

**John Lyly's**  
***Complete Plays:***  
**Retellings**

**David Bruce**

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**Dedicated to Carl Eugene Bruce and Josephine Saturday Bruce**

**My father, Carl Eugene Bruce, died on 24 October 2013. He used to work for Ohio Power, and at one time, his job was to shut off the electricity of people who had not paid their bills. He sometimes would find a home with an impoverished mother and some children. Instead of shutting off their electricity, he would tell the mother that she needed to pay her bill or soon her electricity would be shut off. He would write on a form that no one was home when he stopped by because if no one was home he did not have to shut off their electricity.**

**The best good deed that anyone ever did for my father occurred after a storm that knocked down many power lines. He and other linemen worked long hours and got wet and cold. Their feet were freezing because water got into their boots and soaked their socks. Fortunately, a kind woman gave my father and the other linemen dry socks to wear.**

**My mother, Josephine Saturday Bruce, died on 14 June 2003. She used to work at a store that sold clothing. One day, an impoverished mother with a baby clothed in rags walked into the store and started shoplifting in an interesting way: The mother took the rags off her baby and dressed the infant in new clothing. My mother knew that this mother could**

**not afford to buy the clothing, but she helped the mother dress her baby and then she watched as the mother walked out of the store without paying.**

**My mother and my father both died at 7:40 p.m.**



# CAMPASPE

## CAST OF CHARACTERS (CAMPASPE)

*Alexander*, King of Macedon. Conqueror of Greece. He is known in history as Alexander the Great.

*Page* to Alexander.

*Melippus*, Chamberlain to Alexander.

*Hephestion*, his General.

### ALEXANDER'S WARRIORS:

*Clitus*, an officer.

*Parmenio*, an officer.

*Milectus*, a soldier.

*Phrygius*, a soldier.

### PHILOSOPHERS AND THEIR SERVANTS:

*Plato*.

*Granichus*, Servant to Plato.

*Aristotle*.

*Diogenes*, Cynic philosopher.

*Manes*, Servant to Diogenes.

*Chrysippus*, Stoic philosopher.

*Crates*.

*Cleanthes*, Stoic philosopher.

*Anaxarchus*.

*Apelles*, a Painter.

*Psyllus*, Servant to Apelles.

*Crysus*, a beggar.

*Solinus*, a citizen of Athens.

*Sylvius*, a citizen of Athens.

*Perim*, Son to Sylvius.

*Milo*, Son to Sylvius.

*Trico*, Son to Sylvius.

*Lais*, a Courtesan, aka prostitute.

**CAMPASPE**, a female Theban Captive.

**Timoclea**, a female Theban Captive.

Citizens of Athens, other captive women, etc.

**SCENE:** Athens, Greece.

**TIME:** The story begins immediately after the Macedonians' defeat of Thebes in 335 B.C.E.

**NOTES:**

In this society, a person of higher rank would use "thou," "thee," "thine," and "thy" when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use "you" and "your" when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word "wench" at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word "fair" can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, good-looking.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "manners" as "A person's habitual behaviour or conduct; morals." This meaning is now obsolete.

In Lyly's play, the word "counterfeit" often means a painting.

In Lyly's play, the phrase "to shadow" often means "to paint."

"Sirrah" was a title used to address someone of a social rank inferior to the speaker. Friends, however, could use it to refer to each other, and fathers could call their sons "sirrah."

Oedipus, famous protagonist of a play by Sophocles, came from Thebes, as did his daughter Antigone, famous protagonist of another play by Sophocles.

Statius' *Thebaid* is an epic poem about Thebes. It tells of the conflict between the sons of Oedipus: Polynices and Eteocles.

Cynics believed that lives should be lived in accordance with virtue, which is the end of life. Virtue is much more important than pleasure.

Stoics pursued happiness based in virtue.

The Cynics and the Stoics both believed in virtuous conduct.

Diogenes of Sinope was a Cynic. He appears in Lyly's play.

The Cynics took as their symbol dogs, and so Diogenes is sometimes called Diogenes the Dog. The name "dog" is also a comment on the way he sometimes behaved toward others.

Cleanthes and Chrysippus were Stoics. They appear in Lyly's play.

Much later than the events of Lyly's play, in Roman times, Cicero, Seneca, and Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius were Stoics.

John Lyly is writing drama, not history. Dramatists frequently take liberties with historical facts.

## CHAPTER 1 (CAMPASPE)

### — 1.1 —

Clitus and Parmenio, two generals in Alexander the Great's army, stood outside the walls of Athens, Greece. Alexander's Macedonian army had just defeated the city of Thebes in 335 B.C.E. Now Alexander ruled Greece.

Clitus said, "Parmenio, I cannot tell which quality I should more commend in Alexander's victories: courage or courtesy. In his courage he has a resolution without fear, and in his courtesy he has a liberality — a generosity — above custom.

"Thebes has been razed, and the people have not been tortured as if on a rack; towers have been thrown down, and bodies have not been thrust aside. This has been a conquest without conflict, and a cruel war in a mild peace."

Actually, in history Alexander had been harsh in his treatment of Thebes. His soldiers killed six thousand Thebans and sold the rest — thirty thousand Thebans — into slavery.

Alexander, however, treated the rest of the Greeks, including the Athenians, much better, and he was generous to individual Greeks at times.

Parmenio said:

"Clitus, it is fitting that the son of the late King Philip of Macedon is none other than Alexander. Seeing in the father a full perfection, who could have therefore doubted in the son an excellency?"

"For as the moon can borrow nothing else of the sun but light, so of a sire, in whom nothing but virtue was, what else could the child receive other than excellence?"

"It is for pieces of turquoise to stain each other, not for diamonds; in the one a difference in goodness can be made, in the other there is no comparison."

The colors of pieces of turquoise vary in brightness: Polished bright blue turquoise is especially prized. A highly prized piece of turquoise figuratively stains an inferior piece of turquoise next to it. Diamonds are transparent.

Clitus said, "You mistake me, Parmenio, if while I commend Alexander, you imagine I call Philip into question; unless perhaps you think (which no one of judgment will imagine) that because I like the fruit, therefore I heave at the tree; or coveting to kiss the child, I therefore go about to poison the teat."

"Heave" can mean "feel loathing" or "vomit."

"Aye, but Clitus, I perceive you are figuratively born in the east, and never laugh except at the sun rising," Parmenio said, "which is evidence that although you show a duty where you ought, yet you show no great devotion where you might."

Parmenio was punning on "sun." The sun rises, and Alexander, son of Philip, was rising.

"We will make no controversy of that which there ought to be no question," Clitus said. "Only this shall be the opinion of us both, that none was worthy to be the father of Alexander but Philip, nor was anyone worthy to be the son of Philip but Alexander."



“Quiet, Clitus, behold the spoils and prisoners! They are a pleasant sight to us, because profit is joined with honor; it is not much painful to the captive Thebans, because their captivity is eased by mercy.”

Guarded, Timoclea, Campaspe, and other captives entered the scene. Some soldiers carried valuable spoils.

Timoclea said:

“Fortune, thou did never yet deceive virtue, because virtue never yet did trust fortune. Sword and fire will never get spoil where wisdom and fortitude bear sway.”

Lady Fortune is a goddess who is represented as standing on a ball. One can easily fall off the ball, and in life, one can suffer bad luck. Lady Fortune also has a wheel that turns: the Wheel of Fortune. Those at the top of the wheel have a good and happy life, while those at the bottom of the wheel have a bad and unhappy life.

Timoclea continued:

“Oh, Thebes, thy walls were raised by the sweetness of the peaceful harp, but they were razed by the shrillness of the war trumpet.”

According to mythology, twin brothers built the stone walls of Thebes. Zethus carried the stones, while Amphion played his lyre, a musical instrument, and stones rose in the air and floated to where they fit in the wall.

Timoclea continued:

“Alexander would never have come so near the walls, had Epaminondas walked about the walls, and the Thebans might still have been merry in their streets, if he had been alive to guard their towers.”

Epaminondas was a Theban general in the years when the Thebans were fighting the Spartans.

Timoclea continued:

“But destiny is seldom foreseen, and it is never prevented.

“We are here now captives, whose necks are yoked by force, but whose hearts cannot yield by death.

“Come, Campaspe and the rest, and let us not be ashamed to cast our eyes on him, on whom we feared not to cast our arrows and spears.”

The Theban captives were soon to see Alexander the Great.

“Madam, you need not fear,” Parmenio said. “It is Alexander who is the conqueror.”

He meant that Alexander was a merciful conqueror.

“Alexander has overcome, not conquered,” Timoclea said.

“To bring all under his subjection is to conquer,” Parmenio said.

“He cannot subdue that which is divine,” Timoclea said.

“Thebes was not divine,” Parmenio said.

“Virtue is divine,” Timoclea said.

Clitus said:

“As Alexander cherishes virtue, so he will cherish you.

“He does not drink blood, but thirsts after honor; he is greedy for victory, but never satisfied with mercy. In fight he is terrifying, as befits a captain; in conquest he is mild, as befits a king.”

“Never satisfied with mercy” is unclear. The parallelism of the sentence suggests that this is something nonviolent. Perhaps Alexander is not satisfied with one example of mercy and always wants more.

But “never satisfied with mercy” considered without parallelism suggests that Alexander prefers war to mercy.

Campaspe continued:

“In all things then, he is Alexander, than which nothing can be greater.”

Campaspe said:

“Then if it be such a thing to be Alexander, I hope it shall be no miserable thing to be a virgin. For if he shall save our honors, it is more than to restore our goods. And I wish that he will preserve our reputations rather than our lives. If he does that, we will confess there can be no greater thing than to be Alexander.”

Campaspe would soon become Alexander’s concubine.

Alexander the Great, his general Hephestion, and some attendants entered the scene.

“Clitus, are these people prisoners?” Alexander the Great asked. “From where came these spoils?”

His army had conquered a large area, and Alexander could not be sure from where prisoners and spoils were coming to him.

“If it pleases your Majesty, they are prisoners, and they are from Thebes,” Clitus answered.

“Of what calling or reputation are they?” Alexander the Great asked.

“I don’t know, but they seem to be ladies of honor,” Clitus said.

Alexander the Great said:

“I will find out.”

He then said to Timoclea:

“Madam, from where you have come, I know; but who you are, I cannot tell.”

Timoclea said, “Alexander, I am the sister of Theagines, who fought a battle with thy father before the city of Chyronie, where Theagines died valiantly. What I say about my brother’s

valor, none can contradict.”

In 338 B.C.E. the battle of Chyronie (better known as Chaeronea) was fought in Boeotia.

Alexander the Great replied:

“Lady, there seem in your words valiant sparks of your brother’s deeds, but worser fortune in your life than his death, but fear not, for you shall live without violence, enemies, or poverty.”

He then asked Campaspe:

“But who are you, fair lady? Another sister to Theagines?”

“I am no sister to Theagines, but a humble handmaid to Alexander,” Campaspe said. “I was born with a parentage neither the highest nor the lowest, and I was born to suffer extreme bad fortune.”

Alexander the Great said:

“Well, ladies, for so your virtues show that you are ladies, whatsoever your births are, you shall be honorably treated. Athens shall be your Thebes, and you shall not be as abject subjects of war, but as subjects to Alexander.”

He then ordered:

“Parmenio, conduct these honorable ladies into the city. Order the soldiers to not so much as in words to offer them any offence, and let all the ladies’ needs be supplied, in so far forth as shall be necessary for such persons and my prisoners.”

Parmenio and the Theban captives exited.

Alexander then said:

“Hephestion, it remains now that we have as great care to govern in peace, as we have had to conquer in war, so that while arms cease, arts may flourish, and joining letters with lances, we endeavor to be as good philosophers as soldiers, knowing it no less praise to be wise, than commendable to be valiant.”

He had conquered Greece with weapons; now he wanted to rule Athens with peace.

Hephestion replied:

Your Majesty therein shows that you have as great desire to rule as to subdue.

“That commonwealth must necessarily be fortunate, whose captain is a philosopher, and whose philosopher is a captain.”

— 1.2 —

Manes, Granichus, and Psyllus met on a street and talked. Manes and Granichus were servants to philosophers. Psyllus was a servant to a painter.

Manes was the servant to Diogenes the Cynic.

Granichus was the servant to Plato.

Psyllus was the servant to Apelles, a painter.

“Instead of a master, I serve a mouse, whose house is a tub, whose dinner is a crust, and whose bed is a board,” Manes said.

Diogenes the Cynic once saw and admired a mouse that tended to its own business and did not chase luxuries. Diogenes sought to live a simple lifestyle. For a while, he lived in a tub.

“Then thou are in a state of life that philosophers commend. A crumb for thy supper, a hand for thy cup, and thy clothes for thy sheets,” Psyllus said. “For *natura paucis contenta*.”

After seeing a boy drinking water out of his cupped hand, Diogenes threw away his wooden bowl. Diogenes ate simple food, and he slept in his clothes.

The Latin means: “Nature is content with little.”

Granichus said, “Manes, it is a pity that so proper — so handsome — a man should be cast away upon a philosopher, but that Diogenes that dog should have Manes that dogbolt, it grieves nature and spites art: the one [nature] having found thee so dissolute — I mean absolute — in body, and the other [art] so single — I mean singular — in mind.”

Granichus was “accidentally” insulting Manes and then praising him. He insulted him by saying that he was dissolute in body and simple in mind. He praised him by saying that he was perfect (absolute) in body and preeminent (singular) in mind.

Diogenes was called the Dog, in part because of his rude manners, and in part because the Cynics adopted the dog as their symbol.

A dog-bolt is a menial servant.

“Are you merry?” Manes said. “It is a sign by the trip of your tongue, and the toys — the foolish trifles and fancies — of your head, that you have done something today that I have not done these three days.”

Nature and art are different. Nature is a human’s character, which can be changed by art — by the application of reason.

“What is that?” Psyllus asked.

“Dined,” Manes answered.

“I think Diogenes keeps but cold cheer,” Granichus said.

Diogenes’ “cold cheer” is an austere lifestyle.

“I wish it were so, but he keeps neither hot nor cold,” Manes said.

Cheer is also food and drink. Manes was saying that Diogenes lacked food, whether hot or cold.

“What then, lukewarm?” Granichus said. “That made Manes run from his master yesterday.”

“Manes had reason to run away,” Psyllus said, “for his name foretold as much.”

“My name?” Manes said. “How so, sir boy?”

“You know that it is called *Mons*, à *movendo*, because it stands still,” Psyllus said.

Some names are the opposite of what we would expect. For example, some obese men are nicknamed “Tiny.”

From *movendum*, Latin for “moving,” mountains get the name “mons,” because they don’t move. So said Psyllus.

“Good,” Manes said.

“And thou are named *Manes*, à *manendo*, because thou run away,” Psyllus said.

From *manendum*, Latin for “staying in place,” Manes gets his name because he doesn’t stay in place. So said Psyllus.

“Excellent reasoning!” Manes said. “I did not run away, but I did retire.”

Like some soldiers, he did not run away, but instead made a strategic repositioning.

“To a prison, because thou would have leisure to contemplate,” Psyllus said.

“I will prove that my body was immortal because it was in prison,” Manes said.

“How?” Granichus asked.

“Didn’t your masters ever teach you that the soul is immortal?” Manes asked.

“Yes,” Granichus said.

“And the body is the prison of the soul,” Manes said.

“True,” Granichus said.

“Why then, thus to make my body immortal, I put it to prison,” Manes said.

“Oh, bad!” Granichus said.

Bad reasoning, indeed.

“Excellent ill!” Psyllus said.

Excellent ill reasoning, indeed.

Manes said:

“You may see how dull a fasting wit is.”

If he were fed better, he would be wittier and speak more intelligently.

“Therefore, Psyllus, let us go to supper with Granichus: Plato is the best fellow of all philosophers. Give me a master who reads a lecture in the morning in the school, and at noon in the kitchen.”

Plato, famous for his *Dialogues*, kept the best table of the masters of these three servants. He was also easy-going.

“And so would I,” Psyllus said.

“Ah, sirs, my master — Plato — is a king in his parlor for the body, and a god in his study for the soul,” Granichus said. “When among all his men, he commends one who is an excellent musician, then I stand nearby, and clap another on the shoulder, and say, ‘This is a surpassingly good cook.’”

Granichus valued food more than music.

“That is well done, Granichus,” Manes said. “Give me pleasure that goes in at the mouth, not the ear. I had rather fill my guts than my brains.”

Psyllus said:

“I serve Apelles, who feeds me as Diogenes does Manes, for at dinner the one preaches abstinence, and the other commends counterfeiting [painting].

“When I would eat meat, he paints a spit for roasting meat, and when I thirst, he asks, ‘Isn’t this a fair pot for holding an alcoholic beverage?’ and points to a table in a painting that contains the banquet of the gods, where there are many dishes to feed the eye, but not to fill the gut.”

“What do thou do then?” Granichus asked.

Psyllus said:

“This he then does: Bring in many examples that some have lived by savors [smells], and proves that it is much easier to grow fat by colors, and he tells about birds that have been fattened by painted grapes in winter, and how many have so fed their eyes with their mistress’ picture that they never desired to take food, being gluttoned with the delight in their mistress’ beauty.

“Then he shows me counterfeits [paintings], portraits of such people as have surfeited with their filthy and loathsome vomits, and have surfeited with the riotous bacchanales — the drunken orgies — of the god Bacchus and his disorderly crew, which are painted all to the life in his shop.

“To conclude, I fare hardly and with difficulty, though I go richly, which makes me when I should begin to shadow [portray] a lady’s face, to draw a lamb’s head, and sometimes to set to the body of a maid a shoulder of mutton: for *semper animus meus est in patinis.*”

The Latin means: “Always my soul is in the stew pot.”

In other words: I am always thinking about food.

Psyllus “goes richly”: This may mean that he uses his imagination to picture food.

Manes said:

“Thou fare like a god in comparison to me: For if I could just see a cook’s shop painted, I would make my eyes as fat as butter.

“For I have nothing but sentences to fill my maw, such as:

“*Plures occidit crapula quàm gladius.*”

The Latin means: “Overeating kills more than the sword.”

Manes continued:

*“Musa ieiunantibus amica.”*

The Latin means: “The Muse is a friend to those who fast.”

Manes continued:

“Repletion kills delicately.

“And an old saw of abstinence by Socrates:

“The belly is the head’s grave.

“Thus with sayings, not with food, he makes a gallimaufry.”

A gallimaufry is a stew.

“But how do thou then live?” Granichus asked.

“With fine jests, sweet air, and the dog’s alms,” Manes said.

The dog’s alms are 1) scraps such as those thrown to a dog, or 2) gifts of food given to Diogenes the Dog.

“Well, for this time I will staunch thy hunger, and among pots and platters, thou shall see what it is to serve Plato,” Granichus said.

“Out of joy for it, Granichus, let’s sing,” Psyllus said.

“My voice is as clear in the evening as in the morning,” Manes said.

In other words: Fasting clears the voice.

Manes woke up hungry, and he was still hungry in the evening.

“That is another commodity — another advantage — of emptiness,” Granichus said.

They began their song.

Granichus sang:

*“O for a bowl of fat [rich] canary,*

*“Rich Palermo, sparkling sherry,*

*“Some nectar else, from Juno’s dairy,*

*“O these draughts would make us merry.”*

Canary is sweet wine from the Canary Islands.

Palermo is wine from Palermo, Sicily.

Nectar is the drink of the gods.

Juno is the wife of Jove, aka Jupiter, king of the gods.

Psyllus sang:

*“O for a wench. (I deal in faces,  
“And in other daintier things.)  
“Tickled am I with her embraces,  
“Fine dancing in such fairy rings.”*

Fairy rings are literally circles in grass, and perhaps figuratively they are a circular part of a woman’s anatomy.

“Things” can refer to genitalia.

“Dancing” probably means what you think it means, if you think prostitutes (and other women) give dance lessons.

Manes sang:

*“O for a plump fat leg of mutton,  
“Veal, lamb, capon [castrated rooster], pig, and cony [rabbit],  
“None is happy but a glutton,  
“None an ass, but who wants [lacks] money.”*

All sang the end of the song:

*“Wines (indeed) and girls are good,  
“But brave victuals feast the blood,  
“For wenches, wine, and lusty cheer [robust food, or lusty entertainment],  
“Jove would leap down to surfeit here.”  
“To surfeit” means “to overindulge.”*

— 1.3 —

Melippus, Alexander’s chamberlain, stood alone in a room of the palace.

He said to himself:

“I have never had such trouble to warn scholars to come before a king.

“First, I came to Chrysippus, a tall, lean, old, mad man, and I told him to appear immediately before Alexander. He stood staring at my face, moving neither his eyes nor his body. I urged him to give some answer, but he took up a book, sat down, and said nothing. Melissa, his maid, told me it was his manner, and that often she was obliged to thrust food into his mouth because he would rather starve than cease study.

“‘Well,’ I thought, ‘seeing that bookish men are so blockish and obtuse, and seeing that great clerks are such simple-minded courtiers, I will be partaker neither of their commons — their community meals — nor of their commendations.’



“From thence I came to Plato and to Aristotle, and to various others, with none refusing to come, except an old obscure fellow, who sitting in a tub turned towards the sun, read Greek to a young boy.

“When I told him to appear before Alexander, he answered, ‘If Alexander would like to see me, let him come to me; if he would like to learn about and from me, let him come to me; whatsoever he wants, let him come to me.’

“‘Why,’ I said, ‘he is a king.’

“He answered, ‘Why, I am a philosopher.’

“I said, ‘Why, but he is Alexander.’

“He answered, ‘Aye, but I am Diogenes.’

“I was half angry to see one so crooked in his shape being so crabby and disagreeable in his utterances. So going my way, I said, ‘Thou shall repent it, if thou do not come to Alexander.’”

“‘Nay,’ he, smiling, answered. “Alexander may repent it, if he does not come to Diogenes: Virtue must be sought, not offered.”

Diogenes’ teacher, Antisthenes, was reluctant to accept Diogenes as a student, but Diogenes was patient and waited to be accepted. Laertius, in his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, wrote, “On reaching Athens [Diogenes] fell in with Antisthenes. Being repulsed by him, because he never welcomed students, by sheer persistence Diogenes wore him out.”

Antisthenes even beat Diogenes with a stick in an attempt to drive him away. Such tests are common in Taoism and Zen Buddhism. Teachers will say “no” at first and wait for the would-be student to go away. If the would-be student stays and waits for days, the teacher knows that the student is sincere about acquiring knowledge. Some Zen masters have even poured the contents of slop buckets on would-be students’ heads to test their determination.

Wandering warrior Zhang Liang once met an old man on a bridge. The old man deliberately kicked off a sandal, then asked Zhang Liang to retrieve it and to put it back on his foot. After Zhang Liang had done so, the old man told him that he was worthy to be taught and to meet him at the bridge in the early morning in five days. Five days later, Zhang Liang arrived at the bridge a few minutes after daybreak, and the old man told him to arrive earlier in another five days. Five days later, Zhang Liang arrived at the bridge earlier, but the old man was already there and told him, “Arrive earlier in another five days’ time. This is your last chance.” Five days later, Zhang Liang arrived at the bridge around midnight, and the old man arrived a few minutes later. The old man, who was named Huang Shi Gong, then taught Zhang Liang the military strategy that enabled him to help Liu Bang become the founder of the Han Dynasty.

Melippus concluded:

“And so turning himself to his cell, he grunted I don’t know what, like a pig under a tub.

“But I must be gone because the philosophers are coming.”

He exited.

The philosophers Plato, Aristotle, Cleanthes, Anaxarchus, Crates, and Chrysippus entered the scene.

John Lyly did not write history. Plato was dead at this time, but Aristotle, Anaxarchus, and Crates were alive. Cleanthes and Chrysippus were not yet born in 335 B.C.E.

Oddly, all these ancient Greek philosophers knew Latin well.

John Lyly is also not writing clear philosophy. In this scene, Plato will argue for a supernatural explanation of events in nature, and Aristotle sometimes will seem to be arguing for a natural explanation of events in nature and sometimes will seem to believe in a god.

In reading the argument below, note that Plato and Aristotle both believed in a Prime Mover, aka Unmoved Mover.

When it comes to understanding difficult concepts, defining important terms is a big help. Often, people have very different definitions of God.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “prime mover” as “A person who instigates or originates something; spec. God regarded as the motive force of the universe.”

Plato said, “It is a difficult controversy, Aristotle, and rather to be wondered at than believed, how natural causes should work supernatural effects.”

Natural causes come from nature, without any help from anything supernatural.

God is supernatural. Morality and reason also seem to be supernatural.

The controversy the philosophers were discussing was whether God existed and caused natural events to happen.

Aristotle said, “I do not so much maintain the view that the apparition that is seen in the moon, nor the *demonium* of Socrates, as that I cannot by natural reason give any reason for the ebbing and flowing of the sea, which makes me in the depth of my studies cry out, ‘*O ens entium, miserere mei.*’”

The Latin means: “Oh, essence of essences, take pity on me.”

“Apparition” refers to the visibility of a heavenly, aka astronomical, body. The moon moves, and the reason why it moves is not visible.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the astronomical meaning of “apparition” in this way: “The state or condition of being manifest to sight, or of being visible; esp. the visibility of a star, planet, or comet.”

Today, we know that the tides of the sea have a natural cause: They are caused by the gravitational pull of the moon.

Socrates’ *demonium* was his conscience, which gave him guidance.

Does anything supernatural exist? If reality consists of *only* matter, space, and energy, then how can ethics and morality (and logic and reason) exist?

C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) made an argument from morality for the existence of God. See “NOTES,” located before the appendixes.

Aristotle’s Latin sentence can be understood to reflect belief in one god, rather than the many gods of paganism.

Here, as in history, Aristotle is a seeker after truth. Here, he is asking whether God exists and causes such natural phenomena as the tides.

Plato said to Aristotle:

“Cleanthes and you attribute so much to nature by searching for things that are not to be found, that while you study a cause [a particular case] of your own, you omit the occasion [reason why things are as they are] itself.

“There is no man so savage in whom this divine particle does not rest: that there is an omnipotent, eternal, and divine mover, which may be called God.”

According to Plato, the philosophers Aristotle and Cleanthes investigate individual cases of natural phenomena that need explaining, but they don't look at the big picture: Why do things exist and why do they change? Plato believes in a Prime Mover, which is God.

The Prime Mover is not caused, but it causes everything else. The Prime Mover has necessary existence.

We may think of the Prime Mover as causing the existence of the universe and keeping it in existence each moment.

In the history of philosophy, Aristotle believed in God as an Unmoved Mover. God causes change, but God is unchanged.

Saint Thomas Aquinas made five arguments for the existence of God, including arguments for the existence of a Unmoved Mover or Prime Mover, which he says we call God. See “NOTES,” located before the appendixes.

Cleanthes said:

“I am of this mind, that the First Mover, which you term God, is the instrument of all the movings that we attribute to nature. The earth, which is mass, swims on the sea; seasons divided in themselves, fruits growing in themselves, the majesty of the sky, the whole firmament of the world, and whatsoever else appears to be miraculous, what man almost of mean capacity but can prove it natural?”

This seems to be confused: Cleanthes' first sentence states that all of these natural events can be explained by the First Mover, whom philosophers call God.

But the end of the paragraph states that all of these natural events can be explained by natural causes without having recourse to a supernatural being, and even a man of limited intelligence can prove it.

Perhaps Cleanthes regards the First Mover as Nature and not as God?

Come on, philosophers, define your terms so the rest of us can figure out what you mean!

Anaxarchus said, “These causes shall be debated at our philosophers' feast, in which controversy I will take part with Aristotle, that there is *Natura naturans*, and yet not God.”

*Natura naturans* is a Latin phrase that means “nature doing nature” or “nature does what nature does.”

Plato's belief in a Prime Mover, which Aristotle called an Unmoved Mover, and Cleanthes called the First Mover, is consistent with belief in a Judeo-Christian god, but belief in a Judeo-Christian god requires much more than belief in a Prime Mover.

"And I will argue with Plato that there is *Deus optimus maximus*, and not nature," Crates said.

The Latin *Deus optimus maximus* means "God the best and greatest."

"Here comes Alexander," Aristotle said.

Alexander the Great, Hephestion, Parmenio, and Clitus entered the scene. Cleanthes was Alexander's general, and Parmenio and Clitus were officers in Alexander's army.

"I see, Hephestion, that these philosophers are here waiting for us," Alexander the Great said.

"They would not be philosophers, if they did not know their duties," Hephestion said.

"But I much marvel that Diogenes should be so dogged — so perverse and spiteful," Alexander the Great said.

"I can't help but think that his excuse will be better than Melippus' message," Hephestion said.

In other words: Hephestion expected that Diogenes would be much more polite when he saw Alexander in person.

Alexander the Great said:

"I will go see him, Hephestion, because I long to see the man who would command Alexander to come."

He then addressed the philosophers:

"Aristotle and the rest, since my coming from Thebes to Athens, from a place of conquest to a palace of quiet, I have resolved with myself to have as many philosophers in my court, as I had soldiers in my camp.

"My court shall be a school wherein I wish to see practiced as great doctrine in peace, as I did discipline in war."

Aristotle replied, "We are all here ready to be commanded, and glad we are that we are commanded because nothing better becomes kings than literature and book learning, which makes them come as near to the gods in wisdom as they do in dignity."

Alexander the Great said, "That is true, Aristotle, but yet there is among you, yes, and one of your bringing up, one who sought to destroy Alexander. His name is Callistenes, Aristotle, and the reasons of his philosophy shall not make allowances for his treasons against his prince."

Callistenes was Aristotle's student and the son of Hero, his niece.

"If ever mischief entered into the heart of Callistenes, let Callistenes suffer for it, but Aristotle denies that Aristotle ever imagined any such thing of Callistenes," Aristotle replied.

Alexander the Great said:

"Well, Aristotle, his being your relative may blind thee, and that I am personally involved may blind me, but in kings' causes I will not listen to and abide by scholars' arguments.

“The purpose of this meeting shall be for a commandment that you all frequent my court, instruct the young with rules, confirm the old with reasons. Let your lives be answerable to your learnings, lest my proceedings be contrary to my promises.”

“You said you would ask every one of them a question, which yesterday evening none of us could answer,” Hephestion said.

Alexander the Great said:

“I will.

“Plato, of all beasts, which is the subtlest and craftiest?”

“That which man hitherto never knew,” Plato answered.

Apparently, subtle and crafty animals stay out of the sight of man.

Alexander the Great asked, “Aristotle, how should a man be thought to be a god?”

“By doing a thing impossible for a man,” Aristotle answered.

Dying and then rising three days later would be sufficient.

Alexander the Great asked, “Chrysippus, which was first, the day or the night?”

“The day, by a day,” Chrysippus answered.

A 24-hour day includes day and night. Night is on average 12 hours.

Alexander the Great said:

“Indeed! Strange questions must have strange answers.

“Cleanthes, what do you say: Is life or death the stronger?”

“Life, which suffers so many troubles,” Cleanthes answered.

Dead people don’t have to worry about such things as taxes.

Alexander the Great asked, “Crates, how long should a man live?”

“Until he thinks it is better to die than to live,” Crates answered.

Alexander the Great asked, “Anaxarchus, which brings forth the most creatures: the sea or the earth?”

“The earth, for the sea is just a part of the earth,” Anaxarchus answered.

Alexander the Great said, “Hephestion, I think they have answered all the questions well, and I mean often to test them in such questions.”

Hephestion replied, “It is better to have in your court a wise man, than in your ground a golden mine. Therefore, I would leave war and instead study wisdom if I were Alexander.”

Alexander the Great said:

“So would I — if I were Hephestion.

“But come, let us go and grant the freedom that I promised to our Theban slaves.”

Alexander the Great, Hephestion, Parmenio, and Clitus exited.

The philosophers began to walk to the marketplace.

“Thou are fortunate, Aristotle, that Alexander is thy scholar,” Plato said.

This is true in history: Aristotle did tutor Alexander the Great.

“And all of you are happy and fortunate that he is your sovereign,” Aristotle said.

“I could like the man well, if he could be contented to be just a man,” Chrysippus said.

“He seeks to draw near to the gods in knowledge, not to be a god,” Aristotle said.

Having arrived at the marketplace, the philosophers saw Diogenes the Cynic in his tub.

Plato said:

“Let us talk a little with Diogenes and ask why he didn’t go with us to Alexander.”

He then said:

“Diogenes, thou did forget thy duty, in that thou did not go with us to the king.”

From his tub, Diogenes said, “And you did forget your profession as philosophers, in that you went to the king. “

According to Diogenes, seekers after truth — philosophers — rank higher than kings.

“Thou take as great pride in being peevish, as others glory in being virtuous,” Plato said.

“And thou take as great honor in being a philosopher to be thought court-like, as others who are courtiers shame to be accounted philosophers,” Diogenes said.

Diogenes believed that philosophers ought not to subordinate themselves to kings.

“These austere manners set aside, it is well known that thou did counterfeit money,” Aristotle said.

In history, either Diogenes or his father adulterated currency. Diogenes then left his town of Sinope and went into exile.

Diogenes replied, “And it is well known that thou counterfeited thy manners, in that thou did not counterfeit money.”

Hmm. Interesting insult. By not counterfeiting money, Aristotle is hiding his true nature, which is such that he would counterfeit money.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “manners” as “A person’s habitual behaviour or conduct; morals.” This meaning is now obsolete.

“Thou have reason to condemn and scorn the court, being both in body and mind too crooked for a courtier,” Aristotle said.

“It is as good to be crooked, and endeavor to make myself straight away from the court, as it is to be straight, and learn to be crooked at the court,” Diogenes replied.

“Crooked” can mean “corrupt,” and “straight” can mean “honest.”

Crates said, “Thou think it a grace to be opposite against Alexander.”

“And thou to be jump with — to be in sync with — and be in agreement with Alexander,” Diogenes said.

“Let us go,” Anaxarchus said, “for in contemning and scorning him, we shall better please him, than in staring and marveling at him.”

“Plato, what do thou think of Diogenes?” Aristotle asked.

Plato said:

“To be Socrates, furious. Let us go.”

According to Laertius Diogenes, author of *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Plato once referred to Diogenes as “Socrates gone mad.”

## CHAPTER 2 (CAMPASPE)

— 2.1 —

Holding a lantern, Diogenes walked down one side of a street.

Psyllus, Manes, and Granichus walked down the other side.

Psyllus said, “Behold, Manes, where thy master is; he is seeking either bones for his dinner, or pins to hold together his clothing. I will go and greet him.”

“Do so,” Manes said. “But be mum. Don’t say a word about you seeing Manes.”

“Then stay thou behind, and I will go with Psyllus,” Granichus said.

Granichus and Psyllus walked over to Diogenes.

“All hail Diogenes to your proper person,” Psyllus said.

“To your proper person” means “to you.”

“All hate to thy peevish conditions,” Diogenes said.

“O dog!” Granichus said.

“What do thou seek for here?” Psyllus asked.

“For a man and a beast,” Diogenes answered.

Some retellings of this anecdote state that Diogenes said that he was looking for an *honest* man.

“That is easy to be found without thy light,” Granichus said. “Aren’t all these men?”

“They are called men, but they are not necessarily men,” Diogenes said.

“What beast is it thou look for?” Granichus asked.

“The beast is my serving-man, Manes,” Diogenes answered.

“He is a beast indeed if he will serve thee,” Psyllus said.

“So is he who begat thee,” Diogenes replied.

“What would thou do if thou were to find Manes?” Granichus asked.

“Give him permission to do as he had done before,” Diogenes replied.

“What’s that?” Granichus asked.

“To run away,” Diogenes replied.

“Why, have thou no need of Manes?” Psyllus asked.

“It would be a shame for Diogenes to have need of Manes, and it would be a shame for Manes to have no need of Diogenes,” Diogenes said.



“But assume that he were gone, would thou hire and take into service any of us two?” Granichus asked.

“Upon condition,” Diogenes said.

“What condition?” Psyllus asked.

“That you tell me why and to what end any of you two were good,” Diogenes said.

“Why, I am a scholar, and well skilled in philosophy,” Granichus said.

“And I am an apprentice, and well skilled in painting,” Psyllus said.

Diogenes said:

“Well, then, Granichus, be thou a painter to amend thine ill face.

“And be thou, Psyllus, a philosopher to correct thine evil way of life.”

Catching sight of a man, Diogenes said:

“But who is that?

“Manes?”

“I don’t care who I am, as long as I am not Manes,” Manes said.

Granichus said to Manes, “You are taken tardy: You have been caught unawares.”

“Let us slip aside, Granichus, to see the salutation between Manes and his master,” Psyllus said.

Granichus and Psyllus stepped aside and eavesdropped.

Diogenes said:

“Manes, thou know that yesterday I threw away my dish, to drink in my hand, because my dish was superfluous.

“Now I am determined to put away my serving-man, and serve myself: *Quia non egeo tui vel te.*”

The Latin means: “Because I do not need you or what is yours.”

Manes replied, “Master, you know a while ago I ran away, and so I mean to do again: *quia scio tibi non esse argentum.*”

The Latin means: “Because I know that you have no silver [no money].”

“I know I have no money, neither will I ever have a serving-man, for I was resolved long since to put away both my slaves: money and Manes,” Diogenes said.

“So was I determined to shake off both my dogs: hunger and Diogenes,” Manes said.

Hunger is a dog because in Greek and Latin, hunger barks.

Hunger and Diogenes are both dogging Manes.

“O sweet concert — musical concord — between a crowd and a Jew’s harp,” Psyllus said.

One meaning of “a crowd” is a fiddle.

A Jew’s harp is also known as a jaw harp.

“Come, let us reconcile them,” Granichus said.

“There is no need, for this is their customary behavior,” Psyllus said. “Now they dine one upon another.”

Diogenes exited.

“How are things now, Manes?” Granichus asked. “Have thou left thy master?”

“No, I did but just now bind myself to him,” Manes said.

In other words: Arguing brought them closer together.

“Why, you were at mortal jars — deadly quarrels,” Psyllus said.

“Indeed, no,” Manes said. “We broke a bitter jest one upon the other.”

“Why, thou are as dogged as he,” Granichus said.

“My father knew them both when they were little whelps,” Psyllus said.

Whelps are 1) puppies, or 2) impertinent young boys.

“Well, I will hurry after my master,” Manes said.

“Why, is it supper time with Diogenes?” Granichus asked.

“Aye, with him at all times when he has food,” Manes said.

Whenever Diogenes has food, it is time to eat.

“Why then, let every man go to his home, and let us steal out again and meet soon,” Psyllus said.

“Where shall we meet?” Granichus asked.

“Why, at *Alae vendibili suspense hedera non est Opus*,” Psyllus said.

The Latin means: “There is no need for a sign of ivy where the ale is good.”

They would meet at the regular place: a place with good ale.

Ivy was often found outside inns. It served as a kind of sign.

“O Psyllus, *habeo te loco parentis*,” Manes said. “Thou bless me.”

The Latin means: “I consider you to be my parent.”

Parents blessed their children.

They exited.

Alexander the Great, Hephestion, and a page stood in a room inside the palace.

Alexander the Great said to the page:

“Stand aside, sir boy, until you are called.”

He then asked:

“Hephestion, how do you like the sweet face of Campaspe?”

“I cannot but commend the stout and undaunted courage of Timoclea,” Hephestion said.

“Without doubt Campaspe had some great man as her father,” Alexander the Great said.

“You know Timoclea had Theagines as her brother,” Hephestion said.

“The name of Timoclea is still in thy mouth! Aren’t thou in love?” Alexander the Great said.

“Not I,” Hephestion said.

Alexander the Great said:

“Not with Timoclea, you mean; in this, you resemble the lapwing, who cries most where her nest is not.”

Lapwings would pretend to have a wounded wing when predators would get close to their nest. A lapwing would cry and draw the predator away from the nest, and then the lapwing would take flight.

Alexander the Great continued:

“And so in order to lead me away from spying your love for Campaspe, you cry ‘Timoclea.’”

Hephestion replied, “If I could subdue kingdoms as well as I can my thoughts, or if I were as far from ambition as I am from love, then all the world would account me as valiant in arms as I know that I myself am moderate in affection and love.”

Hephestion had great skill in controlling thoughts of love, and he wished that he had as great skill in conquering nations.

“Is love a vice?” Alexander the Great asked.

“It is no virtue,” Hephestion answered.

Alexander the Great said:

“Well, now thou shall see what small difference I make between Alexander and Hephestion.

“And since thou have been always partaker of my triumphs, thou shall be partaker of my torments.

“I am in love, Hephestion! I am in love! I love Campaspe, a thing far unfit for a Macedonian, for a king, for Alexander.

“Why do thou hang down thy head, Hephestion? Are thou blushing to hear that which I am not ashamed to tell?”

“If my words might crave pardon, and my counsel might crave credit, I would both discharge the duty of a subject, for so I am, and the office of a friend, for so I will,” Hephestion said.

He had things to tell Alexander that Alexander would not like to hear.

“Speak, Hephestion,” Alexander the Great said, “for whatsoever is spoken, Hephestion speaks to Alexander.”

The two men respected each other.

Hephestion said:

“I cannot tell, Alexander, whether the report is more shameful to be heard, or the cause is more sorrowful to be believed?

“What! Has the son of Philip, King of Macedon, become the subject of Campaspe, the captive of Thebes?

“Has that mind, whose greatness the world could not contain, been drawn within the compass of a trifling, alluring eye?

“Will you handle the spindle with Hercules, when you should shake the spear with Achilles?”

Hercules once worked for three years for Omphale, the Queen of Lydia. She often wore his lionskin while he wore women’s clothing and worked at a loom and spun thread and wound it onto a spindle.

Hephestion continued:

“Has the warlike sound of the military drum and trumpet been turned to the soft noise of lyre and lute?

“Have the neighing of barbed — armed — steeds, whose loudness filled the air with terror, and whose breaths dimmed the sun with vapor, been converted into delicate tunes and amorous glances?

“O Alexander, that soft and yielding mind should not be in him, whose hard and unconquered heart has made so many yield and surrender.

“But you love — ah, grief! But whom do you love?

“Campaspe? Ah, shame!

“She is a maiden truly unknown, she is unnoble, and who can tell whether she is immodest and wanton?

“She is a maiden whose eyes are framed by art to enamor, and whose heart was made by nature to enchant.

“Aye, but she is beautiful; yes, but she is not therefore chaste.

“Aye, but she is comely in all parts of the body, but she may be crooked in some part of the mind.

“Aye, but she is wise; yes, but she is a woman!

“Beauty is like the blackberry, which seems red when it is not ripe, resembling precious stones that are polished with honey, which the smoother they look, the sooner they break.

“It is thought wonderful among the seamen that mugil [grey mullet], which is of all fishes the swiftest, is found in the belly of the bret [turbot], which is of all fishes the slowest.

“And shall it not seem monstrous to wise men that the heart of the greatest conqueror of the world should be found in the hands of the weakest creature of nature? Of a woman? Of a captive?

“Ermines have fair skins, but foul livers; sepulchers have fresh colors, but rotten bones; women have fair faces, but false hearts.”

Sepulchers, aka tombs, can have beautiful colors, but no matter how beautifully colored they are, they have rotten bones inside.

Hephestion continued:

“Remember, Alexander, thou have a camp to govern, not a bed-chamber.

“Don’t fall from the armor of Mars to the arms of Venus.

“Don’t go from the fiery assaults of war to the maidenly skirmishes of love.

‘Don’t go from displaying the eagle in thine ensign — thine battle flag — to set down the sparrow.’”

Sparrows, reputed to be lusty, were called the birds of Venus.

Hephestion continued:

“I sigh, Alexander, that where fortune could not conquer, folly should overcome.

“But behold all the perfection that may be in Campaspe; a hair curling by nature, not art; sweet alluring eyes; a fair face made to spite and in spite of Venus, and a stately bearing in disdain of Juno, Queen of the gods; a wit and intelligence apt to understand, and quick to answer; a skin as soft as silk, and as smooth as jet; a long white hand, a fine little foot.

“To conclude, she has all parts answerable to the best part — but so what?

“Although she has heavenly gifts, virtue and beauty, isn’t she made of earthly metal and substance, flesh and blood?

“You, Alexander, who would be a god, show yourself in this worse than a man, so soon to be both overseen and overtaken — that is, deceived — in a woman, whose false tears know their true and best times to flow, whose smooth and flattering words wound deeper than sharp swords.

“There is no surfeit — no over-indulging — as dangerous as over-indulging in honey, nor is there any poison as deadly as that of love; in the one medicine cannot prevail, and in the other counsel cannot prevail.”

A proverb stated, “Words hurt more than swords.”

Alexander the Great replied:

“My case would be light and trifling, Hephestion, and not worthy to be called love, if reason were a remedy, or if wise sentences and proverbs could salve and heal that which sense and perception cannot understand.

“Little do you know, and therefore slightly and slightingly do you regard, the dead embers in a private person, or live coals in a great prince, whose passions and thoughts do as far exceed others in the most extreme degree, as their callings do in majesty. An eclipse in the sun is more than the falling of a star; none can conceive the torments of a king, unless he is a king, whose desires are not inferior to their dignities: their high office and worthiness.

“And then judge, Hephestion, if the agonies of love are dangerous in a subject, whether they are not more than deadly to Alexander, whose deep and not-to-be-imagined sighs cleave and split the heart in pieces; and whose wounded thoughts can be neither expressed nor endured.

“Cease then, Hephestion, with arguments to seek to repulse love, which with their deity and godlike might, the gods cannot resist; and let this suffice to answer thee, that it is a king who loves, and it is Alexander who loves, whose affections are not to be measured by reason, being immortal, nor, I fear, are to be borne, being intolerable.”

Alexander had pretensions of being a god. He was influenced by foreign ideas, and when he was in Egypt, he was called the son of Jupiter. Possibly, however, he was calling his affections and love immortal.

“I must necessarily yield, when neither reason nor counsel can be heard,” Hephestion said.

“Yield, Hephestion, for Alexander does love, and therefore Alexander must obtain his love,” Alexander the Great said.

Hephestion said:

“Suppose she doesn’t love you.

“Affection and love do not come into existence by appointment or birth.

“Love that is forced is hated.”

“I am a king, and I will command,” Alexander the Great said.

“You may force someone to yield to your lust,” Hephestion said, “but you cannot use fear to force someone to consent to love you.”

A proverb stated, “Love cannot be compelled.”

“Why, what is that which Alexander may not conquer as he wishes?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Why, that which you say the gods cannot resist: love,” Hephestion answered.

Alexander the Great said:

“I am a conqueror, and she is a captive. I am as fortunate as she is fair. My greatness may grant her what she needs, and the gifts of my mind may raise the modest capability of her mind.

“Isn’t it likely then that she should love? Isn’t it reasonable?”

“You say that in love there is no reason, and therefore there can be no likelihood,” Hephestion said.

Alexander the Great said:

“Let’s discuss this no more, Hephestion. In this case I will use my own counsel, and in all other cases I will use thine advice. Thou may be a good soldier, but thou shall never be a good lover.

“Call my page.”

The page stepped forward.

Alexander the Great ordered:

“Sirrah, go immediately to Apelles, and tell him to come to me without either delay or excuse.”

“I go,” the page said.

He exited.

Alexander the Great said:

“In the meantime, to recreate my spirits, being so near, we will go and see Diogenes.

“And look, we can see where his tub is.”

He called:

“Diogenes!”

“Who calls?” Diogenes asked.

Alexander the Great replied:

“It is Alexander.”

He then asked:

“How did it happen that you would not come out of your tub and go to my palace?”

“Because it was as far from my tub to your palace, as from your palace to my tub,” Diogenes said.

“Why, then, do thou owe no reverence to kings?” Alexander the Great asked.

“No,” Diogenes said.

“Why so?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Because they are no gods,” Diogenes said.

“They are gods of the earth,” Alexander the Great said.

“Yes, gods of earth,” Diogenes said.

In other words: Kings are gods made of earth: flesh and blood.

“Plato is not of thy mind,” Alexander the Great said.

“I am glad of it,” Diogenes said.

“Why?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Because I would have no one have Diogenes’ mind, except Diogenes,” Diogenes said.

“If Alexander has anything that may pleasure Diogenes, let me know, and take it,” Alexander the Great said.

“Then don’t take from me that which you cannot give me, the light of the world,” Diogenes said.

According to Laertius, when Alexander offered Diogenes anything he wanted, Diogenes, who was in Alexander’s shadow, said, “Stand out of my light.”

“What do thou want?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Nothing that you have,” Diogenes said.

“I have the world at command,” Alexander the Great said.

“And I hold the world in contempt,” Diogenes said.

“Thou shall live no longer than I will allow you to live,” Alexander the Great said.

“But I shall die whether or not you will my death,” Diogenes said.

“How should one learn to be content?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Unlearn to covet,” Diogenes said.

Alexander the Great said, “Hephestion, if I were not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes.”

According to Plutarch in his “Life of Alexander,” after hearing Alexander’s words, Diogenes said, “If I were not Diogenes, I would wish to be Diogenes.”

Hephestion said, “He is dogged and spiteful, but he is discreet and wise. I cannot tell how sharp he is, but he has a kind of sweetness. He is full of wit, yet he is too, too wayward and perverse.”

“Diogenes, when I come this way again, I will both see thee and confer with thee,” Alexander the Great said.

“Do,” Diogenes said.

Alexander the Great said:

“But here comes Apelles.”

Alexander’s page returned, bringing Apelles the painter with him.

Alexander the Great asked:

“How are things now, Apelles? Is your painting of Venus’ face finished yet?”

Venus is the goddess of sexual passion; her Greek name is Aphrodite.



“Not yet,” Apelles said. “Beauty is not so soon shadowed [painted] and depicted because its perfection does not come within the compass either of cunning and skill or of color.”

Alexander the Great said, “Well, let it rest unperfect and incomplete, and come with me, where I will show you beauty that is finished by nature, beauty that you have been trifling about by art.”

Campaspe had been finished by nature: She was perfect.

Apelles’ painting of Venus had not been finished: It was imperfect.

They exited.

## CHAPTER 3 (CAMPASPE)

### — 3.1 —

Apelles, Campaspe, and Psyllus talked together in a room in Apelles' house.

Apelles said, "Lady, I doubt whether there is any color so fresh and bright that may shadow [paint] a countenance as fair as yours."

Campaspe modestly replied, "Sir, I had thought you had been commanded to paint with your hand, not to gloss and flatter with your tongue; but as I have heard, it is the hardest thing in painting to set down a hard face, which makes you despair of painting my face; and then you shall have as great thanks to spare your labor, as you would have discredit to your art and skill if you persisted."

In other words: I am ugly, and painting an ugly face is difficult. If you attempt to paint my face, you will get a bad reputation as an artist, so it best for you not to paint me.

Campaspe was beautiful, and her saying that she has a hard face — an ugly face — was modesty.

Apelles said:

"Mistress, you neither differ from yourself nor your sex: for knowing your own perfection, you seem to dispraise that which men most commend, drawing and attracting them by that means into an admiration, where feeding themselves they fall into an ecstasy.

"Your modesty causes men's admiration of you, and your affections cause men to be sent into an ecstasy."

In other words: Campaspe was beautiful, and Apelles believed she knew it, but she, like other women, disparaged her beauty. But her beauty caused men to admire her; she was also modest, and that and the other qualities of her character caused men to pursue her and fall into an ecstasy of love.

Campaspe replied, "I am too young to understand your speech, although I am old enough to withstand your trap: You have been so long used to colors, you can do nothing but color."

She was punning: "Color" means "dissemble": to hide one's real intentions, motives, and feelings.

Apelles said:

"Indeed, I fear that the colors I see will alter the color I have."

He may blush.

Apelles continued:

"But come, madam, will you draw near, for Alexander will be here soon.

"Psyllus, stay here at the window, and if anyone enquires for me, answer, *Non lubet esse domi.*"

The Latin means: "He doesn't like to be at home."

They exited into Apelles' art studio.

— 3.2 —

Psyllus stood outside Apelles' art studio.

He said to himself:

“It is always my master's fashion, when any beautiful gentlewoman is to be drawn within, to make me stay outside.”

Apelles liked to be alone with beautiful women.

Psyllus continued:

“But if he should paint Jupiter like a bull, like a swan, or like an eagle, then Psyllus with one hand must grind colors, and with the other he must hold the candle so Apelles can see to paint.”

Apelles often painted mythological themes.

The gods are shape-shifters, and Jupiter used this ability to have affairs with mortal women:

1) Disguised as a bull, Jupiter kidnapped the Phoenician woman Europa, who climbed on his back. He then swam to Crete, where Europa bore him a son: King Midas.

2) Disguised as a swan, Jupiter seduced Leda, who bore him two daughters: Helen, who later became known as Helen of Troy, and Clytemnestra, who married and later murdered Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces against the Trojans.

3) Disguised as an eagle, Jupiter kidnapped the beautiful boy Ganymede, who became his cupbearer, and, some say, his catamite. A catamite is a boy kept to serve as a sexual object for a homosexual man.

Psyllus continued:

“But let Apelles alone; the better he shadows her face, the more will he burn his own heart.

“Shadows” can mean 1) paints, and 2) protects from the sun.

Psyllus continued:

“And now if any man could meet with Manes, who, I dare say, looks as lean as if Diogenes dropped out of his nose —”

A proverb states: Hunger dropped out of his nose.

Manes entered the scene, just in time to hear Psyllus' last few words.

Manes said, “And here comes Manes, who has as much meat in his stomach as thou have honesty in thy head.”

“Then I hope thou are very hungry,” Psyllus said.

He was joking. If Manes had a stomach empty of food, then Psyllus would have a head empty of honesty.

“They who know thee, know that you are the type of person to wish me to be hungry — and know that you have a head empty of honesty,” Manes said.

“But don’t thou remember that we have certain liquor to confer with?” Psyllus asked.

They were supposed to meet at a tavern.

“Aye, but I have business,” Manes said. “I must go cry a thing.”

“Cry a thing” means “make a proclamation” — for example, about lost and found items.

“Why, what have thou lost?” Psyllus asked.

“That which I never had: my dinner,” Manes said.

“Foul lubber, will thou cry for thy dinner?” Psyllus asked.

A “lubber” is a dolt.

Psyllus was using “cry” in the sense of “weep.”

“I mean, I must cry,” Manes said. “I must cry not as one would say ‘cry,’ but ‘cry’ — that is make a noise.”

“Why, fool, that is all one,” Psyllus said, “for if thou cry, thou must necessarily make a noise.”

Manes said:

“Boy, thou are deceived. The word ‘cry’ has diverse meanings, and the word ‘cry’ may be assigned and applied to many things.

“The word ‘knave’ has only one meaning, and it can be applied only to thee.”

“Profound Manes!” Psyllus said.

Manes had won the battle of puns.

“We Cynics are mad fellows,” Manes said. “Didn’t thou find I did quip thee?”

Manes was a Cynic, like his master: Diogenes. Like his master, he could make a quip — a joke — about someone.

“No, truly!” Psyllus said. “Why, what’s a quip?”

“We great girders call it a short saying of a sharp wit, with a bitter sense in a sweet word,” Manes said.

“Girders” are “scoffers and scorning critics.” They insult people.

Some words that seem sweet can be bitter. Benjamin Franklin once ended a letter (that he never sent) in this way:

*“You and I were long Friends: You are now my Enemy, and I am*

*“Yours,”*

followed by his signature.

“How can thou thus divine, divide, define, dispute, and all so suddenly?” Psyllus asked.

“Wit will have its swing: It will go where it wants to go,” Manes said. “I am bewitched, inspired, inflamed, infected.”

“Well, then I will not tempt thy gibing spirit,” Psyllus said.

Manes said:

“Do not, Psyllus, for thy dull head will be but a grindstone for my quick wit, which if thou whet and sharpen with repartee and contradictions, *perjisti, actum est de te.*”

The Latin means: “Thou have perished; thou are finished.”

Manes continued:

“I have drawn blood at someone’s brains with a bitter bob — a bitter taunt.”

“Let me cross myself: for I will die if I cross — contradict — thee,” Psyllus said.

Characters in English Renaissance plays tend to be English, even when they are ancient Greeks. Here, Psyllus makes the sign of the cross three centuries before Jesus.

“Let me do my business, I myself am afraid lest my wit should wax warm, and then it must necessarily consume some hard head with fine and pretty jests,” Manes said. “I am sometimes in such a vein — such a mood — that for lack of some dull head to work on, I begin to gird and taunt myself.”

“May the gods shield me from such a fine fellow, whose words melt wits like wax,” Psyllus said.

“Well, then let us get to the matter,” Manes said. “In faith, my master means tomorrow to fly.”

That was the topic of the proclamation: Diogenes would fly the next day.

“It is a jest,” Psyllus said. “You are joking.”

“Is it a jest to fly?” Manes said. “If thou were to fly in jest, soon thou would repent it in earnest.”

Flying is serious business.

“Well, I will be the cryer,” Psyllus said.

Manes cried, “Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! All manner of men, women, or children, who will come tomorrow into the marketplace, between the hours of nine and ten, shall see Diogenes the Cynic fly.”

“Oyez” means: “Pay attention. Hear what I have to say.”

Psyllus cried:

“Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! All manner of men, women, or children, who will come tomorrow into the marketplace, between the hours of nine and ten, shall see Diogenes the Cynic —”

He did not finish the proclamation, but said:

“I do not think he will fly.”

“Bah, say ‘fly,’” Manes said.

“Fly,” Psyllus said.

“Now let us go,” Manes said, “for I will not see him again until midnight. I have a back way into his tub.”

“Which way do thou call the back way, when every way is open?” Psyllus said.

“I mean to come in at his back,” Manes said.

Hmm. Indelicate, that.

“Well, let us go away, so that we may return speedily,” Psyllus said.

They exited.

### — 3.3 —

Apelles and Campaspe talked together in Apelles’ art studio.

“I shall never draw your eyes well because they blind mine,” Apelles said.

“Why then, paint me without eyes, for I am blind,” Campaspe said.

She was going into art modeling blind: without knowing what she was doing. She had never been painted before.

Art modeling does require skill: Models have to remain motionless for long periods of time.

Love, however, is blind, as is Cupid. Campaspe may be in love.

“Were you ever shadowed — painted — before by anyone?” Apelles asked.

“No,” Campaspe said, “And I wish that you could so now shadow me that I might not be perceived by anyone.”

“Shadow” can mean “paint,” but Campaspe was saying that she wanted to be hidden by being in shadows.

“It would be a pity if so absolutely perfect a face should not furnish Venus’ temple among these pictures,” Apelles said.

Apelles painted beautiful women and goddesses. It would be a pity if Campaspe’s portrait were not among the other portraits of beauties whom Apelles had painted.

“What are these pictures?” Campaspe asked.

“This is Leda, whom Jove deceived while he was in the likeness of a swan,” Apelles said.

“A fair woman, but a foul deceit,” Campaspe said.

Leda was a beautiful woman, and Jupiter committed a foul — and fowl — deceit.

“This is Alcmena, unto whom Jupiter came in the shape of Amphytrion, her husband, and begat Hercules,” Apelles said.

“A famous son, but an infamous deed,” Campaspe said.

When Alcmena slept with Jupiter, she thought that she was sleeping with her husband.

In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Odysseus (his Roman name is Ulysses) talked to his wife, Penelope, after he killed all the suitors who had plagued her. Penelope had been waiting for her husband to return home for twenty years, and she did not want to make a mistake and sleep with the wrong man, or with a shape-shifting god. Odysseus proved that he was her husband by revealing his knowledge of their bed.

Penelope tried to trick Odysseus by telling a servant to bring out the bed that she and her husband shared, and Odysseus said:

“First I built my bedroom over the olive tree, and then I trimmed the olive tree to make a post for our bed. After I built the bed, I finished the rest of my palace. This is our secret sign, Penelope. No one should know about that bed. Not even the gods know about it — they can’t see through the walls and roof that I built before I built our bed.

“Penelope, is our bed still deeply rooted, or has a man been in the bedroom to cut the roots of our bed — and our marriage?”

Of course, the bed was still deeply rooted, and the bed is an important symbol of their deeply rooted marriage.

“He might do it because he was a god,” Apelles said.

If might makes right, then whatever the gods do is right because they are mighty.

“Nay, therefore it was evilly done, because he was a god,” Campaspe said.

Campaspe believed that the gods ought to obey a very strict moral code, but the ancient Greek and Roman gods were entirely capable of rape.

“This is Danae, into whose prison Jupiter drizzled a golden shower, and obtained his desire,” Apelles said, showing another painting.

Danae bore Jupiter a son: the hero Perseus.

“What gold can make one yield to desire?” Campaspe asked.

“This is Europa, whom Jupiter ravished,” Apelles said. “And this is Antiopa.”

In a shape of a satyr, Jupiter raped Antiopa, who bore him a son: Amphion, who helped build the walls of Thebes by playing music. Stones rose from the ground and fitted themselves into their positions in the walls without any other help than the music. Amphion had a twin brother, Zethus, whose father was mortal.

“Were all the gods like this Jupiter?” Campaspe asked.

“There were many gods like this Jupiter,” Apelles said.

“I think in those days love was well ratified and sanctioned among men on earth, when lust was so fully authorized by the gods in Heaven,” Campaspe said.

“Nay, you may imagine there were women surpassingly amiable and worthy to be loved, when there were exceedingly amorous gods,” Apelles said.

“If women were never so fair, men would be false,” Campaspe said.

“If women were never so false, men would be fond: amorous and foolish,” Apelles said.

“Never so” can mean “especially.”

“What counterfeit [What painting] is this, Apelles?” Campaspe asked.

“This is Venus, the goddess of love,” Apelles said.

“What! Are there also loving goddesses?” Campaspe asked.

“This is she who has power to command the very affections of the heart,” Apelles said.

“How is she hired and engaged for services: by prayer, by sacrifice, or by bribes?” Campaspe asked.

“By prayer, by sacrifice, and by bribes,” Apelles said.

“What prayer?” Campaspe asked.

“Vows irrevocable,” Apelles said.

“What sacrifice?” Campaspe asked.

“Hearts ever sighing, never dissembling,” Apelles said.

“What bribes?” Campaspe asked.

“Roses and kisses, but were you never in love?” Apelles asked.

“No, nor was love ever in me,” Campaspe said.

A person with a bawdy mind might think she had said, “No, nor was Love ever in me.”

“Love” with a capital L is Cupid.

“Then you have injured many!” Apelles said.

“How so?” Campaspe asked.

“Because you have been loved by many,” Apelles said.

“I have been flattered perhaps by some,” Campaspe said.

“It is not possible that a face so fair, and a wit so sharp, both without comparison, should not be apt to love,” Apelles said.

“If you begin to tip your tongue with cunning, I ask you to dip your pencil [your fine, tapered paintbrush] in colors,” Campaspe said, “and I ask you to fall to that which you must do, not that which you wish to do.”



Clitus and Parmenio, who were officers in Alexander the Great's army, talked together in the palace.

Clitus said, "Parmenio, I cannot tell how it comes to pass that in Alexander nowadays there grows an impatient kind of life. In the morning he is melancholy, and at noon he is solemn. At all times he is either more sour or more severe than he was accustomed to be."

Parmenio replied, "In kings' cases I prefer to doubt rather than conjecture, and I think it is better to be ignorant than inquisitive. Kings have long ears and long stretched-out arms, and in the heads of kings suspicion is a proof, and to be accused is to be condemned."

In other words: Kings have spies, and kings are overly suspicious, and so it is better not to know things that can get you in trouble with a king.

A being with long ears — an ass — can misinterpret things.

Clitus said, "Yet between us there can be no danger to find out the cause of Alexander's moods because we have no ill will that would make us reject a plausible explanation, such as these three:

"First, it may be an unquenchable thirst of conquering that makes Alexander unquiet.

"Second, it is not unlikely that his long ease here in Athens has altered his mood and character.

"Third, it is not impossible that he should be in love."

Parmenio said:

"In love, Clitus?"

"No, no, it is as far from his thought as treason is in ours.

"Alexander, whose always-waking eye, whose never-tired heart, whose body patient of labor, whose mind insatiable of victory has always been noted, cannot so soon be melted into the weak fancies of love.

"Aristotle told him there were many worlds, and Alexander, who longs to conquer all worlds, galls because he has not conquered even one world.

"But here he comes."

Alexander the Great and Hephestion entered the scene.

Alexander the Great said, "Parmenio and Clitus, I want you both to be ready to go into Persia on an embassy no less profitable to me than honorable to yourselves."

Alexander had not forgotten about his desire for conquest.

"We are ready for all commands," Clitus said. "We wish nothing else, but continually to be commanded."

Alexander the Great said:

"Well, then withdraw yourselves until I have further considered about this matter."

Clitus and Parmenio exited.

Alexander the Great then said:

“Now we will see how Apelles goes forward: I fear that nature has overcome art, and her countenance has overcome his cunning.”

In other words: I am afraid that Campaspe is too beautiful for Apelles to capture her beauty in paint.

“You love, and therefore think anything,” Hephestion said.

“But I am not so far in love with Campaspe as I am with Bucephalus, if the opportunity arises either of conflict or of conquest,” Alexander the Great said.

In the paragraph above, Bucephalus, Alexander’s war horse, is figuratively warfare and conquest.

Bucephalus was a beautiful horse, but no one could ride him. Alexander noticed that Bucephalus was afraid of its own shadow. Alexander therefore had the horse face the sun as he trained it. Soon, Bucephalus lost its fear of its own shadow.

“Occasion cannot be lacking, if will is not lacking,” Hephestion said.

In other words: If Alexander has the will to fight and conquer, he will not lack the opportunity to fight and conquer.

Hephestion said:

“Behold all Persia, which is swelling in the pride of its own power.

“Behold the Scythians, who are unworried about what courage or fortune can do to them.”

Alexander had both much courage and much good fortune, aka much good luck.

Hephestion said:

“Behold the Egyptians, who are dreaming in the soothsayings of their augurs, and gaping over the smoke of their beasts’ entrails.”

Augurs revealed the will of the gods. As a form of soothsaying, augurs would kill animals and examine their entrails.

In Book 1 of Homer’s *Iliad*, a plague fell on the Greeks after Agamemnon took a spear-bride who was the daughter of a priest of Apollo. Agamemnon then refused a ransom for the priest’s daughter.

At a meeting that Achilles, the best warrior in the Trojan War, called, the soothsayer Chalcas revealed the cause of the plague:

“Apollo is not angry at us because of a lack of sacrifice or a vow that we failed to fulfill. Instead, the god is angry because of the actions of Agamemnon. The priest of Apollo acted correctly when he tried to ransom his daughter, but Agamemnon disrespected the old priest. Agamemnon should have respected the old priest and the god — Apollo — the priest serves. Now, because of Agamemnon’s disrespect to him, Apollo shoots his arrows at us and kills us with plague. The deaths will not stop until we give the old priest his daughter — without taking shining treasure as ransom. She must be given back to her father with no price paid for

her freedom. Both she and a hundred bulls need to be sent to the city of Chryse; the bulls must be sacrificed to Apollo. Only then will Apollo be appeased and stop the killing.”

Spear-brides are among the spoils of war. Warriors who fought well would be awarded with treasure, animals, and women. A young, pretty woman would become a spear-bride, aka sex-slave.

Campaspe was among the spoils of war, and she became a slave. Earlier, however, Alexander gave her and other slaves their freedom. In history, Campaspe was Alexander’s favorite concubine. He had sex with her, but he was not married to her.

Hephestion continued:

“All these, Alexander, are to be subdued, if that world has not slipped out of your head, that world which you have sworn to conquer with that hand.”

As they talked, they walked to the marketplace, where Diogenes the Cynic and his tub were located.

Alexander the Great said:

“I confess the labor’s fit for Alexander, and yet recreation is necessary among so many assaults, bloody wounds, and intolerable troubles. Give me a little time, if not to sit, yet to breathe and catch my breath. And don’t doubt that Alexander can, when he will, throw affections as far from him as he can cowardice.

“But behold Diogenes talking with someone at his tub.”

Crysus, a beggar, asked Diogenes for money: “One penny, Diogenes. I am a Cynic.”

“He who first gave thee anything made thee a beggar,” Diogenes said.

“Why, if thou will give nothing, nobody will give thee anything,” Crysus said.

“I lack nothing, until the springs dry, and the earth perish,” Diogenes said.

“I gather for the gods,” Crysus said.

“And I don’t care for those gods who lack money and want money,” Diogenes said.

“Thou who will give nothing are not a true Cynic,” Crysus said.

“Thou who will beg anything are not a true Cynic,” Diogenes said.

He went back inside his tub.

“Alexander, King Alexander, give a poor Cynic a groat,” Crysus said.

A groat is a small amount of money.

“It is not for a king to give a groat,” Alexander the Great said.

“Then give me a talent,” Crysus said.

A talent is a large amount of money.

Alexander the Great said:

“It is not for a beggar to ask for a talent.

“Go away!”

Crysus exited.

Alexander the Great and Hephestion went to the art studio in which were Apelles and Campaspe and stood in front of it.

Alexander the Great then called, “Apelles.”

“Here I am,” Apelles said.

Campaspe was with him.

Alexander the Great said to her, “Now, gentlewoman, doesn’t your beauty put the painter to his trump?”

To paint Campaspe, Apelles must put forth his best effort: He must play his trump card.

Modestly, Campaspe said, “Yes, my lord. Seeing so disordered a countenance [face], he fears he shall shadow [paint] a deformed counterfeit.”

Campaspe went back inside the art studio.

Alexander the Great said to himself:

“I wish that he could color the life — her personality — along with painting the features.”

He then said:

“And I think, Apelles, if you were as cunning as report says you are, you may paint flowers as well with sweet smells as fresh colors, observing in your mixture of paint such things as should draw near to their savors — their scents.”

“Your majesty must know that it is no less hard to paint savors, than virtues; colors can neither speak nor think,” Apelles said.

“Where do you first begin when you draw any picture?” Alexander the Great asked.

“The face in as just compass and proper proportion as I can,” Apelles said.

“I would begin with the eye, as a light to all the rest,” Alexander the Great said.

“If you will paint, since you are a king, your majesty may begin where you please; but as you would be a painter, you must begin with the face,” Apelles said.

Kings can do whatever they want; good painters must do what will result in a good painting.

“Aurelius would in one hour color four faces,” Alexander the Great said.

“I marvel that he did not color four faces in half an hour,” Apelles said.

“Why? Is it so easy?” Alexander the Great asked.

“No, but he does it so homely and so roughly: His work is unsophisticated, and so he can work fast.”

“When will you finish Campaspe?” Alexander the Great asked.

“I will never finish her portrait, for always in absolute beauty there is something above the ability of art to capture it,” Apelles said.

“Why shouldn’t I by labor and practice be as skillful as you, Apelles?” Alexander the Great asked.

Apelles answered, “May God forbid that you should have cause to be as skillful as Apelles!”

“I think four colors are sufficient to shadow any countenance, and so it was in the time of Phydias,” Alexander the Great said.

Some ancient Greek painters used only four colors to complete their paintings: black, red, yellow, and white.

Apelles said:

“Then men had fewer fancies, and women had not as many favors.”

Modern women — that is, the women of Apelles’ day — were much more fashion-conscious and used more colors in their makeup and clothing than ancient women did.

Apelles continued:

“Nowadays, if the hair of her eyebrows is black, the hair of her head must yet be yellow.

“The attire of her head must be different from the clothing of her body, else the picture would seem like the blazon — a painted coat of arms — of ancient armory, not like the sweet delight of newly found amiableness and beauty.

“Just as in elaborate flower beds, a diversity of odors makes a sweeter scent, or as in music a diversity of strings causes a more delicate harmony and accord, so in painting, the more colors, the better counterfeit, observing black for a background and foundation, and the rest for grace.”

“Lend me thy charcoal-pencil, Apelles. I will color, and thou shall judge my work,” Alexander the Great said.

A charcoal-pencil is a piece of charcoal used for drawing.

“Here,” Apelles said.

“The coal breaks,” Alexander the Great said.

“You press too hard,” Apelles said.

“Now it does not make a black mark,” Alexander the Great said.

“You press too soft,” Apelles said.

“This is awry,” Alexander the Great said.

“Your eye goes not with your hand,” Apelles said.

Alexander’s eye and hand were not working together.

“Now it is worse,” Alexander the Great said.

“Your hand goes not with your mind,” Apelles said.

Alexander’s hand and mind were not working together.

Alexander the Great said:

“Nay, if all is too hard or too soft, and if there are so many rules and regards, and if one’s hand, one’s eye, and one’s mind must all draw together, then I would rather be arranging troops for a battle than blotting a board.

“But how have I done here?”

“Like a king,” Apelles said.

Alexander the Great said:

“I think so, but nothing could be more unlike a painter.

“Well, Apelles, the portrait of Campaspe is finished as I wish, so dismiss her as your model, and bring immediately her counterfeit [painted portrait] after me.”

“I will,” Apelles said.

Alexander the Great and Hephestion walked out of the studio.

“Now Hephestion, doesn’t this matter cotton and succeed as I wish?” Alexander the Great said. “Campaspe looks pleasantly, liberty will increase her beauty, and my love shall advance her honor.”

“I will not contradict your majesty, for time must wear out that which love has wrought, and reason must wean that which appetite has nursed,” Hephestion said.

Wean? Nursed? Hephestion was subtly calling Alexander’s judgment immature.

Campaspe walked out of the studio.

Alexander the Great said, “How stately she passes by, yet how soberly! A sweet consent in her countenance is paired with a chaste disdain, desire is mingled with coyness and shyness, and I cannot tell what to call it, but she has a curst yielding modesty!”

In other words: Campaspe is beautiful and calm with good judgment. She appears to be soft and yielding, but she also has a determined will that keeps her from doing wrong.

“Let her pass,” Hephestion said.

He wanted Campaspe to pass out of Alexander’s life.

“So she shall for the fairest on the earth,” Alexander the Great said.

Campaspe could pass for — be regarded as — the most beautiful woman on earth.

They exited.

Psyllus and Manes walked together to Apelles' art studio and stood in front of it.

"I shall be hanged for tarrying so long," Psyllus said.

Psyllus and Manes had been proclaiming that Diogenes would fly the next day.

"I pray God my master has not flown before I come," Manes said.

This is ambiguous:

1) I hope that my master will not have flown in the sky before I get there.

2) I hope that my master will not have departed hastily before I get there.

"Leave, Manes! My master is coming," Psyllus said.

Manes exited.

Apelles came outside from his studio.

"Where have you been all this while?" Apelles asked.

"Nowhere but here," Psyllus said.

"Who has been here since I went inside my studio?" Apelles asked.

"Nobody," Psyllus said.

"Ungracious wag — foolish boy! I perceive you have been loitering. Was Alexander nobody?" Apelles said.

"He was a king," Psyllus said. "I meant no mean body."

A mean body is a person whose parents are from a mean — low — social class.

"I will beat your body with a cudgel for it, and then I will say it was 'nobody,' because it was no honest body. Go inside!" Apelles said.

Psyllus exited.

Alone, Apelles, who was in love with Campaspe, said to himself:

"Unfortunate Apelles, and therefore unfortunate because you are Apelles!

"Have thou by drawing her beauty brought to pass that thou can scarcely draw thine own breath? And by so much the more have thou increased thy concerns and worries, by how much the more thou have showed thy cunning artistic skill.

"Wasn't it sufficient to behold the fire and warm thee, but with Satyrus thou must kiss the fire and burn thyself?"

A satyr — a half-man, half-goat creature — saw a fire and wanted to hug and kiss it, but Prometheus warned him not to because he would be burned.

Apelles continued:

"O Campaspe, Campaspe, art must yield to nature, reason must yield to appetite, wisdom must yield to affection.

“Could Pygmalion entreat by prayer to have his ivory turned into flesh, and yet Apelles cannot obtain by lamentations to have the picture of his love changed to life?”

Alexander the Great loved the living Campaspe, and so Apelles was hoping that Venus would turn his painting of Campaspe into a second living Campaspe.

Apelles continued:

“Is painting portraits so far inferior to carving sculpture? Or do thou, Venus, more delight to be hewed with chisels, than shadowed with colors?”

“What Pygmalion, or what Pyrgoteles, or what Lysippus is he who ever made thy face as fair as I, or spread thy fame as far as I? Perhaps thou, Venus, in this envy my art, thinking that in coloring my sweet Campaspe, I have left no place by cunning and skill to make thee as amiable and beautiful as I made Campaspe.”

Perhaps Apelles had already created his masterpiece, and now he could not paint as well as he had painted Campaspe.

Pygmalion, Pyrgoteles, and Lysippus were all sculptors, and Pyrgoteles was also a gem-cutter.

Pygmalion carved a marble statue of a beautiful woman, and he fell in love with it. He prayed to Venus to make the statue living flesh, Venus granted his prayer, and Pygmalion and the live woman (and former statue) lived together happily ever after.

Apelles continued:

“But alas! She is the paramour to a prince. Alexander the monarch of the earth has both her body and her affection. For what is it that kings cannot obtain by prayers, threats, and promises?”

“Won’t she think it better to sit under a cloth of estate — the canopy over the throne — like a queen, than in a poor shop like a housewife? And won’t she esteem it sweeter to be the concubine of the lord of the world, than the spouse to a painter in Athens?”

“Yes, yes, Apelles, thou may swim against the stream with the crab, and feed against the wind with the deer, and peck against the steel with the cockatrice.”

It is easier to swim downstream than upstream.

Deer are safer when the wind blows toward them the scent of their enemy.

A cockatrice, aka a basilisk, was a half-cock, half-serpent mythological creature whose look could kill. If it looked into a mirror, it would die.

Apelles continued:

“Stars are to be looked at, not reached at. Princes are to be yielded unto, not contended with. Campaspe is to be honored, not obtained, and she is to be painted, not possessed by thee.

“O fair face! O unhappy hand! And why did thou draw so fair a face?”

The beautiful face belonged to Campaspe; the unhappy hand belonged to Apelles, who had painted Campaspe’s beautiful face.



Apelles continued:

“O beautiful countenance, the express image of Venus, but somewhat fresher: She is the only example of that eternity, which Jupiter dreaming of asleep, could not conceive again once he awakened.”

Campaspe was so beautiful that Jupiter can only dream of her.

Apelles continued:

“Blush, Venus, for I am ashamed to finish my painting of thee.

“Now I must paint things impossible for my level of skill, but agreeable with my emotions. I must paint deep and hollow sighs, sad and melancholy thoughts, wounds and slaughters of my imagination. I must paint a life posting to death, a death galloping from life, a wavering constancy, an unsettled resolution, and what but these must I paint, Apelles?

“But as they who are shaken with a fever are to be warmed with clothes, not with groans, and as he who melts away in a consumption is to be cured by cullices [by medicinal broths], not by conceits [not by daydreams], so the feeding canker — destructive caterpillar — of my care and anxiety, the never dying worm of my heart, is to be killed by counsel and advice, not by cries, and by the applying of remedies, not by the replying of reasons.

“And since in desperate cases, there must be used medicines that are extreme, I will hazard that little life which is left to me to restore the greater part that is lost, and this shall be my first plan and medicine, for wit and intelligence must work where authority is not.

“As soon as Alexander has viewed this portrait, I will by a ruse give it a blemish, so by that means she may come again to my shop and model for me so I can repair the blemish; and then it would be as good to utter my love, and die with denial, as to conceal it, and live in despair.

Apelles then sang this song:

*“Cupid and my Campaspe played*

*“At cards for kisses, Cupid paid;*

*“He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,*

*“His mother’s doves, and team of sparrows;*

*“Loses them, too; then, down he throws*

*“The coral of his lip, the rose*

*“Growing on’s [on his] cheek (but none knows how),*

*“With these, the crystal of his brow,*

*“And then the dimple of his chin:*

*“All these did my Campaspe win.*

*“At last, he set [bet] her both his eyes;*

*“She won, and Cupid blind did rise.*

*“O Love! Has she done this to thee?”*

*“What shall (Alas!) become of me?”*

Campaspe is a good card player. She wins, and Cupid pays.

## CHAPTER 4 (CAMPASPE)

### — 4.1 —

It was the next day: the day that Diogenes was supposed to fly.

Solinus, Psyllus, and Granichus talked together in the marketplace, near Diogenes' tub. Solinus was a citizen of Athens.

"This is the place, the day, and the time that Diogenes has appointed that he will fly," Solinus said. "This is something I will not miss witnessing!"

"I will not lose the opportunity to see the flight of so fair a fowl as Diogenes is, even if my master would beat with a cudgel my 'nobody,' as he threatened earlier," Psyllus said.

When Psyllus takes an unpermitted leave of absence, he is a nobody, as in, "Nobody is here where Psyllus is supposed to be."

"What, Psyllus? Will the beast wag his wings today?" Granichus asked.

Psyllus said:

"We shall hear, for here comes Manes."

He called:

"Manes, will it be? Will it happen?"

Manes walked over to him.

He said, "Be! It would be best for him to be as cunning as a bee, or else shortly he will not be at all."

"How is he equipped to fly?" Granichus asked. "Has he feathers?"

"Thou are an ass! Capons, geese, and owls have feathers," Manes said.

Capons are associated with cuckolds, geese are associated with fools, and owls are associated with bad omens.

Manes continued:

"He has found Daedalus' old waxen wings, and he has been piecing them — mending and enlarging them — this month, because he is so broad in the shoulders."

By the way, the name "Plato" is actually a nickname meaning "broad." Some people think that he was broad in the shoulders. Some people joke that he was fat.

Daedalus was an inventor, and he created the labyrinth in which the Minotaur, whose mother was Pasiphae, was kept.

Pasiphae was guilty of bestiality: having sex with an animal. She was a Queen of Crete who fell in love with a bull, so she commissioned Daedalus to create an artificial cow for her to creep into. The bull had sex with the artificial cow (and with Pasiphae), and Pasiphae conceived and gave birth to the Minotaur, a mythical half-human, half-bull creature that

feasted on human flesh. After Pasiphae gave birth to the Minotaur, Daedalus built the labyrinth that housed the Minotaur.

Androgeos, the son of King Minos and Queen Pasiphae of Crete, competed in athletic contests against Athenian athletes and won, but the Athenian losers were jealous of his victories and murdered him. As a result of the murder, King Minos demanded that the Athenians periodically pay a tribute to Crete of young men and young women. These young people were put in the labyrinth, and the Minotaur killed them and feasted on their bodies.

Eventually, Theseus of Athens arrived to kill the Minotaur. Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, helped him by giving him a spool of string that Theseus used to get out of the maze after he had killed the Minotaur.

Because Daedalus had given Ariadne the idea of the spool of string, he was imprisoned with his son, Icarus, and he fashioned wings made out of wax and feathers so that they could fly away from the island where they were imprisoned. He warned his son not to fly too high, for if he did, the sun would melt the wax, the feathers would fall out of the wings, and he would fall into the sea and drown.

This is exactly what happened. Icarus became excited because he was flying, he flew too high, the wax of his wings melted, the feathers fell out of the wings, and he drowned.

Manes continued:

“O you shall see him cut the air even like a tortoise.”

A fable told about a tortoise that two cranes tried to help find new water. The cranes held the ends of a stick in their mouths, and the tortoise held onto the stick with its teeth. The cranes warned the tortoise not to speak, but the tortoise heard some villagers laughing at him as he was high in the air. Angry, the tortoise opened his mouth to insult the villagers, and he fell.

“I think that so wise a man should not be so mad,” Solinus said. “His body must necessarily be too heavy to fly.”

“Why, he has eaten nothing this week but cork and feathers,” Manes said.

Psyllus whispered to Manes, “Touch him, Manes.”

A touch in fencing scores a point. Psyllus wanted Manes to score a point against Solinus by telling him a tall tale.

“He is so light that he can scarcely keep himself from flying at midnight,” Manes said.

Witches and birds of ill omen fly at midnight.

Many people entered the scene, hoping to see Diogenes fly.

“See, they begin to flock, and look, my master bustles himself to fly,” Manes said.

Diogenes came out of his tub.

He berated the crowd members:

“You wicked and bewitched Athenians, whose bodies make the earth groan, and whose breaths infect the air with stench.

“Did you come to see Diogenes fly? Diogenes comes to see you sink.

“You call me ‘Dog,’ and so I am, for I long to gnaw the bones in your skins.

“You call me a hater of men. No, I am a hater of your way of life. Your dissolute lives, not fearing death, will prove your desperate deaths, not hoping for life after death.”

In Christian despair, people lose their hope for salvation and life after death.

Diogenes continued:

“What else do you do in Athens but sleep in the day, and surfeit — overindulge — in the night? You are back gods in the morning with pride, and in the evening you are belly gods with gluttony!”

By “back gods,” Diogenes may simply mean that they lie on their back as they oversleep.

Proud backs don’t bend, and people lying on their backs in bed have straight backs.

Diogenes continued:

“You flatter kings, and call them gods. Now speak the truth about yourselves, and confess you are devils!

“From the bee you have not taken the honey, but you have taken the wax to make your religion, framing it to the time, not to the truth.”

Wax is malleable: It can be shaped. The Athenians are molding their religion to suit their desires. Think of prosperity theology, where the focus is on getting wealth for yourself, not on helping other people. Who is more likely to be a good Christian? A Franciscan monk who has taken a vow of poverty? Or a preacher who has a private jet?

But let’s acknowledge the alternative prosperity wisdom of John Wesley, who advised Christians: “Get all you can. Save all you can. Give all you can.”

Diogenes said:

“Your filthy lust you color — you disguise — under a courtly color of love, and injuries abroad you color under the title of policies at home.”

In other words: Athenians commit crimes abroad, but at home they call them justified political maneuvers.

Diogenes continued:

“And secret malice creeps under the name of public justice.”

In the USA, politicians pass laws that show a hatred of women, but they justify the laws by saying that they are protecting the rights of a clump of cells.

Diogenes continued:

“You have caused Alexander to dry up springs and plant vines, to sow rocket [an edible plant reputed to be an aphrodisiac] and weed endif [endive], to shear sheep and enshrine foxes.”

Among other things, the Athenians prefer wine to water. They prefer sophistication to lack of sophistication. They also like to take advantage of the innocent and to make heroes of manipulators.

Diogenes continued:

“All conscience is seeled at Athens.”

Falcons had their eyes seeled — sewn shut — to facilitate their training.

Diogenes continued:

“Swearing comes from a hot mettle, aka character.

“Lying comes from a quick wit.

“Flattery comes from a flowing tongue.

“Undecent talk comes from a merry disposition.

“All things are lawful at Athens.

“Either you think there are no gods, or I must think you are no men.

“You build as though you should live forever, and you surfeit — overindulge — as though you should die tomorrow.

“No one teaches ‘true philosophy’ except Aristotle, because he was the king’s schoolmaster!”

According to Diogenes, Aristotle gets a good reputation as a philosopher because he associates with Alexander.

Diogenes continued:

“O times! O men! O corruption in manners!”

Cicero also decried the state of the society and the men in his time.

Diogenes continued:

“Remember that green grass must turn to dry hay.

“When you sleep, you are not sure to wake again, and when you rise, you are not certain to lie down again (because you may die in the meantime).

“Look never so high — your heads must lie level with your feet. Thus have I flown over and surveyed your disordered lives, and if you will not amend your manners, I will study to fly further from you, so that I may be nearer to honesty.”

“Thou rave, Diogenes, for thy life is different from thy words,” Solinus said. “Didn’t I see thee come out of a brothel house? Wasn’t that a shame?”

“It was no shame to go out, but it was a shame to go in,” Diogenes said.

“It would be a good deed, Manes, to beat thy master,” Granichus said.

“It would be as good a deed for you to eat my master,” Manes said.

One of the people in the crowd asked, “Have thou made us all fools, and will thou not fly?”

“I tell thee, unless thou be honest,” Diogenes said. “I will fly.”

He would flee from Athens because it was so corrupt.

People in the crowd shouted, “Dog! Dog! Take a bone!”

“Thy father need fear no dogs, but dogs need fear thy father,” Diogenes said.

People in the crowd shouted, “We will tell Alexander that thou reprove him behind his back.”

“And I will tell him that you flatter him before his face,” Diogenes said.

People in the crowd shouted, “We will cause all the boys in the street to hiss in disapproval at thee.”

“Indeed, I think the Athenians have their children ready for any vice because they are Athenians,” Diogenes said.

“Why, master, do you intend not to fly?” Manes asked.

“No, Manes, not without wings,” Diogenes said.

He meant biological wings, not the wings of Daedalus.

“Everybody will account you a liar,” Manes said.

“No, I promise you they won’t, for I will always say that the Athenians are evil,” Diogenes said.

If Diogenes tells the truth — that the Athenians are evil — he ought not to be called a liar.

“I don’t care,” Psyllus said. “It was entertainment enough for me to see these old huddles hit home.”

Diogenes had thoroughly insulted the old huddles: the people in the crowd. And they had thoroughly insulted him.

“Nor do I care,” Granichus said.

“Come, let us go!” Psyllus said. “And hereafter whenever I intend to rail upon and criticize any crowd of people openly, it shall be given out that I will fly.”

He would imitate Diogenes by announcing that he would fly, and after a crowd of people had gathered, he would denounce them.

They exited.

#### — 4.2 —

Campaspe was alone in a room in Apelles’ house.

She said to herself:

“Campaspe, it is hard to judge whether thy choice is more unwise, or thy chance — thy luck and fortune — is more unfortunate.

“Do thou prefer — but wait, don’t utter in words that which makes thine ears glow with thoughts.

“Bah! It’s better that thy tongue wag than thy heart break! Has a painter crept further into thy mind than a prince? Has Apelles crept further into thy mind than Alexander?”

“Fond, foolish wench! The baseness of thy mind betrays the meanness of thy birth.

“But alas! Passionate love is a fire, which kindles as well in the bramble as in the oak; and it catches hold where it first alights, not where it may best burn.

“Larks that climb aloft in the air build their nests below on the earth; and women who cast their eyes upon kings may place their hearts upon vassals. A needle will become thy fingers better than a lute, and a distaff is fitter for thy hand than a scepter.

“Ants live safely, until they have gotten wings, and juniper is not blown up until it has gotten a high top.”

Small shrubs bend in hard winds and survive; tall trees don’t bend and are blown down.

Campaspe continued:

“The people of a low and mean estate are without worry and anxiety as long as they continue to be without pride.

“But here comes Apelles, in whom I wish there were the like love and affection for me that I have for him.”

Apelles entered the scene.

He said, “Gentlewoman, the misfortune I had with your picture will put you to some pains to sit again to be painted.”

The “misfortune” was the deliberate “accident” that resulted in a blemish on the picture.

“It is small pains for me to sit still, but infinite for you to draw still — to draw continually,” Campaspe said.

“No, madam! To paint Venus was a pleasure, but to shadow [paint] the sweet face of Campaspe is a heaven!” Apelles said.

Campaspe said, “If your tongue were made of the same flesh that your heart is, your words would be as your thoughts are, but it is such a common thing among all you men to commend that often for fashion’s sake you call them beautiful whom you know are black and ugly.”

In other words: Apelles’ words do not match his thoughts.

This culture regarded white skin as more beautiful than black skin.

“What might men do to be believed?” Apelles asked.

“Whet their tongues on their hearts,” Campaspe said.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “whet” as “Something that incites or stimulates desire; an incitement or inducement to action,” but the first recorded use is in 1698.



If their tongues were in conformity with their heartfelt thoughts and emotions, as they would be if their tongues were stimulated with the love that is in their hearts, men would say what they think.

“So they do, and they speak as they think,” Apelles said.

“I wish they did!” Campaspe said.

Campaspe wanted Apelles to say that he loved her.

“I wish they didn’t!” Apelles said.

Apelles believed that his love for Campaspe was hopeless because Alexander the Great was his rival for her love, and so he did not want to say he loved her.

“Why, would you have them dissemble?” Campaspe asked.

“Not in love, but their love,” Apelles said.

A loving couple ought not to dissemble to each other, but in such a situation as Apelles found himself in, where his love was hopeless, he did not want to reveal his love.

Apelles then asked, “But will you give me permission to ask you a question without offence?”

“As long as you will answer another question for me without excuse,” Campaspe said.

“Whom do you love best in the world?” Apelles asked.

“He who made me last in the world,” Campaspe said.

“That was a god,” Apelles said.

God created Eve after he had created Adam.

“I had thought it had been a man,” Campaspe said.

Apelles had made a portrait of her.

Campaspe then asked, “But whom do you honor most, Apelles?”

“The thing that is most like you, Campaspe,” Apelles said.

“My picture?” Campaspe asked.

“I dare not venture upon your person,” Apelles said. “But come, let us go in, for Alexander will think it a long time until we return.”

They went into the art studio.

— 4.3 —

Clitus and Parmenio talked together in a room in the palace.

Earlier, Alexander the Great had ordered them to be prepared to undertake an embassy. Alexander the Great had said, “Parmenio and Clitus, I want you both to be ready to go into Persia on an embassy no less profitable to me than honorable to yourselves.”

But now Clitus said:

“We hear nothing about our embassy, which was a pretext perhaps to blear our eyes, or tickle our ears, or inflame our hearts.”

In other words: The talk about an embassy was perhaps simply a pretext to keep Clitus and Parmenio from being impatient about Alexander’s stay in Athens because they would think that Alexander was planning an excursion into Persia.

“But what does Alexander do in the meantime, except use for tantara, sol, fa, la; use for his hard couch, down beds; and use for his handful of water, his standing cup of wine?”

Alexander was trading the hard life of a conqueror for the soft life of a king. Instead of the tantara of military music, he was hearing the sol, fa, la of love songs. Instead of a hard bed in a military camp, he was sleeping in a down bed. Instead of drinking a handful of water on a battlefield, he was drinking lots of wine in Athens.

A standing cup is a cup with a stem and a base on which it stands.

Parmenio said:

“Clitus, I dislike this new delicacy and pleasing peace, for what else do we see now than a kind of softness in every man’s mind?

“What else do we see now than bees that make their hives in soldiers’ helmets because the helmets are not being used?

“What else do we see now than our steeds furnished with ornamental footcloths of gold, instead of useful saddles of steel?

“More time is required to scour the rust of our weapons than was accustomed to be used in subduing the countries of our enemies.”

Weapons that are frequently used in battle have little rust.

Parmenio continued:

“Since Alexander fell from his hard armor to his soft robes, behold the face of his court:

“Youths who were accustomed to decorate their shields with images of victory, now engrave posies — short mottos — of love in their rings.

“They who were accustomed on trotting horses to charge the enemy with a lance, now in comfortable coaches ride up and down to court ladies.

“Instead of sword and shield to hazard their lives, they use pen and paper to paint their loves.

“Yes, such a fear and faintness have grown in court that they wish rather to hear the blowing of a horn calling them to hunt than the sound of a trumpet calling them to fight.”

Parmenio now addressed King Philip of Macedon, who had died in 336 B.C.E.

“O Philip, if thou were alive to see this alteration — thy men turned into women, thy soldiers turned into lovers, and gloves worn in velvet caps instead of plumes worn in graven helmets — thou would either die among them out of sorrow or destroy them out of anger.”

The gloves worn in velvet caps were gifts from women.

Clitus said, “Stop, Parmenio, lest in speaking what does not become thee, thou feel what thou will not like.”

Parmenio was speaking words that a tyrant could interpret as being traitorous. A tyrant can punish a traitor or “traitor” with torture and death.

Clitus continued:

“Truth is never without a scratched face, whose tongue although it cannot be cut out, yet it must be tied up.”

Yes, telling the truth to power can be dangerous. Clitus was advising Parmenio to metaphorically tie up his tongue.

Parmenio said:

“It grieves me not a little for Hephestion, who thirsts for honor, not ease; but such is his fortune and nearness in friendship to Alexander that he must lay a pillow under his head, when he would prefer to put a shield in his hand.

“But let us go in, in order to see how well it becomes them to tread the measures of music in a dance — them who were previously accustomed to set the order for a march.”

They exited.

— 4.4 —

Apelles and Campaspe talked together in Apelles’ studio. They had confessed their love for each other.

“I have now, Campaspe, almost made an end,” Apelles said.

He had almost finished repairing the painting.

“You told me, Apelles, you would never end,” Campaspe said.

“I shall never end my love for you, for it shall be eternal,” Apelles said.

“That is, neither to have beginning nor to have ending,” Campaspe said.

Scholastic philosophers defined “eternity” as “having no beginning or end.” Apelles’ love for Campaspe, of course, had a beginning.

“You are disposed to misinterpret what I say,” Apelles said. “I hope you do not mistrust me.”

“What will you say if Alexander perceives your love for me?” Campaspe asked.

“I will say it is no treason to love,” Apelles said.

“But what if he will not allow thee to see my person?” Campaspe asked.

“Then I will gaze continually on thy picture,” Apelles said.

“That will not feed thy heart,” Campaspe said.

“Yet it shall fill my eye,” Apelles said. “Besides the sweet thoughts, the sure hopes and expectations, and thy declared faith and love will cause me to embrace thy shadow [painting]

continually in my arms, and by strong imagination I will make a substance [a living Campaspe] of the shadow [picture].”

He was thinking of Pygmalion, whose love for a statue brought it to life (with the assistance of the goddess Venus).

“Well, I must be gone,” Campaspe said, “but assure yourself that I would rather be in thy shop, grinding colors, than in Alexander’s court, following higher fortunes.”

Apelles exited into his shop.

Alone, before going to Alexander’s palace, Campaspe said to herself:

“Foolish wench, what have thou done?”

“Thou have done that — alas! — which cannot be undone, and therefore I fear that I am undone — that I am ruined.

“But being content is such a life that I don’t care for abundance.”

Being with Apelles made her happy; she did not need riches.

Campaspe continued:

“O Apelles, thy love comes from the heart, but Alexander’s love from the mouth.

“The love of kings is like the blowing of winds, which whistle sometimes gently among the leaves, and then quickly turn the trees up by the roots; or fire, which warms afar off, and burns near at hand; or the sea, which makes men hoist their sails in a flattering calm and makes them cut their masts in a rough storm.”

Cutting the masts was a quick way to get rid of sails in strong winds that could cause the ship to capsize.

Campaspe continued:

“Kings place love and affection by times, by policy, by appointment and arrangement.

“If kings frown, who dares call them unconstant and unfaithful?”

“If kings betray secrets, who will call them untrue?”

How many readers thought of Donald Trump after reading this?

Campaspe continued:

“If kings fall to other loves, who does not tremble if the kings call them unfaithful?”

“In kings there can be no love, except love given to queens, for they must meet in majesty as near as they do in love and affection.

“It is necessary — it is the best policy — to stand aloof from kings’ love, Jove, and lightning.”

— 4.5 —

Apelles came out of his art studio.

He said to himself:

“Now, Apelles, gather thy wits together: Campaspe is no less wise than fair, and thyself must be no less cunning than faithful.

“It is no small matter to be a rival to Alexander.”

Alexander’s page entered the scene.

The page said, “Apelles, you must come away quickly with the picture; the king thinks that now you have painted it, you play with it.”

In other words: The painting is finished. Stop tinkering with it.

“If I would play with pictures, I have enough at home,” Apelles said.

“There are none perhaps you like as well,” the page said.

“It may be the case that I have painted none as well as I painted this one,” Apelles said.

“I have known many fairer faces than that of Campaspe,” the page said.

“And I have known many better boys than you,” Apelles said.

## CHAPTER 5 (CAMPASPE)

— 5.1 —

Diogenes was in his tub in the marketplace.

Sylvius, Perim, Milo, Trico, and Manes walked over to him.

Sylvius was a citizen of Athens, and Perim, Milo, and Trico were his sons.

“I have brought my sons, Diogenes, to be taught by thee,” Sylvius said.

“What can thy sons do?” Diogenes asked.

“You shall see their qualities and accomplishments,” Sylvius replied.

He then said to his son Perim:

“Dance, sirrah!”

Perim danced.

Sylvius asked Diogenes, “How do you like this? Does he dance well?”

“The better, the worser,” Diogenes said.

In other words: The better you dance, the worse it is for you.

Or: The better you do it, the worse you do it.

Apparently, Diogenes did not regard dancing as an activity worth pursuing.

Someone might say today: The more experienced you become at watching junk television, the worse off you are.

(But dancing is much more valuable than watching junk television.)

“The music is very good,” Sylvius said.

“The musicians are very bad,” Diogenes said. “They only study to have their strings in tune, never framing their way of life to order.”

Diogenes believed it was more important to have one’s moral life in tune than to have one’s music strings in tune.

Sylvius said:

“Now you shall see the other.”

He said to his son Milo:

“Tumble, sirrah!”

Milo tumbled. He was a gymnast.

Diogenes laughed.

Sylvius asked, “How do you like this? Why do you laugh?”

“I laugh to see a wag — a boy — who was born to break his neck by destiny, practice it by art,” Diogenes said.

Gymnastics is a beautiful art and sport, but it is dangerous. In 1988, Julissa Gomez was paralyzed while vaulting. In 1989, Adriana Duffy was paralyzed while vaulting. In 1998, Sang Lan was paralyzed while vaulting.

“This dog will bite me,” Milo said. “I will not be a student with him.”

“Don’t be afraid, boy: Dogs eat no thistles,” Diogenes said.

Thistles are noxious and prickly, and according to Diogenes, so is Milo.

“I marvel what kind of dog thou are, if thou are a dog,” Perim said.

“When I am hungry, I am a mastiff,” Diogenes said, “and when my belly is full, I am a spaniel.”

“Do thou believe that there are any gods, thou who are so dogged?” Sylvius asked.

“Dogged” means perverse and spiteful.

“I must necessarily believe that there are gods,” Diogenes said, “for I think that thou are an enemy to them.”

“Why so?” Sylvius asked.

“Because thou have taught one of thy sons to rule his legs, and not to follow learning,” Diogenes said, “and thou have taught the other to bend his body every way, and his mind no way.”

“Thou do nothing but snarl, and bark like a dog,” Perim said.

“It is the readiest way to drive away a thief,” Diogenes said.

“Now you shall hear the third, who sings like a nightingale,” Sylvius said.

“I don’t care, for I have a nightingale herself to sing to me,” Diogenes said.

“Sing, sirrah!” Sylvius said.

Trio sang about the nightingale:

*“What bird so sings, yet so does wail?*

*“O ’tis the ravished nightingale.”*

In mythology, Procne was married to Tereus, and she bore him a son named Itys. Tereus then raped Procne’s sister, Philomela, and he cut out her tongue so that she could not tell anyone what had happened. Philomela wove a tapestry that displayed pictures that told the story of the rape. When Procne saw the tapestry and realized that her husband had raped her sister, she was so angry that she killed his and her son, Itys, cooked him, and served him to her husband. When Tereus realized what she had done, he grabbed an axe and pursued Procne and Philomela in order to kill them. They prayed to the gods, and the gods changed Procne into a swallow, and they changed Philomela into a nightingale. Ovid tells this story in Book 6 of his book *Metamorphoses*.

Trio continued his song, singing about the nightingale:

*“Jug, jug, jug, jug, tereu, ’ she cries,*

*“And still her woes at midnight rise.*

*“Brave prick song!”*

“Jug” is a representative word for one of the nightingale’s song-notes.

“Tereu” is the vocative of Tereus.

“Brave prick song!” means “excellent written music!”

A folk belief states the nightingale sings as it pricks its breast against a thorn.

Trio continued his song, singing now about the lark:

*“Who is’t now we hear?”*

*“None but the lark so shrill and clear;*

*“How at Heaven’s gates she claps her wings,*

*“The morn not waking till she sings.”*

Trio continued his song, singing now about the robin:

*“Hark, hark, with what a pretty throat*

*“Poor robin red-breast tunes his note;”*

Trio continued his song, singing now about the cuckoo:

*“Hark how the jolly cuckoos sing*

*“Cuckoo, to welcome in the spring;*

*“Cuckoo, to welcome in the spring.”*

“Lo, Diogenes! I am sure thou cannot do as much as my son can,” Sylvius said.

Diogenes, who knew he could not, said, “But there is never a thrush but can.”

“What have thou taught Manes, thy serving-man?” Sylvius asked.

“To be as unlike thy sons as is possible,” Diogenes said.

“He has taught me to fast, lie hard, and run away,” Manes said.

“Lie hard” means 1) tell big lies, and 2) lie on the hard ground to sleep.

“What do thou say, Perim?” Sylvius asked. “Will thou be a student with Diogenes as your master?”

“Aye, as long as he will teach me first to run away,” Perim said.

“Thou need not be taught because thy legs are so nimble,” Diogenes said.



Perim was a dancer.

“What do thou say, Milo?” Sylvius asked. “Will thou be a student with Diogenes as your master?”

“Nay, hold your peace; he shall not,” Diogenes said.

“Why?” Sylvius asked.

“There is not room enough for him and me to tumble both in one tub,” Diogenes said.

Hmm. Indelicate, that.

“Well, Diogenes, I perceive that my sons cannot endure thy manners.”

“I thought no less, when they knew my virtues,” Diogenes said.

“Farewell, Diogenes, thou need not have to eat scraped roots, if thou would follow Alexander,” Sylvius said.

“Nor would thou need to follow Alexander, if thou would eat scraped roots,” Diogenes said.

Do as Alexander the Great wants you to do, and you will eat well.

Do as you want to do, and you will be free.

— 5.2 —

Alone, Apelles said to himself:

“I fear, Apelles, that thine eyes have blabbed that which thy tongue dared not reveal. What little regard for thy own safety had thou!

“While Alexander viewed the counterfeit [the picture] of Campaspe, thou stood gazing on her countenance [her face].

“If he spies your love for her, or only suspects it, thou must necessarily perish twice. Physically you will perish because of Alexander’s hate, and metaphorically you will perish because of thine own love.

“Thy pale looks when he blushed with pleasure when seeing Campaspe’s picture, thy sad countenance when he smiled, thy sighs when he asked questions, may breed in him a jealousy, and perhaps a frenzy.

“O love! I never before knew what thou were, and now thou have changed me so that I don’t know what I myself am!

“Only this I know: that I must endure intolerable passions, for unknown — that is, inexperienced — pleasures.

“Don’t dispute the cause, wretched Apelles, but yield to it: For it is better to melt with desire than to wrestle and contend with love. Cast thyself on thy filled-with-worries bed, be content to live unknown and inexperienced, and die unfound and undiscovered.

“O Campaspe, I have painted thee in my heart. Painted? Nay, contrary to my art of painting, I have imprinted thee in my heart; and I have imprinted thee in such deep characters that nothing

can raze it out, unless it rubs my heart out.”

— 5.3 —

Milectus, Phrygius, and Lais walked over to Diogenes, who was in his tub.

Lais was a courtesan, aka prostitute, and Milectus and Phrygius were soldiers in Alexander’s army.

Milectus said, “It shall go hard, but this peace shall bring us some pleasure.”

“It shall go hard” means “there will be trouble” if something doesn’t happen as I want it to happen.

What he wanted to have happen was sexual pleasure.

“It” and “hard” had double meanings.

Phrygius said, “Down with arms, and up with legs: This is a world for the nonce — for this one purpose.”

One meaning of “arms” is “weapons.”

A prostitute’s legs are frequently up.

Lais said:

“Sweet youths, if you knew what it was to save your sweet blood, you would not so foolishly go about to shed it in war.

“What delight can there be in gashing, to make foul scars in fair faces and crooked maims in straight legs?

“You youths do this as though men born well formed by nature would on purpose become deformed by folly; and all indeed for a newfound term, which is called ‘valiant,’ a word that breeds more quarrels than the sense — the word’s meaning — can breed commendation.”

“It is true, Lais, a featherbed has no equal, and good drink makes good blood,” Milectus said. “And shall pelting, violent words spill it?”

“It” refers both to the drink and to the blood.

Phrygius said, “I mean to enjoy the world, and to draw out my life at the wiredrawer’s, not to curtail it off at the cutler’s.”

A wiredrawer draws metal into wires.

Phrygius wanted a long life, not one cut short — curtailed — by a maker of knives and swords — a cutler.

Lais said:

“You may talk about war, speak big, conquer worlds with great words, but stay at home, where instead of alarms and calls to battles, you shall have dances, and instead of hot battles with fierce men, you shall have gentle skirmishes with fair women.

“These pewter coats of armor can never sit and fit as well as satin doublets. Believe me, you cannot conceive the pleasure of peace, unless you despise the rudeness and violence of war.”

Milectus said:

“That is true.

“But look at Diogenes prying — looking at us — over his tub.”

He called:

“Diogenes, what do thou say to such a morsel?”

He was referring to Lais, a morsel of female flesh.

“I say, I would spit it out of my mouth because it should not poison my stomach,” Diogenes replied.

According to Laertius, “One of [Diogenes’] sayings was [...] that good-looking courtesans were like poisoned mead.”

Mead is an alcohol-containing drink that is made with fermented honey and water.

“Thou speak as thou are: a rude Cynic,” Phrygius said. “It is no meat for dogs.”

“I am a dog, and philosophy berates me from carrion,” Diogenes said.

His philosophy as a Cynic kept him away from rotting flesh (carrion) by berating him if he got near it.

Angry at being insulted, the anti-war prostitute Lais said to Diogenes, “Uncivil wretch, whose manners are answerable and conformable to thy calling as a Cynic, the time was that thou would have had my company, had it not been, as thou said, too dear.”

“Dear” can mean “expensive.”

“I remember there was a thing that I repented me of,” Diogenes said, “and now thou have told it, it was indeed too dear of nothing, and thou dear to — beloved by — nobody.”

“Too dear of nothing” means “even free is too high a price to pay for it” or “why pay anything for nothing?”

“Get down, villain,” Lais said, as if she were speaking to a dog, “or I will have thy head broken.”

“Will you crouch down?” Milectus asked Diogenes.

Phrygius said:

“Avant, cur! Get lost!”

Diogenes sank down in his tub.

Phrygius then said:

“Come, sweet Lais, let us go to some place and possess peace.

“But first let us sing. There is more pleasure in the tuning of a voice than there is in a volley of shot.”

They sang.

Milectus said, “Now let us make haste to leave, lest Alexander finds us here.”

They exited.

— 5.4 —

Alexander the Great and Hephestion talked together in the marketplace, near Diogenes’ tub. A page was present.

Alexander the Great said, “I think, Hephestion, you are more melancholy now than you were accustomed to be, but I perceive it is all because of Alexander. You can neither brook and tolerate this peace, nor my pleasure, but now be of good cheer because although I close my eyes, I do not sleep.”

Hephestion said, “I am not melancholy, nor am I well content, for I don’t know how it happened, but there is such a rust crept into my bones with this long period of ease that I fear I shall not scour it out with infinite labors.”

Alexander the Great said:

“Yes, yes, if all the travails and travels of conquering the world will set either thy body or mine in tune, we will undertake them.

“But what do you think about Apelles? Did you ever see anyone so perplexed? He neither answered directly to any question, nor looked steadfastly upon anything. I bet my life the painter is in love.”

Hephestion said:

“It may be, for commonly we see that it is normal in artificers and artists to be enamored of their own works, as Archidamus was of his wooden dove, Pygmalion of his ivory image, and Arachne of his wooden swan.

“This is especially true of painters, who playing with their own imaginations, now desiring to draw a glancing eye, then a rolling eye, now a closing eye, still mending it, never ending it, until they are caught with it; and then — the poor souls! — they kiss the colors with their lips, with which before they were loath to taint their fingers.”

Alexander the Great said:

“I will find out whether Apelles is in love.

“Page, go speedily for Apelles, tell him to come here, and when you see us earnestly in talk, suddenly cry out, ‘Apelles’ shop is on fire!’”

“It shall be done,” the page said.

“Don’t forget your lesson,” Alexander the Great said. “Don’t forget what I told you to say.”

The page exited.

“I wonder what your trick shall be,” Hephestion said.

“The event shall show that,” Alexander the Great said.

“If he is in love, then I pity the poor painter,” Hephestion said.

“Don’t pity him, please; set aside that severe gravity and tell me what you think about love,” Alexander the Great said.

“As the Macedonians do of their herb beet, which looking yellow in the ground, and black in the hand, think it better seen than touched,” Hephestion said.

“But what do you imagine love is?” Alexander the Great asked.

“A word by superstition thought a god, by use turned to a humor, by self-will made a flattering madness,” Hephestion said.

One meaning of “humor” is “mood.”

The god of love is Cupid.

Alexander the Great said:

“You are too hard hearted to think so of love.

“Let us go to Diogenes.”

After they had walked over to Diogenes’ tub, Alexander the Great said:

“Diogenes, thou may think it somewhat of a big deal that Alexander comes to thee again so soon.”

“If you have come to learn, you could not come soon enough,” Diogenes said. “If you have come to laugh, you have come too soon.”

“It would better become thee to be more courteous, and frame thyself to please others,” Hephestion said.

“And it would better become you to be less courteous,” Diogenes said. “You would be better if you would dare to displease.”

“What do thou think of the time we have here?” Alexander the Great asked.

“That we have little, and lose much,” Diogenes said.

“If someone is sick, what would thou have him do?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Be sure that he does not make his physician his heir,” Diogenes said.

“If thou might have thy will, how much ground would content thee?” Alexander the Great asked.

“As much as you in the end must be contented with,” Diogenes said.

“What! A world?” Alexander the Great asked.

“No, the length of my body,” Diogenes said.

He meant a grave.

“Hephestion, shall I be a little pleasant and joke with him?” Alexander the Great asked.

“You may, but he will be very perverse with you,” Hephestion said.

Alexander the Great said:

“It doesn’t matter. I cannot be angry with him.

“Diogenes, I ask thee, what do thou think of love?”

“A little worser than I can of hate,” Diogenes said.

“And why?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Because it is better to hate the things that cause one to love than to love the things that give occasion of hate,” Diogenes said.

“Why, aren’t women the best creatures in the world?” Alexander the Great asked.

“Next to men and bees,” Diogenes said.

“What do thou dislike chiefly in a woman?” Alexander the Great asked.

“One thing,” Diogenes said.

“What?” Alexander the Great asked.

“That she is a woman,” Diogenes said.

Alexander the Great said:

“In my opinion thou were never born from a woman because thou think such hard opinions about women, but now comes Apelles, who I am sure is as far from thy thoughts as thou are from his cunning.

“Diogenes, I will have thy cabin moved nearer to my court because I will be a philosopher.”

“And when you have done so, please move your court further from my cabin because I will not be a courtier,” Diogenes said.

Apelles entered the scene.

Alexander the Great said:

“But here comes Apelles.”

Diogenes disappeared into his tub.

Alexander the Great then asked:

“Apelles, what piece of work have you now in hand?”

“None in hand, if it pleases your majesty, but I am devising a platform — that is, I am planning a picture in my head,” Apelles said.

“I think your hand put it in your head,” Alexander the Great said. “Is it nothing about Venus?”

“No, but it is something above Venus,” Apelles said.

The page shouted, “Apelles, Apelles, look around you — your shop is on fire!”

“Aye me!” Apelles said. “If the picture of Campaspe has been burnt, I am ruined!”

Alexander the Great said:

“Stay, Apelles, no haste: It is your heart that is on fire, not your shop; and if Campaspe does hang there, I wish she were burnt.

“But do you have the picture of Campaspe?”

“It’s likely that you love her well, since you don’t care if all else is lost, as long as she is safe.”

Making a king angry can be dangerous, so Apelles lied:

“I don’t love her.”

He continued:

“But your majesty knows that painters in their last — most recent — works are said to excel themselves, and in this I have so much pleased myself, that the shadow [painting] as much delights me as an artificer, as the substance does others who are amorous.”

Alexander the Great replied:

“You lay your colors grossly — your pretense of not loving the real Campaspe is obvious. Although I could not paint in your shop, I can spy into your excuse.

“Don’t be ashamed, Apelles, for it is a gentleman’s sport to be in love.”

Alexander ordered some attendants:

“Tell Campaspe to come here.”

He then said to Apelles:

“I might have been made privy to your affection; although my counsel had not been necessary, yet my countenance — my permission — for you to love might have been thought requisite and necessary. But Apelles, in truth, thou did love secretly and under hand, yes, and under Alexander’s nose, and — but I say no more.”

Still wary, Apelles said, “Apelles does not love so, but he lives to do as Alexander wants him to.”

Campaspe entered the scene.

“Campaspe, here is news,” Alexander the Great said. “Apelles is in love with you.”

“It pleases your majesty to say so,” Campaspe said.

Alexander the Great whispered to Hephestion:

“Hephestion, I will test her, too.”

He then said out loud:

“Campaspe, for the good qualities I know in Apelles, and the virtue I see in you, I am determined you shall enjoy one another.

“What do you say, Campaspe, would you say, ‘Aye,’ to marriage with Apelles?”

“Your handmaid must obey, if you command,” Campaspe replied.

Like Apelles, Campaspe was wary of angering Alexander.

Alexander the Great whispered to Hephestion, “Don’t you think, Hephestion, that she would like to be commanded?”

“I am no thought-catcher,” Hephestion quietly replied, “but I guess unhappily and unfavorably when it comes to your love for her.”

He could see that Campaspe wanted to marry Apelles, not be Alexander’s concubine.

Alexander the Great said out loud to Campaspe, “I will not force marriage, where I cannot compel love.”

He was teasing her by saying that he would not force her to marry Apelles.

Wanting to marry Apelles, Campaspe said, “But your majesty may raise the issue, where you are willing to have a match.”

Alexander the Great said:

“Believe me, Hephestion, these parties are agreed; they would have me be both priest and witness.

“Apelles, take Campaspe.”

Apelles hesitated.

Alexander the Great asked Apelles:

“Why don’t you move over to her?”

He then said:

“Campaspe, take Apelles.”

Campaspe hesitated.

Alexander the Great asked Campaspe:

“Won’t this match be made?”

He then said to Apelles and Campaspe:

“If you are ashamed one of the other, you shall never come together by my consent.”

He then said:

“But don’t dissemble.

“Campaspe, do you love Apelles?”



“Pardon me, my lord,” she said, “but I do love Apelles!”

Alexander the Great said:

“Apelles, it would be a shame for you, being loved so openly by so fair a virgin, to say the contrary.

“Do you love Campaspe?”

Apelles said, “I love only Campaspe!”

Alexander the Great said:

“These are two loving worms, Hephestion!

“I perceive that Alexander cannot subdue the passions and affections of men, although he conquers their countries.

“Love falls like a dew as well upon the low grass as upon the high cedar. Sparks have their heat, ants have their gall, flies have their spleen.

“Well, enjoy one another.

“I give her thee frankly, Apelles. Thou shall see that Alexander makes but a toy and trifle of love, and he leads affection and desire in fetters; and he chains fancy, using it as if it were a fool to make entertainment for him, or a minstrel to make him merry.

“It is not the amorous glance of an eye that can settle an idle thought in the heart.

“No, no, it is children’s play: a life for seamsters and scholars. The seamsters pricking — sewing — in clothing have nothing else to think about, and the scholars picking fancies out of books have little else to marvel at.

“Go, Apelles, take with you your Campaspe.

“Alexander is cloyed and satiated with looking on that which thou marvel at.”

According to Alexander the Great’s words, he had grown tired of Campaspe.

Apelles knelt and said, “I give thanks to your majesty on bended knee. You have honored Apelles.”

Campaspe curtsied and said, “I give thanks to you with my bowed heart. You have blessed Campaspe.”

Apelles and Campaspe exited.

Alexander the Great said:

“Page, go warn Clitus and Parmenio and the other lords to be in a state of readiness.

“Let the trumpet sound, strike up the drum, and I will immediately go into Persia.”

The page exited.

Alexander the Great then asked:

“How are things now, Hephestion? Is Alexander able to resist love as he chooses?”

“The conquering of Thebes was not as honorable as the subduing of these thoughts of love,” Hephestion said.

Alexander the Great said:

“It would be a shame that Alexander should desire to command the world, if he could not command himself.

“But come, let us go. I will test whether I can better bear my hand with my heart than I could with my eye.

“And good Hephestion, when all the world is won, and every country is thine and mine, either find me out another country to subdue, or on my word I will fall in love.”

## NOTES (CAMPASPE)

### Diogenes

Recommended Good Reading:

Joshua J. Mark, "The Life of Diogenes of Sinope in Diogenes Laertius." *World History Encyclopedia*. 6 August 2014.

<https://www.worldhistory.org/article/740/the-life-of-diogenes-of-sinope-in-diogenes-laertiu/>

This is the Project Gutenberg translation; it is a free download:

Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*. Translator: C. D. Yonge.

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/57342/57342-h/57342-h.htm>

This link will take you to the chapter on Diogenes the Cynic:

[https://www.gutenberg.org/files/57342/57342-h/57342-h.htm#Page\\_224](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/57342/57342-h/57342-h.htm#Page_224)

Plutarch. *Plutarch's Lives*. With an English Translation by Bernadotte Perrin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1919.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0243%3Achapter%3D1%3Asection%3D1>

Plutarch. *Life of Alexander*. Trans. John Dryden.

<http://classics.mit.edu/Plutarch/alexandr.html>

### Campaspe and Apelles

Their story is told in Pliny, 35.36. Here is an excerpt:

*It was a custom with Apelles, to which he most tenaciously adhered, never to let any day pass, however busy he might be, without exercising himself by tracing some outline or other; a practice which has now passed into a proverb. It was also a practice with him, when he had completed a work, to exhibit it to the view of the passers-by in some exposed place; while he himself, concealed behind the picture, would listen to the criticisms that were passed upon it; it being his opinion that the judgment of the public was preferable to his own, as being the more discerning of the two. It was under these circumstances, they say, that he was censured by a shoemaker for having represented the shoes with one shoe-string too little. The next day, the shoemaker, quite proud at seeing the former error corrected, thanks to his advice, began to criticize the leg; upon which Apelles, full of indignation, popped his head out, and reminded him that a shoemaker should give no opinion beyond the shoes, a piece of advice which has equally passed into a proverbial saying. In fact, Apelles was a person of great amenity of manners, a circumstance which rendered him particularly agreeable to Alexander the Great, who would often come to his studio. He had forbidden himself, by public edict, as already stated, to be represented by any other artist. On one occasion, however, when the prince was in his studio, talking a great deal about painting without knowing anything about it, Apelles quietly begged that he would quit the subject, telling him that he would get laughed at by the boys who were there grinding the colours: so*

great was the influence which he rightfully possessed over a monarch, who was otherwise of an irascible temperament. And yet, irascible as he was, Alexander conferred upon him a very signal mark of the high estimation in which he held him; for having, in his admiration of her extraordinary beauty, engaged Apelles to paint Pancaste [Campaspe] undraped,<sup>50</sup> the most beloved of all his concubines, the artist while so engaged, fell in love with her; upon which, Alexander, perceiving this to be the case, made him a present of her, thus showing himself, though a great king in courage, a still greater one in self-command, this action redounding no less to his honour than any of his victories. For in thus conquering himself, not only did he sacrifice his passions in favor of the artist, but even his affections as well; uninfluenced, too, by the feelings which must have possessed his favorite in thus passing at once from the arms of a monarch to those of a painter. Some persons are of opinion that Pancaste was the model of Apelles in his painting of Venus Anadyomene.

50: Also known as “Campaspe,” and “Pacate.” She was the favorite concubine of Alexander, and is said to have been his first love.

Source of Above: Bostock, John, and Riley, H.T., transl. Pliny the Elder. *The Natural History*. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1855. Accessed 16 October 2022.

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0137%3Abook%3D35%3Achapter%3D36#note50>

— 1.1 —

### Timoclea

In the play, Timoclea is treated well. But in history, she was treated badly (and then acted courageously) before Alexander saw her.

This is from Plutarch’s “Life of Alexander”:

*Among the other calamities that befell the city, it happened that some Thracian soldiers, having broken into the house of a matron of high character and repute, named Timoclea, their captain, after he had used violence with her, to satisfy his avarice as well as lust, asked her, if she knew of any money concealed; to which she readily answered she did, and bade him follow her into a garden, where she showed him a well, into which, she told him, upon the taking of the city, she had thrown what she had of most value. The greedy Thracian presently stooping down to view the place where he thought the treasure lay, she came behind him and pushed him into the well, and then flung great stones in upon him, till she had killed him. After which, when the soldiers led her away bound to Alexander, her very mien and gait showed her to be a woman of dignity, and of a mind no less elevated, not betraying the least sign of fear or astonishment. And when the king asked her who she was, “I am,” said she, “the sister of Theagenes, who fought the battle of Chaeronea with your father Philip, and fell there in command for the liberty of Greece.” Alexander was so surprised, both at what she had done and what she said, that he could not choose but give her and her children their freedom to go whither they pleased.*

Source: Plutarch. *Life of Alexander*. Trans. John Dryden. Accessed 16 October 2022.

<http://classics.mit.edu/Plutarch/alexandr.html>

— 1.3 —

The source of the quotation from Laertius is this book:

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. R.D. Hicks, Trans. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heineman. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925. P. 25.

— 1.3 —

Source of Zhang Liang Story: Wang Xuanming, *Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong*. Singapore: Asiapac Books PTE LTD, 1993, pp. 2-8. Retold by David Bruce.

— 1.3 —

In 1.3, the philosophers discuss the existence of God, mentioning the Prime Mover.

For Your Information:

**St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274): The Five Ways**

*One of the greatest geniuses of all time is Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), author of the Summa Theologica, which gave the Catholic Church much of its philosophy and theology. Certainly Aquinas is recognized for his valuable contributions to the Catholic Church, as he was canonized in 1323.*

*Aquinas believed in a twofold approach to knowledge of God. First, he believed in revelation: The Bible provides us with knowledge of God. Second, Aquinas engages in natural theology: Through our reason and our knowledge of Nature, we can arrive at knowledge of God. For example, Aquinas believed that there are five ways to prove the existence of God. Each of these five ways is based upon a fact found in Nature.*

*Aquinas assumes a principle of reason that we call the Principle of Sufficient Reason. According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, there is an explanation or cause for everything. According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, when something exists, we can ask for a reason sufficient to explain the existence of that thing.*

**The Five Ways**

**I. The Argument From Change**

*Take a look at Nature. What do you see? One of the things that you will see is that things change. The seasons change, an infant grows up into an old person, day succeeds night, and night succeeds day — change is constant. Therefore we can ask, “Why is there change? What is a reason to explain the existence of change?” According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, there is a reason sufficient to explain the fact of change.*

*Aquinas comes up with two possible answers:*

*1. We may refer to an infinite series of changes. This thing changed because that thing changed, and that thing changed because this other thing changed, etc. Saint Thomas rejects this answer because “then there would be no first mover, and, consequently, no other mover, seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are moved by the first mover . . . .”*

2. *An Unmoved Mover, or Prime Mover, exists. The Unmoved Mover is itself unchanging, but it is the source from which all particular instances of change proceed. Since there are only two possibilities, and Aquinas has rejected the first possibility, the second possibility must be true.*

*In Aquinas' words, "Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other; and this everyone understands to be God."*

## **II. The Argument From Causality**

*The Argument From Causality works the same way as the Argument From Change. Take a look at Nature. What do you see? One of the things you will see is that things are caused. One thing causes another, and that causes another. The frost causes leaves to die and turn colors, and that in turn causes the leaves to fall off the tree. The weather in part causes the leaves to decompose and to return to the soil, from whence it fertilizes plants. Causation is all around us. Therefore we can ask, "Why does causation exist?" According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, there is a reason sufficient to explain the fact of causation.*

*Once again, there are two possibilities:*

1. *We may refer to an infinite series of causes. This thing was caused by that thing, and that thing in turn was caused by this other thing, etc. Saint Thomas rejects this answer because he believes that there must be a first cause that starts the series of causes. Without the first cause, there would be no effect that would be the second cause.*

2. *A First Cause, which is itself uncaused, exists. The First Cause is itself uncaused, but it is the source from which all particular instances of causation proceed. Since there are only two possibilities, and Aquinas has rejected the first possibility, the second possibility must be true.*

*In Aquinas' words, "Therefore it is necessary to admit a first ... cause, which everyone gives the name of God."*

## **III. The Argument From Possibility and Necessity**

*The Argument From Possibility and Necessity follows the same pattern as Aquinas' first two arguments. Look around at Nature: What do you see? Everywhere you see contingent being. Definition: A contingent being is a merely possible being; there is no necessity for it to exist. My existence is contingent. I am here because my parents exist. My parents in turn exist because of their parents. A desk is an example of contingent being. The desk did not have to exist — it exists only because someone decided to make it. Contingency exists throughout Nature. Therefore, we can ask, "Why does contingency exist?" According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, there is a reason sufficient to explain the fact of contingency.*

*Once again, there are two possibilities:*

1. *We may refer to an infinite series of instances of contingency. This thing is contingent upon that thing, and that thing in turn is contingent upon this other thing, etc. Saint Thomas rejects this answer because if everything is contingent, then at one*

*time nothing existed. If that had happened, then nothing would exist today. But of course something exists today, so it is not true that everything is contingent.*

*2. A Necessary Being, or Prime Mover, which is itself not contingent upon anything, exists. The Necessary Being is itself not contingent, but it is the source from which all particular instances of contingency proceed. Since there are only two possibilities, and Aquinas has rejected the first possibility, the second possibility must be true.*

*In Aquinas' words, "Therefore we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God."*

#### **IV. The Argument From Gradations of Nature**

*Once again, we have an argument with the same structure as the first three arguments. Look at Nature. What do you see? You see varying degrees of excellence. This being is better than that being. This being is truer than that being. This being is nobler than that being. On every hand, we see varying degrees of excellence. Therefore, we can ask, "Why are there degrees of excellence?" According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, there is a reason sufficient to explain the fact of varying degrees of excellence.*

*Once again, there are two possibilities:*

*1. We may refer to an infinite series of degrees of excellence. This being is better than that being, and that being in turn is better than this other being, and so on to infinity. Saint Thomas rejects this answer because there must be a standard — a "maximum" — according to which we judge things.*

*2. Perfect Being exists. Perfect Being has all manner of perfections, and through our knowledge of Perfect Being, we are able to recognize imperfect being, or varying degrees of excellence, in Nature. Since there are only two possibilities, and Aquinas has rejected the first possibility, the second possibility must be true.*

*In Aquinas' words, "Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God."*

#### **V. The Argument From Design**

*The fifth way of proving that God exists is a little different from the first four arguments. Look at Nature. What do you see? Everywhere you see design. For example, we need eyes to see, and we have eyes. Everything in Nature — including natural bodies that lack knowledge — seems to have an end; everywhere we see design. Therefore, we can ask, "Why is there design in Nature?" According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason, there is a reason sufficient to explain design.*

*Once again, there are two possibilities:*

*1. All the design we see in Nature occurred by chance. In an infinite amount of time, the universe arrived at the stage of development we see today. Saint Thomas rejects this answer because Nature appears to be working toward an end — the end being the development of intelligent life that can become children of God. And nothing can work*

toward an end “unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence.”

2. There must be a Designer of Nature, and this Designer uses intelligence to achieve His aims. Since there are only two possibilities, and Aquinas has rejected the first possibility, the second possibility must be true.

In Aquinas’ words, “Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.”

### **Conclusion**

Put all the proofs together, and we know that God is unchanging (the First Way), uncaused (the Second Way), necessary (the Third Way), perfect (the Fourth Way), and providential (the Fifth Way).

**Note:** The quotations by Aquinas that appear in this essay are from his *Summa Theologica*, Question 2, Article 3, in *Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas*, edited by Anton C. Pegis.

Source: David Bruce. *Philosophy for the Masses: Religion*.

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/376026>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10Pkuj2HT64Ug5oq6dy3fc5oqnnVAFi7I/view?usp=sharing>

For Your Information:

### **C. S. Lewis (1898-1963): The Argument From Morality**

C. S. Lewis wrote about the Moral Argument in his book *Mere Christianity* (1952). Of course, Lewis is famous for many things, not just for being a defender of the faith in many of his books. For example, he wrote the wonderful children’s series *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which I have read several times. In addition, *Shadowlands* is a nonfiction movie about Lewis’ marriage to the American poet Joy Davidman.

*The Moral Argument* argues that God is the best explanation for Humankind’s experience of a Moral Law within themselves. As such, it uses the Principle of Sufficient Reason. We find an objective moral law within ourselves; what is a reason sufficient to explain the existence of this moral law?

It is an important presupposition of the Moral Argument that the Moral Law is objective and not subjective. If the Moral Law is subjective, then ethics is a matter of opinion. What I believe is right, is right for me, and what you believe is right, is right for you. The same applies to what each of us believes to be wrong.

One consequence of subjectivism is that the same thing can be both right and wrong at the same time. Thus, I may think that rape is morally right and you may think that rape is morally wrong, and if subjectivism is the correct ethical theory, then both of us are correct in what we believe. Thus, rape is morally right for me but morally wrong for you.

Objectivism, however, denies this. According to objectivism, moral rules exist that apply to everyone, no matter what we may believe about them. Thus, according to



*objectivism, the truth of the statement “Rape is wrong” is not a matter of opinion. The statement is either true or false. If the statement is true, then this moral rule applies to everyone, at every time, in every place, no matter what they may believe about the statement.*

*Note that although objectivism requires that ethical statements (e.g. “Rape is wrong” and “Murder is wrong”) be either true or false — they are not a matter of opinion — objectivism does not require the belief that every human being have an innate moral sense that tells them what to do. (We may have to be educated about what is morally right and what is morally wrong; after all, we have to be taught calculus, which is definitely objective.) In addition, objectivism does not require that all persons naturally and easily know what is morally right and what is morally wrong. Objectivism merely requires that ethical statements be true or false. We may not know whether a certain ethical statement is true or false — objectivism merely requires that it be true or false.*

*As you know, Lewis will argue that God is the best explanation of the Moral Law. However, many people would like to argue that human beings are the source of the Moral Law. Of course, if this were true, then the Moral Law would be subjective and not objective. An argument for human beings as the source of the Moral Law could state that certain moral laws came into effect because they were useful in helping communities to exist. However, a subjectivist who argues this could not argue that it is objectively better for communities to exist than not to exist. Lewis believes in an objective moral law that he calls the Law of [Human] Nature or the Law of Decent Behavior.*

*Lewis starts his argument from human experience: There are two odd things we notice about members of the human species:*

- 1) They have an idea about the kind of behavior they ought to practice.*
- 2) They do not, in fact, always practice this kind of behavior.*

*Because of these two things, the human species is much different from a stone or a tree. After all, a stone or a tree does not think about what it ought to do; in addition, a stone or a tree always does what it is supposed to do. If you drop a stone, the stone does not suddenly take thought and remember that now it is supposed to fall to the ground. Instead, it is a nonthinking thing and obeys unquestioningly the law of gravity.*

*We know that there is a Moral Law that human beings are aware of, but that stones and trees are not aware of. The next question is, What is a reason sufficient to explain the existence of the Moral Law?*

*Lewis writes that there are two main views of the existence of the universe:*

- 1) The Materialist view: According to this view, the universe just happened to exist.*
- 2) The Religious view: According to this view, “what is behind the universe is more like a mind than it is like anything else we know. That is, it is conscious, and has purposes, and prefers one thing to another. And on this view it made the universe, partly for purposes we do not know, but partly, at any rate, in order to produce creatures like itself — I mean, like itself to the extent of having minds.”*

*In trying to decide which view is correct, we cannot have recourse to science, because science cannot answer such questions as these: Why is there a universe? and Why does it go on as it does? and Has it any meaning?*

*The only way that we can answer this question is from our observation of ourselves. Within ourselves, we find a Moral Law — a Moral Law that the physical universe is unable to account for. The best explanation of the Moral Law is that a mind is behind the universe, making the universe what it is.*

*The Materialist view of the universe cannot explain the existence of the Moral Law because, as Lewis states, you can hardly imagine a bit of matter telling you what is right and what is wrong. (According to Materialism, all reality consists of matter and the manifestations of matter. Materialism has no room for a nonmaterial mind or spirit.)*

*The only other view of the universe is the Religious view, which states that there is a Mind behind the universe Who directs the universe. Lewis writes, “The only way in which we could expect [the Mind] to show itself would be inside ourselves as an influence or a command trying to get us to behave in a certain way.” Of course, this is an exact description of the Moral Law we find within ourselves. Lewis’ conclusion at this point is this:*

*“I am not yet within a hundred miles of the God of Christian theology. All I have got at this point is a Something which is directing the universe, and which appears in me as a law urging me to do right and making me feel responsible and uncomfortable when I do wrong. I think we have to assume it is more like a mind than it is like anything else we know — because after all the only other thing we know is matter and you can hardly imagine a bit of matter giving instructions.”*

*Lewis uses logical reasoning in his essay. He writes that there are two candidates for explaining the existence of the Moral Law: Materialism and Religion. Since Materialism cannot explain why the Moral Law exists, then the Religious answer must be the correct one.*

*In a short note, Lewis mentions an alternative to the Materialist view and the Religious view: the Life-Force Philosophy (aka Creative Evolution and Emergent Evolution). According to this view, “the small variations by which life on this planet ‘evolved’ from the lowest forms to Man were not due to chance but to the ‘striving’ or ‘purposiveness’ of a Life-Force.” Lewis asks people who hold this view “whether by Life-Force they mean something with a mind or not.” If they do, then they really hold the Religious view. If they don’t, then they are talking nonsense, for what sense does it make to say that “something without a mind ‘strives’ or has ‘purposes’?”*

*Lewis completely rejects the Life-Force Philosophy. He writes, “The Life-Force is a sort of tame God. You can switch it on when you want, but it will not bother you. All the thrills of religion and none of the cost. Is the Life-Force the greatest achievement of wishful thinking the world has yet seen?”*

**Note:** *The quotations by C. S. Lewis that appear in this essay are from his Mere Christianity (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952).*

Source: David Bruce. *Philosophy for the Masses: Religion*.

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/376026>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10Pkuj2HT64Ug5oq6dy3fc5oqnnVAFi7I/view?usp=sharing>

— 2.2 —

For Your Information:

But since that philosopher took not the slightest notice of Alexander, and continued to enjoy his leisure in the suburb Craneion, Alexander went in person to see him; and he found him lying in the sun. Diogenes raised himself up a little when he saw so many persons coming towards him, and fixed his eyes upon Alexander. And when that monarch addressed him with greetings, and asked if he wanted anything, ‘Yes,’ said Diogenes, ‘stand a little out of my sun.’ It is said that Alexander was so struck by this, and admired so much the haughtiness and grandeur of the man who had nothing but scorn for him, that he said to his followers, who were laughing and jesting about the philosopher as they went away, ‘But verily, if I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes.’

Plutarch. *Plutarch’s Lives*. With an English Translation by Bernadotte Perrin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1919.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:tlg,0007,047:14>

— 3.1 —

Ganymede as Catamite: Martial, Epigram 2

*In the sixth line of Epigram 2 (page 34) a pun seems to be intended on the word pocula, which is used in the double meaning of a drinking cup and the anus. Therefore, ‘mingles luscious cups’ also means allows sodomy to be committed upon him. Martial writes:*

*Dulcia Dardanio nondum miscente ministro  
Pocula, Juno fuit pro Ganymede Jovi.*

*[Translation]*

*Before the Dardanian servitor mingled Jove’s sweet cups,  
Juno was to him as Ganymede (i.e. acted as his catamite).*

Source: “Sodomy with Women.”

<https://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/priap/prp101.htm>

— 3.1 —

The story of Odysseus and Penelope’s bed comes from my retelling of Homer’s *Odyssey*:

Source: Bruce, David. *Homer’s Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*.

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/87553>

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rn5b3A6TFJngdZ\\_DC0daL9jZBToiSy-P/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rn5b3A6TFJngdZ_DC0daL9jZBToiSy-P/view?usp=sharing)

For Your Information:

*This famous letter was unquestionably not sent. The positive evidence is that the original remained with Franklin's papers. The negative evidence is that Strahan later gave no sign that he had received such a blast: when he responded on September 6 to a letter, now lost, from Franklin two days after this one, and when he wrote again on October 4, he showed the pain and sorrow that one friend reserves for the other's delusions, and also the implicit assumption that the relationship remained intact. On the rare occasions when Franklin lost his temper he was likely to recover it quickly. This outburst was an example in point: it relieved his rage at what was happening, and went no further.*

*Philada. July 5. 1775*

*Mr. Strahan,*

*You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction. You have begun to burn our Towns, and murder our People. Look upon your Hands! They are stained with the Blood of your Relations! You and I were long Friends: You are now my Enemy, and I am, Yours,*

*B Franklin*

Source: "From Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, 5 July 1775." Founders Online. National Archive. Accessed 20 October 2022.

