

# **Hengist, King of Kent**

Thomas Middleton

# Table of Contents

<b><u>Hengist, King of Kent, or The Mayor of Quinborough</u></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<u>Thomas Middleton</u> .....	1
<u>I.i. [Before a monastery]</u> .....	2
<u>II.i. [A room in the palace]</u> .....	18
<u>III.i. [A room in the palace]</u> .....	33
<u>IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]</u> .....	54
<u>V.i. [A room in Simon's house]</u> .....	71

# Hengist, King of Kent, or The Mayor of Quinborough

Thomas Middleton

[Dramatis Personae]

Chorus: RAYNULPH, monk of Chester

CONSTANTIUS, King of the Britons

VORTIGER

HENGIST, King of Kent

AURELIUS and UTHER, brothers to Constantius

HORSUS

DEVONSHIRE and STAFFORD, two lords

LUPUS and GERMANUS, two monks

CASTIZA, daughter to Devonshire

ROXENA, daughter to Hengist

Two LADIES

SIMON, a tanner, Mayor of Quinborough

OLIVER, a fustian weaver

Three GRAZIERS

GLOVER

BARBER

TAILOR

FELLMONGER

BUTTONMONGER

[Honeysuckle, a] BRAZIER

Petitioners

GENTLEMEN

[AMINADAB, a] clerk

FOOTMAN

SAXONS, soldiers, captain, guard, and officers

[MONKS]

[Villains]

[Vortimer, son of Vortiger]

[British lords]

[CHEATERS, including a CLOWN]

[Chorus i.]

Enter Raynulp, a monk, the presenter.

**RAYNULPH**

What Raynulp monk of Chester can

Raise from his [Polychronicon],

That raises him as works do men

To see light so long parted with again,

That best may please this round, fair ring

With sparkling judgments [circled] in

[I] shall produce; if all my powers

Can win the grace of two poor hours,

Well a–paid I go to rest.

Ancient stories have been best.

## Hengist, King of Kent

Fashions that are now call'd new  
Have been worn by more than you;  
Elder times have us'd the same,  
Though these new ones get the name:  
So in story what's now told  
That takes not part with days of old?  
Then to prove time's mutual glory  
Join new time's love to old time's story.

Exit.

### I.i. [Before a monastery]

Shout. Enter Vortiger.

#### **VORTIGER**

Will that wide-throated beast, the multitude,  
Never lin bellowing? Courtiers are ill-advis'd  
When they first make such monsters.  
How near was I to a sceptre and a crown!  
Fair power was e'en upon me; my desires  
Were tasting glory till this forked rabble  
With their infectious acclamations  
Poisoned my fortune. They will here have none  
As long as Constantine's three sons survive,  
As if vassals knew not how to obey  
But in that line, like their professions  
That all their lifetime hammer out one way,  
Beaten into their pates with seven years' bondage.  
Well, though I rise not king, I'll seek the means  
To grow as close to one as policy can,  
And choke their expectations.

Enter Devonshire, Stafford.

Now, [good] lords,  
In whose [kind] loves and wishes I am built  
As high as human dignity can aspire,  
Are yet those trunks that have no other souls  
But noise and ignorance something more quiet?

#### **DEVONSHIRE**

Nor are they like to be for ought we gather.  
Their wills are up still: nothing will appease 'em;  
Good speeches are but cast away upon 'em.

#### **VORTIGER**

I.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Then, since necessity and fate withstand me,  
I'll strive to enter at a [straighter] passage.  
Your sudden aids and counsels, good my lords.

### **STAFFORD**

They're ours no longer than they do you service.

Music. Enter certain Monks [including Lupus and] Germanus, Constantius being one, singing as [at] precession[, and Aurelius and Uther]. Song.

### **[MONKS]**

Boast not of high birth or blood;  
To be great is to be good.  
Holy and religious things,  
Those are vestures fit for kings;  
By how much man in fame shines clearer,  
He to heaven should draw the nearer,  
He deserving best of praises  
Whom virtue raises.  
It is not state, it is not birth;  
The way to heaven is grace on earth.  
Sing to the temple him so holy  
Sin may blush to think on folly.

### **VORTIGER**

Vessels of sanctity, be pleas'd a while  
To give attention to the public peace,  
Wherein heaven is serv'd too, though not so purely:  
Constantius, eldest son of Constantine,  
We here seize on thee for the general good,  
And in thy right of birth.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

On me! For what, lords?

### **VORTIGER**

The kingdom's government.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Oh, powers of blessedness!  
Keep me from [growing] downwards into earth again;  
I hope I am further on my way than so.  
[To Monks] Set forward.

### **VORTIGER**

You must not.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

How!

### **VORTIGER**

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

I know your wisdom  
Will light upon a way to pardon us  
When you shall read in every Briton's brow  
The urg'd necessity of the times.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

What necessity  
Can be i' th' world but prayer and repentance?  
And that business I am about.

[Shout.]

### **VORTIGER**

Hark, afar off still!  
We lose [and] hazard much. Holy Germanus  
And reverend Lupus, with all expedition  
Set the crown on him.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

No such mark of fortune  
Comes near my head.

### **VORTIGER**

My lord, we are forc'd to rule you.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Dare you receive heaven's light in at your eyelids  
And offer violence to religion? Take heed,  
The very beam let in to comfort you  
May be the fire to burn you; on these knees,  
Hardened with zealous prayers, I entreat you  
Bring not my cares into the world again.  
Think with how much unwillingness and anguish  
A glorified soul parted from the body  
Would to that loathsome [gaol] return again;  
With such great pain a well subdued affection  
Reenters worldly business.

### **VORTIGER**

Good my lord,  
I know you cannot lodge so many virtues,  
But patience must be one. As low as earth  
We beg the freeness of your own consent,  
Which else must be constrain'd, and time it were  
Either agreed or forc'd. Speak, good my lord,  
For you bind up more sin in this delay  
Than thousand prayers can absolve again.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Were 't but my death, you should not kneel so long for't.

Hengist, King of Kent

**VORTIGER**

'Twill be the death of millions if you rise not,  
And that betimes too. Lend your helps, my lords,  
For fear all come too late.

**CONSTANTIUS**

This is a cruelty  
That peaceful man did never suffer yet,  
To make me die again that was once dead,  
And begin all that ended long before.  
Hold, Lupus and Germanus, you are lights  
Of holiness and religion. Can you offer  
The thing that is not lawful? Stand not I  
Clear from all temporal charge by my profession?

**GERMANUS**

Not when a time so violent calls upon you.  
Who's born a prince is born [for] general peace,  
Not his [own] only; heaven will look for him  
In others' business and require him there.  
What is in you religious must be shown  
In saving many more souls than your own.

**CONSTANTIUS**

Did not great Constantine, our noble father,  
Deem me unfit for government and rule,  
And therefore [pressed] me into this profession,  
Which I have held strict and love it above glory?  
Nor is there want in me; yourselves can witness  
Heaven has provided largely for your peace  
And bless'd you with the lives of my two brothers:  
Fix your obedience there, leave me a servant.

**VORTIGER**

[To Lupus and Germanus] You may even at this instant.

[Constantius is crowned.]

**CONSTANTIUS**

Oh, this cruelty!

**ALL**

Long live Constantius, son of Constantine, King of the Britons!

Flourish.

**AURELIUS**

They have chang'd their tune already.

**CONSTANTIUS**

I feel want

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

And extreme poverty of joy within me:  
The peace I had is parted 'mongst rude men;  
To keep them quiet I have lost it all.  
What can the kingdom gain by my undoing?  
That riches is not bless'd, though it be mighty,  
That's purchas'd with the spoil of any man,  
Nor can the peace so filch'd ever thrive with 'em;  
And if't be worthily held sacrilege  
To rob a temple, 'tis no less offence  
To ravish meditations from a soul,  
The consecrated altar in a man,  
And all their hopes will be beguil'd in me.  
I know no more the way to temporal rule  
Than he that's born and has his year[s] to him  
In a rough desert; well may the weight kill me,  
And that's the fairest good I look for from't.

### **VORTIGER**

Not so, great king: here stoops a faithful servant  
Would sooner perish under it with cheerfulness  
Than your meek soul should feel oppression  
Of ruder cares; such common, coarse employments  
Cast upon me your subject, upon Vortiger.  
I see you are not made for noise and pains,  
Clamours of suitors, injuries and redresses,  
Millions of rising actions with the sun,  
Like laws still ending and yet never done,  
Of power to turn a great man to the state  
Of his insensible monument with o'erwatching.  
To be oppress'd is not required of you, my lord,  
But only to be king: the broken sleeps  
Let me take from you, sir; the toils and troubles,  
All that is burthensome in authority,  
Please you lay't on me, and what is glorious  
Receive it to your own brightness.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Worthy Vortiger,  
If 'twere not sin to grieve another's patience  
With what we cannot tolerate ourselves,  
How happy were I in thee and thy charity.  
There's nothing makes man feel his miseries  
But knowledge only: reason, that is plac'd  
For man's director, is his chief afflicter,  
For though I cannot bear the weight myself,  
I cannot have that barrenness of remorse  
To see another groan under my burthen.

### **VORTIGER**

[Aside] I'm quite blown up a conscionable way;  
There's even a trick of murdering in some pity.

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

The death of all my hopes I see already:  
There was no other likelihood, for religion  
Was never friend of mine yet.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

[To Monks] Holy partners  
In strictest abstinence, fastings and vigils,  
Cruel necessity has forc'd me from you.  
We part I fear forever, but in mind  
I will be always here; here let me stay.

### **DEVONSHIRE**

My lord, you know the times.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Farewell, bless'd souls, I fear I much offend;  
He that draws tears from you takes your best friend.

Flourish. [Exeunt all but Vortiger.]

### **VORTIGER**

Can this great motion of ambition stand  
Like wheels false wrought by an unskillful hand?  
Then, time, stand thou too; let no hopes arrive  
At their sweet wishfulness till mine set forward.  
Would I could stay this [existence] as I can  
Thy glassy counterfeit in hours of sand!  
I'd keep thee turn'd down till my wishes rose,  
Then we'd both rise together.  
What several inclinations are in nature!  
How much is he disquieted, and wears royalty  
Disdainfully upon him like a curse.  
Calls a fair crown the weight of his afflictions,  
When here's a soul would sing under the burthen!  
Yet well recovered: I will seek all ways  
To vex authority from him; I will weary him  
As low as the condition of a hound  
Before I give him over, and in all  
Study what most may discontent his blood,  
Making my mask my zeal to th' public good.  
Not possible a richer policy  
Can have conception in the thought of man.

Enter [three] Graziers.

### **FIRST GRAZIER**

An honourable life enclose your lordship.

### **VORTIGER**

Now, what are you?

l.i. [Before a monastery]

**SECOND GRAZIER**

Graziers, an't like your lordship.

**VORTIGER**

So it should seem by your enclosures;  
What's your affairs with me?

**FIRST GRAZIER**

We are your petitioners, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

What? Depart!  
Petitioners to me! Y'have well deserv'd  
My grace and friendship, have you not a ruler  
After your own election? Hie to court,  
Get near and close, be loud and bold enough,  
You cannot choose but speed.

[Exit.]

**SECOND GRAZIER**

And that will do't,  
We have throats wide enough, we'll put 'em to't.

Exeunt.

[Dumb show i.]

Music. Dumb show: Fortune is discovered upon an altar, in her hand a golden round full of lots. Enter Hengist and Horsus with others; they draw lots and hang them up with joy: so all depart saving Hengist and Horsus, who kneel and embrace each other as partners in one fortune. To them enter Roxena, seeming to take her leave of Hengist her father, but especially privately and warily of Horsus her lover; she departs weeping, and Hengist and Horsus go to the door and bring in their soldiers with drum and colours, and so march forth.

