

A CRITICAL COMPARISON OF COPIES
OF THE FIRST THREE EDITIONS

OF

ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM

by

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This critical comparison of copies of the first three editions of Arden of Feversham includes in the introduction a description of the text, sources and stage history, followed by an examination of the problems of dating and authorship. The genre of domestic tragedy also is investigated according to its development and influence: i.e. the contributing factors of the preceding drama, its individual merits, and a general study of comparative drama. The criticism of the past and an independent evaluation of the play as a literary work also are presented.

Textual emendations contain variants in the first three quarto editions, explanatory notes as suggested by subsequent editions and personal interpretations.

The appendices include title page reproductions, extracts from source material and related information on the topic of Arden.

The primary source of Arden is Holinshed's Chronicles published in 1577 and amended in 1587, in which the murder of Thomas Arden of Kent (1550) and the surrounding circumstances are described in vivid, somewhat imaginative detail. A brief account of the same crime occurs in Stow's Chronicles also published in 1577. It is probable that popular ballads, now lost, also existed on the theme since such sensational material was their natural subject material; furthermore, one late ballad now part of the Roxburghe Collection is extant.

most likely published to accompany the third Quarto edition of the play in 1633.

The dating of the play has been placed as early as 1584 but the evidence is unconvincing. The date indicated by the title page is 1592 and the composition of Arden was probably 1590-1591.

External evidence is lacking concerning sixteenth century public performances; nevertheless, the popularity of the play can be gauged by the number of domestic tragedies which commanded attention on the stage in the late 1590's and early 1600's. Arden was adapted by George Lillo to suit eighteenth century tastes and performed on several occasions in this version. The original play was revived in 1954 in Stratford-Atte-Bowe.

Although the play was attributed to William Shakespeare by Edward Jacob in 1770, the claim is now largely refuted by twentieth century critics. Other candidates for authorship range in eminence from Christopher Marlowe to the hack-writer George Wilkins, none having a clear and undisputed title. This thesis examines the various tests of authorship which have been applied to verify each claimant and points out the weaknesses inherent in the argument. The strongest evidence suggests authorship, at least partially, by Thomas Kyd since a close comparison of Arden with the anonymous Soliman and

Perseda, generally recognized as coming from Kyd's pen, and The Spanish Tragedy, Kyd's known work, reveal fundamental similarities in imagery and parallel passages. Such evidence is certainly to be viewed with caution, but not rejected altogether. Coincidences in parallel phraseology assuredly will be encountered; however, the excessive number of literary correspondences to one particular author should command some weight of authority. Joint authorship of Kyd and Marlowe is here advanced as another possibility not only on stylistic similarities to each dramatist but also on biographical evidence. During the proposed date of composition, Marlowe and Kyd were sharing the same living quarters and possibly collaborating on plays.

The literary merit of Arden of Feversham is subject to two factors: personal preference and categorical assessment i.e. whether or not Arden is judged in the context of domestic tragedy or in the context of Elizabethan tragedy as a whole. Critical opinions range from two extremes: Oliphant refers to Arden as "one of the finest and most effective tragedies of the period".¹ Professor Moorman condemns the work as a complete artistic failure in respect to the classical

¹ E. H. C. Oliphant, "Problems of Authorship in Elizabethan Dramatic Literature", Modern Philology, VIII (1911), 420.

criteria.² There is general agreement, however, that Arden of Feversham is certainly an excellent example of its type and as validly stated by Sarah Youngblood, probably neglected too often because of the "bourgeois" elements in the nature of the tragedy.³

Judged as a domestic tragedy, Arden becomes a highly significant play in the main stream of Elizabethan drama and maintains a commanding position as the pinnacle of achievement in its genre, worthy of recognition and performance by modern day Shakespearean theatrical companies.

² F. W. Moorman, "Plays Attributed to Shakespeare", The Cambridge History of English Literature, V, ed. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller (Cambridge: University Press, 1910), 241.

³ Sarah Youngblood, "Theme and Imagery in 'Arden of Feversham'", Studies in English Literature, III (Spring 1963), 207.

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³ Sarah Youngblood, "Theme and Imagery in 'Arden of Feversham'", Studies in English Literature, III (Spring 1963), 207.

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PREFACE

The text of Arden of Feversham here reproduced is an exact copy of the 1592 Quarto edition (STC 733) located at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, U.S.A. In textual emendations variations in wording incurred by additions or omissions are recorded as they appear in the 1599 Quarto edition (STC 734) and the 1633 Quarto edition (STC 735), both also located at the Huntington Library. As further explication of the text, comments made by subsequent editors of the play (E. Jacob; H. Tyrrell; N. Delius; K. Warnke and L. Proescholdt; A. H. Bullen; Rev. R. Bayne; C. F. Tucker Brooke; C. R. Baskerville, V. B. Heltzel, and A. H. Nethercot) are here collected verbatim. However, their validity is investigated if questionable or they are supplemented by further notations if inadequate.

To facilitate a study of the authorship of Arden through parallel passages in Elizabethan plays, the textual emendations also include lines drawn from Shakespearean works the spelling and line length of which follows that of the first folio (1623) and the first quarto edition of contemporary leading dramatists (specifically, Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Kyd). If a particular quarto was required, the year of publication has been indicated in brackets. The line reference, however, follows The Yale Shakespeare and the editors of Works for each

respective dramatist to provide for the reader's inaccessibility to quarto editions.

The Introduction contains a collection of various background material pertinent to the play and its genre. Critical comments also are presented and elaborated upon in a brief appreciation of the style and structure of the play. This section is not designed as an in-depth analysis of a historical nature but a gathering of appropriate information.

Variations in the spelling of "Feversham" frequently occur. In each case, the exact lettering of the word follows the source material from which the reference has been derived.

- Baskervill C. R. Baskervill, V. B. Heltzel, A. H. Methercot, Elizabethan and Stuart Plays (London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2nd. ed. 1965.)
- Bayne Rev. R. Bayne, Arden of Feversham (London: J. M. Dent, 1897.)
- Brooke C. F. Tucker Brooke, The Shakespeare Apocrypha (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908.)
- Bullen A. H. Bullen, Arden of Feversham (London: J. W. Jarvis & Son, 1887.)
- Chambers E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd. ed. 1961.)
- Crawford C. Crawford, "The Authorship of Arden of Feversham", Shakespeare Jahrbuch (XXXIX, 1903.)
- Delius N. Delius, Pseudo-Shakspere'sche Drama II (Elberfeld: Ein Shakspere zugeschriebenes Drama, 1855.)
- Donne C. E. Donne, An Essay on the Tragedy of Arden of Feversham (London and Feversham, 1873.)
- Dyer Rev. T. F. Thielton Dyer, The Folk-lore of Shakespeare (New York: Dover Publications, 1966.)
- Jacob E. Jacob, The Lamentable and True Tragedy of M. Arden, of Feversham, in Kent ... (Feversham, 1770.)
- Onions C. T. Onions, Shakespeare Glossary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd. ed. rev., 1958.)
- Tyrrell A. Tyrrell, The Doubtful Plays of Shakspere (London, 1851.)
- Warnke & Proescholdt Warnke and Proescholdt, Pseudo-Shakespearian Plays (Halle, V, 1888.)
- Wright L. B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (New York: Cornell University Press, 1958.)

- DNB Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee (Oxford: University Press, 1950.)
- CCFL Oxford Companion to English Literature, ed. Sir Paul Harvey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd. ed. 1946.)
- ODEP Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, ed. W. G. Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd. ed. 1957.)
- OED Oxford English Dictionary, ed. C. T. Onions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd. ed. 1947.)
- Q₁, Q₂, Q₃ Quartos published 1592, 1599, 1633.
- Works The Works of Christopher Marlowe, ed. C. F. Tucker Brooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.)
- The Works of Thomas Kyd, ed. F. S. Boas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901.)

INTRODUCTION

1. Text

Arden of Feversham was first printed in 1592, the imprint of the First Quarto (Q₁) being -

London for Edward / White, dwelling at the lyttle
North dore of Paules Church at / the signe of the /
Gun. 1592, / ¹

Three copies are extant² and variants are minor being centered mainly on the spelling of Feversham (Feueshame; Fewershame). The collation follows A - I₄ K₂, fully signed; 38 leaves unnumbered. The text is black letter with roman type used for proper nouns and stage directions; italic for letters and the running title. An ornament appears at the end of the text "which at this date was in the possession of Peter Short, the successor of H. Derham who is known to have used it twenty years earlier".³

¹ A complete reproduction of the title page of each Quarto to exact scale appears in Appendix I.

² Copies are located at the Dyce, Bodleian, and Huntingdon Libraries.

³ W. W. Greg, A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama To the Restoration, Stationers' Records, Plays to 1616: Nos. 1-349, I (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 183.

The second Quarto (Q₂) appeared in 1599 with the imprint:

LONDON, / Printed by I. Roberts, for Edwarde White, and /
are to be sold at his shop at the little North doore / of
Paules, at the signe of the Gun. 1599.

This edition of which three copies are extant⁴ seems to be a fairly accurate reproduction of Q₁ with the most significant variation being the omission of a line on E₁^v. The collation follows A - I₄, fully signed; 36 leaves unnumbered. The text is black letter, stage directions and proper names roman; letters and the running title italic. An ornament follows the text on I₄^v.

The third Quarto (Q₃) of 1633 possesses the following imprint:

LONDON, / Printed by ELIZ. ALLDE dwelling neere / Christs-
Church. 1633.

A variant imprint occurs in one copy:

LONDON, / Printed by ELIZ. ALLDE, and are to be sold by /
Stephen Penel at the signe of the Black Bull on / London
Bridge. 1633.⁵

The Q₃ edition with several omissions in wording and minor changes in reading appears to be a hasty copy of Q₂ which has similar errors. However, the significant point is that it does contain the line omitted from Q₂ suggesting that this error was corrected in some copies of that edition. The

⁴ Copies of Q₂ are located at the Folger and Huntington (2) Libraries.

⁵ Greg, p. 184.

collation follows A - I₄, fully signed; 36 leaves unnumbered. A large woodcut appears on A₁^v.⁶ The text is in roman type with italics used extensively for proper nouns, stage directions, letters, and the single word "audit" on E₂^r. There are several copies extant.⁷

The Stationers' Register also contains an entry concerning another Quarto printed in 1592 by A. Jeffes which was confiscated; consequently, no copies of this edition have survived. The entry reads:

1592 Dec. 18. Ordered in full Court that, whereas E. White has printed The Spanish Tragedy belonging to A. Jeffes, and Jeffes has printed the tragedy of Arden of Kent belonging to White, all copies be confiscated to the use of the poor of the Company, that each pay a fine of 10s., and that the question of their imprisonment be referred to the Master, Wardens, and Assistants.⁸

Concerning further action taken against White and Jeffes, The Court Book of the Stationers' Company for 1576-1602 (Register B) lists two entries:

Edw white. Abell Ieffes.	Whereas Edward white and Abell Ieffes offendyd. ViZ Edw White in havinge printed the spanish tragedie belonging to Edw. Abell Ieffes/ and Abell Ieffes in having printed the tragedie of arden of kent belonginge to Edw white: yt is agreed that all the booke of eche ympression shalbe
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⁶ A reproduction of the woodcut appears in Appendix I.

⁷ For a full account of variations in copies and locations see Greg, pp. 184-185.

⁸ Ibid., p. 185.

as confiscated and forfayted accordinge
to thordonnance, be disposed to thuse
of the poore of the companye for that eche
of them hath seu'ally transgressed the
ordōnance in the seid impressions/

Edw. White.
Abell. Ieffes/

Item yt is agreed that either of them
shall pay for a fine for transgressing
the ordōnance. by ymprintinge the seid
booke contrary to thorders shall Ten
shillinge a pece. presently or betwene
this and our Lady day next/

(in margin) solut' x^s. p Edw. whit in may
1593

And as touchinge their imprisom^t for
the said offence yt is Referred ou' till
some other convenient tyme at the discre-
cōn of the m^r. W. & Assistente

Edward whit
Abell Ieffes⁹

No further records exist indicating imprisonment of either
Jeffes or White in respect to the plays so involved here.
This is also the last reference to the lost pirated edition.

A controversial manuscript copy of Arden of Feversham
compiled by Thomas Southouse, a Kentish antiquary, early in
the eighteenth century raises many interesting problems. The
manuscript appears to have been transcribed in 1716 and there
are numerous striking differences in readings from the Quarto
editions.¹⁰ An apologetic prologue and epilogue in somewhat

⁹ W. W. Greg and E. Boswell, Records of the Court of the
Stationers' Company 1576 to 1602 - from Register B (London:
1930), p. 44.

¹⁰ J. M. Nosworthy, "The Southouse Text of Arden of
Feversham", The Library, Transactions of the Bibliographical
Society, V, Sept. 1950, pp. 113-129.

doggerel rhyme have been added to the text. Although all material is conjectural, conclusions have been reached concerning the manuscript. This version of Arden of Feversham is not derived from the original manuscript but "seems to have been copied mechanically and rather uncritically" by Southouse from an earlier manuscript, most likely a badly worn promptcopy "based on Q₂ with several sheets in an uncorrected state". The additions are to facilitate the actors' performances before the Commonwealth.¹¹

The present edition is a reproduction of the original Quarto including old spelling,¹² punctuation, and line divisions.

A detailed analysis of the Southouse manuscript and variants in individual Quarto line readings are given in this article. Theories as to its source are opened including the possibility of the manuscript being copied from Jeffes' pirated edition.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 124.

¹² The swash "s" cannot be reproduced here and has been replaced by the modern fount.

2. Sources

The murder of Thomas Arden of Feversham¹ actually occurred on Sunday, February 15th, 1550-51 about seven o'clock in the evening.² The Wardmote Book of Feversham gives a brief account of the crime stating the names and eventual punishment of those implicated. The same Thomas Ardern³, having been the chief comptroller of his Majesty's Customs at Feversham, a jurat⁴ in 1544 and mayor of the town in 1548⁵, was a prominent social figure so his murder readily drew attention.

The first historical account of Arden's death appeared in Stowe's Chronicles (1777) as a simple, concise reporting of the facts.⁶

In a second adaptation, however, the horror and sensationalism of the murder captured the interest and imagination of the writers of the Chronicles compiled largely by Raphael

¹ Feversham is presently a town of approximately 12,984 (1961).

² The date of the crime appears in the Wardmote Book quoted in the preface to Jacob's edition of Arden of Feversham in 1770 (Bullen, p. v).

³ "Ardern" is the correct spelling of the name (Bullen, p. iv).

⁴ A jurat is a municipal officer similar to an alderman in some English towns (OED).

⁵ Bullen, p. iv.

⁶ For Stow's account, see Appendix II.

Holinshed. The author of this section of the work apparently became so engrossed in the case that he described in vivid detail the backgrounds of the criminals and accomplices, the intrigue, the failures of attempts made on Arden's life, the actual brutal stabbing of Arden, the discovery, and the fate of the villains. He colours his lengthy narrative with added sensual details, medieval superstitions such as the happenings at the grave site of Arden, and heavily moralistic marginal comments pointing out how susceptible the innocent are to the wiles of the wicked. In conclusion, he apologizes for becoming side-tracked and resumes the history. Holinshed's Chronicles was first published in 1577 and augmented in 1587.⁷ This was the direct source of the dramatist who was inspired not only by the lurid events but also the poetic richness of the writer's style. In the play, he follows the account closely even when it deviates from the factual evidence presented in the Wardnote Book.⁸ Further, he adds to the story such characters as Franklin functioning as Arden's advising friend and as a dramatic vehicle to convey past events to the audience much in the manner of the Chorus of earlier and

⁷ For the full account of Holinshed's Chronicles, see Appendix III.

⁸ All such variations are recorded in textual emendations. So too are all changes in the Holinshed account by the dramatist.

contemporary plays. Moreover, all character portrayals are softened noticeably to acquire a new complexity; the play, then, although inclined to didacticism, transcends the tone of condemnation invoked by the Holinshed rendition.

Such occurrences often found their way into ballad form and The Complaint and Lamentation of Mistress Arden of Feversham⁹ appeared in 1633.¹⁰ With the popularity of the theme in the 1590's, and public interest at a high level, it is likely that this was based on an earlier ballad now lost. Further, an early ballad may also have been a secondary incentive for the dramatist in writing the play.

A possible source of the sub-plot concerned with Michael's motivation in betraying his master has been traced to an old court play entitled Murderous Michael acted by Sussex's Company in 1579 and unfortunately now lost.¹¹ This play has further been postulated as the original Arden and the 1592 Quarto a revision. The suggestion is tempting but unlikely. A. H. Bullen refutes the claim indicating that domestic tragedy is not in keeping with the genre of drama at that time.¹²

⁹ The complete ballad is reproduced in Appendix IV.

¹⁰ The ballad is undated but 1633 is suggested by A. H. Bullen as quite accurate since the printed sheet contains the woodcut from Q3 and was most likely circulated on occasion of the reissue of the text in 1633. Bullen, p. xx.

¹¹ A. Harbage, Annals of English Drama, 975-1700 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), pp. 44-45.

¹² Bullen, p. xvii.

3. Dating

On April 3, 1592, the following entry was made in the Stationers' Register:

3 Aprilis. Edward White, Entered for his copie vnder th[e h] andes of the Lord Bishop of London and the wardens The tragedie of Arden of Feuersham and Blackwall. vjd A.¹

From this evidence, a date of composition in 1591 is maintained. However, the printing of plays immediately following stage appearance was not a common practice in the Elizabethan period. This dating, then, would appear to be late.

Since there is no reference to performances of Arden in Henslowe's Diary or other such sources, it is not known in whose repertory the play was included. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain at which playhouse or in what year the play may have been acted.

If Murderous Michael, the court play of 1579,² is postulated as the original Arden, it must follow that Arden predates the flowering of the Senecan influence on English drama stimulated by the translations of the same in 1581.³ Such a dating would be certainly early and quite presumptuous in

¹ Edward Arber, A Transcript of the Register of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640, II (London: 1875-94) p. 607.

² Cf. p. xi.

³ See p. xix for a description of the Senecan influence on Elizabethan tragedy.

view of the developed stylistic techniques displayed in Arden.⁴

Fleay gives an elaborate argument to justify 1585⁵ as a date of composition and appearance on stage. He suggests a very dubious piece of evidence by pointing out the unpopularity of the name "Arden" stimulated by the execution on December 20, 1583 of one Edward Arden for treason. Arden was a Roman Catholic supporter of Mary, Queen of Scots and publicly criticized Queen Elizabeth.⁶ One Thomas Arden was Edward's grandfather but the association here is again highly presumptuous for the family concerned was the Ardens of Warwickshire,⁷ not Kent.

Much more plausible in Fleay's discussion is his citation of an allusion to Black Will in The True Tragedy (of Richard III), 1586. An actor, William Slaughter or Slater of the Queen's Men, is referred to in the passage:

Forest. One of their names is Will
Sluter, yet the most part calls him Black
Will.

Fleay explains that the name is introduced here "as a bit of 'rag' addressed to the groundlings for the sake of the wretched

⁴ See pp. li-lii for a structural analysis of Arden of Feversham.

⁵ F. G. Fleay, A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559-1642, II (London: Reeves and Turner, 1891), pp. 28-29.

⁶ DNB, I, p. 546.

⁷ A relationship here is traced often to Mary Arden, the mother of W. Shakespeare, to justify his Catholic faith. Tbid.

pun".⁸ However, the fallacy here, is in assuming the name Black Will to be unique rather than a common derogatory corruption of the name William. The same name, for example, appears in Samuel Rowley's When You See Me (1605). If this theory is held as valid, Arden again must predate The Spanish Tragedy and any verbal parallels in the latter or the contemporary drama of the early 1590's are destroyed.

Little can be determined from internal evidence. If any topical allusions occur, they are now obscure and untraceable. The time sequence of the play itself follows a seasonal cycle from spring to winter, so that a late year dating might be suggested. However, if the reference to "hough Munday" (IV, iii, 31) is in any way indicative of composition, an early spring date is likely.

Perhaps the most accurate dating is that of late 1590 or early 1591 when popular tragedy was in vogue and more significantly, when Marlowe and Kyd were living in "one chamber" and possibly working together.⁹

⁸ Fleay, p. 28.

⁹ Cf. p. lxxv.

A. Stage History

There is no definite evidence of Arden of Feversham having been performed in the 1590's, nor for a century later. Since Lord Leicester's players were at Feversham in 1500, it has been suggested that this was a premier performance.¹ More probable, however, is a performance in 1597 when Lord Hundson's players visited the town.² If Arden was performed in London, its popularity on the public stage might be called into question in that such sensational themes as infidelity and murder were usually associated with foreign settings, especially Italian cities, which the Elizabethans regarded with scorn as centres of the blackest intrigue and lax sexual morality. Such a subject matter in an English setting was certainly unprecedented and it may have been too close to home, in more ways than one considering the reputation of the district in which the theatre was situated. Nevertheless, one must keep in mind the wave of domestic tragedies which followed Arden such as The Yorkshire Tragedy and A Woman Killed with Kindness³ which in themselves attest to the success of

¹ Bullen, p. xix.

² Ibid., n. 1. Bullen cites Halliwell-Phillipps, The Visits of Shakespeare's Company of Actors to the Provincial Cities and Towns of England (Privately Printed, 1887).

³ Cf. pp. xcii-xcvii.

Arden in its appeal to public tastes.

The first recorded production of Arden was at the Haymarket on Wednesday, January 21, 1736, altered, according to the bills by Mrs. Haywood.⁴ Further, as with many Elizabethan plays during the eighteenth century, Arden was rewritten and adapted to suit current tastes by George Lillo in 1759. The work was apparently completed by Dr. John Hoadly and published anonymously in 1762.⁵ In this form, the play appeared at Drury Lane for several performances in 1759, 1762 and 1775. A performance in Dublin is also recorded in 1763.⁶ Interest declined but a revival occurred at Covent Garden in 1790⁷ and in 1799, Arden of Feversham was produced as a ballet.⁸ A Sadler's Wells performance is recorded in 1852 which is again Lillo's adaptation.⁹

There seems to have been a great deal of local interest in the play as it was acted frequently at the Feversham

⁴ Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama: 1600-1900, II, Eighteenth Century Drama (Cambridge: University Press, 1952), 71.

⁵ The work was entitled A New Historical Play ... Taken from Holingshead's Chronicle. Nicoll, II, 342.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Nicoll, III, 90.

⁹ Nicoll, II, 342.

Theatre¹⁰ and on one occasion the production was suspended because of "so magnetic an effect of terror on the audience".¹¹

A recent record of performance was in 1954 at the Theatre Royal in Stratford-atte-Bowe where the play received unfavourable reviews on account of the inferiority of stage conditions, acting ability, and crudity of subject matter.¹² However, a very perceptive critic, Raymond Chapman, offered a contrary opinion in recognizing the potential of the tragedy on the modern stage and paid tribute to the company "for a most intelligent ... production which deserved a larger and more accessible theatre".¹³

Performances of Arden have not been restricted to English theatres in that the play has also been produced on the Continent quite recently. In 1966 "a young director, Andrei Serbou, who had not finished his studies, put on a pre-Shakespearean play Arden of Feversham. Performed at Piatra

¹⁰ Rev. C. E. Donne, An Essay on the Tragedy of Arden of Feversham, 1873, p. 18. Bullen, p. xix.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² K. Tynam, Curtains: Selections from the Drama Criticism and Related Writings (Atheneum, 1961), pp. 81-83.

Mr. Tynam humourously says of the play that it is "about as far from Shakespeare as Stratford-atte-Bowe is from Stratford-on-Avon". He credits it to a hackwriter George Wilkins (See p.xciii) giving no substantial evidence.

¹³ Raymond Chapman, "'Arden of Feversham': Its Interest Today", English, XI, 1956, 17.

Neamt, and afterwards in Bucharest, the production was widely commended".¹⁴

It would appear that Arden has been theatrically underrated since it does possess richly sensitive poetic inspiration and a piercing portrayal of human passions.. That Arden of Feversham is a tragedy "touching life" can hardly be denied.

¹⁴ Alexandru Dutu, "Recent Shakespeare Performances in Romania", Shakespeare Survey 20 (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), 130.

5. General Background

Being so strongly rooted in the classical traditions of Greek and Roman antiquity, the drama of the early 1590's did not originate from native elements. It was rather the cultivation of this seedling by the English writers which occasioned the blossoming of Renaissance drama at the turn of the seventeenth century.

In tracing the development of the drama as an art form, it becomes apparent that the transition made from the spontaneity of the medieval miracle plays to the rigidity of the classical form in imitation was effected by the University playwrights who adopted the genre primarily as a practical exercise in Latin translation and as a mode of entertainment.¹ The first outstanding offshoot of this hybrid was The Tragedy of Gorboduc produced by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple during their Christmas festival in 1561-62 and later before the Queen herself. Although the play is limited in audience appeal by its morotonously long speeches, it was revolutionary in its structural techniques patterned after Senecan art.

Elizabethan drama was now awakened and audiences were stirred by the lurid horrors and crude passions evoked by Senecan imitations. The academic playwrights of the

¹ As early as 1532, the boys of St. Paul's acted before Cardinal Wolsey a Latin tragedy on Dido.

Cf. F. L. Lucas, Seneca and Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge: University Press, 1922), p. 95.

Universities and Inns of Court had taken it for granted that Seneca was meant to be acted rather than merely read in private as "closet drama" so they piled horror upon horror in their productions at Cambridge and Oxford attempting to outdo each other in sensational brutality. On one occasion "in 1592 Alabaster's Roxanna was performed at Trinity College, Cambridge, a typical Senecan imitation which ended in a cannibal orgy of revenge so ghastly, that a gentleman in the audience 'fell distracted and never recovered'".²

The crudities here enacted were really not unusual to the Elizabethan spectator who delighted in gruesome pastimes like cock-fighting and bear-baiting in such places as the Southwark Bear Gardens. Such physical horrors stimulated their emotions and this was the form of entertainment they were seeking at the Theatre as well. Nevertheless, this tendency to fall into barbarism, though seemingly perverted, actually breathed new life into "the dead bores of the Latin Decadence"³ in that it was offset by the Elizabethan vigour, vitality and vehement emotionalism.

Another significant step forward came with the translation of the Senecan drama in 1581⁴ since these resources were now

² Ibid., p. 58

³ Ibid., p. 59.

⁴ In 1581 appeared Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies, Translated into English by Thomas Newton and dedicated to Sir Thomas Henreage, Knight, Treasurer of her Majesty's Chamber.

to be opened up to popular playwrights ready to adapt them to the public stage. This fusion of the academic and the popular elements produced the "revenge tragedy" abounding in sensational atrocities, rape, bloodshed, murder and disfigurement. By 1586, the crowning glory of Senecan drama came to the stage in The Spanish Tragedy, further distinguished as the only play definitely known to have been written by Thomas Kyd. Vengeance becomes the core of the action which resolves itself in insanity and multiple deaths.

The Elizabethans were also fascinated by the psychology of crime as well as the visual aspects and their portrayals often concentrated on the subtle warping of human nature by malignant plotting. Consider here the intricacies of the greatest tragedies of all time making their appearance on stage in Hamlet, Macbeth and Othello. Analysis of passion was foremost, and favourite studies of human emotions were on themes of love, hatred and ambition linked with criminal behaviour.⁵

Man was pitted in a tragic struggle against the inconstancy of fortune and even the blackest character often aroused pathos from the audience as his actions were motivated by recognizable basic human drives. Further, to heighten the total effect, dramatists relied upon dramatic irony exemplified in situations

⁵ Cf. Aeschylus' Agamemnon; Seneca's Hercules Furens and Phaedra.

in which characters were completely unaware of the impending horror which was already known to the audience.

Another popular theme of the blood-tragedies of both the Greek and Roman drama which was re-enacted within the Elizabethan "wooden O" of the 1590's was that of adultery and jealousy. The striking feature here is that the dramatist was always able to skilfully evoke pity for the infidel who is taunted by the fear of the coming results of the immoral act. Again, the victim of the intrigue is led unawares to his fate tricked by his innocence and the vehicles of deception employed by others.

Arden of Feversham is one of the best examples of a classical motif reset into an Elizabethan domestic framework. Alice, the adulteress, is ever conscious of a tragic fate and yet she persists in falling deeper and deeper under the spells of evil. Arden, the victim, is blindly led into a series of traps whereby the murderers hope to complete their task but through the incongruous twists of fortune, he escapes several of their attempts only to be duped into believing in the virtue of Mosbie, his wife's lover, and fatally stabbed and beaten to death in full view of the audience for his naive complacency.

A decline in Senecan adaptations was inevitable. In the hands of unskilled playwrights, the intricacies of emotional motivation were obscured and the portrayal of villainy became

and end in itself causing the drama to rely solely on the action of horror. Arden of Feversham surpasses this abuse of melodrama and aspires to levels of artistic perfection.⁶

An important component of Elizabethan drama which also must be mentioned is that of the medieval morality tradition. Although the morality abstract personifications do not appear in Arden of Feversham, the didactic overtone is particularly pronounced in the final scenes. The classical tradition also stressed the necessity of moral comment in the drama but the precedent had already been established in England before classical imitation was attempted. The didactic criteria is made clear in Willard Thorp's statement:

But the critical literature of the Elizabethan period had established the moral standard as the principal criterion of judgment some years previous to the arrival in England of the Senecan drama with its concomitant critical dogmas.⁷

The secularization of the Biblical material of the miracle plays did not exclude the ultimate end of presenting the public with a practical lesson in Christian ethics through visual impact in the drama. In fact, this didactic purpose has been considered as of prime importance to the spectator. Thorp comments:

⁶ Cf. pp. xxxi.

⁷ Willard Thorp, The Triumph of Realism in Elizabethan Drama: 1558-1612 (New York: Haskell House, 1965), p. 24.

Elizabethans were bound to consider the drama's function that of moral instruction with the delight of the audience a necessary but secondary consideration.⁸

In Arden of Feversham, the villains are justly punished for their crimes. An irreparable rift grows between Alice and Mostie, the blood of guilt delivers them into the hands of the retributors, and all implicated are sentenced to execution. Nevertheless, the theme of redemption ever within the grasp of "the sinners" is reinforced and the merciful grace of God overshadows the horror of the stake for Alice in particular. Both social and religious principles have then been resolved while the audience has been "purged of pity and fear".⁹

⁸ Ibid., p. 20.

⁹ The element of "katharsis" in Arden of Feversham has also been strongly denied by Professor Moorman. He classes the play with inferior drama and condemns it as unique in the following quality:

Apart from the work of mere journeymen playwrights, there is no play in the whole range of Elizabethan dramatic literature which disregards tragic 'katharsis', alike in its terror and its pity so completely.

The severity here is the result of the critics inability to sympathize with Arden's plight or to appreciate the suspenseful manipulation of the repeated failures in attempts on his life.

Professor Moorman continues:

he the dramatist makes no attempt whatever to render him attractive, or to awaken our pity at his death.

This is to deny the dramatic principle operative behind the

playwright's variations from Holinshed which are regarded here as mere immaterial oversights in the transposition of detail.

Compare the comments of F. W. Moorman, The Cambridge History of English Literature, ed. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller, (Cambridge: University Press, 1950), pp. 240-242 and a description of Arden's character pp. xliv-xlvi.

6. General Criticism

Domestic tragedy first appeared on the London stages in its purest form in the 1590's beginning with Arden of Feversham; however, it contained few innovations. Its novelty sprang from its choice of characters, but essentially the genre was a unique and harmonious interweaving of the various elements of the preceding drama.

The tales of infidelity, seduction and murder which form the basis of the domestic tragedy were comparable, in fact, to those "that fill up the front pages of the newspaper and that in Elizabethan times were put into complaint ballads¹ sung by the ballad-mongers in the street".² Another non-dramatic equivalent of domestic tragedy was the homiletic tract, one of the most outstanding examples of which was The Murder of John Erewen. It is mentioned here to draw attention to its fundamental similarities to Arden of Feversham indicated in textual emendations.

Sensationalism was implicit, but domestic tragedy possessed much more depth in its content. H. H. Adams, in an exhaustive study of the form defines it as:

¹ See Appendix IV for a reproduction of a ballad on the subject of Arden.

² Louis Gillet, "Arden of Feversham", Shakespeare's Contemporaries, ed. M. Bluestone and N. Rabkin (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1961), p. 150.

a tragedy of the common people, ordinarily set in the domestic scene, dealing with personal and family relationships rather than with large affairs of state, presented in a realistic fashion, and ending in a tragic or otherwise serious manner.³

He further describes its purpose as aiming to inculcate "lessons of morality and religious faith in citizens who came to the theatres by offering them examples drawn from the lives and customs of their own kind of people".⁴ Therefore, these plays combined social, ethical and religious discussions within their plot structures; and consequently, they served in a guise of entertainment "the same purpose as the exempla of the sermons preached every Sunday in every parish church".⁵ Moreover, these religious principles were derived from the simple beliefs of the layman rather than those of scholastic disputations on controversial points of theology.

There is a striking similarity here to the earlier miracle and morality plays aspiring to dramatize Biblical and secular material respectively as a media reaching to the citizenry inducting subtle lessons on their social responsibilities. Furthermore, as in these same plays, the sense

³ H. H. Adams, English Domestic or Homiletic Tragedy: 1575-1642, 2nd ed. (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965), pp. 1-2.

⁴ Ibid., p. viii.

⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

of justice in the domestic tragedy became standardized, being well rooted in the heart of medieval philosophy: the reward for virtue was salvation; the punishment for sin was an inescapable damnation unless repentance was exacted to settle the account between Man and God, thereby reassuring some comfort in the after-life.

Another contributing influence was the Senecan emphasis on bloodshed, criminal perversion, and melodramatic sensationalism which supplied the element of unabashed crudity so displayed in domestic tragedy.⁶

In a comparison of domestic tragedy and the norm⁷ in Elizabethan tragedy, similarities are again apparent. The theme of man confronting the problem of evil as a contagious disease indiscriminantly infecting the innocent as well as the guilty is basic to both. The point of departure in domestic tragedy coes with the moral decision being determined by the middle-class people who actually made up the greater part of the Elizabethan audiences.⁸ The reason for the popularity of this type of drama then is evident. Audiences responded

⁶ See pp. xix-xx for a fuller description of the Senecan influence on domestic tragedy.

⁷ The "norm" represents here the Elizabethan imitations of classical tragedy. The principles of Shakespearean tragedy suggested by A. C. Bradley provide an example of the "norm".

⁸ A. Harbage, Shakespeare's Audience (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), pp. 54-55.

strongly to the pathetic appeal of misfortunes overtaking members of their own class. The possibilities of identification of the spectator with such middle-class heroes defeated by the fickleness of fortune expressing their meager existence to redemptive stimulated public reaction. This process of self-recognition in the members of the audience was much more likely to be removed in conventional tragedy where the scene and the characters were not inspiring rather than inclining to personal association.

The circumstances surrounding the tragic hero in both domestic tragedy and the catastrophe of Elizabethan tragedy, however, are not really different in that he moved headlong to his downfall through the various machinations that Inconstant Fortune was likely to devise. This decline was usually the result of a character flaw which provoked the hero to make an irrational decision of extreme responsibility. Ambivalence in respect to beliefs in free will and fatalism was not unusual in Elizabethan drama as its writers were caught up in a period of transition looking backwards to Medieval determinism and forward to Renaissance free choice.

The most outstanding difference in domestic tragedy is the social position of the tragic hero who was not a figure of political importance or nobility. He was usually a common man of some responsibility in the community, but his concern

was that of the family unit not of the general welfare of the state. Furthermore, from a general point of view, the picture of mankind presented in the domestic tragedy certainly must be regarded as more bitter and pessimistic than that of the preceding drama. The innate malevolence of man, his propensity to evil if he allowed himself to be governed by his appetites unchecked by religious scruples rather than reason, must have contributed a great deal to the finest achievements of melancholy in the later Jacobean tragedy.

In connection with the didactic element, H. Adams clarifies another important variation in domestic tragedy:

These authors [of the contemporary orthodox tragedy] sought to exhibit the rectitude of man even in the midst of affliction, while the authors of domestic tragedy, inflamed in their view of human nature by the religious doctrines they taught, were compelled to exhibit man as a vile and wicked sinner. In their plays, they presented a God far more interested in administering laws of heavenly justice than in the fate of an individual, while the writers of conventional tragedy made their chief interest in the revelation of the greatness of human characters.²¹

The point of interest here is that the tendency in domestic tragedy was to sacrifice complexity in character portrayals for the sake of the religious principle. The characters, then, seldom function in their own right but are manipulated like puppets to reinforce the essential thematic pattern which

²¹ Adams, p. 122.

had become so stabilized. Adams categorizes the successive platitudes in the action which the hero or heroine had to cross as that of: sin, discovery, repentance, punishment, and ex-
 rediation of divine mercy.¹⁰

With the characters being little more than the stock repentant sinner of moral literature moving in a pre-designed scheme as examples of the retribution dealt to those who dared to dissent from the norm in conventional Elizabethan morality, the life breath of humanity was destined to suffocate in lesser domestic tragedies. Nevertheless, Arden is able to transcend the pathos of social conformity. Although the fate of the characters is conventional in that the moral is vindicated, they still display the terrifying power of unrestrained passions so much so that the audience is held in the grip of a profound emotional experience. Their conflict tears apart the veneer of social pretense in each character as he is faced with the problems of his responsibility to uphold the accepted moral or follow his own inclinations. Even on the part of other characters such as the servant Michael, there is an indication of hesitancy and reluctance to commit crime because of an awareness of traditional servile loyalty. Arden, then, must be regarded as the pinnacle of achievement in domestic tragedy in that the dramatist has absorbed the didacticism in his art

¹⁰ Id., p. 7.

so that it is not obtrusive to the spectator.

That the dramatist was conscious of varying from the norm in tragedy is implicit in the epilogue (ll. 14-18) in which Franklin in all humility begs pardon from the audience for the daring and unconventional nature of the artistry:

Gentlemen we hope youle pardon this naked Tragedy,
Wherein no filed points are foisted in,
To make it gracious to the eare or eye.
For simple trueth is gracious enough:
And needs no other points of glosing stufte.

Critics suggest various interpretations of these lines. Some maintain it is an apology for "failing to present, in a work called a tragedy, the catastrophe of a king or other person of political importance";¹¹ others describe it as a justification of his "stark realism".¹² In fact, there should be no disparity of opinion since the low-born characters, the fluid dialogue, and the violence are part of the emphasis on the naturalistic portrayal to which the dramatist has aspired.

If one is to conjecture as to the motivation of the dramatist in pursuing such a form of "naked Tragedy", it becomes apparent that an appreciation of the drama is inseparable from the Elizabethan temperament. The time is definitely one of transition. The middle-classes, in particular the merchants, were now close to dictating social policies in the

¹¹ Ibid., p. 101.

¹² Ibid., p. 102.

community and demands could no longer be ignored. Furthermore, they now provided a ready market for any enterprising opportunist to exploit. Once catered to, the resources they could yield were boundless. These were the people who were now filling the playhouses and buying up the quartos. These were the spectators who wanted to see something in the drama written in a simple straight forward style and directly applicable to their own social circles. They were interested also in re-enactments of the chronicles and of the love and intrigue in the supposed lascivious court circles of Italy.

Another point so often overlooked here is that the audience was consisting more and more of women whose tastes also demanded recognition. Indeed, the figure of the sinning woman was central to the drama of the 1590's and early 1600's. Elizabethan views of the weaknesses of women had been well conditioned through literature by such tragic heroines as Jane Shore, the famous mistress of Edward IV, and Rosamond, the mistress of Henry II. It would seem, however, that the position of the woman in the development of Elizabethan drama has been underestimated, most likely overshadowed by the well-known facts of young boys taking the role of female characters on stage and by the despicable reputation the theatre pictured as being a den of iniquity which no respectable woman would frequent. Willard Thorp, in a study of the importance of the female character in the Elizabethan period, gives new insight

into the development of domestic tragedy. He comments on the tendency in the drama to concentrate on husband-wife relationships:

for the first time in the history of western civilization the various problems that arise from the relations between the sexes received full and minute consideration in the drama written in the reigns of Elizabeth and James....The growth in the understanding of woman's nature in Elizabethan drama, as revealed in the dramatization of moral problems in which her character is a factor, must constitute a large part of any study of its technical and philosophical development.¹³

One of the first writers to dramatize the theme of the distressed wife was Robert Greene whose list of heroines include Queen Dorothea in James IV, Margaret in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and Angelica in Orlando Furioso. From there on, the role of the women became increasingly important on stage. The vogue of patient wife plays, the distressed maiden, the faithful wife, and the sinning woman rivalled each other in popularity throughout the period. The double standard was conspicuously operative and Thorp clearly points out that "the man's honour is an important factor. The glory of the chaste and patient wife consists equally in the preservation of her own good name and her husband's honour".¹⁴

¹³ Willard Thorp, The Triumph of Realism in Elizabethan Drama: 1558-1612 (New York: Haskell House, 1965), p. 81.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 106.

These plays, to be fully appreciated, also should be viewed against the background of Elizabethan conceptions of marriage. Little progress had been made in the direction of dissolving marriages through legal means for the sanctity of wedlock was still protected by the rigidity of the laws. Therefore, the legal stand on divorce was not, as yet, well defined. Thorpe elaborates:

In England [in the 1500's] the ecclesiastical courts arranged in an ascending series of five degrees, still judged marriage difficulties as in earlier days. Officially there could be no absolute divorce except upon the discovery that the marriage had been illegally contracted, e.g., within the forbidden degrees of 'affinity'....Commissions met to discuss and ratify divorce laws to meet those followed on the Continent allowing adultery and desertion as suitable grounds, but proposals were rejected.¹⁵

Evidently, attempts had been made to reform the laws but the results were inconclusive in view of the determined opposition of church authorities. Nevertheless, despite this technicality, Thorpe also makes it quite clear that in all social circles, English women "actually enjoyed more liberty than their European sisters".¹⁶

In Arden of Feversham, the indissolvability of her marriage causes Alice's desperate, at times hysterical, acceptance

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 87.

of murder as a means to achieve her ends. This complex problem provides the inciting force of the action and adds new dimensions to the irony of the religiously orientated thematic pattern. The dichotomy here lies in the fact that for Alice, this is the only way to fulfil her sensual desires - the only way she can realize the life principle. The acceptance of her marriage implies a living death for Alice who is incapable of returning the affection Arden possesses for her. Therefore, beneath the standardized religious ethic of sin and redemption lies a penetrating portrayal of Elizabethan middle-class mores unable to cope with the fluctuating social scene and the new independence desired by the woman.

The changing social patterns of the period were the result of a new economy encountered with the collapse of feudal and monastic monopolies on land tracts. The influence of this breakdown was far reaching and Thorp explains that "entire classes of society were made over by the influx of new philosophies from the continent and the political and mercantile progress of the whole world."¹⁷

The author of Arden was certainly acutely aware of the social upheavals which were taking place. The loss of medieval security and the advent of the new learning which was continually questioning earlier accepted ideologies are well reflected

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 41.

in the sub-plot involving both Greene and Dick Reede. The scene with Reede has been viewed as totally irrelevant structurally; however, from the beginning of the play to the end, the audience is reminded of Arden's land possessions of which the Reede incident is only one example. Arden represents the mercantile interests. He is a shrewd businessman who has also acquired social prestige in the community.¹⁸ Furthermore, Arden has come into the property as conferred upon him by "letters patents...sealed & subscribed" by the king. (I, i, 4-6) This same land was formerly in the possession of the Abbey of Feversham and Arden ironically becomes "a victim of the system which has made him rich - the redistribution of the Church lands by the Reformers".¹⁹ Concerning this property, Bullen gives a pertinent statement as obtained from "the writer of an article...in The Monthly Journal of the Faversham Institute, August, 1881" whose source of information was "some MS notes found many years ago in a lumber room at the Dolphin Inn, Faversham":

Arden was a gentleman bred near Wye, in Kent, and was importuned to buy the Abbey lands by Lord Cheyre, and was not aware when he bought them that several tenants had leases of different portions.²⁰

¹⁸ Arden was mayor of Feversham in 1548 (Bullen, p. iv).

¹⁹ Raymond Chapman, "'Arden of Feversham': Its Interest Today", English, XI (1956), 15.

²⁰ Bullen, p. xii, n. 1.

It would appear both from the play and from this comment that Arden did not callously deprive the tenants of their land such as the Holinshed account seems to indicate.²¹

Greene is one of the lessees who despises Arden so much that he is prepared to hire two murderers to take revenge on Arden. Greene decries the lack of social justice and his complaint is that of the dislocated tenant farmer victimized by the methods of the capitalistic land corporations using the strength of their investments to stifle independent enterprise:

Your husband does me wrong:
To wring me from the little lard I haue.
My liuing is my lyfe, oroly that
Resteth remainder of my portion.
Desyre of woth is endles in his minde,
And he is greedy paping still for paine,
Nor cares he though young gentlemen do begge,
So he may scrape and hoarde vp in his poutche
.....
I, Gods my witnes, I meane plaine dealing,
For I had rather die than loose my land.
(I, i, 468-516)

The same complaint is echoed late in the play when Roede, the sailor, pleads for leniency in allowing his family to retain the land he has purchased:

the plot of ground
Which wrongfully you detain from me.
Although the rent of it be very small,
Yet will it helpe my wife and children:
which here I leaue in Feuershame God knowes,
Needy and bare, for Christs sake let him haue it.
(IV, iv, 12-17)

²¹ See Appendix III.

