

ElizabethanDrama.org

presents
a Theatre Script of

MIDAS

By John Lyly

Written c. 1590

Earliest Extant Edition: 1592

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MIDAS

By JOHN LYL

Written c. 1590

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Midas, King of Phrygia.

Sophronia, daughter of Midas.

Counselors of Midas:

Eristus.

Martius.

Mellacrites.

Celia, daughter of Mellacrites.

Petulus, Page to Mellacrites.

Licio, Page to Celia.

Pipenetta, Maid to Celia.

Ladies of the Court:

Camilla.

Amerula.

Suavia.

Other Phrygian Mortals:

Motto, a Barber.

Dello, his Boy.

A *Huntsman*.

Minutius, a Page.

Shepherds:

Menalcas.

Coryn.

Celthus.

Driapon.

Amyntas.

Gods and Other Deities:

Bacchus.

Apollo.

Pan.

Erato, a Nymph.

Thalia, a Nymph.

Other Nymphs.

Scene: Phrygia and Delphi.

NOTES.

A. Acts, Scenes, and Stage Directions.

Midas was originally published in a 1592 quarto. As usual, we lean towards adhering to the wording of this earliest volume as much as possible.

Words or syllables which have been added to the original text to clarify the sense are surrounded by hard brackets []; these additions are often adopted from the suggestions of later editors. A director who wishes to remain truer to the original text may of course choose to omit any of the supplementary wording.

Unusually for the era, *Midas* was, in its original printing, divided into both numbered Acts and Scenes. Suggested scene settings, however, are adopted from Warwick Bond's edition of the play.

Finally, as is our normal practice, some of the quarto's stage directions have been modified, and others have been added to the text, usually without comment, to give clarity to the action. Most of these changes are adopted from Bond.

B. Optional Textual Changes.

A list of optional emendations to the text can be found at the end of this play.

MIDAS

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THE PROLOGUE IN PAUL'S.

1 GENTLEMEN, so nice is the world, that for
 2 apparel there is no fashion, for music no instrument,
 for diet no delicate, for plays no invention, but
 4 breedeth satiety before noon, and contempt before
 night.
 6 Come to the tailor, he is gone to the painters, to
 learn how more cunning may lurk in the fashion, than
 8 can be expressed in the making. Ask the musicians,
 they will say their heads ache with devising notes
 10 beyond Ela. Inquire at ordinaries, there must be sallets
 for the Italian, picktooths for the Spaniard, pots for the
 12 German, porridge for the Englishman. At our exercises,
 soldiers call for tragedies, their object is blood:
 14 courtiers for comedies, their subject is love;
 countrymen for pastorals, shepherds are their saints.
 16 Traffic and travel hath woven the nature of all nations
 into ours; and made this land like arras, full of device;
 18 which was broad-cloth, full of workmanship.
 Time hath confounded our minds, our minds
 20 the matter; but all commeth to this pass, that what
 heretofore hath been served in several dishes for a
 22 feast, is now minced in a charger for a gallimaufrey. If
 we present a mingle-mangle, our fault is to be excused,
 24 because the whole world is become an hodge-podge.
 We are jealous of your judgments, because you
 26 are wise; of our own performance, because we are
 imperfect; of our author's device, because he is idle.
 28 Only this doth encourage us, that presenting our
 studies before gentlemen, though they receive an
 30 inward mislike, we shall not be hissed with an open
 disgrace.

ACT I.SCENE I.

The gardens before Midas' palace.

*Enter Bacchus, Midas, Eristus, Martius
and Mellacrites.*

1 **Bacc.** Midas, where the gods bestow benefits, they ask
2 thanks, but where they receive good turns, they give
rewards. Thou hast filled my belly with meat, mine
4 ears with music, mine eyes with wonders. Bacchus of
all the gods is the best fellow, and Midas amongst men
6 a king of fellows. All thy grounds are vineyards, thy
corn grapes; thy chambers cellars, thy household stuff
8 standing cups: and therefore ask anything, it shall be
granted. Wouldest thou have the pipes of thy conducts
10 to run wine, the udders of thy beasts to drop nectar, or
thy trees to bud ambrosia? Desirest thou to be
12 fortunate in thy love, or in thy victories famous, or to
have the years of thy life as many as the hairs on thy
14 head? Nothing shall be denied, so great is Bacchus, so
happy is Midas.

16
18 **Midas.** Bacchus, for a king to beg of a god it is no
shame, but to ask with advice, wisdom; give me leave
to consult, lest desiring things above my reach, I be
20 fired with Phaeton; or against nature, and be drowned
with Icarus: and so perishing, the world shall both
22 laugh and wonder, crying, *Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*

24 **Bacc.** Consult, Bacchus will consent.

26 **Midas.** Now, my lords, let me hear your opinions;
what wish may make Midas most happy, and his
28 subjects best content?

30 **Erist.** Were I a king, I would wish to possess my
mistress, for what sweetness can there be found in life,
32 but love, whose wounds the more mortal they are to
the heart, the more immortal they make the possessors?
34 and who knoweth not that the possessing of that must
be most precious, the pursuing whereof is so pleasing?

36
38 **Mar.** Love is a pastime for children, breeding nothing
but folly, and nourishing nothing but idleness. I

40 would wish to be monarch of the world, conquering
kingdoms like villages, and, being greatest on the earth,
42 be commander of the whole earth: for what is there
that more tickles the mind of a king, then a hope to be
44 the only king, wringing out of every country tribute,
and in his own to sit in triumph? Those that call
46 conquerors ambitious, are like those that term thrift
covetousness, cleanliness pride, honesty preciseness.
48 Command the world, Midas, a greater thing you
cannot desire, a less you should not.

50 **Midas.** What say you, Mellacrites?

52 **Mell.** Nothing, but that these two have said nothing. I
would wish that everything I touched might turn to
54 gold: this is the sinews of war, and the sweetness of
peace. Is it not gold that maketh the chastest to yield to
56 lust, the honestest to lewdness, the wisest to folly, the
faithfullest to deceit, and the most holy in heart, to be
58 most hollow of heart? In this word gold are all the
powers of the gods, the desires of men, the wonders of
60 the world, the miracles of nature, the looseness of
fortune and triumphs of time. By gold may you shake
62 the courts of other princes, and have your own settled;
one spade of gold undermines faster than an hundred
64 mattocks of steel. Would one be thought religious and
devout? *Quantum quisque sua nummorum servat in*
66 *arca, tantum habet et fidei:* religion's balance are
golden bags. Desire you virtue? *Querenda pecunia*
68 *primum est, virtus post nummos:* the first stair of
virtue is money. Doth any thirst after gentry, and wish
70 to be esteemed beautiful? *Et genus et formam regina*
pecunia donat: king coin hath a mint to stamp
72 gentlemen, and art to make amiableness. I deny not but
love is sweet, and the marrow of a man's mind; that to
74 conquer kings is the quintessence of the thoughts of
kings: why, then follow both, *aurea sunt verè nunc*
76 *saecula, plurimus auro venit honos, auro conciliatur*
amor: it is a world for gold; honour and love are both
78 taken up on interest. Doth Midas determine to tempt
the minds of true subjects? to draw them from
80 obedience to treachery, from their allegiance and oaths
to treason and perjury? *quid non mortalia pectora*
82 *cogit auri sacra fames?* what holes doth not gold bore
in men's hearts? Such virtue is there in gold, that being
84 bred in the barrenest ground, and trodden under foot, it
mounteth to sit on princes' heads. Wish gold, Midas,

86 or wish not to be Midas. In the counsel of the gods,
was not Anubis, with his long nose of gold, preferred
88 before Neptune's, whose stature was but brass? And
Aesculapius more honoured for his golden beard, than
90 Apollo for his sweet harmony?

92 **Erist.** To have gold and not love (which cannot be
purchased by gold) is to be a slave to gold.

94

Mar. To possess mountains of gold, and a mistress
96 more precious than gold, and not to command the
world, is to make Midas new prentice to a mint, and
98 journeyman to a woman.

100 **Mell.** To enjoy a fair lady in love, and want fair gold
to give; to have thousands of people to fight, and no
102 penny to pay – will make one's mistress wild, and his
soldiers tame. Jupiter was a god, but he knew gold was
104 a greater: and flew into those grates with his golden
wings, where he could not enter with his swan's wings.
106 What stayed Atalanta's course with Hippomenes? an
apple of gold: what made the three goddesses strive?
108 an apple of gold. If therefore thou make not thy
mistress a goldfinch, thou mayest chance to find her a
110 wagtail: believe me, *Res est ingeniosa dare*. Besides,
how many gates of cities this golden key hath opened,
112 we may remember of late, and ought to fear hereafter.
That iron world is worn out, the golden is now come.
114 *Sub Jove nunc mundus, iussa sequare Jovis*.

116 **Erist.** Gold is but the guts of the earth.

118 **Mell.** I had rather have the earth's guts, than the moon's
brains. What is it that gold cannot command, or hath
120 not conquered? Justice herself, that sitteth wimpled
about the eyes, doth it, not because she will take no
122 gold, but that she would not be seen blushing when she
takes it: the balance she holdeth are not to weigh the
124 right of the cause, but the weight of the bribe; she will
put up her naked sword if thou offer her a golden
126 scabbard.

128 **Midas.** Cease you to dispute, I am determined. – It is
gold, Bacchus, that Midas desireth, let everything that
130 Midas toucheth be turned to gold: so shalt thou bless
thy guest, and manifest thy godhead. Let it be gold,
132 Bacchus.

134 **Bacc.** Midas, thy wish cleaveth to thy last word. Take
up this stone.

136

[Midas picks up rock.]

138

Midas. Fortunate Midas! It is gold, Mellacrites! gold!
140 it is gold!

142 **Mell.** This stick.

144

[Midas picks up stick.]

146 **Midas.** Gold, Mellacrites! my sweet boy, all is gold! –
forever honoured be Bacchus, that above measure hath
148 made Midas fortunate.

150 **Bacc.** If Midas be pleased, Bacchus is. I will to my
temple with Silenus, for by this time there are many to
152 offer unto me sacrifices: *Poenam pro munere poscis.*

154 **Midas.** Come, my lords, I will with gold pave my
court, and deck with gold my turrets; these petty
156 islands near to Phrygia shall totter, and other kingdoms
be turned topsy-turvy: I will command both the
158 affections of men, and the fortunes. Chastity will grow
cheap where gold is thought dear; Celia, chaste Celia,
160 shall yield. You, my lords, shall have my hands in
your houses, turning your brazen gates to fine gold.
162 Thus shall Midas be monarch of the world, the darer
of Fortune, the commander of Love. Come let us in.

164

Mell. We follow, desiring that our thoughts may be
166 touched with thy fingers, that they also may become
gold.

168

Erist. Well, I fear the event, because of Bacchus' last
170 words, *poenam pro munere poscis.*

172 **Midas.** Tush, he is a drunken god, else he would not
have given so great a gift. Now it is done, I care not
174 for anything he can do.

176

[Exeunt.]

ACT I, SCENE II.

The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.

Enter Petulus and Licio.

1 **Licio.** Thou servest Mellacrites, and I his daughter,
2 which is the better man?

4 **Pet.** The masculine gender is more worthy than the
feminine: therefore Licio, backare.

6 **Licio.** That is when those two genders are at jar, but
8 when they belong both to one thing, then –

10 **Pet.** What then?

12 **Licio.** Then they agree like the fiddle and the stick.

14 **Pet.** *Pulchrè sanè.* God's blessing on thy blue nose!
but, Licio, my mistress is a proper woman.

16 **Licio.** Ay, but thou knowest not her properties.

18 **Pet.** I care not for her qualities, so I may embrace her
20 quantity.

22 **Licio.** Are you so pert?

24 **Pet.** Ay, and so expert, that I can as well tell the
thoughts of a woman's heart by her eyes, as the change
26 of the weather by an almanac.

28 **Licio.** Sir boy, you must not be saucy.

30 **Pet.** No, but faithful and serviceable.

32 **Licio.** Lock up your lips, or I will lop them off. But
sirrah, for thy better instructions I will unfold every
34 wrinkle of my mistress' disposition.

36 **Pet.** I pray thee do.

38 **Licio.** But for this time I will only handle the head and
purtenance.

40 **Pet.** Nothing else?

42 **Licio.** Why, will not that be a long hour's work to
44 describe, that is almost a whole day's work to dress?

46 *Pet.* Proceed.

48 *Licio.* First, she hath a head as round as a tennis ball.

50 *Pet.* I would my bed were a hazard.

52 *Licio.* Why?

54 *Pet.* Nothing, but that I would have her head there
among other balls.

56 *Licio.* *Video, pro intelligo.* Then hath she an hawk's
58 eye.

60 *Pet.* O, that I were a partridge head.

62 *Licio.* To what end?

64 *Pet.* That she might tire with her eyes on my
countenance.

66 *Licio.* Wouldst thou be hanged?

68 *Pet.* *Scilicet.*

70 *Licio.* Well, she hath the tongue of a parrot.

72 *Pet.* That's a leaden dagger in a velvet sheath, to have a
74 black tongue in a fair mouth.

76 *Licio.* Tush, it is not for the blackness, but for the
babbling, for every hour she will cry "Walk, knave,
78 walk."

80 *Pet.* Then will I mutter, "A rope for parrot, a rope."

82 *Licio.* So maist thou be hanged, not by the lips, but by
the neck. Then, sir, hath she a calve's tooth.

84 *Pet.* O monstrous mouth! I would then it had been a
86 sheep's eye, and a neat's tongue.

88 *Licio.* It is not for the bigness, but the sweetness: all
her teeth are as sweet as the sweet tooth of a calf.

90 *Pet.* Sweetly meant.

92 *Licio.* She hath the ears of a want.

94 *Pet.* Doth she want ears?

96

98 **Licio.** I say the ears of a want, a mole; thou dost want
wit to understand me. She will hear, though she be
never so low on the ground.

100 **Pet.** Why then, if one ask her a question, it is likely
102 she will hearken to it.

104 **Licio.** Hearken thou after that. She hath the nose of a
sow.

106 **Pet.** Then belike there she wears her wedding ring.

108 **Licio.** No, she can smell a knave a mile off.

110 **Pet.** Let us go farther, Licio, she hath both us in the
112 wind.

114 **Licio.** She hath a beetle-brow.

116 **Pet.** What, is she beetle-browed?

118 **Licio.** Thou hast a beetle head! I say the brow of a
beetle, a little fly, whose brow is as black as velvet.

120 **Pet.** What lips hath she?

122 **Licio.** Tush, the lips are no part of the head, only made
124 for a double-leaf door for the mouth.

126 **Pet.** What is then the chin?

128 **Licio.** That is only the threshold to the door.

130 **Pet.** I perceive you are driven to the wall that stands
behind the door, for this is ridiculous: but now you can
132 say no more of the head, begin with the purtenances,
for that was your promise.

134 **Licio.** The purtenances! it is impossible to reckon
136 them up, much less to tell the nature of them: hoods,
frontlets, wires, caules, curling-irons, perriwigs,
138 bodkins, fillets, hairlaces, ribbons, rolls, knotstrings,
glasses, combs, caps, hats, coifs, kerchers, clothes,
140 earrings, borders, crippins, shadows, spots, and so
many other trifles, as both I want the words of art to
142 name them, time to utter them, and wit to remember
them: these be but a few notes.

144 **Pet.** "Notes" quoth you, I note one thing.

146

Licio. What is that?

148

Pet. That if every part require so much as the head,
it will make the richest husband in the world ache at
the heart.

152

Enter Pipenetta.

154

Licio. But soft, here comes Pipenetta: – what news?

156

Pip. I would not be in your coats for anything.

158

Licio. Indeed, if thou shouldest rig up and down in our
jackets, thou wouldst be thought a very tomboy.

160

162

Pip. I mean I would not be in your cases.

164

Pet. Neither shalt thou, Pipenetta, for first, they are
too little for thy body, and then too fair, to pull over
so foul a skin.

166

168

Pip. These boys be drunk! – I would not be in your
takings.

170

Licio. I think so, for we take nothing in our hands
but weapons, it is for thee to use needles and pins, a
sampler, not a buckler.

172

174

Pip. Nay then, we shall never have done! I mean I
would not be so curst as you shall be.

176

178

Pet. Worse and worse! We are no chase (pretty mops,)
for deer we are not, neither red nor fallow, because we
are bachelors, and have not *cornu copia*, we want
heads: hares we cannot be, because they are male one
year, and the next female, we change not our sex:
badgers we are not, for our legs are one as long as
another: and who will take us to be foxes, that stand so
near a goose, and bite not?

180

182

184

186

Pip. Fools you are, and therefore good game for
wise men to hunt: but knaves I leave you, for honest
wenches to talk of.

188

190

Licio. Nay, stay sweet Pipenetta, we are but disposed
to be merry.

192

194

Pip. I marvel how old you will be before you be

196 disposed to be honest. But this is the matter, my
master is gone abroad, and wants his page to wait on
198 him: my mistress would rise, and lacks your worship
to fetch her hair.

200 *Pet.* Why, is it not on her head?

202 *Pip.* Methinks it should, but I mean the hair that she
must wear today.

204 *Licio.* Why, doth she wear any but her own?

206 *Pip.* In faith, sir, no, I am sure it's her own when she
208 pays for it. But do you hear the strange news at the
court?

210 *Pet.* No, except this be it, to have one's hair lie all
212 night out of the house from one's head.

214 *Pip.* Tush! Everything that Midas toucheth is gold.

216 *Pet.* The devil it is!

218 *Pip.* Indeed, gold is the devil.

220 *Licio.* Thou art deceived, wench, angels are gold. But
is it true?

222 *Pip.* True? Why, the meat that he toucheth turneth to
224 gold, so doth the drink, so doth his raiment.

226 *Pet.* I would he would give me a good box on the ear,
that I might have a golden cheek.

228 *Licio.* How happy shall we be if he would but stroke
230 our heads, that we might have golden hairs. But let us
all in, lest he lose the virtue of the gift before we taste
232 the benefit.

234 *Pip.* If he take a cudgel and that turn to gold, yet
beating you with it, you shall only feel the weight of
236 gold.

238 *Pet.* What difference to be "beaten with gold", and to
be "beaten gold"?

240 *Pip.* As much as to say, drink before you go, and go
242 before you drink.

244 *Licio.* Come, let us go, lest we drink of a dry cup for

246

our long tarrying.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II.SCENE I.

The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.

Enter Eristus and Celia.

1 **Erist.** Fair Celia, thou seest of gold there is satiety, of
2 love there cannot.

4 **Cel.** If thou shouldst wish that whatsoever thou
thoughtest might be love, as Midas whatever he
6 touched might be gold, it may be love would be as
loathsome to thine ears, as gold is to his eyes, and
8 make thy heart pinch with melancholy, as his guts
do with famine.

10 **Erist.** No, sweet Celia, in love there is variety.

12 **Cel.** Indeed men vary in their love.

14 **Erist.** They vary their love, yet change it not.

16 **Cel.** Love and change are at variance, therefore if they
18 vary, they must change.

20 **Erist.** Men change the manner of their love, not the
humour; the means how to obtain, not the mistress they
22 honour. So did Jupiter, that could not entreat Danae by
golden words, possess his love by a golden shower,
24 not altering his affection, but using art.

26 **Cel.** The same Jupiter was an eagle, a swan, a bull;
and for every saint a new shape, as men have for
28 every mistress a new shadow. If you take example
of the gods, who more wanton, more wavering? if of
30 yourselves, being but men, who will think you more
constant than gods? Eristus, if gold could have allured
32 mine eyes, thou knowest Midas, that commandeth all
things to be gold, had conquered: if threats might have
34 feared my heart, Midas, being a king, might have
commanded my affections: if love, gold, or authority
36 might have enchanted me, Midas had obtained by
love, gold, and authority, *Quorum si singula nostrum*
38 *flectere non poterant, potuissent omnia mentem.*

40 **Erist.** Ah, Celia, if kings say they love, and yet

42 dissemble, who dare say that they dissemble, and not
 44 love? They command the affections of others [to] yield,
 46 and their own to be believed. My tears, which have
 48 made furrows in my cheeks, and in mine eyes
 50 fountains; my sighs, which have made of my heart a
 52 furnace, and kindled in my head flames; my body, that
 54 melteth by piecemeal; and my mind, that pineth at an
 56 instant, may witness that my love is both unspotted,
 58 and unspeakable: *Quorum si singula duram flectere
 60 non poterant, deberent, omnia mentem.* – But soft,
 62 here cometh the princess, with the rest of the lords.

*Enter Sophronia, Mellacrites, Martius
 and other courtiers.*

56 **Soph.** Mellacrites, I cannot tell whether I should
 58 more mislike thy counsel or Midas' consent, but the
 60 covetous humour of you both I contemn and wonder
 62 at, being unfit for a king, whose honour should consist
 64 in liberality, not greediness; and unworthy the calling
 66 of Mellacrites, whose fame should rise by the soldiers'
 68 god, Mars, not by the merchants' god, Gold.

64 **Mell.** Madam, things past cannot be recalled, but
 66 repented; and therefore are rather to be pitied than
 68 punished. It now behooveth us how to redress the
 70 miserable estate of our king, not to dispute of the
 72 occasion. Your highness sees, and without grief you
 74 cannot see, that his meat turneth to massy gold in his
 76 mouth, and his wine slideth down his throat like liquid
 78 gold: if he touch his robes they are turned to gold, and
 80 what is not that toucheth him, but becommeth gold?

74 **Erist.** Ay, Mellacrites, if thy tongue had been turned to
 76 gold before thou gavest our king such counsel, Midas'
 78 heart had been full of ease, and thy mouth of gold.

78 **Mar.** If my advice had taken place, Midas, that now
 80 sitteth over head and ears in crowns, had worn upon
 82 his head many kings' crowns, and been conqueror of
 84 the world, that now is commander of dross. That
 86 greediness of Mellacrites, whose heart-strings are
 88 made of Plutus' purse-strings, hath made Midas a lump
 of earth, that should be a god on earth; – and thy
 effeminate mind, Eristus, whose eyes are stitched on
 Celia's face, and thoughts gyved to her beauty, hath
 bred in all the court such a tender wantonness, that
 nothing is thought of but love, a passion proceeding of

90 beastly lust, and coloured with a courtly name of love.
 Thus whilst we follow the nature of things, we forget
 92 the names. Since this unsatiable thirst of gold, and
 untemperate humour of lust crept into the king's court,
 94 soldiers have begged alms of artificers, and with their
 helmet on their head been glad to follow a lover with a
 96 glove in his hat, which so much abateth the courage of
 true captains, that they must account it more honourable
 98 in the court to be a coward, so rich and amorous, than
 in a camp to be valiant, if poor and maimed. He is
 more favoured that pricks his finger with his mistress'
 100 needle, than he that breaks his lance on his enemy's
 face; and he that hath his mouth full of fair words, than
 102 he that hath his body full of deep scars. If one be old,
 and have silver hairs on his beard, so he have golden
 104 ruddocks in his bags, he must be wise and honourable.
 If young and have curled locks on his head, amorous
 106 glances with his eyes, smooth speeches in his mouth,
 every lady's lap shall be his pillow, every lady's face
 108 his glass, every lady's ear a sheath for his flatteries;
 only soldiers, if they be old, must beg in their own
 110 countries; if young, try the fortune of wars in another.
 He is the man, that, being let blood, carries his arm in
 112 a scarf of his mistress' favour, not he that bears his leg
 on a stilt for his country's safety.

114
Soph. Stay, Martius, though I know love to grow to
 116 such looseness, and hoarding to such misery, that I
 may rather grieve at both, than remedy either: yet thy
 118 animating my father to continual arms, to conquer
 crowns, hath only brought him into imminent danger
 120 of his own head. The love he hath followed, I
 fear unnatural; the riches he hath got, I know
 122 unmeasurable; the wars he hath levied, I doubt
 unlawful, – hath drawn his body with gray hairs to
 124 the grave's mouth; and his mind with eating cares to
 desperate determinations: ambition hath but two steps,
 126 the lowest, blood; the highest, envy: both these hath
 my unhappy father climbed, digging mines of gold with
 128 the lives of men, and now envied of the whole world;
 is environed with enemies round about the world, not
 130 knowing that ambition hath one heel nailed in hell,
 though she stretch her finger to touch the heavens. I
 132 would the gods would remove this punishment, so that
 Midas would be penitent. Let him thrust thee, Eristus,
 134 with thy love, into Italy, where they honour Lust for a
 god, as the Egyptians did dogs: – thee, Mellacrites, with

136 thy greediness of gold, to the utmost parts of the west,
where all the guts of the earth are gold: – and thee,
138 Martius, that soundest but blood and terror, into those
barbarous nations, where nothing is to be found but
140 blood and terror. Let Phrygia be an example of
chastity, not lust; liberality, not covetousness; valour,
142 not tyranny. I wish not your bodies banished, but your
minds, that my father and your king may be our honour,
144 and the world's wonder. – And thou, Celia, and all you
ladies, learn this of Sophronia: that beauty in a minute
146 is both a blossom and a blast; love, a worm which
seeming to live in the eye, dies in the heart. You be all
148 young and fair: endeavour all to be wise and virtuous,
that when, like roses, you shall fall from the stalk, you
150 may be gathered and put to the still.