[Chorus ii.]

[Enter Raynolph.]

**RAYNULPH**

When Germany was overgrown  
With sons of peace too thickly sown,  
Several guides were chosen then  
By destin'd lots to lead out men,  
And they whom Fortune here withstands  
Must prove their fates in other lands.  
On these two captains fell that lot;  
But that which must not be forgot,  
Was Roxena's cunning grief,  
Who from the father like a thief,  
Hid her best and truest tears  
Which her lustful lover wears,

l.i. [Before a monastery]

Hengist, King of Kent

In many a stol'n and wary kiss  
Unseen of father: that maids will do this  
Yet highly scorn to be call'd strumpets too,  
But what they lack on't I'll be [judg'd] by you.

Exit.

[I.ii. A hall in the palace]  
Enter Vortiger, Fellmonger, Buttonmonger, [Brazier,] Grazier[s], [and other] petitioners.

**VORTIGER**

This way his majesty comes.

ALL

Thank your good lordship.

**VORTIGER**

When you hear yon door open--

**FELLMONGER**

Very good, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

Be ready with your [several] suits; put forward.

**FIRST GRAZIER**

That's a thing every man does naturally, sir,  
That's a suitor, if he mean to speed.

**VORTIGER**

'Tis well y'are so deep--learn'd; take no denials.

**FELLMONGER**

No, my good lord.

**VORTIGER**

Not any, if you love  
The prosperity of your [suits]; you mar all utterly  
And overthrow your fruitful hopes forever  
If either fifth or sixth, nay, tenth repulse  
Fasten upon your bashfulness.

**BUTTONMONGER**

Say you so, my lord?  
We can be troublesome and we list.

**VORTIGER**

I know't.  
[Aside] I felt it but too late in the [general] sum  
Of your rank brotherhood, which now I'll thank you for.

I.i. [Before a monastery]

Hengist, King of Kent

While this vexation is in play, I'll study  
To raise a second, then a third to that,  
One still to back another. I'll make quietness  
As dear and precious to him as night's rest  
To a man in suits in law: he shall be glad  
To yield up power; if not, it shall be had.

Exit.

**BUTTONMONGER**

Hark! I protest my heart was coming upward, I thought the door had open'd.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Marry, would it had, sir.

**BUTTONMONGER**

I have such a treacherous heart of mine own, 'twill throb at the very fall of a farthingale.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Not if it fall on the rushes.

**BUTTONMONGER**

Yes, truly, if there be no light in the room I shall throb presently. The first time it took me my wife was i' th' company; I remember the room was not half so light as this, but I'll be sworn I was a whole hour a-finding on her.

**BRAZIER**

Byrlady, y'had a long time of throbbing on't then!

**BUTTONMONGER**

Still I felt men, but I could feel no women; I thought they had been all sunk. I have made a vow for't, I'll never have a meeting by candlelight again.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Yes, sir, in lanthorns.

**BUTTONMONGER**

Yes, sir, in lanthorns, but I'll never trust a naked candle again, take 't on my word.

Enter Constantius and two Gentlemen.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Hark there, stand close! It opens now indeed.

**BUTTONMONGER**

Oh, majesty, what art thou! I'd give any man half my suit to deliver my petition now; 'tis in the behalf of button-makers, and so it seems by my flesh.

**CONSTANTIUS**

[To the Gentlemen] Pray do not follow me, unless you do't  
To wonder at my garments; there's no cause

I.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

I give you why you should. 'Tis shame enough  
Methinks for me to look upon myself;  
It grieves me that more should: the other weeds  
Became me better, but the lords are pleas'd  
To force me to wear these; I would not else.  
I pray be satisfied, I call'd you not.  
Wonder of madness, can you stand so idle  
And know [that] you must die?

### **FIRST GENTLEMAN**

We are all commanded, sir;  
Besides it is our duty to your grace  
To give attendance.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

What a wild thing's this!  
We marvel though you tremble at death's name  
When you'll not see the cause why you are [cowards].  
All our attendances are far too little  
On our own selves, yet you'll give me attendance  
Who looks to you the whilst, and so you vanish  
Strangely and fearfully. For charity's sake,  
Make not my presence guilty of your sloth;  
Withdraw, young men, and find you honest business.

### **SECOND GENTLEMAN**

[Aside to First Gentleman] What hopes have we to rise by following him?  
I'll give him over shortly.

### **FIRST GENTLEMAN**

[Aside to Second Gentleman] He's too nice,  
Too holy for young gentlemen to follow  
That have good faces and sweet running fortunes.

Exeunt Gentlemen.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Eight hours a day in serious contemplation  
Is but a bare allowance, no higher food  
To th' soul than bread and water to the body,  
And that's but needful then: more would do better.

### **FIRST GRAZIER**

Let's all kneel together; ['twill] move pity:  
I have been at begging a hundred suits.

[The petitioners kneel.]

### **CONSTANTIUS**

How happy am I in the sight of you!  
Here are religious souls that lose no time.

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

With what devotion do they kneel to heaven  
And seem to check me that am so remiss!  
I bring my zeal amongst you, holy men;  
[If I see any kneel and I sit out,]  
That hour is not well serv'd, methinks. Strict souls,  
You have been of some order in your times?

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Graziers and braziers some, and this a fellmonger.

**BRAZIER**

Here's my petition.

**BUTTONMONGER**

Mine, an't like your grace.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Look upon mine, I am the longest suitor:  
I was undone seven years ago, my lord.

**CONSTANTIUS**

I have mock'd my good hopes. Call you these petitions?  
Why, there's no form of prayer among 'em all!

**BUTTONMONGER**

Yes, i' th' [bottom] there's [some] half a line  
Prays for your majesty if you look on mine.

**CONSTANTIUS**

Make your request to heaven, not to me.

**BUTTONMONGER**

'Las, mine's a supplication for brass buttons, sir.

**FELLMONGER**

There's a great enormity in wool, I beseech your grace consider 't.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Pastures rise to twopence an acre, my lord. What will this world come to?

**BUTTONMONGER**

I do beseech your grace!

[FIRST] GRAZIER

Good your grace!

**CONSTANTIUS**

Oh, this is one of my afflictions  
That with the crown enclos'd me! I must bear it.

[FIRST] GRAZIER

l.i. [Before a monastery]

Hengist, King of Kent

Your grace's answer to my supplication!

**BRAZIER**

To mine, my lord!

**CONSTANTIUS**

No violent storm lasts ever,  
That's all the comfort on't.

**FELLMONGER**

Your highness' answer!

[FIRST] GRAZIER

We are almost half undone, the country beggar'd!

**BRAZIER**

See, see, he points to heaven, as who should say  
There's enough there; but 'tis a great way thither.  
There's no good to be done here, I see that; we may all spend our mouths like a company of hounds in the chase of a royal deer, and go home and fall to cold mutton bones, when we have done.

**BUTTONMONGER**

My wife will hang me; that's my destiny.

Exeunt [all but Constantius].

**CONSTANTIUS**

Thanks, heaven, 'tis over; we should never know rightly  
The sweetness of a calm but for a tempest.  
Here's a [wish'd] hour for contemplation now,  
All still and silent; this is a true kingdom.

Enter Vortiger.

**VORTIGER**

My lord.

**CONSTANTIUS**

Again?

**VORTIGER**

Alas, this is but early  
And gentle to the troops of businesses  
That flock about authority, my lord.  
You must forthwith settle your mind to marry.

**CONSTANTIUS**

To marry!

**VORTIGER**

Suddenly there's no pause given;

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

The peoples' wills are violent,  
And covetous of succession from your loins.

### CONSTANTIUS

From me there can come none: a profess'd abstinence  
Hath set a virgin [seal] upon my blood  
And alter'd all the course; the heat I have  
Is all enclos'd within a zeal to [virtue],  
And that's not fit for earthly propagation.  
Alas, I shall but forfeit all their hopes;  
I'm a man made without desires, tell 'em.

### VORTIGER

This gives no satisfaction to their wills, my lord:  
I prov'd them with such words, but all were fruitless;  
Their sturdy voices blew 'em into clouds.  
A virgin of the highest subject's blood  
They have pick'd out for your embrace, and send her  
Bless'd with their general wishes into fruitfulness.

Enter Castiza.

See where she comes, my lord.

### CONSTANTIUS

[Moving aside] [I] never felt  
Unhappy hand of misery till this touch;  
A patience I could find for all but this.

### CASTIZA

My lord, your vow'd love ventures me but dangerously.

### VORTIGER

'Tis but to strengthen a vexation politicly.

### CASTIZA

That's an uncharitable practice, trust me, sir.

### VORTIGER

No more of that.

### CASTIZA

But say he should affect me, sir,  
How should I 'scape him then? I have but one faith, my lord,  
And that you have already; our late contract's  
A divine witness to't.

### VORTIGER

Leave it to me still;  
I am not without shifting rooms and helps  
For all my projects [I] commit with you.

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Exit Vortiger.

### **CASTIZA**

[Aside] 'Tis an ungodly way to come to honour;  
I do not like 't; I love Lord Vortiger,  
But not these practices; th'are too uncharitable.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Are you a virgin?

### **CASTIZA**

Never yet, my lord,  
Known to the will of man.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Oh, blessed creature!  
And does too much felicity make you surfeit?  
Are you in soul assured there is a state  
Prepared for you, for you, a glorious one,  
In midst of heaven, now in the state you stand?  
And had you rather, after much known misery,  
Cares and hard labours, mingled with a curse,  
Throng but to th' door and hardly get a place there?  
Think, has the world a folly like this madness?  
Keep still that holy and immaculate fire,  
You chaste lamp of eternity; 'tis a treasure  
Too precious for death's moment to partake,  
This twinkling of short life. Disdain as much  
To let mortality know you as stars  
To kiss the pavements; y'have a substance  
As excellent as theirs, holding your pureness:  
They look upon corruption, as you do,  
But are stars still; be you a virgin too.

### **CASTIZA**

I'll never marry, what though my troth be engag'd  
To Vortiger. Forsaking all the world  
I save it well and do my faith no wrong.  
Y'have mightily prevail'd, great virtuous lord;  
I'm bound eternally to praise your goodness.

Enter Vortiger and [First] Gentleman.

I carry thoughts away as pure from man  
As ever made a virgin's name immortal.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

I will do that for joy I never did  
Nor ever will again.

l.i. [Before a monastery]

Hengist, King of Kent

[He kisses her.] Exit Castiza.

[FIRST] GENTLEMAN  
My lord, he's taken.

**VORTIGER**

I'm sorry for't; I like not that so well:  
They're somewhat too familiar for their time methinks;  
This way of kissing is no course to vex him.  
Why, I that have a weaker faith and patience  
Could endure more than that coming from woman.  
Dispatch and bring his answer speedily.

Exit Vortiger.

[FIRST] GENTLEMAN  
My lord, my gracious lord.

**CONSTANTIUS**

Beshrew thy heart.

[FIRST] GENTLEMAN  
They all attend your grace.

**CONSTANTIUS**

I would not have 'em;  
'Twould please me better and they'd all depart  
And leave the court to me, or put me out  
And take it to theirselves.

[FIRST] GENTLEMAN  
The noon is past, my lord;  
Meat's upon the table.

**CONSTANTIUS**

Meat! Away, get from me;  
Thy memory's diseas'd. What saint's eve's this?

[FIRST] GENTLEMAN  
Saint Agatha, I take [it].

**CONSTANTIUS**

Oh, is it so?  
I am not worthy to be serv'd before her,  
And so return I pray.

