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presents

the Annotated Popular Edition of

The SCORNFUL LADY

by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

Performed c. 1609-1610

First published 1616

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

THE SCORNFUL LADY

By Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

Performed c. 1609-1610
First Published 1616

Persons Represented in the Play.

Elder Loveless, a Suitor to the Lady.
Young Loveless, a Prodigal, and brother to Elder Loveless.
Savil, Steward to Elder Loveless.

Lady, target of Elder Loveless' suit.
Martha, the Lady's sister.
Abigail Younglove, a waiting Gentlewoman of the Lady.

Welford, a Suitor to the Lady.
Sir Roger, Curate to the Lady.

Hangers-on of Young Loveless:
Captain.
Traveller.
Poet.
Tobacco-man.

Morecraft, an Usurer.
Widow, a Rich Widow.

Wenches, Fiddlers, Attendants.

The Scene: London

INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAY

The Scornful Lady is a "City Comedy", its scene London; thus, its characters are neither royalty nor nobility, but "regular" citizens. Almost plotless, our play examines the need some people have to manipulate their admirers. A very funny play, *The Scornful Lady* is notable for its extensive use of animal-related insults and imagery. The lecherous old servant Abigail in particular is the target of a great deal of entertaining abuse.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

The text of *The Scornful Lady* is taken from Warwick Bond's edition of the play, as it appears in Volume I of *The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher*, cited at #3 below.

The Scornful Lady was published multiple times in the 17th century, the first time in 1616; as is the normal practice on this website, our edition remains faithful to the original 1616 quarto to the greatest degree possible.

NOTES ON THE ANNOTATIONS

Mention of Bond, Dyce, Colman and Weber in the annotations refers to the notes provided by each of these editors in their respective editions of this play, each cited fully below.

The most commonly cited sources are listed in the footnotes immediately below. The complete list of footnotes appears at the end of this play.

Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:

1. OED online.
2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words.* London; New York: Penguin, 2002.
3. Bond, R. Warwick, ed. *The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher*, Volume I. London: George Bell & Sons and A. H. Bullen, 1904.
4. Dyce, Alexander. *The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879.
7. Colman, George. *The Dramatic Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*. London: Printed for John Stockdale, 1811.
9. Weber, Henry. *The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*. Edinburgh: James Ballantyne and Company, 1812.

NOTE on the IAMBIC PENTAMETER

Most of *The Scornful Lady* was originally published in prose; early editors, however, recognized that much of this prose was clearly written in iambs, and many of the speeches could easily be broken up into iambic, or near iambic, pentameter.

As a result, many early editors, such as Alexander Dyce and Warwick Bond, did exactly that. And while they did not always agree on exactly how every speech should be divided, their decision to do so was the correct one. The edition you have in front of you employ's Bond's divisions.

The concerned reader, however, may still wonder why it is that so many of the lines in *The Scornful Lady* are irregular; after all, both Beaumont and Fletcher were perfectly capable of writing in strict iambic pentameter when they wanted to. So why do so many lines contain extra syllables, or slip momentarily into meters other than iambic? One may rightfully ask whether these speeches should really be presented in verse at all.

Editor R. Warwick Bond presents in his notes to B&F's *A King and No King* a solid argument for printing the questionable speeches as verse: recognizing that the lines contain too much "metrical suggestion" to believe the authors intended them to be presented as prose, Bond argues that the verse is really a hybrid of prose and pure, strict iambic pentameter, so as to make the speech less stylized than that which might be given to nobles and other higher-ranked members of society; the verse was therefore *intentionally* made less regular by our authors to make the speeches more fitting for the more earthy members of "ordinary" society who populate the play.

As a result, it is suggested that you generally not concern yourself terribly with following the iambic pentameter as you read *The Scornful Lady*. There are plenty of other challenges with respect to the play's language, numerous literary and topical allusions, and dense metaphors to keep your intellect occupied.

AUTHORSHIP.

E.H.C. Oliphant (*The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927), in his study of the collaborations of Beaumont and Fletcher, assigns to our two authors the following scenes:

Beaumont: Act I.i; Act II.i; first part of Act IV.i; Act V.ii.

Fletcher: Act I,ii; Act II.ii and iii; Act III; second part of Act IV.i, and all of Act IV.ii; Act V.i, iii and iv.

The OBSSESIVE USE of the WORD *CAST*.

Wordsmiths will be interested to pay attention to the recurring use of the word ***cast***, with so many of its meanings, throughout the play - a total of 17 appearances. It is employed by our authors as a verb, a noun, and an adjective, as well as in various phrases.

By itself, ***cast*** is used to mean

(1) to bestow; to scheme or contrive; to toss (present tense verbs); and schemed (past tense verb);

(2) pair; and analysis (nouns); and

(3) dismissed (adjective).

In addition, ***cast*** appears in the following expressions:

cast off (meaning to cast off; thrown away; and dismissed);

cast a fortune (to diagram the arrangement of the planets as part of an astrological forecast);

bridling cast (a parting drink);

cast up (to vomit);

cast up a reckoning (to make a calculation); and

cast one's eyes upon (to look or glance upon).

SETTINGS, SCENE BREAKS and STAGE DIRECTIONS.

The original editions of ***The Scornful Lady*** did not identify scene settings, nor were there any scene breaks; we have adopted those suggested by Bond.

As is our normal practice, some stage directions have been added, and some modified, for purposes of clarity. Most of these minor changes are adopted from Bond and Dyce.

THE SCORNFUL LADY

By Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

c. 1609-1610

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Room in Lady's House.

Enter the two Lovelesses, Savil the Steward, and a Page.

Entering Characters: the two ***Lovelesses*** are brothers; ***Elder Loveless*** is courting the unnamed ***Lady***, whose house they have entered; ***Savil***, an elderly man dressed in old-fashioned livery, is the steward of Elder.

Lady, the title character, and an obnoxious and selfish woman, has decided that if ***Elder*** wants to continue to woo her, he must travel to France for a year.

Elder's younger brother, ***Young Loveless***, is a spendthrift, who, by failing to make payments on his mortgage, has forfeited all of his property to the money-lender Morecraft.

Elder. Brother, is your last hope past to mollify Morecraft's heart about your mortgage?

= ***Morecraft*** is a money-lender, typically referred to in Elizabethan drama as a *usurer*.

Young. Hopelessly past. I have presented the usurer with a richer draught than ever Cleopatra swallowed; he hath sucked in ten thousand pounds worth of my land, more than he paid for, at a gulp, without trumpets.

4-7: Young uses an extended drinking metaphor to describe Morecraft's taking possession of all of his property, and thus his wealth, thanks to his defaulting on the loan Morecraft has made to him; in this era, a failure to make a single payment could lead to the loss of one's entire security, hence Young's allusion in line 7 to Morecraft receiving ***more than he paid for***.

5: ***richer draught*** = more powerful drink or potion.
Cleopatra = Plutarch wrote in his *Lives* that Cleopatra enjoyed testing the effects of various poisons on condemned prisoners; she herself died by the bite of an asp, to avoid being taken prisoner by Octavian.

= drawn or drunk in.
= without a flourish of trumpets as would normally accompany the drinking of healths at public functions.[3]

Elder. I have as hard a task to perform in this house.

Young. Faith, mine was to make an usurer honest, or to lose my land.

Elder. And mine is to persuade a passionate woman, or to leave the land. – Savil, make the boat stay.

15: ***leave the land*** = these words parallel Young's ***lose my land*** in form and alliteration.
stay = wait.

[*Exit Page*.]

17: Savil passes the instruction on to the Page, who leaves to carry it out.

I fear I shall begin my unfortunate journey this night,
20 though the darkness of the night, and the roughness of the waters, might easily dissuade an unwilling man.
22

Sav. Sir, your father's old friends hold it the sounder

23*f*: Savil tries to dissuade his master from taking this foolish trip to France.
hold it = "maintain that it is".
the sounder = meaning both more (1) healthy in body, and (2) financially secure, describing Elder's ***body and estate*** respectively in the next line (24).

24 course for your body and estate to stay at home, and marry and propagate − and govern in your country −

= fortune, property.

26 than to travel for disease, and return following the court

26: ***for disease*** = ie. to treat or to pick up some disease, perhaps referring specifically to venereal disease, which was often associated with France, where Elder must travel; the terms *French pox* and *French measles* appear frequently in literature of the time to refer to syphilis.[1]
following the court = when a once-wealthy man's own property has been consumed, he might become a follower of the court.[3]

in a night-cap, and die without issue.

27: ***night-cap*** = worn because of the chronic disease he has picked up.[3]
issue = children.

28

Elder. Savil, you shall gain the opinion of a better
30 servant in seeking to execute, not alter, my will, howsoever my intents succeed.

= reputation for being.

32

Young. Yonder's Mistress Younglove, brother, the

= a little confusingly, Lady's servant, ***Abigail Younglove***, is sometimes referred to by her last name, sometimes her first.

34 grave rubber of your mistress' toes.

= Young appears to pun on "grave robber".

36 *Enter Abigail Younglove, the waiting woman.*

Entering Character: ***Abigail Younglove*** is Lady's servant; the OED conjectures that the word ***abigail*** came to mean "female servant" because of its use in this play.

38 ***Elder.*** Mistress Younglove −

40 ***Abig.*** Master Loveless, truly we thought your sails had been hoist: my mistress is persuaded you are

40-41: ***your sails…hoist*** = ie. "you had already set sail."

42 sea-sick ere this.

= "before this time", ie. "by now."

44 ***Elder.*** Loves she her ill-taken-up resolution so dearly? Didst thou move her for me?

= "try to persuade her on my behalf?"

46

Abig. By this light that shines, there's no removing

47: ***By this…shines*** = typical Elizabethan oath affirming the truth of something.
47-48: ***there's no…the end*** = "there's no dissuading her once she stubbornly adheres to a position";[1] but there is a double entendre here - Abigail is prone, in the best tradition of the dirty-minded female servant, to be bawdy: according to Partridge, ***end*** could be used to refer to a man's member, so that with ***stiff*** the line takes on an entirely different - and rather indelicate - meaning.

48 her, if she get a stiff opinion by the end. I attempted her

= ie. "tried to persuade".

to-day when they say a woman can deny nothing.

= ie. at the moment.

Elder. What critical minute was that?

Abig. When her smock was over her ears: but she was no more pliant than if it hung about her heels.

= ie. "she was undressing"; ***smock*** = undergarment.
= perhaps meaning "when Lady was using the water closet."

Elder. I prithee, deliver my service, and say, I desire to see the dear cause of my banishment; and then France.

= "I pray thee", ie. please. = "commend me to her".
= ie. Lady.
= "I'll be off to France."

Abig. I'll do't. Hark hither; is that your brother?

= "listen here".

Elder. Yes: have you lost your memory?

Abig. As I live, he's a pretty fellow.

64: Abigail will readily admit her attraction to the two main young male characters of the play.

[*Exit Abigail*.]

Young. Oh, this is a sweet brach!

= bitch hound;[1] many of the characters will be quite open in their abuse of Abigail.

Elder. Why she knows not you.

Young. No, but she offered me once to know her.

= Young plays on the word ***know***, which was a common term for "having sexual relations with."

To this day she loves youth of eighteen. She heard a tale

73: ***youth*** = ie. young men.
heard = as Dyce suggests, perhaps this should be ***had***, meaning "knew" or "told".

how Cupid struck her in love with a great lord in the

= ie. ***Cupid***, the god of love, caused a maiden to fall in love by shooting her with one of his arrows.

Tilt-yard, but he never saw her; yet she in kindness,

= arena for a jousting tournament.

would needs wear a willow-garland at his wedding. She

76: ***woulds need*** = felt obliged to.
willow = a symbol for rejected love.
She = ie. Abigail.

loved all the players in the last queen's time once over;

77: ie. "fell in love with each of the actors (***players***) she saw on stage during the reign of Elizabeth I." Our play was written during the reign of James I - Elizabeth had died in 1603.

she was struck when they acted lovers, and forsook

78-79: ***she was…murtherers*** = she particularly fell for those actors when they played lovers, but abandoned them when they played villains.

some when they played murtherers. She has nine

= murderers.

spur-royals, and the servants say she hoards old gold;

= relatively new gold coins struck during the reign of James I, worth 15 shillings; they were called ***spur royals*** because of the resemblance of the star or sun, which was pictured with its rays on the reverse side, to the rowel (revolving wheel) of a spur.[1,3]

and she herself pronounces angerly that the farmer's

= alternate word for ***angrily***; ***angerly*** generally went out of fashion in the 17th century.[1]

eldest son (or her mistress' husband's clerk that shall

81-82: ***her mistress'…shall be*** = Abigail expects to marry the clergyman (***clerk***) of Lady's now-deceased husband; the reference is to Roger, a parson who seems to live in Lady's household, and a character whom we will soon meet. As will

become clear, Roger and Abigail have an "understanding".

be) that marries her, shall make her a jointure of fourscore pounds a year. She tells tales of the serving-men −

= a marriage settlement made by a groom to provide for his bride, should he predecease her; Abigail intends to marry a reasonably wealthy man, whose land can provide 80 pounds a year in rent.

Elder. Enough, I know her, brother. I shall entreat you only to salute my mistress, and take leave: we'll part at the stairs.

87: Elder interrupts; he can hear no more.
entreat = ask.
= greet.

Enter Lady and Abigail.

Lady. Now, sir, this first part of your will is performed: what's the rest?

93-94: Lady's obnoxious personality is apparent from her first line: "ok, I performed the first thing you asked for - which was to see me; now what?"

Elder. First, let me beg your notice for this gentleman, my brother: I shall take it as a favour done to me.

= ie. "ask you to greet or acknowledge".
= the original editions print this clause as the first line of Lady's speech immediately below, but we follow Bond and Dyce in giving it to Elder.

Lady. Though the gentleman hath received but an untimely grace from you, yet my charitable disposition would have been ready to have done him freer courtesies as a stranger, than upon those cold commendations.

99-100: ***Though…from you*** = ie. "although this is not the right time for you to be introducing me to your brother."
untimely = at an improper time, unseasonable.[1]

100-3: ***yet my…commendations*** = "yet thanks to my naturally generous character, I would gladly give him the warm welcome that he, as a stranger, deserves, and one that is more magnanimous than your ineffective introduction would suggest he should receive." Lady is highly unpleasant!

Young. Lady, my salutations crave acquaintance and leave at once.

= permission to be excused; the lines exchanged by Lady and Young are courteously formulaic.

Lady. Sir, I hope you are the master of your own occasions.

108-9: ie. "sir, I expect you may do as you wish."
= circumstances.

[*Exit Younglove and Savil*.]

Elder. Would I were so! Mistress, for me to praise over again that worth, which all the world and you yourself can see −

113: ***Would I were so*** = ie. "I wish *I* had control over my own circumstances!" Perhaps an aside.
113*ff:* Elder's flattery and formal language of courting is painfully trite and ineffective.

Lady. It's a cold room this; servant.

117*ff*: Lady ignores Elder's wooing.
servant = common term for a professed or authorized lover or wooer; used here as a vocative expression for Elder.

Elder. Mistress −

Lady. What think you if I have a chimney for't, out here?

Elder. Mistress, another in my place, that were not tied to believe all your actions just, would apprehend

124-6: ***another…wronged*** = "if you had treated anyone else the way you treat me, he would feel insulted."

himself wronged: but I, whose virtues are constancy and obedience −

= loyalty.

Lady. Younglove, make a good fire above, to warm me after my servant's exordiums.

= (long-winded) introductory remarks.[1]

Elder. I have heard and seen your affability to be such, that the servants you give wages to may speak.

132-3: Lady's affability is such that she allows her servants to speak their minds.

Lady. 'Tis true, 'tis true; but they speak to the purpose.

= "to the point (unlike you)".

Elder. Mistress, your will leads my speeches from the purpose. But as a man −

Lady. A simile, servant? This room was built for honest meaners, that deliver themselves hastily and plainly, and are gone. Is this a time or place for exordiums, and similes and metaphors? If you have aught to say, break into 't: my answers shall very reasonably meet you.

= ie. people who have something substantive to say.[1]

= anything.

= "respond to what you say."

Elder. Mistress, I came to see you.

Lady. That's happily dispatched; the next?

148: "great, that objective has been met; what's next?"

Elder. To take leave of you.

Lady. To be gone?

Elder. Yes.

Lady. You need not have despaired of that, nor have used so many circumstances to win me to give you leave to perform my command; is there a third?

= so much unnecessary verbiage.[2]

158: "permission to follow my instructions; is there a third thing you want from me?"

Elder. Yes, I had a third, had you been apt to hear it.

= disposed.[1]

Lady. I! never apter. Fast, good servant, fast.

= "speak quickly" or "get to the point". = wooer or lover.

Elder. 'Twas to entreat you to hear reason.

Lady. Most willingly: have you brought one can speak it?

= anyone who can.

Elder. Lastly, it is to kindle in that barren heart love and forgiveness.

Lady. You would stay at home?

= would prefer to.

Elder. Yes, lady.

Lady. Why, you may, and doubtlessly will, when you have debated that your commander is but your mistress, a woman, a weak one, wildly overborne with passions;

= instructor, ie. Lady herself.

178: Lady is highly sarcastic.
overborne = overcome.[1]

but the thing by her commanded is, to see Dover's dreadful cliff; passing, in a poor water-house, the dangers of the merciless channel 'twixt that and Calais, five long hours sail, with three poor weeks' victuals.

179-182: Lady teases Elder regarding the supposedly dangerous trip across the Channel to France.[8]
179-180: ***to see...cliff*** = ie. to sail to France; the famous white cliffs of Dover would be visible from a

boat sailing to Calais on the French shore.
dreadful (line 180) = formidable.[1]
water-house (line 180) = ie. boat.[1]

Elder. You wrong me.

Lady. Then to land dumb, unable to enquire for an = metaphorically unable to speak, since Elder does not speak French; even at this remote time, the English were well known for their lack of foreign language skills.

English host, to remove from city to city by most = ie. move.

chargeable post-horse, like one that rode in quest of his = expensive rented horses.[1]
mother tongue. = the phrase ***mother tongue*** has been in use at least as far back as 1425.[1]

Elder. You wrong me much.

Lady. And all these (almost invincible) labours = impossible to perform;[1] Lady remains sarcastic.

performed for your mistress, to be in danger to forsake her, and to put on new allegiance to some French lady, who is content to change language with you for

194-7: ***to be…laughter*** = Lady gives Elder additional instructions: "to risk abandoning me by taking up a relationship with some French lady, who for her own great amusement will teach you to speak French (***change language***)."[3]
By ***your mistress*** (line 194) and ***her*** (line 195), Lady means herself.

laughter; and after your whole year spent in tennis and broken speech, to stand to the hazard of being laughed = risk; Lady puns on ***hazard***, which refers to the receiving side of a ***tennis*** serve.[1]

at, on your return, and have tales made on you by the = told about.
chamber-maids.

Elder. You wrong me much.

Lady. Louder yet. 204: ie. "speak up;" Elder may be mumbling.

Elder. You know your least word is of force to make me seek out dangers; move me not with toys. But in this = ie. spur on or anger. = trifles, mocking speech.[1]
banishment, I must take leave to say you are unjust. Was one kiss forced from you in public by me so 209-211: Elder suggests Lady is sending him to France as penance for his sin of taking liberties with her in public.
unpardonable? Why, all the hours of day and night have seen us kiss.

Lady. 'Tis true, and so you satisfied the company that 213-4: Lady apparently reproached Elder for kissing her in front of his friends, but his attempts to justify the act, heard by his friends, only compounded his offense.
heard me chide.
satisfied = convinced, persuaded.[9]

Elder. Your own eyes were not dearer to you than I.

Lady. And so you told 'em.

Elder. I did, yet no sign of disgrace need to have stained your cheek: you yourself knew your pure and simple heart to be most unspotted, and free from the = free from disgrace or moral stain.
least baseness.

Lady. I did; But if a maid's heart doth but once think that she is suspected, her own face will write her guilty.

Elder. But where lay this disgrace? The world that 228*f*: Elder pleads his case: since everyone knew of their intimate relationship, where was the harm in what he

had done?

knew us, knew our resolutions well: and could it be

229-231: ***could it…kissed*** = "can you expect (***hoped*** = expected) that I would tie myself to you - and thus deny myself forever-after the company of other women - when you refuse to kiss me?"

hoped that I should give away my freedom, and venture a perpetual bondage with one I never kissed? or could I, in strict wisdom, take too much love upon me from her that chose me for her husband?

= ie. "is it possible for me to".

= true.[1]

Lady. Believe me, if my wedding-smock were on;

235-243: ***Believe me...wed that year*** = a very long, typical Elizabethan stage sentence; the sense is, no matter how far the preparations for her hypothetical wedding have gotten, if her fiancé had bragged once that she had shown him any partiality (line 242), she would call the whole thing off.

Lady's numerous examples of such wedding preparations are separated by semi-colons; the bulk of the sentence, then, is made up of premises ["***were*** (ie. *if*) this and ***were*** that"], ending with the conclusion (***I would not wed that year***) all the way down in line 243.

wedding smock = ***smock*** normally refers to a woman's undergarment, so perhaps Lady is referring to a special undergarment worn for one's wedding night.

Lines 236-241 are frequently cited for their examples of some of the wedding customs of the early 17th century.

Were the gloves bought and given, the license come;

= ***were*** in this line, and in lines 237, 239, and 241, means "even if".

Were the rosemary-branches dipt, and all

= ***rosemary***, representing remembrance, commonly decorated weddings and funerals.

The hippocras and cakes eat and drunk off;

= a type of spiced wine that has been strained through a flannel filter.[3]

Were these two arms encompassed with the hands
Of bachelors, to lead me to the church;

= ***bachelor*** normally referred to an unmarried man, but it seems likely that "unmarried women" is meant here; Ben Jonson, in his 1632 comedy *The Magnetic Lady*, uses ***bachelor*** clearly to refer to a female.

Were my feet in the door; were "I John" said;

= likely an assenting phrase, *"ay, John"*, like "I do"; ***John*** was used as a generic name for any man.[1]

If John should boast a favour done by me,
I would not wed that year. And you, I hope,
When you have spent this year commodiously,

= profitably.[1]

In achieving languages, will, at your return,
Acknowledge me more coy of parting with mine eyes,

246: "be a little more reserved in bragging about my regard for you".

Than such a friend. More talk I hold not now:

= lover.

If you dare, go.

Elder. I dare, you know. First let me kiss.

Lady. Farewell sweet servant. Your task performed,

252: although not stated explicitly in a stage direction, Lady likely gives Elder a modest parting kiss.

On a new ground, as a beginning suitor,
I shall be apt to hear you.

= ie. Lady will require Elder, on his return from France after a year's absence, to start his courtship all over again!

Elder. Farewell cruèl mistress.

[*Exeunt Lady and Abigail*.]

Enter Young Loveless and Savil.

Young. Brother, you'll hazard the losing your tide to Gravesend; you have a long half mile by land to Greenwich.

= risk.
= a town east of London and on the Thames, ***Gravesend*** was the normal embarkation point for boats to France.[6]
= once the site of a great royal palace, ***Greenwich***, on the Thames, would have been from where Elder would have sailed down to Gravesend.

Elder. I go. But, brother, what yet-unheard-of course to live doth imagination flatter you with? your ordinary means are devoured.

266-8: "how do you expect to live while I am gone? You have no money left."

Young. Course! Why, horse-coursing, I think.

= Young puns on ***course***.
The editors understand ***horse-coursing*** to mean horse-dealing, ie. the buying and selling of horses for profit, though Bond suggests that ***horse coursing*** is properly ***horse scorsing*** (the two phrases would sound the same), ***scorsing*** meaning trading or exchanging; we may note that ***coursing*** also meant "racing".[1]

Consume no time in this: I have no state to be mended by meditation: he that busies himself about my fortunes may properly be said to busy himself about nothing.

271-2: ***Consume…meditation*** = "don't spend a moment worrying about me; my situation won't improve by thinking about it."

Elder. Yet some course you must take, which, for my satisfaction, resolve and open; if you will shape none, I must inform you, that that man but persuades himself he means to live, that imagines not the means.

= determine on and declare.[9] = fashion.[1]
= "is only fooling himself".
= ie. "who does actually have a plan for how to do so." Elder handsomely puns on ***means***.

Young. Why, live upon others, as others have lived upon me.

= ie. "I will live off the generosity of others".

Elder. I apprehend not that. You have fed others, and consequently disposed of 'em; and the same measure must you expect from your maintainers, which will be too heavy an alteration for you to bear.

= understand.
= subsequently.[3]
284-6: ***the same…to bear*** = "you should expect that those who support you for a while will eventually cease to do so; when this happens, you will not be able to handle it."

Young. Why, I'll purse; if that raise me not, I'll bet at bowling-alleys, or man whores; I would fain live by

288-9: ***I'll purse…whores*** = Young itemizes, in Colman's delightful words, "three of the most despicable modes of acquiring subsistence to which mankind can be reduced" (p. 112).
purse = ie. steal purses.[3]
raise me not = ie. "fails to raise my fortunes".
bet = ie. gamble.

289: ***bowling alleys*** = ***bowling alley*** describes the green on which to play the oft referred-to game of ***bowls***; *bowls* may be thought of as an old English version of *bocce*, in which larger, heavier balls are rolled to get as near as possible to a smaller ball; an interesting variation in bowls is that the larger balls were unevenly weighted, allowing a skilled bowler to take advantage of the balls' tendency to curve (a quality known as "bias").
The term ***bowling alley*** itself goes back at least to 1412.[1]
man whores = be an escort or attendant for prostitutes.[3,7]

fain = be happy to, prefer to.

others. But I'll live whilst I am unhanged, and after the thought's taken.

= "so long as I have not been hanged".

290-1: ***after the thought's taken*** = "according to the thought that first strikes me", or "by any means I can think of" (Weber, p. 148), or "after sentence of hanging has been passed" (Bond, who says Weber is wrong, p. 370).

Elder. I see you are tied to no particular employment, then!

Young. Faith, I may choose my course: they say Nature brings forth none but she provides for them;

297: nature produces nothing that it is not able to supply provisions for.

I'll try her liberality.

= test Nature's generosity.

Elder. Well, to keep your feet out of base and dangerous paths, I have resolved you shall live as master of my house. − It shall be your care, Savil, to see him fed and clothed, not according to his present estate, but to his birth and former fortunes.

302-4: ***It shall…fortunes*** = Savil should supply money to and generally provide for Young in a manner suitable for his rank (a gentleman) and his former wealth, and not as would only be fitting for a poor man, which describes Young's present condition.

Note that the dash in line 302 signals that the speaker will next address a different character.

Young. If it be referred to him, if I be not found in

306-9: if Young is forced to depend on Savil for his provisioning, then he can expect to be very poorly provided for indeed.

carnation Jersey-stockings, blue devils' breeches, with

307: ***carnation*** = flesh-coloured or pink.[1]

Jersey-stockings = stockings made of wool, and hence inferior.[3]

blue devils' breeches = close-fitting hose, as would have been worn by the character of the devil in the old morality plays;[3] such tight-fitting stockings were out of fashion by the early 17th century.

three guards down, and my pocket i'th' sleeves, I'll ne'er look you i'th' face again.

308: ***guards*** = ornamental trimmings or embroidered borders;[1,3] Weber suggests that "waistband" is meant here.

pocket i'th' sleeves = pockets could not be fitted onto the tight-fitting breeches, so they would have to be situated elsewhere.[3]

Sav. A comelier wear, I wus, it is than those dangling slops.

= more agreeable. = indeed or truly; usually written ***iwis***.[1]

311-2: ***dangling slops*** = the more fashionable loose-fitting hose of the early 17th century, which Young is wearing.[3]

Elder. To keep you ready to do him all service peaceably, and him to command you reasonably, I leave these further directions in writing, which at your best leisure, together open and read.

= Young, as the temporary master of Elder's home, may give reasonable instructions to the steward.

Re-enter Abigail to them with a jewel.

Abig. Sir, my mistress commends her love to you in this token and these words: it is a jewel, she says, which, as a favour from her, she would request you to wear till your year's travel be performed; which, once

= symbol of affection.

expired, she will hastily expect your happy return.

Elder. Return my service, with such thanks, as she may imagine the heart of a suddenly over-joyed man would willingly utter: and you, I hope, I shall, with slender arguments, persuade to wear this diamond; that when my mistress shall, through my long absence and the approach of new suitors, offer to forget me, you may call your eye down to your finger, and remember and speak of me. She will hear thee better than those allied by birth to her; as we see many men much swayed by the grooms of their chambers, – not that they have a greater part of their love or opinion on them as on others, but for that they know their secrets.

Abig. O' my credit, I swear I think 'twas made for me. Fear no other suitors.

Elder. I shall not need to teach you how to discredit their beginnings: you know how to take exception at their shirts at washing, or to make the maids swear they found plasters in their beds.

Abig. I know, I know, and do not you fear the suitors.

Elder. Farewell; be mindful, and be happy; the night calls me.

[*Exeunt omnes praeter Abigail*.]

Abig. The gods of the winds befriend you, sir! a constant and a liberal lover thou art: more such God send us.

Enter Welford.

= impatiently.[7]

Is this last clause intended to be ambiguous, suggesting that it is the jewel Lady expects to be returned to her, and not Elder?

329-330: ***and you…diamond*** = Elder gives Abigail a jewel as well to wear in return for her doing a favour for him.

= "slight or trifling means of persuasion" (OED),[1] ie. Elder expects he will not have to twist Abigail's arm to get her to accept the diamond.

331-4: ***when my…speak of me*** = "if Lady seems interested in another man, then seeing this diamond will prompt you to defend my interest in Lady's affection."

334-335: ***She will…birth to her*** = a common notion, that one's servants are one's most trustworthy confidants.

336: ***swayed*** = ie. more influenced.

grooms = servants.

336-8: ***not that...secrets*** = a cynical conclusion to the previous thought: servants are more persuasive in influencing their masters' and mistresses' actions because they are aware of, and therefore in a position to reveal, their employers' secrets!

as (line 338) = than; later editions print ***than*** here.

343-6: Elder suggests ways Abigail can make a prospective suitor of Lady's appear less attractive to her.

344: ***beginnings*** = origins, ie. their social backgrounds.

344-5: ***take exception…washing*** = Abigail should, when doing the wash, find reason to criticize the shirts, and thus all the clothing, of any suitors which may be staying at the house.

= curatives applied to the skin;[1] the appearance of such medical supplies would suggest a suitor is suffering from some loathsome disease.

353: all exit but for Abigail.

355: Abigail wishes Elder a safe crossing over the Channel, whose contrary winds frequently interrupted travel plans.

= loyal and generous.

Entering Character: it has not taken long for Lady's first suitor, ***Welford***, a good-natured fellow, to arrive.

Wel. [*To servant without*] Let 'em not stand still, we have rid hard.

= offstage. = ie. his horses, which need to be walked to cool off after some hard riding.

Abig. [*Aside*] A suitor, I know, by his riding hard: I'll not be seen.

= Abigail momentarily hides from the entering Welford.

Wel. A pretty hall this: no servant in't? I would look freshly.

367-8: it was a convention of Elizabethan drama for characters to express their thoughts out loud, even when they are alone, to the benefit of those who are eaves-dropping nearby.

Abig. [*Aside*] You have delivered your errand to me, then: there's no danger in a handsome young fellow; I'll show myself. [*Advances*.]

370-2: Welford's speech confirms to Abigail that he has indeed arrived to woo Lady; but we will not be surprised to find Abigail willing to make herself available to him.

Wel. Lady, may it please you to bestow upon a stranger the ordinary grace of salutation? are you the lady of this house?

= ie. a kiss; it was the custom in England for even strangers to kiss upon greeting each other; but Welford is mis-taken as to Abigail's identity.

Abig. Sir, I am worthily proud to be a servant of hers.

Wel. Lady, I should be as proud to be a servant of yours, did not my so late acquaintance make me despair.

= devotee or lover; in this speech, Welford is courteously flattering: he expects other men to already have claims on Abigail.

Abig. Sir, it is not so hard to achieve, but nature may bring it about.

384: Abigail flirts more directly with Welford, taking ***servant*** to mean "lover".

Wel. For these comfortable words, I remain your glad debtor. Is your lady at home?

= encouraging.[1]

Abig. She is no straggler, sir.

= vagabond, one who wanders about aimlessly.[1]

Wel. May her occasions admit me to speak with her?

= circumstances.

Abig. If you come in the way of a suitor, no.

Wel. I know your affable virtue will be moved to persuade her, that a gentleman, benighted and strayed,

= induced.

= ie. finding himself without a place to stay at night;[1] there may also be a pun with "beknighted."

offers to be bound to her for a night's lodging.

398: "asks from her a place to spend the night, a favour for which I will be indebted to her."

Abig. I will commend this message to her; but if you aim at her body, you will be deluded. Other women the

401: ***at her body*** = ie. "to see her in person", but of course suggestive as well.

401-2: ***Other women the house holds*** = "there are other women in this house"; Abigail is hinting at her own availability.

house holds, of good carriage and government; upon

= good bearing (in her case, possibly) and good conduct or behaviour (less likely).

any of which if you can cast your affection, they will perhaps be found as faithful, and not so coy.

= ie. not as modest (as other women in the house might be).

[*Exit*.]

Wel. What a skin full of lust is this! I thought I had come a-wooing, and I am the courted party. This is

409-410: ***This is…all woo*** = typical comment of the era on the loose morals of English court-life under James I.

right court-fashion: men, women, and all, woo; catch

410-1: ***catch that catch may*** = an early version of ***catch***

that catch may. If this soft hearted woman have infused

as catch can, a phrase which goes as far back as the 14th century, meaning "get a hold of something any way one can" (OED).[1]

any of her tenderness into her lady, there is hope she will be pliant. But who's here?

412: ***tenderness*** = compassion or considerateness.[1]
lady = ie. mistress.
she = ie. Lady.

Enter Sir Roger the Curate.

Entering Character: ***Roger*** is the household cleric; he is wearing a night-cap on his head. ***Sir*** was a common title for clergymen.

Roger. God save you sir. My lady lets you know, she desires to be acquainted with your name, before she confer with you.

Wel. Sir, my name calls me Welford.

Roger. Sir, you are a gentleman of a good name. [*Aside*] I'll try his wit.

= a common motif in Elizabethan drama: a clever person decides to test (***try***) the ability of another to engage in witty conversation.

Wel. I will uphold it as good as any of my ancestors had this two hundred years, sir.

= ie. "my name".

Roger. I knew a worshipful and a religious gentleman of your name in the bishopric of Durham: call you him cousin?

= diocese: Roger only means that he knew a man with the name Welford who lived in Durham.

Wel. I am only allied to his virtues, sir.

433: a right witty response!

Roger. It is modestly said: I should carry the badge of your Christianity with me too.

435-6: ***I should…me too*** = Roger means he would like to know his visitor's name, but this is unclear to Welford at the moment: Roger is being playfully enigmatic, but he will explain his joke at lines 440-1.

Wel. What's that, a cross? There's a tester.

= a slang term for a coin known as a ***teston***, which first appeared under Henry VII, and bore the image of a ***cross*** on one face.[1,3] Welford is up to meeting Roger pun for pun!

Roger. I mean the name which your godfathers and godmothers gave you at the font.

= ie. the baptismal font.

Wel. 'Tis Harry. But you cannot proceed orderly now in your catechism; for you have told me who gave me that name. Shall I beg your name?

443-5: the ***catechism*** is a series of questions and answers used to instruct those converting to or being confirmed in the Christian faith. In the English *Book of Common Prayer*, first published in 1549, the first two questions and answers of the catechism are as follows:
(1) Q - "What is your name?" A - (name);
(2) Q - "Who gave you this name?" A - "The Godfathers and Godmothers at my Baptism, etc."
So, Welford is humorously pointing out how Roger has asked him the second question without having yet received an answer to the first!

Roger. Roger.

Wel. What room fill you in this house?

= position, office.

Roger. More rooms than one.

Wel. The more the merrier. But may my boldness know why your lady hath sent you to decipher my name?

= this proverbial sentiment first appeared around 1400.[1]
= discover.[1]

Roger. Her own words were these: to know whether you were a formerly-denied suitor, disguised in this message; for I can assure you she delights not *in thalamo*; Hymen and she are at variance. I shall return with much haste.

459: ***in thalamo*** = Latin for "in the bedroom", or "in the marriage bed"; as an educated man, Roger will sprinkle his dialogue with Latin.

Hymen = the god of marriage; Roger is, in his indirect way, explains that Lady is not interested in being courted, or in marriage, at this time.

[*Exit*.]

Wel. And much speed, sir, I hope. Certainly I am arrived amongst a nation of new-found fools, on a land where no navigator has yet planted wit. If I had foreseen it, I would have laded my breeches with bells, knives, copper, and glasses, to trade with the women for their virginities; yet, I fear, I should have betrayed myself to a needless charge then. Here's the walking night-cap again.

= success, but also punning on ***haste***.

= Welford perhaps alludes to the colonies England had ***planted*** recently in Virginia, and he goes on to suggest the kinds of trinkets he should have brought with him to sell to the natives in exchange for access to their women.

469-470: ***I should…charge then*** = ie. "I would have spent all that money for nothing."

= Roger is wearing a ***night-cap***, which suggests he is unwell in some way.

Re-enter Roger.

Roger. Sir, my lady's pleasure is to see you; who hath commanded me to acknowledge her sorrow that you must take the pains to come up for so bad entertainment.

475-8: ie. as the host, Lady acknowledges her bad manners in making Welford come upstairs to visit her, instead of her greeting him downstairs.

Wel. I shall obey your lady that sent it, and acknowledge you that brought it to be your art's master.

= Welford puns on the ***Master of Arts*** degree he expects Roger would have attained.

Roger. I am but a bachelor of art, sir; and I have the mending of all under this roof, from my lady on her down-bed to the maid in the pease-straw.

= Roger presumably puns on ***bachelor***, referring to his unmarried status.
= ie. Roger, as a cleric, is responsible for the care of the souls and morals of those who live in Lady's house.
= ie. a bed stuffed with the straw of the pea plant; the original name for ***pea*** was ***pease***; that is, ***pease*** was singular, and only later dropped the "s" to indicate a single pea;[1] Abigail, as a servant, would of course sleep on a coarser bed than her mistress.

Wel. A cobbler, sir?

487: Welford puns on Roger's use of the word ***mending***.

Roger. No, sir; I inculcate divine service within these walls.

Wel. But the inhabitants of this house do often employ you on errands, without any scruple of conscience?

= ie. other than religious errands.

Roger. Yes, I do take the air many mornings on foot, three or four miles, for eggs. But why move you that?

= ie. ask.

Wel. To know whether it might become your function to bid my man to neglect his horse a little, to attend on me.

498-500: Welford is considerate: he does not want to offend Roger by asking him to fetch his (Welford's) servant (his ***man***), who is walking the horses.

Roger. Most properly, sir.

Wel. I pray you do so, then, and whilst I will attend your lady. You direct all this house in the true way?

= meanwhile.
= ie. the proper spiritual journey through life.[1]

Roger. I do, sir.

Wel. And this door, I hope, conducts to your lady?

= leads.

Roger. Your understanding is ingenious.

[*Exeunt severally*.]

= ie. through separate exits.

ACT I, SCENE II.

A Room in the House of the Elder Loveless.

Scene ii: we may note that while the original editions broke up the play into its individual Acts, scene breaks - as well as scene settings - were added by later editors.

Enter Young Loveless and Savil, with a writing.

= written document.

Sav. By your favour sir, you shall pardon me.

Young. I shall beat your favour, sir. Cross me no more: I say they shall come in.

3: ***beat*** = the first quarto has ***beat***; the later editions print ***bear***, which lose the dark the humour of the line.
your favour, sir = Young mockingly repeats Savil's words; Young will of course normally use ***thee*** to address his social inferior, while the steward will always use the formal ***you*** in addressing his superiors.
cross = thwart.

Sav. Sir, you forget me, who I am.

= the earliest editions print ***one*** here.

Young. Sir, I do not; thou art my brother's steward, his cast off mill-money, his kitchen arithmetic.

9: Young alludes to Savil's job, as steward, to act as the household bookkeeper; Young puns on ***cast off***, meaning both (1) "to reckon up an account", and (2) "thrown-away",[1,3] while ***mill-money*** refers to coins minted in a press, rather than struck individually with a hammer.[1]

Sav. Sir, I hope you will not make so little of me?

Young. I make thee not so little as thou art: for indeed there goes no more to the making of a steward but a fair *imprimis*, and then a reasonable *item* infused into him, and the thing is done.

13: a biting insult.

15: Young continues his bookkeeping humor: ***imprimis*** refers to the first item on a list, and an ***item*** was any entry in an account book[1] (these words are italicized in the original text).

Sav. Nay, then, you stir my duty, and I must tell you −

= "force me to do my job", referring to his instructions from Elder regarding Young.

Young. What wouldst thou tell me? how hops go? or hold some rotten discourse of sheep, or when

= sell.[4]

Lady-day falls? Prithee, fare well, and entertain my

22: ***Lady-day*** = March 25, a festival day celebrating the Virgin Mary.[1]
fare well = "live freely";[3] Young demands Savil allow him to carouse with his friends, and even encourages him to join them in their debauchery.

friends; be drunk and burn thy table-books: and my
= notebooks or memorandum books.[1,4]

dear spark of velvet, thou and I −
= a reference to the fine livery worn by servants.

Sav. Good sir, remember.

Young. I do remember thee a foolish fellow; one that did put his trust in almanacs and horse-fairs, and rose
= ie. rose in status.

by honey and pot-butter. Shall they come in yet?
= salted butter.[1] = ie. Young's friends and comrades.

Sav. Nay, then, I must unfold your brother's pleasure. These be the lessons, sir, he left behind him.
= ie. "reveal to you".
33: Savil indicates the written instructions left him by Elder.

Young. Prithee, expound the first.

Sav. [*Reads*] *I leave, to keep my house, three hundred pounds a-year, and my brother to dispose of it* −
= maintain.
38-39: ***dispose of it*** = ie. spend as he wishes.

Young. Mark that, my wicked steward, − and I dispose of it.

Sav. [*Reads*] *Whilst he bears himself like a gentleman, and my credit falls not in him.* − Mark that, my good young sir, mark that.
44-45: Savil finishes his sentence; ***Whilst*** = so long as.
= reputation, name.[2] = ie. because of.
= Savil mockingly repeats Young's own words.

Young. Nay, if it be no more, I shall fulfill it: whilst my legs will carry me, I'll bear myself gentleman-like, but when I am drunk, let them bear me that can. Forward, dear steward.
= who.
= "go on".

Sav. [*Reads*] *Next, it is my will, that he be furnished, as my brother, with attendance, apparel, and the obedience of my people*.
53-55: Elder intends that Young be dressed well and be attended by his own servants as befits Young's status as Elder's brother.

Young. Steward, this is as plain as your old minikin-
57-58: ***minikin-breeches*** = another allusion to Savil's unfashionable tight-fitting hose;[3] ***minikin*** was a plain-weave worsted wool.[1]

breeches. Your wisdom will relent now, will it not? Be mollified or − You understand me, sir. Proceed.
= a mock title.
= ie. "or else", an implied threat.

Sav. [*Reads*] *Next, that my steward keep his place and power, and bound my brother's wildness with his care.*

Young. I'll hear no more of this Apocrypha;
= a reference to the seven books of the Bible that have been viewed historically as of uncertain authenticity;[30] they were included in English Bibles until the early 19th century.[3] Young clearly considers his brother's instructions as not to be followed.

bind it by itself, steward.
= the ***Apocrypha*** had been published separately in the 16th century.[3]

Sav. This is your brother's will; and, as I take it, he

makes no mention of such company as you would draw unto you, − captains of gally-foists, such as in a clear

day have seen Calais; fellows that have no more of God than their oaths come to; they wear swords to reach fire

at a play, and get there the oiled end of a pipe for their guerdon; then the remnant of your regiment are wealthy tobacco-merchants, that set up with one ounce, and break for three; together with a forlorn hope of

poets; and all these look like Carthusians, things without linen. Are these fit company for my master's brother?

Young. I will either convert thee, oh, thou pagan steward! Or presently confound thee and thy reckonings. − Who's there? Call in the gentlemen!

Sav. Good sir!

Young. Nay, you shall know both who I am, and where I am.

Sav. Are you my master's brother?

Young. Are you the sage master-steward, with a face like an old ephemerides?

Enter Young's Comrades: Captain, Traveller, Poet and Tobacco-Man.

Sav. Then God help all, I say!

Young. Ay, and 'tis well said, my old peer of France.

68*f*: in this speech, Savil sprinkles a series of military terms (***company***, ***captain***, ***regiment***) to disparage the men Young keeps as companions: ***company*** is thus used in both its regular sense and to mean "a body of soldiers".

= contemptuous term for pleasure boats or state barges, particularly that of London's mayor;[1,4] Savil is suggesting that Young's friends - and particularly the Captain - have never seen a day of real danger in their lives.

71-72: ***fellows…come to*** = the only time God is in their lives is when they swear by his name.

72-73: ***they wear…pipe*** = a fire of juniper was kept burning in the theaters; a man might stick the point of his sword into the fire in order to gain a light for his pipe.[3]

= reward.

= ie. set up shop.[1]

76: ***break*** = go bankrupt.[1]
forlorn hope = a group of desperate men, and also a group of soldiers selected to lead an attack;[1] ***hope*** seems to be used as a word of assemblage, like a *flock* of birds.

= a religious order founded by St. Bruno in the 11th century, whose monks led lives of extreme asceticism, including wearing the poorest of clothing; Savil compares Young's companions to Carthusians in the poverty reflected in their clothing.[1,8]

81: ***confound*** = ruin or corrupt.[2]
reckonings = calculations as keeper of the house accounts; but ***reckoning*** also refers to one's being called by God to account for his or her life,[1] which Young uses punningly with his intent to convert the ***pagan*** Savil.

= ie. yellow and wrinkled like the pages of the old almanac, especially one containing astrological and astronomical predictions; ***ephemerides*** is properly the plural word, and ***ephemeris*** the singular.[1,3]

Entering Characters: Young's friends, a soldier, a world-traveller, a poet and a smoking expert, enter the stage. The ***Tobacco-man*** would have given lessons in smoking to the others.[3] We may note here the Tobacco-man speaks no lines in the play.

= an allusion to Charlemagne's "Twelve Peers", the name given to the emperor's cadre of elite knights (something akin to the "Knights of the Round Table").[15]

– Welcome, gentlemen, welcome, gentlemen;
mine own dear lads, you're richly welcome. Know
this old Harry-groat.

= a coin from the reign of Henry VIII, portraying the king with long hair and a long face; Young is introducing Savil to his friends with this unflattering comparison.[3]

Capt. Sir, I will take your love −

105: the Captain is a jolly soul, happy to make friends with everyone he meets.

Sav. [*Aside*] Sir, you will take my purse.

Capt. And study to continue it.

= endeavor to maintain.

Sav. I do believe you.

Trav. Your honorable friend and master's brother
Hath given you to us for a worthy fellow,
And so we hug you sir.

113-5: the Traveller addresses Savil.

Sav. [*Aside*]
H'as given himself into the hands of varlets
But to be carved out. − Sir, are these the pieces?

118-9: ***H'as…carved out*** = Savil censoriously suggests that Young's friends are likely to take advantage of his generosity.

But = the original editions print ***Not*** here, corrected by all the editors.

H'as = "he has".

to be carved out = a reference to the practice of ***carving out*** a portion of the master's food for distribution among the servants.[3]

are these the pieces = having just been introduced by the name of a cheap coin (***Harry Groat***), Savil returns the favour by ironically referring to Young's friends as valuable coins (***pieces***).[3]

Young. They are the morals of the age, the virtues,
Men made of gold.

Sav. [*Aside*] Of your gold, you mean, sir.

124: Savil worries that Young will spend all of his 300 pounds supporting and entertaining his friends.

Young. This is a man of war, and cries "Go on,"

126-7: Young introduces the Captain, a title which suggests he led a regiment of troops in war.

Go on = a cry of encouragement, as if to battle.

And wears his colours −

= battle flags or standards.[2]

Sav. [*Aside*] In's nose.

129: Savil completes Young's sentence; the notion is that the Captain's nose is red (perhaps from too much drinking), like the face and nose of Shakespeare's character Bardolph, the companion of Prince Harry, whose red countenance was continuously mocked in *Henry IV, Parts I* and *II*.[3]

Young. In the fragrant field.

131: Bond notes that Young is describing the Captain in "mock-heroic talk" which he has "caught" from the Captain, who himself speaks in the manner of Shakespeare's Pistol, another of Prince Harry's companions.

This is a traveller, sir, knows men and manners,
And has plowed up the sea so far, till both
The poles have knocked; has seen the sun take coach,

134: ***poles have knocked*** = ie. "reached countries where the wildest improbabilities are fact".[3]

the sun takes coach = in Greek mythology, the sun

was a golden chariot driven across the sky each day by Apollo.

And can distinguish the colour of his horses,
136 And their kinds; and had a Flanders-mare leaped there.

= frequently alluded-to powerful horses bred by the Flemish; Young is exaggerating the experiences of the Traveller.

138 ***Sav.*** 'Tis much.

140 ***Trav.*** I have seen more, sir.

142 ***Sav.*** 'Tis even enough, o' conscience. Sit down, and rest you: you are at the end of the world already. − Would

143: ***at the end of the world already*** = perhaps a reference to Britain's being the most distant known land of the ancient world; Savil is humorously suggesting the Traveller should rest because he can travel no further.

143-5: ***Would you…gift in't*** = an aside directed at Young, but not so he can hear it: "I wish you had enough income to match the amount of money the Traveller's lies will persuade you to spend on him."

144 you had as good a living, sir, as this fellow could lie you out of! h'as a notable gift in't!

= ie. in Traveller's ability to tell lies.

146

Young. This ministers the smoke, and this the Muses.

146: with the first ***this***, meaning "this person here", Young gestures towards the Tobacco-man; with the second ***this***, Young indicates the Poet.

Muses = the nine goddesses who cultivated the arts.

148

Sav. And you the cloths, and meat, and money. You

149: Savil refers again to the provisions Young will ***carve out*** to his friends.

150 have a goodly generation of 'em; pray, let them

= (1) a group of individuals of the same age, and (2) reproduction; it is this latter meaning which Savil puns with ***multiply*** in the next line.

multiply; your brother's house is big enough, and to
152 say truth, h'as too much land, − hang it, dirt!

= a likely aside: "damn it, I meant to say ***dirt***," a contemptuous term for "land"[1]

154 ***Young.*** Why, now thou art a loving stinkard. Fire off

= ie. one would ***fire off*** one's hunting gun before setting it aside.[3]

thy annotations and thy rent-books; thou hast a weak

155: with ***annotations*** and ***rent-books***, Young again alludes to Savil's role as bookkeeper; an ***annotation*** is an inventory of the household's goods that have been seized by the authorities;[1] a ***rent-book*** was a notebook listing one's properties, and the rent due from them.[1]

156 brain, Savil, and with the next long bill thou wilt run

= list of great expenses (which Young will incur).[1]

mad. − Gentlemen, you are once more welcome to three
158 hundred pounds a-year; we will be freely merry, shall we not?

160

Capt. Merry as mirth and wine, my lovely Loveless.

162

Poet. A serious look shall be a jury to excommunicate
164 any man from our company.

163-4: ie. "anyone who is not merry convicts himself, and will be banned from our company."

166 ***Trav.*** We will have nobody talk wisely neither.

168 ***Young.*** What think you, gentlemen, by all this revenue in drink?

168-9: ***by all…drink*** = "of all this money I can spend on alcohol?"

170

Capt. I am all for drink.

Trav. I am dry till it be so.

Poet. He that will not cry “amen” to this, let him live sober, seem wise, and die o'th' corum.

175-6: ***let him…corum*** = briefly, "let him live and die like a judge."[3]

corum = ie. a legal quorum.[3]

Young. It shall be so, we'll have it all in drink:
Let meat and lodging go; they are transitory,
And show men merely mortal.
Then we'll have wenches, every one his wench,
And every week a fresh one, − we'll keep
No powdered flesh. All these we have by warrant,

179: so long as they have money to spend on drink, they shall not worry about room and board.

183: ***powdered flesh*** = meat that was salted to keep it from going bad; Young means they will keep no individual woman for any long period of time, but will rather rotate them regularly, ie. fresh wenches will be regularly required for these gentlemen!

warrant = authorization.[2]

Under the title of “things necessary”;

183: Young is referring to a clause in Elder's instructions requiring Young to be provided with all ***things necessary*** to maintain him properly - which Young takes to include an endless supply of alcohol and prostitutes; we may note that Savil did not read aloud any clause which included these words.

here upon this place I ground it, “the obedience of my people, and all necessaries.” Your opinions gentlemen?

= ie. "in this category I include it".

Capt. 'Tis plain and evident that he meant wenches.

= ie. Elder.

Sav. Good sir, let me expound it.

= explain the meaning of the clause.[1]

Capt. Here be as sound men as yourself, sir.

192: ie. "we are just as capable of interpreting the clause as you are."

Poet. This do I hold to be the interpretation of it: in this word “necessary” is concluded all that be helps to man; woman was made the first, and therefore here the chiefest.

= included.[1]

Young. Believe me, 'tis a learned one; and by these words, “the obedience of my people”, you, steward, being one, are bound to fetch us wenches.

= ie. in Elder's instructions.

Capt. He is, he is.

Young. Steward, attend us for instructions.

= ie. "stand by".

Sav. But will you keep no house, sir?

= ie. not take on the responsibility of managing the house.

Young. Nothing but drink; three hundred pounds in drink.

Sav. O miserable house, and miserable I
That live to see it! Good sir, keep some meat.

= ie. "please save some money to spend on food."

Young. Get us good whores, and for your part, I’ll board you
In an alehouse! you shall have cheese and onions.

214-5: it is unclear whether Young considers his offer a reward or a threat.

Sav. [*Aside*]

What shall become of me, no chimney smoking?

218: Bond thinks this line suggests that Savil has been able to take advantage of his position to acquire a little extra income or benefits on the side.

Well, prodigal, your brother will come home.

= as the younger brother wasting his money, Young deserves comparison to the prodigal son of Christ's parable.

[*Exit*.]

Young. Come lads, I'll warrant you for wenches.
Three hundred pounds in drink.

[*Exeunt omnes*.]

226: all exit

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Bed-Chamber in Lady's House.

Enter Lady, Welford, Sir Roger.

Entering Characters: Lady is showing Welford his room for the night.

Lady. Sir, now you see your bad lodging, I must bid you good night.

= Lady is being modest.

Wel. Lady, if there be any want, 'tis in want of you.

= ie. anything missing.

Lady. A little sleep will ease that complement. Once more, good night.

= "bring relief regarding that missing piece."[1] There may also be a pun here on ***compliment*** (referring to flattering language), though it is uncertain whether this use of ***compliment*** was current in the early 17th century.[1]

Wel. Once more, dear lady, and then all sweet nights.

= the sense seems to be, "one more thing".

Lady. Dear sir, be short and sweet, then.

Wel. Shall the morrow Prove better to me? shall I hope my suit Happier by this night's rest?

= ie. courtship.

Lady. Is your suit so sickly, that rest will help it? Pray ye, let it rest, then, till I call for it. Sir, as a stranger, you have had all my welcome; But had I known your errand ere you came, Your passage had been straiter. Sir, good night.

= a phrase used in the card game of whist,[3] punning on ***suit***.

= "before you arrived".

= narrower, more difficult to negotiate:[1] the suggestion is that had Lady known Welford was a suitor, she would not have welcomed him in her home.

Wel. So fair and cruèl! Dear unkind, good night. −

23: a seeming unique use of ***unkind*** as a vocative term.

[*Exit Lady*.]

25: Roger also starts to leave, but is called back by Welford.

Nay, sir, you shall stay with me; I'll press your zeal So far.

= ***zeal*** is usually used to suggest religious enthusiasm.

Roger. O, Lord, sir!

Wel. Do you love tobacco?

Roger. Surely I love it, but it loves not me; Yet with your reverence, I will be bold.

= ie. "disagrees with me"; Roger will find himself tearing up from the smoke.

35: "but in your company, I will try it."

Wel. Pray, light it, sir. How do you like it?

37: the pair are smoking pipes.

[*They smoke*.]

Smoking: the use of tobacco for smoking in the New World was observed by the earliest explorers, including Christopher Columbus. Tobacco was first brought to Europe in 1558 by the Spanish physician Francisco Fernandes. The habit of smoking itself, however, was introduced to Europe by Virginia settlers Ralph Lane (the first governor of Virginia) and Sir Francis Drake, who brought back the first

implements for smoking in 1586. Sir Walter Raleigh, in turn, was the man responsible for popularizing pipe-smoking, a fashion which quickly took hold in Elizabethan court society.[10] James I denounced the habit, and even judged a debate on the subject of smoking held at Oxford in 1605.[6]

Rog. I promise you, it is notable stinging gear indeed.
= business.

It is wet, sir; Lord, how it brings down rheum!
= tears.

Wel. Handle it again, sir; you have a warm text of it.
44: ***Handle it*** = ie. "work the tobacco between your fingers (to dry it)".[3]
text = hand, but also referring to the Scriptures;[1] one of Welford's many jokes incorporating religious terms, as he speaks to the cleric.

Roger. Thanks ever premised for it. I promise you,
46: Roger gives thanks as an introduction; as Roger is an educated man, he would naturally use the word ***premise***, a term from logic, and, true to his character, would also enjoy the wordplay of ***premised*** and ***promise***.
We may note that only the first edition has ***premised*** here; all subsequent editions print ***promised***.

It is very powerful, and, by a trope, spiritual;
= metaphor, figure of speech.

For certainly it moves in sundry places.
48: ***moves*** = stirs passions,[1] in addition to its usual meaning.
sundry = various.[1]

Wel. Ay, it does so, sir, and me, especially,
= "and it ***moves*** me", ie. "spurs me".

To ask, sir, why you wear a night-cap?

Roger. Assuredly I will speak the truth unto you.

You shall understand, sir, that my head is broken;
= wounded.

And by whom? even by that visible beast,
= obvious or eminent beast,[1] or one who appears to everyone as a beast.[4] Dyce suggests Roger has "the mark of the beast" from Revelations in mind.

The butler.
= the ***butler*** was the servant usually responsible for the wine cellar, as well as the dispensing of drink.[1]

Wel. The butler? Certainly
He had all his drink about him when he did it.
59: "he was drunk when he did it."

Strike one of your grave cassock! the offence, sir?
= a loose coat or frock, as worn by clerics and others.[1]

Roger. Reproving him at tray-trip, sir, for swearing.
62: ***at*** =ie. while playing.
tray-trip = a game of dice, perhaps something like backgammon,[3] likely depending on the throw of three (ie. ***trey***).[1]

You have the total, surely.
63: "that's the whole story".

Wel. You tolled him when his rage was set a-tilt,
65: "you pulled on (***tolled***), ie. provoked, him when his rage was already at a tipping point (***a-tilt***) due to his drinking."[3]

And so he cracked your canons. I hope he has
= ***canons*** has various religious meanings, including Church law generally, and the accepted, inspired books of the Bible; there may also be a reference to artillery, as in ***cannons***.

Not hurt your gentle reading. But shall we see
= ie. of the Scriptures, but also punning on the phrase ***gentle reader***, used by writers when addressing their audience.[1]

These gentlewomen to-night?

Roger. Have patience, sir,
Until our fellow Nicholas be deceased,
= ie. Old Nick, the devil,[1] meaning the butler.

That is, asleep: for so the word is taken:
"To sleep, to die; to die, to sleep;" a very figure, sir.
73: Roger sort-of quotes from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "*to die, to sleep; to sleep: perchance to dream.*"
figure = metaphor or image;[1] see the next line for Welford's punning use of ***figure***.

Wel. Cannot you cast another for the gentlewomen?
= ie. like a fishing net, meaning "try again"; but also an astrological pun: to ***cast a figure*** meant to diagram the arrangement of the planets at a given time.[1]

Roger. Not till the man be in his bed, his grave:
= Roger again alludes to *Hamlet*: "*twenty thousand men… go to their graves like beds*".

His grave, his bed: the very same again, sir.
Our comic poet gives the reason sweetly;
= the ancient Roman comic playwright Terence, not Shakespeare.[3]

Plenus rimarum est; he is full of loopholes,
and will discover to our patroness.
80: ***Plenus rimarum est*** = "I am full of holes or chinks", from Terence's play *Eunuch*.
loopholes = usually narrow, vertical openings in a wall from which to shoot arrows, or admit light; the sense is that the butler, who cannot keep quiet, will reveal (***discover***) to Lady the facts of the incident with Roger, so the pair should not approach Lady until the butler has gone to bed.

Wel. Your comment, sir, has made me understand you.

Enter Martha (the Lady's sister)
Entering Characters: Lady's sister ***Martha*** is yet another member of the household.

and Abigail to them with a posset.
= a sweet drink of hot milk curdled with alcohol.[3]

Roger. Sir, be addressed; the Graces do salute you
88: ***be addressed*** = "be ready".[9]
the Graces = the three beautiful daughters of Jupiter and Eurynome, referring to Martha and Abigail.

With the full bowl of plenty. −
= Roger playfully uses a variation of the phrase "horn of plenty", referring to a cornucopia.[1]

Is our old enemy entombed?
= ie. the butler; note that with ***entombed***, Roger continues to connect sleep and death.

Abig. He's fast.
= ie. fast asleep.

Roger. And does he snore out supinely with the poet?
94: Roger is thinking about a phrase from the *Sermonum* of the Roman poet Horace, "*stertitque supinus*", meaning "snores on his back".[3]

Mar. No, he out-snores the poet.

Wel. Gentlewoman, this courtesy
Shall bind a stranger to you, ever your servant.
= tie, ie. oblige, place in debt.

Mar. Sir, my sister's strictness makes not us forget
You are a stranger and a gentleman.
101-2: just because Lady has such a severe manner (***strictness***) does not mean her sister Martha doesn't know the proper way to treat a house-guest.

Abig. In sooth, sir, were I changed into my lady,
= truth.

A gentleman so well endued with parts
= endowed with such good qualities.

Should not be lost.
106: ie. "would not be forgotten or left alone;" Abigail is flirting again with Welford.

Wel. I thank you, gentlewoman,

And rest bound to you. −

[*Aside*] See how this foul familiar chews the cud!

110: ***familiar*** = attending spirit or demon.[2]
chews the cud = a disparaging suggestion that Abigail is repeating what Martha has already said;[3] cows regurgitate and re-chew their food after it has entered a first stomach;[1] Welford is disgusted by the repulsive Abigail's attention.

From thee and three-and-fifty good Love deliver me!

= Welford asks personified ***Love*** to save him from the attention of old women, as represented by the age of ***three-and-fifty***.

Mar. Will you sit down, sir, and take a spoon?

= ie. eat.

Wel. I take it kindly, lady.

Mar. It is our best banquet, sir.

= snack or desert.[1]

Roger. Shall we give thanks?

= ie. say grace, but the others take this to mean simply "express thanks to our hostesses".

Wel. I have to the gentlewomen already, sir.

Mar. Good Sir Roger, keep that breath to cool your part o' the posset; you may chance have a scalding zeal

124: ***part*** = portion.
a scalding zeal = a case of fervent religious passion, but of course referring vaguely yet humorously and metaphorically to the hot (***scalding***) posset.

else: an you will needs be doing, pray, tell your twenty

125-6: ***an you…to yourself*** = "if (***an***) you feel compelled to pray, please do so on your own"; note the pun on ***pray***, used to mean "please";
tell your twenty = literally means "count to twenty"; Bond suspects it refers to Roger's repetition of his prayers.[3]

to yourself. − Would you could like this, sir!

= "I hope you like this," spoken to Welford.

Wel. I would your sister would like me as well, lady!

Mar. Sure, sir, she would not eat you. But banish that

= 128: a joke by analogy: if Welford likes the posset, he will eat it; but if Welford gets his wish, and Lady were to like him, she would not eat him.

Imaginatiön: she's only wedded

= "idea or image (from your mind)."

To herself, lies with herself, and loves herself;
And for another husband than herself,

= ie. sleeps.

He may knock at the gate, but ne'er come in.
Be wise, sir: she's a woman, and a trouble,

= may never.

And has her many faults, the least of which is,
She cannot love you.

Abig. God pardon her! she'll do worse.

= "she could do much worse!"

Would I were worthy his least grief, Mistress Martha!

140: Abigail wishes she were worth the least bit of attention from Welford.

Wel. [*Aside*] Now I must over-hear her.

142: Welford wishes he didn't have to listen to Abigail, whose flattery fills him with revulsion.

Mar. Faith, would thou hadst them all, with all my heart!

144-5: Martha is addressing, and insulting, the maid: Abigail

I do not think they would make thee a day older.

could take on all of Welford's griefs, and they could not age her any further than she already is.

Note how Martha addresses Abigail appropriately as ***thee***, but Welford with ***you***, as befits a gentleman.

146

Abig. Sir, will you put in deeper? 'tis the sweeter.

147: Abigail alludes to a proverbial sentiment; in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, for example, we find "the deeper, the sweeter"; ***deep*** and ***sweet*** were commonly paired in the literature of the era, and could be used to refer to a number of concepts, including love and sleep, or, as here, the pleasure associated with eating.

put in deeper = eat more vigorously or to the bottom of the bowl.

148

Mar. Well said, Old-sayings.

= a mock epithet for Abigail, referring to her pithy adage.

150

Wel. [*Aside*] She looks like one indeed. −

151: the dash in this line is used to indicate the end of the character's aside.

152 Gentlewoman, you keep your word: your sweet self
Has made the bottom sweeter.

154

Abig. Sir, I begin a frolic: dare you change, sir?

155: Abigail is desirous to exchange (***change***) witty conversation with Welford.

156

Wel. Myself for you, so please you. −

158 [*Aside*]
That smile has turned my stomach. This is right,
160 The old emblem of the moyle cropping of thistles.

160: Abigail reminds Welford of a grazing mule (***moyle***).[3]

Lord, what a hunting head she carries! sure,

161: an unclear metaphor: perhaps Welford is comparing Abigail's head to that of a horse used for hunting.

162 She has been ridden with a martingale.

= a strap looped around the head of a horse to keep it from throwing its head back.[1,3]

Now, Love, deliver me!

164

Roger. [*Aside*]

166 Do I dream, or do I wake? surely I know not.

166*f*: the exact intent of Roger's speech may appear unclear at this point; but it will not harm the reader to know that Roger has had an understanding with Abigail, and now is stunned to find her obviously flirting with Welford.

Am I rubbed off? is this the way of all

= ie. erased from the picture.

168 My morning prayers? Oh, Roger, thou art but grass,
And woman as a flower! Did I for this
170 Consume my quarters in meditation[s], vows,

170: Roger uses a religious metaphor: he has used up all his time (***quarters*** = the 3-hour intervals between the times appointed by church canon for praying)[1] on ***meditations*** and ***vows***, both of which can be seen as applying to periods of both prayer and thinking about and making promises to Abigail.

And wooed her in *Heroical Epistles*?

171-2: Roger suggests he was wooing Abigail by reading to her the poetry of the English poet Michael Drayton, who, having been born in 1563, was still alive at the time this play was written and performed.[3] His *England's Heroical Epistles* (1597), modeled on Ovid's *Heroides*, contained a series of composed poems pretending to be love letters of famous English couples written to each other.

172 Did I expound *The Owl*?

The Owl (1604), on the other hand, was more in the line of satire, but has been considered one of Drayton's less successful works.[11]

And undertook, with labour and expense,

The re-collection of those thousand pieces,
Consumed in cellars and tobacco-shops,
Of that our honoured Englishman, Nick Breton?

174-6: Roger refers to the extensive output of the prolific English poet ***Nicholas Breton***, who was born around 1545, and was still alive into the 1620's;[12] ***pieces*** refers to Breton's poems.

Have I done thus, and am done thus to?
I will end with the wise man, and say,
"He that holds a woman has an eel by the tail."

179: proverbial, included in John Heywood's famous *Proverbs of John Heywood* of 1546.

Mar. Sir, 'tis so late, and our entertainment (meaning our posset) by this is grown so cold, that 'twere an unmannerly part longer to hold you from your rest. Let what the house has be at your command, sir.

= ie. by this time, by now.

Wel. Sweet rest be with you, lady: − and to you What you desire too.

= ie. to Abigail.

Abig. It should be some such good thing like yourself, then.

189: Abigail has no shame!

[*Exeunt Martha and Abigail*.]

Wel. Heaven keep me from that curse, and all my issue!

= children or descendants.

Good night, Antiquity.

= a parody of *Iniquity*, an alternative name for *Vice*, a buffoonish character from the old morality plays,[1] and frequently alluded to in Elizabethan drama; ***Antiquity*** is also of course another reference to Abigail's age.

Roger. [*Aside*] *Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris*: But I alone −

196: literally "misery is easier when one is not the only one", or more pithily "misery loves company".[13]

Wel. Learned sir, will you bid my man come to me? and, requesting a greater measure of your learning, good-night, good Master Roger.

200: "and, hoping to spend more profitable time with you in the future"; Welford expresses a polite sentiment upon separating from Roger for the night.

Roger. Good sir, peace be with you!

Wel. Adieu, dear Domine.

= Lord; a polite form of address towards a clergyman.[1]

[*Exit Roger*.]

Half a dozen such
In a kingdom would make a man forswear confession;
For who, that had but half his wits about him,
Would commit the counsel of a serious sin
To such a crewel night-cap? −

209*f*: Welford now tells us what he really thinks of Roger!

= judgment.

= a worsted yarn, used for making the vestments of clergy.[1]

Enter Welford's Servant, drunk.

Why, how now?
Shall we have an antic? Whose head do you carry
Upon your shoulders that you jowl it so
Against the post? is't for your ease, or have
You seen the cellar? where are my slippers, sir?

= grotesque or bizarre entertainment.[2]

= throw.[3]

= ie. where the liquor would be kept.

Serv. Here, sir.

Wel. Where, sir? have you got the pot-verdugo?

= this odd and unique expression has puzzled all the

Have you seen the horses, sir?

commentators; the OED suggests "dizziness from consuming alcohol"; Dyce quotes an earlier editor who suggests "a stunning blow from drink", based on the definition of ***verdugo*** described below.

pot = a drinking vessel.

verdugo = all the old editors point out that ***verdugo*** is a Spanish word, meaning "executioner", or "severe stroke",[4] and not at all related to its English near-homonym ***vertigo***; there is also an entry for ***verdugo*** in John Florio's 1598 Italian-English dictionary, which he defines as a "rapier, a tucke or little sword".

seen (line 226) = ie. seen to.

Serv. Yes, sir.

Wel. Have they any meat?

= ie. "been fed?" (***meat*** = fodder).[1]

Serv. Faith, sir, they have a kind of wholesome rushes; hay I cannot call it.

= an oxymoron; the servant comments on the lack of quality fodder in the house: ***rushes*** would provide a poor substitute for the cut grass that makes up ***hay***.

Wel. And no provender?

= ie. proper dry food, such as oats or hay, for a horse.[1]

Serv. Sir, so I take it.

237: "I believe that is correct."

Wel. You are merry, sir; and why so?

239: ***merry*** = droll, amusing.

and why so? = "and why do you believe there is no provender available?" Welford actually finds his drunken servant entertaining, and is curious to hear him explain himself; this is an endearing characteristic of Welford's.

Serv. Faith, sir, here are no oats to be got, unless you'll have 'em in porridge; the people are so mainly given to spoon-meat. Yonder's a cast of coach-mares of the gentlewoman's, the strangest cattle!

243: ***spoon-meat*** = ie. liquid food, as consumed by invalids.[1]

Yonder's = "and over there is".

cast = pair.

Wel. Why?

Serv. Why, they are transparent, sir; you may see through them: and such a house!

= ie. so thin as to be see-through, due to their being so ill-fed.

Wel. Come, sir, the truth of your discovery.

Serv. Sir, they are in tribes, like Jews: the kitchen and

253-360: this speech could easily have been converted into verse - it is clearly written in iambs - but I follow both Bond and Dyce in leaving it as printed, in prose.

tribes = ie. metaphor for "factions"; the servant goes on in this speech to describe his observations of the cliques formed by Lady's various servants.

the dairy make one tribe, and have their faction and their fornication within themselves; the buttery and the

255: ***fornication within themselves*** = ie. "they only sleep around with each other"; ***fornication*** is a surprisingly ancient word, having first appeared around 1400 A.D. in a Northumbrian poem known as *Cursor Mundi*.

buttery = store room or liquor room.

laundry are another, and there's no love lost; the chambers are entire, and what's done there is somewhat

= ie. the members of the two cliques don't like each other.[1]

= ie. those who work as servants in the rooms form a full faction by themselves.[1]

higher than my knowledge; but this I am sure, between

258-260: ***between…fasting*** = as the factions find sexual

these copulations, a stranger is kept virtuous, that is,
260 fasting. But of all this, the drink, sir −

comfort only amongst themselves, Welford's servant can find no bedmate, and so is "forced" to remain unstained by sin; ***copulation*** is another ancient word that dates back to 1400 A.D., but it originally meant simply "linking", and slightly later in the 15th century came to mean, well, "fornication".[1]

262 ***Wel.*** What of that, sir?

264 ***Serv.*** Faith, sir, I will handle it as the time and your patience will give me leave. This drink, or this cooling

= permission.

266 julap, of which three spoonfuls kills the calenture, a

266: ***julap*** = a sweet drink.[3]
three spoonfuls kills = note the not uncommon lack of concern with subject-verb agreement.
calenture = a type of fever.

pint breeds the cold palsy −

= causes.[1]

268 ***Wel.*** Sir, you belie the house.

= slander.

270 ***Serv.*** I would I did, sir! But, as I am a true man, if
272 'twere but one degree colder, nothing but an ass's hoof would hold it.

271: ***I would I did*** = "I wish I was slandering Lady's household", ie. if he was lying, the facts would be otherwise.
true = honest.[4]
271-3: in a round-about way, the servant swears he is telling the truth; the learned young man alludes to a legend included by the 2nd century Roman historian Justin in his *History*, in which he wrote that the waters of Mt. Nonacris in Arcadia were "of a coldness mortal to the drinker (hence the servant's reference to the ***cold palsy*** in line 267), and able to penetrate everything except a horse's hoof" (Bond, p. 388).

274 ***Wel.*** I am glad on't, sir; for if it had proved stronger,
276 You had been tongue-tied of these commendations.
Light me the candle, sir: I'll hear no more.

276: "you would have been too drunk to express these compliments to the house."

278 [*Exeunt*.]

ACT II, SCENE II.

A Room in the House of Elder Loveless.

Enter Young Loveless, Captain, Traveller, Poet, Tobacco-man, with Wenches and two Fiddlers.

1 ***Young.*** Come, my brave man of war, trace out thy darling.

= "dance with your girl."[1]

2 And you, my learned council, set and turn boys;

= "have a seat". = turn into, ie. act like.

Kiss till the cow come home; kiss close, kiss close, knaves;

3: ***till the cow come home*** = this still-proverbial expression (albeit with a single cow) dates back at least to 1593, when it appeared in an instructional book for conversational French!
close = perhaps the sense is "tightly".[1]

4 My modern Poet, thou shalt kiss in couplets. −

= ordinary, ie. trite.[4] = perhaps punning, Young may be suggesting the Poet take two women for himself.

6 *Enter Servant, with wine*.

8 Strike up, you merry varlets, and leave your peeping;

= ie. spying on the amorous activities; Young is addressing

This is no pay for fiddlers.

the musicians.

Capt. Oh, my dear boy, thy Hercules, thy Captain,

= meaning himself; note the Captain addresses Young with the informal and intimate ***thee***.

Makes thee his Hylas, his delight, his solace!

= after killing Hylas' father, the king of Dryopes, ***Hercules*** took ***Hylas*** with him when he, Hercules, left with the Argonauts to seek the Golden Fleece; the youthful and attractive Hylas soon became Hercules' favourite. When the ship stopped in Mysia, Hylas went to fetch some water at a spring, where he became enchanted by the water nymphs, and disappeared, never to be heard from again.

Love thy brave man of war, and let thy bounty

= generosity.

Clap him in shamois. Let there be deducted

= dress him in clothing of soft, high quality leather;[1] the Captain is hoping to gain more than just drink from Young.

Out of our main potatiön, five marks,

= ie. drinking money. = a ***mark*** was a unit of money worth 2/3 pound, though there was no mark coin.

In hatchments to adorn this thigh,

= silver or gold ornamentation added to the hilt of a sword, which was worn of course along the thigh.[3]

Cramped with this rest of peace, and I will fight

= without having a war to fight, the Captain's legs lack their proper adornment.[3]

Thy battles.

Young. Thou shalt have't, boy, and fly in feather. −

= "dress smartly", with an allusion to the then-fashionable wearing of feathers.[3,9]

Lead on a march, you michers.

= skulkers or loiterers, ie. knaves, meaning the fiddlers.[4]

Enter Savil.

Sav. Oh, my head, oh, my heart! what a noise and change is here!

Would I had been cold i' the mouth before this day,

= ie. dead.

And ne'er have lived to see this dissolution!

He that lives within a mile of this place,

Had as good sleep in the perpetual

= ie. will have.

Noise of an iron mill. There's a dead sea

= ie. a large lake's worth; the OED's earliest recorded English reference to the ***Dead Sea*** is from 1325.[1]

Of drink i' the cellar, in which goodly vessels

31-33: having begun an extended nautical metaphor with ***dead sea***, Savil compares the disarray caused by Young's orgy to that left behind by a storm: ***vessels*** refers to both drinking vessels and boats; a ***flagon*** is a drinking cup with a handle and spout, a ***blackjack*** a leather beer jug.[1]

Lie wrecked; and in the middle of this deluge

Appear the tops of flagons and black-jacks

Like churches drowned i' the marshes.

Young. What, art thou come? my sweet Sir Amias,

= likely meaning ***Aeneas***, a hero of the Trojans; Young is addressing to Savil.

Welcome to Troy! Come, thou shalt kiss my Helen,

= Young seems to compare himself to Paris, the Trojan who eloped with the beautiful ***Helen***, wife of Menelaus, precipitating the Trojan War.

And court her in a dance.

Sav. Good sir, consider.

= ie. "please reflect on your behavior".

Young. Shall we consider, gentlemen? how say you?

Capt. Consider! that were a simple toy, i' faith:

= weak or frivolous joke or comment.[1]

Consider! whose moral's that?

The man that cries "consider" is our foe:
Let my steel know him.

= ie. sword.

Young. Stay thy dead-doing hand; he must not die yet:
Prithee be calm, my Hector.

= hold. = death-dealing.
= yet another hero of Troy, and Paris' brother.

Capt. Peasant slave!

52: Captain addresses Savil; note that the Captain, probably now drunk, addresses Savil contemptuously as ***thee*** in this speech.

Thou groom composed of grudgings, live, and thank

53: ***thou groom*** = ie. "you low-down servant"; probably insulting to a man who holds the enviable position of steward.
grudgings = complaints.[1]

This gentleman; thou hadst seen Pluto else:

54: ***This gentleman*** = ie. Young, for saving his life.
hadst = would have.
Pluto = god of the underworld, ie. hell.

The next "consider" kills thee.

55: "the next time I hear you say ***consider*** (ie. the next time Savil admonishes them), you will die."

Trav. Let him drink down his word again, in a gallon
Of sack.

= a white wine.[2]

Poet. 'Tis but a snuff: make it two gallons,
And let him do it kneeling in repentance.

= sniff or taste,[3] or the leftover amount of drink remaining at the bottom of a vessel.[1]

Sav. Nay, rather kill me; there's but a layman lost.

= proverbial: a person was spiritually lost if he or she did not belong to the church;[3] Savil refers to himself as the lost one, as he won't be affiliated with the partiers.

Good Captain, do your office.

= "do your duty, ie. "please kill me".

Young. Thou shalt drink, steward; drink and dance, my steward. −
Strike him a hornpipe, squeakers! − Take thy stiver,

67: ***hornpipe*** = a lively dance tune.[1]
squeakers = the earliest citation for the word ***squeaker*** in the OED is 1650, used to refer to one who "plays on a squeaking instrument".[1] Our authors' use here predates 1650, and suggests a contemptuous term for the musicians.
stiver = appears to derive from ***stive***, which Nathan Bailey's 1731 *An Universal Etymological Dictionary* defines as another term for "stews", or an area occupied by prostitutes, hence a prostitute. We may note that the original editions all print ***striver***, which all the editors emend to ***stiver***.

And pace her till she stew.

68: a line dense with multiple meanings: one can ***pace a dance***, but the use of ***her*** as a direct object also suggests walking her like a horse; to ***stew*** is to perspire, but ***stews*** as a noun refers to an area occupied by prostitutes, which is apropos indeed.

Sav. Sure, sir, I cannot
Dance with your gentlewomen; they are too light for me.

= ***light*** was a loaded Elizabethan word: it could mean (1) nimble, as in "light on one's feet"; (2) trivial, of slight importance or value; and (3) unchaste, wanton.[1]

Pray, break my head, and let me go.

72: Savil would still rather die than join the festivities.

Capt. He shall dance, he shall dance.

Young. He shall dance and drink, and be drunk and dance,
And be drunk again, and shall see no meat in a year.

= take no real food, as opposed to booze.

Poet. And three quarters.

79: Bond calls this a "pointless addition" of the Poet's.

Young. And three quarters be it.

[*Knocking within*.] = from offstage.

Capt. Who knocks there? Let him in.

Sav. [*Aside*] Some to deliver me, I hope. = someone. = save.

Enter Elder Loveless, disguised. 89: an important stage convention of the era was that disguises were absolutely impenetrable to other characters, or at least until it served the plot for it to be otherwise.

Elder. Gentlemen, God save you all! = common Elizabethan greeting.
My business is to one Master Loveless.

Capt. This is the gentleman you mean; view him,
And take his inventory; he's a right one.

Elder. He promises no less, sir.

Young. Sir, your business?

Elder. Sir, I should let you know, − yet I am loath, − = ie. "I hate to have to tell you this".
Yet I am sworn to 't, − would some other tongue = "to do it". = "I wish".
Would speak it for me!

Young. Out with it, i' God's name!

Elder. All I desire, sir, is the patiënce 107-9: Elder, slow to report his "news", asks first that Young be prepared to accept it with fortitude.
And sufferance of a man; and, good sir, be not
Moved more − = emotionally stirred or upset.

Young. Than a pottle of sack will do: = a half-gallon drinking vessel.[1]
Here is my hand. Prithee, thy business? 112: "I offer you my hand as a pledge not to get upset. Please, what is your business?"

Elder. Good sir, excuse me; and whatsoever 114-5: "forgive me for what I am about to tell you, but whatever I say, remember that someone had to tell you."
You hear, think must have been known unto you;
And be yourself discreet, and bear it nobly. = ie. "don't do anything rash".[26]

Young. Prithee, despatch me. = ***despatch me*** usually means "kill me", but the sense here is one of "conclude your business" or "get to the point".[1]

Elder. Your brother's dead, sir.

Young. Thou dost not mean − dead drunk?

Elder. No, no; dead, and drowned at sea, sir.

Young. Art sure he's dead?

Elder. Too sure, sir.

Young. Ay, but art thou very certainly sure of it?

Elder. As sure, sir, as I tell it.

Young. But art thou sure he came not up again?

Elder. He may come up, but ne'er to call you brother.

Young. But art sure he had water enough to drown him?

Elder. Sure, sir, he wanted none. = lacked.

Young. I would not have him want; I loved him better. = Young puns: to ***want*** is to live in poverty.[1]
Here I forgive thee; and, i' faith, be plain;
How do I bear it?

Elder. Very wisely, sir.

Young. Fill him some wine. − Thou dost not see me moved; = upset.
These transitory toys ne'er trouble me; = momentary or slight trifles,[1] referring to the news of his brother's death.
He's in a better place, my friend, I know 't.
Some fellows would have cried now, and have cursed thee,
And fallen out with their meat, and kept a pudder; 152: ***fallen out…meat*** = ie. lost their appetites.[1] ***kept a pudder*** = made a noise or to-do.[27] The OED considers ***pudder*** an alternate spelling of ***pother***.

But all this helps not. He was too good for us;
And let God keep him!
There's the right use on 't, friend. Off with thy drink; = ie. "finish off".
Thou hast a spice of sorrow makes thee dry. − = touch.[1] = ie. "that is making you thirsty."
Fill him another. − Savil, your master's dead;
And who am I now, Savil? Nay, let's all bear it well: = the answer to the question is, "your new master!"
Wipe, Savil, wipe; tears are but thrown away.
We shall have wenches now; shall we not, Savil? 160: the earliest editions print the words "Drink to my friend Captain" at the end of this speech, but are generally omitted, as they do not make sense given the dialogue that immediately follows.

Sav. Yes, sir.

Young. And drink innumerable?

Sav. Yes, forsooth, sir. = in truth.

Young. And you'll strain courtesy, and be drunk a little? = the phrase means to be "over-insistent" about observing proper conduct or ceremony:[1] Young is suggesting with some irony that Savil should lighten up and join the party.

Sav. I would be glad, sir, to do my weak endeavour.

Young. And you may be brought in time to love a wench too?

Sav. In time the sturdy oak, sir − 174: Savil alludes to the proverb, "in time, (a) small wedge will cleave the mightiest oake", which appeared in 1582 in the *Ekatompathia*, or *Watson's Passions*, a collection of love poems.[4]
The adage seems in turn to have its "roots" at least as far back as Virgil, from Book 6 of the *Aeneid*: "piercing wedges cleave the stubborn oak".

Young. Some more wine
For my friend there.

Elder. [*Aside*] I shall be drunk anon = soon.
For my good news: but I have a loving brother, = ie. in return for. = no doubt sarcastic.
That's my comfort.

Young. Here's to you, sir;
This is the worst I wish you for your news:
And if I had another elder brother,
And say it were his chance to feed more fishes, = (bad) luck. = humorous for "drown".
I should be still the same you see me now,
A poor contented gentleman. −
More wine for my friend there; he's dry again. = ie. thirsty or needing a drink.

Elder. [*Aside*] I shall be, if I follow this beginning. 191: Elder puns on ***dry***, which could mean "emotionally numb", but also "sexually impotent", from over-drinking.

Well, my dear brother, if I scape this drowning, = escape. = ie. in alcohol; Elder is still speaking in an aside here.
Tis your turn next to sink; you shall duck twice = ie. slip under the water.
Before I help you. − Sir, I cannot drink more;
Pray, let me have your pardon. 195: ie. "please excuse me, but I must go now."

Young. Oh, Lord, sir, 'tis your modesty! − More wine;
Give him a bigger glass. − Hug him, my Captain:
Thou shalt be my chief mourner.

Capt. And this my pennon. − Sir, a full carouse = a plume or pennant; the Captain raises his tankard.[3]
To you, and to my lord of land here.

Elder. [*Aside*] I feel a buzzing in my brains; pray God
They bear this out, and I'll ne'er trouble them 205-6: ***They bear…again*** = "if my brains (***They***) can
So far again. − Here's to you, sir. manage all this alcohol, I'll never bother them again!"

Young. To my dear steward.
Down o' your knees, you infidel, you pagan! 209: Young adopts the Poet's suggestion in line 61 above
Be drunk, and penitent. to force Savil to kneel and drink "in penitence."

Sav. Forgive me, sir. 212: Savil kneels.
And I'll be anything.

Young. Then be a bawd; = supplier of prostitutes.
I'll have thee a brave bawd. = excellent.

Elder. Sir, I must take
My leave of you, my business is so urgent.

Young. Let's have a bridling cast before you go. − = originally referring to a parting drink given to a man on horseback, but used generally for "a parting drink".[1]
Fill's a new stoop. = stoup, cup.[2]

Elder. I dare not, sir, by no means. 223: note the double negative of the line.

Young. Have you any mind to a wench? I would = ie. inclination or desire.
Fain gratify you for the pains you took, sir. = like to. = "efforts (on my behalf)".

Elder. As little as to the t'other. = the other; the phrase, though commonly used, is technically redundant, as ***t'other*** means "the other"; here Elder means he has as little desire for a woman as he does for another drink.

Young. If you find any stirring, do but say so. = ie. impulse, desire.

Elder. Sir, you are too bounteous: when I feel that itching, = generous. = lustful desire.

You shall assuage it, sir, before another. = alleviate.
This only, and farewell, sir: = "just one more thing".
Your brother, when the storm was most extreme,
Told all about him, he left a will, which lies close = hidden.
Behind a chimney in the matted chamber. = carpeted; a ***mat*** was a coarse, woven floor covering.[3]
And so, as well, sir, as you have made me able,
I take my leave.

Young. Let us embrace him all. −
If you grow dry before you end your business,
Pray, take a bait here; I have a fresh hogshead for you. = refreshment.[1] = cask.

Sav. [*Drunk*] You shall neither will nor choose, sir. My = desire; Savil seems to hearken back to Elder's mention of a ***will*** above in line 237.
master is a wonderful fine gentleman; has a fine state, a = estate.
very fine state, sir: I am his steward, sir, and his man.

Elder. [*Aside*]
Would you were your own, sir, as I left you! = ie. "if only you were still your own man", a common expression for one who is not controlled by others, ie. Savil should be the one in charge here.

Well, I must cast about, or all sinks. 252: ***cast about*** = figure out a plan, but also ***casting*** as a net in the water.[1]
all sinks = all is lost; note Elder's repeated use of drowning imagery.

Sav. Farewell, gentleman, gentleman, gentleman! 254: Savil is hilariously drunk; the comic motif of the drunken or alcoholic servant was common in drama of the era.

Elder. What would you with me, sir! = "do you want".

Sav. Farewell, gentleman!

Elder. Oh, sleep, sir, sleep!

[*Exit Elder*.]

Young. Well, boys, you see what's fallen; let's in and drink. = taken place, happened. = ie. go in.
And give thanks for it.

Sav. Let's give thanks for it. 267: the early editions give this line to Captain, but it is clearly intended for Savil, who is drunkenly repeating everything he hears.

Young. Drunk, as I live!

Sav. Drunk, as I live, boys!

Young. Why,
Now thou art able to discharge thine office, = "perform the duties of your position".
And cast up a reckoning of some weight. − = make a calculation, again alluding to Savil's position as steward; but Young clearly also uses ***cast up*** to mean "vomit".[1]

I will be knighted, for my state will bear it; = "I can afford it": the allusion is to the wholesale selling of knighthoods by James I to raise money for the government; the practice was mocked mercilessly by the writers and

dramatists of the day.

Tis sixteen hundred, boys. Off with your husks;

277: ***sixteen hundred*** = Young can now expect to enjoy and spend the full annual income from Elder's estate.
Off with your husks = "take off your clothes." Young's companions are no doubt coarsely attired.

278 I'll skin you all in satin.

= dress.[1]

280 ***Capt.*** Oh, sweet Loveless!

282 ***Sav.*** All in satin! Oh, sweet Loveless!

284 ***Young.*** March in, my noble compeers; −

= companions.

And this, my countess, shall be led by two:
286 And so proceed we to the will.

285: "and this guy, my dear (pointing to the Poet), shall be led by two women" (see line 4 above).
countess = Young, vulgar, uses this word because its first syllable would sound like the rude name for a woman's privates.

[*Exeunt*.]

ACT II, SCENE III.

A Room in Morecraft's House.

Enter Morecraft and Widow.

Entering Characters: ***Morecraft*** is a money-lender, and the gentleman who has taken all of Young Loveless' forfeited property; ***Widow*** is, well, a widow, and wealthy.
Since money-lenders charged interest on loans, and stood to take over the entire security if a borrower defaulted, they were understandably the target of much vicious humor on the Elizabethan stage. Unfortunately, there was a strong ethnic prejudice in the humor, as stage money-lenders were always Jewish.
As would be expected, the money-hungry Morecraft is courting the wealthy Widow.

1 ***More.*** And, widow, as I say, be your own friend:

= a common expression: "do what serves your own interest best." Morecraft is trying to convince the wealthy Widow to marry him.

2 Your husband left you wealthy, ay, and wise;

= the adjectives ***wealthy*** and ***wise*** were frequently paired in the literature of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Continue so, sweet duck, continue so.
4 Take heed of young smooth varlets, younger brothers;

4-7: Morecraft counsels Widow to avoid marrying youthful flattering rogues (***smooth varlets***)[1] and ***younger brothers*** - with regards to the latter, the first-born son generally inherited the entire estate of a deceased man, leaving younger siblings to fend for themselves; Widow could expect such prospective husbands, he continues, to squander all her wealth; in other words, she would do herself a favour by engaging herself to a mature and rich man like himself!

They are worms that will eat through your bags;

= ie. money-bags

6 They are very lightning, that, with a flash or two,
Will melt your money, and never singe your purse-strings;
8 They are colts, wench, colts, heady and dangerous,

8: ***colts*** = common term describing lads who are young, inexperienced, and unmanageable.
heady = headstrong or capricious.[1]

	Till we take 'em up, and make 'em fit for bonds.	= (1) mortgages, and (2) shackles; the idea is that those who default on Morecraft's mortgages will end up in debtor's prisons.
10	Look upon me; I have had, and have yet, Matter of moment, girl, matter of moment:	= as he is asking Widow to turn her eye to him, the sense may be "important or substantial qualities".[1]
12	You may meet with a worse back; I'll not commend it.	12: ***back*** = ie. referring to his strength or ability to bear a burden; there may be some innuendo here regarding Morecraft's sexual prowess. ***commend it*** = (self) praise it.
14	***Widow.*** Nor I neither, sir.	14*ff*: Widow's response indicates she is not interested in Morecraft.
16	***More.*** Yet thus far, by your favour, widow, 'tis tough.	= ie. referring again to his back.
18	***Widow.*** And therefore not for my diet; for I love a tender one.	18: ie. "a gentle man", with a hint of "a solicitous or gentle lover".
20	***More.*** Sweet widow, leave your frumps, and be edified.	= "cease your jeers, ie. mocking".[1] = instructed.
	You know my state: I sell no pérspectives,	21: ***state*** = ie. circumstances. ***perspective*** = a picture or glass that when viewed or viewed through produces a distorted image;[3] Morecraft's point here and in the next line is that he doesn't waste his time trying to make money by selling trivial items; there is perhaps an extra sense that Morecraft is not presenting a false image of himself. In verse, ***perspective(s)*** is usually stressed on its first syllable.
22	Scarfs, gloves, nor hangers, nor put my trust in shoe-ties;	= a ***hanger*** is an ornamental strap, attached to the sword belt, which held one's sword.[1,3]
	And where your husband in an age was rising	23-27: Morecraft compares how he has been getting wealthy in large leaps (as a usurer) while Widow's husband made his money in contemptibly small increments as a grocer, ie. selling spices, sugar, tea and coffee, etc.[1] ***where*** = whereas.[4]
24	By burnt figs, dredged with meal and powdered sugar,	= sprinkled.[1] = ground grain.[1]
	Sanders and grains, worm-seed, and rotten raisins,	25: ***Sanders*** = ie. sandalwood, a wood from India whose fragrant oil was used for perfuming.[10] ***worm-seed*** = a generic name for various plant which were used to kill or expel intestinal worms.[1]
26	And such vile tobacco that made the footmen mangy;	26: ***footmen*** = servants who ran alongside a wealthy person's coach or carriage; ***mangy*** = a metaphor or exaggerated allusion to the skin disorders one might get from smoking or exposure to tobacco smoke.
28	I, in a year, have put up hundreds; Enclosed, my widow,	28-29: Morecraft uses the image of fencing in a meadow to describe his success in gaining much property via the failure of his borrowers to pay back his loans.
30	Those pleasant meadows, by a forfeit mortgage; For which the poor knight takes a lone chamber, Owes for his ale, and dare not beat his hostess.	30-31: Morecraft describes the ruined fortunes of once wealthy men who have lost their property to Morecraft.

Nay, more −

Widow. Good sir, no more. Whate'er my husband was,
I know what I am; and, if you marry me,
You must bear it bravely off, sir.

More. Not with the head, sweet widow.

Widow. No, sweet sir,
But with your shoulders: I must have you dubbed;

For under that I will not stoop a feather.

My husband was a fellow loved to toil,
Fed ill, made gain his exercise, and so

Grew costive; which, for that I was his wife,

I gave way to, and spun mine own smocks coarse,
And, sir, so little − but let that pass:

Time, that wears all things out, wore out this husband;
Who, in penitence of such fruitless five years marriage,
Left me great with his wealth; which, if you'll be
A worthy gossip to, be knighted, sir.

Enter Savil.

More. Now, sir, from whom come you? whose man are you, sir?

Sav. Sir, I come from young Master Loveless.

More. Be silent, sir;
I have no money, not a penny for you:
He's sunk, your master's sunk; a perished man, sir.

Sav. Indeed, his brother's sunk, sir; God be with him!
A perished man, indeed, and drowned at sea.

More. How saidst thou, good my friend? his brother drowned?

takes a lone chamber = rents a single room; ***lone*** probably puns with *loan*.

36: the sense is, "you must take me as I am."

= an example of the ubiquitous joke about the horns a cuckolded husband was said to wear on his forehead.[3] Morehead is, with weak humour, suggesting he hopes that his burden will not be to be cheated on.

= Widow requires that her next husband become a knight; another reference to notorious practice of selling knighthoods during the reign of James I.

= ie. below that status. = ***not*** did not appear in the very earliest quartos.

= who loved.

= ate poorly (because he was too cheap to consume or pay for quality food).

45: ***costive*** = Widow uses ***costive*** to mean (1) miserly, and (2) with ***fed ill***, constipated.[1]
45-46: ***for that…way to*** = as a wife, Widow was obliged to live in as miserly a fashion as her husband demanded.

= Widow's image of her sewing her own undergarments (***smocks***), or repairing them continuously instead of ever getting new ones, graphically demonstrates the poverty of her personal possessions and her mean lifestyle; but the mention of her unmentionables causes Widow in line 47 to break off this train of slightly embarrassing thought.

= meaning both (1) unsuccessful and (2) barren or childless.[1]

= friend or sponsor to, as a godparent at a baptismal.

= servant.

61: Morecraft is referring to Young, who is completely broke, so Morecraft will lend him no more money; in using ***sunk*** and ***perished*** to refer to Young's financial ruin, however, he inadvertently uses words which obviously can apply to Elder, as Savil's response shows.

Sav. Untimely, sir, at sea.

More. And thy young master
Left sole heir?

Sav. Yes, sir.

More. And he wants money?

Sav. Yes;
And sent me to you, for he is now to be knighted.

More. Widow, be wise; there's more land coming, widow;
Be very wise, and give thanks for me, widow.

80: as Young is now once again propertied, Morecraft will gladly lend him money, fully expecting him to default, thus forfeiting to Morecraft his inherited fortune.

Widow. Be you very wise, and be knighted, and then
give thanks for me, sir.

83-84: Widow reminds Morecraft that she will not marry him without his getting knighted.

Sav. What says your worship to this money?

More. I say,
He may have money, if he please.

Sav. A thousand, sir?

More. A thousand, sir, provided any wise, sir
His land lie for the payment; otherwise −

= way.
= his property stands in security for.

Enter Young Loveless, Captain, Traveller, Poet, and Tobacco-man.

Sav. He's here himself, sir, and can better tell you.

More. My notable dear friend, and worthy Master Loveless,
And now right worshipful, all joy and welcome!

= an honorific title for man of importance.[1]

Young. Thanks to my dear incloser, Master Morecraft:

= one who fences in common land in order to signal his taking possession of it.[1]

Prithee, old angel-gold, salute my family;

105: ***angel-gold*** = an allusion to the English gold coin bearing the image of the archangel Michael.
salute = greet.
family = ie. his companions.

I'll do as much for yours. −
This, and your own desires, fair gentlewoman.

106: Young has noticed the attractive Widow; since ***salute*** can also more specifically mean "to greet with a kiss", and as it was the custom in England for newly-introduced strangers to exchange a kiss, Young suggests he will gladly ***salute*** the Widow. Elizabethan drama is full of characters who look forward to taking advantage of this custom when introduced to attractive members of the opposite sex.

[*Kisses Widow*.]

Widow. And yours, sir, if you mean well. –
[*Aside*] 'Tis a handsome gentleman.

Young. Sirrah, my brother's dead.

= a familiar form of address.

More. Dead!

Young. Dead;
And by this time soused for ember-week.

119: ***soused*** = pickled for preservation, but also with the secondary meaning of "soaked".[1]

ember weeks = four different weeks of the year during which fasting is observed on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.[1] The sense, per Weber, is that Elder's body has been preserved to be eaten in ember week.

More. Dead!

Young. Drowned, drowned at sea, man; by the next fresh conger
That comes, we shall hear more.

123: ***conger*** = a frighteningly large species of eel (up to ten feet in length) found off the coast of Britain.[1] Young humorously talks of the conger as if it were a ship delivering news from afar, or a messenger in itself.

More. Now, by the faith of my body,

= it was common for a character to swear by his or her body or body parts.

It moves me much.

127: at this point, Morehead begins to weep - but are they only crocodile tears?

Young. What, wilt thou be an ass,
And weep for the dead? why, I thought nothing but
A general inundation would have moved thee.
Prithee, be quiet; he hath left his land behind him.

= large flood, which, as Bond states, would swallow up Morecraft's land.[3]

More. Oh, has he so?

Young. Yes, faith, I thank him for 't; I have all, boy.
Hast any ready money?

More. Will you sell, sir?

Young. No, not outright, good Gripe; marry, a mortgage.
Or such a slight security.

= vulture.[3] = a mild oath, derived from the Virgin Mary.

More. I have
No money, sir, for mortgage: if you will sell,
And all or none, I'll work a new mine for you.

144-6: Morecraft decides he wants to buy the Loveless estate outright.

= ie. provide him with a fresh source of funds.

Sav. Good sir, look afore you; he'll work you out of all

148*f*: in this difficult speech, Savil appears to be explaining to Young the consequences of selling his land to Morecraft, who Savil expects will cheat Young in some way; Young will then have no choice but to go to sea, perhaps joining the navy (hence the reference to the poor diet he would expect to have), and expect to be sunk by an enemy ship.

else. If you sell all your land, you have sold your
country; and then you must to sea, to seek your brother,

= sold out, betrayed[1]
= ie. go to. = ie. who is already underwater.

and there lie pickled in a powdering-tub, and break your

= a vat used for pickling fish, but ***tub*** could also humorously describe a boat.[1] It is worth noting that ***powdering tub*** was also used to describe a sweating treatment for venereal disease.

teeth with biscuits and hard beef, that must have
watering, sir: and where's your three hundred pounds a-

= representative food from a British sailor's diet.
= ie. soaked in water, they are so dry.[1]

year in drink, then? If you'll tun up the Straits, you may;

154: ***tun up the straits*** = Bond suggests the meaning to be, "the only drink you will get is salt-water."
tun up = store in casks;[1] later editions print ***turn up***, while Dyce wonders if the correct wording should have been ***run up***; these alternatives do seem to make more sense.
the Straits = usually this refers to the Straits of Gibraltar, but could also refer to the Straits of Dover.[1]

for you have no calling for drink there but with a
cannon, nor no scoring but on your ship's sides; and

= the tallying up with marks of one's tab at a tavern, but also suggesting an enemy ***cannon*** wrecking or marking his ship's sides.

then, if you scape with life, and take a faggot-boat and a
bottle of usquebaugh, come home, poor man, like a type

= get rescued or picked up by a passing timber ship.[3]
158: ***usquebaugh*** = whiskey.
type = image or symbol.[1]

of Thames-street, stinking of pitch and poor-John. I
cannot tell, sir; I would be loath to see it.

159: ***Thames Street*** parallels the Thames River. Also known informally as Stockfishmonger's Row, its south side contained all the old walled city's wharfs.[14]
pitch = a type of tar used to calk ships.
poor-john = salted and dried hake (a fish).[3]

Capt. Steward, you are an ass, a measled mongrel; and,
were it not against the peace of my sovereign friend

= leprous.[1]
= a play on the phrase "king's peace", which referred to the sovereign's guarantee of public order.

here, I would break your forecasting coxcomb, dog, I

164: ***coxcomb*** = head.
dog = the Captain's use of canine-related name-calling is highly insulting.

would, even with thy staff of office there, thy pen and

= a rod that symbolized certain officials' positions, used metaphorically here by the Captain.

inkhorn. − Noble boy, the god of gold here has said

= "supplied your needs";[3] the first two quartos print ***sed*** here, the subsequent ones ***fed***.[4]

thee well:
Take money for thy dirt. Hark, and believe;

= humorous term for "land" or "property". = "listen to me".

Thou art cold of constitution, thy seat unhealthful;

= ie. house.

Sell, and be wise: we are three that will adorn thee,

= the Captain may have meant to say "we are ***four***" here, as ***we*** presumably includes the Poet, the Traveller, and the Tobacco-Man, as well as himself; on the other hand, there may be a continuity error here, and either Traveller or Tobacco-Man may not supposed to be on stage right now - neither one of the pair appears again in our play after this scene; indeed, the Poet's assertion at line 178 below that the four of them - the Captain, the Poet, Young, and one other person - will form a family, necessarily excludes one of the two.

And live according to thine own heart, child;
Mirth shall be only ours, and only ours
Shall be the black-eyed beauties of the time.

= ***black eyes*** were considered evidence of great beauty.[1]

Money makes men eternal.

Poet. Do what you will, it is the noblest course:
Then you may live without the charge of people;

= having to support other people, such as the servants necessary to manage the household; the Poet of course exempts himself and Young's other drinking companions.

Only we four will make a family;
Ay, and an age that shall beget new annals,
In which I'll write thy life, my son of pleasure,

Equal with Nero or Caligula.

= perhaps an odd choice of heroes to emulate, but no doubt the Poet is focusing on their pleasure-seeking lifestyles.

Young. What men were they, Captain?

Capt. Two roaring boys of Rome, that made all split.

185: ***roaring*** = rowdy, boisterous; a very common adjective in this period.
made all split = made all go to pieces, ie. upset the status quo.

Young. Come, sir, what dare you give?

187: Young asks Morecraft how much he will offer for the Loveless lands.

Sav. You will not sell, sir?

Young. Who told you so, sir?

Sav. Good sir, have a care.

Young. Peace, or I'll tack your tongue up to your roof. –

195: ***Peace*** = "quiet!"
tack = fasten or nail.[1]
roof = ie. of his mouth

What money? speak.

More. Six thousand pound, sir.

= the value of a property was typically calculated by multiplying its annual income by 12;[5] Young has mentioned that the income of his property is 1600 pounds per year, thus its value is more like 19,000 pounds; Morecraft's offer is clearly low - not that Young or his friends would know that.

Capt. Take it; h' as overbidden, by the sun!
Bind him to his bargain quickly.

Young. Come, strike me luck with earnest, and draw the writings.

203: ***strike me luck*** = to ***strike someone luck*** means to offer the seller a "luck-penny" on closing a deal;[1] Morecraft accedes to Young's request in the next line below.
writings = ie. the legal documents necessary to effect the sale of the property.

More. There's a God's penny for thee.

= a small amount of money serving as a symbolic down payment on a deal.[1]

Sav. Sir, for my old master's sake, let my farm be excepted:

= Savil appears to live with his family on a farm located on the Loveless' property.

If I become his tenant, I am undone,
My children beggars, and my wife God knows what.
Consider me, dear sir.

= ruined.

More. I'll have all in
Or none.

= the entire property.

Young. All in, all in. Despatch the writings.

[*Exit Young Loveless with Comrades.*]

Widow. [*Aside*] Go, thou art a pretty fore-handed fellow! would thou wert wiser!

= prudent or thrifty;[1] she is being ironic.
= "if only"; Widow is disappointed that Young does not possess greater financial acumen.

Sav. Now do I sensibly begin to feel

= acutely;[1] the word ***sensible*** was used more literally then, relating directly to the physical senses.

Myself a rascal. Would I could teach a school,

= vagabond or beggar.[3] = "I wish".

Or beg, or lie well! I am utterly undone. −
Now, he that taught thee to deceive and cozen,
Take thee to his mercy! so be it!

= ruined.
= ie. Morecraft. = cheat.

[*Exit Savil*.]

More. Come, widow, come, never stand upon a knighthood;
'Tis a mere paper honour, and not proof
Enough for a sergeant. Come, come, I'll make thee −

230: ie. "don't let your marriage to me be held up by a trivial detail - your requirement that I purchase a knighthood."
231-2: ***not proof…sergeant*** = not enough to even gain him the appointment of a sergeant-at-law[3] (a feudal status appointed by the crown).[1]

Wid. To answer in short, 'tis this, sir, − no knight, no widow.
If you make me anything, it must be a lady;
And so I take my leave.

235: a woman's husband must attain the rank of at least knight in order for her to be called "my lady".[28]

More. Farewell, sweet widow,
And think of it.

= on.

Widow. Sir, I do more than think of it;
It makes me dream, sir.

[*Exit Widow*.]

More. She's rich, and sober if this itch were from her:

246: ***sober*** = ie. "could be considered moderate in temperament".
itch = ie. the desire to have a knight for a husband.

And say I be at charge to pay the footmen,
And the trumpets, ay, and the horsemen too,

247*f*: Morecraft is unwilling to pay the burdensome costs and fees required for one to purchase and maintain a knighthood. Lines 247-8 refer specifically to the expenses he must incur for the ceremonial ride to be knighted at Windsor Castle.[3]

And be a knight, and she refuse me then;

249: "and what if I pay out all this money for a knighthood, only to have her decide in the end not to marry me?"

Then am I hoist into the subsidy,
And so, by consequence, should prove a coxcomb:
I'll have a care of that. Six thousand pound,
And then the land is mine: there's some refreshing yet.

= become liable for the special taxes levied on knights.[3]
= fool.

[*Exit*.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Room in Lady's House.

Enter Abigail.

Entering Character: Abigail has dropped her glove off-stage, hoping Welford will gallantly retrieve it for her.

Abig. If he but follow me, as all my hopes
Tell me he's man enough, up goes my rest,
And, I know, I shall draw him.

= expectations.
= an expression from cards, meaning to "stand on one's hand";[3] ***draw*** in line 3 continues the gaming metaphor; ***man enough*** and ***up*** are likely intended to be vaguely dirty.

Enter Welford, with Abigail's glove.

5: Welford has taken the bait!

Wel. [*Aside*] This is the strangest pampered piece of
flesh towards fifty, that ever frailty coped withal. What

8: ***towards fifty*** = a comment on Abigail's age.
frailty = moral vulnerability.
withal = with.

a trim *l'envoy* here she has put upon me! These women

= a kind of post-script attached to a poem, usually to bring the poem to the attention of a particular person,[4] here metaphorically describing the glove.

are a proud kind of cattle, and love this whoreson doing

10-11: ***love...directly*** = women of this type love to flirt in a very obvious way, which Welford, as a gentleman, disapproves of - at least from the repulsive Abigail.

so directly, that they will not stick to make their very

= hesitate or scruple.[1]

skins bawds to their flesh. Here's dog-skin and storax

12: ***dog-skin*** = meaning the glove; the leather made from the skin of canines was used to make gloves, caps, etc.[1]
storax = a pleasant-smelling extract from the sweet-gum tree, used as a perfume;[3] Welford's point is that the glove is drenched in perfume.

sufficient to kill a hawk: what to do with it, beside
nailing it up amongst Irish heads of teer, to shew the

14: ***Irish heads of teer*** = the heads of the extinct great Irish elk, which were prominently displayed by those lucky enough to own them; Dyce quotes an earlier editor who suggests ***teer*** may be the Irish pronunciation of ***deer***.
shew = ie. show off.

mightiness of her palm, I know not. There she is: I must
enter into dialogue − Lady, you have lost your glove.

15: ***mightiness*** = great size.
palm = the part of the antlers of certain deer, such as the moose, that is filled in between the branches, resulting in a broad flat surface.

Abig. Not, sir, if you have found it.

Wel. It was my meaning, lady, to restore it.

Abig. 'Twill be uncivil in me to take back
A favour fortune hath so well bestowed, sir:
Pray, wear it for me.

24: it was a custom for a woman to give her lover a token to wear or keep about him.

Wel. [*Aside*]
I had rather wear a bell, − But, hark you, mistress,
What hidden virtue is there in this glove.

= as worn on the cap of a jester,[1] hence, "be a professed fool" (Weber, p. 187).

That you would have me wear it? Is it good
Against sore eyes, or will it charm the tooth-ache?
Or these red tops, being steeped in white wine, soluble,

= ie. red tips[1] (on the fingers of the glove).

Will 't kill the itch? or has it so concealed
A providence to keep my hand from bonds?

= scabies, or a general dermatological scabbing condition.[1]

32-33: ***has it so…bonds?*** = "does it have the foresight or capability of guidance (***providence***) to keep me from prison (***bonds*** = shackles)?"

If it have none of these, and prove no more

= ie. "these beneficial properties". = ie. "prove to be nothing more".

But a bare glove of half-a-crown a pair,
'Twill be but half a courtesy; I wear two always.
Faith, let's draw cuts; one will do me no pleasure.

= than.

36: Welford disingenuously suggests they draw lots to see who should get both gloves, since having only one is worthless; he refuses to acknowledge the significance of Abigail's offer that he should wear the one as a favour.

Abig. [*Aside*]
The tenderness of his years keeps him as yet in ignorance:

40: Abigail assumes Welford is too young to understand the flirting significance of the glove - but she is only fooling herself.

He's a well-moulded fellow, and I wonder

= well-built.

His blood should stir no higher: but 'tis his want
Of company: I must grow nearer to him.

41: ***his blood...higher*** = that his passion is not aroused to a greater degree; ***higher*** is of course suggestive.

42-43: ***but tis…company*** = ie. Welford's lack (***want***) of amorousness is only a function of his loneliness.

Enter Elder Loveless, disguised.

Entering Character: having delivered the news of his own death to his brother, Elder now arrives at Lady's house to check on whether she has remained faithful to him during his absence.

Elder. God save you both!

Abig. And pardon you, sir! this is somewhat rude:
How came you hither?

49-50: Abigail is annoyed that the stranger has interrupted her attempt to seduce Welford.

Elder. Why, through the doors; they are open.

Wel. What are you? and what business have you here?

= who.

Elder. More, I believe, than you have.

Abig. Who would this fellow speak with? Art thou sober?

= Abigail shows her contempt for the intruder by addressing him as ***thou***.

Elder. Yes; I come not here to sleep.

= ie. to sleep off his drunkenness.

Wel. Prithee, what art thou?

62*ff*: Elder and Welford also begin to address each other with the disrespectful ***thou***.

Elder. As much, gay man, as thou art; I am a gentleman.

Wel. Art thou no more?

Elder. Yes, more than thou dar'st be, − a soldier.

Abig. Thou dost not come to quarrel?

Elder. No, not with women.
I come to speak here with a gentlewoman.

Abig. Why, I am one.

Elder. But not with one so gentle.

= noble or well-born; Elder is deliberately ambiguous: he could mean (1) his mission is to speak to one who is not as gentle as Abigail (complimentary), or (2) she is with someone who is not particularly gentle, ie. Welford (insulting).

Wel. This is a fine fellow.

Elder. Sir, I am not fine yet; I am but new come over:

81: ***fine*** = well-dressed (punning); Elder arrives in rather distressed garb, and he will comment repeatedly and sarcastically about Welford's well-tailored dress.
new come over = newly arrived in England.

Direct me with your ticket to your tailor,
And then I shall be fine, sir. − Lady, if there be
A better of your sex within this house,
Say I would see her.

= IOU; Elder implies that Welford cannot actually afford his clothing, but has taken delivery of his outfit on credit.

Abig. Why, am not I good enough for you, sir?

Elder. Your way, you'll be too good. Pray, end my business. −

89: ***Your way*** = likely suggestive.
end my business = ie. "let me complete my errand."

[*Aside*] This is another suitor: oh, frail woman!

90: ***This*** = ie. Welford.
frail woman = morally weak; Elder assumes that Lady has already accepted Welford as a suitor.

Wel. [*Aside*]
This fellow, with his bluntness, hopes to do
More than the long suits of a thousand could:
Though he be sour, he's quick; I must not trust him. −

93-5: Welford assumes in turn that Elder is also a suitor for Lady's hand; Welford prefers the old-fashioned, indirect style of courtly wooing (***long suits***), but recognizes the possible efficacy of Elder's more direct approach.

Sir, this lady is not to speak with you;
She is more serious. You smell as if
You were new calked: go, and be handsome, and then
You may sit with her serving-men.

98: ***calked*** = ie. like a ship that has been ***calked*** with pitch.
be handsome = behave appropriately.[1]

Elder. What are you, sir?

= who.

Wel. Guess by my outside.

= ie. outfit, clothing.

Elder. Then I take you, sir,
For some new silken thing, weaned from the country,
That shall, when you come to keep good company,
Be beaten into better manners. − Pray,
Good proud gentlewoman, help me to your mistress.

105-8: Elder suggests Welford is a country boor who has tried to buy his way into society.

Abig. How many lives hast thou, that thou talk'st thus rudely?

110: Abigail suggests that Elder is risking his life too casually in being so openly insulting to Welford, who presumably would be expected to defend his honour against Elder.

Elder. But one, one; I am neither cat nor woman.

= Elder alludes to the still-popular adage that was first mentioned in English literature by John Heywood in his influential collection of *Proverbs* of 1546, in which he wrote "a woman hath nyne lyues lyke a cat."

Wel. And will that one life, sir, maintain you ever

= "always sustain you", ie. "always keep you alive".

In such bold sauciness?

Elder. Yes, amongst a nation of such men as you are,
And be no worse for wearing. − Shall I speak
With this lady?

Abig. No, by my troth, shall you not.

Elder. I must stay here, then.

Wel. That you shall not, neither.

Elder. Good fine thing, tell me why?

Wel. Good angry thing, I'll tell you:
This is no place for such companiöns;
Such lousy gentlemen shall find their business

Better i' the suburbs; there your strong pitch-perfume,

Mingled with lees of ale, shall reek in fashion:

This is no Thames-street, sir.

Abig. This gentleman informs you truly;
Prithee, be satisfied, and seek the suburbs:
Good captain, or whatever title else
The warlike eel-boats have bestowed upon thee,
Go and reform thyself; prithee, be sweeter;
And know my lady speaks with no such swabbers.

Elder. You cannot talk me out with your tradition
Of wit you pick from plays: go to, I have found ye. −

And for you, tender sir, whose gentle blood
Runs in your nose, and makes you snuff at all

But three-piled people, I do let you know,

He that begot your worship's satin suit,
Can make no men, sir: I will see this lady,

= another reference to Welford's fine dress.

= fellows.

= covered with lice, ie. filthy.

133: ***the suburbs*** = traditional location of the brothels of a Renaissance city.
pitch-perfume = Welford again notes that Elder smells of ***pitch***.

134: ***lees of ale*** = the sediment at the bottom of a cup of ale; Welford hints that Elder likely drinks a lot.
reek in fashion = the idea is that Elder's peculiar odour will allow him to fit right in with those who frequent the less desirable part of town.

= another reference to the street that would have been populated by those who make their living from the sea.

= a clever oxymoron by Abigail.

= please. = ie. sweeter-smelling.

= low ranking sailors, such as those who ***swab*** the deck.[2]

= Bond suggests that Elder is accusing Abigail of stealing her insults from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, which would have been performed earlier in the 1600's: in Act I.v of that play, there is a dialogue similar to the present one, in which Maria is encouraging Viola to depart, but she refuses, calling Maria a ***swabber***.

= noble.

= sniff, out of a feeling of superiority.

= ie. except at those who wear the finest clothing, especially the finest velvet;[1] ***three-pile*** refers to a method of producing velvet "in which the loops of the pile-warp (which constitutes the nap) are formed by three threads, producing a pile of treble thickness" (OED, *three-pile, adj.*).

149-150: ***He that…no men*** = the idea is that clothes don't make one a man; ***begot*** means "furnished", but is also humorously used to mean "gave birth to", along with ***make no men***.

And, with the reverence of your silkenship,
In these old ornaments.

= a mock title for Welford.
= ie. his old and worn outfit (***ornaments*** = attire).[1]

Wel. You will not, sure?

Elder. Sure, sir, I shall.

Abig. You would be beaten out?

Elder. Indeed, I would not; or, if I would be beaten,
Pray, who shall beat me? this good gentleman
Looks as he were o' the peace.

= ie. an officer of the peace, one who is sworn to maintain order.[1]

Wel. Sir, you shall see that.
Will you get you out?

Elder. Yes; that, that shall correct
Your boy's tongue. Dare you fight? I will stay here still.

167: ***that*** = ie. Elder's sword; Elder is responding to Welford's question: "I will ***get out*** that thing that will punish (***correct***) your tongue."

[*They draw their swords, and fight.*]

Abig. Oh, their things are out! − Help, help, for God's sake! − Madam! − Jesus! They foin at one another! − Madam! why, who is within there?

= typical, and in this case exceptionally funny, double entendre from Abigail.
= lunge or thrust with a sword, no doubt also bawdy.[1]
= ie. "is anyone out there?"

[*Exit.*]

Enter Lady.

Lady. Who breeds this rudeness?

Wel. This uncivil fellow:
He says he comes from sea; where, I believe,
H'as purged away his manners.

184: "he has eliminated his manners from his body;" the the word ***purge*** was used to describe vomiting or evacuation of the bowels.[1]

Lady. What of him?

Wel. Why, he will rudely, without once "God bless you,"
Press to your privacies, and no denial
Must stand betwixt your person and his business:
I let go his ill language.

= "intrude on your privacy"
= between.
= the sense seems to be "took exception to".

Lady. Sir, have you
Business with me?

Elder. Madam, some I have;
But not so serious to pawn my life for't.
If you keep this quarter, and maintain about you
Such Knights o' the Sun as this is, to defy
Men of employment to you, you may live;
But in what fame?

196-201: Elder allows that Lady may be pleased to keep such ruffians as Welford about her, but at what cost to her reputation?
= ie. trade or sell.
= maintain this posture or attitude.[3]
= meaning Welford: Bond suggests this is a reference to a well-known Spanish romance, which had been translated into English under a very long title, part of which read *Knight of the Sunne*.[3]
= ie. better use. = ie. "sure, you can live this way".
= ie. "but with what affect to your reputation?"

Lady. Pray, stay, sir: who has wronged you?

Elder. Wrong me he cannot, though uncivilly
He flung his wild words at me: but to you,
I think, he did no honour, to deny
The haste I come withal a passage to you,
Though I seem coarse.

Lady. Excuse me, gentle sir; 'twas from my knowledge,
And shall have no protection. − And to you, sir,
You have shewed more heat than wit, and from yourself
Have borrowed power I never gave you here,
To do these vild unmanly things. My house

Is no blind street to swagger in; and my favours
Not doting yet on your unknown deserts
So far, that I should make you master of my business:

My credit yet stands fairer with the people
Than to be tried with swords; and they that come
To do me service must not think to win me
With hazard of a murder: if your love
Consist in fury, carry it to the camp,

And there, in honour of some common mistress,
Shorten your youth. I pray, be better tempered;
And give me leave a while, sir.

Wel. You must have it.

[*Exit Welford*.]

Lady. Now, sir, your business?

Elder. First, I thank you for schooling this young fellow,

Whom his own follies, which he's prone enough
Daily to fall into, if you but frown,
Shall level him a way to his repentance.
Next, I should rail at you; but you are a woman,
And anger's lost upon you.

Lady. Why at me, sir?
I never did you wrong; for, to my knowledge.
This is the first sight of you.

Elder. You have done that,
I must confess, I have the least curse in,
Because the least acquaintance: but there be
(If there be honour in the minds of men)
Thousands, when they shall know what I deliver,
(As all good men must share in't), will to shame

= "hold on a moment".

= with. = ie. in visiting or traveling to.

= "(done) unknown to me".
= ie. Welford.
= "unbridled emotion than intelligence".
= assumed authority.
= despicable;[1] ***vild*** was a commonly-used alternative for ***vile***.

216: ***blind street*** = ie. dead end street, with the sense of having no traffic, so that one could bluster or assault another (***swagger***)[1,3] without being interrupted; the phrase survives today in the expression *blind alley*.[1]
216-8: ***and my...business*** = "and since I don't know anything about you, I of course have given you no authority to make any decisions regarding my business."
deserts (line 217) = merits.

= reputation.
= put to the test, ie. fought over.
= "become my lovers or courters".[3]
= risk.
= ie. a soldiers' camp.

= prostitute.[1]
= ie. by being killed in a fight over the woman.
226: Lady asks Welford to excuse himself.

= the verb "***to school***", meaning to educate, has been used at least as far back as the mid-15th century.[1]

= direct.[2]
= rant, complain.

= that which.
= "I am the least cursed by" or "I suffer the least by".[3]
= "I know you the least".

Blast your black memory.

Lady. How is this, good sir?

Elder. 'Tis that, that if you have a soul, will choke it:
You've killed a gentleman.

Lady. I killed a gentleman!

Elder. You, and your cruèlty, have killed him, woman!
And such a man (let me be angry in't)
Whose least worth weighed above all womens' virtues
That are; I spare you all to come too: guess him now.

Lady. I am so innocent, I cannot, sir.

Elder. Repent, you mean. You are a perfect woman,
And, as the first was, made for man's undoing.

Lady. Sir, you have missed your way; I am not she.

Elder. Would he had missed his way too, though he had wandered
Farther than women are ill-spoken of,
So he had missed this misery, − you, lady!

Lady. How do you do, sir?

Elder. Well enough, I hope,
While I can keep myself from such temptations.

Lady. Pray, leap into this matter; whither would you?

Elder. You had a servant, that your peevishness
Enjoined to travel.

Lady. Such a one I have still,
And should be grievèd it were otherwise.

Elder. Then have your asking, and be grieved; he's dead!
How you will answer for his worth I know not;
But this I am sure, either he, or you, or both,
Were stark mad, else he might have lived to have given
A stronger testimony to the world
Of what he might have been. He was a man
I knew but in his evening; ten suns after,
Forced by a tyrant storm, our beaten bark
Bulged under us: in which sad parting blow
He called upon his saint, but not for life,
On you, unhappy woman; and, whilst all
Sought to preserve their souls, he desperately
Embraced a wave, crying to all that saw it,
"If any live, go to my Fate, that forced me

To this untimely end, and make her happy."
His name was Loveless; and I scaped the storm;
And now you have my business.

252: ie. "ruin your reputation forever."

= "it is such a thing that".

= more than.
= ie. further details. = ie. "who it is (I am talking about)."

= Elder finishes Lady's sentence. = "the epitome of a".
= the first woman, ie. Eve. = ruin.

= "you have lost your path", ie. he is mistaken.[1]

276: perhaps ironic: "are you alright?"

= ie. getting involved with a woman.

= lover.
= ie. caused or forced.[1]

287, 289: note how ***grieved*** is disyllabic in line 287, but monosyllabic in line 289, to fit the meter.

= wish or desire.

= must be. = or else.

= ie. "at the end of his life". = "ten days after we met".
= ship.
= caved in, broke apart.[1]

= but on. = unfortunate.

= ie. submitted to be drowned.
= allusion to the mythical three ***Fates***, the goddesses who determined how long one lived, but meaning Lady.
= premature death.
= escaped.

Lady. ‘Tis too much.
Would I had been that storm! he had not perished.
If you’ll rail now, I will forgive you, sir;
Or if you'll call in more, if any more
Come from this ruin, I shall justly suffer
What they can say: I do confess myself
A guilty cause in this. I would say more,
But grief is grown too great to be delivered.

Elder. [*Aside*]
I like this well: these women are strange things. −
Tis somewhat of the latest now to weep;
You should have wept when he was going from you,
And chained him with those tears at home.

Lady. Would you had told me then so! these two arms
Had been his sea.

Elder. Trust me, you move me much: but, say he lived,
These were forgotten things again.

Lady. [*Aside*] Ay, say you so?
Sure, I should know that voice: this is knavery;

I'll fit you for it. − Were he living, sir,
I would persuade you to be charitable,
Ay, and confess we are not all so ill
As your opinion holds us. Oh, my friend,
What penance shall I pull upon my fault,
Upon my most unworthy self for this?

Elder. Leave to love others; 'twas some jealousy
That turned him desperate.

Lady. [*Aside*] I'll be with you straight:
Are you wrung there?

Elder. [*Aside*] This works amain upon her.

Lady. I do confess there is a gentleman
Has borne me long good will.

Elder. [*Aside*] I do not like that.

Lady. And vowed a thousand services to me;
To me, regardless of him: but since fate,
That no power can withstand, has taken from me
My first and best love, and to weep away
My youth is a mere folly, I will shew you
What I determine, sir; you shall know all. −
[*To a servant within*]
Call Master Welford, there! − That gentleman
I mean to make the model of my fortunes,

= "I would have preferred that". = "then he would not have".

= ie. any other survivors of the shipwreck.

314: ie. "my grief prevents me from saying more"; note also the fabulous alliteration with ***gr*** in this line.

= ie. latest fashion.

322-3: ***these two arms…his sea*** = a neat metaphor: rather her arms had embraced him than did the sea.

= affect, touch. = suppose.

326: ie. "if he had lived, you would forget your repentance, and return to your cruel ways"

= an Elizabethan character's disguise was impenetrable, at least until it suited the plot to have it be otherwise; Lady finally recognizes Elder by his voice.

= punish.[1]

= ie. women.

= "forsake loving other men"; Elder, not too subtly, plants the idea that Lady should not pursue other men, before Elder has a chance to "return".

337: ie. she will get back at him immediately (***straight***).[1]

= ie. in anguish.

= speedily, or with full force;[2] Elder expects his strategy is succeeding.

= ie. another man; Lady has Welford in mind for the part; now her revenge begins!

= without regard for Elder's existence as her present lover.

= show.

358: ie. Lady means to share Welford's fortunes.[3]

And in his chaste embraces keep alive
The memory of my lost lovely Loveless:
He is somewhat like him too.

Elder. Then you can love?

Lady. Yes, certain, sir:
Though it please you to think me hard and cruel,
I hope I shall persuade you otherwise.

Elder. [*Aside*] I have made myself a fine fool.

Re-enter Welford.

Wel. Would you have spoke with me, madam?

Lady. Yes, Master Welford; and I ask your pardon,
Before this gentleman, for being froward:
This kiss, and henceforth more affection.

[*Kisses Welford*.]

Elder. [*Aside*] So; it is better I were drowned indeed.

Wel. [*Aside*] This is a sudden passiön; God hold it!
This fellow, out of his fear, sure, has
Persuaded her: I'll give him a new suit on't.

Lady. A parting kiss; and, good sir, let me pray you
To wait me in the gallery.

[*Kisses Welford again*.]

Wel. [*Aside*] I am
In another world! − Madam, where you please.

[*Exit*.]

Elder. [*Aside*] I will to sea.
And 't shall go hard but I'll be drowned indeed.

Lady. Now, sir, you see I am no such hard creature
But time may win me.

Elder. You have forgot your lost love?

Lady. Alas, sir, what would you have me do?
I cannot call him back again with sorrow:
I'll love this man as dearly; and, beshrow me,
I'll keep him far enough from sea. And 'twas told me,

Now I remember me, by an old wise woman,
That my first love should be drowned; and see, 'tis come about.

Elder. [*Aside*]

= note the interesting combination alliteration and wordplay in this clause.

= ie. "love again", or "still love another".

366: Elder realizes his plan has backfired.

= contrary or obstinate,[2] ie. when she was so rude to him before.

= would have been better.

383-5: Welford seems to think Elder has, out of his fear of Welford, convinced Lady - either intentionally or not - to turn her affection to him, and he will reward Elder by buying him new clothes!

= hallway.[1]

= ie. go to.
= ie. for real.

= "beshrew me", ie. "the devil take me", or the like.
= "to me".

409: ***I remember me*** = "I remember": this is an example of the grammatical form known as the ethical dative; the ***me*** after the verb indicates extra interest on the part of the speaker.
wise woman = witch or sorceress.[1]

I would she had told you your second should be hanged too,
And let that come about! –
[*Aloud*] But this is very strange.

Lady. Faith, sir, consider all, and then I know
You'll be of my mind: if weeping would redeem him,
I would weep still.

Elder. But, say, that I were Loveless,
And scaped the storm; how would you answer this?

Lady. Why, for that gentleman I would leave all
The world.

Elder. This young thing too?

Lady. That young thing too,
Or any young thing else: why, I would lose my state.

Elder. Why, then, he lives still; I am he, your Loveless.

[*Throws off his disguise*.]

Lady. Alas, I knew it, sir, and for that purpose
Prepared this pageant! Get you to your task,
And leave these players' tricks, or I shall leave you;
Indeed, I shall. Travel, or know me not.

Elder. Will you then marry?

Lady. I will not promise: take your choice. Farewell.

Elder. [*Aside*]
There is no other purgatory but a woman.
I must do something.

[*Exit*.]

Re-enter Welford.

Wel. Mistress, I am bold.

Lady. You are, indeed.

Wel. You have so overjoyed me, lady!

Lady. Take heed, you surfeit not; pray, fast and welcome.

Wel. By this light, you love me extremely.

Lady. By this, and to-morrow's light, I care not for you.

= wish.

418: ***of my mind*** = "in agreement with me."
redeem = bring him back, as if weeping were a ransom for his return.[1]

= escaped.

423: ie. "would you leave Welford too?"

= ie. "give up all my wealth".

= performance.
= actors'.
= a threat: "go to France, or I shall leave you."

= ie. "marry me?"

= ie. Elder must either go to France, and possibly lose Lady, or stay in England, and definitely lose Lady.

446: like ***purgatory***, which Christians must visit and suffer punishment in for a fixed period of time to purge their sins before they can be admitted to Heaven, living with a woman also constitutes a temporary, though earthly, punishment.

459: ***surfeit*** = overindulge.
pray = please.
fast = an imperative: "abstain"; a dining metaphor: ***fast*** is contrasted with ***surfeit***.

= a common oath.

Wel. Come, come, you cannot hide it.

Lady. Indeed I can, where you shall never find it.

Wel. I like this mirth well, lady.

Lady. You shall have more on 't.

Wel. I must kiss you.

Lady. No, sir.

Wel. Indeed, I must.

Lady. What must be, must be.

[*He kisses her*.]

I will take my leave:
You have your parting blow. I pray, commend me
To those few friends you have, that sent you hither, = to here.
And tell them, when you travel next, 'twere fit = ie. "it would be better for you".
You brought less bravery with you and more wit; = fine clothing.
You'll never get a wife else.

Wel. Are you in earnest?

Lady. Yes, faith. Will you eat, sir? your horses will be ready straight: you shall have a napkin laid in the buttery for you. 492-4: at least Lady will feed Welford before sending him on his way. = store room, where provisions were kept.[2]

Wel. Do not you love me, then?

Lady. Yes, for that face.

Wel. It is a good one, lady.

Lady. Yes, if it were not warpt; the fire in time may mend it. 502-3: Bond explains that ***face*** was used to describe the wooden façade of a house. Lady expects a fire would improve it!

Wel. Methinks, yours is none of the best, lady. 505: oh dear! Petulant, Welford unchivalrously returns the insult.

Lady. No, by my troth, sir; yet o' my conscience, you could make shift with it. = make do.

Wel. Come, pray, no more of this.

Lady. I will not: fare you well. – Ho! who's within there? Bring out the gentleman's horses; he's in haste; and set some cold meat on the table. 512-3: ***Ho…within there*** = Lady calls offstage for a servant.

Wel. I have too much of that, I thank you, lady: = Welford alludes to the cold treatment he is receiving.

Take your chamber when you please, there goes
A black one with you, lady. 517: ***Take your chamber*** = "go back to your bedroom".
517-8: ***there goes…with you*** = an obscure line, but the sense may be that even as Lady returns to her chamber alone, she is really two people, herself and a villainess (***A black one***). This line is cited in a footnote in an 1813 edition

		of *Othello*, to support this interpretation of a similar line in that play, "*You that way, and you this, but two in company*."
520	***Lady.*** Farewell, young man.	
522	[*Exit*.]	
524	***Wel.*** You have made me one. Farewell; and may the	= Welford puns on ***young man***, which also means a dupe or fool,[3] or that she has left him "inexperienced".[1]
526	curse of a great house fall upon thee, − I mean, the butler! The devil and all his works are in these women.	526: Welford may be recalling Roger's comparison of the butler to the devil, back in Act II.i.71.
	Would all of my sex were of my mind! I would make	527-9: ie. Welford would require all men (***my sex***) to refrain from sex, as if they had given it up for an extended period of Lent, to wean them off their dependence on women.
528	'em a new Lent, and a long one, that flesh might be in more reverence with them.	528-9: ***be in reverence*** = held in awe, as something not to be trifled with.
530		
	Re-enter Abigail.	
532		
	Abig. I am sorry, Master Welford −	
534		
	Wel. So am I, that you are here.	
536		
	Abig. How does my lady use you?	= treat.
538		
	Wel. As I would use you, scurvily.	
540		
	Abig. I should have been more kind, sir.	= would.
542		
	Wel. I should have been undone then. Pray, leave me,	= ruined.
544	And look to your sweet-meats. Hark, your lady calls.	= candied fruit or sugary cakes;[1] Welford is telling Abigail to get back to her duties - or her snacking.
546	***Abig.*** Sir, I shall borrow so much time, without offending.	546: ie. "I can wait a bit, Lady won't mind."
548	***Wel.*** You're nothing but offence; for God's love, leave me.	
550	***Abig.*** 'Tis strange, my lady should be such a tyrant.	
552	***Wel.*** To send you to me. Pray, go stitch; good, do:	= "get back to your embroidering", a typical activity for women to pass the time.
	You are more trouble to me than a term.	= one of the four periods of the year when the law courts were in session.[1]
554		
	Abig. I do not know how my good will, − if I said love,	
556	I lied not, − should any way deserve this.	
558	***Wel.*** A thousand ways, a thousand ways. Sweet creature, Let me depart in peace.	
560		
	Abig. What creature, sir? I hope I am a woman.	
562		
	Wel. A hundred, I think, by your noise.	= ie. "you are a hundred creatures".
564		
	Abig. Since you are angry, sir, I am bold to tell you that	
566	I am a woman, and a rib −	= Abigail begins a reference to the notion that woman is formed from a man's rib.

Wel. Of a roasted horse.

= the obscure phrase, ***tale of a roasted horse***, seems to refer to an improbable or tedious tale;[1] Welford's point, in finishing Abigail's sentence, may simply be to let Abigail know he finds her presence and conversation tiresome.

Bond offers an alternative interpretation, that Welford means Abigail is "tough and old"; Bond further notes that ***roasted horse*** can also refer to a whore.

Abig. Conster me that.

= explain (the word is related to *construe*).

Wel. A dog can do it better. Farewell, Countess; and

572: ***A dog…better*** = Welford vaguely alludes to the practice of feeding horse-meat to dogs.[3]

Countess = (1) ***Countess*** is identified as a common name for a hound in a 1721 publication, *The Gentleman's Recreation*; (2) the first syllable of ***Countess*** would have sounded the same as the rude word for a woman's private parts; the use of the word is intentional.

commend me to your lady; tell her she's proud and scurvy: and so I commit you both to your tempter.

= ie. the devil.

Abig. Sweet Master Welford!

Wel. Avoid, old Satanas! Go daub your ruins;

578: ***Avoid*** = away!

Satanus = ancient name for Satan.[1]

daub your ruins = a contractor's metaphor: "plaster (***daub***)[1] your fallen or decayed building", meaning to cover over her face. Welford's cruelty would have been appreciated as quite funny by the Elizabethan audience.

Your face looks fouler than a storm:
The footman stays you in the lobby, lady.

580: Welford is being rudely suggestive.

stays = waits for.

lobby = hallway or anteroom.

Abig. If you were a gentleman, I should know it by your gentle conditions. Are these fit words to give a gentlewoman?

= would.

= noble qualities or habits.[2,4]

Wel. As fit as they were made for you. − Sirrah, my horses! − Farewell, old adage!

587: ***Sirrah*** = address form used for servants.

old adage = Martha has earlier called Abigail ***Old sayings***.

Keep your nose warm; the rheum will make it horn else.

= moisture in the air.[1] = turn it to.

[*Exit Welford*.]

Abig. The blessings of a prodigal young heir be thy companions, Welford! Marry come up, my gentleman, are your gums grown so tender they cannot bite? A skittish filly will be your fortune, Welford, and fair

592-3: ***The blessings…companions*** = Abigail wishes on Welford a son who will spend all his wealth.

= an expression of surprise or contempt.[1]

595-7: Abigail develops a plan: although it is unclear exactly what she means, Bond suggests that she has decided to play match-maker between Martha and Welford, expecting she would be a poor match for him. Note that Abigail uses an extended horse metaphor to unflatteringly describe Martha.

A skittish filly = Abigail describes Welford's prospective mate as a weak or nervous woman, as opposed to a strong female like herself; ***filly*** describes a lively young girl as well as a horse.[1]

595-6: ***fair enough...pack-saddle*** = attractive enough to be a pack-animal or bear a burden; a ***pack-saddle*** was a saddle capable of being loaded.[1]

enough for such a pack-saddle: and I doubt not,
if my aim hold, to see her made to amble to your hand.

597: ***if my aim hold*** = "if my plan works out".
amble to your hand = like a horse approaching its owner; Abigail's equine imagery is not flattering to Martha.

[*Exit*.]

ACT III, SCENE II.

A Room in the House of Elder Loveless.

Enter Young Loveless, Captain, Poet, Morecraft, Widow, and Savil.

Entering Characters: the money-lender ***Morecraft*** arrives at the Loveless home to arrange the purchase of the Loveless estates. Note that ***Widow*** has decided to tag along as well - though her presence doesn't really make sense; perhaps she is interested to see Young Loveless once again.

Capt. Save thy brave shoulder, my young puissant knight!

1: ***Save thy brave shoulder*** = humorous greeting, similar to "God save you".
puissant = mighty or powerful.[2]
knight = Young has successfully acquired a knight-hood.

And may thy back-sword bite them to the bone
That love thee not! Thou art an errant man;

= a sword with only one sharp edge.[1]
= who. = ie. a knight-errant.

Go on; the circumcised shall fall by thee:

= ie. Muslims; the Captain alludes to the still familiar image of the Christian knights of the west fighting their enemies, the Turks of the Ottoman Empire; the Ottomans were very much still viewed as an existential threat to Europe at this time, as they had besieged Vienna in 1529, and would do so again in 1683.

Let land and labour fill the man that tills;

5-6: the Captain draws a contrast between those who farm, and are fulfilled (***filled***) by working the land, and Young, from whom great martial adventures are expected.
Note both the alliteration and rhyme of line 5; the Captain has a penchant for using alliterative expressions.

Thy sword must be thy plough; and Jove it speed!

6: ***Thy sword...plough*** = the Captain reverses the Bible's admonition to turn one's "swords to ploughshares".
Jove it speed ="God grant you success (***speed***)"; the name of the Roman king of the gods was often used to mean the Christian God. Note the poetical construction of this brief sentence, in which the object ***it*** is placed before the verb ***speed***, to fit the meter.

Mecca shall sweat, and Máhomet shall fall,
And thy dear name fill up his monument.

= Muhammad, meaning Islam in general.[1]
= ie. Muhammad's tomb.

Young. It shall, Captain; I mean to be a worthy.

= Young intends to deserve to be included among the oft referred-to ***nine worthies***, a collection of nine heroes from the past whose lives were worthy of admiration; they included
(a) 3 pagans: Hector of Troy, Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar;
(b) 3 Jews: Joshua, David and Judas Maccabeus; and
(c) 3 Christians: King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey

		of Boullion, a leader of the First Crusade, and first sovereign of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Bond suggests Young is making a model specifically of Godfrey de Boullion, the crusader who fought the Muslims in the Holy Land.
12	***Capt.*** One worthy is too little; thou shalt be all.	
14	***More.*** Captain, I shall deserve some of your love too.	14: Morecraft wishes to make the Captain's acquaintance.
16	***Capt.*** Thou shalt have heart and hand too, noble Morecraft, If thou wilt lend me money.	
18	I am a man of garrison; be ruled,	= ie. war. = "take my advice".
	And open to me those infernal gates,	19: the Captain asks Morehead to lend him money; the ***infernal gates*** refer to his purse-strings, which, as Bond describes them, close "as fast as the gates of hell upon the lost" (p. 417).
20	Whence none of thy evil angels pass again,	20: "from which never let your ***evil angels*** exit again". ***angel*** = a gold coin with the image of archangel Michael imprinted upon it, worth about 10 shillings; Morecraft's angels are ***evil*** because they were earned sinfully, through usury and forfeiting of property;[3] the Captain thus is recommending to Morecraft to abandon his sinful ways. ***evil angels*** = also a reference, of course, to the fallen angels who occupy hell. We may note that Weber interprets ***evil angels*** to mean bad or counterfeit money, which the Captain would not want, but otherwise he would be delighted to take money from Morecraft.
	And I will style thee noble, nay, Don Diego;	21: ***style*** = call. ***noble*** = another gold coin of the era: ***nobles*** were first minted during the reign of Edward III, and were worth 3s. 8d.[1] ***Don Diego*** = a derisive name for a Spaniard; several plays of the era refer to one ***Don Diego*** who revolted society by passing wind in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1600.[16]
22	I'll woo thy infanta for thee, and my knight	= the Captain perhaps alludes to the Spanish princess (***infanta***) Catherine of Aragon (daughter of the famous sovereigns Ferdinand and Isabella of Aragon), who had married the English Prince Arthur in 1501; Arthur died, and she went on to marry Arthur's brother, the future Henry VIII. Later, after our play was written, James I pursued various Spanish marriages on behalf of his children, most famously the multi-year negotiations for James' heir Charles to marry the infanta Maria Anna. The potential match was unpopular in England, and the subject of dramatist Thomas Middleton's controversial (and therefore popular) play *A Game at Chess* of 1624; the ***infanta*** the Captain alludes to is the Widow, the target of Morecraft's coarse wooing.
	Shall feast her with high meats, and make her apt.	= luxurious food.[1] = suitable or disposed (to be wooed).[1]
24		
	More. Pardon me. Captain, you're beside my meaning.	= "you misunderstand me": Morecraft has neither the intention to lend the Captain money nor a desire for the Captain's assistance in courting Widow.
26		
	Young. No, Master Morecraft, 'tis the Captain's meaning,	

I should prepare her for you.

Capt. Or provoke her. −
Speak, my modern man; I say, provoke her.

= ie. rouse or cause her to love Morecraft.[1]
= ordinary;[3] the Captain addresses the Poet in this line.

Poet. Captain, I say so too; or stir her to it:
So say the critics.

= ie. those who are skilled in textual interpretation.[1]

Young. But howsoever you expound it, sir,
She's very welcome; and this shall serve for witness. –

= interpret.[1]

[*Kisses Widow*.]

39: as described previously, strangers often greeted each other with a kiss on the lips.

And, widow, since you're come so happily,
You shall deliver up the keys, and free
Possession of this house, whilst I stand by
To ratify.

= "your arrival is so fortuitous".
= ie. to Morecraft, to conclude the sale of the property.

Wid. I had rather give it back again, believe me;
'Tis a misery to say, you had it. Take heed.

46-47: Widow wisely advises Young to reconsider selling his lands.
47: "it will bring you despair to have to say in the future, '*I owned property*'; be cautious!"

Young. 'Tis past that, widow. Come, sit down. − Some wine there! −
There is a scurvy banquet, if we had it. −
[*To Morecraft*.] All this fair house is yours, sir. − Savil!

= "it's too late for that".
= "there would also be a wretched course of dessert".[2]

Sav. Yes, sir.

Young. Are your keys ready? I must ease your burden.

= the steward wore a chain with keys on them as a symbol of his office;[5] Savil is being relieved of his position.

Sav. I am ready, sir, to be undone, when you
Shall call me to 't.

= ruined.

Young. Come, come, thou shalt live better.

60: ie. by entering a state of endless carousal with the boys.

Sav. [*Aside*] I shall have less to do, that's all:
There's half-a-dozen of my friends i' the fields,
Sunning against a bank, with half a breech
Among 'em; I shall be with 'em shortly. −
The care and continual vexation
Of being rich, eat up this rascal!
What shall become of my poor family?
They are no sheep, and they must keep themselves.

63-65: Savil expects to join his friends in their poverty.
64: ***bank*** = ie. of a river;
breech = an undergarment reaching down to cover a portion of the thighs.[1]
= ie. Morecraft.
69: ie. unlike sheep, his family will have no one else to look after them, so they will have to fend for themselves.

Young. Drink, Master Morecraft. Pray, be merry all.
Nay, an you will not drink, there's no society.
Captain, speak loud, and drink. − Widow, a word.

= if. = (true) fellowship.[1]

[*Retires with Widow*.]

75: Young steps aside with Widow.

Capt. Expound her throughly, knight. −

= thoroughly.

78 Here, god o' gold, here's to thy fair possessions!

78: the Captain drinks a toast to Morecraft, and refers to him as the ***god of gold***, alluding to Plutus, the Greek god of wealth; in this speech the Captain encourages the usurer to be more generous, especially to him!

Be a baron, and a bold one;

79: note the nice alliteration in this line.

80 Leave off your tickling of young heirs like trouts,

= it was believed that one could catch a trout by tickling it in the gills;[5] the meaning here is that Morecraft should leave the sinful life of snaring the property away from the heirs of wealthy men, who were often considered likely to waste away the wealth passed on by their fathers.

And let thy chimneys smoke; feed men of war;

81: "have a smoke, and lend a soldier (meaning himself) some money."

82 Live, and be honest, and be savèd yet.

= ie. save his soul by rejecting his sinful occupation.

84 ***More.*** I thank you, worthy Captain, for your counsel,

84*f*: Morecraft responds sarcastically to the Captain.

You keep your chimneys smoking there, your nostrils;
86 And, when you can, you feed a man of war:
This makes you not a baron, but a bare one;

87: note the wordplay of ***baron*** and ***bare one***.

88 And how or when you shall be savèd, let
The clerk of the company you have commanded

89-90: Morecraft mocks: he suggests letting the chaplain (***clerk***) of the company that the Captain commands (perhaps only his imagination) take responsibility for saving his soul.[3]

90 Have a just care of.

92 ***Poet.*** The man is much moved. − Be not angry, sir;

= ie. moved to anger; after the dash, the Poet addresses the money-lender.

But, as the poet sings, let your displeasure

93-94: ***as the poet…go out*** = the Poet cites the 1st century B.C. Roman poet Horace,[3] who wrote in his *Epistles*, Book I, Epistle 2, line 62, "anger is a brief madness".[17]
go out = expire, like a flame.

94 Be a short fury, and go out. You have spoke home,

And bitterly to him, sir. − Captain, take truce;

= originally ***me***; I follow Dyce and Bond's emendation to ***him***.

96 The miser is a tart and a witty whoreson.

= derisive term for usurers. = sour or biting.[1] = bastard.

98 ***Capt.*** Poet, you feign, perdie: the wit of this man

98: ***you feign*** = "you lie", or "you don't mean that"; ***perdie*** = "by God" (from the French *par Dieu*), ie. "truly".[1,4]

Lies in his fingers' ends; he must tell all;

= "count", alluding to Morecraft's presumed penchant for counting his money, which is why his intelligence lies in his fingertips.

100 His tongue fills but his mouth like a neat's tongue,

100: Morecraft "can make no more use of his tongue than an ox (***neat***)" (Bond, p,. 419), ie. he has no ability to speak wittily.

And only serves to lick his hungry chaps

= ie. greedy jaws.[2]

102 After a purchase: his brains and brimstone are
The devil's diet to a fat usurer's head. −

102: ***after a purchase*** = ie. whenever he adds to his wealth.
102-3: ***his brains…head*** = Bond interprets this difficult line to mean that Morecraft's ***brains*** serve only as a side-dish for when the devil comes to eat off of his head;[3] a very early editor interprets ***diet*** to mean "sauce".[4]
brimstone = burning sulfur, a means used to punish the soul in hell.[1]

104 To her, knight, to her! clap her aboard, and stow her. −

104: ***clap her aboard*** = switching to a maritime metaphor,

Where's the brave steward?

the Captain suggests Young ***board*** the Widow, like a ship. We may note that the Captain, who earlier had offered to help Morecraft win the Widow, now encourages Young to take her for himself.
stow her = confine her under the hatches.[1]

Sav. Here's your poor friend and Savil, sir.

Capt. Away, thou art rich in ornaments of nature:
First, in thy face; thou hast a serious face,
A betting, bargaining, and saving face,
A rich face, − pawn it to the usurer, −
A face to kindle the compassiön — = to incite or stir up, but also used in metaphor with ***frozen*** in the next line.
Of the most ignorant and frozen justice. — = ie. it cannot be moved to sympathy.

Sav. Tis such, I dare not show it shortly, sir. — 116: ie. for shame in his poverty

Capt. Be blithe and bonny, steward. − Master Morecraft, — = merry and pleasing.[1,2]
Drink to this man of reckoning. — = an easy pun on Savil's status as steward, who kept the household accounts; the Captain keeps Morecraft occupied with drinking, allowing Young time to court Widow.

More. [*Drinks.*] Here's e'en to him.

Sav. [*Aside*]
The devil guide it downward! would there were in 't — = "I wish". = in it, ie. in Morecraft's drink.

An acre of the great broom-field he bought,
To sweep your dirty conscience, or to choke you! — 125-6: Savil wishes there were an acre of the Loveless land in Morecraft's drink, to either excite his conscience or choke him.
broom-field = derisive term for land.
broom = a plant with a yellow flower found in abundance in England.[1]
sweep = Savil puns on ***broom***.

Tis all one to me, usurer. — = ie. the same.

Young. [*to Widow*]
Consider what I told you; you are young, — 130*f*: in this speech, Young tries to persuade Widow of the reasons she should not marry Morecraft the usurer.
Unapt for worldly business. Is it fit, — = unsuited.[2]
One of such tenderness, so delicate,
So contrary to things of care, should stir, — = ie. not made to have to worry.
And break her better meditatiöns, — 134-5: note the extended alliteration in these two lines.

In the bare brokage of a brace of angels? — 135: colloquially, "in order to make an extra buck?"
brokage = engaging in commercial transactions.[1]
brace of angels = pair of ***angels*** (coins).

Or a new kirtle, though it be of satin? — = ie. just to be able to buy a new gown (***kirtle***).
Eat by the hope of forfeits and lie down — 137: ***eat...forfeits*** = to be able to eat thanks only to the expectation (***hope***) of borrowers forfeiting their property to Morecraft.

Only in expectation of a morrow, — = ie. new day.
That may undo some easy-hearted fool, — = ruin; Young relentlessly drives home the unsavouriness of the means by which Widow, in marrying the usurer,

would be getting money to live an easy life.

Or reach a widow's curses? let out money,
= lend.

Whose use returns the principal? and get,
141-2: ***and get…heir*** = "your only reward for all your pains will be a son who will no doubt wastefully consume all you have worked for."

Out of these troubles, a consuming heir;

For such a one must follow necessarily?
You shall die hated, if not old and miserable;
And that possessed wealth, that you got with pining,
= causing suffering in others.[1]

Live to see tumbled to another's hands,
146: "you will live to see your wealth passed on to others (thanks to your son's predicted prodigality)."

That is no more a-kin to you than you
= who. = in familial relation.

To his cozenage.
= deception; but with ***a-kin***, also punning on "cousinage", meaning kinship.

Wid. Sir, you speak well: would God, that charity
Had first begun here!
150-1: Widow clearly alludes to the phrase ***charity begins at home***; the expression found its modern form in John Marston's play *Histrio-mastix*, first published in 1610, "True charity beginneth first at home."

Young. 'Tis yet time. − Be merry!
= "there's time for that!"

Methinks, you want wine there; there's more i' the house. −
= lack or need; Young is addressing Morecraft, continuing to keep him busy with drinking.

Captain, where rests the health?
= he refers to a drink that is being passed around.

Capt. It shall go round, boy.

Young. [*To Widow*]

Say, you can suffer this, because the end
160-1: ***Say…profit*** = "let's suppose you could tolerate being married to Morecraft, because of the wealth you will have in compensation".
end = result.

Points at much profit, − can you so far bow
161-2: ***bow below your blood*** = "consent to marry one of Morecraft's rank (***blood***), which is so far below yours." Note also the impressive alliteration from ***bow*** to ***beauty***.

Below your blood, below your too-much beauty,

To be a partner of this fellow's bed,
And lie with his diseases? If you can,
= Young's next line of argument is to suggest Morecraft is suffering from a variety of wasting - and loathsome - ailments.

I will not press you further. Yet look upon him:
There's nothing in that hide-bound usurer,
= "miserly", but also meaning "emaciated", so that his skin clings to his bones;[1] in this and the next line, Young refers repeatedly to Morecraft's spindly physical condition, wasted away by presumed disease.

That man of mat, that all-decayed, but aches,
= man of straw, ie. without substance.

For you to love, unless his perished lungs,
His dry cough, or his scurvy; this is truth.
And so far I dare speak it: he has yet,
Past cure of physic, spaw, or any diet,
171: ***physic*** = medicine.
spaw = generic reference to a ***spa***, derived from ***the Spaw***, a Belgian town 16 miles south of Liège, famous for its mineral springs, which were popular with invalids attracted to their curative powers.[29]

A primitive pox in his bones; and, o' my knowledge,

= ie. early stages of venereal disease, which was said to cause pain in the bones.

He has been ten times rowelled; − you may love him; −

= a term from veterinary medicine, in which a small wheel of leather was inserted into an incision to encourage fluid discharge.[1,3]

He had a bastard, his own toward issue,
Whipped and then cropped,

= promising son.[1]

175: piling on, Young suggests Morecraft's illegitimate son is also a criminal. The ***cropping*** of the ears was an occasional punishment in the 16th and 17th centuries.

For washing out the roses in three farthings,
To make 'em pence.

176-7: the suggestion is that his son filed away the roses engraved on 3-farthing coins so that they would be taken for 1-penny coins, which had a higher value;[3] however, Bond points out that there was no three-farthing coin with a rose on it, though James I had recently introduced a gold coin, the Rose Rial, with a rose on the reverse. The obverse of the coin features a spectacularly detailed image of James on his throne.[18]

Wid. I do not like these morals.

= ie. Morecraft's morals - or maybe Young's moralizing.[1]

Young. You must not like him, then.

Enter Elder Loveless.

Elder. By your leave, gentlemen.

Young. By my troth, sir, you are welcome; welcome, faith.

187: Young does not seem particularly surprised to see his brother!

Lord, what a stranger you are grown! Pray, know
This gentlewoman; and, if you please, these friends here.

= meet, be introduced to.

We are merry; you see the worst on's;
Your house has been kept warm, sir.

= on us.

Elder. I am glad
To hear it, brother; pray God, you are wise too!

= Elder alludes to another of Heywood's proverbs: "ye are wise enough, if ye keepe ye warme."

Young. Pray, Master Morecraft, know my elder brother; −
And, Captain, do your compliment. − Savil,

= "formally greet my brother".

I dare swear, is glad at heart to see you.
Lord, we heard, sir, you were drowned at sea,
And see how luckily things come about!

More. This money must be paid again, sir.

= since Elder is alive, Morecraft's purchase of the property from Young was without effect; so he asks Young for his money back.

Young. No, sir;
Pray, keep the sale; 'twill make good tailors' measures:

= deed of sale,[3] now a worthless piece of paper.

I am well, I thank you.

Wid. [*Aside*] By my troth, the gentleman
Has stewed him in his own sauce; I shall love him for 't.

208-9: Widow is impressed by Young (***the gentleman***) finally showing some ability to make money, and not just spend it; of course, the legality and morality of his profit are somewhat dubious. Unfortunately, part of the humour, as well as the audience's expected easy acceptance of Young's defrauding Morecraft, is the fact that money-lenders such as

Morecraft were invariably Jewish, and hence not liable to receive much sympathy.

Sav. I know not where I am, I am so glad!
Your worship is the welcom'st man alive:
Upon my knees I bid you welcome home.
Here has been such a hurry, such a din,
Such dismal drinking, swearing, and whoring,
'T has almost made me mad:
We have all lived in a continual Turnball-street.
Sir, blest be Heaven, that sent you safe again!
Now shall I eat, and go to bed again.

= originally ***Turnmill Street***, located in central London; Sugden writes "it was the most disreputable street in London, a haunt of thieves and loose women."[29]

Elder. Brother, dismiss these people.

Young. Captain, be gone a while;
Meet me at my old rendezvous in the evening;
Take your small poet with you.

= thin.[2]

[*Exeunt Captain and Poet*.]

Master Morecraft,
You were best go prattle with your learnèd counsel;
I shall preserve your money: I was cozened

230: "it would be best for you to go talk to your lawyer."
231: ***preserve*** = keep.
cozened = cheated, ie. by being paid much less than the house was worth.

When time was; we are quit, sir.

= all even.

Wid. [*Aside*] Better and better still.

Elder. What is this fellow, brother?

= who.

Young. The thirsty usurer that supped my land off.

Elder. What does he tarry for?

= "is he waiting".

Young. Sir, to be landlord of your house and state:
I was bold to make a little sale, sir.

More. Am I over-reached? If there be law, I'll hamper ye.

245: ***over-reached*** = outwitted.[2]
I'll hamper ye = the sense is Morecraft will use the law to obstruct the Loveless' free enjoyment of the property.[1]

Elder. Prithee, be gone, and rail at home; thou art
So base a fool, I cannot laugh at thee.
Sirrah, this comes of cozening: home, and spare;

= Elder uses the contemptuous ***thou*** to address Morecraft.

249: ***Sirrah*** = an address form used to express contempt.
cozening = cheating.
home, and spare = "go home and live frugally."

Eat raddish till you raise your sums again.
If you stir far in this, I'll have you whipped,

= money, wealth.
= ie. pursue this matter any further.

Your ears nailed for intelligencing o' the pillory,

252: ***ears nailed o' the pillory*** = there was a form of punishment in which a prisoner was secured in a kind of stocks attached to a post, and an ear nailed to the post, with the expectation that the ear would be torn off when the prisoner invariably moved his head;
intelligencing = telling tales, slandering;[1] the earliest case of criminal prosecution in England (as opposed to suits for

civil damages) appears to have taken place around this time, during the reign of James I.[10]

And your goods forfeit. You are a stale cozener:

253: ***your goods forfeit*** = if convicted he would lose all his property.
stale = ie. he has lost his novelty, though there also could be a sense of "being stalemated".[1]

Leave my house. No more!

More. A pox upon your house! −

256: the quintessential Elizabethan imprecation; the earliest use of ***pox*** in this manner occurred in Robert Greene's play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, published in 1594.

Come, widow; I shall yet hamper this young gamester.

= gambler.

Wid. Good twelve i' the hundred, keep your way;

= a vocative expression, alluding to the extortionate but hypothetical 12% interest a usurer might earn on a loan; a 1571 statute limited the interest rate to 10%,[19] and a later statute passed in 1623 limited it to 8%.[10]

I am not for your diet:
Marry in your own tribe, Jew, and get a broker.

= a marriage match-maker.[1]

Young. 'Tis well said, widow. − Will you jog on, sir?

More. Yes, I will go; but ‘tis no matter whither:

= to where.

But when I trust a wild fool, and a woman,
May I lend gratis, and build hospitals!

= "should I ever again".
267: ***gratis*** = ie. interest-free.
build hospitals = a well-known civic gesture by the wealthy was to sponsor the building of a new hospital; this is not something a stereotypical usurer would do.

[*Exit Morecraft*.]

Young. Nay, good sir, make all even:
Here is a widow wants your good word for me;
She's rich, and may renew me and my fortunes.

271-3: Young asks his brother to put in a good word for him with the Widow.

Elder. I am glad you look before you. − Gentlewoman,

= in front of.

Here is a poor distressèd younger brother.

= vexed by problems.[2]

Wid. You do him wrong, sir; he’s a knight.

Elder. I ask you mercy: yet, 'tis no matter;

= "pardon me."

His knighthood is no inheritance, I take it:

= ie. a man cannot live on his title alone.

Whatsoever he is, he’s your servant, or would be, lady.

= courter or wooer.

Faith, be not merciless, but make a man:
He’s young and handsome, though he be my brother,
And his observances may deserve your love;

= attentiveness.[2]

He shall not fail for means.

285: Elder will ensure Young will not ***fail*** to pull his own financial weight in a marriage.

Wid. Sir, you speak like a worthy brother:
And so much I do credit your fair language,
That I shall love your brother; and so love him −
But I shall blush to say more.

290: for the second time in the play, Widow is embarrassed to continue her speech.

Elder. Stop her mouth. −

293: "kiss her already!"

[*Young Loveless kisses her*.]

I hope you shall not live to know that hour,
When this shall be repented. − Now, brother, I should chide;
But I'll give no distaste to your fair mistress.
I will instruct her in 't, and she shall do 't:
You have been wild and ignorant; pray, mend it.

Young. Sir, every day, now spring comes on.

Elder. To you, good Master Savil, and your office,
Thus much I have to say. You're, from my steward,
Become, first your own drunkard, then his bawd;
They say, you're excellent grown in both, and perfect:
Give me your keys, Sir Savil.

Sav. Good sir, consider whom you left me to.

Elder. I left you as a curb for, not to provoke,
My brother's follies. Where's the best drink, now?
Come, tell me, Savil, where's the soundest whores?

You old he-goat, you dried ape, you lame stallion,

Must you be leaping in my house! your whores,

Like fairies, dance their night-rounds, without fear
Either of king or constable, within my walls?
Are all my hangings safe? my sheep unsold yet?
I hope my plate is current; I ha' too much on 't.
What say you to three hundred pounds in drink now?

Sav. Good sir, forgive me, and but hear me speak.

Elder. Methinks, thou shouldst be drunk still, and not speak;
'Tis the more pardonable.

Sav. I will, sir, if you will have it so.

Elder. I thank you: yes, e'en pursue it, sir. Do you hear?
Get a whore soon for your recreation;

= ie. Widow; note how Elder has been addressing her with the respectful "you".

= ie. "mend your ways."

303: "sir, I will do so every day, now that spring has arrived"; ***spring*** here represents ground that has been left barren for the winter, but will be cultivated when the warmer weather returns - a metaphor for Young's renewed good fortune.[3]

306-7: ***You're…bawd*** = "from my steward you have turned into a drunkard and a procurer of prostitutes."

309: Elder, perhaps unfairly, dismisses Savil from his office; his ***keys*** are a symbol of the position of steward.

= restraint.

315: ***where's...whores*** = note the typical lack of concern for proper subject-verb agreement.
soundest = healthiest, least affected by venereal disease.

= ***goat*** was a common term of abuse used to describe a lecherous man.

= ie. like a ***stallion***. I have adopted the punctuation for lines 317-9 from Bond and Dyce, who also substituted ***leaping*** for the original word ***leading***; but the lines as they appeared in the earliest editions are acceptable as well:
"Must you be leading in my house your whores,
Like fairies dance their night-rounds, without fear
Either of king or constable, within my walls?"

= dances performed in a circle, typically holding hands.

= draperies or tapestries.[1]
320: ***plate*** = vessels made of gold and silver.[1]
current = genuine; Elder's mock concern is that Savil has allowed Young to sell off the valuable possessions, and in the case of his dinner ware, replace them with cheaper ones, in order to raise funds to procure women.

326-7: the offense of drunkenness on the part of Savil would be more forgivable than what he has actually done.

Go look out Captain Broken-breech, your fellow,

333: ***look out*** = seek out.
Captain Broken-breech = "Captain Bankrupt-pants".
fellow = companion.

And quarrel, if you dare. I shall deliver

= ie. "pick a fight with him".

These keys to one shall have more honesty,
Though not so much fine wit, sir. You may walk,

= ie. "as clever as you are".

And gather cresses, sir, to cool your liver;

337: ***gather cresses*** = collect edible plants, like watercress, for consumption.
liver = frequently referred to organ which was believed to be the seat of emotions, especially sexual passion.

There's something for you to begin a diet,
You'll have the pox else. Speed you well, Sir Savil!

339: ***have the pox*** = catch venereal disease (if he doesn't cool off his lust).
Speed you well = "I wish you success".

You may eat at my house to preserve life;
But keep no fornications in the stables.

340: at least Elder won't let Savil go hungry.
= ie. women.

[*Exeunt Elder and Young Loveless with the Widow*.]

Sav. Now must I hang myself; my friends will look for't.
Eating and sleeping, I do despise you both now:
I will run mad first, and, if that get not pity,

347: Savil suggests he may appear in public pretending to be mad, in order to elicit pity and alms; there are frequent allusions in the literature of the day to such faux-mad-men, who were known as *Abraham-men*.

I'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty.

347-8: scenes sometimes end with a rhyming couplet.
347-8: previous editors have noted a parody here of Shakespeare's Ophelia, from *Hamlet*, who after going mad, sang strange songs, and then drowned herself. [3]

[*Exit*.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Room in Lady's House.

Enter Abigail.

Entering Character: in her opening speech, Abigail recites the play's longest soliloquy, ruing her advancing years; once upon a time she was the lover of aristocrats, but her standards have been forced to drop gradually over the decades, with a concomitant increase in difficulty in procuring any lovers at all.

Abig. Alas, poor gentlewoman, to what a misery hath age brought thee, to what a scurvy fortune! Thou, that hast been a companion for noblemen, and, at the worst of those times, for gentlemen, now, like a broken serving-man, must beg for favour to those, that would have crawled, like pilgrims, to my chamber but for an apparition of me.

= Abigail addresses herself.

4: ***gentlemen*** = those well-born, but a step below nobility.
broken = ruined or bankrupt.[2]

= the sense is that seeing Abigail's bedroom once had the aura of visiting a holy site.
= a vision, typically said of a ghost or star.[1]

You that be coming on, make much of fifteen,
And so till five-and-twenty: use your time
With reverence, that your profits may arise;
It will not tarry with you; *ecce signum*!

8-11: Abigail, switching to verse, advises the young ladies of the audience to take advantage of their youth's beauty while they still have it.
8-9: ***fifteen…till five-and-twenty*** = presumably the ages between which a woman is most beautiful.

= suggestive, as is usual with Abigail.

11: ***It will not tarry with you*** = proverbial: "time and tide tarry for no man" (***It*** refers to time); variations of this expression can be traced back to the 15th century.
ecce signum = Latin for "behold the proof";[21] the pitiable Abigail points to her own face as she says this.

Here was a face!
But Time, that like a surfeit eats our youth,
(Plague of his iron teeth, and draw 'em for 't!)
Has been a little bolder here than welcome;
And now, to say the truth, I am fit for no man.
Old men i' the house, of fifty, call me grannam;
And when they are drunk, e'en then when Joan and my lady
Are all one, not one will do me reason.
My little Levite hath forsaken me;
His silver sound of cittern quite abolished;
His doleful hymns under my chamber-window
Digested into tedious learning.

13: ie. personified ***Time*** feasts on ***our youth***.[3]
14: "a plague on Time's iron teeth! pull them out for this!" - perhaps a reference to the beast with iron teeth seen by Daniel in Daniel 7:7.
= grandmother.[1]
18-19: even when men are so drunk that all women should be equally attractive to them, none will have her.
Joan = generic name used to represent any female rustic.[1]
Are all one = are all the same.
= slightly derisive term for a clergyman,[1] meaning Roger; her flirtations with Welford have caused Roger to break up with her.
21-23: Roger no longer serenades Abigail with music.
cittern = an early guitar.
= dissipated into,[1] ie. exchanged for.

Well, fool, you leapt a haddock when you left him:

= "let slip an opportunity";[3] Abigail has replaced the original fish used in the phrase, a whiting, with what she considers a superior fish.[3]

He's a clean man, and a good edifier,

= ie. a saver or supporter of souls.[1]

And twenty nobles is his state *de claro*,

26: Roger's net income (***state de claro***) from private sources is ***twenty nobles***, a noble being worth 6 shillings, 8 pence.[3]

Besides his pigs *in posse*.

= potential (***in posse***)[3] income in tithe-pigs; if Roger had his own parish, he might receive additional income in the form of animals donated by farmers to satisfy their tithing requirement.

To this good homilist I have been ever stubborn,
Which God forgive me for, and mend my manners!

28: ie. she should have married him when he her wanted to.

And, Love, if ever thou hadst care of forty,

30-31: Abigail asks personified Love to help her.
forty = ie. forty years of age; not to be taken literally, as ***forty*** was used to mean "an indefinite but large number".[1]

Of such a piece of lay ground, hear my prayer,

31: Abigail refers to herself, in this bawdy metaphor, as an uncultivated or unploughed piece of land; the original edition prints ***lape***, without doubt an error for ***laye*** (***lay***).

And fire his zeal so far forth, that my faults,
In this renewed impression of my love,

= ***zeal*** usually refers to religious passion.

May shew corrected to our gentle reader!

34: ***corrected*** = mended.
gentle reader = a ***reader***, here meaning Roger, was a minor office in post-Reformation England, applied to one who led church services;[1] Abigail also plays on the phrase ***gentle reader***, which is usually used as an address of courtesy by an author to the readers of his or her work.

Enter Roger.

36: Roger enters the stage and walks by Abigail, deliberately ignoring her.

[*Aside*] See how neglectingly he passes by me!
With what an equipáge canonical,

39: Roger may be dressed in his full ecclesiastical garb, or perhaps Abigail refers to his religious bearing.

As though he had broke the heart of Bellarmin,

40: ***broke the heart*** = the still common expression, "to break a person's heart", for bringing crushing sorrow on another, dates back to at least 1530.
Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), Archbishop of Capua, and an important figure in the Catholic church hierarchy in his day; in 1606, the year after the Gunpowder Plot, in which a conspiracy of Catholics planning to blow up Parliament was discovered, Parliament promulgated an oath which required Catholics to swear primary allegiance to James I over the pope and their church. Bellarmine was one of those involved in the back and forth of controversy regarding the oath, and wrote a treatise attacking it. Weber observes that it was believed to have added to one's prestige to have participated in the debate against the outsider.
Thus, Abigail suggests that Roger, as a good Protestant, would have taken sides against the archbishop.[8]

Or added something to the singing brethren!

= ie. written a hymn to be used by the despised Puritans.[3]

Tis scorn, I know it, and deserve it. − Master Roger −

Roger. Fair gentlewoman, my name is Roger.

44: Roger, with biting formality and self-conscious modestly, declines the title ***Master***, which suggests he is of high social rank.[1]

Abig. Then, gentle Roger −

= an alternative polite form of address.[1]

Roger. Ungentle Abigail!

48: Roger's mask quickly slips: ***ungentle*** = unkind.[1]

Abig. Why, Master Roger, will you set your wit
To a weak woman's?

50-51 we remember that Roger is known for enjoying a clever exchange of banter.

Roger. You are weak, indeed;

= lacking self-restraint.[1]

For so the poet sings.

54: an unclear reference, not illuminated by any of the early editors; the phrase ***the poet sings*** appears often in 17th century literature, and was used to refer to any of a number of ancient versifiers, including Homer, Ennius, and Juvenal. Juvenal's *Satire VI* was an invective against women, and included complaints about their lack of virtue and self-restraint.

Abig. I do confess
My weakness, sweet Sir Roger.

Roger. Good my lady's

59-61: even in this difficult moment of confrontation, Roger endearingly cannot help but play with words.

Gentlewoman, or my good lady's gentlewoman,
(This trope is lost to you now,) leave your prating.

= figure of speech,[1] ie. word-play. = pointless chatter.[1]

You have a season of your first mother in you:

62: ie. Abigail has some of Eve's deceiving qualities in her.

And, surely, had the devil been in love,

63-64: ***had the devil…abused too*** = "you would have deceived (***abused***) the devil himself if he had been in love with you."

He had been abused too. Go, Dalida;

= ie. Delilah, the woman who in the book of Judges betrayed Samson by letting the Philistines cut off his hair; her name was proverbial for a temptress.[1]

You make men fools, and wear fig-breeches.

65: ***fig-breeches*** = ie. loin-covering garments made of fig-leaves; the reference is to Adam and Eve covering up their nakedness by sewing together fig leaves; Roger's point is that Abigail has shamed Roger in the same way that Eve, by inciting Adam to taste the forbidden fruit, brought shame on the first man by revealing to Adam his nakedness.

breeches = the ubiquitous article of clothing resembling short trousers; the improbable creation of breeches made of fig-leaves is another of Roger's jests.

Abig. Well, well, hard-hearted man, dilate
Upon the weak infirmities of women;

= discourse.[1]

These are fit texts: but once there was a time −

= "these are appropriate words you use on me"; but ***texts*** also referred specifically to Scripture.[1]

Would I had never seen those eyes, those eyes,
Those orient eyes!

= bright or radiant, used to describe pearls, metaphorically applied to Roger's eyes.[1]

Roger. Ay, they were pearls once with you.

Abig. Saving your reverence, sir, so they are still.

= a very polite phrase, meaning "if I may say so".[1]

Roger. Nay, nay, I do beseech you, leave your cogging:

= deceiving.[1]

What they are, they are;

They serve me without spectacles, I thank 'em.

= the word ***spectacles***, meaning "glasses" had entered the language by the early 15th century, and appeared in both singular (***spectacle***) and plural forms.[1]

Abig. Oh, will you kill me?

81: ie. by spurning her.

Rog. I do not think I can;
You're like a copyhold, with nine lives in 't.

84: ***copyhold*** = a form of land tenure in the *manor system*; a *manor* could be thought of as a self-contained village, under the political and economic control of a lord. A freeman might have a *freehold* interest in a portion of the land, which gave him the rights to the land similar to those of full ownership; a *copyhold* interest was a lesser interest, sort of like a lease, in which the lord owned the land, and had the right to the timber and minerals on the land; however, unlike in a lease, the copyholder could transfer his interest in the copyhold, by inheritance or sale, and the lord was obliged to accept the copyholder's nominee.[10]

The ***copyhold*** is called such because the rights and obligations of the parties are written down in the *court roll* of the manor.[10]

nine lives = an allusion to the proverbial nine lives of a cat; a *copyhold* may be said to have *nine lives* perhaps because of its never-terminating transferability.

Abig. You were wont to bear a Christian fear about you:
For your own worship's sake −

= in the habit of bearing.

Rog. I was a Christian fool then.
Do you remember what a dance you led me?
How I grew qualmed in love, and was a dunce?

= sick or nauseous.[1] = perhaps more wordplay with ***dance*** and ***dunce***.

Could expound but once a quarter, and then was out too?

= interpret Scripture.[1] = put out; the idea is that Roger was too dizzy with love to perform his duties properly.

And then, at prayers once,

= these words appeared in the original and second printing only, and are normally omitted.

Out of the stinking stir you put me in,

= emotional tumult.

I prayed for my own royal issue? You do
Remember all this?

= ie. children; the phrase ***royal issue*** refers specifically to the heir of a sovereign; when a king or queen was childless, as had been Elizabeth I, the people of the realm would pray for her to bear a child, as political instability could result if no definitive heir existed when the sovereign died. (We note that ***royal*** was omitted in most of the early editions).

Abig. Oh, be as then you were!

Rog. I thank you for it:
Surely, I will be wiser, Abigail;
And as the ethnick poet sings,

= pagan poet, alluding to Plautus, the 3rd century B.C. Roman comic playwright.[3]

I will not lose my oil and labour too.
You're for the worshipful, I take it, Abigail.

103: Roger reasonably translates a line from Plautus' play *Poenulus*.

Abig. Oh, take it so, and then I am for thee!

106: by now, Abigail has begun to tear up.

Rog. I like these tears well, and this humbling also;
They are symptoms of contrition, as a father saith.

= a confessor or other spiritual leader.[1]

If I should fall into my fit again,
= fever or seizure of love.

Would you not shake me into a quotidian coxcomb?
111: ***quotidian*** = daily;[1] ***quotidian*** was used to describe a malarial fever which attacked every day; Roger uses ***fit*** and ***shake*** to complete the metaphor;
coxcomb = fool.

Would you not use me scurvily again,
= treat.

And give me possets with purging comfits in 't?
113: ***posset*** = a medicinal drink made of curdled milk and a bit of alcohol, usually spiced or sweetened.[1]
purging comfits = candied fruits or nuts that would act as a laxative.

I tell thee, gentlewoman, thou hast been harder to me
= ie. "treated me more severely".

Than a long chapter with a pedigree.
115: perhaps Roger means a chapter of the Bible containing a long family tree.[1]

Abig. Oh, curate, cure me!
117: Abigail engages in her own little play on words.

I will love thee better, dearer, longer:
I will do any thing; betray the secrets
Of the main household to thy reformation.
= ie. for Roger to address in his role as the household religious advisor; with ***reformation***, Abigail continues her religious punning.

My lady shall look lovingly on thy learning;
And when true time shall 'point thee for a parson,
= "appoint you to your own parsonage".[3]

I will convert thy eggs to penny-custards,
123: she will bake custards that she can sell for a penny to supplement their income.

And thy tithe-goose shall graze and multiply.
= a goose that Roger might receive as a tithe in kind.

Rog. I am mollified,
As well shall testify this faithful kiss:
And have a great care, Mistress Abigail,
How you depress the spirit any more
With your rebukes and mocks; for certainly
The edge of such a folly cuts itself.
131: a neat little aphorism from Roger.
edge = ie. sharp edge.

Abig. Oh, sir, you have pierced me thorough! Here I vow
= Abigail picks up on Roger's ***cutting*** metaphor. = through.

A recantatiön to those malicious faults
I ever did against you. Never more
Will I despise your learning; never more
136: ***despise*** = scorn.
learning = advanced education, which was generally limited to members of the clergy.

Pin cards and cony-tails upon your cassock;
= rabbit tails. = a coat or long tunic worn by clergymen.[1]

Never again reproach your reverend night-cap,
= Roger's ***night-cap*** has been the target of a lot of mockery in this play.

And call it by the mangy name of murrin;
= a brimmed, visor-less helmet worn by common soldiers;[3]
murrin was similar to the word ***murrain***, which describes the flesh of an animal that has died from disease,[1] hence Abigail's use of ***mangy***.

Never your reverend person more, and say,
= ie. never reproach.

You look like one of Baal's priests in a hanging;
141: ***one of Baal's priests*** = allusion to the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18: having shown the priests who worshiped the idol Baal that his (Elijah's) God could bring fire to burn his sacrifice, while Baal could not, Elijah had all the priests

killed. Abigail's simile, comparing Roger to one of the executed pagan priests, would have been particularly hurtful to Roger!

hanging = a tapestry on which the story might be pictured, and not a ***hanging*** as on a gallows.[3]

142 Never again, when you say grace, laugh at you,
Nor put you out at prayers; never cramp you more

143: ***put you out at*** = "disconcert you during your".

144 With the great Book of Martyrs; nor, when you ride,

143-4: ***never cramp…Martyrs*** = ***The Book of Martyrs*** was an immensely influential book written by John Foxe and published in 1565; the book bitterly described the Catholic church's persecution against all those who turned from it, focusing especially on the trials and deaths of Protestantism's victims in Britain.[10]

The book was apparently prodigious in size: a 1583 copy on sale at *greatsite.com* measures 14x10x4 inches;[22] Bond understands Abigail to mean that she will never again crowd up his chapel stall with the volume. (We note that the entire clause, "*With a...Martyrs*", is omitted by most of the quartos after the first).

Get soap and thistles for you. No, my Roger,

= ie. as remedies for soreness; the implication is that Roger cannot ride a horse.[3]

146 These faults shall be corrected and amended,
As by the tenor of my tears appears.

= nature or character;[1] Abigail's tears, she suggests, demonstrate the genuineness of her expressed intent to reform.

148

Rog. Now cannot I hold, if I should be hanged; I must cry too.

= "I cannot keep from crying either".

150 Come to thine own beloved, and do even
What thou wilt with me, sweet, sweet Abigail!
152 I am thine own for ever; here's my hand:
When Roger proves a recreant, hang him i' the bell-ropes!

= unfaithful or false.[1]

154

Enter Lady and Martha.

156

Lady. Why, how now, Master Roger, no prayers
158 down with you to-night? did you hear the bell ring?

= ie. "in your memorandum book".[3] = ie. the church bell which signaled a time for prayer.

You are courting; your flock shall fat well for it.

= Lady is humorously using a phrase normally associated with sheep to refer to the expected increase in the size of Roger's congregation, thanks to the children the couple will have.

160

Rog. I humbly ask your pardon. – I'll clap up prayers,

= quickly concoct.[1]

162 But stay a little, and be with you again.

= "wait a little bit", addressed to Abigail.

164 [*Exit Roger.*]

166 *Enter Elder Loveless.*

168 ***Lady.*** How dare you, being so unworthy a fellow,
Presume to come to move me any more?

= persuade.

170

Elder. Ha, ha, ha!

172

Lady. What ails the fellow?

174

Elder. The fellow comes to laugh at you. –
I tell you, lady, I would not, for your land,
Be such a coxcomb, such a whining ass,
As you decreed me for when I was last here.

Lady. I joy to hear you are wise, sir; 'tis a rare jewel
In an elder brother: pray, be wiser yet.

Elder. Methinks I am very wise: I do not come a-wooing;
Indeed, I'll move no more love to your ladyship.

Lady. What make you here, then?

Elder. Only to see you, and be merry, lady;
That's all my business. Faith, let's be very merry.
Where's little Roger? he is a good fellow:
An hour or two, well spent in wholesome mirth,
Is worth a thousand of these puling passions.
'Tis an ill world for lovers.

Lady. They were never fewer.

Elder. I thank God, there is one less for me, lady.

Lady. You were never any, sir.

Elder. Till now; and now I am the prettiest fellow!

Lady. You talk like a tailor, sir.

Elder. Methinks, your faces are no such fine things now.

Lady. Why did you tell me you were wise? Lord, what a lying age is this! Where will you mend these faces?

Elder. A hog's face soused is worth a hundred of 'em.

Lady. Sure, you had some sow to your mother.

Elder. She brought such fine white pigs as you,
fit for none but parsons, lady.

Lady. 'Tis well you will allow us our clergy yet.

Elder. That shall not save you. Oh, that I were in love again with a wish!

Lady. By this light, you are a scurvy fellow! pray, be gone.

Elder. You know, I am a clean-skinned man.

Lady. Do I know it?

= "even for all your land".
= fool.

180-1: ***'tis…brother*** = elder brothers, as the primary heirs of rich men, were stereotyped as squanderers of their inheritances, and thus not ***wise***.

= propose or plead.

= "are you doing".

= whimpering displays of emotion.

199: harsh! "you were never a lover, sir."

201: Elder means that now that he is indifferent to women, he is more popular with them than ever.[3]

= ie. absurdly;[3] ***tailors*** were held in general contempt in Elizabethan society, and were the target of much mockery from our playwrights.

= pig's cheek salted for preservation;[3] the insults are growing crueler.

= for.

214-5: ie. "the sow was actually your mother, who begot such pigs as you, fit only to be tithe-pigs."

219: ***save you*** = ie. from damnation.
219-220: ***that I were…a wish*** = Bond interprets this to mean "I'd come to the rescue if I could revive that passing fancy I had."

= Lady has, in line 222, used ***scurvy*** in its common sense of "contemptible", but Elder has chosen to take it more literally, meaning "scabby", or "suffering from some disease of the skin".

Elder. Come, come, you would know it; that's as good: but not a snap, never long for 't, not a snap, dear lady.

= "not a morsel for you". = "don't bother pining for it".

Lady. Hark ye, sir, hark ye, get you to the suburbs;

= "listen closely". = the traditional location for a town's brothels.

There's horse-flesh for such hounds. Will you go, sir?

234: literally referring to horse-meat as common food for hounds, but ***horse-flesh*** suggests the flesh of whores, and Elder is the ***hound.***

Elder. Lord, how I loved this woman! how I worshipped
This pretty calf with the white face here! As I live.

= in the 17th century, pale skin was considered attractive.

You were the prettiest fool to play withal,

= with.

The wittiest little varlet! It would talk;

= she, ie. Lady, referring to her in the third person.

Lord, how it talked! and when I angered it,
It would cry out, and scratch, and eat no meat,

= food.

And it would say, "Go hang!"

Lady. It will say so still, if you anger it.

Elder. And when I asked it, if it would be married,
It sent me of an errand into France;
And would abuse me, and be glad it did so.

= mistreat.

Lady. Sir, this is most unmanly; pray, be gone.

Elder. And swear (even when it twittered to be at me) I was unhandsome.

= quivered with excitement.[1]

Lady. Have you no manners in you?

Elder. And say my back was melted, when, the gods know,

257: ***say my back was melted*** = suppose Elder's strength - and perhaps also sexual prowess - (symbolized by a strong back) was dissipated".[1]

I kept it at a charge, − four Flanders mares

258: ***at a charge*** = under a load or burden.[1]
Flanders mares = large Flemish horses, but the term was used to refer derisively to big and strong women.[1]

Would have been easier to me, and a fencer.

= "for me to handle". = leaping horse.[3]

Lady. You think all this is true now?

Elder. Faith, whether it be or no, 'tis too good for you.
But so much for our mirth: now have at you in earnest.

= "now I will really attack you."

Lady. There is enough, sir; I desire no more.

Elder. Yes, faith, we'll have a cast at your best parts now; And then the devil take the worst!

268: ***cast*** = (1) reckoning, (2) analysis, specifically of the urine, to determine one's health, and (3) an astrological calculation.
best parts = best qualities.

Lady. Pray, sir, no more; I am not much affected
With your commendatiöns. 'Tis almost dinner:
I know they stay you at the ordinary.

= compliments.

273: "I know people are waiting for you at the ordinary."
ordinary = a tavern where meals could be purchased for a fixed price.

Elder. E'en a short grace, and then I am gone. You are

A woman, and the proudest that ever loved a coach;

The scornfullest, scurviest, and most senseless woman;
The greediest to be praised, and never moved,
Though it be gross and open; the most envious,

That, at the poor fame of another's face,
Would eat your own, and more than is your own,
The paint belonging to it; of such a self-opinion,

That you think none can deserve your glove;

And for your malice, you are so excellent,
You might have been your tempter's tutor. Nay,
Never cry.

Lady. Your own heart knows you wrong me.
I cry for you!

Elder. You shall, before I leave you.

Lady. Is all this spoke in earnest?

Elder. Yes, and more,
As soon as I can get it out.

Lady. Well, out with 't.

Elder. You are − let me see −

Lady. One that has used you with too much respect.

Elder. One that hath used me, since you will have it so,
The basest, the most foot-boy-like, without respect
Of what I was, or what you might be by me;
You have used me as I would use a jade,

Ride him off's legs, then turn him into the commons;

You have used me with discretion, and I thank you.
If you have many more such pretty servants,
Pray, build an hospital, and, when they are old,

Keep 'em, for shame.

Lady. I cannot think yet this is serious.

Elder. Will you have more on 't!

Lady. No, faith, there's enough,
If it be true; too much, by all my part.
You are no lover, then?

Elder. No, I had rather be a carrier.

Lady. Why, the gods amend all!

= "first I'll say a brief grace", responding to Lady's suggestion it is dinner time, but meaning "just a few words more".

= carriage, a status symbol.

= without feeling.

= ie. touched or affected (by Elder's praise).

= obvious, flagrant.

280-2: ***That…belonging to it*** = "one who, in envy of another woman's reputation for great beauty, would destroy her own face, out of spite."

= usually replaced by ***no one***. = ie. as a token or favour to be worn.

= ie. the devil's.

286: Lady's mask cracks: she can take no more, and breaks down weeping.

302: hardly! ***used*** = treated.

= a young assistant to the footman, suggesting the most menial of servants.

= worn-out horse.

= release him to graze in the commonly-owned pasture; in most of the editions after the first, ***into*** is changed to ***to*** for the sake of the meter.

309: Elder is sarcastic; ***discretion*** = courtesy, civility.[1]

= endow the construction of a hospital, a familiar act of public service by a wealthy citizen.

312: ie. "house them there, to your shame."

322: Elder would rather be a messenger or porter (***carrier),***[1] as his burden would be less.[3]

Elder. Neither do I think

There can be such a fellow found i' the world,
To be in love with such a froward woman:
If there be such, they're mad; Jove comfort em!
Now you have all; and I as new a man,
As light and spirited, that I feel myself
Clean through another creature. Oh, 'tis brave
To be one's own man! I can see you now
As I would see a picture; sit all day
By you, and never kiss your hand; hear you sing,
And never fall backward; but, with as set a temper

As I would hear a fiddler, rise and thank you:
I can now keep my money in my purse,
That still was gadding out for scarfs and waistcoats;

And keep my hand from mercers' sheep-skins finely:
I can eat mutton now, and feast myself

With my two shillings, and can see a play
For eighteen-pence again: I can, my lady.

Lady. [*Aside*] The carriage of this fellow vexes me. − Sir, pray, let me speak a little private with you. − [*Aside*] I must not suffer this.

Elder. Ha, ha, ha! What would you with me?
You will not ravish me? Now, your set speech.

Lady. Thou perjured man!

Elder. Ha, ha, ha! this is a fine
Exordium: and why, I pray you, perjured?

Lady. Did you not swear a thousand thousand times,
You loved me best of all things?

Elder. I do confess it: make your best of that.

Lady. Why do you say you do not, then?

Elder. Nay, I'll swear it.
And give sufficient reason, − your own usage.

Lady. Do you not love me now, then?

Elder. No, faith.

326*f*: Elder couldn't be more pleased to be free of his obligations to Lady.

= impossible to please.[1]

= the name of the Roman king of the gods was often used to refer to the Christian God.

= excellent.

336: ***fall backward*** **=** Bond suggests this means "fainting in ecstasy", but the expression also carries more than a hint of "submit sexually".
set = fixed or even.

339: ***still*** = always, continuously.
gadding out for = wandering around in search of .[1]
waistcoats = ie. waistcoats to buy for Lady; a ***waistcoat*** was an expensive upper-body garment worn by women underneath a gown, but still visible.[1]

= a ***mercer*** was a dealer in textiles. = ie. used for gloves.[3]
= commonly-used term for a whore, so Elder is likely being particularly vulgar - his overall point is that he is now free to spend his money on his own leisurely pursuits.

342-3: ***can see a play…again*** = 18 pence (ie. 18 pennies, or one-and-a-half shillings)[1] would have bought Elder the most expensive seat in one of London's more costly indoor theaters.[3]

= bearing.

= tolerate; Lady is thinking of a way to get back at Elder.

= introduction (to her ***set speech***).[1]

= ie. "treatment of me".

Lady. Did you ever think I loved you dearly?

Elder. Yes; but I see but rotten fruits on 't.

Lady. Do not deny your hand, for I must kiss it,
And take my last farewell.

[*Kisses his hand*.]

Now let me die,
So you be happy!

381: "so long as you are happy!"

Elder. I am too foolish. − Lady! speak, dear lady!

383: Lady begins to faint.

Lady. No, let me die.

[*She swoons*.]

Mar. Oh, my sister!

Abig. Oh, my lady! Help, help!

Mar. Run for some *rosa solis*!

= a spiced cordial, used as a stimulant.[1,9]

Elder. I have played the fine ass! − Bend her body. − Lady,
Best, dearest, worthiest lady, hear your servant!

= raise.

I am not as I shewed. − Oh, wretched fool,
To fling away the jewel of thy life thus! −
Give her more air. See, she begins to stir. −
Sweet mistress, hear me!

= ie. "I was not presenting myself as I really feel."

Lady. Is my servant well?

Elder. In being yours, I am so.

Lady. Then I care not.

Elder. How do you? − Reach a chair there. − I confess
My fault not pardonable, in pursuing thus,
Upon such tenderness, my willful error;
But had I known it would have wrought thus with you,

= "worked this way upon you".

Thus strangely, not the world had won me to it:

= "I would not have behaved this way for the world", or "the whole world could not have persuaded me to behave this way."

And let not, my best lady, any word,
Spoke to my end, disturb your quiet peace;
For sooner shall you know a general ruin
Than my faith broken. Do not doubt this, mistress;

= loyalty, constancy (to her).

For, by my life, I cannot live without you.
Come, come, you shall not grieve: rather be angry,
And heap infliction on me; I will suffer.

= pain, aggravation.[1]

Oh, I could curse myself! Pray, smile upon me.
Upon my faith, it was but a trick to try you,

= test.

Knowing you loved me dearly, and yet strangely
That you would never shew it, though my means
Was all humility.

423: ***shew*** = show.

423-4: ***though my…humility*** = "even though I used the humblest means to induce you to show your love for me" (Dyce, p. 441).

All. Ha, ha

426: everyone - but Elder - begins laughing; perhaps Lady does something cheeky, like open one eye widely; Lady's fainting had been a subterfuge.

Elder. How now?

Lady. I thank you, fine fool, for your most fine plot: = excellent plan.
This was a subtle one, a stiff device = formidable scheme.[2]
To have caught dotterels with. Good senseless sir, = a ***dotterel*** is a type of plover (ie. a bird) that is proverbially easy to catch.[1]
Could you imagine I should swoon for you,
And know yourself to be an arrant ass,
Ay, a discovered one? 'Tis quit; I thank you, sir. = revealed.[1] = "I have repaid you", or "we are even".
Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Take heed, sir; she may chance to swoon again.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Abig. Step to her, sir; see how she changes colour!

Elder. I'll go to hell first, and be better welcome.
I am fooled, I do confess it, finely fooled;
Lady-fooled, madam; and I thank you for it.

Lady. Faith, 'tis not so much worth, sir:
But if I know when you come next a-birding, = bird-hunting.
I'll have a stronger noose to hold the woodcock. = a proverbially foolish bird, also considered easily caught.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Elder. I am glad to see you merry; pray, laugh on.

Mar. H'ad a hard heart, that could not laugh at you, sir. = ie. "he has". = who.
Ha, ha, ha!

Lady. Pray, sister, do not laugh; you'll anger him;
And then he'll rail like a rude costermonger, = apple-seller.
That school-boys had cozened of his apples, = cheated or tricked.
As loud and senseless.

Elder. I will not rail.

Mar. Faith, then, let's hear him, sister.

Elder. Yes, you shall hear me.

Lady. Shall we be the better for it, then?

Elder. No; he that makes a woman better by his words,
I'll have him sainted: blows will not do it.

Lady. By this light, he'll beat us.

475: sarcastic: "ooh, I'm afraid!"

Elder. You do deserve it richly, and may live
To have a beadle do it. = an officer charged with handing out punishment for minor offenses.

Lady. Now he rails.

Elder. Come, scornful folly, if this be railing, you
Shall hear me rail.

Lady. Pray, put it in good words, then.

Elder. The worst are good enough for such a trifle,
Such a proud piece of cobweb-lawn.

= small or inconsequential person, such as Lady.
= a fine, transparent linen,[1] scornfully referring to Lady by her fine clothing.

Lady. You bite, sir.

Elder. I would till the bones cracked, an I had my will.

= ie. "your". = if.

Mar. We had best muzzle him; he grows mad.

494: Martha picks up on Lady's use of ***bite*** to speak about Elder as if he were a dog.

Elder. I would 'twere lawful in the next great sickness,
To have the dogs spared, those harmless creatures,
And knock i' the head these hot continual plagues,
Women, that are more infectious. I hope
The state will think on 't.

496-9: ***I would…infectious*** = Elder refers to the practice of killing off dogs during the plague epidemics which regularly swept London, in the belief that dogs were carriers of infection; he expresses a wish that during the next such epidemic (***great sickness***), it would be legal to spare the lives of the canines and instead snuff those of the women, who are a plague in themselves.
state (line 500) = government or administration.

Lady. Are you well, sir?

Mar. He looks
As though he had a grievous fit o' the colic.

= a type of stomach disorder.

Elder. Green-ginger, will you cure me?

= ginger root, used as a cure for upset stomach;[1,10] ***green*** was also used to describe an inexperienced maiden,[1] and ***ginger*** was considered an aphrodesiac;[5] thus Elder's addressing Martha by this name is somewhat suggestive.

Abig. I'll heat
A trencher for him.

= a wooden platter;[1] Abigail is faux-volunteering to prepare a little something to soothe Elder's stomach.

Elder. Dirty December, do;
Thou with a face as old as Erra Pater;

= alluding to Abigail's advanced age.
= the name of an unknown astrologer whose name was used in the title of a 17th century almanac; hence the reference to Abigail's ***prognosticating nose***.[3]

Such a prognosticating nose; thou thing,
That ten years since has left to be a woman,

= ceased.

Out-worn the expectation of a bawd;

516: perhaps meaning that she either outlasted or exhausted (***out-worn***)[1] the patience of a pimp that she could perform satisfactorily as a prostitute; the general sense of the speech, however, is clear.

And thy dry bones can reach at nothing now,
But gords or nine-pins; pray, go fetch a trencher, go.

= ie. are good for.
= "but to be used to make false-dice (***gords***)[3] or the pins used in ***nine-pins***", ie. a game that resembles a smaller version of bowling.[1]

Lady. Let him alone; he's cracked.

= mad.

Abig. I'll see him hanged first: he's a beastly fellow,
To use a woman of my breeding thus;

523: as she did in the scene's opening lines, when she referred to herself as a ***gentlewoman***, Abigail hangs doggedly on to her memory, or impression, of once having been a woman of consequence and status.
use = treat.

Ay, marry, is he. Would I were a man,
I'd make him eat his knave's words!

= an oath. = "I wish".

Elder. Tie your she-otter up, good Lady Folly,
She stinks worse than a bear-baiting.

= a long-popular entertainment, in which a bear was tied to a post and tormented by dogs, with injury usually occurring to all the animals involved.

Lady. Why, will you be angry now?

Elder. Go, paint, and purge;
Call in your kennel with you. You a lady!

= "put on your make-up and vomit or empty your bowels".[1]
= referring to Martha and Abigail as Lady's pack of dogs;[1] there is a great deal of dog and animal imagery in this scene!

Abig. Sirrah, look to't against the quarter-sessions:
If there be good behaviour in the world,
I'll have thee bound to it.

535: Abigail suggests Elder watch his words, as he may need to defend himself in a courtroom (***quarter sessions*** were those criminal and civil courts that met quarterly).[1]
Sirrah (line 535) = Abigail's addressing Elder by ***Sirrah***, which was usually used as a form of address *to* a servant, demonstrates her intense contempt for him; such a form of address would be highly inappropriate under normal circumstances.

Elder. You must not seek it in your lady's house, then. −
Pray, send this ferret home, − and spin, good Abigail: −

= an imperative, telling her to get back to her domestic duties.

And, madam, that your ladyship may know
In what base manner you have used my service,
I do from this hour hate thee heartily;
And though your folly should whip you to repentance,
And waken you at length, to see my wrongs,

= "responded to my attentions to you".

= "to recognize the injuries you have done to me".

'Tis not the endeavour of your life shall win me, −

546: the second half of this sentence occurs in line 551; in between this line and that - between the two dashes - Elder lists all the ways Lady might try, but fail, to win him back.

Not all the friends you have in intercession,
Nor your submissive letters, though they spoke
As many tears as words; not your knees grown
To the ground in penitence, nor all your state, −
To kiss you; nor my pardon, nor will
To give you Christian burial, if you die thus:
So farewell. −

= ie. "to intercede on your behalf".
= wealth.

When I am married and made sure, I'll come
And visit you again, and vex you, lady:
By all my hopes, I'll be a torment to you,
Worse than a tedious winter. I know you will
Recant and sue to me; but save that labour:
I'll rather love a fever and continual thirst,
Rather contract my youth to drink, and safer

= betrothed.[16]
= torment.
= appeal to, beg.

560: ***contract…drink*** = engage, as in a marriage contract, his youth to drinking, ie. bind himself to a life of alcoholism.
safer = ie. with greater safety.

Dote upon quarrels,

= ie. take to dueling.

Or take a drawn whore from an hospital,

562: ***drawn*** = perhaps meaning shrunken or wasted away by venereal disease.
hospital = where a prostitute would be treated for

syphilis.

That time, diseases, and mercury had eaten,
Than to be drawn to love you.

= used for the treatment of syphilis.
= Elder puns on ***drawn*** in line 562.

Lady. Ha, ha, ha! Pray, do; but take heed though.

Elder. From thee, false dice, jades, cowards, and plaguy summers,
Good Lord, deliver me!

568: Elder, picking up on Lady's use of ***heed***, lists a number of items he should take ***heed*** of - including Lady herself, as indicated by his saying ***from thee***.
jades = worn out, and therefore worthless, horses that an unscrupulous salesman might offer.
plaguey = plague-filled.

[*Exit Elder*.]

Lady. But hark you, servant, hark ye! − Is he gone?
Call him again.

= "listen to me".

Abig. Hang him, paddock!

= toad.[1]

Lady. Art thou here still? fly, fly, and call my servant;
Fly, or ne'er see me more.

578-9: addressed to Abigail; for the first time, Lady actually worries that she might lose Elder.
fly = ie. hurry.

Abig. [*Aside*] I had rather knit again than see that rascal;
But I must do it.

= per Bond, Abigail would rather be demoted to her lowly former position of needle-worker than go after Elder;[3] but as Lady's employee, she knows she has no choice.

[*Exit Abigail*.]

Lady. I would be loath to anger him too much.
What fine foolery is this in a woman,
To use those men most frowardly they love most?
If I should lose him thus, I were rightly served.
I hope he's not so much himself to take it
To the heart.

= ie. in women generally.
= treat. = perversely.[1]

590-1: Lady hopes Elder's anger is not genuine.
take it…heart = the expression ***to take (something) to heart*** can be traced back at least to the late 14th century.

Re-enter Abigail.

593: here we find a good example of the dramatic technique of ***compression of time***: note that Abigail appears to have chased down Elder and had a whole conversation with him, and then returned, all in the time it took Lady to recite a mere 6-line speech (586-591); the technique speeds up the apparent action and increases the drama of the scene.

How now? will he come back?

Abig. Never, he swears, whilst he can hear men say
There's any woman living: he swore he would ha' me first.

= ie. he would rather have Abigail before he takes back Lady!

Lady. Didst thou entreat him, wench?

= implore, beg.

Abig. As well as I could, madam.
But this is still your way, to love being absent,
And when he's with you, laugh at him and abuse him.
There is another way, if you could hit on 't.

= always. = "love him when he's not here".

605: Abigail's idea is never revealed, but it likely involves sex - perhaps she is thinking Lady can win Elder back by giving herself over to him; Lady, for her part, realizes there is something she can do - but not what Abigail is thinking.

Lady. Thou sayst true; get me paper, pen, and ink;
I'll write to him: I'd be loath he should sleep in's anger.
Women are most fools when they think they're wisest.

[*Exeunt*.]

ACT IV, SCENE II.

A Street.

Music.
Enter Young Loveless and Widow, going to be married: with them Captain and Poet.

Widow. Pray, sir, cast off these fellows, as unfitting
For your bare knowledge, and far more your company.

Is 't fit such ragamuffins as these are,

Should bear the name of friends, and furnish out
A civil house? you're to be married now;
And men, that love you, must expect a course
Far from your old career. If you will keep 'em,

Turn 'em to the stable, and there make 'em grooms:

And yet, now I consider it, such beggars
Once set o' horse-back, you have heard, will ride −
How far, you had best to look to.

Capt. Hear you, you
That must be lady: pray, content yourself,
And think upon your carriage soon at night,

What dressing will best take your knight, what waistcoat,

What cordial will do well i' the morning for him.

What triers have you?

= "in his".

= the word ***ragamuffin*** appeared first as the name of a demon around 1400 A.D., before it began to be used to refer to an unkempt person in the late 16th century.

= respectable, sober, grave.[1,4]

6-7: ***a course …career*** = a metaphor for Young to change his lifestyle; ***course*** and ***career*** both refer to a gallop of a horse.[1]

8: if Young doesn't want to get rid of his comrades, then he should send them to occupy the stable, where they can work as servants attending the horses (***grooms***).

9-10: the full proverb is "set a beggar on horse-back, and he will ride like the devil", ie. when a poor man gains wealth suddenly, he quickly becomes arrogant or corrupt; Widow is offering an ironic warning about the Captain and Poet receiving a benefit greater than they merit.

= who. = ie. the wife of a knight.

15-16: the Captain suggests Widow should concern herself with preparing for her wedding night.
carriage = bearing or conduct.

16: ***dressing*** = outfit.
waistcoat = an expensive garment worn by a woman on her upper body, and normally worn underneath a gown; a woman who wore a waistcoat without any garment over it was understood to be a courtesan or prostitute; hence the Captain may have a vaguely bawdy meaning in mind.

= restorative, which would be needed after a long night of romping.

= by ***trier***, the Captain could mean a judge, an examiner,

one who tests something out,[1] or even one who shows off a horse at a sale, as Bond suggests;[3] Widow asks him to clarify.

20 ***Widow.*** What do you mean, sir?

22 ***Capt.*** Those that must switch him up. If he start well,

22-26: the Captain explains: the ***triers*** are those who will drive Young during his love-making, as with a ***switch***; in this speech, the Captain, in a rather dirty and lengthy metaphor, compares the newly-weds' love-making to Widow's riding a horse; note the use of ***hard***, ***down*** and ***stands*** as typical double-entendres.

Fear not, but cry, "Saint George," and bear him hard:
= a common English battle cry.[1]

24 When you perceive his wind grows hot and wanting,
Let him a little down; he's fleet, ne'er doubt him,
= swift, agile.[1]

26 And stands sound.

28 ***Widow.*** Sir, you hear these fellows?

30 ***Young.*** Merry companions, wench, merry companions.
= an affectionate name for a sweetheart.[2]

32 ***Widow.*** To one another let 'em be companions,
But, good sir, not to you: you shall be civil,
= respectable.

34 And slip off these base trappings.
= release or cut off.[1] = ornaments.[2]

36 ***Capt.*** He shall not need, my most sweet Lady Grocer,

36*f*: the Captain alludes back to how Widow's now deceased husband made his fortune as a grocer; his point is to remind her of her own humble roots, and hence that she has no right to be snobbish.

If he be civil, not your powdered sugar,
= the Captain and Poet will keep using the word ***civil***, which was first used by Widow, in a mocking tone.

38 Nor your raisins, shall persuade the captain
To live a coxcomb with him: let him be civil,

39: ***To live…with him*** = ie. to play the fool and join him in living a respectable life.[3]

40 And eat i' the Arches, and see what will come on 't.

let him be civil…Arches = ***the Arches*** was the Ecclesiastical Court of Appeal for the province (an administrative district made up of several dioceses) of Canterbury, so-called because it was located at the old Church of St. Mary Arcusbus, or St. Mary Bow Church, which was known for its arches;[3,29] the Captain puns on ***civil***, using it to mean "respectable" and "Canonical", so that ***eat i' the Arches*** means "eat his words in the Arches",[29] ie. "let him change his behaviour".[3,29]

42 ***Poet.*** Let him be civil, do: undo him; ay, that's the next way.
= ruin.

I will not take, if he be civil once,
= would.

44 Two hundred pounds a year to live with him.
Be civil! there's a trim persuasiön.
= a fine argument.[1]

46

Capt. If thou be'st civil, knight, (as Jove defend it!)
= God forbid.[3]

48 Get thee another nose; that will be pulled
= "yourself". = that one, ie. "your nose".
Off by the angry boys for thy conversion.
= ie. rowdy types. = on account of.

50 The children thou shalt get on this civilian

50: ***get on*** = beget by or with.

civilian = ie. Canonist, by which he means Widow; a civilian, or Canonist, is one who practices Roman civil law, from which Canonical law (see the note at lines 39-40 above) is derived; the Captain is revisiting his religion-

		related metaphor of his previous speech.[29]
	Cannot inherit by the law; they're ethnicks,	= aliens.[3] William Blackstone, in his *Commentaries of English Law* (7th Edition, 1775, p. 249), explains that in English common law, aliens could not inherit property.
52	And all thy sport mere moral lechery:	= euphemism for "sex". = absolute, nothing but.
	When they are grown, having but little in 'em,	= ie. they will not be particularly manly or distinguished.[1]
54	They may prove haberdashers, or gross grocers,	= dealer in hats.[1] = fat;[1] note the wordplay of ***gross grocer***.
	Like their dear dam there. Prithee, be civil, knight:	= contemptuous term for mother.[1]
56	In time thou mayst read to thy household,	= ie. read prayers.[3]
	And be drunk once a-year; this would shew finely.	= ie. thanks to Widow's gracious permission; with ***once***, the Captain means "but once".
58		
	Young. I wonder, sweetheart, you will offer this;	= ie. "why you speak this way".
60	You do not understand these gentlemen.	
	I will be short and pithy; I had rather	= to the point.
62	Cast you off, by the way of charge. These are creatures,	62-65: ***These are…two hens*** = Young's argument for not dispensing with his friends is that they will cost next to nothing to support! ***creatures*** = people.
	That nothing goes to the maintenance of	
64	But corn and water. I will keep these fellows	= this will be explained at lines 72-73.
	Just in the competency of two hens.	65: ie. his two friends will require no more provisioning than would be needed by ***two hens*** (which generally need no more than ***corn and water*** to keep them alive). ***competency*** = sufficiency.[23] ***two hens*** = Young's entourage is down to two, the Captain and the Poet.
66		
	Widow. If you can cast it so, sir, you have my liking:	= contrive.[3] = consent.[1]
68	If they eat less, I should not be offended.	
	But how these, sir, can live upon so little	
70	As corn and water, I am unbelieving.	
72	***Young.*** Why, prithee, sweetheart, what's your ale?	= ie. "what is".
	Is not that corn and water, my sweet widow?	
74		
	Widow. Ay; but, my sweet knight, where's the meat to this,	= food.
76	And clothes, that they must look for?	
78	***Young.*** In this short sentence, ale, is all included;	= ie. "in the following maxim or pithy adage".[1]
	Meat, drink, and cloth. These are no ravening footmen,	79: ***meat, drink, and cloth*** = apparently proverbial: "ale is meat, drink and cloth", though I have not found an earlier instance of it than this. ***ravening*** = ravenous. ***footmen*** = servants who ran alongside a wealthy employer's carriage, which activity would presumably increase their appetites.
80	No fellows that at ordinaries dare eat	= taverns.
	Their eighteen-pence thrice out before they rise,	81: ie. the sense is, they will not be foolish enough to spend their money on food first thing in the morning.
82	And yet go hungry to a play, and crack	82-83: ***crack more nuts*** = cracking nuts was a common activity of early theater-goers.[3]
	More nuts than would suffice a dozen squirrels,	

Besides the din, which is damnable:
= noise. = many modern editions print ***most damnable*** for the sake of the meter.[4]

I had rather rail, and be confined to a boat-maker,
= ie. perhaps meaning "be apprenticed to".
Than live among such rascals. These are people
Of such a clean discretion in their diet,
Of such a moderate sustenance, that they sweat
If they but smell hot meat; porridge is poison;
They hate a kitchen as they hate a counter;
= prison.[3]
And shew 'em but a feather-bed, they swound.
= swoon.
Ale is their eating and their drinking surely,
Which keeps their bodies clear and soluble.
= in good digestion.[3]
Bread is a binder, and for that abolished,
= ie. it causes constipation.

Even in their ale, whose lost room fills an apple,
Which is more airy, and of subtler nature.
95-96: Young describes a traditional drink known as a "wassail", in which warmed and spiced ale or wine was topped with toast to act as a sop;[3] roasted ***crab-apples*** were also often added to such drinks; the idea here is that the ***apples*** would take the place of the ***bread*** in the drinks (line 94).

The rest they take is little, and that little
As little easy; for, like strict men of order,
= ie. men who belonged to a monastic order, and so lived lives of strict ascetecism.[3]

They do correct their bodies with a bench
99: ***correct*** = punish.
99-100: ***bench…table*** = a reference to the simplest, and perhaps most uncomfortable, of furniture.

Or a poor stubborn table; if a chimney
= rigid.[1]
Offer itself, with some few broken rushes,
They are in down: when they are sick, that's drunk,
102: ***They are in down*** = ie. to his friends, lying on rushes in front of a fire is like lying on luxurious down.
that's = ie. "which is to say".

They may have fresh straw; else they do despise
These worldly pamperings. For their poor apparel,
'Tis worn out to the diet; new they seek none;
105: ***'Tis worn…diet*** = ie. their clothing corresponds in its poor nature to their spare diets.[3]
new = new clothes.

And if a man should offer, they are angry,
106-7: they would rather lose the friendship of one who offered them clothing than accept the clothing.
Scarce to be reconciled again with him:
You shall not hear 'em ask one a cast doublet
= ie. "from anybody". = tossed-away close-fitting jacket.
Once in a year, which is a modesty
Befitting my poor friends: you see their wardrobe,
Though slender, competent; for shirts, I take it,
= poor, scanty.[1] = adequate.[1]
They are things worn out of their remembrance.
Lousy they will be when they list, and mangy,
113: ***lousy*** = filthy.
list = wish it.
mangy = shabby or sparse, but also suffering from the mange.[1]

Which shews a fine variety; and then, to cure 'em,
= both (1) repair, and (2) heal.[1]

A tanner's lime-pit, which is little charge;
115: ***tanner's lime pit*** = hides were soaked in a lime solution to remove the hair and epidermis; the loss of hair is a symptom of mange;
charge = cost.

Two dogs, and these two, may be cured for threepence.

116: ***dogs*** = alludes back to ***mangy*** (line 113), completing the densely metaphoric nonsense Young is spewing.
these two = ie. the Captain and Poet.

Widow. You have half persuaded me; pray, use your pleasure: −
And, my good friends, since I do know your diet,
I'll take an order meat shall not offend you;
You shall have ale.

120: Widow will make sure not to offend the guests by offering them any food.

Capt. We ask no more; let it be mighty, lady,
And, if we perish, then our own sins on us!

Young. Come, forward, gentlemen; to church, my boys!
When we have done, I'll give you cheer in bowls.

= ie. where Elder and Widow will get married.
= food and drink generally;[1] Young is saying that all of his guests' provender will be in the form of alcohol, which would be served in ***bowls***, as opposed to food, which would be served on platters.

[*Exeunt*.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Room in the House of Elder Loveless.

Enter Elder Loveless.

Elder. This senseless woman vexes me to the heart;
= lacking sense, foolish.[2]

She will not from my memory: would she were
= be gone from.

A man for one two hours, that I might beat her!
= ie. one or two.

If I had been unhandsome, old, or jealous,

'T had been an even lay she might have scorned me;
= bet.

But to be young, and, by this light, I think,
= an oath.

As proper as the proudest; made as clean,
= handsome. = well-built.[2]

As straight, and strong-backed; means and manners equal

8: ***straight*** = strong, muscular.[2]
strong-backed = strong, but also suggesting that he is able to satisfy women sexually, especially with ***straight***.

With the best cloth-of-silver sir i' the kingdom −
= ie. the wealthiest knight.

But these are things, at some time of the moon,

10-11: ***But these…canvass*** = ***canvass***, a coarse cloth of hemp,[1] is contrasted with ***cloth-of-silver***; metaphorically, Young means that women prefer a rougher sort of man over a more refined one.[3]

Below the cut of canvass. Sure, she has
= "certainly"; in the following lines, Young drives himself crazy with jealousy, imagining Lady entertaining a physically powerful man of no standing.

Some meeching rascal in her house, some hind,
= skulking, with amorous intent.[3] = boor or peasant.[2]

That she hath seen bear, like another Milo,

13: ***bear*** =carry.
Milo = famous Olympic wrestling champion of ancient Greece, proverbial for his strength; he once carried an ox on his shoulders around the Olympic stadium, hence Elder's comparison; ***Milo*** is said to have died when he, in trying to tear apart a partially-cleaved tree, got his hand caught when the tree closed up, and he was torn apart by wolves.[10]

Quarters of malt upon his back, and sing with 't;
= a ***quarter*** of grain equaled eight bushels, or about 290 liters,[1] an obvious but pointed exaggeration.

Thrash all day, and i' th' evening, in his stockings,
= thresh grain, ie. work hard all day.

Strike up a hornpipe, and there stink two hours,

16: ***hornpipe*** = a dance performed to the accompaniment of a hornpipe,[3] an ancient instrument that was sort of a cross between a clarinet and a recorder;
stink = smell or be offensive generally.[1]

And ne'er a whit the worse man: these are they,
= the worse for it.

These steel-chined rascals, that undo us all.
= strong-backed (***chine*** = back). = ruin everything for.

Would I had been a carter, or a coachman!
= one who drives a cart, ie. a commoner.[1]

I had done the deed ere this time.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentleman without would speak with you.
= in an outer room or anteroom.

Elder. Bid him come in.

[*Exit Servant*.]

Enter Welford.

Wel. By your leave, sir. = "with your permission"; a polite apologetic phrase.

Elder. You are welcome: what's your will, sir?

Wel. Have you forgotten me?

Elder. I do not much remember you,

Wel. You must, sir.
I am that gentleman you pleased to wrong = insult.
In your disguise; I have inquired you out.

Elder. I was disguised indeed, sir, if I wronged you. = ie. drunk, a secondary meaning for ***disguised***.[3]
Pray, where and when?

Wel. In such a lady's house, sir,
I need not name her.

Elder. I do remember you:
You seemed to be a suitor to that lady.

Wel. If you remember this, do not forget
How scurvily you used me: that was = treated.
No place to quarrel in; pray you, think of it:
If you be honest, you dare fight with me, 56-57: Welford is essentially challenging Elder to a duel, to preserve his honour.
Without more urging; else I must provoke ye.

Elder. Sir, I dare fight, but never for a woman;
I will not have her in my cause; she's mortal, 60: ***cause*** = a formal grounds for fighting a duel. ***mortal*** = deadly.[2]

And so is not my anger. If you have brought
A nobler subject for our swords, I am for you; = ie. "then I will be happy to oblige you."
In this I would be loath to prick my finger: = ie. "but in this matter", ie. over a woman.
And where you say I wronged you, 'tis so far = whereas.[4]
From my profession, that, amongst my fears, = nature.[1]
To do wrong is the greatest. Credit me, = Elder would never consciously offend another.
We have been both abused, not by ourselves = mistreated or deceived. = not by each other.

(For that I hold a spleen, no sin of malice, 68-69: when men insult each other, any offense can be written off as having been brought on by an excusable sudden emotion; the ***spleen*** was believed to be the source of high emotion or temper.
And may, with man enough, be left forgotten),

But by that willful, scornful piece of hatred,
That much-forgetful lady: for whose sake, = neglectful.[1]
If we should leave our reason, and run on 72-73: ***run on…rams*** = Elder compares himself and Welford to two rams butting heads over a woman.[3]
Upon our sense, like rams, the little world
Of good men would laugh at us, and despise us,
Fixing upon our desperate memories = lasting reputations.
The never-worn-out names of fools and fencers. = those who fence for public amusement in shows;[1] the sense seems to be that Elder and Welford would be like those who fight for no better end than to entertain others.

Sir, 'tis not fear, but reason, makes me tell you,

In this I had rather help you, sir, than hurt you.
And you shall find it, though you throw yourself
Into as many dangers as she offers,
Though you redeem her lost name every day,
And find her out new honours with your sword,
You shall but be her mirth, as I have been.

Wel. I ask you mercy, sir; you have ta'en my edge off;
Yet I would fain be even with this lady.

Elder. In which I'll be your helper: we are two;
And they are two, − two sisters, rich alike,

Only the elder has the prouder dowry.
In troth, I pity this disgrace in you,
Yet of mine own I am senseless. Do but

Follow my counsel, and I'll pawn my spirit,
We'll over-reach 'em yet: the means is this −

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentlewoman will needs speak with you;
I cannot keep her out; she's entered, sir.

Elder. It is the waiting-woman: pray, be not seen. −
Sirrah, hold her in discourse a while.

[*Exit Servant*.]

Hark in your ear [*whispers*]: go, and despatch it quickly:
When I come in, I'll tell you all the project.

Wel. I care not which I have.

Elder. Away; 'tis done;
She must not see you.

[*Exit Welford*.]

Enter Abigail.

Now, Lady Guinever, what news with you?

Abig. Pray, leave these frumps, sir, and receive this letter.

[*Gives letter*.]

Elder. From whom, good Vanity?

Abig. 'Tis from my lady, sir: alas, good soul,
She cries and takes on!

Elder. Does she so, good soul?

= "you'll find out", or "you'll discover".

= ruined reputation.

= ie. nothing more than a source of amusement for Lady.

= "desire to get even with".

89: Elder refers to Lady and Martha.
rich alike = meaning that both are rich, but not necessarily equally.[3]

91-92: Elder means that he feels Welford's pain and disgrace, but for himself, he feels nothing; ***senseless*** had a more literal meaning of "not feeling anything".
troth = truth.

= the modern equivalent would be "bet my life".
= outwit. = "here's how".

= form of address for a servant.

= Elder whispers to Welford: he has a plan!

= obviously ironic comparison to the legendary woman of great beauty.

= mocks.

= another insulting name, meaning "worthless".[1]

129*f*: an Elizabethan audience would have found Elder's extreme abuse of the old servant woman very funny.

Would she not have a caudle? Does she send you

= a warm, sweetened alcoholic drink, given especially to the sick; Elder bitterly takes Abigail's description of Lady to mean she is not well.[1]

With your fine oratory, goody Tully,

131: ***goody*** = a title of courtesy for women of low status, here used ironically.
Tully = Cicero, the ancient Roman senator famous for his oratory.

To tie me to belief again? − Bring out the cat-hounds! −

= hounds that would chase cats.

I'll make you take a tree, whore; then with my tiller

133: ***take a tree*** = ie. as a cat would be forced to do.
tiller = the wooden beam of a cross-bow which has been notched to hold the arrow in place; hence the cross-bow itself.[1]

Bring down your gibship, and then have you cased,

134: ***gib*** = cat, but also an abusive term for an old woman.[1]
your gibship = parody of *your ladyship.*
cased = skinned.

And hung up i' the warren,

= a section of land reserved for breeding animals, but also a brothel.[1]

Abig. I am no beast, sir; would you knew it!

Elder. Would I did! for I am yet very doubtful.

= suspicious (that she is a beast); we remember that Welford had practically called Abigail an animal at Act III.i.563.

What will you say now?

Abig. Nothing, not I.

Elder. Art thou a woman, and say nothing?

144: a common sentiment, that a woman who remained silent was a miracle.

Abig. Unless you'll hear me with more moderation.
I can speak wise enough.

Elder. And loud enough. Will your lady love me?

= "your mistress", ie. Lady.

Abig. It seems so by her letter and her lamentations;
But you are such another man!

= ie. such a changed man.[3]

Elder. Not such another as I was, mumps;

= a derisive form of address for an old woman.[1]

Nor will not be. I'll read her fine epistle.

[*Reads.*]

Ha, ha, ha! is not thy mistress mad?

Abig. For you she will be. 'Tis a shame you should
Use a poor gentlewoman so untowardly:

= treat. = wretchedly.[2]

She loves the ground you tread on; and you, hard heart,
Because she jested with you, mean to kill her.
'Tis a fine conquest, as they say.

[*Weeps.*]

Elder. Hast thou so much moisture
In thy whit-leather hide yet, that thou canst cry?

170: "left in your skin (***hide***), which is as dry as leather".
whit-leather = leather made pliant by treatment with alum and salt.[1]

I would have sworn thou hadst been touchwood five year since.

= ie. wood so dry as to catch fire easily.[1]

Nay, let it rain; thy face chops for a shower,
Like a dry dunghill.

172: ***let it rain*** = ie. "go ahead and cry."
chops = cracks or cleaves open, like dried ground.[1,3]

Abig. I'll not endure
This ribaldry. Farewell, i' the devil's name!
If my lady die, I'll be sworn before a jury,
Thou art the cause on 't.

= coarseness, though usually applied to lewd behavior.[1]

= having failed in her mission, and now the target of Elder's abuse, Abigail switches pronouns, addressing Elder with the contemptuous ***thou***.

Elder. Do, maukin, do.
Deliver to your lady from me this:
I mean to see her, if I have no other business;

= a slovenly, lower-class woman.[1]

= "if I have nothing else to do."

Which before I'll want, to come to her, I mean
To go seek birds' nests. Yet I may come, too;

183: ***want*** = lack (ie. any other business).
183-4: ***I mean…nests*** = an example of the most trivial of errands Elder must do before he would see Lady again.

But if I come,
From this door till I see her, will I think

186: "from the moment I leave my door till I see her I will be thinking about"; Dyce logically wonders if ***door*** should be ***hour***.

How to rail vildly at her; how to vex her,

= vilely, ie. meanly.[2]

And make her cry so much, that the physician,
If she fall sick upon it, shall want urine
To find the cause by, and she remediless
Die in her heresy. Farewell, old adage!

188-191: it was a common medical practice for a physician to diagnose an illness by studying a person's urine; Elder is suggesting that he will cause Lady to cry so much that she won't have enough water remaining in her body to provide a urine sample; consequently, if the physician is unable to provide a diagnosis, she will die.

= Welford had previously called Abigail by this name, back at Act III.i.587.

I hope to see the boys make pot-guns on thee.

192: Bond interprets the line to mean that Abigail is so dried up, like a hollow stick, that boys can use her as a pot-gun.
pot-guns = pea-shooters, from which children shot chewed paper;[3] from ***pot-gun*** is derived the word ***pop-gun***.
on = of.

Abig. Thou 'rt a vile man: God bless my issue from thee!

= "protect my children".

Elder. Thou hast but one, and that's in thy left crupper,
That makes thee hobble so: you must be ground
I' the breech like a top; you'll never spin well else.

196-8: Elder, more vulgar than ever, takes ***issue*** to mean an outlet from which a liquid flows; he suggests Abigail has one such outlet, located in her buttocks (***crupper***); then says her buttocks (***breech***) need to be sharpened (***ground***) in order for her to be able to spin properly like a top; but ***crupper*** can also refer to the strap on a horse that is attached to a saddle and runs behind the horse and through its legs to keep the saddle from falling off; such a strap would ***hobble*** Abigail.[1]

Farewell, fytchock!

= ie. fitchew, ie. a polecat, a term used to describe a loose woman.[1]

[*Exeunt severally*.]

= ie. in different directions.

ACT V, SCENE II.

A Room in Lady's House.

Enter Lady.

Entering Character: Lady begins the scene with a soliloquy in which she decries the uncontrollable urge that drives women generally, and herself particularly, to act perversely against their own best interests.

Lady. Is it not strange that every woman's will
Should track out new ways to disturb herself?
If I should call my reason to account,
It cannot answer why I keep myself
From mine own wish, and stop the man I love
From his; and every hour repent again,
Yet still go on. I know 'tis like a man

= drive out from shelter by hunting, ie. hunt out.[1]

3-7: ***If I should…still go on*** = Lady rues the inability of her reason to control her urge to treat Elder the way she does.

7-12: ***I know…repose*** = in this analogy, Lady compares her proud self to a man who, though desperate for sleep, will rather stay awake than admit to being as fatigued as another equally sleepy man; this is an excellent bit of psychological insight from our authors.

That wants his natural sleep, and, growing dull,
Would gladly give the remnant of his life
For two hours' rest; yet, through his frowardness,
Will rather choose to watch another man,
Drowsy as he, than take his own repose.
All this I know; yet a strange peevishness,
And anger not to have the power to do
Things unexpected, carries me away
To mine own ruin: I had rather die
Sometimes than not disgrace in public him
Whom people think I love; and do 't with oaths,
And am in earnest then. Oh, what are we?
Men, you must answer this, that dare obey
Such things as we command.

= lacks.

= perversity.

= ie. remain awake with.[1]

= ie. women.

20-21: men are just as guilty as women are, because they acquiesce to the perverse demands women make on them.

answer = ie. answer for.

Enter Abigail.

How now? what news?

Abig. Faith, madam, none worth hearing.

Lady. Is he not come?

Abig. No, truly.

Lady. Nor has he writ?

Abig. Neither. I pray God you have not undone yourself.

= brought ruin on.

Lady. Why, but what says he?

Abig. Faith, he talks strangely.

Lady. How strangely?

Abig. First, at your letter he laughed extremely.

Lady. What, in contempt?

Abig. He laughed monstrous loud, as he would die; − and when you wrote it, I think, you were in no such merry mood, to provoke him that way; − and having done, he cried, "Alas for her!" and violently laughed again.

Lady. Did he?

Abig. Yes; till I was angry.

Lady. Angry! why?
Why wert thou angry? he did do but well;
I did deserve it; he had been a fool,
An unfit man for any one to love,
Had he not laughed thus at me. You were angry!
That shewed your folly: I shall love him more
For that, than all that e'er he did before.
But said he nothing else?

58-65: Lady actually has more respect for Elder now than if he had immediately given in to her pleading letter and come running over to see her.

Abig. Many uncertain things. He said, though you had mocked him, because you were a woman, he could wish to do you so much favour as to see you: yet, he said, he knew you rash, and was loath to offend you with the sight of one whom now he was bound not to leave.

70-72: ***was loath…leave*** = Elder has a new sweetheart, and would not want to offend Lady by appearing with her by his side.

Lady. What one was that?

Abig. I know not, but truly I do fear there is a making up there; for I heard the servants, as I passed by some, whisper such a thing: and as I came back through the hall, there were two or three clerks writing great conveyances in haste, which, they said, were for their mistress' jointure.

76-77: ***a making up*** = a match, a marital arrangement.

= legal contracts.[2]
= a material provision for the wife, should the husband pre-decease her.

Lady. 'Tis very like, and fit it should be so;
For he does think, and reasonably think,
That I should keep him, with my idle tricks,
For ever ere he married.

83-86: Lady acknowledges that Elder has done the right thing in finding another woman to be his wife, as he reasonably could expect Lady to continue to string him along and avoid marrying him indefinitely.
like (line 83) = likely.

Abig. At last, he said it should go hard but he Would see you, for your satisfactiön.

= not be easy to do.

Lady. All we, that are called women, know as well
As men, it were a far more noble thing
To grace where we are graced, and give respect
There where we are respected: yet we practise
A wilder course, and never bend our eyes
On men with pleasure, till they find the way
To give us a neglect; then we, too late,
Perceive the loss of what we might have had,

= neglect us.

And dote to death. = "until we die."

Enter Martha.

Mar. Sister, yonder's your servant, = lover, ie. Elder.
With a gentlewoman with him.

Lady. Where?

Mar. Close at the door.

Lady. Alas, I am undone! I fear he is betrothed.
What kind of woman is she?

Mar. A most ill-favoured one, with her mask on; = ugly. = Elizabethan women frequently wore ***masks*** when going out, to protect their complexions from the elements.
And how her face should mend the rest, I know not.

Lady. But yet her mind is of a milder stuff 116-7: Lady appreciates that Elder's new fiancée, unattractive as she might be, no doubt treats him better than she did.
Than mine was.

Enter Elder Loveless and Welford in woman's apparel.

[*Aside*] Now I see him, if my heart 122-5: a typical complex sentence: "don't let me live if I cannot control my pride enough to speak civilly to him."
Swell not again − away, thou woman's pride! −
So that I cannot speak a gentle word to him,
Let me not live.

Elder. By your leave here.

Lady. How now? what new trick invites you hither?
Ha' you a fine device again? = another great scheme.

Elder. Faith, this is the finest device I have now. −
How dost thou, sweetheart?

Wel. Why, very well, so long as I may please
You, my dear lover: I nor can nor will = neither.
Be ill when you are well, well when you are ill.

Elder. Oh, thy sweet temper! What would I have given,
That lady had been like thee! See'st thou her? = "for Lady to have been like you".
That face, my love, joined with thy humble mind,
Had made a wench indeed. 142: "would have made a fine woman indeed".

Wel. Alas, my love.
What God hath done I dare not think to mend! = fix, improve upon.
I use no paint nor any drugs of art; = cosmetics. = dyes used to deceive (***art*** = artifice).
My hands and face will shew it.

Lady. Why, what thing have you brought to shew us there?
Do you take money for it? 150: despite her good intentions, Lady can't help but insult Elder and his ugly "girlfriend"; she is asking if he would take money to sell her, or for exhibiting her, like a freak.

Elder. A godlike thing,
Not to be bought for money; 'tis my mistress,

In whom there is no passion, nor no scorn;
What I will is for law. Pray you, salute her.

Lady. Salute her! by this good light, I would not kiss her
For half my wealth.

Elder. Why? why, pray you?
You shall see me do 't afore you: look you.

[*Kisses Welford*.]

Lady. Now fie upon thee! a beast would not have done 't. −
I would not kiss thee of a month, to gain
A kingdom.

Elder. Marry, you shall not be troubled.

Lady. Why, was there ever such a Meg as this?
Sure, thou art mad.

Elder. I was mad once, when I loved pictures;
For what are shape and colours else but pictures?

In that tawny hide there lies an endless mass
Of virtues, when all your red and white ones want it.

Lady. And this is she you are to marry, is't not?

Elder. Yes, indeed, is't.

Lady. God give you joy!

Elder. Amen.

Wel. I thank you, as unknown, for your good wish.
The like to you, whenever you shall wed.

Elder. Oh, gentle spirit!

Lady. You thank me! I pray,
Keep your breath nearer you; I do not like it.

Wel. I would not willingly offend at all;
Much less a lady of your worthy parts.

Elder. Sweet, sweet!

Lady. I do not think this woman can by nature
Be thus, thus ugly: sure, she's some common strumpet,
Deformed with exercise of sin.

Wel. [*Kneeling*] Oh, sir,
Believe not this! for Heaven so comfort me,
As I am free from foul pollutiön
With any man! my honour ta'en away,

= unseemly displays of emotion.
= "my word is law with her". = greet with a kiss.

= an expression of disgust or reproach.[1]

= once a month.[3]

= an allusion to ***Long Meg***, an unusually tall woman who appears to have lived during the reign of Henry VIII; her exploits were the topic of plays and ballads, which portrayed her as a boisterous amazon.[24]

174-5: Elder is comparing loving Lady to loving a picture of her, in the sense that his attraction was based solely on looks.

= ie. in Welford's yellow-brown (***tawny***)[1] hide.
= ie. Lady's blood and flesh. = lack a single virtue.

= ie. "as one who is still a virgin".[2]

= likely meaning "so, so", ie. an intensifier.

= "don't believe a word she says!"
= moral corruption or sin.
207-8: ***my honour…no woman*** = "without my honour, I

I am no woman.

am not a true woman"; in a man's world, one expected one's wife to be a virgin.

Elder. [*Raising Welford*]
Arise, my dearest soul;
I do not credit it. − Alas, I fear
Her tender heart will break with this reproach! −
Fie, that you know no more civility
To a weak virgin! − 'Tis no matter, sweet;
Let her say what she will, thou art not worse
To me, and therefore not at all; be careless.

= believe.

= maiden.

= literally "without care", free from anxiety.

Wel. For all things else I would; but for mine honour,
Methinks −

Elder. Alas, thine honour is not stained!−
Is this the business that you sent for me
About?

223-4: Elder now addresses Lady; note how he addresses his sweetheart with the affectionate ***thou***, but Lady with the formal and distant ***you***.

Mar. Faith, sister, you are much to blame
To use a woman, whatsoe'er she be,
Thus. I'll salute her. − You are welcome hither.

= treat.

[*Kisses Welford*.]

Wel. I humbly thank you.

Elder. Mild still as the dove,
For all these injuries. Come, shall we go?
I love thee not so ill to keep thee here,
A jesting-stock. − Adieu, to the world's end!

= always.

= illy.

= laughing stock; both expressions entered the written language in the 1530's.[1]

Lady. Why, whither now?

= to where, ie. "where are you going".

Elder. Nay, you shall never know.
Because you shall not find me.

Lady. I pray, let me speak with you.

Elder. 'Tis very well.− Come.

Lady. I pray you, let me speak with you.

Elder. Yes, for another mock.

Lady. By Heaven, I have no mocks: good sir, a word.

Elder. Though you deserve not so much at my hands, yet, if you be in such earnest, I'll speak a word with you: but, I beseech you, be brief; for, in good faith, there's a parson and a license stay for us i' the church all this while; and, you know, 'tis night.

= waiting.

= Elder would naturally be looking forward to his wedding night.

Lady. Sir, give me hearing patiently, and whatsoever I have heretofore spoke jestingly, forget;
For, as I hope for mercy any where.
What I shall utter now is from my heart,
And as I mean.

Elder. Well, well, what do you mean?

Lady. Was not I once your mistress, and you my servant?

Elder. Oh, 'tis about the old matter.

[*Going*.] 272: Elder begins to exit.

Lady. Nay, good sir, stay me out: = "let me speak my mind before you go."
I would but hear you excuse yourself,
Why you should take this woman, and leave me.

Elder. Prithee, why not? deserves she not as much
As you?

Lady. I think not, if you will look 281-2: Lady asks Elder to objectively compare the two women's looks.
With an indifferency upon us both.

Elder. Upon your faces, 'tis true; but if judicially we shall cast our eyes upon your minds, you are a thousand
women off her in worth. She cannot swound in jest, nor = pretend to faint, as Lady did.
set her lover tasks, to shew her peevishness and his = like when she sent him to go to France!
affection; nor cross what he says, though it be 288-9: ***cross…canonical*** = thwart his word, even if it were as good as Scripture; note the possible pun on ***cross***.

canonical. She's a good plain wench, that will do as I
will have her, and bring me lusty boys, to throw the 290: ***bring*** = bear, beget.
to = ie. "who will be strong enough to".
290-1: ***throw the sledge*** = ie. toss a sledge hammer, a popular sport of the era, in which participants competed to see who could throw a heavy object, like a stone or sledge hammer, the farthest, an entertainment more generically called "casting of the bar".[1,9]

sledge, and lift at pigs of lead. And for a wife, she's far = to lift bars (***pigs***) of lead that have solidified after coming out of a smelter.[1,3]

beyond you: what can you do in a household to provide
for your issue, but lie a-bed and get 'em? your business = children.
is to dress you, and at idle hours to eat; when she can do = yourself.

a thousand profitable things; − she can do pretty well in 295-6: ***she can do…pastry*** = ie. she can cook or bake.
pastry = the place where pastry is made.[1]
the pastry, and knows how pullen should be crammed; = how to fatten up (***cram***) poultry (***pullen***).[1]

she cuts cambric at a thread, weaves bone-lace, and 297: ***cuts cambric…thread*** = Bond suggests this refers to the skillful cutting of cambric in a pattern as it is stretched upon a frame of some kind.[3]
quilts balls: and what are you good for?
bone-lace = linen lace knitted upon a pattern marked by pins, and utilizing bobbins made of bone.[1,3]

Lady. Admit it true, that she were far beyond me in
all respects; does that give you a license to forswear = perjure: Lady will explain in a moment.
yourself?

Elder. Forswear myself! how?

Lady. Perhaps you have forgot the innumerable oaths 306-7: vows to marry were considered inviolable, but Elder reasonably understands that to be meaningful, the vows must be reciprocal.

you have uttered, in disclaiming all for wives but me:
I'll not remember you. God give you joy! = remind.

Elder. Nay, but conceive me; the intent of oaths is

310: ***conceive*** = understand.
310-1: ***the intent…understood*** = the sense and good faith behind a vow is more important than its literally being followed.[3]

ever understood. Admit I should protest to such a friend
to see him at his lodging to-morrow; divines would
never hold me perjured, if I were struck blind, or he hid
him where my diligent search could not find him, so
there were no cross act of mine own in 't. Can it be
imagined I meant to force you to marriage, and to have
you, whether you will or no?

= suppose. = assert, promise.
= priests or theologists.[1]
= himself.
= ie. "no deliberate failure on my part to fulfill my promise."

Lady. Alas, you need not! I make already tender of
myself, and then you are forsworn.

319-320: by offering herself definitely to marry Elder, Lady obliges Elder to follow through on his vow to marry her; which, if he fails to do, invites damnation.

Elder. Some sin, I see, indeed, must necessarily
Fall upon me; as whosoever deals
With women shall never utterly avoid it.
Yet I would choose the least ill, which is to
Forsake you, that have done me all the abuses
Of a malignant woman, contemned my service,
And would have held me prating about marriage
Till I had been past getting of children
Than her, that hath forsook her family,

= who has.
= scorned.
= ie. ie. beyond the age when he could actually father children.
= ie. Welford.

And put her tender body in my hand,
Upon my word.

= delicate or inexperienced.[1]
332: "depending on my word".[3]

Lady. Which of us swore you first to?

Elder. Why, to you.

Lady. Which oath is to be kept, then?

Elder. I prithee, do not urge my sins unto me,
Without I could amend 'em.

= "keep reminding me of".
= ie. "as I am in no position to".

Lady. Why, you may,
By wedding me.

Elder. How will that satisfy
My word to her?

Lady. It is not to be kept,
And needs no satisfaction: 'tis an error
Fit for repentance only.

= Lady suggests Elder's breaking his vow to Welford would constitute something like a *venial sin*, that is, a lesser sin, that can be purged with penance (compare a *venial sin* to the more serious *mortal sin*, which constitutes a complete break with God).

Elder. Shall I live
To wrong that tender-hearted virgin so?
It may not be.

Lady. Why may it not be?

Elder. I swear I had rather marry thee than her;
But yet mine honesty −

Lady. What honesty?
Tis more preserved this way. Come, by this light,
Servant, thou shalt: I'll kiss thee on't.

Elder. This kiss,
Indeed, is sweet: pray God, no sin lie under it!

Lady. There is no sin at all; try but another.

Wel. Oh, my heart!

Mar. Help, sister! this lady swoons.

Elder. How do you?

Wel. Why, very well, if you be so.

Elder. Such a quiet mind lives not in any woman.
I shall do a most ungodly thing.
Hear me one word more, which, by all my hopes,
I will not alter. I did make an oath,
When you delayed me so, that this very night
I would be married: now if you will go
Without delay, suddenly, as late as it is,
With your own minister, to your own chapel,
I'll wed you, and to bed.

Lady. A match, dear servant.

Elder. For if you should forsake me now, I care not:
She would not though, for all her injuries;
Such is her spirit. If I be not ashamed
To kiss her now I part, may I not live!

Wel. I see you go, as slyly as you think
To steal away; yet I will pray for you:
All blessings of the world light on you two,
That you may live to be an agèd pair!
All curses on me, if I do not speak
What I do wish indeed!

Elder. If I can speak
To purpose to her, I am a villain.

Lady. Servant, away!

Mar. Sister, will you marry that inconstant man?
Think you he will not cast you off to-morrow?
To wrong a lady thus, looked she like dirt,
'Twas basely done. May you ne'er prosper with him!

Wel. Now God forbid!
Alas, I was unworthy! so I told him.

Mar. That was your modesty; too good for him. −

= honour.

= a common oath.

= ie. "you shall marry me".

= now Welford is fainting!

= Elder is addressing Lady.

= "it's a deal", or "agreed, it's a marriage".

= "that I am breaking up with her".

403-4: ***speak to purpose*** = speak plainly or to the point.

= "lover, let's go!"

408*ff*: Martha sympathizes with the forsaken Welford.

= "you were actually ***too good*** for him".

I would not see your wedding for a world.

Lady. Choose, choose. − Come, Younglove.

[*Exeunt Lady, Elder Loveless, and Abigail*.]

Mar. Dry up your eyes, forsooth; you shall not think
We are all uncivil, all such beasts as these.
Would I knew how to give you a revenge!

Wel. So would not I: no, let me suffer truly;
That I desire.

Mar. Pray, walk in with me;
'Tis very late, and you shall stay all night:
Your bed shall be no worse than mine. I wish
I could but do you right.

Wel. My humble thanks:
God grant I may but live to quit your love!

[*Exeunt*.]

= ie. to Elder.

= ie. Abigail.

= Welford, crying, is playing his part well!

= "not me".

432: sharing a bed was common amongst friends in those days, and not necessarily sexual.

= requite, ie. repay; Welford's role-playing has earned him a place in Martha's bed!

ACT V, SCENE III.

A Room in the House of Elder Loveless.

Enter Young Loveless and Savil.

Young. Did your master send for me, Savil?

Sav. Yes, he did send for your worship, sir.

= a title used by Savil to show his new-found respect for Young, as well as to acknowledge Young's new status as a knight.

Young. Do you know the business?

= ie. "why he sent for me?"

Sav. Alas, sir, I know nothing!
Nor am employed beyond my hours of eating.
My dancing days are done, sir.

Young. What art thou now, then?

11: Young is inquiring into Savil's exact status in the household; after all, he had been fired by Elder, though he is still permitted to eat there.

Sav. If you consider me in little, I
Am, with your worship's reverence, sir, a rascal;
One that, upon the next anger of your brother,

15-6: Savil expects to get kicked out of the house at any moment.

Must raise a sconce by the highway, and sell switches.

16: ***sconce*** = a small earthen fortification: Savil means he must build a pile of dirt to use as a vendor's stall.[1,9]
sell switches = ie. sell slender, flexible shoots cut from a tree by the side of the road.[1]

My wife is learning now, sir, to weave inkle.

= linen strips or tape, or white thread.[1,4]

Young. What dost thou mean to do with thy children, Savil?

Sav. My eldest boy is half a rogue already;
= beggar.[3]

He was born bursten; and, your worship knows,
= probably meaning "ruptured", suggesting "deformed", which may more likely attract ***men's compassions***.[3]

That is a pretty step to men's compassions.

My youngest boy I purpose, sir, to bind
= ie. as an apprentice.[1]

For ten years to a gaoler, to draw under him,
= jailer.

That he may shew us mercy in his function.
26: if Savil and his family are tossed into prison at some point, they may receive better treatment if his son is working as an apprentice jailer!

Young. Your family is quartered with discretion.
= housed: Elder is punning on ***drawn and quartered*** (***draw*** appeared in line 25).

You are resolved to cant, then? where, Savil,
= literally meaning to "use the jargon or whining voice of a beggar", here meaning simply to beg.[1,3]

Shall your scene lie?
30: a bit of self-reference to the stage.

Sav. Beggars must be no choosers;
32: this ubiquitous proverb seems to have first appeared in Heywood's 1546 *Proverbs*: "beggers shuld be no choosers."

In every place, I take it, but the stocks.

Young. This is your drinking and your whoring, Savil;
= ie. "what happens when you turn to".

I told you of it; but your heart was hardened.
= ie. warned; Young is being a bit disingenuous here.

Sav. 'Tis true, you were the first that told me of it;
38-44: Savil reverses Young's meaning, bitterly suggesting that it was Young who talked him *into* such dissolute behavior.

I do remember yet in tears, you told me,

You would have whores; and in that passion, sir,
You broke out thus; "Thou miserable man,
= ie. spoke.

Repent, and brew three strikes more in a hogshead:
= the proportion of malt in ale.[1] = cask.

Tis noon ere we be drunk now, and the time
43: ***ere*** = before.

Can tarry for no man."
43-44: ***the time…no man*** = this is the second time this popular adage has been used in our play; see Act IV.i.9-11.

Young. You're grown a bitter gentleman. I see,
Misery can clear your head better than mustard.
= ***mustard*** could be applied externally to relieve pain.[10]

I'll be a suitor for your keys again, sir.
= Young agrees to ask Elder to give Savil his job back.

Sav. Will you but be so gracious to me, sir,
I shall be bound −

Young. You shall, sir, to your bunch again;
= ie. Savil's family.

Or I'll miss foully.
54: ie. Young is confident he can get Savil's job back.

Enter Morecraft.

More. Save you, gentlemen, save you!
= "God save you", a customary greeting.

Young. Now, polecat, what young rabbit's nest have you to draw?
60: ***polecat*** = a carnivorous animal resembling a weasel; Young is basically calling Morecraft a predator.
to draw = a hunting term, meaning to trace the steps of a given prey.[20]

More. Come, prithee, be familiar, knight.
62: ***prithee*** = "I pray thee", ie. please.
familiar = sociable.[1]

Young. Away, fox!
I'll send for terriers for you.

More. Thou art wide yet:
I'll keep thee company.

Young. I am about some business.
Indentures, if you follow me, I'll beat you:
Take heed; as I live, I'll cancel your coxcomb.

More. Thou art cozened now; I am no usurer.
What poor fellow's this?

Sav. I am poor indeed, sir.

More. Give him money, knight.

Young. Do you begin the offering.

More. There, poor fellow; here's an angel for thee.

Young. Art thou in earnest, Morecraft?

More. Yes, faith, knight; I'll follow thy example:
Thou hadst land and thousands; thou spent'st,
And flung'st away, and yet it flows in double:
I purchased, wrung, and wire-drawed for my wealth,
Lost, and was cozened; for which I make a vow,
To try all the ways above ground, but I'll find
A constant means to riches without curses.

Young. I am glad of your conversion, Master Morecraft:
You're in a fair course; pray, pursue it still.

More. Come, we are all gallants now; I'll keep thee company. −
Here, honest fellow, for this gentleman's sake,
There's two angels more for thee.

Sav. God quit you, sir, and keep you long in this mind!

Young. Wilt thou perséver?

More. Till I have a penny.
I have brave clothes a-making, and two horses:
Canst thou not help me to a match, knight?

I'll lay a thousand pound upon my crop-ear.

64-65: Young continues his hunting references: now Morecraft is a ***fox***.
= ie. "to chase you away."
= ie. "wide of the mark", from archery: Young fails to understand Morecraft's intent.
= contracts or deeds;[1] Young is using ***Indentures*** vocatively, as a name for Morecraft.
= another legal term, meaning "to annul". = head.
= deceived. = Morecraft has given up his profession.
75: Morecraft indicates Savil.
= "why don't you".
= a coin worth 10 shillings.[3]
85: Young is stunned that the usurer would give someone money.
= an early editor suggested adding ***which*** before ***thou***, for the sake of the meter; Dyce agrees something dropped out.
= ie. Young's wealth.
= literally to draw out or elongate something like metal, a metaphor for "behaved parsimoniously";[1] the idiom "stretch one's dollar" comes to mind.
= ie. "all possible means to get wealthy".
= ie. being cursed by other people.
= a religious pun on "converting", applied to the Jewish Morecraft, who has converted to a life away from usury.
96: a hunting metaphor: as a greyhound would ***pursue*** game (***coursing***), Morecraft is encouraged to continue his new chosen path.
= reward. = ie. frame of mind.
= ie. keep to his new course of behavior; ***persever*** was normally stressed on the second syllable.
= whilst, so long as.[9]
= fine.
= a wife, ie. a rich wife, like Widow.
109: ***lay*** = bet.
my crop-ear = back at Act III.ii.251-2, Elder threatened

to have the usurer criminally punished if he persisted in trying to recover his money from the Lovelesses, by whipping and having his ears nailed to a pillory; this line suggests that Elder's threats were not idle, and that Morecraft was indeed punished for slander.

Young. 'Foot, this is stranger than an Afric monster!

= "by God's foot"; an act of Parliament in 1605 banned the blasphemous use of God's name on stage; hence such implied blasphemies became the norm in Elizabethan drama.

There will be no more talk of the Cleve wars

= in 1609, the Duke of ***Cleves***, John William, died heirless and insane; an obscure little war over his duchy commenced between Catholic and Protestant factions, and was not settled until England and France intervened in 1614.[10] Young suggests that the conversion of Morecraft into a generous gallant will replace the Cleve Wars as a topic of conversation.

Whilst this lasts. Come, I'll put thee into blood.

= ie. get Morecraft a wife that will enter him into gentility (***blood***).[1]

Sav. [*Aside*]

Would all his darned tribe were as tender-hearted! −

116: unfortunate but typical Jewish stereotyping.

I beseech you, let this gentleman join with you
In the recovery of my keys; I like
His good beginning, sir: the whilst, I'll pray
For both your worships.

Young. He shall, sir.

More. Shall we go, noble knight? I would fain be acquainted.

= like to.

Young. I'll be your servant, sir.

[*Exeunt*.]

ACT V, SCENE IV.

A Room in Lady's House.

Enter Elder Loveless and Lady.

The Time: Elder and Lady were married; it is now the morning after their wedding night.

Elder. Faith, my sweet lady, I have caught you now,
Maugre your subtilties and fine devices.
Be coy again now.

= in spite of .[2] = intricate schemes.
3: "go ahead and be disdainful of me now;" Elder seems to still hold a grudge against Lady.

Lady. Prithee, sweetheart, tell true.

Elder. By this light,

7-9: in this elaborate oath, Elder swears on a trio of concepts.

By all the pleasures I have had this night,
By your lost maiden-head, you are cozened merely;
I have cast beyond your wit: that gentlewoman
Is your retainer Welford.

= completely tricked.
= devised, schemed.[3]
= follower.[1]

Lady. It cannot be so.

Elder. Your sister has found it so, or I mistake:
Mark how she blushes when you see her next.
Ha, ha, ha! I shall not travel now; ha, ha, ha!

= ie. to France.

Lady. Prithee, sweetheart,
Be quiet: thou hast angered me at heart.

Elder. I'll please you soon again.

22: likely suggestive.

Lady. Welford!

24: Lady is not calling for Welford, but simply repeating his name in disbelief.

Elder. Ay, Welford. He's a young handsome fellow,
Well-bred, and landed: your sister can instruct you
In his good parts better than I, by this time.

= an owner of property.
= qualities, again suggestive.

Lady. Ud's foot, am I fetched over thus?

= God's foot. = gotten the better of .[1]

Elder. Yes, i' faith;
And over shall be fetched again, never fear it.

33: Elder is risqué again.

Lady. I must be patient, though it torture me.
You have got the sun, sir.

= gotten the upper hand or the advantage; the phrase derives from the advantage an army had when the sun was to its back, shining into the enemy's eyes.[1]

Elder. And the moon too; in which I'll be the man.

= ie. the man in the moon.

Lady. But had I known this, had I but surmised it,
You should have hunted three trains more, before
You had come to the course;

41-42: "you would have needed (***hunted*** here means "employed in hunting") three more snares or lures (***trains***) before you would have captured the target of your hunt (***course***, meaning herself)."[1]

You should have hanked o' the bridle, sir, i' faith.

43: "you would have been entangled or caught (***hanked***) in your own bridle".[1]

Elder. I knew it, and mined with you, and so blew you up.

45: Elder employs the image of secretly digging a ***mine*** under one's enemy, as in a siege, and ***blowing it up***.

Now you may see the gentlewoman: stand close.

= "let's hide."

[*They retire*.]

Enter Welford in his own apparel, and Martha.

Mar. For God's sake, sir, be private in this business;

52-53: Martha worries for her reputation: what if it becomes known that she had spent the night with a man before she was married?
private = secret.

You have undone me else. Oh, God, what have I done?

= ruined.
Note that while Welford will address Martha with the intimate and familiar ***thou***, Martha, a nervous wreck, uses the formal ***you*** in addressing Welford to signal her need to keep a formal distance from her new lover, at least until her fears have been assuaged.

Wel. No harm, I warrant thee.

= assure.

Mar. How shall I look upon my friends again?
With what face?

Wel. Why, e'en with that;
Tis a good one, thou canst not find a better.
Look upon all the faces thou shalt see there,

62-65: Welford explains that most women have slept with a man while unmarried, but no one can tell just by looking at them.

And you shall find 'em smooth still, fair still, sweet still,
And, to your thinking, honest: those have done
As much as you have yet, or dare do, mistress;
And yet they keep no stir.

= pleasant.[2]
= "as far as you would know". = chaste.
= ie. also slept with a man while unmarried.
= make no fuss.[1]

Mar. Good sir, go in, and put your woman's clothes on:
If you be seen thus, I am lost for ever.

Wel. I'll watch you for that, mistress; I am no fool:
Here will I tarry till the house be up,
And witness with me.

= "protect or guard you against such a possibility".
72-73, 77-87: Welford gives Martha several options:
(a) go back to bed with him;
(b) agree to marry him; or
(c) face scandal if she doesn't.
The one thing he will not do is go back into his disguise. By ***witness***, Welford means he wants their vows to marry to be heard by others, so as to make their betrothal more binding.

Mar. Good dear friend, go in!

Wel. To bed again, if you please, else I am fixed here
Till there be notice taken what I am,
And what I have done.
If you could juggle me into my womanhood again,

= "or else I will not budge from here".

80-83: if he were to change back into his woman's outfit, then Martha could credibly carry on as if Welford never existed, and leave Welford single again.
juggle = change or transform, as by magic or trickery.[1]

And so cog me out of your company,
All this would be forsworn, and I again
An asinego, as your sister left me.
No; I'll have it known and published: then,
If you'll be a whore, forsake me, and be shamed;
And, when you can hold out no longer, marry
Some cast Cleve captain, and sell bottle-ale.

= cheat.
= ass or fool.[1]
= proclaimed.
= ie. for sleeping with him without marrying him.
= cashiered soldier of the Cleve Wars; it is odd that Welford should refer to the ***Cleve Wars*** so soon after Young had done so in just the previous scene.

Mar. I dare not stay, sir: use me modestly;
I am your wife.

= "treat me with decency."[1]

90: Martha chooses option (b) above; they have likely made vows of marriage to each other, which in those days created a bond stronger than a mere engagement; indeed, they could call themselves man and wife; such a vow was even stronger if made in front of witnesses, making the vow legally and morally binding.

Wel. Go in; I'll make up all.

92: ***make up all*** = fix everything.

The Engagement of Martha and Welford: the entire episode of Welford's tricking Martha raises a whole host of questions; for example, how exactly did Welford reveal

himself to be a man - which presumably occurred as he was removing his female disguise - without Martha screaming or running from the room? did Martha resist him at all? also, Welford's demand that she marry him, or else risk ruining her reputation by having her fornication become public knowledge, contains a sniff of blackmail.

While we are on the subject, a modern student of gender relations could write an entire thesis on all the kissing between Elder and Welford in the previous scene; after all, all the actors on the pre-Restoration stage were men (or boys);

I think we can accept that an actor of the era would just know that it was a part of his job to kiss other males when they are portraying members of the opposite sex; such kisses are necessarily part of the relationships between the genders, and the audience would easily and regularly suspend belief in seeing such acts of affection between males and females.

But in the case of Elder and Welford, the two characters "knew" they were both men as they nuzzled each other throughout the previous scene. We may end this discussion with the following observation, which is that the weird obsession with "gender issues" is a modern construct, and probably not one that came to mind all those centuries ago; in other words, we must be careful of imposing our contemporary ideas and biases on the unknowable men and women who populated England half a millennium ago.

94 [*Exit Martha*.]

96 ***Elder.*** [*coming forward with Lady.*]
I'll be a witness of your naked truth, sir. −
= obviously humorously suggestive.

98 This is the gentlewoman; prithee, look upon him;
98*f*: Elder addresses Lady.

This is he that made me break my faith, sweet;
= ie. vows to marry Lady.

100 But thank your sister, she hath soldered it.
= ie. united the ***faith*** that had been ***broken*** in the previous line.

102 ***Lady.*** What a dull ass was I, I could not see
= tell.

This wencher from a wench! Twenty to one,
= womanizer.

104 If I had been but tender, like my sister,
= ie. as sympathetic or solicitous to Welford.

He had served me such a slippery trick too.
105: "he would have seduced me too"; ***slippery trick*** is perhaps suggestive.

106

Wel. Twenty to one I had.
= Welford is confident!

108

Elder. I would have watched you, sir, by your good patience,
= guarded against.

110 For ferreting in my ground.
= hunting with or like a ferret.[1]

112 ***Lady.*** You have been with my sister?

114 ***Wel.*** Yes; to bring.
= Bond commented on the uncertain meaning of this line; perhaps he means "to produce progeny", as Elder's response suggests.

116 ***Elder.*** An heir into the world, he means.

118 ***Lady.*** There is no chafing now.
118: ie. there is no point in getting angry (***chafing***) now.

120 ***Wel.*** I have had my part on 't;

I have been chafèd this three hours, that's the least:
= Welford puns suggestively: ***chafe*** also means "to heat"

I am reasonable cool now.

and "to excite".[1]

Lady. Cannot you fare well, but you must cry roast meat?

124: "must you actually boast (***cry roast meat***)[1] of your success?"

Wel. He that fares well, and will not bless the founders,

= allusion to the Catholic custom of praying for the souls of those who founded charities, monasteries, etc.[3]

Is either surfeited, or ill taught, lady.

= ie. jaded or wearied with excess good fortune[1]

For mine own part, I have found so sweet a diet,
I can commend it, though I cannot spare it.

Elder. How like you this dish, Welford? I made a supper on 't, and fed so heartly, I could not sleep.

= ie. meaning Lady; Elder punningly takes up Welford's dining metaphor.

Lady. By this light, had I but scented out your train,

= scheme.[2]

You had slept with a bare pillow in your arms,
And kissed that, or else the bed-post, for any wife
You had got this twelvemonth yet: I would have vexed you
More than a tired post-horse, and been longer bearing
Than ever after-game at Irish was.
Lord, that I were unmarrièd again!

138: ***post-horse*** = messenger's horse.

138-9: ***been longer…Irish was*** = ie. "it would be a long time before I relented."

Irish was a game similar to backgammon; ***after-game*** was a difficult strategy in which one forbore attacking early in the game, awaiting a more favourable opportunity; ***bearing*** referred to the removing of one's pieces after they have circled the board.[1]

Elder. Lady, I would not undertake you, were you
Again a haggard, for the best cast of
Sore ladies i' the kingdom: you were ever
Tickle-footed, and would not truss round.

142-5: in this extended metaphor, Elder uses various terms from falconry; he would not take Lady up in marriage (***undertake***)[1] if she were once again single (***haggard*** = wild adult female hawk) for a pair (***cast***) of young maidens (***sore*** describes a young hawk that has not yet molted), since she is unable to keep hold of what she has (***tickle-footed*** describes a hawk that does not have a secure grasp of its prey; to ***truss*** is to grasp and fly off with the prey).[1,3]

Wel. Is she fast?

147: Welford joins in the metaphoric fun: "is she held fast now?"

Elder. She was all night locked here, boy.

Wel. Then you may lure her, without fear of losing:

151: ***lure her*** = "recall her with a lure"; a lure is a feathered apparatus attached to the end of a cord, used to recall a hawk.[1]

losing = ie. her flying away.

Take off her cranes −

= common plural form ***creance***, the cord attached to a hawk to keep it from flying away while it is being trained.[1,4]

You have a delicate gentlewoman to your sister:
Lord, what a pretty fury she was in,
When she perceived I was a man!
But, I thank God, I satisfied her scruple,

= appeased Martha's uncertainty or unease regarding their status, or the immorality of what they have done, or her reputation, with a likely extra meaning of "satisfied her sexually."

Without the parson o' the town.

Elder. What did ye?

Wel. Madam, can you tell what we did?

161: Welford addresses Lady.

Elder. She has a shrewd guess at it, I see by her.

Lady. Well, you may mock us: but, my large gentlewoman,
= lewd or coarse.[2] = ie. Welford, alluding to his disguise.

My Mary Ambree, had I but seen into you,
= ***Mary Ambree*** was an English heroine of the liberation of Ghent from the Spanish in 1584; as described in ballads, she disguised herself as a soldier to be with her lover, also a volunteer soldier; when he was killed, she was made an officer, and led her men bravely.[25] Her name became proverbial for a woman of "heroic spirit".

You should have had another bed-fellow,
Fitter a great deal for your itch.
= ie. lust.

Wel. I thank you, lady;
Methought it was well. You are so curious!
= fastidious, delicate.

Elder. Get on your doublet; here comes my brother.
= ie. "get dressed".

Enter Young Loveless, his Lady, Morecraft, Savil, and Serving-men.

Young. Good morrow, brother; and all good to your lady!

More. God save you, and good morrow to you all!

Elder. Good morrow. − Here's a poor brother of yours.
= "brother-in-law of yours" (addressing Lady).

Lady. Fie, how this shames me!

More. Prithee, good fellow, help me to a cup of beer.

1st Serv. I will, sir.

[*Exit 1st Servant*.]

Young. Brother, what make you here? will this lady do?
= "what are you doing here?"
Will she? is she not nettled still?
= angry.[1]

Elder. No, I have cured her. −
Master Welford, pray, know this gentleman; he is my brother.
= ie. make the acquaintance of Young.

Wel. Sir, I shall long to love him.

Young. I shall not be your debtor, sir. − But how is't with you?
= ie. "I will not be remiss to return your love (ie. friend-ship)".

Elder. As well as may be, man: I am married.
Your new acquaintance hath her sister; and all's well,
= ie. "your new friend Welford has married Lady's sister"

Young. I am glad on't. − Now, my pretty lady sister,
= ***sister***, like ***brother***, could be used to refer to one's in-law.
How do you find my brother?

Lady. Almost as wild as you are.

Young. He'll make the better husband: you have tried him?
= tested; probably suggestive.

Lady. Against my will, sir.
213: Lady is still resentful.

Young. He'll make your will amends soon, do not doubt it. −

= ie. Young puns on ***will***, meaning (1) "he will change your mind", and (2) "he will put you in a position to change your will soon, ie. by giving you children."

But, sir, I must entreat you to be better known
To this converted Jew here.

= Young repeats his ***conversion*** joke.

Re-enter First Serving-man, with beer.

1st Serv. Here's beer for you, sir.

More. And here's for you an angel.
Pray, buy no land; 'twill never prosper, sir.

223-4: Morecraft again gives a monetary gift to the servant, and a bit of advice.

Elder. How's this?

226: Elder is stunned by Morecraft's transformation.

Young. Bless you, and then I'll tell. He's turned gallant.

= "bless yourself", ie. "cross yourself", the customary thing to do upon seeing a wonderful or miraculous thing.[3,9]

Elder. Gallant!

Young. Ay, gallant, and is now called Cutting Morecraft:
The reason I'll inform you at more leisure.

= swaggering.[3]

Wel. Oh, good sir, let me know him presently.

235: "please introduce me to him right away".

Young. You shall hug one another.

More. Sir, I must keep
You company.

Elder. And reason.

Young. Cutting Morecraft,
Faces about; I must present another.

= military command: "about face", ie. "turn around".[1]

More. As many as you will, sir; I am for 'em.

Wel. Sir, I shall do you service.

More. I shall look for 't, in good faith, sir.

Elder. Prithee, good sweetheart, kiss him.

= as described earlier, a kiss was usually exchanged by strangers of the opposite sex meeting formally for the first time.

Lady. Who? that fellow!

Sav. Sir, will it please you to remember me?
My keys, good sir!

257-8: Savil asks Young not to forget to ask Elder for his job back.

Young. I'll do it presently.

= right away.

Elder. Come, thou shalt kiss him for our sport-sake.

Lady. Let him come on, then; and, do you hear, do not
Instruct me in these tricks, for you may repent it.

264-5: a vague threat to Elder not to so cavalierly introduce her to other men, as she may become interested in them; the English custom of greeting new acquaintances with a kiss certainly could lead to potential embarrassment or confusion of feelings.

Elder. That at my peril. − Lusty Master Morecraft,
Here is a lady would salute you.

= merry.[1]
= greet with a kiss.

More. She shall not lose her longing, sir. What is she?

= who.

Elder. My wife, sir.

More. She must be, then, my mistress.

274: Morecraft is being playful.

[*Kisses her*.]

Lady. Must I, sir?

Elder. Oh, yes, you must.

More. And you must take
This ring, a poor pawn of some fifty pound.

282-3: Morecraft gives Lady what may be described as a wedding gift.

Elder. Take it, by any means; 'tis lawful prize.

= the phrase describes the legally sanctioned appropriation of the equipment and goods of a captured enemy's ship, or of the ship itself.

Lady. Sir, I shall call you servant.

= Lady is playful in return; she designates Morecraft as one licensed to pay her extra attention, though she is also playing on servant's meaning "lover".

More. I shall be proud on 't. − What fellow's that?

= Morecraft gestures to one of the servants whose livery may be fancier than that of the rest of the help.

Young. My lady's coachman.

More. There's something, my friend, for you to buy
whips; and for you, sir; and you, sir.

[*Gives money to the Servants*.]

Elder. Under a miracle, this is the strangest
I ever heard of.

More. What, shall we play, or drink? what shall we do?
Who will hunt with me for a hundred pounds?

Wel. Stranger and stranger! − Sir, you shall find sport
After a day or two.

304-5: Welford advises Morecraft that he will find entertainment with the others in due time.

Young. Sir, I have a suit unto you,
Concerning your old servant Savil.

= request or petition.

Elder. Oh, for his keys; I know it.

Sav. Now, sir, strike in.

= Savil reminds Morecraft of his promise to add his voice to the petition for his job.

More. Sir, I must have you grant me.

Elder. 'Tis done, sir. − Take your keys again:
But hark you, Savil; leave off the motions
Of the flesh, and be honest, or else you shall graze again;
I'll try you once more.

= impulses.
= chaste. = ie. go hungry, so as to be forced to dine on grass to survive.
= test, ie. give another chance to.

Sav. If ever I be taken drunk or whoring,
Take off the biggest key i' the bunch, and open
My head with it, sir. − I humbly thank your worships.

= caught.

Elder. Nay, then, I see we must keep holiday:

Enter Roger and Abigail.

Here's the last couple in hell.

329: an allusion to a game called ***barley-break***, in which a couple, while holding hands, had to catch either of two other couples, something like a game of tag; the couple they caught would then have to enter the area in between the other two, which location was called ***hell***.[1,3]

Roger. Joy be amongst you all!

Lady. Why, how now, sir,
What is the meaning of this emblem?

= the customary epigram at the end of a pastoral poem.[3]

Roger. Marriage,
An 't like your worship.

337: "if it please your worship", a deferential remark.

Lady. Are you marrièd?

Roger. As well as the next priest could do it, madam.

Elder. I think the sign's in Gemini, here's such coupling.

= ***Gemini*** is a constellation, whose stars comprise the Greek twin brothers Castor and Pollux, and is hence used to mean "couple":[1] Elder's point is to emphasize all of the new ***couples*** that have been formed.

Gemini is also the third sign of the zodiac. With this in mind, Bond suggests ***sign's*** should be ***sun's***.

Wel. Sir Roger, what will you take to lie from your sweet-heart to-night?

= apart; Welford is being playful.

Roger. Not the best benefice in your worship's gift, sir.

348: "I wouldn't accept even the best benefice you could grant me to give up spending tonight (Roger's wedding night!) with Abigail."

benefice = an appointment of an ecclesiastical position, such as vicar, with concomitant income from property.[1]

Wel. A whoreson, how he swells!

= ie. with pride, but also dirty.

Young. How many times to-night, Sir Roger?

352: the dialogue is reaching its raunchiest level yet!

Roger. Sir, you grow scurrilous. What I shall do, I shall do: I shall not need your help.

Young. For horse-flesh, Roger.

357: "to find you a whore, Roger."[3]

Elder. Come, prithee, be not angry; 'tis a day
Given wholly to our mirth.

Lady. It shall be so, sir.
Sir Roger and his bride we shall entreat
To be at our charge.

363-4: Lady and Elder will entertain the new bride and groom.

Elder. Welford, get you to the church:
By this light you shall not lie with her again
Till y' are married.

Wel. I am gone.

More. To every bride I dedicate, this day,

Six healths a-piece; and it shall go hard,
But every one a jewèl. Come, be mad, boys!

Elder. Thou'rt in a good beginning. − Come, who leads? − Sir Roger, you shall have the van: lead the way.

Would every doggèd wench had such a day!

[*Exeunt*.]

FINIS.

= toasts. = "it will be difficult to accomplish this" (ie. 6 drinks for each of the 4 new brides).

= go first; when an army marched, the soldiers in the front were called the ***van***.

378: a final pun, on the proverb "every dog has his day", originally in Heywood's *Proverbs*: "a dog hath a day".

The Authors' Invented Words

Like all of the writers of the era, Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher made up words when they felt like it, usually by adding prefixes and suffixes to known words, combining words, or using a word in a way not yet used before. The following is a list of words from *The Scornful Lady* that are indicated by the OED as being either the first or only use of a given word, or, as noted, the first use with a given meaning:

courted (as an adjective, meaning a wooed party)
annotation (meaning an inventory of goods seized by authorities)
faggot-boat
filly (applied to a young girl)
fitchock or fytchock
gibship
gulp (as a noun, applied figuratively, ie. to anything other than a swallow)
hatchment
homilist
long bill
meeching (as an adjective)
out-snore
over-bid (meaning to bid more than something is worth)
paper (as an adjective describing something as theoretical)
pot-butter
purse (as a verb, meaning to steal)
rent-book
snap (as a noun, meaning fragment); also the phrase **not a snap**.
spa (as a generic term, as opposed to the original geographical location of Spa in Belgium)
strike (as a noun, meaning a unit of measure of malt in ale)
switch (as a noun, meaning a shoot from a tree)
tickle-footed
tickling (as a noun, describing the catching of a trout by tickling it)
twitter (as a verb, meaning to quiver or tremble)
van (describing the foremost part of a moving group of persons)
verdugo (first to use this Spanish word in English literature)
water-house (meaning a boat)
wedding-smock
well-moulded
wire-draw (as a verb, meaning to behave parsimoniously)

The OED currently (November 2018) indicates that the word ***hopelessly*** also made its first appearance in English letters in this play, but research indicates that the word appeared earlier, in 1602.

Complete List of Footnotes.

Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:

1. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online.
2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words.* London; New York: Penguin, 2002.
3. Bond, R. Warwick. *The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher*, Volume I. London: George Bell & Sons and A. H. Bullen, 1904.
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5. Holden, William P., ed. *The Yale Shakespeare*: *The Twelfth Night*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922.
6. Parrott, Thomas Marc. *Chapman's Comedies*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1914, p.786.
7. Colman, George. *The Dramatic Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*. London: Printed for John Stockdale, 1811.
8. Herbermann, Charles G., *et al*., ed. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1917.
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