







House of Falkland.



This is the second Edition  
vide curious reading on recto  
of #2.

J. G.







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98.  
M. VVilliam Shake-speare,  
*HIS*

True Chronicle History of the life  
and death of King Lear, and his  
*three Daughters.*

*With the unfortunate life of EDGAR,  
sonne and heire to the Earle of Glocester, and  
his sullen and assumed humour of TOM  
of Bedlam.*

*As it was plaid before the Kings Maiesty at White-Hall, up-  
pon S. Stephens night, in Christmas Hollidaies.*

By his Maiesties Seruants, playing vsually at the  
*Globe on the Banck-side.*



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M. VVilliam Shake-speare

*HIS*

History, of King Lear.

*Enter Kent, Glocester, and Bastard.*

*Kent.*



Thought the King had more affected the Duke of  
*Albency then Cornewall.*

*Gloft.* It did alwaies seeme so to vs, but now in  
the diuision of the Kingdomes, it appears not  
which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities  
are so weighed, that curiosity in neither, can make choise of ei-  
thers moytie.

*Kent.* Is not this your sonne, my Lord?

*Gloft.* His breeding sir hath beene at my charge. I haue so of-  
ten blusht to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to it.

*Kent.* I cannot conceiue you.

*Gloft.* Sir, this young fellowes mother could, whereupon she  
grew round wombed, and had indeed Sir a sonne for her Cra-  
dle, ere she had a husband for her bed, do you smell a fault?

*Kent.* I cannot wish the fault vndone, the issue of it being so  
proper.

*Glo.* But I haue sir a sonne by order of Law, some yeare elder  
then this, who yet is no deerer in my account, thogh this knaue  
came something sawcely into the world before he was sent for,  
yet was his mother faire, there was good sport at his making, &  
the whoreson must be acknowledged, do you know this noble  
gentleman, *Edmund*?

A 2

*Bast.*



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*Bast.* No my Lord.

*Glo.* My Lord of *Kent*, remember him heereafter as my honourable friend.

*Bast.* My seruices to your Lordship.

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

*Bast.* Sir, I shall study deseruing.

*Glo.* He hath beene out nine yeares, and away he shall again, the King is comming.

*Sound a Sennet, Enter one bearing a Coronet, then Lear, then the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall, next Gonorill, Regan, Cordelia, with followers.*

*Lear.* Attend my Lords of *France* and *Burgundy*, *Gloster*.

*Gloft.* I shall my Liege.

*Lear.* Meane time we will expresse our darker purposes,  
The Map there; know we haue diuided  
In three our Kingdome; and tis our first intent,  
To shake all cares and businesse of our state,  
Confirming them on younger yeares,  
The two great Princes, *France* and *Burgundy*,  
Great Riuals in our youngest daughters loue,  
Long in our Court haue made their amorous soiourne,  
And here are to be answer'd; tell me my daughters,  
Which of you shall we say doth loue vs most,  
That we our largest bounty may extend,  
Where merit doth most challenge it:  
*Gonorill* our eldest borne, speake first.

*Gon.* Sir, I do loue you more then words can wield the matter,  
Dearer then eye-sight, space, or liberty,  
Beyond what can be valued rich or rare,  
No lesse then life; with grace, health, beauty, honour,  
As much a childe ere' loued, or father friend,  
A loue that makes breath poore, and speech vnable,  
Beyond all manner of so much I loue you.

*Cor.* What shall *Cordelia* do, loue and be silent.

*Lear.* Of all these bounds, euen from this line to this,  
With shady Forrests, and wide skirted Meads,  
We make thee Lady, to thine and *Albanies* issue,

Be

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Be this perpetuall. What saies our second daughter?  
Our deere *Regan*, wife to *Cornwall*, speake.

*Reg.* Sir I am made of the selfe-same mettall that my sister is;  
And prize me at her worth in my true heart,  
I finde she names my very deed of loue, onely shee came short,  
That I professe my selfe an enemy to all other ioyes,  
Which the most precious square of sence possesse,  
And finde I am alone felicitate in your deere highnesse loue.

*Cor.* Then poore *Cordelia*, and yet not so, since I am sure  
My loue's more richer then my tongue.

*Lear.* To thee and thine hereditary euer  
Remaine this ample third of our faire kingdome,  
No lesse in space, validity, and pleasure,  
Then that confirm'd on *Gonorill*; but now our ioy,  
Although the last, not least in our deere loue,  
What can you say to win a third, more opulent  
Then your sisters.

*Cor.* Nothing my Lord.

*Lear.* How, nothing can come of nothing, speake againe.

*Cor.* Vnhappy that I am, I cannot heaue my heart into my  
mouth, I loue your Maiesty according to my bond, nor more  
nor lesse.

*Lear.* Go too, go too, mend your speech a little,  
Least it may marre your fortunes.

*Cord.* Good my Lord,

You haue begot me, bred me, loued me,  
I returne those duties backe as are right fit,  
Obey you, loue you, and most honour you,  
Why haue my sisters husbands, if they say they loue you all,  
Haply when I shall wed, that Lord whose hand  
Must take my plight, shall carry halfe my loue with him,  
Halfe my care and duty, sure I shall neuer  
Marry like my sisters, to loue my father all.

*Lear.* But goes this with thy heart?

*Cor.* I good my Lord.

*Lear.* So young and so vtender?

*Cor.* So young my Lord, and true.

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*Lear.*



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*Lear.* Well let it be so, thy truth then be thy dower,  
For by the sacred radiance of the Sunne,  
The mistresse of *Heccat*, and the might,  
By all the operation of the Orbes,  
From whom we do exsist and cease to be,  
Heere I disclaime all my paternall care,  
Propinquity and property of bloud,  
And as a stranger to my heart and me,  
Hold thee from this for euer, the barbarous *Scythian*,  
Or he that makes his generation  
Messes to gorge his appetite,  
Shall be as well neighbour'd, pittied and releued,  
As thou my some-time daughter.

*Kent.* Good my Liege.

(wrath

*Lear.* Peace *Kent*, come not betweene the Dragon and his  
I lou'd her most, and thought to set my rest  
On her kinde nursery, hence and auoid my sight:  
So be my graue my peace as heere I giue,  
Her fathers heart from her; call *France*, who stirres?  
Call *Burgundy*, *Cornwall*, and *Albany*,  
With my two daughters dower digest this third,  
Let pride, which she cals plainnesse, marry her:  
I do inuest you ioyntly in my power,  
Preheminence, and all the large effects  
That troope with Maiesty, our selfe by monthly course  
With reseruatiou of an hundred Knights,  
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode  
Make with you by due turnes, onely we still retaine  
The name and all the additions to a King,  
The sway, reuenue, execution of the rest,  
Beloued sonnes be yours, which to confirme,  
This Coronet part betwixt you.

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

*Lear.* The bow is bent and drawne, make from the shaft.

*Kent.*

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*Kent.* Let it fall rather,  
Though the forke inuade the region of my heart,  
Be *Kent* vnmanly, when *Lear* is mad,  
What wilt thou do old man, think'st thou that duty  
Shall haue dread to speake, when power to flattery bowes,  
To plainnesse honours bound, when Maiesty stoops to folly,  
Reuerse thy doome, and in thy best consideration  
Checke this hideous rashnesse, answer my life,  
My iudgement, thy yongest daughter does not loue thee least,  
Nor are those empty hearted, whose low sound  
Reuerbs no hollownesse.

*Lear.* *Kent*, on thy life no more.

*Kent.* My life I neuer held but as a pawne  
To wage against thy enemies, nor feare to lose it,  
Thy safety being the motiue.

*Lear.* Out of my sight.

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

*Lear.* Now by *Apollo*——

*Kent.* Now by *Apollo*, King thou swear'st thy Gods in vaine.

*Lear.* Vassall, recreant.

*Kent.* Do, kill thy Physition,  
And the fee bestow vpon the foule disease,  
Reuoke thy doome, or whilst I can vent clamour  
From my throat, ile tell thee thou dost euill.

*Lear.* Heare me, on thy alleigance heare me;  
Since thou hast sought to make vs breake our vow,  
Which we durst neuer yet; and with straied pride,  
To come betweene our sentence and our power,  
Which, nor our nature, nor our place can beare,  
Our potency make good, take thy reward,  
Foure dayes we do allot thee for prouision,  
To shield thee from diseases of the world,  
And on the fift to turne thy hated backe  
Vpon our kingdome; if on the tenth day following,  
Thy banisht trunk be found in our Dominions,  
The moment is thy death, away,

By



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By *Jupiter*, this shall not be reuokt.

*Kent*. Why fare thee well King, since thou wilt appeare,  
Friendship liues hence, and banishment is here;  
The Gods to their protection take the maid,  
That rightly thinkes, and hath most iustly said,  
And your large speeches may your deeds approue,  
That good effects may spring from words of loue:  
Thus *Kent*, O Princes, bids you all adew,  
Hee'l shape his old course in a Country new.

*Enter France and Burgundy with Gloucester.*

*Glo.* Heer's *France* and *Burgundy*, my noble Lord.

*Lear*. My Lord or *Burgundy*, we first addresse towards you,  
Who with a King hath riuald for our daughter,  
What in the least will you require in present  
Dower with her, or cease your quest of loue?

*Burg.* Roiall Maiesty, I craue no more then what  
Your Highnesse offered, nor will you tender lesse?

*Lear*. Right noble *Burgundy*, when she was deare to vs,  
We did hold her so, but now her price is fallen;  
Sir, there she stands, if ought within that little  
Seeming substance, or all of it with our displeasure peece't,  
And nothing else may fitly like your Grace,  
Shee's there, and she is yours.

*Burg.* I know no answer.

*Lear*. Sir, will you with those infirmities she owes,  
Vnfriended, new adopted to our hate,  
Couered with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,  
Take her or leaue her.

*Burg.* Pardon me royall sir, election makes not vp  
On such conditions.

*Lear*. Then leaue her sir, for by the power that made me,  
I tell you all her wealth. For you great King,  
I would not from your loue make such a stray,  
To match you where I hate, therefore beseech you,  
To auert your liking a more worthier way,  
Then on a wretch whom Nature is asham'd  
Almost to acknowledge hers.

*Fran.*

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*Fra.* This is most strange, that she that euen but now  
Was your best obiekt, the argument of your praise,  
Balme of your age, most best, most deereft,  
Should in this trice of time commit a thing  
So monstrous, to dismantle so many foulds of fauour,  
Sure her offence must be of such vnnaturall degree,  
That monsters it, or you for voucht affections  
Falne into taint, which to belecue of her  
Must be a faith that reason without miracle  
Could neuer plaint in me.

*Cord.* I yet beseech your Maiesty,  
If for I want that glib and oily Art,  
To speake and purpose not, since what I well intend,  
Ile do't before I speake, that you may know  
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,  
No vnclane action or dishonoured step  
That hath depriu'd me of your grace and fauour,  
But euen for want of that, for which I am rich,  
A still solliciting eye, and such a tongue,  
As I am glad I haue not, though not to haue it,  
Hath lost me in your liking.

*Lear.* Go to, goe to, better thou hadst not bene borne,  
Then not to haue pleas'd me better.

*Fran.* Is it no more but this, a tardinesse in nature,  
That often leaues the history vnspoke that it intends to do,  
My Lord of *Burgundy*, what say you to the Lady?  
Loue is not loue when it is mingled with respects that stands  
Aloofe from the entire point, will you haue her?  
She is her selfe and dower.

*Burg.* Royall *Lear*, giue but that portion  
Which your selfe propos'd, and here I take  
*Cordelia* by the hand, Dutchesse of *Burgundy*.

*Lear.* Nothing, I haue sworne.

*Burg.* I am sorry then you haue so lost a father,  
That you must lose a husband.

*Cord.* Peace be with *Burgundy*, since that respects  
Of fortune are his loue, I shall not be his wife.

B

*Fran.*



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*Fran.* Fairest *Cordelia*, that art most rich being poore,  
Most choise forsaken, and most loued despis'd,  
Thee and thy vertues heere I seize vpon,  
Be it lawfull I take vp what's cast away.  
Gods, Gods! tis strange, that from their cold'st neglect,  
My loue should kindle to enflam'd respect,  
Thy dowrelesse daughter King, throwne to thy chance,  
Is Queene of vs, of ours, and our faire *France*:  
Not all the Dukes in wattrish *Burgundy*,  
Shall buy this vnpriz'd precious maid of me.  
Bid them farwell *Cordelia*, though vkinde  
Thou lovest heere, a better where to finde.

*Lear.* Thou hast her *France*, let her be thine;  
For we haue no such daughter, nor shall euer see  
That face of hers againe, therefore be gone, *(gundy.*  
Without our grace, our loue, our benizon: come noble *Bur-*  
*Exit Lear and Burgundy.*

*Fran.* Bid farwell to your sisters.

*Cord.* The Iewels of our Father,  
With washt eyes *Cordelia* leaues you, I know you what you are,  
And like a sister am most loth to call your faults  
As they are named, vse well our Father,  
To your professed bosomes I commit him,  
But yet alasse, stood I within his grace,  
I would preferre him to a better place;  
So farwell to you both.

*Gonorill.* Prescribe not vs our duties.

*Regan.* Let your study be to content your Lord,  
Who hath receiu'd you at Fortunes almes,  
You haue obedience scanted,  
And well are worth the worth that you haue wanted.

*Cord.* Time shall vnfold what pleated cunning hides,  
Who couers faults, at last shame them derides:  
Well may you prosper.

*Fran.* Come faire *Cordelia*.

*Exit France and Cord.*

*Gon.* Sister, it is not a little I haue to say,  
Of what most neerely appertaines to vs both,

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I thinke our father will hence to night.

*Reg.* That's most certaine, and with you, next month with vs.

*Gon.* You see how full of changes his age is, the obseruation  
we haue made of it hath not beene little; he alwaies loued our  
sister most, and with what poore iudgement hee hath now cast  
her off, appeares too grosse.

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

*Gon.* The best and soundest of his time hath bin but rash,  
then must we looke to receiue frō his age, not alone the imper-  
fection of long ingrafted condition, but therewithal vnruely wai-  
wardnes, that infirme and cholericke yeares bring with them.

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

*Gon.* There is further complement of leaue taking between  
*France* and him, pray lets hit together, if our Father cary autho-  
rity with such dispositions as he beares, this last surrender of  
his will but offend vs.

*Regan.* We shall further thinke on't.

*Gon.* We must do something, and it'h heate.

*Exeunt.*

*Enter Bastard solus.*

*Bast.* Thou Nature art my Goddesse, to thy law my seruices  
are bound, wherefore should I stand in the plague of custome,  
and permit the curiosity of Nations to depriue me, for that I am  
some 12. or 14. moone-shines lag of a brother: why bastard?  
wherefore base, when my dementions are as well compact, my  
minde as generous, & my shape as true as honest madams issue,  
why brand they vs with base, base bastardy? who in the lusty  
stealth of nature, take more composition and fierce quality, then  
doth within a stale dull lied bed, goe to the creating of a whole  
tribe of fops got tweene sleepe and wake; well the legitimate  
*Edgar*, I must haue your land, our Fathers loue is to the bastard  
*Edmund*, as to the legitimate: well my legitimate, if his letter  
speed, and my inuention thriue, *Edmund* the base shall tooth'le-  
gitimate: I grow, I prosper, now Gods stand vp for Bastards.

*Enter Gloucester.*

*Glost.* *Kent* banisht thus, and *France* in choller parted, and



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the King gone to night, subscrib'd his power, confined to exhibition, all this done vpon the gad; *Edmund*, how now, what newes?

*Bast.* So please your Lordship, none.

*Gloster.* Why so earnestly seeke you to put vp that letter?

*Bast.* I know no newes, my Lord.

*Glo.* What paper were you reading?

*Bast.* Nothing my Lord.

*Gloster.* No, what needs then that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket, the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide it selfe, lets see, come if it be nothing I shal not need spectacles.

*Bast.* I beseech you sir pardon me, it is a Letter from my brother, that I haue not all ore read, for so much as I haue perused, I finde it not fit for your liking.

*Gloster.* Giue me the letter sir.

*Bast.* I shall offend, either to detaine or giue it, the contents as in part I vnderstand them, are too blame.

*Glo.* Lets see, Lets see.

*Bast.* I hope for my brothers iustification, he wrote this but as an essay, or taste of my vertue. *A Letter.*

*Gloster.* This policy of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times, keepes our fortunes from vs till our oldnesse cannot rellish them, I begin to finde an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who swaies not as it hath power, but as it is suffered, come to mee, that of this I may speake more; if our Father would sleepe till I wakt him, you should enioy halfe his reueneue for euer, and liue the beloued of your brother *Edgar*.

Hum, conspiracy, slept till I wakt him, you should enioy halfe his reueneue: my sonne *Edgar*, had he a hand to write this, a hart and braine to breed it in? when came this to you, who brought it?

*Bast.* It was not brought me my Lord, there's the cunuing of it, I found it throwne in at the casement of my Closet.

*Gloster.* You know the carracter to be your brothers?

*Bast.* If the matter were good, my Lord, I durst sweare it were his, but in respect of that, I would faine think it were not.

*Gloster.*

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*Gloster.* Is it his?

*Bast.* It is his hand my Lord, but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

*Gloster.* Hath he neuer heeretofore sounded you in this businesse?

*Bast.* Neuer my Lord, but I haue often heard him maintaine it to be fit, that sonnes at perfit age, and fathers declining, his father should be as Ward to the sonne, and the sonne mannage the reueneue.

*Gloster.* O villaine, villaine, his very opinion in the Letter, abhorrid villaine, vnnaturall detested bruitish villaine, worse then bruitish, go sir seeke him; I apprehend him, abominable villaine, where is he?

*Bast.* I do not well know my Lord, if it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother, till you can deriue from him better testimony of this intent, you shal runne a certaine course, where if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your owne honour, and shake in peeces the heart of his obedience, I dare pawne downe my life for him, hee hath wrote this to feele my affection to your Honour, and to no further pretence of danger.

*Gloster.* Thinke you so?

*Bast.* If your Honour iudge it meete, I will place you where you shall heare vs conferre of this, and by an auricular assurance haue your satisfaction, and that without any further delay then this very euening.

*Gloster.* He cannot be such a monster.

*Bast.* Nor is not sure.

*Gloster.* To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loues him: heauen and earth! *Edmund* seeke him out, winde me into him, I pray you frame your busines after your owne wisdom, I wold vnstate my selfe to be in a due resolution.

