

# The Two Noble Kinsmen



William Shakespeare

# The Two Noble Kinsmen

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# The Two Noble Kinsmen

## Dramatis Personae

Theseus, Duke of Athens

Hippolyta, Bride to Theseus.

Emilia, Sister to Hippolyta.

Flavina, deceased friend of Emilia

Three Queens

Palamon and Arcite, The Two Noble Kinsmen, in  
love with Emilia

Pirithous – 2nd in command to Theseus

Wooer – in love with the Jailer's daughter

Jailer

His Daughter - in love with Palamon

His Son

2 Friends of the Jailer

Artesius

Doctor

# ACT I

## ACT I

SCENE I: Athens. Before a temple.

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

FIRST QUEEN

(to Theseus)

For pity's sake and true gentility's,  
Hear, and respect me.

SECOND QUEEN

(to Hippolyta)

For your Mothers sake, And as you wish your womb may thrive with fair ones,  
Hear and respect me.

THIRD QUEEN

(to Emilia)

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

THESEUS

(to First Queen)

Sad Lady, rise.

HIPPOLYTA

(to Second Queen)

Stand up

EMILIA

(to Third Queen)

No knees to me.

THESEUS

What's your request? Deliver you for all.

## FIRST QUEEN

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

## THESEUS.

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

## FIRST QUEEN

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

## THESEUS

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

## SECOND QUEEN.

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

HIPPOLYTA

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

THIRD QUEEN

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

EMILIA

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

THIRD QUEEN

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

EMILIA

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

THESEUS.

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

FIRST QUEEN.

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

SECOND QUEEN.

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

THIRD QUEEN.

None fit for 'th dead:

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

FIRST QUEEN

But our Lords

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

THESEUS

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

FIRST QUEEN.

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

SECOND QUEEN.

Now you may take him,  
drunk with his victory.

THIRD QUEEN.

And his Army full of Bread, and sloth.

THESEUS.

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

FIRST QUEEN.

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



ALL THE QUEENS.

Farewell.

SECOND QUEEN.

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

THESEUS.

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

FIRST QUEEN.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

(to Theseus)

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

THIRD QUEEN.

Oh help now,  
Our Cause cries for your knee.

EMILIA.

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

THESEUS.

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

[Exeunt towards the Temple.]

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

PIRITHOUS.

Sir, I'll follow you at heels.

FIRST QUEEN.

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

SECOND QUEEN.

And earn'st a Deity equal with Mars.

THIRD QUEEN.

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

THESEUS.

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

[Exeunt.]

HIPPOLYTA.

Sir, farewell; repeat my wishes  
 To our great Lord, of whose success I dare not  
 Make any timorous question; yet I wish him  
 Excess and overflow of power, and't might be  
 To dure ill-dealing fortune: speed to him.

EMILIA.

Remember me  
 To our all royal Brother, for whose speed  
 The great Bellona I'll solicit; our hearts  
 Are in his Army, in his Tent.

HIPPOLYTA.

In's bosom:  
 We have been Soldiers, and we cannot weep  
 When our Friends don their helms, or put to sea;  
 Or tell of Babes broached on the Lance, or women  
 That have sod their Infants in (and after ate them)  
 The brine, they wept at killing 'em; Then if  
 You stay to see of us such Spinsters, we  
 Should hold you here forever.

PIRITHOUS.

Peace be to you,  
 As I pursue this war, which shall be then  
 Beyond further requiring.

[Exit Pirithous]

EMILIA.

How his longing  
 Follows his Friend! Have you observ'd him,  
 Since our great Lord departed?

HIPPOLYTA.

With much labour,  
 And I did love him for't: they two have Cabined  
 In many as dangerous, as poor a Corner,  
 Peril and want contending; they have skiffed  
 Torrents whose roaring tyranny and power  
 I'th' least of these was dreadful, and they have  
 Fought out together, where Death's-self was lodged,  
 Yet fate hath brought them off: Their knot of love,  
 Tied, weaved, entangled, with so true, so long,  
 And with a finger of so deep a cunning,  
 May be outworn, never undone. I think  
 Theseus cannot be umpire to himself,  
 Cleaving his conscience into twain and doing  
 Each side like justice, which he loves best.

EMILIA.

Doubtless

There is a best, and reason has no manners

To say it is not you: I was acquainted

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

You were at wars, when she the grave enriched,

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

(Which then looked pale at parting) when our count

Was each eighteen.

HIPPOLYTA.

Twas Flavina.

EMILIA.

Yes.

