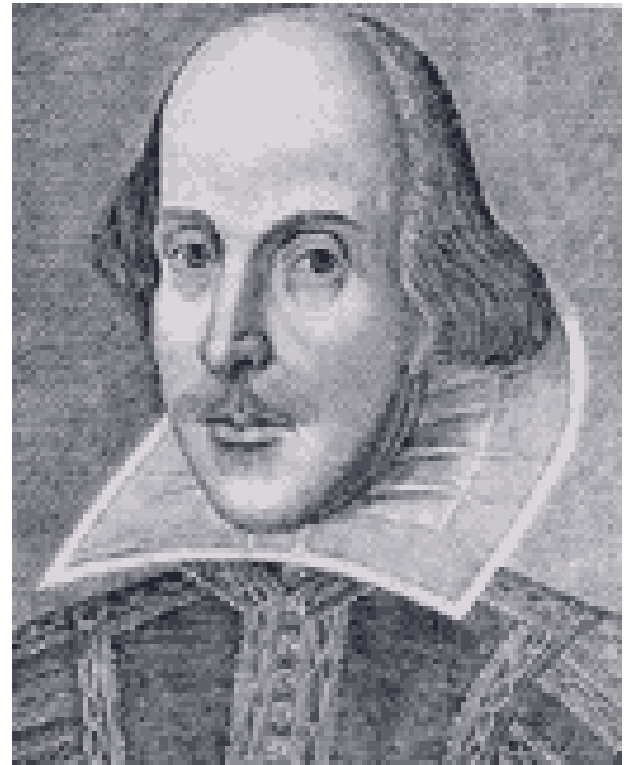


The Two Noble Kinsmen

ABRIDGED



William Shakespeare
(1564-1616)

By

William Shakespeare

PALAMON.

Thy brave soul seek Elysium.

EMILIA.

I'll close thine eyes, prince; blessed souls be with thee!
Thou art a right good man, and while I live,
This day I give to tears.

PALAMON.

And I to honour.

THESEUS.

His part is played, and though it were too short,
He did it well: your day is lengthened, and
The blissful dew of heaven does arouse you.
The powerful Venus well hath graced her altar,
And given you your love: Our Master, Mars,
Hath vouched his Oracle, and to Arcite gave
The grace of the contention: So the deities
Have showed due justice.

PALAMON.

O cousin,
That we should things desire, which do cost us
The loss of our desire! That naught could buy
Dear love, but loss of dear love!

THESEUS.

Never Fortune

Did play a subtler game: The conquered triumphs,
The victor has the loss: yet in the passage
The gods have been most equal: Palamon,
Your kinsman hath confessed the right o'th' lady
Did lie in you, for you first saw her, and
Even then proclaimed your fancy: He restored her
As your stolen jewel, and desired your spirit
To send him hence forgiven; The gods my justice
Take from my hand, and they themselves become
The executioners.

O you heavenly Charmers,

What things you make of us! For what we lack
We laugh, for what we have, are sorry: still
Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful
For that which is, and with you leave dispute
That are above our question. Let's go off,
And bear us like the time.

[Flourish.]

[Exeunt.]

William Shakespeare's

The Two Noble Kinsmen

The Wichita Shakespeare Co.

The Two Noble Kinsmen

Dramatis Personae

Theseus, Duke of Athens
 Hippolyta, Bride to Theseus.
 Emilia, Sister to Hippolyta.
 Flavina, deceased friend of Emilia
 Three Queens
 Palamon and Arcite, The Two Noble Kinsmen, in
 love with Emilia
 Pirithous – 2nd in command to Theseus
 Wooer – in love with the Jailer's daughter
 Jailer
 His Daughter - in love with Palamon
 His Son
 2 Friends of the Jailer
 Artesius
 Doctor

PALAMON.
 What
 Hath waked me from my dream?

PIRITHOUS.
 List then: your cousin,
 Mounted upon a steed that Emily
 Did first bestow on him, a black one, owing
 Not a hair-worth of white; on this horse is Arcite
 Trotting the stones of Athens, which the Calkins
 Did rather tell then trample; for the horse
 Would make his length a mile, if't pleased his rider
 To put pride in him: as he thus went counting
 The flinty pavement, dancing, as 'twere, to th' music
 His own hooves made; what envious flint,
 Cold as old Saturn, and like him possessed
 With fire malevolent, darted a Spark;--the hot horse, hot as fire, Took toy at
 this, and fell to what disorder His power could give his will; bounds, comes on
 end, Forgets school-doing, being therein trained, And of kind manège; pig-like
 he whines At the sharp rowel, seeks all foul means Of boist'rous and rough
 jadery, to disseat His Lord, that kept it bravely: when naught served, When
 neither curb would crack, girth break nor diff'ring plunges Disroot his rider
 whence he grew, but that He kept him 'tween his legs, on his hind hooves on
 end he stands, That Arcite's legs, being higher then his head, Seemed with
 strange art to hand. His victor's wreath Even then fell off his head: and
 presently Backward the jade comes o'er, and his full poise Becomes the rider's
 load: yet is he living, But such a vessel 'tis, that floats but for The surge that
 next approaches. He much desires To have some speech with you: Lo he
 appears.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, & Arcite.]

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

ARCITE.
 Take Emilia
 And with her all the world's joy: Reach thy hand:
 Farewell: I have told my last hour. I was false,
 Yet never treacherous: Forgive me, cousin.

ACT 5

SCENE 4: The same; a Block prepared.

[Enter Palamon and his Knights pinioned: Jailer, Executioner, & co.]

PALAMON.

My Friend, my Friend,
 Your gentle daughter gave me freedom once;
 You'll see't done now forever: pray, how does she?
 I heard she was not well; her kind of ill
 Gave me some sorrow.

JAILER.

Sir, she's well restored,
 And to be married shortly.

PALAMON.

By my short life,
 I am most glad on't; 'tis the latest thing
 I shall be glad of; prithee tell her so:
 Commend me to her, and to piece her portion,
 Tender her this.

[Gives purse.]

JAILER.

The gods requite you,
 And make her thankful.

PALAMON.

Adieu; and let my life be now as short,
 As my leave-taking.

[Lies on the Block.]

[A great noise within crying, 'run, save, hold!']

PIRITHOUS

[off]

Hold, hold! O hold, hold, hold!

[enter Pirithous, in haste]

Hold! ho! It is a cursed haste you made,
 If you have done so quickly. Noble Palamon,
 The gods will show their glory in a life,
 That thou art yet to lead.
 Arise, great Sir, and give the tidings ear
 That are most dearly sweet and bitter.

The Two Noble Kinsmen

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ACT I

WOOER.
Come, sweet, we'll go to dinner;
And then we'll play at cards.

DAUGHTER.
And shall we kiss too?

WOOER.
A hundred times.

DAUGHTER.
And twenty.

WOOER.
Ay, and twenty.

DAUGHTER.
And then we'll sleep together.

DOCTOR.
Take her offer.

WOOER.
Yes, marry, will we.

DAUGHTER.
But you shall not hurt me.

WOOER.
I will not, sweet.

DAUGHTER.
If you doe, Love, I'll cry.

[Flourish.]
[Exeunt.]

DAUGHTER.
Do you think so too?

JAILER.
Yes.

DAUGHTER.
We shall have many children:--
Lord, how you're grown!
My Palamon, I hope, will grow, too, finely,
Now he's at liberty: Alas, poor chicken,
He was kept down with hard meat and ill lodging,
But I'll kiss him up again.

[Enter a Jailer's friend.]

FIRST FRIEND.
What do you here? You'll lose the saddest sight
That ev'r was seen.

JAILER.
Are they done i'th Field?

FIRST FRIEND.
They are.
You bear a charge there too.

JAILER.
I'll away straight.
I must ev'n leave you here. How did you like her?

DOCTOR.
I'll warrant you, within these three or four days
I'll make her right again.

(exit Jailer with Friend)

You must not from her,
But still preserve her in this way.

WOOER.
I will.

DOCTOR.
Lets get her in.

ACT I
SCENE I: Athens. Before a temple.

[Enter three Queens in Black, with veils stained, with imperial Crowns. The First Queen falls down at the foot of Theseus; The Second falls down at the foot of Hippolyta. The Third Queen before Emilia.]

FIRST QUEEN
(to Theseus)
For pity's sake and true gentility's,
Hear, and respect me.

SECOND QUEEN
(to Hippolyta)
For your Mothers sake, And as you wish your womb may thrive with fair ones,
Hear and respect me.

THIRD QUEEN
(to Emilia)
Now for the love of him whom Jove hath marked
The honour of your Bed, and for the sake
Of clear virginity, be advocate
For us, and our distresses.

THESEUS
(to First Queen)
Sad Lady, rise.

HIPPOLYTA
(to Second Queen)
Stand up

EMILIA
(to Third Queen)
No knees to me.

THESEUS
What's your request? Deliver you for all.

FIRST QUEEN

We are Three Queens, whose Sovereigns fell before
The wrath of cruel Creon; who endured
The Beaks of Ravens, talons of the Kites,
And pecks of Crows, in the foul fields of Thebes.
He will not suffer us to burn their bones,
To urn their ashes, nor to take th' offence
Of mortal loathsomeness from the blest eye
Of holy Phoebus, but infects the winds
With stench of our slain Lords. O pity, Duke:
Thou purger of the earth, draw thy feared Sword
That does good turns to th' world; give us the Bones
Of our dead Kings, that we may Chappel them.