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-22-02-0052>

# ENDYMION, THE MAN IN THE MOON

## CAST OF CHARACTERS (ENDYMION)

**Endymion**, a young man

**Dares**, Endymion's page

**Eumenides**, friend of Endymion

**Samias**, Eumenides' page

**Cynthia, the Goddess of the Moon.** Cynthia is the personified Moon.

**Tellus**, a lady-in-waiting at Cynthia's court. Tellus is a goddess: the personification of Earth.

**Floscula**, Tellus' woman-servant

**Semele**, a lady-in-waiting at Cynthia's court

**Pythagoras**, a Greek philosopher, attendant at Cynthia's court

**Gyptes**, an Egyptian soothsayer, attendant at Cynthia's court

**Panelion**, a lord at Cynthia's court

**Zontes**, a lord at Cynthia's court

**Sir Tophas**, a braggart

**Epiton**, Sir Tophas' page. His nickname is "Epi."

**Dipsas**, an aged sorceress

**Bagoa**, a sorceress, assistant to Dipsas

**Geron**, an old man who has experienced hardship

**Scintilla**, a maid-in-waiting at the court

**Favilla**, a maid-in-waiting at the court

**Three ladies and an ancient (an old) man**, in a dumb show

**Corsites**, a captain

**Two Watchmen and a Constable**

**Four Fairies**

Scene: At or near the Court of Cynthia

### EDITIONS

Lyly, John. *Endymion*. Edited by George P. Baker. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1894.

Lyly, John. *Endymion*. Edited by David Bevington. New York: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Lyly, John. *The Plays of John Lyly*. Carter A. Daniel, editor. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses. 1988.

## ONLINE EDITION

Lyly, John. *Endymion*. Modern Spelling - Transcript by B.F. Copyright © 2002

<https://sourcetext.com/?s=John+Lyly>

<https://sourcetext.com/john-lylys-endimion/>

## LANGUAGE

In this society, a person of higher rank would use “thou,” “thee,” “thine,” and “thy” when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use “you” and “your” when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word “wench” at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word “mistress” at this time can mean simply a woman who is loved.

The word “fair” can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, and good-looking.

“Sirrah” was a title used to address someone of a social rank inferior to the speaker. Friends, however, could use it to refer to each other, and fathers could call their sons “sirrah.”

## HUMORS

John Lyly’s society existed before the age of modern medicine.

Doctors in John Lyly’s society believed that the human body had four humors, or vital fluids, that determined one’s temperament. Each humor made a contribution to the personality, and one humor could be predominant. For a human being to be sane and healthy, the four humors had to be present in the right amounts. If a man had too much of a certain humor, it would harm his personality and health.

Blood was the sanguine humor. A sanguine man is optimistic.

Phlegm was the phlegmatic humor. A phlegmatic man is calm.

Yellow bile was the choleric humor. A choleric man is angry.

Black bile was the melancholic humor. A melancholic man is gloomy.

A humor can be a disposition.

A humor can be a personal characteristic.

A humor can be a fancy or a whim.

A humor can be a mood.

## **Cynthia: For Your Information**

Cynthia has many names: Diana: Artemis, Phoebe, etc.

One reason for this is that the Greeks and the Romans worshipped goddesses who were similar and so were conflated as one.

Another reason is that Cynthia was a tripartite goddess of the Moon, the Earth, and the Underworld.

Cynthia is a tripartite goddess of the Moon, the Earth, and the Underworld: a goddess with three forms.

- In Heaven, she is Luna, goddess of the Moon. (In this book, the Moon-goddess is called Cynthia.)
- On Earth, she is Diana (Roman name) and Artemis (Greek name), virgin goddess of the hunt.
- In Hell, she is Hecate, goddess of witchcraft.

This book is concerned only with Cynthia the Moon-goddess.

She was born on Mount Cynthus on the island of Delos.

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## PROLOGUE (ENDYMION)

The Prologue appeared and addressed Queen Elizabeth I:

“Most high and happy princess, we must tell you a tale of the Man in the Moon, which if it seems ridiculous for the method, or superfluous for the matter, or incredible for the means, for three faults we can make but one excuse: It is a tale about the Man in the Moon.

“It was forbidden in old times to dispute about the chimaera because it was a fiction.”

A chimaera is a mythological monster with three heads: one was that of a lion, one was that of a goat, and one was that of a dragon. Its body was also made up of parts of these animals.

“We hope in our times no one will try to match the events and characters of our play with real events and people because the events and characters of our play are imaginative fancies and fantasies; for no one who lives under the sun knows what to make of the Man in the Moon. We present neither comedy, nor tragedy, nor story, nor anything, except something that whosoever hears it may say this:

““Why, here is a tale of the Man in the Moon.””

## CHAPTER 1 (ENDYMION)

— 1.1 —

Two friends, Endymion and Eumenides, talked together.

Endymion said, “I find, Eumenides, in all things both variety to content and satiety to glut, saving only in my affections, which are so stayed — so hindered — and so stately that I can neither satisfy my heart with love nor my eyes with wonder. My thoughts, Eumenides, are stitched to the stars, which being as high as I can see, thou may imagine how much higher they are than I can reach.”

Eumenides said, “If you are enamored of anything above the Moon, your thoughts are ridiculous because immortal things are not subject to affections. If you are allured or enchanted with these transitory things under the Moon, you show yourself senseless to attribute such lofty titles to such low trifles.

“My love is placed neither under the Moon nor above,” Endymion said.

“I hope you are not besotted upon and bewitched by the Man in the Moon,” Eumenides said.

“No, but I am determined either to die or to possess the Moon herself,” Endymion said.

“Is Endymion mad, or am I mistaken?” Eumenides asked. “Do you love the Moon, Endymion?”

“Eumenides, I do love the Moon,” Endymion said.

Eumenides said:

“There was never anyone so peevish — so foolish — as to imagine the Moon either capable of affection or capable of the shape of a mistress, for it is as impossible to make love fit her humor — fit her disposition — which no man knows, as it is impossible to fit a coat to her form, which continues not in one bigness while she is being measured.”

The size of the Moon continually changes as it goes through its phases.

Eumenides continued:

“Cease, Endymion, to feed so much upon fancies. That melancholy blood must be purged that draws you to a dotage — an infatuation — no less miserable than monstrous.”

In this society, melancholy blood was blood that contained too much black bile. A common medical treatment at this time was bloodletting.

Endymion replied, “My thoughts have no veins, and yet, unless my thoughts are let blood, I shall perish.”

“But they have vanities that, if they are reformed, you may be restored,” Eumenides said.

“Vanities” are vain, unprofitable thoughts. If those thoughts were let go, Endymion could be restored to health.

Endymion said:

“O fair Cynthia, why do others term thee inconstant whom I have always found unmovable?”

Cynthia is the personified Moon.

“Inconstant” means 1) always changing, as in the Moon’s cycles, and 2) fickle.

“Unmovable” means 1) constant, and 2) unable to be persuaded.

Endymion continued:

“Injurious time, corrupt manners, unkind men, who, finding a constancy not to be matched in my sweet mistress — my sweet loved one — have christened her with the name of wavering, waxing, and waning!”

The Moon waxes, aka grows, and wanes, aka diminishes, in its cycle.

Endymion continued:

“Is she — the Moon — inconstant who keeps a settled course, which since her first creation has altered not one minute in her moving? There is nothing thought more admirable or commendable in the sea than the ebbing and flowing of the tides; and shall the Moon, from whom the sea takes this virtue, be accounted fickle for increasing and decreasing?”

“Flowers in their buds are worth nothing until they have burst out of their buds, nor are blossoms accounted to be worth anything until they are ripe fruit; and shall we then say they are changeable because they grow from seeds to leaves, from leaves to buds, from buds to their perfection?”

“Then why aren’t twigs that become trees, children who become men, and mornings that grow to evenings termed wavering, because they don’t continue in one and the same state?”

“Aye, but Cynthia, being in her fullness, decays, as not delighting in her greatest beauty, or withering when she should be most honored. When malice cannot object anything, folly will, making that a vice which is the greatest virtue.

“What thing (my mistress excepted), being in the pride of her beauty and latter minute of her age, grows young again?”

“Tell me, Eumenides, who is he who, having a mistress of ripe years and infinite virtues, great honors and unspeakable beauty, would not wish that she might grow tender again, getting youth by the passage of years and getting never-decaying beauty by the passage of time, whose fair face neither the summer’s blaze can scorch nor winter’s blast chap, nor the numbering of years breed altering of colors?”

Years can change hair color to silver.

Endymion continued:

“Such is my sweet Cynthia, whom time cannot touch because she is divine nor will time offend her because she is delicate.

“O Cynthia, if thou should always continue at thy fullness, both gods and men would conspire to ravish thee. But thou, to abate the pride of our affections, detract from thy perfections, thinking it sufficient if once in a month we enjoy a glimpse of thy majesty; and then, to

increase our griefs, thou decrease thy gleams, coming out of thy royal robes, with which thou dazzle our eyes down into thy swath clouds — thy swaddling clothes — beguiling our eyes.

“And then —”

The full Moon wears royal robes, but the Moon decreases until it wears an infant’s clothing: swaddling clothes.

Eumenides interrupted, “— stop there, Endymion. Thou who commit idolatry will immediately blaspheme if thou would be allowed. Sleep would do thee more good than speech. The Moon does not hear thee; or if she does, she does not regard and pay attention to thee.”

Endymion said:

“Vain, foolish Eumenides, whose thoughts never grow higher than the crown of thy head! Why do thou trouble me, since thou have neither head to conceive the cause of my love nor a heart to receive the impressions that Cynthia has made on my heart?

“Follow thou thine own fortunes, which creep upon the earth, and allow me to fly to mine, whose fall, although it is desperate, yet it shall come by daring.

“Farewell.”

Endymion exited.

Now alone, Eumenides said to himself:

“Without doubt Endymion is bewitched; otherwise, in a man of such rare — uncommon and splendid — virtues, there could not harbor a mind of such extreme madness.

“I will follow him, lest in this fancy of the Moon, he deprives himself of the sight of the Sun by committing suicide.”

— 1.2 —

Tellus and Floscula talked together. Tellus was a lady-in-waiting at Cynthia’s court, and Floscula was Tellus’ waiting-woman. Tellus was a goddess: the personification of Earth.

Tellus loved Endymion, but Endymion loved Cynthia.

Tellus said:

“Treacherous and most perjured Endymion, is Cynthia the sweetness of thy life and the bitterness of my death? What revenge may be devised so full of shame as my thoughts are plenished and equipped with malice?

“Tell me, Floscula, whether falseness in love can possibly be punished with extremity of hate. As long as sword, fire, or poison may be hired, no traitor to my love shall live unrevenged.”

Tellus then addressed Endymion, who was not present, in an apostrophe:

“Were thy oaths without number, thy kisses without measure, thy sighs without end, forged to deceive a poor credulous virgin whose simplicity had been worth thy favor and better fortune? If the gods sit as unequal beholders of injuries or laughers at lovers’ deceits, then let revengeful evil be as well forgiven in women as perjury is winked at in men.”

Floscula said, “Madam, if you would compare the state of Cynthia with your own, and the height of Endymion’s thoughts with the meanness — the lowliness — of your fortune, you would rather yield than contend and compete, since there is between you and her no comparison, and you would rather wonder than rage at the greatness of his mind, being affected by and afflicted by and in love with a thing more than mortal: Cynthia.”

“No comparison, Floscula?” Tellus said. “And why so? Isn’t my beauty divine, whose body is decked with fair flowers, and whose veins are vines, yielding sweet liquor to the dullest spirits, whose ears are corn and wheat to bring strength, and whose hairs are grass to bring abundance? Doesn’t frankincense and myrrh breathe out of my nostrils, and all the sacrifice to the gods breed in my bowels? Infinite are my creatures, without which neither thou nor Endymion nor anyone could love or live.”

Tellus was the goddess of the earth.

Floscula said:

“But don’t you know, fair lady, that Cynthia governs all things? Your grapes would be only dry husks, your corn and wheat would be only chaff, and all your virtues — all your powers — would be only vain if not for Cynthia, who preserves the one in the bud and nourishes the other in the blade [aka leaf of a plant; ‘in the blade’ means ‘only leaf, not yet in ear’], and who by her influence comforts all things and who by her authority commands all creatures.

“Allow then Endymion to follow his affections, although to obtain her is impossible, and let him flatter himself in his own imaginations because they are concerned with Cynthia, who is immortal.”

Tellus said to the absent Endymion:

“Loath I am, Endymion, that thou should die, because I love thee well, and it grieves me that thou should live, because thou love Cynthia too well. In these extremities, what shall I do?”

She then said:

“Floscula, no more words. I am resolved: He shall neither live nor die.”

“A strange practice — a strange trick — if it is possible,” Floscula said.

Tellus said:

“Yes, it is possible. I will entangle him in such a sweet net that he shall neither find the means to come out nor desire it. All allurements of pleasure I will cast before his eyes, insomuch that he shall slake and slack that love which he now vows to Cynthia and he shall burn in love of me, for whom he seems not to care.

“In this languishing between my amorous devices and his own loose desires, such dissolute thoughts shall take root in his head, and over his heart shall grow so thick a skin, that neither hope of preferment nor fear of punishment, nor counsel of the wisest nor company of the worthiest shall alter his humor — his disposition — nor make him once think of his honor.”

“This is a revenge incredible, and if it may be put in action, it is unnatural: It is supernatural and cruel,” Floscula said.

Tellus said:

“He shall know that the malice of a woman has neither mean nor end, and he shall know that a woman deluded in love has neither rule nor reason. I can do it. I must. I will. All his virtues I will shadow with vices; his person — ah, his sweet person! His sweet body! — he shall deck with such rich robes that he shall forget it is his own person; his sharp wit — ah, wit too sharp, that has cut off all my joys! — he shall use in flattering my face and devising sonnets in my favor.

“The prime of his youth and the pride and flower of his time shall be spent in melancholy passions, careless behavior, untamed thoughts, and unbridled affections.”

“When this is done, what then?” Floscula asked. “Shall it continue until his death, or shall he dote forever in this delight?”

“Ah, Floscula, thou rend my heart in sunder. Thou split my heart apart in putting me in remembrance of the end,” Tellus said.

Endymion was mortal, and someday he would die. Tellus was immortal, and always she would live.

“Why, if this is not the end, then all the rest is to no end — to no purpose,” Floscula said.

“Yet allow me to imitate Juno, who would turn Jupiter’s lovers to beasts on the earth, although she knew afterwards they would be stars in heaven,” Tellus said.

Juno’s husband, Jupiter, raped Callisto. Juno, who hated the women whom her husband slept with, even when they were raped, turned Callisto into a bear. Years later, Callisto saw her son, Arcas, who prepared to defend himself with a spear against what he thought was a bear. Jupiter turned Arcas and Callisto into constellations. Callisto became Ursa Major: Big Bear. Arcas became Ursa Minor: Little Bear.

Floscula said, “Affection that is bred by enchantment is like a flower that is wrought in silk: in color and form most similar, but not at all similar in substance or smell.”

Love potions may work, but the love that results is not true love.

Tellus said, “Affection that is bred by enchantment shall suffice for me, if the world gossips that I am favored by Endymion.”

Floscula replied, “Well, use your own will, but you shall find that love gotten with witchcraft is as unpleasant as fish that is taken — captured — with unwholesome medicines.”

Tellus said:

“Floscula, they who are so poor that they have neither net nor hook will rather poison dough — catch fish with poison bait — than pine with hunger; and she who is so oppressed with love that she is able neither with beauty nor with wit to obtain her friend — her lover — will rather use unlawful means than experience intolerable pains.

“I will do it.”

She exited.

Alone, Floscula said to herself:

“Then go about it.

“Poor Endymion, what traps are laid for thee because thou honor one whom all the world marvels at! And what plots are cast to make unfortunate thee who studies of all men to be the most faithful!”

— 1.3 —

Dares and Samias talked together. Dares was Endymion’s page, and Samias was Eumenides’ page. Pages are boy-servants.

Dares said, “Now that our masters are in love up to the ears, what do we have to do but to be in knavery over the ears and up to the crowns of our head?”

Of course, Endymion was in love with Cynthia. Soon we will learn that Eumenides was in love with Semele.

Samias said:

“O, I wish that we had Sir Tophas, that ‘brave’ squire, in the midst of our mirth.

“And *ecce autem* — lo and behold — you will see the devil!”

A proverb stated, “Speak of the devil, and he will appear.”

Sir Tophas and Epiton entered the scene. Sir Tophas was a braggart, and Epiton was Sir Tophas’ page. Epiton’s nickname was “Epi.”

Sir Tophas said, “Epi?”

“Here, sir,” Epiton said.

“I cannot endure this idle humor — this idle feeling — of love,” Sir Tophas said. “It does not tickle my liver, from whence the love-mongers in former ages seemed to infer it should proceed.”

The ancients thought that the liver was the seat of love; we tend to think the heart is.

Epiton said, “Love, sir, may lie in your lungs, and I think it does; and that is the reason you pant and puff and are so pursy — so short-winded.”

“Tush, boy, I think it is just some device of the poet to get money,” Sir Tophas said.

“A poet?” Epiton said. “What’s that?”

“Don’t thou know what a poet is?” Sir Tophas asked.

“No,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas “explained”:

“Why, fool, a poet is as much as one would say, a poet.”

Seeing Samias and Dares, he said:

“But wait, yonder are two wrens. Shall I shoot at them?”

“They are two lads,” Epiton said.

“Larks or wrens, I will kill them,” Sir Tophas said.

“Larks? Are you blind?” Epiton said. “They are two little boys.”

“Birds or boys, they are both but a pittance for my breakfast,” Sir Tophas said. “Therefore, have at them, for their brains must, as it were, embroider — decorate — my bolts.”

“Have at them” is a declaration of a readiness to fight.

Bolts are arrows.

Sir Tophas took aim at Samias and Dares.

Samias said to Sir Tophas, “Stay — calm — your courage, valiant knight, for your wisdom is so weary that it stays — stops short — itself.”

Dares said, “Why, Sir Tophas, have you forgotten your old friends?”

“Friends?” Sir Tophas said. “*Nego argumentum* — I reject your argument.”

“And why aren’t we your friends?” Samias asked.

Sir Tophas said:

“Because, *amicitia*, as in old annals we find, is *inter pares*.”

Annals are records of events year by year.

*Amicitia inter pares* means “friendship among equals.”

Sir Tophas continued:

“Now my pretty companions, you shall see how unequal you are to me.”

He measured himself against them by standing close to them.

Sir Tophas then said:

“But I will not cut you quite off; you shall be my half-friends, for you reach only to my middle. So far as from the ground to the waist, I will be your friend.”

Dares said:

“Learnedly.”

“Learnedly” means “in a learned manner.”

Dares then asked:

“But what shall become of the rest of your body, from the waist to the crown?”

Normally, the learned half is from the waist to the crown, as the head contains the brain. But Sir Tophas’ brain was so lacking that his learned half was from the waist to the feet.

Sir Tophas answered, “My children, *quod supra vos nihil ad vos* — that which is higher than you is nothing to you — you must think the rest immortal because you cannot reach it.”



Epiton said to Samias and Dares, "Nay, I tell you, my master is more than a man."

Dares said to Epiton, "And thou are less than a mouse."

"But who are you two?" Sir Tophas asked.

"I am Samias, page to Endymion," Samias said.

"And I am Dares, page to Eumenides," Dares said.

"Of what occupation are your masters?" Sir Tophas asked.

"Occupation, you clown?" Dares said. "Why, they are honorable, and they are warriors."

"Occupation" can refer to menial work.

"Then they are my apprentices," Sir Tophas said.

"Thine?" Dares said. "And why so?"

Sir Tophas said:

"I was the first who ever devised war, and therefore Mars himself gave me for my arms a whole armory, and thus I go as you see, clothed with artillery.

"It is not silks (a favorite material for milksops), nor tissues, nor the fine wool of *Seres*, but iron, steel, swords, flame, shot, terror, clamor, blood, and ruin that rock asleep my thoughts, which never had any other cradle but cruelty."

"Tissues" are fine cloths.

*Seres* is the Latin word for an area of eastern Asia, the inhabitants of which were reputed to have fine wool.

Sir Tophas then said:

"Let me see, don't you bleed?"

"Why would I bleed?" Dares asked.

"Commonly my words wound," Sir Tophas said.

"What then do your blows?" Samias asked.

"They not only wound, but also confound and destroy," Sir Tophas said.

Samias asked Epiton:

"How dare thou come so near thy master, Epi?"

He then said:

"Sir Tophas, spare us."

Sir Tophas said, "You shall live. You, Samias, shall live because you are little; you, Dares, shall live because you are no bigger; and both of you shall live, because you are only two; for commonly I kill by the dozen, and I have for every particular adversary a peculiar weapon."

“Peculiar” means 1) particular, and 2) badly suited.

He displayed his weapons.

“May we know the use, for our better skill in war?” Samias asked.

“You shall,” Sir Tophas said. “Here is a bird-bolt for the ugly beast known as the blackbird.”

As Sir Tophas mentioned each of his weapons, he displayed it.

Bird-bolts are blunt arrows for shooting birds.

“A cruel sight,” Dares said.

Sir Tophas said, “Here is the musket for the untamed, or (as the vulgar sort term it) the wild, mallard.”

He demonstrated, not heeding them as they talked.

“O desperate attempt!” Samias said.

“Nay, my master will be a match for them,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas was a match for a duck — no duck would defeat him.

Dares said, “Aye, if he catches them.”

Sir Tophas said, “Here are spear and shield, and both are necessary: the one to conquer, the other to subdue or overcome the terrible trout, which, although he is under the water, yet tying a string to the top of my spear and an engine of iron to the end of my line, I overthrow him, and then herein I put him.”

The “engine of iron” is a fishhook. He can tie a fishing line to his spear, and he can use his shield to carry any fish he catches.

He showed his gear and strutted about, oblivious to their talk.

Samias said out loud:

“O wonderful war!”

He then whispered:

“Dares, have thou ever heard such a dolt?”

Dares whispered, “All the better. We shall have good sport and entertainment hereafter if we can get leisure.”

Samias whispered:

“Leisure! I would rather lose my master’s service than his company. Look at how he struts.”

He was willing to shirk his duty and risk getting fired than to lose the opportunity of seeing Sir Tophas make a fool of himself.

Samias then said out loud to Sir Tophas:

“But what is this? Do you call it your sword?”

Sir Tophas answered, “No, it is my scimitar, which I, by construction often studying to be compendious, call my smiter.”

“Compendious” means “concise,” but “concise” is a more concise word than “compendious.”

“What! Are you also learned, sir?” Dares asked.

“Learned?” Sir Tophas said. “I am all Mars and *Ars*.”

Mars is the god of war. *Ars* is Latin for “the arts.”

“Nay, you are all mass and ass,” Samias said.

Sir Tophas said:

“Do you mock me? You shall both suffer; yet you shall be killed by such weapons as you shall make choice of. Am I all mass or lump — is there no proportion in me? Am I all ass — is there no wit and intelligence in me?”

“Epi, prepare them for the slaughter.”

In other words, give them their choice of weapons to be killed by.

Samias said, “Please, sir, hear us speak. We call you ‘mass,’ which your learning well understands is all ‘man,’ for *mas*, *maris*, is a man. Then *as*, as you know, is a weight; and we for your virtues account you a weight.”

*Mas*, *maris* is Latin for “male.”

An *as* was a unit of weight in Roman times.

Hmm. “We for your virtues account you a weight.” What kind of weight? Probably a dead weight.

Sir Tophas said, “The Latin has saved your lives — lives that a world of silver could not have ransomed. I understand you and pardon you.”

In this society, a person who could read Latin could be saved from being hung, as religious people such as priests knew Latin and could be excused from being sentenced by a secular court. This was called benefit of clergy.

“Well, Sir Tophas, we bid you farewell,” Dares said, “and at our next meeting we will be ready to do you service.”

Sir Tophas said:

“Samias, I thank you.

“Dares, I thank you.

“But especially I thank you both.”

Samias said:

“Wisely.”

Well, thoroughly.

Samias then said to Dares, “Come, next time we’ll have some pretty gentlewomen to walk with us, for without doubt he will be very dainty with them.”

“Dainty” means pleasant and debonair. But Sir Tophas would also be a sweet target for the wit of the ladies.

Dares whispered to Samias, “Come, let us see what our masters are doing; it is high time we did that.”

Dares and Samias exited.

Sir Tophas said, “Now I will march into the field, where, if I cannot encounter with my foul — and fowl — enemies, I will withdraw myself to the river and there fortify myself with weapons to fight fish; for no minute rests free from fight.”

Sir Tophas and Epiton exited.

— 1.4 —

Tellus and Floscula entered the scene from one direction; Dipsas entered the scene from another direction.

Dipsas was an aged sorceress.

Tellus said, “Look, Floscula, we have met with the woman by chance whom we sought by travel and travail. I will break my mind to her without ceremony or circumstance, lest we lose time in advice that should be spent in execution. I will tell her what I want simply and quickly.”

Floscula said, “Use your discretion. I will in this case neither give counsel nor consent; because there cannot be a thing more monstrous than to force affection by sorcery, and I do not imagine anything more impossible.”

Tellus said:

“Tush, Floscula, in obtaining love what impossibilities will I not try? And for the winning of Endymion, what impieties will I not practice?”

She went to Dipsas and said:

“Dipsas, whom as many honor for age as marvel at for cunning, listen to my tale of few words and answer in one word to the purpose — yes or no — because my burning desire cannot afford long speech nor can the short time I have to stay afford many delays.

“Is it possible by herbs, stones and minerals, spells, incantation, enchantment, exorcisms, fire, metals, planets, or any plot or trick, to plant affection where it is not and to supplant it where it is?”

Dipsas said:

“Fair lady, you may imagine that these hoary hairs are not void of experience, and you may imagine that the great name and reputation that goes abroad about my cunning is not without cause or reason.

“I can darken the Sun by my skill and move the Moon out of her course; I can restore youth to the aged and make hills without bottoms.

“There is nothing I cannot do except only that which you would have me do, and therein I differ from the gods, in that I am not able to rule hearts; for, if it were in my power to place affection by appointment, I would make such evil appetites, such inordinate lusts, such cursed desires that all the world would be filled both with superstitious and credulous passions and with extreme love.”

Tellus said to herself, “Unhappy Tellus, whose desires are so desperate that they are neither to be conceived by any creature nor to be cured by any art!”

Dipsas said:

“This I can do: Breed slackness in love although I can never root it out.

“Who is he whom you love, and who is she whom he honors?”

Tellus said, “Endymion, sweet Endymion, is he who has my heart; and Cynthia — too, too fair Cynthia — the miracle of nature, of time, of fortune, is the lady whom he delights in, and dotes on every day and dies for ten thousand times a day.”

“Do you wish to have his love made slack either by absence or sickness?” Dipsas asked. “Do you wish that Cynthia should openly mistrust him or openly be jealous of him without reason or excuse?”

Tellus said:

“It is the only thing I crave.

“Seeing that my love to Endymion, unspotted, cannot be accepted, I crave that his truthful allegiance to Cynthia, although it is inexpressible in words, may be doubted.”

Dipsas said, “I will undertake it and overtake — overcome — him, so that all his love shall be doubted and therefore he shall be in despair. But this will wear out with time, which treads all things down but truth.”

Her spell would wear out, and possibly Endymion’s love for Cynthia would wear out — that is, weather — the metaphorical storm created for him by Dipsas at Tellus’ request.

“Let us go,” Tellus said.

“I follow,” Dipsas said.

All exited.

## CHAPTER 2 (ENDYMION)

— 2.1 —

Alone, Endymion said to himself:

“O fair Cynthia! O unfortunate Endymion! Why wasn’t thy birth as high as thy thoughts, or her beauty less than heavenly? Or why aren’t thine honors as rare and splendid as her beauty or thy fortunes as great as thy deserts?”

“Sweet Cynthia, how would thou be pleased? How would thou be possessed? Will labors, patient of and enduring all extremities, obtain thy love? There is no mountain so steep that I will not climb it, no monster so cruel that I will not tame it, no action so desperate that I will not attempt to do it.

“Do thou desire the passions of love, the sad and melancholy moods of perplexed minds, the not-to-be-expressed torments of racked — pulled this way and then pulled that way — thoughts? Behold my sad tears, my deep sighs, my hollow eyes, my broken sleeps, my heavy countenance.

“Would thou have me vowed only to thy beauty and consume every minute of time in thy service? Remember my solitary life, almost these seven years.”

Seven years were the length of an apprenticeship. Endymion had spent almost seven years loving Cynthia.

Endymion continued:

“Whom have I entertained except my own thoughts and thy virtues? What company have I had but contemplation? Whom have I wondered at but thee? Nay, whom have I not contemned and disdained for thee?”

“Haven’t I crept and abased myself to those on whom I might have trodden, only because thou shined upon them? Haven’t injuries been sweet to me if thou vouchsafe and permit that I should bear them? Haven’t I spent my golden years in hopes, growing old with wishing, yet wishing nothing except thy love?”

“With Tellus, fair Tellus, I have dissembled and put on a false front, using her only as a cloak for my affections, so that others, seeing my mangled and disordered mind, might think it were for one who loves me, not for Cynthia, whose perfection allows no companion or comparison.

“In the midst of these distempered and vexed thoughts of mine, thou are not only doubtful about my truth, but indifferent, mistrustful, and safe and secure from my passion, which strange humor — strange disposition — makes my mind as desperate as thy conceits and fancies are difficult to discern.”

Endymion loved Cynthia deeply; Cynthia mostly ignored him.

Endymion continued:

“I am not one of those wolves that bark most when thou shine brightest.”

Wolves bark at that which they cannot hurt. They are analogous to petty, jealous underlings who “bark” because they are jealous of others’ accomplishments.

Endymion continued:

“But I am that fish — thy fish, Cynthia, in the flood Araris [a river] — which at thy waxing is as white as the driven snow and at thy waning is as black as deepest darkness.

“Sweet Cynthia, I am that Endymion, who has carried my thoughts in equal balance with my actions, being always as free from imagining ill as I am free from endeavoring to commit ill.

“I am that Endymion whose eyes never esteemed anything fair except thy face, whose tongue called nothing rare and splendid except thy virtues, and whose heart imagined nothing miraculous except thy government — thy conduct and thy rule.

“Yes, I am that Endymion who, divorcing himself from the amiableness of all ladies, the bravery — the splendor — of all courts, the company of all men, has chosen in a solitary cell to live only by feeding on thy favor, accounting nothing excellent, nothing immortal in the world — except thyself.

“Thus may thou see every vein, sinew, muscle, and artery of my love, in which there is no flattery nor deceit, no error nor artfulness.

“But wait, here comes Tellus. I must turn my other face to her like Janus, lest she be as suspicious as Juno.”

Janus is a two-faced god.

Juno was the jealous — with good reason — wife of Jupiter, King of the gods.

Tellus, Floscula, and Dipsas entered the scene.

Tellus said:

“Yonder I see Endymion. I will seem to suspect nothing, but soothe him, so that seeing I cannot obtain the depth of his love, I may learn the height of his dissembling.

“Floscula and Dipsas, withdraw yourselves out of our sight, yet be within the hearing of our greetings to each other.”

Floscula and Dipsas withdrew.

Tellus then said:

“How are you now, Endymion? Always solitary? No company but your own thoughts? No friend but melancholy fancies?”

Endymion said, “You know, fair Tellus, that the sweet remembrance of your love is the only companion of my life, and thy presence is my paradise, so that I am not alone when nobody is with me, and I am in heaven itself when thou are with me.”

“Then you love me, Endymion?” Tellus asked.

“Or else I don’t live, Tellus,” Endymion answered.

This is ambiguous. It can mean that he cannot live without her love, or that she will kill him if she finds out that he loves someone else.

“Isn’t it possible for you, Endymion, to dissemble?” Tellus asked.

“Not, Tellus, unless I could make me a woman,” Endymion answered.

This is ambiguous. It can mean that Endymion would dissemble to Tellus if he could make himself into a woman. But the word “make” can also mean “To pair, match, mate with,” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. If Endymion could pair himself with Cynthia, as he does in his imagination, then he would dissemble to Tellus, as in fact he is doing.

“Why, is dissembling joined to their sex inseparably, as heat to fire, heaviness to earth, moisture to water, thinness to air?” Tellus asked.

“No, but dissembling is found in their sex as common as spots upon doves, moles upon faces, caterpillars upon sweet apples, cobwebs upon fair windows,” Endymion answered.

Mourning doves have black spots on their wings, as do common ground-doves.

“Do they all dissemble?” Tellus asked.

“All but one,” Endymion answered.

“Who is that?” Tellus asked.

“I dare not tell you,” Endymion answered. “For if I should say it were you, then you would imagine my flattery to be extreme; if I say it was another, then you would think my love to be only indifferent.”

Tellus said:

“You will be sure I shall take no advantage of and gain no profit from your words.”

An additional meaning of Tellus’ words is that Endymion is choosing his words carefully so that he is hiding his love for Cynthia: a love that is of no advantage to Tellus.

Tellus continued:

“But tell the truth, Endymion, without standing on ceremonies and formalities: Isn’t it Cynthia?”

Endymion said, “You know, Tellus, that we are forbidden to dispute about the gods because their deities don’t come within the compass of our reasons; and we are not allowed to talk about Cynthia except to marvel, because her virtues are not within the reach of our capacities.”

“Why, she is only a woman,” Tellus said.

“No more was Venus,” Endymion said.

Venus, sexually active goddess of sexual passion, was renowned for beauty.

“She is only a virgin,” Tellus said.

“No more was Vesta,” Endymion said.

Vesta, virgin goddess of the hearth, was renowned for chastity.

“She shall have an end,” Tellus said.

“So shall the world,” Endymion said.



“Isn’t her beauty subject to time?” Tellus asked.

“No more than time is subject to standing still,” Endymion said.

“Will thou make her immortal?” Tellus asked.

“No, but she is incomparable,” Endymion said.

Cynthia, the Moon goddess, was immortal, but Queen Elizabeth I was often called Cynthia in allegories.

Tellus said:

“Take heed, Endymion, lest like the wrestler in Olympia who, striving to lift an impossible weight, caught an incurable strain, thou by fixing thy thoughts above thy reach fall into a disease without all recovery and cure.

“But I see thou are now in love with Cynthia.”

Endymion said:

“No, Tellus, thou know that the stately cedar, whose top reaches to the clouds, never bows his head to the shrubs that grow in the valley; and you know that ivy, which climbs up by the elm, can never get hold of the beams of the Sun.

“I in all humility honor Cynthia, whom none ought or dare venture to love, whose affections are immortal and whose virtues are infinite.

“Allow me, therefore, to gaze on the Moon, at whom, were it not for thyself, I would die with marveling.”

— 2.2 —

Dares, Samias, Scintilla, and Favilla talked together. Dares and Samias were pages, and Scintilla and Favilla were maids-in-waiting at the court.

Dares said, “Come, Samias, did thou ever hear such a sighing: the one for Cynthia, the other for Semele, and both for Moonshine in the water?”

Endymion loved Cynthia, and Eumenides loved Semele.

People who love Moonshine in the water love something that will not return their love.

Samias said:

“Let them sigh and let us sing.

“What do you say, gentlewomen, aren’t our masters too far gone in love?”

Scintilla said, “Their tongues are happily dipped to the root in amorous words and sweet discourses, but I think their hearts are scarcely tipped — lightly touched — on the side with constant desires.”

Dares said, “What do you say, Favilla? Isn’t love a lurcher — a petty thief, that takes away men’s stomachs with the result that they cannot eat, takes away their spleen with the result that they cannot laugh, takes away their hearts with the result that they cannot fight, takes away

their eyes with the result that they cannot sleep, and leaves nothing but livers to make nothing but lovers?"

This society regarded the liver as the site of love.

"Away, peevisish boy," Favilla said. "A rod would be better under thy belt than love in thy mouth. It will be a forward, presumptuous cock that crows in the shell."

Hmm. A rod under a man's belt? Bawdy, that.

Favilla was saying that Dares was too young to be concerned about such things as having his belt at his knees.

Dares said, "Alas, good old gentlewoman, how it becomes you to be grave!"

He was mocking her; Favilla was a young virgin.

Scintilla said, "Favilla, although she is only a spark, yet she is fire."

"And you, Scintilla, are not much more than a spark, although you would be esteemed a flame," Favilla said.

Samias whispered to Dares, "It would be good entertainment to see the fight between two sparks."

Dares whispered to Samias, "Let them go at it, and we will warm ourselves by their words."

"You are not angry, Favilla?" Scintilla asked.

"That is, Scintilla, as you wish to take it," Favilla said. "Take it as you wish."

Samias said, "That! That!"

In other words: Go at it, girls! Or: Sic 'em!

Scintilla said, "This it is to be matched with girls, who, coming but yesterday from the making of babies, would before tomorrow be accounted matrons."

One meaning of "babies" is "dolls."

But these babies may be real babies.

Matrons are married women, especially older married women with large families.

Favilla said, "I beg your matronship's mercy and pardon. Because your pantofles are higher with cork, your feet must therefore be higher in the insteps. You will pretend to be my elder because you stand upon a stool, and I stand on the floor."

Scintilla was perhaps a little older and a little taller than Favilla, at least when Scintilla was wearing shoes with raised heels.

Favilla was accusing Scintilla of being proud. "Pantofles" are slippers with raised heels; Favilla called Scintilla's raised heels a stool. A person who is proud is high in the insteps.

Entertained by the fight, Samias said, "Good! Good!"

Dares whispered to Samias, "Let them alone, and see with what countenance they will become friends."

They could become friends, or they could become "friends."

Scintilla said to Favilla, "You think that you are the wiser of us because you mean to have the last word."

The two young women threatened each other.

Samias whispered to Dares, "Step between them lest they scratch."

Samias then said out loud to Scintilla and Favilla, "In truth, gentlewomen, seeing we came out to be merry, don't let your jarring and fighting mar our jests. Be friends. What do you say?"

"I am not angry, but it spited me to see how short and abrupt she was," Scintilla said.

"I meant nothing hurtful until she found it necessary to cross me," Favilla said.

"Then so let it rest," Dares said.

"I am agreed," Scintilla said.

Weeping, Favilla said, "And I ... yet I never took anything so unkindly in all my life."

Weeping, Scintilla said, "It is I who have the cause and reason to weep, although I never offered the occasion for a fight."

"Excellent, and exactly like a woman," Dares said.

"It is a strange sight to see water come out of fire," Samias said.

"It is women's nature to carry in their eyes fire and water, tears and torches, and in their mouths, honey and gall," Dares said.

Scintilla said:

"You will be a good one if you live. Yes, if you escape the gallows, you will be a fine man.

"But who is yonder formal fellow?"

Sir Tophas' appearance was formal. He presented the essence as well as the appearance of a type of man: one who loved weapons but who had a better opinion of himself than other people had of him. He was the essence of a *miles gloriosus*: a comic boastful soldier.

Sir Tophas and Epiton entered the scene.

Dares whispered to Scintilla and Favilla, "He is Sir Tophas, Sir Tophas about whom we told you. If you are good wenches, pretend as if you love him and marvel at him."

"We will do our parts," Favilla said.

Dares said, "But first let us stand aside and let him use his garb and show his style, for all our entertainment consists in his gracing us by showing what kind of man he is."

The pages and maids-in-waiting stood to the side, unnoticed, in order to watch Sir Tophas make a fool of himself.

Sir Tophas said, “Epi!”

“At hand, sir,” Epton said.

Sir Tophas asked, “How do thou like this martial life, where nothing but blood besprinkles our bosoms? Let me see, are our enemies fat?”

His enemies were the fish, fowl, and animals he fished or hunted — or, as he would say, battled.

Epton said, “Surpassingly fat. And I would not change this life to be a lord, and you yourself surpass all comparison; for other captains kill and beat, and there is nothing you kill but you also eat.”

“Surpass all comparison” means 1) are without equal, or 2) are too foolish and outlandish for words.

Sir Tophas said, “I will draw their guts out of their bellies, and tear the flesh with my teeth, so mortal and deadly is my hate and so eager my unstaunched stomach.”

“Stomach” can mean 1) courage, or 2) hunger.

Epton said to himself, “My master thinks himself the most valiant man in the world if he kills a wren, so warlike a thing he accounts it to take away life, although it be from a lark.”

Sir Tophas said, “Epi, I find my thoughts to swell and my spirit to take wings, insomuch that I cannot continue within the compass of so slender combats.”

“This surpasses all our expectations! This surpasses belief!” Favilla whispered.

“Why, isn’t he mad?” Scintilla whispered.

“No, he is only a little vainglorious and proud,” Samias said.

Sir Tophas said, “Epi!”

“Sir?” Epton responded.

Sir Tophas said, “I will encounter that black and cruel enemy that bears rough and untewed — uncombed — locks upon his body, whose sire throws down the strongest walls, whose legs are as many as both ours, on whose head are placed most horrible horns by nature as a defense from all harms.”

“What do you mean, master, to be so desperate?” Epton asked.

It certainly sounds as if a battle against such an enemy would be a desperate encounter.

Sir Tophas said, “Honor incites me, and hunger itself compels me.”

The hunger is for honor — and for food.

“What is that monster?” Epton asked.

Sir Tophas said, “The monster *ovis*. I have said the word: Let thy wits work.”

Epiton said, "I cannot imagine it. Yet let me see. A black enemy with rough locks — it may be a sheep, and *ovis* is a sheep. His sire so strong — a ram is a sheep's sire, that being also an engine of war. Horns he has, and four legs — so has a sheep. Without doubt this monster is a black sheep. Isn't it a sheep that you mean?"

*Ovis* is Latin for "sheep."

The black sheep's sire is a ram; a battering ram throws down strong walls.

Sir Tophas said, "Thou have hit it; that monster I will kill and sup with."

He will eat the black sheep.

Samias said to his friends, "Come, let us take him off his plan. Let us distract him."

The pages and maidens came forward and said, "Sir Tophas, all hail!"

"Welcome, children," Sir Tophas said. "I seldom cast my eyes as low as to the crowns of your heads, and therefore pardon me that I did not speak all this while."

"No harm done," Dares said. "Here are fair ladies come to marvel at your body, your valor, your wit, the report whereof has made them careless about their own honors, as long as they could glut their eyes and hearts upon yours."

The two young maids-in-waiting were "careless about their own honors" because they were talking to Sir Tophas without chaperones other than the two boy-pages.

Sir Tophas said, "Report and gossip cannot do otherwise than injure me, because, not knowing fully what I am, I fear that gossip has been a niggard in her praises."

Sir Tophas did not know fully what he was: a fool.

Any gossip about him would fail to state just how great a person he really was. So said Sir Tophas.

"No, gentle knight," Scintilla said. "Report has been prodigal, for she has left you no equal, nor herself credit. So much she has told, yet no more than we now see."

Her words were ambiguous. Report of Sir Tophas' reputation had 1) failed to say how great a man he was, or 2) failed to say how outlandish a man he was.

Dares whispered, "She is a good wench."

Favilla said to Sir Tophas, "If there remains in you as much pity toward women as there is in you courage against your enemies, then we women shall be happy, who, hearing about your person, came to see it; and seeing it, are now in love with it."

In love with his body? Or in love with the entertainment that he provides without meaning to?

Sir Tophas said, "Love me, ladies? I easily believe it, but my tough heart receives no impression with sweet words. Mars may pierce it; Venus shall not paint on it."

"That is a cruel saying," Favilla said.

Samias whispered, "There's a girl."

Dares said to Sir Tophas, “Will you cast these ladies away, and all because they want a little love? Do but speak kindly.”

Sir Tophas said:

“There comes no soft syllable within my lips. Custom has made my words bloody and my heart barbarous. That paltry, pelting word ‘love’ — how waterish it is in my mouth! It carries no sound. Hate, horror, death are speeches that nourish my spirits.

“I like honey, but I don’t care for the bees because they sting. I delight in music, but I don’t love to play on the bagpipes. I can vouchsafe to hear the voice of women, but to touch their bodies I disdain as a thing childish and fit for such men as can digest nothing but milk.”

“You have a hard heart,” Scintilla said. “Shall we die for your love and find no remedy?”

Sir Tophas said, “I have already taken a surfeit of love and women. I have already had too much of them.”

“Good master, pity them,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said:

“Pity them, Epi? No, I do not think that this breast shall be pestered with such a foolish passion.

“What is that which the gentlewoman carries on a chain?”

“Why, it is a squirrel,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, “A squirrel? O gods, what things are made for money!”

“Squirrel” was slang for “prostitute.”

The pages and maidens spoke confidentially to each other.

“Isn’t this gentleman over-wise?” Dares whispered.

“I could stay all day with him if I didn’t fear being shent — being scolded,” Favilla whispered.

“Isn’t it possible to meet him again?” Scintilla whispered.

“Yes, at any time,” Dares whispered.

“Then let us hasten home,” Favilla whispered.

Scintilla said out loud, “Sir Tophas, may the god of war deal better with you than you do with the god of love.”

The god of love is Cupid.

Favilla said, “We may dissemble and hide our love for now; but we cannot digest and endure your indifference to our love. Still, I don’t doubt that time will hamper you and help us.”

Sir Tophas said:

“I defy time, who has no interest in and no claim on my heart.

“Come, Epi, let me go to the battle with that hideous beast.

“Love is pap, and love has no relish in my taste because it is not terrible.”

“Pap” is baby food, and it is a woman’s breast.

Sir Tophas and Epiton exited.

Dares said:

“Indeed, a black sheep is a perilous beast.

“But let us go in until we meet him another time.”

Favilla said, “I shall long for that time.”

Everyone exited.

— 2.3 —

Endymion stood near a riverbank on which lunary — moonwort, a species of fern — grew. Unseen by him, Dipsas and Bagoa stood nearby. Bagoa was a sorceress and an assistant to Dipsas.

Endymion said to himself:

“No rest, Endymion? Still uncertain how to settle thy steps by day or thy thoughts by night? Thy truth is measured by thy fortune, and thou are judged unfaithful because thou are unhappy.”

Endymion loved Cynthia and he was faithful to her, but she did not love him back, and his fortune was unfortunate and unhappy. Anyone who believed that true love will always be rewarded would regard him as not being truly in love with Cynthia.

Endymion continued:

“I will see if I can beguile myself with sleep, and if no slumber will take hold in my eyes, yet I will embrace the golden thoughts in my head and wish to melt by musing, that as ebony, which no fire can scorch, is yet consumed with sweet savors, so my heart, which cannot be bent by the hardness of fortune, may be bruised by amorous desires.”

A false belief about ebony held that when it burned, it had no flame, but it did produce a sweet scent.

Endymion continued:

“On yonder riverbank never grew anything but lunary, and hereafter I will never have any bed but that riverbank.

“O Endymion, Tellus was fair! But what avails beauty without wisdom?

“Nay, Endymion, she was wise. But what avails wisdom without honor?

“She was honorable, Endymion. Don’t belie her. Aye, but how obscure is honor without fortune?

“Wasn’t she fortunate whom so many followed? Yes, yes, but fortune is base without majesty.

“Thy majesty, Cynthia, all the world knows and wonders at, but not one in the world can imitate it or comprehend it.

“No more, Endymion. Sleep or die. Nay, die, for it is impossible to sleep; and yet (I don’t know how it comes to pass) I feel such a heaviness both in my eyes and in my heart that I am suddenly benumbed, yes, in every joint. It may be weariness, for when did I rest? It may be deep melancholy, for when did I not sigh? Cynthia, aye, so I say Cynthia!”

He went to the riverbank, lay down, and fell asleep.

Dipsas stepped forward and said:

“Little do thou know, Endymion, when thou shall wake, for, had thou placed thy heart as low in love as thy head lies now in sleep, thou might have commanded Tellus, whom now instead of a mistress thou shall find a tomb.”

Tellus is the goddess of the Earth.

Dipsas continued:

“These eyes I must seal up by art, not by nature, these eyes that are to be opened neither by art nor by nature.

“Thou who lay down with golden locks shall not awaken until they have turned to silver hairs; and that chin, on which scarcely appears soft down, shall be filled with bristles as hard as broom straw. Thou shall sleep out thy youth and flowering time and become dry hay before thou know thyself green grass in the prime of thy life, and thou shall find thyself ready by age to step into the grave when thou wake up — thou who was youthful in the court when thou lay down to sleep.

“The malice of Tellus has brought this to pass, which if she could not have entreated me by fair means, she would have commanded by menacing; for from her we gather all our simples to maintain our sorceries.”

Simples are medicines consisting of one ingredient, such as a medicinal herb that grows in earth. These herbs, however, can also be used in witchcraft.

Dipsas then said to Bagoa:

“Fan with this hemlock over his face and sing the enchantment for sleep, while I go and finish those ceremonies that are required in our art. Take care that you don’t touch his face, for the fan is so seasoned that whoever it touches with a leaf shall immediately die, and over whom the wind of it breaths, he shall sleep forever.”

Bagoa said, “Let me alone and leave it to me, I will be careful.”

Dipsas exited.

Bagoa fanned Endymion as she sang the enchantment, and Endymion fell more deeply into sleep.

Bagoa then said:



“What hap — what misfortune — had thou, Endymion, to come under the hands of Dipsas?”

“O fair Endymion, how it grieves me that thy fair face must be turned to a withered skin and taste the pains of death before it feels the reward of love!

“I fear that Tellus will repent that which the heavens themselves seemed to rue.

“But I hear Dipsas coming. I dare not repine and complain, lest she make me pine and long for Endymion, and she may rock me into such a deep sleep that I shall not awaken even for my marriage.”

Dipsas returned and asked, “How do matters stand now? Have you finished?”

“Yes,” Bagoa said.

Dipsas said, “Well, then, let us go in, and see that you do not as much as whisper that I did this; for if you do, I will turn thy hairs to adders and all thy teeth in thy head to tongues.

“Come away. Come away.”

They exited, leaving Endymion behind, asleep.

### **A DUMB SHOW (ENDYMION)**

Music sounded.

Endymion slept on the riverbank.

Three ladies entered. One lady had a knife and a looking glass, and at the instigation of one of the other two ladies, she made motions as if she would stab Endymion as he slept, but the third lady wrung her hands, lamented, wanting always to prevent it and making motions as if she would prevent it, but not daring to do so. At last, the first lady, looking into the mirror, cast down the knife.

The three ladies exited.

An ancient man entered the scene with books with three leaves. He offered the books to Endymion twice. Endymion refused each time. The old man tore two and offered the third to Endymion. The old man stood for a while, and then Endymion offered to take it.

The ancient man exited.

Endymion remained sleeping on the lunar bank, curtained off from view.

## CHAPTER 3 (ENDYMION)

— 3.1 —

Cynthia, Tellus, Semele, Eumenides, Corsites, Panelion, and Zontes met together. Corsites was a captain, and Panelion and Zontes were lords at Cynthia's court.

Cynthia asked, "Is the report true that Endymion is stricken into such a dead sleep that nothing can either awaken him or move him?"

Eumenides answered, "The report is too true, madam, and Endymion is as much to be pitied as wondered at."

"It is as good to sleep and do no harm as it is to wake and do no good," Tellus said.

Cynthia said, "Tellus, what makes you be so short and abrupt? The time was that you thought only about Endymion."

"It is an old saying, madam, that a waking dog from far away barks at a sleeping lion," Eumenides said.

"It would be good, Eumenides, that you took a nap with your friend, for your speech begins to be heavy," Semele said.

Of course, Eumenides' friend Endymion was sleeping a very long sleep.

Heavy speech can be serious speech, or speech that is slurred because of drowsiness.

"That would be contrary to your nature, Semele, which has always been accounted light," Eumenides said.

A light woman is a promiscuous woman.

Angry at the exchange of insults, Cynthia said, "What! Have we here before my face these unseemly and malapert, impertinent overthwarts — these exchanges of rude insults in a quarrel? I will tame your tongues and your thoughts, and I will make your speeches answerable to your duties and your thoughts fit for my dignity; or else I will banish you both from my person and from the world."

"I humbly ask your pardon; but such is my unspotted faith to Endymion that whatsoever seems a needle to prick his finger is a dagger to wound my heart," Eumenides said.

Cynthia asked, "If you are so dear to him, how does it happen that you neither go to see him nor search for a remedy for him?"

Eumenides said:

"I have seen him, to my grief, and I sought a cure with despair because I cannot imagine who should restore Endymion, who is the wonder of all men.

"Your Highness, in your hands the entire compass of the Earth is at command (although not in absolute possession)."

The Moon influences all that is within the circumference of the Earth, as shown by the tides.

Eumenides continued:

“You may show yourself worthy of your sex, worthy of your nature, and worthy of your favor and beauty, if you redeem and rescue that honorable Endymion, whose years of age, now ripening, foretell rare virtues and whose unripened conceits promise ripe counsel.”

According to Eumenides, his friend Endymion, who was still young, nevertheless showed great promise of possessing future rare and splendid virtues. His thoughts, now still unripened, would become wise counsel.

Cynthia said, “I have tested Endymion, and I conceive greater assurance of his age than I could hope of his youth.”

Tellus said, “But the right time, madam, makes crooked that tree that will become a cammock, and a young tree that pricks slightly will grow to become a thorn tree; and therefore, he who began without care to settle his life, it is a sign he will end it without amendment and improvement.”

In other words, Tellus was saying that early events predicted later events. A young tree that is made to grow crooked can be made into a cane. A tree that pricks slightly when it is young will have full-grown thorns when it is mature. A young man who begins life without taking care to form good habits and without taking care to avoid forming bad habits will probably end his life without making improvements to his life.

A cammock is a crooked piece of wood that can be made into a cane.

Cynthia said:

“Presumptuous girl, I will make thy tongue an example of unrecoverable displeasure.

“Corsites, carry her to the castle in the desert, there to remain and weave.”

Corsites asked, “Shall she work stories, or shall she work poetries? Shall she weave historical, nonfiction stories, or shall she weave fictions?”

Cynthia said:

“It does not matter which. Bah, let her weave both, for she shall find in both of them infinite examples of what punishment long tongues have.”

Corsites and Tellus exited.

Cynthia continued:

“Eumenides, if any of the soothsayers in Egypt, or the enchanters in Thessaly, or the philosophers in Greece or all the sages of the world can find a remedy to cure Endymion, I will procure it.

“Therefore, dispatch will all speed.

“You, Eumenides, go to Thessaly.

“You, Zontes, go to Greece (because you are acquainted in Athens).

“You, Panelion, go to Egypt, saying that Cynthia sends, and if you will, commands.”

“On bowed knee I give thanks, and with wings on my legs I fly to find a remedy,” Eumenides said.

“We are ready at Your Highness’ command, and we hope to return to your full content,” Zontes said.

Cynthia said, “It shall never be said that Cynthia, whose mercy and goodness fills the heavens with joys and the world with marvels, will allow either Endymion or any other person to perish if he may be protected.”

Eumenides said, “Your Majesty’s words have always been deeds, and your deeds have always been virtues.”

In other words: Your Majesty always fulfills your promises in a virtuous manner.

They exited.

### — 3.2 —

Corsites and Tellus talked together.

Corsites said:

“Here is the castle, fair Tellus, in which you must weave until either time ends your days with death or Cynthia ends her displeasure toward you.

“I am sorry that so fair a face should be subject to so hard a fortune, and I am sorry that the flower of beauty, which is honored in courts, should here wither in prison.”

Tellus said, “Corsites, Cynthia may restrain the liberty of my body, but she cannot restrain the liberty of my thoughts. And therefore, I esteem myself to be most free, although I am in greatest bondage.”

“Can you then feed yourself on fancy, and subdue the malice of envy by the sweetness of imagination?” Corsites asked.

Whose malicious envy? That of Tellus?

Tellus said, “Corsites, there is no sweeter music to the miserable than despair; and therefore, the more bitterness I feel, the more sweetness I find. For so vain was liberty, and so unwelcome was the following of higher fortune, that I choose rather to pine in this castle than to be a prince in any other court.”

“That is a humor — an attitude — contrary to your years and not at all agreeable to your sex, the one commonly allured with delights, the other always allured with sovereignty,” Corsites said.

Tellus said, “I marvel, Corsites, that you, being a captain, who should sound nothing but terror and suck nothing but blood, can find in your heart to talk such smooth words, because it does not agree with your calling to use words as soft as that of ‘love.’”

“Smooth” can mean 1) pleasant and polite, 2) insinuating, or 3) flattering.

Corsites said, “Lady, it would be unfit to discourse with women about wars, as into women’s minds nothing can sink but smoothness. Besides, you must not think that soldiers are so rough-

hewn or of such knotty metal — knotty material — and knotty mettle that beauty cannot allure, and you, being beyond perfection, enchant.”

“Good Corsites, don’t talk about love, but let me go to my labor,” Tellus said. “The little beauty I have shall be bestowed on my loom, which I now mean to make my lover.”

“Let us go in, and what favor Corsites can show, Tellus can command,” Corsites said.

“The only favor I desire is now and then to walk,” Tellus said.

— 3.3 —

Sir Tophas, armed, and Epiton, carrying a gown (an outer garment for men) and other paraphernalia, talked together.

“Epi!” Sir Tophas said.

“Here, sir,” Epiton said.

“Unrig me,” Sir Tophas said. “Heighho!”

“What’s that?” Epiton asked.

He was asking about “heighho.”

Sir Tophas answered, “An interjection, whereof some are of mourning, such as *eho, yah.*”

Instead of *eho*, aka “holla,” Sir Tophas may have meant *eheu*, aka “alas.”

These words are interjections from a Latin grammar book of the time. The book was written by William Lyly, John Lyly’s grandfather.

“I don’t understand you,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas asked, “Do thou see me?”

“Aye,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas asked, “Do thou hear me?”

“Aye,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas asked, “Do thou feel me?”

“Aye,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas asked, “And do thou understand me?”

“No,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said:

“Then I am but three quarters of a noun substantive.”

According to William Lyly’s Latin grammar book, a noun substantive can be seen, heard, felt, and understood.

Sir Tophas then said:

“But alas, Epi, to tell thee the truth, I am a noun adjective.”

According to William Lyly’s Latin grammar book, a noun adjective cannot stand by itself. It needs another word to support it. Today, we call noun adjectives simply adjectives.

“Why?” Epiton asked.

Sir Tophas said, “Because I cannot stand without another.”

One meaning of “stand” is “to have an erection.”

“Who is that?” Epiton asked. “Who is ‘another’?”

Sir Tophas said, “Dipsas.”

“Are you in love?” Epiton asked.

Sir Tophas said:

“No, but love has, as it were, milked my thoughts and drained from my heart the very substance of my accustomed courage.”

In this society, people believed that each sigh drained away a drop of blood from the heart.

Sir Tophas continued:

“It works and ferments in my head like new wine, and so I must hoop my sponce with iron lest my head break and I betray and reveal my brains.”

A sponce is 1) a small fortress, or 2) a head.

The word that John Lyly used for “betray” is “bewray,” which sounds like “beray,” which means to soil oneself.

Sir Tobias continued:

“But please, first reveal and expose me in all parts, so that I may be like a lover, and then I will sigh and die. Take my gun and give me a gown. *Cedant arma togae* — let arms yield to the toga.”

In other words: Let the weapons of war yield to diplomacy.

Epiton helped Sir Tophas to disarm and then gave him the gown, saying, “Here.”

Sir Tophas said, “Take my sword and shield and give me a beard-brush and scissors. *Bella gerant alii; tu, Pari, semper ama* — let others fight; you, Paris, will always love.”

If Sir Tophas is to be compared to the Trojan prince Paris, then his beloved, the aged sorceress Dipsas, whose nose touches her chin, is to be compared to Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world.

“Will you be trimmed, sir?” Epiton asked.

Sir Tophas said:

“Not yet, for I feel a contention within me whether I shall frame the bodkin beard or the bush.”

The bodkin beard was shaped like a dagger, and the bush beard was bushy.

Later, we learn that three or four little hairs are growing on Sir Tophas' chin.

Sir Tophas then said:

“But take my pike and give me a pen. *Dicere quae pudit, scribere jussit amor* — love makes one write about things he cannot speak about.”

“I will furnish and equip you, sir,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said:

“Now for my bow and bolts, give me ink and paper; and for my smiter, give me a penknife.”

“Bolts” are arrows.

Sir Tophas continued:

“For *scalpellum, calami, atramentum, charta, libelli, sint semper studiis arma parata meis* — may penknife, pens, ink, papers, books always be prepared for action.”

“Sir, will you give over wars and play with that bauble — that plaything — called love?” Epiton asked.

Sir Tophas said:

“Give over wars? Give them up? No, Epi.

“*Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido* — all lovers are warriors, and Cupid has his own military camp.”

“Love has made you very eloquent, but your face is not at all fair and handsome,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, “*Non formosus erat, sed erat facundus Ulysses* — Ulysses was not handsome, but he was eloquent.”

“Nay, I must seek a new master if you can speak nothing but verses,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said:

“*Quicquid conabar dicere versus erat* — what I was trying to speak were verses.

“Epi, I feel all Ovid's *De Arte Amandi* lie as heavy at my heart as a load of logs.”

Ovid wrote *Ars Amatoria: The Art of Love*. It was also known as *De Arte Amandi*.

Sir Tophas continued:

“O what a fine thin hair has Dipsas!

“What a pretty low forehead!”

“Thin hair” can mean “balding.”

This society praised high foreheads.

Sir Tophas continued:

“What a tall and stately nose!

“What little hollow eyes!

“What great and goodly lips!

“How harmless she is, being toothless!

“Her fingers are fat and short, and they are adorned with long nails like a bittern — like a heron with long claws!

“In how sweet a proportion her cheeks hang down to her breasts like dugs [udders] and her paps [her breasts] hang down to her waist like bags!

“What a low stature she is, and yet what a great big foot she carries!

“How thrifty must she be in whom there is no waste!”

And no waist.

Sir Tophas continued:

“How virtuous she is likely to be, about whom no man can be jealous!”

“Stop, master, you forget yourself,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, “O, Epi, even as a dish melts by the fire, so does my wit increase by love.”

His comparison lacks wit and intelligence.

“Pithily, and to the purpose,” Epiton said sarcastically about Sir Tophas’ choice of a metaphor. “But what now? Do you begin to nod?”

Sir Tophas said, “Good Epi, let me take a nap. For as some man may better steal a horse than another man may look over the hedge, so many different people shall be sleepy when they would most like to take a rest.”

He slept.

Epiton said to himself:

“Who ever saw such a woodcock?”

A woodcock is an easily caught bird, and so “a woodcock” became slang for “a fool.”

Epiton continued:

“Love Dipsas? Without doubt all the world will now account him valiant, him who ventures on her whom no one dared to undertake.

“But here come two wags.”

Samias and Dares entered the scene.

Samias said to Dares, “Thy master has slept his share.”

Dares was the sleeping Endymion’s page.



Dares said to Samias, “I think he does it because he doesn’t want to pay me my board wages: my allowance to buy food.”

Samias said, “It is a very strange thing, and I think my master will never return; so that we must both seek new masters, for we shall never live by our manners.”

Samias was Eumenides’ page; Eumenides had gone to Thessaly to seek a cure for the sleeping Endymion.

Epiton said to Samias and Dares, “If you want manners, join with me and serve Sir Tophas, who must keep more men because he is heading toward marriage.”

“Want” can mean 1) lack, and 2) desire.

“What, Epi? Where’s thy master?” Samias asked.

“Yonder sleeping in love,” Epiton answered.

“Is it possible?” Dares asked.

He did not expect Sir Tophas to be in love.

Epiton said, “He has taken his thoughts a hole lower, aka down a peg, and he has come off his high horse, and he says, seeing it is the fashion of the world, he will vail bonnet — take off his hat — to beauty.”

“A hole lower.” Hmm. Women have a hole lower.

A ship that surrenders will vail — lower — its sails.

“How is he attired?” Samias asked.

“Lovely — like a lover,” Epiton answered.

“Whom does this amorous knight love?” Dares asked.

“Dipsas,” Epiton answered.

“That ugly creature?” Samias said. “Why, she is a fool, a scold, fat, without fashion and shape, and quite without favor and beauty.”

“Tush, you are simple-minded,” Epiton said. “My master has a good marriage in mind.”

“Good?” Dares said. “In what way?”

Epiton said:

“Why, in marrying Dipsas, he shall have every day twelve dishes of food for his dinner, although there will be none but Dipsas with him.

“Four dishes of flesh, four dishes of fish, four dishes of fruit.”

“How, Epi?” Samias asked.

Epiton said, “For flesh, these: woodcock, goose, bittern, and rail.”

“Woodcock” and “goose” mean “fool.”

Bittens are a species of bird that has long claws. Dipsas will scratch Sir Tophas.

Rails are crane-like birds, but the name suggests that Dipsas will rail at and criticize Sir Tophas.

“Indeed, he shall not miss having those if Dipsas is there,” Dares said.

Epiton said, “For fish, these are the dishes: crab, carp, lump, and pouting.”

“Excellent!” Samias said. “For, of my word, she is crabbish, lumpish, and carping.”

And pouting.

All of these fish dishes, including lump and pouting, are real fish.

Epiton said:

“For fruit these are the dishes: fritters, medlars, heart-i-chokes, and lady-longings.”

Three of the fruits are varieties of apples.

Dipsas is a fretting woman.

Medlars were eaten when they were soft and beginning to rot. Dipsas was a meddling woman, and she was an aging woman who was beginning to rot.

“Heart-i-chokes” are, of course, artichokes. Dipsas can choke a heart.

“Lady-longings” refers to a woman’s desires.

Epiton then said:

“Thus, you see he shall fare like a king, although he is only a beggar.”

Dares said:

“Well, Epi, dine thou with him, for I had rather fast than see her face.

“But see, thy master is asleep. Let us have a song to wake this amorous knight.”

“Agreed,” Epiton said.

“I am content to sing,” Samias said.

They began to sing their song.

Epiton sang:

*“Here snores Sir Tophas,*

*“That amorous ass,*

*“Who loves Dipsas,*

*“With face so sweet.*

*“Nose and chin meet.”*

All three sang:

*“At sight of her each Fury skips*

*“And flings into her lap their whips.”*

Furies are whip-carrying avenging deities from the Land of the Dead.

Dares sang:

*“Holla, holla in his ear.”*

Samias sang:

*“The witch sure [surely] thrust her fingers there.”*

Epiton sang:

*“Cramp him, or wring the fool by the nose.”*

Wringing an unconscious person’s nose was supposed to restore that person to consciousness.

These three servants would also be happy to give Sir Tophas cramps — or to burn his toes.

Dares sang:

*“Or clap some burning flax to his toes.”*

Samias sang:

*“What music’s best to wake him?”*

Epiton sang:

*“Bow-wow. Let bandogs shake him.”*

Bandogs are tied-up fierce dogs.

Dares sang:

*“Let adders hiss in his ear.”*

Samias sang:

*“Else earwigs wriggle there.”*

Earwigs are a species of crawling insects.

Epiton sang:

*“No, let him batten; when his tongue*

*“Once goes, a cat is not worse strung.”*

Cat guts were used as strings in musical instruments.

To “batten” means to “grow fat.”

All three sang:

*“But if he ope nor [opens neither] mouth nor eyes,*

*“He may in time sleep himself wise.”*

Sir Tophas said to himself, as he awakened, “Sleep is a binding of the senses; love is a loosing of the senses.”

Epiton whispered to Samias and Dares, “Let us listen to him for a while.”

Sir Tophas said, “There appeared in my sleep a goodly owl, who, sitting on my shoulder, cried, ‘Twit, twit,’ and in front of my eyes presented herself as the express image of Dipsas. I marveled at what the owl said, until at the last I perceived ‘Twit, twit’ to mean ‘To it, to it.’ Only by contraction was I admonished by this vision to make account of my sweet Venus.”

Another interpretation of the dream is that the owl was simply making its cry — not telling him to “go to it” and woo Dipsas.

In this society, a twit is a criticism or a reproach.

Samias said, “Sir Tophas, you have overslept yourself.”

Sir Tophas replied, “No, youth, I have but slept over my love.”

“Slept over my love”? Hmm. Slept on top of my love?

Dares said, “Love? Why, it is impossible that into so noble and unconquered a courage, love should creep, having first a head as hard to pierce as steel, and then to pass to a heart armed with a shirt of mail — that is, with armor.”

A “head as hard to pierce as steel” is one armed with a helmet against an enemy, or one armed with stupidity against ideas.

Epiton whispered to Samias and Dares, “Aye, but my master yawning one day in the sun, love crept into his mouth before he could close it, and there kept such a tumbling in his body that he was glad to untruss the points — to untie the strings — of his heart and entertain and welcome Love as a stranger.”

Sir Tophas said, “If there remains any pity in you, plead for me to Dipsas.”

“Plead?” Dares said. “Nay, we will press her to it.”

Dares whispered to Samias:

“Let us go with him to Dipsas, and there we shall have good sport — good entertainment.”

He then said out loud:

“But Sir Tophas, when shall we go? For I find my tongue voluble and my heart venturous, and I find all myself like myself.”

Samias whispered, “Come, Dares, let us not lose him until we find our masters, for as long as he lives, we shall lack neither mirth nor meat.”

Epiton said:

“We will traverse. We will proceed.”

He then asked Sir Tophas:

“Will you go, sir?”

Sir Tophas said, “Will I go? *Prae, sequar* — lead, I will follow.”

They exited to go and see Dipsas.

— 3.4 —

Eumenides and Geron met outside, near a fountain.

Geron, an old man, sang a sad song.

Eumenides would call Geron “father,” a respectful way of addressing an old man, even when the old man was not one’s biological father.

Eumenides said, “Father, your sad and solemn music, being tuned to the same key that my hard fortune is, has so melted my mind that I wish to hang at your mouth’s end until my life ends.”

Geron said, “These tunes, gentleman, I have been accustomed to sing these fifty winters, having no other house to shroud myself but the broad heavens; and continual experience has made misery so familiar to me that I esteem sorrow my chiefest solace. And most welcome is that guest who can rehearse — can relate — the saddest tale or the bloodiest tragedy to me.”

“This is a strange humor — a strange disposition,” Eumenides said. “Might I inquire its cause?”

Geron said:

“You must pardon me if I decline to tell it, for, knowing that the revealing of griefs is, as it were, a renewing of sorrow, I have vowed therefore to conceal them so that I might not only feel the depth of everlasting discontentment, but also despair of remedy.

“But from where are you? What fortune has thrust you into this distress?”

Eumenides said, “I am going to Thessaly to seek remedy for Endymion, my dearest friend, who has been cast into a dead sleep almost these twenty years, growing old and ready for the grave, being almost but newly come forth from the cradle.”

“You need not travail and travel far for a remedy because the person who can clearly see the bottom of this fountain shall have the remedy for any problem,” Geron said.

“That, I think, is impossible,” Eumenides said. “Why, what virtue can there be in water?”

“Yes, whoever can shed the tears of a faithful lover into the fountain shall obtain anything he wishes,” Geron said. “Read these words engraved around the brim.”

Eumenides read words that backed up what Geron had said, and then he said, “Have you known this by experience? Have you witnessed this happening? Will the tears of a faithful lover be in fact rewarded? Or was this fountain placed here on purpose to delude men?”

Geron said, “I would only like to have experience of it, myself, and then there would be an end of my misery. And then I would tell you the strangest discourse that ever yet was heard.”

Eumenides said to himself, but loudly enough for Geron to hear, “Ah, Eumenides!”

He had two problems. One, he loved Semele, but she did not return his love, and so he needed a remedy that would result in her loving him. Two, he loved Endymion as a friend, and he needed a remedy to awaken him from his too-deep sleep.

Which wish did he most want fulfilled?

“What do you need, gentleman?” Geron asked. “Aren’t you well?”

“Yes, father, but a qualm that often comes over my heart now takes hold of me,” Eumenides said. “But have any lovers ever come hither?”

Geron said:

“Lusters have come here, but not lovers.”

Lusters are those who lust. Lusters are also appearances.

Geron continued:

“For often I have seen them weep, but I could never hear that they saw the bottom.”

“Have women come there, also?” Eumenides asked.

“Some,” Geron said.

“What did they see?” Eumenides asked.

Geron answered, “They all wept with the result that the fountain overflowed with tears, but so thick became the water with their tears that I could scarcely discern the brim, much less behold the bottom.”

“Are faithful lovers so scant?” Eumenides asked.

“It seems so, for I have never heard of any yet,” Geron said.

Eumenides said to himself, but loudly enough for Geron to hear:

“Ah, Eumenides, how are thou perplexed!

“Call to mind the beauty of thy sweet mistress and the depth of thy never-dying affections. How often have thou honored her, not only without spot — without sin — but also without suspicion of falsehood! And how hardly has she rewarded thee without cause or reason or color of despite — without pretext for her scorn of me! How secret have thou been these seven years, who have not named her — who have not even once dared to name her for fear of discontenting her.

“Unhappy Eumenides!”

“Why, gentleman, did you once love?” Geron asked.

“Once?” Eumenides said. “Aye, father, and I always shall.”

“Was she unkind and were you faithful?” Geron asked.

“She is of all women the most froward, the most perverse, and I am of all creatures the fondest, the most foolish,” Eumenides said.

“You doted then, not loved,” Geron said. “For affection is grounded on virtue and virtue is never peevish, or affection is based on beauty, and beauty loves to be praised.”

Both virtue and beauty can be loved. And praised.

According to Geron’s words, because Semele was peevish, Eumenides could not truly love her — he could only dote on her. But Semele was beautiful.

Eumenides said, “Aye, but if all virtuous ladies should yield to all who are loving, or if all amiable gentlewomen should entertain all who are amorous, their virtues would be accounted vices and their beauties would be accounted deformities, because love can be only between two, and that not proceeding from him who is most faithful, but from him who is most fortunate.”

A woman does not always fall in love with the man who most loves her.

“I wish that you were so faithful that your tears might make you fortunate,” Geron said.

“Yes, father, if it is the case that my tears do not clear this fountain, then you may swear that the fountain is only a mere mockery,” Eumenides said.

“So, indeed, everyone yet who wept,” Geron said.

In other words: Every lover — make that luster — who has wept into the fountain has not been able to see the fountain’s bottom, and so the fountain has shown that the lusters’ love is not true. Like Eumenides would do if he could not see the fountain’s bottom, they had said that the fountain was a mere mockery.

Looking into the fountain, Eumenides said, “Ah, I faint, I die! Ah, sweet Semele, let me alone and leave it to me, and let me dissolve by weeping into water!”

Geron said to himself, “This affection seems strange. It may be affectation. If he sees nothing, without doubt this dissembling is excessive, for nothing shall draw me away from the belief that the fountain has magical properties.”

Eumenides said, “Father, I plainly see the bottom, and there in white marble are engraved these words: ‘Ask one for all, and ask for only one thing at all.’”

The words mean, “Ask for just one remedy out of all of those that you might ask for.”

Geron said:

“O fortunate Eumenides (for so I have heard thee call thyself), let me see.”

He looked into the fountain, and then he said:

“I cannot discern any such thing. I think thou dream.”

Eumenides said, “Ah, father, thou are not a faithful lover and therefore cannot behold it.”

“Then ask, so that I may be satisfied by the outcome, and thyself blessed,” Geron said.

Eumenides said:

“Ask? So I will. And what shall I do but ask, and whom should I ask for but Semele, the possessing of whose person is a pleasure that cannot come within the compass of comparison,

whose golden locks seem most artfully arranged when they seem most carelessly arranged, whose sweet looks seem most alluring when they are most chaste, and whose words the more virtuous they are, the more amorous they are accounted.

“I pray to thee, Fortune, when I shall first meet with fair Semele, dash my delight with some light disgrace lest embracing sweetness beyond measure, I take surfeit without a remedy.

“Let her practice her accustomed coyness, so that I may diet myself upon my desires; otherwise, the fullness of my joys will diminish the sweetness, and I shall perish by them before I possess them.”

He was worried that the pleasure of Semele’s loving him could destroy him.

In mythology, a mortal woman named Semele had sex with Jupiter, King of the gods, after making him swear an inviolable oath that he would grant her whatever she wished for. After they had sex, Semele asked Jupiter to reveal himself to her in his true form. Having sworn an inviolable oath, Jupiter had to grant the wish, but seeing Jupiter in his true form was too much for Semele, and she died. She was carrying a fetus, which Jupiter rescued and sewed into his thigh. Jupiter later gave birth to Bacchus, the god of wine and ecstasy.

Eumenides continued:

“Why do I trifle away the time in words? The least minute being spent in the getting of Semele is worth more than the whole world; therefore, let me ask for Semele.

“What now, Eumenides? To where are thou drawn? Have thou forgotten both friendship and duty, both the care of Endymion and the commandment of Cynthia? Shall he die in a leaden sleep because thou sleep in a golden dream?

“Aye, let him sleep always, as long as I slumber just one minute with Semele. Love knows neither friendship nor kindred. Why wouldn’t I hazard the loss of a friend, for the obtaining of her for whom I would often lose myself?

“Fond and foolish Eumenides, shall the enticing beauty of a most disdainful lady be of more force than the rare fidelity of a tried friend? The love of men to women is a thing that is common and of a matter-of-fact course; the friendship of man to man is infinite, and it is immortal.

“Tush, Semele possesses my love.

“Aye, but Endymion has deserved it. I will help Endymion; I found Endymion unspotted in his truth.

“Aye, but I shall find Semele constant in her love. I will have Semele.

“What shall I do? Father, thy gray hairs are ambassadors of experience. Which shall I ask?”

He had to choose between Semele and Endymion. One was a woman whom he loved, and the other was a friend.

Geron advised:

“Eumenides, release Endymion; for all things, friendship excepted, are subject to fortune. Love is just an eye-worm — a distraction, a woman whom one eyes — which only tickles the head



with hopes and wishes; friendship is the image of eternity, in which there is nothing movable, nothing mischievous.

“As much difference as there is between beauty and virtue, bodies and shadows, colors [makeup] and life, so great differences are there between love and friendship. Love is a chameleon, which draws nothing into the mouth but air and nourishes nothing in the body but lungs.”

A folk belief in this society was that chameleons can live on nothing but air.

Geron continued:

“Believe me, Eumenides, desire dies in the same moment that beauty sickens, and beauty fades in the same instant that it flourishes. When adversities flow, then love ebbs, but friendship stands stiffly in storms. Time draws wrinkles in a fair face but adds fresh colors to a fast friend, which neither heat, nor cold, nor misery, nor place, nor destiny can alter or diminish.

“O friendship, of all things the most rare and uncommon, and therefore the rarest and most splendid because the most excellent, whose comforts in misery are always sweet and whose counsels in prosperity are always fortunate!

“Vain love, which only comes near to friendship in name, wishes to seem to be the same, or better, in nature!”

*Amor* is Latin for “love,” and *amicitia* is Latin for “friendship.” Geron valued friendship much more than he valued love, and he criticized love as being vain for trading on the similarity of *amor* to *amicitia* and claiming to be superior to *amicitia*.

Eumenides said:

“Father, I allow your reasons and will therefore conquer my own. Virtue shall subdue affections, wisdom shall subdue lust, friendship shall subdue beauty. Mistresses are in every place, and as common as hares on Mount Athos, bees in the Sicilian city of Hybla (which is famous for its honey), fowls in the air; but friends to be found are like the phoenix in Arabia, just one, or the *philadelphi* in Arays, never more than two. I will have Endymion.”

Mount Athos is the site of many Eastern Orthodox monasteries. The monks have full beards, and so, yes, there are many hairs on Mount Athos.

The phoenix was a mythological Arabian bird that lived for five hundred years, burned itself up, and rose reborn from the ashes.

“*Philadelphi* in Arays” may mean *philadelphi ad aras*, a variant of the proverb “friendship as far as the altar,” or “friendship to the point of conscience.” If this is the case, then the proverb puts friendship before all things except God, Who comes first and Who is all-good and Who wants us to follow our conscience.

Or *philadelphi* could mean *philadelphus hirsutus*, or mock-orange, whose flowers grow in twos.

The Greek *philadelphus* means “loving one’s sibling,” and so *philadelphi* may refer to loving brothers and to brotherly love.

Arays could be a place: the Spanish Araya or Aranjuez, whose old Latin name is *Ara Iovis*.

Eumenides looked into the fountain again and said:

“Sacred fountain, in whose bowels are hidden divine secrets, I have increased your waters with the tears of unspotted thoughts, and therefore let me receive the reward you promise. Endymion, the truest friend to me, and the most faithful lover to Cynthia, is in such a dead sleep that nothing can wake or move him.”

“Do thou see anything?” Geron asked.

Eumenides said:

“I see in the same white marble pillar these words: ‘When she, whose figure of all is the most perfect and never to be measured, always one yet never the same, always inconstant yet never wavering, shall come and kiss Endymion in his sleep, he shall then rise; else he will never rise.’

“This is strange.”

“What else do you see?” Geron asked.

Endymion said, “There comes over my eyes either a dark mist, or upon the fountain a deep thickness, for I can perceive nothing. But how I am deluded! Or what difficult, nay impossible, thing is this?”

“I think it is easy to understand,” Geron said.

“Good father, and how?” Eumenides asked.

“Isn’t a circle of all figures the most perfect?” Geron asked.

“Yes,” Eumenides said.

“And isn’t Cynthia of all circles the most absolute?” Geron asked.

The full Moon is round.

“Yes,” Eumenides said.

“Isn’t it impossible to measure her, who always works by her influence, never standing at one stay?” Geron asked.

According to astrologers, heavenly bodies such as the Moon influenced human destiny.

“One stay” is one fixed place in the zodiac. The Moon, of course, varies its position in the night sky.

“Yes,” Eumenides said.

Geron said, “Isn’t she always Cynthia, yet seldom in the same bigness, always wavering in her waxing or waning, so that our bodies might the better be governed, our seasons the daylier give their increase, yet never to be removed from her course as long as the heavens continue theirs?”

The Moon each day increases the seasons, which go from one to another.

“Yes,” Eumenides said.

Geron said, "Then who can it be but Cynthia, whose virtues being all divine, must necessarily bring things to pass that are miraculous? Go humble thyself to Cynthia; tell her the success, aka the outcome of your quest, of which I myself shall be a witness. And assure thyself of this: that she who sent thee to find the means for Endymion's safety will now work her cunning skill."

"How fortunate I am, if Cynthia is she who may do it!" Eumenides said.

Geron said, "How fond — how foolish — thou art if you do not believe it!"

"I will hasten thither, so that I may entreat on my knees for succor, and I will embrace in my arms my friend," Eumenides said.

"I will go with thee, for to Cynthia I must reveal all my sorrows, who also must work in me a contentment," Geron said.

"May I now know the cause?" Eumenides asked.

"That shall be my tale as we walk, and I don't doubt that the strangeness of my tale will take away the tediousness of our journey," Geron said.

"Let us go," Eumenides said.

"I follow," Geron said.

They exited.

## CHAPTER 4 (ENDYMION)

— 4.1 —

Alone, Tellus said to herself:

“I marvel that Corsites gives me so much liberty, with all the world knowing his charge and commission to be so high and of such magnitude and his nature to be most strange and reserved. He has so badly treated ladies of great honor in that he has not allowed them to look out of windows, much less to walk abroad.

“It may be the case that he is in love with me, for, Endymion, hardhearted Endymion excepted, who is he who is not enamored of my beauty?”

“But what respect do thou, Tellus, give the love of all the world? Endymion hates thee. Alas, poor Endymion, my malice has exceeded my love, and thy faith and loyalty to Cynthia has quenched my affections.

“Quenched, Tellus? Nay, kindled them afresh, insomuch that I find scorching flames instead of dead embers, and cruel encounters of war in my thoughts instead of sweet parleys.

“Ah, that I might once again see Endymion! Accursed girl, what hope have thou to see Endymion, on whose head already are grown gray hairs, and whose life must yield to nature before Cynthia shall end her displeasure?”

“Wicked Dipsas, and most devilish Tellus, the one — Dipsas — for cunning too exquisite, and the other — Tellus — for hate too intolerable!

“Thou, Tellus, were commanded to weave the stories and poetries wherein were shown both examples and punishments of tattling tongues, and thou have only embroidered the sweet face of Endymion, devices of love, melancholy imaginations, and what not out of thy work — all things that thou should work to pick out of thy mind.”

Tellus should have been trying to get Endymion out of her mind.

Tellus continued:

“But here comes Corsites. I must seem yielding and stout, full of mildness yet tempered with a majesty.”

“Stout” means “unyielding.” She needed to find a mean between extremes.

Tellus continued:

“For if I am too flexible, I shall give him more hope than I mean; and if I am too froward and perverse, I shall enjoy less liberty than I wish to enjoy. I cannot love him, and therefore I will practice that which is most ‘contrary’ to our sex: to dissemble.”

Many people in this society would say without irony that to dissemble is most customary to the female sex.

Corsites entered the scene.

“Fair Tellus,” he said, “I perceive that you rise with the lark and that you sing with the nightingale to yourself.”

“My lord, I have no playfellow except fancy and my imagination,” Tellus said. “Being barred of all company, I must question — converse — with myself and make my thoughts my friends.”

Corsites replied, “I wish that you would consider my thoughts to be also your friends, for they are such as are only busied in marveling at your beauty and wisdom, and some of my thoughts are such as have esteemed your fortune too hard, and other thoughts of that kind that offer to set you free if you will set them free.”

Tellus said, “There are no colors as contrary as white and black, nor elements as disagreeing as fire and water, nor anything as opposite as men’s thoughts and their words.”

“Colors” can mean pretenses as well as hues.

Corsites said, “He who gave Cassandra the gift of prophesying, with the curse that, although she spoke so true, she should never be believed, has, I think, poisoned the fortune of men, who, uttering the extremities of their inward passions, are always suspected of outward perjuries.”

The god Apollo promised to give the Trojan princess Cassandra the gift of prophecy if she slept with him. She agreed, he gave her the gift, and then she did not keep her promise to sleep with him. Apollo arranged things so that although Cassandra always accurately foretold the future, no one ever believed what she foretold until it happened.

Corsites was saying that Apollo had arranged things so that no matter how truly men spoke about love, women would never believe them.

“Well, Corsites, I will flatter myself and believe you,” Tellus said. “What would you do to enjoy my love?”

“I would set all the ladies of the castle free and make you the pleasure of my life,” Corsites said. “More I cannot do; less I will not do.”

“These are great words, and fit for your calling, for captains must promise impossible things,” Tellus said. “But will you do one thing for all?”

“Anything, sweet Tellus,” Corsites said. “I am ready to do anything for you.”

“You know that on the lunar bank Endymion is sleeping,” Tellus said.

“I know it,” Corsites said.

Tellus said, “If you will remove him from that place by force and convey him into some obscure cave through cunning, I give you here the faith of an unspotted virgin that only you shall possess me as a lover and, in spite of malicious gossip, have me for a wife.”

“Remove him from that place, Tellus?” Corsites said. “Yes, Tellus, he shall be removed, and that so quickly that thou shall as much commend my diligence as my force. I go.”

He started to leave.

“Wait,” Tellus said. “Will you yourself attempt to remove him?”

Corsites said:

“Aye, Tellus. As I would have no one be partaker of my sweet love, so no one shall be a partner in my labors.

“But I ask thee to go into the castle at your best leisure, for Cynthia begins to rise, and if she discovers our love, we will both perish, for nothing pleases her but the fairness of virginity. All things must be not only without lust but without suspicion of lightness and wantonness.”

“I will depart, and you will go to Endymion,” Tellus said.

“I fly, Tellus, being of all men the most fortunate,” Corsites said.

He exited.

Tellus said:

“Simple Corsites! I have set thee to do a task, thou who are just a man, that the gods themselves cannot perform. For little do thou know how heavy his head lies, how hard his fortune. But women must have such shifts and tricks to deceive men, and, under color — under the pretext — of easy things, entreat that which is impossible. Otherwise, we would be encumbered with importunities, oaths, sighs, letters, and all implements of love, which to one resolved to the contrary, are most loathsome.

“I will go in and laugh with the other ladies at Corsites’ sweating.”

She exited.

— 4.2 —

Samias and Dares talked together.

“Will thy master never awake?” Samias asked.

“No, I think he sleeps for a wager,” Dares answered. “But how shall we spend the time? Sir Tophas is so far in love that he pines in his bed and does not come abroad.”

The pages could not laugh at Sir Tophas because he no longer went outside.

“But here comes Epi, in a pelting chafe: a childish bad mood,” Samias said.

Epiton entered the scene.

He said, “A pox on all false proverbs! And, if a proverb were a page, I would have him by the ears.”

“Why are thou angry?” Samias asked.

“Why?” Epiton said. “You know that it is said that the tide tarries no man.”

Actually, the proverb is, “The tide waits for no man,” and not, “The tide delays no man.”

Epiton would have been correct if he had said, “The tide tarries *for* no man.”

“True,” Samias said.

“That is a monstrous lie,” Epiton said, “for I was tied two hours, and tarried for one to unloose me.”

“Alas, poor Epi!” Dares said.

He meant that Epiton ought to be pitied.

“Poor?” Epiton said. “No, no, you base-conceited slaves, I am a most complete gentleman, although I am in disgrace with Sir Tophas.”

Epiton was taking “poor” in the senses of 1) impoverished, and 2) poor-spirited.

“Are thou out of favor with him?” Dares asked.

“Aye, because I cannot get him a lodging with Endymion,” Epiton said. “Sir Tophas would like to take a nap for forty or fifty years.”

Endymion was in love, and he was sleeping a very long time, Sir Tophas was in love, and he wanted to do as lovers do, and so he wanted to imitate Endymion.

“A ‘short’ sleep, considering our long life,” Dares said.

He was sarcastic.

“Is Sir Tophas still in love?” Samias asked.

“In love?” Epiton said. “Why, he does nothing but make sonnets.”

“Can thou remember any one of his poems?” Samias asked.

Epiton said:

“Aye, this is one:

“*The beggar Love that knows not where to lodge,*

“*At last within my heart when I slept,*

“*He crept.*

“*I waked, and so my fancies began to fodge.*”

“To fodge” means “to proceed.”

“That’s a very long verse,” Samias said. He was referring to this line:

“*I waked, and so my fancies began to fodge.*”

That line was eleven syllables long.

Epiton said:

“Why, the other was short.”

The line “*At last within my heart when I slept,*” is nine syllables long.

The lines of Sir Tophas’ poem vary in length.

Elizabethan sonnets have fourteen lines and are written in iambic pentameter, and so they have ten syllables per line.

Epiton continued:

“The first is called from the thumb to the little finger, the second from the little finger to the elbow, and some he has made to reach to the crown of his head and down again to the sole of his foot.

He was pretending to literally measure the length of Sir Tophas’ lines.

Poetic feet are repeating lines of syllables that are either stressed or unstressed in a certain pattern. For example, an iambic foot consists of two syllables: The first is unstressed and the second is stressed. An iambic pentameter line consists of five iambic feet. For example, this iambic pentameter line comes from William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*: “*Two households, both alike in dignity.*”

Epiton continued:

“It is set to the tune of the ‘Black Saunce’; *ratio est* — the reason is — because Dipsas is a black saint.”

“Black Saunce” is “Black Sanctus,” a parodic hymn to Satan; it mocked monks.

As a sorceress, Dipsas is the opposite of a saint and so she is a black saint.

Dares said:

“Very wisely.

“But please, Epi, how are thou complete — how are you getting what you need? And, being away from thy master, what occupation will thou take?”

Epiton had said he was a complete gentleman, but to be complete, a person needs to have what is necessary. Epiton had no job, so how could he get what he needed?

Epiton said:

“Know, my hearts, I am an absolute microcosmos, a petty world unto myself. My library is my head, for I have no other books but my brains; my wardrobe is on my back, for I have no more apparel than is on my body; my armory at my fingers’ ends, for I use no other artillery than my fingernails; my treasure is in my purse.

“*Sic omnia mea mecum porto* — thus, I carry with me everything that is mine.”

“Good,” Dares said.

Epiton said, “Now, sirs, my palace is paved with grass and tiled with stars, for *caelo tegitur qui non habet urnam*: He who has no house must lie in the yard.”

The Latin sentence actually means this: “He who has no burial urn has the heavens for a roof.”

“A brave resolution,” Samias said. “But how will thou spend thy time?”

“Not in any melancholy sort. For my exercise I will walk horses,” Epiton said.

“Too bad,” Dares said.

“Why, isn’t it said, ‘It is good walking when one has his horse in his hand’?” Epiton asked.

Yes, but Epiton would not be walking his own horse.



“Worse and worse,” Samias said. “But how will thou live?”

“By angling,” Epiton said. “O, it is a stately occupation to stand four hours in a cold morning and to have his nose bitten with frost before his bait is mumbled by a fish.”

“To mumble” means “to chew without teeth.”

“A rare attempt,” Dares said. “But will thou never travel?”

“Yes, in a western barge, when, with a good wind and lusty pugs, one may go ten miles in two days,” Epiton said.

“Lusty pugs” are “robust companions.” They are the strong bargemen.

“Thou are excellent at thy choice,” Samias said. “But what pastime will thou use? None?”

A “pastime” is a hobby or source of entertainment.

“Yes, the quickest of all,” Epiton said.

“What? Dice?” Samias asked.

“No,” Epiton said. “When I am in haste, one-and-twenty games at chess, to pass a few minutes.”

“A life for a little lord, and full of quickness,” Dares said.

Epiton said:

“Tush, let me alone. Leave it to me.

“But I must necessarily see if I can find where Endymion lies, and then go to a certain fountain nearby, where they say faithful lovers shall have all things they will ask for.

“If I can find out any of these, *ego et magister meus erimus in tuto* — I and my master shall be friends. He is resolved to weep some three or four pailfuls to avoid the rheum of love that wambles — rolls around and rumbles — in his stomach.”

Love is a rheum because it can produce watery discharges: tears. Many people hope that love is contagious.

Two watchmen and a constable entered the scene.

Cynthia had given these people the responsibility of guarding Endymion as he slept.

“Shall we never see thy master, Dares?” Samias asked.

“Yes, let us go now, for tomorrow Cynthia will be there,” Dares said.

“I will go with you,” Epiton said. “But how shall we get past the watchmen so we can see Endymion?”

Samias said:

“Tush, let me alone and leave it to me. I’ll begin to speak to them.”

He said to the two guardsmen and the constable:

“Masters, God speed you.”

“God speed you” means “May God make you fortunate and successful.”

“To speed” can also mean “to attain one’s desire.”

“Sir boy, we are all sped already,” the first watchman said.

Epiton whispered to Samias and Dares, “So I think, for they all smell of drink like a beggar’s beard.”

They were drunk. That was their desire.

“But please, sirs, may we see Endymion?” Dares asked.

“No, we are commanded in Cynthia’s name that no man shall see him,” the second watchman said.

“No man?” Samias said. “Why, we are only boys.”

The first watchman said to the other law enforcement officers, “By the Mass, neighbors, he says the truth. For if I swear I will never drink my liquor by the quart, and yet I call for two pints, I think with a safe conscience I may carouse and drink both.”

Dares whispered to Samias and Epiton about the first watchman’s speech: “Pithily, and to the purpose.”

The second watchman said to the other law enforcement officers, “Tush, tush, neighbors, take me with you — let me understand you.”

Samias whispered to Dares and Epiton, “This will grow hot. There will be an argument.”

Dares whispered to Samias and Epiton, “Let them alone. Let them fight.”

The second watchman said to the other law enforcement officers, “If I say to my wife, ‘Wife, I will have no raisins in my pudding,’ she puts in currants [small raisins]. Small raisins are raisins, and boys are men. Even as my wife should have put no raisins in my pudding, so there shall be no boys to see Endymion.”

Dares whispered, “Learnedly.”

He was sarcastic.

Epiton said, “Let Master Constable speak. I think he is the wisest among you.”

In this society, constables had a reputation for having little wit and knowledge.

The constable said, “You know, neighbors, it is an old-said saw, an old and still-said proverb: ‘Children and fools speak true.’”

“True,” everyone said.

Hmm. Everyone who spoke “True” was saying that they were children and fools. The pages were children, and the guardsmen and the constable were fools.

“Well, there you see the men are the fools,” the constable said, “because it is provided from the children.”

Because they had spoken “True,” the watchmen were either children or fools. Because the pages were boys, that left the designation of “fool” for the watchmen.

“Good,” Dares said.

If the law enforcement officers were fools, they would let the pages see Endymion.

“Then I say, neighbors, that children must not see Endymion, because children and fools speak true,” the constable said.

If the children were to succeed in giving the watchmen the designation of “fool,” then the children would not be fools. Because the constable was a law-enforcement officer like the guardsmen, he did not want the pages to outwit the guardsmen, making them fools, and get to see Endymion.

“O, wicked application!” Epiton said.

It seemed that the law enforcement officers would not let the pages see Endymion.

“Scurvily brought about,” Samias said.

The first watchman said to the pages:

“Nay, the constable says true; and therefore, until Cynthia shall have been here, Endymion shall not be uncovered.”

Endymion was hidden away from the sight of other people by a curtain.

The first watchman then said to the pages:

“Therefore, go away.”

Dares whispered to Samias and Epiton:

“A watch, said you? A man may watch seven years for a wise word and yet go without it. Their wits are all as rusty as their bills — their weapons.”

Dares then said out loud:

“But come on, Master Constable, shall we have a song before we go?”

“With all my heart,” the constable said.

The watchmen sang:

*“Stand, who goes there?”*

*“We charge you [to] appear*

*“’fore our constable here.*

*“In the name of the Man in the Moon,*

*“To us billmen [men armed with the long-handled bladed weapons called ‘bills’] relate*

*“Why you stagger so late,*

*“And how you come [to be] drunk so soon.”*

The pages sang:

*“What are ye, scabs?”*

*“Scabs” are “scoundrels.”*

The watchmen sang:

*“This is the constable.”*

The pages sang:

*“A patch [fool].”*

The constable sang:

*“Knock them down unless they all stand.”*

*“Stand” means “Halt! Stand still!”*

The constable continued to sing:

*“If any run away,*

*’tis the old watchman’s play [trick]*

*“To reach him a bill of his hand.”*

The bill could be 1) a weapon, or 2) a handwritten legal document.

The pages sang:

*“O gentlemen, hold [wait].*

*“Your gowns [a gown is a kind of outer garment] freeze with cold,*

*“And your rotten teeth dance [chatter] in your head.”*

Epiton sang:

*“Wine nothing shall cost ye,”*

Samias sang:

*“Nor huge fires to roast ye.”*

The fires would also be free for the law enforcement officers.

Dares sang:

*“Then soberly let us be led.”*

The pages were offering to buy the two guardsmen and the constable drinks. This was a way to get past the law enforcement officials, provided that the pages did not also become drunk.

The constable sang:

*“Come, my brown bills, we’ll roar [carouse],*

*“Bounce [Knock] loud at tavern door,”*

“Brown bills” are the guardsmen, who carry the weapons called brown bills. Brown bills were either rusty or painted with brown paint. The guardmen’s bills were rusty.

Everybody sang:

*“And i’th’ morning steal all to bed.”*

They exited.

— 4.3 —

Endymion lay asleep on the lunny bank — the riverbank overgrown with lunny.

Alone, Corsites said to himself:

“I have come in sight of the lunny bank. Without doubt Tellus dotes upon me; and cunningly, so that I might not perceive her love, she has set me to do a task that is done before it is begun.

“Endymion, you must change your pillow, and if you are not weary of sleep, I will carry you where you shall sleep your fill at ease.

“It would be good that without more ceremonies I took him, lest being spied, I become entrapped and so incur the displeasure of Cynthia, who commonly sets a watch so that Endymion will have no wrong done to him.”

The two watchmen and the constable were in an inn drinking with the pages.

Corsites tried to lift Endymion, but he could not.

Corsites said:

“What is this now, Endymion? Is your mastership — are you — so heavy? Or are you nailed to the ground? You don’t stir one whit — one little bit!

“Then, Corsites, use all thy strength, although he will feel it and wake.”

He again tried to lift Endymion, but he could not budge him.

Corsites said:

“What! Stone still? You have turned, I think, to earth, from lying so long on the earth.

“Didn’t thou, Corsites, in front of Cynthia, pull up a tree that was fastened with roots and wreathed in knots to the ground for forty years? Didn’t thou with main strength pull upon the iron gates that no battering ram or war machine could move?

“Have my weak thoughts made my strong arms brawn-fallen — shrunken and weak? Or is it the nature of love or the quintessence of the mind to breed numbness, or litherness — laziness — and languor, or I don’t know what languishing in my joints and sinews, which are just the base strings of my body?

“Or does the remembrance of Tellus so refine my spirits into a matter so subtle and divine that the other fleshy parts cannot work while they — the refined spirits — muse?”

“Rest thyself, rest thyself — nay, rend thyself in pieces, Corsites, and strive, in spite of love, fortune, and nature, to lift up this dulled body, heavier than dead and more senseless than death.”

Some fairies entered the scene.

Corsites said to himself:

“But what are these so fair fiends that cause my hairs to stand upright and my spirits to fall down?”

He then said to the fairies:

“Hags —”

The fairies pinched him.

Corsites said:

“Ow! Alas!”

Corsites then tried to apologize:

“Nymphs, I beg your pardon.”

The fairies again pinched him.

Corsites said:

“Aye me! Ow!”

“Aye me” is an expression of woe.

Corsites then asked himself:

“What am I doing here?”

The fairies danced, and as they sang a song, they pinched him, and Corsites fell asleep.

All the fairies sang:

*“Pinch him, pinch him, black and blue.*

*“Saucy mortals must not view*

*“What the Queen of Stars is doing,*

*“Nor pry into our Fairy wooing.”*

The first fairy sang:

*“Pinch him blue.”*

The second fairy sang:

*“And pinch him black.”*

The third fairy sang:

*“Let him not lack*

*“Sharp nails [fingernails] to pinch him blue and red,*

*“Till sleep has rocked his addle-head.”*

An addle-head is a muddled head.

The fourth fairy sang:

*“For the trespass he has done,*

*“Spots o’er all his flesh shall run.”*

The fairies made spots on his face and hands.

The fourth fairy continued to sing:

*“Kiss Endymion, kiss his eyes;*

*“Then [let’s go] to our midnight hay-de-guise [midnight dance].”*

They kissed Endymion and departed, leaving him and Corsites asleep.

Cynthia, Floscula, Semele, Panelion, Zontes, Pythagoras, and Gyptes talked together some distance away.

Floscula was Tellus’ woman-servant.

Panelion and Zontes were lords at Cynthia’s court.

Pythagoras was an ancient Greek philosopher, and Gyptes was an Egyptian soothsayer.

Cynthia said, “You see, Pythagoras, what ridiculous opinions you hold, and I don’t doubt that you are now of another mind.”

Pythagoras said, “Madam, I plainly perceive that the perfection of your brightness has pierced through the thickness that covered my mind, inasmuch that I am no less glad to be reformed than ashamed to remember my grossness.”

“They are thrice fortunate who live in your palace, where truth is not in colors — false appearances — but in life, and virtues are not in imagination but in execution,” Gyptes said.

Cynthia said:

“I have always endeavored to have living virtues rather than painted gods: to have the body of truth rather than have the tomb of truth.

“But let us walk to Endymion. Perhaps it lies in your arts to release him from the enchantment he is under.

“As for Eumenides, I fear that he is dead.”

Eumenides had not yet returned from Thessaly.

“I have given all the natural reasons I can for such a long sleep,” Pythagoras said.

“I can do nothing until I see him,” Gyptes said.

“Come, Floscula, I am sure you are glad that you shall behold Endymion,” Cynthia said.

“I would be blessed if I might have him recovered from his long sleep,” Floscula said.

“Are you in love with his person?” Cynthia asked.

“No, but I am in love with his virtue,” Floscula said.

“What do you say, Semele?” Cynthia asked.

“Madam, I dare say nothing for fear I offend,” Semele said.

Cynthia said to Semele:

“It is likely that you cannot speak unless you are spiteful. But it is as good to be silent as it is to be saucy.”

Cynthia then asked:

“Panelion, what punishment would be fit for Semele, in whose speech and thoughts are only contempt and sourness?”

Panelion replied, “I don’t love, madam, to give any judgment. Yet since your Highness commands, I think that an appropriate punishment would be to commit her tongue close prisoner to her mouth.”

Cynthia said:

“Agreed.

“Semele, if thou speak this twelve-month — this year — thou shall forfeit thy tongue.

She then said:

“Behold Endymion. Alas, poor gentleman, have thou spent thy youth in sleep, who once vowed all to my service? Hollow eyes? Grey hairs? Wrinkled cheeks? And decayed limbs? Is it destiny or deceit that has brought this to pass? If the first, who could prevent thy fate and its wretched stars? If the latter, I wish I might know thy cruel enemy.

“I favored thee, Endymion, for thy honor, thy virtues, thy affections. For the purpose only to bring thy thoughts within the compass of thy fortunes, I have seemed strange and unfriendly, I who might have stayed thee.”

“Stayed” is ambiguous. It can mean 1) prevented, or 2) supported.

Cynthia continued:

“And now thy days are ended before my favor begins.

“But whom have we here? Isn’t it Corsites?”

“It is, but more like a leopard than a man,” Zontes said.

Cynthia ordered:



“Awaken him.”

They awakened Corsites.

Cynthia said:

“How are things now, Corsites? What are you doing here?”

“How did you come to be deformed?”

“Look on thy hands, and then thou see the picture of thy face.”

His hands and face were spotted like a leopard.

Corsites said:

“Miserable wretch, and accursed! How am I deluded?”

“Madam, I ask pardon for my offense, and you see that my fortune deserves pity.”

Cynthia said, “Speak on. Thy offense cannot deserve greater punishment than the spots you already have; but see that thou rehearse — speak — the truth, else thou shall not find me as thou wish me to be.”

Corsites said:

“Madam, as it is no offense to be in love, being a mortal man, so I hope it can be no shame to tell with whom I am in love, my lady being heavenly.

“Your Majesty committed to my charge and responsibility the fair Tellus, whose beauty took my heart captive in the same moment that I undertook to carry her body prisoner.

“Since that time, I have found such combats in my thoughts between love and duty, reverence for you and affection for Tellus, that I could neither endure the conflict nor hope for the conquest.”

Cynthia said, “In love? A thing far unfitting the name of a captain and, as I thought, the tough and unsmoothed nature of Corsites. But continue.”

Corsites said:

“Feeling this continual war, I thought rather by parley — negotiation with an enemy — to yield than by certain danger to perish. I unfolded to Tellus the depth of my affections and directed my tongue to utter a sweet tale of love, my tongue that was accustomed to sound nothing but threats of war.

“She, too fair to be true and too false for one so fair, after a nice — coy — denial, practiced a notable deceit, commanding me to remove Endymion from this cabin and carry him to some dark cave, which seeking to accomplish, I found impossible, and so by fairies or fiends have been thus handled.”

The “cabin” is the riverbank on which Endymion is lying. The trees offered some protection from the weather.

Cynthia said:

“What do you say, my lords? Isn’t Tellus always practicing some deceits?”

“Truly, Corsites, thy face is now too foul for a lover and thine heart is too fond — too foolish — for a soldier. You may see, when warriors become wantons, how their manners alter with their faces.

“Isn’t it a shame, Corsites, that, having lived so long in Mars’ camp, thou should now be rocked in Venus’ cradle? Do thou wear Cupid’s quiver at thy girdle, and make lances of looks?”

“Well, Corsites, rouse thyself and be as thou have been, and let Tellus, who is made all of love, melt herself in her own looseness.”

Corsites said, “Madam, I don’t doubt but to recover my former state, for Tellus’ beauty never wrought such love in my mind as now her deceit has wrought scorn in my mind; and yet to be revenged on a woman would be a thing more womanish than love itself.”

“These spots, gentleman, are to be worn out if you rub them over with this lunary, so that in the place where you received this maim you shall find a medicine,” Gyptes said.

“I thank you for that,” Corsites said. “May the gods bless me and protect me from love and these pretty ladies — the fairies — who haunt this green!”

“Corsites, I wish that Tellus could see your amiable face,” Floscula said.

“Amiable” means “worthy of being loved.”

Corsites rubbed out his spots with lunary from the bank.

Forbidden to speak, Semele laughed.

“How spitefully Semele laughs, who dares not speak!” Zontes said.

“Couldn’t you stir Endymion with that doubled strength of yours?” Cynthia asked Corsites.

A very strong man, Corsites had tried twice to move Endymion, the second time with all his strength.

“Not so much as his finger, even using all my strength,” Corsites said.

Cynthia asked, “Pythagoras and Gyptes, what do you think about Endymion? What reason or cause is to be given for his sleep? What is the remedy?”

“Madam, it is impossible to give a reason for things that did not happen within the compass of nature,” Pythagoras said. “It is very certain that some strange enchantment has bound all his senses.”

“What do you say, Gyptes?” Cynthia asked.

Gyptes answered, “I agree with Pythagoras that it is enchantment, and an enchantment that is so strange that no art can undo it because heaviness argues a malice unremovable in the enchantress and heaviness argues that no power can end it until she who did it dies, or the heavens show some means of remedy more than miraculous.”

“O Endymion, could spite itself devise a mischief so monstrous as to make thee dead with life, and living being altogether dead?” Floscula said. “Where others number their years, their

hours, their minutes, and step to age by stairs, thou have thy years and times only in a cluster, being old before thou remembered thou were young.”

Cynthia said:

“No more, Floscula; pity does him no good. I wish anything else might do him good, and I vow by the unspotted honor of a lady that he would not miss — lack — it.

“But is this, Gyptes, all that is to be done?”

“All that can be done as yet,” Gyptes said. “It may be that either the enchantress shall die or else be identified. If either happens, I will then practice the utmost of my art. In the meantime, about this grove I would have a watch, and the first living thing that touches Endymion is to be arrested.”

Cynthia asked, “Corsites, what do you say? Will you undertake to do this?”

“Good madam, pardon me,” Corsites said. “I was overtaken — overcome — too recently. I would rather break into the midst of a main battle than fall again into the hands of those fair babies — those fairies.”

Cynthia said:

“Well, I will provide others.

“Pythagoras and Gyptes, you shall yet remain in my court until I hear what may be done in this matter.”

“We attend to and wait on you,” Pythagoras said.

Cynthia said, “Let us go in.”

They exited.

Endymion continued to sleep on the lunar bank, near a tree.

## CHAPTER 5 (ENDYMION)

— 5.1 —

Samias and Dares talked together.

Samias said, “Eumenides has told such strange tales that I may well wonder at them but never believe them.”

Dares said:

“The other old man, what a sad speech he spoke, which caused us all almost to weep.”

The two old men are the enchanted Endymion and the not enchanted Geron, who is “the other old man.”

Dares continued:

“Cynthia is so desirous to know the experiment of her own virtue and to see if she has the power to awaken Endymion, and she is so willing to ease Endymion’s hard fortune that she no sooner heard the discourse, but she got ready to try it and see the outcome.”

Samias said:

“We will also see the outcome.

“But whist — hush! Here comes Cynthia with all her train of attendants. Let us sneak in among them.”

Cynthia, Floscula, Semele, Panelion, Eumenides, Zontes, Gyptes, and Pythagoras entered the scene. Some attendants were also present.

Samias and Dares joined the throng.

Cynthia said, “Eumenides, it cannot sink into my head that I should be signified by that sacred fountain, for many things are there in the world to which those words may be applied.”

“Good madam, agree just to try, else I shall think myself most unhappy that I did not ask for my sweet mistress,” Eumenides said.

He had been allowed to have one wish granted by the fountain, and he had asked that Endymion be restored, not that Semele love him.

“Won’t you tell me her name yet?” Cynthia asked.

“Pardon me, good madam, for if Endymion awakens, he shall tell her name to you. I myself have sworn never to reveal it,” Eumenides said.

Cynthia said:

“Well, let us go to Endymion.”

They approached the sleeping Endymion.

Cynthia continued:

“Good Endymion, I will not be so stately that I will not stoop to do thee good; and if thy liberty consists in a kiss from me, thou shall have it. And although my mouth has been heretofore as untouched as my thoughts, yet now to recover thy life (although to restore thy youth is impossible), I will do that to Endymion which yet never mortal man could boast of heretofore, nor shall ever hope for hereafter.”

Cynthia kissed Endymion.

“Madam, he begins to stir,” Eumenides said.

“Be quiet, Eumenides,” Cynthia said. “Stand still.”

“Ah, I see his eyes almost open,” Eumenides said.

“I command thee once again, don’t stir,” Cynthia said. “I will stand before him.”

“What do I see, Endymion almost awake?” Panelion asked.

Eumenides said, “Endymion, Endymion, are thou deaf or dumb? Or has this long sleep taken away thy memory? Ah, my sweet Endymion, don’t thou see Eumenides, thy faithful friend, thy faithful Eumenides, who for thy safety has been taking care of his own contentment and happiness? Speak, Endymion, Endymion, Endymion!”

Groggy, Endymion said, “Endymion? I call to mind such a name. I remember that name.”

Eumenides said:

“Have thou forgotten thyself, Endymion? Then I don’t marvel that thou don’t remember thy friend. Thou are Endymion, and I am Eumenides.

“Behold also Cynthia, by whose favor thou are awakened, and by whose virtue thou shall continue thy natural course of life.”

“Endymion, speak, sweet Endymion,” Cynthia said. “Don’t thou know Cynthia?”

“O heavens, whom do I behold?” Endymion said. “Fair Cynthia, divine Cynthia?”

“I am Cynthia, and thou are Endymion,” Cynthia said.

Looking at himself and feeling his face, Endymion said, “Endymion? What am I doing here? What! A long, gray beard? Hollow eyes? Withered body? Decayed limbs? And all in one night?”

Eumenides said, “One night? Thou have slept here for forty years, by what enchantress it is as yet not known. And look! The twig to which thou laid thy head has now become a tree. Can’t thou remember Eumenides?”

Previously, Eumenides had spoken about Endymion sleeping for almost twenty years. Now he has spoken about him being asleep for forty years. Some time has passed, enough for people to travel to Thessaly, Greece, and Egypt and back. The twenty years and the forty years refer to how much Endymion has aged in his enchanted sleep. The others have aged only in accordance with non-magical, ordinary time. Of course, we learn that the twig Endymion slept by has become a mature tree, so it has also been affected by the enchantment.

Endymion said, “Thy name I do remember by the sound, but thy favor — thy features — I do not yet call to mind and remember. Only divine Cynthia, to whom time, fortune, destiny, and death are subject, I see and remember, and in all humility, I regard and reverence.”

“You have good reason to remember Eumenides, who has for thy safety and sake forsaken his own solace,” Cynthia said.

“Am I that Endymion who was accustomed in court to lead my life, and in jousts, tournaments, and weapons to exercise my youth?” Endymion asked. “Am I that Endymion?”

Eumenides said, “Thou art that Endymion, and I am Eumenides. Will thou not yet call me to remembrance?”

Endymion said, “Ah, sweet Eumenides, I now perceive thou art he, and that I myself have the name of Endymion. But I doubt that this should be my body; for how could my curled locks be turned to gray hairs and my strong body to a dying weakness, me having waxed and grown old and not knowing it?”

“Well, Endymion, arise,” Cynthia said. “Sit down for a while, because thy limbs are stiff and not able to support thee, and tell us what thou have seen in thy sleep all this while. What dreams, visions, thoughts, and fortunes? For it is impossible but in so long a time thou should see strange things.”

Endymion said, “Fair Cynthia, I will recite what I have seen, humbly desiring that when I exceed in length, you give me warning so that I may end my tale. For to utter all I have to speak would be troublesome, although perhaps the strangeness may somewhat abate the tediousness.”

“Well, Endymion, begin,” Cynthia said.

Endymion said:

“I thought that I saw a lady surpassingly beautiful but very evil, who in the one hand carried a knife with which she made a move as if to cut my throat, and in the other a looking glass, wherein seeing how ill anger became ladies, she refrained from intended violence. She was accompanied with other damsels, one of which, with a stern countenance, and as it were with a settled malice engraved in her eyes, provoked her to execute mischief. Another with a sad visage, and constant only in sorrow, with her arms crossed and watery eyes, seemed to lament my fortune, but dared not attempt to prevent the force.”

In this society, crossed arms were a sign of melancholy.

Endymion continued:

“I started in my sleep, feeling my very veins to swell and my sinews to stretch with fear, and such a cold sweat bedewed all my body that death itself could not be as terrible as the vision.”

“A strange sight,” Cynthia said. “Gyptes at our better leisure shall expound it.”

Endymion said: “After long debating with herself, mercy overcame anger, and there appeared in her heavenly face such a divine majesty, mingled with a sweet mildness, with the result that I was ravished with the sight above measure, and I wished that I might have enjoyed the sight

without end. And so she departed with the other ladies, of whom the one retained still an unmovable cruelty, the other a constant pity.”

Cynthia said, “Poor Endymion, how thou were frightened! What else?”

Endymion said:

“After her immediately appeared an aged man with a beard as white as snow, carrying in his hand a book with three leaves, and speaking, as I remember, these words: ‘Endymion, receive this book with three leaves, in which are contained counsels, cunning policies and statecraft, and pictures.’

“And with that, he offered me the book, which I rejected; wherewith moved by a disdainful pity, he tore the first leaf into a thousand shivers — a thousand pieces. He offered it a second time, which I refused also; at which, bending his brows and fixing his eyes fast to the ground as though they were fixed to the earth and not again to be removed, then suddenly casting them up to the heavens, he tore in a rage the second leaf and offered me the book with only one leaf left.

“I don’t know whether fear to offend or desire to know some strange thing moved me. I took the book, and so the old man vanished.”

His memory was different from the dumb show the audience had witnessed. In the dumb show, there were three books. In his account, Endymion mentioned only one book with three leaves.

“What did thou imagine was in the last leaf?” Cynthia asked.

Endymion said:

“With a cold quaking in every joint, I beheld there — aye, portrayed to the life — many wolves barking at thee, Cynthia. The wolves, having ground their teeth to bite, did with striving bleed themselves to death.

“There I could see Ingratitude with a hundred eyes, looking for benefits for herself, and with a thousand teeth gnawing on the bowels wherein she was bred.

“Treachery stood all clothed in white, with a smiling countenance but with both her hands bathed in blood.

“Envy, with a pale and meager — emaciated — face, whose body was so lean that one might count all her bones, and whose garment was so tattered that it was easy to number every thread, stood shooting at stars, whose darts fell down again on her own face.

“There I could behold drones, or beetles, I don’t know how to term them, creeping under the wings of a princely eagle, who, being carried into her nest, sought there to suck that vein that would have killed the eagle.

“I mused that things so base would attempt a deed so barbarous or would dare to imagine a thing so bloody.

“And I saw many other things, madam, the repetition whereof may at your better leisure seem more pleasing, for bees surfeit sometimes with honey, and the gods are glutted with harmony, and Your Highness may be dulled with delight.”

The dream had been about political intrigue against Cynthia. It is difficult to see how hearing about more political intrigue could dull her with delight. Perhaps the rest of what Endymion had to say was about good things happening to Cynthia.

Cynthia said:

“I am content to be dieted; therefore, let us go in.

“Eumenides, see that Endymion will be well tended and taken care of, lest, either eating immoderately or sleeping again too long, he might fall into a deadly surfeit or into his former sleep.

“See that this also is proclaimed: that whosoever will expose this plot against Endymion shall have from Cynthia infinite thanks and no small rewards.”

Cynthia exited, attended by her courtly entourage.

Floscula, Endymion, and Eumenides remained behind.

Floscula said, “Ah, Endymion, no one is as joyful as Floscula at thy restoring!”

Eumenides said:

“Yes, someone is more joyful than thee, Floscula. Let Eumenides be somewhat gladder, and don’t do that wrong to the settled friendship of a man as to compare it with the light affection of a woman.

“Ah, my dear friend Endymion, allow me to die with gazing at thee!”

Endymion said, “Eumenides, thy friendship is immortal and not to be conceived and understood, and thy good will, Floscula, is better than I have deserved.

“But let us all wait on Cynthia. I marvel that Semele does not speak a word.”

“Because if she does utter a word, she loses her tongue,” Eumenides said.

“But how prospers your love?” Endymion asked.

“I have not yet spoken a word about it since your sleep,” Eumenides said.

“I don’t doubt that your affection is old and your appetite is cold,” Endymion said.

Eumenides replied:

“No, Endymion, thine affection has made my affection stronger, and now my sparks have grown to flames and my amorous fancies have almost grown to frenzies.

“But let us follow Cynthia, and inside we will debate all this matter in detail.”

They exited.

— 5.2 —

Sir Tophas and Epiton talked together.

“Epi, love has jostled my liberty from the wall and taken the upper hand of my reason,” Sir Tophas said.



Elizabethan streets could be muddy, and whoever was closest to the street could be splashed with muddy water. Therefore, people wanted to stay close to the wall on the side of the street. When two men walking in opposite directions passed each other, the person with the higher social class was supposed to be closer to the wall.

Epiton said, “Let me then trip up the heels of your affection and thrust your good will into the gutter.”

“No, Epi, love is a Lord of Misrule, and keeps Christmas in my corpse — in my body,” Sir Tophas said.

The Lord of Misrule provided entertainment during the Christmas season at such places as the universities and the inns of court.

“No doubt there is good cheer and food,” Epiton said. “What dishes of delight does his lordship feast you with?”

“His lordship” is a Lord of Misrule who is love.

Sir Tophas said, “First, with a great platter of plum-porridge of pleasure, wherein is stewed the mutton of mistrust.”

“Excellent love-lap!” Epiton said. “Excellent love-pap!”

“Love-lap” is food that can be lapped up. “Pap” is soft baby food.

“Paps” are breasts, and “laps” are a locale of sexual goodies.

The word “plum” is bawdy. “Plum tree” was slang for a woman’s crotch and thighs. “Climbing a plum tree” was slang for mounting and having sex with a woman.

“Stews” are brothels.

“Mutton” is slang for “prostitute.”

Sir Tophas said, “Then comes a pie of patience, a hen of honey, a goose of gall, a capon of care, and many other viands, some sweet and some sour, which proves love to be as it was said of in old years: *dulce venenum* — a sweet poison.”

A pie is a chattering, bold, impertinent person, male or female.

One thing that can be done with a pie is to have a finger in it.

A then-current meaning of “patience” is “permission” or “indulgence.”

A “hen” is a woman or a wife, and both honey and female sexual arousal fluid are wet.

A “goose” is a fool.

“Gall” can mean asperity and rancor.

A capon is a castrated cock and is associated with a lack of manliness.

“Care” can mean worry.

The phrase “sweet poison” consists of two words that seem as if they ought not to belong together and yet can belong together.

Some of the words detailing the banquet can apply to Sir Tophas, and some of the words can apply to Dipsas.

“A brave banquet!” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, “But Epi, please feel my chin; something pricks me. What do thou feel or see?”

Examining his chin, Epiton said, “There are three or four little hairs.”

“Please call it my beard,” Sir Tophas said. “How I shall be troubled when this young spring shall grow to a great wood!”

A “spring” is a grove of trees.

Epiton said, “O, sir, your chin is but a quiller — a unfledged bird with a baby bird’s fuzz — yet. You will be most majestic when it is fully fledged. But I marvel that you love Dipsas, that old crone.”

Sir Tophas said, “*Agnosco veteris vestigia flamma*. I love the smoke of an old fire.”

*Agnosco veteris vestigia flamma* means “I recognize the traces of the old flame.”

Dido, Queen of Carthage, says this in Virgil’s *Aeneid* when she recognizes that she is falling in love with the Trojan survivor Aeneas. The fire is old because she has felt it before: when she was married to her late husband.

“Why, she is so cold that no fire can thaw her thoughts,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said:

“It is an old goose, Epi, that will eat no oats; old cows will kick, old rats gnaw cheese, and old sacks will have much patching.

“I prefer an old cony — an old rabbit — before a rabbit-sucker, aka suckling rabbit, and an ancient hen before a young chicken peeper.”

Young chicks say, “Peep. Peep.”

Epiton said:

“*Argumentum ab antiquitate*: an argument from antiquity.”

Arguments from antiquity can be those based on myth or epic poems. People could apply lessons learned from Virgil’s *Aeneid* or from Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Epiton then said to himself:

“My master loves antique work.”

Sir Tophas loved both old works of literature and old women.

The argument from antiquity is this:

P1: A man quotes from old works of literature.

C: That man likes old women.

Sir Tophas said, "Give me a pippin that is withered like an old wife."

A pippin is a species of apple.

"Good, sir," Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, "Then a *contrario sequitur argumentum*. Give me a wife who looks like an old pippin."

A *contrario sequitur argumentum* means "a contrary argument follows."

In other words:

P1: A pippin (a species of apple) resembles an old woman.

C: Therefore, an old woman resembles a pippin.

Epiton said to himself, "Nothing has made my master a fool except flat scholarship."

"Don't thou know that old wine is best?" Sir Tophas asked.

"Yes," Epiton said.

"And do thou know that like will to like?" Sir Tophas asked.

"Aye," Epiton said.

"And do thou know that Venus loved the best wine?" Sir Tophas asked.

"So," Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, "Then I conclude that Venus was an old woman in an old cup of wine. For, *est Venus in vinis, ignis in igne fuit* — Venus is in wine as surely as fire is in fire."

This is his argument:

P1: Venus likes the best wine.

P2: The best wine is old.

P3: Like will to like.

C1: Venus is old.

P4: Venus is in wine as surely as fire is in fire.

C2: Venus is an old woman in a cup of old wine.

One problem with the argument is that the word "like" is used with different meanings. One is "enjoys"; the other is "similar."

"Like will to like" means "People are attracted to people who are similar to them."

Also, the word "in" is used with different senses: one metaphorical and the other literal.

Epiton said:

“*O lepidum caput*, O madcap master!”

*O lepidum caput* means, “Oh, witty mind.”

“Madcap” is a play on the word *caput*, one meaning of which is “head.”

Caps are worn on heads.

Epiton continued:

“You were worthy to win Dipsas, even if she were as old again as she is — that is, twice as old — for in your love you have worn the nap of your wit quite off and made it threadbare.

“But wait, who is coming here?”

Enter Samias and Dares.

Sir Tophas said, “My solicitors.”

Sir Tophas had earlier asked the two pages to intercede for him with Dipsas.

Samias said, “All hail, Sir Tophas! how do you yourself feel?”

Sir Tophas answered, “Stately in every joint, which the common people term stiffness. Does Dipsas stoop? Will she yield? Will she bend?”

Dares said, “O, sir, as much as you would wish, for her chin almost touches her knees.”

“Master, she is bent, I assure you,” Epiton said.

Yes, she is bent almost double.

“What conditions does she ask?” Sir Tophas asked.

Samias said, “She has vowed she will never love any who does not have a tooth in his head fewer than she.”

“How many teeth does she have?” Sir Tophas asked.

“One,” Dares said.

“That goes hard, master, for then you must have no teeth,” Epiton said.

Sir Tophas said, “It is a small request, and it agrees with the gravity of her years. What would a wise man do with his mouth full of bones like a charnel house — like a vault for bones? The true turtledove has no teeth.”

Samias whispered to Epiton, “Thy master is in a notable mood, one in which he will lose his teeth to be like a turtledove.”

Epiton whispered to Samias, “Let him lose his tongue, too. I don’t care.”

“Nay, you must also have no fingernails, for she long since has cast — shed — hers,” Dares said.

Sir Tophas said, "That also I yield to. What a quiet life shall Dipsas and I lead, when we can neither bite nor scratch! You may see, youths, how age provides for peace."

Samias whispered to Epiton and Dares, "What shall we do to make him leave his love? For we never spoke to her."

Dares whispered to Samias:

"Let me alone. Leave it to me."

Dares then said out loud to Sir Tophas, "She is a notable witch, and she has turned her maid Bagoa into an aspen tree for revealing her secrets."

Sir Tophas said, "I honor her for her cunning, for now, when I am weary of walking on two legs, what a pleasure she may do me to turn me into some goodly ass and help me to have four legs!"

"Nay then," Dares said. "I must tell you the truth: Her husband, Geron, has come home, who for this past fifty years has had her as his wife."

Sir Tophas said:

"What do I hear? Has she a husband?"

"Go to the sexton and tell him Desire is dead, and have him dig his — Desire's — grave."

"Oh heavens, a husband? What death is agreeable to — suits — my fortune?"

Samias said, "Don't be desperate, and we will help you to find a young lady."

Sir Tophas said:

"I love no Grissels — no young and immature girls; they are so brittle that they will crack like glass, or so dainty that if they are touched, they are immediately of the fashion of wax and bend out of shape."

"*Animus maioribus instat*. I desire old matrons."

*Animus maioribus instat* means "my spirit ventures greater themes."

Sir Tophas thought, however, that *maioribus* came from the noun *majores*, which means "ancestors." It actually comes from the adjective *maior*, which means "greater."

Sir Tophas continued:

"What a sight it would be to embrace one whose hair were as orient as the pearl, whose teeth shall be so pure a watchet — a pale blue — that they shall make the truest turquoise look stained, whose nose shall throw more beams from it than the fiery red carbuncle, whose eyes shall be environed about with redness exceeding the deepest coral, and whose lips might compare with silver for the paleness!"

A beautiful woman is unlikely to have pale blue teeth.

The lips — not the nose and eyes — of a beautiful woman are likely to be red.

Sir Tophas continued:

“If you can help me to such a one, I will by piecemeal curtail my affections towards Dipsas and walk my swelling thoughts until they are cold.”

Epiton said to Sir Tophas:

“Wisely provided.”

Epiton then said to the pages:

“What do you say, my friends? Will you angle — devise stratagems — for my master’s cause?”

“Most willingly,” Samias said.

Dares said, “If we don’t quickly make him succeed, I will burn my cap. We will serve him with the spades, and we will dig an old wife out of the grave that shall be answerable to his gravity.”

“Youths, adieu,” Sir Tophas said. “He who brings me first news shall possess my inheritance.”

He exited.

Dares said to Epiton, “What! Does thy master own land?”

“Don’t you know that my master is *liber tenens*?” Epiton asked.

The Latin is bad.

“What’s that?” Samias asked.

“A freeholder,” Epiton said. “But I will go after him.”

Samias said, “And we will go to hear the news about Endymion. Things are coming to a conclusion.”

All exited.

### — 5.3 —

Panelion and Zontes talked together.

Panelion said, “Who would have thought that Tellus, being so fair by nature, so honorable by birth, so wise by education, would have entered into an evil to the gods so odious, to men so detestable, and to her friend so malicious?”

The word “friend” means “man who loves her.”

Zontes said, “If Bagoa had not revealed it, how then would it have come to light? But we see that gold and fair words have the strength to corrupt the strongest men, and therefore they are able to work silly, foolish women like wax.”

I wonder what Cynthia will decide in this case,” Panelion said.

Zontes said, “I fear that she will do what she does in all cases: Hear of it in justice and then judge of it in mercy. For how can it be that she who is unwilling to punish her deadliest foes with disgrace will revenge the injuries and crimes of her train of attendants with death?”

Panelion said:

“That old witch Dipsas, in a rage, having understood her crafty practice to be revealed, turned poor Bagoa into an aspen tree.

“But let us make haste and bring Tellus before Cynthia, for she was coming out after us.”

“Let us go,” Zontes said.

They exited.

— 5.4 —

Cynthia, Semele, Floscula, Dipsas, Endymion, Eumenides, Geron, Pythagoras, Gyptes, and Sir Tophas met together at the lunar riverbank where a tree stood.

Cynthia said, “Dipsas, thy years of age are not as many as thy vices, yet they are more in number than commonly nature affords, or justice should permit. Have thou almost these fifty years practiced that detested wickedness of witchcraft? Were thou so simple as not to know the nature of simples, thou who of all creatures are the most sinful?”

These simples are herbs used in magic.

Cynthia continued:

“Thou have threatened to turn my course awry and alter by thy damnable art the government that I now possess by the eternal gods. But know thou, Dipsas, and let all the enchanters know, that Cynthia, being placed for light on earth, is also protected by the powers of heaven.

“Thou may breathe out words and curses and spells, thou may gather herbs, thou may find out stones and minerals agreeable to thine art, yet thou will have no force to appall my heart, in which courage is so rooted, and constant persuasion of the mercy of the gods is so grounded that I esteem all thy witchcraft as weak as the world esteems thy case wretched.

“This noble gentleman, Geron, who was once thy husband but is now thy mortal — deadly — hate, thou did contrive to make him live in a deserted, uninhabited area, almost desperate.

“Thou have bewitched by art Endymion, the flower of my court and the hope of succeeding time, before thou would allow him to flourish by nature.”

Dipsas replied:

“Madam, things past may be repented, not recalled. There is nothing so wicked that I have not done, nor is there anything so wished-for as death. Yet among all the things that I have committed, there is nothing that as much torments my rent — my torn — and ransacked thoughts as that in the prime of my husband’s youth, I divorced him by my devilish art, for which, if to die might be amends, I would not live until tomorrow. If for me to live and be still more miserable would better content him, I would wish of all creatures to be the oldest and ugliest.”

Mythology has tales of mortals asking to live many, many years more than is normal, but forgetting to ask for endless youth. Such mortals grow older and older, and when one such mortal, a Sibyl, was asked what she wished for most, she wished for death. Dipsas is wise enough to know that asking for an excessively long life is a punishment.

Geron said, "Dipsas, thou have made this difference between Endymion and me: Both he and I being young, thou have caused me to remain awake in melancholy, losing the joys of my youth, and thou have caused him to sleep, not remembering youth."

"Wait, here comes Tellus," Cynthia said. "We shall now know all."

Corsites and Tellus entered the scene along with Panelion and Zontes.

Corsites said to Tellus, "I wish that to Cynthia thou could make as good an excuse in truth as to me thou have done by wit."

"Truth shall be my answer, and therefore I will not search for an excuse," Tellus replied.

Cynthia said:

"Is it possible, Tellus, that so few years — so short a time, and so young a person — should harbor so many evil deeds?"

"I have borne thy swelling pride because it is a thing that beauty excuses and makes blameless — beauty that the more it exceeds fairness in measure and goes beyond normal beauty, the more it stretches itself and swells itself in disdain."

A proverb stated, "Where beauty is, there needs [be] no other plea."

Cynthia continued:

"I smile at thy devices and plots against Corsites because the sharper wits are, the shrewder they are.

"But this unacquainted — strange and unheard of — and most unnatural practice and conspiracy with a vile enchantress against so noble a gentleman as Endymion I abhor as a thing most malicious, and I will revenge it as a deed most monstrous.

"And as for you, Dipsas, I will send you into the desert among wild beasts, and I will see whether you can cast lions, tigers, boars, and bears into as dead a sleep as you did Endymion, or turn them into trees as you have done Bagoa."

Dipsas will have to defend her life against wild beasts.

Cynthia continued:

"But tell me, Tellus, what was the cause of this cruel conduct, far unbecoming thy sex, in which there should be nothing but simpleness and innocence, and which is much disagreeing from thy face, in which nothing seemed to be but softness?"

Tellus said, "Divine Cynthia, by whom I receive my life and by whom I am content to end it, I can neither excuse my fault without lying nor confess it without shame. Yet if it were possible that in as heavenly thoughts as yours there could fall such earthly emotions and thoughts as mine, I would then hope, if not to be pardoned without extreme punishment, yet to be heard without great marvel."

"Speak on, Tellus," Cynthia said. "I cannot imagine anything that can color — render acceptable — such a cruelty as you have shown."

Tellus said:



“Endymion, that Endymion, in the prime of his youth, so ravished my heart with love that I could not find means to obtain my desires, nor could I find reason to resist them.

“What woman did not love Endymion, who was young, wise, honorable, and virtuous? Besides, what metal and mettle — material and temperament — was that woman made of, being mortal, who is not affected with the spice, and not infected with the poison of that not-to-be-expressed yet always-to-be-felt love, which breaks the brains and never bruises and hurts the brow and forehead, consumes the heart and never touches the skin, and makes a deep scar to be felt before any wound at all can be seen?

“My heart, too tender to withstand such a divine fury, yielded to love. Madam, not without blushing, I confess that I yielded to love.”

Cynthia said:

“A strange effect of love, to work such an extreme hate.

“What do you say, Endymion? Was all this for love?”

Endymion said, “I say, madam, if this was a woman’s love, then I pray that the gods send me a woman’s hate.”

If love caused Tellus to treat him like this, then he would prefer that Tellus hate him.

Cynthia said:

“That would be as bad, for then by a contrary argument, you would never sleep.”

If a woman’s love had made him sleep continually, then a woman’s hate would make him stay awake continually.

Cynthia then said:

“But continue, Tellus. Let us hear the end.”

Tellus said:

“Feeling a continual burning in all my bowels and a bursting in almost every vein, I could not smother the inward fire, but it must necessarily be perceived by the outward smoke; and by the flying abroad of many sparks, many people judged that I had scalding flames.

“Endymion, as full of art as wit, marking my eyes (in which he might see almost his own), my sighs (by which he might always hear his name sounded), aimed at my heart (in which he was assured his person was imprinted), and by questions wrung out that which was ready to burst out.

“When he saw the depth of my affections, he swore that my affections in comparison to his were as fumes to Etna, valleys to Alps, ants to eagles, and nothing could be compared to my beauty but his love and eternity.

“Thus, drawing a smooth shoe upon a crooked foot, he made me believe that (which all of our sex willingly acknowledge and believe) I was beautiful, and to wonder (which indeed is a thing miraculous) that any of his sex should be faithful.”

“Endymion, how will you clear yourself?” Cynthia asked.

“Madam, by my own accuser,” Endymion answered.

Cynthia said, “Well, Tellus, proceed, but briefly, lest, taking delight in uttering thy love, thou offend us with the length of it.”

Tellus said:

“I will, madam, quickly make an end of my love and my tale.

“Finding continual increase of my tormenting thoughts, and finding that the enjoying and experiencing of my love made deeper wounds than the entering into it, I could find no means to ease my grief but to follow Endymion, and continually to have him before my eyes, who had me as a slave and subject to his love.

“But in the moment that I feared his falsehood, and fried myself most in my affections, I found (ah, grief, even then I lost myself) him cursing his stars, his state, the earth, the heavens, the world in the most melancholy and desperate terms, and all for love of —”

She hesitated.

“Of whom?” Cynthia said. “Tellus, speak boldly.”

“Madam, I dare not utter the name for fear of offending,” Tellus said.

“Speak, I say,” Cynthia said. “Who will dare to take offense if thou are commanded by Cynthia to speak?”

Tellus said, “For the love of Cynthia.”

Cynthia said:

“For my love, Tellus? That would be strange.

“Endymion, is it true?”

“It is true in all things, madam,” Endymion said. “Tellus does not speak falsely.”

Cynthia said, “What will this breed to and develop into in the end? Well, Endymion, we shall hear all.”

Tellus said:

“Seeing my hopes turned to mishaps and a settled dissembling towards me by Endymion, and his unmovable desire for Cynthia, and forgetting both myself and my sex, I fell into this unnatural hate.

“For knowing your virtues, Cynthia, to be immortal, I couldn’t imagine that I would be able to draw him to me, and finding my own affections unquenchable, I could not bear the thought that anyone else should possess what I had pursued.

“For although in majesty, beauty, virtue, and dignity, I always humbled and yielded myself to Cynthia, yet in affections I esteemed myself equal with the goddesses, and I esteemed all other creatures, according to their states, with myself. For stars in proportion to their bigness have their lights, and the sun has no more. And little pitchers, when they can hold no more, are as full as great vessels that run over.

“Thus, madam, in all truth I have uttered the unhappiness of my love and the cause of my hate, yielding wholly to that divine judgment which never erred for lack of wisdom or envied for too much partiality.”

Cynthia asked:

“What do you say, my lords, about this matter?”

“But what do you say, Endymion? Has Tellus told the truth?”

Endymion answered, “Madam, in all things except in that she said I loved her and swore to honor her.”

Certainly, he had misled Tellus and made her believe that he loved and honored her.

Cynthia asked, “Was there such a time when for my love thou didst vow thyself to death, and in respect of it loathed thy life? Speak, Endymion. I will not revenge it with hate.”

Endymion said:

“The time was, madam, and is, and ever shall be, that I honored Your Highness above all the world; but I never dared to stretch it so far as to call it love.

“No one has pleased my eye but Cynthia.

“No one has delighted my ears but Cynthia.

“No one has possessed my heart but Cynthia.

“I have forsaken all other fortunes to follow Cynthia.

“And here I stand ready to die if it pleases Cynthia.

“Such a difference has the gods set between our states that all must be duty, loyalty, and reverence; nothing, unless Your Highness permits it, shall be termed love.

“Let my unspotted thoughts, my languishing body, and my discontented life obtain by princely favor that which to demand as a right they must not presume, only wishing for impossibilities.

“With the imagination of having these impossibilities, I will spend my spirits, and I will softly call it love to myself, so that no creature may hear. And if anyone urges me to utter what I whisper, then I will name it honor: My love is honorable.

“If I am not driven from this sweet contemplation, I shall live of all men the most content, taking more pleasure in my aged thoughts than I ever did in my youthful actions.”