*Bast.* I shall seeke him sir presently, conuey the businesse as I shall see meanes, and acquaint you withall.

*Glo.* These late Eclipses in the Sunne and Moone, portend no good to vs, though the wisdom of nature can reason thus and thus, yet nature findes it selfe scourg'd by the sequent effects,



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loue cooles, friendship fals off, brothers diuide, in Cities mutinies, in Countries discords, Pallaces treason, the bond crackt betweene sonne and father; finde out this villaine, *Edmund* it shall lose thee nothing, do it carefully; and the noble and true hearted *Kent* banisht, his offence honest; strange, strange!

*Bast.* This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sicke in Fortune, often the surfet of our owne behauiour, we make guilty of our disasters, the Sunne, the Moone, and the stars, as if we were villaines by necessity, fooles by heauenly compulsion, knaues, theeuers, and trecherers by spirituall predominance, drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforced obedience of planetary influence, and all that we are euill in, by a diuine thrusting on, an admirable euasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of stars; my Father compounded with my Mother vnder the Dragons taile, & my natiuity was vnder *Vrsa maior*, so that it followes I am rough & lecherous; Fut, I should haue beene that I am, had the maiden-lest starre of the Firmament twinckled on my bastardy; *Edgar*,

*Enter Edgar.*

& out he comes like the Catastrophe of the old Comedy, mine is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like them of *Bedlam*; O these Ecclipses do portend these diuisions.

*Edgar.* How now brother *Edmund*, what serious contemplation are you in?

*Bast.* I am thinking brother of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these Ecclipses.

*Edg.* Doe you busie your selfe about that?

*Bast.* I promise you the effects he writ of, succeed vnhappily, as of vnnaturalnesse betweene the childe and the parent, death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient armies, diuisions in state, menaces and maledictions against King and Nobles, needlesse diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of Cohorts, nuptiall breaches, and I know not what.

*Edg.* How long haue you bin a sectary Astronomicall?

*Bast.* Come, come, when saw you my father last?

*Edg.* Why the night gone by.

*Bast.* Spake you with him?

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*Edg.* Two houres together.

*Bast.* Parted you in good tearmes? found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?

*Edg.* None at all.

*Bast.* Bethinke your selfe wherein you may haue offended him, and at my entreaty, forbear his presence, till some little time hath qualified the heate of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarce allay.

*Edg.* Some villaine hath done me wrong.

*Bast.* That's my feare brother, I aduise you to the best, goe arm'd, I am no honest man if there be any good meaning towards you, I haue told you what I haue seen & heard, but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it; pray you away.

*Edg.* Shall I heare from you anon?

*Exit Edgar.*

*Bast.* I do serue you in this businesse:

A credulous Father, and a brother noble,  
Whose nature is so farre from doing harmes,  
That he suspects none, on whose foolish honesty  
My practises ride easie, I see the businesse,  
Let me if not by birth, haue lands by wit,  
All with me's meete, that I can fashion fit.

*Exit.*

*Enter Gonorill and a Gentleman.*

*Gon.* Did my Farher strike my gentleman for chiding of his foole?

*Gent.* Yes Madam.

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

*Gent.* Hee's comming Madam, I heare him.

*Gon.* Put on what weary negligence you please, you and your fellow-seruants, Ide haue it come in question, if he dislike it, let him



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him to our sister, whose minde & mine I know in that are one, not to be ouer-rulde; idle olde man that still would manage those authorities that he hath giuen away, now by my life olde fooles are babes againe, and must be vsed with checkes as flatteries, when they are seene abus'd, remember what I tell you.

*Gent.* Very well, Madam.

*Gon.* And let his Knights haue colder lookes among you, what growes of it no matter, aduise your fellowes so, I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall, that I may speake, Ile write straight to my sister to hold my very course; goe prepare for dinner.

*Exit.*

*Enter Kent.*

*Kent.* If but as well I other accents borrow, that can my speech defuse, my good intent may carry through it selfe to that full issue for which I raizd my likenesse; now banisht *Kent*, if thou canst serue where thou dost stand condemn'd, thy master whom thou louest, shall finde the full of labour.

*Enter Lear.*

*Lear.* Let me not stay a iot for dinner, goe get it ready: how now, what art thou?

*Kent.* A man sir.

*Lear.* What dost thou professe? what wouldst thou with vs?

*Kent.* I doe professe to bee no lesse then I seeme, to serue him truly that wil put me in trust, to loue him that is honest, to conuerse with him that is wise and saies little, to feare iudgement, to fight when I cannot chuse, and to eate no fish.

*Lear.* What art thou?

*Kent.* A very honest hearted fellow, and as poore as the King.

*Lear.* If thou be as poore for a subiect, as he is for a king, thou art poore enough, what wouldst thou?

*Kent.* Seruice.

*Lear.* Who wouldst thou serue?

*Kent.* You.

*Lear.* Dost thou know me fellow?

*Kent.* No sir, but you haue that in your countenance, which I would faine call Master.

*Lear.* What's that?

*Kent.* Authority.

*Lear.* What seruices canst thou do?

*Kent.* I can keepe honest counsaile, ride, run, marre a curious tale

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tale in telling it, and deliuer a plaine message bluntly, that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best of me, is diligence.

*Lear.* How old art thou?

*Kent.* Not so young to loue a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing, I haue yeares on my backe forty eight.

*Lear.* Follow me, thou shalt serue me, if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet; dinner ho, dinner, where's my knaue, my foole, goe you and call my foole hether, you sirra, where's my daughter?

*Enter Steward.*

*Steward.* So please you——

*Lear.* What saies the fellow there? call the clat-pole backe, where's my foole? ho, I thinke the world's asleepe, how now, where's that mungrell?

*Kent.* He saies my Lord, your daughter is not well.

*Lear.* Why came not the slaue backe to me when I call'd him?

*Servant.* Sir, he answered me in the roundest mannner, hee would not.

*Lear.* He would not?

*Servant.* My Lord, I know not what the matter is, but to my iudgement, your Highnesse is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont, there's a great abatement appeares as well in the generall dependants, as in the Duke himselfe also, and your daughter.

*Lear.* Ha, saist thou so?

*Servant.* I beseech you pardon me my Lord, if I be mistaken, for my duty cannot be silent, when I thinke your Highnesse is wrong'd.

*Lear.* Thou but remembrest me of mine owne conception, I haue perceiued a most faint neglect of late, which I haue rather blamed as mine owne iealous curiosity, then as a very pretence and purport of vnkindnes; I will look further into it, but wher's this foole? I haue not seene him this two daies.

*Servant.* Since my young Ladies going into France sir, the foole hath much pined away.

*Lear.* No more of that, I haue noted it, goe you and tell my daughter



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daughter, I would speake with her, go you call hither my foole;  
O you sir, you sir, come you hither, who am I sir?

*Stew.* My Ladies Father.

*Lear.* My Ladies father, my Lords knaue, you whoreson dog,  
you slaue, you curre.

*Stew.* I am none of this my Lord, I beseech you pardon me.

*Lear.* Do you bandy lookes with me you rascal?

*Stew.* Ile not be strucke my Lord.

*Kent.* Nor tript neither, you base football plaier.

*Lear.* I thanke thee fellow, thou seru'st me, and ile loue thee.

*Kent.* Come sir, ile teach you differences, away, away, if you  
will measure your lubbers length againe, tarry, but away, you  
haue wisdom.

*Lear.* Now friendly knaue I thanke thee, there's earnest of  
thy seruice.

*Enter Foole.*

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

*Lear.* How now my pretty knaue, how dost thou?

*Foole.* Sirra, you were best take my coxcombe.

*Kent.* Why Foole?

*Foole.* Why for taking ones part that's out of fauour, nay and  
thou canst not smile as the winde sits, thou't catch colde shortly,  
there take my coxcombe; why this fellow hath banisht two of  
his daughters, and done the third a blessing against his will, if  
thou follow him, thou must needs weare my coxcombe, how  
now nunckle, would I had two coxcombes, and two daughters.

*Lear.* Why my boy?

*Foole.* If I gaue them any liuing, ide keepe my coxcombe my  
selfe, theres mine, beg another of thy daughters.

*Lear.* Take heed sirra, the whip.

*Foole.* Truth is, a dog that must to kennell, he must bee whipt  
out, when Lady oth'e brach may stand by the fire and stinke.

*Lear.* A pestilent gull to me.

*Foole.* Sirra, ile teach thee a speech.

*Lear.* Do.

*Foole.* Marke it Vnckle; haue more then thou shewest, speake  
lesse then thou knowest, lend lesse then thou owest, ride more  
then

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thou goest, learne more then thou trowest, set lesse then thou  
throwest, leaue thy drinke and thy whore, and keepe in a doore,  
and thou shalt haue more, then two tens to a score.

*Lear.* This is nothing foole.

*Foole.* Then like the breath of an vnfeed Lawyer, you gaue me  
nothing for it; can you make no vse of nothing Vnckle?

*Lear.* Why no boy, nothing can be made out of nothing.

*Foole.* Prethee tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to,  
he will not beleue a foole.

*Lear.* A bitter foole.

*Foole.* Dost thou know the difference my boy, betweene a bit-  
ter foole, and a sweete foole.

*Lear.* No lad, teach me.

*Foole.* That Lord that counsaile thee to giue away thy Land,  
Come place him heere by me, do thou for him stand,  
The sweete and bitter foole will presently appeare,  
The one in motley here, the other found out there.

*Lear.* Dost thou call me foole boy?

*Foole.* Al thy other Titles thou hast giuen away, that thou wast  
borne with.

*Kent.* This is not altogether foole my Lord.

*Foole.* No faith, Lords and great men will not let me, if I had  
a monopolie out, they would haue part on't, and lodes too, they  
will not let me haue all foole to my selfe, thei'l be snatching; giue  
me an egge Nunckle, and ile giue thee two crownes.

*Lear.* What two crownes shall they be?

*Foole.* Why after I haue cut the egge in the middle and eate vp  
the meate, the two crownes of the egge: when thou clouest thy  
crowne in the middle, and gauest away both parts, thou borest  
thy asse on thy back ore the dirt, thou hadst little wit in thy bald  
crowne, when thou gauest thy golden one away; if I speak like  
my selfe in this, let him be whipt that first findes it so.

Fooles had nere lesse wit in a yeare,

For wise men are growne foppish,

They know not how their wits do weare,

Their manners are so apish.

*Lear.* When were you wont to be so full of songs sirra?



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*Foole.* I haue vsed it Nuncle, euer since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mother, for when thou gauest them the rod, and putt downe thine owne breeches, then they for sudden ioy did weep, and I for sorrow sung, that such a King should play bo-peepe, and goe the fooles among: prethee Nunckle keepe a schoole-master that can teach thy foole to lie, I would faine learne to lie.

*Lear.* If you lie, wee'l haue you whipt.

*Foole.* I maruell what kin thou and thy daughters are, they'l haue me whipt for speaking true, thou wilt haue mee whipt for lying, and sometime I am whipt for holding my peace, I had rather be any kinde of thing then a foole, and yet I would not bee thee Nunckle, thou hast pared thy wit a both sides, and left nothing in the middle; heere comes one of the parings.

*Enter Gonorill.*

*Lear.* How now daughter, what makes that Frontlet on, Me-thinkes you are too much alate it'h frowne.

*Foole.* Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no neede to care for her frowne, thou, thou art an O without a figure, I am better then thou art now, I am a foole, thou art nothing, yes forsooth I will hold my tongue, so your face bids me, though you say nothing.

Mum, mum, he that keepees neither crust nor crum,  
Weary of all, shall want some. That's a sheald pescod.

*Gon.* Not onely sir this, your all-licenc'd foole, but other of your insolent retinue do hourelly carpe and quarrell, breaking foorth in ranke and (not to be endured riots) Sir, I had thought by making this well knowne vnto you, to haue found a safere-dresse, but now grow fearefull by what your selfe too late haue spoke and done, that you protect this course, and put on by your allowance, which if you should, the fault would not scape censure, nor the redresse sleepe, which in the tender of a wholesome weal, might in their working do you that offence, that else were shame, that then necessity must call discrete proceedings.

*Foole.* For you trow Nuncle, the hedge-sparrow fed the Coo-kow so long, that it had it head bit off beir young, so out went the Candle, and we were left darkling.

*Lear.* Are you our Daughter?

*Gon.*

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*Gonorill.* Come sir, I would you would make vse of that good wisdom whereof I know you are fraught, and put away these dispositions, that of late transforme you from what you rightly are.

*Foole.* May not an Ass know when the Cart drawes the horse, whoop *Ing* I loue thee.

*Lear.* Doth any here know me? why this is not *Lear*; doth *Lear* walke thus? speake thus? where are his eies, either his notion, weaknesse, or his discernings are lethergy, sleeping or waking; ha! sure tis not so, who is it that can tell me who I am? *Lear*s shadow? I would learne that, for by the markes of souerainty, knowledge, & reason, I should be false perswaded I had daughters.

*Foole.* Which they, will make an obedient Father.

*Le.* Your name faire gentlewoman?

*Gon.* Come sir, this admiration is much of the fauour of other your new pranks; I do beseech you vnderstand my purposes aright, as you are old and reuerend, you should be wise, heere doe you keepe one hundred Knights and Squires, men so disordered, so deboyft and bold, that this our Court infected with their manners, shewes like a riotous Inne, epicurisme and lust make more like a Tauerne or Brothell, then a great Pallace, the shame it selfe doth speake for instant remedy, bee thou desired by her, that else will take the thing she begs, a little to disquantity your traine, and the remainder that shall still depend, to be such men as may besort your age, and know themselves and you.

*Lear.* Darknesse and Diuels! saddle my horses, call my traine together, degenerate bastard, ile not trouble thee; yet haue I left a daughter.

*Gon.* You strike my people, and your disordered rabble, make seruants of their betters.

*Enter Duke.*

*Lear.* We that too late repent's vs; O sir, are you come? Is it your will that we prepare any horses, ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend, more hideous when thou shewest thee in a childe, then the sea-monster, detested kite, thou lessen my traine and men of choise and rarest parts, that all particulars of duty know,



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and in the most exact regard, support the worshippes of their name, O most small fault, how vgly didst thou in *Cordelia* shew, that like an engine wrencht my frame of nature from the fixt place, drew from my heart all loue, & added to the gall; ô *Lear*, *Lear*! beate at this gate that let thy folly in, and thy deare iudgment out, goe, goe, my people?

*Duke*. My Lord, I am guiltlesse as I am ignorant.

*Lear*. It may be so my Lord, harke *Nature*, heare deere Goddess, suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend to make this creature fruitfull, into her wombe conuey sterility, dry vp in her the Organs of encrease, and from her derogate body neuer spring a babe to honor her; if she must teem, create her childe of spleen, that it may liue and be a thourt disuetur'd torment to her, let it stampe wrinckles in her brow of youth, with accent teares, fret channels in her cheekes, turne all her mothers paines and benefits to laughter and contempt, that shee may feelee, how sharper then a serpents tooth it is, to haue a thanklesse childe, goe, goe, my people?

*Duke*. Now Gods that we adore, whereof comes this!

*Gon*. Neuer afflict your selfe to know the cause, but let his disposition haue that scope that dotage giues it.

*Lear*. What, fifty of my followers at a clap, within a fortnight?

*Duke*. What is the matter sir?

*Lear*. Ile tell thee, life and death! I am asham'd that thou hast power to shake my man-hood thus, that these hot teares that breake from me perforce, should make the worst blasts and fogs vpon the vtender woundings of a fathers curse, peruse euery sence about the olde fond eies, be-weepe this cause againe, ile plucke you out, and you cast with the waters that you make to temper clay, yea, is it come to this? yet haue I left a daughter, whom I am sure is kinde and comfortable, when she shall heare this of thee, with her nailes shee'l fley thy woluish visage, thou shalt finde that ile resume the shape, which thou doest thinke I haue cast off for euer, thou shalt I warrant thee. *Exit.*

*Gon*. Do you marke that my Lord?

*Duke*. I cannot be so partiall *Gonorill* to the great loue I beare you.

*Gon.*

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*Gon*. Come sir, no more; you, more knaue then foole, after your master.

*Foole*. Nuncle *Lear*, Nuncle *Lear*, tarry and take the foole with a fox when one has caught her, and such a daughter, should sure to the slaughter, if my cap would buy a halter, so the foole folowes after.

*Gon*. What *Oswald*, ho.

*Oswald*. Heere Madam.

*Gon*. What, haue you writ this letter to my sister?

*Osw*. Yes Madam.

*Gon*. Take you some company, and away to horse, informe her full of my particular feares, and thereto adde such reasons of your owne, as may compact it more, get you gone, and after your returne — now my Lord, this mildie gentlenesse and course of yours though I dislike not, yet vnder pardon y'are much more apt want of wisedome, then praise for harmfull mildnesse.

*Duke*. How farre your eies may pierce I cannot tell, Striuing to better ought, we marre what's well.

*Gon*. Nay then —

*Duke*. Well, well, the euent.

*Exit.*

*Enter Lear, Kent, and Foole.*

*Lear*. Go you before to *Glocester* with these Letters, acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know, then comes from her demand out of the Letter, if your diligence be not speedie, I shall be there before you.

*Kent*. I will not sleepe my Lord, till I haue deliuered your letter. *Exit.*

*Foole*. If a mans braines were in his heeles, wert not in danger of kybes?

*Lear*. I boy.

*Foole*. Then I prethee be merry, thy wit shall nere go slipshod.

*Lear*. Ha, ha, ha.

*Foole*. Shalt see thy other daughter will vse thee kindly, for though she is as like this, as a crabbe is like an apple, yet I can, what I can tell.

*Lear*. Why what canst thou tell my boy?

*Foole*. Shee'l taste as like this, as a crab doth to a crab; thou canst.



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canst not tell why ones nose stands in the middle of his face?

*Lear.* No.

*Foole.* Why to keep his eyes on either side his nose, that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

*Lear.* I did her wrong!

*Foole.* Canst tell how an Oyster makes his shell.

*Lear.* No.

*Foole.* Nor I neyther; but I can tell why a snayle has a house.

*Lear.* Why?

*Foole.* Why to put his head in, not to giue it away vnto his daughter, and leaue his hornes without a case.

*Lear.* I will forget my nature, so kinde a father; bee my horses ready?

*Foole.* Thy Asses are gone about them; the reason why the seuen starres are no more then seuen, is a pretty reason.

