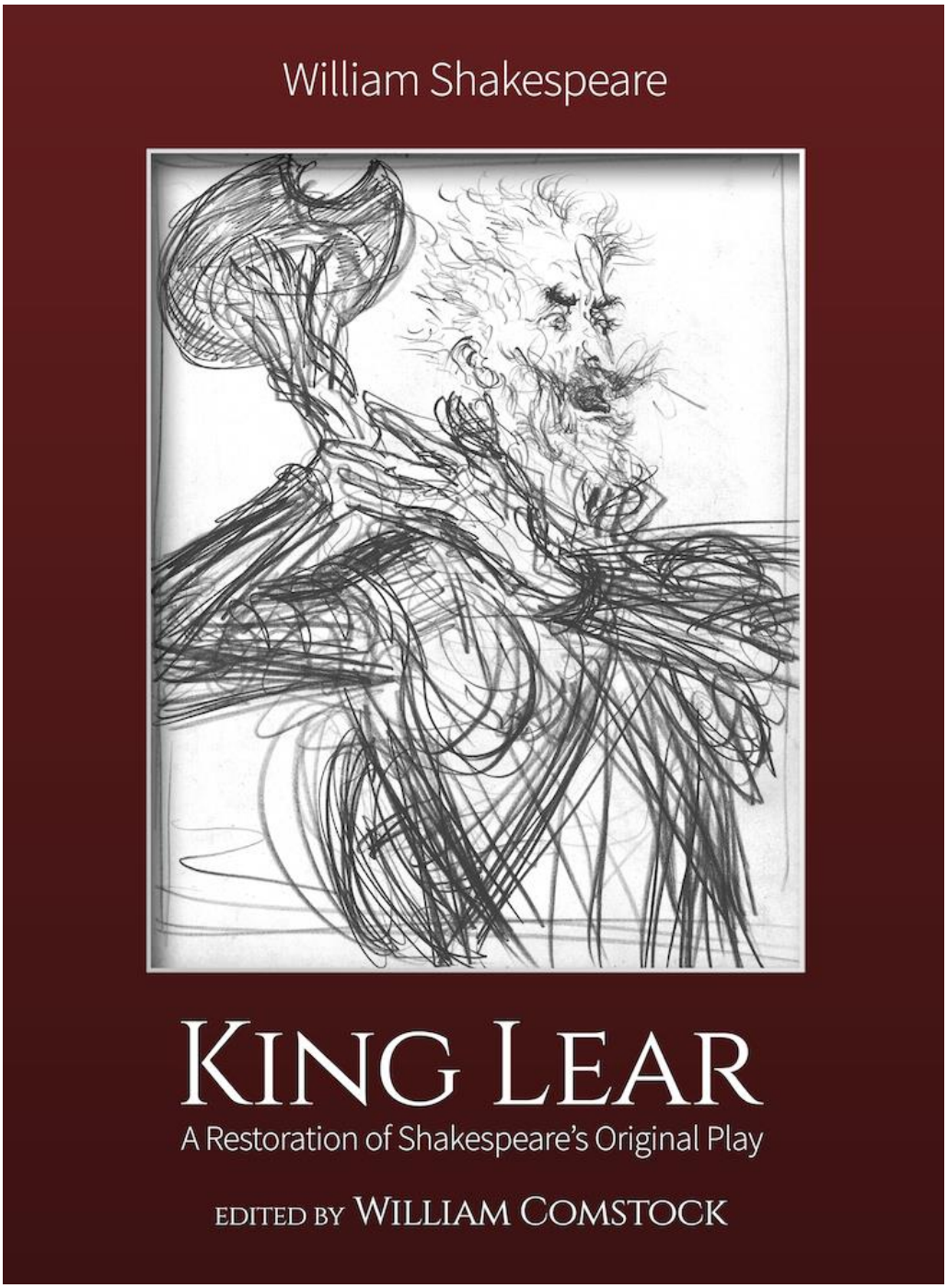

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Go to Table of Contents

Dedication

William A. Arrowsmith

At 17 years old, I was lucky enough to cross paths with Dr. William Arrowsmith. We met at the Bloomington, IL home of Samuel A. Lynde, who had flown Arrowsmith in from Boston to discuss Sam's dream of launching an open university. What stays with me most from that afternoon is the profound impact of hearing Arrowsmith read his newly published version of the "Speech of Chief Seattle." Dr. Arrowsmith was deeply concerned about the decline of American higher education and had recently gained notoriety for his attacks on graduate education in the humanities. His lecture "The Shame of the Graduate Schools: A Plea for a New American Scholar," published in *Harper's Magazine* in 1966, remains as powerful today as it was then. Arrowsmith blamed "the hideous jungle of academic bureaucracy" for making the humanities irrelevant to modern life and subordinating education to trivial research, "the cult of the fact," and career training.

A few years later, after immersing myself in *King Lear*, I sent some of my notes to Dr. Arrowsmith for his appraisal, specifically regarding my contention that standard editions are missing critical stage directions. "My opinion isn't worth straw among the Renaissance drama folk," he replied. "But I do think you've got to make contact with somebody in Elizabethan drama, somebody who will be open-minded but still can read your work with a sense of what has been done, and what has not. I can say that I learned something, say, from your comments about Lear's archery-references, but then I don't know how new all this is, whether the scholars haven't already mined it. (I'm prepared a priori to suppose that they've ignored the essentials, simply on the basis of the way scholars in my field have read Greek tragedy). You've got to find somebody who knows, and whose knowledge matters to others." [See Appendix K.]

Following Dr. Arrowsmith's advice, I spent decades consulting prominent Shakespeare scholars. An early childhood brain injury left me with aphasia, which impacted my SAT and ACT scores and limited my access to traditional higher education. Recognizing that I lacked the formal rhetorical training required to challenge established academic reconstructions of *King Lear*, I sought a collaborator. My goal was to partner with an expert who could help refine my argument and champion a major rethinking of the play's narrative. It was only in 2019, after retiring as a staff photographer for bodybuilding magazines, when Paul Werstine (editor of the Folger Shakespeare Library editions) confirmed via email that many of my insights into *King Lear* were largely unprecedented both editorially and theatrically. Fearing that my reconstruction of the King's Men's 1606 pre-censorship conception might die with me, I felt I had no choice but to work through my language disabilities, and publish my vision online as a full edition. [See About This Document.]

Art asks to be *felt* and inhabited, not merely explained through rhetoric or logos. To give *King Lear* the form of an intellectual critique is to lose in translation what only the experience itself can convey—as though reading a scholarly article on Beethoven s Grosse Fuge could even remotely substitute for hearing it performed. Literary analysis of a play risks becoming sophistic and

misleading when scholars treat passages, images, characters, or themes as self-contained objects rather than as elements whose meaning and function emerge from their dramatic relationships. Ironically, the play explores the relationship between rhetorical persuasion and truth. In preparing this edition, I was guided by Arrowsmith's 1967 warning to editors in his translation of *The Bacchae*:

> "At the very least then *The Bacchae* requires of its critics gentleness in approaching it and humility in handling; *the reader who is not willing to follow where the play, rather than his prejudice, leads him forfeits his quarry*. But *sophrosunê* is not a common critical virtue, and despite the critic's clear warning in the fate of Pentheus, the play has suffered more than most from the violence of its interpreters." ("Introduction to the Bacchae", p. 142).

"The reader who is not willing to follow where the play, rather than his prejudice, leads him forfeits his quarry."

—William Arrowsmith, *The Bacchae*

"Anybody who cares to study Shakespeare's method will see that there is absolutely no dramatist of the French, English, or Athenian stage who relies so much for his effects on the dress of his actors as Shakespeare does himself"

—Oscar Wilde, *Shakespeariana*

Table of Contents

Dedication *1*
Table of Contents *4*
Illustrations *6*
Videos *18*
About This Document *20*
Totus mundus agit histrionem *27*
Dramatis Personæ *28*
King Lear *32*
ACT I, SCENE I.— [King Lear's Palace.] 32
ACT I, SCENE II.—[The Earl of Gloucester's Castle.] 40
ACT I, SCENE III.—[The Duke of Albany's Palace.] 44
ACT I, SCENE IV.—[A Hall in the same.] 44
ACT I, SCENE V.—[Court before the Same.] 53
ACT II, SCENE I.—[The Earl of Gloucester's Castle.] 54
ACT II, SCENE II.—[Before Gloucester's Castle.] 57
ACT II, SCENE III.—[Before a Hovel.] 62
ACT II, SCENE IV.—[Before Gloucester's Castle.] 62
ACT III, SCENE I.—[A Heath.] 70
ACT III, SCENE II.—[Another part of the Heath.] 72
ACT III, SCENE III.—[Gloucester's Castle.] 74
ACT III, SCENE IV.—[The Heath. Before a Hovel.] 75
ACT III. SCENE V.—[Gloucester's Castle.] 79
ACT III, SCENE VI.—[A Skinning House.] 80
ACT III, SCENE VII.—[Gloucester's Castle.] 83
ACT IV, SCENE I.—[The Heath.] 86
ACT IV, SCENE II.—[The Duke of Albany's Palace.] 89
ACT IV, SCENE III.—[The Same. A Tent.] 91
ACT IV, SCENE IV.—[A Room in Gloucester's Castle.] 92
ACT IV, SCENE V.—[The Country near Dover.] 93
ACT IV, SCENE VI.—[A Tent in the French Camp.] 101
ACT IV, SCENE VII.—[The British Camp near Dover.] 104
INTERMEZZO 106
ACT V, SCENE I.—[The British Camp near Dover.] 106
Notes *116*
Acknowledgments *409*
Appendix A: "You lords and noble friends etc". *410*
Appendix B: Scene 23 (Q1, Q2). Act V,scene ii (F) *416*
Appendix C: Intermezzo *421*
Appendix D: The Gentleman in Scene 17 (quartos) *422*
Appendix E: Actus Tertius. Scena Prima *425*

Appendix F: The Incidental Music in King Lear. *428*
Appendix G: Edgar's Ox Horn *432*
Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester *434*
Appendix I: Main Entrance at The Globe *440*
Appendix J: A Skinning House *443*
Appendix K: Correspondence with Dr. William Arrowsmith *448*
Appendix L: Email from Paul Werstine *449*
About William Barr Comstock *450*

Illustrations

Cover illustration. Mambrino's Helmet. Verso: Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, and Dorothea at the Inn(?), c. 1920s, Edmund Joseph Sullivan, The Morgan Library and Museum.
Figure 1. “I tooke your for a ioyne ftool.” Quarto 1, King Lear, Quarto 1 (Halliwell-Phillipps), Internet Shakespeare Editions.
Figure 2. Edmund Joseph Sullivan, “Mambrino’s Helmet,” c.1920s. The Morgan Library Museum.
Figure 1. Screen shot of TOC.
Figure 4. A crest depicting Hercules bearing the globe on his shoulders together with the motto "Totus mundus agit histrionem" (the whole world is a playhouse) is thought to have been displayed at the entrance to the Globe Theatre. [Photo credit unknown.] “The question of whether the first (1599) Globe theatre had a sign, and if so what it showed is one that has teased scholars for some time. Sir Edmund Chambers set a tone of skepticism when he concluded his account of the Globe with the comments: ‘Malone conjectured that the name “Globe” was from the sign, “which was a figure of Hercules supporting the Globe, under which was written *Totus mundus agit histrionem*. I do not know where he got this information. Ernest Schanzer demonstrated that Malone in fact got his information from the great Shakespearean scholar, George Steevens, who in turn possibly got it from the antiquarian William Oldys (1696-1761), which does not establish it as a fact but at least takes it out of the realm of pure conjecture, where Chambers seemed to imply that it belonged.” (Richard Dutton, “Hamlet, An Apology for Actors, and the Sign of the Globe”, p. 35.)
Figure 5. Dramatis Personæ from *King Lear. A Tragedy*, edited by Nicholas Rowe, 1709.
Figure 6. Thirteenth century Spanish depiction of a pair of buisines, also called a herald's trumpet.
Figure 7. Detail from John Speed’s map of Cheshire. Courtesy UCDL.
Figure 8. Title page, First Quarto, 1608. InternetShakespeareEditions.
Figure 9. Aernout van Buchel’s copy of Johan de Witt’s drawing of the Swan playhouse, c.1596, British Museum.
Figure 9a. William Boonen, sketch of a play in the market of Leuven (1594).
Figure 10. Title page, First Folio, 1623. InternetShakespeareEditions.
Figure 11. Pantalone wearing spectacles (left) and Brighella (right) in a Flemish painting by Hieronymus Francken of I Gelosi theatre company, c. 1590.
Figure 12. This 25” x 18” color map from Ziereis Facsimilies was a New Year's gift from the Archdeacon of Rochester to King Henry VIII, and hung in Hampton Court Palace, the King's favorite residence.
Figure 13. Portrait of the engineer Luca Martini, Bronzino Agnolo, 1555, Palazzo Pitti Florence Italy.
Figure 14. Map of England and Wales by Christopher Saxton, 1579. 41.3 x 53.8 cm.
Figure 15. Allegory and personification of Geometry teaching two scholars how to measure the earth in an engraving by C. Cort, 1565, after F. Floris, c. 1557.
Figure 16. Detail from The Westminster Portrait of Richard II of England (1390s), artist unknown.
Figure 17. “Portrait of Henry VIII after Hans Holbein the Younger,” Original c. 1536. "His large codpiece and heavily padded shoulders further enhance the aggressive masculinity of the image.
Figure 18. The codpiece of Don Grazia de Medici (1562) reconstructed by Anne-Marie Norton, with embellishments derived from the codpiece of Cosimo Medici (1574). From “Egregious Renaissance Maleness, From the Inside Out: An up-close look at the codpiece” by Michael Glover, Hyperallergic, 2020.

Go to Table of Contents

Figure 19. Tudor Man in Red. The Royal Collection: Portrait of a Man in Red - German/Netherlandish School, 16th century (artist) Creation Date: c. 1530-50.
Figure 20. Larry Yando as Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, 2008-09 CST.
Figure 21. Philip Stubbs (Stubbs) (c. 1555 – c. 1610) was an English pamphleteer.
Figure 22. Daughter of Niger - costume design by Inigo Jones for The Masque of Blackness.
Figure 22a. The Somerset House Conference, 1604, The National Portrait Gallery
Figure 23. Frontispiece to Simonds D'Ewes "Journals of all the Parliaments during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth" [1682].
Figure 24. *Catechismus*, 1593. Folger STC 18733.2
Figure 25. Plato & Aristotle as central figures in Raphael's The School of Athens (1510). Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Museum.
Figure 26. The Greek mythological prophet Tiresias is transformed into a woman by the goddess Hera, after striking two copulating snakes with a stick. Engraving taken from Die Verwandlungen des Ovidii : in zweyhundert und sechs- und zwantzig Kupffern. 1690.
Figure 26a. An early example of a demise of the Crown: following the Battle of Bosworth Field, Lord Stanley hands the crown of Richard III to Henry VII—who established the House of Tudor.
Figure 27. Anne Askew by Hans Eworth (1560).
Figure 28. The Burning of Anne Askew and others. John Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 1663 ed. The British Museum
Figure 29. Jupiter castrates Saturn eating his children. French, Anonymous, c. 1501. Jupiter's castration of Saturnus is combined with Saturnus' (Cronos) eating of his children.
Figure 30. The Dragon Devouring the Companions of Cadmus, 1588, Hendrick Goltzius, Netherlandish, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Figure 31. The Meeting of Henry VIII and the Emperor Maximilian I circa 1513.
Figure 32. Lady Fortune with Reynard the Fox as Pope and Anti-Christ.
Figure 33. James I of England, ca. 1605. John de Critz (Flemish, 1551-1642). Museo del Prado.
Figure 34. "Twelve-penny hirelings in their Heavens" with "creaking throne", *Shakespeare's Theatre* by C. Walter Hodges, 1964, p. 99.
Figure 35. Goneril's speech as published in the First Quarto, (Q, 301-305).
Figure 36. Regan's speech as published in the First Folio, (F, 301-305).
Figure 37. "Ill-Matched Lovers", Quentin Massys. c. 1520-1525, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.
Figure 38. Ruins of forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, where "know yourself" was once said to be inscribed.
Figure 38a. Beheading of Edmund Beaufort, 4th Duke of Somerset in 1471 at Tewkesbury. Edward IV watches. Illuminated miniature from Histoire de la rentrée victorieuse du roi Edouard IV en son royaume d'Angleterre.
Figure 39. "Portrait of two sisters" probably Anne of Denmark and her sister Elizabeth, by Robert Peake the elder, around 1580.
Figure 40. Woman wearing breeches and a codpiece. "Histoire de la virilité, 1-l'invention de la virilité de l'Antiquité aux lumières", Paris, Éditions du Seuil, page 208.
Figure 41. Lucretius opens his poem De rerum natura by addressing Venus not only as the mother of Rome (Aeneadum genetrix) but also as the veritable mother of nature (Alma Venus).
Figure 42. Portrait of Thomas More wearing bow spectacles. Flemish School, circa 16th century. Musee Granet, France.
Figure 43. Portrait of Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk, by Hans Eworth, 1563.
Figure 43a. *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* by Will Fisher.
Figure 44. Men's hose worn skin-tight in the fifteen century was described as being "so closely fitted that they showed almost all their muscles, as if they were completely naked." Agostina Veneziano, 1517, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.
Figure 45. Bow spectacles found in the original case and dating back at least 340 years were among the finds of a recently discovered warship The Gloucester.
Figure 46. Tudor casement windows, Gloucester Folk Museum.

Figure 47. Doctor Faustus conjuring Mephistopheles from a trap door on the Frontispiece of the 1631 edition of Marlowe's play.
Figure 48. John Dee was an Anglo-Welsh mathematician, astronomer, astrologer and occult philosopher, and an advisor to Queen Elizabeth I.
Figure 48a. Title page of an early edition of *Cambyses*, showing the division of roles among actors.
Figure 49. Facsimile Viewer: King Lear, Quarto 2 (Garrick), Internet Shakespeare Editions.
Figure 50. Unknown Man, ca. 1600 attributed to Nicholas Hilliard by the V&A.
Figure 51. Portrait of an Unknown Young Man with a Book, Bronzino, 1530s, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY.
Figure 52. Guidonian hand.
Figure 53. "A Puritan Family, from Tenor of the Whole Psalms in Four Parts, 1563." Courtesy of Meister-drucke.
Figure 54. Nicholas Hilliard's Unknown Woman of 1602 wears typical Puritan fashion of the early years of the century. Her tall black felt hat with a rounded crown is called a capotain and is worn over a linen cap. She wears a black dress and a white stomacher over a chemise with blackwork embroidery trim; her neckline is filled in with a linen partlet.
Figure 55. Young men playing football.
Figure 56. Victor Mature as Samson in MGM's box office hit Samson and Delilah (1949) directed by Cecil B. DeMille.
Figure 57. The Bath House,n.d.Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528 Nuremberg), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Figure 58. Adolescens, Omne Bonum, c.1360-1375–Royal 6 E VI f. 58v, England. Detail of a histriated initial 'A'(dolescens) of a young woman with a mirror and a young man with a sword. British Library.
Figure 59. Jakob Seisenegger, *"Portrait of Charles V with a Hound,"* 1532,- Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Bilddatenbank.
Figure 60. The only known example of an original 'Monmouth Cap' dating from the 16th century (Monmouth Museum).
Figure 61. King James Feasting with Spanish Ambassadors (1624) by Melchior Tavernier.
Figure 62. Fasting nuns at the refectory table being served fish by skeletons (an allegory of abstinence), from Cotton MS Tiberius A VII/1, f. 97v.
Figure 63. "Flaisch macht Flash" or "flesh equals flesh". "Nun walks with fish in hand chasing a cat, she wants to trade the fish with a penis that the cat has in its mouth. A jester watches through a window frame", c. 1555, artist unknown, Rijksmuseum.
Figure 64. The children of the chapel detail from The funeral procession of Queen Elizabeth I to Westminster Abbey, 28th April 1603. (Wiki)
Figure 65. "The man wot eats oysters - But can't pay for 'em", 1830.
Figure 66. Puritan family Meal. An illustration from A Short History of the English People by John Richard Green. Sex and food are conflated throughout Shakespeare's plays, and the banquet served to Lear is not one any hungry sportsman would welcome.
Figure 67. Title page of *The Italian Taylor and his Boy by* Robert Armin (1609).
Figure 68. Uncredited illustration at CNN of a game of Real Tennis played during the time of Henry VIII.
Figure 69. Boys playing football. 1612 woodcut from the Minerva Britannia by Henry Peacham. Source: The Fellows' Library, Winchester College.
Figure 70. President Gerald Ford tripping up Chevy Chase.
Figure 71. Young Knight in a Landscape, with a handkerchief in his codpiece, Vittore Carpaccio (c. 1505). Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.
Figure 72. The Funny Dreams of Pantagruel (1565), illustrator thought to be François Desprez.
Figure 73. Plato's Allegory of the cave, 1604, Engraving of Jan Sanraedam (1565-1607) after a painting of Cornelis Corneliszoon van Haarlem (1562-1638). British Museum.
Figure 74. Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (New South Wales), Internet Shakespeare Editions.
Figure 75. Man with a cobza on his back. From "The Dancing Cripples" by Cornelis Massijs, 1538. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (Museum of Prints and Drawings).

Figure 76. “Marina singing before Pericles” from V,i, Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Thomas Stothard, 1825, Folger Shakespeare Library.
Figure 77. Detail of coxcomb. ‘Trivulzio Book of Hours’, Flanders ca. 1470 (Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, SMC 1, fol. 110v).
Figure 78. Albrecht Durer, *The Peasant Couple at Market* (1520). According to Jürgen Müller, the two dead cocks, the jug and the egg basket have sexual connotations. See “Albrecht Dürer’s Peasant Engravings.” The Met.
Figure 79. Audience faces in detail of
Figure 80. Field peas and their pods.
Figure 81. Nature Forging a Baby, from the Roman de la Rose, Master of the Prayer Books, ca. 1490-1500. London, British Library, MS Harley 4425, f140r.
Figure 82. Men being driven by an ox. From “The World Turned Upside Down.”
Figure 83. A “Bartmann” jug in the collection of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.
Figure 84. JUGGS; The World's Dirtiest Tit-Mag Vol. 12, No. 07 / May 1993.
Figure 85. Albrecht Dürer, Amorous Man with a jar of oysters gesturing obscenely with his tongue (c. 1500).
Figure 86. Christ bleeding tears while praying in the garden of Gethsemane, from the gothic Tabernakelbildstock in Taisten, Leonhard of Brixen (15th century).
Figure 87. David Plays the Harp for Saul, by Rembrandt van Rijn, c. 1650 and 1670. Mauritshuis.
Figure 88. Henry VIII in the likeness of King David, playing the harp: Royal MS 2 A xvi, f. 63v.
Figure 89. Facsimile Viewer: Actus Primus, Scena Quinta, First Folio (New South Wales).
Figure 90. Lullaby (Italian girl spinning) (1875), by William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1875.
Figure 91. Folio 110 from the McGill *Feather Book*: Scene from a comedy by Nicolò Barbieri showing Spineta serenaded by the masked Schapin (Scapino). The large number of instruments hanging from the tree suggest the player is the commedia dell'arte actor Francesco Gabrielli with his wife Spinetta.
Figure 92. Cimon and Pero, Peter Paul Rubens, c. 1630, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.
Figure 93. Judith Leyster’s androgynous *Fool with Lute*, after a painting by Hans Hals c. 1623.
Figure 94. King John’s Hunting Lodge, Axbridge, Somerset, a 15th century merchant’s house.
Figure 95. Scola, overo teatro by Nicoletto Giganti - Figure 2.
Figure 96. Sixteen-year-old Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, by Isaac Oliver, ca.1610, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Figure 97. The Butcher`s Shop, Annibale Carracci, c. 1582, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX.
Figure 98. Detail of the village of “Tilburye” in the county of “Wiltshire” on John Speed's 'The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine' (1611/12). University of Cambridge Digital Library.
Figure 99. Built in 1279, the magnificent tithe barn in Tisbury has been repurposed as an arts venue.
Figure 100. Driving to Stonehenge located on Salisbury Plain from Westminster Cathedral.
Figure 101.Wilshire, England, *Britannica*. Artist Unknown. He is wearing silk netherstocks. Private collection; on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, London.
Figure 102. Figure 109. Portrait of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton (1573-1624), Patron of Shake-speare. Ca. 1600. Artist Unknown. He is wearing silk netherstocks. Private collection; on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, London.
Figure 103. Illustration by Gustave Doré from Chapter XXVI of *Don Quixote*.
Figure 104. Ox turned butcher. From “The World Turned Upside Down.”
Figure 104a. Albrecht Dürer, The Promenade, ca. 1498, engraving. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.
Figure 105. “Who’s a pretty boy then? A wagtail inspects himself in a car wing mirror.”
Figure 106. “Netherlandish Proverbs” by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1559, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.
Figure 107. Marginal image from the Goreston Psalter. Source: British Library.
Figure 108. According to local lore, Crossbones Graveyard was once the final rest place for the Winchester Geese, medieval sex workers licensed by the Bishop of Winchester to work in the brothels of The Liberty of the Clink. The graveyard is a short walk from the Globe Playhouse.
Figure 109. Stocks in Keevil, Wiltshire.
Figure 110. “Time and a Fox Turning the Wheel of Fortune with People of All Ranks to the Right.” The

Michel*f*eldt Tapestry: Allegory of Social Injustice (series), Albrecht Dürer, ca.1526, Rosenwald Collection.
Figure 111. Marginal illustrations of a pipe and tabor, and chifonie or symphonia (hurdy-gurdy) from The Luttrell Psalter, c. 1330-40 (GB_lbl Add. 42130, f176r).
Figure 112. The Hurdy-Gurdy Player, Georges La Tour, c.1620–1625, Musée d'Arts de Nantes. An impoverished blind beggar singing in the street to the music of his hurdy-gurdy.
Figure 113. A 17th century Dutch drawing of a beggar couple, the man accompanying his companion's singing on the hurdy-gurdy.
Figure 114. William Kemp, Kemps nine daies vvonder (London, 1600).
Figure 115. Jean-Martin Charcot demonstrating female hysteria. Etching by A. Lurat, 1888, after P.A.A. Brouillet, 1887.
Figure 116. A Briefe Discourse of a Disease called the Suffocation of the Mother by Edward Jorden, 1603.
Figure 117. Codex Manesse, UB Heidelberg, Cod. Pal. germ. 848, fol. 14v, Markgraf Heinrich von Meißen.
Figure 118. Four heads of men who each exhibit one of the four temperaments in an 18th century woodcut: phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine and melancholic.
Figure 119. Tityos, Jusepe de Ribera, 1632, Museo del Prado.
Figure 120. Jupiter hurling lightning bolts in "The Battle Between the Gods and the Giants", Joachim Wtewael, 1600.
Figure 121. Frances (Howard), Countess of Somerset, 1593 - 1632. Daughter of the 3rd Earl of Suffolk; wife of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, National Galleries Scotland.
Figure 122. Portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark by John de Critz, 1605.
Figure 123. A painting by Nicholas Hilliard of Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland, c. 1590-1595, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Hanging from a branch behind him is a globe of the earth balanced with feather. The Latin word 'TANTI' written beside it implies that man's rational, scientific knowledge of the world is equal to a feather (viz. nothing). See note V,i,273, feather.
Figure 124. Dover guards the Straits of Dover, the narrowest part of the English Channel.
Figure 125. Rat catcher wearing a purse. The famous Ratketcher, with his trauels / into France, and of his returne to London, to the tune of Joviall Tinker. Imprinted at London for Iohn Trundle, and are to be sold at/ the signe of the No-body in Barbican.
Figure 126. A rare Tudor gold signet ring, believed to have belonged to a member of the Boleyn family. (Image: © Historic Royal Palaces/3004593)
Figure 127. Facsimile of First Folio (New South Wales), *"Blows windes"*, p.296.
Figure 128. Aiolos, keeper of the violent storm winds in Greek mythology.
Figure 129. Prop cannon by Eric Hart for Shakespeare in the Park.
Figure 130. Rare Antique Theatre Sound Effect Prop Rain Box Vintage SIlent Movie (ebay).
Figure 131. "Rain-Box." John A. Leonard, "History of Theatre Sound", p.7.
Figure 132. "How to make a swivel" from THE SECOND BOOKE. Teaching most plainly, and withall most exactly, the composing of all manner of Fire-works For Triump and Recreation (The Project Gutenberg Ebook, The Mysteryes of Nature and Art by John Bate)
Figure 133. An old woman delousing a man Etching by Willem Basse after a design drawing by Anthonie Victorijns. Collection: Voorhelm Schneevoogt.
Figure 134. "Anger, if not restrained, is frequently more hurtful to us than the injury that provokes it." – Seneca.
Figure 135. Woodcut illustrating the dangers of pride and vanity in calling up the devil represented by looking in a mirror. The picture is entitled: A Young Woman Combing Her Hair from the 1493 edition of The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry.
Figure 136. The Dance of Death (1493) by Michael Wolgemut, from the Nuremberg Chronicle of Hartmann Schedel.
Figure 137. Stairs used in a masque. Detail from The Portrait of Sir Henry Unton by Unknown artist, c. 1596, National Portrait Gallery.
Figure 138. After nearly 500 years, the remains of the Red Lion playhouse, which marked the dawn of Elizabethan theatre, may have finally been found." (Stephen White).

Figure 139. “Dives and Lazarus” by (c. 1700), Paolo Pagani. Pushkin Museum of Art.
Figure 140. Siegfried, as portrayed by Arthur Rackham, revels in his strength and masculinity.
Figure 141. A ghost awaits his cue in the cellar, Shakespeare’s Theatre by C. Walter Hodges, 1964, p. 97.
Figure 142. Tom o’Bedlam or Abraham-men. Woodcut illustration for an old ballad, National Library of Scotland - Crawford
Figure 143. Richard Napier (c. 1630), British School, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Napier was a clergyman and astrologer who treated thousand of patients worried about their mental health in the 16th century. Their symptoms included suicidal thoughts and self-harm, refusal to pray, inability to feel pious, sexual urges, visions, weeping.
Figure 144. Demons tempting suicide. Source not given. “It was customary during the Tudor and Stuart periods for the corpse of a felo de se suicide to undergo a form of ritual desecration: defilement of one’s body and living memory, followed by 'profane burial' at a crossroads.”
Figure 145. Egyptian plague of boils in the Toggenburg Bible from 1411. The image depicts Moses tossing handfuls of soot into the air with two people suffering from the Biblical plague of boils described in Exodus 9:8-9.
Figure 146. A naked woman on a flying penis, marginalium image from Decretum Gratiani by Bartolomeo da Brescia.
Figure 147. In The Madhouse — Plate 8, A Rake's Progress, William Hogarth.
Figure 148. Henry vs The Whores, 3rd April 1546. ‘A good old traditional Southwark brothel, where we have tea with our tits out and everyone looks over the moon to be here…oh and we also collect crockery’.
Figure 149. Dyce gives Swithold, a contraction of Saint Withold (supposed by Tyrwhitt to mean St. Vitalis), who, as a youth, was licentious and immoral. He was known as a patron against venereal disease.
Figure 150. A medical illustration attributed to Albrecht Dürer (1496) depicting a person with syphilis. Here, the disease is believed to have astrological causes.
Figure 151. 16th century engraving by Jan Sadeler showing Girolamo Fracastoro warning a mythic Greek shepherd, Syphilis, not to anger Apollo by Pointing to Venus, the Goddess of Love. ‘A night with Venus, a lifetime with Mercury’ ran the old adage.
Figure 152. Gambling in a Brothel at the time of Queen Elizabeth I. Phillip Stubbs's Anatomy of the ABUSES IN ENGLAND in SHAKSPERE’S YOUTH, PART I, 1583. Page 46.
Figure 153. A vagrant is tied and whipped through the streets on his way to the gallows, c.1567.
Figure 154. A public whipping with rods in Fulham, 1558, from Foxe's Book of Martyrs. “A Grim And Gruesome History Of Public Shaming In London: Part 2” by Dr. Matthew Green.
Figure 155. “Diogenes”, Engraved by Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio, After Parmigianino, ca. 1527. The Met.
Figure 156. *Ecce Homo*, Caravaggio, 1605, Palazzo Bianco, Genoa.
Figure 157. Job tearing his clothes upon the loss of his children and property. “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither.” KJV, Job 1:121. Illustration from Bibel AT, deutsch, 1477. The tearing of one’s clothes is an ancient meme associated with grief and loss.
Figure 158. Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (New South Wales).
Figure 159. Tudor gentleman with a cape giving alms to a beggar.
Figure 160. Procession portrait of Elizabeth I of England, c. 1601.
Figure 161. “Whipped Peter,” An escaped enslaved man named Peter showing his scarred back at a medical examination in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1863.
Figure 162. *Flagellation of Christ* by Peter Paul Rubens, 1617.
Figure 163. “Diogenes”, Engraved by Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio, After Parmigianino, ca. 1527. The Met.
Figure 164. *Caritas*, The Seven Acts of Mercy, pen and ink drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1559.
Figure 165. Caravaggio, “The Seven Works of Mercy, ca. 1607.
Figure 166. El Greco, Saint Martin and the Beggar. c. 1597-99, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figure 167. (Left) Youth wearing a chlamys, a short cloak worn by Greek men; (center) Tudor period rapier cape; (right) statue of an athlete wearing a chlamys, (Museum of Archaeology, Istanbul, Turkey).
Figure 168. From the Spring/Summer 2022 collection of Victor and Rolf. Victor Boyko/Getty Images Entertainment/Getty Images.
Figure 169. Members of the Royal Australian Air Force diving into a river, 1943.
Figure 170. The Misanthrope, Breugel, 1568.
Figure 171. Decapitated Head of "Swithold", Patron Saint of Genital Diseases. Recently sold at auction.
Figure 172. Greek or Roman bronze statuette of a draped man, 1st century BCE–1st century CE, The Met.
Figure 173. Alexander the Great meeting Diogenes, Anonymous, 1580-1640. Metropolitan Museum
Figure 174. "The Song of Roland." Charlemagne hears Roland blow his Oliphant. Image from Stricker's Karl der Grosse, manuscript of Bonn, 1450.
Figure 175. Chapbook for Jack the Giant Killer.
Figure 176. Facsimile of Quarto 1 (1608). There are no stage directions in regard to performance.
Figure 176a. Detail of mohel wearing contemporary 15th-century riveted spectacles in Circumcision of Christ (1466) by Friedrich Herlin, Rothenburg ob der Tauber.
Figure 177. Edmund Joseph Sullivan, "Mambrino's Helmet," c.1920s. The Morgan Library Museum.
Figure 178. Queen Elizabeth 1 preparing to slit the throat of a stag, from Turberville, *'Noble Art of Venerie',* 1575.
Figure 179. Postcard of Woodlands Manor, Mere, Wiltshire, England.
Figure 180. Henry Hastings (c. 1561–15 October 1650), "was the typical country squire of the time, 'well-natured, but soon angry.' He always dressed in green, and keeping all sorts of hounds and hawks, devoted himself to hunting. His hall was hung with sporting trophies, while favorite dogs and cats occupied every corner." (Wiki)
Figure 181. Ilsington House (Puddletown Manor)
Figure 182. Emperor Nero on Horseback, Antonio Tempesta, 1596. Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Figure 182a. Ecce Homo, Jusepe De Ribera, c. 1620, Messina Museo Regionale.
Figure 183. In scene 6, Don Quixote, convinced that the puppets are real, destroys the puppet theatre. Illustration by Gustave Doré from Don Quixote, chapter 26.
Figure 184. "Don Quixote attacking a Puppet Theatre." Illustrator not credited.
Figure 185. "The trial of the dog for biting the noble lord."
Figure 186. From L. M[ascall] Sundrie Engrines and Trappes to take polecats, and all Kings of vermin 1550.
Figure 187. "Skinning the eyes can be tricky," *OutdoorLife*.
Figure 188. Found in "Come O'er the Bourn Bessie to Me" from the Traditional Tune Archive abc collection. Click to play.
Figure 189. Pelt of a polecat. "Her boat hath a leak."
Figure 190. From *King Lear*, Quarto 1 (InternetShakespeareEditions).
Figure 191. The Terracotta Amphora from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, showing a judge in himation.
Figure 191. Ecce Homo, Jusepe De Ribera, c. 1620, Messina Museo Regionale.
Figure 192. Joint-stools in a goldsmith's workshop.
Figure 193. Shepherd playing his horn. The Shepheardes Calendar (November), Edmund Spenser.
Figure 194. Buster Keaton, the King of Pratfalls, in a promotional still for *The Camerman*, 1928.
Figure 195. "Actaeon Killed by His Dogs" from Ovid's Metamorphoses, Antonio Tempesta, 1606.
Figure 195a. Detail of Michelangelo's Moses at San Pietro in Vincoli.
Figure 205. The Noble art of Venerie or Hunting, George Turberville, 1611.
Figure 206. "The meafures of blowing, fet downe in the notes for the more eafe and ready helpe of fuch as are defirous to learnc the fame: and they are fet downe according to the order which is obfervcd at thefe dayes ia this Real me of Great Brittaine, as followeth." The Noble art of Vemerie or Hunting.
Figure 207. Excerpt from scene 13 in King Lear, Quarto 1, 1608 (Halliwell-Phillipps), InternetShakespeare-Editions.

Figure 208. Flute Player, Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1621. Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel.D.
Figure 209. Gentleman peeking through curtains. British Museum.
Figure 210. Opening of Act III,vii as published in First Folio (InternetShakespeareEditions).
Figure 211. Attendant soldiers standing behind Titus in the Peacham drawing of Titus Andronicus (c. 1595?), the only surviving contemporary illustration from a play by Shakespeare, now in the library of the Marquess of Bath at Longleat.
Figure 212. Quinten Matsys, "Tax Collectors" (c. 1525), Liechtenstein Collection, Vaduz.
Figure 213. Samson and Delilah, Peter Paul Rubens (1609), National Gallery, London.
Figure 214. A Chained Bear, Agostino Carracci (1557-1602) Courtland Institute of Art, London.
Figure 215. The blinding of Gloucester and death of Cornwall's Knight (*"Seru"*) as published in the First Folio (InternetShakespeareEdition).
Figure 216. "God bless me, what's the matter." by Phiz (Hablot K. Browne). Household Edition Dickens's Pickwick Papers, p. 65. Engraved by one of the Dalziels.
Figure 217. Still from Battleship Potemkin, Sergei Eisenstein, 1925. Like Hitchcock in The Birds, Eisenstein uses glasses as a symbol throughout the film.
Figure 218. A chilling still from Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* where the broken glasses of a schoolgirl are used as a symbol.
Figure 219. Detail from The Blinding of Samson, Rembrandt (1636), Städel, Frankfurt am Main.
Figure 220. A 1540s depiction of a judicial combat in Augsburg in 1409, between Marshal Wilhelm von Dornsberg and Theodor Haschenacker. Dornsberg's sword broke early in the duel, but he proceeded to kill Haschenacker with his own sword.
Figure 221. "The Knight's Tale" from the Ellesmere Chaucer (Huntington Library, San Marino).
Figure 222. Portrait of Alof de Wignacourt with his Page, Caravaggio (c. 1607-1608), Louvre.
Figure 223. S.D., *"Draw and fight"*, Quarto 1 (InternetShakespeareEditions).
Figure 224. *"Out vilde gelly," King Lear,* III,vii. Facsimile copy of First Folio (New South Wales), Internet Shakespeare Editions
Figure 225. Hecuba gouges out the eyes of Polymester for murdering her last surviving child Polydorus. From Metamorphoses by Ovid, Antoine Vérard: Paris, 1494. British Library IC. 41148, CLVI.
Figure 226. "Young Squire with Man in Armour". Giorgione. Ca. 1501-1502, The Uffizi.
Figure 227. The Squire in the Ellesmere manuscript of Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.
Figure 228. The Parable of the Blind, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1568, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.
Figure 229. Earliest illustration of a belted plaid c. 1600.
Figure 230. Woodcut of the Devil Tempting a Woman's Vanity with a Mirror.
Figure 231. George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland, Nicholas Hilliard, c. 1590. The glove he has pinned to his hat looks suspiciously like the crown of a cockscomb.
Figure 232. Man with a Glove, Titian, c. 1520, Louvre.
Figure 233. Detail of a miniature of Franchise fighting Danger, Harley MS 4425, f. 134v. c 1490-c 1500 Title Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, Roman de la Rose.
Figure 234. Drummer from Soldiers and Officers, Jacob de Gheyn II, 1587, The Cleveland Museum of Art.
Figure 235. Old Soldier Turned Nurse. From "The World Turned Upside Down."
Figure 236. God's destruction of Sodom in The Dore Gallery of Bible Illustrations, Gutenberg.
Figure 237. Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, by Unknown Anglo-Netherlandish artist, circa 1575.
Figure 238. In the Spring, Burdock produces spiky purple flowers in the shape of orbs, similar to thistles. Photo Credit Shutterstock.
Figure 239. Cuckooflower. Photo by J. Patrick Fischer. "Perhaps the best way to define a flower vs a weed is to consider Ian Emberson's line of poetry: 'A weed is a flower in the wrong place, a flower is a weed in the right place." (Cathy Habas, "Are Daisies Weeds of Flowers?")
Figure 240. The unimproved nature grassland at Polebrook farm (Kent) is thought to have remained unchanged for more than 700 years. Photo: Picasa/Tania Pascoe.
Figure 241. A romanticized Victorian-era illustration of a MacGillivray clansman wearing a kilt and feathered bonnet. By the end of the 16th century, bonnets were very fashionable among Scotsmen at the time. It was a simple craft, requiring inexpensive materials and little special equipment. From

R.R. McIan, The Clans of the Scottish Highlands.
Figure 242. Actors wearing hats. Francis Kirkman, *The Wits* (1662). From *Shakespeare's England* (1917).
Figure 243. Mark Rylance as Hamm, Tom Hickey as Nagg and Miriam Margolyes as Nell in Samuel Beckett's "Endgame" directed by Simon McBurney at the Duchess Theatre in London.
Figure 244. The Earth from Apollo 8 as it rounded the dark side of the moon. Photograph: Nasa/AFP/Getty Images.
Figure 245. Rock samphire growing on the cliffs at Dover. Photo: Karen Roe for White Cliffs of Dover.
Figure 246. *The Ambassadors* (1533) is a painting by Hans Holbein the Younger.
Figure 247. Bronze statuette of a comic actor farting, Roman Empire, ca A.D.1 to 125. J. Paul Getty Museum.
Figure 248. Scene della commedia dell'arte, fine xviii-inizio xix secolo 01, Museo del Teatro alla Scala (Milan).
Figure 249. A plate originally from The Image of Irelande by John Derricke, published in 1581. Note the flatulentists on the right side (h/t the Lavatory Reader).
Figure 250. Mosaic with mask of Silenus, 1st century AD, The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. The Festival of Dionysus was the theatrical event of year in 5th century Athens. Every year in the spring playwrights would compete to entertain the masses of Athenian citizenry.
Figure 251. Facsimile of Lear's "mad scene" in First Folio (1623).
Figure 252. Henry V at the battle of Agincourt. Illustration from History of England by Henry Tyrrell (c 1860).
Figure 253. "Costumed people parade through the Old Town during the annual Jack In The Green festival. The event marks the May Day public holiday in Britain." /Credit: Getty.
Figure 254. A green man in the misericords of Holy Trinity Church, Coventry.
Figure 255. Bal des Ardents from Froissart's Chronicles. Four of the dancers disguised as Wild Men, mythical beings often associated with demonology, were killed in a fire caused by a torch. Wild men were commonly represented in medieval Europe and documented in revels of Tudor England.
Figure 255a. Florizel and Perdita in The Winter's Tale. (1867) After Charles Robert Leslie.
Figure 256. Mother Nature forging creation on her "anvil of life." From Romance of the Rose, about 1405, unknown artist. The J. Paul Getty Museum.
Figure 257. Two Merks or Thistle Dollar.
Figure 258. Thistles on the Dover coast of England.
Figure 259. Dried Thistle by Zina Stromberg, March 28th, 2017.
Figure 260. Blind crippled beggar. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, c. 1566.
Figure 261. "The Double-armed Man", 1625
Figure 262. The Medieval Bill Hook (also called just a "Bill") was a polearm weapon that is a good example of how weapons developed out of farm implements and tools. This is derived from the agricultural bill hook.
Figure 263. "The icons of victory," photo by Sebastião Salgado, 1998.
Figure 264. James I of England and VI of Scotland at the age of eight with a sparrow-hawk, artist unknown, National Portrait Gallery. Unlike gyrfalcons or peregrines, hawks will use their strong feet and talons to constrict their prey, effectively cutting off the prey's air supply.
Figure 265. XIV Century Archery, Joseph Strutt, The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England, p. 42.
Figure 266. Cicero Denouncing Catiline, engraved by B. Barloccini, 1849. After C.C. Perkins / Getty Images.
Figure 267. Quintilian's statue in Calahorra, La Rioja, Spain.
Figure 268. *Chironomia, or, The art of manuall rhetorique*, John Bulwer, 1644.
Figure 269. *L'Escole des Filles ou la Philosophy des dames* is a sex manual by an unknown author first published in Paris in 1655. One of the first uses of the word dildo in literature is an erotic poem by Thomas Nashe entitled "The Choise of Valentines" (c. 1592). It concerns male performance anxiety.
Figure 270. Illustration "Of the Young Man and the Cat," from The Fables of Æsop Paraphras'd in Verse: Adorned with Sculpture and Illustrated with Annotations by John Ogilby (London, 1665); first state.

The British Museum.
Figure 271. "Returning the Wandering Womb with 'fetid and rank smells'".
Figure 272. Woodcut of a civet cat. From 'Caroli Clvsii...', 1611. Credit: Wellcome Collection.
Figure 273. The White Cliffs of Dover as they may have presented themselves to Shakespeare in May 1606, awash with daisies, red field poppies, crimson clover, yellow rattle and lady's bedstraw. Matt Hayward/National/Trust. (CountryLiving). It is in fields and grasslands such as these that Lear seeks to camouflage himself in.
Figure 274. The hand of Pope Francis being kissed by Martin Scorcese. The palm is facing downward.
Figure 275. A blindfolded Cupid, armed with bow and arrow, by Piero della Francesa, c. 1456.
Figure 276. "Reach here with your finger, and See my hands." Source Unknown.
Figure 277. Incredulità di San Tommaso, Caravaggio, c. 1602. Sanssouci, Potsdam. "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." John 20:25.
Figure 278. The Fortune Teller, by Caravaggio (1594–95; Louvre).
Figure 279. Henry-Frederick, Prince of Wales wearing boots, Anthony van Dyck. Other portraits of Prince Henry from this period often emphasize his interest in chivalry and militarism, portraying him in jousting armor.
Figure 280. John Wayne (left) and Montgomery Clift in *Red River* (1948), directed by Howard Hawks.
Figure 280a. Giotto, "Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet" (c. 1305), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy.
Figure 281. Hans Jamnitzer, depicted in a buttoned jacket, breeches and white collar, stands at his work table and cuts leather with the curved knife. Six pairs of finished shoes with shoe trees are on the delivery table, two pairs of boots hang on the left wall. In the background there are numerous shoe lasts in the wall bracket.
Figure 282. A blacksmith stands at his block, from "The Housebooks of the Nuremberg Twelve Brother Foundations: Digital Development and Edition of Craftsman Paintings of the 15th-19th Century" Amb. 317b.2° Folio 55 verso (Mendel II), Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.
Figure 283. "Man of Law" from the Ellesmere Chaucer (Huntington Library, San Marino).
Figure 284. Tractatus Perutilis et Completus de Fractura Cranei, (1535, Venice).
Figure 285. Cutting the Stone, ca. 1540, Jan Sanders van Hemessen and the Master of Paul and Barnabas,. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.
Figure 286. The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula by Caravaggio (1610), Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano, Naples.
Figure 287. Robert Peake the Elder, Henry Frederick Prince of Wales (1594–1612), with Sir John Harington (1592–1614), in the hunting field, 1603. Oil on canvas, 201.9 × 147.3 cm. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest 1944, 44.
Figure 288. Portrait de Michel de Nostre-Dame (Nostre Dame), dit Nostradamus, astrologue (1503-1566), detail, Maison de Nostradamus, Salon de Provence, Bouches du Rhone.
Figure 289. Sedan chair of Charles V, Illustrated History of Furniture by Frederick Litchfield.
Figure 290. David Plays the Harp for Saul, by Rembrandt van Rijn, c. 1650 and 1670. Mauritshuis.
Figure 291. Queen Elizabeth and the Ambassadors, attributed to Levina Teerlinc, c. 1560.
Figure 292. Gallonio, the Rev. Father: "Tortures and Torments of the Christian Martyrs", p, 66 (1903), Translated from the Latin by A.R. Allison, 1591.
Figure 293. David Allan, *Volumnia Pleading with Coriolanus*, c. 1769 National Galleries Scotland.
Figure 294. "I had rather lose the battle" ascribed to Goneril in the quartos. The line was omitted in the Folio. InternetShakespeareEditions.
Figure 295. Facsimile copy of Second Quarto (New South Wales).
Figure 296. Time Clipping Cupid's Wings (1694), by Pierre Mignard, Denver Art Museum. Chronos, representing the inevitable passage of time and logic, disables Cupid's ability to fly.
Figure 296. "An armed company of the kerne, carrying halberds and pikes and led by a piper." *The Image of Irelande*, by John Derrick, published in 1581.
Figure 297. Sculptured Piper in Melrose Abbey.
Figure 298. Diogenes (1873), by Jules Bastien-Lepage.
Figure 399. *A Catalogue of the Severall Sects and Opinions in England and other Nations: With a briefe*

Rehearsall of their false and dangerous Tenents, a propaganda broadsheet denouncing English dissenters from 1647, including Jesuits, Welsh blasphemers, Arminians, Arians, Adamites, Libertines (Antinomians), Antescripturians, Soul sleepers, Anabaptists, Familists, Seekers, and Divorcers.
Figure 300. The Death of Socrates by Jacques-Louis David (1787). Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Figure 301. The Martyrdom of St Stephen, Peter Paul Rubens (c. 1616), Musée des Beaux-Arts de Valenciennes.
Figure 302. Single combat subjected to the judgement of God, 15th century (1849). A 19th century version of an original 15th century manuscript illustration in Conquetes de Charlemagne, held at the Bibliothèque Royale de Brussels, Belgium. From Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance, by Paul Lacroix, Ferdinand Séré and A Rivaud, Volume I (Paris, 1849).
Figure 303. Jeanne III of Navarre Buying Poisoned Gloves from Catherine de Medici's Parfumeur, P.C, Comte, c. 1858.
Figure 304. *"A Herald ho,"* Quarto 1 (Halliwell-Phillipps), Internet Shakespeare Editions.
Figure 305. *"A Herald ho,"* Folio (Halliwell-Phillipps), Internet Shakespeare Editions
Figure 306. Louis de Gruuthuse's copy of the Deeds of Sir Gillion de Trazegnies in the Middle East, in French, illuminated manuscript on vellum [southern Netherlands (Antwerp or perhaps Bruges), dated 1464] - Photo Sotheby's.
Figure 307. Pollaxe combat depicted in the Fiore Furlan dei Liberi da Premariacco, circa 1410.
Figure 308. Codex Wallerstein, (Plate 214) showing a half-sword thrust against a Mordau move .
Figure 309. Detail of a miniature of Dido committing suicide as Aeneas sails away, c 1490 – 1500, Harley MS 4425, f. 117v, The Roman de la Rose.
Figure 310. Judi Dench as Hecuba in Branagh's Hamlet (1996).
Figure 310a. Hecuba Blinding Polymestor by Giuseppe Crespi, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Belgium.
Figure 311. Detail from The Fall of the Titans, Cornelis van Haarlem, c. 1588-1590, Statens Museum, Copenhagen.
Figure 312. Charles Blount, Duke of Devonshire, c.1603/6, British Museum.
Figure 313. The Dance of Death, Hans Holbein the Younger. c. 1538.
Figure 315. "There was just no way I could describe what was in that box. No way. And I just wanted the world to see." - Mamie Till-Mobley
Figure 316. "The Burial of the Head of the Family" (Das Begräbnis des Familienoberhauptes) by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473 - 1531).
Figure 317. Paola waving to Marcello at the end of La Dolce Vita by Fellini.
Figure 318. The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb, Hans Holbein, ca. 1520-22. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.
Figure 319. Detail of page 309 in the First Folio from InternetShakespeareEditions.
g a man suspected of witchcraft being subjected to the "sink or swim" proof. All hands are raised in expectation of a divine judgement.
Figure 320. 18th century woodcut showing a man suspected of witchcraft being subjected to the "sink or swim" proof. All hands are raised in expectation of a divine judgement.
Figure 321. Anonymous portrait, possibly Marlowe, at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.
Figure 320. Inigo Jones, Queen Anne as the Daughter of Niger for The Masque of Blackness, 1605, disegno (Devonshire, Chatsworth House Collection).
Figure 321. "Allegory of the sinking of painting," Circle of Jacques de Gheyn III (Dutch, 1596 - 1644
Figure 322. Scena Secunda. Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (New South Wales). Internet Shakespeare Library.
Figure 323. Lines 2931-36 in the First Folio (New South Wales). Internet Shakespeare Editions.
Figure 324. A 16th century woodcut of Archimedes' eureka moment, refers to the legendary instant when he discovered a method to measure the volume of an irregular object, solving King Hieron II's problem of verifying a golden crown's purity.
Figure 325. *The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordelia* by Anonymous.
Figure 326. Battle of Agincourt. D'Azincourt à Marignan. Chevaliers et bombardes, 1415-1515, Paris, Gallimard / Musée de l'armée, 2015, p. 18-19.

Figure 327. “Luther playing the lute to his family” by Gustav Adolph Spangenberg (1866), Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig, Germany.
Figure 328. A broken consort of young men.
Figure 329. Paul Shaffer and the World's Most Dangerous Band.
Figure 330. Detail from the Rothschild Mahzor (1490) illustrating the first Mishnah in Pirkei Avot (1:1) with a winged angel blowing the shofar.
Figure 331. Title page of *The Italian Taylor and his Boy* by Robert Armin (1609).
Figure 332. This is the third quarto of *Mucedorus*, the most frequently reprinted play of the early modern period.
Figure 333. Marginalia from Bodleian Library MS. Bodl. 264, fol. 97v. “You can find echoes of this minstrel’s humour in shows like Mock the Week, situational comedies and slapstick,” says Dr. James Wade. “The self-irony and making audiences the butt of the joke are still very characteristic of British stand-up comedy” (The Guardian).
Figure 334. In The Globe Restored, C. Walter Hodges proposed that two doors on ground level of the Globe may have flanked either side of the tiring-hoise and platform.

Videos

Video 1. David Sedley: Plato's Theory of Forms.
Video 2. Bette Davis sings "I've Written A Letter To Daddy" in Robert Aldrich's classic *Whatever Happened To Baby Jane?* with Victor Buono on the piano. MGM
Video 3. "The World Turned Upside Down," English Folk Ballad.
Video 4. OAE Principal Trumpet David Blackadder introduces the Baroque or Natural Trumpet.
Video 5. Professor William Mahrt demonstrates the solfege technique using the Guidonian hand.
Video 6. "Going Home". The call of a hunting horn at the end of a hunt.
Video 7. Leslie Nielsen, dinner at the White House from the Naked Gun 2 ½: The Smell of Fear.
Video 8. Peter Brook's 1953 production with Orson Welles.
Video 9. IV,i, The Taming of the Shrew directed by Franco Zefferilli (1967). Columbia Pictures Industries.
Video 10. "3 BEST ways to Eat Herring in Amsterdam"
Video 11. "Peek A Boo" | @CoComelon Nursery Rhymes & Kids Songs.
Video 13. Toccata, Ritornelo, and Prologue from the Harnoncourt/Ponnelle production of Monteverdi's l'Orfeo. Trudeliese Schmidt as "La Musica"
Video 14. Swashbuckler Errol Flynn in The Sea Hawk (1940). Note that the English privateers onboard ship descend on ropes wearing swords.
Video 15. "How To Wear Your Sword," Tod's Workshop.
Video 16. "Der Leiermann", Thomas Quasthoff / Daniel Barenboim.
Video 17. OAE musician Adrian Woodward introduces us to the original all-in-one portable dance band, the hurdy gurdy.
Video 18. The scandalously low-cut dresses of the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts!
Video 19. Ian McKellen in the Royal Shakespeare Company 2008 production directed by Trevor Nunn (3:51-4:36).
Video 20. Roger Allam as King Lear performing "Blow, winds" as one might an internal monologue or a sonnet. The stage effects are incidental.
Video 21. Wind machine/Aeoliphone by ArborPercussion.
Video 22. Michael Jackson suffered from severe burns after a pyrotechnics mishap after a pyrotechnics mishap caused his hair and scalp to catch a fire, in 1984. The Detail.
Video 23. Three cow horn trumpets (also known as blowing horns or blast horns), of different sizes, and a ram's horn.
Video 23a. The trial of Goneril and Regan in Peter Brooks 1953 live television production of *King Lear*.
Video 24. Professional fur handling, Part 1, how to skin a red fox. (Video not suitable for children and animal lovers.)
Video 25. "Tour of my skinning shed!!!"
Video 26. "The Campfire" from *Blazing Saddles* (1974)
Video 27. "Skinning, Fleshing, and Boarding a Fox (K9) for a Wall Hanger (Full Process)."
Video 28. The Dead Parrot Sketch – Monty Python's Flying Circus.
Video 29. Sophie Matthews demonstrates the sound of the shawm.
Video 30. Sound of an ox horn.
Video 31. "Identifying Hemlock." Hemlock grows in the UK from March to September.
Video 32. Inishmaan and the Darnel Project: A short film highlighting the history & ecology of Darnel (Lolium temulentum) and the work to save it.
Video 33. The amazing Buster Keaton doing a pratfall known as a "108" among clowns. Buster was in his 50s when this was filmed.
Video 33a. 1:45:57 – 1:46:11. David Threlfall (Edgar) and Leo McKern (Gloucester) in Laurence Olivier's widely seen 1983 television production of *King Lear* directed by Michael Elliott.
Video 33b. *King Lear* TV movie (2008) directed by Trevor Nunn starring Ian McKellan. Oswald (John

Heffernan) 31:35 – 3159.
Video 34. Traditional Accents and Dialects of South East England: Kent.
Video 35. Sir Laurence Olivier performing Lear's famous "mad scene" as Romantic Realism in Granada's 1983 TV production (1:47:31 to 1:151:00).
Video 36. Gregory S. Aldrete demonstrating Roman Oratorical Gestures in an ancient theatre at Ostia using a speech of Cicero's.
Video 37. Henry Wiemeyer '22: "Chironomia: A demonstration of the language of hand gestures."
Video 38. "If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes" with James Earl Jones and Paul Sorvino, NYC Shakespeare Festival, 1974 (2:19:39)
Video 39. "How to Block Felt Hats."
Video 40. Westcountry Yap.
Video 42. "20 British Accents." Edgar is probably affecting a conservative English accent signaling his high breeding.
Video 43. English civil war drum calls, played by the drummers of the Marquess of Winchesters Regiment.
Video 44. "Bagpipes of War"
Video 45. When the Battle Is Over (3/4 Retreat March) - Performed by Matt Willis on the Highland Bagpipes
Video 46. Shakespeare was devasted by Giordano Bruno's death | "The Phoenix and the Turtle" explained.
Video 47. Buisines playing a medieval fanfare from 'Early Musical Instruments' - written and introduced by David Munrow.
Video 48. A herald formally proclaims the rules and stakes of the combat to the assembled crowd in Ridley Scott's 2021 film The Last Duel. It emphasizing the ritualistic nature of the late-14th-century trial by combat.
Video 49. "My Heart", Louis Armstrong's Hot Fives and Sevens. Music dominated by polyphony and collective improvisation.
Video 50. Video. John Tyson on polyphony and improvisation in the Renaissance.
Video 51. Video on "Improvisation Around 1600" by Elam Rotem, Early Music Sources. Illustration above, "Sylvestro Ganassi, Opera intitulata Fontegara (Venice, 1535).
Video 51. Jerusalem Shofar at Sunrise. (TorahChannel)

About This Document

I designed this digital edition of *King Lear* to facilitate an interactive, nonlinear mode of reading—one intended to support sustained critical inquiry and imaginative interpretation. It enables readers to navigate directly among *internally* cross-referenced passages and to access pertinent *external* web resources through textual and image-based links. The document was converted to PDF, a standard format for finished professional documents that can be viewed online or downloaded. This digital edition clarifies the difference between external links and internal annotations through context. Readers will naturally understand that labels like "Microsoft Word" or "PDF" point to external files, whereas hyperlinks on inline text or textual notes lead to internal annotations. External hyperlinks appear consistently within illustrations and bibliographic citations; [677] for instance, every low-resolution thumbnail—including paintings, woodcuts, engravings, and videos—links directly to its original repository. As an example, the thumbnail for Figure 225, *"Hecuba Gouges Out the Eyes of Polymester,"* connects straight to its source record.

Figure 225. Hecuba gouges out the eyes of Polymester for murdering her last surviving child Polydorus. From *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, Antoine Vérard: Paris, 1494. British Library IC. 41148, CLVI.

Downloading the PDF is straightforward on both Windows and macOS alike. Although the steps vary by browser, you can generally save the file by right-clicking its link and selecting the appropriate save option, using a keyboard shortcut, or clicking the download icon in the browser's PDF viewer. The behavior of external hyperlinks in Word and PDF documents depends substantially on the application or browser viewer used to display them. In desktop Word for Windows, following a hyperlink normally requires Ctrl + Click, although this setting can be changed; Word for macOS ordinarily follows hyperlinks with a simple click. Following an external web link normally opens its destination in the default browser, leaving the Word document open and ordinarily preserving the reader's place. When a PDF is displayed in a browser, however, an ordinary click on an external link may replace the PDF in the current tab; the result depends on the viewer and its settings, and the PDF's author cannot reliably prescribe new-tab or new-window behavior across browsers. Where supported, readers can preserve the PDF tab by choosing "Open Link in New Tab" from the link's context menu or using Ctrl + Click on Windows or Command + Click on macOS. URL previews on hover also depend on the viewer. Safari does not show its status bar by default; View > Show Status Bar enables destination previews for webpage links, but that behavior should not be assumed for links within PDFs.

This digital edition of *King Lear* distinguishes between my emendations and supplementary

critical explanations through a color-coded hyperlink system: red links identify emended material, while blue links lead to explanatory notes. For example, red hyperlinks mark substantial departures from the plot as presented in standard editions. They indicate places where this restoration revises not merely wording or punctuation but the distribution of action, agency, or dramatic knowledge. For example, in the quartos and the Folio, Cornwall is given the line *"Out vilde gelly: / Where is thy luster now?"* (F, 2159-60). I have reassigned it to Regan on textual-critical grounds. Because Shakespeare's own intention cannot be recovered with certainty, the red links are intended not as assertions of editorial finality but as alerts: they ask the reader to suspend passive acceptance, examine the evidence, and form an independent judgment.

A blue hyperlink embedded in the main text functions as a clickable reference, directing readers to the corresponding note at the back. For example, Lear's sudden outcry—*"To have a thousand with red burning spits / Come hizzing in upon 'em!"*—links to an endnote that glosses the line's fox-hunting allusion and asks how the scene is being focalized. Readers can then click the return link—*"To have a thousand ... 'em"*—to resume reading at the exact point from which they accessed the note. The endnotes sometimes include blue hyperlinks to specific lines, allowing readers to trace verbal and imagistic echoes across the play. Thus III.vi.15–16, "*To have a thousand with red burning spits / Come hizzing in upon 'em,"* is linked to V.iii.22–23, *"He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven, / And fire us hence like foxes."* Taken together, the two passages develop an extended metaphor of foxhunting. The essential factor is Shakespeare's governing conceit, the import of which becomes intelligible only in relation to the play's larger structural and thematic context. Helen Gardner, in her study of the metaphysical poets, observed that "a conceit is a comparison whose ingenuity is more striking than its justness" and that "a comparison becomes a conceit when we are made to concede likeness while being strongly conscious of unlikeness." [1]

The modern version of *King Lear* is a composite text engineered by editors from three early publications—Quarto 1(1608), Quarto 2 (1619) and Folio 1 (1623)—none of which bear evidence of Shakespeare's direct authorization. Q2 is largely a reprint of Q1, although it introduces both corrections and fresh errors; it is therefore not usually treated as an independent authorial textual state on a par with Q1 and F1. [678] The textual and structural differences between them are dramatic, which is why pioneering editor Stanley Wells and co-editor Gary Taylor made the groundbreaking decision to print them as two entirely separate plays (*The History of King Lear* and *The Tragedy of King Lear* in the 1986 Oxford University Press Complete Works. [679] F1 contains a little over 100 lines absent from Q1, while Q1 contains roughly 285–300 lines absent from F1, including all of scene 17. [See Appendix D.]

Textual scholars do not know for certain how the differences in Q1 and F1 arose. The Internet Shakespeare Editions' textual introduction describes the relationship between the texts as "still hotly contested." [679] [5] Logically, it is due to a combination of factors, such

as innocent errors by the copyist or typesetter, modifications by the sharers of the King's Men, or by Sir George Buck, the Master of Revels. By 1606, when *King Lear* was first performed on Saint Stephen's Day, Buck had begun licensing plays for publication. He was also responsible for reviewing scripts before performance and could require cuts or revisions to politically or religiously sensitive material, as well as changes to costumes and staging. It was in this same year that the Parliament of England ratified a censorship law Act to Retrain Abuses Of Players (3 Jas. 1. c. 21). [See Appendix A.]

Over the centuries, Shakespearean editors have increasingly privileged minute textual variants over broader questions of plot, narrative structure, and thematic coherence. This concentration on individual readings has obscured the patterns that give the play its shape, its tone, and dramatic purpose—effectively missing the forest for the trees. The problem is not textual precision itself, but the disproportion between attention to local details and consideration of the whole. Like defense attorneys whose elaborate arguments divert attention from the central issue, textual scholars can deploy rhetoric and specialist terminology not to clarify an interpretation but to insulate questionable conclusions from scrutiny and reinforce their own authority. Just as the labyrinthine proceedings of *Jarndyce v Jarndyce* in *Bleak House* obscure the dispute they were meant to resolve, so the critical discourse surrounding *King Lear* has become so convoluted and self-serving that, in Dickens's words, "no man alive knows what it means."

In Shakespeare's day, plays were written principally for performance rather than for silent private reading. By contrast, Nicolas Rowe's landmark 1709–10 edition, *The Works of William Shakespear* helped make Shakespeare's plays more legible and navigable for an expanding reading public. Rowe modernized and regularized spelling and punctuation; made numerous editorial emendations, sometimes correcting apparent printing errors; supplied a dramatis personae for each play; standardized character names; organized the plays systematically into acts and scenes; and added or regularized stage directions, including entrances, exits, and scene locations. [16] He sourced his *King Lear* strictly from the 1685 Fourth Folio, a text then celebrated as the definitive authority rather than a diluted, generational reprint. [680] Soon after its publication, a massive shift occurred in Shakespearean editing. [683] Rather than modernizing the play to enhance theatrical clarity and readability, scholars began treating Q1, Q2, and F1 as distinct historical artifacts requiring rigorous "conflation." Almost overnight, these flawed secondary sources were elevated to the status of inviolable relics, akin to the Holy Prepuce. [684] [685] [See Figure 176a] Since the publication of the *Pelican Shakespeare Series* under Alfred Harbage's general editorship (1956–67), scholarly editions of *King Lear* have increasingly dispensed with scene-location headings. Yet the stage directions supplied by their editors have generally preserved the conception of the dramatic action established by Rowe and Theobald in the eighteenth century and consolidated by William Aldis Wright and William George Clark in the nineteenth.

Drawing on history, sociology, and philosophy, Science and Technology Studies (STS) examines how social, cultural, and institutional conditions shape scientific knowledge and technological development. A similar attention to the conditions under which knowledge acquires authority can inform Shakespearean textual scholarship. When students open a modern edition of *King Lear*, they encounter an editorially mediated text whose wording and presentation reflect decisions about competing early versions of the play. Those decisions, and the interpretations offered to justify them, warrant scrutiny for the personal ambitions, institutional affiliations, and conceptions of Shakespearean tragedy they may reflect. Editorial judgments should command assent through evidence and argument, not through the authority conferred by their placement in a scholarly edition. Just Charles Kinobote, in Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, systematically appropriates John Shade's eponymous poem to sustain his romantic fantasy of being the exiled King Charles II of Zembla, so editors and directors often impose anachronistic frameworks on Shakespeare's texts, revealing more about their own modern preoccupations than about the works they ostensibly illuminate.

When editors blend different early texts of Shakespeare, they don't just change individual words; they alter the entire perspective of the play. In *Hamlet*, for example, an editor must choose between Q2's long, reflective passages and F's fast-paced, theatrical cuts. Blending them or picking one over the other directly changes the focalization of the story: it either anchors the narrative deeply inside Hamlet's own mind or spreads the focus across the competing viewpoints of the Danish court. Focalization is a termed coined by the literary theorist Gérard Genette to describe the perspective through which a narrative's action and information are presented—broadly, the question of whose consciousness or point of view orients what the audience is permitted to perceive. In *Lear,* without explicit stage directions in the copy sources, editors fall into the trap of treating an absence of evidence as evidence of absence. This fallacy of logic predisposes readers to interpret Lear's madness in psychological rather than objective terms.

Scholar's editorial bias is most clearly reflected in their presentation of the Fool's line: *"Cry you mercy I tooke you for a ioyne stoole"* (Q1, 2014.26). [688] *King Lear*, which was performed in 1606, a year after *Don Quixote* was published, employs the same ironic, metatheatrical storytelling techniques. The works' complex, multilayered narratives derive their comedy and primary meaning from the absurd disconnect between Lear's/Don Quixote's delusional subjective reality and the stubborn, unyielding nature of objective facts**.** The joint stool is just as fundamental to the scene's humor and theme as the barber's basin that Don Quixote mistakes for Mambrino's helmet. [687]

Figure 2. Edmund Joseph Sullivan, "Mambrino's Helmet," c.1920s. The Morgan Library Museum.

Most editorial commentary has historically emphasized the metaphoric, proverbial meaning of the line rather than as a reference to a real stage prop. No standard edition of *King Lear*, including the 2022 Arden "Performance" Edition (quotation marks mine), inserts an explicit editorial stage direction—such as [Pointing to a joint-stool]. By omitting a prescriptive stage direction, editors allow the scene to be read as existing entirely within Lear's mind, collapsing the boundary between what is real and what is imagined. They fundamentally reshape the play's core thematic conflict in accordance with their own interpretive assumptions about character interiority. The editor's refusal to gloss the farcical double meaning of Lear's words—judged incompatible with pathos—permits a reading of the speech as hallucinatory or wholly internal. This is itself an interpretive commitment concerning both tragic effect and dramatic form.

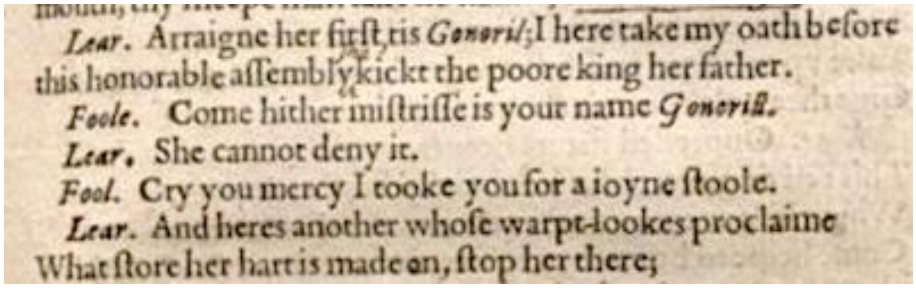
Lear. Arraigne her firſt,tis *Goneril*;I here take my oath before
this honorable aſſembly,kickt the poore king her father.
Foole. Come hither miſtriſſe is your name *Goneril.*
Lear. She cannot deny it.
Fool. Cry you mercy I tooke you for a ioyne ſtoole.
Lear. And heres another whoſe warpt-lookes proclaime
What ſtore her hart is made on, ſtop her there;

Figure 1 ***"I tooke your for a ioyne ftool."*** **Quarto 1, *King Lear*, Quarto 1 (Halliwell-Phillipps), Internet Shakespeare Editions.**

Theatre audiences come to *King Lear* for a theatrical experience, not an antiquarian reconstruction of Shakespeare's text or intentions. The long stage life of Nahum Tate's adaptation in England, from 1681 to 1838, makes the distinction plain. In 'The Deadly Theatre,' the opening chapter of *The Empty Space* (1968), Peter Brook characterizes historically informed performance as "excruciatingly boring"—a judgment that now seems better suited to his own dated twentieth-century productions. [See Video 23a.] Brook's 1962 Royal Shakespeare Company staging of the play, with Paul Scofield as Lear, drew on the modernist drama theorist Antonin Artaud, specifically Theatre of Cruelty. [691] The windmill set in his 1953 live television production of *King Lear,* with Orson Welles, bears a striking stylistic affinity to F.W. Murnau's films and German Expressionism more broadly. On the other hand, students buying a copy of *King Lear* for academic coursework operate under the baseline assumption that the editorial team has faithfully restored the text according to the best available historical evidence. Students may likewise treat their professor's interpretation as authoritative, particularly because that professor controls their grades. In turn, both students and teachers may defer to an editor's presumed expertise rather than scrutinize the interpretive judgments presented as textual facts. [671] Arthur Schopenhauer addresses the problem of substituting authority for rational justification in his classic text *The Art of Being Right* (1831): "Appeal to Authority Rather Than Reason" (p. 14)

Video 23a. "Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool," The trial of Goneril and Regan in Peter Brooks 1953 live television production of King Lear.

In reconstructing this scene, whose original staging remains unknowable, the critical question for readers is how the text's form and narrative structure focalize the action. There are no directions in III,vi to indicate the location of the scene or what props are discovered by Lear behind the *"curtains"* (Q1, 2041). Textual cues place the scene in a skinning house, where Lear farcically mistakes the carcass of a fox for his vixen daughter Regan. [See note S.D., "*A Skinning House.*"]

Video 24. Professional fur handling, Part 1, how to skin a red fox.

I contend that contemporary interpretations of *King Lear* remain captive to a legacy stretching from Goethe and the Romantic movement to 20th-century psychoanalysis, both of which project anachronistic psychological preoccupations onto the play. Just as German criticism stripped away the comedic surface of *Don Quixote* to find a core of tragic alienation, so they did with *Lear*—a bawdy satire of rhetoric and Puritanism that turns tragic in the end. In *The Romantic Approach to 'Don Quixote': A Critical History of the Romantic Tradition in 'Quixote' Criticism*, Anthony Close examines why the novel "was given a sentimentalised and seriously philosophical interpretation by the German Romantics. Dr Close is essentially concerned with the question why this unhistorical and subjective reading of the novel prevailed, first in Europe, then in Spain. He examines the stages by which, from 1860, it progressively supplanted in Spain the hitherto dominant neo-classical interpretation, and shows how this process kept pace with increasing identification with movements of intellectual history, aesthetics, literary criticism and scholarship in Europe."

> For Anthony Close, the tendency of *Don Quixote* criticism since 1800 to idealize the protagonist, to deny the satiric purpose of the novel, and to interpret its symbolism in modern (that is, anachronistic) terms demonstrates the impact and continuing influence of German Romanticism" (Edward H. Friedman).

Drama is inherently a spatial medium. The configuration of a theatrical space shapes how an audience experiences and interprets a play. [372] In his once highly influential work *The Globe Playhouse: its design and equipment* (1961), John Cranford Adams created a

detailed, conjectural scale model of the Globe Theatre which he then used to illustrate how *King Lear* was originally staged ("The Original Staging of King Lear", pp. 385-404). While his reconstruction of the Globe is now considered outdated and inaccurate, his basic premise that the unique architectural features of the theatre shaped the form and meaning of the play is incontestable. To highlight the text's spatial dynamics, I contrast Adams's hypotheses on the original Globe staging with my own. [28] [See note I,iv,S.D., "*The Platform and the Lords Rooms.*"]

The Table of Contents has clickable links that take you straight to each section, making it easy to navigate. In accordance with the document's red-and-blue hyperlink convention, red highlights denote substantial departures from Q and F, together with readings that differ from those found in modern editions. For example, I present evidence that Act IV originally ended with Edmund revealing his plans to murder Lear and Cordelia after the battle, and Act V beginning with them his prisoners. An intermezzo was performed between the acts to signal the passage of time, and set the gravitis tone of the battle. [See Appendix B.]

Totus mundus agit histrionem

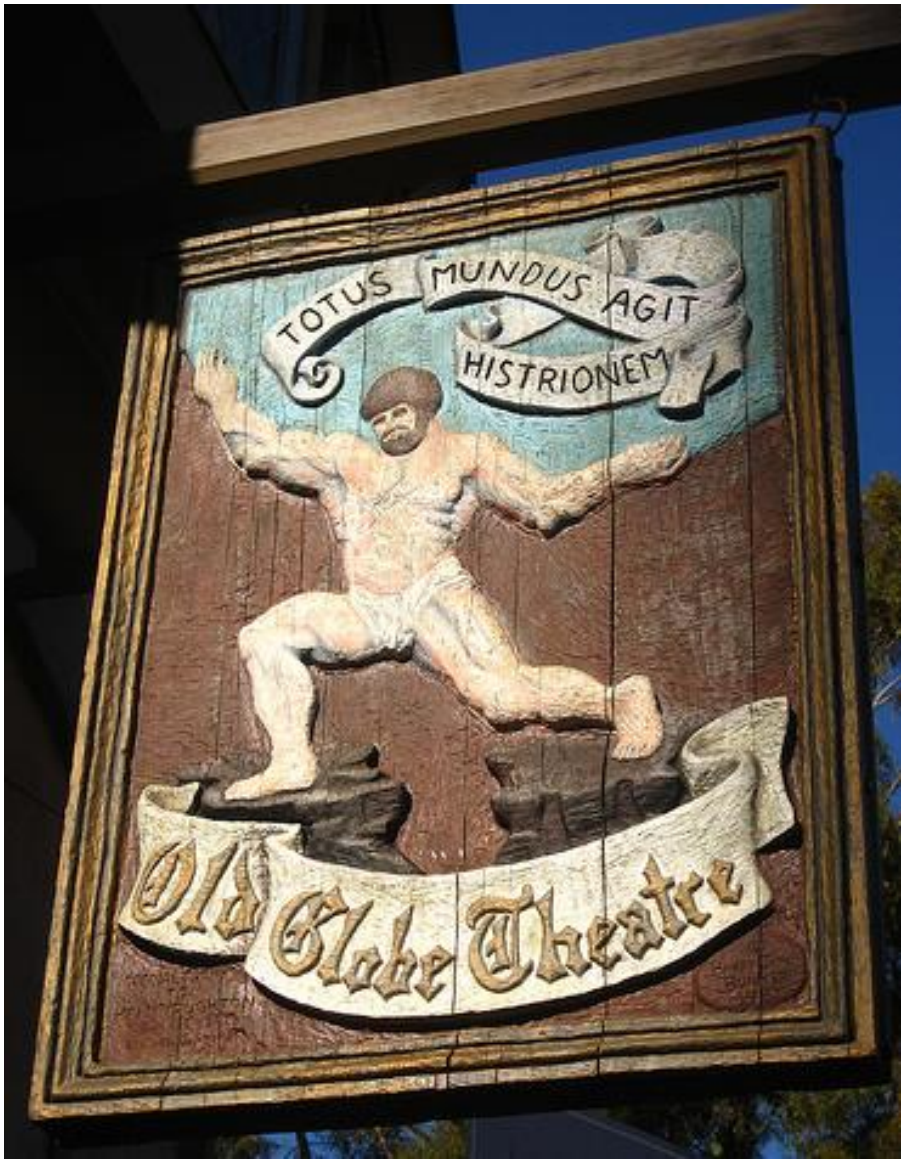

Figure 4. A crest depicting Hercules bearing the globe on his shoulders together with the motto "*Totus mundus agit histrionem*" (the whole world is a playhouse) is thought to have been displayed at the entrance to the Globe Theatre.

Dramatis Personæ

LEAR, King of Britain

EDGAR, son to Gloucester
KING OF FRANCE
} *Roles played by the same actor.*

EARL OF GLOUCESTER

CORDELIA, youngest daughter to Lear
FOOL, Cordelia's doppelgänger
} *Roles played by the same actor.*

GONERIL, eldest daughter to Lear

REGAN, middle daughter to Lear

EDMUND, bastard son to Gloucester:

EARL OF KENT

DUKE OF ALBANY

DUKE OF CORNWALL

OSWALD, young steward to Goneril

ALBANY'S SQUIRE, a young squire in the service of Albany

LEAR'S KNIGHT

CORNWALL'S KNIGHT

DUKE OF BURGUNDY
A CAPTAIN commissioned by Edmund to hang Lear and Cordelia
} *Roles played by the same actor.*

DOCTOR

BAGPIPE PLAYER, a musician

HERALD TRUMPETER, a musician

Knights, Men-at-Arms, Domestic Servants, French and English Soldiers, Musicians.

I have listed the characters in order of the size and importance of their roles—*in reverse order of their curtain calls*.

Go to Table of Contents

Dramatis Personæ] There is no *Dramatis Personæ* in the quartos or the First Folio. One was first published in *The works of Mr. William Shakespear* by Nicholas Rowe in 1709, and has remained practically unchanged to the present day. [See Figure 5.] In regard to the principal and secondary characters, there is no doubting who they are because their titles are written or spoken in the text. Lear is a *"King"* (F, 4) and Gloucester an *"Earl"* (F, 1331). Albany is a *"Duke"* (F, 5) and Oswald a *"Steward"* (F, 506), etc. What is problematic for readers is knowing who's who among the *tertiary* players with speaking roles. According to Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's time, 1590-1642*, it was not customary for roles performed by apprentice players to be assigned names.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

SCENE lyes in *Britain*.

KING

Figure 5. Dramatis Personæ from ***King Lear. A Tragedy***, edited by Nicholas Rowe, 1709.

Michael Best writes, "Many of the changes to speech prefixes are relatively minor: a *Servant* in Q (Q1, 584) is a *Knight* in F (F, 583); a *Gentleman* in Q (Q1, 921) is a *Messenger* in F (F, 921]; a *Doctor* in Q (Q1, 2761) is a *Gentleman* in F (F, 2762); and so on. Changes of this kind carry meaning and have an influence on staging and costuming, but they make no change to the major roles in the play. There are a total of 45 changes involving minor characters of this kind." [12] In my version, several of the so-called "minor" characters, and even background actors, form an essential part of the narrative. Their interactions are a crucial element in defining the nature and motivations of the "major" characters. [13] They drive the plot forward by creating conflict, and help set the overall tone of the story. "In art, as in life, everyone is the hero of their own particular story; [347] it is worth thinking about what your minor characters' stories are, even though they may intersect only slightly with your protagonist's" (Sarah Waters). [348]

LEAR'S KNIGHT. Lear's Knight is a conflation of parts ascribed variously to *"a Knight", "a Gentleman", "a Messenger", "a Servant"* and to *Kent* in the quartos and folio [See note I,iv,47, *"Lear's Knight"*.] One of Tolstoy's main objections to *Lear* is that it does not adhere to conventions of theatre realism. "The action of *King Lear* takes place 800 years b.c., and yet the characters are placed in conditions possible only in the Middle Ages." [14] Thus, it cannot be overstated that *King Lear* takes the form metatheatre. Shakespeare mixes elements of Graeco-Roman paganism, English Puritanism, Medieval chivalry, and Elizabethan Poor Laws as freely as a child plays with Civil War soldiers, GI Joe Action toys, and Godzilla collectables. Metatheatre creates a richer, more immersive experience of the story than realism because it engages the spectator's imagination by blurring the boundaries between what is real and what is fiction.

> "Metatheatre" is a convenient name for the quality or force in a play which challenges theatre's claim to be simply realistic -- to be nothing but a mirror in which

> we view the actions and sufferings of characters like ourselves, suspending our disbelief in their reality. Metatheatre begins by sharpening our awareness of the unlikeness of life to dramatic art. It may end by making us aware of life's uncanny likeness to art or illusion. By calling attention to the strangeness, artificiality, illusoriness, or arbitrariness -- in short, the theatricality -- of the life we live, it marks those frames and boundaries that conventional dramatic realism would hide. It may present action so alien, improbable, stylized, or absurd that we are forced to acknowledge the estranging frame that encloses a whole play." [15]

CURAN. In my restoration, *Curan* (F, 927) in II,i; the *Seruant* (Q, 2176.1) in III,vii; and the *Old Man* (F, 2188) in IV,i, are identified as a single character. He functions as Gloucester's chamberlain. [See note II,i,1, *"Curan."*]

CORNWALL'S KNIGHT. In the quartos and Folio, the brave young knight who comes to the aid of Gloucester in III,vii is identified as a *"Seruant"* (F, 2145)—a word that can be applied both to a Lord Chamberlain and to a gong farmer in a broad, etymological sense. In keeping with the theme of chivalry, I have given the character the name of Cornwall's Knight. [See note III,vii,69,73,76,78. *"Cornwall's Knight."*]

ALBANY'S SQUIRE. As noted above, speech headings, especially for minor characters and extras (typically performed by hired men and apprentices) are often imprecise and inconsistent. [351] In this restoration, Albany's Squire is a conflation of parts ascribed in the quartos and Folio to "a *Servant", "a Messenger", "a Captain", "a Herald", "An officer who bows and goes out",* and *"The one with the bloody knife."* [249] [See note III,vii,97, *"Squire."*] The first the audience sees of this strongly individuated character is in scene 14, where the printer gives him the name *"2 Seruant"*(Q1, 2176.3) (Q2, 2176.3)—lines Q, 2176.1-2177.9) were not published in the Folio. He was sent by Albany to escort his wife to Gloucester's castle in the role of a messenger to bring back news of the war with France. Shakespeare's audience would have deduced his rank from his costume: he wears a tabard with his lord's coat of arms. Unlike Albany's knights, he is unarmed, and perhaps carries a "Herald's wand" or a caduceus—hence his possession and knowledge of unguents which he applies to Gloucester's eyes. Edward Capell and most other modern editors, including Stanley Wells in *The Oxford Shakespeare,* identify him as the "*Third Servant."*

We next see Albany's Squire in IV,ii, where he is identified as a *"Gentleman"* (Q, 2313) / *"Messenger"* (F, 2312), and he gives an eye witness account of Gloucester's blinding to his Lord and his wife. He carefully avoids mentioning Goneril's and Regan's complicity for fear of incurring the wrath of the former. As the saying goes, "no one loves the messenger who brings bad news." [350]

Albany's Squire is logically the unnamed actor in scene 22 whom Edmund tells to summon the Duke: *"bring his constant pleasure"* (F, 2849). Edward Capell (1768?) identifies the character as an anonymous *"Officer; who bows, and goes out."* Clark and Wright refer to him a *"Gentleman, who goes out"* in the 1864 *Globe Shakespeare* (Furness, *New Variorum Edition*,

p. 306). Albany's Squire is logically the same character as the *"Gentleman"* (F, 3169) or the *"one with a bloody knife"* (Q, 3169) who returns horrorstricken with the knife Goneril used to kill herself with. He is logically the *"Captain"* (Q, 3265) or *"Messenger"* (F, 3169) who informs Albany of the news of Edmund's death.

HERALD TRUMPETER. In the final scene, Albany sends for a *"Herald"* (F, 3051), a Fanfare Trumpeter, whose sole function is to summon Edgar on his buisine: *"If you haue victory, let the Trumpet sound / For him that brought it"* (F, 2885-86). [See note V,i,108, *"Come hither, Herald."*]

Figure 6. Thirteenth century Spanish depiction of a pair of buisines, also called a herald's trumpet.

EDGAR | THE KING OF FRANCE. (See also note Edgar I,ii,126.) There is not a list of acting credits in the quartos and folio indicating how the parts were cast. In my restoration, the roles of the King of France and Edgar are performed by the same actor. [See note I,i,189. *"France."*]

CORDELIA | THE FOOL. I concur with Alois Brandl that the parts of Cordelia and the Fool were doubled, and performed by the same boy player. [See note I,iv,86,S.D., *"Enter Fool."*] The important thing for the audience to see is that the roles of parent and child are inverted. The FOOL is essentially CORDELIA'S doppelgänger, her double. In Shakespeare's day, the sighting of a double was regarded as an omen, usually of one's imminent death. As Tichenor writes, "when Lear holds the dead Cordelia in his arms and cries out, 'And my poor fool is hanged,' it's not the non-sequitur it might be when two separate actors play each role." The metaphysical concept is that Cordelia and the Fool are one Platonic Form. [See video 1, "David Sedley: Plato's Theory of Forms."]

Video 1. Video, David Sedley: Plato's Theory of Forms.

BAGPIPE PLAYER. See note S.D., *"Bagpiper"*.

THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY | THE CAPTAIN. Given the mischievous nature of the playwright, I guess that the parts of BURGUNDY and the CAPTAIN commissioned to hang Lear and Cordelia were played by the same actor as well. The doubling of these parts is nothing more than a metatheatrical wink at the audience, reminding us that we are watching a play.

King Lear

ACT I, SCENE I.— [King Lear's Palace.]

[The Platform]

Figure 7. Detail from John Speed's map of Cheshire. Courtesy UCDL.

Trumpets Sound.
Enter Kent, Gloucester, *wearing spectacles*
and pouch on side, Edmund *following, reading a map.*

Kent. *[To Edmund.]* I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Gloucester *steps between* Kent *and* Edmund.

Glou. It did always seem so to us; but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities are so weigh'd that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my Lord?

Glou. His breeding, Sir, hath been at my charge. I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to't.
Kent. I cannot conceive you.
Glou. Sir, this young fellow's mother could, whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had, indeed, Sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?
Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.
Glou. But I have a son, Sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account. Though this knave came something saucily to the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair. There was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. —Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?
Edm. No, my Lord.
Glou. My Lord of Kent. Remember him hereafter as my honorable friend.
Edm. My services to your Lordship.
Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.
Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.
Edm. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The King is coming.

Sennet. Enter King Lear, *crowned, wearing a king-size codpiece.* Albany, Cornwall, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, *two bearing coronets on cushions,* Lear's Knight, *and others following in attendance.* Lear *ascends the throne, assisted by* Kent.

Lear. Attend the Lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.
Glou. I shall my Liege. *[Exit* Gloucester.
Lear. Meantime, we shall express our darker purpose. —
[To Edmund.*]* Give me the map there. —Know
that we have divided
In three our kingdom, and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age,
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The Princes, France and
Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters,
(Since now we will divest us both of rule,

Interest of territory, cares of state)
Which of you shall we say doth love us most,
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where Nature doth with merit challenge. —Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.
Gon. *[Kneels.]* Sir,
I love you more than word can wield the matter;
Dearer than eyesight, space and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honor;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.
Cor. *[Aside.]* What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent.
Lear. *[Pointing to the map.]* Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady. To thine and Albany's issues
Be this perpetual. *[Places a coronet on her head.*
—What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall? Speak.
Reg. *[Kneels.]* I am made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love,
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys
Which the most precious square of sense possesses,
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.
[Places a coronet on her head.
Cor. *[Aside.]* Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so, since I am sure my love's
More ponderous than my tongue.
Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure
Than that conferr'd on Goneril. —But now, our joy,
Although our last and least, to whose young love
The wine of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive interest, what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
Cor. *[Kneels.]* Nothing, my Lord.
Lear. Nothing?
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. *[Rising.]* Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again.
Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty

According to my bond; no more nor less.
Lear. How? How, Cordelia? Mend your speech a little,
Lest you may mar your fortunes.
Cor. Good my Lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit:
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Happily, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty.
Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.
Lear. But goes thy heart with this?
Cor. Ay, my good Lord.
Lear. So young, and so untender?
Cor. So young, my Lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so. Thy truth then be thy dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist and cease to be,
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me,
Hold thee from this forever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbor'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.
*[*Kent *steps between them.*
Kent. Good my Liege—
Lear. Peace, Kent!
Come not between the Dragon and his wrath.
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.—*[To Cordelia.]* Hence, and avoid
my sight! *[She rises and steps back.]*—
[To Kent.] So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her!—Call France. Who stirs?
[Exit Edmund.
Call Burgundy. —Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest the third.—
[*To Cordelia*.] Let pride, which she calls plainness,
marry her.—
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Preeminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode

Make with you by due turn. Only we shall retain
The name and all th'addition to a king; the sway,
Revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours. Which to confirm,
This 'coronet' part between you.
[Gives Albany his golden crown.
Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honor'd as my King,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers—
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart. Be Kent unmanly
When Lear is mad? What would'st thou do, old man?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honor's bound
When majesty falls to folly. Reserve thy state,
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness. Answer my life my judgment,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least,
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sounds
Reverb no hollowness.
Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.
Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being motive.
Lear. Out of my sight!
Kent. See better, Lear, and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.
Lear. Now, by Apollo—
Kent. Now, by Apollo, King,
Thou swear'st thy Gods in vain.
Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[Laying his hand upon his sword.
Alb., Lear's Knight. Dear Sir, forbear!
Kent. Do.
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy 'gift';
Or, whilst I can vent clamor from my throat
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.
Lear. Hear me, recreant!
On thine allegiance, hear me!
That thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd pride
To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
Our potency make good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee for provision

To shield thee from disasters of the world;
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom. If on the tenth day following
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! By Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, King. Sith thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.—
[To Cordelia.] The Gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
That justly think'st and has most rightly said!—
[To Goneril and Regan.] And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
That good effects may spring from words of love.—
Thus Kent, O Princes, bids you all adieu.
He'll shape his old course in a country new. *[Exit.*

Flourish. Re-enter Gloucester *and* Edmund, *with* France *and* Burgundy.

Glou. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble Lord.
Lear. My Lord of Burgundy,
We first address toward you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter. What, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?
Bur. Most royal Majesty,
I crave no more than hath your Highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.
Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us we did hold her so,
But now her price is fallen. Sir, there she stands.
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your Grace,
She's there, and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Sir,
Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?
Bur. Pardon me, royal Sir;
Election makes not up in such conditions.
Lear. Then leave her, Sir; for by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth.—*[To France.]* For you, great King,
I would not from your love make such a stray
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
T'avert your liking a more worthier way

Than on a wretch whom Nature is asham'd
Almost t'acknowledge hers.
France. This is most strange,
That she, whom even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
The best, the dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favor. Sure, her offense
Must be of such unnatural degree
That monsters it, or your forevouch'd affection
Fall into taint; which to believe of her
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Should never plant in me.
Cor. I yet beseech your Majesty,
(If for I want that glib and oily art
To speak and purpose not, since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak), that you make known
It is no vicious plot, murder or foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonor'd step
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favor,
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.
Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not t'have pleased me better.
France. Is it but this? A tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do?—My Lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from th'entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.
Bur. Royal King,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy?
Lear. Nothing. I have sworn. I am firm.
Bur. I am very sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.
Cor. Peace be with Burgundy.
Since that respect and fortunes are his love
I shall not be his wife.
France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon.
Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'Tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.

Thy dowerless daughter, King, thrown to my chance,
Is Queen of us, of ours, and our fair France.
Not all the dukes of wat'rish Burgundy
Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.
Bid them farewell, Cordelia; though unkind,
Thou losest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France. Let her be thine, for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again. Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.—
Come, noble Burgundy.

Flourish. Exeunt Lear, Burgundy, Cornwall, Albany, Gloucester, Edmund, the Gentleman *and* Attendants.

Music.

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you. I know you what you are,
And like a sister am most loth to call
Your faults as they are named. Love well our father.
To your professed bosoms I commit him;
But yet, alas! stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So farewell to you both.

Gon. Prescribe not us our duty.

Reg. Let your study
Be to content your Lord, who hath receiv'd you
At Fortune's alms.

Gon. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides;
Who covers faults, at last with shame derides.
Well may you prosper.

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

Flourish. Music still. Exeunt France *and* Cordelia.

Gon. Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence tonight.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little. He always lov'd our sister most, and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age; yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash. Then must we look from his age, to receive not alone the imperfections of long-engraffed condition, but

therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. *[She takes her by the hand.]* Pray you, let us hit together. If our father carry authority with such disposition as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i'th'heat.

[Flourish. Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE II.—[The Earl of Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Edmund, *with a letter.*

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess. To thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why 'bastard?' Wherefore 'base?'
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With 'base'? With 'baseness'? 'bastardy'? 'base', 'base'?
Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to th'creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to th'legitimate. Fine word, 'legitimate'!
Well, my 'legitimate', if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall to th'legitimate. I grow, I prosper.
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter Gloucester, *wearing spectacles.*

Glou. Kent banish'd thus! And France in choler parted!
And the King gone tonight! Prescrib'd his power!
Confin'd to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad!—Edmund, how now. What news?

Edm. So please your Lordship, none. *[Putting up the letter.*

Glou, Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my Lord.
Glou. What paper were you reading?
Edm. Nothing, my Lord.
Glou. No? What needed then that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? The quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see. Come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.
Edm. I beseech you, Sir, pardon me. It is a letter from my brother that I have not all o'erread, and for so much as I have perus'd, I find it not fit for your o'erlooking.
Glou. Give me the letter, sir.
Edm. I shall offend either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.
Glou. Let's see, let's see.
Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue. *[Gives him the letter.*
Glou. *[Reads.] 'This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffer'd. Come to me that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother*, Edgar.'—
Hum! Conspiracy? 'Sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his revenue.'—My son Edgar? Had he a hand to write this? A heart and brain to breed it in? When came you to this? Who brought it?
Edm. It was not brought me, my Lord, there's the cunning of it. I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.
Glou. You know the character to be your brother's?
Edm. If the matter were good, my Lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.
Glou. *[Readjusting his spectacles.]* It is his.
Edm. It is his hand, my Lord, but I hope his heart is not in the contents.
Glou. Has he never before sounded you in this business?
Edm. Never, my Lord; but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declin'd, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.
Glou. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! Worse than brutish! Go, sirrah, seek him. I'll apprehend him. Abominable villain! Where is he?
Edm. I do not well know, my Lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you should

run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honor, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honor, and to no other pretense of danger.

Glou. Think you so?

Edm. If you honor judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction, and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glou. He cannot be such a monster—

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glou. —To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out. Wind me into him, I pray you. Frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

[Gives him back the letter.

Edm. I will seek him, Sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glou. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us. Though the wisdom of Nature can reason it thus and thus, yet Nature finds itself scourg'd by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father. The King falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time. Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves. —Find out this villain, Edmund. It shall lose thee nothing. Do it carefully.—And the noble and true-hearted Kent banish'd! His offense, honesty! 'Tis strange. *[Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeits of our own behavior, we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and stars; as if we were villains on necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion, knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance, drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforc'd obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail, and my nativity was under *Ursa major*, so that it follows I am rough and lecherous. Tut! I should have been that I am had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.—

Enter Edgar, *unbraced, reading on a book.*

Edgar. And pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy. My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o'Bedlam. O! these eclipses do portend these divisions. *Fa, sol, la, mi.*

Demonstrating the solfège technique on his hand. He stands musing.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! What serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state; menaces and maledictions against King and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. When saw you my father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word nor countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him; and at my entreaty forbear his presence until some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower, and as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my Lord speak. Pray ye, go. There's my key. If you do stir abroad, go arm'd.

Edg. Arm'd, brother?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best. I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you. I have told you what I have seen and heard but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it. Pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.— *[Exit* Edgar.
A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! I see the business.
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit.

All with me's meet that I can fashion fit.
[Trumpets Sound. Exit.

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ACT I, SCENE III.—[The Duke of Albany's Palace.]

[The Platform]

Enter Goneril, *dressed like a Puritan, coifed, with* Oswald, *her Steward, wearing a longsword.*

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his Fool?
Osw. Ay, Madam.
Gon. By day and night he wrongs me! Every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other
That sets us all at odds. I'll not endure it.
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting
I will not speak with him. Say I am sick.
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well. The fault of it I'll answer.
[Horn within.
Osw. He's coming, Madam; I hear him.
Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question.
If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away. Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again, and must be us'd
With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abus'd.
Remember what I have said.
Osw. Well, Madam.
Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you.
What grows of it, no matter. Advise your fellows so.
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak. I'll write straight to my sister
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner.
[Tucket within. Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE IV.—[A Hall in the same.]

[The Platform and the Lords Rooms.]

Enter Kent, *disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd my likeness. Now, banish'd Kent
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labors.

Sennet.
Enter Lear, Lear's Knight, *and* Knights *from hunting.*
Enter Oswald *severally.*

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner.—Go, get it ready.
[Exit Oswald.
Music.
A banquet is served in by five or six serving men.

How now, what art thou?
Kent. A man, Sir.
Lear. What dost thou profess? What would'st thou with us?
Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose,—

Re-enter Oswald, *with a dish of poor-John.*

and to eat no fish.

Exit Oswald.

Lear. What art thou?
Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.
Lear. If thou be'st as poor for a subject as he is for a King, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?
Kent. Service.
Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?
Kent. You.
Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?
Kent. No, Sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.
Lear. What's that?
Kent. Authority.
Lear. What services canst thou do?
Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly; that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best of me is diligence.
Lear. How old art thou?
Kent. Not so young, Sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for anything. I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me. Thou shalt serve me; if I like thee no worse after dinner I will not part from thee yet. —Dinner, ho! Dinner. —Where's my knave? My Fool? —Go you and call my Fool hither. *[Exit a* Knight.

Re-enter Oswald, *with a dish of herring.*

You, you sirrah. Where's my daughter?

Osw. So please you— *[Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back.— *[Exit* Lear's Knight.

Where's my Fool? Ho! I think the world's asleep.

Re-enter Lear's Knight.

—How now, where's that mongrel?

Lear's Knight. He says, my Lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I call'd him?

Lear's Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not?

Lear's Knight. My Lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your Highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont. There's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependents as in the Duke himself also and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Lear's Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my Lord, if I be mistaken, for my duty cannot be silent when I think your Highness wrong'd.

Lear. Thou but rememb'rest me of mine own conception. I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretense and purpose of unkindness. I will look further into't. But where's my Fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Lear's Knight. Since my young Lady's going into France, Sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that. I have noticed it well.—Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her.— *[Exit a Knight.*

Go you, call hither my Fool.— *[Exit a Knight.*

Re-enter Oswald, *with a plate of raw eggs.*

O you sir. You! Come you hither, sir. Who am I?

Osw. My Lady's father.

Lear. 'My Lady's father?' my Lord's knave. You whoreson dog! You slave! You cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my Lord. I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal? *[Striking him with his hunting crop.*

Osw. I'll not be strucken, my Lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you base football player.

Kent trips up his heels. Oswald falls.

Lear. I thank thee, fellow. Thou serv'st me, and I'll love thee.
Kent. [*Draws his sword*.] Come, sir, arise. Away! I'll teach you differences. Away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry. But away! Go to. Have you wisdom? [Exit Oswald.] So.
Lear. Now my friendly knave, I thank thee. There's earnest of thy service.

Takes purse from his codpiece and gives Kent *money.*

Enter Fool, *wearing a lute.*

Fool. Let me hire him too. Here's my coxcomb.
[Offers Kent *his coxcomb.*
Lear. How now, my pretty knave! How dost thou?
Fool. *[To Kent.]* Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.
Lear. Why, my boy?
Fool. Why? For taking one's part that's out of favor. Nay, and thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly. [*To Kent*]—There, take my coxcomb. Why, this fellow has banish'd two on's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will. If thou follow him thou must needs wear my coxcomb.—How now, Nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters.
Lear. Why, my boy?
Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.
Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.
Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipp'd out, when the Lady's brach may stand by th'fire and stink.
Lear. *[He drinks and spits.]* A pestilent gall to me!
Fool. I'll teach thee a speech.
Lear. Do.
Fool. Mark it, Nuncle:

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less then thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Lear. This is nothing, Fool.
Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for 't. Can you make no use of nothing, Nuncle?

Lear. Why no, boy. Nothing can be made out of nothing.
Fool. *[To* Kent.*]* Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to. He will not believe a Fool.
Lear. A bitter Fool.
Fool. Doth thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter Fool and a sweet one?
Lear. No, lad; teach me.
Fool. *That lord that counsell'd thee*
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
Do thou for him stand.
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.
Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?
Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.
Kent. This is not altogether Fool, my Lord.
Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me. If I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't. And ladies too, they will not let me have all the fool to myself; they'll be snatching.—Nuncle, give me an egg, and I'll give thee two crowns.
Lear. *[Giving him an egg.]* What two crowns shall they be?
Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i'th'middle and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i'th'middle, and gav'st away both parts, thou bor'st thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt.

Gives Lear *the two shells.*

Thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown when thou gav'st thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so.
Fools had ne'er less grace in a year;
For wise men are grown foppish,
And know not how their wits to wear
Their manners are so apish.
Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?
Fool. I have used it, Nuncle, e'er since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mothers; for when thou gav'st them the rod and putt'st down thine own breeches,
Then they for sudden joy did weep,
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.
Prithee, Nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy Fool to lie. I would fain learn to lie.
Lear. And you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipp'd.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are. They'll have me whipp'd for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and sometimes I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a Fool; and yet I would not be thee, Nuncle. Thou hast pared thy wit o'both sides and left nothing i'th'middle. Here comes one o'the parings.

Enter Goneril, *above. Reenter a* Knight.

Lear. How now, daughter! What makes that frontlet on? You are too much of late i'th'frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure. I am better than thou art now. I am a Fool, thou art nothing. *[To* Goneril.*]*—Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum—

He that keeps nor crust nor crumb,
Weary of all, shall want some.

—That's a sheal'd peascod.

[Pointing to Lear's codpiece.

Gon. Not only, Sir, this your all-licens'd Fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel, breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you know, Nuncle, the hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long, that it had it head bit off by its young:

[Sings.] So out went the candle,
And we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would you would make use of your good wisdom,
Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
These dispositions which of late transport you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when a cart draws the horse?—

[*Sings*.] *Whoop, Jug! I love thee!*

Lear. Does any here know me? This is not Lear.
Does Lear walk thus? Speak thus? Where are his eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied—*[Pricks himself.]* Ha! Waking? 'Tis not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that; for by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, Sir, is much o'th'savor
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright.
As you are old and reverend, should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd, and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn. Epicurism and lust
Makes it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy. Be then desir'd
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainders, that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
Which know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!—
Saddle my horse. Call my train together.—
Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee.
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter Albany, *above.*

Lear. Woe, that too late repents!—O Sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, Sir.—Prepare my horses.—
[Exit Lear's Knight.
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,
Than the sea-monster.

Alb. Pray, Sir, be patient.

Lear. Detested kite! Thou liest!
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of Nature
From the fix'd place, drew from my heart all love,

And added to the gall.— *[Striking his head.*
O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,
And thy dear judgment out!—Go, go, my people.

Alb. My Lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath moved you.

Lear. It may be so, my Lord.—
Hear, Nature, hear! Dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase,
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honor her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen, that it may live
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth,
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt, that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! —Away, away!

Exeunt Lear, Kent, Lear's Knight, *and* Knights.

Alb. Now, Gods that we adore, whereof comes this?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know more of it,
But let his disposition have that scope
As dotage gives it.

Re-enter Lear.

Lear. What! fifty of my followers at a clap;
Within a fortnight!

Alb. What's the matter, Sir?

Lear. I'll tell thee.— *[To Goneril.]* Life and death! I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
Th'untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. Yea, is't come to this?
Ha! Let it be so. I have another daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable.
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolvish visage. Thou shalt find
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think

I have cast off forever. *[Exit.*

Gon. Do you mark that?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you—

Gon. Pray you, content.—What, Oswald, ho!—
[To the Fool.] You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, Nuncle Lear, tarry. Take the Fool with thee.—
A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter;
So the Fool follows after. *[Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel. A hundred knights!
'Tis politic and safe to let him keep
At point a hundred knights; yes, that on every dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say!

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far.
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken. I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister.
If she sustain him and his hundred knights
When I have show'd th'unfitness—

Re-enter Oswald.

How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Ay, Madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse.
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone,
And hasten your return. *[Exit* Oswald.
—No, no, my Lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more at task for want of wisdom
Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell.
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then—*[Trumpets sound within.*

Alb. Well, well; th'event. *[Exeunt.*

ACT I, SCENE V.—[Court before the Same.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Lear, Kent, Lear's Knight, *and* Fool *with lute.*

Lear. Go you before to Cornwall with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my Lord, till I have delivered your letter. *[Exit.*

The Fool plays a lullaby on his lute.

Fool. If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall not go slipshod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. What canst tell, boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i'th'middle on's face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose, that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong.

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put's head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature. So kind a father!—Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no mo than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed! Thou would'st make a good Fool.

Lear. *[Begins to weep.]* To take't again perforce! Monster Ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my Fool, Nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou should'st not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O! let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven;
Keep me in temper. I would not be mad!

Enter Lear's Knight.

Lear's Knight. Ready, my Lord.
Lear. Come, boy. *[Exeunt* Lear *and* Lear's Knight.
Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.
[Hits a high note on his lute. Exit.

ACT II, SCENE I.—[The Earl of Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Platform and Upper Casement in the Tiring House.]

Enter Edmund *and* Curan, *separately*.

Edm. Save thee, Curan.
Curan. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his Duchess will be here with him this night.
Edm. How comes that?
Curan. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad? I mean the whisper'd ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments.
Edm. Not I. Pray you, what are they?
Curan. Have you heard of no likely wars toward 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?
Edm. Not a word.
Curan. You may do then, in time. Fare you well, sir. *[Exit.*
Edm. The Duke be here tonight. The better! Best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing of a queasy question,
Which I must act. Briefness and Fortune, work!—
Brother, a word. Descend! Brother, I say!

Enter Edgar, *descends from above with a rope.*

My father watches. O Sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid.
You have now the good advantage of the night.
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither, now, i'th'night, i'th'haste,
And Regan with him. Have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.
Edg. I am sure on't, not a word.

Tucket within.

Edm. I hear my father coming. Pardon me.
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you.
[Draws his sword.
Draw. Seem to defend yourself.
[Edgar draws and parries Edmund's attacks.
Now quit you well.—
[Loudly.] Yield! Come before my father.—Light, ho!
Here!—
Fly, brother.—Torches! Torches!— So, farewell.
[Exit Edgar.
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
Of my more fierce endeavor.—*[Wounds his arm.*
I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport.

Edmund hides his rapier.

—Father! Father! —
Stop, stop!—No help?

Enter Gloucester, Curan,
Household Knights, and Servants with torches.

Glou. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?
Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress.
Glou. But where is he?
Edm. Look, Sir, I bleed.

Gloucester readjusts his spectacles to see the wound.

Glou. Where is the villain, Edmund?
Edm. Fled this way, Sir, when by no means he could—
Glou. Pursue him, ho! Go after. *[Exeunt some Knights.*
—'By no means' what?
Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all the thunder bend,
Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to th'father. Sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm:
And when he saw my best alarum'd spirits
Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to th'encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.
Glou. Let him fly far.
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught

And found. [*To Curan.*] Dispatch,—the noble Duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes tonight.
By his authority I will proclaim it
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake.
He that conceals him, death. *[Exit Curan.*

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him. He replied,
'Thou unpossessing bastard! Dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No, what I should deny—
As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character—I'd turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot and damned practice.
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spirits
To make thee seek it.'

Glou. O strange and fast'ned villain!
Would he deny his letter, said he?
[Tucket within.
Hark! The Duke's trumpets. I know not why he comes.
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape.
The Duke must grant me that. Besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him. And of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter Cornwall *and* Regan,
attended by Cornwall's Knight *and four other bodyguards.*

Corn. How now, my noble friend! Since I came hither,
Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news.
Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue th'offender. How dost, my Lord?
Glou. O! Madam, my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd.
Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd, your Edgar?
Glou. O Lady, Lady, shame would have it hid.
Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tended upon my father?
Glou. I know not, Madam. 'Tis too bad, too bad.
Edm. Yes, Madam, he was of that consort.
Reg. No marvel then, though he were ill affected,
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death

To have th'expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them, and with such cautions
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.
Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.
Edm. It was my duty, Sir.
Glou. He did bewray his practice, and receiv'd
This hurt you see striving to apprehend him.
Corn. Is he pursued?
Glou. Ay, my good Lord.
Corn. If he be taken he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm. Make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please.—For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours.
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need.
You we first seize on.
Edm. I shall serve you, Sir,
Truly, however else.
Glou. For him I thank your Grace.
Corn. You know not why we came to visit you—
Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd night.
Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some prize,
Wherein we must have use of your advice.
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow
Your needful counsel to our businesses,
Which craves the instant use.
Glou. I serve you, Madam.
Your Graces are right welcome. *[Trumpet. Exeunt.*

ACT II, SCENE II.—[Before Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Kent *and* Oswald, *severally.*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend. Art of this house?
Kent. Ay.
Osw. Where may we set our horses?
Kent. I'th'mire.
Osw. Prithee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.
Osw. Why then, I care not for thee.
Kent. If I had thee in Tisbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.
Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.
Kent. Fellow, I know thee.
Osw. What dost thou know me for?
Kent. A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking, whoreson, glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pander, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch. One whom I will beat into clamorous whining if thou deni'st the least syllable of thy addition.
Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!
Kent. What a brazen-fac'd varlet art thou to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days since I tripp'd up thy heels and beat thee before the king? *[Drawing his sword.]* Draw, you rogue; for though it be night, yet the moon shines. I'll make a sop o'th'moonshine of you. You whoreson cullionly barbermonger, draw.
Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.
Kent. Draw, you rascal. You come with letters against the King, and take Vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father. Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks. Draw, you rascal. Come your ways.

Oswald *trips on his longsword.*

Osw. Help, ho! Murder! Help!
Kent. Strike, you slave! Stand, rogue, stand! You neat slave, strike!
Osw. Help, ho! Murder! Murder!

Enter Edmund, *with his rapier drawn.*

Edm. How now, what's the matter? Part!
Kent. *[To Edmund.]* With you goodman boy, if you please. Come, I'll flesh ye. Come on, young master.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, *and* Gloucester, *Cornwall's Knight, and other heavily armed knights. Servants with torches.* Oswald *draws his longsword.*

Glou. Weapons! Arms! What's the matter here?
Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives.
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?
Reg. The messengers from our sister and the King.

Corn. What is your difference? Speak.
Osw. I am scarce in breath, my Lord.
Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valor. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee. A tailor made thee.
Corn. Thou art a strange fellow. A tailor make a man?
Kent. A tailor, sir. A stonecutter or a painter could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two years o'th'trade.
Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?
Osw. This ancient ruffian, Sir, whose life I have spar'd at suit of his grey beard—
Kent. Thou whoreson zed! Thou unnecessary letter!—My Lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar and daub the wall of a jakes with him.—'Spare my grey beard,' you wagtail!
Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?
Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.
Corn. Why art thou angry?
Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrince t'unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.—
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a Fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.
Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?
Glou. How fell you out? Say that.
Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.
Corn. Why does thou call him knave? What is his fault?
Kent. His countenance likes me not.
Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.
Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain.
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.
Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature. He cannot flatter. He,

An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth;
And they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbor more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly-ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
Under th'allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flick'ring Phoebus' front—

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer. He that beguil'd you in a plain accent was a plain knave, which for my part I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to't.

Corn. What was th'offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any.
It pleas'd the King his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, compact, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the King
For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you.

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn.
Call not your stocks for me. I serve the King,
On whose employment I was sent to you.
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honor,
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon? Till night, my Lord, and all night too.

Kent. Why, Madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same color
Our sister speaks of.—Come, bring away the stocks.

[Exit Cornwall's Knight.

Glou. Let me beseech your Grace not to do so.
His fault is much, and the good King his master

Will check him for't. Your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilf'rings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with. The King must take it ill
That he, so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrained.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reenter Cornwall's Knight, with *Servants carrying stocks*.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs.—
[*To* Cornwall's Knight.] Put in his legs.

Kent *is put in the stocks.*

Corn. Come, my good lord, away.
[Trumpet. Exeunt all but Gloucester *and* Kent.

Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the Duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd. I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, Sir. I have watch'd and travell'd hard.
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels.
Give you good morrow!

Glou. The Duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken.
[Exit. Soft music.

Kent. Good King, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun! *[He takes a letter out of his purse.*
—Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter.—Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery. *[Puts away the letter.]*—I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course, and shall find time
From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night. Smile once more. Turn thy wheel. *[He sleeps.*

ACT II, SCENE III.—[Before a Hovel.]

[The Yard.]

A hurdy-gurdy plays.
Enter Edgar, *from under the stage.*

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,
I will preserve myself; and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast. My face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hairs in knots
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms
Poor pelting villages, sheepcotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. 'Poor Hurdygurd! Poor Tom"
That's something yet. Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

ACT II, SCENE IV.—[Before Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Lear, Lear's Knight, *and* Fool,
playing a pipe and tabor.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Lear's Knight. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my Lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! He wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by th'neck, monkeys by th'loins, and men by th'legs. When a man's overlusty at legs then he wears wooden nether-stocks.

Go to Table of Contents

Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?
Kent. It is both he and she,
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
Lear. No, no; they would not.
Kent. Yes, yes, they have.
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no!
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay!
Lear. They durst not do 't,
They could not, would not do't. 'Tis worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage.
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.
Kent. My Lord, when at their home
I did commend your Highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,
Being the very fellow which of late
Display'd so saucily against your Highness,
Having more man than wit about me, drew.
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.
Fool. Winter's not gone yet if the wild-geese fly that way.
Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind,
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.—
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to th' poor.
But for all this thou shalt have as many dolors for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.
Lear. O! how this mother swells up toward my heart;
[Pointing to his liver.

Hysterica passio! Down, thou climbing sorrow!
Thy element's below.—Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the Earl, Sir; here within.

Lear. Follow me not. Stay here. *[Exit.*

Lear's Knight. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the King comes with so small a number?

Fool. And thou hadst been set i'th'stocks for that question, thou'dst well deserv'd it.

Kent. Why, Fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no laboring i'th'winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men, and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill lest it break thy neck with following; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again. I would have none but knaves follow it, since a Fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the Fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly.
The knave turns fool that runs away;
The Fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, Fool?

Fool. Not i'th'stocks, Fool.

Re-enter Lear, *with* Gloucester.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick! They are weary!
They have travell'd all the night! Mere insolence,
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.

Glou. My dear Lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! Plague! Death! Confusion!
'Fiery'! What 'quality'? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester!
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glou. Well, my good Lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. 'Inform'd them'? Dost thou understand me, man?

Glou. Ay, my good Lord.

Lear. The King would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands, tends service;

Are they 'inform'd' of this? My breath and blood!
'Fiery'! the 'fiery' Duke! Tell the hot Duke that—
No, but not yet. Maybe he is not well.
Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves
When Nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body. I'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
For the sound man.—*[Looking on* Kent.*]* Death on my state! Wherefore
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the Duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the Duke and's wife I'd speak with them;
Now; presently. Bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.

Glou. I would have all well betwixt you. *[Exit.*

Lear. O me! My heart, my rising heart! *[Clutching his heart.*
But, down!

Fool. Cry to it, Nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i'th'paste alive. She knapp'd 'em o'th' coxcombs with a stick, and cried, 'Down wantons, down!' 'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Enter Cornwall *and* Regan, *above.*
Reenter Gloucester *with* Cornwall's Knight *and others.*

Lear. Good morrow to you both.
Corn. Hail to your Grace!
*[*Kent *is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are. I know what reason
I have to think so. If thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adult'ress. *[To* Kent.*]*—O! are you free?
Some other time for that.

Kent *is helped off by* Cornwall's Knight *and* Lear's Knight.

—Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught. O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here.
[Points to his liver.
I can scarce speak to thee. Thou'lt not believe
With how deprav'd a quality—O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, Sir, take patience. I have hope

You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.
Lear. Say? How is that?
Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation. If, Sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
Lear. My curses on her!
Reg. O Sir, you are old!
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine. You should be rul'd and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore I pray you
That to our sister you do make return.
Say you have wrong'd her.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house—
[Kneeling.] 'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old.
Age is unnecessary. On my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed and food.'
Reg. Good sir, no more. These are unsightly tricks.
Return you to my sister.
Lear. *[Rising.]* Never, Regan!
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue
Most serpent-like upon the very heart.
All the stor'd vengeances of Heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!
Corn. Fie, Sir, fie!
Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs drawn by the pow'rful sun,
To fall and blister!
Reg. O, the blest gods! So will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.
Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse.
Thy tender-hafted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness. Her eyes are fierce, but thine
Do comfort and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in. Thou better know'st
The offices of Nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude.
Thy half o'th'kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to th'purpose.
Lear. Who put my man i'th'stocks? *[Tucket within.*
Corn. What trumpet's that?
Reg. I know't, my sister's. This approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Enter Oswald.

—Is your Lady come?
Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.—
Out, varlet, from my sight!
Corn. What means your Grace?
Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on't. Who comes here?—

Enter Goneril, *above.*

O Heavens,
If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if you yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down and take my part!—
[To Goneril.*]* Art not asham'd to look upon this beard?

Goneril *takes* Regan *by the hand*.

O Regan! Will you take her by the hand.
Reg. Why not by th'hand, Sir? How have I offended?
All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.
Lear. O sides, you are too tough!
Will you yet hold?—How came my man i'th'stocks?
Corn. I set him there, Sir; but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.
Lear. *[To* Regan.*]* You? Did you?
Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so!
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me.
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.
Lear. Return to her? And fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o'th'air;
To be a comrade with the wolf, and howl
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. *[Pointing at* Oswald.

Gon. At your choice, Sir.
Lear. *[To Goneril.]* I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad.
I will not trouble thee, my child. Farewell.
We'll no more meet, no more see one another;
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine. Thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, or embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee.
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it.
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
Mend when thou canst. Be better at thy leisure.
I can be patient. I can stay with Regan.
I and my hundred knights.
Reg. Not altogether so.
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, Sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.
Lear. Is this well spoken?
Reg. I dare avouch it, Sir. What? Fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.
Gon. Why might not you, my Lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?
Reg. Why not, my Lord? If then they chanc'd to slack ye,
We could control them. If you will come to me,
For now I spy a danger, I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty. To no more
Will I give place or notice.
Lear. I gave you all—
Reg. And in good time you gave it.
Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries,
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What? Must I come to you
With five-and-twenty? Regan, said you so?
Reg. And speak't again, my Lord. No more with me.
Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favor'd
When others are more wicked. Not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise.— [*To* Goneril.] I'll go with thee.
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.
Gon. Hear me, my Lord.

What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you.
Reg. What need one?
Lear. O! reason not the need. Our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's. [*To* Regan.] Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need—

A noise of distant thunder heard, then music.

You Heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you Gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both.
If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely. Touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks! —No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both
That all the world shall—I will do such things,
What they are yet I know not, but they shall be
The terrors of the earth!

Thunder.

—You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep.
I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
Or ere I'll weep.—O Fool! I shall go mad.

Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, *and* Fool.

Corn. Let us withdraw, 'twill be a storm.
Reg. This house is little. The old man and's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.
Gon. 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.
Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.
Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my Lord of Gloucester?
Corn. Follow'd the old man forth.

Re-enter Gloucester.

—He is return'd.
Glou. The King is in high rage.
Corn. Whither is he going?

Glou. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.
Gon. ‘Tis best to give him way. He leads himself.
Reg. My Lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

The sound of wind.

Glou. Alack! The night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle. For many miles about
There’s scarce a bush.
Gon. O Sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors.
He is attended with a desperate train,
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus’d, wisdom bids fear.
Corn. Shut up your doors, my Lord. ‘Tis a wild night.
My Regan counsels well. Come out o’th’storm.
[Exeunt.

ACT III, SCENE I.—[A Heath.]
[The Platform.]

Storm still.

Enter Kent *and Lear’s Knight, severally.*

Kent. Who’s there, besides foul weather?
Lear’s Knight. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.
Kent. I know you. Where’s the King?
Lear’s Knight. Contending with the fretful elements;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curlèd waters ‘bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-storm
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.
Kent. Who is with him?
Lear’s Knight. None but the Fool, who labors to outjest
His heart-strook injuries.
Kent. Sir, I do know you;

And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it is cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have, as who have not that their great stars
Thron'd and set high, servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state. What hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the Dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them hath borne
Against the old kind King, or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings–
True it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you.
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The King hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding,
And from some knowledge and assurance offer
This office to you.

Lear's Knight. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my outwall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia—
As fear not but you shall—show her this ring,
And she will tell you who that fellow is
That yet you do not know.—
Storm.
Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the King.

Lear's Knight. Give me your hand.
Have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet:
That when we have found the King—in which your
pain
That way, I'll this—he that first lights on him
Holla the other. *[Exeunt severally.*

ACT III, SCENE II.—[Another part of the Heath.]

[The Platform and the Heavens.]

Enter Lear, *bare-headed.*

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!

Blast of thunder.

Rage! Blow!—

Roaring wind.

You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!

Scolding rain.

—You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head!—

A flash of lightning.

And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o'th'world
Crack Nature's molds, all germens spill at once
That makes ingrateful man!—

Silence.

Fool *peaks his head out from between the curtains.*

Fool. O Nuncle.— Court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rainwater out o'door. [*Comes downstage.*] Good Nuncle, in. Ask thy daughters' blessing. Here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools.

Thunder, lightning, wind and rain.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! Spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters.

Music.

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children.
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man.
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O, ho! 'tis foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put's head in has a good head-piece.

The codpiece that will house
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse;
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make,
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.—

For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass.

Thunder and Lightning.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience.
I will say nothing.
Kent. *[Within.]* Who's there?
Fool. Marry, here's grace and a codpiece.
Kent. *[Within.]* Holla!

Enter Kent.

Fool. *[Aside.]* That's a wise man and a fool.
Kent. Alas, Sir, are you here? Things that love night
Love not such nights as these. The wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark
And make them keep their caves. Since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain I never
Remember to have heard. Man's nature cannot carry
Th'affliction nor the fear.
Lear. Let the great Gods,
That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipp'd of Justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand,
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular of virtue
That art incestuous. Caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Has practis'd on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Storm.

Kent. Alack, bareheaded!
Gracious my Lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest;
Repose you there while I to this hard house—
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis rais'd,
Which even but now, demanding after you,

Denied me to come in—return and force
Their scanted courtesy.
Lear. My wits begin to turn.—
Come on, my boy. How does, my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
And can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.—
Poor Fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.
Fool. *He that has and a little tiny wit,*
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
Though the rain it raineth every day.
Lear. True, boy.—Come, bring us to this hovel.
[Exeunt Lear *and* Kent.
Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtesan.
I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i'th'field;
And bawds and whores do churches build—
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion—
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.

Thunder and lightning.

—This prophecy Merlin shall make, for I live before his time. *[Exit.*

ACT III, SCENE III.—[Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Lords Rooms.]

Enter Gloucester *and* Edmund, *above.*

Glou. Alack, alack! Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desir'd their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charg'd me, on pain of perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, or any way sustain him.
Edm. Most savage and unnatural!

Glou. Go to; say you nothing. There is division between the Dukes, and a worse matter than that. I have receiv'd a letter this night; 'tis dangerous to be spoken; I have lock'd the letter in my closet. These injuries the King now bears will be revenged home. There is part of a power already footed. We must incline to the King. I will look him and privily relieve him. Go you and maintain talk with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceiv'd. If he ask for me, I am ill and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the King my old master must be reliev'd. There is strange things toward, Edmund. Pray you, be careful. *[Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy forbid thee shall the Duke
Instantly know, and of that letter too.
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses—no less than all.
The younger rises when the old doth fall. *[Exit.*

ACT III, SCENE IV.—[The Heath. Before a Hovel.]

[The Yard and Platform.]

Storm still.
Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool, *below.*

Kent. Here is the place, my Lord. Good my Lord, enter.
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure.
Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my Lord, enter here.
Lear. Wilt break my heart?
Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my Lord, enter.
Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin. So 'tis to thee.
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou'ldst meet the bear i'th'mouth. When the mind's free,
The body's delicate. This tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to't. But I will punish home.
No, I will weep no more.—In such a night
To shut me out?—

Rain and wind.

Pour on! I will endure.—

In such a night as this? O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all!—
O that way madness lies. Let me shun that.
No more of that.

Kent. Good my Lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself. Seek thine own ease.
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. *[Looking on the Fool*.
But I'll go in.—
[To the Fool.] In, boy; go first.—You houseless poverty—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.—

[Exit Fool, under the stage.

Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, Pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them
And show the Heavens more just.

Edgar *winds his horn, from under the stage.*

Edg. Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!
Fool. *[From below.]* Come not in here, Nuncle; here's a spirit!
Help me! Help me!
Kent. Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

Thunder and Lightning,
Re-enter Fool, *from under the stage.*

Fool. A spirit, a spirit. He says his name's poor Tom.
Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i'th'straw?
Come forth.

Enter Edgar, *from under the stage, disguised as a Tom o'Bedlam and carrying a horn in a baldric.*

Edg. Away. Hum, go to thy cold bed and warm thee.
Lear. Didst thou give all to thy daughters? And art thou come to this?
Edg. Who gives anything to poor Tom, whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inch'd bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor.
Lear. What, has his daughters brought him to this pass?
Couldst thou save nothing? Would'st thou give 'em all?
Fool. Nay, he reserv'd a blanket, else we had been all sham'd.

Lear. Now all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!
Kent. He hath no daughters, Sir.
Lear. Death, traitor! Nothing could have subdu'd nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'Twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.
Edg. *Pillicock sat on Pillicock hill.*
Alow, alow, loo, loo!
Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.
Lear. What has thou been?
Edg. A servingman, proud in heart and mind, that curl'd my hair, wore gloves in my cap, serv'd the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of Heaven; one that slept in the contriving of lust, and wak'd to do it. Wine lov'd I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramour'd the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman. Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.—

Sound of scolding wind.

"Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind."
Says, *"suum, mun, hey no nonny."*—

Thunder.

Dolphin, my boy, my boy:

Winds his horn.

—Sessa! Let him trot by.

Lear. Thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies.—Is man no more than this? Consider him well.—Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! Here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou art the thing itself. Unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art.—Off, off you lendings! Come; unbutton here.

Lear *tears off pieces of his upper garments.*
Edgar *puts on the king's discarded riding-cloak.*

Fool. Prithee, Nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in.—

Enter Gloucester *with a torch, muffled in a voluminous, hooded cloak.*

Now, a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart: a small spark; all the rest on's body cold.—Look, here comes a walking fire.

Edg. This is the foul Flibbertigibbet. He begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock. He gives the web and the pin, squinies the eye, and makes the harelip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

Swithold footed thrice the 'old;
He met the Nightmare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your Grace?

Lear. *[Pointing to Gloucester.]* What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glou. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall newt, and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow dung for sallets, swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog, drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipp'd from tithing to tithing, and stocked-punish'd, and imprison'd; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body,

Horse to ride, and weapons to wear,
But mice and rats and such small deer
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Thunder.

—Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin! Peace, thou fiend!

Glou. What, hath your Grace no better company?

Edg. The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman. Modo he's called, and Mahu.

Glou. Our flesh and blood, my Lord, is grown so vile,
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glou. Go in with me. My duty cannot suffer
T'obey in all your daughters' hard commands.
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet I have ventured to come seek you out
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.—
[To Edgar.] What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my Lord, take his offer. Go into th'house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.—
What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private. *[They talk aside.*
Kent. Importune him once more to go, my Lord;
His wits begin t'unsettle.
Glou. Canst thou blame him?
His daughters seek his death. Ah, that good Kent!
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!
Thou say'st the King grows mad. I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself. I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood. He sought my life
But lately, very late. I loved him, friend,
No father his son dearer. True to tell thee,
The grief hath craz'd my wits.—

Storm.