THESEUS.

Pray you, kneel not:
I was transported with your Speech, and suffer'd
Your knees to wrong themselves; I have heard the fortunes
Of your dead Lords, which gives me such lamenting
As wakes my vengeance, and revenge for'em.

FIRST QUEEN

O, I hope some God,
Some God hath put his mercy in your manhood
Whereto heel infuse power, and press you forth
Our undertaker.

THESEUS

O no knees, none, Widow,
Unto the Helmeted Bellona use them,
And pray for me your Soldier.
Troubled I am. [turns away.]

SECOND QUEEN.

Honoured Hippolyta,
Most dreaded Amazonian, that hast slain
The Scythe-tusked Boar; that with thy Arm as strong
As it is white, wast near to make the male
To thy Sex captive, but that this thy Lord, shrunk thee into the bound thou wast
ore-flowing, at once subduing Thy force, and thy affection: Soldieress That
equally canst poise sternness with pity, Whom now I know hast much more
power on him Then ever he had on thee;
Dear Glass of Ladies,
Bid him that we, whom flaming war doth scorch,
Under the shadow of his Sword may cool us;
Speak't in a woman's key: like such a woman
As any of us three.

WOOER.

Do not you know me?

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER.

That's all one; I will have you.

DAUGHTER.

Will you surely?

WOOER.

Yes, by this fair hand, will I.

DAUGHTER.

We'll to bed, then.

WOOER.

Ev'n when you will.

[Kisses her.]

DAUGHTER.

O Sir, you would fain be nibbling.

WOOER.

Why do you rub my kiss off?

DAUGHTER.

Tis a sweet one,
And will perfume me finely against the wedding.
Is not this your cousin Arcite?

DOCTOR.

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

DAUGHTER.

Do you think he'll have me?

DOCTOR.

Yes, without doubt.

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

What stuff she utters!

JAILER.

Make curtsy; here your love comes.

WOOER.

Pretty soul,
How do ye? That's a fine maid, there's a curtsy!

DAUGHTER.

Yours to command I'th' way of honesty.
How far is't now to th' end o'th' world, my masters?

DOCTOR.

Why, a day's journey, wench.

DAUGHTER.

Will you go with me?

WOOER.

What shall we do there, wench?

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER.

I am content,
If we shall keep our wedding there.

DAUGHTER.

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

HIPPOLYTA

Poor Lady, say no more;
My Lord is taken heart-deep with your distress:
Let him consider:
I'll speak anon.

THIRD QUEEN

O my petition was [kneel to Emilia.]Set down in ice, which by hot grief uncan-
died Melts into drops, so sorrow, wanting form, Is pressed with deeper matter.

EMILIA

Pray stand up,
Your grief is written in your cheek.

THIRD QUEEN

O woe,
You cannot read it there, there through my tears—
Like wrinkled pebbles in a glassy stream
You may behold 'em.
O pardon me:
Extremity, that sharpens sundry wits,
Makes me a Fool.

EMILIA

Pray you say nothing, pray you:
Being a natural sister of our Sex
Your sorrow beats so ardently upon me,
That it shall make a counter reflect gainst
My Brothers heart, and warm it to some pity,
Though it were made of stone: pray, have good comfort.

THESEUS.

Forward to'th Temple, leave not out a jot
O'th sacred Ceremony.

FIRST QUEEN.

Think, dear Duke, think
What beds our slain Kings have.

SECOND QUEEN.

What griefs our beds,
That our dear Lords have none.

THIRD QUEEN.

None fit for 'th dead:

Those that with Cords, Knives, drams precipitance,
Weary of this world's light, have to themselves
Been death's most horrid Agents, human grace
Affords them dust and shadow.

FIRST QUEEN

But our Lords

Lie blist'ring for the visitating sun,
And were good Kings, when living.

THESEUS

It is true, and I will give you comfort,
To give your dead Lords graves:
the which to do, Must make some work with Creon.

FIRST QUEEN.

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

SECOND QUEEN.

Now you may take him,
drunk with his victory.

THIRD QUEEN.

And his Army full of Bread, and sloth.

THESEUS.

Artesius, that best knowest
How to draw out fit to this enterprise
The prim'st for this proceeding, and the number
To carry such a business, forth and levy
Our worthiest Instruments, whilst we dispatch
This grand act of our life, this daring deed
Of Fate in wedlock.

FIRST QUEEN.

Dowagers, take hands;
Let us be Widows to our woes: delay
Commends us to a famishing hope.

JAILER.

No.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

That's fine, indeed.

DAUGHTER.

He'll dance the Morris twenty mile an hour,
And that will founder the best hobby-horse
If I have any skill-- in all the parish,
And gallops to the turn of 'Light o' love':
What think you of this horse?

JAILER.

Having these virtues,
I think he might be brought to play at tennis.

DAUGHTER.

Alas, that's nothing.

JAILER.

Can he write and read too?

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

Very well.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

What dowry has she?

WOOER.
She's eighteen.

DOCTOR.
She may be,
But that's all one; tis nothing to our purpose.
What ere her Father says, if you perceive
Her mood inclining that way that I spoke of,
Videlicet, the way of flesh--you have me?

WOOER.
Yet, very well, Sir.

DOCTOR.
Please her appetite,
And do it home; it cures her, ipso facto,
The melancholy humour that infects her.

WOOER.
I am of your mind, Doctor.

[Enter Jailer, Daughter, Maid.]

DOCTOR.
You'll find it so; she comes, pray humour her.

JAILER.
Come, your Love Palamon stays for you, child,
And has done this long hour, to visit you.

DAUGHTER.
I thank him for his gentle patience;
He's a kind Gentleman, and I am much bound to him.
Did you nev'r see the horse he gave me?

JAILER.
Yes.

DAUGHTER.
How do you like him?

JAILER.
He's a very fair one.

DAUGHTER.
You never saw him dance?

ALL THE QUEENS.
Farewell.

SECOND QUEEN.
We come unseasonably: But when could grief
Cull forth, as unpanged judgement can, fit'st time
For best solicitation.

THESEUS.
Why, good Ladies,
This is a service, whereto I am going,
Greater then any was; it more imports me
Then all the actions that I have foregone,
Or futurely can cope.

FIRST QUEEN.
O, when her twinning Cherries shall their sweetness fall
Upon thy tasteful lips, what wilt thou think
Of rotten Kings or blubbered Queens, what care
For what thou feel'st not? what thou feel'st being able
To make Mars spurn his Drum? O, if thou couch
But one night with her, every hour in't will
Take hostage of thee for a hundred, and
Thou shalt remember nothing more then what
That Banquet bids thee to.

HIPPOLYTA.
(to Theseus)
Though much unlike [Kneeling.]
You should be so transported, as much sorry
I should be such a Suitor; yet I think,
Did I not by th' abstaining of my joy,
Which breeds a deeper longing, cure their surfeit
That craves a present med'cine, I should pluck
All Ladies' scandal on me. Therefore, Sir,
As I shall here make trial of my prayers,
Prorogue this business we are going about, and hang
Your sheild afore your Heart, about that neck
Which is my fee, and which I freely lend
To do these poor Queens service.

THIRD QUEEN.
Oh help now,
Our Cause cries for your knee.

EMILIA.

If you grant not [Kneeling.]
My Sister her petition in that force,
With that Celerity and nature, which
She makes it in, from henceforth I'll not dare
To ask you anything, nor be so hardy
Ever to take a Husband.

THESEUS.

Pray stand up.
I am entreating of myself to do
That which you kneel to have me.
Queens, Follow your Soldier. As before, hence you [to Artesius] And at the
banks of Aulis meet us with The forces you can raise, where we shall find The
moiety of a number, for a business More bigger look't.
Since that our Theme is haste,
I stamp this kiss upon thy current lip;
Sweet, keep it as my Token. Set you forward,
For I will see you gone.

[Exeunt towards the Temple.]

Farewell, my beauteous Sister.
Once more, farewell all.

PIRITHOUS.

Sir, I'll follow you at heels.

FIRST QUEEN.

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

SECOND QUEEN.

And earn'st a Deity equal with Mars.

THIRD QUEEN.

If not above him, for
Thou being but mortal makest affections bend
To Godlike honours; they themselves, some say,
Groan under such a Mast'ry.

THESEUS.

As we are men,
Thus should we do; being sensually subdued,
We lose our human title. Good cheer, Ladies.
[Flourish.] Now turn we towards your Comforts.

[Exeunt.]

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

Ho, there, Doctor!

DOCTOR.

Yes, in the way of cure.

JAILER.

But first, by your leave,
I'th' way of honesty.

DOCTOR.

That's but a niceness,
Nev'r cast your child away for honesty;
Cure her first this way, then if she will be honest,
She has the path before her.

JAILER.

Thank ye, Doctor.

DOCTOR.

Pray, bring her in,
And let's see how she is.

JAILER.

I will, and tell her
Her Palamon stays for her. But, doctor,
Me thinks you are i'th wrong still.

[Exit Jailer.]

DOCTOR.

Go, go:
You fathers are fine fools! Her honesty?
An' we should give her physic till we find that—

WOOER.

Why, do you think she is not honest, Sir?

DOCTOR.

How old is she?

ACT 5

SCENE 2: A darkened Room in the Prison.

