

*ElizabethanDrama.org*

presents

a Theatre Script of

GEORGE-A-GREENE,  
THE PINNER OF WAKEFIELD

ANONYMOUS

Earliest Extant Edition: 1599

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# GEORGE-A-GREENE, THE PINNER OF WAKEFIELD

Anonymous.

Earliest Extant Edition: 1599

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

*Edward*, King of England.

*James*, King of Scotland.

The English Rebels:

*Earl of Kendal.*

*Lord Bonfield.*

*Sir Gilbert Armstrong.*

*Sir Nicholas Mannering.*

Other English Characters:

*Earl of Warwick.*

*George-a-Greene.*

*Jenkin*, George-a-Greene's man.

*Wily*, George-a-Greene's boy.

*William Musgrove.*

*Cuddy*, son to Musgrove.

*Grime.*

*Bettris*, daughter to Grime.

*Jane-a-Barley.*

*Ned-a-Barley*, son to Jane.

*Justice.*

Other Scottish Characters:

*Lord Humes.*

*John Taylor*, messenger to King James.

Robin Hood's Gang:

*Robin Hood.*

*Much, the Miller's Son.*

*Scarlet.*

*Maid Marian.*

Townsmen, Shoemakers, Soldiers, Messengers, etc.

### **Scene Breaks, Settings, and Stage Directions.**

*George-a-Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield* was originally published in a 1599 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 or repair the meter 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.

The 1599 quarto does not divide *George-a-Greene* into Acts and Scenes, or provide settings or asides. Act and scene breaks and settings have been adopted from Dickinson, and asides from Dyce.

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

# GEORGE-A-GREENE, THE PINNER OF WAKEFIELD

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*At Bradford.*

*Enter the Earl of Kendal; with him Lord Bonfield,  
Sir Gilbert Armstrong, Sir Nicholas Mannering,  
and John.*

1 **Kendal.** Welcome to Bradford, martial gentlemen,  
2 Lord Bonfield, and Sir Gilbert Armstrong both;  
And all my troops, even to my basest groom,  
4 Courage and welcome! for the day is ours.  
Our cause is good, it is for the land's avail:  
6 Then let us fight, and die for England's good.

8 **All.** We will, my lord.

10 **Kendal.** As I am Henry Momford, Kendal's earl,  
You honour me with this assent of yours;  
12 And here upon my sword I make protest  
For to relieve the poor or die myself.  
14 And know, my lords, that James, the King of Scots,  
Wars hard upon the borders of this land:  
16 Here is his post. –  
Say, John Taylor, what news with King James?

18 **John.** War, my lord, [I] tell, and good news, I trow;  
20 for King Jamy vows to meet you the twenty-sixth of  
this month, God willing; marry, doth he, sir.

22 **Kendal.** My friends, you see what we have to win. –  
24 Well, John, commend me to King James, and tell him,  
I will meet him the twenty-sixth of this month,  
26 And all the rest; and so, farewell.

28

[Exit John.]

30

Bonfield, why stand'st thou as a man in dumps?  
 Courage! for, if I win, I'll make thee duke:

32

I Henry Momford will be king myself;

34

And I will make thee Duke of Lancaster,  
 And Gilbert Armstrong Lord of Doncaster.

36

**Bonf.** Nothing, my lord, makes me amazed at all,  
 But that our soldiers find our victuals scant.

38

We must make havoc of those country-swains;

40

For so will the rest tremble and be afraid,  
 And humbly send provision to your camp.

42

**Armstr.** My Lord Bonfield gives good advice:

44

They make a scorn, and stand upon the king;

46

So what is brought is sent from them perforce;

48

Ask Mannering else.

46

**Kendal.** What sayest thou, Mannering?

48

**Mann.** Whenas I shewed your high commissiön,

50

They made this answer,

52

Only to send provision for your horses.

52

**Kendal.** Well, hie thee to Wakefield, bid the town

54

To send me all provision that I want,

56

Lest I, like martial Tamburlaine, lay waste

58

Their bordering countries, and leaving none alive

60

That contradicts my commission.

58

**Mann.** Let me alone, my lord,

60

I'll make them vail their plumes;

62

For whatsoe'er he be, the proudest knight,

64

Justice, or other, that gainsayeth your word,

66

I'll clap him fast, to make the rest to fear.

64

**Kendal.** Do so, Nick: hie thee thither presently,

66

And let us hear of thee again to-morrow.

68

**Mann.** Will you not remove, my lord?

70

**Kendal.** No, I will lie at Bradford all this night

72

And all the next. – Come, Bonfield, let us go,

74

And listen out some bonny lasses here.

74

[Exeunt.]

ACT I, SCENE II.

*At Wakefield.*

*Enter the Justice, Townsmen, George-a-Greene,  
and Sir Nicholas Mannering with his commission.*

1 **Just.** Master Mannering, stand aside, whilst we confer  
2 What is best to do. – Townsmen of Wakefield,  
The Earl of Kendal here hath sent for victuals;  
4 And in aiding him we shew ourselves no less  
Than traitors to the king; therefore  
6 Let me hear, townsmen, what is your consents.

8 **Ist Towns.** Even as you please, we are all content.

10 **Just.** Then, Master Mannering, we are resolved –

12 **Mann.** As how?

14 **Just.** Marry, sir, thus.  
We will send the Earl of Kendal no victuals,  
16 Because he is a traitor to the king;  
And in aiding him we shew ourselves no less.

18 **Mann.** Why, men of Wakefield, are you waxen mad,  
20 That present danger cannot whet your wits,  
Wisely to make provision of yourselves?  
22 The earl is thirty thousand men strong in power,  
And what town soever him resist,  
24 He lays it flat and level with the ground.  
Ye silly men, you seek your own decay:  
26 Therefore  
Send my lord such provision as he wants,  
28 So he will spare your town,  
And come no nearer Wakefield than he is.

30 **Just.** Master Mannering, you have your answer;  
32 You may be gone.

34 **Mann.** Well, Woodroffe, for so I guess is thy name,  
I'll make thee curse thy overthwart denial;  
36 And all that sit upon the bench this day shall rue  
The hour they have withstood my lord's commission.

38 **Just.** Do thy worst, we fear thee not.

40 **Mann.** See you these seals? before you pass the town,

42 | I will have all things my lord doth want,  
 In spite of you.

44 | **George.** Proud dapper Jack, vail bonnet to the bench  
 46 | That represents the person of the king;  
 Or, sirrah, I'll lay thy head before thy feet.

48 | **Mann.** Why, who art thou?

50 | **George.** Why, I am George-a-Greene,  
 52 | True liege-man to my king,  
 Who scorns that men of such esteem as these  
 54 | Should brook the braves of any traitorous squire. –  
 You of the bench, and you, my fellow-friends,  
 56 | Neighbours, we subjects all unto the king;  
 We are English born, and therefore Edward's friends.  
 58 | Vowed unto him even in our mothers' womb,  
 Our minds to God, our hearts unto our king:  
 60 | Our wealth, our homage, and our carcasses,  
 Be all King Edward's. – Then, sirrah, we  
 62 | Have nothing left for traitors, but our swords,  
 Whetted to bathe them in your bloods, and die  
 64 | Against you, before we send you any victuals.

66 | **Just.** Well spoken, George-a-Greene!

68 | **1st Towns.** Pray let George-a-Greene speak for us.

70 | **George.** Sirrah, you get no victuals here,  
 Not if a hoof of beef would save your lives.

72 | **Mann.** Fellow, I stand amazed at thy presumption.  
 74 | Why, what art thou that darest gainsay my lord,  
 Knowing his mighty puissance and his stroke?  
 76 | Why, my friend, I come not barely of myself;  
 For, see, I have a large commissiön.

78 | **George.** Let me see it, sirrah .

80 | *[Takes the commission].*

82 | Whose seals be these?

84 | **Mann.** This is the Earl of Kendal's seal-at-arms;  
 86 | This Lord Charnel Bonfield's;  
 And this Sir Gilbert Armstrong's.

88 | **George.** I tell thee, sirrah, did good King Edward's son

90 Seal a commission 'gainst the king his father,  
 Thus would I tear it in despite of him,  
 92  
 [Tears the commission.]  
 94  
 Being traitor to my sovereign.  
 96  
**Mann.** What, hast thou torn my lord's commission?  
 98 Thou shalt rue it, and so shall all Wakefield.

100 **George.** What, are you in choler? I will give you pills  
 To cool your stomach. Seest thou these seals?  
 102 Now, by my father's soul,  
 Which was a yeoman when he was alive,  
 104 Eat them, or eat my dagger's point, proud squire.

106 **Mann.** But thou dost but jest, I hope.

108 **George.** Sure that shall you see before we two part.

110 **Mann.** Well, and there be no remedy, so, George:  
 112  
 [Swallows one of the seals.]  
 114 One is gone; I pray thee, no more now.

116 **George.** O, sir,  
 If one be good, the others cannot hurt.  
 118 So sir;  
 120  
 [Mannering swallows the other two seals.]  
 122 Now you may go tell the Earl of Kendal,  
 Although I have rent his large commission,  
 124 Yet of courtesy I have sent all his seals  
 Back again by you.  
 126  
**Mann.** Well, sir, I will do your errand.  
 128  
 [Exit Mannering.]  
 130  
**George.** Now let him tell his lord that he hath spoke  
 132 With George-a-Greene,  
 Right Pinner of merry Wakefield town,  
 134 That hath physic for a fool,  
 Pills for a traitor that doth wrong his sovereign. —  
 136 Are you content with this that I have done?

138 **Just.** Ay, content, George;  
 For highly hast thou honoured Wakefield town



140 | In cutting off proud Mannering so short.  
142 | Come, thou shalt be my welcome guest to-day;  
142 | For well thou hast deserved reward and favour.

144 |

*[Exeunt.]*

ACT I, SCENE III.

*In Westmoreland.*

*Enter Musgrove and Cuddy.*

1 **Cuddy.** Now, gentle father, list unto thy son,  
2 And for my mother's love,  
That erst was blithe and bonny in thine eye,  
4 Grant one petition that I shall demand.

6 **Musgr.** What is that, my Cuddy?

8 **Cuddy.** Father, you know  
The ancient enmity of late  
10 Between the Musgroves and the wily Scots,  
Whereof they have oath  
12 Not to leave one alive that strides a lance.  
O father,  
14 You are old, and waning age unto the grave:  
Old William Musgrove, which whilom was thought  
16 The bravest horseman in all Westmoreland,  
Is weak,  
18 And forced to stay his arm upon a staff,  
That erst could wield a lance.  
20 Then, gentle father, resign the hold to me;  
Give arms to youth, and honour unto age.

22 **Musgr.** Avaunt, false-hearted boy! my joints do quake  
24 Even with anguish of thy very words.  
Hath William Musgrove seen an hundred years?  
26 Have I been feared and dreaded by the Scots,  
That, when they heard my name in any road,  
28 They fled away, and posted thence amain,  
And shall I die with shame now in mine age?  
30 No, Cuddy, no: thus resolve I,  
Here have I lived, and here will Musgrove die.

32

*[Exeunt.]*

ACT I, SCENE IV.*At Bradford.**Enter Lord Bonfield, Sir Gilbert Armstrong,  
Grime, and Bettris (his daughter).*

1 **Bonf.** Now, gentle Grime, God-a-mercy for our good cheer;  
 2 Our fare was royal, and our welcome great:  
 And sith so kindly thou hast entertained us,  
 4 If we return with happy victory,  
 We will deal as friendly with thee in recompense.

6 **Grime.** Your welcome was but duty, gentle lord;  
 8 For wherefore have we given us our wealth,  
 But to make our betters welcome when they come?  
 10 [*Aside*]. O, this goes hard when traitors must be flattered!  
 But life is sweet, and I cannot withstand it:  
 12 God, I hope, will revenge the quarrel of my king.

14 **Armstr.** What said you, Grime?

16 **Grime.** I say, Sir Gilbert, looking on my daughter,  
 I curse the hour that e'er I got the girl;  
 18 For, sir, she may have many wealthy suitors,  
 And yet she disdains them all,  
 20 To have poor George-a-Greene unto her husband.

22 **Bonf.** On that, good Grime, I am talking with thy daughter;  
 But she, in quirks and quiddities of love,  
 24 Sets me to school, she is so over-wise. —  
 But, gentle girl, if thou wilt forsake the Pinner  
 26 And be my love, I will advance thee high;  
 To dignify those hairs of amber hue,  
 28 I'll grace them with a chaplet made of pearl,  
 Set with choice rubies, sparks, and diamonds,  
 30 Planted upon a velvet hood, to hide that head  
 Wherein two sapphires burn like sparkling fire:  
 32 This will I do, fair Bettris, and far more,  
 If thou wilt love the Lord of Doncaster.

34 **Bettris.** Heigh-ho! my heart is in a higher place,  
 36 Perhaps on the earl, if that be he. —  
 See where he comes, or angry, or in love,  
 38 For why his colour looketh discontent.

40 *Enter the Earl of Kendal and Sir Nicholas Mannering.*

- 42 **Kendal.** Come, Nick, follow me.
- 44 **Bonf.** How now, my lord! what news?
- 46 **Kendal.** Such news, Bonfield, as will make thee laugh,  
And fret thy fill, to hear how Nick was used.
- 48 Why, the Justices stand on their terms:  
Nick, as you know, is haughty in his words;
- 50 He laid the law unto the Justices  
With threatening braves, that one looked on another,
- 52 Ready to stoop; but that a churl came in,  
One George-a-Greene, the Pinner of the town,
- 54 And with his dagger drawn laid hands on Nick,  
And by no beggars swore that we were traitors,
- 56 Rent our commission, and upon a brave  
Made Nick to eat the seals or brook the stab:
- 58 Poor Mannering, afraid, came posting hither straight.
- 60 **Bettris.** O lovely George, fortune be still thy friend!  
And as thy thoughts be high, so be thy mind
- 62 In all accords, even to thy heart's desire!
- 64 **Bonf.** What says fair Bettris?
- 66 **Grime.** My lord, she is praying for George-a-Greene:  
He is the man, and she will none but him.
- 68 **Bonf.** But him! why, look on me, my girl:  
Thou know'st that yesternight I courted thee,  
And swore at my return to wed with thee.
- 72 Then tell me, love, shall I have all thy fair?
- 74 **Bettris.** I care not for earl, nor yet for knight,  
Nor baron that is so bold;
- 76 For George-a-Greene, the merry Pinner,  
He hath my heart in hold.
- 78 **Bonf.** Bootless, my lord, are many vain replies:  
Let us hie us to Wakefield, and send her the Pinner's head.
- 82 **Kendal.** It shall be so. – Grime, gramercy,  
Shut up thy daughter, bridle her affects;
- 84 Let me not miss her when I make return;  
Therefore look to her, as to thy life, good Grime.
- 86 **Grime.** I warrant you, my lord.
- 88 **Kendal.** And, Bettris,
- 90 Leave a base Pinner, for to love an earl.

92

*[Exeunt Grime and Bettris.]*

94

Fain would I see this Pinner George-a-Greene.

It shall be thus:

96

Nick Mannering shall lead on the battle,

And we three will go to Wakefield in some disguise:

98

But howsoever, I'll have his head to-day.

100

*[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

*Before Sir John-a-Barley's Castle.*

*Enter James (King of Scots), Lord Humes,  
with Soldiers, and John.*

1 **K. James.** Why, Johnny, then the Earl of Kendal is blithe,  
2 And hath brave men that troop along with him?

4 **John.** Ay, marry, my liege,  
And hath good men that come along with him,  
6 And vows to meet you at Scrasblesea, God willing.

8 **K. James.** If good Saint Andrew lend King Jamy leave,  
I will be with him at the 'pointed day.

10

*Enter Ned.*

12

But, soft! – Whose pretty boy art thou?

14

**Ned.** Sir, I am son unto Sir John-a-Barley,  
16 Eldest, and all that e'er my mother had;  
Edward my name.

18

**K. James.** And whither art thou going, pretty Ned?

20

**Ned.** To seek some birds, and kill them, if I can:  
22 And now my schoolmaster is also gone,  
So have I liberty to ply my bow;  
24 For when he comes, I stir not from my book.

26

**K. James.** Lord Humes, but mark the visage of this child:  
By him I guess the beauty of his mother;  
28 None but Leda could breed Helena. –  
Tell me, Ned, who is within with thy mother?

30

**Ned.** Nought but herself and household servants, sir:  
32 If you would speak with her, knock at this gate.

34

**K. James.** Johnny, knock at that gate.

36

*[John knocks at the gate.]*

38

*Enter Jane-a-Barley upon the walls.*

40

**Jane.** O, I'm betrayed! What multitudes be these?

42 **K. James.** Fear not, fair Jane, for all these men are mine,  
 And all thy friends, if thou be friend to me:  
 44 I am thy lover, James the King of Scots,  
 That oft have sued and wooed with many letters,  
 46 Painting my outward passions with my pen,  
 Whenas my inward soul did bleed for woe.  
 48 Little regard was given to my suit;  
 But haply thy husband's presence wrought it:  
 50 Therefore, sweet Jane, I fitted me to time,  
 And, hearing that thy husband was from home,  
 52 Am come to crave what long I have desired.

54 **Ned.** Nay, soft you, sir! you get no entrance here,  
 That seek to wrong Sir John-a-Barley so,  
 56 And offer such dishonour to my mother.

58 **K. James.** Why, what dishonour, Ned?

60 **Ned.** Though young,  
 Yet often have I heard my father say,  
 62 No greater wrong than to be made [a] cuckold.  
 Were I of age, or were my body strong,  
 64 Were he ten kings, I would shoot him to the heart  
 That should attempt to give Sir John the horn. –  
 66 Mother, let him not come in:  
 I will go lie at Jocky Miller's house.

68 **K. James.** Stay him.

70 **Jane.** Ay, well said; Ned, thou hast given the king his answer;  
 72 For were the ghost of Caesar on the earth,  
 Wrapped in the wonted glory of his honour,  
 74 He should not make me wrong my husband so. –  
 But good King James is pleasant, as I guess,  
 76 And means to try what humour I am in;  
 Else would he never have brought an host of men,  
 78 To have them witness of his Scottish lust.

80 **K. James.** Jane, in faith, Jane, –

82 **Jane.** Never reply,  
 For I protest by the highest holy God,  
 84 That doometh just revenge for things amiss,  
 King James, of all men, shall not have my love.

86 **K. James.** Then list to me: Saint Andrew be my boot,  
 88 But I'll raze thy castle to the very ground,  
 Unless thou open the gate, and let me in.

90 | **Jane.** I fear thee not, King Jamy: do thy worst.  
92 | This castle is too strong for thee to scale;  
94 | Besides, to-morrow will Sir John come home.

96 | **K. James.** Well, Jane, since thou disdain'st King James's love,  
98 | I'll draw thee on with sharp and deep extremes;  
100 | For, by my father's soul, this brat of thine  
102 | Shall perish here before thine eyes,  
104 | Unless thou open the gate, and let me in.

106 | **Jane.** O deep extremes! my heart begins to break:  
108 | My little Ned looks pale for fear. –  
110 | Cheer thee, my boy, I will do much for thee.

112 | **Ned.** But not so much as to dishonour me.

114 | **Jane.** And if thou diest, I cannot live, sweet Ned.

116 | **Ned.** Then die with honour, mother, dying chaste.

118 | **Jane.** I am armed:  
120 | My husband's love, his honour, and his fame,  
122 | Joins victory by virtue. – Now, King James,  
124 | If mother's tears cannot allay thine ire,  
126 | Then butcher him, for I will never yield:  
The son shall die before I wrong the father.

128 | **K. James.** Why, then, he dies.

130 | *Alarum within.*  
132 | *Enter a Messenger.*

134 | **Mess.** My lord, Musgrove is at hand.

136 | **K. James.** Who, Musgrove? The devil he is! Come, my horse!

138 | *[Exeunt.]*



ACT II, SCENE II.

*The Same, before Sir John-a-Barley's Castle.*

*Enter Musgrove with King James prisoner;  
Jane-a-Barley on the walls.*

1 **Musgr.** Now, King James, thou art my prisoner.

2  
3 **K. James.** Not thine, but Fortune's prisoner.

4  
5  
6 *Enter Cuddy.*

7 **Cuddy.** Father, the field is ours:  
8 Their colours we have seized, and Humes is slain;  
9 I slew him hand to hand.

10  
11 **Musgr.** God and Saint George!

12 **Cuddy.** O father, I am sore athirst!

13 **Jane.** Come in, young Cuddy, come and drink thy fill:  
14 Bring in King Jamy with you as a guest;  
15 For all this broil was 'cause he could not enter.

16  
17  
18  
19 *[Jane exits above; exeunt below, the others.]*

ACT II, SCENE III.*At Wakefield.**Enter George-a-Greene.*

1 **George.** The sweet content of men that live in love  
 2 Breeds fretting humours in a restless mind;  
 And fancy, being checked by fortune's spite,  
 4 Grows too impatient in her sweet desires;  
 Sweet to those men whom love leads on to bliss,  
 6 But sour to me whose hap is still amiss.

8 *Enter Jenkin.*

10 **Jenkin.** Marry, amen, sir.

12 **George.** Sir, what do you cry "amen" at?

14 **Jenkin.** Why, did not you talk of love?

16 **George.** How do you know that?

18 **Jenkin.** Well, though I say it that should not say it,  
 there are few fellows in our parish so nettled with love  
 20 as I have been of late.

22 **George.** Sirrah, I thought no less, when the other  
 morning you rose so early to go to your wenches. Sir, I  
 24 had thought you had gone about my honest business.

26 **Jenkin.** Trow, you have hit it; for, master, be it known  
 to you, there is some good-will betwixt Madge the  
 28 souce-wife and I; marry, she hath another lover.

30 **George.** Can'st thou brook any rivals in thy love?

32 **Jenkin.** A rider! no, he is a sow-gelder and goes  
 afoot. But Madge 'pointed to meet me in your wheat-  
 34 close.

36 **George.** Well, did she meet you there?

38 **Jenkin.** Never make question of that. And first I  
 saluted her with a green gown, and after fell as hard a-  
 40 wooing as if the priest had been at our backs to have  
 married us.

42 **George.** What, did she grant?  
 44

46 **Jenkin.** Did she grant! never make question of that.  
And she gave me a shirt-collar wrought over with no  
counterfeit stuff.

48 **George.** What, was it gold?

50 **Jenkin.** Nay, 'twas better than gold.

52 **George.** What was it?

54 **Jenkin.** Right Coventry blue. We had no sooner come  
56 there but wot you who came by?

58 **George.** No: who?

60 **Jenkin.** Clim the sow-gelder.

62 **George.** Came he by?

64 **Jenkin.** He spied Madge and I sit together: he leapt  
66 from his horse, laid his hand on his dagger, and began  
to swear. Now I seeing he had a dagger, and I nothing  
68 but this twig in my hand, I gave him fair words and  
said nothing. He comes to me, and takes me by the  
bosom. "You whoreson slave," said he, "hold my  
70 horse, and look he take no cold in his feet." "No,  
marry, shall he, sir," quoth I; "I'll lay my cloak  
72 underneath him." I took my cloak, spread it all along,  
and [set] his horse on the midst of it.

74 **George.** Thou clown, didst thou set his horse upon thy  
76 cloak?

78 **Jenkin.** Ay, but mark how I served him. Madge and  
he was no sooner gone down into the ditch, but I  
80 plucked out my knife, cut four holes in my cloak, and  
made his horse stand on the bare ground.

82 **George.** 'Twas well done. Now, sir, go and survey my  
84 fields: if you find any cattle in the corn, to pound with  
them.

86 **Jenkin.** And if I find any in the pound, I shall turn  
88 them out.

90 [Exit Jenkin.]

92 *Enter the Earl of Kendal, Lord Bonfield,  
Sir Gilbert Armstrong, all disguised,*

94 | *with a train of men.*

96 | **Kendal.** Now we have put the horses in the corn,  
Let us stand in some corner for to hear  
98 | What braving terms the Pinner will breathe  
When he spies our horses in the corn.

100

*[Retires with the others.]*

102

*Re-enter Jenkin blowing his horn.*

104

**Jenkin.** O master, where are you? we have a prize.

106

**George.** A prize! what is it?

108

**Jenkin.** Three goodly horses in our wheat-close.

110

**George.** Three horses in our wheat-close! whose be they?

112

**Jenkin.** Marry, that's a riddle to me; but they are  
114 | there; velvet horses, and I never saw such horses  
before. As my duty was, I put off my cap, and said as  
116 | followeth: "My masters, what do you make in our  
close?" One of them, hearing me ask what he made  
118 | there, held up his head and neighed, and after his  
manner laughed as heartily as if a mare had been tied  
120 | to his girdle. "My masters," said I, "it is no laughing  
matter; for, if my master take you here, you go as  
122 | round as a top to the pound." Another untoward jade,  
hearing me threaten him to the pound and to tell you of  
124 | them, cast up both his heels, and let such a monstrous  
great fart, that was as much as in his language to say,  
126 | "A fart for the pound, and a fart for George-a-Greene!"  
Now I, hearing this, put on my cap, blew my horn,  
128 | called them all jades, and came to tell you.

130 | **George.** Now, sir, go and drive me those three horses  
to the pound.

132

**Jenkin.** Do you hear? I were best to take a constable  
134 | with me.

136 | **George.** Why so?

138 | **Jenkin.** Why, they, being gentlemen's horses, may  
stand on their reputation, and will not obey me.

140

**George.** Go, do as I bid you, sir.

142

144 **Jenkin.** Well, I may go.

146 *The Earl of Kendal, Lord Bonfield,  
and Sir Gilbert Armstrong come forward.*

148 **Kendal.** [To Jenkin] Whither away, sir?

150 **Jenkin.** Whither away! I am going to put the horses in  
the pound.

152 **Kendal.** Sirrah, those three horses belong to us,  
154 And we put them in,  
And they must tarry there and eat their fill.

156 **Jenkin.** Stay, I will go tell my master. – Hear you,  
158 master? we have another prize: those three horses be in  
your wheat-close still, and here be three geldings  
160 more.

162 **George.** What be these?

164 **Jenkin.** These are the masters of the horses.

166 **George.** Now, gentlemen (I know not your degrees,  
But more you cannot be, unless you be kings,  
168 Why wrong you us of Wakefield with your horses?  
I am the Pinner, and, before you pass,  
170 You shall make good the trespass they have done.

172 **Kendal.** Peace, saucy mate, prate not to us:  
I tell thee, Pinner, we are gentlemen.

174 **George.** Why, sir,  
176 So may I, sir, although I give no arms.

178 **Kendal.** Thou! how art thou a gentleman?

180 **Jenkin.** And such is my master, and he may give as  
good arms as ever your great-grandfather could give.

182 **Kendal.** Pray thee, let me hear how.

184 **Jenkin.** Marry, my master may give for his arms the  
186 picture of April in a green jerkin, with a rook on one  
fist and an horn on the other: but my master gives his  
188 arms the wrong way, for he gives the horn on his fist;  
and your grandfather, because he would not lose his  
190 arms, wears the horn on his own head.

192 **Kendal.** Well, Pinner, sith our horses be in,

194 In spite of thee they now shall feed their fill,  
And eat until our leasures serve to go.

196 **George.** Now, by my father's soul,  
Were good King Edward's horses in the corn,  
198 They shall amend the scath, or kiss the pound;  
Much more yours, sir, whatsoe'er you be.

200 **Kendal.** Why, man, thou knowest not us:  
202 We do belong to Henry Momford, Earl of Kendal;  
Men that, before a month be full expired,  
204 Will be King Edward's betters in the land.

206 **George.** King Edward's better[s]! Rebel, thou liest!

208 *[George strikes him.]*

210 **Bonf.** Villain, what hast thou done? thou hast stroke an earl.

212 **George.** Why, what care I? a poor man that is true,  
Is better than an earl, if he be false.  
214 Traitors reap no better favours at my hands.

216 **Kendal.** Ay, so methinks; but thou shalt dear aby this blow. –  
Now or never lay hold on the Pinner!

218 *[All the train comes forward.]*

220 **George.** Stay, my lords, let us parley on these broils:  
222 Not Hercules against two, the proverb is,  
Nor I against so great a multitude. –  
224 *[Aside].* Had not your troops come marching as they did,  
I would have stopped your passage unto London:  
226 But now I'll fly to secret policy.

228 **Kendal.** What dost thou murmur, George?

230 **George.** Marry, this, my lord; I muse,  
If thou be Henry Momford, Kendal's earl,  
232 That thou wilt do poor George-a-Greene this wrong,  
Ever to match me with a troop of men.

234 **Kendal.** Why dost thou strike me, then?

236 **George.** Why, my lord, measure me but by yourself:  
238 Had you a man had served you long,  
And heard your foe misuse you behind your back,  
240 And would not draw his sword in your defence,  
You would cashier him.

242 Much more, King Edward is my king:  
And before I'll hear him so wronged,  
244 I'll die within this place,  
And maintain good whatsoever I have said.  
246 And, if I speak not reason in this case,  
What I have said I'll maintain in this place.  
248  
**Bonf.** A pardon, my lord, for this Pinner;  
250 For, trust me, he speaketh like a man of worth.  
252 **Kendal.** Well, George,  
Wilt thou leave Wakefield and wend with me,  
254 I'll freely put up all and pardon thee.  
256 **George.** Ay, my lord, considering me one thing,  
You will leave these arms, and follow your good king.  
258  
**Kendal.** Why, George, I rise not against King Edward,  
260 But for the poor that is oppressed by wrong;  
And, if King Edward will redress the same,  
262 I will not offer him disparagement,  
But otherwise; and so let this suffice.  
264 Thou hear'st the reason why I rise in arms:  
Now, wilt thou leave Wakefield and wend with me,  
266 I'll make thee captain of a hardy band,  
And, when I have my will, dub thee a knight.  
268  
**George.** Why, my lord, have you any hope to win?  
270  
**Kendal.** Why, there is a prophecy doth say,  
272 That King James and I shall meet at London,  
And make the king vail bonnet to us both.  
274  
**George.** If this were true, my lord,  
276 This were a mighty reason.  
278 **Kendal.** Why, it is  
A miraculous prophecy, and cannot fail.  
280  
**George.** Well, my lord, you have almost turned me. —  
282 Jenkin, come hither.  
284 **Jenkin.** Sir?  
286 **George.** Go your ways home, sir,  
And drive me those three horses home unto my house,  
288 And pour them down a bushel of good oats.  
290 **Jenkin.** Well, I will. — [*Aside*]. Must I give these

scurvy horses oats?

292

[Exit Jenkin.]

294

**George.** Will it please you to command your train aside?

296

**Kendal.** Stand aside.

298

[The train retires.]

300

**George.** Now list to me:

302

Here in a wood, not far from hence,

There dwells an old man in a cave alone,

304

That can foretell what fortunes shall befall you,

For he is greatly skilful in magic art.

306

Go you three to him early in the morning,

And question him: if he says good,

308

Why, then, my lord, I am the foremost man

Who will march up with your camp to London.

310

**Kendal.** George, thou honourest me in this.

312

But where shall we find him out?

314

**George.** My man shall conduct you to the place;

But, good my lord, tell me true what the wise man saith.

316

**Kendal.** That will I, as I am Earl of Kendal.

318

**George.** Why, then, to honour George-a-Greene the more,

320

Vouchsafe a piece of beef at my poor house;

You shall have wafer-cakes your fill,

322

A piece of beef hung up since Martlemas:

If that like you not, take what you bring, for me.

324

**Kendal.** Gramercies, George.

326

[Exeunt.]



ACT III.SCENE I.

*Before Grime's house in Bradford.*

*Enter George-a-Greene's boy Wily,  
disguised as a woman.*

1 **Wily.** O, what is love! it is some mighty power,  
2 Else could it never conquer George-a-Greene. —  
Here dwells a churl that keeps away his love:  
4 I know the worst, and if I be espied,  
'Tis but a beating; and if I by this means  
6 Can get fair Bettris forth her father's door,  
It is enough. —  
8 Venus, for me, of all the gods alone,  
Be aiding to my wily enterprise!

10

*[Wily knocks at the door.]*

12

*Enter Grime.*

14

**Grime.** How now! who knocks there? what would you have?  
16 From whence came you? where do you dwell?

18

**Wily.** I am, forsooth, a sempster's maid hard by,  
That hath brought work home to your daughter.

20

**Grime.** Nay, are you not  
22 Some crafty quean that comes from George-a-Greene,  
That rascal, with some letters to my daughter?  
24 I will have you searched.

26

**Wily.** Alas, sir, it is Hebrew unto me  
To tell me of George-a-Greene or any other!  
28 Search me, good sir, and if you find a letter  
About me, let me have the punishment that's due.

30

**Grime.** Why are you muffled? I like you the worse for that.

32

**Wily.** I am not, sir, ashamed to shew my face;  
34 Yet loth I am my cheeks should take the air:  
Not that I'm chary of my beauty's hue,  
36 But that I'm troubled with the toothache sore.

38

*[Unmuffles.]*

40 **Grime.** [*Aside*] A pretty wench, of smiling countenance!  
 Old men can like, although they cannot love;  
 42 Ay,  
 And love, though not so brief as young men can. —  
 44 Well,  
 Go in, my wench, and speak with my daughter.

[*Exit Wily into the house.*]

48 I wonder much at the Earl of Kendal,  
 50 Being a mighty man, as still he is,  
 Yet for to be a traitor to his king,  
 52 Is more than God or man will well allow.  
 But what a fool am I to talk of him!  
 54 My mind is more here of the pretty lass.  
 Had she brought some forty pounds to town,  
 56 I could be content to make her my wife:  
 Yet I have heard it in a proverb said,  
 58 He that is old and marries with a lass,  
 Lies but at home, and proves himself an ass.

[*Enter, from the house, Bettris in Wily's apparel.*]

62 How now, my wench! how is't? — what, not a word? —  
 64 Alas, poor soul, the toothache plagues her sore. —  
 Well, my wench,  
 66 Here is an angel for to buy thee pins,

[*Gives money.*]

70 And I pray thee use mine house;  
 The oftener, the more welcome: farewell.

[*Exit Grime.*]

74 **Bettris.** O blessèd love, and blessèd fortune both! —  
 76 But, Bettris, stand not here to talk of love,  
 But hie thee straight unto thy George-a-Greene:  
 78 Never went roe-buck swifter on the downs  
 Than I will trip it till I see my George.

[*Exit.*]

ACT III, SCENE II.

*A Wood near Wakefield.*

*Enter the Earl of Kendal, Lord Bonfield,  
Sir Gilbert Armstrong, and Jenkin.*

1 **Kendal.** Come away, Jenkin.

2  
3 **Jenkin.** Come, here is his house.

4  
5  
6 [Knocks at the door.]

7 – Where be you, ho?

8  
9 **George.** [Within] Who knocks there?

10  
11 **Kendal.** Here are two or three poor men, father,  
12 would speak with you.

13 **George.** [Within]  
14 Pray, give your man leave to lead me forth.

15  
16 **Kendal.** Go, Jenkin, fetch him forth.

17  
18 [Jenkin leads forth George-a-Greene disguised.]

19  
20 **Jenkin.** Come, old man.

21  
22 **Kendal.** Father,  
23 Here is three poor men come to question thee  
24 A word in secret that concerns their lives.

25  
26 **George.** Say on, my son.

27  
28 **Kendal.** Father, I am sure you hear the news,  
29 How that the Earl of Kendal wars against the king.  
30 Now, father, we three are gentlemen by birth,  
31 But younger brethren that want revenues,  
32 And for the hope we have to be preferred,  
33 If that we knew that we shall win,  
34 We will march with him: if not,  
35 We will not march a foot to London more.  
36 Therefore, good father, tell us what shall happen,  
37 Whether the king or the Earl of Kendal shall win.

38  
39  
40 **George.** The king, my son.

42 **Kendal.** Art thou sure of that?

44 **George.** Ay, as sure as thou art Henry Momford,  
The one Lord Bonfield, the other Sir Gilbert [Armstrong].

46 **Kendal.** Why, this is wondrous, being blind of sight,  
48 His deep perceivance should be such to know us.

50 **Armstr.** Magic is mighty and foretelleth great matters. —  
Indeed, father, here is the earl come to see thee,  
52 And therefore, good father, fable not with him.

54 **George.** Welcome is the earl to my poor cell,  
And so are you, my lords; but let me counsel you  
56 To leave these wars against your king,  
And live in quiet.

58 **Kendal.** Father, we come not for advice in war,  
60 But to know whether we shall win or leese.

62 **George.** Lose, gentle lords, but not by good King Edward;  
A baser man shall give you all the foil.

64 **Kendal.** Ay, marry, father, what man is that?

66 **George.** Poor George-a-Greene, the Pinner.

68 **Kendal.** What shall he?

70 **George.** Pull all your plumes, and sore dishonour you.

72 **Kendal.** He! as how?

74 **George.** Nay, the end tries all; but so it will fall out.

76 **Kendal.** But so it shall not, by my honour Christ.  
78 I'll raise my camp, and fire Wakefield town,  
And take that servile Pinner George-a-Greene,  
80 And butcher him before King Edward's face.

82 **George.** Good my lord, be not offended,  
For I speak no more than art reveals to me:  
84 And for greater proof,  
Give your man leave to fetch me my staff.

86 **Kendal.** Jenkin, fetch him his walking-staff.

88 **Jenkin.** [Giving it] Here is your walking-staff.

90

92 **George.** I'll prove it good upon your carcasses;  
 A wiser wizard never met you yet,  
 Nor one that better could foredoom your fall.  
 94 Now I have singled you here alone,  
 I care not though you be three to one.

96  
**Kendal.** Villain, hast thou betrayed us?

98  
**George.** Momford, thou liest, ne'er was I traitor yet;  
 100 Only devised this guile to draw you on  
 For to be combatants.  
 102 Now conquer me, and then march on to London:  
 But shall go hard but I will hold you task.

104  
**Armstr.** Come, my lord, cheerly, I'll kill him hand to hand.

106  
**Kendal.** A thousand pound to him that strikes that stroke!

108  
**George.** Then give it me, for I will have the first.

110  
 112 *[Here they fight;  
 George kills Sir Gilbert Armstrong,  
 and takes the other two prisoners.]*

114  
**Bonf.** Stay, George, we do appeal.

116  
**George.** To whom?

118  
**Bonf.** Why, to the king:  
 120 For rather had we bide what he appoints,  
 Then here be murdered by a servile groom.

122  
**Kendal.** What wilt thou do with us?

124  
**George.** Even as Lord Bonfield wist,  
 126 You shall unto the king: and, for that purpose,  
 See where the Justice is placed.

128  
*Enter Justice.*

130  
**Just.** Now, my Lord of Kendal, where be all your threats?  
 132 Even as the cause, so is the combat fallen,  
 Else one could never have conquered three.

134  
**Kendal.** I pray thee, Woodroffe, do not twit me;  
 136 If I have faulted, I must make amends.

138  
**George.** Master Woodroffe, here is not a place for many words:

140 | I beseech ye, sir, discharge all his soldiers,  
That every man may go home unto his own house.

142 | **Just.** It shall be so. What wilt thou do, George?

144 | **George.** Master Woodroffe, look to your charge;  
Leave me to myself.

146 | **Just.** Come, my lords.

148 |

[*Exeunt all except George.*]

ACT III, SCENE III.

*A Wood near Wakefield.*

*George-a-Greene still on-stage.*

1 **George.** Here sit thou, George, wearing a willow wreath,  
2 As one despairing of thy beauteous love: –  
Fie, George! no more;  
4 Pine not away for that which cannot be.  
I cannot joy in any earthly bliss,  
6 So long as I do want my Bettris.

8 *Enter Jenkin.*

10 **Jenkin.** Who see a master of mine?

12 **George.** How now, sirrah! whither away?

14 **Jenkin.** Whither away! why, who do you take me  
to be?

16 **George.** Why, Jenkin, my man.

18 **Jenkin.** I was so once indeed, but now the case is  
20 altered.

22 **George.** I pray thee, as how?

24 **Jenkin.** Were not you a fortune-teller to-day?

26 **George.** Well, what of that?

28 **Jenkin.** So sure am I become a juggler. What will you  
say if I juggle your sweetheart?

30 **George.** Peace, prating losel! her jealous father  
32 Doth wait over her with such suspicious eyes,  
That, if a man but dally by her feet,  
34 He thinks it straight a witch to charm his daughter.

36 **Jenkin.** Well, what will you give me, if I bring her  
hither?

38 **George.** A suit of green, and twenty crowns besides.

40 **Jenkin.** Well, by your leave, give me room. You must  
42 give me something that you have lately worn.

44 **George.** Here is a gown, will that serve you?

46

[George gives gown.]

48

**Jenkin.** Ay, this will serve me. Keep out of my circle,  
Lest you be torn in pieces with she-devils. —

50

Mistress Bettris, once, twice, thrice!

52

[Jenkin throws the gown in, and Bettris comes out.]

54

Oh, is this no cunning?

56

**George.** Is this my love, or is it but her shadow?

58

**Jenkin.** Ay, this is the shadow, but here is the  
substance.

60

**George.** Tell me, sweet love,  
What good fortune brought thee hither?  
For one it was that favoured George-a-Greene.

62

64

**Bettris.** Both love and fortune brought me to my George,  
In whose sweet sight is all my heart's content.

66

68

**George.** Tell me, sweet love, how cam'st thou from thy father's?

70

**Bettris.** A willing mind hath many slips in love:  
It was not I, but Wily, thy sweet boy.

72

**George.** And where is Wily now?

74

**Bettris.** In my apparel, in my chamber still.

76

**George.** Jenkin, come hither: go to Bradford,  
And listen out your fellow Wily. —  
Come, Bettris, let us in,  
And in my cottage we will sit and talk.

78

80

82

[Exeunt.]



ACT IV.SCENE I.

*London, the Court of King Edward.*

*Enter King Edward, James (King of Scots),  
Lord Warwick, Cuddy, and Train.*

- 1 **K. Edw.** Brother of Scotland, I do hold it hard,  
2 Seeing a league of truce was late confirmed  
"Twixt you and me, without displeasure offered  
4 You should make such invasion in my land.  
The vows of kings should be as oracles,  
6 Not blemished with the stain of any breach;  
Chiefly where fealty and homage willeth it.  
8
- K. James.** Brother of England, rub not the sore afresh;  
10 My conscience grieves me for my deep misdeed.  
I have the worst; of thirty thousand men,  
12 There 'scaped not full five thousand from the field.
- K. Edw.** Gramercy, Musgrove, else it had gone hard:  
Cuddy, I'll quite thee well ere we two part.  
16
- K. James.** But had not his old father, William Musgrove,  
18 Played twice the man, I had not now been here.  
A stronger man I seldom felt before;  
20 But one of more resolute valiance,  
Treads not, I think, upon the English ground.  
22
- K. Edw.** I wot well, Musgrove shall not lose his hire.  
24
- Cuddy.** And it please your grace, my father was  
26 Five-score and three at midsummer last past:  
Yet had King Jamy been as good as George-a-Greene,  
28 Yet Billy Musgrove would have fought with him.
- K. Edw.** As George-a-Greene!  
I pray thee, Cuddy, let me question thee.  
32 Much have I heard, since I came to my crown,  
Many in manner of a proverb say,  
34 "Were he as good as George-a-Greene, I would strike him sure!"  
I pray thee, tell me, Cuddy, canst thou inform me,  
36 What is that George-a-Greene?
- Cuddy.** Know, my lord, I never saw the man,  
38 But mickle talk is of him in the country:

40 They say he is the Pinner of Wakefield town:  
But for his other qualities, I let alone.

42 **Warwick.** May it please your grace, I know the man too well.

44 **K. Edw.** Too well! why so, Warwick?

46 **Warwick.** For once he swung me till my bones did ache.

48 **K. Edw.** Why, dares he strike an earl?

50 **Warwick.** An earl, my lord! nay, he will strike a king,  
52 Be it not King Edward. For stature he is framed  
Like to the picture of stout Hercules,  
54 And for his carriage passeth Robin Hood.  
The boldest earl or baron of your land,  
56 That offereth scath unto the town of Wakefield,  
George will arrest his pledge unto the pound;  
58 And whoso resisteth bears away the blows,  
For he himself is good enough for three.

60 **K. Edw.** Why, this is wondrous: my Lord of Warwick,  
62 Sore do I long to see this George-a-Greene. —  
But leaving him, what shall we do, my lord,  
64 For to subdue the rebels in the north?  
They are now marching up to Doncaster. —

66 *Enter one with the Earl of Kendal prisoner.*

68 Soft! who have we there?

70 **Cuddy.** Here is a traitor, the Earl of Kendal.

72 **K. Edw.** Aspiring traitor! how dar'st thou  
74 Once cast thine eyes upon thy sovereign  
That honoured thee with kindness, and with favour?  
76 But I will make thee buy this treason dear.

78 **Kendal.** Good my lord, —

80 **K. Edw.** Reply not, traitor. —  
Tell me, Cuddy, whose deed of honour  
82 Won the victory against this rebel?

84 **Cuddy.** George-a-Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield.

86 **K. Edw.** George-a-Greene! now shall I hear news  
Certain, what this Pinner is.  
88 Discourse it briefly, Cuddy, how it befell.

90 **Cuddy.** Kendal and Bonfield, with Sir Gilbert Armstrong,  
Came to Wakefield town disguised,  
92 And there spoke ill of your grace;  
Which George but hearing, felled them at his feet,  
94 And, had not rescue come unto the place,  
George had slain them in his close of wheat.

96 **K. Edw.** But, Cuddy,  
98 Canst thou not tell where I might give and grant  
Something that might please  
100 And highly gratify the Pinner's thoughts?

102 **Cuddy.** This at their parting George did say to me:  
"If the king vouchsafe of this my service,  
104 Then, gentle Cuddy, kneel upon thy knee,  
And humbly crave a boon of him for me."

106 **K. Edw.** Cuddy, what is it?  
108

**Cuddy.** It is his will your grace would pardon them,  
110 And let them live, although they have offended.

112 **K. Edw.** I think the man striveth to be glorious. –  
Well, George hath craved it, and it shall be granted,  
114 Which none but he in England should have gotten. –  
Live, Kendal, but as prisoner,  
116 So shalt thou end thy days within the Tower.

118 **Kendal.** Gracious is Edward to offending subjects.

120 **K. James.** My Lord of Kendal, you're welcome to the court.

122 **K. Edw.** Nay, but ill-come as it falls out now;  
Ay,  
124 Ill-come indeed, were't not for George-a-Greene. –  
But, gentle king, for so you would aver,  
126 And Edward's betters, I salute you both,  
And here I vow by good Saint George,  
128 You will gain but little when your sums are counted.  
I sore do long to see this George-a-Greene:  
130 And for because I never saw the north,  
I will forthwith go see it;  
132 And for that to none I will be known,  
We will disguise ourselves and steal down secretly,  
134 Thou and I, King James, Cuddy, and two or three,  
And make a merry journey for a month. –  
136 Away, then, conduct him to the Tower. –  
Come on, King James, my heart must needs be merry,

138 | If Fortune makes such havoc of our foes.

140 |

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV, SCENE II.*Robin Hood's Retreat.**Enter Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Scarlet,  
and Much the Miller's son.*

1 **Robin.** Why is not lovely Marian blithe of cheer?  
2 What ails my leman, that she gins to lour?  
3 Say, good Marian, why art thou so sad?

4  
5 **Marian.** Nothing, my Robin, grieves me to the heart  
6 But, whensoever I do walk abroad,  
7 I hear no songs but all of George-a-Greene;  
8 Bettris, his fair leman, passeth me:  
9 And this, my Robin, galls my very soul.

10  
11 **Robin.** Content [thee]:  
12 What recks it us, though George-a-Greene be stout,  
13 So long as he doth proffer us no scath?  
14 Envy doth seldom hurt but to itself;  
15 And therefore, Marian, smile upon thy Robin.

16  
17 **Marian.** Never will Marian smile upon her Robin,  
18 Nor lie with him under the greenwood shade,  
19 Till that thou go to Wakefield on a green,  
20 And beat the Pinner for the love of me.

21  
22 **Robin.** Content thee, Marian, I will ease thy grief,  
23 My merry men and I will thither stray;  
24 And here I vow that, for the love of thee,  
25 I will beat George-a-Greene, or he shall beat me.

26  
27 **Scarl.** As I am Scarlet, next to Little John,  
28 One of the boldest yeomen of the crew,  
29 So will I wend with Robin all along,  
30 And try this Pinner what he dares do.

31  
32 **Much.** As I am Much, the miller's son,  
33 That left my mill to go with thee,  
34 And nill repent that I have done,  
35 This pleasant life contenteth me;  
36 In aught I may, to do thee good,  
37 I'll live and die with Robin Hood.

38  
39 **Marian.** And, Robin, Marian she will go with thee,  
40 To see fair Bettris how bright she is of blee.

42 | **Robin.** Marian, thou shalt go with thy Robin. –  
Bend up your bows, and see your strings be tight,  
44 | The arrows keen, and everything be ready,  
And each of you a good bat on his neck,  
46 | Able to lay a good man on the ground.

48 | **Scarl.** I will have Friar Tuck's.

50 | **Much.** I will have Little John's.

52 | **Robin.** I will have one made of an ashen plank,  
Able to bear a bout or two. –  
54 | Then come on, Marian, let us go;  
For before the sun doth show the morning day,  
56 | I will be at Wakefield to see this Pinner, George-a-Greene.

58

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV, SCENE III.*At Bradford.**A Shoemaker discovered at work:  
enter Jenkin, carrying a staff.*

1 **Jenkin.** My masters, he that hath neither meat nor  
 2 money, and hath lost his credit with the alewife, for  
 anything I know, may go supperless to bed. – But,  
 4 soft! who is here? here is a shoemaker; he knows  
 where is the best ale. – Shoemaker, I pray thee tell me,  
 6 where is the best ale in the town?

8 **Shoe.** Afore, afore, follow thy nose; at the sign of the  
 Egg-shell.

10 **Jenkin.** Come, shoemaker, if thou wilt, and take thy  
 12 part of a pot.

14 **Shoe.** [*Coming forward*] Sirrah, down with your staff,  
 down with your staff.

16 **Jenkin.** Why, how now! is the fellow mad? I pray  
 18 thee tell me, why should I hold down my staff?

20 **Shoe.** You will down with him, will you not, sir?

22 **Jenkin.** Why, tell me wherefore?

24 **Shoe.** My friend, this is the town of merry Bradford,  
 and here is a custom held, that none shall pass with his  
 26 staff on his shoulders but he must have a bout with me;  
 and so shall you, sir.

28 **Jenkin.** And so will not I, sir.  
 30

**Shoe.** That will I try. Barking dogs bite not the sorest.

32 **Jenkin.** [*Aside*] I would to God I were once well rid  
 34 of him.

36 **Shoe.** Now, what, will you down with your staff?

38 **Jenkin.** Why, you are not in earnest, are you?

40 **Shoe.** If I am not, take that.

42 [*Strikes him.*]

44 **Jenkin.** You whoreson cowardly scab, it is but the  
part of a clapperdudgeon to strike a man in the street.  
46 But darest thou walk to the town's end with me?

48 **Shoe.** Ay, that I dare do; but stay till I lay in my tools,  
and I will go with thee to the town's end presently.

50 **Jenkin.** [*Aside*] I would I knew how to be rid of this  
52 fellow.

54 **Shoe.** Come, sir, will you go to the town's end now,  
sir?

56 **Jenkin.** Ay, sir, come. –  
58

[*Scene changes to the town's end*].

60 Now we are at the town's end, what say you now?  
62

**Shoe.** Marry, come, let us even have a bout.  
64

**Jenkin.** Ha, stay a little; hold thy hands, I pray thee.  
66

**Shoe.** Why, what's the matter?  
68

**Jenkin.** Faith, I am Under-pinner of a town, and  
70 there is an order, which if I do not keep, I shall be  
turned out of mine office.  
72

**Shoe.** What is that, sir?  
74

**Jenkin.** Whensoever I go to fight with anybody, I  
76 use to flourish my staff thrice about my head before  
I strike, and then show no favour.  
78

**Shoe.** Well, sir, and till then I will not strike thee.  
80

**Jenkin.** Well, sir, here is once, twice: – here is my  
82 hand, I will never do it the third time.

**Shoe.** Why, then, I see we shall not fight.  
84

**Jenkin.** Faith, no: come, I will give thee two pots of  
86 the best ale, and be friends.

88 **Shoe.** [*Aside*] Faith, I see it is as hard to get water  
90 out of a flint as to get him to have a bout with me:  
therefore I will enter into him for some good cheer. –  
92 My friend, I see thou art a faint-hearted fellow, thou



94 | hast no stomach to fight, therefore let us go to the ale-  
house and drink.

96 | **Jenkin.** Well, content: go thy ways, and say thy  
98 | prayers, thou 'scap'st my hands to-day.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV, SCENE IV.*At Wakefield.**Enter George-a-Greene and Bettris.*

1 **George.** Tell me, sweet love, how is thy mind content?  
 2 What, canst thou brook to live with George-a-Greene?

4 **Bettris.** O, George, how little pleasing are these words!  
 Came I from Bradford for the love of thee,  
 6 And left my father for so sweet a friend?  
 Here will I live until my life do end.

8  
 10 **George.** Happy am I to have so sweet a love. –  
 But what are these come tracing here along?

12 **Bettris.** Three men come striking through the corn, my love.

14 *Enter Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Scarlet and Much.*

16 **George.** Back again, you foolish travellers,  
 For you are wrong, and may not wend this way.

18  
 20 **Robin.** That were great shame. Now, by my soul, proud sir,  
 We be three tall yeomen, and thou art but one. –  
 Come, we will forward in despite of him.

22 **George.** Leap the ditch, or I will make you skip.  
 24 What, cannot the highway serve your turn,  
 But you must make a path over the corn?

26  
 28 **Robin.** Why, art thou mad? dar'st thou encounter three?  
 We are no babes, man, look upon our limbs.

30 **George.** Sirrah,  
 The biggest limbs have not the stoutest hearts.  
 32 Were ye as good as Robin Hood and his three merry men,  
 I'll drive you back the same way that ye came.  
 34 Be ye men, ye scorn to encounter me all at once;  
 But be ye cowards, set upon me all three,  
 36 And try the Pinner what he dares perform.

38 **Scarl.** Were thou as high in deeds  
 As thou art haughty in words,  
 40 Thou well mightest be a champion for the king:  
 But empty vessels have the loudest sounds,  
 42 And cowards prattle more than men of worth.

44 **George.** Sirrah, darest thou try me?

46 **Scarl.** Ay, sirrah, that I dare.

48 [They fight, and George-a-Greene beats him.]

50 **Much.** How now! what, art thou down? –  
Come, sir, I am next.

52 [They fight, and George-a-Greene beats him.]

54 **Robin.** Come, sirrah, now to me: spare me not,  
56 For I'll not spare thee.

58 **George.** Make no doubt I will be as liberal to thee.

60 [They fight; Robin Hood stays.]

62 **Robin.** Stay, George, for here I do protest,  
Thou art the stoutest champion  
64 that ever I laid hands upon.

66 **George.** Soft, you sir! by your leave, you lie;  
You never yet laid hands on me.

68 **Robin.** George, wilt thou forsake Wakefield,  
70 And go with me?  
Two liveries will I give thee every year,  
72 And forty crowns shall be thy fee.

74 **George.** Why, who art thou?

76 **Robin.** Why, Robin Hood:  
I am come hither with my Marian  
78 And these my yeomen for to visit thee.

80 **George.** Robin Hood!  
Next to King Edward art thou lief to me.  
82 Welcome, sweet Robin; welcome, Maid Marian;  
And welcome, you my friends. Will you to my poor house?  
84 You shall have wafer-cakes your fill,  
A piece of beef hung up since Martlemas,  
86 Mutton and veal: if this like you not,  
Take that you find, or that you bring, for me.

88 **Robin.** Godamercies, good George,  
90 I'll be thy guest to-day.

92 **George.** Robin, therein thou honourest me.  
I'll lead the way.

94

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.SCENE I.*At Bradford.*

*Several Shoemakers discovered at work.  
Enter King Edward and James (King of Scots)  
disguised, each carrying a staff.*

1 **K. Edw.** Come on, King James; now we are thus disguised,  
2 There's none, I know, will take us to be kings:  
I think we are now in Bradford,  
4 Where all the merry shoemakers dwell.

6 **Ist Shoe.** Down with your staves, my friends,  
Down with them.

8  
10 **K. Edw.** Down with our staves! I pray thee, why so?

12 **Ist Shoe.** My friend, I see thou art a stranger here,  
Else wouldst thou not have questioned of the thing.  
This is the town of merry Bradford,  
14 And here hath been a custom kept of old,  
That none may bear his staff upon his neck,  
16 But trail it all along throughout the town,  
Unless they mean to have a bout with me.

18  
20 **K. Edw.** But hear you, sir, hath the king granted you  
This custom?

22 **Ist Shoe.** King or kaiser, none shall pass this way,  
Except King Edward;  
24 No, not the stoutest groom that haunts his court;  
Therefore down with your staves.

26  
28 **K. Edw.** [*To James*] What were we best to do?

30 **K. James.** Faith, my lord, they are stout fellows;  
And, because we will see some sport,  
We will trail our staves.

32  
34 **K. Edw.** Hear'st thou, my friend?  
Because we are men of peace and travellers,  
We are content to trail our staves.

36  
38 **Ist Shoe.** The way lies before you, go along.

*Enter Robin Hood and George-a-Greene, disguised.*

40

**Robin.** See, George, two men are passing through the town,  
42 Two lusty men, and yet they trail their staves.

44

**George.** Robin,  
They are some peasants tricked in yeoman's weeds. –  
46 Hollo, you two travellers!

48

**K. Edw.** Call you us, sir?

50

**George.** Ay, you. Are ye not big enough to bear  
Your bats upon your necks, but you must trail them  
52 Along the streets?

54

**K. Edw.** Yes, sir, we are big enough;  
But here is a custom kept,  
56 That none may pass, his staff upon his neck,  
Unless he trail it at the weapon's point.  
58 Sir, we are men of peace, and love to sleep  
In our whole skins, and therefore quietness is best.

60

**George.** Base-minded peasants, worthless to be men!  
62 What, have you bones and limbs to strike a blow,  
And be your hearts so faint you cannot fight?  
64 Were't not for shame, I would shrub your shoulders well,  
And teach you manhood against another time.

66

**Ist Shoe.** [*To George*] Well preached, Sir Jack! down  
68 with your staff!

70

**K. Edw.** Do you hear, my friends? an you be wise,  
Keep down your staves, for all the town will rise upon you.

72

**George.** [*To Edward*]  
74 Thou speakest like an honest, quiet fellow:  
But hear you me; in spite of all the swains  
76 Of Bradford town, bear me your staves upon your necks,  
Or, to begin withal, I'll baste you both so well,  
78 You were never better basted in your lives.

80

**K. Edw.** We will hold up our staves.

82

*[George-a-Greene fights with the Shoemakers,  
and beats them all down.]*

84

**George.** What, have you any more?  
86 Call all your town forth, cut and longtail.

88 | *[The Shoemakers spy George-a-Greene.]*

90 | **Ist Shoe.** What, George a-Greene, is it you? A plague found you!  
I think you longed to swinge me well.

92 | Come, George, we will crush a pot before we part.

94 | **George.** A pot, you slave! we will have an hundred. –  
Here, Will Perkins, take my purse; fetch me  
96 | A stand of ale, and set [it] in the market-place,  
That all may drink that are athirst this day;  
98 | For this is for a fee to welcome Robin Hood  
To Bradford town.

100 |

102 | *[The stand of ale is brought out,  
and they fall a-drinking.]*

104 | Here, Robin, sit thou here;  
For thou art the best man at the board this day.  
106 | You that are strangers, place yourselves where you will.  
Robin,  
108 | Here's a carouse to good King Edward's self;  
And they that love him not, I would we had  
110 | The basting of them a little.

112 | *Enter the Earl of Warwick with other Noblemen,  
bringing out the King's garments;  
114 | then George-a-Greene and the rest  
kneel down to the King.*

116 |

**K. Edw.** Come, masters, all fellows. – Nay, Robin,  
118 | You are the best man at the board to-day. –  
Rise up, George.

120 |

**George.** Nay, good my liege, ill-nurtured we were, then:  
122 | Though we Yorkshire men be blunt of speech,  
And little skilled in court or such quaint fashions,  
124 | Yet nature teacheth us duty to our king;  
Therefore I  
126 | Humbly beseech you pardon George-a-Greene.

128 | **Robin.** And, good my lord, a pardon for poor Robin;  
And for us all a pardon, good King Edward.

130 |

**Ist Shoe.** I pray you, a pardon for the shoemakers.

132 |

**K. Edw.** I frankly grant a pardon to you all:

134 |

*[They rise.]*

136 |

138 And, George-a-Greene, give me thy hand;  
There's none in England that shall do thee wrong.  
Even from my court I came to see thyself;  
140 And now I see that fame speaks naught but truth.

142 **George.** I humbly thank your royal majesty.  
That which I did against the Earl of Kendal,  
144 It was but a subject's duty to his sovereign,  
And therefore little merit[s] such good words.

146 **K. Edw.** But ere I go, I'll grace thee with good deeds.  
148 Say what King Edward may perform,  
And thou shalt have it, being in England's bounds.

150 **George.** I have a lovely leman,  
152 As bright of blee as is the silver moon,  
And old Grime her father will not let her match  
154 With me, because I am a Pinner,  
Although I love her, and she me, dearly.

156 **K. Edw.** Where is she?

158 **George.** At home at my poor house,  
160 And vows never to marry unless her father  
Give consent; which is my great grief, my lord.

162 **K. Edw.** If this be all, I will dispatch it straight;  
164 I'll send for Grime and force him give his grant:  
He will not deny King Edward such a suit.

*Enter Jenkin.*

168 **Jenkin.** Ho, who saw a master of mine? – Oh, he is  
170 gotten into company, and a body should rake hell for  
company.

172 **George.** Peace, ye slave! see where King Edward is.

174 **K. Edw.** George, what is he?

176 **George.** I beseech your grace pardon him; he is my  
178 man.

180 **Ist Shoe.** Sirrah, the king hath been drinking with us,  
and did pledge us too.

182 **Jenkin.** Hath he so? kneel; I dub you gentlemen.  
184



186 **Ist Shoe.** Beg it of the king, Jenkin.

188 **Jenkin.** I will. – I beseech your worship grant me  
one thing.

190 **K. Edw.** What is that?

192 **Jenkin.** Hark in your ear.

194 *[Whispers King Edward in the ear.]*

196 **K. Edw.** Go your ways, and do it.

198 **Jenkin.** *[To Shoemakers]* Come, down on your knees,  
I have got it.

200 **Ist Shoe.** Let us hear what it is first.

202 **Jenkin.** Marry, because you have drunk with the king,  
204 and the king hath so graciously pledged you, you shall  
206 be no more called Shoemakers; but you and yours, to  
the world's end, shall be called the trade of the Gentle  
Craft.

208 **Ist Shoe.** I beseech your majesty reform this which  
210 he hath spoken.

212 **Jenkin.** I beseech your worship consume this which  
he hath spoken.

214 **K. Edw.** "Confirm" it, you would say. –  
216 Well, he hath done it for you, it is sufficient. –  
Come, George, we will go to Grime, and have thy love.

218 **Jenkin.** I am sure your worship will abide; for yonder  
220 is coming old Musgrove and mad Cuddy his son. –  
Master, my fellow Wily comes dressed like a woman,  
222 and Master Grime will marry Wily. Here they come.

224 *Enter Musgrove and Cuddy;*  
*Grime, Wily disguised as a woman,*  
226 *Maid Marian, and Bettris.*

228 **K. Edw.** Which is thy old father, Cuddy?

230 **Cuddy.** This, if it please your majesty.

232 *[Musgrove kneels.]*

234 **K. Edw.** Ah, old Musgrove, kneel up;  
It fits not such grey hairs to kneel.

236 **Musgr.** [*Rising*] Long live my sovereign!  
238 Long and happy be his days!  
Vouchsafe, my gracious lord, a simple gift  
240 At Billy Musgrove's hand.  
King James at Middleham Castle gave me this;  
242 This won the honour, and this give I thee.  
244 [*Gives sword to King Edward.*]  
246 **K. Edw.** Godamercy, Musgrove, for this friendly gift;  
And, for thou felledst a king with this same weapon,  
248 This blade shall here dub valiant Musgrove knight.  
250 **Musgr.** Alas, what hath your highness done? I am poor.  
252 **K. Edw.** To mend thy living take thou Middleham Castle,  
The hold of both, and if thou want living, complain;  
254 Thou shalt have more to maintain thine estate. –  
George, which is thy love?  
256 **George.** This, if please your majesty.  
258 **K. Edw.** Art thou her aged father?  
260 **Grime.** I am, and it like your majesty.  
262 **K. Edw.** And wilt not give thy daughter unto George?  
264 **Grime.** Yes, my lord, if he will let me marry  
266 With this lovely lass.  
268 **K. Edw.** What say'st thou, George?  
270 **George.** With all my heart, my lord, I give consent.  
272 **Grime.** Then do I give my daughter unto George.  
274 **Wily.** Then shall the marriage soon be at an end.  
Witness, my lord, if that I be a woman;  
276 [*Wily throws off his disguise.*]  
278 For I am Wily, boy to George-a-Greene,  
280 Who for my master wrought this subtle shift.  
282 **K. Edw.** What, is it a boy? – what say'st thou to this, Grime?  
284 **Grime.** Marry, my lord, I think this boy hath  
More knavery than all the world besides.

286 | Yet am I content that George shall both have  
287 | My daughter and my lands.

288 | **K. Edw.** Now, George, it rests I gratify thy worth:  
289 | And therefore here I do bequeath to thee,  
290 | In full possession, half that Kendal hath;  
291 | And what as Bradford holds of me in chief,  
292 | I give it frankly unto thee for ever.  
293 | Kneel down, George.

294 | **George.** What will your majesty do?

295 | **K. Edw.** Dub thee a knight, George.

296 | **George.** I beseech your grace, grant me one thing.

297 | **K. Edw.** What is that?

298 | **George.** Then let me live and die a yeoman still:  
299 | So was my father, so must live his son.  
300 | For 'tis more credit to men of base degree,  
301 | To do great deeds, than men of dignity.

302 | **K. Edw.** Well, be it so, George.

303 | **K. James.** I beseech your grace dispatch with me,  
304 | And set down my ransom.

305 | **K. Edw.** George-a-Greene,  
306 | Set down the King of Scots his ransom.

307 | **George.** I beseech your grace pardon me;  
308 | It passeth my skill.

309 | **K. Edw.** Do it, the honour's thine.

310 | **George.** Then let King James make good  
311 | Those towns which he hath burnt upon the borders;  
312 | Give a small pension to the fatherless,  
313 | Whose fathers he caused murdered in those wars;—  
314 | [To James]  
315 | Put in pledge for these things to your grace,  
316 | And so return.

317 | **K. Edw.** King James, are you content?

318 | **K. James.** I am content, and like your majesty,  
319 | And will leave good castles in security.

320 | **K. Edw.** I crave no more. — Now, George-a-Greene,

336 | I'll to thy house; and when I have supped,  
I'll go to Ask,  
338 | And see if Jane-a-Barley be so fair  
As good King James reports her for to be.  
340 | And for the ancient custom of *Vail staff*,  
Keep it still, claim privilege from me:  
342 | If any ask a reason why, or how,  
Say, English Edward vailed his staff to you.

344

[*Exeunt.*]

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.

In addition, we have added a few suggestions for stage directions which do not appear in the script; these directions are adapted from actions which appear in *The History of George-a-Greene*, the prose recounting of the legendary stories of George-a-Greene on which this play was based.

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

#### Universal Emendations:

1. modernize *shew* to *show* everywhere.
2. modernize *murther* (and its derivatives) to *murder* everywhere.

#### Act I, Scene ii.

1. line 71: have George snatch off Mannering's hat, stomp on it, and kick it away.

2. line 133: emend *Right* to *Hight*.

#### Act I, Scene iii.

1. line 8: emend *of late* to *of late revived*.

#### Act II, Scene iii.

1. line 208: have George strike Kendal with his staff between the back of his neck and shoulders.

2. line 210: modernize *stroke* to *struck*.

#### Act III, Scene i.

1. line 9: emend *of all the gods alone* to *and all the gods above*.

#### Act III, Scene ii.

1. line 103: emend *But* to *It*.

#### Act IV, Scene i.

1. line 126: have King Edward remove his hat and bow to Kendal.

#### Act V, Scene i.

1. line 88: have George's disguise fall off as he is fighting.

- 2. line 234: modernize *kneel up* to *stand up*.
- 3. line 253: emend *The hold of both* to *And hold of me*.