Cynthia said:

“Endymion, this honorable respect of thine shall be christened love in thee, and my reward to give you for it shall be my favor. Persevere, Endymion, in loving me; I account more strength in a true heart than in a walled city.

“I have labored to win all, and I work to keep such as I have won; but those whom neither my favor can move to continue constant and loyal, nor my offered benefits can get to be faithful, the gods shall either bring to truth or shall revenge their treacheries with justice.

“Endymion, continue as thou have begun, and thou shall find that Cynthia does not shine on thee in vain.”

Endymion’s youthful looks were restored to him, although earlier (5.1) Cynthia had said that restoring his youth was impossible. Cynthia’s powers, she is discovering, are stronger than she had believed them to be.

Endymion said, “Your Highness has blessed me, and your words have again restored my youth. I think I feel my joints strong, and these moldy hairs to molt, and all by your virtue, Cynthia, into whose hands are committed the balance that weighs time and fortune.”

[When the actor said, “these moldy hairs to molt,” he took off a wig and a fake beard.]

Cynthia said:

“What! Young again?”

“Then it is a pity to punish Tellus.”

Tellus said, “Ah, Endymion, now that I know thee, I ask pardon from thee. Allow me always to wish thee well.”

“Tellus, Cynthia must command what she will,” Endymion said.

“Endymion, I rejoice to see thee in thy former state,” Floscula said.

“Good Floscula, to thee also I am in my former affections,” Endymion said.

Eumenides said, “Endymion, the comfort of my life, how I am ravished with a matchless joy, saving only the enjoying of my mistress!”

Cynthia said, “Endymion, you must now tell whom Eumenides shrines for his saint.”

Eumenides had previously stated that he could not name whom he loved, but that Endymion could reveal the secret.

Endymion answered, “Semele, madam.”

Cynthia asked, “Semele, Eumenides? Is it Semele? The very wasp of all women, whose tongue stings as much as an adder’s tooth?”

“It is Semele, Cynthia,” Eumenides said. “Only the possessing of her love can prolong my life. I can’t live without her.”

Cynthia said:

“Since Endymion is restored, we will have all parties pleased.

“Semele, are you happy after so long trial of his faith, such rare secrecy, such unspotted love, to take Eumenides?”

“Why don’t you speak? Not a word?”

“Silence, madam, consents,” Endymion said. “That is most true.”

“It is true, Endymion,” Cynthia said. “Eumenides, take Semele. Take her, I say.”

“I give you my humble thanks, madam,” Eumenides said. “Only now do I begin to live.”

Semele said to Cynthia:

“A hard choice, madam: either to be married if I say nothing, or to lose my tongue if I speak a word. Yet I choose to have my tongue cut out rather than to have my heart distempered and vexed.

“I will not have him.”

Cynthia said:

“So speaks the parrot?”

She was calling Semele a parrot-like chatterer.

Cynthia continued:

“She shall nod hereafter with signs. Cut off her tongue; nay, cut off her head, the head of her who, having a servant — a wooer — of honorable birth, honest manners, and true love, will not be persuaded to have him!”

Semele said, “He is no faithful lover, madam, for if he were, then he would have asked for his mistress when he peered into the fountain.”

His mistress was the woman he loved: Semele.

Geron said, “Had he not been faithful, he would have never seen into the fountain, and so he would have lost his friend Endymion *and* he would have lost his mistress, Semele.”

Eumenides said:

“Thine own thoughts, sweet Semele, witness against thy words, for what have thou found in my life but love? And as yet what have I found in my love but bitterness?”

He then said to Cynthia:

“Madam, pardon Semele, and let my tongue ransom hers.”

Cynthia said:

“Thy tongue, Eumenides? Why would thou live, lacking a tongue to blaze and proclaim the beauty of Semele?”

“Well, Semele, I will not command love, for it cannot be compelled. Let me entreat it.”

Semele said:

“I am content that Your Highness shall command, for only just now do I think Eumenides faithful, who is willing to lose his tongue for my sake, yet he is loath to lose it because it would do me better service by proclaiming my beauty.

“Madam, I accept Eumenides as my husband.”

“I thank you, Semele,” Cynthia said.

Eumenides said:

“Ah, happy Eumenides, who has a friend so faithful and a mistress so fair! With what sudden trouble will the gods daunt and subdue this excess of joy?”

This society believed that the pagan gods punished people who experienced an excess of joy.

Eumenides then said:

“Sweet Semele, I live or die as thou will order me.”

Cynthia said:

“What shall become of Tellus?”

“Tellus, you know that Endymion is vowed to a service from which death cannot remove him.

“Corsites still casts a loving look towards you. What do you say? Will you have your Corsites and so receive pardon for all that is past?”

“Madam, most willingly,” Tellus said.

“But I cannot tell whether Corsites is agreeable to this,” Cynthia said.

“Aye, I am, madam,” Corsites said. “I am happier to enjoy Tellus than I would be to enjoy the monarchy of the world.”

Eumenides said, “Why, she caused you to be pinched by fairies.”

“Aye, but her fairness — her beauty — has pinched my heart more deeply,” Corsites said.

Cynthia said:

“Well, enjoy thy love.

“But what have you wrought in the castle, Tellus?”

Tellus had been ordered to embroider while she was a prisoner in the castle.

Tellus answered, “Only the picture of Endymion.”

“Then possess and play with as much of Endymion as his picture comes to,” Cynthia said.

Corsites said, “Ah, my sweet Tellus, my love shall be as thy beauty is: matchless.”

Cynthia said, “Now this remains, Dipsas: If thou will forswear that vile art of enchanting, Geron has promised again to receive thee; otherwise, if thou are wedded to that wickedness, I must and will see it punished to the utmost.”

Dipsas said, “Madam, I renounce both the substance and the shadow of that most horrible and hateful trade, vowing continual penance to the gods, and obedience to Your Highness.”

“What do you say, Geron?” Cynthia asked. “Will you allow her to be your wife?”

Geron said:

“Aye, with more joy than I did marry her the first day; for nothing could happen to make me happy except only her forsaking that mean, base, and detestable course.

“Dipsas, I embrace thee.”

Dipsas said, “And I embrace thee, Geron, to whom I will hereafter recite the cause of these my first follies.”

They embraced.

Cynthia said, “Well, Endymion, nothing remains now except that we depart. Thou have my favor, Tellus has her friend and lover, Eumenides is in paradise with his Semele, and Geron is contented with Dipsas.”

Sir Tophas said, “Nay, wait. I cannot handsomely go to bed without Bagoa.”

Cynthia said, “Well, Sir Tophas, it may be that there are more virtues in me than I myself know of, for I awakened Endymion, and at my words he grew young. I will see whether I can turn this tree again into thy true love.”

Sir Tophas said, “Turn her into a true love or a false love. I don’t care as long as she is a wench.”

Cynthia said, “Bagoa, Cynthia puts an end to thy hard fortunes, for being turned into a tree for revealing a truth. I will recover thee again if the effect of truth is in my power.”

Bagoa had revealed Dipsas’ secrets and Dipsas responded by turning her into a tree. If Bagoa were under Cynthia’s protection, Dipsas would not have been able to turn Bagoa into a tree, so perhaps Bagoa did not reveal Dipsas’ secrets to Cynthia but to others.

The aspen tree transformed back into Bagoa.

Looking at her, Sir Tophas said. “This is Bagoa? A bots — a plague — upon thee!”

He did not like what he saw.

Is it possible that Bagoa was young and beautiful?

Sir Tophas preferred old women.

Cynthia said:

“Come, my lords, let us go in.

“You, Gyptes and Pythagoras, if you yourselves cannot be happy in our court to fall away from the vain follies of philosophers and practice such virtues as are here practiced, you shall be entertained according to your deserts, for Cynthia is no stepmother to strangers.”

If they practice virtue, they will be treated well because she is not like an evil stepmother. If they don’t, they will be treated as they ought to be treated.

“I had rather spend ten years in Cynthia’s court than one hour in Greece,” Pythagoras said.

“And I choose rather to live by the sight of Cynthia than by the possessing of all Egypt,” Gyptes said.

“Then follow me,” Cynthia said.

Eumenides said, “We all attend on you.”

All exited.





## EPILOGUE (ENDYMION)

The Epilogue said:

“A man walking abroad, the wind and sun strove for sovereignty: the one with his blast, the other with his beams. The wind blew hard; the man wrapped his garment about him harder. It blustered more strongly; he then girt it fast — wrapped it tight — to him. ‘I cannot prevail,’ said the wind. The sun, casting her crystal beams, began to warm the man; he unloosed his gown. Yet it shined brighter; he then put it off. ‘I yield,’ said the wind, ‘for if thou continue shining, he will also put off his coat.’

“Dread sovereign, the malicious who seek to overthrow us with threats only stiffen our thoughts and make them sturdier in storms. But if Your Highness vouchsafe with your favorable beams to glance upon us, we shall not only stoop, but with all humility lay both our hands and hearts at Your Majesty’s feet.”

## NOTES (ENDYMION)

### A Dumb Show

- The three ladies are possibly Tellus, who wants to hurt Endymion; Dipsas, who enchants Endymion; and Bagoa, who would like to protect Endymion. Other interpretations, including allegorical interpretations, are possible.
- Geron, who has not appeared in this book at the time of the dumb show, is the old man.
- The Cumaean Sibyl wrote prophecies on leaves, and she placed them at the mouth of the cave she lived in — a cave that was one of the entrances to the Land of the Dead. Sometimes, the wind scattered the leaves, and she made no attempt to put them back in the correct order. But sometimes, they were collected into books.

The Sibyl went to King Tarquin II of Rome and offered to sell to him nine books of prophecies at a high price. He refused to buy them, and the Sibyl burned three of the books and offered the remaining six books at the same high price. Again, he refused to buy them, and the Sibyl burned three of the books and offered the remaining three books at the same high price. This time, King Tarquin II bought the books.

— 3.4 —

GERON:

*You doted, then, not loved. For affection is grounded  
on virtue and virtue is never peevish; or on beauty, and  
beauty loveth to be praised.*

(3.4.64-66)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Endymion*. Edited by David Bevington. New York: Manchester University Press, 1996. P. 133.

“Affection” means love. It may seem superficial for love to be grounded on beauty, but it need not be. Often, a husband’s conception of beauty changes as his wife’s body changes, whether through pregnancy or age or some other cause.

A few examples:

**“Men Of Reddit, Is It Boring To See Your Girlfriend / Wife’s Naked Body After A While Of Being Together? Why Or Why Not?”**

1) *Child\_of\_Lake\_Bodom* wrote, “Almost ten years now, still not tired of it.”

2) *kaljupaa* wrote, “Married almost 18 years and still can’t get enough of her.”

3) *CaptainFrivolous* wrote, “No, I just wish she believed me and would show it a little more.”

4) *mister-fancypants-* wrote, “My girlfriend will flash me basically anytime I say, ‘Lemme see them titties.’”

5) Lumberjack1286 wrote:

*“No, because boobs.*

*“Edit: Of course, a comment about boobs is going to be my most-upvoted comment.”*

6) KrustyKrabPizzaLover wrote, *“Nah. She’s still as beautiful as she was 20 years ago.”*

7) PerfectionPending wrote, *“Not at all. Been married 18 years, and I can’t help but stare when she changes. I just stop whatever I’m doing and blatantly stare. She smiles a shy flattered smile and continues changing. I’ll often tell her somewhere in there how beautiful she is.”*

8) Whole-Box537 wrote, *“You can chill and be naked together in a non-sexual way, and when things heat up, it’s as good as it ever was.”*

9) thingsmykidsdraw asked, *“Why are all these comments so wholesome?”*

*coolbeansbradley commented, “It’s a nice start to my day. Giving me hope.”*

*213x4s commented, “I was not expecting this wholesome level at all.”*

10) JohnnyAngelo wrote, *“I think boring is too strong of a word. You get accustomed to seeing it ... think about good food, you know how it tastes and looks so it’s not surprising to you anymore but you still wanna eat it every chance you get.”*

11) bobbyray89 wrote:

*“Been with my wife for 13 years. I still get giddy when it’s sexy time.*

*“I will say, I was surprised that my taste changed from when we were young to now after kids. She’s built like a mother of three and I dig it.”*

*fooliemon commented, “When the body changes are because she made your kids, it’s like the changes are badges of honor in your life together.”*

12) diskootdatkoot wrote, *“The more deeply I grow a relationship with my partner the more I see their body as a beautiful work of art that I know intimately.”*

13) readit2U wrote, *“Been with my wife for 36 years and she still turns me on. She doesn’t understand why, but she is glad.”*

*Dnasty12-12 commented, “Agree ... 39 years together here ... new grandparents ... I tell her the best part of being grandparents is watching her bend over as she picks up toys all over the floor.”*

14) ulittlerippa wrote, *“Partner is so pregnant she’s ready to pop ... cellulite, weight gain ... and it’s the most beautiful I’ve ever seen her. And yes, I tell her that. She’s growing our child, and it’s magnificent.”*

Source: throwawayacc9q7, “Men of Reddit, is it boring to see your girlfriend/wife’s naked body after a while of being together? Why or why not?” Reddit. AskReddit. 10 January 2021 < [https://www.reddit.com/r/AskReddit/comments/s0catu/men\\_of\\_reddit\\_is\\_it\\_boring\\_to\\_see\\_your/](https://www.reddit.com/r/AskReddit/comments/s0catu/men_of_reddit_is_it_boring_to_see_your/) >.

## EPILOGUE

For Your Information:

### *THE SUN AND THE WIND*

*Phebus and Boreas from on high  
Upon the road a Horseman spy,  
Wearing a cloak for fear of rain.  
Says Boreas, "His precaution's vain  
'Gainst me, I'll shew you for a joke  
How soon I'll make him quit his cloak."  
"Come on," says Phebus, "let us see  
Who best succeeds, or [either] you or me."  
The Wind to blow so fierce began,  
He almost had unhors'd his man;  
But still the cloak, for all his roar,  
Was wrapp'd more closely than before.  
When Boreas what he could had done,  
"Now for my trial," says the Sun,  
And with his beams so warm'd the air.  
The Man his mantle could not bear.  
But open'd first, then threw aside.  
[Moral:]  
Learn hence, unbending sons of pride,  
Persuasive manners will prevail.  
When menaces and bluster fail.*

Source: Sir B. Boothby, *Fables and Satires*. Fable III.

Imitated from Avicenus.

[https://archive.org/stream/fablesandsatire01bootgoog/fablesandsatire01bootgoog\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/fablesandsatire01bootgoog/fablesandsatire01bootgoog_djvu.txt)

For Your Information:

*The Wind and the Sun were disputing which was the stronger. Suddenly they saw a traveller coming down the road, and the Sun said: "I see a way to decide our dispute. Whichever of us can cause that traveller to take off his cloak shall be regarded as the*

*stronger. You begin.” So the Sun retired behind a cloud, and the Wind began to blow as hard as it could upon the traveller. But the harder he blew the more closely did the traveller wrap his cloak round him, till at last the Wind had to give up in despair. Then the Sun came out and shone in all his glory upon the traveller, who soon found it too hot to walk with his cloak on.*

[Moral:]

*Kindness effects more than severity.*

Source: Aesop. “The Wind and the Sun.”

<https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/pdf/passage/697/aesops-fables-085-the-wind-and-the-sun.pdf>

# **GALATEA**

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS (GALATEA)**

**Tityrus**, a shepherd

**Galatea**, his daughter, disguised as Tityrus II

**Melebeus**, a shepherd

**Phillida**, his daughter, disguised as Melebeus II

**Venus**, goddess of sexual passion

**Cupid**, god of affection and love, and son of Venus. Cupid is also known as Love.

**Neptune**, god of the sea

**Diana**, goddess of virginity and of the hunt

**Telusa**, a nymph of Diana

**Eurota**, a nymph of Diana

**Ramia**, a nymph of Diana

**Larissa**, a nymph of Diana

**Another Nymph** of Diana. Her name may be Servia or Clymene; they are mentioned in 3.1.

**Ericthinis**, another countryman of the shepherds

**Hebe**, his virgin daughter

**An Augur**

**Rafe**, son of a Miller, brother of Robin and Dick

**Robin**, son of a Miller, brother of Rafe and Dick

**Dick**, son of a Miller, brother of Rafe and Robin

**A Mariner**

**An Alchemist**

**Peter**, servant to an alchemist

**An Astronomer**

**Fairies**

**Two countrymen** of the shepherds

**SCENE:** A forest by the Humber River and adjacent woods. The Humber River is on the east coast of England.

**NOTES:**

**Online Edition:**

This is David Bevington's modern-spelling edition of the play (no notes included):

[https://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/doc/Gal\\_M/complete/index.html](https://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/doc/Gal_M/complete/index.html)

### Editions

Lyly, John. *Galatea*. Leah Scragg, editor. Revels Student Edition. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012.

Lyly, John. *Galatea and Midas*. *Galatea* edited by George K. Hunter. *Midas* edited by David Bevington. The Revels Plays. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Lyly, John. *Gallathea and Midas*. Anne Begor Lancashire, editor. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1969.

Lyly, John. *The Plays of John Lyly*. Carter A. Daniel, editor. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses. 1988.

Lyly, John. *John Lyly: Selected Prose and Dramatic Work*. Leah Scragg, editor. Fyfield Books. Manchester: Carcanet, 1997.

### **Name of Main Character:**

On 1 April 1585, printer Gabriel Cawood entered a play in the Stationers' Register under this title: *A Commoedie of Titirus and Galathea*.

The title page of the 1592 quarto uses this name: Gallathea.

Editor Leah Scragg uses the name "Gallathea" in her book *John Lyly: Selected Prose and Dramatic Work*.

But editor Leah Scragg uses the name "Galatea" in her book *Galatea*, a Revels Student Edition.

George K. Hunter uses the name "Galatea" in his edition of the play.

### **Astronomy**

Copernicus (1473-1543) developed the heliocentric model that placed the sun at the center of the solar system and Galileo (1564-1642) championed Copernicus' work.

The first record of performance of *Galatea* is on New Year's Day of 1588, so Galileo was young. Astrology was still practiced: The astronomer in this play is very much an astrologer.

### **Language**

In this society, a person of higher rank would use "thou," "thee," "thine," and "thy" when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use "you" and "your" when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word "wench" at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word "fair" can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, good-looking.



“Sirrah” was a title used to address someone of a social rank inferior to the speaker. Friends, however, could use it to refer to each other, and fathers could call their sons “sirrah.”

Love is nonrational. Suppose you are confronted with two individuals who are basically alike in beauty, form, character, and personality, but one individual is rich and the other individual is poor. Reason would tell you to fall in love with the rich individual, but you may fall in love with the poor individual.

In this book, “virgin” means “female virgin.”

### **Natural “Facts”**

Much of what Lyly says about nature and other societies is made up or are folk beliefs.

For example:

“The Egyptians never cut their dates from the tree, because they were so fresh and green; it is thought wickedness to pull roses from the stalks in the garden of Palestine, because they have so lively a red; and anyone who cuts the incense tree in Arabia before it falls commits sacrilege.”

“[...] old eagles fly high into the air so the sun would heat them and open their pores so the eagles could shed their feathers. The eagles dived into water, which renewed their feathers and made the eagles young again.”

## PROLOGUE (GALATEA)

The Prologue complimented Queen Elizabeth I:

“Ios and Smyrna were two sweet-smelling and fragrant cities. Ios was named after the violet, and Smyrna was named after the myrrh. Homer was born in Ios and buried in Smyrna.

“Your Majesty’s judgment and favor are our sun and shadow. Your judgment comes from your deep wisdom, and your favor comes from your customary grace. We — the acting company — in all humility desire that by the former receiving our first breath, we may, in the latter, take our last rest.

“Augustus Caesar had such piercing eyes that whoever looked at him was constrained to close his eyes. Your Highness has so perfect a judgment that, whatsoever we offer, we are forced to blush.

“Yet as the Athenians were most careful that the lawn — fine linen — with which Minerva, goddess of wisdom, was covered should be without spot or wrinkle, so we have endeavored with all care to ensure that what we present Your Highness should neither offend in scene (actions) nor syllable (words) — knowing that as in the ground where gold grows and abounds, nothing will prosper but gold, so in Your Majesty’s mind, where nothing harbors and resides except virtue, nothing can enter except virtue.”

## CHAPTER 1 (GALATEA)

### — 1.1 —

Tityrus and Galatea sat under an oak tree. Tityrus was the father of Galatea, a young woman who was disguised as a boy. The name “Galatea” means “milk-white,” and she was wearing a boy’s white coat. They were on a bank of the Humber River.

“The sun beats upon the plain — the open — fields,” Tityrus said. “Therefore, let us sit down, Galatea, under this fair oak tree, where being defended from the warm beams of the sun by the oak’s broad leaves, we may enjoy the fresh air, which softly breathes from the Humber’s water.”

“Father, you have devised a good plan,” Galatea said. “And while our flock of sheep roams up and down this pleasant green, you shall recount to me, if it pleases you, for what reason this tree was dedicated to Neptune, god of the sea, and why you have thus disguised me as a boy.”

“I agree to tell you, and, when thy state and predicament and my care and concern are considered, thou shall know this request was not asked in vain,” Tityrus said.

“I willingly listen to you,” Galatea said.

Tityrus began:

“Where thou now see a heap of small pebbles, in times past stood a stately temple of white marble, which was dedicated to Neptune, the god of the sea, and properly so, because this location is so near the sea.

“Hither came all such as either ventured by long travel to see countries or by great traffic to engage in trade, offering sacrifice by fire to get safety by water, yielding thanks for past perils passed and making prayers for good success to come.

“But Lady Fortune, constant in nothing but inconstancy, changed her tone and her behavior as the people changed their customary practices; for, the land having been oppressed by Danes — who instead of sacrifice committed sacrilege, who instead of religion committed rebellion, and who made a prey of that in which they should have made their prayers, tearing down the temple, which was almost level with the skies, and making it level with the earth — so enraged the god who binds the winds in the hollows of the earth and creates storms at sea that he caused the seas to break their bounds since men had broken their vows, and to swell and flood as far above their usual reach and range as men had swerved beyond their reason.”

The Danes often raided Britain, including British churches and monasteries, from 790 to 1069.

The god who binds the winds in the hollows of the earth is usually Aeolus, but here Neptune does that, perhaps in addition to Aeolus. Neptune and Aeolus both control storms at sea. Aeolus does that in Book 1 of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, and then Neptune calms the winds and waves.

Tityrus continued:

“Then you might see ships sail where sheep fed, anchors cast where plows go, fishermen throw their nets where husbandmen — farmers — sow their grain, and fishes throw their scales where fowls breed their quills, aka feathers. Then you might gather froth where now is dew,

gather rotten weeds instead of sweet roses, and you might see monstrous mermaids — mermaids — instead of surpassingly beautiful maids passing by.”

A “mere” is an arm of the sea, or it is a lake or pond.

“To hear these sweet marvels, I wish my eyes were turned also into ears,” Galatea said.

“But at last our countrymen repented, and not too late, because at last Neptune, either weary of his wrath or wary to do them wrong, consented to ease their miseries — upon condition,” Tityrus said.

“What condition won’t miserable men accept?” Galatea asked.

“The condition was this: that at a specified day observed every five years, the fairest and most chaste virgin in all the country should be brought to this tree, and here being bound (whom neither parentage shall excuse for honor, nor virtue and excellence for uncorrupted integrity), is left for a peace-offering to Neptune,” Tityrus said.

Neither being born into a good family nor having uncorrupted virtue and integrity exempt a maiden from being a sacrifice to Neptune.

“Dear is the peace that is bought with guiltless blood,” Galatea said.

“Dear” can mean 1) cherished, and 2) expensive. Galatea meant the second meaning, but in his answer Tityrus used the first meaning.

“I am not able to say that, but he sends a monster called the Agar, against whose coming the waters roar, the fowls fly away, and the cattle in the field shun the banks because of terror,” Tityrus said.

Agar is a personification of “eagre,” a tidal wave of unusual height created by the tide rushing up a narrow estuary. This is also called a tidal bore, or a bore.

“And is she bound to endure that horror?” Galatea asked.

By “bound,” she meant “obliged.”

“And she is bound to endure that horror,” Tityrus answered.

By “bound,” he meant “tied up.”

“Does this monster devour her?” Galatea asked.

Tityrus said:

“Whether she is devoured by him, or conveyed to Neptune, or drowned between both, it is not permitted to know, and to conjecture what happens incurs danger to one’s safety.

“Now, Galatea, here ends my tale and begins thy tragedy.”

“Alas, father!” Galatea said. “And why so?”

Tityrus said:

“I wish that thou had been less beautiful or more fortunate. Then thou should not repine that I have disguised thee in this attire, for thy beauty will make thee to be thought worthy of this

god.

“Therefore, to avoid destiny (for wisdom rules the stars and governs destiny), I think it better to use an unlawful means, with your honor preserved, than to endure intolerable grief, with both life and honor hazarded; and to prevent, if it should be possible, thy constellation — thy fate — by my crafty trick.

“Now thou have heard the custom of this country, the reason why this tree was dedicated to Neptune, and the vexing care and concern of thy fearful, apprehensive father.”

Galatea said:

“Father, I have been attentive to hear, and with your patience and permission, I am ready to answer.

“Destiny may be deferred, not prevented; and therefore, it would be better to offer myself in triumph than to be forcibly drawn to it with dishonor.”

A proverb stated, “It is impossible to avoid fate.”

Galatea continued:

“Has nature (as you say) made me so beautiful above all others, and shall virtue not make me as famous as others?”

“Don’t you know, or does overcarefulness make you forget, that an honorable death is to be preferred before an infamous life? I am only a child, and I have not lived long, and yet I am not so childish that I desire to live forever.

“I intend to carry virtues to my grave, not gray hairs. I wish that I were as sure that destiny would alight and fall on me as I am resolved that it could not make me afraid.

“Nature has given me beauty, and virtue has given me courage. Nature must yield death to me, and virtue must yield honor to me. Permit me therefore to die, for which I was born, or let me curse that I was born, since I may not die for it.”

A proverb stated, “He that [who] is once born must once die.”

“Alas, Galatea, to consider the causes of change thou art too young, and that I should find them out for thee, thou art too, too fortunate,” Tityrus said.

One kind of change was the change in Galatea’s attire: her disguise. Another kind of change was going from youth to old age, as her father had done.

“The destiny to me cannot be as hard as the disguising is to me hateful,” Galatea said.

She disliked wearing boys’ clothing. She was resolved to be virtuous, and if being virtuous meant welcoming her fate, she would welcome it.

“To gain love, the gods have taken shapes of beasts, and to save life art thou too scrupulous and too reluctant to take the attire of men?” Tityrus said.

In one of his shape-shifting adventures, Jupiter, King of the gods, assumed the form of a swan and impregnated Leda, who gave birth both to Helen, who later became Helen of Troy, and to

Clytemnestra, who married and later murdered Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces against Troy.

“They were beastly gods, whom lust could make them appear as beasts,” Galatea said.

She was right. The ancient Greeks and Romans were evil deceivers and rapists. Jupiter, King of the gods, was infamous for his unfaithfulness to his wife.

Tityrus said:

“In health it is easy to counsel the sick, but it’s hard for the sick to follow wholesome counsel and good advice.

“Well, let us depart. The day is far spent.”

They exited.

— 1.2 —

Cupid, the god of love, met a nymph who served Diana, the virgin goddess of hunting. Cupid carried a bow and arrows. If Cupid shoots a gold arrow into your heart, you fall in love.

“Fair nymph, have you strayed from your company by chance, or do you love to wander solitarily and on your own?” Cupid asked.

The nymph replied, “Fair boy, or god, or whatever you are, I would have you know that these woods are to me so well known that I cannot stray off my path even if I wanted to, and my mind is so free that I have no reason to be melancholy. There is none of Diana’s train of followers whom anyone can train — that is, lure — either out of their way or out of their wits.”

This society regarded wanting to be alone as a sign of melancholy.

Cupid asked, “Who is that Diana? A goddess? Who are her nymphs? Virgins? What are Diana’s pastimes? Hunting?”

The nymph replied, “Is Diana a goddess? Who doesn’t know it? Are her followers virgins? Who doesn’t think it? Is Diana’s favorite pastime hunting? Who doesn’t love to hunt?”

“Please tell me, sweet wench, among all your sweet troop isn’t there one who follows the sweetest thing, which is sweet love?” Cupid requested.

“Love, good sir?” the nymph said. “What do you mean by it? Or what do you call it?”

Cupid explained what love is:

“A heat full of coldness, a sweet full of bitterness, a pain full of pleasantness, which makes thoughts have eyes and makes hearts have ears, bred by desire, nursed by delight, weaned by jealousy, killed by dissembling, buried by ingratitude — this is love.”

A proverb stated, “Love is a sweet torment.”

Cupid then asked:

“Fair lady, will you have any? Do you want to try the experience of being in love?”

“If love is nothing else, then love is only a foolish thing,” the nymph said.

“Try it, and you shall find it a pretty and pleasing thing,” Cupid said.

The nymph said:

“I have neither the will nor the leisure — neither the desire nor the time — but I will follow Diana in the chase and the hunt, whose virgins are all chaste, delighting in the bow that wounds the swift hart in the forest, not fearing the bow that strikes the soft heart in the private chamber.”

These are words that Cupid can — and will — take as a direct challenge. Cupid often makes people fall in love, even when they don’t want to.

The nymph continued:

“This difference is between my mistress, Diana, and your mother, as I guess, Venus. All Diana’s nymphs are amiable and friendly and wise in their kind — that is, by nature. In contrast, the other nymphs, those belonging to Venus, are amorous and too kind — that is, too affectionate — for their sex.

“And so farewell, little god.”

Diana was the nymph’s mistress: her female boss.

The nymph had guessed correctly that she had been talking to Cupid.

Cupid said to himself, “Diana, and thou, and all of thine shall know that Cupid is a great god. I will plot and scheme for a while — and for a wile, aka a trick — in these woods, and play such pranks with these nymphs that, while they aim to hit others with their arrows, they shall be wounded themselves with their own eyes.”

A proverb stated, “Love comes by looking.”

Cupid exited.

### — 1.3 —

Melebeus and Phillida, his daughter, talked together. Phillida was the same age as Galatea, and like Galatea, she was beautiful. Unlike Galatea, Phillida was wearing feminine clothing.

Melebeus said:

“Come, Phillida, fair Phillida, and I fear that thou are too fair, thou being my Phillida, my daughter.

“Thou know the custom of this country, and I know the greatness of thy beauty; we both know the fierceness of the monster Agar. Everyone thinks his own child fair, but I know that which I most desire and would least have, that thou are the fairest.

“Thou shall therefore disguise thyself in boys’ clothing, lest I should disguise myself in affection and act contrary to my love for you, my daughter, in allowing thee to perish by a fond — foolish, affectionate, doting — desire whom I may preserve by a sure and infallible deception.”

The fathers of Galatea and Phillida were afraid that their daughters would be chosen as the sacrifice to Neptune, god of the sea.

Patriotism is love of one's country, but these fathers' love for their daughters came first.

Phillida said:

"Dear father, Nature could not make me as fair as she has made you kind and ready to act as a father ought to act, nor could Nature make you more kind than me dutiful. Whatever you command, I will not refuse to do because you command nothing but my safety and your happiness.

"But how shall I be disguised?"

"In man's apparel," Melebeus answered.

"It will suit neither my body nor my mind," Phillida objected.

"Why, Phillida?" Melebeus asked.

Phillida answered:

"For then I must keep company with boys and commit follies unseemly and inappropriate for my female sex. Or I must keep company with girls and be thought more wanton and unrestrained in behavior than becomes me.

"Besides, I shall be ashamed of my long hose and short coat — typical boys' clothing — and so unwarily blab out — that is, reveal — something by blushing at everything."

"Don't be afraid of that, Phillida," Melebeus said. "Use and custom will make it easy; fear must make it necessary."

Soon, Phillida will grow used to wearing men's clothing.

"I agree, since my father will have it so, and since fortune must have it so," Phillida said.

"Come, let us go in, and, when thou are disguised, we will roam about these woods until the time of the sacrifice has passed and Neptune is pleased," Melebeus said.

They exited.

— 1.4 —

A mariner, Rafe, Robin, and Dick talked together. They had been cast ashore in a shipwreck on the coast of Lincolnshire, near the mouth of the Humber River. Rafe, Robin, and Dick were brothers, and they were the sons of a miller.

"Now, mariner, what do thou call this sport and entertainment on the sea?" Robin asked.

"It is called a shipwreck," the mariner said.

"I take no pleasure in it," Rafe said. "Of all deaths, I would not be drowned. One's clothes will be so wet when he is taken up from out of the sea."

"What do thou call the thing we were bound to?" Dick asked.

"A rafter," the mariner said.

A rafter is a spar.



Rafe said:

“I will rather hang myself on a rafter — a beam — in the house than be so haled and pulled along in the sea; on a rafter in the house one may have a leap for his life.

“But I wonder how our shipmaster is doing.”

Dick said:

“I’ll warrant by this time he is wetshod and has wet feet. Did you ever see water bubble as the sea did?

“But what shall we do?”

“You are now in Lincolnshire, where you can lack no fowl, if you can devise means to catch them,” the mariner said. “There are woods nearby, and there are houses a mile apart from each other, so that if you seek what you need on the land, you shall speed better and have more success than on the sea.”

“Sea?” Robin said. “Nay, I will never sail anymore. I cannot endure or tolerate their diet. Their bread is so hard that one must carry a whetstone in his mouth to grind his teeth to sharpen them; the meat is so salty that one would think after dinner his tongue had been powdered with salt for ten days.”

Whetstones are stones that are used to whet — sharpen — such tools as axes and knives.

In this society, liars were sometimes punished by having a heavy whetstone hung from their necks. Robin had done a fair amount of exaggerating.

Rafe said to the mariner:

“Oh, thou have a sweet life, mariner, to be pinned and confined within a few boards and planks, and to be within an inch of a thing bottomless.”

Only one inch of planking on the ship’s bottom lay between the sailors and the bottomless sea.

Rafe then said:

“I ask thee, how often have thou been drowned?”

“Fool, thou see I am still alive,” the mariner said.

“Why, are they dead who are drowned?” Robin said. “I had thought they had been with the fish, and so by chance they had been caught up with them in a net again. It would be a shame if a little cold water should kill a man of reason, when you shall see a poor minnow lie in it that has no ability to understand or to reason.”

The mariner said to Robin:

“Thou are wise from the crown of thy head upwards.”

In other words: Thou are a fool. A wise man is wise from the crown — the top — of the head downwards.

He then said to the three brothers:

“Seek new fortunes now. I will follow my old fortune of being a sailor.

“I can shift the moon and the sun.”

This sounds as if the mariner meant that he could move the moon and the sun, but he meant that he could record the variations in their positions.

The mariner continued:

“I know by one card what all of you cannot do and know by a whole pair. The loadstone — the magnet — that always holds his nose to the north, the two-and-thirty points for the wind, the wonders I see would make all you blind. You are just boys.

“I fear the sea no more than a dish of water. Why, fools, it is only a liquid element.

“Farewell.”

In this society, a “whole pair” is a whole pack of cards. In this case, the mariner meant a pack of fortune-tellers’ cards.

The one card the mariner has is a mariner’s card, which has on it the thirty-two points of the compass.

The mariner turned and started to leave.

Robin said to his brothers, “It would be good for us if we learned his cunning at the cards, for we must live by cozenage and cheating. We have neither lands, nor wit, nor masters, nor honesty.”

Robin was thinking about cheating at cards in order to make a living.

“Nay, I would like to have his thirty-two, that is, his three dozen lacking four points because you see that between us three there are not two good points,” Rafe said.

“Points” are laces that connect the upper garments to hose, which are clothing for the legs: long stockings or breeches. Without points, the hose dropped.

Dick said:

“Let us call him back for a little while so that we may learn those points.”

He then said to the mariner:

“Sirrah, a word. I ask thee to show us thy points.”

The mariner, understanding “points” to mean the points on a compass, asked, “Will you learn?”

“Aye,” Dick answered.

“Then as you like this, I will instruct you in all our secrets, for there is not a clout, nor card, nor board [ship’s side], nor post [stem-post, from which the rudder is hung] that hasn’t a special name or a singular and unique nature,” the mariner said.

A “clout” is a sail.

“Well, begin with your points, for I lack only points in this world,” Dick said.

Only points? He lacked everything, as he lacked all the 32 points of the mariner’s card.

The mariner rattled off the points of one quadrant of a compass: “North. North and by east. North north-east. North-east and by north. North-east. North-east and by east. East north-east. East and by north. East —”

The mariner had named eight points and then Dick interrupted him as the mariner named another point, and so he had mentioned a quarter of the 32 points on the mariner’s card.

Dick interrupted:

“— I’ll say it. North. North-east. North-east. Nore-nore and by nore-east.”

“Nore” means “nor’,” aka “north.”

He paused to think, and then he said:

“I shall never do it.”

“This is just one quarter,” the mariner said.

A quarter is a quadrant.

Robin said:

“I shall never learn a quarter of it.

“I will try.

“North. North-east, is by the west side. North and by north.”

“Surpassingly ill!” Dick said. “Very bad!”

The mariner asked Robin:

“Have thou no memory?”

He then said to Rafe:

“Thou try.”

“North. North and by north,” Rafe said. “I can go no further.”

“O dullard! O fool!” the mariner said to Rafe. “Is thy head lighter than the wind, and is thy tongue so heavy that it will not wag and move? I will once again say it.”

“I will never learn this language,” Rafe said. “It will get only a small living — a small income — when it will hardly be learned until one is old.”

The mariner said, “Then, farewell. And if your fortunes are not better than your wits and intelligence, you shall starve before you sleep.”

He exited.

Rafe said:

“Was there ever such cozening and cheating?”

“Come, let us go to the woods and see what fortune we may have before the woods are made into ships.

“As for our shipmaster, he is drowned.”

“I will go this way,” Dick said.

“I will go this way,” Robin said.

“I will go this way, and on this date after a year has passed, let us all meet here again,” Rafe said. “It may be we shall either beg together or hang together.”

“It doesn’t matter, as long as we are together,” Dick said. “But let us sing now, even though we cry hereafter.”

All three sang:

*“Rocks, shelves, and sands, and seas, farewell!”*

“Shelves” are sandbanks or submerged rock ledges.

All three continued to sing:

*“Fie! [Bah!] Who would dwell*

*“In such a hell*

*“As is a ship, which drunk does reel [reels like a drunk],*

*“Taking salt healths [Taking on sea water] from deck to keel.”*

Robin sang:

*“Up were we swallowed in wet graves,”*

Dick sang:

*“All soused [drenched] in waves,”*

Rafe sang:

*“By Neptune’s slaves.”*

Neptune’s slaves are wind and water, which he can command to make storms at sea.

All three sang:

*“What shall we do, being tossed to shore?”*

Robin sang:

*“Milk [Exploit] some blind tavern, and there roar.”*

A blind tavern is obscure, secret, private, or prone to being cheated.

“Roar” means “carouse and revel.”

Rafe sang:

*“’Tis [It is] brave [splendid], my boys, to sail on land,*

*“For being well manned,*

*“We can cry ‘Stand!’”*

“Well manned” can mean 1) well supplied with men, or 2) well hung.

The full highwayman’s command is “Stand and deliver!” It means, “Stand still and deliver — hand over — your valuables.”

In Elizabethan slang, the word “stand” also means “erection.”

Dick sang:

*“The trade of pursing [stealing purses, aka bags of money] ne’er shall fail*

*“Until the hangman cries, ‘Strike sail!’”*

When a ship surrenders, it strikes — lowers — its sails. It also lowers its sails when a voyage reaches its destination.

Here, the hangman is ordering someone to surrender his life. The person’s life has reached its end.

All sang:

*“Rove [Roam], then, no matter whither,*

*“In fair or stormy weather.*

*“And as we live, let’s die together.*

*“One hempen caper cuts a feather.”*

One kind of “hempen caper” is dancing at the end of a hangman’s noose while suspended in air.

“Caper” also means “privateer.” “Hempen” is clothing made of hemp. Another meaning of “hempen caper” is a privateer wearing hempen clothing.

“Cuts a feather” means “making fine distinctions.” The jerk of a hangman’s noose makes a distinction between life and death.

“Cuts a feather” also means “making foam at the front end of a ship.”

Erotic asphyxiation occurs when a person hangs until he ejaculates. A hanged man who dangles for a while, still alive, can ejaculate. The semen can be compared to foam. When a person does this intentionally, it is called auto-erotic asphyxiation.

The three brothers’ meaning is “Let’s die together because our group will be broken up if only one of us hangs.”

They exited.



## CHAPTER 2 (GALATEA)

— 2.1 —

Alone, the disguised-as-a-boy Galatea said to herself:

“Blush, Galatea, you who must frame thy affection fit for thy habit — thy male clothing — and therefore be thought immodest because thou art unfortunate!”

She had to make her thoughts fit with her clothing; that is, she had to begin thinking like a boy. If people knew that she was dressed as a boy, they would look down on her.

Galatea continued:

“Thy young, tender years cannot dissemble this deceit, nor thy sex bear it.

“Oh, I wish that the gods had made me as I seem to be (a boy), or that I might safely be what I seem not to be (a girl)!”

“Thy father dotes, Galatea, whose blind love corrupts his fond judgment, and, apprehensive and fearful about thy death, seems to dote on thy beauty; whose fond — foolish but loving — care and concern carry his partial eye as far from truth as his heart is from falsehood.”

Galatea’s father loved her, and he was afraid that she could become a sacrifice to Neptune and die. This fear made him a little insane, according to her, and so he had made her dress in boys’ clothing, something that Galatea did not want to do. His heart was filled with love for her, but his worry about her was affecting his judgment, according to her.

Galatea continued:

“But why do thou blame him, or blab and reveal what thou art, when thou should only counterfeit and pretend to be what thou art not?”

“But whist — hush! Here comes a lad. I will learn from him how to behave and conduct myself as a boy.”

She stood aside, not readily noticeable.

Phillida, wearing men’s clothing, entered the scene. She was practicing walking like a boy.

Phillida said to herself, “I like neither my gait nor my garments: The one is untoward and awkward, the other is unfit, and both are unseemly.”

By “unfit” and “unseemly,” Phillida meant unfit and unseemly for a girl.

She continued:

“O Phillida! But yonder stands someone, and therefore I will say nothing. But O Phillida!”

While looking at and listening to the disguised Phillida, the disguised Galatea said to herself, “I perceive that boys are in as great disliking of themselves as maidens. Therefore, although I wear the apparel, I am glad I am not the person.”

The disguised Phillida said to herself, “He is a pretty boy and a handsome boy. He might well have been a woman, but because he is not, I am glad I am, for now, under the color — the

disguise — of my boys' coat and outfit, I shall decipher the follies of their sex.”

While looking at the disguised Phillida, the disguised Galatea said to herself, “I would greet him, but I fear that I would make a woman's curtsy instead of a man's bow.”

Phillida said to herself, “If I dared to trust my face as well as I do my clothing, I would spend some time to make pastime and have some entertainment; for, say what they will of a man's wit and intelligence, it is no second thing to be a woman — women are not inferior to men.”

Galatea said to herself, “All the blood in my body would be in my face, if he would ask me (as the question among men is common), ‘Are you a maiden? Are you a virgin?’”

Phillida said to herself, “Why do I stand still? Boys should be bold. But here comes a brave and splendid train of people who will spill — will ruin — all our talk.”

The goddess Diana and two of her nymphs, Telusa and Eurota, entered the scene. They were hunting.

Diana said to the disguised Galatea, “God speed, fair boy. May God make you prosper.”

“You are deceived, lady,” Galatea said, hearing the word “boy” and speaking without thinking.

“Why, are you no boy?” Diana asked.

Recovering her wits, Galatea said, “I am no *fair* boy.”

“But I see an unhappy boy,” Diana said.

Telusa asked the disguised Galatea, “Didn't you see the deer come this way? He flew away in the direction the wind was blowing to prevent us from following his scent, and I believe you have blanched him — I believe that you have made him turn back in fright.”

“Whose deer was it, lady?” the disguised Galatea asked.

“Diana's deer,” Telusa said.

“I saw none but my own dear,” the disguised Galatea said.

Galatea was already in love with the disguised Phillida.

Telusa said to Diana, “This mischievous wag is wanton — is perverse, or is joking — or is a fool! Ask the other boy, Diana.”

The disguised Galatea said to herself, “I don't know how it comes to pass, but yonder boy is in my eye too beautiful. I pray to the gods that the ladies won't think him their dear!”

Diana asked the disguised Phillida, “Pretty lad, do your sheep feed in the forest, or have you strayed from your flock, or do you come on purpose to mar Diana's pastime?”

“I don't understand one word that you speak,” the disguised Phillida replied.

“What, are thou neither lad nor shepherd?” Diana asked.

The disguised Phillida answered, “My mother said I could be no lad until I was twenty years old, nor keep sheep until I could tell — count — them; and therefore, lady, neither lad nor shepherd is here.”



In pastoral poetry, a “lad” is a young shepherd. In 1599, eleven years after scholars think *Galatea* was first performed, Christopher Marlowe’s poem “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love,” whose first line is “Come live with me and be my love,” was first published.

Phillida’s mother wanted her to be grown up before she married.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a “lad” can also be a spirited man, or, colloquially, a spirited girl.

A proverb stated, “If you cannot tell, you are nought to keep sheep.”

Telusa said to Diana, “These boys are both alike. Either they are very pleasant and merry, or they are too perverse. You would do best, lady, to make them tusk these woods, while we stand by with our bows, and so use them as hunting beagles since they have so good mouths.”

“Tusk the woods” means to beat the woods and make a lot of noise so that the deer will flee in the direction of the hunters.

“Good mouths” means 1) good at barking, or 2) good at talking.

Diana said:

“I will.”

She then said to Phillida:

“Follow me without delay or excuse, and, if you can do nothing, yet you shall halloo the deer and pursue them with shouts.”

Phillida said out loud:

“I am willing to go —”

She then continued, saying to herself, “— not for these ladies’ company, because I myself am a virgin girl, but for that fair boy’s favor, who I think is a god.”

“Favor” means 1) appearance, and 2) goodwill.

Diana said to the disguised Galatea, “You, sir boy, shall also go.”

Galatea said out loud:

“I must go if you command —”

She then continued, saying to herself, “— and I would go if you had not.”

They exited.

## — 2.2 —

Cupid, wearing the clothing of a nymph, thought he was alone, but Neptune was nearby, listening.

He said to himself:

“Now, Cupid, under the disguise of a silly, foolish girl, show the power of a mighty god. Let Diana and all her coy, disdainful nymphs know that there is no heart so chaste but thy bow can

wound it, nor eyes so modest but thy firebrands — thy torches — can kindle them, nor thoughts so staid [sober] and stayed [unwavering] but thy shafts can make them wavering, weak, and wanton.

“Cupid, although he is — I am — a child, is no baby. I will make their pains my pastimes and pleasures, and I will so confound their loves by making them love people of their own so that they shall go mad in their desires, delight in their affections and passions, and practice only impossibilities.

“While I am truant from my mother, Venus, the goddess of sexual passion, I will practice some tyranny in these woods, and their exercise in foolish love shall be my excuse for running away.

“I will see whether fair faces are always chaste, and whether Diana’s virgins are uniquely and preeminently modest; or else I will expend both my shafts and shifts — I will exhaust all my arrows and all my wily tricks.”

Cupid then directly addressed the women reading this book:

“And then, ladies, if you see these dainty dames entrapped in love, say softly to yourselves, we may all love.”

Cupid exited.

Neptune stepped forward and said to himself:

“Do silly, foolish shepherds go about to deceive great Neptune by putting men’s clothing on women, and does Cupid, to make entertainment, deceive them all by putting a woman’s apparel on a god: himself?

“Then, Neptune, I who have taken various shapes to obtain love, don’t hesitate to practice some deceit to show thy deity, and, having often thrust thyself into the shape of beasts to deceive men, don’t be reluctant to adopt the shape of a shepherd to show thyself a god.”

Neptune became a horse to sleep with Ceres. (Her Greek name is Demeter.) He pursued her, but she did not want to be pursued, so she turned herself into a mare. The trick didn’t work because Neptune turned himself into a stallion. Their offspring was Arion, a horse that saved the life of Adrastus, King of Argos, during the War of the Seven Against Thebes.

Neptune became a ram to sleep with Theophane. She was so beautiful that many would-be lovers pursued her. Neptune carried her to the island of Crinissa. The would-be lovers pursued her even there, so Neptune turned Theophane into an ewe and himself into a ram. Their offspring was the ram with the golden fleece of Jason and the Argonauts fame.

Neptune became a steer to sleep with Arne. Her mother had been transformed into a mare, and so Arne was born a colt, but she later gained human form. While in the form of a bull, Neptune fathered Aeolus and Boeotia with her.

Neptune continued:

“Neptune cannot be overreached — be outwitted — by swains: lovers. He himself is subtle and cunning, and, if Diana will be overtaken by craft, then Cupid is wise.”

He did not think that Diana could be taken in by a trick, and he did not think that Cupid was wise.

Neptune continued:

“I will go into these woods and closely observe all that happens, and in the end, I will mar all.”

— 2.3 —

Alone, Rafe said to himself:

“Do you call this the seeking of fortunes, when one can find nothing but birds’ nests? I wish that I were out of these woods! For I shall have only wooden luck here.”

“Wooden luck” is much different from “golden luck.”

If something is “wooden,” it is dull, worthless, inferior.

Rafe continued:

“Here’s nothing but the shrieking of ill-omened owls, croaking of frogs, hissing of adders, barking of foxes, and walking of hags, aka witches or evil spirits in female form.

“But what are these?”

Some fairies entered the scene. They danced and played on musical instruments, and then they exited.

Rafe said:

“I will follow them. To hell I shall not go, for such fair faces never can have such hard fortunes.”

Of course, some virgins with fair faces were sacrificed to get Neptune’s favor.

Seeing someone approaching, Rafe said:

“What black boy is this?”

“Black” can mean 1) covered with soot and dirt, and/or 2) having black hair or a dark complexion.

The alchemist’s serving-boy, Peter, entered the scene.

Thinking that he was alone, Peter said to himself:

“What a life do I lead with my master! Nothing but the blowing of bellows, the beating of spirits, and the scraping of crosslets, aka crucibles.”

“Spirits” are four liquid essences used by alchemists.

Peter continued:

“It is a very secret science, for almost no one can understand the language of it: sublimation, almagation, calcination, rubification, incorporation, circination, cementation, albification, and fermentation, with as many terms unpossible and impossible to be uttered as the art to be encompassed and mastered.”

Rafe did not know these alchemical terms, and you, the readers, don’t need to know them, unless you have a need to learn alchemical jargon.

Actually, Peter did not entirely know these terms, either. “Almigation” should be “amalgamation.”

Rafe said to himself, “Let me cross myself. I never heard so many great devils in a little monkey’s mouth.”

He thought that Peter was saying the names of devils.

Peter then said to himself, “Then our instruments: crosslets, sublimatories, cucurbits, limbecks, decensors, vials, manual and mural, for imbibing and conbibing, bellows molificative and indurative.”

Rafe did not know these alchemical terms, and you, the readers, don’t need to know them, unless you have a need to learn alchemical jargon.

Rafe said to himself, “What language is this? Do they — do devils — speak so?”

Peter then said to himself, “Then our metals: saltpeter, vitriol, sal tartar, sal preparat, argoll, resagar, sal ammoniac, agrimony, lunary, brimstone, valerian, tartar alum, breemwort, glass, unslaked lime, chalk, ashes, hair, and what not, to make I don’t know what.”

An obsolete meaning of “metal” is “Material, matter, substance, fabric,” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Rafe did not know these alchemical terms, and you, the readers, don’t need to know them, unless you have a need to learn alchemical jargon.

So how did John Lyly know them? He read Reginald Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) and Chaucer’s “Canon’s Yeoman’s Tale” from *The Canterbury Tales*.

Rafe said to himself, “My hair begins to stand upright. I wish that the boy would make an end!”

Peter said to himself, “And yet such a beggarly science it is, and so strong on multiplication that the end is to have neither gold, nor wit, nor honesty.”

“Multiplication” is “making much out of little.”

Rafe said to himself:

“Then I am just of thy occupation.”

He stepped forward and said:

“What! Fellow, we are well met!”

Peter said, “Are we fellows? Upon what acquaintance?”

Fellows have something in common.

Rafe said, “Why, thou say the end of thy occupation is to have neither wit, nor money, nor honesty; and I think, at a blush — that is, at first glance — thou should be one of my occupation.”

“Thou are deceived,” Peter said. “My master is an alchemist.”

“What’s that?” Rafe said. “A man?”

Peter said:

“A little more than a man, and a hair’s breadth less than a god. He can make thy cap gold, and, by multiplication of one groat, he can make three old angels.”

A groat is a silver coin of little value. Angels are gold coins of much greater value than a groat.

During 1544-1551, the Great Debasement occurred under King Henry VIII. The amount of gold and silver in gold and silver was lowered.

According to Peter, the alchemist could take a little of something of value and turn it into a lot of something of value. The alchemist could take a little silver and turn it into much gold.

Peter continued:

“I have known him from the metal tag of a point to make a silver bowl of a pint.”

Points are laces with metal tags on each end.

According to Peter, the alchemist he serves can take a small metal tag and make from it a silver bowl that can hold one pint.

Alchemists tried to make much out of little. Their main goal was the creation of the philosopher’s stone, which could be used to turn lead into gold. The philosopher’s stone does not exist, and many alchemists were conmen who tried to convince suckers to give them money to buy expensive materials that they said they would use to create the philosopher’s stone. Alchemists are punished in the tenth ditch of the eighth circle of Dante’s *Inferno*. Alchemists tried to turn lead into gold, and in the *Inferno*, their healthy skin is changed into diseased skin. They have leprosy, which is fitting because sin is a kind of disease.

Rafe said:

“That makes thee have never a point; they are all turned into pots.”

Apparently, Peter the apprentice was like Rafe: lacking points to hold up his hose.

Rafe continued:

“But if he can do this, he shall be a god altogether.”

Peter said, “If thou have any gold to work on, thou are then made forever, for with one pound of gold he will go near to — that is, almost — pave ten acres of ground.”

“How might a man serve him and learn his cunning skill?” Rafe asked.

Peter said:

“Easily.

“First, seem to understand the terms, and especially note and remember these points:

“In our art there are four spirits.”

“Nay, I have done, if you work with devils!” Rafe said.

Peter said:

“Thou are gross and thick-witted.

“We call ‘spirits’ those things that are the grounds — the foundation — of our art, and, as it were, the metals more incorporative [capable of combining] for domination over other substances.

“The first spirit is quicksilver.”

“That is my spirit, for my silver is so quick that I have much ado and trouble to catch it; and when I have it, it is so nimble that I cannot hold it,” Rafe said. “I thought there was a devil in it.”

“The second spirit is *orpiment*,” Peter said.

“That’s no spirit, but a word to conjure a spirit,” Rafe said.

To conjure a spirit, one may *compliment* the spirit by recognizing what they are princes and monarchs of, as Christopher Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus did when he said these Latin words:

*“Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovahae! Ignei, aerii, aquatici spiritus, salvete! Orientis Princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephastophilis. Quod tu moraris. Per Jehovah, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephastophilis!”*

Translated, the Latin passage means this:

*“May the gods of Acheron be favorable to me! Farewell to the threefold spirit of Jehovah — the Trinity! Welcome, you spirits of fire, air, and water! Prince of the East; Belzebub, monarch of burning Hell; and Demogorgon, we ask that Mephastophilis may appear and rise.”*

The word “orp” means “nag,” however, so if the compliments don’t work, nagging at the spirits might work. Or one of the other meanings of “orp” may apply to spirit-summoning.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “orp” means, “To fret, to murmur discontentedly, to complain, to nag.” The first entry, however, is dated 1634.

But the first entry for the adjective “orpit,” meaning “Fretful, discontented,” is 1525.

“The third spirit is sal ammoniac,” Peter said.

“A proper word,” Rafe said.

He may have been thinking of “demoniac.”

“The fourth spirit is brimstone,” Peter said.

Rafe said:

“That’s a stinking spirit. I thought there was some spirit in it because it burnt so blue.”

Brimstone is sulphur. When burned, it stinks and it produces a blue flame.

Rafe continued:

“For my mother would often tell me that when the candle burnt blue, there was some ill spirit in the house, and now I perceive it was the spirit brimstone.”

“Thou can remember these four spirits?” Peter asked.

“Let me alone — leave it to me — to conjure them,” Rafe said.

Peter said:

“Now there are also seven bodies —”

The seven bodies are the seven metals known to the ancients: copper, gold, iron, lead, mercury, silver, and tin.

Peter then said:

“— but here comes my master.”

The alchemist, who was poorly dressed, entered the scene and stood apart from Rafe and Peter.

“This is a beggar,” Rafe said.

“No,” Peter said. “Such cunning, wise men must disguise themselves as though there were nothing — no special knowledge — in them, for otherwise they shall be compelled to work for princes, and so be constrained and forced to betray and reveal their secrets.”

“I don’t like his attire, but I am enamored of his art,” Rafe said.

The alchemist said to himself, “An ounce of silver limed, as much of crude mercury, of spirits four, being tempered with the bodies seven, by multiplying of it ten times, comes for one pound eight thousand pounds, provided that I may have only beechen coals: coals made from burning beechwood.”

The alchemist was possibly talking about turning one pound of silver into eight thousand pounds — if only he could get the right materials.

Perhaps the alchemist had wanted to be overheard.

“Is it possible?” asked Rafe, who had overheard the alchemist.

“It is more certain than certainty,” Peter said.

“I’ll tell thee one secret: I stole a silver thimble,” Rafe said. “Do thou think that he will make it a pottle pot: a two-quart pot?”

Peter said:

“A pottle pot? Nay, I dare assure thou that he will make it a whole cupboard of silver-plated dishes. Why, from the quintessence of a leaden plummet — a sinker on a fishing line — he has made twenty dozen silver spoons.

“Look at him. Look at how he studies and thinks in his mind. I dare to bet my life that he is now casting about and considering how he may make golden bracelets from his breath, for often he has made silver drops — silver earrings or silver pendants — from smoke.”

“What do I hear?” Rafe asked, incredulous. “What are you telling me?”

“Did thou never hear how Jupiter came in a golden shower to Danae?” Peter asked.

“I remember that tale,” Rafe said.

Jupiter lusted after the mortal maiden Danae. The gods are shape-shifters, and Jupiter assumed the form of a shower of gold, passed through the roof of her prison and impregnated her. She gave birth to the hero Perseus.

Peter said:

“That shower my master made from a spoonful of tartar alum, but with the fire of blood and the corrosive acid of the air, he is able to make nothing infinite.”

No, the alchemist cannot make an infinite amount of something out of nothing.

Yes, the alchemist is able to make an infinite amount of nothing out of nothing.

Peter continued:

“But whist — hush! He sees us.”

The alchemist came forward and asked, “What! Peter, do you loiter, knowing that every minute increases our mine: our hoard?”

“I was glad to take air, for the metal came so fast that I feared my face would have been turned to silver,” Peter said.

Alchemist pointed to Rafe and asked, “But what stripling is this?”

“One who is desirous to learn your craft,” Peter said.

“Craft, sir boy?” the alchemist said. “You must call it a mystery.”

A craft is a trade. A mystery is a craft that involves much secrecy.

“All is one,” Rafe said. “It is the same thing: a crafty mystery, and a mystical craft.”

“Can thou take pains?” the alchemist asked.

“Take pains” can mean 1) be conscientious, or 2) endure suffering.

“Infinite,” Rafe said.

“But thou must be sworn to be secret, and then I will entertain — hire — thee,” the alchemist said.

By “be sworn,” the alchemist meant for Rafe to take an oath not to reveal alchemical secrets.

Rafe, who understood “swear” to mean “utter profanity,” said, “Although I am a poor fellow, I can swear as well as the best man in the shire. But, sir, I much marvel that you, being so cunning, should be so ragged.”

The alchemist said:

“O my child, gryphs — griffins, which are part eagle and part lion — make their nests of gold, although their coats are feathers, and we feather our nests and enrich ourselves with diamonds, although our garments are made only of coarse woolen frieze.



“If thou knew the secret of this science, the cunning knowledge would make thee so proud that thou would disdain the outward pomp.”

Peter said to Rafe, “My master is so ravished with his art that we many times go supperless to bed, for he will make gold of his bread, and such is the drought of his desire that we all wish our very guts were gold.”

The “drought of his desire” is the lack of what he desires: food.

If their guts were made of gold and not of living flesh, they would not feel hunger.

“I have good fortune to alight upon such a master,” Rafe said.

The alchemist said, “When in the depth of my skill, I determine to try the uttermost of my art, I am dissuaded by the gods. Otherwise, I would dare to undertake to make the fire, as it flames, gold; the wind, as it blows, silver; the water, as it runs, lead; the earth, as it stands, iron; the sky, brass; and men’s thoughts, firm metals and mettles.”

“I must bless myself, and I must marvel at you,” Rafe said.

“Come in, and thou shall see all,” the alchemist said.

The alchemist exited.

“I follow, I run, I fly,” Rafe said. “They say my father has a golden thumb. You shall see me have a golden body.”

A proverb stated, “An honest miller has a golden thumb.”

Possibly, the proverb means that honest millers are as rare as golden thumbs.

But possibly, if the proverb is “An ‘honest’ miller has a golden thumb,” then the miller keeps his thumb on the scale when measuring meal.

Chaucer wrote about the miller in *The Canterbury Tales*, “And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.”

Also possibly, a golden thumb may be a useful thumb. Possibly, Rafe’s father, a miller, rubbed meal between his thumb and index finger to test its quality. Because he was skillful as a miller, he could make his living honestly without resorting to put his thumb on the scale.

Rafe exited.

Alone, Peter said to himself:

“I am glad of this, for now I shall have leisure to run away. Alchemy is such a bald — paltry and unproductive — art as never was!

“Let the alchemist keep his new serving-man, for he shall never see his old serving-man again. May God shield and protect me from blowing gold to nothing, with a strong imagination to make nothing anything!

“Blowing gold to nothing” means to spend labor and materials on an activity that yields nothing of value.

Fairies can be malicious or benevolent, and so can people.

The fairies had danced and sang; providing good entertainment is benevolent.

Peter had done much lying in order to get Rafe to become the alchemist's new serving-man, and that was malicious.

— 2.4 —

Alone, the disguised Galatea said to herself:

“How are you now, Galatea?”

“Miserable Galatea, who, having put on the apparel of a boy, thou cannot also put on the mind of a boy.

“O fair Melebeus!”

This Melebeus was the disguised Phillida, who had taken her father's name.

Galatea had also adopted her father's name: Tityrus.

Galatea continued:

“Aye, too fair, and therefore, I fear, too proud.”

Galatea said about herself:

“Wouldn't it have been better for thee to have been a sacrifice to Neptune than a slave to Cupid? To die for thy country than to live in thy fancy? To be a sacrifice than a lover?”

“Oh, I wish that when I hunted his — Melebeus' — eye with my heart, he might have seen my heart with his eyes!

“Why did Nature to him, a boy, give a face so fair, and why did Nature to me, a virgin, give a fortune so hard?”

“I will now use for the distaff the bow and play at quoits abroad — out of doors — I who was accustomed to sew in my sampler at home.”

A distaff is used in spinning thread, typically designated as women's work.

Quoits is a game similar to horseshoes.

A sampler is a piece of embroidery that illustrates the embroiderer's skill.

She continued:

“It may be, Galatea —

“— foolish Galatea, what may be? Nothing.

“Let me follow him into the woods, and thou, sweet Venus, be my guide!”

— 2.5 —

Alone, the disguised Phillida said to herself:

“Poor Phillida, curse the time of thy birth and the splendiddness of thy beauty, the inappropriateness of thy apparel, and the untamedness of thy affections and desires.

“Are thou no sooner in the clothing of a boy but thou must be enamored of and in love with a boy?”

“What shall thou do when what best pleases thee also most discontents thee?”

“Go into the woods, watch the good times, watch his best moods, and transgress in love a little of thy modesty.”

“I will ... I dare not.”

“Thou must ... I cannot.”

“Then pine in thine own peevishness and foolishness.”

“I will not ... I will.”

“Ah, Phillida, do something, nay, anything, rather than live thus! Well, what I will do, I myself don't know, but what I ought to do — suppress my feelings of love — I know too well. And so I go, resolute either to betray and reveal my love or to suffer shame.”

The shame would be not to pursue the one she loved.

She exited.

## CHAPTER 3 (GALATEA)

— 3.1 —

Alone, the nymph Telusa said to herself:

“What is this now?”

“What new conceits and ideas and fancies, what strange contraries, breed in thy mind? Has thy Diana become a Venus, have thy chaste thoughts turned into wanton looks, has thy conquering modesty turned into a captive and enthralled imagination?”

She was asking herself if she now worshipped Venus, sexually active goddess of sexual passion, instead of Diana, virgin goddess of the hunt.

Telusa continued:

“Do thou begin with piralis to die in the air and live in the fire, to leave the sweet delight of hunting and to follow the hot desire of love?”

A piralis is a mythological bird that lives in fire and languishes out of it.

Telusa continued:

“O Telusa, these words are unfit for thy sex, you being a female virgin, but they are apt for thy affections and passions, you being a lover. And can there in years so young, in education so strict, in vows so holy, and in a heart so chaste, enter either a strong desire or a wish or a wavering thought of love?”

“Can Cupid’s firebrands — his torches — quench the flames of Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, and can Cupid’s feeble shafts headed with feathers pierce deeper than Diana’s arrows headed with steel?”

Vesta’s flames were supposed to be kept burning eternally in her temple. Vesta and her female devotees who tended the eternal fire were virgins. In fact, her female devotees were known as Vestal Virgins.

Telusa continued:

“Break thy bow, Telusa, you who seek to break thy vow, and let those hands that aimed to hit the wild hart — wild deer — scratch out those eyes that have wounded thy tame heart.

“O vain and wholly empty and naked name of chastity, which is made out to be eternal and perishes by time, which is made out to be holy and is infected by fancy, and which is made out to be divine and is made mortal by folly!

“Virgins’ hearts, I perceive, are not unlike cotton trees, whose fruit is so hard in the bud that it resounds like steel, and, being ripe, pours forth nothing but wool; and virgins’ thoughts are like the leaves of lunary, which, the further they grow from the sun, the sooner they are scorched with his beams.”

Lunary is a plant also known as moonwort, which flourishes in the shade and dies in hot, direct sunshine.

Virgins' hearts may receive protection (may be hard and distant), but still they eventually will become soft and yielding.

In other words: Virgins will eventually fall in love.

Telusa continued:

“O Melebeus, because thou art fair, must I be fickle and violate my vow of chastity because I see thy virtue? Fond, foolish girl whom I am, to think of love! Nay, it is a vain profession and vocation that I follow, to disdain love!”

“But here comes Eurota. I must now put on a red mask and blush, lest she perceive my pale face and laugh.”

She needed to pretend to have a red face from the exertions of hunting.

Eurota entered the scene.

She said:

“Telusa, Diana told me to hunt you out, and she said that you don't care to hunt with her; but if you follow any other game than the game she has roused to be hunted, your punishment shall be to bend all our bows and weave all our bowstrings: You shall string all our bows.”

Bowstrings were made of hemp, flax, or silk. Individual strings were twisted or woven together to form a bowstring.

Eurota then asked:

“Why do you look so pale, so sad, so wildly?”

“Eurota, the game I follow is the thing I flee,” Telusa said. “My strange disease is my chief desire.”

Eurota said:

“I am no Oedipus to expound riddles, and I muse how thou canst be Sphinx to utter them.”

The Sphinx is a mythological creature with the head of a human and the body of a lion. In Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex*, the Sphinx, which has the head of a woman, asks Oedipus this riddle: What goes on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening? If Oedipus cannot answer this riddle correctly, the Sphinx will kill him. Fortunately, Oedipus does answer the riddle correctly: Man, who goes on hands and knees as a crawling baby, two legs as a healthy adult, and two legs and a cane as an old person.

Eurota continued:

“But I ask thee, Telusa, to tell me what ails thee. What is wrong?”

“If thou art sick, this ground has leaves to heal thee.

“If thou art melancholy, here are pastimes to use to divert yourself.

“If thou art peevish and foolish, wit must wean it, or time, or counsel.

“If thou art in love (for I have heard of such a beast called Love), it shall be cured.”

“Wit must wean it” means that intelligence must cure you of your foolishness.

Eurota then asked:

“Why do thou blush, Telusa?”

Telusa answered:

“To hear thee in reckoning my pains to recite thine own.

“I saw, Eurota, how amorously you glanced your eye on the fair boy in the white coat, and how cunningly, now that you would have some talk of love, you metaphorically hit me in the teeth and reproach me with love.”

Galatea wore a white coat as part of her disguise.

Eurota said:

“I confess that I am in love, and yet I swear that I don’t know what it is. I feel my thoughts unknit and disjointed, my eyes unstayed [wandering] and unstaed [not sober], my heart I don’t know how affected or infected, my sleeps broken and full of dreams, my waking hours sad and full of sighs, myself in all things unlike myself.

“If this is love, I wish that it had never been devised.”

“Thou have told what I am in uttering what thyself is,” Telusa said. “These are my passions, Eurota, my unbridled passions, my intolerable passions, which it would be as good for me to acknowledge and crave and seek counsel and advice as to deny and endure peril.”

“How did it take you first, Telusa?” Eurota asked.

Telusa answered:

“By the eyes, my wanton eyes, which conceived the picture of his face and hanged it on the very strings of my heart.

“O fair Melebeus! O fond Telusa!”

Of course, Melebeus is the disguised Phillida.

Telusa then asked:

“But how did it take you, Eurota?”

Eurota answered:

“By the ears: Tityrus’ sweet words have sunk so deep into my head that the remembrance of his wit and intelligence has bereaved me of my wisdom.

“O eloquent Tityrus!”

Of course, Tityrus is the disguised Galatea.

Eurota continued:

“O credulous Eurota!

“But quiet, here comes Ramia. But let her not hear us talk. We will withdraw a little distance away and hear her talk.”

They concealed themselves.

Ramia entered the scene.

She said to herself, “I who have lost myself have been sent to seek others.”

Eurota whispered to Telusa, “You shall see that Ramia has also bitten on a love-leaf and fallen in love.”

Thinking herself to be alone, Ramia then said:

“Can there be no heart so chaste but love can wound it? Can there be no vows so holy but affection and love can violate them?”

“Virtue, thou art vain, and thou, chastity, art just a byword and object of scorn, when you both are subject to love, of all things the most abject and debased.

“If Love is a god, why shouldn’t lovers be virtuous? Love is a god, and lovers are virtuous.”

Cupid is also known as Love.

Coming forward with Telusa, Eurota said, “Indeed, Ramia, if lovers were not virtuous, then thou would be vicious and given to vice.”

“What!” Ramia said. “Have you come so near me?”

She was surprised that they had been so near her while she thought she was speaking to herself. Of course, she was worried that they had overheard her.

“I think we came near you when we said you loved,” Telusa said.

“Come near me” means “understand me” as well as “come close to me.”

Eurota said:

“Tush, Ramia, it is too late to recall it; to repent it would be a shame.

“Therefore, I ask thee to tell us what is love.”

Ramia said:

“If only I myself felt this infection, I would then take upon me the definition, but, since this infection — love — is incident to so many, I dare not myself describe it.

“But we will all talk of that in the woods. Diana storms and rages that, sending one nymph to seek another, she loses all her nymphs.

“Servia, of all the nymphs the shyest and most reserved, loves excessively, and exclaims against Diana, honors Venus, detests Vesta, and makes a common scorn of virtue.”

Vesta is the virgin goddess of the hearth.

Ramia continued:

“Clymene, whose stately looks seemed to amaze and confound the greatest lords, stoops, yields, and fawns on the strange boy in the woods. I myself (with blushing I speak it) am thrall to — that is, captivated by — that boy, that fair boy, that beautiful boy!”

Telusa said, “What have we here? All of us are in love? No other food than fancy? No, no, she shall not have the fair boy.”

“Nor shall you, Telusa,” Eurota said.

“Nor shall you, Eurota,” Ramia said.

Each nymph believed that the other nymphs loved the boy she loved.

Telusa said, “I love Melebeus, and my deserts shall be answerable to my desires. I will forsake Diana for him. I will die for him!”

Of course, Melebeus is the disguised Phillida.

Ramia said:

“So says Clymene, and she says she will have him. I don’t care.

“My sweet Tityrus, although he seems proud, I impute it to childishness, who, being yet scarcely out of swath-clouts — infant swaddling clothes — cannot understand these deep conceits and ideas. I love him.”

“So do I, and I will have him!” Eurota said.

Telusa and Clymene loved the disguised Phillida, and Eurota and Ramia loved the disguised Galatea. Servia also loved someone.

Telusa said:

“Immodest that we all are, unfortunate that we all are likely to be, shall virgins begin to wrangle for love and become wanton in their thoughts, in their words, and in their actions?”

“O divine Love, who are therefore called divine because thou overreach and overpower the wisest, conquer the chastest, and do all things both unlikely and impossible, because thou are Love!

“Thou make the bashful impudent, thou make the wise fond and foolish, thou make the chaste wanton and lascivious, and thou work contraries to our reach, because thou thyself are beyond reason.”

Love does things that humans cannot understand because Love is beyond reason.

Love is not irrational, but it is non-rational.

Eurota said:

“Talk no more, Telusa; your words wound.

“Ah, I wish that I were not a woman!”

“I wish that Tityrus were not a boy!” Ramia said.



“I wish that Telusa were nobody!” Telusa said.

They exited.

— 3.2 —

Phillida and Galatea, both disguised as young men, talked together.

The disguised Phillida said, “It is a pity that Nature did not make you a woman, since you have so fair a face, so lovely a countenance, and so modest a behavior.”

The disguised Galatea replied, “There is a tree in Tylos whose nuts have shells like fire, and being cracked, the kernel is just water.”

These nuts are not what they seem to be, and neither is the disguised Galatea.

“What a toy — an idle fancy — is it to tell me of that tree, being nothing to the purpose?” Phillida said, not understanding. “I say it is a pity you are not a woman.”

“I would not wish to be a woman unless it were because thou are a man,” Galatea said.

“I do not wish to be a woman, for then I should not love thee, for I have sworn never to love a woman,” Phillida said.

“That is a strange humor — whim — in so pretty a youth, and it is in accordance with mine, for I myself will never love a woman,” Galatea said.

“It would be a shame if a maiden should be a suitor (a thing hated in that sex), and that then thou should decline to be her devoted servant, lover, and admirer,” Phillida said.

“If it is a shame in me, it can be no commendation in you, for you yourself are of that mind — you have made the same decision that I have,” Galatea said.

Phillida said:

“Suppose I were a virgin (I blush in supposing myself one), and that under the clothing of a boy were the person and body of a maiden.

“If I should utter my affection with sighs, manifest my sweet love by my salt tears, and prove my loyalty unspotted and my griefs intolerable, wouldn’t then that fair face pity this true heart?”

Galatea said, “Admit [Suppose] that I were as you would have me suppose that you are, and that I should with entreaties, prayers, oaths, bribes, and whatever can be invented in love desire your favor. Would you then yield your love to me?”

“Bah, you come in with ‘admit,’” Phillida said.

“And you come in with ‘suppose,’” Galatea said.

Phillida said to herself, “What doubtful — ambiguous — speeches these are! I fear that he is as I am: a maiden.”

Maidens are young female virgins.

Galatea said to herself, “What dread rises in my mind! I fear that the boy is as I am: a maiden.”

Phillida said to herself, "Bah, it cannot be. His voice shows the contrary."

Galatea said to herself, "Yet I do not think it, for he would then have blushed."

"Have you any sisters?" Phillida asked.

"If I had only one sister, my brother must necessarily have two sisters," Galatea said. "But I ask, do you have a sister?"

"My father had only one daughter, and therefore I could have no sister," Phillida said.

Galatea said to herself, "Aye, me! Alas! He is as I am, for his speeches are as mine are."

Phillida said to herself, "What shall I do? Either he is subtle and cunning, or my female sex is simple and not astute."

Galatea said to herself, "I have known several of Diana's nymphs to be enamored of and in love with him, yet he has rejected all of them, either because he is too proud and disdains them, or because he is too childish and young to understand them, or because he knows himself to be a virgin."

Chances are excellent that she meant female virgin.

Phillida said to herself:

"I am in a quandary. Diana's nymphs have followed him, and he has rejected them, either knowing too well the beauty of his own face or that he himself is of the same shape and mold."

If the disguised Galatea were to be the same shape and mold as Diana's nymphs, she would have a female form.

Phillida said to herself:

"I will once again test him."

Phillida then said to the disguised Galatea:

"You promised me in the woods that you would love me before all of Diana's nymphs."

"Aye, as long as you would love me before all of Diana's nymphs," Galatea replied.

"Can you prefer a fond, foolish boy as I am before as fair ladies as they are?" Phillida asked.

"Why shouldn't I as well as you?" Galatea asked.

"Come, let us go into the grove, and make much of each other, who cannot tell what to think about each other," Phillida said.

They went into the grove.

Their speeches had made it clear that each of them was a young woman. If they seemed obtuse, it is because they did not want to accept the truth.

The alchemist and Rafe talked together.

“Rafe, my serving-boy has run away,” the alchemist said. “I trust thou will not run after him.”

Rafe said to himself, “I wish that I had a pair of wings so that I might fly after him!”

The alchemist continued, “My serving-boy was the veriest — the most thorough-going — thief, he was the most arrant — most downright — liar, and he was the vilest swearer in the world, but otherwise he was the best boy in the world. He has stolen my apparel and all my money, and he has forgotten nothing except to bid me farewell.”

“That I will not forget,” Rafe said. “Farewell, master!”

He turned to go.

“Why, thou have not yet seen the end of my art,” the alchemist said.

By “end,” the alchemist meant “outcome.”

Rafe said:

“I wish that I had not known the beginning.

“Didn’t you promise me that out of my silver thimble you would make a whole cupboard of silver-plated plates, and didn’t you promise me that out of a Spanish needle you would build a silver steeple?”

The alchemist said:

“Aye, Rafe, I did promise those things.

“The fortune — the success — of this art consists in the precise measure of the fire, for if there is a coal too much or a spark too little, if the fire is a little too hot or a thought too soft and moderate, then all our labor is in vain.

“Besides, they who blow on the fire must beat time with their breaths, as musicians do with their breasts and breaths as they keep time while singing, because there must be a true harmony of the metals, the fire, and the workers.”

Rafe said, “Nay, if you must weigh your fire by ounces, and take measure of a man’s blast — that is, his breath — you may then make a wedge of gold from a dram of wind, and from the shadow of one shilling make another, as long as you have an organist to tune your temperatures.”

“To weigh the fire and measure the wind” was proverbial for something impossible to do.

We can measure quantities of grain and appropriately mete them out to people, but no one can do that with wind.

An organist can play an organ, and in this context, an organist can control his breathing organs.

“So is it, and often does it happen, that the just proportion of the fire and all things concur,” the alchemist said.

Rafe said:

“Con-cur? Con-dog!”

In other words: Concur? Don't con me! Con a dog!

Rafe then said:

"I will go away."

"Then go away!" the alchemist said.

The alchemist exited.

An astronomer entered the scene, gazing up at the sky, with an almanac in his hands. He and Rafe did not notice each other at first.

Rafe said about the astronomer:

"An art — so you say — that one multiplies so much all day that he lacks money to buy food at night?"

Seeing the astronomer, he said:

"But what have we yonder? What devout man?"

The astronomer was holding a book, many of which were devotional.

Rafe continued saying to himself:

"He will never speak until he is urged. I will greet him."

He then said out loud:

"Sir, there lies a purse under your feet. If I thought it were not yours, I would pick it up."

A purse is a container for money. In this society, men and woman had money containers that they called purses.

This astronomer was also an astrologer, and he would claim that nothing could happen that he did not know about ahead of time, but he had not foreknown that he would drop his purse and money.

The astronomer picked up his purse and asked, "Don't thou know that I was calculating the nativity — the horoscope — of Alexander's great horse?"

Ah, he had an excuse: He was busy with his astrological calculations or he would have stopped his purse from falling earlier.

Bucephalus was a beautiful horse, but no one could ride him. The young Alexander the Great noticed that Bucephalus was afraid of its own shadow. Alexander therefore had the horse face the sun as he trained it. Soon, Bucephalus lost its fear of its own shadow and became Alexander's war horse.

It's difficult to see why Alexander's great horse would need its nativity calculated. Horoscopes foretell the future. Bucephalus' future was to continue to be dead.

"Why, what are you?" Rafe asked.

"I am an astronomer."

“What! One of those who make almanacs?” Rafe asked.

Almanacs contained weather predictions and much astronomical and astrological data.

The astronomer said:

“*Ipsissimus*. The very one.

“I can tell the minute of thy birth, the moment of thy death, and the manner how thee will die. I can tell thee what weather shall be between this moment and *octogessimus octavus mirabilis annus*.”

The *mirabilis annus* — the miracle year — was '88, aka 1588. Astrologers forecast disasters and catastrophes for that year, but 1588 was the year the English navy defeated the Spanish Armada.

The astronomer continued:

“When I want to, I can set a trap for the sun, catch the moon with lime-twigs, and go a-batfowling for stars.”

Twigs smeared with sticky lime were used to catch birds.

In batfowling, bats were dazzled with light and caught at night.

The astronomer continued:

“I can tell thee things past and things to come, and with my cunning measure I can tell thee how many yards of clouds are beneath the sky.”

How many yards of clouds are beneath the sky? None. Clouds are in the sky.

The astronomer continued:

“Nothing can happen that I do not foresee; nothing shall.”

“I hope, sir, you are no more than a god,” Rafe said.

“I can bring the twelve signs out of their zodiacs and hang them up at taverns,” the astronomer said.

Many taverns were named after signs of the zodiac and celestial bodies.

“I ask you, sir, to tell me what you cannot do,” Rafe said, “for I perceive there is nothing as easy for you to encompass as impossibilities. But what are those signs?”

The astronomer said:

“As a man should say, signs that govern the body.”

According to astrologers, each zodiac sign governed — affected — a part of the human body.

The astronomer continued:

“The ram governs the head.”

“That is the worst sign for the head,” Rafe said.

“Why?” the astronomer asked.

“Because it is a sign of an ill ewe,” Rafe said.

On their heads, rams have horns, which is the sign of a cuckold: a man with an unfaithful wife. Here, the unfaithful wife is an ill ewe.

An ill ewe can make you an ill you if you are married to one.

“Bah, that sign must be there,” the astronomer said. “Then the Bull for the throat, Capricornus for the knees.”

Rafe said:

“I will hear no more signs if they are all such desperate and discouraging signs.

“But seeing you are — I don’t know what to call you — shall I serve you? I would like to serve you.”

“I accept thee,” the astronomer said.

Rafe said, “I am happy! For now I shall reach lofty thoughts, and count how many drops of water go into the greatest shower of rain. You shall see me catch the moon in the ’clips like a coney in a purse-net.”

The ’clips is 1) an eclipse, and 2) pincers or forceps.

A coney is a rabbit, and a purse-net is a net with a drawstring opening. The net was used to trap rabbits.

“I will teach thee the golden number, the epact, and the prime,” the astronomer said.

Rafe did not know these astronomical terms, and you, the readers, don’t need to know them, unless you have a need to learn astronomical jargon.

Rafe said:

“I will meddle no more with the numbering — the measuring — of gold, for multiplication is a miserable action.

“Please tell me, sir, what weather shall we have this hour in threescore years — in sixty years?”

The astronomer said:

“That I must cast by our judicials astronomical.”

Judicials astronomical are a system for making astrological predictions based on the positions and influences of heavenly bodies.

The astronomer continued:

“Therefore, come in with me, and thou shall see every wrinkle in my astrological wisdom, and I will make the heavens as plain to thee as the highway.

A wrinkle is 1) an adroit — clever — action, or 2) a crafty trick.

The astronomer continued:

“Thy cunning shall sit cheek by jowl with the sun’s chariot.

“Then shall thou see what a base thing it is to have others’ thoughts creep on the ground, when thine shall be stitched to the stars.”

Rafe said, “Then I shall be translated from this mortality.”

If Rafe were to ride in the sun-chariot beside Helios or Apollo, he would be unlikely to be mortal.

The human condition is that we are mortal, and we will die.

“Thy thoughts shall be metamorphosed and made hail-fellows — good friends — with the gods,” the astronomer said.

Rafe said:

“O Lady Fortune!

“I feel my very brains moralized, and as it were, a certain contempt of earthly actions has crept into my mind by an ethereal and sublime contemplation.

“Come, let us go in.”

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one definition of “moralize” is “To interpret morally or symbolically; to explain the moral meaning of (an event, etc.).” Another meaning is “To make moral.”

Apparently, Rafe is saying that his brains have become moral, and he can look at earthly actions and find them contemptible.

If he finds all earthly actions contemptible, his education is incomplete, as human beings are capable of much good as well as of much evil.

They exited.

— 3.4 —

The goddess Diana and the nymphs Telusa, Eurota, Ramia, and Larissa talked together.

Diana said:

“What news have we here, ladies? Are all my nymphs in love? Have Diana’s nymphs become Venus’ wanton women? Is it a shame to be chaste because you are amiable? Or must you necessarily be amorous because you are fair and beautiful?”

A proverb stated, “Beauty and chastity (honesty) seldom meet.”

Diana continued:

“O Venus, if this is thy spite, I will requite it with more than hate. Well shall thou know what it is to drib — to shoot poorly — thine arrows up and down Diana’s leas — Diana’s meadows.”

The arrows belonged to Venus’ son: Cupid.

Diana continued:

“There is an unknown nymph who wanders up and down these woods, who I suspect has been the weaver of these woes. I saw her slumbering by the brook-side. Go search for her and bring her here.

“If you find upon her shoulder a burn, it is Cupid; if you find any print on her back like a leaf, it is Medea; if you find any picture on her left breast like a bird, it is Calypso.”

Venus was jealous of the mortal woman Psyche, and she sent Cupid to kill her, but Cupid fell in love with the mortal Psyche, and he made a home for her and slept with her on the condition that she never see his face. Curious, Psyche looked at his face by candlelight as he was sleeping, and some candlewax fell on him and burned him. He fled, and Psyche wandered the earth in search of him. After many trials, Psyche became immortal, and she and her husband, Cupid, had a daughter named Pleasure.

The story of Psyche and Cupid is told in *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius.

Medea was a witch who had much knowledge of medicinal herbs and of poisonous herbs. She helped Jason of the Argonauts fame to get the golden fleece.

The story of Medea and Jason is told in Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* and in Euripides' tragedy *Medea*.

Calypso was a goddess who kept Ulysses prisoner for seven years before allowing him to return to his home island of Ithaca.

The story of Calypso and Odysseus, aka Ulysses, is told in Homer's *Odyssey*.

Diana continued:

“Whoever it is, bring her here, and speedily bring her here.”

“I will go with speed,” Telusa said.

“Go, Larissa, and help her,” Diana said.

“I obey,” Larissa said.

Telusa and Larissa exited.

Diana said:

“Now, ladies, doesn't what makes my ears glow make your cheeks blush?”

A proverb stated, “When your ear tingles (burns), people are talking about you.”

Diana continued:

“Or can you remember without sobs that which Diana cannot think about without sighs?”

“What greater dishonor could happen to Diana, or to her nymphs' shame, than that there can be any time so idle that should make their heads so addled and confused?”

This society believed that leisure was conducive to falling in love.



Diana continued:

“Your chaste hearts, my nymphs, should resemble the onyx, which is hottest when it is whitest; and your thoughts, the more they are assaulted with desires, the less they should be affected. You should think that love is like Homer’s moly: a white leaf and a black root, a fair show and a bitter taste.”

In the *Odyssey*, Hermes gave Odysseus (his Roman name is Ulysses) the plant moly, which protected him against the goddess Circe, who attempted to transform him into a pig.

A proverb stated, “Beauty may have fair leaves yet bitter fruit.”

Diana continued:

“Of all trees the cedar is greatest and has the smallest seed; of all affections, love has the greatest name — the greatest reputation — and the least virtue.”

A proverb stated, “Of [From] little seeds grow great cedars (trees).”

Diana continued:

“Shall it be said, and shall Venus say it — nay, shall it be seen, and shall wantons see it — that Diana, the goddess of chastity, whose thoughts are always answerable to her vows, whose eyes never glanced on desire, and whose heart abates and blunts the point of Cupid’s arrows, shall have her virgins become unchaste in desires, immoderate in affection, and intemperate in love ... in foolish love ... in base love?”

“Eagles cast their evil feathers in the sun, but you cast your best desires upon a shadow.”

Some people in this society had heard the folk belief that old eagles fly high into the air so the sun would heat them and open their pores so the eagles could shed their feathers. The eagles dived into water, which renewed their feathers and made the eagles young again.

Diana continued:

“The Egyptian birds known as *ibes* lose their sweetness when they lose their sights, and virgins lose all their virtues with their unchaste thoughts.

“Diana calls ‘unchaste’ that which has either any show or any suspicion of lightness: unchastity.”

Women with light heels have legs that can easily be raised into the air for the missionary position.

Diana continued:

“O my dear nymphs, if you knew how loving thoughts stain lovely faces, you would be as careful to have your thoughts as unspotted as your face is beautiful.

“Cast before your eyes the loves of Venus’ trulls — promiscuous women — their fortunes, their fancies, their ends and fates. What else are they but Silenus’ pictures — outside, good things such as lambs and doves; inside, bad things such as apes and owls. These trulls, like Ixion, embrace clouds for Juno; they embrace the shadows of virtue instead of the substance of virtue.”

In ancient Greece, images of Silenus, the drunk and jovial companion of Bacchus, could be opened to reveal an image of gods. Silenus is often regarded as ugly, but his personality may be greatly preferred to those of the Olympian gods, many or all of whom were often petty, vindictive, and entirely capable of rape. Neptune, of course, required the sacrifice of a virgin every five years.

Better a drunk, jovial god than a petty, bloodthirsty god.

Ixion, the King of the Lapiths, who violated proper guest-host relations, was bound to a continually spinning fiery wheel in the Land of the Dead. Among his sins was attempting to rape Juno while he was one of Jupiter's guests. To prevent the rape, Jupiter made a cloud in the shape of Juno. Ixion coupled with it, and from this union came Imbros, aka Centaurus, who mated with mares and created the Centaurs, most of whom were wild.

A proverb stated, "Lose not the substance for the shadow."

Diana continued:

"The eagle's feathers consume the feathers of all others, and love's desire corrupts all other virtues."

Some people in this society believed that if an eagle's feathers were placed near other feathers, the eagle's feathers would destroy the other feathers.

Diana continued:

"I blush, ladies, that you, having been heretofore patient and enduring of labors, should now become apprentices to idleness and use the pen for sonnets, not the needle for samplers.

"And how and where is your love placed? Upon pelting, paltry boys, perhaps base of birth, without doubt weak of discretion.

"'Aye, but they are fair.'

"O ladies, do your eyes begin to love colors — to love appearances, which may be false — whose hearts were accustomed to loathe them? Has Diana's chase — Diana's hunting ground — become Venus' court? And are your holy vows turned to hollow thoughts?"

Ramia said, "Madam, if love were not a thing beyond reason, we might then give a reason for our doings; but so divine is his force that it works effects as contrary to that we wish as unreasonable against that we ought."

"Lady, we are so unacquainted and unfamiliar with the passions of love that we can neither describe them nor bear them," Eurota said.

Diana said:

"Foolish girls, how willing you are to follow that which you should flee!

"But here comes Telusa."

Telusa and Larissa returned with Cupid.

Telusa said, "We have brought the disguised nymph, and we have found on his shoulder Psyche's burn, and he confesses that he is Cupid."

Diana said to Cupid, “How are you now, sir? Are you caught? Are you Cupid?”

Cupid replied, “Thou shall see, Diana, that I dare confess myself to be Cupid.”

Diana said:

“And thou shall see, Cupid, that I will show myself to be Diana — that is, I am the conqueror of thy loose and untamed appetites. Did thy mother, Venus, under the color — the disguise — of a nymph, send thee hither to wound my nymphs? Does she add craft to her malice, and, mistrusting her deity, practice deceit? Is there no place but my groves? Are there no persons but my nymphs?”

“Cruel and unkind Venus, who spites only chastity, thou shall see that Diana’s power shall revenge thy policy — thy trickery and thy scheming — and tame this pride.

“As for thee, Cupid, I will break thy bow and burn thine arrows, bind thy hands, clip thy wings, and fetter thy feet. Thou who fatten and feed others with hopes shall be fed with wishes, and thou who bind others with golden thoughts shall be bound with golden fetters. Venus’ rods are made of roses; Diana’s rods are made of briars.”

Rods are canes.

Venus and Cupid sometimes wore chaplets made of roses.

Hawthorn is associated with the nightingale and with Diana: with true love and with chastity.

Diana continued:

“Let Venus, that great goddess, ransom Cupid, that little god.

“These ladies here, whom thou — Cupid — have infected with foolish love, shall both tread on thee and triumph over thee. Thine own arrow shall be shot into thine own bosom, and thou shall be enamored, not on Psyches, but on Circes.”

Psyche was beautiful, loving, and mortal but became immortal.

The goddess Circe transformed Ulysses’ men into pigs.

Diana continued:

“I will teach thee what it is to displease Diana, distress her nymphs, and disturb her game.”

Her “game” is her entertainment, and it is the animals she hunts.

Cupid said, “Diana, what I have done cannot be undone, but what you mean to do shall be undone. Venus has some gods who are her friends, and Cupid shall have all.”

In other words: Cupid shall have the victory, and he shall have all the other gods on his side.

Diana replied:

“Are you prating and chattering without purpose? I will bridle and curb thy tongue and thy power, and in spite of my own thoughts I will set thee a task every day which, if thou do not finish it, thou shall feel the smart. Thou shall be treated as Diana’s slave, not Venus’ son. All the world shall see that I will treat thee like a captive, and I will show that I am a conqueror.”

She then said to her nymphs:

“Come, bring him in, so that we may devise apt punishments for his proud presumptions.”

Eurota said to Cupid, “We will plague you as a little god.”

Telusa said to Cupid, “We will never pity thee, although thou are a god.”

Ramia said to Cupid, “Nor will I pity thee.”

Larissa said to Cupid, “Nor will I pity thee.”

They exited.

## CHAPTER 4 (GALATEA)

### — 4.1 —

An augur, Melebeus, Tityrus, and two countrymen met together.

Augurs foretell the future, and they prepare sacrifices.

The augur said:

“This is the day on which you must satisfy Neptune and save yourselves. Call together your fair daughters, and for a sacrifice take the most beautiful, for it is better to offer a virgin than to suffer ruin.”

A proverb stated, “Better one die (perish, suffer) than all.”

The sacrifice was a bribe to the god Neptune: Take this one life and protect the lives of the rest of us.

So said the augur.

Asshole.

If a god is not good, then that god ought not to be worshipped. The word “worshipped” means “adored.”

Why give such a god a priest? Or an augur? Or a sacrifice?

The augur continued:

“If you think it against natural affection and love to sacrifice your children, think it also against sense to destroy your country. If you imagine Neptune pitiless to desire such a prey, confess yourselves perverse to deserve such a punishment.

“You see this tree, this fatal tree, whose leaves, although they glitter like gold, yet the tree threatens grief to beautiful virgins.

“To this tree the most beautiful virgin must be bound until the monster Agar carries her away, and, if the monster does not come, then assure yourselves that the most beautiful virgin is concealed; and then your country shall be destroyed.

“Therefore, consult with yourselves, not as fathers of children, but as favorers of your country. Let Neptune have his right — have what is due to him — if you wish to have your quiet.

“Thus I have warned you to be careful, and I would wish you to be wise, knowing that who has the fairest daughter has the greatest fortune, in losing one to save all. And so I depart to provide ceremonies for the sacrifice, and I command you to bring the sacrifice.”

The augur exited.

Both Melebeus and Tityrus had beautiful daughters they had disguised and hidden. Neither wanted his own daughter to be a sacrifice to Neptune. If someone’s daughter had to die, each father preferred that she be the other father’s daughter.

Melebeus said, “They say, Tityrus, that you have a beautiful daughter. If it is true, then don’t lie, for you shall be a fortunate father because it is a thing holy to preserve one’s country, and it is honorable to be the cause.”

Tityrus replied, “Indeed, Melebeus, I have heard you boast that you had a fair daughter than whom no one was more beautiful. I hope you are not so full of care for a child that you will be lacking regard for your country, and I hope you will not add so much to natural affection and love that you will detract from wisdom and impair your reasoning.”

Melebeus said:

“I must confess that I had a daughter, and I know that you have a daughter — but alas! My child’s cradle was her grave, and her swath-clout — her swaddling cloth that she was wrapped in when she was born — was her winding sheet, aka shroud.

“I wish that she had lived until now. She would willingly have died now; for what could have happened to poor Melebeus more comfortable and satisfying than to be the father of a fair child and sweet country?”

Tityrus said:

“Oh, Melebeus, you may dissemble with men, but you cannot deceive the gods. Didn’t I see (and very recently see) your daughter in your arms, when you gave her infinite kisses with affection that I fear were more than fatherly?”

“You have conveyed and stolen her away so that you might cast us all away and destroy us, bereaving and depriving her of the honor of her beauty and bereaving us of the benefit, preferring a common harm before a private evil.”

A proverb states, “Private welfare is not to be preferred before common-weal.”

Melebeus said:

“It is a bad cloth, Tityrus, that will take no dye-color, and it is a simple, foolish father who can use no cunning. You make the people believe that you wish well when you practice and engage in nothing but ill, wishing to be thought religious towards the gods when I know you are deceitful towards men.

“You cannot overreach and outwit me, Tityrus, but you may overshoot yourself and what you are capable of. It is a wily mouse that will breed in the cat’s ear, and he must halt — limp — cunningly who will deceive a cripple.

“Did you ever see me kiss my daughter? You are deceived; it was my wife whom I kissed. And if you thought so young a piece — that is, a woman — unfit for so old a person, and therefore imagined it to be my child, not my spouse, you must know that silver hairs delight in golden locks, and the old fancies and appetites crave young nurses, and frosty years must be thawed by youthful fires.

“But this matter set aside, you have a fair daughter, Tityrus, and it is a pity you are so fond and doting a father.”

One of the countrymen said, “You are both either too fond and foolish or too froward and disobedient, for, while you dispute to save your daughters, we neglect to prevent our

destruction.”

The other countryman said, “Come, let us go away and seek out a sacrifice. We must sift and examine these two fathers’ cunning, and we must let them shift for and look after themselves.”

They exited.

— 4.2 —

Telusa, Eurota, and Larissa sang a song. Cupid and Ramia listened.

Telusa sang:

“*Oyez! Oyez!*”

“Oyez” means “Be quiet and pay attention.”

Telusa continued to sing:

“*If any maid [maiden]*

“*Whom leering Cupid has betrayed*

“*To frowns of spite [vexation], to eyes of scorn,*

“*And would in madness now see torn*

“*The boy in pieces —*”

Telusa, Eurota, and Larissa sang:

“*Let her come*

“*Hither and lay on him her doom [verdict].*”

Eurota sang:

“*Oyez! Oyez!*

“*Has any lost*

“*A heart which many a sigh has cost?*”

A folk belief alleged that one sigh resulted in the loss of one drop of blood from the heart.

Eurota continued to sing:

“*Is any cozened [cheated] of a tear,*

“*Which, as a pearl, Disdain does wear?*

“*Here stands the thief.*”

Telusa, Eurota, and Larissa sang:

“*Let her but come*

“*Hither, and lay on him her doom [verdict].*”

Larissa sang:

*“Is any one undone [ruined] by fire,”*

“Fire” is the fire of love.

Larissa continued to sing:

*“And turned to ashes through desire?”*

*“Did ever any lady weep,*

*“Being cheated of her golden sleep?”*

*“Stol’n by sick thoughts?”*

Telusa, Eurota, and Larissa sang:

*“The pirate’s found,*

*“And in her tears he shall be drowned.*

*“Read his indictment; let him hear*

*“What he’s to trust to [look for].”*

She then said to Cupid:

“Boy, give ear! Listen!”

Telusa said, “Come, Cupid, get to work on your task. First you must undo all these lovers’ knots because you tied them.”

Cupid said, “If they are true love-knots, it is impossible to unknit — to untie — them; if they are false love-knots, I never tied them.”

“Make no excuse, but go to it,” Eurota said. “Get to work.”

Cupid said:

“Love-knots are tied with eyes and cannot be undone with hands; love-knots are made tight with thoughts and cannot be unloosed with fingers. Doesn’t Diana have any task to set Cupid to work on other than impossible tasks?”

The nymphs threatened him.

Cupid then said:

“I will get to work on it.”

He set to work, unwillingly, on a love-knot.

“Why, what is this now?” Ramia said. “You tie the knots tighter.”

“I cannot choose to do otherwise,” Cupid said. “It goes against my mind and my nature to make them loose.”

Eurota said:



“Let me see, now.”

She tried to untie the love-knot, and then she said:

“It is impossible to be undone.”

Cupid explained, “It is the true love-knot of a woman’s heart, and therefore it cannot be undone.”

He tried to untie another love-knot and easily untied it.

“That falls in sunder of itself,” Ramia said. “That love-knot falls apart by itself.”

“It was made from a man’s thought, which will never hang together and remain consistent,” Cupid explained.

“You have untied that well,” Larissa said.

“Aye, because it was never tied well,” Cupid said.

Telusa said:

“Get to work on the rest, for Diana will give you no rest.”

Cupid resumed his task and untied two love-knots.

Telusa then said:

“These two knots are finely and easily untied!”

Cupid explained, “It was because I never tied them. The one love-knot was knit by Pluto, not Cupid, by money, not love; the other love-knot was knit by force, not faith, by appointment and orders, not affection.”

Pluto is the god of the Land of the Dead, aka the Underworld. Much wealth, such as diamonds and gold, comes from underground.

Some matches are made by parents, not by the man and the woman. Some marriages are arranged.

Cupid tried to untie another love-knot but gave up.

“Why do you lay that knot aside?” Ramia asked.

“I lay it aside for Death,” Cupid said.

“Why?” Telusa asked.

“Because the knot was knit by faith, and it must only be unknit by Death,” Cupid said.

He picked up another love-knot, and then he laughed.

“Why do you laugh?” Eurota asked.

“Because it is both the most beautiful and the most false, done with the greatest art and the least truth, with the best colors and the worst conceits — the finest shows and the worst designs,” Cupid explained.

“Who tied it?” Telusa asked.

“A man’s tongue.” Cupid answered.

He bestowed the love-knot on Larissa.

“Why do you put that in my bosom?” Larissa asked.

“Because it is only for a woman’s bosom,” Cupid answered.

“Why, what is it?” Larissa asked.

“A woman’s heart,” Cupid answered.

Telusa said to Ramia and Eurota:

“Come, let us go in and tell Diana that Cupid has done his task.”

She then said:

“You stay behind, Larissa, and see to it that Cupid does not sleep, for love will be idle. And take heed you don’t surfeit and overindulge in Cupid’s company, for love will be wanton.”

“Let me alone and leave it to me,” Larissa said. “I will find him something to do.”

Telusa exited with Ramia and Eurota.

“Lady, can you for pity see Cupid thus punished?” Cupid asked.

“Why did Cupid punish us without pity?” Larissa asked.

He had punished the nymphs by making them fall in love.

“Is love a punishment?” Cupid asked.

“It is no pastime, no game, no pleasurable entertainment,” Larissa answered.

Cupid said to the absent Venus:

“O Venus, if thou saw Cupid as a captive, bound to obey who was accustomed to command, fearing ladies’ threats who once pierced their hearts, I cannot tell whether thou would revenge it for despite or laugh at it for disport.”

“For despite” means “out of anger and indignation and offended pride,” and “for disport” means “for amusement.”

Cupid said to the absent Diana:

“The time may come, Diana, and the time shall come, that thou who set Cupid to undo love-knots shall entreat Cupid to tie love-knots.”

Cupid said to the women reading this book:

“And you ladies who with solace and pleasure have beheld my pains shall with sighs entreat my pity.”

Cupid then started to go to sleep.

“What is this now, Cupid?” Larissa asked. “Do you begin to nod with sleepiness?”

Ramia, Telusa, and Eurota entered the scene.

Ramia said:

“Come, Cupid, Diana has devised new labors for you who are the god of loves. You shall weave samplers all night, and lackey after — be a servant to — Diana all day. You shall shortly shoot at beasts instead of men because you have made beasts of men by making their passion for love overcome their reason, and you shall wait on ladies’ trains [retinues] because thou entrap ladies by trains [tricks].

“All the stories that are in Diana’s arras — her wall hanging decorated with woven pictures — which are about love you must pick out — must unpick — with your needle, and in that place sew Vesta with her nuns and Diana with her nymphs.

“How do you like this, Cupid?”

“I say that I will prick as well with my needle as ever I did with my arrows,” Cupid said.

Hmm. In the slang of this society, a “needle” is a penis.

“Diana cannot yield,” Telusa said. “She conquers affection and love.”

These are famous last words.

“Diana shall yield,” Cupid said. “She cannot conquer destiny.”

“Come, Cupid, you must go to your business and task,” Larissa said.

“You shall find me so busy in your heads — so active in your thoughts — that you shall wish that I had been idle with your hearts,” Cupid said.

Cupid and Larissa exited.

— 4.3 —

Alone, Neptune said to himself:

“This day is the solemn sacrifice at this tree; this is the day on which the fairest and most beautiful virgin (if the inhabitants weren’t faithless and lacking in piety) should be offered to me. But so over-full of care are fathers for their children that they forget the safety of their country, and fearing to become unnatural and not show love for their children, they become unreasonable.

“Their sleights and tricks may blear and blur and deceive the eyes of men; they cannot deceive me. I will be here at the hour appointed for the sacrifice, and I will show as great cruelty as they have done crafty tricks, and they shall know well that Neptune should have been entreated, not cozened and cheated.”

He exited.

— 4.4 —

The disguised Galatea and the disguised Phillida talked together. Still, neither knew that the other was a young woman although each suspected that the other was a young woman.

Phillida said, "I wonder which virgin the people will present for the sacrifice. It is fortunate you are not a female virgin, for then it would have fallen to your lot because you are so beautiful."

"If you had been a maiden, too, I need not to have feared because you are more beautiful than I am," Galatea said.

"Please, sweet boy, don't flatter me," Phillida said. "Speak the truth about thyself, for in my eye of all the world thou art the most beautiful."

"These are fair words, but far from thy true thoughts," Galatea said. "I know my own face in a true mirror, and I do not desire to see it in a flattering mouth."

Phillida said:

"Oh, I wish that I did flatter thee, and I wish that fortune would not flatter me!"

The first "flatter" means "overpraise," and the second "flatter" means "fill me with false hopes."

Phillida wished that she did overpraise Galatea's beauty, for if she did, Galatea would not become a sacrifice.

Phillida continued:

"I love thee as a brother, but thou do not love me in that way."

"No, I will not love thee as a brother, but I will love thee better because I cannot love as a brother," Galatea said.

"We are both boys, and we are both lovers," Phillida said. "So that our affection may have some expression and so that our affection for each other may seem as if it were love, let me call thee 'mistress.'"

"I accept that name, for several people before this time have called me mistress," Galatea said.

"For what reason?" Phillida asked.

Galatea replied, "Nay, there lie the mistress-ies: the mysteries."

"Will thou be at the sacrifice?" Phillida asked.

"No," Galatea said.

"Why?" Phillida asked

Galatea said:

"Because I dreamt that if I were there I would be turned into a virgin, and then being so beautiful (as thou say I am) I should be offered as a sacrifice, as thou know one must.

"But will you be there?"

"Not unless I were sure that a boy would be sacrificed, and not a maiden," Phillida said.

"Why, then you would be in danger," Galatea said.

“But I would escape it by deceit,” Phillida said. “But seeing we are resolved to be both absent, let us wander into these groves until the hour of the sacrifice has passed.”

“I am agreed, for then my fear will be past,” Galatea said.

“Why, what do thou fear?” Phillida asked.

“Nothing except that you do not love me,” Galatea said.

She exited.

Phillida said:

“I will love you.”

She then said to herself:

“Poor Phillida, what should thou think of thyself, who love one who, I am afraid, is as thyself is: a female virgin?”

“And can’t it be possible that her father practiced the same deceit with her that my father has with me, and, knowing her to be fair, feared she should be unfortunate?”

“If it is so, Phillida, how desperate and hopeless is thy case! If it is not so, how doubtful and uncertain! For if she is a maiden, there is no hope of my love; and if she is a boy, she is a hazard — there is only a chance and not a certainty for me to have her.”

Hazards is a game played with two dice; a player can either win or lose it. In real tennis, hazards are openings into which the ball can be hit; hazards are especially those openings that do not win a point.

Phillida concluded:

“I will go after him or her, and I will lead a melancholy life, I who expect a miserable death.”

She exited.

## CHAPTER 5 (GALATEA)

— 5.1 —

Alone, Rafe said to himself:

“No more masters now, but a mistress, if I can alight on her.”

A “mistress” is a female boss, or a female lover. He wanted to 1) find a female boss, and 2) climb on a female lover.

Rafe continued:

“An astronomer! Of all occupations that’s the worst. Yet I hope that the alchemist may fare well, for he keeps good fires although he gets no gold.

“The other — the astronomer — stands warming himself by staring on the stars, which I think he can as soon and as easily count as know their properties. He told me a long tale about *octogessimus octavus*, the year 1588, and the meeting of the conjunctions and planets, and in the meantime he fell backward into a pond. I asked him why he had not foreseen that by the stars. He said he knew about it, but he disdained it and regarded it with contempt.

“But wait, isn’t this my brother Robin?”

Entering the scene, Robin overheard him and said, “Yes, as sure as thou are Rafe.”

“What! Robin?” Rafe said. “What is your news? What has been your luck and your fortune?”

Robin answered, “Indeed, I have had only bad fortune, but I ask thee to tell me thine fortune.”

Rafe said:

“I have had two masters, not by art but by nature.”

He did not find his two masters through his own efforts but came across them accidentally.

Also, the alchemist and the astronomer were unlikely to be masters by virtue of having university degrees; they were masters only because Rafe was their servant.

Rafe continued:

“One said that by multiplying he would make of a penny ten pounds.”

“Aye, but could he do it?” Robin asked.

“Could he do it, you ask?” Rafe said. “Why, man, I saw a pretty wench come into his shop, where with puffing, blowing, and sweating, he so plied her that he multiplied her.”

“Plied her.” Nudge, nudge. Wink, wink.

“How?” Robin asked.

“Why he made her from one, two,” Rafe said.

In other words: He made her pregnant.

“What, by fire?” Robin asked.

“No, by the philosopher’s stone,” Rafe said.

The philosopher’s stone was supposed to be able to turn base metals such as iron into valuable metals such as gold.

“Why, do philosophers have such stones?” Robin asked.

In Elizabethan slang, “stones” are testicles.

“Aye, but they lie in a privy cupboard,” Rafe said.

Anatomists call that private cupboard a scrotum.

“Why, then thou are rich if thou have learned this cunning knowledge,” Robin said.

“Tush, this was nothing,” Rafe said. “He would from a little fasting spittle make a hose and doublet of cloth of silver.”

“Fasting spittle” is saliva that is generated from the smell of food when one has not eaten for a long time

Because of hunger, the alchemist would drool strands of saliva on his clothing.

Cloth of silver has silver threads woven into it.

Robin said, “I wish that I had been with him! For I have had almost no food but spittle since I came to the woods.”

He swallowed a lot of saliva. The food he had had was mostly “food.”

Also, the “spittle” may be charity and free food provided by ’spital — kind and hospitable — people.

Charitable people can be found in the countryside.

“How then did thou live?” Rafe asked.

“Why, man, I served a fortune-teller, who said I should live to see my father hanged and both my brothers beg,” Robin said. “So I conclude the mill shall be mine, and I live by imagination still.”

He stayed alive by constantly thinking about his future prospect of owning the family mill.

Rafe said:

“Thy master was an ass and looked on the lines of thy hands — he was a palm reader.

“But my other master was an astronomer, who could pick my nativity — my horoscope — out of the stars. I should have half a dozen stars in my pocket if I have not lost them, but here they are: Sol, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus.”

Sol is the Sun. Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and Venus are wandering stars, aka planets. They change positions in the night sky, while the fixed stars of the constellations do not change positions in relation to each other.

Rafe showed Robin a list of astrological names.

“Why, these are only names,” Robin said.

“Aye, but by these he gathers that I was a Jovalist born of a Thursday, and that I should be a splendid Venerian and get all my good luck on a Friday,” Rafe said.

A Jovalist is someone born on a day ruled by Jove, aka Jupiter: Thursday.

Rafe is lecherous, and he is lucky on Friday, the day ruled by Venus, and so he is also a Venerian.

“It is strange that a fish day should be a flesh-day,” Robin said.

Fish days are days when many Christians eat fish rather than flesh. Venus’ flesh day is devoted to a different kind of flesh than meat, and it is devoted to a different kind of activity than fasting.

Rafe spoke some Latin to his brother and translated it:

“Robin, *Venus orta mari*: Venus was born from the sea.”

He continued:

“The sea will have fish, fish must have wine, wine will have flesh, for *caro carnis genus est muliebre*.”

Wine increases sexual desire.

The Latin means, “*Caro, carnis* is feminine.”

Many languages have masculine, feminine, and neuter cases.

*Caro, carnis* are Latin words for “flesh.”

Rafe then said:

“But quiet, here comes that notable villain who once recommended me to the alchemist.”

Peter entered the scene, not seeing the other two at first.

He said to himself, “As long as I had a master, I would not care what became of me.”

Rafe whispered:

“Robin, thou shall see me fit him — that is, treat him appropriately.

“As long as I had a servant, I don’t care about his moral and social conditions, his qualities and abilities, or his person, aka body.”

Seeing them, Peter said, “What, Rafe? We are well met. No doubt you had a warm service from my master the alchemist?”

Rafe said:

“It was warm indeed, for the fire had almost burned out my eyes, and yet my teeth still watered with hunger, so that my service was both too hot and too cold. I melted all my meat — perspired and lost weight — and ate only my slumber thoughts, aka dreams, and so I had a full head and an empty belly.”



It was a warm service of work, but not a warm service of food.

Rafe then asked:

“But where have thou been since?”

“With a brother of thine, I think, for he has such a coat as yours, and two brothers (as he said) seeking their fortunes,” Peter said.

“It is my brother Dick,” Robin said. “Please, let’s go to him.”

“Sirrah, what was he doing that he did not come with thee?” Rafe asked Peter.

“He has gotten a master now, who will teach him to make you both his younger brothers,” Peter said.

It sounded as if the new master is a lawyer or a Sophist, or both.

In ancient Greece, Sophists were accused of teaching students how to make the weaker argument seem better than the stronger argument. They learned how to argue for both sides of a controversy: for and against.

“Aye, thou excel when it comes to devising impossibilities,” Rafe said. “That’s as true as thy master could make silver pots of tags of points.”

“Nay, his master will teach him to cozen — cheat — you both, and so get the mill to himself,” Peter said.

Rafe said:

“Nay, if he is both our cozens — our cousins and our cheats — I will be his great-grandfather, and Robin shall be his uncle.”

This age was one of primogeniture. The eldest son would inherit most or all of the father’s property and possessions.

In Elizabethan times, the word “cousin” had a wider meaning than it has today: It meant “kinsman.”

Based on what Rafe had said, Rafe was the eldest son, and Dick was the youngest of the three sons.

Rafe believed that he and Robin could outcheat Dick, if necessary.

Rafe then said:

“But I ask thee to bring us to him quickly, for I am great-bellied with conceit — with curiosity — until I see him.”

“Come then and go with me, and I will bring you to him straightaway,” Peter said.

They exited.

The augur and Ericthinis, who was a countryman, talked together. Ericthinis' daughter, Hebe, had been chosen to be the sacrifice. She was not a volunteer.

The augur said, "Bring forth the virgin, the fatal — condemned by fate — virgin, the fairest and most beautiful virgin, if you mean to appease Neptune and preserve your country."

Ericthinis said, "Here she comes, accompanied only by men, because it is a sight unseemly (as all virgins say) to see the misfortune of a maiden, and it is terrible to behold the fierceness of Agar the monster."

Hebe, with some men, entered the scene where the sacrifice to Neptune would be held.

The men bound her to the tree.

Hebe lamented her fate:

"Miserable and accursed is Hebe, because although thou art neither fair and beautiful nor fortunate and happy, thou have been thought to be most happy and most beautiful!"

People have thought her to be most happy because as a sacrifice she could save her people from the wrath of Neptune.

People have thought her to be most beautiful because she was the most beautiful virgin they could find.

Hebe continued:

"Curse thy birth, thy life, thy death, being born to live in danger, and having lived, to die by deceit."

Because she was not beautiful, Hebe ought not to be the sacrifice. She was the sacrifice only because of the deceit of the fathers of Galatea and Phillida. These fathers had made their daughters dress in men's clothing so that they would not be chosen to be the sacrifice to Neptune.

Hebe continued:

"Are thou the sacrifice to appease Neptune and satisfy the custom, the bloody custom, ordained for the safety of thy country? Aye, Hebe, poor Hebe: men will have it so, whose strong forces command our weak natures. Indeed, the gods will have it so, whose powers make sport of and play with our purposes and plans.

"The Egyptians never cut their dates from the tree, because they were so fresh and green; it is thought wickedness to pull roses from the stalks in the garden of Palestine, because they have so lively a red; and anyone who cuts the incense tree in Arabia before it falls commits sacrilege.

"Shall it uniquely be lawful among us in the prime of youth and pride of beauty to destroy both youth and beauty? And what was honored in fruits and flowers as a virtue shall it uniquely be lawful among us to violate in a virgin as a vice?"

"But alas! Destiny allows no dispute. Die, Hebe! Hebe, die! Woeful Hebe, and only accursed Hebe!"

“Farewell, the sweet delights of life, and welcome now, the bitter pangs of death!

“Farewell, you chaste virgins, whose thoughts are divine, whose faces are fair, whose fortunes are agreeable with and correspond to your affections and desires!

“Enjoy, and long enjoy, the pleasure of your curled locks, the amiableness of your wished-for looks, the sweetness of your tuned voices, the content of your inward thoughts, the pomp and splendor of your outward appearances.

“Only Hebe bids farewell to all the joys that she conceived and imagined and that you hope for, that she possessed and that you shall possess.

“Farewell, the pomp of princes’ courts, whose roofs are embossed with gold and whose pavements are decked with fair ladies; where the days are spent in sweet delights, and the nights are spent in pleasant dreams; where chastity honors affections and commands; and where chastity yields to desire and conquers!”

Chastity heightens sexual desire, and chaste marital sex triumphs over unchaste sexual desire.

Hebe continued:

“Farewell, the sovereign of all virtue and goddess of all virgins, Diana, whose perfections are impossible to be numbered and therefore infinite, never to be matched and therefore immortal!

“Farewell, sweet parents, yet, to be mine, unfortunate parents! How blessed would you have been in barrenness! How happy would I have been if I had not been born!

“Farewell, life, vain life, wretched life, whose sorrows are long, whose end is fearful, whose miseries are certain, whose hopes are innumerable, whose fears are intolerable!”

A proverb stated, “Long life has long misery.”

Hebe continued:

“Come, Death, and welcome, Death, whom nature cannot resist, because necessity rules, nor can nature defer because destiny hastens!”

A proverb states, “As sure as death.”

Another proverb states, “It is impossible to avoid (undo) fate (destiny).”

Hebe continued:

“Come, Agar, thou monster insatiable for maidens’ blood and devourer of beauty’s bowels. Glut thyself until thou surfeit, and let my life end thine. Tear these tender joints with thy greedy jaws, these yellow locks with thy black feet, this fair face with thy foul teeth.

“Why do thou abate and slacken thy accustomed swiftness? I am fair; I am a virgin; I am ready.

“Come, Agar, thou horrible monster, and farewell, world, thou viler monster!”

They waited, but no monster came.

The augur said, “The monster has not come, and therefore I see that Neptune is abused, disdained, and held in contempt, whose rage will, I fear, be both infinite and intolerable. Take

in this virgin, whose lack of beauty has saved her own life and spoiled and destroyed all yours.”

“We could not find any virgin fairer than she,” Ericthinis, Hebe’s father, said.

The augur said:

“Neptune will.”

He then ordered the men:

“Go and deliver her to her father.”

The men untied Hebe.

Hebe said:

“Fortunate Hebe, how shall thou express thy joys?

“Nay, unhappy girl, who are not the fairest. Wouldn’t it have been better for thee to have died with fame and reputation than to live with dishonor, to have preferred the safety of thy country and the splendiddness of thy beauty before the sweetness of life and the vanity of the world?

“But alas! Destiny would not have it so. Destiny could not, for it asks for and requires the most beautiful.

“I wish, Hebe, that thou had been the most beautiful.”

Ericthinis, her father, said, “Come, Hebe, this is no time for us to reason and talk about this. It would have been best for us if thou had been most beautiful.”

All exited.

### — 5.3 —

Both still disguised, Phillida and Galatea talked together.

Phillida said, “We met the virgin who should have been offered to Neptune. Perhaps either the custom is pardoned or she is not thought the fairest and most beautiful.”

“I cannot conjecture and surmise the cause, but I fear the outcome,” Galatea said.

“Why should you fear the outcome?” Phillida said. “The god requires no boy as the sacrifice.”

“I wish he did,” Galatea said. “Then I would have no fear.”

Phillida said:

“I am glad he does not, though, because if he did, I should have also cause to fear.

“But wait, what man or god is this? Let us secretly withdraw ourselves into the thickets.”

The disguised Galatea and the disguised Phillida exited.

Alone, Neptune entered the scene.

Neptune said to himself:

“And do men begin to be equal with gods, seeking by crafty trickery to overreach and outwit them who by power oversee and govern them? Do they dote so much on their daughters that they do not hesitate to dally with our deities?”

“The inhabitants shall well see that destiny cannot be prevented and forestalled by craft nor can my anger be appeased by submission. I will make havoc — widespread destruction — of Diana’s nymphs. My temple shall be dyed with maidens’ blood, and there shall be nothing viler than to be a virgin. To be young and fair shall be considered shame and punishment, insomuch as it shall be thought as dishonorable to be honest and chaste and inasmuch as it shall be thought fortunate to be deformed.”

Diana and her nymphs entered the scene.

Diana, who had overheard Neptune, said, “O Neptune, have thou forgotten thyself, or will thou entirely forsake me? Has Diana therefore brought danger to her nymphs because they are chaste? Shall virtue suffer both pain and shame, which always deserves praise and honor?”

Venus entered the scene. She had been eavesdropping.

Venus said:

“Praise and honor, Neptune? Diana deserves nothing less, unless it is commendable to be disdainful and honorable to be peevish.

“Sweet Neptune, if Venus has any influence over you, let her try it in this one thing: that Diana may find as small comfort at thy hands as Love has found courtesy at hers. Diana is she who hates sweet delights, envies and is malicious toward loving desires, masks and covers wanton eyes, stops amorous ears, bridles and curbs youthful mouths, and, under a name or a word, that of ‘constancy,’ entertains and sanctions all kinds of cruelty.

“She has taken my son Cupid — Cupid, my lovely son — treating him like an apprentice, whipping him like a slave, scorning him like a beast. Therefore, Neptune, I entreat thee by no other god than the god of love that thou evilly treat this goddess of hate.”

Neptune said:

“I muse not a little and am much perplexed to see you two in this place, at this time, and about this matter.

“But what do you say, Diana? Have you held Cupid captive?”

Diana said:

“I say there is nothing more in vain than to dispute with Venus, whose untamed affections have bred more brawls in heaven than is fit to repeat on earth or possible to recount in number.

“I have Cupid, and I will keep him — not to dandle and bounce him up and down in my lap, him whom I abhor in my heart, but to laugh to scorn him who has made in my virgins’ hearts such deep scars.”

Venus said:

“Diana, do you call them scars that I know to be bleeding wounds?”

“Alas, weak deity! Your power does not stretch far enough both to abate the sharpness of his arrows and to heal the hurts.

“No, love’s wounds, when they seem green and fresh, rankle and fester, and, having a smooth skin on the outside, they rankle and fester to the death within.

“Therefore, Neptune, if ever Venus stood thee in thy stead and did any service for you, if ever Venus furthered thy fancies and promoted thy desires, or if Venus shall at all times be at thy command, then let either Diana bring her virgins to a continual massacre or release Cupid from his martyrdom.”

Neptune had many sex affairs, and Venus had been of assistance to him.

Diana said, “It is known, Venus, that your tongue is as unruly as your thoughts, and your thoughts as unstayed [wavering] and ungoverned and unstead [not sober] as your eyes. Diana cannot chatter; Venus cannot choose to not chatter.”

Venus said:

“It is an honor for Diana to have Venus mean ill, when she speaks so well.”

She was sarcastic. Diana had been speaking ill about Venus.

Venus continued:

“But you shall see I did not come to trifle.

“Therefore, once again, Neptune, if that is not buried which can never die — amorous fancy — or if that is quenched which must forever burn — affection and desire — then show thyself the same Neptune that I knew thee to be when thou were a shepherd, and don’t let Venus’ words be in vain and without effect in thine ears, since thine words were imprinted in my heart.”

Neptune said:

“It would be unfitting that goddesses should strive against each other, and it would be unreasonable that I should not yield.

“And therefore, to please both of you, both of you pay attention to my words. Diana I must honor; her virtue deserves no less. But Venus I must love; I must confess so much.

“Diana, restore Cupid to Venus, and I will forever release and stop the sacrifice of virgins. If therefore you love your nymphs as she loves her son, or if you do not rate a private grudge above a far-reaching grief, answer what you will do.”

Diana had a private grudge with Cupid. The sacrifice of the virgins to Neptune affected many more people and so Neptune called it a far-reaching grief.

Diana said:

“I don’t consider the choice hard, for if I had twenty Cupids, I would deliver them all to save one virgin, knowing love to be a thing of all the vainest and most futile, and virginity to be a virtue of all the noblest. I yield.

“Larissa, bring out Cupid.”

Larissa exited.

Diana continued:

“And now it shall be said that Cupid saved those whom he thought to spoil and ruin.”

Cupid had plagued the nymphs by making them fall in love, and now his role in this bargain ensued that beautiful, chaste virgins — another kind of nymph — would no longer be sacrificed.

Venus said, “I agree to this willingly, for I will be wary how my son wanders again. But Diana cannot forbid him to wound with his arrows.”

“Yes, I can,” Diana said. “Chastity is not within the level — the range — of his bow.”

“But beauty is a fair mark to hit,” Venus said. “It is both a legitimate target and an agreeable target.”

Neptune said, “Well, I am glad you are in accord and are agreed, and that you say that Neptune has dealt well with beauty and chastity.”

Venus and Diana were not entirely in accord, but Neptune was pretending that they were.

Larissa returned with Cupid.

Diana said to Venus, “Here, take your son.”

Venus said to Cupid, “Sir boy, where have you been? Always taken, first by Sappho, now by Diana. How do such things happen, you unhappy and unfortunate elf?”

At the end of John Lyly’s play *Sappho and Phao*, Cupid had rejected Venus and had stayed with Sappho.

Cupid said, “Coming through Diana’s woods, and seeing so many fair faces with fond hearts, I thought for my entertainment to cause them pain by making them fall in love, and so I was taken by Diana.”

“I am glad I have you,” Venus said.

“And I am glad I am rid of him,” Diana said.

Venus said to Cupid, “Alas, poor boy! Thy wings clipped? Thy torches quenched? Thy bow burnt? And thy arrows broken?”

“Aye, but it doesn’t matter,” Cupid said. “I bear now my arrows in my eyes, my wings on my thoughts, my torches in my ears, and my bow in my mouth, so that I can wound with looking, fly with thinking, burn with hearing, and shoot with speaking.”

“Well, you shall go up to heaven with me, for on earth thou will lose me,” Venus said.

Tityrus and Melebeus, the fathers of Galatea and Phillida, entered the scene.

Galatea and Phillida followed at a distance, unseen at first by the others.

“But wait, who are these men?” Neptune asked, seeing Tityrus and Melebeus.

“Those who have offended thee to save their daughters,” Tityrus said.

Neptune asked Tityrus, “Why, did you have a fair daughter?”

“Aye, and Melebeus had a fair daughter,” Tityrus said.

“Where are they?” Neptune asked.

“In yonder woods, and I think I see them coming,” Melebeus said.

“Well, your deserts have not gotten you pardons, but these goddesses’ jars — their quarrels — have gotten you pardons,” Neptune said.

The two fathers’ behavior had not gotten them a pardon, but the quarreling of Diana and Venus had gotten them a pardon.

“This is my daughter, my sweet Phillida,” Melebeus said.

“And this is my fair Galatea,” Tityrus said.

“Unfortunate is Galatea, if this is Phillida!” Galatea said.

“Accursed is Phillida, if that is Galatea!” Phillida said.

Galatea said to herself, “And were thou all this while enamored of and in love with Phillida, that sweet Phillida?”

Phillida said to herself, “And could thou dote upon the face of a maiden, thyself being one? Could thou dote on the face of fair Galatea?”

“Do you both, being maidens, love one another?” Neptune asked.

“I had thought the male clothing agreeable with and in accord with the male sex, and so I burned in the fire of my own fancies,” Galatea said.

“I had thought that in the attire of a boy there could not have lodged the body of a virgin, and so I was inflamed with a sweet desire that now I find a sour deceit,” Phillida said.

“Now things falling out as they do, you must leave these fond-found — now found to be foolish — affections. Nature will have it so; necessity must have it so,” Diana said.

“I will never love any but Phillida,” Galatea said. “Her love is engraved in my heart with her eyes.”

“Nor will I love any but Galatea, whose faith is imprinted in my thoughts by her words,” Phillida said.

Neptune said:

“An idle choice, strange and foolish, for one virgin to dote on another, and to imagine a constant faith where there can be no cause of affection.

“How do you like this, Venus?”

Venus said:

“I like it well, and I allow and approve it.”



Venus! You go, girl!

Venus continued:

“They shall both be possessed of their wishes, for never shall it be said that Nature or Fortune shall overthrow Love and Faith and Loyalty.”

Venus asked Galatea and Phillida, “Is your love unspotted, begun with truth, continued with constancy, and not to be altered until death?”

Galatea said, “Die, Galatea, if thy love is not so!”

Phillida said, “Accursed be thou, Phillida, if thy love is not so!”

“Suppose all this, Venus, what then?” Diana asked.

“Then it shall be seen that I can turn one of them into a man, and that I will,” Venus said.

“Is it possible?” Diana said.

Venus replied:

“What is to Love or the mistress of love impossible? Wasn’t it Venus who did the like to Iphis and Ianthes?”

Iphis and Ianthes were both born female, but Iphis was raised as a male. Her family was poor and unable to provide a dowry for her, and her mother feared that her husband would want the girl infant dead. The Egyptian goddess Isis visited the mother and told her to keep the baby’s sex a secret and raise her as a boy. When Iphis was grown up, her father arranged a marriage for her with Ianthes: Both Iphis’ father and Ianthes thought that Iphis was a male, and Ianthes fell in love with Iphis. In despair, Iphis’ mother visited the temple of Isis and asked Isis for help. Isis responded by making Iphis a male. Iphis and Ianthe married and presumably lived happily together ever after, given that their wedding was presided over by Venus (goddess of sexual passion), Juno (goddess of marriage), and Hymen (god of marriage).

The story of Iphis and Ianthe is told in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 9.

Venus then asked Galatea and Phillida, “What do you say? Are you agreed that one of you will be made a boy immediately?”

“I am content, as long as I may embrace Galatea,” Phillida said.

“Embrace.” Nudge, nudge. Wink, wink.

“I wish it, as long as I may enjoy Phillida,” Galatea said.

“Enjoy.” Nudge, nudge. Wink, wink.

Melebeus said to Phillida, “Wait, daughter, you must know whether I will have you as a son.”

Tityrus said to his daughter, “Don’t forget about me and what I want, Galatea: I will keep you as I begat you, a daughter.”

“Tityrus, let yours be a boy, and, if you will and if you like, mine shall not be a boy,” Melebeus said.

“Nay, mine shall not, for by that means my young son shall lose his inheritance,” Tityrus said.

Galatea was older than her brother; if Galatea became a man, her brother would lose his inheritance, which would go to the eldest son.

“Why then, get him made a maiden, and then there is nothing lost,” Melebeus said.

“If there is to be such changing, I wish that Venus could make my wife change into a man,” Tityrus said.

“Why?” Melebeus asked.

“Because she loves always to play with men,” Tityrus said.

“Play” can mean “amuse herself.” Such play may include sex.

“Well, you are both fond and foolish,” Venus said. “Therefore, agree to this changing, or allow your daughters to endure hard misfortune and a bad fate.”

“What do you say, Tityrus?” Melebeus asked. “Shall we refer it to Venus? Shall we let Venus decide?”

“I am content with that because she is a goddess,” Tityrus said.

“Neptune, you will not dislike it?” Venus asked.

“Not I,” Neptune said.

“Nor you, Diana?” Venus asked.

“Not I,” Diana said.

“Cupid shall not,” Venus said.

“I will not,” Cupid agreed.

Venus said:

“Then let us depart. Neither of them shall know whose lot it shall be to become a boy until they come to the church door, where the marriage will be solemnized. One shall become a boy.

“Does this suffice? Does it satisfy you?”

Phillida said, “Yes, and it satisfies us both. Doesn’t it, Galatea?”

“Yes, Phillida,” Galatea said.

The brothers Rafe, Robin, and Dick entered the scene.

“Come, Robin, I am glad I have met with thee, for now we will make our father laugh at these tales,” Rafe said.

“Who are these men who so malapertly and impudently thrust themselves into our companies?” Diana asked.

“Indeed, madam, we are ‘fortune tellers,’” Robin said.

Venus said, “Fortune-tellers? Tell me my fortune. What is in my future?”

Rafe said, "We do not mean fortune-tellers, we mean 'fortune tellers': tellers of our fortunes and our luck. We can tell what fortune we have had these twelve months in the woods."

"Let them alone," Diana said. "Ignore them. They are only peevish: foolish and perverse."

"Yet they will be as good as minstrels at the marriage, to make us all merry," Venus said.

"Aye, ladies, we bear a very good consort: a very good harmony," Dick said.

Venus asked Rafe, "Can you sing?"

Rafe replied, "Basely."

Venus asked Dick, "And can you sing?"

Dick said, "Meanly."

Venus asked Robin, "And what can you do?"

Robin said, "If they double it, I will treble it."

The three brothers could sing bass, tenor (the mean between bass and treble), and treble — but perhaps not very well.

A song with two singers is doubled; with three, it is trebled.

Venus said, "Then all of you shall go with us, and sing the nuptial hymn 'Hymen' before the marriage. Are you content? Are you happy with this?"

Rafe said, "Content? Never better content for our bellies! For there we shall be sure to fill our bellies with capons' rumps, or some such dainty dishes."

A capon is a castrated cock.

Then follow us," Venus said.

## EPILOGUE (GALATEA)

Galatea stepped forward.

She said to the others:

“Go, all of you. It is only I who shall conclude all.”

The others exited.

Galatea then said to the ladies reading this book:

“You ladies may see that Venus can make constancy fickleness, Venus can make courage cowardice, and Venus can make modesty lightness, working things impossible in your sex and tempering hardest hearts like softest wool.

“Yield, ladies, yield to love, ladies, which lurks under your eyelids while you sleep and plays with your heartstrings while you wake; whose sweetness never breeds satiety, whose labor never breeds weariness, and whose grief never breeds bitterness.

“Cupid was begotten in a mist, nursed in clouds, and suckled only upon conceits and fancies.

“Confess that he is a conqueror whom you ought to regard with respect, since it is impossible to resist him; for this is infallible, that love conquers all things but itself, and ladies conquer all hearts but their own.”

Question: Are the male readers of this book honorary ladies?

Of course.

## NOTES (GALATEA)

— 1.4 —

For Your Information: Erotic asphyxiation:

*Do male prisoners have an erection and ejaculate during hanging?*

*In popular culture it has often been claimed that men have erections and ejaculate when hanged.*

*Some refer to this as “angel lust”.*

*So do these things actually happen? The answer appears to be YES to both, but very rarely.*

Source: “Some myths and facts surrounding execution by hanging.” 9 October 2013

[http://www.capitalpunishmentuk.org/Hanging\\_myths.pdf](http://www.capitalpunishmentuk.org/Hanging_myths.pdf)

— 2.3 —

PETER

*A little more than a man, and a hair’s breadth less than a god. He can make of thy cap gold, and, by multiplication of one goat, he can make three old angels.*

(2.3.43-45)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Galatea and Midas*. *Galatea* edited by George K. Hunter. *Midas* edited by David Bevington. The Revels Plays. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000. Page 53.

For Your Information: The Great Debasement

*The Great Debasement (1544–1551) was a currency debasement policy introduced in 1544 England under the order of Henry VIII which saw the amount of precious metal in gold and silver coins reduced and in some cases replaced entirely with cheaper base metals such as copper. Overspending by Henry VIII to pay for his lavish lifestyle and to fund foreign wars with France and Scotland are cited as reasons for the policy's introduction. The main aim of the policy was to increase revenue for the Crown at the cost of taxpayers through savings in currency production with less bullion being required to mint new coins. During debasement gold standards dropped from the previous standard of 23 karat to as low as 20 karat while silver was reduced from 92.5% sterling silver to just 25%. Revoked in 1551 by Edward VI, the policy's economic effects continued for many years until 1560 when all debased currency was removed from circulation.*

Source: “The Great Debasement.” Wikipedia. Accessed 18 November 2022.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Great\\_Debasement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Debasement)

— 2.3 —

PETER

*The third, [third spirit is] sal ammoniac.*

RAFE

*A proper word.*

(2.3-63-64)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Galatea and Midas*. *Galatea* edited by George K. Hunter. *Midas* edited by David Bevington. *The Revels Plays*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Page 54.

George K. Hunter suggested that Rafe may have been thinking of “demoniac,” given that the conversation is about spirits.

What follows are David Bruce's speculations about “sal ammoniac.”

*Salam* or *Salaam* is an Arabic word that means “peace” and is used as a greeting. The Hebrew word for “peace” is *shalom*.

Perhaps “sal ammoniac” means “*Salam*, demoniac” and is an incantation to greet a person possessed by a demon.

In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the first citation for *salaam* as a noun is 1613, and as a verb is 1684.

\*\*\*

In 1 Samuel 11, King Saul wins a battle over the King Nahash and the Ammonites. King Nahash of Ammon was an evil man who threatened Israel, and the country of Ammon was a hostile neighbor to Israel. The Israelites may have regarded King Nahash as possessed by a demon.

The suffix *-iac* can indicate a sufferer from a disease. If King Nahash is a demoniac, then he suffers from being possessed by a demon: a disease that can be cured by exorcism.

King Nahash was sinful. If sin can be regarded as a disease, King Nahash of Ammon was afflicted by a disease.

In the tenth ditch of the eighth circle of Dante's *Inferno*, the falsifiers are afflicted by disease. The alchemists have leprosy (the alchemists tried to change lead into gold, and now their skin turns from healthy to diseased). The evil impersonators are insane (the evil impersonators made other people confused about who the evil impersonators were; now the evil impersonators, who are insane, are confused about who they are). The counterfeiters — who made what they had bigger than it should be — have dropsy, aka edema (which makes part of their body swell up and be bigger than it should be). The liars — whose testimony stank — are feverous and stink.

King Nahash wanted the people of Jabesh-Gilead to submit to him. If they did, he would spare their lives but blind their right eye. The people of Jabesh-Gilead sent messengers throughout Israel to ask for help, and Saul, who was then a herdsman and not yet King of Israel and who was angry at the Ammonites, quickly gathered soldiers and defeated the Ammonites in battle.

“Sal ammoniac” may mean “Saul, whom the country of Ammon made sick with anger.”

Also, Saul’s anger was righteous anger, and he may have been filled with the Holy Spirit.

\*\*\*

Of course, I thought of Salem, but the Salem Witch Trial occurred a century later in 1692-1693. *Galatea* was first published in 1592.

— 2.3 —

PETER

*Didst thou never hear how Jupiter came in a golden  
shower to Danae?*

(2.3.98-99)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Galatea and Midas*. *Galatea* edited by George K. Hunter. *Midas* edited by David Bevington. The Revels Plays. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000. Page 56.