Reede's outburst of temper occasions Arden's bitter resentment of his impertinence. He shows no compassion for the dispossessed and mechanically defends himself by maintaining a legal position. The lands are his by royal authority and he does not have to answer to such an attack. Reede's reaction parallels Greene's in that he cries out for revenge and lays a curse on Arden which comes true in the final scene:

Arden lay murdered in that plot of ground,
 which he by force and violence held from Reede.
 And in the grass his boydes print was scene,
 Two yeeres and more after the deede was doone.
 (Epilogue, 10-13)

Both of these incidents appear in Holinshed but the difference here is that the dramatist was trying to soften the character description of Arden whose blackness is only eclipsed by the evil intentions of the criminals in the Holinshed account. In order to elicit a sympathetic response from the audience for Arden, he omitted details from Holinshed very selectively²² and coloured Arden's genuine affection for Alice. In the scene with Reede, Arden would seem to prove valid Greene's charge of miserliness. However, it doesn't quite convince the spectator since Arden, from a general point of view, appears to be little more than a pawn in a much larger game. He is so naively unsuspecting that one wonders whether he is not the scapegoat for the interests of Lord Cheyre to

²² See p. x, n. 8.

whom complaints would be more accurately directed.

This same concern for property is evident in the servant Michael whose vehemence in expressing his right to possession is epitomized in the lengths to which he is prepared to go to procure the valuable commodity:

For I will rid myne elder brother away:
 And then the farme of Bolton is mine owne.
 Who would not venture vpon house and land?
 When he may haue it for a right downe blowe.
 (I, i, 171-174)

The note of the dispossessed also is struck by the two hired murderers, Black Will and Shakebag. Raymond Chapman aptly describes them as "two of the liveliest rogues in Elizabethan drama" in that they "represent that dread of the sixteenth century society - the masterless man. Black Will is a discharged soldier who knows no trade but murder".²³ Indeed, he goes so far as to lament that murder is not a legal profession since it is here that he excels. On the other hand, Shakebag appears to be "a man with some glimmering of education"²⁴ and his speech is often that of the most sensitive poetic richness. Chapman makes a vivid comparison here between the Elizabethan villains and the modern syndicate mobster:

The pair of them are prototypes of the
 modern gangster....There is something
 strikingly modern about Black Will's

²³ Chapman, p. 16.

²⁴ Ibid.

boasting of the way in which he is accus-
tomed to extort money from the London
tradesmen, by what would now be described
as 'protection'.²⁵

Consider here Black Will's bragging of his accomplishments
to Greene:

The bawdie houses haue paid no tribute,
There durst not a whore set vp, vnlesse she haue
agreed
with me first, for-opning her Shoppe windowes.
For a crosse worde of a Tapster,
I haue reared one barrell after another, with my
dager,
And held him by the eares till all his beare hath
run out,

All the temperny alehouses would stand euery morning,
with a curst pot in his hand,
Saying will it please your worship drinke:
He that had not come so had bene sure to haue had his
Singe puld down, & his lattice borne away the next night.
To conclude, what haue I done? yet cannot do this.

(V, i, 15-21)

Perhaps the most outstanding character suggestive of the
social disintegration of the status quo is Ioskie. Under a
guise of modesty and virtuosity, he has risen socially by in-
crustating himself in the favour of a rich lord. He has left
the lowly trade of tailor and become the steward of the house-
hold through skilful but hypocritical contrivances. His social
aspirations, however, have not been satisfied by any means,
and his ambition is to gain added prestige and wealth in an
alliance with Alice Arden. In many of his speeches, he strikes
the pose of the overreacher so fundamental to the Marlovian

²⁵ Ibid.

concept of drama:

My goulden time was when I had no gould,
 Thought then I wanted, yet I slept secure,
 My dayly toyle, begat me nights repose:
 My nights repose made daylight fresh to me.
 But since I climbd the tonpe bough of the tree,
 And sought to build my nest among the clouds.
 Each gentle starry gaile doth shake my bed:
 And makes me dread my downfall to the earth,

 The way I seeke to finde, where pleasure dwels,
 Is hedged bereath me that I cannot back,
 But needs must on although to dangers gate.
 (III, v, 11-21)

Ironically enough, Mosbie is destroyed, in essence betrayed, by the very gold he has played so foully to possess. Arden's purse is found by his bed as incriminating evidence of his part in the murder.

Despite his odious villainy, the audience sympathizes with Mosbie's plight. His self-conscious awareness of his base motives and the resulting high price he must pay with his peace of mind cannot but move the spectator to compassion. Furthermore, Mosbie is not insensitive to the repercussions he must contend with in his persistent climb to the top. He is continually berated by others who are aware of his manipulation of people to achieve his own ends. Arden castigates Mosbie for his impudence in daring to aspire to sophistication and he displays the characteristic resentment of an upper-middle-class individual irritated by the social mobility of the lower-middle-classes during this period. Even Alice is shrewd enough to perceive how sensitive Mosbie is to his social inferiority and uses

it against him as a weapon to counteract his cold, sarcastic reproaches of her behaviour.

Mosbie's portrait is best described as that of the Machiavellian villain who is determined to use whatever means lay at his disposal to achieve his desired ends. Using women, Alice and Susan, is not above him, nor are they indispensable in his plans. Of Alice he comments:

Tis fearefull sleeping in a serpents bed.
And I will cleanly rid my hands of her.
(III, v, 12-13)

Of Susan, his sister, he is ready to make the best use as he strategically hopes to exploit the artistry of Clarke in painting poison pictures by offering his approval of Clarke's marriage with her. In all matters, Mosbie is suspicious of those around him taking advantage of his position as he himself aptly has been so able to do in his own ascent. He questions the reliability of each of his associates and takes steps to insure his success, as in the case of his hired murderers, by turning one against the other hoping they will end his problems by destroying each other.

Mosbie's almost hypnotic control over people is best illustrated in his brutal humiliation of Alice when he confesses he has deluded her and is now resentful of the fact that for a woman such as Alice he has passed up an opportunity to marry a wealthy "honest maid whose dowry...beauty and demianor" exceeded that of Alice. She momentarily realizes the truth but

irradiately falls back in his power. Again, the fact that he has been honest with her at this point, though in a vicious verbal attack, arouses awe in the audience rather than the aversion one would expect to feel for such a despicable villain.

As for the character of Arden, there are mixed reactions. At times, Arden is presented as the hard-nosed businessman unaffected by such trifles as compassion for those whom he has ruthlessly deprived of a livelihood. F. W. Moorman comments:

By reason of his stupidity and insensate credulity, his avarice and his cruelty to Bradshaw Greene and Reede, Thomas Arden fails altogether to win our sympathyhe the dramatist makes no attempt whatever to render him attractive, or to awaken our pity at his death.²⁶

On the other hand, Arden is depicted as the naive, gullible and thoroughly blindly confident victim of malignant forces. Louis Gillet, who has written one of the most perceptive articles on the characterization and moral interpretations of the play, contends Arden's avaricious nature is excusable and that the dramatist has taken great pains to emphasize his "so many generous impulses that render him admirable".²⁷ In truth, Arden does remain ever affectionate towards Alice even though he senses that something has changed in her attitude

²⁶ Moorman, CHEL, v, p. 241.

²⁷ Gillet, p. 152.

towards him. He vacillates between respect for her and contempt for those who would make a cuckold of him. In the final analysis of his own situation, he is ready to blame anyone but Alice; moreover, when he makes an overture concerning his suspicions of infidelity, he is easily pacified and convinced of the virtuous behaviour of all so involved.

Perhaps the ambivalent response felt towards Arden is more the outcome of the conflicting portrayals other characters present of him rather than as he is depicted in his own speeches and actions. Alice describes him as a miserly, brutal and violently jealous husband in the first act of the play to Greene. Her motivation here, however, is an important consideration. She is overtly trying to goad Greene into decisive action against Arden since she has already sensed his antagonism. In contrast, Michael characterizes Arden as kind, generous and deserving of loyalty. His motives are ostensibly his feeling of having been well treated by his master and his lack of a personal grievance to merit the betrayal he must engage himself in to fulfil his personal aspirations. On the whole, Arden certainly fails to achieve heroic proportions as the central figure of the tragedy but perhaps herein lies another example of the artistry of the dramatist. He creates not a perfect, noble hero but a man whose weaknesses and imperfections make him a realistic human being.

One of the most interesting justifications of Arden's

apparently inexplicable character is found in Adam's work. He presents an elaborate framework built on the religious conceptions of the sixteenth century to show Arden's precarious state of grace. His primary sin is the "covetousness for land" which causes Greene's revengeful schemes employed in retaliation. This being unlawful, Providence intervenes to rescue Arden from the murderers to afford him one final opportunity to seek repentance. The chance for restitution comes in the character of Reede. However, Arden's reaffirmation of a lack of Christian charity warrants retribution and Arden must pay for the wages of sin with death. Reede, then, seals the fate of Arden and the murderers are "the agents of God's justice".²⁸ Nevertheless, the paradox remains. Arden's Christian virtues as presented in his most tolerant and forgiving attitude towards Alice tend to offset such a minor frailty as disinterest in the lives of those outside one's immediate family. Further, is this sin serious enough to warrant the extreme penalty of death Arden must face? If so, the dramatist hasn't created flesh and blood characters but mere puppets subserviant to a didactic criteria.

Caught between these two men and enjoyed by both is the heroine Alice Arden, the most complex character of the play. Her malice has caused critics to compare her to such notorious

²⁸ Adams, pp. 104-106.

female roles as Lady Macbeth and Clytemnestra.²⁹ Chapman labels her a "female Faust with a human Mephistopheles [Mosbie]".³⁰ The strength of her character is attested to certainly in such histrionic comparisons. Alice Arden, above all, is a desperate woman acting on impulse, craving for a fulfilled life of sensuality and paradoxically sacrificing human life and her own spiritual life to obtain it. Like Mosbie, she is a true Machiavellian, in that she lies, schemes, callously partakes of the bludgeoning to death of her husband, and maintains amazing self-control in the face of her deceptions. Nevertheless, she too manages to elicit a sympathetic response from the audience in her realization of her moral responsibility, her acceptance of her doom, and her inability to escape from her acknowledged desperation. She also captures the interest of the audience by her pathetic laments of the innocence of her youth, her foolish compliance with Mosbie's wishes, her hysterical regret once the crime has been committed, and her passive acceptance of her death once she has begged for repentance for her sinful ways. Gillet vividly depicts Alice as

a woman who is no longer in the prime
of youth, sterile, bored, still beautiful,
an autumn thunderstorm....She cannot do
without this young god Mosbie who has

²⁹ Gillet, p. 153.

³⁰ Chapman, p. 16.

released in her an unknown woman, aroused her flesh to extraordinary sensations. She can give him up no more easily than her own life. She loves him as one can love only what one dies of.³¹

Her sense of moral responsibility is evident in her acceptance of the inevitable disaster she must face, yet she persists in throwing herself headlong into destiny without any resistance. She does attempt to reconcile herself with her husband, and she repudiates Mosbie vehemently for his misuse of her. Nevertheless, in the next moment she falls back into her old ways. These sudden changes of heart occasionally are unsubstantiated and the audience is baffled by this seeming inconsistency in her portrayal. However, these fluctuating moods of Alice are not really so inexplicable. They are rather the enigma of Alice's split personality. They underline the skill of the dramatist in displaying the subtle psychological strains such a distraught woman as Alice likely will go through as she is torn between her responsibility as Arden's wife and her frivolous rejection of conventional morality as Mosbie's mistress. This same vacillation is expressed by Alice in connection with oaths. She frees herself psychologically from all the legal bonds marriage holds for a woman, and she upholds her right to love as the precedent whereby she has liberated herself. At the same time, she reminds others of their moral

³¹ Gillet, p. 153.

obligations to her. She urges Michael to keep his oath of secrecy and in a rage of jealousy, she spurns Mosbie for breaking an oath of fidelity to her. Gillet accurately summarizes the modernity of this two-sided character portrait of Alice:

some part of her always loves her husband and remains the woman she formerly had been. Beneath the impure and wanton lover there subsists and reappears at intervals the wife of the virtuous Arden. These two parallel loves coexist in her - the one in her spirit, the other in her flesh; two distinct individuals seem to coexist in and share her body, to succeed each other by turns. This psychology of eclipses, this alternation of egos in a single character, is a spectacle that we scarcely see again until much later, in the Russian novel or in Proust....Sinner, almost in spite of herself; criminal, more than guilty; prodigy of clear perversion, and yet almost innocent.³²

Here, as in the case of other characters in the play, the audience is held entranced by the daring, brash exploitation of other human beings; yet strangely, also moved to compassion in identifying with the essential human frailties so displayed by characters in their vile pursuits.

Of the major characters, perhaps the only one which remains flat, is that of Franklin. His function in the play, however, is more that of the Chorus of classical tragedy. He supplies the necessary background information, and gives the summation of the play in the Epilogue. Throughout, he makes generalizations

³² Ibid., p. 154.

concerning the behaviour of women and indicates methods of handling marital problems. His conceptions are that of the Elizabethan, but they also have a modern ring about them. Ironically, even though they are shrewd observations, Arden is unwittingly led to his downfall by following his advice. Franklin also typically feels the repercussions of his involvement in marital disputes and refrains from further entanglement at the crucial moment of the snare at Arden's home. Alice viciously accuses him of deliberate malice in his warning Arden of Norfolk's danger:

pen of such ill spirits as your selfe.
 Look crosses and debates twixt me and wife.
 (TV, iv, 170-170)

Franklin acquiesces and Alice is left at the mercy of the concealed murderers:

He whom the diuel drives must so perforce,
 Fear cert'raue how sore he is bewitcht,
 And yet because his wife is the instrument
 His friends must not be lavish in their speech.
 (TV, iv, 175-178)

The plot structure of Arden of Feversham is not intricately set in motion according to the principles of orthodox tragedy and this has brought condemnations of the play as "singularly devoid of constructive art".³³ Although not so divided in the quarters, the play does fall readily into a five act structure. The action, however, does not rise through a

³³ Hoorman, p. 2/1.

series of progressing tensions to a climax of accumulated effects. The work is loose and episodic with the only complication being the repeated failures of the murderers to catch Arden off-guard and the growing rift between Kosbie and Alice. The conclusion follows quickly on Arden's eventual death and the capture of the guilty. Gillet argues here from the point of view of realism - the episodic arrangement of the plot imitates "the evident caprice and frequent improbability characteristic of reality and often the hallmarks of life itself".³⁴ He continues to compare the procedure here with that of the techniques of the modern film industry whose tendency is now to show only flashes of action in order to concentrate on a depth of character study:

he [the dramatist] limits himself to cutting his material like a film-strip and permits himself no intervention in the progress of the events. He contents himself with a few transitions and eschews elaborate links between each scene and those which precede and follow it. The result is a very special kind of drama, with a minimum of construction, that gives the impression of happening right before our eyes, of being improvised as it treads its way through unforeseeable episodes up to a denouement which we have nevertheless sensed to be inevitable. Rarely does a dramatic work present this random appearance, this resemblance to life, this quality of authenticity.³⁵

³⁴ Gillet, p. 151.

³⁵ Ibid.

Sub-plots exist concerning the minor characters and these too are linked to the main plot. The Michael-Susan-Clarke love triangle parallels that of the upper-middle-class characters Arden-Alice-Mosbie. The land sub-plot involves Arden, Greene and Reede.³⁶ The sub-plot of Bradshaw's pursuit to clear his name of the injustice of Lord Cheyne's charges adds little here to the main plot other than the fact that he is innocently entangled in the web of crime encircling Arden and cannot clarify his position before the Mayor. He too in desperation must die for Arden's murder.

A time sequence is consistent throughout the play as it opens in the summer, follows through the fall and winter months ending ironically on Saint Valentine's Day. The imagery in each scene conforms readily to the apparent season indicating that the dramatist was conscious of his artistry and that a loose plot structure was not the result of a haphazard arrangement of details.

The style of writing naturally adapted to the content and the tendency towards realism was inevitable. The use of prose, the accepted medium in the drama to denote the lower classes, as well as verse devoid of pedantic, formal learning and exaggerated poetic sensitivity became part of this trend. This is not to imply that commonplace imagery destroyed the

³⁶ See p. xxxvii for a fuller description of the land dispute.

emotional appeal of the domestic tragedy. In such plays as Arden, despite the natural flow of the dialogue to maintain verisimilitude, the imagery is deceptively simple on a superficial level, but complex in its penetrating implications.

A study of the imagery of Arden indicates further the precision and conscious artistry with which the play has been constructed. Each of the characters perpetrates evil and destroys the moral order of the world. This violation of accepted Christian ethics is basic to all domestic tragedy, and the characters who dare to trespass moral sanctions must inevitably face the consequence of their own disorder. The desecration of religious symbols throughout the play provides one of the outstanding examples of the imagery used in harmony with the theme of sin and redemption. The first religious image is the ring which Arden mentions was given to Alice in marriage and which he now sees on the hand of Mosbie. This ring comes to symbolize Alice's later rejection of all the trappings of the marriage ceremony:

Love is a God and marriage is but words,
 And therefore Mosbies title is the best,
 Tushe whether it be or no, he shall be mine,
 In spite of him, of Hymen and of rytes.
 (I, i, 99-102)

She later reaffirms her paganistic credo as she rejects all oaths as foolish:

oathes are wordes, and words is winde,
 And winde is mutuable? then I conclude,

Tis childishness to stand vpon an oath.
(I, i, 134-436)

The second religious image is that of the poisoned crucifix. It is designed as a method of murdering Arden and Clarke, who is to fabricate the crucifix, hesitates ironically "because it toucheth lyfe".

The complexity of the symbolism is explained by Sarah Youngblood in an exceptional article on imagery in Arden as she points out the double function of the image:

Each character has repudiated the world
of Christian values, and yet each now ap-
peals to it as a norm for judging the
other.³⁷

For example, in one of the quarrel scenes between Mosbie and Alice concerning accusations of bewitchment by both parties, Mosbie justifies himself in terms of a religious context:

I was bewitched, that is no theame of thine,
And thou vnhalloved has enchaunted me:
But I will breake thy spels and excirsimes.
(III, v, 92-94)

Alice, however, is only temporarily enraged and quickly reaffirms her devotion to Mosbie in the same religious imagery also perverting another spiritual symbol, the prayer book which is now to enclose Mosbie's love letters:

I will do penance for offending thee,

³⁷ Sarah Youngblood, "Theme and Imagery in 'Arden of Feversham'", Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, (Spring III), 211.

And burre this prayer booke, where I here vse,
 The holy word that had converted me,
 See Mosbie I will teare away the leaues.
 And al the leaues and in this golden couer,
 Shall thy sweete phrases and thy letters dwell,
 And theron will I chiefly meditate,
 And hould no other sect, but such devotion.
 (III, v, 114-121)

The religious imagery is particularly striking in the final scene where the sacrificial blood of the victim cannot be washed away. The similarities here with Macbeth are significant. In murdering Arden, the criminals have committed a sacrilege of a sense. The Mayor discovers the stains and cries out: "See see his blood/ It is too manifest" and Alice ironically replies in the image of the sacrament: "It is a cup of wine that Michael shed". That Arden was meant to be regarded as a sacrificial victim certainly is suggested in Alice's final plea in desperation for redemption:

Leaue now to trouble me with worldly things
 And let me meditate vpon my Sauour Christ
 Whose blood must saue me for the blood I shed.
 (V, v, 10-12)

This does not imply that Arden's complete character portrayal reaches the proportions of the Christ-figure in the play, but simply that the use of such blood imagery subtly strengthened the didactic theme of the consequence of moral violation.

Sarah Youngblood points out the consistency in the parallelism of religious imagery in the comic scenes involving the low characters. She points out the "muffled reverberations

of religious symbolism" in such phrases used by Black Will and Shakebag as: "let vs go on lyke a couple of blind pilgrins"; "almost in hels mouth"; "wondrous holy luck"; "doubtless he is preserved by miracle" and "Ile cross the water and take sanctuary".³⁸

The final religious symbol is at the close of the play where the body of Arden makes an imprint in the grass field behind the Abbey. This image is fitting as a concluding symbol because it is also indicative of the violation of the natural law consequent on a disregard for the moral order of the universe.

The light and dark imagery is here quite conventional. The most outstanding example of the symbolic use of darkness occurs in Shakebag's speech:

Black night hath hid the pleasures of ye day.
 And sheting darkness ouerhangs the earth,
 And with the blacke folde of her cloudy robe,
 Obscure vs from the eyesight of thw worlde,
 In which swete silence such as we triumph.
 (III, ii, 1-5)

Night is also used with a double application such as with the religious symbol since besides being a time of evil deeds and bad dreams, darkness represents for lovers, a haven in which their relationship can flourish. The similarity here to Romeo and Juliet is striking:

Sweet loue thou knowst that we two Ouid-like

³⁸ Ibid., p. 213.

Haeue often chid the morning, when it gan to peene.
 And often wisht that darke nights purblind steedes,
 Would pull her by the purple mantle back:
 And cast her in the Ocean to her loue.

(I, i, 58-62)

The nature image in the play is used primarily to substantiate the paganistic attitude Alice has adopted. Because she feels nature is "mutable", she finds it expedient to use it in justification of her own moral anarchy. Her natural desires should be unrestrained to fulfil its potential such as the wind. That she equates herself with nature is evident in the harvest image so often found in the tragedy:

Why should he thrust his sickle in our corne,
 Or what hath he to do with my loue?
 Or gouerne me that am to rule my selfe?

(IV, i, 86-88)

Mosbie also echoes this image of the harvest when he expresses his agitation over his new found social success and his inability to turn back. However, the image has again been inverted for the harvester this time is not Arden but Greene. Further, the enigma of the image comes in the act of murder being compared to a creative, productive process which will yield profits for the reaper. The fertility of life is then co-ordinated with an act of sterile destruction:

For Greene doth erre the land and weede thee vp,
 To make my haruest nothing but pure corne.

(III, v, 24-25)

Alice also sets up the nature gods in her attempt to justify her moral decision. She calls upon them to sanction her

convictions of natural law:

Had chaste Diana kist him, she like me
 Would grow loue sicke, and from her watrie bower,
 Fling down Erdinion and snath him vp:
 Then blame not me, that slay a silly man,
 Not halfe so lovely as Erdinion.

(V, i, 156-160)

The nature image is again applied to the lower characters, the murderers in particular, who view life in terms of self-preservation. It is the survival of the fittest for these men who find they must prey upon Arden in order to eke out a living for themselves. The nature image is of the hunt: the hunters are the villains and the hunted is Arden. Shakebag, for instance, justifies his participation in the plot on Arden's life in these terms:

Such mercy as the staruen Lyons
 When she is dry suckt of her eager young:
 Showes to the pray that next encounters her,
 On Arden so mush pittie would I take.

(II, ii, 108-111)

Greene uses the same motif of predatory animalism in his speech:

Lime your twigs to catch this weary bird,
 Ile leaue you, and at your dags discharge
 Make towards lyke the longing water dog,
 That coucheth til the fowling peece be of:
 Then ceazeth on the pray with eager moode.

(III, vi, 200-204)

The hunting metaphor appears in Michael's dream and he becomes so overwrought with the horror of the scene his vivid imagination renders, that he identifies himself with the victim. He tries to find a reason why Arden deserves such a hideous fate:

Thus feedes the Lambe securely on the downe,
 Whilst through the thicket of an arber brake,
 The hunger bitten Wolfe orepryes his hant,
 And takes advantage to eat him vp,
 Ah harmles Arden how, how hast thou misdore
 That thus thy gentle lyfe is leueld at.
 (II, ii, 189-194)

Michael's final justification for becoming an accomplice despite his guilt ridden conscience is again one of self-preservation:

So haue I sworne to Mosby and my mistres.
 So haue I promised to the slaughtermen,
 And should I not deale currently with them,
 Their lawless rage would take reuenge on me,
 Tush, I will spurne at mercy for this once.
 Let pittie lodge there feeble women ly,
 I am resolued and Arden needs must die.
 (II, ii, 201-207)

Evan Arden in a dream sees himself caught in a "toyle" by a group of hunters but fails to perceive the significance of the interpretation once applied to his own domestic circumstances:

An ill thew'd fester had reroued the toyle,
 And rounded me with that beguyling home.
 which late my thought was pitch'd to cast the deare,
 with that he blew an euill sounding horne,
 And at the noise an other heard run came:
 with Faucher drawn and bent it at my brest.
 Crying aloud Thou art the game we seeke.
 (III, iii, 12-16)

Other mirror image clusters are traceable in the play. The "dog" metaphor is often used in connection with the murderers. "wind" is consistently used to express how quickly malicious gossip is carried in the air and how easily the

delicate reputation is disparaged. Metaphors in which legalistic terminology is used are also frequent in the dialogue of several characters.

Arden of Feversham has been fabricated with an elaborate symbolic pattern. Images react one upon the other to give the play continuity and skilled craftsmanship. These symbols convey the incongruity of the picture of life so presented - its desperate reliance on spiritual aphorisms and the negative compromise one must make in the acceptance of these same principles. The moral dilemma of the play shines through the conventional handling of the concluding distribution of punishment.

7. Authorship of Arden of Feversham

In a case of this kind, it is obvious that the slightest clue to the possible authorship of this great dramatic poem is of first-rate importance, and ought to be treated with consideration as well as with caution rather than with hostility.¹

The question of the authorship of Arden of Feversham has intrigued scholars of the Elizabethan period but few conclusive results have been shown for almost two hundred years of exhaustive literary research. Tucker Brooke in The Shakespeare Apocrypha commented with dismay on the inadequacy of the amassed literary speculation concerning the attribution of Arden to the various leading dramatists of the age; nevertheless, he also leaves the author's identity in the grasp of obscurity.²

In reopening the case, the methodology here will follow the guide lines suggested by Samuel Schoenbaum in his very illuminating text, Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship, in which are analysed the correct procedures for examining problems posed by spurious and anonymous Elizabethan plays.

¹ Selected from "some remote issue" of The Times Literary Supplement by W. J. Lawrence in the article "The Authorship of 'Arden of Feversham'", The Times Literary Supplement, (June 28, 1934), p. 460.

² C. F. Tucker Brooke, Apocrypha, p. xiv.

Schoenbaum places primary importance on the factual information obtained from external evidence and he lists several such sources as: a) title pages, b) dedications, c) Stationers' Records, d) the Revels Office-Book, e) early play catalogues, and f) allusions and citations by sixteenth and seventeenth century commentators or anthologists.³

Arden of Feversham, however, continues to elude a claimant following these criteria. The title page of the first three quarto editions bears neither an ascription to an author, nor a dedication from which a possible patron can be traced.⁴ The Stationers' Register contains entries concerning the play but only in reference to the claim of the original bookseller, Edward White, and a subsequent lawsuit incurred by Abel Jeffes over a pirated unauthorized edition.⁵ The Revels Office-Book, kept by the Master Edmund Tilney (1587-1610), in which were recorded licensing fees, court performances and other business related to the Office has not survived for those years; consequently, another invaluable source of information is denied literary research.

³ S. Schoenbaum, Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 141-140.

⁴ See Appendix I for the complete title page of Q₁, Q₂ and Q₃.

⁵ See Introduction, p. vi.

The first tangible evidence, though still quite questionable, comes in old play catalogues. In 1656, Edward Archer published an edition of The Old Law to which was appended "An Exact and Perfect Catalogue of all the Plaies that were ever printed". This listing has come to be known as Archer's Catalogue but W. W. Greg proposes that Robert Pollard was the most likely compiler.⁶ The entry concerning Arden reads as follows:

Arraignment of Paris	T	Will. Shakespeare
Arden of Feversham	I	Rich. Bernard
Andrea in Terence	C	Rich. Bernard

The initials stand for "Tragedy", "Interlude", and "Comedy". Greg points out that the only accurate ascription here is the third entry. Richard Bernard was a Puritan clergyman of Christs' College, Cambridge, who published an edition of translations of Terence in 1598. Greg continues to explain how the confusion arose in the alignment of the several columns, possibly originating in the manuscript from which the work was transcribed. The compositor's error is certainly obvious in the letters used to designate the type of drama in each case. The repetition of the name Bernard, however, caused the author's column to correspond for the remaining entries down the page.⁷

⁶ W. W. Greg, "Shakespeare and 'Arden of Feversham'", Review of English Studies, XXI (April, 1945), 134.

⁷ Ibid.

The evidence of misalignment is given further weight by a similar confusion occurring later in the alphabetical listing under "R". Therefore, it would appear that the cataloguer intended to ascribe Arden to Shakespeare. Greg is careful, however, to clarify just how dubious the authenticity of the Shakespearean claim actually stands since there are so many similar errors in plays of declared authorship.⁸

Arden of Feversham is also included in another sale catalogue of one "Dr. John Munro's library disposed of at Leigh and Sotheby's in April, 1792".⁹ The listing there appears as follows:

Plays. Shakespeare's Richard the Third,
1634. Ford's Chronicle Historie of Perkin
Warbeck, 1634. Cloy's Tragedy of Arden of
Feversham, 1633,¹⁰

The identity of "Cloy" has escaped detection since no trace of the proper surname has been found. W. J. Lawrence offers the speculation of the reference being to a travelling showman named Bartholomew Cloys, most likely a foreigner, and appearing in dramatic documents as having received a licence in 1623 from Sir Henry Herbert, the Master of the Revels at that time.¹¹ The problem with this assumption is that Cloys, if

⁸ Ibid., p. 135.

⁹ W. J. Lawrence, p. 460.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

he is the author of Arden, must have been very young when the play was first published in 1592. This is contrary to the generally accepted opinion of Arden having been written by a mature dramatist.¹²

The next allusion to Arden of Feversham supported the evidence of Archer's Catalogue and the play was again linked with Shakespeare. In 1770, Edward Jacob, "a loyal but somewhat uncritical citizen of Faversham",¹³ published an edition of the play which was actually a reprint of Q₁. The title page followed the original with the addition of this ascription: "With a Preface; in which some Reasons are offered in favour of its being the earliest dramatic Work of Shakespeare now remaining...". Jacob supports his claim with a citation of parallel phraseology in Arden and known Shakespearean plays.¹⁴ Jacob's conclusions are far from convincing and Brooke aptly condemns the unscrupulous critical comparison as being "of so general a character as to prove nothing at all, beyond the obvious fact that Arden of Feversham and Shakespeare both belong to the Elizabethan period".¹⁵

¹² Bullen, p. xvi.

¹³ Brooke, Apocrypha, p. xiv.

¹⁴ Jacob's listing of parallel words and phrases are included in the textual emendations for immediate comparison.

¹⁵ Brooke, Apocrypha, p. xiv.

The external evidence exhausted, critics have no alternative but to pursue internal evidence which Schoenbaum applauds as providing some welcomed information on plays which would otherwise be shadowed with obscurity.¹⁶ He continues, nevertheless, to point out the extreme caution which must be taken in the application of the methodology because of the weaknesses and pitfalls inherent in each.¹⁷ The major tests of authorship employed as literary criteria are: a) verse tests, b) tragicomic tests, c) parallel passages and literary correspondences.¹⁸

Little can be gained by applying metrical tests to Arden since the evidence so far cited indicates little more than its dating in the early 1600's in which such plays as those of Shakespeare¹⁹ and Marlowe were characterized by five foot verses (pentameter measure) with few run-on lines. The blank verse is prevailingly end-stopped with the last syllable accented yet still possessing a flowing rather than a rigid quality. Indeed, the rhythm of the conversational tone is

16 Schoenbaum, p. 161.

17 Ibid., pp. 165-167.

18 Ibid., pp. 187-188.

19 "A Table of Metrical Tests Applied to Shakespeare's Plays" based on the work of Fleay and corrected by Dr. F. J. Furnivall appears in The Complete Works of Shakespeare, ed. H. Craig (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1961), p. 38.

exceptional for the drama at that time and perhaps unsurpassed until the plays of Webster. The difficulty in this procedure lies in its partially subjective element whereby rhyme and rhythm are dictated often by the reader's intonation. Furthermore, this method does not allow for a dramatist to deviate from his metrical pattern under "the exigencies of creation or the pressures of momentary inspiration".²⁰

Tests based on imagery came into prominence after the publication of Caroline Spurgeon's work Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us (1931). Her definition of an image so stated in her book follows:

any and every imaginative picture or other experience, drawn in every kind of way which may have come to the poet not only through any of his senses, but through his mind and emotions as well, and which he uses, in the forms of simile and metaphor in their widest sense, for purposes of analogy.²¹

One of the first studies of imagery in Arden of Feversham as inspired by Miss Spurgeon's methodology was Marion Bodwell Smith's Marlowe's Imagery and the Marlowe Canon (1940). She detects Marlowe's presence along with Shakespeare's in her study of the play. In describing the imagery, she indicates its unusual qualities in that the imagery is scarce and

²⁰ Schoenbaum, p. 184.

²¹ Caroline Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), p. 5.

strangely distributed among the lower-class characters.²²

She reaches the conclusion that an extremely high percentage of images occur from "Daily Life ... made up from the daily occupations and trades, from sports, and from war".²³

However, this categorizing overlooks the significant number of religious images. Nevertheless, comparisons are made here with Marlowe's works, and the crucial point she makes is that from Miss Spurgeon's analysis it is evident that Shakespeare used the same images from the "Daily Life" group with greater frequency.²⁴ She cites such examples as those of the unweeded garden, the animal image of the helpless victim at the mercy of a predator, and the striking image in Arden of the hunt.²⁵

The weakness here is the assumption that the individual Elizabethan playwright had a special predilection for certain types of imagery which can be identified as his unique way of expressing himself.²⁶

It is with parallel passages as a test of authorship

²² Marion Bodwell Smith, Marlowe's Imagery and the Marlowe Canon (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1940), p. 125.

²³ Ibid., p. 126.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 129.

²⁵ See p. liii for a fuller description of the patterns of imagery in Arden.

²⁶ Moody E. Prior, "Imagery as a Test of Authorship", Shakespeare Quarterly, VI (1955), 381-382.

that the strongest evidence in favour of one particular author is advanced. This type of evidence includes "Unusual correspondences of language and thought, generally in brief passages, between the doubtful play and the acknowledged works of suggested dramatists."²⁷ Charles Crawford made a major contribution in this area in a very perceptive article on the authorship of Arden of Feversham as being that of Thomas Kyd (1558-1594).²⁸ Numerous parallels are found between Arden and Kyd's proposed works: The Spanish Tragedy, Colin and Perseda and The Murder of John Brewen. The problem here, however, is that Colin and Perseda is only credited to Kyd by the very slender evidence of its being based on the subject matter of the play-within-the-play of The Spanish Tragedy. Moreover, The Murder of John Brewen, a brief narrative in pamphlet form, has lately been refuted by Arthur Freeman in his book, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems (1967), as Thomas Kyd's and is now accepted as the work of John Kyd who was a printer and hack pamphleteer²⁹ and no relation to Thomas. Crawford also includes in his article literary parallels to Edward II describing them as imitations from Marlowe rather than by Marlowe's hand.³⁰

²⁷ Schoenbaum, p. 189.

²⁸ Charles Crawford, "The Authorship of 'Arden of Feversham'", Shakespeare Jahrbuch, XXIX (1930), 74-86.

²⁹ Arthur Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 5.

³⁰ Crawford, p. 80.

Crawford does not limit himself exclusively to literary correspondences but also alludes to important biographical facts from Kyd's life and the printing of his works to substantiate his argument. Still extant is a letter to Sir John Puckering written after June 1, 1593, the date of Marlowe's death, on Kyd's release from prison with the clarification of his innocence of the charge of atheism in which he was involved by the discovery of "some fragments of a disputation"³⁰ in his possession. Kyd writes that he was in the service of a nobleman and one of his patron's household for three years. Kyd's patron has not been identified beyond doubt, but Boas suggests Robert Radcliffe, the husband of the Countess of Sussex to whom the play Cornelia was dedicated in 1595.³² Freeman points out, however, that the same Radcliffe was but fourteen years old when Kyd first came into his Lordship's household so that he is an unlikely contributor to patronage. His alternative is to propose Kyd's position as probably that of the tutor of young Radcliffe and that his actual patron was the father, Henry, the fourth Earl of Sussex.³³

With this in mind, Crawford comments:

³¹ "Kyd's Letter to Sir John Puckering", The Works of Thomas Kyd, ed. F. S. Boas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955) p. cviii.

³² Boas, p. lxiv.

³³ Freeman, pp. 32-35.

Arden of Feversham is a tragedy affecting servants such as Kyd was, and all through the play the author shows us that he was intimately acquainted with the inner life of a great or rich man's household. It is a play mainly dealing with the doings of servants, and it was written by a servant who knew their ways and the duties of their calling.³⁴

This observation is justified certainly in view of the complexity of the predicament in which Michael finds himself while serving his master and coping with personal problems at the same time.

Crawford further cites Kyd's family background as throwing light on his claim to Arden. Being the son of a scrivener, he was familiar with legal procedure. Arden does contain, in fact, a good deal of legal terminology which suggests that the author was knowledgeable of the law. Crawford comments:

His play Arden opens with a speech referring to a lease of lands, and further on he the author describes the terms of this lease in language which can only be properly appreciated by one acquainted with the law.³⁵

Concerning the publication of Kyd's work, another important association is to be made. Edward White and Edward Allde, book printers and publishers, seem to have handled several plays linked with the name of Kyd in some form or the other.

³⁴ Crawford, p. 75.

³⁵ Ibid.

One wonders if there was some kind of mutual agreement between the two on quarto editions since The Spanish Tragedy, Soliman and Perseda and Arden of Feversham indicate their names on the title pages. Crawford exploits, in particular, the White-Jeffes lawsuit over pirated editions³⁶ which may have been "no less than a quarrel between rival publishers over the same author's work".³⁷ The suggestion is purely hypothetical and no doubt easily contested by a study of common practices in the printing of Elizabethan plays, but it is an interesting observation worthy of notation.

Freeman also makes a thought-provoking comment on the publication of Kyd's works. He wonders whether Kyd deliberately sought obscurity since nothing in print bears his name until after his death in 1594. Some works are merely signed T. K. while Soliman and Perseda rests on internal evidence and The Spanish Tragedy is only known as Kyd's through a chance reference by Heywood in An Apology for Actors (1612).³⁸

Crawford's article was acclaimed as outstanding and his case for Kyd's authorship was supported by H. Dugdale Sykes in Sidelights on Shakespeare (1919) in which he too credited

³⁶ See p. vi-vii.

³⁷ Crawford, p. 74.

³⁸ Freeman, p. 49.

Kyd with Arden, largely on the basis of parallels.³⁹

Schoenbaum disregards the claims of both Crawford and Sykes on the grounds that they were entirely unwarranted and founded on commonplaces rather than on genuine Kydian vocabulary and phraseology.⁴⁰ Caution certainly must be executed in an application of parallel passages and a flagrant misuse of them must be avoided in the interest of scholarship; nevertheless, the arguments which are heavily weighted with valid points of similarity cannot be overlooked even though held to be unauthenticated.

There are also those critics who reject Kyd's authorship on the seeming disparity between Arden and the accepted Kydian tradition. A. Wynne is a leading spokesman here. He describes the typical Kydian style in juxtaposition with Arden:

Kyd does not serve up crime and the supernatural world thus. He shows us terrible things, it is true. But the causes are to be found deep down in the primary impulses of man, in jealousy, in fear, in despair, in blood-revenge. These impulses are not vile; our moral code does not cry out against them - as it does against lust, greed, and motiveless cruelty.⁴¹

The questions here to be asked include: Is not sexual

³⁹ H. Dugdale Sykes, Sidelights on Shakespeare (Stratford-on-Avon, 1919), p. 63.

⁴⁰ Schoenbaum, p. 72, 89.

⁴¹ A. Wynne, "Tragedy: Lodge, Kyd, Marlowe, 'Arden of Feversham'", The Growth of English Drama (Oxford, 1914), p. 214.

gratification a primary impulse of man? Does not Arden contain these same elements of jealousy in the character of Mosbie so desirous of social prestige; fear in the character of Michael, the distraught servant caught between dual loyalties; despair in the character of Alice Arden doomed to damnation yet unable to free herself from instinctual drives of passion; and blood-revenge in the characters of Greene and Reede? Moreover, the moral code is upheld throughout in that retributive justice is executed carefully. Therefore, the audience finds no reason to decry the moral order as presented by the play.

Another interesting article on parallel passages as a test of authorship came with Oliphant's work on Arden. He advanced the possibility of the presence of Marlowe's pen and also raised speculation of Peele and Lodge as also having some share in the play.⁴² The central thesis of his argument, however, is that the strongest case swings to Marlowe's favour in that parallels to his known works are significant and "indicative, not of plagiarism from one author by another, but of an author's repetition of his own work".⁴³ Although these parallels, like Crawford's analyses, can be criticized

⁴² E. H. C. Oliphant, "Marlowe's Hand in 'Arden of Feversham': A Problem for Critics", New Criterion IV (1926), 76-93.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 83.

as mere commonplaces, Oliphant does make an interesting point on joint authorship. He stresses the greater probability of an anonymous play being by more than one author than of its being the work of one man alone. He attributes the omission of authors to the publisher who preferred to give no names rather than two or three names on the title page.⁴⁴

In specifying the likely candidates for the joint authorship of Arden, Oliphant suggests collaboration between Marlowe and Kyd. In his letter to Sir John Puckering, Kyd endeavours to explicate his innocence by declaring that the illegal papers were Marlowe's and became "shuffled wth some of myne (vnknown to me) by some occasion of o^r wrytinge in one chamber twoe yeares synce".⁴⁵ This indicates that Kyd and Marlowe were sharing the same room in 1591, the date of composition of Arden, and perhaps writing plays together. Oliphant further explains:

Marlowe's passion, power and poetry
and Kyd's stagecraft, mastery of plot,
and command of dramatic irony would have
made an almost ideal combination.⁴⁶

Another point in Marlowe's favour is his home being in Canterbury, a little less than nine miles from Feversham.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 85.

⁴⁵ "Kyd's Letter to Sir John Puckering", Boas, p. cviii.

⁴⁶ Oliphant, "Marlowe's Hand", p. 87.

Cliphant states that "the writer, or one of the writers, of Arden of Feversham was one who had an intimate knowledge of the history, topography, and personalities of the county of Kent. The chances are strongly in favour of his having been a Kent man".¹⁷ The play certainly indicates the dramatist's familiarity with the surrounding countryside of Feversham intimated by the treatment of the references to the "downs", the "ferriman", and the farming interests of both Greene and Michael.

A further possible indication of joint authorship between Marlowe and Kyd, hitherto overlooked, lies in Arden's unusual line (Act I, Sc. 1, l. 31) in which he refers to "Lord Clifford he that likes not us". This name is not to be found in the source material of Halliwell or Stow and the query remains - is there any significance to be attached to the name or the context in which it is used? In the letter to Puckering, Kyd also says that for a time Marlowe was sharing the favours of his patron:

My first acquaintance with this Marlowe, rose upon his leaving mine to serve my Lo: although his Lo never knewe his service, but in writing for his pleasures, after never could my Lo endure his name or sight, when he had heard of his condition, nor could indeed the force of devyne prayers used daily in his Lo's house, have quashed wth such reproches.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ "Kyd's Letter to Sir John Puckering", Eds., n. cix.

If Kyd's "To [red]" was Lord Radcliffe⁴⁹ could Marlowe be commenting on the disfavour incurred with his patron? Notice that a rearrangement of the letters of "Radcliffe" easily form "Clifford".

The final point raised by Cliphant concerns the possibility of Samuel Rowley as a third writer. The evidence of parallel passages in the speech of the Black Will of When You See It and the Black Will of Arden again are strongly suggestive of something more than plagiarism. It is a point deserving of fuller investigation in arriving at a definite conclusion on the authorship problem.

Cliphant's opinions have been met with varied reactions. Brooke supported the argument with caution. He accepted the proposed possibility of collaboration between Marlowe and Kyd and agreed that traces of Marlowe's influence were "undeniable both in the parallels to his acknowledged plays and in the general effect of certain passages".⁵⁰ However, he qualified his position with the statement that the "plot and tone of the play as a whole seem ... so unlike Marlowe ... as to leave imitation by Kyd a more likely hypothesis than partnership between the two poets".⁵¹ The important point to notice here

⁴⁹ See p. lxx.

⁵⁰ C. F. Tucker Brooke, "The Marlowe Canon", PMLA, LXXVII (1922), p. 202.

