



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



144.5.13.3

Harvard College Library



FROM THE BEQUEST OF

THOMAS WREN WARD

TREASURER OF HARVARD COLLEGE  
1830-1842





• .

✓

OLD ENGLISH PLAYS No. 2

Heywood's

A Woman Killed with Kindness



WORKS BY F. J. COX

**A STRANGER WITHIN THE GATES, A Story**  
of **Severn Side.** Crown 8vo. Cloth, **6s.**

**SONGS OF THE CAR, with "De Omnibus" Rhymes.**  
Illustrated by **HOWARD SOMERVILLE.** Crown 8vo.  
Cloth, **3s. 6d.** net.


---

London: FRANCIS GRIFFITHS

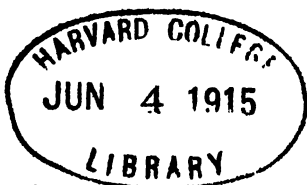
A Woman Killed with  
Kindness 

by Thomas Heywood 

Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by  
F. J. Cox.

Published by FRANCIS GRIFFITHS at the Sign of the  
Gryphon, 34 Maiden Lane, near the Strand, in the City  
of Westminster MDCCCXVII 

1442.5.13.3



*Ward fund*

## OLD ENGLISH PLAYS

Paper, 6d. net.      Cloth, 1s. net.

1. **The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus.** By CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.
2. **A Woman Killed with Kindness.** By THOMAS HEYWOOD.
3. **Every Man in his Humour.** By BEN JONSON.
4. **The Maid's Tragedy.** By FRANCIS BEAUMONT and JOHN FLETCHER.

London: FRANCIS GRIFFITHS

THE PLAY .  
AND . . . .  
ITS AUTHOR.

PERHAPS, of all the dramatists of the Elizabethan and Jacobean epochs, Thomas Heywood is one of the least known to the mass of readers. To many, doubtless, he is scarcely a name even, and the most diligent student of our literary byways would probably be hard put to it to identify him as the author of "Fortune by Land and Sea," or that quaintly-named play, "If you know not Me, you know Nobody." But if his works have remained "caviare to the general," they have been fondly prized and read with delight by men of letters from Charles Lamb downwards. Just as Spencer has been called "the poet's poet," so Thomas Heywood may, in a more limited sense, be described as "the litterateur's playwright." But there is no valid reason why his appeal should be thus circumscribed. His plays, so far from being academic, stilted, or abstruse, smelling of the lamp rather than the sweet air of the countryside, are full of sheer humanity, studied at first hand and portrayed with skilful force through the medium of dramatic art.

The warmth of his human sympathy—devoid of which any work of the imagination becomes valueless and perishes—is Heywood's richest endowment. It has been well said of him that he describes men's errors with tenderness. So large, indeed, is his tolerance, that it leads him to temper his judgments with an excess of clemency, and his villains far too often escape with exceedingly light sentences. In the present play, for example, the worthless Wendoll, after irretrievably ruining the domestic happiness of the man who had befriended him, is allowed to escape practically without any punishment. As he makes his final exit from the stage, and almost at the moment when the woman whom he has seduced is dying, he announces an intention of travelling abroad until the remembrance of his rank offence has grown dim, and then returning, when he hopes that his newly-acquired Continental graces will assist him to advance in Court favour. In Mr. Hardy's grim phrase, it is the woman who pays. The man escapes scot-free, the recipient of a magnanimous forgiveness which his actions do not deserve and his shallow heart cannot understand.

But if this charity of judgment in Heywood is the means of robbing the Furies of much legitimate prey, it remains a very lovable trait of the man. It fascinated Elia, himself one of the most compassionate of men. "In all those qualities which gained for Shakespeare the epithet of gentle," says Lamb, "he (Heywood) was not inferior to him—generosity, courtesy, temperance in the

depths of passion; Christianity, and true hearty Anglicism of feelings, shaping that Christianity, shine throughout his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakespeare; but only more conspicuous, inasmuch as in Heywood these qualities are primary, in the other subordinate to poetry." The tribute paid by Charles Lamb to the genius of his "prose Shakespeare" has been followed by the unstinted eulogies of other literary critics. Hazlitt says that "his imagination is a gentle lambent flame that purifies without consuming." His dialogue he describes as "beautiful prose put into heroic measure." Robert Louis Stevenson swells the chorus of praise by declaring that, if Heywood was not an immortal, he was at least an "immortalette." Mr. J. Addington Symonds remarks that he "is essentially an author whom we love the better the more we read of him. It is impossible to rise from the perusal of his plays without being refreshed and invigorated."

Of the life of Heywood little is known. He shares the obscurity common to most of the great Elizabethans. From the meagre records of his career that are available, we gather that he was born in Lincolnshire probably some ten or twelve years later than Shakespeare and Marlowe. After a residence at Cambridge, he came to London, there to enter upon his life-work as a writer and actor of plays. He was first of all attached to the Lord Admiral's Company of Players, then to the Earl of Worcester's, and finally, on the accession of James I., to the

Queen's. The famous Henslowe was his colleague, and for a time, his chief. The following extract from that actor's diary is interesting as showing, for one thing, that the modern maker of plays has no cause to envy the emoluments of his Elizabethan predecessor :

“ Paid, at the Appointment of the Company the 6th of March, 1602, unto Thomas Heywood, in full payment for his Play called ‘ A Woman Kill'd with Kindness.’ . . . . £3.”

Such fragmentary records, and the internal evidence furnished by the plays themselves, give us all we know of the life of Thomas Heywood. Even the date of his death is unknown.

One of the most striking characteristics of Heywood's genius is its amazing fruitfulness. Most of his contemporaries were voluminous producers, but he excels them all. Those were the days when men were not afraid to speak out, for no imp of self-criticism sat at their elbows. Facility they had in brimming measure, but it was not of necessity fatal, for the right word seemed to leap to their lips spontaneously, and their glorious lyrical cadences flowed from them with an impromptu rush. They spurned the services of the file, and would have scorned the assiduous craftsman who spent a whole night in polishing a single line. Heywood went at his work impetuously and without cessation. It was his rule never to let a day pass without writing something. He observed this rule rigidly, and

neither the mood nor the place he was in seemed to have any effect upon the flow of his thoughts and the expression of them. Some of his plays were written on odd scraps of paper, the backs of tavern bills being often pressed into service. This carelessness resulted in the loss of many of the plays, and the capture of others by the literary pirates of the day, whose depredations went unrestrained and unpunished by any copyright law. Of the 220 plays in which Heywood declares he had "an entire hand or, at the least, a main finger," only 24 have been preserved. Nor did dramatic composition exhaust all his time or consume all his energies; he was not only a playwright, but a literary man, quite in the modern sense of the term, whose superabundant activities were employed in the writing of histories, dictionaries of poets, or anything else that happened to come his way.

By universal consent "A Woman Killed with Kindness" has been adjudged the best of Thomas Heywood's plays. It shows, for one thing, what an enormous advance had been made in the Anglicising of the drama since Marlowe's time. This tendency did not make for insular narrowness but for faithfulness in portraying things actually observed. Heywood painted the men and women around him as he saw them. His dramas are a mirror of the times they were written in. They are more peculiarly English than those of Shakespeare, who so often gave his comedies a foreign setting, and occupied himself in his historical pageants with the fortunes



of kings and great nobles, the common people acting only as a chorus to their spiritual, royal, and feudal lords. Heywood, on the contrary, made the drama a democratic instrument, and his characters are typical of contemporary life in its lower social ramifications. On the stage of his creation we are constantly meeting country squires and stalwart yeomen; bluff sea-captains, eager to be at grips with the Spaniard, walk through the salt-smelling streets of Plymouth; merchants and citizens, usurers and spendthrifts, foregather in the streets of London. The loves and adventures, the pursuits and festivities of these people form, not the mere trimming of Heywood's plays, but the essential stuff of them. There is hardly a phase of their life which he leaves untouched. Their outdoor and indoor enjoyments are brought vividly before us, witness the hawking and card-playing scenes in the play here reprinted. The large number of scenes enacted inside the tavern is indicative of the full-blooded joyous nature of a people with an abounding faith in themselves—a faith which had been greatly stimulated by their marvellous victories by sea and land, by the great discoveries of their navigators which had trebled the dimensions of the world to their imaginations, and by the subtle inflowing of an unexampled religious and intellectual revival.

“A Woman Killed with Kindness” entitles Heywood to rank, we think, as the parent of the English domestic drama. It has no subtle intri-

cacies of plot, being a plain, unvarnished story of a woman's frailty and a man's duplicity. It is, in fine, a tragedy of two men and one woman. Though more than three hundred years have elapsed since the play was written, it has retained all its freshness and all its power to touch the emotions. There are at least two scenes in the drama which are full of unescapable pathos—that wherein Mistress Frankford is confronted by her two children after her husband's discovery of her guilt, and the death scene at the close. The one blemish of the play, its one psychological fault, is the ease with which the woman falls. It is hardly conceivable that Anne Frankford, married to so excellent a husband, and with the heyday of the honeymoon hardly over, would have proved such an easy prey to the machinations of Wendoll. Neither are we quite persuaded that a woman who sinned so lightly, and resisted so half-heartedly the proposals of her seducer, would have been so absolutely overwhelmed by remorse and despair when her secret was discovered. The victim of selfish indulgence as she seems to be, she would, we think, have clung tenaciously to life at all costs. But the treatment of Anne Frankford was Heywood's way with erring woman. Mistress Wincott, the heroine of "The English Traveller," sacrifices her chastity from a motive equally inadequate, and when found out, repents and dies in the same mechanical manner. But it must not be supposed that all Heywood's women are weak-willed, and wantons at heart. Bess Bridges, in "The Fair

## 12      The Play and its Author

Maid of the West," is a striking instance to the contrary; she is a spirited girl with a man's courage and a woman's devotion to her absent lover.

The story of "A Woman Killed with Kindness" hardly requires further summarisation. Its narrative is so plain that all who run may read. It contains no entanglements to be unravelled, no ambiguities to be elucidated, and few archaic words to be explained. In accordance with Heywood's general method, the play has a secondary plot; the misfortunes of Sir Charles Mountford and his sister Susan blend well with the tragic history of the Frankfords, and impart a touch of fulness and completion to the drama. The direct and unrheterical diction of the play shows what splendid dignity, simplicity, and reserve had been attained by Marlowe's successors in the use of the instrument which that mighty master of dramatic harmonies had devised. Arresting passages abound in the play, and will be found readily enough by the discerning reader. Grace and melody meet together in Mistress Frankford's reference to her husband immediately after the bridal:

"His sweet content is like a flattering glass,  
To make my face seem fairer to mine eye;"

and her brother's description of herself, as a wife,

"Pliant and duteous in your husband's love."

## The Play and its Author 13

Wendoll's impassioned declaration of his illicit love issues with torrential force from his lips :

“ O speak no more !  
For more than this I know, and have recorded  
Within the red-leaved table of my heart.  
Fair, and of all beloved, I was not fearful  
Bluntly to give my life into your hand,  
And at one hazard all my earthly means.  
Go, tell your husband; he will turn me off,  
And I am then undone. I care not, I;  
'Twas for your sake. Perchance in rage he'll  
kill me :  
I care not, 'twas for you. Say I incur  
The general name of villain through the world,  
Of traitor to my friend; I care not, I.  
Beggary, shame, death, scandal, and reproach,  
For you I'll hazard all.”

In the following moving lines Frankford expresses the first agony of his soul after the discovery of his wife's adultery :

“ O God ! O God ! that it were possible  
To undo things done ; to call back yesterday !  
That time could turn up his swift sandy  
glass,  
To untell the days, and to redeem these  
hours !  
Or that the sun  
Could, rising from the west, draw his coach  
backward,

## 14            The Play and its Author

Take from the account of time so many  
minutes,  
Till he had all these seasons called again,  
Those minutes, and those actions done in  
them,  
Even from her first offence; that I might  
take her  
As spotless as an angel in my arms!  
But, oh! I talk of things impossible,  
And cast beyond the moon. God give me  
patience!  
For I will in and wake them."

The great forgiveness of which the soul of the injured Frankford is capable finds vent in a passage of noble eloquence:

" My wife, the mother to my pretty babes!  
Both those lost names I do restore thee back,  
And with this kiss I wed thee once again:  
Though thou art wounded in thy honoured  
name,  
And with that grief upon thy death-bed liest,  
Honest in heart, upon my soul, thou diest."

It is to be hoped that the reader will not allow his studies of Heywood's works to stop short at the present drama; he will find in many of the remaining twenty-three plays much moving story and eloquent verse. For Heywood is one of the dramatists who belie the crabbed dictum of Walter Savage Landor that Shakespeare's contemporaries were mushrooms that sprang up

## The Play and its Author 15

about the roots of the oak of Arden. They are rather, in Mr. Swinburne's splendid phrase, "gulfs or estuaries of the sea which is Shakespeare." *Shak*

In the present reprint the text contained in Heywood's collected plays, published by Pearson in 1874, has been followed. Previous to this, in 1850, the Shakespearian Society published an edition, under the editorship of Payne Collier. The Pearson reprint should be consulted by those who wish to obtain a complete knowledge of the dramatist, but the five selected plays in the "Mermaid" series will form a useful introduction to the larger study of the poet.

F. J. COX.



## THE PROLOGUE

I COME but like a Harbinger, being sent  
To tell you what these preparations mean :  
Look for no glorious state, our Muse is bent  
Upon a barren subject : a bare scene.  
We could afford this twig a Timber tree,  
Whose strength might boldly on your favours  
build ;  
Our Russet, Tissue ; Drone, a Honey-Bee ;  
Our barren plot, a large and spacious field ;  
Our coarse fare, banquets ; our thin Water,  
Wine ;  
Our Brook, a Sea ; our Bat's eyes, Eagle's  
sight ;  
Our Poet's dull and earthy Muse, Divine ;  
Our Ravens, Doves ; our Crow's black feathers,  
white.  
But gentle thoughts when they may give the foil,  
Save them that yield, and spare where they may  
spoil.



*DRAMATIS PERSONÆ*

Sir FRANCIS ACTON, Brother of ANNE FRANKFORD.

Sir CHARLES MOUNTFORD.

Master JOHN FRANKFORD.

Master WENDOLL, Friend to FRANKFORD.

Master MALBY, Friend to Sir FRANCIS.

Master CRANWELL.

SHAFTON, a False Friend to Sir CHARLES.

OLD MOUNTFORD, Uncle to Sir CHARLES.

TIDY, Cousin to Sir CHARLES.

SANDY.

RODER.

NICHOLAS,

JENKIN,

ROGER BRICKBAT,

JACK SLIME,

SPIGOT, a Butler,

Sheriff.

A Serjeant, a Keeper, Officers, Falconers, Huntsmen, a Coachman, Carters, Servants, Musicians.

ANNE FRANKFORD.

SUSAN, Sister of Sir CHARLES.

CICELY, Maid to Mistress FRANKFORD.

Women Servants.

} Servants to FRANKFORD.

# A Woman Killed with Kindness

---

SCENE—THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

*Enter* Master JOHN FRANKFORD, Mistress ANNE FRANKFORD, Sir FRANCIS ACTON, Sir CHARLES MOUNTFORD, Master MALBY, Master WENDOLL, *and* Master CRANWELL.