You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love;

Theirs has more ground, is more maturely seasoned,

More buckled with strong Judgement and their needs

The one of th'other may be said to water

Their intertangled roots of love; but I

And she I sigh and spoke of were things innocent,

Loved for we did, and like the Elements

That know not what, nor why, yet do effect

Rare issues by their operance, our souls

Did so to one another; what she liked,

Was then of me approved, what not, condemned,

No more arraignment; the flower that I would pluck

And put between my breasts (then but beginning

To swell about the blossom) oh, she would long

Till she had such another, and commit it

To the like innocent Cradle, where Phoenix-like

They died in perfume; her affections (pretty,

Though, haply, her careless wear) I followed

For my most serious decking; had mine ear

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

From musical Coinage, why it was a note

Whereon her spirits would sojourn (rather dwell on)

And sing it in her slumbers.

This rehearsal

(Which ev'ry innocent wots well comes in

Like old importment's bastard) has this end,

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

More than in sex dividual.

HIPPOLYTA.

You're out of breath

And this high speeded pace, is but to say

That you shall never like the Maid Flavina

Love any that's called Man.

EMILIA.

I am sure I shall not.

HIPPOLYTA.

Now, alack, weak Sister,

I must no more believe thee in this point

(Though in't I know thou dost believe thy self,);

but, sure, my Sister, If I were ripe for your persuasion, you Have said enough to shake me from the Arm Of the all noble Theseus, for whose fortunes I will now in, and kneel with great assurance, That we, more then his Pirithous, possess The high throne in his heart.

EMILIA.

I am not

Against your faith; yet I continue mine.

[Exeunt. Fanfare of war.]

## ACT I

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

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

FIRST QUEEN.

To thee no star be dark.

SECOND QUEEN

Both heaven and earth

Friend thee forever.

THIRD QUEEN.

All the good that may

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

THESEUS

Th'impartial Gods, who from the mounted heavens

View us their mortal herd, behold who err,

And in their time chastise: go and find out

The bones of your dead Lords, and honour them

With treble Ceremony; rather than a gap

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

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

[Exeunt Queens.]

[Pointing to Palamon and Arcite] What are those?

ARTESIUS

Men of great quality, as may be judged

By their appointment; Some of Thebes have told's

They are Sisters' children, Nephews to the King.

THESEUS.

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

Like to a pair of Lions, smeared with prey,

Make lanes in troops aghast. I fixed my note

Constantly on them; for they were a mark

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

When I enquired their names?

ARTESIUS

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

THESEUS

Tis right: those, those.

ARTESIUS

My lord, death to the prisoners?

THESEUS

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

# ACT II



## ACT 2

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

[Enter Jailer and Wooer.]

JAILER.

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

WOOER

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

JAILER.

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

[Enter Daughter.]

WOOER.

I have Sir;  
here she comes.

JAILER

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

DAUGHTER

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

JAILER.

They are famed to be a pair of absolute men.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

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

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

Do they so?

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER

I never saw 'em.

JAILER.

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

[Enter Palamon, and Arcite, in shackles.]

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

DAUGHTER.

No, Sir, no, that's Palamon.

Arcite is the lower of the twain; you may perceive a part of him.

JAILER.

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

DAUGHTER

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

[Exeunt.]

ACT 2

SCENE 2: The prison

[Enter Palamon, and Arcite in prison.]

PALAMON.

How do you, noble cousin?

ARCITE.

How do you, Sir?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON

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

ARCITE

No, Palamon,

Those hopes are prisoners with us; here we are  
 And here the graces of our youths must wither  
 Like a too-timely Spring; here age must find us,  
 And, which is heaviest, Palamon, unmarried;  
 The sweet embraces of a loving wife,  
 Loaden with kisses, armed with thousand cupids  
 Shall never clasp our necks, no issue know us,  
 No figures of ourselves shall we ev'r see,  
 To glad our age, and like young eagles teach 'em  
 Boldly to gaze against bright arms, and say:  
 'Remember what your fathers were, and conquer.'

This is all our world; we shall know nothing here but one another, Hear  
 nothing but the Clock that tells our woes. The vine shall grow, but we shall  
 never see it: Summer shall come, and with her all delights; But dead-cold  
 winter must inhabit here still.

PALAMON

Tis too true, Arcite.

ARCITE

Yet, cousin,

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

PALAMON.

How, gentle cousin?

ARCITE.

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

New births of love; we are father, friends, acquaintance;  
 We are, in one another, families,  
 I am your heir, and you are mine: this place  
 Is our inheritance, no hard oppressor  
 Dare take this from us; here, with a little patience,  
 We shall live long, and loving:  
 The hand of war hurts none here, nor the  
 Seas swallow their youth. Were we at liberty,  
 A wife might part us lawfully, or business;  
 Quarrels consume us, envy of ill men  
 Grave our acquaintance. I might sicken, cousin,  
 Where you should never know it, and so perish  
 Without your noble hand to close mine eyes,  
 Or prayers to the gods: a thousand chances,  
 Were we from hence, would sever us.

PALAMON.