For Your Information: From Apollodorus, *Library* 2.4:

*When Acrisius inquired of the oracle how he should get male children, the god said that his daughter would give birth to a son who would kill him. Fearing that, Acrisius built a brazen chamber under ground and there guarded Danae. However, she was seduced, as some say, by Proetus, whence arose the quarrel between them; but some say that Zeus had intercourse with her in the shape of a stream of gold which poured through the roof into Danae's lap. When Acrisius afterwards learned that she had got a child Perseus, he would not believe that she had been seduced by Zeus, and putting his daughter with the child in a chest, he cast it into the sea. The chest was washed ashore on Seriphus, and Dictys took up the boy and reared him.*

Source:

Apollodorus, *Library*. Sir James George Frazer, Ed. Perseus. Accessed 18 November 2022.

[http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?  
doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0022:text=Library:book=2:chapter=4](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0022:text=Library:book=2:chapter=4)

— 3.1 —

EUROTA

*Telusa, Diana told me to hunt you out, and she said that you  
don't care to hunt with her; but if you follow any other  
game than the game she has roused, your punishment shall be to  
bend all our bows and weave all our strings.*

(3.1.31-34)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Galatea and Midas*. *Galatea* edited by George K. Hunter. *Midas* edited by David Bevington. The Revels Plays. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Page 61.

For Your Information:

*The bowstring*

*Although manufactured bowstrings are available, some archery enthusiasts prefer to make their own.*

*The number of strands of thread needed is determined. This depends on the strength of the thread being used and the draw weight (strength) of the bow. The bundle of strands is divided into three equal sets, and each set is coated with beeswax (perhaps with added resin). The sets of strands are then formed into a cord by twisting and weaving them together.*

Source: "Bow and Arrow." How Things are Made." Accessed 18 November 2022.

<http://www.madehow.com/Volume-5/Bow-and-Arrow.html#ixzz71jHeHZQ>

For Your Information:

*Medieval bowstrings were most commonly made of hemp, a plant fiber that was relatively available, strong, and resistant. Flax was also sometimes used, as was (on occasion) silk. For average people, bowstrings may also be made of animal sinews or other cheap plant fibers.*

Source: "What Were Medieval Bow Strings Made Of?" Study.com. Accessed 18 November 2022.

<https://homework.study.com/explanation/what-were-medieval-bow-strings-made-of.html>

— 3.3 —

ASTRONOMER

*I can tell thee*

*what weather shall be between this moment and octogessimus octavus*

*mirabilis annus.*

(3.3.43-45)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Galatea and Midas*. *Galatea* edited by George K. Hunter. *Midas* edited by David Bevington. The Revels Plays. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Page 71.

For Your Information:

*The biggest media event of the sixteenth century occurred in 1523-24, when scores of astrologers jumped onto a bandwagon of collective hysteria by proclaiming the imminent end of the world. The final days, the astrologers announced, would occur as a result of a second Deluge brought on by a conjunction of the three upper planets, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, in the sign of Pisces.*

[...]



*The European fascination with the Wonder Year of 1588 can be traced back to the supposed discovery among the papers of the German astronomer Regiomontanus (Johannes Müller) of a doggerel verse predicting great calamities for that year, which he was alleged to have scribbled on a leaf of paper.*

[...]

*As in 1524, the annus mirabilis came and went without calamitous results—much less the Second Coming. Astrologers, who had gone out on a limb predicting the end of the world, became the butt of ridicule. Philip Stubbes, in his *Anatomy of Abuses* (1583) chided the “foolish star tooters,” whose “presumptuous audacity and rash boldness ... brought the world into such wonderful perplexity.” Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, wrote that the astrologers should be shunned “like a dragon’s den.[”]*

Source: William Eamon, “Astrology and Prophecy in the Renaissance.” 20 November 2011

<https://williameamon.com/astrology-and-prophecy-in-the-renaissance/>

— 5.3 —

At the end of the play, either Galatea or Phillida will become a boy, aka a transgender man. All indications are that the two will live happily ever after. (Some important gods attend the wedding, and it is clear that Galatea and Phillida love each other.) More power to them.

For Your Information:

*In 1949, journalist James Morris married Elizabeth Tuckniss. Later, Mr. Morris got a sex change and became Jan Morris. Because of the sex change, the married couple was forced to divorce, but they continued to live together. In 2008, in a civil service ceremony, Jan Morris, now a writer, re-married Elizabeth Tuckniss. Ms. Morris pointed out, “I have lived with the same person for 58 years. We were married when I was young ... and then this sex-change, so-called, happened, so we naturally had to divorce ... but we always lived together, anyway. So, I wanted to round this thing off nicely. So last week, as a matter of fact, Elizabeth and I went and had a civil union.” Ms. Tuckniss says, “After Jan had a sex change, we had to divorce. So there we were. It did not make any difference to me. We still had our family. We just carried on.”*

*Why do some marriages endure that seem unlikely to endure?*

*British journalist Stuart Jeffries says, “You know what — it’s none of our business. ... Enough that some mysteries remain just that.”*

Source: Stuart Jeffries, “Unlikely in love — couples who beat the odds.” *The Guardian*. 5 June 2008 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jun/05/gayrights.relationships>>.

The anecdote was retold in David Bruce’s own words, and it appears in his book *The Funniest People in Families, Volume 6: 250 Anecdotes*:

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/108857>

# **LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS**

## CAST OF CHARACTERS (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### MAIN GODS

*Cupid*, God of Love.

*Ceres*, Goddess of Agriculture.

### FORESTERS

*Ramis*, in love with Nisa. The Latin word *ramus* means “branch.”

*Montanus*, in love with Celia. The Latin word *montanus* means “mountaineer.”

*Silvestris*, in love with Niobe. The Latin word *silva* means “forest.”

### OTHER MORTAL CHARACTERS

*Erisichthon*, a churlish farmer.

*Protea*, daughter to Erisichthon.

*Petulius*, in love with Protea.

### NYMPHS OF CERES

*Nisa*. Nisa believes that she can resist any man. She does not believe that true love exists. Ramis thinks that she mocks love.

*Celia*. Celia wants to stay beautiful and not have children. Montanus thinks that she hates love.

*Niobe*. Niobe does not want to have just one man. She hates — or says she hates — the kind of love that leads to loyalty and chasteness. Silvestris thinks that she thinks she is above love.

*Tirtena*. Tirtena speaks only one line in the play.

*Fidelia*, transformed into a tree.

### MINOR CHARACTERS

*A Merchant*.

*A Siren*.

**The Scene: Arcadia. A rustic area.**

The play makes a few references to Thessaly.

Thessaly is in northern Greece, and Arcadia is in southern Greece in the central Peloponnesus.

Arcadia is also a fictionalized rustic area.

The Arcadia in the play has a seashore, but the Arcadia in southern Greece in the central Peloponnesus does not have a seashore.

Thessaly does have a seashore.

Erisichthon was a king of Thessaly, but in this play Erisichthon is a rich farmer.

## **NOTES:**

Peter Lukacs has excellently edited and annotated this play. It can be downloaded free here:

<http://elizabethandrama.org/the-playwrights/john-lyly/loves-metamorphosis-by-john-lyly/>

Leah Scragg has also excellently edited and annotated this play:

Lyly, John. *Love's Metamorphosis*. Ed. Leah Scragg. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press. Distributed exclusively in the USA by Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

### **ROMAN NAME (GREEK NAME)**

Bacchus (Dionysus): god of wine and ecstasy

Ceres (Demeter): goddess of grain and agriculture

Cupid (Eros): god of love; also, son of Venus

Diana (Artemis): goddess of the hunt

Juno (Hera): wife of Jupiter, king of the gods, and so she is queen of the gods

Jupiter, aka Jove (Zeus): king of the gods

Mercury (Hermes): a messenger-god

Neptune (Poseidon): god of the sea

Proserpine (Persephone): wife of Pluto, god of the Land of the Dead; also, daughter of Ceres

Pluto (Hades): god of the Land of the Dead

Ulysses (Odysseus): hero of Homer's epic poem *Odyssey*

Venus (Aphrodite): goddess of sexual desire

Vesta (Hestia): goddess of the hearth

## CHAPTER 1 (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### — 1.1 —

Three foresters — Ramis, Montanus, and Silvestris — talked together while standing by a tree that was sacred to Ceres, the goddess of agriculture. The foresters, whose job was to take care of the woods on this estate, were carrying shields and garlands. Garlands are wreaths made of flowers and leaves. These garlands would be hung on Ceres' sacred tree to honor Ceres. The shields were heraldic shields and bore designs that told which nymph each forester loved.

Another name for shields is escutcheons.

The three foresters had fallen in love with three nymphs. Nymphs are long-lived minor deities of nature.

Ramis loved Nisa, Montanus loved Celia, and Silvestris loved Niobe. Unfortunately, the three nymphs did not return their love.

Ramis said, "I cannot see, Montanus, why it is fabled by the poets that Love sat upon the chaos and created the world, since in the world there is so little love."

Different mythologies have different creators who bring order out of chaos. In this mythology, Love performs that creation. This Love is not Cupid, god of Love. This philosophical and perhaps religious Love is much stronger. Cupid was created and is part of the universe.

"Ramis, thou cannot see that which cannot with reason be imagined," Montanus said, "for if the divine virtues of Love had dispersed themselves through the powers of the world so forcibly as to make them take by his influence the forms and qualities impressed within them, no doubt they could not choose but savor more of his divinity."

In other words: Using reason, we can conclude that if Love created the world, then love ought to permeate all of existence.

Silvestris said:

"I do not think Love has any spark of divinity in him, since the end of his being is earthly: In the blood he is born by the frail fires of the eye, and he is quenched by the frailer shadows of thought."

According to Silvestris, Love need not be regarded as a god. We look at someone and are attracted to them, and Love is born. But then our reason may let us know that this person is not a suitable partner for us, and Love dies.

Silvestris continued:

"What reason have we then to pander to his desires with such zeal, and follow his fading delights with such passion?"

Another conception of love is Cupid, the god of love who shoots gold arrows at people and makes them fall in love.

Because Silvestris, like Ramis and Montanus, has been rejected by the nymph he loves, he thinks that Love, aka Cupid, offers fading delights. First we have the delights of falling in love, followed by the pain of rejection.

Ramis said, “We have bodies, Silvestris, and human bodies, which in their own natures being much more wretched than beasts, do much more miserably than beasts pursue their own ruins; and since it will ask longer labor and study to subdue the powers of our blood — our passion and lust — to the rule of the soul, than to satisfy them with the fruition of our loves, let us be constant in the world’s errors, and seek our own torments.”

In other words: As humans, it is in our character to fall in love. Subjecting our passions and lust to the rule of reason would require much effort and study, and so it is better to continue to fall in love and try to have our love reciprocated even though the attempt will often fail and leave us in torment.

Montanus said:

“It is as good to yield indeed submissively, and satisfy part of our affections, as to be stubborn without the ability to resist, and to enjoy none of them.”

By pursuing the person we love, we will at least be doing what our heart wants us to do. That is some satisfaction even if we are rejected.

Montanus continued:

“I am in the worst plight, since I love a nymph who mocks love.”

“And I love a nymph who hates love,” Ramis said.

“I love a nymph who thinks herself above love,” Silvestris said.

Ramis said:

“Let’s not argue about whose mistress — whose loved one — is the baddest, since they are all cruel; nor let us argue about which of our fortunes are the most perverse, since they are all desperate and hopeless.”

In this sense, “mistress” means “woman who is loved.”

Ramis continued:

“I will hang my shield on this tree in honor of Ceres, and I will write this verse on the tree in hope of my success:

“*Penelopen ipsam perstes, modo tempore vinces.*”

“Penelope will yield at last: continue and conquer.”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)*, Book 1, line 477.

Translated, the quotation says, “If you are persistent, you will conquer Penelope herself in time.”

Ulysses’ wife, Penelope, remained chaste during the twenty years that her husband spent away from home. The first ten years he spent fighting the Trojan War, and the second ten years he spent trying to get back home. Much of that time he was kept captive on an island by the goddess Calypso.

During much of that time, people assumed that Ulysses was dead, and over 100 suitors tried to convince Penelope to marry one of them. Penelope was able to hold them off for some time with her famous weaving trick. She told them that after she had woven a shroud for Ulysses' father, Laertes, she would choose one of them to marry. Each day she wove the shroud, and each night she unwove what she had woven.

All of the foresters would hang their shields on the tree to honor Ceres, and they would write short mottos or verses on the garlands and hang them on the tree to honor Ceres.

Montanus said:

“I will write this verse on the tree:

“*Fructus abest facies cum bona teste caret.*”

“Fair faces lose their beauty, if they accept no lovers.”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)*, Book 3, line 398.

Translated, the quotation says, “The fruit is absent from the face when it lacks a good witness.”

Ramis asked Silvestris, “But why are thou thinking so hard? What will thou write for thy lady to read?”

Silvestris answered:

“That which necessity forces me to endure: to revere love, and to admire wisdom:

“*Rivalem patienter habe.*”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)*, Book 2, the first half of line 539.

Translated, the quotation says, “Be patient with your rival.”

Montanus then suggested that they go to work in their separate parts of the forest: “Come, let us all go to our walks. Perhaps we shall meet the nymphs walking.”

## — 1.2 —

The three nymphs — Nisa, Celia, and Niobe — walked over to the tree that was sacred to Ceres.

“It is time to hang up our garlands,” Nisa said. “This is our harvest holyday: On this festival day, we must both sing and dance in honor of Ceres. Of what colors or flowers is thine garland made of, Niobe?”

Niobe said:

“Of salamints, which are white in the morning, red at noon, and purple in the evening, for in my affections there shall be no staidness but in unsteadiness.”

Staidness is constancy. The salamint — a flower that John Lyly made up — is not constant in color. Niobe wanted to be constant only in inconstancy. That is, she didn't want to be tied to only one relationship, but to go from one relationship to another, or to have many relationships at the same time.

Niobe then asked:

“But what is yours of, Nisa?”

Nisa said:

“My garland is made of holly because it is most holy and its lovely green neither the sun’s beams, nor the wind’s blasts, can alter or diminish.”

Holly is not affected by the elements, and Nisa is not affected by men. For Nisa, romantic love does not exist.

Nisa then asked:

“But, Celia, what garland do you have?”

Celia answered, “Mine is made all of cypress leaves, which are broadest and most beautiful, yet bear the least fruit; for beauty makes the brightest show, being the slightest substance; and I am content to wither before I am worn and to deprive myself of that which so many desire: sex.”

The cypress is very beautiful but bears little fruit, and Celia was content to be beautiful but have no children. She knew that her beauty would wither eventually, but she was content to have her beauty wither before she had children. She was content to die a virgin.

Niobe said:

“Come, let us make an end to this discussion, lest Ceres comes and finds us slack in performing that which we owe her: music and dancing.”

Noticing the writing on Ceres’ sacred tree, Niobe said:

“But wait, some people have been here this morning before us.”

“The amorous foresters, or no one, have been here,” Nisa said, “for in the woods they have eaten so much wake-robin, that they cannot sleep for love.”

Wake-robin is an herb that people used when they suffered from depression.

“Alas, poor souls, how ill love sounds in their lips, who by telling a long tale of hunting, think they have revealed a sad passion of love!” Celia said.

The foresters didn’t know how to tell a nymph that they loved her, and so they talked about hunting instead and hoped that each nymph understood that she was loved.

Oddly enough, this worked, because the three nymphs knew that the three foresters loved them.

Niobe said, “Give them permission to love, since we have liberty to choose whom we will love or not love, for I take as great entertainment in coursing their tame hearts, as they take pains in hunting their wild harts.”

The verb “to course” can mean 1) to hunt, 2) to chase, or 3) to trouble.

Niobe delighted in teasing the forester who loved her.



Celia said:

“Niobe, your affection is only pinned to your tongue, which when you wish you can unloose.”

Niobe’s love is not real love, but just teasing: She can easily “love” someone other than the forester who loves her.

Celia then said:

“But let us read what they have written: *Penelopen ipsam perstes modo tempore vinces.*

“That is for you, Nisa, whom nothing will move, yet hope makes him hover.”

Ramis, who loved Nisa, had placed the motto “If you are persistent, you will conquer Penelope herself in time” on Ceres’ tree.

Nisa was the nymph who thought she could resist any man.

“A fond hobby to hover over an eagle,” Nisa said.

A hobby is a type of falcon; eagles were regarded as a better bird.

Nisa regarded herself as the eagle, and she regarded Ramis as the hobby.

The word “fond” can mean “foolish.”

Niobe said:

“But foresters think all birds are buntings.”

Buntings are small colorful birds. “Foresters think all birds are buntings” metaphorically meant that they think that all women are alike.

Niobe then said:

“What’s the next motto? *Fructus abest facies cum bona teste caret.* Celia, the forester gives you good counsel: Take your pennyworth while the market serves.”

In other words: Sell while there is a demand.

Or: Find a husband while you are young and beautiful.

Montanus, who loved Celia, had hung the motto “The fruit is absent from the face when it lacks a good witness” on Ceres’ tree.

Celia was the beautiful nymph who wished never to have children.

“I hope it will be market day until my death’s day,” Celia said.

She hoped to remain beautiful until she died.

The verb “hope” can mean “expect.”

Nisa said:

“Let me read, too: *Rivalem patienter habe.*

“He touches you, Niobe, to the quick, yet you see how patient he is in your inconstancy.”

Silvestris, who loved Niobe, had hung the motto “Be patient with your rival” on Ceres’ tree.

Niobe said:

“Inconstancy is a vice that I will not swap for all the virtues; although I throw a man off with my whole hand, I can pull him back again with my little finger.”

Niobe wanted to have many lovers. Getting rid of a lover might require effort, but getting a new lover was easy.

Niobe then said:

“Let us encourage them, and write something: If they judge it favorably, we will know that they are fools; if they respond with anger, we will say they are perverse.”

Niobe wanted the nymphs to tease the foresters by leaving messages for them.

Nisa said:

“I will begin.

“*Cedit amor rebus, res age, tutus eris.*”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid’s *Remedia Amoris* (*The Cures for Love*), line 144.

Translated, the quotation says, “Love gives way to things, keep busy, you will be safe.”

In other words: Keep busy, and you can avoid falling in love.

Celia said:

“Indeed, it is better to count the stars than to be idle, yet it is better to be idle than to be ill-employed.

“My motto is this: *Sat mihi si facies, sit bene nota mihi.*”

The Latin is a variation of a line from Ovid’s *Heroides* (*Heroines*) xvii.38.

Translated, the Latin means, “If you will pursue me, let it be well known to me.”

One way for Montanus to do that would be to praise Celia’s beauty.

Niobe said, “You care for nothing but a glass — that is, a flatterer.”

A glass is a mirror, and flatterers praise a woman’s beauty.

“Then all men are glasses,” Nisa said.

“Some glasses are true,” Celia said.

Sometimes, when a man praises a woman’s beauty, her beauty really is worthy of praise.

Niobe said:

“No men are true glasses: All men are liars.”

She then said:

“But this is my motto: *Victoria tecum stabit.*”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)*, Book 2, the second half of line 539 and the first word of line 540.

Translated, the quotation says, “Victory rests with you.”

Silvestris’ motto had been the first half of line 539:

“*Rivalem patienter habe.*”

Nisa said, “Thou give hope to Silvestris.”

“He who is patient is worthy of it,” Niobe said.

Silvestris’ motto, translated, had been: “Be patient with your rival.”

Celia said:

“Let us sing, and so attend on Ceres; for this day, although into her heart never entered any impulse of love, yet usually to the temple of Cupid, she offers two white doves, as asking for his favor, and one eagle as commanding his power.”

Ceres was actually a mother: Her daughter was Proserpine, aka Persephone. Perhaps, however, Ceres had not yet become a mother at this time.

Doves are associated with Cupid’s mother, Venus, and eagles are associated with Jupiter, the king of the gods.

Turtledoves mate for life.

“To command his power” can mean to ask for his protection.

Since Ceres is a goddess, such a request is likely to be at least strongly considered.

Celia then said:

“*Praecibusque minas regaliter addet.*”

Translated, the Latin means, “She will add threats to her royal entreaties.”

When dealing with Cupid, Ceres used both the carrot and the stick.

The nymphs sang and danced to honor Ceres.

Erisichthon, a wealthy and churlish farmer whose estate contained these woods, entered the scene and said:

“What noise is this, what assembly, what idolatry?”

“Has the modesty of virgins turned to wantonness?”

“Is the honor of Ceres now considered to be immoral?”

“And is Erisichthon, the ruler of this forest, now believed to have no power?”

“You are impudent giglots — harlots — to disturb my game animals or to dare do honor to any but Erisichthon. It is not your fair faces as smooth as jet — black marble — nor your enticing

eyes, even if they drew and attracted iron like adamantine magnets, nor your polished speeches, even if they were as forcible as Thessalides', that shall make me any way flexible."

"Thessalides'" may be a typo for "Thessalians'," meaning the women of Thessaly.

Aglaonice or Aganice of Thessaly is regarded as the first female astronomer of ancient Greece. She and some women associated with her became known as "the witches of Thessaly."

She claimed to be able to "make the Moon disappear from the sky," which is now interpreted as meaning that she could predict lunar eclipses. Her words and the words of the women in her scientific group would be well worth hearing.

Niobe said:

"Erisichthon, thy stern looks combined with thy haughty speeches, thy words as unkempt as thy locks of hair, were able to frighten men of bold courage, and to make frantic us simple girls, who are full of fear; but know thou, Erisichthon, that if thy hands were as ungoverned and unrestrained as is thy tongue, and the one was as ready to execute and perform evil as the other — your tongue — was to threaten it, it should neither move our hearts to ask for pity, or remove our bodies from this place.

"We are the handmaids of divine Ceres. To fair Ceres is this holy tree dedicated — to Ceres, by whose favor thyself live, who deserve to perish."

Erisichthon was a farmer, and Ceres was the goddess of agriculture. Erisichthon owed his livelihood to Ceres.

Erisichthon said:

"Are you so devoted to Ceres that to spite Erisichthon, you will engage in these sacrificial offerings?"

The sacrificial offerings included the nymphs' song and their dance, but Erisichthon may have been referring to the mottos on Ceres' holy tree.

The ancient Greeks did sacrifice animals to honor the gods, but the sacrifices in this play are offerings that do not involve the killing of animals.

Erisichthon continued:

"No, immodest girls, you shall see that I have neither the regard for your sex that men should tender to you, nor of your beauty that foolish love would dote on, nor of your goddess, which no one except peevish, foolish girls reverence and honor."

Erisichthon did not love: This was an affront to Cupid.

Erisichthon continued:

"I will destroy this tree to spite all; and so that you may see my hand execute what my heart intends, and so that you realize that nothing may appease my malice, my last word shall be the beginning of the first blow."

Erisichthon struck the tree with his axe.

"Oh, alas! What has he done!" Celia said.

“We ourselves, I fear, must also provide matter to feed his fury!” Niobe said.

The nymphs could attempt to physically stop Erisichthon from cutting down Ceres’ sacred tree.

“Let him alone,” Nisa said, “but look, the tree pours out blood, and I hear a voice.”

In Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Aeneas was looking for a home for himself and the other Trojan survivors of the Trojan War. He landed in Thrace and thought to build a city there, but in a thicket of dogwood and myrtle he broke a branch off a tree and blood poured out. He heard a voice and learned that the voice was that of Polydorus, a prince of Troy, who said to him:

“Why, Aeneas, are you making me bleed? Spare me, and spare yourself. No good can come to you from fouling your hands with my blood. You know me. I am a Trojan, and the blood you see is Trojan. Escape from this guilty land. I am Polydorus, and I am one of the sons of Priam. Here I was murdered with spears. The spears stayed in my body after my death. They took root and grew.”

This was a bad omen, and the Trojans left Thrace, but first they built a proper burial mound for Polydorus.

Dante, of course, knew Virgil’s *Aeneid* well, and he used the image of a tree speaking when a branch is broken in his *Inferno* in the section about the suicides. (Of course, Polydorus was a murder victim, not a suicide.)

After leaving a river of boiling blood where the violent against other people were punished, Dante and Virgil arrived at a gloomy wood where the Suicides were punished. The Suicides were the grubby shrubs of the wood. They could communicate only when a twig or branch was broken, and then they used the resulting hole as a mouth until the blood congealed.

This punishment was appropriate because by killing themselves, the Suicides had given up the privilege of self-determination. As shrubs, the Suicides had no free will because plants have no free will. This was appropriate because in life the Suicides had rejected free will by committing suicide. As grubby shrubs, the Suicides could not move around and could not even speak unless someone broke off a twig or branch. At the Last Judgment, the Suicides will be given back their bodies, but because they had rejected their bodies when they were alive, the bodies will hang from the branches of the shrubs.

Erisichthon asked:

“What voice?”

He then said to the tree:

“If in the tree there is anybody, speak quickly, lest the next blow hit the tale out of thy mouth.”

The voice of the transformed nymph Fidelity came from the trunk of the tree:

“Monster of men, hate of the heavens, and to the earth a burden, what transgression has chaste Fidelity committed?”

“Is it thy spite, Cupid, who, having no power to wound my unspotted, pure, chaste mind, procured means and found a way to mangle my tender body, and by violence to gash those sides that enclose a heart dedicated to virtue?”

Fidelia was asking whether Cupid, god of Love, had inspired Erisichthon to cut that tree that was actually Fidelia. Cupid's motive for doing that would be Fidelia's desire to remain a virgin and not lie with a man.

Fidelia continued:

“Or is it that savage satyr, who feeding his sensual appetite upon lust, seeks now to quench it with blood, so that since he is without hope to attain my love, he may with cruelty end my life?”

Satyrs were half-man and half-goat, and they were notoriously lustful. A satyr had pursued Fidelia but had not succeeded in bedding her.

Fidelia continued:

“Or does Ceres, whose nymph I have been for many years, in recompence and repayment of my inviolable faith, ‘reward’ me with unspeakable torments?”

“Divine Phoebus Apollo, who pursued Daphne until she was turned into a bay tree, ceased then to trouble her. Aye, the gods are full of pity.”

The ancient Greek gods, including Zeus and Apollo, were notoriously lustful, and they slept with many mortal women and immortal goddesses. They were entirely capable of rape.

Zeus' Roman name is Jupiter.

Apollo had pursued Daphne, who prayed for an escape from him. Her father, the river god Peneus of Thessaly, heard her prayer and turned her into a bay laurel tree.

Fidelia continued:

“Cinyras, who with fury followed his daughter Myrrha until she was changed to a myrrh tree, ceased then to torment her. Yes, parents are natural.”

Parents naturally love their children. Here, the love is shown by her father's ceasing to torment her once she was transformed.

Myrrha had an unnatural love for her father, Cinyras, and when he was drunk, she committed incest with him. Their child was the beautiful Adonis. Her father chased after her with a sword. Myrrha asked the gods to transform her into something other than a human being, and they transformed her into a myrrh tree.

Fidelia continued:

“Phoebus Apollo lamented the loss of his friend, Cinyras, who lost his child.

“But both gods and men either forget or neglect the transformation of Fidelia; indeed, they follow her after her transformation so they can make her more miserable.

“The result is that there is nothing more hateful than to be chaste. The bodies of the chaste women are followed in the world with lust, and then they are tormented in the graves with tyranny.

“The freer the minds of the chaste are from vice, the more their bodies are in danger of evil being done to them, so that they are not safe when they live, because of men's love.

“Nor are they safe after being changed and transformed, as I was into a tree, because of their hates.

“Nor are they safe when they are dead because their reputations are defamed and slandered.

“What is that chastity which so few women study ways to keep, and both gods and men seek to violate?

“If chastity is only a naked name — just a word — why are we so superstitious about and so devoted to a hollow sound?

“If chastity is a splendid virtue, why are men so negligent in respecting such an exceeding splendiddness?

“Go, ladies, tell Ceres that I am that Fidelity who for so long made garlands in her honor, and chased by a satyr, by prayer to the gods became turned into a tree; whose body now is grown over with a rough bark, and whose golden locks are covered with green leaves; yet whose mind nothing can alter, neither the fear of death, nor the torments of death.”

Her mind did not change: Her mind was still human.

Fidelity continued:

“If Ceres will seek no revenge, then let virginity be not only the scorn of savage people, but the spoil. Let savage people despise virginity and take virgins’ virginity.

“But, alas, I feel the last of my blood come. I am soon to die, and therefore I must end my last breath.

“Farewell, ladies, whose lives are subject to many evils; for if you are beautiful, it is hard to be chaste.

“If you are chaste, it is impossible to be safe and remain a virgin.

“If you are young, you will quickly bend.

“If you bend, you are suddenly broken.

“If you are ugly, you shall seldom be flattered and complimented.

“If you are not flattered, you will always be sorrowful.

“Beauty is a firm fickleness, youth is a feeble staidness, deformity is a continual sadness.”

In other words: Beauty is always variable; it always leaves us. Young people are weak when it comes to virtue. Deformity always causes sadness.

Being turned into a tree can be regarded as a kind of deformity.

Fidelity died.

Niobe said to Erisichthon, “Thou monster, can thou hear this without grief?”

Erisichthon said, “Yea, and I can double your griefs with my blows.”

He cut the tree until it fell to the ground.

Nisa said, “Ah, poor Fidelia, the perfect model of chastity and example of misfortune!”

Celia said, “Ah, cruel Erisichthon, who not only defaced these holy trees, but also murdered this chaste nymph!”

Erisichthon said:

“Nymph, or goddess, it does not matter, for there is no one whom Erisichthon cares for, except Erisichthon.

“Let Ceres, the lady of your harvest, take revenge when she will — indeed, when she dares! And tell her this: that I am Erisichthon.”

It is a mistake to offend the gods because the gods are powerful, and they will get revenge.

It is also a mistake to let offended gods know your name because the gods are not omniscient and if Ceres did not know who had cut down the tree and killed the nymph Fidelia, Ceres could not take revenge.

When Odysseus escaped from the cave of the one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus after blinding his eye, he and his surviving men got on their ship and started to sail away. Odysseus, however, wanted Polyphemus to know who tricked and blinded him, and he yelled to the Cyclops, “Do you want to know who blinded you? It was I, Odysseus, son of Laertes. My home is Ithaca.”

Immediately, Polyphemus prayed to his father, the god Poseidon, and asked for revenge against the Ithacan Odysseus, son of Laertes.

If Odysseus had not told the Cyclops his identity, the Cyclops would not have been able to pray to Poseidon and curse him. Poseidon may never have found out that it was Odysseus who blinded his son, Polyphemus, and he would not have known to hate Odysseus.

In this case the nymphs already knew Erisichthon’s name. Still, his telling the nymphs to tell Ceres his name is an act of hubris: overweening pride.

“Thou are none of the gods,” Niobe said to Erisichthon.

“No, I am a despiser and scorner of the gods,” Erisichthon said.

“And do thou hope to escape revenge, being just a man?” Nisa asked.

“Yes, I don’t worry about revenge, being a man and Erisichthon,” he answered.

A proverb of the time stated, “Revenge is womanish.”

Erisichthon exited.

Nisa said to the other nymphs:

“Come, let us go to Ceres, and complain about this unparalleled and not-to-be-believed villain: Erisichthon.

“If there is power in her deity, if there is pity in her mind, or if there is virtue in virginity, this monster cannot escape.”

The three nymphs left to inform Ceres about the sacrilege Erisichthon had done to her sacred tree and to tell her about the death of Fidelia.





## CHAPTER 2 (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### — 2.1 —

At Ceres' tree, now felled, Ceres and the nymphs Niobe, Nisa, and Celia met.

Although the three nymphs all served Ceres, they were different:

Nisa believed that she could resist any man, and she did not believe in true love.

Celia wanted to stay beautiful and not have children.

Niobe did not want to have just one man.

Another nymph, who was named Tirtena, was present.

Ceres said:

“Does Erisichthon offer violence to my nymphs, and does he offer disgrace to my deity?”

“Have I stuffed his barns with fruitful grain, and does he stretch his hand against me with intolerable pride?”

“So it is, Ceres, thine eyes may witness what thy nymphs have told you; here lies the tree hacked in pieces, and here is the blood scarcely cold of the fairest virgin.

“If this is the result of thy cruelty, Cupid, I will no longer hallow and do reverence to thy temple with sacred vows.”

Ceres thought that possibly, Cupid had inspired Erisichthon to do this evil deed.

Ceres continued:

“If this is the result of thy malignant, cankered nature, Erisichthon, thou shall find as great misery as thou have shown malice. I have decided on thy punishment, and as speedy shall be my revenge as thy cruelty has been barbarous.”

She then ordered:

“Tirtena, on yonder hill, where neither grain nor leaf ever grew, where there is nothing except barrenness and coldness, fear and paleness, Famine lies.

“Go to her and say that Ceres commands her to gnaw on the bowels of Erisichthon, so that his hunger may be as unquenchable as is his fury.”

“I obey,” Tirtena said, “but how will I know Famine from others?”

Ceres answered:

“Thou cannot fail to recognize her, if thou just remember her name; and thou cannot forget her name because when thou come near to the place, thou shall find gnawing in thy stomach.

“She lies with open mouth, and swallows nothing except air.

“Her face is pale, and so lean, that thou may through the very skin behold the bone, as easily as in a mirror thou may behold thy reflection.

“Her hair is long, black, and shaggy.

“Her eyes are sunk so far into her head that she looks out of the back of her neck.

“Her lips are white and rough.

“Her teeth are hollow and red with rustiness: discoloration.”

Her teeth are “rusty” because they have not been used.

Ceres continued:

“Her skin is so thin that thou may as clearly make an anatomy of and analyze her body, as if she were cut up by surgeons.”

An anatomy is a skeleton.

Ceres continued:

“Her stomach is like a dry bladder.

“Her heart is swollen big with wind; and all her intestines are like snakes working in her body.

“This monster, when thou shall see her, tell her my instructions, and return with speed.”

“I go, fearing more the sight of Famine than the force and effect of famine itself,” Tirtena said.

“Take thou these few ears of corn, but do not let Famine so much as smell them; and let her go on the windward side from thee,” Ceres said.

Tirtena could eat the corn to help avoid the effects of famine, but she needed to stand in such a way that the wind would not blow the scent of the corn to Famine.

Tirtena exited.

Ceres then said:

“Now shall Erisichthon see that Ceres is a great goddess, as full of power as he himself is full of pride, and he will see that Ceres is as pitiless as he is presumptuous.

“What do you think, ladies? Isn’t this revenge apt punishment for so great an injury?”

“Yes, madam,” Niobe said. “This punishment will let men see that they who contend with the gods only confound and ruin themselves.”

Ceres said:

“But let us go to the temple of Cupid and make an offering.

“They who think it strange for chastity to humble itself to Cupid, know neither the power of love, nor the nature of virginity: Love has absolute authority to command, and so virgins find it difficult to resist love.

“Where such continual war is between love and virtue, there must be some parleys and continual perils.”

Parleys are conversations between enemies; for example, a parley could be held when an army is besieging a castle. The besieging army may ask — or demand — that those in the castle surrender.

Ceres continued:

“Cupid has never been conquered, and therefore he must be flattered; virginity has been conquered, and therefore it must be humble.”

“Into my heart, madam, there did never enter any motion or impulse of love,” Nisa said.

Ceres said:

“Those who often say that they cannot love, or will not love, certainly they love.”

Nisa believed that she could resist any man.

Ceres asked her:

“Have thou ever seen Cupid?”

Nisa replied:

“No, but I have heard him described fully, and, as I imagined, foolishly.

“First, he is described as a blind and naked god, with wings, with bow, with arrows, with firebrands, aka flaming torches; swimming sometimes in the sea, and playing sometimes on the shore; with many other attributes, which the painters, being the poets’ apes — that is, imitators — have taken as great pains to paint, as the poets have taken great pains to lie.

“Can I think that gods who command all things would go naked?”

“What should he do with wings who does not know where to fly?”

“Or what should he do with arrows, who does not see how to aim? The heart is a narrow mark to hit, and rather requires Argus’ eyes to take aim than a blind boy to shoot at random.”

Argus was a giant with a hundred eyes.

Nisa continued:

“If he were fire, then the sea would quench those coals, or the flame would turn him into cinders.”

“Well, Nisa, thou shall see him,” Ceres said.

“I fear Niobe has felt his power,” Nisa said,

Niobe, who did not want to be tied down to one lover, said:

“Not I, madam.”

It sounds as if Niobe has had no lovers so far. She may have teased many men without having a relationship with any of them.

She continued:

“Yet I must confess that I have had often sweet thoughts, sometimes hard and hostile thoughts, and between both, I have had a kind of yielding.

“I don’t know what it is.

“But certainly, I think it is not love.

“I can sigh and find ease and relief in feelings of melancholy.

“I smile, and I take pleasure in imagination.

“I feel in myself a pleasing pain, a chill heat, a delicate bitterness — I don’t know what to call it. Without doubt it may be love; I am sure that it is not hate.”

“Niobe is tender-hearted, and her thoughts are like water: yielding to everything, and nothing to be seen,” Nisa said.

Ceres said:

“Well, let us go to Cupid.

“Take heed that in your stubbornness in refusing to love, you don’t offend him, whom by entreaties you ought to follow: You should pray to him.

“Diana’s nymphs were as chaste as Ceres’ virgins, as fair, as wise. How Cupid tormented them, I had rather you should hear than feel, but this is the truth, they all yielded to love.

“Don’t look so scornfully, my nymphs, I say they yielded to love.”

Diana’s Greek name is Artemis, and she is the virgin goddess of the hunt. Her nymphs were also virgins, and when Cupid pursued one of them and was rejected by her, he made Diana’s nymphs fall in love with two girls who were disguised as boys. John Lyly tells this story in his play *Gallathea*, aka *Galathea*.

Ceres then said:

“This is Cupid’s temple.”

The temple doors opened, and Cupid came out.

Ceres said:

“Thou great god Cupid, whom the gods regard with respect, and men revere and worship, let it be lawful and permissible for Ceres to give her offering.”

Cupid, who was a clothed handsome young man rather than a naked cherub, replied, “Divine Ceres, Cupid accepts anything that comes from Ceres, who feeds my sparrows with ripe corn, feeds my pigeons with wholesome seeds, and honors my temple with chaste virgins.”

Despite all her talk about wanting many lovers, Niobe was a virgin.

Ceres, referring to Cupid as Love, said:

“Then, Love, to thee I bring these white and spotless and pure doves, in token that my heart is as free from any thought of love, as these are free from any blemish, and as clear in virginity, as these are perfect in whiteness.”

She then said:

“But so that my nymphs may know both thy power and thy laws, and so that they will err neither in ignorance nor in pride, let me ask some questions to instruct them so that they will not offend thee, whom they cannot resist.”

She then asked, “In virgins what do thou chiefly desire?”

“In those who are not in love, I chiefly desire reverent thoughts of love; in those who are in love, I chiefly desire faithful vows,” Cupid said.

“What do thou most hate in virgins?” Ceres asked.

“Pride in the beautiful, bitter taunts in the witty, incredulity and disbelief in all,” Cupid answered.

Celia was proud of her beauty.

Niobe teased the forester who loved her.

Nisa did not believe that she would ever fall in love.

“What may protect my virgins so that they may never love?” Ceres asked.

“That they never are idle,” Cupid replied.

“Why did thou so cruelly torment all Diana’s nymphs with love?” Ceres asked.

“Because they thought it impossible to love,” Cupid replied.

“What is the substance — the essence — of love?” Ceres asked.

“Constancy and secrecy,” Cupid replied.

“What are the physical signs of love?” Ceres asked.

“Sighs and tears,” Cupid replied.

“What are the causes of love?” Ceres asked.

“Wit and idleness,” Cupid replied.

“What are the means of love?” Ceres asked. “What means will a lover use?”

“Opportunity and importunity,” Cupid replied.

“Importunity” means persistence.

“What is the end or goal of love?” Ceres asked.

“Happiness without end,” Cupid replied.

“What do thou require from men?” Ceres asked.

“That shall be known by men only,” Cupid replied. “I won’t tell a woman that.”

“What is your revenge for those who will not love?” Ceres asked.

“To be deceived by their lover when they do love,” Cupid replied.

Ceres then said:

“Well, Cupid, treat my nymphs well, and though to love is no vice, yet spotless virginity is the only virtue.

“Let me keep their thoughts as chaste as their bodies, so that Ceres may be happy, and they may be praised.”

Cupid said:

“Why, Ceres, do you think that lust follows love?

“Ceres, lovers are chaste: for what is love, divine love, but the quintessence of chastity, and affections binding by heavenly impulses, which cannot be undone by earthly means and must not be controlled by any man?”

Chasteness does not mean virginity, although all virgins are chaste. To be chaste is to be free from all *unlawful* sexual intercourse. A husband and a wife who sleep only with each other are chaste.

Chaste love — genuine and honorable love — between a husband and wife can include sex. Many religions say that it ought to include sex with some exceptions such as physical or mental disability that makes sex painful or impossible.

According to Judaism, chaste sex is a *mitzvah*.

A *mitzvah* is 1) a commandment, and 2) a good deed.

Ceres said:

“We will honor thee with continual sacrifice.

“Warm us with mild affections; lest being too hot, we seem immodest like wantons, or lest being too cold, we seem immoveable and incapable of feeling like stocks.”

Stocks are tree trunks.

Ceres was seeking a mean between extremes: not too hot, like reckless lustfulness, nor too cold, like people who are frigid in sexual desire.

Cupid said:

“Ceres, let this advice serve for all.

“Don’t let thy nymphs be light and easily won nor let them be obstinate; but let them be as virgins should be — compassionate and faithful.

“Do this so that your flames shall warm but shall not burn.

“And do this so that your flames shall delight and shall never cause discomfort and distress.”

Cupid went into his temple.

Ceres said:

“What do you say, my nymphs? Doesn’t Cupid speak like a god?”

“I will not tell you to love, but I will implore you not to be disdainful of love.

“Let us go and see how Erisichthon is doing.

“Famine flies swiftly, and she has already seized on his stomach.”

They exited.



## CHAPTER 3 (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### — 3.1 —

Ramis pursued Nisa in a glade in the forest.

Nisa believed that she could resist any man. She mocked love, and she did not believe that true love exists.

Ramis said:

“Stay, cruel Nisa, thou don’t know from whom thou flee, and therefore thou flee.

“I don’t come to offer violence, but instead to offer that which is inviolable: My thoughts are as holy as thy vows to remain chaste, and I am as constant and faithful in love as thou are in cruelty.

“Lust does not follow my love as shadows follow bodies, but truth is woven into my love, as veins are woven into bodies.

“Let me touch this tender arm of yours, and say my love is endless.”

“And to no end,” Nisa said.

“My love is without spot and sin,” Ramis said.

“And shall be without hope,” Nisa said.

“Do thou disdain Love and his laws?” Ramis asked.

Love is a name for Cupid, god of love.

“I do not disdain that which I think does not exist, yet I laugh at those who honor it as if it exists,” Nisa said.

Nisa did not believe that true love exists.

“Time shall bring to pass that Nisa shall confess that there is love,” Ramis said.

“Then love will also make me confess that Nisa is a fool,” Nisa said.

“Is it folly to love, which the gods account as honorable, and men esteem as holy?” Ramis asked.

“The gods are capable of making anything lawful, because they are gods, and men honor shadows for substance, because they are men,” Nisa said.

“Both gods and men agree that love is a consuming and a restoring of the heart, a bitter death in a sweet life,” Ramis said.

Love can burn one’s heart. It can bring both pain and pleasure.

“Gods know, and men should know, that love is a consuming of wit, and a restoring of folly; it is a staring blindness, and a blind gazing,” Nisa said.

In other words: Love takes away a person’s intelligence and makes them foolish. And people in love tend not to see anything but their beloved. Certainly, when first in love, they can think

of little else but their beloved.

“Would thou allot me death?” Ramis asked.

“No, but I would allot you discretion,” Nisa said.

“Yield to me some hope,” Ramis requested.

“Hope to despair,” Nisa said.

The word “hope” can mean “expect.”

“I will not despair as long as Nisa is a woman,” Ramis said.

“Therein, Ramis, you show yourself to be a man,” Nisa said.

“Why?” Ramis asked.

“In flattering yourself that all women will yield,” Nisa said.

“All may,” Ramis said.

“Thou shall swear that we cannot,” Nisa said.

In other words: Not all women will yield. They have a choice.

“I will follow thee, and I will practice by denials to be patient, or by disdain I will die, and so be happy,” Ramis said.

Ramis and Nisa exited, with Ramis running after Nisa.

Montanus and Celia entered the scene. Montanus was pursuing Celia.

Celia wanted to stay beautiful and not have children. She thought that she was above love.

“Though thou have overtaken me in love, yet I have overtaken thee in running,” Montanus said. “Fair Celia, yield to love, to sweet love!”

Celia said:

“Montanus, thou are mad. Thou have almost no breath due to running so fast, yet thou will spend more breath in speaking so foolishly.

“Yield to love I cannot; or if I do, to thy love I will not.”

Montanus replied:

“The fairest wolf chooses the ugliest male wolf, if he is the most faithful, and the fairest wolf chooses the wolf who endures the most grief.

“The fairest wolf does not choose the male wolf that has the most beauty.

“If my thoughts were wolvis, thy hopes might be as thy comparison is — beastly,” Celia said.

“I wish that thy words were, as thy looks are, lovely,” Montanus said.

“I wish thy looks were, as thy affection is — blind,” Celia replied.

Montanus’ “looks” were his sense of seeing.

“Fair faces should have smooth hearts,” Montanus said.

“Fresh flowers have crooked roots,” Celia said.

“Women’s beauties will wane, and then no art can make them fair!” Montanus said.

Makeup can do only so much.

“Men’s follies will forever wax and grow, and then what reason can make them wise?” Celia asked.

“To be amiable, and not to love, is like a painted lady: to have colors, and no life,” Montanus said.

A painted lady is a woman wearing makeup, or a woman in a painting.

“To be amorous, and not lovely, is like a pleasant, merry fool, full of words, and no deserts — without merit,” Celia said.

“What do you call you deserts, and what do you call lovely?” Montanus asked.

“There is no lovelier thing than wit, and there is no greater desert than patience,” Celia said.

“Wit” is intelligence.

“Haven’t I an excellent wit?” Montanus asked.

“If thou think so thyself, thou are an excellent fool,” Celia said.

“Fool?” Montanus said. “No, Celia, thou shall find me as wise as I find thee proud; and as little to digest and tolerate thy taunts, as thou to brook and tolerate my love.”

“I thought, Montanus, that you could not deserve, when I told you what desert was: patience,” Celia said.

“Sweet Celia, I will be patient and forget this,” Montanus said.

“Then you lack wit, if you can be content to be patient,” Celia said.

Montanus said:

“That is a hard choice.

“If I take all well and have patience, then I lack wit and am a fool.

“But if find fault, then I lack patience and desert.”

“The fortune of love, and the virtue, is to have neither success in love nor the means to acquire it,” Celia said. “Farewell!”

Often, love is unrequited and so it is the fortune of love; however, the virtue of love is chasteness and loyalty in the sense that Cupid thinks of it: loving someone and being faithful to that person.

She ran away.

Montanus said:

“Farewell? Nay, I will follow!

“And I don’t know how it comes to pass, but disdain increases desire; and the further away possibility stands, the nearer hope approaches.

“I now follow you!”

The more Nisa disdained and scorned him, the more he wanted her.

The more that it seemed that he would never have Nisa, the more he hoped to have her.

Montanus ran after Nisa.

Niobe ran onto the scene, closely followed by Silvestris.

Niobe did not want to have just one man. She hated the kind of love that leads to loyalty and chasteness.

“A polypus, Niobe, is always the color of the stone it sticks to; and thou are always of the mood of whatever man thou talk with,” Silvestris said.

A polypus is a sea creature that can change its color.

Is Niobe “always of the mood of whatever man” she talks to? Not always. She does not match the mood of Silvestris.

“Do you find fault with me because I love?” Niobe asked.

“I find fault with thee because thou love so many,” Silvestris said.

“Would you have me like no one?” Niobe asked.

“I would like thee to love one man,” Silvestris said.

“Who shall make the choice of whom to love except myself?” Niobe asked.

“I myself,” Silvestris said.

Niobe said:

“For another to put thoughts into my head would be to pull the brains out of my head. Don’t take the measure of my affections but do weigh your own. Don’t judge my love but do criticize your love.

“The oak finds no fault with the dew because the dew also falls on the bramble.”

Niobe wanted to love many men, and she wanted Silvestris to be like the oak and not find fault.

Niobe continued:

“Believe me, Silvestris, the only way to be mad is to be constant and loyal to one person.

“Poets make their wreathes of laurel; ladies make their wreathes of several and various flowers.”

Silvestris replied:

“Sweet Niobe, a river running into diverse brooks becomes shallow, and a mind divided into various affections will have none in the end.

“What joy can I take in the fortune of my love, when I shall know many to have the like favors?”

“Turtledoves flock by couples and breed both joy and young ones.”

Turtledoves mated for life. Silvestris wanted Niobe and him to mate for life.

“But bees flock in swarms, and bring forth wax and honey,” Niobe said.

“Why do you covet many, when you may find sweetness in one?” Silvestris asked.

“Why did Argus have one hundred eyes, and might have seen with one?” Niobe asked.

“Because while he slept with some eyes, he might be awake with some other eyes,” Silvestris said.

“And I love many because, being deceived by the inconstancy and disloyalty of various men, I might yet have one who is constant and loyal,” Niobe said.

“That men are inconstant and disloyal is just an idea propagated by Juno, who knew that her husband, Jupiter, cheated on her,” Silvestris said.

Jupiter was a notoriously unfaithful husband, and Juno was a notoriously jealous wife.

“And this is a rule of Venus, who knew men’s lightness and promiscuity,” Niobe said.

Possibly, Venus knew that men were promiscuous because she slept with so many gods and mortals.

“The whole heaven has only one sun,” Silvestris said.

“But the heaven has an infinite number of stars,” Niobe said.

“The rainbow is always in one circumference,” Silvestris said.

“But the rainbow is made of various colors,” Niobe said.

“A woman has but one heart,” Silvestris said.

“But a woman has a thousand thoughts,” Niobe said.

“My lute, although it has many strings, makes a sweet consent — a sweet harmony — and a lady’s heart, although it harbors many fancies, should embrace only one love,” Silvestris said.

“The strings of my heart are tuned in a contrary key to your lute and make as sweet harmony in discords as yours make in concord,” Niobe said.

“Why, what strings are in ladies’ hearts?” Silvestris said. “Not the bass.”

The bass string produces a low note.

“There is no base string in a woman’s heart,” Niobe said.

“The mean?” Silvestris asked.

The mean string produces an intermediate note.

“There was never mean in a woman’s heart,” Niobe said.

“The treble string?”

The treble string produces a high note.

“Yea, the treble double and treble — double and triple,” Niobe said, “and so are all my heartstrings. Farewell!”

The treble is the highest part in a song for three voices.

Niobe wanted to double and triple the number of her lovers.

“Sweet Niobe, let us sing, so that I may die with the swan,” Silvestris said.

Swans were reputed to sing before they died.

“It will make you sigh the more, and live with the salamich,” Niobe said.

The salamich is the salamander, which was reputed to be able to live in fire.

“Are thy tunes fire?” Silvestris asked.

“Are your tunes death?” Niobe asked.

“No, but after I have heard thy voice, I am content to die,” Silvestris said.

“I will sing to content thee,” Niobe said.

Hmm. Sing to make thee happy? Or sing to make thee happy to die?

She sang, and then she exited.

Silvestris did not die. He also was not made happy.

He said, “Inconstant Niobe! Unhappy Silvestris! Yet I prefer that she should love all rather than none, for now although I have no certainty, yet I find a kind of sweetness.”

If Niobe loved all, then Silvestris would have a share of her love. If Niobe loved none, then Silvestris would not have a share of her love.

Ramis returned to the scene and said, “Cruel Nisa, born to slaughter men!”

Montanus returned to the scene and said, “Coy Celia, bred up in scoffs!”

Silvestris said:

“Wavering, yet witty Niobe!”

The word “witty” means “intelligent.”

Silvestris then asked:

“But are we all met?”

Ramis replied, “Yes, and we have met our matches, if your fortunes are similar to mine, for I find my mistress immoveable, and the only hope I have is to despair.”

His “mistress” was the nymph whom he loved.

“My mistress is intolerable in pride, and she orders me to look for no other comfort than her contempt and scorn,” Montanus said.

“My mistress is best of all, and worst of all,” Silvestris said. “This is my hope, that either she will have many lovers or none.”

If she has no lovers, Silvestris will not be jealous of them; if she has many lovers, Silvestris may be one of them, and he will have a share of her love. Niobe had given him no hope that she would have one lover.

Ramis said:

“I fear our fortunes cannot thrive, for Erisichthon has felled the holy tree of Ceres, which will increase her anger, and which will increase cruelty in her nymphs.

“Let us see whether our garlands that we hanged on that tree are still there; and let us hang ourselves upon another tree.”

Unrequited lovers sometimes hung themselves — or threatened to hang themselves.

Silvestris said:

“Hanging is a remedy for love that is inflexible and unmovable, but I will first see whether all those who love Niobe do likewise.

“In the meantime, I will content myself with my share.”

Silvestris did not want to hang himself if Niobe’s other lovers had not.

Montanus said:

“Here is the tree.

“O, mischief scarcely to be believed, impossible to be pardoned!”

Ramis said:

“Pardoned it is not, for Erisichthon perishes with famine, and he is able to starve those who look at him.

“Here our garlands hang.

“Something is written; read mine.”

Silvestris read, “*Cedit amor rebus, res age, tutus eris.*”

Translated, the quotation says, “Love gives way to things, keep busy, you will be safe.”

In other words: Keep busy, and you can avoid falling in love.

Montanus said, “And read mine.”

Silvestris read:

“*Sat mihi si facies, sit bene nota mihi.*”

Translated, the Latin means, “If you will pursue me, let it be well known to me.”

One way for Montanus to do that would be to praise Celia’s beauty.

Silvestris then said:

“Now for myself: *Victoria tecum stabit.*”

Translated, the quotation says, “Victory rests with you.”

He then said:

“*Scilicet.*”

This Latin word means, “Indeed” or “Of course.”

He had read the motto that Niobe had written, but that didn’t mean he believed it.

Montanus said:

“You see their posies are like their hearts; and their hearts are like their speeches — cruel, proud, and wavering.”

Nisa was cruel.

Celia was proud of her beauty.

Niobe was wavering and fickle in her love.

“Let us all go to the temple of Cupid, and entreat and beg for his favor, if not to obtain their loves, yet to revenge their hates: Cupid is a kind god who, knowing our unspotted thoughts and love for the nymphs, will punish them or release us.”

Cupid had arrows made of lead as well as arrows made of gold.

When he shot an arrow made of lead at someone, that person’s love would change to hate.

When he shot an arrow made of gold at someone, that person would fall in love.

Montanus continued:

“We will study what revenge to have, so that, our pains proceeding of our own minds, their plagues may also proceed from theirs.

“Are you all agreed?”

“I agree, but what if Cupid denies us his help?” Silvestris asked.

“Then he is no god,” Montanus said.

“But if he yields to our entreaties and will help us, what shall we ask for?” Silvestris asked.

“Revenge,” Ramis said.

“Then let us prepare ourselves for Cupid’s sacrifice,” Montanus said.

On the seashore near Erisichthon’s farm, Erisichthon and Protea, his daughter, talked.



Erisichthon said:

“Come, Protea, dear daughter. That name of ‘daughter of Erisichthon’ thou must buy too expensively. Necessity causes thee to be sold; nature must frame thee to be contented.”

In other words: Her filial love for her father must make her consent to being sold.

Erisichthon continued:

“Thou see in how short a time I have turned all my goods into my guts, where I feel a continual fire that nothing can quench. My famine increases by eating, resembling the sea, which receives all things, and cannot be filled.”

Erisichthon had sold his land and possessions so he could buy food, but eating did not stop his hunger — it only increased it.

Now all he had left to sell was his daughter: Protea.

Erisichthon continued:

“Life is sweet, and hunger is sharp. Between them the contention must be short, unless thou, Protea, prolong it.

“I have acknowledged my offence against Ceres; but I cannot make amends, for the gods hold the balance in their hands, and so what recompence can equally weigh with their punishments?

“Or who is he who, having but one ill thought of Ceres, can erase it with a thousand dutiful actions?

“Such is the difference that none can find defense. This is the difference: We are miserable, and men; they are immortal, and gods.”

The gods and goddesses can be unforgiving for trivial offenses as well as for great offenses.

Erisichthon has already repented cutting down Ceres’ tree, but Ceres has not forgiven him. He is still being tormented by Famine.

Protea responded:

“Dear father, I will obey and consent both to sale and slaughter, considering it the only happiness of my life, if I should I live a hundred years, to prolong your life just one minute.”

“Sale and slaughter” referred to market animals. Protea would be sold and would become a slave, but she would not be slaughtered for meat.

Protea continued:

“I yield, father: Chop and change me.”

“Chop and change me” meant “Barter away. Make the bargain.”

Protea continued:

“I am ready; but first let me make my prayers to Neptune, and you withdraw yourself until I have finished. It shall not be long, but it must be now.”

Neptune is the god of the sea.

Protea wanted her father to step away so he would not hear her prayer to Neptune.

“Stay, sweet Protea, and may that great god hear thy prayer, although Ceres stops her ears to mine,” Erisichthon said.

Erisichthon stepped away.

Protea prayed:

“Sacred Neptune, whose godhead conquered my virginity and maidenhead, be as ready to hear my passions, as I was to believe thine, and perform that which now I entreat you for, which thou did promise when thyself did love.”

The gods often sleep with mortals, and Neptune had slept with Protea after promising to help her if she ever needed help.

Protea continued:

“Don’t allow me to be a prey to this merchant who knows no other god than gold unless it be falsely swearing by a god to get gold.

“Do let me, as often as I am bought for money, or pawned for meat and food, be turned into a bird, hare, or lamb, or any shape in which I may be safe, as long as I shall preserve my own honor, preserve my father’s life, and never repent of thy love.”

Protea wanted to become a shape-shifter so she could escape from whoever bought her. The merchant would buy her, pay her father money, and then Protea would change her shape and escape.

In Homer’s *Odyssey*, a minor sea-god named Proteus is a shape-shifter. Menelaus encountered him and learned information about Odysseus’ location and about Menelaus’ own return home.

Protea continued:

“And now bestir thee, for of all men I hate that merchant, who, if he finds my beauty worth one penny, will put it to use to gain ten; he has no religion in his mind, nor word in his mouth, except money.”

One way to put Protea’s beauty to use would be to prostitute her.

Protea continued:

“Neptune, hear me now or never.”

She then said, “Father, I have finished praying.”

Stepping forward, Erisichthon said, “In good time, Protea. Thou have finished at a good time, for look, the merchant keeps not only the day, but the hour.”

The merchant was coming toward them at the exact time appointed.

“If I had not been here, would I have been forfeited?” Protea asked. “Would I have been sold?”

“No, Protea, but thy father would have famished and starved to death,” Erisichthon said.

Protea would not have been sold, and her father would not have received any money with which to buy food.

The merchant entered the scene.

“Here, gentleman, I am ready with my daughter,” Erisichthon said.

“Gentleman?” Protea asked.

The word “gentleman” can refer to 1) good character, or to 2) social position and wealth.

A gentleman of good character is a person who exhibits good and courteous behavior. A gentleman does not buy women.

A gentleman of social position and wealth is a man of the lowest rank of the English aristocracy. He can bear arms, but he has no title.

“Yes, gentleman, fair maiden!” the merchant said. “My financial circumstances make me no less than a gentleman.”

“Your financial circumstances indeed brought in your obligations, your obligations your usury, and your usury your gentry,” Protea said.

The merchant was a merchant of money: a usurer.

His wealth brought in his financial contracts (loans to others), which brought in more wealth through interest, which allowed him to purchase the name of gentleman.

“Why, do you judge no merchants to be gentlemen?” the merchant asked.

“Yes, I judge many merchants to be gentlemen, and I judge some merchants to be no men!” Protea said.

If they are not men, then they are beasts.

“You shall be well entreated at my hands,” the merchant said.

“Entreated” means 1) begged or pleaded with, or 2) treated.

“Maybe,” Protea said. “I will not be commanded.”

“If you are mine by bargain, you shall be commanded,” the merchant said. “You will have to do what I tell you to do.”

Protea asked, “Father, has this merchant also bought my mind?”

“He cannot buy that which cannot be sold,” Erisichthon answered.

“Here is the money,” the merchant said, handing it over.

Erisichthon said to the merchant:

“Here is the maiden.”

He then said to Protea, “Farewell, my sweet daughter; I commit thee to the gods and this man’s courtesy, who I hope will deal no worse with thee than he would have the gods deal with him.”

In other words: I hope that the merchant will treat you the way that he hopes the gods would treat him.

Erisichthon then said:

“I must be gone, lest I starve as I stand here.”

“Farewell, dear father, I will not cease to pray to Ceres continually for thy recovery,” Protea said.

Erisichthon exited.

“You are now mine, Protea,” the merchant said.

“And I am my own,” Protea said.

“In will, not power,” the merchant said.

“In power if I will,” Protea said.

“I perceive that nettles, gently touched, sting; but, when they are roughly handled, they cause no pain,” the merchant said.

A proverb stated that “he which touchest the nettle tenderly is soonest stung.”

The meaning of the proverb is “Face danger bravely and it won’t hurt you.”

Aaron Hill (1685-1750) wrote:

*Tender-handed stroke a nettle,*

*And it stings you for your pains;*

*Grasp it like a man of mettle,*

*And it soft as silk remains.*

*'Tis the same with common natures,*

*Use [Treat] them kindly they rebel;*

*But be rough as nutmeg graters,*

*And the rogues obey you well.*

“Yet, roughly handled, nettles are nettles, and a wasp is a wasp, although she loses her sting,” Protea said.

“But then they do no harm,” the merchant said.

“Nor good,” Protea said.

“Come with me, and you shall see that merchants know their good as well as gentlemen,” the merchant said.

“I am sure that they have gentlemen’s goods,” Protea said.

When gentlemen could not pay their debts, usurers would foreclose on the debts, taking whatever the gentlemen had pledged as security.

## CHAPTER 4 (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### — 4.1 —

The three foresters — Ramis, Montanus, and Silvestris — stood before the temple of Cupid. Ramis held burning lamps, Montanus held a distaff (used in spinning thread and yarn) and a noose, and Silvestris held a fan made of feathers and a garland made of flowers. These were offerings to Cupid. Each of them would also offer a metaphorical picture of his heart to Cupid. Ramis' heart was bleeding, Montanus' heart was bloodless, and Silvestris' heart was swollen.

“This is the temple of our great god,” Ramis said. “Let us offer our sacrifice.”

“I am ready,” Montanus said.

Silvestris said:

“And I am ready.”

He prayed:

“Cupid, thou god of love, whose arrows have pierced our hearts, give ear to our complaints.”

The temple doors opened.

Cupid came out and said, “If you come to Cupid, speak boldly, so must lovers; speak faithfully, so must speeders.”

“Speeders” are those who succeed.

Ramis said:

“These ever-burning lamps are signs of my never-to-be-quenched flames; this bleeding heart, in which yet sticks the head of the golden shaft, is the lively picture of inward torments.

“My eyes shall bedew thine altars with tears, and my sighs shall cover thy temple with a dark smoke.

“Pity poor Ramis.”

Montanus said:

“With this distaff have I spun, so that my exercises may be as womanish as my affections, and so did Hercules.”

As the result of some evil that Hercules had done, he became a slave to Omphale, the Queen of Lydia. She wore his lionskin, and Hercules dressed in women's clothing and did “women's work,” such as spinning fibers into thread or yarn.

Montanus continued:

“And with this noose I will hang myself, if my fortunes don't answer my deserts, and so did Iphis.”

A shepherd named Iphis fell in love with a proud woman named Anaxarete who scorned his advances, and he hung himself on her doorstep.

Montanus continued:

“To thee, divine Cupid, I present not a bleeding heart, but a bloodless heart, dried only with sorrow, and worn with faithful service.

“This picture I offer, carved with no other instrument than love.

“Pity poor Montanus.”

Silvestris said:

“This fan of swans’ and turtledoves’ feathers is token of my truth and jealousy.”

Swans and turtledoves were reputed to find mates for life.

Silvestris continued:

“Without jealousy, love is infatuation, and with jealousy, love is madness.

“Without jealousy, love is lust, and with jealousy, love is folly.”

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, at the time John Lyly was writing, “jealousy” meant:

1) “Zeal or vehemence of feeling in favour of a person or thing; devotion, eagerness, anxiety to serve.”

2) “Zeal or vehemence of feeling against some person or thing; anger, wrath, indignation.”

The independent clauses using the phrase “Without jealousy” use the word “jealousy” with the first meaning.

The independent clauses using the phrase “with jealousy” use the word “jealousy” with the second meaning.

Silvestris continued:

“This heart, neither bleeding nor bloodless, but swollen with sighs, I offer to thy godhead, professing that all my thoughts are, as are my words, without lust, and all my love is, as is my fortune, without sweetness.

“This garland of flowers, which has all colors of the rainbow, witnesses that my heart has all the torments of the world.

“Pity poor Silvestris.”

Cupid said, “I accept your offerings, not without reason; and I marvel at your loves, not without pleasure, but are your thoughts as true as your words?”

Ramis said, “Thou, Cupid, who gives the wound, knows the heart; for it is as impossible to conceal our affections, as it is to resist thy power.”

Cupid said:

“I know that where my arrow alights, there love breeds; but shooting every minute a thousand shafts, I don’t know on whose heart they alight, although they fall on no place but hearts.

“Who are your mistresses? Who are the women you love?”

Ramis said, “We love Ceres’ maidens. Mine is the cruelest, which she calls ‘constancy.’”

Maidens are virgins. If Niobe is a virgin, she talks a good game but does not actually play the game.

Nisa constantly believed that true love does not exist.

“Mine is the most beautiful, but she is also the proudest,” Montanus said.

Celia wanted to stay beautiful and not have children.

“Mine is the wittiest, but she is also the most wavering,” Silvestris said.

Niobe did not want to have just one man. She hated the kind of love that leads to loyalty and chasteness.

Cupid asked, “Is the one cruel, the next coy, and the third inconstant?”

“Too cruel!” Ramis said.

“Too coy!” Montanus said.

“Too fickle!” Silvestris said.

Cupid then asked, “What do they think of Cupid?”

“One says that Cupid has no eyes because he does not know whom he hits with his arrows,” Ramis said.

So many people fall in love that Cupid must shoot very rapidly with the result that some people fall in love with someone who is clearly not suitable for them.

“The next says that Cupid has no ears that he could use to hear those who call on him,” Montanus said.

“The third says that Cupid has no nose because savors are not found of lovers,” Sylvestris said.

People can be so much in love that they forget to eat, especially when their love is unrequited, and they are grieving.

The sense of smell is related to the sense of taste. If you can’t smell good food, it will not taste good or at least it will not taste as good as it would if you could smell it.

Niobe wanted to have many lovers. This is analogous to having a plate loaded with many kinds of food.

According to *the Oxford English Dictionary*, the noun “savour” or “savor” can mean “Pleasing, enjoyable, or attractive quality; merit, value.”

The arrows that Cupid shoots tend to make one person fall in love with another person. According to Niobe, those monogamous lovers are missing out.

Woody Allen once said, “I believe that sex is a beautiful thing between two people. Between five, it’s fantastic.”



“All say that Cupid has no taste because sweet and sour is all one to him,” Ramis said.

Cupid shoots many gold arrows, and the people he shoots fall in love. Sometimes the love is requited, and it is sweet, but sometimes the love is unrequited, and it is sour.

“All say that Cupid has no ability to feel because pains are pleasures, and pleasures are pains,” Montanus said.

Falling in love can be pleasurable but can also lead to heartbreak.

“All say that Cupid is a foolish god, working without reason, and without regard allowing the rejected lovers to suffer the repulse,” Silvestris said.

Love may not be rational, but it is not irrational. Love is nonrational.

Some things are rational, such as mathematics and logic. Other things are irrational, such as putting your hand in a blender and turning it on just to see what it feels like. The realm of the nonrational is the realm of beauty, poetry, laughter, dance, sex, and love. Comedy is nonrational. The arts connect the world of the rational and the nonrational. Much intelligence goes into producing art, but much art explores the world of the nonrational.

Love is nonrational. Suppose you are confronted with two individuals who are basically alike in beauty, form, character, and personality, but one individual is rich and the other individual is poor. Reason would tell you to fall in love with the rich individual, but you may fall in love with the poor individual.

Cupid replied:

“Do they dare to blaspheme my godhead, which Jove worships, Neptune reveres, and all the gods tremble at?”

All the gods were afraid of Cupid because he could make them fall in love. Jupiter, aka Jove, had a jealous wife who hated the women he had sex with.

Cupid continued:

“To make the nymphs love would be a revenge too gentle for Cupid.

“To make you hate the nymphs would be a recompense too small for lovers.

“But I’ll say more about that soon.

“Right now, tell me what tactics you have used in love to attract the nymphs.”

“All things that may procure love — gifts, words and vows, oaths and promises, and sighs and swoonings,” Ramis said.

Swoonings are fainting fits.

“What did they say about the gifts?” Cupid asked.

“That affection could not be bought with gold,” Montanus said.

“What did they say about the words and vows?” Cupid asked.

“That they were golden blasts, out of leaden bellows,” Ramis said.

“What did they say about the oaths and promises?” Cupid asked.

“That Jupiter never swore true to Juno,” Silvestris said.

Jupiter was a notoriously unfaithful husband who committed adultery with many mortal women and many immortal goddesses. Juno was his jealous wife.

“What did they say about sighs?” Cupid asked.

“That deceit kept a forge in the hearts of fools,” Silvestris said.

The nymphs believed or said that they believed that the foresters were fools, and therefore the foresters’ hearts and sighs were deceitful.

Cupid, however, is likely to regard the nymphs as fools for not yielding to love.

“What did they say about the swoonings?” Cupid asked.

“Nothing, except that they wished the swoonings were deaths,” Montanus said.

“What reasons did they give for them not to love?” Cupid asked.

“Women’s reasons,” Silvestris said. “They would not, because they would not.”

In other words, each nymph’s excuse was this: Because I said so.

Cupid said:

“Well, then shall you see Cupid repay their reasons with his harshness.

“What punishment do you desire that Cupid will deny?”

Cupid intended to grant whatever *reasonable* punishment the foresters asked for. If they asked for something *unreasonable*, he would deny that punishment.

Ramis said, “Mine, who is as hard as stone, I would have turned into stone. She has been pitiless to lovers, so now let she be without the physical senses to all the world.”

Montanus said, “Mine, who is so fair and so proud, I would have turned into some flower so that she may know beauty is as fading as grass, which, being fresh in the morning, has withered before night.”

Silvestris said, “Divine Cupid, let mine, whose affection nothing can make constant, be turned into that bird that lives only by air, and dies if she touches the earth, because it is constant. Turn her into the bird-of-paradise, Cupid, so that, drawing into her bowels nothing but air, she may know that her heart is fed on nothing but fickleness.”

The bird-of-paradise was reputed never to land on the earth and never to eat.

Cupid said:

“Your revenges are reasonable and shall be granted.

“Thou, **Nisa**, whose heart no tears could pierce, shall with continual waves be worn away.

“Instead of thy fair hair, thou shall have green moss.

“Thy face shall be of flint because thy heart is of marble. “Thine ears shall be holes for fishes because your ears were deafer than fishes’ ears.”

Nisa would be a rock on the beach.

Cupid continued:

“Thou, **Celia**, whom beauty made proud, shall have the fruit of beauty, that is, to fade while it is flourishing, and to wither before it is fully bloomed.

“Thy face, as fair as the damask rose, shall perish like the damask rose.

“The canker shall eat thee in the bud, and every little wind shall blow thee from the stalk, and then men in the morning shall wear thee in their hats, and at night they shall cast thee at their heels.”

Celia would be a rose.

Cupid continued:

“Thou, **Niobe**, whom nothing can please (except that which most displeases Cupid, inconstancy), shall only breathe and suck air instead of food, and wear feathers instead of silk, being more wavering and fickler than air, and lighter than feathers.”

Niobe would be a bird.

“Lighter” can mean 1) less heavy, and 2) more promiscuous.

Cupid said:

“This will Cupid do.

“Therefore, when next you shall behold your ladies, just send a faithful sigh to Cupid, and there shall arise a thick mist that Proserpine shall send, and at that moment you shall be revenged, and with the nymphs changed and metamorphosed, Cupid will prove that he is a great god, and that the nymphs are peevish, foolish girls.”

Proserpine’s mother is Ceres, goddess of agriculture. Pluto, the god of the Land of the Dead, kidnapped Proserpine and made her his wife. Ceres mourned and searched for her daughter, and while she mourned, no crops grew. Jupiter sent the messenger god Mercury to Pluto to make him allow Proserpine to go back to the Land of the Living. But Proserpine had eaten some pomegranate seeds and those who eat in the Land of the Dead were not supposed to go back to the Land of the Living. But since Proserpine had eaten so little, and since Jupiter did not want life on Earth to end, a compromise was reached. Proserpine would spend six months of the year in the Land of the Living and the other six months in the Land of the Dead.

When Proserpine is in the Land of the Living, Ceres is happy and crops grow, but when Proserpine is in the Land of the Dead, Ceres is unhappy, and crops don’t grow.

Proserpine’s Greek name is Persephone, and Ceres’ Greek name is Demeter.

Jupiter’s Greek name is Zeus, Pluto’s Greek name is Hades, and Mercury’s Greek name is Hermes.

“With what sacrifice shall we show that we are thankful, or how may we repay to you this benefit?” Ramis asked.

Cupid replied:

“You shall yearly at my temple offer true hearts, and hourly you shall bestow all your wits in loving devices.”

“Loving devices” are inventive ways of showing love.

Cupid continued:

“You shall think all the time that is not spent in love is wasted.

“You shall let your oaths be without number, but not without truth.

“Your words shall be full of alluring sweetness, but not of broad and obvious flattery.

“Your clothing shall be neat, but not womanish.

“Your gifts shall be of more price for the fine device, than the great value, and yet of such value that the device shall seem not beggarly, nor yourselves blockish and stupid.”

These devices are ways of showing love.

The gifts need not be expensive, but they should be carefully and thoughtfully chosen. Don't buy your beloved something that you like but your beloved doesn't.

Cupid continued:

“You shall be secret; secrecy works miracles.

“You shall be constant and loyal — that brings secrecy.

“This is all Cupid commands.

“Leave now!”

Ramis said, “And to this we all willingly consent.”

The temple doors closed.

Silvestris said, “Now what remains to be done but revenge on them who have committed malice against us? Let mine be anything, seeing that she will not be only mine.”

Montanus said, “Let us not now stand wishing, but immediately seek them out, using as great speed in following revenge as we did in pursuing our love; certainly, we shall find them around Ceres' tree, singing or sacrificing.”

“But shall we go visit Erisichthon?” Silvestris asked.

Montanus said:

“Not I, lest he, who devours all things, eats us; his looks have the power to famish.

“Let us go in, and let all ladies beware to offend in spite those who love them in honor; for when the crow shall set his foot in their eye and create crow's feet, aka wrinkles, and the black

ox tread on their foot and make it hurt, they shall find their misfortunes to be equal with their deformities, and men both to loath them and laugh at them.”

— 4.2 —

Erisichthon and Protea stood together on the seashore near Erisichthon’s farm.

“Come, Protea, tell me how did thou escape from the merchant?” Erisichthon asked.

Protea said:

“Neptune, that great god of the sea, when I was ready to go with the merchant into the ship, turned me into a fisherman on the shore, with a fishing pole in my hand, and on my shoulder a net.

“The merchant missing me, and yet finding me without recognizing me, asked me who I was, and whether I had seen a fair maiden?

“I answered, no!

“He, astonished and raging, was forced either to lose his passage, or seek for me among the pebbles! To make short a long story, a good wind caused him to go I don’t know where, and me (thanks be to Neptune) to return home.”

“Thou are happy, Protea, although thy father is miserable, and Neptune is gracious, although Ceres is cruel,” Erisichthon said. “Thy escape from the merchant breeds in me life, joy, and fulfillment.”

Protea said:

“My father cannot be miserable, if Protea is happy; for by selling me every day, he shall never lack food, nor shall I lack the means to escape.

“And now, father, give me permission to enjoy my Petulius, who on this unfortunate shore still seeks me sorrowing.”

She wanted to spend some time with her boyfriend.

“Seek him, dear Protea; find and enjoy him, and live ever hereafter to thine own comforts, who have hitherto been the preserver of mine,” Erisichthon said.

Protea wanted both to have a relationship with her boyfriend and to allow herself to be sold over and over again so that her father could have food.

Erisichthon exited.

“Oh!” Protea said. “Look, a Siren haunts this shore! May the gods forbid that she should entangle my Petulius.”

The Siren was sitting on a rock. She did not notice Protea.

Sirens are part-woman. According to Apollonius of Rhodes, author of the *Argonautica*, an epic poem about Jason and the Argonauts, Sirens are part-bird.

Sirens sing beautiful songs to lure sailors to their deaths. The sailors hear the Sirens’ song and jump overboard to swim to the Sirens. The sailors forget about their homecoming and instead

stay with the Sirens and listen to their songs while forgetting to eat and slowly starving to death.

This Siren, however, resembled a mermaid.

In the Middle Ages, Sirens and mermaids became conflated.

Now, when we think of a Siren, we think of a beautiful mermaid who sings beautifully.

And when we think of a siren (with a small s), we think of a beautiful woman.

The Siren said, “Accursed men! Men’s loves have no other mean than extremities, and their hates end in nothing but evil.”

In other words: When men love, they use extreme means (such as deceit) to get what they want, and when men hate, their hatred brings evil to those whom they hate.

Protea said to herself, “Unnatural monster! She is no maid, who accuses men, whose loves are built on truths, and whose hearts are moved by courtesy. I will hear the depth of her malice.”

The experience of Protea and the experience of the Siren with men was much different. Protea was happy with her relationship with her boyfriend, but the Siren’s heart had been broken.

The Siren said:

“Men are of all creatures most unkind, most cunning.

“By men’s subtleties, I am half fish, half flesh.

“Men themselves are neither fish nor flesh.”

The expression “neither fish nor flesh” means “neither one nor the other.” Men are not “flesh” because, according to the Siren, they don’t act the right way toward her.

The Siren continued:

“In love men are lukewarm, and in cruelty they are red hot.

“If men praise, they flatter; if men flatter, they deceive; if men deceive, they destroy.”

Protea said to herself:

“She rails at men, but she seeks to entangle them.

“This trick is prepared for my sweet Petulius.

“I will withdraw myself nearby, for Petulius has seen me and is following me and will come here.

“He will without doubt be enamored of her; but he shall not be enchanted — my charms shall countervail hers.

“Petulius has saved my father’s life with money, and he must prolong my life with love.”

Petulius had given Erisichthon money so he could buy food.

Petulius entered the scene and said:

“I marvel that Protea is so far ahead of me: If she runs, I’ll fly.”

He called:

“Sweet Protea, where are thou? It is Petulius who calls Protea.”

The Siren said:

“Here comes a handsome youth.

“Now, Siren, leave out nothing that may allure — thy golden locks of hair, thy enticing looks, thy musically tuned voice, thy subtle speech, thy fair promises, which never missed the heart of any but Ulysses.”

Ulysses’ Greek name is Odysseus. In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Odysseus’ ship sailed by the Sirens. Ulysses wanted to hear the Sirens’ song, so he ordered his men to tie him to the mast so he could not jump overboard. His men put beeswax in their ears so they could not hear the Sirens’ song, and they rowed past the Sirens.

Another man who heard the Sirens’ song but lived was Butes, a sharp-eared Argonaut. When Jason’s ship, the *Argo*, sailed past the Sirens, Orpheus played his lyre loudly to drown out their song, but Butes’ hearing was so sharp that he heard the Sirens’ song and jumped overboard. Fortunately, the goddess Aphrodite felt pity for him and rescued him and set him on shore far from the Sirens.

The Siren sang, holding a mirror and a hair comb in her hand.

Petulius, reacting the way that other men had reacted, said:

“What divine goddess is this? What sweet harmony! My heart is ravished with such tickling thoughts, and my eyes stayed with such a bewitching beauty, that I can neither find the means to remove my affection and stop myself from falling in love, nor can I turn aside my eyes and not look at her.”

The Siren sang again.

Petulius said to the Siren:

“I yield to death, but with such delight, that I would not wish to live, unless it were to hear thy sweet songs.”

The Siren replied:

“Live always, as long as thou love me!

“Why do thou stand amazed at the word ‘love’?”

This Siren seemed more like a heartbroken woman seeking love than a monster seeking to destroy sailors. Still, she was attempting to take Petulius away from Protea.

Protea, from her hiding place behind them, said to herself:

“It is high time to prevent this evil.”

She prayed:

“Now, Neptune, stand to and keep thy promise, and let me take suddenly the shape of an old man; in that shape I shall mar what she makes.”

Protea exited.

Petulus said:

“I have not yet come to myself, or if I have, I dare not credit my ears.

“Love thee, divine goddess?

“Grant to me that I may honor thee and live by the imagination I have of thy words and worthiness.”

The Siren said, “I am a goddess, but I am also a lady and a virgin, whose love if thou embrace, thou shall live no less happy than the gods in heaven.”

Protea reentered the scene. She had assumed the shape and appearance of an old man.

The metamorphosed Protea said, “Don’t believe this enchantress, sweet youth. She retains the face of a virgin, but the heart of a fiend, whose sweet tongue sheds more drops of blood than it utters syllables.”

Petulus said to the old man (the metamorphosed Protea), “Go away, dotterel! Your dim eyes cannot recognize beauty, nor can dotting age judge of love.”

He was calling her a dotard.

A dotterel is a senile old man. The word “dotterel” also referred to a bird that was easily caught and therefore thought to be stupid.

“If thou listen to her words, thou shall not live to repent,” the old man (the metamorphosed Protea) said, “for her malice is as sudden as her joys are sweet.”

“Thy silver hairs are not as precious as her golden locks, nor is thy crooked old age as esteemed as her flowering youth,” Petulus said.

“That old man measures the hot assault of love with the cold skirmishes of age,” the Siren said.

The old man (the metamorphosed Protea) said:

“That young cruel one — the Siren — resembles old apes, who kill by culling.”

“Culling” means “hugging.” Old apes, by showing excessive love to their young, end up killing them. So said the old man (the metamorphosed Protea).

The old man (the metamorphosed Protea) continued:

“From the top of this rock on which she is sitting, she will throw thee headlong into the sea.

“Her song is the instrument of her witchcraft.

“She never smiles except when she intends to smite, and under the flattery of love she practices the shedding of blood.”

“Who are thou, who so blasphemous this divine creature?” Petulus asked.



The old man (the metamorphosed Protea) said:

“I am the ghost of Ulysses, who continually hovers about these places where this Siren haunts, to save those who otherwise should be spoiled: stop thine ears, as I did mine, and succor and help the fair, but, by thy folly, the most unfortunate Protea.”

Protea’s reference to the myth of Ulysses (his Greek name is Odysseus) was incorrect. It was Ulysses’ (Odysseus’) men who had stopped their ears with beeswax.

“Protea?” Petulius said, recovering from the Siren’s spell. “What do thou hear, Petulius? Where is Protea?”

The old man (the metamorphosed Protea) said:

“In this thicket, ready to hang herself because thou don’t care for her whom thou did swear to follow.

“Curse this hag, who has only the voice and face of a virgin; the rest is all fish and feathers and filth. Follow me, and strongly stop thine ears, lest the second encounter make the wound incurable.”

The Siren has feathers, so she may also be part-bird, unless she is wearing the feathers.

“Is this a Siren, and are thou Ulysses?” Petulius said. “Cursed be that hellish carcass, and blessed be thy heavenly spirit.”

The Siren said:

“I shrink my head for shame.

“O, Ulysses! Isn’t it enough for thee to escape from me, but must thou also teach others how to escape from me?”

She then said to herself:

“Sing and die, nay die, and never sing anymore.”

The Siren exited.

The old man (the metamorphosed Protea) said to Petulius, “Follow me at this door, and then come out at the other door.”

Of course, she was referring to stage doors.

The two exited, and then returned to the stage. Protea was now in her own shape.

“How I am delivered!” Petulius said. “The old man has vanished, and here in his place stands Protea.”

Protea said:

“Here stands Protea, who has saved thy life.

“Thou must also prolong hers with love, but let us go into the woods, and there I will tell thee how I came to be Ulysses, and I will tell thee the sum of all my fortunes, which perhaps will breed in thee both love and wonder.”

Petulus said, "I will, and I will love only Protea, and never cease to marvel at Protea."

They exited.

## CHAPTER 5 (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### — 5.1 —

In front of the temple of Cupid, Ceres and Cupid talked. The nymph Tirtena was also present.

Ceres said, “Cupid, thou have transformed my nymphs and incensed me. Thou have transformed them into shapes that lack the power to reason, and thou have incensed in me anger that is immortal and undying, for at one and the same time I am robbed of both my honor and my nymphs.”

Cupid said:

“Ceres, thy nymphs were stubborn, and thyself, speaking so imperiously to Cupid, somewhat stately and arrogant.

“If you ask the cause in anger, I respond, *Sic volo, sic iubeo*: I wish this, and therefore I command this. In other words: I have the power here, not you.

“If you ask the cause in courtesy, I respond, *Quae venit ex merito poena dolenda venit*: When a punishment comes deservedly, it comes painfully.

“Thy nymphs were disdainful, and they have their just deserts.

“Thou, Ceres, govern just the guts of men, while I govern the hearts.

“With thy administered famine, thou seek to starve Erisichthon, whom his daughter shall preserve by my virtue: love.”

“Thou are only a god, Cupid,” Ceres said.

Cupid is a god, and Ceres is a goddess, and so they ought to be equal.

Cupid replied:

“No, Ceres, for I am such a god as makes thunder fall out of Jove’s hand, by throwing thoughts into his heart, and to be more terrified by the sparkling of — the fire in — a lady’s eye than men are terrified by the flashes of his — Jove’s — lightning.

“I am such a god as has kindled more fire in Neptune’s bosom than the whole sea that he is king of can quench.

“Such power have I that Pluto’s never-dying fire only scorches in comparison to my flames.”

Jove (Jupiter), Neptune, and Pluto are the three main Roman gods. Jupiter is the god of the sky, Neptune is the god of the sea, and Pluto is the god of the Land of the Dead, aka the Underworld. Jupiter is the king of the gods.

Cupid continued:

“Diana has felt some impulses of love, Vesta does feel some impulses of love, and Ceres shall feel some impulses of love.”

Diana’s Greek name is Artemis; she is the goddess of the hunt. Vesta’s Greek name is Hestia; she is the goddess of the hearth. Both Diana and Vesta are virgin goddesses.

Diana, however, had once fallen in love with Orion, a hunter.

Ceres, of course, was the mother of Proserpine; their Greek names are Demeter and Persephone. Perhaps, however, Ceres had not yet become a mother at this time.

“Are thou so cruel?” Ceres asked.

Cupid replied, “To those who resist, I am a lion; to those who submit, I am a lamb.”

“Can thou make such difference in passion, and yet shall it all be love?” Ceres asked.

When Cupid is a lion, love can be painful; when Cupid is a lamb, love can be pleasurable.

Cupid replied:

“Yes, as much difference as between sickness and health, although life is in both.

“Those who yield and honor Cupid shall possess sweet thoughts and enjoy pleasing wishes; the others shall be tormented with vain imaginations and impossible hopes.”

“How may my nymphs be restored?” Ceres asked.

“If thou restore Erisichthon, if they embrace their loves, and if all offer sacrifice to me,” Cupid said.

The nymph’s loves are the foresters. So says Cupid.

Ceres objected, “Erisichthon did in contempt hew down my sacred tree.”

“Thy nymphs did in disdain scorn my constant love,” Cupid said.

“Erisichthon slew most cruelly my chaste Fidelity, whose blood lies yet on the ground,” Ceres said.

“But Diana has changed her blood to fresh flowers, which are to be seen on the ground,” Cupid said.

“What honor shall Erisichthon do to Ceres? What amends can he make to Fidelity?” Ceres asked.

“Erisichthon shall deck all of Ceres’ grove with garlands, and he shall consider every tree holy,” Cupid said. “He shall erect a stately monument in remembrance of Fidelity, and he shall offer to you a yearly sacrifice.”

“What sacrifice shall I and my nymphs offer thee? For I will do anything to restore my nymphs and honor thee,” Ceres asked.

Cupid said:

“You shall present in honor of my mother, Venus, grapes and wheat; for *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus.*”

“Grapes and wheat” mean “wine and food.”

The Latin means “Without Ceres (goddess of agriculture) and Bacchus (god of wine), Venus (goddess of sexual passion) grows cold.”

Cupid continued:

“You shall allow your nymphs to play, sometimes to be idle, in the favor of Cupid; for *Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus.*”

The Latin means, “If you take away leisure, Cupid’s bow is broken.” This is line 139 of Ovid’s *Remedia Amoris (Cures for Love)*.

Much falling in love takes place during leisure hours.

Cupid continued:

“That is for Ceres.

“Thy nymphs shall make no vows to continue to be virgins, nor use words to disgrace love, nor flee from opportunities that kindle affections.

“If they are chaste, let them not be cruel.

“If they are beautiful, let them not be proud.

“If they are loving, let them not be inconstant and disloyal.

“Cruelty is for tigers, pride is for peacocks, and inconstancy is for fools.”

Ceres said, “Cupid, I yield, and the nymphs shall, but sweet Cupid, let them not be deceived by flattery, which takes on the shape of love; nor let them be deceived by lust, which is clothed in the habit — the garment — of love to delude, for men have as many tricks to use to delude as they have words to speak.

“Both flattery and lust disguise themselves as love, inwardly and outwardly.”

“Those who practice deceit shall perish,” Cupid said. “Cupid favors none but the faithful.”

“Well, I will go to Erisichthon, and bring him before thee,” Ceres said.

“Then thy nymphs shall recover their forms — their former shapes — as long as they yield to love,” Cupid said.

“They shall,” Ceres promised.

They exited.

## — 5.2 —

Petulius and Protea stood in front of the temple of Cupid. Protea had told Petulius her story, including how she had gained the ability to shape-shift by sleeping with Neptune.

Petulius said, “Yours is a strange story, Protea, by which I find the gods become amorous, virgins become immortal, goddesses become full of cruelty, and men become full of unhappiness.”

Neptune is the amorous god, Protea is the virgin who acquired an ability that usually only immortal gods and goddesses could have, Ceres is the goddess who became cruel, and Erisichthon is a man who became unhappy.

Protea said, “I have told both my father’s misfortunes, grown by pride and arrogance, and my own misfortunes, grown by weakness. His pride and arrogance are shown by his thwarting of Ceres, and my weakness is shown by my yielding to Neptune.”

Petulius said, “I know, Protea, that hard iron, falling into fire, grows soft; and then the tender heart of a virgin, being in love, must necessarily melt: for what should a fair, young, and witty lady answer to the sweet enticements of love, but *Molle meum levibus cor est violabile telit?*”

The Latin means, “My heart is tender, and it is easily pierced by [Cupid’s] light shafts.”

This is a quotation from Ovid’s *Heroides (Heroines)* xv.79.

Petulius believed that Protea had been in love with Neptune.

Protea said, “I have heard, too, that the hearts of men, stiffer than steel, have by love been made softer than wool, and then they cry, *Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.*”

The Latin means, “Love conquers all, and we will yield ourselves to love.”

Protea believed that Petulius had been in love with the Siren.

The quotation is from Virgil’s *Eclogues (Bucolics)*, x, 69.

Bucolics are pastoral poems.

“Men have often feigned sighs,” Petulius said.

“And women forged tears,” Protea said.

“Suppose I don’t love,” Petulius said.

“Suppose I don’t care,” Protea said.

“If men swear and lie, how will you test their loves?” Petulius asked.

“If women swear they love, how will you test their dissembling?” Protea asked.

“The gods put wit into women,” Petulius said.

That wit — intelligence — could be used to dissemble and lie more effectively.

“And nature put deceit into men,” Protea said.

“I did this just to test your patience,” Petulius said.

In other words: I said, ‘Suppose I don’t love,’ just to test your patience.

“Nor did I mean it, except to test your faith,” Protea said.

In other words: I said, ‘Suppose I don’t care,’ just to test your faith.

A subtext of their badinage was Protea’s sleeping with Neptune and Petulius’ falling in love with the Siren.

Both forgave the other, and with good reason.

The gods can be very insistent when they want to sleep with mortal women, and they are very powerful. The gods have committed rape. At least Protea had gotten something from Neptune

that was useful.

The Siren had the gift of enchantment in her song, and her song had enchanted Petulius.

Neither Protea nor Petulius had had a choice in what they had done.

Protea continued:

“But look, Petulius, what miraculous punishments here are for deserts in love:

“This rock was a nymph to Ceres; so was this rose; so was that bird.”

“All are changed from their real shapes?” Petulius asked.

“All are changed by Cupid, because they disdained love, or because they dissembled in it,” Protea said.

“This is a fair and clear warning to Protea,” Petulius said. “I hope she will love without dissembling.”

Protea said:

“This is an admonition for Petulius, so that he will not delude those who love him; for Cupid can also change men.

“Let us go into the temple.”

— 5.3 —

The foresters — Ramis, Silvestris, and Montanus — stood in front of the temple of Cupid.

Ramis said, “This turns out luckily: Cupid has promised to restore our mistresses; and Ceres has promised that they shall accept our loves.”

Montanus said, “I always imagined that true love would end with sweet joys, even though it was begun with deep sighs.”

Silvestris said, “But how shall we behave toward the nymphs when we shall see them smile when they regain their own shapes? We must meet with and face them, and perhaps they will frown.”

“Tush!” Ramis said. “Let us endure the bending of their fair brows in frowns, and let us endure the scorching of their sparkling eyes, as long as we may possess at last the depth of their affections.”

“Possess?” Montanus said. “Never doubt that we will because Ceres has restored Erisichthon to his former state, and therefore she will persuade the nymphs to love us — indeed, she will command them to love us.”

“If the nymphs’ love for us would come by commandment of Ceres, and not by the nymphs’ own impulses, I would rather that they should hate us,” Silvestris said, “for what joy can there be in our lives, or sweetness in our loves, when every kiss shall be sealed with a curse, and every kind word shall proceed out of fear, not affection? Enforcement is worse than enchantment.”

Both should be rejected. Forced marriages are wrong, and getting someone to love you through the use of love spells or love potions — assuming they worked — would be wrong.

“Are thou so scrupulous and exacting in love, thou who were accustomed to be most unconcerned about love?” Ramis said. “Let them curse all day, as long as I may have just one kiss at night.”

“Thou are worse than Silvestris,” Montanus said. “He is not content without absolute love, and thou are content with indifferent and apathetic love.”

Silvestris said, “But here comes Ceres with Erisichthon. Let us look grave; for in her heart, she hates us deeply.”

Ceres wanted her nymphs to be changed back to their own forms, so Ceres had reason to be displeased with the foresters, who had requested that Cupid change the nymphs’ forms into a stone, a flower, and a bird.

— 5.4 —

Ceres, Erisichthon, and Tirtena walked over to the foresters, who were in front of the temple of Cupid.

Erisichthon had been restored to his former state: He was no longer gaunt and famished.

“I will hallow and honor thy woods with solemn feasts, and I will honor all thy nymphs with due regard and respect,” Erisichthon said to Ceres.

Ceres said:

“Well, do so, and thank Cupid who commands; and thank my foolish nymphs, who don’t know how to obey.”

The nymphs had disrespected Cupid, and so he had metamorphosed them. To free the nymphs, Ceres had been forced to restore Erisichthon to his former state.

Ceres continued:

“Here are the lovers ready at receipt.”

“At receipt” was a hunting term. Hunters would be positioned in a place toward which game was driven. Here, the three foresters were the hunters, and the three nymphs were the game.

Ceres continued:

“How are you now, gentlemen? What do you seek?”

“Nothing but what Ceres would like to find,” Ramis said.

Both Ceres and the foresters wanted the nymphs to be given back their former shapes.

“Ceres has found those whom I wish she had lost — foolish lovers,” Ceres said.

The foolish lovers were the foresters.

“Ceres may lose those whom Cupid would save — true lovers,” Ramis said.



“You think so one of another,” Ceres said. “You think that each of you is a faithful lover.”

“Cupid knows so of us all,” Silvestris said.

“You might have made me a counselor of your loves,” Ceres said.

She wanted to have known early about their loves. She could have advised them.

But lovers tend not to listen to advice. Think of a father telling a daughter, “These two boys are almost identical. If you must fall in love, fall in love with the one who has a job.”

“Aye, madam, if love would admit counsel,” Montanus said.

Since Ceres wanted virgins to serve her, she would have advised the foresters to fall in love with someone else. The foresters would not have taken that advice.

The temple doors opened, and Cupid came out of his temple.

Ceres said, “Cupid, here is Erisichthon in his former state; restore my nymphs to theirs, and then they shall embrace these lovers, who wither out their youth.”

Petulius and Protea came out of the temple.

“Honored be mighty Cupid, who makes me live!” Erisichthon said.

“Honored be mighty Cupid, who makes me love—” Petulius said.

“— and me!” Protea said.

“What, yet more lovers?” Ceres said. “I think it is impossible for Ceres to have anyone follow her in one hour and not be in love in the next hour.”

Cupid said:

“Erisichthon, be thou careful to honor Ceres, and don’t forget to please her nymphs. The faithful love of thy daughter, Protea, has wrought both pity in me to grant her desires, and to release thy punishments.

“Thou, Petulius, shall enjoy thy love because I know thee to be loyal.”

Petulius had fallen in love with the Siren, but as soon as he had heard the name “Protea,” he had rejected the Siren’s advances. That was quite an accomplishment, given the Siren’s supernatural ability to attract men.

“Then shall Petulius be most happy,” Petulius said.

“And Protea most fortunate,” Protea said.

Cupid then asked:

“But do you, Ramis, continue your constant love?”

“And you, Montanus?”

“And you, Silvestris?”

Speaking for all the foresters, Ramis said, "Nothing can alter our loves, which increase while the means of fulfillment decrease, and grow stronger in being weakened."

Cupid said:

"Then, Venus, send down that shower, wherewith thou were accustomed to wash those who do the worship; and let love by thy beams be honored in all the world, and feared, wished for, and wondered at."

A shower fell, and the nymphs were metamorphosed back into their normal and natural shapes.

From a stone, Nisa became herself.

From a rose, Celia became herself.

From a bird, Niobe became herself.

Cupid then said:

"Here are thy nymphs, Ceres."

"Whom do I see? Nisa?" Ramis said.

"Divine Celia, more beautiful than she ever was!" Montanus said.

"My sweet Niobe!" Silvestris said.

Ceres said, "Why do you stare, my nymphs, as if you were amazed and bewildered? Triumph rather because you have your own shapes. This great god Cupid, who metamorphosed you because of your prides and follies, has by my prayer and promise restored you."

Cupid said:

"You see, ladies, what it is to make a mockery of love, or a scorn of Cupid."

One ought not to commit a misdeed that a god or goddess must and will punish.

Cupid continued:

"See where your lovers stand.

"You must now take them for your husbands: This is my judgment, and this is Ceres' promise."

Ramis said, "Happy Ramis!"

Montanus said, "Happy Montanus!"

Silvestris said, "Happy Silvestris!"

"Why don't you speak, nymphs?" Ceres said. "This must be done, and you must yield."

"Not I!" Nisa said.

"Nor I!" Niobe said.

"Nor I!" Celia said.

Ceres said, "You nymphs will not yield? Then Cupid in his fury shall turn you again into insentient, unfeeling, and shameful shapes."

Cupid asked:

"Won't you nymphs yield?"

"What do you say, Ramis?"

"Do your loves continue? Are your thoughts constant?"

"And yours, Montanus?"

"And yours, Silvestris?"

"My love is most unspotted and is pure!" Ramis said.

"And my love is the same!" Montanus said.

"And my love is the same, Cupid!" Silvestris said. "Nothing can alter that!"

"And won't you yield, virgins?" Cupid asked.

Nisa, who had been changed to a stone, said:

"Not I, Cupid!"

"Neither do I thank thee that I have been restored to life, nor do I fear to again be changed to stone because I would rather be worn with the continual beating of waves than dulled and stupefied by the importunities and solicitations of men, whose open flatteries make way to their secret lusts, retaining as little truth in their hearts as modesty in their words.

"How happy was Nisa, who felt nothing. She was worn away, yet she did not feel the wasting away!"

"Unfortunate wench, who now has ears to hear men's cunning lies, and eyes to behold men's dissembling looks!"

"Change me, Cupid, again, into a stone, for I will not love!"

Ramis said, "Miserable Ramis! Unlucky in love; to change the lady, I was accursed; and now to lose her, I am desperate and without hope!"

Celia, who had been changed to a rose, said:

"Nor will I love, Cupid.

"Well would I content myself to bud in the summer, and to die in the winter because more good comes from the rose than can come from love.

"When the rose is fresh, it has a sweet scent of perfume; love, when it is young, has a sour taste.

"The rose, when it is old, does not lose its beneficial properties; love, when it is stale, grows loathsome.

“The rose, distilled with fire, yields sweet water: rose oil. Love, in extremities, kindles jealousies.

“In the rose, however it be and in whatever form it is, there is sweetness; in love, there is nothing but bitterness.

“If men look pale, and swear, and sigh, then truly women ‘must’ yield, because men say they love, as though our hearts were tied to their tongues, and we must choose them by their command, ourselves feeling no affection and love, and so have our thoughts bound like apprentices to their words.

“Change me again into a rose.

“I will not yield!”

Montanus said, referring to himself in the second person:

“Which way shall thou turn and direct thyself, since nothing will turn and change her heart and affections?

“Die, Montanus, with shame and grief, and both infinite!”

Niobe, who had been changed to a bird, said:

“Nor will I love, Cupid!

“Let me hang always in the air, which I found more constant than men’s words.

“Happy Niobe, who did not touch the ground where they walk, but always holding thy beak in the air, did never turn back to behold the earth.

“In the heavens I saw an orderly course, in the earth I saw nothing but disorderly, unruly love and peevishness and foolishness.

“Change me again into a bird, Cupid, for I will not yield!”

Silvestris said, “I wish that I myself were stone, flower, or bird, seeing that Niobe has a heart harder than stone, a face fairer than the rose, and a mind lighter than feathers.”

“Lighter” can mean 1) less heavy, and 2) more wanton.

Cupid said:

“What have we here? Has punishment made you nymphs perverse?

“Ceres, I vow here by my sweet mother Venus, that if they do not yield, I will turn them again, not into flowers, or stones, or birds, but into monsters, no less filthy to be seen than to be called hateful: They shall creep who now stand, and they shall be to all men odious, and they shall be to themselves (for their mind they shall retain) loathsome.”

This was not an idle threat: The gods sometimes did change young women into monsters.

The minor sea-god Gaucus loved a beautiful young woman named Scylla, but the goddess sorceress Circe also loved Glaucus. Driven by jealousy, Circe transformed Scylla into a monster. Scylla had six long necks. Each neck was like a serpent with a serpent’s head at the end. She used her necks to seize and devour one of Odysseus’ men with each neck.

Ceres said, "My sweet nymphs, for the honor of your sex, for the love of Ceres, out of respect for your own country, yield to love. Yield, my sweet nymphs, to sweet love."

Nisa said, "Shall I yield to him who plotted my destruction, and when his love was hottest, caused me to be changed to a rock?"

Ramis said, "Nisa, the extremity of love is madness, and to be mad is to be senseless; upon that rock I resolved to end my life. Fair Nisa, forgive him — me — thy change, who for himself provided a worse fate."

Celia said, "Shall I yield to him who made so small account of my beauty that he studied and contrived how he might never behold it again?"

Montanus said, "Fair lady, in the rose I always did behold thy color, and I resolved by continual gazing to perish, which I could not do when thou were in thine own shape because thou were so coy and aloof and swift in flying from me."

Niobe said, "Shall I yield to him who caused me to have wings, so that I might fly farther from him?"

Silvestris said, "Sweet Niobe, the farther you did seem to be from me, the nearer I was to my death, which, to make it speedier, I wished for thee to have wings to fly into the air, and for myself I wished lead on my heels so I could sink into the sea."

"Well, my good nymphs, yield," Ceres said. "Let Ceres entreat you to yield."

Nisa said, "I am content to yield, as long as Ramis, when he finds me cold in love, or recalcitrant, attributes it to his own folly, in that I retain some nature of the rock he changed me into."

Ramis said, "O, my sweet Nisa! Be what thou will, and let all thy imperfections be excused by me, as long as thou just say thou love me."

"I do," Nisa said.

Ramis said, "Happy Ramis!"

Celia said, "I consent to yield, as long as Montanus, when in the midst of his sweet delight, shall find some bitter rebuffs from me, shall impute it to his folly, in that he allowed me to be a rose that has thorns to go with her pleasantness, as he is likely to have along with my love some shrewishness."

Montanus said, "Let me bleed every minute with the thorns of the rose, as long as I may enjoy the perfume of the rose for just one hour. Love me, fair Celia, and at thy pleasure comfort me, and confound me."

"I do," Celia said.

Montanus said, "Fortunate Montanus!"

Niobe said:

"I yielded first in my mind, although my usual practice is to be last to speak. But if Silvestris should find me not ever at home, let him curse himself who gave me wings to fly away from

home; whose feathers, if his jealousy shall break them, my policy shall imp.”

To “imp” is to mend a wing by grafting feathers.

Niobe continued:

“*Non custodiri, ni velit, ulla potest.*”

The Latin means, “No guard can be set over a woman’s will.”

The quotation is from Ovid’s *Amores (Loves)* iii.4,6.

Silvestris said:

“My sweet Niobe! Fly to wherever thou wilt all day. As long as I may find thee in my nest at night, I will love thee and believe thee.

“*Sit modo, non feci, dicere lingua memor.*”

The Latin means, “Let your tongue only remember to say, I did not do it.”

The quotation is from Ovid’s *Amores (Loves)* iii.14,48.

Cupid said:

“I am glad you are all agreed; enjoy your loves, and everyone enjoy his delight.

“Thou, Erisichthon, are restored by Ceres, and all the lovers are pleased by Cupid. Ceres is joyful, and I am honored.

“Now, ladies, I will make such unspotted love among you that there shall be no suspicion or argument, no unkindness or jealousy, but let all ladies hereafter take heed that they do not resist love, which works wonders.”

“I will charm and bewitch my nymphs, so that they shall neither be so haughty that they will not bow to love, nor so light and wanton as immediately to yield,” Ceres said.

Cupid said:

“Here is no one who is not happy, but don’t do as Hippomanes did, when by Venus’ aid he won Atalanta: Don’t defile her temple with unchaste desires, and don’t forget to sacrifice and keep his vows.”

Atalanta was a fleet-footed woman who did not wish to marry. Bothered by the many men seeking to marry her, she made each of them agree to run a footrace with her. If he won the footrace, he would marry her. If she won the footrace, he would be killed. Many men died.

Hippomanes wanted to marry her, and he got help from Venus, who gave him three golden apples. During the race, three times he threw a golden apple to the ground, and Atalanta took the time to chase after and pick up each gold apple, all of which weighed her down.

Hippomanes won the race and married Atalanta, but he made an enemy out of Venus by having newlywed sex with Atalanta in Venus’ temple and by neglecting to sacrifice to Venus.

In another version of the myth, Hippomanes had newlywed sex with Atalanta in a cave near the temple of Cybele, and Cybele became angry at them.

Cupid continued:

“I will soar up into heaven, to settle the loves of the gods, I who on earth have disposed the affections of men.”

Ceres said:

“I will go to my harvest, whose corn has now come out of the blade — the flat leaf — into the ear.

“Let all this amorous troop proceed to the temple of Venus, there to consummate what Cupid has commanded.”

The consummation of the marriage is different from the wedding. Ceres meant for the couples to be married in the temple of Venus and to consummate the marriages elsewhere. Otherwise, they would make an enemy of Venus.

“To consummate” can mean 1) to complete, 2) to carry out, and 3) to accomplish.

Erisichthon said:

“I, in the honor of Cupid and Ceres, will solemnize this feast within my house; and learn, if it is not too late, again to love.

“But you foresters were unkind, because in all my maladies you would not visit me.”

“Thou know, Erisichthon, that lovers visit none but their mistresses,” Montanus said.

This isn't a good excuse; in fact, Montanus had been afraid to visit Erisichthon because he might be affected by Erisichthon's curse.

“Well, I will not take it unkindly, since all ends in kindness,” Erisichthon said.

This showed a change in Erisichthon. Rather than being arrogant, he quickly accepted Montanus' poor excuse for the foresters not visiting him.

Ceres said:

“Let it be so.

“These lovers attend to nothing that we say.”

“Yes, we do attend to what Ceres says,” Ramis said.

“Well, do,” Ceres said.

## NOTES (LOVE'S METAMORPHOSIS)

### — 1.1 —

For Your Information:

*Erysichthon once ordered all trees in the sacred grove of Demeter to be cut down. One huge oak was covered with votive wreaths, a symbol of every prayer Demeter had granted, and so the men refused to cut it down. Erysichthon grabbed an axe and cut it down himself, killing a dryad nymph in the process. The nymph's dying words were a curse on Erysichthon.*

*Demeter responded to the nymph's curse and punished him by entreating Limos (here a female deity), the spirit of unrelenting and insatiable hunger, to place herself in his stomach. Food acted like fuel on a fire: The more he ate, the hungrier he got. Erysichthon sold all his possessions to buy food, but was still hungry. At last he sold his own daughter Mestra into slavery. The latter was freed from slavery by her former lover Poseidon, who gave her the gift of shape-shifting into any creature at will to escape her bonds. Erysichthon used her shape-shifting ability to sell her numerous times to make money to feed himself, but no amount of food was enough. Eventually, Erysichthon ate himself in hunger. Nothing of him remained the following morning.*

Source: "Erysichthon of Thessaly." Wikipedia. Accessed 18 September 2022

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erysichthon\\_of\\_Thessaly](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erysichthon_of_Thessaly)

NOTE: Demeter's Roman name is Ceres. Poseidon's Roman name is Neptune.

### — 1.1 —

For Your Information:

*Aglaonice or Aganice of Thessaly was a Greek astronomer and thaumaturge of the 2nd or 1st century BC. She is mentioned in the writings of Plutarch and in the scholia to Apollonius of Rhodes as a female astronomer and as the daughter of Hegetor (or Hegemon) of Thessaly. She was regarded as a sorceress for (amongst other extraordinary feats) her (self-proclaimed) ability to 'make the moon disappear from the sky' which has been taken — first by Plutarch and subsequently by modern astronomers — to mean that she could predict the time and general area where a lunar eclipse would occur.*

*A Greek proverb makes reference to Aglaonice's alleged boasting: "Yes, as the Moon obeys Aglaonice". A number of female astrologers, apparently regarded as sorcerers, were associated with Aglaonice. They were known as the "witches of Thessaly" and were active from the 3rd to 1st centuries BCE.*

Source of Above: "Aglaonice." Wikipedia. Accessed on 18 September 2022

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aglaonice>

### — 2.1 —

For Your Information:



*In Jewish law, sex is not considered shameful, sinful or obscene. Sex is not thought of as a necessary evil for the sole purpose of procreation. Although sexual desire comes from the yetzer ra (the evil impulse), it is no more evil than hunger or thirst, which also come from the yetzer ra. Like hunger, thirst or other basic instincts, sexual desire must be controlled and channeled, satisfied at the proper time, place and manner. But when sexual desire is satisfied between a husband and wife at the proper time, out of mutual love and desire, sex is a mitzvah.*

Source: "Kosher Sex." Judaism 101.

[https://www.jewfaq.org/kosher\\_sex](https://www.jewfaq.org/kosher_sex)

— 3.2 —

The Aaron Hill poem is from this source:

William Stanley Braithwaite, ed. *The Book of Georgian Verse*. 1909.

<https://www.bartleby.com/333/93.html>

— 3.2 —

"Agelastos" is Latin for "unsmiling," and it was the nickname of Marcus Licinius Crassus, who laughed just once in his life. The story is that rich Romans regarded thistles, properly prepared, as a delicacy, and they would not allow poor Romans to eat them. Agelastos laughed when he saw an ass eating thistles for free.

Eating thistles is a way of roughly handling them.

Nettles and thistles both irritate, but they are different plants. Nettles have tiny hairs that sting, and thistles have leaves with sharp prickles.

Thistles are a symbol of Scotland, and "he which touchest the [thistle] tenderly is soonest stung" could be advice to face Scottish raiders bravely and punish them.

For Your Information:

*II. That Crassus never laughed but once, and that was at an Asse eating Thistles, seems strange to the Doctor, yet he gives no reason for this, but only that the object was unridiculous, & that laughter is not meerly voluntary. But these are no reasons: for a more ridiculous object there cannot be, then to see such a medley of pleasure and pain in the Asses eating of Thistles; for whilst he bites them, they prick him, so that his tongue must needs be pricked, though perhaps his lips may be hard, and not so easily penetrable; when arose the Proverb, Like lips, like lettice. But there was something else in this that moved Crassus to laugh: For he saw here the vanity both of most men taking pleasure in those things which are accompanied with much pain and sorrow: Besides, he saw here the folly of the Roman rich men, who held Thistles for such a dainty dish, that they would not suffer poor men to eat thereof, engrossing them with great summes of money to themselves, which notwithstanding the Asses did eat on free cost. Was it not then a ridiculous thing to see rich men pay so dear for Asses food, and to debarre poore men from that meat which they permitted to Asses?*

Source of Above:

Alexander Ross (1652) *Arcana Microcosmi*, Book II, Chapter 15, pp. 174-179.

<https://penelope.uchicago.edu/ross/ross215.html#9>

<https://medium.com/equestrian-explorers/what-did-the-ancient-romans-eat-9ba2b595046c>

The below information comes from “The History of Artichokes”:

*Thistles—in the form of artichokes and cardoons—have been on the human table since at least the days of ancient Greece and Rome.*

[...]

*Both today’s cultivated artichoke and cardoon are, scientists believe, descended from the wild cardoon, a tougher, meaner, and pricklier plant, likely a native of north Africa and Sicily. Pliny the Elder mentions two types of edible thistles known to first-century Romans: one which “throws out numerous stalks immediately it leaves the ground,” which sounds like a cardoon; the other “thicker, and having but a single stem” and purple flowers, which may be a progenitor of the modern globe artichoke. This last, according to Pliny, had a number of beneficial medicinal effects, among them curing baldness, strengthening the stomach, freshening the breath, and promoting the conception of boys. Though Pliny doesn’t mention it, it was also purportedly an aphrodisiac. The Roman ate them pickled in honey and vinegar, and seasoned with cumin.*

[...]

*Similarly, wild thistles—the atrociously spiny stuff Winnie-the-Pooh’s doleful donkey Eeyore munches in his Gloomy Place—are said to have edible (even delicious) leaf ribs. I personally can’t attest to this, but even devoted wild-food aficionados agree that wild thistle is a challenge to gather, unless you happen to be wandering through the woods wearing elbow-length leather gloves.*

Source of Above: Rupp, Rebecca, “The History of Artichokes.” *National Geographic*. 12 November 2014

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/artichokes>

— 4.2 —

For Your Information:

*Sirens are not the same as mermaids. Mermaids are half-fish women, but sirens (the ones with the hypnotic singing voices) are half-bird women from Greek mythology. On the other hand, sirens and mermaids have been conflated for a long time. When did it begin?*

*Sirens first appear in Homer’s *Odyssey* in the 8th century B.C. Homer doesn’t really describe them at all. All we know is that their song will ensnare anyone who hears it.*  
[...]

*Meanwhile, fish-tailed people were a subject of art for a long time. They showed up in Mesopotamian art at least from the Old Babylonian Period (c. 1830 BC – c. 1531 BC). These were usually men, like the god Ea, but fish-tailed women sometimes appeared.*

*Then in medieval times, sirens stopped being bird-ladies and became fish-ladies. But birds and fish aren't typically interchangeable. What happened? [...]*

*By the 14th century, the siren's identity had become standardized as a fish-tailed temptress with a hypnotic voice. The words siren and mermaid were interchangeable. [...]*

Source of Above: "Fish or Fowl: How did Sirens become Mermaids?" Writing in Margins.  
11/12/2018

<https://writinginmargins.weebly.com/home/fish-or-fowl-how-did-sirens-become-mermaids>

— 4.2 —

This is from my retelling of the *Argonautica*:

*Soon, they reached the island of the Sirens, whose mother had been the muse Terpsichore. The Sirens were part bird and part human female. They sang, and the beauty of their singing led sailors to forget their homecoming and instead stay with the Sirens and listen to their songs while forgetting to eat and slowly starving to death.*

*Orpheus realized the danger that the Argonauts were in, and so he started to play his lyre and sing in competition with the Sirens. His song was loud and lively, and it mostly drowned out the song of the Sirens. The current and the wind swept the Argo past the Sirens. Only one Argonaut — Butes, who loved battle — jumped overboard to swim to the Sirens. The goddess Aphrodite felt pity for him and rescued him and set him on shore far from the Sirens.*

Source of Above: David Bruce. *Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica*.

This is from my retelling of the *Odyssey*. The speaker is Odysseus:

*"When Circe finished speaking to me, dawn arrived, and I went directly to my ship and we set sail. Circe sent us a favorable wind to help us on our way. I told my crewmembers, 'I will tell you everything — everything that Circe told me. Dangers await us. We will come to the island of the Sirens. Circe said that only I would hear their song. You must tie me to the mast so that I cannot jump overboard, swim to their island, and die.' I did not tell them everything, as I had promised. I did not tell them about Scylla — I feared a mutiny.*

*"As we approached the island of the Sirens, I melted beeswax and stopped the ears of the crewmembers with it so that they could not hear the song of the Sirens. They tied me tightly to the mast. I heard the song of the Sirens: 'Come to us, Odysseus. Your fame has reached the sky. Hear our song and become wise. We know what happened at Troy, and we know what will happen on the Earth.'*

*"I wanted my crewmembers to untie me. They tied me tighter to the mast. They rowed quickly to escape from danger. Once we were past the island of the Sirens, they removed the beeswax from their ears and untied me."*

Source: David Bruce. *Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*.

For Your Information:

The Wikipedia article on “Scylla” states that a beautiful young woman named

*[...] Scylla was loved by [the sea-god] Glaucus, but Glaucus himself was also loved by the goddess sorceress Circe. While Scylla was bathing in the sea, the jealous Circe poured a baleful potion into the sea water which caused Scylla to transform into a frightful monster with four eyes and six long snaky necks equipped with grisly heads, each of which contained three rows of sharp shark’s teeth. Her body consisted of 12 tentacle-like legs and a cat’s tail, while six dog’s heads ringed her waist. In this form, she attacked the ships of passing sailors, seizing one of the crew with each of her heads.*

Source of Above:

“Scylla.” Wikipedia. Accessed 27 September 2022

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scylla>

Wikipedia’s source for the information is

Gaius Julius Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 199

As you can see below, the Wikipedia paragraph contains information not found in Gaius Julius Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 199. Wikipedia may be conflating Scylla, daughter of the River Crataeis, with Scylla, the daughter of Nisus, and Scylla, the daughter of Typhon. All of these Scyllas are mentioned in the *Fabulae*. It should be noted that myths are frequently inconsistent.

§ 199 THE OTHER SCYLLA: Scylla, daughter of the River Crataeis, is said to have been a most beautiful maiden. Glaucus loved her, but Circe, daughter of Sol, loved Glaucus. Since Scylla was accustomed to bathe in the sea, Circe, daughter of Sol, out of jealousy poisoned the water with drugs, and when Scylla went down into it, dogs sprang from her thighs, and she was made a monster. She avenged her injuries, for as Ulysses sailed by, she robbed him of his companions.

Source of Above: Gaius Julius Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 199. Translated by Mary Grant. TOPOS text. Public Domain.

Hyginus, *Fabulae* from *The Myths of Hyginus*, translated and edited by Mary Grant. University of Kansas Publications in Humanistic Studies, no. 34., now in the public domain, with thanks to [www.theoi.com](http://www.theoi.com) for making the text available on line.

<https://topostext.org/work/206>

In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Scylla has six long necks. Later myth stated that Scylla had once been a beautiful woman.

Below is an excerpt from my retelling of Homer’s *Odyssey*. The speaker is Odysseus:

*“We avoided the Crashing Rocks — we went the other route, the one that lay between Scylla and Charybdis. I told my men, ‘We will get through this alive. You see the whirlpool. Stay clear of it. Sail close to this cliff, away from the whirlpool.’ I did not*

*mention Scylla. I remembered that Circe had told me that it was useless to try to stop Scylla from devouring six of my men, but I put on my armor, got my spears, and watched and waited. We saw Charybdis suck water down, down, down, and then vomit it up again. While we were watching Charybdis, Scylla struck. Each of her six long necks snaked down from her lair and grabbed one of my men. They shrieked my name, they screamed for help, but I could do nothing. She ate them raw. I have seen much evil in my life, but this made me feel the worst.*

Source: David Bruce. *Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose.*

**MIDAS**

## CAST OF CHARACTERS (MIDAS)

### **Prologue.**

**King Midas**, King of Phrygia (now part of western Turkey).

**Sophronia**, Daughter of King Midas.

Counselors of King Midas: **Eristus. Martius. Mellacrites.**

**Petulus**, Page to Mellacrites.

**Celia**, Daughter of Mellacrites.

**Pipenetta**, Maid to Celia.

**Licio**, Page to Celia.

**Minutius**, another Page.

**The gods: Bacchus, god of wine. Apollo, aka Phoebus Apollo, aka Phoebus. Pan, god of the wild.**

**Voice of Apollo's Oracle.**

**Shepherds: Menalcas. Coryn. Celthus. Dryapon. Amyntas.**

**Motto**, a Barber.

**Dello**, his apprentice.

**A Huntsman.**

**Erato**, a Nymph, Priestess to Pan.

Other Nymphs, including **Thalia**.

Ladies of the Court: **Camilla. Amerula. Suavia.**

**Scene: Phrygia and Delphi.**

### **NOTES:**

In this play, the island of Lesbos may stand for the island of Britain and especially the country of England. King Midas may stand for King Philip II of Spain. The King of Lesbos may stand for Queen Elizabeth I of England. At this time, Britain and Spain were enemies, and recently, in 1588, England had defeated the Spanish Armada.

King Midas is the King of Phrygia (now part of western Turkey). He is NOT King Minos of Crete, which is famous for the Minotaur and the Labyrinth it was kept in.

In this society, a person of higher rank would use "thou," "thee," "thine," and "thy" when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use "you" and "your" when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word "wench" at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word “fair” can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, good-looking.

“Sirrah” was a title used to address someone of a social rank inferior to the speaker. Friends, however, could use it to refer to each other, and fathers could call their sons “sirrah.”



## THE PROLOGUE IN ST. PAUL'S (MIDAS)

The Prologue said to you, the readers, all of whom are either men or honorary men:

“Gentlemen, so fickle and difficult to please is the world that for apparel there is no fashion, for music there is no instrument, for diet there is no delicacy, and for plays there is no invention except that which breeds satiety before noon, and contempt before night.”

The Prologue spoke about the difficulty various service providers have in satisfying the public:

“Come to the tailor, he has gone to the painters to study fashion in paintings and learn how more cunning and skill may lurk in the fashion than can be expressed in the making.”

Tailors did study paintings to see what fashions the figures were wearing.

The Prologue continued:

“Ask the musicians, they will say their heads ache with devising notes beyond *Ela*, a very high note.

“Inquire at ordinaries [taverns that serve food], there must be salads for the Italian; toothpicks for the Spaniard; pots of alcoholic beverages for the German; stews and porridges for the Englishman.

“At our theatrical performances, soldiers call for tragedies: Their object is blood.

“Courtiers call for comedies: Their subject is love.

“Countrymen call for pastorals: Shepherds are their saints.

“Trade and travel have woven the nature of all nations into ours; and they have made this land like arras, full of fanciful images, which formerly was broadcloth, full of workmanship.”

An arras is a wall hanging in which are woven scenes and/or figures.

The Prologue continued:

“Time has mixed up our minds, and our minds have mixed up the matter; but all comes to this pass, that what heretofore has been served in several dishes for a feast, is now minced in a large plate for a *gallimaufry* [stew made from odds and ends of food]. If we present a *mingle-mangle*, our fault is to be excused, because the whole world has become a *hodge-podge*.”

“*Mingle-mangle*” and “*hodge-podge*” both mean “*mishmash*.”

The Prologue continued:

“We are anxious about your judgments because you are wise.

“We are anxious about our own performance because we are not perfect.

“We are anxious about our author’s play because he is idle.

“Only this encourages us, that presenting our studies and play before gentlemen, even if they receive an inward mislike, we shall not be hissed with an open disgrace.

*“Stirps rudis urtica est; stirps generosa, rosa.”*

The Latin means: “A man of low birth is a nettle; a man of high birth is a rose.”

## CHAPTER 1 (MIDAS)

— 1.1 —

Bacchus, King Midas, Eristus, Martius, and Mellacrites met in the gardens before King Midas' palace.

Bacchus was the god of wine.

King Midas was the King of Phrygia (now part of western Turkey). He had been entertaining Bacchus.

Eristus, Martius, and Mellacrites were King Midas' counselors.

Bacchus said:

“King Midas, where the gods bestow benefits they ask thanks, but where they receive good turns, they give rewards.

“Thou have filled my belly with food, my ears with music, and my eyes with wonders.

“Bacchus of all the gods is the best fellow, and King Midas among men is a king of fellows.”

A fellow is a convivialist: a good liver, someone fond of good food and good music and good sights and other good things, including good company.

Bacchus continued:

“All thy grounds are vineyards, and thy fruit are grapes; thy chambers are wine cellars, and thy household items are standing cups.”

Standing cups are wine cups that have stems and bases they stand on.

Bacchus said:

“Therefore, ask me for anything, and it shall be granted.

“Would thou have the pipes of thy conduits to run wine, the udders of thy beasts to drop nectar, or thy trees to bud ambrosia?”

Nectar is the drink of the gods; ambrosia is the food of the gods.

Bacchus continued:

“Do thou desire to be fortunate in thy love, or famous in thy victories, or to have the years of thy life be as many as the hairs on thy head?”

Hmm. Be careful what you ask for, King Midas. Mythology has tales of mortals asking to live many, many years more than is normal, but forgetting to ask for endless youth. Such mortals grow older and older, and when one such mortal, a Sibyl, was asked what she wished for most, she wished for death.

Bacchus continued:

“Nothing shall be denied, so great is Bacchus, and so happy is King Midas.”

King Midas replied:

“Bacchus, for a king to beg something from a god is no shame, but to ask with advice, is wisdom.

“Give me permission to consult my advisors, lest desiring things above my reach, I will be burnt with Phaeton, or desiring things against nature, I will be drowned with Icarus, and with us so perishing, the world shall both laugh and wonder, crying, *Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*”

The Latin means: “Yet at least he fell because of his deeds of great daring.”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, II.328.

Phaeton attempted to drive the Sun-chariot across the sky, but he could not manage the horses, and so it came close to Earth and would have set it on fire, but Jupiter, King of the gods, hurled a thunderbolt and killed Phaeton, who fell to Earth.

Daedalus and his son, Icarus, were imprisoned on the island of Crete. To escape imprisonment, Daedalus fashioned wings made out of wax and feathers so that they could fly away from the island where they were imprisoned. He warned his son not to fly too high, for if he did, the sun would melt the wax, the feathers would fall out of the wings, and he would fall into the sea and drown.

This is exactly what happened. Icarus became excited because he was flying, he flew too high, the wax of his wings melted, the feathers fell out of the wings, and he drowned.

Bacchus granted the permission that King Midas had requested: “Consult. Bacchus will consent.”

King Midas said to his advisers, “Now, my lords, let me hear your opinions. What wish may make my days most happy and may make his subjects best content?”

Eristus expressed his opinion that King Midas ought to ask for love:

“If I were a king, I would wish to possess my mistress, for what sweetness can there be found in life, but love? The more mortal the wounds of love are to the heart, the more immortal they make the possessors.

“And who does not know that the possessing of love must be the most precious thing because the pursuing of it is so pleasing?”

Martius expressed his opinion that King Midas ought to ask for political and military power:

“Love is a pastime for children, breeding nothing but folly, and nourishing nothing but idleness. I would wish to be monarch of the world, conquering kingdoms like villages and being the greatest on the earth. I would wish to be commander of the whole earth.

“For what is there that more tickles the mind of a king than a hope to be the only king, wringing out of every country tribute, and in his own country to sit in triumph? Those who call conquerors ambitious, are like those who call thrift ‘covetousness,’ call cleanliness ‘pride,’ and call honesty ‘preciseness’ or ‘severe Puritanical fastidiousness.’

“Command the world, King Midas. A greater thing you cannot desire, a lesser thing you should not.”

“What do you say, Mellacrites?” King Midas asked.

Mellacrites expressed his opinion that King Midas ought to ask for gold:

“Nothing, except that these two have said nothing.

“I would wish that everything I touched might turn to gold because gold is the sinews of war, and gold is the sweetness of peace.

“Isn’t it gold that makes the most chaste to yield to lust, the most honest and loyal to yield to lewdness, the wisest to yield to folly, the most faithful to yield to deceit, and the most holy in heart to be most hollow of heart?”

Gold can buy a lot of flesh and corrupt a lot of character.

Mellacrites continued:

“In this word ‘gold’ are all the powers of the gods, the desires of men, the wonders of the world, the miracles of nature, the generosity of fortune and triumphs of time.

“By the use of gold, you may shake the courts of other princes, and have your own settled.

“One spade of gold undermines faster than a hundred mattocks of steel.”

Mattocks are digging implements. One way to undermine the walls of a city is to dig tunnels under the walls and then set off explosives. A quicker way is to bribe people to open the gates and let in your soldiers.

Mellacrites continued:

“Would one be thought religious and devout?

“*Quantum quisque sua nummorum servat in arca, tantum habet et fidei*: Religion’s weighing scales are golden bags.”

The Latin means: “Every man is trusted in proportion to the amount of money he has in his treasury.”

The Latin quotation is from Juvenal, *Satires*, III.143-144.

Mellacrites continued:

“Do you desire virtue?

“*Quaerenda pecunia primum est, virtus post nummos*: The first stair of virtue is money.”

The Latin means: “Seek money first; seek virtue after you have money.”

The Latin quotation comes from Horace, *Epistles*, I.1.53-54.

Mellacrites continued:

“Does anyone thirst to enter the rank of the gentry and become a gentleman, and does anyone wish to be esteemed beautiful?

“*Et genus et formam regina pecunia donat*: King Coin has a mint to stamp gentlemen, and it has the art, aka skill, to make amiableness.”

“Amiable” means “worthy to be loved.”

The Latin means: “Queen Pecunia [Queen Money] gives both pedigree and beauty.”

The Latin quotation comes from Horace, *Epistles*, I.6.37.

Mellacrites continued:

“I don’t deny that love is sweet, and I don’t deny that love is the marrow of a man’s mind.

“I don’t deny that to conquer kings is the quintessence of the thoughts of kings.

“Why, then get both with gold:

“*Aurea sunt vero nunc aecula, plurimus auro venit honos, auro conciliatur amor*: It is a world for gold; honor and love are both obtained through the payment of interest.”

The Latin means: “Now is the Golden Age. The greatest honor is sold for gold; love is sold for gold.”

The Latin quotation comes from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, II.277-278, but Ovid has *vere*, not *vero*.

Mellacrites continued:

“Does King Midas determine to tempt the minds of his enemy’s true subjects? Does King Midas determine to draw them from obedience to treachery, from their allegiance and oaths to treason and perjury?

“*Quid non mortalia pectora cogit auri sacra fames?* What holes does gold not bore in men’s hearts?”

The Latin means: “What doesn’t this insatiable love of gold compel mortal men to do?”

The Latin quotation comes from Virgil, *Aeneid*, III.56-57.

Mellacrites continued:

“Such virtue is there in gold that although it is bred in the most barren ground, and trodden under foot, it mounts to sit on princes’ heads.”

Gold is used in crowns.

Mellacrites continued:

“Wish for gold, King Midas, or wish not to be King Midas.

“In the counsel of the gods, wasn’t Anubis with his long nose of gold preferred before Neptune, whose statue was only brass?

“And wasn’t Aesculapius more honored for his golden beard than Apollo was honored for his sweet harmony?”

Lucian wrote the *Zeus Tragoedus*, in which the gods were seated according to the material their statue was made of, rather than according to their merit and virtue. Anubis’ statue had a long nose of gold, and so he was seated in a more prestigious seat than Neptune. Anubis is often portrayed as a man with a dog’s head.

Aesculapius' statue had a gold beard, and he was seated in a more prestigious seat than Apollo. Aesculapius is the god of medicine.

Eristus said, "To have gold and not love (which cannot be purchased by gold) is to be a slave to gold."

Martius said, "To possess mountains of gold, and a mistress more precious than gold, and not to command the world, is to make King Midas a new apprentice to a money-coining mint, and a journeyman to a woman."

A journeyman is a hired man.

Mellacrites said:

"To enjoy a fair lady in love, and lack fair gold to give, and to have thousands of people to fight, and no penny to pay — will make one's mistress wild and will make his soldiers tame.

"Jupiter was a god, but he knew gold was a greater god: and he flew into those grates with his golden wings, where he could not enter with his swan's wings."

Jupiter lusted after the mortal maiden Danae. The gods are shape-shifters, and Jupiter assumed the form of a shower of gold, passed through the grates of the walls imprisoning her, and impregnated her. She gave birth to the hero Perseus.

A cynical interpretation of the myth is that Jupiter gained access to Danae by giving her jailer a shower of gold coins.

In one of his shape-shifting adventures, Jupiter assumed the form of a swan and impregnated Leda, who gave birth to Helen, who later became Helen of Troy, and to Clytemnestra, who married and later murdered Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces against Troy.

Mellacrites continued:

"What stayed Atalanta's course with Hippomenes? An apple of gold."

Atalanta, who was wooed by many men, wished to preserve her virginity. Being swift, she challenged her suitors to a foot race. If she won the foot race, she would remain unmarried. If a suitor won the footrace, she would marry that suitor. For a long time, she remained a virgin, but Venus, the goddess of sexual passion, helped Hippomenes to win the foot race. She gave him three golden apples, and during the foot race, he threw the golden apples, one at a time, off the direct path to the finish line. Atalanta picked up the golden apples, and this slowed her down enough that Hippomenes won the race and married her.

Mellacrites continued:

"What made the three goddesses strive? An apple of gold."

Peleus was the human man who married the minor sea-goddess Thetis and who fathered Achilles. Obviously, you do not want discord at a wedding, and therefore, Eris, goddess of discord, was not invited to the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis. Even though Eris was not invited to the wedding feast, she showed up anyway and she threw an apple on a table at the wedding feast. Inscribed on the apple was the phrase "For the fairest." Three goddesses claimed the apple, meaning that each of the three goddesses thought that she was the fairest, or most beautiful:

Hera was the wife of Jupiter, King of the gods. Her Roman name is Juno.

Athena was the goddess of wisdom. Her Roman name is Minerva.

Aphrodite was the goddess of sexual passion. Her Roman name is Venus.

Paris was a prince of Troy, and Jupiter allowed him to judge the three goddesses' beauty contest.

Each of the goddesses offered Paris a bribe if he would choose her:

Hera offered Paris political power: several cities he could rule.

Athena offered Paris prowess in battle. Paris could become a mighty and feared warrior.

Paris chose Aphrodite, who had offered him the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife, as the victor of the beauty contest. That woman turned out to be Helen, the wife of King Menelaus of Sparta. She became Helen of Troy, and the Trojan War was fought over her.

Mellacrites continued:

“If therefore thou don't make thy mistress a goldfinch, thou may perhaps find her a wagtail. Believe me, *Res est ingeniosa dare.*”

The Latin means: “The clever act is to give.”

The Latin quotation comes from Ovid, *Amores*, I.8.62.

Mellacrites continued:

“Besides, how many gates of cities this golden key has opened we may remember of late, and ought to fear hereafter.

“That iron world is worn out, and the golden age has now come.”

Some ancients believed that the world was steadily growing worse. The golden age came first, then it was followed by the silver age, the bronze age, the heroic age, and the iron age.

According to Mellacrites, because of men's love of gold, this is the golden age.

Mellacrites continued:

“*Sub Jove nunc mundus, iussa sequare Jovis.*”

The Latin means: “Under Jove the world now is; we must follow the orders of Jove.”

“Jove” is Jupiter, King of the gods.

Eristus said, “Gold is just the guts of the earth.”

Mellacrites said:

“I would rather have the earth's guts than the moon's brains — that is, than be a lunatic.

“What is it that gold cannot command, or has not conquered?

“Justice herself, who sits wimpled — blindfolded — about the eyes, wears the blindfold not because she will take no gold, but because she would not be seen blushing when she takes it.



The scales she holds are not to weigh the right of the cause, but the weight of the bribe; she will put away her naked sword if thou offer her a golden scabbard.”

A wimple is a nun’s headdress.

King Midas said to his advisors:

“Stop arguing. I have made my decision.”

He then said to Bacchus:

“It is gold, Bacchus, that King Midas desires. Let everything that King Midas touches be turned to gold, so shall thou bless thy guest, and manifest thy godhead.

“Let it be gold, Bacchus.”

Bacchus said, “King Midas, thy wish cleaves to thy last word. Pick up this stone.”

King Midas picked up the stone, which turned to gold.

He said, “Fortunate King Midas! It is gold, Mellacrites! Gold! It is gold!”

“Hold this stick,” Mellacrites said, handing him a stick.

King Midas held the stick, which turned to gold.

“It is gold, Mellacrites!” King Midas said. “My sweet boy, all is gold! Forever honored be Bacchus, who above measure has made King Midas fortunate.”

Bacchus said:

“If King Midas is pleased, Bacchus is pleased. I will go to my temple with Silenus, for by this time there are many to offer to me sacrifices.”

Silenus was Bacchus’ traveling companion. He was a continually drunk and continually jovial Satyr: half-man, half goat.

Bacchus then said:

“*Poenam pro munere poscis.*”

The Latin means: “You have asked for a punishment instead of a gift.”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, II.99.

The Sun-god said that to Phaeton when Phaeton asked to drive the Sun-chariot across the sky.

Bacchus exited.

King Midas said:

“Come, my lords, I will pave my court with gold, and I will deck my turrets with gold, and these petty islands near Phrygia shall totter, and other kingdoms shall be turned topsy-turvy.

“I will command both the affections and the fortunes of men.

“Chastity will grow cheap where gold is thought dear. Celia, chaste Celia, shall yield.”

Celia was the daughter of Mellacrites, who was present, and who had advised King Midas to ask that everything he touched turn to gold.

Power corrupts. Wealth can be a kind of power.

King Midas continued:

“You, my lords, shall have my hands in your houses, turning your brazen gates to fine gold. Thus, King Midas shall be monarch of the world, the darer of fortune, the commander of love.

“Come, let us go inside.”

Mellacrites said, “We follow, desiring that our thoughts may be touched with thy fingers, so that they also may become gold.”

Eristus said, “Well, I fear the outcome of this wish because of Bacchus’ last words: *‘Poenam pro munere poscis.’*”

King Midas said, “Tush, he is a drunken god, or else he would not have given so great a gift. Now that it is done, I don’t care about anything he can do.”

— 1.2 —

Petulus and Licio talked together. Petulus was a page to Mellacrites, and Licio was a page to Celia. Mellacrites was a counselor to King Midas, and Celia was his daughter.

Licio asked Petulus, “Thou serve Mellacrites, and I serve Celia, his daughter, so which of us is the better man?”

Petulus responded, “The masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine; therefore, Licio, backare.”

In other words: I serve a man, and you serve a woman, so I am the better man. Therefore, back off, and give place to me.

Licio said, “That is when those two genders are in conflict, but when they belong both to one thing, then —”

Petulus interrupted, “— what then?”

“Then they agree like the fiddle and the stick,” Licio said.

They play beautiful music together.

Petulus said:

“*Pulchrè sane!* God’s blessing on thy blue nose!”

*Pulchrè sane* is Latin for “very nice.”

Veins showing through the skin look blue. They are often taken as evidence of fragility or refinement.

Licio’s “they agree like the fiddle and the stick” was mildly suggestive. Someone such as Petulus would speak words that were much more than suggestive.

Petulus continued:

“But Licio, my mistress — Celia — is a proper woman.”

In this context, a “mistress” is a female boss.