[Enter Doctor, Jailer and Wooer, in habit of Palamon.]

DOCTOR.

Has this advice

I told you, done any good upon her?

WOOER.

O very much;

The maids that kept her company

Have half persuaded her that I am Palamon;

Within this half hour she came smiling to me,

And asked me what I would eat, and when

I would kiss her: I told her presently, and kissed her twice.

DOCTOR.

Twas well done; twenty times had been far better,

For there the cure lies mainly.

WOOER.

Then she told me

She would watch with me tonight, for well she knew

What hour my fit would take me.

DOCTOR.

Let her do so,

And when your fit comes, fit her home,

And presently.

WOOER.

She would have me sing.

DOCTOR.

You did so?

WOOER.

No.

DOCTOR.

Twas very ill done, then;

You should observe her ev'ry way.

WOOER.

Alas, I have no voice,

Sir, to confirm her that way.

HIPPOLYTA.

Sir, farewell; repeat my wishes

To our great Lord, of whose success I dare not

Make any timorous question; yet I wish him

Excess and overflow of power, and't might be

To dure ill-dealing fortune: speed to him.

EMILIA.

Remember me

To our all royal Brother, for whose speed

The great Bellona I'll solicit; our hearts

Are in his Army, in his Tent.

HIPPOLYTA.

In's bosom:

We have been Soldiers, and we cannot weep

When our Friends don their helms, or put to sea;

Or tell of Babes broached on the Lance, or women

That have sod their Infants in (and after ate them)

The brine, they wept at killing 'em; Then if

You stay to see of us such Spinsters, we

Should hold you here forever.

PIRITHOUS.

Peace be to you,

As I pursue this war, which shall be then

Beyond further requiring.

[Exit Pirithous]

EMILIA.

How his longing

Follows his Friend! Have you observ'd him,

Since our great Lord departed?

HIPPOLYTA.

With much labour,

And I did love him for't: they two have Cabined

In many as dangerous, as poor a Corner,

Peril and want contending; they have skiffed

Torrents whose roaring tyranny and power

I'th' least of these was dreadful, and they have

Fought out together, where Death's-self was lodged,

Yet fate hath brought them off: Their knot of love,

Tied, weaved, entangled, with so true, so long,

And with a finger of so deep a cunning,

May be outworn, never undone. I think

Theseus cannot be umpire to himself,

Cleaving his conscience into twain and doing

Each side like justice, which he loves best.

EMILIA.

Doubtless

There is a best, and reason has no manners

To say it is not you: I was acquainted

Once with a time, when I enjoyed a Play-fellow;

You were at wars, when she the grave enriched,

Who made too proud the Bed, took leave o'th' Moon

(Which then looked pale at parting) when our count

Was each eighteen.

HIPPOLYTA.

Twas Flavina.

EMILIA.

Yes.

You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love;

Theirs has more ground, is more maturely seasoned,

More buckled with strong Judgement and their needs

The one of th'other may be said to water

Their intertangled roots of love; but I

And she I sigh and spoke of were things innocent,

Loved for we did, and like the Elements

That know not what, nor why, yet do effect

Rare issues by their operance, our souls

Did so to one another; what she liked,

Was then of me approved, what not, condemned,

No more arraignment; the flower that I would pluck

And put between my breasts (then but beginning

To swell about the blossom) oh, she would long

Till she had such another, and commit it

To the like innocent Cradle, where Phoenix-like

They died in perfume; her affections (pretty,

Though, haply, her careless wear) I followed

For my most serious decking; had mine ear

Stol'n some new air, or at adventure hummed one

From musical Coinage, why it was a note

Whereon her spirits would sojourn (rather dwell on)

And sing it in her slumbers.

This rehearsal

(Which ev'ry innocent wots well comes in

Like old importment's bastard) has this end,

That the true love 'tween maid and maid, may be

More than in sex dividual.

HIPPOLYTA.

You're out of breath

And this high speeded pace, is but to say

That you shall never like the Maid Flavina

Love any that's called Man.

[to Arcite]

Wear the Garland

With joy that you have won: For the subdued,

Give him our present justice, since I know

His life but pinches 'em; Let it here be done.

The Scene's not for our seeing, go we hence,

[to Arcite]

Arm your prize,

I know you will not lose her.—

Hippolyta, I see one eye of yours conceives a tear

The which it will deliver.

[Flourish.]

EMILIA.

Is this winning?

Oh all you heavenly powers, where is your mercy?

But that your wills have said it must be so,

And charge me live to comfort this unfriended,

This miserable Prince, that cuts away

A life more worthy from him than all women,

I should, and would, die too.

HIPPOLYTA.

Infinite pity,

That four such eyes should be so fixed on one

That two must needs be blind fort.

[Exeunt.]

EMILIA
More exulting? Palamon still?

FLAVINA.
Nay, now the sound is Arcite.

EMILIA.
I prithee, lay attention to the cry,
Set both thine ears to th' business.

[Cornets. A great shout and cry, 'Arcite, victory!']

FLAVINA.
The cry is 'Arcite', and 'victory', hark: 'Arcite, victory!' The Combats
consummation is proclaimed By the wind Instruments.

EMILIA.
Half sights saw
That Arcite was no babe; I did think
Good Palamon would miscarry; yet I knew not
Why I did think so; Our reasons are not prophets,
When oft our fancies are. They are coming off:
Alas, poor Palamon!

[Cornets.]
[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Pirithous, Arcite as victor, and attendants, & co.]

THESEUS.
Lo, where our
Sister is in expectation,
Yet quaking, and unsettled.--Fairest Emily,
The gods by their divine arbitrament
Have given you this knight;
Give me your hands;
Receive you her, you him; be plighted with
A love that grows, as you decay.

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

THESEUS.
O loved Sister,
He speaks now of as brave a Knight as ere
Did spur a noble steed.

EMILIA.
I am sure I shall not.

HIPPOLYTA.
Now, alack, weak Sister,
I must no more believe thee in this point
(Though in't I know thou dost believe thy self,);
but, sure, my Sister, If I were ripe for your persuasion, you Have said enough
to shake me from the Arm Of the all noble Theseus, for whose fortunes I will
now in, and kneel with great assurance, That we, more then his Pirithous, pos-
sess The high throne in his heart.

EMILIA.
I am not
Against your faith; yet I continue mine.

[Exeunt. Fanfare of war.]

ACT I

SCENE 4: A field before Thebes. Dead bodies lying on the ground.

[A Battle struck within: Then a retreat: Flourish. Then Enter Theseus (victor), (Herald and Attendants:) the three Queens meet him, and fall on their faces before him.]

FIRST QUEEN.

To thee no star be dark.

SECOND QUEEN

Both heaven and earth

Friend thee forever.

THIRD QUEEN.

All the good that may

Be wished upon thy head, I cry Amen to't.

THESEUS

Th'impartial Gods, who from the mounted heavens

View us their mortal herd, behold who err,

And in their time chastise: go and find out

The bones of your dead Lords, and honour them

With treble Ceremony; rather than a gap

Should be in their dear rights, we would supply't.

So, adieu, and heaven's good eyes look on you.

[Exeunt Queens.]

[Pointing to Palamon and Arcite] What are those?

ARTESIUS

Men of great quality, as may be judged

By their appointment; Some of Thebes have told's

They are Sisters' children, Nephews to the King.

THESEUS.

By'th Helm of Mars, I saw them in the war,

Like to a pair of Lions, smeared with prey,

Make lanes in troops aghast. I fixed my note

Constantly on them; for they were a mark

Worth a god's view: what prisoner was't that told me

When I enquired their names?

Hark, how yon spurs to spirit do incite

The Princes to their proof!

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

What is the chance?

[Enter Flavina.]

FLAVINA

The Cry's 'a Palamon'.

EMILIA.

Then he has won! T'was ever likely;

I prithee, run

And tell me how it goes.

[Shout, and Cornets: Crying, 'a Palamon'.]

FLAVINA.

Still Palamon.

EMILIA.

Run and enquire.

Poor Servant, thou hast lost;

Upon my right side still I wore thy picture,

Palamon's on the left: why so, I know not;

I had no end in't else, chance would have it so.

On the sinister side the heart lies; Palamon

Had the best boding chance.

[Another cry, and shout within, and Cornets.]

This burst of clamour

Is sure th'end o'th combat.

[Enter Flavina.]

FLAVINA.

They said that Palamon had Arcite's body

Within an inch o'th Pyramid, that the cry

Was general 'a Palamon': But, anon,

Arcite made a brave redemption, and

The two bold Titlers, at this instant are

Hand to hand at it.

[Cornets. Cry within, Arcite, Arcite.]

EMILIA.
In faith, I will not.

THESEUS.
Why, the knights must kindle
Their valour at your eye: know, of this war
You are the treasure, and must needs be by
To give the service pay.

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

THESEUS.
Well, well, then, at your pleasure;

HIPPOLYTA
Farewell, Sister;
I am like to know your husband fore yourself
By some small start of time: he whom the gods
Do of the two know best, I pray them he
Be made your lot.

[Exeunt Theseus, Hippolyta, Pirithous, & co.]

