death, and that death need not be a quick death.

Alone, Agydas said to himself, "Betrayed by Fortune and suspicious love, threatened with frowning wrath and jealousy, surprised with fear of hideous revenge, I stand aghast; but I am most astonished to see his anger shut in secret thoughts and wrapped in the silence of his angry soul.

"Upon his brows was portrayed ugly death, and in his eyes that shine like comets — evil omens threatening revenge — was portrayed the fury of his heart. His shining eyes cast a pale complexion on his cheeks.

"Imagine a seaman seeing the Hyades gather an army of Cimmerian clouds."

The Hyades were seven stars representing nymphs who were said to bring rain, and the Cimmerians were a people who were believed to always live in darkness. Agydas was saying that the sailor knew that bad weather was coming because of the current location of the stars that made up the Hyades and because dark clouds were gathering.

Agydas continued, “Auster and Aquilon — the south wind and the north wind — with winged steeds, all sweating, joust in the watery heavens. With shivering spears they create thunderclaps, and from their shields they strike flames of lightning.”

In this society, people believed that collisions of winds and clouds caused thunder and lightning.

Agydas continued, “The afraid sailor lowers his sails and sounds the main, measuring the height of the sea’s waves, lifting his prayers to the heavens for aid against the terror of the winds and waves.

“Just like that sailor, so fares Agydas because of Tamburlaine’s lately felt frowns that sent a tempest to my daunted thoughts and make my soul foretell her overthrow.”

Carrying an unsheathed dagger, Techelles entered the room. Usumcasane accompanied him.

Techelles gave Agydas the dagger and said, “See, Agydas, see how King Tamburlaine greets you. He tells you to prophesy what this dagger imports.”

Agydas replied, “I have already prophesied that, and now I suffer Tamburlaine’s killing frowns of suspicion and love. He didn’t need to confirm my fear with words, for words are vain where working tools — such as this dagger — present the naked action of my threatened end.

“Tamburlaine’s greeting, which is this dagger, says, ‘Agydas, you shall surely die, and of extremities elect the least — choose the least horrible death.’”

Talking about himself in the third person, he continued, “More honor and less pain you may procure if you die by this determined hand of yours rather than wait for the torments Tamburlaine and Heaven have sworn. So then hasten, Agydas, and prevent the plagues that your prolonged fates may draw on you.

“Go wander free from fear of the tyrant’s rage, removed from the torments and the Hell wherewith he may torture your soul, and let Agydas by Agydas die, and with this stab slumber eternally.”

He stabbed himself and died.

Techelles said, “Usumcasane, see how rightly the man has hit the meaning of my lord and King’s greeting.”

Usumcasane replied, “Indeed, and Techelles, his suicide was manly done. And, since he was so wise and honorable that he killed himself without fuss, let us give him now the bearing hence, and call for him to have a triple-worthy burial.”

“Agreed, Casane,” Techelles said. “We will honor him.”

They carried away Agydas’ body.

Tamburlaine, Techelles, Usumcasane, Theridamas, a Pasha, and Zenocrate met together. Anippe and others were present. The Pasha was the one who Bajazeth had sent to Tamburlaine.

Tamburlaine said, "Pasha, by this time your lord and master knows that I intend to meet him in Bithynia on the coast of the Black Sea. See how he comes!"

He was sarcastic: Bajazeth had not yet come.

Tamburlaine continued, "Tush, Turks are full of brags and they menace more than they can well perform."

He said sarcastically, "He meet me in the field and take you away from here!"

Then he added, "Alas, poor Turk, his fortune is too weak to encounter with the strength of Tamburlaine. View well my camp, and speak without bias. Don't my captains and my soldiers look as if they mean to conquer Africa?"

"Your men are valiant, but their number is few, and they cannot terrify Bajazeth's mighty army," the Pasha said. "My lord is the great commander of the world. Besides fifteen Kings who pay tribute to him, he has now in arms ten thousand Turkish soldiers, mounted on strong, vigorous Mauritanian steeds, brought to the war by men of Tripoli. He also has two hundred thousand footmen who have served in two pitched battles fought in Graecia. And to end this war quickly, he can, if he thinks it good to do so, withdraw as many more from his garrisons to follow him."

Techelles said, "The more horsemen he brings, the greater is the spoil, for when they perish by our warlike hands, we mean to set our footmen on their steeds and plunder all those stately Turkish soldiers."

"But will those Kings accompany your lord?" Tamburlaine asked.

"Such as his highness wants to accompany him will do so, but some must stay to rule the provinces he has recently subdued," the Pasha answered.

Tamburlaine said to Techelles, Usumcasane, and Theridamas, "Then fight courageously; their crowns are yours. This hand shall set them on your conquering heads, the heads of you who made me Emperor of Asia."

Usumcasane said, "Let him bring infinite millions of men, unpeopling western Africa and Greece, yet we feel sure of the victory."

Theridamas said, "We feel sure that Tamburlaine, who in a moment vanquished two Kings — Mycetes and Cosroe — who were mightier than the Turkish Emperor, shall drive Bajazeth out of Europe and pursue his scattered army until they yield or die."

"Well said, Theridamas!" Tamburlaine said. "Speak in that mood, for 'will' and 'shall' — rather than 'may' and 'might' — best fit Tamburlaine, whose smiling stars give him assured hope of martial triumph, even before he meets his foes.

"I who am termed the scourge and wrath of God, the only fear and terror of the world, will first subdue the Turkish Emperor, and then set free those Christian captives that the Turks keep as slaves, burdening their bodies with your heavy chains, and feeding them with thin and slender fare. These are the naked captives who row galleys about the Mediterranean Sea, and, when

they chance to breathe and rest a space, are punished with bastinadoes — cudgels — so grievously that they lie panting on the galley's side, and strive for life at every stroke the Christian rowers make with the oar or the Turkish master gives with the bastinado.

“These are the cruel pirates of Algiers, that damned troop, the scum of Africa, inhabited with straggling runagates — vagabonds, apostates, and deserters — who make quick havoc of the Christian blood.

“But, as I live, that town of Algiers shall curse the time that Tamburlaine set foot in Africa.”

Bajazeth arrived with his wife, Zabina, and her maid, Ebea, along with his Pashas and three tributary Kings: those of Fez, Morocco, and Algiers.

Bajazeth ordered, “Pashas and Turkish soldiers of my guard, attend upon the person of your lord, the greatest potentate of Africa.”

Tamburlaine ordered, “Techelles and the rest, prepare your swords. I mean to fight a battle with that Bajazeth.”

Insulted at being called by his name, not by his titles, Bajazeth said, “Kings of Fez, Morocco, and Algiers, he calls me Bajazeth, whom you call lord! Note the presumption of this Scythian slave!”

He then said to Tamburlaine, “I tell thee, villain, those who lead my horse have in addition to their names titles of dignity, and thou dare to bluntly call me Bajazeth?”

Tamburlaine replied, “Know, thou Turk, that those who lead my horse shall lead thee captive through Africa, and thou dare to bluntly call me Tamburlaine?”

Bajazeth said to his tributary Kings, “By my kinsman Mahomet's sepulcher, and by the holy Koran I swear, he shall be made a chaste and lust-lacking eunuch, and in my harem — my women's apartments — he will tend my concubines. And all his captains, who thus proudly and arrogantly stand, shall draw the chariot of my Empress, whom I have brought to see their overthrow.”

“By this my sword that conquered Persia, thou fall shall make me famous through the world,” Tamburlaine said. “I will not tell thee how I'll handle thee, but every common soldier of my camp shall smile to see thy miserable state.”

The King of Fez said, “What means the mighty Turkish Emperor to talk with one as base as Tamburlaine?”

The King of Morocco said, “You Moors and valiant men of Barbary, how can you suffer these indignities?”

The King of Algiers said, “Leave aside words, stop talking, and let them feel your lances' points, which glided through and pierced the bowels of the Greeks.”

“Well said, my brave tributary Kings,” Bajazeth said. “Your threefold army and my huge army shall swallow up these base-born Persians.”

Techelles said, “Puissant, renowned, and mighty Tamburlaine, why are we inactive, thus prolonging all their lives?”

“I long to see those crowns won by our swords,” Theridamas said, “so that we may reign as Kings of Africa.”

Usumcasane said, “What coward would not fight for such a prize?”

“All of you fight courageously, and you will be Kings,” Tamburlaine said. “I speak it, and my words are oracles.”

Bajazeth said to his wife, “Zabina, you are the mother of three boys braver than Hercules, who in his infancy crushed the jaws of venomous serpents.”

Juno hated Hercules because he was her husband’s bastard son. She sent two serpents to strangle him when he was an infant, but the already strong Hercules strangled the snakes.

Bajazeth continued, “These three sons’ hands are made to grip a warlike lance. Their broad shoulders are fit for complete armor. Their limbs are larger and of a bigger size than all the brats that sprung from Typhon’s loins.

Typhon was the father of the Nemean lion, the three-headed dog named Cerberus, the two-headed dog named Orthrus, the Chimera, the Lernaean Hydra, and the Theban Sphinx.

Bajazeth continued, “These three sons, when they come to their father’s age, will batter turrets with their manly fists.

“Zabina, sit here upon this royal chair of state, and on your head wear my imperial crown, until I bring this sturdy Tamburlaine and all his captains bound in captive chains.”

“May such good fortune happen to Bajazeth!” Zabina said as she sat on the chair of state and Bajazeth set his crown on her head.

Tamburlaine and Bajazeth had been using “thee,” “thy,” and “thou” when talking to each other. In this society, these were words that a high-ranking person would use when talking to a servant. Bajazeth’s wife and Tamburlaine’s consort, Zenocrate, would speak to each other in the same way.

Tamburlaine said, “Zenocrate, the loveliest maid alive, fairer than rocks of pearl and precious stone, Tamburlaine’s only paragon and consort, whose eyes are brighter than the lamps of Heaven and whose speech is more pleasant than sweet harmony, who with your looks can clear the darkened sky and calm the rage of thundering Jupiter — sit down by Zabina, and be adorned with my crown, as if you were the Empress of the world.

“Don’t move, Zenocrate, until you see me march victoriously with all my men, triumphing over Bajazeth and these his tributary Kings, whom I will bring as vassals to your feet.

“Until then, take my crown, extol my worth, and wage a war of words with Zabina, as her husband and I will wage a war of weapons.”

As Tamburlaine set his crown on Zenocrate’s head, she said, “And may my love, the King of Persia, return with victory and free from wounds!”

Bajazeth said to Tamburlaine, “Now shall thou feel the force of Turkish weapons, which lately made all Europe quake for fear. I have of Turks, Arabians, Moors, and Jews, enough to cover all Bithynia. Let thousands die! Their slaughtered carcasses shall serve as walls and bulwarks

and fortifications for the rest. And just like the heads of the Hydra, so my army, subdued, shall stand as mighty as before.”

The Hydra was a monster with nine heads. Each time one head was cut off, another appeared in its place. Bajazeth was saying that each time one of his soldiers fell in battle, another soldier would take his place.

Bajazeth continued, “If my soldiers should yield their necks to the sword, thy soldiers’ arms could not endure to strike as many blows as I have heads for thee. Thou know not, foolish hardy Tamburlaine, what it is to meet me in the open field. My soldiers are so numerous that they will leave no ground for thee to march upon.”

Tamburlaine replied, “Our conquering swords shall lead the way we use to march upon the slaughtered foe, trampling their guts with the hooves of our horses, brave horses bred on the white Tartarian hills. My army is like Julius Caesar’s army, which never fought without having the victory.”

Tamburlaine now referred to the Battle of Pharsalus, fought on 9 August 48 BCE, in which Julius Caesar’s army decisively defeated his rival Pompey’s army: “Nor in Pharsalus was there such hot war as these, my followers, willingly would have.

“Legions of spirits, gliding in the air, direct our projectiles and our weapons’ points and make your strokes wound the senseless air, and when Victory sees our bloody banners spread, then Victory begins to spread her wings and take her flight, alighting upon my milk-white tent in triumph.

“But come, my lords, to weapons let us fall. The field is ours, the Turkish Emperor, his wife, and all.”

Tamburlaine exited with his followers.

Bajazeth said, “Come, Kings and Pashas, let us glut our swords that thirst to drink the feeble Persians’ blood.”

Bajazeth exited with his followers.

Now Zabina and Zenocrate began to insult each other, using “thou,” “thy,” “thine,” and “thee.”

Zabina said, “Base concubine, must thou be placed by me who am the Empress of the mighty Turk?”

Zenocrate replied, “Disdainful Turkess, and irreverent fat woman, do thou call me concubine, who am betrothed to the great and mighty Tamburlaine?”

“To Tamburlaine, the great Tartarian thief!” Zabina said.

“Thou will repent these intemperate words of thine when thy great Pasha-master and thyself must plead for mercy at Tamburlaine’s kingly feet, and plead to me to be your advocates,” Zenocrate said.

“And plead to thee?” Zabina said. “I tell thee, shameless girl, thou shall be the laundress to my waiting maid.”

She asked her maid, “How do you like her, Ebea? Will she serve?”

Ebea, Zabina's maid, answered, "Madam, she thinks perhaps she is too refined, but I shall make her wear other clothing and make her dainty fingers fall to work."

Zenocrate said to her own maid, "Do you hear, Anippe, how your drudge talks, and how my slave, her mistress, menaces?"

Zenocrate was saying that after Tamburlaine won the battle, Zabina would be her slave, and Ebea — the drudge — would be Anippe's slave.

She continued, "Both for their sauciness shall be employed to prepare the common soldiers' food and drink, for we will scorn that Zabina and Ebea should come near ourselves."

Anippe said, "Yet sometimes let your highness send for them to do the work my chambermaid disdains."

They listened to the sounds of trumpets and the battle, and waited a while.

Zenocrate then prayed, "You gods and powers who govern Persia, and made my lordly love — Tamburlaine — become Persia's worthy King, now strengthen him against the Turkish Bajazeth, and let his foes, like flocks of fearful roes — small deer — pursued by hunters, flee his angry looks, so that I may see him come out of this battle as conqueror."

Zabina prayed, "Now Mahomet, solicit God himself, and make him rain down murdering shots from Heaven to dash the Scythians' brains, and strike dead those who dare to battle with Bajazeth, who offered jewels to your sacred shrine when first he warred against the Christians."

They listened again to the trumpets and the battle.

Zenocrate said, "By this time the Turks lie weltering in their blood, and Tamburlaine is lord of Africa."

If Tamburlaine were to defeat Bajazeth, he would control much of North Africa.

Zabina said, "Thou are deceived. I heard the trumpets sound as when my Emperor overthrew the Greeks and led them captive into Africa. Immediately will I treat thee as thy pride deserves: Prepare thyself to live and die as my slave."

Zenocrate replied, "Even if Mahomet should come from Heaven and swear that my royal lord is slain or conquered, Mahomet still could not persuade me of anything except that Tamburlaine lives and will be conqueror."

Bajazeth arrived, fleeing from Tamburlaine, who pursued him and caught up to him. They fought, and Tamburlaine was victorious.

Tamburlaine said, "Now, King of Pashas, who is the conqueror?"

"Thou," Bajazeth said, "by the fortune of this damned defeat."

"Where are your three brave tributary Kings?" Tamburlaine asked Bajazeth as Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane arrived.

Techelles answered the question: "We have their crowns; their bodies strew the battlefield."

“Each man has a crown?” Tamburlaine said. “Why, kingly fought, indeed. Deliver them to my treasury.”

Zenocrate said, “Now let me offer to my gracious lord again his royal crown, so highly won.”

“No, Zenocrate, you keep it,” Tamburlaine said, “but take the Turkish crown from Zabina, and crown me Emperor of Africa.”

“No, Tamburlaine,” Zabina said. “Although now thou has got the best of us, thou yet shall not be lord of Africa.”

Theridamas said, “Give her the crown, Turkess; it is best for you that you do so.”

He took it from her, and gave it to Zenocrate.

Zabina said, “Injurious villains, thieves, runagates, how dare you thus abuse my majesty?”

Theridamas gave the crown to Zenocrate and said, “Here, madam, you are Empress; Zabina is not.”

“True, Zabina is not Empress now, Theridamas,” Tamburlaine said. “Zabina’s time is past. The pillars that have bolstered up those terms have fallen in clusters at my conquering feet.”

The word “terms” meant both “titles” and “statues of the kind known as busts.”

Zabina said, “Although Bajazeth is a prisoner, he may be ransomed.”

“Not all the world shall ransom Bajazeth,” Tamburlaine said.

“Ah, fair Zabina,” Bajazeth said, “we have lost the battle, and never have I, the Turkish Emperor, had so great a defeat by any foreign foe.

“Now will the Christian miscreants be glad, ringing with joy their superstitious bells, and making bonfires for my overthrow. But before I die, those foul idolaters shall make me bonfires with their filthy bones, for although the glory of this day is lost, Africa and Greece have garrisons enough to make me sovereign of the earth again.”

“Those walled garrisons I will subdue,” Tamburlaine said, “and write myself great lord of Africa.

“So from the east unto the furthest west shall Tamburlaine extend his puissant, powerful arm. The galleys and those pillaging small pirate ships called brigandines, that yearly sail to the Venetian gulf and hover in the Straits of Otronto, which separate Italy and Greece, in order to wreck Christians’ ships, shall lie at anchor in the Isle Asant off the west coast of Greece until the Persian fleet and men-of-war, sailing along the oriental sea, have sailed around the Indian continent, even from Persepolis to Mexico, and from there to the Straits of Gibraltar.”

In other words, they will sail from Persia across the Indian Ocean and the Pacific to Mexico and then to the Straits of Magellan at the bottom of Argentina (or to Mexico, where they would then build a canal to the Atlantic Ocean), and then sail across the Atlantic Ocean to Gibraltar.

Tamburlaine continued, “The two fleets of ships will meet at Gibraltar and join their force in one, keeping in awe and intimidating the Bay of Biscay near Portugal and all the ocean by the British shore, and by this means I’ll win the world at last.”



Bajazeth said, "Yet set a ransom on me, Tamburlaine."

Tamburlaine replied, "What, do thou think that Tamburlaine esteems thy gold? Before I die, I'll make the Kings of India offer their mines to sue for peace to me. And they will dig for treasure to appease my wrath."

He then ordered, "Come, bind them — Bajazeth and Zabina — both, and one of you lead in the Turk. Let my love's maid lead away the Turkess. Let Anippe lead away Zabina."

Some soldiers bound Bajazeth and Zabina.

Bajazeth said, "Ah, villains, do you dare to touch my sacred arms? Oh, Mahomet! Oh, sleepy, lethargic Mahomet!"

Zabina said, "Oh, cursed Mahomet, who makes us thus the slaves to rude and barbarous Scythians!"

"Come, bring them in," Tamburlaine ordered, "and for this happy conquest let us triumph, exult, and celebrate a martial feast."

#### **ACT 4 (TAMBURLAINE, Part 1)**

##### **— 4.1 —**

The Sultan of Egypt, Zenocrate's father, met with three or four Lords, an Egyptian military commander named Capolin, and a messenger in Memphis, Egypt.

The Sultan of Egypt said, "Awaken, you men of Memphis! Hear the clang of Scythian trumpets! Hear the immense cannons named basilisks, which roaring shake Damascus' turrets down!"

Damascus, Syria, is far from Memphis, Egypt, but the Sultan of Egypt was imagining that the sounds of Tamburlaine's siege of Damascus could be heard in Memphis.

He continued, "The rogue of Volga — Tamburlaine — holds Zenocrate, the daughter of the Sultan of Egypt — me — for his concubine, and with a troop of thieves and vagabonds, he has spread his banners to our high disgrace, while you, fainthearted base Egyptians, lie slumbering on the flowery banks of the Nile, just like unafraid crocodiles that rest while thundering cannons rattle on their skins."

The messenger said, "Mighty Sultan, if your greatness could see the frowning looks of fiery Tamburlaine, who with his terror and his imperious eyes commands the hearts of his associates, it might amaze your royal majesty."

The Sultan of Egypt said, "Villain, I tell you that even if Tamburlaine were as monstrous and unnatural as Demogorgon, a demon Prince of Hell, the Sultan would not flinch and jump a foot from him.

"But tell me, what kind of army does he have?"

The messenger replied, "Mighty lord, he has three hundred thousand men clad in armor, upon their prancing steeds, disdainfully with insolent paces trampling on the ground.

“He also has five hundred thousand footmen threatening to shoot arrows and throw spears, shaking their swords, their spears, and their iron bills. They stand, surrounding their standard banner, as bristle-pointed as a thorny wood.”

A bill is a long-handled weapon that consists of a pole and a hook for unseating horsemen; it has a spike at the end of the pole.

The messenger continued, “Their large warlike instruments of assault and their artillery exceed the forces of their martial men.”

The Sultan of Egypt said, “Even if their numbers equaled the number of the stars, or the number of ever-drizzling drops of April showers, or the number of withered leaves that autumn shakes down, yet the Sultan would by his conquering power so scatter and consume them in his rage, that not a man should live to rue their fall.”

Capolin said, “So might your highness, had you time to organize your fighting men, and raise your royal army, but Tamburlaine by speedy travel takes advantage of your unreadiness.”

“Let him take all the advantages he can,” the Sultan of Egypt said. “Even if all the world conspired to fight for him — indeed, even if he were a devil, as he is no man — yet in revenge of fair Zenocrate, whom he detains to spite us, this arm should send him down to Erebus — Hell — to shroud his shame in the darkness of the night.”

The messenger said, “May it please your mightiness to understand that his resolution and determination far exceeds that of all other men.

“The first day when he pitches down his tents before a city he intends to conquer, white is their hue, and he bears on his silver crest a snowy feather speckled white, to signify the mildness of his mind that, if quickly satiated with spoil, refuses blood. If the city surrenders on the first day, he will kill no one.

“But when Aurora, goddess of the dawn, mounts the second time, and the second day begins, as red as scarlet are his banners, tents, and armor. Then his kindled wrath must be quenched with blood and he will not spare any who can manage arms. If the city surrenders on the second day, he will kill only those who are capable of fighting in battle.

“But if these threats don’t move the surrender and cause the city to submit to him, black are his banners, black is his pavilion — his ceremonial tent — and black are his spear, his shield, his horse, his armor, his plumes, and his jet-black feathers that menace death and Hell. If the city surrenders on the third day, he will kill everyone without respect of sex, degree, or age: He will raze all his foes with fire and sword.”

The Sultan of Egypt said, “Merciless villain, peasant ignorant of military codes of honor or martial discipline! Pillage and murder are his usual trades: The slave usurps the glorious name of war.

“See to it, Capolin, that the fair Arabian King Alcidamas, who is betrothed to my daughter, Zenocrate, and who has been disappointed by this slave who has my fair daughter — the recipient of Alcidamas’ princely love — may have quick notice to go to war in allegiance with us, and be revenged for Zenocrate’s disparagement and disgrace.”

Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, Zenocrate, and Anippe stood together. Two Moors — Muslims from North Africa — pulled in Bajazeth, who was in a cage. Bajazeth's wife, Zabina, followed him. Tamburlaine was besieging Damascus, the capital of Syria. This was the first day of the siege, and Tamburlaine was wearing white.

Tamburlaine ordered, "Bring out my footstool."

The Moors took Bajazeth out of the cage.

Bajazeth said, "You holy priests of heavenly Mahomet — you priests who, sacrificing, slice and cut your flesh, staining his altars with your purple blood — make Heaven frown and every fixed star suck up poison from the Moorish marshlands, and pour it in this boastful tyrant's throat!"

Vapors that rose from marshlands were thought to be unhealthy. People in this culture believed that stars sucked up the vapors.

Tamburlaine said, "The chiefest god, First Mover of that sphere encased with thousands of ever-shining lamps — stars — will sooner burn the glorious frame of Heaven than it would so conspire my overthrow."

Aristotle thought of God as the First Mover: God set the universe in motion. The Primum Mobile was the sphere that moved and caused motion in all the other spheres within it. Outside the Primum Mobile was the Empyrean, the dwelling place of God: Paradise.

Tamburlaine continued, "But, villain, thou who wishes this to me, fall prostrate on the low disdainful earth, and be the footstool of great Tamburlaine, so that I may rise into my royal throne."

Bajazeth replied, "First shall thou rip my bowels with thy sword and sacrifice my heart to death and Hell, before I yield to such a slavery."

Tamburlaine said, "Base villain, vassal, slave to Tamburlaine, you are unworthy to embrace or touch the ground that bears the honor of my royal weight. Stoop, villain, stoop! Stoop, for so bids me, the man who may command thee to be torn into pieces, or scattered like the lofty cedar trees struck with the voice of thundering Jupiter."

Such trees are blasted with lightning.

Bajazeth said, "Then, as I look down to the damned fiends, fiends, look on me; and may you, Pluto, dread god of Hell, with a scepter made of ebony strike this hateful earth, and make it swallow both of us — Tamburlaine and me — at once!"

Bajazeth knelt.

As Tamburlaine stood on him to reach his chair, Tamburlaine said, "Now clear the triple region of the air, let the air be clear and transparent, and let the majesty of Heaven behold their scourge and terror tread on Emperors."

People in this culture divided the atmosphere into three regions: 1) low and warm because the Sun warms the ground, 2) middle and cold like the tops of mountains, and 3) high and hot because close to the sphere of fire that some people in this culture believed to exist between the Earth and the Moon.

Sitting in his chair, Tamburlaine began to talk about astrological stars; in astrology, stars are the heavenly bodies and include planets.

He said, “Smile, stars that reigned at my nativity, and dim the brightness of your neighboring lamps. Disdain to borrow light from Cynthia — the Moon — for I, the chiefest lamp of all the earth, first rising in the east with mild aspect, but fixed perpetually now in the meridian line that is noon, will send up fire to your turning spheres and cause the Sun to borrow light from you.”

Tamburlaine meant that his brightness would give light to the stars and would outshine the Sun, forcing the Sun to borrow light from the stars. He was also saying that he had reached the high point — the high noon — of his fortunes and that he intended to stay there. And he was saying that he had started his career with a mild aspect: The stars that reigned at his nativity had given him a mild disposition. Apparently, Tamburlaine believed that he was mild as long as he got exactly what he wanted; unfortunately for Bajazeth, what he wanted was to humiliate him and keep him as a caged slave.

Tamburlaine continued, “My sword struck fire from Bajazeth’s coat of steel, even in Bithynia, when I took this Turk, as when a fiery meteor, wrapped in the bowels of a freezing cloud, fighting for a passage out, makes the sky crack and casts a flash of lightning to the earth.”

People in this society believed that thunder and lightning were caused when compressed fire trapped in a cloud found a way out.

He continued, “But before I march to wealthy Persia, or leave Damascus and the Egyptian fields, as was the fame of Phaëthon, Clymene’s brainsick son, who almost burned the axle-tree of Heaven, so shall our swords, our lances, and our arrows and other missiles fill all the air with fiery meteors.”

The axle-tree of Heaven is an axis on which the Earth rotates and the spheres that make up the universe revolve. This society believed that the Earth was at the center of the universe and the planets and stars were embedded in crystalline spheres that revolved around the Earth.

The Phaëthon, the mortal son of the Sun-god, asked for a gift, which his father swore an inviolable oath to give to him. The gift was to be allowed to drive the Sun-chariot across the sky. Because his father had sworn an inviolable oath, he had to grant it. mortal Phaëthon was unable to control the immortal horses that pulled the Sun-chariot, and it veered wildly across the sky and almost burned the Earth. Jupiter prevented the destruction of the Earth by killing Phaëthon with a thunderbolt.

The polished weapons of Tamburlaine’s soldiers flashed and made the air seem as if it were filled with fiery meteors. The lightning bolts that Jupiter threw to kill Phaëthon looked like fiery meteors.

Tamburlaine said, “Then, when the sky shall grow as red as blood, it shall be said I myself made it red in order to make myself think of nothing but blood and war.”

Zabina, the wife of Bajazeth, said, “Unworthy King, that by thy cruelty unlawfully has usurped the Persian seat, dare thou, who never saw an Emperor before thou met my husband on the battlefield, being thy captive, thus abuse his royal person, keeping his kingly body in a cage? For Bajazeth, roofs of gold and Sun-bright palaces should have been prepared to receive his

grace! And dare thou tread on him beneath thy loathsome feet? The Kings of Africa have kissed the feet of Bajazeth.”

Techelles said to Tamburlaine, “You must devise some worse torment, my lord, that will make these captives rein their uncontrolled tongues.”

Tamburlaine said, “Zenocrate, pay better attention to your slave and control her.”

Zenocrate replied, “Zabina is my handmaid’s slave, and my handmaid shall see to it that these abuses stop flowing from her tongue. Berate her, Anippe.”

Anippe, Zenocrate’s maid, said to Zabina, “Let these be warnings for you then, my slave, about how you abuse the person of the King. Stop, or else I swear to have you whipped stark naked.”

Bajazeth said, “Great Tamburlaine, made great in my overthrow, ambitious pride shall make thee fall as low, for treading on the back of Bajazeth, who should be horsed — mounted — on four mighty Kings.”

Tamburlaine said, “Thy names and thy titles and thy dignities have fled from Bajazeth and remain with me, who will maintain my ambitious pride against a world of Kings.”

The Moors put Bajazeth back in the cage.

Bajazeth said to Tamburlaine, “Is this a place for mighty Bajazeth? May ruin light on him who helps thee thus.”

Tamburlaine said, “There, while he lives, shall Bajazeth be kept, and wherever I go Bajazeth will thus be in triumphal procession pulled.

“And thou, Zabina, his wife, shall feed him with the scraps my servants shall bring thee from my table, for he who gives him any other food than this shall sit by him and starve to death himself.

“This is my mind, and I will have it so. Not all the Kings and Emperors of the earth, if they would lay their crowns before my feet, shall ransom him or take him from his cage.

“The ages that shall talk of Tamburlaine, even from this day to Plato’s wondrous year, shall talk about how I have treated Bajazeth.”

Plato believed that the planets and stars had an original starting position for their movement. In *Timaeus* (especially see section 39), Plato’s wondrous year is the time it takes for the planets and stars to return back to their original starting position. Translator W.R.M. Lamb calls the wondrous year “the Great World-Year, which is completed when all the planets return simultaneously to their original starting points. Its length was variously computed: Plato seems to have put it at 36,000 years.” Tamburlaine was calling “Plato’s wondrous year” the year in which the return to original positions would occur.

Tamburlaine continued, “These Moors who drew him from Bithynia to fair Damascus, where we now remain, shall lead him with us wherever we go.

“Techelles, and my loving followers, now we may see Damascus’ lofty towers, which are like copies of the Egyptian Pyramids that with their beauties grace the Memphian fields. The golden statue of their sacred feathered bird, the ibis, that spreads her wings upon the city walls, shall not defend it from our battering shot. The townsmen dress richly in silk and cloth of gold

as if attending a masquerade, and every house is like a treasury. The men, the treasure, and the town are ours.”

Theridamas said, “Your tents of white are now pitched before the gates, and gentle flags of amity are displayed. I don’t doubt that the governor will yield and surrender Damascus to your majesty.”

“If he does,” Tamburlaine said, “he shall have his life, and all the rest shall have their lives.

“But if he waits until the second day when the bloody flag is raised aloft on my vermilion — red — tent, he dies, and also die those fighting men who kept us out so long.

“And if on the third day they see me march in black array, with mournful, drooping pennons hanging down their heads, then even if that city contained all the world, not one person should escape, but all would perish by our swords.”

“Yet you would have some pity for my sake,” Zenocrate said, “because it is my and my father’s country. Damascus is a city in territory that my father the Sultan controls.”