⁵¹ Ibid.

is the fact of the author's awareness of his unconventionality and deviation from his normal patterns as expressed in the final lines spoken by Franklin. This could explain the reason for the changed techniques of Kyd.

If critics continue to reject Marlowe and Kyd, to whom is one to attribute such scenes of magnitude as those between Alice and Ioshie? If it was the work of a minor playwright of 1590-92, then his greatness was only sporadic and fleeting.

One alternative is to turn to Shakespeare as did Swinburne in his Study of Shakespeare. Through a rarely impressionistic methodology, he attributed the complete work to the young Shakespeare on the grounds of superb characterization, stylization in imagery, and fidelity to sources. The complex portrayal of Ioshie in particular, he cites as "a kind of triumph only Shakespeare could achieve".⁵² He also glorifies the presentation of Alice as a forerunner of Lady Macbeth. The analogy here is quite valid in many respects but Swinburne clouds the efficacy of his work by his description of Alice's death. He describes her repentance as thoroughly ennobling and comments that she is "incapable of dying with a hideous and homicidal falsehood on her long polluted lips...Her last breath is not a lie but a prayer". In his final appraisal of the work, Swinburne concludes by saying:

⁵² A. C. Swinburne, Study of Shakespeare (London: Heinemann, 1918), p. 137.

I cannot but finally take heart to say, even in the absence of all external or traditional testimony, that it seems to me simply logical and reasonable, to set down this poem, a young man's work on the face of it, as the possible work of no man's youthful hand but Shakespeare's.⁵³

Acknowledging the grandeur of both style and character delineation in Order of Feversham, critics found it difficult to trace such to the Shakespeare of 1602 and Swinburne's views are largely, if not totally, rejected by the twentieth century scholar. Schoenbaum castigates his method as one of the most disastrous pitfalls the critic is likely to encounter in determining authorship. He admits that intuitive reasoning has its place in the arts, but is thoroughly superficial in application to research demanding factual endorsement. He disregards this type of inquiry on the basis that "intuition, convictions, and subjective judgments generally carry no weight as evidence. This no matter how learned, respected, or confident the authority".⁵⁴

The disparity here between the early Shakespeare and Order is well summarized by Gillet:

One thing is sure; it is not by Shakespeare and above all not by the bombastic, bookish, scholarly, or affected Shakespeare of 1607, of Titus Andronicus or of the first parts of Henry VI, and less still by the

⁵³ Ibid., p. 171.

⁵⁴ Schoenbaum, p. 178.

magician who revealed himself all at once
in Romeo and Juliet.⁵⁵

Another point of contention in Swinburne's argument
advanced by L. H. Bullen concerns his designation of the
dramatist as a young man:

To me the tragedy appears to be the
work of an artist writing in the full
maturity of his power. In my judgment
the straightforward unambitious style of
the language, the quiet self-restraint
composure of the dialogue, bears no marks
of juvenility. It is hardly credible that
Shakespeare at any period of his career could
have adopted so bald a simplicity of diction.
The versification - except in a few passages
... is not, in a word, Shakespearian.⁵⁶

Bullen also offers the suggestion that the reason the play in
"short clusters of lines" does seem "to have a genuine Shake-
spearian flavour" is that "it is in the highest degree probable
that Iron was one of the plays which received correction and
revision from Shakespeare's hand."⁵⁷

In taking a general look at other dramatists of the
Elizabethan period, one finds little to support rival claimants.

Michael Drayton (1563-1631) who came to London from
Warwickshire in 1587 had some contact with the stage in that
his name was associated with thirty-three plays and twenty-
three plays positively attributed to him in Henslowe's Diary.

⁵⁵ Gillet, p. 156.

⁵⁶ Bullen, p. xvi.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. xvii.

Few are extant, however, and comparison is almost impossible. Furthermore, most of the dramatic work was done in 1598.⁵⁸ One interesting point here is that Drayton wrote a dedicatory sonnet to Sir Anthony Cooke in Ideas Mirrour. Cooke appears in Arden as a background figure connected in the Bradshaw incident.

Thomas Heywood (1575-1650), the known author of A Woman Killed with Kindness⁵⁹ another important domestic tragedy often rivalling Arden in popularity, has also been suggested as the author of the anonymous Warning for Fair Women (1599).⁶⁰ To suggest Heywood as the author of Arden, despite his profound skill in the revelation of lower class sentiment and humanity, is difficult since he is not mentioned in connection with the theatre until 1596 when Henslowe lent him a sum of money. He is again mentioned as an actor and playwright in 1598-99.⁶¹ It is obvious, then, that such a young unskilled person as Heywood was in 1591 could not have written Arden.

Anthony Munday (1553-1633) has also received attention

⁵⁸ Lemuel Whitaker, "Michael Drayton as a Dramatist", PMLA, XVIII (1903), 378-411.

⁵⁹ See p. xcv.

⁶⁰ J. Q. Adams, Jr. "The Authorship of 'A Warning for Fair Women'", PMLA, XXVIII (1913), 594-620.

See p. lxxviii for a description of this play.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 596.

in connection with Arden on the grounds that he too was involved with the publishers White and Alder and tried his hand at every variety of literature that was in vogue in his day. In the years 1557-1602, he was instrumental in the writing of eighteen plays several of which were highly successful, though only four are now extant.⁶² The problem here is that his style is destitute of originality and, as often is the case with the prolific writer, seldom escaping a mundane level.⁶³ Nevertheless, H. W. Crundell suggests that "it is surely conceivable that Tinday may have scored an exceptional success with this piece"⁶⁴ despite the fact that positive evidence, either internal or external, is lacking.

Two other dramatists of 1591-92 are Thomas Lodge (1558-1625) and Robert Greene (1560-1592) who wrote both alone and jointly. Again, works are lost or unidentifiable. Greene, in particular, tended towards romances and prose tracts as his literary contribution rather than such as Arden depicting an abhorrent crime.

With George Peele (1558-1597) similar problems arise in that few known works by him exist to prove anything substantial.

⁶² DEB, XIII, 1180.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 1180.

⁶⁴ H. W. Crundell, "The Authorship of 'Arden'", Notes and Queries, CLXVI (June 30, 1931), 157.

Another interesting figure presents himself, however, in the personage of Thomas Dekker (1572-1632). Although he does not appear prominently as a dramatist of the London stages until 1598 according to Henslowe's records, E. Pendry points out that Dekker was associated with Shakespeare in the early nineties collaborating on such plays as Sir Thomas More.⁶⁵ This puts him in a favourable position for partial authorship of Arden. Dekker, in fact, did write in the main as one of a team of playwrights and he worked with such others as Michael Drayton and Henry Chettle. Further significant here is Francis Mere's Palladis Tamia in which Dekker is designated as among the best for tragedy in England in 1598. The plays so mentioned in this reference are no longer extant but one wonders whether Arden might not have been one unlisted in which Dekker had a hand. The realism of the scenes involving the low characters Black Will and Shakebag are certainly worthy of Dekker's pen in view of his familiarity with the seamy side of London life so well expressed in his prose writings.

Perhaps the question of the authorship of Arden of Feversham must remain shrouded by anonymity, a mystery for all time, in terms of conservative standards. The absence of external

⁶⁵ E. D. Pendry, Thomas Dekker: Selected Prose Writings (London: Edward Arnold, 1967), p. 3.

evidence naturally forces an internal examination which, at best, yields information which is conjectural rather than authoritative. Such obscurity does tend to enhance the appeal of Arden for the student of Elizabethan drama; on the other hand, many interesting points command attention concerning the major dramatists of the time if it can be attributed to one of them. How, then, must our concepts change of the early "magician" Shakespeare, of the "atheist" Marlowe, and of the "pedantic" Kyd! The name of Shakespeare is here refuted but the literary correspondences to Marlowe and Kyd are too pronounced to be unconditionally denied. Despite the view of long respected contrary opinion, I believe Arden to be the result of the Marlowe-Kyd proximity of 1591.

8. A Study of Comparative Drama

Although records and literary allusions concerning the public reaction to Arden of Feversham are lacking, its popularity on the stage is attested to by the number of imitations which followed in the later 1590's and the first decade of the seventeenth century.

One of the first attempts at domestic tragedy following Arden came with Robert Yarrington's Two Lamentable Tragedies printed in 1601¹ but dated as early as 1594 in composition to take advantage of the public interest in the sensational murder of Thomas Beech which occurred on August 23, 1594.² Yarrington was only a minor dramatist since no other reference in Elizabethan drama is made to him other than as the authorship of this work. He is generally regarded as a hack writer whose lack of skill is epitomized in the "incoherence, awkward construction, and naive psychology"³ the play presents.

As the title suggests, the play consists of two tragic

¹ The complete title page reads as follows: Two Lamentable/ Tragedies.// The one, of the nurther of Mais- ster Beech a Chaundler in/ Thames-streete, and his boye, done by Thomas Merry.// The other of a young childe mur- thered in a Wood by two Ruffins, with the consent of his Vnckle.// By ROE YARRINGTON.// LONDON/ Printed for Mathew Lawe, and are to be solde at/ his shop in Paules Church-yarde neere vnto/ S. Austines gate, at the signe/ of the Foxe. 1601. (STC 26076)

² Chambers, III, p. 518.

³ Adams, p. 108.

tales which are completely independent of one another. There is no main plot line or division of the text into two sections. The scenes merely alternate quite confusingly between London, the location of the murder of Beech, and Italy, the scene of the murder of Pertillo, the young child. The play opens with a Prologue containing a quasi-philosophical discussion of human nature by three allegorical figures "Homicide", "Avarice", and "Truth".⁴ In the Beech story, Thomas Merry murders Beech to procure his wealth and the crime is temporarily covered by Merry's sister Rachael. The flaw in the plan which eventually foils Merry's scheme is that the crime is known by Merry's friend Harry Williams who promises silence, and a boy servant whose silence is assured when Merry bludgeons him to death with a hammer. The authorities, however, discover the body of Beech and in a frenzy of guilt, Williams confesses his knowledge of the identity of the murderers. All those implicated are arrested. Rachael and Merry are hanged after repentance speeches, and Williams pleads benefit of clergy and escapes punishment of death with branding.

In the Italian tale, Pertillo is murdered by two ruffians hired by his uncle and trustee, Fallerio, who is violently jealous of his nephew's possessions. Again, it is a guilty

⁴ The presence of such allegorical figures in the prologue and the chorus indicate how strongly linked the domestic tragedy is with the morality tradition.

conscience, this time on the part of one of the murderers, which foils the plot. A confession is made and Fallerio only escapes the authorities by utilizing a disguise. His son, Alsero, who has not been a party to the crime, attempts to protect his father by covering his escape but in doing so, he too becomes an accessory to the murder and is arrested.

Fallerio returns and gives himself up, unable to leave his son to the fate he himself deserved. In the final scene, both are hanged, Fallerio for his villainy and Alsero for deception.

The didactic purpose is clearly to show the just punishment of Avarice and Homicide while the element of Truth finds expression in the virtue of confession of evil and the power of repentance. The use of the play as a dramatized sermon and secondarily as an entertainment is further obvious. If a theme was intended, a conclusion may be drawn from the similarity of the incentive to crime in each case in relation to the setting. In other words, villainy and debauchery in human nature were just as rampant in England as in Italy.

Unlike Arden, the characters show few redeeming qualities in accepting the moral responsibilities for their actions. They are but wooden puppets manipulated by Fate and only rescued from the clutches of hell-fire and damnation by the intervention of Providence in the final scene.

Dramatizations of the same story appeared in 1599-1600.

Henry Chettle, John Day and William Haughton worked together on Beech's Tragedy, The Tragedy of Merry, and The Orphan's Tragedy. John Day also is credited with The Italian Tragedy.⁵ These plays are conjectured to be individual rather than variant titles of two plays.⁶

Another play clearly modelled on Arden was A Warning for Fair Women printed in 1599.⁷ Again the allegorical figures of "History", "Comedy", and "Tragedy" appear followed by a dispute over the right of each to dictate the public's taste in stage performances; consequently, the Prologue is valuable as a source of information on stage conventions. "Tragedy" controls the argument and eventually triumphs in the action of the play. These same allegorical figures also appear throughout the play intervening in the action to comment on past events and to foreshadow the retributive justice to follow much in the same manner as the older Greek Chorus. Other medieval and classical traditions are evident in the retaining

⁵ Adams, p. 198.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ The complete title page reads: A/WARNING/ for Faire Women.// Containing,/ The most tragicall and lamentable mur-/ ther of Master George Sanders of London/ Marchant, nigh Shooters hill.// Consented vnto/ By his owne wife, acted by M. Browne, Mistris/ Drewry and Trusty Roger agents therein:/ with their severall ends.// As it hath beene lately diuerse acted by the right/ Honorable, the Lord Chamberlaire/ his Seruantes./ Printed at London by Valentine Sims for William Aspley./ 1599. (STC 25089).

of the dumb show at various intervals in the action of the play. Here, there are pantomimes of the murder scene, and music and dancing on behalf of the allegorical figures to indicate the merriment of the villains on their success in completing the job. Christian morality is again rigidly insisted upon and it is the didactic element which controls the manipulation of characters throughout.

The plot originates from an actual murder in 1573 recounted in Stow's Annales and Holinshed's Chronicles. The story was also popularized in Anthony Munday's A View of Sundry Examples.⁸ The actual events leading up to the crime are straightforward. George Browne loves Anne, the wife of George Sanders. To help him gain her love, he approaches Anne Drury, her friend, and Anne's servant Roger. By playing upon her frail vanity, Mistress Drury is able to persuade Anne to become Browne's mistress and together they plot her husband's death. After a few unsuccessful attempts, Browne finally kills Sanders and a boy who is an accidental witness to the murder. However, the boy is only wounded and lives long enough to inform the authorities of Browne's villainy. Arrests are swift and Browne, in order to protect Anne, tries to take the blame entirely on his shoulders. Anne, on the

⁸ Munday's pamphlet is a collection of twenty murder stories supported by Biblical references to show the consequences of misdirected human energy.

contrary, is unable to accept escape and is driven by a guilty conscience to confess her part as an accomplice. After a lengthy court scene in which Browne and other characters lament their fate as being the result of misspent youth, all are condemned to death.

Like Thomas Arden, Sanders is a prosperous merchant who has a reputation for being overly generous and a kind, affectionate father and husband. This strain of sentimentalism, as with Arden, serves to heighten the total tragic effect. Anne, like Alice, describes her husband in an entirely opposite light. She condemns him for avarice and cold indifference to her needs as a woman. She is thoroughly swayed by her lover at all times but seldom shows any strength of character in resistance, not even momentarily as does Alice Arden. Nevertheless, despite these overt similarities, Sanders becomes more of a Christ-figure as the sacrificial victim in that he begs forgiveness for the sins of his killers at his death. Therefore, the criminals are saved by divine mercy and their sins are expiated with repentance.

One of the major criticisms of the play is the heavy reliance on the use of the supernatural which detracts from a realistic presentation.⁹ The boy who is mortally wounded, for instance, lives for ten days in order to reveal his

⁹ Adams, p. 121.

knowledge of the crime. Later, a white rose which Anne is wearing before the court to show her innocence changes colour when she tries to lie about her knowledge of the crime. Other weaknesses in the play are that it lacks a depth of subtle psychology in character portrayals mainly because preparatory scenes explaining behaviour have been omitted. Further, the pitfall of didacticism which was perhaps unavoidable in the domestic tragedy is again obtrusive. The richness of the play's experience is eclipsed by the burdensome theological principles.

A final interesting feature of A Warning for Fair Women, as in Arden,¹⁰ is the disputed authorship. Candidates for the position range in eminence from Yarrington to Shakespeare¹¹ and include such claimants as Thomas Kyd and Thomas Heywood. Attempts to decipher the dramatist's identity remain unsuccessful since external evidence is lacking. From internal evidence, fundamental dissimilarities in style, mannerisms, techniques, and ideas refute the claim for each of the playwrights mentioned above.

The domestic tragedy which has aroused more interest than others because of both its artistry and authorship is The

¹⁰ See Chapter 7 for a discussion of the authorship of Arden.

¹¹ W. Bernhardt ascribed the play to Shakespeare in 1856. Cf. C. F. Tucker Brooke, Anocrypha, p. x.

Yorkshire Tragedy printed in 1606.¹² The play was entered in the Stationers' Register as Shakespeare's and his name appeared on the title pages of the 1608 and 1619 quartos. It was further included in the Third Folio of 1664 and the Fourth Folio of 1685 as part of the Shakespearean canon. The evidence would seem to be worthy of serious consideration especially when the ascription dates from the poet's lifetime. However, the original bookseller Thomas Pavier was notorious as a book pirate and such a use of Shakespeare's name on a play to promote its interest to the public is only one of many instances with which the dramatist had to contend. In The Shakespeare Apocrypha, Tucker Brooke includes the work indicating its limitations as quite unbecoming the style of the mature Shakespeare in such major considerations as characterization, plot and retorical arrangements.¹³

The Yorkshire Tragedy was originally written to be performed in a group of one act plays and it is now the only one extant. This explains its extreme brevity, compression and hurried action. The plot is again based on an actual crime

¹² The complete title page reads: A/ YORKSHIRE/ Tragedy.// Not so New as Lamentable/ and true.// Acted by his Maiesties Players at/ the Globe./ Written by W. Shakespeare.// AT LONDON/ Printed by R. B. for Thomas Pavier and are to bee sold at his/ shop on Cornhill, neere to the exchange./ 1608. (STC 22340).

¹³ Brooke, Apocrypha, pp. xxxiv-xxxv.

described in Stow's Annales. In 1605, one Walter Calverley murdered his wife and children, was tried and then executed. This was not the first dramatization of the crime. George Wilkins¹⁴ wrote The Miseries of Enforced Marriage in 1606¹⁵ in which the circumstances which led up to the murder are elaborated upon and the facts surrounding the fate of Calverley are distorted into a happy ending. In The Yorkshire Tragedy, the plot involves Walter Calverley's marriage to Katherine upon the insistence of his father. He rejects Clare Harcop, his former love, and she commits suicide on receiving word that Calverley has obeyed his father. On hearing news of her tragic death, Calverley becomes a degenerate and passes his time gambling or trying to drown his miseries in liquor. Meanwhile, his family falls into debt and his brother is put into debtors prison. Calverley urges Katherine to secure the money to free him by any possible means but she refuses to prostitute herself. In a rage of frenzied anger, Calverley slays his family trying to save them from the evil which has possessed him. One child survives, being away from home at

¹⁴ It is interesting to note here that George Wilkins' name is linked with Shakespeare's in the disputed authorship of another play, Pericles.

¹⁵ The complete title page reads: THE/ Miseries of Inforst/ MARRIAGE.// As it is now playd by his Maiesties/ Seruants.// Qui Alios, (seipsum) docet./ By George Wilkins// LONDON/ Printed for George Vincent, and are to be sold at his shop in/ Woodstreet. 1607. (STC 25635).

the time, and his wife recovers from her wounds. A brief trial scene occurs in which Katherine forgives him when he repents his crime. On the scaffold, he goes to his death firmly believing his soul had been possessed by the Devil.

In Wilkins' play, Calverley is genuinely determined to redeem his waywardness and reform. He is left an inheritance and so avoids debt. There is no need for the murder scene; consequently, the customary pattern of domestic tragedy is broken. The principles here are still firmly theological but the penitent sinner lives and finds prosperity rather than death despite his refusal to conform to the existing social morality.

The Yorkshire Tragedy is by far the better play since its power in sustaining tension is outstanding. Wilkins' play is dull and lifeless as it drones on, insensitive to its value as stage entertainment. Perhaps the strongest drawbacks stylistically in The Yorkshire Tragedy which make it inferior to Arden is its excessive use of prose and its tendency to fall into overly simplified rhyme schemes. Rhyming couplets, for instance, are used throughout and give a doggerel echo to the tone of the verse. Characterization is also flat. Development naturally has been hindered by the brevity of the play and the characters seldom function in their own right but are pronounced examples of the moral aim.

The only domestic tragedy which poses a serious rival in popularity to Arden is A Woman Killed with Kindness written by Thomas Heywood and published in 1603.¹⁶ Heywood was an extremely prolific writer but this play is usually regarded as his best achievement in the several literary forms he chose for expression. The plot concerns one Master Frankford who marries Anne, a beautiful young woman, in the opening scene. The villain is Frankford's friend and house guest Wendoll who succeeds in seducing Anne while her husband is out of town. Frankford, however, is suspicious of his wife's behaviour and with the aid of a servant, Nicholas, discovers the illicit relationship in a spying incident so arranged that the unsuspecting lovers believe Frankford to be away on a business trip. To punish his wife, Frankford sends her to live alone in a secluded manor house. She is never again to see her children or Frankford for her immoral and adulterous behaviour. Anne becomes ill with grief and is sincerely penitent for her waywardness. She rejects Wendoll's renewed suits of her love and begs forgiveness from her husband. After remaining steadfast in his original scheme to punish her, he finally forgives Anne for her infidelity just before she dies of a broken heart.

From this outline, it is difficult to ascertain the

¹⁶ The complete title page reads: A/ WOMAN/ KILDE/ with Kindnesse.// Written by Tho: Heywood.// LONDON/ Printed by William Iaggard dwelling in Barbican, and/ are to be sold in Paules Church-yard./ by Iohn Hodgets. 1607. (STC 13371).

profound emotionalism of the play. It would appear to be heavily melodramatic and extremely sentimental. On the contrary, the play maintains an absolute aura of realism with the vividness in scenic details, character portrayals, and flowing dialogue. The pathos of the figure of Anne in the final scene is intensely powerful and never maudlin because of saccharine sentimentalism.

It is the presentation of the character of Wendoll which stirs the interest and imagination of the spectator. He is perhaps the most fully developed character in the entire cast despite the fact that he is the villain. He is never repentant for what he has done yet he is fully aware of his moral responsibility to Frankford, his close friend. The inner conflict in Wendoll is laid bare and he is torn between his love for Anne and his respect for Frankford.

The major weakness in the play is the extreme passivity of Anne in respect to Wendoll's advances. This is another example, however, of how characterization is sacrificed for the sake of clear moral instruction. Adams says of the play: "At every critical point in the play, religious didacticism and not Elizabethan psychology directs the action of the play".¹⁷

Domestic tragedy declined in subsequent years as it concentrated less and less on subtle character insight and more

¹⁷ Adams, p. 146.

on the actual physical horror of the scenes presented. Extravagant sentimentalism added to the decadence of the form and the mawkish absurdity of the plays was more pronounced than any sense of verisimilitude.

The Jacobean tragedy, however, benefited indirectly from this tendency to utilize husband and wife relationships in the drama and dialogue spoken in a very natural, homely manner. Consider, for example, the beauty and pathos in the dialogue of such plays as Webster's The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi.

As to the position of domestic tragedy during the suppression of the stage by the Puritans, Adams makes the following observation:

when the theatres were closed in 1642, domestic tragedy had quite probably disappeared from the repertories. It has settled down in England for a sleep of nearly a hundred years. There were signs, as early as 1694, that the sleeper was stirring, but with the chill storm of imported French classicism and the heated blasts of heroic bombast raging in English tragedy after 1660, there is small wonder that domestic tragedy continued its hibernation until 1731, when George Lillo produced The London Merchant.¹⁸

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 191.

9. Contribution to Elizabethan Drama

Arden of Feversham has been received by critics with mixed reactions and opinions range from extremes. Oliphant writes of the play with lavish praise describing it as "one of the finest and most effective tragedies of the period".¹ F. F. Moorman condemns the work as a complete artistic failure if the principles of classical tragedy are applied.² The independent merit of Arden as a literary master-piece actually impinges upon two factors: personal preference and categorical assessment.

Subjective reactions certainly are an important consideration and many find the play totally repulsive in its subject material - the base ulterior motives of the heroine and the brutal bludgeoning to death of Arden. Unable to reconcile themselves with the stark realism presented in Arden, critics tend to disregard its potential as a work of art.³ Indeed, Arden has suffered from those who would discredit it on the basis of the vulgarity of the adulterous love of Alice and Mosbie. However, the criterion of vulgarity has changed for the contemporary critic who no longer balks at such supposedly

¹ Oliphant, "Problems of Authorship in Elizabethan Dramatic Literature", Modern Philology, VIII (1911), 420.

² Moorman, CHET., V, 241.

³ Wynne, p. 263.

indecent themes in the arts. Herein lies the reason for the renewed popularity of the play in the twentieth century. We are able to present a more unbiased view of the play because we see there the emphasis on materialism and gratification of the senses which has become an admittedly identifiable part of our own lives. Therefore, the modern audience is likely to be much more sympathetic towards Arden since it penetrates the veneer of social hypocrisy in middle-class morality to illuminate the pathos and dark confusion there encountered in the unfulfilled passions of Alice Arden, in the precarious balance fearfully maintained by Iosbie in his climb to the top, in the cry of the dispossessed landowners Greene and Reede, and in the dilemma of the landless, Black Will and Shakebag. Furthermore, the modern audience is inclined to be entertained rather than repulsed by the violence and bloodshed which has become a popular theme in contemporary art, quite in harmony with the present world-wide strife and turmoil. That which appeals to the spiritual and the profoundly philosophical is now almost eclipsed by the sensational, and horror is exploited for the sake of horror. For those of the public that seek psychological truths in artistic forms, Arden contains piercing revelations of the timelessness of human drives and ambitions to achieve a more enriched existence both physically and spiritually.

The rejection of Arden, on the grounds of its

unconventionality and disregard for the established principles of theoretical drama, is to miscategorize the play. Arden must be judged not in the context of Elizabethan tragedy as a whole, but in the context of domestic tragedy. Then the play assumes a commanding position as the pinnacle of achievement in its genre and secondarily, a highly significant play in the mainstream of Elizabethan drama. Its contribution to the Jacobean drama is unquestionable. Consider the complexity of the husband-wife-lover triangle in the dark brooding tragedies of Webster and Ford. Consider the natural yet richly poetic conversational tone of these plays and the rigid, stilted poetic speech of the previous euphuistic drama of the early Elizabethan stage. Arden is important as a transitional link between the two epochs and probably influenced the world's greatest dramatist William Shakespeare in his tragedy of Macbeth.

Arden of Feversham is indeed worthy of recognition and performance by modern day Shakespearean theatrical companies desiring a vigorous and exciting play to add to their repertoires.

[DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Mr. ARDEN, a merchant of Feversham.

FRANKLIN, his friend.

MOSBIE, Alice's lover.

MICHAEL, Arden's servant.

ADAM FOWLE, landlord of the Flower-de-Luce.

CLARKE, a painter.

BRADSHAW, a goldsmith.

GREENE, a tenant farmer.

DICK REEDE, a sailor.

BLACK WITL, }
SHAKEBAG, } murderers

A Prentice.

A Ferryman.

LORD CHEVY, and his Men.

MAYOR OF FEVERSHAM, and the watch.

ALICE, Arden's wife.

SUSAN, Mosbie's sister.

SCENE: FEVERSHAM, LONDON, and on the road between.]

THE TRAGEDY OF M. ARDEN OF FEUESHAME

[ACT I

SCENE I.- A Room in Arden's House.]¹[Enter Arden and Francklin]²Franklin Arden cheere vp thy spirits and droup no moreMy gracious Lord y^{e3} Duke of Sommerset:Hath frely giuen to thee and to thy⁴ heyres,By letters patents⁵ from his Maiesty:

All the lands of the Abby of Feuershame.

¹ The Quartos have no divisions into acts and scenes. They are here included in square brackets to facilitate the reading and to give coherency to the transition of action in the play. Such divisions which first appeared in the Tyrrell edition of 1851 are annotated in Erooke's The Shakespeare Apocrypha. The present edition will follow his format for the most part.

² This set of square brackets actually appears in Q₁ only.

³ y^e: the (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴ thy: thine (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁵ letters patents: "An open letter or document, usu. from a sovereign or person in authority, issued for various purposes; now esp. to grant for a statutory term to a person or persons the sole right to make, use, or sell some invention." It was also used to designate the conferrment of a piece of land (CED).

This is the first of many references which point to the author's familiarity with legal procedure and terminology.

Heer are the deedes sealed & subscribed⁶ w^t⁷ his name and
the kings,⁸
Read them, and leaue this melancholy moode⁹

Arden Francklin thy loue prolongs my weary lyfe

And but for thee, how odious¹⁰ were this lyfe:

That shoues me nothing but tormentes my soule, 10

And those foule obiects¹¹ that offend myne eies,

Which makes me wish that for this vale of Heauen,

The earth hung ouer my heede and couerd mee.¹²

⁶ subscribed: given full assent by signature (Onions).

⁷ w^t: occasionally the printer has contracted words in a lengthy line. The mark above the "w" is most likely to represent "t" but it appears to be a comma in shape. Q₂ and Q₃ read "with".

⁸ kings: the possessive case is seldom used by the printers in all Quarto editions of this play

⁹ leaue this melancholy moode: Charles Crawford, "The Authorship of Arden of Feversham", here cites a very minor similarity in phraseology to Soliman and Perseda [Works: III. i. 152] as one of many indications of Kyd's authorship:

"driue away this melancholly mood."

¹⁰ odious: hateful (Onions).

¹¹ foul obiects: Alice and Mosbie.

¹² 12-13. Which ... mee: This is one of the significant variations from Holinshed where Arden "was contented to winke at hir filthie disorder" for fear of losing some "benefite" he was hoping to receive from her friends. Cf. Appendix III, p. 185.

The Faversham Wardmote Book recounts: "All which things the said Arden did well know and wilfully did permit and suffer the same." The reason is given that he was afraid to offend Lord North, "father-in-law unto Alice Arden", whose servant Mosbie had been. This North (Sir Edward) was the father of Sir Thomas North, the translator of Plutarch (Bayne).

Love letters past¹³ twixt Mosbie and my wyfe
 And they have preuie¹⁴ meetings in the Towne:
 May on his finger did I spy the Ring,
 Which at our Marriage day¹⁵ the Preest put on,¹⁶
 Can any greefe be halfe so great as this?

Fran. Comfort thy selfe sweete freend it is not strange,
 That women will be false and wauering.¹⁷

20

Arden. I but to doat¹⁸ on such a one as hee

The dramatist, then, is obviously trying to redeem the character of Arden as a pander and to further blacken Alice, hoping perhaps to heighten the tragic tone. The implication is that Arden wishes he could shut his eyes to his wife's infidelity but still sincerely wants to do something to stop it.

¹³ past: in all Quartos. Bullen suggests the correct reading is "pass".

¹⁴ preuie: secret.

¹⁵ day: omitted in Q₃.

¹⁶ 16-17. May ... put on: Token rings were common during the Elizabethan period. The exchange of rings symbolized a solemn mode of private contract between lovers (Dyer, p. 365). This was also a common motif of medieval romances. It is important to note here that this is the same ring given to Alice by Arden in marriage. It becomes a religious symbol of the wedding sacrament which is desecrated by Alice in her paganistic attitude towards life.

¹⁷ 19-20. it is ... wauering: on a casual reading of this line, the reader is struck by the matter-of-fact approach of Franklin. However, it was generally accepted in the Elizabethan period as seen by countless other plays that women were morally weak, deceitful and inconstant.

¹⁸ doat: dote.

Is monstrous Francklin, and intollerable.¹⁹

Francklin. Why, what is he?

Arden. A Botcher²⁰ and no better at the first,

Who by base brocage,²¹ getting some small stock:

Crept into seruire of a noble man:

And by his seruile flattery and fawning,²²

Is now become the steward²³ of his house,

And brauely iets²⁴ it in his silken gowne.²⁵

¹⁹ 21-22. I But ... intollerable: Arden seems to disapprove more of Mosbie's social inferiority rather than the actual act of adultery.

²⁰ Botcher: an unskilled tailor, a patcher of old clothes (Onions). Cf. Coriolanus II. i. 98-100

"and your Beards deserue not so honourable a graue, as to stuffe a Botchers Cushion, or to be entomb'd in an Asses Packe-saddle."

²¹ brocage: acting as an intermediary. It was frequently used in the derogatory sense meaning a go-between in love affairs (Onions). Cf. Hamlet I. iii. 127-130
Polonius warns Ophelia -

"Doe not beleeeue his voves; for they are Brokers/... meere implorators of vnhold Sutes,/ Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds."

²² fawning: weedling and cringing (Onions).

²³ steward: An official who controls the domestic affairs of a household, supervising the service of his master's table, directing the domestics and regulating household expenditure (OED).

²⁴ iets: jets; walk pompously, strut, swagger (Onions). Cf. Twelfth Night II. v. 32

"how he iets vnder his advanc'd plumes."

²⁵ 24-30. A Botcher ... silken gowne: Mosbie is first

Fran. No noble man will countraunce²⁶ such a pesant. 30

Arden. Yes, the Lord Clifford²⁷ he that loues not mee.

But through his fauour let not him grow proude,

For were he by the Lord Protector²⁸ backt,

He should not make me to be pointed at,²⁹

I am by birth a gentle man of bloode,³⁰

And that iniurious³¹ riball³² that attempts,

depicted as an ambitious social climber shrewd enough to play upon human foibles to achieve his own ends. He becomes the prototype of the Machiavellian villain.

²⁶ countraunce: abide, give accompaniment (Onions).

²⁷ Lord Clifford: This name does not appear in Holinshed's account. Mosbie's master was "Lorde North". The question remains as to why the playwright chose this name. Is Lord Clifford the same George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland (1558-1605) - the "nautical Quixote - courtier, gambler, and buccaneer" (DNE)? Can anything be made of the allusion to Arden's unpopularity with the same? Could this be the dramatist's own comment on someone who dislikes him?

Another interesting point to consider is the possibility of the name Lord Clifford being an anagram. Notice the similarity here to Lord Radcliffe, the proposed patron of Thomas Kyd and for a time Christopher Marlowe. Cf. Introduction, p. lxx.

²⁸ Lord Protector: one in charge of the kingdom during the minority, absence, or incapacity of the sovereign (OED).

²⁹ 34. He should ... at: one of several references to malicious revelling in gossip.

³⁰ 35. I am ... bloode: Although the play is referred to as "domestic tragedy", it is important to note that Arden's social status is one of prominence. He is definitely upper middle class. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxvii.

³¹ iniurious: insulting, insolent (Onions).

³² riball: "ribald" in Q₃: an offensive noisy person (Onions).

To vyolate my deare wyues chastitie, ³³

(For deare I holde hir loue, as deare as heauen)³⁴

Shall on the bed which he thinks to defile,

See his disseuerd ioints and sinewes torne, 40

Whylst on the planchers³⁵ pants³⁶ his weary body,

Smeard in the charnels of his lustfull bloode.

Fran. Be patient gentle freend and learne of me,

To ease thy griefe and saue her chastitye:

Intreat³⁷ her faire sweete words are fittest engines³⁸

To race³⁹ the flint⁴⁰ walles of a womans breast:

³³ 36-37. And that ... chastitie: As yet, Arden is apparently unaware of the seriousness of the affair. He naively implies that it is but an imprudent flirtation.

³⁴ Brackets appear as such in all Quartos.

³⁵ planchers: wooden floor boards (Onions). Cf. Measure for Measure IV. i. 24

³⁶ pants: throbs.

³⁷ Intreat: beguile, pass the time (Onions).

³⁸ engines: literally - a mechanical implement; but figuratively, a contrivance or plot (Onions). Cf. Othello IV. ii. 218-219

"take me from this world with Treacherie, / and deuise Engines for my life."

³⁹ race: raze, cut, slash, scratch with something sharp (Onions).

⁴⁰ flint: hard, black, sharp-edged. (Onions). Here "flint" is applied to "breast". Shakespeare often uses the expression to describe the heart as being insensitive to compassion. Cf. The Merchant of Venice IV. i. 31

"From bassie bosomes and rough hearts of flints."

In any case be not too Ielyouse,
 Nor make no⁴¹ question of her loue to thee,
 But as securely⁴² presently take horse,
 And ly with me at London all this tearme
 For women when they may will not,
 But being kept back, straight grow outragious.⁴³

50

Arden. Though this abhorres⁴⁴ from reason yet ile try it

And call her foorth, and presently take leaue: How! Ales!

Heere entes⁴⁵ Ales.

Ales. Husband what meane you to get vp⁴⁶ so earely

Sommer⁴⁷ nights are short, and yet you ryse ere day,

⁴¹ no: "a" in Delius' edition (Brooke).

⁴² as securely: as if nothing is wrong, without apprehension or suspicion (Onions). Warnke and Proescholdt, 1888, suggest as a possible reading: "as if thou wert quite secure" (Brooke).

⁴³ 51-52. For women ... outragious: Franklin seems to possess shrewd character insight as he here comments that force breeds disobedience springing from delight in opposing what is forbidden. Nevertheless, despite this subtle psychological reasoning, Franklin inadvertently hastens Arden's death by affording Alice and Mosbie the freedom to contrive the means.

⁴⁴ abhorres: seems contrary to, protests against (Onions).

⁴⁵ entes: enters (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴⁶ to get vp: Q₃ reads "to rise".

⁴⁷ Sommer: the reference to the season is important in keeping account of the time sequence.

Had I beene wake you had not rise so soore.⁴⁸

And. Sweet loue thou knowst that we two Quid like⁴⁹

Haue often⁵⁰ chid⁵¹ the morning, when it gan to peepe.

And often wisht that darke nights purblind⁵² steedes, 60

Would pull her by the purple mantle back:

And cast her in the Ocean to her loue.⁵³

But this night sweete Ales thou hast kild my hart,

I heard thee cal on Mosbie in thy sleepe.

⁴⁸ you had not rise so soore: you would not have risen so early.

⁴⁹ Quid like: the reference is to Quid's Elegy, "Ad Auroram ne properet". - Amor. i. 13 (Bayne).

The Elegies of Quid had been translated by Marlowe (Brooke).

Crawford cites a similar construction in Soliman and Perseda [Works: I. v. 58]

"Then, Aristippus like didst ..."

⁵⁰ Haue often: All Quartos read as such. Bullen suggests that "often" should be omitted claiming the compositor's eye caught the same word from the following line. However, Bayne argues for its inclusion pointing out that it is necessary to make the line an Alexandrine. He further cites other instances of the same.

⁵¹ chid: scorn, speak loudly (Onions).

⁵² purblind: partially blind, dim-sighted (Onions). Cf. Romeo and Juliet II. i. 12-13

"her purblind Sonne and her/ Young Abraham Cupid."

⁵³ 58-62. Sweet loue ... her loue: The imagery in these lines is particularly heightened and poetic. It echoes many passages in Romeo and Juliet in which dark night harbours love. Cf. Romeo and Juliet III. ii. 1-25

Ales. Tis lyke I was a sleepe when I⁵⁴ nam'd him,

For beeing awake he comes not in⁵⁵ my thoughts:

Arden. I but you started vp⁵⁶ and suddenly

In steede of him: caught me about the necke.

Ales. In steede of him? why, who was there but you,

And where but one is, how can I mistake.

70

Fran. Arden, leaue to vrdge⁵⁷ her ouer farre.

Arden May loue there is no credit in a dreame,⁵⁸

Let it suffice I know thou louest me well.

Ales. Now I remember where vpon it came,

Had we no talke of Mosbie yesternight.

Fra. Mistres Ales, I hard you name him once or twice,

Ales. And thereof came it, and therefore blame not me⁵⁹

⁵⁴ I: omitted in Q₃.

⁵⁵ in: to (Q₃).

⁵⁶ started vp: in a sudden fit or impulse (Onions).

⁵⁷ leaue to vrdge her: do not goad her.

⁵⁸ 72. there is ... dreame: The Renaissance preoccupation with the interpretation of dreams is here evident. Arden's apparent skepticism is, however, to prove false when he later recounts the strange events of a dream to Franklin p. 88. Note also the continual use of the word "credit" throughout the play.

⁵⁹ 74-77. Now I ... not me: The subtle use of dream psychology shows Alice's quick wit in self-justification. She cleverly twists Arden's words to avoid confronting the real issue.

Arden. I know it did, and therefore let it passe,
I must to London⁶⁰ sweete Ales presently.

Ales But tell me do you meane to stay there long? 80

Arden. No longer there⁶¹ till my affaires be done.

Fran. He will not stay aboute a month at most.

Ales. A moneth aye me, sweete Arden come againe
Within a day or two, or els I die.⁶²

Arden. I cannot long be from thee gentle Ales,
Whilest, Michel fetch our horses from the field,
Franklin and I will down unto the key:⁶³
For I have certaine goods there to vnload,⁶⁴
Meanwhile prepare our breakfast gentle Ales,

⁶⁰ I must to London: I must go to London. Elliptical expressions occur frequently in the play, but were regular Elizabethan constructions.

⁶¹ there: Macd. P. Jackson suggests that the correct word is "than" since Arden's reply does not really make sense. He proposes the possibility of a misreading by the compositor under the influence of "there" in the previous line (Notes and Queries, Nov. 1963, p. 410). The argument certainly has a valid point but the question remains - is Arden's reply really so distorted in meaning?

⁶² 83-84. A moneth ... I die: This quick change of temperament by Alice to a sincere protestation of her love is perhaps unwarranted. However, her ulterior motives are to be made apparent.

⁶³ key: quay, wharf.

⁶⁴ certaine goods there to vnload: Arden is a prosperous merchant. Cf. Introduction, pp. xxxvii.

For yet ere noone wele take horse and away,

90

Exeunt Arden, & Francklin.

Ales. Ere noone he meanes to take horse and away:

Sweete newes is this, Oh that some ayrie spirit,

Would in the shape and liknes of a horse

Gallope with Arden crosse the Ocean,

And throw him from his backe into the waues.⁶⁵

Sweete Mosbie is the man that hath my hart:

And he vsurpes⁶⁶ it, having nought but this,

That I am tyed to him⁶⁷ by marriage.

Loue is a God and mariage is but words,

And therefore Mosbies title is the best,

100

Tushe whether it be or no,⁶⁸ he shall be mire,

In spite of him,⁶⁹ of Hymen and of rytes.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ 92-95. Oh that ... waues: Compare the image of the horse here as an echo of Arden's speech on "darke nights purblind steedes".

Further, Alice's soliloquy is the first indication that she is wishing for his death.

⁶⁶ vsurpes: the figure of the usurper was common in Elizabethan drama.

⁶⁷ him: Arden.

⁶⁸ whether it be or no: regardless of whether it is morally right or wrong.

⁶⁹ him: Arden.

⁷⁰ 99-102: Loue is a God ... rytes: Alice's sensuality is here evident. She rejects the traditional Christian marriage vows in favour of paganism. The word "Hymen" has an interesting

Here enters Adam of the Flourdeluce.⁷¹

And here comes Adam of the flourdeluce,

I hope he brings me tydings of my loue.

How now Adam, what is the newes with you?

Be not affraid my husband is now from home.

Adam. He whome you wot⁷² of Mosbie Mistres Ales.

Is come to towne, and sends you word by mee,

In any case you may not visit him⁷³

Ales Not visit him?

110

Adam. No nor take no knowledge⁷⁴ of his beeing heere

Ales. But tell me is he angree or displeased

Adam Should seeme so for he is wordrous sad.⁷⁵

derivation. Hymen was the Greek and Roman god of marriage represented as a young man carrying a torch and veil. The word was later adopted into Christian terminology as a wedding song (GED).

⁷¹ Flourdeluce: "An inn, formerly situated in Abbey Street, nearly opposite Arden's house." C. E. Donne, An Essay on the Tragedy of Arden of Feversham, 1873 (Bayne). ⁶³ reads: Floure-de-luce Holinshed reads: Floure-de Lice.

⁷² wot: know.

⁷³ you may not visit him: Other than Arden's biased ravings, the first impression the reader is given of Mosbie is of an arrogant, off-handed character.

⁷⁴ take no knowledge: take no notice.

⁷⁵ sad: It seems unusual that this word has not aroused the suspicion of other editions. Alice has just inquired whether Mosbie is "angree or displeased". In her reply to Adam, she again picks up the same thread "were he as mad as

Ales Were he as mad as raving Hercules,

Ile see him, I and were thy house of force⁷⁶

These hands of mine should race it to the ground:

Unless that thou wouldst bring me to my loue.⁷⁷

Adam Nay and⁷⁸ you be so impatient Ile be gone

Ales. Stay Adam, stay, thou wert wont⁷⁹ to be my frēd⁸⁰

Aske Fosbie how I haue incurred his wrath, 120

Feare him from me these paire of siluer dice:⁸¹

With which we plaid for kisses many a tyme,

And when I lost I wan and so did hee:⁸²

rauing Hercules". Therefore, it seems probable that Adam's original answer should now read "for he is wordrous mad", the compositor having made the error. "Sad" is in no way suitable to the context.

⁷⁶ of force: reinforced, well-fortified (Onions).

⁷⁷ 116-117. These hands ... my loue: The violent, passionate temperament of Alice is striking. Her manliness of tone and frenzy for sexual gratification make her role as a murderess much more plausible to the reader or spectator knowing the stock portrayals of the Elizabethan women on stage. Alice's inconstancy and sinning ways would be quite in keeping with the Renaissance idea of women. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxiii.