EMILIA.
Arcite is gently visaged; yet his eye
Is like an engine bent, or a sharp weapon
In a soft sheath; mercy and manly courage
Are bedfellows in his visage. Palamon
Has a most menacing aspect: his brow
Is graved, and seems to bury what it frowns on;
Yet sometime tis not so, but alters to
The quality of his thoughts; long time his eye
Will dwell upon his object. Melancholy
Becomes him nobly; So does Arcite's mirth,
But Palamon's sadness is a kind of mirth,
So mingled, as if mirth did make him sad,
And sadness, merry; those darker humours that
Stick misbecomingly on others, on them
Live in fair dwelling.

[Cornets. Trumpets sound as to a charge.]

ARTESIUS
Wi'leave, they're called
Arcite and Palamon.

THESEUS
Tis right: those, those.

ARTESIUS
My lord, death to the prisoners?

THESEUS
Rather then have 'em
Freed of this plight, and in their morning state
Sound and at liberty I would 'em dead;
But forty thousand fold we had rather have 'em
Prisoners to us then death. Bear 'em speedily
From our kind air.
[Exeunt. Music.]



ACT II

ACT 5

SCENE 3: A Place near the Lists.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, Pirithous: and some Attendants]

EMILIA.

I'll no step further.

PIRITHOUS.

Will you lose this sight?

EMILIA.

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

PIRITHOUS.

Sir, my good Lord,
 Your sister will no further.

THESEUS.

You must be present,
 You are the victor's meed, the price, and garland
 To crown the questions title.

EMILIA.

Pardon me;
 If I were there, I'd wink.

THESEUS.

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

EMILIA.

I am extinct.

HIPPOLYTA.

You must go.



ACT V

ACT 2

SCENE 1: Athens. A garden, with a prison in the background.

[Enter Jailer and Wooer.]

JAILER.

I may depart with little, while I live, some thing I may cast to you, not much: Alas the Prison I keep, though it be for great ones, yet they seldom come; before one salmon, you shall take a number of minnows; Marry, what I have (be it what it will) I will assure upon my daughter at the day of my death.

WOOER

Sir I demand no more then your own offer, and I will estate your daughter in what I have promised.

JAILER.

Well, we will talk more of this, when the solemnity is past. But have you a full promise of her?

[Enter Daughter.]

WOOER.

I have Sir;
here she comes.

JAILER

Your Friend and I have chanced to name you here, upon the old business: But no more of that now. So soon as the court hurry is over, we will have an end of it: I'th mean time look tenderly to the two Prisoners. I can tell you they are princes.

DAUGHTER

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

JAILER.

They are famed to be a pair of absolute men.

DAUGHTER.

By my troth, I think Fame but stammers 'em; they stand a grece above the reach of report.

JAILER.

I heard them reported in the battle to be the only doers.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

Do they so?

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER

I never saw 'em.

JAILER.

The Duke himself came privately in the night, and
so did they: what the reason of it is, I know not.

[Enter Palamon, and Arcite, in shackles.]

Look, yonder they are! That's Arcite looks out.

DAUGHTER.

No, Sir, no, that's Palamon.
Arcite is the lower of the twain; you may perceive a part of him.

JAILER.

Go to, leave your pointing; they would not make us
Their object. Out of their sight.

DAUGHTER

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

[Exeunt.]

DOCTOR.

That intemp'rate surfeit of her eye, hath distempered
 Other senses, they may return and settle again to
 Execute their preordained faculties, but they are
 Now in a most extravagant vagary. This you
 Must do; take Upon you young sir, her friend, the name of Palamon, say you
 come to eat with her, and to Commune of Love; this will catch her attention,
 for This her mind beats upon. Sing to her, such green Songs of love, as she
 says Palamon hath sung in prison;
 Come to her, stuck in as sweet flowers, as the
 Season is mistress of, and thereto make an addition of
 Some other compounded odours, which are grateful to the
 Sense: all this shall become Palamon, for Palamon can sing, and
 Palamon is sweet, and ev'ry good thing, desire
 To eat with her, carve her, drink to her, and still
 Among, intermingle your petition of grace and acceptance
 Into her favour: It is a falsehood
 She is in, which is with falsehoods to be combated.
 This may bring her to eat, to sleep, and reduce what's
 Now out of square in her, into their former law, and
 Regiment; I have seen it approved, how many times
 I know not, but to make the number more, I have
 Great hope in this. I will between the passages of
 This project, come in with my appliance : Let us
 Put it in execution; and hasten the success, which doubt not Will bring forth
 comfort.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 2

SCENE 2: The prison

[Enter Palamon, and Arcite in prison.]

PALAMON.

How do you, noble cousin?

ARCITE.

How do you, Sir?

PALAMON.

Why strong enough to laugh at misery,
 And bear the chance of war, yet we are prisoners,
 I fear forever, cousin.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON

O cousin Arcite,
 Where is Thebes now? Where is our noble country?
 Where are our friends, and kindreds? never more
 Must we behold those comforts, never see
 The hardy youths strive for the games of honour
 Hung with the painted favours of their ladies,
 Like tall ships under sail then start among'st 'em
 And as an eastwind leave 'em all behind us,
 Like lazy clouds, whilst Palamon and Arcite,
 Even in the wagging of a wanton leg
 Outstripped the peoples praises, won the garlands,
 Ere they have time to wish 'em ours.
 O never shall we two exercise, like twins of honour,
 Our arms again, and feel our fiery horses
 Like proud seas under us.

ARCITE

No, Palamon,
 Those hopes are prisoners with us; here we are
 And here the graces of our youths must wither
 Like a too-timely Spring; here age must find us,
 And, which is heaviest, Palamon, unmarried;
 The sweet embraces of a loving wife,
 Loaden with kisses, armed with thousand cupids
 Shall never clasp our necks, no issue know us,
 No figures of ourselves shall we ev'r see,
 To glad our age, and like young eagles teach 'em
 Boldly to gaze against bright arms, and say:
 'Remember what your fathers were, and conquer.'
 This is all our world; we shall know nothing here but one another, Hear
 nothing but the Clock that tells our woes. The vine shall grow, but we shall
 never see it: Summer shall come, and with her all delights; But dead-cold
 winter must inhabit here still.

PALAMON

Tis too true, Arcite.

ARCITE

Yet, cousin,
 Even from the bottom of these miseries,
 From all that fortune can inflict upon us,
 I see two comforts rising, two mere blessings,
 If the gods please: to hold here a brave patience,
 And the enjoying of our griefs together.
 Whilst Palamon is with me, let me perish
 If I think this our prison.
 Shall we make worthy uses of this place
 That all men hate so much?

PALAMON.

How, gentle cousin?

ARCITE.

Let's think this prison holy sanctuary,
 To keep us from corruption of worse men.
 We are young and yet desire the ways of honour,
 That liberty and common conversation,
 The poison of pure spirits, might, like women
 Woo us to wander from.
 And here being thus together,
 We are an endless mine to one another;
 We are one another's wife, ever begetting

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

How she continues this fancy! Tis not an engrafted
 Madness, but a most thick, and profound melancholy.

DAUGHTER.

[Sings]

I will be true, my stars, my fate, etc.

[Exit Daughter.]

JAILER.

What think you of her, Sir?

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

Alas, what then?

DOCTOR.

Understand you, she ever affected any man,
 ere she beheld Palamon?

JAILER.

I was once, Sir, in great hope she had fixed her liking on this gentleman, my
 friend.

WOOER.

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

ACT 4

SCENE 3: A room in the prison.

[Enter Jailer, Wooer, Doctor.]

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER

She is continually in a harmless distemper, sleeps little, altogether without appetite, save often drinking, dreaming of another world, and a better; and what broken piece of matter so'ere she's about, the name Palamon lards it, that she farces ev'ry business withal, fits it to every question.—

[Enter Daughter.]

Look where she comes, you shall perceive her behavior.

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

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

DAUGHTER.

Faith, I'll tell you, sometime we go to Barley-break, we of the blessed; alas, tis a sore life they have i'th other place, such burning, frying, boiling, hissing, howling, chattering, cursing, oh they have shrowed measure! Take heed; if one be mad, or hang or drown themselves, thither they go, Jupiter bless us, and there shall we be put in a cauldron of lead, and usurers' grease, amongst a whole million of cutpurses, and there boil like a gammon of bacon that will never be enough.

DOCTOR.

How her brain coins!

New births of love; we are father, friends, acquaintance;

We are, in one another, families,

I am your heir, and you are mine: this place

Is our inheritance, no hard oppressor

Dare take this from us; here, with a little patience,

We shall live long, and loving:

The hand of war hurts none here, nor the

Seas swallow their youth. Were we at liberty,

A wife might part us lawfully, or business;

Quarrels consume us, envy of ill men

Grave our acquaintance. I might sicken, cousin,

Where you should never know it, and so perish

Without your noble hand to close mine eyes,

Or prayers to the gods: a thousand chances,

Were we from hence, would sever us.

PALAMON.

You have made me

I thank you, cousin Arcite- almost wanton

With my Captivity: what a misery

It is to live abroad, and every where!

Tis like a beast, me thinks: I find the Court here—

I am sure, a more content; and all those pleasures

That woo the wills of men to vanity,

I see through now, and am sufficient

To tell the world, tis but a gaudy shadow,

That old time, as he passes by, takes with him.

What had we been, old in the Court of Creon,

Where sin is Justice?

Cousin Arcite, had not the loving gods found this place for us, We had died as

they do, ill old men, unwept, And had their epitaphs, the people's curses: Shall

I say more?

ARCITE.

I would hear you still.

PALAMON.

Ye shall.