“Not for the world, Zenocrate, if I have sworn otherwise,” Tamburlaine said.

He then ordered the Moors, “Come, bring along the Turk.”

They exited.

#### — 4.3 —

The Sultan of Egypt and King Alcidamus of Arabia met with the Egyptian military leader Capolin. Many soldiers with streaming colors were present. Alcidamus and Zenocrate had been engaged before Tamburlaine captured her.

The Sultan of Egypt said, “I think we march as the ancient Greek hero Meleager did, surrounded with brave knights from Argolis in Greece as we chase the savage Calydonian boar.”

Meleager was one of the Argonauts, the heroes who traveled on the first ship, the *Argo*, in search of the Golden Fleece. After successfully completing this quest, he returned home and organized the hunt for the dangerous Calydonian boar that the goddess Diana had sent to punish the citizens for not showing her the honor she wanted. A woman, Atalanta, wounded the boar, and Meleager killed it and awarded the boar’s hide to her. A brother and an uncle of Meleager objected to the hide being awarded to a woman, and in a quarrel Meleager killed them, a deed that led to his own death. When Meleager was born, the Fates told his mother that he would live only until a piece of wood in the fire burned up. His mother took out the piece of wood, put out the flame, and put the piece of wood in a secure place. But after she learned that Meleager had killed one of her brothers and one of her sons, she burned the piece of wood and Meleager died.

The Sultan of Egypt continued, “Or we march like Cephalus, with brave Theban youths, against the wolf that angry Themis — the personification of divine order — sent to waste and spoil the sweet fields of Greek Aonia, where Thebes and Mount Helicon are located.”

Usually, the beast is called a fox, not a wolf. Cephalus hunted the beast with his hunting dog, which was a gift from his wife, but both the beast and the hunting dog were transformed into

stone. Why? Both the beast and the hunting dog had super powers. The beast was unable to be caught, and the hunting dog always caught its prey. Faced with an irreconcilable paradox, Jupiter turned the two animals into stone. The beast is called the Teumessian fox or the Cadmean vixen, and the hunting dog is named Laelaps.

Cephalus and Procris, his wife, were two ancient lovers whose love ended tragically. He was accustomed to spend much time hunting, but his wife became jealous and thought he was going to see a lover, and so one day she secretly followed him to spy on him. Cephalus heard a rustling in the shrubbery, thought it was caused by an animal, threw his javelin, which never missed and which was another gift from his wife, and killed her.

In both stories, the beast is a scourge of a divine being; in both stories, success is followed by disaster.

Now the Sultan of Egypt began to describe Tamburlaine's army of five hundred thousand footmen as if it were a hunted monster:

"A monster of five hundred thousand heads joined in rapine, piracy, and spoil, the scum of men, the hate and scourge — enemy — of God, raves and rages in territory controlled by Egypt, and militarily molests us.

"King of Arabia, my lord, it is the bloody Tamburlaine, a fierce, cruel felon, and a base-bred thief, raised to the Persian crown by murder, who dares challenge us in our territories. To tame the pride of this presumptuous beast, join your Arabians with the Sultan's power; let us unite our royal bands in one and hasten to stop Damascus' siege.

"It is a blemish to the majesty and high estate and status of mighty Emperors that such a base usurping vagabond should defy a King, or wear a princely crown."

King Alcidamus of Arabia replied, "Renowned Sultan, have you lately heard about the overthrow of mighty Bajazeth in the border regions of Bithynia? Have you heard about the slavery with which Tamburlaine persecutes the noble Turk and his great Empress, Zabina?"

"I have, and I sorrow for his disastrous misfortune," the Sultan of Egypt said. "But, noble lord of great Arabia, be so persuaded that the Sultan is no more dismayed with tidings of Bajazeth's downfall than when a ship's pilot stands in a safe harbor, and views a foreigner's ship torn apart in the winds and smashed against a craggy rock.

"Yet in compassion to his wretched state and condition, I make a sacred vow to Heaven and him, confirming it with Isis' holy name, that Tamburlaine shall rue the day, the hour, wherein he wrought such ignominious wrong to the hallowed person of a Prince, or kept the fair Zenocrate so long, as his concubine, I fear, to feed his lust."

King Alcidamus of Arabia replied, "Let grief and fury hasten revenge. Let Tamburlaine for his offences feel such plagues as Heaven and we can pour on him. I long to break my spear upon his crest and test the weight — strength — of his victorious arm. For Fame, I fear, has been too prodigal and generous in sounding through the world his praise — Fame has been partial to Tamburlaine."

The Sultan of Egypt asked, "Capolin, have you surveyed our armies?"

Capolin answered, “Great Emperors of Egypt and Arabia, the number of your hosts united is a hundred and fifty thousand horsemen and two hundred thousand footmen. These are brave men-at-arms, courageous and full of hardiness, as frolicsome and merry as the hunters in the chase of savage beasts amid the desolate woods.”

King Alcidamus of Arabia said, “My mind foretells fortunate success, and, Tamburlaine, my spirit foresees the utter ruin of thy men and thee.”

“Then rear your standards,” the Sultan of Egypt said. “Let your sounding drums direct our soldiers to Damascus’ walls.

“Now, Tamburlaine, the mighty Sultan comes and leads with him the great Arabian King to dim thy baseness and obscurity, your low birth that is famous for nothing but theft and spoil, and to raze and scatter thy inglorious crew of Scythians and slavish Persians.”

— 4.4 —

Tamburlaine, wearing scarlet, walked over to a banquet. With him were Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, and Zenocrate. Bajazeth was brought in, in a cage pulled by Moors. Zabina followed him.

Tamburlaine said, “Now our bloody colors hang by Damascus, casting hues of blood-red upon the heads of the citizens of Damascus while they walk quivering on their city walls, half dead for fear before they feel my wrath.

“So then let us freely banquet and carouse and drink heartily full bowls of wine to the god of war, who intends to fill your helmets full of gold, and make Damascus’ spoils as rich to you as was to Jason the golden fleece that hung in the Kingdom of Colchis, located on the east coast of the Black Sea.

“And now, Bajazeth, have thou any stomach?”

The word “stomach” means 1) appetite, 2) anger, and 3) courage.

“Yes,” Bajazeth replied. “I have such a stomach, cruel Tamburlaine, that I could willingly feed upon thy bloody, raw heart.”

“Nay,” Tamburlaine said. “Thine own heart is easier to come by. Pluck out that, and it will serve to feed thee and thy wife.

“Well, Zenocrate, Techelles, and the rest, fall to your victuals and eat.”

“Fall to,” Bajazeth said, “and may your meat never be digested!

“Ye avenging Furies, who can turn invisible, dive to the bottom of Avernus’ pool at the entrance of Hell and in your hands bring hellish poison up, and squeeze it in the cup of Tamburlaine!”

The Furies had the power of being invisible to people other than the particular person whom they were punishing. This is seen in Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*: At the end of *The Libation Bearers*, the second play in Aeschylus’ trilogy, only Orestes can see the Furies.

Bajazeth continued, “Or, winged snakes of the Lernaean Hydra, cast your stings, and leave your venoms in this tyrant’s dish!”



The Hydra in the region of Lerna was a poisonous serpentine water monster with nine heads. Hercules killed the Hydra and used its venom to poison his arrows. The heads of the Hydra were figuratively “winged” because they were so quick.

Bajazeth’s wife, Zabina, said, “And may this banquet prove as ominous as Procne’s to the adulterous Thracian King who fed upon the substance of his child.”

King Tereus of Thrace violently raped Philomena, who was the sister of his wife, Procne. To keep Philomena from telling anyone about the rape, Tereus cut out her tongue. Philomena weaved her story into a tapestry, which Procne saw, thus learning what had happened. To get revenge, Procne killed, cooked, and fed her and Tereus’ son to Tereus.

Zenocrate asked Tamburlaine, “My lord, how can you tolerate these outrageous curses that are made by these slaves of yours?”

Tamburlaine replied, “I tolerate the curses to let these slaves of mine see, divine Zenocrate, that I glory in the curses of my foes — I have the power from the imperial and empyreal Heaven to turn them all upon their own heads.”

Techelles said to Zenocrate, “Please, give them permission to curse, madam; this kind of speech is a good refreshment to them.”

Theridamas said, “But if his highness would let them be fed, it would do them more good.”

Tamburlaine said to Bajazeth, “Sirrah, why don’t you fall to? Are you so daintily brought up that you cannot pull out your heart and eat your own flesh?”

Tamburlaine used both “sirrah” and “you” to refer to Bajazeth. “Sirrah” was used to refer to a male of lower status, such as a servant, than the speaker. “You” was formal and respectful, and Tamburlaine was mocking Bajazeth by using it.

“Before that happens, legions of devils shall tear thee in pieces,” Bajazeth said.

Usumcasane said, “Villain, do thou know to whom thou speak?”

Tamburlaine said to Usumcasane, “Oh, let him alone.”

He then put some food on the end of his sword and held it out to Bajazeth and said, “Here; eat, sir; take it from my sword’s point, or I’ll thrust it to thy heart.”

Bajazeth took the food, threw it down, and stomped on it.

Theridamas said, “He stamps it under his feet, my lord.”

“Take it up, villain, and eat it,” Tamburlaine said, “or I will make thee slice the muscles of thy arms into strips of meat and eat them.”

“Nay, it would be better if he killed his wife,” Usumcasane said, “and then she shall be sure not to be starved, and he shall be provided for a month’s food beforehand.”

Tamburlaine showed his dagger to Bajazeth and said, “Here is my dagger. Kill her while she is fat, for if she lives just a little while longer, she will fall into a wasting disease because of anguish, and then she will not be worth the eating.”

Theridamas asked Bajazeth, “Do thou think that Mahomet will allow this?”

Techelles said, "It is likely that he will allow it, when he cannot stop it."

"Go to it," Tamburlaine said. "Fall to and eat your food."

"What, not a bit? Perhaps he has not been watered today. Give him some water to drink."

Animals are watered; Tamburlaine was treating Bajazeth like an animal.

The Moors gave Bajazeth water to drink, but he flung it on the ground.

Tamburlaine said, "Fast and starve, and welcome, sir, until hunger makes you eat."

"What do you think, Zenocrate? Don't the Turk and his wife make a splendid show at a banquet?"

"Yes, my lord," Zenocrate said.

She was sad and thinking about her husband's invading her father's territory, including Damascus, and the death and destruction that would occur.

"I think it is a great deal better than a company of performing musicians," Theridamas said.

"Yet music would do well to cheer up Zenocrate," Tamburlaine said.

He asked her, "Please tell me, why are you so sad? If you will have a song, the Turk Bajazeth shall strain his voice and sing. But why are you sad?"

Zenocrate replied, "My lord, to see my father's town besieged, the country wasted where I myself was born — how can it but afflict my very soul? If any love remain in you, my lord, or if my love to your majesty may merit favor at your highness' hands, then raise your siege from fair Damascus' walls, and with my father make a friendly truce."

Tamburlaine replied, "Zenocrate, even if Egypt were Jupiter's own land, yet I would with my sword make Jupiter stoop, bow down, and submit to me."

"I will confute and prove wrong those blind geographers who make a triple region of Africa, Europe, and Asia in the world, excluding regions that I mean to travel and chart and with this pen — my sword — reduce them to a map, renaming the provinces, cities, and towns, after my name and your name, Zenocrate."

"Here at Damascus I will make the point that shall begin the perpendicular."

Some medieval maps were of the T-in-O variety. A T was placed in an O, dividing the map into three areas. Usually, at the top was Asia, and below were Europe (left) and Africa (right). Jerusalem, as the spiritual center of the world, was placed at the top middle of the T, where the perpendicular bar met the horizontal bar. Tamburlaine was boasting that he would put Damascus instead of Jerusalem in that spot.

Or possibly he meant by "perpendicular" the initial meridian of some maps. The position of the initial meridian varied, and Tamburlaine may have been saying that he would put Damascus on that meridian.

Tamburlaine continued, "And would you have me buy your father's love with such a loss? Tell me, Zenocrate."

“May honor always wait on and serve happy, fortunate Tamburlaine,” she replied, “yet give me permission to plead for my father, my lord.”

“Be happy,” Tamburlaine said. “His person shall be safe, I shall not take his life, and the same is true for all the friends of fair Zenocrate — if with their lives they will be pleased to yield, or may be forced to make me Emperor; for Egypt and Arabia must be mine.”

He then said to Bajazeth, “Eat, you slave; thou should think thyself happy to be fed the scraps from my dinner plate.”

Bajazeth said, “My empty stomach, full of idle heat, draws blood from my feeble parts” — he was starving and so his body was feeding on itself — “preserving life by hastening cruel death. My veins are pale, my sinews hard and dry, my joints benumbed; unless I eat, I die.”

“Eat, Bajazeth,” Zabina said. “Let us live in spite of them, in hope that some merciful power or lucky intervention will pity and liberate us.”

Bajazeth began to eat the food he had stomped on.

Tamburlaine held out a clean plate to him and said, “Here, Turk; will thou have a clean trencher?”

A trencher is a wooden plate.

“Yes, tyrant, and more food,” Bajazeth said.

“Slow down, sir, you must be dieted,” Tamburlaine said. “Too much eating will make you sick.”

“So it would, my lord,” Theridamas said, “especially since he has so small a space to walk in and so little exercise.”

Servants brought in three crowns.

Tamburlaine said, “Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane, here are the delicacies you desire to finger, are they not?”

“Yes, my lord,” Theridamas said, “but none save Kings must feed with these.”

“It is enough for us to see them,” Techelles said, “and for only Tamburlaine to enjoy them.”

Tamburlaine proposed a toast, “Well, here is now to the Sultan of Egypt, the King of Arabia, and the Governor of Damascus.”

These people wore three crowns that he intended to enjoy.

They drank.

Tamburlaine then said to Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane, “Now, take these three crowns, and pledge your loyalty to me, my tributary Kings.”

As he handed out the crowns, he said:

“I crown you here, Theridamas, King of Algiers.

“I crown you here, Techelles, King of Fez.

“And I crown you here, Usumcasane, King of Morocco.”

He then said to Bajazeth, “What do you say to this, Turk? These are not your tributary Kings.”

“Nor shall they long be thine, I promise them,” Bajazeth said.

Tamburlaine said, “Kings of Algiers, of Fez, and of Morocco, you who have marched with happy, fortunate Tamburlaine as far as from the frozen region of Heaven — the tops of snowy mountains in the far north — to the watery, dewy morning’s ruddy red abode in the East, and from there by land to the torrid zone between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn” — Tamburlaine was vastly exaggerating the distance they had traveled together — “deserve these titles I endow you with because of your valor and your fortitude.

“Your non-noble births shall be no blemish to your reputations and honors, for virtue — power and ability — is the fountain from which honor springs, and they whom the personified Virtue invests as Kings are worthy of being Kings.”

Theridamas said, “And, since your highness has so graciously granted us these crowns, if we do not deserve them with greater excellence in our bearings and actions than formerly we have possessed, take them away again, and make us slaves.”

“Well said, Theridamas,” Tamburlaine said. “When holy Fates shall establish me in strong Egypt, we intend to travel to the Antarctic pole, conquering the people underneath our feet — those in the Southern Hemisphere — and be renowned as never Emperors were.

“Zenocrate, I will not crown you yet — not until with greater honors I am graced.”

## **ACT 5 (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 1)**

### **— 5.1 —**

The Governor of Damascus met with three or four citizens, and with four virgins holding branches of laurel in their hands.

The Governor of Damascus said, “Still does this man, or rather god, of war, batter our walls and beat our turrets down, and to resist with longer stubbornness, or hope of rescue from the Sultan of Egypt’s army, would only bring our willful overthrow, and make us despair of saving our threatened lives.

“We see that Tamburlaine’s tents have now been altered terrifyingly to the last and cruelest hue. His coal-black colors, everywhere raised high, threaten our city with a general slaughter that no one will escape.

“And if we would in accordance with common rites of war offer our lives to his mercy, I fear that he will follow the custom peculiar to his sword and his mode of warfare, which he observes as an essential part of his reputation, intending by doing so to terrify the world.

“I fear that not until after we are dead will he allow himself to make any change in his established military practice or feel pity.

“I fear that he will follow his own custom and slaughter all of us because we did not surrender to him earlier.

“Therefore, for these our innocent, harmless virgins’ sakes, whose honors and whose lives rely on him, let us have hope that their pure prayers and entreaties, their tearful cheeks, and their heartfelt humble moans will melt his fury into some pity, and persuade him to treat us like a loving conqueror would.”

The Governor of Damascus was hoping the virgins would make Tamburlaine both feel pity and change his custom of slaughtering all the citizens of a city that surrendered to him on or after the third day of his siege.

The first virgin said, “If humble entreaties or prayers, uttered with tears of wretchedness and blood shed from the heads and hearts of all our female sex, some of whom are your wives, and some of whom are your children, might have entreated your stubborn, obdurate breasts to think to take some care of our safety while only danger and not certain destruction beat upon our walls, these more than dangerous promises of our death — Tamburlaine’s black tents and banners — would have never been erected as now they are, nor would you depend on such weak helps as we virgins are. You should have surrendered earlier.”

The women of Damascus had pleaded for the city to be surrendered earlier, but their pleas had not been effective.

The Governor of Damascus replied, “Well, lovely virgins, consider our concern for our country, our love of honor, our repugnance at the thought of being enslaved to foreign powers and rough imperious yokes. We would not with too much cowardice or fear — before all hope of rescue was denied — submit yourselves and us to servitude.”

The Governor of Damascus was loath to surrender to Tamburlaine because of honor and because of fear of enslavement as long as there was hope that the Sultan of Egypt would rescue them.

He continued, “Therefore, since your safeties and our own, your honors, liberties, and lives were weighed in equal care and balance with our own, endure as we endure the malice of our astrological stars that have been malignant toward us. Endure also the wrath of Tamburlaine and the power of wars, or be the means the overruling powers of Heaven have kept in reserve to alleviate this hot crisis, and bring us pardon in your cheerful looks.”

The second virgin prayed, “Then here, before the majesty of Heaven and the holy patrons of Egypt, on our knees and with submissive hearts we entreat grace to our words and pity to our looks so that this plan may prove propitious, and so that through the eyes and ears of Tamburlaine we may make him feel in his heart that a merciful outcome to the siege is possible.

“Grant that these signs of victory we yield may bind the temples of his conquering head to hide the folded furrows of his brows as his anger fades, and envelop his displeased countenance with propitious looks of pity and mercy.”

The virgins were holding branches of laurel that they were going to make into a wreath that Tamburlaine would wear if he showed pity to them and to the other citizens of Damascus.

She continued, “Leave us, my lord, and loving countrymen. What simple virgins may persuade, we will. We will do our best to persuade Tamburlaine to save all of our lives.”

The Governor of Damascus replied, “Farewell, sweet virgins, on whose safe return depend our city, liberty, and lives.”

— 5.2 —

The virgins of Damascus had left the city and were now in Tamburlaine’s camp. Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, and others walked over to the virgins. Tamburlaine was wearing black clothing, and he was very melancholy.

He said, referring to the virgins, “What! Are the turtledoves frightened out of their nests? Alas, poor fools, must you be the first who shall feel the destruction of Damascus I have sworn?”

“The city rulers know my customs of warfare. Couldn’t they as well have sent you out when first appeared my milk-white flags, through which sweet mercy threw her gentle beams, casting them on Damascus’ disdainful eyes as now when fury and incensed hate flings slaughtering terror from my coal-black tents, and tells truly that your submission comes too late?”

The first virgin said, “Most happy King and Emperor of the Earth, image of honor and nobility, for whom the divine powers have made the world and on whose throne the holy Graces sit” — the three Graces, aka Charities, were goddesses of charm, beauty, and gracefulness — “in whose sweet person is comprised the sum of nature’s skill and heavenly majesty, pity our plights!

“Oh, pity poor Damascus!

“Pity our old people, within whose silver hairs honor and reverence evermore have reigned.

“Pity the marriage bed, where many a lord, in the prime and glory of his loving joy, embraces now with tears of pity and blood the apprehensive body of his fearful wife, whose cheeks and hearts, so tormented with fearful imaginings that they think that your powerful, never-resting arm will part their bodies and deprive their souls of heavens of comfort that they might enjoy as they age.

“Now all the people of Damascus grow pale and withered to the death, for grief because our ruthless Governor of Damascus has thus refused the mercy of your hand, whose scepter angels kiss and Furies dread. All the people of Damascus also grieve for the loss of their liberties, their loves, or their lives. We regret that the Governor of Damascus did not earlier surrender to you.

“Oh, then, for these, and for such as we ourselves, for us, for infants, and for all our lives, which never nourished thought against your rule, pity, oh, pity, sacred Emperor, the prostrate homage of this wretched town” — the virgins prostrated themselves before Tamburlaine — “and take in sign thereof this gilded wreath, whereto each man in a position of ruling authority has given his hand, and has wished, as worthy subjects, to have the happy opportunity to ceremonially adorn your royal brows and crown you with this wreath even as with the true Egyptian diadem.”

If Tamburlaine were to accept and wear the wreath, then that would mean that he had accepted the virgins' petition to him and he would not kill the citizens of Damascus. The wreath was also a symbol of the intention of the citizens of Damascus to regard him as their legitimate ruler.

Tamburlaine replied, "Virgins, in vain you labor to prevent that which my honor swears shall be performed. Behold my sword. What do you see at the point?"

The first virgin replied, "Nothing but fear and deadly steel, my lord."

Tamburlaine said, "Your full-of-fear minds are thick and misty then, for there sits Death; there sits imperious Death, traveling his circuit along the slicing edge of my sword."

Tamburlaine was comparing Death to a traveling judge whose circuit — accustomed path as he traveled from one court to another — was the path traveled by Tamburlaine's sword as he fought in battle.

He continued, "But it pleases me that you shall not see him there. He now is seated on my horsemen's spears, and on their points his fleshless skeletal body feeds."

Then he ordered, "Techelles, immediately go charge — order — a few of them to charge these dames and present to the virgins my servant, Death, sitting in scarlet — a red judge's robe, and blood — on their ready spears."

The virgins begged, "Oh, pity us!"

"Away with them, I say, and show them Death," Tamburlaine ordered.

Techelles and some soldiers took the virgins away.

Tamburlaine said, "I will not spare these proud Egyptians, nor change my customary martial practices for all the wealth of the river Gihon's golden waves."

A river that watered the Garden of Eden divided into four rivers. According to Genesis 2:13, the second river was Gihon: "*And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same compasseth the whole land of Cush*" (1599 Geneva Bible). Gihon is often identified with the Nile.

He continued, "I will not spare these proud Egyptians for the love of Venus, even if she would leave the angry god of arms and lie with me."

Venus, goddess of sexual passion, had had an affair with Mars, god of war.

Tamburlaine continued, "They have refused the offer of their lives and they know that my customary military practices are as peremptory and absolutely decided as are wrathful planets, death, or destiny."

Techelles returned.

Tamburlaine asked him, "Have your horsemen shown the virgins Death?"

"They have, my lord," Techelles answered, "and on Damascus' walls they have hoisted up the virgins' slaughtered carcasses."

Tamburlaine said, "That is a sight as toxic to their souls, I think, as are Thessalian drugs or mithridate."

Drugs can be used to cure people, and mithridate is a poison antidote. These things are hateful to the people of Damascus because the sight of the slaughtered virgins makes them wish not to prolong life because they know that they will die just like the virgins did. Some citizens are likely thinking that suicide by poison is a better and more honorable death than being slaughtered by Tamburlaine's warriors. The Median lord Agydas and the ancient Roman Cato the Younger considered suicide to be an honorable death in their situations.

Thessalian women are medicine women. A tradition states that Medea threw away her basket of medicinal plants, and the plants sprouted on Thessalian soil. According to a myth, Medea restored the health of Aeson, Jason's father, by withdrawing his blood, adding medicine to it, and then infusing it back into his body. Tamburlaine would withdraw the blood from the bodies of the citizens of Damascus, but the blood would not be infused back into their bodies.

Tamburlaine ordered, "But go, my lords, put the rest of the citizens of Damascus to the sword."

Everyone except Tamburlaine exited. He began a meditation on beauty and mercy and honor:

"Ah, fair Zenocrate! Divine Zenocrate! Fair is too foul an epithet for you, who feel extreme sorrow out of love for your country and feel fear that you will see harm come to your kingly father.

"You wipe your watery cheeks with your disheveled hair; and, like Flora, goddess of flowers, in her morning's pride, shaking her silver tresses in the air, you rain on the earth dissolved pearls — tears — in showers, and sprinkle blue sapphires — tears that catch the blue color of the sky — on your shining face, where Beauty, the mother of the Muses, sits, and writes with her ivory pen a commentary on the beauty of you, Zenocrate, taking instructions from your flowing eyes — eyes that when Ebena, personification of Night, steps to Heaven, in the silence of your solemn evening's walk, making the mantle of the richest night, the Moon, the planets, and the meteors, light. The Moon, the planets, and the meteors all receive their light from your eyes.

"There in your beautiful, sorrowful face angels in their crystal armors fight a divisive battle with my thoughts that are tempted to show mercy for Egypt's freedom and the Sultan's life, his life that so consumes Zenocrate with anxiety, whose sorrows lay more siege to my soul than all my army to Damascus' walls.

"Neither Persia's sovereign nor the Turk troubled my senses with thoughts of defeat as much as does Zenocrate. Zenocrate's beauty threatens to defeat me by making me merciful.

"What is beauty, ask my sufferings, then?

"If all the pens that poets ever held had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts, and every sweetness that inspired their hearts, their minds, and their meditations on admired themes ...

"If all the heavenly quintessence — the most essential part — they distill from their immortal flowers of poetry, wherein, as in a mirror, we perceive the highest reaches of a human poetic intelligence ...

"If all of these had achieved the poets' goal of describing perfect beauty in one poem and if all of these had combined in describing beauty's worthiness ...



“Yet there would hover in the poets’ restless heads one thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least, which no creative power can distill into words and express.”

That one thought, one grace, one wonder is a paradox. One ought to pursue virtue, and virtue ought to encourage virtue. Virtue is excellence, and many kinds of excellence exist. One virtue is bodily excellence, or beauty. Another virtue is military excellence, which Tamburlaine believed in his case means having a code, and sticking to that code. To Tamburlaine, it is honorable to keep his word, and if he has sworn to kill all the citizens of a city that surrenders on the third day, then that is what he should do.

Zenocrate possesses the virtue of beauty, and that virtue ought to encourage Tamburlaine’s virtue, he believes, but paradoxically it does not, instead encouraging him to be merciful and do the dishonor of breaking his sworn oath.

Tamburlaine continued:

“How unseemly it is for my sex, my discipline of arms and chivalry, my nature, and the terror of my name, to harbor effeminate and faint and weak thoughts!”

Zenocrate’s beauty tempts Tamburlaine to show mercy to her father and at least some Egyptians. Indeed, his meditation now is evidence that he is tempted to show mercy to the virgins of Damascus. To Tamburlaine, to show mercy is to break his word. To Tamburlaine, no poet can explain how virtue can lead to lack of virtue.

The virtue is appreciating beauty, and the lack of virtue is not doing what he said he would do — not following his military code. For Tamburlaine to be true to himself, he has to kill the people he said he would kill.

Tamburlaine continued:

“But we must admit that beauty merits applause, and we must admit that the soul of man is touched instinctively by beauty, and we must admit that every warrior who is rapt and smitten with love of fame, of valor, and of victory, must necessarily have beauty beat on his thoughts.

“I thus both conceiving of and responding to beauty and subduing and controlling that response, shall cause the world to believe, for all my low birth, that virtue — excellence, which in my case is excellence as a military commander — solely is the high point of glory, and forms men with true nobility.”

Tamburlaine believed that he could be a man of true nobility if he could both appreciate and respond to beauty and yet resist the temptations that beauty led him to — such as the temptation of showing mercy when he had sworn he would not show mercy.

He continued:

“What is it that I must conceive of and respond to and that I must subdue and control?”

“It is that which has stooped the topmost of the gods and stopped the tempest of the gods who have come even from the fiery star-spangled veil of Heaven, to feel the lovely and lowly warmth of shepherds’ flames and enter cottages strewn with reeds.”

The classical gods often fell in love with and slept with mortals. In order to sleep with the mortal woman Mnemosyne, Jupiter, the King of the gods, disguised himself as a humble

shepherd, and so the topmost of the gods stooped.

Jupiter is the god of *xenia*, which is often translated as hospitality. He grew angry at mortals in a certain region because of their lack of hospitality, and he and Mercury went in disguise to that region and knocked on doors and asked for hospitality. Ancient Greece had no inns, and so this was the accepted way of getting a meal and a place to stay. All of the heads of households in the region refused them hospitality except for an elderly couple named Baucis and Philemon, who invited them into their humble cottage. In gratitude, Jupiter and Mercury destroyed all the homes in the region except for the home of Baucis and Philemon. Here, the beauty of hospitality had stopped the tempest — anger — of the gods and caused them to be merciful.

Tamburlaine continued:

“Let me repeat: I thus both conceiving of and responding to beauty and subduing and controlling that response, shall cause the world to believe, for all my low birth, that virtue — excellence, in my case excellence as a military commander — solely is the high point of glory, and forms men with true nobility.”

Tamburlaine was as good as his word: While meditating on Zenocrate’s beauty, he had allowed his soldiers to slaughter all the inhabitants — men, women, and children — of Damascus. He knew that this would cause Zenocrate anguish because Damascus was in the territory controlled by her father, the Sultan of Egypt.

He stopped, and then he asked, “Who’s within there?”

Two or three attendants entered the tent.

Tamburlaine asked, “Has Bajazeth been fed today?”

“Yes, my lord,” an attendant replied.

“Bring him forth,” Tamburlaine ordered, “and let us know if Damascus has been ransacked.”

The attendants exited.

Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, and others arrived.

Techelles said, “The town is ours, my lord, and a fresh supply of conquest and of spoil is offered to us.”

“That’s well, Techelles,” Tamburlaine said. “What’s the news?”

“The Sultan of Egypt and the King of Arabia together march on us with such eager violence that it is as if there were no way but one with us.”

For the Egyptians, this is the “no way but one with us”: “The Egyptians and Arabians are going to take the lives of Tamburlaine and his soldiers.”

Tamburlaine replied, “No more than one there’s not, I promise you, Techelles.”

For Tamburlaine, this is the “no way but one with us”: “We are going to take the lives of the Egyptians and Arabians.”

The Moors brought in the Turk, Bajazeth, in his cage. Zabina followed them.

“We know the victory is ours, my lord,” Theridamas said, referring to a future victory, “but let us save the reverend Sultan of Egypt’s life for fair Zenocrate who so laments his state.”

Using the majestic plural, Tamburlaine said, “That we will chiefly see to, Theridamas. We will do it for sweet Zenocrate, whose worthiness deserves a conquest over every heart.”

He then said to Bajazeth, “And now, my footstool, if I lose the battle, do you hope for liberty and restitution?”

Then he ordered, “Here let him stay, my good sirs, away from the tents, until we have made us ready to fight on the battlefield.”

Then he said, “Pray for us, Bajazeth; we are going.”

Everyone exited except Bajazeth and Zabina.

“Go, never to return with victory!” Bajazeth said as Tamburlaine and the others exited. “May millions of men surround thee about, and gore thy body with as many wounds! May sharp barbed arrows light upon thy horse! May Furies from the lake of the black Cocytus break up the earth, and with their firebrands force you to run upon the life-destroying pikes! May volleys of shot pierce through thy charmed skin, and may every projectile be dipped in poisoned drugs! Or may roaring cannons sever all thy joints, blasting them high in the sky and making thee mount as high as eagles soar!”