*Sir Fran.* Some music there. None lead the bride a dance?

*Sir Char.* Yes, would she dance *The Shaking of the Sheets*?<sup>1</sup>

But that's the dance her husband means to lead her?

*Wen.* That's not the dance that every man must dance,

According to the Ballad.

I should have said—the hand that but this day  
Was given you in the church I'll borrow : Sound !  
This marriage music hoists me from the ground.

*Frank.* Ay, you may caper, you are light and free :

Marriage hath yoked my heels ; pray then pardon me.

<sup>1</sup>The name of a popular tune, to which many ballads of the time were written.

*Sir Fran.* I'll have you dance too, brother.

*Sir Char.* Master Frankford,

You are a happy man, sir, and much joy  
Succeed your marriage mirth. You have a wife  
So qualified, and with such ornaments  
Both of the mind and body. First, her birth  
Is noble, and her education such  
As might become the daughter of a Prince :  
Her own tongue speaks all tongues, and her own  
hand

Can teach all strings to speak in their best grace  
From the shrillest treble to the hoarsest base.  
To end her many praises in one word,  
She's beauty and perfection's eldest daughter,  
Only found by yours, though many a heart hath  
sought her.

*Frank.* But that I know your virtues and  
chaste thoughts,

I should be jealous of your praise, Sir Charles.

*Cran.* He speaks no more than you approve.

*Mal.* Nor flatters he that gives to her her due.

*Anne.* I would your praise could find a fitter  
theme

Than my imperfect beauties to speak on ;  
Such as they be, if they my husband please,  
They suffice me now I am married :  
His sweet content is like a flattering glass,  
To make my face seem fairer to mine eye ;  
But the least wrinkle from his stormy brow  
Will blast the roses in my cheeks that grow.

*Sir Fran.* A perfect wife already, meek and  
patient ;

How strangely the word " husband " fits your  
mouth,

Not married three hours since ! Sister, 'tis good ;  
You, that begin betimes thus, must needs prove  
Pliant and duteous in your husband's love.—

Gramercies, brother, wrought her to it already;  
Sweet husband, and a curtsey, the first day!  
Mark this, mark this, you that are bachelors,  
And never took the grace of honest man;  
Mark this, against you marry, this one phrase:  
"In a good time that man both wins and woos,  
That takes his wife down in her wedding shoes."

*Frank.* Your sister takes not after you, Sir  
Francis;

All his wild blood your father spent on you:  
He got her in his age, when he grew civil;  
All his mad tricks were to his land entailed,  
And you are heir to all; your sister, she  
Hath to her dower her mother's modesty.

*Sir Char.* Lord, sir, in what a happy state live  
you;

This morning, which to many seems a burden  
Too heavy to bear, is unto you a pleasure.  
This lady is no clog, as many are:  
She doth become you like a well-made suit,  
In which the tailor hath used all his art:  
Not like a thick coat of unseasoned frieze,  
Forced on your back in summer. She's no chain  
To tie your neck, and curb you to the yoke;  
But she's a chain of gold to adorn your neck.  
You both adorn each other, and your hands,  
Methinks, are matches: there's equality  
In this fair combination; you are both  
Scholars, both young, both being descended  
nobly.

There's music in this sympathy; it carries  
Consort, and expectation of much joy,  
Which God bestow on you, from this first day  
Until your dissolution—that's for aye.

*Sir Fran.* We keep you here too long, good  
brother Frankford.  
Into the hall; away, go cheer your guests!

What! bride and bridegroom both withdrawn  
at once?

If you be missed, the guests will doubt their  
welcome,

And charge you with unkindness.

*Frank.* To prevent it,

I'll leave you here, to see the dance within.

*Anne.* And so will I.

[*Exeunt FRANKFORD and Mistress FRANKFORD.*

*Sir Fran.* To part you it were sin.

Now gallants, while the town-musicians  
Finger their frets<sup>2</sup> within; and the mad lads  
And country-lasses, every mother's child,  
With nosegays and bridelaces in their hats,  
Dance all their country measures, rounds, and  
jigs,

What shall we do? Hark, they are all on the  
hoigh,<sup>3</sup>

They toil like mill-horses, and turn as round,—  
Marry, not on the toe. Ay, and they caper,  
Not without cutting: you shall see to-morrow  
The hall-floor pecked and dinted like a mill-stone,  
Made with their high shoes: though their skill  
be small,

Yet they tread heavy where their hob-nails fall.

*Sir Char.* Well, leave them to their sports.

*Sir Francis Acton,*

I'll make a match with you: meet to-morrow  
At Chevy-chase, I'll fly my hawk with yours.

*Sir Fran.* For what? For what?

*Sir Char.* Why, for a hundred pound.

*Sir Fran.* Pawn me some gold of that.

*Sir Char.* Here are ten angels;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The strings of a lute, guitar, etc.

<sup>3</sup>On the romp.

<sup>4</sup>An angel: a gold coin varying in value from 6/8 to 1/0

I'll make them good a hundred pound to-morrow  
Upon my hawk's wing.

*Sir Fran.* 'Tis a match, 'tis done.  
Another hundred pound upon your dogs;  
Dare ye, Sir Charles?

*Sir Char.* I dare: were I sure to lose,  
I durst do more than that: here's my hand,  
The first course for a hundred pound.

*Sir Fran.* A match.

*Wen.* Ten angels on Sir Francis Acton's hawk;  
As much upon his dogs.

*Cran.* I am for Sir Charles Mountford; I have  
seen  
His hawk and dog both tried. What, clap you  
hands?

Or is't no bargain?

*Wen.* Yes, and stake them down:  
Were they five hundred, they were all my own.

*Sir Fran.* Be stirring early with the lark to-  
morrow;  
I'll rise into my saddle ere the sun  
Rise from his bed.

*Sir Char.* If there you miss me, say  
I am no gentleman. I'll hold my day.

*Sir Fran.* It holds on all sides. Come, to-night  
let's dance,

Early to-morrow let's prepare to ride;  
We had need be three hours up before the bride.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter* NICHOLAS and JENKIN, JACK SLIME, and  
ROGER BRICKBAT, with Country Wenches,  
and two or three Musicians.

*Jenk.* Come, Nick, take you Joan Miniver to  
trace withal; Jack Slime, traverse you with

Cicely Milk-pail: I will take Jane Trubkin, and Roger Brickbat shall have Isbel Motley; and now that they are busy in the parlour, come, strike up; we'll have a crash<sup>5</sup> here in the yard.

*Nic.* My humour is not compendious; dancing I possess not, though I can foot it; yet, since I am fallen into the hands of Cicely Milk-pail, I consent.

*Jack.* Truly Nick, though we were never brought up like serving courtiers, yet we have been brought up with serving creatures, ay, and God's creatures too; for we have been brought up to serve sheep, oxen, horses, hogs, and such like: and, though we be but country fellows, it may be in the way of dancing we can do the horse-trick as well as serving-men.

*Roger.* Ay, and the cross-point too.

*Jenk.* O Slime, O Brickbat, do not you know that comparisons are odious? now we are odious ourselves too, therefore there are no comparisons to be made betwixt us.

*Nic.* I am sudden, and not superfluous:  
I am quarrelsome, and not seditious:  
I am peaceable, and not contentious:  
I am brief, and not compendious.

*Jack.* Foot it quickly; if the music overcome not my melancholy, I shall quarrel; and if they do not suddenly strike up, I shall presently strike them down.

*Jenk.* No quarrelling, for God's sake! Truly, if you do, I shall set a knave between ye.

*Jack.* I come to dance, not to quarrel. Come, what shall it be? *Rogero?*

*Jenk.* *Rogero*, no; we will dance *The Beginning of the World*.

<sup>5</sup>Crash: a feast, an entertainment.

*Cicely.* I love no dance so well as *John* come kiss me now.

*Nic.* I that have ere now deserved a cushion, call for the *Cushion-dance*.

*Roger.* For my part, I like nothing so well as *Tom Tyler*.

*Jenk.* No; we'll have *The Hunting of the Fox*.

*Jack.* *The Hay, The Hay*; there's nothing like *The Hay*.

*Nic.* I have said, I do say, and I will say again—

*Jenk.* Every man agree to have it as *Nick* says.

*All.* Content.

*Nic.* It hath been, it now is, and it shall be—

*Cicely.* What, Master *Nicholas*, what?

*Nic.* Put on your smock a' *Monday*.

*Jenk.* So the dance will come cleanly off. Come, for God's sake agree of something: if you like not that, put it to the musicians; or let me speak for all, and we'll have *Sellenger's round*.

*All.* That, that, that.

*Nic.* No, I am resolved, thus it shall be: First take hands, then take ye to your heels.

*Jenk.* Why, would ye have us run away?

*Nic.* No; but I would have you shake your heels.

Music, strike up!

[*They dance.* *NICHOLAS* whilst dancing speaks stately and scurvily, the rest after the country fashion.]

*Jenk.* Hey! lively, my lasses! here's a turn for thee! [Exeunt.]

*Wind horns.* Enter Sir *CHARLES*, Sir *FRANCIS*, *MALBY*, *CRANWELL*, *WENDOLL*, *Falconer*, and *Huntsmen*.



*Sir Char.* So; well cast off: aloft, aloft! well flown!

Oh, now she takes her at the sowse, and strikes her

Down to the earth, like a swift thunder-clap.

*Wen.* She hath struck ten angels out of my way.

*Sir Fran.* A hundred pound from me.

*Sir Char.* What, falconer!

*Fal.* At hand, sir.

*Sir Char.* Now she hath seized the fowl, and 'gins to plume her,

Rebeck her not: rather stand still and check her.

So, seize her gets,<sup>6</sup> her jesses,<sup>7</sup> and her bells: Away!

*Sir Fran.* My hawk killed too.

*Sir Char.* Ay, but 'twas at the querre,<sup>8</sup> Not at the mount like mine.

*Sir Fran.* Judgment, my masters.

*Cran.* Yours missed her at the ferre.

*Wen.* Ay, but our merlin first had plumed the fowl,

And twice renewed her from the river too;  
Her bells, Sir Francis, had not both one weight,  
Nor was one semi-tune above the other:  
Methinks these Milan bells do sound too full,  
And spoil the mounting of your hawk.

*Sir Char.* 'Tis lost.

*Sir Fran.* I grant it not. Mine likewise seized a fowl

Within her talons and you saw her paws  
Full of the feathers: both her petty singles,

<sup>6</sup> Gets: gains, booty.

<sup>7</sup> Jesses were short leather straps round the hawk's legs having little rings to which the falconer's leash was fastened.

<sup>8</sup> The meaning of this term in falconry is obscure.

And her long singles, gripped her more than  
other;

The terrials of her legs were stained with blood :  
Not of the fowl only she did discomfit

Some of her feathers; but she brake away.

Come, come, your hawk is but a riffer.

*Sir Char.* How!

*Sir Fran.* Ay, and your dogs are trindle-tails  
and curs.

*Sir Char.* You stir my blood.

You keep not one good hound in all your kennel,  
Nor one good hawk upon your perch.

*Sir Fran.* How, knight!

*Sir Char.* So, knight: you will not swagger,  
sir?

*Sir Fran.* Why, say I did?

*Sir Char.* Why sir,

I say you would gain as much by swaggering,  
As you have got by wagers on your dogs:

You will come short in all things.

*Sir Fran.* Not in this:

Now I'll strike home.

*Sir Char.* Thou shalt to thy long home,

Or I will want my will.

*Sir Fran.* All they that love Sir Francis, follow  
me.

*Sir Char.* All that affect Sir Charles draw on  
my part.

*Cran.* On this side heaves my hand.

*Wen.* Here goes my heart.

[*They divide themselves.* Sir CHARLES,  
CRANWELL, Falconer, and Huntsman,  
fight against Sir FRANCIS ACTON, WEN-  
DOLL, his Falconer, and Huntsman;  
and Sir CHARLES'S side gets the better,  
beating them away, and killing both of  
Sir FRANCIS' men.

*Sir Char.* My God! what have I done? what have I done?

My rage hath plunged into a sea of blood,  
In which my soul lies drowned. Poor innocents,  
For whom we are to answer! Well 'tis done,  
And I remain the victor. A great conquest,  
When I would give this right hand, nay, this  
head,

To breathe in them new life whom I have slain!  
Forgive me, God! 'twas in the heat of blood,  
And anger quite removes me from myself:  
It was not I, but rage, did this vile murder;  
Yet I, and not my rage, must answer it.  
*Sir Francis Acton* he is fled the field;  
With him all those that did partake his quarrel,  
And I am left alone with sorrow dumb,  
And in my height of conquest overcome.

*Enter SUSAN.*

*Susan.* O God! my brother wounded 'mong  
the dead!

X Unhappy jest, that in such earnest ends;  
The rumour of this fear stretched to my ears,  
And I am come to know if you be wounded.

*Sir Char.* Oh! sister, sister, wounded at the  
heart.

*Susan.* My God forbid!

*Sir Char.* In doing that thing which He forbid,  
I am wounded, sister.

*Susan.* I hope not at the heart.

*Sir Char.* Yes, at the heart.

*Susan.* O God! a surgeon there!

*Sir Char.* Call me a surgeon, sister, for my  
soul;  
The sin of murder it hath pierced my heart,  
And made a wide wound there: but for these  
scratches,

They are nothing, nothing.

*Susan.* Charles, what have you done?

Sir Francis hath great friends, and will pursue  
you

Unto the utmost danger of the law.

*Sir Char.* My conscience is become mine  
enemy,

And will pursue me more than Acton can.

*Susan.* Oh, fly, sweet brother.

*Sir Char.* Shall I fly from thee?

Why, Sue, art weary of my company?

*Susan.* Fly from your foe.

*Sir Char.* You, sister, are my friend;  
And, flying you, I shall pursue my end.

*Susan.* Your company is as my eye-ball dear;  
Being far from you, no comfort can be near;  
Yet fly to save your life; what would I care  
To spend my future age in black despair,  
So you were safe? and yet to live one week  
Without my brother Charles, through every cheek  
My streaming tears would downwards run so  
rank,

Till they could set on either side a bank,  
And in the midst a channel; so my face  
For two salt-water brooks shall still find place.

*Sir Char.* Thou shalt not weep so much, for  
I will stay

In spite of danger's teeth; I'll live with thee,  
Or I'll not live at all. I will not sell  
My country and my father's patrimony,  
Nor thy sweet sight, for a vain hope of life.

*Enter Sheriff, with Officers.*

*Sher.* Sir Charles, I am made the unwilling  
instrument

Of your attach and apprehension :  
 I am sorry that the blood of innocent men  
 Should be of you exacted. It was told me  
 That you were guarded with a troop of friends,  
 And therefore I come thus armed.

*Sir Char.* O Master Sheriff,  
 I came into the field with many friends,  
 But see, they all have left me : only one  
 Clings to my sad misfortune, my dear sister.  
 I know you for an honest gentleman ;  
 I yield my weapons, and submit to you ;  
 Convey me where you please.