⁷⁸ and: if (Baskervill).

⁷⁹ thou wert wont: you used to be.

⁸⁰ frēd: friend in.

⁸¹ siluer dice: an incident drawn from Holinshed. See Appendix III, p. 184.

⁸² 122-123. With which ... did hee: Alice's childish delight in love games supports Louis Gillet's view of her as a middle-aged woman trying desperately to recapture the sensual

Such winning and such losing Ioue⁸³ send me,

And bid him if his loue doo not decline,

Come⁸⁴ this morning but along⁸⁵ my dore:

And as a stranger, but salute me there,

This may he do without suspect or feare

Adam. Ile tell him what you say, and so farewell.

Exit Adam

Ales. Doo, and one day Ile make amends for all:⁸⁶

130

I know he loues me well, but dares not come,

Because my husband is so Ielious;

And these my marrow prying⁸⁷ neighbours blab,

thrill of adolescent love. For fuller details see Introduction pp. xlvii - xlviii.

⁸³ Ioue: Jove - the pagan undercurrent is again suggested.

⁸⁴ Come: To come (Q2 and Q3)

⁸⁵ along: past.

⁸⁶ 130. Doo ... for all: An ominous foreshadowing of retribution. Alice seems to sense at the outset she is doomed to failure yet still persists in her suit. This perhaps heightens her portrayal as the tragic heroine in that she is aware of her guilt in breaking the accepted moral order of society.

⁸⁷ marrow prying: narrow prying (Q2 and Q3). Bayne comments that "marrow prying" may be correct. Further, "blab" is either a verb with "and" omitted after it, or a noun, the subject of "hirder". This is an interesting observation despite the punctuation at the end of the line.

Hinder our meetings when we would⁸⁸ conferre.
 But if I liue that block shall be remoued,
 And Nosbie, thou that comes to me by stelth
 Shalt neither feare the biting speach of men,
 For Ardens lookes, as⁸⁹ surely shall he die,
 As I abhorre him, and loue onely thee.⁹⁰

Here enters Michaell.

How now Michaell whether are you going?

140

Michael. To fetch my masters ragge,

I hope youle thinke on mee.

Ales. I But Michaell see yon⁹¹ keepe your oath,⁹²

And be as secret, as you are resolute.⁹³

Michaell. Ile see he shall not liue aboue a weeke.

⁸⁸ would: should (Q₂ and Q₃). "Would" is most likely the correct word - the meaning being: when we would like to talk.

⁸⁹ as: since.

⁹⁰ loue onely thee: none but thee (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁹¹ yon: you (Q₂ and Q₃); an error by the compositor in Q₁. The "u" has been inverted.

⁹² keepe your oath: Alice and Michael have already made a compact. Ironically, Alice, who has just thrown off all acknowledgement of vows, urges Michael to retain his. This is one of many apparent inconsistencies in her character. It reflects her hypertension if conscious delineation of character by the playwright or detracts from his abilities if an oversight.

⁹³ resolute: determined, constant, firm (OED).

Ales. On that condition Michaell here is my hand:

None shall haue Mosbies sister but thy selfe.⁹⁴

Michaell. I vnderstand the Painter⁹⁵ heere hard by,⁹⁶

Hath made reporte that he and Sue is sure.⁹⁷

Ales. There's no such matter Michaell bolecue it not, 150

Michael. But he hath sent a dagger sticking in a hart,

With a verse or two stollen from a painted cloath:⁹⁸

The which I heere the wench keeps in her chest,

Well let her kepe it, I shall finde a fellow

That can both write and read, and make rime too,

And if I doo, well, I say no more:

Ile send from London such a taunting letter,⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Alice is prepared to sell out anyone to satisfy her own pleasures.

⁹⁵ Painter: The character of the Painter appears in Holinshed but also, interestingly enough, in Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy. However, the scene including the Painter was one of those extensively altered for Henslowe by, probably, Ben Jonson.

⁹⁶ hard by: close, at hand (Onions).

⁹⁷ is sure: are betrothed, firmly united (Onions). Q₃ reads "are sure".

⁹⁸ painted cloath: the reference here is to a tapestry - a hanging for a room painted or worked with figures or mottoes (Onions). Cf. Love's Labour's Lost. V. ii. 575-6:

"you will be scrap'd out of the painted cloth for this."
Jacob cites this expression as a Shakespearean parallel and proof of authorship (Brooke).

⁹⁹ 157. Ile send ... taunting letter: Cf. As You Like It III. v. 134:

"Ile write to him a very tanting Letter."
Jacob again cites this expression as Shakespearean and authorship proof (Brooke).

As shall¹⁰⁰ eat the hart he sent with salt.

And fling the dagger at the Painters head.

Ales. What needes all this, I say that Susan's thire 160

Michaell. Why then I say that I will kill my master

Or anything that you will haue me doo.¹⁰¹

Ales But Michaell see you doo it cunningly.¹⁰²

Michaell. Why say I should be tooke, Ile nere confesse,

That you know any thing, and Susan being a Maide,

May begge me from the gallous of the Shriefe.¹⁰³

Ales Trust not to that Michaell.

Michaell. You can not tell me, I haue seene it I,

But mistres tell her whether I liue or die.

Ile make her more worth¹⁰⁴ then twenty Painters can, 170

¹⁰⁰ As shall: "As she shall" - first suggested by Delius to clarify the meaning (Brooke).

¹⁰¹ 161-162. Why then ... me doo: Michael is having problems of his own and vows to help Alice in the hope that she can solve them.

¹⁰² see you doo it cunningly: Crawford cites a parallel in Soliman and Perseda [works V. ii. 1] to support Kyd's authorship:

"See you handle it cunningly."

¹⁰³ 164-166. The nere ... the Shriefe: "It was popularly supposed that a virgin might save a criminal from the gallows by offering to marry him.- See note to my edition of Marston, III. 190-1 " (Bullen).

¹⁰⁴ worth: Bayre suggests the word should be omitted; however, the meaning demands its inclusion. Michael sees himself of more value to Susan than twenty painters.

For I will rid myne¹⁰⁵ elder brother away:
 And then the farre of Bolton¹⁰⁶ is mine owne.
 Who would not venture vpon house and land?
 When he may haue it for a right downe¹⁰⁷ blowe.

Here enters Mosbie.

Ales. Yonder comes Mosbie. Michaell get thee gone,
 And let not him nor any knowe thy drifts.¹⁰⁸

Exit Michaell.¹⁰⁹

Mosbie my loue,

Mosbie. Away I say, and talke not to me now.

Ales. A worde or two sweete hart and then I will,
 'Tis yet but early daies,¹¹⁰ thou needest not feare. 180

¹⁰⁵ myne: my (Q₃).

¹⁰⁶ farre of Bolton: The location is not derived from Holinshed and several attempts have been made to pinpoint it. Bolton is 'Boughton, looking down on Canterbury' (Donne). Jacob suggests it is 'Boctor'. Brooke comments: "This ... is the 'Boughton vnder Blee' mentioned by Chaucer at the beginning of the Canon's Yeoman's Prologue. See map, Appendix V.

¹⁰⁷ right downe: downright.

¹⁰⁸ drifts: aims, schemes (Onions).

¹⁰⁹ Exit Michaell: The Tyrrell edition here inserts "Scene II. Before Arder's House. Enter Alice from the House, meeting Mosbie" (Brooke).

¹¹⁰ early daies: early in the day. Brooke refers to Historical Outlines of English Syntax #185 and terms this construction - the adverbial genitive of time.

Mosbie Where is your husband?

Ales Tis now high water, and he is at the key.

Mos. There let him be, hence forward¹¹¹ know me not.¹¹²

Ales Is this the end of all thy solemne oathes?¹¹³

Is this¹¹⁴ the frute thy reconcilement buds?¹¹⁵

Haue I for this giuen thee so many fauours,

Incurd my husbands hate, and out alas,

Made shipwrack of myne honour¹¹⁶ for thy sake,

And dost thou say henceforward know me not?

111 hence forward: from now on.

112 know me not: Mosbie speaks in a rough and brutal manner to Alice. He expresses nothing but cold indifference towards her.

113 184. Is this the end ... oathes: Agair Alice who has thrown marital oaths to the wind rebukes another for betraying the same.

114 this: omitted in Q₃.

115 185. Is this the frute ... buds: This line has interesting parallels in both Marlowe and Kyd. Crawford cites the following passages for comparison:

Edward II [works: 11. 832-833]

"Is this the loue you beare your soveraigne? Is this the fruite your reconcilement beares?" (Q - 1594)

and The Spanish Tragedy [works: IV. i. 1-3]

"Is this the loue thou bearest Horatio? Is this the kindnes that thou counterfaits? Are these the fruits of thire incessant teares?" [Q - 1592]

116 shipwrack of myne honour: The imagery is effective. No Shakespearean parallels can be found.

Remember when I lockt the¹¹⁷ in my closet,¹¹⁸ 190

What were thy words and mine, did we not both

Decree, to murder Arden in the night.¹¹⁹

The heauens can witnes, and the world can tell,

Before I saw the falshoode locke of thine,

Fore¹²⁰ I was tangled with thy tysing speach.

Arden to me was deurer then my soule,

And shall be still,¹²¹ base pesant get thee gone.

And boast not of thy conquest ouer me,

Gotten by witch=craft, and meere¹²² sorcery.¹²³

For what hast thou to countenaunce my loue, 200

117 the: thee (Q₂ and Q₃).

118 closet: private chamber or room (Onions).

119 191-192. What were ... night: Alice and Mosbie have already discussed the murder of Arden.

120 Fore: before.

121 And shall be still: Alice's quick change of heart is another indication of her radical behaviour.

122 meere: absolute, sheer (Onions).

123 199. Gotten by ... sorcery: Seduction through the powers of witchcraft was a popular belief of the time. The passage also reflects the Elizabethan preoccupation with witchcraft as inducing evil on the innocent. Cf. Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay [Baskervill: ll. 144-146]

"it must be negroma[n]tic spells./ And charms of art that must enchain her loue,/Or else shall Edward never win the girl."

Being descended of a noble house,
 And matcht already with a gentleman,
 Whose seruant thou maist be, and so farewell.¹²⁴

Mos. Vngentle and vnkinde Ales, now I see
 That which I euer feard, and finde too trew:
 A womans loue is as the lightning flame,
 Which euen in bursting forth consumes it selfe,¹²⁵
 To trye thy constancie haue I beene strange,
 Would I had neuer tryed, but liued in hope.¹²⁶

Ales. What needs thou try me whom thou neuer found false, 210

Mos. Yet pardon me for loue is Ielious,

Ales. So list¹²⁷ the Sailer to the Mermaids song,¹²⁸

124 200-203. For what ... so farewell: Alice claims nobility by direct descent and by her marriage with Arden. The social inferiority of Mosbie as her lover is continually brought to the reader's attention. Alice, for once, shows some stamina in standing up to Mosbie's rebuke but she too quickly falls back into submissiveness.

125 206-207. A womans ... it selfe: The imagery here is quite effective although the idea was commonplace in Elizabethan thought. Lovers were supposedly consumed by passion and hence had a shorter life span. Cf. J. Donne, "The Canonization".

126 208-209. To trye ... in hope: Mosbie continues to supplicate Alice's favours through shrewd flattery, a characteristic Arden has already discussed.

127 list: "lists" in Q₃ meaning "listen".

128 Mermaids song: Jacob cites the expression as Shakespearean. Cf. The Comedy of Errors III. ii. 170:

"He stop mire cares against the Mermaids song."

So lookes the trauellour to the Basiliske,¹²⁹

I am content for to be reconcilde,

And that I know will be mine ouerthrow.¹³⁰

Mos. Thire ouerthrow? first let the world dissolue,¹³¹

Ales May Mosbie let me¹³² still inioye thy loue,

And happen what will, I am resolute,

My sauing husbard hoordes up bagges of gould,¹³³

¹²⁹ Basiliske: a reptile, also called the cockatrice. It was supposed to be hatched by a serpent from a cock's egg and said to kill by its breath and look (Onions). Cf. 2 Henry VI, III. ii. 52-3.

"come Easiliske,/And kill the innocent gazer with thy sight."

The word is also cited by Jacob as indicative of Shakespeare's authorship.

¹³⁰ 15. And that ... ouerthrow: Another premonition by Alice of forthcoming doom.

¹³¹ 16. first let the world dissolue: meaning - the world will come to an end in destruction before we are undone.

¹³² me: him (Q₂ and Q₃). The original Quarto is not necessarily incorrect. Alice pleads for a continuing relationship with Mosbie confirming further her intentions to go through with Arden's murder. If "him" is correct, it must be assumed that Alice is asking rather that Mosbie continue as Arden's friend -- but for what reason? The context does not seem to substantiate the change.

¹³³ 219. hoordes ... gould: Arden's miserliness is accentuated here and it becomes his only character flaw which is even later refuted by Michael, p. 73. Arden's avarice is dwelt upon also in Holinshed's Chronicles, See Appendix III p. 185.

To make our children¹³⁴ rich, and now is hee
 Gone to vnload the goods that shall be thine,
 And he and Francklin will to London straight.

220

Mos. To London Ales, if thoulde be rulde by mee,
 Wee le make him sure¹³⁵ enough for comming there.

Ales. Ah, would we could

Mos. I happend on a Painter yesternight,

The onely cunning man of Christendoome:
 For he can temper¹³⁶ poyson with his oyle,
 That who so lookes vpon the worke he drawes,
 Shall, with the beames that issue from his sight, 230
 Suck vennome to his breast and slay him selfe,
 Sweete Ales he shall draw thy counterfet,¹³⁷
 That Arden may be gaizing on it perish.¹³⁸

Ales. I but Moskie, that is dangerous,

For thou or I, or any other els,

¹³⁴ children: This is the only reference by the dramatist to Alice's children. Holinshed, however, recounts in horror that a daughter, in particular, was an actual accomplice in the crime and further, that the children joined in with merry-making after his death. See Appendix III, p. 192.

¹³⁵ 224. make him sure enough for comming: disable or destroy him (Onions). Brooke suggests "for" means "to prevent". This is also a possible reading.

¹³⁶ temper: blerd (Onions).

¹³⁷ counterfet: portrait (Onions).

¹³⁸ 232. That ... perish: The source of the poison picture is unknown. It does not appear in Holinshed. In the Italian "novella", however, death by poisoning was a common occurrence.

Comming into the Chamber where it hangs, may die.

Mos. I but weele haue it couered with a cloath,

And hung vp in the studie for himselfe.

Ales. It may not be, for when the pictur's drawne,

Arden I know will come and shew it me.

240

Mos. Feare not weele haue that shall serue the turne.¹³⁹

This is the painters house Ile call him foorth.

Ales. But Mosbie Ile haue no such picture I:¹⁴⁰

Mos. I pray thee leaue it to my discretion

How, Clarke¹⁴¹

Here enters Clarke.

O you are an honest man of your word, you serud me wel,

Clark. Why sir ile do it for you at any time,

Prouided as you haue giuen your worde,

I may haue Susan Mosbie to¹⁴² my wife:

For as sharpe witted Poets whose sweete verse

250

Make heauenly gods break of their Nector draughts

And lay their eares down to the lowly earth:

Vse humble promise to their sacred Muse,

¹³⁹ 241. that shall serue the turne: that which will satisfy our needs.

¹⁴⁰ I: not I (Q₃).

¹⁴¹ Clarke: "The name Clarke is apparently our author's invention, like the name and character of Franklin. The painter's name was William Blackburn" (Bayne).

¹⁴² to: for (Q₃).

So we that are the Poets fauorits,
 Must haue a loue, I, Loue is the Painters Muse.¹⁴³

That makes him frame a speaking courtenaunce.

A weeping eye that witnesses¹⁴⁴ hartes griefe,¹⁴⁵

Then tell me Master Mostie shall I haue hir?

Ales Tis pittie but he should heele vse her well.¹⁴⁶

Mosbie. Clarke heers my hand my sister shall be thine, 260

Cla. Then brother to requite this curtesie,

You shall cormand my lyfe my skill and all.

Ales. Ah that thou couldst be secret,

Mosbie. Feare him not, leaue,¹⁴⁷ I haue talked sufficient,

Cla. You know not me, that ask such questions:

Let it suffice, I krow you loue him well,

And faire would haue your husband made away:

Wherein trust me you shew¹⁴⁸ a noble minde,

¹⁴³ 250-255. as sharpe witted ... Painters Muse: The elaborate praise here directed towards the poet and the painter is interesting. A similar passage is not traceable in either Shakespeare, Marlowe or Kyd.

¹⁴⁴ witnesses: witnesseth (Q₂ and Q₃).

¹⁴⁵ hartes griefe: Crawford cites a parallel to Soliman and Perseda [works: III. ii. 14]

"my swollen harts grief."

¹⁴⁶ 259. Tis pittie ... well. Alice breaks another oath - that which she has just made to Michael concerning Susan's hand.

¹⁴⁷ leaue: Tyrrell reads "love" (Bayne).

¹⁴⁸ shew: beare (Q₃).

That rather then youle liue with him you hate,
 Youle venture lyfe, and die with him you loue,¹⁴⁹ 270
 The like will I do for my Susans sake.

Ales. Yet rothing could inforce me to the deed,
 Eut Mosbies loue, Might I without controll,¹⁵⁰
 Inioy thee still, then Arden should not die:
 But seeing I cannot therefore let him die.¹⁵¹

Mos Enough, sweete Ales, thy kinde words makes¹⁵² me melt,
 Your tricke of poysoned pictures we dislyke,
 Some other poyson would do better farre.

Ales. I such as might be put into his broth,
 Ard yet in taste not to be found at all, 280

Clarke. I know your minde,¹⁵³ and here I haue it for you,
 Put but a dram of this into his drinke,

149 266-270. I know ... you loue: Clarke shows his knowledge of their love affair and intended plot against Arden's life. He sadistically attributes Alice with nobility, courage and character for entering into such a daring pursuit.

150 controll: restraint by marital vows.

151 275. But seeing ... die: This line is missing from Q2 only.

152 makes: The singular verb used here with a plural subject is frequent in the play and not uncommon in Elizabethan literature. Brooke refers to Abbott's Shakespearean Grammar #332-333.

153 I know your minde: I know what you are thinking of.

Or any kirde of broth that he shall eat:

And he shall die within an houre after.

Ales. As I am a gentle-woman¹⁵⁴ Clarke, next day

Thou and Susar shall be married.

Mos. And ile mak her dowry more the¹⁵⁵ ile talk of Clark,

Clarke. Yonder's your husband, Mosbie ile be gore.

Here enters Arden and Francklin.

Ales. In good time,¹⁵⁶ see where my husband comes,

Maister Mosbie aske him the question your selfe. 290

Exit Clarke.

Mos. Maister Arden, being at London yester night,

The Abby lands whereof you are now possest,

Were offred me on some occasion,

By Greene, one of sir Antony Ager's¹⁵⁷ men:

I pray you sir tell me, are not the lands yours?

Hath any other interest herein?¹⁵⁸

Arden. Mosby, that question wele decyde anon,

Ales make ready my brekfast, I must hence.

¹⁵⁴ gentle-woman: Alice never ceases to remind others of her high social position.

¹⁵⁵ thē: then (Q2 and Q3).

¹⁵⁶ In good time: at the right moment (Baskervill).

¹⁵⁷ Sir Anthony Ager: The name appears in Holinshed. He was apparently Greene's master but no other historical material is traceable.

¹⁵⁸ herein: therein (Q3).

Exit Ales.

As for the lands mosbie they are mire,

By letters patents from his Maiesty:

300

But I must haue a Mardat¹⁵⁹ for my wyfe,

They say you seeke to robbe me of her loue.

Villaire what makes thou¹⁶⁰ in her company,

Shees no companion for so base a grcome.¹⁶¹

Mosbie Arden I thought rot on her, I cam to thee,

But rather then I pocket vp¹⁶² this wrong.

Francklin. What will you doo sir?

Mos. Reuenge¹⁶³ it on the proudest of you both:

Then Arden drawes forth Mosbies sword.

Arden. So sirha, you may rot weare a sword,

The statute makes against artificers,¹⁶⁴

310

¹⁵⁹ Mardat: a judicial or legal command from a superior to an inferior (OED). The author often uses such legal terminology figuratively.

¹⁶⁰ what makes thou: what are you doing.

¹⁶¹ 304. Shees no ... grcome: Again, it is social position which dominates the argument.

¹⁶² pocket vp: put vp (Q3). Cf. King John III. i. 199-200:

"well ruffian, I must pocket vp these wrongs."

¹⁶³ Reuenge: the first of many threats of revenge - a stock ingredient of the blood tragedy.

¹⁶⁴ 309-310. you may ... artificers: by law, craftsmen were not allowed to wear swords. As a source, Bullen cites an obscure reference, "37 Edward III. c. 9."

I warrand that I doo,¹⁶⁵ now vse your bodkin,
 Your spanish needle,¹⁶⁶ and your pressing Iron.¹⁶⁷
 For this shall go with me, and marke my words,
 You goodman¹⁶⁸ botcher tis to you I speake,
 The next time that I take thee neare my house,
 In steede of legs Ile make thee crall¹⁶⁹ on stumps.

Mos. Ah maister Arden you have iniurde mee,

I doo appeale to God, and to the world.

Fran. Why canst thou deny, thou wert a botcher orce,

Mos. Measure me what I am, not what I was.¹⁷⁰ 320

Ar. Why what art thou now but a Veluet drudge,¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁵ I warrand that I doo: I am justified in this action (Onions).

¹⁶⁶ Your spanish needle: "The making of Spanish needles was first taught in England by Elias Crowse a Germane about the eight yeere of Queere Elizabeth, and in Queen Maries time there was a negro made fine Spanish needles in cheape-side, but would neuer teach his Art to any." (Bullen here quotes from Howe's Stow, 1631, p. 1038.)

¹⁶⁷ your pressing Iron: Mosbie uses this later as a weapon to kill Arden. See Appendix III, p. 191.

¹⁶⁸ goodman: the term designates a class below that of a gentleman (Onions).

¹⁶⁹ crall: crawle (Q₂ and Q₃).

¹⁷⁰ 320. Measure ... I was: Mosbie's sensitivity to his low social position is apparent.

¹⁷¹ Veluet drudge: the expression has a double meaning. It can refer to Mosbie's profession as a tailor or to Mosbie's conniving, slippery character (Onions).

A cheating steward, and base minded peasant.¹⁷²

Mos. Arden now thou hast belcht and vomited,
 The rancorous verome of thy mis-swolne hart,
 Heare me but speake, as I intend to liue
 With God, and his elected saints¹⁷³ in heauen,
 I neuer meant more to solicit her,
 And that she knowes, and all the world shall see,
 I loued her once, sweete Arden pardon me.
 I could not chuse, her beauty fyred my hearte,
 But time hath quenched these ouerraging coles,
 And Arden though I now¹⁷⁴ frequent thy house,
 Tis for my sisters sake, her waiting maid
 And not for hers, maiest thou enjoy her long:¹⁷⁵
 Hell fyre and wrathfull vengeance light on me,¹⁷⁶

330

¹⁷² 322. cheating steward ... peasant: Again Arden's attack is socially derisive.

¹⁷³ elected saints: the doctrine of the Elect could be suggestive of the Calvinistic beliefs of the author.

¹⁷⁴ now: omitted in Q₃

¹⁷⁵ 324-334. Arden now ... her long: Mosbie's speech is quite admirable. The imagery is heightened in tone as Mosbie feigns humility and helplessness to resist Alice's beauty. This guise of affected modesty is also cunning flattery to arouse Arden's sympathy.

¹⁷⁶ 335. Hell fyre ... on me: this line emphasizes the heavy moralistic tone of the play. Crawford cites a parallel to Soliman and Perseda [Works: II, i. 114]

"vengeance light on me."

If I dishonor her or iniure thee.

Arden. Mosbie with these thy protestations,

The deadly hatred of my hart is appeased,

And thou and Ie be freends, if this proue trew

As for the base tearmes I gaue thee late, 340

Forget them Mosbie, I had cause to speake:

When all the Knights and gentlemen of Kent,

Make common table talke of her and thee.

Mosbie. Who liues that is not toucht with slaunderous tongues,¹⁷⁷

Fraunce. Then Mosbie, to eschew¹⁷⁸ the speache of men,

Upon whose generall brute¹⁷⁹ all honor hangs,

Forbeare¹⁸⁰ his house.

Arden. Forbeare it, nay rather frequent it more.

The worlde shall see that I distrust her not,

To warne him on the sudden from my house, 350

were to confirme the rumour that is growne.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ slaunderous tongues: The undercurrent of malicious gossip bringing misfortune is reinforced.

¹⁷⁸ eschew: escape, avoid (Onions).

¹⁷⁹ brute: brute (Q₂ and Q₃); rumour, report (Onions).

Cf. Timon of Athens V. i. 197-198:

"One that reioyces in the common wracke, / As common brute doth put it."

¹⁸⁰ Forbeare: leave alone, withdraw from the presence of (Onions).

¹⁸¹ 348-351. Forbeare it ... growne: Arden's argument, though logically sound, ironically causes his downfall.

Mos. By faith my sir¹⁸² you say trew,

And therefore will I sojourne here a while,

Vntill our enemies haue talkt their fill.

And then I hope theile¹⁸³ cease, and at last confesse,

How causeles they have iniurde her and me.

Arđ. And I will ly at London all this tearne,

To let them see how light I wey their words.¹⁸⁴

Here enters Ales.¹⁸⁵

Ales. Husband sit down, your brekfast will be could,¹⁸⁶

Arđ. Come M. Mosbie will you sit with vs, 360

Mos. I can not eat, but ile sit for company.

Arđ. Sirra Michaell see our¹⁸⁷ horse be ready.

Ales. Husband why pause ye,¹⁸⁸ why eat you not,

Arđ. I am not well thers something in this broth

That is not holesome, didst thou make it Ales?

¹⁸² By faith my sir: "undoubtedly we should read "By my faith, sir." (Bullen).

¹⁸³ theile: they will.

¹⁸⁴ 357-358. And I ... words: Arden only gives Alice and Mosbie time to further plot his death.

¹⁸⁵ Here enters Ales: The Tyrrell edition here reads: "Scene III. Room in Arden's House, as before. Enter Arden, Franklin, Mosbie, Michael and Alice." (Brooke).

¹⁸⁶ could: cold (Q2 and Q3).

¹⁸⁷ our: your (Q2 and Q3).

¹⁸⁸ ye: you (Q3).

Ales. I did, and thats the cause it likes not you,

Then she throws down the broth on the grounde.¹⁸⁹

Thers nothing that I do can please your taste.

You were best to say I would haue poysoned you,¹⁹⁰

I cannot speak or cast aside my eye:

But he Imagines I haue stept awry.

370

Heres he that you cast in my teeth so oft,¹⁹¹

Now will I be conuincd, or purge my selfe,¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Then she throws down the broth on the grounde: This outbreak of temper is unexpected in view of Alice's earlier professed love for Arden. However, it does show Alice as emotional and impetuous consequently preparing the reader for her ambivalence towards Arden and Mosbie and her later violence. Crawford draws a similarity here to Kyd's (John) pamphlet The Murder of John Brewen where Anne too upsets the "poisoned pottage" contained in "a porringer". The poison, in this case, has accomplished its purpose.

¹⁹⁰ 368. You were ... you: Alice actually admits the truth.

¹⁹¹ 369-371. I cannot ... so oft: Arden is here presented as an overly suspicious husband who would stoop so low as to flout friends in front of Alice to entrap her and satiate his jealousy.

¹⁹² 372. Now will ... purge my selfe: Crawford gives the parallel in Soliman and Perseda [Works: II. i. 259]

"Great ease it were for me to purge my selfe."

However, the expression is also common in Shakespeare: Cf. I Henry IV, III. ii. 20-21:

I can purge/

"My selfe of many I am charg'd withall."

I charge thee speake to this mistrustfull man,
 Thou that wouldst see me hange,¹⁹³ thou hosbye thou,
 What fauour hast thou had more then a kisse
 At comming or departing from the Towne?

Nos. You wrong your selfe and me, to cast these douts

Your louing husband is not Ielious.

ard. Why gentle mistres Ales, cannot I be ill,

But youle accuse your selfe.

380

Franckline thou haste a boxe of Methridate,¹⁹⁴

Ile take a lytle to preuent the worst.

Fran. Do so, and let vs presently take horse,

My lyfe for yours ye shall do well enough.

Ales. Giue me a spoure, Ile eat of it my selfe,

Would it were full of poyson to the brin.

Then should my cares and troubles haue an end,

Was euer silly¹⁹⁵ woman so tormented?

Arden. Be patient sweete loue, I mistrust not thee.

¹⁹³ hange: bang (Q3).

¹⁹⁴ Methridate: mithridate - derived from old pharmacy: a composition in the form of an electuary, regarded as a universal antidote against poison and infectious disease (CED). Bayne gives the following historical account of the word: "Called after the famous King of Pontus, who made himself poison-proof. Greene uses the word."

¹⁹⁵ silly: helpless, defenceless (Onions). Cf. Two Gentlemen of Verona IV. i. 71-72:

"do no outrages/
 On silly women, or poore passengers."

Ales. God will reuenge it Arden if thou doest. 390

For neuer woman lou'd her husband better, thē I do thee,¹⁹⁶

Arden. I know it sweete Ales, cease to complaine:

Least that in teares I answer thee agaire.

Fran. Come leaue this dallying¹⁹⁷ and let vs away.

Ales. Forbeare to wound me with that bitter word,

Arden shall go to London in my¹⁹⁸ armes.

Arden. Loth am I to depart, yet I must go,

Ales. Wilt thou to London then, and leaue me here?

Ah if thou loue me gentle Arden stay,

Yet if thy busines be of great Import 400

Go if thou wilt Ile beare it as I may

But write from London to me euery weeke,

May euery day and stay no longer there

Then thou must nedes, least that I die for sorrow.

Arden. Ile write vnto thee euery other¹⁹⁹ tide,

And so farewell sweete Ales till we meete next.

Ales. Farewell Husband seeing youle haue it so.

And M. Francklin, seeing you take him hence,

¹⁹⁶ 391. For neuer ... thee: another reversal of feeling for Alice.

¹⁹⁷ dallying: trifling (Onions).

¹⁹⁸ my: mine (Q₂ and Q₃).

¹⁹⁹ other: omitted in Q₃.

In hope youle hasten him home Ile giue you this
and then she kisseth him.

Frar. And if he stay the fault shall not be mine, 410

Mosbie farewell and see you keepe your oath.

Mosbie I hope he is not Ielious of me now.

Arden. No Mosbie no, hereafter thinke of²⁰⁰ me,

As of²⁰¹ your dearest frend, and so farewell.

Exeunt Arden, Franklin, & Michael.

Ales. I am glad he is gone, he was about to stay.

But did you marke me then how I brake of?

Mosbie I Ales, and it was cunningly performed,

But what a villaine is this²⁰² painter Clarke?

Ales. Was it not a goodly poyson that he gaue?

Why he's as well now as he was before. 420

It should haue bene some fine confection,²⁰³

That might haue giuen the broth some daintie²⁰⁴ taste,

²⁰⁰ of: on (Q3).

²⁰¹ of: omitted in Q3.

²⁰² is this: was the (Q2 and Q3).

²⁰³ confection: a compound preparation of drugs, a specially prepared poison (Onions). Cf. Cymbeline V. v. 247-249:

"that Confection/ Which I gave him for Cordiall, shee is seru'd,/ As I would serue a Rat."

²⁰⁴ daintie: sweet.

This powder was to grosse and populos.²⁰⁵

Mosbie But had he eaten but three spoorefulles more,

Then had he died, and our loue continued.

Ales. Why so it shall²⁰⁶ Mosbie, albeit²⁰⁷ he liue,

Mosbie. It is vnpossible,²⁰⁸ for I haue sworne,

Neuer hereafter to sollicite thee,

Or whylest he lives, once more importune²⁰⁹ thee.

Ales. Thou shalt not neede I will importune thee. 430

What shall an oath make thee forsake my loue?

As if I haue not sworne as much my selfe,

²⁰⁵ populos: "Perhaps 'populos' may be used in the sense of 'thick, compact'; but I cannot quote for this use of the word" (Bullen).

Delius proposed 'palpable' but later retracted it and quoted Appius and Virginia, ed. Dyce, vol. ii, p. 261:

"he I plead for/
Has power to make your beauty populous"
(Brooke).

The implication here is that "populos" means "common, vulgar". Bullen's suggestion, though unsubstantiated, seems more apt.

²⁰⁶ so it shall: omitted in Q₃.

²⁰⁷ albeit: although (Onions).

²⁰⁸ vnpossible: impossible (Q₂ and Q₃). "Vnpossible" is not necessarily a misprint. The word also appears in Richard II, II. ii. 122-123:

"For vs to leuie power/
Proportionable to the enemy is all
vnpossible."
[Q-1597]

²⁰⁹ importune: bother, trouble, impel (Onions).

And giuen my hand vnto him in the church,²¹⁰

Tush Mosbie oathes are wordes, and words is winde,²¹¹

And winde is mutable:²¹² then I conclude,

Tis childishnes to stand vpon an oath.

Mos. Well proued Mistres Ales, yet by your leaue,

Ile keep mine vntroken, whilest he liues.

Ales. I doo, and spare not his time is but short,

For if thou beest as resolute as I,

440

Weele haue him murdered, as he walkes the streets:

In London many alehouse Ruffins keepe²¹³

Which as I heare will murther men for gould,²¹⁴

They shall be soundly fed to pay him home.²¹⁵

²¹⁰ 431-433. What shall ... church: In rebuking Mosbie for standing by an oath, Alice is suddenly reminded of her own to Arden.

²¹¹ words is winde: words are wind - Q₂ and Q₃. The expression is an old proverb first found in 1390 in Gower's Confessio Amantis III, 2768:

For word is wynd, bot the maistrie
Is that a man himself defende Of
thry which is noight to commende.

(ODEP)

The proverb is often found in Shakespeare. Cf. The Comedy of Errors III. i. 75:

"A man may breake a word with your sir, /and words are but winde."

²¹² mutable: changeable.

²¹³ keepe: lodge (Baskervill).

²¹⁴ gould: gold (Q₂ and Q₃).

²¹⁵ 444. soundly fed to pay him home: to murder him.

Here enters Greene.

Mos. Ales whats he that comes yonder, knowest thou him²¹⁶

Ales. Mosbie be gore, I hope tis ore that comes

To put in practise our intended drifts,

Exit Mosbie.

Gre. Mistres Arden you are well met,

I am sorry that your husband is from home,

When as²¹⁷ my purposed iourney was to him, 450

Yet all my labour is not spent in vaine:

For I suppose that you can full discourse,²¹⁸

And flat resolue me²¹⁹ of the thing I seeke.

Ales. What is it maister Greere? If that I may

Or can, with safety,²²⁰ I will answer you.

Crawford quotes from Soliman and Perseda [works: III. iii. 24]
a strained parallel:

" I will pay you both you sound delight."

Cf. The Tempest II. ii. 79-80:

"hee shall pay for him that hath him, and that soundly"

- a Shakespearean parallel.

²¹⁶ him: omitted in Q₃.

²¹⁷ When as: since (Baskervill).

²¹⁸ discourse: converse (Onions).

²¹⁹ flat resolue me: completely satisfy my anxiety or uncertainty (Onions).

²²⁰ with safety: without over-stepping my bounds.

Greene. I heard your husband hath²²¹ the grant of late,
 Confirmed by letters patents from the king,
 Of all the lands of the Abby of Feuershame,
 Generally intituled,²²² so that all former grants,
 Are cut of, whereof I my selfe had one,
 But now my interest by that is void.

460

That is all mistres Arden, is it trew nor no?²²³

Ales. Trew maister Greene, the lands are his in state,²²⁴
 And whatsoeuer leases were²²⁵ before,
 Are void for tearme²²⁶ of Maister Ardens lyfe:
 He hath the grant vnder the Chancery seale.

Gre. Pardon me mistres Arden, I must speake,
 For I am toucht,²²⁷ your husband doth me wrong:
 To wring me from the little land I haue.²²⁸

²²¹ hath: had (Q₂ and Q₃).

²²² intituled: deeded, placed a claim upon (Onions).

²²³ nor no: or no (Q₂ and Q₃).

²²⁴ in state: by judicial order, legally (Onions).

²²⁵ were: omitted in Q₃.

²²⁶ for tearme: until the termination.

²²⁷ toucht: overwrought with emotion.

²²⁸ 460. To wring me from the little land I haue: Bayne
 cites 2 Henry VI, V. i. 188:

"To wring the Widdow from her custom'd right."

My liuing is my lyfe, orelly that 470
 Resteth remainder²²⁹ of my portion.
 Desyre of welth is endles in his minde,
 And he is gredy gaping still²³⁰ for faine,
 Nor cares he though young gentlemen do begge,
 So he may scrape and hoorde vp in his poutche,²³¹
 But seeing he hath taken my lands, Ile value lyfe:
 As careles as he is carefull for to get,
 And tell him this from me, Ile be reuenged,²³²
 And so, as he shall wishe the Akby lands
 Had rested still, within their former state.²³³ 480

²²⁹ remainder: remained (Q₂ and Q₃).

The original reading is perhaps correct. "Remainder" during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries implied "residual or further interest remaining over from an estate, coming into effect when this has determined, and created by the same conveyance by which the estate itself was granted." (Onions). Cf. All's Well IV. iii. 314-317:

"he will sell the fee-simple of his saluation, the inheritance of it, and cut th' intaile from all remainders, and a perpetuall succession for it perpetually."

²³⁰ still: always.

²³¹ poutche: pouch.

²³² reuenged: Greene is the second character to seek vengeance on Arden.

²³³ 468-480. your husband ... former state: This speech by Greene emphasizes Arden's greed and miserliness which Alice has already described on p. 22. Arden is not depicted here in heroic proportions.

Ales. Alas poore gentleman, I pittie you,
 And wo is me that any man should want,
 God knowes tis not my fault, but wonder not
 Though he be harde to others, when to me,
 Ah maister Greene, God knowes how I am vsde,

Gre. Why mistres Arden can the crabbed churle,
 Vse you unkindely respects he not your birth?
 Your honorable freends, nor what you brought:
 Why? all Kent knowes your parentage, and what you are²³⁴

Ales. Ah M. Greene be it spoken in secret heere, 490
 I neuer liue good day with him alone:
 When hee is at home, then haue I froward²³⁵ lookes,
 Hard words and blowes, to mend the match withall:²³⁶
 And though I might content as good a man,
 Yet doth he keepe in every corner trulles,²³⁷
 And weary with his trugges at home,
 Then rydes he straight to London, there forsooth
 He reuelles it among such filthie ones,

²³⁴ 487-489. respects ... you are: Alice's social status is again emphasized. The final line strikes an ironic note since Alice's adultery is also well-known.

²³⁵ froward: disobedient, unfavourable (Onions).

²³⁶ 493. Hard words ... withall: Alice tries to arouse sympathy from Greene by telling of cruel abuse at Arden's hands. The truth of her condemnation, however, can be questioned.

²³⁷ trulles: "trulles and trugges are contemptuous terms for whores" (Bullen).

As counsels²³⁸ him to make away his wyfe:

Thus liue I dayly in continuall feare: 500

In sorrow, so despairing of redres

As every day I wish with hartly prayer,

That he or I were taken forth the worlde.²³⁹

Gre. Now trust me mistres Ales, it greeueth me,

So faire a creature should be so abused.

Why who would haue thought the ciuill sir, so sollen,²⁴⁰

He lookes so smoothly now fye vpon him Churle,

And if he liue a day he liues too long,

But frolick²⁴¹ woman, I shall be the man,

Shall set you free from all this discontent: 510

And if the Churle deny my intereste,

And will not yelde my lease into my hand,

Ile paye him home,²⁴² what euer hap to me,

Ales. But speake you as you thinke?

Gre. I Gods my witnes, I meane plaine dealing,

For I had rather die then lose my land.

238 counsels: counsell (C₃).

239 496-503. And weary ... the worlde: Alice continues to blacken Arden's character alluding to lechery and planning her murder. She reaches a peak of melodrama proclaiming it to be a matter of his life or hers.

240 sollen: dark, dismal, malicious (Onions).

241 frolick: "an exclamation meaning 'cheer up'" (Bayne).

242 pay him home: Cf. p. 38, n. 215.

Ales. Then maister Greene be counsailed by me.

Indaunger rot your selfe, for such a Churle,
 But hyre some Cutter²⁴³ for to cut him short,
 And heer's ten pound, to wager²⁴⁴ them with all, 520
 When he is dead you shall haue twenty more.
 And the lands whereof my husband is possest,
 Shall be intytled as they were before.

Gre. Will you keepe promise with me?

Ales. Or count me false and periurde, whilst I liue,

Gre. Then heeres my hand Ile haue him so dispatcht,
 Ile vp to London straight, Ile thether poast,²⁴⁵
 And neuer rest, til I haue compast it,
 Till then farewell.

Ales. Good Fortune follow all your forward thoughts 530

Exit Grene.

And whosoeuer doth attempt the deede,
 A happie hand I wish and so farewell.
 All this goes well, Mosbie I long for thee
 To let thee know all that I haue contriued,

²⁴³ Cutter: cutthroat (Baskervill).

²⁴⁴ wager: "Wager seems to have here the meaning 'pay wages to'. 'Wage' is frequently used in this sense" (Brooke).

²⁴⁵ poast: post.

Here enters Mosbie & Clarke.²⁴⁶

Mos. How now Ales whats the newes,

Ales. Such as will content thee well sweete hart,

Mos. Well let them passe²⁴⁷ a while, and tell me Ales,

How have you dealt, and tempered with²⁴⁸ my sister

What will she have my neighbour Clarke, or no?

Ales. What M. Mosbie let him wooe him self, 540

Thinke you that maides looke not for faire²⁴⁹ wordes,²⁵⁰

Go to her Clarke shees all alone within,

Michaell my man is cleane out of her bookes.²⁵¹

Clarke. I thanke you mistres Arden, I will in,

And if faire Susan, and I can make a gree,²⁵²

²⁴⁶ Here enters Mosbie & Clarke: Tyrrell begins Act II here (Brooke).

²⁴⁷ let them passe: a common colloquial expression which occurs frequently in the play. Cf. pp. 47, 85.

²⁴⁸ tempered with: worked upon, softened (Onions).

²⁴⁹ faire: "faire is here to be pronounced in two syllables. Such lengthenings are very frequent with words containing liquids or nasals" (Brooke).

²⁵⁰ 541. Thinke you ... wordes: Mosbie again displays his cold indifference to romance and sentimentalism.

²⁵¹ 543. Michaell ... bookes: Crawford draws a parallel to this line from The Murder of John Brewen, "no man was so high in her books as John Parker". However, Shakespeare uses the same expression in Much Ado I. i. 79-80:

"the Gentleman is not in your bookes."

²⁵² make a gree: make gree (Q3); reach an agreement. Bayne comments "Agree was used adverbially for 'at gree'".

You shall command me to the vttermost,
As farre as either goods or lyfe may stretch.

Exit Clark.

Mos. Now Ales lets heare thy newes!

Ales. They be so good, that I must laugh for ioy,

Before I can begin to tell my tale, 550

Mos. Lets heare them, that I may laugh for company

Ales. This morning M. Greene, dick greene I meane,

From whom my husband had the Abby land,

Came hether railing for to know the trueth,

Whether my husband had the lands by grant,

I tould him all, where at he stormd a maine,²⁵³

And swore he would cry quittance²⁵⁴ with the Churle,

And if he did denye his enterest

Stabbe him, whatsoeuer did befall him selfe,

When as I sawe his choller thus to rise, 560

I whetted on the gentleman with words²⁵⁵

And to conclude, Mosbie, at last we grew

To composition²⁵⁶ for my husband's death,

²⁵³ a maine: amain, with full force or speed (Onions).

²⁵⁴ cry quittance: be even with, take revenge, demand to requite (Onions).

²⁵⁵ l. 561. I whetted ... words: Alice confesses that she has not told the truth to Greene; therefore, her charges of cruelty by Arden are perhaps wholly unjustified.

²⁵⁶ composition: plotting a plan, agreement (Onions).

I gaue him ten pound to hire knaues,
 By some deuise to make away the Churle:
 When he is dead, he should haue twenty more,
 And repossesse his former lands againe,
 On this we greed, and he is ridden straight
 To London, to bring his death about.

Mos. But call you this good newes?

570

Ales. I sweete hart, be they not?

Mos. Twere cherefull newes, to hear the churle wer dead,

But trust me Ales I take it passing ill,
 You would be so forgetfull of our state,
 To make recount of it to euery groome,
 What? to acquaint each stranger with our drifts,
 Cheefely in case of murther, why tis the way,
 To make it open vnto Ardens selfe.
 And bring thy selfe and me to ruine both,
 Forewarnde, forearmde who threats his enemye²⁵⁷
 Lends him a sword to garde himselfe with all.

580

Ales. I did it for the best.