Zabina said, “Let all the swords and lances in the battlefield stick in Tamburlaine’s breast just as they fit in their proper rooms — their sheaths! At every pore of his body let blood come dropping forth, so that lingering pains may massacre his heart and madness send his damned soul to Hell!”

“Ah, fair Zabina,” Bajazeth said, “we may curse his power, the heavens may frown, the earth may quake for anger, but such a favorable astrological star has influence in his sword as rules the skies and overrules the gods more than Cimmerian Styx or destiny.”

The ancient gods were not omnipotent; they sometimes were forced to do what they didn’t want to do. Phaëthon, the mortal son of the Sun-god, asked for a gift, which his father swore an inviolable oath to give to him. The gift was to be allowed to drive the Sun-chariot across the sky. Because his father had sworn an inviolable oath, he had to grant it.

The ancient gods were not omniscient; they did not know everything and so could be tricked. In Book 14 of Homer’s *Iliad*, Hera wants to trick Zeus. To do so, she needs the god of Sleep to put Zeus to sleep so that the Greeks, whom she supports, can rally against the Trojans. To get the god of Sleep’s help, she tells him that she will give him Pasithea, one of the Graces, to marry. This makes him happy, but he makes her swear an oath on the inviolable waters of the Styx that she will keep her word. Hera’s trick works: Sleep puts Zeus to sleep, and the Greek troops rally.

The gods also cannot alter destiny, aka fate. Zeus’ mortal son Sarpedon is fated to die in the Trojan War, In Book 16 of the *Iliad*, Sarpedon fights Patroclus, and Zeus knows that Sarpedon will die. Zeus is tempted to go against fate and save Sarpedon’s life, but Hera tells him that if he does, the other gods and goddesses will want to save the lives of their mortal children. This apparently would have very bad effects on the universe. Saving Sarpedon’s life would have such bad consequences that Zeus is forced to allow his son to die.

Zeus' Roman name is Jupiter, and Hera's Roman name is Juno.

According to Bajazeth, Tamburlaine has more power over the gods than do inviolable oaths and destiny.

Bajazeth continued, "And then shall we in this detested manner remain" — he could not bring himself to say "live" — "with shame, with hunger, and with horror, clutching our bowels with thoughts bending back to our former glory, and have no hope to end our frenzied fears and anguish."

Zabina said, "Then is there left no Mahomet, no god, no fiend from Hell to pray to, is there no Lady Fortune, and is there no hope of an end to our infamous, monstrous slaveries?"

"Gape open, earth, and let the infernal fiends below view up here a Hell as hopeless and as full of fear as are the withered blasted banks of Erebus — the dark passage leading to Hell — where the shaking ghosts of the dead with ever-howling groans hover about the ugly ferryman Charon to get a passage to Elysium!"

Charon ferried spirits across the Styx into the Land of the Dead. Elysium is the part of the Land of the Dead that good souls go to. To Zabina, any part of the Land of the Dead would be Elysium in comparison to her present life.

"Why should we live" — Zabina gave a cry of distress — "as wretches, beggars, slaves!"

"Why do we live, Bajazeth, and metaphorically build up nests so high within the region of the air, living on false hopes and building castles in the air, exposing ourselves by living long in this oppression, thereby ensuring that all the world will see us and laugh to scorn the former triumphs of our mightiness in this obscure infernal servitude we suffer?"

Bajazeth said, "Oh, life, more loathsome to my vexed and troubled thoughts than the foul vomit of the snakes of the Styx — vomit that fills the nooks of Hell with stagnant, unmoving air, infecting all the ghosts with cureless griefs!"

"Oh, dreary instruments — eyes — of my loathed sight, that see my crown, my honor, and my name thrust under the yoke of a thief and see my captivity to a thief, why do you still feed on day's accursed beams, and not sink entirely into my tortured soul?"

"You see my wife, my Queen, and my Empress, brought up and supported by the hand of Fame, Queen of fifteen tributary Queens, now thrown to employments of black degradation, smeared with blots of basest drudgery and menial work, and slave to shame, disdain, and misery.

"Accursed Bajazeth, whose words of pity that would with pity cheer Zabina's heart, and make our souls dissolve in ceaseless tears, sharp hunger bites upon and grips the root from whence the issue of my thoughts break."

Bajazeth's extreme hunger prevented him from thinking of and saying compassionate words to Zabina.

He continued, "Oh, poor Zabina! Oh, my Queen, my Queen! Fetch me some water for my burning breast, to cool and comfort me with longer life, so that in the shortened remainder of my life I may pour forth my soul into your arms with words of love whose moaning

intercourse has hitherto been prevented with wrath and hate of our inexpressible cursed inflictions.”

Zabina said, “Sweet Bajazeth, I will prolong your life as long as any blood or spark of breath can quench or cool the torments of my grief.”

She exited.

Alone, Bajazeth said, “Now, Bajazeth, shorten your poisoned days, and beat the brains out of your conquered head, since all other means of suicide are forbidden me.

“Oh, Sun — highest lamp of ever-living, immortal Jove, accursed day, infected with my griefs — hide now your stained face in endless night, and shut the windows of the luminous, radiant heavens.

“Let ugly darkness with her rusty coach encircled with tempests, wrapped in pitch-black clouds, smother the earth with never fading mists, and let the horses pulling Darkness’ coach breathe from their nostrils rebellious winds and dreadful thunderclaps, so that in this terror Tamburlaine may live, and my withering-away-from-sorrow soul, dissolved in the clear air, may still torture his tormented thoughts!

“Then let the stone-hearted spear of unfeeling cold pierce through the center of my withered heart, and make a passage for my loathed life!”

He brained himself against the cage.

Zabina returned and said, “What do my eyes see? My husband dead! His skull all split in two, his brains dashed out! The brains of Bajazeth, my lord and sovereign!

“Oh, Bajazeth, my husband and my lord!

“Oh, Bajazeth! Oh, Turk! Oh, Emperor!

“Give him his water? Not I. Bring milk and fire, and my blood I bring him again.

“Tear me in pieces.

“Give me the sword with a ball of incendiary wild-fire upon it.

“Down with him! Down with him!

“Go to, my child. Away! Away! Away!

“Ah, save that infant, save him, save him! I, even I, speak to her.

“The Sun was down. Streamers — pennons — white, red, black.

“Here, here, here! Fling the food in his face!

“Tamburlaine, Tamburlaine! Let the soldiers be buried. Hell, death, Tamburlaine, Hell!

“Make ready my coach, my chair, my jewels. I come! I come! I come!”

She ran against the cage and brained herself.

Zenocrate and Anippe arrived. Zenocrate was grieving so much over the deaths of the virgins and the other citizens of Damascus that at first she didn't notice the corpses of Bajazeth and Zabina.

Zenocrate said to herself, "Wretched Zenocrate, you have lived to see Damascus' walls dyed with Egyptian blood, the blood of your father's subjects and your countrymen. I have lived to see the streets strewn with the dis severed joints of men, I have lived to see the streets strewn with wounded bodies still gasping for life, and I have lived to see the most accursed sight of all: the Sun-bright troop of heavenly virgins and unspotted-by-sin maidens on horsemen's lances hoisted up and despite being guiltless forced to endure a cruel death.

"The looks of these virgins might make Mars, the angry god of arms, break his sword and mildly talk about love.

"When all their riders leveled their quivering spears for the charge against the virgins, then every deadly and formidable Tartarian steed that stamped on others with their thundering hooves, began to stop suddenly and stamp on the ground and rein themselves and pause, gazing upon the beauty of the virgins' looks.

"Ah, Tamburlaine, were you the cause of this, you who call me, Zenocrate, your dearest love?

"The virgins' lives were dearer to me, Zenocrate, than Zenocrate's own life, or anything except your own love."

Zenocrate now noticed the corpses of Bajazeth and Zabina and said, "But look, another bloody spectacle! Ah, wretched eyes, the enemies of my heart, how are you eyes of mine glutted with these grievous objects, and yet tell my soul more tales of bleeding suffering!

"Anippe, see whether they breathe or not."

Anippe examined the corpses of Bajazeth and Zabina and said, "No breath, nor sense, nor motion, in them both. Ah, madam, their slavery and the pitiless cruelty of Tamburlaine have forced them to do this!"

Zenocrate said, "Earth, cast up fountains of lava from your entrails, and wet your cheeks because of the untimely and too-early deaths of Bajazeth and Zabina.

"Shake with the weight of their corpses in an earthquake as a sign of fear and grief.

"Blush with shame, Heaven, you that gave them honor at their birth and let them die a death so barbarous.

"You people who are proud of treacherous imperial rule and place your chiefest good in earthly pomp, behold the Turk and his great Empress!

"Ah, Tamburlaine my love, sweet Tamburlaine, who fights for scepters and for slippery, hard-to-hold-on-to crowns, behold the Turk and his great Empress!

"You, Tamburlaine, under the guidance of your happy, fortunate stars, sleep every night with conquest and victory on your brows and yet you would shun the fortune-changing turns of war out of fear if you could feel the distress that Bajazeth and Zabina felt, behold the Turk and his great Empress!

"Ah, mighty Jove and holy Mahomet, forgive my love for Tamburlaine!

“Oh, pardon his contempt of earthly fortune and his contempt of regard for pity.”

Tamburlaine did not show pity because he held in contempt the turn of the Wheel of Fortune. He believed that he would stay at the top of the wheel and therefore he felt no empathy and no pity for those who had fallen.

Zenocrate continued, “And let not conquest, ruthlessly pursued, be equally incensed against his life as it was against the lives of this great Turk and unlucky Empress!”

“And pardon me who was not moved with pity to see Bajazeth and Zabina live so long in misery!

“Ah, what may chance to happen to you, Zenocrate?”

Anippe said, “Madam, calm yourself, and know that your love — Tamburlaine — has Lady Fortune so much at his command that she shall stay her hand and turn her wheel no more, as long as life maintains the mighty arm of him who fights for honor so that he can adorn your head with a crown.”

Philemus, a messenger, arrived.

Zenocrate asked, “What other sad, heavy news now brings Philemus?”

He replied, “Madam, your father, and the Arabian King, the first man who loved your excellence, comes now, as Turnus against Aeneas did, armed with lances into the Egyptian battlefields, ready to do battle against my lord, King Tamburlaine.”

When Aeneas landed in Italy after the Trojan War, he fought a war against Turnus, leader of the Rutulian soldiers. He killed Turnus in single combat and won the right to marry the Italian Princess Lavinia.

Zenocrate said, “Now shame and duty, love and fear present a thousand sorrows to my martyred soul.

“Whom should I wish to achieve the fatal victory, when my poor pleasures are divided thus, and racked by duty from my cursed heart?

“My father and my first-betrothed love must fight against my life and present love.

“The change in allegiance I have made condemns my faith and makes my deeds infamous through the world.”

She had, in fact, made a change in allegiance: She would support her beloved Tamburlaine instead of her beloved father and her first-betrothed love in the battle. But no matter whom she supported, people would blame her.

If Zenocrate supported her beloved father instead of her beloved Tamburlaine in the battle, then that would show a lack of loyalty to Tamburlaine, and people in the world would regard her as disloyal to him.

If Zenocrate supported her beloved Tamburlaine instead of her beloved father in the battle, then that would show a lack of loyalty to her beloved father, and people in the world would regard her as disloyal to him.

If Zenocrate supported her first-betrothed love instead of her beloved Tamburlaine in the battle, then that would show a lack of loyalty to her beloved Tamburlaine, and people in the world would regard her as disloyal to him.

If Zenocrate supported her beloved Tamburlaine instead of her first-betrothed love in the battle, then that would show a lack of loyalty to her first-betrothed love, and people in the world would regard her as disloyal to him.

Zenocrate continued:

“But as the gods, to end the Trojans’ toil, deprived Turnus of Lavinia and fatally enriched Aeneas’ love, so, for a final end to my griefs, to pacify both my country and my love, Tamburlaine must by the gods’ resistless powers, by virtue of a gentle victory, conclude a treaty of honor in accordance with my hope. Then, as the divine Powers have preordained, Tamburlaine will provide happy safety for my father’s life and send the same happy safety for the life of the fair King of Arabia.”

Zenocrate was hoping that Tamburlaine would win a victory with little loss of life and the divine Powers would ensure that he spare the lives of her father and the man she had first been engaged to.

The battle took place, and Tamburlaine won the victory. Alcidamas, the King of Arabia, mortally wounded, walked near Zenocrate.

Not seeing Zenocrate, King Alcidamas of Arabia said to himself, “What cursed power guides the murdering hands of this infamous tyrant’s soldiers, ensuring that no escape may save their enemies, and that fortune will not keep themselves from victory?”

As he lay down, he added, “Lie down, you King of Arabia, wounded to the death, and let Zenocrate’s fair eyes behold that, as for her you bore these wretched weapons, these wretched arms, even so for her you die in these arms, leaving your blood for witness of your love.”

Zenocrate went to him, cradled his head, and said, “I am too dear a witness for such love, my lord. Behold Zenocrate, the cursed object whose fortune in life has never conquered her sorrows and griefs.

“Behold her wounded in conceit for you as much as your fair body is wounded for me!”

Zenocrate’s words were ambiguous:

1) “Behold her wounded in her mind for you as much as your fair body is wounded for me!”

This meant that she really did mourn his death. Indeed, the sights of the dead and wounded hurt her mind.

2) “Behold her wounded in your mind as much as your fair body is wounded for me!”

This meant that he should pretend that she really did mourn his death.

Zenocrate meant the first meaning, but Alcidamas thought she meant the second meaning. He, nevertheless, was a good man and he was happy if she was happy. Apparently, Zenocrate loved Tamburlaine despite being — Alcidamas thought — his captive. This victory would make the man she loved much more famous and powerful, although it would kill the man who first loved her.



King Alcidamas of Arabia said, “Then I shall die with a fully contented heart, having beheld divine Zenocrate, whose sight would take away my life with joy, as now it brings sweetness to my wound, if I had not been wounded as I am. Simply seeing you kills with joy, even without this wound.

“Ah, if only the deadly pangs I suffer now would lend another hour’s license to my tongue, so that we could talk about some sweet occurrences of good fortune that have happened to you, you whose merits make you deserve them, in this bondage that is unworthy of you, and that I might know the secret of the state of your deserved contentment and your love.

“But, making now a virtue of my seeing you, to drive all sorrow from my fainting soul, since death denies me any further cause of joy, deprived of care, my heart with comfort dies, since your desired hand shall close my eyes.”

He died.

Tamburlaine arrived, leading Zenocrate’s father: the Sultan of Egypt. Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, and others also arrived.

Tamburlaine said to the Sultan of Egypt, “Come, fortunate father of Zenocrate, a title higher than your Sultan’s name. Although my right hand has thus enslaved you, your princely daughter here shall set you free. She has calmed the fury of my sword, which before this time has been bathed in streams of blood as vast and deep as the Euphrates or the Nile.”

Zenocrate said, “Oh, sight thrice welcome to my joyful soul: To see the King, my father, come out safe from a dangerous battle against my conquering love!”

“We are well met, my only-dear Zenocrate, although with the loss of Egypt and my crown,” the Sultan of Egypt said.

“It was I, my lord, who got the victory,” Tamburlaine said to him, “and therefore don’t grieve at your overthrow, since I shall render all into your hands, and add more strength to your dominions than has ever yet sustained the Egyptian crown.

“Mars, the god of war, resigns his position to me, intending to make me general of the world.

“Jove, viewing me in arms, looks pale and wan, fearing my power should pull him from his throne just like he pulled his father from the throne.

“Wherever I come the Fatal Sisters — the Three Fates — sweat, and so does grisly Death, because of running to-and-fro to do their ceaseless homage to my sword. I keep the Fates busy with cutting the threads of life, and I keep Death busy collecting the newly made ghosts of the dead.

“And here in Africa, where it seldom rains, since I arrived with my triumphant army, swelling clouds, drawn from wide-gasping wounds, have been often dissolved in bloody purple showers.”

The spurts of blood caused by his soldiers’ swords fell like rain in Egypt; in addition, people in this culture believed that the Sun could cause pools of blood to evaporate, form clouds, and become red rain.

Tamburlaine continued, "This is an evil omen that might terrify the earth, and make it quake at every drop of blood it drinks. Millions of souls sit on the banks of the Styx, waiting the return of Charon's boat, which is kept busy ferrying souls to the Land of the Dead.

"Hell and Elysium swarm with men whom I have sent from several battlefields to spread my fame through Hell and up to Heaven.

"And look, my lord, at a sight of unusual importance, Emperors and Kings lie breathless at my feet. The Turk and his great Empress, as it seems, left to themselves while we were at the battle, have desperately dispatched their slavish lives. With them the King of Arabia, too, has left his life.

"These are all sights of power that grace my victory, and as such they are fit for Tamburlaine to see.

"By looking at these sights, as if looking in a mirror, I may see my honor, which consists of shedding blood when men presume to wage war against me."

The Sultan of Egypt said, "Mighty has God and Mahomet made your hand, renowned Tamburlaine, to whom all Kings by force of necessity must yield their crowns and empires, and I am pleased with this my overthrow, if, as befits a person of your state, you have treated Zenocrate with honor."

Tamburlaine said, "Her state and person lack no pomp, as you can see, and as for all blot of foul lack of chastity, I call on Heaven to witness that her heavenly self is clear.

"Now then let me seek no more distant time to grace her princely temples with the Persian crown. Instead, here these Kings who attend on my fortunes, and have been crowned for proven worthiness, even by this hand that shall establish them, shall now, adjoining all their hands with mine, invest her here as my Queen of Persia. She and I shall be married.

"What do the noble Sultan of Egypt and Zenocrate say to that?"

The Sultan of Egypt said, "I yield with thanks and professions of endless honor to you because of her love of you and because of your love of her."

Tamburlaine said, "Then I don't doubt that fair Zenocrate will soon consent to satisfy us both."

"Otherwise I should much forget myself, my lord," Zenocrate said.

Theridamas said, "Then let us set the crown upon her head; the crown has long awaited so high a seat."

"My hand is ready to perform the deed," Techelles said, "for now her marriage time shall give us a time for rest."

Holding the crown, Usumcasane said to Tamburlaine, "And here's the crown, my lord; help set it on her head."

"So then sit down, divine Zenocrate," Tamburlaine said.

She sat on a throne.

Tamburlaine said, “Here we crown you Queen of Persia and of all the Kingdoms and dominions that recently the power of Tamburlaine has subdued.”

He set the crown on her head.

Tamburlaine continued:

“Just like Juno, when the Giants who threw mountains at her brother Jove were suppressed, so my love looks. In her brows she portrays triumphs and trophies for my victories, or she portrays Latona’s daughter, Diana, who is devoted to arms, adding more courage to my conquering mind.”

Actually, Diana was much more devoted to hunting with weapons than to battling with weapons.

Tamburlaine continued:

“To gratify you, sweet Zenocrate, Egyptians, Moors, and men of Asia, from Barbary on the north coast of Africa to the western India, shall pay a yearly tribute to thy father; and from the boundaries of Africa to the banks of the Ganges shall his mighty arm extend.

“And now, my lords and loving followers, who won Kingdoms by your martial deeds, cast off your armor, put on scarlet robes of peaceful lawmakers, mount and rise up to your royal places of estate and be Kings, surrounded with troops of noblemen, and there make laws to rule your provinces.”

Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane were now able to rule their Kingdoms.

Tamburlaine continued:

“Hang up your weapons on Alcides’ post — the doorpost of the temple dedicated to Hercules, another name for whom is Alcides — for Tamburlaine takes a truce with all the world.”

He said to Zenocrate, “Your first-betrothed love, the King of Arabia, we shall with honor, as is fitting, entomb with this great Turk and his fair Empress. Then, after all these solemn funeral rites, we will perform our celebrated rites of marriage.”

#### **NOTA BENE (TAMBURLAINE, Part 1)**

#### **— 4.2 —**

The quotation in Act 4, Scene 2, comes from a footnote in W.R.M. Lamb’s translation of *Timaeus* 39d:

Plato. *Plato in Twelve Volumes, Vol. 9* translated by W.R.M. Lamb. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1925.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0180%3Atext%3DTim.%3Asection%3D39d>

#### **— 4.3 —**

One source that states that these two stories — Cephalus and the wolf, and Cephalus and Procris — are about two different Cephaluses is this:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Cephalus>

— 5.1 —

“Draw down the moon, hide it in a mirror: On Thessalian medicine women.” 5 April 2018.

“‘Thessalian woman’: refers to medicine women, since the Thessalians are accused of being sorcerers. Even to the present day, Thessalian women are called medicine women (*pharmakides*). They say it’s because when Medea fled, she tossed her basket of medicines (*pharmaka*) and there they sprouted.”

<https://www.ancientmedicine.org/home/2018/4/5/bring-down-the-moon-hide-it-in-a-mirror-on-thessalian-medicine-women>

## Chapter 8: TAMBURLAINE, Part 2

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 2)

The Prologue.

#### **Male Characters**

Tamburlaine, King of Persia.

*Tamburlaine's Sons:*

- Calyphas, Tamburlaine's oldest son.
- Amyras, Tamburlaine's middle son.
- Celebinus, Tamburlaine's youngest son.

*Tamburlaine's Kings:*

- Theridamas, King of Algiers.
- Techelles, King of Fez.
- Usumcasane, King of Morocco (nicknamed Casane).

*Other Kings:*

Orcanes, King of Natolia. (Natolia is bigger than modern Anatolia; it includes all of the promontory of Asia Minor; approximately Turkey.)

- King of Trebizond.
- King of Syria.
- King of Jerusalem.
- King of Amasia.
- Gazellus, Viceroy of Byron, which is located near Babylon.
- Uribassa, Viceroy of a region that is not named.
- Sigismund, King of Hungary.

*Lords of Hungary*

- Frederick, Lord of Buda.
- Baldwin, Lord of Bohemia.

Callapine, son to Bajazeth and prisoner to Tamburlaine.

Almeda, his keeper.

The Captain of Balsera.

His Son.

Governor of Babylon.

Maximus.

Perdicas.

A Captain.

A Messenger.

### **Female Characters**

Zenocrate, wife to Tamburlaine.

Olympia, wife to the Captain of Balsera.

### **Minor Characters**

Lords, Citizens, Physicians, Soldiers, Pioneers (army ditch diggers and laborers), Turkish Concubines, Attendants

### ***Nota Bene***

At the end of *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*, Tamburlaine and Zenocrate married. They now have three mostly grown sons.

In *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*, Tamburlaine made Kings of his generals: He made Theridamas the King of Algiers, Techelles the King of Fez, and Usumcasane the King of Morocco. At that time, they were Kings in name only, but since the end of *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*, they have been fighting successfully to establish themselves as Kings in reality.

The Ottoman Turks have recovered from their defeat in *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*, and they have grown powerful again. Tamburlaine is building an army to fight them. He has as a prisoner Callapine, the son to Bajazeth, the Turkish Emperor who died in *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*.

Barbary is the part of North Africa that is west of Egypt.

Cynthia is the personification of the Moon; sometimes, her name is used to refer to the Moon.

Apollo is the personification of the Sun; sometimes, his name is used to refer to the Sun.

## **THE PROLOGUE (*TAMBURLAINE, Part 2*)**

The universal acclaim Tamburlaine received,

When he arrived last upon our stage,

Has made our poet — Christopher Marlowe — pen his second part,

Where death cuts off the progress of Tamburlaine's pomp

And the three murderous Fates — Clotho, who spins the thread of life; Lachesis, who measures the thread of life; and Atropos, who cuts the thread of life — throw all his triumphs

down.

But what became of fair Zenocrate,  
And with how many cities' sacrifice  
He celebrated her sad funeral,  
Tamburlaine himself in his own presence shall unfold at large.

## ACT 1 (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 2)

### — 1.1 —

With the death of Bajazeth, the Turkish Emperor, the new Turkish Emperor should be Callapine, his son. Callapine, however, was a prisoner of Tamburlaine in Egypt, and so Deputy Kings, aka Viceroys, were ruling his territories. Orcanes, King of Natolia, was the most powerful and ruled the greatest amount of territory among these Kings.

On the southern bank of the Danube River in Hungary in Europe, he was meeting with two other Deputy Kings. One King was Gazellus, Viceroy of Byron, and the other was Uribassa. With them were their train of attendants, with drummers and trumpeters.

As far as King Orcanes of Natolia was concerned, the meeting was necessary because of Tamburlaine, who was raising an army to fight the Turks. King Orcanes of Natolia was considering making a truce with the Europeans, whose territory in southeast Europe the Turks had been encroaching on. This would free troops to fight Tamburlaine. On the other hand, the Turks could fight the Europeans and try to win more territory. Both sides — the Turks and the Europeans — had armies ready to fight each other.

Soon King Sigismund of Hungary and two Hungarian lords named Frederick and Baldwin would arrive and join the meeting.

King Sigismund of Hungary and the two Hungarian lords were Christians. King Orcanes of Natolia and his fellow Viceroys and Deputy Kings were Muslims.

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “Distinguished Viceroys and Deputy Kings of these eastern parts, all of you — and me — were appointed to your positions by the son of great Bajazeth and sacred lord the mighty Callapine, who lives in Egypt as prisoner to that evil ‘slave’ Tamburlaine, who kept Callapine’s father in an iron cage.

“Now we have marched from fair Natolia two hundred leagues, and our warlike army in complete armor rests on the Danube’s banks, where Sigismund, the King of Hungary, is scheduled to meet our person to conclude a truce.”

By “our person,” he meant “me”: He was using the majestic plural.

He continued, “Pay attention! Shall we parley and negotiate with the Christian, or cross the stream and meet him in the battlefield?”

Gazellus, Viceroy of Byron, said, “King of Natolia, let us talk of peace. We are all glutted with the Christians’ blood, and we have a greater foe to fight against. That great foe is proud

Tamburlaine, who now in Asia, near Guiron, is setting his conquering feet and intends to burn Turkey as he goes.”

Guiron is a city on the upper Euphrates River; the city is located near the head of the Giulap River.

Actually, Tamburlaine was gathering his forces at Larissa, a seacoast town located close to Egypt’s border with Syria.

Gazellus, Viceroy of Byron, continued, “Against Tamburlaine, my lord, you must prepare your army to fight.”

Uribassa said, “Besides, King Sigismund of Hungary has brought from Christendom more than his military camp of stout Hungarians. The soldiers he leads include Slavs, Germans, cavalry, Swiss, and Danes, who with the halberd, lance, and murdering axe will put at risk that which we might otherwise with certainty hold.”

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “Even if from the farthest north, vast Greenland, which is encircled by the frozen Arctic Sea and inhabited with tall and sturdy men who are giants as big as the huge one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus, millions of soldiers cut through and cross the Arctic Circle southward, bringing the strength of Europe to these arms, our Turkish blades shall glide through all their throats, and make this open grassland a bloody swamp.”

Orcanes now talked about the Danube River, which empties into the Black Sea. He believed that it formed a current that went across the Black Sea to the Turkish city of Trebizond. From there the current went from the Black Sea through the Bosphorus into the Sea of Marmara and then through the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean Sea and through the area of the Mediterranean frequented by Italian sailors.

King Orcanes of Natolia continued, “The Danube River, which empties into the Black Sea and then runs to Trebizond in Natolia, shall carry, wrapped within its scarlet-with-blood waves, as martial presents to our friends at home the slaughtered bodies of these Christians. The bodies of those Christians will be proof to the Turks of our victory.

“The Mediterranean Sea, wherein the Danube River falls, shall by this battle of our Muslim army against the Christians be the Bloody Sea. The wandering sailors of proud Italy shall meet the bodies of those Christians, floating with the tide, beating in heaps against their argosies — their large merchant-ships — and make fair Europe, mounted on her bull, adorned with the wealth and riches of the world, alight from the bull and wear a woeful mourning robe. The slaughtered bodies of these Christians will make Italian sailors afraid.”

According to mythology, Jupiter fell in love with a mortal woman named Europa, who was the daughter of King Agenor of Phoenicia. He took the form of a white bull, coaxed her onto his back, and swam with her to the island of Crete. Europe is named after her.

Gazellus said, “Yet, brave Orcanes, Viceroy of the World and leader of the Turks as long as Callapine is imprisoned, since Tamburlaine has mustered all his men, marching from Cairo northward with his camp to Alexandria and the frontier towns, meaning to make a conquest of our land, it is necessary to parley and negotiate for a peace with King Sigismund of Hungary and save our forces for the hot assaults proud Tamburlaine intends to make against Natolia.”



King Orcanes of Natolia replied, “Viceroy of the city of Byron, you have spoken wisely. If my realm, the center of our empire, were once lost, all Turkey would be overthrown, and for that reason the Christians shall have peace.”

Referring to himself in the third person, he said, “Orcanes does not fear Slavs, Germans, cavalry, Swiss, and Danes, but great Tamburlaine — nor does Orcanes fear him, but he does fear Lady Fortune, who has made Tamburlaine great.”

Lady Fortune has a Wheel of Fortune that she turns, and as she turns it, a man’s fortune rises and becomes better or his fortune falls and becomes worse. For Tamburlaine, it appeared that she had stopped the Wheel of Fortune with Tamburlaine at the top.

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “We have insurgent renegade Grecians, Albanians, Sicilians, Jews, Arabians, Turks, and Moors, Natolians, Syrians, black Egyptians, Illyrians, Thracians, and Bithynians, enough to swallow forceless, weak King Sigismund of Hungary, yet scarcely enough to encounter Tamburlaine in battle.

“Tamburlaine brings a world of people to the battlefield.

“From Scythia to the oriental — eastern — border of India, where the raging Lantchidol Sea — part of the Indian Ocean — beats with its boisterous blows on the regions that a seaman has never yet discovered, all Asia is in arms with Tamburlaine.

“Even from the Canary Islands in the midst of the fiery Tropic of Cancer to Amazonia in the south of Africa under the Tropic of Capricorn, and from there northward as far as the Archipelago — the Aegean islands above north Africa between Greece and Turkey — all Africa is in arms with Tamburlaine.”

The Canary Islands can be thought of as being in the midst of the Tropic of Cancer because they are so close to the intersection of the Tropic of Cancer and the Prime Meridian.

King Orcanes of Natolia continued, “Therefore, Viceroys, the Christians must have peace.”

Tamburlaine’s army came from a large area: from the countries of the Barbary Coast in north Africa and from Persia and from Egypt and from India and from Scythia and from many areas in between with the main exception of Turkey. Indeed, much of Africa and Asia provided soldiers for Tamburlaine’s armies.

Drums and trumpets were heard, and now the Christians arrived for the parley: King Sigismund of Hungary, the Hungarian lords Frederick and Baldwin, and a train of many attendants, including drummers and trumpeters.

King Sigismund of Hungary said, “Orcanes, as our ambassadors promised thee, we, with our peers, have crossed the Danube’s stream to talk of friendly peace or deadly war. Take whichever thou wilt, for as the Romans used to do, I here present thee with a naked sword. If you choose to have war, then shake this blade at me. If peace, restore it to my hands again, and I will sheathe it to confirm the same.”

King Sigismund of Hungary referred to King Orcanes of Natolia using “thee” and “thou,” which were words a man of a higher social status used to refer to a man of a lower social status. He also did not call him by the title “King.” These were insults, and King Orcanes of Natolia would respond in kind.