[FIRST] GENTLEMAN  
He'll starve the guard and this be suffer'd; if we set court bellies by a monastery clock, he that breaks a fellow's  
pate now will scarce be able to crack a louse within this twelvemonth.

[Exit.]

l.i. [Before a monastery]

## Hengist, King of Kent

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Sure 'tis forgetfulness and not man's will  
That leads him forth into licentious ways;  
He cannot certainly commit such errors  
And think upon 'em truly as they are acting.  
Why's abstinence ordain'd but for such seasons?

Enter Vortiger, Devonshire and Stafford.

### **VORTIGER**

My lord, y'have pleas'd to put us to much pains,  
But we confess 'tis portion of our duties.  
Will your grace please to walk? Dinner stays for you.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

I have answer'd that already.

### **VORTIGER**

But, my lord,  
We must not so yield to you, pardon me:  
'Tis for the general good; you must be rul'd, sir.  
Your health and life is dearer to us now;  
Think where you are, at court: this is no monastery.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

But, sir, my conscience keeps still where it was;  
I may not eat this day.

### **VORTIGER**

We have sworn you shall,  
And plentifully too; we must preserve you, sir,  
Though you'll be wilful: 'tis no slight condition  
To be a king.

### **CONSTANTIUS**

Would I were less than man.

### **VORTIGER**

What, will you make the people rise, my lord,  
In great despair of your continuance  
If you neglect the means that must sustain you?

### **CONSTANTIUS**

I never eat on [eves].

### **VORTIGER**

But now you must:  
It concerns others' healths that you take food;  
Y'have chang'd your life, you well may change your mood.

**CONSTANTIUS**

This is beyond all cruelty.

**VORTIGER**

'Tis our care, my lord.

Exeunt omnes. Music.

**II.i. [A room in the palace]**

[Enter Vortiger] and Castiza.

**CASTIZA**

My lord, I am resolv'd; tempt me no further:  
'Tis all to fruitless purpose.

**VORTIGER**

Are you well?

**CASTIZA**

Never so perfect in the truth of health  
As at this instant.

**VORTIGER**

Then I doubt my own,  
Or that I am not waking.

**CASTIZA**

Would you were then;  
You would praise my resolution.

**VORTIGER**

This is wondrous.  
Are you not mine by contract?

**CASTIZA**

'Tis most true, my lord,  
And I'm better bless'd in't than I look'd for,  
In that I am confin'd in faith so strictly:  
I'm bound, my lord, to marry none but you;  
You'll grant me that, and you I'll never marry.

**VORTIGER**

It draws into me violence and hazard!  
I saw you kiss the king.

**CASTIZA**

II.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

I grant you so, sir.  
Where could I take my leave of the world better?  
I wrong'd not you in that; you will acknowledge  
A king is the best part on't.

**VORTIGER**

Oh, my passion!

**CASTIZA**

I see you somewhat yielding to infirmity, sir;  
I take my leave.

**VORTIGER**

Why, 'tis not possible!

**CASTIZA**

The fault is in your faith; time I was gone  
To give it better strengthening.

**VORTIGER**

Hark you, lady.

**CASTIZA**

Send your intent to the next monastery;  
There you shall find my answer ever after.  
And so with my last duty to your lordship,  
For whose perfections I will pray as heartily  
As for mine own.

[Bows and] exit.

**VORTIGER**

How am I serv'd in this!  
I offer a vexation to the king;  
He sends it home into my blood with vantage.  
I'll put off time no longer. I have wrought him  
Into most men's neglect, calling his zeal  
A deep pride hallowed over, love of ease  
More than devotion or the public benefit,  
Which catches many men's beliefs. I am stronger too  
In peoples' wishes; their affections point to me.  
I lose much time and glory; that redeem'd,  
She that now flies returns with joy and wonder:  
Greatness and woman's wish never keep asunder.

Exit.

[Dumb show ii.]

Hoboyes. Dumb show. Enter two villains, to them Vortiger seeming to solicit them, gives them gold, then swears them. Exit Vortiger. Enter to them Constantius in private meditation; they rudely come to him, strike down his

II.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

book and draw their swords upon him. He fairly spreads his arms and yields to their furies, at which they seem to be overcome with pity, but looking on the gold kill him as he turns his back and hurry away his body. Enter Vortiger, Devonshire, Stafford in private conference; to them enter the murderers presenting the head to Vortiger. He seems to express much sorrow, and before the astonished lords makes officers lay hold on 'em, who offering to come towards Vortiger are commanded to be hurried away as to execution. Then the lords, all seeming respect, crown Vortiger; then bring in Castiza, who seems to be brought in unwillingly [by] Devonshire and Stafford who crown her and then give her to Vortiger, she going forth with him with a kind of constrain'd consent. Then enter Aurelius and Uther the two brothers who much astonished seem to fly for their safety.

[Chorus iii.]

[Enter Raynolph.]

### RAYNULPH

When nothing could prevail to tire  
The good king's patience, death had hire  
In wicked strengths to take his life,  
In whom awhile there fell a strife  
[Of] pity and fury, but the gold  
Made pity faint and fury bold.  
Then to Vortiger they bring  
The head of that religious king,  
Who, feigning grief, to clear his guilt  
Makes the [slaughterers'] blood be spilt.  
Then crown they him and force the maid,  
That vow'd a virgin life, to wed.  
Such a strength great power extends:  
It conquers fathers, kin and friends.  
And since fate's pleas'd to change her life,  
She proves as holy in a wife.  
More to tell were to betray  
What deeds in their own tongues must say;  
Only this, the good king dead,  
The brothers poor in safety fled.

Exit.

[II.i. A hall in the palace]

Enter Vortiger, a Gentleman [meeting him].

GENTLEMAN

My lord!

VORTIGER

I fear thy news will fetch a curse,  
It comes with such a violence.

GENTLEMAN

The people are up in arms against you!

II.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

**VORTIGER**

Oh, this dream of glory! I could wish  
A sting unto thee; there's no such felt in hell  
The fellow but to mine I feel now.  
Sweet power, before I can have [time] to taste thee  
Must I forever lose thee? What's the impostume  
That swells 'em now?

GENTLEMAN

The murder of Constantius.

Exit Gentleman.

**VORTIGER**

Ulcers of realms! They hated him alive,  
Grew weary of the minute of his reign  
Compared with some kings' time, and poisoned him  
Often before he died in their black wishes,  
Call'd him an evil of their own electing.  
And is their ignorant zeal so fiery now  
When all [their] thanks are cold? The mutable hearts  
That move in their false breasts! Provide me safety!

Shout.

Hark, I hear ruin threaten me with a voice  
That imitates thunder.

Enter Gentleman.

GENTLEMAN

Where's the king?

**VORTIGER**

Who takes him?

GENTLEMAN

Send peace to all your royal thoughts, my lord;  
A fleet of valiant Saxons newly landed  
Offer the truth of all their service to you.

**VORTIGER**

Saxons! My wishes! Let 'em have free entrance  
And plenteous welcomes from all hearts that love us;  
They never could come happier.

Enter Hengist, Horsus, drum and soldiers.

**HENGIST**

Health, power, and victory to Vortiger.

Hengist, King of Kent

**VORTIGER**

There can be no more wish'd to a king's pleasure  
If all the languages earth speaks were ransack'd.  
Your names I know not, but so much good fortune  
And warranted worth lightens your fair aspects,  
I cannot but in arms of love enfold you.

**HENGIST**

The mistress of our births, hope-[fruitful] Germany,  
Calls me Hengistus, and this Captain Horsus,  
A man low built but, sir, in acts of valour  
Flame is not swifter. We are all, my lord,  
The sons of fortune; she has sent us forth  
To thrive by the red sweat of our own merits,  
And since after the rage of many a tempest  
Our fate has cast us upon Britain's bounds,  
We offer you the first fruits of our wounds.

**VORTIGER**

Which we shall dearly prize; the mean'st blood spent  
Shall at wealth's fountain make his own content.

**HENGIST**

You double vigour in us then, my lord:  
Pay is the soul of them that thrive by th' sword.

Exeunt omnes.

[II.iii. Near the palace]

Alarums and skirmish. Enter Vortiger and Gentleman.

**GENTLEMAN**

My lord, these Saxons bring a fortune with 'em  
Stains any Roman success.

**VORTIGER**

On, speak forward;  
I will not take a moment from thy tidings.

**GENTLEMAN**

The main supporters of this insurrection  
They have taken prisoners, and the rest so tame  
They stoop to the least grace that flows from mercy.

**VORTIGER**

Never came power guided by better stars  
Than these men's fortitudes, yet [th'are] misbelievers;  
'Tis to my reason wondrous.

Enter Hengist, Horsus, with drum, colours, soldiers leading prisoners.

II.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Y'have given me such a first taste of your worth,  
'Twill never from my love; sure when life's gone  
The memory sure will follow, my soul still  
Participating immortality with it.  
And here's the misery of earth's limited glory:  
There's not a way reveal'd to give you honour  
Above the sum which your own praises give you.

### **HENGIST**

Indeed, my lord, we hold, when all's summ'd up  
That can be made for worth to be express'd,  
The fame that a [man wins] himself is best;  
That he may call his own: honours put to him  
Make him no more a man than his clothes do,  
And as soon taken off, for as in warmth  
The heat comes from the body, not the weeds,  
So man's true fame must strike from his own deeds.  
And since by this event which fortune speaks us  
This land appears the fair predestin'd soil  
Ordain'd for our good hap, we crave, my lord,  
A little earth to thrive on, what you please,  
Where we'll but keep a nursery of good spirits  
To fight for you and yours.

### **VORTIGER**

Sir, for our treasure,  
'Tis open to your merits as our love,  
But for y'are strangers in religion chiefly,  
Which is the greatest alienation can be  
And breeds most factions in the bloods of men,  
I must not grant you that.

Enter Simon with a hide.

### **HENGIST**

[Aside] 'S precious!—My lord,  
I see a pattern, be it but so little  
As yon poor hide will compass.

### **VORTIGER**

How! The hide?

### **HENGIST**

Rather than nothing, sir.

### **VORTIGER**

Since y'are so reasonable,  
Take so much in the best part of our kingdom.

### **HENGIST**

ll.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

We thank your grace.

[Exit Vortiger.]

Rivers from [bubbling] springs  
Have rise at first, and great from abject things.  
Stay yonder fellow. He came luckily,  
And he shall fare well for't, whate'er he be;  
We'll thank our fortune in rewarding him.

### **HORSUS**

Stay, fellow.

### **SIMON**

How, fellow! 'Tis more than you know  
Whether I be your fellow or no, for I am sure  
You see me not.

### **HENGIST**

Come, what's the price of your hide?

### **SIMON**

[Aside] Oh, unreasonable villain! He would buy the house o'er a man's head. I'll be sure now to make my bargain wisely; they may buy me out of my skin else.—Whose hide would you have, mine or the beast's? There's little difference in their complexions; I think mine [be] th' better o' th' twain: you shall see for your love and buy for your money. [Aside] A pestilence on you all, how have you gull'd me! You buy an ox hide! You buy a good calf's gather! They are all hungry soldiers and I took 'em for shoemakers.

### **HENGIST**

Hold fellow, prithee hold. Right a fool wordling  
That kicks at all good fortune! Whose man art thou?

### **SIMON**

I am a servant, yet I am a masterless man, sir.

### **HENGIST**

How! Prithee how's that now?

### **SIMON**

Very nimbly, sir: my master's dead, and I serve my mistress. I am a masterless man, sir; she's now a widow, and I am the foreman of her tan-pit.