*Lear.* Because they are not eight.

*Foole.* Yes, thou wouldst make a good foole.

*Lear.* To tak't againe perforce; monster, ingratitude!

*Foole.* If thou wert my foole Nunckle, I de haue thee beaten for being olde before thy time.

*Lear.* How's that?

*Foole.* Thou shouldst not haue beene olde, before thou hadst beene wise.

*Lear.* O let me not be mad sweete heauen! I would not bee mad, keepe me in temper, I would not bee mad; are the Horses ready?

*Servant.* Ready my Lord.

*Lear.* Come boy.

*Exit.*

*Foole.* She that is maid now, and laughs at my departure, Shall not be a maid long, except things be cut shorter.

*Exit.*

*Enter Bastard, and Curan meetes him.*

*Bast.* Saue thee Curan.

*Curan.* And you sir, I haue beene with your father, and giuen him notice, that the Duke of Cornwall and his Dutchesse will be here with him to night.

*Bast.* How comes that?

*Curan.*

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*Curan.* Nay I know not, you haue heard of the newes abroad, I meane the whisperd ones, for there are yet but care-bussing arguments.

*Bast.* Not, I pray you what are they?

*Curan.* You may then in time, fare you well sir.

*Exit.*

*Bast.* The Duke be here to night! the better best, this weaues it selfe perforce into my businesse, my father hath set guard to take my brother, & I haue one thing of a queisie question, which

*Enter Edgar.*

must aske breefenesse and fortune helpe; brother a word, descend brother I say, my father watches, O flie this place, intelligence is giuen where you are hid, you haue now the good advantage of the night, haue you not spoken against the Duke of Cornwall ought, hee's coming hether now in the night, it'h haste, and Regan with him, haue you nothing saide vpon his party against the Duke of Albany, aduise your——

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

*Bastard.* I heare my father comming, pardon me in crauing, I must draw my sword vpon you, seeme to defend your selfe, now quit you well, yeeld, come before my father, light heere, heere, flie brother flie, torches, torches, so farwell; some bloud drawne on me would beget opinion of my more fierce endeuor, I haue seene drunkards do more then this in sport; father, father, stop, stop, no helpe?

*Enter Glocester.*

*Gloft.* Now Edmund, where's the villaine?

*Bast.* Heere stood he in the darke, his sharpe sword out, warbling of wicked charmes, coniuring the Moone to stand his auspicious Mistris.

*Gloft.* But where is he?

*Bast.* Looke sir, I bleed.

*Gloft.* Where is the villaine, Edmund?

*Bast.* Fled this way sir, when by no meanes he could——

*Gloft.* Pursue him, go after, by no meanes, what?

*Bast.* Perswade me to the murder of your Lordship, but that I tolde him the reuengiuie Gods, gainst Paracides did all their  
D  
thunders



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thunders bend, spoke with how many fould and strong a bond the child was bound to the father; fir, in a fine, seeing how lothly opposite I stood to his vnnaturall purpose, with fell motion with his prepared sword, he charges home my vnprovidd body, launcht mine arme; but when he saw my best alarumd spirits bold in the quarrels right, roud to the encounter, or whether gasted by the noise I made, but sodainly he fied.

*Gloft.* Let him flie farre, not in this Land shall he remaine vncaught and found; dispatch, the Noble Duke my master, my worthy Arch and Patron comes to night, by his authority I will proclaime it, that he which findes him shall deserue our thanks, bringing the murderous caytiffe to the stake, he that conceales him, death.

*Bast.* When I dissuaded him from his intent, and found him pight to do it, with curst speech I threatned to discouer him; he replied, Thou vnpossessing bastard, dost thou thinke, if I would stand against thee, could the repofure of any trust, vertue, or worth in thee make thy words faith'd? no: what I should deny, as this I would, I, thogh thou didst produce my very character, ide turne it all to thy suggestion, plot, and damned pretence, and thou must make a dullard of the world, if they not thought the profits of my death were very pregnant and potentiall spurres to make thee seeke it.

*Gloft.* Strong and fastened villaine, would he deny his letter? I neuer got him: harke, the Dukes trumpets, I know not why he comes; all Ports ile barre, the villaine shall not scape, the Duke must grant me that: besides, his picture I wil send far and neere, that all the kingdome may haue note of him, and of my land, (loyall and naturall boy) ile worke the meanes to make thee capable.

*Enter the Duke of Cornwall.*

*Corn.* How now my noble friend, since I came hether, which I can call but now, I haue heard strange newes.

*Reg.* If it be true, all vengeance comes too short which can pursue the offender; how dost my Lord?

*Gloft.* Madam, my old heart is crakt, is crakt.

*Reg.* What, did my fathers godson seeke your life? he whom

my

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my father named your *Edgar*?

*Gloft.* I Lady, Lady, shame would haue it hid.

*Reg.* Was he not companion with the ryotous Knights that tends vpon my father?

*Gloft.* I know not Madam, tis too bad, too bad.

*Bast.* Yes madam, he was.

*Reg.* No maruaile then though he were ill affected, Tis they haue put him on the old mans death, To haue these —— and waste of this his reuenues:

I haue this present euening from my sister Beene well inform'd of them, and with such cautions, That if they come to sojourne at my house, ile not be there.

*Duke.* Nor I, assure thee *Regan*; *Edmund*, I heard that you haue shewne your father a child-like office.

*Bast.* T was my duty fir.

*Gloft.* He did betray his practise, and receiued This hurt you see, striuing to apprehend him.

*Duke.* Is he pursued?

*Gloft.* I my good Lord.

*Duke.* If he be taken, he shall neuer more be feard of doing harme, make your owne purpose how in my strength you please; for you *Edmund*, whose vertue and obedience doth this instant so much commend it selfe, you shall be ours, natures of such deep trust, we shall much need, you we first seize on.

*Bast.* I shall serue you truely, how euer else.

*Gloft.* For him I thanke your Grace.

*Duke.* You know not why we came to visite you?

*Regan.* Thus out of season, threatning darke eide night, Occasions noble *Glocester* of some prize, Wherein we must haue vse of your aduice, Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister, Of defences, which I best thought it fit, To answer from our hand, the seuerall messengers From hence attend dispatch, our good old friend, Lay comforts to your bosome, & bestow your needfull counsell To our businesse, which craues the instant vse.

*Exit.*

*Gloft.*



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*Glo.* I serue you Madam, your Graces are right welcome.

*Enter Kent, and Steward.*

*Steward.* Good euen to thee friend, art of the house?

*Kent.* I.

*Steward.* Where may we set our horses?

*Kent.* In the mire.

*Stew.* Prethee if thou loue me, tell me.

*Kent.* I loue thee not.

*Stew.* Why then I care not for thee.

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

*Stew.* Why dost thou vse me thus? I know thee not.

*Kent.* Fellow I know thee.

*Stew.* What dost thou know me for?

*Kent.* A knaue, a rascall, an eater of broken meates, a base, proud, shallow, beggerly, three shewted hundred pound, filthy worsted-stocken knaue, a lilly liuer'd action taking knaue, a whoreson glasse-gazing superfinicall rogue, one trunk inheriting slaue, one that would't be a baud in way of good seruice, & art nothing but the composition of a knaue, begger, coward, pander, and the sonne and heire of a mungrell bitch, whom I will beate into clamorous whining, if thou deny the least sillable of the addition.

*Stew.* What a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to raile on one that's neither knowne of thee, nor knowes thee.

*Kent.* What a brazen fac't varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me, is it two daies agoe since I beate thee, and tript vp thy heeles before the King? draw you rogue, for though it be night the Moon shines, ile make a sop of the Moone-shine a'you, draw you whoreson cullyonly barber-munger, draw.

*Stew.* Away, I haue nothing to do with thee.

*Kent.* Draw you rascall, you bring Letters against the King, & take Vanity the puppets part, against the royalty of her father, draw you rogue, or ile so-carbonado your shankes, draw you rascall, come your wayes.

*Stew.* Helpe, ho, murther, helpe.

*Kent.*

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*Kent.* Strike you slaue, stand rogue, stand you neate slaue, strike.

*Stew.* Helpe, ho, murther, helpe.

*Enter Edmund with his Rapier drawne, Gloucester, the Duke and Dutchesse.*

*Bast.* How now, what's the matter?

*Ken.* With you Goodman boy, and you please come, ile fleash you, come on yong master.

*Glo.* Weapons, armes, what's the matter here?

*Duke.* Keepe peace vpon your liues, he dies that strikes againe, what's the matter?

*Reg.* The messengers from our sister, and the King.

*Duke.* What's your difference, speake?

*Stew.* I am scarce in breath my Lord.

*Kent.* No maruaile you haue so bestir'd your valour, you cowardly rascall, nature disclaimes in thee, a Taylour made thee.

*Duke.* Thou art a strange fellow, a Taylour make a man.

*Kent.* I, a taylour fir, a Stone-cutter, or a Painter could not haue made him so ill, though he had bene but two houres at the trade.

*Glo.* Speake yet, how grew your quarrell?

*Stew.* This ancient ruffian fir, whose life I haue spar'd at sute of his gray-beard.

*Kent.* Thou whoreson Zed, thou vnnecessary letter, my Lord if you will giue me leaue, I will tread this vnbound villaine into mortar, and daube the wals of a Iaques with him; spare my gray-beard you wagtaile?

*Duke.* Peace fir, you beastly knaue you haue no reuerence.

*Kent.* Yes fir, but anger has a priuiledge.

*Duke.* Why art thou angry?

*Kent.* That such a slaue as this should weare a sword, That weares no honesty, such smiling rogues as these, Like Rats oft bite those cordes in twaine, Which are to intrench, to inloose smooth euery passion That in the natures of their Lords rebell,



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Bring oile to stir, snow to their colder moods,  
Reneag, affirme, and turne their halcion beakes  
With euery gale and vary of their masters,  
Knowing nought like daies but following,  
A plague vpon your Epelipticke visage,  
Smoile you my speeches, as I were a foole?  
Goose, if I had you vpon Sarum Plaine,  
Ide send you cackling home to Camulet.

*Duke.* What, art thou mad olde fellow?

*Gloſt.* How fell you out, say that?

*Kent.* No contraries hold more antipathy,  
Then I and such a knaue.

*Duke.* Why dost thou call him knaue, what's his offence?

*Kent.* His countenance likes me not.

*Duke.* No more perchance doth mine, or his, or hers.

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

*Duke.* This is a fellow, who hauing beene praisd  
For bluntnesse, doth affect a saucie ruffines,  
And constraines the garb quite from his nature,  
He cannot flatter he, he must be plaine,  
He must speake truth, and they will take it so,  
If not hee's plaine, these kinde of knaues I know,  
Which in this plainnesse harbour more craft,  
And more corrupter ends, then twenty silly ducking  
Oseruants, that stretch their duties nicely.

*Kent.* Sir in good sooth, or in sincere verity,  
Vnder the allowance of your grand aspect.  
Whose influence like the wreath of radiant fire  
In flickering *Phæbus* front.

*Duke.* What meanst thou by this?

*Kent.* To go out of my dialogue which you discommend so  
much; I know sir, I am no flatterer, he that beguild you in a plain  
accent, was a plaine knaue, which for my part I wil not be, thogh  
I should win your displeasure to entreate me to it.

*Duke.*

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*Duke.* What's the offence you gaue him?

*Stew.* I neuer gaue him any, it pleasd the King his master  
Very late to strike at me vpon his misconstruction,  
When he coniunct and flattering his displeasure  
Tript me behinde, being downe, insulted, raild,  
And put vpon him such a deale of man, that  
That worthied him, got praises of the King,  
For him attempting who was selfe subdued,  
And in the flechuent of this dread exploit,  
Drew on me heere againe.

*Kent.* None of these roges & cowards but *A'Iax* is their foole.

*Duke.* Bring foorth the stockes ho?

You stubborne miscreant knaue, you vnreuerent bragart,  
Wee'l teach you.

*Kent.* I am too olde to learne, call not your stockes for me,  
I serue the King, on whose imploiments I was sent to you,  
You should do small respect, shew too bold malice  
Against the grace and person of my master,  
Stopping his Messenger.

*Duke.* Fetch foorth the stockes; as I haue life and honour,  
There shall he sit till noone.

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

*Kent.* Why Madam, if I were your fathers dog, you could not  
vse me so.

*Reg.* Sir, being his knaue, I will.

*Duke.* This is a fellow of the same nature,  
Our sister speakes off, come, bring away the stockes.

*Gloſt.* Let me beseech your Grace not to do so,  
His fault is much, and the good King his Master.  
Will checke him for't; your purposed low correction  
Is such, as basest and temnest wretches for pilfrings  
And most common trespasses are punisht with,  
The King must take it ill, that hee's so slightly valued  
In his Messenger, should haue him thus restrained.

*Duke.* Ile answer that.

*Reg.* My sister may receiue it much more worse,  
To haue her gentleman abused, assaulted

For



*The History of King Lear.*

For following her affaires, put in his legs,

Come my Lord, away.

*Exit.*

*Gloſt.* I am ſorry for thee friend, tis the Dukes pleaſure,

Whoſe diſpoſition all the world well knowes

Will not be rubd nor ſtopt, Ile intreate for thee.

*Kent.* Pray you do not ſir, I haue watcht and trauaild hard,

Some time I ſhall ſleepe out, the reſt Ile whistle,

A good mans fortune may grow out at heeles,

Giue you good morrow.

*Gloſt.* The Duke's too blame in this, twill be ill tooke.

*Exit.*

*Kent.* Good King, that muſt approue the common ſaw,

Thou out of heauens benediction com'eſt

To the warme Sunne.

Approach thou beacon to this vnder-globe,

That by thy comfortable beames I may

Peruſe this letter, nothing almoſt ſees my wracke

But miſery, I know tis from *Cordelia*,

Who hath moſt fortunately bene informed

Of my obſcured courſe, and ſhall finde time

From this enormous ſtate, ſeeking to giue

Loſſes their remedies, all weary and ouer-watcht,

Take vantage heauy eies not to behold

This ſhamefull lodging; Fortune goodnight,

Smile, once more turne thy wheele.

*He ſleepes.*

*Enter Edgar.*

*Edgar,* I heare my ſelfe proclaim'd,

And by the happy hollow of a Tree,

Eſcapt the hunt, no Port is free, no place

That guard, and moſt vnusall vigilance

Doſt not attend my taking while I may ſcape,

I will preſerue my ſelfe, and am bethought

To take the baſeſt and moſt pooreſt ſhape,

That euer penury in contempt of man,

Brought neere to beaſt; my face ile grime with filth,

Blanket my loines, elſe all my haire with knots,

*And*

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And with preſented nakednes out-face

The winde, and perſecution of the ſkie,

The Country giues me prooſe and preſident

Of *Bedlam* beggers, who with roring voices,

Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare Armes,

Pins, wooden prickes, nailes, ſprigs of roſemary,

And with this horrible obieſt from low ſeruiſe,

Poore pelting villages, ſheep-coates, and milles,

Sometime with lunaticke bans, ſometime with praiers

Enforce their charity, poore *Turlygod*, poore *Tom*,

That's ſomething yet, *Edgar* I nothing am.

*Exit.*

*Enter King, and a Knight.*

*Lear.* Tis ſtrange that they ſhould ſo depart from hence,

And not ſend backe my meſſenger.

*Knight.* As I learn'd, the night before there was

No purpoſe of his remoue.

*Kent.* Haile to thee noble Maſter.

*Lear.* How, mak'ſt thou this ſhame thy paſtime?

*Foole.* Ha, ha, looke, he weares crewell garters,

Horfes are tide by the heeles, dogs and beares

By the necke, munkies by the loines, and men

By the legs, when a man's ouer-luſty at legs,

hen he weares wooden neather-ſtockes.

*Lear.* What's he, that hath ſo much thy place miſtooke to ſet thee here?

*Kent.* It is both he and ſhe, your ſonne and daughter.

*Lear.* No.

*Kent.* Yes.

*Lear.* No I ſay.

*Kent.* I ſay yea.

*Lear.* No, no, they would not.

*Kent.* Yes they haue.

*Lear.* By *Iupiter* I ſweare no, they durſt not do it,

They would not, could not do it, tis worſe then murder,

To do vpon reſpect ſuch violent out-rage,

Reſolue me with all modeſt haſte, which way

*E*

*Thou*



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Thou maist deserue, or they purpose this vsage,  
Comming from vs.

*Kent.* My Lord, when at their home  
I did commend your Highnesse Letters to them,  
Ere I was risen from the place that shewed  
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking Poste,  
Stewd in his haste, halfe breathlesse, panting forth  
From *Genorill* his Mistris, salutations,  
Deliuered letters spite of intermission,  
Which presently they read; on whose contents  
They summond vp their men, straight tooke horse,  
Commanded me to follow, and attend the leisure  
Of their answer, gaue me cold lookes,  
And meeting heere the other Messenger,  
Whose welcome I perceiu'd had poisoned mine,  
Being the very fellow that of late  
Displaid so sawcily against your Highnesse,  
Hauing more man then wit about me, drew;  
He raised the house with loud and coward cries,  
Your sonne and daughter found this trespasse worth  
This shame which here it suffers.

*Lear.* O how this mother swels vp toward my heart,  
*Historica passio* downe thou climbing sorrow,  
Thy element's below, where is this daughter?

*Kent.* With the Earle sir within.

*Lear.* Follow me not, stay there.

*Knight.* Made you no more offence then what you speake of?

*Kent.* No, how chance the King comes with so small a traine?

*Foole.* If thou hadst beene set in the stockes for that question,  
thou hadst well deserued it.

*Kent.* Why foole?

*Foole.* Wee'l set thee to schoole to an Ant, to teach thee ther's  
no labouring in the winter, all that follow their noses, are led by  
their eyes, but blinde men, and there's not a nose among a hun-  
dred, but can smell him that's stincking; let goe thy hold when  
a great wheele runs downe a hill, least it breake thy necke with  
following it, but the great one that goes vp the hil, let him draw  
thee

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thee after, when a wise man giues thee better counsell, giue mee  
mine againe, I would haue none but knaues follow it, since a  
foole giues it.

*That Sir that serues for gaine,*

*And followes but for forme;*

*Will packe when it begins to raine,*

*And leaue thee in the storme.*

*But I will tarry, the foole will stay,*

*And let the wise man flie:*

*The knaue turnes foole that ruines away,*

*The foole no knaue perdy.*

*Kent.* Where learnt you this foole?