*Sher.* To prison then,  
 To answer for the lives of these dead men.

*Susan.* O God ! O God !

*Sir Char.* Sweet sister, every strain  
 Of sorrow from your heart augments my pain ;  
 Your grief abounds, and hits against my breast.

*Sher.* Sir, will you go ?

*Sir Char.* Even where it likes you best.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter Master FRANKFORD in a STUDY.*

*Frank.* How happy am I amongst other men,  
 That in my mean estate embrace content.  
 I am a gentleman, and by my birth,  
 Companion with a king ; a king's no more.  
 I am possessèd of many fair revenues,  
 Sufficient to maintain a gentleman.  
 Touching my mind, I am studied in all arts ;  
 The riches of my thoughts, and of my time,  
 Have been a good proficient ; but the chief  
 Of all the sweet felicities on earth,

I have a fair, a chaste, and loving wife,  
Perfection all, all truth, all ornament;  
If man on earth may truly happy be,  
Of these at once possessed, sure I am he.

*Enter* NICHOLAS.

*Nic.* Sir, there's a gentleman attends without  
To speak with you.

*Frank.* On horseback?

*Nic.* Yes, on horseback.

*Frank.* Entreat him to alight, I will attend  
him.

Know'st thou him, Nick?

*Nic.* Know him! yes, his name's Wendoll:  
It seems he comes in haste; his horse is booted  
Up to the flank in mire; himself all spotted  
And stained with plashing. Sure he rid in fear  
Or for a wager. Horse and man both sweat;  
I ne'er saw two in such a smoking heat.

*Frank.* Entreat him in; about it instantly.  
This Wendoll I have noted, and his carriage  
Hath pleased me much: by observation  
I have noted many good deserts in him:  
He's affable, and seen<sup>9</sup> in many things,  
Discourses well, a good companion;  
And though of small means, yet a gentleman  
Of a good house, though somewhat pressed by  
want.

I have preferred him to a second place  
In my opinion, and my best regard.

*Enter* WENDOLL, ANNE FRANKFORD, and  
NICHOLAS.

*Anne.* O Master Frankford, Master Wendoll  
here

<sup>9</sup> Skilled.

Brings you the strangest news that e'er you heard.

*Frank.* What news, sweet wife? What news, good Master Wendoll?

*Wen.* You knew the match made 'twixt Sir Francis Acton

And Sir Charles Mountford?

*Frank.* True, with their hounds and hawks.

*Wen.* The matches were both played.

*Frank.* Ha! and which won?

*Wen.* Sir Francis, your wife's brother, had the worst,

And lost the wager.

*Frank.* Why, the worse his chance:

Perhaps the fortune of some other day

Will change his luck.

*Anne.* Oh, but you hear not all.

Sir Francis lost, and yet was loth to yield:

At length the two knights grew to difference,

From words to blows, and so to banding sides;

Where valorous Sir Charles slew in his spleen

Two of your brother's men: his falconer,

And his good huntsman, whom he loved so well:

More men were wounded, no more slain outright.

*Frank.* Now, trust me, I am sorry for the knight;

But is my brother safe?

*Wen.* All whole and sound,

His body not being blemished with one wound:

But poor Sir Charles is to the prison led,

To answer at the assize for them that's dead.

*Frank.* I thank your pains, sir; had the news been better

Your will was to have brought it, Master Wendoll.

Sir Charles will find hard friends; his case is heinous,

And will be most severely censured on :  
 I'm sorry for him. Sir, a word with you ;  
 I know you, sir, to be a gentleman  
 In all things ; your possibilities but mean :  
 Please you to use my table and my purse,  
 They are yours.

*Wen.* O Lord, sir, I shall never deserve it.

*Frank.* O sir, disparage not your worth too much :

You are full of quality and fair desert :  
 Choose of my men which shall attend on you,  
 And he is yours. I will allow you, sir,  
 Your man, your gelding, and your table, all  
 At my own charge ; be my companion.

*Wen.* Master Frankford, I have oft been bound to you

By many favours ; this exceeds them all,  
 That I shall never merit your least favour :  
 But, when your last remembrance I forget,  
 Heaven at my soul exact that weighty debt !

*Frank.* There needs no protestation ; for I know you

Virtuous, and therefore grateful. Prythee, Nan,  
 Use him with all thy loving'st courtesy.

*Anne.* As far as modesty may well extend,  
 It is my duty to receive your friend.

*Frank.* To dinner, come, sir ; from this present day,

Welcome to me for ever : come, away. [*Exit.*]

*Nic.* I do not like this fellow by no means :  
 I never see him but my heart still yearns :  
 Zounds ! I could fight with him, yet know not why :

The devil and he are all one in my eye. y

*Enter JENKIN.*

*Jen.* O Nick, what gentleman is that comes



to lie at our house? My master allows him one to wait on him, and I believe it will fall to thy lot.

*Nic.* I love my master; by these hilts I do!  
But rather than I'll ever come to serve him,  
I'll turn away my master.

*Enter CICELY.*

*Cicely.* Nichlas, where are you, Nichlas? you must come in, Nichlas, and help the young gentleman off with his boots.

*Nic.* If I pluck off his boots, I'll eat the spurs,  
And they shall stick fast in my throat like burs.

*Cicely.* Then, Jenkin, come you.

*Jen.* Nay, 'tis no boot for me to deny 'it. My master hath given me a coat here, but he takes pains himself to brush it once or twice a day with a holly-wand.

*Cicely.* Come, come, make haste, that you may wash your hands again, and help to setve in dinner.

*Jen.* You may see, my masters, though it be afternoon with you, 'tis but early days with us, for we have not dined yet: stay but a little, I'll but go in and help to bear up the first course, and come to you again presently. *[Exit.]*

*Enter MALBY and CRANWELL.*

*Mal.* This is the sessions-day; pray can you tell me  
How young Sir Charles hath sped? Is he acquit,  
Or must he try the law's strict penalty?

*Cran.* He's cleared of all, spite of his enemies,  
Whose earnest labour was to take his life:  
But in this suit of pardon he hath spent

All the revenues that his father left him;  
And he is now turned a plain country man,  
Reformed in all things. See, sir, here he comes.

*Enter Sir CHARLES and his Keeper.*

*Keep.* Discharge your fees, and you are then  
at freedom.

*Sir Char.* Here, Master Keeper, take the poor  
remainder

Of all the wealth I have: my heavy foes  
Have made my purse light; but, alas! to me  
'Tis wealth enough that you have set me free.

*Mal.* God give you joy of your delivery!  
I am glad to see you abroad, Sir Charles.

*Sir Char.* The poorest knight in England,  
Master Malby:  
My life hath cost me all my patrimony  
My father left his son: well, God forgive them  
That are the authors of my penury.

*Enter SHAFTON.*

*Shaf.* Sir Charles! a hand, a hand! at liberty?  
Now, by the faith I owe, I am glad to see it.  
What want you? wherein may I pleasure you?

*Sir Char.* O me! O most unhappy gentleman!  
I am not worthy to have friends stirred up,  
Whose hands may help me in this plunge of want.  
I would I were in Heaven, to inherit there  
The immortal birth-right which my Saviour  
keeps,  
And by no unthrift can be bought and sold;  
For here on earth what pleasures should we  
trust?

*Shaf.* To rid you from these contemplations,  
Three hundred pounds you shall receive of me;

Nay, five for fail. Come, sir; the sight of gold  
Is the most sweet receipt for melancholy,  
And will revive your spirits. You shall hold law  
With your proud adversaries. Tush, let Frank  
Acton

Wage with his knighthood like expense with me,  
And he will sink, he will. Nay, good Sir Charles,  
Applaud your fortune, and your fair escape  
From all these perils.

*Sir Char.* O sir, they have undone me.  
Two thousand and five hundred pound a year  
My father at his death possessed me of;  
All which the envious Acton made me spend.  
And, notwithstanding all this large expense,  
I had much ado to gain my liberty:  
And I have only now a house of pleasure,  
With some five hundred pounds, reserved  
Both to maintain me and my loving sister.

*Shaft.* [*Aside.*] That must I have, it lies convenient for me:  
If I can fasten but one finger on him,  
With my full hand I'll gripe him to the heart.  
'Tis not for love I proffered him this coin,  
But for my gain and pleasure. [*Aloud.*] Come, Sir  
Charles,

I know you have need of money; take my offer.

*Sir Char.* Sir, I accept it, and remain indebted  
Even to the best of my unable power.  
Come, gentlemen, and see it tendered down.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter WENDOLL melancholy.*

*Wen.* I am a villain if I apprehend  
But such a thought: then, to attempt the deed,—  
Slave, thou art damned without redemption.  
I'll drive away this passion with a song.

A song! ha, ha: a song! as if, fond man,  
 Thy eyes could swim in laughter, when thy soul  
 Lies drenched and drownèd in red tears of blood.  
 I'll pray, and see if God within my heart  
 Plant better thoughts. Why, prayers are medi-  
 tations;  
 And when I meditate (O God, forgive me!)  
 It is on her divine perfections.  
 I will forget her; I will arm myself  
 Not to entertain a thought of love to her:  
 And, when I come by chance into her presence,  
 I'll hale these balls until my eye-strings crack,  
 From being pulled and drawn to look that way.

*Enter over the stage, FRANKFORD, his Wife, and  
 NICHOLAS.*

O God! O God! with what a violence  
 I'm hurried to mine own destruction.  
 There goest thou, the most perfectest man  
 That ever England bred a gentleman;  
 And shall I wrong his bed? Thou God of  
 thunder!  
 Stay in thy thoughts of vengeance and of wrath,  
 Thy great, almighty, and all-judging hand  
 From speedy execution on a villain—  
 A villain, and a traitor to his friend.

*Enter JENKIN.*

*Jenk.* Did your worship call?

*Wen.* He doth maintain me, he allows me  
 largely

Money to spend.

*Jenk.* By my faith, so do not you me; I cannot  
 get a cross of you.

*Wen.* My gelding, and my man—

*Jenk.* That's Sorrell and I.

*Wen.* This kindness grows of no alliance 'twixt us—

*Jenk.* Nor is my service of any great acquaintance.

*Wen.* I never bound him to me by desert :  
Of a mere stranger, a poor gentleman,  
A man by whom in no kind he could gain,  
He hath placed me in the height of all his  
thoughts,  
Made me companion with the best and chiefest  
In Yorkshire. He cannot eat without me,  
Nor laugh without me : I am to his body  
As necessary as his digestion ;  
And equally do make him whole or sick :  
And shall I wrong this man? Base man ! ingrate !  
Hast thou the power straight with thy gory hands  
To rip thy image from his bleeding heart?  
To scratch thy name from out the holy book  
Of his remembrance ; and to wound his name  
That holds thy name so dear? Or rend his heart  
To whom thy heart was knit and joined together?  
And yet I must. Then, Wendoll, be content ;  
Thus villains, when they would, cannot repent.

*Jenk.* What a strange humour is my new  
master in ! Pray God he be not mad : if he  
should be so, I should never have any mind to  
serve him in Bedlam. It may be he's mad for  
missing of me.

*Wen.* What, Jenkin, where's your mistress?

*Jenk.* Is your worship married?

*Wen.* Why dost thou ask?

*Jenk.* Because you are my master ; and if I  
have a mistress, I would be glad, like a good  
servant, to do my duty to her.

*Wen.* I mean where's Mistress Frankford.

*Jenk.* Marry, sir, her husband is riding out of

town, and she went very lovingly to bring him on his way to horse. Do you see, sir? here she comes, and here I go.

*Wen.* Vanish.

[*Exit* JENKIN.]

*Enter* Mistress FRANKFORD.

*Anne.* You are well met, sir; now, in troth, my husband,  
 Before he took horse, had a great desire  
 To speak with you : we sought about the house,  
 Hollaed into the fields, sent every way,  
 But could not meet you : therefore he enjoined me  
 To do unto you his most kind commends.  
 Nay, more ; he wills you, as you prize his love,  
 Or hold in estimation his kind friendship,  
 To make bold in his absence, and command  
 Even as himself were present in the house :  
 For you must keep his table, use his servants,  
 And be a present Frankford in his absence.

*Wen.* I thank him for his love.—

[*Aside*] Give me a name, you whose infectious  
 tongues

Are tipped with gall and poison ; as you would  
 Think on a man that had your father slain,  
 Murdered your children, made your wives base  
 strumpets,

So call me, call me so. Print in my face  
 The most stigmatic title of a villain,  
 For hatching treason to so true a friend.

*Anne.* Sir, you are much beholding to my  
 husband ;

You are a man most dear in his regard.

*Wen.* [*Aside.*] I am bound unto your husband,  
 and you too.

I will not speak to wrong a gentleman  
 Of that good estimation, my kind friend :

I will not; zounds! I will not. I may choose,  
 And I will choose. Shall I be so misled?  
 Or shall I purchase to my father's crest  
 The motto of a villain? If I say  
 I will not do it, what thing can enforce me?  
 What can compel me? What sad destiny  
 Hath such command upon my yielding thoughts?  
 I will not—Ha! some fury pricks me on,  
 The swift Fates drag me at their chariot-wheel,  
 And hurry me to mischief. Speak I must;  
 Injure myself, wrong her, deceive his trust.

*Anne.* Are you not well, sir, that you seem thus troubled?

There is sedition in your countenance.

*Wen.* And in my heart, fair angel, chaste and wise.

I love you: start not, speak not, answer not.  
 I love you: nay, let me speak the rest:  
 Bid me to swear, and I will call to record  
 The host of Heaven.

*Anne.* The host of Heaven forbid  
 Wendoll should hatch such a disloyal thought!

*Wen.* Such is my fate; to this suit I was born,  
 To wear rich pleasure's crown, or fortune's scorn.

*Anne.* My husband loves you.

*Wen.* I know it.

*Anne.* He esteems you  
 Even as his brain, his eye-ball, or his heart.

*Wen.* I have tried it.

*Anne.* His purse is your exchequer, and his  
 table

Doth freely serve you.

*Wen.* So I have found it.

*Anne.* Oh! with what face of brass, what brow  
 of steel,

Can you, unblushing, speak this to the face  
 Of the espoused wife of so dear a friend?

It is my husband that maintains your state;  
Will you dishonour him that in your power  
Hath left his whole affairs? I am his wife,  
It is to me you speak.

*Wen.* O speak no more!

For more than this I know, and have recorded  
Within the red-leaved table of my heart.  
Fair, and of all beloved, I was not fearful  
Bluntly to give my life into your hand,  
And at one hazard all my earthly means.  
Go, tell your husband; he will turn me off,  
And I am then undone. I care not, I;  
'Twas for your sake. Perchance in rage he'll kill  
me:

I care not, 'twas for you. Say I incur  
The general name of villain through the world  
Of traitor to my friend; I care not, I.  
Beggary, shame, death, scandal, and reproach,  
For you I'll hazard all: why, what care I?  
For you I'll live, and in your love I'll die.

*Anne.* You move me, sir, to passion and to  
pity:

The love I bear my husband is as precious  
As my soul's health.