### **HENGIST**

[Giving him money] Hold you and thank your fortune, not your wit.

### **SIMON**

Faith, and I thank your bounty and not your wisdom; you are not troubled greatly with wit neither it seems. [Aside] Now by this light, a nest of yellowhammers! What will become of me? If I can keep all these without hanging of myself, I am happier than a hundred of my neighbours.—You shall have my skin into the bargain too, willingly, sir, then if I chance to die like a dog, the labour will be saved of fleaing. I'll undertake, sir, you shall have all the skins of our parish at this rate, man and woman's.

II.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

### HENGIST

Sirrah, give ear to me: now take your hide  
And cut it all into the slenderest thongs  
That can bear strength to hold.

### SIMON

That were a jest indeed! Go and spoil all the leather? Sin and pity, why, 'twould shoe half your army!

### HENGIST

Do't, I bid you.

### SIMON

What, cut it all in thongs? Hunch, [this] is like the vanity of your Roman gallants, that cannot wear good suits but they must have 'em cut and slash'd into giggets, that the very crimson taffety sits blushing at their follies. I would I might persuade you, sir, from the humour of cutting; 'tis but a kind of swaggering condition and nothing profitable. What an't were but well pinked? 'Twould last longer for a summer suit.

### HENGIST

What a gross lump of ignorance have I lighted on!  
I must be forc'd to beat my drift into him.  
Look you, to make you wiser than your parents,  
I have so much ground given me as this hide will compass,  
Which, as it is, is nothing.

### SIMON

Nothing, quoth 'a!  
Why, 'twill not keep a hog!

### HENGIST

Now with the vantage  
Cut into several parcels, 'twill stretch [far]  
And make a liberal circuit.

### SIMON

A shame on your crafty hide! Is this your cunning? I have learn'd more knavery now than ever I shall shake off while I live. I'll go purchase lands by cows' tails and undo the parish; three good bulls' pizzles would set up a man forever. This is like a pin a day doubled to set up a haberdasher of small wares.

### HENGIST

Thus men as mean to thrive as we must learn, captain,  
Set in a foot at first.

### SIMON

A foot do you call it?  
The devil's in that foot, it takes up all  
This leather.

### HENGIST

Dispatch, away, and cut it carefully  
With all the advantage, sirrah.

## Hengist, King of Kent

### **SIMON**

You could never have lighted upon such a fellow, captain, to serve your turn. I have such a trick of stretching too—I learnt it of a tanner's man that was hang'd last sessions—that I'll warrant you I'll get you in a mile and a half more than y'are aware of.

### **HENGIST**

Pray serve me so as oft as you will, sir.

### **SIMON**

I'm casting about for nine acres to make you a garden plot out of one of the buttocks.

### **HENGIST**

'Twill be a good soil for nosegays.

### **SIMON**

'Twill be a good soil for cabbages to stuff out the guts of your fellows there.

Exit Simon.

### **HENGIST**

You, sirs, go see it carefully perform'd;  
It is the first foundations of our fortunes  
On Britain's earth and ought to be embrac'd  
With a respect near-link'd to adoration.

[Exeunt soldiers.]

Methinks it sounds to me a fair assurance  
Of large honours and hopes, does't not, captain?

### **HORSUS**

How many have begun with less at first  
That have departed emperors from their bodies,  
And left their carcasses as much in monument  
As would erect a college?

### **HENGIST**

There's the fruits  
Of their religious shows too, to lie rotting  
Under a million spent in gold and marble,  
When thousands left behind dies without shelter,  
Having nor house nor food.

### **HORSUS**

A precious charity.  
But where shall we make choice of our ground, captain?

### **HENGIST**

About the fruitful banks of [uberous] Kent,  
A fat and olive soil; there we came in.

II.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

Oh, captain, h'as given [he knows] not what!

**HORSUS**

Long may he give so.

**HENGIST**

I tell thee, sirrah, he that begg'd a field  
Of fourscore acres for a garden plot,  
'Twas pretty well, but he came short of this.

**HORSUS**

Send over for more Saxons.

**HENGIST**

With all speed, captain.

**HORSUS**

Especially for Roxena.

**HENGIST**

Who, my daughter?

**HORSUS**

That star of Germany, forget not her, sir,  
She is a fair, fortunate maid--[aside] I shall betray myself--  
Fair is she, and most fortunate may she be.  
[Aside] But in maid lost forever: my desire  
Has been the close confusion of that name.  
A treasure 'tis, able to make more thieves  
Than cabinets set open to entice,  
Which learns one theft that never knew the vice.

**HENGIST**

Some I'll dispatch with speed.

**HORSUS**

Do you forget not.

**HENGIST**

Marry, pray help my memory if I should.

**HORSUS**

Roxena, you remember?

**HENGIST**

What more dear, sir?

**HORSUS**

I see you need no help; your memory's clear, sir.

Shout and flourish.

Il.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

**HENGIST**

Those shouts leapt from our army.

**HORSUS**

They were too cheerful  
To voice a bad event.

Enter Gentleman Saxon.

**HENGIST**

Now, sir, your news?

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Roxena the fair.

**HENGIST**

True, she shall be sent for.

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

She's here.

**HENGIST**

What sayst?

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

She's come, sir.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] A new youth  
Begins me o'er again!

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Followed you close, sir,  
With such a zeal as daughter never equall'd,  
Expos'd herself to all the merciless dangers  
Set in mankind or fortune, not regarding  
Aught but your sight.

**HENGIST**

Her love is infinite to me.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] Most charitably censor'd! 'Tis her cunning,  
The love of her own lust, which makes a woman  
Gallop down hill as fearless as a drunkard;  
There's no true lodestone i' th' world but that.  
It draws 'em through all storms by sea or shame:  
Life's loss is thought too small to pay that game.

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Il.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

What follows more of her will take you strongly.

**HENGIST**

How!

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Nay, 'tis worth your wonder.

**HENGIST**

I thirst for't.

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Her heart joy-ravish'd at your late success,  
Being the early morning of your fortunes  
So prosperously new-opening at her coming,  
She takes a cup of gold and midst the army,  
Teaching her knee a current cheerfulness  
Which well became her, drank a liberal health  
To the king's joys and yours, the king in presence,  
Who with her sight, but her [behaviour] chiefly—  
Or chief I know not which, but one or both—  
But he's so far 'bove my expression caught,  
'Twere art enough for [one] man's time and portion  
To speak him and miss nothing.

**HENGIST**

This is astonishing!

**HORSUS**

[Aside] Oh, this ends bitter now! Our close hid flame  
Will break out of my heart: I cannot keep it.

**HENGIST**

Gave you attention to this, captain? How now, man?

**HORSUS**

A kind of grief about these times o' th' moon still;  
I feel a pain like a convulsion,  
A cramp at heart, I know not what name fits it.

**HENGIST**

Nor never seek [one] for't; let it go  
Without a name. Would all griefs were serv'd so;  
Our using of 'em mannerly makes 'em grow.

Flourish. Enter Vortiger, Roxena, attendants.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] A love knot already, arm in arm!

**VORTIGER**

Il.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

What's he lays claim here?

**HENGIST**

In right of fatherhood  
I challenge an obedient part, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

Take 't, and send back the rest.

**HENGIST**

What means your grace?

**VORTIGER**

You'll keep no more than what belongs to you, will you?

**HENGIST**

That's all, my lord, it all belongs to me; yet  
I keep a husband's interest till he come.  
Yet out of duty and respect of majesty,  
I send her back your servant.

**VORTIGER**

My mistress, sir, or nothing.

**HENGIST**

Come again;  
I [never] thought to have heard so ill of thee.

**VORTIGER**

How, sir! So ill?

**HENGIST**

So beyond detestable,  
To be an honest vassal is some calling;  
Poor is the worst of that, shame comes not to't.  
But mistress: that's the only common bait  
Fortune sets at all hours, catching whore[s] with it,  
And plucks 'em up by clusters. There's my sword, my lord,  
And if your strong desires aim at my blood,  
Which runs too purely there, a nobler way  
Quench it in mine.

**VORTIGER**

I ne'er took sword in vain.  
Hengist, we here create thee Earl of Kent.

**HORSUS**

[Aside, and falling down] Oh, that will do't, 'twill do't!

**VORTIGER**

What ails our friend? Look to him.

Il.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

**ROXENA**

Oh, 'tis his epilepsy, I know it well;  
I [holp] him once in Germany. Com'st again?  
A virgin's right hand strok'd upon his heart  
Gives him ease straight, but 't must be a pure virgin,  
Or else it brings no comfort.

**VORTIGER**

[Aside] What a task  
She puts upon herself! Unurg'd—for purity!  
The proof of this will bring love's rage upon me.

[Roxena kneels by Horsus, and they talk aside.]

**ROXENA**

Oh, this would mad a woman! There's no plague  
In love to indiscretion.

**HORSUS**

Pish, this cures not.

**ROXENA**

Dost think I'll ever wrong thee?

**HORSUS**

Oh, most feelingly!  
But I'll prevent it now and break thy neck  
With thy own cunning; thou hast undertook  
To give me help, to bring in royal credit,  
Thy crack'd virginity, but I'll spoil all:  
I will not stand on purpose, though I could,  
But fall still, to disgrace thee.

**ROXENA**

What, you will not?

**HORSUS**

I have no other way to help myself,  
For when thou't known to be a whore impost'rous,  
I shall be sure to keep thee.

**ROXENA**

Oh, sir, shame me not!  
Y'have had what's precious; try my faith yet once more:  
Undo me not at first in chaste opinion.

**HORSUS**

All this art shall not make me find my legs.

**ROXENA**

II.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

I prithee wilt thou wilfully confound me?

**HORSUS**

Well, I'm content for this time to recover  
To save thy credit and bite in my pain,  
But if thou ever fail'st me, I will fall  
And thou shalt never get me up again.

**ROXENA**

Agreed 'twixt you and I, sir.—[Raising him] See, my lord,  
A poor maid's work: the man may pass for health now  
Among the clearest bloods and whose are nicest.

**VORTIGER**

I have heard of women bring men on their knees,  
But few that [e'er restor'd] 'em. How now, captain?

**HORSUS**

My lord, methinks I could do things past man,  
I'm so renew'd in vigour; I long most  
For violent exercise to take me down:  
My joy's so high in blood I am above [frailty].

**VORTIGER**

My Lord of Kent?

**HENGIST**

Your love's unworthy creature.

**VORTIGER**

Seest thou this fair [chain]? Think upon the means  
To keep it link'd forever.

**HENGIST**

Oh, my lord,  
'Tis many degrees sund'red from that hope!  
Besides your grace has a young, virtuous queen.

**VORTIGER**

I say think on't, think on't.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] And this wind hold  
I shall even fall to my old disease again.

**VORTIGER**

[To Roxena] There's no fault in thee but to come so late;  
All else is excellent, I chide none but fate.

Flourish, cornets. Exeunt.

**III.i. [A room in the palace]**

Enter Horsus, Roxena.

**ROXENA**

I have no conceit now that you ever lov'd me,  
But as lust held you for the time.

**HORSUS**

So, so.

**ROXENA**

Do you pine at my advancement, sir?

**HORSUS**

Oh, barrenness  
Of understanding! What a right love is this!  
'Tis you that fall, I that am reprehended!  
What height of honours, eminence and fortune  
Should ravish me from you?

**ROXENA**

Who can tell that, sir? What's he can judge  
Of a man's appetite before he sees him eat?  
Who knows the strength of any's constancy  
That never yet was tempted? We can call  
Nothing our own if they be deeds to come;  
They are only ours when they are pass'd and done.  
How bless'd are you above your apprehension  
If your desire would lend you so much patience  
To examine the adventurous condition  
Of our affections, which are full of hazard,  
And draw in the time's goodness to defend us!  
First, this bold course of ours can't last long,  
Or never does in any without shame,  
And that, you know, brings danger; and the greater  
My father is in blood, as he's well risen,  
The greater will the storm of his rage be  
'Gainst his blood['s] wronging; I have cast for this.  
'Tis not advancement that I love alone,  
'Tis love of shelter, to keep shame unknown.

**HORSUS**

Oh, were I sure of thee, as 'tis impossible  
There to be ever sure where there's no hold,  
Your pregnant hopes should not be long arising!

**ROXENA**

By what assurance have you held me thus far  
Which you found firm, despair you [not] in that.

**HORSUS**

True, that was good security for the time,  
But admit a change of state. When y'are advanc'd  
You women have a French toy in your pride;  
You make your friend come crouching, or perhaps,  
To bow i' th' hams the better, he is put  
To complement three hours with your chief gentlewoman,  
Then perhaps not admitted, nay, nor never:  
That's the more noble fashion. Forgetfulness:  
'Tis the pleasing'st virtue anyone can have  
That rises up from nothing, for by the same  
Forgetting all they forget from whence they came,  
An excellent property for oblivion.

**ROXENA**

I pity all the fortunes of poor women  
Now in mine own unhappiness. When we have given  
All that we have to men, what's our requital?  
An ill-[fac'd] jealousy, which resembles much  
The mistrustfulness of an insatiate thief  
That scarce believes he has all, though he has stripp'd  
The true man naked and [left] nothing on him  
But the hard cord that binds him: so are we  
First robb'd and then left bound by jealousy.  
Sure he that finds us now has a great purchase,  
And well he [gains] that builds another's ruins,  
Yet man—the only seed that's sown in envy,  
Whom little would suffice as any creature  
Either in food or pleasure—yet 'tis known  
What would give ten enough contents not one.  
A strong diseas'd conceit may tell strange tales to you  
And so abuse us both: take but th' opinion  
Of common reason, and you'll find 't impossible  
That you should lose me in this king's advancement,  
Who here's a usurper. As he has the kingdom,  
So shall he have my love by usurpation;  
The right shall be in thee still: my ascension  
To dignity is but to waft thee upward,  
And all usurpers have a falling-sickness,  
They cannot keep up long.

**HORSUS**

May credulous man  
Put all his confidence in so weak a bottom  
And make a saving voyage?

**ROXENA**

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Nay, as gainful  
As ever man yet made.

### **HORSUS**

Go, take thy fortune,  
Aspire with my consent, so thy ambition  
Will be sure to prosper. Speak the fair certainty  
Of Britain's queen home to thy wishes.

### **ROXENA**

Speak  
In hope I may, but not in certainty.

### **HORSUS**

I say in both: hope and be sure I'll quickly  
Remove her that stands between [thee and] thy glory.

### **ROXENA**

Life is love!  
If lost virginity can win such a day,  
I'll have no daughter but shall learn my way.

Exit Roxena.

### **HORSUS**

'Twill be good work for him that first instructs 'em,  
Maybe some son of mine, got by this woman too.  
Man's scattered lust brings forth most strange events,  
An' 'twere but strictly thought on. How many brothers  
Wantonly got through ignorance of their births  
May match with their own sisters!

Enter Vortiger.

[Aside] Peace, 'tis he.  
Invention fail me not; 'tis a gallant's credit  
To marry his whore bravely.

### **VORTIGER**

[Aside] Have I power  
Of life and death, and cannot command ease  
In mine own blood? After I was a king  
I thought I never should have felt pain more,  
That there had been a ceasing of all passions  
And common stings, which subjects use to feel,  
That were created with a [patience] fit  
For all extremities: but such as we  
Know not the way to suffer; then to do't,  
How most prepost'rous 'tis! What's all our greatness  
If we that prescribe bounds to meaner men  
Must not pass these ourselves? Oh, most ridiculous!

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

This makes the vulgar merry to endure,  
Knowing our state is strict and less secure.  
I'll break through custom. Why should not the mind,  
The nobler part that's of us, be allow'd  
Change of affections, as our bodies are  
Still change of food and raiment? I'll have't so.  
All fashions appear strange at first production,  
But this would be well followed.—Oh, captain!

### HORSUS

My lord, I grieve for you; [you] scarce fetch breath  
But a sigh hangs at end on't: this is no way  
If you'll give way to counsel.

### VORTIGER

Set me right then,  
And quickly, sir, or I shall curse thy charity  
For lifting up my understanding to me  
To show that I was wrong: ignorance is safe;  
I slept happily. If knowledge mend me not  
Thou hast committed a most cruel sin,  
To [wake] me into judgment and then leave me.

### HORSUS

I will not leave you so, sir, that were rudely [done].  
First y'have a flame too open and too violent,  
Which like blood—guiltiness in an offender  
Betrays him when none can: out with it, sir,  
Or let some cunning coverture be made  
Before our practice enters, 'twill spoil all else.

### VORTIGER

Why, look you, sir, I can be as calm as silence  
All the whiles music plays; strike on, sweet friend,  
As mild and merry as the heart of [innocence].  
I prithee take my temper. Has a virgin  
A heat more modest?

### HORSUS

[Aside] He does well to ask me;  
I [could] have told that once.—Why, here's a government!  
There's not a sweeter amity in friendship  
Than in this friendly league 'twixt you and health.

### VORTIGER

Then since thou find'st me capable of happiness,  
Instruct me with the practice.

### HORSUS

What would you say, my lord,  
If I ensnare her in an act of lust?

**VORTIGER**

Oh, there were art to the life! But that's impossible;  
I prithee flatter me no further with't.  
[Fie], so much sin as goes to make up that  
Will ne'er prevail with her: why, I tell thee, sir,  
She's so sin-killing modest, that if only  
To move the question were enough adultery  
To cause a separation, there's no gallant  
So brassy-impudent durst undertake  
The words that should belong to't.

**HORSUS**

Say you so, sir?  
There's nothing made i' th' world but has a way to't,  
Though some be harder than the rest to find,  
Yet one there is, that's certain, and I think  
I have took the course to light on't.

**VORTIGER**

Oh, I pray for't!

**HORSUS**

I heard you lately say, from whence, my lord,  
My practice receiv'd life first, that your queen  
Still consecrates her time to contemplation,  
Takes solitary walks.

**VORTIGER**

Nay, late and early, sir,  
Commands her weak guard from her, which are but women  
When 'tis at [strongest].

**HORSUS**

I like all this well, my lord.  
And now your grace shall know what net is us'd  
In many places to catch modest women,  
Such as will never yield by prayers or gifts.  
Now there be some will catch up men as fast,  
But those she-fowlers nothing concerns us:  
Their birding is at windows, ours abroad,  
Where ring-doves should be caught, that's married wives  
Or chaste maids, what the appetite has a mind to.  
'Tis practis'd often, therefore worth discovery  
And may well fit the purpose.

**VORTIGER**

Make no pause then.

**HORSUS**

The honest gentlewoman, where'er she be,

## Hengist, King of Kent

When nothing will prevail, I pity her now;  
Poor soul, she's entic'd forth by her own sex  
To be betray'd to man, who in some garden-house  
[Or] remote walk, taking his lustful time,  
Binds darkness on her eyes, surprises her,  
And having a coach ready, turns her in,  
Hurrying her where he list for the sin's safety,  
Making a rape of honour without words,  
And at the low ebbs of his lust, perhaps  
Some three days after, sends her coach again  
To the same place, and, which would make most mad,  
She's spoil'd of all, yet knows not where she was robb'd:  
Wise, dear, precious mischief.

### **VORTIGER**

Is this practis'd?

### **HORSUS**

Too much, my lord, to be so little known;  
A springe to catch a maidenhead after sunset,  
Clip it, and send it home again to th' city:  
There 'twill be ne'er perceiv'd.

### **VORTIGER**

My raptures want expression! I conceit  
Enough to make me fortunate and thee great.

### **HORSUS**

Ay, [practise] it then, my lord. [Aside] I knew 'twould take.

Exeunt.

[III.ii. Grounds near the palace]

Enter Castiza [with] a book, two Ladies.

### **CASTIZA**

Methinks you live strange lives! When I see't not,  
The less it grieves me; you know how to ease me then.  
If you but knew how well I lov'd your absence  
You would bestow 't upon me without asking.

### **FIRST LADY**

Faith, for my part, were it no more for ceremony  
Than 'tis for love, you should walk long enough  
For my attendance; so think all my fellows,  
Though they say nothing. Books in women's hands  
They are as much against the hair, methinks,  
As to see men [wear] stomachers and night-rails!  
She that has the green sickness and should follow her counsel would die like an ass and go to th' worms like a salad; not I as long as such a creature as man is made: she's a fool that will not know what he's good for.

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Exeunt Ladies.

### **CASTIZA**

Though amongst lives' elections that of virgin  
I speak noblest of, yet 't has pleas'd just heaven  
To send me a contented blessedness  
In this of marriage, which I ever doubted;  
I see the king's affection was a true one,  
It lasts and holds out long: that['s] no mean virtue  
In a commanding man, though in great fear  
At first I was enforc'd to venture on't.

Enter Vortiger and Horsus [disguised, to one side].

### **VORTIGER**

All's happy, clear and safe.

### **HORSUS**

The rest comes gently then.

### **VORTIGER**

Be sure you seize on her full sight at first,  
For fear of my discovery.

### **HORSUS**

I'll not miss it.

### **VORTIGER**

Now fortune, and I am sped.

[Horsus seizes and blindfolds Castiza.]

### **CASTIZA**

Oh, help, treason, treason!

### **HORSUS**

Sirrah, how stand you? Prevent noise and clamour,  
Or death shall end thy service.

### **VORTIGER**

[Aside] A sure cunning.

### **CASTIZA**

Oh, rescue!

### **HORSUS**

Dead her voice; away, make speed!

[Vortiger gags her.] Exeunt and enter again.

[III.iii. Off a country road]

**CASTIZA**

No help, no succour?

**HORSUS**

Louder yet? [Extend]

Your voice to the last rack, you shall have leave now;

Y'are far from any pity.

**CASTIZA**

What's my sin?

**HORSUS**

Contempt of man, and he's a noble creature,

And takes it in ill part to be despis'd.

**CASTIZA**

I never despis'd any.

**HORSUS**

No? You hold us

Unworthy to be lov'd. What call you that?

**CASTIZA**

I have a lord disproves you.

**HORSUS**

Pish, your lord!

You're bound to love your lord, that's no thanks to you;

You should love those you are not tied to love:

That's the right trial of a woman's charity.

**CASTIZA**

I know not what you are nor what my fault is,

But if't be life you seek, whate'er you be,

Use no immodest words and take it from me:

You kill me more in talking sinfully

Than acting cruelly; be so far pitiful

To end me without words.

**HORSUS**

Long may you live,

The wish of a good subject; 'tis not life

That I thirst after: loyalty forbid

I should commit such treason! You mistake me,

I have no such bloody thought; only your love

Shall content me.

**CASTIZA**

What said you, sir?

III.i. [A room in the palace]

**HORSUS**

Thus, thus plainly,  
To strip my words as naked as my purpose,  
I must and will enjoy you.

[Castiza swoons.]

Gone already?  
Look to her, bear her up, she goes apace.  
I fear'd this still, and therefore came provided.

[Takes out a vial and gives some of its liquid to Castiza.]

There's that will fetch life from a dying spark  
And make it spread a furnace; she's well straight.  
It kept a lord seven years alive together  
In spite of nature, that he look'd like one  
Had leave to walk out of a grave to air himself  
Yet still walked lord.