*Foole.* Not in the stockes.

*Enter Lear and Glocester.*

*Lear.* Deny to speake with me? th'are sicke, th'are weary,  
They traueled hard to night, meare Iustice,  
I the images of reuolt and flying off,  
Fetch me a better answer.

*Gloft.* My deare Lord, you know the fiery quality of the Duke,  
how vnremoueable and fixt he is in his owne course.

*Lear.* Veanceance, death, plague, confusion, what fiery quali-  
ty; why *Glocester, Glocester*, ide speake with the Duke of *Corn-  
wall*, and his wife.

*Gloft.* I my good Lord.

*Lear.* The King would speake with *Cornwall*, the deare father  
Would with his daughter speake, commands her seruice,  
Fiery Duke, tell the hot Duke that *Lear*,  
No but not yet, may be he is not well,  
Infirmity doth still neglect all office, where to our health  
Is bound, we are not our selues, when nature being opprest,  
Commands the minde to suffer with the body; ile forbearc,  
And am fallen out with my more headier will,  
To take the indisposed and sickly fit, for the sound man,  
Death on my state, wherefore should he sit here?  
This acte perswades me, that this remotion of the Duke & her



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Is practise, onely giue me my seruant forth;  
Tell the Duke and's wife, Ile speake with them  
Now presently, bid them come forth and heare me,  
Or at their chamber doore Ile beate the drum,  
Till it cry sleepe to death.

*Gloſt.* I would haue all well betwixt you.

*Lear.* O my heart! my heart.

*Foole.* Cry to it Nunckle, as the Cockney did to the Eeles,  
when she put them vp i'th paste aliue, she rapt vñ ath coxcombs  
with a sticke, and cryed downe wantons, downe; twas her bro-  
ther, that in pure kindnesse to his horse, butterd his hay.

*Enter Duke and Regan.*

*Lear.* Good morrow to you both.

*Duke.* Haile to your Grace.

*Reg.* I am glad to see your Highnesse.

*Lear.* *Regan*, I thinke you are, I know what reason  
I haue to thinke so; if thou shouldst not be glad,  
I would diuorce me from thy mothers toombe,  
Sepulchring an adulteresse, yea, are you free?  
Some other time for that. Beloued *Regan*,  
Thy sister is naught, ô *Regan* she hath tied  
Sharpe tooth'd vnkindnesse, like a vulture heere.  
I can scarce speake to thee, thou't not belecue,  
Of how depriued a quality, O *Regan*.

*Reg.* I pray sir take patience, I haue hope  
You lesse know how to value her desert,  
Then she to slacke her duty.

*Lear.* My curses on her.

*Reg.* O sir, you are olde,  
Nature on you stands on the very verge of her Confine,  
You should be ruled and led by some discretion,  
That discernes your state better then you your selfe,  
Therefore I pray, that to our sister you do make returne,  
Say you haue wrongd her sir.

*Lear.* Aske her forgiuenesse,  
Do you marke how this becomes the house

Deare

*The History of King Lear.*

Deare daughter, I confesse that I am old,  
Age is vnneccessary, on my knees I beg,  
That you'l vouchsafe me rayment, bed and food.  
*Reg.* Good sir no more, these are vnfightly tricks,  
Returne you to my sister.

*Lear.* No *Regan*,  
She hath abated me of halfe my traine,  
Lookt backe vpon me, stroke me with her tongue,  
Most serpent-like vpon the very heart,  
All the stor'd vengeance of heauen fall on her ingratefull top,  
Strike her young bones, you taking aires with lamnesse.

*Duke.* Fie, fie sir.

*Lear.* You nimble lightnings dart your blinding flames  
Into her scornfull eies, infect her beauty,  
You Fen suckt fogs, drawne by the powerfull Sunne,  
To fall and blast her pride.

*Reg.* O the blest Gods, so will you wish on me,  
When the rash mood——

*Lear.* No *Regan*, thou shalt neuer haue my curse,  
The tender hested nature shall not giue thee ore  
To harshnes, her eies are fierce, but thine do comfort & not burn  
Tis not in thee to grudge my pleasures, to cut off my traine,  
To bandy hasty words, to scant my fizes,  
And in conclusion, to oppose the bolt  
Against my comming in, thou better knowest  
The offices of nature, bond of child-hood,  
Effects of curtesie, dues of gratitude,  
Thy halfe of the kingdome, hast thou not forgot  
Wherein I thee endowed.

*Reg.* Good sir to the purpose.

*Lear.* Who put my man i'th stockes?

*Duke.* What trumpets that?

*Enter Steward.*

*Reg.* I know't my sisters, this approues her letters,  
That she would soone be here, is your Lady come?

*Lear.* This is a slaue, whose easie borrowed pride



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Dwels in the fickle grace of her he followes,  
Out varlet, from my sight.

*Duke.* What meanes your Grace?

*Enter Gonorill.*

*Gon.* Who stricke my seruant? *Regan*, I haue good hope  
Thou didst not know ant.

*Lear.* Who comes here? O heauens!  
If you do loue olde men, if you sweet sway alow  
Obedience, if your selues are old, make it your cause,  
Send downe and take my part;  
Art not asham'd to looke vpon this beard?

O *Regan*, wilt thou take her by the hand?

*Gon.* Why not by the hand sir, how haue I offended?  
All's not offence that indiscretion findes,  
And dotage tearmes so.

*Lear.* O sides, you are too tough,  
Will you yet hold? how came my man i'th stockes?

*Duke.* I set him there, but his owne disorders  
Deseru'd much lesse aduancement.

*Lear.* You; did you?

*Reg.* I pray you father being weake, seeme so,  
If till the expiration of your moneth,  
You will returne and sojourne with my sister,  
Dismissing halfe your traine, come then to me,  
I am now from home, and out of that prouision  
Which shall be needfull for your entertainment.

*Lear.* Returne to her, and fifty men dismiss?  
No, rather I abiure all roofes, and chuse  
To wage against the enmity of the ayre,  
To be a Comrade with the Wolfe and Owle,  
Necessities sharpe pinch, returne with her:  
Why the hot blood in *France*, that dowerles  
Tooke our yongest borne, I could as well be brought  
To knee his Throne, and Squire-like pension beg,  
To keepe base life afoote; returne with her?  
Perswade me rather to be slaue and sumpter

To

*The History of King Lear.*

To this detested groome.

*Gon.* At your choise sir.

*Lear.* Now I prethee daughter do not make me mad,  
I will not trouble thee my childe, farwell,  
Wee'l no more meete, no more see one another.  
But yet thou art my flesh, my bloud, my daughter,  
Or rather a disease that lies within my flesh,  
Which I must needs call mine, thou art a byle,  
A plague sore, an imbossed carbuncle in my  
Corrupted bloud, but Ile not chide thee,  
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it,  
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoote,  
Nor tell tales of thee to high iudging *Ioue*,  
Mend when thou canst, be better at thy leisure,  
I can be patient, I can stay with *Regan*,  
I and my hundred Knights.

*Reg.* Not altogether so sir, I looke not for you yet,  
Nor am prouided for your fit welcome,  
Giue eare to my sister, for those  
That mingle reason with your passion,  
Must be content to thinke you are old, and so,  
But she knowes what she does.

*Lear.* Is this well spoken now?

*Reg.* I dare auouch it sir, what fifty followers,  
Is it not well? what should you need of more,  
Yea or so many, sith that both charge and danger  
Speakes gainst so great a number, how in a house  
Should many people vnder two commands  
Hold amity, tis hard, almost impossible.

*Gon.* Why might not you my Lord, receiue attendance  
From those that she calls seruants, or from mine?

*Reg.* Why not my Lord? if then they chancet to slacke you,  
We could controule them; if you will come to me,  
(For now I spie a danger) I entreate you  
To bring but fife and twenty, to no more  
Will I giue place or notice.

*Lear.* I gaue you all.

*Reg.*



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*Reg.* And in good time you gaue it.

*Lear.* Made you my guardians, my depositaries,  
But kept a reseruatiō to be followed  
With such a number, what, must I come to you  
With fīue and twenty, *Regan*, said you so?

*Reg.* And speak't againe my Lord, no more with me.

*Lear.* Those wicked creatures yet do seeme well-fauour'd  
When others are more wicked, not being the worst,  
Stands in some ranke of praise, Ile go with thee,  
Thy fifty yet doth double fīue and twenty,  
And thou art twice her loue.

*Gon.* Heare me my Lord;  
What need you fīue and twenty, ten, or fīue,  
To follow in a house, where twice so many  
Haue a command to tend you?

*Regan.* What needs one?

*Lear.* O reason not the deed, our basest beggars  
Are in the poorest thing superfluous,  
Allow not nature more then nature needs,  
Mans life's as cheap as beasts; thou art a Lady,  
If onely to go warme were gorgious,  
Why nature needs not what thou gorgious wearest,  
Which scarcely keepes thee warme, but for true need,  
You heauens giue me that patience, patience I need,  
You see me heere (you Gods) a poore old fellow,  
As full of greefe as age, wretched in both,  
If it be you that stirres these daughters hearts  
Against their Father, foole me not too much,  
To beare it lamely, touch me with noble anger,  
O let not womens weapons, water drops  
Staine my mans cheekes, no you vnnaturall hags,  
I will haue such reuenges on you both,  
That all the world shall—I will do such things,  
What they are, yet I know not, but they shall be  
The terrors of the earth; you thinke ile weepe,  
No, ile not weepe, I haue full cause of weeping,  
But this heart shall breake in a thousand flowes

Ere

*The History of King Lear.*

Ere ile weepe; ô foole, I shall go mad.

*Exeunt Lear, Glocester, Kent, and Foole*

*Duke.* Let vs withdraw, twill be a storme.

*Reg.* This house is little, the old man and his people,  
Cannot be well bestowed.

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

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

*Duke.* So am I purposed, where is my Lord of *Glocester*?

*Enter Glocester.*

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

*Glo.* The King is in high rage, and will I know not whether.

*Reg.* Tis good to giue him way, he leads himselfe.

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

*Glo.* Alacke, the night comes on, and the bleake windes  
Do sorely ruffell, for many miles about there's not a bush.

*Reg.* O sir, to wilfull men,  
The iniuries that they themselues procure,  
Must be their schoole-masters, shut vp your doores,  
He is attended with a desperate traine,  
And what they may incense him too, being apt,  
To haue his eare abused, wisdom bids feare.

*Duke.* Shut vp your doores my Lord, tis a wilde night,  
My *Regan* counsels well, come out ath storme.

*Exeunt omnes.*

*Enter Kent and a Gentleman at severall doores.*

*Kent.* What's heere beside foule weather?

*Gent.* One minded like the weather, most vnquietly.

*Kent.* I know you, where's the King?

*Gent.* Contending with the fretfull Element,  
Bids the winde blow the earth into the sea,  
Or swell the curled waters boue the maine,  
That things might change or cease, teares his white haire,  
Which the impetuous blasts with ciclesse rage  
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of,  
Striues in his little world of man to out-scorne,

F

The



*The History of King Lear.*

The too and fro conflicting winde and raine,  
This night wherein the cub-drawne Beare would couch,  
The Lyon, and the belly pinched Wolfe  
Keepe their surre dry, vnbonneted he runnes,  
And bids what will take all.

*Kent.* But who is with him?

*Gent.* None but the foole, who labours to out-iest  
His heart strooke iniuries.

*Kent.* Sir I do know you,  
And dare vpon the warrant of my Arte,  
Commend a deare thing to you, there is diuision,  
Although as yet the face of it be couer'd  
With mutuall cuaning, twixt *Albany* and *Cornwall*.  
But true it is, from *France* there comes a power  
Into this scatterd kingdom, who already wise in our negligence  
Haue secret fee in some of our best Ports,  
And are at point to shew their open banner,  
Now to you, if on my credite you dare build so farre,  
To make your speed to *Douer*, you shall finde  
Some that will thanke you, making iust report  
Of how vnnaturall and bemadding sorrow  
The King hath cause to plaine;  
I am a Gentleman of blood and breeding,  
And from some knowledge and assurance,  
Offer this Office to you.

*Gent.* I will talke farther with you.

*Kent.* No do not,  
For confirmation that I much more  
Then my outwalk, open this purse and take  
What it containes, if you shall see *Cordelia*,  
As doubt not but you shall, shew her this ring,  
And she will tell you who your fellow is,  
That yet you do not know, sie on this storme,  
I will goe seeke the King.

*Gent.* Giue me your hand, haue you no more to say?

*Kent.* Few words, but to effect more then all yet,  
That when we haue found the King,

He

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He this way, you that, he that first lights  
On him, hollow the other.

*Exeunt.*

*Enter Lear and Foole.*

*Lear.* Blow winde and cracke your cheekes, rage, blow  
You carterickes, and Hircanios-spout till you haue drencht  
The steeples, drownd the cockes, you sulphurous and  
Thought executing fires, vaunt-currers to  
Oke-cleauing thunder-bolts, sing my white head,  
And thou all shaking thunder, smite flat  
The thicke rotundity of the world, cracke natures  
Mold, all Germaines spill at once that make  
Ingratefull man.

*Foole.* O Nunckle, Court holy water in a dry house  
Is better then this raine water out a doore,  
Good Nunckle in, and aske thy daughters blessing,  
Here's a night pitties neyther wise man nor foole.

*Lear.* Rumble thy belly full, spit fire, spout raine,  
Nor raine, winde, thunder, fire, are my daughters,  
I taske not you, you Elements with vnkindnesse,  
I neuer gaue you kingdome, cald you children,  
You owe me no subscription; why then let fall your horrible  
Pleasure, here I stand your slaue, a poore, infirme, weake, and  
Despised old man, but yet I call you seruile  
Ministers, that haue with two pernicious daughters ioynd  
Your high engendered battell gainst a head so old and white  
As this, O tis foule.

*Foole.* He that has a house to put his head in, has a good head-  
peece, the codpeece that will house before the head, has any the  
head and he shall lowse, so beggers marry many, the man that  
makes his toe, what he his heart should make, shall haue a corne  
cry woe, and turne his sleepe to wake, for there was neuer yet  
faire woman, but she made mouthes in a glasse.

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

*Enter Kent.*

*Kent.* Who's there?

F 2

*Foole.*



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*Foole.* Marry heere's grace and a codpis, that's a wiseman and a foole.

*Kent.* Alasse sir, sit you heere?

Things that loue night, loue not such nights as these;  
The wrathfull Skies gallow, the very wanderer of the  
Darke, and makes them keepe their caues,  
Since I was man, such sheetes of fire,  
Such bursts of horrid thunder, such grones of  
Roring winde and raine, I nere remember  
To haue heard, mans nature cannot carry  
The affliction, nor the force.

*Lear.* Let the great Gods that keepe this dreadfull  
Thundring ore our heads, finde out their enemies now,  
Tremble thou wretch that hast within thee  
Vndivulged crimes, vnwhipt of Iustice,  
Hide thee thou bloody hand, thou periur'd, and  
Thou simular man of vertue that art incestious,  
Caytiffe in peeces shake, that vnder couert  
And conuenient seeming, hast practised on mans life,  
Close pent vp guilts, riuie your concealed centers,  
And cry these dreadfull summoners grace,  
I am a man more sind against their finning.

*Kent.* Alacke bare headed, gracious my Lord, hard by here is  
a houell, some friendship will it lend you gainst the tempest, re-  
pose you there, whilst I to this hard house, more hard then is the  
stone whereof tis rais'd, which euen but now demanding after  
me, denide me to come in, returne and force their scanted curte-  
sie.

*Lear.* My wit begins to turne,  
Come on my boy, how dost my boy, art cold?  
I am cold my selfe, where is this straw my fellow,  
The art of our necessities is strange, that can  
Make vilde things precious, come you houell poore,  
Foole and knaue, I haue one part of my heart  
That sorrowes yet for thee.

*Foole.* He that has a little tine wit, with hey ho the winde and  
the raine, must make content with his fortunes fit, for the raine,

it

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it raineth euery day.

*Lear.* True my good boy, come bring vs to this houell.

*Enter Gloucester, and the Bastard with lights.*

*Gloster.* Alacke, alacke, *Edmund* I like not this  
Vnnaturall dealing, when I desired their leaue  
That I might pittie him, they tooke from me  
The vse of mine owne house, chargd me on paine  
Of their displeasure, neither to speake of him,  
Entreate for him, nor any way sustaine him.

*Bast.* Most sauage and vnnaturall.

(*Dukes,*

*Gloster.* Go too, say you nothing, there's a diuision betwixt the  
And a worse matter then that, I haue receiued  
A letter this night, tis dangerous to be spoken,  
I haue lockt the letter in my Closet, these iniuries  
The King now beares, will be reuenged home;  
There's part of a power already landed,  
We must incline to the King, I will seeke him,  
And priuily releue him; go you and maintaine talke  
With the Duke, that my charity be not of him  
Perceiued; if he aske for me, I am ill, and gone  
To bed, though I die for it, as no lesse is threatned me,  
The King my old Master must be releued, there is  
Some strange thing toward, *Edmund*, pray you be carefull.

*Exit.*

*Bast.* This courtesie forbid thee, shall the Duke instantly know,  
And of that letter to, this seemes a faire deseruing,  
And must draw to me that which my father loses, no lesse  
Then all, then yonger rises when the old do fall.

*Exit.*

*Enter Lear, Kent, and Foole.*

*Kent.* Here is the place my Lord, good my Lord enter, the tir-  
rany of the open night's too ruffe for nature to endure.

*Lear.* Let me alone.

*Kent.* Good my Lord enter.

*Lear.* Wilt breake my heart?

*Kent.* I had rather breake mine owne, good my Lord enter.

*Lear.*



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*Lear.* Thou thinkst tis much, that this crulentious storme  
Inuades vs to the skin, so tis to thee,  
But where the greater malady is fixt,  
The lesser is scarce felt, thou wouldst shun a Beare,  
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,  
Thoud'st meete the beare it'h mouth, when the mind's free,  
The bodies delicate, the tempest in my minde,  
Doth from my sences take all feeling else,  
Saue what beares their filiall ingratitude,  
Is it not as this mouth should teare this hand  
For lifting food to it? but I will punish sure;  
No I will weepe no more; in such a night as this!  
*O Regan, Gonorill,* your old kinde father  
Whose franke heart gaue you all, *O that way madnesse lies,*  
Let me shunne that, no more of that.

*Kent.* Good my Lord enter.

*Lear.* Prethee go in thy selfe, seeke thy owne ease,  
This tempest will not giue me leaue to ponder  
On things would hurt me more, but Ile go in,  
Poore naked wretches, where so ere you are  
That bide the pelting of this pittilesse night,  
How shall your house-lesse heads, and vnfed sides,  
Your loopt and windowed raggednesse defend you  
From seasons such as these, *O I haue tane*  
Too little care of this, take physicke pompe,  
Expose thy selfe to feele what wretches feele,  
That thou maist shake the superflux to them,  
And shew the heauens more iust.

*Foole.* Come not in here Nunckle, here's a spirit, helpe me, help me.

*Kent.* Giue me thy hand, who's there?

*Foole.* A spirit, he sayes his name is poore *Tom*.

*Kent.* What art thou that dost grumble there in the straw?  
come foorth.

*Edg.* Away, the foule fiend followes me, through the sharpe  
hathorne blowes the cold winde, goe to thy cold bed & warme  
thee.

*Lear.*

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*Lear.* Hast thou giuen all to thy two daughters, and art thou  
come to this?

*Edg.* Who giues any thing to poore *Tom*, whom the foule  
fiend hath led through fire, and throgh foord, and whirli-poole,  
ore bog and quagmire, that has laide kniues vnder his pillow, &  
halters in his pue, set ratsbane by his pottage, made him proud  
of heart, to ride on a bay trotting horse ouer foure incht bridg-  
es, to course his owne shadow for a traitor, blesse thy five wits,  
*Toms* a cold, blesse thee from whirle-windes, starre-blutting, &  
taking, do poore *Tom* some charity, whom the foule fiend vexes,  
there could I haue him now, and there, and there againe.

*Lear.* What, his daughters brought him to this passe,  
Couldst thou saue nothing? didst thou giue them all?

*Foole.* Nay he reserued a blanket, else wee had beene all sha-  
med.

*Lear.* Now all the plagues that in the pendulous ayre  
Hang fated ore mens faults, fall on thy daughters.

*Kent.* He hath no daughters sir.

*Lear.* Death traitor, nothing could haue subdued nature  
To such a lownesse, but his vnkinde daughters,  
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers,  
Should haue thus little mercy on their flesh,  
Iudicious punishment, twas this flesh  
Begot those Pelicane daughters.

*Edg.* Pilicock sate on pelicocks hill, a lo lo lo.

*Foole.* This cold night will turne vs all to fooles & madmen.

*Edg.* Take heed of the foule fiend, obey thy parents, keepe thy  
words iustly, sweare not, commit not with mans sworne spouse,  
set not thy sweet heart on proud array; *Toms* a cold.

*Lear.* What hast thou beene?

*Edg.* A seruingman, proud in heart and minde, that curlde my  
haire, wore gloues in my cap, serued the lust of my mistris heart,  
and did the acte of darknesse with her, swore as many oaths as I  
spake words, and broke them in the sweete face of heaven, one  
that slept in the contriuing of lust, and wak't to do it, wine lo-  
ued I deeply, dice dearely, and in woman, out paramord the  
Turke, false of heart, light of eare, bloody of hand, hog in sloth,

Fox



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Fox in stealth, Wolfe in greedinesse, Dog in madnesse, Lyon in prey, let not the creeking of shooes, nor the rustings of silkes betray thy poore heart to women, keepe thy foote out of brothell, thy hand out of placket, thy pen from lenders booke, and defie the foule fiend, still through the hathorne blowes the colde winde, hay no on ny, Dolphin my boy, my boy, cease let him trot by.

*Lear.* Why thou wert better in thy graue, then to answer with thy vncouered body this extremity of the skies; is man no more but this? consider him well, thou owest the worme no silke, the beast no hide, the sheep no wooll, the cat no perfume, he's three ones are sophisticated, thou art the thing it selfe, vnaccommodated man is no more but such a poore bare forked Animal as thou art, off, off you leadings, come on be true.

*Foole.* Prithee Nunckle be content, this is a naughty night to swim in, now a little fire in a wilde field, were like an old lechers heart, a small sparke, all the rest in body colde, looke here comes a walking fire.

*Enter Gloucester.*

*Edg.* This is the foule fiend *Sirberdegibit*, he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cocke, he gins the web, the pinqueuer the eye, and makes the hart lip, mildewes the white wheate, & hurts the poore creature of earth, swithald footed thrice the olde anel-thu night Moore and her nine fold bid her, O light and her troth plight and arint thee, with arint thee.

*Kent.* How fares your Grace?

*Lear.* What's he?

*Kent.* Whose there? what ist you seeke?

*Gloft.* What are you there? your names.

*Edg.* Poore *Tom*, that eates the swimming frog, the roade, the roade pold, the wall-wort, and the water, that in the fruite of his heart, when the foule fiend rages, Eates cowdung for sallets, swallowes the old rat, and the ditch-dog, drinckes the greene mantle of the standing poole, who is whipt from tything to tything, and stock-punisht and imprisoned, who hath had three sutes to his backe, fixe shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to weare.

But

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But Mice and Rats, and such small Deere,  
Hath beene *Toms* food for seuen long yeare.

Beware my follower, peace snulbug, peace thou fiend.

*Gloft.* What, hath your Grace no better company?

*Edg.* The Prince of darknes is a Gentleman, *modo* hee's called, and ma hu—

*Gloft.* Our flesh and bloud is growne so vilde my Lord, that it doth hate what gets it.

*Edg.* Poore *Toms* a colde.

*Gloft.* Go in with me, my duty cannot suffer to obey in al your daughters hard commands, though their iniunction be to barre my doores, and let this tyrannous night take hold vpon you, yet haue I venter'd to come seeke you out, and bring you where both food and fire is ready.

*Lear.* First let me talke with this Philosopher;  
What is the cause of thunder?

*Kent.* My good Lord take his offer, go into the house.

*Lear.* Ile talke a word with this most learned *Theban*; what is your study?

*Edg.* How to preuent the fiend, and to kill vermine.

*Lear.* Let me aske you one word in priuate.

*Kent.* Importune him to goe my Lord, his wits begin to vnsettle.

*Gloft.* Canst thou blame him?

His daughters seeke his death. O that good *Kent*,

He said it would be thus, poore banisht man,

Thou saist the King growes mad, ile tell thee friend,

I am almost mad my selfe; I had a sonne

Now out-lawed from my bloud, he sought my life

But lately, very late, I lou'd him friend,

No father his sonne dearer, truth to tell thee,

The greefe has craz'd my wits.

What a night's this? I do beseech your Grace.

*Lear.* O cry you mercy noble Philosopher, your company.

*Edg.* *Tom's* a cold.

*Gloft.* In fellow there, into th'houell, keepe thee warme.

*Lear.* Come, let's in all.

G

*Kent.*



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*Kent.* This way my Lord.

*Lear.* With him I will keepe still, with my Philosopher.

*Kent.* Good my Lord sooth him, let him take the fellow.

*Gloſt.* Take him you on.

*Kent.* Sirra come on, go along with vs.

*Lear.* Come good Athenian.

*Gloſt.* No words, no words, huſh.

*Edg.* Childe *Rowland*, to the darke towne come,  
His word was ſtill fye, fo, and fum,  
I ſnell the bloud of a Britiſh man.

*Enter Cornwall and Baſtard.*

*Corn.* I will haue my reuenge ere I depart the houſe.

*Baſt.* How my Lord I may be cenſured, that nature thus giues way to loyalty, ſome-thing feares me to thinke of.

*Corn.* I now perceiue it was not altogether your brothers euil diſpoſition made him ſeek his death, but a prouoking merit, ſet a worke by a reproveable badneſſe in himſelfe.

*Baſt.* How malicious is my fortune, that I muſt repent to bee iuſt? this is the Letter he ſpoke off, which approues him an intelligent partie to the aduantages of *France*, O heauens, that his treason were, or not I the deteſter.

*Corn.* Go with me to the Dutches.

*Baſt.* If the matter of this paper be certaine, you haue mighty buſineſſe in hand.

*Corn.* True or falſe, it hath made thee Earle of *Gloceſter*, ſeek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehenſion.

*Baſt.* If I finde him comforting the King, it will ſtuffe his ſuſpition more fully, I will perſeuere in my courſe of loyalty, thogh the conflict be ſore betweene that and my bloud.

*Corn.* I will lay truſt vpon thee, and thou ſhalt finde a dearer father in my loue. *Exit.*

*Enter Gloceſter, Lear, Kent, Foole, and Tom.*

*Gloſt.* Here is better then the open ayre, take it thankfully, I will peece out the comfort with what addition I can, I will not be

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be long from you.

*Kent.* All the power of his wits haue giuen way to impatience, the Gods deſerue your kindneſſe.

*Edg.* *Fretereto* calſ me, and tels me *Nero* is an angler in the lake of darkneſſe, pray innocent beware the foule fiend.

*Foole.* Prethee Nunckle tell me, whether a mad man may bee a Gentleman or a Yeoman.

*Lear.* A King, a King, to haue a thouſand with red burning ſpits come hiſſing in vpon them.

*Edg.* The foule fiend bites my backe.

*Foole.* Hee's mad that truſts in the tamenefſſe of a Wolfe, a horſes health, a boyes loue, or a whores oath.

*Lear.* It ſhall be done, I will arraigne them ſtraight,  
Come ſit thou heere moſt learned Iuſtice,  
Thou ſapient ſir, ſit heere, now you ſhee Foxes——

*Edg.* Looke where he ſtands and glars, wantſt thou eies at triall madam, come ore the broome *Befſy* to me.

*Foole.* Her boat hath a leake, and ſhe muſt not ſpeak,  
Why ſhe dares not come ouer to thee.

*Edg.* The foule fiend haunts poore *Tom* in the voyce of a nightingale, Hoppedance cries in *Toms* belly for two white herring, Croke not blacke Angell, I haue no food for thee.

*Kent.* How do you ſir? ſtand you not ſo amaz'd, will you lie downe and reſt vpon the Cuſhions?

*Lear.* Ile ſee their triall firſt, bring in their euidence, thou robbed man of iuſtice take thy place, & thou his yoke-fellow of equi-ty, bench by his ſide, you are o'th commiſſion, ſit you too.

*Ed.* Let vs deale iuſtly, ſleepeſt or wakeſt thou iolly ſhepherd, Thy ſheepe bee in the corne, and for one blaſt of thy minikin mouth, thy ſheepe ſhall take no harme, Pur the cat is gray.

*Lear.* Arraigne her firſt, tis *Gonorill*, I here take my oath before this honourable aſſembly ſhe kickt the poore King her father.

*Foole.* Come hither Miſtreſſe, is your name *Gonorill*.

*Lear.* She cannot deny it.

*Foole.* Cry you mercy, I tooke you for a ioynt ſtoole.

*Lear.* And heres another whoſe warpt lookes proclaime  
What ſtore her heart is made an, ſtop her there,



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Armes, armes, sword, fire, corruption in the place,  
False Iusticer, why hast thou let her scape?

*Edg.* Blesse thy five wits.

*Kent.* O pittie sir, where is the patience now,  
That you so oft haue boasted to retaine.

*Edg.* My teares begin to take his part so much,  
They'll marre my counterfeting.

*Lear.* The little dogs and all,  
*Trey, Blanch, and Sweet-hart,* see they barke at me.

*Edg.* *Tom* will throw his head at them, auant you curs.  
Be thy mouth, or blacke or white, tooth that poisons if it bite,  
Mastiuie, Gray-hound, Mungrel, Grim-hound, or Spaniell, Brach  
or Him, Bobtaile tike, or Trundle-taile, *Tom* will make them  
weepe and waile. For with throwing thus my head, dogs leape  
the hatch, and all are fled, loudla doodla, come march to wakes,  
and faires, and market townes, poore *Tom* thy horne is dry.

*Lear.* Then let them anotomize *Regan*, see what breeds about  
her,  
Hart is there any cause in nature that makes this hardnesse;  
You sir, I entertaine you for one of my hundred,  
Onely I do not like the fashion of your garment; you'll say  
They are Persian attire, but let them be changed.

*Kent.* Now good my Lord lie here a while.  
*Lear.* Make no noise, make no noise, draw the Curtaines, so,  
so, so, wee'll go to supper in the morning, so, so, so.

*Enter Gloucester.*  
*Gloft.* Come hither friend, where is the King my master?  
*Kent.* Here sir, but trouble him not, his wits are gone.  
*Gloft.* Good friend, I prethee take him in thy armes,  
I haue ore-heard a plot of death vpon him,  
There is a Litter ready, lay him in it, and driue towards *Douer*,  
friend,  
Where thou shalt meete both welcome and protection; take vp  
thy master,  
If thou shouldst dally halfe an houre, his life with thine,  
And all that offer to defend him, stand in assured losse,

Take

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Take vp to keepe, and follow me that will to some prouision,  
Giue thee quicke conduct.

*Kent.* Oppressed nature sleepes,  
This rest might yet haue balmed thy broken sinewes,  
Which if conuenience will not allow, stand in hard cure,  
Come helpe to beare thy Master, thou must not stay behinde.

*Gloft.* Come, come, away. *Exit.*

*Edg.* When we our betters see bearing our woes,  
We scarcely thinke our miseries our foes.  
Who alone suffers, most i'th minde,  
Leauing free things and happy shoues behinde,  
But then the minde much sufferance doth ore-skip,  
When griefe hath mates, and bearing fellowship:  
How light and portable my paine seemes now,  
When that which makes me bend, makes the King bow;  
He childed as I fatherd, *Tom* away,  
Marke the high noises, and thy selfe bewray,  
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,  
In thy iust prooffe repeals and reconciles thee,  
What will hap more to night, safe scape the King,  
Lurke, lurke.

*Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gonorill, and Bastard.*

*Corn.* Poste speedily to my Lord your husband, shew him this  
Letter,

The army of *France* is landed, seeke out the villaine *Glocester*.

*Regan.* Hang him instantly.

*Gon.* Plucke out his eyes.

*Corn.* Leauie him to my displeasure, *Edmund* keepe you our si-  
ster company. The reuenge we are bound to take vpon your trai-  
terous father, are not fit for your beholding, aduise the Duke  
where you are going to a most festuant preparation, wee are  
bound to the like.

Our poste shall be swift and intelligence betwixt vs;  
Farwell deare sister, farwell my Lord of *Glocester*.  
How now, wheres the King?

G 3

*Enter*



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*Enter Steward.*

*Stew.* My Lord of *Glocester* hath conueyed him hence,  
Some five or sixe and thirty of his Knights hot questrits after  
him, met him at gate, who with some other of the Lords depen-  
dants are gone with him towards *Douer*, where they boast to  
haue well armed friends.

*Corn.* Get horses for your mistress.

*Gon.* Farwell sweet Lord and sister.

*Exit Gon. and Bast.*

*Corn.* Edmund farwell: go seeke the traitor *Glocester*,  
Pinion him like a theefe, bring him before vs,  
Though we may not passe vpon his life  
Without the forme of iustice, yet our power  
Shall do a curtesie to our wrath, which men may blame  
But not controle; who's there, the traitor?

*Enter Glocester, brought in by two or three.*

*Reg.* Ingratefull Fox tis he.

*Corn.* Binde fast his corky armes.

*Gloft.* What meanes your Graces, good my friends consider,  
You are my guests, do me no foule play friends.

*Corn.* Binde him I say.

*Reg.* Hard, hard, O filthy traitor!

*Gloft.* Vnmercifull Lady as you are, I am true.

*Corn.* To this chaire binde him, villaine thou shalt find ———

*Gloft.* By the kinde Gods tis most ignobly done, to plucke me  
by the beard.

*Reg.* So white, and such a Traitor, (iny chin,

*Gloft.* Naughty Lady, these haire which thou dost rauish fro  
Will quicken and accuse thee, I am your host:

With robbers hands, my hospitable fauours

You should not ruffell thus, what will you do?

*Corn.* Come sir, what letters had you late from *France*?

*Reg.* Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.

*Corn.* And what confederacy haue you with the traitors lately  
footed in the kingdome?

*Reg.* To whose hands haue you sent the lunaticke king, speak?

*Gloft.*

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*Gloft.* I haue a letter guesingly set downe,  
Which came from one that's of a neutrall heart,  
And not from one opposed.

*Corn.* Cunning.

*Reg.* And false.

*Corn.* Where hast thou sent the King?

*Gloft.* To *Douer*.

*Reg.* Wherefore to *Douer*? wast thou not charg'd at perill ———

*Corn.* Wherefore to *Douer*? let him first answer that.

*Gloft.* I am tide tot'h stake, and I must stand the course.

*Reg.* Wherefore to *Douer* sir?

*Gloft.* Because I would not see thy cruell nayles  
Plucke out his poore olde eyes, nor thy fierce sister

In his aurynted flesh rash borish phangs,

The sea with such a storme of his lou'd head

In hell blacke night endur'd, would haue laid vp

And quencht the steeled fires, yet poore old heart,

He holpt the heauens to rage;

If Wolues had at thy gate heard that dearne time,

Thou shouldst haue said, good Porter turne the key,

All cruels else subscrib'd, but I shall see

The winged vengeance ouertake such children.

*Corn.* See't shalt thou neuer, fellowes hold the chaire,  
Vpon those eies of thine, Ile set my foote.

*Gloft.* He that will thinke to liue till he be old ———  
Giue me some helpe, O cruell, O ye Gods!

*Reg.* One side will mocke another, tother to.

*Corn.* If you see vengeance ———

*Seruant.* Hold your hand my Lord,  
I haue seru'd you euer since I was a childe, (hold.

But better seruice haue I neuer done you, then now to bid you

*Reg.* How now you dog.

*Ser.* If you did weare a beard vpon your chin, ide shake it on  
this quarrell, what do you meane?

*Corn.* My villaine. *Draw and fight.*

*Ser.* Why then come on, and take the chance of anger.

*Reg.* Giue me thy sword, a peasant stand vp thus.

*She*



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*She takes a sword, and runs at him behinde.*

*Servant.* Oh I am flaine my Lord, yet haue you one eye left to see some mischiefe on him, oh! *He dies.*

*Corn.* Least it see more, preuent it, out vilde Ielly, Where is thy luster now?

*Gloster.* All darke and comfortles, wheres my sonne *Edmund*? *Edmund* vnbridle all the sparkes of nature, to quit this horrid acte.

*Reg.* Out villaine, thou calst on him that hates thee, it was hee that made the ouerture of thy treasons to vs, who is too good to pittie thee.

*Gloster.* O my follies, then *Edgar* was abused, Kinde Gods forgieue me that, and prosper him.

*Reg.* Goe thrust him out at gates, and let him smell his way to Douer, how ist my Lord? how looke you?

*Corn.* I haue receiued a hurt, follow me Lady, Turne out that eyelesse villaine, throw this slaue vpon The dunghill, *Regan* I bleed apace, vntimely Comes this hurt, giue me your arme. *Exit.*

*Servant.* Ile neuer care what wickednesse I do, If this man come to good.

*2. Servant.* If she liue long, and in the end meet the old course of death, women will all turne monsters.

*1 Ser.* Let's follow the old Earle, and get the bedlam To lead him where he would, his rogissh madnesse Allowes it selfe to any thing.

*2 Ser.* Goe thou, ile fetch some flaxe and whites of egges to apply to his bleeding face, now heauen helpe him. *Exit.*

*Enter Edgar.*

*Edg.* Yet better thus, and knowne to be contemnd, Then still contemnd and flattered to be worst, The lowest and most deiected thing of Fortune Stands still in experience, liues not in feare, The lamentable change is from the best, The worst returnes to laughter,

Who's

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Who's here, my father poorely led, world, world, & world! But that thy strange mutations make vs hate thee, Life would not yeeld to age.

*Enter Gloster led by an olde man.*

*Old man.* O my good Lord, I haue bene your tenant, & your fathers tenant this fourescore —

*Gloster.* Away, get thee away, good friend be gone, Thy comforts can do me no good at all, Thee they may hurt.

*Old man.* Alacke sir, you cannot see your way.

*Gloster.* I haue no way, and therefore want no eies, I stumbled when I saw, full oft tis seene Our meanes secure vs, and our meere defects Prooue our commodities; ah deare sonne *Edgar*, The food of thy abused fathers wrath, Might I but liue to see thee in my tuch, Ide say I had eyes againe.

*Old man.* How now, who's there?

*Edg.* O Gods, who ist can say I am at the worst, I am worse then ere I was.

*Old man.* Tis poore mad *Tom*.

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

*Old man.* Fellow where goest?

*Gloster.* Is it a begger man?

*Old man.* Mad man, and begger too.

*Gloster.* He has some reason, else he could not beg, In the last nights storme I such a fellow saw, Which made me thinke a man a worme, my sonne Came then into my minde, and yet my minde Was then scarce friends with him, I haue heard more since, As flies are to th wanton boyes, are we to th Gods, They bit vs for their sport.

*Edg.* How should this be? bad is the trade that must play the foole to sorrow, angring it selfe and others; blesse thee master.

*Gloster.* Is that the naked fellow?

H

Old



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*Old man.* I my Lord.

*Glo.* Then prethee get thee gone, if for my sake  
Thou wilt ore-take vs here a mile or twaine  
Ith' way to Douer, do it for ancient loue,  
And bring some couering for this naked soule,  
Who ile entreate to lead me.

*Old man.* Alacke sir he is mad.

*Glo.* Tis the times plague, when madmen leade the blinde,  
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure,  
Aboue the rest, be gone.

*Old man.* Ile bring him the best parrell that I haue,  
Come on't what will.

*Glo.* Sirra, naked fellow.

*Edg.* Poore Toms a cold, I cannot dance it farther.

*Glo.* Come hither fellow.

*Edg.* Blesse thy sweete eyes, they bleed.

*Glo.* Knowst thou the way to Douer?

*Edg.* Both stile and gate, horse-way, and foot-path,  
Poore Tom hath beene scard out of his good wits,  
Blesse the good man from the foule fiend,  
Fiue fiends haue beene in poore Tom at once,  
Of lust, as *Obidicut*, *Hobbididence* Prince of dumbnesse,  
*Mahu* of stealing, *Modo* of murder, *Stiberdigebit* of Mobing,  
And *Mobing* who since possessees chambermaids  
And waiting women, so, blesse thee master.

*Glo.* Here take this purse, thou whom the heauens plagues  
Haue humbled to all strokes, that I am wretched, makes thee  
The happier, heauens deale so still,  
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man  
That stands your ordinance, that will not see  
Because he doth not feele, feele your power quickly,  
So distribution should vnder excessse,  
And each man haue enough: dost thou know Douer?

*Edg.* I master.

*Glo.* There is a cliffe, whose high and bending head  
Lookes firmly in the confined deepe,  
Bring me but to the very brim of it,

And

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And ile repaire the misery thou dost beare,  
With something rich about me,  
From that place shall I no leading need.

*Edg.* Giue me thy arme, poore Tom shall lead thee.

*Enter Genorill and Bastard.*

*Gon.* Welcome my Lord, I maruaile our milde husband  
Not met vs on the way: now, where's your Master?

*Enter Steward.*

*Stew.* Madame within, but neuer man so chang'd; I tolde him  
of the Army that was landed, he smiled at it, I told him you were  
coming, his answer was, the worse; of *Glosters* treachery, and of  
the loyall seruice of his sonne, when I enformd him, then he cald  
me for, and told me I had turnd the wrong side out, what hee  
should most desire, seemes pleasant to him, what like offense.

*Gon.* Then shall you go no further.

It is the cowish curre of his spirit  
That dares not vndertake, heel not feele wrongs  
Which tye him to an answer, our wishes on the way  
May proue effects, backe *Edmund* to my brother,  
Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers,  
I must change armes at home, and giue the distaffe  
Into my husbands hands; this trusty seruant  
Shall passe betweene vs, ere long you are like to heare  
If you dare venter in your owne behalfe  
A mistresses coward, weare this spare speech,  
Decline your head: this kisse if it durst speake,  
Would stretch thy spirits vp into the ayre;  
Conceiue, and faryewell.

*Bast.* Yours in the rankes of death.

*Gon.* My most deare Gloster, to thee womans seruices are due,  
My foote vsurpes my head.

*Stew.* Madame, heere comes my Lord.

*Exit Steward.*



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*Gon.* I haue bene worth the whistle.

*Enter the Duke of Albeney.*

*Alb.* O *Gonorill*, you are not worth the dust which the winde  
Blowes in your face, I feare your disposition,  
That nature which contemnes it origin,  
Cannot be bordered certaine in it selfe,  
She that her selfe will flouer and disbranch  
From her materiall sap, perforce must wither,  
And come to deadly vse.

*Gon.* No more, the text is foolish.

*Alb.* Wisedome and goodnesse to the vilde seeme vilde,  
Filths fauour but themselves, what haue you done?  
Tygers, not daughters, what haue you perform'd?  
A father, and a gracious aged man,  
Whose reuerence the head-lugd Beare would licke;  
Most barbarous, most degenerate haue you madded;  
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?  
A man, a Prince, by him so beneficted,  
If that the heauens do not their visible spirits  
Send quickly downe to tame the vilde offences, it will come  
Humanly must perforce prey on it selfe, like monsters of the  
deepe.

*Gon.* Milke liuer'd man,  
That bearest a cheek for blowes, a head for wrongs,  
Who hast not in thy browes an eie deseruing thine honour,  
From thy suffering, that not know'st fooles, do these villains pity  
Who are punisht ere they haue done their mischief,  
Where's thy drum? *France* spreads his banners in our noiselesse  
Land, with plumed helme thy slaier begins threats,  
Whiles thou a morall foole, sits still and cries  
Alacke, why does he so?

*Alb.* See thy selfe diuell, proper deformity seemes not in the  
fiend, so horrid as in woman.

*Gon.* O vaine foole.

*Alb.* Thou chang'd and selfe-couerd thing, for shame  
Be-monster not thy feature, wer't my fittesse

To

*The History of King Lear.*

To let these hands obey my bloud,  
They are apt enough to dislecate and teare  
Thy flesh and bones, how ere thou art a fiend,  
A womans shape doth shield thee.

*Gon.* Marry your man-hood now——

*Enter a Gentleman.*

*Alb.* What newes?

*Gent.* O my good Lord, the Duke of *Cornwall*s dead, slaine by  
his seruant, going to put out the other eie of *Gloster*.

*Alb.* *Gloster*s eyes?

*Gon.* A seruant that he bred, thrald with remorse,  
Oppos'd against the acte, bending his sword  
To his great master, who thereat enraged,  
Flew on him, and amongst them feld him dead,  
But not without that harmfull stroke,  
Which since hath pluckt him after.

*Alb.* This shewes you are aboue your Iustices,  
That these our neather crimes so speedily can venge,  
But oh poore *Glocester*, lost he his other eye?

*Gent.* Both, both my Lord, this letter Madam craues a speedy  
Answer, tis from your sister.

*Gon.* One way I like this well,  
But being widow, and my *Glocester* with her,  
May all the building on my fancy plucke,  
Vpon my hatefull life, another way the newes is not so tooke,  
Ile reade and answer. *Exit.*

*Alb.* Where was his sonne when they did take his eies?

*Gent.* Come with my Lady hither.

*Alb.* He is not here.

*Gent.* No my good Lord, I met him backe againe.

*Alb.* Knowes he the wickednesse?

*Gent.* I my good Lord, twas he inform'd against him,  
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment  
Might haue the freer course.

*Alb.* *Glocester*, I liue to thanke thee for the loue  
Thou shewedst the King, and to reuenge thy eyes;

H 3

Come



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Come hether friend, tell me what more thou knowest.

*Exit.*

*Enter Kent and a Gentleman.*

*Kent.* Why the King of France is so suddenly gone backe,  
Know you the reason?

*Gent.* Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his  
comming foorth is thought of, which imports to the Kingdom,  
so much feare and danger that his personall returne was most re-  
quired and necessary.

*Kent.* Who hath he left behinde him, Generall?

*Gent.* The Marshall of France, Mounseieur la Far.

*Kent.* Did your letters pierce the Queene to any demonstrati-  
on of griefe?

*Gent.* I say she tooke them, read them in my presence,  
And now and then an ample teare trild downe  
Her delicate cheeke, it seemd she was a Queene ore her passion,  
Who most rebell-like, sought to be King ore her.

*Kent.* O then it moued her.

*Gent.* Not to a rage, patience and sorrow streame,  
Who should expresse her goodliest, you haue seene  
Sun-shine and raine at once, her smiles and teares,  
Were like a better way, those happy smilets  
That plaid on her ripe lip, seeme not to know  
What guests were in her eyes, which parted thence  
As pearles from Diamonds dropt; in brieft,  
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloued,  
If all could so become it.

*Kent.* Made she no verball question?

*Gent.* Faith once or twice she heau'd the name of father  
Pantingly foorth, as if it prest her heart,  
Cried sisters, sisters, shame of Ladies sisters;  
*Kent.* Father, sisters, what ith storme ith night?  
Let pittie not be beleu'd, there she shooke  
The holy water from her heauenly eyes,  
And clamour moistened her, then away she started,  
To deale with griefe alone.

*Kent.* It is the stars, the stars aboue vs gouern our conditions,  
Else

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Else one selfe mate and mate could not beget  
Such different issues; you spoke not with her since?

*Gent.* No.

*Kent.* Was this before the King returnd?

*Gent.* No, since.

*Kent.* Well sir, the poore distressed Lear's ith Towne,  
Who sometime in his better tune remembers  
What we are come about, and by no meanes will yeeld to see his  
daughter.

*Gent.* Why good sir?

*Kent.* A soueraigne shame so elbowes him, his own vnkindnes  
That stript her from his benediction, turnd her  
To forraine casualties, gaue her deare rights  
To his dog-hearted daughters; these things sting his minde  
So venomously, that burning shame detaines him from *Cordelia*.

*Gent.* Alacke poore Gentleman.

*Kent.* Of *Albanies* and *Cornwals* powers you heard not?

*Gent.* Tis so they are afoote.

*Kent.* Well sir, ile bring you to our master Lear,  
And leaue you to attend him, some deare cause  
VVill in concalement wrap me vp a while,  
VVhen I am knowne aright you shall not greeue,  
Lending me this acquaintance, I pray you go along with me.

*Exit.*

*Enter Cordelia, Doctor, and others.*

*Cor.* Alacke tis he, why he was met euen now,  
As mad as the vent sea, singing aloud,  
Crownd with ranke femiter and furrow weeds,  
VVith hor-docks, hemlocke, nettles, coockow-flowers,  
Darnell and all the idle weeds that grow  
In our sustaining, Corne, a century is sent foorth,  
Search euery acre in the high growne-field,  
And bring him to our eye, what can mans wisedome do  
In the restoring his bereaued sence? he that can helpe him  
Take all my outward worth.

*Doct.* There is meanes Madame,  
Our foster nurse of nature is repose,

The



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The which he lackes, that to prouoke in him  
Are many simples operative, whose power  
Will close the eye of anguish.

*Cord.* All blest secrets, all you vnpublisht vertues of the earth,  
Spring with my teares, be aidant and remediat  
In the good mans distresse, seeke, seeke for him,  
Least his vngouernd rage dissolue the life,  
That wants the meanes to leade it.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Messen.* Newes Madam, the British powers are marching he-  
therward.

*Cord.* Tis knowne before, our preparation stands  
In expectation of them, ô deare Father,  
It is thy businesse that I go about, therefore great *France*,  
My mourning and important teares hath pittied,  
No blowne ambition doth our armes insite,  
But loue, deare loue, and our aged fathers right,  
Soone may I heare and see him.

*Exit.*

*Enter Regan and Steward.*

*Reg.* But are my brothers powers set foorth?

*Stew.* I Madam.

*Reg.* Himselfe in person?

*Stew.* Madam with much ado, your sister's the better Soldier.

*Reg.* Lord *Edmund* spake not with your Lady at home?

*Stew.* No Madam.

*Reg.* What might import my sisters letter to him?

*Stew.* I know not Lady.

*Reg.* Faith he is posted hence on a serious matter,  
It was great ignorance, *Glosters* eies being out,  
To let him liue, where he arriues he moues  
All hearts against vs, and now I thinke is gone,  
In pittie of his misery to dispatch his nighted life,  
Moreouer to descric the strength of the Army.

*Stew.* I must needs after him with my Letters.

*Reg.* Our troope sets foorth to morrow, stay with vs,

The

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The wayes are dangerous.

*Stew.* I may not Madam, my Lady charg'd my dutie in this  
businesse.

*Reg.* Why should she write to *Edmund*? Might not you  
Transport her purposes by word, belike  
Something, I know not what, Ile loue thee much,  
Let me vnseale the Letter.

*Stew.* Madam Ide rather——

*Reg.* I know your Lady does not loue her husband,  
I am sure of that: and at her late being heere  
She gaue strange aliads, and most speaking looks  
To Noble *Edmund*, I know you are of her bosome.

*Stew.* I Madam.

*Reg.* I speake in vnderstanding, for I know't,  
Therefore I do aduise you take this note:  
My Lord is dead, *Edmund* and I haue talkt,  
And more conuenient is he for my hand,  
Then for your Ladies: you may gather more,  
If you do finde him, pray you giue him this,  
And when your mistris heares thus much from you,  
I pray desire her call her wisedome to her, so farewell,  
If you do chance to heare of that blinde traitor,  
Preferment fals on him that cuts him off.

*Stew.* Would I could meet him Madam, I would shew  
What Lady I do follow.

*Reg.* Fare thee well.

*Exit.*

*Enter Gloster and Edmund. Edgar*

*Glo.* When shall we come to th top of that same hill?

*Edg.* You do climbe it vp now, looke how we labour?

*Glo.* Me thinkes the ground is euen.

*Edg.* Horrible steepe: hearke, do you heare the sea?

*Glo.* No truly.

*Edg.* Why then your other senses grow imperfect  
By your eies anguish.

*Glo.* So may it be indeed,  
Methinkes thy voice is altered, and thou speakst

I

With



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With better phrase and matter then thou didst.

*Edg.* Y'are much deceiued, in nothing am I changd,  
But in my garments.

*Glo.* Me thinkes y'are better spoken.

*Edg.* Come on sir, here's the place, stand still, how fearfull  
And dizey tis to cast ones eyes so low:

The Crowes and Choughes that wing the midway ayre  
Shew scarfe so grosse as beetles, halfe way downe  
Hangs one that gathers Sampire, dreadfull trade,  
Me thinkes he seemes no bigger then his head:

The fishermen that walke vpon the beake  
Appeare like Mice; and you tall Anchoring barke  
Diminisht to her cocke; her cocke aboue  
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,  
That on the vnnumbred idle peebles chafe,  
Cannot be heard: it is so hie lle lookenomore  
Least my braine turne, and the deficient sight  
Topple downe headlong.

*Glo.* Set me where you stand.

*Edg.* Giue me your hand: you are now within a foot  
Of the extreme verge; for all beneath the Moone  
Would I not ieape vpright.

*Glo.* Let go my hand:  
Heere friend's another purse, in it a Iewell  
Well worth a poore mans taking. Fairies and Gods  
Prosper it with thee: go thou farther off,  
Bid me farewell, and let me heare thee going.

*Edg.* Now fare you well good sir.

*Glo.* With all my heart.

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

*Glo.* O you mighty Gods, *He kneels*  
This world I do renounce, and in your sights  
Shake patiently my great affliction off,  
If I could beare it longer, and not fall  
To quarrell with your great opposelesse wils,  
My snuffe and loathed part of nature should  
Burne it selfe out: if *Edgar* liue, O blesse,

Now

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Now fellow fare thee well. *He falls*

*Edg.* Gon sir, farewell, and yet I know not how conceite may  
rob the treasury of life, when life it selfe yeelds to the theft: had  
he bene where he thought, by this thought had bene past: Aliue  
or dead? Ho you sir, heare you sir, speake, thus might hee passe  
indeed, yet he reuiues, what are you sir?

*Glo.* Away, and let me dye.

*Edg.* Hadst thou bene ought but gosmore feathers ayre,  
So many fadome downe precipitating,  
Thou hadst shiuerd like an Egge, but thou dost breath,  
Hast heauy substance, bleedst not, speakst, art sound:  
Ten Masts at each make not the altitude,  
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell,  
Thy lifes a miracle, speake yet againe.

*Glo.* But haue I fallen or no?

*Edg.* From the dread summons of this chalkie borne,  
Looke vp a hight; the shrill gorg'd Larke so farre  
Cannot be seene or heard, do but looke vp.

*Glo.* Alacke, I haue no eyes:  
Is wretchednesse depriu'd that benefite  
To end it selfe by death? T was yet some comfort,  
When misery could beguile the Tyrants rage,  
And frustrate his proud will.

*Edg.* Giue me your arme:  
Vp, so, how feele you your legges? you stand.

*Glo.* Too well, too well.

*Edg.* This is aboue all strangenesse:  
Vpon the crowne of the cliffe, what thing was that  
Which parted from you?

*Glo.* A poore vnfortunate begger.

*Edg.* As I stood heere below, methought his eyes  
Were two full Moones; a had a thousand noses,  
Hornes, welkt and waued like the enridged sea.  
It was some fiend, therefore thou happy Father  
Thinke that the cleereft Gods, who made their honors  
Of mens impossibilities, haue preserued thee.

*Glo.* I do remember now, henceforth lle beare



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Affliction till it do cry out it selfe  
Enough, enough, and dye: that thing you speake of,  
I tooke it for a man: often would he say  
The fiend, the fiend, he led me to that place.

*Edg.* Bare, free, and patient thoughts: but who comes heere,  
The safer sense will nere accommodate his maister thus.

*Enter Lear mad.*

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

*Edg.* O thou side piercing sight.

*Lear.* Nature is aboue Art in that respect, ther's your presse-  
money. That fellow handles his bow like a Crow-keeper, draw  
me a clothiers yard. Looke, looke, a Mouse; peace, peace, this  
tosted cheese will do it. Ther's my gantlet, Ile proue it on a Gy-  
ant, bring vp the browne bills. O well flowne birde in the ayre.  
Hagh, giue the word.

*Edg.* Sweet Margerum.

*Lear.* Passe,

*Glo.* I know that voice.

*Lear.* Ha *Gonorill*, ha *Regan*, they flatter'd me like a dogge, and  
told me I had white haire in my beard, ere the black ones were  
there; to say I and no to all I saide: I and no too was no good  
Diuinity. When the raine came to wet me once, and the wind to  
make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at my bid-  
ding, there I found them, there I smelt them out: goe too, they  
are not men of their words, they told mee I was euery thing, tis  
a lye, I am not argue-prooffe.

*Glo.* The trick of that voyce I doe well remember, ist not  
the King?

*Lear.* I, euery inch a King: when I do stare see how the subiect  
quakes: I pardon that mans life, what was thy cause, *Adulterie*?  
thou shalt not dye for adultery: no, the wren goes toot, and the  
small guilded flye do letcher in my sight; let copulation thrive.  
For *Glosters* bastard son was kinder to his father then my daugh-  
ters got twene the lawfull sheets, toot Luxury, pell mell, for I  
want souldiers. Behold yon simpring dame, whose face between  
her

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her forkes presageth snow, that minces vertue, and do shake the  
head, heare of pleasures name to fitchew, nor the soyled Horffe  
goes toot with a more riotous appetite: downe from the waste  
they are Centaures, though women all aboue, but to the girdle  
do the gods inherit, beneath is all the fiends, theres Hell, theres  
darknesse, theres the sulphury pit, burning, scalding, stench, con-  
summation, sic, sic, sic, pah, pah: Giue mee an ounce of Ciuet,  
good Apothecary, to sweeten my imagination, ther's money for  
thee.

*Glo.* O let me kisse that hand.

*Lear.* Here wipe it first, it smels of mortality.

*Glo.* O ruin'd peece of nature, this great world shold so weare  
out to naught, do you know me?

*Lear.* I remember thy eyes well enough, dost thou squiny on  
me: no, do thy worst blinde Cupid, Ile not loue: Read thou that  
challenge, marke the penning on t.

*Glo.* Were all the letters suns I could not see one.

*Edg.* I would not take this from report, it is, & my hart breaks  
at it.

*Lear.* Read.

*Glo.* What, with the case of eyes.

*Lear.* O ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head nor  
money in your purse? your eyes are in a heauy case, your purse  
in a light; yet you see how this world goes?

*Glo.* I see it feelingly.

*Lea.* What art mad? A man may see how the world goes with  
no eyes. Looke with thy eares, see how yon Iustice railes vpon  
yon simple theefe: hearke in thy eare, handy dandy, which is the  
theefe, which is the Iustice. Thou hast seene a farmers dog barke  
at a begger.

*Glo.* I sir.

*Lear.* And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst  
behold the great image of Authoritie, a dogge, so bad in office.  
Thou Rascall Beadle hold thy bloody hand; why dost thou lash  
that whore? strip thine owne backe, thy blood hotly lusts to vse  
her in that kind for which thou whipst her. The vsurer hangs the  
cozener, through tattered ragges small vices do appeare, Robes



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and furd-gownes hides all. Get thee glasse eyes, and like a scurvy politician, seeme to see the things thou dost not; No, now pull off my boots, harder, harder, so.

*Edg.* O matter and impertinency, mixt reason in madnesse.

*Lear.* If thou wilt weepe my fortune, take my eyes; I know thee well enough, thy name is Gloster, thou must be patient, we came crying hither: thou knowst the first time that we smel the aire, we waile and cry. I will preach to thee, marke me.

*Glo.* Alack, alack, the day.

*Lear.* When we are borne, we crie that wee are come to this great stage of fooles: this a good blocke. It were a delicate stragem to shoata troope of horse with fell, and when I haue stole vpon these sonnes in law, then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

*Enter three Gentlemen.*

*Gent.* O here he is, lay hands vpon him sirs.

*Lear.* No rescue, what a prisoner? I am eene the naturall foole of Fortune: vse me well, you shall haue a ransom. Let me haue a Chirurgeon, I am cut to th braines.

*Gent.* You shall haue any thing.

*Lear.* No seconds, all my selfe: why this would make a man of salt to vse his eyes for garden water-pottes, I and laying Autumnes dust.

*Gent.* Good Sir.

*Lear.* I will dye brauely like a Bridegroom. What, I will bee iouiall: Come, come, I am a King my masters, know you that?

*Gent.* You are a royall one, and we obey you.

*Lear.* Then theres life int, nay if you get it you shall get it with running.

*Exit King running.*

*Gent.* A sight most pittifull in the meanest wretch, past speaking of in a king: thou hast one daughter who redeemes nature from the generall curse which twaine hath brought her to.

*Edg.* Haile gentle sir.

*Gent.* Sir speed you, what's your will?

*Edg.* Do you heare ought of a battell toward?

*Gent.* Most sure and vulgar, euery ones heares That can distinguish sense.

*Edg.* But by your fauour, how neeres the other army?

*Gent.*

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*Gent.* Neere and on speed for't, the maine descries, Stands on the hourelly thoughts.

*Edg.* I thanke you sir, thats all.

*Gent.* Though that the Queene on speciall cause is heere, His army is mou'd on.

*Edg.* I thanke you sir.

*Exit*

*Glo.* You euer gentle gods take my breath from me, Let not my worser spirit tempt me againe, To dye before you please.

*Edg.* Well pray you father.

*Glo.* Now good sir what are you?

*Edg.* A most poore man, made lame by fortunes blowes, Who by the Art of knowne and feeling sorrowes Am pregnant to good pittie. Giue me your hand, Ile leade you to some biding.

*Gloft.* Hearty thanks, the bounty and the benizon of heauen to boot, to boot.

*Enter Steward.*

*Stew.* A proclaim'd prize, most happy; that eyles head of thine was first framed flesh to raise my fortunes. Thou most vnhappy Traitor, briefly thy selfe remember, the sword is out that must destroy thee.

*Glo.* Now let thy friendly hand put strength enough to't.

*Stew.* Wherefore bolde pezant darst thou support a publiht traytor, hence leaft the infection of his fortune take like hold on thee, let go his arme.

*Edg.* Chill not let go sir without cagion.

*Stew.* Let go slave, or thou diest.

*Edg.* Good Gentleman goe your gate, let poore volke passe: and chud haue beene zwaggar'd out of my life, it wold not haue bene so long by a vortnight: nay come not neere the olde man, keepe out cheuore ye, or ile try whether your costard or my bat be the harder, chill be plaine with you.

*Stew.* Out dunghill.

*Edg.* Chil pick your teeth zir, come no matter for your foints.

*Stew.*

*They fight.*



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*Stew.* Slaue thou hast slaine me, Villaine take my purse:  
If euer thou wilt thrine, bury my body,  
And giue the Letters which thou findest about me  
To *Edmund* Earle of Gloster, seeke him out, vpon  
The British party: ô vntimely death! death.

*He dyes.*

*Edg.* I know thee well, a seruiceable villaine,  
As dutious to the vices of thy Mistris,  
As badnesse would desire.

*Glo.* What is he dead?

*Edg.* Sit you downe father, rest you, lets see his pockets,  
These Letters that he speakes of may be my friends,  
Hee's dead, I am onely sorry he had no other deathsmā.  
Let vs see, leaue gentle wax, and manners blame vs not,  
To know our enemies minds wee'd rip their hearts,  
Their papers is more lawfull.

*A Letter.*

*Let your reciprocall vowes be remembred,  
You haue many oportunities to cut him off.  
If your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered.  
There is nothing done: If he returne the Conqueror,  
Then am I the prisoner, and his bed my Iayle,  
From the loath'd warmth whereof deliuer me,  
And supply the place for your labour.*

Your wife (so I would say) & your affectionate seruant,

*Gonorill.*

*Edg.* O vndistinguisht space of womans wit,  
A plot vpon her vertuous husbands life,  
And the exchange my Brother: heere in the sands  
Thee lle rake vp, the post vn sanctified  
Of murderous letchers, and in the mature time  
With this vngracious paper strike the light  
Of the death practis'd Duke, for him tis well,  
That of his death and businesse I can tell.

*Glo.* The King is mad, how stiffe is my vilde sense,  
That I stand vp, and haue ingenious feeling

Of

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Of my huge sorrowes, better I were distract,  
So should my thoughts be fenced from my greefes,  
And woes by wrong imaginations, lose  
The knowledge of themselves.

*A Drumme afarre off.*

*Edg.* Giue me your hand:  
Farre off methinkes I heare the beaten drum.  
Come Father lle bestow you with a friend.

*Exit*

*Enter Cordelia, Kent, and Doctor.*

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

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

*Cor.* Be better suited,  
These weeds are memories of those worser houres,  
I prethee put them off.

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

*Cor.* Then be it so: my Lord how does the king.

*Doct.* Madam sleepes still.

*Cor.* O you kinde Gods,  
Cure this great breach in his abused nature,  
The vntun'd and hurrying senses, O winde vp,  
Of this childe-changed Father.

*Doct.* So please your Maiesty we may wake the King  
He hath slept long.

*Cor.* Be gouern'd by your knowledge, and proceede  
Ith sway of your owne will: is he array'd?

*Doct.* I Madam, in the heauinesse of his sleepe,  
We put fresh garments on him.

*Kent.* Good Madam be by when we do awake him,  
I doubt not of his temperance.

K

*Cor.*



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*Cor.* Very well.

*Doct.* Please you draw neere : louder the musicke there.

*Cor.* O my deere father,  
Restoration hang thy medicine on my lippes,  
And let this kisse repaire those violent harmes  
That my two sisters haue in thy reuerence made.

*Kent.* Kinde and deere Princeesse.

*Cor.* Had you not bin their father, these white flakes  
Had challeng'd pittie of them. Was this a face  
To be expos'd against the warring windes,  
To stand against the deepe dread bolted thunder,  
In the most terrible and nimble stroke  
Of quicke crosse lightning, to watch poore *Per du*,  
With this thin helme? Mine iniurious dogge,  
Though he had bit me, should haue stood that night  
Against my fire, and wast thou faine (poore father)  
To houill thee with swine and rogues forlorne,  
In short and musty straw? Alack, alacke,  
Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once,  
Had not concluded all. He wakes, speake to him.

*Doct.* Madam do you, tis fittest.

*C.* How does my royal lord? how fares your maiesty

*Lear.* You do me wrong to take me out a'th graue,  
Thou art a soule in blisse, but I am bound  
Vpon a wheele of fire, that mine owne teares  
Do scald like molten Lead.

*Cor.* Sir, know ye me?

*Lear.* Y'are a spirit I know, when did you dye?

*Cor.* Still, still, farre wide.

*Doct.* He's scarce awake, let him alone awhile.

*Lea.* Where haue I bin? where am I? faire day light  
I am mightily abus'd; I should ene dye with pity  
To see another thus. I know not what to say:  
I will not sweare these are my hands, let's see,  
I feele this pin pricke, would I were assur'd of my con-

*Cor.* O looke vpon me sir, (dition.  
And hold your hands in benediction ore me,

No

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No sir, you must not kneele.

*Lear.* Pray do not mocke me:

I am a very foolish fond olde man,  
Fourescore and vpward, and to deale plainly,  
I feare I am not perfect in my minde.  
Me thinkes I should know you, and know this man,  
Yet I am doubtfull: for I am mainly ignorant  
What place this is, and all the skill I haue  
Remembers not these garments: nor I know not  
Where I did lodge last night. Do no laugh at me,  
For (as I am a man) I thinke this Lady  
To be my childe *Cordelia*.

*Cor.* And so I am.

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

*Cor.* No cause, no cause.

*Lear.* Am I in France?

*Kent.* In your owne kingdome sir.

*Lear.* Do not abuse me.

*Doct.* Be comforted good Madame, the great rage you see is  
cured in him, and yet it is danger to make him euen ore the time  
hee has lost; desire him to goe in, trouble him no more till fur-  
ther settling.

*Cor.* Wilt please your Highnesse walke?

*Lear.* You must beare with me:

Pray now forget and forgiue,  
I am olde and foolish.

*Exeunt.*

*Manet Kent and Gentleman.*

*Gen.* Holds it true sir that the Duke of Cornwall was so slaine?

*Kent.* Most certaine sir.

*Gent.* Who is conductor of his people?

*Kent.* As tis said, the bastard sonne of Gloster.

*Gent.* They say Edgar his banisht sonne, is with the Earle of



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*Kent in Germany.*

*Kent.* Report is changeable, tis time to looke about,  
The powers of the kingdome approach apace.

*Gent.* The arbitrement is like to be bloody, fare you well sir.

*Kent.* My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,  
Or well, or ill, as this dayes battels fought.

*Enter Edmund, Regan, and their powers.*

*Bast.* Know of the Duke if his last purpose holde,  
Or whether since he is aduisd by ought.

To change the course, he is full of alteration  
And selfe-reprouing, bring his constant pleasure.

*Reg.* Our sisters man is certainly miscarried.

*Bast.* Tis to be doubted Madam.

*Reg.* Now sweet Lord,  
You know the goodnesse I intend vpon you:  
Tell me truly, but then speake the truth,  
Do you not loue my sister?

*Bast.* I honor'd loue.

*Reg.* But haue you neuer found my brothers way,  
To the forefended place?

*Bast.* That thought abuses you.

*Reg.* I am doubtfull that you haue beene coniunct  
And bosom'd with her, as farre as we call hers.

*Bast.* No by mine honor Madam.

*Reg.* I neuer shall endure her,  
Deere my Lord be not familiar with her.

*Bast.* Feare me not, she and the Duke her husband.

*Enter Albany and Gonorill with troopes.*

*Gon.* I had rather loose the battell  
Then that sister should loosen him and me.

*Alb.* Our very louing sister well be-met,  
For this I heare the King is come to his daughter  
With others, whom the rigour of our State  
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest  
I neuer yet was valiant: for this businesse

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It toucheth vs, as France inuades our land  
Not bolds the king, with others whom I feare,  
Most iust and heauy causes make oppose.

*Bast.* Sir you speake nobly.

*Regan.* Why is this reason'd?

*Gon.* Combine together gainst the enemy,  
For these domesticke doore particulars,  
Are not to question heere.

*Alb.* Let vs then determine  
With the Ancient of warre on our proceedings.

*Bast.* I shall attend you presently at your Tent.

*Reg.* Sister youle go with vs?

*Gon.* No.

*Reg.* Tis most conuenient, pray you go with vs.

*Gon.* O ho, I know the Riddle, I will go.

*Exit.*

*Enter Edgar.*

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

*Alb.* Ile ouertake you, speake.

*Edg.* Before you fight the battell, ope this Letter,  
If you haue victory let the trumpet sounde  
For him that brought it, wretched though I seeme,  
I can produce a Champion, that will prooue  
What is asouch'd there. If you miscarry,  
Your businesse of the world hath so an end,  
Fortune loue you.

*Alb.* Stay till I haue read the letter.

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

*Exit.*

*Alb.* Why fare thee well, I will looke ore the paper.

*Enter Edmund.*

*Bast.* The enemy's in view, draw vp your powers,  
Hard is the guesse of their great strength and forces  
By diligēt discouery, but your hast is now vrgd on you.



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*Alb.* We will greet the time.

*Bast.* To both these sisters haue I sworne my loue,  
Each iealous of the other, as the sting are of the Adder,  
Which of them shall I take, both one  
Or neither; neither can be enioy'd  
If both remaine aliue: to take the Widdow,  
Exasperates, makes mad her sister *Gonorill*,  
And hardly shall I carry out my side  
Her husband being aliue. Now then wee'l vse  
His countenance for the battell, which being done  
Let her that would be rid of him deuise  
His speedy taking off: as for his mercie  
Which he extends to *Lear* and to *Cordelia*,  
The battell done, and they within our power,  
Shall neuer see his pardon: for my state  
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. *Exit*

*Alarum.* Enter the powers of France ouer the stage, *Cordelia*  
with her Father in her hand.

*Enter Edgar and Gloster.*

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

*Glo.* Grace go with you sir.

*Alarum and retreat.*

*Enter Edgar.*

*Edg.* Away olde man, giue me thy hand, away,  
*King Lear* hath lost, he and his daughter tane:  
Giue me thy hand, come on.

*Glo.* No farther sir, a man may rot euen heere.

*Edg.* What in ill thoughts agen? Men must endure,  
Their going hence, euen as their comming hither,  
Ripenessse is all come on. *Exit.*

*Enter Edmund, with Lear and Cordelia prisoners.*

*Bast.* Some officers take them away, good guard,  
Vntill their greater pleasures best be knowne  
That

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That are to censure them.

*Cor.* We are not the first,  
Who with best meaning haue incurr'd the worst:  
For thee oppressed King am I cast downe,  
My selfe could else out-frowne false fortunes frowne.  
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters?

*Lear.* No, no, come let's away to prison,  
We two alone will sing like birds i' th cage:  
When thou dost aske me blessing, Ile kneele downe  
And aske of thee forgiuenesse: so weell liue,  
And pray, and tell old tales, and laugh  
At gilded Butterflies, and heare poore Rogues  
Talke of Court newes, and weel talke with them too,  
Who looses, and who wins; whose in, whose out;  
And take vpon's the mystery of things,  
As if we were Gods spies: and weel weare out  
In a walld prison, packes and sects of great ones,  
That ebbe and flow by the Moone.

*Bast.* Take them away.

*Lear.* Vpon such sacrifices my *Cordelia*

The gods themselues throw incense. Haue I caught thee?  
He that parts vs shall bring a brand from heauen,  
And fire vs hence like Foxes, wipe thine eyes,  
The good shall deuoure em, seach and fell,  
Ere they shall make vs weepe? Weele see em starue first. *Exit*

*Bast.* Come hither Captaine, hearke.

Take thou this note, go follow them to prison,  
One step I haue aduanc't thee, if thou dost as this instructs thee,  
Thou dost make thy way to Noble fortunes:  
Know thou this, that men are as the time is;  
To be tender minded does not become a sword,  
Thy great employment will not beare question,  
Either say thou do't, or thriue by other meanes.

*Cap.* Ile doot my Lord.

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

*Cap*



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*Cap.* I cannot draw a Cart, nor eate dried oates,  
If it be mans worke, Ile doo't.

*Enter the Duke, the two Ladies, and others.*

*Alb.* Sir you haue shewne to day your valiant straine,  
And Fortune led you well: you haue the Captiues  
That were the opposites of this dayes strife:  
We do require then of you so to vse them,  
As we shall finde their merits, and our safety  
May equally determine.

*Bast.* Sir I thought it fit,  
To send the olde and miserable King  
To some retention, and appointed guard,  
Whose age has charmes in it, whose Title more,  
To plucke the common blossomes of his side,  
And turne our imprest Launces in our eyes  
Which do command them. With him I sent the Queene:  
My reason all the same, and they are ready to morrow,  
Or at a further space, to appeare where you shall hold  
Your Session at this time: we sweate and bleed,  
The friend hath lost his friend, and the best quatrels  
In the heate are curst by those that feele their sharpenesse.  
The question of *Cordelia* and her father  
Requires a fitter place,

*Alb.* Sir by your patience,  
I hold you but a subiect of this warre, not as a brother.

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

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

*Reg.* In my right by me inuested, he compeers the best.

*Gon.* That were the most, if he should husband you.

*Reg.* Iesters do oft proue Prophets.

*Goner.*

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*Gon.* Hola, hola, that eye that told you so, lookt but a squint.

*Reg.* Lady I am not well, else I should answer  
From a full flowing stomacke. Generall,  
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony,  
Witnesse the world, that I create thee heere  
My Lord and master.

*Gon.* Meane you to enioy him then?

*Alb.* The let alone lies not in your good will.

*Bast.* Nor in thine Lord.

*Alb.* Halfe blooded fellow, yes.

*Bast.* Let the drum strike, and proue my title good.

*Alb.* Stay yet, heare reason: *Edmund*, I arrest thee  
On capitall treason; and in thine attaint,  
This gilded Serpent: for your claime faire sister,  
I bare it in the interest of my wife,  
Tis she is subcontracted to her Lord,  
And I her husband contradict the banes.  
If you will marry, make your loue to me,  
My Lady is bespoke. Thou art arm'd Gloster,  
If none appeare to proue vpon thy head,  
Thy hainous, manifest, and many treasons,  
There is my pledge, Ile proue it on thy heart  
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing lesse  
Then I haue heere proclaim'd thee.

*Reg.* Sicke, ô sicke.

*Gon.* If not, Ile nere trust poyson.

*Bast.* Ther's my exchange, what in the world he is,  
That names me traitor, villain-like he lyes,  
Call by thy Trumpet, he that dares approach  
On him, on you, who not, I will maintaine  
My truth and honor firmly.

*Alb.* A Herald ho.

*Bast.* A herald ho, a herald.

*Alb.* Trust to thy single vertue, for thy soldiers  
All leuied in my name, haue in my name tooke their discharge.

*Reg.* This sicknesse growes vpon me.

*Alb.* She is not well, conuey her to my tent,

L

Come



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Come hither Herald, let the Trumpet sound, and read out this.

*Cap.* Sound Trumpet.

*Her.* If any man of quality or degree, in the host of the Army, will maintaine vpon *Edmund*, supposed Earle of Gloucester, that he's a manifold traitor, let him appeare at the thirde sound of the Trumpet: he is bold in his defence.

*Bast.* Sound. Againe.

*Enter Edgar at the third sound, with a trumpet before him.*

*Alb.* Aske him his purposes, why he appeares  
Vpon this call o'th trumpet?

*Her.* What are you? your name and quality?  
And why you answer this present summons?

*Edg.* O know my name is lost by Treasons tooth:  
Bare-gnawne and canker-bit,  
Where is the aduersary I come to cope with all?

*Alb.* What is that aduersary?

*Edg.* What's he that speakes for *Edmund* Earle of Gloster?

*Bast.* Himselfe, what sayst thou to him?

*Edg.* Draw thy sword,  
That if my speech offend a noble heart, thy arme  
May do thee iustice, heere is mine:  
Behold it is the priuiledge of my tongue,  
My oath and profession. I protest,  
Maugre thy strength, youth, place and eminence,  
Despight thy victor, sword, and fire new fortun'd,  
Thy valor, and thy heart, thou art a traitor:  
False to the gods, thy brother, and thy father,  
Conspicuate gainst this high illustrious Prince,  
And from th'extremest vpward of thy head,  
To the descent and dust beneath thy feet,  
A most toad-spotted traitor: say thou no,  
This sword, this arme, and my best spirits,  
Is bent to proue vpon thy heart, whereto I speake thou lyest.

*Bast.* In wisdome I should aske thy name,  
But since thy outside lookes so faire and warlike,  
And that thy being some say of breeding breathes,  
By right of knight-hood I disdain and spurne,

With

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With the hell hatedly ore-turn'd thy heart,  
Which for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,  
This sword of mine shall giue them instant way,  
Where they shall rest for euer, Trumpets speake.

*Alb.* Saue him, saue him.

*Gen.* This is meeke practise Gloster, by the law of Armes  
Thou art not bound to offer an vknowne opposite,  
Thou art not vanquisht, but coulned and beguild.

*Alb.* Stop your mouth Dame, or with this paper shall I stop  
it: thou worse then any thing, reade thine owne euill. Nay, no  
tearing Lady, I perceiue you know't.

*Gen.* Say if I do, the lawes are mine not thine, who shal araign  
me for it.

*Alb.* Monster, knowst thou this paper?

*Gen.* Aske me not what I know.

*Exit Genorill.*

*Alb.* Go after her, she's desperate, gouerne her.

*Bast.* What you haue charg'd me with, that haue I done,  
And more, much more, the time will bring it out.  
Tis past, and so am I: but what art thou that hast this fortune on  
me? If thou beest noble, I do forgiue thee.

*Edg.* Let's exchange charity,  
I am no lesse in blood then thou art *Edmund*,  
If more, the more thou hast wrongd me.  
My name is *Edgar*, and thy fathers sonne,  
The Gods are iust, and of our pleasant vertues  
Make instruments to scourge vs: the darke and vicious place  
Where he thee got, cost him his eyes.

*Bast.* Thou hast spoken truth,  
The wheele is come full circkled, I am heere.

*Alb.* Me thought thy very gate did prophesie  
A royall noblenesse, I must embrace thee,  
Let sorow split my heart: if I did euer hate thee or thy father.

*Edg.* Worthy Prince I know it.

*Alb.* Where haue you hid your selfe?  
How haue you knowne the miseries of your father?

*Edg.* By nursing them my Lord,  
List a breefe tale, and when tis told,

L 2

O



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O that my heart would burst. The bloody proclamation  
To escape that followed me so neere,  
(O our liues sweetnesse, that with the paine of death  
VVould hourly dye, rather then dye at once)  
Taught me to shift into a mad-mans rags,  
To assume a semblance that very dogges disdain'd:  
And in this habit met I my father with his bleeding rings,  
The precious stones new lost; Became his guide,  
Led him, begd for him, sau'd him from dispaire.  
Neuer (O Father) reueald my selfe vnto him,  
Vntill some halfe houre past when I was arm'd,  
Not sure, though hoping of this good successe,  
I askt his blessing, and from first to last  
Told him my pilgrimage: but his flawd heart,  
Alacke too weake the conflict to support,  
Twixt two extremes of passion, ioy and greefe,  
Burst smilingly.

*Bast.* This speech of yours hath moued me,  
And shall perchance do good, but speake you on,  
You looke as you had something more to say.

*Alb.* If there be any more more wofull, hold it in,  
For I am almost readie to dissolve.

*Edg.* This would haue seem'd a period to such  
As loue not sorrow, but another to amplifie too much,  
VVould make much more, and top extremity.  
VVhilst I was big in clamor, came there in a man,  
VVho hauing seene me in my worst estate,  
Shund my abhord society: but then finding  
Who twas that so indur'd, with his strong armes  
He fastened on my necke, and bellowd out  
As hee'd burst heauen, threw me on my father,  
And told the pitteous tale of *Lear* and him,  
That euer eare receiued, which in recounting  
His greefe grew puisant, and the strings of life  
Began to cracke twice, then the trumpets sounded,  
And there I left him traunst.

*Alb.* But who was this?

*Edg.*

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*Edg.* Kent sir, the banisht Kent, who in disguise,  
Followed his enemy king, and did him seruice,  
Improper for a slaue.

*Enter one with a bloody knife.*

*Gent.* Helpe, helpe.

*Alb.* What kinde of helpe? what meanes that bloody knife?

*Gent.* Its hot, it smokes, it came euen from the heart of

*Alb.* Who man? speake.

*Gent.* Your Lady sir, your Lady; and her sister  
By her is poyson'd: she has confest it.

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

*Alb.* Produce their bodies be they aliue or dead:  
This iustice of the heauens that makes vs tremble,  
Touches not with pity.

*Enter Kent*

*Edg.* Here comes Kent sir.

*Alb.* O tis he, the time will not allow  
The complement that very manners vrge.

*Kent.* I am come to bid my King and master aye good night,  
Is he not heere?

*Alb.* Great things of vs forgot. Speake *Edmund*, where's the  
king, and wher's *Cordelia*? Seest thou this object Kent?

*The bodies of Conorill & Regan are brought in.*

*Kent.* Alacke, why thus.

*Bast.* Yet *Edmund* was belou'd: the one the other poysond for  
my sake, and after slew her selfe.

*Alb.* Euen so, couer their faces.

*Bast.* I pant for life: some good I meane to do despite of my  
owne nature. Quickly send, bee briefe, into the Castle for my  
Writ, tis on the life of *Lear*, & on *Cordelia*: nay, send in time.

*Alb.* Run, run, O run.

*Edg.* To who my Lord? who hath the office?  
Send thy token of repreue.

*Bast.* Well thought on, take my sword, giue it the Capitaine.

*Alb.* Hast thee for thy life.

*Bast.* He hath commission from thy wife & me, to hang *Cor-*  
*delia* in the prison, and to lay the blame vpon her own despaire.



*The History of King Lear.*

*Alb.* The Gods defend her, beare him hence a while.

*Enter Lear with Cordelia in his armes.*

*Lear.* Howle, howle, howle, howle: O you are men of stones,  
Had I your tongues and eyes, I would vse them so,  
That heauens vault should cracke: O, she is gone for euer.  
I know when one is dead, and when one liues,  
Shees dead as earth: Lend me a looking-glasse,  
If that her breath will mist and staine the stone, she then liues.

*Kent.* Is this the promist end?

*Edg.* Or image of that horror? *Alb.* Fall and cease.

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

*Kent.* A my good master.

*Lear.* Prethee away.

*Edg.* Tis Noble *Kent* your friend.

*Lear.* A plague vpon you murderous traitors all, I might haue  
saued her, now shees gone for euer: *Cordelia, Cordelia,* stay a li-  
cle. What ist thou sayst? her voice was euer soft, gentle & low,  
an excellent thing in women. I kild the slaue that was a hanging  
thee.

*Cap.* Tis true my Lords hee did.

*Lear.* Did I not fellow? I ha seene the day, that with my bi-  
ting Fauchion I would haue made them skip: I am old now, and  
these same crosses spoile me. Who are you? Mine eyes are none  
o'th best, Ile tell you straight.

*Kent.* If Fortune bragd of two she loued or hated,  
One of them we behold.

*Lear.* Are not you *Kent*?

*Kent.* The same your seruant *Kent*, wher is your seruant *Caius*?

*Lear.* Hees a good fellow, I can tell that,  
Heel strike and quickly too, hees dead and rotten.

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

*Lear.* Ile see that straight.

*Kent.* That from your life of difference and decay,  
Haue followed your sad steps.

*Lear.* You are welcome hether.

*Kent.* Nor no man else: All's cheerelesse, darke, and deadly,  
Your eldest daughters haue fore-doom'd themselves,

And

*The History of King Lear.*

And desperately are dead. *Lear.* So I thinke too.

*Alb.* He knowes not what he sees, and vaine it is  
That we present vs to him.

*Edgar* Very bootlesse.

*Enter Captaine*

*Cap.* *Edmund* is dead my Lord.

*Alb.* Thats but a trifle heere: you Lords and Noble friends,  
know our intent, what comfort to this decay may come, shalbe  
applied: for vs we will resigne during the life of this old maicsty  
to him our absolute power, you to your rights with boote, and  
such addition as your honors haue more then merited, al friends  
shall taste the wages of their vertue, and all foes the cup of their  
deseruings: O see, see.

*Lear.* And my poore foole is hangd: no, no life, why should  
a dog, a horse, a rat haue life, and thou no breath at all? O thou  
wilt come no more, neuer, neuer, neuer: pray vndo this button;  
thanke you sir, O, o, o, o, o.

*Edg.* He faints, my Lord, my Lord.

*Lear.* Breake heart, I prethe breake.

*Edg.* Looke vp my Lord.

*Kent.* Vex not his ghost, O let him passe,  
he hates him much, that would vpon the wracke  
Of this rough world stretch him out longer.

*Edg.* O he is gone indeed.

*Kent.* The wonder is, he hath endured so long,  
He but vsurpt his life.

*Duke.* Beare them from hence, our present businesse  
Is to generall woe: friends of my soule, you twaine  
Rule in this kingdome, and the good state sustaine.

*Kent.* I haue a journey sir, shortly to go,  
My master cals, and I must not say no.

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

*FINIS.*



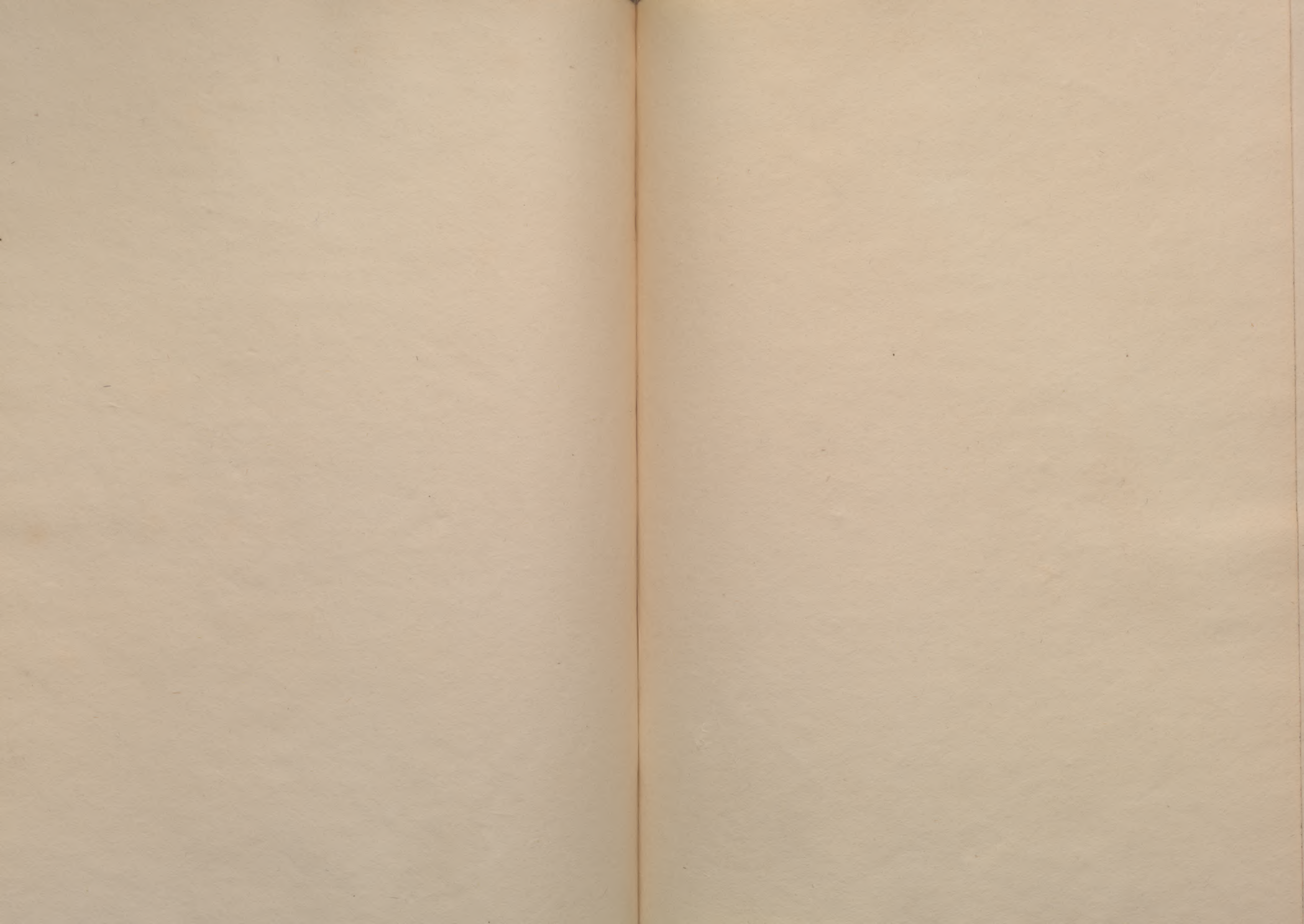


















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KING

LEAR

W. M.

SHAKESPEARE

1608