“Wait, Sigismund,” King Orcanes of Natolia said. “Have thou forgotten that I am the man who with the cannon shook the walls of Vienna and made it dance upon the solid land as when an earthquake causes the massive foundation of the Earth to quiver about the axletree of Heaven?”

The axletree of Heaven is the axle or axis through the Earth around which the heavenly spheres revolve, according to the Ptolemaic theory of the universe.

King Orcanes of Natolia continued, “Have thou forgotten that I sent a shower of spears, mingled with powdered shot and feathered arrows with steel heads, so thick upon the blinking-with-fear-eyed burghers’ heads, that thou thyself, who were then only a Count Palatine with autonomy over a region granted to you by the Holy Roman Emperor, the King of Bohemia, and the Austrian Duke, sent heralds out, who servilely on their knees, in all your names desired a truce of me?”

“Have thou forgotten that to have me raise my siege, wagons of gold were set before my tent, stamped with the princely fowl — the eagle — that in her wings carries the fearful thunderbolts of Jove?”

“How can thou think of this and offer war to me?”

“Vienna was besieged, and I was there,” King Sigismund of Hungary replied. “Then I was a Count Palatine, but now I am a King and what we did was done out of extreme necessity.

“But now, Orcanes, view my royal army that covers and hides these plains and seems as vast and wide as does the desert of Arabia to those who stand on Baghdad’s lofty tower, or as does the ocean to the traveller who rests upon the snowy Apennine Mountains, and tell me whether I should stoop so low, or talk of peace with the Natolian King.”

The Turkish lord Gazellus said, “Kings of Natolia and of Hungary, we came from Turkey to confirm an alliance, and not to dare each other to go to the battlefield and fight. A friendly parley might befit both of you.”

The Hungarian lord Frederick said, “And we came from Europe with the same intention, which if your general Orcanes refuses or scorns, our tents are pitched and our men stand in military array, ready to charge you before you stir your feet.”

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “So ready are we, but yet, if Sigismund speaks as a friend, and does not insist upon terms that would wreck the treaty, here is his sword; let peace be ratified on these conditions that have been specified before and drawn with the advice of our ambassadors.”

He gave the sword to King Sigismund of Hungary, who said, “Then here I sheathe it and give thee my hand. I will never draw the sword out or conduct war against thyself or thy confederates, but while I live I will be at truce with thee.”

The words “thee” and “thy” could also be used among close friends — but were these two Kings friends?

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “But, Sigismund, confirm it with an oath, and swear in the sight of Heaven and by thy Christ.”

King Sigismund of Hungary said, “By Him Who made the world and saved my soul, the Son of God and a virgin maiden, sweet Jesus Christ, I solemnly swear and vow to keep this peace inviolable.”

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “By sacred Mahomet, the friend of God, whose holy Koran remains with us, whose glorious body, when he left the world, closed in a coffin mounted up in the air and hung on stately Mecca’s temple roof, I swear to keep this truce inviolable.

“As memorable witness of our league, each of us shall retain a scroll on which is written this treaty’s conditions and our solemn oaths, signed with our own hands.

“Now, Sigismund, if any Christian King should encroach upon the borders of thy realm, send word to that King that Orcanes of Natolia has confirmed this league beyond the Danube’s stream, and they will, trembling, sound a quick retreat because I am so feared among all nations.”

The treaty established peace between King Orcanes of Natolia and King Sigismund of Hungary, but it also required each of them to come to the aid of the other if a foreign army attacked one of them.

King Sigismund of Hungary said, “If any heathen potentate or King should invade Natolia, Sigismund will send a hundred thousand cavalry trained to the war, and backed by brave lancers of Germany, the strength and sinews and support of the imperial throne and seat of power.”

“I thank thee, Sigismund,” Orcanes said, “but when I war, all Asia Minor, Africa, and Greece follow my standard and my thundering drums.

“Come, let us go and banquet in our tents. I will dispatch the greater part of my army from here to fair Natolia and to Trebizond, to await my coming against proud Tamburlaine.

“Friend Sigismund and peers of Hungary, come, banquet and carouse with us a while, and then we will depart to our territories.”

— 1.2 —

Callapine talked with Almeda, his keeper. Tamburlaine kept Callapine prisoner in Egypt, south of Alexandria. Almeda’s job was to prevent Callapine from escaping.

Callapine said, “Sweet Almeda, pity the ruthless, pitiful plight of Callapine, the son of Bajazeth. I was born to be monarch of the western world — the Turkish Empire — yet I am detained here by cruel Tamburlaine.”

“My lord, I pity it, and with my heart I wish your release,” Almeda said, “but he whose wrath is death, my sovereign lord, renowned Tamburlaine, forbids you further liberty than this.”

Callapine was Almeda’s “lord,” but Tamburlaine, a much more powerful superior, was Almeda’s “sovereign lord.”

“Ah, if I were now but half so eloquent to paint in words what I’ll perform in deeds,” Callapine said, “I know you would depart from here with me.”

“Not for all Africa; therefore, don’t urge me to do that,” Almeda replied.

“Yet hear me speak, my gentle Almeda.”

“No speech to that end, if you please, sir.”

Callapine began, “By Cairo runs —”

Almeda interrupted, “No talk of running, I tell you, sir.”

“A little further, gentle Almeda.”

“Well, sir, what about this?” Almeda asked.

“By Cairo runs to the bay of Alexandria the stream of Darote,” Callapine said.

The Nile River runs from Cairo to the Mediterranean Sea, forming a delta close to the Mediterranean. Alexandria is in the western part of the delta, and Darote is a town in the delta on the part of the Nile leading to Alexandria. Callapine wanted to get to a ship at Darote and then sail to the Mediterranean and get into Turkish waters.

He continued, “In the stream of Darote, a Turkish galley of my royal fleet lies at anchor, awaiting my coming to the riverside, hoping by some means I shall be released. This galley, when I come aboard, will hoist up sail and soon put forth into the Mediterranean Sea, where we quickly may arrive in Turkish seas between the islands of Cyprus and of Crete.

“Then you shall see a hundred Kings and more, upon their knees, all bid me welcome home. Among so many crowns of burnished gold, choose which you want — all are at thy command.

“A thousand galleys, manned with Christian slaves, I freely give you, which shall cut the Straits of Gibraltar, and bring armadas — large war ships — from the coasts of Spain, laden with the gold of rich America.

“The Grecian virgins shall attend on you. They are skillful in music and in amorous songs, as fair as was Pygmalion’s ivory girl or lovely Io, who was metamorphosed.”

Pygmalion carved a statue of a beautiful woman out of ivory, fell in love with it, and prayed to the gods for a woman just like that. Venus heard his prayer, and she made the statue come alive, and Pygmalion and the woman, named Galatea, married.

Io was a mortal woman with whom Jupiter, King of the gods, had an affair. Jupiter’s jealous wife, Juno, changed Io into a white cow. (Another version of the myth states that Jupiter turned Io into a white cow in order to hide her from Juno.)

Callapine continued, “With naked negroes shall your coach be drawn, and, as you ride in triumph through the streets, the pavement underneath your chariot wheels shall be covered with Turkish carpets, and tapestries made of rich arras cloth hung about the walls, fit sights for your princely eye to pierce.

“A hundred Pashas, clothed in crimson silk, shall ride before you on steeds from the Barbary. And, when you walk, a golden canopy inlaid with precious stones, which shine as brightly as that fair veil of stars that covers all the world, when Phoebus the Sun-god, leaping from this hemisphere, descends his Sun-chariot downward to the Antipodes, who live on the opposite side of the Earth.

“And I will give you more than this, for all I cannot tell.”

“How far from here lies the galley, do you say?” Almeda asked.

“Sweet Almeda, it is scarcely half a league from here.”

A league is three miles, or three kilometers.

Almeda said, “But we need to not be seen going aboard!”

Callapine said, “Between the hollow hanging of a hill and the crooked bending of a craggy rock, the sails wrapped up, the mast and tackling and rigging down, the galley lies so well hidden that no one can find her.”

“I like that well,” Almeda said. “But tell me, my lord, if I should let you go, will you be as good as your word? Shall I be made a King for my labor?”

“As I am Callapine the Emperor, and by the hand of Mahomet I swear, you shall be crowned a King and be my equal.”

“Then here I swear, as I am Almeda, your keeper under Tamburlaine the Great — for keeper is the official designation and title I have as yet — even if Tamburlaine were to send a thousand armed men to intercept this aspiring enterprise, yet I will undertake the risk to conduct your grace away from here and I will die before I bring you back again!”

“Thanks, gentle Almeda. Then let us make haste, lest time be past and lingering hinder us both.”

“Whenever you will, my lord, I am ready,” Almeda said.

“I am ready even right now,” Callapine said, “and farewell, cursed Tamburlaine. Now I go to revenge my father’s death.”

— 1.3 —

Tamburlaine talked with Zenocrate and their three sons: Calyphas, Amyras, and Celebinus. Drummers and trumpeters were present. They were at Larissa, a seacoast town located close to Egypt’s border with Syria. (Larissa is the modern El Arish; it is a seacoast town located close to Egypt’s border with Israel.) Tamburlaine had traveled from Cairo to Alexandria and then headed east to Larissa, intending to travel a land route to Turkey.

Tamburlaine said, “Now, bright Zenocrate, you are the world’s fair eye, the Sun, whose beams light up and illuminate the lamps of Heaven. Your cheerful looks clear the cloudy air and clothe it in a crystal livery.

“Now rest here on fair Larissa plains where Egypt and the Turkish Empire are separated, between your sons who shall be Emperors, and every one commander of a world.”

Zenocrate replied, “Sweet Tamburlaine, when will you leave these arms — these weapons — and save your sacred person free from harm and the dangerous chances of the wrathful war?”

Tamburlaine replied, “When Heaven shall cease to move on both poles of the axle-tree of the Earth, and when the ground, whereon my soldiers march, shall rise aloft and touch the horned crescent moon, and not before, my sweet Zenocrate. Sit up, and rest yourself like a lovely Queen.

“So, now Zenocrate sits in pomp and majesty, and these, my sons, more precious in my eyes than all the wealthy kingdoms I have subdued, placed by her side, look on their mother’s face.

“But yet I think that their looks are gentle and affectionate, not martial as ought to be the sons of Tamburlaine. Water and air, being mixed in one, argue their lack of courage and lack of sharpness of intellect.”

This society believed that four elements — water, air, earth, and fire — made up everything, including human bodies. Tamburlaine’s sons, he complained, were made of lots of water and air, but they lacked earth and fire. Tamburlaine was afraid that this imbalance made his sons’ temperaments too gentle and affectionate. He would have preferred more earth and fire in his sons so that they would have sharp intelligence and courage.

Tamburlaine continued, “Their hair, as white as milk, and as soft as down — which should be like the quills of porcupines, as black as jet-colored coal, and as hard as iron or steel — reveals the fact that they are too dainty for the wars.

“Their fingers that are made to quaver and play on a lute, their arms that are made to hang about a lady’s neck, and their legs that are made to dance and leap in the air would make me think them bastards, not my sons, except that I know they issued from your womb, Zenocrate, who never looked on any other man but Tamburlaine.”

Zenocrate replied, “My gracious lord, our sons have their mother’s looks, but when they wish, they have their conquering father’s heart.

“This lovely boy, Celebinus, the youngest of the three, not long ago rode a Scythian steed, trotting his horse in the training ring, and tilting at a glove, which when he touched it with his slender rod, he reined his steed straightaway, and made him so curvet that I cried out for fear he would have fallen.”

The game of tilting at a glove involved riding on horseback and attempting to touch a glove with the tip of a lance. In a curvet, the rider suddenly reins the horse, causing the horse’s forelegs to rise and its hind legs to leap forward.

“Well done, my boy!” Tamburlaine said. “You shall have shield and lance, armor of proven strength, horse, helmet, and sword, and I will teach you how to charge your foe and unharmed run among the deadly pikes.

“If you will love the wars and follow me, you shall be made a King and reign with me, keeping Emperors in iron cages.”

Tamburlaine had kept Bajazeth, the conquered Turkish Emperor, in an iron cage until Bajazeth killed himself.

He continued, “If you exceed your elder brothers’ worth, and shine in perfect manliness more than they, you shall be King before them, and your children shall issue crowned from their mother’s womb.”

If Tamburlaine’s youngest son, Celebinus, were to show more manliness than his elder brothers, then Tamburlaine would name Celebinus and Celebinus’ children as his heirs.

Celebinus said, “Yes, father; you shall see me, if I live, have under me as many Kings as you, and march with such a multitude of men that all the world shall tremble at seeing them.”

“These words assure me, boy, that you are my son,” Tamburlaine said. “When I am old and cannot wage war, then you be the scourge and terror of the world.”

Amyras, his middle son, asked, “Why may not I, my lord, as well as he, be termed the scourge and terror to the world?”

Tamburlaine replied, “All of my sons shall be a scourge and terror to the world, or else you are not sons of Tamburlaine.”

Calyphas, his oldest son, said, “But while my brothers follow arms and fight in battles, my lord, let me accompany my gracious mother. My two brothers are enough to conquer all the world, and you have won enough territory for me to keep.”

This infuriated Tamburlaine, who said, “Bastardly boy, sprung from some coward’s loins, and not the child of great Tamburlaine!

“You shall not have a foot of territory, unless you bear a courageous and invincible mind. For the man who shall wear the crown of Persia is he whose head has the deepest scars, whose breast has the most wounds, who when he is angry sends lightning from his eyes and in the furrows of his frowning brows harbors revenge, war, death, and cruelty.

“For in a battlefield, whose ground is covered with a liquid red veil of blood and sprinkled with the brains of slaughtered men, my royal chair of state — my throne — shall be advanced and lifted high, and he who means to place himself thereon must armed wade up to the chin in blood.”

Zenocrate said, “My lord, such speeches to our princely sons dismay their minds before they come to experience for themselves the wounding troubles that angry war affords.”

“No, madam, these are speeches fit for us,” Celebinus said. “For even if Tamburlaine’s chair of state were in a sea of blood, I would prepare a ship and sail to it, before I would lose the title of a King.”

Amyras said, “And I would strive to swim through pools of blood or make a bridge of murdered carcasses whose arches should be framed with the bones of Turks, before I would lose the title of a King.”

“Well, lovely boys, you shall be Emperors both, stretching your conquering arms from east to west,” Tamburlaine said to Celebinus and Amyras.

He then said to Calyphas, his oldest son, “And, sirrah, if you mean to wear a crown, then when we shall meet the Turkish Deputy Kings Orcanes and all his Viceroyes, snatch it from his head, and cleave his skull with your sword.”

Fathers often referred to their sons as “sirrah.”

Calyphas said, “If any man will hold him, I will strike and cleave him to the collarbone or throat with my sword.”

Calyphas was willing to kill a man if someone else were to hold the man so he could not fight back.

“Hold him, and cleave him, too, or I’ll cleave thee,” Tamburlaine said, “for we will march against them shortly. Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane have promised to meet me on the

plains of Larissa with each bringing armies to fight against this Turkish crew, for I have sworn by sacred Mahomet to make Natolia part of my empire.”

Tamburlaine had made Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane Kings; they owed their crowns to him.

Trumpets sounded.

Tamburlaine said, “The trumpets sound, Zenocrate; they come.”

Theridamas and his train of attendants arrived.

“Welcome, Theridamas, King of Algiers,” Tamburlaine said.

“My lord, the great and mighty Tamburlaine, arch-monarch of the world, I offer here my crown, myself, and all the power I have, in all affection at your kingly feet,” Theridamas said as he handed his crown to Tamburlaine.

“Thanks, good Theridamas,” Tamburlaine replied.

Theridamas said, “Under my flags march ten thousand Greeks, and twice twenty thousand valiant men-at-arms from Algiers and Africa’s frontier towns, all of whom have sworn to sack Natolia. Five hundred brigandines — small, light ships — are under sail, suitable for your service on the sea, my lord. These ships, launching from Algiers to Tripoli, will quickly ride before Natolia, and batter down the castles on the shore.”

Tripoli is a city on the northern Levant’s Mediterranean coast.

“Well said, King of Algiers,” Tamburlaine said. “Receive your crown again.”

Tamburlaine gave back Theridamas’ crown.

Then Techelles and Usumcasane arrived together.

“Kings of Morocco and of Fez, welcome,” Tamburlaine said.

“Magnificent and peerless Tamburlaine,” King Usumcasane of Morocco said as he gave him his crown, “I and my neighbor, King Techelles of Fez, have brought to aid you in this Turkish expedition, a hundred thousand expert soldiers. From Azimor on the Atlantic coast of Morocco to Tunis near the sea, I have stripped Barbary of its men for your sake, and I gladly offer you all the men in armor under me, along with my crown.”

“Thanks, King of Morocco,” Tamburlaine said. He handed him the crown and said, “Take your crown again.”

Techelles gave Tamburlaine his crown and said, “And, mighty Tamburlaine, our earthly God, whose looks make this inferior world quake under the heavens, I here present you with the crown of Fez, and with an army of Moors trained to the war, whose coal-black faces make their foes retire and quake for fear, as if the infernal Jove — Pluto, God of the Underworld — meaning to aid you in these Turkish arms, should pierce the black circumference of Hell and bring out ugly Furies bearing fiery flags and millions of Hell’s strong tormenting spirits.”

The Furies are avenging deities who often carry firebrands.

Techelles continued, “From strong Tesella to Biledull, all Barbary is unpeopled for your sake.”



Tamburlaine handed Techelles his crown back and said, “Thanks, King of Fez; take here your crown again. Your presence, loving friends and fellow Kings, makes me overindulge in conceiving joy.”

In addition to the pleasure he felt when seeing his tributary Kings again, he was thinking ahead to the joy he would have when he conquered Natolia.

Tamburlaine added, “If all the crystal gates of Jove’s high court were opened wide, and I might enter in to see the state and majesty of Heaven, it could not more delight me than your sight.

“Now we will banquet on these plains a while, and afterwards march to Turkey with our army, in number more than are the drops that fall when Boreas, god of the North wind, rends a thousand swelling clouds.

“And proud Orcanes of Natolia with all his Viceroyes shall be so afraid that even though the stones, as at Deucalion’s flood, were turned to men, he should be overcome.”

When Jupiter decided to cause a great flood, he allowed Deucalion and his wife, Pyrrha, to survive on an ark Deucalion built. Afterward, they prayed to Jupiter to repopulate the Earth. Following a sacrifice to the goddess Themis, she told them to throw the bones of the mother behind them. Interpreting the “bones” to be the stones of Mother Earth, they threw stones over their backs. From those stones grew people. This story is told in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* 1.318ff.

Tamburlaine continued, “Such lavish profusion will I make of Turkish blood that Jove shall send Mercury, his winged messenger, to command me to sheathe my sword and leave the battlefield. The Sun, unable to sustain the sight, shall hide his head in Thetis’ watery lap, and leave his steeds to fair Boötes’ charge.”

According to mythology, the Sun-god drives the Sun-chariot, which is pulled by immortal horses each day across the sky.

Thetis is a sea-nymph and the mother of Achilles, the greatest warrior of the Trojan War. To “hide his head in Thetis’ watery lap” means that the Sun will set over the ocean.

The constellation Boötes is also known as the Herdsman or the Plowman or the Wagoner — in other words, a driver of oxen and horses. The brightest star in Boötes is Arcturus, which is known as the guardian of the constellation Ursa Major, the Big Bear, because Boötes is so close to it in the night sky. The Big Dipper is part of Ursa Major.

Tamburlaine was saying in poetic language that he would cause such bloodshed that the gods would be sickened and order him to stop shedding blood. Also, the Sun would be sickened and so would set early in the west over the Atlantic Ocean — the Sun-god would then have Boötes take care of the immortal horses.

In non-poetic and non-hyperbolic language, Tamburlaine was simply saying that he would cause enormous amounts of bloodshed until the Sun set.

He continued, “For half the world shall perish in this fight. But now, my friends, let me examine you: How have you spent your time while absent from me?”

Usumcasane now described how he and his army had conquered Barbary, northwest Africa:

“My lord, our men of Barbary have marched four hundred miles with armor on their backs, and lain in military camp fifteen months and more. For, since we left you at the Sultan of Egypt’s court, we have subdued the southern Guallatia in the Libyan desert and all the land to the coast of Spain. We took control of the narrow Strait of Gibraltar, and made the Canary Islands call us Kings and lords.

“Yet never did my army enjoy recreations, or cease one day from war and hot alarms and calls to arms, and therefore let them rest a while, my lord.”

“They shall, Casane, and it is time they rested, in faith,” Tamburlaine said.

Techelles now described how he and his army had explored and conquered much of Africa. From Egypt, they went far south through the heart of Africa, following the Nile River and conquering Prester John in Machda, Abyssinia, and then they went west and then north along the south-west coast, and then west and north again. Finally they went north and east until they reached Damascus, where they stayed until receiving Tamburlaine’s summons.

Techelles said, “And I have marched along the Nile River to Machda, where the mighty Christian priest-King, Prester John, called John the Great, sits in a milk-white robe. His triple miter — papal tiara — I took by force, and made him swear obedience to my crown.

“From thence unto Cazates — a town in the region where the Nile River finds its source in Lake Victoria — I marched, where Amazonians met me in the field, with whom (they being women), I made an alliance, and with my army I marched to Zanzibar on the western coast of Africa, where I viewed the Ethiopian sea — the South Atlantic — as well as rivers and lakes, but neither man nor child in all the land.

“Therefore I took my course to Manico, where, unresisted, I located my military camp. And, by the coast of Byather, at last I came to Cubar, where the negroes dwell, and, conquering that, made haste to Nubia, south of Egypt.

“There, having sacked Borno, the kingly seat, I took the King and led him bound in chains to Damascus, where I stayed before.”

“Well done, Techelles,” Tamburlaine said. “What does Theridamas say?”

Theridamas and his army had gone to Eastern Europe and conquered territory northwest of the Black Sea. Among the towns he subdued were Stoka, Codemia, and Oblia.

He replied, “I left the confines and the territory of Africa, and made a voyage into Europe, where, by the river Tyros, I subdued the towns of Stoka and Codemia and the province of Padalia.

“Then I crossed the sea and came to the town of Oblia and Nigra Silva — the Black Forest — where the devils dance. In despite of the devils, I set Nigra Silva on fire.

“From thence I crossed the gulf called the Mare Majore sea — the Black Sea — by the inhabitants.”

After Theridamas and his army sailed across the Black Sea, they marched south to meet Tamburlaine.

Theridamas added, “Yet shall my soldiers make no pause; we shall not stop moving until the King of Natolia kneels before your feet.”

“Then we will triumph, banquet, and carouse,” Tamburlaine said. “Cooks shall have money to provide us delicacies and glut us with the dainties of the world. Common soldiers shall drink bowls of *Lachryma Christi* — a sweet red Italian wine — and Calabrian wines. Indeed, they shall drink liquid gold mingled with coral and with orient pearl when we have conquered King Orcanes of Natolia.”

*Lachryma Christi* is Latin for “Christ’s tears.”

Pearls dissolve in vinegar, not wine — at least not quickly.

Tamburlaine then said, “Come, let us banquet and carouse the whiles — until it is time to take action.”

## ACT 2 (*TAMBURLAINE, Part 2*)

### — 2.1 —

King Sigismund of Hungary and the Hungarian lords Frederick and Baldwin were talking in Hungary. Many attendants and followers were present.

Frederick was Lord of Buda, and Baldwin was Lord of Bohemia.

King Orcanes of Natolia had ordered much of his army out of Europe and back to Turkey so that he would be ready to resist Tamburlaine, who had raised an army to attack Natolia. King Orcanes had conquered territory in Europe, killing many Europeans in the process, and bad feelings remained despite the peace treaty and alliance that he had made with King Sigismund of Hungary.

Now Frederick and Baldwin were trying to persuade King Sigismund to break the peace treaty and to attack the Turkish troops that King Orcanes still had in Europe. In doing so, Frederick and Baldwin made use of religious differences: The Turks were Muslim, and the Europeans were Christian.

King Sigismund of Hungary said, “Now tell me, my Lords of Buda and Bohemia, what impulse is it that inflames your thoughts, and stirs your courage to such sudden arms?”

“Your majesty remembers, I am sure,” Frederick said, “what cruel slaughter of our Christian bloods — our Christian people — these heathenish Turks and pagans lately made between the city of Zula and the Danube River and how they campaigned through the midst of Varna and Bulgaria, and almost to the very walls of Rome.”

Rome is Constantinople, the capital of the Roman Byzantine Empire. The city was known as Byzantium before it became Constantinople, and now it is known as Istanbul. The Emperors of Constantinople were mainly Greek. Located on the Bosphorus Strait, Constantinople straddles Europe and Asia.

Frederick continued, “They have, not long ago, massacred our army. It remains to be done now, then, that your majesty take all advantages of time and power, and work revenge upon these infidels.”

“Your highness knows that in order to resist the return of Tamburlaine, who strikes a terror to all Turkish hearts, King Orcanes of Natolia has dismissed the greatest part of all his army pitched against our army between Cutheia and Mount Orminius, and sent them marching up to Belgasar in western Asia Minor, Acantha, Antioch, and Caesarea, to aid the Kings of Syria and Jerusalem.”

The main part of King Orcanes’ army was travelling to Natolia and nearby regions in preparation to fight Tamburlaine. King Orcanes was travelling with troops in the rear because he had been farthest from Natolia.

Frederick continued, “Now, then, my lord, take advantage of this and issue in battle suddenly upon the rest, so that in the good fortune of their defeat we may discourage all the pagan troops who dare attempt to war with Christians.”

King Sigismund of Hungary replied, “But doesn’t your grace remember the alliance we recently made with King Orcanes, confirmed by oath and articles of peace, and calling on Christ to witness our truths? We called on Christ to witness our good faith when we made the treaty.

“What you are advising me to do would be treachery and violence against the grace of our vow and religious beliefs.”

“Not at all, my lord,” Baldwin said, “for with such infidels, in whom no faith and no true religion rests, we are not bound to the fulfillment of those vows and sworn promises the holy laws of Christendom enjoin. Because the faith that they profanely pledge themselves to is by prudent statecraft not to be esteemed trustworthy by ourselves, so what we vow to them should not infringe our liberty of arms and victory.”

In other words, King Orcanes of Natolia had made vows in the Muslim religion, which is something that Christians — according to Baldwin — necessarily do not regard as trustworthy. Because of that, Christians need not respect the vows that they made in the Christian religion and so they ought not to be prevented from seeking and obtaining a military victory against the Turks. In still other words, a Christian need not keep vows made with a Muslim — this is sometimes known as “no faith with heretics.”

King Sigismund of Hungary said, “Though I confess the oaths that they undertake breed little strength to our sense of safety, yet those infirmities that thus defame their faiths, their honors, and their religion should not give us presumption to do the same thing they do.

“Our Christian pledges are sound and valid, and must be perfect, consummated and fulfilled, religious, righteous, and inviolate.”

“Assure your grace,” Frederick said, “that it is superstition to stand so strictly on dispensive faith — some oaths and vows can be broken with special dispensation from the church — and should we lose the opportunity that God has given to avenge our Christians’ deaths and scourge the Turks’ foul blasphemous paganism, as happened to Saul, to Balaam, and the rest, who would not kill and curse at God’s command, so surely will the vengeance of the highest, and the jealous anger of his frightening arm, be poured with rigor on our sinful heads if we neglect this offered victory.”

Saul, the first King of the Israelites, failed to carry out God’s order to kill all living things following a victorious battle against the Amalekites; instead, he allowed King Agag of the

Amalekites to live, as well as the sheep and the cattle. This story is told in 1 Samuel 15.

Frederick seemingly showed ignorance of the Bible while speaking about Balaam; actually, Balaam did what God told him to do. King Balak of Moab ordered Balaam to travel to the Israelites and curse them; instead, Balaam followed God's command and blessed them.

God, however, did get angry at Balaam for going with some men whom Balak sent, although God had given Balaam permission to go with those men (despite forbidding him earlier to go with them). Perhaps God knew that at that time Balaam was planning to curse the Israelites. (In Balaam's defense, he may have thought that God had changed His mind about the cursing of the Israelites; after all, God had given him permission to go with the men despite forbidding him to go with them earlier.) The story of Balaam (and his ass) is told in Numbers 22-24.

According to Frederick, God will punish King Sigismund of Hungary if he does not break the alliance he made with King Orcanes of Natolia.

Convinced by the Hungarian lords' arguments, King Sigismund of Hungary said, "Then arm, my lords, and issue suddenly, giving commandment to our general army, with haste to assail the pagan army and take the victory our God has given."

## — 2.2 —

King Orcanes of Natolia and the Viceroy's Gazellus and Uribassa talked together. Many of their attendants were present. Their location was the mountain Orminius in Transylvania, Romania. Because King Orcanes had sent most of his troops to Turkey following the peace treaty that he had made with King Sigismund of Hungary, his army in Eastern Europe was now much weaker.

King Orcanes of Natolia said, "Gazellus, Uribassa, and the rest, now we will march from proud Orminius mountain to fair Natolia, where our neighbor Kings await our army and our royal presence to do battle against the cruel Tamburlaine, who commands a mighty army near Larissa, and with the thunder of his martial weapons makes earthquakes in the hearts of men and Heaven."

Gazelles said, "And now we come to make his muscles shake with greater power than his pride has ever before felt. A hundred Kings, by scores — twenty at a time — will challenge him to combat, and a hundred thousand soldiers will be allotted to each score of Kings.

"These troops, even if a shower of wounding thunderbolts should break out of the interior of the clouds and fall as thick as hail upon our heads, favoring and giving aid to that proud Scythian, yet our courages and steeled helmets and more than infinite numbers of men would be able to withstand and conquer him."

Uribassa said, "I think I see how glad and joyful your granted truce made the Christian King, who could not but before be terrified by the unexampled power of our army."

A messenger entered and said, "Arm, dread sovereign, and my noble lords! The treacherous army of the Christians, taking advantage of your small, slender army, comes marching on us, and is determined to immediately bid us to battle for our dearest lives."

"Traitors, villains, damned Christians!" King Orcanes of Natolia said. "Haven't I here the articles of peace and solemn covenants we — King Sigismund of Hungary and I — have both

confirmed, he by his Christ, and I by Mahomet? Both of us have sworn oaths by our prophets.”

Gazelles said, “May Hell and ruin alight upon their heads, who with such treason seek our overthrow, and care so little for their prophet Christ!”

King Orcanes of Natolia asked, “Can there be such deceit in Christians, or treason in the soft heart of man, whose shape is the image of the highest God?”

Genesis 1:27: states, “*So God created man in his own image*” (King James Version).

He then said this:

“Then if there is a Christ, as Christians say, but in their deeds Christians deny him for their Christ,

“If their Christ is son to always-living Jove, and has the power of his outstretched arm,

“If their Christ is protective of his name and honor as is our holy prophet Mahomet,

“Then I say to their Christian Christ, ‘Take here these papers as our sacrifice to You and as evidence of your servant Sigismund’s perjury.’”

He tore up the articles of peace.

He added, “Open, you shining veil of the Moon goddess Cynthia. Open, you moonlit sky, and make a passage from the Empyrean Heaven, the dwelling place of God, so that He — God — Who sits on high and never sleeps, nor in one place is circumscribable — able to be contained, but everywhere fills every continent and space with strange infusion of his sacred vigor, may, in His endless power and purity, behold and avenge this traitor’s perjury!