Is there record of any two that loved

Better then we do, Arcite?

ARCITE.

Sure, there cannot.

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

ARCITE.
Till our deaths it cannot;

[Enter Emilia and a woman .]

And after death our spirits shall be led
To those that love eternally.
Speak on, Sir.

EMILIA.
This garden has a world of pleasures in't.
What Flower is this?

FLAVINA.
Tis called Narcissus.

EMILIA.
That was a fair boy, certain, but a fool,
To love himself; were there not maids enough?

ARCITE.
Pray forward.

PALAMON.
Yes.

EMILIA.
Or were they all hard hearted?

FLAVINA.
They could not be to one so fair.

EMILIA.
Thou wouldst not.

FLAVINA.
I think I should not.

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

EMILIA.
Would I might end first:
What sins have I committed, chaste Diana,
That my unspotted youth must now be soiled
With blood of princes, and my chastity
Be made the altar, where the lives of lovers—
Must be the sacrifice
To my unhappy beauty?

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, and attendants.]

THESEUS.
Bring 'em in
Quickly, by any means; I long to see 'em.—
Your two contending lovers are returned.
Now, my fair sister,
You must love one of them.

[to Hippolyta]

Lady, you shall see men fight now.

HIPPOLYTA.
I wish it,
But not the cause, my Lord. They would show
Bravely about the titles of two kingdoms;
Tis pity love should be so tyrannous:
O my soft hearted sister, what think you?
Weep not, till they weep blood, wench; it must be.

THESEUS.
You have steeled 'em with your beauty.—
Honored friend,
To you I give the Field; pray, order it
Fitting the persons that must use it.

PIRITHOUS.
Yes, Sir.

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

PIRITHOUS.
There shall want no bravery.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 4
SCENE 2

EMILIA.

O sacred, shadowy, cold and constant Queen,
Abandoner of Revels, mute, contemplative,
Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure
As windfanned Snow; I hear, thy Priest,
Am humbled for thine altar; O vouchsafe,
With that thy rare green eye, which never yet
Beheld thing maculate, loose on thy virgin;
And, sacred silver Mistress, lend thine ear to my petition Seasoned with holy
fear: This is my last Of vestal office; I am bride habited, But maiden hearted, a
husband I have pointed, But do not know him; out of two I should Choose one
and pray for his success, but I Am guiltless of election; Therefore, most modest
Queen, He of the two pretenders, that best loves me And has the truest title in't,
Let him Take off my wheaten Garland, or else grant The file and quality I hold,
I may Continue in thy band.

[She cries and then takes out dagger and holds it to her breast]

Yet I may bind those wounds up, that must open
And bleed to death for my sake else; I'll choose,
And end their strife: Two such young handsome men
Shall never fall for me, their weeping mothers,
Following the dead cold ashes of their sons,
Shall never curse my cruelty.

FLAVINA
No! No.

EMILIA
Poor wench, go weep, for whosoever wins,
Loses a noble cousin for my sins.

[Enter Pirithous]

PIRITHOUS.
From the Noble duke your brother,
Madam, I bring you news: the knights are come.

EMILIA.
To end the quarrel?

PIRITHOUS.
Yes.

FLAVINA
Why, maiden?

EMILIA.
Men are mad things.

ARCITE.
Will ye go forward, cousin?

EMILIA.
Canst not thou work such flowers in silk?

FLAVINA.
Yes.

EMILIA.
I'll have a gown full of 'em, and of these;
This is a pretty colour, will't not do
Rarely upon a skirt, maid?

FLAVINA.
Dainty, Maiden.

ARCITE.
Cousin, cousin, how do you, Sir? Why, Palamon?

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

ARCITE.
Why what's the matter, Man?

PALAMON.
Behold, and wonder!
By heaven, she is a Goddess.

ARCITE.
Ha!

PALAMON.
Do reverence.
She is a Goddess, Arcite.

EMILIA.
Of all Flowers, me thinks a rose is best.

FLAVINA.
Why, maiden?

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

FLAVINA.
Yet, good maiden,
Sometimes her modesty will blow so far
She falls for't: a maid,
If she have any honour, would be loath
To take example by her.

EMILIA.
Thou art wanton.

ARCITE.
She is wondrous fair.

PALAMON.
She is beauty extant.

EMILIA.
The sun grows high, lets walk in.
I am wondrous merry hearted, I could laugh now.

FLAVINA.
I could lie down, I am sure.

EMILIA.
And take one with you?

FLAVINA.
That's as we bargain, Emilia.

EMILIA.
Well, agree then.

[Exeunt Emilia and Flavina.]

DAUGHTER.
Set it to th' north.
And now direct your course to th' wood, where Palamon
Lies longing for me; For the tackling let me alone;
Come, weigh, my hearts, cheerily! ALL. Owgh, owgh, owgh!
tis up, the wind's fair, Top the bowline, out with the main sail; Where's your
whistle, Master?

SON.
Let's get her in.

JAILER
Up to the top, Boy.

SON.
Where's the pilot?

FIRST FRIEND.
Here.

DAUGHTER.
What kenn'st thou?

SECOND FRIEND.
A fair wood.

DAUGHTER.
Bear for it, master: tack about!
[Sings.]
When Cynthia with her borrowed light, etc.

[Exeunt.]

FIRST FRIEND.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

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

FIRST FRIEND.

Yes.

JAILER.

She's lost
Past all cure.

SON.

Heaven forbid, father.

DAUGHTER.

Come hither, you are a wise man.

FIRST FRIEND.

Does she know him?

SECOND FRIEND.

No, would she did.

DAUGHTER.

You are master of a ship?

JAILER.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

Where's your Compass?

JAILER.

Here.

PALAMON.

What think you of this beauty?

ARCITE.

Tis a rare one.

PALAMON.

Is't but a rare one?

ARCITE.

Yes, a matchless beauty.

PALAMON.

Might not a man well lose himself and love her?

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

You love her, then?

ARCITE.

Who would not?

PALAMON.

And desire her?

ARCITE.

Before my liberty.

PALAMON.

I saw her first.

ARCITE.

That's nothing.

PALAMON.

But it shall be.

ARCITE.

I saw her too.

PALAMON.

Yes, but you must not love her.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

You shall not love at all.

ARCITE.

Not love at all!
Who shall deny me?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Have I called thee friend?

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Yes.

SON.

O, a very fine one.

DAUGHTER.

I can sing twenty more.

SON.

I think you can.

DAUGHTER.

Yes, truly, can I; I can sing the Broom,
And Bonny Robin. Are not you a tailor?

SON.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

Where's my wedding Gown?

SON.

I'll bring it tomorrow.

DAUGHTER.

Good ev'n, good men; pray, did you ever hear
Of one young Palamon?

JAILER.

Yes, wench, we know him.

DAUGHTER.

Is't not a fine young Gentleman?

JAILER.

Tis Love.

SON.

By no mean cross her; she is then distempered
Far worse then now she shows.

FIRST FRIEND.

Yes, he's a fine man.

DAUGHTER.

O, is he so? you have a Sister?

FIRST FRIEND.

Pretty soul.

WOOER.

Then she talked of you, Sir;
That you must lose your head tomorrow morning,
And she must gather flowers to bury you,
And see the house made handsome: then she sung
Nothing but 'Willow, willow, willow,' and between
Ever was, 'Palamon, fair Palamon,'
And 'Palamon was a tall young man.' The place
Was knee deep where she sat; her careless tresses
A wreath of bulrush rounded; about her stuck
Thousand fresh water flowers of several colors,
That methought she appeared like the fair nymph
That feeds the lake with waters, or as Iris
Newly dropped down from heaven; Rings she made
Of rushes that grew by, and to 'em spoke
The prettiest posies: 'Thus our true love's tide,'
'This you may lose, not me,' and many a one:
And then she wept, and sung again, and sighed,
And with the same breath smiled, and kissed her hand.

SECOND FRIEND.

Alas, what pity it is!

WOOER.

I made in to her.
She saw me, and straight sought the flood; I saved her,
And set her safe to land: when presently
She slipped away, and to the city made,
With such a cry and swiftness, that, believe me,
She left me far behind her; three or four
I saw from far off cross her, one of 'em
I knew to be your brother; where she stayed,
And fell, scarce to be got away: I left them with her,

[Enter Son & Daughter.]

And hither came to tell you. Here they are.

DAUGHTER.

[sings.]

May you never more enjoy the light, etc..
Is not this a fine Song?

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Ye may be.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

No; but unjust,
If thou pursue that sight.

ARCITE.

Because another
First sees the enemy, shall I stand still
And let mine honour down, and never charge?

PALAMON.

Yes, if he be but one.

ARCITE.

But say that one
Had rather combat me?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

You are mad.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Thou dar'st not, fool, thou canst not, thou art feeble.
Put my head out? I'll throw my body out,
And leap the garden, when I see her next

[Enter Jailer.]

And pitch between her arms to anger thee.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Do.

JAILER.

By your leave, Gentlemen—

PALAMON.

Now, honest keeper?

JAILER.

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

ARCITE.

I am ready, keeper.

JAILER.

Prince Palamon, I must awhile bereave you
Of your fair cousin's company.

[Exeunt Arcite, and Jailer.]

FIRST FRIEND.

Not right?

SECOND FRIEND.

Not well?

WOOER.

No, Sir, not well.

Tis too true, she is mad.

FIRST FRIEND.

It cannot be.

WOOER.

Believe, you'll find it so.

JAILER.

I half suspected

What you have told me: the gods comfort her:

Either this was her love to Palamon,

Or fear of my miscarrying on his scape,

Or both.

WOOER.

Tis likely.

JAILER.

But why all this haste, Sir?

WOOER.

I'll tell you quickly. As I late was angling

In the great Lake that lies behind the palace,

From the far shore. I heard a voice, a shrill one, and attentive I gave my ear,

when I might well perceive T'was one that sung, and by the smallness of it A

boy or woman. I then left my angle To his own skill, came near, but yet

perceived not Who made the sound, the rushes and the reeds Had so

encompassed it: I laid me down And listened to the words she sung, for then,

Through a small glade cut by the fishermen, I saw it was your Daughter.

JAILER.

Pray, go on, Sir?

WOOER.

She sung much, but no sense; only I heard her

Repeat this often: 'Palamon is gone,

Is gone to'th wood to gather mulberries;

I'll find him out tomorrow.'

JAILER
Ye are a good man
And ever bring good news.

[Enter Wooer.]

WOOER.
Alas, Sir, where's your Daughter?

JAILER.
Why do you ask?

WOOER.
O, Sir, when did you see her?

SECOND FRIEND.
How he looks!

JAILER.
This morning.

WOOER.
Was she well? Was she in health, Sir?
When did she sleep?

FIRST FRIEND.
These are strange questions.

JAILER.
I do not think she was very well, for now
You make me mind her, but this very day
I asked her questions, and she answered me
So far from what she was, so childishly,
So sillily, as if she were a fool,
An Innocent, and I was very angry.
But what of her, Sir?

WOOER.
Nothing but my pity;
But you must know it, and as good by me
As by another that less loves her—

JAILER.
Well, Sir.

PALAMON.
Why is he sent for?
It may be he shall marry her; he's goodly,
And like enough the Duke hath taken notice
Both of his blood and body: But his falsehood!
Why should a friend be treacherous? If that
Get him a wife so noble, and so fair,
Let honest men ne're love again. Once more
I would but see this fair one.
I would bring her fruit
Fit for the Gods to feed on: youth and pleasure
Still as she tasted should be doubled on her,
And if she be not heavenly, I would make her
So near the Gods in nature, they should fear her,

[Enter Jailer.]

And then I am sure she would love me.
How now, keeper. Where's Arcite?

JAILER.
Banished: Prince Pirithous
Obtained his liberty; but never more
Upon his oath and life must he set foot
Upon this Kingdom.

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

JAILER
My Lord for you
I have this charge too—

PALAMON.
To discharge my life?

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

PALAMON.
Devils take 'em,
That are so envious to me! prithee kill me.

JAILER.
And hang for't afterward.

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

JAILER
Why, my Lord?

PALAMON.
Thou bringst such pelting scurvy news continually
Thou art not worthy life. I will not go.

JAILER
Indeed, you must, my Lord.

PALAMON.
May I see the garden?

JAILER
No.

PALAMON.
Then I am resolved,
I will not go.

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

PALAMON.
Do, good keeper.
I'll shake 'em so, ye shall not sleep;
I'll make ye a new Morris: must I go?

JAILER
There is no remedy.

PALAMON.
Farewell, kind window.
May rude wind never hurt thee. O, my Lady,
If ever thou hast felt what sorrow was,
Dream how I suffer. Come; now bury me.

[Exeunt Palamon, and Jailer.]

ACT 4
SCENE 1: Athens. A room in the prison.

[Enter Jailer and his friend.]

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

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

[Enter Second Friend.]

JAILER.
Pray heaven it hold so.

SECOND FRIEND.
Be of good comfort, man;
I bring you news, Good news.

JAILER.
They are welcome.

SECOND FRIEND.
Palamon has cleared you,
And got your pardon, and discovered how
And by whose means he escaped, which was your daughter's,
Whose pardon is procured too; and the Prisoner,
Not to be held ungrateful to her goodness,
Has given a sum of money to her marriage,
A large one, I'll assure you.



ACT IV

ACT 2

SCENE 3: The country near Athens.

[Enter Arcite.]

ARCITE.

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

[Enter Wooer, 2nd Friend & Jailer's Son.]

SECOND FRIEND

My Masters, I'll be there, that's certain.

SON

And I'll be there.

WOOER

And I.

SECOND FRIEND

Why, then, have with ye, boys; Tis but a chiding.
 Let the plough play to day, I'll tickle't out
 Of the jades' tails tomorrow.
 I am sure
 To have my wife as jealous as a turkey:
 But that's all one; I'll go through, let her mumble.

SON

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

ARCITE.

By your leaves, honest friends:
 pray you, whither go you?

SON

Whither? why, what a question's that?

ARCITE.

Yes, tis a question, to me that know not.

WOOER

To the Games, my Friend.

SECOND FRIEND

Where were you bred, you know it not?

ARCITE.

Not far, sir,
 Are there such Games today?

SON

Yes, marry, are there: And such as you never saw;
 The Duke himself will be in person there.

ARCITE.

What pastimes are they?

SECOND FRIEND

Wrestling, and Running..

WOOER

Thou wilt not go along?

THESEUS.

Make choice, then.

EMILIA.

I cannot, Sir, they are both too excellent:
 For me, a hair shall never fall of these men.

HIPPOLYTA.

What will become of 'em?

THESEUS.

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

PALAMON.

Yes: Here, Cousin Arcite,
 I am friends again, till that hour.

ARCITE.

I embrace ye.

THESEUS.

Are you content, Sister?

EMILIA.

I must, Sir,
 Else both miscarry.

THESEUS.

Come, shake hands again, then;
 And take heed, as you are gentlemen, this quarrel
 Sleep till the hour prefixed; and hold your course.

PALAMON.

We dare not fail thee, Theseus.

[Exeunt.]

PALAMON.
He's a villain, then.

PIRITHOUS.
These are men.

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

THESEUS.
What may be done? For now I feel compassion.

PIRITHOUS.
Let it not fall again, Sir.

THESEUS.
Say, Emilia,
If one of them were dead, as one must, are you
Content to take th'other to your husband?
They cannot both enjoy you; They are Princes
As goodly as your own eyes, and as noble
As ever fame yet spoke of; look upon 'em,
And if you can love, end this difference.
I give consent; are you content too, Princes?

ARCITE
Ay.

PALAMON
With all my soul.

THESEUS.
He that she refuses
Must die, then.

ARCITE
Any death thou canst invent, Duke.

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

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

ARCITE.
Not yet, Sir.

SECOND FRIEND
Well, Sir, take your own time: come, Boys.

[Exeunt.]

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

[Exeunt Arcite.]

ACT 2

SCENE 4: Athens. A room in the prison.

[Enter Jailer's Daughter alone.]

DAUGHTER.

Why should I love this Gentleman? Tis odds
 He never will affect me; I am base,
 My Father the mean keeper of his Prison,
 And he a prince: To marry him is hopeless;
 To be his whore is witless. Out upon't;
 First, I saw him; I, seeing, thought he was a goodly man;
 He has as much to please a woman in him,
 (If he please to bestow it so) as ever
 These eyes yet looked on. Next, I pitied him,
 And so would any young wench, o' my conscience,
 That ever dreamed, or vowed her maidenhead
 To a young handsome Man; Then I loved him,
 Extremely loved him, infinitely loved him;
 And yet he had a cousin, fair as he too.
 But in my heart was Palamon, and there,
 Lord, what a coil he keeps! To hear him
 Sing in an evening, what a heaven it is!
 And yet his Songs are sad ones. Fairer spoken
 Was never Gentleman. When I come in
 To bring him water in a morning, first
 He bows his noble body, then salutes me, thus:
 'Fair, gentle maid, good morrow; may thy goodness
 Get thee a happy husband.' Once he kissed me.
 I loved my lips the better ten days after.
 Would he would do so ev'ry day! He grieves much,
 And me as much to see his misery.
 What should I do, to make him know I love him?
 For I would fain enjoy him. Say I ventured
 To set him free? what says the law then?
 (snaps her fingers) Thus much
 For Law, or kindred! I will do it,
 And this night, or tomorrow, he shall love me.

[Exit.]

And not kill one another? Every day
 They'd fight about you; hourly bring your honour
 In public question with their swords. I have said they die; Better they fall by th'
 law, than one another. Bow not my honor.

EMILIA.

O my noble brother,
 That oath was rashly made, and in your anger.

PIRITHOUS.

Urge it home, brave Lady.

EMILIA.

That you would nev'r deny me anything
 Fit for my modest suit, and your free granting:
 I eye you to your word now; if ye fall in't,
 Think how you maim your honour,--
 For now I am set a begging, sir, I am deaf
 To all but your compassion-- how, their lives
 Might breed the ruin of my name, opinion.
 Shall anything that loves me perish for me?
 That were a cruel wisdom;
 For heaven's sake, save their lives, and banish 'em.

THESEUS.

On what conditions?

EMILIA.

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

PALAMON.

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

THESEUS.

Will you, Arcite,
 Take these conditions?

PIRITHOUS.

Nay, then, I'll in too:

By all our friendship, sir, by all our dangers,
By all you love most: wars and this sweet lady.

EMILIA.

By that you would have trembled to deny,
A blushing Maid.

HIPPOLYTA.

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

PIRITHOUS.