A “proper” woman is 1) good-looking, and/or 2) respectable.

“Aye, but thou don’t know her properties,” Licio said.

“I don’t care about her qualities, as long as I may embrace her quantity,” Petulus said.

Her quantity is her body.

“Are you so pert?” Licio asked.

“Pert” can mean saucy and impertinent.

“Aye, and I am so *expert* that I can as well tell the thoughts of a woman’s heart by her eyes as I can tell the change of the weather by an almanac,” Petulus said.

Telling the change of the weather by an almanac doesn’t always work. It’s much better to look out the window.

“Sir boy, you must not be saucy,” Licio said.

“No, I mustn’t, but I ought to be faithful and serviceable,” Petulus said.

“Lock up your lips, or I will lop them off,” Licio said. “But sirrah, for thy better instructions I will unfold every wrinkle and trick of my mistress’ disposition.”

“Please do,” Petulus said.

“But for this time, I will only handle the head and the purtenance — the head and that which pertains to it,” Licio said.

“Nothing else?” Petulus asked.

“Why, won’t that be a long hour’s work to describe that which is almost a whole day’s work to dress?” Licio asked.

Women can take a long time to dress, even with help from servants.

“Proceed,” Petulus said.

Licio began to describe Celia’s head:

“First, she has a head as round as a tennis ball.”

“I wish my bed were a hazard,” Petulus said.

He wished that his bed was hazardous to young unmarried virgins.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a “hazard” in Real Tennis as “Each of the various openings or galleries around a court, *spec.* those which are not winning openings.”

Tennis balls can be hit into hazards.

“Why?” Licio asked.

“Nothing, except that I would have her head there among other balls,” Petulus said.

Hmm. Indelicate, that.

Licio said:

“*Video, pro intelligo.*”

The Latin means: “I see, for I understand.”

Licio continued:

“Then she has a hawk’s eye.”

A hawk’s eyes could be seeled — sewn shut — as part of its training. Celia’s eyes would have to be sewn shut if her head was to come anywhere near Petulus’ balls.

“O, I wish that I were a partridge head,” Petulus said.

“To what end?” Licio said. “Why?”

“So that she might tire with her eyes on my countenance,” Petulus said.

Falcons would “tire” — that is, tear — flesh. Petulus wanted Celia to feast her eyes on his face.

But “tire” can also mean “become fatigued,” so Petulus was also unintentionally saying that he wanted Celia to become tired of looking at his face.

“Would thou be hanged for that?” Licio asked.

One way for Celia to tire — to feast — with her eyes on Petulus’ countenance would be for the two to be close together, paying close attention to what the other said. If that were to happen, they would be “hanging” on each other’s lips.

Petulus answered, “*Scilicet.*”

The Latin means, “Of course.”

Of course, if Petulus were to “annoy” Celia sexually, she could “tire” — tear — his face, and he could be hung.

“Well, she has the tongue of a parrot,” Licio said.

“To have a black tongue in a fair mouth is like having a dagger made out of lead in a velvet sheath,” Petulus said.

“Tush, her having the tongue of a parrot is not for the blackness, but for the babbling, for every hour she will cry, ‘Walk, knave, walk,’” Licio said.

Parrots were frequently taught these words. Possibly, the joke was that the parrot would say them to someone who was NOT a knave and did NOT want to be called a knave.

“Then I will mutter, ‘A rope for parrot, a rope,’” Petulus said.

The word “rope” was often taught to parrots. This word referred to 1) the hangman’s noose, and 2) (possibly) a rope perch for the parrot.

Licio said:

“So may thou be hanged, not by the lips, but by the neck.

“Then, sir, she has a calf’s tooth.”

“O monstrous mouth!” Petulus said. “I wish then it had been a sheep’s eye, and a neat’s — a cow’s — tongue.”

“It is not for the bigness, but the sweetness,” Licio said. “All her teeth are as sweet as the sweet tooth of a calf.”

“Sweetly meant,” Petulus said.

“She has the ears of a want,” Licio said.

A “want” is a mole, which this society thought to have very good hearing despite this society’s believing that moles have no ears.

“Does she want — lack — ears?” Petulus asked.

“I say the ears of a want, a mole,” Licio said. “Thou lack the wit and intelligence to understand me. She will hear although she is ever so low on the ground.”

“Why, then if someone would ask her a question, it is likely she will hearken to it,” Petulus said.

The questions these two servants were likely to ask her were propositions.

Licio said:

“Hearken thou after that.”

In other words: Give it a try.

Licio continued:

“She has the nose of a sow.”

“Then it is likely she wears her wedding ring there,” Petulus said.

“No, she can smell a knave a mile off,” Licio said.

Her ability to smell knaves kept her from marrying knaves.

“Let us go farther, Licio, for she has both of us in the wind,” Petulus said. “She can smell both of us.”

“Farther” can mean 1) farther away, or 2) farther in our conversation.

“She has a beetle brow,” Licio said.

A beetle brow can be bushy eyebrows or frowning eyebrows.

“What, is she beetle browed?” Petulus asked.

“Thou have a beetle head!” Licio said. “Thou are a blockhead. I say the brow of a beetle, a little fly, whose brow is as black as velvet.”

“What kind of lips has she?” Petulus asked.

“Tush, the lips are no part of the head; they are only made for a double-leaf door for the mouth,” Licio said.

“Tush” means “bah.”

“What is then the chin?” Petulus asked.

“That is only the threshold to the door,” Licio said.

Petulus said:

“I perceive you are driven to the wall that stands behind the door — that is, I see that you are driven to your last extremity, for this is ridiculous.

“But now that you can say no more of the head, begin with the purtenances, for that was your promise.”

“Purtenances” are accessories.

Licio said:

“The purtenances! It is impossible to count them up, much less to tell the nature of them.

“These accessories include:

“Hoods.

“Frontlets: ornaments or bands worn on the forehead.

“Wires, aka wire frameworks for holding up hairstyles.

“Caules, aka nets or small caps for the hair.

“Curling-irons.

“Periwigs, aka wigs.

“Bodkins, aka pins for pinning up hair.

“Fillets, aka ribbons or bands for tying up hair.

“Hair laces, aka strings for tying up hair.

“Ribbons.

“Rolls, aka cushions that form part of a headdress.

“Knotstrings, aka ribbons or strings used to make bows.

“Glasses, aka mirrors.

“Combs.

“Caps.

“Hats.

“Coifs, aka close-fitting caps that are tied under the chin.

“Kerchers, aka kerchiefs.

“Cloths, aka veils.

“Earrings.

“Borders, aka ornamental borders on the edge of a hat or a piece of clothing.

“Crippins, aka hair nets.

“Shadows.”

The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives this as one of its definitions of “shadow”: “A woman’s headdress, or a portion of a headdress, projecting forward so as to shade the face.”

Licio continued:

“Spots, aka beauty spots.

“And so many other trifles that I lack the words of art to name them, the time to utter them, and the wit to remember them. These are only a few notes.”

“Notes, you say?” Petulus said. “I note one thing.”

“What is that?” Licio asked.

“That if every part of a woman requires as much as the head, it will make the richest husband in the world ache at the heart,” Petulus said.

And ache in the wallet.

Celia’s handmaid, Pipenetta, entered the scene.

Licio said:

“But wait, here comes Pipenetta.”

He then asked her:

“What is the news?”

“I would not be in your coats for anything,” Pipenetta said.

“Indeed, if thou should rig — should romp — up and down in our jackets, thou would be thought a complete tomboy,” Licio said.

“I mean I would not be in your cases,” Pipenetta said.

By “cases,” Pipenetta meant “positions,” but the word can also mean “clothes” or “skins.”

“Neither shall thou, Pipenetta, for first, they are too little for thy body, and then they are too fair to pull over so foul a skin,” Petulus said.

“These boys are drunk!” Pipenetta said. “I would not be in your takings.”

“Takings” can mean “circumstances” or “situations.”

“I think so, for we take nothing in our hands but weapons,” Licio said. “It is for thee to use needles and pins, a sampler and not a buckler.”

A sampler is a piece of embroidery, and a buckler is a shield.

“Nay, then, we shall never have done!” Pipenetta said. “I mean I would not be so curst as you shall be.”

Pipenetta meant “so damned with curses,” but Petulus deliberately misunderstood the word to be “coursed,” which means “hunted.”

“Worse and worse!” Petulus said. “We are no chase (pretty mops), for deer we are not, neither red nor fallow, because we are bachelors and we don’t have *cornu copia*. We lack heads.”

“Mops” is a term of endearment that refers to a girl or woman.

“Red” and “fallow” are species of deer.

A *cornucopia* is a horn of plenty, but Petulus was also using “horn” to mean the antlers of deer and the invisible horns that were said to grow on the heads of husbands with unfaithful wives.

Petulus continued:

“Hares we cannot be, because they are male one year, and the next year they are female. We don’t change our sex.”

People have had many odd beliefs about animals through the centuries.

Petulus continued:

“We are not badgers, for our legs are one as long as the other.”

The front legs of badgers are powerful and strongly built. It can seem as if their front legs are longer than their back legs.

Petulus continued:

“And who will take us to be foxes, we who stand so near a goose and don’t bite?”

A goose is a fool. Petulus was referring to Pipenetta.

Pipenetta said, “Fools you are, and therefore good game for wise men to hunt, but I leave you knaves for honest wenches — honest women — to talk about.”

“Nay, stay, sweet Pipenetta, we are just disposed to be merry,” Licio said.

Pipenetta said:

“I marvel how old you will be before you are disposed to be honest.

“But this is the matter at hand:

“My master has gone abroad, and he wants his page to wait on him.

“And my mistress would rise, and she wants your worship to fetch her hair.”



“Her hair” is her wig.

“Why, isn’t it on her head?” Petulus joked.

“I think it should be, but I mean the hair that she must wear today,” Pipenetta said.

“Why, does she wear any hair except her own?” Licio asked.

Pipenetta said:

“In faith, sir, no, I am sure it’s her own when she pays for it.

“But have you heard the strange news at the court?”

“No, unless it is this: to have one’s hair lie all night out of the house away from one’s head,” Petulus said.

“Tush!” Pipenetta said. “The news is that everything that King Midas touches is gold.”

“The devil it is!” Petulus said.

“Indeed, gold is the devil,” Pipenetta said.

“Thou are deceived, wench, angels are gold,” Licio said. “But is it true?”

“Angels” are gold coins.

“True?” Pipenetta said. “Why the food that he touches turns to gold, so does the drink, and so does his clothing.”

“I wish that he would give me a good box — a good blow — on the ear, so that I might have a golden cheek,” Petulus said.

Licio said:

“How happy we shall be if he would but stroke our heads, so that we might have golden hairs.

“But let us all go in, lest he lose the virtue — the power — of the gift before we taste the benefit.”

“If he takes a cudgel — a stick or rod — it turns to gold, yet when he beats you with it, you shall only feel the weight of gold,” Pipenetta said. “You shall not turn to gold.”

“What is the difference between to be beaten with gold, and to be beaten gold?” Petulus asked.

Gold can be shaped by repeatedly beating — striking — it. Then it is beaten gold.

“As much difference as to say, drink before you go, and go before you drink,” Pipenetta said.

“Come, let us go, lest we drink from a dry cup and get no benefit because of our long tarrying and lingering,” Licio said.

They exited.

## CHAPTER 2 (MIDAS)

— 2.1 —

Eristus and Celia talked together. Eristus was one of King Midas' counselors. Celia was the daughter of Mellacrites, another of King Midas' counselors. Eristus was in love with Celia.

"Fair Celia, thou see of gold there is satiety, but of love there cannot be satiety," Eristus said.

Because of King Midas' "gift," there was an abundance of gold in his kingdom. There was, however, not an abundance of love, according to Eristus; after all, Celia did not love Eristus.

Celia said, "If thou should wish that whatsoever thou thought might be love, as King Midas wished that whatever he touched might be gold, it may be that love would be as loathsome to thine ears as gold is to his eyes and love would make thy heart pinch with melancholy, as his guts do with famine."

King Midas had discovered the downside of his wish: He was starving because all the food he touched turned to gold before he could eat it.

"No, sweet Celia, in love there is variety," Eristus said.

"Indeed, men vary and are fickle in their love," Celia said.

She meant that men are fickle and change the person whom they choose to love. They go from woman to woman.

"They vary their love, yet they do not change it," Eristus said.

"Love and change are at variance and in conflict; therefore, if they vary, they must change," Celia said.

Eristus said, "Men change the manner of their love, not the humor, aka inclination to love; men change the means how to obtain their love, not the mistress they honor. So did Jupiter, who could not entreat Danae by golden words. He possessed his love by means of a golden shower. He did not alter his affection for Danae, but he did use a different art to get what he wanted."

Celia said:

"The same Jupiter was an eagle, a swan, a bull; and for every saint he had a new shape, as men have for every mistress a new shadow."

"A new shadow" is a new guise. Men change their personalities to get women.

Jupiter was a horny god who pursued women, whether or not they wanted to be pursued. Many women wanted to pursue their virginity: They were saints.

Celia continued:

"If you take the example of the gods, who is more wanton, more wavering than the gods?"

Disguised as an eagle, Jupiter kidnapped the beautiful boy Ganymede, who became his cupbearer, and, some say, his catamite. A catamite is a boy kept as a sexual object for a homosexual man.

Disguised as a swan, Jupiter seduced Leda, who bore him two daughters: Helen, who later became known as Helen of Troy, and Clytemnestra, who married and later murdered Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces against the Trojans.

Disguised as a bull, Jupiter kidnapped the Phoenician woman Europa, who climbed on his back. He then swam to Crete, where Europa bore him a son: King Midas.

Jupiter slept with many, many mortal women and immortal goddesses. In Book 14 of Homer's *Iliad*, his wife sleeps with him so that he will fall asleep and the Greeks will fight well for a while. (Jupiter has been making sure that the Trojans fight well.) Overcome with lust for Hera, his wife, Jupiter mentions seven women and goddesses whom he has had sex with, and he mentions children that they have borne for him. The catalog of women and goddesses he has slept with is often called the "Leporello catalog." It is named after a famous aria in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Don Giovanni is better known by the name Don Juan.

Celia continued:

"If you take the example of yourselves, who are just men, who will think you are more constant and loyal than the gods?"

"Eristus, if gold could have allured my eyes, thou know King Midas, who commands all things to be gold, would have conquered and won me.

"If threats might have made my heart afraid, King Midas, being a king, might have commanded my affections.

"If love, gold, or authority might have enchanted me, King Midas would have obtained what he wanted from me by love, gold, and authority.

*"Quorum si singula nostrum flectere non poterant, potuissent omnia mentem."*

The Latin means: "If each of these things could not persuade me, all of them together might have succeeded."

Yes, they might have, but they didn't.

Earlier, King Midas had said, "Chastity will grow cheap where gold is thought dear. Celia, chaste Celia, shall yield."

Celia had not yielded.

The Latin quotation is adapted from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IX.608-609. Ovid used *duram* instead of *nostrum*.

Eristus said:

"Ah, Celia, if kings say they love and yet dissemble, who will dare to say that they dissemble, and not love? They command the affections of others to yield, and their own to be believed.

"My tears, which have made furrows in my cheeks and have made fountains in my eyes ...

"My sighs, which have made of my heart a furnace, and kindled in my head flames ...

"My body that melts by piecemeal, a little at a time, and my mind that pines and loses vitality at an instant ...

“All of these may witness that my love is both unspotted and pure, and that it is unspeakable and indescribable.

*“Quorum si singula duram flectere non poterant, deberent, omnia mentem.”*

The Latin means: “If each of these things could not move your hard mind, all of them together should have succeeded.”

Eristus then said:

“But wait, here comes the princess, with the rest of the lords.”

Sophronia, Mellacrites, Martius, and other courtiers entered the scene. Sophronia was King Midas’ daughter.

People were criticizing Mellacrites because of his advice to King Midas to ask Bacchus for a golden touch: that everything he touched would turn to gold.

Sophronia said:

“Mellacrites, I cannot tell whether I should more dislike thy counsel, or King Midas’ consent, but I both condemn and wonder at your covetous humor — your greedy disposition.

“A greedy disposition is unfit for a king, whose honor should consist in liberality, not greediness; and a greedy disposition is unworthy the calling of Mellacrites, whose fame should rise by the soldiers’ god, Mars, and not by the merchants’ god, Gold.”

Mellacrites replied:

“Madam, things past cannot be recalled, but they can be repented; and therefore, they are rather to be pitied than punished.

“It now behooves us how to redress the miserable condition of our king, not to dispute about the cause.

“Your highness sees, and without grief you cannot see, that his food turns to heavy gold in his mouth, and his wine slides down his throat like liquid gold. If he touches his robes, they are turned to gold, and what isn’t there that touches him, but becomes gold?”

Eristus said, “Aye, Mellacrites, if thy tongue had been turned to gold before thou gave our king such counsel, King Midas’ heart would have been full of ease, and thy mouth would have been full of gold.”

Martius said:

“If my advice had taken place, King Midas, who now sits over head and ears in crowns [gold coins], would have worn upon his head many kings’ crowns [diadems], and he who now is commander of dross would have been conqueror of the world.”

“Dross” is something worthless. It literally is what is left over after gold is refined.

Martius continued:

“That greediness of Mellacrites, whose heart-strings are made of Plutus’ purse-strings, has made King Midas, who should be a god on earth, a lump of earth.”

Plutus is the god of wealth.

Martius continued:

“And thy effeminate mind, Eristus, whose eyes are stitched on Celia’s face, and whose thoughts are gyved — fettered — to her beauty, has bred in all the court such a tender wantonness, that nothing is thought of but love, a passion proceeding from beastly lust, and colored with — that is, disguised by — a courtly name of love.

“Thus, while we follow the nature of things, we forget the names. Since this unsatiated thirst for gold, and this untemperate humor — intemperate desire — for lust has crept into the king’s court, soldiers have begged alms from artificers and craftsmen, and with their helmet on their head, they have been glad to imitate a lover with a glove in his hat, which so much abates the courage of true captains that they must account it more honorable in the court to be a coward, as long as he is rich and amorous, than in a camp to be valiant, if he is poor and maimed.”

The glove in a lover’s hat is a gift from a lady.

Martius continued:

“He who pricks his finger with his mistress’ needle is more favored than he who breaks his lance on his enemy’s face, and he who has his mouth full of fair words is more favored than he who has his body full of deep scars.

“If one is old, and has silver hairs on his beard, as long as he has golden ruddocks — that is, gold coins — in his bags, he must be wise and honorable.

“If he is young and has curled locks on his head, amorous glances with his eyes, and smooth and flattering speeches in his mouth, then every lady’s lap shall be his pillow, every lady’s face his mirror, every lady’s ear a sheath for his flatteries.

“True soldiers, if they are old, must beg in their own countries; if they are young, they must try the fortune of wars in another country.”

Currently, there was no need for true soldiers in King Midas’ country. So said Martius.

Martius continued:

“He is considered a man, who being let blood, carries his arm in a scarf of his mistress’ favor. He is not considered a man, who bears his leg on a crutch for his country’s safety.”

In this society, blood-letting was a recognized medical procedure.

Sophonra said:

“Stop, Martius, although I know love to grow to such looseness, and hoarding of gold to such misery, and although I may rather grieve at both, than remedy either, yet thy animating and inspiring my father to continual arms, to conquer crowns, has only brought him into imminent danger of his own head.

“The love he has followed — I fear is unnatural.

“The riches he has got — I know are unmeasurable.

“The wars he has levied — I fear are unlawful.

“My father’s love of riches and war has drawn his body with gray hairs to the grave’s mouth; and his mind with eating cares to desperate determinations.”

King Midas had been using his gold to hire soldiers.

Sophronia continued:

“Ambition has only two steps: The lowest step is blood, and the highest step is malicious envy.

“Both of these my unhappy father has climbed, digging mines of gold with the lives of men, and he is now maliciously envied and disliked by the whole world. He is surrounded with enemies round about the world, not knowing that Ambition has one heel nailed in hell, although she stretches her finger to touch the heavens.

“I wish the gods would remove this punishment, so that King Midas would be penitent.

“Let him thrust thee away and exile thee, Eristus, with thy love, into Italy, where they honor lust for a god, as the Egyptians did dogs.

“Let him thrust thee away and exile thee, Mellacrites, with thy greediness of gold, to the utmost parts of the west, Central and South America, where all the guts of the earth are gold.

“And let him thrust thee away and exile thee, Martius, who speak of nothing except blood and terror, into those barbarous nations, where nothing is to be found except blood and terror.

“Let Phrygia be an example of chastity, not lust.

“Let Phrygia be an example of liberality and generosity, not covetousness.

“Let Phrygia be an example of valor, not tyranny.

“I don’t wish your bodies banished, but your minds, so that my father and your king may be our honor and the world’s wonder.

“And thou, Celia, and all you ladies, learn this from Sophronia, that beauty in a minute is both a blossom and a blast — a blight.

“Love is a worm that, seeming to live in the eye, dies in the heart.

“You are all young, and fair; endeavor all of you to be wise and virtuous, so that when, like roses, you shall fall from the stalk, you may be gathered and distilled.”

The distillation of roses results in rose oil, which is used in perfumes.

“Madam, I am free from love, and unfortunate to be beloved,” Celia said.

She meant she was unfortunate to be loved by Eristus.

“To be free from love is strange, but to think being beloved is worthy of scorn is monstrous,” Eristus said.

Sophronia said:

“Eristus, thy tongue itches to talk about love, and my ears tingle to hear it.

“I order you all, if you owe any duty to your king, to go immediately to the temple of Bacchus and offer praise-gifts and sacrifice, so that King Midas may be released of his wish, or his life. This I entreat you; this King Midas commands you.

“Don’t argue with yourselves.

“Agree as one body to do this for your king, if ever you regarded King Midas as your lawful king.”

“Madam, we will go, and we will omit nothing that duty may perform, or pains may perform,” Mellacrites said.

Sophronia said:

“Go speedily, lest King Midas die before you return.

“And you, Celia, shall go with me, so that with talk we may beguile the time, and my father shall think of no food.”

“I attend on you,” Celia said.

They exited.

## — 2.2 —

Licio, Petulus, and Pipenetta talked together in the garden before King Midas’ palace. Petulus was a page to Mellacrites, and Licio was a page to Celia. Pipenetta was Celia’s handmaiden.

“Ah, my girl, isn’t this a golden world?” Licio asked Pipenetta.

“It is all the same as if it were lead with me, and yet as golden with me as with the king,” Pipenetta said, “for I see it, and I don’t feel it; he feels it, and he doesn’t enjoy it. “

Pipenetta could see the gold, but she couldn’t get her hands on any of it.

“Gold is just the earth’s garbage, a weed bred by the sun, the very rubbish of barren ground,” Licio said.

“Tush, Licio, thou are unlettered,” Petulus said. “All the earth is an egg: The white is silver, and the yolk is gold.”

“Tush” mean “Bah!”

“Why, thou fool, what hen would lay that egg?” Licio said.

“I warrant a goose did,” Pipenetta said.

A “goose” is a fool.

“Nay, I believe a bull did,” Licio said.

One meaning of “bull,” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is “A ludicrous jest.”

“Blurt to you both!” Petulus said. “It was laid by the sun.”

“Blurt” means “Bah!”

“The sun is rather a cock than a hen,” Pipenetta said.

Helios, the Sun-god, was male. So was Apollo, who in Roman mythology drives the Sun-chariot across the sky. Helios and Apollo were sometimes conflated in mythology.

“It is true, girl, else how could Titan have trodden Daphne?” Licio said.

The Titans Hyperion and Theia were the parents of Helios, and so Helios was called here a Titan. Apollo, however, was the god who pursued Daphne. Apollo loved Daphne, but Daphne did not love Apollo, and so she fled from him. He trod in her footprints and followed her. Daphne prayed to her father, a river-god, and she was transformed into a bay laurel tree, which became sacred to Apollo.

“I weep over both your wits!” Petulus said. “If I prove in every respect that there is no difference between an egg and gold, won’t you then grant that gold is an egg?”

“Yes, but I believe thy idle imagination will make it an addled egg — a rotten egg,” Pipenetta said.

Yes. And addled logic.

“Let us hear,” Licio said. “Proceed, Doctor Egg.”

“Gold will be cracked,” Petulus said. “‘Cracked crown’ is a common saying.”

A crown is a coin (or a head). A crown that developed a crack that penetrated a circle near the edge of the coin was no longer legal tender.

“Aye, that’s a broken head,” Pipenetta said.

A crown is the top of a head.

“Nay, then I see thou have a broken — an imperfect — wit,” Petulus said.

“Well, suppose gold will crack,” Licio said.

“So will an egg,” Petulus said.

“Go on,” Licio said. “Continue.”

“An egg is roasted in the fire,” Petulus said.

“Well,” Pipenetta said.

“So is gold tried in the fire,” Petulus said.

Gold can be extracted from ore by being placed in a fire. This is called “trying” the gold.

“Forth,” Licio said. “Continue.”

“An egg (as physicians say) will make one lusty,” Petulus said.

The word “lusty” can mean “vigorous.”

“Conclude,” Pipenetta said.

“And who does not know that gold will make one frolic?” Petulus asked.



“Pipenetta, this is true, for it is called ‘egg,’ as a thing that does egg on,” Licio said, “and so does gold.”

One meaning of “egg” is “incite.”

“Let us hear all,” Pipenetta said.

“Eggs are poached for a weak stomach; and gold is boiled for a consuming body,” Petulus said.

A consuming body is a body that is wasting away.

In this society, physicians sometimes prescribed a solution of gold as medicine.

“Spoken like a physician,” Licio said.

“Or a fool out of necessity,” Pipenetta said.

“An egg is eaten at one sup, and a portage is lost at one cast,” Petulus said.

A “portage” is a Portuguese gold coin better known as a portague.

“One cast” can be 1) one cast of the dice, or 2) one episode of vomiting.

“Concluded like a gambler,” Licio said.

“Eggs make custards, and gold makes spoons to eat them,” Petulus said.

“A reason dough-baked,” Pipenetta said.

“Dough-baked” is imperfectly risen bread, so Pipenetta is saying the result of Petulus’ reasoning was poor, as is dough-baked bread.

“The oven of his wit was not thoroughly heated,” Licio said.

Petulus’ reasoning did not rise to the occasion.

Petulus said, “Only this odds — this difference — I find between money and eggs, which makes me wonder. Why, since there are more pennies in the world than eggs, should one have three eggs for a penny, and not three pence for an egg.”

“A wonderful matter! But your wisdom is over-shot — you have missed your target — in your comparison, for eggs have chickens, and gold has none,” Pipenetta said.

“Mops, I pity thee!” Petulus said. “Gold has eggs; change an angel into ten shillings, and all those pieces are the angel’s eggs.”

“Mops” is a term of endearment.

An angel is a gold coin.

Licio said:

“He has put a spoke in your wheel and successfully refuted your criticism, so will thou eat an egg?”

“But be quiet, here come our masters.”

“Let us shrink aside.”

They went to the side, but they could still hear the newcomers' conversation.

Mellacrites, Martius, and Eristus entered the scene. They had been to Bacchus' temple and had consulted Bacchus' oracle.

Mellacrites said:

"It is a short answer, yet a sound answer.

"Bacchus is pithy — full of short but concentrated advice —and he is full of pity."

He read the oracle out loud:

*"In Pactolus go bathe thy wish and thee,*

*"Thy wish the waves shall have, and thou be free."*

Pactolus is a river in the neighboring country of Lydia.

Martius said:

"I understand no oracles!

"Shall the water turn everything to gold? What then shall become of the fish? Shall King Midas be free from gold? What then shall become of us, of his crown, of our country?"

"I don't like these riddles."

Mellacrites said:

"Thou, Martius, are so warlike, that thou would cut off the wish with a sword, not cure it with a medicinal salve.

"The gods, who can give the desires of the heart, can as easily withdraw the torment.

"Suppose that Vulcan the blacksmith god should so temper thy sword, that were thy heart never so valiant and thine arm never so strong, yet thy blade should never draw blood.

"Wouldn't thou wish to have a weaker hand, and a sharper edge?"

Swords are tempered — given strength, by heating and cooling them.

"Yes," Martius said. "I would prefer a weaker arm and a sharper sword to a strong arm and a blunt sword."

Mellacrites said, "If Mars should answer thee thus, 'Go bathe thy sword in water, and wash thy hands in milk, and thy sword shall cleave adamant, and thy heart shall answer the sharpness of thy sword,' wouldn't thou try it and see what happens?"

Adamant is a legendarily hard mineral.

"What else would I do?" Martius asked.

Mellacrites said:

"Then let King Midas believe until he has tested the oracle and let him think that the gods rule as well by giving remedies, as by granting wishes.

“But Eristus is mum.”

He was wondering if Eristus had anything to add to the conversation.

“Celia has sealed his mouth,” Martius said.

A hawk’s eyes could be sealed — sewn shut — as part of its training.

Eristus said:

“Celia has sealed — made an impression of — her face in my heart, which I am no more ashamed to confess, than thou are ashamed to confess that Mars has made a scar in thy face, Martius.

“But let us go in to the king.

“Sir boys, you wait well!”

He was criticizing them for not going into the temple.

“We dared not go to Bacchus, for if I see a grape, my head aches,” Petulus said.

“And if I find a cudgel, I’ll make your shoulders ache,” Eristus said.

“And you, Licio, you wait on yourself,” Mellacrites said.

“I cannot choose otherwise, sir. I am always so near myself,” Licio said.

“I’ll be as near you as your skin presently,” Mellacrites said.

In other words: I’ll soon beat you.

They exited.

## CHAPTER 3 (MIDAS)

— 3.1 —

King Midas, Mellacrites, Martius, and Eristus talked together.

King Midas was holding the oracle, which he read out loud:

*“In Pactolus go bathe thy wish and thee,*

*“Thy wish the waves shall have, and thou be free.”*

He said to himself:

“Miserable King Midas, thou were as unadvised and rash in thy wish, as thou were unfortunate in thy wish’s outcome.

“O, unquenchable thirst of gold, which turns men’s heads to lead, and makes them blockish and stupid ...

“And turns their hearts to iron, and makes them covetous and greedy ...

“And turns their eyes to delight in the view and makes them blind in the use.

“I who did possess mines of gold, could not be contented until my mind were also a mine.”

His mind was dark like a mine.

King Midas continued:

“Couldn’t the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes that Greece paid to Phrygia, nor the mountains in the east, whose guts are gold, satisfy thy mind with gold?

“Ambition eats gold and drinks blood; she climbs so high by other men’s heads that she breaks her own neck.

“What should I do with a world of ground, whose body must be content with seven feet of earth after I die?”

King Midas turned his mind to his military conquests:

“And why did I covet to get so many crowns, having myself only one head?

“Those who took small vessels at the sea, I judged to be pirates; and I myself, who suppressed whole fleets, I judged to be a conqueror, as though I might mask the robberies of King Midas under the names of triumphs, and I might call the traffic and trade of other nations treachery.

“Thou have pampered up and engorged thyself with slaughter, as Diomedes did his horses with blood, so unsatiable was thy thirst, so violent was thy sword.”

Hercules’ eighth labor was to capture the man-eating mares of Diomedes of Thrace. Hercules took a few companions with him during this labor. He captured the horses, but they ate human flesh. While Hercules was fighting Diomedes, Hercules’ companion Abderus watched the mares; unfortunately, they attacked and ate him. To avenge the death of Abderus, Hercules fed Diomedes to the mares. Hercules took the mares to Eurystheus, who ordered them to be taken

to Mount Olympus and sacrificed to Jupiter. Jupiter did not want such a sacrifice, so he sent wild animals that killed the mares.

King Midas continued:

“Two books I have always carried in my bosom, calling them the dagger and the sword; in which the names of all princes, noblemen, and gentlemen were dedicated to slaughter, or if not (which is worse), they were dedicated to slavery.

“O, my lords, when I remember my cruelties in the district of Lycaonia, my usurping in the district of Getulia, my oppression in the city of Sola, then I find neither mercies in my conquests, nor color — pretext — for my wars, nor reasonable limits in my taxes.

“I have written my laws in blood and made my gods of gold.

“I have caused the mothers’ wombs to be their children’s tombs, I have caused cradles to swim in blood like boats, and I have caused the temples of the gods to become a stews — a brothel district — for strumpets.

“Haven’t I made the sea groan under the number of my ships, and haven’t they perished, so that there were not two left to make a plural number?

“Haven’t I thrust my subjects into a military camp, like oxen into a cart; having made them slaves by unjust wars, don’t I use them now as slaves for all wars?

“Haven’t I enticed the subjects of my neighbor princes to destroy their natural kings like moths that eat the cloth in which they were bred, like vipers that gnaw the bowels from which they were born, and like worms that consume the wood in which they were engendered and begotten?”

Vipers were thought to gnaw their way out of their mother.

King Midas continued:

“To what kingdoms haven’t I pretended claim as though I had by the gods been created heir apparent to the world, making every trifle a title and making all the territories around me traitors to me.”

In order to gain crowns, he would start wars over trifles, and he treated the countries around Phrygia as if they were enemy states. In fact, because of his actions, they were hostile to him.

King Midas continued:

“Why did I wish that all I touched might be gold, except that I thought all men’s hearts would be touched with gold and I thought that what policy could not encompass, nor prowess, gold might have commanded, and conquered?

“I did mean to make a bridge of gold in that island where all my navy could not make a breach in the island’s defenses. Those islands I did long to touch, so that I might turn them to gold, and myself to glory.

‘But unhappy King Midas, who himself perishes by the same means that he thought to conquer others: He has now become a shame to the world, a scorn to that petty prince of the island, and to thyself has become a consumption — a destruction.

“A petty prince, King Midas?”

“No, I am a scorn to a prince who is protected by the gods, by nature, by his own virtue, and his subjects’ obedience.

“Haven’t all treasons been discovered by miracle, not counsel? The gods demand that as a right.

“Isn’t the country walled with huge waves? Nature claims that.

“Isn’t he regarded through the whole world as a wonder for wisdom and temperance? His own strength is that.

“Don’t all his subjects (like bees) swarm to preserve the king of bees? Their loyalty maintains that.

“My lords, I faint both for lack of food and lack of grace from the gods. I will go to the river, where if I will be rid of this intolerable disease of gold, I will next shake off that intemperate desire of government, and limit my territories, not by the greatness of my mind — the greatness of my desires — but by the right of my succession.”

Martius said:

“I am not a little sorry that because all your highness touches turn to pure gold, therefore all your princely desires should be converted to dross. Does your majesty begin to melt your own crown, you who should combine your own crown with other monarchs’ heavy crowns?”

“Do you begin to make an enclosure of your mind, and to debate about inheritance, when the sword proclaims you conqueror? If your highness’ heart is not tried and tested to be able to defend your kingdom against other countries, every paltry, petty prince will batter it.

“Though you use this garish gold, let your mind be always of steel, and let the sharpest sword decide the right of scepters.”

In other words: Let the sword decide who shall rule a kingdom.

“Every little king is a king, and the title consists not in the compass and measure of ground, but in the right of inheritance,” King Midas said.

“Aren’t conquests good titles to kingdoms?” Martius asked.

“Conquests are great thefts,” King Midas said.

“If your highness would be advised by me, then I would rob in order to obtain kingdoms, and if I obtained them, I would be eager to see him who dared call the conqueror a thief,” Martius said. “I would dare them to call the conqueror a thief.”

King Midas said:

“Martius, thy counsel has shed as much blood as would make another sea. I cannot call it valor, and barbarousness is a word too mild.

“Come, Mellacrites, let us go, and Eristus, you come so that if I obtain mercy from Bacchus, we may offer sacrifice to Bacchus.

“Martius, if you are not disposed to go, dispose of yourself as you will.”

“I will humbly attend on your highness, as always hoping to have my hearts’ desire, and always hoping that you would have your height of honor,” Martius said.

— 3.2 —

Licio and Petulus talked together.

Motto the barber had cut King Midas’ golden beard and taken possession of it, but then Petulus had cheated Motto and taken possession of the golden beard.

“Ah, Licio, a bots on the barber!” Petulus said. “Ever since I cozened — I cheated — him of the golden beard, I have had the toothache.”

A bot is a parasitic worm.

“I think Motto has poisoned thy gums,” Licio said.

“It is a deadly pain,” Petulus said.

“I knew a dog who ran mad because of it,” Licio said.

“I believe it, Licio, and thereof it is that they call it a dogged pain,” Petulus said. “Thou know I have tried all old women’s medicines, and cunning men’s charms, but *interim* — in the meantime — my teeth ache.”

Dello, the barber’s serving-boy, who had been standing nearby, unseen, spoke directly to you, the readers:

“I am glad I have overheard these wags, Petulus and Licio, two mischievous young men, so the barber and I can get revenge for their overhearing us.”

Petulus and Licio had apparently overheard Dello and the barber talking about the golden beard, and then Petulus had gotten possession of it.

Dello continued:

“We will take the advantage of them; they shall find us quick barbers.

“I’ll tell Motto, my master, and then we will have *quid pro quo*, tit for tat, a tooth for a beard.”

Dello exited to tell his master, the barber, that he had overheard Petulus saying that he had a toothache.

Petulus said, “Licio, to make me merry, I ask thee to go forward with and continue the description of thy mistress; thou must begin now at the paps — her breasts.”

Licio said:

“Indeed, Petulus, that would be a good beginning for thee, for thou can eat pap — soft baby food — now, because thou can bite nothing else due to your toothache.

“But I am not thinking about those matters.

“If the king were to lose his golden wish, we shall have but a brazen — a brass — court.

“But what became of the beard, Petulus?”

“I have pawned it, for I dared not coin it,” Petulus said. “I dared not make coins out of it.”

“What do thou pay for the pawning?” Licio asked.

“The interest is twelve pence per pound for the month,” Petulus said.

“What for the herbage?” Licio said.

“Herbage” is a pasture.

“It is not at herbage,” Petulus said.

“Yes, Petulus, if it is a beard, it must be at herbage, for a beard is a badge — a distinguishing mark — of hair; and a badge of hair is a hair-badge,” Licio said.

Motto the barber and Dello entered the scene.

“Dello, thou know King Midas touched his beard, and it was gold,” Motto said.

“True,” Dello said.

“The pages cozened me of it,” Motto said. “They cheated me.”

“That’s no lie,” Dello said.

“I must be revenged,” Motto said.

“In good time,” Dello said.

Now was a good time.

“Thou know I have taught thee the knocking of the hands, the tickling on a man’s hairs, like the tuning of a cittern,” Motto said.

“Knocking” is snapping of fingers. Some barbers put on a show as they cut hair.

A cittern was a musical instrument found in barber shops for customers to play.

“True,” Dello said.

Motto said, “Besides, I have instructed thee in the phrases of our eloquent occupation, such as:

“‘How, sir, will you be trimmed?

“‘Will you have your beard like a spade, or a bodkin [sharp and pointed like a dagger]?

“‘Will you have a penthouse [bushy mustache] on your upper lip, or an ally [forked beard] on your chin?

“‘Will you have a low curl on your head like a bull, or a dangling lock like a spaniel?

“‘Will you have your mustachoes sharp at the ends like shoemaker’s awls, or hanging down to your mouth like goat’s flakes [unplaited locks of hair]?

“‘Will you have your love-locks wreathed with a silken twist [silk string], or shaggy to fall on your shoulders?’”



Dello said, “I confess you have taught me *Tullie de Oratore*, the very art of trimming.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero wrote *De Oratore*, which is about the art of public speaking.

“Trimming” can mean 1) cutting hair a little shorter, or 2) cheating someone.

Barbers usually talk while cutting hair.

“Well, for all this I desire no more at thy hands than to keep secret the revenge I have prepared for the pages,” Motto said.

“O, sir, you know I am a barber, and cannot tittle-tattle, I am one of those whose tongues are swelled and swollen with silence,” Dello said.

Of course, barbers are famous talkers.

“Indeed, thou should be no blabbing, because thou are a barber, so therefore be secret,” Motto said.

Motto then started to put his plan in action. Dello had overheard that Petulus had a toothache and Motto’s revenge would take advantage of that fact.

Motto said loudly so that Petulus and Licio would overhear him, “Wasn’t it a good cure, Dello, to ease the toothache and never touch the tooth?”

Touching the tooth would cause it to hurt.

“O master, I warrant — assure you — that he who is your patient for the toothache is patient and able to endure all aches,” Dello said.

“I did but rub his gums, and immediately the rheum evaporated,” Motto said.

A rheum is a watery discharge; here, the watery discharge is probably tears of pain.

“*Deus bone*, has that word come into the barber’s basin?” Licio said.

Licio was surprised that the barber knew a fancy word like “rheum.”

By *Deus bone*, Licio meant “Good God.”

“Aye, sir, and why not?” Dello said. “My master is a barber and a surgeon.”

Barbers could do such things as bleed patients and pull teeth.

Bleeding patients was a medical procedure thought (incorrectly) to help some patients.

“In good time,” Licio said.

Petulus said, “O, Motto, I am almost dead with the toothache, all my gums are swollen, and my teeth stand in my head like thorns.”

“It may be that it is only the breeding of a beard, and being the first beard, you shall have a hard travail,” Motto said.

Petulus was young and just starting to grow — to birth — beard hairs.

“Old fool, do thou think hairs will breed in my teeth?” Petulus asked.

“As likely, sir, for anything I know, as on your chin,” Motto said.

“O teeth! O torments!” Petulus said. “O torments! O teeth!”

Motto whispered to Dello, “If I can just touch his teeth, Dello, I’ll teach his tongue to tell a tale about what villainy it is to cozen one of a beard, but don’t stand close by, for it is likely that when he spits, all his teeth will fly in thy face.”

Licio said, “Good Motto, give some ease to Petulus, for when thou were coming in, I overheard of a cure thou had done.”

“My teeth!” Petulus said. “I will not have this pain, that’s for certain!”

Motto said, “Aye, so you did overhear — and take advantage of — me, when you cheated me of a beard, but I have already forgotten everything.”

“My master is mild and merciful,” Dello said, “and he is merciful, because he is a barber, for when he has the throat at command, you know he takes revenge only on a silly, weak hair.”

Barbers had better be merciful, for they hold sharp razors against customers’ throats.

“How is it now, Petulus?” Motto asked. “Do the teeth still ache?”

“Aye, Motto,” Petulus said.

“Let me rub your gums with this leaf,” Motto said.

Petulus said:

“Do, Motto, and for thy labor I will requite and reward thee.”

Under pretense of easing the pain, Motto hurt him.

Petulus complained:

“Get out, rascal! What have thou done? All my nether — lower — teeth are loose, and wag like the keys of a pair of virginals.”

Virginals were keyboard musical instruments with a double row of keys. The double row was known as “jacks.”

“O sir, if you will, I will sing to them, with your mouth being the instrument,” Dello said.

“Do, Dello,” Petulus said.

Dello put his fingers in Petulus’ mouth, and Petulus bit them.

“Out, villain!” Dello said. “Thou bite. I cannot tune — play — these virginal keys.”

“They were the jacks above,” Petulus said. “The keys beneath were easy, gentle, and yielding.”

His lower teeth were loose.

“A bots on your jacks and jaws, too!” Dello said.

“They were virginals of your master’s making,” Licio said.

“O my teeth!” Petulus said. “Good Motto, what will ease my pain?”

“Nothing in the world, but to let me lay a golden beard against your chin,” Motto said.

In other words: Give back to me King Midas’ golden beard, and I will ease your pain.

“It is at pawn,” Petulus said. “I pawned it.”

“You are likely to fetch it out of pawn with your teeth, or go without your teeth,” Motto said.

“Motto, withdraw thyself, it may be thou shall draw — pull — my teeth,” Petulus said. “Wait for my resolution — my decision.”

Motto and Dello retired and allowed Petulus to consult Licio privately.

“A fearful decision, whether it would be better to lose my beard of gold, or my tooth of bone?” Petulus said. “Help me, Licio, to make a decision.”

“Your teeth ache, Petulus,” Licio said. “Your beard does not.”

Of course, he meant the golden beard.

“Aye, but Licio, if I part from my beard, my heart will ache,” Petulus said.

“If your tooth is hollow, it must be filled, or pulled out,” Licio said, “and the barber will not fill it, without the beard.”

“My heart is hollow, too, and nothing can fill it but gold,” Petulus said.

“Thou cannot eat food without teeth,” Licio said.

“Nor buy food without money,” Petulus said.

“Thou may get more gold; if thou lose these teeth, thou cannot get more teeth,” Licio said.

“Aye, but the golden beard will last me ten years and keep me in porridge, and then to what use are teeth?” Petulus said.

Porridge is soft food and does not need to be chewed.

“If thou lack teeth, thy tongue will catch cold,” Licio said.

“That is true, and it is also true that if I lack money, my whole body may go naked,” Petulus said. “But Licio, let the barber have his beard. I will have a trick (with thy help) to get it back again, and a cozenage — a cheat — beyond that, maugre his beard.”

“Maugre his beard” means “in spite of whatever he tries to do.” Literally, it means, “Oppose/defy his beard.”

“That’s the best way, both to ease thy pains and to test our wits,” Licio said.

“Barber, eleven of my teeth have gone on a jury, to judge whether the beard is thine,” Petulus said. “They have chosen my tongue for the foreman, which cries, ‘Guilty.’”

Petulus was admitting that he was guilty of taking the golden beard.

“Gilded?” Motto said. “No, boy, all my beard was gold. It was not gilt. I will not be so overmatched and bested.”

“You cannot pose — perplex — my master with a beard,” Dello said. “Come to his house, and you shall sit upon twenty beards; all his cushions are stuffed with beards.”

“Let him go home with thee, ease himself, and thou shall have thy beard,” Licio said.

“I am content with that, but I will have the beard in my hand to be sure,” Motto said.

“And I will have thy finger in my mouth, to be sure of ease,” Petulus said.

“Agreed,” Motto said.

“Dello, sing a song to the tune of ‘My Teeth Do Ache,’” Petulus said.

“I will,” Dello said.

Petulus sang:

*“O my teeth! Dear barber, ease me,*

*“Tongue, tell me, why my teeth disease me,*

*“O! What will rid me of this pain?”*

Motto sang:

*“Some pellitory fetched from Spain.”*

“Pellitory” is a root that was used to treat toothache.

Licio sang:

*“Take mastic else.”*

“Mastic” is a gum or resin that was believed to stop tooth decay.

Petulus sang:

*“Mastic’s a patch.”*

A “patch” is a fool.

Petulus continued:

*“Mastic does many a fool’s face catch.”*

Many fools’ faces are treated with mastic.

Petulus continued:

*“If such a pain should breed the horn,*

*“’Twere [It would be] happy to be cuckolds born.”*

If men were born with horns, they would have no need to get toothache to grow horns (if toothache would grow horns).

Petulus continued:

*“Should beards with such an ache begin,*

*“Each boy to th’ bone would scrub his chin.”*

Licio sang:

*“His teeth now ache not.”*

Motto sang:

*“Caper [Dance] then,*

*“And cry up checkered-apron men:”*

Barbers wore checkered aprons.

Motto continued:

*“There is no trade but shaves,*

*“For barbers are trim [excellent] knaves,*

*“Some are in shaving so profound [knowledgeable],*

*“By tricks they shave [cheat] a kingdom round.”*

— 3.3 —

Sophronia, Celia, Camilla, Amerula, and Suavia talked together.

Sophronia was the daughter of King Midas, and Celia was the daughter of Mellacrites.

Camilla, Amerula, and Suavia were ladies of the court.

Sophronia said, “Ladies, here we must await the happy return of my father, but in the meantime, what pastime shall we use to pass the time? I will agree to any, as long as it is not to talk about love.”

“Then sleep is the best exercise,” Suavia said.

“Why, Suavia, are you so light that you must chat about love, or are you so heavy that you must sleep?” Sophronia asked.

“Light” can mean 1) frivolous, or 2) wanton.

“Heavy” means “tired” in this context.

Sophronia continued:

*“Penelope in the absence of her lord beguiled the days with spinning.”*

In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Odysseus, Penelope’s husband, was away from home for twenty years. He fought in the Trojan War for ten years, and then it took ten more years for him to return home. Much of that time, he was kept prisoner on an island by the goddess Calypso. Because people thought that Odysseus was dead, over one hundred suitors tried to convince Penelope to marry one of them. Penelope was able to hold off the suitors with her famous weaving trick. She said that she would marry one of the suitors after she had finished weaving a shroud for Odysseus’ aged father. Each day she wove the shroud, and each night she unwove what she had woven.

Suavia said, "Indeed she spun a fair thread, as if it were to make a string to the bow wherein she drew her wooers."

Eventually, Penelope was caught unweaving what she had woven, and she then said that she would marry whichever suitor could string Odysseus' bow and shoot an arrow through the holes in the heads of twelve axes lined up in a row.

Sophronia said, "Why, Suavia, it was a bow that she knew to be above their strength, and therein she showed her wit."

Yes, Penelope was intelligent. None of the suitors was strong enough to string Odysseus' bow.

Suavia said, "*Qui latus arguerit corneus arcus erat*: It was made of horn, madam, and therein she showed her meaning."

The Latin means: "A bow of horn proved his strength."

Suavia was being playful. In this society, people joked about the invisible horns on the heads of cuckolds: husbands with unfaithful wives. She was hinting that Penelope wanted to sleep with or had slept with the suitors.

"Why, don't thou think she was chaste?" Sophronia asked.

"Yes, by all her wooers," Suavia said.

In other words: Yes, she was *chased* by all her wooers.

Sophronia said:

"To talk with thee, Suavia, is to lose time, not to spend it well.

"What do you say, Amerula? What shall we do?"

"Tell tales," Amerula answered.

"What do you say, Celia?" Sophronia asked.

"Sing," Celia answered.

"What do you think, Camilla?" Sophronia asked.

"Dance," Camilla answered.

Sophronia said, "You see, Suavia, that there are other things to keep one from idleness, besides love. Indeed, there is nothing to make idleness, except love."

"Well, let me stand aside and feed my own thoughts with sweetness, while the other women fill your eyes and ears with songs and dancings," Suavia said.

"Amerula, begin thy tale," Sophronia said.

Amerula began:

"There dwelt formerly in Phrygia a lady who was very fair and pretty, but who was surpassingly forward and ungovernable, as much marveled at for beauty, as disliked for

peevishness. High she was in the instep, but short in the heel; she was straitlaced, but loose bodied.”

“High in the instep” means that she was proud.

“Straitlaced” means that she was stiff in manner.

“Short in the heel” and “loose bodied” both mean “unchaste and “wanton.”

Amerula continued:

“It came to pass that a gentleman, as young in wit and in intelligence as in years, and in years truly a boy, chanced to glance his eyes on her, and there they were dazzled by her beauty like larks that are caught in the sun with the glittering of a glass, aka mirror.

“In her fair looks were his thoughts entangled, like the birds of the Canary Islands that fall into a silken net.

“Dote he did without measure and limit, and die he must without her love.

“She, on the other side, as one who knew what was good for her, began to look askance — look at him with disapproval — and yet she felt the passions of love eating into her heart, though she dissembled her feelings of love with her eyes.”

Suavia laughed.

“Why do thou laugh?” Sophronia asked.

Suavia answered:

“I laugh to see you, madam, so tame as to be brought to hear a tale of love, who before were so wild you would not come to speak the name of love.

“And I laugh because Amerula could devise how to spend the time with a tale, with the only stipulation being that she might not talk of love, and now she makes love the sole subject of her tale.”

Sophronia said:

“Indeed, I was overshot — I missed the mark — in judgment, and she missed the mark in discretion.

“Amerula, another tale or none; this tale is too much about love.”

Suavia said:

“Nay, let me hear any woman tell a tale of ten lines long without it tending towards love, and I will be bound never to go to the court.

“And you, Camilla, who would like to trip — to dance — on your pettitoes — your little toes — can you persuade me to take delight to dance, and not love? Or can you persuade me that you, who cannot rule your feet, can guide your affections and your love, having the one [affections and love] be as unstead and unrestrained as the other [feet] are unsteady. Dancing is love’s sauce; therefore, I dare to be so saucy, if you love to dance, as to say you dance for love.

“But Celia, she will sing, whose voice if it should utter her thoughts, would make the tune of a heart out of tune. She who has crotchets [musical notes] in her head also has love conceits [love notions]. I dare swear she harps not only on plain song.”

“Plain song” is unaccompanied song. Celia is supposed to harp on plain song, and so she accompanies the song. “Plain song” is here meant to refer to the state of being single. “Plain song with harp accompaniment” is intended here to refer to a love couple.

Suavia continued:

“And, Sophronia, none of them use plain dealing in front of you, but because they see you so curious — so squeamish — to talk above love, they frame themselves counterfeit.”

In other words: They are eager to talk about love, but because you are squeamish, they pretend that they are not eager to talk about love.

Suavia continued:

“As for myself, as I know honest love to be a thing inseparable from our sex, so I think it most allowable in the royal court, unless we would have all our thoughts made of churchwork and charity, and so carry a holy face, and a hollow heart.”

Suavia was honest in talking about her beliefs concerning love.

“Ladies, how do you like Suavia in her loving vein?” Sophronia asked.

“We are content at this time to soothe — to humor — her in her vanity,” Celia said, punning on vain/vein.

“She casts all our minds in the mold of her own head, and yet she errs as far from our meanings, as she does from her own modesty,” Amerula said.

Suavia said:

“Amerula, if you were not bitter, your name would have been ill bestowed.”

The name “Amerula” comes from the Latin word *amarus*, which means “bitter.”

Suavia continued:

“But I think it as lawful in the royal court to be accounted both loving and chaste, as you think it lawful in the temple to seem religious, and actually be spiteful.”

Camilla said, “I wonder if you will reply any more, Amerula, because Suavia’s tongue is so nimble it will never lie still.”

“My tongue is much like thy feet, Camilla, which were taught not to stand still,” Suavia said.

Sophronia said:

“So, no more, ladies. Let our coming to sport not turn to spite.

“Suavia, love if thou think it sweet.

“Celia, sing for thine own content.



“Amerula, tell tales.

“And Camilla, dance.

“And so, with everyone engaging in her own delight, no one shall have cause to be discontent.

“But here comes Martius and the rest.”

Martius, Mellacrites, and others entered the scene.

Sophronia asked:

“What is the news, Martius, about my sovereign and father King Midas?”

Martius answered:

“Madame, he had no sooner bathed his limbs in the river, but it turned into a golden stream, the sands turned into fine gold, and all turned to gold that was cast into the water.

“King Midas, dismayed at the sudden alteration, assayed again to touch a stone, but he could not alter the nature of the stone.

“Then we went with him to the temple of Bacchus, where we made offerings of a lance wreathed about with ivy, garlands of ripe grapes, and skins of wolves and panthers, and a great standing cup of the water that so lately was turned to gold.

“Bacchus accepted our gifts, and he commanded King Midas to honor the gods, and also he wished King Midas to be as wise as he meant to have made King Midas fortunate.”

Sophronia said:

“Happy Sophronia, thou have lived to hear this good news, and happy King Midas, if thou live better to better govern thy fortune.

“But what has become of our king?”

Mellacrites said:

“King Midas, overjoyed with this good fortune, decided to take some solace in the woods, where we roused a great boar by chance. King Midas, eager in the sport, outrode us; and we, thinking he had come to his palace some other way, came ourselves the shortest and quickest way.

“If he has not yet returned, he cannot be long in returning.

“We have also lost our pages, who we think are with him.”

Sophronia said:

“May the gods shield him from all harms. The woods are full of tigers, and he is full of courage. Wild beasts make no distinction between a king and a countryman; nor do hunters in the heat of their pastime fear the fierceness of the boar more than they fear the fearfulness of the hare.

“But I hope all is well. Let us go in to see all is well.”

## CHAPTER 4 (MIDAS)

— 4.1 —

Apollo, Pan, the nymph Erato, and some other nymphs met in a glade in the forest on Mount Tmolus, which is located in the country of Lydia, which neighbored the country of Phrygia. A glade is an open area in a wood.

Erato was a priestess of Pan.

Apollo is the god of music, archery, medicine, and more.

Pan is the god of the wild, and he is a companion to the nymphs. Shepherds worship him. Pan's lower half is a goat, and his top half is mostly human although he has the horns of a goat.

Apollo and Pan were about to engage in a contest of musical skill.

Apollo said:

“Pan, will thou contend with Apollo, who tunes the heavens, and makes them all hang by harmony?”

“Orpheus, who caused trees to move with the sweetness of his harp, offers yearly homage to my lute.

“So does Arion, who brought dolphins to his sugared notes; and so does Amphion, who by music reared the walls of Thebes.”

Orpheus could tame wild beasts with his music, and his music once caused the trees of Mount Olympus to follow him.

Arion's music won him many valuable prizes. When he sailed home after winning some prizes, the sailors planned to murder him and take his prizes. Before the sailors threw Arion into the sea, they allowed him to play music. The music, which was in praise of Apollo, attracted the attention of some music-loving dolphins, and when Arion was thrown into the sea, a dolphin allowed Arion to ride him and took him safely to shore.

According to mythology, twin brothers built the stone walls of Thebes. Zethus carried the stones, while Amphion played his lyre, a musical instrument, and stones rose in the air and floated to where they fit in the wall.

Apollo continued:

“Only Pan with his harsh whistle (which makes beasts shake for fear, not men dance for joy) seeks to compare with Apollo.”

Pan invented the shepherd's flute as well as the pan flute. The pan flute is also known as panpipes and as a syrinx.

Pan said:

“Pan is a god, and Apollo is no more. Comparisons cannot be odious, where the deities are equal. This pipe (my sweet pipe) was once a nymph, a fair nymph, who was once my lovely

mistress, but who is now my heavenly music.”

Pan pursued the nymph Syrinx, who did not want to be pursued. To help her escape the attentions of Pan, her fellow nymphs changed her into a reed. Hearing the wind rustle the reeds, Pan enjoyed the sound, and he used reeds to create a musical instrument.

Pan continued:

“Tell me, Apollo, is there any instrument as sweet to play on as one’s mistress? Had thy lute been of bay laurel, and the strings of Daphne’s hair, thy tunes might have been compared to my notes, for then Daphne would have added sweetness to thy stroke, and melody to thy thoughts.”

The nymph Daphne had been transformed into a bay laurel tree, which became sacred to Apollo.

Apollo said:

“Does Pan talk of the passions of love? Does Pan talk of the passions of divine love?”

“O, how that word ‘Daphne’ wounds Apollo, pronounced by the barbarous mouth of Pan. I fear his breath will blast the fair green, if I don’t dazzle his eyes, so that he may not behold it.

“Thy pipe is a nymph? It is some hag rather, haunting these shady groves, and desiring not thy love but the fellowship of such a monster.”

Pan was half-goat and part-man.

Apollo continued:

“What god is Pan but the god of beasts, of woods, and of hills? Pan is excluded from heaven, and on earth Pan is not honored.”

Pan was not one of the gods who lived on Mount Olympus, as Apollo did. Pan was a god of the wild areas on earth.

Arcadian hunters used to whip a statue of Pan if they were unsuccessful in a hunting trip.

Apollo continued:

“Break thy pipe, or with my sweet lute I will break thy heart. Let not ‘love’ enter into those savage lips. ‘Love’ is a word for Jove, for Apollo, for the heavenly gods, whose thoughts are gods, and gods are all love.”

Jove is another name for Jupiter, King of the gods.

Pan said:

“Apollo, I told thee before that Pan was a god, I tell thee now again, that Pan is as great a god as Apollo. I had almost said a greater, and because thou shall know I don’t worry about you being offended by my thoughts, I now say that I am a greater god than you.”

Pan was wrong. Apollo was an Olympian: one of the major gods. Pan was definitely a lesser god compared to Apollo.

Pan continued:

“Pan feels the passions of love deeply engraven in his heart, with as fair nymphs, with as great fortune, as Apollo, as Neptune, as Jove; and none can describe love better than Pan. Not Apollo! Not Neptune! Not Jove!”

Neptune is the god of the sea.

Pan continued:

“My temple is in Arcadia, where they burn continual flames to Pan. In Arcadia is my oracle, where Erato the nymph gives answers for Pan. In Arcadia, the place of love, is the honor of Pan.”

Pan was born in Arcadia.

Pan continued:

“Aye, but I am the god of hills. So I am, Apollo! And I am the god of hills so high that I can pry into the juggling — the trickery and the copulating — of the highest gods.

“I am the god of woods! So I am, Apollo! I am the god of woods so thick that thou with thy sunbeams cannot pierce them. I knew Apollo’s prying; I knew my own suspicion.”

Apollo drove the Sun-chariot across the sun each day.

Pan continued:

“Sun and shadow cheat one another. If thy sun stands still, the shadow is fast at thy heels, Apollo. I am as near to thy love, as thou are to mine. A cart-driver with his whistle and his whip in an ear that can hear truly and with discrimination, moves as much as Phoebus Apollo does with his fiery chariot and winged horses.”

He was punning on “moves,” which can mean emotionally moves and physically moves.

Pan continued:

“Love-leaves are as good as heavenly nectar for country porridge.”

“Love-leaves” are leaves that are supposed to make people fall in love when they eat them.

Nectar is the drink of the gods.

Pan continued:

“Love made Jupiter a goose, and Neptune a swine, and both for love of an earthly mistress.”

Pan was deliberately misrepresenting the various forms the shape-shifting Jupiter and Neptune took in order to seduce or rape women and goddesses.

Jupiter became a swan, not a goose, in order to impregnate Leda, who bore Helen, who later became Helen of Troy, and Clytemnestra, who later married and then murdered Agamemnon, leader of the Greek soldiers against Troy in the Trojan War.

Neptune assumed the shape of animals such as a bird, a ram, and a steer in his pursuit of sexual affairs. As far as is known, he never assumed the shape of a swine.

Pan continued:

“What has made Pan, or any god on earth (for gods on earth can change their shapes) turn themselves into another shape for a heavenly goddess?”

“Believe me, Apollo, our groves are pleasanter than your heavens, our milkmaids are pleasanter than your goddesses, our rude ditties to a pipe are pleasanter than your sonnets to a lute.

“Here is flat faith *amo, amas*; where you cry, *O utinam amarent vel non amassem.*”

Pan believed in plain speech and plain dealing. *Amo amas* is Latin for “I love, you love.”

Pan also said that Apollo’s love-talk is much more verbose and unhappy. *O utinam amarent vel non amassem* is Latin for “O, if only they had loved, or that I had not loved.”

Pan gave the impression in his words that his sex-partners were volunteers, whereas Apollo’s sex-partners may not be.

Pan continued:

“I let pass, Apollo, thy hard words, such as calling Pan a ‘monster’; which is as much as to call everyone monsters: For Pan is all, while Apollo is only one.”

The root-word *pan* means “all.”

Pan continued:

“But touch thy strings, and let these nymphs decide.”

Apollo said:

“These nymphs shall decide unless thy rude speech has made them deaf. As for any other answer to Pan, take this: It is not fitting for Apollo to answer Pan. Pan is all, and all is Pan; thou are Pan and all, all Pan and tinkery.”

Tinkers mend pans: This is a good skill to know, but it is not an art. Music is an art.

Apollo continued:

“But let’s turn to this music, wherein all thy shame shall be seen, and all my skill.”

King Midas entered the scene.

“In the chase, I lost all my company, and I missed the game, too,” he said. “I think King Midas shall in all things be unfortunate.”

“Who is he who talks?” Apollo asked.

“I am King Midas, the unfortunate King of Phrygia,” King Midas said.

“To be a king is next to being a god,” Apollo said. “Thy fortune is not bad. What is thy folly?”

Since Midas’s fortune was good, his problems must be due to his foolishness.

This was true. Bacchus’ offer of a gift was fortunate, but King Midas’ choice of a gift was foolish.

“My folly was to abuse a god,” King Midas said. “I did not treat a god with the honor due to him.”

Earlier, King Midas had said about Bacchus, “Tush, he is a drunken god, or else he would not have given so great a gift. Now that it is done, I don’t care about anything he can do.”

Apollo said:

“That was an ungrateful act by a king.

“But, King Midas, I see that by chance thou have come, or thou have been sent here by some god on purpose. None on the earth can be a better judge of gods than kings. Sit down with these nymphs.

“I am Apollo, and this is Pan; we are both gods. We contend for sovereignty in music. Seeing it happens on earth, we must be judged by those on earth, in which there are none more worthy than kings and nymphs. Therefore, give ear and listen closely, so that thy judgment does not err.”

King Midas said, “If gods you are, although I dare wish nothing of gods, being so deeply wounded with wishing, yet let my judgment prevail before these nymphs, if the nymphs and I do not agree in our judgments, because I am a king.”

“There must be no condition, but judge, King Midas, and judge, nymphs,” Pan said.

“Then thus I begin both my song and my playing,” Apollo said.

He sang a song about Daphne and accompanied himself on the lute:

*“My Daphne’s hair is twisted gold,*

*“Bright stars a-piece her eyes do hold,*

*“My Daphne’s brow enthrones the graces [and the Graces],”*

The three Graces are goddesses of beauty, charm, nature, and other things. The graces are graces in general: mercy, patience, love, etc.

Apollo continued to play and sing:

*“My Daphne’s beauty stains all [all other] faces [in comparison],*

*“On Daphne’s cheek grow rose and cherry,*

*“On Daphne’s lip a sweeter berry,*

*“Daphne’s snowy hand but touched does melt,*

*“And then no heavenlier warmth is felt,*

*“My Daphne’s voice tunes all the spheres,”*

This society believed that the sun, moon, planets, and stars were encased in crystalline spheres that revolved around the earth and created beautiful music — the music of the spheres — that humans could not hear.

Apollo continued to play and sing:

*“My Daphne’s music charms all ears.*

*“Fond [Foolish] am I thus to sing her praise;*

*“These glories now are turned to bays.”*

Bay trees are also known as laurel trees. Sometimes the plant is called bay laurel. They are small evergreen trees or large evergreen shrubs.

“O divine Apollo, O sweet harmony of voice and lute!” the nymph Erato said.

“If the god of music would not be above our reach, who would be?” the nymph Thalia said.

“I don’t like it,” King Midas said.

Pan said:

“Now let me tune — that is, play — my pipes. I cannot pipe and sing, that’s a difference in the instruments Apollo and I use, but not in the art. I will pipe and then sing, and then you shall judge both the singing art and the instrument.”

Pan first played his pipes and then he sang:

*“Pan’s Syrinx was a girl indeed,*

*“Though now she’s turned into a reed,*

*“From that dear reed Pan’s pipe does come,*

*“A pipe that strikes Apollo dumb;*

*“Nor flute, nor lute, nor cittern [early guitar] can*

*“So chant it, as the pipe of Pan;*

*“Cross-gartered swains, and dairy girls,”*

An out-of-fashion fashion of the time was to wear long garters that crossed each other above and below the knee.

“Swains” are shepherds.

Pan continued to sing:

*“With faces smug [smooth], and round as pearls,*

*“When Pan’s shrill pipe begins to play,*

*“With dancing wear out night and day;*

*“The bag-pipe’s drone his hum lays by,*

*“When Pan sounds up his minstrelsy [his singing and playing],*

*“His minstrelsy! O base! This quill [a pipe in a pan-pipe]*

*“Which at my mouth with wind I fill,*

*“Puts me in mind, though her I miss,*

*“That still my Syrinx’ lips I kiss.”*

“Have thou done, Pan?” Apollo asked. “Have thou finished?”

“Aye, and done well, as I think,” Pan said.

“Now, nymphs, what do you say?” Apollo asked.

Erato said:

“We all say that Apollo has showed himself to be both a god, and the god of music.

“Pan has showed himself to be a rude satyr, neither keeping measure [rhythm], nor time; his piping is as far out of tune as his body is out of form.”

Pan’s lower half was a goat.

Erato continued:

“To thee, divine Apollo, we give the prize and reverence.”

“But what does King Midas say?” Apollo asked.

King Midas said:

“I think there’s more sweetness in the pipe of Pan than in Apollo’s lute; I cannot endure that nice tickling of strings.

“What makes me happy is what would make someone else startle. What a shrillness came into my ears out of that pipe, and what a goodly, splendid noise it made!

“Apollo, I must and do judge that Pan deserves most praise.”

Pan said:

“Blessed be King Midas, who is worthy to be a god.

“These girls, whose ears do but itch with daintiness, gave the verdict without weighing the virtue; they have been brought up in chambers with soft music, not where I make the woods ring with my pipe, King Midas.”

Apollo said to King Midas, “Wretched, unworthy to be a king, thou shall know what it is to displease Apollo. I will leave thee only the two last letters of thy name, which shall be thy whole name, which if thou cannot guess, touch thine ears, and they shall tell thee.”

The last two letters of Midas’ name are *a* and *s*, but Apollo was a generous god and added a second *s* to form the word “ass.”

King Midas touched his ears, which were now ass’ ears, and asked, “What have thou done, Apollo? Put the ears of an ass upon the head of a king?”

“And they are well deserved, when the dullness of an ass is in the ears of a king,” Apollo said.

King Midas pleaded, “Help, Pan, or King Midas perishes!”



Pan said, "I cannot undo what Apollo has done, nor give thee any amends, unless to those ears thou will have added these horns."

Pan had the horns of a goat as well as the lower half of a goat.

"The addition of the ass' ears was very good, as it might be hard to judge whether he is more ox or ass," the first nymph said.

Oxen are slow and can be stubborn.

"Farewell, King Midas," Apollo said.

"King Midas, farewell," Pan said.

"I warrant — guarantee — that they are dainty ears, since nothing can please them but Pan's pipe," the second nymph said.

She was sarcastic.

Erato said:

"He has the advantage of all ears, except the mouse; for other than the big-eared mouse there's none as sharp of hearing as the ass.

"Farewell, King Midas."

"King Midas, farewell," the second nymph said.

"Farewell, King Midas," the third nymph said.

The gods and nymphs exited, leaving King Midas by himself.

King Midas said to himself:

"Ah, King Midas! Why wasn't thy whole body metamorphosed, so that there might have been no part left of King Midas? Where shall I shroud this shame? Or how may I be restored to my old shape?"

"Apollo is angry. Don't blame Apollo, who is the god of music and whom thou did both dislike and dishonor, preferring the barbarous noise of Pan's pipe before the sweet melody of Apollo's lute.

"If I return to Phrygia, I shall be pointed at. If I live in these woods, savage beasts must be my companions, and what other companions should King Midas hope for than beasts, being of all beasts himself the dullest and stupidest?"

"Wouldn't it have been better for thee to have perished by a golden death, than now to lead a beastly life? Thou were unfortunate in thy wish and unwise in thy judgment; thou were first a golden fool, and now thou are a leaden ass.

"What will they say in Lesbos, if by chance this news comes to Lesbos? *If* the news comes, King Midas? Yes, gossip flies as swift as thoughts, gathering wings in the air, and doubling rumors by her own running, insomuch as having here the ears of an ass, it will there be told that all my hairs are ass' ears.

"Then this will be the byword and the gossip:

“Has King Midas, who sought to be monarch of the world, become the mock of the world? Are his golden mines turned into water, as free for everyone who will fetch it, as for himself, who possessed them by wish?

“Ah, poor King Midas! Have his ideas become blockish and doltish, have his counsels become unfortunate, and have his judgments become unskillful?

“Ah, foolish King Midas! It is a just reward for thy pride to grow poor, for thy overweening pride to grow dull and stupid, for thy ambition to grow humble, for thy cruelty to say, *Sisque miser simpler, nec sis miserabilis ulli.*”

The Latin means: “May you always be miserable, and may no one pity your miseries.”

The Latin quotation is from Ovid, *Ibis*, 117.

King Midas continued:

“But I must seek to cover my shame by art, lest being once revealed to these petty kings of Mysia, Pisidia, and Galatia, they all will join to add to my ears of an ass, which is of all the beasts the dullest, the heart of a sheep, which is of all the beasts the most full of fear, and so cast lots for those kingdoms that I have won with so many lives, and kept with so many envies — so many evils and enmities.”

— 4.2 —

Five shepherds — Menalcas, Coryn, Celthus, Driapon, and Amyntas — talked together in a place where many reeds grew.

“I wonder what the nymphs meant, who sang in the groves, ‘King Midas of Phrygia has ass’s ears,’” Menalcas said.

“I don’t wonder what they meant,” Coryn said, “because one of them plainly told me that he had ass’ ears.”

“Aye, but it is not safe to say it,” Celthus said. “King Midas is a great king, and his hands are longer than his ears; therefore, for us who keep sheep, it is wisdom enough to tell sheep.”

In addition to its usual meaning of “inform,” the word “tell” can mean “count.”

In other words: King Midas’ ears are long, and he hears what goes on in the kingdom (with the help of spies, no doubt). Also, his hands are longer than his ears, and he can punish those whom he wishes to punish.

Therefore, if the secret of King Midas’ ears must be told, it is safest to tell it to sheep.

Driapon said:

“That is true; yet since King Midas has grown so evil as to blemish his diadem — his crown — with blood, his diadem that should glisten with nothing but pity; and since he has grown so miserable — contemptible and miserly — that he made gold his god, gold that was intended and framed to be his slave, many broad — bold and outspoken — speeches and much talk has flown abroad.

“In his own country, they don’t hesitate to call him a tyrant, and elsewhere, they don’t hesitate to call him a usurper. They flatly say that he eats into other dominions, as the sea eats into the land, not knowing that in swallowing a poor island as big as Lesbos, he may vomit up three territories thrice as big as Phrygia, for what the sea wins in the marsh, it loses in the sand.”

“Let me understand you, but speak softly,” Amyntas said, “for these reeds may have ears and hear us.”

Two proverbs of the time were:

1) “Walls [that is, hedges used as walls] have ears [or eyes].”

2) “Fields have eyes, and woods have ears.”

“Suppose that they have, yet they may be without tongues to betray us,” Menalcas said.

“Nay, let them have tongues, too,” Coryn said. “We have eyes to see that they have none, and therefore if they hear, and speak, they know not from where it comes.”

“Well, then this I say, when a lion does degenerate so much from its princely nature that he will borrow from the beasts, I say he is no lion, but a monster,” Amyntas said. “He is pieced and put together with the craftiness of the fox, the cruelty of the tiger, the ravening of the wolf, the dissembling of the hyena, and he is also worthy to have the ears of an ass.”

Hyenas were thought to be able to sound like a human in order to draw humans out of the safety of a house or other place.

Menalcas said, “He seeks to conquer Lesbos, and like a foolish gambler with a bagful of money of his own, he risks it all to win a groat — a coin of little value — from another person.”

“He who fishes for Lesbos must have such a wooden net as all the trees in Phrygia will not serve to make the cod, nor all the woods in Pisidia provide the corks,” Coryn said.

The wooden net is a metaphor for a navy. The cod is literally a bag at the bottom of a net. A stone in the cod of the net would keep the bottom of a net sunken. Corks could be attached to the sides of a net to keep them afloat.

Driapon said, “Nay, he means to fish for it with a hook of gold and a bait of gold, and so to strike — to hook — the fish with a pleasing bait that will slide out of an open net.”

Apparently, King Midas was planning to bribe officials on Lesbos to help him take control of the island.

Amyntas said:

“Tush! Tush!

“Those islanders on Lesbos are too subtle and cunning to nibble at his trickery, and they are too rich to swallow treasure. If that is his hope, then he may as well dive to the bottom of the sea and bring up an anchor weighing a thousand pounds as plot with his gold to corrupt a people so wise.

“And besides, it is a nation (as I have heard) of very valiant citizens, who are readier to strike than to simply stand guard.”

Celthus said:

“More than all this, Amyntas, although we dare not so much as mutter it, the King of Lesbos is such a king that he dazzles the clearest eyes with majesty, daunts the most valiant hearts with courage, and for virtue fills all the world with wonder.

“If beauty goes beyond sight, if confidence goes above valor, and if virtue exceeds miracle and achievement, what is it to be thought but that King Midas goes to undermine and conquer, by the simplicity and ignorance of the man, something that is fastened to a rock, by the providence of the gods.”

In other words: The gods supported the King of Lesbos, and they supported Lesbos itself. King Midas was showing his ignorance by attempting to conquer Lesbos.

Menalcas said:

“We poor commoners, who, tasting war, are made to relish nothing but taxes, can do nothing but grieve, to see unlawful things practiced in order to obtain things impossible to obtain.

“All his mines do is just guild his comb, to make it glisten in the wars, and his mines cut the combs of those of us who are forced to follow him in his wars.”

A comb is literally a rooster’s crest; figuratively, it is a symbol of pride. It can also be the crest at the top of a helmet.

Coryn said:

“Well! That which cannot be changed must be borne, not blamed.

“For my part, if I may enjoy the fleece of my silly — my humble — flock with quietness, I will never care three flocks for his ambition.”

“Three flocks” are three tufts of wool, or something of similarly little value.

Menalcas said:

“Let this suffice. We may talk too much, and being overheard, be all undone and ruined. I am so fearful that I think the very reeds bow down, as though they listened to our talk.

“Be quiet. I hear someone coming. Let us go in and meet at a place more suitable than this.”

The shepherds exited.

### — 4.3 —

Licio, Petulus, Minutius, and a huntsman talked together in the reedy place.

Minutius was a page; he was small in size.

They would be talking about the jargon — specialized vocabulary — of hunting.

“Isn’t hunting a tedious occupation?” Licio asked.

“Aye, and troublesome, for if you call a dog a dog, you are undone and ruined,” Petulus said.

“Call a dog a dog” means “to speak plainly in plain English.”

“You are both fools!” the huntsman said. “And besides, you are base minded; hunting is for kings, not peasants. Such as you are unworthy to be hounds, much less huntsmen; you don’t know when a hound is fleet, fair flewed, and well hanged. You are ignorant of the deepness of a hound’s mouth, and the sweetness.”

“Fleet” means “fast.”

“Fair flewed” means “with large hanging jowls.”

“Well hanged” means “with large hanging ears.”

“Deepness of a hound’s mouth” refers to the deepness of a hound’s cries.

“Sweetness” refers to the “music” made by baying hounds.

“Why, I hope, sir, a cur’s mouth is no deeper than the sea, nor sweeter than a honeycomb,” Minutius said.

“Pretty cockscomb! Excellent fool!” the huntsman said. “A hound will swallow thee as easily as a great pit will swallow a small pebble.”

Minutius was small.

“Indeed, hunting would be a pleasant sport, but the dogs make such barking that one cannot hear the hounds cry,” Minutius said.

“I’ll make thee cry!” the huntsman said. “If I catch thee in the forest, thou shall be leashed.”

“Leashed” means “whipped with a leather leash.”

“What’s that?” Minutius asked.

“Don’t thou understand their language?” Licio asked.

“Not I!” Minutius said.

“It is the best calamance in the world, as easily deciphered as the characters in a nutmeg,” Petulus said.

“Calamance” figuratively means “double talk.” Literally, calamanco is a Flemish checkered cloth made in such a way that the checkered part appears on only one side of the cloth. Only those people seeing that side of the cloth can see the checkers. Similarly, hunting jargon can be understood only by those who know hunting.

A cross-section of a nutmeg shows lines and patterns that have no meaning and so cannot be deciphered.

“Please, speak some hunting language,” Minutius said.

“I will,” Petulus said.

“But speak in order and correctly, or I’ll pay you what you deserve,” the huntsman said.

“Go to it, Petulus,” Licio said.

“There was a boy leashed on the single because when he was embossed, he took soil,” Petulus said

“What’s that mean?” Minutius said.

“Why, a boy was beaten on the tail with a leathern thong, because when he foamed at the mouth with running, he went into the water,” Petulus said.

The huntsman knew that Petulus was misinterpreting some of the words.

The word “boy” was used to address dogs: “Here, boy!” But in Petulus’ sentence it does mean a human boy.

A leash is a leather thong.

A single is the tail of a buck.

“Embossed” refers to a deer foaming at the mouth because has been trying to outrun dogs.

“To take soil” refers to a hunted animal that goes into water as a refuge.

Possibly, there is a hidden indelicate meaning in Petulus’ words, given that “emboss” can mean “swell up” or “bulge”:

*“Why, a boy was beaten on the tail with a leathern thong, because when he [his belly] swelled up, he soiled himself.”*

“This is worse than fustian — worse than lofty, inflated language!” the huntsman said. “It would be best for you to be mum and not speak! Hunting is an honorable pastime, and for my part I would rather hunt a deer in a park than court a lady in a chamber.”

“Give me an English venison pastry for a hunting park and let me shake off — let loose — a whole kennel of teeth for hounds, and then thou shall see a notable champing and chewing,” Minutius said. “After that, I will carouse a bowl of wine, and so in the stomach let the venison take soil.”

In other words: Instead of a park for hunting, Minutius wanted a venison pie, and instead of a pack of hounds, he wanted lots of teeth. Biting into a venison pie was the kind of “hunting” Minutius preferred. The venison (deer) would “take soil” — go into a pool of liquid — when Minutius drank some wine.

Licio said, “He has laid the plot to be prudent; why, it is pastry crust. An old proverb says, ‘Eat enough, and it will make you wise.’”

Petulus said, “Aye, and it will make you eloquent, for you must tipple wine freely: *Et foecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?*”

The Latin means: “Which man has the flowing cups not made eloquent?”

The Latin quotation is from Horace, *Epistles*, I.5.19.

“*Fecere dizardum!*” the huntsman said.

The huntsman had parodied the last two words of Petulus' Latin quotation, replacing *disertum* with *dizardum*.

A "dizzard" is a fool.

The huntsman's "Latin" meant: "They have made him a fool."

The huntsman continued:

"Leave off these trifles, and let us seek out King Midas, whom we lost in the chase."

"I'll guarantee that he has by this time started a covey of bucks, or roused a school of pheasants," Petulus said.

"Covey" is used to refer to fowl, and "school" is used to refer to fish.

"You have spoken treason to two splendid sports: hawking and hunting," the huntsman said. "Thou should say these phrases: start a hare, rouse the deer, spring the partridge."

"Start," "rouse," and "spring" all mean to come from out of cover, but they are used for different kinds of animals.

Petulus said, "I'll warrant that was devised by some country swad, aka bumpkin; who seeing a hare skip up, which made him startle, he soon said he started the hare."

Licio said, "Aye, and some lubber, aka dolt, lying beside a spring, and seeing a partridge come by, said he did spring the partridge."

"Well, remember all this!" the huntsman said.

In other words: Remember how to correctly use these hunting terms.

Petulus said:

"Remember all this? Then we would have good memories, for there are more hunting phrases than thou have hairs!

"But let me see, I ask thee, what's this around thy neck?"

"A bugle," the huntsman said.

"If it had stood on thy head, I would have called it a horn," Petulus said. "Well, it is hard to have one's brows and forehead embroidered with a bugle."

Petulus was joking about the horns of a cuckold.

"But can thou blow it?" Licio asked.

"What else would I do with it?" the huntsman asked.

"But you cannot blow it away," Minutius said.

"No, to blow his horns away would make Boreas out of breath," Petulus said.

Boreas is the god of the north wind.

Petulus was still joking about a cuckold's horns.

“There was good blowing, I’ll guarantee, before they came there,” Licio said.

“Well, it is a shrewd blow,” Petulus said.

The word “blow,” of course, can mean a blow with a fist.

The huntsman said:

“Spare your winds in this, or I’ll wind your necks together and form a cord — a hangman’s noose.

“But be quiet. I heard my master’s blast on his horn.”

His master was King Midas.

“Some have felt it!” Minutius said.

A blast can be a burst of strong wind, a sounding of a horn, or a burst of angry curses.

The huntsman said:

“Thy mother felt it, when such a flyblow — such a maggot — was buzzed out!”

This was an insult. Minutius was so small that his disappointed father must have spoken words to his wife when Minutius was born.

The huntsman continued:

“But I must be gone. I perceive that King Midas has come.”

The huntsman exited.

Licio said:

“Then let’s not tarry, for now we shall shave the barber’s house.”

They would steal stuff from the barber’s house.

Licio continued:

“The world will grow full of wiles seeing King Midas has lost his golden wish.”

Because King Midas could no longer create new gold by touching things, his citizens would find ways to trick each other out of their wealth.

“I don’t care,” Minutius said. “My head shall dig devices and my tongue stamp them, as long as my mouth shall be a mint, and my brains a mine.”

He was using a mining and coining metaphor that meant that his head would form plans and plots that would make him money, like metal being dug from a mine and then being embossed to make a coin.

“Then help us to cozen and cheat the barber,” Licio said.

“The barber shall know every hair of my chin to be as good as a choke-pear for his purse,” Minutius said.



A choke-pear is a device that keeps open a person's mouth. Minutius' choke-pear would keep open the barber's wallet.

They exited.

— 4.4 —

Mellacrites, Martius, and Eristus talked together in the reedy place.

"I marvel why King Midas is so melancholy since his hunting," Eristus said.

Mellacrites said:

"'Melancholy' is a good word to describe King Midas, but if someone else were to act that way, I would call it 'blockishness' or 'stupidity.'

"I cannot tell whether his melancholy is a sourness commonly incident to age, or a severeness particular to the kings of Phrygia, or a suspicion cleaving to great estates, but I think he seems so suspicious of us all and he has become so contentious to all others, that either I must conjecture his wits are not his own, or his intention toward some people is very hard."

Martius said:

"For my part, I neither care nor wonder.

"I see that all his expeditions for wars are laid in water — that is, his plans are suspended. For now, when he should execute his plans and act on them, he begins to consult; and he allows our enemies to bid us good morning at our own doors, to whom we long since might have given the last good night in their own beds."

"The last good night" is death.

Martius continued:

"King Midas wears — I don't know whether for warmth or caprice — a large tiara on his head, as though his head were not heavy enough unless he loaded it with large cushions in his headdress: This is an attire never used (that I could hear of) except by old women, or petty priests."

A tiara is a headdress with a high peak.

Martius continued:

"King Midas' lack of action will make Pisidia wanton and ungovernable, Lycaonia stiff and obstinate, and all his territories wavering in their loyalty to him. King Midas, who has couched and set so many kingdoms in one crown, will have his kingdom scattered into as many crowns as he possesses countries. Each country will once again have its own king.

"I will rouse him up, and if his ears are not ass' ears, I will make them tingle. I am not concerned about my life. I know it is my duty to speak to him frankly, and certainly I dare swear that war is my profession."

Martius was willing to risk King Midas' anger by talking frankly to him, as was his duty, although an angry King Midas could have him killed.

Eristus said, “Martius, we will all join together, and although I have been (as in Phrygia they call it) a brave courtier, that is (as in Phrygia they expound it) a fine lover, yet I now set aside both love and courting, and follow Martius: For never shall it be said, *Bella gerant alij, semper Eristus amet.*”

The Latin means: “Let others wage war; may Eristus always love.”

The Latin was adapted from Ovid, *Heroides* [*Heroines*], XVII.254.9.

Mellacrites said to Martius, “I, who honored gold as a god and considered all other gods as only lead, will follow Martius, and say, *Vilius argentum est auro, virtutibus aurum.*”

The Latin means: “Silver is of less value than gold; gold is of less value than virtue.”

The Latin quotation is from Horace, *Epistles*, I.1.52.

Martius said:

“My lords, I give you thanks, and I am glad, for there are no stouter soldiers in the world than those who are made of lovers, nor any more liberal and generous in wars than they who in peace have been covetous. So then don’t be afraid: If courage and coin can prevail, we shall prevail, and besides these things, nothing can prevail but fortune and luck.

“But here comes Sophronia. I will first talk with her.”

Sophronia, Camilla, and Amerula entered the scene.

Martius then said to Sophronia:

“Madame, either our king has no ears to hear, or no care to consider, both in what state we stand being his subjects, and what danger he is in being our king.

“Duty is not respected, and courage is contemned and scorned.

“Our king does not at all care about us and his own safety.”

Sophronia said:

“Martius, I don’t dislike thy plain dealing and plain speaking, but I do pity my father’s trance. I must call it a trance, where nature cannot move, nor can counsel, nor music, nor medicine, nor danger, nor death, nor anything.

“But that which makes me most both to sorrow and to wonder, is that music (a mithridate — an antidote — for melancholy) should make him mad, always crying, ‘*Uno namque modo Pan et Apollo nocent.*’”

The Latin means: “For Pan and Apollo harm in the same way.”

Sophronia continued:

“No one has access to him but Motto, as though melancholy were to be shaven with a razor, not cured with a medicine.”

The reeds rustled.

Sophronia asked:

“But wait, what noise is this in those reeds?”

“What sound is this?” Mellacrites said. “Who dares to utter what he hears?”

Sophronia said, “I dare to utter what I hear, Mellacrites. The words are plain: ‘Midas the king has ass’ ears.’”

“This is strange, and yet it must be told to the king,” Camilla said.

“So I dare to do, Camilla,” Sophronia said, “for it concerns me in duty, and us all in discretion. But let’s be quiet and listen more closely.”

The reeds made a noise that said, “King Midas of Phrygia has ass’ ears.”

Eristus said:

“This is monstrous, and it is either an omen of some evil to the king, or an omen of some disaster to the state.

“King Midas of Phrygia has ass’ ears? It is impossible!

“Let us speedily go to the king to know what he decides, for to some oracle he must send. Until his majesty is acquainted with this matter, we dare not root out the reeds; he himself must both hear the sound and guess at the reason.”

“Unfortunate King Midas!” Sophronia said. “Despite his being so great a king, there has out of the earth sprung so great a shame.”

Martius said:

“It may be that his wishing for gold, which is only the dross of the world, is by all the gods accounted foolish, and so revealed out of the earth by the reeds.

“For a king to thirst for gold instead of honor, to prefer heaps of worldly coin before triumphs in warlike conquests, was in my mind no princely mind.”

Mellacrites said:

“Let us not debate the cause, but seek to prevent the snares, for in my mind it foretells that which wounds my mind.

“Let us go in.”

They exited.

## CHAPTER 5 (MIDAS)

— 5.1 —

Sophronia, Mellacrites, and Martius had talked to King Midas, and he had revealed his secret to them nine days ago.

King Midas, Sophronia, Mellacrites, and Martius now talked together in the reedy place.

King Midas was not wearing his headdress. His ass' ears were visible.

He said, "Sophronia, thou see I have become a shame to the world, and a wonder. My ears glow."

His ears were metaphorically red: People were speaking about him.

King Midas continued:

"My ears? Ah, miserable King Midas! To have such ears as make thy cheeks blush, thy head monstrous, and thy heart desperate?"

"Yet in blushing I am impudent and shameless, for I walk in the streets."

For King Midas to walk in the streets wearing his headdress to hide his ears was impudent and shameless: It was the wrong thing to do.

King Midas continued:

"In deformity I seem comely and graceful, for I have left off my tiara."

For King Midas to now not wear his tiara was comely and graceful: It was the right thing to do.

King Midas continued:

"And the heavier my heart is because of grief, the more hope it conceives of recovery."

Sophronia, his daughter, said:

"Dread sovereign and loving sire, there are nine days past, and therefore the wonder is past; there are many years to come, and therefore a remedy is to be hoped for."

A nine day's wonder is something that is talked about for nine days, and then people move on and gossip about something else. Sophronia was telling her father that the worst was already over.

Sophronia continued:

"Although your ears are long, yet there is room left on your head for a diadem — for a crown.

"Although your ears resemble the ears of the dullest beast, yet they should not daunt the spirit of so great a king.

"The gods dally and play with men; kings are no more than men. The gods disgrace kings, lest kings should be thought to be gods. Sacrifice pleases the gods, so if you know by the oracle

what god brought about your long ears, you shall by humble submission to that god be released by that god.”

“Sophronia, I commend thy care and courage, but let me hear these reeds, so that these loathsome ears may be glutted with the report, and that is as good as a remedy,” King Midas said.

Hearing the reeds would be a remedy for pride.

The reeds murmured, “King Midas of Phrygia has ass’ ears.”

King Midas said:

“‘King Midas of Phrygia has ass’ ears’?”

“So he has, unhappy King Midas. If these reeds sing my shame so loudly, will men whisper it softly? No, all the world already rings of it, and it is as impossible to stop the rumor, as to catch the wind in a net that blows in the air, or to stop the wind of all men’s mouths that breathe out air.

“I will go to Apollo, whose oracle must be my judgment, and I fear, my dishonor, because I judged him wrongly and disgraced him, if kings may disgrace gods: And kings do disgrace gods, when kings forget their duties.”

Kings’ duties include showing obeisance to and respect for the gods.

“What is King Midas saying?” Mellacrites asked.

King Midas had not explained how he had gotten ass’ ears.

King Midas responded:

“Nothing, except that Apollo must determine all, or King Midas will see the ruin of all.

“To Apollo I will offer an ivory lute for his sweet harmony, and I will offer berries of bay laurels as black as jet for his love Daphne. And I will offer pure simples [medicinal herbs] for his physic [medicine], and continual incense for his prophesying.”

Apollo was the god of music, medicine, and prophecy, and he loved Daphne.

Martius, who was skeptical of oracles, said, “Apollo may reveal some odd riddle, but not give the remedy because I never yet did hear that his oracles were without doubtfulness and ambiguity, nor his remedies without impossibilities. This superstition of yours is able to bring errors among the common sort, not ease to your discontented mind.”

Oracles are difficult to understand. Croesus, King of Lydia, wanted to attack Persia, but first he went to the Oracle of Delphi and asked the oracle what would happen if he attacked the mighty Kingdom of Persia. The oracle replied, “A mighty Kingdom will fall.” Lydia attacked Persia, and a mighty Kingdom did fall: the mighty Kingdom of Lydia.

When Socrates heard that the Delphic Oracle had said that he was the wisest man in Athens, he tried to prove the oracle wrong. Yes, he discovered that other men had skills that he did not have, but he also discovered that these other men believed that they knew some things that Socrates was able to show that they were mistaken about. Eventually, Socrates decided that the

oracle had said that he was the wisest man in Athens because he was aware when he did not know something.

Martius regarded oracles as superstitions. Let the common sort believe in them and misinterpret them, but not kings such as Midas.

King Midas asked, “Don’t thou know, Martius, that when Bacchus commanded me to bathe myself in Pactolus, thou thought it a mere mockery, before with thine eyes thou saw the remedy?”

“Aye, Bacchus gave the wish, and therefore was likely also to give the remedy,” Martius said.

King Midas said:

“And who knows whether Apollo gave me these ears, and therefore may release the punishment?”

King Midas had not told the others that it was Apollo who had given him ass’ ears, and he had not told them why Apollo had done that. He was keeping his mistaken judgment about Apollo’s musical ability secret.

He was ashamed of that more than he was ashamed of his ass’ ears.

King Midas continued:

“Well, don’t reply, for I will go to Delphos.”

He meant the oracle at Delphi, which was named after Apollo’s son Delphos.

King Midas continued:

“In the meantime, let it be proclaimed that if there are any so cunning that they can tell the reason of these reeds creaking, he shall have my daughter to be his wife, or if she should refuse it, a dukedom for his pains, and in addition, that whosoever is so bold as to say that King Midas has ass’ ears shall immediately lose his own ears.”

The cropping of ears — cutting off the ears — was a punishment in Elizabethan England.

“Dear father, then go forwards, prepare for the sacrifice, and dispose of Sophronia as it best pleases you,” Sophronia said.

She was willing to marry whoever her father told her to marry.

“Come, let us go in,” King Midas said.

They exited.

## — 5.2 —

Licio and Petulus talked together in the gardens before the palace.

They had been busy. Motto the barber had cured Petulus’ toothache after getting the promise that they would return the golden beard they had stolen from him. The pawnbroker had given back the golden beard, which was now in Motto the barber’s possession, but the pawnbroker had wanted a list of Motto’s possessions that would serve as security. Licio and Petulus now planned to divide Motto’s possessions between themselves.

“What a rascal Motto was to cozen and cheat us and say there were thirty men in a room that would undo and ruin us, and when all came to all, they were only table-men,” Petulus said.

Table-men are the pieces in a chess game.

Apparently, Motto had said that if Licio and Petulus did not give him the golden beard, he had men in the next room who would beat them up.

“Aye,” Licio said, “and then to give us an inventory of all his goods, only to redeem the beard! But we will be even with him, and I’ll be forsworn unless I’ll be revenged.

Petulus said, “And here I vow by my concealed beard, if ever it chances to be discovered to the world, that it may make a pike-devant. I will have it so sharp pointed that it shall stab Motto like a poignado.”

His beard was concealed because he had not yet grown a beard.

A pique-devant is a short, pointed beard.

A pike is a long-handled weapon with a pointed end.

A poignado is a dagger.

Licio said:

“And I protest by these hairs on my head, which are just casualties and things subject to chance — for alas, who doesn’t know how soon they are lost. Autumn shaves like a razor.”

Yes, men in the autumn of their lives sometimes begin to go bald.

Licio continued:

“If these locks of hair are rooted against wind and weather, spring and fall, I swear they shall not be lopped until Motto by my knavery becomes so bald that I may write verses on his scalp. In witness whereof I eat this hair.”

He ate a hair.

Licio continued:

“Now must thou, Petulus, kiss thy beard, for that was the book — the Bible — thou swear by.”

Petulus said:

“Nay, I wish I could come but to kiss my chin, which is as yet the cover of my book!”

Petulus had not yet grown a beard.

Petulus continued:

“But my word shall stand. I give my word that I will be revenged. Now let us read the inventory of Motto’s possessions. We’ll share them equally.”

“What else?” Licio said.

Petulus began to read the inventory out loud:

*“An inventory of all Motto’s moveable bads and goods, as also of such debts as are owing him, with such household stuff as cannot be removed.”*

“Bads” are goods of poor quality.

Petulus continued to read the inventory out loud:

*“Imprimis, in the bed-chamber, one foul wife, and five small children.”*

*Imprimis* means “in the first place.”

“I’ll not share in that,” Licio said.

“I am content — thou can take them all,” Petulus said. “These are his moveable bads.”

Licio meant that he didn’t want any of these things, but Petulus pretended that Licio meant that he didn’t want to share possession of any of them.

“And from me they shall be removeables,” Licio said.

He wanted these items to be far removed from him.

Petulus continued to read the inventory out loud:

*“Item, in the servant’s chamber, two pair of curst queans’ tongues.”*

“Queans” are “scolds” or “strumpets.”

“Tongs thou would say,” Licio said.

“Nay, the tongues of queans pinch worse than tongs,” Petulus said.

“I’ll guarantee that they are moveables,” Licio said.

Scolds’ tongues are moveable items, for they are constantly moving.

Petulus continued to read the inventory out loud:

*“Item, one pair of horns in the bride-chamber, on the bed’s head.”*

“The beast’s head, for Motto is stuffed with horns in the head, and these are among unmoveable goods,” Licio said.

Licio was again joking that Motto the barber was a cuckold.

Petulus said, “Well, *Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.*”

He then translated the Latin: “Happy are they whom other men’s *homes* do make to beware.”

His translation was a little off. The correct translation is this: “Happy are they whom other men’s *harms* do make to beware.”

Petulus continued to read the inventory out loud:

*“Item, a broken pate — head — owed to me by a member of the Cole household, for notching his head like a chessboard.”*

“Take thou that, and I give thee all the rest of his debts,” Licio said.



He made a motion as if he were going to strike Petulus.

“*Noli me tangere*,” Petulus said.

The Latin means: “Don’t touch me.”

Petulus then said, “I refuse the executorship because I will not meddle with his desperate debts.”

Petulus continued to read the inventory out loud:

“*Item, a hundred shrewd turns owed to me by the pages in the court, because I will not trust them for trimming.*”

“Shrewd turns” are “bad deeds.”

“Trimming” means “cheating.”

“That’s due debt,” Licio said.

“Well, because Motto is poor, they shall be paid to him *cum recumbentibus*,” Petulus said.

“*Cum recumbentibus*” means “with interest.”

Petulus continued:

“*All the pages shall enter into recognizance.*”

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “recognizance” means “A bond or obligation by which a person undertakes before a court or magistrate to perform some act or observe some condition, such as to pay a debt, or appear when summoned; the action or process of entering such a bond.”

Petulus then said:

“But *ecce*, Pipenetta sings it.”

The Latin *ecce* means “behold.”

Pipenetta entered the scene, singing a song about virginity:

1. “*’Las! [Alas!] How long shall I*

*“And my maidenhead [virginity] lie*

*“In a cold bed all the night long,*

*“I cannot abide it,*

*“Yet away cannot chide it,*

*“Though I find it does me some wrong.*

2. “*Can anyone tell*

*“Where this fine thing doth [does] dwell,*

*“That carries nor [neither] form nor fashion?”*

*“It both heats and cools,  
“’Tis [It is] a bauble [trifle] for fools,  
“Yet caught at [sought] in every nation.  
3. “Say a maid were so crossed [thwarted],  
“As to see this toy [trifle] lost,  
“Cannot hue and cry fetch it again?”*

A hue and cry is a pursuit after a thief. The victim cries out, and citizens who hear the victim are obliged to run in pursuit of the thief.

*“’Las! [Alas!] No, for ’tis [it is] driven  
“Nor [Neither] to hell, nor to Heaven,  
“When ’tis [it is] found, ’tis [it is] lost even then.”*

Pipenetta then said:

*“Hey ho! I wish that I were a witch, so that I might be a duchess.”*

King Midas had offered either marriage to his daughter or a duchy to whoever solved the riddle of why the reeds were saying, “Midas the king has ass’ ears.”

A witch might be able to cast a spell and solve the riddle.

Petulus said:

*“I don’t know whether thy fortune is to be a duchess, but I am sure thy face serves thee well for a witch.*

*“What’s the matter? What’s going on?”*

*“The matter?” Pipenetta said. “By the Virgin Mary, it is proclaimed that whosoever can tell the cause of the reeds’ song shall either have Sophronia to wife, or (if she refuses to marry) a dukedom for his wisdom. Besides that, it is proclaimed that whosoever says that King Midas has ass’ ears shall lose their ears.”*

Licio said:

*“I’ll be a duke, I find honor to bud in my head, and I think every joint of my arms, from the shoulder to the little finger, says, ‘Send for the herald.’”*

Heralds make proclamations, such as: “Licio is the new duke!”

Licio continued:

*“My coat of arms is all armory, aka a place for arms. They are all gules, sables, azure, or vert, pur, post, pair, etc.”*

Some of these terms are real heraldic colors that can be used in a coat of arms:

*Gules = red, sables = black, azure = blue, and vert = green.*

*Post and pair* is the name of a card game, and *pur* is the name of a jack in that game.

Petulus said:

“And my heart is like a hearth where Cupid is making a fire, for Sophronia shall be my wife.

“I think Venus and Nature stand, with each of them using a pair of bellows, the one cooling my low birth to make it evaporate away, and the other kindling my lofty affections.”

“Apollo will help me because I can sing,” Pipenetta said.

Apollo is a god of song.

“Mercury will help me because I can lie,” Licio said.

Mercury is the god of thieves. He was born in the morning, he invented and played the lyre around noon, and he stole Apollo’s cattle in the evening.

Petulus said:

“All the gods will help me because I can lie, sing, swear, and love.

“But quiet, here comes Motto. Now we shall have a fit time to be revenged, if by a trick we can make him say, ‘King Midas has ass’ ears.’”

If Motto were to say, “King Midas has ass’ ears,” he would be in danger of having his own ears cut off.

Motto and Dello entered the scene.

“Let us not seem to be angry about the inventory, and you shall see my wit to be the hangman for his tongue,” Licio said.

Licio will use his wit and intelligence to attempt to trick Motto into saying the forbidden words.

“Why, fools, does a barber have a tongue?” Pipenetta asked.

She was joking that barbers are NOT known for being talkative.

“We’ll make him have a tongue, and his teeth that look like a comb shall be the scissors to cut it off,” Petulus said.

“Please let me have the odd ends: his cut-off tongue,” Pipenetta said. “I fear nothing as much as to be tongue-tied.”

Licio said, “Thou shall have all the shavings, and then a woman’s tongue, which is impeded — enlarged — with a barber’s tongue, will prove a razor or a razer.”

A razer razes — demolishes — something. The walls of some conquered cities are razed to the ground.

Words can cut and demolish.

Petulus asked, “How are thee now, Motto? What! All amorphous — all dejected?”

“I am as melancholy as a cat,” Motto said.

“Melancholy” means “depressed.”

Licio, who thought that “melancholy” was a fancy word, said:

“Melancholy? Marry gup! Is ‘melancholy’ a word for a barber’s mouth? Thou should say, ‘heavy,’ ‘dull,’ and ‘doltish.’”

“Marry gup!” means, roughly, “Bah!”

Licio continued:

“Melancholy is the crest of courtiers’ arms, and now every base companion, being in his mubble-fubbles, says he is melancholy.”

A crest is literally a heraldic device at the top of a helmet.

The phrase “mubble-fubbles” means “melancholy” or “depression.”

Petulus said:

“Motto, thou should say thou are lumpish. If thou encroach upon our courtly terms, we’ll trounce and beat thee.

“Perhaps if thou should spit often, thou would call it ‘rheum.’ Motto, in men of reputation and credit, it is the rheum; in such mechanical mushrumps, it is a catarrh, a pose, the water-evil, aka disease involving water.

“You would do best to wear a velvet patch on your temples, too.”

A “mechanical” is a working man. As an adjective, “mechanical” means “vulgar” or “mean.”

A “mushrump” is a mushroom, a fungus that can grow overnight.

Metaphorically, a mushroom is a person who is raised high in society so quickly that the person seems to be an overnight success.

A “pose” is a cold in the head.

A velvet patch is like a beauty mark.

“Velvet” also refers to the soft, downy skin that covers a young deer’s growing antlers, and so Petulus is making yet another cuckold joke at Motto’s expense.

Motto said to himself:

“What a world it is to see eggs more forward and bolder than cocks! These infants — Petulus, Licio, and Minutius — are as cunning and knowledgeable in diseases, as I who know them all, backward and forward.”

Motto said out loud:

“I tell you, boys, it is melancholy that now troubles me.”

Dello said, “My master could tickle and delight you by telling you about diseases, and those are old diseases that have continued in his ancestors’ bones these three hundred years. He is the last of the family who is left uneaten.”

Venereal disease can be passed down in families.

“What do thou mean, Dello?” Motto asked.

Petulus said, “He means you are the last of the stock alive; the worms have eaten the rest.”

“A pox on those saucy worms that eat men before they are dead,” Dello said.

“Pox” can mean 1) plague, or 2) venereal disease.

Dello was saying, “A plague on venereal disease.”

“But tell us, Motto, why thou are sad,” Petulus said.

“Because all the court is sad,” Motto said.

“Why are they sad in the court?” Licio asked.

“Because the king has a pain in his ears,” Motto said.

“Perhaps it is the wens: a swelling,” Petulus said.

“It may be, for his ears are swollen very big,” Motto said.

Petulus whispered to Licio, “Ten to one Motto knows about the ass’ ears.”

Licio whispered back:

“If he knows it, we shall hear it, for it is as hard for a barber to keep a secret in his mouth as a burning coal in his hand. Thou shall see me wring it out of him by the use of my wit.”

He said out loud:

“Motto, it was told to me that the king will discharge you of your office because you cut his ear when you last trimmed him.”

“It is a lie; and yet if I had, he might well spare an inch or two,” Motto said.

Petulus whispered to Licio, “It will come out. I feel Motto coming close to blurting it out.”

Dello whispered to Motto, “Master, take heed, you will blab all soon; these wags — these mischievous boys — are crafty.”

“Let me alone!” Motto cried.

“Why, Motto, what is the difference between the king’s ears, and thine?” Licio said.

“As much as between an ass’ ears and mine,” Motto said.

“O, Motto is modest,” Petulus said. “To mitigate the matter, he calls his own ears ass’ ears.”

“Nay, I mean the king’s ears are ass’ ears,” Motto said.

“Treason! Treason!” Licio cried.

“I warned you, master!” Dello said. “You have made a fair hand — you have gotten yourself into a fine mess — for now you have made your lips into scissors that will cut off your ears.”

Card players sometimes drew new cards in the hope of bettering their hand. Here, Dello was sarcastic when he said that Motto had made for himself a fair hand.

Motto cried, “*Perii!* Unless you pity me, Motto is in a pit: He is in a desperate situation.”

*Perii* is Latin for “I am undone and ruined!” or “I have perished!”

“Motto, treason is a worse pain than toothache,” Petulus said.

“Now Motto, thou know thine ears are ours to command,” Licio said.

“My ears are your servants or handmaids,” Motto said.

“Then I will lead my maid by the hand,” Petulus said.

He pulled Motto’s ears.

“Get out, villain!” Motto cried. “Thou wring my ears too hard.”

“Not as hard as he bit me,” Dello said.

Petulus had bitten Dello’s fingers when Dello wanted to play a tune on Petulus’ toothachey teeth.

“Thou see, boy, we are both mortals,” Motto said. “I enjoy my ears only *durante placito*; nor do thou enjoy thy finger, except *faunte dento*.”

In other words: Dello enjoyed his fingers as long as teeth treated them properly.

“*Durante placito*” is Latin for “during pleasure.”

“*Faunte dento* (or *dente*) is Latin for “by the favor of the tooth.”

“*Deo favente*” was a common Latin phrase meaning “with God’s support.” “*Faunte dento*” was a parody of the Latin.

“Yeah, Motto, have thou Latin?” Petulus asked. “Do you know Latin?”

“Alas!” Motto said. “He who has drawn so many teeth, and never asked Latin for a tooth, is ill brought up.”

Possibly, “never asked Latin for a tooth” means “never asked in Latin for permission to pull a tooth.” Motto’s customers included the king and other educated people.

“Well, Motto, let us have the beard, without covin, fraud, or delay, at one entire payment, and thou shall escape a payment,” Licio said.

A “covin” is a fraudulent agreement.

The payment would be his ears to King Midas.

Motto replied:

“I swear by scissors, brush, and comb; by basin, balls of soap, and barber’s apron; by razor, ear-pick [used to get excess wax out of the ear], and cloths for rubbing faces; and by all the *tria sequuntur triaes* in our secret occupation (for you know it is no blabbing art) that you shall have the beard, in the manner and form following.”

“*Tria sequuntur triaes*” means, roughly, “threes follow threes.” It may be meant to be a version of “one thing follows another.”

Motto continued, describing the manner and form in which Petulus and Licio would get the golden beard:

“You shall have not only the golden beard and every hair (although it is not hair, but gold), but also a dozen beards to stuff two dozen cushions.”

“Then they must be big beards,” Licio said.

Motto said:

“The beards are half a yard broad, and a nail, three quarters long, and a foot thick, so, sir, you shall find the cushions stuffed enough and soft enough.”

A nail is a length of measurement: a sixteenth of a yard, or 2.25 inches.

Motto continued:

“All my mistress’ lines that she dries her clothes on are made only of mustachio stuff.”

Clotheslines at the time were made of hair. Mustache hair is likely too short to be used for clotheslines.

Motto continued:

“And if I dare to tell the truth, as vigorous as I am here, I lie upon a bed of beards — a bots on their bristles, and they who own them. They are harder than flocks — than tufts of wool!”

Petulus said:

“A fine discourse! Well, Motto, we give thee mercy, but we will not lose the beard.

“Remember now our inventory.

“*Item*, we will not let thee go out of our hands, until we have the beard in our hands.”

“Then follow me,” Motto said.

They exited.

### — 5.3 —

King Midas, Sophronia, Mellacrites, and Martius talked together at Delphi, in front of Apollo’s temple.

He had already made a request for an oracle.

King Midas said:

“This is Delphos: Delphi.

“Sacred Apollo, whose oracles are all divine, although full of doubts because of ambiguity, answer poor King Midas, and pity him.”

“I marvel there is no answer,” Sophronia said.

King Midas said to himself:

“Foolish King Midas, how can thou ask pity from Apollo, whom thou have so much abused; and why do thou abuse the world, both to seem ignorant in not acknowledging an offence; and to seem impudent, so openly to crave pardon?”

He then said out loud:

“Apollo will not answer, but King Midas must not cease.

“Apollo, divine Apollo, King Midas has ass’ ears, yet let pity sink into thine ears, and tell when he shall be free from this shame, or tell what may mitigate his sin?”

Silence.

Martius said:

“Bad! Apollo is tuning his pipes, or he is at barley-break with Daphne, or he is trying on some shepherd’s coat, or he is taking the measure of a serpent’s skin.”

“Barley-break” is a game, somewhat similar to tag, usually played by three couples. Such games can have a sexually titillating element.

At times, Apollo has worked as a shepherd.

Apollo slew a python at Delphi, and he used its skin as a covering for the seat of his oracle: a priestess.

Martius continued:

“If I were King Midas, I would rather cut these ears off close from my head than stand whimpering before such a blind — such an arbitrary — god.”

King Midas said:

“Thou are barbarous, not valiant.

“Gods must be entreated, not commanded. Thou would attempt to quench fire with a sword and add to my shame (which is more than any prince can endure) thy rudeness, (which is more than any sensible creature would follow).

“Divine Apollo, what shall become of King Midas? Accept this lute, these berries, these simples [medicinal herbs], these tapers [devotional candles], if Apollo takes any delight in music, in Daphne, in medicine, in eternity.”

Devotional candles dedicated to Apollo were supposed to be kept burning for eternity.

Apollo’s oracle spoke from inside Apollo’s temple.

*“When Pan Apollo in music shall excel,”*

In properly arranged words (prose has its advantages): When Apollo shall excel Pan in music,

The oracle continued:

*“King Midas of Phrygia shall lose his ass’ ears;*



*“Pan did Apollo in music far excel,”*

In properly arranged words (prose has its advantages): Apollo did far excel Pan in music,

The Oracle continued:

*“Therefore King Midas wears ass’ ears:*

*“Unless he shrink his stretching hand from Lesbos,*

*“His ears in length, at length shall reach to Delphos.”*

This oracle was clear: Unless King Midas gave up his plan or attempt to conquer Lesbos, his ears would grow longer and longer until they reached from Phrygia to Delphi.

From the first two lines of the Oracle, those who know how King Midas got his ass’ ears will understand what Midas has to do to lose his ass’ ears.

Mellacrites said, “It would be good to expound these oracles at a time when the learned men in Phrygia would be assembled; otherwise, the remedy will be as impossible to be had as the cause to be sifted.”

He wanted the learned men in Phrygia to hear and interpret the oracle.

Martius said:

“I foresaw some old saw, some old saying, which would be unclear.

“Who would gad about and travel to such gods, who must be honored if they speak without sense, and the oracle marveled at, as though it were above sense?”

King Midas said:

“No more, Martius! I am the most learned in Phrygia to interpret these oracles, and although shame has hitherto caused me to conceal it, now I must unfold it by necessity. Thus, destiny brings me not only to be the cause of all my shame, but also the reporter.

“Thou, Sophronia, and you, my lords, hearken and listen.

“When I had bathed myself in Pactolus, and saw my wish float in the waves, I wished the waves to overflow my body, so melancholy my fortune made me, so mad my folly made me, and yet by hunting I thought to ease my heart. And coming at last to the hill — to Mount — Tmolus, I perceived Apollo and Pan contending for excellency in music. Along with the nymphs’ judgment, they also required my judgment.

“I, whom the loss of gold had made discontent, and whom the possessing of gold had made desperate, either dulled with the moods of my weak brain, or deceived by the thickness of my deaf ears, preferred the harsh noise of Pan’s pipe before the sweet stroke of Apollo’s lute, which caused Phoebus Apollo in justice (as I now confess, and then as I saw in anger) to set these ears on my head, ears that have wrung so many tears from my eyes.”

Confessing sin is important in repenting sin.

King Midas continued:

“As for stretching my hands to Lesbos, I find that all the gods have spurned my practices, and those islands scorn them. The gods disdain my pride; men disdain my policy: my mines have been emptied by soldiers, my soldiers are destroyed by wars, my wars are without success because they are usurping and overthrowing legitimate rulers; my usurping is without end, because my ambition is above measure.

“I will therefore yield myself to Bacchus and acknowledge my wish to be vanity.

“I will therefore yield myself to Apollo and confess my judgment to be foolish.

“I will therefore yield myself to Mars, and say my wars are unjust.

“I will therefore yield myself to Diana, the virgin goddess of the hunt, and tell her that my affection has been unnatural.

“And, I don’t doubt that what a god has done to make me know myself, all the gods will help to undo, so that I may come to myself.”

“Is it possible that King Midas should be so overshoot in judgment? Has he missed the mark by so much?” Sophronia said to herself. “Unhappy King Midas, whose wits melt with his gold, and whose gold is consumed with his wits.”

“What is Sophronia saying to herself?” King Midas asked.

“Nothing, except that since King Midas has confessed his fault to us, he should also acknowledge it to Apollo,” Sophronia said.

King Midas said:

“I will, Sophronia.

“Sacred Apollo, things passed cannot be recalled, but they may be repented.

“Behold King Midas not only submitting himself to punishment, but confessing his peevishness, being glad for shame to call peevishness that which indeed was folly. Whatsoever Apollo shall command, King Midas will do.”

“Peevishness” and “folly” both mean “foolishness.”

Apollo, who was out of sight in his temple, said to King Midas, who was the only person able to hear him:

“Then pay attention, King Midas.

“I accept thy submission and sacrifice, as long as yearly at this temple, thou offer sacrifice in submission. In addition, thou shall take Apollo’s counsel and advice, which if thou scorn, thou shall find thy destiny.

“I will not speak in riddles; all shall be plain, because thou are dull; but all shall be certain if thou are obstinate.

“Don’t in one balance weigh gold and justice.”

One balance has two scales. Gold ought not to make justice, just as might ought not to make right.

Apollo continued:

“With one hand don’t wage war and peace.

“Let thy head be glad to have one crown.

“And take care to keep one friend.”

Apollo then explained what would happen if Midas did NOT keep that one friend:

“The friend that thou would make thy foe, the kingdom thou would make the world, the hand that thou do arm with force, the gold that thou do think a god, shall conquer, fall, shrink short, be common: with force, with pride, with fear, with trade.”

Apollo then gave Midas a decision to make:

“If this thou like, shake off an ass’s ears:

“If thou not like this, forever shake an ass’s ears.”

In an easier-to-understand arrangement of words, Apollo had said:

“The friend that thou would make thy foe shall conquer with force.”

Lesbos shall conquer Phrygia.

“The kingdom thou would make the world shall fall with pride.”

Phrygia will fall because of King Midas’ pride.

“The hand that thou do arm with force shall shrink short with fear.”

Phrygia’s soldiers shall be afraid.

“The gold that thou do think a god shall be common with trade.”

Because of trade, gold shall become so common that it is worthless.

“Apollo will not reply,” Sophronia said.

Sophronia and King Midas’ other companions had not heard Apollo.

King Midas said:

“It may be, Sophronia, that neither you, nor anyone else, understand Apollo, because none of you have the heart of a king, but my thoughts expound my fortunes, and my fortunes hang upon my thoughts. That great Apollo, who joined to my head ass’s ears, has put into my heart a lion’s mind.

“I see in obscure shadows that which you cannot discern in fresh colors. Apollo, in the depth of his dark answer, is to me the glistening and sparkling of a bright sun.

“I perceive (and yet not too late) that Lesbos will not be touched by gold, that by force Lesbos cannot be touched, and that the gods have pitched it out of the world, so as not to be controlled by any in the world.

“Although my hand is gold, yet I must not think to span — to stretch it — over the main ocean.

“Although my soldiers are valiant, I must not therefore think that my quarrels are just.

“There is no way to nail the crown of Phrygia fast to my daughter’s head, except by letting the crowns of others sit in quiet on theirs.”

Martius said, “King Midas!”

King Midas said:

“How dare thou reply, seeing me firmly resolved and decided? Thy counsel has spilt more blood than all my soldiers’ lances! Let none be so hardy as to look to cross me.

“Sacred Apollo, if sacrifice yearly at thy temple and submission hourly in my own court, if fulfilling thy counsel, and if correcting my counselors may shake off these ass’ ears, I here before thee vow to shake off all envies abroad, and to shake off all tyranny at home.”

King Midas’ ass’ ears fell off.

Sophonra said, “Honored be Apollo! King Midas is restored!”

King Midas said:

“Fortunate King Midas, who feels thy head lightened of dull ears, and who feels thy heart lightened of deadly sorrows.

“Come, my lords, let us repair to our palace, in which Apollo shall have a stately statue erected: Every month we will celebrate there a feast, and every year we will celebrate here a sacrifice.

“Phrygia shall be governed by gods, not men, lest the gods make beasts of men. So, my counsel of war shall not make conquests in their own conceits, nor my counselors in peace make me poor, to enrich themselves.

“So blessed be Apollo, quiet be Lesbos, happy be King Midas, and to begin this celebration, let us sing to Apollo, for nothing can content Apollo as much as music.

They all sang:

*“Sing to Apollo, god of day,*

*“Whose golden beams with morning play,*

*“And make her eyes so brightly shine.*

*“Aurora’s face is called divine.”*

Aurora is the goddess of the dawn.

They continued to sing:

*“Sing to Phoebus, and that throne*

*“Of diamonds which he sits upon;*

*“Io, paeans [hymns] let us sing,”*

The sound “Io” is a joyful cry.

They continued to sing:

*“To physic’s and to poesy’s king.”*

Apollo is the king (god) of physic (medicine) and poesy (poetry).

They continued to sing:

*“Crown all his altars with bright fire,*

*“Laurels bind about his lyre,*

*“A Daphnean coronet [a crown of bay laurel] for his head,*

*“The Muses dance about his bed;”*

The Muses are goddesses of the arts.

They continued to sing:

*“When on his ravishing lute he plays,*

*“Strew his temple round with bays [a crown of bay laurel].*

*“Io, paeans let us sing,*

*“To the glittering Delian king.”*

Apollo was born on the island of Delos.

They exited.

## NOTES (MIDAS)

— 1.2 —

### “Walk, knave, walk.”

The below is from the anonymous poem “A LOOKING-GLASSE OF THE WORLD, OR, The Plundred Man in I R E L A N D”:

*The Parrat, he is learned to talk,  
To honest men say, walk knave walk:  
But rather then we would do any wrong,  
Should cut our tongue if it grow too long.*

Source of Above: “A Looking-Glass of the World.” 1644.

<https://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/tract2.html>

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Sir John Harington published fourteen epigrams in Henry Parrot’s *Springes for Woodcocks* (1613). The title is *Laquei ridiculosi: or Springes for Woodcocks, By H.P.*”

Springes are snares. Woodcocks are proverbially foolish and easily caught birds. *Laquei ridiculosi* means “A ridiculous trap.”

The below is from “Henry Parrot’s Stolen Feathers”:

*Sig. K3<sup>v</sup>, epigram 31. The phrases were common parrot-talk, corresponding to “Polly wants a cracker.” But does the second line indicate that Parrot was actually in prison? Hudibras knew what parrots meant “When they cry Rope, and Walk Knave, walk” (ed. A. R. Waller [Cambridge, 1905], p. 17).*

Source of Above: “Henry Parrot’s Stolen Feathers.” Published online by Cambridge University Press: 02 December 2020.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/pmla/article/abs/henry-parrots-stolen-feathers/26C8C5284288773EC0D711A34AEAB6E3>

Note by David Bruce: Paywalls are enemies to scholarship.

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For Your Information:

*What Member ’tis of whom they talk,  
When they cry, Rope, and walk, knave, walk.*

Source of Above: “Hudibras” (lines 551-552)

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4937>

Note by David Bruce: “Hudibras” is a satiric poem by Samuel Butler. It was written between 1660 and 1680.

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In Act 4, scene 4 of William Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, Dromio of Ephesus says that parrots have been taught to say "rope."

— 4.3 —

Petulus

*There was a boy leash'd on the single, because  
when he was embost [embossed], he took soil.*

(4.3.26-27)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Gallathea and Midas*. Ed. Anne Begor Lancashire. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1969. P. 138.

Petulus translates his remark:

*Why, a boy was beaten on the tail with a leathern thong,  
because when he foamed at the mouth with running, he went  
into the water.*

(4.3.29-31)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Gallathea and Midas*. Ed. Anne Begor Lancashire. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1969. P. 139.

Although Petulus translates his remark, I have to wonder whether there is an indelicate meaning.

The word "emboss" also means "bulge" or "swell out."

Therefore:

*Why, a boy was beaten on the tail with a leathern thong,  
because when he [his belly] swelled up, he soiled himself.*

— 5.2 —

In some versions of the Midas myth, a barber plays a different role than Motto the barber does here.

A barber cut King Midas' hair and so knew about the ass' ears, but of course, the barber was ordered to tell no one about the ass' ears. Barbers are notoriously talkative, and the barber felt the need to speak the secret, so he dug a hole in a reedy area and whispered into the hole, "Midas has ass' ears." Reeds grew in the hole, and when the wind blew through them, the reeds whispered, "Midas has ass' ears." Soon, everyone knew Midas' secret.

In Lyly's play, at the end of 4.2, the reeds overhear the shepherds talking about Midas' ass' ears. At the end of 4.4, Sophronia hears the reeds talking about Midas' ass' ears.

# MOTHER BOMBIE



## **CAST OF CHARACTERS (MOTHER BOMBIE)**

### **FEMALE CHARACTERS**

**Mother Bombie**, a fortune-teller, an aged cunning woman

**Vicinia**, a nurse, mother to Maestius and Serena

**Livia**, daughter to Prisius, in love with Candius

**Serena**, daughter to Vicinia

**Silena**, a simpleton, daughter to Stellio

**Rixula**, a serving-girl to Prisius, whose daughter is Livia

### **MALE CHARACTERS**

**Memphio**, a rich old man, father of Accius

**Stellio**, an old and wealthy husbandman, father of Silena

**Prisius**, a fuller, an old man of modest means, father of Livia. A fuller fulls cloth: A fuller cleans wool in a fulling mill.

**Sperantus**, a farmer, an old man of modest means, father of Candius

**Maestius**, son to Vicinia

**Candius**, son to Sperantus, in love with Livia

**Accius**, a simpleton, son to Memphio

**Dromio**, a boy, servant to Memphio

**Risio**, a boy, servant to Stellio

**Lucio**, a boy, servant to Prisius

**Halfpenny**, a boy, servant to Sperantus

### **MINOR CHARACTERS**

**Synus**, a fiddler

**Nasutis**, a fiddler

**Bedunenus**, a fiddler

**Hackneyman**

**Sergeant**

**Scrivener**

### **SCENE:**

A street in Rochester, Kent, England. On the street are the houses of Memphio, Stellio, Prisius, Sperantus, and Mother Bombie. Also on the street are a scrivener's shop and a tavern.

## NOTES:

This play is greatly influenced by Roman comedies in which tricky slaves outwit their masters and earn their freedom. The four serving-boys are bondmen, which means they are in bondage. The word “bondman” can mean serf or slave.

In this society, a person of higher rank would use “thou,” “thee,” “thine,” and “thy” when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use “you” and “your” when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word “wench” at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word “mistress” at this time can mean simply a woman who is loved. It can also mean a female head of household.

The word “fair” can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, and good-looking.

“Sirrah” was a title used to address someone of a social rank inferior to the speaker. Friends, however, could use it to refer to each other, and fathers could call their sons “sirrah.”

The verb “cozened” means “tricked” and “cheated.”

## EDITIONS:

Lyly, John. *The Complete Plays of John Lyly*. Edited by R. Warwick Bond. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1973.

Lyly, John. *Mother Bombie*. Ed. Leah Scragg. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010.

Lyly, John. *The Plays of John Lyly*. Carter A. Daniel, editor. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses. 1988.

An online edition (NOT modern spelling) is here:

<https://americanshakespearecenter.com/events/mother-bombie-2015/>

I was unable to find and use this edition:

*John Lyly's 'Mother Bombie': A Critical Edition*. Edited by Harriette A. Andreadis. Renaissance Studies 35. Published 1975. (And published earlier.)

## CHAPTER 1 (MOTHER BOMBIE)

### — 1.1 —

Memphio, a wealthy old man, and Dromio, his serving-boy, talked together. They talked mostly about Memphio's son: Accius.

Memphio complained, "Boy, three things make my life miserable: a threadbare purse, a curst wife, and a foolish heir."

A threadbare purse is a threadbare container for money. Memphio was complaining about a lack of money, although he was, in fact, wealthy. In this society, both men and women used what were called purses.

A curst wife is a shrewish wife.

Dromio advised:

"Why, then, sir, there are three medicines for these three maladies: a pike-staff weapon to steal a purse on the highway, a wand of holly to brush choler — anger — from my mistress' tongue, and a young wench for my young master.

"Since your worship, who is wise, begot a fool, so he, who is a fool, may tread out — that is, beget — a wise man."

A proverb stated: A wise man commonly has a fool to his heir.

Memphio replied, "Aye, but Dromio, these medicines bite hot on great evils, for if I do these actions, I might have a rope about my neck, horns upon my head, and in my house a litter of fools."

If he became a highwayman, he could end up being hung.

If he used a holly branch to beat his wife, she could cuckold him to get revenge. A cuckold is a man with an unfaithful wife. In this society, people joked that cuckolds had invisible horns growing on their head.

If he got his foolish son a wench to make pregnant, his home could soon become filled with foolish children.

"Then, sir, you had best let some wise man sit on your son, to hatch him a good wit," Dromio said. "They say, if ravens sit on hens' eggs, the chickens will be black, and so forth."

One problem with proverbs and old sayings is that they can be contradictory. The proverb about ravens and black chickens states that children will be like their parents. That is the opposite of the previous proverb: A wise man commonly has a fool to his heir.

"Why, boy, my son is out of the shell and is grown up, and he has grown a pretty cock," Memphio said.

Hmm. He has grown up to be a handsome man, and he has grown a handsome penis.

Dromio advised, “Carve him, master, and make him a capon, else all your breed — your descendants — will prove coxcombs.”

A capon is a castrated cock, aka rooster.

A coxcomb is a fool; professional Fools sometimes wore hats that resembled a cock’s comb.

Of course, professional Fools were not fools; professional Fools were often quite wise.

“I marvel that my son is such an ass,” Memphio said. “He did not get that from his father.”

“He may for any thing you know,” Dromio said.

“Why, villain, do thou think that I am a fool?” Memphio asked.

“O no, sir,” Dromio said. “Neither are you sure that you are his father.”

In the days before DNA analysis, fatherhood could be difficult to prove.

“Rascal, do thou imagine thy mistress has been wicked with her body?” Memphio asked.

“No, but I think she is fantastical of her mind, and it may be, that when this boy was begotten, she thought of a fool, and so she conceived a fool, yourself being very wise, and she surpassingly honest and chaste,” Dromio said.

“It may be, for I have heard of an Ethiopian, who thinking of a fair picture, brought forth a fair lady, and yet the fair lady was no bastard,” Memphio said.

This society regarded white skin as beautiful.

Persina, Queen of Ethiopia, gave birth to a white daughter, Chariclea. Persina explained this by saying that she had been looking at a painting of Perseus and the naked Andromeda, both of whom were white, when Chariclea was conceived. This story appears in Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*.

“You are well read, sir,” Dromio said. “Your son may be a bastard and yet legitimate, yourself a cuckold, and yet my mistress virtuous — all this in conceit: in imagination.”

“Come, Dromio, it is my grief to have such a son who must inherit my lands,” Memphio said.

Dromio said, “He need not be your heir, sir. I’ll beg him for a fool.”

If an heir were intellectually incompetent, others could petition the court to be the heir’s guardian. This would allow them to have the use of the heir’s wealth and lands.

“Vile boy, thou would do that to thy young master?” Memphio said.

“Let me have in a device — a trick,” Dromio said. “Let me come up with a plan that suits your needs.”

“I’ll have thy advice, and if it fadge — if it works — thou shall eat until thou shall sweat, thou shall play until thou sleep, and thou shall sleep until thy bones ache,” Memphio said.

“Aye, by the Virgin Mary, now you tickle me and excite me,” Dromio said. “I am hungry, playful, and sleepy, and all of these at once. I’ll break open this head against the wall, but I’ll make it bleed good matter. I’ll make my head come up with a good plan.”

“Then this is how it is: Thou know I have but one son, and he is a fool,” Memphio said.

“A monstrous fool,” Dromio said.

“I have a wife and she is an arrant — a complete — scold,” Memphio said.

“Ah, master, I smell your device,” Dromio said. “I smell your plan. It will be excellent.”

“Thou cannot know it until I tell it,” Memphio said.

“I see it through your brains,” Dromio said. “Your hair is so thin and your skull is so transparent that I may sooner see it than hear it.”

“Then, boy, thou have a quick wit, and I have a slow tongue, but what is it?” Memphio asked.

“By the Virgin Mary, either you would have your wife’s tongue in your son’s head, so that he might be a prating and chattering fool, or you would have his brains in her brain pan — her skull — so that she might be a foolish scold,” Dromio said.

“Thou dream, Dromio, there is no such matter,” Memphio said. “Thou know I have kept them close, so that my neighbors may think that my son is wise and my wife is temperate and mild-mannered because my neighbors have never heard them speak.”

“That is well,” Dromio said.

“Thou know that Stellio has a good farm and a fair daughter, yes, so fair that she is mewed up — kept inside the home — and she only looks out at the windows, lest she should be stolen away by some roistering courtier,” Memphio said.

Stellio was a wealthy farmer, and Silena was his beautiful daughter.

“That is so, sir,” Dromio said.

“Now if I could compass — arrange — a marriage match between my son and Stellio’s daughter, Silena, by conference of us parents, and without theirs — without my son and his daughter being consulted — I would be blessed, Stellio would be tricked, and thou would be forever set at liberty,” Memphio said.

Stellio would be tricked because his son-in-law would be a fool.

“A singular conceit,” Dromio said. “An extraordinary idea.”

Memphio said:

“Thus much for my son.

“Now for my wife, I would have this kept from her, else I shall not be able to keep my house from smoke, for let it come to one of her ears, and then woe to both of my ears. I would have her go to my house in the country while we conclude this, and once this is done, I don’t care if her tongue never stops wagging.”

A proverb stated, “Smoke, rain, and a very cursed [shrewish] wife make a man weary of house and life.”

Memphio continued:

“If thou can effect and bring about these things, thou shall make thy master happy.”

“Think it done, this noddle — this head — of mine shall coin such a new device and plan that you shall have your son married by tomorrow,” Dromio said.

“But take heed so that neither the father nor the maiden will speak to my son, for then his folly will mar all,” Memphio said.

The maiden was Stellio’s daughter: Silena.

“Lay all the care on me,” Dromio said. “*Sublevabo te onere*: I will rid you of a fool.”

The Latin means: I will lift this burden from you.

“Will thou rid me for a fool?” Memphio, suspicious, asked.

“Will thou rid me for a fool?” can mean “Will you ride me like the fool I am?”

“Tush, don’t quarrel,” Dromio said.

“Then for the dowry, let it be at least two hundred ducats, and after his death the farm,” Memphio said.

“What else?” Dromio asked.

“Then let us go in, so that I may furnish thee with some better counsel, and I may furnish my son with better apparel,” Memphio said.

Dromio said:

“Let me alone and leave it to me.”

He then whispered to you, the readers:

“I lack only a wag more to be a part of my plan, and then you shall see an exquisite cozenage — an excellent piece of trickery — and you will see that the father is more fool than the son.”

A “wag more” is another boy like Dromio: a boy capable of trickery.

Dromio then said:

“But listen, sir. I forgot one thing.”

“What’s that?” Memphio asked.

“*Expellas furca licet, usque recurret*,” Dromio said.

“What’s the meaning of that?” Memphio asked.

The Latin means: Although you cast out nature with a pitchfork, it will always return.

“Why, although your son’s folly is thrust up with a pair of horns on a fork, yet being natural it will have his course,” Dromio said.

In other words: You can try to cast away nature, but if something is natural — intrinsic to one’s character — it will out.

In yet other words: You can try to disguise Accius' foolishness and get him married, but his foolishness will become known.

Dromio was saying, in part, that Accius' marriage would probably be unhappy. The fork can be made by a wife's torso and legs, and the horns can be those of a cuckold: a man with an unfaithful wife.

Dromio was also saying, in part, that marriage is not a cure for foolishness. A man who is foolish before marriage is likely to continue to be foolish after marriage.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one now-obsolete meaning of the adjective "natural" is an environment "naturally adapted *for*, or applicable *to*, something."

Accius may not be a born fool (the meaning of the noun "natural"), but he may have been raised in an environment that resulted in spoiling him and making him foolish.

Dromio seems to regard Accius as a born fool, but readers will have to form their own opinion.

"I ask thee to say no more, but to go about your plan," Memphio said.

They exited into Memphio's house.

— 1.2 —

Stellio and his serving-boy, Risio, talked together.

Stellio was a wealthy man and the father of Silena.

Stellio said, "Risio, my daughter is surpassingly amiable, but very simple."

"Amiable" means "worthy of being loved." It means both 1) lovable, and 2) lovely.

Risio said, "You mean that she is a fool, sir."

"Indeed, I did imply as much," Stellio said.

"Then I apply her characteristics fittingly: The one characteristic she takes from her father, the other characteristic she takes from her mother, and so now you may be sure she is your own," Risio said.

Hmm. Deliberately ambiguous, that. Is it from the father or from the mother that she gets her foolishness? From the other parent (but which one is that?), she gets her good looks.

Stellio said:

"I have penned her up and enclosed her in a chamber, having only a window to look out, so that youths, seeing her fair cheeks, may be enamored before they hear her fond, foolish speech.

"How do thou like this head?"

Stellio was referring to his problem-solving: He kept his daughter at home where youths could see her beauty but not talk to her and discover her foolishness.

Risio said, "There is very good workmanship in it, but the matter is only base. If the stuff — the filling — had been as good as the mold, your daughter would have been as wise as she is beautiful."

Risio was commenting on Stellio's head: his appearance and his intellect. Yes, Stellio was good-looking, but according to Risio, Stellio was somewhat lacking in his brain.

"Do thou think she took her foolishness from me?" Stellio asked.

Risio said, "Aye, and so cunningly, that she took it not from you."

In other words: She got her foolishness from you, but although she took it from you, you are still foolish.

"Well, *Quod natura dedit tollere nemo potest*," Stellio said.

The Latin means: No man can take away what came from nature.

Risio said, "That is a good piece of evidence to prove the fee-simple of your daughter's folly."

"Why?" Stellio asked.

Risio said, "It came by nature, and if none can take it away, it is perpetual."

Property that is owned in fee-simple is absolute ownership. The property belongs to the owner, and it can be passed down to his heirs. Risio was saying that the foolishness of Stellio has been passed down to his daughter.

Stellio said:

"No, Risio, she is no natural fool. She was not born a fool.

"Her simplicity and foolishness consist in these things:

"She thinks that she is a subtle thinker, but she is not.

"When she is rude, she imagines that she is courtly and sophisticated.

"Because of this over-esteeming her abilities, she has overweening pride."

"Well, what follows?" Risio asked.

Stellio said:

"Risio, this is my plot. Memphio has a pretty stripling — a good-looking youth named Accius — who is his son, whom with overindulgence he has spoiled and made wanton: The boy's girdle — that is, his sash — must be warmed, the air must not breathe on him, he must lie in bed until noon, and yet in his bed he must break his fast."

Accius may not be a born fool; his foolishness may be a result of his being spoiled.

Stellio continued:

"Those things that I do to conceal the folly of my daughter, that he does in too much spoiling and pampering of his son."

Memphio's too much spoiling and pampering of his son, Accius, kept Accius at home.

Stellio continued:



“Now, Risio, how shall I compass — that is, arrange — a marriage match between my girl and his boy?”

“Why, with a pair of compasses,” Risio said. “If thou bring them both into the circle, I’ll guarantee they’ll match themselves.”

A compass is a mechanical device used to draw circles.

“Tush, plot it for me so that without ever speaking one to another, they will fall in love with each other,” Stellio said. “I don’t like solemn wooing, it is for courtiers, let country folks believe others’ reports and gossips as much as their own opinions.”

Risio said, “O, then as long as it is a marriage match, you don’t care how it comes about.”

Stellio said, “No, I don’t care, and I would not care for a marriage match either, if I weren’t thirsting after my neighbor’s farm.”

Risio said to himself, sarcastically:

“A very good nature.”

He then said out loud:

“Well, if by flat wit and my ingenuity, I bring this to pass, what’s my reward?”

“Whatever thou will ask,” Stellio said.

“I’ll ask for no more than by my wit I can get in the bargain,” Risio said.

“Then get on about it,” Stellio said.

He exited into his house.

Risio said to himself about Stellio:

“If I come not about — that is, if I don’t outsmart you — never trust me.”

He added:

“I’ll seek out Dromio, the counselor of my conceit. He can advise me about a plot that will get me what I want.”

— 1.3 —

Prisius and Sperantus talked together.

Prisius was a fuller, a man of modest means, and the father of Livia.

Sperantus was a farmer, a man of modest means, and the father of Candius.