Mos. Well, seing tis don, cherefully²⁵⁸ let it pas.

²⁵⁷ 580-581. Forewarnde ... with all: The expression is partially proverbial. Cf. Heywood's Dialogue II. vi. 63:

"Halfe warnd halfe armde" (1546).

These lines from Arden now appear as a proverb in ODEP.

²⁵⁸ cherefully: cheerefully (Q₃).

You know this Greene, is he not religious?²⁵⁹

A man I gesse of great deuotion.

Ales. He is.

Mos. Then sweete Ales²⁶⁰ let it pas, I haue a dryft
will quyet²⁶¹ all, what euer is amis.

Here enters Clarke and Susan.

Ales. How now Clarke, haue you found me false?

Did I not plead the matter hard for you?

590

Clarke. You did.

Mos. And what, wilt be a match,

Clarke. A match, I faith sir I, the day is mine,

The Painter, layes his cullours to the lyfe,

His pensel drawes no shadowes in his loue.

Susan is mine.

Ales. You make her blushe.

Mos. What sister is it Clarke must be the man?

Su. It resteth in your graunt, some words are past,

And happely²⁶² we be growne vnto a match,

600

If you be willing that it shall be so?

²⁵⁹ religious: conscientious, scrupulous, strict (Onions).

²⁶⁰ sweet Ales: omitted in Q₃.

²⁶¹ quyet: quiet (Q₂ and Q₃).

²⁶² happely: haply, perchance (Onions).

Mos. Ah maister Clarke, it resteth at my grant,
 You see my sister's yet at my dispose,
 But so youle graunt me one thing I shall aske,
 I am content my sister shall be yours.

Clark. What is it M. Mosbie?

Mos. I doo remember once in secret talke,
 You tould me how you could compound by Arte.
 A crucifix impoysored:²⁶³
 That who so looke vpon it should waxe blinde, 610
 And with the sent²⁶⁴ be stifeled, that ere long,
 He should dye poysord, that did view it wel.
 I would haue you make me such a crucifix,
 And then Ile grant my sister shall be yours.

Cla. Though I am loath, because it toucheth lyfe,
 Yet rather or Ile²⁶⁵ leaue sweete Susans loue,
 Ile do it, and with all the haste I may.
 But for whome is it?

Ales. Leaue that to vs, why Clarke, is it possible,
 That you should paint and draw it out your selfe, 620

²⁶³ A crucifix impoysored: The cross here is symbolic of a complete repudiation of Christian values by Alice, Mosbie and the Painter. It reflects further the tone of paganism elsewhere followed by Alice. Cf. pp. 11, 104.

²⁶⁴ sent: scent.

²⁶⁵ Ile: I (Q₃).

The cullours beeing balefull and impoysoned,
 And no waies preiudice²⁶⁶ your selfe with all?

Mos. Well questioned Ales,
 Clarke how answer you that?

Cla. Very easily, Ile tell you straight,
 How I doe worke of these Impoysoned drugs,
 I fasten on my spectacles so close,
 As nothing can any way offend my sight,
 Then as I put a leafe within my nose,
 So put I rubarbe²⁶⁷ to auoid the smell, 630
 And softly as another worke I paint,

Mos. Tis very well, but against when shall I haue it,

Cla. Within this ten dayes,

Mos. Twill serue the turne.

Now Ales lets in, and see what cheere you keepe,
 I hope now M. Arden is from home,
 Youle giue me leaue to play your husbands part.

Ales. Mosbie you know whose maister of my hart,
 He well may be the master of the house.

Eeunt,

²⁶⁶ preiudice: endanger (Baskervill).

²⁶⁷ rubarbe: rhubarb was a commonly known medicinal
 antidote in Elizabethan England (OED).

[ACT II. SCENE I.

Country between Feversham and London]¹

Here enters Greene and Bradshaw.

Brad. See you them that coms yonder M. Greene?Gre. I very well, doo you know them?

Here enters Blacke Will and Shakebagge.

Brad. The one I knowe not, but he seemes a knaue,

Cheefly for bearing the other company:

For such a slaue, so vile a roge² as he,

Lyues not againe vppon the earth,

Blacke-will is his name I tell you M. Greene,

At Bulloine³ he and I were fellow souldiers,

Where he plaid such pranks,

As all the Campe feard him for his villany:

10

I warrant you he beares so bad a minde,

That for a croune heele murther any man.

Gre. The fitter is he for my purpose mary.Will. How now fellow Bradshaw,

Whether away so earely?

Brad. O Will times are changed, no fellows now,

Though we were once together in the field,

Yet thy freend to doo thee any good I can.

¹ Act II ... London: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).² roge: rogue (Q3).³ Bulloine: Boulogne, France.

Will. Why Bradshawe was not thou and I,

Fellow souldiers at Bulloine: 20

Wher I was a corporall, and thou but a base mercenarye
groome?⁴

No fellowes now, because you are a gouldsmith,

And haue a lytle plate in your shoppe,

You were gladde to call me fellow will.

And with a cursy⁵ to the earth,

One snatch good corporall.

Wher I stole the halfe Oxe from John the vitler.⁶

And domineer'd⁷ with it, amongst good fellowes,

In one night.⁸

Brad. I Will, those dayes are past with me. 30

⁴ 21. wher I ... groome: It is evident that social snobbery is not confined to the upper classes. Even criminals are concerned with social recognition among their own ranks.

⁵ cursy: courtsey.

⁶ vitler: victualler - one who supplies or undertakes to supply an army or armed force with necessary provisions (OED).

⁷ domineer'd: feasted riotously (Onions). Crawford draws a parallel to Soliman and Perseda [works: II. i. 290]

"or dominere with the roney."

Cf. also The Taming of the Shrew III. ii. 223:

"Goe to the feast, reuell and domineere."

⁸ 19-29. Why Bradshawe ... one night: These lines appear as verse in all Quartos. Several editions present them as prose. The line divisions here will follow the 1592 edition as closely as possible.

Will. I but they be not past with me,

For I kepe that same honorable mind⁹ still,

Good neighbour Bradshaw you are too proude to be my fellow,

But were it not that I see more company coming down

The hill, I would be fellowes with you once more,

And share Crowres with you to.

But let that pas, and tell me whether you goe.

Brad. To London Will, about a peece of seruice,¹⁰

Wherein happely thou maist pleasure me.

Will. What is it?

40

Brad. Of late Lord Cheiny¹¹ lost some plate,

Which one did bring, and sould it at my shoppe,

Saying he serued sir Antony Cooke,¹²

⁹ honorable mind: Even the outlaws must live by a code of honour demanding adherence to oaths made amongst them.

¹⁰ about a peece of seruice: Crawford cites the parallel in Soliman and Perseda [Works: I. iv. 60]

"a hot piece of service."

However, compare also Henry V, III. ii. 49-50:

"I knew by that peece of Seruice,/ the men would carry Coales."

¹¹ Lord Cheiny: Sir Thomas Cheyne "L. Warden of the Cinque Ports." (Holinshed). One branch of the Cheyne family had been long established in the Isle of Sheppey (DNB).

¹² sir Antony Cooke: This name and the story of the stolen plate told by Bradshaw are interesting additions to the play by the dramatist. Holinshed only makes mention of one Cooke, apparently the sailor's wife's first husband. However, a Sir Antony Cooke (1504-1576) was well known at the time as a tutor of Edward VI and a politician (DNB).

A search was made the plate was found with me,
 And I am bound to answer at the syse,¹³
 Now Lord Cheiny solemnly vowes,
 If law will serue hir, hele hang me for his plate,
 Now I am going to London vpon hope,
 To finde the fellow, now Will I know
 Thou art acpuainted¹⁴ with such companions. 50

Will. What manner of man was he?

Brad. A leane faced writhen¹⁵ knaue,
 Hauke nosde, and verye hollow eied,
 With mightye furrowes in his¹⁶ stormye browes,¹⁷
 Long haire down¹⁸ his shoulders curled,
 His chin was bare, but on his vpper lippe,
 A mutchado,¹⁹ which he wound about his eare,²⁰

13 syse: assizes

14 acpuainted: acquainted (Q₂ and Q₃). The "p" was inserted instead of "q" - an error by the compositor.

15 writhen: twisted, contorted (CED).

16 his: omitted in Q₃.

17 54. With mightye ... stormye browes: Crawford draws a parallel to Soliman and Perseda [works: I. v. 135]

"furrowes of her clowding brow."

18 down: down to (Q₃).

19 mutchado: moustache (Bayne).

20 52-57: A leare faced ... his eare: Bullen comments that

Will. What apparell had he,

Brad. A watchet²¹ sattin doublet all to torne,²²

The inner side did beare the greater show, 60

A paire of threed bare Veluet hose, seame rent,²³

A wosted stockin²⁴ rent aboute the shoe,

A liuery cloake, but all the lace was of.

Twas bad, but yet it serued to hide the plate,

Will. Sirra Shakebagge, canst thou remember

such a line "might have come straight out of Tamburlaire". However, "in no other part of the play can we find a trace of Marlowe's influence". Cf. The Jew of Malta [works: IV. 11. 1858-1861]

"He sent a shaggy torte'd staring slaue,
That when he speakes, drawes out his grisly beard,
And winds it twice or thrice about his eare;
Whose face has bin a grind-store for mens swords." Q-1633

Bayne here cites a Shakespearean passage which bears more striking similarities from The Comedy of Errors V. i. 238-242:

"They brought one Pinch, a hungry leane-fac'd Villaire ...
A needy-hollow-ey'd-sharpe-looking-wretch;
A liuing dead man."

Jacob also described the passage as definitely Shakespearean and proof of authorship (Brooke).

²¹ watchet: pale blue (Bayne). Q₂ and Q₃ read "watched".

²² all to torne: completely torn.

²³ seame rent: torn at the seams (Bayne).

²⁴ wosted stockin: worsted stocking.

Since we tould the boule²⁵ at Sittingburgh,²⁶

When I broke the Tapsters head of²⁷ the Lyon²⁸

With a Cudgill sticke?

Shak. I very well Will.

Will. Why it was with the morey that the plate was sould for 70

Sirra Bradshaw what wilt thou giue him

That can telle thee who sould thy plate?

Brad. Who I pray thee good Will,

Will. Why twas one Jack Fitten,²⁹

He's now in Newgate,³⁰ for stealing a horse,

And shall be arrairde the next sise³¹

Brad. Why then let Lord Cheiny seek Jack Fittē forth

²⁵ tould the boule: passed the drinking cup (Easkervill).

²⁶ Sittingburgh: Sittingburne (Q₃).

²⁷ of: at (Q₃).

²⁸ Tapsters head of the Lyon: Brooke refers to another reference in Mucedorus the kings sonne of Valentia:

"head of the tapster of the Lion."

²⁹ Jack Fitten: The name is not notorious in criminology or traceable. It is perhaps local colour added here. Furthermore, the incident with the stolen plate does not appear in Holinshed.

³⁰ Newgate: "the principal criminal prison of London holding all those who were to be tried for petty treason, felony or misdemeanour" (Clifford Dobb, "London Prisons", Shakespeare Survey, ed. A. Nicoll, Cambridge: University Press, 17, 1964, p. 88).

³¹ arrairde the next sise: arraigned at the next assize.

For Ile backe³² and tell him, who robbed him of his plate,
 This cheeres my hart M. Greene, Ile leaue you,
 For I must to the Ile of Sheppy³³ with speede, 80

Greene. Before you go let me intreat you

To carry this letter to mistres Arden of Feuershame,
 And humbly recommend me to her selfe.

Brad. That will I M. Greene, and so farewell.

Here will, theres a Crowne for thy good newes.

Exit Bradshawe.

Will. Farewell Bradshaw,

Ile drinke no water for thy sake, whilest this lasts.³⁴

Now gentleman, shall we haue your company to London.

Gre. May stay sirs, A lytle more I needs must vse your helpe,

And in a matter of great consequence,

Wherein if youle be secret and profound,

Ile giue you twenty Angells³⁵ for your paines.

Will. How? twenty Angells? giue my fellow

George shakbag and me, twenty Angells,

³² Ile backe: Ile goe backe (Q₃).

³³ Ile of Sheppy: See map; Appendix IV.

³⁴ whilest this lasts: whilest this doth last (C₂).

³⁵ Angells: gold coins having as their device the archangel Michael, value from 6s. 8d. to 10s (Onions). [£25.00 - L. B. Wright gives the Elizabethan pound a value of \$40 - \$50 by modern standards i.e. 1964]

And if thoult haue thy owne father slaine,

That thou mayst inherit his land, weele kill him,

Shak. I thy Mother, thy sister, thy brother, or all thy kin

Gre. Well this it is, Arden of Feuershame,

Hath highly wrongd me about the³⁶ Abby land,

That no reuendge but death will serue the turne. 100

Will you two kill him, heeres the Angels downe,

And I will lay the platforme³⁷ of his death:

Will. Plat me no platformes³⁸ give me the money,

And Ile stab him as he stand spissing against a wall,
but Ile kill him.

Sha. Where is he?

Greene. He is now at London, in Aldersgate streete,

Shak. He's dead, as if he had beene condemned

By an act of parliament if once Black Will and I

Sweare his death, 110

³⁶ the: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

³⁷ platforme: plan (Onions).

³⁸ Plat me no platformes: "So the First Murderer in
Yarington's Two Tragedies (III. 2):

' Grace me no graces, I respect no grace,
But with a grace to give a gracelesse stab"
(Bullen).

Crawford cites a parallel construction in Soliman and Perseda
Works: [I. iii. 160]

"Typhon me no typhons."

Gre. Here is ten pound, and when he is dead,

Ye shall haue twenty more:

Will. My fingers itches³⁹ to be at the pesant,

Ah that I might be set a worke thus through the yeere,

And that murther would grow to an occupation:

That a man might without daunger of law,

Zounds, I warrant I should be warden of the company,⁴⁰

Come let vs be going, and wele bate⁴¹ at Rochester,

Where Ile give thee a gallon of Sack,

To hansell⁴² the match with all.

120

Exeunt.

³⁹ My fingers itches: my fingers itch (Q3). i.e. I grow impatient to get my hands on the peasant.

⁴⁰114-117. Ah that ... company: The sheer sadism of Black Will is emphasized as he laments the fact that murder is not a legal profession.

⁴¹ wele bate: stop to eat, grow fat (batten - Onions).

⁴² hansell: confirm, seal (Bayre).

[SCENE II.

London. A Street near St. Paul's]¹

Here enters Michael.

Mich. I have gotten suche a letter,

As will touche the Painter, And thus it is.

Here enters Arden and Francklin and heares Michaell read
this letter.

My duetye remembred Mistres Susan, hoping in God you be in
good health, as I Michaell was at the making heereof.
This is to certifie you, that as the Turtle true, when
she hath lost her mate, sitteth alone, so I mourning for
your absence, do walk vp and down Poules, til one day I
fell a sleepe and lost my maisters Pantophelles.² Ah
mistres Susan abbolishe that paltry Painter, cut him off
by the shinnes, with a frowning looke of your crabed 10
countenance, & think vpon Michaell, who druncke with the
dregges of your fauour, wil cleaue as fast to your loue as
a plaster of Pitch to a gald horse back. Thus hoping you
will let my passions penetrate, or rather impetrate³
mercy of your meeke hands, I end.

Yours Michaell, or els not Michaell.⁴

¹ Scene II ... Paul's: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² Pantophelles: pantofles, slippers (Bayne).

³ impetrate: get by asking (Bayne).

⁴ 3-16. My duetye ... not Michaell: "Michael's letter is

Ard. Why you paltrie knaue,⁵

Stand you here loytering, knowing my affaires,
What haste my busines craues to send to Kent?

Fran. Faith, frend Michaell, this is very ill,

20

Knowing your maister hath no more but you,
And do ye⁶ slack his busines for⁷ your owne.

Ard. Where is the letter sirra, let me see it,

Then he giues him the letter.

See maister Francklin heres proper stuffe,

Susan my maid, the Painter, and my man,

A crue of harlots⁸ all in loue forsooth,

Sirra let me heare no more of this.

Now⁹ for thy lyfe, once write to her a worde.

a curious effort at euphemism which calls to mind Love's Labour's Lost. Note the fabulous natural history, the alliteration, and the alliterative proverb." that as the Turtle true, when she hath lost her mate, sitteth alone (Bayne).

The letter is certainly quite humorous with its attempted high-flown style and homely, prosaic imagery.

⁵ 17. you paltrie knaue: The exact expression appears in Solinan and Perseda [works: I. iv. 103]

"you paltrie knaue" (Crawford).

The phrase does not appear in Shakespeare.

⁶ ye: you (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁷ for: omitted in Q₃.

⁸ harlots: worthless, immoral people (Onions).

⁹ Now: "Nor" in Jacob (Brooke).

Here enters Grene, Will, and Shakebag,
 Wilt thou be married to so base a trull.
 Tis Mosbies sister, come I once at home,
 Ile rouse her from¹⁰ remaining in my house:
 Now M. Francklin let vs go walke in Paules,
 Come, but a turn or two and then away,

30

Exeunt.

Gre. The first is Arden, and thats his man,

The other is Francklin Ardens dearest freend,

Will. Zounds Ile kill them all three,

Gre. Nay sirs, touch not his man in any case,

But stand close, and take you fittest standing,¹¹

And at his coming foorth speede¹² him:

To the Nages head, ther' is¹³ this¹⁴ cowards haunt, 40

But now Ile leaue you till the deed be don:

Exit Greene.

Sha. If he be not paid his owne¹⁵ nere trust Shakebagge,

¹⁰ from: for (Q3).

¹¹ take you fittest standings: secure the best position.
 Q3 reads "your" for "you".

¹² speede: dispatch with haste (Onions).

¹³ ther' is: there's (Q3).

¹⁴ this: omitted in Q3.

¹⁵ paid his owne: given his just punishment.

Wil. Sirra Shakbag, at his coming foorth

He runne him through, and then to the blackfreers,¹⁶

And there take water and a way.

Sha. Why thats the best, but see thou misse him not.

Wil. How can I misse him, when I thinke on the fortye

Angels I must haue more.

Here enters a Prentise,

Prentise. Tis very late, I were best shute vp my stall,

For heere will be ould filching¹⁷ when the presse comes foorth 50
of Paules.

Then lettes he downe his window, and it breaks Black Wils
head.

Wil. Zounds draw¹⁸ Shakbag draw, I am almost kild.

¹⁶ blackfreers: Blackfriars: "After 1550, the Blackfriars continued to be an exempt place or 'liberty', an enclave within the walls of the City, but not part of it..." (Chambers II, p. 478). Sir Thomas Cheyne (Cf. p. 53, n. 11) claimed rights of possession to rooms in the Blackfriars in 1550 (Chambers, II, p. 499).

¹⁷ ould filching: "'rare filching'; 'old' was used to emphasize the word that followed" (Bullen). Brooke suggests "great filching". In any case, the implied meaning is that thievery was common in crowded gatherings.

Crawford here cites a parallel construction in Soliman and Perseda [Works: I. iii. 227]

"I shall have old laughing."

The same construction, however, is also frequent in Shakespeare: Cf. The Merchant of Venice IV. ii. 15:

"we shal haue old swearing."

¹⁸ draw: omitted in Q2 and Q3.

Pren. Wele tame you I warrant.

50

Wil. Zounds I am tame enough already,

Heere enters Arden, Fran. & Michael.

Ard. What trublesome fray or mutany is this?

Fran. Tis nothing but some brabbling paltry fray,

Deuised to pick mens pockets in the throng.

Ard. Ist nothing els? come Franklin let vs away.

Exeunt.

Wil. What mends¹⁹ shal I haue for my broken head?

Pren. Mary this mends, that if you get you not away

All the sooner, you shall be well beaten and sent to the
counter.²⁰ 60

Exit prentise.

Wil. Well Ile be gone, but looke to your signes,

For Ile pull them down all.

Shakbag my broken head grieues me not so much,

As by this meanes Arden hath escaped.

Here enters Greene.

¹⁹ mends: amends.

²⁰ counter: another London prison. The Counters were directly under the jurisdiction of the two Sheriffs of London.... They were intended for persons who offended against the City laws; all others committed there were supposed to be transferred as early as possible to the appropriate prison elsewhere. They remained open all night to receive persons arrested by the watch for disturbing the peace. Of the two, the Counter in Wood Street was easily the larger and therefore it is not surprising that there are far more literary references to it than to the Poultry Counter; both the debtor and the brawler were far more likely to be taken there. (Dobb, Shakespeare Survey, 17, p. 89).

I had a glinse of him and his companion.

Gre. Why sirs, Arden's as wel as I,

I met him and Francklin going merrilly to the ordinary,²¹

What dare you not do it?

Wil. Yes sir²² we dare do it, but were my consent to giue againe,

We would not do it vnder ten pound more. 70

I value euery drop of my blood at a french Crowne.

I haue had ten pound to steale a dogge,

And we haue no more heere to kill a man,

But that a bargane is a bargane, and so foorth,

You should do it your selfe.

Gre. I pray thee how came thy head broke,

Will. Why thou seest it is broke, dost thou not.

Sha. Stāding²³ against a staule, watching Ardens cōming,

A boy let down his shop window, and broke his head.

Wherevpon arose a braul, and in the tumult 80

Arden escapt vs, and past by vnthought on.

But forberance is no acquittance²⁴

²¹ ordinary: a public meal regularly provided at a fixed price in an eating-house or tavern (Onions).

²² Yes sir: yes sir sir (Q₃).

²³ Stāding: standing (Q₂ and Q₃).

²⁴ 82. forberance is no acquittance: forberance is no quit-
tance (Q₂ and Q₃). The expression has become proverbial. A
similar proverb is also found in Heywood's Dialogue II. iv. 53:

Another time wele do it I warrant thee.

Gre. I pray thee Will make cleare thy bloodie brow,

And let vs bethink vs on some other place,

Where Arden may be met with hardsonly.

Remember how deuoutly thou hast sworne,

To kill the villaine thinke upon thyne oath.

Will. Tush, I haue broken fiue hundred oathes,²⁵

But, wouldst thou charme me to effect this dede? 90

Tell me of gould my resolutions fee,

Say thou seest Mosbie kneeling at my knees,

Offring me seruice for my high attempt:

And sweete Ales Arden with a lap of crownes.

Comes with a lowly cursy to the earth,

Saying take this, but for thy quarterige,²⁶

Such yeerely tribute will I answer²⁷ thee.

Why this would steale soft metled²⁸ cowardice,

But sufferance is no quittance is this daiment. (1546)

Cf. Shakespeare's As You Like It III. v. 133:

"But that's all one: omittance is no quittance" (OEDP).

²⁵ 89. Tush ... oathes: Will adopts an attitude similar to that of Alice in her rejection of conventional morality.

²⁶ quarterige: quarterly payment (Bayne).

²⁷ answer: render (Baskervill).

²⁸ metled: melted (Q₂ and Q₃). The letters could have been juggled by the compositor. However, the original reading using an adaptation of the noun "mettle" meaning "spirit, courage" is not so unlikely.

With which black Will was neuer tainted with.²⁹

I tell thee Greene the forlorne trauailer, 100

Whose lips are glewed with sommers parching heat,

Mere longd so much to see a running brooke,

As I to finish Ardens Tragedy.

Seest thou this goare³⁰ that cleaueth to my face?

From hence nere will I wash this bloody staine,

Till Ardens hart be panting in my hand.

Gre. Why thats wel said but what saith Shakbag?

Shak. I cannot paint my valour out with words,

But giue me place and opportunitie,³¹

Such mercy as the staruen Lyones 110

When she is dry suckt of her³² eager young:

²⁹ tainted with: "tainted yet" in Jacob (Brooke). Crawford draws a parallel to Soliman and Perseda [works: IV. i. 89]

"Love neuer tainted Soliman till now."

Cf. 1 Henry VI, IV. v. 46:

"My Age was neuer tainted with such shame"

- a use by Shakespeare.

³⁰ goare: gore

³¹ 108-109. I cannot ... opportunitie: Shakebag feigns humility in his inadequacy at verbal eloquence and then proceeds with lines of the richest and most delicate poetry of the play.

³² her: omitted in C₃.

Shows to the pray that next encounters her.³³

On Arden so much pittie would I take.

Gre. So should it faire with men of firme resolute,

And now sirs seeing this accident,

Of meeting him in Paules hath no successe:

Let vs bethinke vs of some other place,

Whose earth may swallow vp this Ardens bloode.

Here enters Michael.

See yonder comes his man, and wat you what,³⁴

The foolish knaue is in loue with Mosbies sister, 120

And for her sake, whose loue he cannot get,

Unlesse Mosbie solicit his sute.³⁵

The villaine hath sworne the slaughter of his maister,

Weele question him, for he may stead vs³⁶ muche:

How now Michael whether are you going?

Mic. My maister hath new supt,

And I am going to prepare his chamber.

Gre. Where supt M. Arden?

Mic. At the Nages head, at the 18 pence ordinarye,

³³ 110-112. Such mercy ... her: The image of the hunter and the hunted as reflected here is central to the thematic development.

³⁴ wat you what: do you know what.

³⁵ sute: suit.

³⁶ stead vs: be of use to us.

How now M. Shakbag, what Black Wil,

130

Gods deere lady, how chaunce your face is so bloody?

Wil. Go too sirra, there is a chaunce in it.

This sawcines³⁷ in you wil make you be³⁸ knockt.

Mic. May and you be offended ile be gone.

Gre. Stay micheal you may not scape vs so.

Michael I knowe you loue your M. wel.

Mic. Why so I do, but wherefore wrdge you that?

Gre. Because I thinke you loue your mistres better,

[Mic.]³⁹ So think not I, but say, yfaith what if I should?

Shak. Come to the purpose Michael, we heare

140

You haue a pretty loue in Feuershame,

Mic. Why haue I two or three, whats that to thee?

Wil. You deale to mildely, with the pesant, thus it is.

Tis kowne⁴⁰ to vs you loue mosbies sister.

We know besides that you haue tane⁴¹ your oath,

To further Mosbie to your mistres bed.

And kill your M. for his sisters sake.

³⁷ sawcines: sauciress.

³⁸ be: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

³⁹ Mic : The name Michael was omitted from Q₁ only and the line given to Greene.

⁴⁰ kowne: knowne (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴¹ tane: ta'en, taken.

Now sir, a poorer coward then your selfe,
 Was neuer fostered in the coast of Kent.
 How comes it then,⁴² that such a knaue as you 150
 Dare sweare a matter of such consequence?⁴³

Gre. Ah will.

Will. Tush giue me leaue, thers no more but this,
 Sith⁴⁴ thou hast sworne, we dare discouer all,
 And hadst thou or shouldst thou vtter it,
 We have deuised a complat⁴⁵ vnder hand
 What euer shall betide to any of vs:
 To send thee roundly to the diuell of hell.
 And therefore thus, I am the very man,
 Markt in my birth howre by the destynies,⁴⁶ 160

⁴² then: omitted in Q3.

⁴³ 151. a matter of such consequence: Crawford draws a parallel to Soliman and Perseda Works: [IV. i. 245]

"Vnder couler of great consequence."

Cf. also Richard II, V. ii. 61:

"it is a matter of small consequence."

⁴⁴ Sith: since (Onions).

⁴⁵ complat: plan (Onions).

⁴⁶ 160. Markt ... destynies: This is a familiar echo of the conventional tragedy using characters of nobility who comment on the signs of their destiny at their birth. Cf. 1 Henry IV, III. i. 37-41: Glendower explains:

"at my Birth/

To giue an end to Ardens lyfe on earth,
 Thou but a member,⁴⁷ but to whet the knife,
 Whose edge must search the closet of his breast.
 Thy office is but to appoint the place,
 And traine⁴⁸ thy⁴⁹ M. to his tragedy.
 Myne to performe it, when occasion serues.
 Then be not nice,⁵⁰ but here deuise with vs,
 How and what way, we may conclude his death.

Sha. So shalt thou purchase, Mosbie for thy frend

And by his frendship gaire his sisters loue.

170

Gre. So shal thy mistres be thy fauorer,

The front of Heauen was full of fierie shapes,/

...
 These signes haue markt me extraordinarie."

It is ironic here that Black Will, of the lowest class makes such a claim.

⁴⁷ member: helper, assistant (Baskervill).

⁴⁸ traine: lure, entice (Onions). Cf. 1 Henry IV: V. ii. 21:

"We did traine him on."

⁴⁹ thy: the (Q₂).

⁵⁰ Then be not nice: Brooke suggests "nice" means "squeamish". Another possible reading is "be not reluctant or unwilling" (Onions).

The same phrasing occurs in Solimar and Perseda [works: I. ii. 23]

"then be not nice" (Crawford).

Shakespeare also uses the expression in Love's Labour's Lost IV. ii. 223:

"be not nice."

And thou disburdned of the oath thou made.

Mic. Well gentlemen I cannot but confesse,

With you have vrdged me so aparantly,⁵¹

That I have vowed my M. Ardens death,

And he whose kindly loue and liberall hard,

Doth challenge naught but good deserts of me.⁵²

I will delyuer ouer to your hands.

This night come to his house at Aldersgate,

The dores Ile leaue vnlockt against you come.⁵³

180

No sooner shall ye enter through the latch,

Ouer the thresholde to the inner court.

But on your left hand shall you see the staires.

That leads directly to my M. chamber.⁵⁴

There take him and dispose him as ye please,

Now it were good we parted company,

What I haue promised, I will performe.

⁵¹ aparantly: openly, evidently (Onions).

⁵² 176-177. And he ... of me: Michael here presents a view of Arden's character in direct contrast to Alice's description. He attributes Arden with compassion and generosity with a very sincere tone. His conscience is deeply bothered by what he has to do.

⁵³ against you come: in expectation of the time of your arrival (Baskervill).

⁵⁴ 181-184. No sooner ... chamber: Michael's description of the entrance is often quoted to illustrate the "inner court" structure of the Elizabethan townhouse.

Wil. Should you deceiue vs, twould go wrong w̄⁵⁵ you,

Mic. I will accomplish al I haue reuealde,

Wil. Come let's go drinke, choller makes me as drye as a dog 190

Exeunt Will, Gre. and Shak. Manet⁵⁶ Michael.

Mic. Thus feedes the Lambe securely on the dowre,

Whilst through the thicket of an arber brake,

The hunger bitten woulfe orepryes⁵⁷ his hant,

And takes aduantage to⁵⁸ eat him vp.⁵⁹

Ah harmeles Arden how, how hast thou misdore,

That thus thy gentle lyfe is leueld at,

The many good turnes that⁶⁰ thou hast done to me,

Now must I quitance with betraying thee.

I that should take the weapon in my hand,

And buckler⁶¹ thee from ill intending foes.

200

⁵⁵ w̄: with (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁵⁶ Manet: remains.

⁵⁷ orepryes: over looks.

⁵⁸ to: "for to" in Tyrrell (Brooke).

⁵⁹ 191-194. Thus feeds ... him vp: The imagery of the hunter and the hunted reappears to represent the villains stalking Arden.

⁶⁰ that: omitted in Q₃.

⁶¹ buckler: shield, defend (Onions). Cf. The Taming of the Shrew III. ii. 238:

"The buckler thee against a Million."

Do lead thee with a wicked⁶² fraudfull smile,
 As vnsuspected, to the slaughterhouse.⁶³
 So haue I sworre to Mosby and my mistres.
 So haue I promised to the slaughtermen.
 And should I not deale currently⁶⁴ with them,
 Their lawless rage would take reuenge on me,
 Tush, I will spurre at mercy for this once.
 Let pittie lodge where feeble women ly,
 I am resolued and Arden needs must die.

Exit Michaell.

⁶² wicked: omitted in Q3.

⁶³ 201-202. Do lead ... slaughterhouse: Crawford cites two parallels in phrasing from Soliman and Perseida [works: V. iii. 43] [II. i. 120]

"To leade a Lambe unto the slaughterhouse"

"Thy fraudful countenance"

⁶⁴ currently: genuinely, honestly (Baskervill).

[ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in Francklin's House, at Aldersgate¹

Here enters Arden & Fran.

Arden. No Francklin no, if feare or stormy threts,
 If loue of me, or care of womanhooede,
 If feare of God, or common speach of men,
 Who mangle credit with their wounding words,²
 And cooch³ dishonor as dishonor buds.⁴
 Might ioyne repentaunce in her wanton thoughts,
 No question then but she would turn the leafe,
 And sorrow for her desolution.⁵

¹ Act III ... Aldersgate: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² 3-4. common speach ... words: The emphasis is again on the injury incurred by gossip.

Note also the use of the words "mangle credit".

³ cooch: couch (Q3). Delius suggests "crop" is the intended word (Brooke). Brooke continues: "'cooch = cause to germinate'. This line, which has never been properly explained, appears to mean that scandal mongers nourish the unripe buds of dishonour, as fast as they appear, till they sprout and grow."

Bayne gives the following lengthy explication: "warneke explains 'couch = spread' comparing 'couch-grass'; but there is no authority for this use. Is the word used in its surgical sense? The line would then = 'cut the bud of dishonour so that it bursts into flower'. The surgical sense occurs in Holland's Pliny, 1601".

Could not the word simply mean "to put into words, phrase or express"?

⁴ dishonor buds: This is an interesting reflection of Alice's words earlier to Mosbie concerning their strained relationship -

"Is this the frute thy reconcilement buds". p. 19.

⁵ desolution: destruction, ruin (Onions).

But she is rooted in her⁶ wickednes
 Peruerse and stobburne, not to be reclainde, 10
 Good counsell is to her as raine to weedes⁷
 And reprehension⁸ makes her vice to grow,
 As Hydraes head that⁹ perisht by decay.¹⁰
 Her faults me think are painted in my face.
 For euery searching eye to ouer reede.
 And Mosbies name, a scardale vnto myne.
 Is deeply trenched in my blushing brow.
 Ah Francklin Francklin, when I think on this,
 My harts greefe rends my other powers,¹¹

⁶ her: omitted in Q₃.

⁷ as raine to weedes: Compare the imagery here with that in Alice's speech on p. 100, and Mosbie's on p. 97.

⁸ reprehension: remand, condemnation (Onions).

⁹ that: omitted in Q₃.

¹⁰ 3. As Hydraes head that perisht by decay: This ambiguous phrasing has occasioned several word changes. Delius replaces "perisht" with "flourisht", so too Bullen. Warnke and Proescholdt suggest "plenisht" for the same word (Brocke).

The original reading is not necessarily so distorted. The meaning is perhaps that Alice's vices are regenerated after a reproach just as a hydra's head if destroyed by decomposition re-shapes.

¹¹ 19. My harts greefe rends my other powers: Bayne draws a parallel here in wording to 2 Henry VI, II. i. 181:

"Sorrow and grieffe haue varquisht all my powers."

Worse then the conflict at the houre of death.¹²

20

Farn.¹³ Gentle Arden leaue this sad lament,

She will amend, and so your greefes will cease,

Or els shele die, and so your sorrows end.

If neither of these two do happely fall,

Yet let your comfort be, that others beare

Your woes, twice doubled all, with patience.

Ard. My house is irksome, there I cannot rest.

Fra. Then stay with me in London, go not home.

Ard. Then that base Mosbie doth vsurpe¹⁴ my roome,

And makes his triumphe of my boeing thence.

30

At home or not at home, where ere I be.

Heere heere it lyes, ah Francklin here it lyes,

That wil not out till wretched Arden dies.

Here enters Michael.

Fra. Forget your greefes a while, heer coms your man,

Ard. What a Clock ist sirra?

Mic. Almost ten.

Ard. See see how runnes away the weary time,

¹² houre of death: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: V. iv. 96]

"houre of death" (Crawford).

¹³ Farn: Fran. - Letters mixed in error.

¹⁴ vsurpe: Mosbie strikes the familiar figure of the history plays - the usurper.

Come M. Franklin, shal we go to bed.

Exeunt Arden & Michael.

Manet Francklin.

Fran. I pray you go before, Ile follow you,

Ah what a hell is fretfull¹⁵ Ielousie? 30

What pitty moning¹⁶ words? what deepe fetcht¹⁷ sighes?

What greeuous groanes? and ouerlading woes,

Accompanies this gentle gentleman.

Now will he shake his care oppressed head,

Then fix his sad eis on the sollen earth,¹⁸

Ashamed to gaze vpon the open world.

Now will he cast his eyes vp towards the heauens,

¹⁵ fretfull: eating away, consuming (Onions). Cf. 2 Henry VI, III. ii. 403:

"Though parting be a fretfull corosiuē."

¹⁶ pitty moning: pitty-mouing (Q₂ and Q₃). A misprint is not necessarily correct. The expression "pity moaning" will also fit the context.

¹⁷ fetcht: fetch (Q₃).

¹⁸ sollen earth: sullen earth (Q₃); dark, dull (Onions). The expression occurs frequently in Shakespeare: Cf. 2 Henry VI, I. ii. 5:

"Why are thine eyes fixt to the sullen earth."

and Sonnet XXIX. 12:

"(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising)
From sullen earth sings himns at Heauens gate."
(Q-1609)

Looking that waies for redresse of wrong,
 Some times he seeketh to beguile his grieffe,
 And tels a story with his carefull¹⁹ tongue.

50

Then comes his wiues dishonor in his thoughts,
 And in the middle cutteth of his tale.
 Powring fresh sorrow on his weary lins.
 So woe begone so inly charged with woe,
 Was neuer any lyued and bare it so.

Here enters Michaell.

Mic. My M. would²⁰ desire you come to bed.

Fra. Is he himselfe already in his bed?

Exit Fran. Manet Mic.

Mic. He is and faire would haue the light away,
 Conflicting thoughts incamped in my brest
 Awake me with the Echo of their strokes:
 And I a iudge to censure either side,
 Can giue to neither wished victory.
 My masters kindnes pleads to me for lyfe,
 With iust demaurd, and I must grant it him.
 My mistres she hath forced me with an oath,
 For Susans sake the which I may not breake,

60

¹⁹ carefull: full of care or anxiety (Onions).

²⁰ My M. would: M M. would (Q₃).

For that is nearer the a masters loue,²¹

That grimfaced fellow, pittiles black will,

And Shakebag stearne in bloody stratagene.

Two Ruffer Ruffins neuer liued in Kent,

70

Have sworne my death if I infrindge my vow,

A dreadfull thing to be considred of,

Me thinks I see them with their bolstred haire,²²

Staring and grinning in thy gentle face,

And in their ruthles hardes their daggers drawne,

Insulting ore there²³ with a peck of oathes.

Whilst thou submissiue pleading for releefe,

Art mangled by their irefull instruments.

Me thinks I heare them aske where Michaell is

And pittiles black Will, cryes stab the slaue.²⁴

80

²¹ 59-67. Conflicting ... loue: Michael's conflict of conscience is presented in the frame of a legal argument. The court terminology is a highly effective imagistic vehicle to express his unsettled sense of obligation - to his master or his love.

²² bolstred haire: bullen comments that the hair is "matted with blood" and refers to Shakespeare's Macbeth IV. i. 122:

"the Blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles vpon me."

However, this is not the correct root word. "Bolster" means "to prop or support". Brooke gives "erect". The expression is best paraphrased as "hair standing on end".

²³ there: thee (Q₃).

²⁴ stab the slaue: The same expression occurs in Soliman and Perseda [Works: III. v. 10]

"stab the slaue" (Crawford).

The Pesant will detect the Tragedy.²⁵

The wrinkles in²⁶ his fowle death threatning face,
Gapes open wide, lyke graues to swallow men.

My death to him is but a merrymment,

And he will murther me to make him sport.²⁷

He comes he comes ah²⁸ M. Francklin helpe,

Call vp the neighbors or we are but dead²⁹

Here enters Fran. & Arden.

Fran. What dismall outcry cals me from my rest?

Ard. What hath occasiond such a fearefull cry?

Speake Michaell, hath any iniurde thee?

90

Mic. Nothing sir, but as I fell a sleepe,

Vpon the thresholde leaning³⁰ to the staires

I had a fearefull dreame that troubled me,

And in my slunter thought I was beset,

²⁵ 81. The Pesant ... Tragedy: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
[Works: V. ii. 134]

"least he detect us unto the world" (Crawford).

²⁶ in: of (Q₃).

²⁷ 85. And he ... sport: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works:
III. v. 15]

"feare of seruile death thats but a sport" (Crawford).

²⁸ ah: omitted in Q₃.

²⁹ 79-87: Me thinks ... dead: As Michael's imagination runs wild, he envisions his own murder, screams out in frenzy for help and foils another plot on Arden's life.

³⁰ leaning: "leading" in Delius (Erooke).

With murtherer theeues that came to rifle me.

My trembling ioints witnes my inward feare.

I craue your pardons for disturbing you.

Ard. So great a cry for nothing, I nere heard.

What, are the doores fast lockt? and al things safe?

Mic. I cannot tel, I think I lockt the doores. 100

Ard. I like not this, but Ile go see my selfe.

Nere trust me, but the doores were³¹ all vnlockt.

This negligence not halfe contenteth me.

Get you to bed, and if you loue my fauour,

Let me haue no more such pranckes as these

Come M. Francklin, let vs go to bed.

Exeunt.

Farn.³² I be³³ my Faith, the aire is very colde,

Michaell farewell, I pray thee dreame no more.

³¹ were: are (Q₂ and Q₃).

³² Farn: Fran. (Q₂ and Q₃).

³³ be: by (Q₂ and Q₃).

[SCENE II.

Outside Franklin's house]¹

Here enters Will, Gre. and Shak.²

Sha. Black night hath hid the pleasures of ^ey day.

And sheting darknesse ouerhangs the earth,
 And with the black folde of her cloudy robe,
 Obscure³ vs from the eiesight of the worlde,
 In which swete silence such as we triumph.
 The laysie minuts linger on their time,
 Loth⁴ to giue due audit⁵ to the howre:
 Til in the watch⁶ our purpose be complete,
 And Arden sent to euerlasting night.⁷

Greene get you gone, and linger here about, 10
 And at some houre hence, come to vs againe,

¹ Scene II ... house: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² Here enters Will, Gre. and Shak.: This line of stage directions follows the first line of Shakebag's speech in Q₁ only. It was most likely forgotten by the compositor and inserted after the next line.

³ Obscure: obscures (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴ Loth: As loth (Bullen).

⁵ audit: italicized in Q₃ only.

⁶ watch: time division of the night (Onions).

⁷ 9. And Arden sent to euerlasting night: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: V. ii. 110]

"Down to euerlasting night" (Crawford).

Where we will give you instance⁸ of his death.⁹

Gre. Speede to my wish whose wil so ere sayes no,¹⁰

And so ile leaue you for an howre or two. Exit Gre.

Will. I tell thee Shakebag, would this thing wer don,

I am so heauy that I can scarce go:

This drowsines in me bods litile good.¹¹

Shake. How now Will, become a precissiar.¹²

May then¹³ lets go sleepe, when buges¹⁴ and feares,

Shall kill our courages with their fancies worke, 20

Will. Why Shakbagge thou mistakes me much,

⁸ instance: evidence, proof, sign (Onions).

⁹ 1-11. Black night ... his death: This passage rich in poetic sensitivity and quite unfitting in the voice of the ruffian Shakebag is often regarded as definitely Shakespeare. It is indeed reminiscent of passages in Macbeth such as III. ii. 46-53.

¹⁰ whose wil so ere sayes no: "no matter who wills the contrary" (Brooke).

¹¹ 17. This drowsines ... good: Cf. Edward II [Works: 11. 1911-1912]

"this drowsines/ Betides no good" Q-1594

¹² precissian: rigid spiritual advisor synonymous with "Puritan" (Onions). Elizabethan drama contains many such comic references to the Puritans on account of their militant attack on the theatres and their productions. The expression is cited by Jacob as Shakespearean (Brooke).

¹³ then: omitted in Q3.

¹⁴ buges: imaginary objects of terror, hobgoblins (Onions). Brooke gives "bugbears".

And wrongs me to in telling¹⁵ me of feare,

Wert not a serious thing we go about,

It should be slipt,¹⁶ till I had fought with thee:

To let thee know I am no coward I,

I tel thee Shakbag¹⁷ thou abusest me.

Sha. Why thy speach bewraied an inlye kind of feare.

And sauourd of a weak relenting spirit,

Go forward now in that we haue begonne.

And afterwards attempt¹⁸ me when thou darest.

30

Wil. And if I do not heauen cut me of,

But let that passe, and show me to this house.

Where thou shalt see Ile do as much as Shakbag.

Sha. This is the doore, but soft, me thinks tis shut.

The villaine Michaell hath deceiued vs,

Wil. Soft let me see, shakbag tis shut indeed.

Knock with thy sword perhaps the slaue will heare,

Sha. It wil not be, the white liuerd¹⁹ pesant is gon to bed

¹⁵ wrongs me to in telling: wrongs me in the telling - Q₂
wrongst me in the telling - Q₃

¹⁶ slipt: let go, put aside (Baskervill).

¹⁷ Shakbag: it is interesting to here not the variations in the spelling of "Shakebag" within the last twelve lines.

¹⁸ attempt: try my strength, attack (Onions).