“You Christ Who are esteemed to be omnipotent, if You will prove Yourself a perfect God, worthy of the worship of all faithful hearts, be now revenged upon this traitor’s soul, and make the troops I have left behind with us — who are too few to defend our guiltless and innocent lives — sufficient to defeat and destroy the treacherous, unable-to-be-trusted force of those false Christians.”

In the Muslim religion, Jesus is a prophet, but Jesus is not divine.

“To arms, my lords!” King Orcanes of Natolia said. “On Christ let us continuously cry. If Christ exists, we shall have victory.”

### — 2.3 —

The sounds of the battle were heard, and a mortally wounded King Sigismund of Hungary appeared.

King Sigismund said, “All the Christian army has been routed, and God has thundered vengeance from on high, for my accursed and hateful perjury and breaking of my oath.

“Oh, just and dreadful Punisher of Sin, let the dishonor of the pains I feel in this my mortal well-deserved wound end all my penance in my sudden death! And let this death, which will make me incapable of sinning anymore, conceive a second life in endless mercy!”

King Sigismund of Hungary died.

King Orcanes of Natolia, Gazellus, Uribassa, and others arrived.

King Orcanes said, “Now lie the Christians bathing in their bloods, and Christ or Mahomet has been my friend.”

Gazellus said, “See here the perjured traitor King Sigismund of Hungary, bloody and without breath and dead for his villainy.”

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “Now shall his barbarous body be a prey to beasts and fowls, and all the winds through shady leaves of every senseless tree shall breathe murmurs and hisses for his heinous sin.

“Now his soul scalds in the Tartarian streams of Hell and feeds upon the baneful, deadly, poisonous tree of Hell, that Zoacum, that fruit of bitterness, that in the midst of fire is grafted.”

Tartarus is where the worst sinners are punished in Hell.

According to Islam, the tree of Zoacum provides fruit that resembles the heads of devils for the damned in Hell, but it is fruit that causes the sinners to drink scalding water afterwards. The tree of Zoacum is described in 37:62-68 of the Koran.

He continued, “Yet the tree of Zoacum flourishes as does Flora, Roman goddess of flowers, in her pride. The tree of Zoacum bears apples like the heads of damned fiends.

“The devils there, in chains of quenchless flame, shall lead King Sigismund’s soul through Hell’s burning gulf, from pain to pain, whose torments will change but shall never end.

“What do you say yet, Gazellus, to his disgrace and defeat, which we appealed to the justice and power of his Christ? His disgrace and defeat here appears as fully as do the rays of Cynthia — the moonlight — to the clearest sight!”

“It is only the fortune of the wars, my lord,” Gazellus said. “The power of the fortune of war is often offered as evidence of a miracle.”

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “Yet in my thoughts shall Christ be honored, not doing Mahomet an injury, whose power had a share in this our victory. And since this miscreant misbeliever — King Sigismund — has disgraced his faith and died a traitor both to Heaven and Earth, we order that a continuous lookout and guard keep Sigismund’s corpse amid these plains for fowls to prey upon.

“Go, Uribassa, give the order to do that immediately.”

“I will, my lord,” Uribassa said.

He exited to carry out the order.

King Orcanes of Natolia said, “And now, Gazellus, let us make haste and meet the main body of our army in Turkey, and our brothers — fellow Kings — of Jerusalem, Syria, Trebizond, and Amasia, and happily, with full Natolian bowls of Greek wine, now let us celebrate our happy conquest and Sigismund’s stinging fate.”

In the city of Larissa, Zenocrate, ill, was lying in her bed of state. Tamburlaine sat by her. Three physicians were around her bed, mixing potions. Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, and the three sons of Tamburlaine and Zenocrate were present.

Tamburlaine said, “Black is the beauty of the brightest day. The Sun, that golden ball of Heaven’s eternal fire, which danced with glory on the silver waves, now lacks the fuel that inflamed its beams, and all with faintness and for foul disgrace, the Sun binds its temples with a frowning cloud, ready to darken Earth with endless night.

“Zenocrate, who gave the Sun light and life, whose eyes shot fire from their ivory chambers, and refreshed every soul with lively heat, now by the malice of the angry pagan gods in the skies, whose jealousy admits no second mate, no rival, draws comfort from her last and final mortal breath, all overcome by the hellish mists of death.

“Now walk the angels on the walls of Heaven, as sentinels to warn the immortal souls to welcome divine Zenocrate.

“Apollo the Sun, Cynthia the Moon, and the ceaseless lamps that are the stars that gently looked upon this loathsome Earth, shine downwards now no more, but deck the heavens to welcome divine Zenocrate.

“The crystal springs, whose taste illuminates refined eyes with a clearer and eternal sight, like purified silver ore run through Paradise to welcome divine Zenocrate.”

The crystal springs are perhaps similar to the Lethe and Eunoë streams that appear in the Forest of Eden in Dante’s *Purgatory*. Drinking from the stream of Lethe takes away the sting of one’s sins. Drinking from the stream of Eunoë revives the memory of one’s good deeds.

Later, Tamburlaine says that the Lethe is a river in Hell, but people make mistakes. In Canto 14 of Dante’s *Inferno*, Dante the Pilgrim believes that the Lethe is in the Inferno, but Virgil informs him that he will see the Lethe later in a place where souls wash themselves after they have purged their guilt with penitence. Indeed, Dante the Pilgrim sees the Lethe in the Forest of Eden at the top of the Mountain of Purgatory. In his *Aeneid*, Virgil placed Lethe in the Land of the Dead, and so he had made a mistake, as he learned after he died, according to Dante’s *Divine Comedy*.

Tamburlaine continued:

“The cherubim and holy seraphim, who sing and play before the King of Kings, use all their voices and their instruments to welcome divine Zenocrate.

“And in this sweet and elaborate and exquisite harmony, the God Who tunes this music to our souls holds out His hand in highest majesty to entertain divine Zenocrate.

“Then let some holy trance convey my prayerful thoughts up to the palace of the Empyrean Heaven, the dwelling place of God, requesting that this my life may be as short to me as are the days of sweet Zenocrate.”

He then asked, “Physicians, will no medicine do her good?”

A physician replied, “My lord, your majesty shall soon know whether it will: If she survives this crisis, then the worst is past.”



Tamburlaine then asked his wife, “Tell me, how fares my fair Zenocrate?”

She replied, “I fare, my lord, as do other Empresses, who, when this frail and transitory flesh has sucked the measure of that vital air that feeds the body with its allotted time of health, then diminish with enforced and necessary change.”

Tamburlaine said, “May never such a change transform my love, in whose sweet being I repose my life, whose heavenly presence, beautified with health, gives light to Phoebus — the Sun — and the fixed stars.

“The absence of her — Zenocrate’s — life makes the Sun and Moon as dark as when, opposed in one diameter — the Sun, Earth, and Moon cause an eclipse — their spheres are mounted on the Serpent’s Head, or else descended to his winding train, the Serpent’s Tail.”

Tamburlaine was referring to two constellations: One was called the Serpent, and the other was called the Serpent Bearer. People in this society thought that the stars depicted a person holding a serpent: The Serpent’s Head was on one side of the Serpent Bearer, and the Serpent’s Tail was on the other side. The Sun, Earth, and Moon were also aligned when there was an eclipse, and so the Sun, Earth, and Moon were likened to the Serpent’s Head, the Serpent Bearer, and the Serpent’s Tail.

In a lunar eclipse, the Earth was the Serpent Bearer, and the Sun and Moon were the Serpent’s Head and the Serpent’s Tail. In a solar eclipse, the Sun and Moon would be on the same side of the Earth, and so the Moon would be the Serpent Bearer.

When an eclipse occurs, the Moon must cross the ecliptic — the Sun’s apparent path — at one of two points that are called nodes. The Moon crosses one node while going north, and two weeks later it crosses the other node while going south. Tamburlaine called the eclipse with the Moon crossing the node while going north the Serpent’s Head, and he called the eclipse with the Moon crossing the node while going south the Serpent’s Tail.

Tamburlaine continued, “Live still, my love, and so preserve my life, or, dying, be the author of my death.”

“Continue to live, my lord!” Zenocrate said. “Oh, let my sovereign live! And sooner let the fiery element — the Sphere of Fire — dissolve so you can make your kingdom in the sky, than this base earth should shroud and cover your majesty.”

Some people in this society believed that a Sphere of Fire existed between the Earth and the Moon. Because Zenocrate wanted Tamburlaine’s glory to be widely seen and not hidden in his grave, she wanted the Sphere of Fire to be extinguished so that his glory could find a home in the heavens.

Zenocrate continued:

“For, should I but suspect your death would be caused by mine, the comfort of my future happiness in my second — immortal — life and my hope to meet your highness in the heavens, turned to despair, would break my wretched breast, and fury would ruin my present rest.

“But let me die, my love; yes, let me die; with love and patience let your true love die.

“Your grief and fury hurts my second life — my afterlife.

“Yet let me kiss my lord before I die, and let me die with kissing of my lord.”

They kissed.

She continued, “But since my life is lengthened yet a while, let me take leave of these my loving sons, and of my lords, whose true nobility has merited my last act of remembering as I die.

“Sweet sons, farewell! In death resemble me and die with dignity, and in your lives resemble your father’s excellence.”

She then said to Tamburlaine, “Some music, and my crisis will cease, my lord.”

People present called for music.

Tamburlaine said, “Proud fury and intolerable crisis, which dares torment the body of my love and scourge the scourge of the immortal God!

“Those spheres, her eyes, where Cupid, god of love, used to sit, wounding with his arrows the world with wonder and amazement and with love, now are instead sadly supplied with pale and ghastly Death, whose deadly arrows pierce the center of my soul.

“Zenocrates’ sacred beauty has enchanted Heaven, and if she had lived before the siege of Troy, Helen, whose beauty summoned Greece to arms and drew a thousand ships to Tenedos, an island near Troy, would not have been named in Homer’s *Iliad*; instead, Zenocrate’s name would have been in every line he wrote.

“Or, if those wanton poets, writers of lewd verses, for whose birth old Rome was proud, had only gazed a while on her, neither Lesbia nor Corinna would have been named.”

The Roman poet Catullus celebrated Lesbia, and Corinna appeared in a poem by Ovid in his *The Art of Love*, a seduction manual in verse.

Tamburlaine continued, “Zenocrate would have been the theme of every epigram or elegy.”

Music sounded, and Zenocrate died.

Tamburlaine said, “Is she dead?”

“Techelles, draw your sword and wound the earth, so that it may split in two halves and we may descend into the infernal vaults, to drag the Fatal Sisters — the Three Fates — by the hair and throw them in the triple moat of Hell, for taking away from here my fair Zenocrate.”

According to Tamburlaine, as he will say later, the Fates live on an island surrounded by three rivers of Hell: Lethe, Styx, and Phlegethon.

Tamburlaine continued, “Casane and Theridamas, to arms! Raise cavalieros higher than the clouds, and with the cannon break the frame of Heaven.”

Cavalieros are mounds on which cannons were placed.

Tamburlaine continued:

“Batter the shining palace of the Sun, and smash all the starry firmament — the sphere that holds the fixed stars — for amorous Jove has snatched my love away from here, meaning to

make her stately Queen of Heaven.

“Whichever god holds you in his arms, giving you nectar and ambrosia, the food and drink of the gods, behold me here, divine Zenocrate, raving, impatient, desperate, and mad, breaking my steeled lance, with which I burst the rusty beams of Janus’ temple doors, letting out death and tyrannizing war, to march with me under this bloody flag!”

The doors of the temple of Janus in the Roman Forum were open only during times of war. Tamburlaine was ready to go to war immediately and so metaphorically force open the rusty doors of the temple.

He continued, “And, if you pity Tamburlaine the Great, come down from Heaven, and live with me again!”

Theridamas said, “Ah, my good lord, be patient! She is dead, and all this raging cannot make her live.

“If words could be effective, our voices would have pierced the air.

“If tears could be effective, our eyes would have watered all the earth.

“If grief could be effective, our murdered hearts would have trickled forth blood.

“Nothing will be effective, for she is dead, my lord.”

Tamburlaine said, “‘For she is dead’! Your words pierce my soul! Ah, sweet Theridamas, say so no more. Though she is dead, yet let me think she lives and feed my mind that dies for want of her.

“Wherever her soul is —”

He turned to the late Zenocrate and addressed her:

“— you shall stay with me, embalmed with cassia, ambergris, and myrrh, not wrapped in lead, but in a sheet of gold, and until I die you shall not be interred.

“Then in as rich a tomb as that of King Mausolus of Caria we both will rest and have one epitaph written in as many different languages as I have conquered kingdoms with my sword.”

After King Mausolus of Caria died, his widow made a magnificent tomb for him: It was one of the seven wonders of the world. We get our word “mausoleum” from King Mausolus’ name.

Tamburlaine continued, “This cursed town — Larissa — I will consume with fire, because this place bereft me of my love. The houses, burnt, will look as if they mourned, and here I will set up her statue and march around it with my mourning army, drooping and mourning for Zenocrate.”

### **ACT 3 (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 2)**

#### **— 3.1 —**

The King of Trebizond and the King of Syria entered a room at the Turkish court. One King held a sword, and the other King held a scepter. Next Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia and the King of Jerusalem brought in the imperial crown. Next came in Callapine, and after him,

Almeda and other lords. Orcanes and Jerusalem crowned him, and the others gave him the scepter. During processions, the sword of state was carried before the King.

Deputy King Orcanes said, “Callapinus Cyricelibes, otherwise Cybelius, son and successive heir to the late mighty Emperor Bajazeth, by the aid of God and his friend Mahomet, Emperor of Natolia, Jerusalem, Trebizond, Syria, Amasia, Thracia, Illyria, Carmonia, and all the hundred and thirty kingdoms recently tributary to his mighty father — long live Callapinus, Emperor of Turkey!”

Callapine, now the Turkish Emperor, said, “Thrice worthy Kings, of Natolia and the rest, I will repay your royal gratuities with all the benefits my empire yields, and were the muscles — the strength — of the imperial seat as knit and strengthened as when Bajazeth, my royal lord and father, filled the throne, whose cursed fate has so dismembered the Turkish Empire and caused it to come apart, then you would see this thief of Scythia, this proud usurping King of Persia, do us such honor and supremacy, acknowledging me as his lord and suffering the vengeance of our father’s wrongs, that all the world should blot our dignities out of the book of baseborn infamies.

“If only the Turkish Empire were as strong as it was when my father, Bajazeth, ruled, then it would crush Tamburlaine so badly that the indignities we have suffered from him would be forgotten by history.

“And now I don’t doubt that your royal cares have so provided for this cursed foe, that, since I, the heir of mighty Bajazeth — an Emperor so honored for his virtues — revive the spirits of true Turkish hearts, in full-of-grief memory of my father’s shame, we shall not need to nourish any doubt that proud Lady Fortune, who has long followed the martial sword of mighty Tamburlaine, will now return to her old inconstancy and raise our honors to as high an altitude, in this our strongly armed, many-soldiered, and favored-by-Lady-Fortune encounter in battle.”

Callapine, Emperor of the Turks, was hoping that Lady Fortune would turn her wheel so that Tamburlaine’s fortune would fall and the fortune of the Turkish Empire and Emperor would rise. Previously and currently, it seemed as if Lady Fortune had favored Tamburlaine so much that she had stopped turning her wheel once Tamburlaine reached the top.

Callapine continued, “For so has Heaven provided my escape from all the cruelty my soul sustained, by the happy means of Almeda, my friendly keeper, that Jove, overwhelmed with pity for our wrongs” — he was using the majestic plural — “will pour pity down in showers on our heads, scourging the pride of cursed Tamburlaine.”

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia said, “I have a hundred thousand men in arms. Some, who fought in the battle that conquered the perjured Christian King Sigismund of Hungary, although they were a handful of soldiers fighting King Sigismund’s mighty army, think that they in themselves are in number yet sufficient to drink the Nile or the Euphrates, and as for their power, it is enough to win the world.”

The army of the Persian King Cyrus the Great was so large that its soldiers drank rivers dry.

The King of Jerusalem said, “And I have as many soldiers from the territory of Jerusalem, Judaea, the city of Gaza, and the city of Scalonia that the soldiers on Mount Sinai, with their banners spread, look like the multi-colored clouds of Heaven that promise fair weather to the next morning.”

The King of Trebizond said, “And I bring as many soldiers from Trebizond, Chio, Famastro, and Amasia, all of which border on the Mare Majore sea — the Black Sea. I also bring soldiers from Riso, Sancina, and the bordering towns that touch the end of the famous Euphrates River: These soldiers’ courage and valor are kindled with the flames that the cursed Scythian — Tamburlaine — sets on all their towns, and these soldiers vow to burn the villain’s cruel heart.”

The King of Syria said, “From Syria with seventy thousand soldiers, taken from Aleppo, Soldino, Tripoli, and so on unto my city of Damascus, I march to meet and aid my neighbor Kings, all of whom will join together to fight against this Tamburlaine and bring him captive to your highness’ feet.”

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia said, “Our army then, in martial manner arranged, as according to our ancient custom, shall bear the figure of the semi-circled Moon, whose horns shall sprinkle through the tainted air the poisoned brains of this proud Scythian.”

In other words, the Turkish army will form in a crescent formation to fight Tamburlaine and his army.

The Turkish Emperor Callapine said, “Well, then, my noble lords, as for this my friend Almeda, who freed me from the bondage of my foe, I think it requisite and honorable to keep my promise and make him King. That man is a gentleman, I know, at least.”

Almeda said, “That doesn’t matter for being a King, sir, because Tamburlaine came up from nothing.”

The King of Jerusalem said to the Turkish Emperor Callapine, “Your majesty may choose some appointed time, performing all you promised to the full. It is nothing for your majesty to give a kingdom.”

“Then I will shortly keep my promise, Almeda,” the Turkish Emperor Callapine said.

“Why, I thank your majesty,” Almeda said.

### — 3.2 —

Tamburlaine, Usumcasane, and his three sons stood together. Four men set down the bier of Zenocrate. Drums stopped sounding a doleful march, and the town of Larissa burned.

Tamburlaine said, “Burn the turrets of this cursed town — Larissa. Burn it so the flames reach to the highest region of the air, and kindle heaps of exhalations that, being fiery meteors, may presage death and destruction to the inhabitants!”

Meteors were ill omens. This society believed that very light vapors (exhalations) rose from the Earth, caught fire, and formed fiery meteors. Usually, perhaps, they would catch fire from the Sphere of Fire that separated the Earth from the Moon. In this case, however, they would catch fire from the burning flames of Larissa.

“Over my zenith, the highest point over my head, hangs a blazing star — a comet — that may endure until Heaven is dissolved, fed with the fresh supply of earthly dregs, threatening famine to this land!”

This society used the word “star” broadly. A star could be a planet, the Sun, a comet, a meteor, etc.

The blazing star over his head would be fed with the fires rising from the devastation Tamburlaine would cause on Earth. The smoke from the fires could also appear to form shapes such as dragons.

He continued, “May flying dragons, lightning, fearful thunderclaps singe these fair plains and make them seem as black as is the island where the Furies lurk unseen, surrounded by the Lethe, Styx, and Phlegethon, because my dear Zenocrate is dead.”

Calyphas, Tamburlaine’s oldest son, said, “On this pillar, placed in memory of her, in Arabian, Hebrew, and Greek is written, *‘This town, being burnt by Tamburlaine the Great, forbids the world to build it up again.’*”

Amyras, Tamburlaine’s middle son, said, “And here this mournful banner shall be placed, embroidered with the Persian and Egyptian coat-of-arms, to signify she was a Princess born and wife to the Monarch of the East.”

Celebinus, Tamburlaine’s youngest son, said, “And here we will set this memorial tablet as a record of all her virtues and perfections.”

Tamburlaine said, “And here we will set this picture of Zenocrate, to show her beauty that the world admired. This sweet picture of divine Zenocrate, hanging here, will draw the gods from Heaven and cause the stars fixed in the southern hemisphere — southern stars whose lovely faces never has anyone in the northern hemisphere viewed who has not crossed the equator to the southern hemisphere. These stars will be like pilgrims as they travel to our hemisphere, just to gaze on Zenocrate.”

People in the northern hemisphere above the equator cannot see the stars at the southern pole and the stars at the opposite end of the Earth. According to Tamburlaine, those southern stars would move of their own accord to the northern hemisphere to look at beautiful Zenocrate’s picture.

Tamburlaine changed his mind about leaving the picture of Zenocrate at Larissa.

Speaking to the picture of Zenocrate, Tamburlaine said, “You shall not beautify Larissa’s plains, but instead will stay within the circle of my arms. At every town and castle I besiege, you shall be set upon my royal tent, and when I meet an army in the field, your looks will shed such influence in my army, as if Bellona, goddess of the war, threw naked, unsheathed swords and sulphur-balls of fire upon the heads of all our enemies.

“And now, my lords, raise aloft your spears again.

“Sorrow no more, my sweet Casane, now.

“Boys, cease to mourn; this town shall always mourn, being burnt to cinders for your mother’s death.”

Calyphas, Tamburlaine’s oldest son, said, “If I had wept a sea of tears for her, it would not ease the sorrows I endure.”

Amyras, Tamburlaine’s middle son, said, “As is that town, so is my heart consumed as if by fire with grief and sorrow for my mother’s death.”

Celebinus, Tamburlaine's youngest son, said, "My mother's death has mortified my mind, and sorrow stops the passage of my speech."

Tamburlaine said, "But now, my boys, stop mourning and listen to me. I intend to teach you the rudiments of war. I'll have you learn to sleep upon the ground, march in your armor through watery fens, endure the scorching heat and freezing cold, hunger, and thirst, all of which are fit adjuncts of the war.

"And after I teach you that, I will teach you this: how to scale a castle wall, how to besiege a fort, how to undermine a town and plant explosives to make whole cities leap up and dance in the air.

"Next I will teach you the way to build fortifications for your men.

"I will teach you what fortification lay-out serves you best on level, open ground.

"I will also teach you for which kind of ground — rough and uneven — the five-angled shape is best, because the corners there may fall more flat and form wider angles where the fort may fittest be assailed and sharpest where the assault is dangerous to make."

With the star-fortification, the flatter and sharper corners can be placed irregularly in the terrain where they are most advantageous for the defenders. The obtuse-angled corners can be placed on terrain that favors the attackers, and the acute-angled corners can be placed on terrain that favors the defenders. Obtuse-angled corners are easier to defend; acute-angled corners are harder to defend.

An obtuse angle is larger than a right angle and so is more than 90 degrees.

An acute angle is smaller than a right angle and so is less than 90 degrees.

Tamburlaine continued, "The ditches must be deep."

The ditches were dug around the fortification. Deep ditches made the attackers' job more difficult because they had to cross the ditch and also the earthen wall that was built from the earth dug to make the ditch.

Tamburlaine continued, "The counterscarps must be narrow and steep. The walls must be high and broad."

The scarp is the inner wall of the ditch; the counterscarp is the outer wall of the ditch. The ditch, if filled with water, becomes a moat. The counterscarps are the steep outer earthen walls of the ditch; these walls supported the covered ways — a protected path that the defenders could walk along. Sometimes the word "counterscarps" was used to refer to the covered ways and the glacis. The glacis is a wall of earth facing the attackers and protecting the defenders who are on the covered way. The walls of the counterscarp and the glacis must be built high. Apparently, Tamburlaine preferred that the covered ways be narrow.

Tamburlaine continued, "The bulwarks and the rampires must be large and strong, with cavalieros and thick counterforts, and room within to lodge six thousand men."

The bulwarks are substantial defensive positions, often made of earth, often placed at the corners of fortifications, and often made to provide stations for artillery; they are defensive walls. Sometimes the word "bulwark" is used to refer to the fortification itself. The rampires

are ramparts used to support the walls from behind. Both bulwarks and rampiers must be large and strong.

Cavalieros are mounds on which large cannon were placed.

Counterforts are extra buttresses to strengthen defensive walls.

Tamburlaine continued, "The fortification must have privy ditches, countermines, and secret issuings to defend the ditch."

A cunette is a deeper ditch dug in the middle of a defensive ditch. It is another obstacle for attackers to overcome, it serves as a drain, and it helps to prevent mining by the attackers.

A privy ditch is possibly a ditch built for sanitation. Or, possibly, a privy ditch is a cunette. The first citation for "cunette" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is 1688. The word "privy" can mean "secret," and a cunette can be an obstacle for attackers.

Countermines are underground tunnels dug outward from the fortress in order to counteract mines, aka tunnels, dug by the enemy to either cause fortification walls to collapse by use of explosives or to gain entry into a fortification.

Secret issuings are hidden doors that allow defenders to get to the ditch area. In some cases, they can be used to surprise any attackers who are in that area.

Tamburlaine continued, "The fortification must have high *argins* and covered ways, to keep the bulwark fronts from battery."

A high glacis can deflect attackers' cannonballs. "*Argins*" is the French word for "glacis." The glacis is a high wall of earth placed in front of a covered way for protection; a covered way is a passageway protected by the high *argins*.

Tamburlaine continued, "The fortification must have parapets to hide the musketeers."

Parapets are protective walls; in particular, they are low walls that edge the wallwalk, aka walkway on top of the wall. Parapets are located on the scarp part of the ditch; that is, they are located on the inner side of the main defensive wall. The covered way and glacis are located on the other side of the ditch.

Tamburlaine continued, "The fortification must have casemates on which to place the great artillery."

A casemate is a protected chamber or room in which a cannon can be placed. A battery of cannon is different; it is a grouping of cannon.

Tamburlaine continued, "The fortification must have a store of ordnance that from every flank may scour the outward curtains of the fort, dismount the cannon of the enemy, murder the foe, and save the walls from being breached."

Curtains are the plain walls of a fortification; they connect the bulwarks, which are often located at corners.

A flank is a part of a fortification that allows defenders to protect with flanking fire another part of the fortification.



Bastions are defensive structures projecting outward from the curtains. They allow defenders to defend more area than if they were located on top of the curtains.

Cannon were sometimes placed on bastions, which were outward indentations on the outer wall; such cannon could be fired horizontally to the wall and so kill (Tamburlaine used the word “murder”) enemy soldiers close to the wall.

Tamburlaine may have been making wordplay here by referring to a type of small cannon that was called the murderer.

Tamburlaine continued, “When this is learned for service on the land, by plain and easy demonstration I’ll teach you how to make the water mount by holding it back with a dam, so that you may march with dry feet through lakes and pools, deep rivers, sheltered harbors, creeks, and little seas, and I’ll teach you how to make a fortress in the raging waves, protected by the cavity of a monstrous rock, invincible by the nature of the place.

“When all this is done, then you are soldiers, and worthy sons of Tamburlaine the Great.”

Calyphas, Tamburlaine’s oldest son, said, “My lord, but this is dangerous to be done. We may be slain or wounded before we learn all this.”

Angry, Tamburlaine said, “Villain, are you the son of Tamburlaine, and fear to die, or with a sword to hew your flesh, and make a gaping wound?”

“Have you beheld a discharge of cannon strike a ring of soldiers wielding pikes, supported with musketeers and flanked by cavalry, whose shattered limbs, being tossed as high as Heaven, hang in the air as thick as sunny motes of dust, and can you, coward, stand in fear of death?”

“Haven’t you seen my horsemen charge the foe and get shot through the arms and cut across the hands, dyeing their lances with their streaming blood, and yet at night carouse within my tent, filling their empty veins with airy — hot and moist, like blood — wine that, being digested by the soldiers, turns to crimson blood, and will you shun the battlefield for fear of wounds?”

“Look at me, your father, who has conquered Kings, and with his army marched round about the Earth. I am quite devoid of scars and clear from any wound. I have not lost a dram of blood by the wars.

“And now see your father lance his flesh to teach you all.”

Tamburlaine cut his arm.

He then said, “A wound is nothing, be it never so deep. Blood is the god of war’s rich uniform.

“Now I look like a soldier, and this wound is as great a grace — gift — and majesty to me, as if a chair of gold enameled, inlaid with diamonds, sapphires, rubies, and fairest pearl of wealthy India, were mounted here under a canopy, and I sat down, clothed with the large robe that lately adorned Bajazeth the African potentate, whom I brought bound to Damascus’ walls.

“Come, boys, and with your fingers feel how deep is my wound, and in my blood wash all your hands at once, while I sit smiling to behold the sight.

“Now, my boys, what do you think about a wound?”

Calyphas, Tamburlaine's oldest son, said, "I don't know what I should think of it. I think it is a pitiful sight."

Celebinus, Tamburlaine's youngest son, said, "It is nothing. Give me a wound, father."

Amyras, Tamburlaine's middle son, said, "And give me another, my lord."

Tamburlaine said to Celebinus, "Come, sirrah, give me your arm."

"Here, father, cut it bravely and boldly, as you did your own," Celebinus said.

"It shall suffice that you dare to abide a wound," Tamburlaine said. "My boy, you shall not lose a drop of blood before we meet the army of the Turkish Emperor.

"But then, run desperate through the thickest throngs, now dreading blows, bloody wounds, and death. And let the burning of Larissa's walls, my speech of war, and this my wound you see, teach you, my boys, to bear courageous minds, fit for the successors of great Tamburlaine.

"Usumcasane, now come and let us march towards Techelles and Theridamas, whom we have sent before to set fire to the towns, the towers and cities of these hateful Turks, and hunt that coward faint-hearted runaway Callapine, with that accursed traitor, Almeda, until fire and sword have found them at bay. We will corner them and force them to fight us."

Usumcasane said, "I long to pierce with my sword the bowels of that man who has betrayed my gracious sovereign: that cursed and damned traitor, Almeda."

Tamburlaine said, "Then let us see if that coward Callapine dares to muster arms against our army, with the result that we may tread upon his captive neck, and triple all his father's slaveries."

### — 3.3 —

Techelles and Theridamas talked together. Many soldiers and attendants were present.

Theridamas said, "Thus have we marched northward from Tamburlaine to the frontier point of Syria, and this is Balsera, their chiefest stronghold, wherein is all the treasure of the land."

Techelles said, "Then let us bring our light artillery, minions, falconets, and sakers — all our small cannon — to the trench, filling the ditches with the walls' wide breach. We will blast the wall with our small cannon, and the pieces of the wall will fill in the ditches. And then we will enter to seize upon the gold.

"What do you say, soldiers? Shall we do that?"

"Yes, my lord, yes," the soldiers said. "Come, let's set about it."

Theridamas said, "But wait a while.

"Summon a parley, drummer.

"It may be they will yield Balsera quietly, knowing that two Kings, friends to Tamburlaine, stand at the walls with such a mighty army."

The drummer played a rhythm that was recognized by both sides as a request to hold a meeting under a flag of truce.

The Captain of Balsera appeared on the wall of the stronghold. With him were his wife, who was named Olympia, and his son. The Captain was the Commander of the castle.

The Captain of Balsera asked, "What do you require, my masters?"

"My masters" meant "gentlemen."

Theridamas said, "Captain, we require that thou yield up thy stronghold to us."

"To you!" the Captain of Balsera replied. "Why, do you think that I am weary of it?"

Techelles said, "No, Captain, thou art weary of thy life if thou withstand the friends of Tamburlaine."

Theridamas said, "These pioneers — diggers — of Algiers in Africa even in the cannon's face shall raise a hill of earth and bundles of sticks higher than thy fort, and over thy *argins* and covered ways shall play upon the bulwarks of thy fortress volleys of cannon, until the breach is made that with its ruin fills up all the trench. And, when we enter in, not Heaven itself shall ransom thee, thy wife, and thy family."

Generally, a trench is deeper than it is wide; ditches tend to be wider than they are deep.