[Castiza recovers.]

Pish, let her go; she stands,  
Upon my knowledge, or else she counterfeits.  
I know the virtue.

**CASTIZA**

Never did sorrows in afflicted woman  
Meet with such cruelty; such hard-hearted ways  
Human invention never found before.  
To call back life to live is but ill-taken  
By some departing soul; then to force mine back  
To an eternal act of death in lust,  
What is it but most execrable?

**HORSUS**

So, so;  
But this is from the business. List to me:  
Here you are now far from all hope of friendship,  
Save what you make mine; 'scape me you cannot,  
Send your soul that assurance. That resolv'd on  
You know not who I am nor never shall,  
I need not fear you then; but give consent  
Then with the faithfulness of a true friend:  
I'll open myself to you, fall your servant,  
As I do now in hope, proud of submission,  
And seal the deed up with eternal secrecy,  
Not death should pick it open, much less [the] king's  
Authority or torture.

**VORTIGER**

[Aside] I admire him.

**CASTIZA**

[Kneeling] Oh, sir, whate'er you are, I teach my knee  
Thus to requite you; be content to take  
Only my sight as ransom for mine honour,  
And where you have but mock'd mine eyes with darkness,  
Pluck 'em out quite: all outward light of body  
I'll spare most willingly, but take not from me  
That which must guide me to another world  
And leave me dark forever, fast without  
That cursed pleasure which would make two souls  
Endure a famine everlastingly.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] This almost moves.

**VORTIGER**

[Aside] By this light, he'll be taken.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] I'll wrastle down all pity.—Will you consent?

**CASTIZA**

I'll never be so guilty.

**HORSUS**

Farewell words then;  
You hear no more of me, but thus I seize thee.

**CASTIZA**

Oh, if a power above be [reverenc'd] in thee,  
I bind thee by that name, by manhood, nobleness,  
And all the charms of honour!

Exeunt Vortiger [carrying off] Castiza.

**HORSUS**

Here's one caught  
For an example; never was poor lady  
So mock'd into false terror. With what anguish  
She lies with her own lord! Now she could curse  
All into barrenness and beguile herself by it.  
Conceit's a powerful thing, and is indeed  
Plac'd as a palate to taste grief or love,  
And as that relishes so we approve:  
Hence it comes that our taste is so beguil'd,  
Changing pure blood for some that's mix'd and soil'd.

Exit.

## Hengist, King of Kent

[III.iv. A chamber in a castle near Quinborough]  
Enter Hengist.

### **HENGIST**

A fair and fortunate constellation reign'd  
When we set footing here: from his first gift,  
Which to a king's unbounded eyes seem'd nothing,  
The compass of a hide, I have erected  
A strong and spacious castle, yet contain'd myself  
Within my limits, without check or censure.  
Thither, with all the observance of a subject,  
The liveliest witness of a grateful mind,  
I purpose to invite him and his queen  
And feast 'em nobly.

A noise. Barber and Tailor within.

### **BARBER**

[Within] We will enter, sir;  
'Tis a state business of a twelvemonth long,  
The choosing of a mayor.

### **HENGIST**

What noise is that?

### **TAILOR**

[Within] Sir, we must speak with the good Earl of Kent;  
Though we were ne'er brought up to keep a door,  
We are as honest, sir, as some that do.

Enter Gentleman [Saxon].

### **HENGIST**

Now what's the occasion of their clamours, sir?

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Please you, my lord, a company of townsmen  
Are bent against all denials and resistance  
To have speech with your lordship, and that you  
Must end a difference, which none else can do.

### **HENGIST**

Why, then there's reason in their violence,  
Which I never look'd for: let in first but one,  
And as we relish him the rest comes on.

Exit Gentleman [Saxon].

'Twere no safe wisdom in a rising man

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

To slight off such as these; nay, rather these  
Are the foundation of a lofty work:  
We cannot build without them and stand sure;  
He that ascends up to a mountain's top  
Must first begin at foot.

Enter Gentleman [Saxon].

Now, sir, who comes?

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

They cannot yet agree, my lord, of that.

**HENGIST**

How!

**GENTLEMAN SAXON**

They say 'tis worse now for 'em than ever 'twas before,  
For where the difference stood but between two,  
Upon this coming first [they are] at odds;  
One says, sir, he shall lose his place at church by't,  
Another he'll not do his wife that wrong,  
And by their good wills they would come all at first.  
The strife continues in most heat, my lord,  
Between a country barber and a tailor  
Of the same [town], and which your lordship names  
'Tis yielded by consent that one shall enter.

**HENGIST**

Here's no sweet [coil]! I'm glad they're so reasonable.  
Call in the barber: if the tale be long  
He'll cut it short, I trust; that's all the hope on't.

Enter Barber.

Now, sir, are [you] the barber?

**BARBER**

Oh, most barbarous! A corrector of enormities in hair, my lord, a promoter of upper lips, or what your lordship, in the neatness of your discretion, shall vouchsafe call it.

**HENGIST**

Very good, I see this you have without book.  
But what's your business now?

**BARBER**

Your lordship comes  
To a high point indeed; the business, sir,  
Lies all about the head.

**HENGIST**

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

That['s] work for you.

### **BARBER**

No, my good lord, there is a corporation, a kind of body, a body.

### **HENGIST**

The barber's out at body, let in the tailor.

This 'tis to reach beyond your own profession:

When you let go your head, you lose your memory;

You have no business with the body.

### **BARBER**

Yes, sir, I am a barber–surgeon: I have had something to do with't in my time, my lord, and I was never so out o' th' body as I have been here of late; send me good luck, I'll go marry some whore or other but I'll get in again.

Enter Tailor.

### **HENGIST**

Now, sir, a good discovery come from you

That we may know the inwards of the business.

### **TAILOR**

I will rip [up] the linings to your lordship,

And show what stuff 'tis made on; for the body,

Or corporation—

### **HENGIST**

There the barber left indeed.

### **TAILOR**

'Tis piec'd up of two factions.

### **HENGIST**

A patch'd town the whilst.

### **TAILOR**

Nor can [we] go through stitch, my noble lord,

The choler is so great in the one party.

And as in linsey–woolsey wove together

One piece makes several suits, so, upright earl,

Our linsey–woolsey hearts makes all this coil.

### **HENGIST**

What's all this now?

Call in the rest; I'm ne'er the wiser yet.

I should commend my wit could I but guess

What this would come to.

Enter Glover, Buttonmonger, Brazier [and the other tradesmen].

Now, sirs, what are you?

III.i. [A room in the palace]

Hengist, King of Kent

**GLOVER**

Sir—reverence on your lordship, I am a glover.

**HENGIST**

What needs that then?

**GLOVER**

Sometimes I deal with dog's—leather,  
Sir—reverence all that while.

**HENGIST**

Well, to the purpose, if there be any towards.

**GLOVER**

I were an ass else, saving your lordship's presence; we have a body, but our town wants a hand, a hand of justice,  
a worshipful master mayor.

**HENGIST**

This is well—handed yet,  
A man may take some hold on't. You want a mayor?

**GLOVER**

Right, but there's two at fisticuffs about it, sir,  
As I may say, at daggers drawing, sir,  
But that I cannot say, because they have none;  
And you being Earl of Kent, the town does say  
Your lordship's voice shall choose and part the fray.

**HENGIST**

This is strange work for me. Well, sir, what be they?

**GLOVER**

The one is a tanner.

**HENGIST**

Fie, I shall be too partial;  
I owe too much affection to that trade  
To put it to my voice. [What is] his name?

**GLOVER**

Simon, sir.

**HENGIST**

How! Simon, too?

**GLOVER**

Nay, 'tis but Simon one, sir, the very same Simon  
That sold your lordship the hide.

**HENGIST**

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

What sayst thou?

### **GLOVER**

That's all his glory, sir: he got his master's widow by't presently after, a rich tanner's wife. She has set him up; he was her foreman a long time in her other husband's days.

### **HENGIST**

Now let me perish in my first aspiring  
If the pretty [simplicity] of his fortune  
Do not most highly take me; 'tis a presage, methinks,  
Of bright, succeeding happiness to mine  
When my fate's glowworm casts forth such a shine.  
And what's the other that contends with him?

### **TAILOR**

Marry, my noble lord, a fustian weaver.

### **HENGIST**

How! Will he offer to compare with Simon?  
He a fit match for him!

Enter Simon and Oliver.

### **BARBER**

Hark, hark, my lord!  
Here they come both now in a pelting chafe  
From the town-house.

### **SIMON**

[How]! Before me? I scorn thee,  
Thou wattle-[fac'd], sing'd pig!

### **OLIVER**

Pig? I defy thee!  
My uncle was a Jew and scorn'd the motion.

### **SIMON**

I list not brook thy vaunts. Compare with me?  
Thou spindle of concupiscence, 'tis well known  
Thy first wife was a flax-wench.

### **OLIVER**

But such a flax-wench  
Would I might never want at my most need,  
Nor any friend of mine. My neighbours knew her;  
Thy wife was but a hamper halter to her.

### **SIMON**

Use better words; I'll hang thee in my year else,  
Let whose will choose thee afterwards.

Hengist, King of Kent

**GLOVER**

Peace! For shame!  
Quench your great spirits. Do not you see his lordship?

**HENGIST**

What, Master Simonides?

**SIMON**

Simonides? What a fine name he has made of Simon! Then he's an ass that calls me Simon again; I'm quite out of love with't.

**HENGIST**

Give me thy hand. I love thee and thy fortunes;  
I like a man that thrives.

**SIMON**

I took a widow, my lord, to be the best piece of ground to thrive on, and by my faith, there's a young Simonides, like a green onion, peeping up already.

**HENGIST**

Th'ast a good, lucky hand.

**SIMON**

I have somewhat, sir.

**HENGIST**

But why to me is this election offer'd?  
The choosing of a mayor goes by most voices.

**SIMON**

True, sir, but most of our townsmen are so hoarse with drinking, there's ne'er a good voice amongst 'em all that are now here in this company.

**HENGIST**

Are you content both to put all to these then,  
To whom I liberally resign my interest  
To prevent censure?

**SIMON**

I speak first, my lord.

**OLIVER**

Though I speak last, I hope I am not least.  
If [they] will cast away a town-born child,  
They may; 'tis but dying some forty years or so  
Before my time.

**HENGIST**

I'll leave you to your choice awhile.

ALL

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Your good lordship.

Exit Hengist.

### **SIMON**

Look you, neighbours, view us both well ere you be too hasty; let Oliver the fustian weaver stand as fair as I do, and the devil give him good out.

### **OLIVER**

I do, thou upstart [callymoocher], I do. 'Tis well known to thee I have been twice alecunner, thou mushrump that shot up in one night with lying with thy mistress.

### **SIMON**

Faith, thou art such a spiny bald-rib, all the mistresses in the town would never get thee up.

### **OLIVER**

I scorn to rise by a woman, as thou didst; my wife shall rise by me.

### **SIMON**

The better for some of thy neighbours when you are asleep.

### **GLOVER**

I pray cease of your communication; we can do nothing else.

[The tradesmen retire and talk amongst themselves.]

### **OLIVER**

[Aside] I gave that barber a fustian suit, and twice redeem'd his cittern; he may remember me.

### **SIMON**

[Aside] I fear no false measure but in that tailor;  
The glover and the button-maker are both cocksure;  
That collier's eye I like not.  
Now they consult, the matter is a-brewing.  
Poor Gill my wife lies longing for this news;  
'Twill make her a glad mother.

### **ALL**

A Simon, a Simon, a Simon, a Simon!

### **SIMON**

My good people, I thank you all.

### **OLIVER**

Wretch that I am, tanner, thou hast curry'd favour.

### **SIMON**

I curry? I defy thy fustian fume!

### **OLIVER**

But I will prove a rebel all thy year

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

And raise up the seven deadly sins against thee.

Exit.

### **SIMON**

The deadly sins will scorn to rise by thee, and they have any breeding, as commonly they are well brought up; 'tis not for every scab to be acquainted with 'em. But leaving scabs, to you good neighbours [now] I bend my speech. First, to say more than a man can say, I hold it not so fit to be spoken, but to say what man ought to say, there I leave you also. I must confess your loves have chosen a weak and unlearn'd man—that I can neither write nor read you all can witness—yet not altogether so unlearn'd but I could set my mark to a bond, if I would be so simple, an excellent token of government. Cheer you then, my hearts, you have done you know not what. There's a full point; you must all cough and hem now.

ALL

Hum, hum, hum, cough!

### **SIMON**

Now touching our common adversary, the fustian weaver, who threateneth he will raise the deadly sins amongst us, which as I take it are seven in number, let 'em come: our town's big enough to hold 'em, we will not much disgrace it; besides, you know a deadly sin will lie in a narrow hole. But when they think themselves safest and the web of their iniquity woven, with the horse-strength of my justice I'll break the looms of their concupiscence, and let the weaver go seek his shuttle. Here you may hem again, if you'll do me the favour.

ALL

Cough and hem!

### **SIMON**

Why, I thank you all, and it shall not go unrewarded. Now for the seven deadly sins: first, for pride, which always sits uppermost and will be plac'd without a churchwarden; being a sin that is not like to be chargeable to the parish, I slip it over and think it not worthy of punishment. Now you all know that sloth does not anything; this place, you see, requires wisdom. How can a man in conscience punish that which does nothing? Envy, a poor, lean creature that eats raw liver, perhaps it pines to see me chosen, and that makes me the fatter with laughing; if I punish envy then I punish mine own carcass, a great sin against authority. For wrath, the less we say, the better 'tis; a scurvy, desperate thing it is, that commonly hangs itself and saves justice many a halter by't. Now for covetousness and gluttony, I'll tell you more when I come out of mine office; I shall have time to try what they are, I'll prove 'em soundly, and if I find gluttony and covetousness to be directly sins, I'll bury one i' th' bottom of a chest, and th'other i' th' end of my garden. But, sirs, for lechery, I mean to tickle that home, nay, I'm resolv'd upon't: I will not leave one whore in all the town.

### **BARBER**

Some of your neighbours may go seek their wives i' th' country then.

### **SIMON**

Barber, be silent; I will cut thy comb else. To conclude, I will learn the villainies of all trades, mine own I know already: if there be any knavery in the baker, I will bolt it out; if in the brewer, I will taste him thoroughly, and then piss out his iniquity in his own sinkhole. In a word, I will knock out all enormities like a bullock, and send the hide to my fellow tanners.

ALL

A Simonides, a true Simonides indeed!

## Hengist, King of Kent

Enter Hengist and Roxena.

### **HENGIST**

How now, how goes your choice?

### **TAILOR**

Here's he, my lord.

### **SIMON**

You may prove I am the man: I am bold to take the upper hand of your lordship a little; I'll not lose an inch of my honour.

### **HENGIST**

Hold, sirs, there's some few crowns to mend your feast,  
Because I like your choice. [Gives them money.]

### **BARBER**

Joy bless your lordship!  
We'll drink your health with trumpets.

### **SIMON**

Ay, with sackbutts,  
That's the more solemn drinking for my state;  
No malt this year shall fume into my pate.

Exeunt [all but Hengist and Roxena].

### **HENGIST**

Continues still that fervour in his love?

### **ROXENA**

Nay, with increase, my lord, the flames grows greater,  
Though [he] has learn'd a better art of late  
[To set a screen before it.]

Enter Vortiger and Horsus.

### **HENGIST**

[Canst] speak low?

[Hengist and Roxena retire to one side, Hengist pretending to have fallen asleep reading a book.]

### **HORSUS**

Heard every word, my lord.

### **VORTIGER**

Plainly?

### **HORSUS**

Distinctly;  
The course I took was dangerous, but not failing,

III.i. [A room in the palace]

## Hengist, King of Kent

For I convey'd [myself] behind the [hangings]  
Even first before [her] entrance.

### VORTIGER

'Twas well ventur'd.

### HORSUS

I had such a woman's first and second longing in me  
To hear her how she would bear her mock'd abuse  
After she was half return'd to privacy,  
I could have fasted out an ember week,  
And never thought of hunger, to have heard her;  
She fetch'd three short turns, I shall ne'er forget 'em,  
Like an imprison'd lark that offers still  
Her wing at liberty and returns check'd:  
So would her soul fain have been gone, and even hung  
Flittering upon the bars of poor mortality,  
Which ever as it offer'd, drove her back again.  
Then came your holy Lupus and Germanus.

### VORTIGER

Oh, two holy confessors.

### HORSUS

At whose sight  
I could perceive her fall upon her breast  
And cruelly afflict herself with sorrow;  
I never heard a sigh till I heard hers,  
Who after her confession, pitying her,  
Put her into a way of patience,  
Which now she holds, to keep it hid from you.  
There's all the pleasure that I took in't now,  
When I heard that my pains was well rememb'red.  
So with applying comforts and relief,  
They have brought it low now to an easy grief,  
But yet the taste is not quite gone.

### VORTIGER

Still fortune  
Sits bettering our [invention].

Enter Castiza.

### HORSUS

Here she comes.

### CASTIZA

[Aside] Yonder's my lord. Oh, I'll return again;  
Methinks I should not dare to look on him.

### HORSUS

III.i. [A room in the palace]

She's gone again.

**VORTIGER**

It works the kindlier, sir;  
Go [now] and call her back. She winds herself  
Into the snare so prettily, 'tis a pleasure  
To set toils for her.

[Horsus brings Castiza back to Vortiger.]

**CASTIZA**

[Aside] He may read my shame  
Now in my blush.

**VORTIGER**

Come, y'are so link'd to holiness,  
So taken up with contemplative desires,  
That the world has you yet enjoys you not;  
You have been weeping too.

**CASTIZA**

Not I, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

Trust me, I fear you have; y'are much to blame  
And you should yield so to passion without cause.  
Is not [there] time enough for meditation?  
Must it lay title to your health and beauty,  
And draw them into time's consumption too?  
'Tis too exacting for a holy faculty.  
[Noticing Hengist] My Lord of Kent? I pray [wake] him, captain;  
He reads himself asleep sure.

**HORSUS**

My lord?

**HENGIST**

Your pardon, sir.

**VORTIGER**

Nay, I'll take away your book and bestow 't here.  
Lady, you that delight in virgin[s'] stories  
And all chaste works, here's excellent reading for you;  
Make of that book as rais'd men make of favour,  
Which they grow sick to part from. And now, my lord,  
You that have so conceitedly gone beyond me  
And made such large use of a slender gift,  
Which we never minded: I commend your thrift,  
And for your building's name shall to all ages  
Carry the stamp and impress of your wit,  
It shall be call'd Thong Castle.

III.i. [A room in the palace]

**HENGIST**

How, my lord!  
Thong Castle! There your highness quits me kindly.

**VORTIGER**

'Tis fit art should be known by her right name;  
You that can spread my gift, I'll spread your fame.

**HENGIST**

I thank your grace for that, sir.

**VORTIGER**

And, lov'd lord,  
So well we do accept your invitation,  
With all speed we'll set forward.

**HENGIST**

Your love honours me.

Music. Exeunt omnes.

**IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]**

Enter Vortiger, Castiza, two Ladies, Roxena, Devonshire, Stafford at one door, Simon and his brethren at the other[, a mace and a sword before him].

**SIMON**

Lo, I the mayor of Quinborough town by name,  
With all my brethren, saving one that's lame,  
Are come as fast as fiery mill-horse gallops  
To meet thy grace, thy queen and thy fair trollops.  
For reason of our coming do not look,  
It must be done, I found it i' th' town book;  
And yet not I myself: I scorn to read,  
I keep a clerk to do those jobs for need.  
And now expect a rare conceit before Thong Castle [see] thee.  
Reach me the thing to give the king, the other too I prithe.  
Now here they be for queen and thee, the gifts all steel and leather,  
But the conceit of mickle weight, and here they're come together:  
To show two loves must join in one, our town presents to thee  
This gilded scabbard to the queen, this dagger unto thee.

**VORTIGER**

Forbear your tedious and ridiculous duties!  
I hate 'em, as I do the rotten roots of you,  
You inconstant rabble; I have felt your fits.

## Hengist, King of Kent

Sheath up your bounty with your [iron] wits  
And get you gone.

Music. Exeunt King [Vortiger, Castiza], lords [and ladies. Manent Simon and citizens].

### **SIMON**

Look, sir[s], is his back turn'd?

### **ALL**

'Tis, 'tis.

### **SIMON**

Then bless the good Earl of Kent, say I;  
I'll have this dagger turn'd into a pie  
And eaten up for anger, every bit on't.  
And when that pie is new cut up by some rare, cunning pie-man,  
They shall all lamentably sing, "Put up thy dagger, Simon."

Exeunt.

[IV.ii. A hall in Thong Castle]

Hoboys. The king [Vortiger] and his train met by Hengist and Horsus; they salute and exeunt. While the banquet is brought forth, music plays. Enter Vortiger, [Hengist,] Horsus, Devonshire, Stafford, Castiza, Roxena, and two Ladies.

### **HENGIST**

A welcome, mighty lord, may appear costlier,  
More full of talk and toil, show and conceit,  
But one more stor'd with thankful love and truth  
I forbid all the sons of men to boast of.

### **VORTIGER**

Why, here's a fabric that implies eternity,  
The building plain, but [most] substantial;  
Methinks it looks as if it mock'd all [ruin],  
Save that great masterpiece of consumation,  
The end of time, which must consume even [ruin]  
And eat that into cinders.

### **HENGIST**

There's no brass  
Would last your praise, my lord; 'twould last beyond it  
And shame our durablest metal.

### **VORTIGER**

[Taking him aside] Horsus.

### **HORSUS**

My lord.

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

Hengist, King of Kent

**VORTIGER**

This is the time I have chosen; here's [a full] meeting,  
And here will I disgrace her.

**HORSUS**

'Twill be sharp, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

Oh, 'twill be best, sir.

**HORSUS**

Why, here's the earl her father.

**VORTIGER**

Ay, and the lord her uncle, that's the height on't,  
Invited both a' purpose to rise sick  
Full of shame's surfeit.

**HORSUS**

And that's shrewd, byrlady;  
It ever sticks close to the ribs of honour.  
Great men are never sound men after it;  
It leaves some ache or other in their names still,  
Which their posterity feels at every weather.

**VORTIGER**

Mark but the least presentment of occasion;  
As such times yields enough, and then mark me.

**HORSUS**

My observance is all yours, you know't, my lord.  
[Aside] What careful ways some take t'abuse themselves!  
But as there be assurers of men's goods  
'Gainst storm or pirate, which gives [venturers] courage,  
So such there must be to make up man's theft,  
Or there would be no woman [venturer] left.  
See, now the[y] find their seats. What a false knot  
Of amity he ties about her arm,  
Which rage must part! In marriage 'tis no wonder  
Knots knit with kisses are oft broke with thunder.

Music.

Music? Then I have done, I always learn  
To give my betters place.

**VORTIGER**

Where's Captain Horsus?

**HORSUS**

My lord.