¹⁹ white liuerd: cited by Jacob as a Shakespearean parallel (Brooke).

And laughs vs both to scorre.

Wil. And he shall by²⁰ his mirriment as deare,²¹

40

As euer coistrell²² bought so little sport,

Nere let this sworde assist me when I neede,

But rust and canker after I haue sworne:

If I the next time that I mete the hind,

Loppe not away his leg his arme or both,

Sha. And let me neuer draw a sword agaire,

Nor prosper in the twilight, cockshut light,²³

When I would fleece the welthie passenger,²⁴

²⁰ by: buy (Q2 and Q3).

²¹ by his mirriment as deare: suggested as Shakespearean by Jacob (Brooke). However, Crawford points to a similar line in The Murder of John Brewen to support Kyd's authorship:

"Anne" durst not denie him anything he requested, and became so jelious that, had she lookt but merely upon a man, shee would have knowne the price thereof, and have bought her merrement deerley."

However, the pamphlet is now believed to be written by one John Kyd, unrelated to Thomas.

²² coistrell: knave, base fellow (Onions). Cf. Twelfth Night I. iii. 40-41:

"he's a Coward and a Coystrill that will not drinke to my Neece...".

²³ cockshut light: "A cockshut was a large net used to catch woodcocks after sunset." (Bayne) Bullen gives "twilight".

²⁴ passenger: passer-by (Baskervill).

But ly and languish in a loathsome den:

Hated and spit at by the goers by.

50

And in that death may die, vnpittied.

If I, the next time that I meete the slaue,

Cut not the nose from of²⁵ the cowards face,

And trample on it for this²⁶ villany.

Wil. Come lets go seeke out Green I know hele swear

Sha. He were a villane and²⁷ he would not sweare,

Twould make a pesant sweare amongst²⁸ his boyes.

That nere durst say before but yea and no.

To be thus flouted of a coysterel.

Will. Shakbag lets seeke out Green & in the morning

60

At the Alehouse butting²⁹ Ardens house,

Watch thee³⁰ out corning of that prick eard cur,

And then let me alore to handle him.

Exeunt.

²⁵ of: omitted in Q₃.

²⁶ this: his (Q₂ and Q₃).

²⁷ and: if (Baskervill).

²⁸ amongst: among (Q₃).

²⁹ butting: abutting, adjoining, bordering (Onions).

³⁰ thee: the (Q₂ and Q₃).

[SCENE III.]

Room in Francklin's House as before¹

Here enters Ard., Fra., & Michaell.

Ard. Sirra get you back to billensgate,²

And learne what time the tidy will serue our turne,

Come to vs in Paules, first go make the bed,

And afterwards go harken for the floude.³

Exit Michaell.

Come M. Francklin, you shall go with me.

This night I dreamd that, beeing in a parke.

A toyle⁴ was picht to ouerthrow the deare.

And I vppon a little rysing hill,

Stoode whistely⁵ watching for the herds approach.

Euen there me thoughts⁶ a gentle slumber tooke me, 10

And sommond⁷ all my parts to sweete repose.

But in the pleasure of this golden rest,

¹ Scene III ... as before: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² billensgate: Billingsgate.

³ floude: flowing in of the tide (Onions).

⁴ toyle: net, snare (Onions). Cf. Love's Labour's Lost
IV. iii. 2:

"They haue pitcht a Toyle."

⁵ whistely: silently (Brooke).

⁶ me thoughts: me thought (C₃).

⁷ sommond: summoned.

An ill thewd⁸ foster⁹ had remoued the toyle,
 And rounded me¹⁰ with that beguyling home.
 Which late me thought was pitcht to cast the deare,
 With that he blew an euill sounding horne,
 And at the noise an other heard man came:
 With Fauchon¹¹ drawn and bent it at my brest.
 Crying aloud Thou art the game we seeke,
 With this I wakt and trembled every ioynt, 20
 Lyke ore oscured¹² in a lytle bushe,
 That sees a lyon foraging about,
 And when the dreadfull forest King is gone,
 He pryas about, with timerous suspect,
 Throughout the thorny casements of the brake,
 And will not think his person daungerles.

⁸ ill thewd: Brooke suggests "evil-natured", explaining that "'thews' referred originally to mental and moral qualities. cf. Skeat, Etymological Dict. Mares' Glossary quotes Spenser's 'rude, and thewed ill', Fairie Queene, Bk. II. vi. 26."

⁹ foster: forrester (Bullen).

¹⁰ rounded me: brought me round (Bayne). The meaning "surrounded, encircled" is perhaps more appropriate here.

¹¹ Fauchon: falchion, sword more or less curved with the edge on the convex side (Onions).

¹² oscured: obscured (Q₂ and Q₃).

But quakes and shewers¹³ though the cause be gone.¹⁴

So trust me Francklin when I did awake,

I stode in doubt whether I waked or no:

Such great impression tooke this fond surprise:¹⁵ 30

God graunt this vision bedeeme¹⁶ me any good.

Fran. This fantassie doeth rise from Michaels feare,

Who being awaked with the noyse he made,

His troubled senses yet could take no rest.

And this, I warant you, procured your dreame.

Ard. It may be so God frame it to the best,

But often times my dreames presage to¹⁷ trew.

Fran. To such as note their nightly fantasies,

Some one in twenty may incurre believe,

But vse it not,¹⁸ tis but a mockery.¹⁹ 40

Ard. Come M. Francklin wele row walke in Paules

¹³ shewers: shivers (Q₃).

¹⁴ 6-27: This night ... be gone. The imagery of the hunter and the hunted now appears in Arden's dream.

¹⁵ tooke this fond surprise: gave this foolishly credulous bewilderment.

¹⁶ bedeeme: betoken, portend.

¹⁷ to: too (Q₂ and Q₃).

¹⁸ vse it not: do not make a habitual practice of it. Warnke quotes Macbeth III. ii. 10:

"Using those thoughts which should indeed have died" (Bayne).

¹⁹ 37-40. But often times ... mockery: Arden's account of

And dync together at the ordinary,
 And by my mans direction draw to the key,
 And with the tyde²⁰ go down to Feuershame,
 Say M. Francklin shall it not be so?

Franklin. At your good pleasure sir,

Ile beare you companye.

Exeunt.

his dream reflects the Elizabethan interest in dream interpretation. The superstition of dreams being prognostics of good and evil was a common belief of the time (Dyer, p. 277). Franklin, quite in character, maintains a skeptical attitude towards such superstition.

Crawford quotes from Soliman and Perseda [works: V. iii. 25]

"My nightly dreames foretould me this."

For a Shakespearean parallel: Cf. 2 Henry VI, V. i. 195:

"The first I werrant thee, if dreames proue true."

²⁰ with the tyde: "i.e. by boat on the Thames. Holinshed makes Greene and Elack Will go to London, from Gravesend apparently 'at the tide" (Bayne).

[SCENE IV.
Aldersgate]¹

Here enters Michael at one doore.

Here enters Grene, Will, and Shakebag,
at another doore.

Wil. Draw Shaktbag for heers that villaire Michael,

Gre. First Will² lets heare what he can say,

Wil. Speak milksope³ slave, & neuer after speake.

Mic. For Gods sake sirs let me excuse my selfe.

For heare I sweare by heauen and earth and all,

I did performe the outmost⁴ of my task,

And left the doores vnbolted and vnlockt,

But see the chaunce: Francklin and my master,

were very late conferring in the porch,

And Francklin left his napkin⁵ where he sat,

10

With certain Gould knit in it, as he said.

Being in bed, he did bethinke himselfe,

And coming down, he found the doores vnshut,

¹ Scene IV ... Aldersgate: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² Will: omitted in Q3.

³ milksope: an effeminate or spiritless man or youth (CED).

⁴ outmost: utmost (Baskervill).

⁵ napkin: handkerchief (Onions).

He lockt the gates, and brought away the keyes
 For which offence my master rated me,
 But now I am going to see what floode it is,
 For with the tyde my M. will away.

Where you may frons⁶ him well on Raynum downe,⁷
 A place well fitting such a stratageme.

Wil. Your excuse hath somewhat molyfied my choller, .20

Why, now Greene tis better now nor⁸ ere it was,

Gre. But Michaell is this⁹ trew?

Mic. As trew as I report it to be trew.

Shak. Then Michaell this shall be your pennance,

To feast vs all at the Salutation,¹⁰

Where we will plat¹¹ our purpose throughly.¹²

Gre. And Michael, you shal bear no newes of this tide

⁶ frons: front (Q₃).

⁷ Raynum downe: "The country near Rainham seems in the Sixteenth century to have been so open as to have entitled it to the appellation of a Down' (Donne). The spot had a bad reputation" (Bayne).

⁸ nor: than (Brooke).

⁹ this: it (Q₃).

¹⁰ Salutation: "The Saluation is an inn mentioned in Barthalomew Fair" 1614 (Bayne).

¹¹ plat: plot.

¹² throughly: thorowly (Q₃).

Because¹³ they two may be in Raynū down before your M.

Mic. Why Ile agree to any thing youle haue me,

So you will except¹⁴ of my company. Exeunt. 30

¹³ Because: in order that (Baskervill).

¹⁴ except: accept (Q3). The correction in Q3 changes the meaning of the line from "so you will exclude me from accompanying you" to "so you will include me as one of your friends". Q3 is perhaps more accurate.

[SCENE V.]

Arden's House at Feversham]¹

Here enters Mosby.

Mos. Disturbed thoughts² dryues me from company,
 And dryes my marrow with their watchfulness,
 Continuall trouble of my moody braine,³
 Feebles my body by excesse of drinke,⁴
 And nippes me, as the bitter Northeast wind,
 Doeth check the tender blcsoms⁵ in the spring.
 Well fares the man how ere his cates⁶ do taste
 That tables not with foule suspition:
 And he but pines amongst his delicats,

¹ Scene V ... Feversham: added by Tyrrell (Erooke).

² Disturbed thoughts: compare the opening lines of Mosbie's soliloquy and Michael's on p. 79.

³ my moody braine: Crawford draws an obscure parallel to Soliman and Perseda [Works: II. i. 88]

"cloud compacted braine".

⁴ drinke: "perhaps we ought to read 'think!'" (Bayne). The line becomes more meaningful if "by" is replaced with "as".

⁵ check the tender blcsoms: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: II. i. 120]

"To check the fraudfull countenance with a blush."
 (Crawford).

⁶ cates: dainties, delicacies (Onions).

Whose troubled minde is stuf with discontent. 10
 My goulden time was when I had no gould,
 Thought⁷ then I wanted, yet I slept secure,
 My dayly toyle, begat me nights repose:
 My nights repose made daylight fresh to me.
 But since I climbd the toppe bough of the tree,
 And sought to build my nest among the clouds.
 Each gentle stary⁸ gaile doth shake my bed:
 And makes me dread my downfall to the earth,
 But whether doeth contemplation carry me.
 The way I seeke to finde, where pleasure dwels, 20
 Is hedged beneath me that I cannot back,
 But needs must on although to dangers gate:
 Then Arden perish thou by that decre.

⁷ Thought: Though (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁸ stary: Bullen suggests "stirring" explaining that "star" and "stir" are etymologically connected. Brocke refutes this interpretation commenting "no satisfactory meaning or etymology for this word has been discovered, but the proposed emendation 'stirry' is a very doubtful improvement".

"Stary" as it appears in Q₁ is not really so remote. If the stars are still visible and a wind comes up, the gale will be "gentle". Mosbie's meaning here is also quite clear. His position is so precarious that only the slightest imperfection is enough to upset his plans to get to the top. The Marlovian "overreacher" is strongly suggested. His ambition to acquire social prominence and wealth have so obsessed him that now there is no way back.

For Greene doth erre⁹ the land and weede thee vp,
To make my haruest nothing but pure corne.¹⁰

And for his paires Ile heaue¹¹ him vp a while,
And after smother him to haue his waxe.

Such bees as Greene, must neuer liue to sting.

Then is there Michael and the Painter to,¹²

Cheefe actors to Ardens ouerthrow:

30

Who when they shall¹³ see me sit in Ardens seat,

They wil insult vpon me for my mede:¹⁴

Or fright me by detecting¹⁵ of his end.

Ile none of that, for I can cast a bone,

To make these cures pluck out each others throat,¹⁶

⁹ erre: heyre (Q₃): plough, till (Onions).

¹⁰ 24-25. For Greene ... pure corn: The imagery of the harvest although very effective here was common in tragedy. For outstanding similarities to Mosbie's soliloquy - Cf. The Spanish Tragedy, [Works: Chorus ll. 12-14]

"But in the haruest of my sommer ioyes,
Deaths winter nipt the blossomes of my blisse,
Forcing diuorce betwixt my loue and me." Q-1592

¹¹ heaue: "Delius suggests 'hive' as correction" (Bayre).

¹² to: too (Q₃).

¹³ shall: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

¹⁴ mede: gift, reward (Onions). Baskervill suggests "assail me for my bribe".

¹⁵ detecting: exposing, laying bare (Onions).

¹⁶ 34-35. for I can ... throat: Compare the dog imagery

And then am I sole ruler of mine owne:

Yet mistres Arden liues, but she's my selfe,¹⁷

And holy Churchrites makes vs two, but one,

But what for that I may not trust you Ales,

You haue supplanted Arden for my sake,

40

And will extirpen¹⁸ me to plant another:

Tis fearefull sleeping in a serpents bed.¹⁹

And I will clearely rid my hands of her.²⁰

Here enter Aes.²¹

But here she comes and I must|flatter²² her.

How now Ales? what sad, and passionat?²³

here with Greene's comment p. 110. Cf. Heywood's Dialogue
II. ii. 47

"The diuell hath cast abore (said I) to set stryfe
betweene you" (1546).

17 she's my selfe: possibly - she is of the same mind as I.

18 extirpen: root out, extirpate (extirp - Onions).

19 39-42. I may not ... serpents bed: Mosbie fears that
Alice will one day turn on him. Crawford points to the same
situation in The Murder of John Brewen where "Parker tells
Anne that he means to keep as long out of her fingers as he
can, because if he were to marry her she would poison him as
she poisoned her husband."

20 43. And I ... of her: Even Alice is expendable in
Mosbie's climb to the top.

21 Aes: Ales - "l" omitted in error.

22 must|flatter: the line division between the two words
appears in Q₁.

23 passionat: grieved, sorrowful (Onions).

Make me partaker of thy pensiueres:

Fyre deuicid burnes with lesser force.²⁴

Ales. But I will damne that fire in my breast.

Till by the force therof, my part consume, ah Mosbie.

Mos. Such depe pathaires²⁵ lyke to a canrons burst, 50

Dischargde against a ruinated wall,

Breakes my relenting hart in thousand pieces,

Vngentle Ales thy sorrow is my sore,

Thou knowst it wel, and tis thy pollicy,

To forge distressefull looks,²⁶ to wound a breast,

²⁴ 47. Fyre deuicid ... force: The expression sounds proverbial but nothing can be traced.

²⁵ depe pathaires: The meaning of the word has aroused considerable conjecture. Brooke cites Delius' correction to "deep-fet airs" and Warnke and Proescholdt's "depe-fet sighs" then adds: "The proposed emendations ... having nothing to support them".

Bullen comments: "'Pathaires' sounds well but I can attach to meaning to the word". He accepts Delius' suggestion as "tolerably satisfactory".

Bayne gives the following lengthy observations: "Mr. Gollancz has probably solved the crux of the play by his suggestion, -- 'Pathaire, I take to be some special form of 'petarre', i.e. 'petard', probably used in the metaphorical sense of passionate outburst'. (Lamb's Specimens, I. i. 297). The use may be quite literal; for the form Cf. Powell's Tom of All Trades, p. 163, 'An Enginere for making of Patars.'ⁱⁱ

The latter derivation from the French is more suitable in that the following lines exploit the imagery of battle; e.g. "cannons burst".

²⁶ 55. To forge distressefull looks: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: II. i. 117]

"can forge alluring lookes" (Crawford).

Where lyes a hart, that dies where²⁷ thou art sad,

It is not loue, that loues to anger loue.²⁸

Ales. It is not loue, that loues to nurther loue.

Mos. How meane you that?

Ales. Thou knowest how dearly Arden loued me.

60

Mos. And then.

Ales. And then conceale the rest, for tis too bad,²⁹

Least that my words be carried with the wind.³⁰

And publisht in the world to both our shares,

I pray thee Mosbye let our springtime wither,

Cur haruest els will yeald but lathsome weedes.³¹

Forget I pray thee what hath past betwix vs,

For now I blushe and tremble at the thoughts,

²⁷ where: when (Q₂ and Q₃).

²⁸ 57. It is not loue, that loues to anger loue: "Quoted by Bullen as of 'genuine Shakespearean flavour'" (Bayne).

²⁹ 62. And then ... tis too bad: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
[Works: V. ii. 53]

"the rest I dare not speake, it is so bad" (Crawford).

Cf. King Lear II. i. 97:

"tis too bad"

- a use by Shakespeare.

³⁰ 63. words be carried with the wind: Cf. p. 38, n. 211

³¹ 65-66. let our springtime ... weedes: Alice uses the same imagery as Mosbie (p. 97) although she did not hear his speech.

Mos. what are you charge?

Ales. I to my former happy lyfe againe.

70

From tytle of an odious strumpets rane,
 To honest Ardens wife, not Ardens honest wife,³²
 Ha Mosbye tis thou has rifled me of that,
 And made me slaurdrous to all my kin:
 Euen in my forehead is thy name ingraueu,³³
 A meane Artificer that lowe borne name,³⁴
 I was bewitched,³⁵ woe worth the haples howre,
 And all the causes that irchaunted me:³⁶

Mos. May if thou³⁷ ban,³⁸ let me breath curses forth,

³² 72. To honest Ardens wife, not Ardens honest wife: The quibble over the word "honest" is indicative of its various meanings during the period. The sentence is best paraphrased as "to respectable Arden's wife, not Arden's chaste wife" as spoken in bitter sarcasm by town gossips.

³³ ingraueu: ingrauen (Q₂ and Q₃). In Q₁, the "n" has been inverted.

³⁴ 76. that lowe borne name: Alice insults Mosbie by reminding him of his social inferiority. His vicious attack against her for it reflects his extreme sensitivity to his position.

³⁵ I was bewitched: Cf. p. 20, n. 123

³⁶ 77-78. woe worth ... me: Cf. The Murder of John Brewen where Anne says: "wo worth thee (quoth she) that euer I knewe thee, it is thou and no man else that can triumph in my spoyle" (Crawford).

³⁷ thou: "you" in Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

³⁸ ban: to curse, imprecate damnation upon (OED).

And if you stand so nicely³⁹ at your fare: 80

Let me report the credit I have lost,

I have neglected matters of import,

That would have stated⁴⁰ me about thy state:

Forslowde⁴¹ aduantage's, and spurred at time.

I Fortunes right hand Mosbie hath forsooke,

To take a wanton giglote⁴² by the left.

I left the Mariage of an honest maid,

Whose dowry would have weyed down all thy wealth,

Whose beauty and demianor farre exceeded thee

This certaine good I lost for changing bad, 90

And wrapt my credit in thy company.⁴³

I was bewicht, that is no theare of thine,

And thou vnhalloed⁴⁴ has enchaunted me:

But I will breake thy spells and excirsimes,⁴⁵

³⁹ nicely: with great particularity (Onions).

⁴⁰ stated: ranked (Onions).

⁴¹ Forslowde: neglected, delayed (Bullen).

⁴² giglote: lewd, wanton woman (Onions).

⁴³ 87-91. I left ... company: Marriage to Mosbie is a mere financial arrangement. Notice the use of the word "credit".

⁴⁴ vnhalloed: The Biblical terminology reinforces the heavy moralistic strain.

⁴⁵ excirsimes: exorcisms (G₃).

And put another sight vpon these eyes,
 That shewed my hart a rauens for a dowe.⁴⁶
 Thou art not faire, I vied thee not till now,
 Thou art not kinde, till now I knew the⁴⁷ not.
 And now the raire hath beaten of thy gilt,
 Thy worthles copper shows thee counterfet. 100
 It grieues me not to see how foull thou art,
 But maddes me that euer I thought thee faire,
 Go get thee gone, a copsemate⁴⁸ for thy hyndes.
 I am too good to be thy fauorite.

Ales. I now I see, and too soone find it trew,
 Which often hath bene told me⁴⁹ by my freends:
 That Mosbie loues me not but for my wealth,
 Which too incredulus I nere beleued.⁵⁰
 Nay heare me speake Mosbie a word or two.
 Ile bite my tongue, if it speake bitterly: 110
 Look on me Mosby, or⁵¹ Ile kill my selfe,

⁴⁶ dowe: dove (Q₂ and Q₃). Jacob cites the expression "a rauens for a dowe" as Shakespearean (Brooke).

⁴⁷ the: thee (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴⁸ copsemate: companion (Onions).

⁴⁹ me: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

⁵⁰ 105-108. I now ... beleued: Alice momentarily sees Mosbie in his true colours but she immediately returns to blindness.

⁵¹ or: or else (Q₃).

Nothing shall hide me from thy stormy looke:

If thou cry warre there is no peace for me

I will do penance for offending thee,

And burne this prayer booke, where I here vse,

The holy word that had conuerted me,

See howe I will teare away the leaues.

And all the leaues and in this golden couer,

Shall thy sweete phrases and thy letters dwell,

And thereon will I chiefly meditate,

120

And hould no other sect, but such deuotion,⁵²

Wilt thou not looke? is all thy loue ouerwhelme?

Wilt thou not heare? what malice stopes thine eares?

Why speaks thou not? what silence ties thy tongue?

Thou hast bene sighted,⁵³ as the eagle is,

And heard as quickly as the fearefull hare:

And spoke as smoothly as an orator.

When I haue bid thee heare, or see, or speak.

And art thou sensible in none of these?⁵⁴

⁵² 114-121. I will do ... deuotion: Alice's sacrilegious use of the prayer book symbolizes her rejection of Christian morality in favour of paganism.

⁵³ Thou hast bene sighted: endowed with sight (Baskervill).

⁵⁴ 112-129. Nothing shall hide ... these: Bullen suggests that these lines are also "Shakespearean".

waigh all thy⁵⁵ good turns, with this little fault, 130

And I deserue not losbies muddy lookes.

A fence of trouble is not thickned still,⁵⁶

Be cleare againe, Ile nere more trouble thee.

Mos. C⁵⁷ no, I am a base artificer,

My winges are feathred for a lowly flight,⁵⁸

Mosby fy no, not for a thousand pound,

Make loue to you, why tis vnpardonable,

We beggers must not breath where gentiles are.⁵⁹

Alas. Sweete Mosbie is as gentle as a King,

And I too blinde to iudge him otherwise, 140

Flowres do⁶⁰ some times spring in fallow lands,

Weedes in gardens, Roses grow on thornes.⁶¹

⁵⁵ thy: "several editors read 'my'; but the sense is 'the good turns I have done you'" (Bayne).

⁵⁶ 132. A fence of trouble is not thickned still: The meaning here is uncertain. Bayne comments: "Warnke explains 'the quarrel has not yet thickened to so impenetrable a fence as to separate us for ever'. Perhaps we should read 'is not thick-set ill.'" Baskervill suggests a possible proverbial equivalent: "a troubled pool is not always turbid".

⁵⁷ O: O, fie (Q₃).

⁵⁸ flight: flight (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁵⁹ 138. We beggers ... gentiles are: Michael's indignity turns to bitter sarcasm.

⁶⁰ do: omitted in Q₃.

⁶¹ Roses grow on thornes: The expression is proverbial and commonly used in literature - Cf. Iyly's Euphues "The sweetest Rose hath his prickell." 1579.

So what so ere my Mosbies father was,
Himselfe valued⁶² gentle by his worth.

Mos. Ah how you women can insinuate,
Ard cleare a trespasse with your sweete set tongue,
I will forget this quarrel gentle Ales,
Prouided Ile be tempted so no more:

Here enters Bradshaw,

Al.⁶³ Then with thy lips seale vp this new made match⁶⁴

Mos. Soft Ales for⁶⁵ here comes some body. 150

Ales. How not Bradshaw, whats the news with you

Brad. I haue little news but heres a letter.

That M. Greene importuned me to giue you:

Ales. Go in, Bradshaw; call for a cuppe of beare. Exit⁶⁶

Tis almost suppertime, thou shalt stay with vs.

For a use by Shakespeare Cf. 1 Henry VI, II. iv. 69:

"Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet" (OEDP).

⁶² Himselfe valued: "Himselfe is valued" in Jacob (Brooke).
The change is also supported by Eullen.

⁶³ Al: Ales.

⁶⁴ 149. seale vp this new made match: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: I. vi. 4]

"to seal vp their loues" (Crawford).

⁶⁵ for: omitted by Warrke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

⁶⁶ Exit: Bradshaw's exit is usually placed after the next line in most editions.

Then she reades the letter.

We have mist of our purpose at Lordor, but shall perform
it by the waye, We thanke our neighbour Bradshaw.

Yours Richard Greene.⁶⁷

How lykes my loue the terror of this letter?

Mos. Well, were his date compleat and expired.

160

Ales. Ah, would it were,

Then comes my happy howre.

Till then my blisse is mixt with bitter gall.

Come let vs in to shun suspition.

Ales.⁶⁸ I to the gates of death to follow thee. Exeunt.

⁶⁷ 156-158: We have mist ... Greene: Bayre points out the inconsistency of the letter's contents with Holinshed where the same reads as "We have got a man for our purpose, we may thank my brother Bradshaw." He further explains that the Wardmate Book also says nothing of Bradshaw's innocence.

If purposely varied by the dramatist, his motives can be explored. He was perhaps trying to heighten the total tragic effect by showing how an unsuspecting bystander can be destroyed by the evil of others. The didactic tone, then, is reinforced.

⁶⁸ Ales: Mosb (Q3). The line has been given in error to Alice in the first two Quartos.

[SCENE VI.

Country near Rochester]¹

Here enters Greene, Will & Shakbag.

Shak. Core Will, see thy tooles be in a redynes?

Is not thy powder dancke,

Or will thy flint stryke fyre.

Will. Then aske me if my nose be on my face,Or whether my toung² be frosen in my mouth.Zourds, heres a coyle,³ you were best sweare⁴ me on the
intergatories,⁵ how many pistols I haue tooke in hand.

Or whether I loue the smell of gunne powder,

Or dare abide the noise the dagge⁶ will make.

Or will not wincke at flashing of the fire.

10

I pray thee Shackbag let this answer thee.

¹ Scene VI ... Rochester: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).² toung: tongue (Q₂ and Q₃).³ coyle: noise, disturbance, fuss (Onions).⁴ sweare: to sweare (Q₃).⁵ intergatories: interrogatories (Q₃): a question formally put, or drawn up in writing to be put, to an accused person or a witness to be answered as upon oath (Onions). Cf. The Merchant of Venice V. i. 298:

"And charge vs there vpon intergatories."

Jacob cites the expression as Shakespearean and proof of authorship (Brooke).

⁶ dagge: pistol (Bullen).

That I have took more purses in this down,
 Then ere thou handledst pistols in thy life.
Sha. I happely thou hast pickt more in a throng.
 But should I bragge what booties I haue tooke,
 I think the ouerplus thats more then time,
 Would mount to a greater somme of money,
 Then either thou or all thy kinne are worth.⁷
 Zounds I hate them as I hate a toade,⁸
 That carry a muscado⁹ in their tongue. 20
 And scarce a hurting weapon in their hands.

Wil. O Greene, intollerable,
 It is not for mine honor to beare this.
 Why Shakhbag I did serue the King at Bulloyne,¹⁰
 And thou canst bragge of nothing that¹¹ thou hast done,

⁷ 17-18. Would mount ... worth. Cf. Soliman and Perseda
 [Works: I. iv. 7A]

"It was worth more than thou and all thy kin are worth"
 (Crawford).

⁸ 19. Zounds ... toade: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works:
 III. ii. 27]

"Lucire hates me like a Toade" (Crawford).

⁹ muscado: Bullen cites the Spanish "moscárta" and gives
 "gadfly" as a meaning. Bayne suggests "musket", the more
 likely definition.

¹⁰ Bulloyne: Boulogne.

¹¹ that: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

Shak. Why so can Jack of Feuershame,¹²

That sounded¹³ for a phillope¹⁴ on the rose:¹⁵

When he that gaue it him hollowed in his eare.

And he suposed a Cannon bullet hit him.

Then they fight.

Greene. I pray you sirs list to Esops talk, 30

Whilst two stout dogs were striuing for a bore,

There comes a cur, and stole it from them both,¹⁶

So, while you stand striuing on these termes of manhoode,

Arden escapes¹⁷ vs and deceaue¹⁸ vs al.

Shake. Why he begun.

Will. And thou shalt finde the end.

I doo but slip it vntil better time.

¹² Jack of Feuersham: a homely touch added by the dramatist. The name is not traceable in any source.

¹³ sounded: swooned (Bullen).

¹⁴ phillope: fillip: a rovement made by bending the last joint of a finger against the thumb and suddenly releasing it; a smart stroke or tap given by this means (OED).

¹⁵ 27. That sounded ... nose: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: V. iii. 93]

"life is a glasse, and a phillip may cracke it" (Crawford).

¹⁶ 31-32: Whilst two ... them both: The dog imagery has already been suggested in Mosbie's speech p. 97.

¹⁷ escapes: escape (Q₃).

¹⁸ deceaue: deceives (Q₂); deceive (Q₃).

But if I do forget.

Then hee kneeles downe and houldes up
his hands to heauen.

Greene. Wel take your fittest standings,¹⁹ & once more
Lime your twigs to catch this weary²⁰ bird,²¹ 40
Ile leaue you, and at your dags discharge
Make towards lyke the longing water dog,
That coucheth til the fowling peece be of:
Then ceazeth on the pray with eager moode,²²
Ah might I see him stretching foorth his limmes,
As I haue seene them beat their wings ere now,
Shak. Why that thou shalt see if he come this way,
Cre. Yes that he doth Shakbag, I warrant thee:
But braul not when I am gone in any case,
But sirs be sure to speede him, when he comes, 50

¹⁹ standings: place of vantage, ambush (Eayne).

²⁰ weary: "wary" in Jacob (Erooke). tiresome, irksome (Onions).

²¹ 40. Lime your ... bird: Cf. The Spanish Tragedy [Works: III. iv. 39]

"he breakes the worthles twigs,
And sees not that wherewith the bird was limde." [C.-1592]

²² 41. Then ceazeth ... moode: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: V. v. 150-151]

"shall follow thee, / With eager moode" (Crawford).

And in that hope Ile leaue you for an houre.

Exit Gre.

Here enters Arden Fran. & Mic.

Mic. Twere best that I went back to Rochester,
The horse halts down right, it were not good
He trauailed in such paine to feuarsshare:
Remouing of a shoe may happely help it.

Arden. Well get you back to Rochester, but, sirra see ye
ouertake vs ere we come to Raynum down,
For it will be very late ere we get home:

Mic. I God he knowes, & so doth Will and shakebagge,
That thou shalt neuer go further then that dowre, 60
And therefore haue I prickt the horse on purpose,
Because I would not view the massacar.

Exit Michaell.

Arden. Come M. Francklin onwards with your tale,

Fran. I assure you sir, you taske me much,
A heauy bloode is gathered at my hart,
And on the sudden is my winde so short:
As hindereth the passage of my speach.
So ferse²³ a qualme²⁴ yet neere assayled me:

²³ ferse: fierce (Q3).

²⁴ qualme: fit of nausea (Bayne).

Arđ. Come M. Francklin let vs go on softly,
 The annoyance of the dust, or els some reat, 70
 You eat at dinner, cannot brooke you:²⁵
 I haue been often so, and soore amended.

Fra. Do you remember where my tale did leaue?

Arđ. I, where the gentleman did chek²⁶ his wife.

Fran. She being reprehended for the fact.²⁷

Witnes produced that tooke her with the deed,
 Her gloue broght in, which there she left behind,
 And many other assured Arguments:
 He²⁸ husband askt her whether it were not so.

Arđ. Her answer then, I wonder how she lookt, 80
 Hauing forsworne it with such vehement oathes,
 And at the instant so approued²⁹ vppon her,

Fra. First did she cast her eyes down to the earth,
 Watching the drops that fell amaine from thence,
 Then softly drawes she foorth her hand kercher,
 And modestly she wypes her teare staine face:

²⁵ brooke you: brooke with you (Q₂ and Q₃).

²⁶ chek: rebuke, reprove (Onions).

²⁷ fact: deed, crime (Onions).

²⁸ He: Her (Q₂ and Q₃).

²⁹ approued: proved, confirmed (Onions).

Then hend³⁰ she out to cleare her voice should seeme,
 And with a maiesty adrest her selfe,
 To encounter all their accusations.

Pardon me M. Arden I can no more: 90

This fighting at my hart, makes shorte my wynde.

Arden. Come we are almost now at Raynum Downe,

Your pretty tale beguiles the weary way:

I would you were in state³¹ to tell it out.

Shak. Stand close will I heare them cumming.

Here enters Lord Cheiny with his men.

Wil. Stand to it Shakbag, and be resolute,

Lord Che. Is it so reere night as it seemes,

Or wil this black-faced euening haue a showre?

--What M. Arden you are well met,

I haue longd this fortnights day to speake with you, 100

You are a stranger, man, in the ile of Shepny,³²

Arden. Your honors alwayes: bound to do you seruice,

Lord Che. Come you from London & nere a man with you

Arden. My man's comming after,

But her's my horest freend that came along with me.

Lord Che. My Lord protectors man I take you to bee.

³⁰ hend: hermed.

³¹ state: case (Q3).

³² Shepny: Sheppy (Q2 and Q3). See Appendix V.

Fran. I my good Lord, and highly bound to you,

Lord Che. You and your freend come home & sup with me.

Ard. I beseech your honor pardon me.

I haue made a promise to a gentle man,

110

My honest freend, to meete him at my house,

The occasion is great, or els would I wait on you.

Lord C. Will you come to morrow & dyne with me.

And bring your honest frend along with you:

I haue dyuers matters to talke with you about.

Arden. To morrow wele³³ waite vpon your honor,

Lord C. One of you staye my horse at the top of the hil

What black will, for whose purse wait you?

Thou wilt be hanged in Kent, when all is dore.

Wil. Not hanged, God saue your honour.

120

I am your bedesman,³⁴ bound to pray for you,

Lord C. I think thou nere saidest prayer in all thy lyfe,

One of you giue him a crowne,

And, sirra, leaue this kinde of lyfe.

If thou beest tainted³⁵ for a³⁶ penny matter,

³³ wele: we will (Bullen).

³⁴ bedesman: man paid or endowed to pray for others, pensioner or almsman (Onions).

³⁵ tainted: corrupted, discredited (Onions).

³⁶ a: ore (Q₃).

And come in question surely thou wilt trusse.³⁷

Come M. Arden, let vs be going,

Your way and mine lyes four myle togeather.

Exeunt.

Maret Black Wil & Shakbag.

Wil. The Devill break all your necks, at 4 myles end,

Zounds I could kill my selfe for very anger. 130

His Lordship chops me in,³⁸ euen when

My dagge was leaueld at his hart.

I would his crowre were molten down his throat,

Sha. Arden thou hast wordrous holye luck,

Did euer man escape as thou hast done.

Well, Ile discharge my pistol at the skye,

For by this bullet Arden might not die.

Here enters Greene.

Gre. What! is he down, is he dispatcht?

Sha. I in health towards Feuershame, to shame vs all

Gre. The Deuill he is, why sirs how escapt he? 140

Shak. When we were ready to shoote,

³⁷ trusse: tie up for hanging (Bayne).

³⁸ chops me in: to thrust with sudden force (Onions).
Bayne suggest "interrupts suddenly" explaining "'me' is a
dative; 'chop' is used in the sense of 'doing quickly'".

Cf. Richard III, I. iv. 160:

"And then we wil chop him in the malmsey But."
[Q-1597]

Comes my Lord Cheiny to preuent his death.

Greene. The Lord of heauen hath preserued him..

Wil. Preserued, a figge, the L. Cheiny hath preserued him

And bids him to a feast to his house at shorlow:³⁹

But by the way, once more Ile meete with him,

And if all the Chenies in the world say no,

Ile haue a bullet in his breast to morrow,

Therefore come Greene and let vs to Feuershame.

Gre. I and excuse our selues to mistres Arden,

150

O how shele chafe when she heares of this.

Sha. Why ile warrant you shel think we dare rot do it

Wil. Why then let vs go, & tell her all the matter.

Ard plat the newes⁴⁰ to cut him of to morrow.

Exeunt.

³⁹ shorlow: "Shurland in the Isle of Sheppey" (Bullen).

⁴⁰ plot the newes: plot the means (Baskervill).

[ACT IV. SCENE I.

Arden's House at Feversham]¹

Here enters Arden and his wife, Francklin
and Michaell.

Ard. See how the hours the gardeant² of heauens gate
Haue by their toyle remoued the darksome cloudes.
That Soll may wel deserue the³ trampled pace,⁴
Wherein he wount to guide his golden car,
The season fits, come Francklin, let's away.

Ales. I thought you did pretend some speciall hunt,
That made you thus cut shorte the time of rest.

Ard. It was no chase that made me rise so early,
But as I tould thee yesternight to go to the Ile of Sheppy:
There to dine with my Lord Cheiny 10
For so his horor late commanded me.

Ales. I such kinde husbands seldom want excuses,
Home is a wilde Cat, to a wandring wit,⁵
The time hath beene, would God it were not past,

¹ Act IV ... Feversham: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² gardeant: guard at (Q₃): guardian, protector (Onions).

³ deserue: deserue (Q₂); discern (Q₃). The Q₁ reading had an inverted "n".

⁴ pace: course, path (Brooke).

⁵ 13: Home is a wilde Cat ... wit: cited by Jaccb as a Shakespearean parallel (Brooke).

That honors tytle nor a Lords command,
 Could once haue drawne you from these armes of mine,
 But my deserts, or your deserues⁶ decay,
 Or both, yet if trew loue may seeme desert,⁷
 I merite stil to haue thy company.

Fran. Why I pray you, sir, let her go along with vs, 20

I am sure his honor wil welcome her,
 And vs the more, for bringing her along.

Ard. Content, sirra saddle your mistres nagge.

Ales. No, begde fauor morits little thankes,
 If I should go, our house would runne away,
 Or els be stolne, therefore Ile stay behind.

Ard. May see how mistaking you are,

I pray thee goe.

Ales. No no, not now.

Ard. Then let me leaue thee satisfied in this, 30

That time nor place, nor persons alter me,
 But that I hould thee dearer then my life.

Ales. That will be seene by your quick returne.

Ard. And that shall be⁸ ere night and if I liue.

⁶ deserues: Warnke suggests "desires" is the intended word (Bullen).

⁷ 18. if trew loue may seeme desert: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
 [III. i. 102]

"unlesse true loyaltie may seeme desart" (Crawford).

⁸ be: omitted in Q₃.

Farewell sweete Ales, we mind to sup with thee

Exit. Al.⁹

Fra. Come Michaell are our horses ready?

Mic. I your horse¹⁰ are ready, but I am not ready,

For I haue lost my purse,

With six and thirtie shillinges in it,

With taking vp¹¹ of¹² my M.¹³ Magge.

40

Fra. Why I pray you let vs go before,

Whilest he stayer behind to seeke his purse.

Ard. Go too sirra, see¹⁴ you follow vs to the file of sheppye,

To my Lord Cheynyes where we meane to dine.

Exeunt Arden & Francklin.

Manet Michaell.

Mic. So faire whether¹⁵ after you,

For before you lyes, black Will and shakebag,

In the broome close,¹⁶ too close for you,

Theyle be your ferrymen to long home.

⁹ Al: Ales.

¹⁰ horse: horses (Q₃).

¹¹ taking vp: getting ready.

¹² of: omitted in Q₃.

¹³ M.: mistris (Q₃).

¹⁴ see: see that (Q₃).

¹⁵ whether: weather (Q₂ and Q₃).

¹⁶ broome close: field (Baskervill). Holinshed: "a certain broom-close betwixt Feuersham and the Ferry."

Here enters the Painter.

But who is this the Painter, my corriual,

That would nedes winne M. Susan.

50

Clark. How row Michael how doth my Mistresse,

And all at home?

Mic. Who susan Mosbye? she is your Mistres too

Cla. I How doth she, and all the rest?

Mic. Al's well but susan she is sicke,

Cla. Sick, of what disease?

Mic. Of a great feare.¹⁷

Cla. A feare of what?

Mic. A great feuer.¹⁸

Cla. A feuer God forbidde.

60

Mic. Yes faith, and of a lordaire¹⁹ too,

As bigge as your selfe.

Cla. O Michael the spleane prickles²⁰ you.

Go too, you carry an eye ouer mistres susan.

Mic. I faith, to keepe her from the Painter.

Cla. Why more from a Painter, then from a seruing

¹⁷ feare: "feuer" in Delius (Brooke).

¹⁸ 59. A great feuer: Of a great feuer (Q₃).

¹⁹ lordaine: "'Lourden' was a term for a clownish, idle person (Fr. lourdin), and 'fever-lourden' was a jocular expression for slothfulness" (Bullen).

²⁰ prickles: pricks (Q₂ and Q₃).

creature like your selfe.

Mic. Because you Painters make but a painting tab

le of a pretty wench, and spoile her beauty with blotting.²¹

Cla. What meane you by that?

Mic. Why that you Painters, paint lambes, in the

lyning of wenches peticots

70

And we seruingmen put hornes to them, to make them be
come sheepe.

Cla. Such another word wil cost you a cuffe or a knock

Mic. What with a dagger made of a pensell?

Faith tis too weake

And therefore thou to²² weak to winne susan.

Cla. Would susans loue lay vpon this stroke.

Then he breaks Michaels head.

Here enters Mosby Greene & Ales.

Ales. Ile lay my lyfe, this is for susans loue,

Stayd you behinde your M. to this end?

Haue you no other time to brable²³ in

But now when serious matters are in hard?

80

Say Clarke, hast thou done the thing thou promised?

Cla. I heare it is, the very touch is death.

²¹ with blotting: with a blotting (Q₃).

²² to: too (Q₂ and Q₃).

²³ brable: quarrel (Bayne).

Ales. Then this I hope, if all the rest do faile,

Wil catch M. Arden

And make him wise in death, that liued a foole.²⁴

Why should he thrust his sickle in our corne,²⁵

Or what hath he to do with thee my loue?

Or gouerne me that am to rule my selfe,

Forsooth for credit sake I must leaue thee.

May he must leaue to liue, that we may loue, 90

May liue, may loue, for what is lyfe but loue?²⁶

And loue shall last as long as lyfe remaires,

And lyfe shall end, before my loue depart.

²⁴ 1. 85. And make ... foole: Bayne cites Ecclesiastes vii. 5:

"It is better to bear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools."

²⁵ 86. Why should he thrust his sickle in our corne: There are several striking similarities to this line in the following works: Soliman and Perseda [Works: IV. i. 223]

"Thrust his sickle in my harvest corne" (Crawford).

Edward 3 [Brooke, III. iii. 112-113]

"Before the sickles thrust into the Corne
Or that inkindled fury, turne to flame." (Q-1596)

The Spanish Tragedy [Works: II. iv. 202]

"Thou talkest of haruest when the corne is greene,
The end is crowne of euery work well done:
The Sickle comes not till the corne be ripe." (Q-1592)

²⁶ 91. for what is lyfe but loue: Crawford draws a parallel construction from Soliman and Perseda [Works: IV. i. 23]

"for what is misery but want of God."

100. Why whats loue, without true constancy?²⁷

Lyke to a piller built of many stones.

Yet neither with good morter, well compact,

Nor semell,²⁸ to fasten it in the icynts.

But that it shakes with euery blast of winde,

And being toucht, straight falles vnto the earth,

And buries all his²⁹ haughty pride³⁰ in dust. 100

No let our loue be rockes of Addamant,³¹

Which time nor place, nor tempest can a sunder.³²

²⁷ 94. whats loue without true constancy: cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: I. ii. 22]

"my true harts constancie" (Crawford).

²⁸ semell: cement (Q₃).

²⁹ his: its (Onions).

³⁰ haughty pride: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: V. v. 31]

"haughtie pride" (Crawford).

³¹ 101. let our loue be rockes of Addamant: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: IV. i. 99]

"my thoughts are like pillars of Adamant" (Crawford).

Cf. also Troilus and Cressida III. ii. 177-179:

"As true as steele, ... as Turtle to her mate:
As Iron to Adamant".

Adamant is a stone or mineral of excessive hardness, identified with the leadstone or magnet (Onions).

³² a sunder: part. Brooke comments: "some such word as 'drive' is of course, omitted. Warnke and Proescholdt strangely regard 'asunder' as a verb.

Gre. Mosbie leaue protestations now,³³

And let vs bethirke vs what we haue to doo:

Black Will and shakebag I haue placed,

In the broome close watching Ardens coming,

Lets to them, and see what they haue done.

Exeunt.