Prisius said, “It is unneighborly done to allow your son since he came from the university to spend his time in seeking love, and unwisely done to let him hover over my daughter, who has nothing for her dowry except her needle, and must prove to be a sempster: a seamstress. Nor does he have anything to take to except a grammar book, and he cannot at the best be anything except a schoolmaster.”

One way to advance in life is to marry someone with means. Candius and Livia were in love, but their parents had only modest means. Both of their fathers wanted them to marry someone of more-than-modest means.

Sperantus said:

“Prisius, you bite and whine, you wring me on the withers, and yet you winch yourself.”

An ill-fitting saddle will hurt a horse by wringing it on the withers: the highest part of the back of the horse.

A proverb stated, “Touch a galled horse on the back, and he will wince.”

Sperantus continued:

“It is you who go about to match your girl with my boy. She is more fit for sewing seams than for marriage, and he is more fit for a rod than a wife.”

“Her birth requires a better bridegroom than such a groom,” Prisius said.

A groom is lower-class; a groom can be a servant.

“And his bringing up requires another gate marriage than such a minion,” Sperantus said.

“Another gate marriage” is “a different kind of marriage.”

A minion can be a hussy.

“Marry gup!” Prisius said. “I am sure he has no better bread than is made of wheat, nor has he worn finer cloth than is made of wool, nor has he learned better manners than are taught in schools.”

Prisius was saying that Sperantus’ son was not a gentleman.

“Marry gup” means “Bah!”

To “eat better bread than is made of wheat” is to “have extremely fastidious tastes.”

In this society, sumptuary laws stated what kind of clothing each social class could wear. Wool was worn by the lower class.

Excellent manners were associated with the court, not with the university.

Sperantus said, “Nor does your minx have no better grandfather than a tailor, who (as I have heard) was poor and proud. Nor has she a better father than yourself, unless your wife borrowed a better man to make her daughter a gentlewoman.”

The “better man” would make Prisius a cuckold.

Prisius said, “Don’t twit — insult — me with my ancestors, and don’t twit my wife’s honesty and chastity. If thou do —”

He threatened Sperantus.

“Thou had best hold thy hands still, and yet it is impossible now I remember, for thou have the palsy and your hands shake,” Sperantus said.

“My hands shake so much that if thou were in an appropriate place, there I would teach thee to cog,” Prisius said.

To “cog” can mean to lie. This is the meaning Prisius meant.

He would beat up Sperantus and thereby show that Sperantus was lying about Prisius’ hands shaking.

To “cog” can also mean to cheat, as with tricky throws of the dice. Sperantus now used this meaning.

Sperantus said:

“Nay, if thy hands shake, I guarantee that thou cannot teach anyone to cog.

“But neighbor, let not two old fools fall out for two young wantons.”

The wantons were their children, both of whom were wayward, according to their fathers.

Prisius said, “Indeed, it becomes men of our experience to reason, not rail: to debate the matter, not to combat it.”

Sperantus said:

“Well, then I’ll tell thee this in a friendly manner.

“I have almost these two years cast in my head and deliberated about how I might match my princox — my saucy son — with Stellio’s daughter, Silena, whom I have heard to be very fair, and whom I know shall be very rich. She is his heir, he dotes on her, he is old and stoops with his age, and he shortly must die, yet by no means, either by blessing or cursing, can I win my son to be a wooer, which I know proceeds not from bashfulness but stubbornness, for he knows his good although I am the one who says it — he has wit at will.”

Sperantus’ son, Candius, understood courteous behavior, and he had intellectual gifts.

“As for his personage, I don’t care who sees him. I can tell you he is able to make a lady’s mouth water if she does not close her eyes.”

Candius was a handsome young man.

Prisius responded:

“Stop, Sperantus, this is like my case, for I have been tampering and scheming as long as you have to have a marriage committed and arranged between my wench and Memphio’s only son: Accius.

“They say that he is as goodly and splendid a youth as one shall see in a summer’s day, and as neat and trim a stripling as ever went on neat’s leather.”

Neat’s leather is cowhide. Accius walks on leather-soled shoes.

Prisius continued:

“His father will not let him be out of his sight — he is so tender over him. He — the son — still sleeps with his mother for fear of catching cold.

“Now my pretty but wayward elf — my daughter Livia — is as proud as the day is long, and she will have none of him. She, forsooth, will choose her own husband. She thinks that made marriages — arranged marriages — prove to be mad marriages! She will choose with her eye and like with her heart before she will consent with her tongue. Neither father nor mother, kith nor kin — countrymen or blood relatives — shall be her carver in a husband.”

The head of the household carved the meat at the dinner table. Livia wanted to metaphorically carve her own meat: to choose her own husband.

Prisius continued:

“She will fall, too, where she likes best.”

She would metaphorically fall to the meal: She would satisfy her desires with and fall in bed with the man she herself would choose to be her husband.

Prisius continued:

“And thus the chick that is scarcely out of the shell cackles as though she had been trodden with — used by — a hundred cocks and had been mother of a thousand eggs.”

Livia was a young woman who wanted to choose her own mate. According to her father, who wanted to choose her husband for her, that made her headstrong.

Sperantus said, “Well, then, this is our best course of action, seeing we know each other’s mind: to devise a way to govern our own children. As for my boy, I’ll keep him to his books, and study shall make him cease to love your daughter. I’ll break him of his will, or I’ll break his bones with a cudgel.”

Prisius said:

“And I’ll no more dandle — that is, indulge, my daughter. She shall prick on a cloth — sew — until her fingers ache. If she doesn’t, I’ll give her permission to make my heart ache.”

He saw Candius and Livia walking toward them, although they did not see Sperantus and him.

Prisius then said:

“But in good time — at an appropriate moment, although with ill luck — look! Both of them are together. Let us stand nearby and conceal ourselves and hear everything. By doing that, we shall prevent all that we don’t like.”

The two fathers hid themselves.

Candius and Livia entered the scene. Candius was carrying a book, and Livia was holding a sampler.

Sperantus whispered, “This happens at an opportune time. Be careful that you don’t cough, Prisius.”

Prisius whispered, “Bah. Don’t you spit, and I’ll guarantee that my beard is as good as a handkerchief for stopping a cough.”

Livia said, “Sweet Candius, if thy father should see us alone, wouldn’t he fret? I think that the old man should be full of fumes.”

He would fume with anger: His brain would be filled with noxious thoughts.

Candius said, “Bah, let him fret one heartstring against another — he shall never trouble the least vein of my little finger. The churlish old man thinks that no one is wise unless he has a beard that hangs dangling to his waist. When my face is as plastered with hair as is his, then perhaps my understanding may stumble on his staidness.”

If Candius’ understanding were to become as staid as the understanding of Livia’s father, that would be equivalent to a stumble. That is not something to be wished for.

Prisius, the father of Livia, whispered, “Aye? In what book did you read that lesson? Where did you learn that?”

Sperantus, the father of Candius, whispered, “I don’t know in what book he read it, but I am sure he was a knave to learn it.”

Candius said, “I believe, fair Livia, if your sour sire were to see you with your sweetheart, he would not be very patient.”

Livia said:

“I’ve taken some care for that: I am prepared.

“I’ll ask him for his blessing as my father, but I’ll never take his counsel and advice about a husband. There is as much difference between my golden thoughts and his leaden advice, as there is between his silver hairs and my amber locks. I know he will cough for anger that I don’t yield to his wishes, but he shall cough me a fool — that is, make a fool of himself — for his labor.”

Sperantus whispered to Prisius, “Where did your daughter pick that work? Out of broad-stitch?”

In other words: Where did she get that idea?

Something that is “broad” is done without restraint. Livia was not restrained by her father’s wishes.

“Picked” means to unpick stitches.

Stitches hold something together. Livia’s actions — a metaphorical unpicking of stitches — could separate her from her father.

Prisius whispered, “Out of a flirt’s sampler, but let us stay until the end. This is just the beginning; you shall hear two children ‘well brought up.’”

A sampler is a piece of work that illustrates the sewer’s skill.

Candius said:

“Parents in these days have grown peevish and perverse. They rock their children in their cradles until they sleep, and then they cross them about their bridals until their hearts ache. Marriage among them has become a market: What dowry will you give with your daughter? What jointure will you make for your son?”

A jointure is property held in common between a husband and a wife. After the husband dies, the property is used to support the widow.

“And many a match is broken off for a penny more or less, as though they could not afford their children at such a price, when nothing should cheapen such ware — that is, should ask a price for a spouse — except affection, and nothing should buy it except love.”

“Learnedly and like a scholar,” Sperantus whispered sarcastically.

Livia said:

“Indeed, our parents take great care to make us ask blessing and say grace when we are little ones, and when we grow up to the years of judgment, they deprive us of the greatest blessing, and the most gracious things to our minds: the liberty of our minds. They give us pap — soft baby food — with a spoon before we can speak, and when we speak for that which we love, they give us pap with a hatchet.”

“Pap with a hatchet” is “bad treatment with a veneer of kindness.”

Livia continued:

“Because their fancies have grown musty with hoary — grey — old age, nothing that has the flavor of sweet youth can therefore taste good in their thoughts. They study twenty years together to make us grow as straight as a wand, and in the end by bowing us make us as crooked as a cammock.”

A “cammock” is a twisted branch that can be trimmed and used as a cane.

Livia continued:

“For my own part, sweet Candius, they shall pardon me — I will not obey them — for I will measure my love by my own judgment, not by my father’s purse nor by his peevishness. Nature has made me his child, not his slave. I would hate Memphio and his son in a deadly way, if I thought his son would place his affection by his father’s appointment.”

Memphio’s son was Accius. Livia would hate Accius if he would fall in love with whomever Memphio told him to fall in love.

“Wittily but uncivilly,” Prisius whispered.

Livia had spoken cleverly but without conventional obedience to her father.

Candius said:

“Be of that mind always, my fair Livia. Let our fathers lay their purses together; we will lay our hearts together. I will never woo where I cannot love — let Stellio enjoy his daughter.”

“Enjoy” refers to the joy a couple find in bed together. Candius was saying that Stellio might as well marry his daughter, Silena, because he, Candius, would not.

Candius then asked:

“But what have you wrought here in this sampler?”

Livia said:

“Flowers, fowls, beasts, fishes, trees, plants, stones, and what not.

“Among flowers, Cowslips and Lilies for our names Candius and Livia.

“Among fowl, turtledoves and sparrows, for our truth and desires.”

Turtledoves are associated with loyalty in love, and sparrows are associated with sexual desire.

Livia continued:

“Among beasts, the fox and the ermine for policy and beauty.”

Foxes are associated with cunning, and ermines have a beautiful winter coat.

Livia continued:

“Among fishes, the cockle and the tortoise, because of Venus.”

Venus was born off the coast of Cyprus, and she was depicted standing on a cockle (scallop) shell in a painting by Botticelli.

She is sometimes depicted with a foot on a tortoise. Tortoises are associated with staying at home because they carry their homes on their back.

Livia continued:

“Among trees, the vine wreathing about the elm for our embracings.

“Among stones, abeston, which after it becomes hot will never be cold, for our constancies.

“Among plants, thyme and heart’s-ease, to note that if we take time, we shall ease our hearts.”

“There’s a girl who knows her lerripoop,” Prisius whispered.

Literally, a lerripoop is the long tail of a university graduate’s academic hood. Figuratively, it is a lesson.

“Listen and you shall hear my son’s learning,” Sperantus said, seeing Livia looking at the book that Candius was holding.

“What book is that?” Livia asked.

Candius said, “It is by a fine, pleasant poet, a poet who entreats of the art of Love, and of the remedy for Love.”

The poet is Ovid, author of *Ars Amatoria: The Art of Love*.

“Is there art in love?” Livia asked.

Candius said, “It is a short art and a certain art. There are three rules in three lines.”

“Please repeat them,” Livia requested.

Candius quoted from memory or read out loud:

“*Principio, quod amare velis, reperire labora, [...]*

“*Proximus huic labor est placidam exorare puellam.*”

*“Tertius, ut longo tempore duret amor.”*

The Latin lines came from Ovid’s *Arts Amatoria*, Book 1, lines 35, 37-38.

Translated, they are:

“First, find someone to love. [...]

“Next, win the one you want to love you.

“Third, make love long lasting.”

Livia said, “I am no Latinist, Candius. You must construe — translate — it.”

Candius said:

“So I will and parse it, too: Thou shall be acquainted with case, gender, and number.

“First, one must find out a mistress — a woman to love — whom before all others he vows to serve.

“Secondly, he shall use all the means that he may to obtain her.

“And finally, he must study and work to keep her with deserts, faith, and secrecy.”

“What’s the remedy?” Livia asked.

“Death,” Candius said.

Death “cures” love.

“What of all the book is the conclusion?” Livia asked.

Candius answered, “This one verse: *Non caret essertu quod voluere duo.*”

The Latin means: What two people have willed does not lack accomplishment.

In other words: When two people agree to do something, that something will be accomplished.

“What’s that?” Livia asked.

Candius answered, “Where two are agreed, it is impossible for anything except that they must speed — they must succeed.”

Livia said, “Then we cannot fail; therefore, give me thy hand, Candius.”

They could become engaged right now. A betrothal occurred when a man and a woman held hands and pledged to marry each other.

Prisius stepped into the open and said, “Wait, Livia, take me with you. Let’s understand each other. A betrothal is not good in law without witness.”

Sperantus stepped into the open and said, “And as I remember, there must be two witnesses to a betrothal. May God give you joy, Candius. I was worth the bidding to the dinner, although not worthy to be of the counsel.”

Sperantus had not been asked to give his advice about whom Candius should marry and so he was not supposed to witness the engagement, but if the wedding were held, he would be



invited to a celebratory meal.

“I think this hot love has provided but cold cheer,” Prisius said.

“Cheer” is 1) food, and 2) a cheerful state of mind.

“Cold cheer” is 1) cold food, aka a bad meal, and 2) a joyless state of mind.

Sperantus said, “Bah, to be in love is no lack, but don’t blush, Candius. You need not be ashamed of your cunning and learning. You have made love a book case — a subject of study — and you have spent your time well at the university, learning to love by art, and learning to hate against nature, but I perceive, the worser child is the better lover.”

“Hate against nature” means “hate (disobey) your own father.”

Prisius said:

“And my minion — my daughter the hussy — has wrought well, where every stitch in her sampler is a pricking stitch at my heart.

“You take your pleasure by criticizing parents: They are peevish fools, churls, and miserable old men, and they are overgrown with ignorance, because they are overworn with age.

“Little shall thou know what it is to be a father before thyself will be a mother, when thou shall breed thy child with continual pains, and bringing it forth with deadly pangs, nurse it with thine own paps [breasts], and nourish it up with motherly tenderness, and then find that they curse thee with their hearts, when they should ask blessing on their knees, and the collop — the offspring — of thine own bowels will be the torture of thine own soul.

“With tears trickling down thy cheeks, and with drops of blood falling from thy heart, thou will in uttering thy mind wish them rather unborn than unnatural and disobedient to their parents, and thou will wish to have had their cradles be their graves rather than to have thy death be their bridals.”

Their bridals — their celebratory betrothals and weddings — will be the death of their parents. So said Prisius.

Prisius continued:

“But I will not dispute what thou should have done, although I will correct what thou have done. I perceive sewing is an idle, unprofitable exercise, and I perceive that every day there come more thoughts into thine head than stitches into thy work. I’ll see whether you can spin a better mind than you have stitched, and if I don’t coop you up, then let me be the capon.”

Prisius wanted to lock up his daughter and not allow her to see Candius. If Prisius did not do that, then let him — Prisius — be castrated like a capon. So said Prisius.

Sperantus said to his son:

“As for you, sir boy, instead of poring on a book, you shall hold the plow. I’ll make repentance reap what wantonness has sown, but we are both well served: The sons must be the masters, and the fathers must be the old, incapacitated gaffers. What we fathers get together with a rake, our sons cast abroad with a pitchfork, and we fathers must weary our legs to purchase our children coats of arms.

“Well, seeing that booking — academic study — is but idleness, I’ll see whether threshing is any occupation. Thy mind shall stoop to my fortune, or my mind shall break the laws of nature.”

Sperantus’ fortune was his lot in life. He was a farmer, and he was threatening to make his son a farmer instead of an academic.

According to Sperantus, the laws of nature included filial piety: the son must obey the father. If the son did not do that, then Sperantus would himself break the laws of nature: He would not fulfill one or more obligations of the father to the son.

Sperantus continued:

“How like a micher — a truant — he stands, as though he had truanted from honesty.”

He said to his son:

“Get thee in, and as for the rest, leave it to me.

“Get in, villain!”

Prisius said to his daughter:

“And you, pretty minx, who must be fed with love upon sops, I’ll take an order — I’ll make arrangements — to cram you with sorrows.”

A sop is a cake soaked in wine. In this case, it is a delicacy given to a bride.

Prisius continued:

“Get inside without making nasty looks or replies.”

Candius and Livia exited, each into the house of his or her father.

Sperantus said:

“Let us follow after them.

“If you deal as rigorously with yours as I will with mine, you shall see that hot love will wax — grow — soon cold.

“I’ll tame the proud boy, and I’ll send him as far from his love as he is from his duty.”

Prisius said, “Let us go about it, and let us also go on with matching them according to our minds. It was fortunate that we prevented that betrothal by chance, which we could never have suspected they would do by the circumstantial evidence available to us.”

They exited.

## CHAPTER 2 (MOTHER BOMBIE)

### — 2.1 —

Dromio and Risio walked toward each other. Neither saw the other at first.

Dromio was a serving-boy to Memphio, and Risio was a serving-boy to Stello.

Memphio was the father of Accius, and Stello was the father of Silena.

Accius and Silena were simpletons.

Dromio said to himself, “Now if I could meet with Risio, it would be a world of waggery. People would marvel at our mischief.”

Risio said to himself, “Oh, I wish that it would be my luck *obviam dare Dromio* — to stumble upon Dromio — on whom I do nothing but dream.”

Dromio said to himself, “Risio’s knavery and my wit and intelligence would make our masters, who are wise, fools; would make their children, who are fools, beggars; and would make Risio and me, who are bondmen, free.”

Seeing Dromio, Risio said to himself, “With Dromio to cheat, and with me to conjure up a plan, we would make such alterations that our masters would serve themselves and be their own servants, the idiots their children would serve us, and we would wake our wits and put our brains to work among them all.”

Seeing Risio, Dromio said to himself:

*“Hem quam opportune!”* — Well, how opportune!

“Look and see if he has not dropped full in my dish.”

Risio said to himself, *“Lupus in fabula!”*

The Latin means: The wolf in the story. The expression refers to a person who is being gossiped about suddenly showing up in the midst of the gossip.

“Dromio, embrace me, hug me, and kiss my hand, for I must make thee fortunate,” Risio said.

Risio wanted Dromio to treat him as a friend who had done him a favor.

“Risio, honor me, kneel down to me, and kiss my feet, for I must make thee blessed,” Dromio said.

Dromio wanted Risio to treat him as a priest who had conferred some important blessing on him.

“My master, old Stello, has a fool as his daughter,” Risio said.

“My master, old Memphio, has a fool as his son,” Dromio said.

“I must convey a contract,” Risio said.

“And I must convey a contract,” Dromio said.

The contract was a marriage contract between the simpletons Accius and Silena. Rasio and Dromio were supposed to arrange the same marriage.

“This contract is between her and Memphio’s son without one of them speaking to the other,” Rasio said.

“This contract is between him and Stellio’s daughter without one of them speaking to the other,” Dromio said.

The fathers of these simpletons did not want them to talk to each other because each simpleton would discover the other simpleton’s foolishness.

“Do thou mock me, Dromio?” Rasio asked.

“Or thou are mocking me,” Dromio said.

“Not I, for all this is true,” Rasio said.

“And all this is true,” Dromio said.

“Then we are both driven to our wits’ ends, for if either of them had been wise, we might have tempered — that is, secretly arranged — if no marriage, yet a close marriage,” Rasio said.

A close marriage is a secret marriage: one not publicly celebrated.

“Well, let us sharpen our accounts, for there’s no better grindstone for a young man’s head than to have it whet upon an old man’s purse,” Dromio said. “Oh, thou shall see my knavery shave like a razor!”

His words used the imagery of a knife being sharpened on a whetstone.

Dromio wanted to take advantage of his master: Memphio.

Rasio said, “Thou for the edge, and I for the point will make the fool bestride our mistress’ backs, and then have at the bag with the dudgeon haft — that is, with the dudgeon dagger, by which hangs his tantony pouch.”

Weapons have edges and points, but the serving-boys’ main weapons were their wit and intelligence.

The fool is Accius, the mistress [woman they are trying to get married] is Silena, and the “backs” are buttocks.

The two serving-boys could arrange the requested marriage and then they could use their wits to attempt to get money from the two old fathers of the couple.

Dudgeon is a wood used for the handles of good knives.

“Tantony” is an abbreviation of St. Anthony of Abbot, patron saint of animals, including pigs. A tantony pouch may be a purse made out of pigskin.

Literally, Rasio was talking about using a knife to cut the strings of a purse (moneybag) hanging from a belt. Cutpurses — pickpockets — did this.

Hmm. Figuratively, much bawdiness is in this passage. The dagger is a penis, and the pouch refers to a scrotum.

The “bag” is “baggage”: Silena. One meaning of “baggage” is “strumpet.”

Risio wanted to get Silena married off, and then he wanted to take advantage of his master: Stellio.

“These old huddles — old men — have such strong purses with locks that when they shut them, they go off like a snaphance,” Dromio said.

A snaphance is a flint-and-hammer mechanism used in early pistols.

Risio said:

The old fashion is best, a purse with a ring round about it, as a circle to course — chase — a knave’s hand from it.”

An old-fashioned purse is a moneybag with a drawstring to keep the circle — the opening — closed and to try to prevent thievery. The moneybag was hung from a belt.

If this passage is meant to be bawdy, the circle would be the opening of a vagina.

Of course, once a reader realizes just how bawdy the Elizabethan playwrights were in their plays, it becomes possible to see bawdiness where it is not intended.

Risio continued:

“But Dromio, they say that two people may keep counsel — a secret — if one is away, but to convey — to carry out — knavery, two are too few, and four are too many.”

Hmm. There are four serving-boys in Lyly’s play: Dromio, Risio, Halfpenny, and Lucio. All of them engage in knavery together.

Seeing someone coming toward them, Dromio said, “And in good time, look where Halfpenny, Sperantus’ serving-boy, comes. Although he is bound up in decimo sexto for carriage, yet he is a wit in folio for cozenage and cheating.”

Halfpenny was small: A decimo sexto is a book whose pages are made from paper folded four times to produce sixteen small pages.

But Halfpenny’s ability to cheat others was large: A folio is a book whose pages are made from paper folded only once.

Halfpenny was a serving-boy to Sperantus, who was the father of Candius, who was in love with Livia, who was the daughter of Prisius.

Halfpenny entered the scene.

Dromio then said:

“Single Halfpenny, what news are now current?”

Being small, Halfpenny is Single Halfpenny. He is half the size of two Halfpennies.

Current news is new news as opposed to old news.

Current coinage is legal coinage as opposed to counterfeit currency.

Halfpenny replied, “Nothing but that such double coistrels as you are, are counterfeit!”

“Coistrels” are scoundrels.

“Double” can mean 1) two, and 2) cheat.

Halfpenny knows that Dromio and Risio are two cheating scoundrels. Halfpenny himself is a cheating scoundrel.

“As you are so dapper — so smart — we’ll send you for a Halfpenny loaf,” Risio said.

They would send Halfpenny on an errand that he would not return from, as he would be exchanged for the bread.

“I shall go for silver, though, when you shall be nailed up for slips,” Halfpenny said.

Slips are counterfeit coins. Tradesmen nailed them to their counters or walls: This kept them out of circulation and probably decreased the number of people deliberately attempting to use counterfeit coins at these places.

Halfpenny would be recognized as being of value: silver. But Dromio and Risio would be recognized as worthless: counterfeits.

“Thou are a slipstring, I’ll warrant,” Dromio said.

A slipstring is something such as a dog that has slipped from a leash.

“I hope you shall never slip string, but hang steady,” Halfpenny said.

A kind of string is a noose. Halfpenny was saying that he hoped that Dromio would not escape from the noose.

“Dromio, look here, now is my hand on my Halfpenny,” Risio said, taking hold of Halfpenny.

A proverb stated, “I will lay my hand on my halfpenny ere [before] I part with it.”

Halfpenny said, “Thou lie, thou have not a farthing to lay thy hands on — I am none of thine. But let me be wagging — be going on my way — my head is full of hammers, and they have so malleted — beaten — my wit that I am almost a malcontent.”

A head full of hammers is a brain working at full speed.

“Why, what’s the matter?” Dromio asked.

Halfpenny said, “My master has a fine scholar as his son, and Prisius has a fair lass as his daughter.”

Halfpenny’s master was Sperantus, who was the father of Candius, who was in love with Livia, who was the daughter of Prisius.

“Well,” Dromio said.

“The two — Candius and Livia — love one another deadly: almost to the point of death,” Halfpenny said.

“In good time,” Risio said. “Very well.”

Halfpenny said, “The fathers have put them up and shut them away, utterly disliking the match, and they have appointed that the one shall have Memphio’s son, and the other shall have Stellio’s daughter.”

Sperantus wanted his son, Candius, to marry Stellio’s daughter, Silena.

Prisius wanted his daughter, Livia, to marry Memphio’s son, Accius.

And, of course, Memphio and Stellio wanted their children, Accius and Silena, to marry each other.

Accius and Silena were alike in that they were simpletons.

Halfpenny continued:

“This works like wax, but how it will fadge — work out — in the end, the hen that sits next to the cock cannot tell.”

Something that “works like wax” is easily done. Wax is easily heated and manipulated.

Risio said to Halfpenny, “If thou have just any spice of knavery, we’ll make thee happy.”

Halfpenny said, “Bah, don’t doubt that I am as full for my pitch — size — as you are for yours. A wren’s egg is as full of meat as a goose egg, although there is not as much in it. You shall find this head well stuffed, although little stuff went into it.”

A wren’s egg is as full of meat as a goose egg if both are 100 percent full.

Halfpenny was small, and so his brain was small, but he was very intelligent.

Dromio said:

“*Laudo ingenium*. I like thy sconce.”

The Latin means: I like the way you think.

A “sconce” is a head.

Dromio continued:

“So then listen:

“Memphio made me a part of his plan to marry his son, Accius, to Stellio’s daughter.

“Stellio made Risio a part of his plan to marry his daughter, Silena, to Memphio’s son.

“To be short, their children — Accius and Silena — are both fools.”

Halfpenny, who was short in height, said:

“But they are not fools who are short.

“If I thought thou meant so, *Senties qui vir sim*: Thou should have a crow to pull.”

The Latin means: You shall realize what kind of man I am.

They would have a quarrel.

“Have a crow to pull (pluck, pick)” is similar to “have a bone to pick.” It is a point to quarrel over.

Risio said:

“Don’t be angry, Halfpenny. For fellowship we will all be fools, and for gain we will all be knaves.”

Halfpenny laughed.

Risio asked:

“But why do thou laugh?”

“I laugh at my own conceit and quick censure — my own imagination and my own quick judgment,” Halfpenny said.

“What’s the matter?” Risio asked.

“Suddenly I thought you two were asses, and that the least ass was the more ass,” Halfpenny said.

“Thou are a fool,” Risio said. “That cannot be.”

“Yea, my young master taught me to prove it by learning, and so I can prove it by using a verse out of Ovid,” Halfpenny said.

“Please, tell us how,” Risio requested.

“You must first for fashion’s sake — as a matter of form — confess yourselves to be asses,” Halfpenny said.

“Well,” Dromio said.

“Then you stand here, and you stand there,” Halfpenny said, pointing to the places he wanted Dromio and Risio to stand.

“Get to it,” Risio said. “Tell us.”

Halfpenny said, “Then this is the verse as I point it: *Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.*”

The Latin is derived from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, 92. Ovid wrote *convaluere* rather than *invaluere*.

*Cum mala per longas invaluere moras* means: When you stay ill for a long time.

*Cum mala per longas convaluere moras* means: When you have a long delay in recovering from an illness.

The meaning of the Latin passage spoken by Halfpenny meaning is not relevant although its sound is.

Halfpenny pointed to the taller — the longer — boy when he said “*longas.*”

Halfpenny pointed to the shorter boy when he said “*moras.*”

Halfpenny then said, “So you see the least ass is the more ass.



*Longas* sounds like “long ass.”

*Moras* sounds like “more ass.”

The shorter boy is the less tall — least tall — boy. If he is an ass, then he is the least ass. According to Halfpenny’s thinking, the least ass is also the more ass.

Halfpenny, however, was the least tall of the three serving-boys.

Risio said:

“We’ll bite thee for an ape if thou bob us like asses.”

A “bob” is a blow; it is also a trick.

Risio then said:

“But to end all, if thou join with us, we will make a marriage match between the two fools, for that must be our tasks, and thou shall devise to couple Candius and Livia, by over-reaching and out-witting their fathers.”

Halfpenny replied:

“Let me alone; leave it to me. *Non enim mea pigra juvenus*: There’s matter in this noddle.”

The Latin means: My youth is not without resources.

A “noddle” is a head.

Lucio entered the scene.

Seeing Lucio, Halfpenny said:

“But look where Prisius’ serving-boy is coming, as fit as a pudding for a dog’s mouth.”

Prisius was the father of Livia, who was in love with Candius.

“Pop three knaves in a sheath,” Lucio said. “I’ll make it a right Tunbridge case, and I’ll be the bodkin.”

With “knaves,” Lucio was punning on “knives.”

A case is a sheath, and Tunbridge is a town in Kent.

A bodkin is a dagger. It is also an awl for boring holes.

With Lucio as a bodkin, the four serving-boys made a full set of knives, or a full set of knaves.

Risio said, “The bodkin is here already, so you must be the knife.”

A bodkin is a small knife (or it is an awl), and Halfpenny was the smallest boy among the four serving-boys.

“I am the bodkin,” Halfpenny said. “Look well after your ears, for I must bore or bear them.”

An Elizabethan punishment was to cut off an offender’s ears. In the character of a bodkin, aka small knife, Halfpenny could do that and then carry away the ears.

Another Elizabethan punishment was to make holes in an offender's ears, which could be nailed to a pillory. In the character of a bodkin, aka awl, Halfpenny could do that.

Dromio said, "Shut your mouth. Mew — cage — thy tongue or we'll cut it out. I speak this representing the person of a knife, as thou spoke that in shadow — that is, while playing the part — of a bodkin."

Lucio said, "I must be gone. *Taedet*: It irks me to leave. *Oportet*. It behooves me to leave. My wits work — that is, ferment — like barm, alias yeast, alias sizing, alias rising, alias God's good.

The Latin *taedet* means: He is tired.

The Latin *oportet* means: It is necessary.

"Barm," "sizing," "rising," and "God's good" are all names for yeast, which is used in the making of ale.

Halfpenny said, "The new wine is in thine head, yet he was eager to take this metaphor from ale, and now that you talk about ale, let us all go to the wine. Let us all go to the tavern."

"Four makes a mess, and we have a mess of masters who must be cozened and cheated, so let us lay our heads together," Dromio said. "They are married and cannot."

In this society, people joked that cuckolds — men with unfaithful wives — had invisible horns growing on their head. Because of the horns, the four masters could not lay their heads together.

Halfpenny said:

"Let us consult at the tavern, where after we drink to the health of Memphio, we will drink to the life of Stellio, I will carouse — drink — to Prisius, and you, Lucio, will brinch — propose a toast — to Mas, aka Master, Sperantus."

Neither Halfpenny nor Lucio would propose a toast to his own master, but each would drink to the other serving-boy's master.

Halfpenny then said:

"We shall cast our accounts and discharge our stomachs, like men who can digest anything."

"Digest" can mean 1) consume, and 2) plot.

"Cast" means 1) calculate, and 2) vomit. The serving-boys would vomit the ale they had paid for and had drunk.

"I don't see yet what you go about — what you are plotting," Lucio said.

Dromio said:

"Lucio, who can pierce a mud wall that is twenty-feet thick, would make us believe that he cannot see a candle through a paper lantern.

"His knavery is beyond *ela*, and yet he says he doesn't know *gam ut*."

*Ela* is the highest note in the hexachord scale, and *gam ut* is the lowest note in the hexachord scale.

“I am ready, if any cozenage and cheating is ripe,” Lucio said. “I’ll shake the tree.”

Halfpenny said, “I hope to see thee so strong that you shake three trees at once.”

These are the serving-boys’ three plots:

Getting Candius and Livia married.

Getting Accius to agree to marry Silena.

Getting Silena to agree to marry Accius.

Dromio said, “We burn and waste time, for I must give a reckoning of my day’s work. Let us get close to the bush *ad deliberandum* — to deliberate.”

The bush is the tavern, which displayed an ivy branch or had an ivy bush as a sign that it served ale. Bacchus, god of wine, wears a wreath made of ivy, which is sacred to him.

Halfpenny said, “Indeed, *inter pocula philosophundum* — to philosophize among the cups. It is good to plead — to debate — among pots.”

Risio said, “Thine situation will be the worst. I fear we shall leave a Halfpenny in hand.”

A proverb stated, “He drank till he gave up his halfpenny.”

The proverb refers to getting drunk.

Risio was joking that Halfpenny would get drunk and have to be left behind.

Halfpenny said, “Why, say thou that thou have left a print deeper in thy hand already than a halfpenny can leave, unless it should singe worse than a hot iron.”

Some offenders were branded on the hand. Halfpenny was saying that Risio was a branded criminal.

“We are all friends, and so let us sing,” Lucio said. “It is a pleasant thing to go into the tavern, clearing the throat.”

All sang:

“*Iô [Hail], Bacchus! To thy table.*

“*Thou call every drunken rabble,*

“*We already are stiff [hard] drinkers,*

“*[So] Then seal us for thy jolly skinkers [bartenders].*”

Dromio sang:

“*Wine, O wine!*

“*O juice divine!*

“*How do thou the noll [head, or drunkard] refine!*”

Risio sang:

*“Plump thou make men’s ruby faces,  
And from girls can fetch embraces.”*

Halfpenny sang:

*“By thee our noses swell,  
With sparkling carbuncle.”*

A carbuncle is 1) literally, a fiery red gem, and 2) figuratively, the red of an alcoholic’s face.

Lucio sang:

*“Oh, the dear blood of grapes,  
Turns us to antic [grotesque] shapes,  
Now to show tricks like apes.”*

Dromio sang:

*“Now lion-like to roar.”*

Risio sang:

*“Now goatishly to whore.”*

This society regarded goats as lusty animals.

Halfpenny sang:

*“Now hoggishly in the mire.”*

Lucio sang:

*“Now flinging hats in the fire.”*

All sang:

*“Iô, Bacchus! At thy table,  
Make us of thy reeling rabble.”*

They went inside the tavern.

## — 2.2 —

Alone, Memphio said to himself: “I wonder that I hear no news about or from Dromio. Either he slacks the matter, or he betrays his master, I dare not broach anything to Stellio until I know what my serving-boy has done. I’ll hunt him out; if the loitersack — idle boy — has gone springing into a tavern, I’ll fetch him reeling out.”

Dromio would be staggering from Memphio’s blows, not from being drunk.

Memphio was the father of Accius, and Memphio wanted him to marry Silena.

Memphio went into the tavern.

Alone, Stellio entered the scene and said to himself:

“Without a doubt Risio has gone beyond himself and has overreached himself, in casting beyond the Moon.”

“To cast beyond the Moon” means “to try to do more than one is capable of doing.”

Stellio continued talking to himself:

“I fear the boy has run mad with studying and racking his brains, for I know he loved me so well, that for my favor he will venture to run out of his wits and risk going insane, and it may be, to quicken his invention and stimulate his brain, he has gone into this ivy-bush — this tavern — a notable nest for a grape owl.”

“Grape owl” was slang for a person who stayed up late at night drinking.

Stellio continued talking to himself:

“I’ll ferret him out, yet in the end I will treat him in a friendly manner. I cannot be merry until I hear what has been done in the marriages.”

Stellio was the father of Silena, and he wanted her to marry Accius.

Stellio went into the tavern.

Alone, Prisius entered the scene and said to himself:

“I think Lucio has gone hunting squirrels, but I’ll squirrel him — I’ll hunt him and treat him like a squirrel — for it. I sent him on my errand, but I must go for an answer myself. I have tied up — confined — the loving worm my daughter, and I will see whether one fancy can worm another fancy out of her head.

“This green nosegay — the ivy bush, aka the tavern — I fear that my serving-boy has sniffed, for if he gets just a penny in his purse, he turns it suddenly into *argentum potabile*, I must search every place for him, for I stand on thorns — I am anxious — until I hear what he has done.”

*Argentum potabile* is “drinkable silver,” aka drinkable alcohol beverages that have been bought with a silver coin.

Prisius was the father of Livia, and he wanted her to marry Accius. Livia, however, wanted to marry Candius.

He exited into the tavern.

Alone, Sperantus entered the scene and said to himself:

“Well, be as be may is no banning.”

In other words: As things stand now, there is no wedding banns. A wedding banns is a public announcement in a church of an upcoming marriage between a man and a woman who are engaged to each other.

Sperantus continued talking to himself:

I think I have charmed my young master: my son. A hungry meal, a ragged coat, and a dry cudgel — little food, ragged clothing, and a beating — have put him quite beside his love and his logic, too. He no longer thinks of love and learning. Besides, his pigsney — Livia — is put up, aka confined, and therefore now I'll let him take the air, and follow — pursue — Stellio's daughter, Silena, with all his learning, if he means to be my heir."

A "pigsney" is literally a pig's eye; it is used figuratively as a term of endearment.

"The boy has wit *sans* — without — measure. He has more than he needs. He has scraps of intelligence left over to serve as cat food and dog food, such is his advantage when it comes to intelligence.

"Well, without Halfpenny all my wit is not worth a dodkin — a small Dutch coin. That mite is miching — that small fellow is playing truant — in this grove — this tavern — for as long as his name is Halfpenny, he will be banqueting for the other halfpenny."

Halfpenny may be eating so that he can grow twice as big as he is now and so that he will then be called a full penny rather than a halfpenny.

Sperantus was the father of Candius, and he wanted him to marry Silena. Candius, however, wanted to marry Livia.

Sperantus exited into the tavern.

### — 2.3 —

Alone, Candius said to himself:

"He must necessarily go whom the devil drives. My devil is a father, a fiend, who seeks to place affection by appointment, and to force love by compulsion. He seeks to make me love whomever he chooses. I have sworn to woo Silena, but it shall be so coldly that she shall take as small delight in my words, as I do contentment in his commandment. I'll teach him one school trick in love. But look! Who is that who comes out of Stellio's house? It seems to be Silena by her attire."

Candius still loved and wanted to marry Livia, but he had promised to woo Silena. His plan was to woo Silena so badly that she would not want to marry him.

Silena entered the scene.

Candius continued talking to himself:

"By her face I am sure it is she. Oh, fair face! Oh, lovely countenance! How are you now, Candius? If thou begin to slip at beauty suddenly, thou will surfeit with carousing — drinking — it at the last. Remember that Livia is faithful, aye, and let thine eyes witness that Silena is amiable."

He was taken by Silena's beauty, so taken that he thought he could love her.

Candius continued talking to himself:

"Here I shall please my father and myself. I will learn to be obedient, and come what will, I'll make a way.

“If she seems coy, I’ll practice all the art of love; if I find her to be wise and cunning, I’ll practice all the pleasures of love.”

Silena really was beautiful — so beautiful that Candius was thinking of obeying his father’s wishes.

Thinking that she was alone, Silena said to herself:

“My name is Silena. I don’t care who knows it. I really don’t.

“My father keeps me locked up, so he does, and now I have stolen out, so I have, to go to old Mother Bombie to know my fortune, so I will, for I have as fair a face as ever trod on shoe sole, and I have as free a foot as ever looked with two eyes.”

Silena was beautiful, but she was not good with words, as her last sentence demonstrated: Faces don’t tread on the ground, and feet don’t look with two eyes.

Candius said to himself:

“What! I think she is either lunatic or foolish!”

He had heard her last sentence.

Candius continued speaking to himself:

“Thou are a fool, Candius.

“So fair a face cannot be the scabbard of a foolish mind, but she may be mad, for commonly in beauty that is so rare and splendid, there fall extreme passions.”

He believed that she must be insane, not foolish. Beauty and foolishness do not go together. So said Candius.

Candius continued speaking to himself:

“Love and beauty disdain a mean, not therefore because beauty is no virtue, but because it is happiness, and we scholars know that virtue is not to be praised, but it is to be honored.”

Aristotle believed that virtue is a mean between extremes. For example, courage is the mean between the extremes of foolhardiness (too much courage) and cowardice (too little courage). Happiness, however, is good in itself, and it is the chief good of human life, and the mean between extremes does not apply to it.

Candius continued speaking to himself:

“I will put on my best grace.”

He stepped forward and said to Silena:

“Sweet wench, thy face is lovely, thy body is comely, and all that the eyes can see is enchanting. You see how — despite being unacquainted to you — I am bold to board you.”

By “board,” Candius meant “court, aka woo.”

The phrase “board you” can be bawdy: to board — to climb on top of — you and have sex with you.

In her reply, Silena used “board” to mean “feed,” as in “room and board.”

She replied, “My father boards me already; therefore, I don’t care even if your name were Geoffrey.”

The expression “Farewell, gentle Geoffrey” appears in the play *Mankind*, circa 1475. The speaker is the unthrifty guest Nought, who is speaking to Mercy, who is grateful to have Nought and two other unthrifty guests leave.

Candius said to himself:

“She raves or over-reaches.”

If Silena were insane, she would rave. If Silena were foolish, she would over-reach her intelligence: try to be witty but fail.

Candius then said out loud to Silena:

“I am one sweet soul who loves you, brought hither by report of your beauty, and here I languish with your rareness and splendor.”

Silena said, “I thank you that you would call.”

Candius was not wooing in such a way that would intentionally cause her to reject him.

“I will always call on such a saint, one who has power to release my sorrows,” Candius said. “Yield, fair creature to love!”

“I am none of that sect,” Silena said.

The Family of Love was a religious sect that believed in the service of love. It denied the doctrine of the Trinity and opposed infant baptism.

Or possibly, Silena was saying that she could not be seduced.

“The loving sect is an ancient sect and an honorable sect, and therefore should be in a person so perfect,” Candius said.

Silena said, “Much!”

This use of “Much!” means “Bah!”

“I love thee much,” Candius said. “Give me one word of comfort.”

Silena said, “In faith, sir, no, and so tell your master.”

“I have no master, but I have come to make choice of a mistress,” Candius said.

Silena said, “Aha, are you there with your bears?”

A man heard a sermon he did not like about Eliza and the bears: 2 Kings 2:23-24. Therefore, the following Sunday he went to a different church, only to see the same preacher, who again spoke about Elisha and the bears.

Silena’s question means: Are you talking about that same old topic again?

Baffled by Silena’s question, Candius said to himself:



“Doubtless, she is an idiot of the newest cut — the newest fashion. I’ll once more test her.”

He said out loud:

“I have loved thee long, Silena.”

This was a lie.

“In your tother — your other — hose!” Silena said.

Once again, she was saying, “Bah!”

Candius said to himself:

“She is too simple to be natural, and she is too senseless to be artificial.”

A natural is a born fool. An artificial fool is an actor playing the part of a fool.

Candius was wondering what Silena was.

He then said out loud:

“You said you went out of doors to know your fortune. I am a scholar, and I am cunning in palmistry.”

“The better for you sir, so here’s my hand,” Silena said. “What time is it?”

This is not the kind of question one asks a fortune-teller unless one is a fool — or a wit.

Groucho Marx once went to a fortune-teller who claimed to know the wisdom of the universe. He asked her, “What’s the capital of South Dakota?”

Candius examined Silena’s hand and said, “The line of life is good. Venus’ mount is very perfect. You shall have a scholar as your first husband.”

Candius was a scholar.

Venus’ mount is 1) the fleshy base of the thumb, and 2) the mons Veneris of the female genitalia.

Silena said:

“You are well seen in crones’ dirt and in cranes’ dirt.”

A crone is an ugly old woman. Such a woman could be a fortune-teller such as Candius was pretending to be. Candius was using his “fortune-telling” to push the idea that Silena would marry him and be his bedfellow. Silena had seemingly shown no interest in him, and so such a suggestion was unethical and dirty.

A “crane” can be 1) a long-legged bird, and 2) a head.

Candius had dirt in his head. So said Silena.

Silena then said:

“Your father was a poulter.”

A poulter is an official in charge of buying poultry. Such positions are in the royal court, a monastery, etc. If Silena is saying the Candius' father was a poulter in a monastery, she is calling Candius a bastard.

Silena laughed.

"Why do you laugh?" Candius asked.

"Because you should see my teeth," Silena said.

If he thought that he could tell her fortune by looking at her palm, why not have him look at her teeth? Both forms of fortune-telling make the same lack of sense.

Or perhaps she wouldn't mind biting him and causing him pain. After all, some people ought to be better strangers.

Candius said to himself:

"Alas, poor wench, I see now also thy folly. A fair fool is like a fresh weed with pleasing leaves and sour juice."

He had almost made up his mind that she was a fool.

He then said to himself:

"I will not yet leave her, for she may dissemble."

It was still possible that she was pretending that she was a fool.

If that were true, then she wanted to get rid of him by pretending to be a fool.

Candius said out loud to her:

"I cannot choose but love thee."

"I had thought to ask you," Silena said.

In this society, this was a mocking retort.

Candius said, "So then farewell, You are either too proud to accept me, or too simple and foolish to understand me."

He still was not certain that she was a fool.

"You need not be so crusty," Silena said. "You are not so hard baked."

She was punning and using a bakery metaphor. Puns and metaphors are signs of intelligence.

Candius said to himself:

"Now I perceive thy folly, who has raked together all the odd blind phrases that help them who do not know how to discourse, but when they cannot answer wisely, either with gibing and joking they cover their rudeness, or by some new-coined byword, they reveal their peevishness."

The word "rude" can mean 1) impolite, 2) uneducated, 3) unsophisticated, and/or 4) common.

Candius continued saying to himself:

“I am glad of this. Now I shall have color — a reason — to refuse the marriage match, and my father shall have reason to accept Livia as his daughter-in-law. I will go home, and I will repeat to my father the ‘wise’ encounter of me and her, and he shall perceive that there is nothing as fulsome and nauseating as a she-fool.”

He exited.

Candius had made up his mind that Silena was a fool.

One reason for thinking that was that she used many proverbial sentences. Candius believed that Silena was a fool who let clichés do her thinking for her.

But if Silena’s purpose had been to drive him away, she had succeeded.

If.

Alone, Silena said to herself:

“Good God, I think gentlemen had never less wit in a year. We maidens are mad wenches. We gird them and flout them and taunt them out of all scotch and notch — that is, completely — and they cannot see it.”

According to Silena, she had not meant to drive him away. She was simply teasing him, the way that pretty young women do, and he did not like being teased.

Lack of communication had occurred between Candius and Silena. Lack of communication is common between men and women.

David Bruce once went on a first date with a woman who, at the end of the date, welcomed him into her circle of friends. He thought he had been friend-zoned, but he liked talking to the woman and asked if they could continue to watch movies and eat Chinese food together. She was agreeable, and for four months they did that without any hugging, kissing, holding hands, and so on. She then ghosted him. Later, he learned that she had ghosted him because he “didn’t act like a boyfriend.” His reaction was this:

“Boyfriend? I was a boyfriend? I wish I had known.”

Silena continued talking to herself:

“I will learn from the old woman — Mother Bombie — whether I am a maiden or not, and then if I am not, I must necessarily be a man.”

A maiden is 1) a virgin, and 2) a young unmarried woman.

Silena did not distinguish between the two meanings. She had no sexual experience yet, and she was not married, and so both meanings applied to her. She did not need to ask Mother Bombie if she — Silena — is a virgin.

But this society had a double standard. Unmarried women were supposed to be virgins. Unmarried men were expected not to be virgins. In this society, if Silena were not a virgin, then she needed to be a man.

Silena wanted to ask Mother Bombie not about her — Silena's — present life, but instead about her — Silena's — future life. Would Silena remain an unmarried virgin, or would she be married?

Silena called out a blessing:

“May God be here.”

Mother Bombie opened the door of her home.

She asked, “Who's there?”

“One who would be a maiden,” Silena said.

After meeting with and speaking to Candius, she wanted to remain unmarried.

“If thou are not a maiden, it is impossible thou should be, and it is a shame thou are not,” Mother Bombie said.

“They say you are a witch,” Silena said.

“They lie,” Mother Bombie said. “I am a cunning woman. I am a wise woman.”

“Then tell me something,” Silena said.

Mother Bombie told her something:

“Hold up thy hand — not so high.”

In other words: Don't be so proud.

Also, Mother Bombie was looking at Silena's palm.

Mother Bombie continued:

“Thy ‘father’ knows thee not.”

In other words: Your “father” does not know you. Of course, Silena could not hear the quotation marks around the word “father.”

Mother Bombie continued:

“Thy ‘mother’ bare thee not.”

In other words: Your “mother” did not give birth to you.

“Falsely bred, truly begot.”

In other words: You were falsely raised (brought up by the wrong parents), but you were truly begotten.

“Truly” can mean “legitimately.” Silena's parents were married.

Mother Bombie continued:

“Choice of two husbands, but never tied in banns.”

In other words: You have the choice of two men to be your husband, but you are not now married.

The two men who could marry Silena are Accius and Candius.

Mother Bombie continued:

“Because of love and natural bonds.”

In other words: Because of love and the bonds of kinship.

Like the words of many fortune-tellers, interpretation can be difficult, or if the words seem clear, they can also seem unbelievable.

Silena rejected the fortune-teller’s words.

Imitating the rhythm of Mother Bombie’s words, Silena said:

“I thank you for nothing,

“Because I understand nothing.”

Fools tend to think that they know things that they do not know.

Wise people such as Socrates know when they don’t know something.

Silena continued:

“Although you are as old as you are,

“Yet I am as young as I am,

“And because I am so fair,

“Therefore, you are so foul.”

In other words: You are jealous of my youth and beauty, and therefore you told me a foul fortune.

Silena continued:

“And so farewell, frost,

“My fortune naught me cost.”

The telling of her fortune would cost her nothing because she would not pay.

Silena exited.

Alone, Mother Bombie said to herself:

“Farewell, fair fool.

“Little do thou know thy hard fortune, but in the end thou shall, and that must reveal what no one can discover.

“In the meantime, I will profess cunning for all who come here.”

Mother Bombie closed the door to her house.

Dromio, Risio, Halfpenny, and Lucio met together.

All of them were serving-boys plotting against their masters.

Their masters had recently found them drinking in the tavern, but the serving-boys had slipped away, leaving the bill behind for their masters to pay.

Dromio said, “We were all taken tardy — that is, taken unawares. We were not expecting our masters.”

“Our masters will be overtaken if they tarry,” Risio said.

The masters were in the tavern: They would be overcome by alcohol if they tarried and drank in the tavern.

“Now everyone must make an excuse by using their wit, and every excuse must be trickery,” Halfpenny said.

“Let us remember our complot — that is, our joint plan,” Lucio said.

Dromio said:

“We will all plod — work — on that.

“Oh, the wine has turned my wit to vinegar!”

“You mean it is sharp,” Risio said.

“Sharp?” Halfpenny said. “I’ll guarantee that it will serve for as good sauce to knavery as —”

“As what?” Lucio said.

“As thy knavery serves as meat — food — for Dromio’s wit,” Halfpenny said.

“We must all give a reckoning for our day’s travail,” Dromio said.

They had to give an account of what they had done that day — and pay the consequences.

Risio said:

“Huh, I am glad we escaped the reckoning — the bill — for our liquor.

“If you are examined about how we met, swear that we met by chance, for so they met, and therefore they will believe it.

“If you are examined about how much we drank, let them answer the question themselves: They know best because they paid it.”

“We must not tarry,” Halfpenny said. “*Abeundum est mihi*: I must remove myself. I must go and cast this matter in a corner.”

The word “cast” means “vomit.”

He was going to be sick.

Dromio said:

“Aye, *prae, sequar*. You go ahead, and I’ll follow. Get a bowl to be sick in, and I’ll come after you with a broom to clean up any mess.

“Let everyone remember his own cue.”

All of them needed to remember his own part in the plan.

Risio said, “Aye, and everyone remember his key, or else we shall thrive ill.”

All of them needed to remember when they could speak freely and when they needed to keep their lips locked.

“When shall we meet?” Halfpenny asked.

“Tomorrow fresh and fasting,” Risio said.

By “fasting,” he meant “before breakfast.”

“Fast eating our meat, for we have drunk for tomorrow, and tomorrow we must eat for today,” Dromio said.

Today, they had drunk enough for two days, but they had not eaten. As far as food was concerned, they were fasting.

Tomorrow, they would not drink, but they would eat fast — quickly — and break their fast because they had to eat enough for two days: today and tomorrow.

“Away, away. Let’s leave, for if our masters take us here, the matter is marred,” Halfpenny said.

“Let everyone go to his task,” Lucio said.

They exited.

— 2.5 —

Memphio, Stellio, Prisius, and Sperantus spoke together. They were tipsy from being in the tavern.

They were all fathers of marriageable children.

Memphio said, “How luckily we met suddenly in a tavern, we who have not drunk together almost these thirty years.”

Stellio said:

“A tavern is the rendezvous, the exchange, the staple for good fellows.”

A tavern was a place where businessmen met to exchange news while drinking.

A staple is a place where trade is conducted.

Stellio continued:

“I have heard my great-grandfather tell how his great-grandfather would say that it was an old proverb when his great-grandfather was a child that it was a good wind that blew a man to the wine.”

Prisius said:

“The old time was a good time.

“Ale was an ancient drink, and our ancestors considered it authentical and with high regard.

“Gascony wine was liquor for a lord, sack a medicine for the sick, and I may tell you, he who had a cup of red wine to go with his oysters was in the Queen’s subsidy book.”

People in the Queen’s subsidy book were wealthy enough to provide extra money to Queen Elizabeth I when required.

Sperantus said:

“Aye, but now you see how loose this age has grown.

“Our serving-boys carouse sack like double — like strong — beer, and they say that which does an old man good, can do a young man no harm.

“Our serving-boys say that old men eat pap, aka baby food, so why shouldn’t children drink sack. Our serving-boys say that the old men’s white heads have time out of mind cheated our serving-boys’ young years.”

Memphio said:

“Well, the world has become wanton since I knew it first.

“Our serving-boys put as much now in their bellies in an hour as would clothe their whole bodies in a year. We have paid eight shillings for their tippling, and as I have heard, eight shillings was as much as bought Rufus, sometime king of this land, a pair of hose.”

Rufus is King William II (reigned 1087-1100). Because of his red hair, he was called William Rufus. An anecdote about him states that he rejected a pair of hose because they were too inexpensive for a king to wear, but he accepted a second pair of hose that were inferior to the first pair after being told that the second pair of hose cost more than the first pair of hose.

“Is it possible?” Prisius asked.

Stellio said:

“Oh, it is true.

“The serving-boys say that ale is out of request — it is out of fashion. They say that ale is hogs’ porridge, broth for beggars, a caudle for constables, watchmen’s mouth-glue. The better the ale is, the more like bird lime it is, and they say that ale never makes one staid and stayed — sober and still — except in the stocks.”

The serving-boys had been drinking wine rather than ale, which was usually drunk by the lower social classes.

Hogs’ porridge is pig slop.

A caudle is a medicinal drink.

Ale is watchmen’s mouth-glue: A bribe of some drinks can keep a watchman’s mouth shut.



Bird lime is a sticky substance used to catch birds.

One reason for people at this time to drink so much was that alcohol killed bad germs in the liquor. Ale and wine were safe to drink.

“I’ll teach my wag-halter to know grapes from barley,” Memphio said.

A “wag” is a high-spirited boy who is very capable of causing trouble.

A wag-halter is a noose for a wag such as any of the serving-boys.

Ale was made from barley, and wine was made from grapes, which were more expensive than barley. Memphio was going to teach his gallows-bird, Dromio, to drink ale, not wine.

“And I will teach mine to discern a spigot from a faucet,” Prisius said.

Wine was dispensed from a spigot, and ale was dispensed from a faucet.

“And I will teach mine to judge the difference between a black bowl and a silver goblet,” Sperantus said.

“And my serving-boy shall learn the odds — the difference — between a stand and a hogshead, yet I cannot choose but laugh to see how my wag answered me, when I struck him for drinking sack,” Sperantus said.

A stand is a barrel for beer or ale.

A hogshead is a large barrel that can hold wine.

A wag is a mischievous boy.

Sack is white wine.

“Why, what did he say?” Prisius asked.

Stellio said:

“He told me:

“Master, sack is the most sovereign and most supreme drink in the world, and the safest for all times and weathers.

“If it thunders, though all the ale and beer in the town turn and go sour, wine will be constant and retain its freshness.

“If lighting flashed, and if any fire comes to it, it is the most apt wine to burn and the most wholesome when it is burnt.

“So much for Summer.””

Burnt sack is heated sack, or it is wine sweetened with burned sugar.

Stellio continued:

“If it freezes, why, then sack is so hot in operation that no ice can congeal it.

“If it rains, why, then he who cannot abide the heat of sack, may put in — add — water.

“‘So much for Winter.’

“And so ran his way of speaking, and so he ran off, but I’ll overtake him.”

Stellio would catch his serving-boy, Risio.

Sperantus said, “Who would think that my hop-on-my-thumb, Halfpenny, scarcely as high as a pint pot, would reason and argue the matter; but he learned his leer of — his lesson from — my son, Candius, his young master, whom I have brought up at Oxford, and whom I think must continue his learning here in Kent at Ashford.”

His education would be learning how to farm.

“Why, what did Halfpenny say to you?” Memphio asked.

Sperantus said, “He boldly rapped it out: *Sine Ceres and Bacchus friget Venus*. He rapped out that without wine and sugar, his veins would wax — grow — cold.”

The Latin means: Without Ceres and Bacchus, Venus grows cold.

Ceres is the goddess of agriculture, and Bacchus is the god of wine and ecstasy, so metaphorically “Ceres and Bacchus” means “bread and wine.”

Memphio said out loud:

“The serving-boys were all in a pleasant and jocular vein, but I must be gone, and I must get an account of my serving-boy’s business, and so farewell, neighbors. God knows when we shall meet again.”

Memphio then said to himself:

“Yet I have revealed nothing; my wine has been my wit’s friend.

“I long to hear what Dromio has done.”

The four serving-boys were working together, but the four masters were keeping secret plots from each other.

Memphio exited.

Stellio said out loud:

“I cannot stay, but this good fellowship shall cost me the setting on at our next meeting.”

He would pay the bill of their next meeting.

Stellio then said to himself:

“I am glad I blabbed nothing about the marriage, now I hope to compass it and bring it about. I know my serving-boy has been bungling about it.”

Stellio exited.

Prisius said out loud:

“Let us all go, for I must go to my clothes that hang on the tenters to dry.”

Prisius then said to himself:

“My boy shall hang with them, if he does not give me a satisfactory account of his day’s work.”

Prisius exited.

Alone, Sperantus said to himself:

“If all are gone, I’ll not stay.

“I am sure that Halfpenny has done me a penny’s worth of good, else I’ll spend his body in buying a rod to beat him with.”

Sperantus exited.

## CHAPTER 3 (MOTHER BOMBIE)

— 3.1 —

Maestius and Serena talked together. They were brother and sister; they were the children of Vicinia, a nurse.

As a wet-nurse, Vicinia had breast-fed the infants of wealthy people.

Maestius said, “Sweet sister, I don’t know how it comes to pass, but I find in myself passions more than brotherly.”

Serena said, “And I, dear brother, find my thoughts entangled with affections beyond nature, which so flame into my distempered, disordered head that I can neither without danger smother the fire, nor without modesty — without shame — disclose my fury.”

Although they were brother and sister, they were attracted to each other in a way not condoned by society.

“Our parents are poor, our love is unnatural, what can then happen to make us happy and fortunate?” Maestius asked.

“Only to be content with our father’s mean estate, to combat against our own intemperate desires, and to yield to the success — that is, the outcome — of fortune, who although she has framed — that is, has made — us miserable, cannot make us monstrous,” Serena said.

They might be sexually attracted to each other, but that did not mean that they had to give in to their passions.

Maestius said, “It is good counsel, fair sister, if the necessity of love could be relieved by counsel, yet this is our comfort: These unnatural heats have stretched and extended themselves no further than thoughts, although I am unhappy that they should stretch and reach so far.”

In fact, they had not given in to their sexual desire for each other.

Serena said, “Strange it seems in sense: That which nature warrants, laws forbid. Because thou art mine, therefore thou must not be mine.”

Brother and sister ought to love each other, but because Maestius was her brother, he must not be her husband.

Maestius said, “So it is, Serena, the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love, and the greater the kindred is, the less the kindness and affection must be, so that between brothers and sisters superstition — irrational belief — has made affection and love cold, but between strangers custom has bred love exquisite.”

Maestius seemed tempted to engage in incest, since he believed that the prohibitions against it were based in superstition.

“They say there is nearby an old cunning woman who can tell fortunes, expound dreams, tell about things that are lost, and divine — prophesy — accidents and incidents to come,” Serena said. “She is called the good woman, who yet never did any hurt.”

“Nor did she do any good, I think, Serena,” Maestius said, “yet to satisfy thy mind we will see what she can say.”

“Good brother, let us,” Serena said.

“Who is within?” Maestius asked loudly in front of Mother Bombie’s door.

Mother Bombie opened the door.

She said, “The dame of the house.”

“She might have said the beldam because of her face, and her years, and her attire — her looks, her old age, and her clothing,” Maestius said.

A “beldame” is a hag or witch.

Serena said, “Good mother, tell us, if by your cunning you can, what shall become of my brother and me.”

Mother Bombie said:

“Let me see your hands, and look at me steadfastly with your eyes.”

She looked at their hands and their faces, and then she foretold their future:

“You shall be married tomorrow hand in hand,

“By the laws of good nature and the land.

“Your parents shall be glad and give you their land.

“You shall each of you displace a fool,

“And both of you together must relieve a fool.”

The marriage she foretold would be in accordance with “the laws of good nature and the land”; that is, it would be a completely valid marriage that violated no laws of church or society.

She then said:

“If this is not true, then call me an old fool.”

Imitating her, Maestius said:

“This is my sister, and so we cannot marry.

“Our parents are poor and have no land to give us.

“Each of us is a fool

“To come for counsel to such an old fool.”

Serena said:

“These doggerel rhymes and obscure words, coming out of the mouth of such a weather-beaten witch, are thought to be divinations of some holy spirit, but they are only the dreams of decayed brains.

“For my own part, I wish that thou might sit on that stool” — she pointed to a stool — “until he and I marry by law.”

Mother Bombie said, “I say that Mother Bombie never speaks but once, and yet never spoke untruth once.”

“Come, brother, let us go to our poor home,” Serena said. “This — to reveal our passions — is our comfort, since we cannot enjoy our love.”

Maestius said, “Be content, sweet sister, and learn from me hereafter that these old saws — old sayings — of such old hags are only false fires to lead one out of a plain path into a deep pit.”

Witches and cunning women can be deceptive and try to lead their hearers into losing their souls. Think of the witches in *Macbeth*.

Mother Bombie, however, had the reputation of being a good woman.

Maestius and Serena exited, and Mother Bombie shut her door.

### — 3.2 —

Dromio and Risio entered the scene from different directions.

They were serving-boys plotting against their masters.

Dromio’s master was Memphio, and Risio’s master was Stellio.

Not seeing Risio, Dromio said to himself, “*Ingenium quondam fuerat pretiosius auro*: The time was wherein wit would work like wax and crock up gold like honey.”

The Latin means: At one time, genius — wit and intelligence — was more precious than gold.

Something that works like wax (which is pliable) is easily accomplished.

Gold and honey were both stored in earthenware vessels.

Noticing Dromio, Risio said, “*At nunc barbarie est grandis habere nihil*: But now wit and honesty buy nothing in the market.”

The Latin means: But now it is the greatest barbarism to have nothing.

Seeing Risio, Dromio said, “What! Risio! How are thou doing after thy potting?”

“Potting” means drinking out of pots: drinking vessels.

Risio said:

“My master, Stellio, wrung all in the tavern, and he thrust all out in the house.”

Stellio had gotten rid of all Risio’s wine by wringing and thrusting.

First, he had stopped the drinking by showing up at the tavern. “Wrung all in the tavern” can mean “caused everyone distress in the tavern.”

In addition, he could have metaphorically wrung all the wine out of a cloth that soaked up spilled wine. He would literally have stopped the flow of wine.

Second, he had caused Risio to vomit the wine later in the master's house. The word "thrust" can mean "expel." It can also mean "squeeze." Stellio may have squeezed Risio's stomach to make him vomit.

Risio then asked:

"But how are thou doing?"

Dromio said:

"I? It would be a day's work to tell thee about it.

"My master, Memphio, spoke nothing but sentences, but they were vengeable — they were terribly — long ones, for when one word was out, he made a pause of a quarter of an hour long until he spoke another.

"Sentences" are moral maxims.

"Why, what did he do in all that time?" Risio asked.

Dromio said, "He broke interjections as if they were wind: *eho*, *ho*, *oi*."

"Wind" is flatulence.

*Eho* is Latin for "woe!" It also means "hey!"

*Ho* is Latin for "ho!"

*Oi* is Latin for "oh!"

"And what did thou do?" Risio asked.

"Answer him in his own language, as *evax*, *vah*, *hui*," Dromio said.

Possibly, Dromio farted.

*Evax* is Latin for "yes!" It also means "hurray" and "escape."

*Vah* is Latin for "woe!" and "alas!" It also means "wow!"

*Hui* is Latin for "ah!" It also means "here."

Risio said:

"These were conjunctions rather than interjections.

Dromio's words said in response to Memphio had more than one meaning. They meant one thing *and* another thing.

"But what about the plot?"

Dromio said, "As we agreed, I told Memphio that I understood that Silena was very wise, and she could sing exceedingly well, and I told him that my plan was, seeing that Accius, his son, was a proper and handsome youth, and could also sing sweetly, that he should come in the nick of time — the right time — when she was singing and answer her."

Accius and Silena would meet by singing a song together outside.

“Excellent,” Risio said.

Dromio then said:

“Then he asked how it should be devised that she might come abroad — that is, come outside. I told him that was taken account of already by my plan.

“After the song will have ended, and after they will have seen one another, noting the apparel, and marking each other’s personal appearances, he — Memphio — will call in his son, Accius, for fear he should over-reach his speech and betray himself as a simpleton by saying too much.”

“Very good,” Risio said.

Dromio continued:

“Then I said to Memphio that I had gotten a young gentleman who resembled his son in years and favor — in age and appearance. This young man, while wearing Accius’ apparel, would court Silena. She would find the young man wise, and after that, by small entreaty she would be won without more words, and so the marriage would be agreed to and arranged by this cozenage and trickery, and his son would never speak a word for himself.”

Risio said:

“Thou boy!

“I have done as agreed to in every point, for the song, the calling her in, and the hoping that another woman (wiser than Silena) shall woo Accius, and his daughter, Silena, shall wed Accius.

“I told my master, Stellio, the father of Silena, that this wooing would occur tonight, and they would be early married in the morning, without any words except those they will say after the priest.”

Accius and Silena would speak no words to each other except the words of the wedding vows until after the wedding had been performed.

Dromio said:

“All this fodges — works out — well.

“Now if Halfpenny and Lucio have played their parts, we shall have excellent entertainment, and here they come.”

Halfpenny and Lucio entered the scene.

They were also serving-boys plotting against their masters.

Dromio asked them:

“How wrought the wine, my lads?”

Halfpenny said, “How? Like wine, for my body being the rundlet, and my mouth the vent, it wrought — fermented — two days over, until I had thought the hoops of my head would have flown asunder.”



A “rundlet” is a small cask or barrel.

Halfpenny was saying that his body was like a small barrel, and the wine was coming out of his mouth (in vomiting) like wine coming from a spigot so ferociously that he thought the hoops of the barrel — that is, the “hoops” of his head — would break.

Fermenting wine creates gas that can break the container in which it is confined.

In other words: Halfpenny had a bad hangover.

Lucio said, “The best thing was that our masters were as well whittled — well drunk — as we, for yet they lie by it.”

Their masters were still in bed with their hangovers.

Risio said, “All the better for us. We only parboiled — half-cooked — a little our livers, but our masters have sod — steeped and drowned — their livers in sack these past forty years.”

Halfpenny said:

“That makes them spit white broth as they do.”

“White broth” is spittle associated with drinking.

Halfpenny continued:

“But let’s get to the purpose of our meeting.

“Candius and Livia will send their attires; you must send the apparel of Accius and Silena.

“Candius and Livia wonder why, but they commit the matter to our quadripartite — four-part — wit.

“If you keep your promise to get them married by your plan, and with their parents’ consent, you shall have ten pounds apiece for your pains,” Lucio said.

Dromio said:

“If we don’t keep our promise, we are undone and ruined, for we have broached a cozenage — a trick — already, and my master, Memphio, has the tap in his hand, so that it must necessarily run out.”

Dromio was using the metaphor of tapping a barrel of wine.

In other words: ... for we have started a deception already, and my master, Memphio, has already set it in motion, and it will run its course.

Dromio continued:

“Let Candius and Livia be ruled by us — follow our advice — and bring hither their apparel, and we will determine the outcome.

“The rest commit to our intricate considerations: All of us do what we have planned to do.

“Depart.”

Halfpenny and Lucio exited.

Accius walked onto the scene.

Dromio said, “Here comes Accius tuning his pipes: warming up his singing voice. I perceive my master keeps touch — my master, Memphio, is keeping his agreement.”

Silena walked onto the scene.

Risio said:

“And here comes Silena with her wit of proof: impenetrable wit.

“By the Virgin Mary, her wit will scarcely hold out question shot: It will scarcely hold up under a barrage of slight, easy-to-answer questions.”

“Shot “consists of small pellets.

Risio added:

“Let us go in to instruct our masters in the cue.”

They would tell their masters, Memphio and Stellio, what to do and when to do it: Memphio and Stellio would come outside and separate their children, Accius and Silena, after they had sung together.

Dromio said:

“Come, let’s be jogging — let’s be going.

“But wouldn’t it be worth a world to hear them woo one another?”

“That shall be hereafter to make us sport and entertainment, but our masters shall never know it,” Risio said.

Dromio and Risio exited into the houses of their masters.

Accius and Silena remained behind.

They sang together — well.

Accius sang:

*“O Cupid! Monarch over kings,*

*“Wherefore [Why] have thou feet and wings?*

*“It is to show how swift thou art,*

*“When thou wound a tender heart,*

*“Thy wings being clipped, and feet held still,”*

In other words: If thy wings were clipped, and thy feet were held still.

Accius continued to sing:

*“Thy bow so many could not kill.”*

When Cupid, god of love, shot someone with a golden arrow, that person fell in love.

Silena sang:

*“It is all one [It does not matter] in Venus’ wanton school,*

*“Who highest sits, the wise man or the fool!”*

Venus is the sexually active goddess of sexual passion.

In Elizabethan schools, students were seated according to their academic ability. The most academically adept student was seated highest.

Silena continued to sing:

*“Fools in love’s college*

*“Have far more knowledge,*

*“To read a woman over,”*

In other words: To understand a woman.

Silena continued to sing:

*“Than a neat, prating [a trim, prattling] lover.”*

Accius and Silena sang together:

*“Nay, it is confessed [everyone admits],*

*“That fools please women best.”*

Memphio and Stellio entered the scene.

Memphio said to his son, “Accius, go inside and that quickly. What! Walking outside without my permission?”

Stellio said to his daughter, “Silena, I ask you to look homeward. It is a cold air, and you don’t have your muffler. Go home.”

Accius and Silena exited inside their father’s houses.

Memphio said to himself, “This is pat: All is going according to plan. If the rest of our plan proceeds well, Stellio is likely to marry his daughter to a fool — my son — but a bargain is a bargain.”

Stellio said to himself:

“This frames to my wish: This is what I wanted to have happen.

“Memphio is likely to marry a fool — my daughter — to his son. Accius’ tongue shall tie all Memphio’s land to Silena’s dowry; let his father’s teeth undo them if he can.”

A proverb stated, “He has tied a knot with his tongue that all his teeth cannot untie.”

Stellio continued saying to himself:

“But here I see Memphio. I must seem kind and friendly, for in kindness lies cozenage — lies a cheat.”

Memphio said to himself:

“Well, here is Stellio.

“I’ll talk of other matters, and fly from the mark I shoot at, lapwing-like flying far from the place where I nestle.”

Memphio would not talk about the wedding that he hoped would occur. He would be like a lapwing and draw Stellio’s attention away from the wedding.

Lapwings were birds with nests on the ground. When a predator drew near the lapwing’s nest, the lapwing would pretend to have a wounded wing and draw the predator away from the nest. When the predator was far enough away from the nest, the lapwing would take flight.

Memphio said out loud to Stellio, “What are you doing outside? I heard that you were sick since our last drinking bout.”

Stellio said, “You see that gossipy reports are not truths, I heard the same thing about you, and we are both well. I perceive that sober men tell most lies, for in *vino veritas* — in wine there is truth. If they had drunk wine, they would have told the truth.”

Memphio said, “Our serving-boys will be sure then never to lie, for they are always swilling wine, but Stellio, I must strain courtesy and be less than mannerly with you. I have business I cannot delay.”

Stellio replied:

“That happens at a good time, Memphio, for I was about to ask for your patience to allow me to depart. I have business it is necessary for me to do.”

He then said to himself:

“Perhaps I will move his patience and make him angry before long.”

Memphio said to himself, “Good, silly — foolish — Stellio. We must buckle — argue — soon.”

They exited.

— 3.3 —

Halfpenny, Lucio, and Rixula talked together.

Rixula was a serving-girl to Prisius.

Rixula was holding Livia’s clothing, and Halfpenny was holding Candius’ clothing.

Lucio said, “Come, Rixula, we have made thee privy to the whole pack; there lay down the pack.”

The first “pack” meant “plot,” and the second “pack” meant “bundle.”

“I believe unless it is better handled, we shall be unemployed and out of doors,” Rixula said.

Halfpenny said, “I don’t care. *Omnem solum forti patria*. I can live in Christendom as well as in Kent.”

The Latin means: To the brave, every land is his own country.

“And I’ll sing *Patria ubicumque bene*. Every house is my home where I may stanch hunger,” Lucio said.

The Latin meant: Wherever you do well is your country.

Rixula said, “If you set all on hazard and risk everything, although I am a poor wench, I am as hardy and brave as both of you. I cannot speak Latin, but I say in plain English that if anything falls out cross and badly for us, I’ll run away.”

“He loves thee well who would run after and pursue thee,” Halfpenny said.

“Why, Halfpenny, there’s no goose so gray in the lake that cannot find a gander for her mate,” Rixula said.

In other words: Every woman, even if she is not conventionally attractive, can find a mate.

“I love a nut-brown lass,” Lucio said. “It is good to recreate.”

A nut-brown lass is a woman with a dark complexion.

Some kinds of recreation result in procreation.

“Thou mean: A brown nut is good to crack,” Halfpenny said.

In other words: It is good to crack a brown nut open, and it is good for a dark-complexioned woman to open her legs.

“Why, wouldn’t it do thee good to crack such a nut?” Lucio asked.

“I fear she is worm-eaten within — she is so moth-eaten without,” Halfpenny said.

Rixula said, “If you take your pleasure of me, I’ll go in and tell your masters your plots against them.”

By “take your pleasure of me,” Rixula meant “insult and mock me.”

“Indeed, sour heart,” Halfpenny said, “he who takes his pleasure on thee is very pleasurable.”

By “takes your pleasure on thee,” Halfpenny meant “has sex with you.”

“Pleasurable” means “devoted to seeking pleasure.”

Rixula said, “You mean knavishly, and yet I hope foul water will quench hot fire as soon as fair.”

In other words: An ugly woman can satisfy sexual desire as well as a beautiful woman.

Halfpenny said, “Well, then, let fair words cool that choler and anger that foul speeches have kindled, and because we are all in this case, and we all hope to have good fortune, sing a roundelay, and we’ll help. Sing a roundelay such as thou were accustomed to sing when thou beat hemp.”

People convicted of small offenses were put to work beating hemp that would be used to make rope.

In Elizabethan slang, “beating hemp” meant “having sex.”

Lucio said, “It was crabs she stamped, and she stole away one to make a crabby face for herself.”

Rixula said, “I agree in hope that the hemp shall come to your wearing. A halfpenny halter may hang you both; that is, Halfpenny and you may hang in a halter.”

A halter is a noose made of rope.

“Well brought about,” Halfpenny said.

This meant 1) a good answer, and 2) a good conclusion.

“The halter will bring a good conclusion when it is about your neck,” Rixula said.

The noose would conclude his life.

“Now she’s in, she will never out,” Lucio said.

In other words: Now that she’s started [insulting us], she’ll never stop.

Rixula said:

“Nor when your heads are in the noose, as is likely to happen, they should not come out.

“But listen to my song:

Rixula sang:

*“Full hard I did sweat,*

*“When hemp I did beat.*

*“Then thought I of nothing but hanging,*

*“The hemp being spun,*

*“My beating was done,”*

After engaging in sexual intercourse, the penis hangs down.

Spinning consists of making threads. Sex can make threads of semen.

Rixula continued to sing:

*“Then I wished for a noise”*

A “noise” is a band of musicians.

“Noise” is also unwanted sound.

Rixula continued to sing:

*“Of crack-halter boys,”*

“Crack-halter boys” are boys who are destined to hang.

Necks crack when they are broken.

Rixula continued to sing:

*“On those hempen strings to be twanging.”*

One meaning of “to twang” is “to pluck,” as in plucking the strings of a musical instrument.

Another meaning of “to twang” is “to twitch,” as in twitching at the end of a rope while being hanged.

Rixula continued to sing:

*“Long looked I about,*

*“The city throughout —”*

Halfpenny and Lucio sang:

*“— and found no such fiddling varlets.”*

“Fiddling” can refer to engaging in sexual intercourse as well as to playing a fiddle.

Rixula sang:

*“Yes, at last coming hither,*

*“I saw four together.”*

Halfpenny and Lucio sang:

*“May thy hemp choke such singing harlots.”*

“Singing harlots” can mean noisy whores.

Rixula sang:

*“‘Tu-whit tu-whoo,’ the Owl does cry,*

*“‘Phip, phip,’ the Sparrows as they fly,*

*“The goose does hiss, the duck cries quack.*

*“‘A rope,’ the Parrot, that holds tack.”*

The owl is a night bird, and the night is associated with prostitutes.

This society considered sparrows lusty.

In this society, “goose” and “duck” were slang words for a prostitute.

In this society, parrots were often taught to say the word “rope.”

The word “rope” can mean “penis” and “hanging penis” as well as a hanging noose.

The word “tack” means “to sail through the wind.” If you are in a sailboat and the wind is blowing on the right side of your face and you tack through the wind, soon the wind will be blowing on the left side of your face. The place the wind hits your face changes, and the meaning of the word “rope” spoken by the parrot changes.

“Holds tack” may mean that the parrot repeats the one phrase it has been taught to speak.

Halfpenny and Lucio sang:

“*The parrot and the rope be thine.*”

Rixula sang:

“*The hanging yours, but the hemp mine.*”

Rixula will have the “hemp,” the “rope,” the penis: the sexual pleasure.

Dromio and Risio entered the scene from their masters’ houses. Dromio was carrying Accius’ clothing, and Risio was carrying Silena’s clothing.

“Yonder stand the wags,” Dromio said. “I have come in good time.”

“All are here before me,” Risio said. “You make haste.”

Rixula said, “I believe you make haste to your hanging, for I think you have all robbed your masters. Here’s every man his baggage.”

Dromio and Risio were each holding a bundle of clothing.

Halfpenny said, “That is, we are all with thee, for thou are a very baggage.”

The word “baggage” means strumpet.

Rixula said, “Hold thy peace, or on my honesty and chastity, I swear I’ll buy a halfpenny purse with thee.”

“Indeed, that’s big enough to put thy honesty and chastity in, but come, shall we get on about the matter?” Dromio asked.

“Now that it has come to the pinch, my heart pants,” Lucio said.

Halfpenny said, “I for my part am resolute. *In utrumque paratus*: ready to die or to run away.”

The Latin means: I am prepared to go in either direction.

Lucio said, “But listen to me. I was troubled with a vile dream, and therefore it is little time spent to let Mother Bombie expound it; she is cunning in all things.”

“Then I will know my fortune,” Dromio said.

“And I’ll ask about a silver spoon that was lost yesterday, which I must pay for,” Rixula said.

“And I’ll know what will happen with our plots,” Risio said.

“And I’ll learn that, too,” Halfpenny said.

“Then let us all go quickly,” Dromio said. “We must not sleep in this business; our masters are so watchful about it.”

They went to Mother Bombie’s house and knocked on her door.

Mother Bombie asked, “Why do you rap so hard at the door?”

“Because we would come in,” Dromio said.



“My house is no inn,” Mother Bombie said, opening the door.

“Cross yourselves,” Halfpenny said. “Make the sign of the cross. Look how evil she looks.”

“Don’t look directly at her,” Dromio said. “She’ll turn us all into apes.”

“What do you want with me?” Mother Bombie asked.

“They say that you are cunning, and they say that you are called the good woman of Rochester,” Risio said.

The location was a street in Rochester, Kent, England.

“If never to do harm is to do good, I dare say I am not ill — not bad,” Mother Bombie said.

“But what’s the matter?”

“I had an ill dream, and I desire to know the signification and meaning,” Lucio said.

Mother Bombie said:

“Dreams, my son, have their weight. Although they are of a troubled mind, yet they are signs of fortune.

“Continue to speak.”

Lucio said:

“In the dawning of the day, for about that time by my starting out of my sleep, I found it to be, I thought I saw a stately piece of beef, with a cape-cloak of cabbage, embroidered with pepper, having two honorable pages with hats of mustard on their heads, the beef himself in great pomp and state sitting upon a cushion of white brewish [broth-soaked bread], lined with brown bread.”

This society considered early-morning dreams to be truthful.

The piece of beef is described as being a nobleman sitting in state.

A cape-cloak is a cloak with a short cape over the shoulders.

Lucio continued:

“I thought being powdered [with salt], he was much troubled with the salt rheum [runny nose], and therefore there stood by him two great flagons of sack and beer: the sack to dry up his rheum, and the beer to quench his choler and anger.

“I, as one envying his ambition [pride of state], hungering and thirsting after his honor, began to pull his cushion from under him, hoping by that means to give him a fall and bring him down, and with putting out my hand I awakened, and I found nothing in all this dream about me except the salt rheum.”

Dromio said, “This is a dream for a butcher.”

Lucio said:

“Quiet. Let me finish recounting my dream.

“Then I slumbered again, and I thought there came in a leg of mutton.”

“What! All gross meat and large joints,” Dromio said. “A rack would have been dainty.”

A rack is a neck or ribs eaten in broth.

Lucio said, “Thou fool, how could it come in, unless it had been a leg? I thought his hose were cut and drawn out with parsley. I thrust my hand into my pocket for a knife, thinking to hox him, and so awakened.”

A fashion of the time was to cut hose to allow the underlying material to show through.

The parsley was used to dress the joint.

“To hox him” means “to cut his hamstrings.”

Mother Bombie said, “It is likely thou went supperless to bed.”

Hunger is a reason to dream about food.

“So I do every night but Sundays,” Lucio said. “Prisius, my master, has a weak stomach, and therefore we must starve.”

Mother Bombie said, “Well, take this for thy answer, although the dream is fantastical.

“They who in the morning sleep dream of eating

“Are in danger of sickness, or of beating,

“Or shall hear of a wedding fresh a beating.”

“Fresh a beating” means “in the making.”

“This may be true,” Lucio said.

Halfpenny said:

“Then let me come in with a dream, short but sweet, with the result that my mouth waters ever since I woke.

“I thought there sat upon a shelf three damask prunes [damsons] in velvet caps and pressed satin gowns like judges, and that there were a whole handful of currants to be arraigned of a riot, because they clung together in such clusters.

“Twelve raisins of the sun were empaneled in a jury, and as a leaf of whole mace, which was the bailiff, who was carrying the quest [leading away the jury at the inquest] to consult, I thought there came an angry cook, and gelded the jury of their stones, and swept both judges, jurors, rebels, and bailiff into a porridge pot, at which being melancholy, I fetched a deep sigh that woke myself and my bedfellow.”

Sun-raisins are grapes that are dried on the vine by the sun.

“Mace” is a spice that is made from the outer covering of the nutmeg.

A mace is also a staff of office that a bailiff carries.

“Stones” are 1) grape pips, and 2) testicles.

Dromio said, “This was devised — made up — not dreamed, and it is the more foolish because it is no dream, because dreams excuse the fantasticalness.”

Halfpenny said, “Then ask my bedfellow, you know him, who dreamt that night that the king of diamonds was sick.”

In this society, it was common for unrelated people of the same sex to sleep in the same bed.

The three dreams were about food, the law, and playing cards.

Mother Bombie said, “But thy years and humors — thy age and disposition — pretty child, are subject to such fancies, which the more unsensible they seem, the more fantastical they are — the more unlike the real world they seem, the more fantastic they are — and so therefore this dream is easy to interpret.

“To children this is given from the gods:

“To dream of milk, fruit, babies [dolls], and rods.

“They betoken nothing [the dreams mean nothing] except that wantons must have rods.”

In other words: Bad children must be beaten.

“Ten to one thy dream is true,” Dromio said to Halfpenny. “Thou will be beaten.”

Rixula said, “Gammer, I ask you to tell me who stole my spoon out of the buttery.”

A “gammer” is a grandmother. The word could be used as a courtesy title to address someone who was not the speaker’s biological grandmother.

A “buttery” is a pantry in which provisions such as butter and bread and ale were kept.

Mother Bombie said:

“Thy spoon is not stolen but mislaid,

“Thou are an ill huswife [housekeeper] though a good maid,

“Look for thy spoon where thou had like to be no maid.”

In other words: Look for the spoon in that place where thou were likely to cease being a maiden, aka virgin.

“By the body of me, let me fetch the spoon,” Rixula said. “I remember the place.”

Lucio said, “Go slowly swift to the place. If the place is there now, it will be there tomorrow.”

A proverb stated: “Make haste slowly.”

Sometimes doing something swiftly results in making mistakes that take much time to fix.

Rixula said, “Aye, the place will be there, but perhaps the spoon will not.”

Halfpenny asked, “Were thou once put to it?”

In other words: Did someone ask her to steal the spoon?

Rixula replied, “No, sir boy, it was put to me.”

In other words: Someone had propositioned her.

“How was it missed?” Lucio asked

He meant the spoon, but Dromio punned on “missed” and took “it” to mean Rixula’s virginity.

Dromio said:

“I’ll guess for lack of a mist to hide her ugly face.

“But what’s my fortune, mother?”

Mother Bombie said:

“Thy father does live because he does dye,

“Thou have spent all thy thrift with a die,

“And so like a beggar thou shall die.”

Dromio’s father dyed cloth for a living, and Dromio lost all his money gambling with dice.

Risio said, “I would have liked it well if all the gerunds had been there, *-di*, *-do*, and *-dum*, but to have all in ‘die,’ that’s too deadly.”

The endings of Latin gerunds are *-di*, *-do*, and *-dum*.

Dromio said, “My father indeed is a dyer, and I have been a dicer, but to die a beggar, give me permission not to believe Mother Bombie, and yet it may be true.

“I have nothing to live by except knavery, and if the world would grow honest, I would welcome beggary.”

He made his living through trickery, but if he could not make his living that way, a suitable occupation for him would be begging.

Dromio then asked:

“But what have thou to say, Risio?”

“Nothing until I see whether all this that she has said is true,” Risio said.

Halfpenny said to Dromio, “Aye, Risio would like to see thee beg.”

Risio said, “Mother, tell us this: What are all our fortunes? We are engaging in a matter of legerdemain. How will it fodge — work out?”

Mother Bombie said:

“You shall all thrive like cheaters.

“That is, to be cheated by cheaters.

“All shall end well, and you shall be found to be cheaters.”

Dromio said:

“Many thanks, Mother Bombie.

“We are all pleased, if you were for your pains.”

Everyone will be pleased, if Mother Bombie is pleased with telling fortunes for no reward other than personal satisfaction. In her case, it would be the personal satisfaction of being right.

“I take no money, but I do take good words,” Mother Bombie said. “Don’t rail at and criticize me if I tell the truth. If I do not tell the truth, then take revenge on me. Farewell.”

Mother Bombie shut the door of her house.

Dromio said, “Now we have nothing to do but to go about this business. Let Candius put on Accius’ apparel, and I will array Accius with Candius’ clothes.”

Candius and Accius would impersonate each other.

Risio said:

“Here is Silena’s attire. Lucio, put it upon Livia, and give me Livia’s clothing for Silena to put on.”

Silena and Livia would impersonate each other.

Risio continued:

“Once this is done, let Candius and Livia come forth, and let Dromio and me alone for the rest — leave it to Dromeo and me to do what is needed.”

“What shall become of Accius and Silena?” Halfpenny asked.

Dromio replied, “Bah, their turn shall be next. All must be done in an orderly fashion. Let’s get to it, for now it works.”

They exited.

## CHAPTER 4 (MOTHER BOMBIE)

— 4.1 —

Candius and Livia talked together.

Livia was dressed as the simpleton Silena, and Candius was dressed as the simpleton Accius.

Livia (dressed as Silena) said:

“This attire is very fit.”

The clothing fit her well and was of better quality than she was accustomed to wear.

Livia (dressed as Silena) added:

“But what if this clothing should make me a fool and my clothing shall make Silena wise? You will then woo me and wed her.”

Candius (dressed as Accius) said, “Thou know that Accius is also a fool, and his raiment fits me, so that if apparel is infectious, I am also likely to be a fool, and he is likely to be wise. What would be the conclusion? I wonder.”

Dromio and Risio entered the scene.

Dromio was the serving-boy of Memphio, and Risio was the serving-boy of Stellio.

Memphio and Stellio wanted their children, Accius and Silena, both of whom were simpletons, to wed each other. Neither Memphio nor Stellio knew that the other’s child was a simpleton.

“Here come our counselors,” Livia (dressed as Silena) said.

“Well said,” Dromio said. “I perceive that turtledoves fly in couples — in pairs.”

“Else how should they couple and mate?” Risio asked.

“So do knaves go double, in twos; else how should they be so cunning in doubling,” Livia (dressed as Silena) said.

“Doubling” means trickery.

“*Bona verba*, Livia,” Candius (dressed as Accius) said.

In other words: Speak good words, Livia. Don’t be overly critical.

Dromio said, “I understand Latin; that means that ‘Livia’ is a good word.”

Candius (dressed as Accius) said, “No, I told her to use good words.”

“And what deeds do you tell her to do?” Risio asked.

“None but a deed of gift,” Candius (dressed as Accius) said.

“What gift?” Risio asked.

“The gift of her heart,” Candius (dressed as Accius) said.

Dromio said, "Give me permission to pose a question to you although you are a graduate, for I tell you that we in Rochester spur so many hackneys that we must necessarily spur scholars, for we take them for hackneys."

They spur horses, and they spur scholars. They spur scholars to engage in discussion by asking questions.

Livia (dressed as Silena) asked, "Why so, sir boy?"

Dromio said, "Because I knew two scholars hired for ten groats apiece to say service on Sunday, and that's no more than the cost to hire a post horse from here to Canterbury," Dromio said.

Scholars and post horses can be hired for the same amount of money.

"He knows what he says, for he once served the post-master," Risio said.

Candius (dressed as Accius) said, "Indeed, I think he served some post to his master. But come, Dromio, post me."

"Post me" means "post after me" or "come after me."

In other words: test me with your wit by asking me questions.

Dromio said, "You say you would have her heart for a deed."

"Well," Candius (dressed as Accius) said.

Dromio said:

"If you take her heart for *cor*, that heart in her body, then know this, *Molle eius levibus, cor enim inviolabile telis*. A woman's heart is thrust through with a feather."

The Latin means: My heart is soft and tender, and it is easily pierced by the arrow."

The arrow is Cupid's.

Dromio continued:

"If you mean she should give a hart named *cervus*, then you are worse, for *cornua cervus habet*, that is, to have one's heart grow out at his head, which will make one ache at the heart in their body."

*Cervus* is Latin for a hart: a male deer that is over five years old.

*Cornua cervus habet* is Latin for "a hart has horns."

Dromio was joking that Livia would give Candius the horns of a cuckold, and he would grieve at the heart because he had an unfaithful wife.

Sperantus and Prisius entered the scene.

Sperantus was the father of Candius, and Prisius was the father of Livia.

Each father did not want his child to marry the other father's child.

Livia (dressed as Silena), said, “I curse your harts and hearts. I hear someone coming. I know it is my father by the way he walks.”

“What must we do?” Candius (dressed as Accius) asked.

Dromio said, “Why, do as I told you, and let me alone with the old men. Leave the old men to me, and you two get on with your marriage.”

“Come, neighbor, I perceive the love of our children grows key cold,” Prisius said.

“As cold as a key” means “extremely cold.” Keys are made of metal, which can get very hot or very cold very quickly. Metals are good conductors of heat, and metals heat up and cool off quickly.

“I think it was never but lukewarm,” Sperantus said.

Prisius said, “Bavins will have their flashes, and youth will have their fancies, the one is as quickly quenched as the other is burnt.”

“Bavins” are bundles of brushwood that burn up quickly.

Prisius then asked, looking at the disguised Candius and the disguised Livia:

“But who are these two?”

Candius (dressed as Accius) said to Livia, “Here I plight my faith, taking thee for the staff of my age, and for the solace of my youth.”

Livia (dressed as Silena) said to Candius, “And I vow to thee affection that nothing can dissolve, neither the length of time, nor the malice of fortune, nor the distance of place.”

Candius and Livia were now legally betrothed. This was legally binding in common law; however, a church wedding still needed to be performed.

Therefore, Candius (dressed as Accius) asked Livia, “But when shall we be married in church?”

Livia (dressed as Silena) said to Candius, “That’s a good question, for that one delay in wedding brings a hundred dangers in the Church. We will not be asked, and a license is too chargeable — too expensive — and to tarry until tomorrow is too tedious.”

A delay in holding the church wedding would be frowned on by the ecclesiastical authorities. The couple did not want to wait for the banns: the announcement of the upcoming wedding each week for three weeks before the wedding was held. (The announcement of the banns was known as “asking.” As part of the banns, anyone who had an objection to the wedding was asked to make that objection known.) The couple did not even want to wait until the next day for a formal wedding.

Dromio said, “There’s a girl who stands on pricks until she is married.”

Both “stands” (erections) and “pricks” (penises) have a bawdy meaning.

Livia was very eager to marry. It was if she were standing on thorns in her bare feet.



Candius (dressed as Accius) said to Livia, “To avoid danger, charge and expense, and tediousness, let us now conclude it in the nearest church.”

They wanted to get the blessing of a priest.

“Agreed,” Livia (dressed as Silena) said.

Prisius and Sperantus had witnessed the betrothal of their children, and they had not recognized their children because of the clothing in which they were dressed.

“Who are these who hasten so to marry?” Prisius asked.

Dromio said, “By the Virgin Mary, sir, they are Accius, the son of Memphio, and Silena, the daughter of Stellio.”

Sperantus said to Prisius, “I am sorry, neighbor, for our purposes are disappointed and frustrated.”

Sperantus, the father of Candius, had wanted his son to marry Silena.

Prisius, the father of Livia, had wanted his daughter to marry Accius.

“You see that marriage is destiny, made in heaven, though consummated on earth,” Prisius said.

“How do you like them?” Risio asked. “Aren’t they a pretty couple?”

“Yes,” Prisius said. “May God give them joy, seeing in spite of our hearts — our desires — they must join in marriage.”

Dromio said, “I am sure that you are not angry, seeing that things already past cannot be recalled, and being witnesses to their contract, and so I am sure that you will be also well-willers to the match.”

“For my part, I wish them well,” Sperantus said.

“And so do I,” Prisius said, “and since there is no remedy for my disappointed hopes, I am glad for their marriage.”

Risio asked, “But will you never hereafter take it in dudgeon and be angry about it, but treat them as well as though you yourselves had made the marriage?”

Prisius said, “I will never be angry about this marriage.”

“Nor will I,” Sperantus said.

Dromio said to Candius (dressed as Accius), “Sir, here are two old men who are glad that your loves so long continued, are now so happily concluded.”

Candius (dressed as Accius) said:

“We thank them, and if they will come to Memphio’s house, they shall take part of a bad dinner.”

“Dinner” was eaten in the late morning: It was the first big meal of the day.

Since Candius was still pretending to be Accius, Memphio's son, he invited them to a celebratory dinner. Calling it "a bad dinner" was a show of modesty.

He then whispered:

"This cottons, and it works like wax in a sow's ear."

"Cottons" means "is working out well," and "works like wax in a sow's ear" means "this is easy."

Candius (dressed as Accius) and Livia (dressed as Silena) exited.

Prisius said, "Well, seeing that the marriages we wanted have been prevented, we must lay other plots, for Livia shall not have Candius."

"Fear not, for I have sworn that Candius shall not have Livia," Sperantus said. "But let us not fall out and argue because our children fall in love together."

"Will thou go soon to Memphio's house?" Prisius asked.

Sperantus said, "Aye, and if you will, let us go together so that we may see how the young couple bride it — act as a married couple — and so we may teach our own children how to act."

They exited.

— 4.2 —

Lucio and Halfpenny talked together.

Lucio said, "By this time, I am sure, the wags have played their parts, and so there remains nothing now for us but to match Accius and Silena."

In other words: By this time, Dromio and Risio have gotten Candius and Livia married, and so now we — Halfpenny and I — need to get Accius and Silena married.

Halfpenny said:

"It was too good to be true, for we should laugh heartily, and without laughing, my spleen would split, but hush, here comes the man."

Accius entered the scene, coming from Memphio's house. He was dressed in Candius' clothing.

Halfpenny added:

"And yonder comes the maiden."

Silena entered the scene, coming from Stellio's house. She was dressed in Livia's clothing.

Halfpenny then said to Lucio:

"Let us stand to the side and watch and listen and comment."

They stood in a place where Accius and Silena could not easily see them.

Not seeing anyone else, Accius (dressed as Candius) said to himself, “What does my father mean to thrust me forth in another boy’s coat? I’ll warrant it is to as much purpose as a hen in the forehead.”

A proverb about thinness stated, “As fat as a hen in the forehead.”

A fathead is a stupid person.

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, “There was an ancient proverb knocked in the head.”

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, “I am almost come into my nonage, and yet I never was so far as the proverbs of this city.”

“Nonage” means the time of immaturity and youth. Actually, he was about to leave the chronological age of immaturity and youth and enter the chronological age of an adult.

Instead of “proverbs,” Accius should have said “suburbs.”

“There’s a quip for the suburbs of Rochester,” Lucio whispered to Halfpenny.

“Excellently applied,” Halfpenny said.

Not seeing anyone else, Silena (dressed as Livia) said to herself, “Well, although this apparel makes me a sullen and dull dame, yet I hope in my own apparel I am no saint.”

Apparently, Silena thought that saints are sullen and dull.

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, “A brave and splendid fight is likely to be between a cock with a long comb, and a hen with a long leg.”

A cock with a long comb is a coxcomb: a fool. That, of course, is a male fool: Accius.

A hen with one long leg and one short leg will walk oddly. Yes, hens can become lame. The hen, of course, is a female fool: Silena.

But Halfpenny may have meant simply that Silena had long legs; after all, Silena is attractive.

“Her wits are shorter than her legs,” Lucio whispered to Halfpenny.

“And his comb is longer than his wit,” Halfpenny whispered to Lucio.

Seeing Silena, Accius (dressed as Candius) said:

“I have yonder uncovered a fair girl.”

In hunting, “uncover” means to drive a bird or animal out from cover.

“Uncovered a fair girl.” Hmm. Bawdy, that.

Accius then said to himself, “I’ll be so bold as to spur her and ask her questions.”

Accius then asked Selena, “What might a body call her name?”

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, “I cannot help you at this time. I ask you to come again tomorrow.”

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, “Aye, by the Virgin Mary, sir.”

In other words, his interpretation of Silena's words were "So much for you, sir."

Accius (dressed as Candius) said to Silena, "You need not be so lusty. You are not so honest."

Lustful people may not be honest, aka chaste, but the word "lusty" at this time could mean "arrogant."

Silena (dressed as Livia) replied, "I beg your mercy. I took you for a joint stool."

A joint stool was made from a few pieces of wood joined together.

Lucio whispered to Halfpenny, "Here's courting for a conduit or a bakehouse."

A conduit was a place where people could get water and carry it home; it was a place where people gossiped. A bakehouse was another place where lower-class people gathered and gossiped.

The language that Accius and Silena were using was common, not refined.

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, "But what kind of man are you? I think you look as pleases God."

A proverb stated, "God makes and apparel shapes, but money makes the man."

Accius was wearing Candius' clothing, which was less good than his own clothing.

Accius (dressed as Candius) asked, "What! Do you give me the boots?"

"To give someone the boots" meant "to make fun of them."

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, "Whether they will or will not get married, here are very good cobblers' cuts."

Cobblers cut out pieces of leather with which to make shoes, and Accius and Silena were verbally cutting each other.

The pieces of leather that cobblers cut out were then fit and sewed together. Accius and Silena seemed to fit together: They were very alike.

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, "I am taken with a fit of love: Have you thought about marriage?"

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, "I had thought to have asked you."

Accius (dressed as Candius) asked Silena, "Upon what acquaintance?"

People ought to be acquainted before they propose marriage to each other.

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, "Who would have thought it?"

"It" may mean "that we could be married."

Being in disguise can be a hindrance to becoming acquainted — and to proposing marriage.

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, "Much in my gaskins, more in my round hose. All my father's gaskins and hose are as white as daisies, and all my father's gaskins and hose are as full of meat as an egg."

Gaskins were loose-fitting trousers, and round hose were tightly fitting hose.

His father's gaskins and hose were often full of meat: his father's legs.

Earlier, Halfpenny had said, "A wren's egg is as full of meat as a goose egg, although there is not as much in it."

Possibly, Accius' response to Silena's question "Who would have thought it?" is this:

*I would have thought it while wearing gaskins, and I would have thought it more while wearing round hose that fit more tightly and intimately. And my father would have thought it whatever he was wearing.*

Certainly, his father, Memphio, did want Accius and Livia to be married. And for now, so did Accius.

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, "And all my father's plate is made of crimson velvet."

Plate is silverplate or goldplate. It is not made of red velvet cloth.

"Make," however, can mean "paired with."

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, "That's brave — excellent — with bread."

The bread is on the red velvet cloth, which is on the plate.

The point is that different things can be paired, matched, and mated.

Halfpenny whispered, "These three had 'wise' men as their fathers."

"These three" may be Accius, Silena, and Memphio (Accius' father).

According to Halfpenny, all three of these people are fools.

"Why?" Lucio whispered.

Halfpenny whispered, "Because when their bodies were at work about household stuff, their minds were busied about commonwealth matters."

Accius (dressed as Candius) gestured to a part of Silena's clothing and said, "This is pure lawn: fine linen. What do you call this? A preface to your hair?"

A "preface" can be a part of the ceremony of the Eucharist that offers praise and thanks to God. Accius may be saying that this part of Silena's clothing accentuates her hair.

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, "Wisely, you have picked a raisin out of a frail — a basket — of figs."

He had picked out one part of her clothing for special praise.

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, "Take it as you wish. You are in your own clothes."

Silena could take the praise well, or she could regard it as criticism of the rest of her clothing.

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, "Saving a reverence, but that's a lie. My clothes are better. My father borrowed these clothes I am wearing."

“Saving [a person’s] reverence, but ...” means “I’m sorry, but ....”

Accius (dressed as Candius) said:

“Long may he so do: borrow clothing for you to wear.”

Accius was complimenting what she was wearing.

Accius (dressed as Candius) continued:

“I could tell you that these clothes I am wearing are not mine if I would blab it like a woman.”

“I would be as glad if you should tell them it snowed,” Silena (dressed as Livia) said.

In other words: She doesn’t much care for either alternative: wearing borrowed clothing, or enduring cold and snowy weather.

“Come, let us take them off, for we have had the cream of them,” Lucio whispered to Halfpenny.

Hmm. It sounds as if he wanted to take off the clothing of Accius and Silena.

Another meaning of “take them off” is “separate them.”

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, “I’ll guarantee that if this is the cream, then the milk is very flat. Let us join issue — start a debate — with them.”

Lucio whispered:

“To have such issues — such children — of our bodies is worse than to have an issue in the body.”

This kind of issue is an oozing ulcer.

Lucio then said out loud to Silena:

“May God save you, pretty mouse.”

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, “You may command and go without.”

A proverb stated, “Ask and have.”

Silena’s version of the proverb was “Ask and have not.”

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio:

“There’s a gleek for you; let me have my gird.”

A gleek is a jest.

A gird is a gibe: an insult.

Halfpenny then asked Silena out loud:

“On thy conscience, tell me what time it is.”

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, “I beg your mercy. I have killed your cushion.”

To “miss the cushion” means to “miss the mark” or to “make a mistake.”

Both Silena and Accius misremembered and misused proverbial sayings.

Silena may be apologizing for not knowing what time it is.

Halfpenny said, “I am paid — mortally wounded by your remark — and struck dead in the nest. I am sure this soft youth who is not half as wise as you are fair, nor you altogether as fair as he is foolish, will not be so captious.”

He was saying that Accius was a fool.

By “captious,” Halfpenny meant that Accius would not cavil: He would not make petty objections to what would be proposed to him.

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, “Your eloquence surpasses my understanding.”

Memphio and Stellio entered the scene from different directions. They did not see each other at first, and the others in the scene did not see them at first.

Lucio said, “I never heard that before, but shall we two make a marriage match between you?”

Silena (dressed as Livia) said about Accius, “I’ll know first who was his father.”

Accius (dressed as Candius), “My father? Why do you need to care about him? I hope he was not your father.”

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, “A hard question, for it is a good bet that one father begat both of them. He who cut out the upper leather also cut out the inner, and so with one awl he stitched two soles together.”

Hmm. An awl pierces holes.

The hypothetical father may have stitched two souls together.

The two fathers, Memphio and Stellio, had plots of their own afoot.

Memphio was the father of Accius, and Stellio was the father of Silena.

Each father was looking at the back of his own child, did not recognize his own child, and so would inquire about him or her. Each father would not recognize his own child until he or she turned around and faced him.

Dromio had told Memphio that someone would meet Stellio’s daughter and would court her while impersonating Memphio’s son: Accius.

Risio had told Stellio that someone would meet Memphio’s son and would plead — encourage a betrothal — while impersonating Stellio’s daughter: Silena.

Stellio got the attention of Lucio, Memphio’s serving-boy, and whispered, referring to Silena, “Who is she?”

“She is Prisius’ daughter,” Halfpenny answered.

Prisius’ daughter is Livia, whose clothing Silena was wearing.

Stellio said to himself, “The plan is fudging in good time — is working in good time.”

Memphio got the attention of Halfpenny, Stellio's serving-boy, and whispered about Accius, "Who is he?"

Halfpenny whispered, "Sperantus' son."

Sperantus' son is Candius, whose clothing Accius was wearing.

Memphio said to himself, "Good. It will cotton: It will work out."

Accius (dressed as Candius) asked Silena, "Damsel, please tell me how old you are."

Memphio said to himself, "My son would scarcely have asked such a foolish question."

Accius, Memphio's son, would definitely have asked such a foolish question, and Memphio knew it. By "my son," Memphio meant "the person impersonating my son." That person was not supposed to be foolish.

Silena (dressed as Livia) replied, "I shall be eighteen next bear-baiting."

Bear-baiting was a cruel sport in which dogs tormented a chained bear.

Stellio said to himself, "My daughter would have made a wiser answer."

Silena, Stellio's daughter, would definitely not have made a wiser answer, and Stellio knew it. By "my daughter," Stellio meant "the person impersonating my daughter." That person was not supposed to be foolish.

Halfpenny whispered to Lucio, "O how fitly this comes off!"

He was entertained by what he was seeing and hearing.

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, "My father is a scold. What's yours?"

Memphio said, "My heart throbs, I will look him in the face, and yonder I see Stellio!"

Stellio also noticed Memphio for the first time as he said to himself, "My mind misgives me, but hush, yonder is Memphio."

Seeing his father, Accius (dressed as Candius) said, "In faith I perceive an old and rusty saw: no fool to the old fool."

A saw is a proverbial saying.

He meant: There is no fool comparable to the old fool.

Accius (dressed as Candius) then asked his father, Memphio:

"I ask you why I was thrust out like a scarecrow in this similitude."

By "similitude," Accius may have meant 1) multitude, and 2) disguise (similarity to Candius).

Recognizing Accius, Memphio said to himself, "My son! And I am shamed! Dromio shall die."

Seeing Stellio, Silena (dressed as Livia) said to him, "Father, are you sneaking behind? I ask you what must I do next?"



Recognizing Silena, Stellio said to himself, “My daughter! Risio, thou have cheated me.”

“Now begins the game,” Lucio said.

“How did you come to be here?” Memphio asked Accius.

Accius (dressed as Candius) answered, “By the Virgin Mary, by the way from your house hither.”

True, but not an answer to the question Memphio wanted to be answered.

Memphio asked Accius, “How does it happen that you are in this attire?”

Accius (dressed as Candius) asked, “How does it happen that Dromio told me to put on this attire?”

Memphio said to himself, “Ah, thy son will be begged for a concealed fool.”

He was worried that someone would get custody of Accius after he — Memphio — died and so would control the estate that Accius would inherit.

Accius (dressed as Candius) said, “Will I? Indeed, sir, no.”

Stellio asked his daughter, Silena, “Why did you come here, Silena, without permission?”

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, “Because I did, and I am here because I am.”

True, but not an answer to the question Stellio wanted to be answered.

Stellio said, “Poor wench, thy wit is improved to the uttermost.”

In other words: Silena was as intelligent as she was going to get.

The word “improved,” in addition to meaning “developed,” can also mean “raised,” as in the developing — that is, the raising — of rent.

Using the second definition of “improved,” Halfpenny said, “Aye, it is a hard matter to have a wit of the old rent, everyone racks his commons so high — that is, charges more.”

Memphio said to himself, “Dromio told me that someone would meet Stellio’s daughter, and court her while impersonating my son: Accius.”

Stellio said to himself, “Risio told me that someone would meet Memphio’s son and plead — encourage a betrothal — while impersonating my daughter: Silena.”

“But alas, I see that my son has himself met with Silena, and he has revealed his folly,” Memphio said to himself.

“But I see that my daughter has prattled with Accius, and he has discovered her simplicity,” Stellio said to himself.

Lucio said to Halfpenny, “A brave cry to hear the two old mules weep over the young fools.”

“Accius, how do thou like Silena?” Memphio asked.

Accius (dressed as Candius) replied, “I take her to be pregnant.”

The word “pregnant” can mean “pregnant with wit” as well as “pregnant with child.”

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, “Truly his talk is very personable.”

The word “personable” can mean 1) “pleasing in appearance,” or 2) “pleasing in manner.”

Apparently, Accius and Silena did not regard each other as fools.

Stellio said to Silena, “Come inside, girl, this business must be fetched about — it must be considered from another direction.”

Memphio said, “Come, Accius, let us go inside.”

Lucio said, “Sir, there is no harm done. They have neither bought nor sold: They haven’t committed themselves to anything. They may be twins for their wits and years.”

Both Accius and Silena were young fools.

Memphio asked, “But why did thou tell me it was Prisius’ son?”

“Because I thought thee a fool to ask who thine own son was,” Halfpenny replied.

Halfpenny was Sperantus’ serving-boy, not Memphio’s serving-boy, and so Halfpenny spoke frankly to Memphio.

Lucio said to Stellio, “And so, sir, as for your daughter, education has done much; otherwise, they are by nature soft witted enough.”

He was sarcastic about Silena’s education: In this society, many girls and women were not educated.

Memphio said, “Alas, their joints are not yet tied; they are not yet come to years and discretion.”

He was saying that they were still young — too young to know discretion.

“Their joints are not yet tied” means “their joints are not yet knitted together.”

Accius (dressed as Candius) asked, “Father, if my hands were to be tied up, shall I grow wise?”

“Aye, and Silena will be wise, too, if you tie your hands fast to your tongues,” Halfpenny said.

Silena (dressed as Livia) said, “You may take your pleasure of my tongue, for it is no man’s wife.”

An unintended meaning of her words was that Halfpenny could use her tongue sexually.

“Come inside, Accius,” Memphio said.

Stellio said, “Come inside, Silena. I will talk with Memphio’s son, Accius. But as for Risio —”

He wanted to punish Risio, his serving-boy.

Memphio said, “As for Dromio —”

He wanted to punish Dromio, his serving-boy.

Memphio and Accius went inside Memphio's house.

Stellio and Silena went inside Stellio's house.

Halfpenny said, "Ass for you, all four!"

He was calling all four of them asses: fools.

Dromio and Risio entered the scene.

Dromio said, "How goes the world? Now we have made all sure: Candius and Livia are married, and their fathers are consenting, yet they do not know what they have consented to."

Lucio said:

"We have completely marred everything.

"As Accius and Silena courted one another, their fathers took them napping — unawares. Both fathers are ashamed, and you both shall be beaten."

Risio said:

"Tush, let us alone and leave it to us. We will persuade them that all falls out for the best, for if this marriage match had been concluded underhand — by secret means — they both would have been cheated, and now seeing they find both to be fools, they may be both — both sets of fools — better advised and act more wisely."

Both children would have been cheated because they would have married a fool, and both fathers would have been cheated because their children would have married a fool.

Memphio and Stellio were fools, and Accius and Silena were fools.

Risio then asked:

"But why is Halfpenny so sad?"

Halfpenny answered, "Because I am sure I shall never be a penny."

Risio said, "You should rather pray that there be no fall in the value of money, for thou wilt then go for a q."

A q is a farthing. If Halfpenny were to be worth a farthing, his value would fall by half. Instead of being worth half of a penny, he would be worth a quarter of a penny.

Dromio asked, "But didn't the two fools currently court one another?"

Current coinage is legal tender.

Current courting is smoothly running courting.

Lucio said, "These are very good words fitly applied, brought in, in the nick of time — the exact, right time."

A hackneyman and a sergeant entered the scene.

A hackneyman hires out horses and/or hackney carriages, and a sergeant has the power to arrest people.

The sergeant said to Dromio, "I arrest you."

"Me, sir?" Dromio asked. "Why then didn't you bring a stool with thee, so that I might sit down?"

"Arrest," in a pun, is "a rest."

The hackneyman said, "He arrests you at my suit for a horse."

He meant that the sergeant was arresting Dromio over the matter of a horse.

Risio deliberately misinterpreted "arrests you [Dromio] ... for a horse" to mean "arrest you [Dromio], who are a horse."

Risio said, "The more ass he — if he had arrested a mare instead of a horse, it would have been only a slight oversight, but to arrest a man who has no likeness of a horse, is flat lunacy or ale-acy."

"Ale-acy" is lunacy brought on by drinking too much ale.

The hackneyman said, "Bah, I hired him a horse."

He meant that he had rented Dromio a horse.

Dromio said, "I swear then he was well ridden."

The hackneyman said, "I think in two days he was never baited."

"Baited" means 1) fed, or 2) tormented, as in bear-baiting.

Halfpenny asked, "Why, was it a bear thou ride on?"

"I mean he never gave him bait," the hackneyman said.

"Bait" can also mean a lure to catch fish.

"Why, he took him for no fish," Lucio said.

The hackneyman said:

"I mistake none of you when I take you for fools."

He then said to Dromio:

"I say thou never gave my horse meat."

"Meat" is food.

Dromio said, "Yes, in four and forty hours, I am sure he had a bottle — a portion — of hay as big as his belly."

The sergeant said, "Nothing else? Thou should have given him provender."

"Provender" is horse feed.

"Why, he never asked for any," Risio said.

The hackneyman asked, "Why, do thou think a horse can speak?"

“No, for I spurred him until my heels ached, and he never said a word,” Dromio said.

The hackneyman said, “Well, thou shall pay sweetly for spoiling him. It was as lusty and vigorous a nag as any in Rochester, and one that would stand upon no ground.”

According to the hackneyman, the horse was so full of energy that it wouldn’t stand still.

Dromio said, “Then he is as good as he ever was, I’ll warrant. He’ll do nothing but lie down.”

According to Dromio, the horse wouldn’t stand up.

The hackneyman said, “I lent him to thee gently — with good will.”

Dromio said, “And I restored him so gently — in such a gentle and quiet state — that he neither would cry ‘whinny,’ nor would he wag the tail.”

A proverb stated, “It is an ill horse that can neither whinny nor wag his tail.”

The hackneyman asked, “But why did thou bore him thorough the ears?”

Having a hole bored through a horse’s ears was a way of making identification and ownership of a horse easy to determine. The hackneyman’s implication was that Dromio was going to claim ownership of the horse and sell it.

“It may be that the horse was set in the pillory because he had not a true pace,” Lucio said.

An extra punishment for those in a pillory was to have holes put in their ears.

Halfpenny said, “No, it was for tiring.”

The word “tiring” can mean “nagging.”

The hackneyman said, “He would never tire, but it may be he would be so weary that he would go no further, or some such reason.”

Dromio said, “Yes, he was a notable horse for service; he would tire and retire.”

“Service” can mean 1) work, and 2) military service.

“Retire “ can mean “retreat.”

The hackneyman said:

“Do you think I’ll be jested out of my horse?”

“Sergeant, wreak and execute thy office on him.”

“Wait,” Risio said. “Let him be bailed.”

“So he shall when I make a bargain with him,” the hackneyman said.

Dromio said:

“It was a very good horse I must necessarily confess, and now listen to his qualities and have the patience to hear them since I must pay for him.

“He would stumble three hours in one mile.”

A healthy person can walk one mile in fifteen minutes.

Dromio continued:

“I had thought I had rode upon adzes — sharp-edged tools — between this town of Rochester and the town of Canterbury.

“If one gave him water, why, he would lie down and bathe himself like a hawk.

“If one ran him, he would simper and mump — that is, look coy and mope — as though he had gone a wooing to a malt mare — a female dray horse — at Rochester.

“He trotted with his front legs and he ambled with his back legs, and he was so obedient that he would do duty and kneel like a dutiful son every minute on his knees, as though every stone had been his father.”

“I am sure he had no diseases,” the hackneyman said.

Dromio said, “He had a little rheum or pose, and he lacked nothing but a handkerchief.”

“Rheum” is running of the eyes or nose, and “pose” is a head cold with running of the nose.

The sergeant said, “Come, what a tale of a horse have we here! I cannot stay. Thou must go with me to prison.”

“If thou are a good fellow, hackneyman, take all our four bonds for the payment,” Risio said. “Thou know we are town-born children, and we will not shrink the city for a pelting jade.”

In other words: They were local residents, and they would not run out on their obligation because of a pelting — that is, poor-quality — horse.

Halfpenny said:

“I’ll enter into a statute merchant to see it answered — to guarantee the repayment.”

A statute merchant would allow the creditor to seize the debtor’s property in case of default.

Halfpenny added:

“But if thou will have bonds, thou shall have a bushel full.”

The hackneyman said:

“Alas, poor ant, thou bound in a statute merchant! A brown thread — a cheap bit of string — will bind thee fast enough.”

The word “ant” was a reference to Halfpenny’s small size.

The hackneyman added:

“But if all four of you will be content to jointly enter into a bond, I will withdraw the action.”

Dromio said:

“Yes, I’ll warrant that they will.”

He asked his friends:

“What do you say?”

“I yield,” Halfpenny said. “I’ll do it.”

“And I,” Risio said.

“And I,” Lucio said.

The hackneyman said, “Well, call the scrivener.”

Scriveners drew up legal documents.

“Here’s one nearby,” the sergeant said. “I’ll call him.”

Risio said, “A scrivener’s shop clings to a sergeant’s mace like a burr clings to a frieze coat.”

“Frieze” is woolen cloth.

A mace is a staff of office.

“What’s the matter?” the scrivener asked.

“You must take a note of a bond — a legal agreement,” the hackneyman said.

Dromio said, “A pint of courtesy pulls on a pot — a cup — of wine; in this tavern we’ll dispatch and conclude the business.”

“Agreed,” the hackneyman said.

They would conclude the business with drinking.

Everyone but Risio went into the tavern.

Alone, Risio said to himself:

“Now if our wits are not in the wane, our knavery shall be at the full, for they — the serving-boys — will ride them — the hackneyman, the sergeant, and the scrivener — worse than Dromio rid his horse, for if the wine masters their wits, you shall see them bleed — show — their follies.”

The serving-boys would end up mocking the hackneyman, the sergeant, and the scrivener.

One effect of wine is that excessive drinkers end up making fools of themselves and suffering for it.

Risio went into the tavern.

## CHAPTER 5 (MOTHER BOMBIE)

— 5.1 —

Dromio, Risio, Lucio, and Halfpenny walked out of the tavern and talked together.

Dromio said, “Let every fox go to his hole; the hounds are at hand.”

In other words: Let all us foxes leave and avoid the trouble.

Risio said, “The sergeant’s mace lies at pawn for the reckoning — the paying of the bill — and he is under the board to cast it up.”

The sergeant was drunk and under the table, where he was 1) casting — calculating — the bill, and/or 2) casting — vomiting — what he had drunk.

Lucio said, “The scrivener cannot keep his pen out of the pot; every goblet is an inkhorn.”

The scrivener could not keep his pen — nose — out of the drinking pot — the drinking cup.

Halfpenny said:

“The hackneyman whisks with his wand — his whip — as if the tavern were his stable, and all the servants were his horses.

“He says, ‘Jost there up, bay Richard,’ and white loaves are horsebread — horse feed — in his eyes.”

A joss-block was a mounting block, and so the hackneyman may have been imagining that he was telling a horse to go to the mounting block so the hackneyman could get on him.

Possibly, people in the tavern would understand “jost” — mount — to have a bawdy meaning.

Dromio said, “It is well I have my acquittance of debt, and he has such a bond of repayment that shall do him no more good than the bond of a faggot — a bundle of firewood. Our knaveries are now come to the push, and we must cunningly dispatch all.”

The idiom “when push comes to shove” means “it is time for action: A critical point has been reached.”

Now everything was rushing to a conclusion.

Dromio continued:

“We two — Risio and I — will go and see how we may appease our masters. You two go and see how you may conceal the recent marriage.

“If all fall out amiss, the worst thing that can happen is a beating. If all fall out to the best, the worst thing that can happen is liberty!”

Risio said, “Then let’s go about it speedily, for so many irons in the fire together require a diligent plumber.”

In this society, a plumber was a worker in metal.



They exited.

— 5.2 —

Vicinia talked to herself outside Mother Bombie's house:

"My heart throbs, my ears tingle, my mind misgives me since I hear such muttering of marriages in Rochester.

"My conscience, which for these eighteen years has been frozen with concealed guiltiness, begins now to thaw in open grief, but I will not accuse myself until I see more danger.

"The good old woman Mother Bombie shall try her cunning upon me, and if I perceive that my case is hopeless by her words, then I will come forward and confess what I have done, although with shame and hope to be forgiven, rather than report too late and have my actions be seen as inexcusable."

She knocked on Mother Bombie's door and when Mother Bombie opened it, Vicinia said:

"God speed, good mother."

This meant: May God help you succeed, good old woman."

Mother Bombie said, "Welcome, sister."

"Sister" and "mother" were complimentary titles.

Vicinia said:

"I am troubled in the night with dreams, and in the day with fears.

"My estate is laid bare, which I cannot well bear, but my practices are devilish, which I cannot call back and undo.

"If therefore in these aged years of yours, there is any deep skill, tell what my fortune shall be, and tell me what my fault and crime is."

Mother Bombie said:

"In studying to be overnatural,

"Thou are likely to be unnatural,

"And all about a natural.

"Thou shall be eased of a charge

"If thou thy conscience discharge,

"And this I commit to thy charge."

"Overnatural" means "trying to be too protective as a mother."

"Unnatural" means "going against nature, as in not doing what is most ethical and best for your children."

A "natural" is a fool.

Vicinia needs to relieve her conscience, which she can do by doing the right and ethical action. This is her charge: her responsibility.

Vicinia replied:

“Thou have touched me to the quick, mother.

“I understand thy meaning, and thou well know my practice, aka evil deed. I will follow thy counsel.

“But what will be the end? What will be the outcome?”

Mother Bombie said, “Thou shall know that before this day ends, and so, farewell.”

Mother Bombie shut the door.

Vicinia said to herself:

“Now I perceive that I must either reveal an evil deed I have committed, or I must suffer a continual inconvenience.”

The continual inconvenience would be a constant bad conscience for not revealing her bad deed and for not preventing the bad consequences that could follow from that bad deed.

Vicinia continued talking to herself:

“I must hasten homewards and resolve to make all whole. Better a little shame than an infinite grief. The strangeness — uncommonness — will abate and lessen the fault and crime, and revealing the bad deed will wipe it clean away.”

Infinite grief is felt in Hell by unrepentant sinners.

### — 5.3 —

Three fiddlers — Synis, Nasutus, and Beduneus — talked together.

Synis said, “Come, fellows, it is almost day. Let us have a fit of mirth and music at Sperantus’ door and give a song to the bride.”

Sperantus was the father of Candius, and Candius and Livia (the daughter of Prisius) had married. Sperantus and Prisius, however, did not know that their children had married. The fathers thought that Accius and Silena (whom Candius and Livia had been disguised as) had married.

The musicians, however, had heard that Candius and Livia were married.

“I believe they are asleep,” Nasutus said. “It would be a pity to awaken them.”

“It would be a shame they should sleep the first night,” Beduneus said.

Newlyweds have better things to do than sleep.

“But who can tell at which house they lie,” Synis said. “It may be that they are at Prisius’ house. We’ll try both houses.”

“Come, let’s draw like men,” Nasutus said.

They would play their fiddles like men.

Warriors draw their swords out of their sheathes. Bows can be likened to swords.

Synis said:

“Now, tune; tune, I say.”

Beduneus had some trouble tuning.

Synis complained:

“That boy, I think, will never profit in his faculty: He will never do well as a fiddler. He loses his rosin and so his fiddle goes *cush, cush*, a sound like that made by someone going *wetshod* in wet shoes. And his mouth is so dry that he hasn’t spittle for his pin as I have.”

Rosin was used on bowstrings.

Spittle was used to moisten the holes in which tuning pegs, aka pins, were set; the spittle helped keep the fiddle in tune longer.

Beduneus said, “By the Virgin Mary, sir, you see I go *wetshod* and dry mouthed, for yet I could never get new shoes or good drink. Rather than lead this life, I will throw my fiddle into the leads for a hobbler.”

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “leads” are “strips of lead used to cover a roof,” and a “lead” (singular) is “A path; a garden path; an alley.”

A hobbler is a child’s wobbling toy top.

Beduneus was threatening to throw away his fiddle because he could not get good notes out of it.

“Boy, no more words,” Synis said. “There’s a time for all things, although I say it who should not say it. I have been a minstrel these thirty years, and I have tickled more strings than thou have hairs, but I was never yet so misused.”

“Let us not brabble — quarrel — but play,” Nasutus said. “Tomorrow is a new day.”

Beduneus said:

“I am sorry I speak in your cast — I am sorry to interrupt you.

“What shall we sing?”

Synis answered, “‘The Love Knot,’ for that’s best for a bridal.”

A bridal is a wedding feast. Or it is a wedding and the celebrations associated with it.

They sang the song.

Synis said, “Good morning, fair bride, and may God send you joy of your bridal.”

Sperantus looked out of a window and said to himself:

“What a bad deed do the twanglers make here! We have no trenchers — no plates — to scrape. It makes my teeth on edge to hear such grating.

The twanglers are the singers.

Sperantus then told the singers:

“Get you packing, or I’ll make you wear double stocks, and yet you shall be never the warmer.”

The double stocks are not stockings; they are the two stocks of a pillory.

“We come for good will, to wish the bride and bridegroom that God give them joy,” Synis said.

“Here is no wedding,” Sperantus said.

“Yes, your son and Prisius’ daughter, Livia, were married, although you seem not to know it, yet they do not repent their wedding, I am sure,” Synis said.

Sperantus said, “My son, the villain! I would prefer that he had been fairly hanged.”

He meant hung on a gallows.

Nasutus said, “So he is, sir; you have your wish.”

He meant “well hung.”

Candius came out of his father’s house and said quietly to the musicians:

“Here, fiddlers, take this money and don’t say a word.”

He gave the fiddlers money and then said loudly so his father would hear:

“Here is no wedding. It was at Memphio’s house, yet I give you great thanks. Your music, although it missed the house, hit and pleased the mind. We were making our wedding preparations.”

Candius and Livia were married, but Candius did not want to reveal that just yet, so he was pretending that Accius and Silena were married, although they were not.

Synis said to Sperantus, “I beg your mercy, sir. I think it was Memphio’s son who was married.”

Memphio’s son was Accius.

“O ho, the case is altered,” Sperantus said. “Go thither then and be haltered for me.”

“Haltered” means “hung.”

“What’s the alms?” Nasutus asked. “How much did Candius give us?”

“An angel,” Synis said.

An angel was a gold coin worth ten shillings. This was a very good tip.

Beduneus said:

“I’ll warrant there’s some work towards: some plot afoot.

“Ten shillings is real money, even in Master Mayor’s purse.”

Even a rich man such as the mayor would find an angel to be a significant amount of money.

“Let us go to Memphio’s house and share equally,” Synis said. “When we have finished, all of you shall have new shoes.”

Beduneus said, “Aye, such as they cry at the ’sizes, ‘A mark in issues,’ and ‘mark in issues [in his shoes],’ and yet I never saw so much leather as would piece — patch — one’s shoes.

The ’sizes are the Assizes, a session in which justice was administered.

“Mark in issues” is 1) a fine of a mark (a unit of money), and 2) a flaw in shoes.

Synis said:

“No more joking.”

He divided the money among them and said:

“There’s the money.”

Beduneus said, “A good handsel — a good beginning — and I think the maidenhead of your liberality. This is the first time you have been generous.”

Nasutus said, “Come, here’s Memphio’s house. What shall we sing?”

Synis answered, “You know that Memphio is very rich and wise, and therefore let us strike the gentle stroke, and sing a catch.”

All three fiddlers sang:

*“The bride this night can catch no cold,*

*“No cold, the bridegroom’s young, not old,*

*“Like ivy he her fast does hold,”*

The first fiddler sang:

*“And clips her.”*

“Clips” means “embraces.”

The second fiddler sang:

*“And lips her.”*

“Lips” means “kisses.”

The third fiddler sang:

*“And flips her, too.”*

The bridegroom could flip the bride onto her stomach or back for a new sexual position. Or a “flip” could be a playful slap, perhaps on the bride’s butt.

All three fiddlers sang:

*“Then let them alone,*

*“They know what they do.”*

The first fiddler sang:

*“At laugh and lie down, if they play,”*

The second fiddler sang:

*“What ass against the sport can bray?”*

The third fiddler sang:

*“Such tick-tack has held many a day,”*

“Tick-tack” is a game that involves the insertion of pegs into holes.

The first fiddler sang:

*“And longer.”*

The second fiddler sang:

*“And stronger.*

*“It still holds, too.”*

All three fiddlers sang:

*“Then let them alone,*

*“They know what they do,*

*“This night,*

*“In delight*

*“Does thump away sorrow.*

*“Of billing*

*“Take your filling,*

*“So good morrow, good morrow.”*

“Thump” means “beat.”

“Billing” means “kissing.”

“Morrow” means “morning.”

Nasutus said, “Good morrow, mistress bride, and may God send you a huddle — an embrace.”

Memphio, the father of Accius, said, “What crowding knaves have we there? Case up your fiddles, or the constable shall cage you up. What bride are you talking about?”

Synis said:

“Here has been a wedding in Rochester, and it was told to me first that Sperantus’ son had married Prisius’ daughter — that Candius had married Livia.

“We were there, and they sent us to your worship, saying your son was matched with Stellio’s daughter — that Accius had married Silena.”

Thinking that he was the victim of a practical joke, Memphio said, “Has Sperantus — that churl — nothing to do but mock his neighbors? I’ll be even with him. And get yourselves gone, or I swear by the rood’s body I’ll lay you by the heels.”

“The rood’s body” is the body of Christ, crucified on a rood — a cross.

“To lay someone by the heels” means “to have someone arrested and put in the stocks.”

Angry, Nasutus said:

“Sing a catch! Here’s a fair catch indeed!

“Sing until we catch cold in our feet, and be called ‘knave’ until our ears glow on our heads.

“Your worship is ‘wise,’ sir.”

Memphio said to his serving-boy, “Dromio, shake off — unleash — a whole kennel of officers, to punish these jarring rogues. I’ll teach them to stretch their dried sheep’s guts at my door, and to mock one who stands to be made mayor.”

Dried sheep’s guts were used to make bowstrings.

Memphio was hoping to become Mayor of Rochester.

Dromio said:

“I had thought they had been sticking of — killing — pigs because I heard such a squeaking.

“I go, sir.”

Memphio and Dromio moved away from the window.

“Let us be packing,” Synis said. “Let’s go.”

“Where is my scabbard?” Nasutus said. “Let everyone sheathe his science.”

His “scabbard” was a fiddle case.

Struggling with putting his fiddle into its case, Beduneus said, “A plague on the shoemaker who made this boot — this case — for my fiddle. This case is too strait — too narrow.”

Synis said:

“No more words. It will be thought the offenders were the four waits. Let them wring — let them suffer.”

The four waits were four musicians maintained at public charge. They would be blamed instead of Synis, Nasutus, and Beduneus for causing a disturbance.

Synis continued:

“As for the wags who played this practical joke on us, we’ll talk with them.”

They exited.

Memphio and Dromio came out of Memphio's house.

"The musicians are gone, sir," Dromio said.

Memphio said:

"If they had stayed, the stocks would have stayed them."

They would have been put in the stocks, and they would not have been able to move.

Memphio then asked:

"But sirrah, what shall we do now?"

Dromio said, "As I advised you, make a marriage match, for it is better for one house to be encumbered with two fools than for two houses to be encumbered with two fools."

A proverb stated, "Two fools in one house are too many."

Memphio said:

"It is true, for it being bruited about that each of us has a fool, as a child, who, if the person is wise, will make an offer of marriage to any of them?"

Memphio was sure that because of gossip, everyone knew that his son and Stellio's daughter were fools.

Memphio continued:

"Besides, fools are fortunate, fools are fair, fools are honest."

A proverb stated, "A fool cannot speak unlike himself."

Dromio said:

"Aye, sir, and more than that, fools are not wise.

"A wise man is melancholy for moonshine in the water."

In other words: A wise man longs for something that is impossible to get.

Dromio continued:

"A wise man is full of worry, building castles in the air."

In other words: A wise man is anxious because he tries to do things that are impossible to do.

Dromio continued:

"A wise man commonly has a fool as his heir."

Memphio said, "But what do thou say to thy dame's chafing — thy mistress' fretting and nagging?"

Memphio had a shrewish wife.

"Nothing but that all her dishes are chafing dishes," Dromio said.



Chafing dishes keep food warm for a long time.

“I wish that her tongue were in thy belly,” Memphio said.

This would accomplish two things: 1) silence his wife, and 2) feed Dromio.

“I would as willingly have a raw ox-tongue in my stomach,” Dromio said.

He would prefer a different kind of food.

“Why?” Memphio asked.

Dromio said:

“The clapper of a bell makes my ears burn a quarter of a mile off.

Church bells are loud.

“By the Virgin Mary, imagine if the clapper — your wife’s noisy tongue — were to hang within an inch of my heart. Don’t you think it would beat my heart black and blue?”

Memphio said, “Well, patience is a virtue, but pinching is worse than any vice, I will break this matter to Stellio, and if he is willing, this day shall be their wedding.”

He was now willing to permit his son, Accius, to marry Stellio’s daughter, Silena.

“Then this day shall be my liberty!” Dromio said.

Memphio said, “Aye, if Stellio’s daughter had been wise, and if by thy means she had been tricked into accepting a fool to be her husband.”

Dromio said, “Then sir, I’ll revolt, and dash out the brains of your devices. I’ll ruin your plans.”

“Rather than that, I shall allow thou to be free,” Memphio said.

They exited.

— 5.5 —

Sperantus and his serving-boy, Halfpenny, entered the scene from one direction.

Prisius and his serving-boy, Lucio, entered the scene from another direction.

Sperantus said to Halfpenny:

“Boy, this smoke is a token of some fire. I don’t like the luck of it. It seems like an ill omen.

“Why should these minstrels dream of a marriage?”

“Alas, sir, they rustle and creep into every place,” Halfpenny said. “Give credit to no such words.”

Sperantus said:

“I will go to Prisius. I cannot be quiet and at peace in my mind, and at a good time — now — I see and meet him.”

He said to Prisius:

“Good morning, neighbor.”

Prisius said, “I cast the morning in thy face, and I bid ‘good night’ to all the neighborhood.”

Sperantus said:

“This is your old trick, to pick one’s purse and then to pick quarrels.

“I tell thee, I had rather thou would rob my money chest than imbecile and embezzle my son.”

“Embezzle” means “cheat.”

To “imbecile” Sperantus’ son, Candius, means to “marry him to a fool.”

Prisius said:

“Thy son! My daughter is seduced, for I hear say she is married, and our serving-boys can tell.”

He then said to his serving-boy, Lucio, “What do thou say? Tell the truth or I’ll grind thee to powder in my mill. Are they married?”

Of course, Candius and Livia were in fact married.

“It is true that they were both in a church,” Lucio said.

“That is no fault,” Prisius said. “The place is holy.”

“And there was with them a priest,” Halfpenny said.

“Why, what place is fitter for a priest than a church?” Sperantus said.

“And they took one another by the hand,” Lucio said.

“Bah, that’s only common courtesy,” Prisius said.

“And the priest spoke many kind words,” Halfpenny said.

Prisius said:

“That showed he was no dumb minister.”

“Dumb” can mean “unable to speak.” Or the word may refer to a silenced clergyman — one not allowed to speak because of heterodox views not conforming with orthodox views.

Prisius added:

“But what did they say? Did thou hear any words between them?”

“Indeed, there was a bargain during life, and the clock cried, ‘God give them joy,’” Lucio said.

Weddings at this time had to be performed before the clock struck twelve. The clock’s striking after the wedding was performed showed that the wedding had been completed before twelve.

“Villain!” Prisius said. “They are married.”

“Nay, I don’t think so,” Halfpenny said.

Sperantus said:

“Yes, yes, ‘God give you joy’ is a binder. It finishes the wedding ceremony.

“I’ll quickly be resolved.”

He called:

“Candius, come forth.”

Candius came out of Sperantus’ house.

Prisius said:

“And I’ll be put out of doubt.”

He called:

“Livia, come forth.”

Livia came out of Prisius’ house.

“The micher — the truant — hangs down his head,” Sperantus said about his son, Candius.

“The baggage begins to blush,” Prisius said about his daughter, Livia.

“Now the game begins,” Halfpenny whispered to Lucio.

“I believe it will be no game for us,” Lucio whispered back.

The two serving-boys could soon be in big trouble.

“Are you married, young master?” Sperantus asked his son.

“I cannot deny it,” Candius replied. “It was done very recently.”

“But thou shall repent that it was done so soon,” Sperantus said.

“Then it is bootless — pointless — to ask you, Livia, if you are married,” Prisius said.

“Aye, and it is needless to be angry,” Livia said.

“It shall surpass anger,” Prisius said. “Thou shall find it rage.”

“You gave your consent,” Livia said.

“Impudent giglot — hussy — wasn’t it enough to abuse me?” Prisius asked. “Do you also have to lie about me?”

Candius said to his father, “You, sir, agreed to this marriage match.”

Sperantus asked:

“Thou brazen-face boy, do thou think to use your learning to persuade me that I agreed to this marriage? Where did I consent? When did I consent? What witness says that I did consent?”

Candius said, “You consented in this place yesterday before Dromio and Risio.”

Prisius said, “I remember that we heard a marriage contract between Memphio’s son and Stellio’s daughter, and that our good wills, which were not needed, being asked for, we gave them, which was of no significance.”

Candius said, “It was only the apparel of Accius and Silena. We — Livia and I — were the persons in the apparel and the persons who made the marriage contract.”

Realizing that he had agreed to the marriage, Prisius said:

“O villainy not to be borne!”

He then said to his serving-boy, Lucio:

“Were thou privy to this practice? Did you know about this trick?”

“In a manner,” Lucio said.

“I’ll pay thee after a manner,” Prisius said.

Sperantus said to Halfpenny, “And you oatmeal groat, were you acquainted with this plot?”

Halfpenny is small, and an oatmeal groat — a single grain of oatmeal — is small.

“An accessory, as it were,” Halfpenny said.

Sperantus said:

“Thou shall be punished as a principal.”

Looking up, he said:

“Here come Memphio and Stellio. They likely were privy, and all their heads were laid together to grieve our hearts.”

Memphio and his serving-boy, Dromio, entered the scene. So did Stellio and his serving-boy, Risio.

Memphio said, “Come, Stellio, the assurance — the financial settlement — may be made tomorrow, and our children assured — betrothed — today.”

The fathers had arranged for their children — Accius and Silena — to become engaged.

“Let the conveyance run as we agreed,” Stellio said.

Prisius said, “You convey cleanly indeed, if cheating is clean — plain — dealing, for in the apparel of your children you have conveyed a marriage match between our children, which grieves us not a little.”

“Convey” can mean 1) transfer property, or 2) cheat.

Memphio said, “In the apparel of your children, you have revealed the folly of our children, which shames us overmuch.”

“But it does not matter,” Stellio said about Accius and Silena. “Although they are fools, they are not beggars.”

“And although our children are disobedient, they are not fools,” Sperantus said about Candius and Livia.

“So now they tune their pipes,” Dromio whispered to Risio.

They were warming up their voices for what could be a major shouting match.

“You shall hear ‘sweet’ music between a hoarse raven and a screech owl,” Risio said.

Memphio said, “Neighbors, let us not vary and quarrel. Our serving-boys have played their cheating parts. I suspected no less at the tavern, where our four knaves met together.”

“If it were knavery for four to meet in a tavern, your worships know well there were four others in a tavern,” Risio said.

The others were the four fathers.

“This villain calls us knaves by craft,” Stellio said.

Lucio said, “Truly I dare to swear that he used no craft but speaks and means plainly.”

Sperantus said:

“This is worse.

“Come, Halfpenny, tell the truth and escape the rod — escape being beaten.”

Halfpenny said, “It is as good to confess here while trussed — that is, with my breeches being held up — as at home with my hose about my heels.”

His pants would be down as he was whipped at home.

Dromio said to Sperantus:

“Nay, I’ll tell thee.”

He then said to Halfpenny:

“For it will never become thee to utter it.”

“Well, out with it!” Memphio said.

Dromio said:

“Memphio had a fool as his son, which Stellio did not know.

“Stellio had a fool as his daughter, which was unknown to Memphio.

“To cheat each other, they dealt with their serving-boys for a marriage match. They wanted their children — Accius and Silena — to marry.

“We met with Lucio and Halfpenny, who told the love between their masters’ children. The young people were deeply in love, and the fathers were unwilling to consent.”

The young people deeply in love were Candius and Livia.

Risio said:

“I’ll take the tale by the end — the tail.

“Then we four met, which argued we were no mountains.”

A proverb stated, “Friends may meet, but mountains never greet.”

Risio continued:

“And in a tavern we met, which argued we were mortal.”

Many mortals enjoy drinking.

Risio continued:

“And everyone in his wine told his day’s work, which was a sign we did not forget our business.

“Seeing all our masters busy with plots, we determined a little to trouble the water before they drank, so that in the attire of your children our masters’ ‘wise’ children’ — Accius and Silena — revealed their good natures, and in the garments of our masters’ children your children — Candius and Livia — made a marriage.

“This all stood upon — depended upon — us poor children and your young children to show that old folks may be overtaken — outsmarted — by children.”

“Here’s a ‘child-ren’ indeed!” Prisius said. “I’ll never forget it.”

A “ren” is a “run.” The children — especially the serving-boys — had metaphorically run circles around the old fathers.

Memphio said:

“I will.”

Memphio could forget his child’s disobedience by forgiving and forgetting.

Memphio called:

“Accius, come forth.”

Stellio said:

“I forgive all.”

Stellio called:

“Silena, come forth.”

Sperantus said to Prisius, “Neighbor, these things cannot be recalled; therefore, we might as well consent to our children’s marriage, seeing in all our purposes we also missed the mark, for those two will match their children.”

He wanted Prisius and him to forgive their children — Candius and Livia — for marrying without their fathers’ permission.

Prisius said:

“Well, about that more soon.”

He lowered his voice and said to Sperantus:

“We will not forgive them suddenly lest our ungracious youths think we dare do no other thing, but in truth their loves stir up natural feelings of fatherly love in me.”

Accius and Silena entered the scene, each coming from his or her father’s house.

Memphio said, “Come, Accius, thou must be married to Silena. How are thou minded about it?”

“What!” Accius said. “Married forever and ever?”

“Accius, what else?” Memphio asked.

“I shall never be able to endure it!” Accius said. “It will be so tedious!”

Stellio said, “Silena, thou must be betrothed to Accius, and thou must love him for thy husband.”

“I would as willingly have a husband made out of rags,” Silena said. “I prefer a rag doll to Accius.”

“Why, Silena?” Stellio asked.

“Why, look how he looks,” Silena said.

Accius had a reputation for being good-looking, but chances are, he was looking at her with distaste.

“If you will not marry me, another will,” Accius said.

“I thank you for my old cap,” Silena said.

In other words: Thanks for nothing.

“And if you are so lusty, lend me two shillings,” Accius said.

“Lusty” can mean “joyful.” It can also mean “arrogant.”

“We are happy and fortunate,” Prisius whispered to Sperantus. “We missed the foolish marriage match.”

Memphio said to Accius, “Come, you shall immediately be contracted.”

Memphio wanted the marriage contract — the betrothal — to take place.

Dromio said, “Contract their wits no more; they are shrunk close — that is, concealed — already.”

Accius said, “Well, father, here’s my hand. Strike the bargain.”

“Must he lie with me?” Silena asked.

“No, Silena, he must lie by thee,” Stellio said.

Both “lie with” and “lie by” can mean to 1) “lie beside,” and 2) “have sex with.”

Silena may have meant meaning #1 and Stellio may have meant meaning #2.

Accius said, "I shall give her the humble bee's kiss."

He would have sex with her. A "sting" can be a metaphor for a penis.

Vicinia entered the scene. With her were Maestius and Serena.

Vicinia said, "I forbid the banns."

She was declaring that the marriage of Accius and Silena must not take place.

"What!" Risio said. "Do thou think that they are rats, and do thou fear they shall be poisoned?"

"Bane" is poison.

"You do, Vicinia?" Memphio said. "Why?"

Vicinia said, "Pay attention. About eighteen years ago, I nursed thee a son, Memphio, and I nursed thee a daughter, Stellio."

"True," Stellio said.

"True," Memphio said.

Vicinia said:

"I had at that time two children of my own, and being poor, I thought it better to exchange them than kill them."

She is unlikely to have thought about murdering her children, but rather to have thought that they would die because of the effects of poverty. After all, she did not kill the children whom she exchanged with her own children.

Vicinia continued:

"I imagined if by a plot I could thrust my children into your houses, they would be well brought up in their youth, and wisely provided for in their age.

"Nature wrought with me and I wanted the best for my children, and when they were weaned, I sent to your homes my children instead of your children. And hitherto you have kept them as tenderly as if they had been yours.

"Growing in years, I found the children — your children — I kept at home to love each other dearly, at first like brother and sister, which I rejoiced at, but at length they became too forward in affection, which although inwardly I could not dislike, yet openly I seemed to disallow and disapprove."

Maestius and Serena were beginning to love each other more like boyfriend and girlfriend than like brother and sister.

Vicinia continued:

"They increased in their loving humors and fancies, and I did not cease to chastise them for their loose demeanors: their too-much love for each other. At last, it came to my ears that my son who was out with Memphio was a fool, and that my daughter who was out with Stellio



was also unwise, and yet although they were brother and sister, there was a match being hammered — being devised — between them.”

Vicinia’s children were actually the simpletons Accius and Silena.

Memphio’s son was actually Maestius.

Stellio’s daughter was actually Serena.

“What monstrous tale is this?” Memphio asked.

“And I am sure that tale is incredible — it is unable to be believed,” Stellio said.

“Let her end her discourse,” Sperantus said. “Let her say what she has come here to say.”

“I’ll never believe it,” Accius said.

“Hold thy peace,” Memphio said. “Be quiet.”

Vicinia said:

“My very bowels earned — that is, grieved — within me, that I should be author of such vile incest, a hindrance to lawful love.”

If Accius and Silena were to marry, they would be committing incest because they were biologically brother and sister.

Vicinia continued:

“I went to the good old woman Mother Bombie to know the event and outcome of this practice, who told me this day I might prevent the danger, and upon submission escape the punishment. And so hither I have come to claim my children, although they are both fools, and to deliver to you two — Memphio and Stellio — your children, who are both loving.”

“Is this possible?” Memphio said. “How shall we believe it?”

“It cannot sink into my head,” Stellio said.

Vicinia said:

“This test cannot fail. Memphio, your son had a mole under his ear. I made a mole under my child’s ear by art.

“You shall see it taken away with the juice of mandrake.

“Behold.”

She used mandrake juice to rub away the mole behind Accius’ ear.

Vicinia then said:

“Now for your biological son’s mole: No herb can undo that which nature has done.”

She tried but failed to rub away the mole behind Maestius’ ear.

Maestius was the son of Memphio.

Vicinia then said:

“Your daughter, Stellio, has on her wrist a mole, which I counterfeited on my daughter’s arm, and that you shall see taken away like the other.”

She used mandrake juice to rub away the mole that was on Silena’s wrist.

Serena was the daughter of Stellio.

Vicinia then said:

“Thus you see I do not dissemble, hoping you will pardon me, as I have pitied them.”

She had pitied Maestius and Serena, and her pity (in addition to her wish to keep her biological children from committing incest) had helped her decide to reveal their true parentage.

Memphio, the father of Maestius, said, “This is my son, O fortunate Memphio!”

Stellio, the father of Serena, said, “This is my daughter, more than thrice happy Stellio!”

Maestius said, “How happy is Maestius, thou blessed Serena, who being neither children to poor parents, nor brother and sister by nature, may enjoy their love by consent of parents and nature.”

Maestius and Serena could marry and enjoy their love: have sex together.

Accius said, “Wait! I’ll not swap — exchange — my father for all this!”

Silena said:

“What! Do you think I’ll be cheated of my father? I think I should not!

“Mother Bombie told me my father knew me not, my mother bore me not. She said that I was falsely bred [brought up], truly begot. A plague on Mother Bombie!”

Silena’s biological father did not know her. Stellio’s wife did not give birth to Silena.

Dromio said, “Mother Bombie told us we would be found cheaters, and in the end we would be cheated by cheaters. Well may thou fare, Mother Bombie.”

The four serving-boys had been deceivers and they had been deceived by deceivers.

Vicinia had been the main deceiver. Other deceivers had been deceivers because they had not known their true familial relationships.

Risio said to Dromio, “I heard Mother Bombie say that thou shall die a beggar. Beware of Mother Bombie.”

Yes, beware of Mother Bombie. What Mother Bombie predicts comes true.

“Why, have you all been with Mother Bombie?” Prisius asked.

“Yes, all, and as far as I can see Mother Bombie has foretold all,” Lucio said.

Memphio, the father of Maestius, said, “Indeed, she is cunning, knowledgeable, and wise, never doing harm, but always practicing good. Seeing these things fall out thus, are you content, Stellio, that the marriage match should go forward?”

This marriage match was between their children: Maestius and Serena.

Stellio, the father of Serena, said, “Aye, I am content, with double joy, having found for a fool a wise maiden, and finding between them both the utmost love.”

Prisius, the father of Livia, said:

“Then to end all jars, aka quarrels, our children’s marriage matches shall stand with our good liking.

“Livia, enjoy Candius.”

Sperantus, the father of Candius, said, “Candius, enjoy Livia.”

Candius asked, “How shall we recompense fortune, which to our loves has added our parents’ good wills?”

Maestius asked, “How shall we requite fortune, which to our loves has added lawfulness, and which to our poor estate has added a competent living?”

The biological parents of Maestius and Serena were financially well off. Maestius and Serena had gone from impoverished to comfortable.

Memphio said, “Vicinia, thy crime is pardoned, although the law would see it punished. We are content to keep Silena in the house with the new married couple.”

Stellio said, “And I do maintain Accius in our house.”

Accius and Selena would exchange “fathers.” Memphio had been Accius’ “father,” and Stellio had been Selena’s “father.”

This is likely to be good for all of them. Accius had been spoiled in his home through being over-indulged. Selena was not a natural fool, but she had overweening pride.

In his new home, Accius would not be spoiled, and in her new home, Silena would be less proud.

Earlier, Mother Bombie had predicted about Maestius and Serena, “And both of you together must relieve a fool.”

With different “parents,” both Accius and Selena may cease to be fools.

But the fool who is relieved may be Vicinia, who had acted badly when she exchanged babies.

Vicinia said, “Come, my children, although fortune has not provided you with lands, yet you see you are not destitute of friends. I shall be eased of a charge both in purse and conscience. In conscience, I have revealed my lewd practice — my vile deception. In purse, I will have you kept of alms.”

Vicinia’s biological children — Accius and Silena — would be provided for by the charity of Memphio and Stellio.

Accius said to Silena, “Come, if you are my sister, it’s the better for you.”

“Come, brother, I think it’s better than it was,” Silena said. “I should have been but a bald — a bad — bride. I’ll eat as much pie as if I had been married.”

“Let’s also forgive the knavery of our serving-boys since all turns to our good fortune,” Memphio said.

“Agreed, all are pleased,” Stellio said. “Now the serving-boys are unpunished.”

The hackneyman, sergeant, and scrivener entered the scene.

“Nay, wait, don’t forget about us, and do seek redress for our wrongs, or we’ll complain to the mayor,” the hackneyman said.

“What’s the matter?” Prisius asked.

The hackneyman said:

“I arrested Memphio’s serving-boy, Dromio, over a horse.

“After much mocking, at the request of his fellow wags I was happy to take a bond jointly of them all. They had me go into a tavern. There they made me, the scrivener, and the sergeant drunk. They pawned the sergeant’s mace for the wine, and they sealed for me an obligation that is nothing to the purpose: It does not do what it is supposed to do.

“I ask you to read it.”

Memphio said, “What imps these serving-boys are!”

He read the bond and then said:

“Why, by this bond you can demand nothing.

“Things done in drink may be repented in soberness, but not remedied.”

Dromio said, “Sir, I have his acquittance of my debt, so let him sue his bond.”

The hackneyman said, “I’ll cry quittance — get even — with thee.”

The sergeant said, “And so will I, or it shall cost me the laying on freely of my mace.”

If he did not get even with Dromio, he would not be able to use his mace to beat Dromio because his mace had been pawned.

But if he did get even with Dromio, he would get his mace back, and he would beat Dromio with it.

The scrivener said, “And I’ll give thee such a dash with a pen as shall cost thee many a pound, with such a *Noverint* as Cheapside can show none such!”

*Noverint* — “Let all men know” — is the formal beginning of a legal writ.

The scrivener would draw up legal documents that would cause Dromio much trouble.

“Do your worst!” Halfpenny said. “Our knaveries will revenge it upon your children’s children.”

Deuteronomy 5:9 states, “*Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,*” (King James Version).

“Thou boy!” Memphio said.

He then said to the hackneyman:

“We will pay for the hire of the horse. Don’t be angry. The boys have been in a merry cozening — tricking — vein, for they have served their masters in the same way, but all must be forgotten.

“Now all are content except the poor fiddlers; they shall be sent for to perform at the marriage and they will have double fees.”

“You need no more send for a fiddler to a feast than send for a beggar to a fair,” Dromio said.

In other words: The fiddlers will show up, whether sent for or not.

“This day we will feast at my house,” Stellio said.

“Tomorrow we will feast at my house,” Memphio said.

“The next day we will feast at my house,” Prisius said.

Sperantus said, “Then we will feast at my house the last day, and so on even terms — with all the fathers contributing — we will spend this week in good cheer.”

Dromio said, “Then we would best be going while everyone is pleased, and yet these couples are not fully pleased until the priest will have done his worst.”

The priest needed to perform the marriages, which were required after the betrothals, and then the couples could be fully satisfied in bed.

Risio said, “Come, Sergeant, we’ll toss wine into our mouths all this week, and we will make thy mace arrest a boiled capon.”

The sergeant said, “Say no more words about that at the wedding. If the mayor should know about it, I would be in danger of losing my job.”

His mace had been pawned for alcohol.

Risio said, “Then be careful how you exert your authority over such people as we serving-boys are. Be careful how you give us a taste of your legal authority.”

“If you mace us, we’ll pepper you,” Halfpenny said.

Mace and pepper are spices.

“Come, sister, the best thing is that we shall have good cheer these four days,” Accius said to Silena.

“And be fools forever,” Lucio said.

Silena said, “That’s none of our upseekings!”

It is wise not to seek to be a fool.

## **NOTES (MOTHER BOMBIE)**

Silena.

*My father boards me already; therefore I care not if your name were Geoffrey.*

(2.3.35-36)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Mother Bombie*. Ed. Leah Scragg. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010. P. 101.

The phrase “Farewell gentle Geoffrey” appears in the play *Mankind*, where it is said by Nought, one of three unthrifty guests.

*Nought.*

*Go we hence, a devil way!*

*Here is the door; here is the way!*

*Farewell, gentle Geoffrey!*

*I pray God give you good night!*

[Exeunt three unthrifty guests: Nought, Now-a-Days, and New Guise.]

*Mercy.*

*Thanked be God! we have a fair deliverance*

*Of these three unthrifty guests:*

Source of Above:

*Mankind*. Collected in *Early English Dramatists — Recently Recovered “Lost” Tudor Plays with some others*, by Various.

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45805/45805-8.txt>

A modern-spelling edition (with notes) appears here:

[https://bidoonism.files.wordpress.com/2019/12/jhk\\_mankind\\_archive.pdf](https://bidoonism.files.wordpress.com/2019/12/jhk_mankind_archive.pdf)

Silena.

*Aha, are you there with your bears?*

(2.3.52)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Mother Bombie*. Ed. Leah Scragg. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010. P. 101.

The paragraph below appears in the *Oxford English Dictionary* entry about the noun “bear”:

*[Explained in Joe Miller's Jests (1739) 28 as originally the exclamation of a man who, not liking a sermon he had heard on Elisha and the bears (2 Kings 2:23–4), went next*

*Sunday to another church, only to find the same preacher and the same discourse.]*

The *Oxford English Dictionary* states that the joke is explained in *Joe Miller's Jests* (1739).

*“123. A Gentleman hearing a Parson preach upon the Story of the Children being devoured by the two She Bears, who reviled the old Man, and not much liking his Sermon; some Time after seeing the same Parson come into the Pulpit to preach at another Church: O ho! said he, What are you here with your Bears again.”*

Source: *Joe Miller's Jests, or The Wits Vade-Mecum*. Gutenberg edition.

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/40127>

The characters of Silena and Accius are interesting. They are simpletons, but they are probably not born fools. They seem to have been raised badly.

Silena's "bears" comment seems to make sense in the context of *Joe Miller's Jests*, but that book was published in 1739, and *Mother Bombie* was published in 1594. Was the joke current in 1594?

— 4.2 —

Memphio.

*Ah! thy son will be begged for a concealed fool.*

(4.2.121-122)

Source of Above: Lyly, John. *Mother Bombie*. Ed. Leah Scragg. *The Revels Plays*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010. P. 152.

There is a play on "concealed land":

King Henry VIII had dissolved the monasteries and taken their land, but some land that should have gone to the crown was concealed — the land that was taken from the monasteries and should have gone to the crown was instead held by private owners. Queen Elizabeth I gave commissions to people to find and report concealed land; these people received part or sometimes even all of the land. Some greedy people tried to claim that land legally owned by others was actually concealed land. These greedy people begged the land — they claimed they were entitled to part or all of the land as a reward.

## **SAPPHO AND PHAO**



## CAST OF CHARACTERS (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

*Phao*, a young ferryman.

*Sappho*, princess of Syracuse.

### LADIES OF SAPPHO'S COURT:

*Mileta*.

*Lamia*.

*Ismena*.

*Canope*.

*Eugenua*.

*Favilla*.

### OTHER MORTAL CHARACTERS:

*Trachinus*, a courtier.

*Criticus*, page to Trachinus. A page is a boy-servant.

*Pandion*, a scholar.

*Molus*, page to Pandion.

*Sybilla*, an aged soothsayer.

### GODS AND GODDESSES:

*Venus*, goddess of love and beauty and sexual passion.

*Cupid*, her son, god of love. He is young enough to be able to sit on a woman's lap.

*Vulcan*, her husband, the blacksmith god.

*Calypho*, one of the Cyclops.

**SCENE:** Syracuse, Sicily

### NOTES:

In this society, a person of higher rank would use "thou," "thee," "thine," and "thy" when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use "you" and "your" when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word "wench" at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word "fair" can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, good-looking.

### ROMAN NAME (GREEK NAME)

Bacchus (Dionysus): god of wine and ecstasy

Ceres (Demeter): goddess of grain and agriculture

Cupid (Eros): god of love; also, son of Venus

Diana (Artemis): goddess of the hunt

Juno (Hera): wife of Jupiter, king of the gods, and so she is queen of the gods

Jupiter, aka Jove (Zeus): king of the gods

Mercury (Hermes): a messenger-god

Neptune (Poseidon): god of the sea

Proserpine (Persephone): wife of Pluto, god of the Land of the Dead; also, daughter of Ceres

Pluto (Hades): god of the Land of the Dead

Ulysses (Odysseus): hero of Homer's epic poem *Odyssey*

Venus (Aphrodite): goddess of sexual desire

Vesta (Hestia): goddess of the hearth

Vulcan (Hephaestus): the blacksmith god

## **EDITIONS**

Peter Lukacs has excellently edited and annotated this play. It can be downloaded free here:

<http://elizabethandrama.org/the-playwrights/john-lyly/sapho-and-phao-by-john-lyly/>

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David Bevington has also excellently edited and annotated this play:

Lyly, John. *Campaspe. Sappho and Phao*. The Revels Plays. *Campaspe* edited by G.K. Hunter. *Sappho and Phao* edited by David Bevington. Manchester, England and New York: Manchester University Press. 1991.

## CHAPTER 1 (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

— 1.1 —

Near his ferry that took passengers to Syracuse, Sicily, Phao said to himself:

“Thou art a ferryman, Phao, yet thou art a free man. Your riches are contentment, and your honors are a quiet mind. Thy thoughts are no higher than thy fortunes and luck, nor are thy desires greater than thy calling.”

Phao was a ferryman, and he had no desire to be anything other than a ferryman.

Phao continued:

“He who climbs stands on glass and falls on thorn.”

Glass is easily broken.

Phao continued:

“Thy heart’s thirst is satisfied with thy hand’s thrift, and thy gentle labors in the day turn to sweet slumbers in the night.”

“Thy hand’s thrift” means “thy hand’s industry.” Phao’s income from his work was enough to supply him with what he wanted.

Phao continued:

“As much does it delight thee to rule thine oar in a calm stream as it does Sappho to sway the scepter in her splendid court and rule this city.

“Envy never casts her eye low, ambition points always upward, and revenge barks only at stars.

“Thou fare delicately, if thou have a fare to buy anything. Thine fishing pole is ready when thine oar is idle, and as sweet is the fish that thou catch in the river as the fowl that others buy in the market.”

Phao had enough food. He ate well when he had a paying passenger, and if he didn’t have a paying passenger, he ate the fish he caught from the river.

Phao continued:

“Thou need not fear poison in thy glass, nor treason in thy guard.”

Many Roman emperors died of other than natural causes. The same is true of many medieval and Renaissance kings.

Phao continued:

“The wind is thy greatest enemy, whose might is withstood with policy: skillful navigation. Oh, sweet life, seldom found under a golden roof, but often found under a thatched cottage.”

He saw someone coming and said:

“But here comes someone. I will go aside and listen; it may be a passenger.”

Phao retired.

Venus and Cupid appeared on the scene. Venus is the goddess of sexual passion, and Cupid — her son — is the god of love. Cupid was carrying a bow and arrows.

They were traveling in the human realm and were not instantly recognizable as goddess and god.

Venus complained about her husband and her life. Her husband, Vulcan, was the blacksmith to the gods. His legs were crooked, but his arms and shoulders were strong.

Venus said:

“It is no less unseemly than unwholesome for Venus, who is most honored in princes’ courts, to live with Vulcan in a blacksmith’s forge, where bellows blow instead of lovers’ sighs, dark smokes rise instead of sweet perfumes, and instead of the panting of loving hearts, is heard only the beating of steeled hammers.

“Unhappy is Venus. While carrying the fire of passion in thine own breast, thou must dwell with fire in his forge.

“What does Vulcan do all day but endeavor to be as crabbed in manners as he is crooked in body, driving nails when he should give kisses, and hammering hard armors when he should sing sweet amours — sweet love songs?

“It came by lot, not love, that I was linked with him.”

According to Venus, the gods cast lots to determine whom she would marry.

A different account is that when Vulcan was born with crooked legs, his mother, Juno, queen of the gods, threw him down from Mount Olympus. He fell for a day, and then two sea nymphs, Thetis (mother of Achilles) and Eurynome, took care of him. Vulcan created a golden throne for Juno, and when she sat in it, shackles appeared and bound her to the throne. The only way that Jupiter, king of the gods and husband to Juno, could convince Vulcan to release Juno was to give him a wife: Venus.

Venus continued:

“He gives thee bolts, Cupid, instead of arrows, fearing perhaps (jealous fool that he is) that if he should give thee an arrowhead, he should make himself a broad head.”

Bolts are short, blunt arrows.

Cupid shoots arrows into people’s hearts. When one of his gold arrows hits a person’s heart, that person falls in love.

Short, blunt arrows cannot pierce the heart.

A broad head is a head that has horns: the sign of a cuckold — a man with an unfaithful wife. Venus was joking that Vulcan was afraid to give Cupid real arrows because Cupid might shoot Venus in the heart with an arrow and make her fall in love with someone who would help her make Vulcan a cuckold.

Venus continued:

“But come, we will go to Syracuse, where thy deity shall be shown by your use of your arrows, and where my disdain for a woman who has never fallen in love shall be shown. I will yoke the neck that has yet never bowed, at which, if Jove repine and complain, Jove shall repent. Sappho shall know, no matter how beautiful Sappho is, that there is a Venus who can conquer, no matter how fortunate Sappho is.”

Both Venus and Cupid wanted human beings to fall in love. That included beautiful, fortunate women such as Sappho, ruler of Syracuse, who had never fallen in love.

Cupid said, “If Jove spies Sappho, he will devise some new shape to entertain her.”

Jove, aka Jupiter, like other gods, often had affairs with mortal women and with goddesses. The gods were shape-shifters, and because Jupiter had a jealous wife, he would sometimes change his shape in an attempt to hide an affair from her.

For example, Jove came to Leda while he was in the form of a swan. She gave birth to Helen of Troy.

For example, Jove came to Europa while he was in the form of a bull. She climbed on his back, and he carried her to the Island of Crete. She gave birth to King Minos of Crete. Europe was named after her.

For example, Jove came to Danae while he was in the form of a shower of gold. She gave birth to the hero Perseus.

“Strike thou Sappho, with an arrow,” Venus said. “Let Jove devise what shape he can.”

Cupid replied, “Mother, they say she keeps her thoughts on a lease to control them, that she conquers affections, and sends love up and down upon errands; I am afraid she will yerk — hit — me if I hit her with an arrow.”

“Peevish boy, can mortal creatures resist that which the immortal gods cannot redress and remedy?” Venus asked.

The immortal gods cannot resist the effects of Cupid’s arrows, and so mortal humans cannot resist the effects of his arrows.

“The gods are amorous, and therefore they are willing to be pierced,” Cupid said.

Yes, pierced with an arrow, and in the case of the goddesses such as Venus, pierced sexually.

“And she is amiable, lovable, and worthy to be loved, and therefore she must be pierced,” Venus said.

“I dare not shoot an arrow at her,” Cupid said.

“Draw thine arrow to the head, else I will make thee repent it at the heart,” Venus said. “Come along, and behold the ferry-boy who is ready to conduct us.”

Phao stepped forward.

Venus asked, “Pretty youth, do you keep the ferry that bends its way to Syracuse?”

“This is the ferry, fair lady, that bends its way to Syracuse,” Phao said.

“I fear, if the water should begin to swell and become rough, thou will lack the cunning needed to guide the ferry,” Venus said.

After all, Phao was young.

“These waters are commonly as the passengers are,” Phao said, “and therefore since I will be carrying one as fair in appearance as you, there is no cause to fear a rough sea.”

“To pass the time in thy boat, can thou devise any pastime?” Venus asked.

“If the wind is with me, I can fish or tell tales; if the wind is against me, it will be a pleasure for you to see me take pains to steer the ferry,” Phao said.

“I don’t like fishing, yet I was born from the sea,” Venus said.

A myth states that Venus was born in the sea foam by Paphos on the island of Cyprus.

“But he may bless fishing, whoever caught such a one as you in the sea,” Phao said, complimenting Venus.

“It was not with a fishing pole, my boy, but with a net,” Venus said.

“So, it was said that Vulcan caught Mars with Venus,” Phao said.

Phao was referring to a comic story about Venus having an affair with Mars, god of war, and the two being caught in a net by Vulcan, Venus’ husband.

“Did thou hear about that?” Venus said. “It was some tale.”

It was quite a tale, but Venus was not eager to speak about it.

“Yes, madam,” Phao said, “and in the boat I did mean to make that my tale.”

Did Phao know who Venus was? He was standing near Venus and Cupid as they talked, and their conversation revealed their identities. If Phao knew who Venus was, he was naïve to think that she wanted to hear that tale.

Venus said:

“It is not for a ferryman to talk about the gods’ loves, but to tell how thy father could dig and thy mother spin.

“But come, let us go now.”

“I am ready to wait on — to serve — you,” Phao said.

They exited.

— 1.2 —

Trachinus (a courtier), Criticus (Trachinus’ page), Pandion (a scholar), and Molus (Pandion’s servant) entered the scene that Phao, Venus, and Cupid had just vacated.

Trachinus said, “Pandion, since your coming from the university to the court, from the universities of Athens to Syracuse, how do you feel yourself altered, either in humor or

opinion?”

“Humor” can mean mood, disposition, or temperament.

Pandion replied, “I am altered, Trachinus. I have changed. I say no more, and I am ashamed that anyone should know so much.”

Trachinus said:

“Here you see as great virtue and far greater splendor: Here is the action of that which you contemplate. I mean Sappho. She is beautiful by nature, royal by birth, learned by education, politic and prudent by self-government, and rich by peace.”

Peace does have its financial advantages. Witness the waste in the Russia-Ukraine war.

Trachinus continued:

“It is hard to judge whether she is more beautiful or wise, more virtuous or fortunate.

“Besides, in this place, don’t you look on fair ladies instead of good letters, and behold fair faces instead of fine phrases?”

“Good letters” is good literature and good scholarship.

Trachinus continued:

“In universities, virtues and vices are only shadowed in colors, white and black.

“But in courts, virtues and vices are shown to the life, good and bad.”

In university, virtues and vices are studied using theories.

But in courts, virtues and vices are acted out in real life.

Trachinus continued:

“There in Athenian universities, times past are read of in old books, times present are set down by new devices and with new ideas, and times to come are conjectured at by aim, by prophecy, or by chance.

“But here in the royal court, are times in perfection, not by device, as fables, but in execution, as truths.”

In Athenian universities, times past can be read about in old books, times present are written about in new books, and times future are guessed about.

But in the royal court, the times are being created. In the royal court, actions are being performed that the universities will write about.

Trachinus continued:

“Believe me, Pandion, in Athens you have only tombs; in court we have the bodies.

“You have the pictures of Venus and the wise goddesses; we have the persons and the virtues.

“What has a scholar found out by study that a courtier has not found out by practice? Foolish are you who think to see more at the candle-snuff than the sunbeams, to sail further in a little

brook than in the main ocean, to make a greater harvest by gleaning — gathering — ears of corn left behind by reapers than reaping full fields.

“What do you say, Pandion, isn’t all this true?”

Two kinds of life exist: a life of action and a life of contemplation. Trachinus led the life of action in the court of Syracuse, and he extolled that life to Pandion, who had been living a life of contemplation in the Athenian universities.

“Trachinus, what more would you want?” Pandion said. “All that you say is true.”

“Cease then to lead thy life in a study, constructed by pinning together a few boards to form partitions, and endeavor to be a courtier and live under embossed, delicately carved roofs,” Trachinus said.

Pandion replied, “That would be a labor intolerable for Pandion.”

“Why?” Trachinus asked.

“Because it is harder to shape a life to dissemble, than to go forward with the liberty of truth,” Pandion answered.

Many royal courts contain factions that compete against each other for royal favors.

“Why, do you think that in court dissembling has any use?” Trachinus asked.

“Do you know in court any who intend to live?” Pandion asked.

Of course, all of us want to live, as long as we can be happy.

A proverb stated, “He that cannot dissemble knows not how to live (or rule).”

“You have no reason for saying so, except an old report,” Trachinus said.

“Report does not have always a blister on her tongue,” Pandion said.

A proverb stated, “Report has a blister on her tongue.”

“Report” means idle talk and gossip.

Sometimes, proverbs state the truth. The same is true of reports and gossip.

“Aye, but this is the court of Sappho, nature’s miracle, a court that resembles the tree salurus, whose root is fastened upon knotted steel, and in whose top bud leaves of pure gold,” Trachinus said.

The tree salurus does not exist, but it is a symbol of a firm, stable foundation that gives rise to metaphorical golden fruit.

“Yet has salurus blasts and water boughs, worms and caterpillars,” Pandion said.

“Blasts” are “blights.”

“Water boughs” are water-shoots growing from the tree’s roots that starve the tree of sap.

“Worms and caterpillars” are parasites.



“The virtue of the tree is not the reason for the tree’s defects, but the easterly wind, which is thought commonly to bring cankers and rottenness,” Trachinus said.

In Genesis 41:6, the Pharaoh dreamed of “*seven thin ears [of corn] blasted with the east wind*” (Bishop’s Bible).

“Cankers” are destructive caterpillars.

“Nor is the excellency of Sappho the reason for rottenness at court, but the iniquity and evil of flatterers, who always whisper in princes’ ears suspicion and sourness,” Pandion said.

“Why, then you conclude with me that Sappho for virtue has no copartner — no equal,” Trachinus said.

“Yes, and with the judgment of the world, that she is without comparison,” Pandion said.

Pandion greatly criticized life at the court, but he greatly respected Sappho.

“We will take the ferry and go there to the court immediately,” Trachinus said.

“I wish I might return to the Athenian universities immediately,” Pandion said.

He wanted to return to a life of scholarly contemplation.

“Why, there you may live still,” Trachinus said.

By “still,” he meant “always.”

“But not still,” Pandion said.

By “still,” he meant “at peace.”

“How do you like the ladies?” Trachinus asked. “Aren’t they surpassingly beautiful?”

“My eye drinks neither the color of wine nor women,” Pandion said.

Women’s “color” is often makeup.

“Yet I am sure that in judgment you are not so severe, but that you can be content to praise beauty by day or by night,” Trachinus said.

Pandion said:

“When I behold beauty before the sun, the sun’s beams dim beauty.

“When I behold beauty by candle, beauty obscures candlelight.

“The result is that at no time can I judge because at any time I cannot discern because in the sun is a brightness that casts a shadow over beauty, and because in beauty is a glistening brilliance that extinguishes light by outshining it.”

“You spoke like a scholar,” Trachinus said. “You flatter that which you seem to dislike, and you seem to disgrace that which you most marvel at. But let us leave now.”

“Dislike” means dislike without a good reason.

Pandion said:

“I will follow you.”

He then said to Molus, his servant:

“And you, sir boy, go to Syracuse round about by land, where you shall meet my baggage, pay for the carriage, and convey my baggage to my lodging.”

Molus would not take the ferry; he would instead walk around the harbor.

“I think all your stuff consists of bundles of paper,” Trachinus said, “but now you must learn to turn your library into a wardrobe and see whether your rapier will hang better by your side, than the pen did in your ear.”

Pandion would need new clothes and a rapier to wear at court. Trachinus thought that Pandion should sell his books to get money to buy a new wardrobe.

Trachinus and Pandion exited.

The servants Criticus and Molus remained behind.

— 1.3 —

Criticus and Molus discussed their lives. Criticus was the page of Trachinus the courier, and Molus was the page of Pandion the scholar.

Criticus said, “Molus, what is the difference between thy common diet in Athens, and thy diet in court? What is the difference between a page’s life, and a scholar’s life?”

Molus replied, “This is the difference: There at the Athenian universities, of a little I had something; here in Syracuse, of a great deal I have nothing. There I wore pantofles —slippers — on my legs; here I bear them in my hands.”

He carried his master’s slippers to his master when they were needed.

Criticus said:

“Thou may be skilled in thy logic, but not in thy liripoop — thy commonsense knowledge. Most likely, no meat can go down your gullet, unless you have a knife to cut it.”

He was saying that Molus could not digest new knowledge and a new lifestyle without first having thoroughly (and unnecessarily) examined it.

Criticus continued:

“But come among us, and you shall see us once in a morning have a mouse at a bay.”

An animal that is at bay is forced to turn and face its enemies.

“A mouse?” Molus said. “Unproperly spoken.”

A “mouse” can be a woman.

“Aptly understood, a mouse of beef,” Criticus said.

The word “mouse” can also mean “muscle.” “A mouse of beef” is a piece of beef.

Molus said:

“I think indeed a piece of beef as big as a mouse serves a great company of such cats.”

“Such cats” may be metaphorical polecats: couriers.

Molus continued:

“But what else?”

Criticus said, “For other sports: A square die in a page’s pocket is as decent and as fitting as a square cap on a graduate’s head.”

A square die is a cubed die used in gambling.

Molus said:

“You courtiers are mad fellows!

“We silly — that is, we simple — souls are only plodders at logic and arguments that conclude with ‘therefore’ — that is, *ergo*. Our wits are clasped up with our books; and so full of learning are we at home that we scarcely know good manners when we come abroad. We are cunning in nothing but in making small things great by figures, pulling on with the sweat of our studies a great shoe upon a little foot, burning out one candle in seeking for another.

“We are raw wordlings in matters of substance, but we are surpassingly good wranglers about shadows.”

In other words: Scholars know little about the real world, but they can talk very well about things that are of little concern in the real world.

Criticus said:

“Then to be a scholar is time lost. We pages are politicians: For whatever we hear our masters talk of, we decide and settle; where we suspect, we undermine and ruin; and where we dislike for some particular grudge, there we pick quarrels for a general grievance.”

A proverb stated, “One particularity concludes no generality.”

Couriers’ pages joined in the factionalism at court.

Criticus continued:

“No greetings are among us except instead of saying, ‘Good morning,’ we ask, ‘What is the news?’

“We fall from cogging (cheating at dice) to cogging (flattering) statesmen; and so forward are men of middle rank in those matters that they would be cocks to tread down and crush and ruin others before they would be chickens to raise themselves.

“Youths are very forward to stroke their chins, although they have no beards, and to lie as loud as the man who has lived longest.”

“These are the golden days!” Molus said.

“Then they are very dark days, for I can see no gold,” Criticus said.

“You are gross-witted, master courtier,” Molus said.

“And you, master scholar, are slender-witted,” Criticus said.

“Gross-witted” and “slender-witted” both mean “stupid.”

The university page and the court page are similar in some ways.

Molus said, “I meant that these are the times that were prophesied to be golden for an abundance of all things: sharpness of wit, excellency in knowledge, policy in government, for \_\_\_”

“Whoa, *scholaris*,” Criticus said. “I deny your argument.”

“*Scholaris*” means 1) belonging to a school, and 2) scholar.

“Why, I was not making an argument,” Molus said.

Criticus said:

“Then I deny it because it is no argument.

“But let us go and follow our masters.”

— 1.4 —

Mileta, Lamia, Favilla, Ismena, Canope, and Eugenia — all of whom were ladies of Sappho’s court — talked together. They were discussing how Venus had made Phao very handsome, and how Phao had fallen victim to improper pride.

“Isn’t it strange that Phao suddenly should be so handsome?” Mileta said.

By “strange,” she meant “odd.”

“It cannot be strange, since Venus was disposed to make him fair,” Lamia said. “That cunning would have been better bestowed on women, which would have deserved the thanks of nature.”

By “strange,” Lamia meant “unaccountable.”

She wished that Venus had made women beautiful rather than make Phao handsome. It is women’s nature to want to be beautiful.

“Perhaps she did it to spite women, or to scorn nature,” Ismena said.

Canope said, referring to Phao:

“Proud elf!”

Phao was perhaps small; in any case, “elf” was meant derogatively.

Canope continued:

“How squeamish — reserved and distant — he has become already, using both disdainful looks and imperious words, to such an extent that he galls with ingratitude. And then, ladies, you know how it cuts and distresses a woman to become a wooer.”

Phao had become so good-looking that ladies wooed him. They chased him instead of being chased by him.

“Tush!” Eugenia said. “Children and fools, the fairer they are, the sooner they yield; an apple will catch the one, and a baby doll will catch the other.”

“Your lover, I think, is a fair fool, for you love nothing but fruit and puppets,” Ismena said.

“Puppets” are dolls.

In other words: Anyone who loves Eugenia would be a fool, for she loves apples and baby dolls. So said Ismena.

“I laugh at that which you all call ‘love,’ and I judge it to be only a word called ‘love.’ I think liking, a curtsy, a smile, a beck, and such-like are the very quintessence of love,” Mileta said.

A “beck” is a beckoning, as with a finger.

Favilla said, “Aye, Mileta, but if you were as wise as you would like to be thought fair, or as fair as you think yourself wise, you would be as ready to please men, as you are reluctant to preen and dress up yourself; and as anxious to be thought amorous, as you are willing to be thought discreet.”

In other words: A wise woman will try to please men. So said Favilla.

Mileta responded:

“No, no; men are good souls (the poor souls) who never inquire but with their eyes, loving to father the cradle, although they only mother the child.”

In other words: Men love to father children (by having sex), but they leave the raising of the child to the mother.

Mileta continued:

“Give me their gifts, not their virtues: a grain of their gold weighs down a pound of their wit; a dram of ‘give me’ is heavier than an ounce of ‘hear me.’ Believe me, ladies, ‘give’ is a pretty thing.”

Mileta liked to receive gifts from men; receiving gifts is so much better than hearing men talk.

Ismena said:

“I cannot help but often smile to myself to hear men call us weak vessels, when they prove themselves to be broken-hearted, and I cannot help but often smile to myself to hear them call us frail and weak-minded when their thoughts cannot hang together because men are scatter-minded.

“Men take pains to use words to flatter, and to use bribes — gifts — to allure; when we commonly and customarily wish their tongues were in their purses because they speak so simple-mindedly; and we wish that their proposals were in their bellies because they make them so peevishly.”

Ismena would like men to eat their words and not talk rather than say their words.

Mileta said:

“It is good entertainment to see them lack the correct courting manner and have nothing to say to the purpose: for then they fall to good manners, having nothing in their mouths but ‘sweet mistress,’ wearing our hands out with courtly kissings, when their wits fail in courtly discourses.”

When men don’t have good courting conversation, they engage in compliments and hand-kisses.

Mileta continued: “Now ruffling their hairs, now setting their ruffs — pleated collars — in good order, then gazing with their eyes, and then sighing with a secret wring by the hand, all while thinking us likely to be wowed — won — by signs and ceremonies.”

“Secret wrings by the hand” are “secret squeezings of the lady’s hand.”

Eugenia said, “Yet we, when we swear with our mouths we are not in love, then we sigh from the heart and pine in love.”

Canope said:

“We are mad wenches if men pay attention to our words.

“For when I say, ‘I wish no one cared for love more than I,’ what I mean is ‘I wish no one loved but I.’”

In other words: She says that she wishes all women were like herself indifferent to love, but she means that she wishes that she were the only woman to love and be loved.

Canope continued:

“Where we cry, ‘Away!’ don’t we say, ‘Go to?’ And when men strive for kisses, we exclaim, ‘Let us alone,’ in a tone that suggests we would fall to that ourselves.”

“Go to” can mean 1) Bah, or 2) Get down to it.

“Let us alone” can mean 1) Don’t bother us, or 2) Leave it to us.

In other words: Women say one thing and mean the opposite.

Favilla said, “Nay, then, Canope, it is time to go — and behold Phao.”

“Behold” can mean 1) see, and 2) consider.

“And” can be a conjunction that means “in order to.”

“Where?” Ismena said, understanding “behold” to mean “see.”

Favilla answered, “In your head, Ismena, nowhere else. But let us keep on our way and go to court.”

“Wisely,” Ismena said.

## CHAPTER 2 (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

— 2.1 —

At nighttime, in front of Sybilla's cave, Phao arrived, carrying a small mirror: the sign of a vain man. Sybilla, a prophetess, was sitting in her cave.

Previously, Phao had been a contented man, but now he was unhappy.

He said to himself, "Phao, thy mean fortune and lack of wealth causes thee to use an oar and make a living, and thy sudden beauty causes thee to use a mirror: By the one is seen thy need, and in the other is seen thy pride.

"Oh, Venus! In thinking thou have blessed me, thou have cursed me, adding to a poor estate a proud heart; and to a disdained man a disdainful mind."

"Thou do not flatter thyself, Phao, that thou are fair. Fair? I fear that 'fair' is a word too foul for a face so surpassingly fair."

Venus had made Phao extraordinarily good-looking, and Phao recognized that he had grown proud. People looked down on him because of his lack of wealth, but Phao looked down on them because of their lack of beauty. He knew that this was wrong, but he could not control his pride.

Phao continued:

"But what avails beauty? What good is it?"

"If thou had all the things thou would wish for, thou might die tomorrow; and if thou lacked all things thou desire, thou shall live until thou die.

"Tush, Phao! There has grown more pride in thy mind than attractiveness in thy face.

"Blush from shame, foolish boy, to think thine own thoughts: Cease complaining, and crave counsel. Find someone to give you good advice.

"And look! Behold Sybilla sitting in the mouth of her cave.

"I will greet her."

He said to Sybilla:

"Lady, I am afraid that I am out of my way and headed the wrong direction in life, and I am so benighted in my thoughts that I am compelled to ask you for your advice."

The time was also literally night.

Sybilla replied, "Fair youth, if you will be advised by me, you shall at this time seek no other inn than my cave because it is no less perilous to travel by night than it is uncomfortable and disquieting."

"Your courtesy that you have offered me has anticipated what my necessity was going to make me entreat from you," Phao said.

Sybilla said:

“Come near, take a stool, and sit down.”

Phao did that.

Sybilla continued:

“Now, because these winter nights are long, and because children delight in nothing more than to hear old wives’ tales, we will beguile and pass the time with some story.

“And although you see wrinkles and furrows in my tawny face, yet you may perhaps find wisdom and counsel in my white hairs.”

Her face was tawny: blotched from old-age spots.

“Lady, nothing can content me better than a tale,” Phao said. “Neither is there anything more necessary for me than counsel and advice.”

“Were you born so good-looking by nature?” Sybilla asked.

“No, I was made so good-looking by Venus,” Phao said.

“For what reason?” Sybilla asked.

“I fear it was meant to be some curse,” Phao said.

“Why? Do you love and cannot obtain your love?” Sybilla asked.

“No, I may obtain love, but I cannot love,” Phao said.

Women loved him, but he did not return their love.

“Be careful about that, my child!” Sybilla said.

Not returning love can be a bad thing, as can being unable to love.

“I cannot choose otherwise, good madam,” Phao said.

“Then listen to my tale, which I hope shall be as a straight thread to lead you out of those crooked conceits, and place you in the plain, clear path of love,” Sybilla said.

The half-bull, half-man monster known as the Minotaur was kept in a labyrinth on Crete, Theseus, a hero from Athens, undertook to kill the Minotaur, and he found help from the Cretan princess Ariadne, who gave him a spool of thread which he unwound as he moved in the labyrinth. After he had killed the Minotaur, he followed the thread back to the entrance of the labyrinth.

“I am listening,” Phao said.

Sybilla said:

“When I was young, as you now are, I say without boasting that I was as beautiful as you, for Phoebus Apollo in his godhead sought to get my maidenhead.”

Apollo is the god who drives the Sun-chariot across the sky each day. The immortal gods often had affairs with mortal women, and Apollo wanted to take Sybilla’s virginity when she was a



young woman.

Sybilla continued:

“But I, who was a foolish wench, receiving a benefit from above, began to grow squeamish beneath.”

The benefit from a heavenly god was his notice, but then she grew squeamish here below on the earth and below her waist. She would also ask for a gift from the god.

Sybilla continued:

“This was not unlike the plant named asolis, which being made green by heavenly drops, shrinks into the ground when there fall showers, and it was not unlike the Syrian mud, which being made white chalk by the sun, never ceases rolling until it lies in the shadow.

“To sweet prayers, Apollo added great promises. I, either desirous to make trial of his power, or willing to prolong my own life, caught up a handful of sand, consenting to his suit if I might live as many years as there were grains of sand.

“Phoebus Apollo (for what cannot gods do, and what for love will they not do?) granted my petition.

“And then — I sigh and blush to tell the rest — I revoked and did not keep my promise to sleep with him.”

“Wasn’t the god angry to see you unkind and ungenerous?” Phao asked.

“He was angry, my boy, which was the reason that I became unfortunate,” Sybilla said.

“What revenge for such rigor — such hard-heartedness — do the gods give?” Phao asked.

“None but allowing us to live and know we are no gods,” Sybilla said.

The gods are eternally the same age. Jupiter will always be a mature man. Apollo will always be a young man. Cupid will always be a youth.

Sybilla, who was not a goddess, was now a very old and much wrinkled woman.

“Please continue,” Phao said.

Sybilla said:

“I will.

“Having received long life by Phoebus Apollo and splendid beauty by nature, I thought all the year would have been May, that fresh colors would always continue, that time and fortune could not wear out what gods and nature had wrought up.

“Not once did I imagine that white and red should return to black and yellow.

The colors were the color of her complexion when young and then when old. This kind of returning foreshadows returning to dust after life ends.

Sybilla continued:

“Not once did I imagine that the juniper, the longer it grew, the crookeder it would grow.

“And not once did I imagine that in a face without blemish, there would come a countless number of wrinkles.

“I did in the past as you do now. I went about with my mirror, ravished with the pride of my own beauty; and you shall do in the future as I do now. You shall be loath to see a mirror, disdain the deformity of old age.

“There were none who heard about my fault, but shunned my favor, to such an extent that I stooped because of age before I tasted of youth. I was sure to be long-lived, but not certain to be beloved.”

Sybilla’s fault was not keeping her promise to Apollo. Knowing the power of the gods, people shunned her and did not become romantically involved with her.

Sybilla continued:

“Gentlemen who used to sigh from their hearts for my sweet love, began to point with their fingers at my withered face, and they laughed to see the eyes, out of which fire seemed to sparkle, to be assisted, being old, with spectacles.

“This caused me to withdraw myself to a solitary cave, where I must lead six hundred years in no less mourning of crabbed age than grief of remembered youth.”

Because of her fault, Sybilla had been unable to enjoy her youth.

Sybilla continued:

“I have only this comfort, that having ceased to be fair, I study to be wise, wishing to be thought a grave matron, since I cannot return to be a young maiden.”

Sybilla had asked for a very long life, but she had not asked to be youthful for all those years, so she grows older and older and older, with all the disadvantages of old age.

“Isn’t it possible to die before you become so old?” Phao asked.

“No more possible than it is for me to return as you are, to be as young as you,” Sybilla said.

“Couldn’t you settle your fancy upon any, or would your destiny not allow it?” Phao asked.

In other words: Were you able to find anyone to love?

“Women willingly ascribe that to fortune, which wittingly was committed by frowardness and perversity,” Sybilla replied.

In other words: She had not.

“What will you have me do?” Phao asked.

Sybilla answered:

“Take heed you don’t do as I did.

“Don’t make too much of fading beauty, which is fair in the cradle and foul in the grave; resembling polyon, whose leaves are white in the morning and blue before night; or anyta,

which is a sweet flower at the rising of the sun but becomes a weed if it is not plucked before the setting of the sun.

“Fair faces have no fruits if they have no witnesses.

“When you shall behold over this tender flesh a tough skin, when your eyes, which were accustomed to glance at others’ faces, will be sunk so hollow that you can scarcely look out of your own head, and when all your teeth shall wag — wiggle — as fast as your tongue, then you will repent the time that you cannot call back and be forced to bear what most you blame and find fault with.”

“What most you blame and find fault with” is the knowledge of wasted opportunities in the past.

“Don’t lose the pleasant time of your youth, than which there is nothing swifter, nothing sweeter.

“Beauty is a slippery good, which decreases while it is increasing, resembling the medlar, which in the moment of its full ripeness, is known to be in a rottenness.”

Medlars are apples that were eaten when they were soft and pulpy: As soon as they were ripe, they were rotten.

Beauty decreased while it is increasing.

In other words: You may grow more beautiful in the course of a year, but that is one year fewer of the years you will be beautiful.

Sybilla continued:

“While you look in the mirror, your beauty grows old with time; if you look at the sun, your beauty becomes parched with heat; if your beauty faces the wind, it is blasted with cold.

“Beauty takes a great deal of care to keep it, you have a short space to enjoy it, and suddenly you lose it.

“Don’t be coy and shy when you are courted.

“Fortune’s wings are made of time’s feathers, which don’t stay while one may measure them.

“Be affable and courteous in youth, so that you may be honored in age.

“Roses that lose their colors still keep their smells, and plucked from the stalk, they are distilled into sweet-smelling rose oil.

“The plant cotonea, because it bows when the sun rises, is sweetest when it is oldest; and children who in their tender years sow courtesy shall in their declining states reap compassion.

“Don’t be proud of beauty’s painting whose colors consume themselves, because they are beauty’s painting.”

Beauty’s painting is youth’s natural coloring. It doesn’t last, just like another kind of painting — cosmetic makeup — doesn’t last.

Phao said, "I am driven by your counsel into diverse thoughts, neither knowing how to stand, nor where to fall; but to yield to love is the only thing I hate."

Sybilla's advice was to seek a mean between extremes. Enjoy your beauty, but don't overvalue it. In your youth, know that you will someday become old, so act in such a way in your youth that people will feel compassion for you when you are old.

Sybilla had also said not to be coy and shy when someone courted you.

Sybilla said:

"I commit you to Lady Fortune, who is likely to play such pranks with you as your tender years can scarcely bear, nor your green, naïve wits understand."

As a prophetess, Sibylla could foresee the future. Also, as a prophetess, Sibylla spoke vaguely about the future and gave vague advice. In this case, Sibylla knew that Phao, who was lowly born, and Sappho, who was highly born, would fall in love. Phao would become a member of the court, and he would be exposed to the envy of other, more worldly members of the court. Not all loves result in happiness.

She added:

"But return to me often, and if I cannot remove the bad effects of what may happen to you, yet I will manifest and reveal the reasons why they happen to you."

"I go, and I am ready to return for advice before I make a decision about what I will do," Phao said.

Sybilla said:

"Yet listen to two words."

Like many prophetesses, Sybilla had many more than two words left to say.

She continued:

"Thou shall get friendship by dissembling, and thou shall get love by hatred.

"Unless thou perish, thou shall perish.

"In digging for a stone, thou shall reach a star.

"Thou shall be hated most because thou are loved most.

"Thy death shall be feared and wished."

Sybilla seemed to be saying this: To survive and flourish as a member of the court, Phao would have to learn to dissemble. This would involve a change: a perishing of his old self so that he will not become a victim of other dissemblers at court. Phao would rise high, but at the cost of being a member of a court beset by factions, many of whose members will maliciously envy him.

Sybilla continued:

"So much for prophecy, which nothing can prevent.

“Now hear this for counsel, which thou may follow.

“Don’t keep company with ants that have wings.”

Winged ants are aspirers. Ants are an earthly species, but winged ants attempt to rise above their assigned place in the natural order.

Sybilla continued:

“Nor talk with anyone near the hill of a mole.”

In this society, moles were thought to possess a keen sense of hearing. Phao needed to stay away from those who would spy on him. Such spies were often informers who would twist and deliberately misinterpret what they had heard.

Sybilla continued:

“Where thou smell the sweetness of serpent’s breath, beware. Don’t touch any part of the body.”

In other words: Don’t be seduced by flatterers.

Sybilla continued:

“Don’t be merry among those who put bugloss in their wine, and sugar in thine.”

Bugloss is a medicinal herb, and sugar is used to make bad wine taste better.

Sybilla continued:

“If anyone talks about the eclipse of the sun, say thou never saw it.”

Eclipses are bad omens, often foretelling the deaths of princes.

Sybilla continued:

“Nourish no conies in thy vaults, nor swallows in thine eaves.”

Conies are rabbits; they are also con men and flatterers. Vaults are storage rooms for wine. Swallows fly away in the winter, just as false friends fly away when someone — such as Phao — is having hard times.

Sybilla continued:

“Sow next to thy vines mandrake plants.”

Mandrake was thought to prevent grape vines from making too-sharp wine.

Sybilla continued:

“And always keep thine ears open, and thy mouth shut.

“Always keep thine eyes upward toward heaven, and thy fingers down.”

Sybilla was warning Phao from becoming too greedy.

Sybilla continued:

“So shall thou do better than otherwise, although never as well as I wish for thee.”

Phao had a friend in his corner.

Phao said:

“Alas! Madam, your prophecy threatens miseries, and your counsel urges impossibilities.”

The prophecy was mostly bad, and the advice difficult or impossible to take.

Sybilla said, “Farewell, I can answer no more.”

She exited into her cave.

Phao remained.

— 2.2 —

Sappho, Trachinus the courier, Pandion the scholar, Criticus (Trachinus’ page), and Molus (Pandion’s page) walked over to Phao.

Phao said to himself:

“Unhappy Phao!

“But hold on, what gallant troupe of people is this?

“What gentlewoman is this?”

Overhearing Phao, Criticus said, “She is Sappho, a lady here in Sicily.”

“What good-looking boy is that?” Sappho asked.

“Phao, the ferryman of Syracuse,” Trachinus said.

“I never saw anyone more splendid,” Phao said. “Are all ladies of such majesty?”

“No, this is she whom all wonder at and worship,” Criticus said.

“I have seldom seen a sweeter face,” Sappho said. “Are all ferrymen of that fairness?”

“No, madam, this is the man whom Venus determined among men to make the best looking,” Trachinus said.

“Seeing that I have come forth only to take the air, I will cross on the ferry and go to the fields and then go in through the park,” Sappho said. “I think the walk will be pleasant.”

The park was an enclosed hunting reserve for the royal family.

“You will much delight in the flattering green, which now begins to be in its glory,” Trachinus said.

The pleasing vegetation was beginning to bloom.

“Sir boy, will you undertake to carry us over the water?” Sappho asked.

Phao stared at her, mesmerized by her beauty.

Sappho asked, “Are you dumb? Can’t you speak?”

“Madam, I beg your pardon,” Phao said. “I am spurblind: I could scarcely see.”

“Spurblind” was Phao’s variant of “purblind.” Phao was partially blind because of Sappho’s beauty, which was spurring him into falling in love with her.

“It is a pity that in so good a face there should be an evil eye,” Sappho said.

She was bewitched by Phao.

“I wish in my face there were never an eye,” Phao said.

He had seen Sappho’s beauty and fallen in love, something that he had said he did not want to do.

Both Sappho and Phao had fallen in love at first sight.

“Thou can never be rich in a trade of life of all the basest,” Sappho said.

Ferrymen tend not to become rich.

“Yet I am content, madam, which is a kind of life of all the best,” Phao said.

“Will thou forsake the ferry, and follow the court as a page?” Sappho asked.

“As it pleases Lady Fortune, madam, to whom I am an apprentice,” Phao said.

“Come, let’s go,” Sappho said.

“Will you go, Pandion?” Trachinus said.

“Yes,” Pandion said.

All exited except Molus and Criticus, who remained behind. Criticus walked over to Molus.

— 2.3 —

Molus said:

“Criticus comes in good time. I shall not be alone.

“What is the news, Criticus?”

“I taught you that lesson, to ask what is the news, and this is the news,” Criticus said. “Tomorrow there shall be a desperate fray between two men, made at all weapons — that is, no holds barred — from the brown bill to the bodkin.”

A brown bill is a long brown handle with an axe-head and a spear point at one end.

A bodkin is a dagger.

Molus said, “Now that thou talk about frays, please tell me, what is that which they talk about so commonly in court — valor, the stab, the pistol — for the which every man who dares is so much honored?”

Criticus said:

“Oh, Molus, beware of valor!

“He who can look big and threatening; who wears his dagger pommel lower than the point; who maintains a good defensive position and can hit a small target such as a button with a thrust of a sword or dagger; and who will willingly go into the dueling field man to man for a bout or two — he, Molus, is a shrewd fellow and shall be well-followed with admirers.”

In real life, anyone who puts his dagger in a sheath with the point pointing up and the hilt pointing down will find it difficult to take out the dagger.

“What is the end of it all?” Molus asked.

“Danger or death,” Criticus said.

“If it is only death that brings all this commendation, I regard the person who is killed with a surfeit to be as valiant as the person who is killed with a sword,” Molus said.

A surfeit is overeating and/or overdrinking.

“How so?” Criticus asked.

Molus replied:

“If I venture upon a full stomach to eat a rasher on the coals, eat a carbonado, drink a carouse, swallow all things that may procure sickness or death, am I not as valiant to die so in a house, as the other is valiant to die in a dueling field?”

A rasher on the coals is a slice of broiled bacon or ham.

A carbonado is a piece of cross-cut and grilled meat.

A carouse is a full cup of a drink containing alcohol.

Molus continued:

“I think that epicures are as desperate and reckless as soldiers, and cooks provide as good weapons as cutlers.”

Cutlers make knives.

Epicures seek pleasure in life. The philosopher Epicurus, however, believed in moderation because excesses lead to less pleasure.

“Oh, valiant knight!” Criticus said.

“I will die for this opinion,” Molus said. “What greater valor is there?”

“This is how scholars fight, who seek to choke their stomachs rather than see their blood,” Criticus said.

“Choke their stomach” can mean 1) cram their stomachs with food, or 2) stop their stomachs — their appetites — for dueling.

“I will stand upon this point: If it is valor to dare to die, then a man is valiant howsoever he dies,” Molus said.

“Well, let’s talk more about this hereafter, but here comes Calypho — we will have some entertainment.”



Calypho entered the scene.

Calypho was a Cyclops who helped Vulcan make thunderbolts for Jupiter, king of the gods.

He was looking for Venus, who gads about here and there. She was unpopular among Vulcan's Cyclopes.

He said:

"My mistress, I think, has got a gadfly. She is never at home, and yet none can tell where she is outside her home. My master Vulcan was a 'wise' man when he matched with and married such a woman. When she comes into Vulcan's forge, we must put out the fire because of the smoke, we must hang up our hammers because of the noise, and we must do no work except wait on her and get her what she wants.

"She is beautiful, but by my truth I swear I doubt her honesty and chastity.

"I must seek her, her whom I fear Mars has found."

Loyalty means faithfulness.

Chastity does not mean "no sex"; it means "only ethical sex, if any."

A husband and wife are chaste if they sleep only with each other; however, Calypho feared that Venus slept with other gods and mortals in addition to sleeping with her husband.

"Whom do thou seek?" Criticus asked.

"I have found those I don't seek," Calypho said.

Those he had found, of course, were Criticus and Molus.

"I hope you have found those who are honest and truth-telling," Molus said.

"It may be, but I seek no such," Calypho said.

He was seeking Venus, not someone who was honest and truth-telling.

"Criticus, you shall see me by the use of my learning prove Calypho to be the devil," Molus said.

"Let us see," Criticus said, "but I ask thee to please prove it better than thou did prove thyself to be valiant."

"Calypho, I will prove thee to be the devil," Molus said.

"Then will I swear thee to be a god," Calypho said.

"The devil is black," Molus said.

"What do I care?" Calypho said.

"Thou are black," Molus said.

"What do you care?" Calypho said.

"Therefore, thou are the devil," Molus said.

“I deny that,” Calypho said.

“It is the conclusion of my argument,” Molus said. “Thou must not deny it.”

Of course, Molus had made a bad argument because not all black things are the devil:

Premise 1: The devil is black.

Premise 2: Calypho is black.

Conclusion: Calypho is the devil.

“In spite of all conclusions, I will deny it,” Calypho said.

“Molus, the blacksmith holds you hard,” Criticus said. “He denies your argument.”

“Thou see he has no reason,” Molus said. “He knows no logic.”

“Try him again,” Criticus said.

“I will reason with thee now from a place,” Molus said.

“From a place” meant “from a proverb or other well-known saying.”

“I mean to answer you in no other place than here,” Calypho said.

“Like master, like serving-man,” Molus said.

“It may be,” Calypho said.

“But thy master has horns,” Molus said.

“And so may thou,” Calypho said.

Calypho meant that Molus could one day have the horns of a cuckold: a man with an unfaithful wife.

“Therefore, thou have horns, and *ergo*, thou are a devil,” Molus said.

This is another bad argument:

Premise 1: Vulcan has horns.

Premise 2: Like master, like serving-man.

Premise 3: Calypso is a serving-man to Vulcan.

Conclusion: Calypho has horns.

Premise 1: Calypho has horns.

Premise 2: Devils have horns.

Conclusion: Calypho is a devil.

“Are all who have horns devils?” Calypho asked.

“All men who have horns are,” Molus said.

“Then there are more devils on earth than in hell,” Calypho said.

Hmm. There must a lot of cuckolds on earth.

“But what do thou answer?” Molus asked.

“I deny that,” Calypho said.

“Thou deny what?” Molus asked.

Calypho said:

“Whatsoever it is that shall prove me a devil.

“But listen, scholar, I am a plain fellow, and I can make nothing but with the hammer.

“What will thou say, if I prove that thee are a blacksmith?”

“Then I will say thou are a scholar,” Molus said.

“Prove it, Calypho, and I will give thee a good *colaphum*,” Criticus said.

A *colaphum* is a blow.

“I will prove it or else —” Calypho said.

“Or else what?” Criticus asked.

Calypho said:

“Or else I will not prove it.

“Thou are a blacksmith; therefore, thou are a blacksmith.

“The conclusion, you say, must not be denied, and therefore, it is true: Thou are a blacksmith.”

This is the argument:

Premise 1: Molus is a blacksmith.

Conclusion: Molus is a blacksmith.

If the premise is true, then the conclusion is true, and if the conclusion is true, the premise is true.

“Aye, but I deny your antecedent,” Molus said.

The argument can be framed as a conditional statement with an antecedent and a consequent:

If Molus is a blacksmith, then Molus is a blacksmith.

Molus denied the premise, but he had previously stated that the conclusion must be accepted.

Calypho said:

“Aye, but you shall not.”

He then asked:

“Haven’t I touched him, Criticus?”

A touch is a hit in fencing.

“You have both done learnedly,” Criticus said, “for as sure as he is a blacksmith, thou are a devil.”

“And then he is a devil because he is a blacksmith. Because it was his reason to make me a devil, being a blacksmith,” Calypho said.

Molus had previously argued that Vulcan had horns and all men who have horns are devils.

Vulcan is a blacksmith, and he is a devil, and so, according to Calypho, all blacksmiths are devils.

This is Calypho’s argument.

Premise 1: Vulcan is a blacksmith.

Premise 2: Vulcan is a devil.

Conclusion: All blacksmiths are devils.

Premise 1: All blacksmiths are devils.

Premise 2: Molus is a blacksmith.

Conclusion: Molus is a devil.

“There is no reasoning with these mechanical dolts, whose wits and intelligence are in their hands, not in their heads,” Molus said.

Mechanics are people who work with their hands.

“Don’t be angry. You are wise,” Criticus said.

But let us conclude this matter as friends with a song.”

“I am content,” Calypho said. “My voice is as good as my reason.”

“Then we have sweet music,” Molus said. “But come, I will not break off — I will not fail to keep in time.”

They sang a drinking song:

Criticus sang:

*“Merry knaves are we three-a,”*

Molus sang:

*“When our songs do agree-a.*

Calypho sang:

*“Oh, now I well see-a*

*“What anon [soon] we shall be-a.”*

Criticus sang:

*“If we ply thus our singing,*

Molus sang:

*“Pots then must be flinging;”*

Calypho sang:

*“If the drink be but stinging [pungent],”*

Molus sang:

*“I shall forget the rules of grammar,*

Calypho sang:

*“And I the pit-a-pat of my hammer.”*

All sang:

*“To the tap-house [tavern] then let’s gang [go] and roar.*

*“Call hard [call loudly for drinks], ’tis rare [it is splendid] to vamp a score [to run up a bill].*

*“Draw dry the tub [barrel], be it old or new,*

*“And part not till the ground look blue.”*

If the ground looks blue to you, you are very drunk indeed.

All exited.

— 2.4 —

Phao stood in front of Sybilla’s cave.

He said to himself:

*“What unfamiliar, strange thoughts are these, Phao, much unfit for thy thoughts: unsuitable for thy working-class birth, thy fortune, thy years, for Phao!*

*“Unhappy man, can’t thou be content to behold the sun without needing to desire to build thy nest in the sun and thy castle in the air?*

*“Does Sappho bewitch thee, whom all the ladies in Sicily could not woo?”*

All the ladies in Sicily were attempting to make Phao fall in love with them, but none was succeeding.

Phao continued:

*“Yes, poor Phao, the pride of thy mind is far above the beauty of thy face, and the hardness and cruelty of thy fortune beyond the bitterness of thy words.*

*“Die, Phao. Phao, die: For there is no hope if thou are wise; nor is there safety if thou are fortunate.”*

If Phao is wise, he will not woo Sappho and so will miss out on having a relationship with her; if he succeeds in wooing her, he could become the target of envious and malicious factions in the court. (Or a goddess could become jealous.)

Phao continued:

“Ah, Phao, the more thou seek to suppress those growing passions, the loftier they soar, and the more thou wrestle with them, the stronger they grow.”

Phao loses whether he struggles against his thoughts of love or he does not struggle against his thoughts of love. If he struggles to suppress his thoughts of love, they fly ever higher. If he does not struggle to suppress his thoughts of love, they grow ever stronger.

Phao continued:

“These thoughts of love are not unlike a ball, which, the harder it is thrown against the earth, the higher it bounces into the air, and they are not unlike our Sicilian stone, which grows hardest by hammering it.

“Oh, divine love! And therefore divine, because love, whose deity no intellectual apprehension can encompass and fully understand, and therefore no authority can constrain him from doing whatever he wants to do; as miraculous in working as he is mighty, and no more to be suppressed than comprehended.

“How are thou now, Phao? To where are thou carried, committing idolatry with that god whom thou have cause to blaspheme?”

Phao was praising a god — the god of love — whom he had reason to curse.

Phao continued:

“Oh, Sappho! Beautiful Sappho!

“Peace! Calm down, miserable wretch, enjoy thy love for Sappho in covert secrecy, wear willow in thy hat, and bays in thy heart.”

Willows are a symbol of unrequited love. Wreathes made of laurel (bay) leaves are given to successful poets, athletes, and generals.

Because it was well-known that willows are a symbol of unrequited love, Phao’s wearing of willow in his hat would not be “covert secrecy.”

Phao continued:

“Lead a lamb in thy hand, and a fox in thy head.”

Lambs are known for meekness, and foxes are known for cunning.

Phao continued:

“Have a dove on the back of thy hand, and a sparrow in thy palm.”

Doves are the birds of Venus; sparrows are known for lechery.

Phao continued:

“Gold boils best when it bubbles least; water runs smoothest where it is deepest. Let thy love hang at thy heart’s bottom — its inmost part, not at the tongue’s tip. Things untold are as if they were not done; there can be no greater comfort than to know much, nor is there any less labor than to say nothing.

“But ah, thy beauty, Sappho, thy beauty!

“Do thou, Phao, begin to blab foolishly?”

“Aye, blab it, Phao, as long as thou blab copious and true words about her beauty. Bees that die with honey are buried with harmony; swans that end their lives with songs are covered when they are dead with flowers; and they who until their last gasp commend and extol beauty shall be forever honored with benefits.

“In these extremities, I will go to no other oracle than Sybilla, whose old years have not been idle in these young attempts —”

Sappho in her old age was advising the young Phao what to do about his feelings of love.

Phao continued:

“— and whose sound advice may mitigate (although the heavens cannot remove) my miseries.

“Oh, Sappho! Sweet Sappho! Sappho!”

He then called:

“Sybilla.”

Sybilla appeared in the mouth of the cave.

“Who is there?” she asked.

“One who is not worthy to be one — that is, not worthy to be alive,” Phao said.

“Fair Phao?” Sybilla asked.

“Unfortunate Phao!” he answered.

“Come in,” Sybilla said.

Phao said:

“So I will, and I will requite thy tale of Phoebus Apollo with one whose brightness darkens Phoebus the sun-god.

“I love Sappho, Sybilla.

“I love Sappho, ah, Sappho, Sybilla!”

“That is a short tale, Phao, and a sorrowful tale; it asks for pity rather than advice,” Sybilla said.

“It is sorrowful, Sybilla: yet in those firm and infirm years of yours, I think there should harbor such experience as may defer for a while, although not take away, my destiny,” Phao said.

Old age is debilitating, but it can bring firmness of character and opinion.

“It is hard to cure that by words which cannot be eased by herbal medicines; and yet, if thou wilt take advice, be attentive,” Sybilla said.

“I have brought my ears on purpose, and I will hang at your mouth until you have finished your discourse,” Phao said.

Sappho said:

“Love, fair child, is to be governed and managed by art, as thy boat by an oar is governed and managed; for love, although it comes by chance, is ruled by wisdom.

“If my precepts and instructions may persuade thee (and I implore thee, let them persuade thee), I would wish thee first to be diligent and watchful, because women desire nothing more than to have their servants dutiful. Be always in sight, and never be slothful and lazy in showing women affection and attention.

“Flatter — I mean lie. Little things catch light minds, and love is a worm that feeds first upon fennel.”

In this society, fennel was associated with flattery.

Sybilla continued:

“Imagine with thyself that all are women to be won; otherwise, my advice would be as unnecessary as thy labor.

“It is impossible for the brittle mettle of women to withstand the flattering attempts of men; only this, let them be asked. Their sex requires no less, and their modesties are to be allowed so much.”

In other words: Don’t force your attention on women.

Sappho continued:

“Be prodigal and lavish in praises and promises. Beauty must have a trumpet, and pride must have a gift. Peacocks never spread their feathers except when they are flattered, and gods are seldom pleased if they are not bribed with offerings and sacrifices.

“There is no woman so foul — so ugly — who does not think herself fair. In commending, thou cannot lose thy labor, for, by every woman, thou shalt be believed.

“Oh, simple women! They are brought rather to believe what their ears hear of flattering men, than what their eyes see in true mirrors!”

“You digress, with the only result being to make me believe that women do so lightly and easily believe,” Phao said.

Phao had come here for advice.

Sybilla said:

“Then I will talk to the purpose.

“Choose such times to begin thy suit, as thy lady is in a good humor. The wooden horse entered Troy when the soldiers were quaffing.”



Troy fell because of the trick of the Trojan Horse: a large wooden sculpture of a horse. It was hollow and filled with Greek soldiers and left behind when the Greek soldiers appeared to have sailed away from Troy. A lying Greek named Sinon convinced the Trojans to take the Horse inside the city by saying that according to a prophecy Troy would never fall as long as the Horse was inside the city. That night, the Trojans got drunk, and the Greek soldiers came out of the Horse and went to the gates of Troy, where they let in the Greek soldiers who had sailed back to Troy at night.

The fullest extant account of the fall of Troy is in Book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

Sybilla continued:

“And Penelope, indeed, whom fables make so shy, among the pots wrung her woovers by the fists when she frowned at their faces.”

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Penelope was a faithful wife throughout the twenty years her husband Ulysses (his Greek name is Odysseus) was away from home. The first ten years he spent fighting the Trojan War, and the second ten years he spent trying to get back home. Much of that time he was kept captive on an island by the goddess Calypso.

During much of that time, people assumed that Ulysses was dead, and over 100 suitors tried to convince Penelope to marry one of them. Penelope was able to hold them off for some time with her famous weaving trick. She told them that after she had woven a shroud for Ulysses' father, Laertes, she would choose one of them to marry. Each day she wove the shroud, and each night she unwove what she had woven.

But according to Sybilla, although Penelope presented a chaste face to the public, when she was drunk among the pots of liquids containing alcohol, she secretly squeezed the hands of the suitors.

Sybilla continued:

“Grapes are mind-glasses.”

Drunk people say what is on their mind.

Sybilla continued:

“Venus works in Bacchus' wine press, and she blows fire upon his liquor.

“When thou talk with her — Sappho — let thy speech be pleasant and amusing, but not exaggerated and not to be believed. Choose such words as may (as many may) melt her mind and lower her resistance. Honey rankles when it is eaten for pleasure, and fair words wound when they are heard instead of love.”

In other words: Be careful not to overdo your wooing.

Sybilla continued:

“Write, and persist in writing: They read more into what is written to them than is in fact written to them, and write less than they think.

“When being witty, strive to be pleasant; in attire strive to be well-dressed, but not too extravagant.

“When she smiles, laugh outright; if she rises, stand up; if she sits, lie down.

“Use all thy time to keep time with her and keep her pace.

“Can you sing? Then show your ability.

“Can you dance? Then use your legs.

“Can you play upon any instrument? Then practice your fingers to please her fancy.

“Seek out qualities and skills that you can display.

“If she seems at first to be cruel, don’t be discouraged. I tell thee a strange thing: Women strive because they would be overcome.

“‘Force’ they call it, but they account it such a welcome force that they continually make it their aim to be overcome.”

Such “force” is seduction, not rape.

Some women play hard to get, not impossible to get.

Sybilla continued:

“To fair words join sweet kisses, which if they gently and tenderly receive — I say no more, they will gently receive.”

“I say no more.”

In gestures: Nudge, nudge. Wink, wink.

Seduction can be effective.

Sybilla continued:

“But don’t be pinned always on her sleeves: Strangers have green rushes, when daily guests are not worth a rush.”

Rushes were strewn on floors. When an important visitor was coming, fresh, green rushes replaced the old rushes.

“Not worth a rush” means “worthless.”

Sybilla continued:

“Look pale, and learn to be lean, so that whoever sees thee may say, ‘The gentleman is in love.’

“Use no sorcery to hasten thy success: Wit is a witch.

“Ulysses was not fair, but he was wise; he was not cunning in charms, but he was sweet in speech. His filed — polished and smooth — tongue made those enamored who sought to have enchanted him.”

Ulysses was a master of rhetoric. At one point in his travels, he and his men stayed with the enchantress Circe, who loved him. When they were ready to go, Ulysses had to convince Circe to allow them to leave. When telling his tale to other people during his travels, he said:

“That night I entreated Circe to let us go. I did not want to make her angry, so I made it clear that my men were the ones who were restless and wanted to leave, but I also said that I, too, longed for my homecoming.”

Similarly, when another goddess, Calypso, wanted Ulysses to stay with her, Ulysses told her:

“Don’t be angry with me, please. I know that you speak the truth. My wife is not as beautiful as you. My wife’s figure is not better than yours. How can a mortal woman compare to an immortal goddess? The immortal goddess will always be more beautiful.

“But I want to see my home again. I want to see Ithaca again. That is what I have been longing for every day. I have faced many troubles before, and I am willing to face more troubles if only I can see my home again.”

Ulysses could have told each goddess that he missed his wife, Penelope, and he wanted to see her again, but Circe and Calypso each could have seen that as a rejection of her charms. Each goddess could have thought that Ulysses loved Penelope and that he did not love her. Angry gods and goddesses can do horrible things to human beings, as Diana did when Actaeon, a hunter, accidentally saw her bathing naked. She turned him into a stag, and his own hunting hounds killed him.

But Ulysses wanted to see his home again? That was a good reason to leave, although each goddess preferred that he stay with her.

Ulysses was a man of action, but he could show great sensitivity. After he returned to Ithaca and reestablished himself as its king, he did not immediately jump into bed with Penelope; instead, first he talked to her and he proved to her that he was her long-lost husband without room for doubt.

Sybilla continued:

“Don’t be coy: Don’t be either shy or hard to get.

“Bear with her and soothe and cajole her and bear gifts to her, swear, die to please thy lady.

“These are rules for poor lovers; to others I am no mistress.”

This kind of mistress is a mentor.

Sybilla continued:

“He has wit enough, who can give enough.”

A proverb stated, “He is wise who is rich.”

Sybilla continued:

“Dumb men are eloquent if they are liberal in bestowing gifts. Believe me, great gifts are little gods.”

A rich man who gives valuable gifts to women will not lack girlfriends.

Sybilla continued:

“When thy mistress bends her brow and frowns, do not bend thy fist and make a threatening gesture. Cammocks must be bowed with sleight, not strength.”

Cammocks are trees that can be trained to grow in various shapes. When trained properly, their branches can make good canes.

Sybilla continued:

“Water is to be trained — that is, conducted — with pipes, not stopped with sluices and dams; fire is to be quenched with dust, not with swords.

“If thou have a rival, be patient.”

Ovid, *Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)*, Book 2, lines 539-540, states, “*Rivalem patienter habe. Victoria tecum / Stabit.*”

Translated, the quotation says, “Be patient with your rival. Victory rests with you.”

Sybilla continued:

“Art, not malice, must draw thy rival out of the way; time, not might and force, must draw thy rival out of the way; her change from loving him to loving thee, and thy constancy, must draw thy rival out of the way.

“Whatsoever she wears, swear it becomes her.

“In thy love be secret. Venus’ coffer, although they are hollow, never sound, and when they seem emptiest, they are fullest.”

True: A lover’s coffer may be hollow, but they ought not to sound hollow when they are thumped because they are full.

Also true: A lover’s coffer should be emptied in order in order to buy gifts for the beloved.

In other words: Wooing is expensive. A lover’s coffer have to be constantly replenished in order to spend even more to buy gifts for the beloved.

One wonders about some of Sybilla’s advice. Does it have the same acumen as the reasoning about the devil displayed earlier?

But this is possibly true: A mean between extremes is best. Keep the coffer half-full.

Some of Sybilla’s advice seems contradictory:

- “Be always in sight, and never be slothful and lazy in showing women affection and attention.”

- “But don’t be pinned always on her sleeves: Strangers have green rushes, when daily guests are not worth a rush.”

Sybilla continued:

“Old fool that I am! To do thee good, I begin to dote and act foolishly, and counsel that which I would have concealed.”

She had revealed to Phao some women’s secrets.

Sybilla continued:

“Thus, Phao, I have given thee certain ways of regarding your situation, no rules, only to set thee on your way, not to bring thee home.”

Sybilla had provided guidelines, not rules.

Phao said, “Ah, Sybilla, I ask you to continue giving me advice, so that I may glut myself in this knowledge.”

Sybilla said:

“Thou shall not surfeit and overeat, Phao, while I provide thy diet.

“Flies that die on the honeysuckle become poison to bees.

“A little advice in love is a great deal.”

“But all that can be said is not enough,” Phao said.

“White silver draws black lines, and sweet words will breed sharp torments,” Sybilla said.

“What shall become of me?” Phao asked.

“Go dare,” Sybilla said. “Be brave and act and find out what will become of you.”

Sybilla exited into her cave.

Phao said:

“I go now!”

He then said to himself:

“Phao, thou can only die — you have no choice to do otherwise — and so then it is as good to die with great desires, as it is to pine in base fortunes.”

## CHAPTER 3 (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

— 3.1 —

In the anteroom of Sappho's chamber, Trachinus the courier, Pandion the scholar, Mileta, Ismena, Criticus, and Molus met. Sappho was ill and was in her chamber. Mileta and Ismena were court ladies.

"Sappho has fallen suddenly sick," Trachinus said. "I cannot guess the cause."

"Some cold, likely, or else a woman's qualm such as a fainting fit or nausea," Mileta said.

"A strange nature of cold, to drive one into such a heat and fever," Pandion said.

"Your medical skill, sir, I think is of the second place, not the first," Mileta said, "else you would not judge it rare that hot fevers are engendered by cold causes."

Catching a cold can lead to a fever. Also, pursuing a cold loved one may inflame passion.

"Indeed, lady, I have no more medical skill than will purge cholera; and that if it pleases you, I will practice upon you," Pandion said. "It is good for women who are waspish."

"Cholera" is anger. Pandion claims to know how to make someone's temperament calm, although his calling a woman waspish is unlikely to do that. A waspish woman is irritable and spiteful.

"Indeed, sir, no," Ismena said. "You had best purge your own melancholy. It is likely that you are a male-content."

"It is true, and aren't you a female-content?" Pandion asked.

"Quiet!" Trachinus said. "I am not content that a male-content and a female-content should go together."

He thought that a male-content and a female-content — malcontents of each sex — ought not to be a couple.

"Ismena is disposed to be merry," Mileta said.

"No, it is Pandion who is eager to seem wise," Ismena said.

"You shall not fall out and argue," Trachinus said, "for pigeons, after biting, fall to billing, and open jars make the closest jests."

"Billing" is avian kissing: cooing bill to bill. Pigeons that coo together, stay together.

"Jars" are quarrels, and "closest" is most secret and hidden.

Lots of couples quarrel loudly and then have make-up sex.

Eugenia, another court lady, entered the scene.

She said, "Mileta! Ismena! Mileta! Come away! My lady is in a swoon!"

Sappho had fainted.

“Aye me! I am woeful,” Miletta said.

“Come, let’s hurry,” Ismena said.

Eugenua, Miletta, and Ismena exited.

“I am sorry for Sappho because she will take no medicine,” Trachinus said. “She is like you, Pandion, who, being sick with the sullens, will seek no friend.”

The sullens is a case of melancholy or depression, and in this context, “friend” means “medicinal remedy.”

“From men we learn to speak, from gods we learn to hold our peace,” Pandion said. “Silence shall digest what folly has swallowed, and wisdom shall wean what fancy has nursed.”

In other words: People sometimes have foolish and fanciful ideas that calm consideration can correct.

“Isn’t it love?” Trachinus asked.

He thought that Sappho was in love.

“If it were, what then?” Pandion said.

“Nothing, but that I hope it is not love,” Trachinus said.

Pandion said:

“Why, in courts there is nothing more common.

“To be bald among the Micanians was accounted no shame because they were all bald; and so, to be in love among courtiers is no discredit because they are all in love.”

The Micanians are the people of the Greek island named Myconos. Pliny wrote a book in which he stated that all the people there were born bald.

“Why, what do you think of our ladies?” Trachinus asked.

“The same as I think about the Seres wool, which being the whitest and softest, frets the soonest and deepest,” Pandion said.

The word “frets” can mean 1) wears away, or 2) fusses and complains.

“I will not tempt you in your deep melancholy, lest you seem sour to those — the ladies — who are so sweet,” Trachinus said. “But come, let us walk a little into the fields. It may be the open air will disclose your close conceits.”

“Close conceits” are “secret opinions.”

“I will go with you, but let’s send our pages away,” Pandion said.

Trachinus and Pandion exited, leaving their pages — Criticus and Molus — behind.

— 3.2 —

“What brown study are thou in, Molus?” Criticus asked. “No mirth? No life?”

A brown study is a state of gloomy musing.

“I am in the depth of my learning driven to a musing state as I wonder how this Lent I shall scramble — make shift — in the court, I who was accustomed to fast so often in the university,” Molus said.

Lent is a period of fasting.

“Thy belly is thy god,” Criticus said.

“Then he is a deaf god,” Molus said.

“Why?” Criticus asked.

Molus said:

“For *venter non habet aures.*”

The Latin means, “The belly has no ears.”

In other words: Talk about food will not make the belly less empty.

Molus continued:

“But thy back is thy god.”

Criticus wore fine clothing on his back.

“Then it is a blind god,” Criticus said.

“How can you prove that?” Molus asked.

“Easy,” Criticus said. “*Nemo videt manticæ quod in tergo est.*”

The Latin means, “No one sees the satchel on his own back.”

A fable told about a man who carried a satchel of other people’s faults in his arms and carried a satchel of his own faults in a bag on his back. The man could easily see other people’s faults, but he could not see his own faults.

“Then I wish that the satchel that hangs at your god, *id est*, your back, were full of food to stuff my god, *hoc est*, my belly,” Molus said.

Both Latin phrases mean, “That is.”

“Excellent,” Criticus said. “But how can thou study, when thy mind is only in the kitchen?”

“Doesn’t the horse travel best that sleeps with its head in the manger?” Molus asked.

Well-fed horses travel best.

“Yes, but what then?” Criticus said.

“Good wits will apply,” Molus replied.

In other words: An intelligent man will find a way to interpret a saying to make a point in his favor.



Molus then asked:

“But what cheer is there here this Lent?”

“Cheer” is food and drink.

“Fish,” Criticus said.

“I can eat none,” Molus said. “It is wind.”

“Wind” is air.

According to Molus, fish is light food that does not fill him up the way that heavier food such as meat would.

“Eggs,” Criticus said.

“I must eat none, they are fire,” Molus said.

Possibly, eggs gave him heartburn. Or fiery farts.

“Cheese,” Criticus said.

“It is against the old verse, *caseus est nequam*,” Molus said.

The Latin means, “Cheese is nothing.”

“Yea, but it digests all things except itself,” Criticus said.

Many people in this society held the belief that cheese was indigestible but helped the stomach to digest other food.

“Yes, but if a man has nothing else to eat, what shall it digest?” Molus asked.

“You are disposed to jest,” Criticus said. “But if your silken throat can swallow no packthread, you must pick your teeth, and play with your trencher.”

Unless Molus’ fastidious throat can swallow common food during Lent, Molus will have to pick his teeth with a toothpick and play with his plate — and fast, which is what Lent is all about.

Molus said:

“So shall I not incur the fulsome and unmannerly — the reprehensible — sin of surfeiting, aka eating too much.”

Gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins.

Molus then said:

“But here comes Calypho.”

Calypho the Cyclops entered the scene.

“What is the news?” Criticus asked.

“Since I was last here, I have sweat like a dog to prove my master is a devil,” Calypho said. “He brought such reasons to refel” — he meant “repel,” aka “refute” — “me as, I promise and

assure you, I shall think the better of his wit, as long as I am with him.”

Vulcan had a good intelligence and could argue well.

“How did he refute your arguments?” Molus asked.

Calypho replied:

“Like this.

“I was always arguing that he had horns, and therefore he was a devil, but he said, ‘Fool, they are things like horns, but no horns. For once a solemn session was being held in the assembly of gods, and in the midst of their talk, I put in my sentence, aka judgment or opinion, which was so indifferent that they all concluded it might as well have been left out as put in, and so they placed on each side of my head things like horns and called me a *parenthesis*.’

“Now, my masters, this may be true, for I have seen it (a set of parentheses) myself in various sentences.”

Indeed, parentheses can look like horns. Imagine them on the sides of the forehead with a pair of eyes between their bottoms:

(.)

“It is true, and the same did Mars make a full point, so that Vulcan’s head was made a *parenthesis*,” Molus said.

A full point can be 1) a full stop, aka period, or 2) a full erection.

Parentheses resemble horns, and by cuckolding Vulcan, Mars gave him a pair of parentheses.

“This shall go with me,” Criticus said. “I will remember it. I trust in Syracuse to give one or other man a *parenthesis*.”

Criticus wanted to cuckold one or more husbands.

By cuckolding one or more husbands, Criticus could be giving them a parent-thesis. A thesis is a topic for discussion, and people, including the husband, could discuss whether the husband or Criticus was the real father of a child.

“Has Venus yet come home?” Molus asked.

Calypho said, “No, but if I were Vulcan, I would by the gods —”

“What would thou do?” Criticus asked.

“Nothing, but like Vulcan, I would halt by the gods,” Calypho said.

“Halt” can mean 1) limp, or 2) stop speaking (when he was around the gods).

“I thought you would have hardly entreated Venus,” Criticus said.

“Hardly entreated” can mean 1) “little begged,” 2) “vigorously begged,” or 3) “begged with difficulty.”

“Nay, Venus is easily entreated; but let that go by,” Calypho said.

“Let what go by?” Criticus asked.

“That which makes so many *parenthesis*,” Calypho said.

In other words: Let’s stop discussing this topic of cuckoldry.

“I must go by — leave — too, or else my master will not go by me, but will meet me full with his fist and thrash me,” Molus said. “Therefore, if we shall sing, give me my part quickly, for if I tarry long, I shall cry my part woefully and lament my lot in life.

They sang a drinking song:

All sang:

“*Arm, arm, the foe comes on apace [quickly].*”

Calypho sang:

“*What’s that red nose and sulfury [fiery] face?*”

Molus sang:

“*’Tis [It is] the hot leader.*”

Criticus sang:

“*What’s his name?*”

Molus sang:

“*Bacchus, a captain of plump fame [great reputation]:*

“*A goat [is] the beast on which he rides,*

“*Fat grunting swine run by his sides,*

“*His standard-bearer [flag-holder] fears no knocks,*

“*For he’s a drunken butter-box,*

“*Who when i’ th’ red field [bloody battlefield] thus he revels,*

“*Cries out, ‘ten tousan ton of tevils!’*” [*Stereotypical Dutch dialect: The Dutch had a reputation for loving butter and were called butter-boxes.*]”

Calypho sang:

“*What’s he [Who is he who] so swaggers in the van [vanguard, front of the army]?*”

Molus sang:

“*Oh! that’s a roaring Englishman,*

“*Who in deep healths [deeply drunk toasts] does so excel,*

“*From Dutch and French he bears the bell [wins first place].*”

Criticus sang:

*“What vict’lers [vitalers: people who supply food and other provisions] follow Bacchus’ camps?”*

Molus sang:

*“Fools, fiddlers, panders, pimps, and ramps [wanton women].”*

Calypho sang:

*“See, see, the battle now grows hot;*

*“Here legs fly [legs are blown off on the battlefield, or drinkers’ legs collapse], here goes heads to the pot [to ruin, or to the drinking pot],*

*“Here whores and knaves toss broken glasses,*

*“Here all the soldiers look like asses.”*

Criticus sang:

*“What man ever heard such hideous noise?”*

Molus sang:

*“That’s the vintner’s bawling boys. Anon, anon, [Soon, soon] the trumpets are,*

*“Which call them to the fearful bar.”*

Calypho sang:

*“Rush in, and let’s our forces try.”*

Molus sang:

*“Oh, no, for see they fly [flee], they fly [flee]!”*

Criticus sang:

*“And so will I.”*

Calypho sang:

*“And I.”*

Molus sang:

*“And I.”*

All sang:

*“’Tis [It is] a hot day in drink to die.”*

They exited.

In her chamber, Sappho was lying in her bed. Some visitors arrived: the court ladies Mileta, Ismena, Canope, Eugenia, Favilla, and Lamia.

Sappho sighed and said, "I don't know which way to turn myself. Ah, ah, I faint, I die."

"Madam, I think it would be good if you were to put on more bedclothes and sweat it out," Mileta said.

"No, no, the best relief I find is to sigh it out," Sappho said.

"It is a strange disease that would breed such a desire," Ismena said.

"It is a strange desire that has brought such a disease," Sappho said.

Her desire for Phao had caused her love sickness.

The court ladies thought that her illness was physical, not emotional.

"Where, Lady, do you feel your most pain?" Canope asked.

"Where nobody else can feel it, Canope," Sappho answered.

"At the heart?" Canope asked.

"In the heart," Sappho answered.

"At the heart" is a physical ailment; "in the heart" is a love ailment.

"Will you have any mithridate?" Canope asked.

Mithridate was an antidote for poison.

"Yes, if for this disease there were any mithridate," Sappho said.

"Why? What disease is it, madam, that medicine cannot cure?" Mileta asked.

"Only the disease, Mileta, that I have," Sappho said.

"Is it a burning ague — a fever?" Mileta asked.

"I think so, or a burning agony," Sappho answered.

"Will you have any of this syrup to moisten your mouth?" Eugenia asked.

"I wish I had some local things to dry my brain," Sappho said.

"Local things" are medicines that treat one part of the body.

In this society, moist palms were a sign of lechery, and a "thing" could be a penis.

If Sappho could sleep with Phao, her lechery would be satisfied, and her brain would be dry.

"Madam, will you see if you can sleep?" Favilla asked.

"Sleep, Favilla? I shall then dream," Sappho said.

"It is as good to dream while asleep, as it is to sigh while awake," Lamia said.

"Phao is cunning and skilled in all kinds of simples, and it is unlikely that there is none to procure sleep," Eugenia said.

"Simples" are herbal medicines.

“Who?” Sappho asked.

“Phao,” Eugenia answered.

Sappho said:

“Yes, Phao! Phao!

“Ah, Phao, let him come immediately!”

“Shall we draw the curtains while you give yourself to slumber and fall asleep?” Mileta asked.

Sappho said:

“Do, but don’t depart. I have such starts in my sleep, which is disquieted I don’t know how or why.”

Slumbering, she said:

“Phao! Phao!”

“What do you say, madam?” Ismena asked.

Sappho said:

“Nothing, but if I don’t sleep now, you send for Phao.

“Ah, gods!”

Sappho fell asleep, and her attendants drew the curtains around her bed.

“There is a fish called garus, that heals all sickness, as long as while it is applied no one says its name: garus,” Mileta said.

“That is an evil medicine for us women, for if we should be forbidden to say the name ‘garus,’ we should chat nothing but ‘garus,’” Eugenia said.

The name that Sappho should not say is Phao.

Combine “Phao” with “garus,” and the result is “Phaogarus.”

“—phagous” is used in combination with other words. It means “feeding on” the word it is combined with. For example, “ichthyophagous” means “feeding on fish.”

“—phagous” is derived from the Greek word *phagein*, which means “to eat, to devour.”

Sappho was saying the name “Phao” often.

In this case, “—phagous” was combined with nothing, and Sappho’s body was feeding on itself: She was wasting away.

If Sappho could sexually “feed” on Phao, her illness would disappear.

“Well said, Eugenia, you know yourself,” Canope said.

“Know thyself” was a saying found at Delphi, where was the Delphic Oracle.

“Yes, Canope, and you know that I am one of your sex,” Eugenia said.

As women, they shared some of the same faults.

“I have heard of an herb called lunary [moonwort, a fern], that being bound to the pulses of the sick, causes nothing but dreams of weddings and dances,” Ismena said.

“I think, Ismena, that herb is at thy pulses now for thou are always talking of romantic matchings and merriments,” Favilla said.

“It is an unlucky sign in the chamber of the sick to talk of marriages, for my mother said it predicts death,” Canope said.

“It is very evil, too, Canope, to sit at the bed’s feet, and it predicts danger; therefore, move your stool, and sit by me,” Mileta said.

Canope moved and sat by Mileta.

“Surely, she has taken some cold,” Lamia said.

“If someone were burnt to death, I think we women would say that he died of a cold,” Ismena said.

“It may be some conceit,” Favilla said.

In this context, a conceit is a psychosomatic illness.

“Then there is no fear, for I never did hear yet of a woman who died of a conceit,” Mileta said.

“I don’t fear that she will die, for the owl has not shrieked at the window, nor has the night raven croaked, both of which signs are fatal and ominous,” Eugenua said.

“Fatal” means “ominous.”

“You are all superstitious, for these are only fancies of doting old age, who by chance observing it in some, have set it down as a religion for all,” Favilla said.

This is how some superstitions start. One thing happens, then another thing happens. Someone erroneously thinks the first thing caused the second thing.

For example, a black cat crossed my path and then I had bad luck. I conclude that if a black cat crosses your path, you can expect to have bad luck.

“Favilla, thou are only a girl,” Mileta said. “I would not have a weasel cry, nor desire to look into a mirror, nor an old wife come into my chamber; for then, although I lingered in my disease, I should never escape it.”

Apparently, these are things that Mileta associates with bad luck. Weasels are bad-luck animals (some hunters in this society believed that if you see a weasel in the morning, you will have bad luck all day), mirrors can be dropped and broken (or can show an ill face), and old ladies may be witches.

Mileta was superstitious. She wished to avoid signs of bad luck.

Sappho asked:

“Ah, who is there?”

The bedcurtains were drawn back.

Sappho then said:

“What sudden frights are these? I thought that Phao came with simples to make me sleep. Did nobody name Phao before I began to slumber?”

“Yes, we told you about him,” Mileta said.

“Let him be here tomorrow,” Sappho said.

“He shall,” Mileta said. “Will you have a little broth to comfort you?”

“I can relish and enjoy no food,” Sappho said.

“Yet you must eat a little food to sustain nature,” Mileta said.

Sappho said:

“I cannot, Mileta. I will not.

“Oh, which way shall I lie? What shall I do?”

She sighed and then said:

“Oh, Mileta, help to raise me up in my bed; my head lies too low. You pester me with too many bedclothes. Bah, you keep the chamber too hot — leave my chamber.

“It may be I shall steal a nap when all of you are gone.”

“We will,” Mileta said.

All the court ladies exited.

Alone, Sappho said to herself:

“Ah, impatient, restless disease of love, and goddess of love thrice unmerciful. The eagle is never stricken with thunder, nor the olive with lightning; and may great ladies be plagued with love?”

If great things such as eagles (king of birds, associated with Jupiter, king of the gods) and olive trees (associated with Minerva, goddess of wisdom) enjoy protection, why not Sappho, princess of Syracuse)?

Sappho continued talking to herself:

“Oh, Venus, haven’t I strewn thine altars with sweet roses? Haven’t I kept thy swans in clear rivers? Haven’t I fed thy sparrows with ripe corn? And haven’t I harbored thy doves in fair houses?”

Swans, doves, and sparrows are all associated with Venus. Swans pull her chariot in the sky. Turtledoves are symbols of loyalty in love matches. In this society, sparrows were associated with lechery.

Sappho continued talking to herself:



“Thy tortoise I have nourished under my fig tree, I have decorated the ceiling of my bedchamber with thy cockleshells, and I have dipped thy sponge into the freshest waters.”

Venus appeared with a sponge in a painting by the 4<sup>th</sup>-century B.C.E. Greek artist Protogenes, and she appeared standing on a cockleshell in a painting by Botticelli.

Occasionally, she has been depicted with one foot on a tortoise. Tortoises are associated with staying at home because they carry their homes on their back. Figs have been associated with female genitalia.

Sappho continued talking to herself:

“Did thou nurse me in my swaddling clothes with wholesome herbs, just so that I might perish in my flowering years — the prime years of my life — from love?”

“I perceive, but too late I perceive, and yet not too late, because at last, that strains are caught as well by stooping too low, as by reaching too high; that eyes are bleared as soon with vapors that come from the earth, as with beams that proceed from the sun. Love lodges sometimes in caves; and thou, Phoebus Apollo, that in the pride of thy heat shines all day in our horizon, at night dips thy head in the ocean.”

Phao was from a lower social class than Sappho’s, and yet she had fallen in love with him.

Sappho was from a higher social class than Phao’s, and yet he had fallen in love with her.

Sappho continued talking to herself:

“Resist it, Sappho, while love is yet tender and young.

“From acorns come oaks, from drops come floods, from sparks come flames, and from atoms come elements.”

Resisting something small early may keep it from becoming big.

Sappho continued talking to herself:

“But alas, it fares with me as with wasps, who, feeding on serpents, make their stings more venomous: By glutting myself on the face of Phao, I have made my desire more desperate.

“Into the nest of a halcyon [the kingfisher], no bird can enter except the halcyon; and into the heart of so great a lady, can anyone creep except a great lord?”

“There is an herb (not unlike unto my love), which, the further it grows from the sea, the saltier it is; and my desires, the more they swerve from reason, the more they seem reasonable and rational.

“When Phao comes, what then? Will thou open and reveal thy love?”

“Yes.

“No, Sappho, but staring in his face until thine eyes dazzle, and thy spirits faint, I will die before his face.

“Then this shall be written on thy tomb:

“Though thy love were greater than wisdom could endure, yet thine honor was such as love could not violate.”

She then called, “Mileta!”

Mileta and Ismena entered Sappho’s bed-chamber.

“I come,” Mileta said.

“Peace will not happen,” Sappho said. “I can take no rest, whichever way I turn.”

“This is a strange malady!” Mileta said.

Sappho said:

“Mileta, if thou don’t mind, it is a strange martyrdom.”

Martyrdoms involve intense suffering. Sappho was a martyr for love.

Sappho continued:

“But give me my lute, and I will see if in song I can beguile my own eyes and deceive them into falling asleep.”

Mileta got the lute, handed it to Sappho, and said, “Here, madam.”

“Have you sent for Phao?” Sappho asked.

“Yes,” Mileta answered.

“And you told him to bring simples that will procure sleep?” Sappho asked.

“No,” Mileta said.

Sappho said:

“Foolish wench, what should the boy do here, if he doesn’t bring any remedies with him? Do you think that perhaps I could sleep if I did just see him?”

“Let him not come at all — yes, let him come — no, it doesn’t matter. Yet I will try, let him come.”

These days, “come” is sometimes spelled “cum.”

Sappho continued:

“Do you hear me?”

“Yes, madam, it shall be done,” Mileta said.

She left the bedchamber and then said to Ismena, “Peace, no noise. She begins to fall asleep. I will go to Phao.”

Ismena replied:

“Go speedily, for if she wakes up and does not find you here, she will be angry.

“Sick folks are testy, who although they eat nothing, yet they feed on gall.”

Irritable people figuratively feed on gall, aka bile, a secretion of the liver.

Mileta exited, while Ismena withdrew.

Sappho sang:

*“Oh, cruel Love [Cupid]! on thee I lay*

*“My curse, which shall strike blind the day:”*

Her curse will make him blind.

Sappho continued with her curse:

*“Never may sleep with velvet hand*

*“Charm thine eyes with sacred wand;*

*“Thy jailers shall be hopes and fears;*

*“Thy prison-mates, [Thy prison-mates shall be] groans, sighs, and tears;*

*“Thy play, [Thy pastime shall be] to wear out weary times,*

*“Fantastic passions, vows, and rhymes;*

*“Thy bread [shall] be frowns, thy drink [shall] be gall,*

*“Such as when you Phao call.*

*“The bed thou liest on [shall] be despair;*

*“Thy sleep, [Thy sleep shall be] fond [mad] dreams; thy dreams, [dreams shall be] long care;*

*“Hope (like thy fool [jester]) at thy bed’s head,*

*“Mock [Shall mock] thee, till madness strike thee dead,*

*“As [Just as] Phao, thou dost me [thou strike me dead] with thy proud eyes;*

*“In thee poor Sappho lives; for thee she dies.”*

— 3.4 —

In the ante-room to Sappho’s chamber, Mileta and Phao talked.

“I wish that either your cunning, Phao, or your fortune and luck might by simples — herbal remedies — provoke my lady to some slumber,” Mileta said.

“My simples are in their operation like my simplicity is, which if they do little good, assuredly they can do no harm,” Phao said.

His “simplicity” was his foolishness. He was saying that he was just a simple man.

Physicians follow (or try to follow) this guideline: Do no harm.

“If I were sick, the very sight of thy fair face would drive me into a sound sleep,” Mileta said.

Hmm. Mileta has fallen in love with Phao.

“Indeed, gentlewomen are so drowsy in their desires, that they can scarcely hold up their eyes for love,” Phao said.

Women’s “bedroom eyes” can be languorous.

Mileta explained what she had meant: “I mean the delight of beauty would so bind and blind my senses that I would be quickly rocked into a deep rest.”

“You women have an excuse for an advantage, which must be allowed, because only to you women it was allotted,” Phao said.

Women have an advantage because they are women; men will sometimes allow them to win arguments without much argument because they are women.

Mileta said:

“Phao, thou are surpassingly good-looking, and thou are able to draw and attract a chaste eye, not only to glance, but to gaze on thee.

“Thy young years, thy quick wit, thy stayed and staid desires are of force to control and overmaster those who should command.”

“Stayed” desires are suppressed desires. Phao was able to control his sexual desires even when an upper-class woman such as Mileta (or Sappho) was attracted to him.

“Staid” desires are steadfast desires.

Mileta was of a higher social class than Phao, and she was the one to command. She was doing the chasing, not Phao.

Phao realized that he had committed a faux pas by not praising Mileta’s beauty.

He said, “Lady, I forgot to commend you first, and lest I should have overslipped — failed — to praise you at all, you have brought in my beauty, which is simple and unadorned, so that in courtesy I might remember yours, which is singular and without peer.”

His words can be interpreted as saying that Mileta was fishing for compliments.

“You mistake my words on purpose, and deliberately misconstrue my words out of malice,” Mileta said.

“I am as far from malice as you from love, and to mistake your words on purpose would be to dislike you out of peevish foolishness,” Phao said.

Phao’s saying that Mileta was far from love meant only that she was far from loving *him*, but she misunderstood it as saying that she was incapable of loving anyone.

“As far as I from love? Why, do you think that I am so dull that I cannot love, or so spiteful that I will not love?” Mileta asked.

“Neither, lady, but how should men imagine women can love, when in their mouths there is nothing rifer — more commonly spoken — than ‘Truly, I do not love,’” Phao said.

“Why, will you have women’s love in their tongues?” Mileta asked. “Do you want women to openly reveal their hearts?”

“Yes, else I think there is no love in their hearts,” Phao said.

“Why?” Mileta asked.

“Because there was never anything in the bottom of a woman’s heart that does not come to her tongue’s end,” Phao said.

A proverb stated, “Trust a secret with no woman,” aka “Entrust no secret to a woman.”

Phao was making an argument:

Premise 1: Women always reveal what is in their heart.

Premise 2: If a woman does love a man, she will reveal that love.

Premise 3: A woman does not reveal that she loves a man.

Conclusion: That woman does not love that man.

“You are too young to cheapen and trivialize love,” Mileta said.

“Yet I am old enough to talk with market folks,” Phao said.

He was interpreting the word “cheapen” to mean “haggle and attempt to get a lower price for an item one is buying.”

“Well, let us go in,” Mileta said.

Some curtains were drawn back, revealing Ismena and Sappho.

“Phao has come,” Ismena said.

“Who? Phao?” Sappho asked. “Phao, let him come near, but who sent for him?”

“You did, madam,” Mileta said.

Sappho said:

“I am loath to take any medicines, yet I must, rather than pine in these maladies.”

“Pine” can mean wasting away because of lovesickness.

Sappho continued:

“Phao, you may make me sleep, if you will.”

“If I can, I must, if you want me to,” Phao replied.

“What herbs have you brought, Phao?” Sappho asked.

“Such as will make you sleep, madam, although they cannot make me slumber,” Phao replied.

“Why, how can you cure me, when you cannot remedy yourself?” Sappho asked.

Phao said, “Yes, madam, the causes of my insomnia and your insomnia are contrary, for it is only a dryness in your brains that keeps you from rest, but —”

Previously, Sappho had wanted something to dry her brain.

“— but what?” Sappho interrupted.

“Nothing, but mine is not so,” Phao said.

His brain was wet. In this society, a moist palm was a sign of lechery, although Phao’s wet brain was due to love.

Phao was assuming that Sappho’s illness was physical, while his was emotional.

“Nay, then I despair of help if our diseases are not all one,” Sappho said.

She wanted both Phao and her to be suffering from lovesickness.

“I wish our diseases were all one and the same,” Phao said.

In fact, they were all one and the same: lovesickness.

“It goes hard with the patient, when the physician is desperate,” Sappho said.

The physician, Phao, was desperately in love, but by “desperate,” Sappho meant “unable to cure his patient.”

“Yet Medea made the ever-waking dragon to snort and snore, when she, poor soul, could not close her eyes and sleep,” Phao said.

“Medea was in love, and nothing could cause her rest but Jason,” Sappho said.

In Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica*, Jason traveled in search of the Golden Fleece. A young woman, Medea, who was skilled in herbs, fell in love with him and could not sleep. She helped him to get the golden fleece by putting to sleep the huge always-awake dragon (or snake) guarding it.

Phao said, “Indeed, I know no herb to make lovers sleep, except heartsease, which, because it grows so high, I cannot reach, for —”

“For whom?” Sappho asked.

“For such as love,” Phao said.

Sappho said, “It grows very low, and I can never stoop to it, so that —”

“That what?” Phao asked.

Sappho said:

“So that I may gather it.”

Heartsease is a name given to two plants. One grows very high (the wallflower, which climbs upward on walls), and the other grows very low (the pansy).

Sappho’s social position is very high, and Phao’s social position is very low.

Sappho then asked:

“But why do you sigh so, Phao?”

“It is my custom, madam,” Phao said.

“It will do you harm, and me, too,” Sappho said, “for I never hear someone sigh, but I must sigh, also.”

A folk belief alleged that one sigh resulted in the loss of one drop of blood from the heart.

“It would be best, then, that your ladyship would give me leave — permission — to be gone, for I can only sigh,” Phao said.

Sappho said:

“Nay, stay, for now I begin to sigh, I shall not leave — stop — although you would be gone.

“But what do you think best for your sighing to take it away?”

“Yew, madam,” Phao said.

“Yew” is a tree. “Yew” is pronounced like “you.”

“Me?” Sappho said.

“No, madam, yew of the tree,” Phao said.

“Then I will love yew the better. And, indeed, I think it would make me sleep, too; therefore, all other simples set aside, I will simply use only yew,” Sappho said.

“Do, madam, for I think nothing in the world is as good as yew,” Phao said.

“Farewell for this time,” Sappho said.

Phao went into the anteroom just as Venus and Cupid entered it.

Venus asked him, “Isn’t your name Phao?”

“I am Phao, fair Venus, whom you made so good-looking,” Phao said.

Venus said, “So surpassingly good-looking! Oh, fair Phao. Oh, sweet Phao. What will thou do for Venus?”

Hmm. Venus has fallen in love with Phao.

“Anything that comes in the compass — within the limit — of my poor fortune,” Phao answered.

“Cupid shall teach thee to shoot, and I will instruct thee in how to dissemble,” Venus said.

“I will learn anything but dissembling,” Phao said.

“Why, my boy?” Venus asked.

“Because then I must learn to be a woman,” Phao said.

“Thou heard that from a man,” Venus said.

“Men speak truth,” Phao said.

He must have heard that from a man, too.

“But truth is a she, and truth is so always painted — depicted,” Venus said.

“I think a painted — pretended — truth,” Phao said.

“Well, farewell for this time, for I must visit Sappho,” Venus said.

Phao exited.



## CHAPTER 4 (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

### — 4.1 —

Venus and Cupid visited Sappho in her bedchamber.

“Sappho, I have heard thy complaints, and pitied thine agonies,” Venus said.

Sappho said:

“Oh, Venus, my cares and griefs are known only to thee, and from thee only came the cause.

“Cupid, why did thou wound me so deeply?”

“My mother told me to draw my arrow to the head,” Cupid replied.

“Venus, why did thou prove so hateful?” Sappho asked.

“Cupid took a wrong shaft — a wrong arrow,” Venus said.

Cupid had gold arrows and lead arrows. A person hit with a gold arrow feels love. A person hit with a lead arrow feels hate.

“Oh, Cupid, too unkind [cruel and unnatural], to make me so kind [so much in love], that I almost transgress the modesty of my kind [my gender],” Sappho said.

“I was blind, and I could not see my arrow,” Cupid said.

“How did it come to pass that thou did hit my heart?” Sappho asked.

“That came by the nature of the head, which being once let out of the bow, can find no other alighting — landing — place but the heart,” Cupid said.

“Don’t be dismayed,” Venus said. “Phao shall yield.”

Sappho replied, “If he does yield, then I shall be ashamed to embrace one so mean and socially low; if he does not yield, I shall die, because I cannot embrace one so mean and cruel. Thus do I find no mean.”

A mean is a middle ground. Sappho’s two options each ended in an extreme: shame or her death.

“Well, I will work for thee and help thee,” Venus said. “Farewell.”

“Farewell, sweet Venus, and thou, Cupid, who are sweetest in thy sharpness,” Sappho said.

Sappho exited.

### — 4.2 —

Venus and Cupid talked together in Sappho’s bedchamber.

“Cupid, what have thou done?” Venus asked. “Put thine arrows in Phao’s eyes, and wounded thy mother’s heart?”

“You gave him a face to allure, so then why shouldn’t I give him eyes to pierce?” Cupid replied.

A glance from Phao had caused Venus to fall in love with him. It was if Phao’s eyes were shooting Cupid’s gold arrows.

Venus said:

“Oh, Venus! Unhappy Venus! In bestowing a benefit upon a man, thou have brought a bane — a poison — to a goddess. What perplexities and bewilderment do thou feel?”

“Oh, fair Phao! And therefore made fair to breed in me a frenzy!

“Oh, I wish that when I gave thee golden locks to curl thy head, I had shackled thee with iron locks on thy feet! And when I nursed thee, Sappho, with lettuce, I wish that it had turned to hemlock!”

Lettuce is an edible plant, and hemlock is a poisonous plant.

Venus continued:

“Have I brought a smooth skin over thy — Phao’s — face, to make a rough scar in my heart?”

Lettuce is a smooth plant, and hemlock is a rough plant.

Venus continued:

“And have I given thee a fresh color like the damask rose, to make mine pale like the stained turquoise?”

In this society, people believed that turquoise would turn lighter if the wearer was about to be in danger.

Venus continued:

“Oh, Cupid, thy flames with Psyche’s were only sparks, and my desires with Adonis were only dreams, compared to these unfamiliar torments.”

Venus was jealous of the mortal woman Psyche, and she sent Cupid to kill her, but Cupid fell in love with the mortal Psyche, and he made a home for her and slept with her on the condition that she never see his face. Curious, Psyche looked at his face by candlelight as he was sleeping, and some candlewax fell on him and burned him. He fled, and Psyche wandered the earth in search of him.

After being scratched by one of Cupid’s arrows, Venus fell in love with the good-looking Adonis, and she ignored everything but him.

Both love affairs were passionate, but Venus’ current love for Phao was more passionate.

Venus continued:

“Laugh, Juno! Venus is in love; but Juno shall not see with whom, lest she be in love.”

Venus was worried that if Juno, with whom she had a rivalry, saw Phao, she would also fall in love with him.

During the Trojan War, Venus supported the Trojans, while Juno and Minerva supported the Greeks. Earlier, the Trojan prince Paris had chosen Venus as the most beautiful goddess, with Juno and Minerva as runners-up.

Venus continued:

“Venus likely has become stale.”

The word “stale” sometimes means “prostitute.”

Venus continued:

“Sappho, indeed, because she has many virtues, she must therefore have all the favors. Venus grows old, and then she was a pretty wench, when Juno was a young wife; now a crow’s foot is on her eye, and the black ox has trod on her foot.

Venus was growing older. She had laugh lines (crows’ feet), and her feet hurt.

Venus continued:

“But were Sappho never so virtuous, does she think to contend with and compete against Venus and try to be as amorous?”

“Yield, Phao; but yield to me, Phao.

“I entreat where I may command; thou command where thou should entreat.”

Venus was an immortal goddess; Phao was a mere mortal man. Venus should be doing the commanding, according to Venus.

Venus continued:

“In this case, Cupid, what is thy counsel? Venus must both play the lover and the dissembler, and therefore the dissembler, because the lover.”

According to Venus, lovers always dissemble.

Cupid said:

“You will forever be playing with arrows, like children with knives, and then, when you bleed, you cry.”

He then gave his mother this advice:

“Go to Vulcan, entreat him with prayers, threaten him with blows, woo him with kisses, ban him with curses, and try all means to rid yourself of these extremities — this serious problem.”

“To what end?” Venus asked. “Why should I do that?”

Cupid answered:

“So that he might make me new arrows, for nothing can root out the desires of Phao, but a new arrow of inconstancy and fickleness; nor can anything turn Sappho’s heart away from loving Phao, except a new arrow of disdain.

Cupid would shoot Phao with a gold arrow to make him fall in love with someone other than Sappho, and he would shoot Sappho with a lead arrow to make her not love him.

Cupid continued:

“And then, they disliking one the other, who shall enjoy Phao but Venus?”

Venus said:

“I will follow thy counsel. For Venus, although she is in her latter age for years — she is old — yet she is in her nonage — her youth — for affections.

“When Venus ceases to love, let Jove cease to rule.

“But come, let us go to Vulcan.”

— 4.3 —

Sappho, Mileta, Ismena, Eugenia, Lamia, Favilla, and Canope were in Sappho’s bedchamber. They were discussing women’s dreams.

Sappho said:

“What dreams are these, Mileta? And can there be no truth in dreams? Yes, dreams have their truth.

“I thought I saw a stockdove [wild pigeon] or woodquint [ringdove or wood pigeon], I don’t know what to term it, that brought short straws to build his nest in a tall cedar, where, while with his bill he was framing his building — that is, building his nest — he lost as many feathers from his wings as he laid straws in his nest. Yet scrambling and struggling to catch hold to harbor and shelter in the house — that is, the nest — he had made, he suddenly fell from the bough where he stood.

“And then, pitifully casting up his eyes, he cried in such terms (as I imagined) as might either condemn the nature of such a tree, or the daring of such a mind.”

The bird could condemn the tree for being so high, or it could condemn itself for attempting to build its nest so high.

In this allegory, of course, Phao is the bird, and Sappho is the tree.

Sappho continued:

“While he lay quaking upon the ground, and I was gazing on the cedar, I was able to see ants breed in the bark, coveting only to hoard food, and caterpillars to cleave and attach themselves to the leaves, laboring only to suck the leaves dry, which caused more leaves to fall from the tree, than there did feathers before from the dove.”

The ants and caterpillars are parasites, literally and metaphorically.

Sappho continued:

“I thought, Mileta, that I sighed in my sleep, pitying both the fortune — luck, which was bad — of the bird, and the misfortune of the tree; but in this time, quills — that is, feathers — began to bud again in the bird, which made him look as though he would fly up, and then I

wished that the body of the tree would bow down, so that he might just climb and creep up the tree.

“Then — and so —”

Sappho sighed.

“And so what?” Mileta asked.

Sappho said:

“Nothing Mileta, except — and so I waked.

“But did nobody dream but I?”

Mileta said:

“I dreamed last night — but I hope dreams are contrary.”

She hoped that dreams did not forecast the future, but instead forecast the opposite of the future. Her dream was bad, and she hoped that it would not come true.

Mileta continued:

“While I was holding my head over a sweet smoke, all my hair blazed on a bright flame. I thought Ismena threw water to quench it, yet the sparks fell on my bosom, and, wiping them away with my hand, I was all covered in gory blood, until someone with a few fresh flowers staunched it and stopped the flow of blood.

“And so stretching myself because I was stiff, I startled and woke up: It was only a dream.”

Ismena interpreted the dream: “It is a sign you shall fall in love after hearing fair words spoken by the one you will love. Water signifies counsel and advice, flowers signify death, and nothing can purge your loving humor but death.”

Mileta had fallen in love with Phao, who was handsome, but he was also clumsy with words.

Mileta said, “You are no interpreter, but an inter-prater, harping always upon love, until you are as blind as a harper.”

An inter-prater prates and chatters at intervals.

Ismena related her own dream: “I remember two nights ago: I dreamed my eyetooth — my canine tooth — was loose, and that I thrust it out with my tongue.”

Mileta interpreted the dream: “It foretells the loss of a friend: and I always thought thee so full of prattling idle talk, that thou would thrust out thy best friend with thy tattling.”

The loss of a friend? Which friend? Mileta.

Ismena said, “Yes, Mileta, but it was loose before; and if my friend is loose, it is as good to thrust out my friend with plain words, as to keep the friendship with dissembling.”

A loose friend is a wanton friend. Ismena believed that it was better to break up a friendship with a loose friend than to continue a false friendship.

That friendship was with Mileta.

Eugenia gave her opinion about dreams: “Dreams are just foolishness, which are brought on either by things we see in the day, or some kinds of food that we eat, and so the common sense promotes it to be the imaginative.”

Sappho thought that dreams may be true.

Mileta hoped that dreams are false.

Eugenia thought that dreams are brought on by indigestion or the imagination.

Ismena objected: “Wait a moment, philosophatrix, well skilled in the secrets of the art and science, and not seduced and misled by the superstitions of nature!”

A philosophatrix is a woman philosopher.

A meretrix is a prostitute, so a philosophatrix may be a philosophical prostitute — or a wanton friend putting on intellectual airs.

Some hurtful insults were being said among the court ladies.

Sappho said:

“Ismena’s tongue never lies still. I think all her teeth will be loose, they are so often jogged against her tongue.

“But talk on, Eugenia.”

“That is all I have to say,” Eugenia said.

“What did you dream, Canope?” Sappho asked.

Canope said:

“I seldom dream, madam, but ever since your sickness, I cannot tell whether with being exhausted from watching over you, but I have had many fantastical visions; for even now, slumbering by your bed’s side, I thought I was shadowed with and enclosed in a cloud, where laboring to unwrap myself, I was more entangled. But in the midst of my striving, it seemed to mizzle — drizzle — gold, with fair drops. I filled my lap, and as I ran to show the gold to my fellows, it turned to dust.

“I blushed, they laughed, and then I woke up, glad it was only a dream.”

“Take heed, Canope, that gold does not tempt your lap, and then you blush for shame,” Ismene said.

In other words: Beware, Canope. Don’t fall for a man just because he showers you with gifts.

In a myth, Jupiter came to Danae in a shower of gold and impregnated her. She gave birth to the hero Perseus.

“It is good luck to dream of gold,” Canope said.

“Yes, if it had continued to be gold when you woke up,” Ismene said.

Lamia said:

“I dream every night, and last night I dreamed this:

“I thought that, walking in the sun, I was stung with the tarantula fly, whose venom nothing can expel but the sweet consent — the sweet harmony — of music. I tried all kinds of instruments, but found no ease and release from the bite, until, at the last, two lutes tuned in one key so glutted my thirsting ears that my grief presently ceased, for joy whereof as I was clapping my hands, your ladyship called.”

Mileta interpreted the dream:

“It is a sign that nothing shall alleviate your love except marriage, for such is the tying of two in wedlock as is the tuning of two lutes in one key.

“For striking the strings of the one, straws will stir upon the strings of the other; just as in two minds linked in love, one cannot be delighted unless the other rejoices.”

When two lutes are tuned in the same key, playing one lute’s strings will cause the other lute’s strings to gently vibrate like a soft wind causing a straw to gently move. These are sympathetic vibrations.

Sometimes, a man and a woman make beautiful music together.

Favilla related a dream:

“I thought, going by the seaside among pebbles, I saw someone playing with a round stone, always throwing it into the water when the sun shined.

“I asked what the name of the stone was, and he said it was called ‘asbeston,’ which, being once hot, would never be cold.”

He had been throwing the asbeston stone into the sea to keep it cool when the sun shined.

Favilla continued relating her dream:

“He gave it to me and vanished.

“I, forgetting myself, delighted with the pretty show of the stone, would always show it by candlelight, pull it out in the sun, and see how bright it would look in the fire, where, catching heat, nothing could cool it.

“Out of anger, I threw it against the wall, and, with the heaving up of my arm, I awakened.”

Mileta said, “Beware of love, Favilla; for women’s hearts are such stones that, when warmed by affection, they cannot be cooled by wisdom.”

“I assure you that I beware of love, for I never believe men’s words,” Favilla replied.

“Yet be wary, for women are scorched sometimes with men’s eyes, although they had rather consume than confess,” Ismena said.

Men would rather pine and waste away than admit that they are in love.

Sappho said:

“Cease your talking; for I would like to sleep, to see if I can dream whether the bird has feathers or ants have wings.”

She wanted to see if she could continue the dream that she had related earlier.

She then said:

“Draw the curtain.”

The court ladies closed the curtain.

— 4.4 —

Venus and Cupid entered Vulcan’s forge, where Vulcan and Calypho were working.

Vulcan’s forge was his workshop where, assisted by the one-eyed Cyclopes, he forged Jupiter’s thunderbolts. The forge was located under Mount Etna, a volcano in Sicily.

Venus was here to request a favor from Vulcan, her husband. She wanted him to make new arrows for Cupid, her son.

Vulcan was often suspicious of Venus and her motives.

Vulcan is Venus’ husband.

Cupid is Venus’ son.

Was Vulcan Cupid’s father?

Nope.

Who was Cupid’s father?

Maybe Mars.

Maybe Mercury.

Maybe Jupiter.

Venus got around.

Vulcan had reason to be suspicious of Venus and her motives.

Venus said:

“Come, Cupid, Vulcan’s flames must quench Venus’ fires — her passion.”

She called, “Vulcan?”

Vulcan looked up.

“Who is it?” he asked.

Venus answered, “Venus.”

“Ho! Ho!” Vulcan said. “Venus.”

Venus said:



“Come, sweet Vulcan. Thou know how sweet thou have found Venus, who, being of all the goddesses the most fair and beautiful, has chosen thee, of all the gods the most foul and ugliest, to be her spouse.”

Earlier, she had said that her husband was chosen for her by lot.

Venus continued:

“Thou must necessarily then confess that I was most loving.

“Don’t inquire about the reason for my request by questions but prevent the effects — anticipate the results — by courtesy.

“Make for me six arrowheads. It is given thee of the gods by permission to frame them to any purpose for which I shall request them by prayer.”

Vulcan could give the arrowheads whatever power he — or his wife — wanted them to have.

Vulcan looked unhappy at this request.

Venus continued:

“Why do thou scowl and frown, Vulcan? Will thou have a kiss? Hold up thy head: Venus has young thoughts and fresh affections.”

She kissed him and then said:

“Roots have strings [root filaments], when boughs have no leaves.”

Venus’ marriage had roots, while her affairs had no leaves.

Roots stay alive in the winter while all the leaves are dead.

Even when the marriage of Venus and Vulcan was frosty, it was still alive: There was something there.

Venus continued:

“But listen in thine ear, Vulcan.”

She whispered something to him and then asked:

“What do thou say?”

Vulcan replied:

“Vulcan is a god with you when you are disposed to flatter.

“You are a true woman, whose tongue is like a bee’s sting, which pricks deepest when it is fullest of honey.”

Venus was at her most dangerous and her most deceptive when she flattered.

Vulcan continued:

“Because you have made my eyes drunk with beautiful looks, you will set my ears on edge with sweet words.

“You were accustomed to say that the beating of hammers made your head ache, and the smoke of the forge made your eyes water, and every coal was a block in your way.

“You weep rose water when you ask, and spit vinegar when you have obtained what you want.

“What do you want now with new arrows? Perhaps Mars has a tougher skin on his heart, or Cupid has a weaker arm, or Venus has a better courage.”

Perhaps Venus had a new conquest in sight.

Vulcan continued:

“Well, Venus, there is never a smile in your face but has made a wrinkle in my forehead.”

The wrinkles may be caused by worry, or by the horns of a cuckold, or by both.

Vulcan continued:

“Ganymede must fill your cup, and you will pledge and drink a toast to no one but Jupiter.”

Ganymede was the cupbearer to the gods: He filled wine glasses.

Venus wanted the best: She wanted a luxurious life.

Vulcan concluded:

“But I will not chide Venus.”

He did not want to argue with her.

Vulcan then said to Calypho:

“Come, Cyclops, my wife must have her will.

“Let us do that on earth which the gods cannot undo in heaven.”

“That” means “make someone fall in love.”

Venus replied:

“Gramercy, sweet Vulcan. Thank you.

“Get to your work.”

As Vulcan made the arrows, he sang:

*“My shag-hair Cyclops, come let’s ply*

*“Our Lemnian hammers lustily [vigorously].*

*“By my wife’s sparrows,*

*“I swear these arrows*

*“Shall singing fly*

*“Through many a wanton’s eye.*

*“These headed are with golden blisses,*

*“These silver ones [are] feathered with kisses,  
“But this of lead  
“Strikes a clown [rustic, fool] dead,  
“When in a dance  
“He falls in a trance.  
“To see his black-brow lass not buss [kiss] him,  
“And then whines out for  
“Death t’ untruss [to release] him.  
“So, so, our work being done, let’s play,  
“Holiday, boys, cry holiday!”*

“Lemnian” refers to the island of Lemnos.

Usually, Vulcan’s lead arrows make someone hate another person, but according to the song, these lead arrows make the person whose heart they enter fall down and whine that he wants to be dead because the person he loves does not love him.

Silver arrows? In classical mythology, Cupid had only gold and lead arrows.

Vulcan said, “Here, Venus, I have finished these arrows by art and skill, and I bestow them to you by wit and intelligence; for he must use as great advice — prudence — who has them, as he who made them used cunning.”

“Vulcan, now you have done with your forge, don’t tell us about your flights of fancy,” Venus said. “You are the fletcher — the maker — of the arrows; you are not the archer. You should meddle with the arrow, not the aim.”

Before, Venus had been sweet, but now she had what she wanted. She had dissembled to get what she wanted.

Vulcan said:

“I thought so: When I have done working, you have done wooing. Where is now ‘sweet Vulcan’?”

“Well, I can say no more but this, which is enough and as much as any can say: Venus is a woman.”

“Don’t be angry, Vulcan,” Venus said. “I will love thee again, when I have either business or nothing else to do.”

“When I have business” means “When I want something.”

“Nothing else to do” means “When I haven’t found someone better than you.”

Cupid said, “My mother will make much of you, when there are no more men than Vulcan.”

According to Cupid, Venus would make much of Vulcan when Vulcan was the last man on earth.

Vulcan went deeper into his forge. He was out of hearing distance.

## CHAPTER 5 (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

— 5.1 —

Venus and Cupid talked together in Vulcan's forge.

Venus said:

“Come, Cupid, receive with thy step-father's instruments — the six arrows — thy mother's instructions, for thou must be wise in judgment, if thou will be fortunate in execution.”

Venus described **Arrow #1** — Arrowhead of the Stone Perillus:

“This arrow is feathered with the wings of aegitus, which never sleeps for jealous fear of his hen.”

The aegitus was a hawk that was lame: Venus described it as being jealous of its mate.

Vulcan was also lame and jealous of his wife.

Venus continued:

“The head is touched with the stone perillus, which causes mistrust and jealousy.

“Shoot this, Cupid, at men who have beautiful wives who will make them rub the brows when they swell in the brains.”

They will rub their brows to see whether cuckold's horns are growing because their brains are swelling with jealous thoughts.

Venus described **Arrow #2** — Arrowhead of Lydian Steel:

“This shaft is headed with Lydian steel, which strikes the heart and induces a deep disdain of that which we most desire; the feathers are of turtledoves, but they are dipped in the blood of a tigress.

“Draw this up close to the head at Sappho, so that the arrow may hit her with great force and she may despise where now she dotes.

“My good boy, wound her in the side, so that for Phao's love she may never sigh.”

Venus described **Arrow #3** — Arrowhead of the Eagle's Beak:

“This arrow is feathered with the phoenix' wing, and it is headed with the eagle's beak.”

The phoenix is a mythological bird that lives for 500 years, sets itself on fire, and rises newly born from the ashes.

Venus continued:

“It makes men passionate in desires, constant and loyal in love, and wise in conveyance [courtship], melting, as it were, their fancies into faith.

“This arrow, sweet child, and with as great aim as thou can, Phao must be stricken with. Cry softly to thyself in the very release of the arrow, ‘Venus!’

“Sweet Cupid, don’t mistake what I say and don’t make a mistake. I will make a quiver for that by itself.”

Venus described **Arrow #4** — Arrowhead of Fine Gold:

“The fourth has feathers of the peacock, but they are glued with the gum of the myrtle tree, headed with fine gold, and the gold arrowhead is fastened to the shaft with brittle chrysocola, a glue.

“Shoot this arrow at dainty and coy ladies, at amiable, lovely, and young nymphs.

“Choose no other white” — think of the white center of a target — “except women, for this will work liking in their minds, but not love; affability and geniality in speech, but no faith, no loyalty, and no constancy; courtly favors to be mistresses over many, but constant to none; sighs to be fetched from the lungs, not the heart; and tears to be wrung out with their fingernails, not their eyes; secret laughing at men’s pale looks and neat attire; open rejoicing at their own comeliness and beauty and at men’s courting.”

Tears wrung out with fingernails are caused by scratches.

Venus continued:

“Shoot this arrow among the thickest of them, whose bosoms lie open because they would be stricken with it. And seeing men term women ‘Jupiter’s fools,’ women shall make men ‘Venus’ fools.”

Women are Jupiter’s fools because Jupiter has slept with so many mortal women.

Men shall be Venus’ fools because women will string men along by flirting with them without being in love with them.

Venus described **Arrow #5** — Arrowhead of Lead:

“This shaft is lead in the head, and its black feathers are of the night raven: It is a deadly and poisoned shaft, which breeds nothing but hate against those who plead for love.

“Take heed, Cupid, that thou do not hit Phao with this arrow, for then shall Venus perish.”

If Cupid were to hit Phao with this arrow, he would hate any woman or goddess who pursued him, including Venus.

Venus described **Arrow #6**:

“This last is an old arrow, just recently mended. It is the arrow that hit both Sappho and Phao, working only in mean minds an aspiring to superiors, and in high estates a stooping to inferiors.

“With this arrow, Cupid, I am galled — distressed — myself, until thou have galled — wounded — Phao with the other arrow: the one that brings faithful and constant love.”

The arrow that brings faithful and constant love is **Arrow #3**: Arrowhead of the Eagle’s Beak

Venus has been hit with **Arrow #6**: She was a goddess who has fallen in love with a lowly mortal man.

Cupid said, "I assure you that I will cause Phao to languish in your love and pine for you, and Sappho to disdain his love."

Venus said:

"Go. Don't loiter but instead make haste, and don't mistake your shaft. Be sure to hit the right person with the right arrow."

Interesting. Men are capable of true love (**Arrow #3**), while women are capable of liking (**Arrow #4**).

Cupid exited.

Venus continued:

"Now, Venus, thou have played a cunning part, although not current."

"Not current" meant not ethical.

Venus continued:

"But why should Venus dispute about unlawfulness in love, or faith in affection, as Venus is both the goddess of love and affection and she knows that there is as little truth to be used in love, as there is reason?"

"No, sweet Phao, Venus will obtain and possess thee because she is Venus. Not thou, Jove, with thunder in thy hand, shall take him out of my hands. I have new arrows now for my boy, and fresh flames at which the gods shall tremble, if they begin to trouble me.

"But I will wait for the outcome of my instructions to Cupid, and I will wait for Cupid at the forge of my husband."

— 5.2 —

Sappho, Cupid, and Miletta talked together in a room in Sappho's palace.

"What have thou done, Cupid?" Sappho asked.

"I have done what my mother commanded, Sappho," Cupid answered.

"I think I feel an alteration in my mind, and, as it were, a withdrawing into myself of my own affections and lovesickness," Sappho said.

"Then my arrow has had its effect," Cupid said.

Cupid had shot her with **Arrow #2**: the arrow that caused the recipient to dislike whomever she had previously liked.

"I ask thee to please tell me the reason you shot me with one of your arrows," Sappho said.

"I dare not," Cupid said.

Sappho said:

"Fear nothing, for if Venus frets and complains, Sappho can frown.

"Thou shall be my son.

“Mileta, give him some sweetmeats.”

Mileta did.

Sweetmeats are sweet food such as cakes and sugared nuts and candied fruits.

Sappho continued:

“Speak, good Cupid, and I will give thee many pretty things.”

“My mother is in love with Phao,” Cupid said. “She wanted me to strike you with disdain of him, and to strike him with desire of her.”

Sappho said:

“Oh, spiteful Venus!

“Mileta, give him some of that.”

Mileta gave Cupid more sweetmeats.

Sappho then asked:

“What else, Cupid?”

Cupid said, “I could get even with my mother, and so I will if I may call you mother.”

“Yes, Cupid, call me anything, as long as I may get even with her,” Sappho said.

“I have an arrow, with which if I strike Phao, it will cause him to loathe only Venus,” Cupid said.

Only Venus currently loved Phao, and the arrow would cause Phao to loathe only those who currently loved him.

The arrow is **Arrow #5**: the lead arrow.

“Sweet Cupid, strike Phao with it,” Sappho said. “Thou shall sit in my lap: I will rock thee asleep and feed thee with all these fine knacks — these fine delicacies.”

“I will set about doing it,” Cupid said.

He exited.

Sappho said after him:

“But come quickly again.”

She then said to herself:

“Ah, unkind Venus, is this thy promise to Sappho?”

Earlier, Venus had promised to help her. This was not the kind of “help” Sappho wanted.

Sappho continued:

“But if I get Cupid from thee, I myself will be the queen of love. I will direct these arrows with better aim, and I will conquer my own affections with greater modesty. Venus’ heart shall



flame, and her love shall be as common, indiscriminate, and sluttish as her craft.”

Sappho will use the arrows to make herself be in control of her emotions, but also to make Venus always passionately in love.

Venus’ craft is deceit.

Sappho then said:

“Oh, Mileta, time has disclosed that which my temperance and self-control have kept hidden and in secret; but since I am rid of the disease, I will not be ashamed to confess the cause.”

Her disease was lovesickness, and the cause was her love for Phao.

Sappho continued:

“I loved Phao, Mileta, a thing unfit for my social rank, but forced by my desire.”

“Phao?” Mileta asked.

“Phao, Mileta, of whom now Venus is enamored,” Sappho answered.

“And do you love him still?” Mileta asked.

Sappho said:

“No, I feel my love thoughts abating, and I feel my reason not yielding to appetite.

“Let Venus have him — no, she shall not have him.

“But here comes Cupid.”

Cupid entered the scene and sat on Sappho’s lap.

She asked, “How are things now, my boy? Have thou done it?”

Cupid said, “Yes, and I have left Phao ranting against Venus, and cursing her name; yet still sighing for Sappho, and emblazening and proclaiming her virtues.”

Phao had been hit with **Arrow #5**, which caused him to hate those who were pursuing him. That person was the goddess Venus. Since Sappho no longer loved Phao, **Arrow #5** did not cause him to hate her. Instead, he continued to love her.

Sappho said:

“Alas, poor Phao! Thy extreme love should not be requited with so mean a fortune; thy fair face deserved greater favors. I cannot love you: Venus has hardened my heart.”

Sappho was sympathetic to Phao. **Arrow #2** had not caused Sappho to dislike him, but only to not love him.

Venus entered the scene.

She said to herself:

“I marvel Cupid has not come all this while.”

She had grown tired of waiting for him, and so she had come looking for him.

Seeing him and Sappho, she said:

“What is this now? Why are thou sitting in Sappho’s lap?”

“Yes, Venus, what do you say about it?” Sappho said. “Cupid is sitting in Sappho’s lap.”

“Sir boy, come here,” Venus said.

“I will not,” Cupid responded.

“What is this now?” Venus said. “You will not! Has Sappho made you so saucy?”

“I will be Sappho’s son,” Cupid said. “I have, as you commanded, stricken her with a deep disdain of Phao; and I have stricken Phao, as Sappho entreated and asked me, with a great hatred of you.”

“Unhappy wag — trouble-causing boy — what have thou done?” Venus said. “I will make thee repent it in every vein of thy heart.”

Sappho said:

“Venus, don’t be choleric and angry.

“Cupid is mine. He has given me his arrows, and I will give him a new bow to shoot arrows with.

“You are not worthy to be the lady of love, you who yield so often to the deep impressions of love. You are immodest, Venus, who, to satisfy the unbridled and uncontrolled thoughts of thy heart, have transgressed so far from the restraint of thine honor.

“What do thou say, Cupid? Will thou stay with me?”

“Yes,” Cupid said.

“Won’t I be on earth the goddess of affections?” Sappho asked.

“Yes,” Cupid said.

“Won’t I rule the fancies of men, and figuratively lead Venus in chains like a captive?”

Sappho planned to make Venus fall repeatedly in love.

“Yes,” Cupid said.

“It is a good boy!” Sappho said.

Venus said:

“What have we here? You the goddess of love?”

“And you her son, Cupid?”

“I will tame that proud heart of Sappho’s, or else the gods shall say that they are not Venus’ friends.

“And as for you, sir boy, I will teach you how to run away.

“You shall be stripped from top to toe, and whipped with nettles, not roses. I will set you to blow Vulcan’s coals, not to bear Venus’ quiver. I will deal with you because of this matter.

“Well, I will say no more, although there is more that I could say.

“But as for the new mistress of love (or, lady, I beg your mercy, I think you would rather be called a goddess), you shall know what it is to usurp the name of Venus!

“I will pull those plumes and cause you to cast your eyes on your feet, not your feathers.”

Peacock feathers are lovely, but peacock feet are ugly.

Venus continued:

“I will turn your soft hair to hard bristles, your tongue to a sting, and those alluring eyes to eyes unlucky in luring men, in which, if the gods do not aid me, I will curse the gods!”

Sappho said:

“Venus, you are in a vein — a mood — answerable to your vanity, whose high and haughty words of outrage neither become you, nor frighten me.

“But let this suffice: I will keep Cupid in spite of you, and yet with the content and consent of the gods.”

Venus said:

“Will you? Why then, we shall have ‘pretty’ gods in heaven, when you take gods prisoners on earth. Before I sleep, you shall both repent, and you shall find what it is merely to think irreverently and disrespectfully of Venus.

“Come, Cupid. She does not know how to treat and employ thee. Come with me. You know what I have for you.

“Won’t you come with me?”

According to what Venus had said earlier, she had a beating with nettles in store for him.

“Not I!” Cupid said.

“Well, I will be even with you both, and that shortly,” Venus said.

Venus exited.

“Cupid, don’t be afraid,” Sappho said. “I will direct thine arrows better. Every rude ass shall not say he is in love. It is a toy made for ladies, and I will keep it only for ladies.”

“But what will you do for Phao?” Cupid asked.

Sappho said:

“I will wish him fortunate — I will wish him good luck. This I will do for Phao because I once loved Phao. For never shall it be said that Sappho loved to hate, or that out of love she could not be as courteous as she was in love passionate.

“Come, Mileta, shut the door.”

They exited.

— 5.3 —

Phao stood in front of Sybilla's cave.

He said to himself:

“Go to Sybilla. Tell her the beginning of thy love, and the end of thy good fortune.

“And look! Luckily, she sits in her cave.”

He called:

“Sybilla!”

“Phao, welcome,” Sybilla said. “What is the news?”

Phao replied:

“I loathe Venus, the goddess of love.

“Cupid caused it with a new shaft: He shot me with a new arrow.

“Sappho disdains me.

“Venus caused it because of a newly formed spite.

“Oh, Sybilla, if even Venus is unfaithful in love, where shall one fly for truth and faithfulness? She uses deceit, so isn't it then likely she will permit subtlety and cunning? And being careful to commit injuries, won't she not care whom she hurts to revenge them?”

In other words: Venus takes great care to commit injuries, and she will be eager to revenge them, not caring whom she hurts in the process.

Phao continued:

“I must now fall from love to labor, and endeavor with my oar to get a fare, not with my pen to write a fancy: a love sonnet.

“Loves are only illusory smokes, which vanish in the seeing and yet hurt while they are seen.”

He paused and said to himself:

“A ferry, Phao?

“No, the stars cannot call it a worser fortune.”

Being a ferryman was not a worser fortune: Phao had previously been happy as a ferryman.

Being deprived of Sappho was a worser fortune.

Phao added:

“Wander rather over the world, swear off affections, and beg for death.”

Phao then said:

“Oh, Sappho, thou have Cupid in thine arms; I have him in my heart.

“Thou kiss him for sport and entertainment; I must curse him for spite.

“Yet I will not curse him, Sappho, whom thou kiss.

“This shall be my resolution:

“Wherever I wander, I resolve to be as if I were always kneeling before Sappho, my loyalty unspotted and undiminished, although unrewarded.

“I will go to my grave with as little malice as I did lie with in my cradle. My life shall be spent in sighing and wishing, the one for my bad fortune, the other for Sappho’s good fortune.”

Sybilla said:

“Do so, Phao, for destiny calls thee as well from Sicily as from love.

“Other things hang over thy head, which I must neither tell, nor thou inquire.

“And so, farewell.”

Sybilla exited.

Alone, Phao said:

“Farewell, Sybilla, and farewell, Sicily.”

About himself, he said:

“Thoughts shall be thy food, and in thy steps shall be imprinted behind thee that there was none as loyal left behind thee.

“Farewell, Syracuse, which is unworthy to harbor faith; and when I am gone, unless Sappho is here, it is unlikely to harbor any.”

Phao exited.

## EPILOGUE (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

The Epilogue appeared and said:

“They who tread in a maze, walk often in one path, and at the last come out where they entered in.

“We fear we have led you all this while in a labyrinth of trifles, several times hearing one idea, and we have now brought you to an end where we first began.

“This wearisome travail and travel you must impute to the necessity of the history, as Theseus did his labor to the art of the labyrinth.”

Theseus entered the labyrinth of Crete at one place, and he exited at the same place, using a thread to find his way out.

The Epilogue continued:

“There is nothing that causes such giddiness and dizziness as going in a wheel. Neither can there be anything that breeds such tediousness as hearing many words uttered in a small area.

“But if you accept this dance of a fairy in a circle, we will hereafter at your wills frame our fingers to all forms.

“And so we wish every one of you a thread to lead you out of the doubts, wherewith we leave you entangled, so that nothing will be mistaken by our rash oversights, nor misconstrued by your deep insights.”

The Epilogue hoped that the audience of the play would not overinterpret it and think it applied to such real people as, say, Queen Elizabeth I.

The Epilogue also apologized for leaving his characters in the same situation that they were in before his play began.

Phao, however, had changed from a happy man to an unhappy man.

## NOTES (SAPPHO AND PHAO)

### — 1.1 —

Below is the story about Venus and Mars being caught in a net by Vulcan. The story is told by the blind poet Demodocus in Homer’s *Odyssey*. Of course, the *Odyssey* uses the Greek names of the gods. Venus is Aphrodite. Mars is Ares. Vulcan is Hephaestus. Mercury is Hermes. Jupiter is Zeus. Neptune is Poseidon.

*Demodocus sang a comic song of Aphrodite’s affair with Ares, the god of war. The two had fallen in lust although Aphrodite, the goddess of sexual passion, was married to Hephaestus, the gifted blacksmith god. Hephaestus learned of the affair, so he set a trap for the illicit lovers. He created fine chains that bound tightly, he placed the chains above his bed, and then he pretended to leave his mansion to journey abroad. Ares ran to Aphrodite and invited her to join him in Hephaestus’ bed, and together they ran to*

*the bed. Ares and Aphrodite lay down in bed together, and then the fine chains snared them, locked in lust.*

*Hephaestus returned home, knowing what and whom he would see in his bed. He invited all the gods and the goddesses to look, also. He complained to Zeus, "Father, look at how my wife treats me. I am crippled, so she sleeps with Ares because of his handsome looks. Right now, they are in my bed, locked together in the act of lovemaking by chains that only I can loosen. Come, look and laugh at the lovers. I will keep them bound until I receive my bride-gifts back. The goddess I married is a bitch."*

*The gods entered Hephaestus' bedroom and looked at the unhappy and embarrassed Ares and Aphrodite, naked and stuck together. The goddesses, however, were embarrassed and stayed away.*

*The gods laughed, and one god said to another, "Hephaestus one, adulterers zero. The blacksmith god conquers both the god of war and the goddess of sexual passion."*

*Apollo asked Hermes, "Would bedding Aphrodite be worth the embarrassment of being caught by Hephaestus?"*

*Hermes replied, "Of course! Look how beautiful she is!"*

*Only Poseidon did not laugh; he was a friend to Ares. He begged Hephaestus to release the lovers, saying, "Ares will pay you whatever you ask for sleeping with your wife."*

*Hephaestus replied, "Ares is a worthless god, and a promise from a worthless god is a worthless promise, so don't ask me to release him from my chains."*

*But Poseidon said, "If he won't pay the fine, I will. My word is good."*

*"So it is," Hephaestus said. He released the two lovers, who ran away in opposite directions to friends who would not laugh at them.*

Source of Above: David Bruce, *Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose.*

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/87553>

— 1.1 —

Mithridate is an antidote for poison. The name derives from Mithridates.

This is the end of A.E. Housman's poem "Terence, This is Stupid Stuff," from his book *A Shropshire Lad*:

*There was a king reigned in the East:  
There, when kings will sit to feast,  
They get their fill before they think  
With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.  
He gathered all that sprang to birth  
From the many-venomed earth;*

*First a little, thence to more,  
He sampled all her killing store;  
And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,  
Sate the king when healths went round.  
They put arsenic in his meat  
And stared aghast to watch him eat;  
They poured strychnine in his cup  
And shook to see him drink it up:  
They shook, they stared as white's their shirt:  
Them it was their poison hurt.  
— I tell the tale that I heard told.  
Mithridates, he died old.*

— 3.4 —

For Your Information:

The *combining form* *-phage* is used like a *suffix* meaning “a thing that devours.” It is used in many scientific terms, especially in *biology*.

The form *-phage* ultimately comes from the Greek *phageîn*, meaning “to eat, devour.” This Greek root also helps form the word *esophagus*. [...] The word *phage*, referring to a *bacteriophage*, is a shortened or independent use of the combining form *-phage*.

Closely related to *-phage* are *-phagia*, *-phagy*, and *-phagous*. Their corresponding form combined to the beginning of words is *phago-*.

Source of Above:

“-phagous.” Dictionary.com. Accessed 6 October 2022.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/-phage>

— 3.4 —

For Your Information:

The tortoise was the symbol of the ancient Greek city of *Aegina*, on the island by the same name: the seal and coins of the city shows images of tortoises. The word *Chelonian* comes from the Greek *Chelone*, a tortoise god. The tortoise was a fertility symbol in Greek and Roman times, and an attribute of *Aphrodite/Venus*.

This is a photo caption in the Wikipedia article:

*Aphrodite Ourania*, draped rather than *nude*, and with her foot resting on a tortoise at *Musée du Louvre*.



Source of Above:

“Cultural depictions of turtles.” Wikipedia. Accessed 6 October 2022.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_depictions\\_of\\_turtles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_depictions_of_turtles)

For More Information:

Carol L. Dougherty: “Why Does Aphrodite Have Her Foot on That Turtle?”

*Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*

Vol. 27, No. 3 (Winter 2020), pp. 25-48 (24 pages)

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/arion.27.3.0025>

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/815705/pdf>

— 3.4 —

The passage below is from my retelling of Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica*:

*They followed a path to the sacred wood where the Golden Fleece hung from a tree. The Golden Fleece was bright like a cloud that has been colored by the Sun at dawn. The huge snake that guarded the Golden Fleece with its never-sleeping eyes saw them and hissed at them. The hiss traveled a far distance, and it startled babies. Mothers held their babies closer and hugged them.*

*The snake came closer to Medea and Jason, but Medea began to chant, invoking the god of Sleep to come and overpower the snake. She also invoked the dreaded goddess Hecate. Jason, terrified, stood behind Medea. The snake, hearing Medea’s words, began to relax its body, but its head swayed over Medea and Jason and threatened to swallow them.*

*Medea, still chanting, dipped some freshly cut juniper in a potion and sprinkled the snake’s eyes with her magic. The eyes that had never slept before now slept. The snake’s head and body lay on the ground, overcome by the scent of the magic potion. Following Medea’s orders, Jason got the Golden Fleece from the tree while Medea continued to anoint the snake’s head with her magic potion. Jason called to her that he had gotten the Golden Fleece, and she left the snake as it slept.*

Source of Above:

Bruce, David. *Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes’ Argonautica*. 2013.

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/337653>

— 4.4 —

Here is some information about the parentage of Eros, aka Cupid (bold added):

*According to other genealogies, again, **Eros was a son of Hermes by Artemis or Aphrodite, or of Ares by Aphrodite** (Cic. de Nat. Deor. iii. 23), or of Zephyrus and Iris*

*(Plut. Amal. 20; Eustath. ad Hom.p. 555), or, lastly, a son of Zeus by his own daughter Aphrodite, so that Zeus was at once his father and grandfather. (Virg. Cir. 134.)*

Source of Above: "Eros." *Theoi*. Accessed 8 October 2022

<https://www.theoi.com/Ouranios/Eros.html>

Note: I don't understand this reference: *Virg. Cir. 134*.

Here is some more information:

*Eros was a primeval god, son of Chaos, the original primeval emptiness of the universe, but later tradition made him the son of Aphrodite, goddess of sexual love and beauty, by either Zeus (the king of the gods), Ares (god of war and of battle), or Hermes (divine messenger of the gods).*

Source of Above:

"Eros." Encyclopedia Britannica. 10 September 2022

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Eros-Greek-god>

### — Entire Play —

At times in this play, there appears to be forecasting that jealous people at the court will interfere with the love of Sappho and Phao. That does not happen. Instead, it is pride and different social classes, and the machinations of Venus and Cupid, that interfere with that love.

Phao's love does not change, but Sappho, whether in love or not with Phao, thinks that Phao is beneath her.

Phao is proud of his good looks, and he realizes that this is not good.

Sappho is proud of her birth, and she does not realize that such pride may not be good.

In 1.2, Trachinus talked about what could bring rottenness to Sappho's court: the east wind. In Genesis 41:6, the Pharaoh dreamed of "*seven thin ears [of corn] blasted with the east wind*" (Bishop's Bible). In this play, the east wind is Venus and Cupid.

Prophets don't always see clearly, or prophets are not always understood properly. Instead of being wary of people at court, Phao needed to be wary of Venus and Cupid.

Sybilla was in part saying in her advice about how to act at court that if Phao continued to be sweet, innocent Phao, things would end badly for him.

Sappho's beauty and Phao's love were real. But Sappho's love was not real because she fell in love with Phao's good looks, which were not real because they were a gift from Venus.

Love does have power. Cupid's arrows are only partially effective. Cupid's **Arrow #2** should have made Sappho hate Phao, but she merely ceased to love him. She remembered that she had loved him.

## THE WOMAN IN THE MOON



## CAST OF CHARACTERS (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

**Nature.** Nature is the main deity in this play. In Greek and Roman mythology, Jupiter (Greek name: Zeus) was the King of the gods. But in this play, Nature is a greater deity than Jupiter.

**Concord,** handmaid of Nature.

**Discord,** handmaid of Nature.

Note: Concord and Discord are both the handmaids of Nature because, as Nature says early in the play, “Nature works her will from contraries.”

**Saturn,** one of the seven planets. Saturn is associated with melancholy.

**Jupiter,** one of the seven planets. Jupiter is associated with power.

**Mars,** one of the seven planets. Mars is associated with war and fighting.

**Sol,** one of the seven planets. Sol — the Sun — is associated with wisdom.

**Venus,** one of the seven planets. Venus is associated with love.

**Mercury,** one of the seven planets. Mercury is associated with trickery and eloquence.

**Luna,** one of the seven planets. Luna is the Moon, which is associated with change

Note: John Lyly’s society believed that there were seven planets, including the Sun (Sol), which they called a planet. His society believed that the planets were embedded in crystalline spheres that orbited the Earth, which was the center of the universe.

**Juno,** Jupiter’s jealous wife.

**Ganymede,** attendant on Jupiter. Ganymede is a mute character: He has no lines.

**Cupid,** son of Venus.

**Joculus,** son of Venus.

**Pandora,** the woman in the moon. She is the first woman. Nature creates her after Nature previously created men.

**Stesias,** Utopian shepherd.

**Learchus,** Utopian shepherd.

**Melos,** Utopian shepherd.

**Iphicles,** Utopian shepherd.

**Gunophilus,** loyal servant to Pandora.

### SCENE:

Utopia. Etymologically, “Utopia” means “no place.” In this play, Utopia is located on Earth, and the goddess Nature has her workshop there.

### NOTES:

This is the only play that John Lyly wrote as poetry: It is blank verse. His other plays were written in prose. David Bruce's retelling is in prose.

In this society, a person of higher rank would use "thou," "thee," "thine," and "thy" when referring to a person of lower rank. (These terms were also used affectionately and between equals.) A person of lower rank would use "you" and "your" when referring to a person of higher rank.

The word "wench" at this time was not necessarily negative. It was often used affectionately.

The word "mistress" at this time can mean simply a woman who is loved. It can also mean a female head of household.

The word "fair" can mean attractive, beautiful, handsome, and good-looking.

### **COSMOLOGY:**

According to John Lyly's society, the planet Earth is composed of four elements. The element earth is at the center. Water covers the earth, with the continents and islands being bits of earth poking out of the water. Above the water is air. Above the air is a sphere of fire that separates the Earth from the Moon. (The sphere of fire was controversial: After people began to believe in the heliocentric theory, people began to stop believing in the sphere of fire.)

According to John Lyly's society, the Earth is composed of parts that make up one whole. Also according to John Lyly's society, the same is true of the universe.

At the center of the universe is the Earth, then comes the sphere of fire, and then come nine other spheres: the seven spheres of seven planets, the sphere of the firmament, and then (according to Christians) the Empyrean Heaven. The firmament is where the constellations and fixed stars are embedded. (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn are called "wandering stars" or "erring stars" because they wander in the sky; the word "planet" comes from a Greek term and means "wandering star." One meaning of "err" is "wander.") Furthest away from the Earth is Heaven.

The seven planets, in order of distance from the centric Earth, are the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Yes, this culture called the Sun a planet.

### **HUMORS AND ELEMENTS:**

This society believed that the mixture of four humors in the body determined one's temperament. One humor could be predominant. The four humors are blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm.

If blood is predominant, then the person is sanguine (active, optimistic).

If yellow bile is predominant, then the person is choleric (bad-tempered).

If black bile is predominant, then the person is melancholic (sad).

If phlegm is predominant, then the person is phlegmatic (calm, apathetic, indolent).

Humors could be hot, cold, wet, or dry.

Blood is hot and wet.

Yellow bile is hot and dry.

Black bile is cold and dry.

Phlegm is cold and wet.

This society also believed that everything was created out of four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. These were associated with the four humors.

Fire was represented by yellow bile.

Air was represented by blood.

Water was represented by phlegm.

Earth was represented by black bile.

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## PROLOGUE (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

The Prologue said to you, the readers:

“Our Poet slumbering in the Muses’ laps,

“Has seen a woman seated in the Moon,

“A point beyond the ancient theoric.”

The ancient theoric is the old belief. In this case, it is the belief in the man in the Moon. John Lyly is going beyond the old belief and introducing the woman in the Moon.

“And as it was, so he presents his dream,

“Here in the bounds of fair Utopia,

“Where lonely Nature being [the] only Queen,

“Bestows such workmanship on earthly mold [form]

“That [the] Heavens themselves envy her glorious work.

“But all in vain; for, malice being spent,

“They yield themselves to follow Nature’s doom [judgment].

“And fair Pandora sits in Cynthia’s orb.”

Cynthia is the goddess of the Moon. She is a tripartite goddess. On Earth, she is known as Diana. In the Underworld, she is known as Hecate. In the Heavens, she is known as Cynthia and as Luna.

The Prologue continued:

“This, but [just] the shadow of our author’s dream,

“Argues the substance to be near at hand:

“At whose appearance I most humbly crave,

“That in your forehead she may read content.

“If many faults escape in her discourse,

“Remember all is but [only] a poet’s dream,

“The first he had in Phoebus’ holy bower.”

Phoebus Apollo is the god of poetry and many other things.

The Prologue continued:

“But not the last — unless the first displease.”

## CHAPTER 1 (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

### — 1.1 —

Nature and her two handmaidens, Concord and Discord, stood in Nature's workshop, which was located on Earth.

Nature said to Concord and Discord:

"Nature descends from far above the spheres of the seven planets to frolic here in fair Utopia, where my chief works flourish in their prime, and frolic in their first simplicity and innocence.

"Here I survey the pictured firmament."

In her workshop, Nature had a model of the universe. The universe was filled with the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. John Lyly's society believed that everything in the universe was created from these four elements.

As Nature mentioned various parts of her model of the universe, she pointed to them.

Nature continued:

"Hurtless flames are found in the arch of the Moon."

Just below the sphere of the Moon was a Sphere of Fire. The flames that Nature was referring to are hurtless because they are not real: They are a part of a work of art. A sphere that is partially above the horizon forms an arch.

Nature continued:

"Here is the liquid substance of the welkin's waste, where moisture's treasury is clouded up."

The welkin is the sky, which stores much water in the form of clouds. "Waste" means "untouched area."

Nature continued:

"Here is the mutual jointure and conjunction of all swelling seas and all the creatures which their waves contain.

"Lastly is the rundle — that is, the globe — of this massive earth, from utmost face to the center's point."

The utmost face was the place on Earth furthest from the center of the Earth.

Nature continued:

"All these, and all their endless circumstance — everything that appertains to them — I survey here, and I glory in myself.

"But why does Discord so knit her brows, with sorrow's cloud eclipsing our delights?"

Discord said:

"It grieves my heart that always in every work, my fellow Concord frustrates my desires.



“When I, to perfect some wondrous deed, bring forth good and bad, or light and dark, pleasant and sad, moving and fixed things, frail and immortal, or like contraries, Concord with her hand unites them all in one, and so makes void and nullified the end of my attempt.”

Nature said:

“I tell thee, Discord, while you twain attend on Nature’s train, your work must prove to be but one, and although in yourselves you are different, yet in my service you must agree well.

“For Nature works her will from contraries.”

Nature works from the use of Concord and Discord. Think of the yin yang symbol in Chinese philosophy. Yin and yang are two opposite but interconnected forces. The yin yang symbol has two sections, with a part of each force in each section.

Many religions believe that an orderly universe was created from chaos.

Nature looked up and said:

“But see where our Utopian shepherds come.”

The four Utopian shepherds — Stesias, Learchus, Melos, and Iphicles — all clad in animal skins, entered the scene and knelt before Nature.

“Thou sovereign Queen and Author of the world, of all that was, or is, or shall be framed and made, to finish up the heap of thy great gifts, grant thy simple servants’ one request,” Stesias said.

“Stand up and tell me the sum of your desire,” Nature said. “The boon would be great that Nature would not grant. It always was and always shall be my joy, with wholesome gifts to bless my workmanship.”

Iphicles said:

“We crave, fair goddess, at thy Heavenly hands, to have as every other creature has, a sure and certain means among ourselves to propagate the issue of our kind.

“As it would be comfort to our sole estate, so it would be ease to thy working hand.”

The shepherds stood up.

The shepherds wanted a way to have children. If Nature were to make women, the shepherds could have children. That would bring the shepherds comfort, and it would make Nature’s work easier because she would not have to keep on creating men.

Iphicles continued:

“Each fish that swims in the floating sea, each winged fowl that soars in the air, and every beast that feeds on the ground have mates of pleasure to uphold their brood and create children.

“But thy Utopians, poor and simple men, still bewail their lack of the female sex.”

Nature said:

“A female you shall have, my lovely swains, like yourselves, but of a purer mold. Meanwhile, go away from here, and tend your tender flocks, and when I send her to you, see that you consider her dear.”

A swain is 1) a shepherd, and/or 2) a lover.

The shepherds exited, singing a roundelay — a short, simple song — in praise of Nature.

Nature then said to Concord and Discord:

“Now, virgins, put your hands to holy work, so that we may frame new wonders and present them to the world.”

Concord and Discord drew the curtains from before Nature’s workshop, where stood a clothed image and some unclothed images. They brought forth the clothed image, which resembled a statue.

Nature said:

“When I arrayed and dressed this lifeless image thus, it was decreed in my deep providence to make it such as our Utopians crave, a mirror of the Earth, and the Heavens’ envy.”

She wanted to create the first woman and have it be a model — an example — worthy of admiration, although she knew that doing so would make the Heavenly bodies — the seven planets — envious.

Nature continued:

“The matter first when it was void of form, was purest water, and earth, and air, and fire, and when I shaped it in a matchless mold, whereof the like was never seen before, it grew to this impression that you see, and lacks nothing now but life and soul.”

Nature had made the image out of the purest elements.

Nature continued:

“But life and soul I shall inspire from Heaven, so hold it fast, until with my quickening — my life-giving — breath, I kindle inward seeds of sense and mind.”

Nature’s breath would give the image life and soul.

Nature continued:

“Now fire be turned to choler, air to blood, water to humor purer than itself, and earth to flesh clearer than crystal rock.”

Nature was making the first woman out of the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. Nature was also making the first woman out of a mixture of humors.

This society believed that the mixture of four humors in the body determined one’s temperament. One humor could be predominant. The four humors are blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm.

The humor represented by air is blood.

The humor represented by fire is yellow bile.

The humor represented by earth is black bile.

The humor represented by water is phlegm.

Nature continued:

“And Discord stand aloof, so that Concord’s hands may join the spirit with the flesh in league.”

Concord closely embraced the image.

She said, “Now I feel how life and inward sense imparts motion to every limb.”

Nature said:

“Then let her stand or move or walk alone.”

The image walked about fearfully.

“Fearfully” can mean that the image was afraid or that she made those watching her — the audience — feel fear.

Nature continued:

“Herein has Nature gone beyond herself, and Heaven will grudge and complain at the beauty of the Earth, when it spies a second Sun below.”

Discord said, “Now every part performs her function’s due, except the tongue whose strings are still united — still tied.”

Nature said, “Discord, unloosen her tongue, to serve her turn, for in distress that must be her defense, and from that root will many mischiefs grow, if once she stains her state of innocence.”

The image knelt and said to Nature, “Hail, Heavenly Queen, the Author of all good, whose will has wrought in me the fruits of life, and whose will has filled me with an understanding soul to know the difference between good and bad.”

Nature helped her stand up and said:

“I make thee to be a solace to men. See that thou follow our commanding will.

“Now are thou Nature’s glory and delight, compact of every Heavenly excellence.

“Thou are endowed with Saturn’s deep conceit and power of thought.

“Thy mind is as haute — as elevated — as Jupiter’s high thoughts.

“Thy stomach — your temperament and courage — is lion-like, like the heart of Mars, god of war.

“Thine eyes are bright beamed, like Sol — the Sun — in his array.

“Thy cheeks are more beautiful than fair Venus’ cheeks.

“Thy tongue is more eloquent than Mercury’s.”

Among other things, Mercury was the god of eloquence.

Nature continued:

“Thy forehead is whiter than the silver Moon’s.

“Thus have I robbed the planets for thy sake.

“Besides all this, thou have proud Juno’s arms,

“Aurora’s hands, and lovely Thetis’ foot.”

Juno is the wife of Jupiter. Aurora is the goddess of the dawn. Thetis is a sea goddess who is the mother of Achilles, the greatest warrior of the Trojan War.

Nature continued:

“Use all these gifts well, and Nature is thy friend, but use them ill, and Nature is thy foe.

“Now, so that thy name may suit thy qualities, I give to thee ‘Pandora’ for thy name.”

The name “Pandora” means “many-gifted.”

The seven planets entered the scene and looked at Pandora, who sat quietly.

Noticing that Pandora had some of their best attributes, the seven planets were unhappy.

“What creature have we here? A newfound gaud and plaything?” Saturn asked. “A second man, less perfect than the first?”

“Less perfect than the first” man? No. Nature created Pandora to be more perfect than the first man.

Saturn and the other planets spoke contemptuously and sarcastically to and about Pandora.

“A woman this is, indeed, but she was made in haste, to rob us planets of our ornaments,” Mars said.

“Is this the saint who steals my Juno’s arms?” Jupiter said.

Juno was renowned for the beauty of her arms, but Pandora’s arms were more beautiful.

“My eyes?” Sol said. “Then govern thou my daylight car.”

Sol is the Sun. The daylight car is the chariot that the Sun-god drives across the sky each day to bring light and heat to the Earth.

“My cheeks?” Venus said. “Then Cupid be at thy command.”

Cupid was the son of Venus, but he frequently disobeyed her.

“My tongue?” Mercury said. “Thou pretty parrot, speak a while.”

Parrots speak without understanding what they are saying.

“My forehead?” Luna said. “Then fair ‘Cynthia,’ shine by night.”

Cynthia is the Moon-goddess. “Luna” and “Cynthia” are different names for the same goddess.

Luna was calling Pandora “Cynthia” sarcastically.

Nature said:

“What foul contempt is this you planets use against the glory of my words and work?”

“It was my will, and that shall stand for law, and she is framed — created — to darken all your prides. Didn’t I ordain your motions, and yourselves? And do you dare to check and rebuke the author of your lives? Weren’t your lights contrived in Nature’s workshop?”

“But I have the means to end what I have begun and to make Death triumph in your lives’ decay.

“If thus you cross the meed of my deserts — resist giving me what I deserve — and interfere with what I have created, be sure that I will dissolve your harmony, when once you touch the fixed period of your sway.”

Nature created the harmony of the universe, and if she wished, she could change that harmony into disharmony.

Nature continued:

“Meanwhile, I leave my worthy workmanship here to obscure and dim the pride of your disdain.”

Nature exited.

Despite Nature’s threat, the seven planets rebelled against her.

Saturn said:

“Then in revenge of Nature and her work, let us conclude to show our empery — our power. Let us agree to bend our forces against this earthly star who is named Pandora.

“Each one in turn shall signorize — that is, rule — for a while, so that Pandora may feel the influence of our beams, and rue that she was formed in our despite — in scorn of us.”

This society believed that the planets influenced human personality and events, and it believed that beams emanated from the planets.

Saturn continued:

“My turn is first, and I, Saturn, will begin.”

He — Saturn — ascended.

In the theater, Saturn ascended to the balcony that was part of the stage.

Jupiter said:

“And I’ll begin where Saturn makes an end, and when I end, then Mars shall tyrannize, and after Mars then Sol shall marshal — that is, govern — her, and after Sol each other planet shall tyrannize in his turn.

The other planets, in turn, were Venus, Mercury, and the Moon. Because Venus and the Moon have goddesses, Jupiter should have said “his or her,” not “his.”

“Come, let us go, so that Saturn may begin.”

All the planets except Saturn exited.

Saturn said:

“By corrupting her purest blood, I shall instill such a melancholy mood that shall first with sullen sorrows cloud her brain, and then surround her heart with froward — that is, perverse — worry and concern.

“She shall be sick with passions of the heart, self-willed, and tongue-tied and incapable of speech, but full fraught with tears.”

All of the planets were going to change Pandora’s personality. Saturn was going to make her melancholic.

Gunophilus entered the scene.

He said:

“Gracious Pandora, Nature, thy good friend, has sent me, Gunophilus, to wait on thee and be thy servant.

“Because obedience is the proper response to Nature’s will, and because of the graces of thy lovely self, Gunophilus will serve thee humbly, and he is resolved to live and die with thee.”

“If Nature willed this, then attend on me, but little service have I to command,” Pandora said. “If I myself might choose my kind of life, neither thou nor anyone else would stay with me. I find myself unfit for company.”

“Why is that, fair mistress in your flowering youth, when pleasure’s joy should sit in every thought of yours?” Gunophilus asked.

Pandora was already afflicted with melancholy by Saturn. A melancholic person is sad, gloomy, sullen, brooding, and often irritable.

Pandora said:

“Avaunt, sir sauce! Go away, saucy boy! Do you play the questioner?”

“What is it to thee whether I am sick or sad?”

“Either conduct thyself in a better way or get thee away from here and serve some other where.”

Gunophilus said to himself, “This is a sour beginning, but there is no remedy. Nature has bound me to serve Pandora, and I must obey. I see that servants must have merchants’ ears, to bear the blast and brunt of every wind.”

Servants and merchants must put up with rude bosses and with rude customers.

Pandora said:

“What throbs are these that labor in my breast? What swelling clouds are these that overcast my brain?”

“I burst, unless by tears they turn to rain. I grudge and grieve, but I do not know well why. And I choose to weep rather than speak my mind, for fretful sorrow captivates my tongue.”

Pandora was both rude and sad, without knowing why.

She played the vixen with everything about her; that is, she vented her anger on everything around her. Finally, she resumed her seat.

The four Utopian shepherds — Stesias, Iphicles, Melos, and Learchus — entered the scene.

Looking at Pandora, Stesias said:

“See where she sits, she in whom we must delight.

“Beware! She sleeps. Make no noise for fear of waking her!”

“She is asleep?” Iphicles said. “Why, see how her alluring eyes with open looks do glance on every side.”

“O eyes fairer than is the morning star!” Melos said.

“Nature herself is not so lovely fair!” Learchus said.

Stesias said:

“Let us with reverence kiss her lily-white hands —”

They all knelt before her.

Stesias added:

“— and by deserts in service to her win her love.”

He then said to Pandora:

“Sweet Dame, if Stesias may content thine eye, command my neat, my flock, and my tender kids, of which a great store overspread our plains.”

“Neat” are cattle, and “kids” are young goats.

Stesias then said:

“Allow me, sweet mistress, just to kiss thy hand.”

Pandora hit him on the lips.

Part of being melancholic is being easy to anger.

Stesias stood up.

Learchus said:

“No, Stesias, no. Learchus is the man for her.”

He said to Pandora:

“Thou mirror of Dame Nature’s cunning, skillful work, let me just hold thee by that sacred hand, and I shall make thee our Utopian queen, and set a gilded chaplet on thy head, so that nymphs and satyrs may admire thy pomp.”

A chaplet is an ornamental wreath.

Pandora hit his hand. Learchus stood up.

Gunophilus said to himself, "These twain and I have fortunes all alike."

All three of them had endured Pandora's anger.

Melos said, "Sweet Nature's pride, let me just see thy hand, and servant like, Melos shall wait on thee, and carry the train of thy dress, just as in the glorious Heavens, Perseus supports his love — Andromeda — whose thirty stars, whether they rise or fall, Perseus falls or rises, hanging at her heels."

Andromeda was a maiden who was chained to a rock to be a sacrifice to a sea-monster. The hero Perseus rescued her, and then he married her. Their constellations are close together in the sky, and Perseus still serves his loved one.

Pandora thrust her hands in her pockets so that Melos could not see them. Melos stood up.

Iphicles said, "Then to bless the love of Iphicles, whose heart regards thee as dearer than himself, just behold me with a loving look, and I will lead thee in our solemn dance, teaching thee tunes, and pleasant lays — songs — of love."

Many shepherds are musicians.

Pandora closed her eyes and frowned. Iphicles stood up.

Stesias said:

"No kiss? No touch? No friendly look?"

"What churlish influence deprives her mind? For Nature said that she was innocent, and fully fraught — fully filled — with virtuous qualities."

Of course, Pandora was under the malignant influence of Saturn.

Stesias said to Pandora:

"But speak, sweet love. Thou cannot speak but well."

Gunophilus said, "She is not tongue tied. I know that by the proof of experience."

He had experienced Pandora's sharp tongue.

"Speak once, Pandora, to thy loving friends," Melos requested.

"Rude knaves, what do you mean thus to trouble me?" Pandora asked.

Gunophilus said, "She spoke to you, my masters. I am not one of your company."

Pandora sank to the ground and wept.

Learchus said:

"Alas! Weeping, she swoons.

"Gunophilus, help to raise thy mistress from the ground."

"This is the very passion of the heart, and melancholy is the ground thereof," Gunophilus said.



Stesias said:

“Then to sift that humor from her heart, let us with roundelays — with songs — delight her ear, for I have heard that music is a means to calm the rage of melancholy mood.”

The four shepherds and Gunophilus sang.

Pandora stood up and ran away at the end of the song, saying:

“What songs? What pipes? And what fiddling have we here?

“Won’t you allow me to take my rest?”

She exited.

Melos said:

“What shall we do to vanquish her disease — her vexation? The death of that vexation would be life to our desires.

“But let us go and follow her. We must not leave her like this.”

The four shepherds and Gunophilus exited.

Saturn descended on the stage.

Alone, Saturn said:

“Saturn has laid the foundation for the rest of the planets, on which they can build the ruin of this dame, and spot and spoil her innocence with vicious thoughts.

“My turn has passed, and Jupiter’s turn is next.”

Saturn exited.

## CHAPTER 2 (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

— 2.1 —

Accompanied by Ganymede, Jupiter, who was holding a golden scepter, said to himself:

*“A Jove principium, sunt et Jovis omnia plena.”*

The Latin means: From Jove everything gets its beginning, and with Jove everything is filled.

Jove is another name for Jupiter.

Jupiter continued talking to himself:

“Now Jupiter shall rule Pandora’s thoughts and fill her with ambition and disdain. I will enforce my influence to the worst, lest the other planets blame my rule over her for being lenient.”

As King of the gods, Jupiter knew about ambition and disdain. He ruled the other gods by might.

Jupiter ascended.

In the theater, Jupiter ascended to the balcony that was part of the stage.

Pandora and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Pandora’s melancholy had passed, but now she was afflicted with ambition and disdain by Jupiter.

Pandora said:

“Although rancor now has been rooted from my heart, I feel it burdened in another way.

“By day I think of nothing but of rule. By night my dreams are all of empery: absolute power.

“My ears delight to hear of sovereignty.

“My tongue desires to speak of princely sway.

“My eye wishes that every object were a crown.”

Jupiter said to himself:

“Danae was fair, and Leda pleased me well, lovely Callisto set my heart on fire, and in my eye Europa was a gem.”

Disguised as a shower of gold, Jupiter slept with Danae, who bore him a son: the hero Perseus.

Disguised as a swan, Jupiter seduced Leda, who bore him two daughters: Helen, who later became known as Helen of Troy, and Clytemnestra, who married and later murdered Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces against the Trojans.

Disguised as Diana, Jupiter was able to be close to Callisto, a follower of the goddess Diana, goddess of the hunt. When she was separated from her friends, he raped her. Juno, who hated

the women whom her husband slept with, even when they were raped, turned Callisto into a bear. Years later, Callisto saw her son, Arcas, who prepared to defend himself with a spear against what he thought was a bear. Jupiter turned Arcas and Callisto into constellations. Callisto became Ursa Major: Big Bear. Arcas became Ursa Minor: Little Bear.

Disguised as a bull, Jupiter kidnapped the Phoenician woman Europa, who climbed on his back. He then swam to Crete, where Europa bore him a son: King Midas.

Jupiter continued:

“But in the beauty of this paragon, Pandora, Dame Nature has gone far beyond herself, and in this one are all my loves contained, and come what can come, Jupiter shall test whether fair Pandora will accept his love.

“But first I must dismiss this Heavenly cloud that hides me from the sight of mortal eyes.”

The gods were able to hide themselves with a cloud from mortals.

Jupiter waved away the cloud and said:

“Behold, Pandora, where thy lover sits, high Jove himself, who ravished with thy blaze and glory, receives more influence than he pours on thee, and humbly sues for succor at thy hands.”

The kind of succor he wanted was an orgasm.

“Why, who are thou more than Utopian swains?” Pandora asked.

Jupiter said, “I am King of the gods, I am one of immortal race, and I am he who with a beck — a gesture — controls the Heavens.”

“Why, then Pandora does exceed the Heavens — Pandora neither fears nor loves Jupiter,” Pandora said.

Jupiter said:

“Thy beauty will excuse whatever thou say, and in thy looks thy words are privileged.

“But if Pandora understood those gifts that Jove can give, she would esteem his love, for I can make thee Empress of the world, and seat thee in the glorious firmament.”

Some of Jupiter’s lovers became constellations.

Pandora said:

“The words ‘Empress’ and ‘firmament’ please my ears more than Jupiter pleases my eyes.

“Yet if thy love is like the words you have said, give me thy golden scepter in my hand. But do not give it to me as purchase price of my precious love, for that is more than Heaven itself is worth.”

Jupiter tossed her the golden scepter and said, “There, hold the scepter of eternal Jove, but do not let majesty increase thy pride.”

Pandora said, “What do I lack now except an imperial throne and Ariadne’s starlight diadem?”

Ariadne helped Theseus defeat the half-bull, half-human Minotaur on the island of Crete. She sailed away with Theseus, but he abandoned her on the island of Naxos. The god Bacchus found her, married her, and gave her a crown composed of stars.

Juno, Jupiter's jealous (for good reason) wife, entered the scene.

Angry, she said:

"False, perjured Jupiter, and full of guile, are these the fruits of thy new government?"

"Are Juno's beauty and thy wedlock vow and all my kindness trodden under foot? Wasn't it enough to fancy such a trull — such a prostitute — but thou must yield thy scepter to her hand?"

"I thought that Ganymede had weaned thy heart from the lawless lust of any woman's love. But I see well that every time thou stray, thy lust only looks for strumpet stars below."

Ganymede was a beautiful boy whom Jupiter, disguised as an eagle, had kidnapped to be his cupbearer — and, according to some sources, his lover. The Latin form of "Ganymede" is *Catamitus*. A catamite is a boy kept for homosexual purposes.

Pandora said to Juno, "Why, know that Pandora scorns both Jove and thee, and there she lays his scepter on the ground."

Pandora put the golden scepter on the ground, and Juno picked it up.

Holding the golden scepter, Juno said:

"This shall go with me to our Celestial court, where the gods shall see thy shame, fond, foolish Jupiter, and laugh at Love for tainting majesty."

Love is Cupid, the son of Venus. Cupid shoots golden arrows that cause people and gods to fall in love.

Juno continued:

"And when you please, you will come to us."

She then said to Pandora:

"But as for thee, thou shameless counterfeit, thy pride shall quickly lose her painted plumes and feel the heavy weight of Juno's wrath."

Juno exited.

Pandora said:

"Let Juno fret, and move the powers of Heaven, yet Pandora stands secure in herself.

"Aren't I Nature's darling and her pride? Hasn't she spent her treasure all on me?"

Jupiter said, "Yet be thou wise (I counsel thee for love) and fear displeasure at a goddess' hand."

Juno sometimes did horrible things to the women her husband slept with.

For example, a mortal woman named Semele had sex with Jupiter, King of the gods, after making him swear an inviolable oath that he would grant her whatever she wished for. After Jupiter and Semele had slept together, Juno convinced Semele to ask Jupiter to reveal himself to her in his true form although Juno knew what would happen to Semele. Having sworn an inviolable oath, Jupiter had to grant the wish, but seeing Jupiter in his true form was too much for Semele, and she died. She was carrying a fetus, which Jupiter rescued and sewed into his thigh. Jupiter later gave birth to Bacchus, the god of wine and ecstasy.

“I tell thee, Jupiter, Pandora’s worth is far exceeding the worth of all your goddesses,” Pandora said. “And since in her — Juno — thou obscure and diminish my praise, here, to be short, I abjure thy love.”

Jupiter said:

“I may not blame thee, for my beams are the cause of all this insolence and proud disdain. But to prevent a second raging storm if jealous Juno should by chance return, here ends my love.

“Pandora, now farewell.”

Jupiter wrapped himself and Ganymede in a cloud and exited skyward.

Pandora said:

“And are thou clouded up? Fare as thou list: Do as thou wish. Pandora’s heart shall never stoop to Jove.”

She then said to her servant:

“Gunophilus, base vassal as thou are, how did it happen that when Juno was in presence here, thou did not honor me with kneel and crouch, and lay thy hands under my precious foot —”

Placing one’s hands under the feet of another person was a sign of submission.

Gunophilus bowed repeatedly.

Pandora continued:

“— to make her know the height of my deserving?”

“Base peasant, humbly watch my stately looks, and yield applause to every word I speak, or from my service I’ll discard thee quite.”

On his knees, Gunophilus said:

“Fair and dread sovereign! Lady of the world!

“Even then when jealous Juno was in place, as I beheld the glory of thy face, my feeble eyes, admiring thy majesty, there did sink into my heart such holy fear — that very fear amazing and bewildering every sense of mine — that I withheld my tongue from saying what I would, and that fear froze my joints from bowing when they should.”

Pandora said, “Aye, Gunophilus, now thou please me. These words and curtsies — bows — prove that thou are dutiful.”

The four Utopian shepherds — Stesias, Iphicles, Melos, and Learchus — entered the scene.

“Now, Stesias, speak,” Stesias said.

“Learchus, plead for love,” Learchus said.

Iphicles said, “Now, Cyprian Queen, guider of loving thoughts, help Iphicles.”

The Cyprian Queen is Venus, the sexually active goddess of sexual passion, who was born off the shore of the island of Cyprus.

“Melos must speed — that is, succeed — or die,” Melos said.

Gunophilus, stepping between the shepherds and Pandora, said, “Where are you going, now, my masters, in such posthaste? Her excellence is not at leisure now.”

In this context, “masters” means “sirs.”

Of course, they were going to court Pandora.

“Sweet Gunophilus, further our attempts,” Stesias said.

“And we shall make thee rich with our rewards,” Iphicles said.

“Stay here until I know her further pleasure,” Gunophilus said.

He turned to Pandora and said, “Stesias and his fellows humbly crave access to your excellence.”

“Aye, now thou fit my humor — my mood,” Pandora said. “Let them come.”

“Come on, masters,” Gunophilus said.

The shepherds approached Pandora and spoke to her.

“Tell me, my dear, when comes that happy hour, whereon thy love shall guerdon — shall reward — my desire,” Stesias asked.

“How long shall sorrow’s winter pinch my heart, and how long shall my lukewarm hopes be chilled with freezing fear, before my suit obtains thy sweet consent?” Learchus asked.

Iphicles asked, “How long shall death, encroaching by delays, abridge the course of my decaying life before Pandora loves poor Iphicles?”

“How long shall cares cut off my flowering prime, before the harvest of my love shall be in?” Melos asked.

Stesias requested, “Speak, sweet love!”

“Speak some gentle words, sweet love,” Iphicles requested.

“Let thy tongue first salve Learchus’ wound that first was made with those immortal eyes,” Learchus said.

Melos said, “The only — the mere — promise of thy future love will drown the secret heaps of my despair in an endless ocean of expected joys.”

Pandora said, “Although my breast has yet never harbored love, yet my bounty and generosity would free you from your servitude, if love might well consort with and accompany our

majesty and not debase our matchless dignity.”

Pandora was using the royal plural when she said the phrase “our matchless dignity.”

“Sweet honey words, but sauced with bitter gall,” Stesias said.

“They draw me on, and yet they put me back,” Iphicles said.

“They hold me up, and yet they let me fall,” Learchus said.

“They give me life, and yet they let me die,” Melos said.

“But as thou will, so give me sweet or sour, for in thy pleasure must be my content and happiness,” Stesias said.

“Whether thou draw me on, or put me back, I must admire thy beauty’s wildness,” Iphicles said.

“And as thou will, so let me stand or fall,” Learchus said. “Love has decreed thy word must govern me.”

“And as thou will, so let me live or die,” Melos said. “In life or death, I must obey thy will.”

Pandora said:

“I please myself in your humility, yet I will make some test and trial of your faith, before I stoop to favor your laments, for you know well that Pandora knows her worth.

“He who will purchase — that is, win — things of greatest prize, must conquer by his deeds, and not by his words.

“Go then, all four of you, and slay the savage boar, which roving up and down with ceaseless rage, destroys the fruit of our Utopian fields, and he who first presents me with his head shall wear my glove in favor of the deed.”

The gift of a glove by a woman honored the man who received it. The man would wear the glove on his hat.

“We go, Pandora,” Melos said.

“Nay, we run!” Learchus said.

“We fly!” Stesias said.

The shepherds exited.

Pandora said to herself:

“Thus must Pandora exercise these swains, commanding them to do dangerous exploits, and even if they were kings, my beauty would still command them.”

She then said:

“Sirrah Gunophilus, hold up the train of my dress.”

Pandora and Gunophilus exited.

Alone, Mars said to himself:

“Mars comes entreated by Juno, the Queen of Heaven, to summon Jove from this his regiment: his period of rulership over Pandora.

“Such a jealous humor — a jealous mood — crows and cries out in her brain that she is mad until he returns from here.”

He then said loudly so that Jupiter would hear him:

“Now, Sovereign Jove, King of immortal kings, thy lovely Juno long has expected thee, and until thou come, she thinks that every hour is a year.”

Jupiter removed the cloud hiding Ganymede and him, and then they came down from above.

Jupiter said:

“And Jove will go the sooner to assuage and sooth her frantic, idle, and suspicious thoughts, for I know well that Pandora troubles Juno, nor will Juno calm the tempest of her mind until with a whirlwind of outrageous words, she beats my ears, and weeps her curst — her shrewish — heart away.”

Crying will make Juno feel better.

Jupiter continued:

“Yet I will go, for words are just a blast of wind, and sunshine will ensue when storms are past.

Jupiter and Ganymede exited.

Mars ascended.

Mars, in his seat, said:

“Now bloody Mars begins to play his part. I’ll work such war within Pandora’s breast, and somewhat more because of Juno’s fair request that after all her churlishness and pride, she shall become a vixen martialist.”

Pandora shall now become a woman warrior.

The four Utopian shepherds returned with the boar’s head. Stesias was carrying a spear.

“Here let us stay until fair Pandora comes, and then Stesias shall have his due reward,” Stesias said.

“And why not Iphicles as well as you?” Iphicles asked.

“The prize is mine,” Minos said. “My sword cut off his head.”

“But first my spear wounded him to the death,” Learchus said.

“He did not fall down until I had gored his side,” Stesias said.

“Be content, all of you, Learchus did the deed, and I will make it good, whoever says nay,” Learchus said.



He would fight anyone who opposed his claim to have killed the boar.

“Melos will die before he loses his right,” Melos said.

Iphicles said:

“Nay, then it is time to snatch the head.”

He grabbed the boar’s head and said:

“The head is mine.”

“Lay the boar’s head down, or I shall lay thee on the earth,” Stesias said.

They fought.

Pandora and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Pandora said:

“Aye, so I see how it is: fair and far off, for fear of being hurt. See how the cowards counterfeit a fight.”

A fair distance is a cordial distance.

Pandora continued:

“Strike home, you dastard swains, strike home, I say!”

“Strike home” means “deliver a death blow.”

Pandora continued:

“Do you fight in jest? Let me bestir myself then and see if I can cudgel all four of you.”

She snatched the spear out of Stesias’ hand and lay around her, fighting all four shepherds at once.

Gunophilus said, “What! Is my mistress now masculine mankind all of a sudden?”

“Alas!” Learchus said. “Why does Pandora strike her best friends?”

A “friend” is a male admirer.

Pandora said:

“My friends? Base peasants! My friends would fight like men.

“Avaunt! Get out, or I shall lay you all out for dead.”

The shepherds, except Stesias, exited.

Stesias said to Pandora:

“See, cruel fair, how thou have wronged thy friend.”

He showed her his shirt, which was all bloody.

Stesias continued:

“Thou spill the blood of him who kept it just for thee.

“There’s my desert.”

He pointed to the boar’s head on the ground. He believed that he deserved a reward for killing the boar.

Stesias continued:

“And here is my reward.”

He pointed to his wound.

Stesias continued:

“I dare not say this from an ingrateful and ungrateful mind, but if Pandora had been well advised, I dare to say that Stesias would have been spared.”

“Begone, I say, before I strike again,” Pandora said.

“Stop, sweet mistress, and be satisfied,” Gunophilus said.

Pandora said:

“Base vassal, how dare thou presume to speak? Will thou oppose any deed of mine?”

She beat him.

She then said to him:

“How long have you been made a counselor?”

Gunophilus exited, running.

Stesias exposed his chest and said:

“Strike here thy fill, make lavish of my life, so that in my death my love may find relief.

“Lance up my side, so that when my heart leaps out, thou may behold how it is scorched with love, and how in every way it is cross-wounded and scarred with desire.

“There thou shall read my passions deeply engraved, and in the midst thou shall read only Pandora’s name.”

Pandora said:

“Why do thou tell me about love and fancy’s fire?

“The fire of conflict is kindled in my heart, and if thou were not all unarmed, be sure that I would make a trial of thy strength.

“But now the death of some fierce savage beast in blood shall end my fury’s tragedy, for fight I must, or else my gall bladder will burst.”

In this society, the gall bladder was believed to be the seat of rancor.

Pandora exited.

Stesias said to himself:

“Ah, Pandora, whose ruthless heart is harder than adamant, whose ears are deaf against affection’s laments, and whose eyes are blind when sorrow sheds her tears, you are not contented whether I live or I die.

“But fondling — foolishly doting fool — as I am, why do I grieve like this?

“Isn’t Pandora the mistress of my life?

“Yes, yes, and every act of hers is just. Her hardest words are only a gentle wind. Her greatest wound is only a pleasing harm.

“Death at her hands is only a second life.”

Stesias exited.

Mars descended.

He said, “Mars has forced Pandora contrary to her nature to manage arms and quarrel with her friends.

“And thus I leave her, all incensed with ire.

“Let Sol cool that which I have set on fire.”

Mars exited.

## CHAPTER 3 (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

— 3.1 —

Alone, Sol sat down in a seat overlooking the scene.

He said:

“In looking down upon this baser world, I long have seen and rued the harms and injuries done to Pandora, but as I myself am inclined by nature, so shall she now become: gentle and kind, abandoning all rancor, pride, and rage.

“And changing from a lion to a lamb, she shall be loving, liberal, and chaste, discreet and patient, merciful and mild, inspired with poetry and prophecy and the virtues appertaining to and appropriate to womanhood.”

Pandora and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Already affected by the beneficent influence of Sol, Pandora said:

“Tell me, Gunophilus, how is Stesias doing now? How is he faring with his wound?

“Unhappy me, who so unkindly hurt so kind a friend!

“But Stesias, if thou pardon what is past, I shall reward thy long-enduring suffering with love.

“These eyes that were like two malignant stars shall yield thee comfort with their sweet aspect.”

This society believed that the planets and stars influenced human life. Such influence could be benevolent or malignant.

Pandora continued:

“And these my lips, which did blaspheme thy love, shall speak kindly to thee and bless thee with a kiss.

“And this my hand that hurt thy tender side, shall first with herbs cure the wound it made, and then pledge my faith to thee in recompence.

“And thou, Gunophilus, I ask thee to pardon me, who mistreated thee in my witless, unreasoning rage. As time shall yield opportunity, be sure I will not fail to make thee some amends.”

Gunophilus replied, “I am so happy in this pleasant calm that former storms of anger are utterly forgot.

The four Utopian shepherds entered the scene. Stesias stood apart from the other shepherds, who knelt.

“We follow you still in hope of grace to come,” Learchus said.

“Sweet Pandora! Deign to accept our humble love suits,” Iphicles said.

“Grant me love or wound me to the death!” Melos said.

Pandora said:

“Stand up. Pandora is no longer proud but is instead ashamed of the folly of her former deeds.”

The three shepherds stood up.

Pandora then said:

“But why does Stesias stand like a man dismayed?”

She said to him:

“Draw near, I say, and thou, with all the rest, forgive the rigor of Pandora’s hand, and quite forget the faults of my disdain.”

Stesias joined the other shepherds.

Pandora said:

“If all four of you consent, now is the time wherein I’ll make amends for my old offence.

“One of you four shall be my mate in wedlock, and all the rest shall be my well-beloved friends.

“But all of you vow here, in the presence of the gods, that when I choose, my choice shall please you all.”

Stesias said:

“Then I make my vow by Pallas Athena, O shepherds’ Queen, that Stesias will allow and approve Pandora’s choice.”

Pallas Athena is the goddess of wisdom; Pandora is the Queen of the shepherds.

Stesias continued:

“But if a man succeeds who less deserves to succeed than I do, I’ll rather die than hold a grudge or make complaint.”

“I swear the same by all our country — our rural — gods,” Melos vowed.

“And I swear the same by our Diana’s holy head,” Iphicles vowed.

Diana is the goddess of the hunt.

“And I swear the same by Ceres and her sacred nymphs,” Learchus said.

Ceres is the goddess of agriculture.

Pandora said:

“Then may love and Hymen, god of marriage, bless me in my choice.

“All of you are young and all of you are lovely fair, all of you are kind and courteous and of sweet demeanor, all of you are committed to what is morally right and all of you are valiant, and all of you are in flowering prime.

“But since you grant my will its liberty and allow me to choose as I wish, come, Stesias, and take Pandora by the hand, and with my hand I pledge to you my spotless, unstained faith.”

Stesias was now her husband.

“The word has almost slain me with delight,” Stesias said.

“The word with sorrow kills me outright,” Learchus said.

“O happy Stesias, but unhappy me,” Melos said.

Iphicles said, “Come, let us go and weep our lack elsewhere. Stesias has got Pandora from us all.”

Learchus, Melos, and Iphicles exited.

Pandora said to Stesias:

“Their sad departure would make my heart grieve, were it not for the joys that I conceive in thee.”

She then said:

“Go, go, Gunophilus, without delay, gather for me balm and cooling violets, and our holy herb nicotian [the tobacco plant], and with all of this bring pure honey from the hive, so that I may here compound a wholesome salve to heal the wound inflicted by my unhappy hand.”

“I go,” Gunophilus said.

He exited.

Stesias said:

“Blest be the hand that made so happy a wound, for in my suffering I have won thy love, and blessed are thou, who having tried my faith, have given admittance to my heart’s deservings.”

“Now all is well, and all my hurt is whole, and I am in paradise because of my delight.”

“Come, lovely spouse, let us go walk in the woods, where warbling birds render in song our happiness, and whistling leaves make music to our mirth, and Flora, goddess of the spring, strews her bower to welcome thee.”

Pandora said, “But first, sweet husband, be thou ruled by me: Follow my advice. Go make provisions for some holy rites, so that religious zeal may prosper our new joined love, and by and by I myself will follow thee.”

“Don’t delay, my dear, for in thy looks I live,” Stesias said.

He exited.

Alone, but watched by Sol, Pandora said to herself:

“I feel myself inspired, but I do not know how, nor what it is, unless it is some holy power.”

“My heart foretells me many things to come, and I am full of unacquainted, unfamiliar skill, yet such as will not issue from my tongue, but like Sibylla’s golden prophecies, affecting rather

to be clad in verse — the certain badge of great Apollo's gift — than to be spread and soiled in vulgar words.

“And now to ease the burden of my load, like Sibyl, thus Pandora must begin to prophesy.”

The Sybil of Cumae wrote her prophecies on leaves and left them near the opening of the cave that she lived in. If the wind disturbed the leaves, the Sybil did not put them back in the correct order.

The Sybil is sometimes called Sibyl or Sibylla.

Stesias returned and said, “Come, my Pandora. Stesias waits for thee.”

Pandora said:

“Peace, man, be silent with reverence here and note my words, for from Pandora speaks the laureate god: Apollo, god of poetry and prophecy.”

Pandora prophesized:

“*Utopiae Stesias Poenici solvit amorem,*

“*Numina aelorum dum pia paecipiant.*

“And backward thus the same, but with double sense.

“*Praecipiant pia dum caelorum numina, amorem*

“*Solvit phoenici Stesias Utopiae.*”

The prophecy says, “While the pious gods of the Heavens command it, Stesias *solvit amorem* the Phoenix of Utopia.”

The phoenix of Utopia is Pandora.

*Solvit amorem* is a Latin phrase with contradictory meanings: It can mean “he gives love” or “he withdraws love.”

Here, Stesias can give his love to Pandora, or he can withdraw it from Pandora. Given that this is a prophecy, he will probably do both.

Stesias solemnly repeated these verses, first forward and then backward, and then he said:

“If *solvere amorem* means ‘to give love,’ then this prophecy means good to Stesias.

“But if *solvere amorem* means ‘to withdraw love,’ then it is an ill prophecy to us both.

“But speak, Pandora, while the god of prophecy inspires you.”

Pandora prophesied:

“*Idaliis prior hic pueris est: aequoris alti*

“*Pulchrior hec nymphis, et prior Aoniis.*

“And backward thus, but still all one in sense.

“*Aoniis prior, et nymphis hec pulchrior alti*

*“Aequoris est: pueris hic prior Idaliis.”*

*Pueris hic prior Idaliis* means: This boy is superior to the boys of Idalium.

Idalium is a town sacred to Venus.

*Aequoris alti pulchrior hec nymphis, et prior Aoniis* means: This girl is more beautiful than the nymphs, and she is superior to the Aonian goddesses.

The Aonian goddesses are the Muses.

Stesias solemnly repeated these verses, first forward and then backward, and then he said:

“Forward and back, these also are alike, and the sense is all one, with only the punctuation changed.

“They only import Pandora’s praise and mine.”

Pandora said, “Even now my poetic fury begins to retire, and now with Stesias, I will retire from here.”

Pandora and Stesias exited.

— 3.2 —

Venus entered the scene, accompanied by her sons Cupid and Jocus.

Venus said:

“Phoebus, leave. Thou make her too precise: too strait-laced and proper.”

The Puritans were known for being precise: strait-laced and proper.

Phoebus is Phoebus Apollo, the Sun-god. Venus was referring to Sol.

Venus continued:

“I’ll have her witty, quick and lively, and amorous.

“I’ll have her delight in revels and in banqueting, in wanton discourses, in music and merry songs.”

Sol descended and said:

“Bright Cyprian Queen, treat Pandora well.

“For although at first Phoebus envied and resented her looks, yet now he admires her glorious hue, and he swears that neither Daphne in the spring, nor glistening Thetis in her orient robe, nor shamefast — that is, blushing — Morning clad in silver clouds, are half as lovely as this earthly saint.”

Apollo loved the nymph Daphne and pursued her. She ran from him, and she was transformed into a laurel bush. The laurel became sacred to Apollo.

Thetis is the minor sea-goddess who is the mother of Achilles.



“Thetis” may be an error for “Theia,” who was the Greek goddess of sight and the goddess of the blue of the sky. Her “orient robe” may be the sunrise colors after they turn to blue.

Or the goddesses Thetis and Theia may be conflated.

Eos is the goddess of Dawn, and she is the personified Morning. Eos loved Tithonus and made him immortal, but she was unable to give him eternal youth. When he grew old, she gave him the gift of eternal sleep.

Venus said, “And since she is so fair, my beams shall make her light, for Levity is Beauty’s waiting-maid.”

Sol said, “Make Chastity Pandora’s waiting-maid, for modest thoughts suit a woman best.”

Venus said:

“Away with chastity and modest thoughts.

*“Quo mihi fortunam si non conceditur uti?”*

The Latin means: Why is fortune mine if it cannot be used?

Venus continued:

“Isn’t she young? Then let her go into the world and enjoy it.

“All those who are overly chaste are strumpets and deny such as keep their company.”

Being overly chaste and denying lovers what they want can be a sexual fetish involving control over other people.

Venus continued:

“It is not the touching of a woman’s hand, not kissing her lips, not hanging about her neck, not a speaking look, no, nor a yielding word, that men expect, anticipate, and need.

“Believe me, Sol, it is more, and if Mars were here, he would protest as much.”

Mars and Venus had a famous love affair while Venus was married to Vulcan, the blacksmith god.

Sol said:

“But what is more than this is worse than nought and naught.”

Too much of what Venus was advocating would be grossly and sexually immoral.

Sol then said to himself:

“I dare not stay lest she infect me, too.”

Sol exited.

Venus said:

“What! Has he gone?”

“Then for me, light-footed Jocus, put Pandora in a dancing vein.”

Joculus said, "Fair mother, I will make Pandora blithe, and like a satyr she will hop upon these plains."

Satyrs are woodland gods. They sing and dance and chase nymphs.

Joculus exited.

Venus said, "Go, Cupid, and give Pandora all the golden shafts, and she will mistake thee for a forester."

When Cupid shoots a golden arrow at you, you fall in love.

"I will and you shall see her immediately fall in love," Cupid said.

Cupid exited, and Venus ascended.

Venus said to herself, "Here, Venus, sit, and with thy influence govern Pandora, Nature's miracle."

Pandora entered the scene, accompanied by Joculus.

"Please be quiet," Pandora said. "Why should I dance?"

"Thus dance the satyrs on the even lawns," Joculus said.

"Thus, pretty satyr, will Pandora dance," Pandora said.

Cupid entered the scene in time to hear Pandora.

He said, "And thus will Cupid make her melody."

He shot her with a golden arrow.

Pandora, Joculus, and Cupid danced and sang.

Joculus sang:

*"Were I a man I could love thee."*

In other words: If I were a man, I could love thee.

Joculus was a boy. Or he was a satyr.

Pandora sang:

*"I am a maiden. Will thou have me?"*

Joculus sang:

*"But Stesias saith you are not."*

A maiden is a young unmarried woman. Pandora and Stesias were wife and husband.

Pandora sang:

*"What then? I care not."*

Cupid sang:

“*Nor I.*”

Joculus sang:

“*Nor I.*”

Pandora sang:

“*Then merely*

“*Farewell, my maidenhead.*

“*These be all the tears I’ll shed;*

“*Turn about and trip it [dance].*”

Venus said, “Cupid and Joculus, come and leave her now.”

Cupid and Joculus exited.

Pandora said:

“The boys are gone, and I will follow them. I will not follow them; they are too young.

“What honey thoughts are in Pandora’s brain?

“*Hospitis est tepido nocte recepta sinu.*”

The Latin means: She was welcomed at night by the warm embrace of her visitor.

Pandora continued:

“Ah, I envy her, why wasn’t I so welcomed?

“And so will I be. Where is Iphicles? Where is Melos? Where is Learchus? Where is any of the three?

“Shall I cure the sick? Shall I study poetry? Shall I think of honor and of chastity?

“No. Love is fitter than Pandora’s thoughts about honor and of chastity, yet not the love of Stesias alone. Learchus is as fair as Stesias, and Melos is far lovelier than Learchus, but if I might choose, I would have Iphicles. And of them all Stesias deserves the least. Must I be tied to him? No, I’ll be loose, as loose as Helen, for I am as fair.”

Helen is Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world and the legitimate wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta. She either willingly or unwillingly went with Paris to Troy and became the cause of the Trojan War.

Of course, this is an anachronism because Pandora is the first, and in this book the only, woman to exist.

Gunophilus returned to the scene and said, “Mistress, here are the herbs for my master’s wound.”

His master was Stesias, Pandora’s husband.

“Pretty Gunophilus, give me the herbs,” Pandora said. “Where did thou gather them, my lovely boy?”

“Upon Learchus’ plain,” Gunophilus said.

“I am afraid that Cupid dances upon the plain,” Pandora said. “I see his arrowhead upon the leaves.”

“And I see his golden quiver and his bow,” Gunophilus said.

Pandora said:

“Thou dissemble, but I mean good sooth: I speak truly.

“These herbs have wrought some wondrous effect. Did they get this virtue from thy lily-white hands?”

“Let’s see thy hands, my fair Gunophilus.”

Gunophilus showed Pandora his hands and said, “It may be the herbs did get their strength from my hands, for I have not washed them for many days.”

“Such slender fingers has Jove’s Ganymede,” Pandora said. “Gunophilus, I am lovesick for thee.”

“I wish that I were worthy that you should be sick for me!” Gunophilus said.

“I languish for thee,” Pandora said. “Therefore, be my love.”

“Better you languish than I be beaten!” Gunophilus said. “Pardon me, I dare not love because of my master.”

His master was Stesias, Pandora’s husband.

“I’ll hide thee in a wood, and keep thee close and secret,” Pandora said.

“But what if he goes hunting that way?” Gunophilus asked.

“I’ll say thou are a satyr of the woods,” Pandora said.

“Then I must have horns,” Gunophilus said.

“Aye, so thou shall,” Pandora said. “I’ll give thee Stesias’ horns.”

“Why, he has no horns,” Gunophilus said.

“But he may have horns shortly,” Pandora said.

If Pandora and Gunophilus were to sleep together, Stesias would be a cuckolded husband. People in this society joked that cuckolds had invisible horns growing on their forehead.

“You say the truth, and on that condition I am yours,” Gunophilus said.

Learchus entered the scene.

He said to himself:

“I may not speak about love, for I have vowed never to solicit her for love, but instead to rest content.

“Therefore, only gaze, eyes, to please yourselves. Don’t let my inward sense know what you see, lest my fancy dote upon her still.

“Pandora is divine, but do not say so, lest that thy heart hear thee and break in twain.

“I may not court her. What a hell is this!”

Pandora said, “Gunophilus, I’ll have a banquet immediately. Go, thou, get it ready, and then meet me here.”

Gunophilus said:

“I will.”

He then said to himself:

“But with your permission, I’ll stay a while.”

Gunophilus was jealous of Learchus and wanted to keep an eye on him.

“Happy are those who are Pandora’s guests,” Learchus said.

“Then happy is Learchus,” Pandora said. “He is my guest.”

Learchus said, “And greater joy do I conceive therein than Tantalus, who feasted with the gods.”

Tantalus was so proud that he tried to fool the gods. He killed and cooked his own son, Pelops, and he put the meat into a stew that he served the gods. The gods knew the trick, however, so they did not eat the stew — with the exception of the goddess Demeter, who ate part of Pelops’ shoulder. Outraged, the gods brought Pelops to life again and gave him a shoulder made out of ivory, and they sentenced Tantalus to eternal torment in the Land of the Dead. He stands in a stream of water, and branches heavily laden with ripe fruit are overhead, yet Tantalus is eternally thirsty and hungry. Whenever Tantalus bends over to drink from the stream, the water dries up. Whenever Tantalus reaches overhead to seize a piece of fruit, a breeze blows the fruit just out of his reach.

Gunophilus said, “Mistress, the banquet.”

“What about the banquet?” Pandora asked.

“You have invited nobody to it,” Gunophilus said.

“What’s that to you?” Pandora said. “Go and prepare it.”

Gunophilus said to himself:

“And in the meantime, you will be in love with him.”

He then said out loud:

“Please let me stay, and you order him to prepare the banquet.”

“Away, you peasant!” Pandora said.

Gunophilus said sarcastically, “Now she begins to love me.”

He exited.

Pandora said, “Learchus, if I had closely noticed this golden hair of yours, I would not have chosen Stesias for my love, but now —”

She sighed.

Learchus said, “Lovely Pandora, if a shepherd’s tears may move thee to ruth, pity my state. Make me thy love, although Stesias is thy choice, and I instead of love will honor thee.”

“Ruth” is pity.

Pandora said to herself:

“Had he not spoken, I would have courted him.”

She then said to Learchus:

“Won’t thou say Pandora is too light and promiscuous, if she takes thee instead of Stesias?”

“Rather I’ll die than have just such a thought,” Learchus said.

“Then, shepherd, this kiss shall be our nuptials,” Pandora said.

She kissed him.

“This kiss has made me wealthier than Pan,” Learchus said.

Pan is the god of flocks, and thus he is wealthy.

Pandora said:

“Then come again.”

She kissed him a second time and said:

“Now be as great as Jove.”

Jove is Jupiter.

“Let Stesias never touch these lips again,” Learchus said.

Pandora said:

“None but Learchus shall touch these lips of mine.

“Now, sweet love, leave, lest Stesias see thee in this amorous vein.

“But go no farther than thy bower, my love. I’ll steal away from Stesias and meet thee soon.”

“I will, Pandora, and in preparation for thou coming, I’ll strew all my bower with flags and water mints.”

Flags and water mints were leaves that were strewn on the floor to prepare for the arrival of an important guest. Water mint leaves and blossoms had a pleasant odor.

He exited.

Pandora said to herself, "A husband? What a foolish word is that! Give me a lover; let the husband go."

Melos and Iphicles entered the scene.

"Iphicles, behold the Heavenly nymph," Melos said.

"We may behold her, but she scorns our love," Iphicles said.

"Are these the shepherds who made love to — that is, flirted with and pursued — me?" Pandora asked.

"Yes, and we are the shepherds who yet love thee still," Melos said.

"I wish that Pandora would regard and consider my love suit to her!" Iphicles said.

Pandora said:

"They look like water nymphs, but they speak like men."

The two shepherds were so much in love that they were in tears.

Pandora said to Melos:

"Thou should be Nature in a man's attire."

Nature is female.

She then said to Iphicles:

"And thou should be young Ganymede, the minion to Jove."

A "minion" is a favorite or a loved one. Ganymede was a catamite: a boy kept for homosexual purposes.

Melos said, "If I were Nature, then I would make a world and give it to thee.

Iphicles said, "If I were Ganymede, then I would leave great Jove in order to follow thee."

Pandora said to herself:

"Melos is loveliest. Melos is my love."

She then said to him:

"Come here, Melos. I must tell thee news, news that is tragic to thee and to thy flock."

She whispered in his ear:

"Melos, I love thee. Meet me in the vale."

A vale is a valley.

She spoke out loud:

"I saw him in the wolf's mouth. Melos, fly."

Melos said, "O that so fair a lamb should be devoured! I'll go and rescue him."

He exited.

Iphicles said to Pandora:

"Could Iphicles go away from thee because of a lamb?"

"Let the wolf take all my flock, as long as I have thee!"

"Tell me to dive for pearl in the sea ..."

"Tell me to fetch the feathers of the Arabian bird ..."

The phoenix was a mythological Arabian bird that lived for five hundred years, burned itself up, and rose reborn from the ashes.

Iphicles continued:

"Tell me to fetch the Golden Apples from the Hesperian wood ..."

The Hesperides were nymphs who guarded a tree that produced golden apples. One of Hercules' labors was to get those golden apples.

Iphicles continued:

"Tell me to fetch the mermaid's mirror ..."

Mermaids and sirens were proud of their beauty and carried a mirror so they could look at themselves.

Iphicles continued:

"Tell me to fetch the goddess Flora's habiliment ..."

Flora's habiliment were spring flowers.

Iphicles continued:

"So I may have Pandora for my love."

Iphicles was willing to do difficult or impossible deeds to win Pandora's love.

Pandora said:

"He who would do all this must love me well, and why should he love me and I not love him?"

"Will thou for my sake go into yonder grove? We will sing notes to the wild bird and be as pleasant as the Western wind that kisses flowers and plays wantonly with their leaves."

"Will I?" Iphicles said. "O that Pandora would do that!"

"I will!" Pandora said. "And therefore, follow me, Iphicles."

They exited.

Stesias and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Stesias said:



“Did base Learchus court my Heavenly love?”

“Pardon me, Pan, if, to revenge this deed, I shed the blood of that dissembling swain. With jealous fire my heart begins to burn.”

Pan is the god of shepherds, and he would not want a shepherd’s blood to be shed.

Stesias continued:

“Ah, bring me where he is, Gunophilus, lest he entice Pandora from my bower.”

“I don’t know where he is, but here he’ll be,” Gunophilus said. “I must provide the banquet, and I must leave.”

Stesias said:

“What! Will the shepherds banquet with my wife? Light Pandora, can thou be thus false?”

“Tell me where is this wanton banquet kept so that I may hurl the dishes at their heads, mingle the wine with blood, and end the feast with tragic outcries, like the Theban lord where fair Hippodamia was espoused.”

When Pirithous, the King of the Lapiths, married Hippodamia, he invited the half-man, half-horse Centaurs. The Centaur Eurytus attempted to rape Hippodamia, and a battle broke out between the Lapiths and the Centaurs. Pirithous, Theseus (Pirithous’ best friend), and other men were able to defeat the Centaurs in a battle that came to be known as the Centauromachy.

The Lapiths lived in Thessaly, and Theseus was the King of Athens, so “Theban lord” may be an error for “Thessalian lord” or “Athenian lord.”

Gunophilus said, “The banquet will be held here in this place, for so she ordered me.”

“Where might I hide so I can see the banquet?” Stesias asked.

Gunophilus said, “In this cave, for over this they’ll sit.”

He pointed to the place where Pandora and her guests would sit.

“But then I shall not see them when they kiss,” Stesias said.

Gunophilus said, “Yet you may hear what they say; if they kiss, I’ll halloo.”

“Just do so then, my sweet Gunophilus,” Stesias said, “and like a strong wind bursting from the earth, so I will rise out of this hollow vault, making the woods shake with my furious words.”

Gunophilus said, “But if they don’t come at all, or if when they come they behave chastely and honestly, then don’t come out of hiding, lest you, seeming to be jealous, make Pandora overly hate you.”

Stesias said, “I won’t come out of hiding for all the world unless I hear thee call, or if their wanton speech provokes me to come forth.”

Gunophilus said:

“Well, get in hiding, then!”

Stesias hid in the cave, which went down into the earth.

Gunophilus then said:

“Wouldn’t it be a pretty jest to bury him alive? I warrant it would be a good while before she would scratch him out of his grave with her fingernails, and yet she might, too, for she has dug such vaults in my face that you may go from my chin to my eyebrows between the skin and the flesh!”

In her fit of anger while Mars controlled her, Pandora had scratched Gunophilus.

Gunophilus then joked to you, the readers, about the “vaults” made by the scratches: They were big enough to store barrels of wine in.

He said:

“Don’t wonder at it, good people! I can prove that there have been two or three merchants with me to hire rooms to lay in wine.

“Unfortunately, the storage rooms do not stand as conveniently located as the merchants would wish, for indeed the storage areas are all too near my mouth, and I am a great drinker. If not for that, I would have had a quarter’s rent before now.

“Well, be it known to all men that I have done this to cornute — cuckold and put horns on his forehead — my master, for until now I never had the opportunity.

“You would little think that my neck has grown awry with looking back as I have been kissing, for fear that he would come, and yet it is a fair example.

“Beware of kissing, brethren!”

Stesias peeked out of the cave.

Gunophilus said quietly:

“What! Does the cave open? Before Pandora and he shall have finished, Stesias will pick the lock with his horn.”

Pandora entered the scene.

She said:

“Now I have played with wanton Iphicles, yes, and kept touch with Melos. Both are pleased. Now, if Learchus were here!

“But wait, I think that here is Gunophilus. I’ll go with him.”

Quietly, Gunophilus said, “Mistress, my master is in this cave, thinking to meet you and Learchus here.”

Quietly, Pandora said:

“What! Is he jealous?

“Come, Gunophilus, in spite of him I’ll kiss thee twenty times.”

“Look how my lips quiver for fear!” Gunophilus said.

Pandora said loudly, so Stesias could hear, “Where is my husband? Speak, Gunophilus.”

“He is in the woods, and he will be here soon,” Gunophilus said.

Quietly, Pandora said, “Aye, but he shall not.”

Pandora said loudly, so Stesias could hear:

“His fellow swains will meet me in this bower, who for his sake I mean to entertain. If he knew of it, he would meet them here.

“Ah! Wherever he is, may he be safe! Thus I hold up my hands to Heaven for him. Thus I weep for my dear love Stesias!”

“When will the shepherds come?” Gunophilus asked.

Pandora said:

“Immediately. Prepare the banquet right away.

“In the meantime, I’ll pray that Stesias may be here.”

Quietly, she said:

“Bring Iphicles and Melos with thee, and tell them about my husband. *Descendit ad inferos.*”

The Latin means: He has descended into the infernal regions.

Quietly, Gunophilus asked, “You’ll love them then?”

Quietly, Pandora said, “No, only thee, yet let them sit with me.”

Quietly, Gunophilus said, “I am content, as long as you just sit with them.”

He still loved Pandora, and he was still jealous.

He exited.

Learchus entered the scene.

“Why has Pandora thus deluded me?” Learchus asked.

“Learchus, hush!” Pandora said, speaking in a low voice. “My husband’s in this cave, thinking to take us together here!”

“Shall I slay him, and enjoy thee still?” Learchus quietly asked.

Quietly, Pandora said, “No! Let him live, but even if he had Argos’ eyes, he would not keep me from Learchus’ love. Thus I will hang about Learchus’ neck and suck out happiness from forth his lips.”

Argos had a hundred eyes. This made him an excellent watchman because while some eyes slept, the other eyes stayed open.

Pandora put her arms around Learchus’ neck.

Quietly, Learchus said, “And this shall be the Heaven that I’ll aim at.”

Gunophilus entered the scene, carrying glasses, etc., for the banquet.

Seeing Pandora and Learchus, Gunophilus said to himself: “*Sic vos non vobis; sic vos non vobis.*”

The Latin means: Thus you [work] not for yourself; thus you [work] not for yourself.”

The poet Virgil wrote “*Sic vos non vobis,*” according to Aelius Donatus’ *Life of Virgil*, lamenting that he had worked hard creating lines of poetry only for another poet to plagiarize them.

Gunophilus was working hard to set up the banquet and please Pandora, but he was worried that he would not enjoy its benefits. Pandora would kiss other people, including Learchus.

Gunophilus, Pandora, and Learchus were now out of the hearing of Stesias.

“What do thou mean by that?” Learchus asked, overhearing Gunophilus.

“Here is a comment upon my words,” Gunophilus said.

He threw a glass down and broke it.

“Why do thou break the glass?” Pandora asked.

Gunophilus said:

“I’ll answer your question. Shall I provide a banquet and be cheated of the best dish?”

The best dish was Pandora.

He then said to Learchus:

“I hope, sir, that you have said grace, and now I may fall to.”

He took Pandora by the hand and embraced her.

“Away, base swain!” Learchus said.

“Sir, as base as I am, I’ll go for current here,” Gunophilus said.

He was using metaphors of currency.

“Base” can mean 1) of low birth, or 2) made of base metal (not silver or gold).

“Current” can mean 1) has value, and/or 2) is legal tender.

“What?” Learchus said. “Will Pandora be thus light?”

By “light,” he meant wanton and promiscuous.

In his answer, Gunophilus used “light” as referring to weight. Legal currency had to be of the correct weight. Low weight would make a gold coin not legal currency.

Gunophilus said, “O! You stand upon the weight! Well, if she were twenty grains lighter, I would not refuse her, provided always she is not clipped within the ring.”

“Grains” means 1) a unit of measurement, and 2) the fork of the body that is made by the legs.

“Lighter” means 1) less in weight, and 2) lustier.

People clipped the edges of gold coins to collect the bits of precious metal, but if they clipped the coin too much and clipped inside the ring or circle near the edge of the coin, the coin would not be legal tender.

The word “ring” can also refer to a vagina. A clipped vagina is not a chaste vagina. Gunophilus wanted a vagina that was loyal to him.

Pandora said:

“Gunophilus, thou are too malapert! Thou are too impudent!”

She whispered to Learchus:

“Think nothing about this, for I cannot get rid of him.”

She then said to Gunophilus:

“Sirrah, you had best provide the banquet.”

“I will!” Gunophilus said, “And I will do that incontinently — without delay! For indeed I cannot abstain.”

He could not abstain from love — or jealousy.

Gunophilus exited.

Pandora said:

“Here, take thou Melos’ favor.”

Melos had cut off the head of the boar that Pandora had wanted the shepherds to kill. The other shepherds also claimed to have at least a share in the killing of the boar.

She handed Learchus one of her gloves and said:

“Keep it secret, for he and Iphicles will soon be here.

“I don’t love them. They both importune me, yet I must act as if I love them both.”

Seeing Melos and Iphicles coming toward them from different directions, Pandora said:

“Here they come.

“Welcome, Learchus, to Pandora’s feast.”

Gunophilus returned, carrying food, etc.

Melos and Iphicles met.

“What is Learchus doing here?” Melos asked.

“Why should Melos banquet with my love?” Iphicles asked.

“My heart rises against this Iphicles,” Learchus said.

Every man present was in love with Pandora, and every man was jealous.

Pandora loved every man, and especially whatever man was closest to her.

Pandora said:

“Melos, my love!

“Sit down, sweet Iphicles.”

She and Iphicles talked together, apart from the others.

“She daunts — discourages — Learchus with a strange — cold and unfriendly — aspect,” Melos said hopefully.

“I don’t like that she whispers to him,” Learchus said.

Iphicles whispered to Pandora, “I promise you.”

“Here’s to the health of Stesias, my love,” Pandora said. “I wish that he were here to welcome all you three.”

“I will go seek him in the busky — bushy — groves,” Melos said.

“You will lose your labor then,” Gunophilus said. “He is with his flock.”

Pandora wept and said, “Aye, he values his flock more than me.”

“She weeps,” Learchus said.

“Don’t weep, Pandora, for he loves thee well,” Iphicles said.

“And I love him,” Pandora said.

“But why is Melos sad?” Iphicles asked.

“Because of thee I am sad,” Melos said. “Thou have injured me.”

“Doesn’t Melos know that I love him?” Pandora said to him quietly so the other men could not hear her.

“Thou injure me, and I will be revenged!” Iphicles said.

“Has Iphicles forgotten my words?” Pandora asked him quietly so the other men could not hear her.

Gunophilus said to himself, “If I should halloo, they would all be ruined.”

If he were to halloo, Pandora’s husband, Stesias, would come out of hiding and fight them.

Learchus said to himself, “They both — Melos and Iphicles — are jealous, yet they don’t mistrust me!”

Iphicles raised his glass and said, “Here, Melos!”

“I pledge — that is, I toast — thee, Iphicles,” Melos said.

Pandora whispered, “Learchus, go. Thou know my mind.”

Pretending to be angry, Learchus said out loud:

“Shall I sit here thus to be made a stale: a laughing-stock?”

No one had toasted him.

Learchus then said to himself:

“Lovely Pandora intends to follow me. Farewell, this feast. My banquet has not yet come.”

He exited.

“Let him go,” Iphicles said.

“Pandora, go with me to Stesias,” Melos requested.

“No, rather go with me!” Iphicles said.

“Away, base Iphicles!” Melos said.

“Coward! Keep your hand off me! Or else I’ll strike thee down!” Iphicles said.

Pandora said quietly but urgently:

“My husband hears you!”

She then said louder so her husband could hear:

“Will you strive and fight for wine?”

“Give us a fresh cup. I will have you two be friends.”

Melos said, “I defy thee, Iphicles!”

“I defy thee, Melos!” Iphicles said.

“Both of them are drunk!” Gunophilus said.

Melos asked Pandora, “Is this thy love to me?”

Pandora said:

“Nay, if you fall out with each other and fight, farewell.”

She then said to herself:

“Now I will go and meet Learchus.”

Pandora exited.

Iphicles said to Melos, “I see thy trickery. Thou shall lack thy will.”

He thought that Pandora and Melos had arranged an assignation.

“Follow me if thou dare, and fight it out,” Melos said.

“If I dare?” Iphicles said. “Yes, I dare, and I will! Come, thou.”

Iphicles and Melos exited.

Gunophilus called, "Halloo! Halloo!"

Stesias came out of the cave.

"Where is the villain who has kissed my love?" Stesias asked.

Gunophilus had told him that he would call "halloo" if someone kissed Pandora.

"Nobody has kissed her, master," Gunophilus said.

"Why did they fight, then?" Stesias asked.

"It was for a cup of wine," Gunophilus said. "They were all drunk."

"Where has my wife gone?" Stesias asked.

"To seek you," Gunophilus answered.

Stesias said:

"Ah! Pandora, pardon me! Thou art chaste."

He then said to Gunophilus:

"Thou made me suspect her, so take thou that."

He beat Gunophilus.

"O master! I did what I did out of good will to you!" Gunophilus said.

"And I beat thee out of good will to her," Stesias said. "What have thou to do between man and wife?"

Gunophilus said to himself, "Too much with the man, and too little with the wife."

They exited.



## CHAPTER 4 (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

— 4.1 —

Mercury entered the scene. His Greek name was Hermes, and he was the god of thieves and of eloquence. He was a trickster god.

He said to Venus, “Empress of love, give Hermes permission to reign. My orbit comes next; therefore, resign your position to me.”

The planets were ruling Pandora in order: starting with the planet furthest away, Saturn, and ending with the planet closest to the Earth, which was the Moon. The order was Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sol (the Sun), Venus, Mercury, and the Moon.

Venus descended.

She said to Mercury, “Ascend, thou winged pursuivant — herald — of Jove.”

Venus exited, and Mercury ascended.

Mercury said:

“Now Pandora shall be no more in love, and all these swains who were her favorites shall understand their mistress has played false, and loathing her they will blab all to Stesias, her husband.

“Now Pandora is in my regiment, and I will make her false and full of tricks, thievish, lying, subtle and cunning, and eloquent, for these alone belong — uniquely are relevant — to Mercury.”

Melos, Learchus, and Iphicles entered the scene and complained about Pandora.

“Unkind Pandora was unkind to delude me like this,” Iphicles said.

“Too kind was Learchus, who has loved her like this,” Learchus said.

“Too foolish is Melos, who still dotes on her,” Melos said.

“May black be the ivory of her enticing face,” Learchus said.

This society valued light-colored skin; it did not value dark-colored skin.

“May the sunshine of her ravishing eyes be dimmed,” Melos said.

“May her face be fair, and may her eyes be beautiful!” Learchus said.

“O Iphicles, abjure and reject her,” Learchus said. “She is false!”

“To thee, Learchus, and to Melos she is false,” Iphicles said.

“Nay, she is false to all of us; she is too false and full of guile,” Melos said.

“How many thousand kisses did she give me, and every kiss was mixed with an amorous glance,” Learchus said.

“How often have I leaned on her silver breast, with she singing on her lute, and with Melos being the note,” Melos said.

The name “Melos” means “song.”

“Note” means 1) tune or melody, and/or 2) theme or content.

“But waking, what sweet pastime have I had,” Iphicles said, “for love is watchful, and can never sleep.”

Melos said, “But before I slept—”

Learchus said, “When I desired—”

“What then?” Iphicles asked.

“*Cetera quis nescit?*” Melos answered.

The Latin means: Who doesn’t know the rest?

“Melos anticipated what I would have said,” Learchus said.

Iphicles said, “Blush, Iphicles, and in thy rosy cheeks, let all the heat that feeds thy heart appear.”

“Don’t droop, fair Iphicles, because of Pandora’s misdeeds,” Learchus said, “but to get revenge for her misdeeds, have recourse to Stesias.”

In other words: Tell Stesias about the misdeeds of his wife: Pandora.

“Yes, he shall know she is lascivious,” Melos said.

“In this complaint I’ll join with thee,” Iphicles said. “Let us go.”

“Wait, here he comes,” Learchus said.

Stesias and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Stesias was congratulating himself on his wife:

“O Stesias, what a Heavenly love have thou! A love as chaste as is Apollo’s tree! As modest as a Vestal Virgin’s eye, and yet as bright as glowworms in the night, with which the Morning goddess decks her lover’s hair!

“O fair Pandora, blessed Stesias!”

Apollo’s tree is the laurel.

Vestal Virgins were maidens who served Vesta, goddess of the hearth.

“O foul Pandora, cursed Stesias!” Iphicles said.

“What do thou mean, Iphicles?” Stesias asked.

Melos said, “Ah! Is she fair who is lascivious? Or is that swain blest whom she makes but a stale: a laughingstock?”

“He means thy love, unhappy Stesias,” Learchus said.

Stesias said:

“My love? No, shepherds, this is just a stale, to make me hate Pandora, whom I love.”

A “stale” can be 1) a trick, or 2) a laughingstock.

Stesias continued:

“So whispered recently the false Gunophilus.”

Stesias believed that Gunophilus had tried to convince him that Pandora was false.

Stesias continued:

“Let it suffice that I don’t believe you.”

“Love is deaf, blind, and incredulous,” Iphicles said. “I never hung about Pandora’s neck. She never called me fair and never called thee a black swain.”

Melos said, “She did not play music to Melos in her bower, nor is his green bower strewn with primrose leaves.”

Melos had strewn primrose leaves in his bower as a way to welcome Pandora.

“I did not kiss her, nor did she call me her love,” Learchus said. “Pandora is the love of Stesias.”

Learchus, Iphicles, and Melos exited.

Stesias ordered Gunophilus, “Sirrah! Tell your mistress to come here.”

“I shall, sir,” Gunophilus said.

He exited.

Stesias repeated the words of the other swains:

“‘I never hung about Pandora’s neck’—

“‘She did not play music to Melos in her bower’—

“‘I did not kiss her, nor did she call me her love’—”

He then said:

“These words argue that Pandora is light and promiscuous. She played the wanton with these amorous swains.

“By all these streams that interlace these waters, which I hope may be venom to her thirsty soul, I’ll be revenged as a shepherd never was!”

Previously, Stesias had said:

“O fair Pandora, blessed Stesias!”

But now he said:

“Now foul Pandora, wicked Stesias!”

Gunophilus returned, escorting Pandora.

Gunophilus said, "Mistress, it is true. I heard the shepherds and what they said to your husband. Don't do anything risky."

Pandora said, "Defenced with her tongue, and guarded with her wit and intelligence, thus goes Pandora to Stesias."

Stesias said to her, "Detested falser! Detested deceiver who to Stesias' eyes are more infectious than the basilisk."

The basilisk was a mythological monster that could kill with a glance.

Pandora said:

"Gunophilus, Pandora is undone! She is destroyed! Her love, her joy, her life has lost his wits!"

She was referring to Stesias.

Pandora continued:

"Offer a kid goat in Aesculapius' temple, so that he may cure him, lest I die outright."

Gunophilus said to himself, "I'll offer it to Aesculapius, but he shall not have it, for when Stesias comes to himself, I must answer for the kid goat."

Stesias would not want to lose a kid goat.

"Go, I say!" Pandora ordered Gunophilus.

Stesias ordered Gunophilus:

"Stay!"

He then said to Pandora:

"I am well. It is thou who make me rave.

"Thou played the wanton woman with my fellow swains."

Pandora said to herself:

"Then die, Pandora!"

She said to her husband:

"Are thou in thy wits, and thou call me a wanton woman?"

She fell down.

Gunophilus said, "O master! What have you done?"

"Divine Pandora!" Stesias said. "Rise and pardon me!"

Pandora said, "I cannot but forgive thee, Stesias, but by this light, if —"

Gunophilus said, "Look how she closes her eyes."

He was encouraging Stesias to believe that Pandora, now under the influence of the trickster god Mercury, had really fainted.

“Wait, my love!” Stesias said. “I know it was their — the other shepherds’ — trick to make me jealous.”

Pandora said:

“He who will win me must have Stesias’ shape, such golden hair, such alabaster looks.

“Do thou want to know why I did not love Jupiter? Because he was unlike my Stesias.”

Stesias said, “Was ever a simple shepherd as abused as I? All three affirmed that Pandora held them dear.”

Pandora said:

“It was to bring me into disgrace with thee, so that they might have some hope I would be theirs.

“I cannot walk anywhere but they importune me to love them. How many amorous letters have they sent! What gifts! Yet all in vain.

“To prove that this is true, I’ll bear this slander with a patient mind, I’ll speak to them all with fair words, and before the sun goes down, I’ll bring thee to where they are accustomed to lie in wait for me, to rob me of my honor in the groves.”

Stesias said:

“Do so, sweet wife, and they shall pay for it dearly.

“I cannot stay here, for my sheep must go to the sheepfold.”

He exited.

Pandora said:

“Go, Stesias, as simple as a sheep.

“And now, Pandora, summon all thy wits so you can be revenged on these long-tongued, too-talkative swains.

“Gunophilus, bear this ring to Iphicles. Tell him I rave and languish for his love. Tell him to meet me in this meadow alone, and swear that his fellows have deluded him.”

She handed Gunophilus a ring and continued:

“Bear this to Melos.”

She handed Gunophilus a bloody handkerchief and continued:

“Say that for his sake I stabbed myself, and had thou not been near, I would have been dead, but yet I am alive, calling for Melos, the only man whom I love.

“And to Learchus bear these passionate lines, which, if he is not made of flint, will make him come.”

She handed Gunophilus a letter.

Gunophilus said, "I will, and you shall see how cunningly I'll treat them. Stay here, and I will send them to you one after another, and then you shall treat them as your wisdom shall think good."

He exited.

Pandora said to herself:

"That letter I penned, fearing the worst, and I dipped the handkerchief in the lambkin's blood.

"For Iphicles, even if he were entirely made of iron, my ring is adamant — a magnet — to draw him forth.

"Let women learn from me how to be revenged.

"I'll make these shepherds bite their tongues and eat their words, yes, and swear to my husband that all is false.

"My wit is pliant and my invention is sharp, and they will make these shepherds who injure me mere novices in deception."

Seeing Iphicles approaching, she said:

"Young Iphicles must have boasted that I favored him!

"Here I protest as Helen did to her love:

*"Oscula luctanti tantummodo pauca protervus abstulit: ulterius, nil habet ille mei."*

The Latin means: He took only a few kisses from me, who struggled; other than those kisses, he got nothing.

Pandora then said:

"And what's a kiss? Too much for Iphicles!"

Iphicles entered the scene and said:

"Melos is wily, and Learchus is false. Here is Pandora's ring, and she is mine! It was a stratagem laid for my love.

"Foolish Iphicles, what have thou done? Must thou betray her to Stesias?"

Pandora pretended not to see Iphicles and said, so he could overhear her:

"Here I will sit until I see Iphicles, sighing my breath, and weeping out my heart-blood.

"Go, soul, and fly to my dearest love, who is a fairer subject than Elysium."

Elysium is the good and pleasant section of the Underworld. Other parts of the Underworld punish sinners.

Iphicles asked himself:

"Can I hear this? Can I view her?"

Pandora looked at him, and he said:

“O no!”

Pandora said, “But I will look at thee, my sweet Iphicles! Thy looks are medicine to me; allow me to gaze at thee. It is for thy sake that I am thus distempered and made ill.”

“Pale are my looks when they witness my wrongdoing,” Iphicles said.

“And my looks are pale to show my love,” Pandora said. “Lovers are pale.”

Iphicles said, “And so is Iphicles.”

“And so is Pandora,” she said. “Let me kiss my love, and add a better color to his cheeks.”

“Bury all thy anger in this kiss, and don’t checkmate and confound me by uttering my offence,” Iphicles said.

Pandora said:

“Who can be angry with one whom she loves?

“I would rather have no thoughts at all than have just one ill thought about my Iphicles.

“Go to Stesias and deny thy words thou spoke to him, for he has thrust me from his cabinet: his habitation. And as I have loved thee in the past, I will love thee still.

“Don’t delay. Make haste, gentle Iphicles, and meet me on the sedgy banks of the Enipeus River.

Sedges are grassy plants that grow on wet ground.

“When shall I meet thee?” Iphicles said. “Tell me, my bright love.”

“At midnight, Iphicles,” Pandora said. “Until then, farewell!”

“Farewell, Pandora!” Iphicles said. “I’ll go to Stesias.”

He exited.

Pandora said to herself:

“Thus I will serve them all.

“Now, Melos, come to me. I love thee, too — as much as I love Iphicles.”

Carrying the bloody handkerchief and some medicinal herbs, Melos said to himself:

“This is Pandora’s blood; make haste, Melos, make haste! And in her presence lance thy flesh as deep.

“Wicked Learchus, subtle Iphicles, you have undone and ruined me with your far-reaching wit.”

Pandora said:

“Gunophilus! Where is Gunophilus? Give me the knife thou pulled from my breast. Melos has gone, and left Pandora here.

“Witness, you wounds, and witness, you silver streams of tears, that I am true, to Melos only true, and he has betrayed me to Stesias.”

“Forgive me, love,” Melos said. “It was not I alone. It was also Learchus and false Iphicles.”

Pandora said:

“It is not Learchus, nor that Iphicles, who grieves me, but it grieves me that Melos is unkind —

“Melos, for whom Pandora strained her voice, playing with every letter of his name ...

“Melos, for whom Pandora made this wound ...

“Melos, for whom Pandora now will die!”

She pretended to be about to commit suicide.

Melos said:

“Divine Pandora, stop thy desperate hand!

“May summer’s lightning burn our autumn crop, may the thunder’s teeth plow up our fairest groves, may the scorching sunbeams dry up all our springs, and may rough winds blast the beauty of our plains, if Melos does not love thee more than he loves his heart.”

“So Melos swears, but it is a lovers’ oath,” Pandora said.

“Once guilty, and suspected evermore!” Melos said. “I’ll never be guilty anymore, so do not suspect me.”

Pandora said:

“I do not suspect thee anymore, so don’t mistrust me.”

“Learchus never touched Pandora’s lips.

“Nor did Iphicles receive a friendly word from me.

“Melos has all my favors, and for all, do only this one thing, and I’ll be only thine: Go to Stesias and deny thy words, and as the sun goes down, I’ll meet thee here.”

“I will, Pandora,” Melos said, “and to cure thy wound, receive these virtuous herbs that I have found.”

Melos exited.

Pandora said:

“Melos is a pretty swain worthy of Pandora’s love!

“But I have written to Learchus, I, and I will keep my promise although I die, which is to treat him as he treated me — badly.”

Learchus and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Learchus read out loud Pandora’s letter, which he was carrying:

“*Learchus, my love! Learchus!*”



He said:

“The iteration of my name argues her affection!”

He read out loud:

“*Was it my desert? Did I deserve it? Thine, alas! Pandora.*”

He said:

“It was my destiny to be credulous to these miscreants. I believed those villains.”

Learchus again believed that Pandora loved him. He did not now believe the other shepherds, who had believed that Pandora had tricked them, including Learchus, into believing that she loved them, when she did not.

Pandora pretended to write.

Gunophilus said, “Look, look, she is writing to you again.”

“What! Has Learchus come?” Pandora said. “Then my tongue shall declaim. Yet I am bashful and afraid to speak.”

“Don’t blush, Pandora,” Learchus said. “Who has made the most fault?”

“I who solicit thee, who does not love me,” Pandora said.

“I who betrayed thee, who did not offend,” Learchus said.

“Learchus, pardon me!” Pandora said.

“Pandora, pardon me!” Learchus said.

Gunophilus said to himself, “All friends! And so they kissed.”

Pandora said:

“I can only smile to think thou were deceived.

“Learchus, thou must go to my husband immediately and say that thou are sorry for thy words, and in the evening, I’ll meet thee again, under the same grove where we both sat last.”

Learchus said:

“I will, Pandora.”

Pandora had arranged to meet Learchus at a grove in the evening. She had arranged to meet Melos here when the Sun went down. She had arranged to meet Iphicles on the sedgy banks of the Enipeus River at midnight.

Learchus then said:

“But look where your husband comes.”

Pandora said:

“Then give me permission to lie and dissemble.”

Stesias entered the scene, but he was a short distance away.

Pandora said loudly so that her husband would hear, "It is not thy sorrow that can make amends. If I were a man, thou would repent thy words!"

Stesias walked over to them and said, "Learchus, will you stand to your words? Do you still say that your words were true?"

"O Stesias!" Learchus said. "Pardon me. It was their — the other shepherds' — deceit. I am sorry that I injured her."

Stesias said, "They lay the fault on thee, and thou on them. But take thee that."

He struck Learchus.

Pandora said:

"Ah, Stesias, stop. You shall not fight for me.

"Go, go, Learchus. I am Stesias'."

"Are thou?" Learchus asked.

Gunophilus said quietly to him, "No, no, Learchus, she does just say so."

Stesias said:

"Get off of my ground, Learchus. Stay away from my land, and from henceforward do not come near my lawns."

"Lawns" are untilled land.

Stesias continued:

"Pandora, come!

"Gunophilus, let's go!"

"Learchus, meet me soon," Pandora said quietly to Learchus. "The time draws nigh."

Stesias exited, then Gunophilus exited, and then Pandora exited.

Learchus said: "The time draws nigh! I wish that the time were now! I go to meet Pandora at the grove."

He exited.

Melos arrived at the place where Pandora had said she would meet him.

He said:

"When will the sun go down? Fly, Phoebus, fly!"

Phoebus Apollo, the Sun-god, drove the Sun-chariot across the sky each day. Melos wanted the time to pass quickly so that he could meet Pandora.

Melos continued:

“I wish that thy steeds were winged with my swift thoughts.

“Now thou should fall in Thetis’ azure — bright blue — arms, and now I would fall in Pandora’s lap.”

The minor sea-goddess Thetis married a mortal man named Peleus, and Apollo sang at their wedding.

“Thetis” may be an error for “Theia,” a Greek goddess who may be regarded as being blue. Her husband was Hyperion, and she was the goddess of sight and the goddess of the blue of the sky. Apollo’s falling into her arms may be a metaphor for the sun setting.

Or the goddesses Thetis and Theia may be conflated.

Iphicles entered the scene and said, “Why did Jupiter create the day? Sweet is the night when every creature sleeps. Come, night. Come, gentle night, for thee I wait.”

“Why does Iphicles desire the night?” Melos asked.

Startled by Melos’ voice, Iphicles said:

“Who’s that? Melos? Thy words did make me afraid.

“I wish for midnight just to take the wolf, which kills my sheep and for which I make a snare.

“Melos, farewell, I must go to watch my flocks.”

Iphicles exited.

Melos said:

“And I to meet my love! Here she will meet me straightaway.

“See where she comes, hiding her blushing eyes.”

Stesias entered the scene, wearing women’s apparel, including a veil.

Melos said, “My love Pandora, for whose sake I live! Don’t hide thy beauty, which is Melos’ Sun. Here is no one but us two, so lay aside thy veil.”

Stesias said, “Here is Stesias! Melos, you are deceived!”

He struck Melos.

“Pandora has deceived me,” Melos said. “I am undone and ruined!”

He exited.

Stesias said, “I will not deceive you, sir. My meaning is straightforward.”

His meaning was that he wanted to beat Stesias.

Stesias exited, chasing after Melos.

Pandora and Gunophilus entered the scene.

Pandora said, “Come, have thou all Stesias’ jewels and his pearls?”

Mercury was the god of thieves as well as the god of trickery.

Gunophilus said, "Aye, all! But tell me which way we shall go."

Pandora said, "To the seaside, and we will take shipping straightaway."

They would sail away with the stolen jewels.

Gunophilus said, "Well, I am revenged at last on my master. I pray to God that I may be thus even with all my enemies, only to run away with their wives."

"Gunophilus, for thee I have done this," Pandora said.

Gunophilus said, "Aye, and for yourself, too. I am sure you will not beg by the way."

"For thee, I'll beg and die, Gunophilus!" Pandora said.

Gunophilus said, "Aye, so I think; the world is so hard that if you beg, you may be sure to be starved."

"I ask thee to be not so churlish," Pandora said.

Gunophilus said:

"This is but mirth; don't you know *comes facetus est tanquam vehiculus in via?*"

He translated:

"A merry companion is as good as a wagon on the road."

He then explained:

"For you shall be sure to ride although you go on foot."

The Latin *rideo* means "I laugh."

Yes, a merry companion can make a hard journey much easier.

"Gunophilus, setting this mirth aside, don't thou love me more than all the world?" Pandora asked.

Gunophilus said, "Be you as steadfast to me as I'll be to you, and we two will go to the world's end; and yet we cannot, for the world is round, and seeing it is round, let's dance in the circle. Come, turn about."

They danced.

"When I forsake thee, then Heaven itself shall fall," Pandora said.

Gunophilus said, "No, God forbid, then perhaps we should have larks."

If Heaven falls, the birds will fall with it.

A proverb stated, "If the sky falls, we shall have larks."

The proverb meant that something — in this case, Pandora's forsaking Gunophilus — was very unlikely to occur.

They exited.

Stesias entered the scene. He was still wearing women's apparel.

"This is Enipeus' bank," he said. "Here she should be."

Pandora, who was using her husband to get vengeance on the shepherds who had told on her, had told her husband that she had arranged to meet Iphicles here.

Iphicles entered the scene.

He said:

"What! Is it midnight? Time has been my friend. Come, sweet Pandora, all is safe and quiet."

Stesias moved away.

Iphicles asked:

"Whither flies my love?"

"Follow me, follow me," Stesias said. "Here comes Stesias!"

"She has betrayed me," Iphicles said. "Where shall I fly?"

Stesias struck Iphicles, and then he said, "Either to the river, or else to thy grave."

Iphicles exited, running.

Learchus entered the scene.

He said, "The evening has passed, yes, and midnight is at hand. And yet Pandora has not come to the grove."

"But Stesias is her deputy," Stesias said. "He comes, and with his shepherd's hook, he greets Learchus thus."

A shepherd's hook is a staff with a curved end, which was useful for managing sheep.

He struck Learchus.

"Pardon me, Stesias," Learchus said. "It was Pandora's wiles that have betrayed me. Don't trust her, for she is false."

Stesias said:

"Why do thou tell me the contrary to the truth?"

"Take that."

He struck Learchus again.

Stesias continued:

"She is honest, but thou would seduce her. Stay away from my grove, stay off of my land. Didn't I give thee warning?"

Stesias drove Learchus away. They exited with Stesias running after and hitting Learchus.

## CHAPTER 5 (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

— 5.1 —

Luna is the Moon, and another of her names is Cynthia. The word “lunatic” comes from her name.

She arrived, and Mercury descended, bowed to Luna, and exited.

Luna said to herself:

“Now that the other planets’ influence is done, to Cynthia, the lowest of the wandering stars and thus the closest planet to Earth, has beautiful Pandora been given in charge.

“And as I am, so shall Pandora be, newfangled and addicted to novelty, fickle, slothful, foolish, and mad, in spite of Nature, who envies us all.”

Nature is unlikely to envy the seven planets.

Pandora and Gunophilus entered the scene. They had stolen Stesias’ jewels and were running away from him. They wanted to reach the seashore and leave in a ship.

Gunophilus said, “Come, come, Pandora, we must make more haste, or Stesias will overtake us both.”

“I cannot go any faster,” Pandora said. “I must rest.”

She lay down.

“We are almost at the seaside,” Gunophilus said. “I ask thee to please rise.”

“I am faint and weary,” Pandora said. “Let me sleep.”

“Pandora, if thou love me, let us go,” Gunophilus said.

“Why do thou awaken me?” Pandora said. “I’ll remember this.”

“What! Are you angry with me?” Gunophilus asked.

Pandora said:

“No, I am angry with myself for loving such a swain.

“What fury made me dote upon these looks? Like winter’s picture are his withered cheeks. His hair is like a raven’s plumes.”

Gunophilus touched her shoulder.

Pandora said:

“Ah! Don’t touch me!

“His hands are like the fins of some foul fish.

“Look how he moves, like an aged ape! Over the chain, Jack! Or I’ll make thee leap!”

“Over the chain” was a trick that monkeys — a jackanapes is a tame monkey — performed.

Luna was influencing Pandora and making her see Gunophilus as an old man rather than the youth he was.

“What a sudden change is here!” Gunophilus said.

Pandora said:

“Now he swears by his ten bones — his ten fingers.

“Down, I say!”

Gunophilus said, “Didn’t I tell you I should have larks?”

He had said that he would have larks when Pandora betrayed him and Heaven fell.

Pandora said:

“Where are the larks? Come, we’ll go catch some straightaway!

“No, let us go fishing with a net! With a net? No, an angle — a fishing rod — is enough. An angle, a net, no, none of both. I’ll wade into the water, water is fair, and I’ll stroke the fishes underneath the gills.

“But first I’ll go hunting in the wood. I don’t like hunting; let me have a hawk.

“What will thou say if I love thee still?”

“I will say anything, whatever you want!” Gunophilus said.

Pandora said:

“But shall I have a gown of oaken leaves, a chaplet of red berries, and a fan made of the morning dew to cool my face?

“How often will you kiss me in an hour?

“And where shall we sit until the sun is down? For *Nocte latent mendae.*”

The Latin means: Blemishes are hidden by night.

Gunophilus asked, “What then?”

Pandora said:

“I will not kiss thee until the sun is down; whoever are deformed, the night will cover thee.

“We women must be modest in the day. Don’t tempt me until the evening comes.”

Gunophilus said:

“*Lucretia tota sis licet usque die: Thaida nocte volo.*

“Hate me during the days, and love me in the night.”

The Latin means: During the day, be Lucretia. At night, I want Thais.

Lucretia was a virtuous Roman lady, and Thais was an unvirtuous Roman courtesan — a nice word for “prostitute.”

Pandora said:

“Do thou call me Thais? Go, and do not love me.

“I am not Thais, I’ll be Lucretia, I will.

“Give me a knife, and for my chastity I’ll die to be canonized a saint.”

After being raped by Sextus Tarquinius, the son of King Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, Lucretia told her story to others and then committed suicide with a knife. The Romans then threw out King Lucius Tarquinius Superbus and started the Roman Republic.

Gunophilus asked, “But will you love me when the sun is down?”

“No, but I will not!” Pandora said.

“Didn’t you promise me?” Gunophilus asked.

“No! Aye! I didn’t see thee until now,” Pandora said.

The influence of the Moon was working on her.

“Do you see me now?” Gunophilus asked.

“Aye, and I loath thee!” Pandora said.

“Likely I was a spirit all this while?” Gunophilus asked.

“A spirit! A spirit!” Pandora said. “Where may I flee?”

Stesias entered the scene. He was wearing his own attire.

“I see Pandora and Gunophilus,” Stesias said.

“And I see Stesias,” Pandora said. “Welcome, Stesias!”

Stesias said:

“Gunophilus, thou have inveigled her and lured her away, and thou have robbed me of my treasure and my wife.”

Another person who did this was Paris, Prince of Troy, who ran away with the wife and some of the treasure of Menelaus, King of Sparta, thus causing the Trojan War.

Stesias continued:

“I’ll strip thee to the skin for this offence, and put thee in a wood to be devoured by empty tigers and by hungry wolves, nor shall thy sad looks move me to ruth and pity.”

Gunophilus said:

“Pardon me, master. Pandora is lunatic, foolish, and frantic, and I followed her only so I could save the goods — your jewels — and bring her back.

“Why, do you think I would run away with her?”



Pandora said:

“He need not, for I’ll run away with him.

“And yet I will go home with Stesias, so I shall have a white lamb colored black, two little sparrows, and a spotted fawn.”

“I fear that what Gunophilus reports is too true,” Stesias said. “Pandora is lunatic.”

Gunophilus said, “Nay, stay a while, and you shall see her dance.”

Pandora said:

“No, no, I will not dance, but I will sing.”

She sang:

*“Stesias has a white hand,*

*“But his nails [fingernails] are black;*

*“His fingers are long and small,*

*“Shall I make them crack?”*

A lover’s game was to pull the loved one’s fingers and make them crack.

*“One, two, and three;*

*“I love him, and he loves me.*

*“Beware of the shepherd’s hook;*

*“I’ll tell you one thing,*

*“If you ask me why I sing,*

*“I say you may go look.”*

The last line meant: I won’t tell you.

“Pandora, speak,” Stesias said. “Do thou love Gunophilus?”

Pandora said:

“Aye, if he is a fish, for fish is fine.

“Sweet Stesias, help me to a whiting-mop.”

A whiting-mop was an immature white-fleshed fish; it was also a term of endearment for a young girl.

“Help me to a whiting-mop” may mean “Get me pregnant with a girl baby.”

“Now I perceive that she is lunatic,” Stesias said. “What may I do to bring her to her wits?”

Gunophilus said, “Speak, gentle master, and entreat her with fair words.”

“Pandora! My love, Pandora!” Stesias said.

“I’ll not be fair,” Pandora said. “Why do you call me your love? Love is a little boy, and I am not!”

Love is another name for Cupid, son of Venus.

Stesias said, “I will allure her with fair promises, and when I have her in my leafy bower, I will pray to our water nymphs and sylvan — woodland — gods to cure her of this piteous lunacy.”

Pandora said, “Give me a running stream in both my hands, a blue kingfisher, and a pebble stone, and I’ll catch butterflies upon the sand, and thou, Gunophilus, shall clip their wings.”

Stesias said, “I’ll give thee streams whose pebbles shall be pearl, lovebirds whose feathers shall be beaten gold, musk-flies with amber berries in their mouths, milk-white squirrels, singing popinjays, a boat of dear skins, and a fleeting — that is, wandering — isle, a sugar cane, and a line of twisted silk.”

In mythology, Delos was an island that floated on the surface of the sea until the sea-god Poseidon, whose Roman name is Neptune, fastened it to the bottom of the sea. The twins Apollo and Artemis (Roman name: Diana) were born there.

“Where are all these?” Pandora asked.

“I have them in my bower,” Stesias said. “Come, follow me.”

Pandora said:

“Streams with pearls? Birds with golden feathers? Musk-flies, and amber berries? White squirrels, and singing popinjays? A boat of dear skins?”

“Come, I’ll go! I’ll go!”

Stesias and Pandora exited.

Gunophilus said to himself:

“I was never in love with her until now. O absolute, perfect Pandora because foolish Pandora, for folly is women’s perfection. To talk idly, to look wildly, to laugh at every breath and play with a feather — these are things that would make a Stoic fall in love, yes, and thou thyself fall in love:

*“O Marce fili, annum iam audientem Cratippum, idque Athenis.”*

The Latin, translated by Walter Miller, means: “My dear son Marcus, you have now been studying a full year under Cratippus, and that too in Athens.”

Cratippus of Pergamon was a Peripatetic philosopher whom Cicero greatly respected.

Gunophilus has been learning about women recently.

He continued:

“Gravity in a woman is like a gray beard upon a breaching boy’s chin, which a good schoolmaster would cause to be clipped, and the wise husband would cause to be avoided.”

To “avoid” is to “refute.” A wise husband would be able to show that he is more intelligent than his wife.

This society regards a good wife as an obedient wife. This society also regards a good husband as one who is more intelligent than his wife.

A breeching boy is a boy who is still young enough to be whipped.

Melos, Iphicles, and Learchus entered the scene.

Melos was carrying the bloody handkerchief, Iphicles was carrying Pandora's ring, and Learchus was carrying Pandora's letter to him.

Melos asked, "Gunophilus, where is thy mistress, Pandora?"

"She is catching a blue kingfisher," Gunophilus said.

"Tell us where she is," Iphicles requested.

"She is gathering little pebbles," Gunophilus said.

"What!" Learchus said. "Do thou mock us?"

"No," Gunophilus said, "but if she were here, she would make mows — that is, make faces — at the proudest of you."

"What do thou mean by this?" Melos asked.

"I mean that my mistress has become foolish," Gunophilus said.

"A just reward for one as false as she," Iphicles said.

"May such fortune fall to those who intend us ill," Melos said.

"Never were simple shepherds so abused," Learchus said.

"Gunophilus, thou have betrayed us all," Iphicles said. "Thou brought this ring from her to me, which made me come."

"And thou brought this bloody handkerchief to me," Melos said.

"And thou brought this flattering letter to me," Learchus said.

Gunophilus said to Iphicles:

"Why, I brought you the ring, thinking that you and she should be married together."

He said to Melos:

"And being hurt, as she told me, I had thought she had sent for you as a surgeon."

"But why did thou bring me this letter?" Learchus asked.

Gunophilus said to Learchus:

"Only to notify you that she was in health, as I was at the bringing hereof."

He then said to all three shepherds:

"And thus being loath to trouble you, I commit you to God. Yours, as his own, Gunophilus."

This was a parody of how many letters in this society ended.

Gunophilus exited.

“The wicked youngling flouts and mocks us,” Melos said. “Let him go!”

Learchus prayed to the god of shepherds and flocks, “Immortal Pan, wherever this lad remains, revenge the wrong that he has done thy swains.”

Melos said, “O that a creature so divine as Pandora, whose beauty might force the Heavens to blush, and whose beauty might make fair Nature angry to the heart that she — Nature — has made Pandora only for Pandora to obscure Nature herself, should be so fickle and so full of slights, and feigning love to all, love none at all.”

Nature is unlikely to be jealous of her creation: Pandora.

Iphicles said, “Had Pandora been constant and loyal to Iphicles, I would have clad her in sweet Flora’s robes. I would have set Diana’s garland on her head, I would have made her sole mistress of my wanton flock, and I would sing in honor of her deity, whereas now with tears I curse Pandora’s name.”

Learchus said:

“The springs smiled to see Pandora’s face and leapt above the banks to touch her lips, the proud plains danced with Pandora’s weight, the joyous trees bowed when she came near, and in the murmur of their whispering leaves, seemed to say, ‘Pandora is our Queen!’

“All of these witnessed how fair and beautiful she was, but now they only witness how false and treacherous she is!”

Learchus was speaking for the springs, the plains, and the trees, but Nature is a better spokesperson for them.

Melos said, “Here I abjure Pandora, and I protest that I will live forever in a single life.”

“Learchus makes the same vow to great Pan,” Learchus said.

“And so does Iphicles, although sorely against his will,” Iphicles said.

Learchus said:

“In witness of my vow, I rend these lines.”

He tore up Pandora’s letter to him and threw the pieces into the air, saying:

“O thus be my love dispersed into the air!”

Melos threw Pandora’s bloody handkerchief on the ground and said, “May here lie the bloody handkerchief that she sent to me, and with it my affection, and my love.”

Iphicles broke Pandora’s ring and said, “Break, break, Pandora’s ring; and with it break Pandora’s love, that almost burst my heart.”

Stesias, Pandora, and Gunophilus entered the scene.

“Ah, to where runs my love?” Stesias said. “Pandora! Stay! Gentle Pandora, stay! Don’t run so fast.”

Pandora said:

“Shall I not stamp upon the ground? I will! Who says Pandora shall not rend her hair? Where is the grove that asked me how I did?”

Some gods have spoken out of a bush or a grove. In Exodus 3, God speaks to Moses from a burning bush. The rustling of the leaves in the Grove of Dodona was interpreted by the oracle.

Pandora continued:

“Give me an angle — a fishing pole — for the fish will bite.”

“Look how Pandora raves!” Melos said. “Now she is stark mad.”

“Because of you, she raves, you who meant to ravish her,” Stesias said. “Help to recover her or else you die!”

“May she with raving die!” Learchus said. “So do what thou dare to do.”

“She overreached and outwitted us with deceitful guile,” Iphicles said, “and Pan, to whom we prayed, has wrought revenge.”

Pandora said:

“I’ll have the ocean put into a glass, and I’ll drink it to the health of Stesias.

“Thy head is full of hedeockes, Iphicles. So, shake them off.”

“Hedeockes” may be “head ’ocks,” or head-locks, which may be 1) locks of hair, and/or 2) metaphorical locks that bind the mind.

Or, given Pandora’s preoccupation with fishing, it may mean “haddockes.”

Pandora then said to Iphicles:

“Now let me see thy hand.”

She examined his hand and said:

“Look where a biasing star is in this line, and in the other line two and twenty sons.”

“Sons” may be “suns.”

“Come, come, Pandora. Sleep within my arms,” Stesias said.

Pandora said:

“Thine arms are firebrands! Where’s Gunophilus?”

“Go kiss the echo, and bid Love untruss.”

Echo was a nymph who loved Narcissus, who loved himself. Echo wasted away because of her unrequited love until only her voice — an echo — remained. Echoes cannot be kissed.

Love is Cupid, a son of Venus. To “untruss” is to “undress.”

Pandora continued:

“Go fetch the Black Goat with the brazen heel, and tell the bellwether I do not hear him.”

Goats were associated with lustiness, and bellwethers are sheep that lead a flock and on whose neck a bell is hung.

In Greek mythology, an Empusa was a female vampiric being that had a bronze (or copper) leg and could change its shape into various animals. She seduced young men and then drank their blood and feasted on their flesh.

“Wether” means a castrated ram. The bellwether wore a bell.

Pandora continued: “Not, not, not, that you should not come to me this night, not at all, at all, at all.”

She slept.

Gunophilus said, “She is asleep, master. Shall I wake her?”

“O no, Gunophilus,” Stesias said. “There let her sleep, and let us pray that she may be cured.”

“Stesias, thou pity her who does not love thee,” Learchus said.

“The words we told thee, Stesias, were too true,” Melos said.

Iphicles said:

“Never did Iphicles dissemble yet.’

Ahem. He had attempted to seduce Pandora without her husband knowing. So had Learchus, Melos, and Gunophilus. All of these men had dissembled to Stesias.

Iphicles continued:

“Believe me, Stesias, she has been untrue.”

“Will you yet slay me with your slanderous words?” Stesias said. “Didn’t you all swear that Pandora was chaste?”

Learchus said:

“It was her subtle, cunning wit that made us swear.

“For, Stesias, know that she showed love to us all, and she separately sent for us by this swain: Gunophilus.

“And to me he brought such honey lines in a letter from her that overcome by them, I flew to her bower.

“Pandora, when I came, swore that she loved me alone, willing me to deny the words I spoke to you, and she said that at night she would meet me in the grove.

“All this means simply: Lo! I was betrayed.”

Melos said, “Gunophilus brought me a bloody cloth, saying that for my love Pandora was almost slain. And when I came to her, she treated me as she treated this swain Learchus, protesting love for me, and appointing me to come to this place.”

Iphicles said:

“And by this bearer — Gunophilus — I received a ring, and many a loving word that drew me forth.

“O that a woman should dissemble so!

“She then forswore Learchus and this swain — Melos — saying that Iphicles was only hers, whereat I promised to deny my words, and she promised to meet me at the banks of the Enipeus River.”

Stesias asked Gunophilus, “Were thou the messenger to them all?”

Gunophilus said:

“I was, and all that they have said is true. She did not love you, nor them, but me alone.

“How often has she run up and down the lawns, calling aloud, ‘Where is Gunophilus?’”

Stesias said to himself, “Ah! How my heart swells at these miscreants’ words!”

“Come, let us leave him in this pensive mood,” Melos said.

“Fret, Stesias, fret, while we dance on the plain,” Learchus said.

“Such fortune happens to incredulous swains,” Melos said.

“Sweet is a single life,” Iphicles said. “Stesias, farewell.”

Melos, Learchus, and Iphicles exited.

Stesias said:

“Go, life; fly, soul; go, wretched Stesias!

“Curst be Utopia for Pandora’s sake!

“Let wild boars with their tusks plow up my lawns.

“Let devouring wolves come shake my tender lambs, drive my goats up to some steep rock, and let them fall down headlong in the sea.

“She shall not live, nor shall thou, Gunophilus, to triumph in poor Stesias’ overthrow.”

Stesias moved toward Pandora, intending to kill her.

The seven planets entered the scene, with Luna descending from above.

“Stop, shepherd!” Saturn said. “Stop!”

“Do not hurt Pandora, lovely Stesias,” Jupiter said.

Pandora awoke. She was now in her right mind.

“What does my love mean?” Pandora asked. “Why does he look so pale and wan?”

“I am pale and wan because of thee, base strumpet,” Stesias said.

“Speak mildly to her,” Mars said, “or I’ll make thee, crabbed, cantankerous swain!”

“Take her again, and love her, Stesias,” Sol said.

“Not for Utopia!” Stesias said. “No, not for the world!”

“Ah!” Venus said. “Can thou frown on her who looks so sweet?”

“Have I offended thee?” Pandora said. “I’ll make amends.”

“And what can thou demand more at her hand?” Mercury asked.

“To slay herself, so that I may live alone,” Stesias said.

“Flint-hearted shepherd,” Luna said, “thou do not deserve her.”

Stesias said, “If thou are Jove, convey her from the earth, and punish this Gunophilus: her serving-man.”

Gunophilus prayed, “O Jove! Let this be my punishment, to live always with Pandora.”

Nature entered the scene. Pandora was her handiwork.

Nature said to the seven planets:

“Envious planets, you have done your worst.

“Yet in despite of you, Pandora lives.

“And because I see that the shepherds have abjured her love, she shall be placed in one of your seven orbs.”

An orb is the sphere in which the planet is embedded, according to the geocentric Ptolemaic astronomic theory.

Nature then said to Gunophilus:

“But thou who has not served her as I willed, vanish into a hawthorn as thou stand. Never shall thou wait upon Pandora anymore.”

Gunophilus exited, going into a hawthorn bush. He may have metamorphosed and become part of the hawthorn bush.

“O Nature!” Saturn said. “Place Pandora in my sphere, for I am old, and she will make me young.”

“Place her with me!” Jupiter said. “And I will leave the Queen of Heaven.”

He would leave his wife: Juno.

“Place her with me!” Mars said. “And Venus shall no more be mine.”

“Place her with me!” Sol said. “And I’ll forget fair Daphne’s love.”

Phoebus Apollo, the Sun-god, loved the nymph Daphne.

“Place her with me!” Venus said. “And I’ll turn Cupid out of doors.”

“Place her with me!” Mercury said. “And I’ll forsake Aglauros’ love.”



Hmm. There's an error here. Aglauros was envious of her sister, Herse, whom the god Mercury loved. Aglauros attempted to keep Mercury from seeing Herse, and Mercury turned Aglauros into a stone statue.

Luna said:

"No! Fair Pandora, stay with Cynthia, and I will love thee more than all the rest.

"Rule thou my star, while I stay in the woods, or keep with Pluto in the infernal shades."

Pluto was the god of the Underworld.

Luna is a tripartite goddess. On Earth, she is known as Diana, goddess of the hunt. In the Underworld, she is known as Hecate, goddess of witchcraft. In the Heavens, she is known as Cynthia or as Luna.

"Go wherever thou will as long as I am rid of thee," Stesias said.

"Speak, my Pandora," Nature said. "Where will thou be placed?"

Pandora said:

"Not with old Saturn for he looks like death.

"Nor yet with Jupiter, lest Juno storm.

"Nor with thee, Mars, for Venus is thy love.

"Nor with thee, Sol, for thou have two paramours: the sea-born Thetis and the ruddy Morn.

"Nor with thee, Venus, lest I be in love with blindfolded Cupid or young Jocusus.

"Nor with thee, Hermes. Thou are full of slights, and when I need thee, Jove will send thee forth to be his herald.

"Tell me, Cynthia, shall Pandora rule thy star — the Moon — and will thou play Diana in the woods, or Hecate in Pluto's regiment?"

"Aye, Pandora!" Luna said.

Pandora said:

"Fair Nature, let thy handmaid dwell with her because I know that change is my felicity, and fickleness is Pandora's proper form.

"Mercury, thou made me sullen first.

"And thou, Jove, made me proud.

"Thou, Mars, gave me a bloodthirsty mind.

"He — Sol — made me a Puritan.

"Thou, Venus, made me love all whom I saw.

"And thou, Hermes, made me deceive all whom I love.

"But Cynthia made me idle, mutable and changeable, forgetful, foolish, fickle, frantic, mad.

“These are the humors and moods that best content me, and therefore I will stay with Cynthia.”

Nature said, “And Stesias, since thou set so light a value on her, be thou her slave, and follow her in the Moon.”

“I’ll rather die than endure her company!” Stesias said.

“Nature will have it so,” Jupiter said. “Attend on her, and be her servant.”

“I’ll have thee be her vassal,” Nature said to Stesias. “Don’t murmur and complain.”

Stesias said, “Then, to revenge myself on Gunophilus, I’ll rend this hawthorn bush with my furious hands, and I’ll carry this bush. If ever Pandora looks back, I’ll scratch the face of her who was so false to me.”

Nature said:

“Now rule, Pandora, in fair Cynthia’s place, and make the Moon inconstant like thyself.

“Reign at women’s nuptials and weddings, and at their birth.

“Let them be mutable and changeable in all their loves.

“Let them be fantastical, childish, and foolish, in their desires, demanding toys.

“And let them be stark mad when they cannot have their will.”

She then said to the seven planets:

“Now follow me, you wandering lights of Heaven, and do not grieve that she is not placed with you.

“All of you shall glance at her in your astronomical aspects, and in astronomical conjunction, all of you shall dwell with her a space.”

The planets wander in the sky, and they come closer to and farther away from the Moon as they wander. When they are in astronomical conjunction, they are at their closest to each other.

“I wish that they had my place!” Stesias said.

Nature said, “I order thee to follow her, but do not hurt her.”

All exited.

## NOTES (THE WOMAN IN THE MOON)

— 3.2 —

*“Sic vos non vobis; sic vos non vobis.”*

(3.2.260)

Source of Above:

Lyly, John. *The Woman in the Moon*. Ed. Leah Scragg. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006. P. 97.

The Latin means: Thus you work not for yourself; thus you work not for yourself.

The poet Virgil wrote “*Sic vos non vobis*,” according to Aelius Donatus’ *Life of Virgil*, lamenting that he had worked hard to create lines of poetry, only for another poet to plagiarize them.

Aelius Donatus’ *Life of Virgil* is available here:

Donatus, Aelius. *Life of Virgil*. Trans. David Scott Wilson-Okamura. 1996. Rev. 2005, 2008. Online. Internet. 1 January 2023.

[www.virgil.org/vitae/a-donatus.htm](http://www.virgil.org/vitae/a-donatus.htm)

Translator: David Wilson-Okamura (1996; rev. 2005, 2008, 2014).

See section 46.

— 5.1 —

*I'll wade into the water, water is fair,  
And stroke the fishes underneath the gills.*

(5.1.29-20)

Source of Above:

Lyly, John. *The Woman in the Moon*. Ed. Leah Scragg. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006. P. 120.

One method of catching fish is to stroke or tickle the fish under the gills.

Wikipedia defines “Trout tickling”:

**Trout tickling** is the art of rubbing the underbelly of a [trout](#) with fingers. If done properly, the trout will go into a [trance](#) after a minute or so, and can then easily be retrieved and thrown onto the nearest bit of dry land.

Source of Above: “Trout tickling.” Wikipedia. Accessed 13 June 2022

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trout\\_tickling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trout_tickling)

Wikipedia quotes a 1901 book detailing the practice:

Thomas Martindale’s 1901 book, *Sport, Indeed*, describes the method used on trout in the [River Wear](#) in [County Durham](#):

*The fish are watched working their way up the shallows and rapids. When they come to the shelter of a ledge or a rock it is their nature to slide under it and rest. The poacher sees the edge of a fin or the moving tail, or maybe he sees neither; instinct, however, tells him a fish ought to be there, so he takes the water very slowly and carefully and stands up near the spot. He then kneels on one knee and passes his hand, turned with fingers up, deftly under the rock until it comes in contact with the fish’s tail. Then he begins tickling with his forefinger,*

*gradually running his hand along the fish's belly further and further toward the head until it is under the gills. Then comes a quick grasp, a struggle, and the prize is wrenched out of his natural element, stunned with a blow on the head, and landed in the pocket of the poacher.*

Source of Above: "Trout tickling." Wikipedia. Accessed 13 June 2022

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trout\\_tickling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trout_tickling)

Look up "Trout Tickling" on YouTube. Here is one video:

*Trout Tickling on the Elk River (YouTube)*

*Is trout tickling real? Has it ever really been done? Watch the video taken on the Elk River near Fernie BC in September 2008 and you decide!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tszDNiPqm5c&t=66s>

— 5.1 —

*O Marce fili, annum iam audientem Cratip-  
pum, idque Athenis."*

(5.1.123-24)

Source of Above:

Lyly, John. *The Woman in the Moon*. Ed. Leah Scragg. The Revels Plays. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006. P. 124.

The Latin is the beginning of Cicero's *De Officiis*.

The source of the quotation I used is this:

Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, vol. XXI, 1913; Latin text with facing English translation by Walter Miller. It is in the public domain.

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de\\_Officiis/home.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Officiis/home.html)

[https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de\\_Officiis/1A\\*.html](https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Officiis/1A*.html)

— Entire Play —

Nature is a merciful god.

Early in the play, Nature tells the seven planets, "If thus you cross the meed of my deserts — resist giving me what I deserve — and interfere with what I have created, be sure that I will dissolve your harmony, when once you touch the fixed period of your sway."

The seven planets do indeed interfere with what Nature has created by giving Pandora different personality traits, but Nature does not change their harmony into disharmony. All she does is make Pandora the Woman in the Moon.

## APPENDIX A: FAIR USE

## § 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use

Release date: 2004-04-30

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Source of Fair Use information:

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.html>

## APPENDIX B: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine's brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka "The Joker," decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn't been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don't often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for "sounds like" and "two words," then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn't let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor's degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Comedy*, *Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*.

If all goes well, I will publish one or two books a year for the rest of my life. (On the other hand, a good way to make God laugh is to tell Her your plans.)

By the way, my sister Brenda Kennedy writes romances such as *A New Beginning* and *Shattered Dreams*.

## **APPENDIX C: SOME BOOKS BY DAVID BRUCE**

### **Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature**

*Arden of Faversham: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Arraignment, or Poetaster: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Case is Altered: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Catiline's Conspiracy: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Devil is an Ass: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Epicene: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humor: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humor: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Fountain of Self-Love, or Cynthia's Revels: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Magnetic Lady, or Humors Reconciled: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The New Inn, or The Light Heart: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Sejanus' Fall: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's The Staple of News: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's A Tale of a Tub: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings*

*Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text*

*Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings*

*Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose*

*The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling*

*From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica*

*George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston's Eastward Ho! A Retelling*

*George Peele's The Arraignment of Paris: A Retelling*

*George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar: A Retelling*

*George Peele's David and Bathsheba, and the Tragedy of Absalom: A Retelling*

*George Peele's Edward I: A Retelling*

*George Peele's The Old Wives' Tale: A Retelling*

*George-a-Greene: A Retelling*

*The History of King Leir: A Retelling*

*Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*

*Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*

*J.W. Gent.'s The Valiant Scot: A Retelling*

*Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica*

*John Ford: Eight Plays Translated into Modern English*

*John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Fancies, Chaste and Noble: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Lady's Trial: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Lover's Melancholy: A Retelling*

*John Ford's Love's Sacrifice: A Retelling*

*John Ford's Perkin Warbeck: A Retelling*

*John Ford's The Queen: A Retelling*

*John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Campaspe: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Endymion, The Man in the Moon: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Galatea: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Love's Metamorphosis: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Midas: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Mother Bombie: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's Sappho and Phao: A Retelling*

*John Lyly's The Woman in the Moon: A Retelling*

*John Webster's The White Devil: A Retelling*

*King Edward III: A Retelling*

*Mankind: A Medieval Morality Play (A Retelling)*

*Margaret Cavendish's The Unnatural Tragedy: A Retelling*

*The Merry Devil of Edmonton: A Retelling*

*The Summoning of Everyman: A Medieval Morality Play (A Retelling)*

*Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling*

*The Taming of a Shrew: A Retelling*

*Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton's A Chaste Maid in Cheapside: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton's Women Beware Women: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's The Roaring Girl: A Retelling*

*Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's The Changeling: A Retelling*

*The Trojan War and Its Aftermath: Four Ancient Epic Poems*

*Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 5 Late Romances: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 10 Histories: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*



*William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Richard II: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Richard III: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Timon of Athens: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose*