



**BRAVE SPIRITS THEATRE  
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REHEARSAL SCRIPT  
*A King and No King*  
2017

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*A King and No King*

by Francis Beaumont & John Fletcher

Directed by

Cassie Ash

February - March 2017

1.1

*Enter MARDONIUS and BESSUS*

MARDONIUS        Bessus, the King has made a fair hand on't, has ended the wars at a  
 blow, would my sword had a closed basket hilt to hold wine, and the blade would  
 make knives, for we shall have nothing but eating and drinking.

BESSUS            We that are commanders shall do well enough.

MARDONIUS        Faith, Bessus, such commanders as thou may. I'll say so much i'  
 thy behalf, and yet thou art valiant enough upon a retreat, I think thou wouldst kill  
 any man that stopp'd thee an thou couldst.

10    BESSUS            But was not this a brave combat, Mardonius?

MARDONIUS        Why, didst thou see't?

BESSUS            You stood with me.

MARDONIUS        I did so, but methought thou winkst at every blow they struck.

BESSUS            Well, I believe there are better soldiers than I that never saw two  
 princes fight in lists.

MARDONIUS        By my troth, I think so too Bessus, many a thousand.

BESSUS            'Twas bravely done of our king. To take a prince prisoner in the  
 heart of his own country in single combat.

MARDONIUS        See how thy blood curdles at this, I think thou wouldst be  
 20        contented to be beaten in this passion.

BESSUS            Let me not live, if I do not think it is a braver piece of service than  
 that I'm so fam'd for.

MARDONIUS        Why, art thou fam'd for any valor?

BESSUS            Ay, fam'd, ay, I warrant you.

MARDONIUS        I am very heartily glad on't. I have been with thee ever since thou  
                          cam'st a' th' wars, and this is the first word that ever I heard on't, prithee who fames  
                          thee?

BESSUS             The Christian world.

MARDONIUS        'Tis heathenishly done of them, in my conscience, thou deserv'st it  
 30                    not.

BESSUS             Yes, I ha' done good service.

MARDONIUS        I do not know how thou may'st wait of a man in's chamber, or thy  
                          agility in shifting a trencher, but otherwise no service good Bessus.

BESSUS             You saw me do the service yourself.

MARDONIUS        Not so hasty, sweet Bessus, where was it, is the place vanish'd?

BESSUS             At Bessus' Desperate Redemption.

MARDONIUS        'Bessus' Desperate Redemption,' where's that?

BESSUS             There where I redeemed the day, the place bears my name.

MARDONIUS        If I were not a very merrily dispos'd man, what would become of  
 40                    thee? One that had but a grain of choler in the whole composition of his body would  
                          send thee of an errand to the worms, for putting thy name upon that field. Did not I  
                          beat thee there i' th' head a' th' troops with a truncheon, because thou wouldst needs  
                          run away with thy company when we should charge the enemy?

BESSUS             True, but I did not run.

MARDONIUS        Thou knowst, and so do I, thou meanst to fly, and thy fear making  
                          thee mistake, thou ran'st upon the enemy, and a hot charge thou gav'st, as I'll do thee  
                          right, thou art furious in running away, and I think we owe thy fear for our victory. If

I were the King, and were sure thou wouldst mistake always, and run away upon the enemy, thou shouldst be general by this light.

50 BESSUS                    You'll never leave this till I fall foul.

MARDONIUS            No more such words, dear Bessus, for though I have ever known thee a coward, and therefore durst never strike thee, yet if thou proceedst, I will allow thee valiant, and beat thee.

BESSUS                    Come, come, our king's a brave fellow.

MARDONIUS            He is so, Bessus. I wonder how thou com'st to know it. But if thou wert a man of understanding, I would tell thee he is vainglorious, and humble, and angry, and patient, and merry, and dull, and joyful, and sorrowful, in extremities in an hour. Do not think me thy friend for this, for if I car'd who knew it, thou shouldst not hear it, Bessus. Here he is, with the prey in his foot.

60

1.2                        *Enter ARBACES and TIGRANES, with attendants*

ARBACES                Thy sadness, brave Tigranes, takes away  
 From my full victory. You are free as I.  
 To be my prisoner, is to be more free  
 Than you were formerly, and never think  
 The man I held worthy to combat me  
 Shall be us'd servilely. Thy ransom is  
 To take my only sister to thy wife;  
 A heavy one, Tigranes, for she is  
 70 A lady that the neighbor princes send

Blanks to fetch home. I have been too unkind  
 To her, Tigranes, she but nine year old  
 I left her, and ne'er saw her since. Your wars  
 Have held me long. She was a pretty child  
 Then, I was little better; but now fame  
 Cries loudly on her, and my messengers  
 Make me believe she is a miracle;  
 She'll make you shrink, as I did, with a stroke,  
 But of her eye, Tigranes.

80 TIGRANES

Is it the course of

Iberia, to use their prisoners thus?  
 Had Fortune thrown my name above Arbaces,  
 I should not thus have talk'd: for in Armenia  
 We hold it base; you should have kept your temper,  
 Till you saw home again, where 'tis the fashion  
 Perhaps, to brag.

ARBACES

Be you my witness, earth:

90

Need I to brag, doth not this captive prince  
 Speak me sufficiently, and all the acts  
 That I have wrought upon his suffering land?  
 Should I then boast? Where lies that foot of ground  
 Within his whole realm that I have not pass'd  
 Fighting, and conquering? Far then from me



At their own foulness. Nature did her wrong  
 To print continual conquest on her cheeks,  
 And make no man worthy for her to take,  
 120 But me that am too near her; and as strangely  
 She did for me. But you will think I brag.

MARDONIUS I do, I'll be sworn. Thy valor and thy passions sever'd would have  
 made two excellent fellows in their kinds, would one of 'em were away.

TIGRANES Were she as virtuous as she would be thought,  
 So perfect, that no one of her own sex  
 Would find a want, had she so tempting fair,  
 That she could wish it off her damning souls,  
 I would pay any ransom, twenty times,  
 Rather than meet her married in my bed.  
 130 Perhaps I have a love, where I have fix'd  
 Mine eyes, not to be mov'd, and she on me,  
 I am not fickle.

ARBACES Is that all the cause?  
 Trust me Tigranes, she can do as much  
 In peace, as I in war; she'll conquer too.  
 You shall see if you have the power to stand  
 The force of her swift looks. If you dislike,  
 I'll send you home with love, and name your ransom  
 Some other way, but if she be your choice





Each minute--let me hear thee speak again  
 And thou art earth again--why this is like  
 Tigranes' speech, that needs would say, I bragg'd.  
 He said I boasted; speak, Mardonius,  
 Did I? He will not answer. O my temper!  
 I give you thanks above, that taught my heart  
 Patience, I can endure his silence. What, will none  
 170 Vouchsafe to give me audience? Am I grown  
 To such a poor respect, or do you mean  
 To break my wind? Speak, speak, so'one one of you,  
 Or else by Heaven--

1 GENTLEMAN

So please your--

ARBACES

Monstrous!

I cannot be heard out, they cut me off  
 As if I were too saucy; I will live  
 In woods, and talk to trees, they will allow me  
 To end what I begin. The meanest subject  
 180 Can find a freedom to discharge his soul,  
 And not I; now it is a time to speak,  
 I hearken.

1 GENTLEMAN

May it please--

ARBACES

I mean not you,

Did not I stop you once?

2 GENTLEMAN I hope your majesty--

ARBACES Thou draw'st thy words  
That I must wait an hour, where other men  
Can hear in instants.

190 2 GENTLEMAN An't please your majesty--

ARBACES Wilt thou devour me? This is such a rudeness  
As yet you never showed me, and I want  
Power to command me, else Mardonius  
Would speak at my request.

MARDONIUS Truth will offend you.

ARBACES You take all great care what will offend me,  
When you dare to utter such things as these.

MARDONIUS You told Tigranes, you had won his land  
With that sole arm, propp'd by divinity.

200 Was not that bragging, and a wrong to us  
That daily venture lives?

ARBACES O that thy name  
Were great as mine, that I might combat thee;  
I would through all the regions habitable  
Search thee, and having found thee, with my sword  
Drive thee about the world, till I had met  
Some place that yet man's curiosity  
Hath miss'd of. There, there would I strike thee dead.



my king, from amongst men, I should have chose you out to love above the rest, nor can this challenge thanks. For my own sake I should have doted, because I would have lov'd the most deserving man, for so you are.

ARBACES           Alas, Mardonius, rise, you shall not kneel;  
                           We all are soldiers, and all venture lives,  
                           And where there is no difference in men's worths,  
                           Titles are jests. Who can out value thee?

MARDONIUS       Sir, you did promise you would hear me out.

240 ARBACES        And so I will. Speak freely, for from thee  
                           Nothing can come but worthy things and true.

MARDONIUS       Though you have all this worth, you hold some qualities that do  
                           eclipse your virtues.

ARBACES           Eclipse my virtues?

MARDONIUS       Yes, your passions, which are so manifold, that they appear even in  
                           this: when I commend you, you hug me for that truth; when I speak of your faults,  
                           you make a start and fly the hearing. But--

ARBACES           When you commend me? O that I should live  
                           To need such commendations. If my deeds  
 250                    Blew not my praise themselves above the earth,  
                           I were most wretched. Spare your idle praise.  
                           If thou didst mean to flatter, and should'st utter  
                           Words in my praise, that thou thoughtst impudence,  
                           My deeds should make 'em modest.

MARDONIUS           How ever you will use me after, yet for your own promise sake,  
                           hear me the rest.

ARBACES             I will, and after call unto the winds,  
                           For they shall lend as large an ear as I  
                           To what you utter: speak.

260 MARDONIUS        Would you but leave these hasty tempers, which I do not say take  
                           from you all your worth, but darken 'em, then you would shine indeed.

ARBACES             Well.

MARDONIUS        Yet I would have you keep some passions, lest men should take  
                           you for a god, your virtues are such.

ARBACES             Why now you flatter.

MARDONIUS        I never understood the word. Were you no king, and free from  
                           these wild moods, should I choose a companion for wit and pleasure, it should be  
                           you; or for honest, to interchange my bosom with, it would be you; or valor to defend  
                           my reputation, still I would find out you, for you are fit to fight for all the world. Now  
 270 I have spoke, consider to yourself, find out a use. If so, then what shall fall to me is  
                           not material.

ARBACES             Is not material? More than ten such lives  
                           As mine, Mardonius, it was nobly said.  
                           Thou hast spoke truth, and boldly, such a truth  
                           As might offend another. I have been  
                           Too passionate, and idle, thou shall see  
                           A swift amendment. It troubles me



ARBACES Faith, 'tis a very disputable question, yet I think thou canst decide it.

BESSUS Your majesty has a good opinion of my understanding.

ARBACES I have so good an opinion of it. 'Tis whether thou be valiant.

BESSUS Somebody has traduc'd me to you. Do you see this sword, sir?

ARBACES Yes.

BESSUS If I do not make my back-biters eat it to a knife within this week,  
say I am not valiant.

1.4

[Enter a MESSENGER]

MESSENGER Health to your majesty.

310 ARBACES From Gobrius?

MESSENGER Yes, sir.

ARBACES How does he, is he well?

MESSENGER In perfect health.

ARBACES Thank thee for thy good news. [Exit MESSENGER]

BESSUS The King starts back.

MARDONIUS His blood goes back as fast.

BESSUS And now it comes again.

MARDONIUS He alters strangely.

ARBACES The hand of heaven is on me; be it far

320 From me to struggle.

MARDONIUS This is strange, sir, how do you?

ARBACES Mardonius, my mother--

MARDONIUS Is she dead?



ARBACES                   Alas, she's not so happy. Thou dost know  
                                   How she hath labor'd since my father died  
                                   To take by treason hence this loathéd life,  
                                   That would but be to serve her. I have pardon'd  
                                   And pardon'd, and by that have made her fit  
                                   To practise new sins, not repent the old.

330                            She now has hired a slave to come from thence  
                                   And strike me here, whom Gobrius sifting out,  
                                   Took, and condemn'd, and executed there.

MARDONIUS               Sir, let her bear her sins on her own head,  
                                   Vex not yourself.

ARBACES    What will the world  
                                   Conceive of me? With what unnatural sins  
                                   Will they suppose me laden, when my life  
                                   Is sought by her that gave it to the world?  
                                   But yet he writes me comfort here: my sister  
                                   He says is grown in beauty, and in grace,  
                                   In all the innocent virtues that become  
                                   A tender, spotless maid. She stains her cheeks  
                                   With mourning tears to purge her mother's ill,  
                                   And 'mongst her sacred dew she mingles prayers,  
                                   Her pure oblations for my safe return.

340

MARDONIUS               I ne'er saw such sudden extremities.                       *Exeunt all*

1.5

*Enter TIGRANES and SPACONIA*

TIGRANES

Why, wilt thou have me die, Spaconia,

What should I do? Am I not a slave

350

To him that conquer'd me?

SPACONIA

That conquer'd thee,

Tigranes, he has won but half of thee,

Thy body, but thy mind may be as free

As his, his will did never combat thine

And take it prisoner--

TIGRANES

But if he by force

Convey my body hence, what helps it me

Or thee to be unwilling?

SPACONIA

O Tigranes,

360

I know you are to see a lady there,

To see and like, I fear: perhaps the hope

Of her makes you forget me ere we part.

Be happier than you know to wish: farewell.

TIGRANES

Spaconia, stay, and hear me what I say:

Part with me thou shalt not. I've paid a captain

That goes unto Iberia from the King,

That he would place a lady of our land

With the King's sister that is offer'd me;

Thither shall you, and being once got in,

370 Persuade her by what subtle means you can

To be as backward in her love as I.

SPACONIA Can you imagine that a longing maid

When she beholds you, can be pull'd away

With words from loving you?

TIGRANES Dispraise my health,

My honesty, and tell her I am jealous.

SPACONIA Why, I had rather lose you. Can my heart

Consent to let my tongue throw out such words,

And I that ever yet spoke what I thought

380 Shall find it such a thing at first to lie.

TIGRANES Yet do thy best.

*Enter BESSUS*

BESSUS What, is your majesty ready?

TIGRANES There is the lady, Captain.

BESSUS Sweet lady, by your leave, I could wish myself more full of  
courtship for your fair sake.

SPACONIA Sir, I shall find no want of that.

BESSUS Lady, you must haste, I have received new letters from the King,  
that requires more speed than I expected. He will follow me suddenly himself, and  
390 begins to call for your majesty already.

TIGRANES He shall not do so long.

BESSUS Sweet lady, shall I call you to my charge hereafter?



2.1 *Enter* GOBRIUS, BACURIUS, ARANE, PANTHEA, *with* ATTENDANTS

GOBRIUS                    My Lord Bacurius, you must have regard  
                                   Unto the Queen: she is your prisoner,  
                                   'Tis at your peril if she make escape.

400    BACURIUS            My lord, I know't, yet shall not shame to say  
                                   I sorrow for her.

GOBRIUS                                    So do I, my lord.  
                                   I sorrow for her that so little grace  
                                   Doth govern her, that she should stretch her arm  
                                   Against her king.

ARANE                                    Thou know'st the reason why,  
                                   Dissembling as thou art, and wilt not speak.

GOBRIUS                    There is a lady takes not after you.  
                                   Her father is within her, that good man  
 410                                    Whose tears paid down his sins. Mark how she weeps.

ARANE                                    You talk to me as having got a time  
                                   Fit for your purpose; but you know I know  
                                   You speak not what you think.

GOBRIUS                    Why, is not all that's past beyond your help?

ARANE                                    I know it is.

GOBRIUS                                    Nay, should you publish it  
                                   Before the world, think you 'twill be believ'd?

ARANE                                    I know it would not.

420           GOBRIUS           Nay, should I join with you,  
                                   Should we not both be torn? And yet both die  
                                   Uncredited?

                  ARANE                                   I think we should.

                  GOBRIUS                                   Why then  
                                   Take you such violent courses? As for me,  
                                   I do but right in saving of the King  
                                   From all your plots.

                  ARANE                                   The King?

                  GOBRIUS                                   I bade you rest  
                                   With patience, and a time would come for me  
 430                            To reconcile all to your own content.  
                                   But by this way you take away my power,  
                                   And what was done unknown was not by me,  
                                   But you, your urging; being done,  
                                   I must preserve mine own. But time may bring  
                                   All this to light, and happily for all.

                  ARANE                                   Accurst be this overcurious brain,  
                                   That gave that plot a birth; accurst this womb,  
                                   That after did conceive to my disgrace.

440

2.2

*Enter BESSUS and SPACONIA*

BESSUS                   Health to my Lord Protector, from the King these letters, and to  
your grace, madam, these.

GOBRIUS                How does his majesty?

BESSUS                As well as conquest by his own means and his valiant  
commanders' can make him. Your letters will tell you all.

PANTHEA               I will not open mine till I do know  
My brother's health; good captain, is he well?

450 BESSUS               As the rest of us that fought are.

PANTHEA               But how's that, is he hurt?

BESSUS                He's a strange soldier that gets not a knock--

PANTHEA               I do not ask how strange that soldier is  
That gets no hurt, but whether he have one.

BESSUS                He had diverse.

PANTHEA                               And is he well again?

BESSUS                Well again, an't please your grace. Why I was run twice through  
the body, and shot i'th' head with a cross arrow, and yet am well again.

PANTHEA               I do not care how thou dost, is he well?

460 BESSUS               Not care how I do?

GOBRIUS               The King is well, and will be here tomorrow.

PANTHEA               My prayers are heard; now I will open mine.

GOBRIUS               Bacurius, I must ease you of your charge:  
Madam, he has forgiven you freely,

Your own will is your law, be where you please.

ARANE I thank him.

BACURIUS Madam, be wise hereafter.

2.3 [Exit ARANE]

I am glad I have lost this office.

470 Good Captain Bessus, tell us the discourse  
Between Tigranes and our king, and how  
We got the victory.

PANTHEA I prithee do,  
And if my brother were in any danger,  
Let not thy tale make him abide there long,  
Before thou bring him off, for all that while  
My heart will beat.

BESSUS Madam, let what will beat, I must tell truth, and thus it was: they  
fought single in lists but one to one-- as for my own part I was dangerously hurt but  
480 three days before, else perhaps we had been two to two. I cannot tell, some thought  
we had, and the occasion of my hurt was this: the enemy had made trenches.

BACURIUS Captain, without the manner of your hurt be much material to this  
business, we'll hear it some other time.

PANTHEA Ay, I prithee leave it, and go on with my brother.

BESSUS I will, but 'twould be worth your hearing. To the lists they came,  
and single sword and gauntlet was their fight.

PANTHEA Alas.



BESSUS                    Without the lists there stood some dozen captains of either side  
                                  mingled, all which were sworn, and one of those was I. And 'twas my chance to  
 490                            stand near a captain of the enemy's side called Tiribasus, valiant they said he was.  
                                  Whilst these two kings were stretching themselves, this Tiribasus cast something  
                                  a scornful look on me, and ask'd me whom I thought would overcome. I smiled,  
                                  and told him if he would fight with me, he should perceive by the event of that  
                                  whose king would win. Something he answered, and a scuffle was like to grow,  
                                  when one Zipetus offer'd to help him. I--

PANTHEA                All this is of thyself. I prithee, Bessus,  
                                  Tell something of my brother, did he nothing?

BESSUS                Why yes, I'll tell your grace. They were not to fight till the word  
                                  given, which for my own part, by my troth, I was not to give--

500 PANTHEA                See, for his own part.

BACURIUS              I fear yet this fellow's abus'd with a good report.

BESSUS                I, but I--

PANTHEA                Still of himself.

BESSUS                --cried, give the word, when, as some of them said Tigranes was  
                                  stooping, but the word was not given then, when one Cosroes of the enemy's part held  
                                  up his finger to me, which is as much with us marshalists, as 'I will fight with you'. I  
                                  said not a word, nor made sign during the combat, but that once done--

PANTHEA                He slips o'er all the fight.

BESSUS                I call'd him to me. 'Cosroes', said I--

510 PANTHEA                I will hear no more.

BESSUS No, no, I lie.

BACURIUS I dare be sworn thou dost.

BESSUS 'Captain', said I, 'twas so.

PANTHEA I tell thee, I will hear no further.

BESSUS No, your grace will wish you had.

PANTHEA I will not wish it. What is this, the lady my brother writes to me to  
take?

BESSUS An't please your grace, this is she. Charge, will you come nearer  
the princess?

520 PANTHEA You're welcome from your country, and this land  
Shall show unto you all the kindnesses  
That I can make it. What's your name?

SPACONIA Thalestris.

PANTHEA You're very welcome, you have got a letter  
To put you to me that has power enough  
To place mine enemy here.

BESSUS Madam, I dare pass my word for her truth.

SPACONIA My truth.

PANTHEA Why, Captain, do you think I am afraid she'll steal?

530 BESSUS I cannot tell, servants are slippery; but I dare give my word for her,  
and for her honesty. She came along with me, and many favors she did me by the  
way; but by this light, none but what she might do with modesty, to a man of my rank.

PANTHEA Why, Captain, here's nobody thinks otherwise.