You have made me  
 I thank you, cousin Arcite- almost wanton  
 With my Captivity: what a misery  
 It is to live abroad, and every where!  
 Tis like a beast, me thinks: I find the Court here—  
 I am sure, a more content; and all those pleasures  
 That woo the wills of men to vanity,  
 I see through now, and am sufficient  
 To tell the world, tis but a gaudy shadow,  
 That old time, as he passes by, takes with him.  
 What had we been, old in the Court of Creon,  
 Where sin is Justice?  
 Cousin Arcite, had not the loving gods found this place for us, We had died as  
 they do, ill old men, unwept, And had their epitaphs, the people's curses: Shall  
 I say more?

ARCITE.

I would hear you still.

PALAMON.

Ye shall.  
 Is there record of any two that loved  
 Better then we do, Arcite?

ARCITE.

Sure, there cannot.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Till our deaths it cannot;

[Enter Emilia and a woman .]

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

EMILIA.

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

FLAVINA.

Tis called Narcissus.

EMILIA.

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

ARCITE.

Pray forward.

PALAMON.

Yes.

EMILIA.

Or were they all hard hearted?

FLAVINA.

They could not be to one so fair.

EMILIA.

Thou wouldst not.

FLAVINA.

I think I should not.

EMILIA.

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

FLAVINA  
Why, maiden?

EMILIA.  
Men are mad things.

ARCITE.  
Will ye go forward, cousin?

EMILIA.  
Canst not thou work such flowers in silk?

FLAVINA.  
Yes.

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

FLAVINA.  
Dainty, Maiden.

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

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

ARCITE.  
Why what's the matter, Man?

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

ARCITE.  
Ha!

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

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

FLAVINA.  
Why, maiden?

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

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

EMILIA.  
Thou art wanton.

ARCITE.  
She is wondrous fair.

PALAMON.  
She is beauty extant.

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

FLAVINA.  
I could lie down, I am sure.

EMILIA.  
And take one with you?

FLAVINA.  
That's as we bargain, Emilia.

EMILIA.  
Well, agree then.

[Exeunt Emilia and Flavina.]



PALAMON.  
What think you of this beauty?

ARCITE.  
Tis a rare one.

PALAMON.  
Is't but a rare one?

ARCITE.  
Yes, a matchless beauty.

PALAMON.  
Might not a man well lose himself and love her?

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

PALAMON.  
You love her, then?

ARCITE.  
Who would not?

PALAMON.  
And desire her?

ARCITE.  
Before my liberty.

PALAMON.  
I saw her first.

ARCITE.  
That's nothing.

PALAMON.  
But it shall be.

ARCITE.  
I saw her too.

PALAMON.  
Yes, but you must not love her.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

You shall not love at all.

ARCITE.

Not love at all!  
Who shall deny me?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Have I called thee friend?

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Yes.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Ye may be.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

No; but unjust,  
If thou pursue that sight.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Yes, if he be but one.

ARCITE.

But say that one  
Had rather combat me?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

You are mad.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

[Enter Jailer.]

And pitch between her arms to anger thee.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Do.

JAILER.

By your leave, Gentlemen—

PALAMON.

Now, honest keeper?

JAILER.

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

ARCITE.

I am ready, keeper.

JAILER.

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

[Exeunt Arcite, and Jailer.]

PALAMON.

Why is he sent for?

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

[Enter Jailer.]

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

JAILER.

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

PALAMON.

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

JAILER

My Lord for you  
 I have this charge too—

PALAMON.

To discharge my life?

JAILER

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

PALAMON.

Devils take 'em,

That are so envious to me! prithee kill me.

JAILER.

And hang for't afterward.

PALAMON.

By this good light,

Had I a sword I would kill thee.

JAILER

Why, my Lord?

PALAMON.

Thou bringst such pelting scurvy news continually

Thou art not worthy life. I will not go.

JAILER

Indeed, you must, my Lord.

PALAMON.

May I see the garden?

JAILER

No.

PALAMON.

Then I am resolved,

I will not go.

JAILER

I must constrain you then: and for you are dangerous,

I'll clap more irons on you.

PALAMON.

Do, good keeper.

I'll shake 'em so, ye shall not sleep;

I'll make ye a new Morris: must I go?

JAILER

There is no remedy.

PALAMON.

Farewell, kind window.

May rude wind never hurt thee. O, my Lady,

If ever thou hast felt what sorrow was,

Dream how I suffer. Come; now bury me.

[Exeunt Palamon, and Jailer.]

ACT 2

SCENE 3: The country near Athens.

[Enter Arcite.]

ARCITE.

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

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

SECOND FRIEND

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

SON

And I'll be there.

WOOER

And I.

## SECOND FRIEND

Why, then, have with ye, boys; Tis but a chiding.  
 Let the plough play to day, I'll tickle't out  
 Of the jades' tails tomorrow.

I am sure

To have my wife as jealous as a turkey:  
 But that's all one; I'll go through, let her mumble.

## SON

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

## ARCITE.

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

## SON

Whither? why, what a question's that?

## ARCITE.

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

## WOOER

To the Games, my Friend.