*Wen.* I love your husband too,  
And for his love I will engage my life:  
Mistake me not, the augmentation  
Of my sincere affection borne to you  
Doth no whit lessen my regard of him.  
I will be secret, lady, close as night;  
And not the light of one small glorious star  
Shall shine here in my forehead, to bewray  
That act of night.

*Anne.* What shall I say?  
My soul is wandering, and hath lost her way.  
Oh, Master Wendoll! Oh!

*Wen.* Sigh not, sweet saint;



For every sigh you breathe draws from my heart  
A drop of blood.

*Anne.* I ne'er offended yet :  
My fault, I fear, will in my brow be writ.  
Women that fall, not quite bereft of grace,  
Have their offences noted in their face.  
I blush and am ashamed. Oh, Master Wendoll,  
Pray God I be not born to curse your tongue,  
That hath enchanted me ! This maze I am in  
I fear will prove the labyrinth of sin.

*Enter NICHOLAS.*

*Wen.* The path of pleasure, and the gate to  
bliss,  
Which on your lips I knock at with a kiss.

*Nic.* I'll kill the rogue.

*Wen.* Your husband is from home, your bed's  
no blab.

Nay, look not down and blush.

*Nic.* Zounds ! I'll stab.

Ay, Nick, was it thy chance to come just in the  
nick ?

I love my master, and I hate that slave :  
I love my mistress, but these tricks I like not.  
My master shall not pocket up this wrong ;  
I'll eat my fingers first. Whay say'st thou,  
mettle ?

Does not the rascal Wendoll go on legs  
That thou must cut off ? Hath he not ham-  
strings

That thou must hough ? Nav. mettle, thou shalt  
stand

To all I say. I'll henceforth turn a spy,  
And watch them in their close conveyances.  
I never looked for better of that rascal,  
Since he came miching<sup>10</sup> first into our house :

<sup>10</sup> Entering secretly.

It is that Satan hath corrupted her,  
 For she was fair and chaste. I'll have an eye  
 In all their gestures. Thus I think of them,  
 If they proceed as they have done before:  
 Wendoll's a knave, my mistress is a—— [Exit.

*Enter Sir CHARLES MOUNTFORD and SUSAN.*

*Sir Char.* Sister, you see we are driven to hard  
 shift  
 To keep this poor house we have left unsold;  
 I am now enforced to follow husbandry,  
 And you to milk; and do we not live well?  
 Well, I thank God.

*Susan.* O brother, here's a change,  
 Since old Sir Charles died, in our father's house!

*Sir Char.* All things on earth thus change,  
 some up, some down;  
 Content's a kingdom, and I wear that crown.

*Enter SHAFTON with a Serjeant.*

*Shaf.* Good morrow, good morrow, Sir  
 Charles. What, with your sister,  
 Plying your husbandry? Serjeant, stand off.  
 You have a pretty house here, and a garden,  
 And goodly ground about it. Since it lies  
 So near a lordship that I lately bought,  
 I would fain buy it of you. I will give you——

*Sir Char.* O, pardon me: this house succes-  
 sively  
 Hath 'longed to me and my progenitors  
 Three hundred years. My great-great-grand-  
 father,  
 He in whom first our gentle style began,

Dwelt here; and in this ground, increased this  
mole-hill

Unto that mountain which my father left me.

Where he the first of all our house began,

I now the last will end, and keep this house,

This virgin title never yet deflowered

By any unthrift of the Mountfords' line.

In brief, I will not sell it for more gold

Than you could hide or pave the ground withal.

*Shaf.* Ha, ha! a proud mind and a beggar's  
purse!

Where's my three hundred pounds, besides the  
use?

I have brought it to an execution

By course of law: what, is my money ready?

*Sir Char.* An execution, sir, and never tell me  
You put my bond in suit! you deal extremely.

*Shaf.* Sell me the land, and I'll acquit you  
straight.

*Sir Char.* Alas, alas! 'tis all trouble hath left  
me

To cherish me and my poor sister's life.

If this were sold, our names should then be quite  
Razed from the bead-roll of gentility.

You see what hard shift we have made to keep it

Allied still to our own name. This palm, you see,

Labour hath glowed within; her silver brow,

That never tasted a rough winter's blast

Without a mask or fan, doth with a grace

Defy cold winter, and his storms outface.

*Susan.* Sir, we feed sparing, and we labour  
hard,

We lie uneasy, to reserve to us

And our succession this small plot of ground.

*Sir Char.* I have so bent my thoughts to hus-  
bandry,

That I protest I scarcely can remember

What a new fashion is; how silk or satin  
 Feels in my hand: why, pride is grown to us  
 A mere, mere stranger. I have quite forgot  
 The names of all that ever waited on me;  
 I cannot name ye any of my hounds,  
 Once from whose echoing mouths I heard all  
 music  
 That e'er my heart desired. What should I  
 say?

To keep this place I have changed myself away.

*Shaf.* [To the Sergeant.] Arrest him at my  
 suit. Action and actions

Shall keep thee in continual bondage fast.

Nay, more, I'll sue thee by a late appeal,  
 And call thy former life in question.

The keeper is my friend, thou shalt have irons,  
 And usage such as I'll deny to dogs:

Away with him!

*Sir Char.* [To SUSAN.] You are too timorous:  
 But trouble is my master,  
 And I will serve him truly.—My kind sister,  
 Thy tears are of no force to mollify  
 This flinty man. Go to my father's brother,  
 My kinsmen and allies; entreat them for me,  
 To ransom me from this injurious man,  
 That seeks my ruin.

*Shaf.* Come, irons, irons! come away;  
 I'll see thee lodged far from the sight of day.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Susan.* My heart's so hardened with the frost  
 of grief,  
 Death cannot pierce it through. Tyrant too fell!  
 So lead the fiends condemn'd souls to hell.

*Enter* ACTON and MALBY.

*Sir Fran.* Again to prison! Malby, hast thou  
 seen

A poor slave better tortured? Shall we hear  
The music of his voice cry from the grate,  
"Meat for the Lord's sake?" No, no, yet I  
am not

Thoroughly revenged. They say he hath a pretty  
wench

Unto his sister: shall I, in mercy-sake  
To him and to his kindred, bribe the fool  
To shame herself by lewd dishonest lust?  
I'll proffer largely; but, the deed being done,  
I'll smile to see her base confusion.

*Mal.* Methinks, Sir Francis, you are full re-  
venged

For greater wrongs than he can proffer you.  
See where the poor sad gentlewoman stands.

*Sir Fran.* Ha, ha! now will I flout her poverty,  
Deride her fortunes, scoff her base estate;  
My very soul the name of Mountford hates.  
But stay, my heart! oh, what a look did fly  
To strike my soul through with thy piercing eye!  
I am enchanted; all my spirits are fled,  
And with one glance my envious spleen struck  
dead.

*Susan.* Acton! that seeks our blood.

[*Runs away.*]

*Sir Fran.* O chaste and fair!

*Mal.* Sir Francis, why, Sir Francis, zounds!  
in a trance?

Sir Francis, what cheer, man? Come, come,  
how is't?

*Sir Fran.* Was she not fair? Or else this  
judging eye

Cannot distinguish beauty.

*Mal.* She was fair.

*Sir Fran.* She was an angel in a mortal's  
shape,  
And ne'er descended from old Mountford's line.

But soft, soft, let me call my wits together.  
 A poor, poor wench, to my great adversary  
 Sister, whose very souls denounce stern war,  
 One against other. How now, Frank? turned  
 fool

Or madman, whether? But no; master of  
 My perfect senses and directest wits.  
 Then why should I be in this violent humour  
 Of passion and of love? And with a person  
 So different every way, and so opposed  
 In all contractions, and still-warring actions?  
 Fie, fie; how I dispute against my soul!  
 Come, come; I'll gain her, or in her fair quest  
 Purchase my soul free and immortal rest.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter Three or Four Serving-Men, one with a  
 voider and a wooden knife to take away all;  
 another with the salt and bread; another with  
 the table-cloth and napkins; another with the  
 carpet: JENKIN with two lights after them.*

*Jenk.* So, march in order, and retire in battle  
 array. My master and the guests have supped  
 already, all's taken away: here, now spread for  
 the serving-men in the hall. Butler, it belongs  
 to your office.

*But.* I know it, Jenkin. What d'ye call the  
 gentleman that supped there to-night?

*Jenk.* Who, my master?

*But.* No, no; Master Wendoll, he's a daily  
 guest: I mean the gentleman that came but this  
 afternoon.

*Jenk.* His name's Master Cranwell. God's  
 light, hark, within there, my master calls to lay  
 more billets upon the fire. Come, come! Lord,

how we that are in office here in the house are troubled! One spread the carpet in the parlour, and stand ready to snuff the lights; the rest be ready to prepare their stomachs. More lights in the hall there. Come, Nicholas. [*Exit.*]

*Nic.* I cannot eat, but had I Wendoll's heart I would eat that; the rogue grows impudent. Oh, I have seen such vile notorious tricks, Ready to make my eyes dart from my head. I'll tell my master, by this air I will! Fall what may fall, I'll tell him. Here he comes.

*Enter* Master FRANKFORD, *brushing the crumbs from his clothes with a napkin, as newly risen from supper.*

*Frank.* Nicholas, what make you here? why are not you  
At supper in the hall among your fellows?

*Nic.* Master, I stayed your rising from the board,  
To speak with you.

*Frank.* Be brief, then, gentle Nicholas;  
My wife and guests attend me in the parlour.  
Why dost thou pause? Now, Nicholas, you  
want money,  
And, unthrift-like, would eat into your wages  
Ere you have earned it: here, sir,'s half a  
crown;

Play the good husband,<sup>11</sup> and away to supper.

*Nic.* By this hand, an honourable gentleman!  
I will not see him wronged.—Sir, I have served  
you long; you entertained me seven years before  
your beard. You knew me, sir, before you knew  
my mistress.

<sup>11</sup> In the sense of husbandry.

*Frank.* What of this, good Nicholas?

*Nic.* I never was a make-bate<sup>12</sup> or a knave;  
I have no fault but one: I'm given to quarrel,  
But not with women. I will tell you, master,  
That which will make your heart leap from your  
breast,

Your hair to startle from your head, your ears  
to tingle.

*Frank.* What preparation's this to dismal  
news?

*Nic.* 'Sblood, sir! I love you better than  
your wife;

I'll make it good.

*Frank.* You are a knave, and I have much  
ado

With wonted patience to contain my rage,  
And not to break thy pate. Thou art a knave:  
I'll turn you, with your base comparisons,  
Out of my doors.

*Nic.* Do, do:

There is not room for Wendoll and for me  
Both in one house. Oh master, master!  
That Wendoll is a villain.

*Frank.* Ay, saucy!

*Nic.* Strike, strike; do, strike; yet hear me:  
I am no fool,

I know a villain, when I see him act  
Deeds of a villain. Master, master, that base  
slave

Enjoys my mistress, and dishonours you.

*Frank.* Thou hast killed me with a weapon  
whose sharp point  
Hath pricked quite through and through my  
shivering heart:

Drops of cold sweat sit dangling on my hairs,

<sup>12</sup> A quarrelsome person.



Like morning's dew upon the golden flowers,  
 And I am plunged into strange agonies.  
 What didst thou say? If any word that touched  
 His credit or her reputation,  
 It is as hard to enter my belief  
 As Dives into heaven.

*Nic.* I can gain nothing;  
 They are two that never wronged me. I knew  
 before

'Twas but a thankless office, and perhaps  
 As much as is my service, or my life  
 Is worth. All this I know; but this and more,  
 More by a thousand dangers, could not hire me  
 To smother such a heinous wrong from you.  
 I saw, and I have said.

*Frank.* [*Aside.*] 'Tis probable; though blunt,  
 yet he is honest;  
 Though I durst pawn my life, and on their faith  
 Hazard the dear salvation of my soul,  
 Yet in my trust I may be too secure.  
 May this be true? O, may it? Can it be?  
 Is it by any wonder possible?  
 Man, woman, what thing mortal may we trust,  
 When friends and bosom wives prove so un-  
 just?—

[*To NICHOLAS.*] What instance hast thou of this  
 strange report?

*Nic.* Eyes, eyes.

*Frank.* Thy eyes may be deceived, I tell thee:  
 For, should an angel from the heavens drop  
 down,

And preach this to me that thyself hast told,  
 He should have much ado to win belief;  
 In both their loves I am so confident.

*Nic.* Shall I discourse the same by circum-  
 stance?

*Frank.* No more! to supper, and command  
your fellows  
To attend us and the strangers. Not a word,  
I charge thee on thy life: be secret then,  
For I know nothing.

*Nic.* I am dumb; and, now that I have eased  
my stomach,  
I will go fill my stomach.

*Frank.* Away; be gone.  
She is well born, descended nobly;  
Virtuous her education, her repute  
Is in the general voice of all the country  
Honest and fair; her carriage, her demeanour,  
In all her actions that concern the love  
To me her husband, modest, chaste, and godly.  
Is all this seeming gold plain copper?  
But he, that Judas that hath borne my purse,  
And sold me for a sin!—Oh God! Oh God!  
Shall I put up these wrongs? No. Shall I trust  
The bare report of this suspicious groom,  
Before the double-gilt, the well-hatched ore  
Of their two hearts? No, I will lose these  
thoughts:

Distraction I will banish from my brow,  
And from my looks exile sad discontent,  
Their wonted favours in my tongue shall flow;  
Till I know all, I'll nothing seem to know.  
Lights and a table there! Wife, Master Wen-  
doll,  
And gentle Master Cranwell.

*Enter* Mistress FRANKFORD, WENDOLL, CRAN-  
WELL, NICHOLAS, and JENKIN, with cards,  
carpet, stools, and other necessaries.

*Frank.* O Master Cranwell, you are a stranger  
here,

And often baulk my house: faith, y'are a churl.  
Now we have supped, a table, and to cards.

*Jenk.* A pair of cards,<sup>13</sup> Nicholas, and a carpet to cover the table. Where's Cicely with her counters and her box? Candles and candlesticks there! Fie, we have such a household of serving creatures! unless it be Nick and I, there's not one amongst them all can say bo to a goose. Well said, Nick.

[*They spread a carpet, set down lights and cards.*]

*Anne.* Come, Master Frankford, who shall take my part?

*Frank.* Marry, that will I, sweet wife.

*Wen.* No, by my faith, sir; when you are together I sit out: it must be Mistress Frankford and I, or else it is no match.

*Frank.* I do not like that match.

*Nic.* [*Aside.*] You have no reason, marry, knowing all.

*Frank.* 'Tis no great matter neither. Come, Master Cranwell, shall you and I take them up?

*Cran.* At your pleasure, sir.

*Frank.* I must look to you, Master Wendoll, for you will be playing false; nay, so will my wife too.

*Nic.* [*Aside.*] Ay, I will be sworn she will.

*Anne.* Let them that are taken playing false, forfeit the set.

*Frank.* Content; it shall go hard but I'll take you.

*Cran.* Gentlemen, what shall our game be?

*Wen.* Master Frankford, you play best at "noddy."

*Frank.* You shall not find it so; indeed you shall not.

<sup>13</sup> A pack.

*Anne.* I can play at nothing so well as "double ruff."

*Frank.* If Master Wendoll and my wife be together, there's no playing against them at double hand.