To crown all this: By your most noble soul,
Which cannot want due mercy, I beg first.

HIPPOLYTA.

Next, hear my prayers.

EMILIA.

Last, let me entreat, Sir.

PIRITHOUS.

For mercy.

HIPPOLYTA.

Mercy.

EMILIA.

Mercy on these Princes.

THESEUS.

Ye make my faith reel: Say I felt
Compassion to'em both, how would you place it?

EMILIA.

Upon their lives: But with their banishments.

THESEUS.

You are a right woman, sister; you have pity,
But want the understanding where to use it.
If you desire their lives, invent a way
Safer then banishment: Can these two live
And have the agony of love about 'em,

ACT 2

SCENE 5: An open place in Athens.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Pirithous, Emilia: Arcite with a Garland, &co.]

THESEUS.

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

ARCITE.

I am proud to please you.

THESEUS.

What Country bred you?

ARCITE.

This; but far off, Prince.

THESEUS.

Are you a Gentleman?

ARCITE.

My father said so;
And to those gentle uses gave me life.

THESEUS.

Are you his heir?

ARCITE.

His youngest, Sir.

THESEUS.

Your Father
Sure is a happy
Sire then: what proves you?

ARCITE.

A little of all noble qualities: I dare not praise
My feat in horsemanship, yet they that knew me
Would say it was my best piece: last, and greatest,
I would be thought a Soldier.

THESEUS.

You are perfect.

PIRITHOUS.

Upon my soul, a proper man.
How do you like him, Lady?

HIPPOLYTA.

I admire him;
I have not seen so young a man so noble,
If he say true, of his sort.

PIRITHOUS.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

He's well got, sure.

THESEUS.

What made you seek this place, Sir?

ARCITE.

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

PIRITHOUS.

All his words are worthy.

THESEUS.

Sir, we are much endebted to your travel,
Nor shall you lose your wish: Pirithous,
Dispose of this fair Gentleman.

PIRITHOUS.

Thanks, Theseus.
[To Arcite] Whate'er you are you're mine, and I
shall give you
To a most noble service, to this Lady,
This bright young Virgin; pray, observe her goodness;
You have honoured her fair birthday with your virtues,
And as your due you're hers: kiss her fair hand, Sir.

ARCITE.

Sir, you're a noble Giver: [to Emilia]

THESEUS.

I grant your wish, for, to say true, your cousin
Has ten times more offended; for I gave him
More mercy then you found, Sir, your offences
Being no more than his. None here speak for 'em,
For, ere the Sun set, both shall sleep for ever.

HIPPOLYTA.

Alas the pity! Now or never, Sister,
Speak, not to be denied. That face of yours
Will bear the curses else of after ages
For these lost cousins.

EMILIA.

In my face, dear sister,
I find no anger to 'em, nor no ruin;
The misadventure of their own eyes kill 'em;
Yet that I will be woman, and have pity,
My knees shall grow to'th ground but I'll get mercy.
Help me, dear sister; in a deed so virtuous
The powers of all women will be with us.
Most royal Brother—

HIPPOLYTA.

Sir, by our tie of Marriage—

EMILIA.

By your own spotless honour—

HIPPOLITA.

By that faith,
That fair hand, and that honest heart you gave me.

EMILIA.

By that you would have pity in another,
By your own virtues infinite.

HIPPOLITA.

By valour,
By all the chaste nights I have ever pleased you.

THESEUS.

These are strange conjurings.

PALAMON.

Hold thy word, Theseus.

We are certainly both Traitors, both despisers
Of thee and of thy goodness: I am Palamon,
That cannot love thee, he that broke thy prison;
Think well what that deserves: and this is Arcite,
A bolder Traitor never trod thy ground,
A falser nev'r seemed friend: This is the man
Was begged and banish'd; and in this disguise
Against thy own edict follows thy sister,
That fortunate bright star, the fair Emilia,
Whose servant, --if there be a right in seeing,
And first bequeathing of the soul to—justly
I am, and, which is more, dares think her his.
This treachery, like a most trusty lover,
I called him now to answer; if thou be'st,
As thou art spoken, great and virtuous,
The true decider of all injuries,
Say, 'Fight again,' and thou shalt see me, Theseus,
Do such a justice, thou thyself wilt envy.

PIRITHOUS.

O heaven,
What more than man is this!

ARCITE.

We seek not
Thy breath of mercy, Theseus. Tis to me
A thing as soon to die, as thee to say it,
And no more moved: where this man calls me traitor,
Let me say thus much: if in love be treason,
In service of so excellent a beauty,
So let me be most traitor, and ye please me.
For scorning thy edict, Duke, ask that Lady
Why she is fair, and why her eyes command me
Stay here to love her; and if she say 'traitor,'
I am a villain fit to lie unburied.

PALAMON.

Thou shalt have pity of us both, o Theseus,
If unto neither thou show mercy; stop
As thou art just, thy noble ear against us.
As thou art valiant; Let's die together, at one instant, Duke, Only a little let him
fall before me, That I may tell my Soul he shall not have her.

Dearest beauty, Thus let me seal my vowed faith.

[He kisses her hand]

THESEUS.

Sweet, you must be ready,
And you, Emilia, and you, Friend, and all,
Tomorrow by the Sun, to do observance
To flowery May, in Dian's wood: wait well, Sir,
Upon your Mistress. Emily, I hope
He shall not go afoot.

EMILIA.

That were a shame, Sir,
While I have horses: take your choice, and what
You want at any time, let me but know it.

THESEUS.

Go, lead the way; you have won it and shall receive all dues Fit for the honour
you have won;
Sister, beshrew my heart, you have a servant,
That, if I were a woman, would be master,
But you are wise.

[Flourish.]

EMILIA.

I hope too wise for that, Sir.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 2

SCENE 6: Before the prison.

[Enter Jailer's Daughter alone.]

DAUGHTER.

Let all the Dukes, and all the devils roar,
 He is at liberty: I have ventured for him,
 And out I have brought him to a little wood
 A mile hence. I have sent him, where a Cedar,
 Higher than all the rest, spreads like a plane
 Fast by a Brook, and there he shall keep close,
 Till I provide him files and food, for yet
 His iron bracelets are not off. O Love,
 What a stout-hearted child thou art!
 I love him beyond love and beyond reason,
 Or wit, or safety: I have made him know it.
 I care not, I am desperate; If the law
 Find me, and then condemn me for't, some wenches,
 Some honest hearted Maids, will sing my dirge,
 And tell to memory my death was noble,
 Dying almost a Martyr: That way he takes,
 I purpose is my way too: Sure he cannot
 Be so unmanly, as to leave me here;
 If he do, maids will not so easily
 Trust men again: And yet he has not thanked me
 For what I have done: no not so much as kissed me,
 And that, me thinks, is not so well; Yet I hope,
 When he considers more, this love of mine
 Will take more root within him: Let him do
 What he will with me, so he use me kindly;
 For use me so he shall, or I'll proclaim him,
 And to his face, no man. I'll presently
 Provide him necessaries, and pack my clothes up,
 And where there is a patch of ground I'll venture,
 So he be with me; By him, like a shadow,
 I'll ever dwell; within this hour the hubbub
 Will be all o'er the prison: I am then
 Kissing the man they look for: farewell, Father;
 Get many more such prisoners and such daughters,
 And shortly you may keep yourself. Now to him!

[Exeunt.]

For honour's sake, and safety presently
 Into your bush again; Sir, we shall find
 Too many hours to die in: gentle cousin,
 If you be seen you perish instantly
 For breaking prison, and I, if you reveal me,
 For my contempt. .

PALAMON.

No, no, cousin,
 I will no more be hidden, nor put off
 This great adventure to a second trial:
 I know your cunning, and I know your cause;
 He that faints now, shame take him: put thyself
 Upon thy present guard—

ARCITE.

You are not mad?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Look to thine own well, Arcite.

[Fight again. Horns.]

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, Pirithous and train.]

THESEUS.

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

PALAMON.

Stand off, then. My cause and honour guard me!

[They bow several ways: then advance and stand.]

ARCITE.

And me my love!

Is there aught else to say?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

I commend thee.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Farewell, Arcite.

[Fight.]

[Horns within: they stand.]

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Why?

ARCITE.

This is the Duke, a-hunting as I told you.
 If we be found, we are wretched. O retire



ACT III

PALAMON.

Now to you, Sir:

Me thinks this armor's very like that, Arcite,
Thou wor'st the day the three kings fell, but lighter.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

You had indeed; a bright bay, I remember.

ARCITE.

Yes, but all
Was vainly laboured in me; you outwent me,
Nor could my wishes reach you; yet a little
I did by imitation.

PALAMON.

More by virtue;
You are modest, cousin.

ARCITE.

When I saw you charge first,
Methought I heard a dreadful clap of thunder
Break from the Troop.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

No, no, tis well.

PALAMON.

I would have nothing hurt thee but my sword,
A bruise would be dishonour.

ARCITE.

Now I am perfect.

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

PALAMON.
No.

ARCITE.
Is't not too heavy?

PALAMON.
I have worn a lighter,
But I shall make it serve.

ARCITE.
I'll buckle't close.

PALAMON.
My casque now.

ARCITE.
Will you fight bare-armed?

PALAMON.
We shall be the nimble.

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

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

ARCITE.
Faith, very little; love has used you kindly.