## SECOND FRIEND

Where were you bred, you know it not?

## ARCITE.

Not far, sir,  
 Are there such Games today?

## SON

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

## ARCITE.

What pastimes are they?

## SECOND FRIEND

Wrestling, and Running..

## WOOER

Thou wilt not go along?



ARCITE.

Not yet, Sir.

SECOND FRIEND

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

[Exeunt.]

ARCITE.

This is an offered opportunity

I durst not wish for. Well I could have wrestled,

The best men called it excellent, and run—

Swifter the wind upon a field of Corn

Curling the wealthy ears never flew:

I'll venture, and in some poor disguise be there; who knows Whether my  
brows may not be girt with garlands? And happiness prefer me to a place,  
Where I may ever dwell in sight of her.

[Exeunt Arcite.]

## ACT 2

SCENE 4: Athens. A room in the prison.

[Enter Jailer's Daughter alone.]

DAUGHTER.

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

[Exit.]

ACT 2

SCENE 5: An open place in Athens.

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

THESEUS.

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

ARCITE.

I am proud to please you.

THESEUS.

What Country bred you?

ARCITE.

This; but far off, Prince.

THESEUS.

Are you a Gentleman?

ARCITE.

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

THESEUS.

Are you his heir?

ARCITE.

His youngest, Sir.

THESEUS.

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

ARCITE.

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

THESEUS.

You are perfect.

PIRITHOUS.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

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

PIRITHOUS.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

He's well got, sure.

THESEUS.

What made you seek this place, Sir?

ARCITE.

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

PIRITHOUS.

All his words are worthy.

THESEUS.

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

PIRITHOUS.

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

ARCITE.

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

Dearest beauty, Thus let me seal my vowed faith.  
[He kisses her hand]

THESEUS.

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

EMILIA.

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

THESEUS.

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

[Flourish.]

EMILIA.

I hope too wise for that, Sir.

[Exeunt.]

## ACT 2

## SCENE 6: Before the prison.

[Enter Jailer's Daughter alone.]

DAUGHTER.

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

[Exeunt.]



# ACT III



## ACT 3

SCENE 1: A forest near Athens.

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

Enter Arcite alone.

ARCITE.

O Queen Emilia,

Fresher than May, sweeter

Than her gold buttons on the boughs, or all

Th'enamelled knacks o'th mead or garden: yea,

We challenge too the bank of any nymph

That makes the stream seem flowers; thou, o Jewel

O'th wood, o'th world, hast likewise blest a place

With thy sole presence!

Tell me, O Lady Fortune,

Next after Emily my sovereign, how far

I may be proud. She takes strong note of me,

Hath made me near her; and this beauteous morn

The prim'st of all the year, presents me with

A brace of horses.

Alas, alas, Poor Cousin Palamon, poor prisoner, thou

So little dream'st upon my fortune, that

Thou think'st thyself the happier thing, to be

So near Emilia; me thou deem'st at Thebes,

And therein wretched, although free. But if

Thou knew'st my mistress breathed on me, and that

I eared her language, lived in her eye, O coz,

What passion would enclose thee!

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

PALAMON.

Traitor kinsman,

Thou shouldst perceive my passion, if these signs

Of prisonment were off me, and this hand

But owner of a sword: By all oaths in one,

I and the justice of my love would make thee

A confessed Traitor. O thou most perfidious

That ever gently looked; the void'st of honour,

That ev'r bore gentle token; falsest cousin

That ever blood made kin, call'st thou her thine?

I'll prove it in my shackles, with these hands,

Void of appointment, that thou liest, and art

A very thief in love, a chaffy Lord,

Not worth the name of villain: had I a sword

And these house-clogs away—

ARCITE.

Dear Cousin Palamon—

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

[Wind horns of Cornets.]

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Pray hold your promise.

[Wind horns.]

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Tis a good title.

PALAMON.

But this one word:

You are going now to gaze upon my Mistress,  
For note you, mine she is—

ARCITE.

Nay, then.

PALAMON.

Nay, pray you,

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

[Exeunt.]

## ACT 3

## SCENE 2: Another Part of the forest.

[Enter Jailer's daughter alone.]

DAUGHTER.

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

[Exeunt.]

ACT 3

SCENE 3: Same as Scene I.

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

ARCITE.

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

[Enter Palamon.]

PALAMON.

Arcite?

ARCITE.

The same:

have brought you food and files.

Come forth and fear not, here's no Theseus.

PALAMON.

Nor none so honest, Arcite.

ARCITE.

That's no matter,

We'll argue that hereafter: Come, take courage;

You shall not die thus beastly. Here, Sir, drink;

I know you are faint: then I'll talk further with you.

PALAMON.

Arcite, thou mightst now poison me.

ARCITE.

I might,

But I must fear you first. Sit down, and, good, now

No more of these vain parleys; let us not,

Having our ancient reputation with us,

Make talk for Fools and Cowards.

To your health, sir!

[He drinks.]

Pray, sit down, then, and let me entreat you,

By all the honesty and honour in you,

No mention of this woman: 'twill disturb us;

We shall have time enough.

PALAMON.

Well, Sir, I'll pledge you.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Yes.

ARCITE.

I am glad you have so good a stomach.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Yes, for them that have wild consciences.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Venison.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.  
After you, Coz.

PALAMON.  
She loved a black-haired man.

ARCITE.  
She did so; well, sir?

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

ARCITE.  
Out with't, faith.

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

ARCITE.  
Something she did, Sir.

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

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

PALAMON.  
Yes.

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

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

ARCITE.

You are wide.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

As thou makes't me, traitor.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

A Sword and Armor?

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Sirrah—

ARCITE.

I'll hear no more.

[Exit.]

PALAMON.

If he keep touch, he dies for't.

[Exit.]



ACT 3

SCENE 4: Another Part of the forest.

[Enter Jailer's daughter.]

DAUGHTER.

Palamon!

Alas no; he's in heaven. Where am I now?  
 Yonder's the sea, and there's a ship; how't tumbles!  
 And there's a rock lies watching under water;  
 Now, now, it beats upon it; now, now, now,  
 There's a leak sprung, a sound one, how they cry!  
 Spoon her before the wind, you'll lose all else:  
 Up with a course or two, and tack about, boys.  
 Good night, good night, you're gone.--I am very hungry.  
 Would I could find a fine frog; he would tell me  
 News from all parts o'th world, then would I make  
 A carrack of a cockleshell, and sail  
 By east and northeast to the king of Pygmies,  
 For he tells fortunes rarely. Now my father,  
 Twenty to one, is trust up in a trice  
 Tomorrow morning; I'll say never a word.

[Sing.]

For I'll cut my green coat a foot above my knee,  
 And I'll clip my yellow locks an inch below mine e'e.  
 Hey, nonny, nonny, nonny,  
 He s'buy me a white cut, forth for to ride  
 And I'll go seek him, throw the world that is so wide  
 Hey nonny, nonny, nonny.

[Exeunt.]

## ACT 3

## SCENE 6: Same as Scene III.

[Enter Palamon from the Bush.]

PALAMON.

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

[Enter Arcite with Armors and Swords.]

ARCITE.

Good morrow, noble kinsman.

PALAMON.

I have put you to too much pains, Sir.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Then I shall quit you.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Choose you, Sir.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

That's well said.

ARCITE.

You'll find it.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

No.

ARCITE.

Is't not too heavy?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

I'll buckle't close.

PALAMON.

My casque now.

ARCITE.

Will you fight bare-armed?

PALAMON.

We shall be the nimbler.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Faith, very little; love has used you kindly.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Now to you, Sir:

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

You had indeed; a bright bay, I remember.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

More by virtue;  
You are modest, cousin.

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

No, no, tis well.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

Now I am perfect.

PALAMON.

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

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

ARCITE.

And me my love!

Is there aught else to say?

PALAMON.

This only, and no more: Thou art mine aunt's son,

And that blood we desire to shed is mutual;

In me, thine, and in thee, mine. My sword

Is in my hand, and if thou kill'st me,

The gods and I forgive thee; If there be

A place prepared for those that sleep in honour,

I wish his weary soul that falls may win it:

Fight bravely, cousin; give me thy noble hand.

ARCITE.

Here, Palamon: This hand shall never more

Come near thee with such friendship.

PALAMON.

I commend thee.

ARCITE.

If I fall, curse me, and say I was a coward,

For none but such dare die in these just trials.

Once more farewell, my cousin.

PALAMON.

Farewell, Arcite.

[Fight.]

[Horns within: they stand.]

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Why?

ARCITE.

This is the Duke, a-hunting as I told you.

If we be found, we are wretched. O retire

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

You are not mad?

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

Look to thine own well, Arcite.

[Fight again. Horns.]

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

THESEUS.

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

PALAMON.

Hold thy word, Theseus.

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

PIRITHOUS.

O heaven,  
What more than man is this!

ARCITE.

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

PALAMON.

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



THESEUS.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

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

EMILIA.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

Sir, by our tie of Marriage—

EMILIA.

By your own spotless honour—

HIPPOLITA.

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

EMILIA.

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

HIPPOLITA.

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

THESEUS.

These are strange conjurings.

PIRITHOUS.

Nay, then, I'll in too:

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

EMILIA.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

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

PIRITHOUS.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

Next, hear my prayers.

EMILIA.

Last, let me entreat, Sir.

PIRITHOUS.

For mercy.

HIPPOLYTA.

Mercy.

EMILIA.

Mercy on these Princes.

THESEUS.

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

EMILIA.

Upon their lives: But with their banishments.

THESEUS.

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

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

EMILIA.

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

PIRITHOUS.

Urge it home, brave Lady.

EMILIA.

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

THESEUS.

On what conditions?

EMILIA.

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

PALAMON.

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

THESEUS.

Will you, Arcite,  
 Take these conditions?

PALAMON.

He's a villain, then.

PIRITHOUS.

These are men.

ARCITE.

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

THESEUS.

What may be done? For now I feel compassion.

PIRITHOUS.

Let it not fall again, Sir.

THESEUS.

Say, Emilia,

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

ARCITE

Ay.

PALAMON

With all my soul.

THESEUS.

He that she refuses  
Must die, then.

ARCITE

Any death thou canst invent, Duke.

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

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

THESEUS.

Make choice, then.

EMILIA.

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

HIPPOLYTA.

What will become of 'em?

THESEUS.

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

PALAMON.

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

ARCITE.

I embrace ye.

THESEUS.

Are you content, Sister?

EMILIA.

I must, Sir,  
Else both miscarry.

THESEUS.

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

PALAMON.

We dare not fail thee, Theseus.

[Exeunt.]

# ACT IV

## ACT 4

SCENE 1: Athens. A room in the prison.

[Enter Jailer and his friend.]

JAILER.

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

FIRST FRIEND.

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

[Enter Second Friend.]

JAILER.

Pray heaven it hold so.

SECOND FRIEND.

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

JAILER.

They are welcome.

SECOND FRIEND.

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

JAILER

Ye are a good man  
And ever bring good news.

[Enter Wooer.]

WOOER.

Alas, Sir, where's your Daughter?

JAILER.

Why do you ask?

WOOER.

O, Sir, when did you see her?

SECOND FRIEND.

How he looks!

JAILER.

This morning.

WOOER.

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

FIRST FRIEND.

These are strange questions.

JAILER.

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

WOOER.

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

JAILER.

Well, Sir.



FIRST FRIEND.

Not right?

SECOND FRIEND.

Not well?

WOOER.

No, Sir, not well.

Tis too true, she is mad.

FIRST FRIEND.

It cannot be.

WOOER.

Believe, you'll find it so.

JAILER.

I half suspected

What you have told me: the gods comfort her:

Either this was her love to Palamon,

Or fear of my miscarrying on his scape,

Or both.

WOOER.

Tis likely.

JAILER.

But why all this haste, Sir?

WOOER.

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

In the great Lake that lies behind the palace,

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

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

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

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

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

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

JAILER.

Pray, go on, Sir?

WOOER.

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

Repeat this often: 'Palamon is gone,

Is gone to'th wood to gather mulberries;

I'll find him out tomorrow.'

FIRST FRIEND.

Pretty soul.

WOOER.

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

SECOND FRIEND.

Alas, what pity it is!

WOOER.

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

[Enter Son & Daughter.]

And hither came to tell you. Here they are.

DAUGHTER.

[sings.]

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

SON.

O, a very fine one.

DAUGHTER.

I can sing twenty more.

SON.

I think you can.

DAUGHTER.

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

SON.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

Where's my wedding Gown?

SON.

I'll bring it tomorrow.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

Yes, wench, we know him.

DAUGHTER.

Is't not a fine young Gentleman?

JAILER.

Tis Love.

SON.

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

FIRST FRIEND.

Yes, he's a fine man.

DAUGHTER.

O, is he so? you have a Sister?

FIRST FRIEND.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

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

FIRST FRIEND.

Yes.

JAILER.

She's lost  
Past all cure.

SON.

Heaven forbid, father.

DAUGHTER.

Come hither, you are a wise man.

FIRST FRIEND.

Does she know him?

SECOND FRIEND.

No, would she did.

DAUGHTER.

You are master of a ship?

JAILER.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

Where's your Compass?

JAILER.

Here.

DAUGHTER.

Set it to th' north.

And now direct your course to th' wood, where Palamon

Lies longing for me; For the tackling let me alone;

Come, weigh, my hearts, cheerily! ALL. Owgh, owgh, owgh!

tis up, the wind's fair, Top the bowline, out with the main sail; Where's your whistle, Master?

SON.

Let's get her in.

JAILER

Up to the top, Boy.

SON.

Where's the pilot?

FIRST FRIEND.

Here.

DAUGHTER.

What kenn'st thou?

SECOND FRIEND.

A fair wood.

DAUGHTER.

Bear for it, master: tack about!

[Sings.]

When Cynthia with her borrowed light, etc.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 4  
SCENE 2

EMILIA.

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

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

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

FLAVINA

No! No.

EMILIA

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

[Enter Pirithous]

PIRITHOUS.

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

EMILIA.

To end the quarrel?

PIRITHOUS.

Yes.

EMILIA.

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

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, and attendants.]

THESEUS.

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

[to Hippolyta]

Lady, you shall see men fight now.

HIPPOLYTA.

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

THESEUS.

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

PIRITHOUS.

Yes, Sir.

THESEUS.