At this: he writes he brings along with him  
A husband for you, that same captive prince.

I think there is no lady can affect

560

Another prince, your brother standing by;  
He does eclipse mens' virtues so with his.

SPACONIA

[*aside*] I know a lady may, and more I fear  
Another lady will.

PANTHEA

Would I might see him.

GOBRIUS

Why so you shall. My businesses are great;  
I will attend you when it is his pleasure  
To see you, madam.

PANTHEA

I thank you, good my lord.

*Exit* GOBRIUS

570 2.4

SPACONIA

I do beseech you, madam, send away  
Your other women, and receive from me  
A few sad words, which set against your joys,  
May make 'em shine the more.

PANTHEA

Sirs, leave me all.

[*They go*]

SPACONIA

I kneel a stranger here to beg a thing  
Unfit for me to ask, and you to grant,  
'Tis such another strange, ill-laid request,  
As if a beggar should entreat a king

580 To leave his scepter and his throne to him,  
 And take his rags to wander o'er the world,  
 Hungry and cold.

PANTHEA That were a strange request.

SPACONIA As ill is mine.

PANTHEA Then do not utter it.

SPACONIA Alas, 'tis of that nature that it must  
 Be utter'd, ay, and granted, or I die.

I am asham'd to speak it. I shall seem  
 A strange petitioner, that wish all ill  
 590 To them I beg of, ere they give me ought,  
 Yet so I must. I would you were not fair,  
 Nor wise, for in your ill consists my good.  
 If you were foolish, you would hear my prayer;  
 If foul, you had not power to hinder me:  
 He would not love you.

PANTHEA What's the meaning of it?

SPACONIA Your brother brings a prince into this land  
 Of such a noble shape, so sweet a grace,  
 So full of worth withal, that every maid

600 That looks upon him gives away herself  
 To him forever; and for you to have  
 He brings him. And so mad is my demand,



PANTHEA

Then be fearless,

For if he were a thing 'twixt God and man,

I could gaze on him (if I knew it sin

To love him) without passion. Dry your eyes,

630

I will not hinder you. But I perceive

You are not what you seem. Rise, rise, Thalestris.

If your right name be so.

SPACONIA

Indeed it is not.

Spaconia is my name; but I desire

Not to be known to others.

PANTHEA

Why, by me

You shall not, I will never do you wrong.

What good I can, I will. You are welcome hither.

In company you wish to be commanded,

640

But when we are alone, I shall be ready

To be your servant.

[*Exeunt*]

2.5

*Enter* FOUR HICKS

HICK 1      Come, come, run, run, run.

HICK 2      We shall outgo her.

HICK 3      One were better be hang'd, than carry women out fiddling to these shows.

HICK 4      Is the King hard by?

HICK 1        You heard he with the bottles say, he thought we should come too late,  
                   what abundance of people here is.

650 HICK 4        Let's take our places quickly, we shall have no room else.

HICK 2        The man told us he would walk afoot through the people.

HICK 3        Ay, marry, did he.

HICK 1        Our shops are well look'd to now.

HICK 2        S'life, yonder's my master, I think.

HICK 4        No, 'tis not he.

*Enter two WIVES and PHILIP*

WIFE 1        Lord, how fine the fields be, what sweet living 'tis in the country.

WIFE 2        Ay, poor souls, God help 'em; they live as contentedly as one of us.

WIFE 1        My husband's cousin would have had me gone into the country last year,  
 660        wert thou ever there?

WIFE 2        Ay, poor souls, I was amongst 'em once.

WIFE 1        And what kind of creatures are they, for love of God?

WIFE 2        Very good people, God help 'em.

WIFE 1        Wilt thou go with me down this summer, when I am brought abed?

WIFE 2        Alas, 'tis no place for us.

WIFE 1        Why, prithee?

WIFE 2        Why, you can have nothing there: there's nobody cries 'brooms'.

WIFE 1        No?

WIFE 2        No truly, nor 'milk'.

670 WIFE 1        Nor milk, how do they?





HICK 3           When you will.

WIFE 1           I'll give a crown to meet with you.

HICK 3           At a bawdy house.

WIFE 1           Ay, you are full of your roguery; but if I do meet you, it shall cost me a  
                    fall.

HICKS 1, 2, 4       The King, the King, the King, the King! Now, now, now, now!

700                   *Enter* ARBACES, TIGRANES, MARDONIUS, *and others*

ALL                God preserve your majesty!

ARBACES           I thank you all. Now are my joys at full,  
  
                    When I behold you safe, my loving subjects.  
  
                    By you I grow, 'tis your united love  
  
                    That lifts me to this height.

                    All the account that I can render you  
  
                    For all the love you have bestowed on me,  
  
                    All your expenses to maintain my war,  
  
                    Is but a little word-- you will imagine  
  
710                 'Tis slender payment-- yet 'tis such a word  
  
                    As is not to be bought without our bloods:  
  
                    'Tis peace.

ALL                God preserve your majesty.

ARBACES           See, all good people, I have brought the man,  
  
                    Whose very name you fear'd, a captive home.  
  
                    Behold him, 'tis Tigranes; in your hearts

Sing songs of gladness, and deliverance.

WIFE 1 Out upon him.

WIFE 2 How he looks.

720 HICKS 3 & 4 Hang him, hang him, hang him.

MARDONIUS These are sweet people.

TIGRANES Sir, you do me wrong,  
To render me a scornéd spectacle  
To common people.

ARBACES It was far from me  
To mean it so. If I have ought deserv'd,  
My loving subjects, let me beg of you  
Not to revile this prince, in whom there dwells  
All worth of which the nature of a man  
730 Is capable. Valor beyond compare,  
The terror of his name has stretch'd itself  
Wherever there is sun. And yet for you,  
I fought with him single, and won him too.

ALL The Lord bless your majesty.

TIGRANES So, he has made me amends now, with a speech in commendations  
of himself.

ARBACES If there be any thing in which I may  
Do good to any creature, here speak out,  
For I must leave you, and it troubles me,

740                                    Thus my occasions for the good of you,  
     Are such as calls me from you. When there is  
     A want of any thing, let it be known  
     To me, and I will be a father to you.  
     God keep you all.

*Exeunt nobles*

ALL                                    God bless your majesty.

HICK 1                                Come, shall we go, all's done.

HICK 4                                Ay, for God's sake, I have not made a fire yet.

HICK 2                                Away, away, all's done.

HICK 3                                Content. Farewell, Philip.

750 WIFE 1                                Away, you haltersack you.

HICK 1                                Philip will not fight, he's afraid on's face.

PHILIP                                I, marry am I afraid of my face?

HICK 3                                Thou wouldst be, Philip, if thou saw'st it in a glass; it looks like a visor.

*Exeunt HICKS*

WIFE 1                                You'll be hang'd, sirrah. Come, Philip, walk afore us homeward; did not  
     his majesty say he had brought us home peas for our money?

WIFE 2                                Yes, marry, did he.

WIFE 1                                They are the first I heard on this year, by my troth, I long'd for some of  
     'em; did he not say we should have some?

760 WIFE 2                                Yes, and so we shall anon, I warrant you, have everyone a peck brought  
     home to our houses.

*[Exeunt]*

3.1 *Enter ARBACES and GOBRIUS*

ARBACES My sister take it ill!

GOBRIUS Not very ill,  
 Something unkindly she doth take it, sir,  
 To have her husband chosen to her hands.

ARBACES Why, Gobrius, tell her; I must have her know  
 My will, and not her own must govern her.

770 What, will she marry with some slave at home?

GOBRIUS O she is far from any stubbornness,  
 You much mistake her. But when you behold her,  
 You will be loath to part with such a jewel.

ARBACES To part with her, why Gobrius, art thou mad?  
 She is my sister.

GOBRIUS Sir, I know she is.  
 But It were pity to make poor our land  
 With such a beauty, to enrich another.

ARBACES Pfft, will she have him?

780 GOBRIUS I think she will, sir.

ARBACES 'Tis fit. I will not hear her say she's loath.

GOBRIUS [*Aside*] Heaven bring my purpose luckily to pass,  
 You know 'tis just. [*To him*] Sir, she'll not need constraint,  
 She loves you so.

ARBACES How does she love me? Speak.

GOBRIUS                   She loves you more than people love their health  
That live by labor.

ARBACES   She is not like her mother then?

790   GOBRIUS                   O no, when you were in Armenia,  
I durst not let her know when you were hurt:  
For at the first on every little scratch,  
She kept her chamber, wept, and would not eat  
Till you were well; and many times the news  
Was so long coming, that before we heard  
She was as near her death, as you your health.

ARBACES                   Alas poor soul, but yet she must be rul'd;  
I know not how I shall requite her well,  
I long to see her; have you sent for her,  
To tell her I am ready?

800   GOBRIUS   Sir, I have.

3.2   *Enter TIGRANES and BACURIUS*

BACURIUS                   Sir, here's the Armenian king.

ARBACES                   He's welcome.

BACURIUS                   And the Queen Mother and the Princess wait without.

ARBACES                   Good Gobrius bring them in,   [*Exit* GOBRIUS]

Tigranes, you will think you are arriv'd  
In a strange land, where mothers cast to poison

Their only sons; think you you shall be safe?

810 TIGRANES Too safe I am, sir.

*Enter* GOBRIUS, ARANE, PANTHEA, SPACONIA, MARDONIUS, *and* BESSUS

ARANE As low as this I bow to you, and would  
As low as to my grave, to show a mind  
Thankful for all your mercies.

ARBACES O stand up,  
And let me kneel; the light will be asham'd  
To see observance done to me by you.

ARANE You are my king.

ARBACES You are my mother; rise.  
820 As far be all your faults from your own soul,  
As from my memory.

ARANE Longer to stay  
Were but to draw eyes more attentively  
Upon my shame. That power that kept you safe  
From me preserve you still. *Exit*

ARBACES Your own desires shall be your guard.

PANTHEA Now let me die:  
Since I have seen my lord the King return  
In safety, I have seen all good that life  
830 Can show me; I have ne'er another wish.

GOBRIUS Why does not your majesty speak?

ARBACES To whom?

GOBRIUS To the Princess.

PANTHEA Alas, sir, I am fearful, you do look  
On me, as if I were some loathéd thing  
That you were finding out a way to shun.

MARDONIUS Sir, you should speak to her.

ARBACES Ha?

840 PANTHEA I know I am unworthy, yet not ill,  
Arm'd with which innocence here I will kneel,  
Till I am one with earth, but I will gain  
Some words, and kindness from you.

TIGRANES Will you speak, sir?