Techelles said, "Captain, these Moors shall cut the leaden pipes that bring fresh water to thy men and thee, and lay siege, protected by the trench, before thy castle walls, so that no supply of food shall come in, nor will any of your people issue forth but they shall die, and, therefore, Captain, yield your stronghold to us quietly."

The Captain of Balsera replied, "Even if you, who are the friends of Tamburlaine, were brothers to holy Mahomet himself, I would not yield it; therefore, do your worst. Raise earthworks, batter the gates with a battering ram, build a trench around the fort, and undermine the fort's walls, cut off the water and all supply convoys that can come to bring us provisions, yet I am resolute to defend the stronghold, and so, farewell."

The Captain and his wife and son exited.

"Pioneers, away!" Theridamas said. "And where I stuck the stake, build a trench with those dimensions I prescribed. Cast up the earth towards the castle wall. Until the earth forms a wall to defend you, keep low while working and building the wall, and few or none of you shall perish by their shot."

"We will, my lord," the pioneers said as they exited.

Techelles said, "A hundred cavalry shall scout the plains to spy what force comes to relieve the stronghold."

"Both of us, Theridamas, will have our men build the trench that will protect them, and with the gunner's quadrant called the Jacob's staff, they will measure the height and distance of the castle from the trench so that we may know if our artillery will shoot cannonballs completely point-blank at their walls. We want the cannonballs to hit the wall horizontally with full force."

This is why Theridamas had talked earlier about raising a hill of earth and bundles of sticks higher than the fort. Take away the hyperbole, and he was saying that he wanted the cannon to shoot horizontally over the lower outer walls so that the cannonballs would strike the main walls of the fortress with full force.

Theridamas said, “Then see the bringing of our ordnance along the trench into the battery — the platform on which the cannon are placed — where we will have gabions of six foot broad, to save our cannoneers from musket shot.”

Gabions are containers filled with earth, used like sandbags to protect people in the battery and to steady cannon.

Theridamas continued, “Between the gabions our ordnance shall thunder forth, and with the breach’s fall, smoke, fire, and dust, the crack, the echo, and the soldier’s cry, our ordnance shall deafen the air and dim the crystal sky.”

Techelles ordered, “Trumpeters and drummers, play a call to arms at once! And, soldiers, act like men; the hold is yours!”

— 3.4 —

The Captain of Balsera talked with his wife, Olympia. Their son was present.

Olympia said, “Come, my good lord, and let us quickly go away from here along the underground passage that leads beyond the foe. No hope is left to save this conquered fortress.”

The Captain of Balsera replied, “A deadly bullet gliding through my side lies heavy on my heart; I cannot live. I feel my liver pierced, and all my veins, that there begin and nourish every part, mangled and torn, and all my entrails bathed in blood that oozes from their openings.

“Farewell, sweet wife! Sweet son, farewell! I die.”

He died.

Olympia said, “Death, where have you gone, that both my son and I live? Come back again, sweet Death, and strike us both. Let one minute end our days, and one sepulcher contain our bodies! Death, why don’t you come?”

She drew a dagger and said, “Well, this dagger must be the messenger for you.

“Now, ugly Death, stretch out your black, sable wings and carry both my and my son’s souls to where my husband’s soul resides.”

She then asked her son, “Tell me, sweet boy, are you content to die? These barbarous Scythians, full of cruelty, and Moors, in whom pity was never found, will hew us into pieces, or tie us to a torture-wheel and break our bones with clubs, or else invent some torture worse than that; therefore, die by the hand of your loving mother, who gently now will lance your ivory throat, and quickly rid you both of pain and life.”

“Mother, dispatch me, or I’ll kill myself,” her son said. “For do you think I can live and see my father dead? Give me your knife, good mother, or strike home. The Scythians shall not cruelly tyrannize me. Sweet mother, strike, so that I may meet my father.”

She stabbed him, and he died.

Olympia said, “Ah, sacred Mahomet, if this is sin, entreat a pardon of the God of Heaven, and purge my soul and free it from sin before it comes to you.”

She burned the bodies of her husband and son and then prepared to kill herself.

Theridamas and Techelles and many soldiers entered the room.

Theridamas forcibly took the dagger away from Olympia and said, "What is this, madam! What are you doing?"

Olympia replied, "Killing myself, as I have killed my son, whose body, with his father's, I have burnt, lest cruel Scythians should dismember him."

"It was bravely done, and like a soldier's wife," Techelles said. "You shall go with us to Tamburlaine the Great, who, when he hears how resolute you were, will match you with and marry you to a Viceroy or a King."

"My deceased lord was dearer to me than any Viceroy, King, or Emperor," Olympia said. "And for his sake I will end my days here."

Theridamas said, "But, lady, go with us to Tamburlaine, and you shall see a man greater than Mahomet, in whose high looks is much more majesty than exists from the curved surface of Jove's vast palace, the empyreal sphere, to the shining dwellings where Cynthia the Moon sits, like the lovely sea-nymph Thetis, in a crystal robe."

In other words, Tamburlaine looks much more majestic than does anything in the universe from the highest sphere — the empyreal heaven — to the Moon. Cynthia is the Moon-goddess, but sometimes her name was used to refer to the Moon.

Theridamas continued, "Tamburlaine treads Lady Fortune underneath his feet and makes the mighty Mars — god of arms and war — his slave.

"Death and the Fatal Sisters — the three Fates — wait on Tamburlaine with naked swords and scarlet, blood-red uniforms.

"Before Tamburlaine, mounted on a lion's back, Rhamnusia — Nemesis, the goddess of vengeance, who has a temple at Rhamnus — bears a helmet full of blood and strews the way with the brains of slaughtered men.

"By Tamburlaine's side the ugly, horror-causing Furies run, listening carefully for when he shall order them to plague the world.

"Over Tamburlaine's zenith, clothed in windy air and with eagle's wings joined to her feathered breast, Fame hovers, sounding her golden trumpet, so that to the opposite poles of that straight line — the axle-tree of the heavens — which measures the glorious frame of Heaven, the name of mighty Tamburlaine is spread. His name is known throughout the world from north pole to south pole.

"And, fair lady, your eyes shall behold Tamburlaine.

"Come."

Olympia replied, "Take pity on a lady's pitiful tears, a lady who humbly begs upon her knees to stay and cast her body in the burning flame that feeds upon her son's and husband's flesh."

Techelles said, "Madam, sooner shall fire consume us both than scorch a face as beautiful as yours, in fashioning which Nature has showed more skill than when she gave eternal chaos

form, drawing from it the shining lamps of Heaven.”

Theridamas said, “Madam, I am so far in love with you, that you must go with us — you must.”

Olympia said, “Then carry me, I care not, where you will, and let the end of this my fated, fatal journey be likewise the end to my accursed life.”

“No, madam,” Techelles said, “it will be the beginning of your joy. Come willingly, therefore.”

Theridamas said, “Soldiers, now let us meet the general, Tamburlaine, who by this time is at Natolia, ready to charge the army of the Turkish Emperor. The gold, the silver, and the pearl you got, plundering this fort, divide in equal shares. This lady shall have twice as much again out of the coffers of our treasury.”

— 3.5 —

The Turkish Emperor Callapine, Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia, the King of Jerusalem, the King of Trebizond, the King of Syria, and Almeda were meeting. Many soldiers and attendants were present, as was a messenger.

The Turkish Emperor Callapine and his army had traveled from Asia Minor to battle Tamburlaine. Tamburlaine’s army was at Aleppo in northern Syria.

The messenger said, “Renowned Emperor, mighty Callapine, God’s great lieutenant over all the world, here at Aleppo, with an army of men, camps Tamburlaine, this King of Persia — in number they are more than are the quivering leaves of Mount Ida’s forest near Troy in western Natolia, where your highness’ hounds with open cry pursue the wounded stag. Tamburlaine intends to encircle the walls of Natolia with siege, set fire to the town, and overrun the land.”

The messenger referred to Natolia as a town: He meant the military camp of Natolia’s royal army. Tamburlaine intended to utterly defeat the Turkish Emperor’s royal army. According to the messenger, Tamburlaine had so many soldiers that he could surround Natolia’s royal army as if he were besieging a city.

The Turkish Emperor Callapine said, “My royal army is as great as Tamburlaine’s army. My royal army, from the bounds of Phrygia in western Asia Minor to the Mediterranean Sea that washes the island of Cyprus with its brinish waves, covers the hills, the valleys, and the plains.

“Viceroys and peers of Turkey, be valiant. Sharpen all your swords to mangle Tamburlaine, his sons, his captains, and his followers.

“By Mahomet, not one of them shall live. Forever call the field on which this battle shall be fought the Persians’ sepulcher, in memory of this our victory.”

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia said, “Now he who calls himself the scourge of Jove, the Emperor of the World, and earthly god shall end the warlike progress he intends and travel headlong to the lake of Hell, where legions of devils — knowing he must die here in Natolia’s military camp by your highness’ hands — all brandishing their flaming torches of quenchless fire, stretching their monstrous paws, grin with their teeth, and guard the gates to receive his soul.”

The Turkish Emperor Callapine said, “Tell me, Viceroys, the number of your men in your armies, and the total number of men we have when all your armies are combined in our royal army.”

The King of Jerusalem said, “From Palestine and Jerusalem, of Hebrews three score thousand fighting men have come, since last we showed the numbers to your majesty.”

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia said, “From Arabia’s desert, and the territory of that sweet land whose brave metropolis — Babylon — the fair Semiramis rebuilt, have come forty thousand warlike foot soldiers and horsemen, since last we showed the numbers to your majesty.”

The King of Trebizond said, “From Trebizond in Asia Minor, naturalized Turks — people who became Turks after living a long time in Asia Minor — and valiant Bithynians have come to my bands of soldiers, full fifty thousand more, who, when fighting, know not what retreat means, nor will ever return but with the victory, since last we showed the numbers to your majesty.”

The King of Syria said, “Syrians from Halla and neighbor cities of your highness’ land have travelled here, ten thousand horsemen and thirty thousand soldiers on foot, since last we showed the numbers to your majesty.

“And so the royal army is estimated to number six hundred thousand valiant fighting men.”

In an apostrophe, Callapine spoke to Tamburlaine, who was not present: “Then welcome, Tamburlaine, to your death.”

He then said, “Come, powerful Viceroys, let us go to the battlefield — the Persians’ sepulcher — and sacrifice mountains of breathless men to Mahomet, who now, with Jove, opens the heavens to see the slaughter of our enemies.”

Tamburlaine arrived with his three sons, Usumcasane, and some soldiers.

Tamburlaine said, “Hey, Casane! Look, a gang of Kings, sitting as if they were a-telling riddles.”

“My lord, your presence makes them pale and wan,” Usumcasane said. “Poor souls, they look as if their deaths were near.”

“Why, it is true that Death is near, Casane, because I am here,” Tamburlaine said. “But still I’ll save their lives and make them slaves.

“You petty Kings of Turkey, I have come, as Hector did into the Grecian camp, to outdare and daunt the pride of Greece, aka the Greek army, and set his — Hector’s — warlike person to the view of fierce Achilles, rival of his fame. I do you honor in the simile.”

This is true. In the simile, Tamburlaine compared the petty Kings of Turkey to Achilles, while Tamburlaine compared himself to Hector. Achilles was the superior warrior; in fact, he was the greatest warrior in the Trojan War. Tamburlaine, of course, expects to defeat the petty Kings of Turkey — and the Turkish Emperor Callapine.

In William Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, Hector visits the Greek camp. Post-Homeric accounts of the Trojan War sometimes included this episode, which is not in Homer’s *Iliad*.

Tamburlaine continued, "For, if I should, as Hector did Achilles, the worthiest knight who ever brandished sword, challenge in combat any of you, I see how fearfully you would refuse, and flee from my glove that I throw down in challenge as you would flee from a scorpion."

Orcanes, the main "petty King" of Turkey, replied, "Now that thou are afraid that thy army's strength will be insufficient to achieve victory, thou would prefer to overmatch a person in single combat."

An overmatch is a contest in which one person is clearly superior.

Orcanes continued, "But, shepherd's son, baseborn Tamburlaine, think of thy end; this sword shall slash thy throat."

Tamburlaine, who was the son of a shepherd, replied, "Villain, the shepherd's son, at whose birth Heaven gave me a gracious astrological aspect of good fortune and joined those stars that shall be astrologically opposite even until the dissolution to the world — the astrological aspect of good fortune given to me shall never be seen again — and never meant to make a conqueror as famous as is mighty Tamburlaine, shall so torment thee and that Callapine, who, like a roguish runaway, bribed that villain Almeda there, that slave, that Turkish dog, to act falsely and betray his service to his sovereign, that you shall curse the birth of Tamburlaine."

"Don't rant, proud Scythian," the Turkish Emperor Callapine said. "I shall now revenge the vile ill treatment that first my father and then I suffered at your hands."

The King of Jerusalem said, "By Mahomet, Tamburlaine shall be tied in chains, rowing with Christians in a brigantine — a small pirate vessel — about the Grecian isles to rob and plunder, and turn back to his ancient trade of banditry again. I think the slave will make a vigorous thief."

"No," the Turkish Emperor Callapine said, "when the battle ends, we all will meet and sit in council to invent some pain that most may afflict his body and his soul."

"Sirrah Callapine, I'll hang a heavy clog of wood about your neck to keep you from running away again," Tamburlaine said. "You shall not trouble me thus to come and fetch you."

"Sirrah" was a word that people of higher class used to refer to a man of lower class.

"But as for you, Viceroys, you shall have bits thrust in your mouths like horses, and, harnessed like my horses, draw my coach. And, when you don't move quickly enough, you will be lashed with whips of wire. I'll have you learn to feed on horse fodder and lie upon the planks in a stable."

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia said, "But, Tamburlaine, first thou shall kneel to us and humbly crave a pardon for thy life."

The King of Trebizond said, "The common soldiers of our mighty army shall bring thee bound to the General Callapine's tent."

The King of Syria said, "And all have jointly sworn to cause thy cruel death, or to bind thee in eternal torments' wrath."

Tamburlaine said, "Well, sirs, feed yourselves well; you know I shall have occasion shortly to make you take me on a journey by drawing my coach."



Celebinus, Tamburlaine's youngest son, said, "Look, father, how Almeda the jailor looks at us."

Tamburlaine said to Almeda, "Villain, traitor, damned fugitive, I'll make thee wish the earth had swallowed thee. Don't thou see death within my wrathful looks? Go, villain, cast thyself headlong from a rock, or rip thy bowels and tear out thy heart to appease my wrath; or else I'll torture thee, searing thy hateful flesh with burning irons and drops of scalding lead, while all thy joints are torn apart on the rack and beat to pieces with the torture-wheel, for if thou live, no element — not earth, not air, not fire, and not water — shall shroud and hide thee from the wrath of Tamburlaine."

The Turkish Emperor Callapine said, "Well, in despite of thee, he shall be made a King."

"Come, Almeda, receive this crown from me. I here invest thee King of Ariadan, which borders Mare Rosso — the Red Sea — near Mecca."

Ariadan was an unimportant town. Almeda was a petty King, indeed.

Callapine held out a crown to Almeda, who, afraid of Tamburlaine, hesitated to take the crown.

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia said, "What! Take it, man!"

Trembling, Almeda said to Tamburlaine, "My good lord, let me take it."

The Turkish Emperor Callapine said, "Do thou ask him for permission? Here! Take it!"

Tamburlaine said, "Bah, sirrah, take your crown, and make up the half dozen."

Almeda took the crown.

The half-dozen Kings were Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia, the King of Jerusalem, the King of Trebizond, the King of Syria, the King of Amasia, and now King Almeda of Ariadan.

"So, sirrah," Tamburlaine said, "now you are a King, you must give arms."

"To give arms" meant "to wear a coat of arms." It also meant that Almeda, as a King, had the right to grant a coat of arms to other people, and it meant that Almeda, as a tributary King, would have to supply soldiers to the Turkish Emperor.

Orcanes said, "So he shall, and wear thy head in his escutcheon."

An escutcheon is a shield that displays a coat of arms.

"No," Tamburlaine said, "let him hang a bunch of keys on his military banner, to remind himself that he was a jailor, so that when I capture him, I may knock out his brains with them, and lock you in the stable, when you shall come sweating from my chariot."

"Let's leave," the King of Trebizond said, "so that the villain Tamburlaine may be slain."

He meant that Tamburlaine would be slain in the upcoming battle.

"Sirrah, prepare whips, and bring my chariot to my tent," Tamburlaine said, "for, as soon as the battle is done, I'll ride in triumph through the camp."

Theridamas, Techelles, and some of their soldiers and attendants arrived.

Tamburlaine said to Callapine's Kings, "Hey, you petty Kings! Look, here are bug-bears — my generals — who will make the hair stand upright on your heads, and cast your crowns in slavery at their feet."

He then said, "Welcome, Theridamas and Techelles, both. Do you see this mob of Kings?"

Pointing to Almeda, he added, "And do you know this King?"

"Yes, my lord," Theridamas said. "He was Callapine's keeper."

"Well, now you see he is a King," Tamburlaine said. "Look to him, Theridamas, when we are fighting, lest he hides his crown as the foolish King of Persia did."

King Mycetes of Persia had attempted to hide his crown when his army was fighting Tamburlaine's army. Tamburlaine, victorious, became the new King of Persia.

The King of Syria said, "No, Tamburlaine; he shall not be put to that exigent, I warrant thee."

Tamburlaine replied, "You don't know that, sir."

He then said, "But now, my followers and my loving friends, fight as you always have, like conquerors. The glory of this happy day is yours. My stern aspect shall make the fair goddess Victory, hovering between our armies, alight on me, laden with laurel wreaths — symbols of victory — to crown us all."

The stern aspect was both Tamburlaine's stern facial expression and the astrological aspect — the way the heavenly bodies look to a person on Earth. Tamburlaine believed that the astrological aspect indicated a defeat for the royal Turkish army.

Techelles said, "I smile to think how when this battle is fought and rich Natolia is ours, our men shall sweat with carrying pearl and treasure on their backs."

Tamburlaine said to his men, "You shall be princes all, immediately."

He then said, "Come, fight, you Turks, or yield us victory."

Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia replied, "No, we will meet thee on the battlefield, slavish Tamburlaine."

#### **ACT 4 (TAMBURLAINE, Part 2)**

##### **— 4.1 —**

A trumpeter blew a call to arms.

Amyras, Tamburlaine's middle son, and Celebinus, Tamburlaine's youngest son, came out of a tent. Calyphas, Tamburlaine's oldest son, stayed in the tent, asleep.

Amyras said to Celebinus, "Now the golden crowns of these proud Turks shine in their glories, much like so many suns that half dismay the majesty of Heaven. Now, brother, we follow our father's sword, which flies with fury swifter than our thoughts and cuts down armies with its conquering wings."

Celebinus said, "Call forth our lazy brother from the tent, for if my father should miss him on the battlefield, wrath, kindled in the furnace of his breast, will send a deadly lightning to his heart."

Amyras called to Calyphas, "Brother, ho! Do you like to sleep so much that you cannot leave it when our enemies' drums and rattling cannon thunder in our ears our own destruction and our father's disgrace?"

Calyphas said, "Go away, you fools! My father doesn't need me, nor does he need you, truly, but you want to fight because you prefer to be thought more childish-valorous than manly wise.

"If half our camp of soldiers should sit and sleep with me, my father would be enough to scare and scar the foe.

"You do dishonor to his majesty by thinking our helps will do him any good."

Amyras said, "What, do thou dare, then, to be absent from the fight, knowing my father hates thy cowardice, and often has warned thee to be always in the field of battle, when he himself amidst the thickest troops beats down our foes, to flesh our taintless swords?"

The swords of Tamburlaine's sons were taintless: The sons had not yet wounded or killed an enemy soldier. To flesh one's sword meant to get it bloody in battle. In the sport of hawking, hawks were fleshed when they were given a portion of the animal they had killed.

Calyphas said, "I know, sir, what it is to kill a man; it works a remorse of conscience in me. I take no pleasure in being murderous, nor do I care for blood when wine will quench my thirst."

"Oh, cowardly boy!" Celebinus said. "Bah, for shame, come out of the tent and go to the battle! Thou dishonor manhood and thy family."

"Go, go, brave stripling," Calyphas said. "You fight for us both, and take my other eager, promising brother here as a person likely to prove a second Mars, god of war. It will please my mind as well to hear that you both have won a heap of honor in the battlefield and left your slender carcasses behind, as it would if I lay dead with you for company on the battlefield."

"You will not go, then?" Amyras asked.

"You say the truth," Calyphas said.

Amyras said, "Were all the lofty mountains of *Zona Mundi* — the Zone of the World — that fill the midst of farthest Tartary on northwest Asia turned into pearl and offered the pearl to me if I would stay out of the battle, I would not abide the fury of my father, when he, made a victor in these proud conquests, comes and finds his sons have had no shares in all the honors he proposed for us."

"You take the honor," Calyphas said. "I will take my ease. My wisdom shall excuse my cowardice. Should I go to the battlefield before I have to?"

The battle trumpets sounded, and Amyras and Celebinus ran to the battlefield.

Calyphas said to himself, "The bullets fly at random where they please, and if I would go and kill a thousand men, I would be at the earliest moment rewarded with a shot, and far sooner

than he who never fights. And if I should go and do neither harm nor good, I might receive harm, which all the wealth I have, joined with my father's crown, would never cure.

"I'll play cards, not go to the battlefield."

He called, "Perdicas!"

Perdicas, Calyphas' servant, walked over to him and said, "Here I am, my lord."

"Come, you and I will play cards to drive away the time," Calyphas said.

"I am happy to, my lord," Perdicas said, "but what shall we play for?"

"Shall we play to see who shall kiss the fairest of the Turks' concubines first, when my father has conquered the Turks?" Calyphas asked.

"Agreed, indeed," Perdicas replied.

They began to play cards.

Calyphas said, "They say I am a coward, Perdicas, and I fear as little their taratantaras — bugle calls — their swords, or their cannon as I do a naked lady in a net — veil — of fine gold mesh, and who out of fear that I should be afraid, would put it off and come to bed with me."

"Such a fear, my lord, would never make you retire from 'battle' with such a woman," Perdicas said.

Calyphas said, "I wish that my father would let me be put in the front of such a battle once, to try my valor."

Battle noises sounded.

"What a noisy tumult they make!" Calyphas said. "I believe there will be some hurt done soon amongst them."

Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, Amyras, and Celebinus returned to the camp, leading some of the Turkish petty Kings: Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia, the King of Jerusalem, the King of Trebizond, and the King of Syria. Soldiers were present.

Tamburlaine said to the petty Kings, "See now, you slaves, my children humiliate your pride and lead your glories sheeplike to the sword."

He then said, "Bring them, my boys, and tell me if the wars aren't a life that may shed luster on gods? Don't the wars tickle your spirits with desire continually to be trained in arms and chivalry?"

"Shall we let go these Kings again, my lord," Amyras said, "to gather greater numbers against our power, so that they may say it is not luck that gave us this victory, but unmatched strength and great courage?"

"No, no, Amyras," Tamburlaine said. "Don't tempt Lady Fortune that way. Nourish your valor continually with fresh supplies of Kings to conquer elsewhere, and don't glut it with stale and daunted foes."

“But where’s this coward villain, who is not my son, but is instead a traitor to my name and majesty?”

Tamburlaine went into the tent and brought Calyphas, his oldest son, out.

Tamburlaine said to Calyphas, “Image of sloth, and picture of a slave, the disgrace and scorn of my renown! How may my heart, thus inflamed with what my eyes see, wounded with shame and killed with discontent, shroud and conceal any thought that may stop my striving hands from executing martial justice on thy wretched soul?”

Theridamas said, “Yet pardon him, I beg your majesty.”

Techelles and Usumcasane said, “Let all of us entreat and beg for your highness’ pardon.”

Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane knelt.

Tamburlaine said, “Stand up, you base, unworthy soldiers! Don’t you know yet the argument of arms? Don’t you know the code of military conduct?”

Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane stood up, but Amyras and Celebinus knelt.

Amyras said, “My good lord, let him be forgiven for once, and we will force him to go to the battlefield hereafter.”

Tamburlaine said, “Stand up, my boys, and I will teach you arms, and what the zeal for military values must do.”

Amyras and Celebinus stood up.

“Oh, Samarkand, where first I breathed and first enjoyed the fire of this martial flesh, blush, blush, fair city, at your honor’s dishonor and shame of nature, which the stream of Jaertis, embracing you, Samarkand, with its deepest love, can never wash off from your dishonored brows!

“Here, Jove, receive my oldest son’s faint-hearted soul again. Calyphas’ soul is not worthy of being the immortal part of a body that comes from the seed of Tamburlaine.

“In Tamburlaine, an incorporeal spirit moves. This incorporeal spirit is made of the same mold of which thou yourself, Jove, and thy incorporeal spirit consist. Our incorporeal spirits are the same, and my incorporeal spirit makes me valiant, proud, ambitious, and ready to levy power against thy throne. I am willing to challenge thee so that I might be the one to move the turning Spheres of Heaven, for Earth and all this airy region cannot contain the state of Tamburlaine.”

Tamburlaine was not using the respectful “you” and “your” when referring to Jove.

Although Tamburlaine referred to Jove, what he said can be applied to the Judeo-Christian-Muslim God.

1 Kings 8:27 states, “*But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?*” (King James Version).

Tamburlaine believed that like God, Earth and the heavens could not bound him.

Genesis 1:26 states, *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth”* (King James Version).

Tamburlaine was made in God’s image; he believed, apparently, that in his case he was made in the image of God as a vengeful God Who causes the death of those who displease Him.

Tamburlaine stabbed and killed Calyphas, his oldest son, and then he said, “By Mahomet, thy — Jove’s — mighty friend I swear, in sending to my son such a soul, created of the densest dregs of earth, the scum and tartar of the four elements, a soul in which was found neither courage nor strength nor wit, but only folly, sloth, and damned idleness, thou have procured a greater enemy than the mythological being who darted mountains at thy head, shaking the burden — the sky — mighty Atlas bears. Confronted with this mountain-throwing enemy, thou trembling hid thyself in the air, covered with a pitch-black cloud to prevent thy being seen.”

Tamburlaine was wrong. Jove had not hidden; he had won the battle.

Tamburlaine had just declared himself to be a powerful enemy and rival to God.

He then said to the petty Kings, “And now, you cankered curs — worm-infested dogs — of Asia, who will not see and acknowledge and recognize the strength of Tamburlaine, although it shines as brightly as the Sun, now you shall feel the strength of Tamburlaine and learn the state of his supremacy by experiencing the difference between himself and you.”

Orcanes said to Tamburlaine, “Thou show the difference between ourselves and thee, in this thy barbarous damned tyranny.”

The conquered King of Jerusalem said to Tamburlaine, “Thy victories are grown so violently destructive, that shortly Heaven, filled with the meteors of blood and fire thy tyrannies have made, will pour down blood and fire on thy head, whose scalding drops will pierce thy seething brains, and, with our bloods, revenge our bloods on thee.”

The conquered King of Jerusalem was saying that the pools of blood that Tamburlaine and his army had caused to be shed by the Turks would be evaporated and form a scalding bloody rain that would fall on Tamburlaine and avenge the Turks and their blood that Tamburlaine had spilled.

Tamburlaine replied, “Villains, these terrors, and these tyrannies — if you consider war’s justice to be tyrannies — that I execute and carry out were given to me from the gods above to scourge the pride of such people as Heaven abhors, nor am I made Arch-Monarch — the greatest King — of the world, crowned and invested by the hand of Jove, for deeds of generosity or nobility.

“But since I wield a greater name — ‘the scourge of God and terror of the world’ — I must apply myself to make my actions fit those terms, in war, in blood, in death, and in cruelty, and plague such peasants as resist the power of Heaven’s eternal majesty in me.”

Tamburlaine then ordered, “Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane, ransack the tents and the pavilions of these proud Turks, and take their concubines. Make the concubines then bury this effeminate brat, my oldest son, for not a common soldier shall defile his manly fingers with so

faint-hearted a boy. Then bring those Turkish harlots to my tent, and I'll dispose of them as pleases me best. Meanwhile, take the corpse of this effeminate brat in."

Some soldiers replied, "We will, my lord."

Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, and some soldiers exited with the body of Calyphas.

"Oh, damned monster!" the conquered King of Jerusalem said to Tamburlaine. "Nay, a fiend of Hell, whose cruelties are not so harsh as thine, nor yet imposed with such a bitter hate!"

The conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia prayed, "Revenge it, Rhadamanth and Aeacus, and let your hates, made more fierce because of Tamburlaine's cruelties, expel the hate wherewith he pains our souls!"

Rhadamanth and Aeacus were wise and just while alive, and after death, along with Minos, they became judges in the Land of the Dead. Rhadamanth tutored Hercules, and Aeacus ruled the Greek island of Aegina. One good way for them to expel from Tamburlaine the hate with which he torments the captured petty Kings of the Turkish Empire would be to kill him.

The conquered King of Trebizond prayed, "May never day give power to his eyes, whose sight, composed of fury and of fire, sends such severe passions to his heart!"

The conquered King of Syria prayed, "May never spirit, vein, or artery feed the cursed substance of that cruel heart; but, lacking moisture and compassionate blood, may it dry up with anger, and be consumed with heat!"

Tamburlaine said, "Well, bark, you dogs. I'll bridle all your tongues and bind them tightly with bits of burnished steel, down to the channels of your hateful throats, and with the pains my rigor shall inflict, I'll make you roar so that the earth may echo forth the far resounding torments you endure, as when a herd of lusty Cimbrian bulls runs around mourning because of the loss of the females, and stung with the fury of their chasing after and trying to find the females, fill all the air with sorrowful bellowing.

"I will, with war machines never yet used, conquer, sack, and utterly burn your cities and your golden palaces, and with the flames that beat against the clouds, I will burn the heavens and make the stars melt as if they were the tears of Mahomet for the hot destruction of his country's pride.

"And, until by vision or by speech I hear immortal Jove say 'Cease, my Tamburlaine,' I will persist as a terror to the world, making the meteors (that, personified, seem like armed men marching upon the towers of Heaven) run jousting round about the sky and break their burning lances in the air, all for the honor of my wondrous victories."

He then ordered his soldiers, "Come, bring the conquered petty Kings into our pavilion."

#### — 4.2 —

In Tamburlaine's military camp and outside the tent she had been staying in, Olympia, alone and holding a bowl filled with an ointment, said to herself, "Distressed Olympia, whose weeping eyes since your arrival here have beheld no Sun, but instead, enclosed within the confines of a tent, have stained your cheeks with tears and made you look like Death.

“Devise some means to rid yourself of your life rather than yield to Theridamas’ detested wooing. His intention is only to dishonor you, and since this earth, dewed with your brinish tears, provides no herbs whose taste may poison you, and this air, beat often with your sighs, provides no contagious smells and vapors to infect you, and your stuffy cave — this tent — provides no sword to murder yourself with, let this idea I have come up with be the instrument of my death.”

Theridamas arrived.

“We are well met, Olympia,” Theridamas said. “I sought you in my tent, but when I saw the place dim and dark, the place that with your beauty you were accustomed to light up, I enraged ran about the fields for you, supposing that amorous Jove had sent his son, the winged messenger-god Hermes, to convey you away from here. But now I find you, and that fear is past.

“Tell me, Olympia, will you grant my suit?”

She replied, “My lord and husband’s death, with my sweet son’s, with whom I buried all emotions except grief and sorrow, which torment my heart, forbids my mind to entertain a thought that tends to love, but to instead meditate on death, which is a fitter subject for a pensive soul.”