³³ 103. leaue protestations now: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
 [Works: I. iv. 30]
 "leaue protestations now" (Crawford).

[SCENE II.

The Kentish Coast opposite the Isle of
Sheppey]¹

Here enters Ard. & Fra.

Ard. Oh ferry man, where art thou?

Here enters the Ferriman.

Fer. Here here, goe before to the boat.

And I will follow you.

Ard. We haue great haste, I pray thee come away.

Fer. Fy what a mist² is here.

Ard. This mist my frend, is misticall,³

Lyke to a good companions smoaky braine,

That was halfe dround with new ale ouer night.

Fer. Twere pitty but his scull were opened,

To make more Chimney roome.

Fran. Freend whats thy opinion of this mist.

10

Fer. I think tis lyke to⁴ a curst⁵ wife in a lytle house,

That neuer leaues her husband till she haue driuen⁶ him

¹ Scene II ... Sheppey: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² mist: "This mist is not in Holinshed. It is our poet's invention" (Bayne).

³ misticall: having an unseen, unknown origin, or influence; of dark import or obscure meaning; or occult influence (CED).
'mist': state of uncertainty (Onions).

⁴ to: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

⁵ curst: cross, shrewish, vicious (Onions).

⁶ she haue driuen: she driue him (Q₂ and Q₃).

out at doores with a wet paire of eyes,
 Then lookes he as if his house were a fire,
 Or some of his freends dead.

Ard. Speaks thou this of thine owre experience,

Fer. Perhaps I, perhaps no: For my wife is as other
 women are, that is to say, gouerned by the Moone.⁷ 20

Fran. By the Moone, how I pray thee?

Fer. Na, thereby lyes a bargane.

And you shall not haue it fresh and fasting.⁸

Ard. Yes I pray thee good ferryman.

Fre. Then for this orce, let it be midsommer Moone,
 But yet my wyfe as⁹ another moone.

Fran. Another Moone.

Fer. I, and it hath influences and Eclipses.

Ard. Why then by this reconing, you somtimes
 Play the man in the Moone.¹⁰ 30

⁷ 20. women are ... Moone: It was customary for young women to appeal to the moon to tell them of their future prospects in matrimony (Dyer, p. 67). Other current beliefs concerning the powers of the moon were its causing the inconsistency of women, and the insanity of people. Another popular superstition was that the moon was influenced by witchcraft (Dyer, pp.67-68).

⁸ 23. And you ... fasting: before eating; in your eagerness; for nothing (Baskervill).

⁹ as: has (Q₃). The original reading is also quite valid.

¹⁰ 30. Play the man in the Moone: Bayne here cites an interesting parallel to A Midsummer Night's Drean V. i. 245-251

Fer. I but you had not best to meddle with that moore¹¹

Least I scratch you by the face, with my branble bush,

And. I am almost stifled with this fog, come lets away

Fran. And sirra as we go, let us haue some more of your
bolde yeomandry.¹²

Fer. Nay. by my troth, sir, but flat knauery.

Exeunt.

where the frame of reference is that of the cuckolded husband.

"Moon. This lanthorne doth the horned Moone present; ...
My selfe, the man i' the Moone doth seeme to be."

¹¹ 31. you had not best: "you had best not" in Warnke and
Proescholdt (Brooke). Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: II.
ii. 51]

"you had not best go to him" (Crawford).

¹² yeomandry: homespun wit (Bayne).

[SCENE III.]

Another place on the Coast)¹

Here enters Will at one doore, and Shakbag
at another.

Sha. Oh, Will, where art thou?

Wil. Here shakbag, almost in hels mouth,
Where I can not see my way for smoske.

Sha. I pray thee speake still that we may mete
by the sound, for² I shall fall into some ditche or
other, vales my feete see better then ny eies.

Wil. Didest thou euer see better weather to runne-a
way with another mans wife, or play with a wenche
at potfinger.³

Shak. No this were a fire world for chandlers,⁴
If this weather would last, for then a man 10
Should neuer dyne nor sup without candle light,
But sirra Will what horses are those that past?

Wil. Why didst thou⁵ heare any?

Sha. I that I did.

¹ Scene III ... Coast: added by Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

² for: or (Q₃).

³ potfinger: most likely a vulgar sexual reference.

⁴ chandlers: One who makes or sells candles; hence, a retailer of provisions, groceries, etc.: often contemptuous (CED).

⁵ thou: omitted in Q₃.

Wil. My life for thine, twas Arden and his companiō⁶

And then all our labour's lost,

Sha. May say not so, for if it be they, they may happely

loose their way as we haue dore

And then we may chaunce meete with them.

Wil. Come let vs go on lyke a couple of blind pilgrims⁷ 20

Then Shakebag falles into a ditch.

Sha. Helpe will help, I am almost drownd.

Here enters the ferryman.

Fer. Whose that, that calles for help?

Wil. Twas none heere, twas thou thy selfe.

Fer. I came to help him that cald for help.

Why, how row? who is this thats⁸ in the ditch?

You are well enough serued to goe without a guyde,
such weather as this.

Wil. Sirra what companyes⁹ hath past your ferry this
morning

Fer. More but a cupple of gentlemen that wert to dyne
at my Lord cheyneis.

Wil. Shakbag did not I tell thee as much?

⁶ companiō: companion (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁷ 20. a couple of blind pilgrims: possibly a veiled attack on the Puritans.

⁸ thats: that lies (Q₃).

⁹ companyes: companions (Q₂ and Q₃).

Fer. Why sir, will you haue any letters caried to them 30

Wil. No sir, get you gone.

Fer. Did you euer see such a mist as this?

Wil. No, nor such a foole as will rather be hought¹⁰

then get his way.

Fer. Why sir, this is no hough munday,¹¹ you ar deceiud.

Whats his name I pray you sir?

Sha. His name is black will.

Fer. I hope to see him one day hangd vpon a hill.

Exit Ferriman.

Sha. See how the Sunne hath cleard the foggy mist,

Now we haue mist the marke of our intent.

Here enters Grene Nosbye and Ales.

Nos. Black Will and Shakbag, what make you heer 40

What, is the deed don? is Arden dead.

Wil. What could a blynded man performe in armes?

Saw you not how till now, the sky was darke,

That neither horse nor man could be decerned,

Yet did we heare their horses as they past.

Gre. Haue they escapt you then, and past the ferry?

¹⁰ hought: hocked or hamstrung (Bayne).

¹¹ hough munday: "'Hock Monday; a festival which followed the second Sunday after Easter'. Brand's Popular Antiquities" (Bayne). Q3 reads "though Munday" in error.

Sha. I for a while, but here we two will stay.

And at their coming back meete with them once more,

Zounds I was nere so toylde¹² in all my lyfe,

In following so slight a taske¹³ as this. 50

Mos. How canst thou so beraide?¹⁴

Wil. With making false footing in the dark,

He needes would follow them without a guide.

Ales. Here's to pay for a fire and good cheere

Get you to Feuershame to the flowre deluce,

And rest your selues vntil some other time.

Gre. Let me alone, it most concernes my state.

Wil. I Mistres Arden this will serue the turne,

In case we fal into a second fog.

Exeunt Grene Will and Shak.

Mos. These knaues wil neuer do it, let vs giue it ouer. 60

Ales. First tell me how you like my new deuce?

Soone when my husband is returning back,

You and I both marching arme in arme,

Like louing frends, wele mete him on the way.

¹² toylde: netted, ensnared; put to exertion, taxed in strength (Onions).

¹³ 50. so slight a taske: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: I. v. 28]

"so slight a taske" (Crawford).

¹⁴ beraide: befouled (Bullen).

And boldly beard and braue¹⁵ him to his teeth:

When words grow hot, and blowes¹⁶ beginne to ryse,

Ile call those cutters foorth your tenement,

Who in a manner to take vp the fray,

Shall wound my husband hornesbie¹⁷ to the death.

Mos. Ah¹⁸ fine deuise, why this deserues a kisse.

70

Exeunt

¹⁵ beard and braue: to oppose openly and resolutely; to set at defiance, thwart, affront (OED).

¹⁶ blowes: words (Q₃).

¹⁷ hornesbie: cuckold. "Hornebeast" in Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

¹⁸ Ah: "1" in Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

[SCENE IV.
The Open Country]¹

Here enters Dick Reede and a Sailer.

Sawler. Faith Dick Rede it is to lytle end.

His conscience is too liberall, and he too nigardly.²

To parte from any thing may doo thee³ good.

Rede. He is coming from Shorlow as I vnderstand,

Here ile intercept him, for at his house

He neuer will vouchsafe to speake with me:

If prayers and faire intreaties will not serue,

Or make no battry in his flintye breast.

Here enters Fra Arden and Michaell.

Ile cursse the carle⁴ and see what that wil doo,

Se where he comes, to further my intent,

10

M. Arden I am now bound to the sea,

My comming to you was about the plat of ground,

Which wrongfully you detaine from me.

Although the rent of it be very small,

Yet will it helpe my wife and children:

Which here I leaue in Feuershame God knowes,

¹ Scene IV...Country: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² 2. His conscience ... niggardly: Alice's charges of Arden's miserliness are substantiated.

³ thee: him (Q₃).

⁴ carle: countryman, peasant, churl (Onions).

Needy and bare, for Christs sake let him haue it.

Arden. Francklin hearest thou this fellow speake?

That which he craues I dearely bought of him,

Although the rent of it was euer mine. 20

Sirra you, that aske these questions,

If with thy clamarous impeaching⁵ tongue

Thou raile on me, as I haue heard thou dost,

Ile lay thee vp so close a twelue months day,

As thou shalt neither see the Sonne nor Moone,

Looke to it, for as surely as I liue,

Ile banish pittie if thou⁶ vse me thus.

Rede. What wilt thou do me wrong, & threat⁷ me, too?

May then Ile tempt thee, Arden doo thy worst,

God I beseech thee show some miracle, 30

On thee or thine, in plaguing⁸ thee for this.

That plot of ground which thou detaines from me.

I speake it in an agony of spirite,

Be ruinous and fatall vnto thee:

Either there be butcherd by thy dearest freends,

Or els be brought for mean to wonder at.

⁵ impeaching: accusing, questioning (Onions).

⁶ thou: you (Q₃).

⁷ threat: threaten (Q₃).

⁸ plaguing: plaguing (Q₂ and Q₃).

Or thou or thine miscary in that place.

Or there runne mad, and end thy cursed dayes,

Fra. Fy bitter knaue brydle thine enuious⁹ tongue,¹⁰

For curses are like arrowes shot vpright, 40

Which falling down light on the sutors¹¹ head.

Rede. Light where they will, were I vpon the sea,

As oft I haue in many a bitter storme,

And saw a dreadfull suthern flaw¹² at hand,

The Pylate quaking at the doubtfull¹³ storme,

And all the saylers praying on their knees,

Euen in that fearefull time would I fall down,

And aske of God, what ere betide of me,

Vengeance on Arden, or some miseuent,

To shew the world, what wrong the carle hath done, 50

This charge Ile leaue with wy¹⁴ distresfull wife.

My children shall be taught such praiers as these,

⁹ enuious: spiteful, malicious (Onions).

¹⁰ 39. brydle thine enuious tongue: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
[Works: I. v. 104]

"bridle the ford intemperance of thy tongue" (Crawford).

¹¹ sutors: shooters (Q₃).

¹² flaw: gust of wind (Eayne).

¹³ doubtfull: apprehensive, fearful (Onions).

¹⁴ wy: my (Q₂ and Q₃).

And thus I go but leaue my cursive with thee.

Exeunt Rede & Sayler.

Ar. It is the raylingest knave in christendome,¹⁵

And oftentimes the villaine will be mad,

It greatly matters not what he sayes,

But I assure you, I nere did him wrong.

Fra. I think so M. Arden.

Ar. Now that our horses are gone home before,

My wife may hapely mete me¹⁶ on the way, 60

For God knows she is growne passing kinde of late,

And greatly chaunged from the oulde humor

Of her wounted frowardnes.

And seekes by faire meanes to redeeme ould faults.

Fra. Happy the change that alters for the best,¹⁷

But see in any case you make no speache,

Of the cheare we had at my Lord Cheinies,

Although most bounteous and liberall,

For that will make her think her selfe more wrongd,

In that we did not carry her a long, 70

¹⁵ l. 54. It is the raylingest knave in christendome: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: I. iv. 211]

"the braginst knave in Christendom" (Crawford).

¹⁶ me: omitted in Q₃.

¹⁷ l. 65. Happy ... the best: the expression sounds proverbial but cannot be traced.

For sure she greeued that she was left behinde.

Ard. Come Francklin, let vs strain to mend our pace,

And take her¹⁸ vnawares playing¹⁹ the cooke.

Here enters Ales and Mosbie.

For I beleeeue sheele stryue to mend our cheere.

Fran. Why thers no better creaturs²⁰ in the world

Then women are, when they are in good humors.

Ard. Who is that? Mosbie, what so familiare?

Iniurious strumpet, and thou ribald knaue,

Untwyne those armes.

Ales I with a sugred kisse,²¹ let them vntwine.

80

Ard. Ah Mosbie, periurde beast, beare this and all.

Mos. And yet no horned beast,²²

The hornes are thine.

Fran. O monstrous, May then tis time to draw.

Ales Helpe helpe they murther my husband.

Here enters Will, and Shak.

¹⁸ her: omitted in Q₃.

¹⁹ playing: to play (Q₃).

²⁰ creaturs: creature (Q₃).

²¹ 80. with a sugred kisse: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
[works: II. i. 6]

"and a sugred kisse" (Crawford).

²² horned beast: horne-beast (Q₃). The expression is cited by Jacob as Shakespearean (Brooke).

Sha. Zourds, who iniures M. Mosbie.

Help wil I am hurt.

Mos. I may thank you, Mistres arden for this wound,

Exeunt Mosby Will & Shaktbag.

Ales. Ah Arden what folly blinded thee?²³

Ah Ielious harebraine²⁴ man what hast thou don, 90

When we to welcome thy²⁵ intended sport.

Came louingly to mete thee on thy way.

Thou drewst thy sword intraged with Ielousy,

And hurt thy freende,

whose thoughts were free from harme;

All for a woorthles kisse and ioyning armes.

Both don but mirrely to try thy patience.

And me vnhappy that deuyسد the Iest,

Which though begonne in sporte, yet ends in bloode.

Fran. Mary God defend me from such a Ieast. 100

Ales Couldst thou not see vs frendly smyle on thee:

When we ioynd armes and when I kist his cheeke.

²³ 89. what folly blinded thee: Cf. Soliman and Perseda
[works: I. v. 97]

"If wilfull folly did not blind mine eyes" (Crawford).

²⁴ harebraine: flighty, foolish (OED). Cf. Ralph Roister
Doister [Baskervill, I. iv. 32]

"Ah foolish harebraine, This is not she." Q-1567

²⁵ thy: thee (C3).

Hast thou not lately found me ouer kinde.

Didst thou not heare me cry they murther thee.

Cald I not helpe to set my husband free:

No, eares and all were wight, ah me accurst,

To lincke in lyking with a frantick man,²⁶

Hence foorth Ile be thy slaue, no more thy wife:

For with that name I neuer shall content thee.

If I be merry thou straight waies thinks me light. 110

If sad thou saiest the sullens²⁷ trouble me.

If well attyred thou thinks I will be gadding;²⁸

If horely, I seeme sluttish in thine eye.

Thus an I still, and shall be whill²⁹ I die,

Poore wench abused by thy misgouernment,

Arđ But is it for trueth, that neither thou nor he,

Entendedst malice in your misdemeanor.

Ales. The heauens can witnes of our harmles thoghts

Arđ. Then pardon me, sweete Ales,

²⁶ 97. To lincke in lyking with a frantick man: Cf.
Soliman and Perseda [works: IV. ii. 70]

"she linkt in liking with my foe" (Crawford).

²⁷ sullens: moroseness, dumps (Onions). Cf. Richard II,
II. i. 138:

"And let them dye, that age and sullens haue."

²⁸ gadding: to go wandering, in desire or thought (to gad -
OED).

²⁹ whill: while (C₂ and C₃): till (Erooke).

and forgiue this faulte:

Forget but this, and neuer see the lyke.

Impose me pennance,³⁰ and I will performe it:

For in thy discontent I finde a death,

A death tormenting more then death it selfe,

Ales May hadst thou loued me as thou doest pretend,

Thou wouldst haue markt the speaches of thy frend,

Who going wounded from the place, he said

His skin was peirst³¹ only through my deuse,

And if sad sorrow taint thee for this falt,

Thou wouldst haue followed him, and sere him drest, 130

And cryde him mercy whom thou hast misdone,

Nere shall my hart be eased till this be done.

Arden Content thee sweete Ales thou shalt haue thy wil

What ere it be. For that I iniurde thee

And wrongd my frend, shame scourgeth my offence,

Come thou thy selfe and go along with me,

And be a mediator twixt vs two.

Fran. Why M. Arden, know you what you do,

Will you follow him that hath dishonourd you,

³⁰ 122: Impose me pennance: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works:
I. iv. 28]

"Impose me taske" (Crawford).

³¹ peirst: pierced.

Ales. Why canst thou proue I haue bene disloyall.

140

Fran. Why Mostie traunt you³² husband with the horn,

Ales. I after he had reuyled him,

By the iniuyous name of periurde beast,

He knew no wrong could spite an³³ Jelious man,

More then the hatefull naming of the horne.

Fran Suppose tis trew, yet is it dangerous.

To follow him whome he hath lately hurt,

Ales. A fault confessed is more than halfe a mends,³⁴

But men of such ill spirite as your selfe.

Work crosses and debates twixt man and wife.

150

Arđ. I pray the³⁵ gentle Francklin holde thy peace,

I know my wife counsels me³⁶ for the best,

Arđ³⁷ Ile seek out mosty where his wound is drest,

And salue his³⁸ haples quarrell if I may.

³² traunt you: taunt your - Q₂; taunts your (Q₃); "taunted your" in Delius (Brooke).

³³ an: a (Q₃).

³⁴ 148. A fault confessed ... a mends: The expression has become proverbial - A fault confessed is half redressed. ODEP cites Arden as the originator.

³⁵ the: thee (Q₂ and Q₃).

³⁶ me: omitted in Q₃.

³⁷ Arđ: Bullen changes the prefix to "Ales". The lines could also be Arden's with the name put in error.

³⁸ his: "this" in Delius (Brooke).

Exeunt Arden & Ales.

Fran. He whome the diuel driues must go perforce,³⁹

Poore gentleman how sore he is bewicht,

And yet because his wife is the instrument,

His frends must not be lauish in their speach,

Exit Fran.

³⁹ 155. He whome ... perforce: The expression is proverbial cf. Thomas Dekker, News from Hell.

"He that the devil drives feels no lead at his heels" (1606).

[ACT V., SCENE I.

A street in Feversham]¹

Here enters Will shakelafe & Greene

Wil. Sirra Greene when was I so long
in killing a man.

Gre. I think we shall neuer do it.
Let vs giue it ouer.

Sha. May Zounds wele kill him.

Though we be hangd at his dore for our labour.

Wil. Thou knowest Greene that I haue liued in
London this twelue yeers.
Where I haue made some go vppon wodden legges,
For taking the wall² on³ me,
Dyuers with siluer noses, for saying,
There goes blackwill.
I haue crackt as many blades,
As thou hast done⁴ Mutes.

10

Gre. O monstrous lye.

Will. Faith in a maner I haue.

The bawdie houses haue paid me tribute,

¹ Act V ... Feversham: added by Tyrrell (Erooke).

² taking the wall: pushing me into the streets (Easkervill).

³ on: of (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴ done: omitted in Warnke and Proescholdt (Erooke).

There durst not a whore set vp, vnlesse she haue agreed
with me first, for-opning⁵ her shoppe windows.

For a crosse words of a Tapster,

I haue pearced ore parrell after another, with my dager,
And held him be⁶ the teares till all his teare hath run out, 20

In Temes streete⁷ a brewers carte was like to haue runne
ouer me, I made no more ado, but went to the clark
and cut all⁸ the notches of his tales,⁹
and beat them about his head.

I and my compayne haue taken the Corstable from his watch,
And carried him¹⁰ about the fields on a coltstaffe.¹¹

I haue broken a Sariants¹² head with his own race,
And build whome I list with my sword and buckler.

⁵ for-opning: for opening (C₂ and C₃).

⁶ be: by (C₃).

⁷ Temes streete: Thames Street (C₃).

⁸ all: off (C₃).

⁹ tales: "tallies" - Brooke. He continues "Without the tallies the clerk would be unable to reckon his accounts or recover his debts."

¹⁰ him: omitted in C₃.

¹¹ coltstaffe: "a staff used by two persons for carrying 'cawls' i.e. tubs." (Bayne) Cf. The Merry Wives of Windsor III. iii. 156-157:

"Wher's the Cowle-staffe?"

¹² Sariants: Serjeants (C₃).

All the tenpery alehouses¹³ would stand euery morning,
 with a quart pot in his¹⁴ hand, 30

Saying will it please your worship drinke:

He that had rot doone so had beere sure to haue had his
 Singre¹⁵ puld down, & his latice¹⁶ torre away the next night.

To conclude, what haue I rot done? yet cannot do this,

Doubtles he is preserued by Miracle.

Here erters Ales and Michael.ell.

Gre. Hence Will, here comes M.¹⁷ Arden.

Ales. Ah gentle michael.ell art thou sure thei'r frends

Mic. why I saw them when they both shoke hard,

When Mosbie bled, he euen wept for sorrow:

And raild on Francklin that was cause of all. 40

No sooner came the Surgen in at doores,

But my M. tooke to¹⁸ his purse, and gaue him money.

And, to conclude, sent me to bring you word,

That Mosbie, Francklin, Bradshaw, Adam fowle,

¹³ alehouses: "alehouses men" in Jacob (Brocke).

¹⁴ his: their (Q₃).

¹⁵ Singre: Signe (Q₂ and Q₃).

¹⁶ latice: window of lattice work painted red, (sign of an alehouse) (Onions).

¹⁷ M.: mistris (Q₃).

¹⁸ to: omitted in Q₃.

With diuers of his neightours, and his frends,
 Will come and sup with you at our house this night.

Ales. Ah, gentle Michaell, runne thou bak againe,

And when my husband walkes into the faire,
 Bid Moshie steale from him, and come to me.

And this night shal thou and Susan be made sure, 50

Mic. Ile go tell him.

Ales. And as thou goest, tell John cooke of our guests,

And bid him lay it on,¹⁹ spare for no coast.²⁰

Exit Michaell.

Wil. May, and there be such cheere, we wil bid our selues.

Mistres Arden, Dick Greere & I do meane to sup w^t you,

Ales. And welcome shall you be, ah gentlemen,

How mist you of your purpose yesternight?

Gre. Twas long of²¹ shakebag that vnluckye villaire.

Sha. Thou doest me wrong, I did as much as any.

Wil. May, then M. Ales,²² Ile tell you how it was, 60

When he should haue lockt with both his hilts,²³

¹⁹ lay it on: fall to work (Bayne).

²⁰ coast: cost (Q₂ and Q₃).

²¹ long of: an account of (Onions).

²² M. Ales: Mistris Alice - Q₃; "M. Arden" in Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

²³ lockt with both his hilts: "'Hilts' is common for 'hilt', e.g. in Malory and Shakespeare; 'both his hilts' is apparently

He in a brauery²⁴ florisht ouer his head
 With that comes Francklin at him lustely .
 And hurts the slaue, with that he slinks away,
 Now his way had bene to haue²⁵ come hand and feete,
 one and two round at his costerd.²⁶
 He lyke a foole beares his sword point halfe a yarde out
 of danger, I lye here for my lyfe.
 If the deuill come and he haue no more strength then²⁷ fence²⁸
 He shall neuer beat me from this warde,²⁹
 Ile stand to it, a buckler in a skilfull hand,
 Is as good as a castell.³⁰ 70
 May tis better then a sponce³¹ for I haue tryde it.
 Mosbie perceiuing this, began to faint.

an extension of this use. 'Lockt'd' I take to mean 'crossed or clashed swords, with his adversary'" (Bayne).

²⁴ brauery: defiance (Onions).

²⁵ haue: omitted in Q₃.

²⁶ costerd: head; "literally a large ribbed apple. Frequent in Shakespeare" (Bayne).

²⁷ then: "than I have" in Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

²⁸ fence: fencing skill (Onions).

²⁹ warde: guard, protection (Onions).

³⁰ castell: castle (Q₂ and Q₃).

³¹ sponce: a block-house, a small fort (Bullen).

With that comes Arden with his arming sword,³²

And thrust him through the shoulder in a tryce.

Ales. I, but I wonder why you both stode still.

Wil. Faith I was so amazed I could not strike.

Ales. Ah, sirs, had he yesternight bene slaine,

For euery drop of his detested bloode,

I would cramme³³ in Angels in thy fist.

And kist thee, too, and hugd thee in my³⁴ armes. 80

Wil. Patient your selfe, we can not help it now,

Greene and we two will dogge him through the faire,

And stab him in the crowd, and steale away,

Here enters Mosbye.

Ales. It is vnpossible, but here comes he,

That will I hope inuent some surer meanes.

Swete Mosbie hide thy arme it kills my hart.

Mos. I mistres Arden, this is your fauour,

Ales. Ah, say not so, for when I sawe thee hurt,

I could haue toke the weapon thou letst fall,

And runne at Arden, for I haue sworne, 90

That these mine eyes offended with his sight,

³² arming sword: a strong two-handed sword (Bullen).

³³ I would cramme: I would have cram'd (Q₃).

³⁴ my: mine (Q₂ and Q₃).

Shall neuer close, till Ardens be shut vp,

This night I rose and walkt about the chamber.

And twise or thrise, I thought to haue murthred him,

Mos. What, in the night, then had we bene³⁵ vndone,

Ales. Why, how long shall he liue?

Mos. Faith Ales no longer then this night.

Black Will and shakebag, will you two

Perform the complot that I haue laid.

Wil. I or els think me as³⁶ a villaine.

100

Gre. And rather then you shall want,³⁷

The helpe my selfe.

Mos. You M. Greene, shal single Francklin foorth,

And hould him with a long tale of strange newes:

That he may not come home till suppertime.

The fetch M. Arden home & we like frends.

Will play a game or two at tables³⁸ here,

Ales. But what of all this?

How shall he be slaire?

³⁵ bere: be (Q₃).

³⁶ as: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

³⁷ want: fail (Onions).

³⁸ tables: a type of backgammon (Onions). A game played on a board consisting of two tables (usually united by a hinge), with draughtsmen whose moves are determined by throws of the dice (OED).

Mosbie. Why, black wil and shakebag lockt within
the countinghouse,

110

Shall at a certain watchword giuen, rush foorth,

Wil. What shall the watch word be?

Mos. (Now I take you) that shall be the word.

But come not forth before in any case.

Wil. I warrant you, but who shall lock me in?

Ales. That will I do;³⁹ thou'st⁴⁰ kepe the key thy self.

Mos. Come M. Greene, go you along with me.

See all things ready Ales, against we come.

Ales. Take no care for that, send you him home.

Exeunt Mosbie and Greene.

And if he ere go forth againe, blame me,

120

Come blacke Will that in mine eies art faire,

Next vnto Mosbie doe I honour thee,

Instead of faire wordes and large promises,⁴¹

My hands shall play you goulden harmonie,

How like you this? say, will you doe it sirs?

Will. I ard that brauely too, marke my deuice.

³⁹ do: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

⁴⁰ thou'st: thou'lt (Q₃).

⁴¹ 123: faire words and large promises: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: IV. i. 63]

"Querdon with large promises" (Crawford).

Place Mosbie being a stranger in a chaire,

And let your husband sit vpon a stoole,

That I may come behind him cunninglie,

And with a towell pull him to the ground, 130

Then stab him fine till his flesh be as a sine,⁴²

That done beare him behind the Abby,

That those that finde him nurthered, may suppose

Some slaue or other kild him for his golde.

Ales. A fire deuice, you shall have twenty pound,

And when he is dead, you shall haue forty more.

And, least you might be suspected staying heere,

Michaell shall saddle you two lusty geldings.

Ryde whether you will to Scotland, or to Wales.

Ile see you shall not lacke where ere you be. 140

Wil. Such wordes would make one kill 1000.⁴³ men.

Giue re the key, which is the counting house?

Ales. Here would I stay, and still encourage you,

But that I know how resolute you are.

Sha. Tush, you are too faint harted, we must do it.

Ales. But Mosbie will be there, whose very lockes,

Will ad vnwounded courage to my thought,

⁴² sine: siue - Q₂; sive - Q₃. The meaning is most likely "sieve".

⁴³ 1000: a thousand (Q₃).

And make me the first that shall adventure on him,

Wil. Tush get you gone, tis we must do the deede.

When this doore oppens next, looke for his death 150

Ales. Ah, would he now were here, that it might open

I shall no more be closed in Ardens armes,

That lyke the snakes of blacke Tisiphore,⁴⁴

Sting me with their embraceings, mosbies armes

Shall compasse me, and were I made a starre,

I would haue none other spheres but those.

There is no rector, but in Mosbies lypes,

Had chaste Diana kist him, she like me

Would grow loue sicke, and from her watrie bower,

Fling down Endimion⁴⁵ and snath⁴⁶ him vp: 160

Then blame not me, that slay a silly man,

Not halfe so louely as Endimion.

Here enters Michael.

Mic. Mistres my maister is comming hard by,

Ales. Who comes with him.

⁴⁴ 153. lyke the snakes of blacke Tisiphore: Cf. Edward II
[Works: 1. 2031]

"Or like the snakie wreathe of Tisiphon." Q-1594

Tisiphore was one of the three Furies. They pursued Orestes for years in the form women, all black with long hair like snakes demanding vengeance for having slain his mother Clymnestra for adultery.

⁴⁵ Endimion: cited by Jacob as Shakespearean (Brooke).

Mic. Nobody but mosbye.

Ales. Thats well michaell, fetch in the tables,
And when thou hast done, stand before the
counting house doore.

Mic. Why so?

Ales. Black will is lockt within, to do the deede.

Mic. What shall he die to night?

. 170

Ales. I michaell

Mic. But shall not susan know it?

Ales. Yes for shale be as secreete as our selues.

Mic. Thats braue,⁴⁷ Ile go fetch the tables.

Ales. But michaell hearke to me a word or two,
When my husband is come in lock the streete doore:
He shall be murthred or⁴⁸ the guests come in.

Exit mic.

Here enters Arden & Mosbie.

Husband what meane you to bring rosby home?

The allusion here is possibly to Lyly's play Endimion (published 1591) or to the mythological Endymion, the beautiful shepherd of whom Diana became enamoured when she saw him sleeping on Mt. Latmos. She caused him to sleep for ever that she might enjoy his beauty (OCEL).

⁴⁶ snath: snatch (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁴⁷ Thats braue: frequently an epithet of persons and things - i.e. that's fine (Onions).

⁴⁸ or: ere - Q₃: before (Onions). "or e'er" in Jacob (Brooke).

Althought⁴⁹ I wisht you to be reconciled,
 Twas more for feare of you, then loue of him,
 Black will and Greene, are his companions,
 And they are cutters, and may cut you shorte,
 Therefore I thought it good to make you frends.
 But wherefore do you bring him hether now,
 You haue giuen me my supper with his sight,⁵⁰

180

Mos. M. Arden me thinks your wife would haue me gone.

Arden. No good M. Mosbie, women will be prating,⁵¹

Ales bid him welcome, he and I are frends.

Ales. You may inforce me to it, if you will,

But I had rather die then bid him welcome,

190

His company hath purchest me ill frends.

And therefore wil I nere frequent it more.

Mos. Oh how cunningly she can dissemble.⁵²

Ard. Now he is here you wil not serue me so.

Ales. I pray you be not angree or displeasid

Ile bid him welcome seeing youle haue it so,

You are welcome M. Mosbie will you sit down.

⁴⁹ Althought: Although (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁵⁰ 1. 185. You haue giuen me my supper with his sight:
 i.e. you have killed my appetite (Baskervill).

⁵¹ prating: pratling (Q₂); prattling (Q₃).

⁵² 193. Oh how cunningly ... dissemble: an aside.

Mos. I know I am welcome to your louing husband,

But for your selfe you speake not from your hart.

Ales. And if I do not, sir think I haue cause.

200

Mos. Pardon me M. Arden, Ile away.

Ard. No good M. Mosbie.

Ales. We shal haue guests enough, thogh you go hence.

Mos. I pray you M. Arden, let me go.

Ard. I pray thee Mosbie let her prate her fill.

Ales. The doores are open, sir, you may be gone.

Mic. May thats a lye, for I haue lockt the doores.⁵³

Ard. Sirra fetch me a cup of Wine.

Ile make them freends.

And gentle M. Ales, seeing you are so stout,⁵⁴

210

You shal beginne, frowne not, Ile haue it so.

Ales. I pray you meddle with that you haue to do.

Ard. Why Ales? how can I do too much for him,

Whose lyfe I haue endaungered without cause.

Ale. Tis true, & seeing twas partly through my means

I am content to drinke to him for this once.

Here M. Mosbie, and I pray you henceforth,

Be you⁵⁵ as straunge to me, as I to you

⁵³ 208. May ... doores: an aside.

⁵⁴ stout: stubborn, proud, haughty (Onions).

⁵⁵ you: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

Your company hath purchased me ill freends.

And I for you God knowes, haue vnderued.

220

Beene ill spoken of in euery place.

Therefore hencefoorth frequent my house no more.

Mos. Ile see your husband in dispight of you,

Yet Arden I protest to thee by heauen,⁵⁶

Thou nere shalt see me more after this night.⁵⁷

Ile go to Roome⁵⁸ rather then be⁵⁹ forsworne.

Ar. Tush Ile haue no such voves made in my house.

Ales. Yes I pray you husband let him sweare,

And on that condition Mosbie⁶⁰ pledge me here.

Mos. I as willingly as I meane to liue.

230

Ard. Come Ales, is our supper ready yet?

Ales. It will be then you haue plaid a game at tables,

Ard. Come M. Mosbie, what shall we play for?

Mos. Three games for a french crowne sir,

⁵⁶ 223. I protest to thee by heauen: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: V. i. 26]

"I heere protest by heuens" (Crawford).

⁵⁷ 224. Thou nere ... this night: The subtle verbal repartee between Alice, Mosbie and Arden throughout this scene is excellent in its double nuances.

⁵⁸ Roome: Rome (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁵⁹ then be: then to be (Q₃).

⁶⁰ Mosbie: omitted in Q₃.

And⁶¹ please you.

Arđ. Content.

Then they play at the Tables.

Wil. Can he not take him yet?⁶² what a spight is that?

Ales. Not yet Will, take hede he see thee not?

Wil. I feare he wil spy me as I am coming,

Mic. To preuent that, creepe betwixt my legs.⁶³ 240

Mos. One ace, or els I lose the game.

Arđ. Mary sir theres two for fayling.⁶⁴

Mos. Ah M. Arden (now I can take you)

Then Will pulles him down with a towell.

Arđ. Mosbie, Michaell, Ales, what will you do?

Will. Nothing but take you vp sir, nothing els.

Mos. Thers for the pressing Iron you tould me of.

Sha. And ther's for the ten pound in my sleeue,

Ales. what, grores thou? nay then giue me y^e weapō,⁶⁵

Take this for hindring Mosbies loue and mire.⁶⁶

⁶¹ And: if it.

⁶² yet: omitted in Q₃.

⁶³ 237-240. Can he not ... my legs: comments here are meant to be asides.

⁶⁴ fayling: i.e. if ore is not enought (Baskervill).

⁶⁵ y^e weapō: the weapon (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁶⁶ 249. Take this ... mire: The horror of the scene reaches a climax as Alice herself assists in the murder and stabs Arden for simply being her husband.

Michaell. O Mistres.

Will. Ah that villaine will betray vs all,

Mos. Tush feare him not, he will be secrete,

Mic. Why dost thou think I will betray my selfe?

Sha In Southwarke dwels a bonnie northerne lasse,

The widow Chambley ile to her house now,

Ind⁶⁷ if she will not giue me harborough,⁶⁸

Ile make bootie of the queane euen to her smocke.

Will. Shift for your selues we two will leaue you now

Ales. First lay the bodie in the countinghouse.

Then they lay the body in the Countinghouse.

Will. We haue our gould mistris Ales, adew,

Mosbie farewell, and Michaell farewell too. Exeunt

Enter Susan.

Susan. Mistres, the guests are at the doores.

Hearken they knocke, what, shall I let them in?

Ales. Mosbie go thou & beare them companie. Exit M.

And susan fetch water and wash away this bloode,

Susan.⁶⁹ The bloode cleaueth to the ground & will not out

Ales. But with my nailes ile scrape away the blood,

⁶⁷ Ind: And (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁶⁸ harborough: "an old form of 'harbour' frequently found" (Buller).

⁶⁹ Susan: Alice (Q₃).

The more I striue the more the blood appeares:⁷⁰

Susan. Whats the reason M. can you tell?

Ales. Because I blush not at my husbands death. 270

Here enters Mosbie.

Mos. How now, whats the matter? is all well?

Ale. I wel, if Arden were aliue againe.

In vaine we striue, for here his blood remains,

Mos. Why strew rushes⁷¹ on it, can you not,

This wench doth nothing fall vnto the worke.

Ales. Twas thou that made me murther him,

Mos. What of that?

Ales. Nay nothing Mosbie, so it be not known.

Mos. Keepe thou it close, and tis vnpossible,

Ales. Ah but I can not, was he not slaine by me, 280

My husbands death torments me at the hart.⁷²

Mos. It shall not long torment thee, gentle Ales,

⁷⁰ 262-268. Mistris, the guests ... appeares: This scene bears striking similarities to Macbeth i.e. the atmosphere of panic created by the knocking without as soon as the murder has been committed; the murderers concerned with the traces of blood giving them away; the blood of guilt which will not wash out.

⁷¹ strew rushes: the floor of the Elizabethan home was covered with rushes as matting.

⁷² 281. My husbands death ... hart: Alice immediately laments her participation in the crime when the fear of discovery overwhelms her. She now loses all the strength and composure she has displayed earlier in the place.

I am thy husband, thinke no more of him.

Here enters Adam fowle and Brad.

Brad. How now M. Arden?⁷³ what ayle you weepe?⁷⁴

Mrs. Because her husband is abroad so late.

A cupple of Ruffins threatred him yesternight,

And the poore soule is affraid he should be hurt.

Adam. Ist nothing els? tush, hele be here anone.

Here enters Greene.

Gre. Now M. Arden⁷⁵ lacke you any guests.

Ales. Ah M. Greene, did you se my husband lately,

290

Gre. I saw him walking behinde the Abby euen now,

Here enters Francklin.

Ales. I do not like this being out so late,

M. Francklin where did you leaue my husband.

Fra. Beleeue me I saw him not since Morning,

Feare you not, hele come anone, meane time

You may do well to bid his guests sit down.

Ales. I so they shall, M. Bradshaw sit you there,

I pray you be content, Ile haue my will.

M. Mosbie sit you in my husbands seat.

Michaell. Susan shall thou and I wait on them,

300

⁷³ M. Arden: Mrs. Arden (Q3).

⁷⁴ 284. what ayle you weepe: i.e. what ails you that you weep.

⁷⁵ M. Arden: Mrs. Arden (Q3).

Or and thou saist the word let vs sit down too.

Su. Peace we haue other matters now in hand.

I feare me Michaell al wilbe bewraied.

Mic. Tush so it be knowne that I shall marry thee in the

Morning, I care not though I be hangde ere night.

But to preuent the worst, Ile by some rats bane.

Su. Why Michael wilt thou poyson thy selfe?

Mic. No, but my mistres, for I feare shele tell.

Su. Tush Michel feare not her, she's wise enough.

Mos. Sirra Michell giues a cup of beare.

310

M. Arden, heers to your husband.

Ales. My husband?

Fra. What ailes you woman, to crie so suddenly.

Ales. Ah neighbors a sudden qualm came ouer my hart⁷⁶

My husband deing⁷⁷ foorth torments my mynde.

I know some thing's amisse, he is not well.

Or els I should haue heard of him ere now.

Mo. She will vndo vs, through her foolishnes.⁷⁸

Gre. Feare not M. Arden, he's well enough.

⁷⁶ 313-314. What ailes you ... ouer my hart. Cf. Soliman and Perseda [Works: II. i. 49-50]

"Lucina. What ailes you madam that your colour changes?
Perseda. A suddaine qualme" (Crawford).

⁷⁷ deing: being (C₂ and C₃).

⁷⁸ 318. She will vndo ... foolishnes: an aside.

Ales. Tell not me, I know he is not well,

320

He was not wount for to stay thus late.

Good M. Francklin, go and seeke him foorth,

And if you finde him send him home to mee.

And tell him what a feare he hath put me in.

Fra. I lyke not this, I pray God all be well⁷⁹

Exeunt Fra. Mos. & Gre.

Ile seeke him out and find him if I can.

Ales. Michaell how shall I doo to rid the rest away?

Mic. Leaue that to my charge, let me alone,

Tis very late M. Bradshaw,

And there are many false knaues abroad,

330

And you haue many narrow⁸⁰ lanes to pas.

Brad. Faith, frend Michaell, and thou saiest trew.

Therefore I pray thee lights foorth, and lends a linck,⁸¹

Exeunt Brad. Adam, & Michael.

Ales. Michael, bring them to the dores, but doo not stay,

You know I do not loue to be alone,

Go Susan and bid thy brother come,

But wherefore should he come? Heere is nought but feare.

Stay Susan stay, and helpe to counsell me.

⁷⁹ 325. I lyke ... all be well: an aside.

⁸⁰ narrow: omitted in Q₃.

⁸¹ linck: torch (Onions).

Susan. Alas I counsell, feare frights away my wits,

Then they open the countinghouse doore,

and looke vppon Arden.

Ales. See Susan where thy quandam⁸² Maister lyes, 340

Sweete Arden smeard in bloode and filthy⁸³ gore.

Susan. My brother, you, and I, shall rue this deede.

Ales. Come susan help to lift his body forth,⁸⁴

And let our salt teares be his obsequies.

Here enters Mosbie and Greene.

Mos. How now Ales whether will you beare him?

Ales. Sweete Mosbie art thou come?

Then weepe that will.

I haue my wishé in that I ioy thy sight.⁸⁵

Gre. Well it houes⁸⁶ vs to be circumspect.

Mos. I for Francklin thinks that we haue murthred him. 350

Ales. I but he can not proue it for his lyfe.

⁸² quandam: quodam (Q₃): i.e. former (OED).

⁸³ filthy: omitted in Q₂ and Q₃.

⁸⁴ 343. susan help to lift his body forth: Bayne refers to the Wardnote Book: "Cecily Pounders (Mosbie's sister) did help to beare the dead corpse out into a meadow there, commonly called the Amery Croft."

⁸⁵ 348. I haue my wishé in that I ioy thy sight: Cf. Edward II [works: 1. 151]

"I haue my wish, in that I ioy thy sight." Q-1594

⁸⁶ houes: behoves (Baskervill).

Wele spend this night in daliance and in sport.

Here enters Michaell.

Mic. O mistres the Maior and all⁸⁷ the watch,

Are coming towards our house with glaues & billes.⁸⁸

Ales. Make the dore fast, let them not come in,

Mos. Tell me sweets Ales how shall I escape?

Ales. Out at the back dore, ouer the pyle of woode.

And for one night ly at the floure deluce,

Mos. That is the next way to betray me selfe.

Gre. Alas M. Arden the watch will take me here,

360

And cause suspition, where els would be none.

Ales. Why take that way that M. Mosbie dooth,

But first coruey the body to the fields.

Then they beare the body into the fields.

Mos. Vntil to morrow, sweete Ales, now farewell,

And see you confesse nothing in any case.

Gre. Be resolute M. Ales,⁸⁹ betray vs not,

But cleane to vs as we wil stick to you.

Exeunt Mosbie & Grene.

⁸⁷ all: omitted in Q₃.

⁸⁸ glaues & billes: swords and halberts (Baskervill).
bill: an obselete military weapon consisting of a long
wooden handle having at one end a blade or axe-shaped head
(Onions).

⁸⁹ M. Ales: Mrs. Alice (Q₃).

Ales. Now let the iudge and iuries do their worst,

My house is cleare, and now I feare them not.

Susan. As we went it snowed al the way, 370

Which makes me feare, our footsteps will be spyed.

Ales. Peace foole,⁹⁰ the snow wil couer them againe.

Susan. But it had done before we came back againe.

Ales. Hearke hearke, they knocke,

go Michaell let them in.

Here enters the Maior and the watch.

How now M. Maior, haue you brought my husband home.

Maior. I sawe him come into your house an hour agoe.

Ales. You are deceiued, it was a Londoner,

Maior. Mistress Arden know you not one

that is called blacke Will.

Ales. I know nore such, what meane these questions, 380

Maior. I haue the counsels warrand to apprehend him

Ales. I am glad it is no worse.

Why M. mairo thinke you I harbour any such?

Ma. We are informd that here he is.

And therefore pardon vs, for we must search.