ARBACES Speak, am I what I was?  
What art thou that dost creep into my breast,  
And dar'st not see my face? Show forth thyself.  
Up, and be gone, if thou beest love, be gone,  
Or I will tear thee from my wounded flesh.  
I know thou fear'st my words, away.

850 TIGRANES O misery, why should he be so slow,  
There can no falsehood come of loving her,  
Though I have given my faith; she is a thing  
Both to be lov'd and serv'd beyond my faith.  
I would he would present me to her quickly.



PANTHEA Will you not speak at all, are you so far  
From kind words? Say something, though it be  
Poison'd with anger that may strike me dead.

MARDONIUS Have you no life at all? For manhood's sake,  
Let her not kneel, and talk neglected thus;

860 A tree would find a tongue to answer her.

ARBACES You mean this lady, lift her from the earth;  
Why do you let her kneel so long? Alas,  
Madam, your beauty uses to command,  
And not to beg; what is your suit to me?  
It shall be granted, yet the time is short,  
And my affairs are great. But where's my sister?  
I bade she should be brought.

MARDONIUS What, is he mad?

ARBACES Gobrius, where is she?

870 GOBRIUS Sir.

ARBACES Where is she, man?

GOBRIUS Who, sir?

ARBACES Who, hast thou forgot? My sister.

GOBRIUS Your sister, sir?

ARBACES Some one that has a wit, answer; where is she?

BACURIUS Do you not see her there?

ARBACES Where?



TIGRANES

Pssht, this is tedious;

I cannot hold, I must present myself.

And yet the sight of my Spaconia

Touches me, as a sudden thunderclap

Does one that is about to sin.

ARBACES

Away,

No more of this; here I pronounce him traitor,

The direct plotter of my death that names,

Or thinks her for my sister. 'Tis a lie.

910

She is no kin to me, nor shall she be;

If she were any, I create her none.

Come, and answer me, he that is boldest now:

Is that my sister?

MARDONIUS

O this is fine.

BESSUS

No, marry, is she not, an't please your majesty. I never thought she  
was, she's nothing like you.

MARDONIUS

Thou shouldst be hang'd.

PANTHEA

Sir, I will speak but once. By the same power

You make my blood a stranger unto yours

920

You may command me dead, and so much love

A stranger may importune, pray you do.

If this request appear too much to grant,

Adopt me of some other family

By your unquestion'd word.

ARBACES

I will hear no more.

Why should there be such music in a voice,  
 And sin for me to hear it? All the world  
 May take delight in this, and 'tis damnation  
 For me to do so; you are fair, and wise,  
 And virtuous I think, and he is bless'd  
 That is so near you as your brother is.

930

But you are naught to me but a disease.  
 Let me not hear you speak again; yet so  
 I shall but languish for the want of that,  
 The having which would kill me. I'll not toil  
 My body, and my mind too, rest thou there,  
 Here's one within will labor for you both.

PANTHEA

I would I were past speaking.

GOBRIUS

Fear not, madam,

940

The king will alter, 'tis some sudden change,  
 And you shall see it end some other way.

PANTHEA

Pray God it do.

TIGRANES

Though she to whom I swore be here, I cannot  
 Stifle my passion longer. If my father  
 Should rise again disquieted with this,  
 And charge me to forbear, yet it would out.

Madam, a stranger, and a prisoner, begs

To be bid welcome.

PANTHEA

You are welcome, sir,

950

I think, but if you be not, 'tis past me

To make you so, for I am here a stranger,

Greater than you. We know from whence you come,

But I appear a lost thing, and by whom

Is yet uncertain, found here in the court,

And only suffer'd to walk up and down,

As one not worth the owning.

SPACONIA

O, I fear

Tigranes will be caught, he looks, methinks,

As he would change his eyes with her.

960

TIGRANES

Why do you turn away, and weep so fast,

And utter things that misbecome your looks?

Can you want owning?

SPACONIA

O, 'tis certain so.

TIGRANES

Acknowledge yourself mine--

ARBACES

How now?

TIGRANES

And then see if you want an owner--

ARBACES

They are talking.

TIGRANES

Nations shall own you for their queen.

ARBACES

Tigranes, art not thou my prisoner?

970 TIGRANES I am.

ARBACES And who is this?

TIGRANES She is your sister.

ARBACES She is so.

MARDONIUS Is she so again? That's well.

ARBACES And how dare you then offer to change words with her?

TIGRANES Dare do it, why you brought me hither, sir,  
To that intent.

ARBACES Perhaps I told you so.

If I had sworn it, had you so much folly  
980 To credit it? The least word that she speaks  
Is worth a life. Rule your disorder'd tongue,  
Or I will temper it.

SPACONIA Bless'd be that breath.

TIGRANES You talk to me as if I were a prisoner  
For theft. My tongue be temper'd? I must speak  
If thunder check me, and I will.

ARBACES You will.

SPACONIA Alas, my fortune.

TIGRANES Do not fear his frown, dear madam, hear me.

990 ARBACES Fear not my frown? But that 'twere base in me  
To fight with one I know I can o'ercome,  
Again thou shouldst be conquer'd by me.



Whilst I stood stubborn and regardless by,  
 And like a god incensed, gave no ear  
 To all your prayer. Behold, I kneel to you.  
 Show a contempt as large as was my own,  
 1020 And I will suffer it, yet at the last forgive me.  
 PANTHEA O you wrong me more in this,  
 Than in your rage you did: you mock me now.  
 ARBACES Never forgive me then, which is the worst  
 Can happen to me.  
 PANTHEA If you be in earnest,  
 Stand up, and give me but a gentle look,  
 And two kind words, and I shall be in heaven.  
 ARBACES Rise you then too. Here I acknowledge thee  
 My hope, the only jewel of my life,  
 1030 The best of sisters, dearer than my breath,  
 A happiness as high as I could think;  
 And when my actions call thee otherwise,  
 Perdition light upon me.  
 PANTHEA This is better  
 Than if you had not frown'd, it comes to me  
 Like mercy at the block, and when I leave  
 To serve you with my life, your curse be with me.  
 ARBACES Then thus I do salute thee, [*Kiss her*] and again



To make this knot the stronger. [*Kiss again*] Paradise  
 1040 Is there. It may be you are still in doubt;  
 This, this third kiss blots it out. [*Kiss again*] I wade in sin,  
 And foolishly entice myself along.  
 Take her away, see her a prisoner  
 In her own chamber, closely, Gobrius.

PANTHEA Alas, sir, why?  
 ARBACES I must not say the answer, do it.  
 MARDONIUS This is better and better.  
 PANTHEA Yet hear me speak.  
 ARBACES I will not hear you speak;  
 1050 Away with her, let no man think to speak  
 For such a creature: for she is a witch,  
 A poisoner, and a traitor.

GOBRIUS Madam, this office grieves me.  
 ARBACES Bessus, go you too. Go without a word.

*Exeunt all but ARBACES and MARDONIUS*

Why should you that have made me stand in war  
 Like Fate itself, cutting what threads I pleas'd,  
 Decree such an unworthy end of me,  
 And all my glories? What am I alas,  
 1060 That you oppose me? Incest is in me  
 Dwelling already, and it must be holy

That pulls it thence; where art, Mardonius?

MARDONIUS Here, sir.

ARBACES I prithee bear me; my legs

Refuse to bear my body.

MARDONIUS So I shall. *Exeunt*

3.3.1 *Enter BESSUS*

BESSUS They talk of fame. Some will say they could be content to have it,

1070 but that it is to be achieved with danger, but my opinion is otherwise: for if I might  
stand still in cannon proof, and have fame fall upon me, I would refuse it. My  
reputation came principally by thinking to run away, which nobody knows but  
Mardonius, and I think he conceals it to anger me. Before I went to the wars, I came  
to the town a young fellow without means or parts to deserve friends; and my empty  
guts persuaded me to lie, and abuse people for my meat, which I did, and they beat  
me. Then would I fast two days, till my hunger cried out on me, 'rail still'; then  
methought I had a monstrous stomach to abuse them again, and did it. In this state I  
continued till they hung me up by th' heels and beat me with haslet sticks, as if they  
would have roast me, and have cozen'd somebody with me for venison. After this,  
1080 God call'd an aunt of mine, that left two hundred pounds in a cousin's hand for me,  
who, taking me to be a gallant young spirit, rais'd a company for me with the money,  
and sent me into Armenia with 'em. Away I would have run from them, but that I  
could get no company, and alone I durst not run. I was never at battle but once, and  
there I fled with my whole company amongst my enemies, and overthrew 'em. Now

the report of my valor is come over before me, and they say I was a raw young fellow, but now I am improv'd. A plague of their eloquence, 'twill cost me many a beating. And Mardonius might help this to if he would, for now they think to get honor of me, and all the men I have abus'd call me freshly to account, worthily as they call it, by the way of challenge.

1090

3.3.2

*Enter a GENTLEMAN*

GENTLEMAN      Good morrow, Captain Bessus.

BESSUS            Good morrow, sir.

GENTLEMAN      I come to speak with you.

BESSUS            You are very welcome.

GENTLEMAN      From one that holds himself wronged by you some three years since. Your worth, he says, is fam'd, and he nothing doubts but you will do him right, as beseems a soldier.

BESSUS            A pox on 'em, so they cry all.

1100 GENTLEMAN      And a slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me.

BESSUS            'Tis a challenge, sir, is it not?

GENTLEMAN      'Tis an inviting to the field.

BESSUS            An inviting? O cry you mercy, what a complement he delivers it with! He might as agreeably to my nature present me poison with such a speech. [*Reading*] um um um reputation, um um um call you to an account, um um um forc'd to this, um um um with my sword, um um um like a gentleman, um um um dear to

me, um um um satisfaction. 'Tis very well, sir, I do accept it, but he must await an answer this thirteen weeks.

1110 GENTLEMAN        Why, sir, he would be glad to wipe off his stain as soon as he could.

BESSUS                Sir, upon my credit I am already engag'd to two hundred and twelve, all which must have their stains wip'd off, if that be the word before him.

GENTLEMAN        Sir, if you be truly engaged but to one, he shall stay a competent time.

BESSUS                Upon my faith, sir, to two hundred and twelve, and I have a spent body too much bruis'd in battle, so that I cannot fight, I must be plain with you, above three combats a day. All the kindness I can do him, is to set him resolutely in my roll the two hundred and thirteenth man, which is something. For I tell you, I think there will be more after him than before him, I think so; pray ye commend me to him, and  
1120        tell him this.

GENTLEMAN        I will, sir, good morrow to you. *Exit*

BESSUS                Good morrow, good sir. Certainly my safest way were to print myself a coward, with a discovery how I came by my credit, and clap it upon every post: I have received above thirty challenges within this two hours, marry, all but the first I put off with engagement, and by good fortune this first is no madder of fighting than I, so that that's reserv'd. Who's there? 'Tis my Lord Bacurius, I fear all is not well betwixt us.

1130

## 3.3.3

*Enter BACURIUS*

BACURIUS            Now, Captain Bessus, I come about a frivolous matter, caus'd by as  
idle a report: you know you were a coward.

BESSUS              Very right.

BACURIUS            And wrong'd me.

BESSUS              True, my lord.

BACURIUS            But now people will call you valiant, desertlessly I think, yet for  
their satisfaction, I will have you fight with me.

BESSUS              O my good lord, my deep engagements.

1140 BACURIUS            Tell not me of your engagements, Captain Bessus; it is not to be  
put off with an excuse. For my own part, I am none of the multitude that believe your  
conversion from coward.

BESSUS              My lord, I seek not quarrels, and this belongs not to me, I am not to  
maintain it.

BACURIUS            Who then, pray?

BESSUS              Bessus the Coward wrong'd you.

BACURIUS            Right.

BESSUS              And shall Bessus the Valiant, maintain what Bessus the Coward  
did?

1150 BACURIUS            I prithee leave these cheating tricks, I swear thou shalt fight with  
me, or thou shalt be beat extremely, and kick'd.

BESSUS                    Since you provoke me thus far, my lord, I will fight with you; and  
                                  by my sword it shall cost me twenty pounds, but I will have my leg well a week  
                                  sooner purposely.

BACURIUS                Your leg, why what ails your leg? I'll do a cure on you, stand up.

BESSUS                    My lord, this is not noble in you.

BACURIUS                What dost thou with such a phrase in thy mouth? I will kick thee  
                                  out of all good words before I leave thee.

BESSUS                    My lord, I take this as a punishment for the offence I did when I  
 1160                    was a coward.

BACURIUS                When thou wert? Confess thyself a coward still, or by this light,  
                                  I'll beat thee into sponge.

BESSUS                    Why I am one.

BACURIUS                Are you so, sir, and why do you wear a sword then? Come,  
                                  unbuckle, quick.

BESSUS                    My lord.

BACURIUS                Unbuckle I say, and give it me, or as I live, thy head will ache  
                                  extremely.

BESSUS                    It is a pretty hilt, and if your lordship take an affection to it, with  
 1170                    all my heart, I present it to you for a New Year's gift.

BACURIUS                I thank you very heartily, sweet Captain, farewell.

BESSUS                    One word more, I beseech your lordship to render me my knife  
                                  again.



Thou art in hell else: secret scorching flames,  
 That far transcend earthly material fires,  
 Art crept into me, and there is no cure.

1200 MARDONIUS Sir, either I mistake, or there is something hid that you would utter  
 to me.

ARBACES So there is, but yet I cannot do it.

MARDONIUS Out with it, sir, if it be dangerous I shall not shrink to do you  
 service, I shall not esteem my life a weightier matter than indeed it is. Let me but  
 know what I shall do for you.

ARBACES It will not out. Were you with Gobrius,  
 And bade him give my sister all content  
 The place affords, and give her leave to send  
 And speak to whom she please?

1210 MARDONIUS Yes, sir, I was.

ARBACES And did you to Bacurius say as much  
 About Tigranes?

MARDONIUS Yes.

ARBACES That's all my business.

MARDONIUS O say not so,  
 You had an answer of all this before,  
 Besides, I think this business might be utter'd  
 More carelessly.

ARBACES Come, thou shalt have it out. I do beseech thee



1220 By all the love thou hast profess'd to me,  
To see my sister from me.

MARDONIUS Well, and what?

ARBACES That's all.

MARDONIUS That's strange, shall I say nothing to her?

ARBACES Not a word.  
But if thou lovest me, find some subtle way  
To make her understand by signs.

MARDONIUS But what, what should I make her understand?

ARBACES O Mardonius, for that I must be pardon'd.  
1230 Bear her this ring then, and on more advice  
Thou shalt speak to her. Tell her I do love  
My kindred all; wilt thou?

MARDONIUS Is there no more?

ARBACES O yes: and her the best;  
Better than any brother loves his sister.  
That's all.

MARDONIUS Methinks this need not have been delivered with such caution. I'll  
do it.

ARBACES There is more yet. Wilt thou be faithful to me?

1240 MARDONIUS Sir, if I take upon me to deliver it after I hear it, I'll pass through  
fire to do it.

ARBACES I love her better than a brother ought;

Dost thou conceive me?

MARDONIUS I hope I do not, sir.

ARBACES No, thou art dull. Kneel down before her,  
And ne'er rise again, till she will love me.

MARDONIUS Why, I think she does.

ARBACES But better than she does, another way;  
As wives love husbands.

1250 MARDONIUS Why, I think there are few wives that love their husbands better  
than she does you.

ARBACES Thou wilt not understand me: is it fit  
This should be utter'd plainly? Take it then  
Naked as it is: I would desire her love  
Lasciviously, lewdly, incestuously,  
To do a sin that needs must damn us both,  
And thee too. Dost thou understand me now?

MARDONIUS Yes. There's your ring again; what have I done  
Dishonestly in my whole life, name it,  
1260 That you should put so base a business to me?

ARBACES Didst thou not tell me thou wouldst do it?

MARDONIUS Yes, if I undertook it; but if all  
My hairs were lives, I would not be engag'd  
In such a cause to save my last life.

ARBACES O guilt, how poor, and weak a thing art thou!

This man that is my servant, whom my breath  
 Might blow about the world, might beat me here  
 Having his cause, whilst I, press'd down with sin  
 Could not resist him. Dear Mardonius,  
 1270 It was a motion misbeseeming man.

And I am sorry for it.

MARDONIUS Pray God you may be so. You must understand, nothing that you  
 can utter can remove my love and service from my prince. But otherwise, I think I  
 shall not love you more. For you are sinful, and if you do this crime, you ought to  
 have no laws. For after this it will be great injustice in you to punish any offender for  
 any crime. For myself, I find my heart too big, I feel I have not patience to look on  
 whilst you run these forbidden courses. I shall find a dwelling amongst some people,  
 where though our garments perhaps be coarser, we shall be richer far within, and  
 harbor no such vices in 'em. God preserve you, and mend you.

1280 ARBACES Mardonius, stay Mardonius, for though  
 My present state require nothing but knaves  
 To be about me, such as are prepar'd  
 For every wicked act, yet who does know  
 But that my loathéd fate may turn about,  
 And I have use of honest men again.  
 I hope I may, I prithee leave me not.

*Enter BESSUS to them*

BESSUS An't please your majesty, there's the knife.





Worse than my sin, which if I could come by,

Should suffer death eternal, ne'er to rise

In any breast again. Know I will die

Ere I will deal by such an instrument.

Thou art too sinful to employ in this.

1340

If there were no such instruments as thou,

We kings could never act such wicked deeds.

Away I say; I will not do this sin.

*Exit* BESSUS

I'll press it here till it do break my breast;

It heaves to get out, but thou art a sin,

And spite of torture, I will keep thee in.

*[Exit]*

4.1

*Enter* GOBRIUS, PANTHEA, SPACONIA

GOBRIUS Have you written, madam?

PANTHEA Yes, good Gobrius.

1350 GOBRIUS And with a kindness, and such winning words  
 As may provoke him at one instant feel  
 His double fault, your wrong, and his own rashness?

PANTHEA I have sent words enough, if words may win him  
 From his displeasure, and such words I hope  
 As shall gain much upon his goodness, Gobrius.

GOBRIUS Good lady, be not fearful, he loves you,  
 I know it, and I hope I need not further  
 Win you to understand it.

1360 PANTHEA I believe it,  
 Howsoever I am sure I love him dearly,  
 So dearly, that if anything I write  
 For my enlarging, should beget his anger,  
 Heaven be a witness with me, and my faith  
 I had rather live entomb'd here.

GOBRIUS You shall not feel a worse stroke than your grief,  
 I am sorry 'tis so sharp. I kiss your hand,  
 And this night will deliver this true story  
 With this hand to your brother.

*Exit*

PANTHEA Peace go with you,







And country. You have paid me equal, Heavens,  
 And sent my own rod to correct me with:  
 Lay it on, Justice, till my soul melt in me  
 For my unmanly, beastly, sudden doting  
 Upon a new face; after all my oaths.

1420

*Enter BACURIUS and SPACONIA*

BACURIUS                    Lady,  
                                   Your token I acknowledge, you may pass.  
                                   There is the King.

SPACONIA                                    I thank your lordship for't.                    *Exit BACURIUS*

TIGRANES                    She comes, she comes, shame hide me ever from  
                                   Her; would I were buried, or so far remov'd  
                                   Light might not find me out: I dare not see her.

1430

SPACONIA                    Nay, never hide yourself; for were you hid  
                                   Where Earth hides all her riches, near her center,  
                                   My wrongs without more day would light me to you:  
                                   I must speak ere I die. Thou'rt false, false prince,  
                                   I live to see it. Poor Spaconia lives  
                                   To tell thee thou art false, and then no more.  
                                   She lives to tell thee thou art more unconstant  
                                   Than all ill women ever were together;  
                                   Thy faith as firm as raging overflows  
                                   That no bank can command; and as lasting

As boys' gay bubbles blown in the air, and broke.  
 1440 The wind is fix'd to thee. Thou art all  
 That all good men must hate, and if thy store  
 Shall tell succeeding ages what thou wert,  
 O let it spare me in it, lest true lovers  
 In pity of my wrongs burn thy black legend,  
 And with their curses shake thy sleeping ashes.

TIGRANES Oh, oh.

SPACONIA The Destinies I hope have pointed out  
 Our ends alike, that thou may'st die for love,  
 Though not for me. For this assure thyself,  
 1450 The Princess hates thee deadly, and will sooner  
 Be won to marry with a bull, and safer,  
 Then such a beast as thou art. He's asham'd,  
 Alas, I have been too rugged. Dear my lord,  
 I am sorry I have spoken anything,  
 Indeed I am, that may add more restraint  
 To that too much you have. Good sir, be pleas'd  
 To think it was a fault of love, not malice;  
 And do as I will do: forgive it, Prince.  
 I do, and can forgive the greatest sins  
 1460 To me you can repent of; pray believe me.

TIGRANES O my Spaconia! O thou virtuous woman!



MARDONIUS            His fit begins to take him now again. 'Tis a strange fever and 'twill  
shake us all anon, I fear; would he were well cur'd of this raging folly.

ARBACES                I see there's truth in no man, nor obedience,  
But for his own ends. Why did you let her in?

BACURIUS              It was your own command to bar none from him.

1490                      Beside, the Princess sent her ring, sir,  
For my warrant.

ARBACES                A token to Tigranes did she not?  
Sirrah, tell truth.

BACURIUS                            I do not use to lie, sir,  
'Tis no way I eat or live by, and I think  
This is no token, sir.

ARBACES    I'm trifled with.

BACURIUS                Sir.

ARBACES                I know it, as I know thee to be false.

1500 MARDONIUS            Now the clap comes.

BACURIUS                You never knew me so, sir, I dare speak it,  
And durst a worse man tell me, though my better.

MARDONIUS            'Tis well said, by my soul.

ARBACES                Sirrah, you answer as you had no life. I say openly this woman  
carries letters, by my life I know she carries letters, this woman does it. I have found  
it out, this woman carries letters.

- MARDONIUS        If this hold 'twill be an ill world for bawds, chambermaids, and  
                          postboys. I thank God I have none but his letters patents, things of his own inditing.
- ARBACES            Prince, this cunning cannot do it.
- 1510 TIGRANES        What, sir, I reach you not.
- ARBACES            It shall not serve your turn, Prince.
- TIGRANES        Serve my turn, sir?
- ARBACES            Ay, sir, it shall not serve your turn.
- TIGRANES        Be plainer, good sir.
- ARBACES            This woman shall carry no more letters back to your love Panthea,  
                          by heaven, she shall not, I say she shall not.
- MARDONIUS        This would make a saint swear like a soldier.
- TIGRANES        This beats me more, king, than the blows you gave me.
- ARBACES            Take 'em away both, and together let 'em be prisoners, strictly and  
 1520        closely kept, or sirrah, your life shall answer it; and let nobody speak with 'em  
                          hereafter.
- BACURIUS        Well, I am subject to you, and must endure these passions.
- SPACONIA        This is the imprisonment I have look'd for always, and the dear  
                          place I would choose.                    *Exit BACURIUS, TIGRANES and SPACONIA*
- MARDONIUS        Sir, have you done well now?
- ARBACES            Dare you reprove it?
- MARDONIUS        No.
- ARBACES            You must be crossing me.
- MARDONIUS        I have no letters, sir, to anger you,







4.5

*Enter BESSUS and TWO SWORDMEN*

BESSUS

You're very welcome both, gentlemen o' th' sword.

I have been curious in the searching of you,

Because I understood you wise and valiant persons.

1580 SWORD 1

We understand ourselves, sir.

BESSUS

Nay, gentlemen, and my dear friends o' th' sword,

No complement I pray, but to the cause

I hang upon, which in few, is my honor.

SWORD 2

You cannot hang too much, sir, for your honor,

But to your cause, be wise, and speak truth.

BESSUS

My sorest business is, I have been kick'd.

SWORD 2

How far, sir?

BESSUS

Not to flatter myself in it, all over,

My sword forc'd, but not lost; for discreetly

1590

I render'd it, to save that imputation.

SWORD 1

It showed discretion the best part of valor.

SWORD 2

Brother, this is a pretty case, pray ponder on't,

Our friend here has been kick'd.

SWORD 1

He has so, brother.

SWORD 2

Sorely, he says. Now had he sit down here

Upon the mere kick, it had been cowardly.

SWORD 1

I think it had been cowardly indeed.

SWORD 2

But our friend has redeem'd it, in delivering

His sword without compulsion; and that man  
 1600 That took it of him, I pronounce a weak one,  
 And his kicks nullities.  
 He should have kick'd him after the delivery,  
 Which is the confirmation of a coward.  
 SWORD 1 Brother, I take it you mistake the question.  
 For say that I were kick'd--  
 SWORD 2 I must not say so, nor I must not hear it spoke by th' tongue of man.  
 You kick'd dear brother, you are merry.  
 SWORD 1 But put the case I were kick'd.  
 SWORD 2 Let them put it that are things weary of their lives, and know not  
 1610 honor: put case you were kick'd?  
 SWORD 1 I do not say I was kick'd.  
 BESSUS Nay, gentlemen; good sir, to th' question.  
 SWORD 1 Why then I say, suppose your boy kick'd, Captain.  
 SWORD 2 The boy may be suppos'd, he's liable; but kick my brother?  
 SWORD 1 A foolish forward zeal, sir, in my friend;  
 But to the boy, suppose the boy were kick'd?  
 BESSUS I do suppose it.  
 SWORD 1 Has your boy a sword?  
 BESSUS Surely no, I pray.  
 1620 SWORD 1 Suppose a sword too.  
 BESSUS I do suppose it.

SWORD 1            You grant your boy was kick'd then.  
 SWORD 2            By no means, Captain, let it be suppos'd still; this word 'grant'  
                       makes not for us.  
 SWORD 1            I say this must be granted.  
 SWORD 2            This must be granted, brother?  
 SWORD 1            Ay, this must be granted.  
 SWORD 2            Still, the 'must'--  
 SWORD 1            I say this must be granted.  
 1630 SWORD 2            Give me the must again; again; brother, you palter.  
 BESSUS             Nay, look you, gentlemen.  
 SWORD 2            In a word I ha' done.  
 SWORD 1            A tall man, but untemperate; 'tis great pity. Once more, suppose the  
                       boy kick'd.  
 SWORD 2            Forward.  
 SWORD 1            And being throughly kick'd, laughs at the kicker.  
 SWORD 2            So much for us; proceed.  
 SWORD 1            And in this beaten scorn, as I may call it,  
                       Delivers up his weapon: where lies the error?  
 1640 BESSUS            It lies i' th' beating, sir, I found it  
                       Four days since.  
 SWORD 2                            The error, and a sore one,  
                       As I take, lies in the thing kicking.  
 BESSUS             I understand that well, 'tis sore indeed, sir.

SWORD 1            That is according to the man that did it.  
 SWORD 2            There springs a new branch: whose was the fool?  
 BESSUS              A lord's.  
 SWORD 1            The cause is mighty, but had it been two lords,  
                           And both had kick'd you, if you laugh'd, 'tis clear.  
 1650 BESSUS            I did laugh,  
                           But how will that help me, gentlemen?  
 SWORD 1            Yes, it shall help you, if you laugh'd aloud.  
 BESSUS              As loud as a kick'd man could laugh, I laugh'd, sir.  
 SWORD 1            My reason now: the valiant man is known  
                           By suffering and contemning, you have  
                           Enough of both, and you are valiant.  
 SWORD 2            If he be sure he has been kick'd enough.  
                           Embrace him brother, this man is valiant,  
                           I know it by myself he's valiant.  
 1660 SWORD 1            Captain, thou art a valiant gentleman  
                           To abide upon't, a very valiant man.  
 BESSUS              My equal friends o' th' sword, I must request your hands to this.  
 SWORD 2            'Tis fit it should be.  
 BESSUS              Am I clear, gentlemen?  
 SWORD 1            Sir, when the world has taken notice what we have done, make  
                           much of your body, for I'll pawn my steel men will be coyer of their legs hereafter.





ARBACES                   Fie, you come in a step, what do you mean  
                                   Dear sister, do not so. Alas, Panthea,  
                                   Where I am, would you be, why that's the cause  
                                   You are imprison'd, that you may not be  
                                   Where I am.

PANTHEA                   Then I must endure it, sir, God keep you.

ARBACES                   Nay, you shall hear the cause in short. I've lost  
 1720                            The only difference betwixt man and beast:  
                                   My reason.

PANTHEA   Heaven forbid.

ARBACES   Nay it is gone,  
                                   Each sudden passion throws me as it lists,  
                                   And overwhelms all that oppose my will.  
                                   I have beheld thee with a lustful eye.  
                                   My heart is set on wickedness, to act  
                                   Such sins with thee, as I have been afraid  
                                   To think of. If thou dar'st consent to this,  
 1730                            (Which I beseech thee do not) thou may'st gain  
                                   Thy liberty, and yield me a content.  
                                   If not, thy dwelling must be dark, and close  
                                   Where I may never see thee, for God knows,  
                                   That laid this punishment upon my pride,  
                                   Thy sight at some time will enforce my madness.





Than twenty worlds betwixt us.

1760 ARBACES

I have liv'd

To conquer men, and now am overthrown  
 Only by words, 'brother' and 'sister'. Where  
 Have those words dwelling, I will find 'em out  
 And utterly destroy them, but they are  
 Not to be grasp'd. Let 'em be men or beasts,  
 And I will cut 'em from the earth; or towns,  
 And I will raze 'em, and then blow 'em up.

PANTHEA

But 'tis not in the power of any force  
 Or policy to conquer them.

1770 ARBACES

Panthea,

What shall we do? Shall we stand firmly here,  
 And gaze our eyes out?

PANTHEA

Would I could do so,

But I shall weep out mine. Sir, I disturb you,  
 And myself too; 'twere better I were gone.  
 I will not be so foolish as I was.

ARBACES

Stay, we will love just as becomes our births,  
 No otherwise. Brothers and sisters may  
 Walk hand in hand together; so will we.

1780

Come nearer. Is there any hurt in this?

PANTHEA

I hope not.





1830 Or had but in him any noble nature,  
 That might hereafter promise him a good man,  
 My cares were something lighter, and my grave  
 A span yet from me.

MARDONIUS By description

I should now guess him to you. It was Bessus,  
 I dare almost with confidence pronounce it.

LIGONES 'Tis such a scurvy name as Bessus, and now I think 'tis he.

MARDONIUS 'Captain' do you call him? Your daughter was not mad, sir?

LIGONES No, would she had been, the fault had had more credit. I would do  
 something.

1840 MARDONIUS I would fain counsel you, but to what I know not. He's so below a  
 beating, that to hang him were to cast away a rope. He's such an airy, thin, unbodied  
 coward, that no revenge can catch him.

LIGONES I would see him, but I shall have no patience.

MARDONIUS 'Tis no great matter if you have not. 'Tis no news to him to have a  
 leg broke, or a shoulder out. Draw not your sword, if you love it, for on my  
 conscience his head will break it; we use him i' th' wars like a ram to shake a wall  
 withal. Here comes the very person of him; do as you shall find your temper, I must  
 leave you. *Exit MARDONIUS*

1850

5.2

*Enter BESSUS and the SWORDMEN*

LIGONES Is your name Bessus?

BESSUS Men call me Captain Bessus.

LIGONES Then, Captain Bessus, you are a rank rascal, a dirty frozen slave, and with  
the favor of your friends here, I will beat you.

SWORD 2 Pray, use your pleasure, sir.

LIGONES [*Beating him*] Thus, Captain Bessus, thus; thus twinge your nose, thus  
kick, and thus tread you.

BESSUS I do beseech you yield your cause, sir, quickly.

1860 LIGONES Indeed I should have told you that first.

BESSUS I take it so.

SWORD 1 Captain, 'a should indeed, he is mistaken.