152 *Cel.* Madam, I am free from love, and unfortunate to
be beloved.

154 *Erist.* To be free from love is strange, but to think
156 scorn to be beloved, monstrous.

158 *Soph.* Eristus, thy tongue doth itch to talk of love, and
my ears tingle to hear it. – I charge you all, if you owe
160 any duty to your king, to go presently unto the temple
of Bacchus, offer praise-gifts and sacrifice, that Midas
162 may be released of his wish, or his life: this I entreat
you, this Midas commands you. Jar not with
164 yourselves, agree in one for your king, if ever you took
Midas for your lawful king.

166 *Mell.* Madam, we will go, and omit nothing that duty
168 may perform, or pains.

170 *Soph.* Go speedily, lest Midas die before you return:
– and you, Celia, shall go with me, that with talk we
172 may beguile the time, and my father think of no meat.

174 *Cel.* I attend.

176 [Exeunt.]

ACT II, SCENE II.

The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.

Enter Licio, Petulus, Pipenetta.

1 **Licio.** Ah, my girl, is not this a golden world?
2

3 **Pip.** It is all one as if it were lead with me, and yet
4 as golden with me as with the king: for I see it, and
feel it not; he feels it, and enjoys it not.
6

7 **Licio.** Gold is but the earth's garbage, a weed bred by
8 the sun, the very rubbish of barren ground.

10 **Pet.** Tush, Licio, thou art unlettered; all the earth is an
egg: the white, silver; the yolk, gold.
12

13 **Licio.** Why, thou fool, what hen should lay that egg?
14

15 **Pip.** I warrant a goose.
16

17 **Licio.** Nay, I believe a bull.
18

19 **Pet.** Blurt to you both! it was laid by the sun.
20

21 **Pip.** The sun is rather a cock than a hen.
22

23 **Licio.** 'Tis true girl, else how could Titan have trodden
24 Daphne?

25 **Pet.** I weep over both your wits! if I prove in every
respect no difference between an egg and gold, will
28 you not then grant gold to be an egg?

29 **Pip.** Yes, but I believe thy idle imagination will make
it an addle egg.
32

33 **Licio.** Let us hear. Proceed, Doctor Egg.
34

35 **Pet.** Gold will be cracked: a common saying, a cracked
36 crown.

37 **Pip.** Ay, that's a broken head.
38

39 **Pet.** Nay, then I see thou hast a broken wit.
40

41 **Licio.** Well, suppose gold will crack.
42

43 **Pet.** So will an egg.
44

46 *Licio.* On.

48 *Pet.* An egg is roasted in the fire.

50 *Pip.* Well.

52 *Pet.* So is gold tried in the fire.

54 *Licio.* Forth.

56 *Pet.* An egg (as physicians say) will make one lusty.

58 *Pip.* Conclude.

60 *Pet.* And who knows not that gold will make one
frolic?

62 *Licio.* Pipenetta, this is true, for it is called "egg", as a
64 thing that doth egg on; so doth gold.

66 *Pip.* Let us hear all.

68 *Pet.* Eggs poached are for a weak stomach; and gold
boiled, for a consuming body.

70 *Licio.* Spoken like a physician.

72 *Pip.* Or a fool of necessity.

74 *Pet.* An egg is eaten at one sup, and a portage lost at
76 one cast.

78 *Licio.* Gamester-like concluded.

80 *Pet.* Eggs make custards, and gold makes spoons to eat
them.

82 *Pip.* A reason dough-baked.

84 *Licio.* O! the oven of his wit was not throughly heated.

86 *Pet.* Only this odds I find between money and eggs,
88 which makes me wonder; that being more pence in the
world than eggs, that one should have three eggs for a
90 penny, and not three pence for an egg.

92 *Pip.* A wonderful matter! but your wisdom is over-shot
in your comparison, for eggs have chickens, gold hath
94 none.

96 *Pet.* Mops, I pity thee! gold hath eggs: change an angel

98 into ten shillings, and all those pieces are the angel's
eggs.

100 **Licio.** He hath made a spoke: wilt thou eat an egg? –
but soft, here come our masters, let us shrink aside.

102

Enter Mellacrites, Martius, Eristus.

104

Mell. A short answer, yet a sound; Bacchus is pithy
and pitiful.

106

108 [*Reads the oracle*]

110 *In Pactolus go bathe thy wish and thee,
Thy wish the waves shall have, and thou be free.*

112

114 **Mar.** I understand no oracles! shall the water turn
everything to gold? what then shall become of the
fish? shall he be free from gold? what then shall
116 become of us, of his crown, of our country? I like not
these riddles.

118

Mell. Thou, Martius, art so warlike, that thou wouldest
120 cut off the wish with a sword, not cure it with a salve:
but the gods, that can give the desires of the heart,
122 can as easily withdraw the torment. Suppose Vulcan
should so temper thy sword, that were thy heart never
124 so valiant, thine arm never so strong, yet thy blade
should never draw blood; wouldest not thou wish to
126 have a weaker hand, and a sharper edge?

128 **Mar.** Yes.

130 **Mell.** If Mars should answer thee thus, "Go bathe thy
sword in water, and wash thy hands in milk, and thy
132 sword shall cleave adamant, and thy heart answer the
sharpness of thy sword"; wouldest not thou try the
134 conclusion?

136 **Mar.** What else?

138 **Mell.** Then let Midas believe till he have tried, and
think that the gods rule as well by giving remedies, as
140 granting wishes. – But Eristus is mum.

142 **Mar.** Celia hath sealed his mouth.

144 **Erist.** Celia hath sealed her face in my heart, which I
am no more ashamed to confess, than thou that Mars
146 hath made a scar in thy face, Martius. But let us in to

the king. – Sir boys, you wait well!

148

Pet. We durst not go to Bacchus, for if I see a grape,
my head aches.

150

Erist. And if I find a cudgel, I'll make your shoulders
ache.

152

154

Mell. And you, Licio, wait on yourself.

156

Licio. I cannot choose, sir, I am always so near myself.

158

Mell. I'll be as near you as your skin presently.

160

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.SCENE I.

The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.

Enter Midas, Mellacrites, Martius, Eristus.

1 **Midas.** [*Reading the oracle*]

2

In Pactolus go bathe thy wish and thee,

4

Thy wish the waves shall have, and thou be free.

6

Miserable Midas, as unadvised in thy wish, as in thy
success unfortunate. O, unquenchable thirst of gold,
8 which turneth men's heads to lead, and makest them
blockish; their hearts to iron, and makest them
10 covetous; their eyes to delight in the view, and makest
them blind in the use. I that did possess mines of gold,
12 could not be contented till my mind were also a mine.
Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of
14 Greece, nor mountains in the east, whose guts are
gold, satisfy thy mind with gold? Ambition eateth
16 gold, and drinketh blood; climbeth so high by other
men's heads, that she breaketh her own neck. What
18 should I do with a world of ground, whose body must
be content with seven foot of earth?

20

Or why did I covet to get so many crowns, having
myself but one head? Those that took small vessels
22 at the sea, I accompted pirates; and myself that
suppressed whole fleets, a conqueror: as though
24 robberies of Midas might mask under the names of
triumphs, and the traffic of other nations be called
26 treachery. Thou hast pampered up thyself with
slaughter, as Diomedes did his horse with blood;
28 so unsatiabie thy thirst, so heavy thy sword. Two
books have I always carried in my bosom, calling
30 them the dagger and the sword; in which the names of
all princes, noblemen, and gentlemen were dedicated
32 to slaughter, or if not (which worse is), to slavery.

34

O, my lords, when I call to mind my cruelties in
Lycaonia, my usurping in Getulia, my oppression in
Sola: then do I find neither mercies in my conquests,
36 nor colour for my wars, nor measure in my taxes. I
have written my laws in blood, and made my gods of
38 gold: I have caused the mothers' wombs to be their
children's tombs, cradles to swim in blood like boats,

40 and the temples of the gods a stew for strumpets.
42 Have not I made the sea to groan under the number of
44 my ships? And have they not perished, that there was
46 not two left to make a number? Have I not thrust my
subjects into a camp, like oxen into a cart; whom
having made slaves by unjust wars, I use now as slaves
for all wars?

Have not I enticed the subjects of my neighbor
princes to destroy their natural kings, like moaths
that eat the cloth in which they were bred, like vipers
that gnaw the bowels of which they were born,
and like worms that consume the wood in which they
were engendered? To what kingdoms have not I
pretended claim? as though I had been by the gods
created heir apparent to the world, making every trifle
a title; and all the territories about me traitors to me.
Why did I wish that all might be gold I touched, but
that I thought all men's hearts would be touched with
gold? that what policy could not compass, nor prowess,
gold might have commanded, and conquered? A
bridge of gold did I mean to make in that island where
all my navy could not make a breach. Those islands
did I long to touch, that I might turn them to gold, and
myself to glory. But unhappy Midas, who by the same
means perisheth himself, that he thought to conquer
others: being now become a shame to the world, a
scorn to that petty prince, and to thyself a
consumption.

A petty prince, Midas? no, a prince protected by
the gods, by nature, by his own virtue, and his subjects'
obedience. Have not all treasons been discovered by
miracle, not counsel? that do the gods challenge. Is
not the country walled with huge waves? that doth
nature claim. Is he not through the whole world a
wonder, for wisdom and temperance? that is his own
strength. Do not all his subjects (like bees) swarm
to preserve the king of bees? that their loyalty
maintaineth. —

My lords, I faint both for lack of food, and want
of grace. I will to the river, where if I be rid of this
intolerable disease of gold, I will next shake off that
untemperate desire of government, and measure my
territories, not by the greatness of my mind, but the
right of my succession.

84 **Mar.** I am not a little sorry, that because all that your
86 highness toucheth turneth to pure gold, and therefore

88 | all your princely affections should be converted to
dross. Doth your majesty begin to melt your own
90 | crown, that should make it with other monarchies
massy? Begin you to make enclosure of your mind, and
to debate of inheritance, when the sword proclaims you
92 | conqueror? If your highness' heart be not of kingdom
proof, every pelting prince will batter it. Though you
94 | use this garish gold, let your mind be still of steel, and
let the sharpest sword decide the right of scepters.

96 | *Midas.* Every little king is a king, and the title
98 | consisteth not in the compass of ground, but in the
right of inheritance.

100 | *Mar.* Are not conquests good titles?

102 | *Midas.* Conquests are great thefts.

104 | *Mar.* If your highness would be advised by me,
106 | then would I rob for kingdoms, and if I obtained,
fain would I see him that durst call the conqueror
108 | a thief.

110 | *Midas.* Martius, thy counsel hath shed as much blood
as would make another sea. Valour I cannot call it, and
112 | barbarousness is a word too mild. – Come, Mellacrites,
let us go, and come you Eristus, that if I obtain mercy
114 | of Bacchus, we may offer sacrifice to Bacchus. –
Martius, if you be not disposed to go, dispose as you
116 | will of yourself.

118 | *Mar.* I will humbly attend on your highness, as still
hoping to have my hearts' desire, and you your height
120 | of honour.

122 | [Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE II.

The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.

Enter Licio and Petulus.

1 **Pet.** Ah, Licio, a bots on the barber! ever since I
2 cozened him of the golden beard I have had the
toothache.

4 **Licio.** I think Motto hath poisoned thy gums.

6 **Pet.** It is a deadly pain.

8 **Licio.** I knew a dog run mad with it.

10 **Pet.** I believe it, Licio, and thereof it is that they call it
12 a dogged pain. Thou knowest I have tried all old
women's medicines, and cunning men's charms, but
14 *interim* my teeth ache.

16 *Enter Dello (the Barber's Boy).*

18 **Dello.** I am glad I have heard the wags, to be quittance
for over-hearing us. We will take the vantage, they
20 shall find us quick barbers. I'll tell Motto, my master,
and then we will have *quid pro quo*, a tooth for a
22 beard.

24 *[Exit Dello.]*

26 **Pet.** Licio, to make me merry, I pray thee go forward
with the description of thy mistress; thou must begin
28 now at the paps.

30 **Licio.** Indeed, Petulus, a good beginning for thee,
for thou canst eat pap now, because thou canst bite
32 nothing else. But I have not mind on those matters. If
the king lose his golden wish, we shall have but a
34 brazen court; – but what became of the beard, Petulus?

36 **Pet.** I have pawned it, for I durst not coin it.

38 **Licio.** What doest thou pay for the pawning?

40 **Pet.** Twelve pence in the pound for the month.

42 **Licio.** What for the herbage?

44 **Pet.** It is not at herbage.

46 **Licio.** Yes, Petulus, if it be a beard it must be at
48 herbage, for a beard is a badge of hair; and a badge of
hair, hair-badge.

50 *Enter Motto with Dello.*

52 **Motto.** Dello, thou knowest Midas touched his beard,
and twas gold.

54 **Dello.** Well.

56 **Motto.** That the pages cozened me of it.

58 **Dello.** No lie.

60 **Motto.** That I must be revenged.

62 **Dello.** In good time.

64 **Motto.** Thou knowest I have taught thee the knocking
66 of the hands, the tickling on a man's hairs, like the
tuning of a cittern.

68 **Dello.** True.

70 **Motto.** Besides, I instructed thee in the phrases of our
72 eloquent occupation, as "How, sir, will you be
trimmed? will you have your beard like a spade, or a
74 bodkin? a penthouse on your upper lip, or an ally on
your chin? a low curl on your head like a bull, or
76 dangling lock like a spaniel? Your mustachoes sharp at
the ends like shoemaker's awls, or hanging down to
78 your mouth like goat's flakes? your love-locks
wreathed with a silken twist, or shaggy to fall on your
80 shoulders?

82 **Dello.** I confess you have taught me *Tullie de oratore*,
the very art of trimming.

84 **Motto.** Well, for all this I desire no more at thy hands,
86 than to keep secret the revenge I have prepared for the
pages.

88 **Dello.** O, sir, you know I am a barber, and cannot
90 tittle-tattle, I am one of those whose tongues are
swelled with silence.

92 **Motto.** Indeed, thou shouldst be no blab, because a

94 barber, therefore be secret. – [*Louder.*] Was it not a
96 good cure, Dello, to ease the toothache and never
touch the tooth?

98 **Dello.** O master, he that is your patient for the
toothache, I warrant is patient of all aches.

100 **Motto.** I did but rub his gums, and presently the rheum
102 evaporated.

104 **Licio.** *Deus bone*, is that word come into the barber's
basin?

106 **Dello.** Ay, sir, and why not? My master is a barber and
108 a surgeon.

110 **Licio.** In good time.

112 **Pet.** O, Motto, I am almost dead with the toothache;
all my gums are swollen, and my teeth stand in my
114 head like thorns.

116 **Motto.** It may be that it is only the breeding of a beard,
and being the first beard, you shall have a hard travel.

118 **Pet.** Old fool, doest thou think hairs will breed in my
120 teeth?

122 **Motto.** As likely, sir, for anything I know, as on your
chin.

124 **Pet.** O teeth! O torments! – O torments! O teeth!

126 **Motto.** [*Aside to his boy*] May I but touch them, Dello,
128 I'll teach his tongue to tell a tale, what villainy it is to
cozen one of a beard; but stand not thou nigh, for it is
130 odds when he spits, but that all his teeth fly in thy face.

132 **Licio.** Good Motto, give some ease, for at thy coming
in, I overheard of a cure thou hadst done.

134 **Pet.** My teeth! I will not have this pain, that's certain!

136 **Motto.** Ay, so did you overhear me, when you cozened
138 me of a beard: but I forget all.

140 **Dello.** My master is mild and merciful: and merciful,
because a barber, for when he hath the throat at
142 command, you know he taketh revenge but on a silly
hair.

144

Motto. How now, Petulus, do they still ache?

146

Pet. Ay, Motto.

148

Motto. Let me rub your gums with this leaf.

150

Pet. Do, Motto, and for thy labour I will requite thee.

152

[*Under pretense of easing, Motto hurts him.*]

154

Out, rascal! what hast thou done? all my nether teeth
are loose, and wag like the keys of a pair of virginals.

156

158

Dello. O, sir, if you will, I will sing to them, your
mouth being the instrument.

160

Pet. Do, Dello.

162

[*Dello reaches into Petulus' mouth.*]

164

Dello. Out, villain! thou bitest. I cannot tune these
virginal keys.

166

168

Pet. They were the jacks above, the keys beneath were
easy.

170

Dello. A bots on your jacks and jaws too!

172

Licio. They were virginals of your master's making.

174

Pet. O my teeth! good Motto, what will ease my pain?

176

Motto. Nothing in the world, but to let me lay a golden
beard to your chin.

178

180

Pet. It is at pawn.

182

Motto. You are like to fetch it out with your teeth, or
go without your teeth.

184

Pet. Motto, withdraw thyself, it may be thou shalt
draw my teeth; attend my resolution.

186

188

[*Motto and Dello retire.*]

190

A doubtful dispute, whether I were best to lose my
golden beard, or my bone-tooth? Help me, Licio, to
determine.

192

194 **Licio.** Your teeth ache, Petulus, your beard doth not.
196 **Pet.** Ay, but, Licio, if I part from my beard, my heart
will ache.
198 **Licio.** If your tooth be hollow it must be stopped, or
200 pulled out; and stop it the barber will not, without the
beard.
202 **Pet.** My heart is hollow too, and nothing can stop it but
204 gold.
206 **Licio.** Thou canst not eat meat without teeth.
208 **Pet.** Nor buy it without money.
210 **Licio.** Thou mayest get more gold; if thou lose these,
more teeth thou canst not.
212 **Pet.** Ay, but the golden beard will last me ten years in
214 porridge, and then to what use are teeth?
216 **Licio.** If thou want teeth, thy tongue will catch cold.
218 **Pet.** 'Tis true, and if I lack money, my whole body may
go naked. But Licio, let the barber have his beard, I
220 will have a device (by thy help) to get it again, and a
cozenage beyond that, maugre his beard.
222 **Licio.** That's the best way, both to ease thy pains, and
224 try our wits.
226 **Pet.** Barber, eleven of my teeth have gone on a jury, to
try whether the beard be thine, they have chosen my
228 tongue for the foreman, which cryeth, "guilty".
230 **Motto.** Gilded? nay, boy, all my beard was gold, it
was not gilt: I will not be so overmatched.
232 **Dello.** You cannot pose my master in a beard. Come to
234 his house, you shall sit upon twenty: all his cushions
are stuffed with beards.
236 **Licio.** Let him go home with thee, ease him, and thou
238 shalt have thy beard.
240 **Motto.** I am content, but I will have the beard in my
hand to be sure.
242 **Pet.** And I thy finger in my mouth, to be sure of ease.

244

Motto. Agreed.

246

Pet. Dello, sing a song to the tune of "*My Teeth Do Ache*."

248

250

Dello. I will.

252

[*The Song:*]

254

Pet. *O my teeth! dear barber, ease me;
Tongue tell me, why my teeth disease me.*

256

O! what will rid me of this pain?

258

Motto. *Some pellitory fetched from Spain.*

260

Licio. *Take mastic else.*

262

Pet. *Mastic's a patch.
Mastic does many a fool's face catch.*

264

*If such a pain should breed the horn,
Twere happy to be cuckolds born.*

266

*Should beards with such an ache begin,
Each boy to th' bone would scrub his chin.*

268

Licio. *His teeth now ache not.*

270

Motto. *Caper then,*

272

*And cry up checkered-apron men:
There is no trade but shaves,*

274

*For barbers are trim knaves,
Some are in shaving so profound,*

276

By tricks they shave a kingdom round.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III, SCENE III.

The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.

*Enter Sophronia, Celia, Camilla,
Amerula, and Suavia.*

1 **Soph.** Ladies, here must we attend the happy return of
2 my father, but in the mean season, what pastime shall
we use to pass the time? I will agree to any, so it be
4 not to talk of love.

6 **Suav.** Then sleep is the best exercise.

8 **Soph.** Why, Suavia, are you so light, that you must
chat of love? or so heavy, that you must needs sleep?
10 Penelope in the absence of her lord beguiled the days
with spinning.

12 **Suav.** Indeed, she spun a fair thread, if it were to make
14 a string to the bow wherein she drew her wooers.

16 **Soph.** Why, Suavia, it was a bow which she knew to
be above thy strength, and therein she shewed her wit.

18 **Suav.** *Qui latus arguerit corneus arcus erat:* it was
20 made of horn, madam, and therein she shewed her
meaning.

22 **Soph.** Why, doest thou not think she was chaste?

24 **Suav.** Yes, of all her wooers.

26 **Soph.** To talk with thee is to lose time, not well to
28 spend it; – how say you, Amerula, what shall we do?

30 **Amer.** Tell tales.

32 **Soph.** What say you, Celia?

34 **Cel.** Sing.

36 **Soph.** What think you, Camilla?

38 **Cam.** Dance.

40 **Soph.** You see, Suavia, that there are other things to
keep one from idleness, besides love; nay, that there is
42 nothing to make idleness, but love.

- 44 **Suav.** Well, let me stand by and feed mine own
thoughts with sweetness, whilst they fill your eyes
46 and ears with songs and dancings.
- 48 **Soph.** Amerula, begin thy tale.
- 50 **Amer.** There dwelt sometimes in Phrygia a lady very
fair, but passing froward, as much marveled at for
52 beauty, as for peevishness misliked. High she was in
the instep, but short in the heel; straitlaced, but loose-
54 bodied. It came to pass, that a gentleman, as young in
wit as years, and in years a very boy, chanced to
56 glance his eyes on her, and there were they dazzled on
her beauty, as larks that are caught in the sun with the
58 glittering of a glass. In her fair looks were his thoughts
entangled, like the birds of Canary, that fall into a
60 silken net. Dote he did without measure, and die he
must without her love. She on the other side, as one
62 that knew her good, began to look askance, yet felt the
passions of love eating into her heart, though she
64 dissembled them with her eyes.
- 66 **Suav.** Ha, ha, he!
- 68 **Soph.** Why laughest thou?
- 70 **Suav.** To see you, madam, so tame as to be brought to
hear a tale of love, that before were so wild you would
72 not come to the name; and that Amerula could devise
how to spend the time with a tale, only that she might
74 not talk of love, and now to make love only her tale.
- 76 **Soph.** Indeed, I was overshot in judgment, and she in
discretion. – Amerula, another tale or none, this is too
78 lovely.
- 80 **Suav.** Nay, let me hear any woman tell a tale of ten
lines long without it tend to love, and I will be bound
82 never to come at the court. And you, Camilla, that
would fain trip on your pettitoes; can you persuade me
84 to take delight to dance, and not love? or you that
cannot rule your feet, can guide your affections,
86 having the one as unstead as the other unsteady:
dancing is love sauce, therefore I dare be so saucy, as
88 if you love to dance, to say you dance for love. But
Celia, she will sing, whose voice, if it should utter her
90 thoughts, would make the tune of a heart out of tune.
She that hath crotchets in her head, hath also love
92 conceits. I dare swear she harpeth not only on plain

94 song: – and before you, Sophronia, none of them all
 use plain dealing; but because they see you so curious,
 96 they frame themselves counterfeit. For myself, as I
 know honest love to be a thing inseparable from our sex,
 98 so do I think it most allowable in the court; unless we
 would have all our thoughts made of church-work, and
 so carry a holy face, and a hollow heart.

100 *Soph.* Ladies, how like you Suavia in her loving vain?
 102

Cel. We are content at this time to soothe her in her
 104 vanity.

106 *Amer.* She casts all our minds in the mould of her own
 head, and yet erreth as far from our meanings, as she
 108 doth from her own modesty.

110 *Suav.* Amerula, if you were not bitter, your name had
 been ill-bestowed: but I think it as lawful in the court
 112 to be counted loving and chaste, as you in the temple
 to seem religious, and be spiteful.

114 *Cam.* I marvel you will reply any more, Amerula: her
 116 tongue is so nimble, it will never lie still.

118 *Suav.* The liker thy feet, Camilla, which were taught
 not to stand still.

120 *Soph.* So, no more ladies: let our coming to sport not
 122 turn to spite. – Love thou, Suavia, if thou think it sweet:
 – sing thou, Celia, for thine own content: – tell thou
 124 tales, and dance thou, Camilla: and so every one using
 her own delight, shall have no cause to be discontent.
 126 But here commeth Martius and the rest. –

128 *Enter Martius, Mellacrites and others.*

130 What news, Martius, of my sovereign and father
 Midas?

132 *Mar.* Madame, he no sooner bathed his limbs in the
 134 river, but it turned to a golden stream, the sands to fine
 gold, and all to gold that was cast into the water.
 136 Midas, dismayed at the sudden alteration, assayed
 again to touch a stone, but he could not alter the nature
 138 of the stone. Then went we with him to the temple of
 Bacchus, where we offered a lance wreathed about
 140 with ivy, garlands of ripe grapes, and skins of wolves

142 and panthers, and a great standing cup of the water
which so lately was turned to gold. Bacchus accepted
144 our gifts, commanding Midas to honour the gods, and
also in wishing to be as wise, as he meant to have
made him fortunate.

146
Soph. Happy Sophronia, thou hast lived to hear these
148 news; and happy Midas, if thou live, better to govern
thy fortune. – But what is become of our king?

150
Mell. Midas, overjoyed with this good fortune,
152 determined to use some solace in the woods; where, by
chance we roused a great boar: he, eager of the sport,
154 outrid us; and we, thinking he had been come to his
palace some other way, came ourselves the next way.
156 If he be not returned, he cannot be long: we have also
lost our pages, which we think are with him.

158
Soph. The gods shield him from all harms: the woods
160 are full of tigers, and he of courage. Wild beasts make
no difference between a king and a clown; nor hunters,
162 in the heat of their pastime, fear no more the fierceness
of the boar, than the fearfulness of the hare. But I hope
164 well, let us in to see all well.

166 [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.SCENE I.

A glade in the forest on Mount Tmolus.

Enter Apollo, Pan, Erato, Thalia and other Nymphs.

1 **Apol.** Pan, wilt thou contend with Apollo, who tunes
 2 the heavens, and makes them all hang by harmony?
 Orpheus, that caused trees to move with the sweetness
 4 of his harp, offereth yearly homage to my lute: so doth
 Arion, that brought dolphins to his sugared notes, and
 6 Amphion, that by music reared the walls of Thebes.
 Only Pan with his harsh whistle (which makes beasts
 8 shake for fear, not men dance for joy) seeks to
 compare with Apollo.

10
Pan. Pan is a god, Apollo is no more. Comparisons
 12 cannot be odious, where the deities are equal. This
 pipe (my sweet pipe) was once a nymph, a fair nymph,
 14 once my lovely mistress, now my heavenly music. Tell
 me, Apollo, is there any instrument so sweet to play on
 16 as one's mistress? Had thy lute been of laurel, and the
 strings of Daphne's hair, thy tunes might have been
 18 compared to my notes: for then Daphne would have
 added to thy stroke sweetness, and to thy thoughts
 20 melody.

22 **Apol.** Doth Pan talk of the passions of love? of the
 passions of divine love? O, how that word "Daphne"
 24 wounds Apollo, pronounced by the barbarous mouth
 of Pan. I fear his breath will blast the fair green, if I
 26 dazzle not his eyes, that he may not behold it. Thy pipe
 a nymph? Some hag rather, haunting these shady
 28 groves, and desiring not thy love, but the fellowship of
 such a monster. What god is Pan but the god of beasts,
 30 of woods, and hills? excluded from heaven, and in
 earth not honoured. Break thy pipe, or with my sweet
 32 lute will I break thy heart. Let not love enter into those
 savage lips, a word for Jove, for Apollo, for the
 34 heavenly gods, whose thoughts are gods, and gods are
 all love.

36
Pan. Apollo, I told thee before that Pan was a god, I
 38 tell thee now again, as great a god as Apollo, I had
 almost said a greater: and because thou shalt know I

40 | care not to tell my thoughts, I say a greater. Pan feels
 42 | the passions of love deeply engraven in his heart, with
 as fair nymphs, with as great fortune, as Apollo, as
 Neptune, as Jove; and better than Pan can none
 44 | describe love. Not Apollo, not Neptune, not Jove! My
 temple is in Arcadie, where they burn continual flames
 46 | to Pan. In Arcadie is mine oracle, where Erato the
 nymph giveth answers for Pan. In Arcadie, the place of
 48 | love, is the honour of Pan. Ay, but I am god of hills.
 So I am, Apollo! and that of hills so high, as I can pry
 50 | into the juggling of the highest gods. – Of woods! so
 I am, Apollo! of woods so thick, that thou with thy
 52 | beams canst not pierce them. I knew Apollo's prying, I
 knew mine own jealousy. Sun and shadow cozen one
 54 | another. Be thou sun still, the shadow is fast at thy
 heels, Apollo. I as near to thy love, as thou to mine. A
 56 | carter with his whistle and his whip in true ear, moves
 as much as Phoebus with his fiery chariot and winged
 58 | horses. Love-leaves are as well for country porridge,
 as heavenly nectar. Love made Jupiter a goose, and
 60 | Neptune a swine, and both for love of an earthly
 mistress. What hath made Pan, or any god on earth
 62 | (for gods on earth can change their shapes) turn
 themselves for an heavenly goddess? Believe me,
 64 | Apollo, our groves are pleasanter than your heavens,
 our milkmaids than your goddesses, our rude ditties
 66 | to a pipe than your sonnets to a lute. Here is flat faith
amo amas; where you cry, *o utinam amarent vel non*
 68 | *amassem*. I let pass, Apollo, thy hard words, as calling
 Pan monster; which is as much as to call all monsters:
 70 | for Pan is all, Apollo but one. But touch thy strings,
 and let these nymphs decide.

72 |
 74 | **Apol.** These nymphs shall decide, unless thy rude
 speech have made them deaf: as for any other answer
 to Pan, take this, that it becommeth not Apollo to
 76 | answer Pan. Pan is all, and all is Pan; thou art Pan and
 all, all Pan and tinkery. But to this music, wherein all
 78 | thy shame shall be seen, and all my skill.

80 | *Enter Midas.*

82 | **Midas.** In the chase, I lost all my company, and missed
 the game too. I think Midas shall in all things be
 84 | unfortunate.

86 | **Apol.** What is he that talketh?

- 88 **Midas.** Midas, the unfortunate king of Phrygia.
- 90 **Apol.** To be a king is next to being a god. Thy fortune
is not bad: what is thy folly?
- 92 **Midas.** To abuse a god.
- 94 **Apol.** An ungrateful part of a king. But, Midas, seeing
96 by chance thou art come, or sent by some god of
purpose, none can in the earth better judge of gods
98 than kings. Sit down with these nymphs. I am Apollo,
this Pan, both gods. We contend for sovereignty in
100 music. Seeing it happens in earth, we must be judged
of those on earth, in which there are none more worthy
102 than kings and nymphs. Therefore, give ear, that thy
judgment err not.
- 104 **Midas.** If gods you be, although I dare wish nothing
106 of gods, being so deeply wounded with wishing; yet
let my judgment prevail before these nymphs, if we
108 agree not, because I am a king.
- 110 **Pan.** There must be no condition, but judge Midas,
and judge nymphs.
- 112 **Apol.** Then thus I begin both my song and my play.
- 114 [A Song of Daphne to the Lute:]
- 116 **Apol.** *My Daphne's hair is twisted gold,*
118 *Bright stars a-piece her eyes do hold,*
My Daphne's brow enthrones the graces,
120 *My Daphne's beauty stains all faces,*
On Daphne's cheek grow rose and cherry,
122 *On Daphne's lip a sweeter berry,*
Daphne's snowy hand but touched does melt,
124 *And then no heavenlier warmth is felt,*
My Daphne's voice tunes all the spheres,
126 *My Daphne's music charms all ears.*
Fond am I thus to sing her praise;
128 *These glories now are turned to bays.*
- 130 **Erato.** O divine Apollo, o sweet consent!
- 132 **Thalia.** If the god of music should not be above our
reach, who should?
- 134 **Midas.** I like it not.

136

Pan. Now let me tune my pipes. I cannot pipe and
138 sing, that's the odds in the instrument, not the art: but
I will pipe and then sing; and then judge both of the
140 art and instrument.

142

[*He pipes, and then sings.*]

144

[*Pan's Song:*]

146

Pan. *Pan's Syrinx was a girl indeed,
Though now she's turned into a reed,
148 From that dear reed Pan's pipe does come,
A pipe that strikes Apollo dumb;
150 Nor flute, nor lute, nor cittern can
So chant it, as the pipe of Pan;
152 Cross-gartered swains, and dairy girls,
With faces smug, and round as pearls,
154 When Pan's shrill pipe begins to play,
With dancing wear out night and day;
156 The bag-pipe's drone his hum lays by,
When Pan sounds up his minstrelsy,
158 His minstrelsy! O base! This quill
Which at my mouth with wind I fill,
160 Puts me in mind, though her I miss,
That still my Syrinx lips I kiss.*

162

Apol. Hast thou done, Pan?

164

Pan. Ay, and done well, as I think.

166

Apol. Now, Nymphs, what say you?

168

Erato. We all say that Apollo hath shewed himself
170 both a god, and of music the god; Pan himself a rude
satyr, neither keeping measure, nor time; his piping as
172 far out of tune, as his body out of form. To thee, divine
Apollo, we give the prize and reverence.

174

Apol. But what says Midas?

176

Midas. Methinks there's more sweetness in the pipe of
178 Pan than Apollo's lute; I brook not that nice tickling
of strings, that contents me that makes one start. What
180 a shrillness came into mine ears out of that pipe, and
what a goodly noise it made! Apollo, I must needs
182 judge that Pan deserveth most praise.

184 **Pan.** Blessed be Midas, worthy to be a god: these girls,
186 whose ears do but itch with daintiness, give the verdict
188 without weighing the virtue; they have been brought
up in chambers with soft music, not where I make the
woods ring with my pipe, Midas.

190 **Apol.** Wretched, unworthy to be a king, thou shalt
know what it is to displease Apollo. I will leave thee
192 but the two last letters of thy name, to be thy whole
name; which if thou canst not guess, touch thine ears,
194 they shall tell thee.

196 **Midas.** What hast thou done, Apollo? the ears of an
ass upon the head of a king?

198 **Apol.** And well worthy, when the dullness of an ass is
200 in the ears of a king.

202 **Midas.** Help, Pan! or Midas perisheth.

204 **Pan.** I cannot undo what Apollo hath done, nor give
thee any amends, unless to those ears thou wilt have
206 added these horns.

208 **1st Nymph.** It were very well, that it might be hard to
judge whether he were more ox or ass.

210 **Apol.** Farewell, Midas.

212 **Pan.** Midas, farewell.

214 [Exeunt Apollo and Pan.]

216 **2nd Nymph.** I warrant they be dainty ears: nothing can
218 please them but Pan's pipe.

220 **Erato.** He hath the advantage of all ears, except the
mouse; for else there's none so sharp of hearing as the
222 ass. Farewell, Midas.

224 **2nd Nymph.** Midas, farewell.

226 **3rd Nymph.** Farewell, Midas.

228 [Exeunt Erato and Nymphs.]

230 **Midas.** Ah, Midas! why was not thy whole body
metamorphosed, that there might have been no part
232 left of Midas? Where shall I shroud this shame? or
how may I be restored to mine old shape? Apollo is

234 angry: blame not Apollo, whom being god of music
236 thou didst both dislike and dishonour; preferring the
238 barbarous noise of Pan's pipe, before the sweet melody
240 of Apollo's lute. If I return to Phrygia, I shall be
242 pointed at; if I live in these woods, savage beasts must
244 be my companions: and what other companions should
246 Midas hope for than beasts, being of all beasts himself
248 the dullest? Had it not been better for thee to have
250 perished by a golden death, than now to lead a beastly
252 life? Unfortunate in thy wish, unwise in thy judgment;
254 first a golden fool, now a leaden ass. What will they
256 say in Lesbos (if haply these news come to Lesbos)?
258 – *If* they come, Midas? yes, report flies as swift as
260 thoughts, gathering wings in the air, and doubling
262 rumours by her own running, insomuch as having here
264 the ears of an ass, it will there be told, all my hairs are
266 ass's ears. Then will this be the byword; is Midas, that
sought to be monarch of the world, become the mock
of the world? are his golden mines turned into water,
as free for every one that will fetch, as for himself, that
possessed them by wish? Ah, poor Midas! are his
conceits become blockish, his counsels unfortunate,
his judgments unskillful? Ah, foolish Midas! a just
reward, for thy pride to wax poor, for thy overweening
to wax dull, for thy ambition to wax humble, for thy
cruelty to say, *sisque miser simper, nec sis miserabilis
ulli*. – But I must seek to cover my shame by art, lest
being once discovered to these petty kings of Mysia,
Pisidia and Galatia, they all join to add to mine ass's
ears, of all the beasts the dullest, a sheep's heart, of all
the beasts the fearfullest: and so cast lots for those
kingdoms, that I have won with so many lives, and
kept with so many envies.

[Exit.]

ACT IV, SCENE II.

A reedy place.

*Enter five shepherds; Menalcas, Coryn,
Celthus, Driapon, and Amyntas.*

1 **Menal.** I muse what the nymphs meant, that so sang in
2 the groves, "Midas of Phrygia hath ass's ears".

4 **Cor.** I marvel not, for one of them plainly told me he
had ass's ears.

6 **Celt.** Ay, but it is not safe to say it: he is a great king,
8 and his hands are longer than his ears: therefore, for us
that keep sheep, it is wisdom enough to tell sheep.

10 **Dria.** 'Tis true; yet since Midas grew so mischievous
12 as to blur his diadem with blood, which should glister
with nothing but pity; and so miserable, that he made
14 gold his god, that was framed to be his slave; many
broad speeches have flown abroad: in his own country
16 they stick not to call him tyrant, and elsewhere
usurper. They flatly say, that he eateth into other
18 dominions, as the sea doth into the land, not knowing,
that in swallowing a poor island as big as Lesbos, he
20 may cast up three territories thrice as big as Phrygia:
for what the sea winneth in the marsh, it loseth in the
22 sand.

24 **Amynt.** Take me with you, but speak softly, for these
reeds may have ears, and hear us.

26 **Menal.** Suppose they have, yet they may be without
28 tongues to bewray us.

30 **Cor.** Nay, let them have tongues too; we have eyes to
see that they have none, and therefore if they hear, and
32 speak, they know not from whence it comes.

34 **Amynt.** Well, then this I say, when a lion doth so much
degenerate from princely kind, that he will borrow of
36 the beasts, I say he is no lion, but a monster; pieced
with the craftiness of the fox, the cruelty of the tiger,
38 the ravening of the wolf, the dissembling of the hyena,
he is worthy also to have the ears of an ass.

40 **Menal.** He seeks to conquer Lesbos, and like a foolish

42 | gamester, having a bagfull of his own, ventures it all to
win a groat of another.

44

Cor. He that fishes for Lesbos must have such a
46 | wooden net, as all the trees in Phrygia will not serve to
make the cod, nor all the woods in Pisidia provide the
48 | corks.

50 | **Dria.** Nay, he means to angle for it with an hook of
gold and a bait of gold, and so to strike the fish with a
52 | pleasing bait, that will slide out of an open net.

54 | **Amy.** Tush! tush! those islanders are too subtle to
nibble at craft, and too rich to swallow treasure: if that
56 | be his hope, he may as well dive to the bottom of the
sea, and bring up an anchor of a thousand weight, as
58 | plod with his gold to corrupt a people so wise. And
besides, a nation (as I have heard) so valiant, that are
60 | readier to strike than ward.

62 | **Celt.** More than all this, Amyntas (though we dare
not so much as mutter it), their king is such a one as
64 | dazzleth the clearest eyes with majesty, daunteth the
valiantest hearts with courage, and for virtue filleth all
66 | the world with wonder. If beauty go beyond sight,
confidence above valour, and virtue exceed miracle,
68 | what is it to be thought, but that Midas goeth to
undermine that by the simplicity of man, that is
70 | fastened to a rock, by the providence of the gods.

72 | **Menal.** We poor commons (who tasting war, are made
to relish nothing but taxes), can do nothing but grieve,
74 | to see things unlawful practiced, to obtain things
impossible. All his mines do but gild his comb, to
76 | make it glister in the wars, and cut ours that are forced
to follow him in his wars.

78

Cor. Well! that must be borne, not blamed, that cannot
80 | be changed: for my part, if I may enjoy the fleece of
my silly flock with quietness, I will never care three
82 | flocks for his ambition.

84 | **Menal.** Let this suffice; we may talk too much, and
being overheard, be all undone. I am so jealous, that
86 | methinks the very reeds bow down, as though they
listened to our talk: – and soft: I hear some coming,
88 | let us in, and meet at a place more meet.

90

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV, SCENE III.

The same: a reedy place.

Enter Licio, Petulus, Minutius, Huntsman.

1 **Licio.** Is not hunting a tedious occupation?

2

3 **Pet.** Ay, and troublesome, for if you call a dog a dog,
4 you are undone.

6 **Hunts.** You be both fools! and besides, baseminded;
7 hunting is for kings, not peasants. Such as you are
8 unworthy to be hounds, much less huntsmen, that
9 know not when a hound is fleet, fair-flewed, and
10 well-hanged; being ignorant of the deepness of a
11 hound's mouth, and the sweetness.

12

13 **Minut.** Why I hope, sir, a cur's mouth is no deeper
14 than the sea, nor sweeter than a honeycomb.

16 **Hunts.** Pretty cockscomb! a hound will swallow thee
17 as easily as a great pit a small pebble.

18

19 **Minut.** Indeed, hunting were a pleasant sport, but the
20 dogs make such barking, that one cannot hear the
21 hounds cry.

22

23 **Hunts.** I'll make thee cry! If I catch thee in the forest
24 thou shalt be leashed.

26 **Minut.** What's that?

28 **Licio.** Doest thou not understand their language?

30 **Minut.** Not I!

32 **Pet.** 'Tis the best calamance in the world, as easily
33 deciphered as the characters in a nutmeg.

34

35 **Minut.** I pray thee, speak some.

36

37 **Pet.** I will.

38

39 **Hunts.** But speak in order, or I'll pay you.

40

41 **Licio.** To it, Petulus.

42

43 **Pet.** There was a boy leashed on the single, because

44 | when he was embossed, he took soil.

46 | **Licio.** What's that?

48 | **Pet.** Why, a boy was beaten on the tail with a leathern
50 | thong, because when he foamed at the mouth with
52 | running, he went into the water.

52 | **Hunts.** This is worse than fustian! Mum you were
54 | best! Hunting is an honourable pastime, and for my part
56 | I had as lief hunt a deer in a park, as court a lady in a
58 | chamber.

56 | **Minut.** Give me a pasty for a park, and let me shake
58 | off a whole kennel of teeth for hounds: then shalt thou
60 | see a notable champing! after that will I carouse a bowl
62 | of wine, and so in the stomach let the venison take soil.

62 | **Licio.** He hath laid the plot to be prudent: why 'tis
64 | pasty crust, "Eat enough and it will make you wise",
66 | an old proverb.

66 | **Pet.** Ay, and eloquent, for you must tipple wine freely,
68 | *et foecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?*

68 | **Hunts.** *Fecere dizardum!* Leave off these toys, and let
70 | us seek out Midas, whom we lost in the chase.

72 | **Pet.** I'll warrant he hath by this started a covey of
74 | bucks, or roused a school of pheasants.

74 | **Hunts.** Treason to two brave sports, hawking and
76 | hunting: thou shouldest say, start a hare, rouse the
78 | deer, spring the partridge.

78 | **Pet.** I'll warrant that was devised by some country
80 | swad: that seeing a hare skip up, which made him
82 | start, he presently said he *started* the hare.

82 | **Licio.** Ay, and some lubber lying besides a spring, and
84 | seeing a partridge come by, said he did *spring* the
86 | partridge.

86 | **Hunts.** Well, remember all this!

88 | **Pet.** Remember all? nay, then had we good memories,
90 | for there be more phrases than thou hast hairs! but let
92 | me see: I pray thee, what's this about thy neck?

94 **Hunts.** A bugle.
96 **Pet.** If it had stood on thy head, I should have called
98 it a horn. Well, 'tis hard to have one's brows
100 embroidered with bugle.
102 **Licio.** But canst thou blow it?
104 **Hunts.** What else?
106 **Minut.** But not away.
108 **Pet.** No, 'twill make Boreas out of breath, to blow his
110 horns away.
112 **Licio.** There was good blowing, I'll warrant, before
114 they came there.
116 **Pet.** Well, 'tis a shrowd blow.
118 **Hunts.** Spare your winds in this, or I'll wind your
120 necks in a cord: – but soft, I heard my master's blast.
122 **Minut.** Some have felt it!
124 **Hunts.** Thy mother, when such a flyblow was buzzed
126 out! but I must be gone, I perceive Midas is come.
128
130 [Exit Huntsman.]
132 **Licio.** Then let not us tarry, for now shall we shave
134 the barber's house. The world will grow full of wiles,
136 seeing Midas hath lost his golden wish.
Minut. I care not, my head shall dig devises, and my
tongue stamp them; so as my mouth shall be a mint,
and my brains a mine.
Licio. Then help us to cozen the barber.
Minut. The barber shall know every hair of my chin to
be as good as a choke-pear for his purse.
[Exeunt.]

ACT IV, SCENE IV.

The same: a reedy place.

Enter Mellacrites, Martius, and Eristus.

1 **Erist.** I marvel what Midas meaneth to be so
2 melancholy since his hunting.

4 **Mell.** It is a good word in Midas, otherwise I should
6 term it in another blockishness. I cannot tell whether it
8 be a sourness commonly incident to age, or a
10 severeness particular to the kings of Phrygia, or a
12 suspicion cleaving to great estates; but methinks he
seemeth so jealous of us all, and becomes so
overthwart to all others, that either I must conjecture
his wits are not his own, or his meaning very hard to
some.

14 **Mar.** For my part, I neither care nor wonder, I see all
16 his expeditions for wars are laid in water: for now
18 when he should execute, he begins to consult; and
suffers the enemies to bid us good morrow at our own
doors, to whom we long since might have given the
last good night in their own beds. He weareth (I know
20 not whether for warmth or wantonness) a great tiara on
his head, as though his head were not heavy enough
22 unless he loaded it with great rolls: an attire never used
(that I could hear of) but of old women, or pelting
24 priests. This will make Pisidia wanton, Lycaonia stiff,
all his territories wavering; and he that hath couched
26 so many kingdoms in one crown, will have his
kingdom scattered into as many crowns as he
28 posseseth countries. I will rouse him up, and if his ears
be not ass's ears, I will make them tingle. I respect not
30 my life, I know it is my duty, and certainly I dare
swear war is my profession.

32
34 **Erist.** Martius, we will all join: and though I have been
(as in Phrygia they term) a brave courtier, that is, (as
they expound it) a fine lover; yet will I set both aside,
36 love and courting, and follow Martius: for never shall
it be said, *Bella gerant alij, semper Eristus amet.*

38
40 **Mell.** And I, Martius, that honoured gold for a god, and
accounted all other gods but lead, will follow Martius,
and say, *Vilius argentum est auro, virtutibus aurum.*

42

Mar. My lords, I give you thanks, and am glad: for
 44 there are no stouter soldiers in the world, than those
 46 that are made of lovers; nor any more liberal in wars,
 than they that in peace have been covetous. Then
 48 doubt not, if courage and coin can prevail, but we shall
 prevail; and besides, nothing can prevail but fortune. –
 But here comes Sophronia, I will first talk with her.

50

Enter Sophronia, Camilia, Amerula.

52

Madame, either our king hath no ears to hear, or no
 54 care to consider, both in what state we stand being
 his subjects, and what danger he is in being our king.
 56 Duty is not regarded, courage contemned; altogether
 careless of us, and his own safety.

58

Soph. Martius, I mislike not thy plain dealing: but
 60 pity my father's trance; a trance I must call that, where
 nature cannot move, nor counsel, nor music, nor
 62 physic, nor danger, nor death, nor all. But that which
 maketh me most both to sorrow and wonder, is that
 64 music (a mithridate for melancholy) should make him
 mad; crying still, *Uno namque modo Pan et Apollo*
 66 *nocent*. None hath access to him but Motto, as though
 melancholy were to be shaven with a razor, not cured
 68 with a medicine. – But stay, what noise is this in those
 reeds?

70

Mell. What sound is this? who dares utter that he
 72 hears?

74

Soph. I dare, Mellacrites, the words are plain, – "Midas
 the king hath ass's ears."

76

Cam. This is strange, and yet to be told the king.

78

Soph. So dare I, Camilla: for it concerneth me in duty,
 80 and us all in discretion. But soft, let us hearken better.

82

The Reeds. Midas of Phrygia hath ass's ears.

84

Erist. This is monstrous, and either portends some
 mischief to the king, or unto the state confusion. Midas
 86 of Phrygia hath ass's ears? It is impossible! let us with
 speed to the king to know his resolution, for to some
 88 oracle he must send. Till his majesty be acquainted
 with this matter, we dare not root out the reeds;

90 | himself must both hear the sound, and guess at the
reason.

92

94 | **Soph.** Unfortunate Midas! that being so great a king,
there should out of the earth spring so great a shame.

96

98 | **Mar.** It may be that his wishing for gold, being but
dross of the world, is by all the gods accounted
foolish, and so discovered out of the earth: for a king
to thirst for gold instead of honour, to prefer heaps of
100 | worldly coin before triumphs in warlike conquests,
was in my mind no princely mind.

102

104 | **Mell.** Let us not debate the cause, but seek to prevent
the snares; for in [my] mind it foretelleth that which
woundeth my mind. Let us in.

106

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.SCENE I.

The same: a reedy place.

Enter Midas, Sophronia, Mellacrites, and Martius.

1 **Midas.** Sophronia, thou seest I am become a shame to
2 the world, and a wonder. Mine ears glow. – Mine ears?
3 Ah, miserable Midas! to have such ears as make thy
4 cheeks blush, thy head monstrous, and thy heart
5 desperate? Yet in blushing I am impudent, for I walk
6 in the streets; in deformity I seem comely, for I have
7 left off my tiara; and my heart, the more heavy it is for
8 grief, the more hope it conceiveth of recovery.

10 **Soph.** Dread sovereign and loving sire, there are nine
11 days past, and therefore the wonder is past; there are
12 many years to come, and therefore a remedy to be
13 hoped for. Though your ears be long, yet is there room
14 left on your head for a diadem: though they resemble
15 the ears of the dullest beast, yet should they not daunt
16 the spirit of so great a king. The gods dally with men,
17 kings are no more; they disgrace kings, lest they
18 should be thought gods: sacrifice pleaseth them, so
19 that if you know by the oracle what god wrought it,
20 you shall by humble submission by that god be
21 released.

22 **Midas.** Sophronia, I commend thy care and courage,
23 but let me hear these reeds, that these loathsome ears
24 may be glutted with the report, and that is as good as
25 a remedy.

28 **The Reeds.** Midas of Phrygia hath ass's ears.

30 **Midas.** Midas of Phrygia hath ass's ears? So he hath,
31 unhappy Midas. If these reeds sing my shame so loud,
32 will men whisper it softly? No, all the world already
33 rings of it: and as impossible it is to stay the rumour, as
34 to catch the wind in a net that bloweth in the air, or to
35 stop the wind of all men's mouths that breathe out air.
36 I will to Apollo, whose oracle must be my doom, and
37 I fear me, my dishonour, because my doom was his,
38 if kings may disgrace gods: and gods they disgrace,
when they forget their duties.

40

Mell. What saith Midas?

42

Midas. Nothing, but that Apollo must determine all, or
Midas see ruin of all. To Apollo will I offer an ivory
lute for his sweet harmony, and berries of bays as
black as jet for his love Daphne, pure simples for his
physic, and continual incense for his prophesying.

48

Mar. Apollo may discover some odd riddle, but not
give the redress; for yet did I never hear that his
oracles were without doubtfulness, nor his remedies
without impossibilities. This superstition of yours is
able to bring errors among the common sort, not ease
to your discontented mind.

50

52

54

56

Midas. Dost thou not know, Martius, that when
Bacchus commanded me to bathe myself in Pactolus,
thou thoughtedst it a meer mockery, before with thine
eyes thou sawest the remedy.

58

60

Mar. Ay, Bacchus gave the wish, and therefore was
like also to give the remedy.

62

64

Midas. And who knows whether Apollo gave me these
ears, and therefore may release the punishment? Well,
reply not, for I will to Delphos: in the meantime, let it
be proclaimed that if there be any so cunning that can
tell the reason of these reeds creaking, he shall have
my daughter to his wife, or if she refuse it, a dukedom
for his pains: and withal, that whosoever is so bold as
to say that Midas hath ass's ears, shall presently lose
his.

66

68

70

72

74

Soph. Dear father, then go forwards, prepare for the
sacrifice, and dispose of Sophronia as it best pleaseth
you.

76

78

Midas. Come, let us in.

80

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V, SCENE II.

The gardens before the palace.

Enter Licio and Petulus.

1 **Pet.** What a rascal was Motto to cozen us, and say
2 there were thirty men in a room that would undo us,
and when all came to all, they were but table-men.

4 **Licio.** Ay, and then to give us an inventory of all his
6 goods, only to redeem the beard! but we will be even
with him, and I'll be forsworn, but I'll be revenged.

8 **Pet.** And here I vow by my concealed beard, if ever it
10 chance to be discovered to the world, that it may make
a pike devant: I will have it so sharp pointed, that it
12 shall stab Motto like a poignado.

14 **Licio.** And I protest by these hairs on my head, which
are but casualties, – for alas, who knows not how soon
16 they are lost, autumn shaves like a razor, – if these
locks be rooted against wind and weather, spring and
18 fall, I swear they shall not be lopped, till Motto by my
knavery be so bald that I may write verses on his
20 scalp: in witness whereof I eat this hair. Now must
thou, Petulus, kiss thy beard, for that was the book
22 thou swearest by.

24 **Pet.** Nay, I would I could come but to kiss my chin,
which is as yet the cover of my book! but my word
26 shall stand. Now let us read the inventory, we'll share
it equally.

28 **Licio.** What else?

30 **Pet.** [*Reading*] “An inventory of all Motto's moveable
32 bads and goods, as also of such debts as are owing
him, with such household stuff as cannot be removed.
34 *Imprimis*, in the bed-chamber, one foul wife, and five
small children.”

36 **Licio.** I'll not share in that.

38 **Pet.** I am content, take thou all. These be his moveable
40 bads.

42 **Licio.** And from me they shall be removables.

44 **Pet.** “*Item*, in the servant's chamber, two pair of curst
queans' tongues.”

46 **Licio.** Tongs thou wouldst say.

48 **Pet.** Nay, they pinch worse than tongs.

50 **Licio.** They are moveables, I'll warrant.

52 **Pet.** “*Item*, one pair of horns in the bride-chamber, on
54 the bed's head.”

56 **Licio.** The beast's head, for Motto is stuffed in the
head, and these are among unmoveable goods.

58 **Pet.** Well, *Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum*,
60 happy are they whom other men's horns do make to
beware. “*Item*, a broken pate owing me by one of the
62 Cole house, for notching his head like a chessboard.”

64 **Licio.** Take thou that, and I give thee all the rest of his
debts.

66
[*Makes as to strike him.*]

68 **Pet.** *Noli me tangere*, I refuse the executorship,
70 because I will not meddle with his desperate debts.
“*Item*, an hundred shrewd turns owing me by the
72 pages in the court, because I will not trust them for
trimming.”

74 **Licio.** That's due debt.

76 **Pet.** Well, because Motto is poor, they shall be paid
78 him *cum recumbentibus*. All the pages shall enter into
recognizance, but *ecce*, Pipenetta chants it.

80
Enter Pipenetta singing.

82
[*Song by Pipenetta:*]

84
I. 'Las! How long shall I
86 *And my maidenhead lie*
In a cold bed all the night long,
88 *I cannot abide it,*
Yet away cannot chide it,
90 *Though I find it does me some wrong.*

92 | 2. *Can anyone tell*
 | *Where this fine thing doth dwell,*
 94 | *That carries nor form, nor fashion?*
 | *It both heats and cools,*
 96 | *Tis a bauble for fools,*
 | *Yet caught at in every nation.*

98 |
 | 3. *Say a maid were so crossed,*
 100 | *As to see this toy lost,*
 | *Cannot hue and cry fetch it again?*
 102 | *'Las! No, for 'tis driven*
 | *Nor to hell, nor to Heaven,*
 104 | *When 'tis found, 'tis lost even then.*

106 | **Pip.** Hey ho! would I were a witch, that I might be a
 | duchess.

108 |
 | **Pet.** I know not whether thy fortune is to be a duchess,
 110 | but sure I am thy face serves thee well for a witch: –
 | what's the matter?

112 |
 | **Pip.** The matter? marry, 'tis proclaimed, that
 114 | whosoever can tell the cause of the reeds' song, shall
 | either have Sophronia to wife, or (if she refuse it) a
 116 | dukedom for his wisdom. Besides, whosoever saith
 | that Midas hath ass's ears shall lose theirs.

118 |
 | **Licio.** I'll be a duke! I find honour to bud in my head,
 120 | and methinks every joint of mine arms, from the
 | shoulder to the little finger, says "Send for the herald".
 122 | Mine arms are all armoury, gules, sables, azure, or
 | vert, pur, post, pair, &c.

124 |
 | **Pet.** And my heart is like a hearth where Cupid is
 126 | making a fire, for Sophronia shall be my wife:
 | methinks Venus and Nature stand, with each of them
 128 | a pair of bellows, the one cooling my low birth, the
 | other kindling my lofty affections.

130 |
 | **Pip.** Apollo will help me because I can sing.

132 |
 | **Licio.** Mercury me, because I can lie.

134 |
 | **Pet.** All the gods me, because I can lie, sing, swear,
 136 | and love. – But soft, here comes Motto: now shall
 | we have a fit time to be revenged, if by device we can
 138 | make him say, "Midas hath ass's ears."

140 *Enter Motto and Dello.*

142 **Licio.** Let us not seem to be angry about the inventory,
and you shall see my wit to be the hangman for his
144 tongue.

146 **Pip.** Why, fools, hath a barber a tongue?

148 **Pet.** We'll make him have a tongue, that his teeth that
look like a comb shall be the scissors to cut it off.

150 **Pip.** I pray let me have the odd ends. I fear nothing so
152 much as to be tongue-tawde.

154 **Licio.** Thou shalt have all the shavings, and then a
woman's tongue impied with a barber's, will prove a
156 razor or a raser.

158 **Pet.** How now, Motto, what, all amort?

160 **Motto.** I am as melancholy as a cat.

162 **Licio.** Melancholy? marry gup, is "melancholy" a
word for a barber's mouth? thou shouldst say, "heavy",
164 "dull" and "doltish": "melancholy" is the crest of
courtiers' arms, and now every base companion, being
166 in his mubble-fubbles, says he is melancholy.

168 **Pet.** Motto, thou shouldst say thou art "lumpish". If
thou encroach upon our courtly terms, we'll trounce
170 thee: belike if thou shouldst spit often, thou wouldst
call it "rheum". Motto, in men of reputation and credit,
172 it is the "rheum"; in such mechanical mushrumps, it is
a "catarrh", a "pose", the "water evil". You were best
174 wears a velvet patch on your temples too.

176 **Motto.** [*Aside*] What a world it is to see eggs forwarder
than cocks! these infants are as cunning in diseases, as
178 I that have run them over all, backward and forward. –
I tell you, boys, it is melancholy that now troubleth
180 me.

182 **Dello.** My master could tickle you with diseases, and
that old ones, that have continued in his ancestors'
184 bones these three hundred years. He is the last of the
family that is left uneaten.

186 **Motto.** What mean'st thou, Dello?
188

Pet. He means you are the last of the stock alive, the

190 rest the worms have eaten.

192 **Dello.** A pox of those saucy worms, that eat men
before they be dead.

194 **Pet.** But tell us, Motto, why art thou sad?

196 **Motto.** Because all the court is sad.

198 **Licio.** Why are they sad in court?

200 **Motto.** Because the king hath a pain in his ears.

202 **Pet.** Belike it is the wens.

204 **Motto.** It may be, for his ears are swoln very big.

206 **Pet.** [*Aside to Licio*] Ten to one Motto knows of the
208 ass's ears.

210 **Licio.** [*Aside to Petulus*] If he know it, we shall: for
212 it is as hard for a barber to keep a secret in his mouth
as a burning coal in his hand. Thou shalt see me wring
214 it out by wit. – Motto, 'twas told me that the king will
discharge you of your office because you cut his ear
when you last trimmed him.

216 **Motto.** 'Tis a lie; and yet if I had, he might well spare
218 an inch or two.

220 **Pet.** [*Aside to Licio*] It will out, I feel him coming.

222 **Dello.** [*Aside to Motto*] Master, take heed, you will
blab all anon, these wags are crafty.

224 **Motto.** Let me alone.

226 **Licio.** Why, Motto, what difference between the king's
228 ears, and thine?

230 **Motto.** As much as between an ass's ears and mine.

232 **Pet.** O, Motto is modest; to mitigate the matter, he
calls his own ears ass's ears.

234 **Motto.** Nay, I mean the king's are ass's ears.

236 **Licio.** Treason, treason!

238

240 **Dello.** I told you, master! you have made a fair hand;
for now you have made your lips scissors to cut off
your ears.

242 **Motto.** *Perij!* unless you pity me, Motto is in a pit.

244 **Pet.** Nay, Motto, treason is a worse pain than
246 toothache.

248 **Licio.** Now Motto, thou knowest thine ears are ours to
command.

250 **Motto.** Your servants, or handmaids.

252 **Pet.** Then will I lead my maid by the hand.

254 [He pulls him by the ears.]

256 **Motto.** Out, villain! thou wring'st too hard.

258 **Dello.** Not so hard as he bit me.

260 **Motto.** Thou seest, boy, we are both mortal. I enjoy
262 mine ears, but *durante placito*; nor thou thy finger,
but *fauente dento*.

264 **Pet.** Yea Motto, hast thou Latin?

266 **Motto.** Alas! he that hath drawn so many teeth, and
268 never asked Latin for a tooth, is ill brought up.

270 **Licio.** Well, Motto, let us have the beard, without
covin, fraud, or delay, at one entire payment, and thou
272 shalt scape a payment.

274 **Motto.** I protest by scissors, brush and comb; basin,
ball and apron; by razor, ear-pick and rubbing cloths;
276 and all the *tria sequuntur triaes* in our secret
occupation (for you know it is no blabbing art) that
278 you shall have the beard, in manner and form
following: not only the golden beard and every hair,
280 (though it be not hair,) but a dozen of beards, to stuff
two dozen of cushions.

282 **Licio.** Then they be big ones.

284 **Dello.** They be half a yard broad, and a nail, three
286 quarters long, and a foot thick; so, sir, shall you find

288 | them stuffed enough, and soft enough. All my
mistress' lines that she dries her clothes on, are made
290 | only of mustachio stuff. And if I durst tell the truth, as
lusty as I am here, I lie upon a bed of beards; a bots of
292 | their bristles, and they that owe them; they are harder
than flocks!

294 | **Pet.** A fine discourse! – well, Motto, we give thee
mercy, but we will not lose the beard. Remember now
296 | our inventory. *Item*, we will not let thee go out of our
hands, till we have the beard in our hands.

298 | **Motto.** Then follow.

300 |

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V, SCENE III.

Delphi (Delphos), before Apollo's Temple.

Enter Midas, Sophronia, Mellacrites, and Martius.

1 **Midas.** This is Delphos. – Sacred Apollo, whose
2 oracles be all divine, though doubtful, answer poor
Midas, and pity him.

4
Soph. I marvel there is no answer.

6
Midas. Fond Midas, how can'st thou ask pity of him
8 whom thou hast so much abused; or why dost thou
abuse the world, both to seem ignorant in not
10 acknowledging an offence; and impudent, so openly to
crave pardon? Apollo will not answer, but Midas must
12 not cease. – Apollo, divine Apollo, Midas hath ass's
ears, yet let pity sink into thine ears, and tell when he
14 shall be free from this shame, or what may mitigate his
sin?

[A pause.]

18
Mar. Tush! Apollo is tuning his pipes, or at barley-
20 break with Daphne, or assaying on some shepherd's
coat, or taking measure of a serpent's skin. Were I
22 Midas, I would rather cut these ears off close from my
head, than stand whimpering before such a blind god.

24
Midas. Thou art barbarous, not valiant. Gods must be
26 entreated, not commanded: thou wouldst quench fire
with a sword, and add to my shame (which is more
28 than any prince can endure) thy rudeness, (which is
more than any sensible creature would follow.) – Divine
30 Apollo, what shall become of Midas? Accept this lute,
these berries, these simples, these tapers; if Apollo
32 take any delight in music, in Daphne, in physic, in
eternity.

34
Oracle of Apollo:

36
When Pan Apollo in music shall excel,
38 *Midas of Phrygia shall lose his ass's ears;*
Pan did Apollo in music far excel,
40 *Therefore king Midas weareth ass's ears:*
Unless he shrink his stretching hand from Lesbos,

42 | *His ears in length, at length shall reach to Delphos.*

44 | **Mell.** It were good to expound these oracles, that the
learned men in Phrygia were assembled; otherwise the
46 | remedy will be as impossible to be had, as the cause to
be sifted.

48 | **Mar.** I foresaw some old saw, which should be
doubtful. Who would gad to such gods, that must be
50 | honoured if they speak without sense: and the oracle
wondered at, as though it were above sense?
52 |

54 | **Midas.** No more, Martius! I am the learnedest in
Phrygia to interpret these oracles: and though shame
56 | hath hitherto caused me to conceal it, now I must
unfold it by necessity. Thus destiny bringeth me, not
58 | only to be cause of all my shame, but reporter. – Thou,
Sophronia, and you my lords, hearken. When I had
60 | bathed myself in Pactolus, and saw my wish to float in
the waves, I wished the waves to overflow my body,
62 | so melancholy my fortune made me, so mad my folly:
yet by hunting I thought to ease my heart. And coming
64 | at last to the hill Tmolus, I perceived Apollo and Pan
contending for excellency in music: among nymphs
66 | they required also my judgment. I (whom the loss of
gold made discontent, and the possessing desperate)
68 | either dulled with the humours of my weak brain, or
deceived by thickness of my deaf ears, preferred the
70 | harsh noise of Pan's pipe, before the sweet stroke of
Apollo's lute, which caused Phoebus in justice (as I
72 | now confess, and then as I saw in anger) to set these
ears on my head, that have wrung so many tears from
74 | mine eyes. For stretching my hands to Lesbos, I find
that all the gods have spurned at my practices, and
76 | those islands scorn them. My pride the gods disdain;
my policy men: my mines have been emptied by
78 | soldiers, my soldiers spoiled by wars, my wars without
success, because usurping; my usurping without end,
80 | because my ambition above measure. I will therefore
yield myself to Bacchus, and acknowledge my wish to
82 | be vanity: to Apollo, and confess my judgment to be
foolish: to Mars, and say my wars are unjust: to Diana,
84 | and tell my affection hath been unnatural. And I doubt
not, what a god hath done to make me know myself,
86 | all the gods will help to undo, that I may come to
myself.

88 |

90 **Soph.** Is it possible that Midas should be so overshot
in judgment? Unhappy Midas, whose wits melt with his
gold, and whose gold is consumed with his wits.

92
94 **Midas.** What talketh Sophronia to herself?

96 **Soph.** Nothing, but that since Midas hath confessed his
fault to us, he also acknowledge it to Apollo.

98 **Midas.** I will, Sophronia. – Sacred Apollo, things
passed cannot be recalled, repented they may be: behold
100 Midas not only submitting himself to punishment, but
confessing his peevishness, being glad for shame to
102 call that peevishness which indeed was folly.
Whatsoever Apollo shall command, Midas will
104 execute.

106 **Apol.** Then attend, Midas. I accept thy submission
and sacrifice, so as yearly at this temple thou offer
108 sacrifice in submission: withal, take Apollo's counsel,
which if thou scorn, thou shalt find thy destiny. I will
110 not speak in riddles; all shall be plain, because thou art
dull; but all certain, if thou be obstinate.

112 *Weigh not in one balance gold and justice;*
114 *With one hand wage not war and peace;*
Let thy head be glad of one crown,
116 *And take care to keep one friend.*
The friend that thou wouldst make thy foe,
118 *The kingdom thou wouldst make the world,*
The hand that thou dost arm with force,
120 *The gold that thou dost think a god,*
Shall conquer, fall, shrink short, be common;
122 *With force, with pride, with fear, with traffic.*
If this thou like, shake off an ass's ears:
124 If not, forever shake an ass's ears.

126 **Soph.** Apollo will not reply.

128 **Midas.** It may be, Sophronia, that neither you, nor any
else, understand Apollo, because none of you have the
130 heart of a king: but my thoughts expound my fortunes,
and my fortunes hang upon my thoughts. That great
132 Apollo, that joined to my head ass's ears, hath put
into my heart a lion's mind. I see that by obscure
134 shadows, which you cannot discern in fresh colours.
Apollo, in the depth of his dark answer, is to me the
136 glistening of a bright sun. I perceive (and yet not too

late) that Lesbos will not be touched by gold, by force
 138 it cannot: that the gods have pitched it out of the
 world, as not to be controlled by any in the world.
 140 Though my hand be gold, yet I must not think to span
 over the main ocean. Though my soldiers be valiant, I
 142 must not therefore think my quarrels just. There is no
 way to nail the crown of Phrygia fast to my daughter's
 144 head, but in letting the crowns of others sit in quiet on
 theirs.

146
Mar. Midas!

148
Midas. How darest thou reply seeing me resolved? thy
 150 counsel hath spilt more blood than all my soldiers'
 lances! let none be so hardy as to look to cross me. –
 152 Sacred Apollo, if sacrifice yearly at thy temple, and
 submission hourly in mine own court, if fulfilling thy
 154 counsel, and correcting my counselors, may shake off
 these ass's ears, I here before thee vow to shake off
 156 all envies abroad, and at home all tyranny.

158 *[The ears fall off.]*

160 **Soph.** Honoured be Apollo, Midas is restored.

162 **Midas.** Fortunate Midas, that feel'st thy head lightened
 of dull ears, and thy heart of deadly sorrows. – Come
 164 my lords, let us repair to our palace, in which Apollo
 shall have a stately statue erected: every month will we
 166 solemnize there a feast, and here every year a sacrifice.
 Phrygia shall be governed by gods, not men, lest the
 168 gods make beasts of men. So my counsel of war shall
 not make conquests in their own conceits, nor my
 170 counselors in peace make me poor, to enrich
 themselves. So blessed be Apollo, quiet be Lesbos,
 172 happy be Midas, and to begin this solemnity, let us
 sing to Apollo, for, so much as music, nothing can
 174 content Apollo.

176 *[They sing all.]*

178 *Sing to Apollo, god of day,
 Whose golden beams with morning play,
 180 And make her eyes so brightly shine.
 Aurora's face is called divine.
 182 Sing to Phoebus, and that throne
 Of diamonds which he sits upon;
 184 Io, paeans let us sing,*

186 *To physic 's and to poesy's king.*
187 *Crown all his altars with bright fire,*
188 *Laurels bind about his lyre,*
189 *A Daphnean coronet for his head,*
190 *The Muses dance about his bed;*
191 *When on his ravishing lute he plays,*
192 *Strew his temple round with bays.*
193 *Io, paeans let us sing,*
194 *To the glittering Delian king.*

[*Exeunt.*]

196

FINIS

Optional Textual Changes.

The texts of the Scripts prepared for our website, ElizabethanDrama.org, generally lean towards keeping the language of the plays' earliest editions. Where obvious errors in typography have occurred, the emendations suggested by early and modern editors are usually accepted without comment.

Words and syllables have in some cases been added to the original text; such additions appear within hard brackets [], and may be omitted at a director's discretion. Such additions may be made for one of two reasons: (1) where words or syllables have clearly been omitted from the original text by accident, and are needed for a line to make sense; and (2) where words or syllables are added to repair a line's meter.

The text of this Script may be confidently adopted by a theatre group without further revision; however, we present below a list of changes a director may wish to consider, if he or she feels any of them would make the language more sensible, etc. Most of these emendations represent suggestions of later editors of the play, and a few represent restoring original language from the quartos.

Explanations for all these possible emendations can be found in the annotated edition of this play found on our website.

Prologue.

1. Omit Prologue.
2. line 10: modernize *sallets* to *salads*.

Act I, Scene i.

1. line 20: emend *and* to *I*.
2. line 88: modernize *stature* to *statue*.

Act II, Scene ii.

1. line 23: modernize *troaden* to *trodden*.
2. line 85: modernize *thoroughly* to *thoroughly*

Act III, Scene i.

1. line 34: emend *Getulia* to *Galatia*.
2. line 48: modernize *moaths* to *moths*.

Act III, Scene iii.

1. line 17: modernize *shewed* to *showed*.

Act IV, Scene i.

1. line 169: modernize *shewed* to *showed*.

Act IV, Scene iii.

1. line 111: modernize *shrowd* to *shrewd*.