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

PIRITHOUS.

There shall want no bravery.

[Exeunt.]

## ACT 4

SCENE 3: A room in the prison.

[Enter Jailer, Wooer, Doctor.]

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER

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

[Enter Daughter.]

Look where she comes, you shall perceive her behavior.

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

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

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

How her brain coins!



DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

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

DAUGHTER.

[Sings]

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

[Exit Daughter.]

JAILER.

What think you of her, Sir?

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

Alas, what then?

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

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

WOOER.

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

DOCTOR.

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

[Exeunt.]



# ACT V

ACT 5

SCENE 3: A Place near the Lists.

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

EMILIA.

I'll no step further.

PIRITHOUS.

Will you lose this sight?

EMILIA.

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

PIRITHOUS.

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

THESEUS.

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

EMILIA.

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

THESEUS.

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

EMILIA.

I am extinct.

HIPPOLYTA.

You must go.

EMILIA.

In faith, I will not.

THESEUS.

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

EMILIA.

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

THESEUS.

Well, well, then, at your pleasure;

HIPPOLYTA

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

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

EMILIA.

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

[Cornets. Trumpets sound as to a charge.]

Hark, how yon spurs to spirit do incite  
The Princes to their proof!

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

What is the chance?

[Enter Flavina.]

FLAVINA  
The Cry's 'a Palamon'.

EMILIA.  
Then he has won! Twas ever likely;  
I prithee, run  
And tell me how it goes.

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

FLAVINA.  
Still Palamon.

EMILIA.  
Run and enquire.  
Poor Servant, thou hast lost;  
Upon my right side still I wore thy picture,  
Palamon's on the left: why so, I know not;  
I had no end in't else, chance would have it so.  
On the sinister side the heart lies; Palamon  
Had the best boding chance.

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

This burst of clamour  
Is sure th'end o'th combat.

[Enter Flavina.]

FLAVINA.  
They said that Palamon had Arcite's body  
Within an inch o'th Pyramid, that the cry  
Was general 'a Palamon': But, anon,  
Arcite made a brave redemption, and  
The two bold Titlers, at this instant are  
Hand to hand at it.

[Cornets. Cry within, Arcite, Arcite.]

EMILIA

More exulting? Palamon still?

FLAVINA.

Nay, now the sound is Arcite.

EMILIA.

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

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

FLAVINA.

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

EMILIA.

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

[Cornets.]

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

THESEUS.

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

ARCITE.

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

THESEUS.

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



[to Arcite]

Wear the Garland  
 With joy that you have won: For the subdued,  
 Give him our present justice, since I know  
 His life but pinches 'em; Let it here be done.  
 The Scene's not for our seeing, go we hence,

[to Arcite]

Arm your prize,  
 I know you will not lose her.—  
 Hippolyta, I see one eye of yours conceives a tear  
 The which it will deliver.

[Flourish.]

EMILIA.  
 Is this winning?  
 Oh all you heavenly powers, where is your mercy?  
 But that your wills have said it must be so,  
 And charge me live to comfort this unfriended,  
 This miserable Prince, that cuts away  
 A life more worthy from him than all women,  
 I should, and would, die too.

HIPPOLYTA.  
 Infinite pity,  
 That four such eyes should be so fixed on one  
 That two must needs be blind fort.

[Exeunt.]

## ACT 5

## SCENE 2: A darkened Room in the Prison.

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

DOCTOR.

Has this advice  
I told you, done any good upon her?

WOOER.

O very much;  
The maids that kept her company  
Have half persuaded her that I am Palamon;  
Within this half hour she came smiling to me,  
And asked me what I would eat, and when  
I would kiss her: I told her presently, and kissed her twice.

DOCTOR.

Twas well done; twenty times had been far better,  
For there the cure lies mainly.

WOOER.

Then she told me  
She would watch with me tonight, for well she knew  
What hour my fit would take me.

DOCTOR.

Let her do so,  
And when your fit comes, fit her home,  
And presently.

WOOER.

She would have me sing.

DOCTOR.

You did so?

WOOER.

No.

DOCTOR.

Twas very ill done, then;  
You should observe her ev'ry way.

WOOER.

Alas, I have no voice,  
Sir, to confirm her that way.

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

Ho, there, Doctor!

DOCTOR.

Yes, in the way of cure.

JAILER.

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

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

Thank ye, Doctor.

DOCTOR.

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

JAILER.

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

[Exit Jailer.]

DOCTOR.

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

WOOER.

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

DOCTOR.

How old is she?

WOOER.  
She's eighteen.

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

WOOER.  
Yet, very well, Sir.

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

WOOER.  
I am of your mind, Doctor.

[Enter Jailer, Daughter, Maid.]

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

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

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

JAILER.  
Yes.

DAUGHTER.  
How do you like him?

JAILER.  
He's a very fair one.

DAUGHTER.  
You never saw him dance?

JAILER.

No.

DAUGHTER.

I have often.

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

JAILER.

That's fine, indeed.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

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

DAUGHTER.

Alas, that's nothing.

JAILER.

Can he write and read too?

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

Very well.

DAUGHTER.

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

JAILER.

What dowry has she?

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

What stuff she utters!

JAILER.

Make curtsy; here your love comes.

WOOER.

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

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

Why, a day's journey, wench.

DAUGHTER.

Will you go with me?

WOOER.

What shall we do there, wench?

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER.

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

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER.

Do not you know me?

DAUGHTER.

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

WOOER.

That's all one; I will have you.

DAUGHTER.

Will you surely?

WOOER.

Yes, by this fair hand, will I.

DAUGHTER.

We'll to bed, then.

WOOER.

Ev'n when you will.

[Kisses her.]

DAUGHTER.

O Sir, you would fain be nibbling.

WOOER.

Why do you rub my kiss off?

DAUGHTER.

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

DOCTOR.

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

DAUGHTER.

Do you think he'll have me?

DOCTOR.

Yes, without doubt.

DAUGHTER.

Do you think so too?

JAILER.

Yes.

DAUGHTER.

We shall have many children:--

Lord, how you're grown!

My Palamon, I hope, will grow, too, finely,

Now he's at liberty: Alas, poor chicken,

He was kept down with hard meat and ill lodging,

But I'll kiss him up again.

[Enter a Jailer's friend.]

FIRST FRIEND.

What do you here? You'll lose the saddest sight

That ev'r was seen.

JAILER.

Are they done i'th Field?

FIRST FRIEND.

They are.

You bear a charge there too.

JAILER.

I'll away straight.

I must ev'n leave you here. How did you like her?

DOCTOR.

I'll warrant you, within these three or four days

I'll make her right again.

(exit Jailer with Friend)

You must not from her,

But still preserve her in this way.

WOOER.

I will.

DOCTOR.

Lets get her in.



WOOER.

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

DAUGHTER.

And shall we kiss too?

WOOER.

A hundred times.

DAUGHTER.

And twenty.

WOOER.

Ay, and twenty.

DAUGHTER.

And then we'll sleep together.

DOCTOR.

Take her offer.

WOOER.

Yes, marry, will we.

DAUGHTER.

But you shall not hurt me.

WOOER.

I will not, sweet.

DAUGHTER.

If you doe, Love, I'll cry.

[Flourish.]

[Exeunt.]

## ACT 5

SCENE 4: The same; a Block prepared.

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

PALAMON.

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

JAILER.

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

PALAMON.

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

[Gives purse.]

JAILER.

The gods requite you,  
And make her thankful.

PALAMON.

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

[Lies on the Block.]

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

PIRITHOUS

[off]

Hold, hold! O hold, hold, hold!

[enter Pirithous, in haste]

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

PALAMON.

What

Hath waked me from my dream?

PIRITHOUS.

List then: your cousin,

Mounted upon a steed that Emily

Did first bestow on him, a black one, owing

Not a hair-worth of white; on this horse is Arcite

Trotting the stones of Athens, which the Calkins

Did rather tell then trample; for the horse

Would make his length a mile, if't pleased his rider

To put pride in him: as he thus went counting

The flinty pavement, dancing, as 'twere, to th' music

His own hooves made; what envious flint,

Cold as old Saturn, and like him possessed

With fire malevolent, darted a Spark;--the hot horse, hot as fire, Took toy at

this, and fell to what disorder His power could give his will; bounds, comes on

end, Forgets school-doing, being therein trained, And of kind manège; pig-like

he whines At the sharp rowel, seeks all foul means Of boist'rous and rough

jadery, to disseat His Lord, that kept it bravely: when naught served, When

neither curb would crack, girth break nor diff'ring plunges Disroot his rider

whence he grew, but that He kept him 'tween his legs, on his hind hooves on

end he stands, That Arcite's legs, being higher than his head, Seemed with

strange art to hand. His victor's wreath Even then fell off his head: and

presently Backward the jade comes o'er, and his full poise Becomes the rider's

load: yet is he living, But such a vessel 'tis, that floats but for The surge that

next approaches. He much desires To have some speech with you: Lo he

appears.

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

PALAMON.

O miserable end of our alliance!

The gods are mighty, Arcite: if thy heart

Thy worthy, manly heart, be yet unbroken,

Give me thy last words; I am Palamon,

One that yet loves thee dying.

ARCITE.

Take Emilia

And with her all the world's joy: Reach thy hand:

Farewell: I have told my last hour. I was false,

Yet never treacherous: Forgive me, cousin.

PALAMON.

Thy brave soul seek Elysium.

EMILIA.

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

PALAMON.

And I to honour.

THESEUS.

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

PALAMON.

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

THESEUS.

Never Fortune

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

O you heavenly Charmers,

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

[Flourish.]

[Exeunt.]