Theridamas replied, “Olympia, pity him in whom your looks have greater efficacy and more force than Cynthia the Moon’s ability to cause tides in the watery wilderness, for with my seeing you my joys are at the full, and ebb again as you depart from me.”

“Ah, pity me, my lord,” Olympia said, “and draw your sword and make a passage for my troubled soul, which beats against this prison — my body — to get out and meet my husband and my loving son.”

“You still speak of nothing except your husband and your son?” Theridamas said. “Leave this talk, my love, and listen more to me. You shall be the stately Queen of fair Algiers, and clothed in costly cloth of weighty gold, upon the marble turrets of my court you shall sit similar to Venus in her chair of state — her throne — commanding all that your princely eye desires, and I will set aside my military endeavors to sit with you, spending my life in sweet discourse of love.”

Olympia said, “No such discourse is pleasant in my ears, except that where every period ends with death, and every line begins with death again. I cannot love to be an Empress.”

She meant both 1) I cannot love simply in order to be an Empress, and 2) I don’t want to be an Empress.

Theridamas said, “Lady, if nothing will prevail, then I’ll use some other means to make you yield. Such is the sudden fury of my love that I must and will be pleased, and you shall yield.

“Come to the tent again.”

“Wait, my good lord,” Olympia said, “and if you will save my honor and respect my chastity, I’ll give your grace a present of such price as all the world cannot afford the like.”

“What is it?”



“An ointment that a cunning alchemist distilled from the purest balsam and the purest extracts of all minerals, in which is the essential property — the hardness — of marble stone, tempered and brought to the proper consistency by metaphysical, supernatural knowledge, and spells of magic from the mouths of spirits, with which if you only anoint your tender skin, neither pistol, nor sword, nor lance can pierce your flesh.”

“Why, madam, do you think to mock me thus so obviously?” Theridamas asked.

“To prove it, I will anoint my naked throat, which when you stab it, look at your weapon’s point, and you shall see it blunted with the blow,” Olympia said.

“Why didn’t you give your husband some of it, if you loved him, and if it is so precious?”

“My intention was, my lord, to use it for that purpose, but his sudden death prevented that, and for an immediate easy proof that it works and that I am not lying, try it on me.”

“I will, Olympia, and I will keep it for the richest present of this eastern world.”

Olympia anointed her throat with the ointment, and then said, “Now stab, my lord, and observe your weapon’s point that will be blunted even if the blow is great.”

“Here, then, Olympia,” Theridamas said as he stabbed her.

She leaned into the blow to ensure the cut was mortal.

Her throat cut, she bled and fell and died.

“Have I slain her!” Theridamas said. “Villain, stab yourself! Cut off this arm that has murdered my love, in whom the learned Rabbis and sages of this age might find as many wondrous miracles as they find in the contemplation of the world.

“Now Hell is fairer than Elysium. A greater lamp than that bright eye of Heaven, the Sun, from whence the stars borrow all their light, wanders about the black circumference of Hell, and now the damned souls are free from pain, for every Fury gazes on her looks.

“Infernal Dis — Pluto, god of the Land of the Dead — is courting my love, inventing masques and stately shows for her, opening the doors of his rich treasury to welcome this Queen of Chastity, whose body shall be entombed with all the pomp the treasure of my kingdom may afford.”

#### — 4.3 —

Tamburlaine arrived, drawn in his chariot by the conquered petty Kings of Trebizond and Syria, who had bits in their mouths. Tamburlaine held in his left hand the reins, and he held in his right hand a whip with which he scourged them.

Techelles, Theridamas, and Usumcasane were present, as were Tamburlaine’s surviving sons Amyras and Celebinus. Also present were the conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia and the conquered King of Jerusalem, led roughly by five or six common soldiers.

Tamburlaine and his army were heading east toward Babylon. They were now a short distance north of the Persian Gulf at the city of Byron, which was near Babylon.

Tamburlaine said to the conquered Kings pulling his chariot, “Holla, you pampered jades — worn-out horses — of Asia! Can you draw a chariot only twenty miles a day, although you have so proud a chariot at your heels and such a coachman as great Tamburlaine, from the plains of Asphaltis, where I conquered you, to Byron here, where thus I honor you by being your charioteer?”

“Pulling me in my chariot is a greater honor than pulling the Sun-god in his chariot. The horses that guide the golden eye of Heaven by pulling the Sun-chariot across the sky and that blow the morning from their nostrils, making their fiery gait above the clouds, are not so honored in their charioteer, the god Apollo, as you, you slaves, are in mighty Tamburlaine.

“Hercules tamed the headstrong jades of Thrace that King Aegeus fed with human flesh and made so unmanageable that they knew their strengths; those horses were not subdued with valor more divine than you by this unconquered arm of mine.”

In most versions of the myth, it is King Diomedes of Thrace who owned the man-eating horses.

Tamburlaine continued, “To make you fierce and fit my appetite, you shall be fed with flesh as raw as blood and drink the strongest sweet muscatel wine in pails.

“If you can live with it, then live, and draw my chariot swifter than the wind-driven clouds. If not, then die like beasts, and be fit for nothing but perches for the black and deadly and ominous ravens.

“Thus am I rightly the scourge of highest Jove. See the very emblem of my dignity — my whip — by which I hold my name and majesty!”

The “scourge of highest Jove” is ambiguous and can mean 1) the person whom Jove uses to scourge people, or 2) the person who scourges Jove. Right now, Tamburlaine was scourging the petty Kings, but he wished to scourge Jove.

Amyras, Tamburlaine’s oldest surviving son, said, “Let me have a coach, my lord, so that I may ride, and thus be drawn by these two idle Kings.”

The conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia and the conquered King of Jerusalem were not currently drawing a chariot.

“Your youth forbids such ease, my kingly boy,” Tamburlaine said. “They shall tomorrow draw my chariot, while these their fellow Kings may be rested.”

Orcanes prayed to Pluto, god of the Land of the Dead, “Oh, you who rule the region under the earth, and in your own realm are a King as absolute as Jove, come as you did in fruitful Sicily, surveying all the glories of the land, and come just as you took the fair Proserpina as she enjoyed the fruit of Ceres’ garden plot, for love, for honor, and to make her Queen.”

Ceres was the mother of Proserpina, who was kidnapped by Hades. Ceres mourned, and since she was the goddess of agriculture, nothing would grow when she mourned. Fortunately, an arrangement was made in which her daughter would spend six months of the year with her and be Queen of the Land of the Dead the other six months.

Proserpina and Ceres are Roman names. Proserpina’s Greek name is Persephone, and Ceres’ Greek name is Demeter.

Orcanes continued, “So, for just hate, for shame, and to subdue this proud scorner of thy dread-inspiring power, come once and for all in fury and survey his pride and then hale him headlong to the lowest Hell.”

Theridamas said to Tamburlaine, “Your majesty must get some bits for these, to bridle their contemptuous cursing tongues that, like unruly never broken jades, break through the hedges — teeth — of their hateful mouths and pass their fixed bounds exceedingly.”

Techelles said, “No, we will break the hedges of their mouths, and pull their kicking colts — unruly tongues — out of their pastures.”

Usumcasane said, “Your majesty already has devised a means, as fit as may be, to restrain these coltish coach horse tongues from blasphemy.”

Celebinus bridled Orcanes and asked, “How do you like that, sir King? Why don’t you speak?”

The King of Jerusalem said, “Ah, cruel brat, sprung from a tyrant’s loins! How like his cursed father he begins to practice taunts and bitter tyrannies!”

Smiling, Celebinus unbridled Orcanes.

“Aye, Turk, I tell thee,” Tamburlaine said, “this same boy is he who must — advanced in higher pomp than this — plunder the kingdoms I shall leave unsacked, if Jove, esteeming me to be too good for Earth, should raise me to match the fair Aldebaran — known as the Eye of Taurus and the brightest star in the constellation of Taurus — above the threefold astracism of Heaven, before I conquer all the triple world of Europe, Asia, and Africa.”

Tamburlaine wanted to become a star after his death, as happened to some mythological heroes.

The threefold astracism of Heaven is a grouping of three constellations: the Corvus (Raven), the Hydra (Water-Snake), and the Crater (Cup). A myth told the story of how the god Apollo sent a Raven to fetch him a Cup of water. The Raven was late returning because it saw some unripe figs and waited a few days for them to ripen so it could eat them. Returning to Apollo, the Raven lied and said that it had been delayed by a Water-Snake. As “proof” of its tale, the Raven showed Apollo a Water-Snake that it had brought with him. Seeing through the lie, Apollo made the Raven, Cup, and Water-Snake constellations. Apollo also ordered the Water-Snake to never allow the Raven to drink from the Cup and so the Water-Snake constellation separates the other two constellations.

The constellation Taurus is located in the northern celestial hemisphere while the constellations Corvus (Raven), Hydra (Water-Snake), and Crater (Cup) are located in the southern celestial hemisphere, and so Aldebaran is located above the threefold astracism of Heaven.

In addition to animals, the gods often stellified (made into stars or constellations) ancient heroes.

Stellification, therefore, can be done for noble beings such as Perseus, who slew the snake-haired Medusa, but it can also be done for ignoble beings such as the Raven.

Tamburlaine ordered, “Now fetch me out the Turkish concubines. I will ‘promote’ them for the funeral they have bestowed on my abortive son — that monster of nature.”

Some soldiers brought the Turkish concubines.

Tamburlaine asked, "Where are my common soldiers now, who fought so like lions upon the plains of Asphaltis?"

"Here, my lord," the soldiers answered.

Tamburlaine said, "Control yourselves, brave soldiers. Take you Queens for each of you — I mean such Queens as were Kings' concubines."

He was punning on "queans," which means "whores."

He continued, "Take them; divide them, and their jewels, too, and let them equally serve all your turns."

Tamburlaine was ordering his soldiers to rape the Turkish concubines as much as they wanted.

"We thank your majesty," the soldiers replied.

"Don't brawl, I warn you, on account of your lechery," Tamburlaine said, "for every man who so offends shall die."

Orcanes said, "Injurious tyrant, will thou so bring disrepute on the hateful fortunes of thy victory, to exercise upon such guiltless dames the violence of thy common soldiers' lust?"

Speaking to all the conquered Turkish petty Kings, and amused at their defending the chastity of concubines, Tamburlaine replied, "Live chastely, then, you slaves, and don't meet me in battle with troops of harlots at your lazy heels."

The concubines pleaded, "Oh, pity us, my lord, and save our honors by keeping us from being raped."

Tamburlaine said to his common soldiers, "Aren't you gone, you villains, with your spoils?"

The soldiers ran away with the Turkish concubines.

"Oh, merciless, infernal cruelty!" the conquered King of Jerusalem said.

Thinking about the words of the concubines, Tamburlaine said, "Save your honors! It's about time you spoke up about honor indeed, since your honors were lost long before you knew what honor meant."

Theridamas said, "It seems that the Turks meant to conquer us, my lord, and make us laughable spectacles for their whores."

That would explain why the Turks had brought their concubines.

"And now they themselves shall make our laughable spectacles," Tamburlaine said, "and common soldiers will 'jest' with all their trulls — their whores."

"Let the common soldiers take pleasure soundly in their spoils, until we prepare our march to Babylon, to which we will next make a quick journey."

"Let us not be idle, then, my lord," Techelles said, "but soon be ready to conquer it."

Tamburlaine said, "We will, Techelles."

He then said to the Turkish petty Kings harnessed to his chariot, “Forward, then, you jades. Move, you poor-quality horses.”

He then addressed in an apostrophe Kings he intended to conquer in the future: “Now crouch, you so-far-unconquered Kings of greatest Asia, and tremble when you hear that this scourge will come who whips down cities and controls crowned Kings, adding their wealth and treasure to my store.

“The Euxine — Black — Sea, north of Natolia; the Mediterranean Sea, to the west of Natolia; the Caspian Sea, to the north northeast of Natolia; and the Sinus Arabicus — the Red Sea — to the south of Natolia shall all be laden with the martial spoils we will convey with us to Persia.

“Then shall my native city, Samarkand, and the crystal waves of fresh Jaertis’ stream, the pride and beauty of her princely seat, be famous through the furthest continents, for there my royal palace shall be placed, whose shining turrets — towers — shall dismay the heavens and cast the fame of Ilion’s — Troy’s — tower to Hell.

“Through the streets, with troops of conquered Kings, I’ll ride in golden armor like the Sun, and in my helmet a triple plume shall spring, spangled with diamonds, dancing in the air, to note me Emperor of the threefold world — Asia, Europe, and Africa — like an almond tree mounted high upon the lofty and celestial mountain of the evergreen Sicilian city Selinus, location of a temple to Jupiter, quaintly decked with blooms whiter than the brows of Erycina — Venus, who has a shrine at Mount Eryx in Sicily — whose tender blossoms tremble every one at every little breath through Heaven blown.

“Then in my coach, like Jupiter, Saturn’s royal son, mounted in his shining chariot made golden with fire, and drawn by princely eagles through the path paved with bright crystal and inlaid with stars, when all the gods stand gazing at his pomp, so will I ride through Samarkand’s streets, until my soul, dis severed from this flesh, shall mount the milky-white way — the Milky Way — and meet him there.

“To Babylon, my lords, to Babylon!”

## **ACT 5 (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 2)**

### **— 5.1 —**

Tamburlaine was besieging the city of Babylon. This was the third day of the siege, and so Tamburlaine’s tents, banners, and armor were all in black, indicating that he would show no mercy to the inhabitants — men, women, and children — of Babylon.

The Governor of Babylon stood on the city walls, looking at Tamburlaine’s camp. With the Governor of Babylon were his advisor Maximus and other people.

“What do you think, Maximus?” the Governor of Babylon asked.

Maximus replied, “My lord, the breach the enemy has made in our walls gives such assurance of our being conquered that little hope is left to save our lives or hold our city from the conqueror’s hands.

“So then hang out flags, my lord, of humble truce, and satisfy the people’s general prayers, so that Tamburlaine’s intolerable wrath may be suppressed by our submission.”

“Villain, do thou respect more thy slavish life than the honor of thy country or thy name?” the Governor of Babylon asked. “Is not my life and state, the city and my native country’s welfare, as dear to me as anything of value that you can imagine?”

“Don’t we have hope, despite all our battered walls, to live safely and keep his forces out, when this our famous lake of Limnasphaltis makes walls afresh with everything that falls into the liquid substance of its stream, stronger than are the Gates of Death or Hell?”

The bituminous lake of Limnasphaltis petrified anything that fell into it, making defenses for Babylon. Using the bituminous, aka asphaltic, water of Asphaltis, the people of Babylon had created a moat around their city. In this culture, the word “lake” meant “channel” as well as its usual meaning. Asphaltis’ lake was a usual lake, while Limnasphaltis’ lake was a moat.

The Governor of Babylon continued, “What faintness should dismay our courages, when we are thus defended against our foe, and have no terror but his threatening looks?”

A Babylonian citizen came over to the Governor and knelt before him.

The citizen said, “My lord, if ever you did a deed of pity and mercy, and now will work to create a refuge for our lives, offer submission to Tamburlaine, and hang up flags of truce so that Tamburlaine may pity our distress and treat us like a loving conqueror.

“Although this is supposed to be the last day of his dreadful siege, on which he spares neither man nor child, yet there are Christians of Georgia here, whose condition in life he has always pitied and relieved: They will get his pardon, if your grace would send notification of surrender to Tamburlaine.”

Because Tamburlaine had soundly defeated the Ottoman Turks at a time when they seemed unstoppable as they defeated Christian territory, many people viewed him as sympathetic to Christians.

The Governor of Babylon said, “How my soul is environed with cares! And how this eternally famous city of Babylon is filled with a pack of fainthearted fugitives who thus beg for their own shame and servitude!”

A second citizen arrived and said, “My lord, if ever you will win our hearts, surrender the town, and save our wives and children, for I will cast myself from off these walls or die some death of quickest violence before I endure the wrath of Tamburlaine.”

“Villains, cowards, traitors to our state,” the Governor of Babylon said. “Fall to the earth, and pierce the pit of Hell, so that legions of tormenting spirits may vex your slavish bosoms with continual pains — I don’t care! Babylon will never yield as long as any life is in my breast.”

Theridamas and Techelles, with other soldiers, arrived outside the walls of Babylon.

Theridamas said, “Thou desperate Governor of Babylon, to save thy life, and save us a little labor, yield speedily the city to our hands, or else be sure thou shall be forced to do so with pains more excruciating than ever traitor felt.”

Theridamas was apparently telling the Governor of Babylon that if he surrendered the city, he would not be killed. This offer was an exception to Tamburlaine's usual rules regarding sieges:

- If the city surrendered on the first day, Tamburlaine would kill no one. On the first day of the siege, Tamburlaine's tents, pennants, and clothes were white.
- If the city surrendered on the second day, Tamburlaine would kill only those who were capable of fighting in battle. On the second day of the siege, Tamburlaine's tents, pennants, and clothes were red.
- If the city surrendered on the third day, Tamburlaine would kill everyone without respect of sex, social status, or age: He would raze all his foes with fire and sword. On the third day of the siege, Tamburlaine's tents, pennants, and clothes were black.

The Governor of Babylon replied, "Tyrant, I return the charge of 'traitor' down thy throat, and I will defend the city in despite of thee."

He then ordered, "Call up the soldiers to defend these walls."

"Yield, foolish Governor," Techelles said. "We offer more than ever yet we did to such proud slaves as dared resist us until our third day's siege. Thou see us ready to give the last assault, and we shall abide no more negotiations."

"Assault and spare not," the Governor of Babylon said. "We will never yield."

Trumpets sounded the call to arms, and Tamburlaine's soldiers climbed the walls of Babylon and took the city.

Tamburlaine arrived, drawn in his chariot by the conquered Kings of Trebizond and Syria, with two spare conquered Kings, Orcanes and Jerusalem, not in harness. With Tamburlaine were Usumcasane, Amyras, and Celebinus. Because this was the third day of the siege, Tamburlaine was dressed in black.

Tamburlaine said, "The stately buildings of fair Babylon, whose lofty pillars, higher than the clouds, were accustomed to guide the seaman in the deep, being carried thither by the cannon's force, now fill the mouth of the lake of Limnaspaltis and make a bridge to the battered walls."

The towers of Babylon had fallen into Limnaspaltis — the moat whose water came from the lake of Asphaltis — and in the moat the broken towers now formed a bridge to the battered walls of Babylon. The mouth of the lake of Limnaspaltis is the place where the water of Asphaltis and the water of Limnaspaltis met.

Tamburlaine was vastly exaggerating when he said that Babylonian buildings "were accustomed to guide the seaman in the deep." Babylon was located in the center of Iraq, approximately 150 miles northwest of the Persian Gulf.

Tamburlaine added, "Where Belus, Ninus, and Alexander the Great have ridden in triumph, Tamburlaine triumphs."

Belus was the founder of Babylon.

Ninus, the son of Belus, founded Nineveh, the capital of the ancient Assyrian Empire; he founded the first Assyrian Empire by conquering much of western Asia.

In 331 B.C.E., Babylon surrendered to Alexander the Great.

Tamburlaine continued, referring to himself in the third person, “Tamburlaine’s chariot wheels, drawn by these Kings on heaps of carcasses, have broken the Assyrians’ bones.

“Now in the place where fair Semiramis, widow of Ninus, courted by Kings and peers of Asia, danced stately dances, do my soldiers march, and in the streets, where richly dressed Assyrian dames have ridden in pomp like Juno, the rich daughter of Saturn, my horsemen brandish their unruly blades with furious words and frowning faces.”

Theridamas and Techelles arrived, bringing the Governor of Babylon.

Tamburlaine asked, “Who do you have there, my lords?”

Theridamas answered, “The defiant, refractory Governor of Babylon, who made us all labor for the town and made such slender reckoning of your majesty.”

“Go and bind the villain,” Tamburlaine said. “He shall hang in chains upon the ruins of this conquered town.”

He then said to the Governor of Babylon, “Sirrah, the view yesterday of our red tents, which threatened more than if the region next underneath the Sphere of Fire that separates the Moon from the Earth were full of comets and of blazing stars — meteors — whose flaming comet tails and meteor trails should reach down to the Earth, could not frighten you; no, nor I myself, mighty Jove’s wrathful messenger, who with his sword have caused all earthly Kings to tremble, could not persuade you to surrender Babylon, but still you kept the city gates shut.

“Villain, I say, should I but touch the rusty gates of Hell, the triple-headed dog Cerberus that guards the Underworld would howl and make black Jove — Pluto, god of the Land of the Dead — crouch and kneel to me. But I have sent volleys of shot to you, yet I could not enter until the breach was made.”

The Governor of Babylon replied, “Nor if my body could have stopped the breach, should thou have entered, cruel Tamburlaine. It is not thy bloody-red tents that can make me yield, nor indeed thyself, thou who embodied the anger of the Highest. For although thy cannon shook the city walls, my heart never quaked nor did my courage faint.”

“Well, now I’ll make it quake,” Tamburlaine said.

He ordered, “Go, raise him up. Hang him in chains upon the city walls, and let my soldiers shoot the slave to death.”

The Governor of Babylon said, “Vile monster, born of some infernal hag, and sent from Hell to tyrannize on the surface of the Earth, do all thy worst; neither death, nor Tamburlaine, nor torture, nor pain can daunt my fearless mind.”

“Up with him, then,” Tamburlaine said. “Hang him on the wall. His body shall be scared and scarred.”

In an attempt to save his life, the Governor of Babylon said, “But, Tamburlaine, in Limnaspaltis’ lake lies more gold than Babylon is worth. This gold, when the city was besieged, I hid. Just save my life, and I will give it to thee.”



“Then, despite all your ‘valor,’ you would save your life?” Tamburlaine said. “Whereabouts does it lie?”

“Under a hollow bank, right opposite against the western gate of Babylon,” the Governor of Babylon said.

Tamburlaine ordered, “Go there, some of you, and seize his gold.”

Some soldiers exited.

Tamburlaine said to some other soldiers, “Take the Governor of Babylon away from here; let him speak no more.”

He then said to the Governor of Babylon, “I think I am making your courage somewhat quail.”

The soldiers exited with the Governor of Babylon.

Tamburlaine said, “When this is done, we’ll march from Babylon and make our greatest haste to Persia. These jades — the conquered Kings of Trebizond and Syria — are broken winded and half tired. Unharness them, and let me have fresh horses.”

Some attendants unharnessed the conquered Kings of Trebizond and Syria.

Tamburlaine then ordered, “So, now that their best is done to honor me, take them and hang them both up presently.”

He meant to hang them up on the walls of Babylon, just like the Governor of Babylon.

“Vile tyrant!” the conquered King of Trebizond shouted. “Barbarous bloody Tamburlaine!”

Tamburlaine ordered, “Take them away, Theridamas; see them dispatched.”

“I will, my lord,” Theridamas said.

Theridamas exited with the conquered Kings of Trebizond and Syria.

Tamburlaine said to the conquered Kings who were acting as his spare horses, “Come, Asian Viceroy, work your tasks for a while, and take such fortune as your fellows felt. They have drawn my chariot, and now it’s your turn.”

The conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia replied, “First let thy Scythian horses tear apart my limbs and the limbs of the King of Jerusalem rather than we should draw thy chariot, and, like base slaves, degrade our princely minds by performing vile and ignominious servitude.”

“Rather lend me thy weapon, Tamburlaine,” the conquered King of Jerusalem said, “so that I may sheathe it in this breast of mine. A thousand deaths could not torment our hearts more than the thought of this vexes our souls.”

Amyras, Tamburlaine’s oldest surviving son, said, “They will continue to always talk, my lord, if you don’t bridle them.”

“Bridle them,” Tamburlaine ordered, “and let me go to my coach.”

Some attendants bridled the conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia and the conquered King of Jerusalem.

While that was happening, the Governor of Babylon was hung in chains on the walls of Babylon.

Theridamas returned.

Amyras said to his father, Tamburlaine, "See, now, my lord, how bravely the captain — the Governor of Babylon — hangs."

"It is bravely — splendidly — done, indeed, my boy," Tamburlaine said.

He then said to Theridamas, "Well done! Shoot first, my lord, and then the rest shall follow."

Theridamas replied, "Then I'll have at him — shoot him — for a beginning."

Theridamas shot the Governor of Babylon, who said to Tamburlaine, "Yet save my life, and let this wound appease the mortal fury of great Tamburlaine."

"No," Tamburlaine replied, "even though Asphaltis' water were liquid gold, and it was offered to me as ransom for thy life, you still would die."

He ordered, "All of you shoot at him all at once."

They shot and killed the Governor of Babylon.

Tamburlaine was very good at ordering other people to kill and having them obey his orders.

Tamburlaine said, "So, now he hangs like Baghdad's Governor, having as many bullets in his flesh as there are breaches in her battered wall."

Did Tamburlaine mistakenly call Babylon Baghdad? Or had the Governor of Baghdad suffered the same fate as the Governor of Babylon?

"Go now and bind the burghers hand and foot, and cast them headlong in the city's lake. Tartars and Persians shall inhabit there, and to command the city, I will build a citadel in Babylon for which all Africa, which has been subject to the Persian King, shall pay me tribute."

Techelles asked, "What shall be done with the burghers' wives and children, my lord?"

"Techelles, drown them all — man, woman, and child," Tamburlaine said. "Leave not a Babylonian in the town."

"I will set about it immediately," Techelles said. "Come, soldiers."

Later, he would say that he had drowned thousands of men in the lake of Asphaltis. Possibly, the lake of Limnaspaltis was not big enough to drown thousands of people.

He and the soldiers exited.

"Now, Casane, where's the Turkish Koran and all the heaps of superstitious books found in the temples of that Mahomet whom I have thought to be a god?" Tamburlaine said. "They shall be burnt."

"Here they are, my lord," Usumcasane replied.

"Well done," Tamburlaine said. "Let a fire be made immediately."

“In vain, I see, men worship Mahomet. My sword has sent millions of Turks to Hell and slew all his priests, his kinsmen, and his friends, and yet I live untouched by Mahomet.

“There is a God, full of revenging wrath, from whom the thunder and the lightning break, whose scourge I am, and him I will obey.”

Tamburlaine believed in a vengeful God, but not in the people who are widely regarded as God’s prophets.

He continued, “So, Casane; fling them in the fire.”

Usumcasane burned the religious books.

Tamburlaine said, “Now Mahomet, if thou have any power, come down thyself and work a miracle. Thou are not worthy to be worshipped if thou allow flames of fire to burn the scripture wherein the sum of thy religion rests.

“Why don’t thou send a furious whirlwind down to blow thy Koran up to thy throne, where men report that thou sit by God himself?

“Or why don’t thou take vengeance on the head of Tamburlaine, who shakes his sword against thy majesty and kicks the epitome of thy foolish laws?

“Well, soldiers, Mahomet remains in Hell. He cannot hear the voice of Tamburlaine.

“Seek out another godhead to adore — adore the God who sits in Heaven, if you adore any god, for he alone is God, and none but he.”

Techelles returned and said, “I have fulfilled your highness’ will, my lord. Thousands of men, drowned in the lake of Asphaltis, have made the water swell above the banks, and fishes, fed by human carcasses, dazed, swim up and down upon the waves, as when they swallow the bitter plant resin called asafoetida, which makes them float on the surface and gasp for air.”

Fish are unlikely to live or survive in asphaltic water.

“Well, then, my friendly lords, what now remains,” Tamburlaine said, “but that we leave a sufficient garrison of soldiers behind here in Babylon and immediately depart to Persia, to triumph after all our victories?”

“Aye, my good lord, let us hasten to Persia,” Theridamas said, “and let this deceased captain — the Governor of Babylon — be removed from the walls to some high hill about the city here.”

“Let it be so,” Tamburlaine said. “Set about it, soldiers. But hold on; I suddenly feel ill.”

“What is it that dares make Tamburlaine ill?” Techelles asked.

“Something, Techelles,” Tamburlaine said, “but I don’t know what.

“But, go forth, you vassals! Whatsoever it may be, neither sickness nor death can ever conquer me.”

The Turkish Emperor Callapine and the King of Amasia talked together. A captain, soldiers, drummers, and trumpeters were present. They were within sight of Babylon and talking about attacking Tamburlaine's army, which they regarded as not fully recovered from the effort of attacking Babylon.

The Turkish Emperor Callapine said, "King of Amasia, now our mighty army marches in Asia Major, where the streams of Euphrates and Tigris swiftly run, and here may we behold great Babylon, circled about with Limnaspheatis' lake, where Tamburlaine with all his army lies. Since his army is faint and weary with the siege, we may lie ready to encounter Tamburlaine in battle before his army returns to full strength and is fully recovered from the siege of Babylon, and so revenge our latest grievous loss, if God or Mahomet should send any aid."

The King of Amasia said, "Don't doubt, my lord, that we shall conquer him. Our Turkish swords shall headlong send to Hell the monster that has drunk a sea of blood and yet opens his maw for still more to quench his thirst, and that vile carcass, drawn by warlike Kings, the fowls shall eat, for never shall a sepulcher grace this baseborn tyrant Tamburlaine."

"When I remember my parents' slavish life, their cruel death, my own captivity, and my Viceroy's bondage under Tamburlaine," the Turkish Emperor Callapine said, "I think I could sustain a thousand deaths in order to be revenged on all his villainy."

"Ah, sacred Mahomet, you who have seen millions of Turks perish because of Tamburlaine, kingdoms made waste, brave cities sacked and burnt, and now only one army is left to honor you, aid your obedient servant Callapine and make him, after all these defeats, triumph over cursed Tamburlaine."

"Fear not, my lord," the King of Amasia said. "I see great Mahomet, clothed in purple clouds, and on his head wearing a wreath brighter than Apollo's crown, marching about the air with armed men, to join with you against this Tamburlaine."

The Captain said, "Renowned General, mighty Callapine, even if God himself and holy Mahomet were to come in person to resist your power, yet might your mighty army encounter all, and pull proud Tamburlaine upon his knees to beg for mercy at your highness' feet."

"Captain," the Turkish Emperor Callapine said, "the force of Tamburlaine is great, his good fortune greater, and the victories with which he has so sorely paralyzed with fear the world are greatest to discourage all our intentions. Yet when the pride of Cynthia the Moon is at full, she wanes again, and so shall his fortune, I hope, for we have here the chief especially selected men of twenty different kingdoms at the least."

"Neither plowman, nor priest, nor merchant stays at home. All Turkey is in arms and fighting beside me, Callapine, and never will we break down the military camps and discharge the army before either Tamburlaine himself or his army is conquered."

"This is the time that must eternally make me famous for conquering the tyrant of the world."

"Come, soldiers, let us lie in wait for him, and if we find him absent from his military camp, before his soldiers are reassembled again at full strength, we will assail it and be sure of victory."

Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane talked together. They were mourning Tamburlaine's severe illness.

Theridamas said, "Weep, heavens, and vanish into liquid tears! Fall, stars that govern Tamburlaine's birth and summon all the shining lamps — the stars — of Heaven to cast their useless fires to the Earth and shed their feeble influence in the air. Hide your beauties with eternal clouds, for Hell and Darkness pitch their pitch-black tents, and Death, with armies of Cimmerian spirits, gives battle against the heart of Tamburlaine."

The Cimmerians were believed to never see daylight because they lived in caves and came out only to rob travelers at night.

Theridamas continued, "Now in defiance of that customary love your sacred virtues poured upon his throne, and made his state an honor to the heavens, these cowards invisibly assail his soul and threaten conquest on our sovereign. But if he dies, your glories are disgraced, and Earth droops and says that Hell is placed in Heaven."

Techelles said, "Oh, then, you powers who rule eternally and guide this massive substance of the Earth, if you still are deserving of holiness and religious worship, as your supreme estates instruct our thoughts, don't be unfaithful, don't be unconcerned about your reputation, don't bear the burden of your enemies' joys, and don't join the chorus as your enemies sing about their joys as they triumph in the fall of Tamburlaine, whom you advanced, but as his birth, life, health, and majesty were exceptionally blest and cared for by Heaven, so may Heaven — until Heaven is dissolved — honor his birth, his life, his health, and his majesty!"

Usumcasane said, "Blush, Heaven, to lose the honor of your name, to see your footstool set upon your head. Only a foolish god would wear a footstool on his head! And let no baseness in your haughty breast sustain a shame of such inexcellence and indignity as to see the devils mount in angels' thrones, and angels dive into the pools of Hell — the universe will turn upside-down if Tamburlaine dies!

"And though the devils think their painful period of suffering has ended, and that their power is as mighty as Jove's, which makes them conduct war against your — Heaven's — state, yet make them feel that the strength of Tamburlaine, your instrument and note — distinguishing mark — of majesty, is greater far than they can thus subdue. For, if he dies, then your glory is disgraced, and Earth droops and says that Hell is placed in Heaven."

Tamburlaine arrived in his chariot, drawn by the conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia and the conquered King of Jerusalem. Tamburlaine's surviving sons Amyras and Celebinus and some physicians also arrived.

Tamburlaine said, "What daring god torments my body thus and seeks to conquer mighty Tamburlaine? Shall sickness prove me now to be a mortal man — me who has been called the terror of the world?"

"Techelles and the rest, come, take your swords, and threaten him whose hand afflicts my soul. Come, let us march against the powers of Heaven and set black banners in the sky to signify the slaughter of the gods."

As if it were the third day of a siege — the day on which he would show no mercy — Tamburlaine wanted to use the color black to announce his intention — or wish — to slaughter all the gods who opposed him.

He continued, "Ah, friends, what shall I do? I cannot stand. Come, carry me to war against the gods, who thus envy the health of Tamburlaine."

Theridamas said, "Ah, my good lord, stop saying these impatient words that add much danger to your already dangerous malady."

"Why, shall I sit and languish in this pain?" Tamburlaine said. "No, strike the drums, and, in revenge of this, come, let us level our spears, charge, and pierce the breast of Atlas, whose shoulders bear the axis of the world."

Tamburlaine was wrong. Atlas holds up the sky and stars, not the axis of the world, which is the axis that passes through the center of the Earth. To it are affixed the Ptolemaic spheres that revolve around the Earth. If Atlas were to attempt to hold up the axis of the world, he would be attempting to hold up the Earth and the rest of the universe, with nowhere to stand: He would be attempting to exceed what he is capable of doing, much like Tamburlaine.

Tamburlaine continued, "Let's do this so that if I perish, Heaven and Earth may fade and perish with me."

"Theridamas, hasten to the court of Jove. Command him to send Apollo, the god of medicine and healing, here straightaway to cure me, or I'll fetch him down myself."

Techelles said, "Sit still, my gracious lord; this suffering will cease and cannot last — it is so violent and extreme."

"Cannot last, Techelles?" Tamburlaine said. "No, for I shall die. See where my slave, the ugly monster Death, shaking and quivering, pale and sickly because of fear, stands aiming at me with his murdering arrow. Death flies away at every glance I give, and when I look away, comes stealing near me."

"Villainous Death, leave, and hasten to go to the battlefield! I and my army come to load thy — and Charon's — boat with the souls of a thousand mangled carcasses."

"Look, where he goes! But see, he comes again because I stay here."

"Techelles, let us march and weary Death by making him bear many souls to Hell."

A physician asked, "May it please your majesty to drink this potion, which will lessen the fury of your fit and cause some milder spirits to govern you."

"Tell me," Tamburlaine asked, "what do you think about my sickness now?"

"I viewed your urine," the physician said, "and the hypostasis — sediment in the urine — thick and obscure, shows that your danger is great."

"Your veins are full of abnormally excessive heat, whereby the moisture of your blood is dried."

The physician continued, "The humidum and calor — moisture and heat — that some believe is not a part of the natural elements, but of a more divine and pure substance, is almost completely extinguished and spent, which, since moisture and heat are the cause of life, signifies your death."

“Besides, my lord, this day is astrologically critical and dangerous to those whose crisis is like yours.

“Your arteries, which parallel to the veins convey the lively spirits that the heart engenders, are parched and void of those spirits, with the result that the soul, lacking those organons by which it moves — the material parts that interact with the soul — cannot endure, as far as the medical knowledge can tell.”

This society regarded blood as half spiritual and half physical, and Tamburlaine’s blood was losing its spiritual part (lively spirits) and its material parts (organons).

Tamburlaine lacked organons — the material parts that interact with the soul. In another person who had a sufficient number of organons, their presence would manifest itself in things of the soul. These things may include compassion, empathy, sympathy, morality, and mercy. Apparently, Tamburlaine had been losing his organons throughout his military career.

Blood is the sanguine humor, and one definition of “sanguine” is “causing bloodshed and delighting in bloodshed.” As Tamburlaine was dying, he was losing his ability (but not his desire) to cause bloodshed, and so he was losing what made Tamburlaine Tamburlaine.

Earlier, the conquered King of Syria had prayed about Tamburlaine, “May never spirit, vein, or artery feed the cursed substance of that cruel heart; but, lacking moisture and compassionate blood, may it dry up with anger, and be consumed with heat!”

The physician continued, “Yet, if your majesty may escape this day, no doubt you shall soon recover all.”

Tamburlaine replied, “Then I will husband all my vital parts, and live, to spite death, longer than one day.”

Noises sounded, and a messenger arrived and said, “My lord, young Callapine, who lately fled from your majesty, has now gathered a fresh army, and hearing about your absence in the field, acts as if he will set upon us immediately.”

“See, my physicians, now, how Jove has sent a ready medicine to cure my pain,” Tamburlaine said. “Sight of me shall make them fly, and if I can follow them, not one of all the villain’s army shall live to give the offer of another fight.”

Usumcasane said, “I take joy, my lord, because your highness is so strong that you can so well make your royal presence continue to exist, which alone will dismay the enemy. Your fighting off death and showing yourself to the enemy will dismay the enemy.”

Tamburlaine said, “I know it will, Casane.

“Pull my chariot, you slaves! To spite death, I will go show my face.”

Tamburlaine was not healthy enough to fight, but he could show himself to the enemy. Tamburlaine was such a cruel military leader that the mere sight of him dismayed the enemy.

In Homer’s *Iliad*, after Hector has killed Patroclus and has stripped Achilles’ armor, which Patroclus had been wearing, from his corpse, Achilles, who was unable to fight because he lacked armor big enough to fit him, showed himself to the Trojans and shouted; this dismayed the Trojans enough that the Greeks were able to recover Patroclus’ corpse.

The two armies fought, and Tamburlaine's army won the victory.

"Thus are the villains," Tamburlaine said. "They are cowards who fled out of fear, like summer's mist vanished by the Sun. And if I could for just awhile pursue the cowards in the field, then that Callapine would be my slave again.

"But I perceive that my martial strength is spent. In vain I strive and rail against those powers that mean to invest me in a higher throne by killing me, whom they regard as much too high for this disdainful Earth.

"Give me a map; then let me see how much is left for me to conquer all the world, so that these, my boys, may conquer every place that I have not."

An attendant brought him a map.

Holding the map and pointing to various places on it, Tamburlaine said, "Here I began to march towards Persia, along Armenia and the Caspian Sea, and thence into Bithynia, where I took the Turkish Emperor Bajazeth and his great Empress prisoners.

"Then I marched into Egypt and Arabia, and here, not far from Alexandria, where the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea meet, being distant less than a full hundred leagues, I meant to cut a channel — a canal — to them both, so that men might quickly sail to India.

"From thence to Nubia near Borno lake, and so along the Ethiopian Sea, aka the south Atlantic Ocean, cutting across the Tropic of Capricorn, I conquered all as far as the province of Zanzibar, which is part of the west coast.

"Then, by the northern part of Africa, I came at last to Graecia, and from thence to Asia, where I stay against my will.

"The length of my travels from Scythia, where I first began, backward and forwards, totals nearly five thousand leagues, or fifteen thousand miles.

"Look here, my boys; see what a world of ground lies westward from the midst of the Tropic of Cancer's line to the rising of this earthly globe, where the Sun, declining from our sight and setting in the west, begins the day with our Antipodes — the opposite side of the Earth.

"And shall I die, and leave all this unconquered?"

"Look! Here, my sons, are all the golden mines, inestimable drugs, and precious stones — more of worth than Asia and the world beside.

"And from the Antarctic Pole eastward, behold as much more land, which never was charted, wherein are rocks of pearl that shine as bright as all the lamps that beautify the sky.

"And shall I die, and leave all this unconquered?"

"Here, lovely boys, is my command to you: That which death forbids my life, let your lives command that to spite death."

Amyras said, "Alas, my lord, how should our bleeding hearts, wounded and broken with your highness' grief, retain a thought of joy or spark of life? Your soul gives living essence to our wretched bodies, whose flesh comes from and is embodied by your flesh."



Tamburlaine, as Amyras' and Celebinus' father, gave them their bodies. Amyras also believed that Tamburlaine's soul gave his sons a living essence, aka an animating spirit.

Celebinus said, "Your pains pierce our souls; no hope survives, for by your life we maintain our lives."

Tamburlaine said, "But, sons, this subject — my body — that lacks enough force to continue to hold the fiery spirit it contains, must depart, but when this subject departs, it will impart its fiery spirit in equal portions into both your breasts.

"My flesh, divided in your precious shapes, shall still retain my spirit, although I die, and live in all your descendants immortally.

"So then now remove me from my chariot so that I may resign my position and my title to my son.

"Amyras, first take my scourge — my chariot whip — and my imperial crown, and then mount into my royal chariot of estate, so that I may see you crowned before I die.

"Help me, my lords, to make my last move."

They moved him from the chariot and put him in a chair.

Theridamas said, "This is a woeful change, my lord, that daunts our thoughts more than the ruin of our own souls."

"Sit up, my son," Tamburlaine said. "Let me see how well you will befit your father's majesty."

Amyras, Tamburlaine's oldest living son, would become the next King of Persia.

They crowned Amyras, who because he was mourning his father's quickly coming death, would not climb into the chariot.

Amyras said, "I would have such a flinty bosom if I were to enjoy the breath of life and the burden of my soul if this pain of losing my father were not dissolved into relieved pain by the recovery of my father.

"If my father does not recover, then my body's deadened parts will exercise the beating of my heart, which will be pierced if I should take any joy in having the titles of my father!"

Amyras was thinking of committing suicide by stabbing his heart with a knife if he found that he was capable of enjoying becoming a King solely due to the death of his father.

He continued, "Oh, father, if the unrelenting ears of Death and Hell are shut against my prayers, and if the spiteful influence of Heaven denies my soul the possession of any joy, how should I step or stir my hateful feet against the inward powers of my heart, leading a life that strives only to die, and plead in vain against unpleasing sovereignty?"

Amyras was different from his father. Tamburlaine would place being a King above being a father; after all, he had killed his oldest son because he felt dishonored by him. If Amyras were to be like his father, he would have to enjoy being a King although his father's death had given him the crown.

Tamburlaine said, “Let not your love exceed your devotion to honor, son, nor bar from your mind that greatness of soul that nobly must admit necessity.”

In other words, he was saying this: Amyras, enjoy being a King although my death gave you the crown. “Devotion to honor” — being a King — comes before devotion to your father.

Tamburlaine continued, “Sit up, my boy, and with these silken reins bridle the steeled stomachs — the proud and obstinate spirits — of those jades, the conquered Kings.”

Theridamas said to Amyras, “My lord, you must obey his majesty, since fate and proud necessity command you to.”

Amyras climbed into the chariot, saying, “May the heavens witness with what a broken heart and sorrowful spirit I ascend this seat.

“And may the heavens send to my soul, before my father dies, his anguish and his burning agony! May the heavens allow me to suffer my father’s pain so that he doesn’t have to!”

Tamburlaine said, “Now fetch the hearse of fair Zenocrate. Let it be placed by this chair in which I will die, and let it serve as part of my funeral.”

Usumcasane said, “So then your majesty feels no sovereign ease? Our hearts, all drowned in tears of blood, may not enjoy any hope of your recovery?”

Tamburlaine replied, “Casane, there is no hope of my recovery. The Monarch of the Earth and the eyeless monster that torments my soul cannot behold the tears you shed for me, and therefore continually augments and increases his cruelty.”

The Monarch of the Earth is most likely Death, which is often depicted as a skeleton without flesh or eyes. The eyeless monster is most likely the illness that is killing Tamburlaine.

War, or perhaps the vengeful God of the Old Testament, appears to be the god whom Tamburlaine worships.

Techelles said, “Then let some god use his holy power to oppose the wrath and tyranny of Death, so that his tear-thirsty and unquenched hate may be turned upon himself!”

Some attendants brought in Zenocrate’s hearse.

Tamburlaine said, “Now, eyes, enjoy your last benefit, and when after my death my soul, freed from my body, has the virtue of your sight, my soul’s sight will pierce through the coffin and the sheet of gold, and glut your — my eyes’ — longings to see Zenocrate, resulting in a Heaven of joy.

“So, reign, my son; guiding your chariot with your father’s hand, scourge and control those slaves.

“As precious is the responsibility you undertake as that which Phaëthon, Clymene’s brainsick son, did when he guided the Sun-chariot, when wandering Phoebe the Moon’s ivory cheeks were scorched, and all the Earth, like the volcano Mount Etna, was breathing fire.”

Phoebe is another name for the Moon goddess.

Amyras' responsibility is as great as that of Phaëthon, but Phaëthon was unable to handle that responsibility. He could not control the Sun-chariot and almost burned up the Earth. Jupiter saved the Earth by killing Phaëthon with a thunderbolt.

Tamburlaine said, "Be warned by him, then learn with eyes filled with awe to wield authority as dangerous as his, for if your body thrives not full of thoughts as pure and fiery as Pythias' — Apollo the Sun-god's — beams, the nature of these proud rebelling jades — the conquered Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia and the conquered King of Jerusalem — will take opportunity by the slenderest hair of its forelock and tear you to pieces by dragging you, like Hippolytus, through rocks steeper and sharper than the Caspian cliffs."

Hippolytus was one of Theseus' sons, and Theseus' second wife, Phaedra, fell in love with him, but he rejected her advances. She told Theseus that Hippolytus had raped her, and Theseus prayed to the sea-god Poseidon to kill his son. A bull came out of the sea, scaring Hippolytus' horses so badly that they upset his chariot and dragged him to his death.

Tamburlaine wanted Amyras to be on his guard lest Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem kill him just as Phaedra got Hippolytus killed.

Tamburlaine continued, "The nature of your chariot will not bear a guide of baser temperament than myself, more than Heaven's coach the pride of Phaëthon."

It takes a great being such as Apollo to drive the Sun-chariot, and Tamburlaine was saying that it takes a great being such as himself to drive his chariot. No doubt, he also thought that he could control Hippolytus' horses.

Tamburlaine continued, "Farewell, my boys! My dearest friends, farewell! My body feels, my soul weeps to see your sweet desires deprived my company, for Tamburlaine, the scourge of God, must die."

He died.

Amyras said, "Let Heaven and Earth collide into one another, and here let all things end, for Earth has spent the pride of all her fruit, and Heaven has consumed its choicest living fire.

"Let Earth and Heaven deplore Tamburlaine's untimely death, for both their worths will equal him no more."

### **NOTA BENE (*TAMBURLAINE*, Part 2)**

Unless otherwise noted, line numbers are those of this edition:

Marlowe, Christopher. *Tamburlaine*. Edited by J.S. Cunningham. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999.

— 1.2 —

Almeda says this:

*"But need we not be spied going aboard?"*

(1.2.56)

Possible meanings:

- But will we not inevitably be spied going aboard!
- But don't we need to avoid being spied going aboard!
- But won't we necessarily be seen going aboard!
- But we need to not be seen going aboard!

— 1.3 —

Usumcasane says this:

*My lord, our men of Barbary have marched  
Four hundred miles with armour on their backs,  
And lain in leaguer fifteen months and more.*

(1.3.174-176)

Usumcasane says that he and his soldiers have “lain in leaguer” fifteen months and more since leaving Tamburlaine at the court of the Sultan of Egypt, apparently a little after the events of *Tamburlaine the Great, Part 1*.

“Leaguer” means a military camp, especially one engaged in a siege. Some critics think that “lain in league” refers to a military campaign rather than a siege that is part of a longer military campaign, but this conflicts with Tamburlaine and Zenocrate having three mostly grown sons (but chances are that Marlowe’s audience would not notice or care). It is most likely, in my opinion, that “lain in leaguer fifteen months and more” (1.6.49) refers to a siege that lasted that long, and so Usumcasane and his army could have spent years traveling and fighting.

— 2.1 —

Frederick says this:

*And almost to the very walls of Rome,*

(2.1.9)

David Fuller writes this about the word “Rome”:

*The name was applied to Constantinople as the capital of the eastern Roman Empire, and the centre of eastern Christendom (Rome itself being the centre of the western Church). It is so used by Richard Knolles in his version of Bonfinius in The General History of the Turks (1603), which Marlowe may have read in manuscript: Hugh G. Dick, Studies in Philology, 46 (1949), 154-66.*

Source: *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe. Volume V. Tamburlaine Parts 1 and 2.* Edited by David Fuller. *The Massacre at Paris.* Edited by Edward J. Esche. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Page 240.

— 2.4 —

Tamburlaine says this:

*May never such a change transform my love,  
In whose sweet being I repose my life,  
Whose heavenly presence, beautified with health,  
Gives light to Phoebus and the fixèd stars; (50)  
Whose absence makes the sun and moon as dark  
As when, opposed in one diameter,  
Their spheres are mounted on the serpent's head,  
Or else descended to his winding train.*

(2.4.47-54)

The note below appears in the Everyman edition of *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*:

*Tamburlaine describes a lunar eclipse. Eclipses took place at northward and southward points, the caput draconis (serpent's head and the caudra draconis (serpent's tail) respectively. On opposite sides of the earth, the sun and moon are in diametric positions.*

Source: *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*. Edited by Mark Thornton Burnett. London: Everyman, 1999. Page 550.

The information below comes from Michael A. Seeds, *Foundations of Astronomy*, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (Chapter 3: Cycles of the Moon):

*The orbit of the moon is tipped 5°8'43" to the plane of Earth's orbit, so you see the moon follow a path tipped by that angle to the ecliptic. Each month, the moon crosses the ecliptic at two points called nodes. It crosses at one node going southward, and two weeks later it crosses at the other node going northward.*

*Eclipses can only occur when the sun is near one of the nodes of the moon's orbit. A solar eclipse happens at new moon if the moon passes in front of the sun. Most new moons pass too far north or too far south of the sun to cause an eclipse. Only when the sun is near a node in the moon's orbit can the moon cross in front of the sun, as shown in Figure 3-12a. A lunar eclipse doesn't happen at every full moon because most full moons pass too far north or too far south of the ecliptic and miss Earth's shadow. The moon can enter Earth's shadow only when the shadow is near a node in the moon's orbit, and that means the sun must be near the other node. This is shown in Figure 3-12b.*

*So there are two conditions for an eclipse: The sun must be crossing a node, and the moon must be crossing either the same node (solar eclipse) or the other node (lunar eclipse). That means, of course, that solar eclipses can occur only when the moon is new, and lunar eclipses can occur only when the moon is full.*

Source (You can see the Figures here):

<https://www.webassign.net/seedfoundations/ebook/CH03-4.html>

The Penguin edition of Christopher Marlowe's *The Complete Plays* has this note:

[...] as during a lunar eclipse (occurring at points in the celestial map at which the moon's orbit intersects with the ecliptic, known as the serpent's head and tail).

Source: Christopher Marlowe. *The Complete Plays*. Edited by Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey. London: Penguin Books, 2003. Page 603.

The *Oxford American Dictionary* defines *ecliptic* in this way:

*a great circle on the celestial sphere representing the sun's apparent path during the year, so called because lunar and solar eclipses can occur only when the moon crosses it.*

### 4.3 and 5.1 and 5.2

#### **Asphaltis and Limnasphaltis**

Marlowe's geography is sometimes odd. He seems to locate Babylon on the coast, which it isn't. He also may perhaps locate the Dead Sea much nearer Babylon than it was.

Marlowe makes Babylon a great city in the Middle Ages. (The real Tamburlaine was named Timur, and his dates are 9 April 1336 – 18 February 1405.) Actually, Babylon was a great ancient city, but it was abandoned around 1,000 C.E.

As always, we read the historical plays of the Elizabethan era as literature, not as history. Sometimes Marlowe seems to be deliberately vague about locations because he knows that what he is writing is not historical.

#### **Idea #1:**

We may want to regard Asphaltis and Limnasphaltis as referring to the same body of water: the Dead Sea. If so, I would write in *Tamburlaine, Part 2*, something like this:

*Asphaltis, sometimes called Limnasphaltis, is near Jerusalem and is better known as the Dead Sea. The Governor of Babylon regarded the lake as being close enough to Babylon to be part of its defenses. [In actual fact, it is not.]*

*A mapmaker of the time named Abraham Ortelius created a map of Palestine and labeled the Dead Sea as Asphaltis.*

*The actual battlefield where Tamburlaine had conquered the petty Kings was far from Asphaltis, but he was playing with words. He was calling the battlefield where he had won his victory the Dead Plains.*

I reject this: See Ideas #2 and #3.

#### **Idea #2:**

We may want to regard Asphaltis and Limnasphaltis as referring to the same body of water, but that body of water is not the Dead Sea; instead, it is a lake near enough to Babylon to be part of its defenses.

When Tamburlaine refers to Asphaltis as a battlefield (4.3.5), he is referring to the plains of Asphaltis; he mentions "Asphaltis' plains" specifically a little later (4.3.68). Perhaps by doing that, he is emphasizing how important he thinks Babylon is. He could have referred to the plains of Jerusalem but chose to refer to the plains of Babylon instead.

Plains can extend far. This information about the Great Plains of North America comes from Wikipedia:

*Length: 3,200 km, or 1,988 miles*

*Width: 800 km, or 497 miles*

*Area: 1,300,000 square km, or 501,933 square miles*

Source: "Great Plains." Wikipedia. Accessed 5 September 2018  
<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Plains](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Plains)>.

I accept this, but see Idea #3.

**Idea #3:**

*And here may we behold great Babylon,*

*Circled about with Limnasphaltis' lake,*

(5.2.4-5)

My best guess is that Asphaltis and Limnasphaltis are basically the same body of water (or at least share water), and that the battle in which Tamburlaine defeated the Turkish Emperor Callapine and Deputy King Orcanes of Natolia was fought on the plains of Asphaltis.

According to Act 5, Scene 2, Lines 4-5, Babylon is surrounded by Limnasphaltis. Unless Babylon is built on an island, which we aren't told it is, it would not be surrounded by what we call a lake today. Therefore, I conclude that Babylon has a moat whose water comes from Asphaltis. When referring to the moat, Marlowe used the word "Limnasphaltis."

"Lim" comes from Latin and means boundary, edge, line. The moat around the city of Babylon would be the boundary of the city.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, an obsolete meaning of "Lake" is "A small stream of running water; also, a channel for water." Also according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one definition of "Moat" is "A pond or lake; esp. a fish pond."

In Act 5, Scene 1, the Governor of Babylon tells Tamburlaine that gold is hidden "in Limnasphaltis' lake" (5.1.115) "Under a hollow bank, right opposite / Against the western gate of Babylon" (5.1.121-122). The gold is hidden in the moat. This also means that the Governor of Babylon and probably others call the moat a lake that encircles Babylon.

In Act 5, Scene 1, men, women, and children are drowned in Asphaltis (line 203). That means that they are drowned in the lake proper, not in the moat whose water comes from Lake Asphaltis.

**Two Lines:**

Tamburlaine says this:

*And cast them headlong in the city's lake.*

(5.1.161)

In the line above, Tamburlaine is ordering Techelles to drown the burghers in the city's lake. A few lines later, Techelles asks about the burghers' wives and children, and Tamburlaine tells him to drown them all. We may think that "city's lake" refers to Limnasphaltis, which is probably correct, but we find out that Techelles drowned the people of Babylon in Asphaltis. My guess is that the citizens of Babylon were too numerous to be drowned in Limnasphaltis and so Techelles drowned them in Asphaltis.

Tamburlaine says this:

*Now fill the mouth of Limnasphaltis' lake*

(5.1.67)

The mouth of a river is where a river flows into a lake. A moat is unlikely to be running water, so my guess is that "the mouth of Limnasphaltis' lake" is where the water of Limnasphaltis and the water of Asphaltis meet.

**Note:**

In any case, Asphaltis / Limnasphaltis is an asphaltic lake.

Here is some information on Liquid Asphalt:

*First of all, it's not "tar." Asphalt is a natural substance that has some amazing physical properties. It's sticky (adhesive) and it's elastic, able to stretch, bend and flex without breaking (cohesive). This material does an excellent job of waterproofing. At air temperatures, asphalt cement is a very, very thick liquid (highly viscous). When heated, it becomes thinner and easier to use. Asphalt has been used since before Roman times as a glue and for water proofing. In a few places in the world, it's naturally occurring, such as in a lake on the island of Trinidad and in the LaBrea "tar pits" in downtown Los Angeles. Almost all of the asphalt used today for paving comes from petroleum crude oil. Liquid asphalt is the heaviest part of the crude — what's left after all the volatile, light fractions are distilled off for products such as gasoline. In Europe and Canada it is commonly called bitumen.*

Source: "What is Liquid Asphalt (Asphalt Cement)?" My AsphaltPavingProject.com. 2017. Accessed 2018.

<https://tinyurl.com/y7wewx5h>

— 5.3 —

Amyras says this:

*With what a flinty bosom should I joy (line 185)*

*The breath of life and burthen of my soul,*

*If not resolv'd into resolved pains,*

*My body's mortified lineaments*

*Should exercise the motions of my heart,*

*Pierced with the joy of any dignity! (line 190)*



— From the U.M. Ellis-Fermor edition.

This is a difficult passage. In my retelling, I treat the passage as if a period were at the end of line 185:

*“I would have such a flinty bosom if I were to enjoy the breath of life and the burden of my soul if this pain of losing my father were not dissolved into relieved pain by the recovery of my father.*

*“If my father does not recover, then my body’s deadened parts will exercise the beating of my heart, which will be pierced if I should take any joy in having the titles of my father!”*

*Amyras was thinking of committing suicide by stabbing his heart with a knife if he found that he was capable of enjoying becoming a King solely due to the death of his father.*

Note: “To resolve” pain often means “to alleviate or reduce” pain, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Here are some other paraphrases:

*“How hard a heart I should have if I could enjoy my life and the possession of my soul and if my body were not dissolved in extreme pain (l. 187) and sympathetically affected (l. 188) and could still direct the movements of a heart that was touched with joy by such things as earthly dignities.”*

Source of above: Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great: In Two Parts*. Editor: U.M. Ellis-Fermor. New York: Gordian Press, Inc., 1966. Page 278.

*“How hard my heart would be if I could enjoy my life and the possession of my own soul [i.e., with Tamburlaine about to die], or if my body did not dissolve into extreme pain and its affected limbs (‘mortified lineaments’) were still able to carry out the prompting of a heart that could be touched to joy by earthly dignities” (adapted from Ellis-Fermor).*

Source of above: Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine: Parts One and Two*. Editor: Anthony B. Dawson. London, New York: A & C Black, 1971. Page 172.

*“How hardhearted would be my enjoyment of your gift to me of life and soul if, instead of dissolving into grief and mortification, I should gladden my heart at the prospect of such earthly dignity!”*

Source of above: Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*. Oxford World Classics. Edited by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Page 432.

*“i.e. how hardhearted I should be if I were able to enjoy life physically or emotionally, if, instead of dissolving into extreme pain, my heart should be prompted to any joy at the thought of earthly dignity”*

Source of above: Christopher Marlowe. *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*. Volume 5. *Tamburlaine: Parts 1 and 2*. Edited by David Fuller. *The Massacre at Paris*. Edited by Edward J. Esche. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Page 282.

*“How hard-hearted I would have to be to enjoy the burden of my life, and if my body, all made up of pain, could still put into action the feelings of a heart that felt joy at a worldly honor!”*

Source: Christopher Marlowe. *The Complete Plays*. Edited by Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey. London: Penguin Books, 2003. Page 611.

*“Amyras states that he would be hard of heart indeed if his body did not feel the pains experienced by Tamburlaine, and if he could derive pleasure from the prospect of receiving earthly dignities.”*

Source: Christopher Marlowe. *The Complete Plays*. Edited by Mark Thornton Burnett. London and Vermont: Everyman, 1999. Page 556.

## **APPENDIX A: FAIR USE**

§ 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use

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## **APPENDIX B: ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn't let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor's degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Dance*, *Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose*.

By the way, my sister Brenda Kennedy writes romances such as *A New Beginning* and *Shattered Dreams*.

## **APPENDIX C: SOME BOOKS BY DAVID BRUCE**

### **Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature**

*Arden of Faversham: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Arraignment, or Poetaster: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Case is Altered: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Catiline's Conspiracy: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Devil is an Ass: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Epicene: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humor: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humor: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Fountain of Self-Love, or Cynthia's Revels: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Magnetic Lady, or Humors Reconciled: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The New Inn, or The Light Heart: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Sejanus' Fall: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Staple of News: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's A Tale of a Tub: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings*

*Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text*

*Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings*

*Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose*

*The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling*

*From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica*

*George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston's Eastward Ho! A Retelling*

*George Peele's The Arraignment of Paris: A Retelling*

*George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar: A Retelling*

*George Peele's David and Bathsheba, and the Tragedy of Absalom: A Retelling*

*George Peele's Edward I: A Retelling*

*George Peele's The Old Wives' Tale: A Retelling*

*George-a-Greene: A Retelling*

*The History of King Leir: A Retelling*

*Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*

*Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*

*J.W. Gent.'s The Valiant Scot: A Retelling*

*Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica*

*John Ford: Eight Plays Translated into Modern English*

*John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Fancies, Chaste and Noble: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Lady's Trial: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Lover's Melancholy: A Retelling*

*John Ford's Love's Sacrifice: A Retelling*

*John Ford's Perkin Warbeck: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Queen: A Retelling*

*John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Campaspe: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Endymion, The Man in the Moon: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Galatea: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Love's Metamorphosis: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Midas: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Mother Bombie: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Sappho and Phao: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's The Woman in the Moon: A Retelling*

*John Webster's The White Devil: A Retelling*

*King Edward III: A Retelling*

*Mankind: A Medieval Morality Play (A Retelling)*

*Margaret Cavendish's The Unnatural Tragedy: A Retelling*

*The Merry Devil of Edmonton: A Retelling*

*The Summoning of Everyman: A Medieval Morality Play (A Retelling)*

*Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling*

*The Taming of a Shrew: A Retelling*

*Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton's A Chaste Maid in Cheapside: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton's Women Beware Women: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's The Roaring Girl: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's The Changeling: A Retelling*

*The Trojan War and Its Aftermath: Four Ancient Epic Poems*

*Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 5 Late Romances: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 10 Histories: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose*

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*William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose*

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*William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose*