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the Annotated Popular Edition of

# MIDAS

by John Lyly

Written c. 1590

Earliest Extant Edition: 1592

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

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# MIDAS

By JOHN LYLY

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## 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.

## INTRODUCTION to the PLAY

In *Midas*, John Lyly dramatizes a pair of myths told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* about the legendary King of Phrygia, who made the twin mistakes of first asking for the gift of the golden touch, and then in judging a contest of musical skill against an Olympian god. In addition to having to bear with Lyly's baroque euphuistic style, readers should also be prepared to digest the copious amount of dense wordplay which permeates the entire comedy!

## OUR PLAY'S SOURCE

The text of this play was originally adapted from the 1902 edition of Lyly's plays edited by Warwick Bond, but was then carefully compared to the original 1592 quarto. Consequently, much of the original wording and spelling from this earliest printing of the play has been reinstated.

## NOTES ON THE ANNOTATIONS

Mention in the annotations of various editors refers to the notes supplied by these scholars for their editions of this play. Their works are cited fully below.

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

Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:

1. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online.
2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words*. London; New York: Penguin, 2002.
5. Daniel, Carter A. (ed.). *The Plays of John Lyly*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1988.
6. Latin translations by Quintus, whose services may be found at <http://the.latintranslator.com/>.
9. Bond, R. Warwick (ed.). *The Complete Works of John Lyly, Vol. III*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1902.
12. Humphries, Rolfe, trans. Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
14. Lancashire, Anne Begor (ed.). *Gallathea and Midas*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1969.
16. Fairholt, F.W., ed. *The Dramatic Works of John Lilly, Vol. II*. London: John Russell Smith, 1858.

## Notes.

### A. Midas as Allegory.

The first half of John Lyly's *Midas* recounts the Phrygian king's ill-considered acquisition of his famous golden touch. Once attached with the power to turn anything he came in contact with to gold, Midas used his new-found wealth to take over much of Asia Minor, both directly through military intervention, and indirectly by bribing high officials into toppling their kings. The one nation he could not conquer, however, was the small island of Lesbos, which lies off the western coast of Asia Minor.

Editors have long recognized that Midas' frustrated attempts to capture Lesbos served as an allegory for late 16th century Spain's political and military intrigues against England in general and Queen Elizabeth specifically. Thus, when Midas laments how the king of Lesbos is "*protected by the gods...and his subjects' obedience...Is he not through the whole world a wonder, for wisdom and temperance?*", it was understood by all that he was really describing his own queen.

The various kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula were first united in the 15th century, but Spain's rise to a great power, fueled by the immense wealth it harvested in the Western Hemisphere, came to fruition on the ascendancy of Emperor Charles V to the throne. His successor, Philip II (reigned 1556-1598), made Spain a champion of the Catholic Church, which led to Spain's involvement in a great war in the Netherlands, where Philip, a stubborn enemy of Protestantism, had been trying with mixed success to put down a rebellion of Calvinists since 1566.

Elizabeth entered the war in 1585, when she sent the first English troops to the continent in support of the rebels. Political tensions between the great powers remained high through the rest of the 16th century. Rumours of Spanish intrigues against Elizabeth herself, including plots to assassinate the queen, appeared regularly in the English capital throughout this period. The climax of the conflict, at least from the English perspective, took place in July 1588, when the English navy defeated the invading Spanish Armada in a series of battles off the coast of England.

Editors of *Midas* have read into the king's various speeches numerous references to specific events that occurred in the long period of hostilities between England and Spain. While we have not included in the annotations every possible allusion, we do include explanations for a number of them, at least enough to give the reader a flavour of the allegorical speeches, without over-burdening the reader with too many mind-numbing details.

### B. Early Quartos.

Lyly clearly wrote *Midas* after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The earliest extant copy of the play is from 1592. While in this early edition stage directions are provided to indicate when the actors should sing songs, the songs themselves are omitted, as was the usual practice at the time.

*Midas* appeared in a second quarto in 1632, in which lyrics were printed wherever a song was indicated. It has been a tradition amongst editors to incorporate these lyrics into modern editions of the play, and we have followed suit.

### **C. Wordplay.**

*Midas* is saturated with wordplay. To make a note of every bit of such punning and linking of similar-sounding words (*idle* and *addle*, *pity* and *pit*, etc.) and parallel phrases would be to overwhelm the reader with tiresomely repetitive annotations. Hence, while we will indicate some of the more interesting and representative examples of Lyly's linguistic wit, we will leave it to you, gentle reader, to identify the wordplay for yourself as you peruse the play.

### **D. Lyly's Euphuism.**

In 1578, John Lyly wrote and published a romantic novel called *Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit*. The book was a sensation in Elizabethan England, but not so much for its story as for its language. Lyly, inspired by a similar style employed by the Englishman George Pettie in his novel, *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure* (published in 1576), wrote in a highly affected manner that became the rage of London's upper crust.

The style, which was called *euphuism*, consisted of three key elements:

- (1) the regular employment of short parallel phrases with lots of word play;
- (2) frequent use of alliteration; and
- (3) references to fantastic creatures and clearly fictitious "facts" about the natural world, borrowed from works such as Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*.

Euphuism, like anything else that becomes suddenly fashionable, had a short shelf-life, but Lyly continued to use the style throughout his dramatic works.

Lyly's works are fun to read, but not for long periods of time, as euphuism can become ponderous and tiresome after a while. Taken in small bites, however, euphuism can be amusing, and represents a delightful and interesting peek into one of the more unusual episodes of English literary history.

### **E. 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 Bond.<sup>9</sup>

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.

## THE PROLOGUE IN PAUL'S.

1 GENTLEMEN, so nice is the world, that for  
2 apparel there is no fashion, for music no instrument,  
3 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  
7 learn how more cunning may lurk in the fashion, than  
8 can be expressed in the making. Ask the musicians,  
9 they will say their heads ache with devising notes  
10 beyond Ela. Inquire at ordinaries, there must be sallets  
11 for the Italian, picktooths for the Spaniard, pots for the  
12 German, porridge for the Englishman. At our exercises,  
13 soldiers call for tragedies, their object is blood:  
14 courtiers for comedies, their subject is love;  
15 countrymen for pastorals, shepherds are their saints.  
16 Traffic and travel hath woven the nature of all nations  
17 into ours; and made this land like arras, full of device;  
18 which was broad-cloth, full of workmanship.

*Prologue: Midas* was likely first rehearsed at *St. Paul's* church in front of a small paying public, and subsequently performed for the Queen and the Court.<sup>9</sup> Daniel<sup>5</sup> notes that the tone of this Prologue is somewhat sassier than the one Lyly would likely have later presented before Elizabeth.

We have broken up the Prologue, which was published as one long paragraph, into smaller paragraphs to facilitate understanding for the reader.

**1-5 (below):** in this first paragraph, Lyly uses exaggeration and analogy to describe how hard it is to please the public.

= fussy or fickle.<sup>1</sup>

3: *delicate* = ie. delicacy.<sup>1</sup>

*invention* = ideas.

4-5: ie. the public will have had its fill of it by midday, and be contemptuous of it by evening.

**6-16 (below):** Lyly bemoans the difficult time persons in the service industries have trying to satisfy their customers.

6-8: *Come to...making* = if you order a suit from a tailor, he must ask an artist to teach him how to be creative; Fairholt<sup>16</sup> tells us of multiple ancient sources which describe how tailors sometimes consulted with artists over how to make their clothing more attractive.

7: *cunning* = skill.

8-10: *Ask the musicians...Ela* = to please their audiences, musicians must try to play notes beyond *ela*, the highest note on the musical scale<sup>1,22</sup> – an impossible task!

10: *ordinaries* = taverns where food is served for a fixed price.

*sallets* = the more common spelling for *salads* in this period; most editors emend *sallets* to *salads*.

11: *picktooths* = a Mediterranean plant whose umbels could be used as toothpicks.<sup>1</sup> Toothpicks were considered a foreign affectation in Lyly's days. In Shakespeare's *King John*, a character known as the "Bastard" mocks the proverbial international traveler "*and his toothpick at my worship's mess*" (Act I.i).

*pots* = tankards for drinking.

12-15: *At our exercises...saints* = each segment of society demands plays to satisfy its own particular tastes.

*our exercises* = ie. the performances of Lyly's plays.

*object* = preferred dramatic subject matter.

*courtiers* = means both (1) pursuers of women, and (2) members of a sovereign's court.

*countrymen* = ie. those who live in the countryside.

*pastoral* = a literary genre, usually revolving around rural themes in general and shepherds in particular.

16-17: *Traffic...ours* = international trade and travel have noticeably infused English culture with a foreign character.

17: *arras* = the French city **Arras** was famous for its delightful and colourful tapestries, so much so that the

20 Time hath confounded our minds, our minds  
the matter; but all commeth to this pass, that what  
22 heretofore hath been served in several dishes for a  
feast, is now minced in a charger for a gallimaufrey. If  
24 we present a mingle-mangle, our fault is to be excused,  
because the whole world is become an hodge-podge.

26 We are jealous of your judgments, because you  
are wise; of our own performance, because we are  
28 unperfect; of our author's device, because he is idle.  
Only this doth encourage us, that presenting our  
30 studies before gentlemen, though they receive an  
inward mislike, we shall not be hissed with an open  
disgrace.

32 *Stirps rudis urtica est; stirps generosa, rosa.*

name *arras* came to mean tapestries in general. Lyly continues the metaphor begun with *woven* in the previous line.

*full of device* = the image is of a colourful tapestry filled with various ideas (*device*) and scenes.

18: *which was...workmanship* = Lyly describes England as a plain cloth (*broadcloth*) that has become enriched and more interesting, thanks to those who have introduced new fashions and ideas through their trade and travel. The *arras* image corresponds nicely with the American conception of the United States as a melting pot of cultures.

**19-24 (below):** Lyly excuses the sloppiness of the play with the suggestion that all elements of society have entered into a confused or disorderly state.

19: *confounded* = confused or mixed up.<sup>1</sup>

19-20: *our minds the matter* = ie. "and our minds have mixed up the matter". Note how in the remainder of the paragraph, the idea of "blending" is applied both literally to food and metaphorically to the world.

21: *heretofore* = previously.

*several* = individual.

22: *minced* = ground up.

*charger* = large plate.<sup>1</sup>

*gallimaufrey* = stew made up of odds and ends.<sup>1</sup>

23: *mingle-mangle* = mishmash.<sup>1</sup>

24: *hodge-podge* = mishmash, sometimes written as *hotchpotch*.<sup>1</sup>

**25-31 (below):** Lyly both seeks and fears the audience's reception of the play.

25: *jealous of* = anxious to learn or receive.<sup>5</sup>

26: *of* = ie. also jealous (anxious) regarding.

27: *our author's* = Lyly's, a cute bit of self-reference.

*device* = conception or ideas for the play.

*he is idle* = Bond notes that Lyly may have authored *Midas* after a break of several years from writing.

29: *studies* = ie. the play.

29-31: *though they...disgrace* = a sentiment which Lyly frequently expresses in his prologues: even if the audience is not pleased with the play, he hopes they will not be so callous as to demonstrate their displeasure too overtly.

32: **Latin:** "a rough lineage (ie. being born into a mean family) is a nettle; a well-born lineage is a rose."<sup>6</sup> Daniel sees the *nettle*, a wild plant, as representing the rough crowd in public theaters, and the *rose* as the cultured crowd of St. Paul's (p. 372).<sup>5</sup>

# 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

4 rewards. Thou hast filled my belly with meat, mine  
ears with music, mine eyes with wonders. Bacchus of  
6 all the gods is the best fellow, and Midas amongst men  
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  
10 granted. Wouldest thou have the pipes of thy conducts  
to run wine, the udders of thy beasts to drop nectar, or  
12 thy trees to bud ambrosia? Desirest thou to be  
fortunate in thy love, or in thy victories famous, or to  
14 have the years of thy life as many as the hairs on thy  
head? Nothing shall be denied, so great is Bacchus, so  
happy is Midas.

16 **Midas.** Bacchus, for a king to beg of a god it is no  
18 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

**Entering Characters:** *Bacchus* is the Roman god of wine. *Midas* is the King of Phrygia, a land located in what is now western Turkey. *Eristus*, *Martius* and *Mellacrites* are advisors to the king.

1-3: *where...rewards* = the relationship between the ancients and their gods was one of *quid pro quo*: humans prayed and performed sacrifices to the gods, who in return were expected to protect and even bring good fortune to those who honoured them.

*turns* = acts, deeds.

3-4: *Thou hast...wonders* = Midas has been entertaining the god.  
= companion in feasting and drinking.<sup>1,14</sup>

7: *corn* = could refer, as it does here, to the fruit or seed of various plants, such as *grape*.<sup>1</sup>

*thy chambers cellars* = "your rooms all serve as wine cellars".

= a *standing cup* was a drinking vessel with a base.<sup>1</sup>  
= conduits or fountains.<sup>1</sup>  
= the drink of the gods.  
= the food of the gods.

= fortunate.

18: *to ask...wisdom* = ie. for a king to get advice from others before making a request from a god shows his good sense.

*leave* = permission.

= "beyond my capacity (for understanding or employing properly)".

20: *fired with Phaeton* = ie. "burnt (ie. destroyed) alongside (ie. as was) Phaeton."

*Phaeton* was the son of *Apollo*, the sun god. As an adolescent, Phaeton begged his father to allow him, for one day, to drive the chariot that pulled the sun across the sky. After listening to much pleading, Apollo reluctantly acquiesced, but warned his son to be careful. Phaeton could not control the horses, and would have crashed onto the earth had not *Jupiter* killed him with a thunderbolt.<sup>7</sup>

*against nature* = ie. striving against the natural order of things.<sup>1</sup>

*and* = usually emended to *I*.

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;  
28 what wish may make Midas most happy, and his  
subjects best content?

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

36 **Mar.** Love is a pastime for children, breeding nothing

38 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  
the only king, wringing out of every country tribute,  
44 and in his own to sit in triumph? Those that call  
conquerors ambitious, are like those that term thrift  
46 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

20-21: *be drowned with Icarus* = the reference is to the story of **Daedalus**, the famous Athenian craftsman, who for some crime was banished from **Athens** and went to **Crete** to serve **King Minos**, for whom he built the famous **Labyrinth**. When Daedalus advised the Greek hero **Theseus** how to enter and exit the Labyrinth (in order to kill the monstrous **Minotaur**), the King imprisoned Daedalus with his son **Icarus**.

Daedalus fashioned wings for himself and his son out of feathers held together with wax, and the pair used the wings to fly away and escape Crete. Icarus, unfortunately, did not heed his father's advice not to fly too high, and the sun melted the young man's wings, causing him to plunge to his death in the sea.<sup>7</sup>

22: **Latin** = "Yet he failed in pursuing great ventures."<sup>6</sup> The line is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book II.

34-35: *the possessing...pleasing* = anything that requires effort to obtain provides the most satisfaction once it is in the pursuer's possession.

= Martius' name, which means "of Mars", is appropriate for the advisor who counsels Midas to ask to conquer the world: Mars was the Roman god of war.

= promoting or forstering.<sup>1</sup>

44-46: *Those that...preciseness* = Martius uses parallel phrasing to suggest that those people who snidely call *conquerors ambitious* are also likely to portray other positive characteristics (*thrift, cleanliness* and *honesty*) in a negative light (*covetousness, pride* and *preciseness*, respectively).

*cleanliness* = moral purity.<sup>1,14</sup>

*honesty* = could refer to virtuousness or chastity.<sup>1</sup>

*preciseness* = a term which suggests an exaggerated puritanical scrupulousness.<sup>2</sup>

<p>54</p> <p>56</p> <p>58</p> <p>60</p> <p>62</p> <p>64</p> <p>66</p> <p>68</p> <p>70</p> <p>72</p>	<p>gold: this is <u>the sinews of war</u>, and the sweetness of</p> <p>peace. Is it not gold that maketh the chastest to yield to lust, the honestest to <u>lewdness</u>, the wisest to folly, the faithfulest to deceit, and the most holy in heart, to be most hollow of heart? In this word gold are all the</p> <p>powers of the gods, the desires of men, the wonders of the world, the miracles of nature, the <u>looseness</u> of</p> <p>fortune and triumphs of time. By gold may you shake the courts of other princes, and have your own settled;</p> <p>one spade of gold <u>undermines</u> faster than an hundred</p> <p>mattocks of steel. Would one <u>be thought</u> religious and devout? <i>Quantum quisque sua nummorum servat in</i></p> <p><i>arca, tantum habet et fidei</i>: religion's <u>balance are</u></p> <p>golden bags. Desire you virtue? <i>Querenda pecunia primum est, virtus post nummos</i>: the first <u>stair of</u></p> <p>virtue is money. Doth any thirst <u>after gentry</u>, and wish to be esteemed beautiful? <i>Et genus et formam regina</i></p> <p><i>pecunia donat</i>: king coin hath a <u>mint</u> to <u>stamp</u></p> <p>gentlemen, and <u>art to make amiableness</u>. I deny not but</p>	<p>= <b>sinews</b> are tendons, suggesting strength; in ancient Rome, Cicero called money <i>the sinews of war</i>, in that no ruler can keep an army going without it.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>55-58: <b>Is it not gold...heart?</b> = Mellacrites means that those who possess gold can cause other people to abandon their principles, e.g., cause the normally <b>chaste</b> to become lascivious, etc.</p> <p><b>lewdness</b> (line 56) = wickedness.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Note Mellacrites' wordplay in comparing the <b>holy heart</b> with the <b>hollow heart</b>.</p> <p>= the sense is "generosity".</p> <p>61-62: <b>By gold...settled</b> = with gold, a king can both undermine foreign governments, and keep his own subjects content.</p> <p>63-64: <b>one spade...steel</b> = a compact military metaphor: Mellacrites refers to two ways a besieging army may break into a city:</p> <p>(1) dig a tunnel underneath the city's defenses, and then set off explosives which would cause the walls above to collapse (literal <b>undermining</b>); or</p> <p>(2) bribe one of the defenders into opening the city gate (metaphorical <b>undermining</b>).</p> <p>Mellacrites argues that gold can achieve the goal more quickly (through a bribe) than can 100 men digging a tunnel. <b>Mattocks</b> (line 64) are tools for digging, something like picks.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>= ie. wish to be accounted or judged.</p> <p>65-66: <b>Latin</b> = "A man is trusted the more money he keeps in his safe."<sup>6</sup> From Juvenal's <i>Satires</i>, Book III.</p> <p>66-67: <b>religion's...bags</b> = The idea is that gold can be used to corrupt the religious.</p> <p><b>balance are</b> = <b>balance</b> was sometimes treated as a plural word.</p> <p>67-68: <b>Latin</b> = "First one must seek money; virtue is second to cash."<sup>6</sup> From Horace's <i>Epistles</i>, Book I.</p> <p>= step in achieving.</p> <p>= ie. to enter the rank of the <b>gentry</b>, the social class immediately below the nobility.</p> <p>70-71: <b>Latin</b> = "Our queen, money, confers both pedigree and beauty."<sup>6</sup> From Horace's <i>Epistles</i>, Book I.</p> <p>71-72: <b>king coin...gentlemen</b> = a numismatic metaphor: the crown controlled the <b>minting</b> of coins, which were <b>stamped</b> with images. Mellacrites' point is that gold allows one to purchase the trappings of gentility.</p> <p>= (money also has) the ability (<b>art</b>) to make one's friendship desirable (<b>amiableness</b> = the quality of being beloved<sup>1</sup>); a cynical way to rephrase this would be to say that people will always be attracted to those who have money.</p>
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<p>love is sweet, and the <u>marrow</u> of a man's mind; that to</p> <p>74 conquer kings is the <u>quintessence</u> of the thoughts of</p> <p>76 kings: why, then follow both, <i>aurea sunt verè nunc saecula, plurimus auro venit honos, auro conciliatur amor</i>: it is a world for gold; honour and love are both</p> <p>78 <u>taken up on interest</u>. Doth Midas determine to tempt</p> <p>80 the minds of <u>true subjects</u>? to draw them from</p> <p>82 obedience to treachery, from their allegiance and oaths to treason and perjury? <i>quid non mortalia pectora cogit auri sacra fames?</i> what holes doth not gold bore</p> <p>84 in men's hearts? Such <u>virtue</u> is there in gold, that being bred in the <u>barrenest ground</u>, and trodden under foot, it</p> <p><u>mounteth to sit on princes' heads</u>. Wish gold, Midas,</p> <p>86 or wish not to be Midas. In the counsel of the gods,</p> <p>88 was not <u>Anubis</u>, with his long nose of gold, preferred before <u>Neptune</u>'s, whose <u>stature</u> was but brass? And</p> <p>90 <u>Aesculapius</u> more honoured for his golden beard, than <u>Apollo</u> for his sweet harmony?</p> <p>92 <b>Erist.</b> To have gold and not love (which cannot be purchased by gold) is to be a slave to gold.</p> <p>94 <b>Mar.</b> To possess mountains of gold, and a mistress</p> <p>96 more precious than gold, and not to command the</p>	<p>= <b>marrow</b> was the term used to describe the white matter of the brain; hence, figuratively, the richest or key element.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>= purest part, ie. defining characteristic.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>75-77: <b>Latin</b> = "now truly the centuries are golden; the greatest honour is sold for gold, love is won over with gold."<sup>6</sup> Mellacrites is arguing that gold can attain for Midas all the things the other counselors have advised him to ask for, plus much more! The Latin is from Ovid's <i>Ars Amatoria</i>, Book II.</p> <p>= ie. "at the command of one who has gold",<sup>9</sup> or "obtained through the payment of interest."<sup>14</sup></p> <p>= ie. his enemies' subjects who are loyal to their own kings.</p> <p>81-82: <b>Latin</b> = "what does this cursed hunger for gold not compel mortal hearts to do?" From Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i>, Book III.</p> <p>= (supernatural) power.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>= likely reference to an observation of the Roman Pliny the Elder, who wrote in <i>The Natural History</i> that gold can be found in the "arid and sterile" mountains of Spain (Bostock and Riley, 33.21).<sup>10</sup> Pliny was a favourite source of Lyly's for usually fantastic facts about the natural world.</p> <p>= rises. = ie. in the form of crowns.</p> <p>86-88: <b>In the counsel...brass</b> = Bond identifies the source of this allusion to be the satirical play <i>Jupiter Tragoedus</i> by the Roman Lucian, in which the gods, during a meeting, are seated in an order corresponding to the material of which their respective statues are made; <b>Neptune</b> (god of the sea) complains about <b>Anubis</b> getting priority over him, because Anubis' statue is made of gold, but his own is of bronze,<sup>9</sup> a metaphor for valuing wealth over merit.</p> <p><b>Anubis</b> was the Egyptian dog-god, though sometimes he was portrayed as a jackal, or a man with a dog's or jackal's head.</p> <p><b>stature</b> = common alternate form of <b>statue</b>.</p> <p>89-90: <b>Aesculapius...harmony</b> = the Roman writer Valerius Maximus told the story of how <b>Dionysius</b>, the tyrant of <b>Syracuse</b>, ordered the <b>golden beard</b> to be removed from the statue of <b>Aesculapius</b> (and given to him, naturally), justifying this action by suggesting that it was not appropriate for the god to have a beard, since Aesculapius' father, <b>Apollo</b>, was beardless.<sup>8</sup></p> <p><b>Aesculapius</b> was the popular Greek god of medical healing.<sup>4</sup> <b>Apollo</b> was the god of music and song.</p> <p>92-93: Eristus directly contradicts Mellacrites' assertion that gold can be used to obtain love.</p> <p>95-98: Martius too criticizes Mellacrites' recommendation.</p>
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98	world, is to make Midas <u>new prentice to</u> a mint, and <u>journeyman</u> to a woman.	= ie. an apprentice to. = a hired worker, <sup>2</sup> suggesting a subordinate position.
100 102	<b>Mell.</b> To enjoy a fair lady in love, and <u>want</u> fair gold to give; to have thousands of people to fight, and no penny to pay – will make one's mistress wild, and his soldiers tame. Jupiter was a god, but he knew gold was	100-3: <b>To enjoy...tame</b> = if one has no money to shower on one's mistress or pay one's soldiers, the lady will be discontented and the warriors unwilling to fight. Note how Mellacrites has cleverly rebutted the distinct criticisms of Eristus and Martius in a single argument. <b>want</b> (line 100) = lack.
104	a greater: and flew into those grates with his golden	104-5: <b>flew into...golden wings</b> = a reference to the popular myth of <b>Danae</b> : <b>Acrisius</b> , the king of <b>Argos</b> , received an oracle that the future son of his daughter Danae would grow up to kill him. To prevent this event, Acrisius kept Danae locked away in a tower or underground apartment. <b>Jupiter</b> visited her in the form of a shower of gold, which impregnated her, resulting in the birth of the Greek hero <b>Perseus</b> . Perseus did indeed later kill Acrisius, when a discus he threw during funeral games was carried by the wind and fatally struck the king. <sup>4</sup>
	wings, where he could not enter with his <u>swan's wings</u> .	= an allusion to another of Jupiter's conquests: the king of the gods, while in the form of a <b>swan</b> , seduced Leda, resulting in the birth of <b>Helen</b> (later of Troy), and <b>Clytemnestra</b> (future husband of <b>Agamemnon</b> ).
106	What stayed <u>Atalanta's</u> course with <u>Hippomenes</u> ? an	106-7: <b>What stayed...gold</b> = "what slowed Atalanta during her race with Hippomenes? An apple of gold." <b>Atalanta</b> was a beautiful and swift-footed maiden, but she refused to get married, due to an oracle which warned her that if she did become some man's wife, she would "lose herself". Under pressure to take a husband, Atalanta announced she would marry any suitor who could beat her in a foot-race, with the condition that he would be put to death if he lost. Many men tried, and many men died. A young man, <b>Hippomenes</b> , also in love with Atalanta, prayed to <b>Venus</b> to help him win her; the goddess gave him three golden apples. During his foot-race with Atalanta, he tossed the apples one at a time whenever she took the lead, hoping to distract her. Sure enough, every time Hippomenes tossed an apple, Atalanta would stop to chase and gather it. With Atalanta trying to run while carrying these heavy pieces of fruit, Hippomenes won the race, and won Atalanta. <sup>7</sup>
108	apple of gold: what made the three goddesses strive? an apple of gold. If therefore thou make not thy	107-8: <b>what made...gold</b> = a reference to the most famous beauty contest in history: <b>Paris</b> , a Trojan prince, was assigned the unenviable task of judging which of three goddesses – <b>Hera</b> , <b>Athena</b> , and <b>Aphrodite</b> – was the most beautiful; the prize was a golden apple. To bribe Paris, Hera offered him rule over Asia and great riches if he chose her; Athena offered him glory and success in war; and Aphrodite tempted him with the hand of <b>Helen</b> , the world's most beautiful woman. Paris chose Aphrodite, who, in arranging for Helen to run off with Paris, precipitated the Trojan War. <sup>4</sup>
110	mistress a <u>goldfinch</u> , thou mayest chance to find her a <u>wagtail</u> : believe me, <u>Res est ingeniosa dare</u> . Besides,	= one who has lots of gold. <sup>1</sup> 110: <b>wagtail</b> = a small bird, used here to describe a straying girl. <sup>1,9</sup>

112 how many gates of cities this golden key hath opened,  
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 sequere 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

122 about the eyes, doth it, not because she will take no  
gold, but that she would not be seen blushing when she

124 takes it: the balance she holdeth are not to weigh the  
right of the cause, but the weight of the bribe; she will  
126 put up her naked sword if thou offer her a golden  
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.

*Res est ingeniosa dare* = "Giving is a clever act."<sup>6</sup>  
From Ovid's *Amores*, Book I.

111-2: Lancashire<sup>14</sup> sees a possible allusion to an actual of  
event of 1589, when, during the war in the Netherlands, an  
English garrison surrendered to the Spanish in return for the  
latter giving the men their long-overdue backpay.

113: a reversal of the ancient Greek idea, as described by the  
8th century B.C. poet Hesiod, that humanity has passed  
through five ages: the golden age first, then silver, bronze,  
heroic, and iron; the ages describe a decline in the state of  
mankind. The current age, says Mellacrites, with its  
appreciation for gold, makes this the superior one.

114: **Latin** = "The world is now under Jupiter, you must  
now follow Jupiter's commands."<sup>6</sup> The source is un-  
known.

= ie. nothing but.

118-9: *the moon's brains* = ie. the brains of the man in the  
moon. Bond interprets the line to mean that "only a lunatic  
would dream of doing without money" (p. 521).<sup>9</sup> Bond has  
in mind the old belief that the moon caused certain kinds of  
insanity (hence the word *lunatic*, which is derived from the  
Latin word for moon, *luna*)<sup>1</sup>.

**120-126 (below): *Justice herself...scabbard*** = Mellacrites  
perverts the normally admirable image of the impartial and  
blindfolded goddess Justice holding in one hand her famous  
balance, or scales of justice, on which she weighs the  
relative merits of both sides of a case, and in the other a  
sword, "a symbol of power, protection, authority, vigilance  
and might."<sup>20</sup>

120-1: *wimpled about the eyes* = ie. blindfolded;<sup>1</sup> a *wimple*,  
properly, is a headdress which envelopes the entire head and  
neck, as worn in the present day by nuns. Mellacrites is  
mocking.

121-3: *doth it...takes it* = Mellacrites expresses admiration  
for those who are able to pervert justice to their own ends  
with bribes.

*doth it* = ie. does so, ie. wears a wimple or blindfold.

= *balance* is again treated as a plural word.<sup>1</sup>

= sheathe, put away.

= "I have decided."

= "reveal or demonstrate your powers as a deity."<sup>1</sup>

= attaches itself.<sup>1</sup>

136		
137		137, 142: stage directions added by editor.
138		
140	<b>Midas.</b> Fortunate Midas! It is gold, Mellacrites! gold! it is gold!	
142	<b>Mell.</b> This stick.	
144		[Midas picks up stick.]
146	<b>Midas.</b> Gold, Mellacrites! my sweet boy, all is gold! – forever honoured be Bacchus, that above measure hath made Midas fortunate.	
148		
150	<b>Bacc.</b> If Midas be pleased, Bacchus is. <u>I will</u> to my  temple with <u>Silenus</u> , for by this time there are many to  offer unto me sacrifices: <i>Poenam pro munere poscis</i> .	 = "I will go"; this is an example of a common late 16th century grammatical construction: in the presence of a verb of intent ( <i>will</i> ), the verb of action ( <i>go</i> ) is omitted.  = <b>Silenus</b> was a Satyr (a half-human half-beast), a jovial, fat and perpetually drunken old man, and a constant companion to Bacchus. In Ovid's story of Midas, it was Silenus whom Midas entertained, not Bacchus, leading the god to offer Midas a gift of his choosing to show his appreciation.  = Bacchus offers a veiled warning to Midas in Latin: "you demand punishment for a gift." <sup>6</sup> The quote is from Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> , Book II. <b>Apollo</b> says this to his son <b>Phaeton</b> when the latter asks to be allowed to drive the sun- chariot across the sky. Note that in line 20 in this scene, Midas has anticipated this warning when he compared himself to Phaeton. <sup>9</sup>
152		
154	<b>Midas.</b> Come, my lords, I will with gold pave my court, and <u>deck</u> with gold my turrets; these petty islands near to Phrygia shall totter, and other kingdoms be turned topsy-turvy: I will command both the	155: <i>deck</i> = adorn, ornament. 155-7: <i>these petty...turvy</i> = Midas plans to use his gold to immediately build an army to attack his neighbors. The <i>islands</i> refer to Lesbos, which Midas will be portrayed as trying to conquer throughout the play. Previous editors have all commented on the clear allegorical representation of the threatened island Lesbos as England, and the evil aggressor Phrygia, led by Midas (Philip II), as Spain. See, e.g., Daniel, p. 373, note 31. <sup>5</sup>
156		
158	<u>affections</u> of men, and the fortunes. Chastity will grow  cheap where gold is thought dear; <u>Celia</u> , chaste Celia,  shall yield. You, my lords, shall have my hands in your houses, turning your <u>brazen</u> gates to fine gold. Thus shall Midas be monarch of the world, the <u>darer</u> of Fortune, the commander of <u>Love</u> . Come let us <u>in</u> .	158: <i>affections</i> = love, goodwill. 158-9: <i>Chastity...dear</i> = because every woman, no matter her price, can be bought (when gold is ubiquitous), the value of preserving one's maidenhead will diminish to nothing. <i>dear</i> (line 159) = valuable.  = <b>Celia</b> is Mellacrites' daughter. Midas appears to be interested in her, but this idea is never really pursued in this play.  = brass. = challenger. <sup>1</sup> = ie. Cupid. = ie. go in.
160		
162		
164		
166	<b>Mell.</b> We follow, desiring that our thoughts may be 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  
 174 have given so great a gift. Now it is done, I care not  
 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  
 8 **Licio.** That is when those two genders are at jar, but  
 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!  
 16  
 but, Licio, my mistress is a proper woman.  
 18 **Licio.** Ay, but thou knowest not her properties.  
 20 **Pet.** I care not for her qualities, so I may embrace her  
 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.

= outcome.

= ie. Bacchus.

**Entering Characters:** *Petulus* is a servant, a young page working for the advisor Mellacrites, while *Licio* serves Mellacrites' daughter Celia. The servants' scenes are responsible for the plays' comic relief.

= ie. "which of us".

4-5: "since a man has more worth than a woman, the servant of the man is better than that of the woman." The line parodies a Latin grammar, with its references to the gender of words.<sup>16</sup>

**backare** = "back off!" or "give place!" (to Petulus as the more worthy man).<sup>1,16</sup>

= in conflict.<sup>2</sup>

12: this line may be mildly suggestive.

14: **Pulchre sane** = very nice (Latin).

**blue nose** = the reference is uncertain: Lancashire suggests the allusion may be to the blue veins of Licio's nose, or to the blue colour of the servants' livery. In the 17th century, the phrase **blue nose** came to be used to describe a cold nose.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. Celia. = good-looking or admirable.<sup>1</sup>

= note the typical Lylyian play on words with **proper** and **properties**.

19-20: the humour of the younger and lewder Petulus will run towards the risqué.

= impertinent.

= note again the play on words with **pert** and **expert**.

28	<b>Licio.</b> <u>Sir boy</u> , you must not be saucy.	= a humorous and ironic form of address.
30	<b>Pet.</b> No, but faithful and <u>serviceable</u> .	= always available to provide assistance. <sup>1</sup>
32	<b>Licio.</b> Lock up your lips, or I will lop them off. But	33: <b>sirrah</b> = common familiar form of address.
34	<u>sirrah</u> , for thy better instructions I will <u>unfold</u> every	33-34: <b>I will...disposition</b> = Licio will describe the physical attributes of his mistress Celia in detail. Note the brief cloth metaphor of <b>unfold</b> (which means both "straighten out" and "reveal") and <b>wrinkle</b> .
	<u>wrinkle</u> of my mistress' disposition.	= ie. "please do."
36	<b>Pet.</b> I pray thee do.	38-39: Licio only has time to describe Celia's head and its accessories ( <b>purtenance</b> ). <sup>1</sup> The rest of her will have to wait.
38	<b>Licio.</b> But for this time I will only handle the head and	43-44: Fairholt provides a nice quote from a 1607 comedy that is <i>apropos</i> : "a ship is sooner rigged by far than a gentlewoman made ready." (p. 263). <sup>16</sup>
40	<u>purtenance</u> .	<b>dress</b> = prepare, make ready, ie. fix the hair, apply make-up, etc.
42	<b>Pet.</b> Nothing else?	= an early form of tennis, in which the ball was hit with an open palm, was known in England as early as 1400. <sup>1</sup>
44	<b>Licio.</b> Why, will not that be a long hour's work to describe, that is almost a whole day's work to <u>dress</u> ?	50: <b>would</b> = wish.
46	<b>Pet.</b> Proceed.	<b>hazard</b> = a tennis term, referring to the place, such as an aperture in a wall, in which an unreturnable, and hence winning, serve has been made. <sup>2</sup> Petulus is brazen in his rudeness!
48	<b>Licio.</b> First, she hath a head as round as a <u>tennis ball</u> .	54-55: one of the bawdiest lines in all the canon; the use of <b>balls</b> to refer to the testes dates back to the 14th century. <sup>1</sup>
50	<b>Pet.</b> I <u>would</u> my bed were a <u>hazard</u> .	57: <b>Latin</b> = "I see rather than understand." <sup>6</sup>
52	<b>Licio.</b> Why?	= "if only".
54	<b>Pet.</b> Nothing, but that I would have her head there among other <u>balls</u> .	62: "for what purpose?"
56	<b>Licio.</b> <i>Video, pro intelligo.</i> Then hath she an hawk's eye.	= the sense is "feast her eyes"; <sup>16</sup> <b>tire</b> is a term from falconry, used to describe a raptor tearing at the flesh of its prey. <sup>1</sup>
60	<b>Pet.</b> O, <u>that</u> I were a partridge head.	67: <b>hanging</b> was more of an English concern than a Phrygian one.
62	<b>Licio.</b> To what end?	69: <b>Latin</b> = "indeed" (ironic). <sup>1</sup>
64	<b>Pet.</b> That she might <u>tire with her eyes</u> on my countenance.	= "that would be like a dagger made of lead".
66	<b>Licio.</b> Wouldst thou be hanged?	= perhaps meaning "shrewish" or "malignant".
68	<b>Pet.</b> <i>Scilicet.</i>	
70	<b>Licio.</b> Well, she hath the tongue of a parrot.	
72	<b>Pet.</b> <u>That's a leaden dagger</u> in a velvet sheath, to have a	
74	<u>black tongue</u> in a fair mouth.	

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

86 **Pet.** O monstrous mouth! I would then it had been a  
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

92 **Pet.** Sweetly meant.

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

96

98 **Pet.** Doth she want ears?

100 **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.

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

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

106

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

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

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

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

116

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

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

77-78: "*Walk, knave, walk*": Fairholt identifies this as "a  
 rude phrase which parrots were taught to use" (p. 263).<sup>16</sup>

80: "*A rope for parrot, a rope*" = another phrase commonly  
 taught to parrots.<sup>9</sup> The *rope*, of course, is for hanging.

= likely meaning, "she is wanton";<sup>14</sup> a possible variation of  
 the more common expression, "having a colt's tooth", which,  
 in referring to the friskiness of a young horse, carries the  
 same connotation.<sup>23</sup>

= "would have preferred her to have".

= a *sheep's eye* is one that looks out amorously.<sup>1</sup> = cow's.

= ie. because a calf would gladly take a lump of sugar from  
 one's hand.<sup>9</sup>

93: ie. her hearing is acute; a *want* is a mole, which, because  
 it is blind, was believed to have good hearing.<sup>5</sup> Interestingly,  
 the noun *want* referring to the mole actually entered English  
 before the modern use of *want* meaning "lack" or "need".<sup>1</sup>

= lack, an easy joke.

= lack.

= ie. as a mole.

= ie. "asks her an improper question" (Bond, p. 523).<sup>9</sup>

= listen.

107: there was a custom of putting a ring in a swine's nose.<sup>16</sup>

= referring humorously to Petulus.

111: *go farther* = ie. continue, as on a path.

111-2: to *have one in the wind* means "to sense the  
 presence of":<sup>1</sup> hence, suggests Petulus, Celia can smell, or  
 detect, them both (Lancashire, p. 91).<sup>14</sup>

= modern editors usually take this phrase to mean "having an  
 overhanging brow", but the OED suggests it may refer to  
 shaggy brows, or brows that were lifted up to create a  
 scowling expression.<sup>1</sup> Licio may indeed intend the latter  
 meaning (see the note at line 118-9 below).

118: *beetle head* = a *beetle* was a tool with a heavy head,  
 used to drive in pegs or crush stones and so forth; hence,  
 a blockhead.<sup>1</sup>

118-9: *I say...velvet* = Celia is of swarthy complexion.  
 Also, to be *black-browed* was to have a scowling brow.<sup>1</sup>

122 *Pet.* What lips hath she?

124 *Licio.* Tush, the lips are no part of the head, only made 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 say no more of the head, begin with the purtenances, for that was your promise.

134 *Licio.* The purtenances! it is impossible to reckon them up, much less to tell the nature of them: hoods, frontlets, wires, caules, curling-irons, perriwigs,

136 bodkins, fillets, hairlaces, ribbons, rolls, knotstrings,

138 glasses, combs, caps, hats, coifs, kerchers, clothes,

140 earrings, borders, crippins, shadows, spots, and so

142 many other trifles, as both I want the words of art to 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

*black as velvet* = there are frequent references to *black velvet* in 16th century literature, though at least one mid-century source observes that velvet was available in "sundry", or various, colors.

= *double-leaf* was the early name for the twayblade orchid, whose leaves grow in pairs, and which at one point resemble little Pac-men. Also, each part of a *double-door* is called a *leaf*.<sup>1</sup> Lyly punningly combines the ideas.

= ie. driven to the last extremity.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. subsidiary parts of the whole.<sup>1</sup>

= count.

137-140: all definitions in this lengthy catalogue of women's accessories are from the OED, unless otherwise footnoted:

*frontlet* = a band worn on the forehead.

*wire* = a wire frame used to support a hairstyle.

*caule* = a small cap or net for the hair.

*perriwig* = a wig.

138: *bodkin* = a pin for holding up one's hair.

*fillet* = a band or ribbon for tying up one's hair.

*hairlace* = a string for tying up one's hair.

*roll* = a cushion that is part of a headdress.

*knotstring* = an accessory used "for fastening on a knot or bunch of ribbon (Bond, p.523).<sup>9</sup>

139: *glasses* = mirrors.

*coif* = a close-fitting cap tied under the chin.

*kercher* = obsolete word for *kerchief*, referring to a cloth used to cover one's head.

*clothes* = veils.<sup>1</sup>

140: *border* = an ornamental border around the edge of a cap or other bit of clothing.

*crippin* = a net worn in the hair.

*shadow* = a broad-brimmed or forward projecting hat which protects the face from the sun.

*spot* = an artificial beauty mark, sometimes used to cover blemishes.

= lack.

= cleverness or intelligence.

= remarks or observations.<sup>2</sup>

= "say you".

150	<b>Pet.</b> That if <u>every part</u> require so much as the head, it will make the richest husband in the world ache at the heart.	= ie. every part of a woman's body. 150-1: ie. over the cost of maintaining his wife.
152	<i>Enter Pipenetta.</i>	<b>Entering Character: Pipenetta</b> is the maid of Celia (Mellacrites' daughter); all three servants of Mellacrites' household are now on stage.
154	<b>Licio.</b> But <u>soft</u> , here comes Pipenetta: – what news?	= "hold on a moment".
156	<b>Pip.</b> I would not be in your <u>coats</u> for anything.	157ff: Pipenetta arrives to offer a warning to the boys, but they playfully and deliberately misinterpret everything she says. <b>coats</b> = ie. servants' livery.
158	<b>Licio.</b> Indeed, if thou shouldest <u>rig</u> up and down in our jackets, thou wouldst be thought a very tomboy.	= frolic or behave in a wanton manner. <sup>9</sup>
162	<b>Pip.</b> I mean I would not be in your <u>cases</u> .	= circumstances, situation. <sup>1</sup>
164	<b>Pet.</b> Neither shalt thou, Pipenetta, for first, they are too <u>little for thy body</u> , and then too fair, to pull over so <u>foul a skin</u> .	164-6: Petulus takes <b>cases</b> to mean "skins" <sup>9</sup> or "clothes." <sup>5</sup> = Pipenetta appears to be larger than the boys. = Petulus is not very nice to Pipenetta at all!
166	<b>Pip.</b> These boys be drunk! – I would not be in your <u>takings</u> .	= situations or predicaments. <sup>9</sup>
168	<b>Licio.</b> I think so, for we take nothing in our hands but weapons, it is for thee to use needles and pins, a <u>sampler</u> , not a <u>buckler</u> .	171-3: women should concern themselves with sewing, men with weapons. = a bit of embroidery. <sup>2</sup> = a small, round shield. <sup>2</sup>
170	<b>Pip.</b> Nay then, we shall never <u>have done</u> ! I mean I would not be so <u>curst</u> as you shall be.	= "be finished here". = damned with curses. <sup>1</sup> Petulus takes <b>curst</b> to be <b>coursed</b> , a hunting term which suggests the boys will be pursued like animals.
172	<b>Pet.</b> Worse and worse! We are no <u>chase</u> (pretty <u>mops</u> .) for deer we are not, neither <u>red nor fallow</u> , because we	= prey to be hunted. <sup>1</sup> = a term of endearment for a girl. <sup>1</sup> = two common species of European deer. <sup>1</sup>
174	are bachelors, and have not <u>cornu copia</u> , we <u>want</u>	180: <b>cornu copia</b> = literally the horn of plenty, but used punningly to thematically tie together the horns of the deer, and the horns which are proverbially said to grow on the foreheads of cuckolded husbands: since the boys are bachelors, they cannot be cuckolded. <b>want</b> = lack.
176	<u>heads</u> : hares we cannot be, because they are male one year, and the next female, we change not our sex:	181: <b>heads</b> = antlers, ie. horns. 181-2: <b>hares...sex</b> = Lyly borrows another idea from <i>The Natural History</i> , in which Pliny cites the ancient Greek philosopher Archelaus for the belief that hares have both male and female characteristics, and do not require coupling to become pregnant (Pliny, 8.81). <sup>10</sup>
178	badgers we are not, for our legs are one as long as another: and who will take us to be foxes, that stand so	183-4: <b>badgers...another</b> = contemporary literature occasionally referred to a superstition which suggested that the legs on one side of the badger were longer than those on the other.
180		
182		
184		

186 near a goose, and bite not?

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

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

198 **Pip.** I marvel how old you will be before you be  
 200 disposed to be honest. But this is the matter, my  
 202 master is gone abroad, and wants his page to wait on  
 204 him: my mistress would rise, and lacks your worship

206 to fetch her hair.

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

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

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

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

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

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

228 **Pet.** The devil it is!

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

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

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

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

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

= **goose** also means "a fool", referring to Pipenetta.

= women.

191-2: "don't be mad, we are just kidding around!"

195-6: **my master** = ie. Mellacrites, who is of course the  
 master of all three of them.  
 = out and about. = lacks, is missing. = attend.

197: **my mistress would rise** = ie. "Celia wishes to get out  
 of bed", but the sense seems to be "wishes to get herself  
 ready".  
**your worship** = ironic, of course.

= ie. "get her wig", but obviously and humorously ambi-  
 guous.

202-3: **the hair...today** = the *Encyclopedia Britannica*  
 (1911) notes that Queen Elizabeth herself owned "eighty  
 attires of false hair". In the 16th century, wigs were used to  
 simulate genuine hair, but became a costume feature in the  
 17th. (Vol. 28, p. 624).<sup>3</sup>

= unless.

= **angels** were old English coins, having an image of the  
 archangel Michael stamped on them; an easy and common  
 pun, as well as an anachronism.

= clothing.

= wish.

= yellow-dyed hair was fashionable during the age of  
 Elizabeth.

= ie. go in. = power.

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

END OF ACT I.

= stick or rod, used usually to beat someone with.

238: **What difference** = ie. "what is the difference between the expressions".

**beaten with gold** = overlaid or embroidered with gold, but of course punning on **beaten**.

= **beaten** here refers to the process by which any malleable metal might be shaped by repeatedly striking it.<sup>1</sup>

= "the difference is as great as there is in saying".

= ie. receive a **dry**, or severe, beating.<sup>1,16</sup>

= lingering.<sup>2</sup>

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.*

*Enter Eristus and Celia.*

**Entering Characters:** the counselor *Eristus*, we remember, is obsessed with love; he also carries a torch for Mellacrites' daughter *Celia*.

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

= overabundance.

= ie. cannot be too much.

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

4-7: ie. "if love were as plentiful as gold is in the kingdom,  
you would be sick of that too."

8: **pinch with melancholy** = be tormented or pressed with  
depression.

8-9: **his guts...famine** = here is our first hint of the  
problem Midas is having with his "gift": since everything,  
including food, turns to gold at his touch, he is actually  
starving to death! Daniel notes Lyly's interesting choice to  
not present a scene, which the audience would have  
expected, of Midas first discovering the unhappy side of his  
gift (p. 373).<sup>5</sup>

10  
11  
12 *Erist.* No, sweet Celia, in love there is variety.

= ie. are fickle.

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

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

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

= in conflict.

17  
18  
19  
20 *Erist.* Men change the manner of their love, not the  
humour; the means how to obtain, not the mistress they

20-22: **Men change...honour** = ie. men change the way  
they show their love, but not the love itself; and change the  
methods they employ to win their women, but are constant  
in whom they love.

21  
22 honour. So did Jupiter, that could not entreat Danae by  
23 golden words, possess his love by a golden shower,  
24 not altering his affection, but using art.

22-24: **So did...art** = to support his point, Eristus brings  
up *Jupiter*, who changed his tactics (ie. his shape) to win  
*Danae*, but whose love for her remained constant. This is the  
second reference in this play already to the myth of Jupiter  
visiting the maiden Danae in the form of a shower of gold:  
see the note at Act I.i.104-5.

**art** = skill or cunning.

25  
26 *Cel.* The same Jupiter was an eagle, a swan, a bull;

26: emphasizing Jupiter's fickle ways, Celia refers to three of  
the forms the king of the gods has taken to seduce both boys  
and women:

(1) in the form of an **eagle**, Jupiter (*a*) pursued (unsuc-  
cessfully) the Titan goddess **Asteria** (this was according to  
Ovid),<sup>24</sup> and (*b*) kidnapped the handsome Trojan prince  
**Ganymede**, employing him as the cup-bearer of the gods.

(2) as a **swan**, Jupiter seduced **Leda**, resulting in the birth  
of the future **Helen of Troy**; and

and for every saint a new shape, as men have for

28 every mistress a new shadow. If you take example

30 of the gods, who more wanton, more wavering? if of yourselves, being but men, who will think you more

32 constant than gods? Eristus, if gold could have allured 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

38 love, gold, and authority, *Quorum si singula nostrum flectere non poterant, potuissent omnia mentem.*

40 **Erist.** Ah, Celia, if kings say they love, and yet dissemble, who dare say that they dissemble, and not

42 love? They command the affections of others [to] yield, and their own to be believed. My tears, which have

44 made furrows in my cheeks, and in mine eyes fountains; my sighs, which have made of my heart a

46 furnace, and kindled in my head flames; my body, that melteth by piecemeal; and my mind, that pineth at an

48 instant, may witness that my love is both unspotted,

50 and unspeakable: *Quorum si singula duram flectere non poterant, deberent, omnia mentem.* – But soft, here cometh the princess, with the rest of the lords.

52

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

56 **Soph.** Mellacrites, I cannot tell whether I should

(3) Jupiter took the shape of a beautiful **bull** to attract the attention of the maiden **Europa**; after she slid onto his back, he jumped into the ocean and took her to **Crete**, where he seduced her, begetting **Minos**, the king of Crete.<sup>7</sup>

= for every woman he wanted, Jupiter took on a new appearance.  
**saint** = ie. a woman who is worshipped like a saint.<sup>14</sup>

28: **a new shadow** = earlier editors suggested this refers to a new portrait, painted for men's keeping.<sup>9</sup> But Daniel's interpretation of **shadow** as "guise", given the previous description of Jupiter's activities, may make more sense (p. 373).<sup>5</sup>

**take** = "follow the".

29: **who more...wavering?** = ie. "who are more unchaste and fickle (than the gods)?"

29-30: **if of yourselves** = ie. "if you men use yourselves as models".

= faithful (to one woman).

= ie. "would have won me".

= instilled fear into.

= power, political supremacy.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. "would have won me".

37-38: **Latin** = "If each of these matters individually were not able to persuade my mind, all of them jointly should have been able to."<sup>6</sup> Celia adapts a line from Book 9 of *Metamorphoses*.

= ie. "who would dare accuse a king of only pretending to be in love".

47: **by piecemeal** = a little bit at a time.<sup>1</sup>

47-48: **that pineth at an instant** = which suffers at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

= pure.<sup>1</sup>

49: **unspeakable** = ineffable, cannot be expressed in words.<sup>1</sup>

49-50: **Latin** = "If each of these matters joined together were not able to persuade a hard heart, each of them individually *should* have been able to."<sup>6</sup> Eristus modifies Celia's quotation.

**Entering Characters:** **Sophronia** is Midas' daughter; we have already met the king's counselors. Mellacrites was the advisor who recommended that the king ask Bacchus for gold.

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

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

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

78 **Mar.** If my advice had taken place, Midas, that now  
sitteth over head and ears in crowns, had worn upon  
 80 his head many kings' crowns, and been conqueror of  
 the world, that now is commander of dross. That  
 82 greediness of Mellacrites, whose heart-strings are  
 made of Plutus' purse-strings, hath made Midas a lump  
 84 of earth, that should be a god on earth; – and thy  
 effeminate mind, Eristus, whose eyes are stitched on  
 86 Celia's face, and thoughts gyved to her beauty, hath  
 bred in all the court such a tender wantonness, that  
 88 nothing is thought of but love, a passion proceeding of  
 beastly lust, and coloured with a courtly name of love.  
 90 Thus whilst we follow the nature of things, we forget  
 the names. Since this unsatiable thirst of gold, and  
 92 untemperate humour of lust crept into the king's court,  
 soldiers have begged alms of artificers, and with their  
 94 helmet on their head been glad to follow a lover with a  
glove in his hat, which so much abateth the courage of  
 96 true captains, that they must account it more honourable  
 in the court to be a coward, so rich and amorous, than

= ie. adopting Mellacrites' suggestion.

58: **covetous humour** = greedy disposition.

**contemn** = scorn.

**wonder** = marvel; Sophronia is berating Mellacrites for the foolish advice he gave Midas.

= generosity.

= reputation.

**64-72 (below):** note how Mellacrites attempts to turn the conversation away from the blame he deserves for his having misled Midas, and towards a solution to the king's emergency.

= condition.

= cause.<sup>1</sup>

= solid and heavy.<sup>1</sup>

= one may wonder how Midas can wear any clothes at all, if they all turn to solid gold at his touch.

= would have been.

= ie. been taken. = who.

79: **sitteth over head and ears** = is completely immersed in or surrounded by;<sup>1</sup> a common expression.

**crowns** = a type of British gold coin, first struck under Henry VIII.

= ie. he who is now. = contemptuous term for money.

= the Greek god of wealth. = ie. "turned Midas into a".

= "he who".

= fettered.<sup>1</sup>

= an effeminate looseness of morals.<sup>1</sup>

= from.

= disguised under the pretext of.

91-113: **Since this...safety** = Martius bemoans the soldiers' thoughts turning away from military preparedness, and towards amorous pursuits.

= craftsmen.

= a common Elizabethan conceit was for a lover to wear a token of his mistress', such as her **glove**, on his person.

= military commanders, perhaps meaning all soldiers.

= "provided he is" (Bond, p. 524).<sup>9</sup>

98 in a camp to be valiant, if poor and maimed. He is  
 100 more favoured that pricks his finger with his mistress'  
 102 needle, than he that breaks his lance on his enemy's  
 face; and he that hath his mouth full of fair words, than  
 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

of his own head. The love he hath followed, I  
 120 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,

= ie. soldiers' camp.

= ie. sewing needle.

= who.

= "so long as he has".

104: *ruddocks* = originally referring to the robin red-breast,  
*ruddock* was used, along with the phrase "red gold", to refer  
 to gold coins.<sup>16</sup>

*must be* = ie. "is accounted".

= "if he is".

= flattering.

= mirror. = metaphorically, a receptacle for his praise.

= ie. true. = for alms (on account of their poverty).

= ie. they have to go to other countries if they want to  
 pursue their profession.

= "he is considered a real man", or "he is the favoured  
 man".<sup>14</sup>

= crutch; an interesting opposition from Lyly, of a wounded  
 leg supported by a crutch, against an injured arm wrapped in  
 a lady's scarf.

= stop.

116: *looseness* = loose morals in the court.

*hoarding* = ie. "the amassing of the plentiful gold  
 (which has led)".

117: *than remedy either* = Sophronia has no solution to  
 either problem.

117-9: *yet thy...crowns* = Midas has been using his gold  
 to pay for an army that has been viciously attacking his  
 neighbors, much to Sophronia's chagrin.

*animating* = inspiring or giving encouragement to.

= suspect to be.

= ie. have all.

= ie. Midas' troubles have caused him to suffer from a cor-  
 rosive torment; but *eating cares*, of course, also touches on  
 the king's starvation.

= ie. is manifested in one of two ways, or leads one down  
 either of two paths.

= ie. "the lowest step being the spilling of blood".

= despised by.<sup>1</sup>

= surrounded.

= personified *ambition* reaches out.

= wish. = provided that.<sup>14</sup>

= ie. exile.

<p>134 with thy <u>love</u>, <u>into Italy</u>, where they honour Lust for a</p> <p>god, as the <u>Egyptians did dogs</u>: – thee, Mellacrites, with</p> <p>136 thy greediness of gold, to the utmost parts of the west, where all the guts of the earth are gold: – and thee,</p> <p>138 Martius, that <u>soudest but</u> 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; <u>liberality</u>, 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 <u>blast</u>; 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 <u>fall from the stalk</u>, you 150 may be gathered and <u>put to the still</u>.</p> <p>152 <b>Cel.</b> Madam, I am free from love, and unfortunate to be beloved.</p> <p>154 <b>Erist.</b> To be free from love is strange, but to think 156 <u>scorn</u> to be beloved, monstrous.</p> <p>158 <b>Soph.</b> Eristus, thy tongue doth itch to talk of love, and my ears <u>tingle</u> to hear it. – I <u>charge</u> you all, if you owe</p> <p>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, <u>or his life</u>: this I entreat you, this Midas commands you. <u>Jar</u> not with 164 yourselves, agree in one for your king, if ever you took Midas for your lawful king.</p> <p>166 <b>Mell.</b> Madam, we will go, and omit nothing that duty 168 may perform, or <u>pains</u>.</p> <p>170 <b>Soph.</b> Go speedily, lest Midas die before you return: – and you, Celia, shall go with me, that with talk we 172 may <u>beguile</u> the time, and my father think of no <u>meat</u>.</p> <p>174 <b>Cel.</b> I attend.</p> <p>176 [Exeunt.]</p>	<p>134: <b>love</b> = ie. obsession with love. <b>into Italy</b> = Elizabethan plays commonly alluded to <b>Italy</b> as a nation known for its loose morals.</p> <p>= another reference to Anubis, the Egyptian god with the face of a dog.</p> <p>136-7: <b>to the utmost...gold</b> = reference to the Western Hemisphere: by the early 16th century, the Spanish were looting Central and South America of its precious metals.</p> <p>= speaks of nothing but.</p> <p>= generousness.</p> <p>144-5: <b>all you ladies</b> = perhaps directed at the audience.<sup>14</sup></p> <p>= blight; Sophronia comments on how quickly beauty fades.</p> <p>= ie. "lose your beauty", a metaphor. = ie. distilled; rose oil was produced by distillation.</p> <p>152-3: <b>unfortunate to be beloved</b> = ie. by Eristus.</p> <p>= ie. "it worthy of scorn".</p> <p>159: <b>tingle</b> = ie. experience a discomforting ringing sensa- tion.<sup>1</sup> <b>charge</b> = command.</p> <p>= ie. or let him die (rather than suffer as he does). = argue.</p> <p>= efforts.</p> <p>171-2: Sophronia knows her father has feelings for Celia, and so hopes to distract him from his hunger with her presence and conversation. <b>beguile</b> = pass. <b>meat</b> = food.</p>
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## ACT II, SCENE II.

*The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.*

*Enter Licio, Petulus, Pipenetta.*

**Entering Characters:** the three servants of Mellacrites' household enter the stage.

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  
5 feel it not; he feels it, and enjoys it not.

= all the same.

= ie. "all that gold does me as much good as it does Midas".

= ie. "I cannot get my hands on any of it."<sup>9</sup>

6

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

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

= uneducated, ie. ignorant.

11

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

13

14 **Pip.** I warrant a goose.

= ie. fool.

15

16 **Licio.** Nay, I believe a bull.

= the joke is not exactly clear. According to the OED, a 17th century meaning of **bull** was "a ludicrous jest" (see **bull**, n.4); it is possible that Lyly had used **bull** here in some similar vein.

17

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

= an exclamation of scorn, similar to "to hell with".

19

20 **Pip.** The sun is rather a cock than a hen.

= Pipenetta means that the sun god Apollo was male, not female.<sup>4</sup>

21

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

23-24: **else how...Daphne** = ie. "how else could the sun god have slept with (**troaden**)<sup>1,14</sup> Daphne?"

**Daphne** was a lovely maiden who was chased by the amorous **Apollo (Titan)**, but she was changed into a laurel tree by her mother Gaia, the earth goddess, to protect her from the lusty god.<sup>4</sup> Despite Licio's claim, Apollo never did catch Daphne, but of course the servant is being facetious.

**Titan** = as a descendent of the original Titan gods, the sun god (usually called **Phoebus** or **Apollo**) was occasionally referred to as **Titan** in the late 16th century, following the example set by Ovid and others.<sup>4</sup>

**troaden** = alternate form of **trodden**.

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

26-27: **if I prove...and gold** = Petulus will use a logician's sophistry to prove an absurd assertion.

= admit, allow.

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

= rotten; note the wordplay of **addle** with **idle**.

29

30 **Licio.** Let us hear. Proceed, Doctor Egg.

= any learned man might be addressed as **Doctor**.

31

32 **Pet.** Gold will be cracked: a common saying, a cracked  
33 crown.

35: **will** = ie. can.

35-36: **cracked crown** = the gold coin known as a **crown**

34

35

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

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

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

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

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

70 boiled, for a consuming body.

72 **Licio.** Spoken like a physician.

74 **Pip.** Or a fool of necessity.

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

78 one cast.

80 **Licio.** Gamester-like concluded.

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

84 them.

**Pip.** A reason dough-baked.

had a picture of the sovereign stamped on it; if the coin developed a crack through the ring surrounding the head, the coin was said to be **cracked**, and banned from circulation; but a **crown** could also refer to a person's head, hence Pipenetta's response.

46: "go on."

= **to try** is to extract gold or other precious metal from ore by melting it in a **fire**.<sup>1</sup>

54: "continue."

= healthy and vigorous; **eggs** were considered aphrodisiacs.<sup>1</sup>

= merry, joyful.<sup>1</sup>

= the use of **egg** to mean "incite" goes back at least to 1200 A.D., but has a different etymology than the animal **egg**.<sup>1</sup>

68-69: **gold...body** = a solution of gold was believed to have medicinal value.<sup>9</sup>

**consuming body** = wasting away of the body, as from consumption.<sup>1</sup>

= necessarily, unavoidably.<sup>1</sup>

75: **at one sup** = in one sip, ie. in a single mouthful or bite.<sup>1</sup>  
**portage**, or **portague**, refers to a Portuguese coin.<sup>9</sup>  
 Petulus is continuing his comparison of eggs to gold.

= meaning both (1) a toss of the dice, as in a wager, and (2) an episode of vomiting, as a contrast with the **eaten egg**.

= like a gambler.

= metaphorically, "poorly concluded": **dough-baked** literally refers to underbaked dough.<sup>16</sup>

<p>86</p> <p>88</p> <p>90</p> <p>92</p> <p>94</p> <p>96</p> <p>98</p> <p>100</p> <p>102</p> <p>104</p> <p>106</p> <p>108</p>	<p><b>Licio.</b> O! the oven of his wit was not <u>thoroughly</u> heated.</p> <p><b>Pet.</b> Only this <u>odds</u> I find between money and eggs, which makes me wonder; that <u>being more pence</u> in the world than eggs, that one should have three eggs for a penny, and not three pence for an egg.</p> <p><b>Pip.</b> A wonderful matter! but your wisdom is <u>over-shot</u> in your comparison, for eggs have chickens, gold hath none.</p> <p><b>Pet.</b> <u>Mops</u>, I pity thee! gold hath eggs: change an <u>angel</u> into ten shillings, and all those pieces are the angel's eggs.</p> <p><b>Licio.</b> He hath <u>made a spoke</u>: wilt thou eat an egg? –</p> <p>but <u>soft</u>, here come <u>our masters</u>, <u>let us shrink aside</u>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Enter Mellacrites, Martius, Eristus.</i></p> <p><b>Mell.</b> A short answer, yet <u>a sound</u>; Bacchus is <u>pithy</u> and <u>pitiful</u>.</p> <p>[<i>Reads the <u>oracle</u></i>]</p>	<p>= common alternate form of <i>thoroughly</i>.</p> <p>= difference.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>= "there existing more pennies".</p> <p>= ie. has missed the mark.</p> <p>96: <b>Mops</b> = term of endearment for a young girl.</p> <p>96-98: <b>change...eggs</b> = the ten shillings one can get as change for the gold coin known as an <b>angel</b> can be said to be the <b>eggs</b> laid by the angel. Introduced in 1465, the <b>angel</b> (so called because it featured, on its obverse side, the image of the archangel Michael slaying the dragon) was in fact worth exactly ten shillings in the late 16th century.</p> <p>= a variation on "he has put a spoke in your wheel", meaning Petulus has successfully refuted or thwarted Pipenetta's reasoning.<sup>1,9</sup></p> <p>101: <b>soft</b> = "hold on".</p> <p><b>our masters</b> = "our betters."<sup>9</sup></p> <p><b>let us shrink aside</b> = "let us withdraw."<sup>1</sup> A convention of Elizabethan drama permitted onstage characters to retire and observe those who have just entered the stage, while remaining unobserved themselves.</p> <p>103: the counselors have returned from their trip to Bacchus' temple, where they went to seek the advice from the god through his oracle (see the note below at line 108 for a discussion of <b>oracles</b>).</p> <p>105: <b>a sound</b> = ie. a sound one. Mellacrites is describing the oracle they have received.</p> <p><b>pithy</b> = sincere, of sound judgment.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>= literally "full of pity", hence, "merciful".</p> <p>= <b>oracle</b> could refer to the advice given by a god, the location at which the advice was given, or the human medium through which the advice was given. There were numerous oracles to whom members of the ancient world could turn to receive advice from a god, the most famous being <b>Apollo's</b> oracle at <b>Delphi</b>. Generally, in return for a gift, a donor could ask a question of a god, who would give an answer through a priest or priestess, just as the dead are believed by some to speak to the living through a medium in a trance in a modern séance.</p> <p>The oracles of the gods were infamous for their ambiguity. The most famous example of this was told by Herodotus, in his <i>Histories</i>, of <b>Croesus</b>, the king of <b>Lydia</b>, who asked the oracle of Delphi whether he should attack the incipient Persian kingdom. The response from the god was that if he did attack the Persians, he would overthrow a great empire. Unfortunately, Croesus realized too late that the overthrown empire would be his own.<sup>13</sup></p>
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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

120 **Mell.** Thou, Martius, art so warlike, that thou wouldest  
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

124 should so temper thy sword, that were thy heart never  
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

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

110: **Pactolus** = a river flowing from Mt. Tmolus in the ancient state of Lydia, located in today's far-western Turkey. The waters of this river were said to contain large amounts of gold dust. It was thought that when Midas immersed himself in the stream, as commanded here by the oracle, to be relieved of his curse, the river itself acquired his power (hence, line 111's, *Thy wish the waves shall have*).<sup>11</sup>  
*thy wish* = ie. Midas' golden touch.

113-7: Martius is frustrated by the unclear nature of the oracle, which raises as many questions as it answers.

= healing balm.

122-6: **Suppose...edge** = "Suppose you were the bravest and strongest warrior in the world: if Vulcan were to give you a strong arm but a dull sword, would you not prefer a weaker arm and a sharper sword?" **Vulcan** was the Roman blacksmith god.

= adjust the strength of one's sword by heating and cooling it – a typical job for a blacksmith.

130: **If Mars...answer thee** = "Well, suppose Mars (the god of war) gave you this answer:" What follows are Mars' imagined instructions for Martius to follow in order to get his hypothetical wish.

= cut. = legendary mineral of great hardness.

133-4: **try the conclusion** = see what would happen (by following the instructions).

136: "so what?", or "what follows?"

= ie. tested the god's oracle.

= Mellacrites notices that Eristus has not spoken a word since the lords entered the scene.

= Eristus engages in some light wordplay, using **sealed** in its sense of "impressed".

= ie. go in.

= Eristus, noticing the servants, chides them for not having gone with them on their visit to Bacchus' oracle.<sup>9</sup>

= dare.

= a reference to the discomfort of a hangover.

152	<b>Erist.</b> And if I find a <u>cudgel</u> , I'll make your shoulders ache.	= stick or rod usually used to beat another. The history of finding humour in beating one's servants goes back to ancient Greek drama.
154	<b>Mell.</b> And you, Licio, <u>wait on yourself</u> .	= perhaps a warning, e.g., "watch yourself."
156	<b>Licio.</b> I cannot <u>choose</u> , sir, I am always so near myself.	= ie. choose to do otherwise.
158	<b>Mell.</b> I'll be as near you as your skin presently.	159: another "humorous" threat of a good pummeling.
160	[ <i>Exeunt.</i> ]	
END OF ACT II.		

## ACT III.

### SCENE I.

*The same: the gardens before Midas' palace.*

*Enter Midas, Mellacrites, Martius, Eristus.*

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

2  
3 *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  
7 success unfortunate. O, unquenchable thirst of gold,  
8 which turneth men's heads to lead, and maketh them  
9 blockish; their hearts to iron, and maketh them  
10 covetous; their eyes to delight in the view, and maketh  
11 them blind in the use. I that did possess mines of gold,  
12 could not be contented till my mind were also a mine.  
13 Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of  
14 Greece, nor mountains in the east, whose guts are  
15 gold, satisfy thy mind with gold? Ambition eateth  
16 gold, and drinketh blood; climbeth so high by other  
17 men's heads, that she breaketh her own neck. What  
18 should I do with a world of ground, whose body must  
19 be content with seven foot of earth?

20 Or why did I covet to get so many crowns, having  
21 myself but one head? Those that took small vessels

**1-83 (below):** the following monologue by Midas, clocking in at 737 words, is one of the longest in the entire Elizabethan canon, surpassed only by a 775-word speech which appeared in the early drama, *Gorboduc*, which was published in 1561.

The longest unbroken published speeches in Shakespeare's works, by contrast, are those of:

(1) Biron in Act III.iv of *Love's Labour's Lost*, which contains 588 words; however, the editors of *The New Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford University Press, 2016) believe that 22 of these lines (comprising 168 words) were printed accidentally (having been included in a rough draft of the speech), and thus were never actually recited on stage; and

(2) Richard III in Act III.ii of *Henry IV, Part I*, which contains 575 words.

I have broken up Midas' lengthy prose speech into paragraphs to facilitate reading; note, however, that it was not the normal practice of our ancient authors and publishers to do so.

6-77: likely delivered as an aside.

*unadvised* = rash.<sup>1</sup>

= outcome or sequel<sup>9</sup> (as in "successive" or "succession").

= doltish, stupid.

= who.

= ie. because of its darkness.<sup>9</sup>

= the annual payments made to Midas by those nations he has conquered.

15-17: *Ambition...neck* = one who aspires to rise often-times does so by taking advantage of, and even violently crushing, others; in the end, however, ambition always destroys the aspirant.

= ie. in which to be buried at death.

**20-32: (below):** Midas turns his thoughts to regret over his insatiable need to conquer, and harsh treatment of, the kingdoms that surround Phrygia.

21-23: *Those that...conqueror* = a self-damning contrast:

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 unsatiable 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 stews for strumpets.

42 Have not I made the sea to groan under the number of  
my ships? And have they not perished, that there was

44 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  
46 for all wars?

those who capture individual sailing ships Midas accounted (*accompted*)<sup>2</sup> pirates, but he himself, who destroyed entire navies of his enemies, he considered to be a conquering hero.

Bond<sup>9</sup> here sees a reference to the pirating activities of the era's English sailors, such as Francis Drake.

= performed by. = ie. conceal their true natures.

= engorged (Daniel, p. 374).<sup>5</sup>

= *Diomedes* was a king of Thrace who fed his horses human flesh. One of Hercules' Twelve Labours was to capture these horses.<sup>4</sup>

31-32: *dedicated to slaughter* = designated for killing.

**33-46 (below):** in this paragraph, Midas bemoans his treatment of the individuals of the nations on which he has made war.

34: *Lycaonia* = a region in south-central Asia Minor, bordering Phrygia on its south-east side.

*Getulia* = an area in north-west Africa, obviously an error; Bond plausibly suggests that Lyly meant to write *Galatia*, which lies to the immediate north of Phrygia, and which is mentioned later at Act IV.i.262.

= also known as *Soli*, a city in Cilicia located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in Asia Minor, to the south-east of Lycaonia. We note that the inhabitants were infamous for speaking Greek badly, so much so that it gave us the modern word, *solecism*, referring to a bit of faulty grammar.<sup>1,11</sup>

= acceptable pretexts. = reasonable limit.

38-39: note the wordplay of *wombs* and *tombs*.

= the metaphorical image of cradles floating in a stream of blood, like a grotesque fleet of boats, is an arresting one.  
= brothels (*stews*) for prostitutes.

41-42: *Have not...ships* = Bond sees an "unmistakable allusion" to the Spanish Armada, which the English had defeated only two years before in 1588 (p. 526).<sup>9</sup> Midas himself is referring to his failed attempts to capture the island of Lesbos.

43-44: *thrust my...camp* = ie. impressed all his male subjects into soldiers to fight on his behalf.

**47-67 (below):** Midas rues the immoral tactics he has used to overthrow his neighbours' governments.

48 Have not I enticed the subjects of my neighbor  
princes to destroy their natural kings, like moaths

50 that eat the cloth in which they were bred, like vipers  
that gnaw the bowels of which they were born,

52 and like worms that consume the wood in which they  
were engendered? To what kingdoms have not I  
54 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.

56 Why did I wish that all might be gold I touched, but  
that I thought all men's hearts would be touched with

58 gold? that what policy could not compass, nor prows,

gold might have commanded, and conquered? A

60 bridge of gold did I mean to make in that island where  
all my navy could not make a breach. Those islands  
62 did I long to touch, that I might turn them to gold, and  
myself to glory. But unhappy Midas, who by the same  
64 means perisheth himself, that he thought to conquer  
others: being now become a shame to the world, a

66 scorn to that petty prince, and to thyself a  
consumption.

47-48: **Have not...kings** = Midas has bribed those in neighbouring lands to overthrow their kings.

Bond sees a reference here to the many reports sent by English continental spies of Spanish plans to assassinate both Queen Elizabeth and William of Orange (aka William the Silent), leader of the house of Orange and instigator of the Dutch revolt against the Spanish; William was indeed assassinated in 1584.<sup>3,9</sup>

**moaths** = ie. moths, a common late 16th and early 17th century alternate form.

49-50: **vipers...born** = the belief that vipers ate their way out of their mothers' wombs when they were ready to be born was an ancient one.<sup>9</sup>

= born, begotten.<sup>1</sup>

54: **heir apparent** = the oldest child of a monarch, and thus the one who will succeed to the throne, should he or she survive.

54-55: **making...a title** = the sense is, "taking over other kingdoms on the slightest pretexts".

55: **and** = ie. and making.

**traitors to me** = hence providing Midas with a pretext for attacking his neighbors.<sup>9</sup>

= swayed or corrupted.<sup>1</sup>

58-59: **that what...conquered** = Midas regrets adopting the belief that what he could not achieve (**compass**)<sup>2</sup> through political maneuvering (**policy**) or naval (ie. military) action, he could get through bribery.

The line contains a good example of the figure of speech known as a *synecdoche*, in which a part (the **pro**w of a ship) is used to represent the whole (the ship).

59-63: **A bridge...glory** = another allusion to the Spanish and their designs on England: the **gold** refers to the fabulous mineral wealth acquired by the Spanish in the New World.

= ie. Lesbos.

= ie. break through the defenses of.

63: **unhappy** = unlucky.

63-65: **the same...others** = ie. gold, the means by which Midas bought off all of Asia Minor, is now causing him to starve to death.

= ie. the sovereign of Lesbos, allegorically Elizabeth I.

= wasting away.

**68-77 (below)**: finally, Midas recognizes the superiority of a king who rules with wisdom and mercy; such a sovereign will be protected by the gods and loved by his subjects. He is of course really describing Queen Elizabeth; in fact, the entire paragraph is really a description of England.

68	A petty <u>prince</u> , 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 <u>challenge</u> . 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	= monarch.
70		
72		= demand as a right.
74		
76	maintaineth. –	
78	My lords, I faint both for lack of food, and <u>want</u> of <u>grace</u> . I <u>will</u> to the river, where if I be rid of this intolerable disease of gold, I will next shake off that <u>untemperate</u> desire of government, and measure my territories, not by the greatness of my mind, but the right of my succession.	= lack. = favour shown by the gods. = ie. will go.
80		
82		= intemperate, ie. excessive. <sup>1</sup>
84		
	<b>Mar.</b> I am not a little sorry, that because all that your highness toucheth turneth to pure gold, and therefore all your princely <u>affections</u> should be converted to <u>dross</u> . Doth your majesty begin to melt your own	
86		
88		= desires. = the extraneous and worthless waste material collected during the purification of gold.
90	crown, that should make it with other monarchies <u>massy</u> ? Begin you to make enclosure of your mind, and	89-90: <b>make it...massy</b> = metaphorically combine his own crown with those of other nations so as to create a single heavy and solid ( <i>massy</i> ) crown.
92	to <u>debate of inheritance</u> , when the sword proclaims you	= ie. "question your right to rule other lands". <b>inheritance</b> = succession to a crown. <sup>1</sup>
94	conqueror? If your highness' heart be not of kingdom	92-93: <b>of kingdom proof</b> = ie. "made of a metal that is proof against another kingdom's attack" (closely quoting Bond, p. 527). <sup>9</sup>
96	proof, every <u>pelting prince</u> will batter it. Though you use this garish gold, let your mind be still of steel, and let the sharpest sword decide <u>the right of scepters</u> .	= petty monarch. = ie. who has the right to rule other kingdoms.
98		
100	<b>Midas.</b> Every little king is a king, and the <u>title</u> consisteth not in the <u>compass</u> of ground, but in the right of inheritance.	97-108 (below): Midas and Martius disagree as to whether conquest alone gives one the legitimate right to rule a nation. = right to rule. = measure.
102	<b>Mar.</b> Are not conquests good titles?	
104	<b>Midas.</b> Conquests are great thefts.	
	<b>Mar.</b> If your highness would be advised by me,	

106 then would I rob for kingdoms, and if I obtained,  
108 fain would I see him that durst call the conqueror  
a thief.

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

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

= ie. in order to obtain. = ie. succeeded in obtaining other kingdoms by means of such theft.  
= the sense is, "then I would dare anyone to"; Martius, of course, is advocating the notion that "might makes right".

= ie. from.

**Entering Characters:** Petulus and Licio, we remember, are the servants of Mellacrites and his daughter Celia respectively.

**The Story Advances:** Lyly, as he often does, allows for some plot development to occur off-stage: in this case, since we last met the servants, it appears that Motto the barber had given Midas a shave, and naturally took ownership of the king's golden beard; Petulus, however, has somehow tricked the barber out of possession of the beard.

= Petulus curses the barber Motto.  
**bots** = a stomach worm afflicting horses.<sup>2</sup>  
= cheated.

= ie. gone mad.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. that is why.<sup>1</sup>  
= cruel.<sup>1</sup>

= in 1584, author Reginald Scot published his encyclopedic *Discovery of Witchcraft*, in which he provided various charms for a toothache: for example, during the consecration at mass, a sufferer might repeat the following words: "*O horssecombs and sickles that have so many teeth, come heale me now of my toothach.*" (Book XII, Chapter 14). Bond notes other evidence of Lyly's familiarity with this

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  
 herbage, for a beard is a badge of hair; and a badge of  
 48 hair, hair-badge.

book.<sup>9</sup>

= **Latin:** in the meantime.

**Entering Character: Dello** is the servant or apprentice of the barber Motto. Dello should perhaps enter at the beginning of the scene, eavesdropping on Licio and Petulus, but remaining out of their sight.

18: **heard the wags** = ie. overheard the mischievous young men.<sup>1</sup>  
**to be quittance** = ie. "so that we can pay them back". = getting the better of.<sup>9</sup> = advantage, profit.<sup>1</sup>  
 = ie. quick-witted.<sup>2</sup>

21: **quid quo pro** = an exchange (of tricks), tit for tat.  
 21-22: **a tooth for a beard** = just as Petulus had cheated Motto out of a beard, so Dello will arrange for the barber – who also works as a dentist – to treat Petulus for his toothache, a service which the latter may expect to be painful.

26-28: Petulus asks Licio to continue his detailed description (begun in Act I.ii) of Celia, in the hopes it will distract him from his toothache.  
**paps** = breasts.

31-32: **for thou...nothing else** = ie. because of his toothache, Petulus can eat nothing but **pap**, which refers to soft food intended for babies and the infirm.<sup>1</sup>  
 = brass.  
 = ie. turn it into ready money, e.g., by selling it.<sup>14</sup>

38: Petulus has received a loan from the pawnbroker, with the golden beard acting as security; Licio is inquiring as to the interest rate Petulus is paying to keep from defaulting on the loan, and thus losing the beard.

40: since there were 240 pence in a pound, the usurious interest rate comes to 5% monthly. A 1571 English statute limited the interest rate on a loan to 10%.<sup>15</sup>  
 = the joke here is a cryptic one, depending on the audience's familiarity with the legal terms **pawnage** (also spelled **pannage**) and **herbage**, both of which referred to the right given a farmer to pasture his cattle or hogs in another man's forest, or the money paid for the same: see the entry under **Pannage** in John Cowell's 1607 law dictionary, *The Interpreter*.

46-48: Licio has set up Petulus for one of the most painful puns in all of Elizabethan literature.  
 = the sense is, a flag or standard (Bond, p. 527).<sup>9</sup>

<p>50</p> <p>52</p> <p>54</p> <p>56</p> <p>58</p> <p>60</p> <p>62</p> <p>64</p> <p>66</p> <p>68</p> <p>70</p> <p>72</p> <p>74</p> <p>76</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Enter Motto with Dello.</i></p> <p><b>Motto.</b> Dello, thou knowest Midas touched his beard, and twas gold.</p> <p><b>Dello.</b> Well.</p> <p><b>Motto.</b> That the pages <u>cozened</u> me of it.</p> <p><b>Dello.</b> No lie.</p> <p><b>Motto.</b> That I must be revenged.</p> <p><b>Dello.</b> In good time.</p> <p><b>Motto.</b> Thou knowest I have taught thee the knacking of the hands, the <u>tickling</u> on a man's hairs, like the <u>tuning of a cittern</u>.</p> <p><b>Dello.</b> True.</p> <p><b>Motto.</b> Besides, I instructed thee in the phrases of our eloquent occupation, as "How, sir, will you be trimmed? will you have your beard <u>like a spade</u>, or a <u>bodkin</u>? a <u>penthouse on your upper lip</u>, or an ally on your chin? a <u>low curl on your head like a bull</u>, or <u>dangling lock</u> like a spaniel? Your mustachoes sharp at</p>	<p><b>Entering Characters:</b> from line 52 through line 94 below, the barber <b>Motto</b> and his servant <b>Dello</b> speak out of the hearing of Petulus and Licio.</p> <p>= tricked.</p> <p>65-67: Motto reminds Dello of all the tricks of the trade he has taught him. 65-66: <b>knacking of the hands</b> = the snapping of the fingers, which, along with the snapping of the scissors, appears to have been a showy affectation adopted by fashionable barbers (Bond, p. 527).<sup>9</sup> <b>tickling</b> = stroking lightly.<sup>1</sup> <b>tuning of a cittern</b> = Fairholt cites a source which asserts that a <b>cittern</b> (an early guitar) was often made available in barbers' shops for the amusement of waiting patrons.</p> <p><b>71-80 (below):</b> Fairholt notes that this entire speech has been "frequently quoted as a curious detailed account of fashions in male hair-dressing" (p. 265).<sup>16</sup> Unless otherwise footnoted, all descriptions of the fashionable hair-styles in lines 73-80 are from Fairholt.</p> <p>= a <b>spade-beard</b> was grown long and cut straight across the bottom.</p> <p>74: <b>bodkin</b> = a <b>bodkin-beard</b> was sharp and pointed, a <b>bodkin</b> being a name for a dagger. The style was the one favored later by Charles I. <b>penthouse on your upper lip</b> = a bushy mustache overhanging the mouth. 74-75: <b>ally on your chin</b> = in this style, also known as a <b>forked-beard</b>, the beard would be parted about half-way down. = Fairholt describes <b>bull's curls</b> as curls which "were arranged above each other in close contiguity, rising above each other in a thick bush." 76: <b>dangling lock</b> = locks which "were curled and allowed to flow over the shoulders." 76-77: <b>mustachoes sharp...awls</b> = mustaches which were tapered and pointed at the ends, and "stiffened with gum."</p>
---	--	---

78 the ends like shoemaker's awls, or hanging down to  
your mouth like goat's flakes? your love-locks

80 wreathed with a silken twist, or shaggy to fall on your  
shoulders?

82 **Dello.** I confess you have taught me Tullie de oratore,

84 the very art of trimming.

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

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

94 **Motto.** Indeed, thou shouldst be no blab, because a  
barber, therefore be secret. – [*Louder.*] Was it not a  
good cure, Dello, to ease the toothache and never  
96 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

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

78: *goat's flakes* = parallel but unwoven threads or hairs.<sup>1</sup>  
*love-locks* = single locks of hair, allowed to grow  
long and usually tied with a ribbon and a silken bow at  
the end.

= "the oratory of Cicero", ie. the language of the barbering  
profession.

*De Oratore* was a dialogue written by the famous Roman  
lawyer and public speaker Cicero on the art of oratory.  
Cicero was referred to often in English as **Tully**, alluding to  
his middle name *Tullius*.<sup>17</sup>

= **trimming** could also refer to cheating or tricking another  
person out of his money.<sup>1</sup>

89-91: a sly joke of Lyly's: barbers were notorious gossip-  
ers.<sup>16</sup>  
= gossip.<sup>1</sup>

= swollen so as to cause an inability to speak;<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare  
borrowed this expression directly from Lyly for *Richard II*,  
when he wrote of "*unseen grief, that swells in silence in the  
tortured soul.*"

94-96: **Was it not...tooth** = Motto implements his plan of  
revenge: Dello had overheard that Petulus' teeth hurt, so  
Motto loudly brags of his ability to cure toothaches, knowing  
that Petulus and Licio will overhear him. We may note here  
that English barbers at this time were permitted by statute to  
pull teeth and draw blood, the two professions – medical and  
tonsorial – not being severed until 1745.<sup>16</sup>

= guarantee.

= generally any of the secretions from the eyes, nose or  
mouth<sup>1</sup>, but here likely referring specifically to the patient's  
tears of pain.

104: **Deus bone** = good God.

**that word** = Licio pretends to be stunned that a low  
fellow like the barber would use such a courtly term as  
**rheum**.

104-5: **come into the barber's basin** = ie. enter the lingo  
of the barbering profession.

= until 1745, barbers could, if qualified, act as surgeons.<sup>16</sup>

116	<b>Motto.</b> It may be that it is only the <u>breeding of a beard</u> ,		= the beginning of a beard's growth: Petulus, a young lad, is
	and being the first beard, <u>you shall have a hard travel</u> .		still awaiting the sprouting of his first facial hairs.
118	<b>Pet.</b> Old fool, doest thou think hairs will breed in my		= ie. it will be an arduous project.
120	teeth?		
122	<b>Motto.</b> As likely, sir, for anything I know, as on your		
124	chin.		
126	<b>Pet.</b> O teeth! O torments! – O torments! O teeth!		125: an example of the figure of speech known as <i>antimetabole</i> ,
128	<b>Motto.</b> [ <i>Aside to his boy</i> ] May I but touch them, Dello,		in which phrases are repeated in reverse order. <sup>1</sup>
130	I'll teach his tongue to tell a tale, what villainy it is to		
132	cozen one of a beard; but <u>stand not thou nigh</u> , for it is		= "don't stand too close".
134	<u>odds</u> when he spits, but that all his teeth fly in thy face.		= probable that.
136	<b>Licio.</b> Good Motto, give some ease, for at thy coming		
138	in, I overheard of a cure thou hadst done.		
140	<b>Pet.</b> My teeth! I will not have this pain, that's certain!		
142	<b>Motto.</b> Ay, so did you <u>overhear me</u> , when you cozened		= "got the advantage of", <sup>16</sup> the second time in the scene a
144	me of a beard: but <u>I forget all</u> .		pun is employed on the dual meanings of <i>overhear</i> .
146	<b>Dello.</b> My master is mild and merciful: and merciful,		= "I have already forgotten it", ie. "I forgive you".
148	because a barber, for when he hath the throat at		
150	command, you know he taketh revenge but on a <u>silly</u>		141-3: <i>when he...hair</i> = perhaps every man has wondered
152	hair.		about the wisdom of trusting another man to scrape a razor
154	<b>Motto.</b> How now, Petulus, do they still ache?		across his throat.
156	<b>Pet.</b> Ay, Motto.		<i>silly</i> = weak or vulnerable. <sup>2</sup>
158	<b>Motto.</b> Let me rub your gums with this leaf.		
160	<b>Pet.</b> Do, Motto, and for thy labour I will <u>requite</u> thee.		149: 16th and 17th century treatises on health referred to a
162	[ <i>Under pretense of easing, Motto hurts him.</i> ]		multitude of ailments which could be successfully treated by
164	<u>Out</u> , rascal! what hast thou done? all my <u>nether</u> teeth		rubbing the gums with various substances, including the
	are loose, and wag like the keys of <u>a pair of virginals</u> .		leaves of various plants.
	<b>Dello.</b> O, sir, if you will, I will sing to them, your		= reward.
	mouth being the instrument.		
	<b>Pet.</b> Do, Dello.		= "damn you", a common exclamation. <sup>1</sup> = lower.
	[ <i>Dello reaches into Petulus' mouth.</i> ]		= <i>virginals</i> were small primitive harpsichords, probably
	<b>Dello.</b> Out, villain! thou bitest. I cannot tune these		referred to as <i>a pair</i> because of the instrument's double row
			of keys known as <i>jacks</i> (see the note at line 166 below). <sup>9</sup>
			163: stage direction added by editor.

166	virginal keys.	
168	<b>Pet.</b> <u>They were the jacks above</u> , the keys beneath were <u>easy</u> .	= Petulus' upper teeth are his <i>jacks</i> , the short pieces of wood which strike the strings of a virginal. = Lancashire suggests "yielding".
170	<b>Dello.</b> <u>A bots on</u> your jacks and jaws too!	= common exclamation of impatience. <sup>1</sup>
172	<b>Licio.</b> They were virginals of your master's making.	
174	<b>Pet.</b> O my teeth! good Motto, what will ease my pain?	
176	<b>Motto.</b> Nothing in the world, but to let me lay a golden beard to your chin.	177-8: Motto hints rather explicitly that he can ease Petulus' pain only if he gives back the golden beard.
178	<b>Pet.</b> It is at pawn.	
180	<b>Motto.</b> <u>You are like to</u> fetch it out with your teeth, or go without your teeth.	= the sense is, "you will either", ie. there are only two possible outcomes here.
182	<b>Pet.</b> Motto, <u>withdraw thyself</u> , it may be thou shalt draw my teeth; <u>attend my resolution</u> .	= "stand back". = "wait for my decision".
184		
186		
188	[ <i>Motto and Dello retire.</i> ]	
190	A <u>doubtful dispute</u> , whether I were best to lose my golden beard, or my <u>bone-tooth</u> ? Help me, Licio, to determine.	= dreadful question, ie. conundrum. <sup>2</sup> = ie. teeth: literally referring to the hard substance of which the tooth is comprised. <sup>1</sup>
192		
194	<b>Licio.</b> Your teeth ache, Petulus, your beard doth not.	194: Licio advises Petulus to part with the golden beard; Lyly understands that when your teeth hurt, nothing else matters.
196	<b>Pet.</b> Ay, but, Licio, if I part from my beard, my heart will ache.	
198	<b>Licio.</b> If your tooth be hollow it must be <u>stopped</u> , or pulled out; and stop it the barber will not, without the beard.	= filled. <sup>1</sup>
200		
202	<b>Pet.</b> My heart is hollow too, and nothing can stop it but gold.	
204	<b>Licio.</b> Thou canst not eat meat without teeth.	
206	<b>Pet.</b> Nor buy it without money.	
208	<b>Licio.</b> Thou mayest get more gold; if thou lose these, more teeth thou canst not.	
210	<b>Pet.</b> Ay, but the golden beard will last me ten years in porridge, and then to what use are teeth?	213-4: <i>last me...porridge</i> = ie. provide Petulus with enough wealth to last him a decade, during which time he can survive without teeth by eating porridge.
212		
214	<b>Licio.</b> If thou <u>want</u> teeth, thy tongue will catch cold.	= lack.
216	<b>Pet.</b> 'Tis true, and if I lack money, my whole body may go naked. But Licio, let the barber have his beard, I will have a <u>device</u> (by thy help) to get it again, and a	= trick or stratagem.
218		
220		

222 cozenage beyond that, maugre his beard.

224 **Licio.** That's the best way, both to ease thy pains, and  
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*  
248 *Ache*."

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.*

221: **cozenage** = act of deceit.  
**maugre his beard** = "in spite of everything he can do",  
a common expression, here with obvious *apropos* usage.<sup>9</sup>

= test.

226-8: the English had for centuries used 12 men on a  
jury, even by Lyly's time.<sup>18</sup>

230-1: **Gilded?...****gilt** = the beard was not just overlaid with  
gold (**gilt**), but was of solid gold. **Gilded** and **gilt** are meant  
to pun with **guilty** in line 228.

= bested.<sup>1</sup>

= perplex, confuse.<sup>2</sup>

234: **you** = "and you".  
234-5: **cushions...beards** = contemporary literature  
also referred to the clippings of men's beards being used to  
stuff breeches and tennis balls.

250: like all the songs in the play, this one appears only in  
the quarto of 1632. We may note that although Dello agrees  
to perform, he actually does not sing a single note of the  
tune!

= Bond suggests that Motto cures Petulus' aching teeth as  
the characters sing together. Note how the lyrics are com-  
prised completely of rhyming couplets.

= trouble, vex.<sup>1</sup>

= the root of a certain North African plant, used to treat  
toothaches: chewing a bit of this irritant caused increased  
salivation, which was supposed to ease the patient's  
suffering; often referred to in literature as **pellitory of**  
**Spain**.<sup>9,16</sup>

= a gum or resin discharged by the Mediterranean **mastic**  
tree, formerly thought to have medicinal value, generally,<sup>3</sup>  
and to arrest tooth decay, specifically.<sup>16</sup>

= literally meaning "fool", suggesting that mastic is useless  
or of no value as a palliative for toothaches.<sup>16</sup>

264 *Mastic does many a fool's face catch.*  
*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 knives,*  
*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.

264-5: another reference to the ubiquitous *horns* of the  
cuckolded husband.

269: Motto's treatment has succeeded!

= dance or joyfully leap about.<sup>1</sup>

272: ie. "and praise (*cry up*)<sup>1</sup> barbers", who were identifiable  
by their *checkered aprons*.<sup>16</sup>

= excellent,<sup>2</sup> with obvious pun.

= learned.<sup>1</sup>

= cheat.<sup>2</sup>

**Entering Characters:** the princess *Sophronia* and her  
attendants need to kill time while they wait for Midas to  
return from the River Pactolus, where he is hoping to be  
relieved of his curse.

= meantime.

= can mean "frivolous" or "wanton".

= *heavy* can mean "serious", which would make it the  
opposite of *light* in two punning ways; but it is also used  
here to mean "tired".<sup>2</sup>

10-11: *Penelope* was the husband of *Odysseus*, the king of  
*Ithaca* who was away from home for twenty years, after  
having gone to fight in the Trojan War. Pursued by over one-  
hundred suitors who naturally assumed Odysseus must be  
dead, Penelope kept the young men at bay by promising to  
choose one of them to be her new husband after she finished  
weaving a certain funeral shroud for *Laertes*, the father of  
Odysseus. Every night, however, she famously (and secretly)  
undid the weaving she had completed during the day, thus  
allowing her to postpone the decision she had promised to  
make – a ruse she was able to keep up for three years! (*The  
Odyssey*, Book II).

13-14: Suavia, as we shall shortly see, is going to pervert  
Homer's story to suit her own mischievous mood.  
= "by which she attracted", with pun on *drew*: one could,  
of course, "draw" one's bow.

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

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

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

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

28 **Soph.** To talk with thee is to lose time, not well to  
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

16-17: Sophronia, unclear as to what exactly Suavia is trying to say, assumes she is referring to this story told in Book XXI of the *Odyssey*: Odysseus has returned to Ithaca, but he is in disguise, and is planning a way to eliminate Penelope's suitors. Penelope, meanwhile, has announced a new contest to decide whom she will marry: whichever suitor could string Odysseus' bow (a gift which he had left at home when he went off to fight in the Trojan War) and use it to shoot an arrow through a row of 12 axes (the exact alignment of the axes remains unclear), she would take as a husband. The key, of course, was that she knew that no man other than Odysseus himself was strong enough to accomplish the task.

*shewed* = showed, a common alternate form.

19: **Latin** = "it was a bow of horn which proved his strength."<sup>6</sup> Suavia is being playfully disingenuous in her interpretation of Penelope's story: firstly, she is quoting from Ovid's *Amores*, and not Homer's *Odyssey*; secondly, the poetry she is quoting from is being spoken by a pander to a young girl, explaining to her how to get herself rich men.

In relating this episode from the *Odyssey*, the pander suggests Penelope was really trying to signal her eagerness for a man, as her reference to the bow being *made of horn* – the symbol of cuckoldry – proved (Bond, p. 529).<sup>9</sup>

= by; Suavia puns on *chaste*, taking it as "chased".

= cause, create.

= stand aside or stand idle, ie. not participate in any of the other activities.

= ie. the other girls.

= once upon a time.<sup>1</sup>

= exceedingly perverse or ungovernable.<sup>2</sup>

52-53: **High she was in the instep** = she was proud.<sup>9</sup>

the instep, but short in the heel; straitlaced, but loose-

54 bodied. It came to pass, that a gentleman, as young in  
56 wit as years, and in years a very boy, chanced to  
58 glance his eyes on her, and there were they dazzled on  
her beauty, as larks that are caught in the sun with the  
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  
62 must without her love. She on the other side, as one  
that knew her good, began to look askance, yet felt the

64 passions of love eating into her heart, though she  
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  
72 hear a tale of love, that before were so wild you would  
74 not come to the name; and that Amerula could devise  
how to spend the time with a tale, only that she might  
not talk of love, and now to make love only her tale.

76 *Soph.* Indeed, I was overshoot in judgment, and she in  
78 discretion. – Amerula, another tale or none, this is too  
lovely.

80 *Suav.* Nay, let me hear any woman tell a tale of ten  
82 lines long without it tend to love, and I will be bound  
never to come at the court. And you, Camilla, that  
84 would fain trip on your pettitoes; can you persuade me  
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:

88 dancing is love sauce, therefore I dare be so saucy, as  
if you love to dance, to say you dance for love. But  
90 Celia, she will sing, whose voice, if it should utter her  
thoughts, would make the tune of a heart out of tune.

53: *short in the heel* = ie. loose or wanton.

*straitlaced* = stiff in bearing or demeanor.<sup>9</sup>

53-54: *loose-bodied* = wanton, lascivious.<sup>1</sup>

54-55: *as young in wit as years* = as immature or lacking in  
cleverness as he was youthful.

57-58: *larks...glass* = a reference to a passage from the  
collection of romance stories, *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His  
Pleasure*, written by the Englishman George Pettie (1548-  
1589) and published in 1576. Pettie suggests that a section of  
wood, inlaid with pieces of glass that glitter in the sun when  
the wood is spun, will capture the attention of larks, who in  
their mesmerized state can easily be shot.

As a side note, Lyly's adoption of euphuism is believed to  
be directly inspired by Pettie's use of the same style in  
*Pallace*.<sup>19</sup>

= unsurprisingly, *canary birds* are native to the *Canary  
Islands*.<sup>3</sup>

= limit.

62: *knew her good* = ie. knew herself to be good or properly  
behaved.<sup>9</sup>

*look askance* = eye (him) surreptitiously.<sup>1</sup>

= notice that the princess, as is appropriate, addresses her  
attendants with *thee*; the maidens in turn, implicitly acknow-  
ledge their inferior status by addressing Sophronia with the  
respectful and more formal *you*.

= ie. "dare not speak the word *love* itself."

= ie. the core subject of.

= missed the mark, a metaphor borrowed from archery.

= amorous in subject, ie. love-centric.

= tending towards.

= to.

= gladly.<sup>1</sup> = toes.<sup>1</sup>

= "or persuade me that".

= manage or control.<sup>1</sup>

86: ie. her affections are unrestrained (*unstead*),<sup>1</sup> and her  
feet *unsteady*.

She that hath crotchets in her head, hath also love

92 conceits. I dare swear she harpeth not only on plain  
song: – and before you, Sophronia, none of them all

94 use plain dealing; but because they see you so curious,  
they frame themselves counterfeit. For myself, as I

96 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  
100 so carry a holy face, and a hollow heart.

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

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

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

110 *Suav.* Amerula, if you were not bitter, your name had  
112 been ill-bestowed: but I think it as lawful in the court  
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  
132 Midas?

134 *Mar.* Madame, he no sooner bathed his limbs in the  
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

91: *crotchets* = musical notes.<sup>1</sup>

91-92: *love conceits* = notions or fancies of love.

92-93: *plain song* = unaccompanied melody, ie. without  
harmony.<sup>9</sup> But the sense may refer to the *plain song* sung by  
monks, which lacked any rhythm precisely to prevent any  
non-religious, ie. less pure, thoughts from entering one's  
mind.

94: *use plain dealing* = speak truthfully.

94-95: *because...counterfeit* = because Sophronia  
appears to be too squeamish (*curious*) to talk about love, the  
other girls pretend to feel the same way.

= works of charity, or work taken up on behalf of a church.<sup>1</sup>

= be pious in thought, but have a heart empty of passion.

= humour.

= foolishness.<sup>1</sup>

= the name *Amerula* suggests *amor*, or love.

= ie. a poorly chosen one to give her.

= to be thought of as wanton, but actually be chaste.

= full of malice.

= ie. can reply at all. = ie. Suavia's.

= "the more they are like".

= ie. Amerula.

136: *dismayed...alteration* = though Midas, we may think,  
should be pleased, rather than *dismayed*, at being able to eat  
now, we will see that he admits to having been depressed at

138 of the stone. Then went we with him to the temple of  
140 Bacchus, where we offered a lance wreathed about  
with ivy, garlands of ripe grapes, and skins of wolves  
and panthers, and a great standing cup of the water

142 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  
150 thy fortune. – But what is become of our king?

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

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

166 [Exeunt.]

END OF ACT IV.

the loss of his golden touch.

136-7: *assayed...stone* = Midas touched a stone to test whether the curse had truly been broken.

= spear-like military weapon.

141: *panthers* = in some ancient works of art, Bacchus is pictured riding a panther.<sup>4</sup>

*standing cup* = cup with a base.

147-8: *these news* = it has been acceptable to treat *news* as either a singular or plural word for most of the modern English era.

148-9: *and happy Midas...fortune* = Sophronia briefly apostrophizes to her absent father.

= decided. = ie. take.

= "rode ahead of us."

= nearest or shortest.<sup>1</sup>

= who.

160-1: *make no difference* = do not differentiate.

= peasant.

**End of Act III:** with the story of Midas' golden touch concluded, the play moves on to depict Ovid's second story of the Phrygian king.

## 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?

4 Orpheus, that caused trees to move with the sweetness  
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.

8 Only Pan with his harsh whistle (which makes beasts  
shake for fear, not men dance for joy) seeks to

**The Scene:** *Mt. Tmolus* is a mountain range in what was the nation of Lydia, located immediately to the west of Midas' Phrygia.<sup>11</sup> A *glade* is an open, treeless area in the woods.<sup>1</sup>

**Entering Characters:** *Apollo* is one of the Olympian gods, and the god of music. Half-goat and half-man, *Pan*, the cheerful god of herds and shepherds, spends his time playing his pan-pipes, watching his sheep, and engaging in erotic games with nymphs. He was a favourite of Apollo, who often took Pan with him in his travels.<sup>7</sup>

*Nymphs* are semi-divine maidens who lived in the great outdoors, be it in the woods, in streams, or wherever. *Erato* and *Thalia* are two such nymphs: Erato was a priestess of Pan's at his oracle in Megalopolis in Arcadia,<sup>4,14</sup> while Thalia was said to reside on Mt. Etna in Italy.<sup>25</sup>

**Iff (below):** the scene begins in mid-conversation: Pan has challenged Apollo to a contest of musical skill. The story is told by Ovid in Book XI of the *Metamorphoses*.

1-2: *who tunes...harmony* = allusion to the Ptolemaic conception of the universe, in which each planet revolves around the earth in its own sphere; the spheres were further believed to emit harmonious music. Elizabethan authors referred repeatedly to these musical spheres.

3-4: *Orpheus...harp* = the son of a Muse, *Orpheus* was given the gift of a lyre (an early *harp*) by *Apollo*, and was taught by the god to play the instrument. Orpheus' skill in playing was so great that he not only was able to tame wild beasts, but he even once charmed the trees of Mt. Olympus to follow him as he played.<sup>4</sup>

5: *Arion...notes* = a Greek bard and skilled musician, *Arion* once traveled to Sicily, where he won a musical contest and was given many great prizes. On his way home to Corinth, the sailors of the boat on which he was traveling planned to murder him in order to steal his valuable treasures.

In a dream, *Apollo* warned Arion of his predicament, and, having been given permission to play his cithara (a plucked instrument, similar to a lyre<sup>1</sup>) one last time before his death, Arion stood on the prow of the ship and began to play. He then threw himself into the sea, where he was picked up by some music-loving *dolphins*, who carried him home.<sup>4</sup>

6: according to myth, the walls of *Thebes* had been first built by twin brothers *Amphion*, a musician, and *Zethus*; supposedly Zethus carried the stones to the building site, while Amphion caused the stones to construct themselves into a wall by playing on his lyre.<sup>4</sup>

= Apollo is contemptuous!

compare with Apollo.

**Pan.** Pan is a god, Apollo is no more. Comparisons cannot be odious, where the deities are equal. This pipe (my sweet pipe) was once a nymph, a fair nymph, once my lovely mistress, now my heavenly music. Tell

me, Apollo, is there any instrument so sweet to play on as one's mistress? Had thy lute been of laurel, and the strings of Daphne's hair, thy tunes might have been compared to my notes: for then Daphne would have added to thy stroke sweetness, and to thy thoughts melody.

**Apol.** Doth Pan talk of the passions of love? of the passions of divine love? O, how that word "Daphne" wounds Apollo, pronounced by the barbarous mouth of Pan. I fear his breath will blast the fair green, if I dazzle not his eyes, that he may not behold it. Thy pipe a nymph? Some hag rather, haunting these shady groves, and desiring not thy love, but the fellowship of such a monster. What god is Pan but the god of beasts, of woods, and hills? excluded from heaven, and in

earth not honoured. Break thy pipe, or with my sweet lute will I break thy heart. Let not love enter into those savage lips, a word for Jove, for Apollo, for the heavenly gods, whose thoughts are gods, and gods are all love.

**Pan.** Apollo, I told thee before that Pan was a god, I tell thee now again, as great a god as Apollo, I had almost said a greater: and because thou shalt know I care not to tell my thoughts, I say a greater. Pan feels

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

describe love. Not Apollo, not Neptune, not Jove! My temple is in Arcadie, where they burn continual flames to Pan. In Arcadie is mine oracle, where Erato the

nymph giveth answers for Pan. In Arcadie, the place of 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

= ie. compare himself.

12-14: **This pipe...music** = Pan was in love with the woodland nymph **Syrinx**, who, wishing to preserve her virginity, rejected the god's amorous advances, and fled back to her fellow nymphs. She having asked them for their assistance, they changed her into reeds, whose hushed murmuring so charmed Pan that he collected and bound a bunch of them, creating the instrument for which he was known. Ovid tells the tale in Book I of the *Metamorphoses* (Humphries, p. 24-25).<sup>12</sup>

16-20: **Had thy...melody** = Pan suggests that if Apollo had employed an instrument made from the **laurel** tree which had once been **Daphne** (the maiden who had rejected the sun god), he would be able to play his lute as sweetly as Pan does his reeds; the full story of Apollo and Daphne was described earlier in the note at Act II.ii.23-24.

= ie. cause to wither.<sup>1</sup>

= dim.<sup>1</sup>

= Pan lived on Earth rather than with the Olympian gods, who lived on Mt. Olympus. While Pan suggests that all gods, by the very fact of their deity, are equal, Apollo naturally insists that some gods are better than others.

= king of the gods, and father of Apollo.

= ie. "don't care whether I offend you by telling you what I think".

= god of the sea, and brother to Jove.

44-46: **My temple...Pan** = Pan contradicts Apollo's assertion that he, Pan, is not honoured on earth (see lines 30-31 above). In fact, there were a number of temples and sanctuaries dedicated to Pan in the ancient world, including one at **Arcadia** (**Arcadie**) in the Peloppones.<sup>4</sup> Arcadia was in fact Pan's place of birth.

= perhaps defensively, Pan appears to compare the hills he is god of to Mt. Olympus, the home of Jupiter and

50 into the juggling of the highest gods. – Of woods! so  
 52 I am, Apollo! of woods so thick, that thou with thy  
 beams canst not pierce them. I knew Apollo's prying, I  
 54 knew mine own jealousy. Sun and shadow cozen one  
 another. Be thou sun still, the shadow is fast at thy  
 56 heels, Apollo. I as near to thy love, as thou to mine. A  
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 *Apol.* These nymphs shall decide, unless thy rude  
 74 speech have made them deaf: as for any other answer

the other Olympian gods.  
 = trickery, deceptions.  
 51-52: *thy beams* = Pan alludes to Apollo in his role as the  
 sun god.  
 = suspicion. = cheat.  
 = always.  
 55-58: *A carter...horses* = a commonplace cart-driver  
 (*carter*) can affect the emotions of a woman (*moves*) as  
 much as can Apollo (frequently called *Phoebus*) while he  
 (Apollo) pulls the sun across the sky while riding in his *fiery*  
*chariot*.  
*with his whistle...ear* = whistling in tune<sup>1</sup> and plying his  
 whip with accuracy.  
 58-59: *Love-leaves...nectar* = ie. "love is as appropriate for  
 simple country people as for the gods" (Daniel, p. 375).<sup>5</sup>  
 Lancashire asserts that *love-leaves* refers to certain types of  
 leaves which cause those who consume them to fall in love  
 (p. 84).<sup>14</sup>  
*nectar* (line 59) = food of the gods.  
 59-61: *Love made...mistress* = Pan continues to goad  
 Apollo by deliberately misrepresenting famous myths of the  
 Olympian gods:  
 (1) *Jupiter* took the form of a swan, not a *goose*, in order  
 to seduce *Leda*, resulting in the birth of *Helen*, later Helen  
 of Troy; however, *goose* was commonly used to mean  
 "fool", so Pan's insulting intent is obvious; and  
 (2) *Neptune*, like Jupiter, took on many forms to take  
 advantage of various maidens – a ram, a horse, even a  
 dolphin – but never a *swine*.<sup>9</sup> Again, Pan's choice of  
 substitute is telling.  
 62-63: *turn themselves* = change their forms.  
 = ie. are pleasanter than.  
 66: *to* = ie. sung to.  
 66-68: *Here is...amassem* = Pan mocks Apollo for his  
 fancy language: Pan speaks in plain and direct declarations  
 (*flat faith*), whereas (*where*) Apollo, with his metaphorical  
 and verbose language, is round-about and deceitful (Daniel,  
 p. 375).<sup>5</sup>  
 67: *amo amas* = "I love, you love".<sup>6</sup>  
 67-68: *o utinam...amassem* = "oh, if only they were in  
 love, or that I had not been in love."<sup>6</sup>  
 = will overlook. = harsh, insulting.<sup>1</sup>  
 = ie. all living things.  
 = as a root word, *pan* means all.

76	to Pan, take this, that it <u>becommeth not</u> Apollo to	= is not fitting for.
77	answer Pan. Pan is all, and all is Pan; thou art Pan and	
78	all, all Pan and <u>tinkerly</u> . But to this music, wherein all	= literally "like a tinker", meaning "disreputable" or "clumsy". <sup>1</sup>
79	thy shame shall be seen, and all my skill.	
80	<i>Enter Midas.</i>	
82	<b>Midas.</b> In the chase, I lost all my company, and missed	82ff: Bond suggests Midas is depressed at the loss of his
83	the game too. I think Midas shall in all things be	golden touch.
84	unfortunate.	
86	<b>Apol.</b> <u>What</u> is he that talketh?	= who.
88	<b>Midas.</b> Midas, the unfortunate king of Phrygia.	
90	<b>Apol.</b> To be a king is next to being a god. Thy fortune	
91	is not bad: what is thy folly?	
92	<b>Midas.</b> To <u>abuse</u> a god.	= ie. fail to treat with appropriate or due honour.
94	<b>Apol.</b> An ungrateful <u>part of a king</u> . But, Midas, seeing	= element of a king's character. <sup>1</sup>
96	by chance thou art come, or sent by some god of	96-97: <b>of purpose</b> = on purpose, ie. for a reason.
97	purpose, none can in the earth better judge of gods	
98	than kings. Sit down with these nymphs. I am Apollo,	
99	this Pan, both gods. We contend for sovereignty in	
100	music. Seeing it happens in earth, we must be judged	
101	<u>of</u> those on earth, in which there are none more worthy	= by.
102	than kings and nymphs. Therefore, give <u>ear</u> , that thy	102-3: <b>ear...err</b> = more wordplay: the two words <b>ear</b> and
103	judgment <u>err</u> not.	<b>err</b> sounded more alike in the 16th century than they
104		today.
106	<b>Midas.</b> If gods you be, although I dare wish nothing	105-6: Midas wisely acknowledges how poorly his last
107	of gods, being so deeply wounded with wishing; yet	wish from a god turned out.
108	let my judgment prevail <u>before these</u> nymphs, if we	= over that of.
109	agree not, because I am a king.	
110	<b>Pan.</b> There must be no condition, but judge Midas,	
111	and judge nymphs.	
112	<b>Apol.</b> Then thus I begin both my song and my <u>play</u> .	= ie. playing his instrument.
114	[A Song of Daphne to the Lute:]	115: Apollo sings as he plays his lute.
116		
118	<b>Apol.</b> <i>My Daphne's hair is twisted gold,</i>	
119	<i>Bright stars a-piece her eyes do hold,</i>	
120	<i>My Daphne's brow enthrones the graces,</i>	
121	<i>My Daphne's beauty stains all faces,</i>	
122	<i>On Daphne's cheek grow rose and cherry,</i>	
123	<i>On Daphne's lip a sweeter berry,</i>	
		<b>The Songs of Apollo (lines 117-128) and Pan (lines 146-161):</b> the songs of both gods are comprised of rhyming couplets in <i>iambic tetrameter</i> : that is, there are four <i>iamb</i> s per line, each iamb being a 2-syllable foot or unit, comprised of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one.
		119-122: note that the 3rd through 6th lines of the song each have an extra unstressed syllable tagged on at the end (the so-called <i>feminine ending</i> ).

	<i>Daphne's snowy hand but touched does melt,</i>	123: this line has an extra stressed syllable attached at its beginning.
124	<i>And then no <u>heavenlier</u> warmth is felt,</i>	= poetically, a 2-syllable word: <i>HEA'N-lier</i> . In verse, <i>Heaven</i> is almost always pronounced in one syllable, with the <i>v</i> elided, or essentially omitted; the ending <i>-lier</i> here comprises a single unstressed beat.
	<i>My Daphne's voice tunes all the <u>spheres</u>,</i>	125: a second allusion to the music produced by the <i>spheres</i> of the universe as they rotate about the earth; see the note at lines 1-2 above.
126	<i>My Daphne's music charms all ears. <u>Fond</u> am I thus to sing her praise;</i>	= foolish.
128	<i>These glories now are turned to <u>bays</u>.</i>	128: bay leaves ( <i>bays</i> ) <sup>2</sup> are employed by Lyly as a symbol of lost or unattained love. Daphne, as we noted earlier, was turned into a laurel, or bay, tree, to protect her from Apollo.
130	<b>Erato.</b> O divine Apollo, o sweet <u>consent</u> !	130: <i>consent</i> = harmony (between Apollo's voice and his lute). <sup>16</sup> In the original tale told by Ovid, the judge of the contest was <b>Tmolus</b> , the god of the mountain of the same name on which the contest, and this scene, took place. Tmolus ruled in favour Apollo.
132	<b>Thalia.</b> If the god of music should not be above our reach, who should?	
134	<b>Midas.</b> I like it not.	135: oh no! Midas once again, in expressing his dislike of Apollo's music, is showing terrible judgment.
136	<b>Pan.</b> Now let me tune my pipes. I cannot pipe and	
138	sing, that's the <u>odds</u> in the instrument, not the art: but	= unusual or unhappy circumstance <sup>2</sup> or difference. <sup>1</sup>
140	I will pipe and then sing; and then judge both of the art and instrument.	
142	[ <i>He pipes, and then sings.</i> ]	
144	[ <i>Pan's Song:</i> ]	
146	<b>Pan.</b> <i>Pan's Syrinx was a girl indeed,</i>	146-161: the iambic pentameter of Pan's song is strict, or unvaried.
148	<i>Though now she's turned into a reed,</i>	
150	<i>From that dear reed Pan's pipe does come,</i>	
152	<i>A pipe that strikes Apollo dumb;</i>	= early guitar or lute. <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Nor flute, nor lute, nor <u>cittern</u> can</i>	
	<i>So chant it, as the pipe of Pan;</i>	152: <i>cross-gartered</i> = reference to the wearing of long garters which crossed both above and below the knee, a fashion considered eccentric or boorish in Lyly's day. <sup>9</sup>
	<i><u>Cross-gartered swains</u>, and dairy girls,</i>	<i>swains</i> = rustics or shepherds.
	<i>With faces <u>smug</u>, and round as pearls,</i>	= smooth. <sup>1</sup>
154	<i>When Pan's shrill pipe begins to play,</i>	
	<i>With dancing wear out night and day;</i>	
156	<i>The <u>bag-pipe's drone</u> his hum lays by,</i>	156: <i>bagpipe's drone</i> = a bagpipe has 3 three pipes, or drones. The reference here is to the largest, the bass drone, which emits a single continuous note. <i>his hum lays by</i> = pauses or stops making its ( <i>his</i> ) sound.
	<i>When Pan sounds up his <u>minstrelsy</u>,</i>	= ie. singing and playing his own instrument.

158 *His minstrelsy! O base! This quill*  
 160 *Which at my mouth with wind I fill,*  
 162 *Puts me in mind, though her I miss,*  
 164 *That still my Syrinx lips I kiss.*

166 **Apol.** Hast thou done, Pan?

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

170 **Apol.** Now, Nymphs, what say you?

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

182 **Apol.** But what says Midas?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

= a name for any of the pipes in a pan-pipe.<sup>1</sup>

= ie. showed.

171: **satyr** = the generic name for the half-goat half-human denizens of the woods.

**measure** = could refer to rhythm or pace or time.<sup>1</sup>  
 = ouch! A reference to Pan's goatish lower-half.

169-173: note that although Erato is Pan's oracle in Arcadia, she, perhaps wisely, judges the music of the powerful god Apollo to be superior to that of Pan.

= cannot tolerate. = absurd or foolish plucking or playing.<sup>1</sup>

= high-pitched sound,<sup>1</sup> apparently meant without negative connotation.

= are over-nice or overly delicate.<sup>1</sup>

186-8: **they have...pipe** = Pan is suggesting the nymphs were raised shielded from ever hearing authentic music, as is heard on earth.

**chambers** = rooms.

= ie. -as, meaning ass.

196-7: here, Midas reaches up to feel his head, only to find his own ears have been replaced with those of an ass.

= stupidity.

= an interesting limitation on the gods' powers is that they will not, or cannot, undo the actions performed by other gods.

= in addition to having a body that was half-goat, Pan also wore the horns of a goat.

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  
 222 mouse; for else there's none so sharp of hearing as the  
 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  
 232 metamorphosed, that there might have been no part  
 left of Midas? Where shall I shroud this shame? or  
 234 how may I be restored to mine old shape? Apollo is  
 angry: blame not Apollo, whom being god of music  
 236 thou didst both dislike and dishonour; preferring the  
 barbarous noise of Pan's pipe, before the sweet melody  
 238 of Apollo's lute. If I return to Phrygia, I shall be  
 pointed at; if I live in these woods, savage beasts must  
 be my companions: and what other companions should  
 240 Midas hope for than beasts, being of all beasts himself  
 the dullest? Had it not been better for thee to have  
 242 perished by a golden death, than now to lead a beastly  
 life? Unfortunate in thy wish, unwise in thy judgment;  
 244 first a golden fool, now a leaden ass. What will they  
 say in Lesbos (if haply these news come to Lesbos)?  
 246 – *If they come, Midas? yes, report flies as swift as*  
 thoughts, gathering wings in the air, and doubling  
 248 rumours by her own running, insomuch as having here  
 the ears of an ass, it will there be told, all my hairs are  
 250 ass's ears. Then will this be the byword; is Midas, that  
 sought to be monarch of the world, become the mock  
 252 of the world? are his golden mines turned into water,  
 as free for every one that will fetch, as for himself, that  
 254 possessed them by wish? Ah, poor Midas! are his  
conceits become blockish, his counsels unfortunate,  
 256 his judgments unskillful? Ah, foolish Midas! a just

215: stage direction added by editor.

217-8: the 2nd Nymph, recalling Pan's comment about how the nymphs' "ears do but itch with daintiness" (line 185 above), is sarcastic.

*dainty* = over-nice or sensitive.

220-1: **He hath...mouse** = Midas' ears hear better than do those of any other animal, excepting the mouse, whose hearing was believed to be, as contemporary literature suggested, exceptionally keen.

204-228: ultimately, the gods and other deities do not really have any reason to care about the fate of mortals.

= a nice allusion to Ovid's collection of myths.  
 = hide.

= displease.

= stupidest; the *dullness* of the ass was proverbial.  
 = Midas alludes to the starvation caused by his golden touch.

= *lead* is contrasted with *gold*, the two metals having diametrically opposite values.

= by chance.

= ie. news.

250: **Then will...byword** = ie. Midas' ears will cause him to be an object of scorn or ridicule.

*that* = who.

252-4: **are his...by wish** = Midas worries that his enemies will lose their awe of him, and will feel free to remove some of his gold (Phrygia's wealth) without fear of retribution, as if *gold* were no more valuable than *water*.

= ideas. = doltish. = advice is unlucky.<sup>1</sup>

258 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 semper, nec sis miserabilis*

260 *ulli.* – But I must seek to cover my shame by art, lest  
being once discovered to these petty kings of Mysia,

262 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  
264 the beasts the fearfulest: and so cast lots for those  
kingdoms, that I have won with so many lives, and  
266 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

12 *Dria.* 'Tis true; yet since Midas grew so mischievous  
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

= grow. = arrogance or high expectations of himself.<sup>1</sup>

258-9: **Latin** = "May you always be unhappy, and pitied by  
no one."<sup>6</sup> From Ovid's curse poem, *Ibis*.<sup>9</sup>

= ie. skillfully cover his ears.

261: **discovered** = revealed, literally "uncovered".

**Mysia** = region in north-west Asia Minor, perhaps  
bordering Phrygia.

= **Pisidia** and **Galatia** bordered Phrygia to the south and  
north-east respectively.

= so much ill will.<sup>1</sup>

**The Scene:** Bond supposes this location, probably a marshy  
area, is somewhere between the Palace and the woods.<sup>9</sup>

**Entering Characters:** interestingly, **Amyntas** is the only  
shepherd mentioned by name in the scene. One may wonder  
why Lyly even bothered to give the shepherds names: it  
would become common in such situations to simply call  
them *Shepherd No. 1, No. 2*, etc.

= a variation on the proverbial concern for *the long arm of  
the law*: not only will anything said in the kingdom even-  
tually get back to Midas, but his ability to strike back at  
anyone extends even further.

= ie. "we would be wiser to stick to counting (*tell* = count)  
sheep."

**11-22 (below):** Driapon agrees that discretion is required  
here, but then goes on at length to criticize the king  
anyway.

= injurious in action.<sup>1</sup>

= blemish or stain his crown. = sparkle.<sup>1</sup>

= mercy. = despicable or miserly.<sup>1</sup>

14: **framed** = made or created.

14-15: **many broad...abroad** = much loose talk has  
spread; note the wordplay between **broad** and **abroad**.

= hesitate.

18	usurper. They <u>flatly</u> say, that he eateth into other dominions, as the sea doth into the land, not knowing, that in swallowing a poor island as big as Lesbos, he	17-22: <b>They flatly...the sand</b> = a clever metaphor for describing how Midas, through his ambition, may end up losing more than he gains. <b>flatly</b> (line 17) = openly, unambiguously. <sup>1</sup>
20	may <u>cast up</u> three territories thrice as big as Phrygia: for what the sea winneth in the marsh, it loseth in the	= vomit; a metaphor with <b>eateth</b> (line 17) and <b>swallowing</b> (line 19).
22	sand.	
24	<b>Amy.</b> <u>Take me with you</u> , but speak softly, for these reeds may have ears, and hear us.	= "let me understand you".
26		
28	<b>Menal.</b> Suppose they have, yet they may be without tongues to <u>bewray us</u> .	= "give us away".
30	<b>Cor.</b> 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 <u>from whence it comes</u> .	= ie. who uttered the slanderous language.
34	<b>Amy.</b> Well, then this I say, when a lion doth so much degenerate from <u>princely kind</u> , that he will borrow of	35: <b>princely kind</b> = ie. its kingly nature. The <b>lion</b> is of course standing in for Midas. 35-36: <b>borrow of the beasts</b> = ie. assume parts or characteristics from other animals.
36	the beasts, I say he is no lion, but a monster; <u>pieced</u>	= assembled.
38	with the craftiness of the fox, the cruelty of the tiger, the ravening of the wolf, the <u>dissembling of the hyena</u> , he is worthy also to have the ears of an ass.	= Pliny wrote that the <b>hyena</b> is capable of imitating a human voice, in order, for example, to lure a sheep out of its pen so it may devour it (8.44).
40		
42	<b>Menal.</b> He seeks to conquer Lesbos, and like a foolish <u>gamester</u> , having a <u>bagfull</u> of his own, <u>ventures</u> it all to win a <u>groat</u> of another.	41-43: Midas is like a foolish gambler ( <b>gamester</b> ), who out of greed bets all of his wealth on the chance to win a little bit more. <b>bagfull</b> = ie. of money. <b>ventures</b> = risks. <b>groat</b> = an English coin of the lowest value.
44		
46	<b>Cor.</b> He that fishes for Lesbos must have such a <u>wooden net</u> , as all the trees in Phrygia will not serve to make the <u>cod</u> , nor all the woods in Pisidia provide the	45-48: a fishing metaphor: "anyone foolish enough to try to attack Lesbos must have such a large navy that nature cannot provide enough materials to build one." The <b>wooden net</b> is a metaphor for a navy. A stone was often placed in the bottom of a net (its <b>cod</b> ) to keep it deep in the water, while <b>corks</b> would be attached to the net's sides to keep them afloat. <sup>9</sup>
48	<u>corks</u> .	
50	<b>Dria.</b> Nay, he means to <u>angle</u> for it with an hook of gold and a bait of gold, and so to <u>strike</u> the fish with a	= fish. = hook. <sup>1</sup>
52	pleasing bait, that will slide out of an open net.	
54	<b>Amy.</b> Tush! tush! those islanders are too <u>subtle</u> to	54-55: <b>those islanders...treasure</b> = the citizens of Lesbos

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  
58 sea, and bring up an anchor of a thousand weight, as  
60 plod with his gold to corrupt a people so wise. And  
besides, a nation (as I have heard) so valiant, that are  
readier to strike than ward.

62 **Celt.** More than all this, Amyntas (though we dare  
64 not so much as mutter it), their king is such a one as  
dazzleth the clearest eyes with majesty, daunteth the  
66 valiantest hearts with courage, and for virtue filleth all  
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  
70 undermine that by the simplicity of man, that is  
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

82 my silly flock with quietness, I will never care three  
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.

are too shrewd (*subtle*) to be fooled by any Machiavellian strategies to conquer them, and are already too wealthy to be vulnerable to bribery.

*craft* = cunning or trickery.

= ie. "it will be as futile for him to".

= ie. attempt to retrieve. = weighing one thousand pounds.<sup>1</sup>

= plot.

= ie. simply stand guard or in a defensive position. Here is another reference to the English decision to attack and defeat the Spanish Armada in 1588.

= ie. the king of Lesbos, ie. Elizabeth I.

= achievement.<sup>1</sup>

68-70: *Midas goeth...the gods* = a difficult passage. The sense is that Midas seeks to overthrow the great king which the gods in their wisdom have set in Lesbos. Midas assumes that ignorant men (*simplicity* = ignorance) will be available to assist him. The *rock* could refer to the king or to the island itself.

72-73: *We poor...taxes* = a familiar complaint over the heavy taxes imposed upon a nation's citizens to pay for its armies. An alert reader may ask why Midas needed to impose taxes at all, when, thanks to his golden touch, the government had all the wealth it could ever need to prosecute its wars.

*relish* = taste.<sup>1</sup>

= metaphorically, pride: a reference to the crest or comb of a cock; but Lancashire suggests Menalcas is referring to the crest of Midas' helmet, a rare use of this meaning for *comb*.

79-80: *that must...changed* = that which cannot be altered must be endured, and it is pointless to assign blame for deleterious circumstances.

= humble.<sup>2</sup>

= a *flock* is a tuft of cotton or like material, referring to something of no value, with obvious pun.<sup>9</sup>

= ruined. = anxious (of being overheard).

= ie. towards the shepherds, as if straining to hear.

= ie. "let us go in". = more fitting (to continue the discussion).

*The same: a reedy place.*

*Enter Licio, Petulus, Minutius, Huntsman.*

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

2  
3  
4 **Pet.** Ay, and troublesome, for if you call a dog a dog,  
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  
know not when a hound is fleet, fair-flewed, and

9  
10 well-hanged; being ignorant of the deepness of a  
hound's mouth, and the sweetness.

11  
12  
13  
14 **Minut.** Why I hope, sir, a cur's mouth is no deeper  
than the sea, nor sweeter than a honeycomb.

15  
16 **Hunts.** Pretty cockscomb! a hound will swallow thee  
as easily as a great pit a small pebble.

17  
18  
19  
20 **Minut.** Indeed, hunting were a pleasant sport, but the  
dogs make such barking, that one cannot hear the  
hounds cry.

21  
22  
23  
24 **Hunts.** I'll make thee cry! If I catch thee in the forest  
thou shalt be leashed.

25  
26 **Minut.** What's that?

27  
28 **Licio.** Doest thou not understand their language?

29  
30 **Minut.** Not I!

31  
32 **Pet.** 'Tis the best calamance in the world, as easily

**Entering Characters:** *Minutius* is a page or servant, but  
of whom is unclear. His name suggests his small size.

= wearisome or irksome activity.

3-4: though unclear as yet, Petulus is pointing out that if  
one wants to be a proper hunter, one has to learn an entirely  
new affected language and lingo, which quickly becomes  
tiresome.

3-4: *if you call...undone* = "if you are unable to identify  
a hunting dog by its breed, then you will demonstrate your  
ignorance of the sport of hunting."<sup>14</sup> We may note that the  
expression "call a dog a dog" also meant "tell it like it is", or  
"speak plainly".

*undone* = ruined.

9: *fleet* = fast.

*fair-flewed* = with large hanging chaps or jowls.<sup>9</sup>

10: *well-hanged* = with large drooping ears.<sup>9</sup>

10-11: *deepness of a hound's mouth* = a reference to  
the deep-toned cry of a hunting dog, which was believed to  
be characteristic of a good dog.<sup>16</sup>

16-17: The Huntsman makes a joke about Minutius' small  
size.

*Pretty cockscomb* = clever (or excellent) fool.

*a* = ie. can swallow a.

= ie. howl in a way which would notify the hunters that it  
has spotted its prey; a hunting term.<sup>1</sup>

= beaten with a leather thong or leash, with obvious pun.<sup>9</sup>  
Hunting in English forests was the prerogative of the royal  
family, and punishments for any trespass were historically  
quite severe, including mutilation or death.<sup>21</sup>

26: "what does that mean?"

= properly, a glossy Flemish woolen material, woven in such  
a way as to appear checkered only on one side;<sup>9</sup> Halliwell<sup>22</sup>  
suggests the term here is used to mean something like  
"bombast", just as the word *fustian* (also a type of cloth) was  
commonly employed in Elizabethan drama to refer to  
similarly inflated language (see, e.g., line 52 below).

deciphered as the characters in a nutmeg.

34  
36  
38  
40  
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72

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

**Pet.** I will.

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

**Licio.** To it, Petulus.

**Pet.** There was a boy leashed on the single, because when he was embossed, he took soil.

**Licio.** What's that?

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

**Hunts.** This is worse than fustian! Mum you were best! Hunting is an honourable pastime, and for my part

I had as lief hunt a deer in a park, as court a lady in a chamber.

**Minut.** Give me a pasty for a park, and let me shake off a whole kennel of teeth for hounds: then shalt thou

see a notable champing! after that will I carouse a bowl of wine, and so in the stomach let the venison take soil.

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

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

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

**Pet.** I'll warrant he hath by this started a covey of

= Bond believes this is a reference to the easily-visible radial veins in a cross-section of a nutmeg seed.<sup>9</sup> Petulus is explaining how easy it is to talk "hunting-ese".

= "please", often written simply as "prithee".

= ie. correctly. = "give you what you deserve", ie. a beating.

43-44: Petulus shows off his knowledge of hunting terms in this speech, which he translates at line 48 below.

**leashed** = beaten.

**single** = the tail of a buck.

**embossed** = used to describe a deer that is foaming at the mouth, due to fatigue from running.

**took soil** = **to take soil** is to go into hiding in a body of muddy water.<sup>22</sup>

48-49: **leathern thong** = a strip of leather used for whipping.<sup>1</sup>

52: **fustian** = low, vulgar language.<sup>22</sup>

52-53: **Mum you were best** = "you had best remain silent."

= "would rather".

57-60: Minutius would rather feast than hunt.

**pasty** (line 57) = English venison-pastry.<sup>1</sup>

**for** = ie. in exchange for, instead of.

57-58: **shake off** = Lancashire suggests "let loose".

= vigorous and noisy chewing.<sup>1</sup> = drink freely.<sup>1</sup>

= go into hiding (in the wine in the stomach); a hunting term (see the note at lines 43-44 above).

= ie. set the stage. = cautious, sensible.

67: **Latin** = "whom has the flowing cups not made eloquent?" (quoting Horace's *Epistles*, Book I.v.19).

69: **Fecere dizardum** = the Huntsman parodies the last two words Petulus spoke in Latin, which mean "they have made him eloquent"; he replaces *disertum* with *dizardum*, which, from *dizzard*, means "fool": "they have made him a fool."

**toys** = trifles.

72: **by this** = ie. by this time.

**started** = flushed out.

bucks, or roused a school of pheasants.

74

**Hunts.** Treasure to two brave sports, hawking and hunting: thou shouldest say, start a hare, rouse the deer, spring the partridge.

76

78

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

80

82

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

84

86

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

88

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

90

92

**Hunts.** A bugle.

94

**Pet.** If it had stood on thy head, I should have called it a horn. Well, 'tis hard to have one's brows embroidered with bugle.

96

98

**Licio.** But canst thou blow it?

100

**Hunts.** What else?

102

**Minut.** But not away.

104

**Pet.** No, 'twill make Boreas out of breath, to blow his horns away.

106

**Licio.** There was good blowing, I'll warrant, before they came there.

108

110

**Pet.** Well, 'tis a shrowd blow.

112

**Hunts.** Spare your winds in this, or I'll wind your

114

necks in a cord: – but soft, I heard my master's blast.

**covey** = ie. a group name properly used for fowl, not deer.

= still hilariously incorrect, Petulus uses a group word, **school**, which of course should be applied to fish, not birds.

= ie. a capital insult. = fine, excellent.

76-77: **thou shouldest...partridge** = the Huntsman tries to correct the boys' hunting lingo.

= guarantee. = thought up.<sup>1</sup>

80: **swad** = bumpkin.<sup>1,9</sup>

80-81: **that seeing...the hare** = having been startled (**started**) by the sudden appearance of a hare, the bumpkin promptly (**presently**) announced it was he who **started** the hare, and a new hunting term was born!

= dolt.<sup>2</sup>

83-85: note how Licio puns on **spring** to explain the origin of another hunting expression.

87: "You'll pay for all this!"<sup>9</sup>

= "we would require".

= ie. around; Petulus points to the instrument hanging from the Huntsman's neck.

95-97: **If it...a horn** = yet another crack about the horns that were said to grow on cuckolds' foreheads.

**brows** = forehead.

**embroidered** = ie. adorned.

101: "what else would I do with it?"

103 "but you cannot blow it away."

= the god of the north wind.<sup>4</sup>

= ie. shrewd, meaning evil or malicious; a common alternate form,<sup>1</sup> pronounced to rhyme with **showed**.

113-4: **I'll wind...a cord** = punning on **wind**, the Huntsman threatens to weave or twist the servants' necks together as if to make a rope (**cord**); but possibly punning also on **cord**, which could refer to a hangman's noose.

= ie. the blow of the hunting horn of whomever the Huntsman is working for.

116 **Minut.** Some have felt it!  
118 **Hunts.** Thy mother, when such a flyblow was buzzed  
120 out! but I must be gone, I perceive Midas is come.

[Exit Huntsman.]

122 **Licio.** Then let not us tarry, for now shall we shave

124 the barber's house. The world will grow full of wiles,  
seeing Midas hath lost his golden wish.

126 **Minut.** I care not, my head shall dig devises, and my  
128 tongue stamp them; so as my mouth shall be a mint,  
and my brains a mine.

130 **Licio.** Then help us to cozen the barber.

132 **Minut.** The barber shall know every hair of my chin to  
134 be as good as a choke-pear for his purse.

136 [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  
term it in another blockishness. I cannot tell whether it  
6 be a sourness commonly incident to age, or a  
severeness particular to the kings of Phrygia, or a  
8 suspicion cleaving to great estates; but methinks he  
seemeth so jealous of us all, and becomes so  
10 overthwart to all others, that either I must conjecture  
his wits are not his own, or his meaning very hard to  
12 some.

= ie. the master's blast, but Minutius means a beating.

118-9: **Thy mother...buzzed out** = Minutius is compared to a maggot (flyblow),<sup>1</sup> the offspring of a fly: according to Daniel, the Huntsman means that Minutius' father must have beaten up his mother over his disappointment at her giving birth to (buzzed out) such a runt of a boy, with obvious pun on buzz.

123-4: **shave the barber's house** = trick (shave) the barber out of his possessions,<sup>1</sup> especially the golden beard, with obvious pun on shave.

124-5: **The world...golden wish** = if Midas can no longer create new gold, people will have to return to finding clever ways to trick each other out of their wealth.  
wiles = guile, deceitful tricks.<sup>1</sup>

127-9: Minutius employs an extensive mining metaphor.  
dig devises = invent plans or stratagems.<sup>1</sup>  
= ie. referring to the act of stamping words or an image onto a coin.<sup>1</sup>

= deceive, trick.

133-4: Minutius will dedicate every ounce of energy to discovering a way to rob the barber. Despite Minutius' ostensible participation in the plan to fleece the barber, he disappears from the play after this scene.

choke-pear = Fairholt identifies a choke-pear as an Italian torture device, a pear-shaped instrument which when applied to the mouth would force it to open to its maximum width; the metaphor's application to the barber's purse is obvious.

**Entering Characters:** the three royal advisors arrive.

4-5: **It is...blockishness** = ie. "the word melancholy describes Midas well, but if another had person behaved this way, Mellacrites would call it "stupidity" (blockishness).<sup>1</sup>

= which attaches to, ie. is inherent in, men of high standing.

= suspiciously watchful (so as to protect his secret).<sup>1</sup>

= contentious.<sup>1</sup>

= intention.<sup>14</sup>

14	<b>Mar.</b> For my part, I neither care nor wonder, I see all	= suspended. <sup>1</sup>
16	his expeditions for wars are <u>laid in water</u> : for now	= act.
18	when he should <u>execute</u> , he begins to consult; and	= "allows our".
20	<u>suffers the</u> enemies to bid us good morrow at our own	18-19: <b>given...beds</b> = ie. killed.
22	doors, to whom we long since might have given the	= caprice. <sup>1</sup> = enormous or high crown.
24	last good night in their own beds. He weareth (I know	= weighed down. <sup>14</sup>
26	not whether for warmth or <u>wantonness</u> ) a <u>great tiara</u> on	= cushions used as part of a headdress. <sup>9</sup>
28	his head, as though his head were not <u>heavy</u> enough	= by. = petty, small-time. <sup>1</sup>
30	unless he loaded it with great <u>rolls</u> : an attire never used	= ungovernable. <sup>1</sup> = resolute, defiant. <sup>1</sup>
32	(that I could hear of) but <u>of</u> old women, or <u>pelting</u>	= reeling, dangerously close to falling. <sup>1</sup> = set. <sup>9</sup>
34	priests. This will make Pisidia <u>wanton</u> , Lycaonia <u>stiff</u> ,	26-28: <b>will have...countries</b> = each conquered nation
36	all his territories <u>wavering</u> ; and he that hath <u>couched</u>	will regain its own king.
38	so many kingdoms in one crown, will have his	28-29: <b>and if...tingle</b> = colloquially, "and if he is not so
40	kingdom scattered into as many crowns as he	stubborn as to refuse to listen to my advice, then I will make
42	posseseth countries. I will rouse him up, and if his ears	his ears burn with sharply-spoken advice," with obvious
44	be not ass's ears, I will make them tingle. I respect not	"accidental" reference to Midas' elongated ears.
46	my life, I know it is my duty, and certainly I dare	29-31: <b>I respect...profession</b> = Martius knows it is his duty
48	swear war is my profession.	to stir Midas out of his lethargy, even though he risks his life
50	<b>Erist.</b> Martius, we will <u>all join</u> : and though I have been	by possibly angering the king with such counsel.
52	(as in Phrygia they <u>term</u> ) a <u>brave courtier</u> , that is, (as	= "do this together."
54	they expound it) a fine lover; yet will I set both aside,	34: <b>term</b> = "call (me)".
56	love and courting, and follow Martius: for never shall	<b>brave courtier</b> = an excellent courtier; the latter word is
58	it be said, <i>Bella gerant alij, semper Eristus amet.</i>	ambiguous, as Eristus recognizes: <b>courtier</b> could refer to
60	<b>Mell.</b> And I, Martius, that honoured gold for a god, and	him as (1) a member of the king's court, or (2) a lover or
62	accounted all other gods <u>but lead</u> , will follow Martius,	wooer of women; Eristus means the second, as he explains.
64	and say, <i>Vilius argentum est auro, virtutibus aurum.</i>	37: <b>Latin</b> = "Let others wage war, but let Eristus always
66	<b>Mar.</b> My lords, I give you thanks, and am glad: for	love." <sup>6</sup> Eristus adapts a line from Ovid's <i>The Heroides</i> ,
68	there are no stouter soldiers in the world, than those	XVII. 254.9
70	that are made of lovers; nor any more <u>liberal</u> in wars,	= ie. of no value.
72	than they that in peace have been covetous. Then	41: <b>Latin</b> = "Silver is of less value than gold, and gold is
74	doubt not, if courage and coin can prevail, but we shall	of less value than virtue." <sup>6</sup> From Horace's <i>Epistles</i> ,
76	prevail; and besides, nothing can prevail but fortune. –	Book I.I.52.
78	But here comes Sophronia, I will first talk with her.	43-46: Martius courteously compliments his companions.
80	<i>Enter Sophronia, Camilia, Amerula.</i>	= generous.
82	Madame, either our king hath no ears to hear, or no	<b>Entering Characters:</b> the princess <b>Sophronia</b> enters
84	care to consider, both in what <u>state</u> we stand being	with two of her attendants.
86	his subjects, and what danger he is in being our king.	= condition. <sup>1</sup>

56	Duty is not regarded, courage <u>contemned</u> ; altogether	= scorned.
	<u>careless of us</u> , and his own safety.	= ie. "Midas neglects us".
58		
60	<b>Soph.</b> Martius, I <u>mislike not</u> thy <u>plain dealing</u> ; but	= "am not <i>not</i> pleased". = direct language.
62	pity my father's trance; a trance I must call that, where	
64	nature cannot <u>move</u> , nor counsel, nor music, nor	= persuade, influence.
	<u>physic</u> , nor danger, nor death, nor all. But that which	= medicine.
	maketh me most both to sorrow and wonder, is that	
	music (a <u>mithridate</u> for melancholy) should make him	= an antidote.
	mad; <u>crying still</u> . <i>Uno namque modo Pan et Apollo</i>	65: <b>crying still</b> = lamenting ceaselessly.
66	<i>nocent</i> . None hath access to him but Motto, as though	65-66: <b>Latin</b> = "for Pan and Apollo harm in the same
	melancholy were to be shaven with a razor, not cured	way." <sup>6</sup>
68	with a medicine. – But <u>stay</u> , what noise is this in those	= hold on.
	reeds?	
70		
72	<b>Mell.</b> What sound is this? who dares utter that he	
	hears?	
74	<b>Soph.</b> I dare, Mellacrites, the words are plain, – "Midas	
	the king hath ass's ears."	
76		
78	<b>Cam.</b> This is strange, and yet <u>to be told</u> the king.	= ie. "it must be told to".
80	<b>Soph.</b> So dare I, Camilla: for it concerneth me in duty,	
	and us all in discretion. But soft, let us <u>hearken better</u> .	= listen carefully.
82		
	<b>The Reeds.</b> Midas of Phrygia hath ass's ears.	
84		
	<b>Erist.</b> This is monstrous, and either <u>portends</u> some	= ie. is an omen of.
86	mischief to the king, or <u>unto the state confusion</u> . Midas	= disaster for the nation.
	of Phrygia hath ass's ears? It is <u>unpossible</u> ! let us with	= both <i>unpossible</i> and <i>impossible</i> were in use as early as
	speed <u>to</u> the king to know his resolution, for to some	the 14th century. <sup>1</sup>
88	oracle he must send. Till his majesty be acquainted	= ie. go to.
90	with this matter, we dare not root out the reeds;	
	himself must both hear the sound, and guess at the	
92	reason.	
	<b>Soph.</b> Unfortunate Midas! that being so great a king,	
94	there should out of the earth spring so great a shame.	
96		
	<b>Mar.</b> It may be that his wishing for gold, being but	= waste material.
98	<u>gross</u> of the world, is by all the gods accounted	= revealed. <sup>1</sup>
	foolish, and so <u>discovered</u> out of the earth: for a king	
100	to thirst for gold instead of honour, to prefer heaps of	
	worldly coin before triumphs in warlike conquests,	
102	was in my mind no princely mind.	
	<b>Mell.</b> Let us not debate the cause, but seek to prevent	103-4: <b>prevent the snares</b> = anticipate traps, ie. further
104	the snares; for in [my] mind it foretelleth that which	difficulties.
	woundeth my mind. Let us in.	
106		
	[ <i>Exeunt.</i> ]	
	END OF ACT IV.	

## 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  
I fear me, my dishonour, because my doom was his,

**Entering characters:** *Sophronia* and the counselors went to fetch Midas at the end of the last scene, and now return with him to the *reedy place*.

= Midas' ears burn or tingle, suggesting that people are talking about him.<sup>1</sup>

= shameless.<sup>2</sup>

= graceful.

= out of, from.

10-11: *there are...is past* = the phrase *nine day's wonder* was used to describe a phenomenon that would attract great attention for a period of time, before the public's attention would be pulled elsewhere. Sophronia is trying to comfort Midas, suggesting that no one is interested in his ears anymore.

= stupidest.

= toy, trifle.

= ie. kings are no more than men. = ie. kings.

= which god transformed Midas' ears; it is apparent that though Midas has revealed his long ears to his companions, he has not told them the embarrassing story behind the transformation.

30-39: Midas' speech is spoken as a partial aside, meaning that the other characters hear Midas or can observe that Midas is speaking, but only indistinctly.

= unlucky.

= stop the spread of.

36-37: Midas decides he will visit the oracle of Apollo to discover how he can appease the god and get him to remove his cursed ears; the king, however, recognizes that his own role in angering Apollo may make any such assistance less likely to be granted: after all, since Midas' judgment in the

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  
 44 Midas see ruin of all. To Apollo will I offer an ivory  
 lute for his sweet harmony, and berries of bays as

46 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

50 give the redress; for yet did I never hear that his  
 oracles were without doubtfulness, nor his remedies

52 without impossibilities. This superstition of yours is  
 54 able to bring errors among the common sort, not ease  
 to your discontented mind.

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

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

64 **Midas.** And who knows whether Apollo gave me these  
 66 ears, and therefore may release the punishment? Well,  
reply not, for I will to Delphos: in the meantime, let it

68 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

music competition brought Apollo dishonour (*my doom was his*), it seems probable that Apollo's oracle will be to sentence Midas to carry his long ears, with its concomitant *dishonour*, forevermore.

*whose oracle must be my doom* = whatever Apollo decides for him will likely be his final punishment (*doom*).

= kings. = ie. the obeisance and respect they owe the gods.

45-46: *berries...Daphne*: laurel trees (*bays*) produce berries whose colour is a very dark purple, approaching black. See the note at Act II.ii.23-24 for the tree's significance to Apollo.

*jet* (line 46) = a form of coal proverbial for its blackness.

46-47: *simples for his physic* = herbs (*simples*) for his medicines. Midas presents such gifts to Apollo in the latter's role as the god of healing and medicine.

= a gift of incense to be burned in perpetuity for Apollo's being the god of prophesy.

49-54: Martius again expresses his doubt about the efficacy and ambiguity of the gods' oracles: see Act II.ii.113-7.

*discover* = reveal.

50: *redress* = remedy.

52-53: *This superstition...sort* = Martius is toying with blasphemy: belief in supernatural oracles, which he terms *superstition*, only leads average or lower-class people (*common sort*) to compound the error of their ways by misinterpreting inherently ambiguous oracles.

61-62: while Midas has revealed the fact of his ass's ears, he still has not told anyone yet how or why he got them, hence Martius' confusion as to why Midas is so intent to get an oracle from Apollo.

66: *reply not* = ie. "do not try to talk me out of it".

*Delphos* = the name used by Elizabethan poets for *Delphi*, a town lying at the foot of Mt. Parnassus on the Greek mainland, and home to the oracle of Apollo. *Delphos* properly is the former name of the island of Delos, where Apollo was born.

= ie. croaking.

70 for his pains: and withal, that whosoever is so bold as  
72 to say that Midas hath ass's ears, shall presently lose  
his.

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

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,  
4 and when all came to all, they were but table-men.

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

10 **Pet.** And here I vow by my concealed beard, if ever it  
chance to be discovered to the world, that it may make

= efforts. = in addition.

71-72: **lose his** = ie. lose his own ears; the cropping of ears  
was a common punishment in Elizabethan England.

**The Action:** much has happened off-stage since we last saw  
Mellacrites' servants **Licio** and **Petulus** and **Motto** the  
barber. Unfortunately, it is unclear exactly what has been  
going on. Bond provides us with some tentative details:

First, we must remember that Petulus has pawned the  
golden beard. Secondly, Motto has cured Petulus' toothache  
on the condition he would redeem the beard and return it to  
Motto.

Now here is the tricky part: according to Bond, the  
servants, with Motto's acquiescence, were able to persuade  
the pawnbroker to release the beard by using Motto's  
possessions as security. This necessitated Motto giving  
Petulus an inventory of his goods, which the lads intended to  
pawn in order to make some profit out of the deal. Motto  
apparently tried and failed to bully the boys into giving him  
the beard without first turning over the inventory (see the  
scene's first speech at lines 1-3 below). Having finally  
received the inventory, Petulus recovered the beard and gave  
it to Motto, only to find that the list of Motto's possessions is  
a very amusing sham (Bond, p. 534).<sup>9</sup>

The result is one of the funnier scenes in Lyly's canon.

= deceive.

= destroy, ie. thrash.

= pieces of a board-game, such as draughts (checkers).<sup>1</sup> It  
appears that before Motto agreed to give the boys an  
inventory of his possessions, he tried to threaten them with  
violence if they did not turn over the beard. Motto falsely  
claimed (says Petulus here) that he had a number of men in  
the next room ready to beat them up if they did not hand the  
beard over – but the only men he actually had in hiding were  
**table-men**.

9-10: **I vow...world** = the young Petulus pokes fun at the  
fact that he has yet to grow any facial hair. It was common in  
Elizabethan plays for characters to vow or swear to do  
something on body parts.

12 a pike devant: I will have it so sharp pointed, that it 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 fall, I swear they shall not be lopped, till Motto by my knavery be so bald that I may write verses on his scalp: in witness whereof I eat this hair. Now must

22 thou, Petulus, kiss thy beard, for that was the book thou swearest by.

24 **Pet**. Nay, I would I could come but to kiss my chin,

26 which is as yet the cover of my book! but my word 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 bads and goods, as also of such debts as are owing

34 him, with such household stuff as cannot be removed. Imprimis, in the bed-chamber, one foul wife, and five small children.”

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

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

*discovered* = revealed.

= ie. pique-devant, a short, pointed beard.<sup>1</sup>  
= dagger.<sup>1</sup>

14-15: *these hairs...casualties* = a humorous description of a thinning scalp.

16: *autumn...razor* = a delightful metaphor for the loss of hair that accompanies the aging of men.

16-20: *if these...scalp* = Licio will never get another haircut – assuming his remaining hairs do not fall out – until he has gotten revenge on Motto.

= Bible.

24: *would* = wish.

24-25: *my chin...book* = ie. Petulus' chin still conceals within it the beginnings of his first beard; note the clever metaphor of Petulus' *chin* as a *cover* for his beard (*book*).

25-26: *my word shall stand* = "my word will be sufficient to guarantee my vow to be revenged."

29: "what else would we do with it?"<sup>16</sup>

= although it appears to be nothing more than a humorous opposition to *goods*, the word *bads* was a real noun, used to describe a collection of things that were bad, or of low quality, etc. But it does also serve as a play on words, since *goods* refers to Motto's personal property, just as it is still used today.

= ie. including also.

= "first of all" or "firstly": typically used to introduce a list.

37: Licio says that he doesn't want possession of any of these "items", but Petulus humorously takes Licio to mean that he (Licio) won't share any of them with him, Petulus.

= *movables* is a legal term, referring to personal property; *removables* is a humorous variation invented by Lyly, but a word which in the 19th century came to be used to refer to items which can be taken away.<sup>1</sup>

44-45: *two pair...tongues* = ie. Motto's female servants. = scolds'.<sup>22</sup>

47: ie. "You mean *tongs*," referring to the tool used to grasp and pick up smaller items.

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

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

54 **Pet.** “Item, one pair of horns in the bride-chamber, on 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 hapy are they whom other men's horns do make to

62 beware. “Item, a broken pate owing me by one of the 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, because I will not meddle with his desperate debts. “Item, an hundred shrewd turns owing me by the 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 him *cum recumbentibus*. All the pages shall enter into

78 recognizance, but ecce, Pipenetta chants it.

80 *Enter Pipenetta singing.*

82 [Song by Pipenetta:]

84 *1. 'Las! How long shall I*

86 *And my maidenhead lie*

88 *In a cold bed all the night long,*

90 *I cannot abide it,*  
*Yet away cannot chide it,*  
*Though I find it does me some wrong.*

= ie. "women's tongues torment". There is a pun on **pinch** here, which can mean (1) torment, and (2) nip or grip, as tongs would do.

= still talking about women's **tongues**. = "I assure you."

= ie. suggesting a pair of antlers or the like, but Motto has certainly made a joke about his wife cuckolding him. Licio immediately recognizes the reference to the horns said to be worn by the man whose wife is cheating on him.

= furnished.<sup>1</sup>

59: **Latin** = "Happy is the man who is made wary thanks to his awareness of the dangers afflicting others."<sup>6</sup>

60-61: **happy...beware** = those men are lucky whom the cuckolding of other men raises their own alertness of their own wive's potential straying.

61-62: **a broken...chessboard** = Motto has listed in his inventory of assets a blow to the head (**pate**) owed him by another.  
**one** = ie. a member.

69: **Latin** = "Do not touch me".

= malicious deeds or "favors".<sup>1</sup> = ie. "owed to me".  
= Motto appears to be barber for the entire palace staff.  
= typical barbering pun: **trimming** refers to "cheating."

78: **Latin** = quoting Bond: "this ought to mean 'with interest'...it seems to be used as a sort of dog-Latin for 'recompense'" (p. 535).<sup>9</sup>  
78-79: **All...recognizance** = the pages will have to record their debts before a magistrate.<sup>14</sup>

= behold.<sup>1</sup> = is singing.

**Pipenetta's Song:** Pipenetta sings a song entirely about her own virginity, and virginity in general.

= virginity.

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

100 3. *Say a maid were so crossed,*  
*As to see this toy lost,*

*Cannot hue and cry fetch it again?*

102 *'Las! No, for 'tis driven*  
 104 *Nor to hell, nor to Heaven,*  
*When 'tis found, 'tis lost even then.*

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

**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: –  
 112 what's the matter?

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

**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  
 124 vert, pur, post, pair, &c.

**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

= toy or trinket.

= sought or snatched at.<sup>1</sup>

= thwarted.

= trifle, referring to her maidenhead.

= a legal phrase denoting the verbal alarm raised by any injured party to pursue an offending felon.<sup>1</sup> It was the duty of those who heard the victim cry out to assist in pursuing and arresting the criminal;<sup>3</sup> hence the image in this line of **fetching** or pursuing a girl's permanently-lost virginity.

= "I wish"; Pipenetta is thinking about Midas' offer of a duchy to whomever can solve the mystery of the whispering reeds. If she were a **witch**, she would have the magic powers needed to unravel a puzzle she otherwise does not really own the brains to deal with.

= an oath, derived from the Virgin Mary.

ie. as a reward for

119-123: Licio too dreams of becoming nobility.

= the officer of the court charged with making proclamations<sup>1</sup> – such as announcing the new duke, Licio!

122-3: Licio ostensibly daydreams about the colours of his coat of arms, initially using the correct heraldic vocabulary (**gules** = red, **sables** = black, **azure** = blue, and **vert** = green);<sup>1</sup> but having quickly exhausted his knowledge of heraldry, Licio humorously tosses out some terminology from cards: **pur** is the jack, and **post and pair** is the name of an old card game.<sup>9</sup>

**&c** = etcetera; often used in drama to indicate that the actor may improvise additional language.

127-8: **Venus...bellows** = ie. Venus and personified Nature each is holding a pair of bellows.

= the sense is of reducing or terminating his low social status by elevating him to the ranks of nobility.

= desires or passions.

132	<b>Pip.</b> <u>Apollo</u> will help me because I can sing.	131: <b>Apollo</b> was the god of music.
134	<b>Licio.</b> <u>Mercury</u> me, because I can lie.	133: the Roman messenger god, <b>Mercury</b> , was known for his deceit.
136	<b>Pet.</b> All the gods me, because I can lie, sing, swear, and love. – But soft, here comes Motto: now shall we have a fit time to be revenged, if by <u>device</u> we can make him say, "Midas hath ass's ears."	= stratagem: the pages will try to trick Motto into committing treason by getting him to say those words which Midas has banned.
140	<i>Enter Motto and Dello.</i>	
142	<b>Licio.</b> Let us not seem to be angry about the inventory, and you shall see my wit to be the hangman for his tongue.	143-4: <i>for his tongue</i> = ie. for its anticipated treason
146	<b>Pip.</b> Why, fools, hath a barber a tongue?	
148	<b>Pet.</b> We'll make him have a tongue, that his teeth that look like a comb shall be the scissors to cut it off.	148-9: a convoluted metaphor suggesting that Motto's own words will lead to his punishment.
150	<b>Pip.</b> I pray let me have the <u>odd ends</u> . I fear nothing so much as to be tongue- <u>tawde</u> .	= leftovers, <sup>1</sup> ie. Motto's amputated tongue. = tied.
154	<b>Licio.</b> Thou shalt have all the shavings, and then a woman's tongue <u>imped</u> with a barber's, will prove a razor or a <u>raser</u> .	= augmented or enlarged. <sup>1</sup> = one who rages. <sup>1,14</sup>
158	<b>Pet.</b> How now, Motto, what, all <u>amort</u> ?	= dejected. <sup>2</sup>
160	<b>Motto.</b> I am as <u>melancholy</u> as a cat.	= depressed.
162	<b>Licio.</b> Melancholy? <u>marry gup</u> , is "melancholy" a word for a barber's mouth? thou shouldst say, "heavy",	162-6: Licio censures Motto for his pretentiousness in using such a sophisticated word as <b>melancholy</b> ! <b>marry gup</b> = an oath or exclamatory cry. <sup>1</sup>
164	"dull" and "doltish": "melancholy" is the <u>crest</u> of	= properly a three-dimensional heraldic device, such as an eagle or fan, worn on the top of one's helmet, usually for ceremonies and tournaments. The <i>coat-of-arms</i> is the entire unique heraldic design used to identify a noble or his family. <sup>1</sup>
166	courtiers' arms, and now every <u>base companion</u> , being in his <u>mubble-fubbles</u> , says he is melancholy.	= low fellow, an insult. = a phrase of uncertain origin referring to depression or melancholia. <sup>1</sup>
168	<b>Pet.</b> Motto, thou shouldst say thou art " <u>lumpish</u> ". If thou encroach upon our courtly terms, we'll <u>trounce</u>	= stupidly lethargic, a baser word for <b>melancholy</b> , and thus more appropriate for Motto to use. = beat.
170	thee: <u>belike</u> if thou shouldst spit often, thou wouldst call it "rheum". Motto, in men of reputation and credit,	170: <b>belike</b> = it is likely that. 170-1: <b>if thou... "rheum"</b> = Petulus suggests Motto is so pretentious that he would use a high-class word like <b>rheum</b> (which refers to any watery discharge) to describe his spitting.
172	it is the "rheum"; in such <u>mechanical mushrumps</u> , it is	172: <b>mechanical</b> = vulgar or coarse, <sup>1</sup> used to describe one engaged in menial work, such as Motto. <b>mushrumps</b> = ie. mushrooms, meaning "contemptible"

174 a "catarrh", a "pose", the "water evil". You were best 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. –  
180 I tell you, boys, it is melancholy that now troubleth 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  
194 before they be dead.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

210 **Licio.** [*Aside to Petulus*] If he know it, we shall: for

person",<sup>1,14</sup> a common word used to describe one who has undeservedly risen in status quickly, especially at court.

173: **catarrh, pose, water evil** = words describing watery discharge or a cold,<sup>1</sup> which Petulus feels would be more appropriate for a mere commoner like Motto to employ.

173-4: **You were...too** = Petulus ironically suggests that Motto should wear a beauty mark (**velvet patch**), if that's how he is going to be.

176-7: **eggs...cocks** = a metaphor for babies or novices (ie. Licio and Petulus) behaving so brashly towards their betters (ie. Motto).<sup>1</sup>

177: **infants** = term used to describe those who are beginners in some enterprise, here referring to Petulus, Licio and Minutius.

**cunning in** = knowledgeable about.<sup>1</sup>

= discoursed on thoroughly.

182-5: Dello amusingly recounts the long history of venereal disease, whose symptoms were thought to be hereditary,<sup>14</sup> running in Motto's family.

**tickle you** = "delight you" (by recounting).

= any mention of one's **bones** in the context of disease in Elizabethan drama may be assumed to be an allusion to the pain caused by syphilis.<sup>1</sup>

= Dello will explain this in a moment.

= "a curse on", but also a reference to syphilis.

203: "it is likely a lump (or tumour or swelling).<sup>1</sup>

= ie. swollen.

<p>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.</p> <p>216 <b>Motto.</b> 'Tis a lie; and yet if I had, he might well spare  218 an inch or two.</p> <p>220 <b>Pet.</b> [<i>Aside to Licio</i>] It will <u>out</u>, I feel him coming.</p> <p>222 <b>Dello.</b> [<i>Aside to Motto</i>] Master, take heed, you will  blab all <u>anon</u>, these <u>wags</u> are crafty.</p> <p>224 <b>Motto.</b> Let me alone.</p> <p>226 <b>Licio.</b> Why, Motto, what difference between the king's  228 ears, and thine?</p> <p>230 <b>Motto.</b> As much as between an ass's ears and mine.</p> <p>232 <b>Pet.</b> O, Motto is modest; to <u>mitigate the matter</u>, he  calls his own ears ass's ears.</p> <p>234 <b>Motto.</b> Nay, I mean the king's are ass's ears.</p> <p>236 <b>Licio.</b> Treason, treason!</p> <p>238 <b>Dello.</b> I told you, master! <u>you have made a fair hand</u>;  240 for now you have made your lips <u>scissors</u> to cut off  your ears.</p> <p>242 <b>Motto.</b> <u>Perij!</u> unless you pity me, Motto is <u>in a pit</u>.</p> <p>244</p> <p>246 <b>Pet.</b> Nay, Motto, treason is a worse pain than  toothache.</p> <p>248 <b>Licio.</b> Now Motto, thou knowest thine ears are ours to  command.</p> <p>250 <b>Motto.</b> <u>Your</u> servants, or handmaids.</p> <p>252 <b>Pet.</b> Then will I lead my maid by the hand.</p> <p>254</p> <p style="text-align: center;">256 [<i>He pulls him by the ears.</i>]</p> <p>258 <b>Motto.</b> Out, villain! thou wring'st too hard.</p> <p>260 <b>Dello.</b> Not so hard as he bit me.</p> <p>262 <b>Motto.</b> Thou seest, boy, we are both mortal. I enjoy  mine ears, but <i>durante placito</i>; nor thou thy finger,  but <i>fauente dento</i>.</p>	<p>= come out.</p> <p>= any moment. = mischievous boys.</p> <p>= minimize the danger of his words.</p> <p>= "you have gotten yourself into a nice mess";<sup>9</sup> a card-  playing metaphor.<sup>14</sup>  = ie. into scissors.</p> <p>243: <b>Perij</b> = <b>Latin</b>: "I am undone."<sup>16</sup>  <i>in a pit</i> = according to Lancashire, "in a desperate  situation". Note the typical Lylyian wordplay of <i>pity</i>  with <i>pit</i>.</p> <p>= ie. "my ears are your".</p> <p>259: Dello has not forgotten how Petulus bit his fingers back  at Act III.ii.163-6.</p> <p>262: <b>Latin</b> = "only during pleasure",<sup>9</sup> a legal expression.<sup>14</sup>  263: <b>Latin</b> = "with the support of your teeth", a parody of  the proverbial <i>deo fauente</i>, "with God's support."<sup>6</sup></p>
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264	<b>Pet.</b> Yea Motto, <u>hast thou</u> Latin?	= ie. "do you know".
266	<b>Motto.</b> Alas! he that hath drawn so many teeth, and	
268	never <u>asked</u> Latin for a tooth, is ill brought up.	= perhaps the old meaning "required". <sup>22</sup>
270	<b>Licio.</b> Well, Motto, let us have the beard, without	= a legal term, meaning "fraudulent agreement". <sup>9</sup>
272	<u>covin</u> , fraud, or delay, at one entire payment, and thou	= ie. escape punishment (for his treason), ie. the boys won't
	shalt <u>scape a payment</u> .	turn him in to the authorities.
274	<b>Motto.</b> I <u>protest</u> by scissors, brush and comb; basin,	274: <b>protest</b> = affirm, attest.
		274-8: <b>by scissors...beard</b> = Motto is vowing on the
		tools of his trade that he will give the beard to Petulus.
	<u>ball</u> and apron; by razor, <u>ear-pick</u> and <u>rubbing cloths</u> ;	275: <b>ball</b> = ie. ball of soap. <sup>9</sup>
		<b>ear-pick</b> = instrument used to pick wax out of one's ear
		(analogous in use to a toothpick). <sup>1</sup>
		<b>rubbing cloths</b> = cloths for rubbing or massaging the
		face, etc. <sup>1</sup>
276	and all the <u>tria sequuntur triaes</u> in our <u>secret</u>	276: <b>tria sequuntur triaes</b> = the Latin is not proper: it is
		close to meaning "three things follow", or "you are three
		things", <sup>6</sup> but is probably intended to demonstrate Motto's
		limited knowledge of Latin; Bond guesses the Latin is meant
		to sound like an alchemic or magic formula. <sup>9</sup>
		<b>secret</b> = secretive, ie. filled with secrets. <sup>1</sup>
	occupation ( <u>for you know it is no blabbing art</u> ) that	= Motto once again unconvincingly comments on the
278	you shall have the beard, <u>in manner and form</u>	taciturnity of barbers.
280	following: not only the golden beard and every hair,	= in the exact way specified; a legal expression. <sup>1</sup>
	( <u>though it be not hair</u> .) but a dozen of beards, to stuff	280: <b>though it be not hair</b> = ie. because it is now gold.
	two dozen of cushions.	280-1: <b>a dozen...cushions</b> = a second joke in the
282		play about the enormous beards worn by some men. <sup>16</sup>
284	<b>Licio.</b> Then <u>they be</u> big ones.	= "they must be" or "they are likely".
286	<b>Dello.</b> They be half a yard <u>broad</u> , and a <u>nail</u> , three	= wide. = a sixteenth of a yard, or 2.25 inches. <sup>9</sup>
288	quarters long, and a foot thick; so, sir, shall you find	287-9: <b>All my...stuff</b> = Fairholt says it was customary to
	them stuffed enough, and soft enough. All my	make clothes-lines of hair, because hair is more resistant
	mistress' lines that she dries her clothes on, are made	to nature's dampness than is ordinary flax.
290	only of mustachio stuff. And if I durst tell the truth, as	= ie. sleep. = ie. stuffed with. = ie. a plague on.
292	lusty as I am here, I <u>lie</u> upon a bed <u>of</u> beards; <u>a bots</u> of	= own.
	their bristles, and they that <u>owe</u> them; they are harder	= tufts of cotton or like material. <sup>1</sup>
	than <u>flocks</u> !	
294	<b>Pet.</b> A fine discourse! – well, Motto, we give thee	
296	mercy, but we will not lose the beard. Remember now	
298	our inventory. <i>Item</i> , we will not let thee go out of our	
300	hands, till we have the beard in our hands.	
	<b>Motto.</b> Then follow.	
	[ <i>Exeunt.</i> ]	<b>End of Scene:</b> thus ends the battle of wits between the pages
		and the barber. The boys in the end are the victorious owners
		of the golden beard.

## 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  
4 Midas, and pity him.

**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  
10 abuse the world, both to seem ignorant in not  
12 acknowledging an offence; and impudent, so openly to  
14 crave pardon? Apollo will not answer, but Midas must  
16 not cease. – Apollo, divine Apollo, Midas hath ass's  
18 ears, yet let pity sink into thine ears, and tell when he  
shall be free from this shame, or what may mitigate his  
sin?

[A pause.]

**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  
24 head, than stand whimpering before such a blind god.

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

= Elizabethan name for the location of the oracle of Apollo.  
= unclear.<sup>1</sup>

5: there is likely a pause after Midas' first speech, during  
which the royal party waits in vain for the oracle to  
speak.

= foolish. = ie. Apollo.

= ie. by stupidly ruling against him in the musical contest.

= ie. give up his praying to Apollo.

= ie. what Midas may do to.

**19-23 (below):** Martius is once again harsh in his expression  
of the futility of appealing to the gods.

19-20: **barley-break** = a game in which a couple, while  
holding hands, has to catch either of two other couples,  
something like a game of tag; the couple they catch then  
becomes "it", and has to enter the area in between the other  
two, which location was called *hell*, and start the process  
again.<sup>9</sup>

20-21: **assaying...coat** = allusion to Apollo's disguising  
himself as a shepherd as he attempted to seduce the  
Dryopian princess Amphissa.<sup>14,26</sup>  
**assaying on** = trying on.<sup>1</sup>

= possibly a reference to Apollo in his role as the god of  
medicine, or to the Python he slew, and whose skin he used  
to form a cover for the stool of his oracle.<sup>9</sup>

= an arbitrary or unseeing.

= king.

30-33: **Accept...eternity** = Midas repeats his list of gifts to  
Apollo (see Act V.i.44-47 above), but now in a complex

32 take any delight in music, in Daphne, in physic, in  
34 eternity.

36 **Oracle of Apollo:**

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

50 doubtful. Who would gad to such gods, that must be  
honoured if they speak without sense: and the oracle

52 wondered at, as though it were above sense?

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)

parallel form: the first three offerings (*lute...simples*)  
correspond to various interests ascribed to Apollo:

(1) the *lute* is offered to him in his guise as the god of  
*music*;

(2) laurel or bay tree *berries* as a way to acknowledge his  
love for *Daphne*; and

(3) herbs (*simples*) in his role as the god of medicine  
(*physic*).

Finally, Midas also offers devotional or penitential  
candles (*tapers*)<sup>1</sup> to be kept burning for eternity.<sup>9</sup>

37: typical complex word ordering for the meter's sake:  
"when Apollo excels Pan in music". The oracle is written in  
loose iambic pentameter.

41: Midas must give up his attempts to capture Lesbos.  
= in the end, in due time.<sup>1</sup>

44-47: Mellacrites explains that the oracle should be repeat-  
ed to the ranking citizens of Phrygia, to make them more  
amenable to leaving Lesbos to self-rule.

49-50: *I foresaw...doubtful* = Martius is basically saying,  
"I told you so." He knew the oracle would be unclear or  
ambiguous (*doubtful*); but he may be excused, seeing as he  
does not know the reason Midas has been punished with  
ass's ears.

*saw* = platitude.<sup>1</sup>

50-51: *Who would...sense* = Martius wonders why anyone  
would waste their time supplicating to such gods who never  
make any sense.

*gad* = literally "wander about", here meaning "travel".<sup>1</sup>

= marveled.

= ie. most qualified (because he is the only one who knows  
why he has been punished so).

= reveal the reason.

= ie. the one who must report or reveal what has transpired.  
= listen.

60-61: *my wish...waves* = ie. how his curse left him and  
was dispersed in the river.

= depressed.

= Mt. Tmolus.

= ie. Midas is admitting to his greed.

<p>68</p> <p>70</p> <p>72</p> <p>74</p> <p>76</p> <p>78</p> <p>80</p> <p>82</p> <p>84</p> <p>86</p> <p>88</p> <p>90</p> <p>92</p> <p>94</p> <p>96</p> <p>98</p> <p>100</p> <p>102</p> <p>104</p> <p>106</p>	<p>either dulled with the <u>humours</u> of my weak brain, or</p> <p>deceived by thickness of my deaf ears, preferred the harsh noise of Pan's pipe, before the sweet stroke of Apollo's lute, which caused <u>Phoebus in justice</u> (as I now confess, and then as I saw in anger) to set these ears on my head, that have wrung so many tears from mine eyes. For stretching my hands to Lesbos, I find that all the gods have spurned at my practices, and those islands scorn them. My pride the gods disdain; <u>my policy men</u>: my mines have been emptied by soldiers, my soldiers <u>spoiled</u> by wars, my wars without success, <u>because usurping</u>; my usurping without end, because my ambition <u>above measure</u>. I will therefore yield myself to Bacchus, and acknowledge my wish to <u>be vanity</u>: to Apollo, and confess <u>my judgment</u> to be foolish: to Mars, and say my wars are unjust: to <u>Diana</u>, and <u>tell my affection hath been unnatural</u>. And I doubt not, <u>what a god hath done to make me know myself</u>, all the gods will help to undo, that I may come to myself.</p> <p><b>Soph.</b> Is it possible that Midas should be so <u>overshot</u> in judgment? Unhappy Midas, whose wits melt with his gold, and whose gold is consumed with his wits.</p> <p><b>Midas.</b> What talketh Sophronia to herself?</p> <p><b>Soph.</b> Nothing, but that since Midas hath confessed his fault to us, <u>he also</u> acknowledge it to Apollo.</p> <p><b>Midas.</b> I will, Sophronia. – Sacred Apollo, things passed cannot be recalled, repented they may be: behold Midas not only submitting himself to punishment, but confessing his <u>peevishness</u>, being glad for shame to call that peevishness which indeed was folly. Whatsoever Apollo shall command, Midas will execute.</p> <p><b>Apol.</b> Then <u>attend</u>, Midas. I accept thy submission and sacrifice, so as yearly at this temple thou offer</p>	<p>= the various fluids (blood, phlegm, and black and yellow bile) of the body which, depending on the proportions in which they existed, were believed to determine a person's temperament.</p> <p>= alternate name for Apollo. = ie. justly.</p> <p>74-75: <b>For stretching...practices</b> = the gods are unhappy with Midas' attempts to subjugate Lesbos (as they were with Spain's attempt to attack England).</p> <p>= "men disdain my practices".</p> <p>= ruined, ie. maimed.</p> <p>= because he was overthrowing the legitimate rulers of other nations.</p> <p>= without or beyond limit.</p> <p>82: <b>be vanity</b> = have been foolish or profitless.</p> <p><b>my judgment</b> = again referring to the music contest; one wonders about the maturity level of gods who would be so spiteful.</p> <p>= the goddess of the hunt, and a sworn virgin.</p> <p>= "confess my desires or passions were monstrous."<sup>2</sup></p> <p>85: <b>what a...myself</b> = "what Apollo did to me in order to enable me to truly understand the errors of my ways".</p> <p><b>know myself</b> = allusion to the ancient maxim <b>know thyself</b>, which was famously inscribed at the entrance to Apollo's oracle at Delphi.</p> <p>= to be <b>overshot</b> is to have "missed the mark", a term borrowed from archery.</p> <p>89-91: once again, a speech is spoken as a partial aside: Midas hears Sophronia mumbling to herself.</p> <p>= ie. "he should also".</p> <p>= foolishness.<sup>16</sup></p> <p><b>106-124 (below):</b> the god speaks directly to Midas, rather than through his oracle. It will become apparent that only Midas can hear Apollo.</p> <p>= pay attention.</p>
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108 sacrifice in submission: withal, take Apollo's counsel,  
110 which if thou scorn, thou shalt find thy destiny. I will  
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.*

124 If this thou like, shake off an ass's ears:  
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  
130 else, understand Apollo, because none of you have the  
heart of a king: but my thoughts expound my fortunes,  
132 and my fortunes hang upon my thoughts. That great  
Apollo, that joined to my head ass's ears, hath put  
134 into my heart a lion's mind. I see that by obscure  
shadows, which you cannot discern in fresh colours.

136 Apollo, in the depth of his dark answer, is to me the  
glistening of a bright sun. I perceive (and yet not too

138 late) that Lesbos will not be touched by gold, by force  
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

= furthermore.

117-122: despite Apollo's promise to speak plainly, his series of quadruple-parallel warnings needs thinking through: the four verbs of line 121 and four adjectives of line 122 belong respectively to the four clauses of lines 117-120. Reorganized, the lines read as follows:

- a. *The friend that thou wouldst make thy foe shall conquer with force* (ie. Midas' new foe shall conquer him);
- b. *The kingdom thou wouldst make the world shall fall with pride* (ie. the personal kingdom Midas intends to make of the whole world will fall due to his pride);
- c. *The hand that thou dost arm with force shall shrink short with fear*; and
- d. *The gold that thou does think a god shall be common with traffic* (ie. the gold Midas so covets will become worthless due to it becoming as common as, say, dirt).  
**traffic** (line 122) = commerce.<sup>1</sup>

126: Midas' companions cannot hear Apollo.

= interpret, explain.<sup>1</sup>

133-4: **I see...colours** = ie. Midas can understand that which is difficult to interpret, while others cannot comprehend that which is plainly set before them.

= obscure, incomprehensible.<sup>1</sup>  
= sparkling.

137-9: **Lesbos...in the world** = Lyly allegorically offers up one last boast of England's honoured place in the universe.

138-9: **pitched...in the world** = removed Lesbos (ie. England) as a capturable prize.

= reach, ie. stretch his hand,<sup>1</sup> so as to grasp Lesbos.  
= ie. high sea.

= firmly decided.

150	counsel hath spilt more blood than all my soldiers' lances! let none be so hardy as to look to <u>cross</u> me. –	= thwart.
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	<i>[The ears fall off.]</i>	
160	<b>Soph.</b> Honoured be Apollo, Midas is restored.	
162	<b>Midas.</b> 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 <u>conceits</u> , nor my	= notions or fancies. <sup>1,14</sup>
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	<i>[They sing all.]</i>	
178	<i>Sing to Apollo, <u>god of day</u>,</i>	= once again, Apollo is addressed in his role as god of the sun.
180	<i>Whose golden beams with morning play,</i>	
180	<i>And make her eyes so brightly shine.</i>	
182	<i><u>Aurora's face is called divine.</u></i>	= goddess of the morning.
182	<i>Sing to <u>Phoebus</u>, and that throne</i>	= alternate name for Apollo.
184	<i>Of diamonds which he sits upon;</i>	
184	<i><u>Io, paeans</u> let us sing,</i>	= an ancient exclamation of joy. <sup>1</sup> = hymns or songs. <sup>1</sup>
186	<i>To <u>physic's</u> and to <u>poesy's king</u>.</i>	185: to Apollo, the god ( <b>king</b> ) of medicine ( <b>physic</b> ) and poetry or poems ( <b>poesy</b> ).
186	<i>Crown all his altars with bright fire,</i>	
188	<i>Laurels bind about his lyre,</i>	= ie. a crown of laurel, to honour Apollo's love <b>Daphne</b> .
188	<i>A <u>Daphnean coronet</u> for his head,</i>	= daughters of Jupiter, the nine <b>Muses</b> were the inspiration for and protectors of all forms of art.
190	<i>The <u>Muses</u> dance about his bed;</i>	
190	<i>When on his ravishing lute he plays,</i>	
192	<i>Strew his temple round with <u>bays</u>.</i>	= laurel leaves.
192	<i>Io, paeans let us sing,</i>	
194	<i>To the glittering <u>Delian king</u>.</i>	= ie. Apollo; the island of Delos was said to be the god's birthplace. <sup>1</sup>
194	<i>[Exeunt.]</i>	
196	<b>FINIS</b>	

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