LIGONES Sir, you shall have it quickly, and more beating:

You have stol'n away a lady, Captain Coward,

And such a one--

*Beats him.*

BESSUS Hold, I beseech you, hold sir,

I never yet stole any living thing that had a tooth about it.

LIGONES Sirrah, that quits not me. Where is this lady?

Do that you do not use to do: tell truth.

1870 Or by my hand, I'll beat your captain's brains out,

Wash 'em, and put 'em in again, that will I.

BESSUS There was a lady, sir, I must confess,

Once in my charge. The Prince Tigranes gave her

To my guard for her safety; how I us'd her,  
 She may herself report, she's with the Prince now.  
 I did but wait upon her like a groom,  
 Which she will testify I am sure.

LIGONES This is most likely, sir, I ask you pardon,  
 And am sorry I was so intemperate.

1880 But I know your goodness can forget  
 Twenty beatings. You must forgive me.

BESSUS Yes, there's my hand, go where you will, I shall think you a valiant fellow  
 for all this.

LIGONES My daughter is a whore.  
 I feel it now too sensible; yet I will see her,  
 Discharge myself of being mother to her,  
 And then back to my country, and there die.  
 Farewell, Captain.

*Exit* LIGONES

BESSUS Farewell, sir, farewell, commend me to the gentlewoman, I pray.

1890 SWORD 1 How now, Captain? Bear up, man.

BESSUS Gentlemen o' th' sword, your hands once more, I have been kick'd again,  
 but the foolish fellow is penitent, has ask'd me mercy, and my honor's safe.

SWORD 1 There be our hands again.

*Exeunt*

5.3

*Enter LIGONES and BACURIUS*

BACURIUS Sir, your authority is good, and I am glad it is so. Yonder is your king, I'll  
leave you. *Exit*

1900

*Enter TIGRANES and SPACONIA*

LIGONES There he is indeed,  
And with him my disloyal child.

TIGRANES I do perceive my fault so much, that yet  
Methinks thou shouldst not have forgiven me.

LIGONES Health to your majesty.

TIGRANES What! Good Ligones, welcome; what business brought thee hither?

LIGONES Several businesses.  
My public business will appear by this:  
I have a message to deliver, which

1910

If it please you so to authorize, is  
An embassy from th' Armenian state,  
Unto Arbaces, for your liberty.  
The offer's there set down, please you to read it.

TIGRANES [*Reading*] There is no alteration happenéd  
Since I came thence?

LIGONES None, sir, all is as it was.

TIGRANES And all our friends are well?

LIGONES All very well.

SPACONIA Though I have done nothing but what was good,

1920 I dare not see my mother. It was fault  
 Enough not to acquaint her with that good.

LIGONES Madam, I should have seen you.

SPACONIA O good sir, forgive me.

LIGONES Forgive you, why I am no kin to you, am I?

SPACONIA Should it be measur'd by my mean deserts,  
 Indeed you are not.

LIGONES Thou couldst prate unhappily  
 Ere thou couldst go, would thou couldst do as well.  
 And how does your custom hold out here?

1930 SPACONIA What do you mean?

LIGONES Do you take money? Are you come to sell sin yet? Perhaps I can help you  
 to liberal clients. Or has not the King cast you off yet? O thou vile creature, whose  
 best commendation is that thou art a young whore. I would thy father had liv'd to see  
 this; or rather would I had died ere I had seen it. Why did'st not make me acquainted  
 when thou wert first resolv'd to be a whore? I would have seen thy hot lust satisfied  
 more privately. I would have kept a dancer, and a whole consort of musicians in mine  
 own house, only to fiddle thee.

SPACONIA Sir, I was never whore.

TIGRANES Ligones, I have read it, and like it,  
 1940 You shall deliver it.

LIGONES Well, sir, I will.  
 But I have private business with you.



TIGRANES Speak, what ist?

LIGONES How has my age deserv'd so ill of you,  
That you can pick no strumpets in the land,  
But out of my breed?

TIGRANES Strumpets, good Ligones?

LIGONES My daughter  
Might have been spar'd, there were enough beside.

1950 TIGRANES May I not prosper, but she's innocent  
As morning light for me, and I dare swear,  
For all the world.

LIGONES Why is she with you then?  
Why do you keep her with you? For your queen  
I know you do contemn her, so should I  
And every subject else think much at it.

TIGRANES Let 'em think much, but 'tis more firm than earth  
Thou seest thy Queen there.

LIGONES Then have I made a fair hand, I call'd her whore. If I shall speak now as  
1960 her mother, I cannot choose but greatly rejoyce that she shall be a queen, but if I  
should speak to you as a statesman, she were more fit to be your whore.

TIGRANES Get you about your business to Arbaces,  
Now you talk idly.

LIGONES Yes, sir, I will go.  
Shall she be a queen, now by my troth 'tis fine,

I'll dance out of all measure at her wedding:

Shall I not, sir?

TIGRANES                      Yes, marry, shalt thou.

1970    LIGONES      Good God preserve you, you are an excellent king.

SPACONIA    Farewell, good mother.

LIGONES                      Farewell, sweet virtuous daughter;

I never was so joyful in my life,

That I remember. Shall she be a queen?

*Exit*

TIGRANES    Come, my dear love.

SPACONIA                      But you may see another

May alter that again.

TIGRANES                      I know I have

The passions of a man, but if I meet

1980                      With any subject that shall hold my eyes

More firmly than is fit, I'll think of thee,

And run away from it. Let that suffice.

*Exeunt*

5.4                                      *Enter BACURIUS and a servant*

BACURIUS    Three gentlemen without to speak with me?

SERVANT      Yes, sir.

BACURIUS    Let them come in.

SERVANT      They are enter'd, sir, already.

*Enter BESSUS and SWORDMEN*

1990 BACURIUS Now fellows, your business, are these the gentlemen?

BESSUS My lord, I have made bold to bring these gentlemen, my friends o' th' sword, along with me.

BACURIUS What come they for, good Captain Stockfish?

BESSUS It seems your lordship has forgot my name.

BACURIUS No, nor your nature neither, though they are things fitter, I confess, for anything than my remembrance, or any honest man's. What shall these billets do, be piled up in my woodyard?

BESSUS Your lordship holds your mirth still, God continue it. But for these gentlemen, they come--

2000 BACURIUS To swear you are a coward, spare your book, I do believe it.

BESSUS Your lordship still draws wide. They come to vouch under their valiant hands, I am no coward.

BACURIUS Men of most valiant hands, is this true?

SWORD 2 It is so most renowned.

SWORD 1 We have examined from your lordship's foot there to this man's head, the nature of the beatings, and we do find his honor is come off clean, and sufficient. This as our swords shall help us.

BACURIUS You are much bound to your bilbo-men. 'Twere good you would think some way to gratify them, they have undergone a labour for you, Bessus, would have puzzled Hercules, with all his valor.

2010

SWORD 2 Your lordship must understand we are no men o'th'law, that take pay for our opinions: it is sufficient we have clear'd our friend.

BACURIUS Yet here is something due, which I as touch in conscience will discharge, Captain. I'll pay this rent for you.

BESSUS Spare yourself, my good lord; my brave friends arm at nothing but the virtue.

BACURIUS Be not so modest, I will give you something.

BESSUS They shall dine with your lordship, that's sufficient.

BACURIUS [*Beating them*] Something in hand the while, ye rogues, ye apple-squires.

2020 Do you come hither with your bottled valor, your windy froth, to limit out my beatings?

SWORD 1 I do beseech your lordship.

SWORD 2 O good lord.

BACURIUS 'Sfoot, what a bevy of beaten slaves are here! Get me a cudgel, sirrah, and a tough one. [*Exit SERVANT*]

SWORD 2 More of your foot, I do beseech your lordship.

BACURIUS You shall, you shall, dog, and your fellow beagle.

SWORD 1 'A this side, good my lord.

BACURIUS Off with your swords, for if you hurt my foot, I'll have you flayed, you  
2030 rascals.

SWORD 1 Mine's off my lord.

SWORD 2 I beseech your lordship stay a little, my strap's tied to my codpiece point.  
Now, when you please.



5.5

*Enter ARBACES with his sword drawn*

ARBACES

I is resolv'd, I bore it whilst I could,  
 I can no more. Hell, open all thy gates,  
 2060 And I will through them; if they be shut,  
 I'll batter 'em, but I will find the place  
 Where the most damn'd have dwelling. Ere I end,  
 Amongst them all they shall not have a sin,  
 But I may call it mine. I must begin  
 With murder of my friend, and so go on  
 To an incestuous ravishing, and end  
 My life and sins with a forbidden blow  
 Upon myself.

*Enter MARDONIUS*

2070 MARDONIUS

What tragedy is near?

That hand was never wont to draw a sword,  
 But it cried dead to something.

ARBACES

Mardonius,

Have you bid Gobrius come?

MARDONIUS

How do you, sir?

ARBACES

Well; is he coming?

MARDONIUS

Why, sir, are you thus?

Why does your hand proclaim a lawless war  
 Against yourself?

2080 ARBACES                   Thou answerest me one question with another.

Is Gobrius coming?

MARDONIUS   Sir, he is.

ARBACES   'Tis well.

MARDONIUS                   Sir, I have mark'd--

ARBACES                   Mark less, it troubles you and me.

MARDONIUS                   You are more variable than you were.

ARBACES                   It may be so. I prithee, get thee gone.

MARDONIUS                   Sir, I will speak.

ARBACES   Will ye?

2090 MARDONIUS   It is my duty.

I fear you will kill yourself. I am subject,

And you shall do me wrong in't; 'tis my cause,

And I may speak.

ARBACES   Thou art not train'd in sin,

It seems, Mardonius. Kill myself, by Heaven.

There is a method in man's wickedness,

It grows up by degrees; I am not come

So high as killing of myself, there are

A hundred thousand sins 'twixt me and it

2100                   Which I must do.

MARDONIUS   I am sorry 'tis so ill.

ARBACES                   True sorrow is alone, grieve by thyself.







To save thee, turn, and speak it to yourself.

2150 GOBRIUS Sir, you shall know your sins before you do 'em.  
Know you kill your father.

ARBACES How?

GOBRIUS You kill your father.

ARBACES My father? Though I know it for a lie  
Made out of fear to save thy stained life,  
The very reverence of the word comes 'cross me,  
And ties mine arm down.

*Enter ARANE*

ARANE Turn thee about,  
2160 I come to speak to thee, thou wicked man.  
Hear me thou, tyrant.

ARBACES I will turn to thee.

Hear me, thou strumpet. I have blotted out  
The name of mother, as thou hast thy shame.