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

ARCITE.
Do, and spare not;
I'll give you cause, sweet cousin.

ACT 3
SCENE 1: A forest near Athens.

[Cornets in sundry places. Noise and hallowing as people a Maying.]

Enter Arcite alone.

ARCITE.
O Queen Emilia,
Fresher than May, sweeter
Than her gold buttons on the boughs, or all
Th'enamelled knacks o'th mead or garden: yea,
We challenge too the bank of any nymph
That makes the stream seem flowers; thou, o Jewel
O'th wood, o'th world, hast likewise blest a place
With thy sole presence!
Tell me, O Lady Fortune,
Next after Emily my sovereign, how far
I may be proud. She takes strong note of me,
Hath made me near her; and this beauteous morn
The prim'st of all the year, presents me with
A brace of horses.
Alas, alas, Poor Cousin Palamon, poor prisoner, thou
So little dream'st upon my fortune, that
Thou think'st thyself the happier thing, to be
So near Emilia; me thou deem'st at Thebes,
And therein wretched, although free. But if
Thou knew'st my mistress breathed on me, and that
I eared her language, lived in her eye, O coz,
What passion would enclose thee!

[Enter Palamon as out of a Bush, with his Shackles: bends his fist at Arcite.]

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

ARCITE.
Dear Cousin Palamon—

PALAMON.
Cozener Arcite, come up to me,
Quit me of these cold Gyves, give me a sword,
Though it be rusty, and the charity
Of one meal lend me; Come before me then,
A good Sword in thy hand, and do but say
That Emily is thine.

ARCITE.
Be content: With counsel of the night, I will be here
With wholesome viands; these impediments
Will I file off; you shall have garments and
Perfumes to kill the smell o'th prison; after,
There shall be at your choice
Both Sword and Armor.

PALAMON.
Oh you heavens, dares any
So noble bear a guilty business? None
But only Arcite. I do embrace you and your offer.

[Wind horns of Cornets.]

ARCITE.
You hear the Horns;
Enter your Muset least this match between's
Be crossed, ere met; farewell.
I'll bring you every needful thing: I pray you,
Take comfort and be strong.

PALAMON.
Pray hold your promise.

[Wind horns.]

ARCITE.
Hark, Sir, they call
The scattered to the banquet; you must guess
I have an office there.

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

ARCITE.
We were not bred to talk, man; when we are armed
And both upon our guards, then let our fury,
Like meeting of two tides, fly strongly from us,
And then to whom the birthright of this beauty
Truly pertains will be seen
And quickly, yours, or mine. Will't please you arm, Sir?
Or if you feel yourself not fitting yet
And furnished with your old strength –

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

ARCITE.
Choose you, Sir.

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

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

PALAMON.
That's well said.

ARCITE.
You'll find it.

PALAMON.
Then, as I am an honest man and love
With all the justice of affection,
I'll pay thee soundly.
This I'll take.

ARCITE.
That's mine, then;
I'll arm you first.

PALAMON.
Do: pray thee, tell me, cousin,
Where gott'st thou this good armor?

ACT 3

SCENE 6: Same as Scene III.

[Enter Palamon from the Bush.]

PALAMON.

About this hour my cousin gave his faith
To visit me again, and with him bring
Two swords, and two good Armors; if he fail,
He's neither man nor soldier. When he left me,
I did not think a week could have restored
My lost strength to me, I was grown so low,
And Crest-fall'n with my wants: I thank thee, Arcite,
Thou art yet a fair foe; and I feel myself
With this refreshing, able once again
To outdure danger;
Therefore, this blest morning
Shall be the last; and that sword he refuses,
If it but hold, I kill him with.

[Enter Arcite with Armors and Swords.]

ARCITE.

Good morrow, noble kinsman.

PALAMON.

I have put you to too much pains, Sir.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Would you were so in all, Sir; I could wish ye
As kind a kinsman, as you force me find
A beneficial foe, that my embraces
Might thank ye, not my blows.

ARCITE.

I shall think either, well done,
A noble recompence.

PALAMON.

Then I shall quit you.

ARCITE.

Tis a good title.

PALAMON.

But this one word:
You are going now to gaze upon my Mistress,
For note you, mine she is—

ARCITE.

Nay, then.

PALAMON.

Nay, pray you,
You talk of feeding me to breed me strength:
You are going now to look upon a Sun
That strengthens what it looks on; there
You have a vantage o'er me, but enjoy't till
I may enforce my remedy. Farewell.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 3

SCENE 2: Another Part of the forest.

[Enter Jailer's daughter alone.]

DAUGHTER.

He has mistook the brake I meant, is gone
 After his fancy. Tis now well-nigh morning;
 No matter, would it were perpetual night,
 And darkness Lord o'th world. Hark, tis a wolf!
 In me hath grief slain fear, and but for one thing
 I care for nothing, and that's Palamon.
 I reckon not if the wolves would jaw me, so
 He had this file: what if I hallowed for him?
 I cannot hallow: if I whooped, what then?
 I have heard strange howls this live-long night, why may't not be
 They have made prey of him? He has no weapons, He cannot run, the jingling of his
 Gyves Might call fell things to listen, who have in them A since to know a man
 unarmed, and can Smell where resistance is. I'll set it down He's torn to pieces;
 they howled many together And then they fed on him. I am moped, Food took
 I none these two days, Sipped some water. I have not closed mine eyes Save
 when my lids scoured off their brine; alas, Dissolve my life, Let not my sense
 unsettle, Least I should drown, or stab or hang myself. So, which way now?
 The best way is the next way to a grave: Each errant step beside is torment. Lo,
 The moon is down, the Crickets chirp, the screech owl Calls in the dawn. All
 offices are done Save what I fail in: But the point is this, An end, and that is
 all.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 3

SCENE 4: Another Part of the forest.

[Enter Jailer's daughter.]

DAUGHTER.

Palamon!
 Alas no; he's in heaven. Where am I now?
 Yonder's the sea, and there's a ship; how't tumbles!
 And there's a rock lies watching under water;
 Now, now, it beats upon it; now, now, now,
 There's a leak sprung, a sound one, how they cry!
 Spoon her before the wind, you'll lose all else:
 Up with a course or two, and tack about, boys.
 Good night, good night, you're gone.--I am very hungry.
 Would I could find a fine frog; he would tell me
 News from all parts o'th world, then would I make
 A carrack of a cockleshell, and sail
 By east and northeast to the king of Pygmies,
 For he tells fortunes rarely. Now my father,
 Twenty to one, is trust up in a trice
 Tomorrow morning; I'll say never a word.
 [Sing.]
 For I'll cut my green coat a foot above my knee,
 And I'll clip my yellow locks an inch below mine e'e.
 Hey, nonny, nonny, nonny,
 He s'buy me a white cut, forth for to ride
 And I'll go seek him, throw the world that is so wide
 Hey nonny, nonny, nonny.

[Exeunt.]

ARCITE.
You are wide.

PALAMON.
By heaven and earth,
there's nothing in thee honest.

ARCITE.
Then I'll leave you: you are a
Beast now.

PALAMON.
As thou makes't me, traitor.

ARCITE.
There's all things needful, files and shirts, and perfumes: I'll come again some
two hours hence, and bring That that shall quiet all.

PALAMON.
A Sword and Armor?

ARCITE.
Fear me not; you are now too foul; farewell.
Get off your trinkets; you shall want naught.

PALAMON.
Sirrah—

ARCITE.
I'll hear no more.

[Exit.]

PALAMON.
If he keep touch, he dies for't.

[Exit.]

ACT 3
SCENE 3: Same as Scene I.

[Enter Arcite, with Meat, Wine, and Files.]

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

[Enter Palamon.]

PALAMON.
Arcite?

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

PALAMON.
Nor none so honest, Arcite.

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

PALAMON.
Arcite, thou mightst now poison me.

ARCITE.
I might,
But I must fear you first. Sit down, and, good, now
No more of these vain parleys; let us not,
Having our ancient reputation with us,
Make talk for Fools and Cowards.
To your health, sir!

[He drinks.]

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

PALAMON.
Well, Sir, I'll pledge you.

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

PALAMON.
Stay, I'll tell you after a draught or two more.

ARCITE.
Spare it not, the Duke has more, Coz: Eat now.

PALAMON.
Yes.

ARCITE.
I am glad you have so good a stomach.

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

ARCITE.
Is't not mad lodging here in the wild woods, cousin?

PALAMON.
Yes, for them that have wild consciences.

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

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

ARCITE.
Venison.

PALAMON.
Tis a lusty meat:
Give me more wine; here, Arcite, to the wenches
We have known in our days.
The Lord Steward's daughter,
Do you remember her?

ARCITE.
After you, Coz.

PALAMON.
She loved a black-haired man.

ARCITE.
She did so; well, sir?

PALAMON.
And I have heard some call him Arcite, and—

ARCITE.
Out with't, faith.

PALAMON.
She met him in an Arbour:
What did she there, Coz? Play o'th virginals?

ARCITE.
Something she did, Sir.

PALAMON.
Made her groan a month for't,
Or 2. or 3. or 10.

ARCITE.
The Marshals Sister
Had her share too, as I remember, cousin,
Else there be tales abroad. You'll pledge her?

PALAMON.
Yes.

ARCITE.
A pretty brown wench 'tis. There was a time
When young men went a hunting, and a wood,
And a broad Beech: and thereby hangs a tale:--heigh ho!

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