*Nic.* I can tell you, sir, the game that Master Wendoll is best at.

*Wen.* What game is that, Nick?

*Nic.* Marry, sir, "Knave out of Doors."

*Wen.* She and I will take you at "Lodam."

*Anne.* Husband, shall we play at "Saint?"

*Frank.* My saint's turned devil. No, we'll none of "Saint:"

You are best at "New-cut," wife; you'll play at that.

*Wen.* If you play at "New-cut," I am soonest hitter of any here, for a wager.

*Frank.* 'Tis me they play on. Well, you may draw out.

For all your cunning, 'twill be to your shame; I'll teach you, at your "New-cut," a new game. Come, come.

*Cran.* If you cannot agree upon the game, to post and pair.

*Wen.* We shall be soonest pairs; and my good host,

When he comes late home, he must kiss the post.

*Frank.* Whoever wins, it shall be to thy cost.

*Cran.* Faith, let it be "Vide-ruff," and let's make honours.

*Frank.* If you make honours, one thing let me crave:

Honour the king and queen; except the knave.

*Wen.* Well, as you please for that. Lift who shall deal.

*Anne.* The least in sight: what are you, Master Wendoll?

*Wen.* I am a knave.

*Nic.* [*Aside.*] I'll swear it.

*Anne.* I a queen.

*Frank.* [*Aside.*] A quean thou shouldst say.

[*Aloud.*] Well, the cards are mine;

They are the grossest pair that e'er I felt.

*Anne.* Shuffle, I'll cut: would I had never dealt.

*Frank.* I have lost my dealing.

*Wen.* Sir, the fault's in me:

This queen I have more than mine own, you see.  
Give me the stock.

*Frank.* My mind's not on my game.

Many a deal I have lost; the more's your shame.  
You have served me a bad trick, Master Wendoll.

*Wen.* Sir, you must take your lot. To end  
this strife,

I know I have dealt better with your wife.

*Frank.* Thou hast dealt falsely, then.

*Anne.* What's trumps?

*Wen.* Hearts: partner, I rub.

*Frank.* [*Aside.*] Thou robb'st me of my soul,  
of her chaste love;

In thy false dealing thou hast robbed my heart.

[*Aloud.*] Booty you play; I like a loser stand,  
Having no heart, or here or in my hand.

I will give o'er the set; I am not well.

Come, who will hold my cards?

*Anne.* Not well, sweet Master Frankford!

Alas, what ail you? 'Tis some sudden qualm.

*Wen.* How long have you been so, Master  
Frankford?

*Frank.* Sir, I was lusty, and I had my health,  
But I grew ill when you began to deal.

Take hence this table. Gentle Master Cranwell,

You are welcome; see your chamber at your pleasure.

I'm sorry that this meagrim takes me so,  
I cannot sit and bear you company.

Jenkin, some lights, and show him to his chamber.

*Anne.* A night-gown for my husband; quickly there:

It is some rheum or cold.

*Wen.* Now, in good faith, this illness you have got

By sitting late without your gown.

*Frank.* I know it, Master Wendoll.

Go, go to bed, lest you complain like me.

Wife, prythee, wife, into my bed-chamber;

The night is raw and cold, and rheumatic:

Leave me my gown and light; I'll walk away my fit.

*Wen.* Sweet sir, good night.

*Frank.* Myself, good night. [*Exit WENDOLL.*]

*Anne.* Shall I attend you, husband?

*Frank.* No, gentle wife, thou'lt catch cold in thy head;

Prythee, be gone, sweet; I'll make haste to bed.

*Anne.* No sleep will fasten on mine eyes, you know,

Until you come.

*Frank.* Sweet Nan, I prythee go.—

[*Exit Mistress FRANKFORD.*]

I have bethought me: get me, by degrees,

The keys of all my doors, which I will mould

In wax, and take their fair impression,

To have by them new keys. This being compassed,

At a set hour a letter shall be brought me,

And, when they think they may securely play,

They are nearest to danger. Nick, I must rely

Upon thy trust and faithful secrecy.

*Nic.* Build on my faith.

*Frank.* To bed then, not to rest :  
Care lodges in my brain, grief in my breast.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter SUSAN, Old MOUNTFORD, SANDY, RODER,  
and TIDY.*

*Old M.* You say my nephew is in great  
distress :

Who brought it to him, but his own lewd life?  
I cannot spare a cross.<sup>14</sup> I must confess  
He was my brother's son : why, niece, what  
then?

This is no world in which to pity men.

*Susan.* I was not born a beggar, though his  
extremes

Enforce this language from me : I protest  
No fortune of mine own could lead my tongue  
To this base key. I do beseech you, uncle,  
For the name's sake, for Christianity,  
Nay, for God's sake, to pity his distress :  
He is denied the freedom of the prison,  
And in the hole is laid with men condemned ;  
Plenty he hath of nothing but of irons,  
And it remains in you to free him thence.

*Old M.* Money I cannot spare ; men should  
take heed ;

He lost my kindred when he fell to need. [*Exit.*

*Susan.* Gold is but earth, thou earth enough  
shalt have,

When thou hast once took measure of thy grave.

You know me, Master Sandy, and my suit.

*Sandy.* I knew you, lady, when the old man lived;

I knew you ere your brother sold his land;  
Then you sung well, played sweetly on the lute;  
But now I neither know you nor your suit.

*Susan.* You, Master Roder, was my brother's tenant,  
Rent-free he placed you in that wealthy farm,  
Of which you are possessed.

*Roder.* True, he did;  
And have I not there dwelt still for his sake?  
I have some business now; but, without doubt,  
They that have hurled him in will help him out.

*Susan.* Cold comfort still: what say you, cousin Tidy?

*Tidy.* I say this comes of roosting, swaggering.

Call me not cousin: each man for himself.  
Some men are born to mirth, and some to sorrow,  
I am no cousin unto them that borrow. [*Exit.*]

*Susan.* O charity! why art thou fled to heaven,  
And left all things upon this earth uneven?  
Their scoffing answers I will ne'er return;  
But to myself his grief in silence mourn.

*Enter Sir FRANCIS and MALBY.*

*Sir Fran.* She is poor, I'll therefore tempt her with this gold.

Go, Malby, in my name deliver it,  
And I will stay thy answer.

*Malby.* Fair mistress, as I understand, your grief

Doth grow from want, so I have here in store  
A means to furnish you, a bag of gold,  
Which to your hands I freely tender you.



*Susan.* I thank you, Heavens! I thank you,  
gentle sir:

God make me able to requite this favour!

*Mal.* This gold Sir Francis Acton sends by me,  
And prays you——

*Susan.* Acton! O God! that name I am born  
to curse:

Hence, bawd! hence, broker! see, I spurn his  
gold;

My honour never shall for gain be sold.

*Sir Fran.* Stay, lady, stay.

*Susan.* From you I'll posting hie,  
Even as the doves from feathered eagles fly.

[*Exit.*

*Sir Fran.* She hates my name, my face: how  
should I woo?

I am disgraced in everything I do.

The more she hates me, and disdains my love,

The more I am rapt in admiration

Of her divine and chaste perfections.

Woo her with gifts I cannot, for all gifts

Sent in my name she spurns. With looks I  
cannot,

For she abhors my sight. Not yet with letters,

For none she will receive. How then, how then?

Well, I will fasten such a kindness on her

As shall o'ercome her hate and conquer it.

Sir Charles, her brother, lies in execution

For a great sum of money; and, besides,

The appeal is sued still for my huntsman's death,

Which only I have power to reverse:

In her I'll bury all my hate of him.

Go seek the keeper, Malby, bring him to me:

To save his body, I his debts will pay;

To save his life, I his appeal will stay. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter Sir CHARLES MOUNTFORD in prison with irons, his feet bare, his garments all ragged and torn.*

*Sir Char.* Of all on the earth's face most miserable,  
 Breathe in this hellish dungeon thy laments,  
 Thus like a slave ragged, like a felon gyved.  
 What hurls thee headlong to this base estate?  
 O unkind uncle! O my friends ingrate!  
 Unthankful kinsmen! Mountford's all too base,  
 To let thy name be fettered in disgrace!  
 A thousand deaths here in this grave I die;  
 Fear, hunger, sorrow, cold, all threat my death,  
 And join together to deprive my breath.  
 But that which most torments me, my dear sister  
 Hath left to visit me, and from my friends  
 Hath brought no hopeful answer: therefore I  
 Divine they will not help my misery.  
 If it be so, shame, scandal, and contempt  
 Attend their covetous thoughts. Need make  
 their graves!  
 Usurers they live, and may they die like slaves!

*Enter Keeper.*

*Keep.* Knight, be of comfort, for I bring thee  
 freedom  
 From all thy troubles.

*Sir Char.* Then I am doomed to die;  
 Death is the end of all calamity.

*Keep.* Live: your appeal is stayed; the execution  
 Of all your debts discharged; your creditors  
 Even to the utmost penny satisfied,  
 In sign whereof, your shackles I knock off;  
 You are not left so much indebted to us

As for your fees ; all is discharged, all paid.  
Go freely to your house, or where you please,  
After long miseries, embrace your ease.

*Sir Char.* Thou grumblest out the sweetest  
music to me

That ever organ played. Is this a dream  
Or do my waking senses apprehend  
The pleasing taste of these applausive news?  
Slave that I was, to wrong such honest friends,  
My loving kinsmen, and my near allies.  
Tongue, I will bite thee for the scandal breathed  
Against such faithful kinsmen : they are all  
Composed of pity and compassion,  
Of melting charity, and of moving ruth.  
That which I spake before was in my rage ;  
They are my friends, the mirrors of this age,  
Bounteous and free. The noble Mountfords'  
race,  
Ne'er bred a covetous thought, or humour base.

*Enter SUSAN.*

*Susan.* I can no longer stay from visiting  
My woful brother : while I could, I kept  
My hapless tidings from his hopeful ear.

*Sir Char.* Sister, how much am I indebted to  
thee,  
And to thy travel !

*Susan.* What, at liberty ?

*Sir Char.* Thou seest I am, thanks to thy in-  
dustry :

Oh ! unto which of all my courteous friends  
Am I thus bound ? My uncle Mountford, he  
Even of an infant loved me : was it he ?  
So did my cousin Tidy ; was it he ?  
So Master Roder, Master Sandy too :  
Which of all these did this high kindness do ?

*Susan.* Charles, can you mock me in your poverty,  
 Knowing your friends deride your misery?  
 Now, I protest I stand so much amazed  
 To see your bonds free, and your irons knocked  
 off,  
 That I am rapt into a maze of wonder :  
 The rather for I know not by what means  
 This happiness hath chanced.

*Sir Char.* Why, by my uncle,  
 My cousins, and my friends : who else, I pray,  
 Would take upon them all my debts to pay?

*Susan.* O brother, they are men all of flint,  
 Pictures of marble, and as void of pity  
 As chased bears. I begged, I sued, I kneeled,  
 Laid open all your griefs and miseries,  
 Which they derided ; more than that, denied us  
 A part in their alliance ; but, in pride,  
 Said that our kindred with our plenty died.

*Sir Char.* Drudges too much, what did they :  
 oh, known evil !  
 Rich fly the poor, as good men shun the devil.  
 Whence should my freedom come? of whom  
 alive,  
 Saving of those, have I deserved so well?  
 Guess, sister, call to mind, remember me :  
 These I have raised, they follow the world's  
 guise ;  
 Whom rich in honour, they in woe despise.

*Susan.* My wits have lost themselves, let's ask  
 the keeper.

*Sir Char.* Gaoler !

*Keep.* At hand, sir.

*Sir Char.* Of courtesy resolve me one demand.  
 What was he took the burthen of my debts  
 From off my back, stayed my appeal to death,  
 Discharged my fees, and brought me liberty?

*Keep.* A courteous knight, one called Sir Francis Acton.

*Susan.* Acton!

*Sir Char.* Ha! Acton! O me, more distressed in this

Than all my troubles! hale me back,  
Double my irons, and my sparing meals  
Put into halves, and lodge me in a dungeon  
More deep, more dark, more cold, more com-  
fortless.

By Acton freed! not all thy manacles  
Could fetter so my heels as this one word  
Hath thrall'd my heart; and it must now lie  
bound

In more strict prison than thy stony gaol.  
I am not free; I go but under bail.

*Keep.* My charge is done, sir, now I have my fees;

As we get little, we will nothing leese. [*Exit.*]

*Sir Char.* By Acton freed, my dangerous opposite!

Why, to what end? on what occasion? ha!  
Let me forget the name of enemy,  
And with indifference balance this high favour:  
Ha!

*Susan.* [*Aside.*] His love to me? upon my soul 'tis so:

That is the root from whence these strange things grow.

*Sir Char.* Had this proceeded from my father, he

That by the law of nature is most bound  
In offices of love, it had deserved  
My best employment to requite that grace:  
Had it proceeded from my friends or him,

From them this action had deserved my life :  
 And from a stranger more ; because from such  
 There is less execution of good deeds.  
 But he, nor father, nor ally, nor friend,  
 More than a stranger, both remote in blood  
 And in his heart opposed my enemy,—  
 That this high bounty should proceed from  
 him,—

Oh, there I lose myself ! What should I say,  
 What think, what do, his bounty to repay ?

*Susan.* You, wonder, I am sure, whence this  
 strange kindness

Proceeds in Acton. I will tell you, brother :  
 He dotes on me, and oft hath sent me gifts,  
 Letters and tokens. I refused them all.

*Sir Char.* I have enough, though poor ; my  
 heart is set,

In one rich gift to pay back all my debt.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter FRANKFORD, and NICHOLAS with keys, and  
 a letter in his hand.*

*Frank.* This is the night that I must play my  
 part

To try two seeming angels. Where's my keys ?

*Nic.* They are made according to your mould  
 in wax :

I bade the smith be secret, gave him money,  
 And here they are. The letter, sir.

*Frank.* True, take it, there it is ;  
 And when thou seest me in my pleasant'st vein,  
 Ready to sit to supper, bring it me.

*Nic.* I'll do't, make no more question but I'll  
 do't. [*Exit.*]

*Enter* Mistress FRANKFORD, CRANWELL, WENDOLL, *and* JENKIN.

*Anne.* Sirrah, 'tis six o'clock already struck! Go bid them spread the cloth and serve in supper.

*Jenk.* It shall be done, forsooth, mistress. Where's Spigot, the butler, to give us out salt and trenchers?

*Wen.* We that have been a-hunting all the day Come with preparèd stomachs. Master Frankford,

We wished you at our sport.

*Frank.* My heart was with you, and my mind was on you.

Fie, Master Cranwell! you are still thus sad? A stool, a stool. Where's Jenkin, and where's Nick?

'Tis supper-time at least an hour ago. What's the best news abroad?

*Wen.* I know none good.

*Frank.* [*Aside.*] But I know too much bad.

*Enter* Butler *and* JENKIN *with a table-cloth, bread, trenchers, and salt.*

*Cran.* Methinks, sir, you might have that interest

In your wife's brother, to be more remiss  
In his hard dealing against poor Sir Charles,  
Who, as I hear, lies in York Castle, needy,  
And in great want.

*Frank.* Did not more weighty business of my own

Hold me away, I would have laboured peace  
Betwixt them, with all care: indeed I would, sir.

*Anne.* I'll write unto my brother earnestly

In that behalf.

*Wen.* A charitable deed,  
And will beget the good opinion  
Of all your friends that love you, Mistress Frank-  
ford.

*Frank.* That's you for one; I know you love  
Sir Charles,  
And my wife too, well.

*Wen.* He deserves the love  
Of all true gentlemen; be yourselves judge.

*Frank.* But supper, ho! Now as thou lov'st  
me, Wendoll,  
Which I am sure thou dost, be merry, pleasant,  
And frolic it to-night. Sweet Master Cranwell,  
Do you the like. Wife, I protest my heart  
Was ne'er more bent on sweet alacrity.  
Where be those lazy knaves to serve in supper?

*Enter* NICHOLAS.

*Nic.* Here's a letter, sir.

*Frank.* Whence comes it? and who brought it?

*Nic.* A stripling that below attends your  
answer,

And, as he tells me, it is sent from York.

*Frank.* Have him into the cellar; let him taste  
A cup of our March beer: go, make him drink.

*Nic.* I'll make him drunk, if he be a Trojan.

*Frank.* [*Reads the letter.*] My boots and  
spurs! where's Jenkin? God forgive me,  
How I neglect my business! Wife, look here;  
I have a matter to be tried to-morrow  
By eight o'clock, and my attorney writes me,  
I must be there betimes with evidence,  
Or it will go against me. Where's my boots?



*Enter JENKIN with boots and spurs.*

*Anne.* I hope your business craves no such despatch

That you must ride to-night.

*Wen.* [*Aside.*] I hope it doth.

*Frank.* God's me! no such despatch!

Jenkin, my boots. Where's Nick? Saddle my roan,

And the grey dapple for himself. Content ye, It much concerns me. Gentle Master Cranwell, And Master Wendoll, in my absence use The very ripest pleasures of my house.

*Wen.* Lord! Master Frankford, will you ride to-night?

The ways are dangerous.

*Frank.* Therefore will I ride

Appointed well; and so shall Nick my man.

*Anne.* I'll call you up by five o'clock to-morrow.

*Frank.* No, by my faith, wife, I'll not trust to that;

'Tis not such easy rising in a morning From one I love so dearly. No, by my faith, I shall not leave so sweet a bedfellow, But with much pain. You have made me a slug-gard

Since I first knew you.

*Anne.* Then, if you needs will go This dangerous evening, Master Wendoll, Let me entreat you bear him company.

*Wen.* With all my heart, sweet mistress. My boots there!

*Frank.* Fie, fie, that for my private business I should disease<sup>15</sup> my friend, and be a trouble

<sup>15</sup> Dis-ease.

To the whole house! Nick!

*Nic.* Anon, sir.

*Frank.* Bring forth my gelding.—As you love me sir,

Use no more words: a hand, good Master Cranwell.

*Cran.* Sir, God be your good speed!

*Frank.* Good night, sweet Nan; nay, nay, a kiss and part.

[*Aside.*] Dissembling lips, you suit not with my heart. [Exit.

*Wen.* How business, time, and hours, all gracious prove,

And are the furtherers to my new-born love!  
I am husband now in Master Frankford's place,  
And must command the house. My pleasure is  
We will not sup abroad so publicly,  
But in your private chamber, Mistress Frankford.

*Anne.* O, sir, you are too public in your love,  
And Master Frankford's wife.

*Cran.* Might I crave favour,  
I would entreat you I might see my chamber;  
I am on the sudden grown exceeding ill,  
And would be spared from supper.

*Wen.* Light there, ho!  
See you want nothing, sir; for, if you do,  
You injure that good man, and wrong me too.

*Cran.* I will make bold: good night. [Exit.

*Wen.* How all conspire  
To make our bosom sweet, and full entire!  
Come, Nan, I pr'ythee let us sup within.

*Anne.* Oh, what a clog unto the soul is sin!  
We pale offenders are still full of fear;  
Every suspicious eye brings danger near,  
When they whose clear hearts from offence are  
free

Despise report, base scandals do outface,

And stand at mere defiance with disgrace.

*Wen.* Fie, fie! you talk too like a puritan.

*Anne.* You have tempted me to mischief,

Master Wendoll:

I have done I know not what. Well, you plead custom;

That which for want of wit I granted erst,

I now must yield through fear. Come, come, let's in;

Once o'er shoes, we are straight o'er head in sin.

*Wen.* My jocund soul is joyful above measure;

I'll be profuse in Frankford's richest treasure.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter CICELY, JENKIN, and Butler.*

*Jenk.* My mistress and Master Wendoll, my master, sup in her chamber to-night. Cicely, you are preferred from being the cook to be chambermaid. Of all the loves betwixt thee and me, tell me what thou thinkest of this?

*Cicely.* Mum; there's an old proverb,—when the cat's away, the mouse may play.

*Jenk.* Now you talk of a cat, Cicely, I smell a rat.

*Cicely.* Good words, Jenkin, lest you be called to answer them.

*Jenk.* Why, God made my mistress an honest woman! Are not these good words? Pray God my new master play not the knave with my old master! Is there any hurt in this? God send no villainy intended! and, if they do sup together, pray God they do not lie together! God make my mistress chaste, and make us all His servants! what harm is there in all this? Nay, more; here is my hand, thou shalt never have my heart unless thou say Amen.

*Cicely.* Amen, I pray God, I say.

*Enter Serving-man.*

*Serv.* My mistress sends that you should make less noise, to lock up the doors, and see the household all got to bed. You, Jenkin, for this night are made the porter to see the gates shut in.

*Jenk.* Thus, by little and little, I creep into office. Come, to kennel, my masters, to kennel; 'tis eleven o'clock, already.

*Serv.* When you have locked the gates in, you must send up the keys to my mistress.

*Cicely.* Quickly, for God's sake, Jenkin, for I must carry them. I am neither pillow nor bolster, but I know more than both.

*Jenk.* To bed, good Spirot; to bed, good honest serving-creatures; and let us sleep as snug as pigs in pease-straw. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter FRANKFORD and NICHOLAS.*

*Frank.* Soft, soft; we have tied our geldings to a tree,  
Two flight-shoot<sup>16</sup> off, lest by their thundering  
hoofs  
They blab our coming back. Hear'st thou no  
noise?

*Nic.* Hear! I hear nothing but the owl and you.

*Frank.* So: now my watch's hand points upon  
twelve,  
And it is dead midnight. Where are my keys?  
*Nic.* Here, sir.

<sup>16</sup>The distance a flight-arrow would go—about one-fifth of a mile.

*Frank.* This is the key that opes my outward gate;  
 This is the hall-door; this the withdrawing chamber;  
 But this, that door that's bawd unto my shame,  
 Fountain and spring of all my bleeding thoughts,  
 Where the most hallowed order and true knot  
 Of nuptial sanctity hath been profaned;  
 It leads to my polluted bed-chamber,  
 Once my terrestrial heaven, now my earth's hell,  
 The place where sins in all their ripeness dwell.—  
 But I forget myself: now to my gate.

*Nic.* It must ope with far less noise than  
 Cripple-gate, or your plot's dashed.

*Frank.* So, reach me my dark lanthorn to the  
 rest;  
 Tread softly, softly.

*Nic.* I will walk on eggs this pace.

*Frank.* A general silence hath surprised the  
 house,  
 And this is the last door. Astonishment,  
 Fear, and amazement play against my heart,  
 Even as a madman beats upon a drum.  
 Oh, keep my eyes, you Heavens, before I enter,  
 From any sight that may transfix my soul;  
 Or, if there be so black a spectacle,  
 Oh, strike mine eyes stark blind; or, if not so,  
 Lend me such patience to digest my grief  
 That I may keep this white and virgin hand  
 From any violent outrage or red murder!  
 And with that prayer I enter. [Exit.

*Nic.* Here's a circumstance.  
 A man be made cuckold in the time  
 That he's about it. An the case were mine,  
 As 'tis my master's,—'sblood that he makes me  
 swear!—  
 I would have placed his action, entered there;

I would, I would.

*Re-enter FRANKFORD.*

*Frank.* Oh! oh!

*Nic.* Master, 'sblood! master! master!

*Frank.* O me unhappy! I have found them  
lying

Close in each other's arms, and fast asleep.  
But that I would not damn two precious souls,  
Bought with my Saviour's blood, and send them,  
laden

With all their scarlet sins upon their backs,  
Unto a fearful judgment, their two lives  
Had met upon my rapier!

*Nic.* 'Sblood, master. What, have you left  
them sleeping still? let me go wake them.

*Frank.* Stay, let me pause a while.

O God! O God! that it were possible  
To undo things done; to call back yesterday!  
That time could turn up his swift sandy glass,  
To untell the days, and to redeem these hours!  
Or that the sun  
Could, rising from the west, draw his coach back-  
ward,

Take from the account of time so many minutes,  
Till he had all these seasons called again,  
Those minutes, and those actions done in them,  
Even from her first offence; that I might take her  
As spotless as an angel in my arms!

But, oh! I talk of things impossible,  
And cast beyond the moon. God give me  
patience!

For I will in and wake them.

[*Exit.*]

*Nic.* Here's patience perforce;  
He needs must trot afoot that tires his horse.

*Enter WENDOLL, running over the stage in a night-gown, FRANKFORD after him with a sword drawn; a Maid-servant in her smock stays his hand, and clasps hold on him. FRANKFORD pauses for a while.*

*Frank.* I thank thee, maid; thou, like the  
angel's hand,  
Hast stayed me from a bloody sacrifice.  
[Exit Maid-servant.]

Go, villain, and my wrongs sit on thy soul  
As heavy as this grief doth upon mine!  
When thou record'st my many courtesies,  
And shalt compare them with thy treacherous  
heart,  
Lay them together, weigh them equally,  
'Twill be revenge enough. Go, to thy friend  
A Judas: pray, pray, lest I live to see  
Thee, Judas-like, hanged on an elder-tree,

*Enter Mistress FRANKFORD in her smock, night-gown, and night attire.*

*Anne.* Oh, by what word, what title, or what  
name,  
Shall I entreat your pardon? Pardon! oh!  
I am as far from hoping such sweet grace  
As Lucifer from heaven. To call you husband—  
O me, most wretched! I have lost that name,  
I am no more your wife.

*Nic.* 'Sblood, sir, she swoons.

*Frank.* Spare thou thy tears, for I will weep  
for thee:  
And keep thy countenance, for I'll blush for thee.  
Now, I protest, I think 'tis I am tainted,  
For I am most ashamed; and 'tis more hard  
For me to look upon thy guilty face,

Than on the sun's clear brow. What would'st  
thou speak?

*Anne.* I would I had no tongue, no ears, no  
eyes,

No apprehension, no capacity.

When do you spurn me like a dog? when tread  
me

Under your feet? when drag me by the hair?

Though I deserve a thousand fold

More than you can inflict: yet, once my husband,

For womanhood, to which I am a shame,

Though once an ornament—even for His sake

That hath redeemed our souls, mark not my face

Nor hack me with your sword; but let me go

Perfect and undeformed to my tomb.

I am not worthy that I should prevail:

In the least suit; no, not to speak to you,

Nor look on you, nor to be in your presence.

Yet, as an abject, this one suit I crave;

This granted, I am ready for my grave. [*Kneels.*]

*Frank.* My God, with patience arm me! Rise,  
nay, rise,

And I'll debate with thee. Was it for want

Thou playedst the strumpet? Wast thou not  
supplied

With every pleasure, fashion, and new toy;

Nay, even beyond my calling?

*Anne.* I was.

*Frank.* Was it then disability in me;

Or in thine eye seemed he a properer man?

*Anne.* Oh, no.

*Frank.* Did not I lodge thee in my bosom?

Wear thee here in my heart?

*Anne.* You did.

*Frank.* I did, indeed; witness my tears I did.

Go, bring my infants hither.



*Two Children are brought in by Servant.*

O Nan ! O Nan !

If neither fear of shame, regard of honour,  
The blemish of my house, nor my dear love  
Could have withheld thee from so lewd a fact,  
Yet for these infants, these young harmless souls,  
On whose white brows thy shame is characterized,  
And grows in greatness as they wax in years,—  
Look but on them, and melt away in tears.  
Away with them ! lest, as her spotted body  
Hath stained their names with stripe of bastardy,  
So her adulterous breath may blast their spirits  
With her infectious thoughts. Away with them !

*Anne.* In this one life I die ten thousand deaths.

*Frank.* Stand up, stand up ; I will do nothing  
rashly ;

I will retire a while into my study,  
And thou shalt hear thy sentence presently.

[*Exit.*

*Anne.* 'Tis welcome, be it death. O me, base  
strumpet,

That, having such a husband, such sweet children,  
Must enjoy neither ! Oh, to redeem my honour,  
I would have this hand cut off, these my breasts  
seared,

Be racked, strappadoed, put to any torment :  
Nay, to whip but this scandal out, I would hazard  
The rich and dear redemption of my soul.

He cannot be so base as to forgive me ;  
Nor I so shameless to accept his pardon.

O women, women, you that yet have kept  
Your holy matrimonial vow unstained,  
Make me your instance : when you tread awry,  
Your sins, like mine, will on your conscience lie.

*Enter CICELY, JENKIN, SPIGGOT, and all the serving-men, as newly come out of bed.*

*All.* O mistress, mistress, what have you done, mistress?

*Nic.* 'Sblood, what a caterwauling keep you here!

*Jenk.* O Lord, mistress, how comes this to pass? My master is run away in his shirt, and never so much as called me to bring his clothes after him.

*Anne.* See what guilt is! Here stand I in this place,  
Ashamed to look my servants in the face.

*Enter FRANKFORD and CRANWELL, whom, seeing, she falls on her knees.*

*Frank.* My words are registered in Heaven already,  
With patience hear me. I'll not martyr thee,  
Nor mark thee for a strumpet; but with usage  
Of more humility torment thy soul,  
And kill thee even with kindness.

*Cran.* Master Frankford!

*Frank.* Good Master Cranwell. Woman, hear thy judgment.  
Go make thee ready in thy best attire;  
Take with thee all thy gowns, all thy apparel;  
Leave nothing that did ever call thee mistress,  
Or by whose sight, being left here in the house,  
I may remember such a woman by.  
Choose thee a bed and hangings for thy chamber;  
Take with thee every thing that hath thy mark,  
And get thee to my manor seven mile off,  
Where live; 'tis thine; I freely give it thee.

My tenants by shall furnish thee with wains  
 To carry all thy stuff within two hours,—  
 No longer will I limit thee my sight.  
 Choose which of all my servants thou likest best,  
 And they are thine to attend thee.

*Anne.* A mild sentence!

*Frank.* But, as thou hopest for Heaven, as thou  
 believest

Thy name's recorded in the book of life,  
 I charge thee never, after this sad day,  
 To see me, or to meet me; or to send  
 By word or writing, gift, or otherwise,  
 To move me, by thyself, or by thy friends;  
 Nor challenge any part in my two children.  
 So, farewell, Nan! for we will henceforth be  
 As we had never seen, ne'er more shall see.

*Anne.* How full my heart is, in mine eyes  
 appears;

What wants in words, I will supply in tears.

*Frank.* Come, take your coach, your stuff; all  
 must along;

Servants and all, make ready; all be gone.  
 It was thy hand cut two hearts out of one.

— *Enter Sir CHARLES MOUNTFORD, and SUSAN,  
 in rich attire.*

*Susan.* Brother, why have you tricked me like  
 a bride,

Bought me this gay attire, these ornaments?  
 Forget you our estate, our poverty?

*Sir Char.* Call me not brother, but imagine me  
 Some barbarous outlaw, or uncivil kern;  
 For if thou shutt'st thy eye, and only hearest  
 The words that I shall utter, thou shalt judge me  
 Some staring ruffian, not thy brother Charles.

O sister!—

*Susan.* O brother, what doth this strange language mean?

*Sir Char.* Dost love me, sister? wouldst thou see me live

A bankrupt beggar in the world's disgrace,  
And die indebted to my enemies?  
Wouldst thou behold me stand like a huge beam  
In the world's eye, a bye-word and a scorn?  
It lies in thee of these to acquit me free,  
And all my debt I may out-strip by thee.

*Susan.* By me! why, I have nothing, nothing left;

I owe even for the clothes upon my back;  
I am not worth—

*Sir Char.* O sister, say not so;

It lies in you my downcast state to raise,  
To make me stand on even points with the world.  
Come, sister, you are rich; indeed you are;  
And in your power you have, without delay,  
Acton's five hundred pound back to repay.

*Susan.* Till now I had thought you had loved me. By my honour

(Which I have kept as spotless as the moon), — *that saying a great deal*  
I ne'er was mistress of that single doit  
Which I reserved not to supply your wants;  
And do you think that I would hoard from you?  
Now, by my hopes in Heaven, knew I the means  
To buy you from the slavery of your debts  
(Especially from Acton, whom I hate),  
I would redeem it with my life or blood.

*Sir Char.* I challenge it; and, kindred set apart,  
Thus, ruffian-like, I lay siege to your heart.  
What do I owe to Acton?

*Susan.* Why some five hundred pounds; towards which, I swear,

In all the world I have not one denier.<sup>17</sup>

*Sir Char.* It will not prove so. Sister, now resolve me :

What do you think (and speak you conscience)  
Would Acton give, might he enjoy your bed?

*Susan.* He would not shrink to spend a thousand pound,

To give the Mountfords' name so deep a wound.

*Sir Char.* A thousand pound! I but five hundred owe;

Grant him your bed, he's paid with interest so.

*Susan.* O brother!

*Sir Char.* O sister! only this one way,  
With that rich jewel you my debts may pay.  
In speaking this my cold heart shakes with shame;  
Nor do I woo you in a brother's name,  
But in a stranger's. Shall I die in debt  
To Acton, my grand foe, and you still wear  
The precious jewel that he holds so dear?

*Susan.* My honour I esteem as dear and precious

As my redemption.

*Sir Char.* I esteem you, sister,  
As dear, for so dear prizing it.

*Susan.* Will Charles

Have me cut off my hands, and send them Acton?  
Rip up my breast, and with my bleeding heart  
Present him as a token?

*Sir Char.* Neither, sister :

But hear me in my strange assertion.  
Thy honour and my soul are equal in my regard;  
Nor will thy brother Charles survive thy shame.  
His kindness, like a burthen hath surcharged me,  
And under his good deeds I stooping go,  
Not with an upright soul. Had I remained

<sup>17</sup> French for a penny

In prison still, there doubtless I had died :  
 Then, unto him that freed me from that prison,  
 Still do I owe this life. What moved my foe  
 To enfranchise me? 'Twas, sister, for your love.  
 With full five hundred pounds he bought your  
 love,

And shall he not enjoy it? Shall the weight  
 Of all this heavy burthen lean on me,  
 And will not you bear part? You did partake  
 The joy of my release; will you not stand  
 In joint-bond bound to satisfy the debt?  
 Shall I be only charged?

*Susan.* But that I know  
 These arguments come from an honoured mind,  
 As in your most extremity of need  
 Scorning to stand in debt to one you hate,—  
 Nay, rather would engage your unstained honour  
 Than to be held ingrate,—I should condemn you.  
 I see your resolution, and assent;  
 So Charles will have me, and I am content.

*Sir Char.* For this I tricked you up.

*Susan.* But here's a knife,  
 To save mine honour, shall slice out my life.

*Sir Char.* Ay! know thou pleasest me a thou-  
 sand times

More in that resolution than thy grant.—  
 Observe her love; to soothe it to my suit,  
 Her honour she will hazard, though not loose :  
 To bring me out of debt, her rigorous hand  
 Will pierce her heart. O wonder! that will  
 choose,

Rather than stain her blood, her life to lose.—  
 Come, you sad sister to a woful brother,  
 This is the gate: I'll bear him such a present,  
 Such an acquaintance for the knight to seal,  
 As will amaze his senses, and surprise  
 With admiration all his fantasies.

*Enter Sir FRANCIS ACTON and MALBY.*

*Susan.* Before his unchaste thoughts shall  
seize on me,  
'Tis here shall my imprisoned soul set free.

*Sir Fran.* How! Mountford with his sister,  
hand in hand!

What miracle's afoot?

*Mal.* It is a sight  
Begets in me much admiration.

*Sir Char.* Stand not amazed to see me thus  
attended:

Acton, I owe thee money, and being unable  
To bring thee the full sum in ready coin,  
Lo! for thy more assurance, here's a pawn,—  
My sister, my dear sister, whose chaste honour  
I prize above a million: here, nay, take her;  
She's worth your money, man; do not forsake  
her.

*Sir Fran.* I would he were in earnest!

*Susan.* Impute it not to my immodesty;  
My brother being rich in nothing else  
But in his interest that he hath in me,  
According to his poverty hath brought you  
Me, all his store; whom howsoe'er you prize  
As forfeit to your hand, he values highly,  
And would not sell, but to acquit your debt,  
For any emperor's ransom.

*Sir Fran.* [*Aside.*] Stern heart, relent;  
Thy former cruelty at length repent.  
Was ever known, in any former age,  
Such honourable wrested courtesy?  
Lands, honours, life, and all the world forego,  
Rather than stand engaged to such a foe.

*Sir Char.* Acton, she is too poor to be thy bride,  
And I too much opposed to be thy brother.  
There, take her to thee: if thou hast the heart

To seize her as a rape, or lustful prey ;  
 To blur our house that never yet was stained ;  
 To murder her that never meant thee harm ;  
 To kill me now, whom once thou savedst from  
 death,

Do them at once ; on her all these rely,  
 And perish with her spotted chastity.

*Sir Fran.* You overcome me in your love, Sir  
 Charles ;

I cannot be so cruel to a lady  
 I love so dearly. Since you have not spared  
 To engage your reputation to the world,  
 Your sister's honour, which you prize so dear,  
 Nay, all the comforts which you hold on earth,  
 To grow out of my debt, being your foe,  
 Your honoured thoughts, lo ! thus I recompense :  
 Your metamorphosed foe receives your gift  
 In satisfaction of all former wrongs.

This jewel I will wear here in my heart ;  
 And, where before I thought her for her wants  
 Too base to be my bride, to end all strife,  
 I seal you my dear brother, her my wife.

*Susan.* You still exceed us : I will yield to fate,  
 And learn to love, where I till now did hate.

*Sir Char.* With that enchantment you have  
 charmed my soul,  
 And made me rich even in those very words :  
 I pay no debt, but am indebted more ;  
 Rich in your love, I never can be poor.

*Sir Fran.* All's mine is yours ; we are alike in  
 state,  
 Let's knit in love what was opposed in hate.  
 Come ! for our nuptials we will straight provide,  
 Blest only in our brother and fair bride. [*Exeunt.*]



*Enter CRANWELL, FRANKFORD, and NICHOLAS.*

*Cran.* Why do you search each room about  
your house,

Now that you have despatched your wife away?

*Frank.* O sir, to see that nothing may be left  
That ever was my wife's. I loved her dearly,  
And when I do but think of her unkindness,  
My thoughts are all in hell; to avoid which  
torment,

I would not have a bodkin or a cuff,  
A bracelet, necklace, or rebato<sup>18</sup> wire;  
Nor any thing that ever was called hers,  
Left me, by which I might remember her.  
Seek round about.

*Nic.* 'Sblood, master! here's her lute flung in  
a corner.

*Frank.* Her lute! O God! upon this instrument  
Her fingers have run quick division,  
Sweeter than that which now divides our hearts.  
These frets have made me pleasant, that have  
now

Frets of my heart-strings made. O Master  
Cranwell,

Oft hath she made this melancholy wood,  
Now mute and dumb for her disastrous chance,  
Speak sweetly many a note, sound many a strain  
To her own ravishing voice, which being well  
strung,

What pleasant strange airs have they jointly  
rung!

Post with it after her. Now nothing's left;  
Of her and hers, I am at once bereft.

*Nic.* I'll ride and overtake her; do my message,

<sup>18</sup>A rebato was a species of plaited ruff which turned  
back and lay on the shoulders.

And come back again.

*Cran.* Mean time, sir, if you please,  
I'll to Sir Francis Acton, and inform him  
Of what hath passed betwixt you and his sister.

*Frank.* Do as you please. How ill am I bested,  
To be a widower ere my wife be dead!

*Enter* Mistress FRANKFORD, *with* JENKIN, CICELY,  
*her* Coachman, *and* three Carters.

*Anne.* Bid my coach stay: why should I ride  
in state,  
Being hurled so low down by the hand of fate?  
A seat like to my fortunes let me have;  
Earth for my chair, and for my bed a grave.

*Jenk.* Comfort, good mistress; you have  
watered your coach with tears already: you have  
but two mile now to go to your manor. A man  
cannot say by my old master Frankford as he  
may say by me, that he wants manors, for he  
hath three or four, of which this is one that we  
are going to now.

*Cicely.* Good mistress, be of good cheer;  
sorrow, you see, hurts you, but helps you not:  
we all mourn to see you so sad.

*Carter.* Mistress, I spy one of my landlord's  
men  
Come riding post: 'tis like he brings some news.

*Anne.* Comes he from Master Frankford, he is  
welcome;  
So are his news because they come from him.

*Enter* NICHOLAS.

*Nic.* [*He hands her the lute.*] There.

*Anne.* I know the lute; oft have I sung to thee:  
We both are out of tune, both out of time.

*Nic.* Would that had been the worst instrument that e'er you played on. My master commends him to ye; there's all he can find that was ever yours: he hath nothing left that ever you could lay claim to but his own heart, and he could afford you that. All that I have to deliver you is this: he prays you to forget him, and so he bids you farewell.

*Anne.* I thank him: he is kind, and ever was. All you that have true feeling of my grief, That know my loss, and have relenting hearts, Gird me about, and help me with your tears To wash my spotted sins: my lute shall groan; It cannot weep, but shall lament my moan.

*Enter WENDOLL (who remains unseen.)*

*Wen.* Pursued with horror of a guilty soul,  
And with the sharp scourge of repentance lashed  
I fly from my own shadow. O my stars!  
What have my parents in their lives deserved,  
That you should lay this penance on their son?  
When I but think of Master Frankford's love,  
And lay it to my treason, or compare  
My murdering him for his relieving me,  
It strikes a terror like a lightning's flash  
To scorch my blood up. Thus I, like the owl,  
Ashamed of day, live in these shadowy woods,  
Afraid of every leaf or murmuring blast,  
Yet longing to receive some perfect knowledge  
How he hath dealt with her. O my sad fate!  
Here, and so far from home, and thus attended!  
O God! I have divorced the truest turtles  
That ever lived together; and, being divided  
In several places, make their several moan;  
She in the fields laments, and he at home.  
So poets write that Orpheus made the trees

And stones to dance to his melodious harp,  
 Meaning the rustic and the barbarous hinds,  
 That had no understanding part in them :  
 So she from these rude carters tears extracts,  
 Making their flinty hearts with grief to rise,  
 And draw down rivers from their rocky eyes.

*Anne.* [To NICHOLAS.] If you return unto your  
 master, say

(Though not from me; for I am all unworthy  
 To blast his name so with a strumpet's tongue)  
 That you have seen me weep, wish myself dead.  
 Nay, you may say too (for my vow is passed)  
 Last night you saw me eat and drink my last.  
 This to your master you may say and swear;  
 For it is writ in Heaven, and decreed here.

*Nic.* I'll say you wept : I'll swear you made me  
 sad.

Why how now, eyes? what now? what's here to  
 do?

I'm gone, or I shall straight turn baby too.

*Wen.* I cannot weep, my heart is all on fire :  
 Curst be the fruits of my unchaste desire !

*Anne.* Go, break this lute upon my coach's  
 wheel,

As the last music that I e'er shall make ;  
 Not as my husband's gift, but my farewell  
 To all earth's joy ; and so your master tell.

*Nic.* If I can for crying.

*Wen.* Grief, have done,

Or like a madman I shall frantic run.

*Anne.* You have beheld the wofullest wretch on  
 earth ;

A woman made of tears : would you had words  
 To express but what you see ! My inward grief  
 No tongue can utter ; yet unto your power  
 You may describe my sorrow, and disclose  
 To thy sad master my abundant woes.

*Nic.* I'll do your commendations.

*Anne.* Oh no :

I dare not so presume ; nor to my children :  
I am disclaimed in both ; alas, I am.

Oh, never teach them, when they come to speak,  
To name the name of Mother ; chide their tongue,  
If they by chance light on that hated word ;  
Tell them 'tis naught ; for, when that word they  
name,

(Poor pretty souls) they harp on their own shame.

*Wen.* To recompense her wrongs, what canst  
thou do ?

Thou hast made her husbandless and childless too.

*Anne.* I have no more to say. Speak not for  
me ;

Yet you may tell your master what you see.

*Nic.* I'll do't.

[*Exit.*

*Wen.* I'll speak to her, and comfort her in  
grief.

Oh ! but her wound cannot be cured with words.  
No matter though, I'll do my best good-will  
To work a cure on her whom I did kill.

*Anne.* So, now unto my coach, then to my  
home,

So to my death-bed ; for from this sad hour  
I never will nor eat, nor drink, nor taste  
Of any cates that may preserve my life :  
I never will nor smile, nor sleep, nor rest ;  
But when my tears have washed my black soul  
white,

Sweet Saviour, to Thy hands I yield my sprite.

*Wen.* O Mistress Frankford—

*Anne.* Oh, for God's sake fly !

The devil doth come to tempt me ere I die.  
My coach ! this fiend, that with an angel's face  
Conjured mine honour, till he sought my wrack,  
In my repentant eyes seems ugly black.

*[Exeunt all, except WENDOLL and JENKIN;  
the Carters whistling.]*

*Jenk.* What, my young master that fled in his shirt! How come you by your clothes again? You have made our house in a sweet pickle, ha' ye not, think you? What, shall I serve you still, or cleave to the old house?

*Wen.* Hence, slave! away with thy unseasoned mirth!

Unless thou canst shed tears, and sigh, and howl,  
Curse thy sad fortunes, and exclaim on fate,  
Thou art not for my turn.

*Jenk.* Marry, an you will not, another will: farewell, and be hanged! Would you had never come to have kept this coil within our doors; we shall ha' you run away like a sprite again.

*Wen.* She's gone to death; I live to want and woe;

Her life, her sins, and all upon my head.  
And I must now go wander, like a Cain,  
In foreign countries and remoted climes,  
Where the report of my ingratitude  
Cannot be heard. I'll over first to France,  
And so to Germany and Italy;  
Where when I have recovered, and by travel  
Gotten those perfect tongues, and that these  
rumours

May in their height abate, I will return:  
And I divine (however now dejected)  
My worth and parts being by some great man  
praised,

At my return I may in court be raised. *[Exit.]*

*Enter Sir FRANCIS, Sir CHARLES, CRANWELL,  
MALBY and SUSAN.*

*Sir Fran.* Brother, and now my wife, I think  
these troubles

Fall on my head by justice of the heavens,  
 For being so strict to you in your extremities :  
 But we are now atoned. I would my sister  
 Could with like happiness o'ercome her griefs,  
 As we have ours.

*Susan.* You tell us, Master Cranwell, wondrous things,

Touching the patience of that gentleman,  
 With what strange virtue he demeans his grief.

*Cran.* I told you what I was a witness of ;  
 It was my fortune to lodge there that night.

*Sir Fran.* O that same villain Wendoll ! 'twas his tongue

That did corrupt her ; she was of herself  
 Chaste and devoted well. Is this the house ?

*Cran.* Yes, sir, I take it here your sister lies.

*Sir Fran.* My brother Frankford showed too mild a spirit

In the revenge of such a loathèd crime ;  
 Less than he did, no man of spirit could do :

I am so far from blaming his revenge,  
 That I commend it. Had it been my case,  
 Their souls at once had from their breasts been freed :

Death to such deeds of shame is the due meed.

*Enter JENKIN and CICELY.*

*Jenk.* O my mistress, my mistress, my poor mistress !

*Cicely.* Alas that ever I was born ! what shall I do for my poor mistress ?

*Sir Char.* Why, what of her ?

*Jenk.* O Lord, sir, she no sooner heard that her brother and his friends were come to see how she did, but she, for very shame of her guilty con-

science, fell into such a swoon, that we had much ado to get life into her.

*Susan.* Alas, that she should bear so hard a fate!

Pity it is repentance comes too late.

*Sir Fran.* Is she so weak in body?

*Jenk.* O sir, I can assure you there's no hope of life in her, for she will take no sustenance: she hath plainly starved herself, and now she is as lean as a lath. She ever looks for the good hour. Many gentlemen and gentlewomen of the country are come to comfort her. [Exeunt.]

*Enter Mistress FRANKFORD in her Bed.*

*Mal.* How fare you, Mistress Frankford?

*Anne.* Sick, sick, oh, sick. Give me some air I pray you.

Tell me, oh, tell me where is Master Frankford?

Will not he deign to see me ere I die?

*Mal.* Yes, Mistress Frankford: divers gentlemen,

Your loving neighbours, with that just request  
Have moved, and told him of your weak estate:  
Who, though with much ado to get belief,  
Examining of the general circumstance,  
Seeing your sorrow and your penitence,  
And hearing therewithal the great desire  
You have to see him ere you left the world,  
He gave to us his faith to follow us,  
And sure he will be here immediately.

*Anne.* You have half revived me with those pleasing news:

Raise me a little higher in my bed.

Blush I not, brother Acton? Blush I not, Sir Charles?

Can you not read my fault writ in my cheek?



Is not my crime there? tell me, gentlemen.

*Sir Char.* Alas! good mistress, sickness hath not left you

Blood in your face enough to make you blush.

*Anne.* Then sickness, like a friend, my fault would hide.

Is my husband come? My soul but tarries  
His arrive, then I am fit for Heaven.

*Sir Fran.* I came to chide you; but my words of hate

Are turned to pity and compassionate grief.

I came to rate you; but my brawls, you see,  
Melt into tears, and I must weep by thee.

Here's Master Frankford now.

*Enter FRANKFORD.*

*Frank.* Good-morrow, brother; morrow, gentlemen:

God, that hath laid this cross upon our heads,  
Might (had He pleased) have made our cause of meeting

On a more fair and more contented ground;

But He that made us, made us to this woe.

*Anne.* And is he come? Methinks that voice I know.

*Frank.* How do you, woman?

*Anne.* Well, Master Frankford, well; but shall be better,

I hope, within this hour. Will you vouchsafe  
(Out of your grace and your humanity)

To take a spotted strumpet by the hand?

*Frank.* This hand once held my heart in faster bonds

Than now 'tis gripped by me. God pardon them  
That made us first break hold!

*Anne.* Amen, amen.

Out of my zeal to Heaven, whither I'm now bound,

I was so impudent to wish you here;  
 And once more beg your pardon. Oh, good man,  
 And father to my children, pardon me,  
 Pardon, oh, pardon me! My fault so heinous is,  
 That if you in this world forgive it not,  
 Heaven will not clear it in the world to come.  
 Faintness hath so usurped upon my knees  
 That kneel I cannot, but on my heart's knees  
 My prostrate soul lies thrown down at your feet  
 To beg your gracious pardon. Pardon, oh, pardon me!

*Frank.* As freely, from the low depth of my soul,  
 As my Redeemer hath forgiven His death,  
 I pardon thee. I will shed tears for thee, pray with thee;  
 And, in mere pity of thy weak estate,  
 I'll wish to die with thee.

*All.* So do we all.

*Nic.* So will not I;  
 I'll sigh and sob, but, by my faith, not die.

*Sir Fran.* O master Frankford, all the near alliance

I lose by her shall be supplied in thee:  
 You are my brother by the nearest way;  
 Her kindred hath fallen off, but yours doth stay.

*Frank.* Even as I hope for pardon at that day  
 When the great Judge of Heaven in scarlet sits,  
 So be thou pardoned. Though thy rash offence  
 Divorced our bodies, thy repentant tears  
 Unite our souls.

*Sir Char.* Then comfort, Mistress Frankford;  
 You see your husband hath forgiven your fall;  
 Then rouse your spirits, and cheer your fainting soul.

*Susan.* How is it with you?

*Sir Fran.* How do ye feel yourself?

*Anne.* Not of this world.

*Frank.* I see you are not, and I weep to see it.  
My wife, the mother to my pretty babes!

Both those lost names I do restore thee back,  
And with this kiss I wed thee once again :  
Though thou art wounded in thy honoured name,  
And with that grief upon thy death-bed liest,  
Honest in heart, upon my soul, thou diest.

*Anne.* Pardon'd on earth, soul, thou in Heaven  
art free.

Once more thy wife, dies thus embracing thee.

*Frank.* New married, and new widowed. Oh!  
she's dead,

And a cold grave must be her nuptial bed.

*Sir Char.* Sir, be of good comfort; and your  
heavy sorrow

Part equally amongst us: storms divided  
Abate their force, and with less rage are guided.

*Cran.* Do, Master Frankford: he that hath  
least part

Will find enough to drown one troubled heart.

*Sir Fran.* Peace with thee, Nan. Brothers,  
and gentlemen,

(All we that can plead interest in her grief)  
Bestow upon her body funeral tears.  
Brother, had you with threats and usage bad  
Punished her sin, the grief of her offence  
Had not with such true sorrow touched her heart.

*Frank.* I see it had not: therefore on her grave  
Will I bestow this funeral epitaph,  
Which on her marble tomb shall be engraved.  
In golden letters shall these words be filled,  
*Here lies she whom her husband's kindness killed.*

## THE EPILOGUE

AN honest Crew, disposèd to be merry,  
Come to a Tavern by, and called for wine :  
The Drawer brought it, smiling like a Cherry,  
And told them it was pleasant, neat, and fine.  
“Taste it,” quoth one. He did so. “Fie!”  
quoth he;  
“This wine was good; now’t runs too near the  
Lee.”

Another sipped, to give the wine his due,  
And said unto the rest it drunk too flat ;  
The third said, it was old ; the fourth, too new ;  
Nay, quoth the fifth, the sharpness likes me not.  
Thus, Gentlemen, you see how, in one hour,  
The wine was new, old, flat, sharp, sweet, and  
sour.

Unto this wine we do allude our play ;  
Which some will judge too trivial, some too  
grave :  
You as our Guests we entertain this day,  
And bid you welcome to the best we have :  
Excuse us, then ; Good wine may be disgraced,  
When every several mouth hath sundry taste.

PRINTED BY  
F. J. MANSFIELD,  
ERITH, S.E.

# Novels at 6s.

---

Crown 8vo. Bound in uniform Red Cloth with  
Gold Panel Back.

---

## **The Wisdom of the Serpent**

By Constantine Ralli.

## **The Return of Joe, and other New Zealand Stories**

By W. H. Koebel.

## **Love a la Mode**

By Kington Parkes.

## **Passing down the Avenues**

By L. Rutherford Skey.

## **A Stranger within the Gates**

By F. J. Cox.

## **Love in London**

By A. St. John Adcock.

## **Where Two Worlds Met**

By Sydney Phelps and Bridey M. O'Reilly.

## **The Mantle of the Emperor**

By Ladbrooke Black and Robert Lynd. With  
Twelve Illustrations by Paul Henry.

---

London : FRANCIS GRIFFITHS, 34, Maiden Lane, Strand, W.C

# SONGS OF THE CAR;

With "DE OMNIBUS" RHYMES.

By F. J. COX. Illustrated by Howard Somerville.

---

Crown 8vo. Cloth. 3/6 net.

---

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"DAILY CHRONICLE."—"Mr. F. J. Cox's clever verses. Many of these we have already met in the columns of 'Mr. Punch'; and are glad to meet again. Mr. Cox has wit and humour; and the means of expressing both."

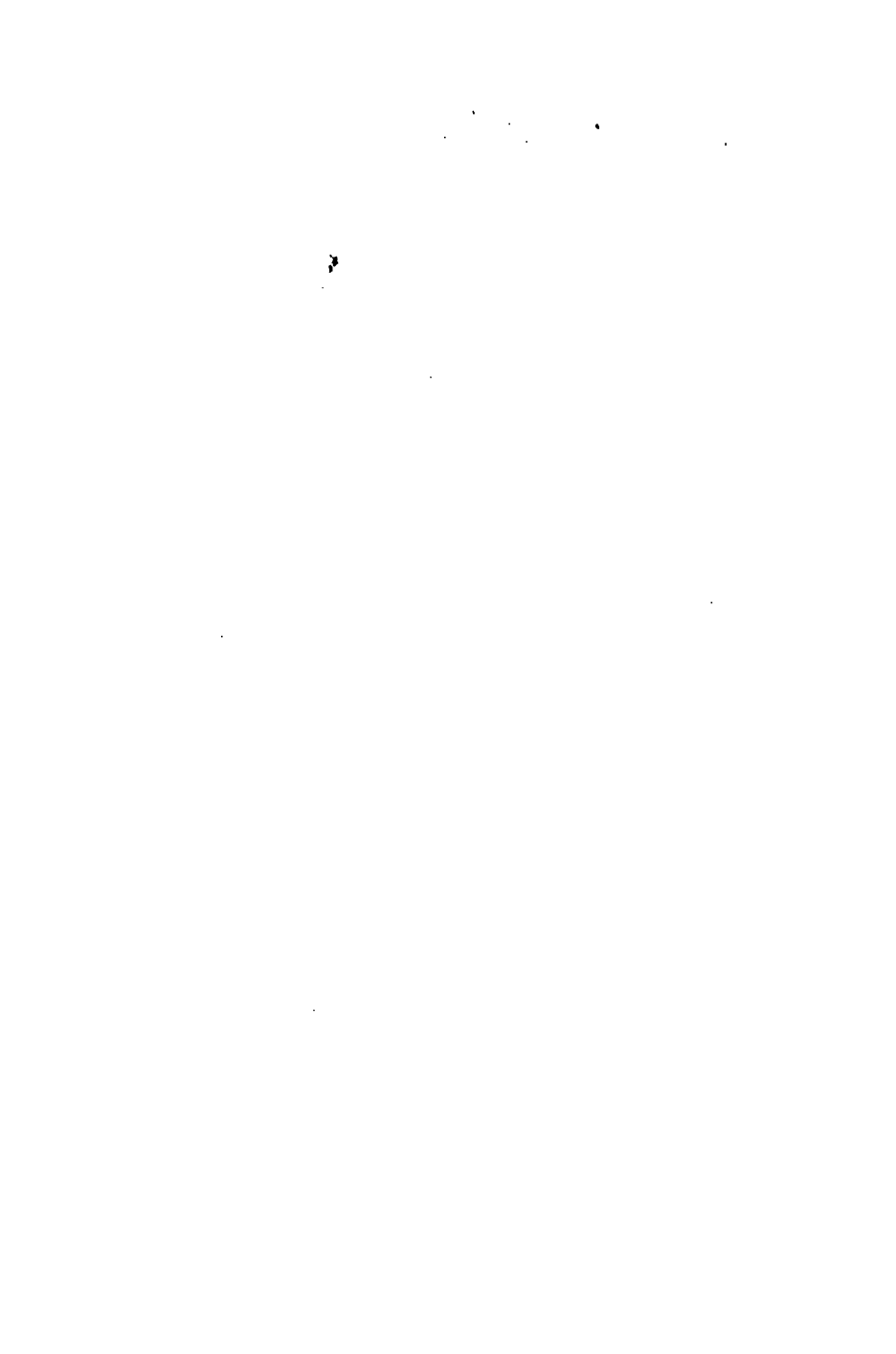
"SPECTATOR."—"Mr. Cox is a skilful writer of humorous verse. . . . Not the least of his many gifts is the ingenuity of his rhymes."

"MORNING LEADER."—"His verses not infrequently contain the soul of wit. Whether as parodist (the motor parodies are particularly happy), or as original composer of frivolity, he is a most diverting companion. His technique is versatile and finished, his humour agile, pointed, and never bitter. These scattered verses were well worth collecting."

"SCOTSMAN."—"The verses are funny, so there is no need to argue about them. There are, besides, more pieces in the book than those about the auto—pieces about St. Valentine, about ladies' names, about the pretensions of the Celtic renascent poets, and, in a word, about everything in general and nothing in particular, all of which reveal an agreeable humour and a curious felicity in spinning dainty arabesques of society verse. The good comic effect of the book is well helped out by Mr. Somerville's illustrations, graphical compositions of a lucidity and point akin to those of the verses."

---

London: FRANCIS GRIFFITHS, 34, Maiden Lane, Strand, W.C.











This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

Please return promptly.

~~APR 15 '63 H~~

~~DEC 2 1963 H~~

~~64593~~

~~MAY 7 '64 H~~

~~242-430~~

APR 24 '67 H

**CANCELLED**  
14746

5784671  
~~DEC 9 1963 H~~  
JAN 12 1964 H  
MAY 5 1964 H

57846  
MAY 27 '77 H  
MAY 11 1977 H

14425.13.3

A woman killed with kindness,

Widener Library

003107874



3 2044 086 749 074