ARANE My shame? Thou hast less shame than anything:  
Why dost thou keep my daughter in a prison?  
Why dost thou call her sister, and do this?

ARBACES Cease thou, strange impudence, and answer quickly  
If thou contemn'st me, this will ask an answer,  
2170 And have it.

ARANE Help me, gentle Gobrius.

ARBACES                   Guilt dare not help guilt, though they grow together  
In doing ill. Think not of help, answer.

ARANE                    I will, to what?

ARBACES                               Tell me who I am,  
Whose son I am, without all circumstance.  
Be thou as hasty as my sword will be  
If thou refusest.

ARANE                               Why, you are his son.

2180   ARBACES   His son?

Swear, swear, thou worse than woman damn'd.

ARANE                    By all that's good you are.

ARBACES                   Then art thou all that ever was known bad. Now is  
The cause of all my strange misfortunes come to light.  
What reverence expects thou from a child  
To bring forth, when thou hast offended Heaven,  
Thy husband, and the land? Adulterous witch,  
I know now why thou wouldst have poison'd me:  
I was thy lust which thou wouldst have forgot.

2190                    Plagues rot thee, as thou liv'st, and such diseases  
As use to pay lust, recompence thy deed.

GOBRIUS                You do not know why you curse thus.

ARBACES   Too well.

You are a pair of vipers, and behold

The serpent you have got.

ARANE

You spend your rage

And words in vain, and rail upon a guess.

Hear us a little.

ARBACES

No I will never hear, but talk away

2200

My breath and die.

GOBRIUS

Why, but you are no bastard.

ARBACES

How's that?

ARANE

Nor child of mine.

ARBACES

Still you go on in wonders to me.

GOBRIUS

Pray be more patient,

I may bring comfort to you.

ARBACES

I will kneel,

And hear with the obedience of a child.

GOBRIUS

First, know our last king, your supposed father

2210

Was old and feeble when he married her,

And almost all the land as she, past hope

Of issue from him.

ARBACES

Therefore she took leave

To play the whore, because the King was old.

Is this the comfort?

ARANE

What will you find out

To give me satisfaction, when you find



No noise at all; but pray you to the point,  
Quick as you can.

GOBRIUS

Now when the time was full,

She should be brought abed. I had a son  
Born, which was you. This the Queen hearing of,  
Mov'd me to let her have you, and such reasons  
She showed me as she knew would tie  
My secrecy. She swore you should be king,  
And to be short, I did deliver you  
2250 Unto her, and pretended you were dead.  
That night, the Queen feign'd hastily to labor,  
And by a pair of women of her own,  
Which she had charm'd, she made the world believe  
She was deliver'd of you. You grew up  
As the King's son, till you were six year old.  
Then did the King die, and did leave to me  
Protection of the realm, and contrary  
To his own expectation, left his queen  
Truly with child, indeed of the fair Princess  
2260 Panthea.

ARANE

Then I could have torn my hair,  
And did alone to him, yet durst not speak  
In public, for I knew I should be found

A traitor, and my talk would have been thought  
Madness or anything rather than truth.

This was the only cause why I did seek  
To poison you, and he to keep you safe.

2270 GOBRIUS And this the reason why I sought to kindle  
Some spark of love in you to fair Panthea,  
That she might get part of her right again.

ARBACES Panthea then is not my sister.

ARANE No.

ARBACES But can you prove this?

GOBRIUS If you will give consent.

ARBACES Why I will have them all that know it rack'd  
To get this from 'em. All that waits without  
Come in, what e'er you be, come in, and be  
Partakers of my joy.

5.7 *Enter MARDONIUS, BESSUS, BACURIUS, and others*

2280 O you are welcome.

Mardonius, the best news, nay, draw no nearer  
They all shall hear it: I am found no king.

MARDONIUS Is that so good news?

ARBACES Yes, the happiest news that e'er was heard.

MARDONIUS Indeed, 'twere well for you, if you might be a little less obey'd.

ARBACES On, call the Queen.





2310 Nor is the Queen Panthea now my sister.

BESSUS Why if you remember, fellow subject Arbaces, I told you once she  
was not your sister, I say she look'd nothing like you.

ARBACES I think you did, good Captain Bessus.

*Enter* LIGONES

MARDONIUS Sir, here's Ligones,  
The agent for the Armenian king.

LIGONES We must have our king again, and will.

ARBACES I knew that was your business, you shall have  
Your king again, and have him so again  
2320 As never king was had. Go one of you  
And bid Bacurius bring Tigranes hither,  
And bring the lady with him, that Panthea,  
The Queen Panthea, sent me word this morning  
Was brave Tigranes' mistress.

LIGONES 'Tis Spaconia.

ARBACES Ay, ay, Spaconia.

LIGONES She is my daughter.

ARBACES She is so. I could now tell anything  
I never heard; your king shall go so home  
2330 As never man went.

MARDONIUS Shall he go on's head?

ARBACES He shall have chariots easier than air

That I will have invented; and ne'er think  
 He shall pay any ransom. And thyself  
 That art the messenger shall ride before him  
 On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,  
 That shall be made to go with golden wheels,  
 I know not how yet.

LIGONES

Why I shall be made

2340

Forever. They belied this king with us  
 And said he was unkind.

ARBACES

And then thy daughter,

She shall have some strange thing, we'll have the kingdom  
 Sold utterly, and put into a toy  
 Which she shall wear about her carelessly  
 Somewhere or other.

*Enter PANTHEA*

See the virtuous Queen.

2350

Behold the humblest subject that you have  
 Kneel here before you.

PANTHEA

Why kneel you to me

That am your vassal?

ARBACES

Grant me one request.

PANTHEA

Alas, what can I grant you?

What I can I will.



TIGRANES

I will.

2380

ARBACES

Take then your fair one with you. And you, Queen  
Of goodness, and of us, O give me leave  
To take your arm in mine. Come everyone  
That takes delight in goodness, help to sing  
Loud thanks for me, that I am prov'd no king.



company amongst my enemies, and overthrew 'em. Now the report of my valor is  
come over before me, and they say I was a raw young fellow, but now I am improv'd.

A plague of their eloquence, 'twill cost me many a beating. And Mardonius might help this to if he would, for now they think to get honor of me, and all the men I have abus'd call me freshly to account, worthily as they call it, by the way of challenge. Upon my credit I am already engag'd to two hundred and twelve. Certainly my safest way were to print myself a coward, with a discovery how I came by my credit, and clap it upon every post: I have received above thirty challenges within this two hours, marry, all but the first I put off with engagement, and by good fortune this first is no madder of fighting than I, so that that's reserv'd. Who's there? 'Tis my Lord Bacurius, I fear all is not well betwixt us.





I'll dance out of all measure at her wedding:

Shall I not, sir?

TIGRANES                                Yes, marry, shalt thou.

LIGONES        Good God preserve you, you are an excellent king.

SPACONIA     Farewell, good mother.

LIGONES                                Farewell, sweet virtuous daughter;

I never was so joyful in my life,

That I remember. Shall she be a queen?

*Exit*

TIGRANES     Come, my dear love.

SPACONIA                                But you may see another

May alter that again.

TIGRANES                                I know I have

The passions of a man, but if I meet

With any subject that shall hold my eyes

More firmly than is fit, I'll think of thee,

And run away from it. Let that suffice.

*Exeunt*

5.4

*Enter BACURIUS and BESSUS with SWORDMEN*

BACURIUS     Now fellows, your business, are these the gentlemen?

BESSUS        My lord, I have made bold to bring these gentlemen, my friends o' th'  
sword, along with me.

BACURIUS     What come they for, good Captain Stockfish?

BESSUS        It seems your lordship has forgot my name.

BACURIUS    No, nor your nature neither, though they are things fitter, I confess, for anything than my remembrance, or any honest man's. What shall these billets do, be piled up in my woodyard?

BESSUS        Your lordship holds your mirth still, God continue it. But for these gentlemen, they come--

BACURIUS    To swear you are a coward, spare your book, I do believe it.

BESSUS        Your lordship still draws wide. They come to vouch under their valiant hands, I am no coward.

BACURIUS    Men of most valiant hands, is this true?

SWORD 2      It is so most renowned.

SWORD 1      We have examined from your lordship's foot there to this man's head, the nature of the beatings, and we do find his honor is come off clean, and sufficient. This as our swords shall help us.

BACURIUS    You are much bound to your bilbo-men. 'Twere good you would think some way to gratify them, they have undergone a labour for you, Bessus, would have puzzled Hercules, with all his valor.

SWORD 2      Your lordship must understand we are no men o'th'law, that take pay for our opinions: it is sufficient we have clear'd our friend.

BACURIUS    Yet here is something due, which I as touch in conscience will discharge, Captain. I'll pay this rent for you.

BESSUS      Spare yourself, my good lord; my brave friends arm at nothing but the  
virtue.

BACURIUS Be not so modest, I will give you something.

BESSUS They shall dine with your lordship, that's sufficient.

BACURIUS [*Beating them*] Something in hand the while, ye rogues, ye apple-squires.

Do you come hither with your bottled valor, your windy froth, to limit out my beatings?

SWORD 1 I do beseech your lordship.

SWORD 2 O good lord.

BACURIUS 'Sfoot, what a bevy of beaten slaves are here!

SWORD 2 More of your foot, I do beseech your lordship.

BACURIUS You shall, you shall, dog, and your fellow beagle.

SWORD 1 'A this side, good my lord.

BACURIUS Off with your swords, for if you hurt my foot, I'll have you flayed, you rascals.

SWORD 1 Mine's off my lord.

SWORD 2 I beseech your lordship stay a little, my strap's tied to my codpiece point.

Now, when you please.

BACURIUS Captain, these are your valiant friends, you long for a little too?

BESSUS I am very well, I humbly thank your lordship.

BACURIUS That jest shall save your bones, up with your rotten regiment, and be gone.

I had rather thresh than be bound to kick these rascals till they cried hold. Bessus, you may put your hand to them now, and then you are quit. Farewell. As you like this, pray visit me again, 'twill keep me in good breath.

[*Exit* BACURIUS]

SWORD 2 Has a devilish hard foot, I never felt the like.

SWORD 1 Nor I, and yet I'm sure I ha' felt a hundred.

BESSUS Why, well enough I warrant you, you can go.

SWORD 2 Yes, God be thanked, but I feel a shrewd ache, sure he has sprang my  
huckle bone.

SWORD 1 Captain, we must request your hands now to our honors.

BESSUS Yes marry, shall ye, and then let all the world come, we are valiant to  
ourselves, and there's an end.

SWORD 1 Nay, then we must be valiant. O my ribs.

SWORD 2 O my small guts, a plague upon these sharp-toed shoes, they are  
murderers.

*Exeunt*