⁹⁰ 372. Peace foole: Cf. Soliman and Perseda [works: IV.
i. 4]

"Peace foole."

Shakespeare uses the same in Troilus and Cressida II. i. 89.

Ales. I, search, and spare you not, through euery roome,

Were my husband at home, you would not offer this,

Here enters Francklin.

M. Francklin what meane you come so sad.

Fra. Arden thy husband, and my freend, is slaine,

Ales. Ah, by whome? M. Francklin can you tell?⁹¹ 390

Fra. I know not, but behind the abby,

There he lyes nurthred in most pittious case,

Mai. But M. Francklin are you⁹² sure tis he,

Fra. I am too sure, would God I were deceiued.

Ales. Finde out the Murthrers let them be knowne,

Fra. I, so they shall, come you along with vs.

Ales. Wherefore?

Fra. know you this handtowel and this knyfe?

Su. Ah michael through this thy negligence.

Thou hast betrayed and vndore vs all. 400

Mic. I was so affraide, I knew not what I did,

I thought I had throwne them both into the well.⁹³

Ales. It is the pigs bloode we had to supper.

But wherefor stay you? finde out the murthrers.

⁹¹ 390. by whome ... you tell: Alice's insensitive question betrays her own guilt.

⁹² you: omitted in Q₃.

⁹³ 399-402: Ah michael ... the well: Susan and Michael are here speaking in asides.

Ma. I feare me youle proue one of them your selfe.

Ales. I one of them, what meane such questions.

Fra. I feare me he was murthred in this house.

And carried to the fields, for from that place,

Backwards and forwards may you see,

The print of many feete within the snow, 410

And looke about this chamber where we are,

And you shall finde part of his giltles bloode,

For in his slipshoe⁹⁴ did I finde sore rushes.

Which argueth he was murthred in this roome.

Ma. Looke in the place where he was wont to sit.

See see his blood it is too manifest.

Ales. It is a cup of wine that michaell shed.

Mic. I truely.

Fran. It is his bloode, which strumpet thou hast shed,

But if I liue thou and thy complices, 420

Which haue conspired and wrought his death,

Shall rue it.

Ales. Ah M. Francklin God and heauen can tell,

I loued him more than all the world beside.

But bring me to him let me see his body.

Fra. Ering that villaine and mosbies sister too,

And one of you go to the flowre deluce.

And seeke for mosbie, and apprehend him to. Exeunt.

⁹⁴ slipshoe: slipper.

[SCENE II.

An obscure street in London]¹

Here enters shakebag solus.

Sha. The widdow charnbly in her husbands dayes I kept
 And now he's dead, she is growre so stout²
 She will not know her ould companions,
 I came thither thinking to haue had
 Harbour as I was wount
 And she was ready to thrust me out at doores,
 But whether she would or no I got me³ vp,
 And as she followed me I spurnd her down the stairs,
 And broke her neck and cut her tapsters throat,
 And now I am going to fling them in the Temes, 10
 I haue the gould, what care I though it be knowne?
 Ile crosse the water and take sanctuary.

Exit shakbag.

¹ Scene II ... London: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² stout: stubborn. Cf. p. 156, n. 54.

³ got me: goe me (Q₃).

[SCENE III.]

Arden's House at Feversham]¹

Here enters the Maior, Mosbie, Ales, Franklin,
Michael and Susan.

Mai. See M. Arden, where your husband lyes.

Confesse this foule fault and be penitent.²

Ales. Arden sweete husband, what shall I say?

The more I sound his name, the more he bleedes.

This bloode condemnes me, and in gushing foorth
Speakes as it falles, and askes me why I did it,³

Forgiue me Arden, I repent me nowe,

And would my death saue thine, thou shouldst not dye,

Ryse vp sweete Arden and enioy thy loue.

And forwne not on me when we mete in heauen, 10

In heauen I⁴ loue thee though on earth I did not,⁵

¹ Scene III ... Feversham: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² 2. Confesse this foule fault and be penitent: Cf. The Spanish Tragedy [works: III. vi. 26]

"Confesse thy folly and repent thy fault" Q-1592
(Crawford).

³ 4-6: Dyer describes the phenomenon of the blood as a "sympathetic indication" and explains that "according to a very old tradition, the wounds of a murdered person were supposed to bleed afresh at the approach or touch of the murderers" (Dyer, p. 486).

⁴ I: "I'll" in Tyrrell (Brooke).

⁵ 3-11: Arden sweete husband ... did not: The emphasis on the theme of redemption controls the remainder of the play.

Maior. Say Mosby what made thee murther him.

Fra. Study not for an answer, Locke rot down

His purse and girdle found at thy beds head,

Witnes sufficiently thou didst the deede.

It bootles is to sweare thou dist it not.

Mos. I hyred black Will and Shakebagge,

Ruffynes both,

And they and I haue done this murthrous deed,

But wherefore stay we?

20

Core and beare me hence.

Fra. Those Ruffins shall not escape;

I will vp⁶ to Lordon, and get the counsels warrand

to apprehend them.

Exeunt.

⁶ vp: omitted in Q₃

[SCENE IV.]

The Kentish Coast]¹

Here enters Will.

Will. Shakebag I heare hath taken sanctuary,

But I am so pursued with hues and cryes,

For petty robberies that I haue done,

That I can come vnto no Sanctuary.

Therefore must I in some Oyster kote,²At last, be faine to go a boord some Hoye.³And so to Flushing⁴ there is no staying here,At Sittinburgh⁵ the watch was like to take me.

And had not I with my buckler couerd my head,

And run full blanck at all aduentures,⁶

10

I am sure I had nere gone further then that place,

¹ Scene IV ... Coast: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).² Oyster kote: "Faversham was famous for its oysters" (Bayne).
"The Faversham oysters (says Hasted) are of the same kind as those which were so highly esteemed by the Romans. The Dutch give preference to these oysters of the Faversham grounds before all others along the coast." - C. E. Donne" (Bullen).³ Hoye: small coasting vessel (Onions).⁴ Flushing: a seacoast town in the province of Zealand, in The Netherlands.⁵ Sittinburgh: "Sittingburn" in Jacob (Brooke).⁶ 10. at all aduentures: at all hazards, whatever the consequences may be (Onions).

For the Constable had 20⁷ warrands to apprehend me,
Besides that, I robbed him and his Man once
at Gades hill,
Farewell England, Ile to Flushing now. Exit will.

⁷ 20: twenty (03).

[SCENE V.

Justice-Room at Feversham]¹

Here enters the Maior, Mosbye, Ales, Michael, Susan,
and Bradshaw.

Maior. Come make haste & bring away the prisoners.

Brad. M. Arden² you are now going to God,
And I am by the law condemned to die.
About a letter I brought from M. Greene,
I pray you M. Arden speak the truth.
Was I euer priuie to your intent or no?

Ales. What should I say?

You brought me such a letter.
But I dare sweare thou knewest not the contents.
Leaue now to trouble me with worldly things. 10
And let me meditate vpon my sauour Christ,
Whose bloode must saue me for the blodde I shed,

Mos. How long shall I liue in this hell of griefe?

Conuey me from the presence of that strumpet.³

Ales. Ah but for thee I had neuer beene strumpet

¹ Scene V ... Feversham: added by Tyrrell (Brooke).

² M. Arden: Master Arden (Q3).

³ 1A. Conuey me from the presence of that strumpet: Cf. The Murder of John Brewer where Parker says: "I would be twice advised how I did wed with such a strumpet as thysself. Whereunto shee answered shee had neuer been strumpet but for him" (Crawford).

What can not oathes and protestations doe?

When men haue opportunity to woe.

I was too young to sound thy villanies.

But now I finde it, and repent too late.⁴

Su. Ah gentle brother, wherefore should I die. 20

I knew not of it, till the deed was don.

Mos. For thee I mourne more then for my selfe,

But⁵ let it suffice, I can not saue thee now,

Mic. And if your brother and my Mistres.

Had not promised me you in marriage,

I had nere⁶ giuen consent to this foule deede.

Maio. Leauē to accuse each other now,

And listen to the sentence I shall giue.

Beare Mosbie and his sister to London straight,

Where they in Smithfield must be executed. 30

Beare M. Arden vnto Canterburye,

Where her sentence is she must be burnt.⁷

⁴ 18-19. I was too young ... too late: Alice's excuse for her rejection of marital vows in favour of Moskie's charms seem trite in the light of her vehement hatred and blood thirsty comments before Arden's death.

⁵ But: omitted in Jacob (Brooke).

⁶ nere: neuer (Q₂ and Q₃).

⁷ 31-32. Beare M. Arden ... burnt: Bayne here cites the Canterbury Records: "For the charges of brenning Mistress Arden and execution of George Bradshaw, XLIII S."

[§107.50 (Wright)].

Michaell and Bradshaw in Feuershame

must suffer death.

Ales. Let my death make amends for all my sinnes,⁸

Mos. Fy vpon women, this shall be my song.

But beare me hence, for I haue liued to long.

Susan. Seing no hope on earth, in heauen is my hope.

Mic. Faith I care not seeing I die with Susan.

Brad. My bloode be on his head that gaue the sentence, 40

Maior. To speedy execution with them all.

Exeunt

⁸ sinnes: sinne (Q₃).

[EPILOGUE]¹

Here enters Francklin.

Fran. Thus haue you seene the trueth of Ardens death

As for the Ruffins, Shakbag and blacke Will,
 The one tooke Sanctuary, and being sent for out.
 Was murthred in Southwark, as he past
 To Greenewitch, where the Lord Protector lay.
 Black Will was burnt in Flushing on a stage.²
 Greene was hanged at Ostridge³ in Kent.
 The Painter fled, & how he dyed we know not.
 But this aboue the rest is to be noted,
 Arden lay murthred in that plot of ground, 10
 Which he by force and violence held from Rede.
 And in the grasse his bodyes print was seene,
 Two yeeres and more after the deede was doone
 Gentlemen we hope youle pardon this naked Tragedy,
 Wherein no filed⁴ points are foisted in,
 To make it gracious to the eare or eye.
 For simple trueth is gracious enough:

¹ Epilogue: division added by Warnke and Proescholdt (Brooke).

² on a stage: "at a stake" in Jacob (Brooke).

³ Ostridge: "Osbringe" in Jacob (Brooke). Bullen gives "Ospringe, near Faversham".

⁴ filed: refined, polished (Onions).

And needs no other points of glosing⁵ stuffe.⁶

FINIS.

⁵ glosing: smooth talking, in fair words and flattering language (Onions). Bayne suggests "wordy".

⁶ 1-18. Thus haue you seene ... glosing stuffe: As a point of interest, Bayne gives a lengthy follow-up: "By the Wardmote Book, 'George Loosebagg, i.e. Shakebag, escaped at that time.' John Greene, who like Mosbie was a tailor, was taken in July in Cornwall and brought to Feversham and hanged in chains within the liberties. Susan, in the play, combines the characters of Cecily Pounder, Mosbie's sister, and of Elizabeth Strafford, the maid-servant. Mosby and his sister were hanged in Smithfield; Michael Saunderson was 'drown and hanged in chains' in Feversham, where Elizabeth was burnt. By the Wardmote Book Alice Arden did not stab her husband."

2

THE
LAMENTA-
BLE AND TRVE TRA-
GEDIAE OF M. AR-
DEN OF FEVERSHAM
IN KENT.

*Who was most wickedlye murdered, by
the meanes of his disloyall and wanton
wyfe, who for the loue she bare to one
M^rbie, hyred two desperat ruf-
fins Blackwill and Shakbag,
so kill him.*

Wherin is shewed the great mal-
lice and discimulation of a witted wo-
man, the vnsatiabie desire of filthie lust
and the shamefull end of all
murderers.

*Imprinted at London for Edward
White, dwelling at the lyttle North
dore of Paules Church at
the signe of the
Gun. 1592.*

*

THE
Lamentable and true
 Tragedie of *M. Arden* of Feuer-
sham in Kent.

Who was most wickedly murdered, by the
 meanes of his disloyall and wanton wife, who
 for the loue she bare to one *Mosbie*, hyred two
 desperate ruffins *Blackwill* and *Shakbag*
 to kill him.

Wherein is shewed the great malice and dissi-
 malation of a wicked woman: the insatiable desire of
 filthy lust, and the shamefull end of
 all murtherers.



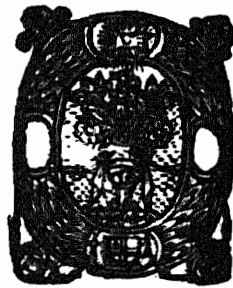
AT LONDON,
 Printed by *I. Roberts*, for *Edwarde White*, and
 are to be sold at his shop at the little North doore
 of *Paules*, at the signe of the Gun.

1599.

THE
**LAMENTABLE
 AND TRVE TRAGEDY**
 OF MASTER ARDEN OF
 FEVERSHAM IN KENT:

Who was most wickedly murdered
 by the meanes of his disloyall and wanton
 wife, who, for the love she bare to one *Mosby*,
 hired two desperate Ruffins, *Blacke-Will*,
 and *Shakebag*, to kill him.

Wherein is shewed the great malice and
 diffimulation of a wicked woman, the un-
 satisfiable desire of filthy lutt, and the shamefull end
 of all murderers.



LONDON,
 Printed by ELIZ. ALDR dwelling neere
 Christs-Church. 1633.



WOODCUT: SIG. A₁^V OF Q₃

The account of the murder of Arden of Feversham as found in Stow 's Chronicles.

JOHN STOW,

The Summarie of the Chronicles of England, continued vnto 1579.

16 . R. Tottle A. H. Binneman.

STC 23325

Arden
murdered

On St. Valentins day, at Feuersham in Kent, one Arden a Gentleman was mudedered by consent of his owne wife, for the which fact she was the .riiiij. March brent at Canterbury, Michael maister Ardens man was hanged in chaines at Feuersham, and a maiden brent. Mosby and his syster, were hanged in Smithfield at Londō. Green which had fled came againe certeine yeares after and was hanged in chaines in the highway against Feuersham, blacke-Will that ruffian that was hiered to doe the act after his first escape, was apprehended & brent at Flyshing in Zeland.

The account of the murder of Arden of Feversham as found in Holinshed's Chronicles.

RAPHAEL HOLINSHED,

Third Volume of Chronicles, beginning at duke William the Norman, commonlie called the Conqueror; and descending by degrees of yeeres to all the kings and queenes of England in their orderlie successions:

...continued...to the yeare 1586.

fol. H. Denham A. T. Woodcocke.

1587.

STC 13569

1551

Edward the sixt

Anno Reg. 5.

Arden
murthered

About this time there was at Feversham in Kent a gentleman named Arden, most cruellie murthered and slaine by the procurement of his owne wife. The which murther, for the horritlenesse thereof, although otherwise it may seeme to be but a priuate matter, and therefore as it were impertinent to this historie, I haue thought good to let it foorth somewhat at large, hauing the instructions deliuered to me by them, that haue used some diligence to gather the true vnderstanding of the circumstances. This Arden was a man of a tall and comelie personage, and matched in marriage with a gentlewoman, young, tall, and well faouered of shape and counter-ance, who chancing to fall in familiaritie with one Mosbie a tailor by occupation, a blacke swart man, seruant to the lord North, it happened this Mosbie vpon some mistiking to fall out with hir: but she being desirous to be in fauour with him againe, sent him a paire of siluer dice by one Adam Foule dwelling at the Floure de lice in Feuersham.

Arden
described

Love and
lust

A paire
of silver
dice worke
much mis-
chiefe

After which he resorted to hir againe, and oftentimes laie in Ardens house: in somuch that within two yeares after, he obtaired such fauour at hir hands, that he laie with hir, or (as they terme it) kept hir, in abusing hir bodie. And although (as it was said) Arden perceiued right well their mutuall familiaritie to be much greater than their honestie, yet

Arden
winketh at
his wiues
lewdresse,
& why

bicause he would not offend hir, and so loose the benefit which he hoped to gaire at some of hir freends hands in bearing with hir lewdresse, which he might haue lost if he should haue fallen out with hir: he was contented to wirke at hir filthie disorder, and both permitted, and also inuited Kosbie verie often to lodge in his house. And thus it continued a good space, before anie practise was begun by them against maister Arden. She at length inflamed in loue with Kosbie, and loathing hir husband, wished and after practised the meanes how to hasten his end.

Ardens wife
attempteth
means to
make awaie
hir husband

There was a painter dwelling in Feuersham, who had skill of poisons, as was reported. She therefore demanded of him, whether it were true that he had such skill in that feat or not? And he denied not that he had in deed. Yea (said she) but I would haue such a one made, as should haue most vehement and speedie operation to dispatch the eater thereof. That can I doe (quoth he) and forth with made hir such a one, and willed hir to put it into the bottome of a porrenger, & then after to powre milke on it. Which circumstance she forgetting, did cleane contrarie, putting in the milke first, and afterward the poison. Now maister Arden purposing that daie to ride to Canturburie, his wife brought him his breakefast, which was wont to be milke and butter. He hauing receiued a spoonefull or two of the milke, misliked the tast and colour thereof, and said to his wife; Mistresse Ales what milke haue you giuen me here? Where-withall she tilted it ouer with hir hand, saieng, I weene nothing can please you. Then he tooke horsse and road towards Canturburie, and by the waie fell into extreme purging vpwards and downwards, and so escaped for that time.

Arden is
poisoned
by his wife
but recou-
ereth

After this, his wife fell in acquaintance with one Greene of Feuersham, seruant to sir Anthonie Ager, from which Greene maister Arden had wrested a peece of ground on the backside of the abbeie of Feuersham, and there had blowes and great threats passed betwixt them about that matter. Therefore she knowing that Greene hated hir husband, began to practise with him how to make him awaie; and concluded, that if he could get anie that would kill him, he should haue ten pounds for a reward. This Greene hauing dooings

She de-
uiseth
another
waie to
dispatch

hir husband Arden

for his master sir Anthonie Ager, had occasion to go vp to London, where his maister then laie, and hauing some charge vp with him, desired one Bradshaw a goldsmith of Feuersham that was his neighbor, to accompanie him to Grauesend, and he would content him for his pains. This Bradshaw, being a verie honest man, was content, and rood with him. And when they came to Rainham downe, they chanced to see three or foure seruingmen that were comming from Leeds: and therewith Bradshaw espied comming vp the hill from Rochester, one blacke Will, a terrible cruell ruffian with a sword and a buckler, and an other with a great staffe on his necke.

a notorious murdering ruffian

Marke how the devill will not let his organs or instruments let slip either occasion or opportunitie to commit most heinous wickednesse

Then said Bradshaw to Greene; We are happie that here commeth some companie from Leeds, for here commeth vp against vs as murdering a knaue as anie is in England: if it were not for them we might chance hardlie to escape without losse of our monie and liues. Yea thought Greene (as he after confessed) such a one is for my purpose, and therefore asked; Which is he: Yonder is he quoth Bradshaw, the same that hath the sword and buckler: his name is blacke Will. How know you that, said Greene? Bradshaw answered, I knew him at Bullongne, where we both serued, he was a soldier, and I was sir Richard Cauendishes man, and there he committed manie robberies and heinous murders on such as trauelled betwixt Bullongne and France.

a desperat villaine

By this time the other companie of seruingmen came to them, and they going all together, met with blacke Will and his fellow. The seruingmen knew blacke Will, & saluting him, demanded of him whither he went? He answered; By his bloud (for his use was to sweare almost at euerie word) I know not, nor care not, but set vp my staffe, and euen as it falleth I go. If thou (quoth they) will go backe againe to Grauesend, we will giue thee thy supper. By his bloud (said he) I care not, I am content, haue with you: and so he returned againe with them. Then blacke Will took acquaintance of Bradshaw, saieng; Fellow Bradshaw how doost thou? Bradshaw vnrwilling to renew acquaintance, or to haue ought to doo with so shameles a ruffian, said; Why doo ye know me? Yea that I

An honest man is ashamed to

renew old doo (quoth he) did not we serue in Bullongne
acquaintance together? But ye must pardon me (quoth Bradshaw)
with a kraue for I haue forgotten you.

Then Greene talked with blacke Will, and
said; When ye haue supped, come to mine hosts
house at such a signe, and I will giue you the
sacke and sugar. By his bloud (said he) I
thanke you, I will come and take it I warrant
you. According to his promise he came, and
there they made good cheare. Then blacke Will
& Greene went and talked apart from Bradshaw,
and there concluded together, that if he would
kill master Arden, he should haue ten pounds
for his labor. When he answered, By his wounds
that I will if I maie know him. Marie tomorrow
in Poules. I will show him thee, said Greene.
Then they left their talke, & Greene had him to
go home to his hosts house. Then Greene wrote
a letter to mistresse Arden, & among other
things put in these words: We haue got a man for
our purpose, we maie thanke my brother Bradshaw.
Now Bradshaw not knowing anie thing of this,
tooke the letter of him, and in the morning de-
parted home againe, and deliuered the letter to
mistresse Arden, and Greene & blacke Will went
vp to London at the tide.

At the time appointed, Greene shewed blacke
Will maister Arden walking in Poules. Then said
blacke Will, What is he that goeth after him?
Marie said Green, one of his men. By his bloud
(said blacke Will) I will kill them both. Maie
(said Greene) doo not so, for he is of counsell
with vs in this matter. By his bloud (said he).
I care not for that, I will kill them both.
Maie said Greene in anie wise doo not so. Then
blacke Will thought to haue killed maister Arden
in Poules churchyard, but there were too manie
gentlemen that accompanied him to dinner, that
he missed of his purpose. Greene shewed all
this talke to maister Ardens man, whose name was
Michaell, which euer after stood in doubt of
blacke Will, lest he should kill him. The causc
that this Michaell conspired with the rest
against his maister, was: for that it was deter-
mined, that he should marrie a kinswoman of
Mosbies.

After this, maister Arden laie at a certaire
parsonage which he held in London, and therefore

The match
made to
murther
Arden

Simplicities
abused

Blacke will
maketh no
conscience
of bloudshed
and murther

Why Ardens
man con-
spired with
the rest to
kill his
maister

his man Michaell and Greene agreed, that blacke Will should come in the night to the parsonage, where he would find the foores left open, that he might come in and murther maister Arden. This Michaell hauing his master to bed, left open the doores according to the appointment. His maister then being in bed, asked him if he had shut fast the doores, and hee said yea: But yet afterwards fearing least blacke Will would kill him as well as his maister, after he was in bed himselve, he rose againe and shut the doores, bolting them fast. So that blacke Will comming thither, and finding the doores shut, departed, being disappointed at that time. The next daie blacke Will came to Greene in a great chafe, swearing and flaring bicause he was so deceiued, and with manie terrible oths threatened to kill maister Ardens man first, wheresoeuer he met him. No (said Greene) doo not so, I will first know the cause of shutting the doores.

One murdering
 mind mis-
 trusting
 another,
 doo hinder
 the action
 whereabout
 they agreed

Then Greene met and talked with Ardens man, and asked of him, why he did not leaue open the doores, according to his promise? Marie (said Michaell) I will shew you the cause. My maister yesternight did that he neuer did before: for after I was in bed, hee rose vp and shut the doores, and in the morning rated me for leauing them vnshut. And herewith Greene & blacke Will were pacified. Arden being redie to go home-wards, his maid came to Greene & said; This night will my maister go doune. Whervpon it was agreed that blacke Will should kill him on Reinam doune. When maister Arden came to Rochester, his man still fearing that blacke Will would kill him with his maister, pricked his horsse of purpose, and made him to halt, to the end he might protract the time and tarie behind. His maister asked him whie his horsse halted, he said, I know not. Well (quoth his maister) when ye come at the smith here before (betweene Rochester and the hill foot over against Cheetam) remooue his shoo, and search him, and then come after me. So maister Arden rode on: and yet he came at the place where blacke Will laie in wait for him, there overtooke him diuerse gentlemen of his acquaintance, who kept him companie: so that blacke Will missed here also of his purpose.

The fairth
 attempt to
 make Arden
 awaie dis-
 appointed

Blacke will
 misseth his
 purpose

After that maister Arden was come home, hee sent (as he vsuallie did) his man to Shepeie to Sir Thomas Cheinie, then lord warden of the cinque ports, about certeine businesse, and at his comming awaie; he had a letter deliuered sent by Sir Thomas Cheinie to his maister. When he came home, his mistresse tooke the letter and kept it, willing hir man to tell his maister, that he had a letter deliuered him by Sir Thomas Cheinie, and that he had lost it; adding that he thought it best that his maister should go the next morning to sir Thomas, because he knew not the matter: he said he would, and therefore he willed his man to be stirring betimes. For this meane while, blacke Will, and one George Shakebag his companion, were kept in a storehouse of sir Anthonie Agers at Preston, by Greens appointment: and thither came mistresse Arden to see him, bringing and sending him meat and drinke manie times. He therefore lurking there, and watching some opportunitie for his purpose, was willed in anie wise to be vp earlie in the morning, to lie in wait for maister Arden in a certeine Broome close, betwixt Feuersham & the ferrie (which close he must needs passe) there to doo his feat. Now blacke Will stirred in the morning betimes, but mist the waie & taried in the wrong place.

Maister Arden & his man comming on their waie earlie in the morning towards Shornelan, where sir Thomas Cheinie laie: as they were almost come to the broome close, his man alwaies fearing that blacke Will would kill him with his maister, feired that he had lost his purse; Why said his maister, thou foolish knaue, couldst thou not looke to thy pursse but loose it? What was in it? Three pounds said he. Why then go thy waies back againe like a knaue (said his maister) and seeke it, for being so earlie as it is, there is no man stirring, and therefore thou maist be sure to find it, and then come and ouertake me at the ferrie.

But neuerthelesse, by reason that blacke Will lost his way, maister Arden escaped yet once againe. At that time, blacke Will yet thought hee should haue beene sure to haue met him homewards: but whether that some of the lord wardens men accompanied him backe to Feuersham, or that

Ardens wife
visiteth,
succoureth,
embaldneth,
and direc-
teth black
Will & c:
how to ac-
complish
his bloudie
purpose

Late here
the force
of feare
and a
troubled
conscience

Blacke will being in doubt, for that it was late to go yet againe through the broome close, and therefore tooke disappointed another waie, blacke Will was disappointed then also.

But now saint Valentines faire being at hand, the conspirators thought to dispatch their diuelish intention at that time. Mosbie minded to picke some quarrel to maister Arden at the faire to fight with him; for he said he could not find in his heart to murther a gentleman in that sort as his wife wished: although she had made a solemne promise to him, and he againe to hir, to be in all points as man and wife together, and therevupon they both receiued the sacrament on a sundaie at London, openlie in a church there. But this deuise to fight with him would not serue, for maister Arden both then and at other times had beene greatlie prouoked by Mosbie to fight with him, but he would not. Now Mosbie had a sister that dwelt in a tenement of maister Ardens neere to his house in Feuersham: and on the faire eeuens, blacke Will was sent for to come thither, and Greene bringing him thither, met there with mistresse Arden, accompanied with Michaell hir man, and one of hir maids. There were also Mosbie and George Shakebag, and there they deuised to haue killed him in manner as afterwards he was. But yet Mosbie at the first would not agree to that cowardlie murthering of him, but in a furie floong awaie, and went vpon their former pre-
pensed mis-
chiefe
the abbeie street toward the flower de lice, the house of the aforementioned Adam Foule, where he did often host. But before he came thither now at this time, a messenger ouertooke him, that was sent from mistres Arden, desiring him of all loues to come backe againe to helpe to accomplish the mater he knew of. Herevpon he returned to hir againe, and at his comming backe, she fell downe vpon hir knees to him, and besought him to go through with the matter, as if he loued hir he would be content to doo, sith as shee had diuerse times told him, he needed not to doubt, for there was not anie that would care for his death, nor make anie great inquirie for them that should dispatch him.

Thus she being earnest with him, at length hee was contented to agree vnto that horrible deuise, and therevpon they conuocied blacke Will

A prepensed
quarrel
against
Arden by
conspira-
tors

Ardens wife,
blacke will
& the knot
of vilans
meet and
conclude
vpon their
former pre-
pensed mis-
chiefe

O importun-
ate & blou-
die minded
trumpet!

into maister Ardens house, putting him into a closet at the end of his parlour. Before this, they had sent out of the house all the seruants, those excepted which were priuie to the deuised murther. Then went Mosbie to the doore, and there stood in a night gowne of silke girded about him, and this was betwixt six and seuen of the clocke at night. Master Arden hauing beene at a neighbors house of his, named Dumpbin, & hauing cleared certeine reckonings betwixt them, came home: and finding Mosbie standing at the doore, asked him if it were supper time? I think not (quoth Mosbie) it is not yet readie. Then let vs go and plaie a game at the tables in the meare season, said maister Arden. And so they went streight into the parlor: and as they came by through the hall, his wife was walking there, and maister Arden said; How now mistresse Ales? But she made small answer to him. In the meare time one cheined the wicket doore of the entrie. When they came into the parlor, Mosbie sat downe on the bench, hauing his face toward the place where blacke Will stood. Then Michaell, maister Ardens man stood at his masters backe, holding a candle in his hand, to shadow blacke Will, that Arden might by no meanes perceiue him comming foorth. In their plaie Mosbie said thus (which seemed to be the watchword for blacke Wils comming foorth) now maie I take you sir if I will. Take me (quoth maister Arden) which waie? With that blacke Will stept foorth, and cast a towell about his necke, so to stop his breath and strangle him. Then Mosbie hauing at his girdle a pressing iron of fourteene pounds weight, stroke him on the hed with the same, so that he fell downe, and gaue a great grone, in-somuch that they thought he had beere killed.

Then they bare him awaie, to laie him in the counting house, & as they were about to laie him downe, the panges of death comming on him, he gaue a great grone, and stretched himselfe, and then blacke Will gaue him a great gash in face, and so killed him out of hand, laid him along, tooke the monie out of his pursse, and the rings from his fingers, and then comming out of the counting house, said; Now the feat is doone, giue me my monie. So mistres Arden gaue him ten pounds: and he comming to Greene, had a horsse of

The prac-
tise to kill
Arden is now
set abroch

Here the
confederats
join their
practises

The watch-
word to
the prin-
cipall
murderer

Arden sla-
ine out-
right

Blacke will
receiueth

n pounds
 r hir
 ward of
 dene wife,
 r murder-
 g hir
 husband

of him, and so rode his waies. After that
 blacke will was gone, mistresse Arden came into
 the counting house, and with a knife gave him
 some or eight picks into the krest. Then they
 made cleere the parlor, tooke a clout, and wiped
 where it was bloudie, and strewed againe the
 rushes that were shufled with struggling, and
 cast the clout with which they wiped the blood,
 and the knife that was bloudie, wherewith she
 had wounded hir husband, into a tub by the wels
 side; where afterwards both the same clout and
 knife were found. Thus this wicked woman, with
 hir complices, most shamefullie murdered hir
 owne husband, who most entirelie loued hir all
 his life time. Then she sent to two Londoners
 for supper, the one named Prune, and the other
 Cole, that were prosers, which before the murder
 was committed, were bidden to supper. When they
 came, she said: I marvell where maister Arden is;
 we will not tarie for him, come ye and sit downe,
 for he will not be long. When Mosbies sister was
 sent for, she came and sat downe, and so they
 were merry.

earken what
 counten-
 nce of
 innocencie
 he bore
 after the
 murdering
 hir husband

The workmen
 of this
 mischief
 carie out
 Arden
 plaine into
 the field

After supper, mistresse Arden caused hir
 daughter to plaie on the virginals, and they
 danced, and she with them, and so seemed to
 protract time, as it were, till maister Arden
 should come, and she said, I maruell where he
 is so long; well, he will come anon I am sure,
 I praye you in the meane while let vs plaie a
 game at the tables. But the Londoners said,
 they must go to their hosts house, or else they
 should be shut out at doores, and so taking
 their leave, departed. When they were gone, the
 servants that were not priue to the murder,
 were sent abroad into the towne; some to seeke
 their painter, and some of other errands, all
 sauing Michell and a maid, Mosbies sister, and
 one of mistresse Ardens owne daughters. Then they
 took the dead bodie, and caried it out, to laie
 it in a field next to the churchyard, and ioining
 to his garden wall, through the which he went to
 the church. In the mearetime it began to snow,
 and when they came to the garden gate, they
 remembered that they had forgotten the kaie, and
 one went in for it, and finding it, at length
 brought it, opened the gate, and caried the
 corps into the same field, as it were ten pases

as a procurer of blacke Will to kill maister Arden, which proceeded wholie by misvnderstanding of the words contained in the letter which he brought from Greene.

Then he desired to talke with the persons cōdemned, and his request was granted. He therefore demanded of them if they knew him, or euer had anie conuersation with him, & they all said no. Then the letter being shewed and read, he declared the verie truth of the matter, and vpon what occasion he told Greene of blacke Will: nevertheless, he was cōdemned, and suffered. These cōdemned persons were diuerslie executed in sundrie places, for Michaell maister Ardens man was hanged in chaines at Feuersham, and one of the maids was burnt there, pitifullie bewailing hir case, and cried out on hir mistres that had brought hir to this end, for the which she would neuer forgiue hir. Mosbie & his sister were hanged in Smithfield at London; mistres Arden was burnt at Canturburie the foure and twentieth of March. Greene came againe certeine yeares after, was apprehended, cōdemned, & hanged in chaines in the high waie betwixt Ospring & Boughton against Feuersham; blacke Will was burnt on a scaffold at Flishing in Zeland. Adam Faule that dwelt at the floure de lice in Feuersham was brought into trouble about this matter, and caried vp to London, with his legs bound vnder the horsse bellie, and committed to prison in the Marshalseie: for that Mosbie was heard to saie; Had it not been for Adam Faule, I had not come to this trouble: meaning that the bringing of the siluer dice for a token to him from mistresse Arden, as ye haue heard, occasioned him to renew familiaritie with hir againe. But when the matter was thoroughlie ripped vp, & that Mosbie had cleered him, protesting that he was neuer of knowledge in anie behalfe to the murder, the mans innocencie preserued him.

A wonder touching the print of Ardens dead bodie two yeares after he

This one thing seemeth verie strange and notable, touching maister Arden, that in the place where he was laid, being dead, all the proportion of his bodie might be seene two yeares after and more, so plaine as could be, for the grasse did not grow where his bodie had touched: but betweene his legs, betweene his

Innocencie
no barre
against
execution

Note how
these male-
factors
suffered
punishment

Blacke will
burnt at
Flishing

The account of the murder of Arden of Feversham in ballad form.

The Complaint and lamentation of Mistresse Arden of Feuersham in Kent, who for the loue of one Mosbie, hired certaine Ruffians too Villaines most cruelly to murder her Husband; with the fatall end of her and her Associats.

To the tune of, Fortune my Foe.

Ay me, vile wretch, that euer I was borne,
Making my selfe vnto the world a scorne:
And to my friends and kindred all a shame,
Blotting their blood by my unhappy name.

Unto a Gentleman of wealth and fame,
(One master Arden, he was call'd by name)
I wedded was with ioy and great content,
Liuing in Feuersham in famous Kent.

In loue we liu'd, and great tranquility,
Untill I came in Mosbies company,
Where sugred tongue, good shape, and louely looke,
Soone won my heart, and Ardens loue forsooke.

And liuing thus in foule adultery,
Bred in my husband cause of iealousie,
And lest the world our actions should bewray,
Wee did consent to take his life away.

To London faire my Husband was to ride,
But ere he went I poyson did prouide,
Got of a Painter which I promised
That Mosbies sister Susan he would wed.

Into his Broth I then did put the same,
He lik't it not when to the boord it came,
Saying, There's something in it is not sound,
At which inrag'd, I flung it on the ground.

Yet ere he went, his man I did coniure,
Ere they came home, to make his Master sure,
And murder him, and for his faith and paine,
Susan, and store of gold that he should gaine.

Yet I misdoubting Michaels constancy,
 Knowing a Neighbour that was dwelling by,
 Which, to my husband bore no great good will,
 Sought to incense him his deare blood to spill.

His name was Greene; O Master Green (quoth I)
 My husband to you hath done iniury,
 For which I sorry am with all my heart,
 And how he wrongeth me I will impart.

He keepes abroad most wicked company,
 With whores and queanes, and bad society;
 When he comes home, he beats me sides and head,
 That I doe wish one of vs were dead.

And now to London he is rid to roare,
 I would that I might neuer see him more:
 Greene then incenst, did vow to be my friend,
 And of his life he soone would make an end.

O Master Greene, said I, the dangers great,
 You must be circumspect to doe this feat;
 To act the deed your selfe there is no need,
 But hire some villaines, they will doe the deed.

Ten pounds Ile give them to attempt this thing,
 And twenty more when certaine newes they bring,
 That he is dead, besides Ile be your friend,
 In honest courtesie till life doth end.

Greene vow'd to doe it; then away he went,
 And met two Villaines, that did vse in Kent
 To rob and murder vpon Shooters hill,
 The ore call'd Shakebag, t'other nam'd Black Will.

Two such like Villaines Hell did neuer hatch,
 For twenty Angels they made vp the match,
 And forty more when they had done the deed,
 Which made them sweare, they'd do it with speed.

Then vp to London presently they hye,
 Where Master Arden in Pauls Church they spy,
 And waiting for his coming forth that night,
 By a strange chance of him they then lost sight.

For where these Villaines stood & made their stop
 A Prentice he was shutting vp his shop,

The window falling, light on Black-Wills head,
And broke it soundly, that apace it bled.

Where straight he made a brabble and a coyle,
And my sweet Arden he past by the while;
They missing him, another plot did lay,
And meeting Michael, thus to him they say:

Thou knowest that we must packe thy Master hence
Therefore content and further our pretence,
At night when as your Master goes to bed,
Leaue ope the doores, he shall be murdered.

And so he did, yet Arden could not sleepe,
Strange dreames and visions in his senses creepe,
He dreamt the doores were ope, & Villianes came,
To murder him, and twas the very same.

The second part. To the same tune.

He rose and shut the doore, his man he blames,
Which conningly he strait this answer frames;
I was so slepy, that I did forget
To locke the doores, I pray you pardon it.

Next day these Ruffians met this man againe,
Who the whole story to them did explaire,
My master will in towne no longer stay,
Tomorrow you may meete him on the way.

Next day his bussinesse being finished,
He did take horse, and home ward then he rid,
And as he rid, it was his hap as then,
To ouertake Lord Cheirey and his men.

With salutations they each other greet.
I am full glad your Honour for to meet,
Arden did say: then did the Lord reply,
Sir, I am glad of your good company.

And being that we home ward are to ride,
I haue a sutie that must be deuide,
That at my house youle sup and lodge also,
To Feuersham this night you rust not goe.

Then Arden answered with this courteous speech,
 Your Honours pardon now I doe beseech,
 I made a vow, if God did giue me life,
 To sup and lodge with Alice my louing wife.

Well, said my Lord, your oath hath got the day,
 To morrow come and dine with me, I pray.
 Ile wait vpon your Honour then (said he)
 And safe he went amongst this company.

On Raymon-Downe, as they did passe this way,
 Black-Will, and Shakebag they in ambush lay,
 But durst not touch them, cause of the great traine
 That my Lord had: thus were they crost againe.

With horrid oathes these Ruffians gan to sweare,
 They stompe and curst, and tore their locks of haire
 Saying, some Angell surely him did keepe,
 Yet vow'd to murther him ere they did sleepe.

Now all this while my husband was away,
 Mosby and I did reuell night and day;
 And Susan, which my waiting-maiden was,
 My Loues owne sister, knew how all did passe.

But when I saw my Arden was not dead,
 I welcom'd him, but with a heauy head:
 To bed he went, and slept secure from harmes,
 But I did with my Mosby in my armes.

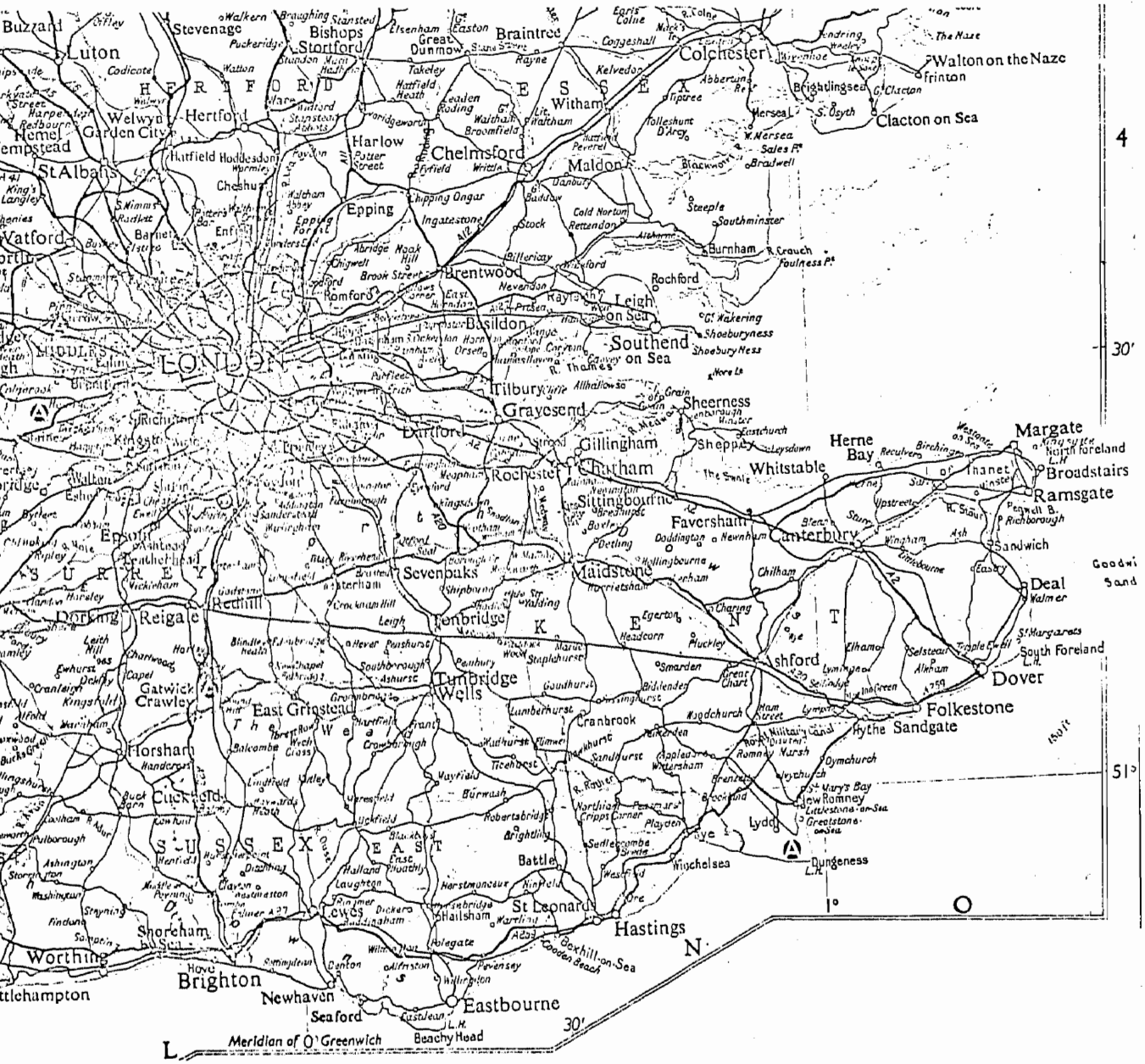
Yet ere he slept, he told me he must goe
 To dinner to my Lords, hee'd haue it so;
 And that same night Blacke-will did send me word,
 What lucke had fortune did to them afford.

I sent him word, that he next day would dine
 At the Lord Cheinies, and would rise betime,
 And on the way their purpose might fulfill,
 Well, Ile reward you, when that you him kill.

Next morne betimes, before the breake of day,
 To take him napping them they tooke their way;
 But such a mist and fog there did arise,
 They could not see although they had foure eyes.

Thus Arden scap'd these villaines where
 And yet they heard his horse goe by that way,
 I thirke (said Will) some Spirit is his friend,
 Come life or death, I vow to see his end.

KENT: ENGLAND



Scenes in Arden of Feversham: Feversham, London, and on the road between.

FAVERSHAM¹

Faversham: a market town, river port and municipal borough in the Faversham parliamentary division of Kent, England, on a creek of the Swale, 9 miles W.N.W. of Canterbury by road.

Population: 12,984 (1961)

Area: 4.7 sq. miles

A member of the Cinque Port of Dover.

Industry: The shipping trade is considerable, chiefly in oils, timber, agricultural feeding stuffs, and fertilizers, both coastwise and from continental ports. The oyster fisheries are particularly outstanding. Other industries include brewing, brick-making, canning fruit and vegetables, grading and packing apples and pears; shipyards, light engineering works and large oil depots.

The Cluniac Abbey: The fragment of the outer gateway that remains forms part of the house wherein Thomas Arderne (Arden) was murdered in 1550.

¹ "Faversham", Encyclopedia Britannica, IX, 123.

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