What a night's this!—
Kent. I do beseech your Grace—

He tries to pull Lear away from Edgar.

Lear. [*To* Kent.] O, cry you mercy, Sir!—
Noble philosopher, your company.
Edg. Tom's a-cold.
Glou. In, fellow, there, into th'hovel. Keep thee warm.
Lear. Come, let's in all.
Kent. This way, my Lord.
Lear. With him!
I will keep still with my philosopher.
Kent. Good my Lord, soothe him. Let him take the fellow.
Glou. Take him you on.
Kent. Sirrah, come on. Go along with us.
Lear. Come, good Athenian.
Glou. No words, no words. Hush!
Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still: "Fie foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man."
[Thunder. Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE V.—[Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Lords Rooms.]

Enter Cornwall *and* Edmund, *above.*

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.
Edm. How, my Lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives
way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.
Corn. I now perceive it was not altogether your brother's evil
disposition made him seek his death, but a provoking
merit set a-work by a reprovable badness in himself.
Edm. How malicious is my fortune that I must repent to be
just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him

an intelligent party to the advantages of France. *[Gives letter to Cornwall.]* O Heavens, that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the Duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. *[Aside.]* If I find him comforting the King, it will stuff his suspicious more fully.—I will persever in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee, and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. *[Exeunt. Distant thunder.*

ACT III, SCENE VI.—[A Skinning House.]

[The Platform with a Discovery.]

Enter Kent *and* Gloucester.

Glou. Here is better than the open air. Take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can. I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience. The Gods reward your kindness!

Enter Lear, Fool *and* Edgar, *wearing Lear's cloak.*

Edg. *[Belches.]* Frateretto calls me and tells me Nero is an angler in the Lake of Darkness.—

[Gloucester *readjusts his spectacles to look at Edgar*.]

Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

[Exit Gloucester.

Fool. Prithee, Nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?

Lear. A King, a King!

Fool. No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear *draws open the curtains, and discovers a freshly hung fox and scattered animal skins.*

Lear. [*Drawing his sword*.] To have a thousand, with red burning spits Come hizzing in upon 'em!

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. *[Aside.]* He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.=

Lear. It shall be done. I will arraign them straight.—

[To Edgar.] Come, sit thou here, most learnèd justicer.—
[To the Fool.] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. —Now, you she-foxes!

Edg. *[To a pelt.]* Look where he stands and glares!
Want'st thou eyes at trial, madam?

Fool. [*Sings.*] *Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me—*
[Aside.] Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale.—Hobberdidance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angler, I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, Sir? Stand you not so amaz'd.
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first. —Bring in their evidence.—
[To Edgar.] Thou robèd man of justice, take thy place.—
[To the Fool.] And thou, his yokefellow of equity,
Bench by his side.—*[To Kent.]* You are o'th'commission,
Sit you too. [Kent *fetches a joint-stool and sits.*

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Fool. [*Sings.*] *Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?*
Thy sheep be in the corn,
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Edgar. *[To the pelt.]* Purr!

Fool. The cat is grey.

Lear. *[Taking the joint-stool Kent is sitting on.]* Arraign her first—'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honorable assembly, she kick'd the poor King her father.

Fool. Come hither mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on.—

Gives the unskinned fox to Kent *who tosses it aside.*

Stop her there!—
[Draws on Kent.] Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!—
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. *[Aside.]* My tears begin to take his part so much,
They mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,—

Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart,—see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them.—Avaunt, you curs!
[Raises his horn.

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite,
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
Bobtail tike or trundle-tail,
Tom will make him weep and wail;
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.
[Blows horn.

Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. *[To Kent, who has retrieved the fox]* Then, let them anatomize Regan. See what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that make these hard hearts?—*[To Edgar.]* You, Sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments. You will say they are Persian but let them be chang'd.

Edgar *removes the cape*. Fool *plays soft music on his tabor pipe*.

Kent. *[Taking* Lear *gently downstage.]* Now, good my Lord, lie here and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise.—Draw the curtains. So; so. [*Curtains are drawn close.*]

Re-enter Lear, peeping from behind the curtains.

[*To* Fool.] We'll go to supper i' th' morning.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon. *[Exit* Lear.

Re-enter Gloucester.

Glou. *[To* Kent.*]* Come hither, friend. Where is the King my master?

Kent. Here, Sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glou. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms.
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him.
There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master.
If thou should'st dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up,
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppressed nature sleeps.
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews
Which, if convenience will not allow,

Stand in hard cure.— *[To the Fool.]* Come, help to bear thy master.
Thou must not stay behind.

Glou. Come, come, away.

Music. Exeunt Kent, Gloucester, *and the* Fool, *behind the curtains.*

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers, suffers most i'th'mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind;
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the King bow.
He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more tonight, safe 'scape the King?
Lurk, lurk. *[Exit.*

ACT III, SCENE VII.—[Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Goneril, Edmund, Cornwall's Knight, Curan, Albany's Squire, *and armed knights belonging to the dukes.*

Corn. *[To Goneril.]* Post speedily to my Lord your husband. Show him this letter. The army of France is landed.—Seek out the traitor Gloucester.

[Exeunt two of Cornwall's knights.

Gon. Hang him instantly.
Reg. Pluck out his eyes.
Corn. Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund, keep you our sister company. The revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the Duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation. We are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us.—Farewell, dear sister.—Farewell, my Lord of Gloucester.

Enter Oswald.

—How now! Where's the King?
Osw. My Lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence.
Some five or six-and-thirty of his knights,
Hot 'questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,

Are gone with him toward Dover, where they boast
To have well-armed friends.
Corn. Get horses for your mistress.
[Exit Oswald.
Gon. *[To* Cornwall *and* Regan.*]* Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.
Reg. Edmund, farewell. [*She kisses him vehemently.*

Exeunt Goneril *and* Edmund, *accompanied by Albany's knights.*

Corn. Go seek the traitor Gloucester,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

Exeunt two more of Cornwall's knights.

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a court'sy to our wrath, which men
May blame but not control.—

Re-enter knights, with Gloucester *wearing his spectacles.*

Who's there? The traitor?
Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'Tis he.
Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.
Glou. What means your Graces? Good my friends, consider
You are my guests. Do me no foul play, friends.
Corn. Bind him I say!
Reg. Hard, hard! O filthy traitor!
Glou. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

Cornwall *lays his hand on his sword.*

Corn. To this chair bind him!! *[Knights tie him to a chair.*
—Villain, thou shalt find—

Regan *plucks* Gloucester's *beard.*

Glou. By the kind Gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.
Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glou. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken and accuse thee. I am your host.
With robbers' hands my hospitable favors
You should not ruffle thus. *[Cornwall draws his dagger.*
—What will you do?
Corn. Come, Sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.
Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands
You have sent the lunatic King. Speak!
Glou. I have a letter guessingly set down,

Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the King?
Glou. To Dover.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril—
Corn. Wherefore to Dover?—Let him answer that.
Glou. I am tied to th'stake, and I must stand the course.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover.
Glou. Because I would not see
Thy cruel nails pluck out his poor old eyes,
Nor thy fierce sister in his anointed flesh
Stick boarish fangs. The sea, with such a storm
As his bare head in hell-black night endur'd,
Would have buoy'd up and quench'd the stelled fires;
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that dire time,
Thou should'st have said, 'Good porter, turn the key,"
All cruel's else subscrib'd. But I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.
Corn. See't shalt thou never.—Fellows, hold the chair.—
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

Stomps on Gloucester's *spectacles.*

Glou. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help!—O cruel! O you Gods!

Cornwall *puts out* Gloucester's *eye.*

Reg. One side will mock another; th'other too.
Corn. If you see vengeance—
Cornwall's Knight. Hold your hand, my Lord.
I have serv'd you ever since I was a child,
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.
Reg. How now, you dog!
Cornwall's Knight. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel.
Reg. What do you mean?
Corn. —My villain?
Cornwall's Knight. Nay then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

He draws his sword against Cornwall.

Reg. —Give me thy sword. —A peasant stand up thus!

She snatches a sword and runs at him behind. He falls into Cornwall*, inadvertently wounding him. The Duke falls down bleeding.*

Knight. O! I am slain. —My Lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. Oh! *[He dies.*

Corn. *[To Regan.]* Lest it see more, prevent it!

She plucks out his other eye.

Reg. Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?
Glou. All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?—
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of Nature
To quit this horrid act.
Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee. It was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us,
Who is too good to pity thee.
Glou. O my follies! Then Edgar was abus'd!
Kind Gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.— *[Exit two with Gloucester.*
How is't, my Lord? How look you?
Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt. Follow me, Lady.—
Turn out that eyeless villain. Throw this slave
Upon the dunghill.

Two of Cornwall's *knights exeunt with the body.*

—Regan, I bleed apace.
Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.

Exit Cornwall, *led by* Regan. *Music.*

Curan. I'll never care what wickedness I do
If this man come to good.
Squire. If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
Curan. Let's follow the old Earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would. His roguish madness
Allows itself to anything.
Squire. Go thou. I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!

[Exeunt severally.

ACT IV, SCENE I.—[The Heath.]

[The Yard and the Platform.]

Enter Edgar *still disguised as Tom o' Bedlam, from under the stage.*

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd, to be worst.
The lowest and most dejected thing of Fortune
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace.
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts.

Enter Gloucester *with a staff, led by* Curan.

—But who comes here?
My father, poorly led? World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.
Curan. O my good Lord!
I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant
These fourscore years.
Glou. Away, get thee away. Good friend, begone.
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.
Curan. You cannot see your way.
Glou. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen
Our means secure us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. Oh! dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath;
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again.

Edgar *winds his horn.*

—How now! Who's there?
Edg. *[Aside.]* O Gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst'?
I am worse than e'er I was.
Curan. 'Tis poor mad Tom.
Edg. *[Aside.]* And worse I may be yet. The worst is not
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'
Curan. Fellow, where goest?
Glou. Is it a beggar-man?
Curan. Madman and beggar too.
Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I'th'last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm. My son
Came then into my mind, and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him. I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys are we to th'Gods;
They kill us for their sport.
Edg. *[Aside.]* How should this be?

Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Ang'ring itself and others.—Bless thee, master!
Glou. Is that the naked fellow?
Curan. Ay, my Lord.
Glou. Then, prithee, get thee away. If, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or twain
I'th'way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Which I'll entreat to lead me.
Curan. Alack, sir! He is mad.
Glou. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.
Curan. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. *[Exit.*
Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow—
Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.—*[Aside.]* I cannot daub it further.
Glou. Come hither, fellow.
Edg. *[Aside.]* And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.
Glou. Know'st thou the way to Dover?
Edg. Both stile and gate, horseway and footpath. Poor Tom hath been scar'd out of his good wits. Bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend. Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; as Obdidicut, of lust; Hobberdidance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids and waiting women. So bless thee, master!
Glou. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heav'ns plagues
Have humbled to all strokes. *[Giving him a purse.*
That I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover?
Edg. Ay, master.
Glou. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep.
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me. From that place
I shall no leading need.
Edg. Give me thy arm.
Poor Tom shall lead thee. *[Exeunt.*

ACT IV, SCENE II.—[The Duke of Albany's Palace.]

[The Platform.]

Flourish. Enter Goneril *and* Edmund.

Gon. Welcome, my Lord. I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way.

Enter Oswald, *severally.*

—Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd.
I told him of the army that was landed.
He smil'd at it. I told him you were coming.
His answer was 'The worse.' Of Gloucester's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out.
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.

Gon. *[To Edmund.]* Then shall you go no further.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit
That dares not undertake. He'll not feel wrongs,
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers.
I must change arms at home and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us. Ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this. Spare speech.
[Gives him a glove.
Decline your head. This kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air.
[She kisses him vehemently.
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloucester!
[Exit Edmund.
O, the difference of man and man.
To thee a woman's services are due.
A fool usurps my bed.

Osw. Madam, here comes my Lord.
[Exit.

Enter Albany.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril!
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition.
That nature which contemns its origin

Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.
Gon. No more. The text is foolish.
Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile.
Filths savor but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate, have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited.
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame the vile offenses,
It will come.
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.
Gon. Milk-liver'd man,
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
Who has not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honor from thy suffering; that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
With plumed helm thy state begins to threat,
Whil'st thou, a moral fool, sits still, and cries
'Alack! Why does he so?'
Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity shows not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.
Gon. O vain fool!
Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame.
Bemonster not thy feature. Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones; howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.
Gon. Marry, your manhood—*mew*.

Trumpet within. Enter Albany's Squire.

Alb. What news?
Squire. O my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead—
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester. *[Goneril frowns at him.*
Alb. Gloucester's eyes?
Squire. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd,

Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath pluck'd him after.
Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But, O poor Gloucester!
Lost he his other eye?
Squire. Both, both, my Lord.—
This letter, Madam, craves a speedy answer.
[Presents a letter.
'Tis from your sister.
Gon. *[Aside.]* One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life. Another way,
The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer. *[Exit.*
Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?
Squire. Come with my lady hither.
Alb. He is not here.
Squire. No, my good Lord. I met him back again.
Alb. Knows he the wickedness?
Squire. Ay, my good Lord. 'Twas he inform'd against him,
And quit the house on purpose that their punishment
Might have the freer course.
Alb. Gloucester, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the King,
And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend.
Tell me what more thou know'st. *[Exeunt.*

ACT IV, SCENE III.—[The Same. A Tent.]

[The Platform.]

Enter, with drum and colors, Cordelia, Doctor, *and* French Soldiers. *She is holding Lear's doublet.*

Cor. [*To Doctor*.] Alack! 'tis he. Why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea, singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. —A century send forth.
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. *[Exit a French* Officer.
—What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.
Doct. There is means, Madam.

Our foster nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.
Cor. All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! Be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him,
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter Lear's Knight.

Lear's Knight. News, Madam.
The British powers are marching hitherward.
Cor. 'Tis known before. Our preparation stands
In expectation of them.—O dear father!
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and importun'd tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right.
Soon may I hear and see him! *[Drum sounds. Exeunt.*

ACT IV, SCENE IV.—[A Room in Gloucester's Castle.]

[The Lords Rooms.]

Enter Regan *and* Oswald, *above.*

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Osw. Ay, Madam.
Reg. Himself in person there?
Osw. Madam, with much ado.
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your Lord at home?
Osw. No, Madam.
Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?
Osw. I know not, Lady.
Reg. Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,
To let him live. Where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o'th'enemy.
Osw. I must needs after him, Madam, with my letter.
Reg. Our troops set forth tomorrow. Stay with us.
The ways are dangerous.
Osw. I may not, Madam;
My Lady charg'd my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Some things—I know not what. I'll love thee much—
Let me unseal the letter.
Osw. Madam, I had rather—
Reg. I know your Lady does not love her husband.
I am sure of that; and at her late being here,
She gave strange œilliads and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.
Osw. I, Madam?
Reg. I speak in understanding. Y'are, I know 't.
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My Lord is dead. Edmund and I have talk'd
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for you Lady's. You may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this—
[Gives him a glove.
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Osw. Would I could meet him, Madam. I should show
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. *[Exeunt.*

ACT IV, SCENE V.—[The Country near Dover.]

[The Platform.]

Solemn Music. Enter Gloucester, with a staff, and Edgar, *wearing a kilt.*

Glou. When shall I come to th'top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now. Look how we labor.
Glou. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?
Glou. No, truly.
Edg. Why then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glou. So may it be, indeed.
Methinks thy voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.
Edg. Y'are much deceiv'd. In nothing am I chang'd
But in my garments.
Glou. Methinks y'are better spoken.
Glou. Come on, Sir. Here's the place. Stand still. How fearful

And dizzy ‘tis to cast one’s eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles. Halfway down
Hangs one that gathers sampire—dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice, and yond tall anchoring bark
Diminish’d to her cock, her cock a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,
That on th’unnumber’d idle pebble chafes
Cannot be heard so high. I’ll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

Glou. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand. You are now within a foot
Of th’extreme verge. For all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

Glou. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, ‘s another purse; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man’s taking. *[Gives him a purse.*

Edgar *takes out a jewel.*

Fairies and Gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou further off.
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare ye well, good Sir.

Glou. With all my heart.

Edg. *[Aside.]* Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.

Glou. O you mighty Gods,
This world I do renounce, and in your sights
Shake patiently my great affliction off.
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him!

Edgar *blows a raspberry.*

—Now, fellow, fare thee well.

Edg. Gone, sir, farewell.

He *falls.*

[Aside.] And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life when life itself
Yields to the theft. Had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past.—Alive or dead?
Ho, you sir! Friend, hear you? Sir, speak.—
[Aside.] Thus might he pass indeed; yet he revives.—
What are you, sir?

Glou. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg; but thou dost breathe,
Hast heavy substance, bleed'st not, speak'st, art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell.
Thy life's a miracle! Speak yet again.
Glou. But have I fall'n or no?
Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height. The shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard. Do but look up.
Glou. Alack! I have no eyes.
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Give me your arm.
Up; so. *[He helps* Gloucester *to his feet.]* How is't?
Feel you your legs? You stand.
Glou. Too well, too well. *[He sits.*
Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o'th'cliff what thing was that
Which parted from you?
Glou. A poor unfortunate beggar.
Edg. As I stood here below methought his eyes
Were two full moons. He had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea.
It was some fiend. Therefore, thou happy father
Think that the clearest Gods, who make them honors
Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.
Glou. I do remember now. Henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man. Often 'twould say
'The fiend, the fiend.' He led me to that place.
Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts.—

Enter Lear, *camouflaged with weeds.*

But who comes here?
The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.
Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining. I am the King himself.
Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!
Lear. Nature's above Art in that respect. *[Gives* Edgar *a thistle.]* There's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crowkeeper.—[*To* Gloucester.] Draw me a clothier's yard. [Gloucester *stirs.*] Look, look, a mouse. Peace, peace! [Lear *smells his own hand.*] This piece of

toasted cheese will do't. *[Gives* Gloucester *his hand and helps him to his feet.]* There's my gauntlet. I'll prove it on a giant. *[Lifting up the bandages.]* Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, bird! I'th' clout, i'th'clout.
[*Clutching his heart.*
Hewgh!—*[To* Edgar.*]* Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glou. I know that voice. *[Kneels.*

Lear. Ha! Goneril with a white beard? They flattered me like a dog, and told me I had the white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say 'ay' and 'no' to everything that I said. 'Ay' and 'no' too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once and the wind to make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to. They are not men o'their words. They told me I was everything. 'Tis a lie. I am not ague-proof.

Glou. The trick of that voice I do well remember.
Is't not the King?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king.—

Gloucester *topples over. Lear remains standing.*

[Aside.] When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life. —What was thy cause?
Adultery?
Thou shall not die. Die for adultery? No.
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets. To't! Luxury, pell-mell!
For I lack soldiers. Behold yond simp'ring dame,
Whose face between her forks presages snow;
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name.
The fitchew nor the soiled horse goes to't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though women all above.
But to the girdle do the Gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiend's. There's hell, there's darkness,
There is the sulphurous pit—burning, scalding,
Stench, consumption. *[Holds his nose.]*
Fie, fie, fie! pah, pah!—
Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary,
To sweeten my imagination.
There's money for thee.

Gives him a daisy.

Glou. O, let me kiss that hand.
Lear. Let me wipe it first. It smells of mortality.
Glou. O ruin'd piece of Nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to naught.

Kisses Lear's *hand.*

—Dost thou know me?
Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me?
No, do thy worst, blind Cupid, I'll not love.

Gloucester weeps, still holding Lear's hand.

Read thou this challenge. Mark but the penning of it.
Glou. Were all thy letters suns, I could not see.

Feels Lear's *open palm.*

Edg. *[Aside.]* I would not take this from report. It is,
And my heart breaks at it.
Lear. Read.
Glou. What, with the case of eyes?
Lear. O ho! Are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light; yet you see how this world goes.
Glou. I see it feelingly.
Lear. What, art mad! A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears. See how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear. Change places, and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou has seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?
Glou. Ay, Sir.
Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou might'st behold the great image of Authority. A dog's obey'd in office.—
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lusts to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sins with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none. I'll able 'em.
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal th'accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes,
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not.—Now, now, now, now.

Soft music. Sitting beside Gloucester.

Pull off my boots. Harder, harder. So.

Gloucester *removes* Lear's *boots*.

Edg. *[Aside.]* O! matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason in madness.
Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester;
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither.
Thou know'st the first time that we smell the air
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee. Mark.

He stands.

Glou. Alack, alack the day!
Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great this stage of fools; this' a good block.
It were a delicate stratagem to shoe
A troup of horse with felt. I'll put't in proof,
And when I have stol'n upon these sons in Law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Enter Lear's Knight, *with the* French Officer
and other French soldiers.

Lear's Knight. O, here he is. Lay hand upon him.—Sir,
Your most dear daughter—
Lear. *[To Edgar.]* No rescue?—What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of Fortune. —Use me well.
You shall have ransom.

Gives some weeds to Lear's Knight.

Let me have surgeons;
I am cut to th'brains.
Lear's Knight. You shall have anything.
Lear. No seconds? All myself?
Why this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden waterpots,
Ay, and laying autumn's dust. I will die bravely,
Like a smug bridegroom.—What! I will be jovial.
Come, come! I am a king, masters, know you that?
Lear's Knight. You are a royal one, and we obey you.
Lear. Then there's life in't. Come, and you get it, you shall get
it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

Exit running. French Officer *and his soldiers in pursuit.*

Lear's Knight. *[Aside.]* A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a King! Thou hast one daughter
Who redeems Nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.
Edg. Hail, gentle Sir!
Lear's Knight. Sir, speed you. What's your will?
Edg. Do you hear aught, Sir, of a battle toward?
Lear's Knight. Most sure and vulgar; every one hears that,

Which can distinguish sound.
Edg. But, by your favor,
How near's the other army?
Lear's Knight. Near, and on speedy foot. The main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.
Edg. I thank you, Sir. That's all.
Lear's Knight. Though that the Queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.
Edg. I thank you, Sir.

Exit Lear's Knight.

Glou. You ever-gentle Gods, take my breath from me.
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please.
Edg. Well pray you, father.
Glou. Now, good sir, what are you?
Edg. A most poor man, made tame to Fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.
Glou. Hearty thanks;
The bounty and the benison of Heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter Oswald.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes. *[Drawing his sword.]* Thou old
unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember. The sword is out
That must destroy thee.
Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to't.

Edgar *steps between them.*

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence,
Lest that th'infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.
Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.
Osw. Let go, slave, or thou di'st.
Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass. And
'chud ha' bin zwagger'd out of my life, 'twould not ha'
bin zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near
th'old man. *[Taking Gloucester's staff.]* Keep out, che
vor' ye, or ice try whither your costard or my ballow be
the harder. Chill be plain with you.
Osw. Out, dunghill! [*He thrusts his sword at* Edgar.
Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir. Come; no matter vor your foins.

They fight. Edgar *disarms* Oswald *with* Gloucester's *staff, and kills the* Steward *with his own sword.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me. Villain, take my purse.
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body,
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund Earl of Gloucester. Seek him out
Upon the British party. O, untimely death.—
Death. *[He dies.*
Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain,
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.
Glou. What, is he dead?
Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.
Let's see these pockets. The letters that he speaks of
May be my friends.— *[Goes through his pockets.*
He's dead. I am only sorry
He had no other deathsman.—Let us see.
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not.
To know our enemies' minds, we rip their hearts;
Their papers is more lawful.
[Reads.] Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off. If your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offer'd. There is nothing done if he return the conqueror; then am I the prisoner, and his bed my jail; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labor.
Your wife, so I would say—
Affectionate servant,
Goneril.
O indistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life,
And the exchange my brother!—Here, in the sands,
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers; and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd Duke. For him 'tis well
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Exit Edgar, *carrying off* Oswald's *body. Soft music within.*

Glou. The King is mad. How stiff is my vile sense
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract.
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.
Edg. Give me your hand.
Glou. No further, sir; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure

Their going hence, even as their coming hither.
Ripeness is all. Come on.
Glou. And that's true too.
Edg. Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
Edgar takes him by the hand.
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend.
[Exeunt Edgar with his father in his hand.

ACT IV, SCENE VI.—[A Tent in the French Camp.]

[The Platform.]

Soft music. Enter Cordelia, Kent, Doctor, *and* Lear's Knight.

Cor. O, thou good Kent! How shall I live and work
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.
Kent. To be acknowledg'd, Madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth,
No more nor clipp'd, but so.
Cor. Be better suited.
These weeds are memories of those worser hours.
I prithee, put them off.
Kent. Pardon, dear Madam.
Yet to be known shortens my made intent.
My boon I make it that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.
Cor. Then be't so, my good Lord.—
[To the Doctor.] How does the King?
Doct. Madam, sleeps still.
Cor. O, you kind Gods,
Cure this great breach in his abusèd nature!
Th'untuned and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father.
Doct. So please your Majesty
That we may wake the King? He hath slept long.
Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I'th'sway of your own will. Is he array'd?
Kent. Ay, Madam, in the heaviness of sleep
We put fresh garments on him.
Doct. Be by, good Madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.
Cor. Very well.

Enter Lear *in a chair carried by* Servants.

Doct. Please you, draw near.—Louder the music there.
[*Music still.*

Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips, and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made. *[Kissing Lear.*
Kent. Kind and dear Princess.
Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Did challenge pity of them. Was this a face
To be oppos'd against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross-lightning? To watch—poor *perdu*!—
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire. And wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all.—He wakes. Speak to him.
Doct. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.
Cor. How does my royal Lord? How fares your Majesty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th'grave.
Thou art a soul in bliss, but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.
Cor. Sir, do you know me?
Lear. You are a spirit, I know. Where did you die?
Cor. Still, still, far wide.
Doct. He's scarce awake. Let him alone awhile.
Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?
I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity
To see another thus. I know not what to say.
I will not swear these are my hands. Let's see—
[Pricks himself.
I feel this pinprick. Would I were assur'd
Of my condition.
Cor. *[She kneels.]* O, look upon me, Sir,
And hold your hand in benediction o'er me.

Lear *kneels.*

No, Sir, you must not kneel.
Lear. Pray do not mock me.
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more or less;
And to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you and know this man,
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is, and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not

Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me,
For as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am, I am.
Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, faith. I pray, weep not.
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong.
You have some cause; they have not.
Cor. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your own kingdom, Sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Doct. Be comforted, good Madam. The great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in. Trouble him no more
Till further settling.
Cor. Will't please your Highness walk?
Lear. You must bear with me.
Pray you now, forget and forgive. I am old and foolish.

Exeunt Lear, Cordelia, Doctor, *and* Attendants.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back, know you no reason?
Lear's Knight. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of, which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger that his personal return was most requir'd and necessary.
Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?
Lear's Knight. The Marshall of France, Monsieur La Far. Holds it true, Sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?
Kent. Most certain, Sir.
Lear's Knight. Who is conductor of his people?
Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.
Lear's Knight. They say Edgar, his banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.
Kent. Report is changeable.

Drum afar off.

'Tis time to look about.
The powers of the kingdom approach apace.
Lear's Knight. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, Sir. *[Exit.*
Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought. *[Exit.*

ACT IV, SCENE VII.—[The British Camp near Dover.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Edmund *and* Regan *from one door*,
Albany's Squire *from behind the arras.*

Edm. Know of the Duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course; he's full of alteration
And self-reproving. Bring his constant pleasure.
[Exit Albany's Squire.

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.
Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, Madam.
Reg. Now, sweet Lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you.
Tell me, but truly, but then, speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?
Edm. In honor'd love.
Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?
Edm. That thought abuses you.
Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her as far as we call hers.
Edm. No, by mine honor, Madam.
Reg. I never shall endure her! Dear my Lord,
Be not familiar with her.
Edm. Fear me not.
She and the Duke her husband!

Enter, with drum and colors, Albany, Goneril,
Albany's Squire, *and* Soldiers.

Reg. *[Aside.]* I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.
Alb. Our very loving sister, well bemet.
Sir, this I hear; the King is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigor of our state
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant. For this business,
It touches us as France invades our land,
Not bolds the King, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.
Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.
Gon. Why is this reason'd?
Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.
Alb. Let's then determine,
With th'ancient of war on our proceeding.
Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Go to Table of Contents

[Exit Edmund.

Gon. Sister, you'll go with us?
Reg. No.
Gon. 'Tis most convenient. Pray you go with us.
[She takes her by the hand.
Reg. O, ho! I know the riddle.—I will go.

As they are going out enter Edgar, *wearing a hooded cloak.*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.
Alb. I'll overtake you.—
Exeunt all but Albany *and* Edgar.
Speak.
Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
[Giving him Goneril's *letter.*
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it. Wretched thou I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!
Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.
Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.
Alb. Why, fare thee well.
I will o'erlook thy paper.

As Edgar *is leaving*, Edmund *reenters with a map. They exchange glances.*

Edm. The enemy's in view. Draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery. But your haste
Is now urged on you.
Alb. *[Taking Edmund's paper.]* We will greet the time.
[Exit.
Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love,
Each jealous of the other as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? One? Or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd
If both remain alive. To take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle, which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state

Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

[Exit. End of Act IV.

INTERMEZZO [The Yard.]

Bagpiper sounds a retreat. Enter with Drum and Colours, Cordelia *with her father in her hand, and Soldiers, their heads and faces bloody and besmeared with mud and dirt. Exeunt.*

ACT V, SCENE I.—[The British Camp near Dover.]

[The Platform.]

Enter Edmund, *with* Lear *and* Cordelia *holding hands, guarded by two Soldiers,* Captain.

Edm. Some officers take them away. Good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.
Cor. *[To Lear.]* We are not the first
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed King, I am cast down.
Myself could else outfrown false Fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?
Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison.
We two alone will sing like birds i'th'cage.
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At guilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too—
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out—
And take upon's the mystery of things
As if we were God's spies. And we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by th'moon.

Edm. Take them away.
Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The Gods themselves throw incense.
She leans on him weeping.
Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes.
The good years shall devour them, flesh and fell
Ere they shall make us weep. We'll see 'em starv'd first.
Come. *[Exeunt* Lear *and* Cordelia*, guarded.*
Edm. Come hither, captain. Hark.
Take thou this note. *[Giving him a paper.*
Go follow them to prison.
One step I have advanc'd thee. If thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes. Know thou this, that men
Are as the time is. To be tender-minded
Does not become a sword. Thy great employment
Will not bear question. Either say thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.
Capt. I'll do't, my Lord.
Edm. About it, and write happy when th'hast done.
Mark, —I say, instantly, and carry it so
As I have set it down.
Capt. I cannot draw a cart nor eat dried oats.
If it be man's work I'll do it. *[Exit.*

Enter, with Drum and Colors, Enter Albany, Goneril, Regan, Albany's Squire, and Soldiers.

Alb. *[To Edmund.]* Sir, you have show'd today your valiant strain,
And Fortune led you well. You have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife.
I do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.
Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable King
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age had charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the Queen,
My reason all the same, and they are ready
Tomorrow, or at further space, t'appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed. The friend hath lost his friend,
And the best quarrels in the heat are curs'd

By those that feel their sharpness.
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.
Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.
Reg. That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers,
Bore the commission of my place and person,
The which immediacy may well stand up
And call itself your brother.
Gon. Not so hot.
In his own grace he doth exalt himself
More than in your addition.
Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.
Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you.
Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.
Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.
Reg. Lady, I am not well, else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach.—*[To Edmund.]* General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony.
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine.
Witness the world that I create thee here
My lord and master.
Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?
Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Edm. Nor in thine, Lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. *[To Edmund.]* Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.
Alb. Stay yet. Hear reason. —Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason, and, in thy attaint,
This gilded serpent. *[Pointing to Goneril.*
—For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife.
'Tis she is subcontracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your banes.
If you will marry, make your loves to me.
My lady is bespoke.
Gon. An interlude!
Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloucester. Let the trumpet sound.
If none appear to prove upon thy person
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge.
[Throws his gauntlet down at Edmund's feet.
I'll make it on thy heart

Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Regan falls down in a swoon.

Reg. Sick, O, sick!
Gon. *[Aside.]* If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.
Edm. There's my exchange.

Takes up Albany*'s gauntlet.*

What in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
Call by the trumpet. He that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
My truth and honor firmly.
Alb. —A herald, ho!—
Edm. A herald, ho! A herald!
Alb. Trust to thy single virtue, for thy soldiers
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.
Reg. My sickness grows upon me.
Alb. She is not well. Convey her to my tent.—

[Exit Regan, led.

Enter a Herald Trumpeter.

[To Herald Trumpeter.] Come hither, herald.—
[To Squire.] Let the trumpet sound,
And read out this. *[Hands his Squire a paper.*
Squire. Sound, trumpet!

Trumpet sounds.

[Squire reads.] If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defense.

Squire. Sound!

First trumpet.

Squire. Again!

Second trumpet.

Squire. Again!

Third trumpet.

[Trumpet answers within.

Enter Edgar *in armor with his beaver shut.*

Alb. *[To Squire.]* Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o'th'trumpet.
Squire. What are you?

Your name, your quality, and why you answer
This present summons?
Edg. Know, my name is lost,
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn, and canker-bit;
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.
Alb. Which is that adversary?
Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloucester?
Edm. Himself. What say'st thou to him?
Edg. Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice. Here is mine.—
[He draws his sword.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honors,
My oath, and my profession. I protest,
Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valor, and thy heart, thou art a traitor,
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father,
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince,
And from th'extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust below thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou 'No,'
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.
Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name,
But since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn.
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head,
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart,
Which, for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. *[He draws his sword.*
—Trumpets, speak!

Alarum, drums and trumpets. They fight. Edmund *falls.*

Gon. [*To Edgar.*] Save him, save him.

She rushes to Edmund's *side.*

—This is practice, Gloucester.
By th'law of war, thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite. Thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

She kisses Edmund *vehemently.*

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stopple it.—

[To Edmund.] Hold, sir!—
[*To* Goneril.] Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil. *[He gives Goneril her letter.*
No tearing, lady. *[She tears it.]* I perceive you know it.
Gon. Say if I do. The laws are mine, not thine.
Who can arraign me for't?
Alb. Most monstrous! O!
Know'st thou this paper?
Gon. Ask me not what I know. *[Exit.*
Alb. [*To Squire.*] Go after her. She's desperate. Govern her.
[Exit Albany's *Squire.*
Edm. *[To Edgar.]* What you have charg'd me with, that have I done,
And more, much more. The time will bring it out.
'Tis past, and so am I. But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.
Edg. Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more th'hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
[He puts up his beaver.
The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.
Edm. Th'hast spoken right, 'tis true.
The wheel is come full circle. I am here.
Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness. I must embrace thee.
Let sorrow split my heart if ever I
Did hate thee or thy father.
Edg. Worthy prince, I know't.
Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
Edg. By nursing them, my Lord. List a brief tale,
And when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst.
The bloody proclamation to escape
That follow'd me so near—O, our lives' sweetness,
That we the pain of death would hourly die
Rather than die at once—taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags, t'assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd, and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost; became his guide;
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never—O fault—reveal'd myself unto him
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd.
Not sure, though hoping of this good success,

I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage. But his flaw'd heart,
Alack, too weak the conflict to support,
'Twix two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.
Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall perchance do good. But speak you on.
You look as you had something more to say.
Alb. If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.
Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamor came there in a man
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he'd burst heaven; threw him on my father,
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear receiv'd, which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack. Twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.
Alb. But who was this?
Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter Albany's Squire, *with a bloody knife.*

Squire. Help, help, O, help!
Edg. What kind of help?
Alb. Speak, man.
Edg. What means this bloody knife?
Squire. 'Tis hot, it smokes.
It came even from the heart of—O, she's dead.
Alb. Who dead? Speak, man.
Squire. Your lady, sir, your lady; and her sister
By her is poison'd. She confesses it.
Edm. I was contracted to them both. All three
Now marry in an instant.
Edg. Here comes Kent.

Enter Kent.

Produce the bodies, be they alive or dead.
[To Squire*]* This judgment of the heavens, that makes us
tremble,

Touches us not with pity.

Exit Squire.

—O, is this he?

The time will not allow the compliment

Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come

To bid my King and master aye good night.

Is he not here?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot!—

Speak, Edmund. Where's the King, and where's Cordelia?

The bodies of Goneril *and* Regan *are brought in, by* Albany's Squire *and others.*

See'st thou this object, Kent?

Kent. Alack, why thus?

Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd.

The one the other poison'd for my sake,

And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so.—Cover their faces.

Edm. I pant for life. Some good I mean to do

Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,

Be brief in it, to th'castle, for my writ

Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia.

Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run! O, run!

Edg. To who, my Lord?—*[To Edmund.]* Who has the office? Send

Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on. Take my sword.

Give it the captain.

Edg. Haste thee, for thy life.

[Exit Albany's Squire.

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me

To hang Cordelia in the prison, and

To lay the blame upon her own despair,

That she fordid herself.

Alb. The Gods defend her!

Bear him hence awhile.—

Edmund is borne off.

You lords and noble friends, know our intent.

What comfort to this great decay may come

Shall be appli'd. For us, we will resign,

During the life of his old Majesty,

To him our absolute power.—

[To Edgar *and* Kent.*]* You, to your rights,

With boot and such addition as your honors

Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste

The wages of their virtue, and all foes

The cup of their deservings.

Re-enter Lear, *with* Cordelia *dead in his arms.*

— O, see, see!

Lear. Howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones!
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That Heaven's vault should crack. She's gone forever.
I know when one is dead and when one lives.
She's dead as earth. [*He lays her down*.
—Lend me a looking glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.—

Kent. Is this the promis'd end?
Edg. Or image of that horror?
Alb. Fall and cease!

Lear takes a feather from his bonnet.

Lear. This feather stirs. She lives! If it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.
Kent. [*Kneeling*.] O, my good master—
Lear. Prithee, away.
Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.
Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her. Now she's gone forever.—
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha!
What is't thou say'st?—Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman.
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.
Off. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.
Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion,
I would have made them skip. I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me.—
[To Kent.] Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o'th'best, I'll tell you straight.
Kent. If Fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.
Lear. This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same.
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that.
He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good Lord. I am the very man—
Lear. I'll see that straight.
Kent. That from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
Lear. You are welcome hither.
Kent. Nor no man else. All's cheerless, dark, and deadly.

Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Alb. *[To Edgar.]* He knows not what he says, and vain is it
That we present us to him.

Edg. Very bootless.

Reenter Albany's Squire.

Squire. Edmund is dead, my Lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here.

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd. No, no, no life.
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never.—
[To Edgar.] Pray you, undo this button. Thank you, Sir.
Do you see this. Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there! *[Clutching his heart.*
—O, o, o, o, o. *[He dies.*

Edg. He faints! My Lord, my Lord.

Kent. Break, heart, I prithee, break.

Edg. Look up, my Lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass. He hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone, indeed.

Kent. The wonder is he hath endur'd so long.
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business
Is general woe.—

The bodies of Goneril *and* Regan *are taken out.*

[To Kent and Edgar.] Friends of my soul, you twain
Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

Kent. *[To Albany.]* I have a journey, Sir, shortly to go.
My master calls me. I must not say no.

Edg. *[To Albany.]* The weight of this sad time we must obey.
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.—

Drums. The bodies of Lear *and* Cordelia *are placed on a bier.*

[To Albany's Squire.] The oldest hath borne most. We
that are young
Shall never see so much nor live so long.

The bodies of Lear *and* Cordelia *are borne off by* Edgar, Kent, Albany *and* Albany's Squire.

Exeunt, with a dead march.

FINIS

Notes

Cover page illustration: Mambrino's Helmet. Verso: Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, and Dorothea at the Inn(?), c. 1920s, Edmund Joseph Sullivan, The Morgan Library& Museum. 1986.1704. Bequest of Gordon N. Ray, 1987. Photographic credit: The Morgan Library & Museum, New York. Cover design by Pat Lee.

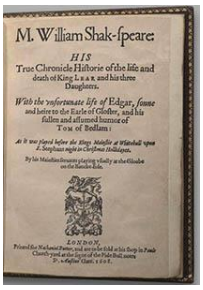

M. William Shak-ſpeare:
HIS
True Chronicle Hiſtorie of the life and death of King L. a. r. and his three Daughters.
With the vnfortunate life of Edgar, ſonne and heire to the Earle of Gloſter, and his ſullen and aſſumed humor of Tom of Bedlam:
As it was played before the Kings Maieſtie at Whitehall upon S. Stephans night in Chriſtmas Holidayes.
By his Maieſties ſeruants playing vſually at the Gloabe on the Bancvke-Side.
LONDON,

Figure 8. Title page, First Quarto, 1608. InternetShakespeareEditions.

King Lear] "M. William Shakespeare: *H I S* True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters. *With the vnfortunate life of* Edgar, *son* and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his sullen and assumed humor of TOM of Bedlam: *As it was played before the King's Maiestie at Whitehall upon* S.Stephans *night in Christmas Holidays.* By his Maiesties servants playing vsually at the Gloabe on the Bancvke-Side. *LONDON*, Printed for *Nathaniel Butter*, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull near St. *Austins* Gate. 1608." [See Figure 8, First Quarto, 1608.]

> "Although this Quarto was dated 1608, we know that the Court performance was in 1606, and not 1607 because the entry in the Stationers' Register on 26 November 1607 tells us . . . 'Kynge Lear as yt was played before the kings maiestie at Whitehall upon St. Stephans nights at Christmas Last by his maiiesties servants playng usually at the globe on the Banksyde.'" (*King Lear*: The Arden Edition of The Works of Shakespeare by Muir, Kenneth, p. xvii).

Figure 9. Aernout van Buchel's copy of Johan de Witt's drawing of the Swan playhouse, c.1596, British Museum.

ACT I, SCENE I] *Actus Primus. Scœna Prima* (F, 1). Quarto 1 (1608) and Quarto 2 (1619) do not include formal act or scene divisions. Links to these sources (such as Q, 1) are to Old-spelling transcriptions published online at the Internet Shakespeare Editions. The ISE is supported by the University of Virginia, Friends of the ISE, and The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and freely available to everybody.

S.D. *King Lear's Palace.*] Rowe, Not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. "The rear stage (or 'Study') and the out stage (or 'Platform')", (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Trumpets Sound***] Ed. Not in Q, F. At the Globe Theatre, it has been established that trumpets were sounded to announce to the audience that the play was starting. [29] In this version of *King Lear*, aural effects are used to signal the beginning of a scene or its ending.

S.D. ***Enter Kent, Gloucester and Edmund***] (F, 2). *Enter Kent, Gloster and Bastard.* (Q, 3-4). The group enters through the central opening of the *frons*, now normally called the "discovery space." Andrew Gurr's analysis of *The Maid's Tragedy* and *Hamlet*'s "Mousetrap" scene suggests the royal throne was positioned at upstage center facing toward the yard, with authority figures entering through the central opening behind it. [501] In *King Lear*, this so-called "discovery space" is used only once to "discover" a scene. [See note III,vi,14., S.D. "*Lear draws open the curtains.*"] This indicates that the center opening was primarily used as an entranceway. Unlike the valva regia in Roman theater, [502] the Globe's central opening acted less like a permanent architectural feature and more like the thrust space of a traditional trestle stage, engineered for dynamic, high-impact entrances. [See note I,i,32,S.D., *"Enter."*] Like the trestle stage in *commedia dell'arte*, the center opening was normally covered by a set of hangings (often called an arras), which functioned as a curtain that could be drawn or traversed. [503] [503] They were operated within the action of the play, most plausibly by actors themselves. [504]

Figure 9a. William Boonen, sketch of a play in the market of Leuven (1594).

S.D. ***Kent***] The Earl of Kent first appears stylishly dressed in fashions from 1606, and is meticulously groomed. His beard and mustache are carefully trimmed, and his hair is curled. Among his accessories is a costly rapier, an essential status symbol for gentlemen to wear with civilian clothes. He speaks "the Queen's English" signaling to the audience that he is highly educated and upper-class. From an early Tudor viewpoint, his court dress and appearance may have been read as androgynous or effeminate, like Henry Wriothesley's, Shakespeare's best-known patron, to whom he dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece.* [See note I,iv,S.D, *"disguised."*]

Figure 11. Pantalone wearing spectacles (left) and Brighella (right) in a Flemish painting by Hieronymus Francken of I Gelosi theatre company, c. 1590.

S.D. ***wearing spectacles***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See Figure 11.] Compare Robert Davenport, *A New Tricke to Cheat the Divell* (1625), III,i, "*Enter the Divell like a Gentleman, with glasse eyes.*" The Earl of Gloucester has extremely poor vision, likely due to cataracts. [See note III,iv,99, *"web and the pin."*] The first thing the audience notices about him are his unnatural-looking

bow spectacles. [See note I,ii,33, *"If it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles"* (F, 369-70).] His costume immediately evokes the stock character of Pantalone in *commedia dell'arte*, *"With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side"* (F, 1138). It is only by means of his spectacles that he is able to "see". His eyesight is as poor as a *"Mouse"* (F, 2536), which are generally considered hyperopic. [634] Due to exigencies of the plot, he needs to wear them all of the time, even outdoors in the storm: *"This is the foul Flibbertigibbet...he gives the web and the pin, squinies the eye."* [See note III,iv,98, *"Flibbertigibbet"*] Ironically, Cornwall stomps on them before putting out the first of his eyes. *"Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot."* (F, 369-70). [See note III,vii,65,S.D., *"Stomps on "Gloucester's spectacles."*] The tragic flaw of the character is his metaphorical "blindness" symbolized by the spectacles he is wearing.

In addition to his spectacles and pouch, he wears a striking *intaglio* or signet ring. Jeweled family signet rings were frequently believed to possess talismanic and protective properties in 15th and 16th-century England. While their primary legal purpose was to act as an authenticating seal for documents, the material makeup of Renaissance and late-medieval jewelry was deeply intertwined with magical thinking, medicine, and spiritual warfare. Gloucester fidgets with it with whenever he senses the presence of evil. Ironically, his last act before attempting suicide is to give it to Edgar. [See note IV,v,29.S.D., *"Edgar takes out a jewel."*] There is a fundamental difference between a father's giving his son his signet ring and his giving him a jeweled pendant or brooch—such as the phoenix jewel Queen Elizabeth I wears in the "Phoenix" portrait. He is unknowingly passing on his bloodline, his history, and his honor to Edgar. Passing on a pendant is simply passing on an expensive stone.

What is important about this deftly written scene is its introduction to the theme of adultery. [See note IV,v,112, *"Adultery."*] Gloucester boasts informally about it as though it was a pleasure sport without any consequences. In IV,v, Lear implicitly recognizes Gloucester's blinding as a punishment for adultery, and formally acquits him by his power as King. [See note IV,v,113. *"Die for adultery?"*] Gloucester's sexual promiscuity is the reference in III,iv,113, when Edgar invokes *"Swithold"* (F, 1900), i.e., St. Vitalis of Assisi, the patron saint of genital disease, upon his father's entrance. In V,i, he explicitly states "*The Gods are iust, and of our pleasant vices / Make instruments to plague vs: / The darke and vitious place where thee he got, / Cost him his eyes."* (F, 3131-34).

S.D. ***pouch on side***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See IV,i, *"Here take this purse"* (F, 2259) and IV,v *"Heere Friend's another purse"* (F, 2465). From the medieval period up until the late 1700s, lords and men of high social status wore purses, both for practical and symbolic purposes. They were often luxurious and richly decorated, serving as a signifier of wealth and status. For example, Sir Thomas Gresham, the founder of the Royal Exchange and financial agent to the Crown in the Elizabethan period, wore a velvet and gold purse that highlighted his affluence and business acumen.

S.D. ***following***] Ed. Not in Q, F. "Widely used (roughly 300 examples) particularly for entrances when a figure *follows* another onto the stage. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642* (p. 95).

S.D. **Edmund**] Although there is no external documentation to tell us which of the Principall

Actors in Shakespeare's company played the parts of Edmund and Edgar, based on the characters of Iago and Cassio in *Othello*, written in 1604, they were most likely performed by John Lowin and Henry Condell respectively. Both were 30 years of age in 1606 when *Lear* was performed, and routinely typecast.

S.D. ***reading a map***] Ed. Not in Q, F. It is a matter of utmost consequence how Lear's kingdom is divided on the map as well as the courtier appointed to present it. The play begins with Kent and Gloucester discussing the *equal* portions marked for Albany and Cornwall. Later on, Lear explicitly states that he will give the *"largest bounty"* (F, 57) to the daughter that proves herself most deserving of it. But what bounty is that? Only two are drawn on the map. Certainly, he has not agreed to give the greater part of England to one of Cordelia's French suitors as a dowry. Shakespeare's audience would still have remembered The War of the Breton Succession (also known as "The War of the Two Jeannes") as an antecedent to the Hundred Years' War. How the portions of the kingdom are divided plays no further part in the plot. Kent merely insinuates in III,i that there could be *"something deeper"* (F, 1637) in the rift between the dukes than their *"snuffes and packings"* (F, 1635), i.e., a brewing war over succession. Also, Goneril takes her exit at the end of the play asserting her rightful sovereignty over her husband by primogeniture: *"the Lawes are mine not thine, / Who can araigne me for't?"* (F, 3116-17). What is important in this unit are the conclusions the audience draws from there being no discussion of Cordelia's dowry; no reference to the king's abdication or the royal succession. By deliberately refusing to set aside any lands for Cordelia, the audience can infer that Lear may have unconsciously never intended to fulfill the dowry arrangements with France and Burgundy, or to abdicate the throne. [See note I,i,35., *"darker purpose."*]

There are only two instances of a map being used as a prop cited in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642* (p.140): *2 Tamburlaine,* V,iii,127, *"One brings a Map."* Also, *Anything for a Quiet Life* by John Webster and Thomas Middleton, IV,i, *"[KNAVESBEE shows them a map.*] 'Look you, sir: here is Clangibbon, a fruitful country and well-wooded.'" In both instances, the map is presented by a single person, and can be presumed to have been rolled as in Figure 13. In my restoration, Edmund has been appointed map-bearer, and is studying it thoughtfully as he enters. Lear points to him when he says, *"Giue me the Map there,"* (F, 42). The play begins with Kent telling Edmund that he thought the king favored the Duke of Albany over Cornwall in order to invite his response. However, his attempt at connection is derailed by his ancient father's jumping into the conversation. [See note I,i,S.D. *To Edmund*.]

Figure 12. This 25" x 18" color map from Ziereis Facsimilies was a New Year's gift from the Archdeacon of Rochester to King Henry VIII, and hung in Hampton Court Palace, the King's favorite residence.

When I contacted A.L. Rowse about the appropriateness of Edmund's serving as an attendant,

he graciously replied that "there would be nothing improper let alone degrading in exhibiting a map at court. The most famous one of all England was Saxton's, a large affair, of which the great Lord Burghley was instigator and patron. You could make quite a thing of it—if it didn't get in the way of the ladies dresses ! or the action." Dr. Rowse is probably referring to the colored 142.5 x 105.0 cm (56.1 by 41.3 inches) wall map entitled "The Travellers Guide being the best Mapp of the Kingdom of England and Principality of Wales." For practical reasons, it is more likely that the map presented to Lear is similar in appearance to the parchment map of the British Isles measuring 64 x 46 cm (25 x 18 inches), presented to Henry VIII as a New Year's gift for the year 1537; that is, a colored map large enough for the audience to see how insignificant the lands granted to Albany and Cornwall are compared to the territory controlled by the King. The map uses geography as a metaphor for power, contrasting Lear's large kingdom with the tiny lands granted to its dependents. In *King Lear*, size matters. [Figure 12.]

Figure 13. Portrait of the engineer Luca Martini, Bronzino Agnolo, 1555, Palazzo Pitti Florence Italy.

Nicola Beech in the Maps and Manuscripts Reference Team at The British Library, writes in a personal communication, "I would think that if the map was large or fairly large then the maps would have been rolled so they could be easily carried and would probably been stored as rolls as you might see today in the Parliamentary Archives. If the map was smaller as the Saxton maps were when produced singly, they could have been kept flat or in a portfolio. [Figure 14.] I don't think we really know. Lord Burghley we know used and annotated the single maps produced by Saxton as they were produced before they were bound into volumes."

Figure 14. Map of England and Wales by Christopher Saxton, 1579. 41.3 x 53.8 cm.

Edmunds's role in the first scene is a crucial element in the plot. His ambitions are sparked by the sexually ambivalent Earl of Kent's interest in his handsome appearance, followed by the grossly inappropriate behavior of his father—which the former reacts to with distaste. His plan is cemented when he encounters Goneril and Regan (and they him) in his role as map bearer. A born seducer, he sees right away, as does the audience, that the two are sexually attracted to them. He recognizes their feelings of rejection by their father from his own experience. The three "villains" share a common bond of not being loved equally. The causality of events leads him take bold steps in the next scene to undo his brother and his father. In *Aspects of the Novel*, E. M. Forster argues that instead of merely revealing random events that occur within a text

(as "story" does), plot emphasizes *causality* between these events. "We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. 'The king died and then the queen died,' is a story. 'The king died, and then the queen died of grief' is a plot. The time-sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it."

2. S.D. ***Gloucester steps between Kent and Edmund***] Ed. not in Q, F. Cf., *"Let Fraude make as though he would strike him, but let Dissimulation step betwene them"* (Robert Wilson, *Three Ladies of London*, A.iii). The proxemics of the actors (together with other nonverbal forms of communication) must always be considered when interpreting the style and meaning of the text. Gloucester's unexpected intrusion into Kent's conversation with Edmund is *lasso* one might expect of Pantalone, who is often depicted as the father to one of the *innamorati* (the lovers), driven to keep his child and their respective lover apart. It is a bit of comic business that draws attention to the stigma of Edmund's illegitimacy. Although Gloucester states that he loves his bastard son in equal measure with Edgar, his body language suggests otherwise. A few lines later, Edmund overhears him telling Kent, *"He hath bin out nine yeares, and away he shall again"* (F, 35-6). Concern for social status is a key characteristic of Pantaloon.

S.D. ***To Edmund***] Ed. Not in Q, F. A passive reader might assume that Kent is talking to Gloucester, but it is Edmund that he wishes to engage in conversation. Edmund is intently studying the map, and Kent wants to "break the ice." Gloucester does not give his son an opportunity to answer before comically eclipsing Kent's vision of him.

1. **affected**] favored

3-4. **division of the kingdom**] The casual tone of Kent's and Gloucester's conversation signals to the audience that there is nothing of any political consequence about the dowries ("maritagium") Lear has promised Goneril and Regan. It was a common and deliberate practice in medieval Europe for monarchs to grant appanages to younger children to prevent violent succession crises. [30] By providing younger children with power and income, kings reduced the risk of rebellion over inheritance under primogeniture while aiming to prevent the permanent splintering of the kingdom. [387] Kent is shocked when Lear relinquishes his crown and divides his kingdom. [See note I,i,149., *"Reserve thy state."*]

5. **equalities are so weigh'd**] that the most careful scrutiny of the two shares could not deduce either of the dukes to prefer his fellow's portion to his own. In Shakespeare's day, substantial advancements were made in the fields of cartography and surveying. The important idea being expressed is that the dukes' territories were drafted using the most advanced *scientific knowledge* of mathematics and geometry. [See Figure 15.]

Figure 15. Allegory and personification of Geometry teaching two scholars how to measure the earth in an engraving by C. Cort, 1565, after F. Floris, c. 1557.

5. **curiosity**] exactest scrutiny

6. **moiety**] The *OED* defines moiety as a legal or quasi-legal term for one of two equal parts. Cf.

1592 T. Kyd *Spanish Trag*. ii. sig. D "She is daughter and halfe heire, Vnto our brother heere Don Ciprian, And shall enioy the moitie of his land." What the audience can observe about these "moieties" from their color is not their equality but their *inequality*; how small they are in relation to rest of the king's vast domain.

7. **Is not this your son**] Edmund is making his debut at court. He has never been formally introduced to the Earl of Kent, whose physical placement by the king is a visible signifier of his rank, royal favour, and political importance.

8. **breeding**] upbringing. Cf. I,i,96.
9. **braz'd**] hardened, literally plated with brass
11. **conceive**] Kent uses the word in the sense of 'understand;' Gloucester puns on its sexual meaning in his next speech. Since readers can't see Kent's reaction to Gloucester's locker room talk when they read *Lear* in a book, it must be noted that the former expresses no carnal interest in women at any time during the play, and is presumed to be a childless bachelor. The one time he mentions sex is when he commends himself to Lear for not sucking cock. [See note I,iv,16, *"eat no fish."*] Kent is at best indifferent to the sexual exploits of an old adulterer, and likely put off by his uncouthness. His single motive for joining Gloucester was to be introduced to Edmund. From his nonverbal cues, we see that he is showing more than good manners towards the earl's handsome son. At the very least his behavior can be read as genuine personal interest, and possibly flirtation, rather than simply courteous social conduct. Edmund is encouraged by his reaction, and the influential earl's evident disapproval of his father when the latter steps in between them. Had either Kent or Gloucester known of Lear's *"darker purpose"* (F, 41), they would not be engaging in a frivolous conversation about dowries and cartography.
12. **mother**] "Edgar hears his mother and the circumstances of his birth spoken of with the most degrading and licentious levity" (Raysor) qu. Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 4. See V,i,239 note.
16. **issue**] result
18. **But I have a son**] Kent must be personally acquainted with Edgar, as Regan is. She asks Gloucester in II,i: *"What, did my Fathers Godsonne seeke your life? / He whom my Father nam'd, your Edgar?* (F, 1030-31). The reason for Edgar's absence in Act I scene i is that his part is doubled with the King of France.
22. **whoreson**] bastard
31. **out**] Out of the country. "This circumstance serves to account for Edmund's being unacquainted with so distinguished a man at Lear's court as Kent; indeed, for their mutual ignorance of each other" (Eccles) qu. Furness, p. 6.
32. S.D. ***Sennet***] F, 37. *Sound a Sennet.* (Q, 37). "The most exclusive, least used signal in military and courtly contexts", a sennet is similar to a flourish, but more standardized (less improvisatory) and longer in duration (Wilson and Calore, p. 376). According to Naylor, "sennet" occurs only 9 times in 8 plays – 3 to designate the entrance/exit of a Parliament, 3 for a royal procession, and 3 to signal the presence of royalty (p. 172)." [373] [See note I,i,188. S.D. *"Flourish."* See also III,vii,S.D. *"Sennet."*]
32. ***Enter***] Frances Yates (1969) first argued that James Burbage's round theatres (The Theatre,

1576, and The Globe, 1599) conform closely to Vitruvius's construction principles of Roman theatre, [500] particularly the acoustical ideal. [498] She connected this to John Dee's library (which contained Vitruvius in Latin/French) and suggested "popular Vitruvianism" influenced theatre building. [499] In Roman (and Greek) theatre, the side entrances and specific doors on the scaenae frons (the permanent background wall of the stage) were strictly coded to signify distance and destination. The door on the audience's left (stage right) signified the farther distance (such as a foreign country, a distant town, or the harbor), while the door on the audience's right (stage left) signified the near distance (such as inside the palace, the immediate city or a neighboring house). This convention allowed the audience to instantly understand where an actor was arriving from geographically.[409] In ancient times, entrances were not based on an abstract concept of "strength" tied to left/right orientation as in modern Western proscenium theatre. They were organized by hierarchical function and social status—the central door was for royalty/main characters, while side doors (Portae Hospitales) served secondary characters. I theorize that while Burbage retained Vitruvian stage conventions to indicate a character's geographic origin, he repurposed the classical center opening. Drawing on the conventions of trestle stages used by medieval troupes and Renaissance *Commedia dell'arte* players, he established the central rear opening as the primary entrance for actors.

32. ***King Lear etc.***] Ed. *King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Gonerill, Regan, Cordelia, and attendants*. (F, 37-8). *Enter one bearing a Coronet, then Lear, then the Dukes of Albany, and Cornwell, next Gonorill, Regan, Cordelia, with followers*. (Q, 37-38.2). The large group enters through the large central opening in the tiring house, corresponding in Roman theatre to the *valva regia* ('royal door'). [See note I,i,S.D., *"Enter Kent, Gloucester and Edmund."*]

Figure 16. Detail from The Westminster Portrait of Richard II of England (1390s), artist unknown.

32. ***crowned***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Richard III*, IV,ii, *"Enter Richard crownd"* (Q1, 2588). "Henslowe's inventory includes 'three imperial crowns; one plain crown." (*Diary*, App. 2, 89.) (**crown, crowned**, *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* p. 60). It can be inferred from the dialogue, that the crown was "golden" (F, 678)—like the medieval St Edward's Crown melted down in 1649 by the Rump Parliament following the execution of Charles I. It is believed to have been made of gold wire with some stones and two small bells, as in Figure 16. The Crown was a prominent symbol of the English monarchy during Shakespeare's lifetime.

Figure 17. Portrait of Henry VIII after Hans Holbein the Younger, Original c. 1536. "His large codpiece and heavily padded shoulders further enhance the aggressive masculinity of the image.

32. S.D. ***wearing a king-size codpiece***] Ed. Not in Q, F. There is no direct evidence that Shakespeare intended Lear to be dressed in grossly outmoded Tudor period clothes with a codpiece *"as massie as [Hercules'] club"* (*Much Ado About Nothing*, F, 1461-63). Any reconstruction must consequently remain inferential, drawing primarily on the following contextual and circumstantial evidence:

1. The play's metatheatrical form and bawdy, ironic style;
2. The phallocentric mindset of the character;
3. The play's central and complex theme of masculinity;
4. The profound philosophical influence of Renaissance Neoplatonism on Shakespeare's plays and sonnets [31];
5. The certain offense the costume would have given English Puritans [32];
6. References to a codpiece in the spoken dialogue. [See note III,ii,40., *"grace and a codpiece"*]

Figure 19. Tudor Youth in Red. The Royal Collection: Portrait of a Man in Red - German/Netherlandish School, 16th century (artist) Creation Date: c. 1530-50.

Assuming the play follows the Elizabethan and Jacobean custom of using contemporary dress, [33] mannerist male attire in the Tudor court functioned as a political instrument of hegemony. Under Henry VIII, sartorial choices deliberately constructed an iconography of absolute power and patriarchal virility through architectural silhouettes and accentuated physical traits. [563] Male fashion was designed to project absolute virility, power, and military might through broad shoulders, a narrow waist, and the iconic, padded codpiece. [See Figure 17.] The evolution from Tudor to early Stuart fashion represents a striking transformation in royal style. The vibrant, strictly regulated opulence of the Tudor era yielded to a sober, minimalist grandeur—a look heavily influenced by the Spanish court styles originally introduced by Mary I. This stylistic shift is perfectly captured in the 1604 painting of the Somerset House Conference, where the delegates are assembled in austere black attire. Lear would have stood out like a sore thumb among them.

Figure 22a. The Somerset House Conference, 1604, The National Portrait Gallery

The interplay between imagination and reality serves as a central theme in *King Lear* rooted deeply in Neoplatonic philosophy. Lear's outdated costume, much like Don Quixote's, [671] is his delusion made visible. It lays bare the sharp divide between his imagination and the real world. He has frozen himself in time like Miss Havisham or "Baby Jane" Hudson. [See Video 2.] He does not see himself as an octogenarian nearing the end of his life, but a teenage potentate who has yet to start shaving: "*They flatter'd me like a Dogge, and told mee I had the white hayres in my Beard, ere the blacke ones were there."* (F, 2543-45). Shakespeare offers perhaps his most famous exploration of the friction between illusion and reality in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (III,i, 946). Under the influence of Oberon's love potion, Queen Titania awakens to fall in love with the weaver Nick Bottom, whose head has been magically transformed into that of ass's. In a nod to Bottom's donkey ears, Lear wears a garishly oversized codpiece that serves as an equally absurd emblem of his own asininity. He does not come across as the imposing, powerful king he imagines himself to be, but a self-deluded, impotent old fool blinded by masculine vanity—a man who "thinks with his dick". It underscores the performative nature of his masculinity and his self-dramatizing nostalgia. The costume forces the audience to reflect on how masculine roles are constructed, and what constitutes "authority." The effect is "metatheatrical," like Pentheus' costume as a Maenad in Euripides' *The Bacchae*.

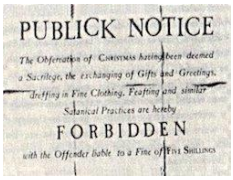
Video 2. Bette Davis sings "I've Written A Letter To Daddy" in Robert Aldrich's *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?*

Lear's "strange" costume is a visual spoiler for his emotional journey. Instead of a traditional tragedy where a great person falls from high to low, this story follows a fool who grows wise. Because Richard Burbage originally played both Lear and Coriolanus, Shakespeare's audience likely recognized an extratextual parallel [672] between two characters who rigidly define manhood by martial invincibility, emotional detachment, and the total suppression of vulnerability. This is crucial in understanding Lear's actions in III,iv, and IV,v as defensive responses where he uses philosophical intellectualization to evade emotions he deems "womanly" and threatening to his masculine identity.

If Shakespeare's original conception of Lear was to present him wearing an outmoded, lurid costume with a gargantuan codpiece, it certainly would have incited a moral panic among the court's Puritan onlookers. Modest clothing was absolutely central to Puritanism, serving as a visible manifestation of their core theological and moral beliefs. [36] In the early years of James'

reign, the Puritans were not yet the dominant political force they were to become. Their influence peaked during the period leading up to and during the English Civil War. Even so, in 1605 they were a force to be reckoned with, as demonstrated by the significant role they played in The Millenary Petition (1603) and The Hampton Court Conference (1604). [See Figure 22a.] The Puritans allied with Parliament against the Church of England's bishops in the 1st Parliament of King James I which set the stage for escalating conflicts over religious and political authority between the Crown, Parliament, and the Puritans themselves. It was interrupted by The Gunpowder Plot (1605) which the Puritans exploited to promote their own anti-Catholic agenda.

Jumping ahead 40 years, when the Puritans cemented their dominance in Parliament after the victory at the Battle of Naseby in June 1645, they passed the "Ordinance for Abolishing of Festivals" (1647). The Ordinance banned Christmas and other celebrations including Easter, Whitsun, Beltane, and May Day. The ban was hugely unpopular, as recorded in the folk ballad, "The World Turned Upside Down" (sung to the tune of "When the King enjoys his own again"). [See Video 3.] In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Puritans also outlawed public celebrations of Christmas in 1659, making it a punishable offense. [673]



Video 3. "The World Turned Upside Down," English Folk Ballad.

Coincidentally, the Act to Restrain Abuses of Players was passed a few months after the scandal caused by Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness*, an extravagant work with sets and costumes designed by Inigo Jones that was commissioned by Anne of Denmark for the Christmas/winter holiday festivities (specifically performed on Twelfth Night, 6 January 1605) at the Banqueting House of Whitehall Palace. [678] We know that Puritans strongly objected to the lavishness of James I's Christmas festivities. During the early part of his reign, however, their resistance was expressed chiefly in theological literature and scathing sermons rather than in direct political action. [265] Their main objection was the merriment associated with Christmas, such as feasting, drinking, dancing and mummery. For example, "Philip Stubbs' complaint in the *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), which dealt with the celebrations as part of a broad attack on the theatre and other follies of the nation, was that Christmas was the time of the year when the abuses were most flagrant. 'Who is ignorant,' he asked, that at Christmas time 'more mischief is committed than in all the year besides? What masking and mumming? Whereby robberies, whoredom, murder, and whatnot, is committed? What dicing and carding, what banqueting and feasting, is then used more than in all the year besides!'" [39]

Figure 22. Daughter of Niger - costume design by Inigo Jones for *The Masque of Blackness*.

Puritanism is implicitly a subject of parody in *King Lear* mainly through the ascetism of Goneril during the banquet in I,iv (see note I,iv,8. S.D., "*A banquet is served in"*), but also her costume (see note I,iii,S.D., *"dressed like a Puritan."*) In Act I scenes iii and iv, she unmistakably presents to the audience as a caricature of an Elizabethan stage Puritan, replete with a murderous frontlet: "*what makes that Frontlet on? You are too much of late I'th'frowne"* (F, 703-4). Her behavior relies on the exaggerated, austere, and hypocritical stereotypes associated with Puritanism in 16th and 17th-century drama. Her frown becomes a pivotal plot point when she uses it to terrify Albany's Squire (aka *"Messenger"*) into hiding her complicity and that of her sister in the blinding of Gloucester. [See note IV,ii,72. S.D., *"Goneril frowns at him."*]

The subject of Puritanism in Shakespeare is most often remarked upon in papers about *Twelfth Night* (c. 1601), where the character of Malvolio (a part identified with Richard Burbage) is explicitly described as *"a kinde of Puritane"* (F, 833). He is depicted as overly strict, joyless, and critical of merriment—scolding Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and Maria for their partying, drinking, and general disorder in Olivia's household. Shakespeare parodies Malvolio's austerity by making him always having to smile and wearing yellow cross-garte'd stockings (II.v,F, 1173-74). [See "Malvolio's Cross-Garted Yellow Stockings" by MC Linthicum, 1927.] Academic essays and critical studies argue that Malvolio's character is crafted to reflect the tensions and cultural anxieties surrounding the rise of Puritanism in Elizabethan England. [37]

Figure 20. Larry Yando as Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, 2008-09 CST.

In *Measure for Measure* (c. 1604), Angelo is widely interpreted as a stage Puritan or, at the very least, embodying Puritanical values. Vincentio, the Duke of Vienna, calls him *"precise"* (F, 342)—a derogatory word used in the 16th and 17th centuries to describe Puritans because were seen as "Precisionists"—people who insisted on strict, exact conformity to biblical standards in doctrine, worship, and daily life. [375] Angelo is characterized by his severe enforcement of morality laws, particularly regarding sexual behavior, which aligns closely with the Puritan agenda of repressing vice and promoting public virtue. [374] Lucio uses the codpiece as a metaphor to ridicule his supposed chastity and to highlight the hypocrisy of those who enforce strict moral laws while being subject to the same desires.

> *Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him, for the rebellion of a* ***codpiece*** *to take away the life of a man! Would the duke that is absent have done this? Ere he would have hanged a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand. He had some feeling of the sport, he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.* (F, 1602-08)

Puritans were targets of satire by playwrights of the day, such as Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton. They were ridiculed for being "precisians," pompous hypocrites, and overly zealous moralists who tried to shut down entertainment. In *The Alchemist* (1610), Jonson reserves his harshest satire for the hypocritical Puritan character Ananias who denounces Surly as the Anti-Christ for his style of dress: *"They are profane, / Lewd, superstitious, and idolatrous breeches . . . That ruff of pride / About thy neck betrays thee . . . Thou look'st like Antichrist, in that lewd hat"* (4.7.46-55). In *Bartholomew Fair,* Zeal-of-the-Land Busy is portrayed as killjoy fanatic, who is mocked for his pompous rhetoric. He claims to hate all festivities but visits the fair to "eat pig", and ends up being defeated in a theological debate by a puppet about crossdressing. In Middleton's *The Family of Love* (1603-1607), Lipsalve says a Puritan bellows-mender preaches against crimson breeches (4.1.18). Puritan characters in early modern English drama were quick to condemn anything smacking of fun, and lavish apparel was a prime object of their scorn." Robert I. Lublin, *Costuming the Shakespearean Stage,* p. 139.

Figure 21. Philip Stubbs (Stubbs) (c. 1555 – c. 1610) was an English pamphleteer

> "Beyond targeting religious clothing, stage Puritans similarly disparaged sumptuous apparel railing against ostentatious display almost as often and as vociferously as they did again the surplice. This attack on rich clothing mirrors the condemnation of pride in apparel that was being issued from the pulpit and in print at the time. Scholars, starting with E.K. Chambers, have focused considerable attention on the anti-theatrical writings of the period, but those works often devote equal or even greater attention to clothing than they do to the theatre. For instance, Philip Stubbs' *Anatomie of Abuses* issues a strong condemnation of the theatres, but devotes far more space to ridiculing English "Sumptuous Attyre." At considerable length, Stubbs assaults opulent hats, ruffs, shirts, doublets, hose, stocks, shoes, jerkins, cloaks, and scarves, as well as gilt swords and scabbards, the wearing of feathers or velvet visors, the use of make-up, particular hairstyles, cross-dressing, and new fashions. On stage, the most common targets of Puritan attack are large ruffs and oversized breeches. Accordingly, in *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, shortly after extolling his uncle for never donning Protestant religious apparel, Stupido attacks the poets who wear "such diabolical ruffs, and wicked great breeches full of sin, that is would make a zealous professors harte bleed for grief" (3.1.359-61).

There is no evidence whatsoever that the "Act to Restrain the Abuses of Players" was a

response to *The Masque of Blackness*. It is currently thought that the Act was directed at players, not the Queen consort or King James I. However, no actors or companies were ever prosecuted under it. [564] It seems to have functioned mainly as a warning to Sir George Buck in his role as Master of the Revels. Buck was responsible for licensing and censoring plays for performance and for supervising court entertainments; separately, from 1606, he held authority to license plays for publication. In the wake of the 1606 Act to Restrain Abuses of Players, Buck had a strong institutional (and perhaps personal) interest in ensuring that a Whitehall Christmas performance contained no language or business that might be construed as profane, indecorous, or politically and religiously offensive. One cannot discount the possibility that Shakespeare's original costume for Lear along with other stage actions vulnerable to Puritan charges of impiety and indecency, were censored and never performed. Incidentally, there is no evidence that Buck himself had any affiliation with the Puritan movement. His professional roles involved working closely with the royal court and overseeing theatrical productions, including censorship related to religion and politics. [See Appendix A.]

32. S.D. ***Two bearing coronets on cushions***] Ed. *"Enter one bearing a Coronet"* (Q, 37); not in F. Cf. *Lust's Dominion*, "*bearing the crown on a cushion"* (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* p. 63). A coronet is "a small or inferior crown; spec. a crown denoting a dignity inferior to that of the sovereign, worn by the nobility, and varying in form according to rank" (*OED*, **1.a**.). See *Julius Cesaer*, I,ii, *"I sawe Marke Antony offer him a Crowne, yet 'twas not a Crowne neyther, 'twas one of these Coronets"* (F, 340-41). In my restoration, Lear theatrically bestows coronets on Goneril and Regan as a confirmation of the two appanages he is granting the dukes of Albany and Cornwall. They are carried in ceremonially on cushions, as in *Lust's Dominion*, "*bearing the crown on a cushion"* (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* p. 63). The omission of Cordelia's dowry from the map, compounded by the absence of a third coronet to confirm it, signals Lear's intent to sabotage the ongoing marriage negotiations with Burgundy and France. [See note I,i,139, "*'coronet.'*"]

32. ***Lear's Knight***] Not in Q, F. Not in Q, F. See note I,iv,47, *Lear's Knight*. While Lear's Knight functions as a tertiary character, his interactions with "Caius" serve as a reminder of Kent's true social status, eloquence, and aristocratic upbringing. In my restoration, we first observe him standing beside Kent, near to the king, signaling his high place in court. He exemplifies the nobility and mannerliness of the *"Knights and Squires"* (F, 750): *"My Traine are men of choice, and rarest parts, / That all particulars of dutie know, / And in the most exact regard, support / The worships of their name"* (F, 776-79). Lear's Knight is present in I,i, I,iv, I,v, II,iv, III,i, IV,iii, IV,v, IV,vi. The character is conspicuously absence in the retreat sounded during the Intermezzo, suggesting that he was among those killed in battle. When Edmund says, *"the friend hath lost his friend"* (Q1, 2997.1), the audience thinks of Lear's Knight and his friendship with Kent

32. ***others following in attendance***] Ed. Not in Q, F, See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*: **permissive stage directions** (pp. 161-62). "A category that includes the many signals that leave key details indeterminate (1) most commonly the specific number of actors required for an entrance." The time it takes for the actors to take their places

on stage explains why there is a Sennet and not a Flourish. [See note I,i.32., S.D. "*Sennet.*"]

32. S.D. ***Lear ascends the throne***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Richard III* (Modern), IV,ii, 2592, *"Here he ascends the throne[, assisted by Buckingham]."* Logically, Lear's throne, which was probably attached to a dais, would have been part of the "preset". [565] [Figure 23.] Heavy furniture like this was stored in the "hut", and moved using a rudimentary fly system of ropes and pulleys. "Our sense of how thrones were brought onstage, has been influenced by Jonson's mocking of the *"creaking throne"* that *"comes down the boys to please"* (*Every Man in His Humour*, Prologue, line 16) See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*: **throne, chair of state** (pp. 228-29). [See Figure 34. "Twelve-penny hirelings in their Heavens" with "creaking throne."]

Figure 23. Frontispiece to Simonds D'Ewes "Journals of all the Parliaments during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth " [1682].

32. S.D. ***assisted by Kent***] signaling to the audience Kent's favored status and influence at court.
34. **my liege**] (Q, 40)] *my Lord* (F, 40).
34. ***Exit Gloucester***] *Exit*. (F, 40). Not in Q. *Exeunt Gloucester and Edmund.* Capell. He exits through the center opening in the *frons*. See also I,i,126,S.D., *"Exit Edmund"* and I,i,188, S.D., *"Exit Kent."*
35. **darker purpose**] "concealed, secret" (C. T. Onions, *A Shakespeare Glossary*. p. 53). Lear's true motives suggest a manipulative ruse designed to prevent Cordelia's marriage and preserve his own reign. He makes her dowry conditional on proving to him rhetorically how much she loves him—a test he knows she will fail, likely from having debated the subject with her before. Love was one of the enduring philosophical problems in ancient Greece. [560] Lear's profound interest in philosophy underpins his relationship with Cordelia, whose shared devotion to classical thought forms a core aspect of their bond. [See note V,i,16, *"mystery of things."*]

The "love test" in *Lear* evokes the dialogue *Symposium* (199b), where Plato stages a contrast between high-flown rhetorical display and Socratic plainness so that the reader sees rhetoric's persuasive showmanship separated from philosophical truth-seeking. Socrates says that he cannot match the elaborate, polished rhetoric of Phaedrus, Pausanias, and Agathon but is willing to speak the truth about love *"in his own way."* [384] Not only is Lear aware that Cordelia does not use words for flattery, as Plato characterizes rhetoric in the *Gorgias*, but he cannot imagine either of her suitors marrying her without a dowry. In fact, before ordering her to speak, he cynically insinuates that Burgundy and France are only courting her for profit. [See note I,i, 85, *"Strive interest."*] He expects them to refuse the new terms of the marriage, leaving her to care for him like a child for the rest of his natural life. In Elizabethan and Jacobean England, if a promised dowry was substantially reduced or not paid, a suitor could commonly and plausibly call off the match on social and contractual grounds. [561]

Lear's psychological reality is structured around patriarchal ideals of what it means to be a

"real man," making it impossible for him to view himself outside of that rigid framework. He fears expressions of vulnerability will prove him weak and lacking authority. [See note I,iv,28., *"Authority"*.] His "love test" was not designed to assay Cordelia's love or *"merit"* (F, 58). It is a rhetorical trap calculated to sabotage her marriage. It backfires spectacularly when France proves to be a Stoic, and choses to marry her purely for her virtue. [40] Lear is caught in a checkmate of his own making, where he must relinquish the crown to preserve a shred of male honor. Contrary to the standard editorial and critical view is that Lear wants to abdicate the active duties and revenues of kingship while keeping the title and the social privileges of being king, [568] ironically, he is forced out of power by a trap of his own making. He chooses to step down *against his will* rather than show weakness. This interpretation is bolstered by his actions in III,ii and IV,v, where he personally charges into battle at the front of his army. Historically, leading troops was considered a literal requirement of being King. Monarchs like Henry V personally lead the English army, most famously at Agincourt in 1415, to secure their crowns and inspire troop morale. By leading the charge Lear proves he actually possess the courage, self-sacrifice, and duty expected of a true King

The term "defense mechanism" is anachronistic for Shakespeare, since it belongs to psycho-analytic theory, where Sigmund Freud first used it and Anna Freud later developed it further to describe largely unconscious strategies people use to protect themselves from anxious thoughts or feelings. [549] Freud frequently treated Shakespeare as a major source of psycho-logical insight and often wrote as if Shakespeare had anticipated some of psychoanalysis's greatest discoveries. [550] Lear's "love test" may be read as an unconscious mechanism calling for care, like a frightened child seeking the mother's protection. The rigid strictures of traditional masculinity choke the character's psyche, rendering him entirely unable to articulate *"true need"* (F, 1570). In 16th-century England, expressing vulnerability was often culturally coded as feminine or soft. [547] Anger was acceptable for men, while softness, passivity, or emotional dependence could be criticized as unmanly or feminine.

In 16th-century and early modern England, showing vulnerability was often coded as effeminate or soft. [547] Scholarship on early modern masculinity emphasizes that hegemonic manhood was fundamentally defined by martial courage, physical and emotional hardness, and the capacity for control. [566] Anger was be acceptable for men, while softness and emotional dependence could be criticized as unmanly or feminine.[567] This coding is very close to the logic of Shakespeare's play *Coriolanus* (with Richard Burbage in the title role as he was in *King Lear*) which repeatedly links wounds, tears, tenderness, and dependence with femininity. Coriolanus' refusal to show his wounds functions as a refusal of vulnerability and a defense of masculine wholeness. The Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca wrote extensively about anger in his essay *De Ira* (On Anger). "Anger is a brief madness for it's no less lacking in self-control, forgetful of decency, unmindful of personal ties, unrelentingly intent on its goal, shut off from rational deliberation, stirred for no substantial reason, unsuited to discerning what's fair and true, just like a collapsing building that's reduced to rubble even as it crushes what it falls upon." [58]

36. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Edmund is holding the map. [See note I,i,S.D. *"reading*

a map."]

36. **there**] "Multifariously employed to point to, and single out, persons and things" (Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*). Compare IV,vi, 28,*"Louder the music there."* See also *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *"what letter are you reading there"* (F, 353).
37. **fast**] fixed, settled.
40. **Unburden'd crawl towards death**] "Crawl" may evoke the image and developmental stage of an infant. [41] The metaphor is extended when he says, "*I lou'd her most, and thought to set my rest / On her kind nursery"* (F, 131-32). [See note I,i,124, *"nursery."*] He uses the metaphor a final time in IV,v to describe human birth as an immediate, instinctive entry into a life of misery, suffering, and folly: *"the first time that we smell the Ayre / We wawle, and cry"* (F, 2619-22). It is only natural that he would feel like crying as he prepares to give Cordelia away in marriage. The metaphor unintentionally reveals his feelings of vulnerability in the face of death, and his desire to be mothered. It reflects his *"true need"* (F, 1570) which is to be cared for and loved like an infant. In his 1969 autobiographical prose collection *Je... Ils...* ("I… They,…"), Arthur Adamov defines masochism with the sentence *"Le masochisme n'est qu'une immunisation contre la mort, une façon de mourir un peu pour ne pas mourir tout à fait, une caricature de la mort, et un moyen de la tromper."* In English, this translates to: "Masochism is nothing but an immunization against death, a way of dying a little so as not to die completely, a caricature of death, and a means to trick it."

    The exigencies of warfare have resulted in the stereotyping of "maleness" throughout human history in all cultures, profoundly impacting expressions of masculinity. Even today, many boys are socialized from a young age to suppress emotions like sadness, vulnerability and pity for fear of being perceived as "weak" or "feminine." The suppression of emotions is a deeply ingrained cultural norm in the United Kingdom and Ireland. "Boys don't cry," as the phrase goes. [42] It is why, for instance, Lear doesn't give his riding cloak directly to poor Tom after observing *"Thou wert better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies"* (F, 1881-82) even though he had only moments before exhorted the audience to *"shake the superflux"* (F, 1816) to *"Poore naked wretches"* (F, 1809). Instead of experiencing the raw vulnerability of empathy, Lear converts his emotional response into an academic exercise. He hides his true feelings behind a facade of rational, "manly" detachment to protect his ego. His behavior is a classic psychological defense mechanism known as "intellectualization." [See note III,iv,92, S.D., *"Edgar puts on the king's discarded riding-cloak."*]
42. **constant will**] firm intention
43. **daughters'**] Lear's inability to conceive a male child would have immediately signaled a problem with his fertility to Elizabethans. *"Bring forth men–children only,/ For thy undaunted mettle should compose / Nothing but males"* (*Macbeth*, F, 554-5).
43. **several dowers**] The dowry Lear negotiates for Cordelia with her two French suitors is conspicuously absent from the map, signaling that no portion of the kingdom is intended for her. He has no intention of granting his "largest bounty," much less giving her his imperial golden crown.

44. **The Princes France and Burgundy**] *King Lear* was performed in the Banqueting Hall of Whitehall Palace on St Stephens Night in 1606. The venue was first built by Queen Elizabeth I in 1581 at a cost of £1,744, to host Francis, Duke of Anjou, during marriage negotiations.

Figure 24. Catechismus, 1593. Folger STC 18733.2

47. **Tell me**] Since ancient times, oral testimony has been used as a primary form of evidence in both legal and academic settings. Because oral examination functioned as a primary instrument of evaluation in early modern education, Shakespeare's educated spectators would have keenly felt the strain inherent in Lear's performative demand upon his daughters. [48] Though Shakespeare would become famous for his rhetorical brilliance, he remained keenly aware of its limitations. The inadequacy of language to capture complex emotion recurs throughout his works, as in Hamlet's, *"Words, words, words"* (F, 1230), and Troilus's *"Words, words, meere words, no matter from / the heart"* (F, 3322-3). In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Mistress Page enlists Sir Hugh Evans to test her son William's Latin; the ensuing street lesson comically exposes the inadequacy and slipperiness of language as Evans' accent and Latin forms are repeatedly misheard and turned into off-color puns by the bawdy Mistress Quickly.

> Rhetoric – the skillful use of language in order to move or persuade – was big business in Elizabethan England judging by the amount of books published on the subject. And although we know very little about Shakespeare's life, it's likely that he would have attended the King Edward VI School in his birthplace of Stratford-upon-Avon until his early teens and studied rhetoric there as part of the regular curriculum. Throughout his plays, we can see how Shakespeare was steeped in rhetoric – not just through the linguistic 'tricks' and techniques he uses to compose his characters' speeches, but through the comments the characters themselves make about the art of communication. (Kim Ballard, "Rhetoric, power and persuasion in *Julius Caesar*".)

48. **divest us both**] part with

50. **Which of you shall we say doth love us most**] How do men know love? Is it something that can be measured by science and geometry, like the boundaries of a kingdom? [See Figure 22.] Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* explore whether discourse about love can be more than persuasive display: whether a *logos* disciplined by dialectic, responsive to truth, and directed beyond doxa can educate desire and lead the soul toward an understanding of *erōs* and, ultimately, toward Beauty itself. In the *Meno* (80d–86c) and Phaedo (72e–77a and 92d–95a), Plato links genuine knowledge with anamnesis, the soul's recollection of its prior acquaintance with intelligible Forms. Sensory experience does not itself yield knowledge of the Forms, though it may prompt their recollection. Aristotle, by contrast, holds in *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, Chapter 6 that *nous* (intuition) grasps the first principles on which demonstrative epistēmē depends; [388] unlike Plato, however, he does not explain this grasp through prenatal recollection, but within an account that begins from perception, experience, and induction. Britannica defines "Intuition, in philosophy" as "the power of obtaining knowledge that cannot

be acquired either by inference or observation, by reason or experience. As such, intuition is thought of as an original, independent source of knowledge, since it is designed to account for just those kinds of knowledge that other sources do not provide. Knowledge of necessary truths and of moral principles is sometimes explained in this way." [45] In *King Lear*, Shakespeare refers to the concept metaphorically as our "feeling" sight. [See note V,i.311-12, *"Looke on her? Looke her lips,/ Looke there, looke there."*]

Figure 25. Plato & Aristotle as central figures in Raphael's The School of Athens (1510). The former is hold his dialogue *Timaeus* and the later his treatise *Nicomachean Ethics*. Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Museum

The historical dichotomy associating intuition with women and reason with men is millennia old. [46] In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, King Oedipus's means of knowledge is contrasted with the blind prophet Tiresias's, who was "famous for clairvoyance and for being transformed into a woman for seven years." [See Figure 26.] In *Medea* and *The Bacchae*, Euripides destabilizes conventional gendered hierarchies of knowledge by showing male claims to civic rationality and rhetorical authority to be compromised by desire, self-interest, and interpretive blindness, while female or feminized figures exercise forms of strategic, affective, and divine knowledge that cannot be contained within the traditional opposition of *logos* and pathos. In his engaging book *Divination and Human Nature: A Cognitive History of Intuition in Classical Antiquity*, (2016), Peter T. Struck works "through evidence that positions divinatory knowledge within the classical thought-world in a way that is more or less analogous to the position of the modern concept of intuition."

Figure 26. The Greek mythological prophet Tiresias is transformed into a woman by the goddess Hera, after striking two copulating snakes with a stick. Engraving taken from *Die Verwandlungen des Ovidii* : (The metamorphoses of Ovid) by Johan Ulrich Krauss, c. 1690.

> Though they have different ideas on how exactly it works and how to value it, the Greek philosophers considered here show a consistent understanding of traditional divinatory insight as the result of an ancillary form of cognition that takes place outside our self-conscious, purposive thinking. It enters into our awareness and offers incremental insight into what is around the corner. They construe it as a feature of human nature, as embedded in physiological processes that have to do with our status as embodied organisms situated in a surrounding atmosphere of stimuli. It relies on mechanisms buried deep in our natural structures, and the philosophers allow that some people will have a better mechanism for it than others. I have tried to show that its cognitive status is consistently congruent to what most contemporary English speakers would call intuition, and that it is best understood as a cultural formation responding to the provocation nature of surplus knowledge …. On the side of classical drama, the story

of Oedipus would on this view include a layer of commentary on Oedipus' particular failings. His renown for his ability to win a confrontation of wits with the Sphinx shows him as an acute thinker in a discursive mode. But his ongoing confrontation with the messages from Delphi, particularly brought to a head by Tiresias, would, by the perspective worked through here, show him to be deficient at another kind of cognition, the non-conscious insight that comes from what we would call intuition. He has discursive rational capacity aplenty but is lacking something else.

51. **bounty**] generosity
52. **Where**] Where Nature doth with merit challenge (F, 58). Where merit doth most challenge it (Q1, 58). "In the case where." See Shakespeare Lexicon, Vol 2, Schmidt. p. 1357.
52. **Nature]** The word "Nature" is capitalized when it is part of a proper name like "Mother Nature" or treated as a personification. Here, Lear is stating his *a priori* belief that Nature herself decides which of his daughters is deserving of his largest bounty based on her merit. Similarly, in his famous speech *"Heare Nature, heare deere Goddesse, heare"* (F, 789), Lear apostrophizes the goddess "Nature" to punish Goneril for her unnatural hardness. The invocation can be read alongside the ancient personification of Physis (Φύσις), "the primordial goddess [Protogenoi] of the origin and ordering of nature." [379] (Natura was the Roman equivalent.) In the "Orphic Hymn to Physis", Nature is figured as "all-parent," "all-ruling," and "Justice, supreme in might": a divine agency whose order distinguishes the good from the bad. [See note I,iv,262., *"Nature."*]

Subverting Lear's own language, Edmund ironically adopts "**Nature**" as his patron deity to legitimize betraying his family, arguing that his inherent ruthlessness and cunning make him far more deserving of his father's estate and title than his legitimate brother. [See note I,ii,1, *"Nature."*] "In the fifth and fourth centuries bc a vigorous debate arose in Greece centered on the terms physis (nature) and nomos (law or custom). It became the first ethical debate in Western philosophy. Is justice simply a matter of obeying the laws, or does it have some basis in nature? [650]

52. **merit**] The question of who merits what is the principle throughline of *King Lear*. Shakespeare repeatedly frames the central conflicts through the intertwined ideas of justice, merit, and moral desert. Lear invokes the rhetoric of merit when declaring that *Nature doth with merit challenge"* (F, 58)—a framework Albany later echoes through the lens of distributive justice: *"All Friends shall / Taste the wages of their vertue, and all Foes / The cup of their deseruings"* (F, 3274-76). [See Appendix A.]
53. **eldest-born**] The law of primogeniture is not explicitly referred to in the dialogue, but it quietly shapes the conflict, and stakes underlying the plot, particularly the motivations of Goneril, who is the legitimate heir. It is alluded to in Lear's opening speech when he publishes *"Our daughters seuerall Dowers, that future strife May be preuented now"* (F, 49-50), and suggested by Kent in III,i when he says *"There is diuision … 'twixt Albany, and Cornwall"* (F, 1628-30). In the find scene, she tell her husband, *"the Lawes are mine not thine"* (F, 3116). In England, the eldest born child automatically becomes the sovereign immediately upon the death or abdication of the King, regardless of gender. This process, known as the "demise of the Crown," follows the rules of primogeniture, where the eldest child is next in line.

Figure 26a. An early example of a demise of the Crown: following the Battle of Bosworth Field, Lord Stanley hands the crown of Richard III to Henry VII—who established the House of Tudor.

54. S.D. ***Kneels***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note IV,v,98.S.D., *"Kneels."* See also note IV,v,99, *"Ha, Goneril with a white beard"* (F, 2543).
54. **Sir**] (Q, 74); not in F, 74
62. S.D. ***Aside***] Pope. Not in Q, F.
63. S.D. ***Pointing to the map***] Not in Q, F. It is here that Goneril first takes notice of Edmund. The audience observes that she finds him more interesting to look at than the map. Her attention does not go unnoticed by Regan, nor by Edmund who possesses a keen awareness of his own physical allure and the effect it exerts on others. He consciously leverages his attractiveness as a form of social capital, using it to gain entry into elite circles and to manipulate influential individuals in service of his own ambitions.
63. **bounds**] boundaries. What is remarkable about the lands given to Goneril and Regan is how small they are in comparison to the rest of Lear's kingdom. The territories are color-accented so the audience can easily identify them. [See Figure 12.]
64. **champains**] plains
65. **meads**] meadows
67. S.D. ***Places a coronet on her head***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note I,i,32.,S.D., "*Two bearing coronets on cushions.*"
68. **Speak**] *speake?* Q, 73. Not in F, 73
69. S.D. ***Kneels***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
72. **comes too short**] F, 77. *came short,* (Q, 76)
74. **precious**] fastidious
74. **square**] a tool for measuring.
74. **possesses**] have knowledge of. Regan rebuffs even the smallest pleasure measurable by science. She is saying that the only joy she knows in life is her father.
75. **felicitate**] made happy
76. S.D. ***Places a coronet on her head***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
76. S.D. ***Aside***] Pope. Not in Q, F.
78. **ponderous**] heavy
81. **validity**] value
82. **But**] Q, 88. Not in F, 88
83. **least**] a reference to Cordelia's diminutive size. [See Figure 67.] Cf. also note I,i,199, *"little seeming substance."*
84. **wine**] Ed. *Vines* (F, 90). (Lines 90-91 omitted in Q.) Wine = red, contrasting with white = milk. Lear is thinking licentiously about Cordelia's wedding night, and the bloodstains on the sheets following intercourse. [See note III.iv,67., *"Alow, alow, loo, loo."*] The word "vines"

predominantly connotes the color green, representing growth, leaves, and life. Wine and milk suit the humors of Cordelia's two suitors. In the ancient medical theory of humorism, each of the four bodily humors was linked to a specific fluid, season, and element. [382] The sanguine temperament is tied to blood, which gives it its association with the color red. France is sanguine. Lear refers to him as *"hot-blooded"* (F, 1505). Burgundy is phlegmatic or *"watrish"* (F, 283),' his liver *"white as milke"*, as Bassanio might describe him in *Merchant of Venice*, III,ii (F, 1432). See also I,iv, 328., *"This milky gentleness and course of yours."*

85. **Strive interest**] Ed. Profit (derived from land). See Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, p. 594, *Merchant of Venice,*I,iii, *"did he take interrest?"* (Q1, 381); *Timon of Athens,* I,ii, *"he now payes interest for't"* (F, 558). Lear cynically implies that Cordelia's suitors are motivated by profit alone. See Furness, p, 15.
86. **opulent**] rich
86. **Speak**] *speake.* F, 92. Not in Q.
87. S.D. ***Kneels***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The next time Cordelia kneels before her father is in IV,vi,57. See note IV, vi,58, S.D. *"Lear kneels."*
87. **Nothing]** The word "nothing" appears 34 times in *King Lear*. [569] Ironically, Edmund uses the same word to describe the letter he forges to deceive his father in the next scene. [See note I,ii,31., "*Nothing*."] Verbal, situational, and dramatic irony function as Shakespeare's central rhetorical devices, structuring the text, illuminating character psychology, and driving narrative momentum. *Lear* hinges on "nothing" much as *Macbeth* hinges on *"faire is foule, and foule is faire"* (F, 12): each phrase condenses the play's central logic and launches its tragic world.

Figure 27. Anne Askew by Hans Eworth (1560).

It may be that Shakespeare drew real-life inspiration for Cordelia from the story of Anne Askew in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. He is thought to have drawn on episodes in the book for the second and third parts of *Henry VI* and an incident in *Henry VIII*. "Foxe's work, while hardly an evenhanded account, is fundamental to almost any study of the English Reformation. First published in English in 1563, it recounts the fate of 300 English Protestants put to death during the restoration of Catholicism under Queen Mary, sometimes called Bloody Mary, in a five-year reign that ended in 1558." [51]

Anne was an English writer, poet, and Protestant preacher who was condemned as a heretic during the reign of Henry VIII. "Known by many as 'the Faire Gospeller,' [she] was a witty, well-informed, attractive, independent modern woman in a male-dominated early modern world." [52] Her *Examinations* "defies the constraints of gender and hierarchy, and attempts to expose patriarchal insecurity surrounding female involvement in traditionally male religious subjects." [53] At age 25, she was tortured and burned to death for arguing with her Catholic

husband about the meaning of transubstantiation. (See Carole Levin, "*Women in The Book Of Martyrs as Models of Behavior in Tudor England*", 1981.) [See Figure 28.]

Askew was defined by her "plain speaking," famously frustrating her examiners by answering with a sharp, scriptural brevity that stripped away all rhetorical ornament. [570] "Under questioning from the bishop Edmund Bonner, who commanded her repeatedly to 'utter al thynges that burdened [her] conscience,' Anne answered in unembellished language blended with Scriptural teachings: 'God hath given me the gifts of knowledge, but not of utterance. And Salomon sayth, that a woman of few words, is a gift of God" (Sirach 26:14).'" [54] In the prevailing religious culture of the 16th century, "plain speaking" was viewed with suspicion by figures like Bishop Stephen Gardiner, who considered it a tactic used by heretics to spread dangerous ideas under the guise of simplicity. In the opening section of Plato's *Apology*. Socrates urges the jury to judge him based on the truth of his words rather than the clever, rehearsed rhetoric of his accusers (Stephanus pages 17d to 18a). At his trial in Plato's *Apology,* Socrates specifically asks the jury to forgive him for not using fancy, rehearsed courtroom speeches. He promises to use plain speech and "whatever words come to mind" because he depends only on the truth. [See note II,ii,96., *"plain"*.]

Figure 28. The Burning of Anne Askew and others. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 1663 ed. The British Museum.

89. **Nothing**] F, 95. Not in Q,
90. S.D. ***Rising***] Ed. Not in Q, F. A menacing gesture intended to intimidate her. It also gives dramatic heft to the word *"nothing"*.
90. **Nothing will come of nothing**] F, 96. *How, nothing can come of nothing,* (Q, 93). In *De rerum natura*, Lucretius dedicates time to exploring the axiom that nothing can be produced from nothing, and that nothing can be reduced to nothing. He explicitly states the principle in Liber Primus, lines 146-184: *"nullam rem e nihilo gigni divinitus umquam"* (no thing is divinely produced from nothing), and in Liber Primus, lines 205-237,*"Huc accedit uti quicque in sua corpora rursum dissolvat natura neque ad nihilum interemat res"* (nature dissolves each thing back into its own constituent bodies, and does not annihilate things into nothing.) The well-known axiom *"Nil fieri ex nihilo, in nihilum nil posse reverti"* (Nothing can be produced from nothing; nothing can be reduced to nothing) is a Latin commonplace from Lucretius and Persius. Shakespeare had a grammar-school education steeped in Latin authors and sententiae, so he was very likely familiar with it. Renaissance writers enthusiastically compressed dense Latin sententiae into memorable, rhetorical commonplaces. Humanists like Erasmus compiled best-selling compendiums of these compressed proverbs—like his *Adagia*—so writers and orators could easily retrieve and apply them.
93. **my bond**] my duty as a daughter
94. **How? How, Cordelia**] F, 100. *Goe to, goe to*, (Q, 100).
96. **begot**] fathered

96. **bred**] reared, brought up. Cf. I,i,8.
101. **take my plight**] accept my wedding vow. The word *"plight"* has a double meaning because the roles of the King of France and Edgar are played by the same actor. The latter is soon to find himself sharing Cordelia's *plight*. He too is banished by his father.
104. **To love my father all**] Q, 111. Not in F.
108. **Let it be so**] F, 115. *Well, let it be so,* (Q, 115).
110. **mysteries**] secret rites
109. **Hecate**] a Greek goddess of the lower world, and patroness of magic and witchcraft.
111. **operation**] astrological influence
114. **Propinquity**] close relationship
117. **generation**] children

Figure 29. Jupiter castrates Saturn eating his children. French, Anonymous, c. 1501. Jupiter's castration of Saturnus is combined with Saturnus' (Cronos) eating of his children.

117. **messes**] portions of food. In Greek mythology, the god Cronus (Saturn in Roman myth) castrated his father Uranus and devoured his children. [Figure 29.]
118. **to my bosom**] (F, 125) Not in Q.
120. S.D. ***Kent steps between them***] Not in Q, F.
122. **dragon**] A red dragon may be Lear's coat of arms, which the audience can see blazoned on the tabards of his knights. "The proud and ancient battle standard of the Welsh is The Red Dragon (*Y Ddraig Goch*) and consists of a red dragon, passant (standing with one foot raised), on a green and white background." (The Red Dragon of Wales, Ben Johnson.) It is supposed to be the battle standard of King Arthur.

Figure 30. The Dragon Devouring the Companions of Cadmus, 1588, Hendrick Goltzius, Netherlandish, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

123. **set my rest**] stake my all. The idiom is taken from the game of primero, a gambling card game.
124. **nursery**] Lear wants the unconditional, steadfast, sacrificial love associated with the mother archetype to allay his fears of the unknown.
124. S.D. ***To Cordelia***] Not in Q, F.
124. S.D. ***She rises and steps back***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Kent remains in front of her. See I,i, *"The bow is bent & drawne, make from the shaft"* (F, 152).
225. S.D. ***To Kent***] Not in Q, F.
126. **Who stirs**] Lear calls for action from his attendants, who are all too dumbfounded to move. Edmund jumps at the opportunity, and exits to fetch France and Burgundy. He immediately

wins over the audience as a decisive, sharp-witted man of action.

126. S.D. ***Exit Edmund***] Ed. Not in F or Q.

129. S.D. ***To Cordelia***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

131. **Preeminence**] high status

133. **reservation**] "The word is a legal term, and means the action or fact of reserving (for oneself or another) some right, power or privilege" (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p.11).

133. **hundred knights**] Compare *"Knights and Squires"* (F, 750). In Shakespeare's time, the 100 Knights Lear retains are vaguely reminiscent of Henry VIII's "Troop of Gentlemen," known today as the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms. They functioned as the king's elite bodyguard, his personal companions in arms when he went to war, the principal participants in tournaments and other martial sports at court and, more generally, a courtly and military finishing school for the sons of nobility and gentry." [55] A private century of armed nobles would not read as a harmless detail; it would suggest a substantial martial and social backing within a fragmented polity. Jacobean audiences were attuned to anxieties about succession, rebellion, and the fragility of order, so the idea of a displaced king retaining force and title would have felt threatening rather than abstract. If Lear decided to reclaim his throne, Goneril would be vulnerable because her rule depended on a small household force, while Lear could invoke a stronger legal claim to kingship.

Figure 31. The Troop of Gentlemen at The Meeting of Henry VIII and the Emperor Maximilian I circa 1513.

136. **th'addition**] titles, honors

136. **sway**] control

139. **'coronet'**] Inverted commas, Ed. Coronet (Q, 147) Coronet (F, 147). When Lear scheme to deter Cordelia's suitors from marrying her backfires, he is inadvertently forced to abdicate the throne against his will. His bitter reduction of the sacred imperial crown of England to a mere "coronet" lays bare his seething, theatrical fury over his dispossession. This frantic display of performative outrage distinctly mirrors the charged self-dramatization of Richard II during his own involuntary abdication.

139. S.D. ***Gives Albany his golden crown*]** Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear does not like the duke of Cornwall. See F, 4-5. He ridicules his *"fiery"* disposition in II,iv,92 (F, 1371).

143. **shaft**] arrow. "Thou wounded heart..alas, the shaft sticks still in thee, or if that bee shaken out, the head." Bishop J. Hall, True Peace-maker 14. (See *OED*, **2.a**.)

144. **fork**] arrowhead

145. **unmanly**] Ed. *unmannerly* (Q, 155); *unmannerly* (F,154). "Not having or demonstrating qualities traditionally associated with men, such as courage, fortitude, self-control, etc.; unbefitting or inappropriate to a man; unmasculine, effeminate" (*OED*). Compare *"This is in thee a Nature but infected,/ A poore* ***vnmanly*** *Melancholly sprung / From change of future"* (*Timon of Athens*, F, 1823-25). Cf. also: *H6. F, 209*; *H8.* F, 575; *Hml.* F, 276. In II,iii, Macbeth uses the words *"unmannerly"* and 23 lines later *"manly"*: *"their Daggers / Vnmannerly*

breech'd with gore" (F, 881), and *"Let's briefely put on manly readinesse"* (F, 904). The emendation "unmanly" places the metrical stress on the word **manly** (The **rē** | gion **of** | my **hēart**, | be **Kēnt** | un **mānly** | When **Lear** | is **mad**). "Unmmanerly" in the quartos and folios is a feminine ending which occurs when a line ends with an extra, unstressed syllable, as in the famous line "To **be** | or **not** | to **be**: | that **is** | the **ques-** | tion" (F, 1711). Instead of the standard 10 syllables (five iambic feet), the line has 11 syllables, with the final stress followed by an extra "falling" beat. This metrical variation is frequently used in Shakespearean drama to create a sense of uncertainty or incompletion. [571] While it may be that the feminine ending was written as a reflection of Kent's sexual ambiguity as discussed above, the earl is appealing directly to Lear's sense of manhood which is the driving force of the character—not his "uncivil, indecent" manners. [See Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon*, Vol II, unmannerly, p.1288.] Kent refers to his manhood getting the better of him (II,iv,41), *"Having more man than wit about me"* F, 1318), as does Oswald when he tells Cornwall in II,ii,116 that he *"put upon him such a deal of man."* (F, 1196).

149. **Reserve thy state**] "to keep to one's self and withhold from others" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary*, p. 966.) The lands Lear agreed to give Cordelia's French suitors as a dowry is conspicuously absent from his territorial divisions, implying that they were never meant to be conferred. When Kent warns the king to "reserve thy state", he is imploring him to retain both his realm and the sovereign authority that defines his kingship. [See note I,i, 3-4., *"division of the kingdom."*]

154. **Reverb**] reverberate

155. **a**] Q, 166. Not in F.

156. **wage**] stake, make war

160. **Apollo**] A deity in both Greek and Roman religions. See Wikipedia

161. O] (F, 175). Not in Q.

161. **vassal**] wretched slave

161. **miscreant**] scoundrel

161. S.D. ***Laying his hand upon his sword***] Rowe. Not in Q, F. A menacing gesture of violence. Compare III,vii,32,S.D., *"Cornwall lays his hand on his sword."* Compare also note III,vi,55, S.D., *"Draws on Kent."*]

162. ***Alb., Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Alb. Cor.* (F, 176). Not in Q. The dual dialogue indicated in the Folio captures the chaos of the moment, and raises the volume of the scene. However, it is uncharacteristic for Cornwall to intercede suggesting that the line is wrongly ascribed. He is represented in the text as a phlegmatic character who doesn't do anything without his wife's approval. [See note III,vii,5. *"Reg."*] Kent likens him to *"Ajax"* (F, 1202), a pompous dimwit in *Troilus and Cressida*. Lear mocks Cornwall's humor as *"Fiery"* (F, 1371).

In Act I, Albany is depicted as a morally principled character who wants to de-escalate rather than fuel the conflict between Lear and Kent. Similarly, in a futile bid to mediate between Lear and Goneril in I,iv,243, Albany seeks to uncover the source of Lear's violent rage. As noted above (I,i, 32., "*Lear's Knight"*), the character is standing next to the Earl of Kent, in close proximity to the throne. He too acts immediately to curb Lear's rash behavior, indicating that his conscience supersedes his fear of the king's wrath. The fact that Lear does not instantly

execute him shows that he deeply respects the nobility and loyalty of the young noble. It highlights a relationship where the Knight is willing to correct the king, even at great personal risk. Like Albany's Squire, who is first introduced in III,vii, S.D., "*Albany's Squire*": "A well-liked minor character does not simply fill space; they add depth to a major character, drive the plot through subplots, and provide emotional investment, often becoming 'fan favorites' that make the story more memorable." [244]

162. **Dear sir, forbear!**] F. Not in Q
163. **Do**] *Doe,* (Q, 176). Not in F.
165. **Revoke**] Take back, cancel
165. **'gift'**] *Guift* (F, 178); *Doome* (Q1, 179). Inverted commas mine. Kent is being ironic.
166. **vent clamor**] make noise
167. **recreant**] (F, 181). Not in Q. traitor
173. **potency**] Lear is referring explicitly to his authority and power as a king. It is implicit that he is taking Kent's defiance as a direct challenge to his manhood.
173. **make**] Q2 (186). *made* (Q, 186). *made* (F, 186). prove, test the truth of. The present tense of Q2 has more immediacy than the past tense of the First Quarto and First Folio. In practical terms, the present tense of Q2 makes the action seem more vivid, urgent, and continuous. Lear is saying that for daring to challenge his power, he is going to prove to Kent how potent he is by banishing him from the kingdom. Furness quotes Moberly: "Shakespeare ingeniously makes Lear forget that he is giving up his power on that very day, and pronounce a sentence on Kent to take effect in ten days." *New Variorum Edition*, p. 26.
178. **trunk**] body
179. **Jupiter**] also referred to as Jove (II,iv,225), is the god of the sky and thunder and king of the gods in ancient Roman religion and mythology. He is known as Zeus in Greek mythology. [See Figure 120.]
181. **Fare thee well**] (F, 194). *Why fare thee well* (Q, 194).
183. S.D. ***To Cordelia***] Hanmer. Not in Q, F.
185. S.D. ***To Goneril and Regan***] Hanmer. Not in Q, F.
185. **large speeches**] grand words
188. S.D. ***Exit***] F, 201. Not in Q.
188. S.D. ***Flourish***] F, 202. Not in Q. Trumpet fanfare. (See Video 3. OAE Principal Trumpet David Blackadder introduces the Baroque or Natural Trumpet,1:27-2:04.) "Trumpets became very much a status symbols. They were played when some member of the nobility arrived. The number of trumpet players you had sort of equals today what kind of car you drive so trumpet players were the sort of Ferrari's of the 17th century. In his discussion of "Hired Men" (Chpt IV) Bentley devotes a section to "Trumpeters and Drummers". He notes that "The music historian, Sternfeld, points out that 'The trumpeters belonged to a special guild and did not play in combination with other instruments'" (*The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time*, p. 77).

Video 4. OAE Principal Trumpet David Blackadder introduces the Baroque or Natural Trumpet.

188. S.D. ***Re-enter Gloucester and Edmund, with France and Burgundy]*** Ed. *Enter France, and Burgundie with Gloster.* (Q, 302). *Enter Gloster with France, and Burgundy Attendants.* (F, 303-4). Edmund returns with his father.

Figure 32. Lady Fortune with Reynard the Fox as Pope and Anti-Christ

189. **France**] There is not a list of acting credits in the quartos and folio indicating that the parts of the King of France and Edgar were played by the same actor. [See note I,ii,124, S.D. *"Enter Edgar."*] His doing so logically explains why Edgar—Lear's *"Godsonne"* (F, 1030)—is conspicuously absent in the first scene (which takes place on the same day as I,ii as indicated by the costumes Gloucester and Edmund are wearing); and "*Why the King of Fraunce is so suddenly gone backe"*, leaving *"Monsier la Far*" to act as Marshall during the battle (Q1, 2341.2-2347.9). [See note I,i,101.,*"That Lord, whose hand must take my plight."*]. The doubling also explains why Shakespeare frames the dead Cordelia with Edgar and Lear in the final scene. [See note V,i,310. S.D., "*To Edgar."*]

A central theme in *Lear* is Rota Fortunae, or the Wheel of Fortune, representing the unpredictable, capricious nature of fate. The wheel is governed by the goddess Fortuna, who spins it at random, causing people to rise or fall in status, fortune, and happiness without regard to merit or virtue. "The metaphor was already a cliché in ancient times, complained about by Tacitus, but was greatly popularized for the Middle Ages by its extended treatment in the *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius from around 520." [57] Edmund alludes to Fortune's Wheel after Edgar defeats him in combat, "*The Wheele is come full circle"* (F, 3136).

When the part of Edgar is doubled with the King of France, the audience first sees the actor at the very top of Fortune's Wheel. [See Figure 32.] He is splendidly dressed to woo Cordelia, and totally outshines Lear, who looks old and impotent in his outmoded Tudor period apparel with its signature codpiece. The audience also recognizes his superiority over Edmund, who serves only as an attendant that nobody of importance in court has ever seen before. The Bastard cuts a fine figure indeed, but his costume pales in comparison to the King of France's in its richness, sophistication, and as a statement of power. [See Figure 33]

Figure 33. "King James I of England," attributed to John de Critz (c. 1605). Museo del Prado.

The essential idea in this scene is a dialectical one. Shakespeare is contrasting Lear's irrational rage with France's measured calm. [See note II,iv,268., *"patience."*] In The *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* (Letters from a Stoic), Seneca cautions that "Ungoverned anger begets madness" (Letter XVIII, On Festivals and Fasting); anger can damage judgment so severely that it threatens sanity itself. Instead of meeting anger with anger, the character maintains his composure and seeks to understand what led the king to reconsider his opinion of Cordelia. When he discovers the truth, he is so smitten by her virtue that he chooses to marry her dowerless: *"She is herselfe a Dowrie"* (F, 264). The character of France embodies phronêsis— "a Greek term that translates to practical wisdom, encompassing the ideas of prudence and common sense. Phronesis is held as an intellectual virtue that not only involves knowing the right course of action but also understanding why it is the right choice." [59] He acts from sober discernment, moral clarity, and a capacity to choose the good in circumstances shaped by political pressure. [572] Phronesis stands as the cornerstone of Stoic ethics, serving as the guide that determines exactly how and when to apply the other virtues. Without it, Stoic principles remain mere theory rather than actionable habits.

189. **Burgundy**] The roles of Burgundy and the Captain (F, 2969) commissioned by Edmund to hang Lear and Cordelia in prison might well have been played by the same actor. Shakespeare is a mischievous playwright, and I don't believe he would have taken a pass on the irony.

192. **hath rivell'd**] competed

193. **present]** "being at this time, not past or future" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon*, Vol II, p. 894). It is inconceivable that the dowry Lear agreed upon with Cordelia's suitors was vastly larger than the appanges granted to Goneril and Regan or that he agreed to crown her Queen of England. Such an arrangement could only result in war. In elite and royal marriages, dowries could include major landed territories, even duchies or large parts of a realm, not just money or movable goods. [390] When Eleanor of Aquitaine married Louis VII of France, her dowry was the vast territory of Aquitaine, making her husband effectively more powerful than many other European monarchs. Shakespeare was aware of the historical events surrounding the French 1328 succession crisis, which he references in *Henry V,* Act I, scene ii. In *King John*, Act I, scene i, 46-49, the character of Queen Elinor implicitly acknowledges her past as Queen of England and France and her marriage to Henry II. No Englishmen of any social class in the early 17th century could have forgotten the Hundred Years' War or the Battle of Agincourt.

Figure 326. Battle of Agincourt. D'Azincourt à Marignan. Chevaliers et bombardes, 1415-1515, Paris, Gallimard / Musée de l'armée, 2015, p. 18-19.

193. **dower**] dowry
194. **Most**] (F, 210). Not in Q.
196. **tender**] offer, give
199. **aught**] anything
199. **little seeming substance**] diminutive. The line is "metatheatrical," alluding to the small size of the boy actor playing Cordelia. [See Figure 67.] Note that the Gentleman remarks about the diminished size of the Fool as well. (See note I,vi,68, *"the Foole hath much pined away"* (F, 603).
200. **piec'd**] added, joined
201. **fitly like**] suitably please
203. **Sir**] (Q, 221). Not in F.
204. **owes**] possesses, owns
208. **Election**] choice
210. S.D. ***To France***] Pope. Not in Q, F.
211. **stray**] departure
213. **T'avert**] to redirect
216. **best**] (Q, 236). Not in F.
217. **argument**] subject, theme
217. **balm**] comfort
218. **trice**] in a moment
219. **dismantle**] strip away
222. **forevouch'd**] previously promised
224-5. **that reason without miracle . . me**] only a miracle could make me believe
229. **plot**] Ed. *blot* (Q, 249), (F, 249). The gradation 'vicious blot, murder, foulness' is not happy as Moberly correctly observes. [See Furness, *A New Variorum Edition*, p. 33.] Collier conjectures that *"murther, or"* is a corruption of "no other." He writes, "Murder or murther of the Ff, seems entirely out of place; Cordelia could never contemplate that anybody would suspect her of murder as the ground of her father's displeasure; she is referring to "vicious blots" and "foulness" in respect to virtue."
229. **murder or**] (Q, 249). *murther, or* (F, 249). *nor other* (Collier).
233. **still-soliciting**] always begging
235. **Better thou**] (F, 256). *Goe to, goe to,* (Q, 256)
237. **Is it but this**] (F, 258). *Is it no more than this?* (Q, 259).
237. **tardiness in nature**] natural reticence
238. **history**] story
241. **regards**] other considerations
242. **th'entire point**] the essential issue

247. **I am firm**] (F, 269). Not in Q.
250. **respect and fortunes**] status and wealth
257. **kindle**] ignite
257. **inflam'd respect**] passionate admiration
260. **wat'rish]** According to Wright, "Burgundy was the best watered district of France." (Furness, *A New Variorum Edition*, p. 46). France's remark might be taken as a veiled insult to the Duke of Burgundy. In humoral medicine, the four humors corresponded in their natures to earth, air, fire, and water. A person with a phlegmatic disposition was cold and wet like water. Lear suggests the same when he compares the humors of France and Burgundy to *"wine and milk."* See note I,i,84, "wine".
261. **unpriz'd**] dowerless
267. **benison**] blessing
268. S.D. ***Flourish***] (F, 202). Not in Q.

Figure 34. "Twelve-penny hirelings in their Heavens" with "creaking throne", Shakespeare's Theatre by C. Walter Hodges, 1964, p. 99.

268. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear, Burgundy, Cornwall, Albany, Gloucester, Edmund, the Gentleman and Attendants***] *Exit Lear and Burgundie*. (Q, 291). *Exeunt*. (F, 291).
268. S.D. ***Music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Logically, the music served the practical purpose of diverting the audience's attention from the "creaking throne" being hoisted from the stage following Lear's exit. [See note I,i,32. S.D. "*Lear ascends the throne.*"**]**
277. **professed bosoms**] publicly stated love.

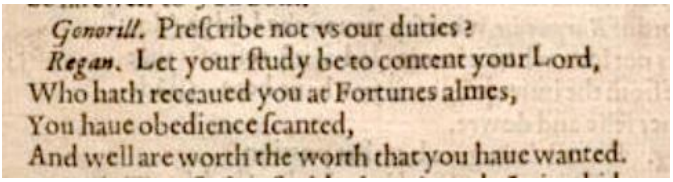

Gonorill. Prefcribe not vs our duties?
Regan. Let your ſtudy be to content your Lord,
Who hath receaued you at Fortunes almes,
You haue obedience ſcanted,
And well are worth the worth that you haue wanted.

Figure 35. Goneril's speech as published in Facsimile Viewer: King Lear, Quarto 1 (Halliwell-Phillipps)lines 301-05. InternetShakespeareEditions

278. **Gon**] *Gonorill*. (Q, 301). *Regn*. (F, 301). [See Figure 35 from Quarto 1, 1608.] Goneril, who is subsequently identified as a Puritan in I,iv, responds to Cordelia's reproach with pronounced moral indignation. The attribution of specific speeches to Goneril and Regan in the quartos and Folio is markedly unreliable and cannot be accepted uncritically. These early texts are well known for their corruption and inconsistency; consequently, only careful textual criticism can

offer a plausible reconstruction of Shakespeare's intended distribution of lines. [Compare note II,iv, 300., "*Gon.*"]

278. ***Reg***] *Regan*. (Q, 302). *Gon*. (F, 302). [See Figure 35 from Quarto 1, 1608.]

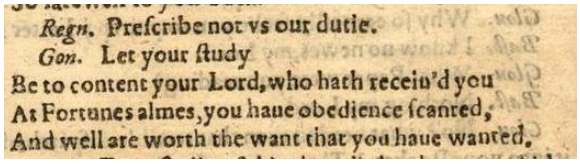

Regn. Preſcribe not vs our dutie.
Gon. Let your ſtudy
Be to content your Lord, who hath receiu'd you
At Fortunes almes, you haue obedience ſcanted,
And well are worth the want that you haue wanted.

Figure 35. Regan's speech as published in Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (Brandeis University) lines 301-05. InternetShakespeareEditions.

278. **duty**] dutie. (F, 301); duties? (Q, 301).

278-9. **Let your study be to content your Lord, who hath receiv'd you**] This line is assigned to Goneril in the First Folio (F, 302-3) and to Regan in the quartos (Q, 302-303). Regan's speeches are characterized by sarcasm, of which this is the first of many examples. The barb is aimed at the King of France who she implies wants to marry her sexually inexperienced sister for her youth and beauty alone. She also implies that Cordelia must learn to service him like a whore. [See Figure 37.] It's one of Regan's snarkiest remarks, and she has a great many. The line must stand alone to pack a punch. The sisters' speeches are distinctly different in tone, highlighting their differences personalities: the elder, a hypocritical, puritanical prude; the other, a sadistic bitch who derives pleasure from inflicting pain and humiliation on others. As the audience witnessed only minutes before, their lust was aroused by Edmund when he was holding up the map. Both are envious of the pleasures awaiting Cordelia. (Compare note III,vii,20., *"Farewell, sweet lord and sister."*)

Figure 37. *"Ill-Matched Lovers"*, Quentin Massys. c. 1520-1525, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

279. **At Fortune's alms**] like a beggar. "In medieval and ancient philosophy, the Wheel of Fortune, or *Rota Fortunae*, is a symbol of the capricious nature of Fate. (Wiki.) [See Figure 32.]

280-81. ***Gon. You have obedience scanted . . . wanted***] F, 30-4. As part of Goneril's speech (Figure 35, lines F, 304-305); as part of Regan's speech (Figure 36, lines Q, 304-305.) Shakespeare is using dialogue techniques to mimic two pecking hens. The complex syntax of the line has the grim, formal tone of many of Goneril's other speeches, such as *"now by my life old fooles are babes again, & must be vs'd with checkes as flatteries, when they are seene abusd"* (Q, 522.2-4) [See note I,iii,65) and *"Not only Sir this,your all-lycenc'd Fool* etc" (F, 712-725), whose severe rhetoric is mocked by the Fool. It is a restatement of her previous words *"Prescribe not us our duties"* (Q, 301) but with a completely different subtext. She is indirectly rebuking Regan for her lewdness, and changing the subject back to Cordelia's moral duty. Goneril's moral hypocrisy, especially in regard to sex, becomes a major subject in Lear's diatribe in IV,v. (F, 2563-70). This is the first and only time the audience sees her pretending to be shocked by

the subject of coitus. Goneril's sexual relationship with Oswald is implicit. [See note: I,iii, S.D., *with* Oswald*, her Steward*.] The sexual rivalry between the sisters for Edmund can be read as a displacement for their unresolved struggle over who between should be made queen. [See note I,i, 303, *"France."*]

281. **And well are worth the want that you have wanted**] You are well deserving of the want of a dower (nothing) that you have asked for ("nothing"). Goneril's speeches are marked by syntactic complexity that enacts her shrewd, legalistic manipulation of reason. Compare note I,iii,21, *"Old fools are babes again, and must be us'd / With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abus'd"*. (Q1, 522.2-4)]

282. **plighted**] "Plighted has the primary meaning of 'pleated, folded," and unfold is a pun on "unpleat" and "reveal"; the statement caries an additional resonance in that plighted can also be used in reference to someone who has pledged her word or her honest, so that Cordelia can be heard to say that her sisters, who have outwardly plighted their truth and love to Lear, have actually pledged instead their cunning" Paul Werstine, *King Lear, Folger Shakespeare Library*., Simon & Schuster, 2015.

284. S.D. ***Flourish***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The flourish is diegetic as is it when Lear departs. As noted in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, a flourish is "a fanfare usually played within on a trumpet or cornet, primarily when important figures enter and exit." (p. 94). It is shorter in duration than a Sennet.

284. ***Music still***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (pp. 146-48): **music.** As noted above, time is needed to raise the "creaking throne." It is non-diegetic in the sense that it presumed unheard by the characters.

284. S.D. ***Exeunt France and Cordelia***] *Exit France and Cor*. (F, 309). *Exit France & Cord.* (Q. 309).

284. **my**] (F, 309). Not in Q.

285. **not little**] (F, 310). *not a little* (Q, 310)

290. **not**] (Q, 316). Not in F.

293-4. **yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself**] *"Know thyself"* (γνῶθι σεαυτόν) is the first of three Delphic maxims inscribed in the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. [See Figure 38.] "Why should the god advise those consulting him to know themselves? Wasn't it precisely their lack of knowledge that had led them to him? Perhaps the god was trying to tell us that, in some way or other, knowing oneself is the key to knowing anything at all, and that any inquiry could start only from a condition of self-awareness. Maybe it meant that self-knowledge is not the beginning but rather the end of true wisdom" (Peter T. Struck, *Divination and Human Nature: A Cognitive History of Intuition in Classical Antiquity*, (2016).

Figure 38. Ruins of forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, where "know yourself" was once said to be inscribed.

295. **rash**] "quick, hasty, sudden" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary*, p. 940): *"I haue no ioy of this contract to night, / It is too rash, too vnaduis'd, too sudden, / Too like the*

lightning which doth cease to be" (*Romeo and Juliet*, F, 917-19). In *De Ira*, Seneca uses the idea of rashness in discussing anger: "some of the wisest of men have … called anger a short madness: for it is equally devoid of self-control, regardless of decorum, forgetful of kinship, obstinately engrossed in whatever it begins to do, deaf to reason and advice, excited by trifling causes, awkward at perceiving what is true and just, and very like a falling rock which breaks itself to pieces upon the very thing which it crushes." (Book I).

297. **long-engraffed**] long ingrained, deeply rooted

298. **the**] (F, 323). Not in Q.

299. **choleric**] ill-tempered

300. **unconstant starts**] unpredictable behavior

303. **France**] It is crucial to note that Goneril masterminds the strategy to strip Lear of his knights by cunningly planting the suggestion in Regan's mind that his behavior is much more than mere rashness but could lead to conflict with France: *"There is further complement of leaue-taking between France and him"* (F, 327-28) The subtext is that she is weaponizing the law of primogeniture to preemptively neutralize her family's claims to her succession. [See note I.i,53., *"eldest-born."*] The theme of dynastic conflict is further developed in III.i, where Kent reports rumors of unrest in the *"snuffes, and packings of the Dukes"* (F, 1635). England's Wars of the Roses were in large part a dynastic dispute over hereditary right, fought between the House of Lancaster and the House of York for control of the English throne. In Shakespeare's *Richard III*, primogeniture plays a pivotal role in the political machinations that lead to the murders of Edward V, Richard's young nephews, and several of Edward's key supporters, though it is not the sole direct cause. While Goneril never uses the language of primogeniture to claim a lawful hereditary right to the English crown, her line *"the Lawes are mine not thine, / Who can araigne me for't?* (3116-7) asserts a claim to sovereign authority. [See note V,i,159., *"The laws are mine, not thine."*] The topic of succession would not have been far from the minds of Shakespeare's audience in 1606 as The Gunpowder Plot of 1605 was tied directly to the uncertainty before and after Elizabeth I's death in 1603 over who would rule next. Since Elizabeth left no heir, the transfer of power depended on political judgment, religious loyalty, and international anxiety, not just legal certainty.

Figure 38a. Beheading of Edmund Beaufort, 4th Duke of Somerset in 1471 at Tewkesbury. Edward IV watches. Illuminated miniature from Histoire de la rentrée victorieuse du roi Edouard IV en son royaume d'Angleterre.

303. S.D. ***She takes her by the hand***] Ed. Not in Q. F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (p. 109): **hand**, "Of the many other actions and gestures the most common (locution) are *taking of/by a hand, joining of hands*, *offering* of a *hand*, *laying* a *hand* on a person/**sword**" (p. 109). Goneril's gesture signifies that she and Regan are of the same mind and heart. Here, Shakespeare is setting up a gag in IV,vii,36 when Goneril takes Regan by the hand to *forcibly* keep her from leaving with Edmund before the battle.

Gon. Sister, you'll go with us?
Reg. No.
Gon. 'Tis most convenient. Pray you go with us.
[She takes her by the hand.
Reg. O, ho! I know the riddle.—I will go.

Figure 39. "Portrait of two sisters" probably Anne of Denmark and her sister Elizabeth, by Robert Peake the elder, around 1580.

Lear himself comments on Goneril's signature gesture in II,iv,190 when he sees her take Regan by the hand, *"Will you take her by the hand?"* (F, 1484). In Act IV, Shakespeare hilariously ridicules the folly of Goneril and Regan by having them each give the same token of their affections to Edmund—a *glove*:

Gon. Wear this. Spare speech.
[Gives him a glove.

[See note IV,ii,21, S.D., *"Gives him a glove."* Compare note IV,iv,33, *"Gives him a glove."*]

Reg: If you do find him, pray you, give him this—
[Gives him a glove.
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.

Naked and gloved hands are a central motif in *King Lear* as they are in *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. [576]

303-04. **Pray you, let's hit together**] *pray you let vs sit together* (F, 328); *pray lets hit together* (Q, 329). The important word here is *"hit."* Her explicit meaning is to "agree together" (*OED*, **17**), but it betrays her desire to forcefully strike her father, as with a bat or a stick. In I,iv, the Fool likens Goneril to *"Jug"* (F, 737) AKA *Joan*, the original name for Judy—the violent wife of Mr. Punch. [See Figure 40.] In III,vi,47, Goneril appears in Lear's imagination as a joint-stool for having *"kickt"* him (Q, 2014.23). See note III,vi,47., S.D. *"Taking the joint-stool Kent is sitting on."*

Figure 40. Woman wearing breeches and a codpiece. "Histoire de la virilité, 1-l'invention de la virilité de l'Antiquité aux lumières", Paris, Éditions du Seuil, page 208.

305. **disposition**] "Humour, mood, caprice." (Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon*, Vol 1, p. 317)
308. **i'th'heat**] immediately
308. ***Flourish***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In *King Lear*, music or sound effects are used consistently to

signal the end of one scene or the beginning of the next.

308. ***Exeunt***] (Q, 333); (F. 333).

ACT I, SCENE II] *Scena Secunda* (F, 333). Scene 2 in Quarto.

S.D. **The Earl of Gloucester's Castle**] Pope *subst*.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. "The upper stage or 'Chamber'" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Edmund***] Rowe *subst*. *Enter Bastard.* (F, 334). *Enter Bastard Solus.* (Q, 334). It is inferred by the clothes Edmund is wearing that Act I scene ii occurs on the same day as the last one: they are unchanged. He enters this scene exhilarated by his brilliant debut at court. He was the only one of the royal attendants to act immediately when Lear commanded France and Burgundy to be summoned; everybody else stood by frozen in shock. He caught the attention of the Earl of Kent with his handsome appearance, but most importantly succeeded in arousing the sexual interest of Goneril and Regan, who both acknowledged him during the business with the map. The two duchesses have the right to appoint whoever they want to court, and one or both are certain to require his presence in England. Edmund has effectively checked the move of his father to send him out of the county. It is under these auspicious circumstances that he hatches his plan to destroy Edgar. He emerges from the center *frons*, commanding the stage with a dramatic, full-view entrance.

S.D. ***with a letter***] Pope, *subst*. Not in Q, F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (p. 131): **letter**: a widely used property and plot device cited in over 400 directions, typically *enter with a letter*.

1. **Nature**] In the previous scene, Edmund becomes attentive when Lear declares that "**Nature**" will determine which daughter merits the greatest share of the kingdom. [See note I,i,52, *"Nature."*] The soliloquy invokes the classical *physis* and *nomos* debate, in which Greek thinkers in the fifth century BCE started to distinguish what exists "by nature" (physis) from what exists through human law, custom, and convention (nomos). The most crucial element of his address speech is its brilliant rhetorical delivery. He seeks to win over the audience much as a defendant might plead his case in the *dikastēria*, the ancient Greek law courts. [577] Through his theatrical apostrophe [141] to Nature, a venerable rhetorical device central to the Shakespeare's dramatic and poetic practice, [142] he casts his malignant designs in quasi-legal terms. He thereby lends them the appearance of principled, universal claims and invites the audience to mistake villainy for rational self-assertion. Shakespeare is satirizing how rhetoric can manufacture the appearance of justice while concealing, or even enabling, injustice.

   The conventional ancient story places the first organized teaching of rhetoric in Syracuse, Sicily, after the fall of tyrannies around the mid-fifth century BCE. Citizens whose land had been confiscated reportedly needed to argue ownership claims before popular juries, often without documentary proof. This setting rewarded arguments from likelihood, narrative reconstruction, and orderly presentation. [652] Plato argues in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedrus* that the sophist's rhetorical power consists in converting an audience's epistemic deficiency

into an appearance of knowledge: the unjust may be made to seem just because persuasion governs public belief independently of truth. In *King Lear*, the physis–nomos debate is satirically refracted through Lear's encounter with "Poor Tom," whom he mistakes for a latter-day Diogenes—the ancient Greek Cynic renowned for his radical asceticism. "*Ile talke a word with this same lerned Theban"* (F, 1936). [See note III,iv, 137, *"Theban."*] Diogenes is consistently represented as teaching that the good and happy life is attained by virtue, reason, self-sufficiency, and simplicity in accordance with physis (nature), rather than by submitting to the prestige, possessions, etiquette, laws, and expectations ordinarily treated as nomos. "He claimed to set courage over against fortune, nature against convention, and reason against passion." [651]

Parenthetically, the art of rhetoric and the sophistic teaching of persuasive speech is hilariously lampooned in Aristophanes' Old Comedy, *The Clouds.* It is a subject of ongoing debate among literary historians if Shakespeare may have encountered the Old Comedies of Aristophanes. [656] By 1528, however, a complete Latin Aristophanes was in print, and it circulated through the trans-European learned book trade. [661] It is therefore entirely plausible that Shakespeare was introduced to *Clouds* by his associate John Florio, the Anglo-Italian scholar and translator. [661]

The formalized, explicit study of the classical Trivium (Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric) has almost entirely disappeared from the standard public K-12 education systems in both the UK and the US. Unfamiliar with the trivium and oral examinations, contemporary students often fail to recognize that the play's central dramatic crisis is rhetoric itself. [657] [658] Rhetorical study remained vigorous into late antiquity, sustained in part by the enduring authority of Cicero's five canons—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Marcus Fabius Quintilianus*'s Institutio Oratoria*, meanwhile, stands as a foundational contribution to educational theory and literary criticism, presenting the training of the orator as inseparable from the moral formation of the citizen. St. Augustine dedicates Book IV of *On Christian Doctrine* to the subject of rhetoric and preaching. For him, the delivery of the sermon was a vital, powerful, and essential part of the Christian ministry, not a secondary skill. [346] During the Middle Ages, rhetoric was taught in schools as part of the trivium, along with logic and grammar. [347] [348] Marsilio Ficino's Latin translation of Plato's works (1484), was widely known and highly influential among English intellectuals in the 16th century.

In Shakespeare's day, the trivium formed the core of the grammar-school curriculum. Students were systematically trained in persuasion, argumentation, and style, primarily through the study of classical Latin texts. Numerous rhetoric textbooks and manuals were available and widely used such as *De copia* by Erasmus and *The Garden of Eloquence* by Henry Peacham, and *The Foundacion of Rhetorike* by Richard Rainolde (father of John Rainolds). [349] The ability to speak effectively was synonymous with power and influence in public and political life. Rhetoric was central both to Queen Elizabeth I personally and to the culture of her court. [350] Shakespeare is renowned for his exceptional mastery of rhetoric. [351] [653] In Act IV, he lampoons rhetoric and oratory in the diatribe Lear address to Gloucester and the audience. [See

note IV,v,109,S.D., "*Lear remains standing.*"]

> Rhetoric – the skillful use of language in order to move or persuade – was big business in Elizabethan England judging by the amount of books published on the subject. And although we know very little about Shakespeare's life, it's likely that he would have attended the King Edward VI School in his birthplace of Stratford-upon-Avon until his early teens and studied rhetoric there as part of the regular curriculum. Throughout his plays, we can see how Shakespeare was steeped in rhetoric – not just through the linguistic 'tricks' and techniques he uses to compose his characters' speeches, but through the comments the characters themselves make about the art of communication. (Kim Ballard, "Rhetoric, power and persuasion in *Julius Caesar*".)

In the later fifth century BCE, the Greek *physis–nomos* debate broadened from a concern with the legitimacy and basis of civic institutions to an inquiry into the formation and character of the individual. The movement is conventionally associated with the fifth-century Sophists' attention to civic discourse, language, convention, and the human sphere; it acquired a distinctive philosophical force in Socratic inquiry and Platonic dialectic in the late fifth and early fourth centuries BCE; and Aristotle gave several of its central distinctions their most systematic fourth-century formulation. For Aristotle, "the virtues come to be present neither by nature nor contrary to nature, but in us who are of such a nature as to take them on, and to be brought to completion in them by means of habit" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, II.1, 1103a23–26). [659]

Some ancient thinkers argued that human laws repress an individual's authentic natural character. Others, notably Callicles in the *Gorgias*, maintained that "nature" itself authorizes the rule of the strong over the weak: on this view, laws are conventions devised by the weak majority to restrain those naturally fitted to command. Hippocratic medical tradition, conventionally associated with Hippocrates, held that health and disease depended on the proportion and mixture of bodily humors. Galen later developed this humoral framework into a more explicit theory of temperament, linking bodily constitution to characteristic emotional and behavioral dispositions.

Figure 41. Lucretius opens his poem *De rerum natura* by addressing Venus not only as the mother of Rome (Aeneadum genetrix) but also as the veritable mother of nature (Alma Venus).

Lucretius' poem *De rerum natura* (On the Nature of Things), which Shakespeare appears to have been familiar with, [67] suggests some organisms as more naturally viable than others under material conditions. Within Epicurean cosmology, the poem says that animals survive through qualities like craft or intelligence, others through strength, cunning, or swiftness. He contrasts species that survive because they possess a useful ***Virtus*** with those that go extinct because they lack a trait suited to self-preservation.

> *De rerum natura* provides the best surviving explanation of the ideas of the Greek Epicurean philosophers. It describes the development of the cosmos, the Earth, living things, and human society through purely naturalistic mechanisms, without any reference to supernatural involvement. *De rerum natura* would influence the cosmological and evolutionary speculations of philosophers and scientists during and after the Renaissance. This view was in strong contrast with the views of Roman philosophers of the Stoic school such as Cicero, Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BC – AD 65), and Pliny the Elder (23 – 79 AD) who had a strongly teleological view of the natural world that influenced Christian theology. [See Figure 41.]

Edmund's nature becomes the central focus at the end of the play when he declares, *"some good I meane to do / Despight of mine owne Nature"* (F, 3200-01). [See note V,i,244, *"some good I mean to do/ Despite mine own nature."*] What "nature" is that? Of course, Shakespeare did not view his characters through the lens of a modern clinical or forensic psychologist, however, his plays definitely explore traits and behaviors that align with our contemporary understanding of psychopathy and moral identity. [71] If Edmund lived in the 21st century, he would very likely score high marks on Robert Hare's "Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R)". According to Hare, one of the key indicators of psychopathy is a lack of affective empathy. Empathy serves as a crucial building block in a person's moral identity. [68] Because psychopaths lack the emotional resonance with others' pain, they also fail to experience genuine remorse for the hurt they inflict. Researchers are actively exploring the possibility that empathy has a genetic basis. [69] The exact role a person's genetic predisposition (nature) plays in psychopathy or any dissocial behavior is not yet fully understood. It is only inferred that there is always a relationship between Nature and Nurture.

> The idea that some humans are inherent free riders without moral scruple seems to have become controversial only in the postmodern era, when it has become fashionable to deny that any of us have a "nature" at all. For as long as humans have roamed the Earth, we have noticed that there are people who seem to be what psychiatrist Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig called "emptied souls." [70] One of Aristotle's students, Theophrastus, was probably the first to write about them [in *The Characters*] and, calling them 'the unscrupulous' [also translated as "The Ironical Man" and "Dissembling"]. [18] These are people who lack the ordinary connections that bind us all and lack the inhibitions that those connections impose. They are, to over simplify, people without empathy or conscience." (Kent A. Kiehl and Morris B. Hoffman, "The Criminal Psychopath: History, Neuroscience, Treatment, and Economics", 2011.)

It is worth considering the possibility that John Lowin (b. 1576) was typecast in the roles of both Iago and Edmund opposite Henry Condell (b. 1576) in the parts of Cassio and Edgar. *Othello* and *King Lear* were theoretically written about a year apart. Edmund functions as a more human and less melodramatic analogue to Iago, complicating Shakespeare's inquiry into how evil is generated, cultivated, and performed within the human psyche. A substantial body of scholarship treats Shakespeare's plays as intertextual, [578] and extratextual, meaning that casting a well-known, established actor automatically brings the audience's awareness of their previous roles, star persona, and public life into the new performance, which comments directly on the character. [579]

3. **in the plague of custom**] condemned by the rules of society
4. **curiosity**] squeamishness, false delicacy, over-particularity or fastidiousness.
4. **deprive me**] debar me, keep me out of my rights.
5. **For that**] because.
6. **Lag of**] behind in years.
6. **base**] Bastards were sometimes called "base sons."
7. **dimensions**] proportions. Edmund is saying that his physical shape is just as good as Edgar's, who was born in wedlock.
7. **compact**] put together, made
8. **generous**] gallant, high-spirited, courageous, befitting a person of noble birth.
8. **as true**] well-proportioned. Compare *Shake-speares Sonnets* (Quarto I, 1609), 62, *"Me thinkes no face so gratious is as mine, / No shape so true,"* (Q1, 920-1).
9. **honest**] chaste.
9. **issue**] child
12. **More composition**] a fuller mixture.
12. **fierce quality**] more energetic quality
14. **fops**] foolish silly persons
19. **speed**] prosper
21. **to**] (F, 355). *tooth'* (Q, 355). *Top the* Capell. Meaning "*go to* the legitimate." See elliptical uses of "to" (*OED,* I,1,(c)). British linguist David Crystal writes in a personal communication on 9 July 20: "This notion of 'going to' or 'blossoming into' resonates nicely with growing and prospering - contra Capell's point about a 'natural introduction'". See Furness, *A New Variorum Edition*, "top", p. 45. "The senses and uses of *to* may be arranged in various ways, every way having its peculiar difficulties owing to cross-currents of history and usage. Old English and the West Germanic Languages had two prepositions with the sense of modern *to*, viz. *tó* and *óð*; the second of these always expressed motion reaching its object; it is therefore probable that *tó* had originally the sense of 'direction towards', without any implication of reaching; and in a truly historical account of the word, it would perhaps be necessary to start with the two main divisions of 'toward' and 'actually to'. But even in the earliest written Old English this distinction had, so far as concerns *tó*, faded away, and in the various transferred and later senses it could not be successfully carried out. Even the later distinction between *to* as a preposition implying motion, and *to* representing the dative inflection, can, from the falling together of these notions, only be partially exhibited. The arrangement here followed is thus largely tentative and practical, and not in every case historical" (*OED*, **Preposition**, in ordinary use, before a noun.)
20. **grow**] *Physis* is the noun form of the Greek verb *phuein*, meaning it represents the active process and natural result of growing, emerging, and coming into existence. To the ancient Greeks, nature was never a static object or backdrop. Physis meant that the universe and everything in it act like a growing plant, constantly unfolding and developing from their own inner power.
22. S.D. ***Enter Gloucester***] (Q, 337), (F,337). Following Vitruvian conventions of entrances signaling to the audience where an actor is coming from geographically, [409] Gloucester enters from the side door in the *frons* on the audience's right (stage left) signifying that he is coming

from inside his castle. This is the opposite of Western proscenium theatre conventions where stage right is generally considered a stronger entrance than stage left. (Because audiences in Western cultures read from left to right, movement from an actor's right to left creates natural momentum, commands immediate attention, and feels intuitively more powerful. [497]) His entrance from the side can justify why he doesn't immediately spot Edmund who is located directly in his line of sight downstage center As noted below, Edgar enters from the same door later in the scene. [See note I,i,22, S.D., *"Enter."*]

22. S.D. ***wearing spectacles***] Ed. Not in Q, F. He is probably wearing bow rather than rivet spectacles, such as those in Figure 42. See note I,i,S.D.,*"wearing spectacles."* Like Edmund, he is wearing the same costume as before, signifying that scene ii occurs the same day as the one before but late in the evening.

Figure 42. Portrait of Thomas More wearing bow spectacles. Flemish School, circa 16th century. Musee Granet, France.

24. **Prescrib'd**] limited, restricted, confined within bounds
25. **Confin'd to exhibition**] restricted to an allowance.
26. **Upon the gad**] suddenly, as if pricked by a gad or goad.
27. S.D. ***Putting up the letter***] Rowe. Not in Q, F.
28. **earnestly**] eagerly
28. **put up**] put away
31. **Nothing**] See note I,i,87, *"Nothing."* It can be said that the Tragedy of King Lear is literally over *"nothing."*
32. **terrible dispatch**] fearful haste.

Figure 43. Portrait of Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk, by Hans Eworth, 1563.

33. **pocket**] By the time of James I's coronation in 1603 and throughout the early Jacobean period, pockets were becoming more fashionable and common among male nobles than external purses. While purses (pouches) had been worn externally on belts for centuries, the 17th century saw a shift toward sewing pockets directly into the seams of men's doublets, coats, and breeches to protect valuables from "cut-purses." [393] [394] In "Hands Deep in History: Pockets in Men and Women's Dress in Western Europe, c. 1480–1630" Rebecca Unsworth, writes that "the sixteenth century saw the rise of new codes of manners and civility, as

expressed in conduct manuals. Not only was there less shame in removing an item from a pocket rather than a codpiece, but pockets could also be used *to hide things from view*" [italics mine] (p.160). She notes that in "Materializing Gender in Early Modern England", "Will Fisher argues that certain accessories and aspects of appearance in the early modern period — handkerchiefs, codpieces, beards and hair — were prostheses, integral yet detachable attachments to the body, which both shaped and compensated for a lack in the original body. Fisher sees these features as not only outwardly marking a person's gender identity, but as actively constituting it. Pockets are not able to mould one's gender in the same way" (p. 158). Edgar goes through Oswald's "pockets" after he kills him. [See note IV,v,253, *"pockets."*]

Figure 43a. ***Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature*** **and Culture by Will Fisher.**

There is significant historical evidence that purses and pouches became unfashionable and functionally obsolete as a primary accessory for men's clothing starting in the 17th century, largely due to the introduction of integrated pockets. [395] Purses are absent from the dominant iconography of James I portraits after his coronation in 1603, such as that worn by Thomas Howard in a painting from 1563 by Hans Eworth. [See Figure 43.] "James VI of Scotland and I of England, was notoriously neglectful of his own appearance, despite being shown wearing a striking pale blue doublet in a portrait miniature by Nicholas Hilliard, c.1609–15. He did, however, expect his courtiers to promote the Stuart court as a centre of culture and fashion to the rest of Europe . . . [Courtiers] could even be driven to bankruptcy in their pursuit of fashion." ("The Sartorial styles of Kings and Queens Revealed", The Royal Collection Trust).

Figure 44. Men's hose worn skin-tight in the fifteen century was described as being "so closely fitted that they showed almost all their muscles, as if they were completely naked." Agostina Veneziano, 1517, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

35. **spectacles**] Compare *Much Ado About Nothing*, I,i, *"I can see yet without spectacles"* (F, 184). Shakespeare is using the prop to symbolize the artificial nature of the character's sight. Ironically, Cornwall stomps on them before putting out the first of his eyes: *"Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot"* (F, 369-70).

> The 15th century marks a crucial time in the development of spectacles. By the time of Johann Gutenberg's invention of the printing press around 1450, glasses were already used by artisans as well as monks and other religious scholars. But once books became available to everyone, the demand and subsequent popularity of spectacles rose exponentially. By the early 16th century, spectacle peddlers who were selling glasses

became a common sight on the streets and throughout the countryside of Western Europe. . . . After 1665, demand also increased more dramatically when the first newspaper, the London Gazette, appeared. . . . From the beginning, spectacles failed to remain in position and stay on. As noted during the 15th and 16th centuries, they were of the riveted type which was normally hand-held. These spectacles evolved into the type with a more comfortable arched bridge known as bow specs. Following this, the ultra-rare slit-bridge spectacles appeared with slits to give some added elasticity to the nose bridge. Then one piece wire (usually copper) frames with round lenses, better known as Nuremberg style nose spectacles, came into fashion, being mass-produced throughout the 17th century and until the early 19th century. ("Antique Spectacles," curated by David A. Fleishman M.D.

Figure 45. Bow spectacles found in the original case and dating back at least 340 years were among the finds of a recently discovered warship *The Gloucester*.

36. **pardon me**] excuse me for trying to conceal it.
38. **o'erlooking**] inspection
44. **essay or taste of my virtue**] To take the 'assay' of a dish was to taste it. (Muir, *The Cambridge Shakespeare Edition,* p.25.)
44. S.D. ***Gives him the letter***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
45. S.D. ***Reads***] Q (370). F (382) reads.
45-6. **This policy and reverence of age**] the policy of reverencing age
46. **bitter**] Whiter, in an unpublished note, points out that the word was suggested by *taste* (44), and that it suggests *relish*. (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 25.)
46-7. **best of our times**] best years of our lives.
48. **relish**] appreciate
48-9. **to find an idle . . . tyranny**] I begin to feel that to be thus oppressed by an aged and tyrannical father is nothing but a state of vain and foolish servitude. (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 25-6.)
49-50. **who sways not as it hath . . . suffer'd**] who is able to rule not by its strength but by our tameness in putting up with it.
54. **Hum!**] "E.A Armstrong, op. cit., p. 45, points out that 'Shakespeare uses the word in twenty contexts an in twelve of these there is death or sleep imagery. (*The Arden Shakespeare KING LEAR* edited by Kenneth Muir, p. 109.) [See note III,iv, 44. *"Humh."*]
59. **casement**] casement window. A casement window is hinged on one side and swings outward to the left or right. Compare *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.i,*"Why then may you leaue a casement of the great / chamber window (where we play) open, and the Moone / may shine in at the casement."* (F, 867-69). The line could hold a clue to the meaning of Edgar's "descent" in II,i. (See note II,i,19, S.D., *"descends from above with a rope."*)

Figure 46. Tudor casement windows at The Folk of Gloucester.

59. **closet**] private apartment (*OED* 1b)
60. **character**] handwriting
61. **durst**] would, dare
62. **fain**] rather
63. S.D. ***Readjusting his spectacles***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Perch-style, bow spectacles are not as easily worn as the "over the ear" innovation later in the 17th century. They present an "obstacle" for the actor who has to prevent them from falling off his nose. "Obstacles are anything and everything that get in the way of your objectives," writes Los Angeles acting teacher Ivana Chubbuck (*Backstage*). Gloucester's objective is to keep them on his nose so he can see things close up. [395] [See note III,vi,7, S.D., *"Gloucester readjusts his spectacles."*]
66. **sounded**] a nautical metaphor
68. **perfect age**] adult
68. **declin'd**] past their prime
69. **as ward to the son**] under the guardianship of
72. **Abhorred**] detestable
72. **detested**] detestable
77-78. **you should run a certain course**] you would be adopting a safe plan.
78. **where**] whereas
80. **gap**] breach
81. **pawn**] stake
82. **feel**] test.
83. **pretence of danger**] dangerous intention.
86-7. **auricular assurance**] hearing for yourself
92-3. **wind me into him**] A nautical term. "To turn (a vessel) about or in some particular direction (*OED*. **8**)
93. **Frame**] fashion, manage
94. **unstate myself**] forfeit my rank and fortune
94. **to be in a due resolution**] to be convinced of his innocence, or even of his guilt, and so freed from uncertainty.
94. S.D. ***Gives him back the letter***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The letter is the object of Edgar's attention when he looks up from his book and sees Edmund musing. [See note I,ii,129, *serious contemplation*" (F, 467-8).] Ironically, the situation is reversed in the scene before the battle when Edmund finds Albany with the treasonous letter Edgar has intercepted. Compare note IV,vii, 40., S.D. *"Giving him Goneril's letter."*
95. **presently**] at once
95. **convey**] manage

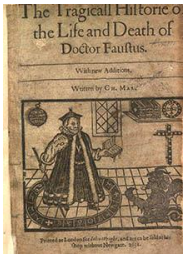


Figure 47. *Doctor Faustus conjuring Mephistopheles from a trap door* on the Frontispiece of the 1631 edition of Marlowe's play.

97. **late**] A total eclipse of the sun occurred on Wednesday 12 October 1605, which was preceded by a partial eclipse of the moon on September 27th in the same year. Comets appeared in England throughout Shakespeare's lifetime. According to Frances W. Yates in her book entitled *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*, "'the dominant philosophy of the Elizabethan age was the occult philosophy'. Other books by Yates in the same line are *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* and *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*. Yates unequivocally demonstrates the pervasive influence of occult philosophy in the Renaissance by revealing that practically all the great figures of the Renaissance were aware of and actively interested in Hermeticism, Cabala, magic and Neoplatonic philosophy. In Yates' view, this occult philosophy was even more of a driving force in the Renaissance than the rational Humanism of Erasmus" (Julian Scott, The Occult Philosophy in the English Renaissance). King James I himself was a deeply superstitious man, obsessed with witchcraft and the occult. He published a dissertation 1597 titled *Daemonologie* "in the form of a Socratic dialogue for the purpose of making arguments and comparisons between magic, sorcery and witchcraft," which included a classification of demons. This book is believed to be one of the main sources used by Shakespeare in *Macbeth*. See note II,i,39,*"wicked charms."*

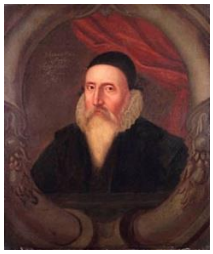


Figure 48. John Dee was an Anglo-Welsh mathematician, astronomer, astrologer and occult philosopher, and an advisor to Queen Elizabeth I.

98-99. **can reason it thus and thus**] can offer explanations of eclipses

99. **yet Nature finds itself scourg'd**] yet the natural world of man is afflicted by the disasters that follow.

100. **falls off**] revolts.

101. **mutinies**] riots, insurrections.

104. **falls from bias of nature**] goes against natural instincts. The metaphor is from bowls.

106. **hollowness**] falseness, insincerity

107. **disquietly**] unquietly

110. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 446). Not in Q.

111. **foppery**] stupidity

112. **surfeits**] natural evil results, as indigestion follows from over-eating.
114. **on**] by
115. **treachers**] traitors
115-16. **spherical predominance**] because a particular planet was most powerful at the hour of our birth. See II,i,39 note.
118. **divine thrusting on**] supernatural impelling or incitement (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*).
119. **whoremaster**] lecherous
119. **goatish**] lascivious
120. **compounded**] had sex with
121. **dragon's tail**] conjunction of the waning moon with the sun's orbit (thought to be an evil influence)
121-22. **Ursa Major**] a star cluster (Great Bear). Edmund is a Leo, a fire sign.
122. **Tut**] Dyce. *Fut,* (Q, 460). Not in F. See Furness, p.54. "**Tut** is an ejaculation (often reduplicated) expressing impatience or dissatisfaction with a statement, notion, or proceeding, or contemptuously dismissing it. (The Scottish *toot*, *toots*, expresses mild expostulation.) (*OED*, **a**.)
124. **bastardizing**] extra-marital conception.

Figure 48a. Title page of an early edition of *Cambyses*, showing the division of roles among actors.

124. S.D. ***Enter Edgar***] (Q, 462). Not in F. [See note EDGAR | KING OF FRANCE in the Dramatis Personae.] From the door on the audience's right (stage left). [See note I,ii,22., S.D. *"Enter Gloucester."*] Evidence and scholarly analysis reveals that Elizabethan playwrights considered character doubling when writing their plays. [72] As the play was published in the quartos and Folio, there is no doubling chart as there is in Thomas Preston's *Cambises King of Percia* (1569), p. 4. [See Figure 48a.] The doubling of the roles of Edgar with the King of France is the central mechanism that makes the character's sudden reversal of fortune deeply shocking to the audience. Aristotle writes in *Poetics* that peripeteia or Reversal is the most powerful part of a plot in a tragedy along with Anagnorisis or Recognition (Chapter VI (1450a 32-35). [400] Seeing Edgar's fall from a great lord to a bedlam beggar (together with Gloucester's recognition of his son at the conclusion of IV,v) is one of the emotional draws of the play, as indicated by the title page:

Figure 49. Facsimile Viewer: King Lear, Quarto 2 (Garrick), Internet Shakespeare Editions.

We first learn about Edgar in the first scene from his father who notes that he was lawfully begotten and *"yet is no deerer in my account"* (F, 22-4) than Edmund. Readers naturally assume that he is not present in the first scene because he isn't important enough to be there. It is not until II,i that he is identified as Lear's *"Godsonne"* (F, 1030). When Edgar first appears in I.ii., Edmund's joking, metatheatrical introduction casts him as a figure of ridicule, priming the audience against him before he speaks. Had they not seen the actor cast in the role of France (explaining his absence in scene i), they might regard him as a minor character without any agency of his own. Edgar is given only 80 words of dialogue in the opening scene compared to Hamlet's where the prince speaks 754 lines including the famous soliloquy *"Oh what a Rogue and Pesant slaue am I?* (F, 1590). These contrasting word counts highlight the difference between a reactive protagonist who dominates the narrative's focus and a marginalized secondary character. Where Edmund proved himself a man of action by fetching Burgundy and France when all the other attendants are thunderstruck by Lear's anger, Edgar goes hide in his brother's closet, and protests his innocence: *"Some Villaine hath done me wrong"* (F, 486). Edgar is *"unbrac'd"* (F, 974) and unimpressive compared with Edmund, who is still wearing the stylish costume he wore at court. [See Figure 50.] After his departure, Edmund tells us that Edgar is *"a Brother Noble, / Whose nature is so farre from doing harmes, / That he suspects none* (F, 499-501), but his words are not adequate to show him at the top of Fortune's Wheel. Edgar's decline fails to resonate because the narrative skips the necessary groundwork of showing his initial success or greatness. It is the trope of a "fall from nothing."

Edgar next appears in II,i where he speaks seven words (F, 958). He submissively parries and dodges Edmund's attack, and then takes flight from the castle, furthering our disapproval of him. Were he a macho man, like Lear or Kent, he would have flown into a violent rage at the news, and rashly stormed off to defend his innocence. We next see him crawling out from underneath the stage in II,iii. Therefore he the form of a bedlam beggar, *"the basest, and most poorest shape / That euer penury in contempt of man, / Brought neere to beast."* (F, 1258-1260). It is not until he vanquishes Edmund in the final scene of the play that he is recognized as a noble character: *"Me thought thy very gate did prophesie / A Royall Noblenesse,"* says Albany (F, 3137-38). Edmund's metaphor at the end of the play "*The Wheele is come full circle"* (F, 3136) is made concrete because the audience saw the actor "at the top" in his role as King of France. [See Figure 32.]

What stands out about Edgar is the performer's skill at mimicry. He effortlessly shifts voices and transforms himself into different personae, like a skilled actor in a play. The German

literary critic Georg Gottfied Gervinus noted, "To play Edgar requires a man to be *'every inch an actor.'* He changes at least six different times." (qu. Furness p.459.) In addition to doubling as the King of France (where he speaks with a French accent, and comports himself with the self-assurance of a King), he mimics a Bedlam beggar, a Doverman who speaks Estuary English, a West Countryman with a Somerset accent, and finally a Knight who speaks Queen's English. After II,iii, Edgar doesn't use his "real" voice until he reveals his identity to Edmund.

Although there is no external documentation to tell us which of the Principall Actors in Shakespeare's company played the parts of Edgar and Edmund, based on the characters of Cassio and Iago in *Othello* (1604), they were performed by Henry Condell and John Lowin respectively. Both were 30 years of age in 1606 when *Lear* was performed. My guess is that the two were routinely typecast, with Lowin specializing in playing "downright villains", according to Britannica. This casting technique, referred to as "meta-casting" today, leverages an audience's pre-existing knowledge and associations with an actor's previous roles as a narrative device. With London public theaters drawing between 10,000 and 20,000 people weekly and several theaters like the Globe active most afternoons, [76] it can be logically assumed the King's Men, an ensemble company, [77] had a dedicated audience base. When an ensemble company has a core group of actors who are well-known to their audience, they can use the audience's familiarity with these actors by crafting storylines that play on their established personas. This can significantly deepen characterizations in a drama.

Figure 50. Unknown Man, ca. 1600 attributed to Nicholas Hilliard by the V&A.

124. S.D. ***unbraced***] Ed. Not in Q, F. loosened, ungirt, unbuttoned (Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 1277). Compare *The Nice Valour or The Passionate Mad-man,* III,iii, *"Enter the passionate Cousin, rudely, and carelessly appareled, unbraced and untrussed"* (p. 157). Compare also *Hamlet*. II,i, *"Lord Hamlet with his doublet all vnbrac'd"* (F, 974); *What You Will*, by John Marston. I,i,21, S.D., *"Enter Jacomo, unbraced, and careless dressed"; III,i,,S.D, "Enter Francisco, half-dressed, in his black doublet and round cap."*.) In contrast to Edmund, who is formally attired in the clothes he wore in the scene before, Edgar is (hypothetically) casually dressed, perhaps even in a state of *undress* as in the miniature of *A Man Against a Background of Flames* by Isaac Oliver. [See Figure 50.] Edgar's costume, like the book he is reading, reinforces the idea that the character is more interested in philosophy than his outward appearance. The audience has already seen the actor in far richer clothes than Edmund's, establishing Edgar nonverbally as the superior character. In fact, Edmund is not even a blip on the radar when the King of France is presented to Lear. Note that Edgar is not wearing a sword. (See note I,ii,158., *"go*

arm'd.")

124. S.D. ***reading on a book***] Ed. Not in Q, F. There are many examples where characters enter "***reading***" cited in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (pp. 176-177), notably *"Enter Hamlet reading on a Book"* (*Hamlet*, F,1203). Edgar's "*reading on a book*" is a "signifier" of the character's intellect and social standing. [78] Edgar is so preoccupied *"reading on a book,"* that he is unaware of his brother's presence downstage.

Figure 51. Portrait of an Unknown Young Man with a Book, Bronzino, 1530s, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY.

125. **And pat he comes**] & out he comes (Q2, 462); and out hee comes (Q1, 462); Pat: he comes (F, 463). Pat: "In a manner that exactly fits the purpose or occasion; appositely, opportunely, readily, promptly" (*OED*). Compare *Hamlet*, *"Now might I do it pat, now he is praying"* (F, 2350). The line contributes to an overarching metaphor rooted in the language of play-wrighting. Edmund means that Edgar has arrived exactly when the plot requires him. Psychologically, He conceit of playwrighting frames him as a cynical observer standing outside his own dramatic world. This positioning reflects his profound emotional detachment—an interpersonal and affective trait central to modern understandings of psychopathy. [79] [80]

Throughout *King Lear*, Shakespeare uses metatheatrical techniques such as this to remind the audience they are watching a play. In Act III,ii, Lear takes the stage directing the storm, shouting commands to *"the twelve-penny Hirelings make artificial Lightning in their Heavens."* [7] [See note III,ii,1,S.D., "*Blast of thunder.*"] In III,iv the perfect timing of Edgar's winding of his horn serves a dramatic, symbolic, and structural function; not a realistic one. The entrance of Gloucester in III,iv.104, is even more "pat" than Edgar's in I,ii. Understanding the structural design of *King Lear* is essential to identifying textual corruptions, such as the unnatural placement of Albany's speech beginning *"That's but a trifle heree"* (F, 3266-76), where Cordelia is lying dead at his feet, and the king in his death throes. Because metatheatre and dramatic irony are so foundational to the narrative, it is highly plausible that Shakespeare originally conceived Cordelia's death as the ultimate piece of dramatic irony. When Lear enters howling with his virtuous daughter dead his arms immediately following the duke's proclamation *"All Friends shall / Taste the wages of their vertue, and all Foes / The cup of their deseruings"* (F, 3274-76), the effect is decidedly contrived and metatheatrical, under-scoring the wantonness of the gods. [See Appendix A.]

125. **catastrophe**] In classical dramatic theory, "catastrophe" refers strictly to the dénouement or the final resolution of a plot. Shakespeare was highly aware of how contrived these resolutions were due to his Classical Roman Education. Elizabethan students were drilled in the dramatic essays of the 4th-century grammarian Aelius Donatus who mapped out a rigid,

formulaic four-part structure for comedies: protasis (introduction), epitasis (complication), catastasis (heightening of the crisis), and the catastrophe (the final unravelling or resolution). In his prefatory essay De Comoedia (or De Fabula), which serves as an introduction to his extensive Commentary on Terence (Commentarius in Terentii comoedias), Donatus identifies Aristophanes as the definitive author and primary example of Old Comedy (comoedia vetus).

125-26. **old comedy**] Athenian comedy is conventionally divided into three periods: Old Comedy (in the form of the eleven surviving plays of Aristophanes), Middle Comedy, and New Comedy. "All the Old Comedy writers worked within a highly structured format."

126. **cue**] "The concluding word or words of a speech in a play, serving as a signal or direction to another actor to enter, or begin his speech." (*OED*, **1.a**). Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V,i, *"Deceiuing me, / Is Thisbies cue; she is to enter,"* (F, 1986-7). The word draws attention to Edmund's role as an actor. See metatheatre.

127. **Tom o' Bedlam**]] A term to describe beggars and vagrants assumed to be former inmates of the Bethlem Royal Hospital (Bedlam). [See Figure 142.]

Figure 52. Guidonian hand.

128. **divisions**] In music, division (also called diminution or coloration) refers to a type of ornamentation or variation common in 16th- and 17th-century music in which each note of a melodic line is "divided" into several shorter, faster-moving notes. See Wiki.

128. ***Fa, sol, la, mi***] Edmund is sarcastically instructing "poor Tom" in solmization or solfège [133] to hone his skills as a singing mendicant. Developed by Guido of Arezzo in the 11th century, it was the predominant method for teaching pitch and sight-singing.

Video 5. Professor William Mahrt demonstrates the solfege technique using the Guidonian hand.

128. ***Demonstrating the solfège technique on his hand***] Ed. Not in Q. F. The Guidonian hand was a mnemonic device used to assist singers in learning to sight-sing. [Figure 52.] Here it is being used as a symbol of techne among other things. Edmund is using sarcasm as a rhetorical device to sway the audience in his favor. [399] Saying the opposite of what is meant through sarcasm and irony is a prominent and widely recognized feature of British humour. [82] [397] In *King Lear*, the human hand functions as a multifaceted symbol, serving as a recurring motif and structural thread throughout the play, as it is in *Macbeth*. [396] [398] The word "hand" is spoken 29 times beginning with *"That Lord, whose hand must take my plight"* (F, 108). Theatrical gestures involving the hand or gloves, are among the most indelible in the play, notably:

1) Regan's use of her naked hand to put out Gloucester's second eye (III,vii,80);
2) The stench of Lear's naked hand (IV,v,90);
3) Gloucester's feeling Lear's hand (IV,v,140);
4) Goneril's practice of taking her sister by the hand (I,i,301, II,iv,190, IV,vii,36);
5) The unpairing of Goneril's and Regan's gloves (IV,ii,21 and IV,iv,33); and
6) The gauntlets of Albany (V,i,94) and Lear (IV,v,92), *"There's my Gauntlet"* (F, 2537).

128. ***He stands musing***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Aglaura*, John Suckling, *"Jolas stands musing"* (Act IV scena 1.)
129. **serious contemplation**] Edgar sees Edmund musing, and holding the letter. [See note I,ii, 94. S.D. *"Gives him back the letter."*]
131-2. **this other day**] the other day
134. **succeed**] turn out
138. **diffidences**] suspicions, cases of mutual distrust.
138-39. **dissipation of cohorts**] i.e. the dissolution of Lear's entourage.
140. **sectary astronomical**] believer in, or student of, astrology.
149. **forbear his presence**] avoid meeting him
150. **qualified**] mitigated
154. **have a continent forbearance**] restrain your feelings, and keep away.
156. **fitly**] opportunely
157. **key**] Edmund's key may allude metatheatrically to a space in the Globe Playhouse that the audience knows is inaccessible without a key. Scholars theorize that the third level of the tiring house included secure storage for valuable items like costumes, hangings, musical instruments, and so on. [401] It was an area that would logically have been kept locked, inherently requiring a key. Historical reconstructions and architectural discussions of Elizabethan public playhouses describe the third level as a partly or fully open gallery. [402] There is no direct positive evidence, however, that it was not built as a great casement window—a defining feature of Tudor architecture. [403] [See Figure 46.] Shakespeare's plays do not feature any balcony scenes as commonly imagined today. [404] The iconic scene in *Romeo and Juliet* (II,ii) is set at a window in Capulet's orchard, not a balcony. Romeo sees "what light through yonder window breaks" (F, 795) with Juliet appearing above at the window. See note II,i,19,S.D., "*descends from above with a rope.*"
158. **stir abroad**] go out
158. **go arm'd**] *goe arm'd.* (F, 491). Not in Q. Evidently, Edgar is not wearing a sword. See note 124, S.D.,*"reading on a book"*.
161. **meaning**] intention
162. **faintly**] euphemistically
163. **image and horror**] horrible reality—the horror which an exact description would fill you with
164. **anon**] soon
165. ***Exit Edgar***] (Q. 498). After line 166 *anon*. (F, 497)
166. **brother noble**] Compare *Othello*, I,iii,*"Cassio's a proper man"* (Q, 738)
169. **practices**] intrigues

171. **All with me's meet that I can fashion fit**] To me everything is fitting and justifiable that I can utilize for my purposes; the end justifies the means. (Muir, *The Cambridge Shakespeare Edition,* p. 32.)
171. ***Trumpets Sound***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
171. S.D. ***Exit***] (Q, 504); (F, 504). Through the center opening

ACT I, SCENE III.] Scena Tertia. (F, 505). Scene 3 in Quarto.

S.D. ***The Duke of Albany's Palace***] Capell, *subst*.
S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Study (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Enter Goneril***] *Enter Gonerill, and Steward.* (F, 506). Q. *Enter Gonorill and Gentleman.* (Q, 506). From the door on the audience's right (stage left) indicating that she and Oswald are coming from inside the castle.
S.D. ***dressed like a Puritan***] Theatrical conventions of Shakespeare's era permitted actors to be costumed in fashions of their own time, and the many explicit references to items of Elizabethan clothing in the play is direct evidence that they were. [405] One of Tolstoy's main complaints about Shakespeare's playwrighting techniques in *Lear* is that he does not abide by 19th century conventions of realism. "The action," he cavils, "takes place 800 years b.c., and yet the characters are placed in conditions possible only in the Middle Ages." [83] In realistic theater the play must keep its world believable on its own terms so spectators can keep emotionally accepting it as real. If the style, character behavior, setting, or plot suddenly contradicts the play's established logic, the illusion breaks and the audience is pulled out of the experience. "An artistic, poetic work, particularly a drama, must first of all excite in the reader or spectator the illusion that whatever the person represented is living through, or experiencing, is lived through or experienced by himself," claims Tolstoy [78].

Figure 53. "A Puritan Family, from Tenor of the Whole Psalms in Four Parts, 1563." Courtesy of Meisterdrucke.

So what precisely does it mean to be costumed in *"Puritan dress",* as Jasper Mayne indicates in *The City Match*: *"Enter Dorcas out of her Puritan dresse"*(IV,iii, Folger Library). The popular stereotype of Puritan women's dress is that of severe, ankle-length, all-black clothing with white collars, designed to be completely devoid of fashion, color, or vanity. This image is largely a 19th-century invention, as historical reality was more varied. [406] "Puritans advocated a conservative form of fashionable attire, characterized by sadd colors and modest cuts. Gowns with low necklines were filled in with high-necked smocks and wide collars. Married women covered their hair with a linen cap, over which they might wear a tall black hat. Men and women avoided bright colours, shiny fabrics and over-ornamentation. Contrary

to popular belief, most Puritans and Calvinists did not wear black for every day, especially in England, Scotland and colonial America. Black dye was expensive and faded quickly. Therefore, black clothing was generally reserved for the most formal occasions (including having one's portrait painted), for elders in a community and for those of higher rank. Richer puritans, like their Dutch Calvinist contemporaries, probably did wear it often but in silk, often patterned. Typical colours for most were brown, murrey (mulberry, a brownish-maroon), dull greens and tawny colours. Wool and linen were preferred over silks and satins, though Puritan women of rank wore modest amounts of lace and embroidery as appropriate to their station, believing that the various ranks of society were divinely ordained and should be reflected even in the most modest dress." [406] [407]

S.D. ***coifed***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Jacobean women primarily wore coifs as informal, everyday headwear when at home. [See Figure 53.] Formal hats were generally worn for public appearances or outdoors over the coif. [84] It is necessary to signal to the audience that time has elapsed since scenes ii and iii

. This is accomplished by Goneril's change of clothes. Her costume is now unmistakably puritanical in its high-neckline, sadd colors, and her exposed coif. By logic, we can infer she is dressed formally in the first scene, and wearing a hat as was customary. [See Figure 54.]

Figure 54. Nicholas Hilliard's Unknown Woman of 1602 wears typical Puritan fashion of the early years of the century. Her tall black felt hat with a rounded crown is called a capotain and is worn over a linen cap. She wears a black dress and a white stomacher over a chemise with blackwork embroidery trim; her neckline is filled in with a linen partlet.

S.D. ***Steward***] "An official who controls the domestic affairs of a household, supervising the service of his master's table, directing the domestics, and regulating household expenditure; a major-domo" (*OED*, **1.a.**) How Oswald is cast is crucial in the narrative. His looks, clothing, and physical mannerisms actively shape the plot. They serve as a driving force for how other characters interact with him. Of course, if he is cast as a sexless middle-aged Puritan, like Malvolio (the Steward to Olivia in *Twelfth Night*), there will be no undercurrents of sexuality in either Goneril's relationship with him or Kent's.

It may be inferred from the dialogue that Oswald is a youth from the lower classes, if not an orphan like the child in Feste's song "When that I was and a little tiny boy" (F, 2560-79) at the conclusion of *Twelfth Night*. [See note I,iv,79, *"football player."*] If the actor is in his teens, and sexually attractive, it will be assumed that his services to "his mistress" extend into the bedroom, as Regan implies: *"I know you are of her bosome"* (F, 2413). Why else would Goneril elevate a pretty youth to a high position in her household if he was not her lover? The reader logically assumes that Oswald seeks to improve his social status and wealth by

leveraging his sexual desirability. Being born poor in England in the 16th century, like being born illegitimate, was a major and often determining factor in a man's future. Bastardy was a legal barrier; poverty was an economic and biological one: both acted as profound constraints on class mobility and survival. [407]

Figure 55. A 17th print showing attractive young football players inflating an animal bladder with a woman looking on admiringly.

Several English monarchs historically promoted handsome men to positions of power and intimacy, often elevating "favourites". These relationships sometimes blurred the lines between romantic affection and their duty. [409] Queen Elizabeth I frequently favored handsome, young, and charismatic men throughout her reign, such as Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Robert Dudley. [407] Edward II was known for the favors he bestowed on the handsome and athletic Piers Gaveston. [408] According to Samantha Smith, King James I is well-known for lavishing attention on a succession of good-looking male courtiers, the last being twenty-one year old George Villiers, "the handsomest-bodied man in all of England; his limbs so well compacted," declared Godfrey Goodman. (Pauline Gregg. *King Charles I,* 1984, p. 49.) The Latin saying *"Rex fuit Elizabeth, nunc est Regina Jacobus"* ("Elizabeth was king: now James is queen") circulated as a contemporary Jacobean witticism mocking King James I's perceived effeminacy or rumored same-sex inclinations. [408]

Kent's physical and verbal abuse of Oswald in II,ii, goes far beyond the small slight he gives Lear (which the audience knows was ordered by Goneril), casting suspicion on the true cause of his visceral hatred of him: *"The lady doth protest too much, methinks"* (*Hamlet*, Q2, 2098). The sexual preferences and lifestyle of a middle-aged, childless, bachelor Earl in Tudor England who preferred the company of men would undoubtedly be a significant subject of intense gossip and, potentially, severe scrutiny. [423] In the opening scene, we see Kent dressed in the manner of Henry Wriothesley, with long, curled hair; wearing showy, expensive clothes. [See Figure 102.] In I,iv, he disguises himself as *"Caius"* (F, 3249). He has cut his hair, and may be wearing a Monmouth Cap—a symbol of practical, rugged, masculinity associated with soldiers, sailors, and laborers in 16th century England. [424] The disguise works primarily because the Earl of Kent presents as a flamboyant figure in court. He immediately taps into Lear's toxic image of himself, which is constructed entirely on stereotyped ideals of what it means to be a man. Kent jokes that he is no cock-sucker in reference to Oswald, who is bringing out a dish of fish. He then shows Lear his aggressive masculinity by tripping and humiliating the steward—a violent act that so pleases the king, he is instantly rewarded with money. Compare Macbeth who is rewarded with the title "Thane of Cawdor" for his brutal nature in service to Duncan (F, 90-92).

Male beauty and high fashionability were viewed as dangerous, sinful, and deeply problematic

by 17th-century Puritans. Rather than seeing fashion as a harmless personal choice, Puritan theologians and lawmakers viewed flamboyant male styles as a threat to spiritual purity, social order, and the distinct boundaries between the sexes. [85] Gore Vidal wrote in a personal communication with Jay Blotcher:

> [T]he male body as an object of beauty and desire for both sexes was very late coming in a sad Jesus Christ-besotted peasant nation like the US. The first manifestation in a mainline movie was *It Happened One Night* when Clark Gable took off his shirt to reveal no undershirt. Sales of undershirts plummet . . . But no one quite understood what was happening. Beauty and desirability were the province of the female. A man could be handsome but hardly erotic—he was judged by his suit, Borsalino hat, the twinkle in his eye. Then came Tennessee Williams with quite other notions of what the male meant. When Brando appeared in 1947 on stage in a torn sweaty t-shirt the male as erotic object exploded into the slow American consciousness.… Incidentally, from the beginning, the female was celebrated by the likes of C.B. DeMille who may have set the style for the later exhibition of the male which he himself did not exhibit, his males' bodies looked like refugees from a Turkish bath for alcoholics. [See Figure 56.] In my time in Hollywood's 50s, male beauty deeply disturbed directors and producers–competition "terror."

Figure 56. Victor Mature as Samson in MGM's box office hit *Samson and Delilah* (1949) directed by Cecil B. DeMille, looking very much like "a refugee from a Turkish bath for alcoholics."

Same-sex sex is part of the spoken universe in *King Lear*. See note IV,v,137-38, *"Dost thou squiny at me? No, doe thy worst blinde Cupid, Ile not loue."* (F, 2580-82). While the term "homosexual" was not used before 1892, the sexual practices of human beings were then as they are now and always will be. At 17 years of age, John Rainolds, a life-long bachelor, played the female role of Hippolyta in a performance of the play *Palamon and Arcite* at Oxford, as part of an elaborate entertainment for Queen Elizabethan I. He might have been speaking from his own personal experience when he warns in his book *Th'overthrow of Stage-Playes*: "Dressed as a *woman*, or playing the *woman's* part, the boy player attracts the *affections* of the *men* in the audience through the image he portrays. ... among the kinds of adulterous lewdness how *filthy* and monstrous a sin against nature *men's* natural corruption and viciousness ... nations, . . . thirdly, what *sparkles* of *lust* to that *vice* the *putting* on of *woman's attire* on *men may kindle* in *unclean affections*."

Figure 57. The Bath House,n.d.Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528 Nuremberg), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

S.D. ***wearing a longsword***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In *King Lear*, size matters. In II,ii,68, Kent alludes to Oswald's sword when Cornwall asks him why he is angry: *"That such a slave as this should wear a sword,/ Who wears no honesty"* (F, 1145-46). In my restoration, he is wearing a longsword in all of his scenes as a device of farce. The term longsword covers a wide range of sword types. In Late Middle Ages (c. 1350–1550), it referred to the two-handed weapon described in German and Italian fencing manuals. [86] [87] During the late 16th century, Renaissance in Elizabethan England, "long sword" could refer to a very long one-handed sword. In every case, if the sword wasn't properly secured in its scabbard and properly belted, there was a very high likelihood of snagging, tripping, or getting tangled**.** [See note II,ii,36.S.D., *"Oswald trips on his sword"*.] Oswald has no need to wear a longsword to serve dinner to Lear. It is performative behavior common among young males throughout history who are eager to assert their maturity and importance. [See Figure 58.] Oswald's longsword may be contrasted comically with Kent's "short sword" in the next scene. In medieval literature, the sword reflects "the warrior who wields it by standing in as a *phallic symbol* and the general concept of gender beyond its physical uses in war."

Figure 58. Adolescens, Omne Bonum, c.1360-1375–Royal 6 E VI f. 58v, England. Detail of a histriated initial 'A'(dolescens) of a young woman with a mirror and a young man with a sword. British Library.

> [S]words were a part of the picture of "masculinity" and of knighthood, it's important to acknowledge the role that they played in medieval literature. The sword was something held in high regard as physical symbols of valor and honor that these men wore and fought with. It was a label passed down from generations and inherited from fathers before them. (Rachel E. Savini, "The —ick of It: Phalluses, Swords, and Character Development in *Beowulf* and *Morte d'Arthur*," 2019)

1. S.D. ***Gon***].
1. **chiding**] scolding
5. **crime**] offence
7. **upbraids**] criticizes
8. **trifle**] trivial matter
8. **hunting**] In the story of Lear as told in Layamon's *Brut* the two dukes covenanted with Lear 'that they would provide for the king Hawks and hounds that he might ride over all the country and live in bliss while he lived.' Lear's hunting is mentioned elsewhere in the poem. (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p.33). Hunting is a central motif in *King Lear*. [See Appendix J: A Skinning House.] King James I was famously obsessed with the hunt. Grace Elliot notes in her blogspot, "King James 1 – Dogs, Hunting and the Nation's Discontent":

> James asserted, as William the Conqueror had, "a royal prerogative" to hunt. To this end it was expected all the subjects of his realm, from noblemen to peasants, would

facilitate this sport. In practice this meant he was free to roam across any land he wished – and do tremendous damage in the process.

James wanted to hunt in the French style – which involved mounted huntsmen tearing across the countryside on horses. To this end he imported French hounds and fifty red deer from a forest in Fontainebleau. James' detractors went so far as to say he spent his life in the saddle and in common with many country squires, hunting was all he seemed to care about. "*Does all go well with you? In all your letters I find not one word of horse, hawk or hound?"*

In keeping with the French way of hunting with James placing restrictions on land owners and farmers. If the hunt was to pass their way he forbade the ploughing of land (furrows being a hazard to galloping horses) and ordered pigs to be confined (so their rooting didn't create dangerous holes) Worse still, locals were commanded to take down any fences, walls or hedges that might obstruct His Majesty's ride. During the hunt itself mounted huntsmen and packs of hounds caused considerable damage – often trampling crops, damaging fences, destroying gardens and scattering flocks or herds of animals. But the disruption didn't end there. Local common folk were ordered to provide workers to assist the hunt, taking them away from their work – if it was harvest time. In addition, a farmer was expected to provide food and fodder for all the royal party – which could easily amount to a hundred or so people. Attempts to appeal to the king to recoup their expenses fell on deaf ears. Indeed, during one hunt, a local hit on an ingenious way of getting the king's attention – by kidnapping his favorite dog, Jowler. Jowler went missing and reappeared later with a message tied to his collar which read: "Good Mr Jowler, we pray you speak to the King, for he hears you every day, and he does not hear us. Ask that His Majesty be pleased to go back to London, or else this countryside will be undone. All our provisions are used up already and we are not able to entertain him any longer."

10. **come slack of former services**] are less serviceable, less duteous to him, than formerly.
11. **answer**] be answerable for
11. S.D. ***Horn within***] Capell, not in Q, F. Huntsman John Tabachka demonstrates the call of "Going Home" on the hunting horn, and explains its use. [See Video 6.]

Video 6. "Going Home". The call of a hunting horn at the end of a hunt.

14. **come to question**] made an issue
15. **distaste**] dislike
17. **Idle**] foolish
21. **With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abus'd**] they must be rebuked when they abuse the flatteries shown them. Compare I,i, *"You haue obedience scanted,/ And well are worth the want that you haue wanted."* (F, 304-5). See note I,i,281., *"And well are worth the want that you have wanted."*]
25. **occasions**] opportunities

26. **straight**] immediately
27. **hold my very course**] follow my lead
27. S.D. ***Tucket within***] Ed. Not in Q, F. "A fanfare played on a trumpet usually when nobility enter, each nobleman having his own call" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **tucket**, p. 239.) The tucket functions like custom ringtones for specific contacts on Android and iOS devices to identify who is calling. The ceremonial trumpets that herald his arrival at Albany's castle find a comic analogue in the Fool's announcement of his arrival at Gloucester's in Act II. [See note II,iv, S.D., "*playing a pipe and tabor.*"] As noted above, the sound of a tucket is distinctly different from the call of a hunting horn signaling the end of a hunt. [See note I,iii,11.S.D., *"Horn within."*] As always, music, whether diegetic or non-diegetic, signals the end of one scene and the beginning of the next.
27. S.D. ***Exeunt***] (F, 528). *Exit*. (Q, 528).

ACT I, SCENE IV. *Scena Quarta*. (F, 529). Scene 4 in Quarto.

Figure 59. Jakob Seisenegger, *"Portrait of Charles V with a Hound,"* 1532,- Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Bilddatenbank.

S.D. **A Hall in the same**] Capell; not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Platform and the Lords Rooms**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Study and Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Enter Kent***] (Q, 530) (F, 530). Following Roman theatrical convention, the character enters from the audience's right, which traditionally signified an arrival from nearby, whereas the left entrance denoted an arrival from the country or foreign locations. [505]
S.D. ***disguised***] Rowe; not in Q, F. When we last saw the Earl of Kent, he was fashionably dressed, meticulously groomed, and wore a rapier. [See note I,i,S.D., *"Kent."*] He has now disguised himself as a veteran soldier, and wears utilitarian, working-class civilian attire. He might even be wearing a Monmouth cap—functional, inexpensive headwear for working-class men, sailors, and soldiers, that have historical associations with male-dominated professions. [88] He wears his hair short, and razed his beard and moustache. He wears a simple civilian short sword, and speaks with a West Country accent. His masquerade as a macho man works largely because no one expects it from someone perceived as effeminate. [See note V,i,13., *"gilded butterflies."*]

Figure 60. The only known example of an original 'Monmouth Cap' dating from the 16th century (Monmouth Museum).

2. **defuse**] disguise. He is now speaking with a different accent.

2-3. **my good intent . . . likeness**] I may be able to carry out the good purpose which made me so disguise myself, i.e. to attend on the king

4. **raz'd my likeness**] "to erase, to blot out: from the book of honour" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary,* pp. 942-3). Raz'd has a double meaning as the androgynous Earl has shaved off his stylish beard and moustache, and wears an unkempt stubble as a disguise. [561] Compare *Island Princess*, (wln 3031), *"Pulls his Beard and hair off"* (The Folger Shakespeare Library). Ironically, in II,ii, Kent lambastes Oswald for being a *"Barber-monger"* (F, 1106), i.e., curling his hair and shaving his face. [See note III,iv,70. *"curl'd my hair."*]

7. S.D. ***Sennet***] Ed. *Horns within*, after *labors,* line 7 (F, 538). Not in Q.

7. S.D. ***Enter Lear***] *Enter Lear and Attendants.* (F, 538). *Enter Lear.* (Q, 539). Lear and several of the highest ranking young Knights in his entourage enter from the central doorway in the *scaenae frons* at the Globe. Contrary to the traditional scholarly assumption that the center opening was the privileged locus of dramatic focus, the textual evidence suggests it acted primarily as a passageway, comparable to the Roman valva regia. [410] In Elizabethan drama, the large recessed opening was only occasionally used as discovery space as in the V,i of *The Tempest* when *"Prospero discouers Ferdinand and Miranda, playing at Chesse*" (F, 2141). [412] In *King Lear*, there is a surprise discovery made in III,vi,14 but it is the only one in the play. In theatre, the upstage-center spot is the strongest focal point because it places the actor in the visual and symbolic center of the stage, where the audience's attention naturally concentrates. [411] It is traditionally the entrance spot for royalty, villains, or key characters because it provides a dramatic, full-view approach to the center of the action.

Lear is still wearing Tudor period fashions but ones suitable for hunting. This matter is essential because it determines what items of clothing the actor can practically "tear off" in the storm. Green was a favored color for hunters in the late medieval and into the Tudor era because it helped blend into woodland backgrounds. [427] Illuminated hunting manuals and literary description such as in 8.2 "The Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and Tale", and Shaftesbury's description of Henry Hastings, [428] associate green with hunting. Of note, the colors red and green are deeply rooted in religious symbolism, particularly within Christianity, where they are best known as the traditional colors of Christmas: green symbolizes the eternal life and hope brought by Christ, while red represents the blood and sacrificial love of Jesus.

7. S.D. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note I,iv,47, *Lear's Knight*.

7. S.D. ***Knights***] Rowe. Not in Q, F. Lear enters with a few of the young knights who had accompanied him on his day's-long hunt. He has granted them the high honor of dining at his table, adhering strictly to the rigid protocols of court. [413] [415] Shakespeare's audience would

naturally have inferred that the rest of Lear's retinue was dining in the main hall. It was customary for monarchs, particularly the Tudors like Henry VIII, to dine in private with a few invited guests. While medieval monarchs dined publicly, by the 16th century, the king often ate in private rooms, only dining in the formal presence chamber on special occasions. [414] There are no stage directions indicating how many of Lear's knights are dining with him, presumably five or six as in the illustration of "King James Feasting with Spanish Ambassadors." [Figure 61.] "Most commonly the number of figures to enter is usually left open by means of a collective noun (army, attendants, followers, lords, men, others, train, and the rest)," *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* **permissive stage directions** p. 161-2. For example, in the famous banquet in Act 3, Scene 4 of *Macbeth*, the number of nobles seated at the table is not specified: traditionally 6-8. Macbeth instructs the lords to *"sit downe"* according to their *"owne degrees"* (F, 1256), and remarks, *"The Table's full"* (F, 1311) when he sees the Ghost of Banquo occupying the seat reserved for him.

Figure 61. Attendants serving King James and Spanish Ambassadors (1624) by Melchior Tavernier.

7. S.D. ***from hunting***] Ed. Compare *The Taming of the Shrew*, *"Enter a Lord from hunting, with his traine"* (F, 18).

7.S.D. ***Enter* Oswald *severally***] Ed. Not in Q, F. A king's return from hunting was typically attended by household servants coordinating the preparation of his supper. Oswald enters from the audience's right indicating that he is coming from within the castle.

8. **stay**] wait

8. **jot**] moment

8. **dinner**] Lear calls for a banquet to be brought out. He is in high spirits, and famished from hunting all day.

8. S.D. ***Exit Oswald***] Not in Q, F.

8. S.D. ***Music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Timon of Athens,* III,vi,S.D., ⌜ *"Music"* ⌝ (The Folger Shakespeare. Ed. Barbara Mowat, Paul Werstine). Modern editors often insert the direction *"Music"* to aid readers' understanding of the scene. Music typically accompanies banquets in Elizabethan drama, e.g., *Atheist's Tragedy*, S.D.*,"A Banquet set out. Music."* (p. 264); *Anthony and Cleopatra,* S.D., *Musicke playes. Enter two or three Seruants with a Banket.* (F, 1333-34); *Timon of Athens*, *"Hoboyes Playing lowd Musicke. A great Banquet seru'd in."* (F, 337-8). (See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* **music**, p. 146-48.) In the scene before, Goneril tells Oswald that she will reward him for creating a miserable dining experience for her father and his knights for the purpose of sparking his anger. In the story-world, it is reasonable to suppose that she instructed the musicians in the same way she instructed Oswald: *"if you come slacke of former seruices, / You shall do well, the fault of it Ile answer"* (F, 516-7). Rather than setting a lively tone corresponding with the king's expectations of a merry feast, the music is austere, devotional, and emotionally controlled. It

sounds like church music for mourning, like Thomas Morley's settings of the burial sentences performed at the funeral of Elizabeth I.

Figure 64. The children of the chapel detail from The funeral procession of Queen Elizabeth I to Westminster Abbey, 28th April 1603. (Wiki)

8. S.D. ***A banquet is served in***] Ed. Not in F, Q. Compare *Timon of Athens*, I,ii, *"A great Banquet seru'd in"* (F, 338). See also *"The Banket brought in"* (F, 1424). Large stage properties and furniture, like banquet tables and beds, were frequently brought onto the stage through the center opening in the tiring house. It was wider and taller than the two permanent heavy timber stage doors flanking it, allowing the company to easily move bulky set pieces onto the platform without maneuvering through narrow entryways. [506] As noted above, there are no stage directions in the quartos (Q, 540) or the First Folio (F, 540) describing the tone and style of the dinner—or if there even is one. The banquet is inferred when Goneril tells Oswald *"prepare for dinner"* (F, 527-8), and when Lear says, *"Let me not stay a iot for dinner, go get it ready"* (F, 5390). "Banquets are specified in roughly 100 directions most of which deal with how banquets are to be brought onstage; banquets can be discovered by means of a curtain; most common are directions for a banquet to be fetched, set/out/forth, and brought" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, 1999, p. 19.)

The staging and symbolic force of the banquet scene are best read in relation to the elaborate and politically inflected dining culture of James I's court, where royal meals functioned as highly codified ceremonies of power and hierarchy. [590] This context is especially resonant given that the play was performed before the king and his court in a Whitehall banqueting hall at the outset of the Christmas festivities. In my restoration, the meal is presented as a satirical spectacle, in which the dinner attendants evoke the antics of *commedia dell'arte* Zanni, displacing the expected solemnity of courtly decorum. By contrast, the young Knights Lear has invited to join him at his table are presented as polished and socially decorous, establishing a sharp comic opposition between the rude, performative table behavior of the servants and the refined aristocratic manners of the lords—thereby thoroughly undercutting Goneril's exaggerated claims that his knights violate her household's civility.

The farcical style of the banquet scene is as crucial to the play's narrative development as the banquet at Petruchio's country-house banquet in *The Taming of the Shrew* (IV,i). The scene's absurd handling of dining protocol is significant because it advances the plot, reveals character, and sharpens the satire of seventeenth-century Puritanism—often depicted on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage as a culture of austere, anti-pleasure moralism that condemned playgoing, dress, drink, dance, and festivity. It was frequently exposed for hypocrisy and self-righteousness. [582] Shakespeare's audience would almost certainly have heard Goneril's complaints about her father's knights against the backdrop of contemporary anti-Puritan discourse. The Jacobean court was frequently attacked by Puritan polemicists for its extravagance, frivolity,

and perceived epicureanism. Like Malvolio in *Twelve Night* who prefers order and decorum over *"Cakes and Ale"* (F, 811), Goneril is presented as stern and hypocritical. Her murderous "*Frontlet"* (F, 703) is alluded to on several occasions, most notably in IV,ii in her interaction with the *"Messenger"* (F, 2312)—reassigned in my restoration to "Albany's Squire."

Video 8. Peter Brook's 1953 production with Orson Welles "Hear, Nature" (23:08-24:11)

In *Plays In Performance: KING LEAR*, edited by J.S. Bratton, there is no mention of I,iv being boisterously funny; the various film and television adaptations viewable on YouTube are decidedly not. While Peter Brook invokes the word *"deadly"* to disparage historically informed performance, [421] it perfectly describes his own 1953 expressionistic production with Orson Welles (Video 8); I doubt many audiences in 2026 would disagree. Because Shakespeare's original staging intentions are impossible to know, editors must proceed in their restorations by formulating multiple competing hypotheses about the play's action. Through a process of elimination, they discard untenable possibilities and retain those most defensible in light of textual evidence and historically informed performance theory. The metatheatrical form of *King Lear* decisively resists realist and later Romantic or Expressionist assumptions, continually reminding us that we are watching a constructed, unstable, and mediated event rather than a slice of life.

The play announces its comic mode immediately through visible stage signals. Gloucester enters wearing a costume evoking *Commedia dell'Arte*'s Pantalone—the archetypal stock character alluded to by Jaques' "All the world's a stage" speech in *As You Like It*: *"With spectacles on nose, and pouch onside"* (F, 1138). Lear then appears in grotesquely outmoded Tudor period clothes with a codpiece *"as massie as [Hercules'] club"* (F, 1461-63). The Fool's riddle at the close of Act I points toward the audience's laughter, from which it may be inferred that the crucial banquet scene was originally staged as farce rather than melodrama or pathos-laden expressionism: *"She that's a Maid now, & laughs at my departure, / Shall not be a Maid long, vnlesse things be cut shorter"* (F, 923-4). [See note I,v,45., *"things."*] Friedrich Dürrenmatt writes in his well-known essay "Problems of the Theatre", "[M]any of Shakespeare's tragedies are already really comedies out of which the tragic arises." [89]

The absence of explicit stage directions poses a significant challenge to reconstructing the intended action, leaving aside the further complication of how the text may have been altered by the Master of the Revels. Theatre communicates meaning through metacommunicative cues that frame the action, not through words. As Gregory Bateson observes, nonverbal cues can either support or directly contradict the spoken words. [507] "The same message accompanied by different meta-communication can mean something entirely different, including its opposite, as in irony." [581] To take an example from cinema, in the banquet at the White House in *Naked Gun 2 ½: The Smell of Fear,* Dr. Albert S. Meinheimer's formal speech to President Bush on

the country's energy policy might be taken seriously were it not for the action lines in the screenplay (pp.1-7) describing Frank wrestling with a lobster claw that closes on Commissioner's Brumford's right breast. [See Video 7.]

Video 7. Leslie Nielsen, dinner at the White House from the *Naked Gun 2 ½: The Smell of Fear*.

7. S.D. ***five or six serving men***] Ed. Not in Q, F. *King Lear* takes the form of metatheatre. Shakespeare presents Lear as both actor and audience of his own delusions: *"a poore Player, / That struts and frets his houre vpon the Stage"* (F, 2345-6). The play is fundamentally built around the concept of "acting," which functions as its central structuring principle and the primary framework through which characters navigate experience and apprehend reality. The banquet in I,iv reflects both comedy and tragedy at once, allowing the audience to laugh at the king while simultaneously feeling empathy for his suffering. The scene draws on many of the comic techniques of the so-called "starvation scene" at Petruchio's country house in in *The Taming of the Shrew*, especially the antics of the dinner attendants. Their physical appearance may include extreme unkemptness, exaggerated deformity, or old age. They are a crew of stock characters, *"ragged, old, and beggarly"* (F, 1763)—like the actors in Franco Zeffirelli's 1967 film adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Tayor, which draws extensively on *commedia dell'arte* traditions. [417] [See Video 9.] The number of attendants serving Lear and his guests is not specified. In *Shrew*, Grumio *"Call[s] forth Nathaniel, Ioseph, Nicholas, Phillip, Walter, Sugersop and the rest"* (F, 1718-19). The attendants supply modular comic business, much like zanni in *commedia dell'arte*, that can be deployed whenever the scene sags without affecting the narrative line.

Video 9. IV,i, *The Taming of the Shrew* directed by Franco Zefferilli (1967). Columbia Pictures Industries.

Under James I at Whitehall, the beginning of a meal was marked by ceremonial table-laying: the table was prepared with cloth, salt, plate, and vessels according to court rank and household order, and drinks were served by designated officers such as the cup-bearer, typically before the main meal. [589] Beer is being served to Lear instead of fine wine because it is cheaper and considered a drink of ordinary or lower-status people. King James I appears to have had a clear preference for wine in elite and royal settings, rather than beer. Surviving accounts show regular purchases of imported wines "for the king's use," including sweet wines such as Muscatel, and note that ale was typically provided for less distinguished diners at court. [594] The presence of beer may clarify why there is a bowl of raw eggs at dinner, since eggs were sometimes added to beer in England. [592] [See note I,iv,144., *"egg."*] Later in the scene, Lear spits out his beer, implicitly in disgust at its having been watered down into "small beer," the

diluted drink commonly associated with children and servants. [See note I,iv,104., *"A pestilent gall to me."*] The practice of watering down beer is alluded to in *The Taming of the Shrew*, I,ii, where the phrase *"she brought stone-Iugs, and no seal'd quarts"* (F, 241) suggests illicit or unlicensed ale served in unsealed containers.

8. S.D. ***Re-enter Oswald***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

8. S.D. ***with an ewer of beer***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Ed.

11. **What dost thou profess**] What is your job?

14. **converse**] consort

14-5. **fear judgment**] by an earthly or a heavenly judge.

15. **when I cannot choose—**] Em-dash, Ed. when I cannot choose, (F, 547) when I cannot chuse, (Q, 548).

15. S.D. ***Re-enter* Oswald**] Ed. Not in F, Q.

Figure 63. "Flaisch macht Flash" or "flesh equals flesh". "Nun walks with fish in hand chasing a cat, she wants to trade the fish with a penis that the cat has in its mouth. A jester watches through a window frame", c. 1555, artist unknown, Rijksmuseum.

15. S.D. ***with a dish of poor-John***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Oswald re-enters through the center opening in the *frons*, and sets out a platter dried hake, historically known as "Poor John" [587] —a vital and cheap food staple during Lent and fast days when the law banned eating meat. In "Nashe's Lenten Stuffe" (1599), he writes of poor John that sailors are "first broken to the sea in the herring-man's skiff or cockboat, where having learned to brook all waters and drink as he can out of a tarry can, and eat poor John (dried, salted fish) out of sooty platters, when he may get it, without butter or mustard." [106] Goneril has chosen the fish to serve her father as a metaphor for his penis. Cf. *Rom.*, I,i,33, *'Tis well thou art not Fish: If thou had'st, thou had'st beene poore Iohn.* (F, 33-4). By comparing Sampson's *"pretty peece of flesh"* (F, 32) to "Poor John," he is essentially insulting the size and condition of Sampson's penis, implying it is dried-up, shriveled, and anything but "pretty." The urbandictionary gives the example, *"Yo dude, did you see the poor john on Gary in the showers today. It's like a raisin!"*

Figure 62. Fasting nuns at the refectory table being served fish by skeletons (an allegory of abstinence), from Cotton MS Tiberius A VII/1, f. 97v.

In *Henry IV, Part 2*, F, 2329, Falstaff makes a connection between diet and masculine sexual prowess. He attributes to Prince John a form of anaemia called chlorosis which was commonly termed 'green–sickness': *There's neuer any of these demure Boyes come to any proofe: for thinne Drinke doth so ouer-coole their blood, and making many Fish-Meales, that they fall into a kinde of Male Greene-sicknesse: and then, when they marry, they get Wenches"* (F,

2327-31). (Compare note II,iv,55, "*Hysterica passio"*).

> "The contemporary references to [green-sickness] cited by Gordon Williams demonstrate that it was usually thought to afflict young women, its cure being sexual activity (Williams 1994c, 'green sickness'). As Ian Maclean pointed out, most early moderns, following Aristotle, believed that sex was determined at the moment of conception by the male semen and this could be affected by diet, climate or physical constitution (Maclean 1980, 37). Sir John's comment about the sex of children born to weak men recalls Macbeth's comment that his wife should *'Bring forth Men-Children onely: / For thy vndaunted Mettle should compose / Nothing but Males'* (F, 554-6). Sir John believes the way to courage is through the stomach: in effect, according to Falstaff, the Prince's diet of weak beer and fish has made him effeminate, suggesting his inferiority, and that he will thus produce inferior, that is female, children" (*Food in Shakespeare: Early Modern Dietaries and the Plays*, Joan Fitzpatrick, University of Northampton, 2007, p. 28).

16. **eat no fish**] A double entendre referring both to the unappetizing plate of "poor-John" and to Oswald. That is, he will not "eat" (i.e. perform fellatio) him. Throughout II,ii, Kent looks on the steward as something to be eaten. Knowing Lear's obsesssive concern with manliness, what better way to win approval than by ridiculing cock-suckers. The audience won't "get the joke" without seeing 1) the type of fish being served, and 2) the person serving it. Hence the dramatic necessity of its being presented separately from the other dishes by Oswald. [See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, 1999, **Dish /Dishes**, p. 71-2.]

16. S.D. ***Exit* Oswald**] Ed. Not in F, Q.

25. **countenance**] bearing—not merely 'face' (Kittredge)

28. **Authority**] Concepts of manhood and authority are inextricably linked within patriarchal hegemony. [551] [See note I,i,173. *"potency"*. See also note IV,v, 109., *"Every inch a king."*]

30. **keep honest counsel**] keep an honorable secret.

30. **curious**] elaborate, complicated, elegant, nice.

35-6. **to love a woman . . . anything**] Kent's droll retort about his passion for women is dry and unconvincing—a line from Shakespeare that might have been quoted at a soirée by Philippe I, Duke of Orléans, the cross-dressing, sexually fluid brother of King Louis IV of France.

40. **knave**] "A man or boy whose behaviour invites disapproval, but who is nonetheless likeable; a wag, a rogue (rogue n. 3). Frequently as a term of endearment, or as a playful term of reproof" (*OED*, 3.**b**).

41. S.D. ***Exit a Knight***] Ed. *Attendant.* Dyce. Not in Q, F. Presumably, one of Lear's Knights who returns with the Fool. Lear does not trust Goneril's attendants.

41. S.D. ***Re-enter Oswald***] Ed. *Enter Steward*, after line 43 *daughter*, Q, 575 and F, 573.

41. S.D. ***with a dish of herring***] Herring was in such abundance in England during the Middle Ages as to prompt the founding of Great Yarmouth. London and other English cities suffered a massive plague outbreak in 1563. The epidemic devastated the economy and contributed to the ruin of the fishing fleet. In an attempt to revive it, Parliament passed a law that required people to eat fish on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays to support England's fishing industry and naval power. The law included a specific clause stating that the requirement was intended solely to increase the number of fishermen and mariners, not for any religious purposes. This

mandate was so unpopular that it was repealed in 1585.

Video 10 "3 BEST ways to Eat Herring in Amsterdam."

Though regularly eaten, herring does not seem to be much liked. Barbara Harvey writes that in monasteries at the end of the 15th century, it was a frequent dish only in Lent" (*Living and Dying in England 1100-1540: The Monastic Experience*, p. 49.) Thus, by featuring herring on the menu, Shakespeare introduces a seasonal marker that situates the scene in spring. See note IV,iii,4, "cuckoo-flowers" (F, 2354). This is a matter of utmost consequence in the story as Lear's "mad scene" happens on or close to May Day—a celebration of spring, "with origins in ancient agricultural rituals to ensure fertility." Lear's DIY costume in IV,v evokes the "Green Man" in a May Day celebration. [See note IV,v,80, *S.D.,* 80 *"Enter Lear, camouflaged with weeds."*] In Philip Stubbs's *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), in the section "Lords of Misrule in England" (pp.148-49), he decries the sexual license associated with May games; May Day celebrations were later effectively suppressed by an Ordinance for the better observation of the Lord's Day passed by the Long Parliament on April 8, 1644. [585]

> Every parish town and village assemble themselves together. Men and women and children, old and young, and go off, some to the woods and groves, some to the hills and mountains, here they spend the night in pastimes. In the morning they return bringing with them birth-boughs and trees to deck their assemblies withal. I've heard it credibly reported by men of great gravity, credibility and reputation, that forty, three score, or a hundred youths, going to the woods overnight. They have scarcely the third part of them, returned home undefiled. ("Shakespeare, May Day and the Hobby Horse", Shakespeare Institute Library.)

The original staging of the banquet scene, including the dishes Goneril presents to her father and his retinue, cannot be recovered with certainty; nor can lazzi performed by the attending servants. Any reconstruction must therefore proceed inferentially, drawing on extant comic business—such as the spilled pitcher in *The Taming of the Shrew* (F, 1784)—as well as on foods Shakespeare's audience would have recognized and encountered in daily life, such as "poor John." At a royal dinner in Jacobean England, service was governed by an exacting protocol: attendants operated according to carefully prescribed rules of order, timing, hierarchy, and deference to both monarch and guests. Etiquette extended no less rigorously to those at table, who were required to await the sovereign's signal before beginning, to observe rank in both seating and the sequence of service, to avoid any display that might attract undue notice, and to conform to highly choreographed patterns of conduct. Even gestures that might appear trivial—handwashing, the handling of utensils, or the use of napkins—were subject to established and codified convention. [586]

The meal Goneril serves is a calculated display of dominance. It is designed to expose the king's total loss of autonomy and his sudden, humiliating dependency. Her food choices were

made to underscore his impoverished status. In addition to "poor John" and herring, another inexpensive seafood harvested in England in the spring months is oysters. [422] Oysters were a familiar and popular snack among the "groundlings" in public theaters like the Rose and the Globe as evidenced by archaeological excavations where thousands of discarded oyster shells were found. [107] As late as 1836 in Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*, Sam Weller observes that "poverty and oysters always seem to go together" (Chapter 22). At the end the scene, the Fool may be baiting Goneril by eating raw oysters. The physical act of shucking, exposing the soft meat, and slurping directly from the wet shell—has long been linked to female genitalia and oral sex. [See note I,iv, 276. S.D. "*Exeunt Lear, Kent, Lear's Knight, and Knights.*"]

Figure 65. "The man wot eats oysters - But can't pay for 'em", 1830.

Pease pottage was a dish commonly served during Lent, especially by "the poorer sort of people," according to John Parkinson in 1629. [583] Samuel Pepys' diary entry for 8 April 1664 notes it was a dish traditionally eaten on Sundays during the Lenten fast. [584] In fact, its association with Lent was so strong that the fifth Sunday of Lent, also known as Passion Sunday, became known in parts of northern England as "Carlin Sunday" or "Pease Sunday," named after the Carlin peas used to make the porridge. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Shakespeare uses pease pottage as a metaphor for something boring: *"Got's-will, and his passion of my heart: I had as lief you would tell me of a messe of porridge"* (F, 1212-13). The Fool refers to the pod of a pea later in the scene, pointing to Lear's codpiece: *"That's a sheal'd Pescod"* (F, 711). In Figure 66, the humble Puritan family seated at the table appears to be dining on pease pottage, which may have also been served to Lear and his noble guests, who were given no utensils like spoons to eat it with.

Figure 66. Puritan family Meal. An illustration from A Short History of the English People by John Richard Green. Sex and food are conflated throughout Shakespeare's plays, and the banquet served to Lear is not one any hungry sportsman would welcome.

43. **So please you—**] The phrase is typical courtly politeness but its tone is dismissive. Oswald is blowing off Lear's question per Goneril's command in the scene before. The reputation of the English people for being outwardly courteous yet deeply sarcastic has developed over centuries, evolving from medieval codes of conduct. [425]

43. S.D. ***Exit***] F, 576. Not in Q.

44. **clotpoll**] clod-pate, blockhead.

44. S.D. ***Exit Lear's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note I,iv,47. *"Lear's Knight"*

45. S.D. ***Re-enter Lear's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Knight. Dyce.

47. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Knigh.* (F, 580). *Kent*. (Q, 580). "Lear's Knight," as I call him, may be identified by his manners and idiolect—his personal, unique way of speaking, reflecting his individual vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, tone, and rhythm. [108] Logically, the speeches ascribed variously to *"a Knight", "a Gentleman", "a Messenger", "a Servant"* and to *Kent* in the quartos and Folio were written to individuate a single character, if only as a practical matter:

- *Knigh.* (F, 580). *Kent*. (Q, 580).
- *Knigh*. (F, 583, F, 586, F, 593, F, 602) / *seruant* (Q, 584, 586, 593,602) in I,iv;
- *Gent***.** (F, 921), *Seruant.* (Q, 921) in I,v;
- *Knight*. (Q, 1275), *Gen*. (F, 1273) in II,iv;
- *Gentleman*. (Q, 1615), *Gentleman*. (F, 1615) in III,i;
- *Gentleman* in IV,iii; *Messenger* in scene 18 in quartos;
- *Gentleman* (Q, 2631), *Gentleman.* (F, 2630) in IV,v;
- *Gentleman* (F, 2762)*; Gent.* (Q, 2843.1).

In my restoration, we first observe "Lear's Knight" in I,i, standing next to Kent, near to the king, signifying his high place in court. He is given lines in I,i, I,iv, I,v; and in II,iv, he suspects *"Caius"* (F, 1333-34), known to him through his earlier exhibition of roughneck behavior towards Oswald, is withholding part of the truth concerning his confinement in the stocks: *"Made you no more offence, / But what you speake of?"* (F, 1333-4). This is why Kent has a such hard time convincing him in III,i that he is trustworthy. [See Appendix E.] Lear's Knight next appears in IV,iii (F) / scene 18 (Q) where Cordelia instructs him to search for her father. He succeeds in doing so in IV,v, upon which Lear gives him a king's ransom in weeds to treat him kindly, *"You shall haue ransome"* (F, 2635). He appears again in IV,vi where he discusses the logistics of the battle with Kent. It is inferred that he is killed in battle because this is the last we see of the character. [See Appendix D.] As with "Cornwall's Knight", "Albany's Squire" and "Curan", Shakespeare treats even minor, supporting characters (likely played by apprentice actors), as dynamic human beings who experience genuine personal growth, emotional shifts, and changes in perspective.

49, 52, 59, 68. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Knight* (F, 583, 586, 593, 602). *seruant* (Q, 584, 586, 594, 601).

49. **roundest**] fullest, plainest

53. **entertain'd**] treated

62. **rememb'rest**] remindest

62. **conception**] idea

63. **most faint**] weak or languid

64. **curiosity**] 'a punctilious jealousy, resulting from a scrupulous watchfulness of his own dignity' (Steevens)

65. **very pretence and purpose**] deliberate act.

67. **this**] these.

68. **the fool hath much pined away**] The line is a metatheatrical joke alluding to the size of the boy actor playing the parts of Cordelia and the Fool. Cordelia is remarkably diminutive. Compare "our last and *least*" (F, 89) and "that *little* seeming substance" (F, 216). [See Figure 64 and Figure 67.]

Figure 67. Title page of *The Italian Taylor and his Boy by* Robert Armin (1609).

70. S.D. ***Exit a Knight***] Ed. *Attendant.* Dyce. Not in Q, F. This is not "Lear's Knight" because the latter must bear witness to Caius's violent attack on Oswald. Moreover, the dinner staff attending Lear are all typecast as completely lacking the skills, manners, and dignity required for the job. They are obviously untrustworthy, and the king would never ask any one of them to deliver a simple message.
71. S.D. ***Exit a Knight***] Ed. *Attendant.* Dyce. Not in Q, F. Another one of Lear's Knights.
71. S.D. ***Re-enter Oswald***] Collier subst. Enter Steward after *sir?* line 72 (F, 608). Not in Q.
71. S.D. ***with a plate of raw eggs***] Ed. Not in Q, F. To be added to the weak ale. [593]
77. **bandy**] exchange, as in a game of tennis.
77. S.D. ***Striking him with his hunting crop***] Rowe *subst*. Not in Q, F. (See **strike,** *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* p. 219.) Lear's striking Oswald with his crop creates a loud and comical "thwack" sound similar in effect to the *batacchio* used by Arlecchino in *commedia dell arte*. The noise is a result of the large, flat surface area at the tip of the crop. It was designed to create a loud pop or thwack to get a horse's attention through sound, rather than inflicting significant pain. [109] Presumably Oswald cries out in an exaggerated way as part of the gag. For the slapstick to be funny, the audience must be able to laugh at the steward's misfortune, not feel genuine distress.
78. **strucken**] struck

Figure 68. Uncredited illustration at CNN of a game of Real Tennis played during the time of Henry VIII.

79. **football player**] Kent thinks that Oswald is less suited for striking (as in tennis, a sport for royals) than for tripping (as in football, a sport for common villagers). The reference is to Oswald's low social class and young age. [See note I,iii,S.D., *"Steward"*.] A rough version of football was very popular among lower-class boys in 16th-century England. This early form of the sport, known as "mob football" or "folk football," was a violent, chaotic, and disorganized pastime with few rules. Costume historian Dr. Maria Hayward says, "Football in Tudor times was a very vicious game with no teams and no rules . . . It was not a game for gentlemen." [110] "Francis Willughby's *Book of Games*, written around 1660, contains diagrams indicating the placement of goal markers. In addition to containing a proscription against kicking an opponent above the shin, it also included what might be the first primer on how to foul an opponent entitled "Tripping of Heels." (Farnsworth, 2020).

Figure 69. Boys playing football. 1612 woodcut from the *Minerva Britannia* by Henry Peacham. Source: The Fellows' Library, Winchester College.

79. S.D. ***Kent trips up his heels. Oswald falls***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Cf. *Roaring Girl*, wln 0836, "*Moll trips up his heels he falls.*" (The Folger Shakespeare Library). In *King Lear*, "The beatings on stage resemble nothing so much as *Comedy of Errors*, the plays of Plautus, or the comedies of Aristophanes. What *Lear* gives us is not a story told first as tragedy, then as farce. It is farcical tragedy, tragedy deflated by slapstick violence, all the more horrifying for being slapstick." (Peter Leithart, "Slapstick Comedy," *Theopolos*). [See Figure 70.]

> "The rough-and-tumble of slapstick has been a part of low comedy and farce since ancient times, having been a prominent feature of Greek and Roman mime and pantomime, in which bald-pated, heavily padded clowns exchanged quips and beatings to the delight of the audience. The Renaissance produced the athletic zanies of the *commedia dell'arte* and even rougher clowns, such as the hunchbacked, hook-nosed, wife-beating Pulcinella, who survived into the 20th century as the Punch of children's puppet shows" (Britannica).

Figure 70. President Gerald Ford tripping up Chevy Chase.

A defining emblem of Oswald is the long sword he wears. Swords posed a significant tripping hazard to untrained individuals. Attaching and carrying a longsword (or even a rapier) on a belt required skill and knowledge, not just for martial use, but also for navigating daily life without hitting things or injuring yourself. [See Video 15.] In *Commedia dell'arte*, the character Capitan Matamoros was known for carrying a "massive sword" that swung about his thighs, frequently threatening to trip him up. The Lazzo of the Sword was a common gag that involved Il Capitano becoming entangled with his own overly large sword, which would end up comically positioned as a mocking phallic symbol between his legs.

81. ***Draws his sword***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

81-2. **I'll teach you differences**] I'll teach you your proper place as a low-born servant.

83. **lubber**] "An inferior servant, drudge, scullion" (*OED*, 1.†**c**): "Mediastinus, a drudge or lubber, which doth in the howse all maner of vyle seruice, as swepe or clense the house, carie wodde to the kytchen, and other like drudgery. T. Elyot *Dict*., 1538.

83. **length**] height, "extent from end to end, contrary breadth" Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, p. 642. That is, if Oswald doesn't want Kent to chop his legs off, he'll depart.

83-4. **have you wisdom**] viz. 'Are you in your senses?' The question implies that some impedi-

ment delays Oswald from exiting immediately. Given the scene's farcical mode, it may stem from some ludicrous mishap with his longsword.

84. S.D. ***Exit Oswald***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.

84. **So**] An expression of approbation of Oswald's departure. See Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, p. 1081). Kent likely sheaths his short sword in accompaniment.

85. **earnest**] "handsel, a part paid beforehand as a pledge" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*. Vol I, p. 346).

Figure 71. Young Knight in a Landscape, with a handkerchief in his codpiece, Vittore Carpaccio (c. 1505). Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

86. S.D. ***Takes purse from out of his codpiece and gives money to Kent*****]** Ed. *Gives Kent money.* Capell. Not in Q, F. Unsurprisingly, there is not a stage direction in the quartos and folios specifying exactly where Lear is carrying his money. In Hands Deep in History: Pockets in Men and Women's Dress in Western Europe, c. 1480–1630, Rebecca Unsworth writes, "Another apparent alternative to the pocket was the codpiece. Vecellio stated that soldiers in the time of Charles V (1500–1558) had a very large codpiece 'which they used in place of a pocket', and the *Treasvrie* corroborates this by noting that when men were still wearing skin-tight hose, instead of a pocket,

> […] they hadde a large and ample Cod-piece, which came vppe with two wings, and so were fastned to eyther side with two Pointes. In this wide roome, they had Linnen bagges, tied with like Points to the inside, betweene the Shirte and Cod-piece. This serued as the receipt for Pursse, Hand-kerchers, Apples, Plummes, Peares, Orenges, and other fruits. (Ibid)

"The character of Panurge takes an orange out of his codpiece on one occasion in François Rabelais's (c. 1494–1553) *Pantagruel*, and a few men can be seen with items other than their genitals spilling out of their codpieces in a couple of images, implying that some men, especially labourers and soldiers, did indeed house prized possessions in their codpieces." (Ibid).

Figure 72. The Funny Dreams of Pantagruel (1565), illustrator thought to be François Desprez.

86. S.D. ***Enter Fool***] (Q, 624) (F, 624). The Fool enters through the center opening. The part is doubled with Cordelia and functions as her doppelgänger. In ancient Greece, a spirit double would be referred to as an *eidolon* (εἴδωλον), which translates to "image, idol, double, apparition, phantom, or ghost". Ghosts, or eidola, were used in ancient Greek literature and

drama to offer wisdom and advice. [111] "In Irish folklore, '*fetch*' refers to the apparition of one's double or mirror-image, rather like the German doppelgänger, which reveals itself as an omen of one's imminent death. Hence the encounters between Carson's, Shelley's, and Lincoln's just before their respective dooms." [112] In Shakespeare's day, John Donne is said to have seen his wife's doppelgänger in Paris in 1612 upon the still birth of their son.[113] The concept of alter egos and double spirits has appeared in the folklore, myths, religious concepts and traditions of many cultures throughout human history." [114] As noted in I,ii,97, superstition was rife in England all through Middle Ages and beyond. It was even more of "a driving force in the Renaissance than the rational Humanism of Erasmus", according to Frances Yates. [115] When the Fool appears as a double of Cordelia, a superstitious person might take it as an omen of impending death. [See note V,i,306, *"And my poor fool is hanged."*]

German philologist Alois Brandl was the first to propose that the parts of Cordelia and the Fool were doubled by a boy actor. (*Shakespere*, E. Hofmann & Co, 1894, Berlin). [116] The physical evidence that the parts were double cast is supported by the fact that the two characters never share the stage together. The diminutive size of the Fool and his youth are referred to in the spoken dialogue: *"our last and least"* (F, 89), *"that little-seeming substance"* (F, 216) and *"the Fool has much pined away"* (F, 603). [See Figure 67.] Lear describes Cordelia's voice as *"ever soft, gentle and low"* (F, 3236-37), presumably in contrast to the high-pitched squeaks of *"little eyases"* referred to in *Hamlet* (F, 1386-87). Thomas B. Stroup observes that Lear refers to the Fool as *"boy"* or *"lad"* nearly a dozen times ("Cordelia and the Fool", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Volume 12, Issue 2, Spring 1961, pages 127–132). [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.]

In realistic theatre, where the goal is to create a seamless illusion of reality, theatrical doubling can disrupt a spectator's emotional immersion in the story. *King Lear*, however, is one of Shakespeare's most conspicuously metatheatrical plays with Lear embodying the archetype of Macbeth's "poor player" who struts and frets his hour upon the stage. Doubling the parts of Cordelia and the Fool draws attention to the fact that characters are theatrical constructions, which makes audiences more likely to think about what the pairing signifies. When the Fool is cast a separate, real-life human being he is generally read as a truth-teller, saying what others cannot or will not say to Lear. Critics often describe him as Lear's conscience or moral commentator, using wit and song to expose his folly. Conversely, the structural choice to double the Fool and Cordelia fundamentally changes how we view the characters, shifting them from public archetypes to intimate family extensions. Her words are rooted in a lifetime of shared history and deep emotional attachment. They carry the weight of personal love and past grievances. The doubling reinforces the inverted parent-child dynamics that underpin the play's narrative structure.

Figure 73. Plato's Allegory of the cave, 1604, Engraving of Jan Sanraedam (1565-1607) after a painting of Cornelis Corneliszoon van Haarlem (1562-1638). British Museum.

The metaphysical idea underling the doubling of the parts takes its inspiration from Plato's Theory of Forms. [118] When Lear says "*And my poore Foole is hang'd?*" (F, 3277), he suggests that the characters are one Platonic Form. [See Video 1.] Like the love shared by the Phoenix and the Turtledove in Shakespeare's eponymous poem, the love Lear has for his daughter is portrayed as transcending earthly boundaries and individual identities, aligning with the selfless, unconditional nature of agapē. Since the days of the ancient Greeks, philosophers have been attempting to define Love, but at no time in human history was its meaning so contentious as during the European Reformation. "Luther's rediscovery of the primacy of *agapē* was the linchpin of the Reformation and the rediscovery of genuine Christian ethics." (G. Meilaender and W. Werpehowski, *The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics*, 2007, p. 456). This Neoplatonic idea is crucial because Lear's final appeal is to our "feeling sight". He challenges the audience to look past intellectual or physical vision and instead "see" the world through active, selfless empathy. His final words are a call to action. *"Do you see this? Looke on her? Looke her lips, / Looke there, looke there"* (F, 3282-83). Shakespeare's metaphor of "feeling sight" acts as a profound metonym for caritas (Latin) and agapē (Greek).

Figure 74. Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (New South Wales), Internet Shakespeare Editions.

In *How the Classics Made Shakespeare* Jonathan Bate makes the claim that Shakespeare possessed a "classical intelligence", meaning that his mental framework, creative output, and literary techniques were fundamentally shaped by the ancient Greek and Roman traditions. Historians debate whether Shakespeare was directly familiar with Plato's *Symposium* and his theory of forms, given the lack of concrete evidence that he read the original Greek texts. Instead, it is widely thought that he absorbed these ideas through the broader lens of Renaissance Neoplatonism. Many English intellectuals encountered Platonic philosophy through translations of widely circulating Italian and Spanish humanist texts that mediated, adapted, and disseminated Platonic ideas such as Thomas Hoby's translation of Baldassare Castiglione's *Il libro del cortegiano*, which served as England's primary introduction to Platonic love. Bartholomew Yong's 1598 English translation of Jorge de Montemayor's *Diana*, transmits a pastoral romance that had itself absorbed and adapted passages from Leone Ebreo's *Dialoghi d'amore*. Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* draws importantly on the Felismena episode in *Diana*. [650] Thus Yong's *Diana* may have offered Shakespeare access not only

to a central narrative pattern but also to a romance culture shaped in part by Neoplatonic discourse on love.

It is worth noting that Miguel de Cervantes did not acquire his knowledge of Platonism and Platonic love by reading primary Greek or Latin sources. Instead, like most Spanish Renaissance writers, he absorbed these concepts through vernacular translations, contemporary poetry, and highly popular secondary treatises written by Renaissance humanists. In the Prologue to Part I of *Don Quixote* (1605), Cervantes portrays himself sitting anxiously at his desk, lamenting to a friend that his book lacks the heavy academic padding common in his era—such as sonnets by nobility, extensive margins filled with Latin annotations, and a massive bibliography of classical authors such as Leone Ebreo. *"Si tratáredes de amores, con dos onzas que sepáis de la lengua toscana, toparéis con León Hebreo, que os hincha las medidas.* (*"If you deal with love, with two ounces that you know of Tuscan [Italian], you will run into Leone Ebreo, who will heap the measure full for you."*)

> Recent Shakespearean scholarship has shown that Shakespeare's engagement with the Classics was both extensive and original. James Shapiro suggests that a grammar school education 'was roughly equivalent to a university degree today, with a better facility in Latin than that of a typical classics major'. *The Sonnets* have been linked with *The Republic* and *The Symposium*. *The Republic* has been linked with *Julius Caesar* and *Troilus and Cressida*, the latter also with Ficino's translation and commentary on *Euthryphro*. *Symposium* and *Euthryphro* have been shown to have informed "The Phoenix and the Turtle." *Symposium*, *Phaedrus* and *Ion* have all been explored in connection with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Medcalf, Taylor and Grey have argued that Shakespeare had read Ficino's 1484 translation of *The Symposium* and Jean de Serres's Latin translation published in Paris in 1578. Bruce Clarke suggests Shakespeare knew *Phaedrus* via Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* in Adlington's 1566 translation. Finally, Barbara Everett correlates the two kinds of love Plato proposes in *Phaedrus* with the two beloveds of *The Sonnets*, allocating the 'love right fair' to the young man, and the love 'coloured ill' to the dark lady. [679]

86. ***wearing a lute***] Ed. Not in Q, F. There are no stage directions in the quartos or Folio indicating that the Fool is wearing a lute. [See Figure 74.] The text offers only a slight indication that he does so through Lear's question, *"When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?"* (F, 684). The Fool's reply that he has used *"it"* (F, 685) ever since Cordelia's banishment may refer specifically to the lute, though it could also denote music more generally. [See note I,iv, 159., *"it."*] The strongest reason for adding the direction appears in the following scene, which alludes to the biblical story of the teenaged David who plays his harp for Saul to heal his troubled soul. (1 Samuel 16:14-23). Layering his riddles with counterpoint on the lute, the Fool infuses his words with a hidden subtext and emotional depth. [See note I,v,S.D., *with lute*.]

Many instances of characters (mostly boy apprentices) carrying lutes are cited in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (p.137), most famously *"Ophelia playing on a Lute"* (*Hamlet*, Q1, 2766.1). See also *Taming of the Shrew*, II,ii, *"Enter…with his boy bearing a lute."* (F, 897-99), and *Old Fortunatus*, III,i, *"Enter…a Boy after them with a lute."*

Richard Dutton writes, "One consistent thread runs through the records of the boy players, and that is musical accomplishment. From the Hind brothers in the 1570s who were expected to sing and play on the cittern, through Augustine Phillips's two apprentices, one of whom received his bass viol in his will, and the other a cittern, bandore, and lute, to John Wilson among Heminge's apprentices, they all either were or trained to be proficient musicians. The first quarto text of Hamlet tells us that the boy who played 'Ofelia' entered 'playing on a lute, and her hair down singing' when she went mad." [119]

Figure 76. In *Pericles*, V,i, Lysimachus visits Pericles' ship and sends for Marina, whose music he thinks will revive the grief-stricken king. "Marina singing before Pericles", Thomas Stothard, 1825, Folger Shakespeare Library.

As a practical matter, there are many sizes and shapes of lutes and other instruments that the actor might be using. [See Figure 75.] These include mandores and gitterns (small lute like instruments) used by medieval minstrels. It is possible that the Fool has it strapped on his back. [See Ian Pittaway, "The evidence for straps used with medieval, renaissance and baroque musical instruments", 2023.]

Figure 75. Man with a cobza on his back. From "The Dancing Cripples" by Cornelis Massijs, 1538. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (Museum of Prints and Drawings).

87. **coxcomb**] The cap of the professional was fool was typically crowned with a crest like that of a cock. Some coxcombs appear to be formed with ass's ears and the head of a rooster curling forward. [See Figure 77.] Its meaning derives from the foolishness of the bird's mating rituals, and has obvious phallic symbolism.

87. S.D. ***Offers Kent his coxcomb***] Rowe, subst. Not Q, F. The Fool's gesture relies on a literal interpretation that suddenly shifts to a metaphorical one for comedic effect. He is calling Kent foolish for accepting service with the king. What's funny, however, is the analogy between his *coxcomb* and Lear's *codpiece*. He is implying that both are emblematic of their respective characters—tokens of foolishness.

Figure 77. Detail of a coxcomb. 'Trivulzio Book of Hours', Flanders ca. 1470 (Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, SMC 1, fol. 110v).

Lear's identification with a codpiece is the source of the Fool's joke in III,ii,42 when Kent shouts *"Holla"* to the Gentlemen. It will be recalled that at the end of III,i, the two of them

agreed that *"He that first lights on him, / Holla the other"* (F, 1652-3). Kent's "Holla" was expunged from the First and Second Quartos and the First Folio, but there can be no doubting where his shout-out occurs. Kent has only to hear the word *"codpiece"* to know he has found his man: no human being alive is still wearing one.

> *Kent*: *[Within.]* Who's there?
> *Fool.* Marry, here's grace and a codpiece!
> *Kent.* *[Within.]* Holla!
>
> *Enter* Kent.
>
> *Fool*. *[Aside.]* That's a wise man and a fool. (III,ii,39-41)

89. S.D. ***To Kent***] Ed, not in Q, F.
89. **you were best**] you had better.
90. ***Lear.* Why my boy**] F, 628. *Kent*. Why Foole? Q, 629. It would be presumptuous for "Caius" (F, 3249) to address Lear's Fool so soon after joining his retinue. Note that the disguised earl does not enter into the conversation until line 141, where he addresses Lear himself: *"This is not altogether foole my Lord"* (Q, 670.08; line cut in First Folio). Kent has to be wary of being recognized, and would not jump into a conversation with such an all-knowing character as the Fool. He probably regrets having attracted the latter's attention to begin with. [See note III,vi,12., *"to his son."*]
93. S.D. ***To Kent***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
94. **on's**] of his.
95. **blessing against his will**] He inadvertently did Cordelia a favor by banishing her.
96. **nuncle**] contracted from *mine uncle*. 'It seems to have been the customary appellation of the licensed fool to his superiors' (Nares).
99. **living**] property
101. **whip**] Lear brandishes his crop, which we just saw him use on Oswald.
103. **the lady's**] New Camb. (conj. Letherland); the Lady F, 642; Ladie oth'e Q, 642.
104. S.D. ***He drinks and spits***] Ed. Not in Q. F. Compare "*Drinks and spits"* in *Brennoralt, or the Discontented Colonel* by John Suckling, II,ii, 2.2.47.
104. **A pestilent gall to me**] It is, of course, possible that the meaning of this line is limited to his words, and refers to the constant pestering of the Fool, which is upsetting Lear's stomach. In my restoration, Lear takes a swig of beer, and spits it out in disgust. Earlier, the audience observed Oswald tasting the beer to verify its quality.
104. **gall**] the contents of the gallbladder, bile (proverbial for its bitterness). Cf. *"bitter Fool"* (F, 666).
112. **trowest**] think
116-7. **And thou shalt have more/Than two tens to a score**] i.e., he'll have more than nothing
118. **Lear**] Q, 659. Kent F, 658. Again, it would be brash for Kent to address Lear's Fool. He wisely takes a back seat, and lets Lear do all the talking.
122. **nothing can be made out of nothing**] Cf. I,ii,37.
123. S.D. ***To Kent***] Rowe; not in Q, F.
132. **Do for him stand**] i.e., Lear.

134. **presently**] at once.

136. **there**] He points at Lear, who is the bitter fool.

142. **monopoly**] If I had a monopoly on foolishness, great men would fight me for some of it. 'Monopolies in Shakespeare's time were common objects of satire' (Steevens) qu. Furness p. 74.

143. **fool**] With a play on "fool", "a kinde of clouted creame called a foole or a trifle in English." 1598 J. Florio *Worlde of Wordes*. (*OED*, **1**). Traditional English Fruit fool is made with a custard base that uses eggs.

Figure 78. Albrecht Durer, *The Peasant Couple at Market* (1520). According to Jürgen Müller, the two dead cocks, the jug and the egg basket have sexual connotations. See "Albrecht Dürer's Peasant Engravings." The Met.

144. **egg**] Referring to the plate of raw eggs. While strict medieval Catholic rules banned meat, eggs, and dairy during the 40 days of Lent, the Elizabethan-era English Church shifted regulations so that only meat remained prohibited. [591] The English added eggs to beer during medieval times, and the practice continued for centuries. [594] [See Figure 78.]

146. S.D. ***Giving him an egg*]** Ed. Not in Q, F. Presumably, the Fool cracks the egg and adds it to the beer. [117] Egg in beer is a centuries-old tradition in England. Eggs have served as a device of physical comedy for at least 500 years. In Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, the phrase "no eggs are broken" in the Prologue serves as a metaphor for the absence of crude, slapstick physical comedy in the play.

150. S.D. ***Gives Lear the two shells***] Ed. Not on Q, F.

152. **like myself**] like a Fool

153. **so**] i.e. true.

154-7. **Fools had ne'er less grace in a year**] True Fools are not given proper respect because "wise" men have ruined their reputations with their dull wits and apish manners.

159. **it**] The Fool may be referring specifically to his lute, though "it" could also denote music more generally. [See Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary:* **Music,** "vocal or instrumental harmony" as in *The Tempest*, I,ii: *"This Musicke crept by me vpon the waters, / Allaying both their fury, and my passion / With it's sweet ayre."* (F, 534-36).]

162-5. **Then they for sudden joy did weep . . .**] A snippet from a song. "Rollins, *M.L.R.,* 1920, p. 87, points out that the Fool is adapting an old ballad: 'Some men for sodayne ioye do wepe,/And some in sorrow syng: / When that they lie in daunger depe, / To put away mourning." (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, pp. 43-44). See also Furness, p. 75. "Compare Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1608 : 'When Tarquin first in court began, And was approved king, Some men for sudden joy gan weep, But I for sorrow sing.'"

164. **play bo-peep**] A medieval children's game commonly known as peek-a-boo. [See Video 11.] The *OED* defines **bo-peep** as "A nursery play with a young child, who is kept in

excitement by the nurse or play-mate alternately concealing herself (or her face), and peeping out for a moment at an unexpected place, to withdraw again with equal suddenness" (**1.a**). "Mark how he playeth *bo-peep* with the scripture," W. Tyndale, 1528. The game of peekaboo remains a familiar ritual between mothers and babies to the present day.

Video 11. "Peek A Boo" | @CoComelon Nursery Rhymes & Kids Songs.

In III,vi, Edgar appears to allude to the nursery rhyme *"Little Boy Blue, come blow your horn, The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn."* [See note III,vi,41-44, *"Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd."*] Both rhymes "Little Bo-Peep" and "Little Boy Blue" probably belong to a later recorded nursery-rhyme tradition that may preserve older motifs. Medieval antecedents exist for some of the language and imagery, but not for the rhymes as we now know them. Bridget Begg discusses the contributions of nursery rhymes, folklore and nonsense to English literature and drama in her dissertation "Medieval Nonsense Verse: Contributions to the Literary Genre."

What is most striking about nursery rhymes and lullabies—and what gives them their significance in *King Lear*—is that they are addressed to infants and young children prior to any comprehension of semantic meaning. In Shakespeare's plays, characters speak to each other on a level far below the rational mind, before words are even understood. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Bard terms it *"the primall state"* (F. 474). Emerging scientific research indicates that shared reading between parent and child produces measurable positive neurochemical effects in both. Such interactions function as a powerful mechanism for strengthening parent–child bonding. [595] Sophie Brickman writes in *The Guardian,* "When you better understand not just the history of books and reading, but also the neurological benefits triggered by *shared* reading, it seems straight up silly that the activity peaks at age five. Five! Then it's all downhill from there, according to Scholastic's most recent Kids and Family Reading Report."

> Higher levels of neural synchrony predict a higher level of engagement with a given stimulus, and also are connected to a greater release of oxytocin. The hormone, known as "the love drug", is most commonly linked to childbirth – mothers get a flood of it during labor and directly afterwards, to help foster a bond between mother and child, and nursing – but also pops up when we fall in love, or during sexual arousal. The higher your oxytocin level, the more warm fuzzies you feel. ("The number of children who read for fun is at a historic low. Why?")

168. And] If

175. S.D. ***Enter Goneril***] (F, 702) (Q, 702)

175. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Theoretically, Goneril is standing in the "Lords Room" amongst the wealthy "Lords"—as illustrated in Aernout Van Buchel's copy of Johan de Witt's drawing of the Swan Playhouse. [See Figure 31.] The idea of actors performing in different sections of the Globe Playhouse is not much of a stretch in *King Lear* because Cordelia tells us they are:

"was't thou faine (poore Father) / To houell thee with Swine and Rogues forlorne,/ In short, and musty straw?" (F, 2786-88). [Compare note II,iii,S.D, *"from under the stage."*] Modern scholars have variously termed the second level of the tiring house at the Globe the "Balcony," the "Upper Stage," the "Chamber," the "Gentlemen's Rooms" or "Lord's Rooms," though not often interchangeably. [426] The only contemporary description of the space comes from satirist Thomas Dekkker who describes it as *"the Stages Suburbs"* in *The Guls Horne-booke* (p.28). [120]

> What one really requires to grasp is that Dekker uses the word 'suburbs' in a sinister metaphorical sense, hard to arrive at now but readily comprehended by his contemporaries. In *Lanthorn and Candle-Light* (1608), he had already devoted a whole chapter to a gruesome description of the iniquities of London's suburbs. 'Would the Divell hire a villaine to spil bloud.' asks he. 'There he shall finde him. One to blaspheme; there he hath choice. A Pandar that would court a matron at her praiers? hes there. A cheator that would turne his owne father a begging; He's there too: A harlot that would murder her new-borne Infant ? Shee lies in there.' That Dekker meant to imply by 'suburbs of the stage' a disreputable and undesirable locality is shown by a quaint passage in the first chapter of *The Guh Hornbooke*, wherein we learn of 'Potato-pies, and Custards' that 'stood like the sinful suburbs of Cookery, and had not a wall (so much as a handfull hie) built rownd about them.' (W. J. Lawrence, *The Elizabethan Playhouse and Other Studies*, pp. 29-31.)

Most of the action in *King Lear* takes place on the thrust platform downstage where the light is the brightest. The King's Men used the "Stage Suburbs" of the Globe primarily for metaphor. It was part of the visual storytelling where it encoded social power through vertical positioning. In the first two acts, it qualifies the hauteur of Goneril, Regan and Cornwall. In Acts III and IV it denotes darkness, secrecy and sneakiness. Note that in all five instances there is little movement. It typically involves only one or two actors who take their places, and stand in one place. III,iii, III,v, and IV,iv are very short, averaging approximately 30 lines each. The staging of two stationary characters requires minimal playing space and scarcely justifies an area extending the full width of the tiring house to a depth of twelve feet. [121]

Figure 79. Audience faces in detail from Kirkman's frontispiece and title page for *The Wits, or Sport for Sport*.

In DeWitt's illustration of the Swan (Figure. 9), the second level of the *"Aedes mimorum"* is used for seating. "The evidence for the use of the stage balcony as a spectating position is overwhelming, and has been cogently organized by Richard Holsey," writes Gabriel Egan. [122] As we know, the nature of Elizabethan theatre was highly participatory. [123] It was heavily influenced by the traditions of inn-yard theatre and mystery plays. These earlier forms provided the foundational performance venues, architectural design, and dramatic techniques that evolved into the professional stage of Shakespeare's era. [124] Just as the yard is explicitly used as a performing space in *Lear* (F, 2786-88), so it may have been with the second level of the tiring house. Shakespeare is not thinking scenically about the action but spatially. He is using

the class stratification of the Globe theater to represent character and themes, specifically Fortune's Wheel." Just as Lear finds himself among the "penny-stinkards" in the yard (see note III,iv, S.D., *"The Yard and Platform"*), here Goneril takes her position at the edge of the railing in front of the luxuriously seated, perfumed spectator, looking down on her father. [See note II,ii,33, *"Vanity the puppet's part"*.]

175. S.D. ***Reenter Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See note I,iv,70. S.D., "*Exit a Knight.*"] The Knight ought not to enter with the Fool through the central opening, in order to maintain the full force of the Fool's entrance.

176. **makes**] is doing.

176. **frontlet**] a decorative band worn on the forehead. Lear is referring to Goneril's frowning face. Compare I,iv, *"Yes forsooth I will hold my tongue, so your face bids me, though you say nothing"* (F, 708-09). Her frown in *Lear* and Malvolio's smile in *Twelfth Night* are parallel expressive signals, each serving a crucial plot function. Goneril fixes Albany's Squire (aka the *"Messenger"*) with the same the murderous glare, forestalling any report of the true circumstances of Cornwall's death in IV.ii (F, 2312). [See IV,ii,72, S.D., "*Goneril frowns at him"*] Malvolio's smile is part of Maria's larger gulling scheme, not just a character detail.

170-80. **an O without a figure**] nothing.

181. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Not in Q, F.

182. **so your face bid me**] Goneril is looking at the Fool with murder in her eyes.

183. **Mum, mum**] I will stay mute. "Mumchance is characterized as a sort of dice or card game requiring silence. The idea of silence is based on the prefix "mum" and is the key to most of etymological surmises about the game" (Delmar E. Solem, "Some Elizabethan Game Scenes", p.17).

184-5. **He that keeps nor crust nor crumb**] He that has nothing soon shall be wanting something.

186. **sheal'd peascod**] A peascod is an archaic word for a pea pod, the hard, inedible pod of the pea plant that contains the pea. [See Figure 80.] It is being used by the Fool as a double entendre for shelling peas and shelling Lear's codpiece. In Elizabethan England people shelled two main types of peas: dried field peas, such as those used to make pease pottage, and fresh green garden peas. Before the 17th century, Londoners more regularly ate dried field peas, which were a storable staple food for the general population. Fresh garden peas were a rare luxury reserved for the aristocracy until the 18th century, when they became more widely accessible. [125]

Figure 80. Field Peas and their pods. Southern Living.

186. S.D. ***Pointing to Lear's codpiece]*** Ed. *Pointing to Lear.* Johnson. Not in Q, F.

189. **carp**] find fault, criticize.

190. **rank**] gross, excessive.

192. **safe**] sure

193. **too late**] i.e., recently.

194. **put it on**] instigate it.

195. **allowance**] approbation
197. **in the tender of a wholesome weal]** i.e., in the nurturing of a healthy body politic (*weal*).
198. **tender**] delicate care for
198. **wholesome**] healthy
198. **weal**] body politic

Figure 81. Nature Forging a Baby, from the *Roman de la Rose*, Master of the Prayer Books, ca. 1490-1500. London, British Library, MS Harley 4425, f140r.

202. **cuckoo**] The cuckoo is associated with cuckoldry, as in *Love's Labor's Lost*. "The common cuckoo is an obligate brood parasite; it lays its eggs in the nests of other birds. At the appropriate moment, the hen cuckoo flies down to the host's nest, pushes one egg out of the nest, lays an egg and flies off. The whole process takes about 10 seconds. A female may visit up to 50 nests during a breeding season. Common cuckoos first breed at the age of two years." Cuckoos arrive in the UK in early spring and are gone by June. The Fool is mocking Goneril's austere rhetoric (F, 726-29). The syntax is anything but maternal. [See Figure 81.]
202. **it had**] (Q, 727). it's had (F, 727)
202. **by its]** *by it* (F, 727), *beit* (Q, 727)
203. S.D. ***Sings***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The words, *"so out went the Candle, and we were left darkling"* (F, 728-9) sound like a snatch from an old nursery rhyme, like "Jack Be Nimble" or "Oranges and Apples", evoking a child's fear of the dark.
207. **fraught**] stored
208. **dispositions**] states of mind, temperamental fits.

Figure 82. Ox whipping men. From The World Turned Upside Down.

210. **May not an ass know when a cart draws the horse**] The Fool refers to Æsop's fable of "The Miller, his Son, and the Donkey." "In this fable a man and his son are accompanied by their donkey and meet constant criticism from passers-by of the way it is used or treated by them. The story's purpose is to show that everyone has their own opinion and there is no way one can satisfy all. There are four or five different elements to the story that are ordered differently according to version. When both walk beside the donkey they are criticised for not riding it. When the father rides, he is blamed for making his young son walk; when the son rides, he is blamed for leaving his elderly father on foot. When both ride, they are berated for overburdening their beast. In later versions the father then exclaims that the only option left is to carry the donkey on his back; in others he does so, or father and son tie the donkey to a pole which they carry on their shoulders. This action causes general mirth and has an unhappy outcome, resulting in the donkey's death through one cause or another. [126] A central motif in

King Lear is the idea of a topsy-turvy world in which hierarchy, justice, language, and perception are radically overturned.

211. S.D. ***Sings***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

Figure 83. A "Bartmann" jug in the collection of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

211. **Whoop, Jug! I love thee**] *"Whoop, Jug! I love thee"* is the refrain of a ballad sung by the Servant of the Old Shepherd in *The Winter's Tale*, IV,iv. The Servant explains that when some *"stretch-mouth'd Rascall"* sings a *"bawdrie"* tune with a "*fowle gap into the Matter",* the song is made to sound harmless by having a maiden in the song answer with the refrain: "*Whoop, doe mee no harme good man*" (F, 2024-25). The Fool's utterance, *"Whoop, Jug, I love thee,"* may be accompanied by an obscene gesture alluding to the ample size of Goneril's bosom, which he references again in the following scene. [See note I,v,12., *"crab's like an apple."*] "The sexual/scatological lazzi, the so-called 'stage crudités' of the *Commedia*, were among the most popular routines, although they remain the least analyzed by scholars." (See "Looking to Measure Her" in *Lazzi: The Comic Routines of the Commedia dell' Arte*). Today, in the United States, there is a softcore pornographic adult magazine called ***Juggs*** that specializes in photographs of women with large breasts. [See Figure 84.] What is a male repast without jokes about cleavage?

Figure 84. JUGGS; The World's Dirtiest Tit-Mag Vol. 12, No. 07 / May 1993.

214. **notion**] intellectual power.

215. S.D. ***Pricks himself***] Ed. not in Q, F. Lear's ham-fisted theatrics are central to his meta-theatrical characterization, anticipating Macbeth's *"poore Player."* (F, 2345).

215. **waking?**] Am I awake?

221. **Which**] i.e. *whom*, relating to the 'I' of Lear's speech.

223. **admiration**] affected astonishment.

224. **other your**] other of your

224. **pranks**] "licentious or mischievous tricks" (Schmidt lexicon, Vol II, p. 889). Goneril is referring to Lear's bad acting—pinching himself to see if he's awake. Regan makes a similar observation in II,iv when she refers to his *"tricks"* (F, 1438)—kneeling and begging forgiveness. Directors and acting coaches widely consider indicating to be a signpost of amateur acting. [596] Lear turns everything he says and does into a big drama, especially when he rips off his clothes in the storm. [See note III,iv,92. S.D., "*Lear tears off pieces of his upper gar--ments."*]

228. **disorder'd**] disorderly.

228. **debosh'd**] a variant of debauched.
230. **Shows**] appears
230. **Epicurism**] gluttony, riotous living. As discussed in my note on Edmund's speech, *"Thou Nature art my Goddesse"* (F, 335), Shakespeare appears to have been acquainted with Lucretius' poem *De rerum natura* (On the Nature of Things)—the most comprehensive surviving account of Epicureanism— a philosophy Puritans were fundamentally opposed to.
232. **grac'd**] honorable, the abode of stately decorum.
233. **desir'd**] requested.
235. **disquantity**] reduce the size of.
236. **remainders**] those who remain.
236. **depend**] attend you as dependents.
237. **besort**] suit
243. S.D. ***Enter Albany***] (F, 768). *Enter Duke.* (Q, 768). Albany functions primarily as a narrative foil to Lear's anger, much as the King of France does. The audience witnesses his rage through the perspective of the duke, whom we saw in I.i to be conciliatory and intent on deescalating his fight with Kent. [See note I,i, 162. "*Alb., Lear's Knight.*"] Lear so blinded with anger, however, that he resists his help, and only worsens the situation. As noted in my note on France, the ancient Stoics regarded anger as a destructive passion: a form of temporary madness and an irrational desire for revenge that overwhelms reason and disrupts social harmony. [597] It is the main subject of Seneca's *De Ira*—a text Shakespeare may have known directly from Latin school reading or through the Neo-Stoic intellectual currents of his time.

    As a costume note, Albany who later reveals his rigid adherence to Puritan divine providence (see Appendix A), has shed the stiff, costly, and ceremonious attire in which he first appeared. He now wears a plain linen shirt, its collar softened and left open, with the neck-ties hanging loose or only lightly fastened. A looser, less formal outer garment may be worn over it. The effect should suggest private ease rather than sartocratic display: a relaxation of formality, not an abandonment of rank. Hats were routinely worn indoors by 17th-century noblemen, but Puritan and non-Puritan styles differed primarily in ornamentation, color, and restraint rather than basic cut or shape.
243. S.D. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [Compare note I,iv,175, S.D., *"Enter Goneril, above."*] In theatre, where actors stand on stage tells the audience just as much as the words they speak. Physical distance and movement create subtext, tension, and emotional reality without needing a single line of dialogue. [127] By locating Goneril and Albany "above," in the restricted balcony space among the "Lords", she need only take a short step back for Albany to come into the foreground, diametrically opposed to Lear. When the king departs from the stage, Goneril returns to her former position.
244. **Woe that too late repents**] Theatrically, Lear reproaches himself for having yielded sovereignty to Goneril and Regan, "Woe on me for abdicating the throne." *"Woe"* is being used as an exclamation of grief" (Schmidt lexicon, Vol II, p. 1386). The effect of the word can be genuinely tragic as in Ophelia's use of the phrase *"Oh woe is me"* (F, 1816) in *Hamlet*. However, it is also used as part of the period's rhetorical repertoire for expressing lament. [599] It can read as elevated or even over-the-top melodrama depending on context (serious tragedy

vs. comic usage). In Genevieve Stebbins' *Delsarte System of Dramatic Expression*—a repertory of codified expressive postures—the author lists specific attitudinal combinations for head and arm that include "Remorse" (p. 117): "Hand decomposes, then forearm ; this drops hand on back of head, which has risen in opposition to meet it ; eye of elbow to front. (p. 117). In early silent films, actors relied on a highly standardized code of physical gestures—largely adapted from Stebbins work. Within that code, in intense melodramatic moments, actors would repeatedly strike the chest (sometimes with a closed fist) to visualize inner torment—guilt, remorse, or a conscience "beating" under emotional pressure. This gesture has deep roots in religious and theatrical traditions of penitence *("mea culpa")* and was adapted into silent film's visual shorthand for guilt and self-condemnation. [598]

Lear's surprise at Albany's arrival indicates that the duke enters the moment Lear turns his back on Goneril to indicate repentance to the audience: *"O sir, are you come?"* (Q1, 770). Goneril is now positioned behind her husband on the balcony, placing Lear and Albany in diametrical opposition to one another. In narratological terms, Shakespeare makes the duke the scene's "focalizer." We consider the action from Albany's POV. Lear's wrath is presented as absurdly counter-productive, causing more harm to himself than anyone else. The action recalls the "Innocent Bystander" *lazzi* in *commedia dell'arte*, in which a third party is accidentally caught up in a fight.

245. S.D. ***Exit Lear's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear commands his Knight to prepare his horses (F, 770). He reappears in I,v,41 (F, 874).

249. **kite**] a hawk. Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination*, 1946, pp. 12, 17, points out that to Shakespeare the kite 'is a despicable creature symbolic of cowardice, meanness, cruelty and death' (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 47).

250. **choice**] choicest, the superlative being understood from 'rarest'.

252-53. **And in the most exact regard support … name**] and are most particular in living up to the honorable reputation they have earned. As noted, Lear's insistence on retaining 100 knights recalls Henry VIII's Troop of Gentlemen, a royal bodyguard composed of cadets of noble families. Goneril's complaints about the uncivil behavior of Lear's knights serve merely as a pretext for diminishing the threat they pose to her emerging authority. Her grievances are framed within a Puritan context, and register as satire. [See note I,i,133.,*"hundred knights."*]

252. **in . . . regard**] the smallest details

253. **worships**] honor

257. S.D. ***Striking his head***] Pope, not in Q, F. See note I,iv,216, S.D.,*"Pinches himself."*

259. **Go, go, my people**] The several knights Lear has honored to sit with him at dinner stand in amazement at the events. They are too dumbfounded to move, and don't leave until line 277. Compare *"Who stirres?* (F, 134) in Act I scene i.

262. S.D. ***Kneels***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

262. **Nature**] Lear opens his celebrated curse with a highly theatrical apostrophe to "Nature", not merely the natural world, but a personified, quasi-divine power akin to the Greek Physis—the primordial force said to originate and order creation. (*Natura* was the Roman equivalent of the Greek Physis. [654]) He wants Nature to punish Goneril for her hardness. [Compare I,i,52., *"Nature",* and I,ii,1.,*"Nature".*]

267. **derogate**] debased, degraded.
268. **teem**] have offspring.
269. **child of spleen**] a child consisting only of malice
270. **thwart**] cross-grained, perverse
270. **disnatur'd**] without natural affection
272. **cadent**] falling
272. **fret**] wear away
273. **her mother's pains**] Goneril's maternal cares.
276. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear, Kent, Lear's Knight, and Knights***] Ed. *Exit.* (F, 803). Not in Q. The Fool stays at the table and continues eating, knowing Lear has not spoken his last, and mindful that he cannot be certain when his next full meal will come, so he eats as much as he can. It is for this reason that in III,vi, Lear assures him, *"wee'l go to Supper i'th'morning"* (F, 2042). [See note III,vi,83.S.D., *"Reenter Lear, peeping from behind the curtains."*]

Figure 85. Albrecht Dürer, Amorous Man with a jar of oysters or clams gesturing obscenely with his tongue (c. 1500).

280. S.D. ***Re-enter Lear***] *Enter Lear.* (F, 808). Not in Q.
283. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.
285. **perforce**] Compare I,v,33 note
287. **Th'untented woundings**] *viz.*, his bleeding tears. See *The Winter's Tale*, V,ii, *"Bleed Teares"* (F, 3096-7). In surgery, a "tent" is "A roll or pledget, usually of soft absorbent material, often medicated, or sometimes of a medicinal substance, formerly much used to search and cleanse a wound, or to keep open or distend a wound, sore, or natural orifice." (*OED,* **2**): "Hauing cleansed the soare by tying a *taint* of flaxe or fine linnen cloth. 1610 G. Markham *Maister-peece* ii. cxiii. 407.

Figure 86. Christ bleeding tears while praying in the garden of Gethsemane, from the gothic Tabernakelbildstock in Taisten, Leonhard of Brixen (15th century).

288. **fond**] foolish
293. **comfortable**] comforting, ready to give comfort
294-5. **with her nails/ She'll flay thy wolvish visage**] Note how Regan's bestial nature is represented in the imagery. Her plucking out Gloucester's *"other eye"* (F, 2315) in III,vii is not simple melodrama to thrill the audience, but an elemental part of her character. (See note III,vii,80,SD,

"*She plucks out his other eye.*")

397. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 829) Upon Lear's departure, Goneril steps forward, in front of her husband, to summon Oswald.

299. **I bear you—**] Goneril cuts him off in mid-sentence.

301. S.D. ***To the Fool***] Johnson. Not in Q, F. Earlier at dinner, it will be recalled that the Fool taunts Goneril with a bawdy gesture crudely indicating her large breasts. He further insults her gender here by staring at her and dramatically slurping an oyster—one of the several dishes served at dinner. The resemblance of oyster flesh with the lips of female genilatia has wormed its way into urban slang as another word for "pussy". [128]

304. **fox**] See note III,vi,54, S.D. "*Gives the unskinned fox to Kent.*"

306. **Should sure**] should certainly be sent.

308. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 841). Not in Q.

311. **At point**] in armed readiness.

312. **buzz**] rumor

313. **enguard**] protect

314. **in mercy**] in jeopardy.

316. **still**] always

317. **Not fear still to be taken**] rather than continue in the fear of our safety. At the end of I.i, Goneril tells Regan that she fears their father will try to reclaim his authority, thereby planting in Regan's mind the need to strip him of his retinue. She is keenly aware that a force of 100 heavily trained knights from noble families could easily overwhelm her own forces. Goneril also recognizes her own legal primacy as Lear's eldest child and thus as the rightful heir to sovereign power under primogeniture. Her competition with Regan for Edmund displaces a more substantial political desire. Her aim is not Edmund, but sovereignty. She wants to be Queen of Britain. She imagines Edmund as Prince Consort, stripped of political agency and subject to her control. Goneril does not mean to share authority with her sister but retain it for herself. In Act III, Scene 1, Kent alludes to whispers of conflict between Albany and Cornwall, likely rooted in struggles over sovereignty. Her chilling declaration—*"the Lawes are mine not thine, / Who can araigne me for't?"* (F, 3116-17)—powerfully echoes the early modern legal theory of sovereign immunity and primogeniture, especially considering she has just eliminated her sister.

320. S.D. ***Re-enter Oswald***] Collier. *Enter Steward*. (F, 856). Not in Q.

324. **particular**] own, personal, individual.

326. **compact**] confirm, make substantial, fortify.

327. S.D. ***Exit Oswald***] Collier. Not in Q, F.

328. **This milky gentleness and course of yours**] viz., womanly.

330. **at task**] F, 867; attastk (Q1, 867); alapt (Q2, 867)

331. **harmful mildness**] dangerous lenity

334. **then**] Goneril would keep arguing

334. ***Trumpets sound within***] Ed. Not in Q, F. "a fanfan usually played within...primarily when important figures **enter** and **exit**." In this case the king is departing. (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **flourish**, p. 94).

335. **th'event**] Let us see what happens.

335. ***Exeunt***] (F, 872); (Q, 872).

ACT I, SCENE V.] *Scena Quinta* (F, 873). Scene 5 in Quarto.

In sweet Musicke is such Art,
Killing care, & griefe of heart,
Fall asleepe, or hearing dye.
~ *Henry VIII* (F,1620-31)

S.D. **Court before the Same**.] Capell; not in Q, F

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Lear, Kent, Lear's Knight, and Fool***] Ed. *Enter Lear, Kent, Gentleman, and Foole.* (F, 874). *Enter Lear.* (Q1, 874). *Enter Lear, Kent, and Foole.* (Q2, 874). Lear and company likely enter together from the side door (audience's right) flanking the central opening in the tiring house. As always, the proxemics of the actors is essential in understanding what is being communicated to the audience. Following the departure of Kent and Lear's Knight to fetch the horses from the door on the audience's left, the king moves all the way downstage, as far away from the Fool/Cordelia as he can get. The desire to withdraw and be alone is a deeply ingrained response for many men and boys experiencing shame. This behavioral pattern is often a form of self-protection rooted in cultural socialization that equates emotional vulnerability with a failure of masculinity. [429] [430] [431] As the scene moves forward, so does the Fool until he is standing by Lear's side. When the two are physically at their closest, Lear's Knight reenters, and the king bolts. His physical closeness to the Fool discomforts him. This leaves the Fool alone downstage to warn the audience that they won't be laughing much longer, as they were throughout the banquet.

Figure 87. David playing the harp before Saul, Rembrandt, c. 1630, Städel Museum, Frankfurt.

S.D. ***with lute***] Ed. Not in Q, F. This scene alludes directly to the biblical story of the teenaged David who plays his harp for Saul to heal his troubled soul. (1 Samuel 16:14-23). Hence the necessity of the Fool playing a lute, the most popular stringed instrument of the Renaissance. [129] One of the central themes in *King Lear* is the deceitful nature of rhetoric, *"Speake what we feele, not what we ought to say"* (F, 3299). In the words of the Hasidic master R. Dov Ber, "The ecstasy produced by melody … is in the category of spontaneous ecstasy alone, without any choice or intellectual will whatsoever. Words can become idols. They concretize

that which cannot be concretized. Ideas can intellectualize experience. Melody is pure soul." [130] [See note I,iv, 86. "*with lute.*"]

Figure 88. Henry VIII in the likeness of King David, playing the harp: Royal MS 2 A xvi, f. 63v.

In *The Psalter of Henry VIII*, there is a miniature for Psalm 52 that depicts a dichotomy between words and music. "The Psalm is accompanied by an illustration of Henry sitting in his Privy Chamber and playing a harp to identify him with the Psalmist. He is accompanied by his jester Will Somers, with whom he enjoyed a close relationship for more than two decades. Appearing rather dejected, the royal Fool looks out of the picture towards the first verse of the Psalm, which tells us 'The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God"'. [131] [See Figure 88.] Roland Hui observes of the miniature "That Sommers was the sole listener, said much about the intimacy of their relationship." [132]

The first question readers must ask themselves about the scene is the one Stanford Meisner would ask: what are the actors *doing?* What the Fool wants in I,v is what Cordelia wants in IV,vi: to *"winde vp"…"Th'vntun'd and iarring senses"…"Of this childe-changed Father"* (F, 2726-66). [See note IV,vi,25., *"music."*] From time immemorial, music has been considered a powerful healing force for the mind, body, and soul. The Stoics believed that music's ratio-based structure allowed it to represent the structure of the world and influence the soul directly, not just through emotional appeal. This suggests a belief in music's capacity to guide the mind towards a more rational and virtuous state. In *De Ira* (3.9) Seneca, the Stoic philosopher, suggests that music can be a valuable tool in managing anger, which he calls a "brief madness": "Pythagoras used to calm his troubled spirit by playing upon the lyre: and who does not know that trumpets and clarions are irritants, just as some airs are lullabies and soothe the mind?" Pythagoras is often referred to as the "Father of Harmonics" or "Father of Music Theory" due to his ground-breaking work in understanding the mathematical relationships within music. He is quoted as saying, "Each celestial body, in fact each and every atom, produces a particular sound on account of its movement, its rhythm or vibration. All these sounds and vibrations form a universal harmony in which each element, while having it's own function and character, contributes to the whole". [133]

> Music had its place in the classical syllabus of European universities. Music theory, including the Pythagorean version of the tone system and harmonic/ consonant and disharmonic/ dissonant proportions, was common knowledge amongst 'free men cultivating the free arts (artes liberales)'. The classical doctrine was combined with the dominating medical theories, e.g. *humoral medicine* (or *humoral pathology*) — a doctrine with great influence through many centuries. In humoral medicine, health is influenced by four bodily fluids or 'humours': blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. According to this theory good health was the result of a harmonic balance between the humours, while disease reflected some sort of imbalance between them.

> Historically the doctrine goes back to circa 400 BC, and one of its most important spokesmen was the influential medical theorist Galen in the time of the Roman Empire. It was considered foundational in medical theory right up to the eighteenth century" (*A Comprehensive Guide to Music Therapy : Theory, Clinical Practice, Research and Training* by Lars Ole Bonde, Inge Nygaard Pedersen and Tony Wigram, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2002. p.25).

Not a single note of original instrumental incidental music survives from Shakespeare's plays largely because it was mostly improvised. [629] [See Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.] As a result, editors have traditionally dismissed it as extraneous to the plot. They codify it as supplementary: a flourish for an entrance, a dance, a song, a cue to cover a scene change, or atmospheric accompaniment that could, in principle, be removed without altering the drama's essential meaning. However, *King Lear* shows evidence of its being the first early modern drama to use musical motifs as a narrative engine. The music functions like a modern film score: driving the plot, exposing inner psychology, and shaping how the audience experiences the tragedy. This is evidenced by the recurring ox horn motif (see Appendix G) and the strategic reprising of the Fool/Cordelia's signature melody introduced in I,v, as discussed below. The musical motif provides structural cohesion to scenes that read as completely separate and disconnected. The motif is a crucial "sound bridge" connecting Gloucester's anagnorisis at the end of IV,v with Lear's reconciliation with Cordelia in IV,vi ***emotionally***. [See Appendix B.]

Shakespeare's company were clearly aware of the court's growing demand for more emotionally expressive music. The Banqueting House evidence confirms that some King's Men took speaking roles in several masques, and that the "Shakespeare company" was regularly employed for formal speeches and theatrical material at Whitehall and related court occasions. [628] Ben Jonson worked extensively with the King's Men as a playwright. The title role in Volpone is most often assigned to Richard Burbage. [629] Jonson also composed court masques, sometimes involving professional actors associated with the King's Men, and worked with composer Alfonso Ferrabosco II, a crucial figure in introducing Italianate stylistic elements into English music. The two collaborated on the scandalous Twelfth Night performance *The Masque of Blackness* (1605). The following year, Parliament passed the Act to Restrain Abuses of Players.

Because no musical scores survive for Shakespeare's stage music, we must assume that incidental music played an equally vital role in *King Lear* as it did in Jacobean court masques and early opera. [279] Claudio Monteverdi extensively used motifs, often employing recurring themes to bind sections of his operas together, represent specific characters, and/or highlight emotional states. While he lived centuries before Richard Wagner formalized the "leitmotif," Monteverdi utilized similar techniques in early Baroque masterpieces like *L'Orfeo* (1607) and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (1642) to create structural cohesion and dramatic continuity. [280]

Scholars have extensively documented a significant shift in the role and frequency of music after Robert Armin replaced Will Kempe in the Lord Chamberlain's Men around 1600. Catherine A. Henze's research indicates that singing in Shakespeare's plays increased by approximately 204% after Armin's arrival. Music functions as a structural, atmospheric, and

thematic instrument in both *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*, plays in which Armin is widely believed to have originated the roles of Touchstone and Feste respectively. [278] [630] [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.]

1. **Cornwall**] Cambridge, 1960. *Gloster* (Q, 876) *Gloster* (F, 875). In Act II, both Kent and Lear speak of travelling first to Cornwall's castle where they are told the duke and duchess have removed themselves to Gloucester's.

1. **these letters**] this letter

3. **than comes from her demand out of the letter**] than the perusal of the letter suggests to her to ask you. 3. **demand**] question. 3. **out of**] suggested by.

5. S.D. ***Exit***] Ed. *Exit.* (Q, 881). Exit. (F, 881).

Figure 89. Facsimile Viewer: Actus Primus, Scena Quinta, First Folio (New South Wales).

5. S.D. ***The Fool plays a lullaby on his lute***] Ed. The inversion of parent-child roles is a central, driving theme in *King Lear*. [432] It is manifested through the dialogue and codified non-verbally by the double casting of the Fool/Cordelia, and the use of musical motifs. [433] The music adds a layer of emotional depth to the relationship between Lear and the Fool that words alone cannot communicate. Unfortunately, like the instrumental music in Greek and Roman drama, "Not a single note of instrumental music from the Shakespeare plays has been preserved, with the possible exception of the witches' dances from *Macbeth*, which are thought to have been borrowed from a contemporary masque. Even descriptions of the kinds of music to be played are sparse. Trumpets sounded 'flourishes,' 'sennets,' and 'tuckets.'" [134] Logically, the melody the Fool plays on his lute in this important scene is based on a popular lullaby a mother might sing to a wailing child. Compare *Titus Andonicus*, II,iii, *"Be vnto vs, as is a Nurses Song / Of Lullabie, to bring her Babe asleepe"* (F, 763-4).

Figure 90. Lullaby (Italian girl spinning) (1875), by William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1875.

The earliest written lullaby on record dates back around 4,000 years to ancient Babylon, where a lullaby was inscribed on a clay tablet in cuneiform script around 2000 BC. Anthropological and cross-cultural research confirms that lullabies, or infant-directed songs, are found in every known human culture, and the impulse for parents to sing to their babies appears to be

universal. While the melodies and lyrics differ across cultures, the core function—soothing and bonding with infants—remains the same. Some researchers suggest that the origins of lullabies may go back even further, possibly to prehistoric times when early humans needed to calm and reassure their infants without using their hands, especially while carrying them in slings. This suggests that the tradition could be hundreds of thousands of years old, well before the advent of written language. [See Figure 90.]

Video 13. *Toccata, Ritornelo,* and *Prologue* from the Harnoncourt/Ponnelle production of Monteverdi's *l'Orfeo*. Trudeliese Schmidt as "La Musica".

The importance of music in ancient plays is a topic of ongoing research and analysis, as no complete musical scores survive from that time period. Scholars believe that many prominent Greek and Roman playwrights incorporated music into their productions, notably Euripides, [136] Aristophanes, [137] and Plautus. [138] It is thought musical patterns and melodies were linked to certain characters, emotions, or dramatic situations. [139] In Shakespeare's time, English musicians were exposed to new Italian monodic styles through contact with Italian musicians at court and works like Vincenzo Galilei's *Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna* (c. 1581), widely read in England. Galilei was a prominent member of the Florentine Camerata, a group of intellectuals in Florence that focused on reviving the expressive power of ancient Greek Tragedy through music. He criticized the excessive use of polyphony in his day, arguing that it hindered emotional expression. While he didn't specifically use the modern term "musical motif" in his writings, his theories laid important groundwork that influenced future Baroque composers' use of recurring musical elements, such as Claudio Monteverdi. The prologue of *L'Orfeo* (1607) features a string *ritornello* which is repeated frequently to represent the power of music, making it one of the earliest examples of an operatic leitmotif. [See Video 13.]

Musicians in Middle Ages would frequently repeat and vary short melodic phrases (motifs) to create a recognizable musical theme throughout a piece. "It is important to note that most secular music was of folk origins. This means that most secular music was created, performed, and passed down orally by traveling musicians." Recurring melodic patterns and phrases were often used to create a sense of unity and structure within the composition." (study.com.) It is in this tradition, for example, that Bach uses the secular love song "Mein G'müt ist mir verwirret" ("I'm all mixed up") by Hans Leo Haßler (c. 1600) as a leitmotif of agapē in his sacred oratorio *Matthäus-Passion*, "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden." The music Ophelia plays on her lute in *Hamlet* (Q1, 2766.1) is a significant thematic device, as is Desdemona's "Willow Song" in *Othello*, Act 4, Scene 3 which is repeated by Emilia (F, 3545) before she commits suicide.

In my restoration, recurring musical motifs are considered a crucial element in the narrative

and narrative structure of the play. While scores for the instrumental music are likely never to be found, it is possible to *predict* the presence of them, as astrophysicists predicted Neptune using basic principles of gravity. [135] The play's thematic and emotional coherence wobbles without music to explain its perturbations. The music is a necessary element for providing the audience with a framework to understand and feel the dramatic shifts and underlying meanings that the dialogue or plot alone fails to convey clearly. [435] This is evident in I,v, III,vi, IV,v and IV,vi, which depend on music to glue the scenes together, and make sense of what the characters are doing and feeling.

7. **kibes**] chilblains, chapped heels.

9. **thy wit shall not go slipshod**] That is, "Your wits are in no danger of slipping because the kibes they're going to get from running hither and thither will be so painful they're certain to tread carefully." Compare III,ii.31-4 note. "For the folklorists and linguists who are serious students of what has been designated 'a minor genre,' the riddle far from being merely the witty bit of entertainment it is commonly supposed to be, is, in fact, a complex linguistic and aesthetic structure that, when subjected to systematic and scientific study, reveals a great deal about the major human systems—such as language, culture, and art—with which it is inextricably bound up. *The Language of Riddles: New Perspectives*, WJ Pepicello and Thomas A Green.

The structure of this scene bears all the hallmarks of what we today call a "double act", a fundamental form of comedy in British Music Hall and American Vaudeville that traces all the way back to *commedia dell'arte* and ancient Greek and Roman theatre. The dynamic involves a "straight man" (Lear) and a "comic" (the Fool). The focus of a double act is primarily on the comedic timing and the relationship between the two performers, but music has long been a part of the tradition. In *Lear*, the gentle music the Fool is playing on his lute serves as a form of counterpoint to his biting riddles.

Figure 91. Folio 110 from the McGill *Feather Book* depicts a scene from a comedy by Nicolò Barbieri showing Spineta serenaded by the masked Schapin (Scapino). The large number of instruments hanging from the tree suggest the player is Francesco Gabrielli with his wife Spinetta.

11. **kindly**] in a like manner.

12. **she's**] i.e., Regan. She is as flat as a boy. Compare note II,iv,265, *"If only to go warm were gorgeous."*

12. **this**] Goneril

Figure 92. Cimon and Pero, Peter Paul Rubens, c. 1630, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

12. **crab's like an apple**] This joke alludes to the size of their breasts. Though Goneril's are much bigger than Regan's, they will taste just as bitter. [See note II,iv,264,S.D, *"To Regan."*] The image evokes the exemplary story of a woman, Pero, who secretly breastfeeds her father, Cimon, after he is incarcerated and sentenced to death by starvation. "The story is recorded in *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* by the ancient Roman historian Valerius Maximus, and was presented as a great act of pietas (i.e., filial piety) and Roman honour. A painting in the Temple of Pietas depicted the scene. Among Romans, the theme had mythological echoes in Juno's breast-feeding of the adult Hercules, an Etruscan myth." (Wikipedia, Roman Charity.) [See Figure 92 and Figure 165.]
16. **on's**] of his.".
18. **of**] on
18. **side's**] side of his
25. **put's**] put his.
27. **I will forget my nature**] i.e. "kind."
29-30. **the seven stars**] the Pleiades.
30. **mo**] more.
30. **pretty**] apt, neat
33. S.D. ***Begins to weep*]** Ed. not in Q, F.
33. **To take it again perforce**] i.e. his manhood. He has begun weeping again. See I,iv, 284-87, *"I am ashamed/That thou has power to shake my manhood thus;/That these hot tears, which break from me* ***perforce****,/Should make thee worth them"* (F, 814-17).
41. **in temper**] in my normal condition.
41. S.D. ***Enter Lear's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear commanded the actor to prepare his horses in the previous scene. See I,iv,246. S.D. "*Exit Lear's Knight".*
42. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Seruant* (Q, 921). *Gent.* (F, 921)
43. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear and Lear's Knight***] Not in Q, F. They depart from stage door left signaling to the audience they are leaving the castle.
44. **maid**] a virgin. "A Lover's Complaint," *"He preacht pure maide,"* (Q, 313). Alexander Schmidt, Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*:* **maid**.
45. **things**] The Fool's couplet is addressed directly to the women in the audience. By *"things,"* he is alluding to the *time* of their maidenhood. If it is shorter than *now*, they've already lost it. That is, any virgin who is so naïve to think this departure is funny, is sure to be robbed of her maidenhood, *if she hasn't been already*. The Fool riddles metatheatrically about time elsewhere in the play [Compare note III,ii, 96-7.,*"Merlin's Prophecy."* Cf. also note III,vi, 85., *"I'll go to bed at noon."*] R.A. Foakes in the venerated *Arden Shakespeare King Lear* (1997) notes that David Wiles suggests that the Fool put his *marotte*, or fool's head on a stick,

the traditional bauble, between his legs as a phallus to illustrate *things*" (p.216). My suggestion is that the boy actor/musician uses the finger board of his lute to help communicate the idea of *time* in the form of a musical joke: a mid-tone signifying *"now"*, a low note for *"long"* and a high note for *"shorter."* Muir notes 'the rhyme *departure-shorter* was accurate in Elizabethan pronunciation. The word departure is a homonymic pun.' (*KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 55.)

45. S.D. ***Hits a high note on his lute***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

45. S.D. ***Exit***] Q. Exeunt. F.

Figure 93. Judith Leyster's androgynous Fool with Lute, after a painting by Hans Hals c. 1623.

ACT II. SCENE I] *Actus Secundus. Scena Prima* (F, 926). Scene 6 in Quarto.

S.D. **The Earl of Gloucester's Castle**] Malone, subst.; not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform and Upper Casement in the Tiring House**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Chamber (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Edmund and Curan, severally***.] *Enter Bastard, and Curan, seuerally*. (F, 927). *Enter Bastard, and Curan meeting*. (Q1, 928). *Enter Bastard, and Curan meetes him*. (Q2, 927). Edmund enters from the center opening and Curan from the door on the audience's left signally that he is coming from afar.

1. **Curan**] It can be inferred from the dialogue that Curan is a chamberlain—a senior household officer responsible for the lord's private chambers. High-ranking chamberlains in England traditionally carried symbolic insignia like a white staff and a golden key as signs of their authority. In the story, Curan is advised of the impending arrival of Regan and the duke. After first apprising Gloucester of the news, he next seeks out Edmund. He has free access to the rooms in the dark castle late at night, and knows exactly where he can be found. Edmund greets him cordially by his distinctly Gaelic name, and the two of them gossip about an approaching war with France. Later in the scene, Gloucester enters with *"Seruants with Torches"* (F, 970), including Curan. The latter is ordered to *"Dispatch"* (F,995) in haste to proclaim Edgar an outlaw. [See note II,i,58, *"dispatch."*] Curan is only important in the story if he is the same character as the *"Seruant"* (Q, 2176.1) and "*1 Ser*" (Q, 2177.5) in III,vii (lines 2176.1-9 were omitted in the First Folio). [See note III,vii, S.D. "*Curan."*]

2, 6,10,13. ***Curan***] (Q, 930); *Cur.* (F, 929)

7-8. **Ear-kissing**] (F, 936) eare-bussing (Q, 936)

8. **arguments**] subjects of conversation.

9**. pray you**] please

10. **toward**] at hand

13. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 942). Not in Q.
14. **The better**] so much the better.
17. **of a queasy question**] of a kind that requires careful handling, if he is not to make a mess of it. 17. **queasy**] Delicate, unsettled.
18. **Briefness**] promptitude, immediate action, speed.
19. **Descend]** Edmund is speaking literally of descending.
19. ***Enter Edgar***] After line 18 *work* (F, 948). After *hath* (Q1, 946). After *which* (Q2, 946).

Figure 94. King John's Hunting Lodge, Axbridge, Somerset, a 15th century merchant's house.

19. S.D. ***descends from above with a rope***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Cf. *Claracilla*, F12V *Enter above with a Rope to come down and make his escape"* (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, p. 184). Adams posits that Edgar begins the scene aloft from "the Chamber" (p. 389), the second level of the tiring house, about 13.5 feet (4.1m) above the stage platform, and makes his descent down an internal tiring-house stairway completely hidden from the audience's sightlines. In my restoration, Edgar descends from a large *"Casement"* (F, 395) on the third level of the tiring house. [See note I,ii,59., *"casement."*] It is pure theory how this level was put to use: A music gallery? Management offices? A "green room"? Most scholars theorize that it included a secure storage space for costumes, hangings, musical instruments, and other expensive items owned by the King's Men. For obvious reasons, the room would have been locked off to the public, hence the need for Edmund to give his brother a key: *"There's my key"* (F, 491). Shakespeare's audience would have expected him to need one to enter. [See note I,ii,157, *"key"*.]

Of course, it can never be known where Edgar *"descends"* from. The discovery of Aernout Van Buchel's copy of Johan de Witt's drawing of the Swan playhouse in the University of Utrecht library in 1880 "forms the inevitable basis of any comprehensive account of the main structural features of a [Elizabeth] playhouse" (Chambers, E.K**.** *The Elizabethan Stage,* 2:527. Oxford: Clarendon, 1923.) [See Figure 9.] In de Witt's drawing, details of the third level are concealed by the roof overhanging the platform. Thus, it is not known if it was cantilevered,—a building technique used in medieval timber-frame buildings in which an upper floor projects beyond the dimensions of the floor below. [See Figure 94.] It would make sense if it was. "There are a number of advantages gained from this type of design. It increased the floorspace of upper floors, making the most of available land, as well as providing some cover from the elements next to the building." ("Jettying – A Unique Architectural Style"). In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Borachio might be referring to an over-hanging structure when he says, *"Stand thee close then vnder this penthouse"* (F, 1431).

Video 14. Swashbuckler Errol Flynn in *The Sea Hawk* (1940). Note that the English privateers onboard ship descend on ropes wearing swords.

The exact, precise height of the original Globe Playhouse is not known for certain because the original 1599 structure burned down in 1613. No architectural blueprints survive, and historians must rely on indirect evidence. Scholars and builders estimate it was approximately 30 to 32 feet (about 9–10 meters) high from the ground to the eaves. "If …the under side of the super-structure was on a plane with the ceiling of the third level of the tiring-house and the top of the spectator-gallery, then the scenic wall was three stories high, and the third level of the tiring-house thus included in the visible scene was capable of development as a unit of the multiple stage" (Adams, *The Globe Playhouse*, pp. 298-99). Were Edgar to *"descend"* from "*a casement"* window on the third floor (as at King John's Hunting Lodge, Figure 94), it could have been a drop of around 6-7 metres (20-23 ft) to the stage. Edgar's descent is a shamelessly theatrical acrobatic stunt contrived to impress the audience with his physical strength and agility. Climbing and descending a rope is not for girlie men. [140] See The Art of Manliness, "*How to Climb a Rope Like a Navy SEAL."* In the 16th century, English sailors primarily descended ropes on tall ships using a combination of specialized rigging structures and manual techniques. For comparison, the total mast height above the hull was substantial on large ships like the Mary Rose, likely well over 100 feet. Setting aside the acrobatic spectacle of the actor's descent, the action is a metaphor for his sudden drop on Lady Fortune's Wheel. He next appears in II,iii, crawling out from the "cellar" underneath the stage into the yard. [See note II,iii.S.D. *below*.]

24. **i'th'haste**] in great haste.
26. **Upon his party**] Furness quotes Delius, 'In order to confuse his brother and urge him to a more speedy flight, by giving him the idea that he is surrounded by perils, Edmund asks Edgar first whether he has not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall, and then, reversing the question, asks whether he has not said something on the side of Cornwall 'gainst the Duke of Albany.' p. 102
27. **Advise yourself**] consider
27. **on't**] of it.
27. S.D. ***Tucket within***] Ed. Not in Q, F. A tucket functions as an acoustic identifier on a trumpet or trumpets signaling the approach of a particular person. Compare *The Merchant of Venice*, *"A Tucket sounds"* (F2, p.183). *"Your husband is at hand, I heare his trumpet"* (F, 2459). [See note II,i,78., S.D., "*Tucket within*."]
28. **I hear my father coming**] He hears the sound of his father's tucket.
29. **In cunning**] "for purposes of deceit; skilful deceit, craft, artifice" (*OED*, **5a**); i.e., to play along with it.
29. S.D. ***He draws his sword***] Ed Not in Q, F.
30. ***Edgar draws and parries Edmund's attack***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Edgar's defensive sword play

does not beget a favorable opinion of him from macho men in the audience.

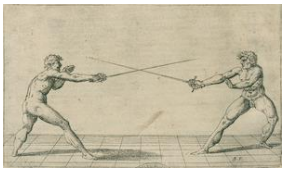


Figure 95. Scola, overo teatro by Nicoletto Giganti - Figure 2.

30. **quit you well**] acquit, give a good account of yourself, fight well. Muir quotes *1 Sam*.,iv.9: 'Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, and fight.' (*KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p.57.)
31. S.D. ***Loudly***] Not in Q, F.
32. S.D. ***Exit Edgar***] F, 965. Not in Q.
33-4. **beget opinion . . . endeavor**] make people think I have a desperate fight.
34. S.D. ***Wounds his arm***] Rowe; not in Q, F.
34-5. **I have seen drunkards . . . sport**] Young gallants, under the influence of drink, would wound themselves in order to pledge the health of their mistresses in blood mingled with their drink. See, e.g., Jonson *Cynthia's Revels*, IV.i.200-9: 'I would see how *Loue* could worke . . . by letting this gallant expresse himselfe . . . with stabbing himselfe and drinking healths, and writing languishing letters in his bloud.' (qu. Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 58).
35. S.D. ***Edmund hides his rapier***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare, *"In the act-time De Flores hides a naked rapier", The Changeling* (p. 42). Edmund wants his father to think he was defenseless when Edgar attacked him. See "*My vnprouided body"* (F, 988). [See note I,ii,52, *"unprovided."*]
36. S.D. ***Enter Gloucester***] *Enter Gloster*, (F, 970) *Enter Glost*. (Q, 971). From the large center opening.
36. S.D. ***Curan***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
36. S.D. ***Household Knights, and Servants with torches***] Ed. *and Seruants with Torches.* (F, 970). Not in Q. Among the *"Seruants"* escorting Gloucester are household knights—the kind he sends to escort Lear safely to Dover. They are armed and wear Gloucester's coat-of-arms. "Many of the male servants in a medieval household were purely military personnel; there would be a gatekeeper, as well as various numbers of knights and esquires." [141] They likely enter from the center.
39. **Mumbling of wicked charms**] Edmund exploits his father's beliefs in the occult.
40. **mistress**] "A woman, goddess, or thing personified as female, which has control over a person or is regarded as a protecting or guiding influence." *Obsolete*. (*OED* **3.b**).
43. S.D. ***Exeunt some Knights***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
41. **I bleed**] Edmund provides his father with more empirical evidence of Edgar's treachery. Apparently, he hadn't seen the wound. The business draws the audience's attention to Gloucester's need to wear eyeglasses.
41. S.D. ***Gloucester readjusts his spectacles to see the wound***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [Figure 42.] The important idea Shakespeare is representing here is the *artificial* means of Gloucester's vision. He fails to see the true nature of the evidence presented to him. [See note III,vii,65.

S.D., "*Stomps on* Gloucester's *spectacles."*]
45. **that**] when that
46. **bend**] aim.
49. **loathly opposite**] bitterly opposed.
50. **fell**] deadly, fierce.
50. **motion**] thrust—a fencing term.
51. **prepared**] unsheathed and ready.
51. **charges home**] makes a home thrust at.
52. **unprovided**] unprotected.
52. **lanc'd**] Theobald; lanch'd] Q; latch'd F. pierced, wounded.
53. **alarum'd spirits**] energies roused to action, as by a trumpet
54. **Bold in the quarrel's right**] emboldened by the justice of his cause. (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 59)
55. **gasted**] frightened.
56. **Let him fly far**] however far he flies.
57-8. **uncaught and found.]** Ed. *Vncaught/ And found;* (F, 994-5); *Vncaught and found,* (Q1, 994-5); *vncaught and found;* (Q2, 902-3). Meaning, un-caught and un-found. As David Crystal observes, William Shakespeare "seemed to have had a penchant for using *un-* in imaginative ways." (*Think on My Words': Exploring Shakespeare's Language*, 2008. p.171.) In today's jargon, "You may want to *find and catch* specific Pokémon to fill up your Pokédex."
58. S.D. ***To Curan***] Ed. Not in Q, F. A chamberlain could issue proclamations and official commands on his lord's orders. In so doing, Curan signals his loyalty and trusted, intimate status within the Gloucester's household to the audience.
58. **Dispatch**] "To dispose or rid oneself promptly of (a piece of business, etc.); to get done, get through, accomplish, settle, finish off, conclude, execute promptly or speedily" (*OED*, 5.a.). Spoken as an imperative. Compare *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV,ii, *"dispatch."* (F, 2000).
59. **worthy**] honorable
59. **arch and patron**] chief patron
63. S.D. ***Exit Curan***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
65. **pight**] fully determined, from pitched
65. **curst**] sharp, harsh, angry
67. **unpossessing**] incapable of holding property, and so beggarly
68. **would stand**] should stand.
68. **reposal**] placing
69. **virtue, or worth**] or your own virtue or worth.
70. **faith'd**] credited.
72. **character**] handwriting
73. **suggestion**] evil instigation.
73. **practice**] treacherous device.
74. **make a dullard of the world**] suppose everyone to be stupid.
76. **pregnant**] obvious, readily conceivable

76. **potential**] powerful
77. **fast'ned**] inveterate, hardened. Muir says it is probably a metaphor for the hardening of cement. *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 61. Compare note III,vii, 31, *"Hard, hard."*
78. S.D. ***Tucket within***] after *seek it* F (l.1014); not in Q. Tuckets are unique musical signatures on a trumpet (F, 1469) or trumpets (F, 1017) identifying a particular person. In accordance with the farcical style of *King Lear*, Cornwall's tucket likely reflects his pomposity: florid and overblown. It is distinctly different from Gloucester's above indicating that the musician(s) must have been instructed by someone with knowledge of the play's style as to how the tucket was meant to be articulated. Is it ironic? Does it get a laugh?
80. **ports**] seaports
85. **capable**] able to inherit. John Guillim notes, *Chassaneus* faith, that Baftards are not capable of their Father's Patrimony, either by Law or Custom, *quia filius Ancillae non erat baeres cum filio Liberae.* See *A Display of Heraldry* (1611), p. 38-39.
85. S.D. ***Enter Cornwall, Regan***] *Enter Cornwall, Regan*, (F, 1024); *Enter the Duke of Cornwall.* (Q, 1024). From the large center opening.
85. ***attended by Cornwall's Knight and four other bodyguards***] Ed. *and Attendants.* (F, 1024). Not in Q. There are rumors of war, and the duke and duchesses are escorted from their castle by armed bodyguards. Conspicuous among them is "Cornwall's Knight" (*Seru.* F, 2145) who fatally wounds the duke. It can be inferred from the stage business in III,vii, that he is accompanied by four other armed bodyguards; two are required to bear his corpse offstage after he is murdered by Regan (see note III,vii,91), while two more are needed to lead Gloucester out after he is blinded (see note III,vii,94). They are an intimidating presence on stage, and wear Cornwall's coat-of-arms.
91. **godson**] Lear was Edgar's sponsor at his baptism.
97. **consort**] set
98. **ill affected**] disloyal
99. **put him on**] incited him to
100. **th'expense and waste**] the privilege of spending and squandering
104. **Nor I, assure thee, Regan**] Cornwall's fatuous remark shows his obsequiousness to Regan. She wears the pants in the house. See II,iv,92 note *'fiery'*.
106. **child-like**] filial.
107. **bewray his practice**] Edmund uncovered Edgar's scheme. The word **Bewray** is obsolete. See *OED*, 2.a., "To expose (a person), by divulging his or her secrets, or telling something that one knows to his or her discredit or harm. Hence passing into, To expose or reveal (the unknown doer of an act.)" Compare III,vi,111, *"bewray"* (Q1, 2056.15).
108. **apprehend**] arrest
111. **Be fear'd of doing harm**] be feared, lest he should do mischief.
111-12. **Make your own purpose …please**] 'carry out your plans for his capture, and make what use you like of my authority and resources for that purpose' (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 63)
113. **virtue and obedience**] virtuous obedience
119. **Thus**] Just as Goneril cuts off Albany in mid-sentence (I,iv,299), Regan takes the words out

of Cornwall's mouth.

119. **threading dark-ey'd night**] passing through the middle of the night, as through the eye of a needle.

120. **prize**] importance.

123. **differences**] quarrels

123. **which**] referring to Lear's letter.

125. **attend dispatch**] are waiting to be dispatched.

128. **craves the instant use**] requires to be done at once.

129. S.D. ***Flourish. Exeunt***] *Exeunt. Flourish.* (F, 1073). Not in Q.

ACT II, **SCENE II**] *Scena Secunda* (F, 1074). Scene 7 in Quarto.

S.D. **Before Gloucester's Castle**] Capell; not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Study and Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Kent and Oswald***] Collier. *Enter Kent, and Steward seuerally.* (F, 1075). *Enter Kent, and Steward.* (Q, 1075).

S.D. **severally**] F; not in Q. Kent likely enters from the left door (viewer's right) signaling that he is coming from inside Gloucester's castle; Oswald from the right door (viewer's left) signaling that he is coming from outside of it.

1. **house**] household.

3. **our**] Oswald uses the royal "we", commonly employed by a person of high office, such as that of a monarch, earl or Pope.

5. **lov'st**] be friends. Compare *"Loue, and be Friends, as two such men should bee"* (*Julius Caesar*, F, 2116) See note IV,iv,21.,*"love."* [Compare note IV,vii,20, *"Our very loving sister well bemet."*]

Figure 96. Sixteen-year-old Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, by Isaac Oliver, ca.1610, Victoria and Albert Museum.

6. **I love thee not**] Oswald words, *"If thou lov'st me"* (F, 1070) hit a raw nerve in Kent who takes them as a sexual proposition, as Lear does when Gloucester physically kisses his hand. [See *"No, doe thy worst blinde Cupid, Ile not loue"* (F, 2581-2)]. Kent earlier insinuated that Oswald is a cocksucker. [See note I,iv,16, *"eat no fish."*] Kent's abomination of Oswald appears on the surface to stem from the latter's affections of high birth. He is a bargain-bin version of the Earl of Kent in I,i. His clothes look like poor hand-me-downs, and the colors don't match—implying that they were not originally intended to be worn together. He calls Oswald a "*barber-monger"* (F, 1106) for curling his hair—as Kent did before he cut it. In Shakespeare's day, it was *de rigue*ur for fashionable men like Henry Frederick and Henry

Wriothesley to have their hair curled with hot irons, but not a domestic servant who eats left-over food (*"broken meats"*, F, 1088) in the kitchen with all the other menial household staff. [See Figure 96 and Figure 102.] Perhaps having heard rumors of the sexual nature of Oswald's relationship with Goneril, he calls him a *"bawd"* (F, 1093), and compares his services to a Winchester Goose's (F, 1156), the poorest of London's prostitutes. Worst of all, Oswald is wearing a longsword which is bigger than Kent's small sword. In *King Lear*, size matters. [See note I,iii, S.D., *"wearing a longsword"*.] In Kent's mind, Oswald's lower-class status makes him no better than an animal, something to be butchered and eaten.

8. **Tisbury pinfold**] Ed. *Lipsbury Pinfold* (F, 1083); *Lipsburie pinfold* (Q, 1082); *Lipsbury pinfold* (Q2, 1083). No such place as "Lipsbury" or "Lipsbury pinfold" has been identified, but Kent's meaning is clear enough: if Oswald was confined to a pound, he would butcher him like a piece of meat. Throughout the play, Kent looks upon Oswald as something to be eaten: *"eate no fish"* (F, 548); *"Lipsbury Pinfold"* (F, 1083); *"sop oth' Moonshine"* (F, 1105); *"carbonado your shanks"* (F, 1111); *"vnboulted villaine"* (F, 1139-40); *"Goose"* (F, 1156). "The terms 'pinfold' and 'pound' are Saxon in origin. *Pundfald* and *pund* both mean an enclosure. There appears to be no difference between a pinfold and a village pound" (Wiki).

Figure 99. Built in 1279, the magnificent tithe barn in Tisbury has been repurposed as an arts venue.

In my judgment, *"Lipsbury"* is a misspelling of Tisbury, and "pinfold" an ironic term for the magnificent 200 foot (about 61 meters) long Great Barn, one of the largest, if not the longest, thatched tithe barns in England. [See Figure 99.] "T" and "L" can be easily confused in Elizabethan handwriting. This visual overlap occurs across both capital (majuscule) and lowercase (minuscule) forms, primarily due to the unique mechanics of Secretary Hand, the dominant script of the era. [481] Lending some credence to this hypothesis, the *"t"* in *"Felt"* (F, 2627) is misprinted as an *"l"* in the quartos, spelling the word *"fell"* (Q1, 2627), (Q2, 2626). The village of Tisbury is also misspelled on John Speed's map of Wiltshire, where it is recorded as *Tilburye*: the cartographer or engraver clearly having mistaken a long *'s'* (*ſ*) for an *'l'*. [Figure 98.] Dr. Douglas Bruster argues in the September 2013 issue of Notes and Queries, that misspellings and bad handwriting are Shakespeare's trademarks. [436]

Figure 98. Detail of the village of "Tilburye" in the county of "Wiltshire" on John Speed's 'The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine' (1611/12). University of Cambridge Digital Library.

The Great Tithe Barn was the signature structure of Place Farm, part of a monastic grange belonging to Shaftesbury Abbey specifically to store tithes (a tenth of agricultural produce) collected from local farmers. [141] The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the word "tithe" to around 1200 and defines it as "A tenth of annual produce or earnings, taken as a tax (originally

in kind) for the support of the church and clergy". Mosaic law imposed a contribution of one tenth of agricultural produce for the support of the priesthood. (*OED* 1.**a**). From medieval times, every-one in England was required to give a certain portion of their income (typically 10%) to their local church. These payments would have been made in the form of crops or animals such as pigs and cattle and were the source of the local clergyman's income (myshakespeare). "For of my Corn and Catel heo Craueþ þe Tiþe"—which translates to "For from my crops and livestock, she demands the tithe" [478] (William Langland, *Piers Plowman,* W.6.88 [KD.6.89]. In *Romeo and Juliet*, I,iv, Mercutio says, *"sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail"* (F, 530). A "tithe-pig" was a pig given by a farmer to a parson as part of a tithe. [See note III,iv,115-16., *"tithing to tithing."*]

The barn is thought to have accommodated a range of uses, from agricultural storage to judicial proceedings and broader estate operations. [479] In medieval monastic granges, larder houses were essential for dismembering carcasses, salting meat, and storage. The presence of two larder houses at Place Farm strongly indicates butchery took place there. [475] Medieval butchery typically involved axes/cleavers for dismembering and knives for stripping meat from bones. Direct evidence that animals were slaughtered at Place Farm would require excavation and scientific analysis of bone assemblages from the site.

Figure 97. The Butcher`s Shop, Annibale Carracci, c. 1582, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX.

While Shakespeare never explicitly maps the story's location for Acts II and III, he gives readers clues that lead to the ceremonial county of Wilshire in South West England, bordering Gloucestershire to the north, Oxfordshire to the north-east, Berkshire to the east, Hampshire to the south-east and south, Dorset to the south, and Somerset to the west. The historic village of Tisbury is located in the county of Wiltshire, situated in the Nadder Valley, west of Salisbury. It stretches into Hampshire, the site of Winchester Cathedral. It is only about 2 miles (3.2 km) from village of Hindon which had historical connections to the Bishop of Winchester through ecclesiastical ties, particularly in the medieval period. Bishop Peter des Roches of Winchester planned the borough of Hindon as a center for markets and fairs in 1218. [179] [477] [See note III,vi,73., *"come march to wakes, and faires, and market townes."*] Hampshire, the capital of Wessex and later of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, was thought by Sir Thomas Malory to be the location of *"Camelot"*. Prostitutes in the District of Southwark were called "Winchester Geese" because they were licensed by the Bishop of Winchester to work within the Liberty of the Clink, an area on the south bank of the River Thames, opposite the City of London and outside its jurisdiction. The liberty was within a minute's walk of Shakespeare's Globe Playhouse. In lines F, 1156-57, Kent says he will drive Oswald *"cackling"* from Salisbury Plain all the way to "Camelot" (85 mi or 137 km), a long and miserable journey for a goose, which he would prod without mercy all the way, and then pluck and cook for dinner. See II,ii., *"if I had you vpon Sarum*

Plaine,/ I'ld driue ye cackling home to Camelot" (F, 1156-57).

Figure 100. Driving to Stonehenge located on Salisbury Plain from Westminster Cathedral.

Edgar comically affects a regional West Country dialect (often associated with Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall) when addressing Oswald in IV,v, using words like *"Chill"* (F, 2687) *"'chud"* (F, 2691), "*zwaggerd"* (F, 2691), and *"vor"* (F, 2692). Bedlam beggars were explicitly associated with Wiltshire during the 16th and 17th centuries, primarily due to the writings of the famous 17th-century Wiltshire antiquary and author John Aubrey. John Dover Wilson, building on earlier hints from Aubrey, who heard from a contemporary's son that Shakespeare had been a country schoolteacher, advanced the idea that Shakespeare tutored the young Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton at Titchfield Abbey, the Southampton family's estate. Wriothesley (1573–1624), noted for his "androgynous beauty," [142] is Shakespeare's only confirmed patron—to whom he dedicated "Venus and Adonis" (1593) and "*The Rape of Lucrece*" (1594). It could be during this "lost" period that Shakespeare befriended Henry Hastings, the second son of George Hastings, 4th Earl of Huntingdon, as discussed in Appendix J: A Skinning House.

> So how is Shakespeare associated with Wiltshire? The main connection comes through Wilton in the south-east of our county. William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, of Wilton House, is famously cited as the 'Mr W.H.' to whom Shakespeare dedicated many of his sonnets. The first folio of his works published posthumously in 1623 is dedicated to both William and his brother, Philip, the fourth Earl. Patronage of the arts was important to both Herbert and his wife, Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, the sister of Sir Philip Sidney (himself a famous poet who wrote 'Arcadia' while staying at Wilton in 1580.) In the first folio the 3rd Earl is thanked for his 'many favours' to Shakespeare and his company; in other words, considerable financial support. ("William Shakespeare in Wiltshire" by Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre).

Figure 101. Wiltshire, England, Britannica.

13. **broken meats**] Somebody who lives on scraps, left-over food.
14. **three-suited**] Servants were given only three suits of clothes a year. Compare III,iv,117.,*"three suits."*
14. **hundred-pound**] cheap. James I sold knighthoods for a hundred pounds. Steevens quotes Middleton, *The Phoenix*, IV,iii,55: 'How's this? Am I used like a hundred-pound gentleman?' Furness, p. 116.
15. **worsted-stocking**] Gentlemen wore silk stockings, not cheap woolen material. No one under the degree of knight was allowed silk 'netherstocks' under the Proclamation of 1597. [See

Figure 102.]

Figure 102. Portrait of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton (1573-1624), Patron of Shakespeare. Ca. 1600. Artist Unknown. He is wearing silk netherstocks. Private collection; on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, London.

15. **lily-livered**] white-livered, without blood in it, and hence cowardly.
15-16. **action-taking**] one who goes to law, instead of fighting
16. **glass-gazing**] vain
16. **super-serviceable**] over officious
17. **finical**] affectedly fastidious
17. **one-trunk-inheriting**] whose sum of possessions can be contain in a single trunk.`
18-19. **one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service**] would only perform good service to those who can pay for it, like a prostitute.
19. **composition**] compound, mixture.
20. **heir**] inheriting the mongrel bitch's characteristics.
22. **thy addition**] the titles I've given you.
27. S.D. ***Drawing his sword***] Rowe; not in Q, F. He is threatening to chop Oswald up into pieces, as he did during the banquet. [See note I,iv,83, *"lubber's length."*]
29. **sop o' th' moonshine**] A sop is a piece of bread soaked in liquid. Kent means simply that he will soak up the moonshine with Oswald as though he was a sop; i.e. *make a meal of him*. Cf. II,ii,34-5. *"I'll so carbonado your shanks."* A milksop is a word still used today to mean somebody without courage. [See also II,ii,61, *"unbolted"*.]
30. **cullionly**] rascally, base, vile; from cullion
30. **barber-monger**] a constant patron of the barber's shop. That is, Oswald keeps his hair curled like a gentleman. Compare *"curl'd my haire"* (F, 1866). [See Figure 102.] "Men had their hair curled with hot irons. To keep the hair in place wax or gum was applied to the hair" (Elizabethan Hair Styles). Ironically, before Kent cuts his hair to disguise himself as *"Caius"* (F, 3249), his hair is long and curled, and he wears flamboyant, expensive clothes.

Figure 103. Illustration by Gustave Doré from Chapter XXVI of *Don Quixote*.

33. **Vanity the puppet's part**] Kent is alluding to allegorical morality or mystery plays from the Middle Ages where personified abstract qualities such as Death and Vanity are the main characters. In I,iv, the audience witnessed Goneril commanding Oswald *from above* as though he were her puppet (F, 856-64). [I,iv, 320. S.D. "*Re-enter Oswald*."] In the 17th century, troupes

of Italian puppeteers travelled around Britain playing at fairs and markets, probably using marionettes, which are operated from above by strings or rods" (Victoria and Albert Museum). Don Quixote famously attacks the marionets in Master Peter's puppet show in Chapt XXIV, Book Two of the eponymous novel. [See Figure 103.] A.R. Philpott writes in a *Dictionary of Puppetry* (1969): "Punch and Judy shows were traditionally marionette shows when they were brought over from Italy, but were later reinvented in the glove puppet style to accommodate the characters' violent movements without the obstruction of marionette strings." See *Hamlet*, III,ii, "I could interpret betweene you and your loue If I could see the *puppets* dallying" (F, 2114-15); *Midsummer Night Dream*, III,ii, "Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you *puppet*, you." (F, 1322); *Taming of the Shrew*, IV,iii, *"Belike you meane to make a puppet of me."* (F, 2088).

35. **carbonado**] to scotch, or cut crosswise, a piece of meat before broiling or grilling.

Figure 104. Ox turned butcher. From *The World Turned Upside Down*.

35-6. **come your ways**] Get moving.

Figure 104a. Man with Longsword. Albrecht Dürer, *The Promenade*, ca. 1498, engraving. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

36. S.D. ***Oswald trips on his longsword***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In my restoration, Oswald trips on his longsword in keeping with the broad, farcical style of the play. Oswald grew up in poverty, as the Earl of Kent unmercifully rubs in his face. He was too poor to attend any "Schools of Defence." [143] Ironically, in IV,v, Edgar quickly disarms him of his longsword, and kills him with it. He didn't know how to wield it. [See note IV,v,242.,S.D.,*"They fight."*]

Video 15. "How to wear YOUR sword Tod's Workshop.

38. **Stand**] Get up. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, III,iii, *"rise and stand"* (F, 1905).
38. **neat**] "Of a person or animals: habitually clean and tidy; fastidious." (*OED*, 4.**a**.). *Henry IV, Pt.1.*. II,iv, *"wherein neat and cleanly, but to carue a Capon, and eat it?* (F, 1413-14).
39. **Help**] *helpe.* (Q, 1116). Not in F.
40. S.D. ***Enter Edmund, with his rapier drawn***] Furness. *Enter Edmund with his rapier drawne,*

Gloster the Duke and Dutchesse. (Q, 1117-18); After "young master", *Enter Bastard, Cornewall, Regan, Glofter, Seruants* (F, 1117).

41. **matter**] subject of the quarrel.. Rom II,iii, 60
42. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Ed. Not in Q, F. From center opening.
42. **with you**] "I'll chastise you, I'll teach you good manners, you shall pay for this (Latin quos ego!) (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II. p.1380.*) Compare *Henry VIII*, *"I shall be with you presently, good Master Puppy,"* (F, 3287); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *"I will be with thee straight"* (F, 1444)' *Taming of the Shrew*, *"what, do you grumble? I'll be with you straight"* (F, 1799); *Twelfth Night*, *"I'll be with you anon"* (F, 1838); *The Winter's Tale, "I'll be w. you at your sheep-shearing too"* (F, 1887-8); *Romeo and Juliet, "was I with you there for the goose?"* (F, 1176-7).
42. **goodman**] "A man of wealth or social standing who is not a member of the gentry or aristocracy, as a master in a craft or guild, a burgess, a yeoman, etc" (*OED*, 3). "[The yeomen] be not called masters and gentlemen, but goodmen, as goodman Smith [etc.]." W. Harrison, *Description of England* (1877) vol. I. ii.v.13. Compare *Lear*, III,vi, *"Prythee Nunkle tell me,whether a madman be a Gentleman, or a Yeoman"* (F, 2007-8). [See note III,vi,10., *"yeoman."*]

42 **boy**. Used as a word of contempt for grown men. Compare *Coriolanus, "Boy?"* (F, 3774)

43. **flesh**] initiate. A hunting term. See Palsgrave, *Lesclarcissement*: 'Flesche as we do an hounde, when we give him any parte of a wyld beast, to encourage him to run well'. Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 67.
43. S.D. ***Cornwall's Knight and other heavily armed knights***] Ed. *Enter Bastard,Cornewall, Regan, Gloster,Seruants* (F, 1117). *Enter Edmund with his rapier drawne, Gloster the Duke and Dutchesse* (Q1, 1117). *Enter Edmund with his Rapier drawne, Glocester, the Duke and Dutchesse* (Q2, 1117). The group enter from the center opening. Gloucester and the duke are accompanied by their armed household knights. Conspicuous among them is Cornwall's young Knight or *Serv*. (F, 2145) that Regan stabs in the back in III,vii. See note III,vii, 69,73,76,78., "*Cornwall's Knight."*
43. S.D. ***Servants with torches***] Ed. Not in Q, F. It before dawn, and Kent is unable to read the words of Cordelia's letter. [See note II,ii,161-2. *"Nothing almost sees miracles But misery."*]
43. S.D. ***Oswald draws his longsword***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
48. **difference**] quarrel.
51. **disclaims in thee**] Nature renounces any claim to have produced you. He is put together by a bad tailor. In Oswald's defense, he cannot afford a tailor, even a bad one.
60. **Thou whoreson zed! Thou unnecessary letter**] "Zed" is a name for the letter Z. "Around 300 BC, the Roman Censor Appius Claudius Caecus removed *Z* from the alphabet. His justification was that *Z* had become archaic: the pronunciation of /z/ had become /r/ by a process called rhotacism, rendering the letter *Z* useless." (Dictionary.com).
61. **unbolted**] coarse flour. "Not bolted or sifted" (*OED,* **unbolted**, adj.2). Kent is once again referring to Oswald as something to be eaten. "Semolato, a kind of course vnboulted bread, full of branne." (J. Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*). Compare II,ii, 29., "*sop o' th' moonshine."*
62. **jakes**] a latrine, a privy. Figurately, "Something regarded as filthy or disgusting in some way, esp. in being morally corrupt; a source or repository of filth or wickedness." (*OED*, 1.**b**). See

II,ii,122., *"Ajax"*.

63. **wagtail**] A songbird that incessantly wags its long tail up and down. Wagtails are also known to be obsessed with looking at themselves in mirrors. [See Figure 105, "Vain wagtails get into a flap over car wing mirrors", *The Daily Mail*.]

Figure 105. "Who's a pretty boy then? A wagtail inspects himself in a car wing mirror."

65. **beastly**] beast-like
68. **wear a sword**] See note I,iii,S.D., *wearing a sword*.
70. **holy cords**] natural bonds of affection.
71. **too intrince**] t'intrince (F, 1148) to intrench (Q1, 1148). "Intricate, entangled, involved." *(OED)*.
71. **smooth**] flatter.

Figure 106. "Netherlandish Proverbs" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1559, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.

73. **Bring**] (Q, 1150). Being (F, 1150) See "*Netherlandish Proverbs*" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1550). "The third proverb is "to carry fire in one hand and water in the other", which means someone is two-faced."
74. **Renege**] deny
74. **turn their halcyon beaks. . . gale**] This refers to the belief that the halcyon, or kingfisher, if hung up by the tail or beak, would turn with the wind. T. Lupton, Tenth Book of Notable Things, says that 'A little byrde called the King's Fisher, being hanged up in the ayre by the neck, his nebbe, or bill, will be always direct or straight gainst the wind.' Furness p. 122
75. **gale and vary**] varying gale
75. **epileptic**] Oswald is holding back his convulsive laughter, if not sticking his tongue out at Kent, as in Figure 107. Presumably, only Kent and the audience can see him making faces.

Figure 107. Marginal image from the Goreston Psalter. Source: British Library.

79-80. **Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain . . . Camelot**] Salisbury Plain or Sarum plain is a **remote** region. Kent means simply that if he had Oswald *alone* he wouldn't be smiling.

Figure 108. According to local lore, Crossbones Graveyard was once the final rest place for the Winchester Geese, medieval sex workers licensed by the Bishop of Winchester to work in the brothels of The Liberty of the Clink. The graveyard is a short walk from the Globe Playhouse.

86. **likes**] pleases.
93-4. **constrains the garb … nature**] forces on himself a demeanor, a character, quite opposed to what is really his (Craig) qu Furness p. 125.
94. **garb**] style, manner
96. **plain**] "artless, without disguise, frank." *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II*. p. 868.
99. **silly ducking**] ludicrously obsequious.
99. **observants**] obsequious attendants.
100. **stretch their duties nicely**] are particular to carry out their courtly duties punctiliously.
102. **allowance**] approval.
102. **aspect**] "Here used in a secondary astrological sense, like *'influence'* in the following line" (Delius) qu. Furness, *A New Variorum Edition*, p. 126. The accent in on the last syllable. Kent is likening Cornwall's face to a star affecting human destiny
103. **influence**] astrological power exercised by the heavenly bodies.
104. **Phoebus**] Apollo.
104. **front**] forehead.
105. **dialect**] manner of speaking, language (OED, 3a., "By corruption of speech, they false *dialect* and misse-sound it." T. Nashe Lenten Stuffe, 1599.)
108-09. **though I should win your displeasure … to't**] Though you should ask me to become a plain knave, I will not be even if it displeases you.
114. **compact**] in league with the King.
115. **being down, insulted**] exulted over me when I was down.
116. **put upon him such a deal of man**] referring to Kent's toxic masculinity, his sense of being "manly." See note I,i,145, "*unmanly*."
117. **worthied him**] won honor for himself.
118. **For him attempting who**] for assailing one who
119. **fleshment**] the action of feeding with flesh. Oswald is comparing Kent to a dog at mealtime. Cf. *Henry IV Part 2*, *"the wild dogge / Shal flesh his tooth on euery innocent"* (F, 2664-65).
122. **But Ajax is their fool**] Kent grossly insults the duke. Ajax is a pun on *a jakes*: a toilet, "a source or repository of filth or wickedness" (*OED*, **1b**). "What vermine, I pray you, is there of Monkes, and Priestes, and all that Cleargie?..that filthie and stinking *iaxe* hath filled the world so full." L. Tomson tr. J. Calvin *Serm. Epist. S. Paule to Timothie & Titus* 967/1, 1579. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare depicts Ajax as a pompous dimwit: *"Why he stalkes vp and downe like a Peacock, a stride and a stand: ruminates like an hostesse, that hath no Arithmatique but her braine to set downe her reckoning: bites his lip with a politique regard,*

as who should say, there were wit in his head and twoo'd out; and so there is: but it lyes as coldly in him, as fire in flint, which will not shew without knocking" (F, 2108-14). See note III,vi,22,S.D., *"Exeunt two more of Cornwall's knights."* [See also note II,iv,92, *"Fiery."*]

Figure 109. Stocks in Keevil, Wiltshire.

122. **stocks**] The stocks were typically used to punish and shame wandering vagabonds and beggars. In 1495, Parliament passed the Vagabonds and Beggars Act ordering that "vagabonds, idle and suspected persons shall be set in the stocks for three days and three nights and have none other sustenance but bread and water and then shall be put out of Town." According to the historian Alice Morse Earle, "Public punishment in the stocks was a common occurrence from around 1500 until at least 1748" (Curious Punishments of Bygone Days). The stocks were popular with early American Puritans, who also used them as a punishment for profaning the Sabbath "by lewd and unseemly behavior." For example, one Captain Kemble, a Boston seafaring man, made the mistake of publicly kissing his wife on returning home on a Sunday after three years at sea, a transgression that earned him several hours of public humiliation in the stocks. (James A Cox, "Colonial Crimes and Punishments"). Corporal punishment is a major theme in the play.

123. **stubborn**] obdurate

123. **reverend**] aged

128. **grace and person**] i.e. an insult to both his title and Lear personally. Compare III,ii, *"here's Grace, and a Codpiece"* (F, 1692).

132. **Till noon?**] Regan sadistically adds another 24 hours to Kent's punishment, emasculating her husband by overriding his authority. She is also sending a message to her father by treating his messenger like a derelict vagabond.

134. **should**] would

135. **color**] kind, complexion.

136. **bring away**] bring here, bring along.

136. S.D. ***Exit Cornwall's Knight***] Ed. *Stocks brought out*. Pope. *Stocks brought out.* After *"I will"* (F. 1217). Not in Q. This draws the audience's attention to Cornwall's Knight before he become critical to the plot. Though he doesn't speak until III,vii—*"Hold your hand, my Lord"* (F, 2145)—we are impressed by his commanding presence, youth and virility.

139. **check**] rebuke

144. **answer**] be answerable for.

144. ***Reenter Cornwall's Knight, with Servants carrying stocks***] Ed. Not in Q,F.

147. ***S.D. To Cornwall's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q or F. It is important for the audience to see Cornwall's Knight dutifully obeying the orders of his lord. In III,vi, he defies him. See III,vii, 69, 73, 76, 78. *Cornwall's Knight.*

147. S.D. ***Kent is put in the stocks***] Dyce.

148. **Come, my good lord, away**] (Q, 1227); *Come my Lord, away.* Assigned to Cornwall (F, 1227).
148. ***Trumpet***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
148. S.D. ***Exeunt all but Gloucester and Kent***] Dyce; *Exit*. (Q2, 1236) *Exit.* (F, 1227); not in Q1.
151. **rubb'd**] impeded, hindered. From *Bowls*: "An unevenness of the ground which impedes or diverts a bowl; the slowing or diversion of a bowl caused by this." (*OED* 2.**a**). See *Richard II*, III,iv, *Twill make me thinke the World is full of Rubs, / And that my fortune runnes against the Byas.* (F, 1811-12). Shakespeare characterizes Cornwall as being stupidly obstinate.
152. **watch'd**] gone without help.
155. **Give**] i.e. God give.
156. **taken**] received
156. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 1236). Not in Q.
156. S.D. ***Soft music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The music continues through Kent's speech.
157. **approve**] confirm
158-59. **Thou out of heaven's benediction . . . sun.**] In other words, "Out of the frying-pan, into the fire. "This proverb, derived presumably from those who leave the shade to go into the hot sun, and so go from better to worse, is to be found in Heywood, *Proverbs*, 1546 (ed. 1874, p. 115): 'In your running from him to me, yee runne / Out of God's blessing into the warme sunne.' Furness p. 131
159. S.D. ***He takes a letter out of his purse***] Not in Q, F. Only Kent's legs are restrained by the stocks. See note III,i,45, *"purse"*.
159. **thou beacon**] It is still the dark of morning, and Kent awaits the sun so he can read Cordelia's letter.
159. **under globe**] the earth beneath the sun
160. **comfortable**] comforting, helpful.
161-2. **Nothing almost sees miracles But misery**] Not being able to read a single word of the letter in the darkness, Kent images seeing a miracle in his misery.
162. S.D. ***Puts away letter*]** Ed. Not in Q, F.
164. **obscured**] in disguise
164. **course**] course of action.
164. **find**] recover or redeem. While the words "find" and "redeem" are not direct synonyms in standard English, they can share a functional meaning in specific contexts, particularly regarding reclaiming, recovery, or restoration. For example, in a biblical or spiritual sense, "finding" grace or redemption suggests the act of reaching a state where one is "redeemed." In the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18:12-14) and the Lost Coin (Luke 15:8-10), the joy of "finding" is synonymous with the recovery of what was missing. The obscurity of the sentence ("*Cordelia . . . remedies*") is discussed in Furness, *A New Variorum Edition*, pp. 132-35. Kent is saying that Cordelia will restore the moral order lost by the present state, and strive to make reparations. The same idea is expressed in simpler words by Lear's Knight when he says "*Thou hast a Daughter / Who redeemes Nature from the generall curse / Which twaine haue brought her to."* [See note IV,v,203, *"redeems."*] Perhaps the sophisticated academic language (notably the embedded clauses) was intended to remind the audience of Kent's blue blood. Noblemen in Shakespeare's time were systematically taught the skills of

rhetoric as a core part of their education. Caius affects to be rough and plain spoken, without any signs of having received a formal education. Except for his devotion and self-sacrifice to Lear, the Earl of Kent is the opposite in every other respect. The complexity of his speech exposes his aristocratic status, especially when he is engaged in dialogue with another high-born character, such as Lear's Knight. [See Appendix E.]

165. **enormous**] exceedingly wicked

165. **state**] kingdom.

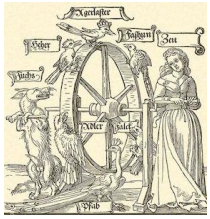


Figure 110. "Time and a Fox Turning the Wheel of Fortune with People of All Ranks to the Right." *The Michelfeldt Tapestry: Allegory of Social Injustice* (series), Albrecht Dürer, ca.1526, Rosenwald Collection.

169. **Fortune**] A frequent motif in the play. "In medieval and ancient philosophy, the Wheel of Fortune, or Rota Fortunae, is a symbol of the capricious nature of Fate. The wheel belongs to the goddess Fortuna (Greek equivalent Tyche) who spins it at random, changing the positions of those on the wheel: some suffer great misfortune, others gain windfalls. The metaphor was already a cliché in ancient times, complained about by Tacitus, but was greatly popularized for the Middle Ages by its extended treatment in the *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius from around 520." (Wiki). [See Figure 110.] Shakespeare is using the metaphor to qualify the meaning of Edgar's entrance from below in the next scene. [See note II,iii,S.D., *"from under the stage."*]

169. S.D. ***He sleeps***] *sleepes.* (Q, 1250). Not in F.

ACT II. SCENE III] Steevens. *Scena Secunda* (F, 1074). Scene 7 in Quarto. According to the printing conventions of Shakespeare's era, a new scene was only marked when the stage was fully emptied of characters. Because Kent doesn't exit the stage at the end of II,ii, the scene is not marked as changing. Furness quotes Schmidt, "In the Ff, Scenes ii, iii, and iv of this act form but one" Scene ii; and this indicates the ancient usage. Only with the departure of all the characters did the scenes change" (*A New Variorum Edition*, p. 135). In performance, the dramatic shift in the incidental stage music is an auditory signal to the audience that the story has moved to a new time. Edgar's entrance from under stage into the yard indicates that the scene is taking place in a different location

S.D. ***Before a hovel***] Ed.; not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Yard**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961). [See note III,iv,S.D., *"below"*.] The new scene is inferred spatially when Edgar unexpectedly emerges from under the stage into the yard. The blocking suggests that he is hiding out in some *lowly,* remote place miles away from Kent, who remains on the platform in the stocks *above* him. The evidence is Cordelia's line *"And was't thou faine (poore Father) / To houell thee with Swine and Rogues forlorne, / In short,and musty straw?"* (F, 2786-88).

Figure 111. Marginal illustrations of a pipe and tabor, and chifonie or symphonia (hurdy-gurdy) from The Luttrell Psalter, c. 1330-40 (GB_lbl Add. 42130, f176r).

S.D. ***A hurdy-gurdy plays***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See note II,iii,20, *"Hurdygurd."*] From Ancient Greek plays and Medieval liturgical dramas to Elizabethan theater and 19th-century melo-drama, the realistic plays of Ibsen and Chekhov, radio dramas, cinema and television, —music has been used to signal the passage of time. [144] Kent is put in the stocks before sunrise on Day 1, and the king does not arrive until late afternoon on Day 2: *"Till noone? till night my Lord, and all night too.*" (F, 1214). [See note II,iv. 123. S.D. "*Kent is set at liberty."*]

S.D. ***Enter Edgar***] (F, 2051); (Q, 2051)

S.D. ***from under the stage***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [Compare note I,iv,175,S.D.,*"above."*] "Below can also be synonymous with ***under the stage*** or ***beneath*** the stage…in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* [p.235] *"Wife below, Rafe below* means*"* below the main platform among the audience" (*Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* p. 28-9). In III,iv, Kent takes Lear and the Fool to the same spot. [See note III,iv,S.D., *"below"*.]

There are no surviving documents that specify the exact height of platform. C. Walter Hodges, puts it between 5 feet 6 inches and 6 feet above the ground. [74] "The stage was closed in below, not with boards (as it was at the Fortune) but with hangings" (The Globe Restored, 1953, p. 47.) Hodges mentions the possibility that action at the Globe was occasionally staged in the yard. He notes that in medieval theatre, performances often took place in open-air venues like town squares, creating a fluid boundary between actors and audiences. Plays performed in medieval churches, were designed to be interactive with the congregation, especially in the early forms of liturgical drama such as the *Quem Quaeritis* trope. The interactive nature of performances was an integral part of the worship service, intended to educate and engage a largely illiterate audience.

> "But what of the visibility of this, when there was a mob of groundlings to shut out the sight of it from the galleries?" writes Hodges. "What, then, was the visibility of similar devices in medieval practice? What problems were raised when the street performers of the Mysteries acted simultaneously between their pageant stages and the street ("Herod rages in the pageant and in the street also'; and 'the 3 kings speaketh in the street' from the Coventry plays)? Presumably, as in the former time, the spectators would be kept away from that part of the ground needed in the action. A part of the yard could be roped off. Perhaps for a play like England's Joy, which had an unusually high entrance fee, there were no ground spectators at all, and whole portions of the play (there was to have been 'a great triumph made with fighting of twelve gentlemen at Barriers', as well as 'the battle at Sea in '88 with England's victor') might conceivably have taken place in the yard. In any case it need not be supposed that, necessarily, for all plays, the whole of the yard was always occupied by spectators. *There is more than a little reason to believe that Elizabethan stage practice did occasionally include, if*

only for its stunt value, a certain amount of action in the yard. [Italics mine.] The possibility alone is enough to demand research." (*Ibid*, p. 49).

2. **happy**] opportune.
3. **port**] seaports
5. **attend my taking**] await to capture me.
6. **preserve myself**] Shakespeare is prompting the audience to anticipate how Edgar will be dressed when he next appears, amplifying the narrative's tension. It is a device he uses throughout the play: the description of Lear in III,i, *"Contending with the fretfull Elements"* (F, 1619); Curan's caveat about the clothes he is giving to Edgar in IV,i,*"Come on't, what will"* (F, 2239); Cordelia's possession of Lear's doublet in IV,iii, *"Alack tis he"* (F, 2351); and Edgar's *"Champion"* (F, 2886) in IV,vii.
8. **in contempt of man**] Man's mortal condition is such that poverty can reduce him to the state of an animal.
10. **elf**] tangle into elf-locks; matted hair, caused by neglect was called 'elf-locks', and elves were blamed for them.
11. **presented**] exposed to view, as on a stage.
11. **outface**] brave.
13. **proof**] example
15. **mortified**] made insensible to pain.
16. **pricks**] skewers
17. **object**] spectacle
17. **low**] lowly
18. **pelting**] petty, paltry
19. **bans**] curses
20. **Hurdygurd**] Ed. *Turlygod* (F, 1271), *Turlygod* (Q1, 1271), *Turlygod* (Q2. 1271). In my version, *"Turlygod"* is emended to **Hurdygurd**, a neologism for a hurdy-gurdist—a beggar who begs for alms on a hurdy-gurdy. As with the word *"Lipsbury"* (F, 1083), the meaning of *"Turlygod"* (F, 2071) has been rendered unintelligible by Shakespeare's lexicographers, as we see in H.H. Furness's note in *King Lear*: A New Variorum Edition, pp. 137-38. Stanley Wells adopts *"Truelygod"* in *The Oxford Shakespeare* (p. 163), saying "the word is otherwise unknown. Editors usually adopt Qb's alternate '*Turlygod'*, but neither word has meaning, the choice is immaterial." As the meaning of "Turlygod" is unknown, philologists and etymologists have only the narrative structure of the play to go by. Editors are forced to deduce a completely unrecorded word's meaning based purely on the immediate context of the dramatic plot, character actions, and scene logic.

Figure 112. The Hurdy-Gurdy Player, Georges La Tour, c.1620–1625, Musée d'Arts de Nantes. An impoverished blind beggar singing in the street to the music of his hurdy-gurdy.

In the present context, Edgar is talking directly to the audience about disguising himself as the *lowliest* beggar known to man, such as a Tom o' Bedlam or a blind Hurdy-Gurdy player (as in Georges de la Tour, *Le Vielleur au chapeau*—English*: The Hurdy-Gurdy Player*). "In the 16th and 17th centuries the hurdy-gurdy was found both in the hands of beggars and cripples, as well as being played by itinerant musicians and folk musicians. In 1606, Robert Estienne considered it to be an instrument of the blind, as did Antoine Furetière in 1690: "Vielle, Instrument... dont jouent ordinairement de pauvres aveugles. Vieller. Les aveugles sont ordinairement ceux qui gagnent leur vie à vieller". Already known by term 'vielle' since the 15th century, which is still used today, the old name 'symphonie' was remembered for a long time in France and was still used for the beggar's instrument. Both terms were used synonymously: "Un aveugle, expert vielleur, / Joint sa symphone à la leur." The hurdy-gurdy was even associated with blind musicians to such an extent that the young lady in a chanson by Gaultier-Garguille (1632) asks the hurdy-gurdy player whether he lost his sight on account of playing the instrument (Marianne Bröcker, "Die Drehleier.") "Der Leiermann" ("The Hurdy-Gurdy Man") is the bleak, final song of Schubert's *Winterreise*, portraying a desolate street musician ignored by villagers, symbolizing the wanderer's profound physical suffering and isolation.

Video 16. "Der Leiermann" (The Hurdy-Gurdy Man), Thomas Quasthoff (baritone) Daniel Barenboim (pianist).

Prasad Mahabal at ElizabethanEnglandLife.com maintains that "A hurdy-gurdy was a musical instrument which was predominantly played in France during the early 10th century and it was introduced in England in the 12th century. . . When the hurdy-gurdy was introduced in England, the bow which accompanied it was replaced by a set of strings attached to a wheel which was cranked by a handle." As Adrian Woodward discusses below [Video 17, "Introducing the Hurdy Gurdy"], "in the 1500s it would have been played alone and also alongside cheap and lowly instruments such as the donkey's jawbone, the deer's antlers and the bagpipe in community plays celebrating religious high days such as "mystery plays." Later on, musical tastes changed and the hurdy-gurdy was relegated to the lowest social classes of peasant and beggars."

Video 17. OAE musician Adrian Woodward introduces us to the original all-in-one portable dance band, the hurdy gurdy.

In 1500s England, "hurdy-gurdy" does not appear to have been the English term for the instrument. [437] English speakers would have referred to it by older or alternative names such as the organistrum, and later as the symphonie, wheel fiddle and cymbal. "Hirdy-girdy" was a Scottish and northern English term for uproar or disorder. *The Dictionaries of the Scots Language* confirm that *hirdy-girdy* (also spelled *hirdie-girdie*) was used as a noun and adverb for "(In) confusion or uproar" and is attested in Scottish and northern English dialects from around 1500. The *OED* dates the first known appearance of the term "hurly-burly" to around c. 1440 in the writings of the English scribe and author John Shirley: *"During the whorlle bourlle in Scotland the olde King Robert died"*(J. Shirley in *Scot. Hist. Review* (1904)October 98.) The etymology of the word is uncertain. [441] Wikipedia states that it is "onomatopoeic in origin, after the repetitive warble in pitch that characterizes instruments with solid wooden wheels that have warped due to changes in humidity or after the sound of the buzzing-bridge." [12] It may be that "hurdy-gurdy" was among the 1700 words Shakespeare is estimated to have coined: "Hurdygurd"—a hurdy-gurdyist—a derivate. Who can say for sure?

Figure 113. A 17th century Dutch drawing of a beggar couple, the man accompanying his companion's singing on the hurdy-gurdy.

David Crystal writes in a personal communication (6 Mar 2024) that "it not easy to argue for this derivation on linguistic grounds, as the differences are so great - /h/ being heard as /t/ isn't an attested change, for instance, and the rhythm is different, with no final syllable. Personally, I prefer to see the first part of the word as an allusion to the Turlupins, the derogatory name given to a medieval French heretical sect - possibly a reference to lupin-eaters - which appears in Cotgrave's 1634 dictionary with one of the meanings being 'person of no value'. The 'god' element is obscure, but if the religious allusion is valid, it could be quite literal, given that there are words like sungod and demigod in English, and thus an allusion (in the French Catholic mind) to the god-defying character of the original heretics."

Dr. Crystal is certainly correct that a case for emending the text cannot be based on units of sound. It is likely that the typesetter of the 1608 Quarto never heard the word spoken, but was merely arranging blocks of type based on what he read, or thought he was reading, from a barely legible, hand-written manuscript given to him by a copyist. He may never have seen the word before. In handwriting and some early printed forms, letters could be visually confusing. For example, Elizabethan handwriting manuals note that "t" can be confused with "b" in some

hands, and other letters such as "H" and "T" could also be hard to distinguish in period scripts. [439] As for the story, Turlupinism—radical 14th century nudism—is not a core message of the play. [440] A beggar going naked in a hurricane is emphatically not represented as a condition to be desired in *King Lear*. [See note III,iv, 85-6., *"Thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies."*] Among its central themes are social injustice and caritas—appropriate subjects for a play commissioned to be performed on St. Stephen's Day at Whitehall Palace.

21. S.D. ***Exit***] (Q, 1272); (F. 1272). Edgar returns from whence he was hiding in the cellar under the stage.

ACT II. SCENE IV] Steevens. *Scena Secunda* (F, 1074). Scene 7 in Quarto.

S.D. ***Before Gloucester's Castle***] Pope, subst; not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. the Study and Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Lear, Lear's Knight, and Fool***] Ed. *Enter Lear, Foole, and Gentleman.*(F, 1273). *Enter King.* (Q1, 1273); *Enter King, and a Knight* (Q2, 1273). They enter from stage door left (the audience's right).

Figure 114. William Kemp, Kemps nine daies vvonder (London, 1600).

S.D. ***playing a pipe and tabor***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Fanfare trumpets are ordinarily played in Shakespeare when royal figures enter, such as the tucket announcing the arrival of Gloucester in II,i (F, 959), the Duke of Cornwall in II,i (F, 1014), II,iv (F, 1466), and Goneril in II,iv (F, 1466). [See note II,i,27. S.D., "*Tucket within.*"] In my restoration, Lear's arrival at Gloucester's castle is proclaimed by the Fool on his pipe and tabor, implying (humorously) that the king has been reduced to the state of an impoverished clown. The stage business alludes to Will Kempe's "Nine Days of Wonder" in 1600, when he morris danced from London to Norwich (110 miles), accompanied by a pipe and tabor. [See video "The Green Man's Jig" with Andy Richards on pipe and tabor.] The editors of *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, write that the pipe and tabor is a "'poor man's' orchestra" (**tabor**, p. 225), and cite several examples. Medieval minstrels were versatile entertainers typically proficient in a variety of instruments, as they were skilled in music, singing, performing ballads and jokes. [146] [147] The one-handed pipe played with a tabor was common. It is possible that the Fool has a stringed instrument strapped on his back as well. [See Ian Pittaway, "The evidence for straps used with medieval, renaissance and baroque musical instruments", 2023.] He uses the pipe again in III,vi. The melody is the one he played in I,v and IV,vi, connecting the three scenes thematically like a leitmotif. [See note III,vi,80,S.D., "*plays soft music on his tabor pipe.*"]

2. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Gentleman* (F, 1276). *Knight.* (Q, 1276). See note I,iv, 47.,"*Lear's Knight"*.
4. **remove**] change of residence.
7. **cruel**] a pun on cruel and crewel, i.e. thin, worsted yarn.
9. **over-lusty at legs**] too much of a vagabond.
10. **nether-stocks**] stockings.
12. **To**] as to.
18. ***Lear*. No, no; they would not**] Q1, 1294. Not in F
19. **Yes, yes; they have**] *New Camb*. (*conj. Maxwell*). Yes they haue. (Q1, 1294). Not in F.
21. **By Juno, I swear, ay!**] (F, 1296). Not in Q
23. **upon respect**] Upon the respect due to the king's messenger (Johnson) or upon Respect personified (Malone) qu. Furness p. 140.
24. **Resolve**] satisfy, answer.
25. **might'st**] could'st.
27. **commend**] commit, deliver
32. **spite of intermission**] though my business was interrupted and the answer delayed which I was to receive.
33. **presently**] immediately
34. **meiny**] household, servants.
40. **Display'd**] acted ostentatiously.
41. **more man than wit**] he was driven by testosterone instead of reason. See note I,i,144, *"unmanly."* Compare also *"put vpon him such a deale of Man"* (F, 1196)
42. **rais'd the house**] awakened the servants.
45. **wild-geese**] i.e. south, the direction geese fly as winter approaches to avoid the cold.
48. **bear bags**] bring moneybags.
51. **turns the key**] opens the door
52. **dolors**] with a pun on dollars
52. **for**] on account of, owing to.
53. **tell**] a quibble, the word meaning both *relate* and *count*.
54. **mother**] The *Rising of the Mother* is a condition characterized by the sensation of *suffocation.* Lear's belief that he suffers from *hysterica passio* is equivalent to Falstaff's thinking "green–sickness" is the condition ailing Prince John in *Henry IV, Part 2*, (F, 2329). Francis Grose's 1811 *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* defines "green sickness" as: "The disease of maids occasioned by celibacy.
54. S.D. ***Pointing to his liver***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear is always indicating in the manner of *"a poore Player"* (*Macbeth*, F, 2345). "The Greek word hêpar (ἦπαρ, "liver") was originally connected to the concept of "pleasure", showing that in antiquity the liver was considered to be the seat of soul and human feelings" (J Hepatol. 2011 Nov; 55(5): 1132–1136). In *Prometheus Bound*, "The liver is seen as the source of passion, or emotion, within Greek mythology and is frequently associated with anger and wrath specifically. Bile, which is produced by the liver, is often said to rise in instances of extreme emotion, principally anger." (LitCharts). [See Figure 119.]

Figure 115. Jean-Martin Charcot demonstrating female hysteria.
Etching by A. Lurat, 1888, after P.A.A. Brouillet, 1887.

55. ***Hysterica passio***] *Hysterica passio* or the wandering womb is "the belief that a displaced uterus was the cause of hysteria and other pathologies in women." [See Figure 115.] Since ancient times, women are the ones believed to suffer from hysteria. The name hysteria is derived from the Greek word *hystera* which means uterus. In the earliest known treatise dealing with the complaint—Kahun papyrus dating from about 1900 BC—it is attributed to starvation or displacement of the uterus. This theory is repeated by Hippocrates, Plato, Celsus, Arataeus, and Soranus. Galen of Pergamon (AD 129-99) denied the ability of the uterus to move about but agreed that the common factor in most cases was some uterine affection. But he recognized hysteria also in men which he attributed to sexual abstinence, hence to retention of sperm." (Percival Bailey, MD "Hysteria: The History of a Disease.") Parenthetically, there is "little evidence for gender differences in infant anger or tantrums in the first year of life, although boys generally show more tantrum behavior after 21 months of age (Potegal & Archer, 2004).

Harsnett facetiously cites an instance of male *"Hysterica passio"* in *A declaration of egregious popish impostures*. Richard Mainy swears to being afflicted with a "spice of the mother" after dancing too long (and implicitly drinking too much). Mainy claims his brother had the same disease from which he died (implicitly alcohol poisoning). [See The confession of Richard Mainy Gentleman, written by himselfe, and auouched vppon his oath the sixt of Iune. 1602.]

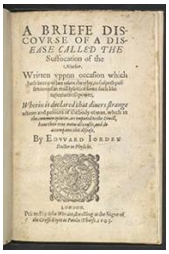

A BRIEFE DIS-
COVRSE OF A DIS-
EASE CALLED THE
Suffocation of the
Mother.
Written vppon occasion which
By EDWARD IORDEN

Figure 116. A Briefe Discourse of a Disease called the Suffocation of the Mother by Edward Jorden, 1603.

Londoners in the day might have heard the Latin term *Hysterica passio* during the notorious trials of Elizabeth Jackson, an old woman accused of bewitching Mary Glover in 1602, a teenager from a prominent Puritan family. [See "The Politics of Exorcism" in *Witchcraft and Hysteria in Elizabethan London* by Michael MacDonald, pp. xix-xxvi.] "The possession and dispossession of Mary Glover were acted out in a politically supercharged atmosphere. The Church of England was been challenged from within and without by thaumaturgists who claimed to have the power to cast out devils, and its leaders had embarked on a campaign to discredit and silence them. Exorcism had been controversial even since the mid-sixteenth century when it was struck out of the English rite by Protestant reformers."

During Jackson's court trial, Edward Jorden, an English physician and chemist, used the term to argue unsuccessfully that Mary Glover's symptoms were natural in origin, and not caused by the Devil. In 1603 he published a pamphlet entitled "*A briefe discourse of a disease called the Suffocation of the Mother, written upon occasion which hath beene of late taken thereby, to suspect possession of an evill spirit, or some such like supernaturall power. Wherin is declared that divers strange act.*" It was in the same year that Samuel Harsnett published his *Declaration*. Both works appear to have been part of a masterly attempt by arch-anti-Puritan Bishop Richard Bancroft (the "chief overseer" of the *King James Bible*) to exploit the division in their ranks known as the Archpriest Controversy. At some point in its composition, probably very soon before publication, Harsnett inserted a page extending his attack on Weston and his fellow papists to include the divines who exorcised Mary Glover.

Figure 117. Codex Manesse, UB Heidelberg, Cod. Pal. germ. 848, fol. 14v, Markgraf Heinrich von Meißen.

55. **Down**] Lear is using a metaphor from falconry to describe his anger. He describes it as *rising up* (like a raptor) from his liver to attack his heart. (Cf, note I,iv,54.,*"mother"*.). "Some raptors…suffo-cate their prey to death in constricting fists" (Ed Yong, "The Violent World of Raptors").
56. **element's below**] *viz*., below in the liver. [See note II,iv,131. S.D. *Points to his liver*.]
58. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 1332); not in Q.
59. **Made you no more offence but what you speak of?**] Lear's Knight, having witnessed the thuggish temperament of "*Caius"* (F, 3249) during the banquet in I,iv, is doubtful that he's being told the whole story. It is why, in the next scene, Kent is compelled to the prove to him that he is true to his word. [See note III,i,18.,*"the warrant of my note."*] See Appendix E.
60. **None**.] Kent is a bad liar, which is why he quickly changes the subject.
61. **How chance**] how does it happen that
75. **sir**] man
76. **pack**] be off
81. **perdy**] The corruption of *par Dieu*, by God.
84. **Re-enter Lear, with Gloucester**] Capell. *Enter Lear and Gloster* (Q, 1361); after "perdy" in F, 1358.
84. **Deny**] Refuse
85. **insolence**] Peter W.M. Blayney *conj*. Iustice (Q, 1363). Fetches (F, 1363). Stanley Wells notes in The Oxford Shakespeare, "Q's 'Iustice' is obviously wrong and could not represent F's 'Fetches'. HallioQ also accepts BlayneyQ's emendation" (p. 166). Compare *"The **insolence** of Office"* (*Hamlet*, F, 1727); *"queazie with his **insolence** already"* (*Antony and Cleopatra*, F, 1772); *"he already is too **insolent**"* (*Troilus and Cressida*, F, 836); *"you whoreson **insolent** Noysemaker, we are lesse afraid to be drownde, then thou art"* (*Tempest*,

F. 52-3)

86. **images**] signs, symbols
86. **flying off**] revolt, desertion.
88. **quality**] nature, disposition.
89. **unremovable**] immovable
92. **'Fiery'**] *Fiery?* (F, 1371); *what fierie quality,* (Q1, 1370); *what fiery quality;* (Q2, 1370) Lear is being facetious as indicated by his repetition of the word. Kent earlier compared Cornwall to *"Ajax"*—a *"purblinded Argus, all eyes and no sight."* (F, 187-88);*"slow as the Elephant"* (F, 180) and *"beefe-witted"* (F, 782). Cornwall's humoral nature is a critical factor when analyzing which character Shakespeare intended to put out the second eye of Gloucester—Cornwall or Regan. Cornwall has a phlegmatic humor, and is slow to act. Regan is choleric; quick thinking, "angry, reactive and impulsive." [148]

Figure 118. Four heads of men who each exhibit one of the four temperaments in an 18th century woodcut: phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine and melancholic.

92. **What 'quality'**] *What quality?* (F, 1371) a reference to the four temperaments or humors: sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic. It was believed that these physical qualities determined the behavior of all created things including the human body. Hence the importance of the actor's outward physical appearance in imagining the character.
100. **hot**] hot-tempered, passionate.
102. **office**] duty.
106. **headier**] i.e. what he thinks as opposed to being driven by testosterone.
107. **To take**] for taking
108. S.D. ***Looking on Kent***] Johnson. Not in Q, F.
108. **my state**] my royal power.
110. **remotion**] referring to their removal
111. **practice**] craft, trickery
115. **Till it cry sleep to death**] till the noise of the drum has been the death of sleep, so that they give up all idea of sleeping.
116. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 1396). Not in Q.
117. **rising heart**] See note II,iv, 55, *"Down."*
117. ***Clutching his heart***] Ed. Not in Q, F. This is the first of two mild heart attacks Lear experiences before dying from cardiac arrest in the final scene. [See note IV,v,94,S.D., *"Clutching his heart."*] "A non-ST-elevation myo-cardial infarction (NSTEMI) is a type of heart attack that usually happens when your heart's need for oxygen can't be met." Symptoms are "chest pain that may feel like pressure, tightness, pain, squeezing or aching." Lear shows signs of shortness of breath, and has difficulty speaking: *"I can scarce speake to thee"* (F, 1414).

119. **knapp'd**] rapped.

120. **Down wantons, down!**] "The traditional eel [pie] is from the Londoners in the early 16th and 17th century, when the Thames was full of eels, and they were cheap," says Ruth Phillips, owner of Cockney's Pie and Mash Shop, one of the few remaining eel pie shops in London. . . . was traditionally based on eel broth made from cooking the live eels . . . The liquor is the truly special part. (See "The Hirshon London Eel Pie with Parsley Liquor."

121-2. **buttered his hay**] The Fool is being facetious. "A common trick of cheating ostlers was to grease the hay of horses committed to their care; the horses, disliking grease, were kept from feeding, and the ostler could steal their provender. The cockney's brother, however, did it in all innocence." (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 85.)

122. S.D. ***Cornwall and Regan***] *Enter Duke and Regan* (Q, 1403). *Enter Cornewall, Regan, Gloster, Seruants* (F, 1403).

122. S.D. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Like Goneril and Albany in I,iv, Cornwall and Regan take their places in the "Suburbs" or "Lords Rooms" at the gallery's edge, in front of the perfumed spectators seated behind them. This puts the duke and duchess at a safe distance from Lear, who they wish to avoid. The blocking helps qualify their formidable *hauteur*.

122. S.D. ***Reenter Gloucester with Cornwall's Knight and others*****]** Ed. Gloucester reenters with Cornwall's Knight and others on the platform. It is now late afternoon in the story, and torches are not needed.

122. S.D. ***below***] Ed. Not in Q, F. That is, on the platform.

123. S.D. ***Kent is set at liberty***] Rowe. Not in Q, F. It is inferred that Kent has been sitting in the stocks from before dawn, when he encountered Oswald, to dusk the next afternoon, perhaps as long as 34 hours: *"Till noon? Till night my Lord, and all night too"* (F, 1214). Gloucester mentions that Lear arrives in the late afternoon: *"Alacke the night comes on"* (F, 1603).

128. **Sepulchring**] as being the sepulcher of. The accent is on the second syllable,

128. S.D. ***To Kent***] Not in Q, F.

129. S.D. ***Kent is helped off by Cornwall's Knight and Lear's Knight***] Ed. *"Kent here set at liberty*" (F, 1405; Not in Q.) There are no directions in the quartos or Folio indicating by whom Kent is set at liberty; nor is there a direction that Kent exits the scene upon his release. J.S. Bratton notes in *Plays in Performance: KING LEAR* that "In J.P. Kemble's production this was done ceremoniously, Cornwall signing to the Captain, and the Captain to two guards ; after he was released Kent went to stand behind the king, backing him up against the forces that confronted them." (p. 123). In the 16th century men who were locked in the stocks for several days required physical assistance to stand or walk because their legs became profoundly numb and temporarily paralyzed. Historical accounts, as well as reenactments of historical punishments, note that offenders typically had to be helped out of the devices and physically assisted, often needing time to have their circulation restored before they could walk. [438] Kent's temporary loss of the use of his legs underscores the cruelty of Regan's punishment. In my version of the story, the task of helping Kent offstage is assigned to "Lear's Knight" and "Cornwall's Knight" in order to deepen character development, advance the narrative, and maximize emotional and symbolic resonance. When Lear storms out of Gloucester's castle at the end of the Act, he is accompanied only by the Fool/Cordelia: *"O Foole, I shall go mad"* (F, 1586). This explains why Kent and Lear's Knight don't leave with him.

131. **like a vulture**] an allusion to Tityos who was tortured by two vultures who fed on his liver.
131. **here**] his liver.
131. S.D. ***Points to his liver***] Ed. Not in F, Q. Compare II,iv,54. S.D., *Pointing to his liver.*

Figure 119. Tityos, Jusepe de Ribera, 1632, Museo del Prado.

132. **I can scarce speak**] From shortness of breath; a feeling of suffocation. As noted, he is theoretically having a mild heart attack. Compare note IV,v,94. *"I'th'clout, i'th'clout."*
133. **quality**] manner, disposition.
144. **confine**] assigned limit
145. **state**] condition of mind; or, your dependent position.
150. S.D. ***Kneeling***] Dyce; not in Q, F. Lear's behavior is histrionic.
151. **Age is unnecessary**] Old people are useless.
152. **tricks**] Regan is alluding to Lear's histrionics (his kneeling) just as Goneril did when he pinched himself: *"This admiration, sir, is much o'th'savor/ Of other your* ***new pranks****"* (F, 746-7) See note I,iv, 215., S.D., *Pinches himself.*
154. S.D. ***Rising***] Dyce. Not in Q, F.
155. **abated**] deprived, curtailed.
159. **top**] head
160. **taking**] infecting, blasting.
163. **fen-suck'd**] sucked up from the fens by the heat of the sun. A fen is "low land covered wholly or partially with shallow water." (*OED*, 1.**a**.)
164. **blister**] F, 1451; and blast her pride (Q, 1451). Meaning, "to raise blisters on" (OED). See *Tempest*, *"A Southwest blow on yee,/ And blister you all ore"* (F. 461-2).
168. **Thy tender-hafted**] *Thy tender-hefted* (F, 1455); *The tẽder hested* (Q1, 1455); *The tender hested nature* (Q2, 1455). i.e., Regan's softness/kindness is so firmly *hafted* (fixed) to her nature she will never act hard-heartedly. Compare note III,vi,77, *"hard hearts."* Regan is arguably the most monstrous character in Shakespeare.
172. **sizes**] allowances.
175. **offices**] duties
175. **bond of childhood**] a child's duty to her parents.
176. **Effects**] workings, manifestations.
179. S.D. ***Tucket within***] F, 1466, after "purpose"; not in Q. The trumpets signal the arrival of Goneril. Compare IV,ii,S.D., *"Enter Goneril and Edmund."*
180. **approves**] confirms
181. S.D. ***Enter Oswald***] Dyce. Enter Steward. after "*that?"* (Q, 1469); after "*stocks"* (F, 1476). He enters on the platform through the left door.
182. **easy-borrowed**] 'borrowed without the trouble of doing anything to justify it.'
186. S.D. ***Enter Goneril***] Johnson. after *"grace"?* (Q, 1475), (F,1476).

186. S.D. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Goneril joins her sister and Cornwall in the "Lords Rooms," looking down on her father on the platform.
188. **Allow**] approve of
190. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
190. S.D. ***Goneril takes Regan by the hand***] Ed. not in Q, F. See II,iv,191, *"O Regan, will you take her by the hand?* (F, 1484). Shakespeare is setting up a joke in IV,vii,36 when Goneril takes Regan by the hand to forcibly keep her from leaving with Edmund. [See note I,i,303,S.D. *"She takes her by the hand."*] Characteristically, it is always the Puritan hypocrite Goneril who first extends her hand.
192. ***Reg***] Ed. Gon Q,1485; F, 1485. This line is not illogically attributed to if Goneril, as it is when the line *"Sister you'le go with vs?"* (F, 2875; Q, 2875; Q2, 2875) is assigned to Regan in IV,vii. The need to emend the text results from the "cognitive friction" caused by diverting attention away from the main subject. Lear is not addressing Goneril when she enters: *"O Regan, will you take her by the hand?"* (F, 1484). Regan's vanity, specifically her costume, is used as a metaphor for his pivotal speech, *"O reason not the need"* (F, 1564). Secondarily, Regan's speeches are marked by her blunt cruelty; Goneril's by her crafty rhetoric. Framing her father's age as *"dotage"* (F, 1487) is exceptionally crude. It is not in keeping with Goneril's more sophisticated style of speaking. The words don't match her personality and established voice. [See note I,i,278-9, *"Let your study be etc."*]
193. **finds**] deems
196. **disorders**] misconduct.
197. **advancement**] promotion, honor.
197. S.D. ***To Regan***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
206. **wage**] combat, contend.
207. **howl**] Collier. Owle (F, 1503), owle (Q, 1503) . Cf. *"If Wolues had at thy Gate howl'd that sterne time"* (F, 2135).
209. **hot-blooded**] amorous
213. **sumpter**] packhorse, or possibly pack-horse driver.
214. S.D. ***Pointing to Oswald***] Johnson, subst; not in Q, F.
215. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
221. **embossed**] swollen, tumid, knobbed like the boss of a shield.
224. **thunder-bearer**] Jupiter, also known as Jove in Roman religion, (Zeus in Greek mythology) is the god of the sky and thunder. His identifying implement is the thunderbolt (as Lear's is his codpiece). [See Figure 120.] Jove became the absolute ruler of the universe after overthrowing his father and by battling the Titans in the Gigantomacy. [See note V,i,274., *"Fall and cease."*

Figure 120. Jupiter hurling thunderbolts in "The Battle Between the Gods and the Giants", Joachim Wtewael, 1600.

225. **high-judging**] that is supreme judge; or 'judging in heaven' (Schmidt) qu. Muir, *KING*

LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare, p.91.

231. **mingle reason with your passion**] Dilute your passionate words with a little common sense, examine them in the cold light of reason (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 91).

242. **slack ye**] come short of their duty towards you.

248. **my guardians, my depositaries**] stewardesses and trustees.

249. **reservation**] a saving clause.

253. **well-favor'd**] good-looking.

255. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Hanmer. Not in Q, F.

259. **follow**] be your attendants.

262. **Are in the poorest thing superfluous**] See note III,iv,35, *"superflux"*.

264. S.D. ***To Regan***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Regan is no Puritan, as Goneril affects to be, and this is reflected in her dress. In my restoration, she is costumed voguishly in a low-cut dress like Anne of Denmark's or Frances Howard's or Lady Elizabeth Pope's or Lady Elizabeth Grey's. Queen Elizabeth I was also known to wear low-cut dresses, even during formal meetings with officials like her French Ambassador Michel De Castlenau, who provides scholars with exceptionally reliable written sources on Elizabeth I. For example, when he first met Elizabeth I during a bureaucratic meeting, he describes the front of her dress as follows:

> "She kept the front of her dress open, and one could see the whole of her bosom, and passing low, and often she would open the front of this robe with her hands as if she was too hot."

Video 18. "The scandalously low-cut dresses of the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts!" (Facebook)

"Women of the 1600s, from queens to prostitutes, commonly exposed one or both breasts in public and in the popular media of the day, according to a study of fashion, portraits, prints, and thousands of woodcuts from 17th-century ballads. The finding suggests breast exposure by women in England and in the Netherlands during the 17th century was more accepted than it is in most countries today. Researchers, for example, say Janet Jackson's Super Bowl baring would not even have raised eyebrows in the 17th century. ("Breast Baring Popular in 1600s" by Jennifer Viegas.) The Fool alludes to Regan's being flat when he remarks *"she's as like this, as a Crabbe's like an Apple"* (F, 889-90). The joke is only funny if the audience has taken notice of her small breasts when we first see her in I,i from the low or scooped neckline of her costume. Regan is as flat as a boy (which he was). In contrast, Goneril's neckline is high, and the boy actor would likely have had his chest padded to look as if the character had double D titties.

Figure 121. Frances (Howard), Countess of Somerset, 1593 - 1632. Daughter of the 3rd Earl of Suffolk; wife of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, National Galleries Scotland.

265. **If only to go warm were gorgeous**] If it were gorgeous merely to be warm, you would not be poshly exposing your breasts. Lear is using costume as a metaphor to distinguishes between vanity and "true need." The question of "true need" is arguably the most important one in the play. [Spoiler: it is kindness; hence the epithet "Kind" Lear in an elegy for Richard Burbage.] Subconsciously, what Lear yearns for as he approaches the end of his life, is to be loved and nurtured, as mothers stereotypically do for their infant children. [149] .

Figure 122. Portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark by John de Critz, 1605.

266. **gorgeous**] "The history [of the word] is a bit iffy, but etymologists think it's linked to necklaces that adorn the throat. Jewelry would have been the first things to be called *gorgeous*, meaning "elegant," and from there, "splendid, showy, sumptuously adorned"…like jewelry. The word dates from around 1500 in English, coming to us from French, which in turn came from Latin, which is *thought* to come from the Greek *gorgias*…Gorgias being a man famous for his rhetoric (hence his voice and things that come from his throat–anyone who's read the Socratic dialogues will be familiar with him!)." [454]

267. **true need**] Lear, who has wanted for nothing in his life (except perhaps a nurturing mother, as dramatized in *Coriolanus* [150]) finds himself not knowing what "true need" is. While searching for an answer to his own question, the sound of the approaching storm takes his thoughts back to the present, and he turns his attention to the "Heavens." Lear is soon to discover the meaning of *"true need"* when he encounters a *"naked wretch"* in III,iv (F, 1809). [See note III,iv,43, S.D., *"disguised as Tom o'Bedlam."*]

267. S.D. ***A noise of distant thunder heard***] Ed. *Storme and tempest.* (F, 1584), after "weeping", line 282); not in Q. The storm effects are as precisely timed as the other SFX in *Lear*, such as sennets, tuckets, and flourishes. The effect is totally metatheatrical, calling attention to its contrived nature, like Edgar's blowing his horn after Lear's words, *"shew the Heauens more iust"* (F, 1817). Here, it underscores the importance of the line *"but for true need"* (F, 1570). The storm reaches a crescendo when Lear takes the stage in III,ii commanding it to do his will—as though, thunder, lighting, wind and rain were his to order. [See note III,ii,9. S.D., *"Silence."*]

267. S.D. ***then music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Cf. *Birth of Merlin* by William Rowley, V,i.S.D., *"Thunder, then musick."*

268. **You Heavens**] "the name given for the false ceiling over the stage" (bardstage.org).
268. **patience**] OED **1.a**. "The calm, uncomplaining endurance of pain, affliction, inconvenience, etc.; the capacity for such endurance." (See note III,ii,37,*"patience"*.) The Stoic philosopher Seneca writes in *On Anger (De Ira)*, "If you want to determine the nature of anything, entrust it to time: when the sea is stormy, you can see nothing clearly."
279. S.D. ***Thunder***] Ed. The placement of the direction in the Folio (F, 1584) is imprecise.
284. **Or ere**] before
284. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear…Fool***] Ringler. *Exeunt.* (F, 1586); *Exeunt Lear, Leister, Kent and Foole*. (Q1, 1587); *Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and Fool.* (Q2, 1587). Kent and Lear's Knight did not reenter the scene.
287. **bestow'd**] lodged.
288. **hath**] 'he' is understood
288. **rest**] repose of mind.
289. **taste his folly**] The same rationale is given in the speech *"To wilfull men, / The iniuries that they themselues procure, / Must be their Schoole-Masters"* (F, 1606-08).
290. **For his particular**] as far as he personally is concerned.
293. S.D. ***Re-enter Gloucester***] Dyce. Not in Q, F.
296. ***Gon***] Ed. *Re.* (Q1, 1601); *Reg.* (Q2, 1598); *Corn.* (F, 1601). "He leads himself" is yet another self-serving rationalization characteristic of Goneril. She is using a psychological defense mechanism to unconsciously avoid guilt and make her hardness feel justified. Can the line logically be said by Regan? Yes, but only as a reflection of Goneril's will. The scheme to disband Lear's 100 armed knights was all her idea. By law of primogeniture, the eldest child inherits the throne. Goneril has no intention of sharing it with her sister (or her husband for that matter).
297. ***Reg***] Ed. Gon. (Q1, 1602); Gon. (Q2, 1599; Gon. (F, 1602).
297. S.D. ***The sound of wind***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In my restoration, Gloucester is alluding to an actual stage effect. While the sound of wind is famously used by Shakespeare in *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*, there is no direct primary evidence confirming the use of wind machines in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Scholars debate how the effect was evoked, weighing stage machinery, musical instruments, or poetic language. [151] In *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, the direction **"Wind"** (p. 251) is connected to blowing a horn—not the weather. The directions **"Tempest"** (p.227) and **"Storm"** (p. 218) are used instead. "In the Roman theatre, Heron of Alexandria invented . . . a wind machine with fabric draped over a rotating wheel." [363] Some theater historians and scholars of early modern European performance practices argue that wind machines (known as *macchina del vento* in Italian) were likely employed in late 16th- and early 17th-century drama and court spectacles, even without surviving direct documentary evidence like stage diagrams or inventory lists. [152] [See note III,ii,1, S.D., *"Blast of thunder."*]

While Shakespeare's plays are firmly rooted in the Renaissance, they overlap with emerging Baroque sensibilities where Spectacle was a defining and essential feature of theatre, intermezzi and opera. [153] In *Macbeth*, *The Tempest* and *King Lear*, special effects and incidental music are intrinsic structural narrative elements. They are not merely atmospheric,

but foundational to the plot, characterizations, and themes. They act as a "sonic text"—a non-verbal layer of communication that conveys meaning which words alone cannot. [See note III,ii, 1. S.D. "*Roaring wind.*"]

299. **ruffle**] to bluster, to be noisy and turbulent.

300. ***Gon***] Ed. Reg. (Q1, 1605) Reg, (Q2 1602) Reg. (F, 1606). This speech is a reiteration of Goneril's words from before, "*Tis his owne blame hath put himselfe from rest, / And must needs taste his folly*" (F, 1590-91). What needs emphasizing in the plot is Goneril's central anxiety—her fear that her father will marshal his armed retainers to reclaim his throne: "*He is attended with a desperate traine, / And what they may incense him too, being apt/ To haue his eare abus'd,wisedome bids feare*" (F, 1609-11).

303. **with**] by

304. **incense**] provoke, instigate.

307. S.D. ***Exeunt.]*** (Q, 1613) (F. 1613).

ACT III, SCENE I] *Actus Tertia. Scena Prima* (F, 1614). Scene 8 in Quarto.

S.D. **A Heath**] Rowe. Not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Storm still***] (F, 1615). Not in Q.

S.D. ***Enter Kent and Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Kent, and a Gentleman,* (Q, 1615), (F, 1615).

S.D. ***severally***] (F, 1615) *at seuerall doores*. (Q, 1615). Kent from the door on the audience's left, as he is the more important character.

2,4,8,27,34. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Gent*. (F, 1615, 1617, 1619, 1624, 1639, 1648). *Gent*. (Q1, 1615, 1617, 1619, 1624, 1639, 1649). Lear's Knight is logically the same character who engages with Lear, Kent and the Fool in Acts I and II. It also logically follows that he is the *"Gentleman"* (Q, 1615) (F, 1615) in III,i because Kent recognizes who he is. He implicitly trusts him to deliver urgent letters to Cordelia, and gives him his precious signet ring. See Dramatis Personæ. [See Appendix E.]

4-15. **Contending with the fretfull Elements...take all**] Until now, the words of Lear's Knight are markedly free of personal expressiveness. His speeches are characterized by brevity, and a punctilious respect for protocol. Here, we observe a dramatic rhetorical shift. The character moves from a formal register to an impassioned, pathos-driven delivery, underscoring his raw human feelings of concern about the king's safety. The speech is expanded by nine lines in the quartos (Q, 1622.1-8). While Plato sharply criticizes rhetoric in the *Gorgias*, he later re-imagines it as a potentially beautiful art. [442] Shakespeare's ambivalence about rhetoric and language is a defining and recurring characteristic of his entire life's work.

4. **elements**] (F, 1619); element (Q, 1619)

6. **main**] land

7-15. **tears…all**] Q, 1622.1-1622.8. Not in F.

Figure 123. A painting by Nicholas Hilliard of Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland, c. 1590-1595, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Hanging from a branch behind him is a globe of the earth balanced with feather. The Latin word 'TANTI' written beside it implies that man's rational, scientific knowledge of the world is equal to a feather (viz. *nothing*). See note V,i,273, *feather.*

10. **little world of man**] The Knight's allusion to the *"little world of man"* (Q, 1622.3) suggests a metaphysical relationship between Lear and the cosmos that is dramatized in the next scene. "The notion of the microcosm dates, in Western philosophy, from Socratic times (Democritus specifically referred to it)—*i.e.,* from the 5th century BC. Propagated especially by the Neoplatonists, the idea passed to the Gnostics, to the Christian scholastics, to the Jewish Kabbalists, and to such Renaissance philosophers as Paracelsus" (*Britannica*). In Nicholas Hilliard's cryptic miniature of Henry Percy the Ninth Earl of Northumberland (1564-1632), the weight of the globe is equal to a feather in Giordano Bruno's multiverse. [See note IV,v, 33-4. *"Why I do trifle thus with his despair/ Is done to cure it."*]
12. **cub-drawn**] A mother bear with her cubs. "The fierce and protective maternal instinct in different animal species is at least equal to, and in some cases maybe even stronger than humans'."[158]
15. **Who**] *But who* (F, 1623). *But who* (Q, 1623)
18. **the warrant of my note**] Compare *Measure for Measure*, V,i, *"I warrant your honor"* (F, 2447). Kent has to guarantee Lear's Knight that the information he has received is reliable. The latter is a man of high rank, presumably a young lord, whose only direct interaction with "Caius" was when the latter blatantly lied to him about the reason he was put in the stocks. [See note II,iv,59, *"Made you no more offense…"*] Kent has to persuade him rhetorically that he is a man of "breeding", hence the complex syntax of his speech. [See Appendix E.]
19. **Commend**] entrust
19. **a dear**] a precious
24. **speculations**] *OED.* **†3†b**. "An observer or watcher; a spy. *Obsolete. rare*."
25. **Intelligent**] *OED.* **2.†4**. "A bringer of news or information; an intelligencer; a spy. *Obsolete*."
26. **snuffs**] *OED* **I.a.** "An (or the) act of snuffing, esp. as an expression of contempt or disdain."
26. **packings**] *OED.* **I. 2.** "To plot (something); to contrive or plan in an underhand way. Also (occasionally) *intransitive. Obsolete*." The rift between Goneril and Regan inferentially concerns the right of succession to the English throne, which belongs to the firstborn child, as Goneril and Shakespeare's audience were well aware. The Gunpowder Plot of 1605 was inextricably linked to the established process for determining who becomes the next ruler when the current one dies or abdicates.
29. **furnishings]** *OED.* **3. †a**. "Unimportant appendages; mere externals."
30. **True it is**] Ed. *But true it is,* (Q1/Q2, 1638.1), Not in F.
22-34 **True it is . . . offer to you**] Q, 1638.1-12. Not in F. See Appendix E.
23. **power**] an armed force.
31. **scatter'd**] divided

32. **Wise in**] knowledgeable about
32. **feet**] That is, foothold
33. **at point**] in readiness
34. **open banner**] That is, their banner openly
35. **credit**] credibility

Figure 124. Dover guards the Straits of Dover, the narrowest part of the English Channel.

36. **Dover**] Dover is a town and major ferry port in Kent, South East England. Matthew Arnold writes beautifully of its poetic connotations in his poem, "Dover Beach." "Arnold uses the sea as a symbol for the inevitably negative fate of humanity. Throughout the poem, the sea and waves gain momentum and become more and more rough and violent. The waves come and go, but they ultimately bring the eternal note of sadness." (*Shenandoah*, Volume 72, Number 2, Spring 2023.)
37. **making just report**] That is, for making a true report
38. **bemadding**] maddening
39. **plain**] complain about
34. **office**]
42. **No, do not**] Kent is not interested in having a conversation with Lear's Knight. All he cares about is Lear's welfare. Compare V,i, *"I am come / To bid my King and Master aye good night. / Is he not here?"* (F, 3189-91).
45. **outwall**] outward appearance
45. **purse**] Men wore purses and pouches on their belts from the 14th to 17th century. [See Figure 125.] Presumably, this is where Kent keeps the letter from Cordelia he alludes to in II,ii,159 (F, 1242), and other valuable items.

Figure 125. Rat catcher wearing a purse. The famous Ratketcher, with his trauels / into France, and of his returne to London, to the tune of Joviall Tinker. Imprinted at London for Iohn Trundle, and are to be sold at/ the signe of the No-body in Barbican.

47. **show her this ring**] In my version of the narrative, the audience first saw Lear's Knight standing next to the flamboyant earl, whose flashiness is anchored by a massive signet ring. The stage proxemics signals to the audience that that the two are favorites of the king, and known to one another. Upon seeing the ring, he immediately recognizes Kent beneath his rough exterior. Perhaps he even embraces him. [See Appendix E.]

Figure 126. A rare Tudor gold signet ring, believed to have belonged to a member of the Boleyn family. (Image: © Historic Royal Palaces/3004593)

49. S.D. ***Storm***] Ed. Not in Q, F. *King Lear* takes the form of metatheatre. The storm effects are not purposed to create the illusion of a "real" storm, as Romantic essayist Charles Lamb famously maintained. [159] There is a cause and effect dynamic between the spoken dialogue and the A/Vs reminding the audience that they are watching a constructed, artifical piece of theater. What is seen or heard on stage forces the characters to alter their conversation, and conversely, what characters say directly triggers changes in the visuals or sound effects. The effects are as precisely timed and articulated as the tuckets and other musical sounds throughout the play.

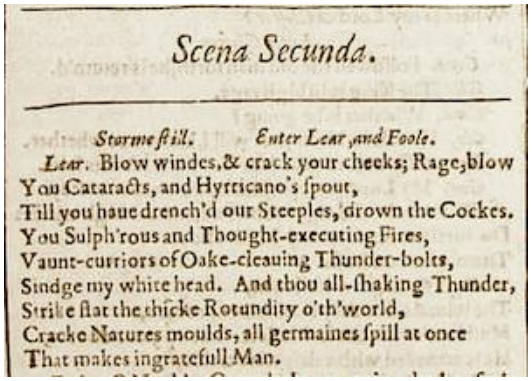
55. **Holla**] "A shout to excite attention" *(OED,* **2**). [See note III,ii,41, *Holla*.]

55**.** S.D. ***Exeunt severally]*** Theobald. *Exeunt.* (Q, 1654) (F, 1654).

ACT III, Scene ii] *Scena Secunda* (F. 1654). Scene 9 in Quarto.

S.D. ***Another part of the Heath.]*** Capell. Not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform and the Heavens**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).



Scena Secunda.

Storme ſtill. Enter Lear, and Foole.

Lear. Blow windes, & crack your cheeks; Rage, blow
You Cataracts, and Hyrricano's ſpout,
Till you haue drench'd our Steeples, drown the Cockes.
You Sulph'rous and Thought-executing Fires,
Vaunt-curriors of Oake-cleauing Thunder-bolts,
Sindge my white head. And thou all-ſhaking Thunder,
Strike flat the thicke Rotundity o'th'world,
Cracke Natures moulds, all germaines ſpill at once
That makes ingratefull Man.

Figure 127. Facsimile of First Folio (New South Wales), p.296. InternetShakespeareEditions

S.D. ***Enter Lear***] Ed. *Enter Lear and Foole*. (Q1, 1655); *Enter Lear and Foole*. (Q2, 1655) *Enter Lear, and Foole.* (F, 1655). The typesetters of both quartos and the First Folio, have Lear and the Fool entering at the same time. [See Figure 127.] In my judgment, Lear enters the stage alone from the large curtained opening in the center of the tiring house, i.e. the strongest entrance (equivalent to the *valva regia* in Roman theatres). The Fool does not "enter" until the storm appears to have subsided. He peeks his head out from between the curtains and excuses himself for interrupting. The timing of his entrance creates suspense about his whereabouts. Is king now totally alone?

Video 19. Ian McKellen in the Royal Shakespeare Company 2008 production directed by Trevor Nunn (1:21:14 – 1:22:15).

Of course, it may be that the two characters enter and part separate ways, as in Heyward's *The Brazen Age:* "They part seuerall waies" (p. 73). [See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **part**, p. 158). Certainly, at the Globe Playhouse, it would have been possible for Lear to move downstage on the platform while the Fool hides behind one of the stage posts supporting the roof. Naturally, the latter wants to take cover, as anybody would, in a terrifying artillery assault. Cf. *Devil's Charter*, F3v, *"stands behind the post."* (C. Walter Hodges discusses the many ways players might have made use of the pillars in *The Globe Restored*, p. 30.) When the two of them stick together, the Fool is merely bothersome and distracting, as in Video 19, 3:52-4:26. His presence undercuts the king's frontline bravery in his siege against mankind. He appears less manly, less heroic, less existentially alone.

S.D. **bare-headed**] Ed. Compare *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, II,iii., *"Enter Wellborn, and Marrall bare-headed."* Andrew Gurr discusses the convention of wearing hats in *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*): "The unbonneted Hamlet familiar to modern audiences is a creation of indoor theatre and fourth-wall staging . . . where everyone goes hatless." [See Figure 242.] It is only in Act III that Lear's head is uncovered.

1. **Blow, winds**] See note III,i, 49. S.D. *"Storm."* Lear takes the stage bellowing loud rhetorical orders to "The Heavens," as though thunder, lightning, wind and rains were his to command. Up until the Battle of Dettingen in 1743, it was expected of British monarchs to personally lead troops into battle. For example, Richard I was actively involved on the frontlines during the Siege of Acre in 1191. Contrast the character's warrior mentality [444] in this scene with his evolution in IV,v, where he enters camouflaged with weeds in preparation for the battle he is leading against his *"sonnes in law"* (Q2, 2629). [See note IV,v,80.S.D., "*camouflaged with weeds."*] The actor is using his thundering voice to communicate authority. He is projecting unshakeable masculine power, making sure his words are taken as absolute directives. His hyperbolic language and use of extended metaphors is a signature of the character's histrionic nature. Lear presents as "*a poore Player, / That struts and frets his houre vpon the Stage ... full of sound and fury / Signifying nothing"* (F, 2345-49).

1. **crack your cheeks**] Aeolus, the Greek god of winds is depicted as puffing out his cheeks as he blows. [See Figure 128.] This line is logically the cue for the stage hands to discharge the cannon situated in the attic above the Heavens.

Figure 128. Aeolus, keeper of the violent storm winds in Greek mythology.

1. S.D. ***Blast of thunder.***] Ed, *Storme still.* (F, 1655). Not in Q. The sound of thunder was frequently likened to and, in theatrical practice, literally produced by the sound of artillery in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Small, cast-iron cannons (known as "chambers") were located in the superstructure above the stage in virtually all major public theatres. These prop canons were loaded with gunpowder and wadding. During a performance of *Henry VIII*, Act 1, scene 4, one was fired to mark the King's entrance, resulting in the fire of 1613 that burned the Globe to the ground: *"Chambers dischargd"* (F, 731). [389] Casca describes the effect when

he says, *"Are not you moved, when all the sway of earth/ Shakes like a thing unfirm?"* (*Julius Cesaer*, F, 435-6).

In John Melton's satire *The Astrologaster* (1620), there is a passage referring to the storm effects in Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*: *"Drummers make Thunder in the Tyringhouse, and the twelve-penny Hirelings make artificial Lightning in their Heavens."* [7] According to Donald McManus, "The stagehands were completely visible to the audience whether they were manipulating huge blue silks to create the illusion of water or pulling rope to make Ariel fly" (*The Routledge Companion to Directors' Shakespeare*, edited by John Russell Brown, p. 450.) If there was ever an occasion in drama to discharge a cannon to simulate thunder, it is here—where Shakespeare is using the metaphor of a siege in battle.

> I think that it should be made clear that thunder and lightning in an Elizabethan theatre would have been a hugely impressive and noisy affair with rockets, fireworks and squibs providing noise and spectacle. It is probable that a cannon, or some other piece of heavy ordinance would also have been fired to simulate the sound of thunder along with the thunder-run. (Gwilym Jones, "Thus much show of fire:" Storm and Spectacle in the Opening of the Globe", p.5. *The Spectacular In and Around Shakespeare*, ed Pascale Drouet p.5

Figure 129. Prop cannon by Eric Hart for Shakespeare in the Park.

The storm scene in *King Lear* (Act 3, Scene 2) is considered one of the most iconic and dramatic scenes in all of literature and drama. Its reputation rests heavily on its poetic language and Lear's *inner* turmoil rather than its "Spectacle", i.e., its storm effects. The few stage directions in the Folio are practically worthless, such as *"Storme Still"* (F, 1605). They give the reader no information what machinery is being used or, more importantly, how the effects are articulated and cued. In the two quartos, there are no stage directions at all in regard to the storm. The reader knows there is one from the dialogue alone. For instance, Kent says, *"Since I was man, such sheets of fire, / Such bursts of horred thunder, such grones of / Roaring winde,and rayne, I ne're remember / To haue heard"* (Q1, 1698-1701).

Ever since the narrative of *King Lear* was codified by modern editors in the 19th century, there has been a strong, historically rooted bias toward language—especially verbal texture, metaphor, and rhetoric—over "Spectacle"—the visual elements of a Tragedy that appeal to the audience's senses. The bias is often traced back to Aristotle, although the stronger anti-spectacle doctrine is really a later critical tradition built from his hierarchy of dramatic elements. [446] In Poetics (Chpt VI), he argues: "Spectacle has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and connected least with the art of poetry. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors. Besides, the production of spectacular effects depends more on the art of the stage machinist than on that of the poet."

The traditional, universally accepted, and standard interpretation of the narrative, as established by mainstream classical scholarship, was significantly shaped by the Victorian-era *Cambridge Shakespeare*. When codifying the text, William Aldis Wright prioritized rigorous empirical methodology—meticulously collating and comparing the original Folios and early Quartos—over speculative assumptions about Elizabethan staging. His historical and archaeological knowledge of the Globe's physical interior, and staging conventions of Elizabethan drama, was limited. DeWitt's sketch of the Swan was not discovered until 1880. [448] Before the 1923 publication of E. K. Chambers' seminal work, *The Elizabethan Stage*, the study of Renaissance theatre was highly fragmented. Previous scholarship tended to be scattered across isolated biographical anecdotes, romanticized literary appreciations, or localized antiquarian records. [452] My edition's approach to *King Lear* relies on "metatheatre," a formal framework and term coined by Lionel Abel in 1963. Instead of treating the characters as real people in a real world, this framework highlights how the play constantly comments on the nature of acting, roleplay, and illusion. [451]

Like many Victorian academics and scholars, Wright was significantly influenced—and often biased—both by Romanticism and conventions of theatrical realism. [447] [449] He viewed the action through the lens of 19th century naturalism, which aimed to create an illusion of reality. By exclusively applying "scientific" methods in his restoration of the play, and treating the lack of stage directions as proof that they didn't exist, he unjustifiably changed the reader's point of view. Wright egregiously shifted the narrative mode from the external to the internal, thereby prioritizing the character's subjective interiority over objective reality. [450] In this scene, for example, he represents Lear's opening speech as it was published in the First Folio, where it is given the form of a monologue rather than a dialogue with the stage mechanics in the Heavens. [See Figure 127.] The romantic essayist Charles Lamb famously wrote that the storm effects in *Lear* diminish the poetry: "the Lear of Shakespeare cannot be acted. The contemptible machinery by which they mimic the storm which he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements than any actor can be to represent Lear ; they might more easily propose to personate the Satan of Milton upon a stage, or one of Michelangelo's terrible figures." [159]

Lamb's historically uninformed, romanticized approach to the staging continues to the present day. Christopher Plummer mentions the adage *"Lear IS the storm"* during the PBS Shakespeare Uncovered series (2015). [See Video 19, 4:52-5:16]. In the same vein, British actor Roger Allam performs the speech as a form of stream of consciousness, like an interior monologue in *The Sound and the Fury*. [See Video 20.] For both these actors, the storm on the heath serves only a metaphor for the internal psychological chaos Lear is experiencing.

Video 20. Roger Allam as King Lear performing "Blow, winds and crack your cheeks" as an interior monologue.

William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, widely recognized as co-founders of the Romantic movement in England, both explored the individual's "inner storm"—often depicted as psychological turmoil, emotional chaos, or spiritual conflict—in their Romantic poetry, using nature as a mirror for internal states. [160] As Joseph Wood Krutch wrote, "The romantics, feeble descendants of the tragic writers to whom they are linked by their effort to see life and nature in grandiose terms, loved to imagine that the sea or the sky had a way of according itself with their moods, of storming when they stormed and smiling when they smiled." ("The Tragic Fallacy," Section III, *The Atlantic*, Nov, 1928).

1. S.D. ***Roaring wind***.] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note II,iv, 297. S.D. "*The sound of wind.*" Probably from a *macchina del vento* or wind machine. [366]

Video 21. Wind machine/Aeoliphone by ArborPercussion.

2. **cataracts**] A violent downpour of water
2. **hurricanoes**] waterspouts
3. **steeples**] Compare *Macbeth*. IV,i, *"Though you vntye the Windes, and let them fight / Against the Churches"* (F, 1582-3).
3. **cocks**] weathercocks.

Figure 130. Rare Antique Theatre Sound Effect Prop Rain Box Vintage SIlent Movie (ebay).

3. S.D. ***Scolding rain***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In Thomas Dekker's *If This Not Be A Good Play, the Devil Is in It*, there is a stage direction *"Rayne, Thunder and lightning"* (p. 326). SFX simulating the sound of rain date back to ancient times. Creating the effect didn't require Leonardo to invent a machine. It is believed that Greek and Roman theatre practitioners dropped pebbles or small stones into earthenware pots. [161] Simple elongated boxes filled with peas were a standard theatrical device for centuries. They were rocked back and forth, allowing dried peas to cascade over internal wooden ledges or slats, mimicking the sound of rain. Sources trace mechanical rain devices to at least the 17th-century.[162] [See Figure 131.] The "rain-box" became a standard effect alongside thunder runs and wind machines as indoor theaters evolved during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. One example is persevered in the Krumlov "theatre, known as the "drizzle"—a circular wooden drum filled with sand and rotated to create the sound of rain was used in the early 17th century in Europe. [163] The sounds of rushing pebbles can be metaphorically described as "scolding," evoking a sharp, chiding quality akin to verbal reprimand.

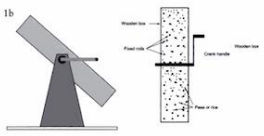


Figure 131. "Rain-Box." John A. Leonard, "History of Theatre Sound", p.7.

3. **sulph'rous**] "Fireworks, while exciting, were also very odorous. Gunpowder was made with sulphur (think rotten eggs) and saltpeter (which was made from dung). These mixed together would have smelled terrible when set alight" (Posted by u/Abrytan, Reddit.)
4. **thought-executing**] a) happening as quickly as thought; b) killing thought.
5. **Vaunt-couriers]** one of the advance part of an army, i.e. precursors. Lear is shouting orders to the storm as though it was under his command.

Figure 132. "How to make a swevel" from THE SECOND BOOKE. Teaching most plainly, and withall most exactly, the composing of all manner of Fire-works For Triump and Recreation (The Project Gutenberg Ebook, The Mysteryes of Nature and Art by John Bate)

6. S.D. ***A flash of lightning***] Ed. Not in Q, F. According to Gwilym Jones ("Storm Effects in Shakespeare", *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance*, edited by Farah Karim Cooper, Tiffany Stern. p. 35) "The main way of creating lightning effects on the stage was through using what was known as, or at least subsequently came to be called, a swevel. This device is similar to a modern firework rocket, though, as John Bate made clear in 1634, it also had a guiding mechanism."

> "Swevels are nothing else but Rockets, having instead of a rod (to ballast them) a little cane bound fast unto them, where through the rope passeth. Note that you mist be careful to have your line strong, even & smooth, and it must be rubd over with sope that it may not burn. If you would have your Rockets to return againe, then binde two Rockets together, with the breech of one towards the mouth of the other, and let the stouple that primeth the one, enter the breech of the other.'"

Andrew Gurr notes that "Lightning was produced from squibs set alight in the heavens" (*The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*).

> The squib (sometimes referred to as a serpent, rocket, or fizgig) often produced a quick, bright burst of flame, a powerful stink, and an unpredictable trajectory of motion.[46] Philip Butterworth describes the squib as "a firework that squirmed erratically to produce a fizzing shower of sparks that sometimes ended in a small report." Squibs produce *an awful smell* through the detonation of gunpowder inside the squib. This detonation produces a powerful physiological response in audiences. (Kevin Matthew Carr, "A Theater of the Senses: A Cultural History of Theatrical Effects in Early-Modern England", 2013, p.18-19.)

Video 22. Michael Jackson suffered from severe burns after a pyrotechnics mishap after a pyrotechnics mishap caused his hair and scalp to catch a fire, in 1984. *the detail.*

The terror experienced by audiences watching III,ii performed at the Globe in 1606 can only be imagined. To the best of my knowledge, no modern theatre producer in the UK would be issued a permit to ignite gunpowder under the Code of Practice 06. One has only to think of the horrific burns suffered by Michael Jackson while filming a Pepsi commercial. (See "How Michael Jackson's Pill Addiction Began." [Video 22.]

> The craze for fireworks in Shakespeare's day, "reached its peak during the reign of Elizabeth I, which saw the queen appointing an official 'Fire Master of England', and Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men experimenting with the kind of pyrotechnic special effects that would eventually burn down the first Globe theatre in 1613. Thankfully nobody was hurt in the blaze - although one chap's breeches caught fire, a situation which was resolved, happily, with some quick thinking and a bottle of beer. A much more cautionary tale comes from Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire. Elizabeth I's visit to see her favourite Robert Dudley in 1572 went catastrophically wrong when a mock battle staged for the Queen's benefit - complete with pyrotechnic dragon effects and fireworks shot from cannons into the sky - resulted in a volley of misdirected fireballs falling on the adjacent town. Several houses were burned to the ground, and tragically at least one man was killed in the blaze (English Heritage History of Fireworks).

Professor Simon Werrett writes in his engaging essay "Watching the Fireworks" (Science in Context 24(2), 167-182 92011), Cambridge University Press)

> "Fireworks of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries amounted to a form of artificial nature, showing suns, stars, comets, fiery exhalations, snow, rain, thunder and lightning. These effects were considered extremely powerful and deeply impressed the princely patrons and courtiers who used them as tools of political distinction. This distinction hinged on knowledge or experience of pyrotechnics. The gentleman or courtier was expected to be virtuous, partly by the habit of reading, and numerous new books on fireworks were published in the sixteenth century to offer instruction in the creation of pyrotechnic effects. Those who understood or had familiarity with fireworks then experienced them as pleasing diversions, while those who did not were imagined to be terrified as if by natural portents." (The Theatre of Gunpower)

7. **rotundity**] This suggests not only the sphere of the globe, but the roundness of gestation (Delius) qu. Furness p. 172
8. **Crack Nature's molds**.] i.e. destroy the casts from which life is fashioned.
8. **germens**] Seeds. Note the phallocentric imagery of Lear's speech.
9. S.D. ***Silence***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Whether by inattention, drunkenness, or Gervaisean mischief, the "Twelve-penny Hirelings" in the Heavens miss their cue, and Lear stands in silence waiting to say his next line. "[A]lthough silences of various kinds are integral to performance, these specific terms are found in only ten plays; most notable is the climactic moment in *Coriolanus*

when after Volumnia's pleas in behalf of Rome, Coriolanus *'Holds her by the hand silent'"* (F, 3539) (*Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **silent, silence,** p. 200.) Compare "*He stands silent"* in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, p. 70). In "Silence in the *Henry VI* Plays" Michael Mannheim writes, "Alwin Thaler nearly a half century ago introduced the idea that Shakespeare, the master of words, achieves some of his most effective and meaningful dramatic moments through the absence of words. See Alwin Thaler, *Shakespeare's Silences*.

9. S.D. ***Fool peaks his head out from between the curtains***.] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *The Atheist's Tragedy*, II,v, p. 285, *"Fresco peeps fearfully forth from behind the arras."*
10. **O Nuncle—**] Ed. *O Nunkle,* (F, 1665). *O Nunckle,* (Q, 1665). "O" funtions linguistically as a filler word, whose meaning changes based on its intonation. Here, he is signaling to Lear that he is still present. As I hear it spoken, he is indicating hesitation, *viz.*, "Excuse me for breaking in." Nuncle is a British colloquialism for uncle, a man who is regarded with affection. Schmidt defines it in his *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, Vol II as "the customary address of a licensed fool to his superiors." (p. 784)
10. **Court holy water**] fair words, flattery.
11. ***Comes downstage***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Unfortunately, the movements of actors on stage are rarely given in the copy sources. An exception is John Marston's *Histriomastix, or The Player Whipped*, Act 4, *"Enter a sort of fellowes with armour and weapons and crosse the stage crying arme, arme, arme"* [See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **cross**, p. 60).
13. ***Thunder and lightning***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
14. **Rumble thy bellyful**] Said in reaction to "the storm."
15. S.D. ***Music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The music is being used to modulate Lear's abrupt changes in emotion. It guides the audience's emotional response, making his erratic behavior feel cohesive. In III,ii, Shakespeare magnifies Lear's feelings to the largest possible scale, as in opera. They switch from violent rage to weeping in a single moment, as in "Cortigiani, vil razza dannata" in *Rigoletto*. (A great performance was videotaped for television in 1959 with Tito Gobbi.) There is no direct evidence, such as scores or stage directions, to indicate that music was used in a *non-diegetic* manner in *King Lear*. The music seems to be mostly diegetic, meaning that it exists as part of the world of the story, as when Edgar winds his horn in Acts III and IV. [See Appendix G: Edgar's Ox Horn.] Editors must piece together clues from the era's rapid advancements in opera and innovations in expressive techniques to deduce if incidental music was being used as a storytelling device.

    Music in ancient Greek and Roman theatre was a structural necessity, serving roles strikingly similar to modern cinematic underscoring by signaling transitions, amplifying emotions, and bolstering dramatic architecture via metrical patterns linked to instrumental accompaniment. [164] Music was intrinsic to 16th-century *commedia dell'arte* troupes for both delineating character types and expressing emotional states. Performances integrated vocal and instrumental music to convey exaggerated moods like joy, melancholy, or madness, aligning with the form's emphasis on emotional extravagance. Eyewitness accounts note mad characters—like Isabella Andreini of I Gelosi—using song in ways tied to narrative, not randomly, to

heighten dramatic irony or passion. [453] This practice drew from Renaissance ideas of music's rhetorical power to stir affections, much like madrigals, blending improvisation with expressive musicality. [165] [See Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.]

16. **tax**] accuse.

18. **Subscription**] submission, allegiance

21. **ministers**] underlings, agents

23. **high-engendered battles**: heavenly battalions

27-30. **The codpiece that will house . . . marry many**]. *viz*., The man who has a codpiece to cover his genitals before he has a house to cover them will end up coexisting with lice. "'Marry' is being used metaphorically, = closely joined, and hence concordant, harmonious." *"If the true concord of well tuned sounds, / By vnions married"* (Sonnet 8, Q1, 110-11). [*Shakespeare Lexicon,* Vol II, p. 696.] "There was an important social distinction between being afflicted by lice as opposed to fleas. Fleas were almost unavoidable; everyone had them. But to 'be lowsie' was an indicator of poor personal hygiene. According to the Georgian entomologist Thomas Muffet, lice were an embarrassing disgrace." (If Walls Could Talk: An Intimate History of the Home by Lucy Worsley, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012.) See Gargantua and His Son Pantagruel, Chapter 3.VIII.—"Why the codpiece is held to be the chief piece of armour amongst warriors."

Figure 133. An old woman delousing a man Etching by Willem Basse after a design drawing by Anthonie Victorijns. Collection: Voorhelm Schneevoogt.

31-34. **The man that makes his toe . . . to wake**] The Fool is comparing the angry man (who responds to things that displease him by stomping off in a temper tantrum) to one who controls his emotions by holding them in his heart. Compare *"If a mans braines were in's heeles, wert not in danger of kybes?"* (F, 882-3). The same philosophy is expressed by Seneca, who is quoted as saying "Anger, if not restrained, is frequently more hurtful to us than the injury that provokes it." In The *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* (Letters from a Stoic), he cautions that "Ungoverned anger begets madness." (Letter XVIII, On Festivals and Fasting).

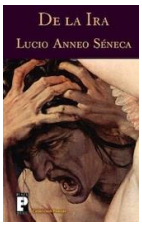


Figure 134. "Anger, if not restrained, is frequently more hurtful to us than the injury that provokes it." – Seneca.

35-6. **For there was never yet fair woman . . . glass**] The phrase sounds like an old-fashioned aphorism about youth and vanity: young women will always practice making pretty faces in the mirror. It is not a documented piece of traditional folklore or proverbial wisdom.

Figure 135. Woodcut illustrating the dangers of pride and vanity in calling up the devil represented by looking in a mirror. The picture is entitled: A Young Woman Combing Her Hair from the 1493 edition of The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry.

36. S.D. ***Thunder and Lightning*****]**. Ed. Not in Q, F. The *"twelve-penny Hirelings in their Heavens"* [7] are not ones for jokes.

37-8. **No, I will be the pattern of all patience . . . nothing.**] Lear's line is a direct response to the effect. It is pure metatheatre, and written for a laugh.

39. S.D. ***Within***] Ed. Not in Q, F. "Widely used (roughly 800 examples) to indicate the location of a **sound** or the presence of a figure *within* the tiring house and therefore offstage out of sight of the playgoer; most of the examples (1) anticipate an entrance" (*Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **within**, p. 253).

40. **Marry**: a mild oath (originally on the name of the Virgin Mary).

40. **grace and a codpiece]** The Fool is referring to the grace and person of the King and his signature codpiece. Compare *"the Grace, and Person of my Master"* (F, 1210). A gargantuan codpiece is as emblematic of Lear as the coxcomb is of the Fool. "Your Grace" was the title used to address kings and queens, particularly in England before Henry VIII."

41. **Kent**] Ed. Not in Q, F.

41. S.D. ***Within***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

41. **Holla!**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, wln 0539, S.D. *"Halloing within."* (The Folger Shakespeare Library). Shakespeare sets up the joke at the conclusion of III,i,55 (F, 1651-53). Kent and the Gentleman decide to look separately for the king, and agree that whoever finds him first will shout *"Holla"* to terminate the efforts of the other. Kent has only to hear the word *"codpiece"* to know he has found his man. [See note I,iv,87,*"coxcomb."*]

41. S.D ***Enter Kent***.] Ed. After 36 *glass* (F, 1688). *En.ter Kent.* after *patience* (Q, 1689).

42. S.D. ***Aside***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

42. **That's a wise man and a fool**.] Ed. (See note I,iv, 87.*"coxcomb."*) Kent is wise for following the king and finding him, and a fool for the same reason. Compare *"when a wiseman giues thee better counsel giue me mine againe, I would hause none but knaues follow it, since a Foole giues it"* (F, 1347-49). The joke is metatheatrical in its timing. It is said *after* the audience's response to Kent's *"Holla!"* It is a fool's profession to get laughs.

45. **Gallow**: frighten, terrify

46. **keep**: stay within

49. **carry**: endure

50. **affliction**] Infliction

51. **pudder**] Pother. Disturbance, commotion, turmoil.

55. **perjur'd**] i.e. perjurer;

55. **simular]** simulator, pretender

56. **Caitiff**] A contemptible or cowardly person

57. **seeming**] hypocrisy

58. **practiced on**] plotted against;
58. **pent-up**] hidden, confined
59. **Rive your concealing continents**] tear open that which contains and conceals you
60. **summoners**] summoners were officers of church courts.
62. S.D. ***Storm***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Note that the literal-minded Kent does not anthropomorphize the storm as Lear and the Fool do. For him, it is just really bad weather. Throughout Act III, Shakespeare uses Kent as a foil to Lear's "madness". See note III,iv,59,*"He hath no daughters, sir."*
62. **hard**] near
65. **More harder**] Compare III,vi,77, *"hard"*.
66-7. **Which even but now . . . come in**] i.e. Goneril and Regan forbade my entrance when I asked them about your whereabouts.
68. **scanted**] withheld; deficient
70. **straw**] Lear means bedding. It is metatheatrical in that the yard and the "cellar" at the Globe were strewn with "short" (i.e. *chopped*) straw, as Cordelia calls it (F, 2788). See note IV,vi, note IV,vi, 40.,*"straw."*
75-8. **He that has but . . . every day**] Men must make the best of what they're born with. The wind and the rain is a symbol of life's daily hardships. The Fool's catch appears to be a reprise of the song "The Wind and the Rain", a Memento mori sung by Feste at the end of *Twelfth Night*.

Figure 136. The Dance of Death (1493) by Michael Wolgemut, from the Nuremberg Chronicle of Hartmann Schedel.

79. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear and Kent***] Capell. *Exit.* (F, 1733). Not in Q.
80. **brave**] fine
81. **prophecy**] This speech is a parody of a well-known prophecy known as "Merlin's Prophecy." The original, which is called *Chaucer's Prophecy*, can be Googled online. (See Misha Teramura, "Prophecy and emendation: Merlin, Chaucer, Lear's Fool", 2019.) It is also cited as a reference in Furness, p. 179. The Fool's awareness of the presence of the audience, as well as his acknowledgment of the difference between the represented time of the story and the time of its theatrical presentation, are common techniques of metatheatre.
92. **Albion**] England
95. **going shall be used with feet**] That men will use their feet for the practical purpose of going someplace instead of storming off to nowhere because they are angry. Cf. I,v.8-9, III,ii,31-34.
95. S.D. ***Thunder and lightning***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Again, the intent of the effect is not to mimic a "real" storm, but to censor the Fool. The "Heavens" hate jokes.
96-7. **This prophecy Merlin shall make . . . time]** The Fool blames Merlin for the joke: "As, according to the legend, King Lear was contemporary with Joash, King of Judah" (Moberly) qu. Furness p. 180. The scene ends as it began using devices of "metatheatre".
97. S.D. ***Exit***] F, 1750. Not in Q.

ACT III, SCENE III] *Scena Tertia* (F, 1751). Scene 10 in Quarto.

S.D. **Gloucester's Castle**] Capell, *subst*. Not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Lords Rooms**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Chamber (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Enter Gloucester and Edmund***] (F, 1752) . *Enter Cornewell and Bastard with lights*. (Q1, 1970). *Enter Gloster, and the Bastard with lights.* (Q2, 1751).
S.D. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The use of the "Suburbs" or the Lords Rooms here, and in III,v and IV,v, conveys the idea of secrecy and duplicity. It also helps quickens the pace of the staging. Note the short duration of these scenes, and the actors' lack of movement.
2. **leave**] permission
2. **pity**] have pity on
7. **Go to**] an expression of impatience
10. **closet**] *OED*. **4. b.** "A place (whether in the form of a cupboard or of a room) where valuables are securely kept." [Compare note I,ii,59., *"closet."*] See *Julius Caesar* III,ii, *"But heere's a Parchment, with the Seale of Caesar, / I found it in his Closset, 'tis his Will"* (F, 1665-66)
11. **home**] i.e. completely; power: armed force; footed: i.e. landed
12. **incline to**: i.e. take the side of; look: i.e. look for; privily: secretly
14. **of**] i.e.by
17. **toward**] about to happen
18. S.D. ***Exit***] (Q, 1770), (F, 1770).
23. S.D. ***Exit***] (Q, 1775), (F, 1775).

ACT III. SCENE IV. *Scena Quarto* (F, 1776). Scene 11 in Q.

S.D. ***Storm still***] after "endure" (F, 1780). Not in Q.
*S.D. **The Heath. Before a Hovel***] Rowe, *subst*. Not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Yard and Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Platform (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Enter Lear, Kent, and Fool***] Q, 1778, F, 1777. My guess is that Kent, Lear and the Fool enter through the central opening in the tiring house. [Compare note III,iv,94., S.D. *"Enter Gloucester."*]
S.D. ***below***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Kent takes Lear and the Fool to the same spot Edgar emerged from in II,iii (F, 1251). It may be that they enter from the large central opening in the tiring house (*valva regia*), and take stairs or a ramp down to the ground level. Stairs leading from the platform to the yard need not be considered a permanent fixture in English public theatres, but pieces of movable furniture. In the masque of *Mercury and Diana*, illustrated in the Portrait of Sir Henry Unton, stairs are positioned at the front of the platform, with the musicians and masquers performing "below". [Figure 137.] Henslowe's inventory lists 'one pair of stairs for Phaeton.'" In *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642,* the authors'

warn that "each use of the term ['**stairs**'] may denote something different" (p. 213). [See note IV,v,2., *"climb up."*] A commonly cited description of medieval outdoor stages notes that the raised scaffolds used for mystery plays were "provided with stairs or ramps for the actors," allowing performers to get up to and down from the elevated platforms while the audience stood around them. [166]

Figure 137. Stairs used in a masque. Detail from The Portrait of Sir Henry Unton by Unknown artist, c. 1596, National Portrait Gallery.

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare is using the physical space of the Globe theatre, which was distinctly stratified by social class, to communicate the philosophy of *Rota Fortunæ*. [See note II,ii,169, *"Fortune."*] The use of levels explains how Lear, Kent, Edgar and the Fool go unobserved by Gloucester for nearly a minute while he wanders about the platform later in III,iv looking for them. It is not until he is accosted by Kent from *below* that he becomes aware of their presence. [See note III,iv,110., *"What are you there."*] Similarly, in IV,i, Gloucester and Curan enter on the platform, and do not see Edgar until the latter reveals himself from *below* in the yard by blowing his horn. Schmidt writes in his *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II.* p. 2024, that "**there**" is 3) "Multifariously employed to point to, and single out, persons and things." Compare *Lear*, *"Giue me the Map there"* (F, 42) and *"louder the musicke there"* (Q1, 2775.2)

The King's Men were accustomed to taking a flexible approach to staging plays. They performed in spaces such as inn courtyards, guildhalls, and private residences, each with their own set of limitations. The banqueting house where *King Lear* was staged for James I, [167] was not a purpose-built theater like the Globe. It was constructed in 1581 by Queen Elizabeth I to negotiate a marriage treaty with Francis, Duke of Anjou of France. The space was frequently converted into a temporary theatre for masques and plays, refitted with temporary stages and stairs, seating, and scenery for each performance. [168]

2. **open night**: i.e. night in the open air
3. **nature**: human nature
8. **fixed**] lodged, rooted
15. **as**] i.e. as if
18. S.D. ***Rain and wind***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
20. **frank**] generous
25. S.D. ***Looking on the Fool***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare II,iv,108,S.D., *"Looking on Kent."*
26. S.D. ***To the Fool***] Johnson. Not in Q, F.
27. S.D. ***Exit Fool***] After *poverty* (F, 1807). Not in Q.
26. **houseless poverty**] In Act III, Lear is consumed by the idea of injustice owing largely to the guilt he feels for having banished Cordelia. [See note IV,vi, 47, *"wheel of fire."*] Here, he

repents of his pride, and exhorts rich people to rid themselves of their wealth, and give to the needy: *"Take physic, Pomp;/ Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,/ That thou mayst shake the superflux to them/ And show the heavens more just."* Compare Matthew 19:21: "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." The idea is reiterated in IV,i by Gloucester after he too loses everything, including his eyes: *"Let the superfluous, and Lust-dieted man,/ That slaues your ordinance, that will not see/ Because he do's not feele, feele your power quickly:/ So distribution should vndoo excesse and each man have enough* (F, 2252-56). The theme of *caritas* is perfectly suited for a play performed for James I on St. Stephen's Day as part of the Christmas festivities at Court.

27. S.D. ***under the stage***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *John a Kent*, Act III, *"From under the Stage, the third antique."* (p.33). The Fool crawls down into the dank "cellar" underneath the stage from whence the audience saw Edgar emerge in II,iii (F, 1251).

Figure 138. After nearly 500 years, the remains of the Red Lion playhouse, which marked the dawn of Elizabethan theatre, may have finally been found." (Stephen White).

28. **naked**] Compare note III,iv,90,*"unaccommodated."*
31. **looped**] filled with loopholes. [See Figure 159.]
33. **Take physic**] cure yourself;
33. **Pomp**] Compare Psalm 49:20: "Man in his pomp yet without understanding is like the beasts that perish."

Figure 139. "Dives and Lazarus" by (c. 1700), Paolo Pagani. Pushkin Museum of Art.

35. **superflux**] A word Shakespeare appears to have coined himself from the Latin *superfluxus*: "An unnecessary or excess amount of something; a surplus" (*OED* **1.**) The word "superfluous" is first spoken by Lear at the conclusion of Act II in relation to the *"gorgeous"* (F, 1568) costume Regan is wearing : *"our basest Beggers / are in the poorest thing* ***superfluous****."* (F, 1564-65).
36. **show the Heavens more just**] In Scripture, what English Bibles call "charity" is frequently treated not just as optional kindness but as a matter of justice, stewardship, and agapē love. [169] In the Hebrew Bible, charity (tsedâqâh) is viewed as justice or what is "right," rather than an optional act of kindness. [170] The word *"just"* (F, 1817) is the cue for Edgar to blow his ox horn. [See Appendix G.]

Figure 150. Siegfried, as portrayed by Arthur Rackham, revels in his strength and masculinity.

36. S.D. ***Edgar winds his horn***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See Appendix G: Edgar's Ox Horn.] There are many instances where characters are directed to *wind a horn* cited in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642*, **horn** (pp. 116-117). We know from Edgar's words, *"Poor Tom, thy horn is dry"* (F, 2032) that one was being used as a prop in *King Lear*. "Bedlam beggars wore about their necks a great horne of an ox in a string or bawdrie, which, when they came to an house for almes *they did wind*, and they did put the drink given them onto this horne whereto they did put a stopple" (Aubrey, *Natural History of Wiltshire,* ed. 1847, p. 93). This the first of four times Edgar winds it. See also III,iv,84; III,vi,72; and IV,i,24. The musical principle is similar to the leitmotif known as "Siegfried's Horn Call." See note III,iv,84.S.D., *"Winds his horn."* In both Jewish and Christian tradition, a ram's-horn trumpet or shofar serves as a spiritual alarm, calling people to awaken, repent of their sins, and draw closer to God.

Video 23. Three cow horn trumpets (also known as blowing horns or blast horns), of different sizes, and a ram's horn.

36. S.D. ***from under the stage***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
37. **Fatham and half**] Edgar is calling *the depth* of the rainwater, using his horn as a boatswain does a whistle—summoning sailors to the "upper deck." In Heywood's *Fortune By Land and Sea* (p. 37), Young Forest commands:

> "Boatswain with your whistle
> Command the Saylors to the upper deck
> To know their quarters, and to hear their charge."

In Shakespeare's time, the Globe Playhouse was a stone's throw from the Thames (see Wenceslaus Hollar's "Long View of London from Bankside"), and likely flooded during heavy rain storms.

Figure 141. A ghost awaits his cue in the cellar, ***Shakespeare's Theatre*** by C. Walter Hodges, 1964, p. 97.

38. S.D. ***From below***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642*, p. 28, "*Below* can be synonymous with under the stage or beneath the stage" (p. 28).
40. S.D. ***Thunder and Lightning***] Ed. Not in Q, F. "[M]ost often the effects [of Thunder and Lighting] are linked to a supernatural figure such as a **devil**, **spirit**, **ghost**, **witch**, **magician**, or god and accompany descents through the trapdoor into the underworld." (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642*, p. 230.)

40. **Give me thy hand**] Kent is physically helping the Fool out of the "cellar." He is not molly-coddling him.
40. S.D. ***Reenter Fool***] Not in Q, F.
40. S.D. ***from under the stage***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
43. **straw**] Compare note IV,vi, 40.,*"straw."* Evidently, "short" (cut) straw was strewn about the yard rather than "long" straw. (See "Buying the Right Straw.") In *Vanity Fair* (p. 256), Thackeray alludes to the practice of laying straw in the streets to muffle sound. Perhaps straw was used at the Globe as an acoustic property as well as to absorb moisture, dirt and bad odors.
43. S.D. ***Enter Edgar***] *Enter Edgar and the Fool*. after *just* (F, 1818). Not in Q, 1608.
43. S.D. ***from under the stage***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

Figure 142. Tom o'Bedlam or Abraham-men. Woodcut illustration for an old ballad, National Library of Scotland - Crawford.

43. S.D. ***disguised as Tom o'Bedlam***] Theobald. Not in Q, F. [See Figure 142.] Not in Q, F. Bedlam beggars are first referred to in the dialogue by Edmund, who mocks the songs they

sing for almes: *"my Cue is villanous Melancholly, with a sighe like* Tom o'Bedlam*"* (F, 464-5). When the First Quarto of *King Lear* was published in 1608, it featured an incredibly long and descriptive title page that explicitly named Edgar's transformation into a Tom of Bedlam, presumably as a marketing tactic to entice audiences to buy tickets. "M. William Shak-speare: *H I S* True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters. *With the vnfortunate life of* Edgar, *sonne* and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his sullen and assumed humor of TOM of Bedlam" (Quarto 1, 1608). Madness and its cure were subjects of intense fascination, debate, and cultural preoccupation in England during the 16th and 17th centuries. [455] [456] It became one of the most bankable tropes on the early modern English stage.

Figure 143. Richard Napier (c. 1630), British School, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Napier was a clergyman and astrologer who treated thousands of patients worried about their mental health in the 16th century. Their symptoms included suicidal thoughts and self-harm, refusal to pray, inability to feel pious, sexual urges, visions, weeping.

> "When Henry VIII dissolved the religious orders, he seized the Bethlem Hospital in London, England's only asylum for the mentally ill. However, shortly before he died in 1547 he transferred its control to the Corporation of London. It then became a civic rather than a religious institution. But the City aldermen struggled to keep it running and in 1574, they handed its management to the Bridewell, a hospital for the 'idle poor'. The Bethlem at this time could only hold a maximum of 40 people and was often only half full . . . It was only the handful of people living in the Bethlem who received any sort of institutional care in the 16th and early 17th centuries. In a population of five million, this meant that large numbers of mentally ill people lived in their communities, usually cared for by their family. Some were on the streets - mentally ill beggars were nicknamed 'Tom o'Bedlams' . . . King James I (1603-1625) instructed the court that 'lunatics be freely committed to their best and nearest friends, that can receive no benefit by their death.' *The care of the mentally ill was essentially a domestic matter* and on the whole, it seems that people were not exploited by the system . . . Mental illness could be seen as both a natural and a supernatural event - a sickness or something caused by devils or astronomical events. People had no difficulty accepting both these explanations at the same time" ("Mental illness in the 16th and 17th centuries").

43. S.D. ***carrying a horn in a baldric***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *"poore Tom thy horne is dry"* (F, 2032). A baldric is a belt worn over one shoulder and reaching down to the opposite hip. [See Figure 142.]
44. **Away**] Following Edgar's command to go away, his imperative collapses into a clause modifying the meaning of the subject, *"Away, the foule Fiend followes me"* (F, 1827), *viz.,* "Go away; I'm being pursued by the foul fiend." It is joined by a second clause, *"thorough the sharpe hathorne blowes the cold wind"* (F, 1827-8). The sentence structure feels jarring and disconnected due to the disjointed compounding of clauses. It is typically punctuated in modern editions as an independent sentence, and performed as sing-song by the actor signaling

to the audience that the character has lost his mind.

In my restoration, I have deleted the clause because Edgar's subject is not the *"foul field"* but Lear's moral exhortation, *"shake the superflux to them, / And shew the Heauens more iust"* (F, 1816-7). In the title page of the quartos of *King Lear*, Tom is described as assuming a *"sullen humor."* His sullenness is reflected in his speech, *"Humh, goe to thy bed and warme thee"* (F, 1809-17), Essentially, Edgar is responding to Lear's "prayer" and telling him, "Fuck off, Preacher! Go away and suffer on your own!" Compare Sly's words to the tavern Hostess in *Taming of the Shrew*, I.i: *"go by S. Ieronimie, goe to thy cold bed, and warme thee"* (F, 11-12). *S. Ieronimie* is a reference to "St. Jerome" a religious authority known for his teachings on Christian moral life, and Hieronimo (played by Richard Burbage) in Thomas Kyd's play *The Spanish Tragedy*. Edgar's subsequent speech continues its focus on charity, maintaining the character's "sullen" disposition: *"Who giues any thing to poore Tom?* (F, 1832). He then explains the reasons people give him nothing by describing his decadent decline from a fashionable gentleman to a syphilitic madman, like Tom Rakewell in Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress*. [See note III,iv,53., *"traitor."*]

Why the line *"thorough the sharpe hathorne blowes the cold wind,"* along with lines (F, 1839-43; Q1, 1840-43; Q2, 1857-41), may have been revised or interpolated can never be known. Henry Condell, one of principal sharers of the King's Men who likely played the part of Edgar, may have felt the character of Tom of Bedlam would make more of an impression by "indicating" madness rather than internalizing it. His style of his delivery seems to be patterned after the character's climactic speech at the end of the scene unit, *"Still through the Hauthorne blowes the cold winde: Sayes suum, mun, nonny. Dolphin my Boy, Boy Sesey: let him trot by. Storme still"* (F, 1878-80). The unit is framed by the actor blowing his ox horn. The King's Men was a highly collaborative ensemble where share-holder-actors managed the company, selected plays, and frequently influenced script development. [458] Condell may have insisted on writing new lines for the character himself specifically to force a visceral reaction from the audience. By so doing, he fundamentally altered Shakespeare's original "sullen" depiction of Tom of Bedlam. In effect, he was acting the ending first, bringing the character's mania into a context where it does not yet belong. [459] In the quartos and Folio, there is no character arc in the scene. "Playing the ending" is one of the most common acting problems acting teachers and coaches address. [460] Leading men (and ladies) are frequently guilty of upstaging their peers. In Shakespeare's company, Will Kempe was the ultimate scene-stealer. [461] Records indicate that he frequently ignored the written script and "changed lines." [462]

44. **Hum,**] Ed. Humh, (F, 1828) Not in Q. "To make a low inarticulate vocal sound; esp. to utter such a sound in expression of dissent or dissatisfaction." (OED, 2a). Compare *"The clowdy Messenger turnes me his backe, / And hums; as who should say, you'l rue the time / That clogges me with this Answer"* (*Macbeth*, F. 1515-17). I hear the speech said, "Away, go to thy cold bed and warm thee. Hum!"
44. **go to thy cold bed and warm thee**] Q1, 1828-29. *"cold"* omitted in Folio. Compare *Taming of the Shrew*, I.i, *"go by S. Ieronimie, goe to thy cold bed, and warme thee"* (F, 11-12). Sly is using it an obscene dismissal, meaning "run off to bed and play with yourself." [See note

III,iv, 44., *"Away."*]

49-50. **knives under his pillow**] Referring to Harsnett's *Declaration*. See Furness, *Variorum Edition of King Lear*, pp. 186-67.

Figure 144. Demons tempting suicide. Source not given. "It was customary during the Tudor and Stuart periods for the corpse of a felo de se suicide to undergo a form of ritual desecration: defilement of one's body and living memory, followed by 'profane burial' at a crossroads."

50. **halters**] hangman's ropes

50. **ratsbane**] white arsenic, the "Poison of Kings" and the "Saviour of Syphilis."

52. **four-inched bridges**] trot poles

53. **for**] as

53. **traitor**] Edgar's speech continues in the Folio: *"Blisse thy fiue Wits, Toms a cold. O do,de,do,de,do de, blisse thee from Whirle-Windes,Starre-blasting, and taking, do poore Tom some charitie, whom the foule Fiend vexes. There could I haue him now,and there,and there againe,and there."* (F, 1839-43) (Q1, 1840-43) (Q2, 1857-41). It is essentially a variation of lines F, 1827-28 in which he anthropomorphizes as the storm: *the foule Fiend followes me, through the sharpe Hauthorne blow the windes"* (F, 1827-28). From the dialogue, readers can deduce that both speeches are prompted by loud sound effects frightening the character. [See also note III,iv,68, *"madmen."*]

Lines F, 1839-43 are tautological, and pause the momentum of the story. Narratively, the most critical problem is Tom's overt appeal for charity: *"do poore Tom some charitie, whom the foule Fiend vexes"* (F, 1841-2). Since the end of Act II when Lear put the question of *"true need"* (F, 1570) to Regan (see note II,iv,267, *"true need"*), the plot builds to his tearing off pieces of his upper garments, allowing Edgar to concomitantly pick up the king's discarded "Persian" riding-cloak and wear it. By explicitly begging for charity beforehand, he turns Lear's gesture into a superficial, transactional exchange. [171] It is crucial that the reader understands that Lear is motivated by pity to remove his cape, not a social obligation. [See note III,iv,85-6, *"Thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies."*] In true charity, a giver is moved internally by love or empathy. When charity is explicitly prompted, the motive shifts from genuine altruism to social expectation. Philosophers like Immanuel Kant argued that a beggar's direct plea forces the giver's hand. [460] In the KJV of the Bible, "charity" is the translators' rendering of the Greek word agápē in a number of passages (famously 1 Corinthians 13), and it is intended to signal a particular kind of love rather than mere philanthropy.

54. **pass**] predicament

56. **reserv'd**] kept, retained

56. **else**] otherwise

Figure 145. Egyptian plague of boils in the Toggenburg Bible from 1411. The image depicts Moses tossing handfuls of soot into the air with two people suffering from the Biblical plague of boils described in Exodus 9:8-9.

57. **pendulous**] pendent, overhanging. "There was a believe that diseases were stored up in the air until it was time for them to be poured down to punish sinners." p. 68 *Oxford School Shak.* [See Figure 145.]
58. **fated**] fatefully, ominously
59. **He hath no daughters, Sir**] In Act III, Kent acts the part of "the straight man." His pragmatic, literal perspective acts as a comedic foil to Lear's figurative language, dichotomizing what is real from what is not.
60. **Death, traitor**] Compare note III,vi,35., *"I'll see their trial first."*
65. **pelican**] Young pelicans feed by sticking their bills into their parents' throats to retrieve food. In Medieval times, a story was told that after the mother pelican gave birth to a brood of young chicks, they became violent toward the parent that selflessly cared for them, and attempting to peck out her eyes and mutilate her. In anger she retaliated, striking her young dead, but after three days regretted her actions, and pierced her own side with her beak. Her blood revived the chicks, and she died, having made the ultimate sacrifice for her children. See "The Pelican, Self-Sacrificing Mother Bird of the Medieval Bestiary."
66. **Pillicock sat on Pillicock hill**] *"Pillicock"* is an archaic word for "the penis" (*OED* **1. α**.): in W. Heuser *Kildare-Gedichte* (1904) 171 "Y ne mai no more of loue done, Mi pilkoc pisseþ on mi schone." In its present context, *Pillicock* appears to be a name given by Shakespeare to a fiend with a propensity for licentiousness. The name is spontaneously suggested by the word "*pelican*" (F, 1856), a bird easily identified by its long massive bill and gular sac.
67. **Alow, alow, loo, loo**] Edgar is imagining the sex Lear enjoyed begetting his daughters. *Halloo* is a common hunting cry used to incite dogs to the chase. Here, his hallooing is salacious, as though he was a witness at a bedding ceremony.

Figure 146. A naked woman on a flying penis, marginalium image from Decretum Gratiani by Bartolomeo da Brescia.

68. **madmen**] Following the word *"madmen"*, Edgar is given the line, *"Take heed o'th'foule Fiend, obey thy Parents, keepe thy words Iustice, sweare not, commit not, with mans sworne Spouse: set not thy Sweet-heart on proud array. Tom's a cold."* (F, 1860-63). I deleted the line in my restoration to prevent readers from mistakenly assuming mad Tom has found redemption through religious obedience. The speech contradicts his "sullen" demeanor established earlier in the scene, and particularly his distrust of preachers: *"Humh, goe to thy bed and warme thee"* (F, 1828-9). [See note III,iv, 127., *"Tom's a-cold."* (F, 1954)]
70. **servingman**] a high-ranking servant, such as Malvolio and Oswald. [463] In *Romeo and Juliet*,

the First Servingman is a superior servant in the Capulet household, with permission to address Lady Capulet directly. The decline and fall of "poor Tom" is presented as a cautionary tale, like William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress* (1732-34) where Tom Rakewell becomes Tom o' Bedlam by squandering his inherence on vice, and becomes a syphilitic lunatic confined in Bethlam Hospital. [See Figure 147.]

Figure 147. In The Madhouse — Plate 8, A Rake's Progress, William Hogarth.

The Globe Theatre was located in the Bankside district of Southwark—an area notorious for prostitution and the rapid spread of syphilis during the 16th century. [464] Though syphilis is non-specific in *King Lear*, as AIDS is non-specific in *Into the Woods*, Shakespeare's audience would have presupposed that Tom's madness was the result of the disease, then incurable. Treatments were notoriously excruciating. [465] Physicians primarily relied on toxic doses of mercury, which caused severe physical agony and often proved deadlier than the disease itself. [466] It is thought by some authorities that the playwright himself was being treated for it when he wrote the play. [See John J. Ross, MD, "Shakespeare's Chancre: Did the Bard Have Syphilis?", Clinical Infectious Diseases, Volume 40, Issue 3, 1 February 2005, Pages 399–404.] By the 1520's, it was clear that the disease was contracted and spread by sexual intercourse. In England, Henry VIII tried to close down the 'stews', or brothels, and communal bathhouses of London c. 1503. [See "Prostitution in Early Modern England."]

Figure 148. Henry vs The Whores, 3rd April 1546. 'A good old traditional Southwark brothel, where we have tea with our tits out and everyone looks over the moon to be here…oh and we also collect crockery'.

Syphilis is not the scourge today that it was circa 1495 when it was first reported in Europe. Although it didn't have the horrendous mortality of the bubonic plague, the symptoms were painful and repulsive: "So cruel, so distressing, so appalling that until now nothing more terrible or disgusting has ever been known on this earth," says the German humanist Josef Grünpeck, who, when he fell victim, bemoaned how "the wound on my priapic gland became so swollen, that both hands could scarcely encircle it." The artist Albrecht Dürer, later to use images of sufferers in propaganda woodcuts against the Catholic church, wrote "God save me from the French disease. I know of nothing of which I am so afraid … Nearly every man has it and it eats up so many that they die." ("Syphilis, sex and fear: How the French disease conquered the world," Sarah Dunant, *The Guardian*, 2013.)

Figure 149. Dyce gives Swithold, a contraction of Saint Withold (supposed by Tyrwhitt to mean St. Vitalis), who, as a youth, was licentious and immoral. He was known as a patron against venereal disease.

> "The first stage was a chancre on or near the genitals, followed by rashes and open sores during the second. The afflicted would experience pain with erection, swelling of the lymph glands, splitting headaches, and other pains throughout the body. At this point, the soft tissues of the nose and palate could begin to rot, and the teeth and hair would loosen and fall out. Lesions and tumors could consume the nasal bones and the tissues of the face until the flesh was literally falling from the bones, sometimes even leaving the brain exposed to open air . . . Syphilis was treated at the second stage with mercury in every form from enemas, ointments, and pills to steam baths or "sweats" in mercury vapor. This treatment was somewhat successful, although it was known even at the time to cause madness. Less common treatments included confining the afflicted to a sweat room to breathe guaiac vapor, "excising the sores and cauterizing the wounds," and celibacy aided by the placement of nettles in one's codpiece" (S is for Syphilis: Genius, Madness, and The Sickness of Naples, by Jessica Cale.

Figure 150. A medical illustration attributed to Albrecht Dürer (1496) depicting a person with syphilis. Here, the disease is believed to have astrological causes.

The subject of sexual promiscuity is first introduced at the very beginning of the play when Gloucester boasts about the bawdy circumstances of Edmund's birth. In III,iv, Edgar invokes *"Swithold"* (i.e. St. Vitalis of Assisi, the patron saint of persons suffering with venereal diseases) upon the entrance of his father (see III,iv,102 note: *Swithold*). In IV,v,111-132, Lear presupposes Gloucester's blindness to be a judgment of the gods for the sin of committing adultery (F, 2556-61), as does Edgar in the final scene: *"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices/ Make instruments to plague us./ The dark and vicious place where thee he got/ Cost him his eyes"* (F, 3130-34).

Figure 151. 16th century engraving by Jan Sadeler showing Girolamo Fracastoro warning a mythic Greek shepherd, Syphilis, not to anger Apollo by Pointing to Venus, the Goddess of Love. 'A night with Venus, a lifetime with Mercury' ran the old adage.

> "We find that the artists of both the 16th and 17th centuries, while somewhat reticent

about syphilis, are nonetheless at pains to suggest that sex is not without its serious side effects. Their artistic exhortations suggest women as the source of the disease, so that we find Venus shown as both ideal love and the source of contamination." (Syphilis in art: an entertainment in four parts. Part 1, Morton RS., Genitourin Med. 1990 Feb;66(1):33-40.) [See Figure 151.]

70. **curl'd my hair**] See note II,ii,30, *"barber-monger"*.
71. **wore gloves in my cap**] wore favors from his mistress. See IV,iii,21 note; IV,v,33. [See Figure 231.]
75. **dice**] "Joseph Strutt, writing in 1800, believed that dicing was the oldest amusement of man. Dice were played in England as early as the twelfth or thirteenth century. The seventeen century was an era of manic dice-playing. Statues against dicing were enacted as early as the reign of Richard II. In an attempt to promote sports and pastimes of a military nature, Henry VII also added dicing to his list of unlawful amusements. These ordinances were loosely enforced under the early Stuarts. James I found games of hazard unappealing, and he was 'unable to agree with the curiositie of some learned men of our age,' but he recommend some dicing games to his son as being suitable for 'foule and stormie weather'" (Vicky Ann Sanderling, "Games and Gaming of the Stuart Aristocracy" pp. 200-201). [See Figure 152.]

Figure 152. Gambling in a Brothel at the time of Queen Elizabeth I. Phillip Stubbs's Anatomy of the ABUSES IN ENGLAND in SHAKSPERE'S YOUTH, PART I, 1583. Page 46.

76. **out-paramoured the Turk**] i.e. had sex with more women than a Turkish pasha with his harem. See III,vi,103, *"Persian"* (F, 2037).
76. **light of ear**] Ready to listen to gossip
80. **plackets**] openings in petticoats or in skirts.
80. **foul fiend**] The word serves as the audio cue for the stagehand in the Heavens to operate the wind machine.
81. S.D. ***Sound of scolding wind***] Ed. *Storme still* (F, 1880). Not in Q. Surviving descriptions of Elizabethan stagecraft often note the special A/V effects—thunder, lightning, wind, and rain—without explaining how they were mechanically produced and articulated.
82. **"Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind"**] "**Still**" is being used as an adverb meaning always, ever, constantly: "*Still she intreats, ... Still is he sullein, still he lowres and frets"* (Q1, 73-5) (Schmidt, Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II, p. 1123). The line is thought to be the fragment of a song adapted from *As You Like It* : "*Blow*, *blow*, *thou winter winde*, / *Thou art not so vnkinde*, *as mans ingratitude* / *Thy tooth is not so keene*, *because thou art not seene*, / *although thy breath be rude*" (F, 1156-59). No score of the original melody has been found. [466]
83. **Says, "suum, mun, hey no nonny."—**] Ed. *Sayes suum, mun, nonny,* (F, 1879). *hay no on ny,* (Q1, 1879). *hay no on ny,* (Q2. 1879). Presumably the refrain of a bawdy nonsense song. "[T]hese dauncers sometimes do teach them trickes above trenchmore, yea and sometimes such la voltas, that they mount so high, that you may see their *hey nony, nony nony no"* (*The Wit of*

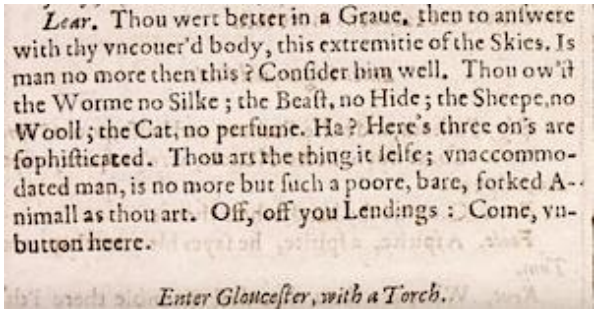
a Woman, 1604, line 430.) The words *"suum, nun"* is probably slang for ***Nunquam satis***, a euphemism for a lady's genitals: "I hope I neglect no opportunity to your *nunquam is satis*." J. Ford, *Loves Sacrifice* i.ii, line 83.

83. S.D. ***Thunder***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
84. **Dolphin**] a name for the horn, which is bottle-nosed like a dolphin.
84. **my boy:**] *my boy,* (Q1, 1897). *my boy,* (Q2, 1879). *Boy* (F, 1880).
84. S.D. ***Winds his horn***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The repetition of the sound effect links Lear's pivotal speech beginning with the words *"Thou wert better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies"* (F, 1881-2) with his earlier exhortation to *"shew the Heauens more iust"* (F, 1817). [467] [See Appendix G: "Edgar's Ox Horn."]
84. **Sessa**] *Sesey* (F, 1880). *caese* (Q1, 1879) *cease* (Q2, 1879). Compare III,vi,72, *sesa"* (F, 2031). An interjection said upon blowing a horn. Sly uses the term in *The Taming of the Shrew* after belching:

> Y'are a baggage, the Slies are no
> Rogues. Looke in the Chronicles, we came
> in with Richard Conqueror: therefore *Pau-*
> *cas pallabris*, let the world slide: *[Belches.]* Sessa. (F, 6-9)

In the Folio, *Sesa* is preceded by the words *"Do, de, de, de"* (F, 2031) and followed by the statement ,*"poore Tom thy horne is dry"* (F, 2032). In both quartos, "*poore Tom thy horne is dry"* (Q1, 2032, Q2, 2031) is preceded by the words *"loudla doodla* (Q1, 2031 / Q2, 2030). By simple logic, these are music cues for the actor to wind his horn. They are not non-lexical vocables, or nonsense syllables, such as those in *"De Do Do Do, De Da Da Da"* by The Police. The musical effect, as demonstrated by Corwen Broch in Video 23, is fiercely theatrical, using heavy religious metaphor and symbolism. [467] Shakespeare is using the horn call as a leitmotif, as in opera and movie music. [See note III,iv, 36. S.D. *"Edgar winds his horn"*.] At the conclusion of III,vi, Edgar alludes to *"Childe Rowland"* (F,1966), who is best remembered for blowing his famous Olifant at the Battle of Roncevaux Pass. Battle of Roncevaux Pass. [See note III,iv,163.,"*Child Rowland"*.] Also, in English folklore, Jack the Giant Killer awakes the giant Cormoran by blowing his horn. [See note III,iv,164, "*His"*.]

84. **Let him trot him**] i.e. the foul fiend. The "thunder roll" used in Elizabethan theatres is loosely analogous to the sound of trotting horses. [468] In Shakespeare's poem *Venus and Adonis*, he writes, *"The bearing earth with his hard hoofe he wounds, / Whose hollow wombe resounds like heauens thun-(der,"* (Q1, 267-8).
85. S.D. ***Thunder and Lightning***] Ed. *Storme still.* (F, 1880). Not in Q.


Lear. Thou wert better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies. Is man no more then this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the Worme no Silke; the Beast, no Hide; the Sheepe, no Wooll; the Cat, no perfume. Ha? Here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou art the thing it selfe; vnaccommodated man, is no more but such a poore, bare, forked Animall as thou art. Off, off you Lendings: Come, vnbutton heere.

Enter Gloucester, with a Torch.

Figure 158. Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (New South Wales).

85-6. **Thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies**] After loftily exhorting the audience to *"shake the superflux"* (F, 1816) to *"Poore naked wretches"* (F, 1809), the reader logically expects him to give his riding cloak to Edgar—especially after declaring, *"Thou wert better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies"* (F, 1881-82). Following these words, what the audience sees happening on stage is as much a matter of acting theory as it is textual criticism. Sanford Meisner famously stated that "the foundation of acting is the reality of *doing*." [552] A character's choices and behaviors—both what they do and what they avoid doing—are the primary tools authors use to construct meaning. What Lear *does* upon seeing Edgar freezing to death is use intellect and philosophy to dissociates emotionally from him. He speaks of him as an abstract philosophical concept: *"Is man no more then this?"* (F, 1882-3). The fact that he does not directly give his cloak to Edgar is so illogical, both within the context of the play and its performance for King James I on St. Stephen's Day, the playwright forces the audience to stop passively observing and actively investigate the deeper motives behind the behavior.

Right from the start, when Lear enters in grossly outmoded Tudor period fashions with a gargantuan codpiece—making him look foolish and totally out of touch with reality—the reader views the character as ludicrously phallocentric, and questions his sense of masculinity. [553] Driven by a fear of losing Cordelia in marriage, he subjects her to a rhetorical exam he knows she will fail in order to renege on the terms of her wedding dowry. [See note I,i, 40., *"Unburden'd crawl towards death."*] Like Lear's "love test", it is within the context of what is means to "be a man", that Shakespeare frames the character's actions in III,iv. Societal expectations of manhood during the Renaissance/Jacobean era were rigid, and often toxic as they are today. [554] Suppressing emotion is direct result of trying to prove or maintain their masculinity. [555] Shakespeare turns what might have been a totally predicable, banal dramatization of "caritas" or charity into a blistering critique of toxic masculinity. He develops an incongruous dialectic between tangible human experiences and metaphysical ideas. Lear's masculine coping strategies are as easy to see through as an adolescent boy's, which is how Burbage's characterization of Lear came to be given the epithet *"Kind."* [548]

We see Lear using the same defense mechanism in IV,v. Instead of comforting Gloucester, his subconscious forces him to put on a performance of masculine strength to protect himself from feeling he's soft-hearted or weak. He launches into a "rhetorical diatribe"—a long, angry, highly academic speech that sounds like gibberish to Gloucester. The king does not address

him personally until he sits down for a brief minute to take off his boots.

Figure 153. A vagrant is tied and whipped through the streets on his way to the gallows, c.1567.

Lear intellectualizes that his *"sophisticated"* clothes have no intrinsic belonging, and exposes his naked back to feel the lashing of the storm as poor Tom experiences it, *"And shew the Heauens more iust"* (F, 1817). Flogging was a common punishment for beggars and vagabonds. Foakes notes "A statute of 1598 orders that any vagabond apprehended in a 'Parish or Tything" shall 'be openly whipped until his or her body be bloudye, and shalbe forthwith sent from Parish to Parish . . . the next streighte way to the Parish where he was borne." (*The Arden Shakespeare King Lear*, p. 281.) [See Figure 153.] Believing himself the guiltiest man alive for having banished Cordelia (see note IV,vi, 47, *"wheel of fire"*), he thinks it only *"just"* that he and Tom feel the scourge of Heaven in equal measure. The gesture is the most extreme example of the character's many histrionic outbursts. His inspiring influence seems to be Diogenes of Sinope, the most theatrical philosopher of the ancient world, who is said to have lived like a beggar and walked around naked in public. [See "5 Sharp Quotes From Diogenes, the Funniest Ancient Greek Philosopher."]

"In the United Kingdom, judicial corporal punishment generally was abolished in 1948; however, it persisted in prisons as a punishment for prisoners committing serious assaults on prison staff (ordered by visiting justices) until it was abolished by section 65 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967. The last ever prison flogging happened in 1962. In the United States, judicial flogging was last used in 1952 in Delaware when a wife-beater got 20 lashes. In Delaware, the criminal code permitted floggings until 1972." (Wiki). According to award-winning journalist Erin Blakemore, "The widely circulated image of Whipped Peter "helped fuel the fires of abolition during the Civil War." [177] [See Figure 161.]

Figure 161. "Whipped Peter," An escaped enslaved man named Peter showing his scarred back at a medical examination in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1863.

We know from the stocking of Kent in II,ii that Shakespeare was familiar with English Poor Laws. [See note II,ii,122, *"Stocks."*] Henry VIII's Vagabonds Act 1530, authorized "the whipping of thieves, blasphemers, poachers, men and women guilty of minor offenses, and even the insane. Victims were tied to the end of a cart until the 1590s, when the whipping post was introduced." (Flogging, Britannica). The Poor Relief Act of 1601, provided "money to support the poor in the area and to provide work for them. However, those who refused work were whipped and sent to a house of correction. Beggars were whipped until their back bled, and were then sent back to their place of birth" (BBC).

Figure 162. *Flagellation of Christ* by Peter Paul Rubens, 1617.

86-7. **Is man no more than this?]** Lear's words *"Is man no more than this?"* evokes the *Ecce homo* ("Behold the man"), the Latin words used by Pontius Pilate in the Vulgate translation of the Gospel of John, when he presents a scourged Jesus Christ, to a crowd of Jews demanding his crucifixion (John 19:5). The scene is considered part of Jesus' passion, and widely depicted in art during the Renaissance. There can be no mistaking the figure of Tom of Bedlam, whose flesh is mortified with "pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary" (F, 2267), wearing the sleeveless cloak of a King, as metaphor and allegory. See note III,iv,92,S.D., *"Lear tears off pieces of his upper garments."*

Figure 156. *Ecce Homo*, Caravaggio, 1605, Palazzo Bianco, Genoa.

87. **worm**] Silkworm. [See note III,vi, 80., *"Persian."*]

88. **cat**] civet cat from whose secretions perfume is made. See IV,v,131.

89. **sophisticated**] not pure or genuine; artificial. The word is ironic because Lear's lurid *Tudor period* costume is anything but *"sophisticated"*.

90. **Unaccommodated**] naked. The action that follows evokes the story of Job in the Bible who, after losing his children and his property, rends his mantle, and says, "*Naked* came I out of my mother's womb, and *naked* shall I return thither" (Job 1:20). [See Figure 157.]

Figure 157. Job tearing his clothes upon the loss of his children and property. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." KJV, Job 1:121. Illustration from Bibel AT, deutsch, 1477.

92. **lendings**] "Something lent" (*OED* **2**).

92. **unbutton**] *Come, vnbutton here.* (F, 1888-89), *come on.* (Q1, 1888) *come on be true.* (Q2, 1887). Unsurprisingly, there is not a costume direction in the quartos and Folio telling us what Lear is wearing in this scene. [See Figure 159.] It can be inferred that he is outfitted for riding because he arrives at Gloucester's castle in Act II on horseback. [See note I,iv,7,S.D., *"Enter Lear."*] Based on what is said in the dialogue coupled with our knowledge of early Tudor fashions, it stands to reason that his original costume included a *"codpiece"* (F, 1692), leather *"boots"* (F, 2615), a doublet closed by *"buttons"* in the front (F, 1889), detachable doublet

sleeves as in Figure 157, collar and cuffs, and very wide breeches covering his hips and upper thighs. Wealthy gentlemen frequently wore luxurious riding cloaks made of silk imported from Persia. [470] These were highly prized garments used to display affluence, and add dramatic flair to an outfit. The cloak is referred to in the text: *"I do not like the fashion of your garments. You will say they are Persian; but let them bee chang'd"* (F, 2036-8). Lear is said to be *"unbonneted"* (Q, 1622.7), so the cloak would naturally be the first thing to go. It was standard for Tudor noblemen to wear short capes or cloaks, such as the one Sir Walter Raleigh is reported to have thrown down to protect the royal feet of Queen Elizabeth I from the mud. [See Figure 160, "Procession portrait of Elizabeth I of England."]

> "Some men's cloaks were flung back over the shoulder and draped over their backs. They had long ties to hold them on, which were fastened under the arm and tied across the body in front. . . . Cloaks were full and often fastened with broaches, clasps or gold chains" (Elizabethan Cloaks).

Figure 160. Procession portrait of Elizabeth I of England, c. 1601.

Undressing oneself in the 16th and 17th centuries was significantly more complex by today's standards due to the multiple layers, intricate fasteners (laces, hooks, and numerous buttons), and tailored fit of the garments. In order to expose his naked back to the storm, Lear would first need to remove his outer cloak. If his sleeves were detachable, and attached to his jerkin, [175] he would remove them next. Detachable sleeves were typically attached using "points" (laces or ties), not buttons. Troilus gives Cressida a sleeve as something to remember him by: *"Weare this Sleeue"* (F, 2458). [See Figure 157.] Sixteenth-century jerkins, worn over doublets, could be laced or buttoned up the front. Doublets commonly had buttons, often numerous and decorative. After removing his cloak, sleeves, jerkin and doublet, he would then take off his ruff and then his chemise. The complex layering of Lear's upper garments emphasizes the artifice of their construction. [See Figure 176.] Needless to say, he stops long before he gets to his chemise. Going shirtless is not the character's motivation. He stops when he sees Edgar don the cloak.

Figure 159. Tudor gentleman with a cape giving alms to a beggar.

92. S.D. ***Lear tears off pieces of his upper garments***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [Compare *The Renegado*, wln, 1653, *"Throws off his cloak and doublet."* (The Folger Shakespeare Library). *Edward IV,Pt.2,* II,iv, p. 134: *S.D.,"riding-cloak."*] Like *Don Quixote* (1605), *King Lear* (1606) is a complex narrative that present events and themes from multiple, differing viewpoints—a technique now termed "multiperspectivity", [556] which helps dismantle the idea of objective truth, and actively engage readers in critical thinking. In this pivotal scene, Lear's philos-

ophizing is being juxtaposed with Tom's *"true need"* to cover himself in the storm. Shakespeare is ridiculing the idea that man is nothing but a "featherless biped," as argued by Plato. [See Figure 163.] "When Plato gave Socrates's definition of man as 'featherless bipeds' and was much praised for the definition, Diogenes plucked a chicken and brought it into Plato's Academy, saying, 'Behold! I've brought you a man.' After this incident, 'with broad flat nails' was added to Plato's definition." [See "Diogenes versus Plato" by Phil Somers, 2015.]

Figure 163. "Diogenes", Engraved by Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio, After Parmigianino, ca. 1527. The Met.

The "unbuttoning of Lear's button" as Tolstoy contemptuously refers to the action in his "Critical Essay on Shakespeare [96], is considered one of the most iconic and emotionally devastating moments in all of English drama. The stage direction *"Tearing off his Coaths"* was first added to modern texts by Nicholas Rowe. The emendation was subsequently given by Lewis Theobald in his seminal collection of Shakespeare's plays (p. 166), and by William George Clark and William Aldis Wright in the revered *Cambridge Shakespeare*: *"Tearing off his clothes."* It is also given in *The Arden Shakespeare's King Lear*, edited by Kenneth Muir in 1952 (p. 115), and in the highly respected *Arden Shakespeare King Lear* (1997) edited by R.A. Foakes (p. 279)—considered one of the most authoritative, scholarly, and comprehensive editions available.

In all of these editions, the stage direction "plays the line"—meaning that it simply tracks the literal sense of the dialogue but not what it means. Editors do not consider that the verbal message and the behavioral or implied message are not the same. The meaning completely changes if Edgar picks up and wears the discarded riding cloak concomitantly. Unfortunately, Rowe's direction has hardened into dogma. It has been so repeatedly printed and performed it that it has become accepted as authoritative rather than an interpretive choice. It goes unquestioned, like the Emperor's New Clothes. J.S. Bratton makes no reference to Edgar's wearing the cape in *Plays in Performance: KING LEAR*. Marvin Rosenberg writes in *The Masks of King Lear* that only a "sentimental" Lear would explicitly give his cloak to a beggar. Stanley Wells's in *The Oxford Edition* (2000) writes, "Lear tries to strip down to nothing" (p. 191), but makes no mention of Edgar's response. Wells goes on to state that the word *"Persian"* (Q1, 2039) is "ironical since Edgar wears only a blanket" (p. 202), indicating to the reader that Edgar is not wearing Lear's riding cloak.

Figure 164. *Caritas,* The Seven Acts of Mercy, pen and ink drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1559. Caritas is a Latin word meaning love, (agapē).

We do not know how *King Lear* came to be commissioned or by whom; only that it was performed by the King's Men on December 26, 1606, "Before the Kings Maieſtie at the Whitehall vpon S. Stephans night in Chriſtmas Hollidayes." Saint Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He is mentioned in Acts 6 as one of the Greek-speaking Hellenistic Jews selected to administer the daily charitable distribution of food to the Greek-speaking widows." [172] In Christian tradition, St. Stephen is associated with service to the poor and marginalized. His feast day is traditionally observed through acts of mercy and service to those in need. [199] The famous 19th-century Christmas carol, set on the "Feast of Stephen," tells the story of the Good King Wenceslas braving a winter storm to deliver food and firewood to a poor peasant. It would be highly appropriate, if not essential, for the King's Men to dramatize the theme of caritas in a play commissioned to be performed on St. Stephen's Day,

Figure 165. Caravaggio, "The Seven Works of Mercy, ca. 1606.

"The phrase *Deus caritas est* from 1 John 4:8—or Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν (*Theos agapē estin*) in the original Greek is translated in the King James Version as: "God is love", and in the Douay-Rheimsbible as: "God is charity" (1 John 4:8). Thomas Aquinas does not simply equate charity with "love", which he holds to be a passion, not a virtue. The King James Version uses both the words *charity* and *love* to translate the idea of caritas/ἀγάπη (agapē): sometimes it uses one, then sometimes the other, for the same concept." [200] There are no existing accounts of the original performance of *King Lear* except for a eulogy for Richard Burbage in which his portrayal of Lear is characterized as "kind." To what else but the kindness *implicit* in Edgar's putting on the cloak can the epithet "*Kind* Lear" possibly refer?

> He's gone and with him what a world are dead.
> Which he review'd, to be revived so,
> No more young Hamlet, old Hieronimo
> *Kind Lear*, the Grieved Moor, and more beside,
> That lived in him have now for ever died.
>
> —A Funerall Elegye on the Death of the famous Actor Richard Burbage
> who died on Saturday in Lent the 13 of March 1619, ANONYMOUS POET

Figure 166. El Greco, Saint Martin and the Beggar. c. 1597-99, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

92. S.D. ***Edgar puts on the king's discarded riding-cloak***] Ed. In the quartos and Folio, there is, predictably, no *explicit* stage direction indicating that Edgar puts on Lear's discarded cape when he sees it lying unwanted on the ground. [See Figure 158.] The action may be inferred from the play's through-line or super-objective—terms Konstantin Stanislavsky used to help actors build a character in his book *An Actor Prepares* (1936). Acting theorists and teachers universally emphasize that performance choices must be firmly rooted in text analysis and the given circumstances of the script, rather than arbitrary impulses or whim. [557] At the end of Act II, Lear contrasts Regan's posh, low-cut dress, *"Which scarcely keepes thee warme"* (F, 1570), with the ragged clothes of beggars. He cannot answer what truly defines human needs past mere survival. His confusing thoughts, are broken by the sound of approaching thunder, leaving the audience to ponder the meaning of *"true need—"* (F, 1570). For Socrates, true need is self-knowledge. For Lear, it is agapē love, specifically, the love a mother gives her child.) [See note II,iv,267. S.D., *"A noise of distant thunder heard."*]

Figure 167. (Left) Youth wearing a chlamys, a short cloak worn by Greek men; (center) Tudor period rapier cape; (right) statue of an athlete wearing a chlamys, (Museum of Archaeology, Istanbul, Turkey).

After Lear "tears off pieces of his upper garments," there are several allusions in the spoken dialogue to Edgar's wearing an expensive cloak, notably, *"You sir, I entertaine for one of my hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of your garments. You will say they are* ***Persian****; but let them bee chang'd."* (F, 2035-28). Logically, by *"Persian"*, Lear is speaking literally about the costly silk from which his riding-cloak was made—imported from Persia. Patterned silk velvet was considered at the time to be the most expensive and prestigious of all woven textiles. Lear associates the cape Edgar has awkwardly draped himself with to stay warm with an *himation* or *chlamys*—elegant, noble garments worn in ancient Greece. [See note III,iv,152, *"noble philosopher."*] The king is projecting grand classical imagery onto an otherwise ordinary reality, much as Don Quixote transforms a barber's basin into the fabled Helmet of Mambrino.

Edgar's wearing of the king's riding cape sheds light on his invocation of *"Nero"* (F, 2004), a figure famously known for dressing in a chlamys. [See Figure 182.] The Roman historian Suetonius explicitly records in *The Twelve Caesars* that during his grand return from

performing in Greece, Nero paraded in a "Greek mantle spangled with gold stars over a purple robe". [662] When Edgar exclaims, *"The foule fiend bites my backe"* (Q1, 2014.1), he is logically referring to the king's unnatural riding cape. Lear's description of poor Tom as *"Thou **robéd** man of justice"* (Q, 2014.17) directly references the noble riding cloak Tom wears like an himation, the classic attire of Greek judges. [663] [See note III,vi,36., *"robed."*] The effect of the cape on Edgar is absurd and unnatural. Needless to say, it does not look *"gorgeous"* on a Bedlam beggar, *"the basest, and most poorest shape / That euer penury in contempt of man, / Brought neere to beast"* (F, 1258-60). The cloak is no more serviceable in a hurricane than haute couture by Viktor & Rolf. [See Figure 168.] Its impracticality is underscored by the farcically contrived entrance of Gloucester in a heavy woolen outer garment. See note III,iv,94.S.D.,*"muffled in a voluminous, hooded cloak."* [Compare *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, wln 0745, S.D. *"Eyre puts it on."* (The Folger Shakespeare Library)].

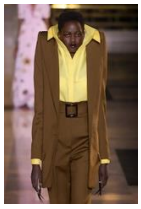


Figure 168. From the Spring/Summer 2022 collection of Victor and Rolf. Victor Boyko/Getty Images Entertainment/Getty Images.

The saying "clothes make the man" is a proverbial expression codified into law in Shakespeare's day. "[C]lothing was central for the formation and display of identity in Elizabethan England, and sumptuary laws attempted to make sure that the clothes matched the identity of the wearer. Elizabethan society was highly structured and hierarchical, with social and legal mechanisms in place to ensure everyone stayed in their proper place. Sumptuary laws were part of this apparatus; attempting to stop people dressing up as something they were not. Indeed, in a culture where identity is based on outward appearance, if a person wore clothes intended for someone outside of their social station or gender, that person's identity could change with their clothes." (Dr. Wil Tosh, "Elizabethan sumptuary laws: Fashion policing in Shakespeare's England", 2022.)

93. **be contented**] The Fool knows that Lear's implicit objective is to give his cloak to poor Tom. He is telling him to stop with that, and dispense with the theatrics. Kent alone cannot restrain the 39 year old Richard Burbage playing the king from tearing off his clothes. Lear is a physically powerful man, who takes pride in his strength and manliness. At the end of the play, he boasts that he slayed the man who hung Cordelia: *"I kill'd the Slaue that was a hanging thee"* (F, 3238). Lear only quiets down when he sees Edgar wearing the cloak.

Figure 169. Members of the Royal Australian Air Force diving naked into a river, 1943.

93-4. **swim in**] *viz.*, go naked, as one does when going out for a refreshing swim. The Fool is

making a joke. The line is not meant to be taken literally. [See Figure 169.]

94. S.D. ***Enter Gloucester***] after *here* (F, 1890). *Enter Gloster*, after *fire* (Q, 1894). My guess is that Gloucester makes a strong entrance from the center opening in the tiring house effectively upstaging Lear, Edgar, Kent and the Fool who are down below in the yard each deeply absorbed in their own separate objectives. The character's meticulously timed arrival is a device of metatheatre. It was contrived to shift the audience's perspective to create a layered narrative—"a storytelling structure where a primary story contains one or more secondary stories, subplots, or distinct levels of meaning that intersect to complicate the text. Instead of moving in a single, linear progression, the text operates on multiple structural, psychological, or allegorical planes." [471]

94. ***with a torch***] F, 1890. Not in Q. "**Torch** – "The most cited property light that be convention can indicate night or darkness on a stage with no variable lighting" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, p. 233).

Figure 170. The Misanthrope, Breugel, 1568.

94. S.D. ***muffled in a voluminous, hooded cloak***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Gloucester looks like a devil *"in black robes like a pronontary."* (Cf. Barnabe Barnes, *The Devil's Charter*, Prologue.) His warm outer garment is the source of the Fool's joke: *"all the rest on's body cold."* (F, 1893-94). [See Figure 170.] Raincoats did not exist in Shakespeare's time. "Men, specifically, had a 'surtout' or long outer overcoat which could be worn to protect against the rain, and clothing itself was made from material like Flax and Wool which naturally repel water." (CCash, "Did Shakespeare Have an Umbrella?")

98. **Flibbertigibbet**] (F, 1895), *Fliberdegibek* (Q1, 1895), *Sirberdegibit* (Q2, 1895). A name for a fiend given in Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*. Gloucester does indeed look like a devil in his voluminous, hooded cloak, and unnatural-looking bow spectacles. "Because [spectacles] were seen as being unusual and rare, they were seen as having magical powers," says Handley. People who wore glasses "were in league with the devil, immoral." (Neil Handley, museum curator at The College of Optometrists.)

98. **curfew**] "During medieval and Tudor times, people used a curfew at night to help prevent fires in the home. As can be seen at the Merchant's House, one of the sites at the John Moore Museum, the fire was often set directly on the floor in the centre of the main living area." (Angela Dunsby, "The History of the Curfew.") See Curfew bell.

99. **web and the pin**] "Catarátta..called a *Cataract* or a pin and web." (*Queen Anna's New World of Words*, J. Florio, 1611.) Gloucester, as noted, is extremely far-sighted, and wears bow spectacles at all times. [See Figure 42.] "Quite often cataract (partial or full dimness of the crystalline lens) is combined with age-related farsightedness (presbiopia). Both of these disorders often develop after the age of 40-45 even in people who has had good vision throughout their life. These two disorders differ in their development mechanism. Even when the cataract has been successfully treated, there still remains presbyopia which means wearing

glasses to have vision at close distances" (Excimer Ophthalmologic Clinic).

100. **squinies the eye**] Uncorrected far-sightedness may cause you to squint or strain your eyes to maintain focus.

100. **mildews**] "To affect or taint with mildew" (*OED*, 1.a), much as a cataract "mildews" the eye. Mildew is characterized by a superficial, typically white or gray powdery growth on organic matter

100-1. **white wheat**] *OED*, "any variety of wheat with light-coloured grains." J. Fitzherbert Bk. *Husbandry* f. xviii^{v} "White whete is lyke polarde whete..but it hath anis, and..wyll make white bredde. And in Essexe they call flaxen whete white whete." (?1523). Cordelia speaks of *"sustaining Corne"* (F, 2356).

102. **Swithold**] Furness quoting Dyce gives Swithold, a contraction of Saint Withold (supposed by Tyrwhitt to mean St. Vitalis), who, as a youth, was licentious and immoral. He was known as a patron against venereal disease. The rhyme is suggested by the Fool's reference to Gloucester's being an *"old Letcher"* (F, 1893). See Figure 171, "Decapitated Head of St. Vitalis, Patron Saint of Genital Disease, To Be Sold At Auction." (Could it be the lost skull of William Shakespeare instead?)

Figure 171. Skull of St. Vitalis of Assisi in Reliquary box.

102. **'old**] wold, open country

103. **Nightmare**] Gloucester looks both sinister and ridiculous in his hooded over coat and bow spectacles.

103. **nine-fold**] Cf. *Macbeth*, (F, 130-134):

> The weird sisters, hand in hand,
> Posters of the sea and land,
> Thus do go about, about:
> Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
> And thrice again, to make up nine.

104. **alight**] dismount, descend. Gloucester is hypothetically above them on the platform.

105. **plight**] Pledge

106. **aroint**] begone. Cf. *Macbeth*, I,iii, *"Aroynt thee, Witch"*(F, 104).

108. S.D. ***Pointing to Gloucester***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

109. **Who's there**] Compare note IV,i,24, *"Who's there."*

110. **What are you there**] Gloucester is made aware of the presence of Lear, Kent, Edgar and the Fool after being accosted from below.

112. **water**] i.e. water newt

113. **sallets**] "raw herbs dressed for food with salt and other ingredients" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon*, Vol II, p. 1000 : *"there was no Sallets in the lines, to make the matter sauouty"* (*Hamlet*, II,ii., F, 1485-6)

114. **ditch-dog**] dead dog thrown in a ditch

115-16. **tithing to tithing**] Beggars and itinerant poor frequently traveled to prosperous agricultural or market towns to take advantage of structured almsgiving, which was heavily funded by church tithes, and to beg during lucrative events like funerals or religious holidays hoping to tap into these organized relief distribution [477] [See note II,ii, 8., *"Tisbury Pinfold."*] English parishes historically collected funds—first voluntarily, and later through compulsory local taxes under the—to support the "impotent poor"—a historical classification used in the Elizabethan Poor Laws to describe individuals who were genuinely unable to work or support themselves due to physical or mental limitations. R.A. Foakes notes "A statute of 1598 orders that any vagabond apprehended in a 'Parish or Tything" shall 'be openly whipped until his or her body be bloudye, and shalbe forthwith sent from Parish to Parish . . . the next streighte way to the Parish where he was borne." (The Arden Shakespeare King Lear, p. 281.)

117. **three suits**] Compare II,ii,14,*"three-suited"*

119. **deer**] In Middle English, the word "deer" (spelled der or deor) was used generically for all wild animals, regardless of their size. While it often referred to four-legged beasts, its application was broad enough to include small creatures that we would not consider "deer" today including ants, mice, rats, and even fish. [180]

120. S.D. ***Thunder***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Julius Caesar*, I,iii, 540, *"Thunder still."* Edgar reacts to the sound effect in the next line.

121. **Beware my follower**] i.e. the "storm."

121. **Smulkin, Modo, Mahu**] names of devils in Harsnett's *Declaration*. "Prince Modu" is named by Richard Mainy on the same page that references "the Mother".

126. **gets**] begets. Something about Tom unsettles Gloucester. He tells Curan in IV,i: *"I'th'last nights storme, I such a fellow saw;/ Which made me thinke a Man,a Worme. My Sonne/ Came then into my minde, and yet my minde/ Was then scarse Friends with him. I haue heard more since"* (F, 2216-20.) Shakespeare is building suspense leading to the character's anagnorisis—the pivotal moment in the Gloucester subplot when the blinded earl finally discovers Edgar's identity. He gets agonizingly close to the truth, before finally recognizing it at the end of IV,v, *"Come Father,Ile bestow you with a Friend"* (F, 2742). [See note IV,v,7.,*"Methinks thy voice is altered."*]

127. **Tom's a-cold**] This is the first time Edgar uses the phrase "Tom's a-cold", which is said to Gloucester. It is not used to compel charitable action from Lear.

128-9. **suffer/ T' obey**] Tolerate obeying

135. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

Figure 172. Greek or Roman bronze statuette of a draped man, 1st century BCE–1st century CE, The Met.

137. **Theban**] Edgar is wearing Lear's discarded cape like a *chlamys*, a short oblong mantle worn by young men of ancient Greece. [See Figure 172.] Lear's encounter with poor Tom evokes the meeting of Alexander the Great with Diogenes of Sinope—the most histrionic philosopher in the

ancient world. "A student of ancient philosopher and scientist Aristotle, Alexander had a great respect for wise men like Diogenes, so he decided to meet the philosopher for himself. He traveled to Corinth, where Diogenes was living at the time. Based on the accounts of Plutarch, the two men exchanged only a few words. Alexander came upon Diogenes as the philosopher was basking in the morning sunlight. Thrilled to meet the famous thinker, Alexander asked if there was any favor he might do for him. To that, Diogenes replied: "Move a little to the right; you are blocking my sun." (Anna Wichmann, "When Alexander the Great Met Diogenes the Cynic.") [See Figure 173.]

Figure 173. *Alexander the Great meeting Diogenes,* Anonymous, 1580-1640. Metropolitan Museum

138. **your study**] Socrates concentrated on ethics, epistemology, and Socratic questioning to examine virtue and knowledge. Plato delved into metaphysics, ideal forms, politics, and the soul, founding the Academy for systematic study. Aristotle, his student, systematized logic, biology, physics, ethics, and politics across numerous treatises. [181] [See note V,i,16,*"mystery of things."*]

139. **prevent**] forestall

139. **vermin**] Animals such as foxes and polecats which preyed on preserved game, crops etc. See definition and an example from 1603 in the OED, 1.a, "The rest..are rather Vermyne than beastes of game; such is the wild Catte, the Brocke and such like. G. Owen, Description Penbrokshire (1892) 268. [See note III,vi,23.S.D., *"To the pelt."*]

140. S.D. ***They talk aside***] Not in Q, F.

141. **Importune**] implore, beg

147. **outlaw'd**] from my blood: disinherited; condemned as an outlaw

150. S.D. ***Storm*]** Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *"Storme and Tempest"* (F, 1584). Gloucester refers to the sound effect in the next line, *"What a night's this!"* (F, 1950)

151. ***Kent***] Ed. As part of Gloucester's speech (F,1951) and (Q,1951).

151. S.D. ***He tries to pull Lear away from Edgar***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

151. S.D. ***To Kent***] Ed. Not in Q, F,

151. **Cry you mercy**] How dare you! Lear is using the phrase to express his anger at Kent's *forcible* attempt to pull him away from poor Tom. Compare note III,vi,56, *"why hast thou let her 'scape?"* The incident is recalled by Edgar when he speaks of Kent's shunning *"my abhord society"* (Q, 3168.5-3168.6). Gloucester is lost in remembrance of his banished son, and does nothing to incite Lear's indignation. He is also on the platform and the others are below him in the yard.

152. **Noble philosopher**] Both the himation and the chlamys were perceived as highly significant garments that conveyed elegance, nobility, and distinct social roles for men in ancient Greece. [662]

Lear mistakes Edgar for a Greek philosopher such as Diogenes.

156. **keep still**] continue to stay

157. **soothe him**] indulge.

158. **Take him you on**] bring him along.

160. **Athenian**] philosopher. See line 138 above, *"Theban."*

162. **Child Rowland**] Edgar's horn evokes the sounding of Olifant at the Battle of Roncevaux Pass. [See Figure 174.] Just as Roland waits for the right moment to blow his horn in the legend, Edgar is waiting for the right time to prove his innocence. Also, in Cornish folklore, Jack blows a loud blast on a horn causing the giant Cormoran to wake and run out of his cave. [See Figure 175.] Edgar's words forewarn the audience of the approaching tragedy. The ominous tone is similar to his words at the end of III,vi: *"Lurk, lurk."* (Q, 2056.19).

Figure 174. "The Song of Roland." Charlemagne hears Roland blow his Oliphant. Image from Stricker's Karl der Grosse, manuscript of Bonn, 1450.

164. **His**] i.e. the Giant's. "'Jack the Giant Killer' is a Cornish fairy tale and legend about a young adult who slays a number of bad giants during King Arthur's reign. The tale is characterized by violence, gore and blood-letting." (Wiki) According to Joseph Jacobs' account, Jack blows a horn to awaken the giant Cormoran.

> So [Jack] got a horn, shovel, and pickaxe, and went over to the Mount in the beginning of a dark winter's evening, when he fell to work, and before morning had dug a pit twenty-two feet deep, and nearly as broad, covering it over with long sticks and straw. Then he strewed a little mould over it, so that it appeared like plain ground. Jack then placed himself on the opposite side of the pit, farthest from the giant's lodging, and, just at the break of day, he put the horn to his mouth and blew, Tantivy, Tantivy. This noise roused the giant, who rushed from his cave crying: "You incorrigible villain, are you come here to disturb my rest? (*The Allies' Fairy Book*, "Jack the Giant-killer" by Joseph Jacobs)

Figure 175. Chapbook for Jack the Giant Killer.

163. **word**] motto

163. **Still**] always

163. **Fie foh, and fum**] According to Wikipedia, the words appear "in the pamphlet *Haue with You to Saffron-Walden* (published in 1596) written by Thomas Nashe (who mentions that the rhyme was already old and its origins obscure)

> Fy, Fa and fum,
> I smell the blood of an Englishman.

164. S.D. ***Thunder***] Ed. Not in F, Q. "[L]inked to the supernatural, as in *Macbeth* where 'Thunder' (F, 97) accompanies both the entrance of the witches and appearance of the apparitions" (F, 1527). See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **thunder,** p. 230

164. S.D. ***Exeunt***] (F, 1968). Not in Q.

ACT III. SCENE V] *Scena Quinta* (F, 1969). Scene 12 in Q.

S.D. ***Gloucester's Castle***] Capell, *subst*. Not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Lords Rooms**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Chamber (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Enter Cornwall and Edmund***] (F, 1970). *Enter Cornewall and Bastard.* (Q, 1970).
S.D. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In *Lear*, the small space allotted to players in the Lords Rooms—what Thomas Dekkker describes as *"the Stages Suburbs"*—is used to quality secrecy and deception. Compare III,iii and IV,v.
5-6. **provoking merit . . . himself**] Edgar's bad nature together with own cunning.
8. **approves**] proves
9. **intelligent party**] One giving information to France
9-10. S.D. ***Gives letter to Cornwall***] Not in Q, F.
18. S.D. ***Aside***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.
23. S.D. ***Exeunt***] (F, 1995). Exit (Q, 1996).
23. S.D. ***Distant thunder***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [Compare note II,iv,279,S.D., *"A noise of distant thunder heard."*] This is the last of the storm effects. They signal the changing of the scene.

ACT III, SCENE VI. *Scena Sexta* (F, 1996). Scene 13 in Quarto.

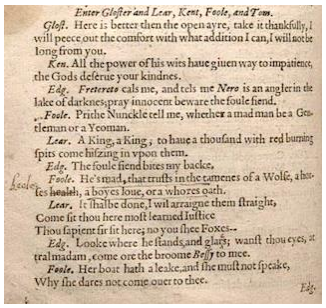

Enter Glofter and Lear, Kent, Foole, and Tom.
Glof. Here is better then the open ayre, take it thankfully, I will peece out the comfort with what addition I can, I will not be long from you.
Kent. All the power of his wits haue giuen way to impatience, the Gods reſtore your kindnes.
Edg. Frateretto cals me, and tels me *Nero* is an angler in the lake of darkneſs, pray innocent beware the foule fiend.
Foole. Prithe Nunckle tell me, whether a mad man be a Gentleman or a Yeoman.
Lear. A King, a King, to haue a thouſand with red burning ſpits come hiſſing in vpon them.
Edg. The foule fiend bites my backe.
Foole. He's mad, that truſts in the gamenes of a Wolfe, a horſes health, a boyes loue, or a whores oath.
Lear. It ſhalbe done, I will arraigne them ſtraight,
Come ſit thou here moſt learned Iuſtice
Thou ſapient ſir ſit here, no you ſhee Foxes--
Edg. Looke where he ſtands and glares, wanſt thou eyes, at tral madam, come ore the broome *Beſſy* to mee.
Foole. Her boat hath a leake, and ſhe muſt not ſpeake,
Why ſhe dares not come ouer to thee.
Edg.

Figure 176. Facsimile of Quarto 1 (1608). There are no stage directions describing the action.

S.D. ***A Skinning House***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Unsurprisingly, there are no stage directions in the quartos describing the action in this scene, including its location (Q, 2014.1-30). [Figure 176.] The practice of adding scene locations began in 1709 with Nicholas Rowe, considered the first editor of the works of Shakespeare. Rowe aimed to adapt Shakespeare's plays to Restoration theatre conventions, which were shaped by the proscenium arch—an architectural feature that became standard in English theatres after 1660, [482] and later developed into the box set of the nineteenth century, central to theatre naturalism / realism, and the illusion of an invisible "fourth wall." [483] Because the original Globe Theatre was an open-air space with a thrust stage, playwrights relied heavily on "verbal scenery" rather than scenography or scene design. Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences understood where a scene was taking place from verbal cues and minimal props rather than from scenography. Generally, modern readers can

easily identify where the action is taking place in Shakespeare from the dialogue alone. In III,vi (scene 13 in quartos) of *Lear*, however, this is not possible because the action depends on the readers' knowledge of skinning houses, and Tudor-era "vermin laws". [182] [183] [See Appendix J: A Skinning House.]

S.D. **Platform with a Discovery**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Study (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Kent, and Gloucester***] (F, 1997). *Enter Gloster and Lear, Kent, Foole, and Tom* (Q, 1998).

Figure 176a. Detail of mohel wearing contemporary 15th-century riveted spectacles in *Circumcision of Christ* (1466) by Friedrich Herlin, Rothenburg ob der Tauber.

5. S.D. ***Enter Lear, Fool and Edgar***] (F, 2003). Not in Q.

5. S.D. ***wearing Lear's cloak]*** Ed. Not in Q, F.

6. S.D. ***Belches***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Edgar belches loudly into the face of his father before the latter makes his exit. The audience has no idea why until later in the scene when he holds in a belch: *"Croke not blacke Angell, I haue no foode for thee"* (Q, 2014.13). [See note III,vi, 31, *"Croak not."*] In *Lear*, Shakespeare uses backwards logic and reverse chronology as a narrative device. Audiences/readers must actively piece together causality and motive, gaining a sense of detective-like participation in constructing meaning. [See note IV,v, 90. S.D. *Lear smells his own hand*. Compare also note IV,v,175. *"I know thee well enough."*] As Aristotle observes, "Most smart sayings are derived from metaphor, and also from misleading the hearer beforehand. For it becomes more evident to him that he has learnt something, when the conclusion turns out contrary to his expectation, and the mind seems to say, 'How true it is! but I missed it'" (*Rhetoric*, Chapter 11, 6). Edgar's belch is completely unexpected, and establishes the broad comic tone of the scene. To this day, belching and farting remain the *ne plus ultra of farce*. [See Video 26.]

Video 26. "The Campfire" from *Blazing Saddles* (1974)

The action in III,vi is disjointed and frenetic like an episode of Pee-wee's Playhouse. "Everything is face-paced and really doesn't fit together, and everything in the playhouse looks like something that would happen to your living room during a bad trip." (Mark Myers, Christmas At Pee-Wee's Playhouse). The scene gives the impression of being heavily improvised, as opposed to being scripted. The dialogue and actions appear spontaneous, messy, and "natural", rather than carefully memorized and recited. The actors seem to be reacting to each other in real-time, resulting in a raw, conversational authenticity that captures how people really talk. The dialectic between Lear's elevated, poetic verse and the Fool's

colloquial prose is embedded in the play's plot mechanics and structural layering, echoing the famous interplay between Don Quixote and Sancho. [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.]

Abrupt tonal shifts are a signature hallmark of the play. Instead of hiding the absurdity behind human suffering, Shakespeare creates a jarring clash between the laughter and genuine pity for Lear to prevent the audience from blindly empathizing with him. He combines the physical, low-brow, Plautine humor of *commedia dell'arte* with "existential pathos" [489], as when Lear collapses mentally after Kent allows "Regan" to escape later in III,iv. He imagines himself being chased down like the hunter Actaeon, who is transformed into a stag and killed by his own hounds. Edgar calls them of by winding his horn. [See note III,vi,62,*"The little dogs."*]

6. **Frateretto**] A devil mentioned in Harsnett.

Figure 182. Emperor Nero on Horseback, Antonio Tempesta, 1596. Metropolitan Museum of Art.

6. **Nero**] Gluttonous emperor of Rome closely identified with wearing a *chlamys,* and known for being a cross-dresser. He is reported to have married at least two males, Pythagoras, whom he allegedly wed in a public ceremony in which the emperor took the role of bride, and Sporus, a young slave boy whom he had castrated, and married [See Figure 182.] Dressed in Lear's luxurious *"Persian"* (F, 2037) silk cloak, poor Tom is reminded of Nero, whose eternity in hell is spent singing and looking for something to eat.

> Nero himself eventually developed great interest in clothes. It was claimed that he never wore the same garment twice. Devoted to music and likening himself to Apollo, it was natural that he should adopt certain forms of Greek dress. When he returned to Rome from his triumphal concert tour of Greece he entered the capital wearing a purple tunic and a **chlamys** decorated with gold stars. It was Nero who forbade the public use of amethyst-colored dyes or Tyrian purple dyes. Once while performing on stage he noticed a female member of the audience dressed in purple. Fuming with rage he ordered his stewards to drag her out and strip her. (The Imperial Wardrobe of Ancient Rome, Kenneth D. Matthews, PennMuseum, Volume 12. Issue 3, 1970.)

Furness quotes Upton (Crit. Obs. p. 235, ed. ii): "Nero was a fiddler in hell [or rather played on a hurdy-gurdy…] as Rabelais tells us, ii,xxx. And Trajan was an angler [for frogs]. . . But players and editors, not willing that so good a prince as Trajan should have such a vile employment, substituted Nero in his room, without any sense or allusion at all." p. 205

7. S.D. ***Gloucester readjusts his spectacles to look at Edgar***] Ed. Gloucester is farsighted or hyperopic, like a *"Mouse"* (F, 2536). His condition makes it difficult to read and see facial expressions. As in I,ii,63,S.D., where he readjusts his bow spectacles to scrutinize the hand-writing of Edmund's letter, he readjusts them here to get a better look at Edgar's face, prompting the Fool to ask Lear *"whether a madman be a Gentleman, or a Yeoman*" (F, 2007-

8). [See note I,ii,63. S.D.,"*Readjusting his spectacles.*"] Something about poor Tom reminds Gloucester of Edgar but until the end of IV,v, he can't see what. Shakespeare is building suspense leading to the character's anagnorisis.

8. **innocent**] He means *innocent* in the sense of *unsuspecting* or naive; a natural fool. The line is spoken directly to Gloucester. [See note IV,v,133, S.D., "*Gives him a daisy*".] In his description of John of the Hospitall in *Foole Upon Foole*, Armin explicitly calls him "*innocent*". [189]

8. S.D. ***Exit Gloucester***] Ed. *Exit.* after *you* (F, 2000). Not in Q.

10. **gentleman**] "Originally, gentleman was the lowest rank of the landed gentry of England, ranking below an esquire and above a yeoman" (Wiki).

10. **yeoman**] A yeoman was a respectable but non-gentry man, while a gentleman was higher status; so the phrase "he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son" implies that the father is of humbler rank, yet his son has become—or is being treated as—socially superior. [See note II,ii,42., *"goodman."*]

Figure 182a. Ecce Homo, Jusepe De Ribera, c. 1620, Messina Museo Regionale.

12. **to his son**] as a son. A punning metatheatrical reference to Edgar's disguised state and social reversal. Shakespeare repeatedly makes social identity look like a performed part rather than a fixed essence, and the Fool's language draws attention to that instability by making "gentleman" and "yeoman" sound like interchangeable costume labels. In that sense, the line does not merely describe Edgar's disguise; it participates in the play's broader habit of exposing rank as something theatrically legible and reversible. The Fool is making a joke about social status and family advancement.

14. S.D. ***Lear draws open the curtains, and discovers***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear draws open the *"curtains"* (F, 2041-42) and makes a surprise "discovery," as defined in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama*, 1580-1642, **discover**, pp. 69-70. [See Appendix J: A Skinning House.]

14. S.D. ***a freshly hung fox and scattered animal skins***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See note III,vi,34, *"cushions"* (Q2, 2014.15)].

Figure 183. In scene 6, Don Quixote, convinced that the puppets are real, destroys the puppet theatre. Illustration by Gustave Doré from Don Quixote, Book 2, chapter 26.

15. S.D. ***Drawing his sword***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear cuts the dead fox down with his sword and violently destroys the set. The metatheatrical form and style of the scene is like Master Peter's Puppet Show ("El Retablo de Maese Pedro") in Part II, Chapter 26 of *Don Quixote*—a comedic

disaster where Don Quixote mistakes a puppet play for real life and then slashes the puppets to pieces with his sword: *"¡Alto, malnacida canalla, no les sigáis ni persigáis, si no conmigo sois en batalla!"* ("Stop, low-born rabble, do not follow or pursue them, or you will fight me!"). [See Figure 183.] III,vi in *Lear* uses a "play-within-a-play" structure where the boundaries between reality, performance, and the audience completely collapse. Lear's "madness" transforms ordinary, mundane objects into extraordinary symbols of a personal narrative. Instead of just misinterpreting a fact, his mind uses imagination to rewrite reality so it aligns with his internal beliefs, as when Don Quixote famously mistakes a field of towering windmills for marauding giants.

15-6. **To have a thousand, with red burning spits/ Come hizzing in upon 'em!**] Compare "fire him out of his hold, as men smoke a Foxe out of his burrow" (Samuel Harsnett in *A Declaration of egregious popish impostures*, p. 97). Foxes are a central metaphor, reappearing in the final scene as Lear and Cordelia are taken to prison. [See note V,i,22-3, *"He that parts vs, shall bring a Brand from Heauen,/ And fire vs hence, like Foxes"* (F, 2964-65)]. After assigning the Fool and Edgar judges, Lear addresses the defendants: *"now you shee Foxes------"* (Q2, 2014.5). [See note III,vi,22., *"Now, you she foxes."*]

17-60. Lines 2014.1-30 in the Quarto are cut in the First Folio.

17. **The foul fiend bites my back**] In reference to the riding cloak he is now wearing. The words are probably accompanied by some funny business with the cape.

18. S.D. ***Aside***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

18. **He's mad that trusts…whore's oath**] The line is triggered by the "discovery." He is saying that anybody who thinks that bringing the mad king to a skinning house will bring rest to his mind is mad himself. The props Lear discovers behind the curtains instantly change the context of the empty stage in the audience's mind. The line is proverbial in form and in its general warning about misplaced trust. The Fool is prompting the audience to reflect on performative facades versus underlying truths. Ancient Greek playwrights like Aristophanes and Euripides explicitly invited audiences to reflect on the tension between performative appearances and deeper realities. [190] [191]

19. **horse's health**] the word of a horse trader about the animal's health and condition.

20. **arraign**] Matt Simon writes in *Fantastically Wrong: Europe's Insane History of Putting Animals on Trial and Executing Them,* "This is Europe's shameful and largely forgotten history of putting animal 'criminals' on trial and either executing them or, for plagues of insects, ordering them to leave town not only by a certain day, but by an exact time. Such irrational barbarism is hard to fathom, but as early as 824 all the way up to the middle of the 18th century, animals were held to the same moral standards as humans, suffering the same capital punishments and even rotting in the same jails."

Figure 185. "The trial of the dog for biting the noble lord."

> ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1379, two herds of pigs at a French monastery grew agitated and killed a man named Perrinot Muet. As was custom at the time, the pigs—the actual murderers and those that had simply looked on—were tried for their horrible crime, and sentenced to death. You see, with their "cries and aggressive actions," the onlookers "showed that they approved of the assault," and mustn't be allowed to escape justice. (Ibid)

In her essay *When Societies Put Animals on Trial*, Sonya Vatomsky writes that "Domestic animals like pigs, foxes, wolves, goats, asses, bulls, cows, dogs, horses, and sheep fell under the jurisdiction of civil and criminal courts and would have been summarily executed by hanging or burning after a guilty verdict." [See Figure 185.]

20. **Straight**] immediately. Compare *Merchant of Venice*, I,ii, "*he fals straight a capring"* (F, 252-3). It jokes on the *"warped looks"* (Q, 2014.27) of the carcass. One of the meanings of *strait* is "not crooked" (*OED*, 2.a) as in Henry V,v,ii, *"a Ryme is but a Ballad; a good Legge will fall, a strait Backe will stoope, a blacke Beard will turne white…"* F, 3147-3154)
21. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Capell. Not in Q.
21. **Sit thou here**] Lear brings a bench forward for Edgar and the Fool to sit on. He does not extend the courtesy to Kent, who seats himself on a joint-stool of his own finding.
21. **justicer**] Theobald. *Iustice* (Q, 2014.5); not in F. Compare *"False Iusticer"* (Q, 2014.30)
22. S.D. ***To the Fool***] Capell. Not in Q.

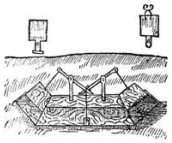


Figure 186. From L. M[ascall] Sundrie Engrines and Trappes to take polecats, and all Kinds of vermin 1550.

22. **Now, you she foxes**] now you shee Foxes --------- (Q2, 2014.6). Across Western, Persian, and East Asian traditions, the John Moore Museum notes that foxes symbolize trickery and craftiness. [644] Compare *Twelfth Night*, I,v, "*Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no Fox"* (F, 371-2) According to Schmidt, *"now"* is being used to introduce an address: *"Now, daughter Siluia, you are hard beset"* (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, F, 698), *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, Vol II, p.783.) When Gloucester is brought into the next scene for interrogation, Regan calls him an *"Ingratefull Fox"* (F, 2090). The recurrence of the epithet creates a verbal linkage between the sequential scenes, asking spectators to consider which of the trials is madder.
23. S.D. ***To a pelt***] Ed. Not in Q. Logically, the pelt of a polecat. [See Figure 189.] In Queen Elizabeth's Act of 1566 "for the Preservation of Grain," a bounty was put on wild animals listed as "vermin":

> For the Heads of everie Foxe or Gray [badger]
> twelve pence.
> And for the head of every Fitchers [Polecat],
> Polcatte, Wesell, Stote, Fayre Bade [probably
> marten cat] or Wylde Catte, one penny.
>
> Douglas Anderson, "Noyfull Fowles and Vermyn: Parish Payments for Killing Wildlife in Hampshire 1533-1863", p. 120

The remains of polecats are mentioned among the furnishings of Hastings' great hall. [See

Appendix J: A Skinning House.] Shaftesbury's friend and collaborator, John Locke, famously uses polecats and foxes as a metaphor for vermin in his *Second Treatise on Government (Section 93):* "This is to think, that men are so foolish, that they take care to avoid what mischiefs may be done them by *pole-cats*, or *foxes*; but are content, nay, think it safety, to be devoured by lions." [See note III,iv,139. *"vermin."*] In the British Isles, the polecat became synonymous with promiscuity in early English literature; hence the Fool's naming her *"Bessy,"* a term for a vagrant whore. [See Figure 270.]

23. **he**] i.e. Lear

Figure 187. "Skinning the eyes can be tricky," *Outdoor Life*.

24. **Want'st thou eyes at trial madam**] Addressed to "Bessy." [See Figure 187.] "Skinning the eyes can be tricky. It is VERY easy to cut and screw up the eyes. The skin binds to the skull and you have to know where to cut. When skinning it, cut horizontally behind the eyeball where my knife is pointing until the membrane thins and you can see the eye. Practicing this on furbearers can hone your skills for doing a perfect job on trophy big game animals when it really counts!" (Tyler Freel, "How To Skin A Fox" by *OutdoorLife*). The meaning of this scene qualifies the next in which Gloucester is interrogated and blinded for treason. Ironically, Regan alludes to the old earl as an *"Ingratefull Fox"* (F, 2020) when he is first brought in for questioning.

25. **Fool**.] Ed. *Edg*. (Q, 2014.8). The Fool is asking Edgar to give him the pelt so that he can examine her.

25. S.D. ***Sings***] Ed. Not in Q.

25. **Come over the bourn, Bessy, to me**] John Payne Collier writes in his edition of 1858 (p. 685), "This, and what follows from the Fool, are certainly parts of an old song, which was imitated by W. Birch, in his "Dialogue with Elizabeth and England," (printed by W. Pickering without date,) which thus commences;

> Come over the bourn, Bessy, come over the bourn, Bessy,
> Sweet Bessy, cover over to me;
> And I shall thee take,
> And my dear lady make
> Before all that ever I see."

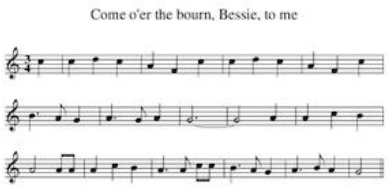


Figure 188. Found in "Come O'er the Bourn Bessie to Me" from the Traditional Tune Archive abc collection. Click to play.

25. **bourn**] Stream, brook.

25. **Bessy]** is the name for a vagrant whore. See "the *cat* is grey." [See Figure 270.]

26-28. **Her boat hath a leak . . . thee**] The Fool is alluding to the eviscerated state of *"Bessy."*

She does indeed have a *"leak."*

Figure 189. Pelt of a polecat. "Her boat hath a leak."

26. S.D. ***Aside***] Ed, Not in Q, F. The Fool assures the frightened "maids" in the audience that they need not be scared of the polecat. There is no chance it will jump off the stage and bite them. Could this vulgar, low-brow scene in *Lear* be Jonson's reference to "quaking custards with fierce teeth affrighted" in the Prologue to *Volpone; or The Fox* (published in 1607)? See note I,iv,146.S.D., "*Giving him an egg."*]

29-30. **voice of a nightingale**] referring to the singing of the Fool. Compare *Twelfth Night*, II,iii, *"A mellifluous voyce, as I am true knight"* (F, 753).

30. **Hobberdidance**] "Hobberdidaunce", Harsnett, from "The examination of Sara Williams" in *A declaration of egregious popish impostures*, p. 180. Hoppedance. (Q, 2014.12). Not in F. Compare Hobbididence (Q, 2248.2). Hobberdidance sounds more like utter nonsense than Hoppedance. Compare Flibbertigibbet (F, 1895). Bridget Begg discusses the use of nursery rhymes, folklore and nonsense in her interesting dissertation "Medieval Nonsense Verse: Contributions to the Literary Genre."

31. **white**] Unsmoked

31. **Croak not**] Edgar belches at the top of the scene but holds it in here. [See note III,vi,6.S.D., *"*Belches.*"***]*** Belching usually comes from swallowing air while eating, but sometimes hunger itself can trigger gas buildup leading to acid reflux. Zanni characters in *Commedia dell'arte* such as Arlecchino, Brighella, and Pulcinella, were known for a range of earthy bodily functions, including belching, farting, and loud snoring. [See note IV,v,40.S.D., "*blows a raspberry."*]

31. **angler]** Ed. *Angell* (Q, 2014.13). Nero is the one who's hungry and angling for fish, not Frateretto. Angels have no need of food. See *"Nero is an angler in the lake of darknes,"* (Q, 2005-06).

33. **amaz'd**] Confused, bewildered.

Figure 190. From *King Lear*, Quarto 1 (InternetShakespeareEditions).

34. **cushions**.] There are no stage directions in the quartos describing what Kent means by *"cushions."* (As noted above, lines 2014.1-30 were omitted in the First Folio.) English foxhunting authority David C. Itzkowitz, writes in a personal communication, "The 'cushions' (Q2, 2014.15) could have been pillows; they could also have been pelts of all sorts including deer, bear, and wolf." [See Appendix J: A Skinning House.] As noted in III,ii,59, *"He hath no*

daughters, sir" (F, 1850), throughout this Act, Kent functions as a narrative foil to Lear. His literal-mindedness contrasts with Lear's imaginings. The *visual* cue that instantly conveys the location of the scene to the audience is established by the "discovery". [See note III,vi,18., *"He's mad that trusts."*]

35. **I'll see their trial first**] The word "cushions" means one thing to Kent and quite another thing to Lear and the audience.
36. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Capell. Not in Q.
36. **robèd**] Referring literally to the exquisite *"Persian"* (F, 2037) riding cloak he discarded, which Edgar is still wearing. Because ancient Greece did not have specialized judicial robes like modern court systems, public officials, citizens attending the assembly, and judges wore high-quality himations to signal their status, education, and adherence to civic decorum. [664] [See note III,iv,92,S.D., *"Edgar puts on the discarded cloak."*]

Figure 191. The Terracotta Amphora from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, showing a judge in himation.

37. S.D. ***To the Fool***] Capell. Not in Q.
37. **yolkfellow of equity**] Fellow justice in a court of equity
38. **Bench**] Sit on the bench. The bench is probably brought downstage by Lear himself. Note that Kent is not given a seat on it.
38. S.D. ***To Kent***] Capell. Not in Q.

Figure 192. Man seated on a joint stool. From the Rynek Underground Museum in Krakow.

39. S.D. ***Kent fetches a joint-stool and sits***] Ed. Not in Q. Kent brings a joint-stool forward, and sits down. [See Figure 192.]

Figure 193. Shepherd playing his horn. The Shepheardes Calendar (November), Edmund Spenser.

41. ***Fool***] Ed. *Ed.* (Q, 2014.19). The song is better sung by the Fool/Cordelia as it suggests an inversion of the parent/child relationship. Nursery rhymes are used by parents to communicate nonverbally with infants and toddlers. [See note I,iv,165, *"play bo-peep."*]
41. S.D. ***Sings***] Ed. Not in Q. Edgar mentions that the Fool has *"the voyce of a nigh-(tingale,"* (Q, 2014.11)

41-44. **Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd**] These lines echo the nursery rhyme *Little Boy Blue*, who blows his horn. [See Figure 193.] In "Medieval Nonsense Verse: Contributions to the Literary Genre" (2013), Bridget Begg argues that although nursery rhymes and nonsense "may initially present as gibberish, the underlying sense-making construction required for the subversion of understood logic allow nonsense to also appear as language-based absurdities." (p. 97).

42. **corn**] wheat

43. **minikin**] small, i.e. the mouthpiece of a horn. We are about to hear Edgar wind his horn to call off the imaginary dogs chasing Lear. Maimonides famously wrote that the shofar says, "Wake up, you sleepers, from your sleep!" [492]

45. ***Edgar***] See Q, 2019.11-21.

45. S.D. ***To the pelt***] Ed. Not in Q. See note III,vi,32.

45. **Purr**] *Pur the* (Q, 2014.21). The sound made by a cat. Edgar commands the polecat to answer the charges brought against her, *viz.*, Speak! Compare *"mew"* (Q, 2311.7.) [See note IV,ii,68, *"Mew"*.] See also *All's Well That Ends Well*, V,ii, *"Heere is a purre of Fortunes sir, or of Fortunes Cat"* (F, 2660).

46. **Fool**] Ed. Ascribed to Edgar in (Q, 2014.21). [Compare note III,vi,52, *"I took you for a joint-stool."*]

46. **cat**] Referring to the skinned polecat or *"Fitchew"* (F, 2565) as in Figure 189. A cat is also a cant term for a prostitute. [See Figure 270.]

46. **grey**] He probably means that her physical appearance is invisible, as in the phrase ***all cats are grey*** (*OED*). "When all candels be out, all cats be grey." J. Heywood, *Dialogue Prouerbes Eng. Tongue* (new ed.) i. v. sig. Aviv, 1550.

47. S.D. ***Taking the joint-stool Kent is sitting on***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear's mind is drawn to the oaken (hard) joint-stool Kent is sitting on. He associates it with Goneril, who has been kicking him around like a football. My guess is that it's a trick chair with a loose leg. When Lear grabs it, the leg breaks off, causing Kent to fall to the ground in the style of slapstick. He gives the broken leg to the Fool for arraignment. *"Cry you mercy I tooke you for a ioyne stoole"* (Q, 2014.26). (Leg = kick) Chair lazzo is common in *Commedia dell'arte*, as when Arlecchino pulls the chair away from the Captain just before he is to sit down. A fundamental device in comedy is to lead the audience toward one expectation and then surprise them with an unexpected action. [192] We expect Goneril and Regan to take *vixen* forms, and are caught by surprise when Lear identifies a joint-stool as his eldest daughter. The important idea here is the *hardness* of his daughters.

Figure 194. Buster Keaton, the King of Pratfalls, in a promotional still for *The Camerman*, 1928.

48. **Goneril**] "Lear is now himself a source of grotesque comedy, addressing his real grievance against Goneril to a joint-stool and couching it in an absurd image: "*she kickt the poore king her father"* (Q2, 2014.23) writes Susan Snyder in an essay included in *The Folger Library*

King Lear: "*King Lear:* A Modern Perspective."

49. **kick'd**] Alluding to the sport of football. "For boyes affecting foote|bale, will argue peradventure, that seeing such horseplay was vsed by Melanthius, & he might strike Vlysses body with his foote; more lawfull should it bee for them to strike a ball so." (John Rainolds, *Th'overthrow of stage-playes*, p. 117-18.)

> "Researchers have found [King Henry VIII] ordered a pair of soccer boots from the Great Wardrobe, the office responsible for supplying his attire, in 1526. The boots were made of leather, hand-stitched by the royal cordwainer, Cornelius Johnson, and cost King Henry the royal sum of four shillings. Dr. Maria Hayward, a clothes historian who discovered the order among records of Henry's wardrobe, says she finds it difficult to believe he played soccer (known simply in Britain and elsewhere in the world as football), but cannot see why else he would have ordered the boots. "Football in Tudor times was a very vicious game with no teams and no rules...It was not a game for gentlemen," Hayward, who works at the textile conservation center at the Winchester School of Art in southern England, told Reuters."

52. **Cry you mercy . . . joint stool**] "This proverbial expression is found in J.Withal, *Short Dictionary*, 1554: '*Antchac te cornua hacere putabam*, I cry you mercy, I took you for a joyn'd stool.' It was a facetious apology for overlooking a person." (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 126). Compare the phrase *"all cats are grey (in the dark)"* in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, P1b. [See note III,iv,46., *"grey."*]

52. **joint stool**] The joint stool Kent fetched for himself to sit on. [See Figure 192.] Compare *Macbeth*, III,iv, *"When all's done/ You looke but on a stoole"* (F, 1336-36).

52. **warp'd**] twisted out of its normal shape. An animal's body begins to stiffen immediately after death. Rigor mortis can last up to 72 hours.

54. S.D. ***Gives the unskinned fox to Kent . . . aside***] Ed. Not in Q. Kent does not want to handle the carcass, which is maggoty and stinks

Video 27. "Skinning, Fleshing, and Boarding a Fox (K9) for a Wall Hanger (Full Process)."

Black humor has long been a part of Britain's national comedic identity. The humor at England's Feast of Fools often veered into morbid territory, blending irreverence with grotesque and scatological elements that mocked death, decay, and bodily horror. In the medieval mystery play Noah's Flood, "Mrs. Noah" argues with Noah about entering the ark and locks him out. [193] Satirical engravings by William Hogarth and James Gillray often employ elements of black comedy by using humour to highlight the morbid, grotesque, and morally corrupt aspects of 18th and early 19th-century society [343] During the Victorian era, cheap broadsides, pamphlets, and popular newspapers like the *Illustrated Police News* frequently made light about public hangings. [194] Ealing Studios popularized black comedy in films like *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949) and *The Ladykillers* (1955). In the 1960s-1970, black humor was a prominent feature of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969-1974), with

sketches like "The Dead Parrot" and the Black Knight scene in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975). [See Video 28.]

Video 28. The Dead Parrot Sketch – Monty Python's Flying Circus.

Today, Shakespeare holds a premier position in British culture. He is a paramount National icon who plays a vital role in the UK's commercial tourist industry, particularly through attractions in Stratford-upon-Avon and Shakespeare's Globe. It is hard to imagine the time when London audiences had to seriously choose between seeing Richard Burbage in *Macbeth* and chimpanzees fighting to the death at the Beargarden. [195]

> Along with bear-baiting, the English arenas also hosted a range of animal fights that the scholar Stephen Dickey once called a 'carnival of cruelty.' There were rat-baitings, badger-baitings, dogfights, cockfights and other stomach-turning displays such as staged whippings of blind bears. Bull-baiting, in which dogs were set upon chained male cattle, was particularly popular. Audiences delighted in watching the bulls throw the attack dogs into the air with their horns, and it was widely believed that baiting helped make the bull's beef more tender and safe for consumption. Perhaps the strangest show of all involved a chimpanzee, or 'jack-an-apes,' which would be strapped onto the back of a horse and then set loose into the ring to be chased by a pack of snarling dogs. An Italian merchant who once witnessed the spectacle wrote that, 'It is wonderful to see the horse galloping along, kicking up the ground and champing at the bit, with the monkey holding very tightly to the saddle, and crying out frequently when he is bitten by the dogs.' (*The Gruesome Blood Sports of Elizabethan England*, Evan Andrews.)

55. S.D. ***Draws on Kent*]** Not in Q. Lear draws his sword on Kent for releasing "Regan."
55. **Corruption in the place**] Lear considers Kent a corrupt judge for allowing "Regan" to escape.
56. **why hast thou let her 'scape**] The literal-minded Kent discards the maggoty carcass when it is given to him for arraignment. Compare *"He hath no Daughters Sir"* (F, 1850) and *"will you lie downe and rest vpon the Cushions?"* (Q2, 2014.14-5).
60. S.D. ***Aside***] Rowe. Not in Q.

Figure 195. "Actaeon Killed by HIs Dogs" from Ovid's Metamorphoses, Antonio Tempesta, 1606.

62. **The little dogs**] Lear imagines himself being the quarry of a hunt, pursed by barking dogs. They evoke in his mind the myth of the hunter Actaeon who was transformed by the goddess Diana into a stag, and hunted down and eaten by his own hounds. [See Figure 195.] Actaeon's dogs are referred to in the broadside ballad "New Mad Tom of Bedlam or, The Man in the Moon drinks Claret, with Powder-Beef Turnip and Carret:"

Poor Tom is very dry-
A little drink for charity!
Hark! I hear Actaeon's hounds!
The huntsmen whoop and hallowe;
"Ringwood, Royster, Bowman, Jowler,"
All the chase now follow.

From Anthony Brian Taylor, "Arthur Golding and the Elizabethan Progress of Actaeon's Dogs," p. 23.

64. **throw his head at them**] Referring to the horn. It can be said "head" and "horn" partly share an etymological root. Both words trace back to the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root *ker-* (also reconstructed as *ḱerh₂-), which meant "head" or "horn." [491] [See the etymology of the word "head" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.] However, as careful exegesis of the text reveals, the sound of Edgar's horn in *Lear* is being used as a symbol and leitmotif. It carries deep narrative meaning and musical significance, rather than just being a physical object the character wears as part of his costume. Its piercing blasts serve multiple layers of symbolic meaning.

When St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin in the fourth century, he rendered the description of Moses descending from Mount Sinai in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 34:29) with the term *"cornuta"*, which translates literally to "horned" or having horn-like appendages. [485] His translation reflects an ambiguity in the underlying Hebrew: the verb *qāran* ("to shine" or "emit rays") shares its consonantal root (q-r-n) with *qeren* ("horn"). Because ancient Hebrew was written without vowels, the two forms appear identical in the consonantal text. The Latin Vulgate was the primary Bible for Western Christianity for over a thousand years, and artists interpreted the text as a physical feature, adding horns to their artistic depictions of Moses, most famously Michelangelo's sculpture at San Pietro in Vincoli.

Figure 195a. Detail of Michelangelo's Moses at San Pietro in Vincoli.

64. **Avaunt**: get away
64. S.D. ***Raises horn***] Ed. Not in Q,F.
65. **or black or white**] Either or
66. **poisons if it bite**] Rabies is potentially fatal
68. **brach**] bitch-hound
68. **lym**] bloodhound
69. **Bobtail tike**] dog with its tail cut short
69. **trundle-tail**] long tailed dog.
71. **with throwing thus my head**] viz. by blowing his horn.
72. **hatch**] bottom half of a divided door.

Figure 205. *The Noble art of Venerie or Hunting*, George Turberville, 1611.

72. S.D. **Blows horn]** Ed. *Do,de,de,de:* (F, 2031). *loudla doodla* (Q1, 2031). *loudla doodla,* (Q2, 2030). Cf. *O do,de,do,de,do de,* (F, 1839). Onomatopoeic imitations of the sound of a horn which I have replaced with a stage direction. [See Appendix G: Edgar's Ox Horn.]

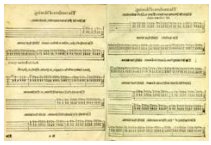


Figure 206. "The meafures of blowing, fet downe in the notes for the more eafe and ready helpe of fuch as are defirous to learnc the fame: and they are fet downe according to the order which is obfervcd at thefe 295arc ia this Real me of Great Brittaine, as followeth." The Noble art of Vemerie or Hunting.

73. **Sessa**] Pope. *Sese:* (F, 2031). Not in Q. An interjection said upon blowing a horn. Compare *Sesey* (F, 1880). *Caese* (Q1, 1879). *Cease* (Q2, 1879). [See note III,iv,84, *"Sessa."*] H.H. Furness discusses the word in *New Variorum Edition* p. 212.

73. **wakes and fairs]** Beggars in England frequently traveled to funerals and fairs despite strict Elizabethan poor laws. These events were highly attractive to the traveling poor because they offered unique opportunities to receive alms and food that were otherwise legally denied to them under the Tudor vagrancy system. [480]

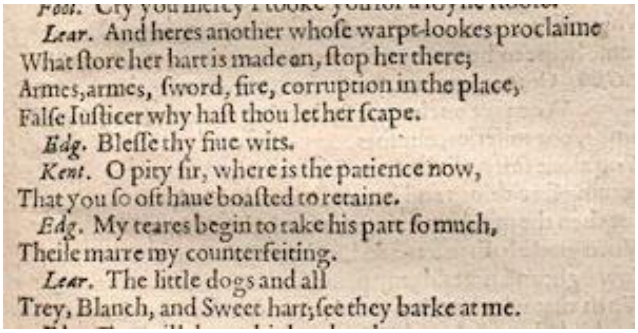

Lear. And heres another whofe warpt-lookes proclaime
What ſtore her hart is made on, ſtop her there;
Armes, armes, ſword, fire, corruption in the place,
Falſe Iuſticer why haſt thou let her ſcape.
Edg. Bleſſe thy fiue wits.
Kent. O pity ſir, where is the patience now,
That you ſo oft haue boaſted to retaine.
Edg. My teares begin to take his part ſo much,
Theile marre my counterfeiting.
Lear. The little dogs and all
Trey, Blanch, and Sweet hart; ſee they barke at me.

Figure 207. Excerpt from scene 13 in *King Lear*, Quarto 1, 1608 (Halliwell-Phillipps), InternetShakespeareEditions.

75. S.D. ***To Kent, who has retrieved the fox***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Kent is as moved by Lear's emotional breakdown as anybody, and plays along with the fiction by retrieving the carcass. In III,iv, we saw him urge Gloucester to placate the King by allowing him to bring mad Tom with them. Compare III,iv,157., *"Soothe him."*

76. **anatomize**] "To dissect or cut up; esp. To dissect a human body, or an animal, for the purpose of displaying the position, structure, and relations of the various parts; to make a dissection of" (*OED*, **1.a**.). "The carkasses of many seuerall beasts, newly by him cut vp and Anatomised," R. Burton *Anat. Melancholy*, 1621. The words Lear uses to describe "Regan" — *"Anatomize"* (F, 2033), "*breeds"* (F, 2034), "*hard-hearts"* (2035), are ones an anatomist might use to dissect a corpse that was in a state of *rigor mortis*.

76. **Regan**] The fox's carcass.

76. **breeds**] i.e. maggots. Cf. *Hamlet*, 2.2, *"For if the Sun breed Magots in a dead dogge"* (F, 1218) An animal's body begins to decompose immediately after death and will soon begin to attract insects.
77. **hard hearts**] One sense of the word *"hard"* is "callous" (3.a. *OED*) as in *Troilus*, I,i: *"O that her Hand / (In whose comparison, all whites are Inke) / Writing their owne reproach; to whose soft seizure, / The Cignets Downe is harsh, and spirit of Sense / **Hard** as the palme of Plough-man."* (F, 89-93). Here, Shakespeare is punning both figuratively and literally on the meaning of "hard," as in rigor mortis, which causes muscles to become hard. "Postmortem rigidity is the third stage of death. [See note III,vii,31.,*"Hard, hard."*]
78. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Capell. Not in Q, F.
79. **fashion**] It is possible that the word connotes both the ostentation of the cloak, and its being worn backwards by poor Tom.
80. **Persian**] pertaining to Persia. Lear is referring literally to the silk cloak he cast off in III,iv, which Edgar is still wearing. See*"Thou ow'st the Worme no Silke"* (F, 1883-4). Broadly speaking, Persia, especially in the Safavid era, was internationally renowned for high-quality silk textiles. The evidence shows that they were valued specifically for their sumptuous materials, sophisticated designs, and wide appeal in international trade. King James I attempted to establish a domestic silk-farming industry in England and its American colonies in 1607. He imported thousands of mulberry trees. However, these efforts failed because the English climate and native trees were poorly suited for silkworms. This failure cemented England's reliance on expensive, imported Persian raw silk [469] [See note III,vi,92.S.D., "*Edgar puts on the king's discarded riding-cloak."*]
80. S.D. ***Edgar removes the cape***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Edgar obliges Lear by taking off the cape. When he reappears in IV,i, he is wearing his filthy blanket and carrying his horn in a baldric.

Figure 208. Flute Player, Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1621. Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel..D.

80. S.D. ***Fool plays soft music on his tabor pipe***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See note II,iv, S.D., "*playing a pipe and tabor."*] Shakespeare uses incidental music in *King Lear*, much like Claudio Monteverdi uses the ritornellos and motifs in his opera *L'Orfeo* (1607)—as storytelling devices. Rather than just serving as background music, these musical elements unify the plot, signal shifts in the narrative, and represent specific emotional states, such as the love a mother feels for her child. Logically, the Fool is playing the same lulling melody here that we first heard him play in I,v—to quiet Lear's raging mind. [See note I,v,5. S.D. *The Fool plays a lullaby on his lute."*] A variation of the melody is played by the consort musicians in IV,vi—*"louder the musicke there"* (Q1, 2775.2)—for the same reason: *"O you kind Gods! / Cure this great breach in his abused Nature, / Th'vntun'd and iarring senses, O winde vp, / Of this childe-changed Father"* (F, 2763-66).

While often credited to the 19th-century Wagnerian leitmotif, the use of recurring musical ideas to drive expressive drama actually stems from a rich tradition originating with Italian intermedio, English court masques, and the narrative structures of *King Lear* as I theorize it was originally staged. Most people today know the leitmotif as one of the most powerful concepts in film scoring, such as "The Love Theme" (*Romeo and Juliet,* Nino Rota), "The Shark" Theme (*Jaws*, John Williams), "Darth Vader's Theme" (*Star Wars*, John Williams), "The Shire Theme" (*The Lord of the Rings*, Howard Shore) etc. The technique uses a recurring melody, chord progression, or rhythm to represent a specific character, place, emotion, or abstract idea. [493]

The functions of music in drama (setting mood, emphasizing action, conveying emotion without words) were used from drama's ancient Greek beginnings. [494] Timothy J. Moore proposes that musical repetition in Euripides's play *Medea* was used to underline key themes. "At the core of my work at The Center for Hellenic Studies were two Euripidean plays, the very early *Medea* (431 BCE), and *Orestes*, from late in Euripides' career (408 BCE). I had already observed before my time in Washington that Medea offered a significant musical surprise followed by significant musical repetition. In an unexpected move, Medea delivers anapests early in the play, and then anapests return at important moments throughout the play. The surprise and repetition reinforce the audience's sense of Medea's power as she plots and carries out her revenge." ("Unheard Melodies: Music and Meaning in Ancient Greek and Roman Theater").

81. S.D. ***Takes Lear gently downstage***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Kent escorts Lear to the curtained area at the rear of the platform where the discovery was made.
82. **curtains**] The stage curtains hiding the central entrance of the tiring-house.
83. S.D. ***Curtains are drawn close***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear exits from view.

Figure 209. Gentleman peeking through curtains. British Museum.

83. S.D. **Reenter Lear, peeping from behind the curtains**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Now they peepe like Italian pantelownes Behind an Arras* I,i, *2nd Part If you know not Me*, T. Heywood. *The Atheist's Tragedy*, II,v, p. 285, *"Fresco peeps fearfully forth from behind the arras." Volpone; or, the Fox*, *"Volpone peeps from behind a traverse"* (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama*, 1580-1642, **traverse**, p.235). [See Figure 209, *The L.Elizabeth before her Sifter Q. Mary*.]
84. S.D. ***To Fool***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
84. **We'll go to supper i'th'morning**] In a comedy double act, a joke is crafted through a dynamic system of contrast, tension, and rhythm between two distinct archetypes: the "Feed" or Straight Man, and the Funny Man or Banana Man ("Boke" in Japanese comedy duos). The straight man feeds the setup, and the comic delivers the punchline. The humor emerges from the contrast in their personalities, timing, and rhythm. [See note I,v,9., *"thy wit shall not go slipshod."*]

After disappearing behind the curtains, Lear suddenly remembers that the Fool hasn't supped for days. The last the audience saw him eating was in I,iv. We remember the character's obscenities at the dinner table, and his eating as long as he can—like the imperturbable guest at the 2026 White House Correspondents' Association Dinner who calmly continued to eat his dinner while other attendees took cover during President Trump's assassination scare. [495]

85. **I'll go to bed at noon.]** The Fool's punchline subverts expectations, and delivers the laugh. The riddle is inherently metatheatrical, compelling the audience to navigate dual realities simultaneously: the timeline inside the story, and the actual clock time passing for the actors and spectators sitting in the theater. The line functions as a self-aware aside. Compare the riddle about the *time* of a woman's maidenhood at the conclusion of Act I, and his "prophecy" at the conclusion of III,ii: "*This prophecie Merlin shall make, for I liue before his* (*time"* (F, 1749). By interrupting an emotionally charged moment in this way, the riddle shatters the audience's passive empathy for Lear's madness, forcing them into active, intellectual engagement. This prevents pure emotional indulgence and promotes analytical observation. It is a key device that Shakespeare uses throughout the play.

Massive amounts of literary criticism and theatrical analyses have been written about the line "*And Ile go to bed at no one"* (F, 2043) (omitted in the quartos)—the Fool's final line in the play before the actor appears again in the character of Cordelia. [See note I,iv,86., S.D. "*Enter Fool."*] Owing to the omission of stage directions in the copy text (and the physical evidence of a musical score), it may be that editors and Shakespeare scholars have historically misunderstood what is actually happening at the end of this scene. The dramatic action and emotional meaning may never have been intended to be understood from the dialogue. Instead, the music is doing the heavy lifting to convey the true meaning nonverbally. The music actually tells the story. Following Lear's command to Edgar's to get rid of the "Persian" riding cape (F, 2037-8), the Fool begins playing the same melody on his tabor pipe that we heard him play on his lute in I,v, marking a new unit of action. He stops to nonchalantly deliver the punchline, and then resumes his playing. The melody also prepares the audience for the actor's switch back to Cordelia.

85. S.D. ***Exit Lear***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
85. S.D. ***Re-enter Gloucester***] (Q, 2044). After chang'd (F, 2039).
86. S.D. ***To Kent***] Not in Q, F.
86. **Where is the king**] Lear is not visible to Gloucester because he is no longer on stage.
87. **Here, Sir**] Sleeping behind the curtains
89. **upon**] against
96. **to some**] quickly take you to where you can find supplies
98. **balm'd**] Soothed; sinews: nerves
100. **Stand in hard cure.]** Are not likely to be cured
100. S.D. ***To the Fool***] Theobald. Not in Q.

Video 29. Sophie Matthews demonstrates the shawm. 2:08-3:33

101. S.D. ***Music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Edgar's speech that follows allows the "invisible" stagehands to clear the platform of all the props. It may be that the nondiegetic, incidental music being played in the gallery includes hoboys or shawms. [See Video 29, "Sophie Matthews demonstrates the shawm. 2:08-3:33."] Its use in III,vi presages the sinister events to follow in the next scene. [Compare note III,iv,172., *"Child Rowland"*.] "**Hoboy** or 'hautboy,' a wooden reed similar to the modern oboe, sometimes called a *shawm* ; the sound of *hoboys* —always plural in directions — can accompany supernatural or sinister events…" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama*, 1580-1642, p, 115). See *Macbeth*, I,vi, *"Hoboyes"* (F, 431).

101. S.D. ***Exeunt Kent, Gloucester, and the Fool***] *Exeunt.* (F. 2055). *Exit*. (Q, 2056.5). The audience does not see Lear hauled off stage as indicated by Capell's S.D. from 1768, *Exeunt Kent, Gloucester, and the Fool, bearing off the King*. The actors leave the stage from *"behind the curtains."*

101. S.D. ***behind the curtains***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

Lines 102-120 (Q, 2056.1-15) were cut in the Folio, which ends after line 2056.

105. **shows**] scenes

108-9. **How light … King bow**] Edgar is expressing that empathy and perspective reduce personal pain. By looking outside of his own misfortune and feeling deep compassion for someone who is older and of higher status suffering even more than he is, Edgar finds the mental fortitude to bear his own cross. [See note V,i,326., *"The oldest hath bourn most."*]

110. **He childed as I fathered**] Lear had long fathered a family by the time Gloucester fathered Edgar. The phrase is complex syntactical wordplay on "father." It relies heavily on anthimeria (specifically verbification), which is the shifting of a word from one part of speech to another. While *"fathered"* is a widely recognized and standard verb (meaning to procreate or to act as a father), *"childed"* is an archaism and a rare grammatical mutation. By transforming the noun "child" into a past-tense verb, the phrase forces *"childed"* to mirror the structural behavior of *"fathered."* While the syntax is parallel, the meaning is inverted. It plays with traditional familial hierarchy by presenting "childing" and "fathering" as simultaneous, active, and opposing forces.

111. **bewray**] reveal; throw off his disguise.

115. **Lurk, lurk**] Beware. Spoken to the audience. Cf. III,iv,177-179. Hence the use of "**hoboys**." See note III,vi,101.S.D., *"Music"*.

115. S.D. ***Exit***] Theobald. Not in Q. It is likely that Edgar too makes his exit behind the center curtains from which Cornwall *et al* immediately make their entrance, as if by magic.

ACT III, SCENE VII. *Scena Septima* (F, 2057). Scene 14 in Quarto.

S.D. ***Gloucester's Castle***] Rowe, subst. Not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. The Chamber (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

Figure 210. Opening of Act III,vii as published in First Folio (InternetShakespeareEditions).

S.D. ***Enter . . . Soldiers***] Ed. *Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gonerill, Bastard, and Seruants.* (F, 2058-59). *Enter Cornwall, and Regan, and Gonorill, and Bastard.* (Q, 2058-59). [See Figure 210.] The group enters through the large central opening in the tiring house, corresponding in Roman theatre to the *valva regia* ('royal door'). The omission of stage directions like "flourish" or "drums" in both Q and F signals that Cornwall wants to keep his interrogation of Gloucester a secret. As yet, he is unaware that the old earl has innocently dispatched his household knights to escort Lear to Dover. The new scene is indicated by the ending of the "hoboys" in the one before.

S.D. ***Cornwall's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See line 69 note.

S.D. ***Curan***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See note III,vii,96., *"Curan."*] In III,vii, Curan logically accompanies Edmund to his official meeting with Cornwall. Chamberlains in medieval and Elizabethan households held roles that extended beyond mere domestic oversight to include personal service and administrative support for the lord. [195] In this scene, Curan is the focal character (or "focalizer") from whose eyes the audience witness Edmund's betrayal of his father. We are not seeing Gloucester's blinding through the eyes of anonymous *"Servants"*, who have no personal connection to the earl, but from the perspective of a character who has served the family his entire life, and feels a closeness with Edmund. It was Curan who wrote the proclamation declaring Edgar an outlaw. [See note II,i,58.S.D., "*To Curan.*"] *1 Ser* tells Albany's Squire aka *2 Seruant* (Q. 2176.3) that he will lead the blinded earl to poor Tom. Following this logic, Curan is the "*Old Man*" in IV,i (Q, 2192) (F, 2188) who says has been a vassal of the family for generations: *"O my good Lord, I haue bene your Tenant, / And your Fathers Tenant, these fourescore yeares."* (F, 2193-94). [See note IV,i,9.S.D., *"led by Curan."*] A senior chamberlain could—and almost always was—a lord's tenant in feudal England. [See note IV,i,13, *"tenant."*]

S.D. ***Albany's Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See line 97 note.

S.D. ***armed knights belonging to the dukes***] Ed. *Seruants* (F, 2059). According to Mark Cartwright, "The staff of a castle may be divided into two broad groups: men-at-arms and domestic servants" ("The Household Staff in an English Medieval Castle"). Shakespeare's audience would have been able immediatelyuy deduce what roles they served from their costumes and weapons. [See Figure 211.] However, modern readers must be told that the extras

in this scene are men-at-arms lest they wrongly be imagined domestic *"Seruants."* Logically, they consist of Cornwall's knights and the ones Albany sent to escort his wife to Gloucester's castle. Gloucester has sent away all of his knights to safeguard the king on his way to join Cordelia in Dover. (See F, 2074-2079.)

1. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Furness. Not in Q, F.

1. **Post speedily**] hasten

3. S.D. ***Exeunt two of Cornwall's knights***] Ed. *Exeunt some of the Servants.* Capell. Not in Q, F. [See note III,vii,22.S.D., "*Exeunt two more of Cornwall's knights.*"]

4. **Gon**] Ed. *Reg.* F, 2063; Q, 2063. In both the quartos and Folio line 2063 is uncharacteristically ascribed to Regan. Goneril is a ruthless pragmatist who wants Gloucester killed because he is an obstacle in her path to the throne. Her calculations recall the ambitions of Shakespeare's Richard III, who is depicted as ordering the murders of his young nephews, and the deaths of Queen Elizabeth's kin—Earl Rivers, Richard Grey, and Sir Thomas Vaughan—after accusing them of treason. He also executes Lord William Hastings, a relation of Henry Hastings, the eccentric huntsman noted in the previous scene, on fabricated treason charges during a council meeting (Act 3, Scene 4).

   Note that Albany's Squire is standing right next to the duchess in IV,ii when he gives her and the duke an eye-witness account of Gloucester's blinding. She is doubtlessly glowering at him, with murder in her eyes, as she did the Fool in I,iv.,183., *"so your face bids me"* (F, 708-9). His account is remarkable for what he doesn't say: he makes no mention of the presence of Goneril nor Regan in the scene, and gives a blatantly false account of the death of Cornwall's Knight. "No one loves the messenger who brings bad news." [See note IV,ii,68.S.D., *"Enter Albany's Squire."*]

5. **Reg**] Ed. *Gon.* F, 2064, Q, 2064. Regan is a sadistic misandrist, driven by emotion. Inflicting pain and humiliation on men overrides any pursuit of goals. When this line is said by her, as emended in my restoration, the message she is implicitly sending to her weak and ineffectual husband is to pluck out Gloucester's eyes: a deed she ultimately accomplishes herself. [See note III,vii,80., S.D., *She plucks out his other eye.*] In IV,iv, she reproaches herself for not following Goneril's advice, and killing the earl outright: *"It was great ignorance, Glousters eyes being out / To let him liue."* (F, 2394-95).

6-7. **our sister**] Goneril

7. **revenges**] There are no stage direction in the quartos and Folio indicating how Curan reacts to the revelation of Edmund's betrayal of his father. Nor are there stage directions indicating how Edmund reacts to Curan, whom he has known since birth. Can Edmund bear to look at the old man? Does he meet his gaze with defiance and contempt? Does he feel any empathy at all, or is Edmund depicted as a psychopath like Iago? In a novel, their interactions would be narrated. In *King Lear*, it is uncertain if *"Curan"* (F, 927), *"1 Servant"* (Q1, 2176.1), and the *"Old Man"* (F, 2187) are even one character let alone if they share any family history with the Bastard. In the revered *Arden Shakespeare King Lear* (p. 154), they are listed as three separate characters, as they are in the *Oxford Shakespeare King Lear* (p. 99) edited by Stanley Wells.

7. **are bound**] are obligated; cannot fail

8-9. **Advise the Duke . . . preparation**] advise Albany when you get there, to make speedy preparation for war
9. **festinate**] speedy
10. **to the like**] to do the same thing
10. **posts**] messengers
11. **shall be swift and intelligent**] will carry intelligence
12. S.D. ***Enter Oswald***] Collier. *Enter Steward.* (F, 2072). After *king?* (Q, 2072).
15. **his**] Gloucester's
16. **Hot**] fast
16. **'questrists**] Ed. *questrits* (Q, 2076). *Questrists* (F, 2076), *viz.,* equestrians, skilled horse-back riders. "Questrist" appears to be a word coined by Shakespeare from *equus*, Latin for "horse." Knights were trained horsemen. Oswald implies that Gloucester's *"Knights"* (F, 2076) are riding at a fast pace.
17. **the lord's**] Gloucester's
19. S.D. **Exit Oswald**] Staunton. Not in Q, F.
20. S.D. ***To Cornwall and Regan***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
20. **Farewell, sweet lord and sister**] Goneril's is using the *formality* of saying goodbye to gloat about her sudden opportunity to have sex with Edmund. The situation reverses itself after the death of Cornwall. [See note IV,ii, 85, *"building in my fancy*".]
21. **Reg**] Ed. Assigned to Cornwall in Q, 2082; F, 2082. Cornwall has already taken leave of Edmund at line 12 (F, 2071). Regan is livid that her husband has given Goneril the chance to be alone with Edmund, and makes a point **not** to acknowledge her sister's farewell. The rivalry between them is what is important to dramatize in the plot because it is from this that the story develops. Shakespeare is suggesting that Regan's fury during the trial is fueled by sexual jealousy. She becomes a *"greene-ey'd Monster"* (F, 1781), maddened by the thought of her sister being alone with Edmund. [See note IV,vii, 35.,*"Reg."*]
21. ***She kisses him vehemently***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *"She Kisses him vehemently"* in *The Soddered Citizen by John Clavell*, 1326-7, 2233-4 (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* **kiss**, p. 124-125). Regan is responding to Goneril's taunt. She could care less if her kissing Edmund makes a cuckold of her husband before his knights. The Duke responds to her insult by needlessly commanding two more of his knights to bring in Gloucester. See note III,vii,22, *"Exeunt two more of Cornwall's knights."*
21. S.D. ***Exeunt Goneril and Edmund***] Dyce. *Exit.* after *sister* (F, 2081). *Exit Gon. and Bast.*, after *sister*. (Q. 2081).

Figure 211. Attendant soldiers standing behind Titus in the Peacham drawing of *Titus Andronicus* (c. 1595?), the only surviving contemporary illustration from a play by Shakespeare, now in the library of the Marquess of Bath at Longleat.

21. S.D. ***accompanied by Albany's knights***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The only armed men remaining in the scene belong to Cornwall. The audience recognizes them by their tabards. As noted above, Gloucester has bravely sent all of his household knights away from the castle to protect Lear, leaving himself defenseless. The duke's ulterior motive for disposing of Albany's Knights is

to avoid any risk of confrontation with them during his interrogation. They owe him no allegiance. As Cornwall tells Edmund, *"the reuenges wee are bound to take vppon your Traitorous Father, are not fit for your beholding."* (F, 2066-68). Neither Curan ("*Seruant*", Q, 2176.1) nor Albany's Squire ("*2 Seruant*", Q. 2176.53) carry weapons, and pose no physical threat to the duke. The former is very old, and the latter very young.

22. **Pinion**] bind

22. S.D. ***Exeunt two more of Cornwall's knights***] Ed. Not in Q, F. *Exeunt other Servants.* Capell. Cornwall has already commanded two of his knights to apprehend the earl: *"seek the traitor Gloucester"* (F, 2082). Shakespeare could have had them return with Gloucester at this moment. Instead, the duke refuses to wait, signaling that he wields absolute authority, and demands immediate results. Why? The duke is humiliated by Regan's vehement kiss of Edmund. He wants to distract his men from being made a cuckold, and issues a threatening command establishing his position of authority. His directive proves redundant, however, because this second group of knights bumps into the first group of knights on their way back with Gloucester. Their running into to one another is farcical, like a caper in the Keystone Kops. Cornwall appears like a bumbling fool, needlessly ordering his men around.

23. **pass upon his life**] condemn him to death

25. **do a court'sy**] defer, yield

26. S.D. ***Re-enter knights***] Ed. *Enter Gloucester, and Servants.* (F, 2088). *Enter Gloster brought in by two or three.* after *traitor* (Q, 2088). Just as the guards in *The Winter's Tale* are reluctant to lay hands on Hermione, Cornwall's knights do not lay their hands on Gloucester until they are physically threatened to bind him on their lord's *third* command: (1) *"Binde fast his corky armes"* (F, 2091). (2) *"Binde him, I say!"* (F, 2095). (3) *"To this Chair binde him!!"* (F, 2098). [The exclamation marks are mine.] The important idea being dramatized is that his knights do not respect their lord's authority. [See note III,vii,38, *"host."*]

26. S.D. ***Gloucester wearing his spectacles***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Gloucester is wearing his bow spectacles on the tip of his nose, as he has been throughout the play. They are the reference in Cornwall's line, *"Upon **these eyes** of thine I'll set my foot"* (F, 2140). [See Figure 42.]

Figure 212. Quinten Matsys, "Tax Collectors" (c. 1525), Liechtenstein Collection, Vaduz.

27. **ingrateful fox**] Regan uses the same metaphor for Gloucester that Lear does for Regan in III,vi: *a fox.* [See note III,vi,24.,"*Want'st thou eyes at trial madam?"*] In the narrative sequencing of events, Shakespeare asks the question which of the two trials is madder? Its structure is roughly comparable to the Kuleshov effect, a mental phenomenon in film editing "by which viewers derive more meaning from the interaction of two sequential shots than from a single shot in isolation."

28. **corky**] dry and withered

31. **Bind him**] For a second time, Cornwall commands his men to bind Gloucester.

31. **Hard, hard]** This could be a direction to Cornwall's knights to bind Gloucester's arms as tightly as they can. In keeping with the style of the play, however, the word *"hard"* is better interpreted as metaphor, echoing Lear's question from the previous scene. [See note III,vi,77, *"hard hearts."*] That is, Regan is referring to the hardened nature of Gloucester's heart, as Kent uses the word in *"this hard house, / (More harder then the stones whereof 'tis rais'd"* (F, 1717-18). Cf. also *Timon of Athens: "Thy Nature, did commence in sufferance, Time / Hath made thee hard in't."* (F, 1895-96). [Compare note II,iv,168, *"tender-hafted."*]
31. S.D. **Cornwall *lays his hand on his sword***] Ed. Compare I,i,161,S.D.,"*Laying his hand upon his sword*." It is only by threatening violence than Cornwall's knights obey his command to bind the old Earl. Ironically, when Cornwall is challenged by his Knight (*Seru*, F, 2145) to actually use his sword in combat, he is too slow-witted to draw it. See note III,vii,77. S.D., *"He falls into Cornwall, inadvertently wounding him."*
32. **none**] not a traitor
33. S.D. ***Knights tie him to a chair***] Ed. Servants bind him to a chair. Rowe. s*ubst.* Not in Q, F.

Figure 213. Samson and Delilah, Peter Paul Rubens (1609), National Gallery, London.

33. **find—**] (Q, 2099) *finde.* (F, 2099)
33. S.D. ***Regan plucks Gloucester's beard***] Johnson. Not in Q, F. Regan is a sadistic misandrist. Here, she is mocking Gloucester for traits she codes as essentially male (his beard). She is also characteristically emasculating the duke her husband, who is formally the one in charge of the inquisition. [Compare note II,ii,132., *"Till noon?"*] When Cornwall's Knight refers to her not having a beard—*"If you did weare a beard vpon your chin,/ I'ld shake it on this quarrel"* (F, 2150-51)—he is drawing on the same deeply rooted stereotypes that frame gender, like facial hair . She proves her "power" by stabbing him in the back when he's looking the other way. [See note III.vii,73.' *"beard."*]
36. **naughty**] wicked
38. **quicken**] come to life
38. **host**] *Hospitiumis*, "the ancient Greco-Roman concept of hospitality as a divine right of the guest and a divine duty of the host." "The red wedding" in George R.R. Martin's *A Storm of Swords* draws on this concept. "The Greeks believed that hospitality was a reciprocal relationship between guest and host and involved certain obligations and responsibilities for both parties. However, *The Odyssey* explores what happens when these rules of hospitality are ignored or violated. There are instances in which guests or hosts violate these rules. Their violations often lead to suffering or consequences" ("The Consequences of Violating Hospitality in *The Odyssey*"). In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, "The misfortunes of Thebes are believed to be the result of a curse laid upon Laius for the time he had violated the sacred laws of hospitality." In *Hecuba,* Euripides' repeatedly stages scenes that presuppose a hospitium / xenia framework and then show it breaking down. [496] [See note III,vii, 26. S.D. "*Re-enter knights."*]

39. **hospitable favors]** features of your host
40. **ruffle**] bully, treat roughly
40. S.D. ***Cornwall draws his dagger***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Cornwall uses the threat of violence to get Gloucester to talk. [Compare note III,vii,31.S.D., "Cornwall *lays his hand on his sword."*] In 1606, noblemen and figures of high standing commonly carried daggers as part of their daily attire, often paired with a rapier for self-defense and as a marker of status. [196]
40. **What will you do?**] Referring to the dagger.
41. **late**] recently
42. **simple-answered**] direct in answering
44. **footed**] landed
46. **guessingly set down**] written without certainty
50. **Wherefore**] Why
50. **peril—**] *perill—* (Q, 2121). *perill.* (F, 2123). Cornwall stops her in mid-sentence in the hope of slowing her down.
52. **I am tied to the stake**] I am like a bear in a bear baiting, tied to the stake, facing the attack of dogs. [See Figure 214.]

Figure 214. A Chained Bear, Agostino Carracci (1557-1602) Courtland Institute of Art, London.

55. **anointed**] with holy oil at his coronation
56. **Stick**] *sticke* (F, 2130); *rash* (Q, 2130). To stab, to pierce (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II.* p. 1122.)
58. **buoy'd up**] risen up and extinguished the stars
58. **stelled fires**] fiery stars
59. **holp]** assisted
60. **dire**] Ed. dearne (Q, 2135); sterne (F, 2135). "Dreadful, dismal, mournful, horrible, terrible, evil in a great degree" (*OED*, **a**). Compare *"Knocke at his study where they say he keepes, / To ruminate strange plots of* ***dire*** *Reuenge"* (*Titus Andronicus*, F. 2289). Cf also "*vnsex me here, / And fill me from the Crowne to the Toe, top-full / Of* ***direst*** *Crueltie"* (*Macbeth*, F, 392-4).
61. **turn the key]** let them in
62. **All cruel's else subscribed**] Ed. *All Cruels else subscribe.* (F, 2137). *All cruels else subscrib'd.* (Q, 2137). *viz.*, otherwise everything cruel is admissible; there is nothing crueler.
63. **Winged vengeance**] an allusion to the Erinyes, Greek goddesses of vengeance.

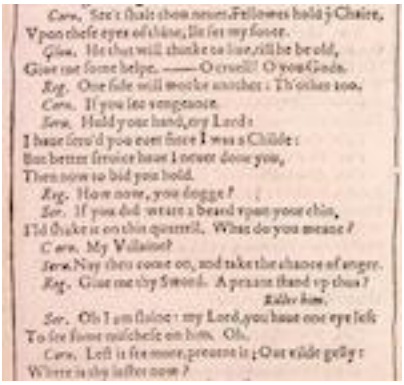

Corn. See't shalt thou never.Fellowes hold i'Chaire,
Vpon these eyes of thine, Ile set my foote.
Glou. He that will thinke to liue, till he be old,
Giue me some helpe. ——O cruell! O you Gods.
Reg. One side will mocke another: Th'other too.
Corn. If you see vengeance.
Ser. Hold your hand, my Lord:
I haue seru'd you euer since I was a Childe:
But better seruice haue I neuer done you,
Then now to bid you hold.
Reg. How now, you dogge?
Ser. If you did weare a beard vpon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrell. What do you meane?
Corn. My Villaine?
Ser. Nay then come on, and take the chance of anger.
Reg. Giue me thy Sword. A peasant stand vp thus?
Killes him.
Ser. Oh I am slaine: my Lord, you haue one eye left
To see some mischefe on him. Oh.
Corn. Left it no more, preuent it: Out vilde gelly:
Where is thy lustre now?

Figure 215. The blinding of Gloucester and death of Cornwall's Knight *("Seru")* as published in the First Folio (InternetShakespeareEdition).

65. **these eyes]** Unsurprisingly, there are no stage directions in the quartos and Folio to indicate if Cornwall is referring *literally* to Gloucester's eyeballs or *metaphorically* to his spectacles. [See Figure 215.] Any judgement about authorial intent relies on basic principles of textual criticism: "which of these two antithetical interpretations is more coherent within the metatheatrical form of the play; its ironic style, and narrative structure? Which interpretation is better supported by the play's internal mechanics and formal qualities, rather than which one is 'correct' in an empirical sense?" In a personal communication, Alan Dessen writes, "I see no reason to restage/rewrite the blinding in 3.7 or introduce Gloucester's spectacles (some Cornwall actors have gouged out the eye with the toe of their boot or a spur.)"

The blinding of Gloucester is a matter of utmost importance thematically, and one of the most indelible visuals in the play. What message is the action communicating? Is Shakespeare making a statement about the nature of sight and knowledge, or just assaulting the senses of the audience with gratuitous gore? It is now well-established that the form of *King Lear* is metatheatre, not melodrama. Its salient stylistic feature is irony. The main theme of the subplot is the paradox of blindness. Gloucester's spectacles give him a means to see the words of Edmund's letter, but not their true meaning. Had he followed his heart, he would have known the letter was false. It is only by losing his eyes that he sees the truth: *"Full oft 'tis seen Our means secure us, and our mere defects Prove our commodities."* (F, 2200-21). [See note IV,i,20. *"our means."*] Throughout the play, empiricism is totally debunked as a means of true knowledge: *"Get thee glasse-eyes, and like a scuruy Politician, seeme to see the things thou dost not"* (F, 2612-14).

Glasses have been used as a signifier in all forms of theatre, doubtlessly from the time they were invented in Italy in the 13th century. Shakespeare saw them worn by the character Pantaloon, as proven by Jaques in his description of the sixth age of man in *As You Like It*: a *"leane and slipper'd Pantaloone,/ With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side"*, (F, 1136-38). Sophocles' ironic treatment of the theme of "sight" in *Oedipus Rex* is probably the best known to students of drama and literature. The sighted Oedipus is "blind" to the truth whilst the blind Teiresias (known for being transformed by Hera into a woman for seven years) can see the truth by the gift of divination. [See Figure 91.] The metaphor is used throughout *The Bible*, e.g., *"Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see*

not; which have ears, and hear not" (Jeremiah 5:21); "*Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house"* (Ezekiel 12:2); *"Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?"* (Mark: 8:18); *"Touch Me and see"* (Luke 24:39). [See note IV,v,139, *"Mark but the penning of it."*]

Figure 216. "God bless me, what's the matter." by Phiz (Hablot K. Browne). Household Edition Dickens's Pickwick Papers, p. 65. Engraved by one of the Dalziels.

The first great use of glasses in English literature is in *The Pickwick Papers* by Charles Dickens. [See Figure 216.] Mr. Pickwick is hilariously voted *"a pair of gold spectacles"* by members of the Pickwick Club for his contribution in "that celebrated scientific discussion so well known to all men, as the Pickwick controversy" (Chap 11). (For other examples, see John Mullen, "Ten of the best pairs of glasses in literature," *The Guardian*.) The image of smashed or broken spectacles is used as a symbol in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies:* Jack memorably breaks one of the lenses of Piggy's glasses. According to SparkNotes, "This assault symbolizes savagery and lawlessness attacking order, intellect, and civilization." Two haunting examples of broken glasses in cinema are in 1) Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, with its famous shot of the nurse, open-mouthed, bloody, and with broken glasses [Figure 217], and 2) the famous close-up of a shattered pair of glasses in *The Birds*. Morbidly, Hitchcock makes it a point to show viewers that they were not broken by the girl's fall, but by a beak. [Figure 218].

Figure 217. Still from Battleship Potemkin, Sergei Eisenstein, 1925. Eisenstein uses glasses as a symbol throughout the film.

65. ***Stomps on Gloucester's spectacles***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Nicholas Rowe was the first to add the stage direction *"Glofter is held down while Cornwall treads out one of his Eyes"* in 1709, and it continues to be added by modern editors as recently as 2000 by Stanley Wells in the *The Oxford Shakespeare*, *"Cornwall puts out one of Gloucester's eyes and stamps on it"* (p. 209). In not one modern edition is it proposed that the line refers metaphorically to Gloucester's spectacles; nor is any explanation given to readers why Shakespeare intended *"these eyes"* to be interpreted in a literal sense. [See "The blinding of Gloucester" in H.H. Furness's *New Variorum Edition,* pp. 224-26.]

Figure 218. A chilling still from Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* where the broken glasses of a schoolgirl are used as a symbol.

66. **will think**] hopes

67. S.D. ***Cornwall puts out Gloucester's eye***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Likely with a dagger (as in Rembrandt's painting of the blinding of Samson) in contrast with Regan's plucking out the *"other eye"* (F, 2326) with her nails. [See Figure 225.] The duke only moments before drew out his dagger. [See note III,vii,40. S.D., "*Cornwall draws his dagger.*"]

Figure 219. Detail from The Blinding of Samson, Rembrandt (1636), Städel, Frankfurt am Main.

69,73,76,78. ***Cornwall's Knight***] Ed. *Seruant.* (Q, 2145). *Seru.* (F, 2145). *First Servant*. Capell. The character's status as a *household knight* is immediately legible to the audience through his costume: he wears a tabard emblazoned with his lord's heraldic crest and carries a sword that marks his rank. In my restoration, the audience first lays eyes on him in II,i,85, where he stands out physically among the men-at-arms that escort Cornwall and Regan to Gloucester's castle. [See note II,i, 85,*"attended by Cornwall's Knight and four other bodyguards."*] He has a halo effect of chivalry that predisposes the audience to like him before he's said or done anything. In II,iv, at the risk of offending his liege, the character's act of helping the lame Kent offstage visually enacts the chivalric ideals and *noble habitus* expected of the romanticcized knight. [See note II.iv.129. S.D. *"Kent is helped off by Cornwall's Knight and Lear's Knight.*"]

Figure 220. A 1540s depiction of a judicial combat in Augsburg in 1409, between Marshal Wilhelm von Dornsberg and Theodor Haschenacker. Dornsberg's sword broke early in the duel, but he proceeded to kill Haschenacker with his own sword.

The character acquires his full significance only when viewed in the context of chivalry and its normative ideal of masculinity. [See note III,vii, 70. *"I have serv'd you ever since I was a child."*] "Knights adhered to a strict code of chivalry that required them to serve their liege lord in battle. They were required to be courteous, loyal, devoted, morally upright, generous, brave, honorable and gallant toward women." [354] He embodies the ideals of chivalric romance, epitomized by the epic poem *The Song of Roland*—an historical figure alluded to in III,iv,173, *"Childe Rowland"* (F, 1966).

What one of problems when interpreting a play text without costume directions or detailed "action lines" is that "the same message accompanied by different meta-communication can mean something entirely different, including its opposite, as in irony." [647] In my judgment, Cornwall and Regan are being grossly insulting when they refer to the Knight as a *"Villaine"* (F, 2152) and a *"peasant"* (F, 2154). Only in a strictly literal, etymological, and feudal-historical sense could a knight be called a "villain": like a villein, he was ultimately bound to a lord and to land by obligations he could not freely abandon. [See note III,vii,75., *"My villain"*]

69. **Hold your hand**] stop, refrain

Figure 222. Portrait of Alof de Wignacourt with his Page, Caravaggio (c. 1607-1608), Louvre.

70. **I have serv'd you ever since I was a child**] In contrast to Curan, who states that his family served in Gloucester's household for generations, the text implies that *"Seru"* (F, 2145) was a boy sent at age seven to a Cornwall's household to train for knighthood, serving first as a page and later, around age fourteen, as a squire. [See Figure 222.] In medieval Europe, chivalry and knighthood were predominantly associated with noble boys and young men, though neither was absolutely limited to them. [355] "In the European feudal system, military duties [were] performed in return for tenures of land. The military service might be required for wars or expeditions or merely for riding and escorting services or guarding the castle" (Knight Service). "Feudal land tenures were divided into *free* and *unfree*. Of the free tenures, the first was tenure in chivalry, principally grand sergeanty and knight service" (Feudal Land Tenure).

73. **beard**] Cornwall's Knight is alluding to Regan's plucking Gloucester's beard. In Tudor-era Britain, tugging or pulling another man's beard was considered a serious act of insult, provocation, and a challenge to a man's honor and masculinity. [198] [See note III,vii, 33, S.D. "*Regan plucks Gloucester's beard.*"]

74. **I'd shake it]** I'd fight with you. The idea that women are weak and frail is a common stereotype in most cultures. Gallantry to "the fairer sex" is a basic code of chivalry.

74. **Reg**] Ed. *Seru*. (Q, 2151). *Ser*. (F, 2151).

74. **What do you mean?**] Ed. As part of the "Servant's" speech in (F, 2151), (Q1, 2151), (Q2, 2151). [See Figure 223.] Regan understands the Knight's retort as an insult to her sex, and stabs him in the back with a sword before her husband has an opportunity to answer the challenge. Chivalric codes explicitly forbid attack from behind, and stress honorable combat against equals.

75. **—My villain?**] Ed. *My villain?* (F, 5152) *My villain*. (Q, 2152). Historically, a villein was "One of the class of serfs in the feudal system; spec. a peasant occupier or cultivator entirely subject to a lord. a peasant, country labourer, or low-born rustic" (*OED*). In his *Shakespeare Lexicon* Vol II, p. 1319, Schmidt equates **villain** to a "bondman, slave, servant." In this context, it is being wielded loosely by Cornwall as an insult for being his subordinate, like the words *"pezant"* (F, 2154) and *"Slaue"* (F, 2174). Pages, squires, and, later, knights fostered in a great lord's household learned rank-appropriate service through disciplined daily

routines: waiting at table, carrying messages, tending horses, arms, clothing, and equipment, and observing the manners, martial skills, and loyalties expected of their station.

In my restoration *"My villain?"* is an instance of what is called today "dual dialogue." Accordingly, I have put a dash at the beginning of it to indicate that it overlaps with Regan's line *"What do you mean?"* Their speaking together adds to the sense of disorder and confusion on stage. Characters are known to speak simultaneously in Shakespeare, as in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, IV,iii,S,D., *"Speak together."* (F, 2495). In H.H. Furness's New Variorum Edition p. 226), he notes that Schmidt says the stress should be on *"My."*

76. **chance of anger**] risks of a sword fight. The First Servant's challenge is metrically composed. "*Nay then come on, and take the chance of anger"* (F, 2153) scans as a regular pentameter line when *anger* is pronounced "an-ger." It is entirely devoid of the coarseness conventionally used to signal a peasant character, as in Edgar's challenge to Oswald: "*ice try whither your Costard, or my Ballow be the harder"* (F, 2693-4). His language and manners instead accord with someone reared in a noble household and trained for knighthood.

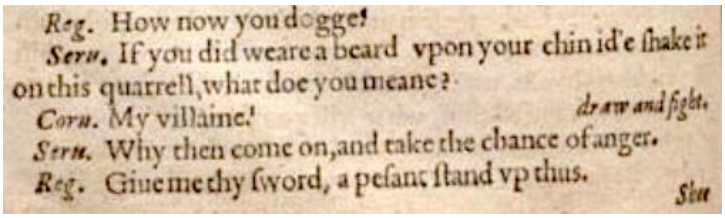

Reg. How now you dogge!
Seru. If you did weare a beard vpon your chin id'e ſhake it on this quarrell, what doe you meane?
Corn. My villaine! draw and fight.
Seru. Why then come on, and take the chance of anger.
Reg. Giue me thy ſword, a peſant ſtand vp thus. Slue

Figure 223. S.D.,*"Draw and fight"*, Quarto 1 (InternetShakespeareEditions).

While the quarto editions include the stage direction *"draw and fight"* (Q1, 2153), the First Folio omits it, forcing editors to determine which textual variant holds greater authority. In my judgment, a prolonged duel between Cornwall and his Knight undermines the play's central theme of chivalry and manliness. [See note V,i,151,S.D., *"Alarum, drums and trumpets."*] The Knight's (*"Seru"*, F, 2145) challenge to Cornwall stands in sharp contrast to Albany's formal, ceremonially regulated challenge of Edmund, and to the spectacle of a medieval trial by combat that follows in the final scene. Albany's encounter with Edmund observes the procedures of chivalric combat; the Knight's intervention, by contrast, immediately exposes the fragility and gendered exclusions of that code. He declares that, were Regan not a woman, he would challenge her directly. Regan responds to this affront by seizing a sword and stabbing him from behind when his back is turned—a killing that is emphatically unchivalric. Ironically, the blow from behind propels him forward into Cornwall whom he wounds involuntarily with his open sword. Compare III,i in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Mercutio is fatally stabbed by Tybalt as an inadvertent consequence of Romeo's interference. For all intents and purposes, it is Regan that causes her husband's death. The notion that that there is any sort of sword play between the duke and his Knight, as indicated in the quartos, does not reinforce the ironic structure of the narrative; confuses Shakespeare's characterization of Cornwall; disrupts the chaotic momentum of Gloucester's trial, and diverts our attention from Regan—the scene is written around her. The trial reaches an apotheosis of insanity when she plucks out Gloucester's *"other eye"* (F, 2326) with her nails.

76. S.D. ***He draws his sword against Cornwall***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

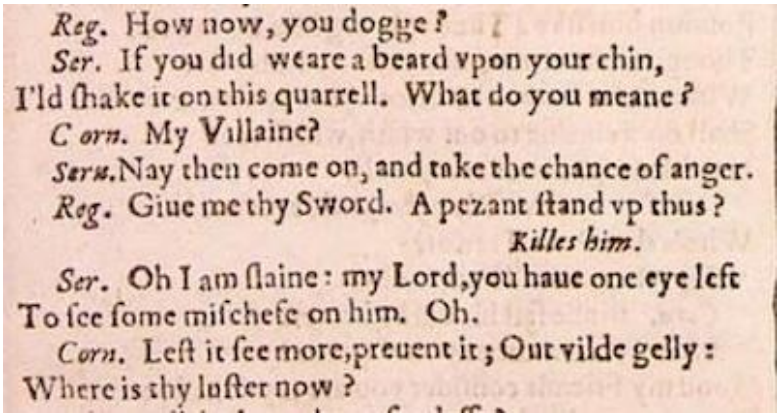

Reg. How now, you dogge?
Ser. If you did weare a beard vpon your chin,
I'ld ſhake it on this quarrell. What do you meane?
Corn. My Villaine?
Serv. Nay then come on, and take the chance of anger.
Reg. Giue me thy Sword. A pezant ſtand vp thus?
Killes him.
Ser. Oh I am ſlaine: my Lord, you haue one eye left
To ſee ſome miſchefe on him. Oh.
Corn. Left it ſee more, preuent it; Out vilde gelly:
Where is thy luſter now?

Figure 224. *"Out vilde gelly," King Lear,* III,vii. Facsimile copy of First Folio (New South Wales), InternetShakespeareEditions.

77. **—Give me thy sword**] Ed. Giue me thy Sword. (F, 2154). Giue me thy sword, (Q, 2154). I believe this line is also an instance of "dual dialogue," and have inserted a dash. Regan is so blinded by rage at the Knight's insult to her sex that she doesn't see or hear his challenge to her husband.

77. S.D. ***She snatches a sword and runs at him behind***.] Ed. *Shee takes a sword and runs at him behind.* (Q, 2155.) *Killes him*. (F, 2155). [See Figure 224.] Compare *The Elder Brother*, IV,iii,133, *Snatches away Eustace's sword*. The trial has turned into a veritable "shit show." It is moving so quickly that Cornwall's bodyguards don't have time to intervene. They are too dumbfounded by the events to think to defend the duke. Compare I,i, *"who stirres?* (F, 134), where none of Lear's attendants immediately fetch France and Burgundy as commanded. Meanwhile, the audience, like Albany in IV,ii, is kept in suspense as to what will happen to Gloucester's *"other eye"* (F, 2326).

77. S.D. ***He falls into Cornwall, inadvertently wounding him***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See **bleeding**, **fall**, **stab** and **sword** in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642.*

77. ***The Duke falls down bleeding***] Ed, Not in Q, F. Cornwall falls to ground bleeding profusely.

78. **I am slain**] This line is said to Gloucester *after* Cornwall has fallen to the ground.

79. S.D. ***He dies***] Ed. *He dies.* (Q2, 2157). Not in Q1, F.

80. S.D. ***To Regan***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

80. **Prevent it!**] Ed. *preuent it,* (Q, 2158*). preuent it;* (F, 2158). Cornwall *commands* Regan to put out the eye. He has been dealt a mortal wound in his gut, and is unable to stand without assistance.

80. ***She plucks out his other eye***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Antonio's Revenge*, V,iii,64,S.D., *"pluck out his tongue."* The "paradox of blindness"—where physical blindness leads to metaphorical insight—is a powerful theme in Euripides' play *Hecuba*, which Shakespeare appears to have read, either in Erasmus's Latin translation or Ovid's *Metamorphoses* translated into English by Arthur Golding in 1567. [See Figure 225.] The theme of blindness is explicitly explored through the character of King Polymestor, whose blinding by Hecuba is a pivotal moment in the play. Shakespeare alludes to Hecuba fifteen times by name in his works. [See note V,i, 266., *"Howl, howl, howl."*]

Figure 225. Hecuba gouges out the eyes of Polymester for murdering her last surviving child Polydorus. From *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, Antoine Vérard: Paris, 1494. British Library IC. 41148, CLVI.

In a letter from March 1979 that I received from Kenneth Muir, editor of *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare* (1951) in regard to the possible corruption of Gloucester's blinding in the quartos and Folio, he replied, "I think it is legitimate for Regan to gouge out Gloucester's other eye (But I doubt if Sh intended this. See the account given to Albany (F, 2312-2329)." Muir did not explain why. Perhaps he reasoned that because Regan is not *explicitly* incriminated in the account given by the *"Messenger"* (F, 2312), that Shakespeare could not have intended her to gouge out Gloucester's second eye. He may have presupposed that the *"Gentleman"* (Q1, 2311.8) (Q2, 2311.8) (F, 2312) was a separate character from the *"Seruant"* (Q, 2176.1) and *"1 Seru"* (Q1, 2177.5)—and not an eye witness to the blinding. Lines Q1, 2176.1-2177.9 and Q2, 2176.1-2177.9 are deleted in Act III scene 7 in the Folio. A specific school of thought—often found among classical actors, directors, and certain critics—holds that there is little to no "modern" subtext in Shakespeare; that the meaning of speeches is dropped directly onto the words themselves. [199] In my restoration, the literal words spoken by the "Messenger" are less important than the hidden meaning, emotions, and motives behind them. The speaker is saying one thing but actively communicating something entirely different to the audience. [See note IV,ii,68. S.D., *"Enter Albany's Squire."*]

From what we have already observed of Regan's need to dominate her husband, it must have been sheer torture for her to watch him put out the first of Gloucester's eyes, especially when he did so at her suggestion: With Cornwall lying wounded on the floor, she does not hesitate to put out the *"other eye"* (F, 2326) as he commands, dispensing with humanmade tools like knives or pokers. Note that the melodramatic quality of the gesture does not take precedence over characterization when performed by Regan. Rather, it epitomizes her savage disposition, represented throughout the play in the poetic imagery. *"With her nailes / Shee'l flea thy Woluish visage"* (F, 826-7), says Lear. *"Because I would not see thy cruell Nailes / Plucke out his poore old eyes,"* says Gloucester. (F, 2128-29). Shakespeare depicts Cornwall as a weak and ineffectual character, a man who lives in fear of his domineering wife. In the context of medieval humorism, he fits the profile of a phlegmatic male: *watery*. Lear speaks ironically of his *"fiery"* humor (II,iv,92, F, 1371). [See note II,iv,92, *"quality."*] Kent likens him to *"Ajax"* (II,ii,123, a jakes, F, 1203), *"a gowtie Briareus"* (F, 187), *"slow as the Elephant"* (F, 180), *"all eyes and no sight"* (F, 188). [See note II,ii,122, *Ajax*.]

Regan overrides the duke's authority on every occasion. She countermands his sentence on Kent to sit in the stocks till noon (F, 1214), and imposes an even stricter penalty of her own. Regan signals to her husband that she wants Gloucester blinded, not killed as Goneril advises,

presumably because of the greater pain and humiliation he will suffer: *"Plucke out his eyes"* (F, 2064). [See note III,vii, 81., *"Where is thy lustre now?"*] No sooner is the earl bound to a chair than she begins plucking his beard (F, 2100-01). She then usurps the duke as the man appointed to lead Gloucester's interrogation, and subsequently becomes so aggressive in her questioning that Cornwall begs her to slow down: *"Wherefore to Dover. Let him answer that"* (F, 2125). She does not give her husband the chance to defend his honor when challenged to a sword fight, but murders the chivalric Knight in cold blood for insulting her sex. Unlike Hecuba in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, who uses her hands to gouge out the eyes of Polymester, and is metamorphized into an barking animal, Regan's blinding of Gloucester with her nails fulfills our every expectation of the character. [See Figure 225.]

80. **Reg**] Ed. As a continuation of Cornwall's speech (Q, 2158), (F, 2158).
80. **Out, vile jelly**] Ascribed to Cornwall in Q, 2158 and F, 2158.
81. **Where is thy lustre now**] Cornwall is characterized by his slow, dull-witted speeches. [See II,i,104. *"Nor I, assure thee, Regan"*] Regan, on the other hand, is sharp-witted. She is incapable of uttering a single word without a double-edge. We recognize the line *"Where is thy luster now"* as one of hers by its mocking quality; her need to further taunt Gloucester in his misery.
83. **sparks**] Used of the stars: "*The Skies are painted with vnnumbred* ***sparkes****"* (*Julius Caesar*, F, 1271). Schmidt, Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II, p. 1095.
88. **abus'd**] Wronged
89. **prosper him**] Cause him to flourish
91. S.D. ***Exit two with Gloucester***] Ed. *Exit with Glouster.* (F. 2171). Not in Q. Two of Cornwall's bodyguards. They lead him out the door stage left.
91. **How look you**] How are you
92. **Follow me**] attend, wait on. See Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary,* Vol I, p. 432. Cornwall needs Regan's assistance to rise from the ground and exit the scene. He has been mortally wounded.
92. **villain**] scoundrel. Compare note IV,v,243., *"Villain."*
93. **This slave**] Cornwall's Knight.
94. S.D. ***Two of Cornwall's knights exeunt with the body***] Ed. Not in Q, F. They carry him through the left door.
95. S.D. ***Exit Cornwall, led by Regan***] Ed. *Exit*. (Q, 2176). *Exeunt*. (F, 2176). They leave through the center opening.
95. S.D. ***Music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lines 96-104 are omitted in the First Folio. Lines Q, 2176.1-2177.5 serve the practical function of allowing the stagehands (presumably costumed as domestic servants) to clear the platform. The music helps muffle the noise they are making, and provides a sound bridge, as in movie music. It is being performed by the consort musicians in the gallery. It is not part of the diegesis.
96. **Curan**] Ed. *Seruant*. (Q, 2176.1). *Second Servant.* Capell. See note *Dramatis Personæ*, "Curan."

Figure 226. "Young Squire with Man in Armour". Giorgione. Ca. 1501-1502, The Uffizi.

97. **Squire**] Ed. *2. Seruant* (Q, 2176.3). *Third Servant.* Capell. The audience recognizes the Squire by his youth, and the tabard he is wearing with his lord's coat-of-arms. He arrives in III,vii with Goneril and the group of Albany's armed knights sent to escort her. His job is to bring back news about the impending war with France. Like Curan, he is not carrying a sword; possibly a caduceus or "herald's wand."

The Squire's empathetic nature is the most important quality of the character, as demonstrated by his bandaging of Gloucester's eyes: *"[I]le fetch some flaxe and whites of egges to apply to his bleeding face"* (Q, 2177.8-9). His knowledge and possession of unguents is in keeping with his role as a squire: "The innkeeper before giving the sword thrust of knight errant to Don Quixote, advises him to get a squire who always carries "bandages and unguents with which to heal" (Chap. III). (See "Home remedies in Don Quixote," by Park Chul.)

Figure 227. The Squire in the Ellesmere manuscript of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

Readers of Geoffrey Chaucer, of whom Shakespeare was one, are sure to recall the youthful and inexperienced Squire in *The Canterbury Tales*. He is described in the *General Prologue* as "twenty yeer of age … a lovyere and lusty bacheler … of greet strengthe …fressh as is the monthe of May . . . embroidered like a meadow bright." The character of the Squire in The Squire's Tale contrasts with that of his father in The Knight's Tale. A similar dynamic comes to mind in the relationship between the Duke of Albany and his Squire, who, too, is being taught the ways of chivalry and manhood. Jacob Hughes writes that "critics such as Donaldson and Anne Thompson have found that Chaucer's thematic influence is rife throughout much of Shakespeare's canon" ("Chaucer Lost and Found in Shakespeare's Histories").

Figure 221. "The Knight's Tale" from the Ellesmere Chaucer (Huntington Library, San Marino).

The Squire's somewhat effeminate behavior is looked on with disapproval by his patriarch. Albany is impatient with the boy's convoluted, emotional account of Gloucester's blinding in

IV,ii. He is not given a straight answer to his question about the *"other eye"* (F, 2315), and has to ask him a second time what happened it: *"Lost he his other eye?"* (F, 2326). In the final scene, before Lear's entrance with the body of Cordelia, the Squire reacts with horror and pity on seeing Goneril and Regan dead. Albany reproaches the lad for feeling pity. *"This iudgement of the Heauens that makes vs tremble. / Touches vs not with pitty"* [See note V,i,232-3.]

The role of Albany's Sqire in *King Lear* is largely poetical. Like Chaucer's Squire, Albany's Squire is young and idealistic, unjaded by experience of the world. He is a symbol of innocence, like the adolescent girl Paola waving to Marcello on the beach at the end *La Dolce Vita*. [See Figure 317.] One of the central themes of the play is what it means to be a man. In my restoration, the final couplet in the play is addressed to Albany's Squire: *"The oldest hath borne most, we that are yong, / Shall neuer see so much, nor liue so long."* (F, 3300-01). Shakespeare leaves the audience pondering what choices the boy will make on his road to becoming a man. [See note V,i,326,SD.,*"To Albany's Squire."*]

Parenthetically, it may be that this good-looking young actor would go on to be cast as Troilus in *Troilus and Cressida* (1609), which Shakespeare based on Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. In the play, Troilus is regarded as a paragon of youthful male beauty. Pandarus (played by Armin?) says Troilus *"has not past three or foure haires on his chinne"* (F, 266-67). He tells Cressida that Helen praised his dark complexion above Paris's. He is described as having a *"clouen chin"* (F, 274). The character of Troilus is represented as an idealist lover, who has not come of age (F, 240).

100. **Curan**] Ed. *1 Ser.* (Q, 2176.5). Second Servant. Capell.
101. **Would]** wishes to go.
101. **roguish]** like a vagabond, i.e., as a madman vagabond he can do anything. Anyone else would be punished for helping Gloucester.
103. **Squire**] Ed. *2 Ser.* (Q, 2176.8). Third Servant. Capell.
103. **flax**] linseed or flaxseed oil. Ambroise Paré treated wounds with a mixture of egg yolk, rose oil and turpentine.
104. S.D. **Exeunt severally**] Theob. Exit (Q, 2177.5). Albany's Squire exits through the center opening; Curan through the door stage left.

ACT IV, SCENE I] *Actus Quartus. Scene Prima* (F, 2177). Scene 15 in Quarto.

S.D. **The Heath**] Capell; not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Yard and the Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. "The Study" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. **Enter Edgar**] F, 2178, Q, 2178
S.D. ***still disguised as Tom o' Bedlam***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
S.D. ***from under the stage***] Edgar emerges from under the stage as he did in II,iii and III,iv, costumed as a bedlam beggar and wearing the horn of an ox. [See Figure 142.] It is not until

he blows it that his presence is detected by his father and Curan—the *"Old Man"* (F, 2192).

3. **dejected**] abased, cast down.
3. **of**] at the hands of
4. **Stands still in esperance**] is always in a condition of hope. Compare *Measure for Measure*, III,i, *"The miserable haue no other medicine/ But onely hope"* (F, 1205-6).
6. **returns to laughter**] must inevitably change for the better
9. **Owes**] When a man's debts are paid, he fears no creditors.
9. S.D. ***Enter Gloucester***] Enter Glouster (F, 2188). Enter Glost. After *age* (Q, 2192).
9. ***with a staff***] Wells. Not in Q, F. See IV,v. *"That fellow handles his* ***bow*** *like a crowkeeper"* (F, 2535). See also IV,v, "*ice try whither your costard or my* ***ballow*** *be the harder"* (F, 2694). Edgar uses the staff later in the scene to disarm Oswald.
9. S.D. ***led by Curan***] Ed. *and an Old man.* (F, 2188). *led by an old man.* After *age* (Q, 2192). If Curan is the same character as the *Seruant* (Q, 2176.1) or *"Second Servant"* (Capell), it follows by he is the *Old Man*.
10. **Poorly**] "in a mean and beggarly manner" (Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*: **poorly**.)
11. **strange**] unknown
11. **mutations**] changeableness
12. **Life would not yield to age**] men would kill themselves but for the very twists of fate that make us hate the world in the first place. Edgar is basically reiterating what he said before, that hope for change for the better keeps men alive.
12, 17, 26, 29, 30, 40, 45, 49. ***Curan***] Ed. *Old man.* (Q, 2193). *Oldm.* (F, 2193).
13. **tenant**] "One who holds of another, vassal, servant." See Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*: **tenant**. A senior chamberlain could be—and almost always was—a lord's tenant in feudal England.
16. **comforts**] attempts to assist me.
19. **I stumbled when I saw**] One of the central paradoxes in the play.
20. **Our means secure us**] Specifically, Gloucester's spectacles, which gave him the means to "see."
21. **Prove our commodities**] Our disadvantages prove advantages.
22. **The food of thy abused father's wrath**] that on which his anger fed, the object of his anger.
24. S.D. ***Edgar winds his horn***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Edgar announces his presence by blowing his horn. His father and Curan don't see him because he is standing in the yard as in II,iii and III,iv.

Video 30. Sound of an ox horn.

24. **Who's there**] Compare note III,iv,109., *"Who's there?"*] Gloucester and Curan enter on the platform, and do not see Edgar until the latter reveals himself from *below* in the yard by blowing his horn.

25. S.D. ***Aside***] Johnson; not in Q, F.
27. S.D. ***Aside***] Johnson; not in Q, F.
31. **He has some reason**] He has some sensibility
36. **wanton boys**] Heraclitus, whom Shakespeare alludes to as the *"the weeping Phylosopher"* (F, 241-2) in *The Merchant of Venice*, compared an aspect of the cosmos and time (known as *Aion* in Greek) to a boy playing an ancient Greek board game called petteia. It was played with black and white "pebbles" on a grid. "Αἰὼν παῖς ἐστι παίζων, πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἡ βασιληίη" (Diels-Kranz B52). A common translation is "Time is a child playing a game of draughts; the kingship is a child's". [200] This fragment was available to scholars in the Renaissance who studied Heraclitus's work.
37. **They kill us for their sport**] Part of an extended metaphor of the sport of hunting. [201] The simile gives concentrated expression to the play's recurring vision of cosmic injustice. [See Appendix A.]
37. S.D. ***Aside***] Johnson; not in Q, F.
37. **How should this be?**] i.e., how should I have to come to play the fool to sorrow.
46. **madmen lead the blind**] A reference to the Biblical parable of the blind leading the blind. Matthew 15.14.

Figure 228. The Parable of the Blind, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1568, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.

48. **the rest**] all
49. **'parel**] apparel. Curan tells Gloucester he will bring poor Tom the finest clothes in his possession . . .
50. **Come on't what will**] . . . but expresses reservations about the impression it is going to make. One possibility is that the clothes are not the right size. In *Macbeth*, Angus alludes to Macbeth's title of King *"hang*[ing] *loose about him, like a Giants Robe"* (F, 2199). In the *Winter's Tale*, IV,iii, Autolycus (played by Robert Armin) changes garments with Florizel. Later in the scene, the Shepherd remarks, *"His Garments are rich, but he weares them not Handsomely"* (F, 2630-31). Armin is believed to have been short in stature, [202] and the prince's clothes don't fit him properly. In my restoration, Curan is referring to a braw Scottish Breacan an Fhéilidh or great *kilt*. [See note IV,v,S.D., "*Enter* Edgar, *wearing a kilt.*"] Proper English-men don't wear dresses; hence the caveat. See "Blunting Lances and Razing Towers: Masculine Performance and Early Tudor Reforms" by Jacob Burt, Chapel Hill, 2006). [Figure 229]. "The General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland in 1575 prohibited the ministers and readers of the church (and their wives) from wearing tartan plaids and other 'sumptuous' clothing."

Figure 229. Earliest illustration of a belted plaid c. 1600.

"Curran is an Irish and also a Scottish surname. According to Word Finder, "The name derives from the 10th century Gaelic name O'Corraidhin, meaning "the male descendant of Corraidhin" a personal name which comes from "corradh", a spear. (Origin Celtic)." Might not the etymology of the name derive from the striking red hair of the family? *Curran* is Gaelic for wild carrot.

50. S.D. ***Exit***] F, 2239. Not in Q.
51. S.D. ***Aside***] Johnson; not in Q, F.
51. **daub it further**] dissemble any more.
53. S.D. ***Aside***] Johnson; not in Q, F.
55. **horse-way]** bridle-path.
58. **Hobberdidance**] Ed. Hobbididence (Q1, 2248.2). Not in F. Compare note III,vi,30.

Figure 230. Woodcut of the Devil Tempting a Woman's Vanity with a Mirror.

60. **possesses**] "This is generally supposed to have been suggested by the three chambermaids in the family of Mr. Edmund Peckham, mentioned in Harnett's *Declaration*, but Moberly gives it a general reference to chambermaids 'who perform these antics before their mistress' dressing-glass'" (Furness, p. 236). Malone quotes from Harnett's *Declaration* as well: — Make antike faces, grinne, mow and mop like an ape." Cf. III,ii,35-6, "For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass."
64. **Have humbled to all strokes**] Have brought so low as to accept humbly the bitterest strokes of Fortune (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare,* p. 142).
64. S.D. ***Giving him a purse***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *As You Like It*, II,vii, *"The sixt age shifts / Into the leane and slipper'd Pantaloone,/ With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side."* (F, 1137-38). It seems a tradition of symbolists in the Renaissance for rich old men carry to coin pouches with them, probably to signify their foolishness because it is a sure invitation to thieves, as in Breugel's painting "The Misanthrope" and Bosch's "The Conjurer." Gloucester gives Edgar another coin bag in IV,v,30 containing a valuable jewel (F, 2465).
66. **superfluous**] pampered, having too much. Compare II,ii, "*our basest Beggers / Are in the poorest thing* ***superfluous****."* (F, 1564-5). Cf. also III,iv, "*Take Physicke, Pompe, / Expose thy selfe to feele what wretches feele, / That thou maist shake the* ***superflux*** *to them, / And shew the Heauens more iust."* (F, 1814-17).

67. **slaves**] subjugate, enslave
68. **feel**] feel sympathy. Compare note IV,v, 140. S.D., *"Feels Lear's open palm"*.
72. **bending**] leaning over its base
73. **fearfully**] so as to inspire terror in one who looks over the edge.
73. **in**] into
73. **confined**] restrained, by the cliffs
78. S.D. ***Exeunt***] F, 2265. not in Q.

ACT IV, **SCENE II**] *Scene Secunda* (F, 2266). Scene 16 in Quarto.

S.D. **The Duke of Albany's Palace**] Capell, *subst*. not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. "The Study" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Flourish***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* **flourish,** p. 94. "A fanfare usually played within on a trumpet or cornet, primarily when import figures enter." It is being used to signal to the audience that the setting, location, and time of the story has shifted.
S.D. ***Enter Goneril and Edmund***] Theobald; *Enter Gonorill and Bastard.* (Q, 2267); *Enter Gonerill, Bastard, and Steward.* (F, 2267). Goneril and Edmund enter from the large center opening in the *frons*.
1. **Welcome**] Goneril and Edmund arrive together at Albany's castle. She is welcoming him to her home. See "**Welcome**", Alexander Schmidt, Shakespeare Lexicon, pp.1349-50.
2. S.D. ***Enter Oswald***] Theobald, subst. *Enter Steward.* (after *master*) (Q, 2269.1). Not in F.
2. S.D. ***severally***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Oswald enters from the stage door on the right indicating he is coming from inside the castle.
8. **sot**] fool
11. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Hanmer. Not in Q, F.
12. **cowish**] cowardly
13. **undertake**] show enterprise or courage, or assume responsibility.
13-14. **He'll not feel wrong . . . answer**] He will ignore insults that demand a response
14. **Our wishes on the way**] i.e., that she will be rid of Albany, and free to marry Edmund.
15. **May prove effects**] might come true.
16. **musters**] troops
17. **change**] exchange.
17. **arms**] the insignia of our sexes, the sword and the distaff.
19. **like**] likely
21. **A mistress's command**] Goneril is quibbling on the word 'mistress': 1) "A woman who employs others in her service; a woman who has authority over servants, attendants, or slaves" (*OED*, **2.b**.); 2) "A woman loved and courted by a man; a female sweetheart" (*OED*, **5.a**).
21. S.D. ***Gives him a glove***] Ed. Not in Q, F. *Giving a favor.* Johnson. Once again, there are no stage directions in the quartos or Folio describing what favor Goneril gives to Edmund. As I try to show in this restoration, stage directions are not just simple, repetitive actions that copy

the spoken words. They provide deep subtext, emotional context, and psychological meaning that the dialogue alone cannot express. They are fundamental choices that dictate how a story feels, looks, and delivers its deeper meaning. They define the genre of the play, its rhythm, and the rules its universe.

Goneril's gesture is ironic and laughable only if Regan gives Oswald the same token to bring to Edmund in IV,v,33: **a glove**. *"If you do finde him, pray you giue him **this**; / And when your Mistris heares thus much from you,/ I pray desire her call her wisedome to her"* (F, 2420-22). Wearing a suitor's glove specifically inside a hat was was a widely accepted, legitimate custom of chivalric devotion. [509] Portia, in her assumed character, asks Antonio for his gloves, which she says she will wear for his sake (F, 2347); and Henry V gives the pretended glove of Alençon to Fluellen (F, 2683-84), which afterwards occasions his quarrel with the English soldier. The practice is alluded to by Edgar in III,iv,71., *"wore gloves in my cap."* (F, 1866). [See portrait of George Clifford in Figure 231 as to how the glove was worn—like the crest on the top of the head of gallinaceous birds.] Dr. Paul Werstine notes in a personal communication that in the commentary of S.E. Goggin's 1910 edition of *Lear* ,"Goneril gives Edmund a glove or a jewel"—but he does not address the theatrical purpose of the gesture—specifically, how it fits within the narrative structure of the play as a whole, and if Shakespeare is *"'aving a laff."* [210] [See Appendix L.] 16th and 17th century satirists aggressively mock hat and glove etiquette to lampoon the superficiality of high society. [510]

Figure 231. George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland, Nicholas Hilliard, c. 1590. The glove he has pinned to his hat looks suspiciously like the crown of a cockscomb.

Shakespeare sets up a closely related gag before the battle when Goneril takes Regan by the hand to forcibly restrain her from leaving with Edmund: *"Oh ho, I know the Riddle, I will goe."* (F, 2878). [See note IV,vii,37, *Reg.*] The reader first saw her do so in I,i,303 to indicate that she and her sisters are of one mind and heart. In II,vi,190, Lear's comments on the gesture: "*O Regan, will you take her by the hand?"* (F, 1484). Shakespeare's father was a glover.

23. S.D. ***She kisses him vehemently***] Ed. not in Q, F. Compare note III,vii,21, S.D., "*She kisses him vehemently"* i.e., as Regan did in III,vii.
25. S.D. ***Exit Edmund***] Rowe. *Exit*. (after *death*) (F 2293); not in Q. He exits from the door stage right.
26. **O, the difference of man and man**] Goneril is referring explicitly to her husband; however, the remark is said within earshot of young Oswald, whose relationship with "his mistress" is implicitly understood by Shakespeare's prurient audience as having a sexual component.

Regan also assumes they are having an affair: *"I know you are of her bosome"* (F, 2413). Compare *"I am doubtfull you haue beene coniunct and bosom'd with hir"* (Q, 2859.1). This helps explain why such a pretty-looking boy from a poor family (if not a foundling) was elevated to a position of high command in Goneril's household. [See "The Steward in Matters Domestical."] It also adds heft to Lear's claim that behind her puritanical facade, she is sexually insatiable: *"The Fitchew, nor the soyled Horse goes too't with a more riotous appetite:"* (F, 2565-67).

Beyond the blatant insult to her husband, Goneril's lewd remark is sure to wound Oswald's ego, leaving him to wonder if he failed to measure up. The eyes of the audience naturally turn to see his reaction, as they did to Edmund when Gloucester introduces him to Earl of Kent as a bastard. [Compare note I,i,11, *"conceive."*] The core contrast between Oswald and Edmund, however, lies not in their sexual prowess, but in their **origins**—poverty and illegitimacy. These distinct backgrounds shape their existential choices as both characters strategically deploy their erotic capital to navigate the rigid boundaries of English society and laws. The question of nature versus nurture is a prominent theme in the play. [See note V,i,245, "nature."] Goneril's remark strips all three men of their dignity, reducing them to mere consorts whose only purpose is to satisfy her lust. As the firstborn, her right to the throne is secured by primogeniture: *"the Lawes are mine not thine, / Who can araigne me for't?"* (F, 3116-7).

28. S.D. ***Exit***] *Exit Stew*. (Q, 2299). Not in F.
28. S.D. ***Enter Albany***] (F, 2299). Not in Q. (He enters through the *right* door, i.e., from inside the castle.)
29. **worth the whistle**] 'It is a poore dog that is not worth the whistling.'

Figure 233. Lorris and Jean de Meun, Roman de la Rose.

Lines 31-50 (Q, 2303.1-17) omitted in the Folio.

31. **fear**] have fears concerning.
32. **its**] ith (Q1, 2303.1); it (Q2, 2303.1)
33. **Cannot be border'd certain itself**] cannot be kept within fixed bounds, cannot be trusted not to break the pale.
34. **sliver**] sear off
34. **disbranch**] sever, cut off
35. **material**] forming the substance of a thing, nourishing, essential, necessary.
37. **text**] on which you have been preaching.
39. **Filths savor but themselves**] Filth smells only itself. See Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare*

Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary: **savour**.

42. **head-lugg'd**] pulled by the head. "To pull, give a pull to, to pull by (the ear, hair, etc.); to tease,worry, bait (a bear, bull, etc.) (*OED* **1**.)
43. **madded**] driven mad.
45-50. **If that the heavens … like monsters of the deep**] Compare note V,i,245. "*That's but a trifle heere"* (F, 3267)
46. **visible**] in visible form.
47. **offenses**] offenders
50. **Milk-liver'd**] white-livered, cowardly

Lines 54-9 (Q, 2307.1-5.) Omitted in Folio.

Figure 234. Drummer from Soldiers and Officers, Jacob de Gheyn II, 1587, The Cleveland Museum of Art.

56. **noiseless**] because no military action has been taken. The reference is to martial music. [See Figure 234.]
57. **thy state begins to threat**] Jennens; not in F. thy state begin thereat (Q1, 2307.3); thy slaier begins threats (Q2, 2307.3).
58. **moral**] moralizing
60-1. **Proper deformity show . . . woman**] Deformity, appropriate to the fiend, seems more horrible in a woman, because of its inappropriateness.
62. **changed**] transformed
62. **self-cover'd**] i.e. covering herself with a woman's shape.
63. **feature**] appearance
63. **Were't my fitness**] if it were proper for me
64. **blood**] instinct, passion
65. **apt**] ready
66. **howe'er**] but although.
68. **mew**!] A sexist insult. Goneril, by imitating a cat's noise, suggests that Albany is a "pussy" or a "**Múccia**, a kitlin, a *pusse-cat*, a young cat, a pug." [203] (John Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words*, 1611) Compare note III,vi,45, "Purr".

Figure 235. Old Soldier Turned Nurse. From The World Turned Upside Down.

68. ***Trumpet within***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The trumpet serves as a sound bridge and heraldic badge. In Shakespeare's plays, trumpets were often used to signal the arrival and status of characters.

Here, it signals to the audience that "Albany's Squire" is an important figure.

68. S.D. ***Enter* Albany's Squire**] Ed. *Enter a Messenger.* after *foole* (F, 2312). *Enter a Gentleman.* after *news*? (Q, 2313). (He would enter from the left door indicating distance.) As noted in The Dramatis Personae, who's who among the tertiary characters in the quartos and folio is uncertain. In my restoration, the "*Messenger"* (F, 2312) or *"Gentleman"* (Q, 2313) in this scene is the *"2 Seruant"* (Q, 2176.3) and *2 Ser.* (Q, 2176.8) in III,vii who I have given the name "Albany's Squire." He is an eye witness to Gloucester's blinding, who afterwards dresses his wounds. The character is sent with Goneril by Albany to bring him back news of the rumored war with France. He wears a tabard displaying his lord's coat of arms, and carries no weapon.

Here, what Albany's Squire is saying is less meaningful than what he's NOT saying. He conspicuously avoids any mention of the roles Goneril and Regan played in Gloucester's inquisition. "No one loves the messenger who brings bad news," writes Sophocles in *Antigone*. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, when a Messenger arrives to tell Cleopatra that Antony has married someone else, she flies into a rage, strikes him, and threatens his life: "*Hence horrible Villaine, or Ile spurne thine eye / Like balls before me: Ile vnhaire thy head, / Thou shalt be whipt with Wyer, and stew'd in brine,/ Smarting in lingring pickle"* (F, 1105-09). Likewise, Shakespeare addresses the dread messengers face when carrying bad updates in *Henry IV, Part 2*. Northumberland recognizes the tragic look on a messenger's face before the man even speaks, noting *"he first bringer of vnwelcome Newe / Hath but a loosing Office"* (F, 160-1).

In my restoration of the plot, Albany's Squire is standing right next to Goneril in III,vii when she advise Cornwall to execute the earl: *"Hang him instantly"* (F, 2063). She is doubtlessly glowering at him now, with murder in her eyes, as she did the Fool in I,iv., 183.*,"so your face bids me"* (F, 708-9). [See note I,iv,176., *"frontlet."*] Fearing her wrath, he delivers an evasive, equivocal account of the Knight's death (F, 2317-20). He tells his lord that he was killed *"**going** to put out/ The other eye"* (F, 2314-15). Significantly, he neglects to say if he succeeded in doing so or by whom. Impatiently, Albany has to ask *again* what happened to the second eye. *"Both, both,"* he replies hastily before giving Goneril a letter: *"'Tis from your Sister"* (F, 2329). Albany is dissatisfied with his poor account of Cornwall's death and explicitly instructs him to give a fuller report as they depart together. The Squire's speech reinforces the dramatic irony integral to the play's style and narrative structure.

70, 81, 83, 89, 90, 92. **Squire**] Ed. *Gent*. (Q, 2314). *Mes*. (F, 2313).

72. S.D. ***Goneril frowns at him***] See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* **frown,** p. 97. The Fool mentions the murderous ferocity of Goneril's frown in I,iv,182, *"so your face bids me."*

73. **thrill'd**] excited, moved, pierced.

73. **remorse**] compassion.

74. **bending**] directing.
75. **To**] against.
76. **fell'd**] they felled.
78. **This shows you are above**] Compare IV, 45-50., *"If that the heavens ... like monsters of the deep."* Puritans in England, like Philip Stubbs, were staunch believers in divine retribution, and the character of Albany represents their views. It is the reason he leaves it to the gods to decide Edmund's guilt in a trial by combat, because he believes them to be the ultimate arbiters of justice. See Appendix A.
79. **justicers**] judges.

Figure 236. God's destruction of Sodom in *The Dore Gallery of Bible Illustrations*, Gutenberg.

79. **nether crimes**] crimes committed here below
82. S.D. ***Presents a letter***] Collier. Not in Q, F.
83. S.D. ***Aside***] Johnson. Not in Q, F.
85. **building in my fancy**] Goneril rightly imagines the malignant pleasure her sister will take in telling her that she is now a widow, and, inferentially, available to marry Edmund.
86. **hateful**] her life is hateful because she is married to Albany.
87. S.D. ***Exit***] Exit (Q, 2334). Not in F. She exits from the door stage right.
90. **back**] on his way back.
97. S.D. ***Exeunt***] (F, 2347). *Exit.* (Q, 2347). They exit from the door stage right.

ACT IV. SCENE III] Scene 18 in Quarto. [See Appendix D: The Gentleman in Scene 17 (quartos)]

S.D. ***The Same. A tent***] Capell. A Camp Rowe; not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Scene 20 (IV,iii) "The Platform" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter, with drum and colors,* Cordelia, Doctor, *and* French Soldiers**] Pope *subst. Enter Cordelia, Doctor, and others. Exit.* (Q, 2350). *Enter with Drum and Colours, Cordelia, Gentleman, and Souldiours.* (F, 2349-50). They enter from the center opening.

S.D. ***She is holding Lear's doublet***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In I,iv, Lear refers to unbuttoning what is logically a doublet, *"Come, vnbutton here"* (F, 1888-89). Cordelia recognizes it as belonging to her father presumably from 1) personally knowing it to be his, and 2) from its outmoded style and lurid color. The dominant palettes and their social meanings shift noticeably between early-16th-century Tudor England and the 17th century. [204] Presumably, the *"Persian"* riding cloak Edgar was wearing is still lying in the skinning shed, after he was told to take it off: *"I do not like the fashion of your garments. You will say they are Persian; but let them*

bee chang'd" (F, 2036-38). Seeing Cordelia holding the doublet creates suspense around what exactly Lear is wearing before the audience sees him in IV,v.

Figure 237. Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, by Unknown Anglo-Netherlandish artist, circa 1575.

1. S.D. ***To Doctor***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See IV,iii,11., *Doct*.
3. **Crown'd**] See note IV,v,80., S.D. *camouflaged with weeds*.
3. **rank**] "Chiefly of vegetation: vigorous or luxuriant in growth. In later use usually in negative sense: growing too luxuriantly or rampantly; thick and coarse" (*OED*). "Our vyne waxeth ranke and must nedes be cutte." W. Bonde. *Pylgrimage of Perfection*, 1526,
3. **fumiter**] fumitory, an Old World plant, often considered a weed, that flowers in early spring. "Fumiter is erbe, I say/ Yt spryngyth i April et [and] in May" (*Fumitory, Or Earthsmoke, Weeds and wild flowers: their uses, legends, and literature by Lady Caroline Catharine Wilkinson*, p. 88. Chaucer mentions the word "fumeterere" as a laxative in "The Nun's Priest Tale" which takes place "When that the month in which the world began,/ That highte March, when God first maked man,/ Was complete, and y-passed were also,/ Since March ended, thirty days and two." "Its popular name of 'beggary' is perhaps due to the association of this weed with the poorer types of land" (Fumitory, WSSA)

   It is said the favorite food of the turtledove is fumitory, an indicator for rich, cultivated lands. If the land were healthy and bountiful, it would likely be full of fumitory—and turtle doves. The only European dove that migrates to winter in northern Africa, they are one of the latest migrants to appear in Europe at the end of April, drawing our first symbolic tie to spring. The turtle dove's diet of wildflower seeds fortifies its connection to springtime. [205]
3. **furrow-weeds**] "Furrow- weeds" does not refer to a genus of flower but to any unwanted plant that finds its way into "a narrow trench made in the earth with a plough" (*OED*).

Figure 238. In the Spring, Burdock produces spiky purple flowers in the shape of orbs, similar to thistles. Photo Credit Shutterstock.

4. **burdocks**] Hanmer. *Hardokes* (F, 2354). *Hor-docks* (Q, 2354). "Any of various weeds, *spec*. the burdock, *Arctium lappa*. (*OED*). The word "hardocks" is most widely thought to be a compositorial error for. In the Spring, burdock produces spiky purple flowers in the shape of orbs, similar to thistles. These flowers turn to dry burred seed pods that stick to your pant legs in the Fall. he flowers and leaves can be used to make tinctures and teas. It's young Spring shoots can be eaten in the Spring. [206]
4. **hemlock**] Poison-hemlock starts growing in the early spring. "The plant, called hemlock, has

been found in Cornwall in the aftermath of Storm Emma," which struck Ireland between the 28th of February and the 4th of March 2018. "Joshua Quick, a professional forager, discovered the lethal plant on Porthkidney Sands in Cornwall and warned that even a small amount could easily kill" *The Sun*, Jon Rogers. [See Video 31.]

Video 31. "Identifying Hemlock." Hemlock grows in the UK from March to September.

4. **nettles**] Perennial nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and the annual nettle (*Urtica urens*) are usually considered to be weeds. "The best time to harvest nettles is the first few weeks of spring when the leaves are young and tender. The plant will be under a foot in height. Read more at Gardening Know How: Stinging Nettle Greens: Tips For Growing Nettle Greens In The Garden by Amy Grant.

Figure 239. Cuckooflower. Photo by J. Patrick Fischer. "Perhaps the best way to define a flower vs a weed is to consider Ian Emberson's line of poetry: 'A weed is a flower in the wrong place, a flower is a weed in the right place." (Cathy Habas, "Are Daisies Weeds of Flowers?")

4. **cuckoo-flowers**] Cuckooflowers (also known as Lady Smocke) flower in early spring, from April to June. Its timescale is identical to the arrival and departure of the Cuckoo bird and it is thought this is where the name comes from. "In Folklore, it was said to be sacred to the fairies and brought bad luck if it was taken indoors. It was not included in Mayday garlands for the same reason." [See Figure 239.]
5. **Darnel**] Darnel is "wheat's malign twin" and mimics its growing cycle. It can be sown during spring and autumn. "Darnel's close physical and agronomic resemblance to its host crop, together with its cryptic corruption of the food chain, has led to the weed developing a sinister and subversive reputation. It has been a trope for evil and sedition throughout literary history, and in particular has been used to identify and vilify heterodoxy and heresy (Archer et al. 2014). With distinct roles in classical and Christian traditions, darnel has been used to figure both religious dissent (and scapegoating) and political sedition. For example, the conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, who sought to reinstate Roman Catholicism in the Protestant England of King James I, were accused of sowing "Popish Darnell" (Gamage 1613:sigs A7rA7v). The message did not escape those unable to read: in one of a handful of visual representations of darnel outside of herbals during the early modern period, Gamage's poetic allusion to o "Popish Darnell" is accompanied by an image depicting the plant burning in place of the martyr at the stake. (*Remembering Darnel, A Forgotten Plant Of Literary, Religious, And Evolutionary Significance*, Howard Thomas, Jayne Elisabeth Archer, and Richard Marggraf Turley, Journal of Ethnobiology 36(1): 29–44, 2016, p. 31. [See Video 32.]

Video 32. "Inishmaan and the Darnel Project: A short film highlighting the history & ecology of Darnel (Lolium temulentum) and the work to save it."

5. **idle**] unwanted, worthless; in comparison with corn, which is cultivated and valued.
6. **corn**] "Elizabethan farmers typically grew 'corn' which is what they called cereals such as wheat, rye, and barley. They did not grow maize, the type of corn familiar to Americans. Maize could not grow in England because the weather was too cool" (*Elizabethan Home Life*).
6. **century**] a hundred soldiers

Figure 240. The unimproved nature grassland at Polebrook farm (Kent) is thought to have remained unchanged for more than 700 years. Photo: Picasa/Tania Pascoe.

7. **high-grown**] When Cordelia says that the fields are "high-grown", she is referring to the height of the "weeds," which are overgrown, and overrun the fields. [See Figure 240, "Polebrook farm, Kent".] As noted below, the DIY costume Lear has made for himself in IV,v serves the practical purpose of camouflage in the uncultivated meadows. He is planning a sneak military attack on his *"Sons in Law"* (Q2, 2629). (See note IV,v,80. S.D. *camouflaged with weeds.*)
8. S.D. ***Exit a French Officer***] Malone (subst). Not in Q, F. The actor appears again in IV,v with Lear's Knight and another French Soldier. He exits from the door stage left indicating they are heading for the country.
8. **What can man's wisdom**] human knowledge
9. **In the restoring**] to restore
9. **bereaved**] robbed, impaired.
10. **helps**] cures
10. **worth**] possessions.
11. **Doct**] Q1, 2361; *Gent*. (F, 2361). See note IV,vi,12. S.D., "*To the Doctor.*"
13. **provoke**] induce
14. **simples**] medicinal herbs
16. **virtues**] beneficial qualities
17. **aidant and remediate**] helpfully remedial.
19. **rage**] frenzy.
20. **the means**] i.e. his reason.
20. S.D. ***Enter Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Enter messenger*. (Q, 2371). *Enter Messenger* (F, 2372).
20. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Mes*. (Q, 2371). *Mes.* (F, 2373). The audience needs to see that Lear's Knight has made contact with Cordelia to make sense of his appearance in IV,v with French soldiers. [See note IV,v,185,S.D.,*"Enter Lear's Knight."*]
22. **preparation**] our troops, ready for battle.
24. **It is thy business I go about**] Cordelia's words echo Luke 2:49 (*"I must be about my Father's business"*).

26. **importun'd**] importunate
27. **blown**] large; her intent is not to overthrow the government
29. S.D. ***Drum sounds***] Ed. Not in Q, F. As noted, music is used to mark the ending of one scene or the beginning of the next. The sound of the drum is diegetic. See IV,iii, S.D.,"*Enter, with drum and colors.*"
29. S.D. ***Exeunt***] (F, 2381). *Exit.* (Q, 2381). They exit through the center door.

ACT IV, SCENE IV] *Scena Quarta* (F, 2382). Scene 19 in Quarto.

S.D. **A Room in Gloucester's Castle]** Cap, subs.; not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Lords Rooms**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Scene 19 (IV,iv) "The Chamber" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961). Regan wants to discuss the subject of Goneril's letter to Edmund secretly with Oswald, hence her taking him to a private space. As in III,iii and III,v, this scene is short (44 lines). The characters take their positions and talk to each other. Movement is restricted by the "Lords" whose space on the second level of the tiring-house they are sharing. [See Figure 9.]
S.D. ***Enter Regan and Oswald***] Steward. Q, 2383. F, 2383
S.D. ***above***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Cf. note "above" in III,iii and III,v.
2. **with much ado**] after much fuss and persuasion
6. **What might import . . . him]** It is inferred that Oswald previously told Regan that he had been ordered by his mistress to bring a letter to Edmund.
8. **serious matter**] important business.
9. **ignorance**] folly.
12. **In pity of his misery**] The line is ironic.
13. **nighted**] darkened, because he is blind.
18. **charg'd my duty**] earnestly enjoined me to carry out her instructions.
20. **Belike**] In all likelihood, probably.
21. **some things**] Regan is likely thinking that Edmund is soon to be hers in marriage due to the death of her husband,—a thought she catches herself from saying aloud.
21. **love**] recompense. Compare I,iv, *"Thou seru'st me, and Ile loue thee."* (F, 618). From this singular sense of the word, her mind switches to the *love* Oswald shares with Goneril who she and the audience assume is sexual. Shakespeare plays on the multiple meanings of *love* in II,ii when Oswald asks Kent if he'll **love** him in II,ii: *"Prythee, if thou lou'st me, tell me."* (F. 1080) In IV,vii (scene 22), Albany greets her with the words, *"Our very **louing** Sister, well be-met"* (F, 2865). See note IV,vii, 18.,*"Reg."*
25. **œilliads**] Cotgrave defines the word as 'an amorous look, affectionate wink'. qu Furness p. 264.
26. **of her bosom**] 1) in her confidence 2) her lover. Compare *"I am doubtfull that you haue beene coniunct and bosom'd with hir"* (Q, 2859.1-2). [See IV,vii,13 note.]
29. **take this note**] take note of what I say.
30. **have talk'd**] have come to an understanding.
31. **convenient**] fitting

32. **You may gather more**] You may deduce more from my hints: that she has had sex with Edmund.
33. **this**] a glove. The same favor that Goneril gave to Edmund in IV,ii,21. The irony has the effect of humanizing these two horrible women, sort of like the Boggart-Banishing spell "Riddikulus" in *Harry Potter*. They are not the evil step-sisters in Gaelic folklore to be feared, but tragically foolish characters to be laughed at and pitied. [See Figure 231.]
33. S.D. ***Gives him a glove***] Ed; not in Q, F.
34. **thus much**] what I have told you.
40. ***Exeunt***] (F, 2428). Exit. (Q, 2429).

ACT IV. SCENE V.] *Scena Quinta* (F, 2429). Scene 20 in Quarto.

S.D. **The Country near Dover**] Theob; not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Scene 20 (IV,v) "The Study and the Platform" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).
S.D. ***Solemn music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* **music**, pp. 146-148. Compare *Cymbeline*, *"Solemne Musicke"* (F, 3065). The music signals the change between scenes IV,iv and IV,v, and functions as a sound bridge comparable to its use in cinema. [207] Note that the music is nondiegetic. It does not exist in the story's world, and is not heard by the actors. The score helps keeps the audience emotionally engaged during Gloucester's slow journey onto the platform, and down to the front of the stage.
S.D. ***Enter Gloucester*]** *Enter Gloucester, and Edgar.* (F, 2430). *Enter Gloster and Edmund*. (Q, 2430).
S.D. ***with a staff*]** Wells. Not in Q, F. See note IV,i,9.

Figure 241. A romanticized Victorian-era illustration of a MacGillivray clansman wearing a kilt and feathered bonnet. By the end of the 16th century, bonnets were very fashionable among Scotsmen at the time. It was a simple craft, requiring inexpensive materials and little special equipment. From R.R. McIan, *The Clans of the Scottish Highlands*.

S.D. ***wearing a kilt***] Ed. Not in Q, F. dressed like a peasant. Theobald. [See note II,iii,6, *"preserve myself."*] Edgar is wearing the *"best Parrell"* (F, 2238) owned by Curan (aka *"Old Man"*, F, 2188)—a belted plaid, the precursor of the modern kilt. "Its prestige among 16th-century Scots was measured by its vibrant colors, expensive dyes, and complexity of the weave chosen for the fabric." [512] [Figure 229 and Figure 241]. [See note IV,i,50.,*"Come on't what will."*] His outfit is topped with a traditional "blue bonnet" (OED, 1.a) or Balmoral hat "dating to at least the 16th century." [209] Andrew Gurr discusses the convention of wearing hats in The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642): "The unbonneted Hamlet familiar to modern audiences is a creation of indoor theatre and fourth-wall staging . . . where everyone goes hatless." [See

Figure 242.] The scene's Scottish symbolism extends further when Lear hires Edgar for his mercenary army using a thistle as payment. The thistle is Scotland's national flower. King James I valued his Scottish origins and surrounded himself with Scots. [208]

> The type of kilt that we will begin to encounter in the 16th century is called a *feilidh-mòr* (great wrap), a *breacan-feile* (tartan wrap) or simply a belted plaid. All refer to the same garment. I prefer the latter for ease of use. A plaid or plaide is a length of heavy woolen fabric worn over the body like a mantle or a shawl. It has nothing to do with the modern American usage of the word plaid, except that they were often of a tartan pattern, which "plaid" is synonymous with in America. A belted plaid is simply a very long plaid that had been gathered into folds and belted around the body. It is often called in modern reenactment circles a "great kilt." Despite what you saw in *Braveheart* the belted plaid was not worn in the 13th and 14th centuries. The belted plaid costumes worn in that movie were not even very good representations of the belted plaids. I honestly do not know how the costumers could have claimed to have done any historical research — they simply designed a garment that they thought looked both Scottish and medieval.
>
> The truth of the matter is that only one document has yet been found that dates from before 1600 and without a doubt describes a belted plaid, the earliest form of the kilt. It is an Irish source, written in Gaelic. In the Life of Red Hugh O'Donnell written by Lughaidh O'Clery, we read of a group of hired mercenaries from the Scottish Hebrides, employed by O'Donnell in 1594. "These were recognized among the Irish by the difference of their arms and clothing, their habits and language, for their exterior dress was mottled cloaks to the calf of the leg with ties and fastenings. Their girdles were over the loins outside the cloaks." ("Early History of the Kilt" by Rev. Mr. Matthew Newsome)

Figure 242. Actors wearing hats. Francis Kirkman, *The Wits* (1662). From *Shakespeare's England* (1917).

The scene is metatheatrical, favoring existential absurdity over literal believability. It is an striking precursor of Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* in which Nagg and Nell live legless in dustbins, and the blind Hamm remains confined to a throne-like armchair pushed around by the long-suffering Clov. "Nothing is funnier than unhappiness," says Nell. "It's the most comical thing in the world." See note IV,v,81.,*"The safer sense will ne're accommodate His Master thus"* (F, 2528-29). *King Lear* registers as allegory, like Shakespeare's poem "The Phoenix and the Turtle." In Renaissance drama, metatheatrical moments can make an allegorical reading feel stronger by reminding the audience that characters, actions, or stage devices may stand for larger moral, political, or spiritual meanings rather than just literal plot events. [511]

Figure 243. Mark Rylance as Hamm,Tom Hickey as Nagg and Miriam Margolyes as Nell in Samuel Beckett's "Endgame" directed by Simon McBurney at the Duchess Theatre in London. (Photo by robbie jack/Corbis via Getty Images).

2. **climb up**] When Edgar speaks about "climbing up", he and his father may actually be ascending some sort of a portable ramp or stairs lead to the platform. Walter C. Hodges' notes in *The Globe Restored: A Study of the Elizabethan Theatre*, "There is in Middleton's *Family of Love* a remark by one of the characters who says that he went to a play at the Fortune, where he 'saw Sampson bear the town-gates on his neck from the lower to the upper stage.' Perhaps he is not talking about an upper stage on the second level of the tiring house but the platform some six feet 'above' the yard" (pp. 48-50). [See Appendix I: Main Entrance at The Globe.]

7. **Methinks thy voice is altered**] Even now, Gloucester is suspicious of the identity of "mad Tom". [See note III,iv,126.,*"gets."*] Here, he dramatically puts Edgar on the defensive: "*Me thinkes thy voyce is alter'd, and thou speak'st/ In better phrase, and matter then thou did'st"* (F, 2440-41). After hearing him speak the word *Father"* (F, 2666) later in the scene, he gets further agitated. [See note IV,v, 218,*"What are you?"*]

Figure 246. Hunters in the Snow, Pieter Breugel the Elder, 1565, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. One man carries the "meager corpse of a fox." Breugel shows us Man and the world from a bird's eye.

11. **Here's the place**] Edgar leads his father to the edge of the platform and gives him an imagined, vertiginous "bird's-eye" view of the world from what he believes is the highest cliff at Dover—where *"crows and choughs appear as beetles, fisherman on the beach look like mice, cock-boats buoys almost too small for sight"* (F, 2448-57). It can be compared to Pieter Bruegel's "*Hunters in the Snow*" (1565) with its extreme, panoramic high-angle perspective designed to emphasize the vastness of the natural world and the extreme vulnerability of human beings within it. Bruegel's painting depicts a group of hunters approaching a steep precipice; their downturned heads suggest that a few more steps could send them plunging over the edge. A sign hanging from the inn translates to "This is the Golden Deer" with an image of a stag bearing a crucifix, representing Saint Hubertus—the patron saint of hunters. The sign is depicted hanging precariously by a single hook, symbolizing the hunters' failure: they have only succeeded in killing a fox, an animal rarely eaten as a primary food source. In the distance are people ice skating—a common metaphor for the fragility and precariousness of the human condition. Bruegel renders humankind as diminutive and inconsequential within the vast, encompassing order of the cosmos.

Figure 247. The Ambassadors (1533) is a painting by Hans Holbein the Younger.

In *Richard II*, Shakespeare uses the imagery of "perspectives"—a popular Renaissance term for anamorphosis, such as the hidden skull in Hans Holbein's painting *The Ambassadors* (1533). [Figure 247]. [521] Bushy tells the Queen that while looking at a tragedy straight-on just causes confusion, tilting your perspective reveals the true form of the situation—that her imagined fears are simply shadows: *"Each substance of a greefe hath twenty shadows / Which shewes like greefe it selfe, but is not so: / For sorrowes eye, glazed with blinding teares, / Diuides one thing intire, to many obiects, / Like perspectiues, which rightly gaz'd vpon / Shew nothing but confusion, ey'd awry, / Distinguish forme"* (F, 966-72). In *Hamlet*, the protagonist's feigned madness and the shifting political landscape of Elsinore act as "literary anamorphosis." Depending on the vantage point of Claudius, Polonius, or Ophelia, Hamlet's behavior shifts wildly from nonsensical raving to profound truth. [527] In *King Lear*, Act III's storm effects take on fluid, subjective meanings that shift from character to character. This instability extends to stage properties, exemplified in III,vi, when a simple joint-stool is farcically misidentified as Regan. The play's linguistic volatility reaches its apotheosis in IV,v, where the literal-minded Gloucester fails to comprehend what Lear is saying to him. Standing atop the Dover cliffs, men on the beach resemble mice; yet from the king's fractured perspective, Gloucester appears *"a Gyant"* mouse (F, 2537). [See note IV,v,93., *"giant."*]

My *King Lear* restoration hinges on a striking parallel between Shakespeare and Cervantes: both utilized anamorphism to shape their narratives. In *Don Quixote* (1605), for instance, the famous windmill attack is completely recontextualized depending on whose eyes are viewing the event. [522] Reality is not a single, objective truth, but is instead shaped by individual beliefs, experiences, and imaginations. Cory A. Reed writes that Cervantes takes a "relativist, critical stance toward empirical reality …. [that] challenges the reliability of determinism, objectivity and literalism" ("Chaotic Quijote: Complexity, Nonlinearity, and Perspectivism," 1994). Arsenio Rey writes in his essay "Onomastic Perspectivism of Don Quijote":

> The onset of the industrial revolution was the era in which the empiricist and other philosophers of the concrete, such as the positivists, stressed the importance of naming things scientifically. The linguistic history of mankind tells us how strong and steady is man's tendency to classify, to distinguish and to put labels to the tangible and the intangible. It is a question of security, an urgent need to establish patterns and principles to which he can relate and feel grounded. While we know that all these labels spring from conventions and private invention, future generations, although they unquestionably would accept what their forefathers had decided upon, could change them. Within this perspective of change, every name and word depend on the relativity of our knowledge; therefore, persons or things can never be named in a fixed, unchangeable way. Miguel de Cervantes was well aware of this and he took a stand against the then-current traditionalistic trend. Departing from such conventionalities he takes hold of other conventions,

> expanding the possibilities of meaning in multiple perspectives. ("Onomastic Perspectivism of Don Quijote", Arsenio Rey, *Literary Onomastics Studies* (1980): Vol. 7 , Article 21. LOS 257.)

Some scholars use the term "literary anamorphosis" to describe the techniques of John Donne, [523] whose time in London overlapped with Shakespeare's from approximately 1590 until the latter's death in May 1616. Donne began composing his poetry in the 1590s, creating metaphysical conceits that combined wildly incongruous images—like a flea becoming a marriage bed and temple in "The Flea" —forcing readers to look at the ordinary world through a metaphysical lens that coaxes new perspective through paradoxical imagery. In Shakespeare's metaphysical poem "The Phoenix and the Tur-tle", he too utilizes shifting perspectives to explore how Reason perceives the paradox-ical, metaphysical union of the two avian lovers. [524] Reason's inability to comprehend the union—yet its final mourning of the birds—illustrates how poetry can "think in a way that metaphysics cannot", transcending the limits of rational understanding. [528]

13. **Choughs**] jackdaws
15. **sampire**] rock samphire. "Rock Samphire comes into season in spring, from the end of April and lasts through to October/November. Although it is at its best in spring and summer, it can be picked later in the year, more care needs to be taken to pick only fresh young growth as the older growth is stringy or woody" (seedaholic.com). [See Figure 245.]

Figure 245. Rock samphire growing on the cliffs at Dover. Photo by Karen Roe for White Cliffs of Dover.

18. **mice**] Compare *"Looke, looke, a Mouse"* (F, 2535-6).
18. **bark**] "A small ship; in earlier times, a general term for all sailing vessels of small size, e.g. fishing-smacks, xebecs, pinnaces" (*OED*, **1.a**). "The Dover Strait, or the Strait of Dover, is a vital maritime route in the Western European region located at the narrowest part of the English Channel. It has been a strategic route since ancient times, and the Romans called it the Fretum Gallicum or Fretum Britannicum or Fretum Morinorum." [211]
19. **Cock**] cockboat, a small rowing boat
21. **unnumber'd**] innumerable
21. **idle**] "moved by a kind of continual and frivolous agitation to no purpose or effect" (Eccles) q. Furness p. 269.

Video 33. Buster Keaton doing a pratfall known as a "108" among clowns. Buster was in his 50s when this was filmed.

27. **leap upright**] straight up, erect: *Henry VI,* Part II, "*I haue seene / Him capre vpright, like a*

wilde Morisco" (F, 1670-71); *Henry IV, Part II*, "*Away, you horson vpright Rabbet, away"* (F, 868). Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol II.,* p. 1301. The phrase "leap upright" suggests a vertical jump. Gloucester's theatrical suicide, therefore, may have left him to land face-up on his backside supine in a manner reminiscent of Buster Keaton's celebrated "108" pratfall. [See Video 33.] [See note IV,v,34., *"O you mighty Gods."*]

28. **jewel**] Precious jewels have been worn as talismans in both Britain and Ireland from prehistoric through medieval and early modern periods. These objects combined status display with explicit protective functions aligning with ancient folk beliefs. [212] [213]

29. **Fairies**] Compare *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where Puck call rubies, *"fairy favors"* (F, 382). Fairies or *aos sí* (in Scottish mythology they are *daoine sìth*) were thought to be especially active during the Spring equinox. Early modern England and Ireland were described by contemporaries as deeply superstitious societies due to widespread beliefs in witchcraft, the evil eye, and folk magic. Some of these superstitions, at least in part, trace back to Celtic mythology. [214]

29. S.D. ***Gives him a purse***] Not in Q, F. See *As You Like It*, II,vii, *"The sixt age shifts / Into the leane and slipper'd Pantaloone,/ With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side."* (F, 1137-38). Gloucester appears to be carrying several coin pouches. See note IV,i,64.

29. S.D. ***Edgar takes out a jewel***] Ed. Not in Q, F. There are no costume directions in *Lear* indicating what jewelry Gloucester is wearing. Dramatic writing requires that the last thing the earl does before killing himself be intrinsically tied to the narrative arc of the character. The ring he gives Edgar has to be more than an expensive rock. It requires a backstory. Audiences in Shakespeare's day would have been highly alert to the meanings conveyed by a character's jewelry. [217] [218]

In medieval and early modern lapidary lore, gems were revered for their symbolic ties to astrology, as well as their reputed powers as amulets against evil, poison, and illness. For example, in *Henry VIII*, King Henry gives a ring to Cranmer as protection against plotters, echoing beliefs in gems' spiritual powers to fend off evil: *"this Ring / Deliuer them"* (F, 2953-4). Despite the rise of Renaissance humanism, the early modern period saw a surge in popular superstitions, including witchcraft, astrology, and magic. Early modern England and Ireland were described by contemporaries as deeply superstitious societies, with astrology integrated as a respected intellectual pursuit. [215] Queen Elizabeth I consulted astrologers like John Dee, and wore talismanic jewel stones. [216] King James I extensively addressed the occult in his 1597 treatise *Daemonologie*, framing it as a real threat tied to witchcraft, demonology, necromancy, sorcery, and spirits.

Gloucester's costume is notable for the striking intaglio or signet he wears as a talisman in every scene through III,vii, repeatedly fidgeting with it when he's upset. His belief in astrology is dramatized in his "eclipse speech" (F, 433-46), and Edmund's speech countering it (F, 447-61). The earl's irrational beliefs in supernatural forces is also evidenced in the text when he immediately accepts Edgar's explanation that a *"Fiend"* with *"Hornes wealk'd"* (F, 2516) tricked him into jumping off a cliff. Just as the banished Earl of Kent conceals his family signet ring in a *"Purse"* (see Appendix E), Gloucester keeps his own precious

heirloom hidden. Gloucester's lucky charm is the last earthy thing he parts with before leaping off the cliff, ironically giving it to his legitimate son.

33. S.D. ***Aside***] Capell.

33-4. **Why I do trifle thus with his despair/ Is done to cure it**] In Renaissance medicine, "imagination-based therapy" for severe melancholia (suicidal depression) was a psychological approach based on the belief that black bile physically corrupted the brain's faculty of imagination, causing patients to experience terrifying false judgments and fatal despair. Physicians treated it with interventions designed to disrupt, redirect, or soothe the patient's corrupted imagination. [520] Physicians and scholars widely used the techniques of Marsilio Ficino in the 130 years between his 1489 medical treatise, *De vita libri tres* (Three Books on Life), and the publication of Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*in 1621 [529] Ficino compared the power of the imagination to the Greek sea god Proteus, noting that "the faculty of imagination is many-formed". This imaginative faculty was central to his Neoplatonic magic, where it served as the crucial link between the material and spiritual worlds. [519] [See note IV,v,55., *"miracle."*]

Video 33a. 1:45:57 – 1:46:11. David Threlfall (Edgar) and Leo McKern (Gloucester) in Laurence Olivier's widely seen 1983 television production of *King Lear* directed by Michael Elliott.

34. **O you mighty Gods**] In both quartos there is a stage direction, *He kneeles.* (Q, 2472). It is not given in the Folio. In the critically acclaimed 1983 television adaptation of *King Lear* staring Laurence Oliver, Gloucester (Leo McKern) flops forward onto his stomach from a kneeling position. [See Video 33a. 1:45:57 – 1:46:11.] It is, for the most part, a rudimentary physical action designed to appear natural, rather than a flamboyant, acrobatic display intended to provoke laugher—such as Keaton "108", in which the performer propels himself forward to land supine on his backside. [See Video 33.] McKern's fall in *Lear* recalls the sophisticated humor found in the tragicomedies of Anton Chekhov—a playwright celebrated for psychological realism. [536] [535] The audience may register absurdity, but the effect comes mixed with sympathy and pathos. Slapstick comedy, like the suicide lazzi in Italian *commedia dell'arte*, creates a safe play zone in which violence is highly stylized. By making the audience cognitively aware that the violence is staged for comic effect, the performance invites laughter. A striking literary analogue to the comic devices Shakespeare employs in *King Lear,* including Gloucester's fall, is the celebrated windmill episode in Cervantes's contemporaneous novel *Don Quixote* (1605), crafted as exuberant farce. He uses storytelling techniques to make readers laugh at the Knight's madness while simultaneously feeling deeply sorry for him. [See note IV,v,41, S.D., "*He falls.*"]

38. **opposeless**] irresistible

39. **snuff**] the smoldering wick of a candle. It is nearly burnt out.

40. S.D. ***blows a raspberry***] Ed. Not in Q, F. There are no stage directions in the quartos and folios indicating what sound Edgar makes that turns Gloucester's attention back to him: *"Now*

Fellow, fare thee well" (F, 2480): A sneeze? A burp? A snort, —as though he dozed off from boredom listening to his father's prayer? Any of these sounds would be appropriate *lazzo* to accompany an attempted suicide in *Commedia dell'arte*. In my judgment, his blowing a raspberry is the most metatheatrical choice because it refers back to the horn he has been blowing time and again. Here, Shakespeare is parodying his own theatrical style just as Edmund does in I,ii when Edgar enters on cue. (See III,iv,37; lll,iv,94; III,vi,72; and IV,i,24.) Dante ends *Inferno 21* [219], "with a burlesque treatment of military behavior as practiced by devils in Hell . . . The devils signal to their leader that they have understood his instructions by pressing their tongues between their teeth. He in turn signals them to depart on their mission with a trumpet blast from his ass" (*Inf.* 21.137-39). Geoffrey Chaucer makes jokes about farting in "The Miller's Tale." Nicholas sticks his buttocks out the window and lets *"fle a fart / As greet as it had been a thonder-dent."* [64] In "The Summoner's Tale", Thomas presents a "gift" he is sitting on to a greedy Friar, which turns out to be a fart: "*And whan this sike man felte this frere / Aboute his tuwel grope there and heere, / Amydde his hand he leet the frere a fart"* (2147-2149).

Figure 247. Bronze Statuette of a Comic Actor Farting, The Roman Empire, Circa A.D. 1 to 125.

Actors in ancient Roman comedies, including those of Plautus, likely made fart sounds by squatting and sticking two fingers in the corner of their mouths as represented in the 2,000-year-old bronze statuette of a comic actor blowing a raspberry. [See Figure 247.] In *commedia dell'arte*, servants like Arlecchino and Pulcinella were known for their crude, physical antics, although the specific techniques of their performing farts on stage have not been documented in the literature.

Figure 248. Scene della commedia dell'arte, fine xviii-inizio xix secolo 01, Museo del Teatro alla Scala (Milan).

> "'The humor of crepitation,' observes Jeffrey Henderson, 'is extremely frequent in [sc. Greek Old] comedy.' Karion releases a bit of intestinal gas in front of the Asclepieion in *Wealth* (696). And fart jokes are not rare in Plautine comedy; Gorgylio himself threatens to knock a *crepitum polentarium*, a "pungent fart," out of any Greek philosopher that gets in his way (*Gorgylio* 295). The pun can therefore hardly be accidental here—and a toot from the tibicen, as well as a "Greek" accent, would make the double entendre obvious." ("A Cute Illness in Epidaurus: Eight Sick Jokes in Plautus' *Gorgylio (Curculio*)" by Michael Fontaine, pp 35-36.

Figure 249. Flatulentist. A plate originally from The Image of Irelande by John Derricke, published in 1581. Note the flatulentists on the right side (h/t the Lavatory Reader).

41. S.D. ***He falls***] *He fals.* after "fare thee well" (Q, 2480). *He falles*. (Q2, 2480). Not in F. In modern productions of *King Lear*, Gloucester's suicide is typically choreographed as a simple forward, face-down fall, sometimes from a kneeling position following the prompt "*He kneeles"* in the quartos (Q, 2472). Instead of leaping into the air, the actor pitches forward landing flat on his stomach. [See Video 33a. 1:45:57 – 1:46:11.] The staging foregrounds the character's interiority, drawing on Romantic and psychologically realist traditions.

Susan Synder writes of the action in her essay "*King Lear*: A Modern Perspective": "when physically acted out [it] becomes something like a clown's pratfall." It recalls suicide lazzo in *commedia dell'arte*—a comic routine built around a character's exaggerated threat or attempted act of self-destruction, played for absurdity rather than realism. [529] [See note IV,v,27, *"leap upright."*] Staging a suicide attempt for laughs may have been as objectionable to the Master of Revels in 1606 as it is in modern times. "Suicide was regarded as a heinous crime in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, a kind of murder committed at the instigation of the devil. Suicides were tried posthumously, and if they were found to have been sane when they took their lives, they were severely punished. Their moveable property was forfeited to the crown or to the holder of a royal patent; their bodies were buried profanely, interred in a public highway or at a crossroads, pinioned in the with a wooden stake."(Michael MacDonald, "The Medicalization of Suicide in England: Laymen, Physicians, and Cultural Change, 1500-1870", University of Michigan.)

In performance tradition before the 20th century Gloucester's attempted suicide was staged and conveyed largely through verbal illusion and non-graphic stagecraft because suicide was a sensitive, often taboo subject for audiences and authorities. J.S. Bratton writes, "In 1773 it struck one critic at least as a 'despicable farce' to see Gloster taking a jump upon the boards' and he claimed 'our laughter is infinitely more provoked that our sensibility (Steevens, pp. 502-3). Edmund Kean had his Edgar advance and catch Gloucester as he prepared to fall, and this became the accepted practice: Gloucester was 'about to leap' when arrested by Edgar. Charles Kean had Edgar interpose verbally instead of physically shouting out 'Hold—who comes here?' (l.80) and so cutting all the rest of their exchange to the entrance of Lear. Edmund Kean and Macready also went straight from this point to Lear's entrance; the cut hurried over any failure of conviction in the supporting actors, or used any emotional tension they may have been able to generate to add effect to Lear's entry. Phelps, who also had Edgar 'quietly' get in front of Gloucester and catch him in his arms as he plunged, cut to l. 73, inserting before it "had he been …been past", ll. 44-4. …. The usual twentieth-century practice has been to require Gloucester to make the jump; in the Brook production, for example, stressing this scene, had him jump and fall and faint away, completely convinced by the fiction Edgar had

created. (*Plays in Performance: KING LEAR*, pp.175-77).

King Lear takes the form of metatheatre. It deliberately exposes its own artifice to explore how what is perceived as "real" is illusion. In his foundational 1900 text, "Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic", Henri Bergson theorized that laughter is "incompatible with emotion" and demands a "momentary anesthesia of the heart". Slapstick carefully manipulates the tension between danger and safety; if the balance tips toward perceived real harm, empathy overrides amusement. [515] Landing in a controlled "108"-style pratfall and simply collapsing forward generate markedly different theatrical effects. The former displays technique and intentionality, cueing the audience to read the moment as comic display; the latter, lacking such stylization, is more readily interpreted as expressive of pathos. The bias against slapstick interpretations of *Lear* is centuries old as evidenced today in film and television adaptions. For example, Oswald's fall in I,iv is staged as a realistic, painful moment rather than a comedic pratfall. For slapstick to function, the physical action requires exaggeration, and the assurance that the violence is comically safe rather than real. [See note I,iv,79, S.D., *"Kent trips up his heels."*]

Video 33b. *King Lear* TV movie (2008) directed by Trevor Nunn (2008) starring Ian McKellan. Oswald (John Heffernan) 31:35 – 3159

According to Richard Dutton, Robert Armin likely played the clown Mouse in the King's Men 1606 production of *Mucedorus*. The character's pratfall may have been so popular with Jacobean audiences, that he reprised the stunt in the role of Gloucester that same year, transforming "Mouse" into an inside joke for theatergoers: *"As he goes backwards the Bear comes in, and he tumbles over, and runs away and leaves his bottle of Hay behind him"* (I,3-1 Mucedorus.27.) [See note IV,v, 89-90, *"Look, look, a Mouse."*] That is, Dutton's theory suggests an intertextual link between Mouse in *Mucedorus* and the *"Mouse"* in *Lear* (F, 2536). [See note IV,v, 89-90, *"Look, look, a Mouse."*]

Armin's reputation among modern scholars is that he was "more interested in intellectual approaches" to comedy. It "really rested in wit and word play." [536] However, if he did add Mouse's pratfall in *Mucedorus,* and repeated the same gag in *Lear,* there is reason to believe he may have possessed strong skills in lowbrow physical comedy. "Artificial fools" in the 16th century were often highly skilled multipurpose entertainers who are said to seamlessly combined jokes, music, dancing, acrobatics, and physical comedy, like his mentor Richard Tarlton. [537] [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.]

42. S.D. ***Aside***] Capell. Not in Q, F.
42. **conceit**] imagination, delusion
44. **Yields**] consents
46. **Friend**] Edgar assumes yet another dialect, probably the "Dover yawl" as would be expected

of someone living in the county of Kent. The accent helps signal where in story the characters are supposed to be, and draws further attention to Edgar's being an actor, not a "real" person. [See Video 34.] Foakes notes in *The Arden Shakespeare* that the word "*'Friend'* is required for the metre" (p. 330). Compare IV,v,288, *"friend."*

Video 34. Traditional Accents and Dialects of South East England: Kent.

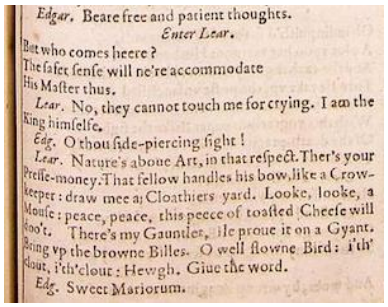
47. S.D. ***Aside***] Not in Q, F.
47. **pass**] die
53. **at each**] one on top of the other
54. **fell**] fallen
55. **miracle**] Edgar uses his father's superstitious beliefs in demonology and the supernatural to trick him into imagining that his survival is a divine miracle. Shakespeare explicitly explores how grief and guilt warp imagination to produce suicidal ideation, most notably in *Hamlet*. [530] In early modern England, the imagination was viewed as a powerful, sometimes dangerous bridge between sensory perception and the mind's internal passions. Shakespeare's exploration of suicide in *King Lear* may reflect his own personal struggles. Dr. John J. Ross argues in his paper "Shakespeare's chancre: did the bard have syphilis?" that "The psychological impact of venereal disease may explain the misogyny and revulsion from sex so prominent in the writings of Shakespeare's tragic period.…Shakespeare's late-life decrease in artistic production, tremor, social withdrawal, and alopecia were due to mercury poisoning from syphilis treatment." Poor Tom's self-described ruin in III,iv (F, 1832-38) is a stark prelude to the archetypal downfall of Tom Rakewell immortalized in William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress*. Both narratives follow a prodigal son through London's hedonistic excesses—prostitution, gambling, and disease—to his ultimate end in Bedlam. Edgar describes himself as being chased by "[the foul fiend] *that hath laid Kniues vnder his Pillow, and Halters in his Pue, set Rats-bane by his Porredge"* (F, 1835-36). In IV,i, he says it is only hope for the better that keeps him from killing himself: *"World, World, O world! / But that thy strange mutations*
57. **bourn**] boundary of the sea, confining it
58. **a-height**] on high
58. **shrill-gorg'd**] shrill-throated
63. **beguile**] cheat
65. S.D. ***He helps Gloucester to his feet***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
66. S.D. ***He sits***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Hypothetically, Gloucester is sitting on his haunches downstage when Lear enters. [See note IV,v, 88: *"That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper."*]
71. **whelk'd**] twisted
71. **enridged**] furrowed
72. **father**] An old man commanding respect (*OED, 6a*)
73. **clearest**] pure and luminous

Figure 250. Mosaic with mask of Silenus, 1st century AD, The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. The Festival of Dionysus was the theatrical event of year in 5th century Athens. Every year in the spring playwrights would compete to entertain the masses of Athenian citizenry.

80. ***Enter Lear***] *Enter Lear.* (F, 2526). *Enter Lear mad.* after *thus* (Q, 2526). [See note IV,v,11., *"Here's the place."*] How Gloucester's "suicide" leap is staged is crucial when considering the style and tone of Lear's ensuing "mad" scene. Does Lear's diatribe function as a satirical, grotesque deconstruction of rhetoric and justice? Does the form of the scene disrupt passive empathy so audiences may think critically about the social and political issues Lear is addressing? Is Shakespeare showing us the character's catastrophic descent from high to low, or his paradoxical rise to from foolishness to wisdom? Is the scene overtly laughable, built on slapstick physical comedy and bodily humor, matching the wild, low-comic style found in Cervantes' contemporaneous novel *Don Quixote*? The restoration of the play demands that staging decisions resist both historical determinism and arbitrary invention, and instead proceed from exacting textual analysis, contextual research, and a reasoned inference of authorial design.

Video 35. Sir Laurence Olivier performing Lear's famous "mad scene" in Granada's 1983 TV production (1:47:31 to 1:151:00

The pivotal interpretive question is whether Lear's opening lines were conceived by Shakespeare as *internal* thought or as *outward* speech addressed to his fellow players on stage: was it written as a monologue or a dialogue? The way Shakespeare's editors have codified the scene's plot rests less on the hermeneutic discipline of rigorous textual criticism than observable theatrical precedent. All actors of renown from the Restoration to the present day have performed Lear's entrance as a solo speech as exemplified by Sir Laurence Oliver in the video below. [See Video 35, 1:47:31 to 1:151:00.]



Edgar. Beare free and patient thoughts.
Enter Lear.
But who comes heere?
The ſafeſt ſenſe will ne're accommodate
His Maſter thus.
Lear. No, they cannot touch me for crying. I am the King himſelfe.
Edg. O thou ſide-piercing ſight!
Lear. Nature's aboue Art, in that reſpect. Ther's your Preſſe-money. That fellow handles his bow, like a Crow-keeper: draw mee a Cloathiers yard. Looke, looke, a Mouſe: peace, peace, this peece of toaſted Cheeſe will doo't. There's my Gauntlet, Ile proue it on a Gyant. Bring vp the browne Billes. O well flowne Bird: i'th' clout, i'th'clout: Hewgh. Giue the word.
Edg. Sweet Mariorum.

Figure 251. Facsimile of First Folio (1623).

Following the quartos and First Folio, the editorial tradition is to omit essential stage directions that indicate that Lear is talking directly to Edgar and Gloucester. [See Figure 251.] In so

doing, editors shift the scene from external to internal focalization, thereby foregrounding the king's subjective experience. This intervention reflects a modern, and arguably anachronistic, conception of tragedy: one shaped by Romantic investments in inwardness and by psychological realism, rather than by the scene's potentially metatheatrical form and style. For example, Kenneth Muir explains that "Lear's mad speeches have an undertone of meaning, and although he leaps from one subject to another, it is often possible to see that there is a subconscious connection between them" (*KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 163).

If the text is understood as interactive, linguistic meaning cannot be confined to a single character's subconscious; it emerges in relation to the interlocutor, for whom the speaker's words may have no literal intelligibility. Here, Gloucester's thinks the king is speaking gibberish as Kent does in III,vi. Shakespeare frames meaning as perspectival rather than self-contained: words become meaningful through the situated perception of their audience, just as anamorphic distortion yields a coherent image only to a viewer standing in the right place, like Edgar's view of *"Fishermen"* (F, 2452) from atop the highest cliff at Dover. Lear's dialogue subverts fixed meaning, dissolving into a lineage of medieval and modern literary nonsense. [616] [617]

80. S.D. ***camouflaged with weeds***] Ed. Not in Q. F. *Fantastically dressed with wild flowers*. Capell. There are no stage directions in the quartos or Folio to indicate what Lear is wearing in the scene. [See Figure 251.] The first question readers must ask themselves about his getup, is what are the character's "objectives"? The foundation of acting is the reality of *doing*," as Sanford Meisner taught. What does Lear mean to *do* by wearing this strange costume? I argue that there is a direct line from the warrior mentality he displays in III,ii, to his entrance here, where he is recruiting soldiers on a crusade for justice. [See note III,ii,1, *"Blow, winds."*] Since arriving in Dover, Lear has spent his time *"coyning"*(Q1, 2530) weeds into money. It is inferred from his giving a thistle to Edgar as "*Press-money"* (F. 2534), that he has been traveling about the fields pressing every able-bodied man he encounters into his mercenary ranks, giving them a freshly minted weed for their service. [See note IV,v, 86-7.S.D., *"Gives Edgar a thistle."*] Later in the scene, he pays Gloucester with a daisy (a type weed [604]): *"Giue me an Ounce of Ciuet; good Apothecary sweeten my immagination: There's money for thee"* (F, 2571-73). He tells his Knight, *"Vse me well, / You shall haue ransome"* (F, 2634-35). [See note IV.v,190. S.D., "*Gives some weeds to Lear's Knight*."] Lear's objectives don't make sense until the very end of the scene, when he reveals his plan to lead a stealth attack on the judicial system in Britain: *"when I haue stole vpon these sonnes in law,/ Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill"* (Q2, 2626-27). It is here we deduce that his costume serves the practical function of camouflage for a battle on the Kent downs. Compare *Macbeth* Act 5, scene iv where Malcolm orders his soldiers to hide themselves behind branches of trees from Birnam Wood.

Figure 253. Costumed people parade through the Old Town during the annual Jack In The Green festival. The event marks the May Day public holiday in Britain. /Credit: Getty.

In *The History of King Leir* (scene 24), there is a stage direction "*Enter the King of Gallia, Cordella, and Mumford, with a basket . . . disguised like country folk."* It is possible that Lear is putting his weed-money into a willow basket, which is easily woven. (See "How to make a simple willow basket"). In *Winter's Tale*, Perdita is associated with a basket of flowers at the sheep-shearing feast, where she distributes blossoms to the guests. Florizel explicitly likens her to *"Flora / Peering in Aprils front."* (F, 1799-1800). Flora, a fertility goddess, is frequently portrayed in art with blooming nature and colorful spring attire, symbolizing the renewal of life and the abundance of nature. The Floralia was an ancient Roman festival held in Spring to honor her. [See note IV,vi,7., *"weeds."*]

Figure 252a. Cosiddetta Flora, fresco from the Villa di Arianna in Stabiae near Pompeii, 1st century Roman fresco.

Logically, the play takes place around the spring Equinox into May. This is signified by the Lenten banquet Goneril prepares for her father in I,iv, but mostly by the type of *"weeds"* (Q1, 2355) Cordelia describes him gathering, such as cuckoo-flowers,—plants Elizabethans would associate with springtime. Just as Lear's codpiece was conceived as an ironic symbol of his potency, his outfit in IV,v is equally mordant. Rather than a verdant symbol of rebirth and resurrection associated with Spring vegetation deities, his costume is ironic. Upwards of 80 years of age and impotent, bedecked with noxious weeds, he presents as a grotesque inversion of Flora with her basket of spring flowers. [See Figure 252a.] Lear's metatheatrical costume serves multiple purpose. It blends the pragmatic needs of camouflage in the story, with the ritualistic symbolism of pagan-rooted folk traditions. It immediately evokes the image of a mummer in the DIY costume of The Green Man at a May Day celebration (officially banned in England along with Christmas during the Interregnum). [See Figure 253.] He presents as the *anti*-Green Man, the King of Weeds, the Sovereign Lord of the worthless and unwanted. Mummers were and still are primarily amateur folk performers (i.e. *"poor players"*). Their costumes for seasonal celebrations such as May Day were "homemade" and signified the grassroots origins of folk traditions throughout the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

> "Down through the centuries May Day has been associated with fun, revelry and perhaps most important of all, fertility. The Day would be marked with village folk cavorting round the maypole, the selection of the May Queen and the dancing figure of the Jack-in-the-Green at the head of the procession. Jack is thought to be a relic from those enlightened days when our ancient ancestors worshipped trees. These pagan roots did little to endear these May Day festivities with the either the established Church or State. In the sixteenth century riots followed when May Day celebrations were banned. Fourteen rioters were hanged, and Henry VIII is said to have pardoned a further 400 who had been sentenced to death. The May Day festivities all but vanished following the Civil War when Oliver Cromwell and his Puritans took control of the country in 1645. Describing maypole dancing as 'a heathenish vanity generally abused to superstition and

> wickedness', legislation was passed which saw the end of village maypoles throughout the country." (May Day Celebrations by Ben Johnson.)

Shakespeare, like everybody else in England during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, was well aware of the myth of the "Green Man," a spirit of vegetation and fertility. "The name 'Green Man' was first used by Lady Raglan in March 1939 in an article she wrote for the 'Folklore' journal; before this, they had been known just as 'foliate heads' and no-one had paid them any particular attention. Lady Raglan suggested that in antiquity, the Green Man was 'the central figure in the May Day celebrations throughout Northern and Central Europe'. As the Green Man is also portrayed with acorns and hawthorn leaves, symbols of fertility in medieval times, this would seem to reinforce the association with spring" (The Green Man by Ellen Castelow). There are eight "Green Men" that Shakespeare would have personally seen in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon. Four are high up in the vaulting of the transept crossing, and four are at the bases of thee arches as well as a Green Man misericord.

Figure 254. A green man in the misericords of Holy Trinity Church, Coventry.

> These remarkable images, with leaves spouting from their faces, can be found virtually everywhere in English medieval churches, from fonts to tombs, corbels and capitals to arm rests. Known in Britain chiefly as the *Green Man*, this often sinister and frightening figure appears among other places, in Exeter, Ely, Lincoln, and Winchester Cathedrals, and in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Coventry, Warwickshire—not a great distance from Shakespeare's home in Stratford-upon-Avon. The Green Man, although he seems in some ways an odd choice for ecclesiastical ornamentation, in fact embodies a warning against the dark side of man's nature, the devil within: 'For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away' (1 Peter 1:24, KJV) "*Macbeth*: The Male Medusa" from *Shakespeare's Ghost Writers*, by Marjorie Garber, Methuen, 1987, p. 137.

Figure 255. *Bal des Ardents* from Froissart's *Chronicles*. Four of the dancers disguised as Wild Men, mythical beings often associated with demonology, were killed in a fire caused by a torch. Wild men were commonly represented in medieval Europe and documented in revels of Tudor England.

81. **safer sense**] Edgar is referring to Lear's sense of *reason*, not his eyesight. In his *Variorum Edition of King Lear*, Furness quotes Blakeway: "The eye-sight is probably the 'safer-sense', in allusion to our vulgar proverb: 'Seeing is believing.' Horace terms the eyes *oculi fideles*." That is, his costume is remarkable for its *imaginative* quality, like the those you might see at a mummers' parade.
81. **accommodate**] Dress.

83. **coining**] to stamp, to mint (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary,* Vol. 1, p. 212): *4Hen1,*III,iii, *"How? Poore? Looke vpon his Face: What call you Rich? Let them coyne his Nose, let them coyne his Cheekes* (F, 2081-2083). The right of a king to mint money is one of the oldest and most universal sovereign prerogatives, traceable to antiquity. [605] It is interesting to note that under the order of Henry VIII, a currency debasement policy was introduced ("The Great Debasement") in which the amount of precious metal in gold and silver coins was reduced and, in some cases, replaced entirely with cheaper base metals such as copper. Diogenes, who is alluded to in III,iv, was banished from Sinope over debasement of currency. Bertrand Russell, in *A History of Western Philosophy*, called Diogenes "the son of a disreputable money-changer who had been sent to prison for defacing the coinage." Here, Lear thinks weeds are a better currency than man-made coins. [See note IV,v, 86., *"Nature's above Art in that respect."*]

The association between coinage and Lear's phallus was indelibly planted in the minds of the audience when he ostentatiously brandished money from his codpiece and gave it to Kent. [See note I,iv,86.S.D., "*Takes purse from out of his codpiece and gives money to Kent."*] As discussed below, the thistle he gives to Edgar as *"Presse-money"* (F, 2534) has phallic associations because of its milk and its prick: "*There thou prickst her with a thissell"* (*Much Ado about Nothing,* F, 1572)). Kenneth Muir comments that the word "coining" often had a sexual significance. See *Meas*., II,iv,45; *Edward III*, II,i,258; Tourneur, *The Revenger's Tragedie*, II,ii,60" (*KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 163). In addition to "coining" weeds, Lear is "coining" **words**, as in "To frame or invent a new word or phrase" (*OED,* **5.c**): "Taking libertie to coyne, and frame new tearms of Art..to auoide circuite of speech" (F. Bacon, *Of Aduancem. Learning* i. sig. E3, 1605).

Shakespeare is known to draw on the "language of flowers." There almost 200 references to plants and flowers in his work. [220] He uses them as symbols that characters speak about, hand out, wear, or imagine, often to crystallize emotion, signal character, or advance theme. In *The Winter's Tale* (IV,iv), Perdita, costumed as a shepherdess, welcomes guests to the sheep-shearing festival by handing out spring flowers and herbs: *"Here's flowres for you: / Hot Lauender, Mints, Sauory, Mariorum, / The Mary-gold, that goes to bed with' Sun, / And with him rises, weeping"* (F, 1916-19). [See Figure 255a.] Ophelia's flower-giving in Act 4, Scene 5 of *Hamlet* transforms her madness into symbolic speech, as each bloom conveys coded meanings to the figures surrounding her: *"There's Fennell for you, and Columbines: ther's Rew for you, and heere's some for me. Wee may call it Herbe-Grace a Sundaies: Oh you must weare your Rew with a difference. There's a Daysie, I would giue you some Violets, but they wither'd all when my Father dyed"* (F, 2932-37). In Act 2, Scene 4 of Henry VI*, Part 1* (F, 955-962), set in the Temple Garden, Richard Plantagenet and Somerset stage their legal and dynastic dispute as a performative choice of flowers.

Figure 255a. Florizel and Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*, IV,iv. (1867) After Charles Robert Leslie.

86. **Nature's**] as opposed to Art
86. **above**] higher than, exceeds
86. **Art**] Q, F. as opposed to Nature
86. **respect**] in regard to the thistle.

Figure 256. Mother Nature forging creation on her "anvil of life." From Romance of the Rose, about 1405, unknown artist. The J. Paul Getty Museum.

86. **Nature's above Art in that respect**] Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, IV,iv, *"The Art it selfe, is Nature"* (F, 1908). Lear thinks a common thistle created by Nature (as in Figure 256 above) is a superior form of currency than costly metal "thistle dollars" forged by James VI of Scotland (as in Figure 257 below). "Coins known as 'thistle dollars' were in use in Scotland during the 16th and 17th centuries." (Wiki) The difference between the "natural" and the "artificial" was extensively discussed and contested in ancient times, particularly in Greek and Roman philosophy. [221] Medieval alchemists spent much of their time debating whether human technology could truly replicate, improve upon, or surpass the natural world. [601] [222] Scholars widely recognize that Shakespeare integrated alchemical imagery and philosophical concepts across his plays and sonnets, using the art's language of transmutation, distillation, and regeneration as metaphors for moral, psychological, and poetic transformation. [223] [602] [See note IV,v,83, *"coining."*]

Figure 257. Thistle merk or Thistle Dollar. The coin was worth 26 shillings and eight pence Scots. Coin Archives.

86-7. S.D. ***Gives Edgar a thistle***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In my restoration, the *"Presse-money"* (F, 2534) he gives to Edgar is a Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*). There is a pun on the *thistle-dollar*, a coin minted by James VI worth two marks. [See Figure 257.] Cordelia alludes to *"hardocks"* (F, 2354) AKA burdocks, another form of thistle but grown for its roots. [224] [See Figure 238.] Lear's command to "*Pull off my Bootes"* (F, 2614-15) carries a fascinating subtext that mirrors the famous legend of the Scottish thistle. We learn that he is planning to launch a surprise attack *"vpon these sonnes in law"* (Q2, 2629), and wants to remove his boots in order to move quietly and stealthily through the brush.

> "Like its rough exterior, the meaning of the [thistle] flower is associated with aggressiveness, pain, protection and pride. Since thistle is defined as both a flower and a weed, the exact inference of the bloom can extend from less positive symbolism such as poverty and weakness all the way to qualities of might and brilliance.... The reason [the thistle became the national flower of Scotland] can be traced to a battle fought during the thirteenth century when the Normans initiated a brutal assault on the country. Heavily outweighed and unarmed, the Scottish army believed they were doomed until one night when a band of soldiers snuck through the pasture in order to initiate a surprise attack. It would have worked but the Normans were unfamiliar with the prevalent, prickly plant that grew in abundance in Scotland. When one enemy yelped and cried in pain from being stabbed by the thistle, the Scottish army woke up and was able to protect themselves, conclusively winning the war. From that point on, the thistle became honored and was even written about in sacred documentation. "Nemo me impune lacesset" became the Scottish Order of the Thistle which translates into "No one attacks me with impunity". The flower is also stitched on the Scotland rugby uniforms to stand for fierceness and bravery. (The Meaning of the Thistle Flower by Suzie Canale, 2016)

Figure 258. Thistles on the Dover coast of England. From "Hiking the White Cliffs of Dover"

Onopordum acanthium (cotton thistle, Scotch or Scottish thistle) was likely introduced to Britian in the 16th century, and grows in southern England, including areas like Dover, as part of its naturalized range in ruderal and coastal sites. It flowers in summer, as do the common thistle and burdock. Therefore, it is possible Lear finds the plant dried. [See Figure 259, photographed in late March.]

> On these bare lofty hills, exposed to every wind that blows, we observed *Spiræa Filipendula*, *Erigeron acris, Silene nutans, β,* the variety which grows about the coasts; also ***Onopordum Acanthium***, quite at home, but not so stately as in gardens, where it is dignified with the name *Scotch Thistle,* probably because it does not grow in Scotland. . . The cliffs near Dover may be called artificial, for every portion of the earth is the work of the Almighty artificer, though they do not owe their being to human agency. This plant, the Wallflower, has taken a fancy to the Castle Hill, and spreads profusely among the rank growth of Thistles, Helminthias, and other coarse plants." "Kentish Botany", *The Phytologist: a botanical journal,* Volume 5, ed. Alexander Irvine, John Edward Taylor Publisher, 1861,p. 243

Figure 259. Dried Thistle by Zina Stromberg, March 28th, 2017.

Writers in the English Renaissance, such as Edmund Spenser and Philip Sidney, made extensive use of symbolism and allegory in their work, continuing and expanding upon a tradition inherited from the Middle Ages. [225] As J.E. Cirlot remarks in the Introduction to *A Dictionary*

of Symbols, "the symbol proper is a dynamic and poly-symbolic reality, imbued with emotive and conceptual values: in other words, with true life" (p. xi). In regard to thistle symbolism, the rank growth of thorns and thistles was a part of God's curse on man for eating from the tree of life:

> "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and *thistles* shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field' In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: *for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."* (*Genesis* 3:17-19 (KJV)

87. **press-money**] Press-money is "Money paid to a sailor or soldier on enlistment, the acceptance of which was held to constitute legal proof of his engagement." See *OED*, **3.α**: "Souldiers entred of record, and hauing taken prest money. (*Countrey Justice* 247, M. Dalton). [See note IV,v,188,S.D.,*"To Edgar."*] It is the reader's first clue that Lear is recruiting an army. Thereafter, he demands Gloucester prove his fitness for battle. [See note IV,v,89, *"draw me a Clothier's yard"* (F, 2535).
88. **That fellow**] i.e. Gloucester.
88. S.D. ***To Gloucester***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
88. **bow**] Gloucester's staff. The prop is explicitly referred to by Edgar, who warns Oswald: *"keep out, che vor' ye, or ice try whither your costard or my* ***ballow*** *be the harder"* (F, 2694-95). "A *ballow* is a North-country word for pole (Furness, qu. Knight p. 291). Lear also refers to Gloucester as *"blind Cupid"* (F, 2581), a classical god associated with a bow and arrow.

Figure 260. Blind crippled beggar. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, c. 1566.

88. **crowkeeper**] Gloucester is sitting on his haunches. [Compare *"No further Sir, a man may rot euen here"* (F, 2931).] "In speaking of awkward shooters Ascham [*Toxophilus*, p. 145, ed. Arber] says: 'An other coureth downe, and layeth out his buttockes, as though he shoulde shoote at crowes.'" qu Furness p. 276. [See Figure 260.] The words *"Mouse"* (F. 2536), *"peece of toasted Cheese"* (F, 2536), *"Gauntlet"* (F, 2537) and "*Gyant"* (F, 2537) are interconnected kinesthetically with the actors' body movements. They organically trigger and shape the meaning of Lear's spoken lines.

Figure 261. "The Double-armed Man" from Neades's Double-armed Man, 1625.

89. **Draw me a clothier's yard**] Gloucester does not appear able-bodied, and Lear doubts his readiness for combat. He demands that he prove his strength as a bowman. Steward, *Textual Difficulties*, p. 84, says that a bowman who could draw a clothier's yard was one who, when the butt of the shaft was at his nose, had the strength to force the bow out the full length of the arm. [See Figure 261.]

89. S.D. ***Gloucester stirs***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear's next line is triggered by something Gloucester is doing that is *mouse-like,* such as feeling the ground with his hands in preparation to stand.

89. **Look, look, a mouse**] Compare IV,v,17-18: *"The fishermen that walk upon the beach Appear like* ***mice****"* (F, 2452-53). Gloucester is blind as a mouse, and an old lecher. In *Anything for a Quiet Life*, the vagina is referred to as a *mousetrap*. "SAUNDER: "How now, George? How does thy mistress that sits in a wainscot gown, like a citizen's lure to draw in customers? Oh, she's a pretty mousetrap! GEORGE: She's ill-baited though to take a Welshman; she cannot away with cheese" (Act IV, scene i).

> "A white mouse, in Suidas (A bad mouse, in Diogenianus) was applied to a lecherous man and one prone to sexual excess, for house mice are very lecherous creatures, and white mice especially. Aelian, book 12 chapter 10, cites authorities to show that the lechery of mice is extraordinary. To much other evidence he adds that of Epicrates in one of his plays where, wanting to convey that a woman is particularly lewd, he calls her *myonia*, a mousehole; and he quotes the proverb A white mouse from a comedy by Philemon. Hence, it seems, came the practice of using as words of endearment between lovers not only 'lovebird' and 'dove' and others of the kind, but 'mouse' as well. Martial: 'Call me mouse if you will, and the light of your life.'" (*Collected Works of Erasmus*: Adages, II vii to III 100, translated and annotated by RAB Mynors.)

Richard Dutton theorizes that Robert Armin likely played the clown Mouse in the King's Men 1606 production of *Mucedorus*, introducing a pratfall to the role: *"As he goes backwards the Bear comes in, and he tumbles over, and runs away and leaves his bottle of Hay behind him"* (I,3-1 Mucedorus.27.) If Armin was cast as Gloucester in *King Lear* that same year, Lear's line *"Looke, looke, a Mouse"* (F, 2535-6) may be understood as an intertextual reference. [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.] "Intertextuality" is a term coined by Julia Kristeva describing the relationship between literary texts. "Her notion of Intertextuality refers to the literal and effective presence in a text of another text." [307] Dutton notes that Armin took over the part of Mouse from Will Kemp, who left the Chamberlain's Men in early 1599.

Figure 332. This is the third quarto of Mucedorus, the most frequently reprinted play of the early modern period.

> If frequency of reprinting is any guide *Mucedorus* … was one of the mainstays of Shakespeare's company and one of the most popular plays of the whole era. First printed in 1598, it went through no fewer than seventeen imprints before 1668. Of these, the second and third are of particular interest: 'The new edition of *Mucedorus*, which came out in 1606 [the year *King Lear* was performed for James I], contains

revision in the epilogue that alter the monarch addressed from a queen to a king, thus implying a performance before King James, perhaps in 1605-06' (Knutson 1991: 110, citing Thornberry 1977). But the third quarto of 1610 was even more different from its predecessors, as the title page tells us: *'Amplified with new additions, as it was / acted before the King's Majesty at / Whitehall on Shrove- / Sunday night. / By his Highness's Servants usually playing at the Globe.'* . . . The role of Mouse, the clown (probably played by Robert Armin, Kemp's successor), is enhanced to include giving him a bottle [bundle] of hay to carry and different stage business with the bear that pursues him". [See I,3-1 Mucedorus.27: *"As he goes backwards the Bear comes in, and he tumbles over, and runs away and leaves his bottle of Hay behind him."* (Dutton, Shakespeare, Court Dramatist.)

90. **Peace, peace**] The line is said to Gloucester who becomes agitated upon hearing Lear's voice, and tries to stand. He obviously needs assistance to get up. Lear offers him his hand after smelling it first.

90. S.D. ***Lear smells his own hand***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Based on Shakespeare's use of backwards logic, Lear smells his hand at this moment—*before* helping Gloucester to his feet; not when the latter asks him to kiss it at F, 2574. [See note IV,v,134, *"smells."*] In I,v, III,vi and IV,v, Shakespeare deconstructs the norms of classical rhetoric by drawing on the logic of enigmas and riddles. Instead of presenting actions and motives transparently, he builds verbal puzzles that force readers and audiences to interpret contradictions, double meanings, and seemingly incompatible clues. [542] [Compare note III,vi,6,S.D., *"Belches."*]

90-1. **piece of toast'd cheese**] Compare *"O ruin'd **piece** of nature"* (F, 2577). Lear gives Gloucester his hand, which is aged and crusty like toasted cheese. Compare *Troilus and Cressida*, V,v, *"That stole old Mouse-eaten dry cheese, Nestor"* (F, 3341-42). He knows from having just smelled it that it emits a strong funky odor which he thinks will appease a Mouse. It is believed that mice love eating cheese. [See "Do Mice Really Like Cheese: Fact or Fiction."]

91-92. S.D. ***Gives Gloucester his hand and helps him to his feet***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

92. **my gauntlet**] my challenge. Compare *"Read thou this **challenge**"* (F, 2582) Cf. also *"There is my pledge"* (F, 3040). Albany throws his gauntlet down at Edmund's feet as a challenge.

92. **prove**] Demonstrate the proof of. Compare *"If none appear to prove it on thy person"* (F, 3038).

93. **giant**] a giant mouse. "Giant" and "mouse" both refer to Gloucester. The metaphor addresses the plurality and mutability of life. Minutes before his entrance in this scene, Edgar shows us men and the world as they might appear from atop the cliffs at Dover where *"The fishermen that walke vpon the beach / Appeare like **mise**"* (Q, 2452-53). Paul Werstine, the co-editor of *The Folger Library Edition of King Lear,* writes in a personal communication, "The identification of the giant and the mouse with Gloucester (in 4.6) is also, as far as I can tell, yours alone. No one else has commented on the giant, and those who talk of the mouse divide between thinking Lear sees an actual mouse and thinking the mouse a figment of Lear's deranged imagination."

93. S.D**.** ***Lifting up the bandages***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear peels back the dressing over Gloucester's eyes to inspect the wound directly. [See Figure 260.]

Figure 262. The Medieval Bill Hook (also called just a "Bill") was a polearm weapon that is a good example of how weapons developed out of farm implements and tools. This is derived from the agricultural bill hook.

93-94. **Bring up the brown bills**] A bill is a class of agricultural implement used for trimming tree limbs, which was often repurposed for use as an infantry polearm. [619] Billmen were a type of infantry soldier used primarily as shock troops for close-quarters combat against other foot soldiers. "The bill is a polearm weapon used by infantry in medieval Europe. It is similar in size, function and appearance to the halberd, differing mainly in the hooked blade form. The English distinguished between several varieties of bill, including the black, brown and forest bills, but the differences between them are currently not fully understood." (Wikipedia). It seems that a "brown bill" was made from a billhook—a tool used by farmers with a curved or hooked blade at one end, for pruning and cutting. The "brown bills' in English armies were largely made up of peasants. They are still used by peasant farmers for weapons as we see in Sebastião Salgado's photo. [See Figure 263.]

Figure 263. "The icons of victory," photo by Sebastião Salgado, 1998.

Cause and effect is one of storytelling's central organizing principles. Lear's discovery that Gloucester was blinded for bringing him to Dover is what causes his diatribe against injustice, and the sudden urgency of mustering his troops for battle. While Stanislavski's system was drafted in the 20th century, it is highly applicable to metatheatre, provided that "truth" is located not in naturalistic illusion alone but in the actor-character's conscious management of performance. In *An Actor Prepares* ("Emotion Memory"), he urges actors to play actions and objectives, not emotions as effects. In other words, you act what triggers the feelings, not the feelings themselves. [618] "On the stage there cannot be, under any circumstances, action which is directed immediately at the arousing of a feeling for its own sake." Rather than "act mad" as in Video 35, the actor should pursue a concrete, partner-directed action under the given circumstances. Feeling is then allowed to arise indirectly from truthful pursuit of the objective and the scene's obstacles.

94. **O, well flown bird**] This metaphor comes from the sport of falconry. Hawks were the most popular choice of birds for hunting by Elizabethans. "Accipitrids (eagles, hawks, kites, harriers and the like) have weaker bites than falcons and no 'teeth' – they use their feet to constrict their prey, cutting off its air supply much like a python uses its coils." Lear uses the image to describe the feeling of suffocation he is experiencing upon his discovery of Gloucester's being blinded. He feels like he can't breathe. See Chap II, "Hawks and Hawking," *The Ornithology of Shakespeare* by James Edmund Harting (1864), "Monstrous sightes also, that were seene without the Scottishe kingdome that year, were these.… There was a sparhauke also *strangled* by an owle."

Figure 264. James I of England and VI of Scotland at the age of eight with a sparrow-hawk, artist unknown, National Portrait Gallery. Unlike gyrfalcons or peregrines, hawks will use their strong feet and talons to constrict their prey, effectively cutting off the prey's air supply.

94. **I'th'clout, i'th'clout**] i.e., in the heart. [See Figure 265.] Compare II,iv, *"Oh me my heart! My rising heart! But downe."* (F, 1397). Lear's feelings of anger, pity and guilt at seeing what happened to his friend cause him to have a second mild heart attack (aka silent myocardial ischemia).

Figure 265. XIV Century Archery, Joseph Strutt, *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, p. 42.

94. S.D. ***Clutching his heart***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note II,iv,117, S.D. *"Clutching his heart"* and note V,i,312, S.D., *"Clutching his heart."*

95. **Hewgh**] (F, 2539) Hagh. (Q, 2539). An utterance of the interjection *hewgh* or *whew*. It refers to his being able to breathe again, as in *"'Whew!' ejaculated Roden, when the danger seemed to be past, and they could breathe again."* (H. S. Merriman' Roden's Corner xxxii, 1898.) (*OED*).

95. S.D. ***To Edgar*]** Ed. Not in Q, F. Edgar moves upstage. Lear and Gloucester remain downstage on the platform.

96. **Sweet marjoram**] The herb was said to be a cure for brain diseases. [608]

98. S.D. ***Kneels***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In the first scene of the play, Goneril kneels before Lear when she describes how much she loves him. [See note I,i,54,S.D., *"Kneels."*] Here, recognizing the king's voice, Gloucester assumes a kneeling position, a traditional sign of respect and allegiance. See **kneel, knee** in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* p. 125-126. "over 200 figures are directed to *kneel/kneel down* (a small percentage of the actual onstage *kneelings*), usually with no further details; *kneeling* can be combined with other actions especially the ***kissing*** of a ***hand***." [See note IV,v, 136., S.D. *Kisses hand.*]

99. **Goneril with a white beard**] Gloucester's gesture reminds Lear of Goneril when she knelt before him in I,i,54. Robert Armin, who I theorize originally created the part of Gloucester, was 37 years old when *Lear* was staged in 1606, and would have been wearing a *"white beard,"* as would Burbage who was only 39 when he created the part of Lear. The line is metatheatrical. [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.]

99-100. **like a dog**] as a dog fawns on his master

100-101. **told me I had the white . . . there**] told me I had the wisdom of age before I was old enough to grow a beard. Compare *Coriolanus*, II,ii,107-8, *"When with his Amazonian chin he drove / The bristled lips before him."* Comenius mentions that Coriolanus was *"sixteene yeeres"* old at the time (F, 1301).

102. **divinity**] divination, a forecast of the future.

109. S.D. ***Gloucester topples over***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The blinded Gloucester is unsteady, and can't sustain his courtly kneeling position. He topples over, and resumes listening to the king uncer-emoniously on his ass. [See note IV,v,110,*"quakes."*]

109. S.D. ***Lear remains standing***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Within the play's overarching narrative, Lear's diatribe functions as a satire on classical rhetoric, subverting Ciceronian and Quintilian con-ventions of oratory. The scene evokes genuine pathos, yet Shakespeare renders it through an exaggerated, pseudo-rhetorical mode of performance. The effect is one of tragicomedy. The audience feels the pain of the two characters even as it laughs at the conspicuous theatrical excess through which that pain is expressed.

Rhetoric is arguably the central theme of the play. How characters use words to construct their own version of reality, persuade others, and hide their true intentions—even from themselves—is arguably the central organizing principle of the narrative. In the first scene, Lear assays his daughters' love for him by their skill in rhetoric. [See note I,i,47., *"Tell me, my daughters."*] In the next, Edmund uses his rhetorical skills to redefine "wrong" as "right," directly targeting the audience to win their empathy. Rhetoric is not only a toolbox for moving other people in *King Lear,* but also a way of modeling how characters think, feel, and talk to themselves. Shakespeare's audiences were highly attuned to rhetorical and poetic cues that revealed a character's inner state. [602]

In modern terms, Lear uses rhetoric as a vehicle for intellectualization, the psychoanalytically defined defense mechanism whereby reasoning and abstract discourse are employed to avoid confronting unconscious conflict and its associated emotional stress. For example, instead of confronting his fear of losing Cordelia, Lear concocts a plot to keep her from marrying, and retain sovereign authority over his kingdom. It blows up in his face when France unexpectedly choses to wed her without a dowry. Lear is *"hoist with his own petar[d]"* (*Hamlet*, Q2, 2577.6), and forced to abdicate the throne.

Lear's psychological fear of being perceived as unmanly is far less ambiguous in III,iv, as discussed above. [See note III,iv,92,S.D., "Lear *tears off pieces of his upper garments."*] Rather than directly give his riding cloak to Edgar, and risk appearing soft-hearted, his speech abruptly transitions from feeling to reason: he philosophizes, *"Is man no more then this?"* (F, 1882-3). For much of its history, philosophy has been socially constructed and institutionally organized as a masculine pursuit. [606] Here, in IV,v, the visceral horror of seeing Gloucester's blinded is so overwhelming for Lear that it triggers a second stroke. [See note IV,v,94,*"O well flowne Bird: i'th'clout, i'th'clout"*] Because he views pity and vulnerability as feminine threats to his manhood, he once again transitions from feeling to *logos*—a core element of rhetoric. [607] Rather than comfort his friend emotionally, he launches into an oratorical diatribe against hypocrisy and injustice that turns Cicero's Five Canons of Rhetoric on its head. [It is not until the very end of the scene that he acknowledges who Gloucester is, and consoles him: *"If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes. / I know thee well enough, thy name is Glouster: / Thou must be patient; we came crying hither"* (F, 2619-20). Anthropological and psychological research indicates that while emotional experiences are universal, social norms globally enforce

male stoicism to uphold traditional gender roles, often equating emotional openness with weakness. [540]

To fully convey the rhetorical weight of his diatribe, the character must deliver it on his feet. His physical positioning evokes the traditional stance of Stoic philosophers lecturing against the vices of mankind. The word "Stoic" itself comes from the *Stoa Poikile* ("Painted Porch"), a public, covered colonnade at the edge of the Athenian marketplace. When the school's founder, Zeno of Citium, began teaching around 300 BCE, he chose not to sit. Instead, historical records indicate he paced briskly up and down the public porch while delivering his lectures. Until Lear sits for a brief moment beside Gloucester (*"Pull off my Bootes"*, F, 2614-15), he is standing above him in the manner of an orator, such as Cicero when he denounced Catiline in the Roman Senate. [See Figure 266.] "The peculiarity of the diatribe as distinct from other forms of popular moralizing lies in the assumed presence of an opponent. He is not permitted to reply, but his position is indicated by statements or rhetorical questions put into his mouth by the speaker, and thus the introduction of an objection in the form of a question becomes one of the characteristic features of the diatribe. It is evidently a development of the dialogue form, and is usually traced to the Platonic dialogues." (Ethel Ella Beers, Euripides and Later Greek Thought: A Dissertation (1914), p. 80.)

Figure 266. Cicero Denouncing Catiline, engraved by B. Barloccini, 1849. After C.C. Perkins / Getty Images.

What is important to note about the style of the diatribe is its theatricality. "Paul's letters [e.g., "The Epistle to the Romans"] were read out loud by someone—presumably the letter bearer—to an audience. They were performed. In this sense, each letter exists for us rather like the script of an old play—but a script that often preserves only one actor's lines (although an important one). All the explicit stage directions, instructions from the playwright and director, not to mention the original coached performances, have been lost." (Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul,* p. 531.) The literary historian and theorist Mikhail Bakhtin notes that it was "the diatribe, not classical rhetoric, that exercised a defining influence on the generic characteristics of the ancient Christian sermon." *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 1984, p. 120.

Figure 267. Quintilian's statue in Calahorra, La Rioja, Spain.

Shakespeare is satirizing Quintilian's principles of *pronuntiatio* by applying them to a mad king. Not only do the arguments in Lear's diatribe violate standard academic expectations of rhetoric—pushing semantics to such extremes that his words sounds like gibberish to his

audience (Gloucester)—his physical hand gestures (known as *chironomia*) are so exaggerated and unseemly they comes across as ridiculous. [See Figure 268.] What orator at Oxford College in 1606 would hold their nose and make twisted faces when speaking about the smell of a woman's privates (see Figure 271, "Treatment of prolapse of uterus", 1559), or demonstrate the game of handy-handy? (See J Hall, "Cicero and Quintilian on the Oratorical Use of Hand Gestures": Classical Quarterly, 54.1, 143-160, 2004.) (See also Sharice Clough and Melissa C. Duff, "The Role of Gesture in Communication and Cognition: Implications for Understanding and Treating Neurogenic Communication Disorders", Front. Hum. Neurosci, 2020.)

Figure 268. *Chironomia, or, The art of manuall rhetorique*, John Bulwer, 1644

"[I]t is Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* 11.3 that offers the most extensive discussion on orators' nonverbal behaviour. It ranges from observations on ideal postures and delivery tones to instructions on the orator's appropriate use of specific hand gestures, in order to accompany certain expressions or indicate certain meanings." (Chrysanthi Demetriou, "The Reception of Quintilian's Theory of Gesture: Rhetorical Elements in Pantomime Acting", 2021.) Quintilian writes that "The rules for delivery are identical with those for the language of oratory itself. For, as our language must be correct, clear, ornate and appropriate, so with our delivery; it will be correct, that is, free from fault, if our utterance be fluent, clear, pleasant and 'urbane,' that is to say, *free from all traces of a rustic or a foreign accent*" *Institutio Oratoria* 11.3.65-184. [See note IV,v,233., *"Chill"*.] Cicero advises in *De Oratore*, in which orators that gestures should involve a "vigorous *manly* throwing out of the chest as in wrestling…the arm thrown out rather forward, like an elocutionary missile; a stamp of the foot in beginning or ending emphatic passages." (Book 3, 220). [See Video 36.]

Video 36. Gregory S. Aldrete demonstrating Roman Oratorical Gestures in an ancient theatre at Ostia using a speech of Cicero's.

It may be worth noting that John Rainolds became the most prominent representative of the Puritan party following his Oxford Lectures on Aristotle's Rhetoric (1572-73). [228] He believed that Aristotle's understanding of the human soul was fundamentally flawed because it didn't account for Original Sin. For Rainolds, rhetoric was valuable when it served to illuminate and propagate truths revealed in Scripture. His work *De Romanae ecclesiae idolatria* (1596), addressed matters of idolatry within the Roman Catholic Church, which implicitly engages with ideas of Divine justice and God's righteous judgment against sin. He is remembered today for his virulent Puritan attack on the Elizabethan stage titled, *Th' Over-throw of Stage Plays* (1599). Perhaps Burbage's delivery of the diatribe was a caricature of Rainolds, who James I

was personally acquainted with.

108. **trick**] intonation, peculiarity

109. **Every inch a king**] "There's ample historical evidence that men have always agonised about their masculinity – and especially the question of size. A late 15th century manuscript entitled *Detti Piacevoli* recounts the following joke (translated by Barbara Bowen): "A woman was asked what kind of penises women preferred, big or small or medium-sized. She answered: 'Medium ones are the best.' When asked the reason, she replied: 'Because there aren't any big ones'." ("What goes up must come down: a brief history of the codpiece", University of Cambridge.)

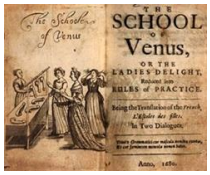


Figure 269. L'Escole des Filles ou la Philosophy des dames is a sex manual by an unknown author first published in Paris in 1655. One of the first uses of the word *dildo* in literature is an erotic poem by Thomas Nashe entitled "The Choise of Valentines" (c. 1592). It concerns male performance anxiety.

110. S.D. ***Aside***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In the style of metatheatre, Lear switches back and forth between addressing the audience directly and the actor.

110. **quakes**] topples over. Compare the stage direction, *"Fall down and quake"* in *Mucedorus*, p. 62.

111. **cause**] charge, offence

112. **Adultery**] The subject of adultery is flippantly introduced in the opening lines of the play, when Gloucester introduces Edmund to Kent as his bastard son: *"I haue so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd too't"* (F, 12-14). In this scene, Lear implicitly recognizes Gloucester's blinding as a punishment for adultery, and formally acquits him by his power as King: *"I pardon that mans life"* (F, 2556). In V,i, Edgar initially reads his father's blinding through the same moral lens: *"The darke and vitious place where thee he got, / Cost him his eyes"* (F, 3133-4).

113. **Die for adultery?**] "In an attempt to discredit Jesus, the Pharisees brought a woman charged with adultery before him. Then they reminded Jesus that adultery was punishable by stoning under Mosaic law and challenged him to judge the woman so that they might then accuse him of disobeying the law. Jesus thought for a moment and then replied, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her ' (John: 8:7). The people crowded around him were so touched by their own consciences that they departed. When Jesus found himself alone with the woman, he asked her who were her accusers. 'She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.' (John: 8:11)

116. **Gloucester's bastard son**] Lear depersonalizes Gloucester to guard against emotional overwhelm.

119. **For I lack soldiers**] In *The Laws*, Book IV, 718a-723c, Plato claims that good law should combine rhetoric (persuasion) with compulsion (punishment). Without knights and soldiers, Lear has no way to challenge *"this enormous State"* (F, 1246); hence the necessity of his raising a mercenary army. [See note IV,v,184., *"sons in Law."*]

118. **luxury**] Lust, lewdness

120. **forks**] legs

120. **snow**] an emblem of chastity. Compare *Coriolanus*, V,iii, *"Chaste as the Isicle / That's curdied by the Frost, from purest Snow,* (F, 3417-18)

121. **minces**] cuts into pieces.

123. **fitchew**] polecat, a cant term for a prostitute. See III,vi,46: *"the cat is grey."* [See Figure 270.]

Figure 270. Illustration "Of the Young Man and the Cat," from The Fables of Æsop Paraphras'd in Verse: Adorned with Sculpture and Illustrated with Annotations by John Ogilby (London, 1665); first state. The British Museum.

123. **soiled**] "The feeding of horses on cut green fodder, so as to cause purgation." (*OED*, †1): "If the Horsse goe to soile in Aprill, after fiue daies..wash him all ouer with Water." E. Topsell, *Hist. Foure-footed Beastes* 330, 1607

Figure 271. "Returning the Wandering Womb with 'fetid and rank smells'".

130. S.D. ***Holds his nose***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In John Bulwer's *Chirologia,* nose-holding and facial distortions are not listed as legitimate oratorical tools. Lear's gesturing would have been considered grossly inappropriate in Shakespeare's day; not merely informal, but actively rude or mocking by traditional standards of rhetorical decorum.

130. **fie, fie, fie! pah, pah!**] Words to express revulsion and disgust by "the smell of female," as Russ Meyer memorably put it. "The 'evil smells' and 'displeasant airs' of Anne of Cleves caused Henry VIII to be unable to consummate his fourth marriage." (*If Walls Could Talk: An Intimate History of the Home* by Lucy Worsley, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012.) John J. Ross, M.D. argues that Shakespeare may have been successfully treated for syphilis, and that the psychological impact of venereal disease could help explain the misogyny and revulsion from sex in his tragic-period writing. [541] He extends the hypothesis by suggesting that Shakespeare's later-life tremor, social withdrawal, and baldness may reflect mercury poisoning from syphilis treatment. [542]

131. **civet**] A civet cat which historically has been the main species from which was obtained a musky scent used in perfumery. See *"the cat no perfume."* (F, 1885).

Figure 272. Woodcut of a civet cat. From 'Caroli Clvsii...', 1611. Credit: Wellcome Collection.

133. **There's money for thee**] In my personal correspondence from 2019 with Paul Werstine, he writes, "Again I'm not aware that in 4.6, when Lear says 'There's money for thee,' any editor

before you has suggested Lear gives Gloucester weeds as money."

Figure 273. The White Cliffs of Dover as they may have presented themselves to Shakespeare in May 1606, awash with daisies, red field poppies, crimson clover, yellow rattle and lady's bedstraw. Matt Hayward/National/Trust. (CountryLiving). It is in meadows such as these that Lear seeks to camouflage himself in.

133. S.D. ***Gives him a daisy***] Ed. Not in Q, F. [See note IV,v,83, *"coining."*] Edgar refers to his father as *"innocent"* in III,vi,8. (F, 2005). Across European tradition the daisy has long been read as a flower of innocence, especially in its white form, and that symbolism is rooted in Christian iconography, medieval romance, and later floriography. [609] [See *Hamlet*, IV,v, *"There's a Daysie"* (F. 2935)]. "Ophelia picks up and sets down the daisy without giving it to anyone. This is interesting because the daisy is the symbol of innocence and gentleness. Evidently Ophelia thought there was no place for innocence in the Danish court anymore." (*Hamlet* Dramaturgy). There are, of course, other springtime "weeds" Lear might pay Gloucester with instead, such as a dandelion, a buttercup or a cuckooflower. "The distinction between a flower vs. a weed depends entirely on the viewer's perspective. Perhaps the best way to define a flower vs. weed is to consider Ian Emberson's line of poetry: "A weed is a flower in the wrong place, a flower is a weed in the right place" (Kathy Habas, "Are Daisies Weeds or Flowers").

133. **O, let me kiss that hand**] As Lear touches Gloucester to pay him, Gloucester asks to kiss his hand.

134. **smells**] Compare *Macbeth*, V,i, *"all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."* (F, 2140-41) Lear smelled his hand before giving it to Gloucester at the top of the scene, and knows it reeks of mold, like a *"piece of toasted cheese*." He does not need to smell it here. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* p. 124-25, **kiss**.

135. **ruined piece of Nature**] Lear's hand. Cf. IV,v, 88: *"This **piece** of toast'd cheese."*

Figure 274. The hand of Pope Francis being kissed by Martin Scorcese. The palm is facing downward.

136. S.D. ***Kisses hand***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See **kiss** in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* p. 124-25, "more than 40 figures are directed to *kiss* a ***hand***, sometimes with ***kneeling*** involved." A hand-kiss is initiated by the person receiving the greeting by holding out their hand *with the palm facing downward*. [See Figure 274.] The subject would typically approach the monarch and kneel on one knee as a sign of extreme respect and acknowledgment of the monarch's higher station. The monarch would proffer their ungloved right hand, held palm downwards with fingers lightly closed. The subject would extend their own right hand, *palm upwards*, to lightly support the monarch's hand. They would then bend over the hand and briefly touch their lips to the back of it. "The practice of kissing hands originated in medieval European feudal systems, where vassals performed homage to lords by

kneeling, placing their joined hands between the lord's hands, and often sealing the oath with a kiss on the hand to symbolize loyalty and mutual obligation." [229] [230]

Figure 275. A blindfolded Cupid, armed with bow and arrow, by Piero della Francesa, c. 1456.

136. **know**] One of the meanings of "know" is to have sexual intercourse with, as in *Measure for Measure*, V,i, *"I haue known my husband"* (F, 2559). Of course, that is not the sense Gloucester is using it in. [Compare note II,ii,6, *"I love thee not."*]

137. **squiny**] "to look asquint" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol. 2*, p. 1108.) A word used by Robert Armin in *A Nest of Ninnies,* p. 6, the 1608 expanded edition of his book *Foole upon Foole; or, Six Sortes of Sots* (1600): "The world queasie stomackt, .. squinies at this and lookes as one scorning." On one semantic level, Lear's remark is a not-so-funny, literal reference to the physical condition of Gloucester's mutilated eyes; on the second, he is implicitly referencing the earl's prolonged hand-kissing. Because of its extended duration, the king misinterprets the courtly ritual as an erotic invitation, causing the audience to laugh. [See note IV,v,141., *"report."*] In the 16th and 17th centuries, proper court behavior demanded that greetings and honors be performed with measured, restrained movements. Subjects, diplomats, and courtiers were expected to follow strict protocols when kissing a monarch's hand. The act was a formal symbol of submission and allegiance, not personal intimacy. [610] In Elizabethan England there was no modern "gay" identity, but same-sex desire was widely recognized. In *King Lear*, Shakespeare addresses the subject comically and unabashedly: here, and when Kent tells him he will *"eate no fish"* (F, 548)—a double entendre with a coded sexual reference to male-to-male fellatio. The humor relies on the audience's familiarity with same-sex subtext. Prior to Karl-Maria Kertbeny coining the term "homosexual" in 1869, same-sex behaviors existed without the framework of a distinct sexual identity or category.

Buggery appears to have been enough of a problem in England in the 16th Century that An Acte for the punishment of the vice of Buggerie was passed during the reign of Henry VIII. "The Act was repealed in 1553 on accession of the staunchly Catholic Queen Mary, who preferred such legal matters adjudicated in ecclesiastical courts. However, it was re-enacted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1564" (Wiki). The specific act of oral sex between men was not officially codified in England as a distinct crime punishable by law until the Labouchère Amendment in 1885.

138. **blind Cupid**] A reference to Gloucester's bandaged eyes and the staff he carries. [See Figure 275.] During the Renaissance, Cupid was most often depicted as a winged child with a bow, sometimes blindfolded. Lear has earlier referenced archery in connection to the staff Gloucester uses to walk with. See *Much Ado About Nothing*, I,i, *"hang me vp at the doore of a brothel-house for the signe of blinde Cupid"* (F, 244-5).

138. S.D. ***Gloucester weeps, still holding Lear's hand***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The interpretive question of *when* Gloucester weeps in this scene is an essential matter for the editor. Is Lear's important line *"If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes"* (F, 2618) a delayed response to the earl's emotional collapse here, or is it prompted when the king tells him, *"Pull off my Bootes"* (F, 1614-5) as conventionally represented by famous actors? The stage direction is a focal point where performance, psychology, and theme converge, offering key insights into what Lear secretly wants and what the play is fundamentally about. [See note IV,v, 174. *"If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes."*]

There are, unsurprisingly, no stage directions indicating what the actors are doing at this moment. In my restoration, after kissing Lear's hand, Gloucester breaks protocol and clings to it, asking, *"Do'st thou know me?"* (F, 2579). The line is charged with emotion. He is asking him for some sort of recognition, some reciprocal show of love, like a frightened child seeking comfort from his father. Instead of engaging with Gloucester as a full, feeling person in a moment that calls for emotional honesty, he treats him impersonally; Lear changes the subject to the formal, ritualized gesture of hand kissing, *No, doe thy worst blinde Cupid, Ile not loue"* (F, 2581-2). The forlorn earl thinks the king has lost his mind completely, and begins sobbing still clutching Lear's hand. He only stops crying and lets go when the king turns his palm *upward* and demands him to *"read"* his *"challenge"* (F, 2587). Lear does not pull his hand away from Gloucester while the latter is holding on to it. He shifts its position, and thereby the meaning of the gesture. [Compare note IV,v,152, *"handy-dandy."*]

Figure 276. "Reach here with your finger, and See my hands." Uncredited illustration.

Shakespeare certainly intuited what modern psychology calls "emotional deflection," even if he lacked the term. His plays are full of characters who avoid, redirect, or intellectualize painful feelings—through rhetoric, humor, subject-changing, or moralizing—especially when confronted with grief, guilt, or desire. For, example, Hamlet intellectualizes grief and guilt, using philosophical disquisition to evade raw emotional confrontation. [611] In Shakespeare's comedies, characters deploy wit as a form of emotional deflection—a practice that resonates with Renaissance rhetorical traditions in which *facetiae* (learned jesting) fulfilled both social and psychological roles. Falstaff conspicuously wields humor to deflect emotion in moments where vulnerability, mortality, or accountability threaten to break through his carnivalesque persona—especially in the Henry IV plays and *The Merry Wives of Windsor.* In *Much Ado About Nothing,* Beatrice and Benedict's self-consciously clever talk keep the interaction at the level of performance, where neither has to risk being seen as emotionally invested.

Figure 232. Man with a Glove, Titian, c. 1520, Louvre.

The human hand is a major and sustained motif in Shakespeare's plays and sonnets, functioning both as a symbol and as a practical theatrical device. [613] This may owe in part to his father, who was a glover. [See also "Shaking Hands and the Politics of Touch in Early Modern England" (2024) by John Walter.] As with Titian (1488-1576), renowned for the psychological depth of his portraits and his sophisticated deployment of symbolism, one of Shakespeare's greatest achievements lies in his use of symbolic forms not as mere decorative or allegorical ornaments, but as integral devices that deepen both the psychological understanding and emotional resonance of his characters. In his early painting "Man with a Glove" (1520), the hands of the sitter—especially the treatment of the leather glove against bare flesh—demonstrates Titian's command of anatomy gesture as carriers of meaning. [See Figure 232.] It is read by Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones to think through how an animal-derived object becomes a second skin that both extends and complicates the sitter's bodily identity. [399]

> One of the most powerful and mysterious Renaissance portraits is Titian's *Man with a Ripped Glove* (c. 1520-23). In the portrait, a somber young man, his black doublet open to reveal a white shirt, stares to the viewer's right. His right hand is naked, held horizontally across his belly; the index finger, with a signet ring, points. But this masterful hand contrasts striking to the gloved left hand, projecting forward to the viewer. The leather glove that he wears is folder back in a torn, ragged line at the cuff, while the back of the glove is torn in two different directions. Is it his hand or the glove's lining that is revealed through the torn back? Where does the skin of animal end and the skin of human begin? ("Fetishizing the Glove in Renaissance Europe" by Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosaline Jones, *Critical Inquiry*, 2001, Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 114-132).

In his Introduction to *Dictionary of Symbols*, Juan Eduardo Cirlot writes, "the symbol proper is a dynamic and polysymbolic reality [differing from allegory], imbued with emotive and conceptual values: in other words, with true life" (xi). He is arguing that a true symbol is not a static, mechanical, or simple "picture" of a concept (like a simple "5" representing the number five). It is alive, changing, and holds multiple meanings at once, rather than one strict interpretation. Because symbols are rooted in the unconscious and carry deep psychological or cosmic significance, they possess a living, active nature, rather than being dead, static representations.

Figure 277. Incredulità di San Tommaso, Caravaggio, c. 1602. Sanssouci, Potsdam. "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." John 20:25.

139. **Read thou this challenge**] "Summons to single combat" (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol.* 1, p. 184.) Lear's *"challenge"* is not some-thing that can be seen with the eyes. It must be *felt*. [See note IV,v,183, *"felt."*] "Ever since Aristotle first discussed the role of intuition in human knowledge development, philosophers have debated its significance and purpose throughout history. The debate centers around whether or not intuition is a valid source of knowledge." ("*More Than a Feeling: Metaphysical Intuition in Aristotle and Bergson, Part One*" by Dave Seng, 2019). Compare "Touch Me and see" (Luke 24:39); "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands" (John 20:27). Jeremiah 5:21, *"Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not"*. Compare note IV,v,92., *"my gauntlet."*

139. **Mark but the penning of it**] i.e. the lines in his hand. Lear turns his hand with the palm facing *upward* for Gloucester to *"read"*, as in Figure 278.

Figure 278. The Fortune Teller, by Caravaggio (1594–95; Louvre).

140. S.D. ***Feels Lear's open palm***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear's *"challenge"* is the *action* of feeling.

141. S.D. ***Aside***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.

141. **report**] Edgar is saying that he would not believe such a sight if he had heard about it from someone else, but because he is witnessing it with his own eyes, he knows it is true, and the truth is so painful that it breaks his heart. The aside shifts the farcical tone of the unit, reori-enting how the audience meant to feel about what's happening.

145. **Are you there with me**] Is that what you mean?

148. **feelingly**] by sense of feeling. See *"Speake what we feele"* (F, 3299). In *Venus and Adonis*, Shakespeare writes, "*Had I no eyes but eares, my eares would loue, / That inward beautie and inuisible, / Or were I deafe, thy outward parts would moue / Ech part in me, that were but sensible, / Though neither eyes, nor eares, to heare nor see, / Yet should I be in loue, by touching thee."* (Q1, 434-38).

152. **handy-dandy**] "A children's game in which a small object is passed between the hands by one of the players, and, the hands being suddenly closed, the other player is required to guess in which hand the object remains, sometimes with the reward for a correct guess of keeping it." (*OED*, **2.a**.). In the context of *chironomia*, Lear's "handy-dandy" gesture constitutes a satirical use of codified hand signs. [See YouTube video, "Handy Dandy: High/Low Game for Kindergartners."]

Video 37. Henry Wiemeyer '22: "Chironomia: A demonstration of the language of hand gestures."

156. **creature**] i.e. the beggar

158. **beadle**] parish constable

160. **kind**] manner

161. **the usurer hangs the cozener**] a magistrate who has been guilty of the crime of usury passes sentence on one guilty only of petty cheating.

161. **cozener**] cheat

166. **able**] authorize

170. **Now, now, now, now**] An interjection. Lear, who is *"Fourescore and vpward"* (F, 2815) needs time to sit down next to Gloucester. His knees are as spoiled as his arms: *"I haue seene the day, with my good biting Faulchion / I would haue made him skip: I am old now, / And these same crosses spoile me."* (F, 3241-43). The line marks a tonal shift in the scene. [614]

170. S.D. ***Soft music***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Although no scores for incidental music in Elizabethan and Jacobean plays survive, it functioned in liturgical services, *intermedii*, masques, and early opera as a means of shaping the audience's emotional and affective experience. [620] [621] [622] [623] Music was extremely popular with theatre audiences and was a standard part of almost every stage performance. [624] It therefore stretches credulity to suppose that the King Men did not employ it to similar effect. [See Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.]

170. S.D. ***Sitting beside Gloucester***] Ed. Not in Q, F. On the surface, Lear sits beside Gloucester because he needs help to remove his tightly fitted boots, which was customary. [See note IV,v,171,S.D., "*Gloucester removes Lear's boots*."] Note that he doesn't sit next to him for long—only 17 lines. "Social expectations around masculinity often limit positive, non-sexual physical touch for men and boys, which can leave them touch-starved. [231] This deprivation of a basic human need can contribute to the development of traits associated with toxic masculinity, such as aggression and emotional suppression." (See "The Impact of Lack of Affection on Men.")

Figure 279. Henry-Frederick, Prince of Wales wearing boots, Anthony van Dyck. Other portraits of Prince Henry from this period often emphasize his interest in chivalry and militarism, portraying him in jousting armor.

171. **boots**] Among the Tudor elite, the prevailing equestrian footwear was a close-fitting, over-the-knee riding boot of supple calfskin or leather, tailored to the calf for secure stirrup work. Henry VIII's own boots exemplified this style: tall leather constructions rising to the knee or thigh, distinguished by their broad, square or 'bear's-paw' toes and modest heels. While fundamentally practical for riding and hunting, their exaggerated width and cut simultaneously signaled the conspicuously masculine court fashion of the 1520s–1540s.

> "By the 16th century (leather) boots were worn by the aristocracy for hunting. . . [L]ike the codpiece, boots were distinctively men's fashion. According to Girotti (1997) to make the boots fit tightly around the leg, they were first soaked in water and allowed to dry on the leg. This made it very difficult for the man wearing boots to bend their knees subsequently dismounted horsemen walked with stiffened legs. This may have given rise to a distinctive swaggering gait which was considered very macho at the

time. Centuries later Hollywood actor John Wayne adopteda similar gait pattern when playing strong masculine characters on screen (16th Century Boots)." [See Figure 280.]

Figure 280. John Wayne (left) and Montgomery Clift in ***Red River*** (1948), directed by Howard Hawks.

171. S.D. ***Gloucester removes Lear's boots***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Monarchs like Henry VIII and Elizabeth I lived highly ritualized lives where *physical touch* and dressing were governed by strict court hierarchy. High-ranking courtiers were specifically tasked with helping the king put on and take off his outer clothes and footwear, including removing tight and muddy riding boots. As they were often unlined or only lightly lined, finely bespoke pairs could be difficult to take off without help, particularly after extended wear, when slight swelling of the leg and moisture from sweat made the leather cling tighter.

The crucial interpretative question for editors is *why* does Lear want to remove his boots? In my view, the immediate reason is because he wants to approach his enemies with *stealth* in the imminent battle he is commanding: *"when I haue stolne vpon these sonnes in law, /Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill"* (Q2, 2626-27). The legend of the Scottish thistle tells that in 1263, during a night-time ambush attempt near Largs, invading Norse warriors removed their footwear to sneak up on sleeping Scottish soldiers. [232] The audience may infer that Lear's strange costume is a tactical camouflage on the Kent downs. The conceit echoes the famous military trick in *Macbeth* where soldiers hide behind branches from Birnam Wood. However, the removal of Lear's boots does more than move the plot forward: it serves as a somatic metaphor for the character's psychological and spiritual transformation. It represents the peak of his narrative arc, which tracks his journey from foolishness to wisdom; from blindness to insight. As a symbol, the gesture conveys many meanings. In the context of *physical touch*, his tactile exchange with Gloucester signifies service and humility in community to one another. It echoes the foot-washing episode in John 13:1-17, where Jesus washes his disciples' dirty, tired bare feet; a scene of sacramental cleansing and shared humanity. [615]

Figure 280a. Giotto, "Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet" (c. 1305), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy.

172. S.D. ***Aside***] Capell. Not in Q, F.

172. **matter and impertinency**] substance and irrationality.

174. **If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes**] Compare "weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15), a call to empathetic solidarity in suffering. Uta Hagen taught that a line is motivated by immediate circumstances and playable action, rather than by preplanned emotion or static interpretation. She emphasized objectives, substitution, and truthful behavior

in performance. [544] The question for the editor-interpreter, therefore, is what prompts Lear to say *"If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes"* (F. 2618)? Is it an immediate response to Gloucester's weeping while he assists the king in removing his boots, as in Peter Brook's 1953 production with Orson Welles (1:00:21); Edwin Sherin's 1974 production with James Earl Jones (see Video 38); Michael Elliot's 1983 production with Laurence Olivier (1:57:40); Trevor Nunn's 2008 production with Ian McKellan (2:14:12), etc, etc, etc? Or it is a delayed response to Gloucester's weeping after asking him, *Do'st thou know me?"* (F, 2579). While the acting unit between Lear and Gloucester is fundamentally a satire of rhetoric and oratory, it exposes the toxic expectations of traditional manhood and martial culture. As we observed in III,iv, Lear does not give his riding cloak directly to Edgar, who he notes *"wert better in a Graue, then to answere / with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies"* (F, 1881-2), because the character was raised to believe that showing vulnerability or soft emotions makes him less of a man. [545] [546]

Video 38. "If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes" from *King Lear* with James Earl Jones and Paul Sorvino, NYC Shakespeare Festival, 1974 (2:19:39)

Up until now, Lear has been standing to deliver his diatribe against injustice. At its conclusion, he sits beside Gloucester and asks for assistance in unfastening his boots. [See note IV,v, 171., *"boots."*] Elite riding boots were made of thick, stiff leather to protect the leg in the saddle and to hold shape. That stiffness, combined with a close fit around the calf, could make them difficult to pull off unaided. In a brief moment of personal intimacy, Lear gives a direct answer to the question Gloucester had asked earlier, and responds as the audience expected him to when he saw him weep: with empathy and compassion: *"If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes. / I know thee well enough, thy name is Glouster: / Thou must be patient; we came crying hither"* (F, 2618-20). His simple words mark a significant emotional and psychological breakthrough for the character who has been conditioned from childhood to suppress feelings of vulnerability, pity, and kindness.

Backward logic, or reversed reasoning or backward thinking, is a common technique used in rhetoric for both structuring arguments and analyzing them. In *King Lear*, Shakespeare repeatedly employs it as a rhetorical tool. For example, the audience has no idea why Lear smells his hand before saying, *"peace, peace, this peece of toasted Cheese will doo't"* (F, 2536-37). It's not until he wipes it at line F, 2575-76 that we understand the literal meaning why: "*Let me wipe it first,/ It smelles of Mortality."* [See note IV,v,90-1,*"piece of toast'd cheese."*]

175. **I know thee well enough**] A delayed response to Gloucester's question from before, *"Dost thou know me?"* (F, 2579).

178. **preach**] A reference to his standing liker a preacher.

178. S.D. ***He stands***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See note 170. S.D. "*Sitting beside Gloucester."*

181. **stage of fools**] Shakespeare frequently uses "All the world's a stage" (the *theatrum mundi* metaphor) as a theme in his works. It is cited as one of two basic, foundational precepts of metatheatre by Lionel Abel. [233] Lear himself may be called *"a poore Player, / That struts and frets his houre vpon the Stage, / And then is heard no more. It is a Tale / Told by an Ideot, full of sound and fury / Signifying nothing"*).

181. **fools: this' a good block**] *Fooles. This a good blocke.* (F, 2625). *fooles: this a good blocke.* (Q2, 2625). *fooles, this a good blocke.* (Q1, 2626). "*When we are born, we cry that we are come to this great stage of fools"* and *"this' a good block"* are two independent clauses expressing one complete thought: *"this"* refers back to *"cry"* in the previous clause, *viz.,* people should mold their lives on the tears we cry when we are born.

The first definition of "block" given in the *OED* is "a bulky piece of wood." Here, it may be considered a metaphor for *the stage itself.* [See Figure 9.] Other senses of the word include "A piece of wood or other substance on which something is moulded, shaped, or fashioned," such as a felt hat, a leather boot, a horseshoe. According to the *OED*, 9.**b**, the word "block" was not used in a theatrical sense until the 1960s: "In a stage play the director *blocks* the scene when he designates the position and action of each of the players, as well as the location on stage of all the props." (A. Berkman, *Singers' Gloss. Show Business Jargon* 9, 1961). Shakespeare ends Lear's "mad scene" as he began it, with semantic overload. His words and phrases signify so many different things simultaneously, the listener's brain short-circuits, making them sound like nonsense. [234] Regrettably, when the text is paraphrased by book editors into words that make sense for readers, the original's strangeness and humor are lost. As E.B. White said, "Explaining a joke is like dissecting a frog. You understand it better but the frog dies in the process."

> Current critical involvement with literary nonsense focuses overwhelmingly on the nonsense of the Victorian era, dominated by the works of Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. Often treated as an independent literary phenomenon, this children's literature actually participates in a much broader literary tradition that emerges from folkloric and medieval nonsense. Overlooking the literary traditions embedded in modern nonsense oversimplifies the genre and inappropriately diminishes the continuing literary relevance of medieval nonsense. (Bridget Begg, "Medieval Nonsense Verse: Contributions to the Literary Genre", 2013, Wellelsey College.)

182. **delicate stratagem**] A tricky business.

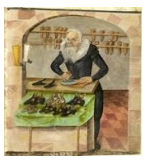


Figure 281. Hans Jamnitzer, depicted in a buttoned jacket, breeches and white collar, stands at his work table and cuts leather with the curved knife. Six pairs of finished shoes with shoe trees are on the delivery table, two pairs of boots hang on the left wall. In the background there are numerous shoe lasts in the wall bracket.

182. **shoe**] *shoo* (F, 2626); *shoot* (Q1, 2627); *shoot* (Q2, 2626). From "block," Lear's mind jumps to *lasts,* "a model of the foot made of wood on which boots and shoes are shaped" (*OED*). See *Rom.* I,ii,287. [See Figure 281.] He has just moments before taken off his boots, and is

possibly holding them even now. Wooden blocks were also used by blacksmiths to shape horseshoes. [See Figure 282.] Malone cites an instance where horses were shod with felt during a jousting tournament in the time of Henry VIII to prevent them from sliding on the pavement. Lord Herbert's *Life of Henry the Eighth*, p. 41: "the lady Margaret, . . . caused there a juste to be held in an extraordinary manner; the place being a fore-room raised high from the ground by many steps, and paved with black square stones like marble; while the horses, to prevent sliding were shod with gelt or flocks (the Latin words are *feltre sive tomento*) : after which the ladies danced all night." qu. Furness, p. 285.

Figure 282. A blacksmith stands at his block, from "The Housebooks of the Nuremberg Twelve Brother Foundations: Digital Development and Edition of Craftsman Paintings of the 15th-19th Century" Amb. 317b.2° Folio 55 verso (Mendel II), Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

183. **troop of horse**] A lot of horse men, soldiers. Compare *Macbeth*, V,iii, *"Troopes of Friends"* (F, 2242). "The first medieval knights were professional *cavalry* warriors" (Britannica).

Video 39, "How to Block Felt Hats."

183. **felt**] (F. 2627). *Fell* (Q, 2627); *fell* (Q2, 2626). The borough of Southwark, where the Globe Playhouse was situated, was the center of felt making in England (See "The Early History of Felt making in London 1250-1604," Harry Duckworth Professor Emeritus, University of Manitoba.) Though felt was primarily used to fashion hats, it was also used to make shoes. Steevens notes that "in Fenton's *Tragical Discourses*, 1567 : '—he attyreth himself for the purpose in a night gown girt to him with a pair of shoes of felt, Leaste the noise of his feete should discover his going'"(qu. Furness, p. 285).

"Felt" is both the simple past tense and the past participle of the verb **feel**. While the word "felt" is not the direct opposite of *logos* [λόγος], the broader category of emotion and feeling it represents stands in a traditional Greek opposition to logic and reason. In classical Greek thought, the more precise counterpart to logos is *pathos* (πάθος), not the English verb "felt." Pathos covers feeling, emotion, and affective experience, and in rhetorical theory it is systematically contrasted with logos as a mode of persuasion. In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, sight and touch represent the ultimate struggle between illusion and truth. While physical sight initially equals knowledge, it proves deceptive. True insight eventually comes through feeling reversing the physical roles of the seeing king and the blind prophet Tyresias. The penultimate couplet of *King Lear* sees Edgar driving home the distinction between real feeling and empty rhetoric: *"Speake what we **feele**, not what we ought to say"* (F, 3399).

184. **stol'n**] stolne (F, 2628). stole (Q1, 2627). stole (Q2, 2526)

184. **sons in Law**] Ed. sonnes in law (Q2, 2629). Son in Lawes (F, 2628). sonnes in lawes (Q1, 2628). Namely, barristers and judges. Lear is using "sons" in the sense of men viewed in relation to the Law (*OED* 6a). Compare "The Man of Law's Tale" is the fifth of the *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer. [See Figure 283.] Compare also *2 Henry VI*, IV,ii, *"The first thing we do, let's kill all the Lawyers."* (F, 2394).

Figure 283. "Man of Law" from the Ellesmere Chaucer (Huntington Library, San Marino).

185. **kill….kill**] a cry of soldiers, viz. "No quarter." That is, Lear intends to make a lot of noise after sneaking up on his enemies. He will be leading the charge himself as was expected of British sovereigns.

185. S.D. ***Enter Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Enter three Gentlemen.* (Q, 2630). *Enter a Gentleman.* (F, 2630).

185. S.D. **French Officer**] "The French Officer" is the extra spoken to by Cordelia, and sent to look for her father in IV,iii,8.

186,190,191,198,201,205,207,211,213,214. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Gent.* Q, F.

188. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear paid Edgar to join his army, and looks to him for protection.

189. **The natural fool of Fortune**] Born to be Fortune's fool.

190. S.D. ***Gives some weeds to Lear's Knight***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Lear gives his Knight a King's ransom in freshly minted weed-money. I imagine that he gives him the basket of weeds he has gathered or tears handfuls of them from his costume. [Compare III,iv,92,S.D., "*Lear tears off pieces of his upper garments.*"]

Figure 284. Tractatus Perutilis et Completus de Fractura Cranei, (1535, Venice).

191. **I am cut to th' brains**] Lear calls for a brain surgeon, as though he's been wounded in the head in battle. [See Figure 284.] Compare *Macbeth*, III,iv, *"With twenty trenched gashes on his head"* (F, 1286). As a humous side note, great advancements had been in medicine during the Tudor Age, including brain surgery. For example: "Andreas Versulius, the anatomist, performed craniotomies and, when physician to the court of Philip the Second of Spain, treated the king's son, who had tripped while chasing the kitchen maid. An operation was recommended to remove an epidural clot, and the patient recovered." (*The History of Cerebral Trauma*, F. Clifford Rose, p. 26, Neurology and Trauma, 2nd Edition, Randolph W. Evans, M.D, 2006. Oxford University Press.) Popular tradition associated madness with a stone lodged in the brain, and trepanation was performed to remove it. "According to the Beatles star [Paul McCartney], Lennon had become interested in trepanning in the '60s. 'John was a kooky cat,' he told GQ. 'We'd all read about it. The 'ancient art of trepanning', which lent a little bit of validity to it because ancient must be good.'" (Rhian Daly, NME).

Figure 285. Cutting the Stone, ca. 1540, Jan Sanders van Hemessen and the Master of Paul and Barnabas,. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.

193. **salt**] Lear feels his tears coming on. Compare "*I am ashamed/That thou has power to shake my manhood thus;/That these hot tears, which break from me perforce, / Should make thee worth them"* (F, 814-17). I guess Richard Burbage was the Beverly Washburn of his day, an actor famous for the ability to cry on cue.

195. **dust**] In a literal sense, causing dust to settle; *Figuratively*, submitting himself to the grave. Compare *Cymbeline*. IV,ii, *"All Louers young, all Louers must, / Consigne to thee and come to **dust**."* (F, 2593-94); *All's Well That Ends Well*, V,iii.*"weepe their **dust**:"* (F, 2771). See also note IV,v, 86-7. S.D.,"*Gives Edgar a thistle".*

195. **bravely**] 1) courageously; 2) in smart clothes (ironic).

199. **Then there's life in't**] the case is not yet desperate

200. **Sa, sa, sa, sa**] An old hunting cry to urge the dogs forward, from Fr. ça, ça. See note III,iv,84. *"Sessa."* The image evokes a mighty stag being chased for sport. [See note III,vi,73, *"Sessa."*]

200. S.D. ***Exit running. French soldiers follow***] Capell, subst. *Exit King running.* (Q, 2646). *Exit.* (F, 2645).

201. S.D. ***Aside***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

203. **redeems**] Compare note II,ii,164, *"find."*

203. **Nature**] In *King Lear*, Mother Nature (Physis) and Lady Justice (Dike) are deeply connected because violating the natural order directly destroys moral justice, and nature itself acts as the ultimate judge and punisher of human sins. Shakespeare repeatedly asks whether justice is inherent in nature, as in Edmund's apostrophe *"Thou Nature art my Goddesse"* (F, 355) and Lear's apostrophe *"Heare Nature, heare deere Goddesse, heare"* (F, 789).

204. **twain**] Goneril and Regan

205. **gentle**] noble

207. **vulgar**] in everyone's mouth; common knowledge

211-12. **The main descry …thought**] We expect to descry the main body any hour now.

214. S.D. ***Exit Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Gentleman*. Johnson. *Exit.* (Q, 2661). *Exit.* after *on* (F, 2661).

216. **worser spirit**] evil angel, evil side of my nature. Compare Sonnet 144, *"The better angell is a man right faire: / The worser spirit a woman collour'd il."* (Q, 2149-50).

217. **father**] An old man commanding respect (*OED, 6a*). [Compare IV,v,72, *"father."*]

218. **what are you?**] Gloucester recoils at the term *"father"* (F, 2666), and challenges his companion's true identity. From the moment he meets "Poor Tom" in Act III,iv, he is painfully reminded of Edgar" *"I had a Sonne…my wits"* F, 1946-50). Something about him makes the farsighted earl think he is not seeing him right, and he readjusts his spectacles to get a closer look at his face. [See note III,vi,7, S.D., *"Gloucester readjusts his spectacles."*] At the beginning of IV,v, Gloucester confronts Tom about his change in voice, to which Edgar responds, *"Y'are much deceiu'd: In nothing am I chang'd / But in my Garments"* (F, 2442-

43). Shakespeare keeps the audience in suspense over how Gloucester will make the discovery of Edgar's identity, and how he will respond once it is made. The next time he hears him use the term *"father"*, he finally "sees" the truth. [See note IV,v, 288., *"father."*] Close textual analysis indicates that Shakespeare meticulously structured the plot to prolong suspense, preparing the audience for the character's eventual anagnorisis. It may be argued that the Gloucester subplot is centrally organized around his recognition of Edgar. The deliberate suspension of anagnorisis can be traced back to Sophocles and Euripides, both of whom demonstrably construct scenes, and, at times, entire plots, toward moments of recognition. For example, in *Iphigenia in Tauris,* the playwright turns the fact that Iphigenia and Orestes are brother and sister into a long-running engine of dramatic delay, rather than revealing it as soon as the siblings meet.

219. **tame**] As the fierceness of a frightened animal is rendered submissive by the whip.

221. **pregnant**] "Easily influenced; receptive; inclined, ready." (*OED*, 2. †**b**).

222. **biding**] abode

223. **benison**] blessing

224. **To boot, and boot**] (F, 2674). *To boot, to boot.* (Q2, 2674). *to saue thee.* (Q1, 2674-5). Compare *Shake-speares Sonnets* (Quarto 1, 1609), 135,"thou hast thy *Will*, And *Will* too **boote**," (Q, 2012-13). Shakespeare is using the word "boot" in two different senses, both now obsolete: 1) To make better; to cure, relieve, heal; to remedy" as in "The sauour of hym boteth alle syknessis." W. Caxton tr. *Hist. Reynard Fo*x (1970) 78. (*OED*, †1.) And 2) "To benefit, increase, enrich (*OED*, †4) as in *Antony & Cleopatra*, II.v, *"And I will **boot** thee with what guift beside / Thy modestie can begge"* (F, 1115-6).

224. S.D. ***Enter Oswald***] Collier. *Enter Steward.* Q, 2675, F, 2675.

226. S.D. ***Drawing his sword***] Not in Q, F.

228. **friendly**] because it brings him the death he desires. Gloucester's mood is even lower after his encounter with Lear, who he thinks has completely lost his mind.

229. S.D. ***Edgar steps between them***] Johnson, subst. Not in Q, F.

230. **publish'd**] proclaimed

233. **Chill**, etc] Eye-dialect for "I will." Shakespeare is using non-standard spellings to indicate that Edgar is speaking with a West Country dialect. Furness quotes Steevens: "When our ancient writers introduce a rustic they commonly allot him this Somersetshire dialect." (p. 290). According to Wikipedia, West Country English is a group of English language varieties and accents used by much of the native population of South West England, encompassing the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, the City of Bristol, and Gloucestershire. Unfortunately, when translated into the Queen's English by linguists, the vernacular is fully comprehensible. As E.B. White said, "Explaining a joke is like dissecting a frog. You understand it better but the frog dies in the process."

Video 40: Westcountry Yap.

Many scholars argue that Chaucer's use of northern dialect in "The Reeve's Tale" does more

than mark region or provide comedy; it thematizes how language itself constructs social perception, authority, and "reality. [237] In *Lear*, Shakespeare explores the theme of rhetoric and its stylistic codes. The Somerset dialect, which dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period, adds a quality of the absurd to Oswald's death, which is already steeped in irony: he is killed by the same sword he took such pride in wearing. He was too poor to attend any schools of defense to be taught how to use it. The abrupt switch in Edgar's dialect further reminds the audience that they are watching a theatrical performance. It draws attention to the actor's virtuosic skill at speaking with different accents. [See note I,i,188, *France*.]

Tom Eatsleepdreamenglish runs though some of the more common accents currently heard in the UK in Video 42. One can only imagine the varied dialects spoken in Southwark and across the British Isles in the 15th and 16th centuries. The received pronunciation of Shakespeare, the dialect traditionally spoken by educated people of high social class in the UK, resounds with elitism, even to Brits themselves. "The Conservatives have a super-weapon which they use all the time and which devastates the opposition – their control of the standard language, known variously as the Queen's English/Oxford English/Public School English." (The National, 2021.) "George Bernard Shaw famously wrote: 'it is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman hate or despise him'. This quote is a testament to the power of accents to position us in the social world by communicating information about our background, our upbringing and the communities we belong to" (AccentBiasBritain).

Video 42. "20 British Accents." Edgar is probably affecting a conservative English accent signaling his high breeding.

235. **volk**] folk.
235-6. **And 'chud**] if I could.
236. **zwagger'd out of my life**] killed by mere swaggering or blustering.
238-9. **che vor ye**] I warrant you. Craig quotes from *The London Prodigal*, v.i.349, 'Well, che vor ye, he is changed' (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 173)
239. **ice**] I shall
238. S.D. ***Taking Gloucester's staff]*** Ed. Not in Q,F.
239. **costard**] your head, literally a kind of apple.
239. **ballow**] cudgel, i.e. Gloucester's staff. Wright, *English Dialect Dictionary*, 1896, shows that in Nottingham a staff beaked with iron was called 'a ballowe staff'.
240. **Chill**] I will
241. S.D. ***He thrusts his sword at Edgar***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
242. **foins**] thrusts
242. S.D. ***They fight. Edgar disarms Oswald with Gloucester's staff, and kills the Steward with his own sword***] Ed. *they fight.* (Q, 2697). Not in F. Edgar immediately disarms Oswald with Gloucester's wooden staff, and, without any ado, uses the Steward's precious sword to slay

him.

243. **Villain**] scoundrel. The word is being used in its usual sense as a term of reproach. See Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary:* **Villain**.

243. **purse**] Oswald keeps his money in a purse. The letter from Goneril he has hidden in his pocket.

247. **Upon**] among

248. **Death.**] Perhaps young Oswald looks at his wound as if he can't believe what he is seeing: his own death. [See Figure 286.]

Figure 286. ***The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula*** **by Caravaggio (1610), Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano, Naples.**

248. S.D. ***He dies***] (Q, 2703). Not in F.

253. **pockets**] Oswald is probably wearing sewn-in pockets. [Figure 287.] "Bindings and embroidery down the sides of men's hose were used to frame and advertise the presence of pockets to even greater effect in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as in Robert Peake's (c. 1551–1619) painting of Henry, Prince of Wales (1594–1612) from c. 1605 (Rebecca Unsworth, "Hands Deep in History: Pockets in Men and Women's Dress in Western Europe, c. 1480–1630", p. 151.)

Figure 287. Robert Peake the Elder, Henry Frederick Prince of Wales (1594–1612), with Sir John Harington (1592–1614), in the hunting field, 1603. Oil on canvas, 201.9 × 147.3 cm. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest 1944, 44.

254. S.D. ***Goes through his pockets***] Ed. Not in Q, F. In addition to Goneril's letter, does he find the unpaired-glove Regan ordered Oswald to give to Edmund?

254. **I am only sorry**] The character of Oswald was written to be sympathetic. We are sorry to see him die, as is Edgar. [See note I,iv,43. *"So please you."*]

255. **deathsman**] executioner.

259. S.D. ***Reads***] *Reads the Letter*. (F, 2715). Not in Q.

261. **fruitfully**] (F, 2718) plentifully. This image is the first in a poetic sequence: *mature* (F, 2728), *rot* (F, 2931), *ripeness* (F, 2935). It is the strongest textual evidence that lines V,ii,8-11 in Q, 2931-35, F, 2931-36 were transposed. See Appendix B.

265. **labor**] (F, 2721); *Venter,* (Q1, 2723). *Labour*. (Q2, 2720).

269. **O indistinguish'd space of woman's will**] O limitless range of women's lust.

269. **indistinguish'd**] indefinable, beyond the range of sight.

272. **rake up**] cover up

273. **mature**] When time is ripe

274. **ungracious**] without grace, wicked
275. **death-practis'd**] whose death is plotted
276. S.D. ***Exit Edgar, carrying off Oswald's body***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Capell inserted the direction *"dragging out the body,"* which continues to be published in modern editions. (See R.A Foakes, *The Arden Shakespeare*, p. 348.) Edgar is strong, and easily lifts Oswald over his shoulders and carries him offstage (called a Fireman's carry.) The character's strength is dramatized when he *"descends"* (F, 949) in II,i. (See note II,i.19.S.D., *"Enter Edgar."*)
276. S.D. ***Soft music within***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The music is non-diegetic. It comes from outside the story world and is not heard by the characters. Here, Shakespeare is using the melody the audience first heard in I,v as a narrative tool primarily to foreshadow what's about to happen. [See note I,i, 5. S.D., *"The Fool plays a lullaby on his lute."*] The main plot involving King Lear and his daughters, and the subplot featuring the Earl of Gloucester and his sons are resolved *emotionally* by the order of events and the music. Gloucester's anagnorisis is "glued together" with the reconciliation of Lear and Cordelia fully dramatized in the next scene. [238] [See note IV,v,287., *"drum."*]
277. **stiff**] obstinately unbending
278. **vile sense**] "Used as an intensive emphasizing some bad quality or condition; †also, heavy, severe." (*OED*, 6.b.) *"Will he steale out of his wholsome bed To dare the* ***vile*** *contagion of the Night?"* (*Julius Caesar*, II,i, F, 905-6) Kenneth Muir notes that "Gloucester calls his senses vile because they still allow him to be fully conscious of his sorrows, and do not give him the relief of insanity." Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 175. See Appendix B.
278. **ingenious**] conscious
279. **distract**] mad
281. **wrong imaginations**] illusions
283-288. **Glou…too**] Ed. See Appendix B.
286. **Ripeness is all**] Cf. *Hamlet,* V,ii,*"the readinesse is all"* (F, 3671). Stoicism, a Hellenistic philosophy, teaches acceptance of fate, readiness for death, and equanimity in the face of fortune's changes. Stoics like Seneca wrote that one should endure all things with fortitude, as everything is determined by a chain of causes, and that the timing of death is settled at birth. Hamlet's line resonates with the same Stoic ideals as Edgar's.
287. **drum**] There are stage directions in both the quartos and the First Folio *"Drum afar off"* (F, 2737, after "*griefs"*), and *"A drum a farre off"* (Q. 2739, after "themselves"). I have omitted the direction because what the audience is hearing are the lulling sounds of music coming from Cordelia's camp in the next scene—which occurs days after IV,v. [See note IV,vi,S.D., *"Soft music."*] The drums Edgar is referring to here refer to some undermined time *after* the reconciliation of father and daughter in IV,vi—maybe days or weeks. Drums are not beaten in performance until Albany enters with *"Drumme and Colours"* (F, 2845) in IV,vii. [See note IV,vii,17,S.D.,"*Enter, with drum and colors, Albany, Goneril, Albany's Squire, and Soldiers."*]
287. S.D. ***Edgar takes him by the hand***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
288. **father**] Edgar uses the word *"father"* in the sense he used it before but the term now carries a completely different meaning for Gloucester. His long-anticipated moment of anagnorisis is

deliberately indeterminate; suspended between auditory identification of his son's voice and tactile confirmation through the touch of his hand. Rather than being told the truth by words or *logos*, he comes to perceive it intuitively; it is *"felt"* (F, 2593). Paradoxically, now that he is "blind," he is able to "see".

When I proposed this interpretation to Alan Dessen, co-author of *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580–1642,* he was of the opinion that Gloucester does not experience an anagnorisis upon hearing the word *"father"* at the end of IV,v (F 2742). He writes, "Edgar's use of 'father' does not reveal his true identity to Gloucester (it's a generic term used to address an older man) and that reunion-recognition is reported, not seen, in 5.3, just as the battle in 5.2 is reported, not seen. Why do we need to see that battle given the original stage limitations and the length of this script – and I find the Spedding [286] comment preposterous given the comparable example in Act 3 of *Antony and Cleopatra* with the crucial battle of Actium, the turning point of that play. A key element in any playwright's tool-kit is knowing what to display vs. what to report given the resources available and the issue of running time."

Dr. Dessen correctly argues that a *Baskets*-style rodeo clown pantomime of Gloucester's anagnorises is completely inappropriate, and could not possibly be what Shakespeare had in mind when he originally wrote the play. The discovery is subtly constructed by the playwright's masterful use of suspense, the arrangement of the incidents ("mythos"), the innovative use of the agapē leitmotif as a sound bridge, and the skill of the actor at nonverbal communication. [631] [See Appendix B.] Given the fundamental divergence in form between the Battle of Actium in *Antony and Cleopatra* (dramatized in Act 3, scene 7, and scenes 10 and 11, lines10–11) and the intermedio or intermezzo in *King Lear*, a direct comparison cannot be sustained.

288. **friend**] i.e. Edgar. See Appendix B.

288. S.D. ***Exeunt Edgar with his father in his hand***] Ed. *Exeunt,* F. Exit. Q. Compare INTERMEZZO, S.D., *"Cordelia with her father in her hand."*

ACT IV, SCENE VI.] Ed. *Scæna Septima* (F. 2743). Scene 21 in Quarto.

S.D. **A Tent in the French Camp]** Steevens, after Capell. Not in Q,

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Scene 21 (IV,vi) "The Platform" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Soft music***] Capell. Not in Q, F. See *"louder the musicke there"* (Q, 2775.2). Logically, the melody is a variation on the one the Fool played in I,v and III,vi. It functions as a "leitmotif" for the infrangible love Cordelia has for her father, which evokes the stereotypical bond a mother has for her child.

S.D. ***Enter Cordelia, Kent, Doctor, and Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Enter Cordelia, Kent, and Gentleman*. (F, 2744). *Enter Cordelia, Kent and Doctor.* (Q, 2744).

S.D. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. Gentleman, F. Not in Q.

7. **weeds**] garment: *"Weed wide enough to rap a Fairy in."* (*Mids.* F, 637); *"Let faire humanitie*

abhor the deede, / That spots & stains loues modestsnow-white weed" (*Lucr*, Q, 195-6). (Schmidt, *Shakespeare lexicon and quotation dictionary, Vol. 2*, p. 1347.) It is possible that Lear does not enter IV,v carrying a basket of weeds but is wearing them instead.

9. **shortens my made intent**] interferes with the plan I have made.

12. S.D. ***To the Doctor***] Theobald, subst. Not in Q, F. Furness quotes Malone: "In the Ff all of the speeches are given to 'the Gentleman' which in the Qq are divided between 'the Physician" and "Gentleman.' I suppose from a penury of actors it was found convenient to unite the two characters, which were originally distinct." Perhaps it was done to cut costuming expenses. In the version performed for James I, the Doctor was probably costumed in something similar to that worn in portraits of Nostradamus, with a signature hat and gown donned by physicians. Costumes were a major, even central, element of Elizabeth drama. [635] [See Figure 288.]

Figure 288. Portrait de Michel de Nostre-Dame (Nostre Dame), dit Nostradamus, astrologue (1503-1566), detail, Maison de Nostradamus, Salon de Provence, Bouches du Rhone.

13. ***Doct***] *Doct.* (Q, 2761); *Gent.* (F, 2762)

16. **untuned**] Cf. IV,iii,39. Plato writes in *Timaeus* that "Attunement, having motions akin to the circuits in our soul, have been given by the Muses . . . as an aid to bring our soul-circuit, when it has gone out of tune, into order and harmony with itself." (West, Martin. "Music Therapy in Antiquity." *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity.* Peregrine Horden. Ashgate Publishing, 2000, p. 58. Marsilio Ficino wrote: "We play the lyre, precisely to avoid becoming unstrung" [518]

16. **wind up**] "Simply winding a lute up to a higher pitch can cause serious structural damage, and tuning it down to a lower pitch can make it very difficult to play cleanly" (Lynda Sayce, The Lute Society).

17. ***Doct***] (Q, 2765); *Gent.* (F, 2767).

21. ***Kent***] Ed. *Gent.* (Q, 2774); *Gent.* (F, 2771). Privileges in the royal presence, such as who spoke, who stood closest, etc, were carefully graded by rank; the highest-ranking gentleman present typically took the lead in formal interactions. [636]

22. **We**] Kent and Lear's Knight are standing next to one another, recalling the blocking in I,i.

22. **fresh garments**] Kent is letting her know that the king is appropriately attired to receive an audience. Lear is too proud to appear publicly in a night-gown and nightcap as in *2 Hen IV*, Q1, 1421.1,*"Enter the King in his night-gowne."* See note V,i,286, *"I haue seene the day, with my good biting Faulchion / I would haue made him skip"* (F, 3241-42). My guess is that the ailing monarch would be dressed sensitively in clothes that aligned with his masculine image of himself (with his signature codpiece) rather than in voguish 17th century fashions that project a dignified version of kingship, as Goneril and Regan would have demanded.

23. ***Doct***] (Q, 2771); *Gent.* (2774-75).

24. **temperance**] sanity, normality

24. S.D. ***Enter Lear in a chair carried by Servants***] F. Not in Q. Compare *Othello*,V,ii,*"Enter*

Lodouico, Montano, Iago, and Officers, Cassio in a Chaire" (Q, 3582.1). Presumably a sedan chair, like the one made for Charles V below.

Figure 289. Sedan chair of Charles V, Illustrated History of Furniture (Chpt III) by Frederick Litchfield.

25. ***Doct***] (Q, 2776). Not in F.
25. **music**] (Q, 2775.1-2775.2); not in F. Cordelia's intent in this scene parallels the Fool's in I,v: they both want to retune Lear's "*un*-tuned" spirit. [See note IV,vi,16., *"untuned."*] "In its most cherished formative texts, both sacred and secular, the medieval world encountered the notion that music had measurable therapeutic value. From the story of David and Saul, perhaps the oldest account of applied music therapy that we possess, through Cato, Cicero, Macrobius, and of course Beothius, music was viewed as an integral element of the healing arts." (*Music in Medieval Medical Practice: Speculations and Certainties*, Christopher Callahan, College Music Symposium, Published by: College Music Society Vol. 40 (2000), pp. 151-164. [See Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.]

Figure 290. David Plays the Harp for Saul, by Rembrandt van Rijn, c. 1650 and 1670. Mauritshuis.

28. **there**] The precise location and even the existence of a dedicated "musician's gallery" (or "music room") in the original Globe Theatre is contested among scholars. [636] In the *Portrait of Sir Henry Unton,* the consort musicians are shown performing at ground level in front of the stage; the players situated on the ground in front of the space used for dancing/masquing rather than on the elevated platform. [636] The transition from IV,v to IV,vi pulls the nondiegetic score and its motif directly into the play's diegesis.
26. S.D. ***Music Still***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
29. S.D. ***Kissing Lear***] Not in Q, F.
30. **White flakes**] snowy locks
31. **challenge**] claim
33. **deep**] bass
33. **dread-bolted**] furnished with the dread thunder-bolt
35. **perdu**] a sentry in a perilous position.
38. **Against**] before, opposite to.
39. **rogues**] vagabonds
40. **short**] In Elizabethan England, straw that was cut short in length was primarily used as chaff for livestock fodder and animal bedding.
40. **musty**] moldy, stale. Compare *Hamlet,* F. 2214.
40. **straw**] In Shakespeare's England, agricultural cereal straw and wetland rushes were distinct

botanical materials with different uses. *Cereal Straw*: The dry, hollow stalks left over after harvesting grain (such as wheat, rye, or oats). It was abundant, cheap, coarse, and primarily used for animal bedding, fodder mixing, and barnyard litter. *Rushes*: Tough, pliable wetland plants (such as Juncus) gathered from riverbanks and marshes. They were softer, cooler in summer, and traditionally preferred for strewing on the floors of better-kept homes and churches. *Rush matting*, a familiar and accessible flooring material, may have covered the original Globe's platform stage. Unlike loose vegetal strewing, it provided a cleaner, more durable, and more serviceable surface. [637] By Victorian times, strewing loose rushes on floors was an obsolete practice from the medieval and Tudor eras. Cereal straw was regularly strewn across streets to muffle sound. [636]

Figure 291. Queen Elizabeth and the Ambassadors, attributed to Levina Teerlinc, c. 1560.

42. **all**] together
43. ***Doct***] (Q, 2791); *Gen.* (F, 2791)
46. **bliss**] "Mental, ethereal, spiritual: perfect joy or felicity, supreme delight; blessedness" (*OED*, **2.b**). *Hen VI Pt. 1.* V.v, *"Whereas the contrarie bringeth **blisse**, / And is a patterne of Celestiall peace.* (F, 2886-7)

Figure 292 Gallonio, the Rev. Father: "Tortures and Torments of the Christian Martyrs", p, 66 (1903), Translated from the Latin by A.R. Allison, 1591.

47. **wheel of fire**] Lear is likening the guilt he is feeling for selfishly plotting to ruin Cordelia's marriage prospects to being burned alive by his own tears. The wheel of fire refers to an actual torture device where a person was bound to a wheel mounted on an A frame and roasted alive. "Hence it came about sometimes that, binding them to wheels having sharp spikes affixed all round, and placed over a fire burning below, they would revolve the same round and round and round at high speed. Wherefore, in just the same fashion as joints on the spit and set to the fire be roasted and cooked, so where these turned about and roasted, that they might become fine bread of Jesus Christ." (*Martyrum Cruciatibus* of the Rev. Father Gallonio, trans A.R. Allison p. 32.) It is inferred by the sequence of incidents (mythos) that the reconciliation between Gloucester and Edgar, which is not shown but narrated in the final scene, is comparable *emotionally* to what the audience sees dramatized between Lear and Cordelia. In Gloucester's case, his guilt was too much to endure, and his heart, *"Twixt two extremes of passion, ioy and greefe, / Burst[s] smilingly."* (F, 3161-2). Note how Shakespeare compresses time theatrically. Lear is wakened by Cordelia in IV,vi, days after he left the stage in IV,v. Gloucester is not reconciled with Edgar until after the battle, some "*halfe houre"* (F, 3156) before the latter is summoned by the Herald Trumpeter.
47. **that**] so that.

50. **wide**] i.e. wide of the mark, delusional
51. ***Doct***] (Q, 2801); *Gen.* (F, 2801-02).
53. **abused**] deluded. He thinks Cordelia must be an hallucination.
55. S.D. ***Pricks himself***] Not in Q, F. Lear's histrionics are an essential part of his character.
57. S.D. ***She kneels***] Not in Q, F. We last saw Cordelia kneel before her father in I,i,87.
58. S.D. ***Lear kneels***] Not in Q, F. Compare *Coriolanus* V,iii, 3397-3406. Coriolanus kneels before his mother, who tells him to rise, and she kneels before him. Here, Lear kneels before Cordelia and begs forgiveness, thus "inverting the orthodoxy whereby children would kneel nightly to their parents and ask for blessing" (Jonathan Bate, *How the Classics Made Shakespeare,* p. 2). As the two of them are being led away to prison at the beginning of V,i, he tells Cordelia, *"When thou dost aske me blessing, Ile kneele downe / And aske of thee forgiuenesse"* (F, 2950-51).

Figure 293. David Allan, *Volumnia Pleading with Coriolanus*, c. 1769 National Galleries Scotland.

60. **fond**] doting, tender. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii., "In truth faire *Mountague* I am too **fond**:" (F, 896)
64. **this man**] Kent
65. **mainly**] entirely
77. **abuse**] deceive
78. ***Doct***] (Q, 2837); *Gent.* (F, 2837)
78. **rage**] frenzy, delirium
80. **even o'er**] fill up the gap in; to smooth over, render what had passed unbroken in his recollection (Wright) qu. Furness p. 304.
82. **Till further settling**] till he is calmer.
83. **walk**] withdraw
85. S.D. ***Music still***] Not in Q, F.
85. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear, Cordelia, Doctor, and Attendants***] *Exeunt. Manet Kent, and Gent*. (Q, 2842). *Exeunt.* (F, 2843). It is possible that Lear's Knight exits with Lear and Cordelia, and that the Doctor remains on stage—explaining why he doesn't know Kent's identity. However, the words *"They say Edgar his banish sonne is with the Earle of Kent in Germanie"* (Q, 2843.5-6), need not be read literally; they can be said ironically by Lear's Knight. Thus, the scene concludes on a poignant note, highlighting the characters' intimate friendship and their shared devotion to the king. The fate of Lear's Knight is implied in the narrative when he is not present in the retreat; the only logical explanation being that he was killed during the battle.

Lines 86-93 (Q, 2843.2-2843.9) have been transposed from scene 17 in the first and second quartos. [Appendix D: The Gentleman in Scene 17 (quartos).]

86. ***Kent***] Q. 2347.2. Not in F.
86-7. **Why the King of France …reason**] This exchange serves to identify the King of France and Edgar as two different people in the fictional world of the story. The audience knows

they are played by the same actor with the effect of metatheatre. See Appendix D.
88. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. Gent. Q, 2347.4. Not in F.
89. **imports**] portends
92. ***Kent***] Q. 2347.8. Not in F.
93. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. *Gent.* (Q, 2347.9). Not in F.
92. **The Marshall of France Monsier la Far**] Q, 2347.9. Not in F.
92. **Holds it true sir that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain**] Q, 2843.1. Not in F.
92. ***Kent***] Q. 2347.9. Not in F.
93. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. Gent. Q. 2347.10. Not in F.
93. **The Marshall of France, Monsieur La Far**] Q, 2843.1. Not in F. Lines Q, 2843.1-2843.11 were deleted in the Folio.
93-4. **Holds it true**] is it still accepted.
95. ***Kent***] Q, 2843.2. Not in F.
96. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. Gent. Q, 2843.3. Not in F.
96. **conductor**] leader, general. See Appendix D.
95. ***Kent***] Q, 2843.4. Not in F.
98. ***Lear's Knight***] Q, 2843.5-6. Not in F.
100. S.D. ***Drum afar off***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *"A drum a farre off"* (Q1, 2739).
100. ***Kent***] Q, 2843.7-8. Not in F.
102. ***Lear's Knight***] Ed. Gent. Q, 2843.9.
102. **arbitrement**] decisive encounter
103. ***Kent***] Q, 2843.10 Not in F.
103. S.D. ***Exit***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.
104. ***Kent***] Q, 2347.51. Not in F.
104. **My point and period**] Kent has dedicated his life to serving the king, and recognizes that the death of his lord and master is nigh. J. Stephen Roberts discusses the knight's chivalric code and his attitude toward death in his YouTube video "How did a medieval knight prefer to die?" According to the American Heart Association (AHA), "broken heart syndrome, or takotsubo cardiomyopathy, is a reaction your heart has to a surge of stress hormones caused by an emotionally stressful event. Broken heart syndrome causes the heart to stop operating normally, resulting in heart failure. During these situations, the body releases an increase of hormones, which temporarily paralyzes your heart and limits its standard functionality." ("Can You Really Die From a Broken Heart?")
105. S.D. ***Exit***] Q. Not in F.

ACT IV. **SCENE VII**] Ed. *Actus Quintus. Scena Prima* (F, 2844). Scene 22 in Quarto. See Appendix B.

S.D. **The British Camp near Dover**] Capell, subst. Not in Q, F.
S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Scene 22 (V,i) "The Platform" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Edmund and Regan from one door***] Ed. *Enter with Drumme and Colours, Edmund, Regan, Gentlemen, and Souldiers.* (F, 2845-6). *Enter Edmund, Regan, and their powers.* (Q, 2845). Regan and Edmund likely enter from the side door on the audience's left (stage right). [508] They are alone together, signaling immediate post-coital intimacy to Shakespeare's prurient audience, which is why she is nagging him about the nature of her relationship with Goneril. See note IV,vii,8, *"but then."* Moreover, Edmund is not in command of the English forces. See note V,i, S.D. *"Enter Edmund, with Lear and Cordelia guarded by two officers, Captain."*

S.D. ***Albany's Squire from behind the arras***] Ed. i.e., from the enter opening. **Arras** is "an alternative term for ***curtain/ hangings*** suspended in front of the tiring-house wall, which, like *hangings*, usually occurs in conjunction with ***behind***" p. 12 See *The Honest Man's Fortune*, III,i, *"Enter Lamira behind the Arras"*, p 247.

1. **His last purpose**] i.e. to fight.
2. **advis'd**] induced.
3. **alteration**] vacillation.
4. **self-reproving**] self-reproach, conscientious scruples.
4. **constant pleasure**] fixed decision.
4. S.D. ***Exit Albany's Squire***] Ed. *To an Officer; who goes out.* Capell. Not in Q, F. Albany's Squire exits behind the center curtains.
5. **man**] Oswald
5. **miscarried**] come to harm.
6. **doubted**] feared.
7. **intend upon you**] mean to confer upon you, i.e., make him her husband.
8. **but then**] Regan is being indirect. She can scarcely contain her jealously. Compare her conversation with Oswald in IV,iv,21,"*some things.*"
9. **honor'd**] honorable.
11. **forfended**] forbidden.
12. **doubtful**] fearful
13. **bosom'd with her**] embraced her, breast to breast. Cf. IV,iv,26 note.
13. **as far as**] She worries that he has gone "all the way" with Goneril.
17. S.D. ***Enter, with drum and colors, Albany, Goneril, Albany's Squire, and Soldiers***] Ed. *Enter with Drum and Colours, Albany, Gonerill, Soldiers.* (F, 2845-46). *Enter Albany and Goneril with Troupes.* (Q, 2845). They enter from the large center opening.

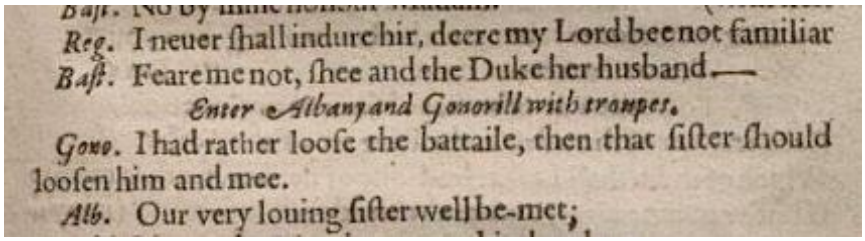

Reg. I neuer ſhall indure hir, deere my Lord be not familiar
Baſt. Feare me not, ſhee and the Duke her husband—
Enter Albany and Gonorill with troupes.
Gono. I had rather looſe the battaile, then that ſiſter ſhould looſen him and mee.
Alb. Our very louing ſiſter well be-met;

Figure 294. "I had rather lose the battle" ascribed to Gonoril in the quartos. The line was omitted in the Folio. InternetShakespeareEditions.

18. **Reg**] Ed. *Gono*. (Q, 2864.1). Not in F. The line "*I had rather loose the battaile, then that sister should loosen him nd mee*" (Q, 2864.1-2) was deleted in the First Folio. It must be

spoken by Regan for Albany's innocent greeting—*"Our very louing Sister, well be-met"* (F, 2865)—to get a laugh. What is said as a polite welcome is charged with irony by the audience who receives in the context of what Regan's last words. See also note IV,vii,34, *"Gon."*

18. S.D. ***Aside***] Theobald, not in Q, F.
20. **very loving**] Albany's means this as a polite greeting (*viz*, "good to see you, my dear sister-in-law").
20. **bemet**] met
22. **rigor of our state**] harshness of our rule.
23. **Where**] in a case where.
24. **For**] as for.
25. **touches**] concerns
30. **and particular broils**] and private quarrels.
31. **determine,**] comma added by Ed. *determine* (Q, 2873), (F, 2873). *viz.* conference with each other.
32. **th'ancient of war**] the banner of war. His words are metaphorical. He means they will be guided by military considerations only.
33. **presently**] at once

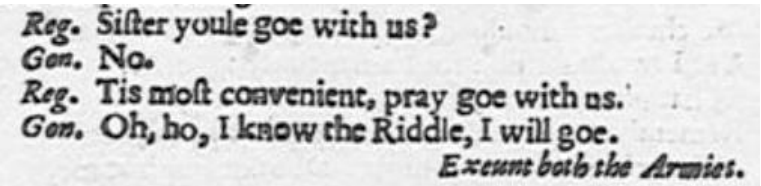

Reg. Sifter youle goe with us?
Gon. No.
Reg. Tis moſt convenient, pray goe with us.
Gon. Oh, ho, I know the Riddle, I will goe.
Exeunt both the Armies.

Figure 295. Facsimile copy of Second Quarto (New South Wales).

33. S.D. ***Exit Edmund***] Ed. Not in Q, F. He exits through the door on the left from which he and Regan entered the scene. He returns at line 50 with a military "situation map." [See IV,vii,50, S.D.. "with a map."]
34. **Gon**] Ed. *Reg.* (Q, 2875) *Reg.* (F, 2875). Goneril does not have the opportunity to leave with Edmund. She is stuck with her husband as long as he lives.
35. **Reg**] Ed. *Gon.* (Q, 2875), *Gon.* (F, 2875). Regan's husband is dead. She is free to go with Edmund wherever she wants. She has now an obvious advantage in the rivalry between the sisters. See note III,vii,21, *Reg*.
36. **Gon**] Ed. *Reg.* (Q, 2876), *Reg.* (F, 2877).
36. **convenient**] befitting
36. S.D. ***She takes her by the hand***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Goneril forcibly restrains her sister from leaving with Edmund.
37. **Reg**] Ed. *Gon.* (F, 2878). Not in Q
37. **riddle**] She understands that Goneril wants to prevent her from being alone with Edmund.
37. S.D. ***As they are going out enter Edgar***] Theobald subst. *Enter Edgar.* (Q, 2880). *Exeunt both the Armies; Enter Edgar.* (F, 2879-80). He enters from the door on the audience's left.
37. S.D. ***wearing a hooded cloak***] Compare *Coriolanus*, IV,iv,*"Enter Coriolanus in meane Apparrell, Disguisd, and muffled*" (F, 2621-22) "[T]o enter muffled is to appear with one's face concealed by a garment" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-*

1642, **muffled**, p. 164.) Edgar is no longer dressed in Curan's *"best 'parel."* Albany mentions being impressed with his *"Royall Nobelenesse"* by his *"very gait"* (F, 3137-38), so presumably he is wearing a short hooded cloak concealing his face. However, what commands Albany's attention most of all is Edgar's *manner of speaking*. The duke would not give him the time of day if he spoke with a Somerset "West Country" accent—the dialect Edgar uses to address Oswald in IV,v. [See Video 40, *Westcountry Yap*]. Edgar is probably speaking in conservative English, signaling his high breeding. Edmund only accepts his challenge because *"thy out-side looks so faire and War-like,/ And that thy tongue (somesay) of breeding breathes"* (F, 3098-99).

39. S.D. ***Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar***] *Exeunt.* (Q, 2882, after *word*). Not in F.
40. S.D. ***Giving him Goneril's letter***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The letter Edgar gives to Albany is a literal and symbolic reversal of Edmund's fortunes, completing the "wheel of fortune" motif throughout the play.
44. **avouched**] maintained.
44. **miscarry**] lose the battle, and perish
48. **Herald**] Herald Trumpet
50. **o'erlook**] peruse
50. S.D. **As Edgar is leaving**] Ed. Exit (Q, 2894); Exit (F, 2894)
50. S.D. ***Edmund reenters***] Enter Edmund (F, 2895); Enter Edmund (Q, 2895).
50. S.D. ***with a map***] Ed. Not in Q, F. A map of the battlefield. Compare I,i,S.D., "*reading a map*."
50. S.D. ***exchange glances***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Cf. IV,ii, "*glances on Jane Shore while reading."* Thomas Heywood, *1 Henry VI*. p. 63.
51. **powers**] troops
53. **By diligent discovery**] obtained by careful reconnoitering
54. **greet the time**] meet the emergency
54. S.D. ***Taking Edmund's paper***] Jennings, *subst*. Not in Q, F.
54. S.D. ***Exit***] (F, 2901). Not in Q.
55-69. **To both these sisters**…] Edmund's speech at the conclusion of Act IV (F, 2902-16) is delivered with the same tone that characterizes his opening soliloquy in I,ii (F, 335-56). He recruits the audience as uneasy accomplices to his designs, disclosing his machinations in rhetorical speeches whose verbal brilliance and audacious self-assurance make him compelling even as they reveal his moral depravity. As noted in Appendix B, the character exhibits a clinical profile consistent with psychopathy. Robert Hare describes psychopathic individuals as "social predators who charm, manipulate, and ruthlessly plow their way through life …. Completely lacking in conscience and empathy, they selfishly take what they want and do as they please, violating social norms and expectations without the slightest sense of regret." [241]
56. **jealous**] suspicious
61. **carry out my side**] make my game, succeed in my ambitions.
63. **countenance**] authority, credit.
65. **Taking off**] killing.
68. **Shall**] they shall
68. **state**] high place. Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*
69. **Stands on**] Stands upon, to be of consequence to. Alexander Dyce, *A General Glossary to*

Shakespeare's Works

69. **defend**] maintain by force. Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary.*

69. **debate**] contend with words. Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*

68-9. **for my state stands on me . . . debate**] Edmund is saying that his hold of power is consequent on protecting it, not disputation.

69. S.D. ***Exit***] (Q, 2917) (F, 2916).

69. S.D. ***End of Act IV***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare S.D., *"Finis Actus Quarto"* in *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, p, 243). "The truth, certainly as far as Elizabethan and Jacobean plays are concerned, is that the playwrights did not write [their plays] in five acts – that division was done later by the various editors who worked on their plays." ("Shakespeare's Five Act Structure"). [See Appendix B.]

Video 43. English civil war drum calls, played by the drummers of the Marquess of Winchesters Regiment.

INTERMEZZO] Ed. *Scena Secunda.* (F, 2917). Scene 23 in Quarto. [See Appendix C.] There is a time jump of perhaps days or weeks after the scene in which Edmund reveals his plan to murder Lear and Cordelia (F, 2914-16). Obviously, he cannot logically leave the stage saying that he is going to have them put to death after the battle (F, 2916), and then immediately turn around with them his captives. In *Lear*, the passage of time is signaled to the audience by an Intermezzo. The Renaissance intermezzo (also called intermedio) derives from the Italian term meaning "in the middle." John Florio defines *"Intermėdio"* as "an Intermedium, the musike that is, or shewes that are betweene the acts of a play." Needless to say, the 16th and 17th-century intermezzo did not adhere to 19th and 20th-century theatre realism. In fact, it was almost the opposite in philosophy and execution. Today, it is considered a primary ancestor of opera**.** [242] Here, the Intermezzo between Acts IV and V in *Lear* is more like an elaborate musical allegory or "play within the play" rather than a standard scene within the main drama. It prioritizes symbolic meaning, thematic commentary, and artificiality over a believable, life-like depiction of events. It employs "musical rhetoric" and the "ethos of modes" to move the affections of the audience. [243] [See Appendix B.]

The stage directions indicate that there is a pageant-like procession, presumably in the yard, modeled on ancient Roman trionfi: "*Enter with Drumme and Colours, Lear, Cordelia, and Souldiers, ouer the Stage, and Exeunt"* (F, 2918-19). As an historical note, the allegorical figure of Time, often personified as Chronos, appears repeatedly in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italian intermezzi, whose Neoplatonic, astrological, and mythological frameworks made temporality a central dramatic concern. [632] In Renaissance court spectacle, especially the English masque, time, cyclical renewal, and metamorphic change were recurring dramaturgical materials. In Ben Jonson' s masque *Time Vindicated to Himself and to His*

Honours (1623) the figure of Saturn (Chronos) as the classical deity of Time embodies the playwright's neoclassical ideals by restoring order against the forces of satirical misrule. In John Dryden's final dramatic poem *The Secular Masque*, written to celebrate the end of the 17th century and the turn of the century, Chronos is portrayed as a weary, burdened figure advised by Janus to speed up and drop his heavy load of human-kind. He symbolizes the inescapable passage of time and acts as a bridge between the old era and the new.

Figure 296. Time Clipping Cupid's Wings (1694), by Pierre Mignard, Denver Art Museum. Chronos, representing the inevitable passage of time and logic, disables Cupid's ability to fly.

S.D. **Bagpiper**] Ed. Not in Q, F. After Edmund's villainous speech concluding Act IV (F, 2902-16), the plot shifts to the aftermath of the lost battle. A mournful bagpipe retreat accompanying the defeated French army during the Intermezzo tells the story—the English forces won. The music sets the grave tone for the final scene. Up to now, the play strikes a farcical rather than tragic tone, mirroring the festive spirit of its presumed Jacobean court debut on the second day of Christmas. Because the play incorporates Scottish customs to flatter King James VI and I, bagpipes offer a more emotionally evocative accompaniment to the retreat than blaring trumpets. [See Video 45.]

Bagpipes were actively used in 16th-century warfare as a "call to arms" and a critical battlefield instrument. During this period, they began replacing the trumpet as the primary musical tool for Scottish Highland regiments. Compare *Captain Thomas Stuckeley* (1596), *"Drum soundeth and a Bagpipe."* Bagpipes were used in English court masques, particularly during the Tudor period in the mid-16th century. [244] Several masques at the courts of Edward VI and Mary I featured bagpipes explicitly. The "Masque of Bagpipes" in 1553 [245] involved six English bagpipers concealed in wicker grotesque animals, with instruments like loud and soft pipes purchased for the event. Earlier, the "Masque of Irishmen" (1551) and "Masque of Irishwomen" (1552) [246] hired Irish bagpipers, and a 1557 masque before Queen Mary included two Irish bagpipers with kerne performers. [247] Bagpipers remained at court through the 16th and into the 17th century for entertainments, often playing refined "pastoral" variants like soft or ivory bagpipes in masques and aristocratic events. References appear in contexts like James Shirley's 1634 *Triumph of Peace*, [248] associating "Lancashire bagpipes" with pastoral or satirical anti-masques. In my restoration, the bagpipe is one of several "lowly" instruments used for their symbolic and political connotations, including the pipe and tabor, the blowing horn and the hurdy-gurdy. [See note II,iii, S.D., "*A hurdy-gurdy plays.*"]

> [T]he existence of the bagpipes before the first century is thought to be documented by the Greek playwright Aristophanes in his work "The Acharnians" where he wrote, "You pipers who are here from Thebes, with bone pipes blow the posterior of a dog," there is no other solid indication until the first century when a very famous piper came to rule

Rome. Nero considered himself a good piper as well as many other things, he even had the bagpipes put on a coin. "They say he can…play the aulos both with his mouth and also with his armpit, a big bag being thrown under it, in order that he might escape the disfigurement of Athens," Dio Chrysostom wrote in 115 AD. This was one of the first positive references to the bagpipes. Nero also used bagpipes to inspire his troops before battle. ("The History of the Highland Bagpipe.")

Figure 297. Sculptured Piper in Melrose Abbey.

The bagpipe was primarily a peasant instrument during the Middle Ages.[249] They became deeply intertwined with Scottish culture between the 14th and 16th centuries, where they played a role in warfare. [250] Scottish bagpipers acted as primary morale boosters, signalers, and psychological warfare agents from the 16th century through World War II and beyond. Their music boosted morale, rallied soldiers, and terrified enemies. German soldiers famously nicknamed Scottish Highland regiment soldiers and their accompanying bagpipers "Ladies from Hell" (Die Damen aus der Hölle) during World War I. [251] In WWII, William Millin, commonly known as Piper Bill, was a Canadian-born Scottish bagpiper, famous for playing "Highland Laddie", "The Road to the Isles", and "All The Blue Bonnets Are Over the Border" as his comrades fell around him on Sword Beach."

Video 44. "Bagpipes in War"

S.D. **retreat]** Ed. *Alarum within.* **(**F, 2918); *Alarum* (Q1, 2917) *Alarum.* (Q2, 2917). A signal to retreat in battle. (The editors of *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, note that **Retreat** is "a frequent direction for **sound** (roughly fifty examples) from a **trumpet** or **drum** within to mark a particular stage **battle**, sometimes called for alone, but more often with **alarum**" (p. 179). See *"Exit, sound Retreat"* (*Edward III*, Q, 1575); *"Sound a retreat"* (*Troilus and Cressida,* F. 1619); *"Alarum, and Retreat"* (*2 Henry VI,* F, 2773). In William Camden's account of the 1579 expedition of Sir William Drury, against James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald, he writes, "…the Marshall and Sir Henry Danvers with the powre of horsemen, and Poer with the Companies of old souldiours at the foote of the hill, beeing disappointed of his hope, stood still, and soone after by his bagpipers sounded the retraite" [639]

Video 45. "When the Battle Is Over" (3/4 Retreat March) - Performed by Matt Willis on the Highland Bagpipes.

S.D. ***Enter with Drum and Colours***] *Enter with Drumme and Colours* (F, 2918). *"Enter the*

powers of France ouer the stage" (Q1, 2917). European armies in the 16th century actively displayed their colors (banners and flags) during a retreat to maintain order and prevent a complete rout. Flags were fiercely guarded by a dedicated group of veteran soldiers called the Colour Guard. [638]

S.D. ***Cordelia with her father in her hand***] *"Cordelia with her father in her hand. Enter Edgar and Gloster."* (Q1 2917-20) *"Lear, Cordelia, and Souldiers, ouer the Stage, and Exeunt"* (F, 2918-19).

Figure 296. "An armed company of the kerne, carrying halberds and pikes and led by a piper." The Image of Irelande, by John Derrick, published in 1581.

S.D. ***their heads and faces bloody and besmeared with mud and dirt***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *Doctor Faustus*, scene xiii (p.67).

ACT V] Ed. SCENE I] Ed. *Scena Tertia* (F, 2937). Scene 24 in Quarto. See Appendix B.

S.D. ***The British Camp near Dover*****]** Malone; not in Q, F.

S.D. **The Platform**] Ed. Not in Q, F. Scene 24 (IV,iii) "The Platform" (J.C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its Design and Equipment*, 1961).

S.D. ***Enter Edmund, with Lear and Cordelia***] Ed. *Enter Edmund, with Lear and Cordelia prisoners* (Q1, 2939). *Enter Edmund, with Lear and Cordelia prisoners* (Q2, 2939). *Enter in conquest with Drum and Colours, Edmund, Lear, and Cordelia, as prisoners, Souldiers, Captaine.* (F, 2938-39). Edmund enters on the sly with Lear and Cordelia in tow, probably through the side door on the audience's left, as he did in IV,vii. [See note IV,vii, S.D., *"Enter Edmund and Regan from one door."*] He certainly does not want to call attention to the whereabouts of his captives or risk his murderous conversation with the Captain being overheard. The entrance of Albany *et al* is announced with a trumpet *"Flourish"* (F, 2982). They enter through the large central opening in the tiring house,—what was called the "porta regia in Roman theatre. Albany, and not Edmund, is the one leading the English forces, as he is quick to remind him. [See note V,i,40,S.D., *"Enter Albany, Goneril, Albany's Squire, and Soldiers."*]

S.D. ***holding hands***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare "*her father in her hand* (Q1, 2919). Compare also *Coriolanus*, *"Holds her by the hand silent"* (F, 3544). According to Social Baseline Theory (SBT), developed by James Coan and David Sbarra, the human brain treats the availability of close social relationships as its default physical and energetic environment. When a child holds a parent's hand, the brain automatically offloads the metabolic and physiological costs of processing stress and managing threats. [640] Here, the roles of parent and child are inverted.

S.D. ***guarded by two Soldiers, Captain***] Ed. *Enter in conquest with Drum and Colours, Edmund, Lear, and Cordelia, as prisoners, Souldiers, Captaine.* (F, 2938-39). Edmund orders two soldiers to escort Lear and Cordelia to prison, leaving him alone on stage with the Captain.

2. **greater pleasures**] wishes of the people of greater authority

3. **censure**] judge, pass judgment on.
3. S.D. ***To Lear***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
12. **old tales**] improbable fictions of bygone times (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*).
13. **gilded butterflies**] flitty, beautifully dressed courtiers. Tudor and Jacobean courtiers were well acquainted with same-sex erotic practices and drew upon a distinctive cultural lexicon and repertoire of signs to allude to them obliquely. [641] Courtiers seen as effeminately dressed and cosmetically adorned, like the Earl of Kent in I,i drew male-male erotic suspicion. [645] Jacobean criticism of James I's intimate promotion of handsome young male favourites such as Philip Herbert provides the obvious courtly case: contemporaries and later commentators connected the king's favourites, his perceived softness, and anxieties about sodomitical intimacy. [642]
13. **rogues**] knaves
16. **take upon**] profess to understand and explain.

Figure 298. Diogenes (1873), by Jules Bastien-Lepage.

16. **mystery of things**] The ancient Greeks used the word "*mysterion*" (μυστήριον) to describe esoteric or hidden ideas. "The Renaissance, that is, the period that extends roughly from the middle of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the 17th century, was a time of intense, all-encompassing, and, in many ways, distinctive philosophical activity." [252] (Philosophy, formal rhetoric, and public debate were conventionally regarded as masculine domains—a pattern that, in altered but persistent forms, continues into the present. [562]) As we saw in III,iv, Lear's preoccupation with philosophical questions leads him to construe Poor Tom as a disciple of Anaxagoras or Diogenes of Sinope. Here, as they are being led away to prison, Lear wants to comfort Cordelia by evoking memories of things they loved doing alone together, from laughing at haute couture to debating concepts of classical philosophy, such the meaning of true love—the central subject of the *Symposium*. [560] Lear projects onto their relationship an ideal of Platonic fellowship, in which they inhabit a timeless world of intellectual and spiritual concord, untouched by sexual or romantic desire, and exempt from gendered expectation.
17. **God's spies**] Ed. Gods Q, F. Spies of *"high-iudging* Ioue*"* (F, 1522). The English word martyr comes from the ancient Greek word μάρτυς (mártys), which literally means "witness." Lear envisions their imprisonment not as a defeat, but as an opportunity to be holy witnesses to human history from a position of detached, spiritual elevation.

Figure 299. *A Catalogue of the Severall Sects and Opinions in England and other Nations: With a briefe Rehearsall of their false and dangerous Tenents*, a propaganda broadsheet denouncing English dissenters from 1647, including Jesuits, Welsh blasphemers, Arminians, Arians, Adamites, Libertines (Antinomians), Antescripturians, Soul sleepers, Anabaptists, Familists, Seekers, and Divorcers.

18. **packs and sects**] cabals and factions. [See Figure 299.]
18. **great ones**] like Socrates, Boethius, John Ball, William Tyndale, Anne Askew, Giordano Bruno, etc—"great ones" who were sent away to prison and martyred. [See Figure 300.]

Video 46. Shakespeare was devastated by Giordano Bruno's Death. 'The Phoenix and the Turtle" explained.

19. **ebb and flow by th'moon**] Compare *"Tempus edax rerum"* (Time, that devours all things) in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Bk XV:176-198 Pythagoras's Teachings: The Eternal Flux*:* "Time itself, also, glides, in its continual motion, no differently than a river . . . And Diana, the moon, can never have the same or similar form, and is always less today than tomorrow if her orb is waxing, greater if it is waning."

Figure 300. *The Death of Socrates* by Jacques-Louis David (1787). Metropolitan Museum of Art.

20. **such sacrifices**] The phrase directly evokes the historic tradition of martyrdom, famously epitomized by figures like Socrates and St. Stephen—on whose "Day" *King Lear* was presumably commissioned by James I to honor. [See Figure 301.]

Figure 301. *The Martyrdom of St Stephen*, Peter Paul Rubens (c. 1616), Musée des Beaux-Arts de Valenciennes.

21. S.D. ***She leans on him weeping***] Not in Q, F. Compare *Claricilla*, by Thomas Killigrew, I,iv, p.8., *"she leans on him and weeps."* Cordelia instinctively seeks comfort from her father when facing fear, and Lear sheds his macho facade and holds her close to him.
21. **caught**] "Caught" evokes the older hunting sense of catch: [643] a chase or pursuit, as in Robert Henryson a 15th-century fable "The Wolf and the Wether", where the Wolf complains, "Quhat wes the cause ye gaif me sic ane katche?"—that is, "Why did you give me such a chase? Lear is asking her if his words caused her to weep and cling to him for support. Catch is being used as part of an extended metaphor. This final interaction signifies a structural shift, reverting the characters back to a traditional parent-child dynamic. The restoration of the natural order after a period of role reversal is a classic archetype in storytelling, such as the *The Bacchae* by Euripides and *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes
22-3. **He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven / And fire us hence like foxes**] In Act III,vi, Lear is taken to a skinning shed—a dedicated outbuilding used for flaying animals, removing pelts, and preparing carcasses. The "discovery" of a fox's carcass, strung up for

skinning, marks the location of the scene. [See note III,vi,14.S.D. *"a freshly hung fox and scattered animal skins."*] The prop serves as the catalyst for the character's decision to put his vixen daughters on trial for their hard-heartedness: *"now you shee Foxes"* (Q2, 2014.6). [See note III,vi,15-16, *"To have a thousand, with red burning spits Come hizzing in upon 'em."*] Shakespeare employs a hunting conceit to cast human life as the prey of cruel, indifferent gods rather than the creation of a loving deity. [See note IV,i,37., *"They kill us for their sport."*]

24. **good years**] The etymology of this word is obscure and debated. (See Furness, p. 318.) Falstaff uses it in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, I,iv, *"We must giue folkes leaue to prate: what the **good-ier**"* (F, 509). Perhaps it derives from "Gudhir" which can be described as an ancient Germanic or Old Norse–styled personal name combining *guð/gud* ("god," and in some Germanic name-elements "battle/war") with *-her/-hir* ("army," "warrior," or "guardian").[645] To my ear, the name has the same linguistic register as *"Herne the Hunter"* (F, 2509-10). In *King Lear*, as in *Don Quixote*, folklore operates less as a bounded corpus of traditional narratives than as an everyday repertoire of practices and interpretive habits: custom, proverb, superstition, carnival, juridical riddling, blessings and curses, and locally grounded belief. It exists in a state of mutual contradiction with rational, rhetorical knowledge (logos). The doubling of the parts of Cordelia and the Fool reflect ancient beliefs surrounding the doppelgänger or fetch—a harbinger of mortality. "Good years" sounds ancient, poetic, and slightly eerie**,** much like the vocabulary found in ghost stories passed down through gener-ations. ***Goodyear*** is defined in the *OED* as an obsolete word used "in exclamations and imprecations, apparently as a euphemism for ***devil***. Compare later euphemisms, as *dickens* and *deuce*." R.A. Foakes notes that 'good years' might connote time. "As long as Lear can be with Cordelia, the years, as he images them, will be good" (*The Arden Shakespeare: King Lear*, p. 366) [See note V,i,19, *"ebb and flow by th'moon."*]
24. **flesh and fell**] flesh and skin, i.e. altogether.
26. S.D. ***Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded***] Theobald. Exit. (F, 2968). Not in Q.
28. S.D. ***Giving him a paper***] Malone. Not in Q, F.
33. **sword**] one who wields a sword, a soldier
34. **Will not bear question**] will not admit discussion; either because it must be done promptly, or because it is too delicate a matter to be expressed in words.
35. **Capt**] *Capt.* (F, 2978). *Cap.* (Q, 2978). Shakespeare is a mischievous playwright, and I don't think he would have been able to resist doubling the parts of the "Captain" with "the Duke of Burgundy." The casting is a metatheatrical wink at the audience.
36. **write happy**] style yourself happy.
37. **Carry it so**] manage the affair in such a way that it will appear that Cordelia slew herself.
39. **I cannot draw a cart . . . oats**] (Q, 2981.1-2). Not in F. I'm not a horse.
40. **If it be man's work**] What it means to be a man is a central question of the play.
40. S.D. ***Exit***] Steevens; *Exit Captaine.* (F, 2981), not in Q.
40. S.D. ***Drum and Colors***] Ed. *Flourish* (F, 2982). Not in Q. Cf. *Macbeth*, *"Enter Macbeth, Seyton, & Souldiers, with Drum and Colours"* (F, 2319-20) [See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **drum** (p. 79) .]
40. S.D. ***Enter Albany, Goneril, Regan, Albany's Squire and Soldiers***] *Enter Albany, Gonerill,*

Regan, Soldiers. (F. 2982) *Enter Duke, the two Ladies, and others.* (Q, 2982). The group enters from the large center opening.

41. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Not in Q, F.
41. **strain**] disposition
43. **opposites**] opponents, enemies
44. **I do require them of you**] Albany justly demands the release of Lear and Cordelia, but his judgment is quickly compromised by anger and masculine pride, provoked by Edmund's insubordination, and the degrading marital rivalry between Regan and his wife. He forgets the captives and challenges Edmund to a trial by combat, leaving the gods to decide the Bastard's guilt or innocence. (See Matthew Mesley, "Chivalry, Masculinity, and Sexuality," *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the Crusades*, pp. 146-164.) The trial's ceremonial rhetoric and formal procedures, together with Edgar's extended account of his sufferings in exile, delay the urgent action needed to secure their safety. His oblivion to Edmund's murderous plot heightens the scene's suspense, leaving the audience to watch in agony as the prisoners' time slips away. Shakespeare frequently uses dramatic irony to generate suspense, [647] as when Duncan arrives at Inverness and praises the castle's *"pleasant seat"* (F, 434) while the audience knows that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are preparing to murder him. [See Appendix A.]
45. **merits**] deserts. Compare "*Where Nature doth with merit challenge"* (F, 58).
48. **retention**] confinement
49. **Whose**] i.e., Lear's.
50. **To pluck the common bosom . . . side**] win the hearts of the common people
51. **impress'd lances**] conscripted lances, i.e. soldiers
57. **quarrels**] causes
57. **in the heat**] before passion has cooled. Edmund is implying that Lear and Cordelia would not get a fair trial under the circumstances. (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 190.)
62. **list**] wish.
64. **spoke so far**] said so much
66. **immediacy**] close proximity, propinquity
69. **your addition**] the titles and offices you have bestowed upon him.
70. **compeers**] equals.
71. ***Gon***] (Q, 2011). *Alb.* (F, 3012). Goneril implies that she herself is going to be the one to wed Edmund. She does not care that her husband is still very much alive and standing right next to her. Compare the vehement kiss Regan gives Edmund in front of the Duke of Cornwall her husband and his body-guards in III,vii,21.
72. **Jesters do oft prove prophets**] There's many a true word spoken in jest. (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p.191)
75. **From a full-flowing stomach**] with a flood of angry words. "Stomach" is being used in the obsolete sense of **"**Anger, irritation; malice, ill-will, spite; vexation, pique. (*OED*, 8 †c). "Wordes be but winde, to purge his heate, His stomacke to abate." T. Howell *Newe Sonet* (1568).
75. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Not in Q, F.

77. **the walls are thine**] referring to walls of Regan's vagina, which surrender themselves like a vanquished fortress. (Schmidt) qu. Furness, p. 322.
80. **The let-alone**] the power of saying 'Thou shalt not'.
81. **Half-blooded fellow**] i.e., bastard. Albany has lost control of his anger, with fatal consequences for Lear and Cordelia. His choices are being driven by testosterone.
82. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Malone. Not in Q, F.
82. **strike**] strike up.
83. **thee**] Albany uses the second-person singular pronoun as a show of contempt.
84. **attaint**] impeachment.
85. **gilded**] meretricious; thinly covered with gold leaf or gold paint.
85. S.D. ***Pointing to Goneril***] Johnson. Not in Q, F.
87. **subcontracted**] † *transitive*. To cause (a person) to become betrothed for a second time. Cf. contract v. I.3b(a). Obsolete. rare. (OED, **1**.)
88. **banes**] banns of marriage
90. **interlude**] A joke. An *interlude* is defined as "A dramatic or mimic representation, usually of a light or humorous character, such as was commonly introduced between the acts of the long mystery-plays or moralities, or exhibited as part of an elaborate entertainment; hence (in ordinary 17–18th century use) a stage-play, esp. of a popular nature, a comedy, a farce" (OED, 1.a.). "Our Comedie or *Enterlude* which we intende to play. Is named Royster Doyster in deede. (N. Udall, *Ralph Roister Doister* (?1566) Prol. sig. A.ij).
92. **prove upon thy person**] to evince or establish as a truth, to demonstrate. Cf., IV,v,92, *"I'll prove it on a giant."* (F, 2537)
94. S.D. ***Throws his gauntlet down at Edmund's feet***] Malone, subst. Not in Q, F. Compare *Henry VI, Part 3*, IV,vii, *"Throwes downe his Gauntlet"* (F, 2585). Throwing down a gauntlet was a formal, literal action used to issue a challenge to a trial by combat or a duel. The ritual followed strict rules of chivalric etiquette. It required the challenged knight to pick up the gauntlet thrown by the challenger. This act symbolized a physical and honorable pledge to fight. If the opponent agreed to fight to defend his honor, he had to physically bend down and "take up the gauntlet". By retrieving the challenger's glove, he formally bound both parties to the duel. The throwing down of Albany's gauntlet is a gesture indelibly associated with the medieval Christian institution of knighthood and the codes of chivalry. It dramatizes the fundamental Christian idea of Divine Providence, a belief the duke espouses in IV,ii. It is "another species of presumptuous appeals to Providence, under an expectation that Heaven would unquestionably give the victory to the innocent or injured party." Source: 4 William Blackstone, Commentaries. [See note V,i, 98. S.D. "*Takes up Albany's gauntlet.*"]

Figure 302. Single combat subjected to the judgement of God, 15th century (1849). A 19th century version of an original 15th century manuscript illustration in Conquetes de Charlemagne, held at the Bibliothèque Royale de Brussels, Belgium. From Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance, by Paul Lacroix, Ferdinand Séré and A Rivaud, Volume I (Paris, 1849).

94. ***make***] show or allege that something is the case.

96. S.D. ***Regan falls down in a swoon***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare *The Alchemist* (4.3.62), *"Sutble falls down in a swoon"* (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*. p. 223).

Figure 303. *Jeanne III of Navarre Buying Poisoned Gloves from Catherine de Medici's Parfumeur*, P.C, Comte, c. 1858.

96. **Sick, O, sick**] The poisoning of Regan is not dramatized on stage. It is left to the audience to *imagine* how Goneril accomplished the deed. "Though the history of gloves savors of romance, there is every reason to believe that they have sometimes been used with sinister motives, as a large trade was done at one time in poison gloves, delicately performed, to conceal their deadly purpose" (Gloves in British fashion history.) A popular rumor in Shakespeare's time was that Jeanne d'Albret had been poisoned by Catherine de'Medici, who allegedly sent her a pair of perfumed gloves, skillfully poisoned by her perfumer, René Bianchi, a fellow Florentine. [See Figure 303.] Dessen and Thomson cite instances of poisoned gloves in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **poison** (p. 167) and **glove** (101).

> The Borgias specialized in disposing of cardinals, bishops, and nobles by using several kinds of poisons including arsenic, strychnine, cantharidin, and aconite incorporated in drinks, clothes, *gloves*, book pages, flowers, and drugs...A primary reason for the popularity of arsenic as a poison was that it has no flavor or odor and when mixed into food or drink, it is tasteless. It seems that *cantarella* was a complex mixture containing arsenic combined with alkaloids of putrefaction emitted by organic substances in the later stages of decay. ("Toxicology in the Borgias period: The mystery of *Cantarella* poison", Marianna Karamanou et al, 2018.)

It is insinuated from the glove/hand motif that Goneril used this method to kill her sister. Because most poisoners want to go undetected, my thinking is that Goneril would not leave behind any signs of how she went about administrating the *"medicine"* (F, 3044). That is to say, Regan would not tear off her gloves as Heracles does the Shirt of Nessus. The latter falls down in a swoon. (See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **swoon, sound**, p. 233.) Dr. Michael F. Hughes, Supervisory Toxicologist of United States Environmental Protection Agency, confirms that "As far as poisoning by arsenic in gloves, I am skeptical if this could occur. While arsenic can be absorbed through the skin, it would take a very large dose and the gloves would have to be worn for days at a time for a lethal effect. Another scenario could be transfer of arsenic from the gloves to the skin, and then hand to mouth activity. This would cause the gastrointestinal distress. But again this would have to be a very large dose." (Personal communication 11.17.23.) It is now known that d'Albret's death was the result of tuberculosis.

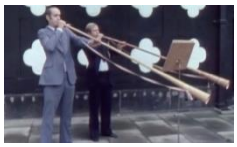
97. S.D. ***Aside***] Rowe. Not in Q, F.

97. **medicine**] Most likely, Goneril poisoned Regan with arsenic, which was used as a medicine in Shakespeare's day. Among its many applications was to treat syphilis. By the middle of the 16th century, white arsenic was widely known as 'ratsbane'. Edgar refers to it in III,iv,53

as a method of suicide, *"set Rats-bane by his Porredge"* (F, 1836).

98. **exchange**] *viz*., reciprocation, response. Edmund bends down and "takes up the gauntlet" signifying that he accepts the terms of the challenge.

98. S.D. ***Takes up Albany's gauntlet***] Ed. *Throws down a glove.* Malone. Not in Q, F. Many modern editors adopt the stage direction *"Throws down a glove,"* introduced by Edmond Malone in his 1790 edition (p. 265): for example, R. A. Foakes in the *Arden Shakespeare* (p. 371) and Stanley Wells in the *Oxford Shakespeare* (p. 262). There are, however, no verified historical records of a medieval duel where both knights simultaneously threw down their gauntlets at each other. The imagery comes from Shakespeare's *Richard II* (Act 1, Scene 1) where Bolingbroke throws down his gauntlet to charge Mowbray with treason. Mowbray takes up Bolingbroke's gauntlet and issues his own counterchallenge, sparking a comically chaotic chain reaction as the feuding lords fling down their hoods and gages in a rapid-fire buildup of quarrels. While both scenes utilize the mechanisms of a formal medieval trial by combat, they are fundamentally different in style, tone, and dramatic function. In *King Lear*, the trial by combat is framed through the ceremonial conventions of chivalric romance. Edgar enters with his visor lowered, withholding both name and lineage; his cloaked anonymity transforms what might otherwise seem a narrowly juridical procedure into a scene of moral fable, in which providential justice appears to work through an unknown champion.



Video 47. Buisines playing a medieval fanfare from 'Early Musical Instruments' - written and introduced by David Munrow.

102. **A herald, ho!**] (F, 3051) (Q, 3050). Albany is summoning a Herald Trumpeter (*i.e.,* a musician costumed as an actor). Compare *The Humorous Lieutenant*, S.D., *"Enter Trumpet and Herald"* (p. 64) by John Fletcher (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642*, **trumpet**, p. 239). In the Middle Ages the buisine was commonly used for military and ceremonial purposes. [See Video 47.] Rather than placing two separate actors onstage, Shakespeare mischievously assigns the professional functions of a medieval tournament Herald (like the "Argentan Herald" in *The Last Duel*) and Albany's modern Squire to one person. The playwright uses the clueless boy—who needs to told exactly what to do and say—to show that the trial by combat is just a staged, artificial performance, not a divine truth.

Video 48. A herald formally proclaims the rules and stakes of the combat to the assembled crowd in Ridley Scott's 2021 film *The Last Duel*. It emphasizes the ritualistic nature of the late-14th-century trial by combat.

If the characters of Albany and his Squire were drawn from Chaucer's Knight's and Squire's Tales (as noted in III,vii,97, *"Squire"*), Shakespeare may have been intending to evoke the youth's naivety regarding the grim realities of manhood. Chaucer's Squire is depicted as a youthful bachelor, around twenty years old. His description emphasizes romantic pursuits,

courtly graces like singing, dancing, and poetry, and a love so intense he sleeps little at night. His combat experience is framed as a means to impress his lady, not as a source of hardened wisdom or trauma. [See note V,i, 222. *"Enter Albany's Squire, with a bloody knife."*]

103. ***Edm.* A herald, ho! A herald**] *Bast. A Herald, ho! a Herald.* (Q, 3050). Not in F. Possibly dual dialogue—a dramatic technique used to show two characters speaking simultaneously, with their lines formatted side-by-side. [See Figure 305.]

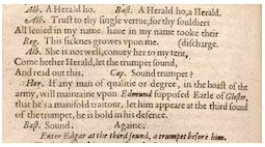

Alb. A Herald ho. *Bast.* A Herald ho, a Herald.
Alb. Trust to thy single vertue, for thy souldiers
All leuied in my name: haue in my name tooke their
Reg. This sicknes growes vpon me. (discharge.
Alb. She is not well, conuey her to my tent,
Come hether Herald, let the trumpet sound,
And read out this. *Cap.* Sound trumpet?
Her. If any man of qualitie or degree, in the hoast of the
army, will maintaine vpon *Edmund* supposed Earle of *Glester*,
that he's a manifold traitour, let him appeare at the third sound
of the trumpet, he is bold in his defence.
Bast. Sound. Againe.
Enter Edgar at the third sound, a trumpet before him.

Figure 305. *"A Herald ho,"* Quarto 1 (Halliwell-Phillipps), Internet Shakespeare Editions.

107. S.D. ***Exit Regan, led***] Theobald. Not in Q, F. She is led out through the center opening.

107. ***Enter a Herald Trumpeter***] Ed. *Enter a Herald*. after "firmly" (line 102) (F, 3050); not in Q. He enters from the center to show his importance,

108. S.D. ***To Herald Trumpeter***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

Figure 304. Marginalia in Bodleian Library MS Bodl. 264, fol.157v, University of Oxford.

108. **Come hither, Herald.—**] Ed. *Come hether Herald,* (Q, 3058); *Come hither Herald*, (F, 3057). The Herald trumpeter. [See note V,i,102,*"A herald, ho!"*] What is important dramatically at this moment is the spectacle. The medieval buisine has a highly distinctive sound described as loud, buzzing, and powerful, often compared to a military bugle. [252] It produces a resonant, "heroic" tone in a lower register due to its long, straight (roughly six feet), that carries over long distances. Lacking valves or pistons, the buisine relied entirely on the player's ability to change pitches using only their lips to produce notes within the harmonic series. These musicians were often members of specialized guilds and required professional training to play in military and ceremonial capacities, providing "impressive aural impact." [353] Since the "Herald" cannot sound his buisine and read Albany's paper at the same time, it logically follows that the duke gives his totally unprepared young Squire the paper to read and tells him exactly what's he's supposed to do.

108. S.D. ***To Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

108. **Let the trumpet sound**] Albany is giving orders to his Squire, who then commands the Herald Trumpeter to sound the instrument. Probably a buisine. Compare *"Now when the angrie Trumpet sounds alarum, / And dead mens cries do fill the emptie ayre, / Clifford I say, come forth and fight with me"* (*Henry VI Part 2*, F, 3221-23).

109. **And read out this**] The Squire obviously has no knowledge of what a medieval tournament Herald is supposed to do. Apparently, he was given no forewarning of his lord's intent to challenge Edmund to a trial by combat.

109. S.D. ***Hands his Squire a paper***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

110. **Squire**] Ed. *Cap.* (Q1. 3059) (Q2, 3057.1). Not in F.

109. ***Sound, trumpet***] *Sound Trumpet?* (Q2, 3057.1). *Sound trumpet?* (Q, 3059). Not in F.

110. S.D. ***Trumpet sounds***] (F, 3058). Not in Q. The Herald trumpeter skillfully sounds a call on the instrument. Compare *Troilus & Cressida*, IV,v: *"Thou, Trumpet, ther's my purse;/ Now cracke thy lungs, and split thy brasen pipe:/ Blow villaine, till thy sphered Bias cheeke/ Out-swell the collicke of puft Aquilon:/ Come, stretch thy chest, and let thy eyes spout bloud"* (F, 2555-59).

111. S.D. ***Squire reads***] Ed. *Herald Reads*. (F, 3058). Not in Q. *Her*. (Q1, 3060, Q2, 3060).

116. ***Squire***] Ed. F, *Bast.* (Q, 3064); not in F.

116. **Sound!**] *Sound? Againe?* (Q1, 3064, Q2, 3064); not in F.

116. S.D. ***First trumpet***] *1 Trumpet*. (F, 3063); not in Q.

117. ***Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

117. **Again!**] *Againe.* (F, 3064); not in Q.

117. S.D. ***Second trumpet***] *2 Trumpet.* (F, 3064). Not in Q.

118. ***Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

118. **Again!**] *Againe.* (F, 3065); Not in Q.

118. S.D. ***Third trumpet***] *3 Trumpet*. (F, 3065). Not in Q.

117. S.D. ***Trumpet answers within***] (F, 3066). Not in Q.

118. S.D. ***Enter Edgar***] Edgar enters from center stage to command absolute audience focus, establish immediate narrative authority, and visually anchor the character at the focal point of the theater's sightlines.

118. S.D. ***in armor***] Ed. *Enter Edgar armed* (F, 3067). *Enter Edgar at the third sound, with a trumpet before him.* (Q, 3065). Compare *Richard II*, I,iii, S.D., *"Mowbray in Armor"* (F, 301-2). Edgar makes a dazzling appearance from the central entrance in contrast with his entrance from a side door in Act I scene ii, "unbraced and carelessly dressed." [See note I,ii,126,S.D., "*reading on a book."*] He cannot be speaking in his "real" voice because Edmund would recognize it. From the many references to chivalry, it would appear that Edgar is wearing armor, and carrying either a poleax or a longsword, rather than a rapier. See *Ponderous, Cruel and Mortal: A Review of Medieval Poleaxe Technique from Surviving Treatises of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, Brian Price. See also *A Brief Introduction to Armoured Longsword Combat*, Matt Anderson and Shane Smith.

Figure 306. Louis de Gruuthuse's copy of the Deeds of Sir Gillion de Trazegnies in the Middle East, in French, illuminated manuscript on vellum [southern Netherlands (Antwerp or perhaps Bruges), dated 1464] - Photo Sotheby's.

118. S.D. **his beaver shut**] Ed. For a knight to have his beaver (or bevor) "shut" means he has closed the movable piece of armor that protects the lower part of his face—the chin, mouth, and throat. In Act V scene iii of John Marston's play *The Tragedy of Sophomisba* (1606), there is a direction *"Massinissa beaver shut"* (p. 53). Massinissa speaks 22 lines of dialogue with his beaver shut, so it can be logically reasoned that Edgar's face is concealed when he speaks as many (F, 3073-96).

Figure 307. Pollaxe combat depicted in the Fiore Furlan dei Liberi da Premariacco, circa 1410.

119. S.D. ***To Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
120. ***Squire***] Ed. *Her.* (Q, 3070); *Her.* (F, 3070).
123. **canker-bit**] eaten by the caterpillar or rose slugs, the larvae of moths and butterflies or sawflies
125. **cope**] encounter.
129. S.D. ***He draws his sword***] Not in Q, F.
130. **Behold it is the privilege of mine honors**] It is the privilege of my knighthood to draw my sword, as this which you now behold, for the purpose of challenging a traitor, and it is my privilege to have such a challenge accepted.
131. **My oath and my profession**] of the oath I swore when I was made a knight, and of my knighthood itself.
132. **Maugre**] In spite of
133. **victor**] victorious
133. **fire-new**] straight from the fire or forge
137. **upward**] top
138. **descent**] the lowest part, i.e. the sole
139. **toad spotted**] stained with infamy, as a toad is spotted and venomous.
142. **In wisdom**] because he was not bound to fight with a man of lower rank.
144. **Say**] show
145. **safe and nicely**] cautiously and punctiliously, with the letter of the law on my side.
145. **delay**] refuse
146. **I disdain and spurn**] I scorn to insist on my legal rights under the code of knighthood. Edmund changes the construction in the middle of the sentence (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare* p. 195).
148. **hell-hated**] hated as much as hell.
149. **Which**] these treasons
149. **for**] since.
149. **glance**] glide.
151. **Where they shall rest for ever**] His success in the combat will prove that Edgar is the traitor, and the treasons will remain with the victim (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, p. 196)
151. S.D. ***He draws his sword***] Ed. Not in Q, F.
151. S.D. ***Alarum, drums and trumpets***] Ed. Alarums (F, 3107). Not in Q. Compare *Antony and Cleopatra,* IV,vii, *"Alarum, Drummes and Trumpets"* (F, 2621). Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights utilized alarms or alarums as a vital auditory tool to immerse the audience in the violence and spectacle of warfare. Roughly 400 examples are cited in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* p.3-4. "Over sixty signals are for drum and trumpet" (Ibid, p. 79). Until this point, Shakespeare strategically withholds the excitement of suspense-

ful swordplay allowing the trial by combat as a culminating spectacle. In particular, he contrasts the formal, chivalric trial by combat at the play's end with the chaotic, *un*-chivalrous murder of Cornwall's Knight or *"Seru"* (F, 2145), who is stabbed from behind by Regan before her submissive husband can even draw his sword. [See note III,vii,76., *"chance of anger."*] Presumably, the "Alarum" is a "long" one, as in *"After a long alarum,"* *The First Part of Jeronino* by Thomas Kyd in *Old English Plays*, Vol IV, 4th Ed, edited by W. Carew Hazlitt (p. 387). See "What did an "alarum" sound like?" See also "Shakespeare and Music/Use of Musical Stage Directions" by Edward Woodall Naylor.

Figure 308. Codex Wallerstein, (Plate 214) showing a half-sword thrust against a Mordau move .

151. S.D. ***They fight***] Fights (F, 3107). Not in Q. amandycat writes on Reddit, "We do not know whether sword fights on stage generally attempted to appear convincing and real, or whether stage fighting had its own conventions without any expectation of verisimilitude. (Charles Edelman, *Brawl Ridiculous: Swordfighting in Shakespeare's Plays*, 1992.) Few contemporary sources discuss this at all, let alone tell us whether these stage fights were realistic. We do know that some actors, like Richard Tarlton were talented fencers, but have no way of knowing whether this was a talent that was put to use on stage to enhance realism. It is worth bearing in mind that we do know that animal blood was more than likely used on the stage to produce realistic special effects, so there must have been some expectations of realism from the stage in other areas (Farah Karim-Cooper and Lucy Munro, *Shakespeare's Globe Theatre History Seminar Stage Blood: A Roundtable,* 13 July 2006) … Edelman sees Shakespeare's substantial use of on-stage fencing/sword fighting as particularly unusual for the period. He says; 'However prevalent the tradition of fencing in the playhouse may have been at the time Shakespeare began his career as a dramatist, it borders on the remarkable that he was the first to exploit this tradition to any significant extent. While stage combat certainly existed before Shakespeare, it is also true that most poets, at least as far as can be determined from extant texts, preferred much of their fighting to be done offstage.'" Edelman, *Brawl Ridiculous*, p.11.

151. S.D. ***Edmund falls***] Capell. Not in Q, F.

152. **Gon**] conj. Theobald. *Alb.* (Q, 3107) (F, 3107). Samuel Johnson defends the quarto and Folio readings by arguing that *"Saue him, saue him"* shows Albany trying to extract a confession from Edmund to validate the treason charge. (See. *Furness*, Alb., p. 329) Yet, because the duke previously initiated a wager of battle, this interpretation overlooks the absolute authority of trial by combat, which leaves the verdict entirely to providence. Note that Albany makes no effort to summon a doctor; instead, leaving Edmund to bleed out. On the other hand, when Goneril cries, *"Saue him, saue him,"* the audience may initially hear an appeal to Edgar's pity: her urgency seems to attest to the depth of her love for Edmund. Yet her ensuing address to her dying lover is strikingly devoid of *pathos*. Instead of offering consolation, she advances a legalistic, almost syllogistic enthymeme grounded in *logos*: *"By th'law of Warre, thou wast not bound to answer / An vnknowne opposite: thou art not vanquish'd, / But cozend, and beguild"*

(F, 3109-1). Her invocation of *"th'law of Warre"* turns the scene into an exercise in forensic casuistry. Rather than mourning Edmund or attempting to comfort him, she seeks to redefine the terms of his defeat. He has not been overcome in fair combat, but deceived. The emotional chill of this rationalization exposes the priority beneath her apparent love for him. His death and her husband's possession of her letter now threaten any prospect of making herself queen.

152. ***To Edgar***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

152. S.D. ***She rushes to Edmund's side***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

152. **practice**] treachery

155. S.D. ***She kisses Edmund vehemently***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare note IV,ii,23.S.D., "*She kisses him vehemently."* As her subsequent words reveal, Goneril's kiss stems less from love than a desire to humiliate Albany, her lawful husband

156. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Ed Not in Q, F.

155. **stopple**] Stople (Q1, 3114); stop (Q2, 3113); (F, 3113). A stopple is something that stops or closes. Compare "Which might serve for a sufficient stopple for the Doctors mouth, to keep in his Doctrine of Necessity." In Rushworth, *Historical Collections* (1659) 586 (*OED*, **I,1,b**)

156. S.D. ***To Goneril***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

156. **Hold, sir**] (F, 3113); not in Q. Albany is condemning Edmund's embrace of his wife. His reaction to Goneril's kiss may reveal his need for a mother, not a lover.

157. S.D. ***He gives Goneril her letter***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

158. S.D. ***She tears it***] subst. Rowe S.D. *Tearing the letter.* Compare "*She snatches them and tears them"* [*King Leir* (1595), V,x, p. 104]. Cf also *1 Henry VI,* III,i,, *"Gloster offers to put vp a Bill: Winchester snatches it, teares it."* (F, 1303-4).

159. **The laws are mine, not thine**] With Regan dead and Cordelia out of the picture, Goneril can claim to be the legitimate, supreme monarch of Great Britain by right of primogeniture, leaving her husband Prince Consort. When she declares, *"The laws are mine, not thine,"* she is asserting that she operates *de facto* above the law through the Divine Right of Kings, remaining completely unaccountable to any earthly authority."

161. **Gon**] (Q, 3119). *Bast.* (F, 3119)

161. **Ask me not what I know**] Perhaps referring to Regan's death, which has yet to be revealed.

161. S.D. ***Exit***] *Exit. Gonorill.* (Q, 3119); after *for't* (line 159) (F. 3117). She exits through the enter opening.

162. ***To Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

162. S.D. ***Exit Albany's Squire***] Ed. *Exit an Officer.* Capell. Not in Q, F.

163. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Not in Q, F.

167. **Let's exchange charity**] Let me forgive you for your crimes against me, as you have forgiven me for killing you (Muir, *KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*).

170. S.D. ***He puts up his beaver***] Ed. Not in Q, F. See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* **beaver**, p.24.

171-74. **The Gods are just…cost him his eyes**] Under the Law of Moses, the punishment for adultery is death (Leviticus 20:10). Compare note IV,v.113.,*"Die for adultery?"* (F, 2557). In conjunction with the trial by combat, which frames desert within the context of divine providence, Edgar's words set up Albany's moral proclamation before the tragic dénouement is revealed: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do righteous judgment?" (Gen. 18:25). [See

Appendix A.]

173. **got**] begot.

175. **The wheel is come full circle**] See note I,i,189, *"France."*

176. **gait**] bearing. See note IV,vii,37. S.D, *"wearing a hooded cloak."*

179. **Worthy**] noble.

182. **List a brief tale**] Edgar's lengthy monologue to Albany after defeating Edmund directly contradicts his promise of brevity, creating agonizing dramatic irony for an audience fully aware that Lear and Cordelia's execution orders are already active. As noted in Appendix B, his account of his father's death, paired with his claim that it paled in comparison to his reunion with Kent, robs Gloucester's highly anticipated anagnorisis of emotion. The central question driving the subplot from Act III onward is when, and by what means, Gloucester comes to recognize his son. Aristotle considered anagnorisis combined with peripeteia to be the hallmark of a superior, complex tragic plot.

187. **shift**] change.

190. **rings**] sockets

193. **fault**] mistake.

195. **success**] result of an action, either good or bad.

197. **flaw'd**] cracked, damaged by flaw.

201. **Perchance**] by chance, by accident (Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, Vol II, p. 851) *Twelfth Night*, I,ii, *"Perchance he is not drown'd"* (F, 55)

204. **dissolve**] melt in tears.

205. **period**] highest point, limit.

206. **but**] only

207. **To amplify too much**] if I were to describe it in detail.

208. **top extremity**] go beyond the extreme limit.

209. **big**] loud

210. **estate**] condition

214. **As**] as if

217. **puissant**] powerful.

217. **the strings of life**] A metaphor for a person's lifespan, as generated by Clotho, measured out by Lachesis and terminated by Atropos.

219. **tranc'd**] senseless.

222. ***Enter Albany's Squire, with a bloody knife***] Ed. *Enter one with a bloudie knife*. (Q, 3169). *Enter a Gentleman.* (F 3169).

223, 224, 227. ***Squire***] Ed. *Gent.* (Q, 3170). *Gen*. (F, 3170).

225. **heart of—]** (Q, 3175) (F, 3174-75). The young Squire is so overwhelmed with pity for Goneril that he cannot finish his thought.

230. S.D. ***Enter Kent***] (F, 3182). After *allow* (Q, 3187).

232. S.D. ***To Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

232-3. **This judgment of the heavens . . . Touches us not with pity**] Albany's lack of pity is being juxtaposed with his young Squire's abundance of it. [Compare note V,i,305., *"That's but a trifle here."*]

233. S.D. ***Exit Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F. *Exit Edgar.* Malone. *Exeunt Edgar, and Others*. Capell.

Exit Messenger. Theobald. *Exit a Captain*. Schmidt. *Exit Gentleman.* Cam. See H.H. Furness, *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare*, p. 337

Figure 309. Detail of a miniature of Dido committing suicide as Aeneas sails away, c 1490 – 1500, Harley MS 4425, f. 117v, The Roman de la Rose.

234. **compliment**] ceremony.

237. **forgot**] Shakespeare structures the scene on classical dramatic irony, as in Euripides' plays. [648] The audience knows that Edmund has secretly ordered Lear and Cordelia's execution in prison, and what ought to have been Albany's first order of business—their release—is tragically waylaid by masculine pride, archaic chivalric protocol, and the theatrical spectacle of a medieval trial by combat. While Edgar's post-battle exposition satisfies the narrative necessity of accounting for Gloucester's death, it fails to deliver the catharsis central to Aristotelian tragedy. Rather than providing a resonant emotional resolution for the subplot, this programmatic delay frustrates an audience acutely aware that time is running out for Lear and Cordelia. [See note V,i,44, *"I do require them of you."*]

238. S.D. ***The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in***] (Q, 3194); *Gonerill and Regans bodies brought out*. (F, 3184). The bodies are brought out from the large center opening.

238. S.D. ***by Albany's Squire and others***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

239. **object**] sight

240. **Yet Edmund was belov'd**] Though this line is conventionally represented as a moment of sincere *pathos*, in my judgment it is better read as ironical. Edmund is a textbook of a Machiavel stage villain who views human emotions as tools for manipulation. He has spent the entire play manipulating Goneril and Regan to make himself Prince Consort, and is making a dark, cynical joke that two powerful queens literally destroyed themselves over Gloucester's bastard son. Shakespeare explicitly mentions the "Machiavel" in plays like *Henry VI, Part 3*—*"I can adde Colours to the Camelion, / Change shapes with Proteus, for aduantages, / And set the murtherous* ***Macheuill*** *to Schoole"* (F, 1715-17); and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—*"Am I politicke? Am Isubtle? Am I a* ***Machiuell****?"* (F, 1246).

242. **after**] afterwards

244. **Some good**] Edmund's decision to reveal his plot to murder Lear and Cordelia should not necessarily be read simply as a "bad man suddenly becomes good" moment. Rather, the phrase *"Despight of mine owne Nature"* (F, 3201) implies that he thinks he was born to be a villain but is now asserting his free will. Renaissance humanists firmly believed that even a person born with a natural predisposition or "nature" toward villainy could still choose between different possible courses of action. In behavioral science, criminology, and investigative psychology literature there is a consensus that late-stage confessions from psychopathic or remorseless serial killers are often driven by a desire to control the narrative and keeping the spotlight firmly on themselves rather than a desire for absolution. [649]

Edmund's behavior aligns with core psychopathic traits—specifically extreme emotional detachment and grandiosity. He views his own life and relationships as an artificial performance that he orchestrates and controls. For example, by comparing Edgar's arrival to *"the Catastrophe of the old Comedie"* (F, 463) and viewing his own behavior as a *"Cue"* (F, 464), he steps completely outside of his own reality and views his life as a scripted performance. He positions his own intellect above the very universe he inhabits. Because he is smart enough to see through Shakespeare's formulaic playwrighting, he thinks he can control the plot and manipulate everyone else like puppets. Edmund's psychopathy is so absolute that he does not live life emotionally; he directs it. His emotional detachment allows him to view his own treacherous actions not as crimes against his family, but as a well-acted performance in a play where he is the smartest person in the room. [See note I,ii,125 *"And pat he comes like the Catastrophe of the old Comedie."*]

245. **Despite**] In defiance. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, *"An Onion ... Shall in despight enforce a waterie eie"* (F, 137-9)

245. **nature**] Edmund's dying words strike directly at the heart of physis vs nomos and free will vs. determinism debates, perfectly capturing the anxieties of the Renaissance transition away from classical and medieval worldviews.[550] [See note I,ii,1., *"Nature."*] The enduring nature-versus-nurture debate surrounding psychopathy remains a central focus for forensic psychologists, criminologists, and philosophers alike. [664] [665] [666] [667] Richard Wiebe says that "Psychopathy does seem to be heritable, and appears to have its basis at least in part in "biological" factors linked to basic emotional systems, so that the mature psychopath never develops a complete set of pro-social emotions like empathy, guilt, and the ability to truly care about and for others." [255] [256] Compare *The Tempest*, *"A Deuill, a borne-Deuill, on whose nature Nurture can neuer sticke"* (F, 1862-3). Compare also *Macbeth*, *"top vp th'accesse, and passage to Remorse, / That no compunctious visitings of Nature / Shake my fell purpose"* (F, 395-97).

249. S.D. ***To Edmund***] Not in Q, F.

252. S.D. ***Exit Albany's Squire***] Not in Q, F.

256. **fordid**] destroyed

257. S.D. ***Edmund is borne off***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.

258-266. **You lords and noble friends . . . see**] Ed. After *"That's but a trifle here"* (Q1, 3269), (Q2, 3269), (F, 3268). Compare Malcolm's speech restoring moral order as the end of *Macbeth*, F, 2513-28. [See Appendix A.]

261. **his**] Ed. *this* (Q, 3270); (F, 3271).

262. S.D. ***To Edgar and Kent***] Malone. Not in Q, F.

263. **With boot and such addition**] with such additional titles and rights.

263. **honors**] noble deeds.

264. **merited**] See note I,i,52, *"merit."*

264-66. **All friends shall taste the wages of their virtue…deserving**] F, 3268-76; Q1, 3266-76. A censor can fundamentally alter the meaning of a speech by recontextualizing it, [258] which I believe is what happened here. While traditional censorship involves the total suppression or removal of information, recontextualization—sometimes called "performative" or "reverse" censorship in the jargon of today—manipulates how an audience perceives the content. If Albany's proclamation is said *before* Lear enters with Cordelia dead, the dénouement feels

structurally contrived and metatheatrical, like the *"pat"* (F, 463) entrances of Edgar and Gloucester in I,ii and III,iv respectively; Lear's dialogue with *"the twelve-penny Hirelings* [*making*] *artificial Lightning in their Heavens"* [7] in III,ii; and the winding of Edgar's horn (see Appendix G.) It invites the audience to register an irony not yet available to Albany. [See Appendix A.]

266. S.D. ***Re-enter Lear, with Cordelia dead in his arms***] *Enter Lear with Cordelia in his armes*. (Q, 3216), (F, 3216).

266. **see, see**] Albany reacts with shock and horror at the revelation of Cordelia's death. He looks the Heavens, and denounces God: *"Fall and cease"* (F, 3226).

Figure 310. Judi Dench as Hecuba in Branagh's Hamlet (1996).

266. **Howl, howl, howl**] Compare *Macbeth, "New Widdowes howle"* (F, 1816-22); *Hamlet*, *"A Ministring Angell shall my Sister be, / When thou liest howling?"* (F, 3432-3). See also The Knight's Tale, *"Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon"* (2817). Shakespeare may have shaped Lear's extreme cry of grief on the famous image of Hecuba, the Trojan queen whose losses drove her beyond ordinary human speech into animal-like cries or barking in classical and Renaissance retellings. Her represented grief so immense that it destroys reason, language, and even human identity. "Hecuba, a wretch forlorn and captive, when she saw Polyxena first slaughtered, and her son, her Polydorus, on the wild sea-beach next met the mourning woman's view, then reft of sense did she bark like a dog; such mighty power had grief to wrench her soul." Dante, *Inferno* Canto xxx, 16-2. (Translation after Cary (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1914). In Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1598), Hecuba's grief robs her of human speech, and she barks like a dog:

> The Thracians at theyr Tyrannes harme for anger wexing wood,
> Began to scare the Trojane wyves with darts and stones. Anon
> Queene Hecub ronning at a stone, with gnarring seazd theron,
> And wirryed it beetweene her teeth. And as shee opte her chappe
> To speake, in stead of speeche shee barkt. (Page:Metamorphoses (Ovid, 1567).djvu/356)

"Hecuba was the first Greek tragedy to be translated into Latin (with fragments as early as c. 1362), and is the only extant tragedy demonstrably studied prior to the sixteenth century (see Mossman 1995; 220-221). Erasmus' 1506 translation made it the first Greek tragedy to be printed in Latin alongside his *Iphigenia at Aulis*. Erasmus' accessible translation facilitated the first known post-classical production of *Hecuba* at the Collège du Porc, Belium c. 1514, and inspired a proliferation of Latin and vernacular translations across Europe. *Hecuba* became the Renaissance's most frequently translated and printed Greek tragedy, as well as operating as a key reference in discussions of drama (Mossman 1995: 220-221; Heath 1987: 40-43). As Malcolm Heath puts it, '[f]or the critics in the Renaissance, Hecuba was indeed a paradigmatic tragedy, perhaps the outstanding piece in the Greek tragic corpus.' (1987:40). In consequence, as Pollard shows, Hecuba functioned culturally as "an icon of tragedy" (2012:

1060). In England's grammar schools, the Hecuba of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book 13) was required reading, where she was memorized, internalized, translated, and dissected at length" (*A Handbook to the Reception of Greek Drama*, edited by Betine Van Syl Smit.)

> "Hecuba features especially prominently in Shakespeare's writings [i.e., "*What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,/ That he should weep for her?"* says Hamlet (*Hamlet*, II.ii.1599-1600)]; he alludes to her fifteen times by name, as well as once by status ("the Queene of Troy", *Titus Andronicus*, F, 159) and once indirectly through a page's misidentification, "Marry (my Lord) *Althea* dream'd, she was deliuer'd of a Firebrand" (F, 871-2). ("Shakespeare's Myths", Tanya Pollard.)

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare repeatedly employs dramatic irony to expose the precariousness of rhetorical authority. Audiences recognize the discrepancy between authoritative speech and ethical truth even as rulers and fathers mistake verbal display for sincerity. In this respect, the play recalls *Hecuba*, where Hecuba's powerful supplications to Odysseus to spare Polyxena. [261] She later implores Agamemnon for justice after the murder of her son Polydorus (lines 786-849). Her eloquent pleas highlight the limits of persuasive speech against power and expediency. [262] Euripides undercuts the institution of Xenia (the ancient Greek concept of hospitality, guest-host relationships, and moral obligation to strangers) primarily through the actions of Polymestor who murders Polydorus while acting as his host. In *Lear*, the violation of Xenia is also a crucial theme. The core of the tragedy hinges on Goneril and Regan turning their father out into a raging storm. The most visceral violation occurs in Act III, vii, when Cornwall and Regan torture Gloucester in his own home: *"I am your Host, / With Robbers hands, my hospitable fauours / You should not ruffle thus"* (F, 2105-07). *Hecuba* shows the audience the "Cyclopean" brutality beneath civilized discourse, holding even Hecuba accountable for rhetoric's collapse into savagery. [263]

Figure 310a. Hecuba Blinding Polymestor by Giuseppe Crespi, Royal Museum of Fine Arts. Belgium.

268. **eyes**] Compare *Hamlet*, II,ii,, *"(Vnlesse things mortall moue them not at all) / Would haue made milche the Burning eyes of Heauen, / And passion in the Gods"* (F, 1557-59).

269. **Heaven's vault**] The Firmament. Hebrew: (*raqiya*), often translated as "expanse" or "vault." See Genesis 1:6-8: **6** Again God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters. **7** Then God made the firmament, and separated the waters, which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. **8** And God called the firmament, Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

271. S.D. ***He lays her down***] Foakes. Not in Q, F.

272. **stone**] a mirror of polished stone or crystal.

272. **promis'd end**] the Last Judgment, the end of the world.

274. **Fall and cease**] Albany's believe in divine justice is by shattered by the death Cordelia. He looks to the Heavens and curses the gods. [See Figure 311.] His words allude to the Titanomochy, the fall of Cronus and the Titans in Greek mythology. Edmund Spenser refers to it in *The Faerie Queene*. (See Jessica Dell, "Divided They Fall: (De)constructing the Triple Hecate in Spenser's *Cantos of Mutabilitie*," 2012.). [See Appendix A.]

Figure 311. Detail from *The Fall of the Titans*, Cornelis van Haarlem, c. 1588-1590, Statens Museum, Copenhagen.

274. S.D. ***Lear takes a feather from his bonnet***] Ed. Not in Q, F. It was standard for gentlemen to wear hats outdoors and indoors during this period. [See Figure 312.] "The unbonneted Hamlet familiar to modern audiences is a creation of indoor theatre and fourth-wall staging . . . where everyone goes hatless" (Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*). Only in Act III does Lear go *"uvbonneted"* (Q, 1622.7) or *"bare-headed"* (F, 1714). Gloucester tells Regan, *"The Sea, with such a storme as his bare head, In Hell-blacke-night indur'd"* (F, 2130-31). There is no historical record of soldiers during the Elizabethan or Jacobean eras carrying stone mirrors as part of their standard military equipment.

Figure 312. Charles Blount, Duke of Devonshire, c.1603/6, British Museum.

In keeping with Lear's histrionic nature, he uses a feather to test to see if Cordelia is still alive. (Cf. *2 Hen lV*. Folio 1, ll.5254-5255 *"by his Gates of breath, There lyes a dowlney feather, which stirres not."*) It is worth noting that Nicholas Hilliard uses a feather as a symbol in his miniature of Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland. Hanging from a branch in the background is a globe balanced with feather. The Latin word 'TANTI' written beside it implies that man's scientific knowledge of the world is equal to *nothing*. [See Figure 123.]

277. S.D. ***Kneeling***] Theobald. Not in Q, F.

282-3. **ever soft, Gentle and low**] These words are likely metatheatrical, and allude to the voice of the boy actor playing Cordelia. It is being contrasted with the high-pitched squeaks of *"little eyases"* referred to in *Hamlet* (II,ii,1386-87) .

286. **I have seen the day**] Compare *Othello,* V,ii, *"I haue seene the day,/ That with this little Arme, and this good Sword,/ I haue made my way through more impediments/ Then twenty times your stop."* (F, 3561-64)

285. **falchion**] a light sword, with the point a little bent inwards. Lear's masculine pride remains undiminished to the end.

287. **them**] (Q, 3242); *him* (F, 3242)

288. **crosses**] his arms.

288. **spoil me**] i.e. as a swordsman

289. S.D. ***To Kent***] Not in Q, F.

290-91. **If fortune brag of two . . . behold**] 'If Fortune . . . should brag of two persons, one of whom she had highly elevated, and the other she had woefully depressed, we now behold the latter' (Mason). Quoted by Muir in *The Arden Shakespeare*, p. 202.

292. **dull sight**] Lear is referring not only to his failing eyesight but his own slowness in seeing the true nature of things.

297. **I'll see that straight**] *OED*. 2.a. "Not crooked; free from curvature, bending, or angularity." Compare *Shake-speares Sonnets* (Quarto 1, 1609), *"Beare thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart goe wide"* (Q1, 2100). Compare note III,vi, 20, *"Straight."*

298. **first**] beginning

298. **difference and decay**] change and decline of fortune

300. **No nor man else**] Kent is soon to die himself, which is why he alone is welcome. The scene is no place for the living.

Figure 313. The Dance of Death, Hans Holbein the Younger. c. 1538.

301. **fordone**] destroyed.

302. **desperately**] from despair.

303. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Not in Q, F.

304. S.D. ***Reenter Albany's Squire***] Ed. *Enter a Captaine*. (Q1, 3265). *Enter Captain.* (Q2, 3265). *Enter a Messenger* (F, 3264)

305. **Squire**] Ed. *Capt.* (Q1, 3265). *Cap:* (Q2, 3266). *Mess.* (F, 3265).

305. **That's but a trifle here**] In IV,ii, Albany was preaching divine retribution as vigorously as the Puritan propagandist Philip Stubbs. [Compare note IV,ii,46-50, *"If that the heauens ... like monsters of (the deepe"*. Compare also note IV,ii,78-80, *"This shewes you are aboue / You Iustices, that these our neather crimes / So speedily can venge"* (F, 2323-25). Adding to this, in the final scene, he subjects the claims of Edgar and Edmund to a trial by combat leaving it to the gods to choose the righteous winner. Before the dénouement is known to him, the duke takes the news of Goneril's and Regan's deaths as acts of Providence: "*This iudgement of the Heauens that makes vs tremble. / Touches vs not with pitty"* (F, 3185-86). [See Appendix A.]

306. **fool**] As noted in I,iv,86,S.D., *"Enter Fool,"* the sighting of a doppelgänger or fetch was regarded as an omen, usually for impending death. [264]

307. **rat**] A rat is more favored than Cordelia because it is alive. *"Ripenesse is all"* (F, 2935).

309. **Never, never, never, never, never**] Shakespeare emphasizes the absolute, permanent finality of human death. He presents death as the ultimate end of existence, completely devoid of physical comfort, heaven, hell, or spiritual continuation. The line shatters the traditional rhythm of the iambic pentameter, mimicking a mind shattering under extreme grief and gasping for breath. [See IV,v,248., *"Death."*] [See Figure 318.]

310. S.D. ***To Edgar***] Ed. *To Kent*. Capell. Not in Q, F. Lear summons Edgar to help him unbutton his shirt due to the tightening compression in his chest. As noted, the actor who plays Edgar doubles as the King of France. Placing Cordelia between father and husband visually maps

out her entire life's trajectory from birth to marriage, abruptly cut short. It underscores the universal Renaissance theme of *Memento Mori*. Shakespeare structures the final scene as a tripartite stage composition, using the actors' relative placement and spatial separation to give visual form to the play's culminating themes. Cordelia, Lear and Edgar form one triangle. Kent, Albany, and his Squire form a second. Although the modern "rule of thirds" was not formulated during the Renaissance, painters such as Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo often employed compositional principles that anticipate its visual effect. They relied heavily on geometric harmony, the Golden Ratio, and harmonic armatures to guide the viewer's eye. Leonardo was directly connected with the study of proportion through his illustrations for Luca Pacioli's *De divina proportione*.

Cultures and spiritual traditions across the globe have assigned deep meaning to the number three, particularly within Christianity [688] and Judaism. [687] It has repeatedly served as a universal thematic constant representing balance, divinity, completeness, and the fundamental structure of existence. In psychology, especially as developed by Carl Jung and later expanded by Marie-Louise von Franz, numbers are considered archetypes of order. They organize chaotic psychic energy into recognizable patterns before those patterns ever manifest as specific, literal images in a story or dream. The number three holds immense structural weight in global mythologies, frequently symbolizing a fated trajectory or an unfolding narrative moving toward a destiny. When a creative work groups three figures together to dictate destiny, time, or mortality, it triggers the mythic resonance of the *Parcae* (Fates) regardless of the characters' genders. Edgar alludes to the *Parcae* when he says that his father's *"strings of life, / Began to cracke"* (Q1, 3168.12-13). [See note V,i,217., *"the strings of life."*]

The explicitly metaphysical conception of mathematical geometry as a divine blueprint—one that unites beauty and truth—derives from the mystical and mathematical traditions associated with Pythagoras and Plato. The Pythagoreans regarded number and geometric form as the fundamental principles underlying the cosmos and reality itself. In the *Timaeus*, Plato articulates a graded kinship among living beings and an analogical correspondence between the cosmos and the human being—what later tradition would call the relation of macrocosm to microcosm. The demiurge fashions individual rational souls from the residual ingredients of the mixture used to make the World Soul, combining them in a similar but less pure and less uniform blend. Later, Platonist and Stoic thinkers, together with Renaissance writers such as Giordano Bruno, developed the analogy into the stronger doctrine that the human being structurally mirrors the larger cosmos. In the *Philebus*, Socrates associates beauty and excellence with measure and proportion. Where these obtain, he says, they make things beautiful and good (64d–e). Yet when the Good cannot be grasped directly in a single form, it is apprehended through the conjunction of "beauty, proportion, and truth." This triad characterizes the Good—or the goodness of a rightly ordered mixture—rather than enumerating three independent constituents of beauty.

310. **button**] Presumably Lear is wearing a doublet with buttons down the front. A common symptom of a heart attack is constriction in the chest. See notes II,iv,117, *"O me! My heart, my rising heart!"* and IV,v,94: *"O, well flown bird ! I'th'clout!"* See "What is Cardiac Arrest?"

311-12. **Do you see this? Look on her, . . . there!]** (F, 3282). Lear's final words are a call to action—an active, urgent demand directed at the surviving characters and the audience. It is an appeal to our "feeling" sight—a call for universal empathy, boundless compassion, and a shared recognition of human suffering in the face of profound grief. The metaphor comes from IV,v when the blind Gloucester claims to see the world *"feelingly"* (F, 2593). Shakespeare redefines "feeling" as a metonym for *caritas* (Latin) and *agapē* (Greek), an active, selfless love materialized through concrete deeds. Caritas is the clear reference of the Fool's lewd joke about sucking on Goneril's and Regan's breasts in I,v. [See Figure 165.] It is enacted in III,iv when Lear clothes a naked beggar in III,iv—albeit obliquely: Edgar puts on the king's riding cloak after its being discarded: Lear does not give it to him directly. Saint Stephen, on whose Feast Day *King Lear* was staged for James I is, remembered for charitable service to the poor, and for his martyrdom.

Shakespeare portrays Cordelia's death as a purely physical, final, and biological event, devoid of any spiritual continuation, divine intervention, or cosmic purpose. However, it is important to note that Renaissance thinkers rarely outright abandoned Divine Providence. Instead, they sought to bridge the gulf between the human experience (*eros* or earthly love) and divine love (*agapē*). In her study *Posthumous Love*, Ramie Targoff notes that writers like Shakespeare often emphasized the agonizing finality of mortal death, forcing characters to confront boundless grief without the immediate, tidy comfort of a heavenly reunion or divine compensation. The closest historical example of a Renaissance writer experiencing a profound breakdown of the traditional divine-providential framework in the face of grief is the Polish humanist poet Jan Kochanowski. Following the death of his young daughter Urszula, Kochanowski wrote *Laments* (1580), a masterpiece of Renaissance mourning literature. Throughout the *Laments*, Kochanowski openly challenges his previous Christian-humanist and Stoic beliefs. His conclusion is not a secularized philosophy of *agapē* as universal empathy; rather, it is an agonizing, fragile attempt to rebuild a fractured faith.

Shakespeare repeatedly dramatizes the devastation of parents bereaved of, or separated from, their children, most memorably in Constance's lament for the captive Arthur in *King John* (F, 1406-90), and in Macduff's response to the slaughter of his family in *Macbeth* (F, 1816-22). Such scenes can be fruitfully compared with Kochanowski's *Laments*, but they do not require direct Kochanowski influence. Shakespeare's depiction of parental grief likely blends personal experience with classical, biblical, and early modern literary traditions. The infant and child mortality rate in England during this period was extraordinarily high. At least 25% to 50% of children did not survive to see their tenth year. [681] Shakespeare buried his son Hamnet on August 11, 1596, at the age of 11. [See Appendix A.]

312. S.D. ***Clutching his heart***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

312. **O, o, o, o, o**] (Q2, 3283). O, o, o. (Q1, 3281). Not in F.

312. S.D. ***He dies***] (F, 3283). Not in Q.

313. **Kent**] (F, 3285) *Lear.* (Q1, 3285) *Lear.* (Q2, 3285)

314. **ghost**] departing spirit

315. **tough**] obdurate

320. S.D. ***The bodies of Goneril and Regan are taken out***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Probably on a litter. See *The Prophetess,* I,iii, *"Enter ... with Litter." (p.11).*

320. S.D. ***To Kent and Edgar***] Johnson. Not in Q, F.

322. S.D. ***To Albany***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

324. ***Edg***] (F, 3298). *Duke.* (Q, 3298). Albany is struck dumb after the revelation of Cordelia's death, and is at a compete loss of words.

324. S.D. ***To Albany***] Ed. Not in Q, F.

324. **weight**] burden, load (*Shakespeare Lexicon*, Vol 2, p. 1349). The word carries a dual resonance, grounding the abstract emotional toll of the tragedy in the stark, physical reality of Lear and Cordelia's bodies being borne offstage. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, III,ii, *"And thou and Romeo presse on heauie beere"* (F, 1710)

325. **Speak what we feel**] Edgar's penultimate couplet rebukes his own belated eloquence. He recognizes that the prolonged recital of his sufferings consumed time that should have been devoted to securing Lear and Cordelia's release. In Shakespeare, rhetoric can become an impediment to action. [682] His words, however moving, arrive too late when urgency demands deeds. The injunction may qualify, or even repudiate, his earlier claim to Edmund that Gloucester's blinding constituted divine punishment for his adultery. [See note V,i,171-74,*"The gods are just..."*] Like Albany, the tragedy has disillusioned him of Providential judgment: *"As Flies to wanton Boyes, are we to th'Gods, / They kill vs for their sport."* (F, 2221-22). As a theoretical matter it might be that Shakespeare cast himself as Albany.

325. S.D. ***The bodies of Lear and Cordelia are placed on a bier***] Ed. Not in Q, F. Compare "*Enter* Angelina *with the bodies of* Ferdinand *and* Violanta *on a bier* (*Four Plays or Moral Representations in One*, p. 333.) See also *Hamlet*, IV.v, "*They bore him bare fac'd on the Beer,"* (F, 2917).

Figure 316. "The Burial of the Head of the Family" (Das Begräbnis des Familienoberhauptes) by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473 - 1531).

326. ***To Albany's Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F. The young Squire is as important a symbol in *King Lear* as the adolescent waitress Paola is in Federico Fellini's cinematic masterpiece *La dolce vita*. Both characters serve as structural and thematic "anchors" of pure, uncorrupted innocence against a backdrop of deep moral decay, disillusionment and corruption. As the bodies of Lear and Cordelia are put on a bier, the audience is left pondering the Squire's future, and what *choices* he will make on his road to becoming a man.

Figure 317. Paola waving to Marcello at the end of *La Dolce Vita* by Fellini.

326. **The oldest hath bourn most]** The word "bourn" (*"borne"*, F, 3300) functions as a poignant

double entendre. It marks the conceptual boundary of Lear's immense suffering while foreshadowing the literal weight of the funeral bier Edgar and Albany's Squire must soon bear. [See note III,vi,108-9., *"How light ... King bow"*]

327. S.D. ***The bodies of Lear and Cordelia are borne off by Edgar, Kent, Albany and Albany's Squire***] Ed. Not in Q, F. "A funeral procession sometimes includes the bearing of a body" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* **bear, bearing, borne**, p.22). It is common for kings to be carried by an even number of bearers (between two and eight, but most commonly four) on their shoulders, by means of a pole projecting fore and aft. [See Figure 316.] See Henry Chettle, *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, Actus tertus, *"Exeunt carrying the dead bodies."* See *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV,15, "*Exeunt, bearing of Anthonies body"* (F, 3107).

327. S.D. ***Exeunt, with a dead march***] (F, 3302). Not in Q. The full company exits through the center opening.

327. S.D. **FINIS**] (Q, 3302), (F, 3303).

Figure 318. The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb, Hans Holbein, ca. 1520-22. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel

Acknowledgments

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." ~ Maya Angelou

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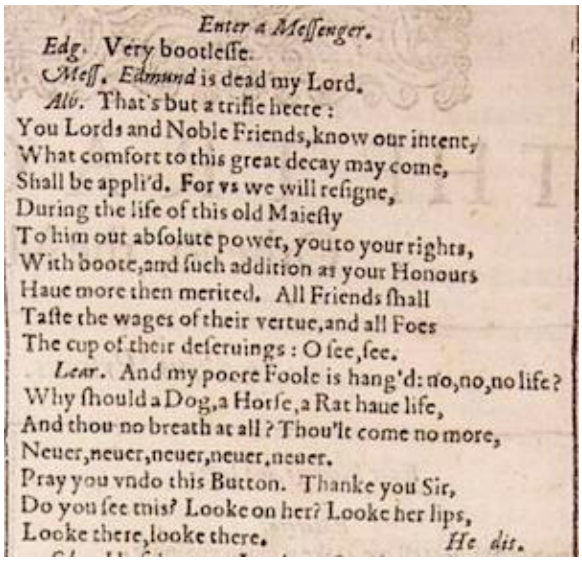
Special thanks to Pat Lee for his help with Perplexity, and Camille Blinstrub for her unwavering support over the years.

Appendix A: “You lords and noble friends etc”.



Enter a Meſſenger.
Edg. Very bootleſſe.
Meſſ. *Edmund* is dead my Lord.
Alb. That's but a trifle heere:
You Lords and Noble Friends, know our intent,
What comfort to this great decay may come,
Shall be appli'd. For vs we will reſigne,
During the life of this old Maieſty
To him our abſolute power, you to your rights,
With boote, and ſuch addition as your Honours
Haue more then merited. All Friends ſhall
Taſte the wages of their vertue, and all Foes
The cup of their deſeruings: O ſee, ſee.
Lear. And my poore Foole is hang'd: no, no, no life?
Why ſhould a Dog, a Horſe, a Rat haue life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Neuer, neuer, neuer, neuer, neuer.
Pray you vndo this Button. Thanke you Sir,
Do you ſee this? Looke on her? Looke her lips,
Looke there, looke there. *He dit.*

Figure 319. Detail of page 309 in the First Folio from InternetShakespeareEditions.

V,i,258-66. *“You lords and noble friends . . . see”*] Ed. After *“That's but a trifle here”* (Q1, 3269), (Q2, 3269), (F, 3268). As the play was published in the quartos and Folio, Albany attempts to re-establish moral order in a speech immediately before Lear's final monologue. [See Figure 319.] No sentient human being could believably make such a proclamation with Cordelia, the epitome of virtue, lying murdered at their feet; her grieving father in the throes of death. Dramaturgical first principles suggest that Shakespeare originally intended this speech to be delivered *before* the dénouement (as in lines 6-14 highlighted in red below), to underscore the total wantonness of Cordelia's death: *“As Flies to wanton Boyes, are we to th'Gods, / They kill vs for their sport”* (F, 2221-22). [See note IV,i,36., *“wanton boys.”*] Although “dramatic irony” is a modern term, Renaissance audiences understood it not as a technical literary theory, but as the unfolding of a foreknown tragic disaster fueled by the characters ignorance. [259] This device powerfully exposed the limits of human knowledge and the devastating mismatch between human intention and actual outcome. As scholar and playwright William Gibson wrote it in a personal communication from 1978, “the transposition of the speech keeps the character from being an idiot.”

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.
Alb. The Gods defend her!
Bear him hence awhile.—

Edmund is borne off.

You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come

Shall be appli'd. For us, we will resign,
During the life of his old Majesty,
To him our absolute power.—
[To Edgar *and* Kent.*]* You, to your rights,
With boot and such addition as your honors
Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.

Reenter Lear*, with* Cordelia *dead in his arms.*
— O, see, see!

When Albany's proclamation is transposed, Lear's lament *"And my poore Foole is hang'd"* (F, 3277) is a coordinate clause directly connecting the news of Edmund's death with the corpse of Cordelia. Shakespeare places the death of a villain and the death of an innocent on the exact same syntax level, reinforcing the idea of the gods' complete and utter disregard for human suffering and morality. The play ends with a final stroke of poetic injustice.

Alb. He knows not what he says, and vain is it
That we present vs to him.

Reenter Albany's Squire.

Squire. Edmund is dead, my Lord.
Alb. That's but a trifle here.
Lear. And my poor Fool is hang'd. No, no, no life.
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never.—
[To Edgar.] Pray you, undo this button. Thank you, sir.
Do you see this. Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there! *[Clutching his heart.*
—O, o, o, o, o *[He dies.*

Like Euripides' *Hecuba*, *King Lear* stages collision rather than resolution. It brings incompatible claims, identities, values, and forms of justice into violent confrontation without finally reconciling them. In both plays, characters cry out to the gods for justice, but the heavens remain silent or indifferent. Good characters die defying the traditional tragic expectation that suffering should lead to some form of cosmic balance or moral lesson. Claims about justice, gender, war, sovereignty, divine order, and desire are pressed against one another, leaving spectators to judge their force and cost rather than simply receive an authorized conclusion. [668] Rather than allowing the audience a passive catharsis, Shakespeare closes *King Lear* with an urgent call to action, demanding active engagement as Lear cries, *"**Looke** on her? **Looke** her lips, / **Looke** there, **looke** there"* (F, 3282-83). Lear's call to action reminds me of Mamie Till's, the mother of Emmett Till, a 14-year old African-American child who was savagely murdered in 1955 by white racists in Mississippi—a state with a historical reputation as a center of white supremacy and violent resistance to racial equality. To its disgrace, it recorded the highest total number of African American lynchings of any state in the United States. [669] She demanded a public funeral with an open casket for people *to*

look at the life that was lost to her: "I wanted the world to see what they did to my baby." [[See Figure 315.] That is what Lear wants to *do* at this moment. He wants the world ***to see*** what happened to his baby.

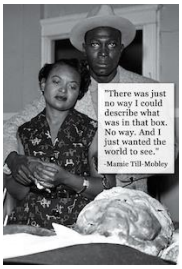


Figure 315. Mamie Till insisted on her son's casket being open so that the world "could *see* what they did to my baby." Photo by David Jackson.

Playwrights of the English Renaissance routinely deployed unsympathetic stereotypes when bringing Puritan characters to the stage. The Duke of Albany is an exception; he is first presented sympathetically. In the opening line of the play, Lear is said to prefer him over the Duke of Cornwall, *"I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany, then Cornwall"* (F, 4-5). In the same scene, he risks the wrath of the king by restraining him from striking Kent, showing both his valor and his unwavering moral compass: *"Deare Sir forbeare"* (F, 176). In I,iv, he strives fruitlessly to discover the cause of Lear's fury in a well-intentioned effort to remedy the situation: *"My Lord, I am guiltlesse, as I am ignorant / Of what hath moued you"* (F, 786-7) [See note I,iv,243.S.D., "*Enter Albany"*.]

Figure 320. 18th century woodcut showing a man suspected of witchcraft being subjected to the "sink or swim" proof. All hands are raised in expectation of a divine judgement.

Albany next appears in IV,ii, where his response to recent events reveals the depth of his religious and moral convictions. He views true Justice as the direct execution of God's absolute will, functioning strictly within the frameworks of Reformed/Calvinist belief systems that dominated early modern England. He chides Goneril for her wickedness, and warns her, *"If that the heauens doe not their visible spirits / Send quickly downe to tame the vild offences, it will(come"* (Q1, 2303.15-16). Upon hearing the news of Cornwall's death, he remarks, "*This shewes you are aboue you Iustisers / That these our nether crimes so speedely can venge"* (Q1, 2324-25). In the final scene, he invokes the old legal and chivalric form of trial by battle where the is outcome treated as a judgment sanctioned by God. Characteristically, he construes Goneril's and Regan's deaths as providential retribution: *"This iudgement of the Heauens that makes vs tremble. / Touches vs not with pitty"* (F, 3185-86). In a moment of stark dramatic irony, Albany loudly and confidently proclaims, *"All friends shall taste the wages of their virtue, and all foes The cup of deservings"* only for Lear to enter howling with Cordelia dead in his arms immediately afterwards. [See note V,i,264-66., *"All friends shall taste the wages of their virtue, and all foes The cup of deservings."*] His faith is utterly destroyed by Cordelia's death, and he blasphemes the gods, *"Fall and cease"* (F, 3226). The character subsequently displays a genuine awareness of the tragedy, as well as his

own role in it. Uncharacteristically, he does not moralize when told of Edmund's death. He dismisses the news of Edmund's death *"a trifle"* (F, 3268).

The concept of divine judgment is a foundational tenet in all three major Abrahamic faiths, and a central theme in many ancient religions. In the context of *King Lear*, it reflects a strictly Calvinist or Puritan view of God's absolute will. [See Figure 320.] For Puritans, nothing happened by chance; accidents, diseases, successes, and natural disasters were interpreted as purposeful, direct communications from God. Albany's beliefs evoke the admonitions of Thomas Beard in his earliest and most famous book, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements*, which first appeared in 1597. [268] In Chapter XXIII, "Of Epicures, and Atheists" (pp. 92-93), he depicts Christopher Marlowe's violent death as a direct punishment from God for blasphemy. In *How the Classics Made Shakespeare*, Jonathan Bate writes

> Sometimes 'this great stage of fools' upon which we are born has an audience. 'The gods look down,' says Coriolanus as his mother kneels to him . . . 'and this unnatural scene / They laugh at' (F, 3542-3). These gods are plural because this is a play set in a polytheistic world of antiquity, but Shakespeare lived in a society where everybody, with a few wildcard exceptions such as the alleged atheist Christopher Marlowe, believed that the world was looked down on upon a singular God—albeit with aspects three-in-one and one-in-three. . .There were strict laws proscribing stage blasphemy. *Marlowe's fate hung over the stage-play world like an admonitory shadow"* [italics mine]. Jonathan Bate writes in *How the Classics Made Shakespeare*, (pp. 2-3)

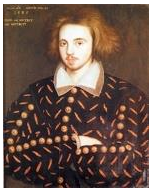


Figure 321. Anonymous portrait, possibly Marlowe, at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

In 2016, *The New Oxford Shakespeare* credited Christopher Marlowe as co-author, with Shakespeare, of all three parts of the *Henry VI* trilogy. Drawing on traditional attribution scholarship alongside computational stylometric analysis, the edition's editors judged the evidence for Marlowe's contribution sufficiently strong to warrant joint attribution. Although the extent and circumstances of that contribution remain debated, the attribution lends substantial support to the view that Marlowe and Shakespeare were connected not only through influence and rivalry but, at least in these plays, through some form of collaborative authorship. [269] Following Marlowe's death in 1593, Shakespeare appears to have paid tribute to him in *As You Like It*, suggesting that he regarded him with admiration, if not necessarily as a personal friend. It contains the quotation of Marlowe's "Hero and Leander," "*Dead Shepheard, now I find thy saw of might, / Who euer lov'd, that lou'd not at first sight?"* (F, 1853-54). The epithet *"Dead Shepherd"* has often been understood as a brief elegiac salute. Later in the play, Touchstone's phrase "*a great reckoning in a little roome"* (F, 1625-26) has also been widely taken to glance at Marlowe's death in the Deptford room, although this interpretation cannot be established conclusively. If a process of elimination makes Shakespeare the most likely actor to have played Albany among the King's Men's "Principall Actors," Albany's blasphemous repudiation of divine providence may have carried a particular personal significance for him.

It is historically plausible but unproven that Shakespeare personally met the Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno during Bruno's stay in England from 1583 to 1585. There is no direct documentary evidence of a meeting, however, historians and literary scholars frequently connect the two figures through John Florio, a prominent linguist and translator. Florio was a close friend of Bruno, living with him at the French embassy in London, and was also deeply connected to Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of Southampton. Scholars point to textual evidence suggesting Shakespeare knew of Bruno's concepts of multiple worlds. [676] Hamlet's famous existential processing of space—*"could be bounded in a nutshell, and count my selfe a King of infinite space"* (F, 1300-01)—strikingly mirrors Bruno's controversial theories on cosmological infinity. *Love's Labour's Lost* is widely read as a satire of the specific academic debates Bruno engaged in while teaching at Oxford. Shakespeare mocks pedantic rhetoric most explicitly through Holofernes, who turns an ordinary report of a deer hunt into a grotesquely inflated exercise in synonymy, Latin tags, and ornamental periphrasis: "*The Deare was (as you know) sanguis in blood, ripe as a Pomwater, who now hangeth like a Iewell in the eare of Celo the skie; the welken the heauen, and anon falleth like a Crab on the face of Terra, the soyle, the land, the earth"* (F, 1153-57). In *King Lear*, *"Striues in his little world of man"* (Q1, 1622.3) can be read as an echo of the massive cosmological anxieties stirred by Bruno's theory of infinite worlds. [674]

In *The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast* (pp. 216-53), Bruno satirizes a vulgarized, anthropomorphic conception of Christian providence: the image of God as a celestial overseer who scrutinizes the smallest contingencies of human life and dispenses particular rewards and punishments accordingly. He does not so much abolish providence as reconceive it. Against episodic, quasi-juridical divine intervention, he posits an immanent rational order operative within nature itself. Nature is not merely God's external artifact or subordinate instrument but "God in things" (*natura est deus in rebus,* p. 235)—the living divine principle active throughout an infinite and animated universe. Bruno's rejection of a transcendent providential deity who governs the world and distributes eternal rewards and punishments placed him in profound conflict with Catholic orthodoxy. After years before the Roman Inquisition, he was condemned as an obstinate heretic for a cluster of alleged theological errors—including positions concerning the Trinity, Christ's divinity and incarnation, souls, multiple worlds, and divination—and was burned in Rome's Campo de' Fiori in 1600.

Figure 321. In 1599, a heretical Franciscan named Fra Celestino of Verona burned at the stake at Rome's Campo de' Fiori, as was Giordano Bruni in 1600.

There is also no direct evidence proving that Shakespeare knew of Bruno's execution. It is unlikely, however, that his martyrdom would not have been reported to the Bard either by Florio or Wriothesley, given their tight-knit social and intellectual network in London. News of such a high-profile execution traveled fast across Europe, particularly to Protestant England, which frequently

capitalized on the brutality of the Roman Inquisition for anti-Catholic propaganda. In the final scene of the play, as Cordelia is being led away to prison with her father, Shakespeare uses imagery of martyrdom and spiritual witness. [See note V,i,17., *“God’s spies.*] *King Lear* subverts traditional genre boundaries, transforming from a bawdy comedy one might expect on St. Stephen’s Day, into a devastating tragedy, satirizing rhetoric and religious Providentialism, the theological belief that the universe is governed by a benevolent divine power that ensures justice, rewards the virtuous, and punishes the wicked. [677] During the English Renaissance, playwrights frequently combined tragic action with satiric, grotesque, or bitterly comic effects. In modern critical vocabulary, comparable tonal mixtures are often described as Black Comedy, a term for comedy that confronts painful, taboo, or otherwise grave material through laughter. Martin Esslin identifies Shakespeare as an important precursor to the tragicomic and darkly comic dimensions of absurdist drama in “The Theatre of the Absurd”https://www.jstor.org/stable/1124873 (10.2307/1124873).

Appendix B: Scene 23 (Q1, Q2). Act V,scene ii (F)

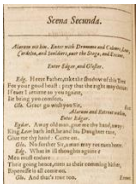

Scena Secunda.

Figure 322. Scena Secunda. Facsimile Viewer: First Folio (New South Wales). Internet Shakespeare Library.

Speaking from a purely practical, acting-focused perspective, the fundamental problem with "V,ii" is that it denies Gloucester his "Aha! moment" (anagnorisis)—a sudden flash of insight—upon hearing Edgar say, *"Come Father, Ile bestow you with a Friend"* (F, 2472). The performer must interpret the word "*friend"* as somebody other than his son because he still doesn't know his true identity. [See Figure 322.] Presumably, it is for this reason that Kenneth Muir, who performed the part of Gloucester in a college production, notes that Shakespeare does not explain "how the fugitive Edgar has got in touch with a friend" (KING LEAR: The Arden Edition of the Works of Shakespeare, 1966, p.175). R.A. Foakes also tells readers that Edgar's "friend" is not to be understood in more than one way: "No more is heard of this friend" (*King Lear (Arden Shakespeare: Third Series*, p. 349).

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colors, Lear, Cordelia, *and their forces; and exeunt.*

Enter Edgar *and* Gloucester.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive.
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort. *[Exit* Edgar.

Alarum; afterwards a retreat. Re-enter Edgar.

Edg. Away, old man! Give me thy hand! Away!
King Lear hath lost! He and his daughter ta'en!
Give me thy hand! Come on!
Glou. No further, sir; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
There going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all. Come on.
Glou. And that's true too.
[Exeunt.

The scene opens with the stage direction *"Alarum within. Enter with Drumme and Colours, Lear, Cordelia, and Souldiers, ouer the Stage, and Exeunt"* (F, 2918-19).*"Enter Edgar, and Gloster"* (F, 2920). Edgar affirms the virtue and righteousness of Cordelia's cause: *"pray that the right may thriue"* (F, 2922). Its moral tone offsets Edmund's completely immoral address to the audience concluding the scene before (V,i). [See note IV,vii,55-69., *"To both these sisters."*] He leaves his father sitting under a *"Tree"* (F, 2921) or by a *"bush"* (Q, 2921) who prays that God's

grace accompany and protect him**:** *"Grace go with you Sir"* (F, 2925). The blind earl addresses Edgar formally as *"Sir"* (F, 2925) because he has not yet revealed himself to be his son. Moments later, following the stage direction *"Alarum and Retreat within"* (F, 2926), Edgar immediately reenters to tell him that the French army was defeated by the English, and Lear and Cordelia taken prisoners. Remarkably, Gloucester offers no words of pity or compassion for their plight. Instead, his reaction is entirely self-absorbed; echoing his despair from IV,v, he wallows in self-pity and simply refuses to move. [See Figure 323.]

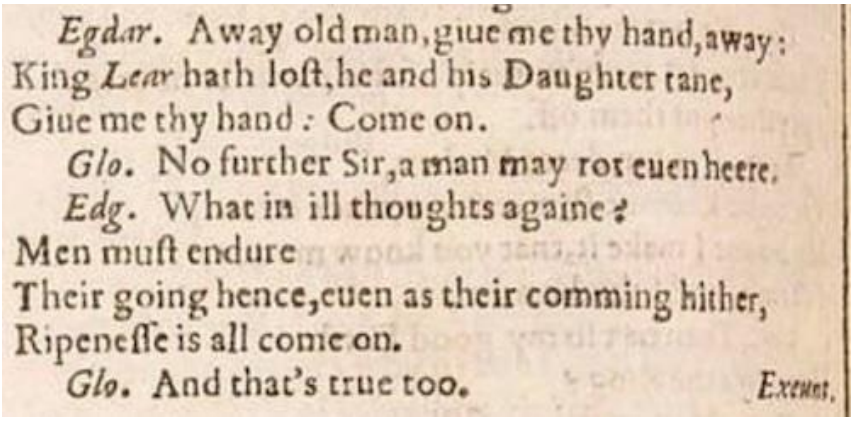

Egdar. Away old man, giue me thy hand, away:
King *Lear* hath loſt, he and his Daughter tane,
Giue me thy hand: Come on.
Glo. No further Sir, a man may rot euen heere.
Edg. What in ill thoughts againe?
Men muſt endure
Their going hence, euen as their comming hither,
Ripeneſſe is all come on.
Glo. And that's true too. *Exeunt.*

Figure 323. Lines 2931-36 in the First Folio (New South Wales). Internet Shakespeare Editions.

Edgar's metaphorical phrase *"ripeness is all"* (F, 2935) is part of an extended organic metaphor—"*fruitfully*" (F, 2718), "*mature*" (F, 2728) , "*rot*" (F, 2931), and "*ripeness*" (F, 2935)—that imagines mortality as the natural culmination of a life-process. The formulation recalls Hamlet's *"the readinesse is all"* (F, 3671). In both cases, Shakespeare gives dramatic form to an ethic of accepting death without futile resistance, though Edgar's language stresses organic maturation whereas Hamlet's stresses inward preparedness. In *King Lear*, the fruit–life-cycle conceit is more persuasive in the context of IV,v where it gives heft to the character's personal despair and depleted attachment to life, than when read in relation to Cordelia's military defeat. Moreover, when writing an extended metaphor, the meaning is clearer and more effective to an audience if the images are sequential rather than disjointed over time. [272]

[Reads.] Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off. If your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offer'd. There is nothing done if he return the conqueror; then am I the prisoner, and his bed my jail; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labor.

Your wife, so I would say—

Affectionate servant],

Goneril.

O indistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life,
And the exchange my brother!—Here, in the sands,
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified

Of murderous lechers; and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd duke. For him 'tis well
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Exit Edgar*, carrying off* Oswald's *body.*

Glou. The king is mad. How stiff is my vile sense
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract.
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.
Edg. Give me your hand.
Glou. No further, sir; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither.
Ripeness is all. Come on.
Glou. And that's true too.
Edg. Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend. *[Exeunt.*

Because Shakespeare's authorial intent remains fundamentally irretrievable, any defensible reconstruction of the plot must proceed from the play's formal design and historically informed performance conventions. Conflating the quartos with the First Folio risks preserving—or even institutionalizing—corruptions instead of emending them. Shakespeare's legacy rests on his mastery of layered, poetic language and deeply nuanced characterizations. The prosaic lines *"Heere Father, take the shadow of this Tree / For your good hoast: pray that the right may thriue / If euer I returne to you againe, / Ile bring you comfort"* (F, 2921-24) bear none of the hallmarks of the Bard's dramatic style before a major battle. This fact, considered with the poorly structured extended metaphor of the life cycle of fruit that begins in IV,v, and Gloucester's anagnorises never being staged, gives readers reason to question if scene V,ii was an interpolation. I propose that lines 2931-36 in the quartos and Folio may have been lifted from their original location in IV,v following Edgar's line *"Giue me your hand"* (F, 2740) and added to V,ii for reasons that can only be guessed at. I thought it was absolutely necessary to emend the text to force readers to analyze, question, and deeply evaluate the artistic structure of the play.

Anagnorisis

The opening scene takes up the epistemological question of how true knowledge may be attained. Lear attempts to assess his daughters' love through their rhetorical performances, yet he mistakes eloquence for sincerity and banishes Cordelia, the daughter who loves him most truly. Gloucester similarly falls victim to deceptive language. Persuaded by Edmund's forged letter and calculated rhetoric, he disowns Edgar. In Act IV, Scene vi, Lear challenges empirical sight as the ultimate path to truth. He advises Gloucester that true understanding comes *"feelingly"* (F, 2593), noting that a man can perceive the world without eyes, *"Looke with thine eares"* (F, 2994-5). Had either father used their intuition or their "feeling" sight, their tragedies may have been avoided. Thus, it

is within the context of how knowledge is come by that Gloucester's anagnorisis is framed. Paradoxically, now that he is "blind," he is able to "see". Aristotle distinguishes *logos* [λόγος] (rational discourse/argument) [371] from *nous* [νοῦς] (intellectual intuition/understanding) based on how they acquire truth and their role in the structure of knowledge. [625] [626]

As the play was published in the quartos and First Folio, Gloucester anagnorisis is not represented as the result of his own sudden insight—a eureka moment, deeply rooted in intuitive and subconscious thinking. [See Figure 324.] Instead, it is explicitly told to him by Edgar. Rather than dramatizing his discovery in IV,v as a live, emotional event on stage, we hear tell of it in a rushed narration in the final scene. [See note V,i,182., *"List a brief tale."*] It is presented more as an info-dump, like what happened to the King of France, and who's leading the French army, than affective dramatic poetry. Edgar spends more time talking about his reconciliation with Kent (Q1, 3168.1-3168.10), which he says *"top[s] extreamitie"* (Q1, 3168.3), than his reconciliation with his own father. At this critical juncture in the story, Shakespeare has left the audience in suspense about the fate of Lear and Cordelia. We know Edmund has sent a Captain to murder them, and Edgar's prolix, expository dialogue only fuels our impatience and disengagement. Until Kent enquires about their whereabouts, they are completely forgotten by the other characters. Could not Edgar have waited to tell his own personal story until after the captives were freed? Could Albany have not ensured their safety before conducting the trial of combat as he first demanded (F, 2984-88)? In *Hamlet*, [626] *Macbeth* [627] and *Julius Caesar*, [628] Shakespeare shows how excessive speech, internal debate, and philosophical thinking prevent characters from acting quickly. At the end of the play, Edgar reproaches himself for talking so much, and tells Albany to shut up. [See note V,i,325., *"Speak what we feel."*]

Figure 324. A 16th century woodcut of Archimedes' eureka moment, refers to the legendary instant when he discovered a method to measure the volume of an irregular object, solving King Hieron II's problem of verifying a golden crown's purity.

Shakespeare uses incidental music as a vital structural element in IV,v. It can be inferred from the dialogue that music is being played at the start of V,vi. The Doctor's command *"louder the musicke there"* (Q1, 2775.2) presupposes that music is already audible when Lear is carried on stage. The music links the scene thematically with I,v, in which the Fool/Cordelia plays on his/her lute to wind up the untuned and jarring senses of this *"child-changed father"* (F, 2765-66). As noted in the introduction to I,v, while the tune itself is lost to time, it was very likely borrowed from a familiar lullaby or cradle song to lull an infant to sleep. Across humoral, philosophical, and religious traditions, sleep—*"Nature's Soft Nurse"* (F, 1427)—has been understood since antiquity as a potent, restorative force for both mind and body. The music is being used as a leitmotif for the profound bond of love between mother and son. It speaks the language of *agapē*—

unconditional, selfless, and sacrificial love. The Fool plays it again on his tabor pipe in III,vi, foreshadowing the actor's return to his role as Cordelia. It is the last we hear from the character in the play. In IV,v, music is used non-diegetically to help modulate the jarring shift in tone between the death of Oswald and Gloucester's soliloquy, wishing he could simply lose his mind like the king so he would no longer feel the agony of his existence (F, 2732-39). The harmony likely modulates from a minor key, opening up into a radiant major mode for the agapē leitmotif connecting Gloucester's anagnorisis at the end of IV,v with Lear's reconciliation with Cordelia in IV,vi. Edgar's perfunctory verbal account of his reunion with his father in the final scene does not communicate the essential idea that his father's discovery is "felt"; nor are his words adequate to move the audience emotionally at the news of his death.

Appendix C: Intermezzo

The evidence strongly suggests that Shakespeare originally intended an *intermezzo* to separate Acts IV and V. It is well established among musicologists, theatre historians, and scholars of early modern literature that innovations in late sixteenth-century Italian stage music fundamentally shaped the development of the Jacobean court masque, [281] particularly the Renaissance *intermedio* or intermezzo, which typically served to bridge acts in spoken plays, conveying the passage of time.[282] It combined music with spectacle including mythological scenes, allegorical figures like Time, and pageant-like processions modeled on ancient Roman trionfi. [283] Intermezzi drew heavily on Catholic liturgical traditions and medieval religious drama to create a sense of spectacle, moral contemplation, and divine order. [See Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.]

It is important to note that Italian stage ensembles during the Renaissance and Baroque eras frequently mixed instrument families like strings (e.g., violins, viols), winds (e.g., cornetts, sackbuts, recorders), and plucked continuo instruments (e.g., theorbo, harpsichord) to achieve timbral variety and vivid sonic effects. [284] They sometimes deployed "lowly" or rustic-sounding instruments in intermedi for dramatic and social contrast. [285] In the opening of *The Masque of Queens* (1609), for instance, Jonson draws on folk traditions in the witches' antimasque entry *"all with Spindles, Timbrels, Rattles, or other vene-ficall Instruments, making a confused noise"* [286] In my restoration, the hurdy-gurdy, the blowing horn and the bagpipe are used for their symbolic, political and emotional effect.

An intermezzo is not the same as a "scene." "V,ii" in Lear has absolutely nothing in common with the battle of Actium dramatized in Act III, scenes 7-13 in *Antony and Cleopatra*. The two are incomparable in both structure and purpose. V,ii is an allegorical, self-contained musical spectacle performed between the acts. A "scene" in a spoken play, by contrast, is a structural unit of the dramatic text itself, advancing plot and dialogue within the same fictional world and continuous action. [287] Dessen's strictly literal interpretation of *"father"* aligns with Muir's and Foakes. In my view, the shifting, ambiguous, and subjective meanings of words—driven by the clash between perception, language, and "reality"—is a cornerstone of Shakespeare's philosophical exploration in *Lear*. The sense in which Gloucester hears the word "father" is not monosemic. It is only because he reappears in "V,ii" not know the identity of Edgar that anybody questions to whom he is referring.

Appendix D: The Gentleman in Scene 17 (quartos)

The plot of the story is disjointed and confused by the introduction of *"a Gentleman"* (Q, 2347.1) in scene 17 (the scene was cut in the Folio). He cannot be the same *"Gentlemen"* (F, 1615) (Q1, 1615) Kent greets in III,i because he is still unaware of Caius's true identity after meeting with Cordelia, and showing her the earl's signet ring: *"she will tell you who your fellow is / That yet you doe not know* (Q, 1645-46). [See note III,i,47., *"show her this ring."*] It must be the character is a new "Gentleman" (Q1, 2347.1), because Kent tells him, "*When I am knowne aright you shall not greeue, / Lending me this acquaintance"* (Q1, 2347.54-5). He then says he will take him to attend the king: *Well sir, ile bring you to our maister Lear,/ And leaue you to attend him"* (Q, 2351.51-52). How can this be when nobody knows his whereabouts? In the next scene (scene 18 in the quartos, Act IV, scene iii in the Folio), Cordelia sends some men to go look for him: *"seeke, seeke for him"* (F, 2368).

> *Kent.* Well sir, ile bring you to our maister *Lear*,
> And leaue you to attend him some deere cause,
> Will in concealement wrap me vp awhile,
> When I am knowne aright you shall not greeue,
> Lending me this acquaintance, I pray you go along with me.

Scene 17 does not advance the narrative. It exists only to showcase the grandiloquence of the actor, who waxes poetic to "Caius" about Cordelia's femininity and devotion to her father. The picture he draws of her evokes the beautiful and dutiful Philoclea in Philip Sydney's pastoral romance, *The Arcadia:* "her teares came dropping downe like raine in Sunshine, and she not taking heede to wipe the teares, they ranne downe vpon her cheekes, and lips, as vpon cherries which the dropping tree bedeweth." (*The Third Booke of the Covntesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (1590), Chap. 5.1). The scene feels engineered solely for a actor to chew the scenery, and the opportunity to earn *"Halfe a share"* (F, 2151), or maybe even *"A whole one"* (F, 2152).

It is, of course, pure speculation what changes were made in *King Lear* before it reached the stage. Gerald Eades Bentley writes, "Precisely what the procedure was in the judging of new manuscripts offered for production cannot yet be determined. . . [The sharers] could even have been consulted about particular scenes or characters or stagings while the new manuscript was in process of composition. …. [T]he prompter had to see that any corrections, deletions, or revisions required by the Master [of Revels] were made in the prompt copy in the sides of the several players." (*The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's time, 1590-1642,* pp. 38-40)

> Philip Henslowe … refers in his Diary to the half shares of certain players. On the first of June 1595 he loaned to his improvident and frequently imprisoned nephew, Francis Henslowe, "…In ready money to lay down for his half share with the company which he doth play withal to be paid unto me when he doth receive his money which he lent to my lord Burt or when my assigns doth demand it . . . £9'" [443]

The only information of any consequence in the scene concerns the whereabouts of Edgar and the

King of France (lines Q, 2347.1-09). (Their exchange was cut in the Folio.) Shakespeare has to give an explanation for France's absence even though the audience knows the reason: the parts are played by the same actor. The logical time to bring up the matter is at the conclusion of scene 21, when Kent and a character prefixed as a *"Gentleman"* (Q, 2843.1) are discussing the logistics of the battle, such as who is leading the Duke of Cornwall's forces in the wake of his death. To resolve the plot inconsistency, I reallocated lines Q, 2347.1-09 from scene 17 to their rightful context in IV,vi. Where France has gone is logically the first question the audience asks of the storyteller when Cordelia and Lear leave the stage.

Exeunt Lear, Cordelia, Doctor*, and* Attendants.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back, know you no reason?
Lear's Knight. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of, which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger that his personal return was most requir'd and necessary.
Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?
Lear's Knight. The Marshall of France, Monsieur La Far.
Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?
Kent. Most certain, Sir.
Lear's Knight. Who is conductor of his people?
Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.
Lear's Knight. They say Edgar, his banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.
Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about. The powers of the kingdom approach apace.
Lear's Knight. The arbitrement is like to be bloody.
Fare you well, Sir. *[Exit.*
Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought. *[Exit.*

As noted in the Dramatic Personae, it was not customary for copyists [21] to give individual names to tertiary characters. Their lines are typically prefixed with generic *titles*, such as *Knight, Gentleman, Servant, Attendant, Messenger, Captain,* etc. Adding to the confusion, the assignment of these titles is not consistent in the quartos and Folio. For example, a *"Servant"* in Q [l.584] becomes a *"Knight"* in F [l.583], a *"Gentleman"* in Q [l. 921] becomes a "Messenger" in F [l.921], a *"Doctor"* in Q [l.2761] becomes a Gentleman in F [l.2762], and so on. … There are a total of 45 changes involving minor characters of this kind." [288]

Over the centuries, editors have made perfunctory attempts to distinguish individuated characters from nameless functionaries. In the venerated *Arden Shakespeare*, for example, R. A. Foakes correctly prefixes the lines ascribed to a *"Knight"* and a *"Gentleman"* in Acts I, II and III to a single character: **Knight.** He notes "Q and F have *'Gentleman'* in the speech prefixes, as Q does for the *'Knight'* in 2.2, but, since Kent recognizes him [*"I know you"* (F, 1618)], and he has been with Lear, he appears to be the knight who came on with Lear in 2.2, and is best played by the same actor" (p. 259). This character is first prefixed with the name *"Knigh"* (F, 580) in I,iv, then as a

"*Gentleman"* in I,v (F, 921), "*Gentleman"* in II,iv (F, 1273), *"Gentleman"* in III,i (F, 1615), *"Gentleman"* (F, 2630) in IV,v, and "*Gentleman"* (F, 2762) in IV,vi. In my restoration, the audience first observes him in I,i, standing next to Kent, near to the throne, signaling his high position in court and favor with the King. The narrative is structured to establish an emotional connection between the character and the earl of Kent. When he does not reappear in the Intermezzo (i.e., the "retreat") with Kent, it is inferred that he was killed in the battle. By so doing, Shakespeare gives the audience a face to go with Edmund's statement, *"friend hath lost his friend"* (Q, 2997.1). I gave him the name "Lear's Knight" in order to distinguish him from "Cornwall's Knight"—the duke's chivalrous young bodyguard who is murdered by Regan in III,vii. [See note III,vii, 69,73,76, 78., "*Cornwall's Knight."*]

Lear's Knight is an exemplar of Lear's *"hundred Knights and Squires"* (F, 750), whom Goneril describes as *"Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd, and bold, /That this our Court infected with their manners,/ Shewes like a riotous Inne"* (F, 751-53). Like Edgar, who Regan says was "*companion with the riotous Knights / That tended vpon my Father"* (F, 1034-5), he is of royal birth. He supports Lear's claim that *"My Traine are men of choice, and rarest parts, / That all particulars of dutie know, / And in the most exact regard, support / The worships of their name"* (F, 776-79). The Knight's speeches are brief, and marked by their punctilious respect for protocol. In medieval times, becoming a knight involved a long and demanding process that emphasized discipline in all aspects of life." [289] The dramatic shift in the character's rhetoric from formal to emotional reflects his psychological state. He is speaking from a place of raw, intense feeling. [See note III,i,4-15., *"Contending with the fretfull Elements."*]

Appendix E: Actus Tertius. Scena Prima

Actus Tertius. Scena Prima. (F, 1614)

Storm still. Enter Kent *and a* Gentleman*, severally.*

Kent. Who's there, besides foul weather?
Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.
Kent. I know you. Where's the king?
Gent. Contending with the fretful elements;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curlèd waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-storm
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.
Kent. But who is with him?
Gent. None but the fool, who labors to outjest
His heart-strook injuries.
Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it is cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have—as who have not, that their great stars
Thron'd and set high?—servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state. What hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king, or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings—
But true it is from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you.
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.

I am a gentleman of blood and breeding,
And from some knowledge and assurance offer
This office to you.
Gent. I will talk further with you.
Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my outwall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia—
As fear not but you shall—show her this ring,
And she will tell you who that fellow is
That yet you do not know .—Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the king.
Gent. Give me your hand.
Have you no more to say?
Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet:
That when we have found the king—in which your
pain
That way, I'll this—he that first lights on him
Holla the other. *[Exeunt several*

I have red-marked the lines omitted in the Folio (1623) that were published in the First (1608) and Second (1619) quartos. The speech of the Gentleman (AKA Lear's Knight) is expanded by nine lines (Q, 1622.1-8) as well as Kent's (1638.1–1638.12).

Kent's objective in III,i is to convince Lear's Knight (a young lord) to deliver an urgent message to Cordelia. The latter only knows him as *"Caius"* (F, 3249), a rogue without a family name, who blatantly lied to him about why he was put in the stocks (F, 1333-35). Kent uses two methods of persuasion. The first is rhetorical. The convoluted style of his speaking is one that only an educated person would be able to construct, proving him to be a man of high breeding. His complex syntax (specifically, the many embedded clauses in his sentences) is as tortuous as his lines in II,iv,162-166, *"Cordelia ... remedies"* (F, 1243-47). Kent's words alone, however, are not enough to convince the Knight to travel to Dover. His primary mode of persuasion is presenting him with physical evidence that he is *"much more / Then my out-wall"* (F, 1641-42). What ultimately convinces him to bring a message is Cordelia is seeing Kent's signet ring. In my version of the narrative, the audience first saw Lear's Knight standing next to the flamboyant earl, whose flashiness is anchored by his massive signet ring. The stage proxemics suggests that both are favorites of king, and known to one another, if not friends. When Kent produces his ring, the Knight immediately sees through the disguise.

Kent's speech functions as a narrative red-herring. Shakespeare is playing on his first audiences' presuppositions about Cordelia's motives for landing an army in England. They were not expecting her or her father to die at the end. They knew the story from Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of King Leir in which she leads an army back to Briton, successfully overthrows her sisters and restores her father to the throne, succeeding him as Queen of England. In Holinshed's Chronicles, the English forces are defeated: "Leir rules for two years before his death and is

succeeded by Cordelia, who rules for a subsequent five years." So the story also goes in the pre-Shakespearean drama of 1594 written by Anonymous, *"The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordelia."* [See Figure 324.] It is not until IV,iii in the Folio (scene 18 in the quartos) that Cordelia tells us herself what she's doing in England.

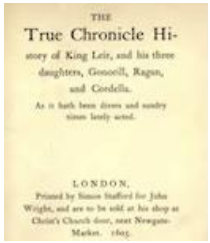

THE
True Chronicle Hi-
story of King Leir, and his three
daughters, Gonoeill, Ragan,
and Cordella.
As it hath been diuers and sundry
times lately acted.
LONDON,
Printed by Simon Stafford for John
Wright, and are to be sold at his shop at
Christ's Church dore, next Newgate-
Market. 1605.

Figure 325. ***The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordelia*** **by Anonymous.**

Today, Kent's speech creates no suspense at all because the audience is certain of the outcome. Everybody knows what is in store for father and daughter. Cordelia has become one of the most iconic tragic figures of purity, loyalty and agapē love in all of drama. Audiences flock to see Lear's "mad scene" and watch him die. It is unthinkable that he might live or that Cordelia may harbor political ambitions, like Eleanor of Aquitaine,

It might be said that the plot of *King Lear*, and its surface-level conflicts, centers on royal succession. Late on November 4, 1605 barely a year before the play was staged for James I on St. Stephen's Day, the Gunpowder Plot was discovered. Its goal was to kill the King, and the Protestant aristocracy, and to kidnap his nine-year-old daughter, Princess Elizabeth, and install her as a puppet Catholic queen to restore Catholicism as the state religion. As noted in II,iv,300, *"Gon"*, Goneril's primary reason for wanting to rid Lear of his hundred knights, is the threat they present to her claim to the throne by right of primogeniture should he decide he wants his kingdom back: *"the Lawes are mine not thine, / Who can araigne me for't?"* (F, 3116-7).

Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.

The evolution of music for the stage from the early Renaissance period to the Baroque is a subject far beyond the scope of this note. Overall, the incidental music in *Lear*, "as in the other arts … was significantly influenced by the developments which define the Early Modern period: the rise of humanistic thought; the recovery of the literary and artistic heritage of Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome; increased innovation and discovery; the growth of commercial enterprises; the rise of a bourgeois class; and the Protestant Reformation" (Wiki). Martin Luther writes in his Letters:

Figure 327. "Luther playing the lute to his family" by Gustav Adolph Spangenberg (1866), Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig, Germany.

> "I firmly believe, nor am I ashamed to assert, that next to theology no art is equal to music; for it is the only one, except theology, which is able to give a quiet and happy mind. This is manifestly proved by the fact that the devil, the author of depressing care and distressing disturbances, almost flees from the sound of music as he does from the word of theology. This is the reason why the prophets practiced music more than any art and did not put their theology into geometry, into arithmetic, or into astronomy, but into music, intimately uniting theology and music, telling the truth in psalms and songs." (The Puritan Board)

The original melodies and musical arrangements of Shakespeare's songs have been lost to time. [291] This is true also of the incidental music. No scores exist for Elizabethan and Jacobean plays.[292] "Not a single note of instrumental music from the Shakespeare plays has been preserved, with the possible exception of the witches' dances from *Macbeth*, which are thought to have been borrowed from a contemporary masque. Even descriptions of the kinds of music to be played are sparse. Trumpets sounded 'flourishes,' 'sennets,' and 'tuckets.' A flourish was a short blast of notes. The words *sennet* and *tucket* were English manglings of the Italian terms *sonata* and *toccata*." [293]

Scholars rely on several types of direct evidence to understand how music was used: explicit stage directions like *"Musicke of the Hoboyes is vnder the Stage"* (F, 2482) in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Many directions specify "still," "solemn," "strange," or "loud" music, as well as cues for dances, masques, and songs. [294] In *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580–1642*, the editors note that the common direction for sound occurs more than 630 times in over 220 plays usually with context thinly indication of the instrument(s)" (*A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580–1642*, (pp.146-48.) In addition to explicit evidence, there are many implicit cues for incidental music the dialogue such as *"IF Musicke be the food of Loue, play on"* (F, 5) in *Twelfth Night*. While firsthand accounts of the incidental music at the Globe are extremely spars, there are several eyewitness reports, and contemporary documents that provide insights into the music and orchestration of Elizabethan and Jacobean masques and entertainments. These sources

range from detailed descriptions in published libretti to letters from foreign ambassadors and attendees. [407] For example, in an account of the entertainment provided for Queen Elizabeth in 1591, six instruments are named, "After this speech, the Fairy Quene and her maides daunced about the garden, singing a song of sixe partes, with the musicke of an exquisite consort, wherein was the lute, bandora, base-violl, citterne, treble-violl, and flute." *The Honorable Entertainment gieuen to the Queen Maiestie in Progresse, at Eluetham in Hampshire, by the right Honorable the Earle of Hertford,* The Fovrth Daies Entertaiment. (Book 4.) (London, 1591), sig. E1-E1V, from Music in English Renaissance Drama, edited by John H. Long, p. 53.

> Stuart masques were always elaborate spectacles, and typically involved sumptuous scenic display and glittering costumes, as well as music provided by consorts of lutes, viols, and wind instruments, and actors and singers to perform the written text. Every performance used a sizeable company of professional artists. For *Love Freed* (1611), the musicians consisted of twenty-four lutenists (twelve of whom sang dressed as priests), fourteen violins, thirteen oboes and sackbuts, and fifteen other instrumentalists – all at a total cost of £90 (see Masque Archive, *Love Freed*, 4).[294]

There are also significant iconographic sources such as "Collegium musicum" [Figure 329.], and the masque in the narrative "portrait" of Sir Henry Unton at the National Portrait Gallery. [Figure 137.]

Figure 329. A broken consort of young men.

The obvious reason why no scores exist for Shakespeare's plays is that the musicians didn't use them. Professional musicians in those days were expected to be accomplished improvisers. Improvisation has been a central driver both in the emergence of Western polyphony and the pedagogical training of musicians throughout the Medieval and Renaissance periods. [295] Far from being a "free-for-all," this improvisation was a highly structured, rule-based skill that served as the foundation for what we now recognize as written composition. [296]

Video 49. "My Heart", Louis Armstrong's Hot Fives and Sevens. Music dominated by polyphony and collective improvisation.

American jazz provides a familiar entry point for navigating the complex structure and spirit of English consort music in Shakespeare's time. The musicians in Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five did not primarily work from sheet music. They relied on lead sheets for basic melodies and structures during recordings, with Lil Hardin Armstrong providing minimal arrangements as the formally trained pianist. The rest of the band used head arrangements, talked-through routines, and spontaneous collective. Armstrong himself could read and write music but favored this intuitive, ear-based approach over full notation. Roger Kamien quotes a New Orleans Jazz musician as

saying, "We didn't know what a sheet of music was. Just six or seven pieces, half a dozen men pounding it out all together, each in his own way and yet somehow fitting in all right with the others." [297] "My Heart" by Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five is a prime example. The recording features the classic New Orleans jazz structure, where the "front line" —consisting of Armstrong on trumpet, Kid Ory on trombone, and Johnny Dodds on clarinet—simultaneously improvise, creating a complex, polyphonic, and "faking" texture over the rhythm section. Improvisation is a core element of the spontaneous, on-the-spot improvisation on late night tv talk shows such as Paul Shaffer and The World's Most Dangerous Band, The Cleto and the Cletones, Louis Cato and the Great Big Joy Machine, and The Roots. [298]

Figure 329. Paul Shaffer and the World's Most Dangerous Band.

John Tyson says, "In the Renaissance, improvisation was a fundamental part of all music making. Renaissance Music is a kind of middle ground in Western Music. It is exquisite high art and yet allows each performer the freedom of expression we often associate with pop music" [See Video 50, 3:37 – 1:07:22.]

Video 50. John Tyson on polyphony and improvisation in the Renaissance.

> "[I]t turns out that counterpoint is something that any musician (not just geniuses like Josquin and Bach) can do on the spot. Every choirboy in the Renaissance could improvise, and did so every day (Canguilhem 2011, 45–46). Renaissance improvisation is highly constrained: in order to produce correct improvised counter-point there is a limited set of choices for every new note. It is this very limitation of choice that makes it relatively easy to improvise in real time. You can even learn to do it from Peter Schubert's YouTube videos." (*Renaissance Improvisation and Musicology*, Julie E. Cumming, Volume 19, Number 2, June 2013.)

Video 51. "Improvisation Around 1600" by Elam Rotem, Early Music Sources. Illustration above, the frontispiece of Andrea Antico's *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi libro primo* (1517) features a woodcut of a player improvising music from his heart at a harpsichord, a singer holding a score, and a monkey playing a lute.

Elam Rotem discusses the grey line between composition and "improvision" in Video 51, "Improvisation Around 1600." He notes, "Stemming from the beginning of the 16th century, the genre of the *fantasia* was very popular both in written form but also in reports of live improvisations…An important treatise in general, but especially in this regard, is Santa Maria's

"*Arte de Tañer Fantasia*", "The Art of Playing Fantasia." Notice that it's not "the art of composing or improvising fantasia." The verb "playing", according to Santa Maria, includes both composing and improvising, and not merely "executing." Rotem emphasizes that *fantasias* have no text. "This is an important point, as the rules for how to set text in vocal music in the 16th century were probably more strict than in any other period. So, working without a text was a great way to explore contrapuntal imitative technique in a way, that was on the one hand advanced and comprehensive, and on the other hand, free of the limiting requirement of setting a text. Improving complex fugal polyphonic pieces based on a given theme may be considered as the height of this art, that was definitely possessed by the great players of keyboard and plucked in instruments of the 16th and 17th century."

The exact nature of how *King Lear* was written, its composition, and its rehearsal process is a deeply complex and heavily debated topic. [420] Some scholar hold that it is was written solely by Shakespeare, [299] [300] and that the principal actors were given "cue scripts" [301] which contained only their own lines, their entrances and exits, and the cue. Othello says, *"Were it my Cue to fight, I should haue knowne it / Without a Prompter"* (*Othello*, F, 302-3). Likewise, no direct contemporary documents from the Globe Theatre specify exactly how consort musicians learned their melodies or precise cues. Some form of "spotting" must have been conducted. Spotting is a word used in filmmaking, referring to "the process of identifying and marking specific moments in a film where music, sound effects, and other audio elements should be placed. It is typically done in a *collaborative session* with the director and composer." For example, the trumpeters in *Lear* needed to know before Gloucester says *"Harke, the Dukes Trumpets"* (F, 1017) when to sound the *"Tucket"* (F, 1014) in II,i announcing the arrival the Duke of Cornwall, and how to articulate it. Was it farcically overblown, signaling the pomposity of character, or as expressionless as a doorbell? The decision had to have been made by somebody who knew the ironic style of the whole play and its narrative structure.

My guess is that the music for *King Lear* was "spotted" by Robert Armin. The reasons why he replaced Will Kempe can never be known, but what is certain is that his arrival in ca. 1600 coincided with a significant increase in the number of songs and lines of singing in Shakespeare's plays. [302] Armin was known for knowledge of music of the kind that that dominates Shakespeare's later plays. Which is heavily influenced by or directly derived from popular, secular, and folk traditions. Both he and his mentor Richard Tarton drew on performance techniques reminiscent of medieval minstrels who extensively used improvisation, interactivity, and music in their performances. Since most minstrels could not read or write music, their craft relied heavily on memory and spontaneous creation. It would have been highly beneficial, if not a necessity, for someone giving instructions to ensemble musicians at the Globe to be a musician himself. Parenthetically, there is no evidence that Armin composed music like Robert Johnson did. Johnson began composing music for Shakespeare's plays around 1609–1611, the time Armin is believed to have retired from the King's Men. [See Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester.]

Appendix G: Edgar's Ox Horn

Figure 330. Detail from the Rothschild Mahzor (1490) illustrating the first Mishnah in Pirkei Avot (1:1) with a winged angel blowing the shofar.

Edgar refers to wearing a horn in III,vi: *"poore Tom thy horne is dry"* (F, 2032). The line is preceded by the words *"Do,de,de,de"* (F, 2031); *"loudla doodla"* (Q1, 2031); *"loudla doodla"* (Q2, 2030)—which by simple logic is an onomatopoeic cue for the actor to sound his horn. [See note III,iv,84., *"Sessa"*.] "Bedlam beggars wore about their necks a great horne of an ox in a string or bawdrie, which, when they came to an house for almes *they did wind*, and they did put the drink given them onto this horne whereto they did put a stopple" (Aubrey, *Natural History of Wiltshire,* ed. 1847, p. 93).

In my version of story, Edgar first winds it in III,iv following Lear's words, *"And shew the Heauens more iust"* (F, 1817). [See note III,iv,37., *"Fatham and half."*] The dramatic timing of the effect is metatheatrical. The unexpected, contrived, theatrical nature of the sound effect shakes the audience out of its emotional stupor and empathy with Lear. The horn call begins a new unit of action starting with Edgar's entrance and ending with Lear's pivotal speech *"Thou wert better in a Graue, then to answere with thy vncouer'd body, this extremitie of the Skies"* (F, 1881-2) The winding of his horn effectively links these two important speeches together. [467]

In III,vi, Edgar blows it a third time to call back the hunting dogs Lear imagines are chasing him, also evidenced by his use of *"Sessa"* (F, 2031). In IV,i, Edgar blows it a fourth and final time, after Gloucester's speech, *"Oh deere Sonne Edgar,/ The food of thy abused Fathers wrath/ Might I but liue to see thee in my touch,/ I'ld say I had eyes againe"* (F, 2202-05). He is standing in the yard, and his father, led by Curan (aka *Old Man*), are on the platform. The sound of the horn alerts them to his presence, *"How now? who's there?"* (F, 2206). [See note IV,i,24. S.D., "*Edgar winds his horn"*.] In IV,v, he blows a metatheatrical raspberry after his father's words, *"If Edgar liue, O blesse him"* (F, 2479). [See note IV,v,40.S.D., "*blows a raspberry."*]

The horn and its sound are loaded with symbolism. (See "**Horn**" (pp. 151-52) and "**Music**" (pp, 223-25) in Juan Cirlot*'s Dictionary of Symbols*.) In Judaism, the blowing of a horn, is a profound metaphor and symbolic ritual, primarily during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The shofar, typically a ram's horn, symbolizes a spiritual wake-up call, urging repentance and introspection.

It calls people to wake from their "slumber" and repent. [See Video 51.] Similarly, blowing a keren (Hebrew for "horn" or "ram's horn," often referred to as a shofar when used ceremonially) holds profound symbolic and practical significance throughout the Bible. It is not merely a musical instrument, but a powerful, supernatural tool representing God's voice, a call to repentance, an alarm for war, and a symbol of strength and salvation. In Psalm 92:10, the psalmist writes

> **10** You have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
> I have been anointed with fresh oil.

Video 23. Jerusalem Shofar at Sunrise. (TorahChannel)

Shara Drimalla & BibleProject Team write of "The Horn of Psalm 148," *BibleProject*, "This metaphor of the 'exalted horn' comes from an image of a bull lifting up its horns after winning a battle. The raised horn is a common biblical symbol of victory, especially of being rescued from oppression. When this metaphor means victory (Psalm 89:24, 112:9; Zechariah 1:21), and when God 'exalts the horn' of someone, he is bringing victory to the oppressed. In 1 Samuel 2, we find Hannah rejoicing in song after the birth of her son Samuel. After years of infertility, Hannah rejoices because "in the LORD [her] horn is lifted high. A prominent idea in Hannah's song is God's righteous judgment. She rejoices that he brings down the proud and exalts the humble (verses 6-8). And she concludes her song by asking God to judge all of creation, calling for the reign of God's Kingdom on the earth (verse 10) —to 'exalt the horn' of his anointed one, the Messiah."

The ram or cattle horn Edgar is blowing is one of "several cheap and lowly instruments,"[302] such the hurdy-gurdy and the bagpipe, which I hypothesize were also employed in the original production of *Lear* to evoke the lowest social classes of peasants and beggars. [See note II,iii, S.D., *"A hurdy-gurdy plays."*] Court masques and Italian intermedi relied on highly refined, sophisticated Baroque and Renaissance instruments. These theatrical spectacles were lavishly scored with instruments like the theorbo, lute, harpsichord, viol, sackbut, and cornett, producing a rich, complex texture suited for courtly flattery and complex stage machinery. These instruments contrasted sharply with folk instruments, which were typically reserved for comedic, pastoral, or "rustic" interludes rather than the courtly performances. [489] [490]

Appendix H: Robert Armin in the Role of Gloucester

Figure 331. THE History of the tvvo Maids of More-clacke, VVith the life and simple maner of IOHN in the Hospitall. ROBERT ARMIN, seruant to the Kings most excellent Maiestie.

Robert Armin is listed in the First Folio as one of the company's "Principall Actors". Unlike Richard Burbage, for whom accounts exists of various roles he played, [303] the parts Armin was cast in are inferred rather than documented (with the exception of the doubled roles of Blue John and Tutch in *The History of the Two Maids of More-clacke* (1597)). [304] Scholars generally attribute the role of the Fool in *King Lear* to Armin primarily because of the latter's study of the distinction between "natural" and "artificial" fools; his musicality; his deep knowledge of popular culture, especially folk songs and folk wisdom; and his genius at improvisation. Armin's performance style was deeply grounded in the oral traditions of English entertainment. [305] Like his mentor Richart Tarlton, he drew upon a centuries-old lineage of live, interactive performance rather than just reciting scripted material and jokes. His style emphasized direct engagement with the audience, colloquial language, and a blend of high-wit and low-brow bawdiness that dates back to medieval minstrels. [305] [306] However, as William A. Ringler, Jr. writes, "The usual assumption that Armin played the Fool has no evidence of any sort to back it."

As noted, the Fool functions as Cordelia's doppelgänger. [See I,iv,86.S.D.,*"Enter Fool."*] In ancient Greece, a spirit double would be referred to as an eidolon (εἴδωλον), which translates to "image, idol, double, apparition, phantom, or ghost". Armin was 38 years of age when *King Lear* was performed in 1606. Thus, he was too old to be cast as Cordelia's "double." Moreover, he appears to have been regularly typecast by the King's Men in the parts of licentious and/or morally compromised characters, such as Pompey, a pimp, in *Measure for Measure*; Pandarus, a pimp, in *Troilus and Cressida* (a foil to Burbage's Thersites); Autolycus, a pimp in *The Winter's Tale;* Lavatch, the Countess of Roussillon's lascivious Fool in *All's Well That Ends Well;* Polonius, a *"fishmonger"* (F, 1212) in *Hamlet;* the prurient Fool in *Timon of Athens*; the intoxicated Porter in *Macbeth*; and the morally ambivalent parts of Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Touchstone in *As You Like It.*

"Extratextuality", a term coined by Julia Kristeva, refers to elements that exist outside of a given text but influence its meaning and interpretation. For example, when audiences see a familiar actor, their perception of the character the actor is playing can be influenced by the actor's previous roles. By typecasting Armin as Gloucester, Shakespeare's audience would automatically have had a preconceived notion of his character—an extratextual element of the original narrative lost to

modern readers. Gloucester's adultery is one of the primary drivers of the story, and it is crucial how he is initially perceived. The subject is treated lightly when Edmund is introduced to the Earl of Kent at start of play, and not addressed as a mortal sin until IV,v: "*Adultery? Thou shalt not dye: dye for Adultery?"* (F, 2557). Under Mosaic law, Gloucester is deserving of being put to death. Lear presupposes his blinding to be an act of Divine judgment for his having committed adultery. In the diatribe that follows, he evokes the scene in the Gospel of John where Jesus is confronted by a group of scribes and Pharisees who have brought a woman caught in adultery, demanding she be stoned according to the Law. Jesus responds with the famous line, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:3-9). In the final scene, Edgar tells Albany, "*The Gods are iust, and of our pleasant vices / Make instruments to plague vs: / The darke and vitious place where thee he got, / Cost him his eyes"* (F, 3131-34). Lear's exclamation *"Looke, looke, a Mouse"* (F, 2535-6) is the only evidence we have that Armin performed as an actor in *Lear*. It may be interpretated as an "intertextual" reference to Armin's role as Mouse in The King's Men 1606 production of *Mucedorus*. [See note IV,v,89, *"Look, look, a mouse."*]

The Stationers' Register entry from 1607 explicitly names Shakespeare as the sole author of *King Lear*, as do the quartos and Folio. There is no autograph or holograph manuscript; no original Promptbook. Nor is there is any direct documentary evidence—such as meeting notes or explicit records—of Shakespeare sitting down with fellow company members to develop scripts. Edward Gordon Craig appears to have believed that a significant portion of Shakespeare's texts, as they are known today, came from actors' improvisations."

> When asked how it was that no manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays have survived and answered by invoking what he thought was an utter instability of these texts precisely because they must have been inextricably collaborative: 'In my opinion the Dramas were created by Shakespeare in close collaboration with the Manager of the Theatre and with the actors; ... and I believe that a glimpse of the manuscript of the plays would reveal a mass of corrections, additions, and cuts made in several handwritings'. To this, Craig adds the idea that following the 'newly formed dramatic art' that was the *Commedia dell'Arte*, much of the Shakespearean texts as we know them are the fruit of the players' improvisations (1913-1914, 163-165). [308]

There is a strong and growing scholarly consensus that Shakespeare frequently collaborated with other playwrights. Modern studies have shifted the academic view from seeing Shakespeare as a solitary writer to a collaborative one within the Lord Chamberlain's Men/King's Men. [351] *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works: Modern Critical Edition* identifies up to 17 collaboratively written plays in the Shakespeare canon. The possibility and reality of Shakespeare's collaborations are a distinct and well-established field of academic study, most commonly referred to as Shakespeare attribution studies. This field investigates which plays Shakespeare wrote alone, which he co-authored, and to what extent he collaborated with other playwrights. It must not be confused with The Shakespeare authorship question.

> "[R]ecent research on the early modern theatre world has made clear the extent to which the Shakespearean stage was a collaborative one in which various factors shaped the plays created by playwrights such as Shakespeare, including the acting companies and actors for whom they wrote. In the case of Shakespeare and Burbage, the collaboration of writer and

> actor appears to have been an especially rich one, their mutual talents serving to inspire each other to a greatness and gift for complex, life-like characterisation not known before on the English stage the fruits of which we still get to enjoy, thanks to the preservation of Shakespeare's plays, and Burbage's roles within them, in the early quarto editions and the First Folio." [309]

Robert Armin's jestbook *Foole upon Foole, or Six Sortes of Sottes* was first published in 1600 under the pseudonym "Clonnico de Curtanio Snuff"—around the time he was made a sharer in the Lord's Chamberlain's Men. [310] (A revised version was later reissued in 1608 under his real name, entitled *A Nest of Ninnies*.) It implicitly addresses the relationship between nature and art—an explicit theme in *King Lear*. [See note IV,v,86., *"Nature's above Art in that respect."*] Art versus nature was significant point of philosophical discussion within the study of linguists and rhetoric in ancient Greece. Early studies debated whether language was natural or conventional, as in Plato's *Cratylus*. [311] [312]

A major theme in *Lear* is the nature of language and rhetoric. The play explores how language constructs reality, shapes identity, and can be used for persuasion, deception, or creating fictional worlds. Shakespeare employs naming and renaming as a linguistic device to reveal how subjective perception defines what is real, as when the titular character perceives a *"joint stool"* in III,vi (Q1, 2014.26) as Goneril; the carcass of a fox as Regan—"*And heres another whose warpt lookes proclaime, / What store her hart is made an"*(Q1, 20,14.27-28); and coins weeds into money,—*"No they cannot touch mee for coyning, I am the king (himselfe"* (Q1, 2530). Lear and the Fool converse with each, but they speak in different "languages"—one scripted and one seemingly ad-libbed or extempore. Lear's speeches are overwrought, excessively emotional and hyperbolic. His language abounds in elaborate conceits characteristic of Elizabethan poetry and euphuistic prose. The Fool speaks in the language of a commoner, using colloquialisms, proverb-heavy folk wisdom, riddle-like rhymes, and snatches of popular songs. It undermines and exposes the meaninglessness of Lear's elevated, theatrical, and delusional rhetoric. He comes across as "*a poore Player, / That struts and frets his houre vpon the Stage, / And then is heard no more. It is a Tale / Told by an Ideot, full of sound and fury / Signifying nothing"* (F, 2345-49). [See note III,ii,10., *"O Nuncle—"*]

Armin's first part for Shakespeare's company is thought to be Touchstone in *As You Like It*, a part characterized by quick wit and wordplay that gives the impression of ad-libbed brilliance. Touchstone's wits are juxtaposed with Jaques' (Burbage), who, as the pronunciation of his name suggests ["Jayks" (/ˈdʒeɪkz/], are shite. [313] ("Jakes" was 16th-century slang for an outhouse.) Jaques expresses a desire to be a "licensed fool", *"O that I were a foole, / I am ambitious for a motley coat"* (F, 1015-16), but he lacks any natural wit. It comes to him from higher education. Jaques' most famous recitation *"All the world's a stage"* (F, 1118-45) is a textbook example of an extended metaphor, popular with Elizabethan poets of the day, and written by Shakespeare as satire. [314] In *Twelfth Night, "A sentence is but a cheu'rill gloue to a good witte, how quickely the wrong side may be turn'd outward"* (F, 1224-26). Feste, like Touchstone and Lear's Fool, speaks in a colloquial style, marked by spontaneously sounding word-play, and the use of extemporaneous puns and songs. His language contrasts with Malvolio's (Burbage) whose speech is literal-minded

and humorless. It further contrasts with Orsino's poetic rhetoric, who's famous opening line "*IF Musicke be the food of Loue, play on,!"* (F, 5) reflects the artificial quality of his love for Olivia, and the metatheatrical form of the play.

Figure 333. Marginalia from Bodleian Library MS. Bodl. 264, fol. 97v. "You can find echoes of this minstrel's humour in shows like Mock the Week, situational comedies and slapstick," says Dr. James Wade. "The self-irony and making audiences the butt of the joke are still very characteristic of British stand-up comedy" (The Guardian.

Improvisation has been used as a technique for developing theatrical content for over 2,000 years. [314] Beginning with *Poetics* (Chpt 4), Aristotle tells us that the earliest forms of comedy were "mere improvisations" evolved from phallic processions. Roman comedy, including Plautus' plays, was influenced by genres known for improvisation, like Atellan Farce. [315] Improvisation was absolutely central to medieval minstrels. They relied on it to adapt to their audiences, create new musical parts over existing melodies, and perform with little to no written notation. [316] Medieval mystery and morality plays frequently blended scripted biblical or allegorical material with unscripted or improvised elements. They often mixed high-stakes religious drama with low-comedy, topical satire, and audience interaction to make didactic stories more entertaining and relatable. [317] There are numerous historical descriptions of medieval pageants that emphasize high spectacle, multi-level pageant wagons, and, most importantly, actors interacting directly with the audience in the streets. [318]

Improvisation is the defining feature of *Commedia dell'arte*. It is consistently described as a form that emphasized ensemble acting; the shaping of each show was inherently collaborative in the moment of performance. Performances were built around a shared *canovaccio* (scenario) rather than a fixed script. Over 1,000 short commedia scenarios survive from this period, giving us a glimpse into the working method of the masterful improvisers who fleshed out these plots live in front of their audiences. [319] [320] Improvisation was a basic a survival skill for *commedia dell'arte* troupes in the 16th and 17th centuries. It was not merely an artistic choice but a practical, economic necessity that enabled itinerant actors to manage the instability of their profession, cater to diverse audiences, and avoid local censorship. [321] Ser Maphio's troupe formally incorporated themselves as a *"fraternal compagnia"* in Padua on 25 February 1545, explicitly framing the company as a brotherly association bound in *"amor fraternal."* [322] *Commedia* troupes operated as profit-sharing collectives. Actors were not just employees but partners who held shares in the company and split the profits (and losses). They were crucial in establishing early modern commercial theater, setting precedents for sustainable business models. Their techniques influenced English theatre, particularly regarding professional, touring, and adaptable performance structures. [323]

Improvisation was an essential part of Richard Tarlton's whole shtick. His fame came from his ability to improvise doggerel verse based on themes suggested by the audience, a direct evolution of minstrel wit-matching. It was often sparked by audience suggestions during jigs—the humorous

song-and-dance afterpieces. Gabriel Harvey critiques the style of performance associated with Tarlton in *Pierce's Supererogation: Or a New Prayse of the Old Asse*. He uses Tarlton's reputation for irreverent, improvisational comedy as a pejorative, branding the literary style of his rival, Thomas Nashe, as "*Tarletonisme"* (p. 149). [324]

While it's difficult to confirm definitively, sources suggest a strong likelihood of a mentorship or at least a significant influence between Armin and Tarlton. An anecdote published in *Tarlton's Jests* (possibly apocryphal), describes how "How Tarlton made Armin his adopted sonne to succeed him." Armin is said to be "in league" with Tarlton's humor, and to have studied his comic techniques. Tarlton's study of natural fools and simpletons preceded Armin's more formal analytical study of natural and artificial fools in his own writings. [325] [326] In his writings and acting, Armin explored, and often blurred the lines, between "natural" and "artificial" fools—s*killed entertainers who feigned* foolishness to amuse and entertain for profit. The word "artificial" comes from the Latin "artificium", meaning a work of art, skill, or craft. "John Astington writes that one of Armin's predecessors once said that what he loved most about Armin was his 'ability to improvise in verse. . . as he himself was able to do.' (Astington, 231) Indeed, Astington even compares Armin's improvisation talent directly to the technique and skill needed in rap music and says about it that this 'aptitude for verbal wit and inventiveness can hardly be taught.'" [327]

James Burbage and Richard Tarlton were neighbors on Holywell Street in Shoreditch for approximately 12 years**,** from around 1576 when James built The Theatre, until Tarlton's death in 1588. Richard Burbage, who was then 21 and living at home, grew up in a theatrical environment, and certainly would have been acquainted, if not close, with his neighbor—the most famous clown of the Elizabethan Age. Richard's earliest surviving credit as a performer is the listing "R. Burbadge" in the printed plot of Tarlton's interlude *The Seven Deadly Sins*. He was about 15 years old at the time, and doubled in the roles of King Gorboduc in the *Envy* section and Tereus in the *Lechery* section. [328] When Armin was made a sharer of The Lord Chamberlain's Men circa 1599, he may have come on the recommendation of Tarlton. Will Kempe, whom he replaced, was widely known as a brilliant but difficult comic actor whose penchant for improvisation was causing significant friction with Shakespeare and other sharers. [329] By this time, the demand for new plays by the ensemble had increased greatly from its formation in 1594. Popularity growth necessitated six different plays weekly, straining actors and requiring constant new acquisitions to keep its repertory fresh, as audiences demanded variety amid competition from the Admiral's Men. [330]

It may be that Richard recognized Shakespeare's collaboration with Armin and himself could speed up production time. He appears to have felt a strong synergy between Armin's style and Shakespeare's and own as evidenced by the performance dynamics between Touchstone and Jaques, Feste and Malvolio, and the Fool and Lear—considered some of the most notable and analytically rich relationships in English theatre, and the philosophical and structural spines of these respective plays. What sense does it make for Burbage and Shakespeare to partner with a writer and performer widely recognized for his skill at ad-libbing, clever wordplay, and his broad knowledge of songs, ballads, and rhymes,—not use them to increase the volume and quality of

their productions? Skilled improvisers can instantly generate authentic characters, dialogue, and blocking. An actor with a cooperative nature can mitigate, and sometimes entirely eliminate, the disruptive, scene-killing problems caused by a self-serving actor. Moreover, as noted in Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*, Armin's knowledge of music, and how to use it as a storytelling device, would give the Lord's Chamberlain's Men an advantage over its competition. By 1600, music was a significant draw for audiences at the commercial theaters in England, and it helped pack the playhouses as much as plot, spectacle, or humor. [331]

Henslowe's Diary provides extensive documentation that Philip Henslowe frequently commissioned multiple authors to work together to speed up the writing process and meet the high demand for new plays. [332] [333] Almost two-thirds of the plays mentioned in Henslowe's accounts are collaborations, showing Henslowe's tendency to pair writers for efficiency and commercial success. [334] In the Prologue to *Volpone*, Jonson himself claims he composed the play in "five weeks fully pend [spent] ... from his own hand without a coadjutor, novice, journeyman, or tutor," as a retort to critics accusing him of slow writing. Jonson wrote in *Timber, or Discoveries* (p. 23) that Shakespeare's fellow players often boasted "as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line"—highlighting the clean copy of the Bard's work, and the speed and effortlessness with which he composed it. Parenthetically, when he writes in the Prologue to *Volpone*, "no eggs are broken, Nor quaking custards with fierce teeth affrighted" perhaps he is disparaging the lowbrow slapstick in *King Lear*, notably the banquet scene in I,iv where eggs are literally broken. By "quaking custards" he might be mocking the gullible, lower-class audience members who were easily frightened by the fox's carcass in III,vi with its fierce teeth. [See note III,vi,26-28., *"Her boat hath a leak."*]

According to Henslowe, a team of four or five writers could produce a new play in as little as two weeks. If James I had commissioned the King's Men to stage a *new* play honoring Saint Stephen—one of the first deacons tasked with caring for the poor—the success of the production may have hinged on the collaborative nature of the ensemble. [335] There would not have been time for Shakespeare to write the play solo. The production process would have depended on improvisation and the collective creativity of the ensemble. [336] Team work. The sharers had to act as a unified, flexible body to meet the deadline. It seems unlikely that *King Lear* was dictated by a rigid, pre-set script or Shakespeare's vision. It emerged through the combined input of *everyone* involved.

Many of the scenes in *Lear* feel as though they were improvised by the actors in rehearsal, most notably I,v; III,vi and IV,v. These scenes in particular function dramatically to subvert conventions of rhetoric or logos [λόγος]. This may have been accomplished by means of "rehearsed improvisation" which blends the structure needed to tackle complex, anti-logical dialogue with the spontaneity required to make that subversion feel authentic and present, rather than merely scripted. It is built around planned scenarios and beats—"the smallest unit of dramatic action, marking a moment where a character's objective, tactic, or emotion shifts." [337] As a phrase, "rehearsed improvisation" is modern, but the phenomenon it describes—improvising within a rehearsed framework—is not. Both Atellan Farce and *Commedia dell'arte* shared a foundational reliance on scenario outlines rather than full scripts. In contemporary theatre and improv practice, "rehearsed

improvisation" usually refers to scenes built on "pre-worked structures, scenarios, or games that are practiced repeatedly, yet whose specific dialogue and actions are still invented in the moment." [338] By appearing spontaneous while being structurally planned, this technique allows performers to dismantle audience expectations, disrupt logical flow, and replace formal dialogue with chaotic, emotional, or absurd interactions. [339]

Student readers of *Lear* likely recognize "rehearsed improvisation" from movies and television, as opposed to theatrical improv. In cinema, film directors, such as Robert Altman, was known for his collaborative approach and embrace of improvisation, allowing actors significant creative freedom and character input. His musical comedy drama movie *Nashville* is a metadrama that deliberately calls attention to its own fictional nature in a way that emphasizes the artificiality of its world. "Altman rejected any semblance of a tight and traditional narrative and shaped a genuine cinematic rarity in the process: a film that is truly a living, breathing entity." [340] In the 21st century, Mike Leigh, Christopher Guest, and Joe Swanberg utilize improvisation as a significant part of their screenwriting process, either by incorporating it into the script development stage or encouraging spontaneous contributions from actors on set. American TV shows like *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and *Reno 911!* use a "retroscripting" method. Actors are given a detailed plot outline (scenario, locations, and goals) but must improvise the actual dialogue in the moment, often after several "practice" takes to find the best jokes. The popular British sitcoms *The Thick of It* and *Outnumbered* use a mix of scripted structure and improvised dialogue to achieve a realistic, chaotic tone. Improvisation was foundational to medieval and Renaissance music, arguably even more so than in modern genres, like jazz, rock and roll, and rap. [See Appendix F: The Incidental Music in *King Lear*.]

Appendix I: Main Entrance at The Globe

Architectural plans or blueprints for the Globe have yet to be found. While there is some documentary and archaeological evidence of its interior, [341] many key design elements remain conjectural, including the main spectator entrance. Its placement is based on architectural inference from surviving evidence, not an exact contemporary plan. The back wall of the Globe's stage, known as the "tiring-house" (de Witt identifies it as the *"Aedes mimorum"*), was a permanent architectural feature. It was the Elizabethan equivalent of the *scaenae frons* of Roman theaters, where two *portae hospitales* flanked the much larger valva regia. Spectators in Roman theaters entered through the *aditus maximi*, which were typically built between the *cavea* and the *scaena*, one on either side of the *orchestra*; corresponding to the *parodos* in Greek theatre. At the Globe, I believe these important entrances were built on either side of the so-called "Aedes mimorum" as in their classical models. They served two main functions: 1) as the main entrance for the audience to enter the theatre, and 2) as an entrance for actors when the yard was made part of the performing space.

In his influential work on Elizabethan theatre, C. Walter Hodges notes that the original Globe had two main entrance doors. "Sir Ralph Winwood, in a contemporary letter in which he referred to the burning-down of that building remarked that 'it was a great marvaile … that the people had so little harm, having but two narrow doors to get out.' … If the doors were narrow, as Sir Ralph Winwood says, it would be reasonable to assume that there were two public doors, one being used for entrance, but both being flung open at the end of the show. And if there were two doors they would most likely have been placed not facing but flanking the stage and opposite to each other. In some of the black-and-white sketches in this book, I have suggested this arrangement for what it is worth; and I think it is at least worth bearing in mind." (*The Globe Restored*, p.27). Nobody was killed or seriously injured in the conflagration. In modern times, bottlenecking was a significant factor in the high death tolls of the Cocoanut Grove, Station Nightclub, Ghost Ship, and Kiss nightclub fires.

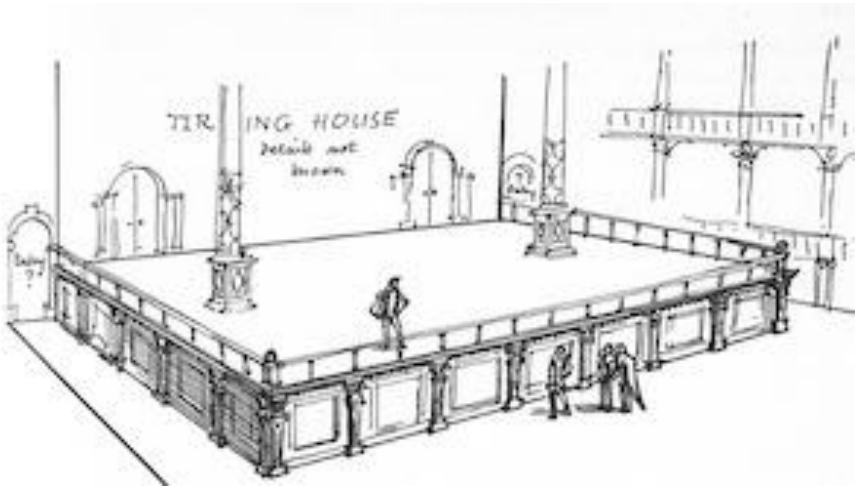


Figure 334. In The Globe Restored, C. Walter Hodges proposed that two doors on ground level of the Globe may have flanked either side of the tiring-hoise and platform.

Winwood describes the doors as "narrow", but in relation to what? The gateway to the medieval London Bridge, which survived until the Great Fire of London in 1666, was approximately 6.1-7.3 meters in width while with the doors to the medieval St Bartholomew's Gatehouse measure about 1 meter in width and 2.5 in height. The aditus maximi at Palmyra is 3.5 meters. For purposes of staging, the *aditus maximi* at the Globe must have been large enough to allow a horseback rider to enter the yard. In *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* p.117, "**Horses**" are called for in three stage directions. *"Dalua carried vpon a horse couered with blacke: Soldiers after, tray∫ling their Pykes"* (*A Larum for London*); "*Enter drum (beating before) a Skiminton, and his wife on a horfe"* (*The Witches of Lancafhire*, IV,i); *"Enter a spruce courtier [on] horseback"* and *"Exit servant with horse"* (*Richard II: Thomas of Woodstpock*, III.ii, pp, 28,29).

Large marches and processions with "drum and colors" were common. While there is no precise record of the distance between the two stage doors at the Swan theatre, historical analysis based on the 1596 drawing by de Witt suggests that a march from door to door would be approximately distance of 14 feet. The original 1600 building contract for the Fortune Theatre's platform stage was noted to be 43 feet wide and 27.5 feet deep. Were a procession to proceed around the "platform", they would march a distance of approximately 98 feet, creating more spectacle and the

opportunity for dramatic musical intermezzi, as the one performed in in *King Lear* separating Acts IV and V. The stage direction in *Julius Caesar*, *"Enter Lucius, Iachimo, and the Romane Army at one doore: and the Britaine Army at another* (F, 2892) makes more sense if the armies enter through the main entranceways into the yard. *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* p.140, cites scores of directions calling for **march, marching** (p. 140) usually with large properties like flags ensigns or standards. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, might not Anthony been carried in on a litter through the aditis maximi lifted *"aloft"* (F, 2996) to*"Cleopatra, and her Maides"* on the platform? This is the most dramatic scene in the play, and the best place to stage it would be downstage. The *"Monument"* (F,3627), alluded to in the text could be a metaphor for the platform stage, as it is when Lear says, "*This' a good block*." (F, 2625). [See note IV,v,181.,*"block."*]

Appendix J: A Skinning House

There are no stage directions indicating the nature and function of the building Gloucester takes Lear and his companions to in III,vi (scene 13 in quartos). Rowe identifies the location as *"A Chamber."* In 1733, Lewis Theobald, called "the first Shakespeare scholar" [184] identified it as *"A Chamber, in a Farm-house."* In *The Arden Shakespeare King Lear* edited in 1957 by Kenneth Muir, it is identified as "*A Chamber in a Farmhouse adjoining the Castle* (p. 122). More recently editors like R.A Foakes and Stanley Wells discontinued the practice of adding scene locations, presumably so as not to make a judgment about the narrative mode of Shakespeare's storytelling. The omission of directions in the scene inevitably shifts the reader's focus from Lear's farcical external actions to his internal psychology. The crucial tension between what he is imagining and what the audience is seeing is lost, resulting in a completely different tone and thematic meaning. Like the narrative mode of Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote*, the narrative mode of *King Lear* is primarily external, but uses a highly complex, multi-layered framework.

Up until the mid-20th century, the concept of a "discovery space" at the Globe wasn't part of scholarly understanding. The theory that such a space existed is credited to Richard Hosley in his 1959 article "The Discovery-space in Shakespeare's Globe." Today, a large curtained opening in the center of the tiring-house is considered one of the defining features of the Elizabethan stage. It mimicked the valva regia of Roman design. Because it sits on the centerline, it draws the audience's direct line of sight and allows a performer to move directly downstage toward the crowd, making it highly dramatic and authoritative. Its size and width accommodated majestic grand entries, such as *Enter King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Gonerill, Regan*, *Cordelia, and attendants* (F, 37-8), and allowed stagehands to bring out bulky props like banquet tables and chairs. On occasion, actors utilized its wide frame to uncover dramatic scenic reveals "ranging from the simple to the complex." [See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **discover**, pp. 69-70.] While there is not a stage direction in the quartos or Folio indicating that a "discovery" is made in III,vi, Lear tells Kent to *"draw the Curtaines"* (F, 2041). The call for a "curtain" can indicate that a scene had been discovered. [185] [See *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*, **curtain**, pp.62-3.] Prospero "*discouers Ferdinand and Miranda, playing at Chesse*" in *The Tempest* (F, 2141-2) or *"Here the Curtaines draw, there is discovered Iupiter dandling Ganimed upon his knee, and Mercury lying asleep."* in Marlowe's *Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* (ca. 1587-93).

Because Elizabethan and Jacobean theatres used a thrust stage with minimal scenery and few props, Shakespeare could not rely on visual sets to show where a scene took place. Instead, he deliberately used rich, descriptive language and vivid imagery to verbally "paint" the setting, mood, and action in the audience's mind. In III,vi the visceral imagery of carcasses, pelts, and maggots summons the macabre aura of a traditional skinning house—a specialized outbuilding on hunting properties specifically equipped to field dress, skin, hang, and butcher wild game. [485] Skinning houses were usually kept on the outskirts of an estate due to the intense odor of decaying

animals, which is in keeping with the story: Gloucester finds Lear before a "hovel" Edgar is using as a hideout—presumably a remote area of the property purposed for hunting.

The trial of Goneril and Regan begins after Lear exclaims, "*To haue a thousand with red burning spits Come hizzing in vpon 'em"* (F, 1013-14). The line alludes to the practice of forcing foxes out of their holds by fire. This is a central metaphor that the playwright revisits in the final scene when Lear and Cordelia are being taken away to prison, "*He that parts vs, shall bring a Brand from Heauen, / And fire vs hence, like Foxes"* (F, 2964-65). Uta Hagen taught that when a character's objective or emotion changes, it cannot come out of nowhere. It must be triggered by a specific line, a physical action, or a shift in the environment that the actor genuinely responds to in the moment. Her method is about truthful responsiveness. [482]

Video 24. Professional fur handling, Part 1, how to skin a red fox. (Video not suitable for children and animal lovers.)

In Practical Aesthetics, a straightforward, action-based acting technique developed by playwright David Mamet and actor William H. Macy, actors are taught to discover a scene's tone (and meaning) primarily through text-centered script analysis. In *King Lear*, farce, dramatic irony and metatheatrical devices form the backbone of the play's narrative structure. The focalization is "zero" or "unrestricted". Lear's "madness" constitutes an imaginative superstructure that re-signifies the material world. In my version of the story, the king draws open the "curtains" and "discovers" the carcass of a fox, hung by its hind legs for pelting, along with flayed hides of "polecats, and all Kindes of vermin." [186] He strikes the tethers with his sword and destroys the scene, as when Don Quixote demolishes Master Peter's Puppet Show believing the puppets are real.

Figure 191. Master Peter's Puppet Show. Illustrator not credited.

To place the scene in its historical context, "Hunting comes out of late classical culture, and is very important for making aristocratic manhood. It's a form of military training, teaching equestrianism, archery, use of weapons, courage, patience, discipline, essential things for aristocrats that give them this new identity as the ruling class of the West." (Eric J. Goldberg, *In the Manner of the Franks: Hunting, Kingship, and Masculinity in Early Medieval Europe.* 2020.) Lear himself returns to Goneril's castle from hunting in I,iv. [See note I,iii,8, "*hunting."*] Henry VIII was an enthusiastic huntsman whose "interest in hunting emerged not only because of personal choice, but because it was expected of him as gentleman and as king but also because it was essential in the projection of his image as a renaissance prince." (James Williams, "Hunting and the Royal Image of Henry VIII"). Queen Elizabethan I also loved to hunt. "I may not be a lion, but I am a

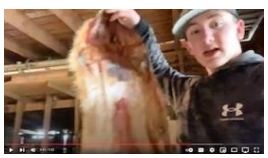
lion's cub, and I have a lion's heart," she is ubiquitously quoted as saying. "On horseback, she would hunt deers and stags with her courtiers, and when the unfortunate animal was caught, she would be invited to cut its throat. …. The Elizabethans had no concept of animal cruelty, and enjoyed a whole manner of violent animal sports, such as bear baiting, cock-fighting, and dog fighting." (Queen Elizabeth l: Pastimes). [See Figure 178.] In 1589 she renovated a building commissioned by her father from which to view the deer chase at Chingford. The structure exists today. It functions as a museum called Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge.

Figure 178. Queen Elizabeth l preparing to slit the throat of a stag, from Turberville, 'Noble Art of Venerie', 1575.

In 1532 Henry passed "The Preservation of Grain Act". The law was "strengthened by Elizabeth in 1566, [who] made it compulsory for every man, woman and child to kill as many creatures as possible that appeared on an official list of 'vermin'". A bounty was placed on each creature, ranging from a penny for the head of a kite or a raven to 12 pence for a badger or a fox. The act priced the head of a hedgehog at four pennies - four times that of a polecat, wild cat, stoat or weasel" (Amelia Hill, "Tudors drove wildlife to the brink"). According to English hunting authority David C. Itzkowitz,

> "The practice of hunting foxes for sport really dates from the eighteenth century. Before that time foxes were considered vermin, and an Elizabethan law provided for a bounty to be paid by the churchwardens for the carcasses of dead foxes. It is unlikely therefore, that a Jacobean hunting lodge would contain fox skins for any reasons other than their use as pelts or, perhaps, to keep a rough count of the number of vermin killed. As the description of Hastings hunting lodge suggests, a lodge would, in fact, have bits of all sorts of animal remains lying about. King James I himself was an avid huntsman and delighted in keeping up the medieval tradition of plunging his arms up to the elbow into the carcass of a freshly killed stag and smearing his courtiers with gore. The gamier the lodge, therefore, the more likely it is to be historically accurate" (Personal correspondence from Sept 20, 1978).

"Skinning sheds" are still in common use by hunters here in the United States. In the Netflix docuseries *Murdaugh Murders:* A Southern Scandal (2023), Paul Murdaugh is pictured flaying a hog on a Christmas card at his family's hunting lodge in a "skinning shed". "The Murdaugh family also had a lot of dogs present at the property because Paul used to go hog hunting. The property had skinning sheds and multiple ponds." (Aayush Sharma). For anybody interested, there are many videos about skinning sheds on YouTube, such as Video 25 by squirrelyoutdoors:



Video 25. "Tour of my skinning shed."

The imagery in III,vi closely mirrors the Earl of Shaftesbury's account of Woodlands Manor—

residence of the eccentric sportsman Henry Hastings—implying Shakespeare may have been acquainted with him, and may have been his guest at Woodlands Manor.

> "The great hall [was] strewed with marrow bones, full of hawks' perches, hounds, spaniels and terriers, the upper side of the hall was hung with fox-skins of this and last years' skinning, here and there a polecat intermixed, guns and keepers' and hunts-men's poles in abundance." (Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, *Fragment of Autobiography*, c. 1675, p. 23.)

Figure 179. Postcard of Woodlands Manor, Mere, Wiltshire, England.

No definitive records of Shakespeare's whereabouts during his "lost years" (1585–1592) have been found, leaving scholars to look for echoes of his possible activities and locations within his plays and poems. [486] These strongly point to the West Country, loosely defined area within South West England. [See note II,ii, 8., *"Tisbury Pinfold."*] Hastings was one of the local characters of this region, known by aristocrats and members of the gentry as a wildly eccentric, larger-than-life country sportsman and a prime example of stubborn, old-school English eccentricity. He had a reputation for his obsession with hunting, his generous hospitality, his libertine, "greenwood" lifestyle, his masculine pride, and fiery, feudal temper—much like the character of King Lear. Shakespeare and Hastings were born three years apart, though the latter out-lived him by nearly 40 more. (Shakespeare died at 52, Hastings 89.) Records indicate that James I knew Hastings personally, as the former conveyed Puddletown Manor in Dorset to him in 1611 and 1614. [See Figure 181.] Through his marriage to Dorothy Willoughby in 1587, second daughter and coheiress of Sir Francis Willoughby, he acquired Woodlands Park, near Horton, Dorset during Shakespeare's "lost years." [See Jonathan Law, "Henry Hastings, the Wodwo of Dorset".]

Figure 180. Henry Hastings (c. 1561–15 October 1650), "was the typical country squire of the time, 'well-natured, but soon angry.' He always dressed in green, and keeping all sorts of hounds and hawks, devoted himself to hunting. His hall was hung with sporting trophies, while favorite dogs and cats occupied every corner." (Wiki)

Had King James I been to Woodlands Manor and seen "the great hall"? Emily Cole, author of "The State Apartment in the Jacobean Country House, 1603-1625", informed me that there is no evidence in the Royal Works account that James travelled as far as Ilsington/Puddletown, though "he stayed at [Hastings'] house in Leicester ('Lord's Place') on 18-21 August 1612, 18-19 August 1614 and 15-16 August 1616, as part of royal progresses, and was also entertained by Hastings at Ashby-de-la-Zouche on 1-2 September 1617, on his return journey south from Scotland (the King made a Scottish progress in 1617). And the King would always have been keen to see hunting lodges." (June, 2021.) She also notes that detailed academic research into buildings associated

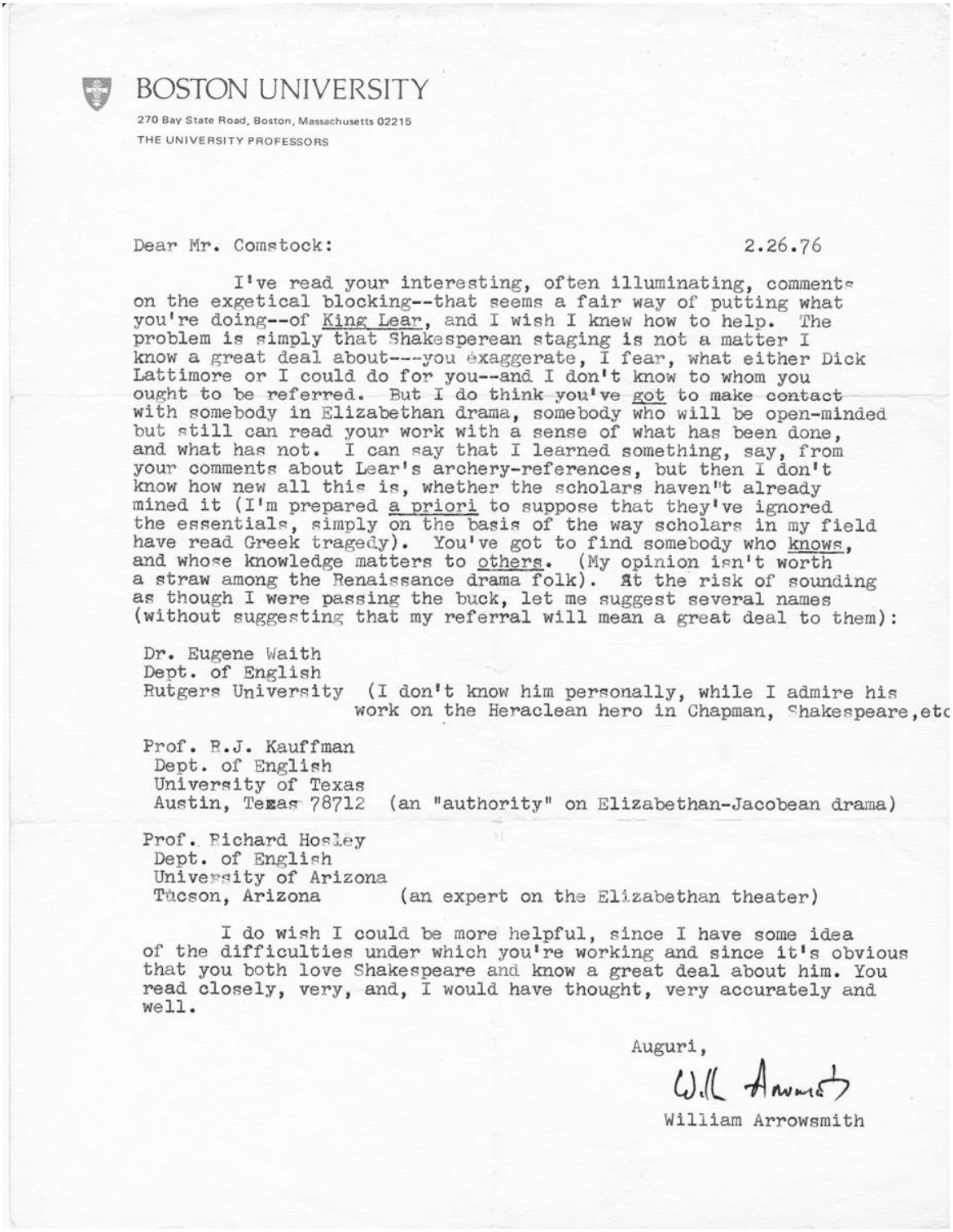
with the hunt has not been undertaken, such as where animals were hanged and skinned: "as to hunting lodges and other buildings used for the hunt, I'm afraid there has been very little work done. The fact that this is a bit of an academic 'gap' has in fact been raised by myself and other colleagues – for instance, as part of the work we undertook on *Apethorpe*: The Story of an English Country House, 2016."

In his 1932 book *The Essential Shakespeare,* John Dover Wilson, advanced the idea that during his lost years Shakespeare tutored Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton at Titchfield Abbey, the Southampton family's estate. Ken Groves also connects Shakespeare to Wriothesley, by arguing that Shakespeare worked as a schoolmaster/tutor at Titchfield (the Earl's family estate) between 1589–1592, where he formed a close friendship with the young Earl. [487] [488] It is a commonly held critical theory that Wriothesley's known love of hunting and his reputation for youthful, "androgynous beauty" [188] were mirrored and allegorized in the character of Adonis in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* (1593). Based on the available biographical records of Wriothesley, there is no evidence of his ever being a guest of Hastings' at Woodland Manor or that he hunted with him as a youth in Dorset. In later years, the two men owned or leased properties in the Strand in London. Their London townhouses were situated in the same elite, aristocratic hub of the city. The latter was the son of George Hastings 4th Earl of Huntingdon, and the nephew of Henry Hastings 3rd Earl of Huntingdon, "considered by some as a potential successor to Elizabeth I."

> "It has become commonplace to say that *Lear* was inspired in some part by the succession crisis that loomed in the last years of Elizabeth I. As direct descendants of the Duke of Clarence (Malmsey butt guy) and hence of John of Gaunt, the Hastings family stood high in the line of succession and hence featured quite prominently in the fevered discussion of the times. When Elizabeth fell ill in the 1590s, there was some talk of making the 3rd Earl Huntingdon her successor, particularly among those who shared his Puritan views. Similarly, when Elizabeth was near death there were important people who favoured the young 6th Earl (Henry's nephew) over James of Scotland. Indeed, Henry Hastings was almost certainly aware that there were some Yorkists who regarded his uncle, his father, his older brother, and his nephew as the rightful kings of England (on the premise that Edward IV was illegitimate). Perhaps it is no surprise that he devoted himself to an obscure and reclusive life!
>
> On a point of detail, I am fairly sure that the house described by Shaftesbury is not Ilsington Manor but Woodlands, some miles to the NE, which was where Hastings actually lived. Also, this was not a "hunting lodge" but rather the main residence of a nobleman that Hastings treated as if it were a hunting lodge – hence the element of oddity and surprise in Shaftesbury's description. (Personal communication with Jonathan Law, June, 2021).

Figure 181. Ilsington House (Puddletown Manor

Appendix K: Correspondence with Dr. William Arrowsmith



BOSTON UNIVERSITY
270 Bay State Road, Boston, Massachusetts 02215
THE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Dear Mr. Comstock: 2.26.76

I've read your interesting, often illuminating, comments on the exgetical blocking--that seems a fair way of putting what you're doing--of King Lear, and I wish I knew how to help. The problem is simply that Shakesperean staging is not a matter I know a great deal about---you exaggerate, I fear, what either Dick Lattimore or I could do for you--and I don't know to whom you ought to be referred. But I do think you've got to make contact with somebody in Elizabethan drama, somebody who will be open-minded but still can read your work with a sense of what has been done, and what has not. I can say that I learned something, say, from your comments about Lear's archery-references, but then I don't know how new all this is, whether the scholars haven't already mined it (I'm prepared a priori to suppose that they've ignored the essentials, simply on the basis of the way scholars in my field have read Greek tragedy). You've got to find somebody who knows, and whose knowledge matters to others. (My opinion isn't worth a straw among the Renaissance drama folk). At the risk of sounding as though I were passing the buck, let me suggest several names (without suggesting that my referral will mean a great deal to them):

Dr. Eugene Waith
Dept. of English
Rutgers University (I don't know him personally, while I admire his work on the Heraclean hero in Chapman, Shakespeare, etc

Prof. R.J. Kauffman
Dept. of English
University of Texas
Austin, Texas 78712 (an "authority" on Elizabethan-Jacobean drama)

Prof. Richard Hosley
Dept. of English
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona (an expert on the Elizabethan theater)

I do wish I could be more helpful, since I have some idea of the difficulties under which you're working and since it's obvious that you both love Shakespeare and know a great deal about him. You read closely, very, and, I would have thought, very accurately and well.

Auguri,

W.H. Arrowsmith

William Arrowsmith

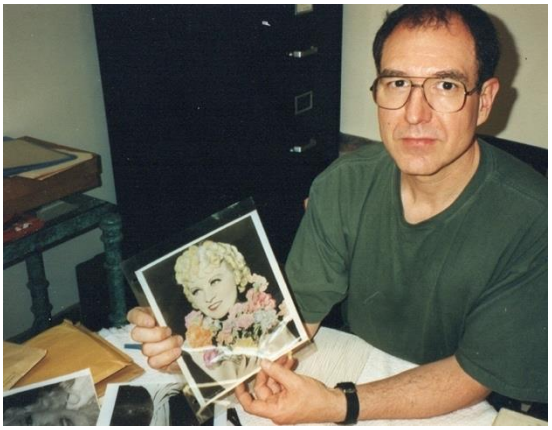
Appendix L: Email from Paul Werstine

> On May 14, 2019, at 5:23 PM, Paul Werstine <werstine@uwo.ca> wrote:
>
> Dear Bill Comstock,
> I've read the piece you sent me, thanks; but I'm not sure how much good I can be to you. It's not clear to me that when you speak of King Lear you are conceiving of it as a performance, or a film, or an edition, or perhaps all three.
>
> For example, when you discuss 3.6, you argue it is set in a hunting lodge. Since editions have not noted fictional scene locations for a long time, here you do not seem to have in mind an edition; it would be hard to realize this location on the stage with all the gore you suppose, so I gather that here you may have in mind a filmic rendering of the play. Am I right? I can say that, from working with Richard Knowles on his Variorum edition of King Lear for twenty years, no editor from the earlier centuries has thought a hunting lodge the location of 3.6. Yours is a highly original idea.
>
> Again I'm not aware that in 4.6, when Lear says "There's money for thee," any editor before you has suggested Lear gives Gloucester weeds as money. Here you are presenting King Lear as an edition with commentary notes.
>
> The identification of the giant and the mouse with Gloucester is also, as far as I can tell, yours alone. No one else has commented on the giant, and those who talk of the mouse divide between thinking Lear sees an actual mouse and thinking the mouse a figment of Lear's deranged imagination.
>
> In an edition of 1910, S.E. Goggin in his commentary suggested that Goneril gives Edmund a glove or jewel.
>
> As we both know, reassigning speeches is not infrequent in editions, but an intervention that has Regan, in killing the servant who seeks to oppose Cornwall, inadvertently cause Cornwall to be killed, and has Regan, rather than Cornwall, remove Gloucester's second eye is unusual, indeed unprecedented in the editorial tradition, although I can imagine that perhaps a director might like such a staging. Likewise the transposition of most of one of Albany's speeches from 5.3.
>
> I'm not sure we can know that the text as it's come down to us is the one that was played only at the Globe and without intervals between the acts, such as were observed at the Blackfriars. After all, the F text is divided into acts.
>
> Your aversion to 5.2 has a long history. Charles Kean (1858), Edwin Booth (1878), Henry Irving (1892), and even John Houseman as late as 1950 all cut it in productions.
>
> Hope this helps. I'm sorry not to have more to say in response.
>
> All best wishes,
> P
> aul Werstine

About William Barr Comstock

William Barr Comstock ("Wild Bill"), is a renowned digital photographer in the bodybuilding and fitness industry. He began his work as a still photographer shortly after his arrival in Southern California in 2000 shooting mega-promoter Jon Lindsay's NPC regional bodybuilding contests for the now defunct graphicmuscle.com, a bodybuilding website he co-founded with the legendary Mickey Hargitay. The site was subsumed by IRONMAN MAGAZINE, where Comstock worked closely with Publisher/photographer John Balik and journalist/celebrity emcee Lonnie Teper in providing contest coverage. He later worked with MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT MAGAZINE and FLEX Magazine. Additionally, Comstock contributed to RX MUSCLE. His professional activities frequently centered around Gold's Gym in Venice, an iconic location in bodybuilding culture often referred to as "The Mecca" of the sport. This positioning allowed him to develop relationships with elite athletes such as Chris Cormier, Charles Glass, Kai Greene, Dexter Jackson, Cody Montgomery, Lee Priest, Shawn Ray, Shawn Rhoden, Hidetada Yamagishi, and many other IFBB pros and top amateurs. His pics present a raw and authentic portrayal of people and event training regimens without the use of artificial lights, fake weights, and contrived poses for the camera.

Comstock was born in 1951, and raised in a prominent family of academics. His great grandfather was John Dewey, "a major voice of progressive education and liberalism." His grandfather's brother, Daniel Frost Comstock, was a member of the faculty at MIT in theoretical physics, and invented Technicolor. He given the middle name Barr after Stringfellow Barr (his father's favorite cousin). Barr was a historian, author, and president of St. John's College where he, together with Scott Buchanan, instituted the *Great Books* curriculum. His maternal grandmother was the Headmistress at Deerfield Academy, one of the oldest prep schools in the country. His father, Alex Barr Comstock (who was teased as a child for being a "smart aleck") chose to go by his middle name. He was sent to Browne & Nichols School, and went on to Harvard University where he graduated in 1940 with John F. Kennedy. During the war, he served as a Lieutenant in the US Navy.



Comstock was sent to elite private schools: St. Edmund's Academy in Pittsburgh, and the North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka. He made a poor scholar, however, having suffered a brain injury as a 4 year old that resulted in aphasia, a language disorder that makes it difficult to communicate through speech. He recalls being sent to the hall every day in the 4th grade for

disruptive behavior. He says the only reason he was not kicked out of North Shore was because the Headmaster, Nathaniel French, was a family relation. Eventually, he was expelled in 1968 for hooliganism, and sent to New Trier West, a public school, where he graduated the following year. His SAT and ACT scores were so low that he was not accepted into a university.

In 1970, Comstock read *King Lear* for the first time. He had consumed a quart of gin, and was struck by a vision of the play that looked nothing like the one he was reading in *Shakespeare The Complete Works*, edited by G. B. Harrison. He believed he had been contacted by Shakespeare himself, and sent on a divine mission to restore the play back to its original form. Comstock moved to New York City in 1976, and worked with Michael Moriarty's Shakespeare Company, "Potter's Field." By March 22, 1979, he was habitually drunk, and taken to AA. His sponsor made it a condition that he never talk about *King Lear*. After a few years of constantly attending meetings, he enrolled at Fordham College at Lincoln Center in 1982 as an adult student, and then transferred to NYU | Tisch School of the Arts.

From 1990-92, Comstock produced *Channel 69* with Linda Simpson, a weekly television series on Manhattan Cable Television featuring live drag shows from the Pyramid Club. In the fall of 1992, he produced the lesbian dance festival *Turn Out*, which Jennifer Dunning cited in *The New York Times* as one of the year's best dance events. It was in that year that he shot the video *Soup of Evening*, a graphic depiction of the horror of AIDS in NYC in the early 90s. The video portrays a bleak and absurdist view of human existence that is mitigated only by the kindness of other people and a Form of Platonic Beauty and Goodness.

A few years later he produced *Sons of Hercules* with MGM Archivist John Kirk. It was presented at gay film festivals around the world. "*These mincing musclequeens might as well be Hercules' daughters!"* wrote Gary Morris at the Bright Lights Film Journal. For Comstock, it was a short from the drag queens at the Pyramid to the line-up of musclemen at the Mr. Olympia. What it means to be a man is the central theme of his work including *King Lear*, where he posits that Lear's fatal flaw or hamartia is his masculine pride. Comstock currently resides in Hollywood, and has been clean and sober since March 22, 1979.