Hengist, King of Kent

**VORTIGER**

Sit, sit, we'll have a health anon  
To all good services.

**HORSUS**

Th'are poor in these days;  
They had rather have the cup than the health, my lord.  
[Aside] I sit wrong now; he hears me not, and most  
Great men are deaf on that side.

Song.

If in music were a power  
To breath a welcome to thy worth,  
This should be the ravishing hour  
To vent her spirit's treasure forth.  
Welcome, oh, welcome; in that word alone  
She'd choose to dwell and draw all parts to one.

**VORTIGER**

My Lord of Kent, I thank you for this welcome;  
It came unthought of in the sweetest language  
That ever my soul relish'd.

**HENGIST**

You are pleas'd, my lord,  
To raise my happiness from slight deservings,  
To show what power's in princes; not in us  
Aught worthy, 'tis in you that makes us thus.  
I'm chiefly sad, my lord, your queen's not merry.

**VORTIGER**

[Aside] So honour bless me, he has found the way  
To my grief strangely.--Is there no delight?

**CASTIZA**

My lord, I wish not any, nor is't needful;  
I am as I was ever.

**VORTIGER**

That's not so.

**CASTIZA**

[Aside] How? Oh, my fears!

**VORTIGER**

[When] she writ maid, my lord,  
You knew her otherwise.

**DEVONSHIRE**

To speak but truth,

Hengist, King of Kent

I never knew her a great friend to mirth,  
Nor taken much with any one delight,  
Though there be many seemly and honourable  
To give content to ladies without taxing.

**VORTIGER**

My Lord of Kent, this to thy full desert,  
Which [intimates] thy higher flow to honour. [Drinks.]

**HENGIST**

Which, like a river, shall return [service]  
To the great master–fountain.

**VORTIGER**

[To First Lady] Where's your lord?  
I miss'd him not till now. Lady, and yours?  
No marvel then we were so out o' th' way  
Of all pleasant discourse: they are the keys  
Of human music; sure at their nativities  
Great nature sign'd a general patent to 'em  
To take up all the mirth in a whole kingdom.  
What's their employment now?

**FIRST LADY**

May't please your grace,  
We never are so far acquainted with 'em,  
Nothing we know but what they cannot keep;  
That['s] even the fashion of 'em all, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

It seems you have great faith though in their constancy,  
And they in yours, you dare so trust each other.

**SECOND LADY**

Hope well we do, my lord; we have reason for't,  
Because they say brown men are honestest,  
But she's a fool will swear for any colour.

**VORTIGER**

They would for yours.

**SECOND LADY**

Troth, 'tis a doubtful question,  
And I'd be loath to put mine to't, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

Faith, dare you swear for yourselves? It's a plain motion.

**SECOND LADY**

My lord—

**VORTIGER**

You cannot deny that with honour,  
And since 'tis urg'd, I'll put you to't in troth.

**FIRST LADY**

May't please your grace—

**VORTIGER**

'Twill please me wondrous well,  
And here's a book; mine never goes without one:  
She's an example to you all for purity.  
Come, swear, I have sworn you shall, that you never knew  
The will of any man besides your husband's.

**SECOND LADY**

I'll swear, my lord, as far as my remembrance.

**VORTIGER**

How! Your remembrance! That were strange.

**FIRST LADY**

Your grace  
Hearing our just excuses will not say so.

**VORTIGER**

Well, what's your just excuse? Y'are ne'er without some.

**FIRST LADY**

I'm often taken with a sleep, my lord,  
The loudest thunder cannot waken me,  
Not if a cannon's burthen be discharg'd  
Close by mine ear; the more may be my wrong:  
There can be no infirmity, my lord,  
That's more excusable in any woman.

**SECOND LADY**

And I'm so troubled with the mother too  
I have often call'd in help, I know not whom;  
Three at once has been too weak to keep me down.

**VORTIGER**

I perceive there's no fastening: well fare one then  
That ne'er deceives faith's [anchor] of her hold,  
Come at all seasons. [To Castiza] Here, be thou the star  
To guide those erring women, show the way  
Which I will make 'em follow. Why dost start,  
Draw back, and look so pale?

**CASTIZA**

My lord—

**VORTIGER**

Come hither,  
Nothing but take that oath; thou'lt take a thousand.  
A thousand? Poor! A million, nay, as many  
As there be angels' registers of oaths!  
Why, look thee, over-holy, fearful chastity,  
That sins in nothing but in too much niceness,  
I'll begin first and swear for thee myself:  
I know thee a perfection so unstain'd,  
So sure, so absolute, I will not pant on't  
But catch time greedily. By all these blessings  
That blows truth into fruitfulness, and those curses  
That with their barren breaths blast perjury,  
Thou art as pure as sanctity's best shrine  
From all man's mixture but what's lawful, mine.

**CASTIZA**

[Aside] Oh, heaven forgive him, h'as forsworn himself!

**VORTIGER**

Come,  
'Tis but going now my way.

**CASTIZA**

[Aside] That's bad enough.

**VORTIGER**

I have clear'd all doubts, you see.

**CASTIZA**

Good my lord,  
Spare me.

**VORTIGER**

How! It grows later now, then so  
For modesty's sake make more speed this way.

**CASTIZA**

Pardon me, my lord, I cannot.

**VORTIGER**

What?

**CASTIZA**

I dare not.

**VORTIGER**

Fail all confidence  
In thy weak kind forever!

**DEVONSHIRE**

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Here's a storm  
Able to [wake] all of our name [inhumed]  
And raise 'em from their sleeps of peace and fame  
To set the honour of their bloods right here  
Hundred years after; a perpetual motion  
Has their true glory been from seed to seed,  
And cannot be chok'd now with a poor grain  
Of dust and earth. We that remain, my lord,  
Her uncle and myself, [wood] in this tempest,  
As ever robb'd man's peace, will undertake  
Upon life's deprivation, lands and honour,  
[She shall accept this oath.

### **VORTIGER**

You do but call me then  
Into a world of more despair and horror;  
Yet since so wilfully you stand engag'd  
In high scorn to be touch'd, with expedition  
Perfect your undertakings with your fames,  
Or by the issues of abus'd belief  
I'll take the forfeit of lives, lands and honours,]  
And make one ruin serve our joys and yours.

### **CASTIZA**

[Aside] Why, here's a height of misery never reach'd yet;  
I lose myself and others.

### **DEVONSHIRE**

You may see  
How much we lay in balance with your goodness—  
And had we more, it went—for we presume  
You cannot be religious and so vild.

### **CASTIZA**

As to forswear myself, 'tis true, my lord,  
I will not add a voluntary sin  
To a constrain'd one. I confess, great sir,  
The honour of your bed has been abus'd—

### **VORTIGER**

Oh, beyond patience!

### **CASTIZA**

Give me hearing, sir:  
But far from my consent, I was surpris'd  
By villains, and so ravish'd.

### **VORTIGER**

Hear you that, sirs?  
Oh, cunning texture to enclose adultery!  
Mark but what subtle veil her sin puts on:

Hengist, King of Kent

Religion brings her to confession first,  
Then steps in art to sanctify that lust.  
'Tis likely you could be surpris'd.

**CASTIZA**

My lord!

**VORTIGER**

I'll hear no more! Our guard, seize on those [lords].

**DEVONSHIRE**

We cannot perish now too fast. Make speed  
To swift destruction; he breathes most accursed  
That lives so long to see his name die first.

[Exeunt Devonshire and Stafford, guarded.]

**HORSUS**

[Aside] Ha, ha, here's no dear villainy!

**HENGIST**

Let him entreat, sir,  
That falls in [saddest] grief for this event,  
Which ill begins the fortune of this building,  
My lord.

**ROXENA**

[Taking Horsus aside] What if he should cause me to swear too, captain?  
You know, sir, I'm as far to seek in honesty  
As the [worst] here can be; I should be sham'd too.

**HORSUS**

Why, fool, they swear by that we worship not,  
So you may swear your heart out and ne'er hurt yourself.

**ROXENA**

That was well thought on; I'd quite lost myself.

**VORTIGER**

You shall prevail in noble suits, my lord,  
But this, this shames the speaker.

**HORSUS**

[Aside] I'll step in now,  
Though it shall be to no purpose.--Good my lord,  
Think on your noble and most hopeful issue,  
Lord [Vortimer] the prince.

**VORTIGER**

A bastard, sir!  
Oh, that his life were in my fury now!

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

**CASTIZA**

That injury stirs my soul to speak the truth  
Of his conception. Here I take the book, my lord:  
By all the glorified rewards of virtue  
And prepared punishments for consents in sin,  
A queen's hard sorrow never supply'd a kingdom  
With issue more legitimate than [Vortimer].

**VORTIGER**

Pish, this takes not out the stain of present shame though;  
To be once good is nothing when it ceases:  
Continuance crowns desert; she ne'er can go  
For perfect-honest that's not always so.  
Beshrew this needless urging of this oath;  
'T has justified her somewhat.

**HORSUS**

To small purpose, sir.

**VORTIGER**

Amongst so many women not one here  
Dare swear a simple chastity? Here's an age  
To propagate virtue in! Since I have began't,  
I'll shame you all together and so leave you.  
My Lord of Kent.

**HENGIST**

Your highness?

**VORTIGER**

That's your daughter?

**HENGIST**

Yes, my good lord.

**VORTIGER**

Though I'm your guest today,  
And should be less austere to you or yours,  
In this [case] pardon me: I will not spare her.

**HENGIST**

Then her own goodness friend her; here she comes, my lord.

**VORTIGER**

[To Roxena] The tender reputation of a maid  
Makes up your honour, or else nothing can;  
The oath you take is not for truth to man,  
But to your own white soul, a mighty task.  
What dare you do in this?

## Hengist, King of Kent

### **ROXENA**

My lord, as much  
As chastity can put a woman to,  
I ask no favour; and t' approve the purity  
Of what my habit and my time professes,  
As also to requite all courteous censure,  
Here I take oath I am as free from man  
As truth from death, or sanctity from stain.

### **VORTIGER**

Oh, thou treasure that ravishes the possessor!  
I know not where to speed so well again;  
I'll keep thee while I have thee. Here's a fountain  
To spring forth princes and the seeds of kingdoms.  
Away with that infection of great honour,  
And those her leprous pledges, by her poison  
Blemish'd and spotted in their fames forever!  
Here [we'll] restore succession with true peace,  
And of pure virgins' grace the poor increase.

Music. Exeunt [all but Horsus].

### **HORSUS**

Ha ha! He's well provided now; here [struck] my fortune.  
With what an impudent confidence she swore honest,  
Having the advantage of the oath! The mischiefs  
That peoples a lost honour! Oh, they're infinite,  
For as at a small breach in town or castle  
When one has entrance, a whole army follows,  
In woman, so abusively once known,  
Thousands of sins has passage made with one:  
Vice comes with troops, and they that entertain  
A mighty potentate must receive his train.  
Methinks I should not hear from fortune next  
Under an earldom now. She cannot spend  
A night so idly but to make a lord  
With ease, methinks, and play. The Earl [of] Kent  
Is calm and smooth, like a deep, dangerous water.  
He has some secret way; I know his blood:  
The grave's not greedier, nor hell's lord more proud.  
Somewhat will hap, for this astonishing choice  
[Strikes] pale the kingdom, at which I rejoice.

[Exit.]

[Dumb show iii.]

Hoboyes. Dumb show. Enter Lupus, Germanus, Devonshire, Stafford leading [Vortimer]; they seat him in the throne and crown him king. Enter Vortiger in great passion and submission; they neglect him, then Roxena expressing great fury and discontent. They lead out [Vortimer] and leave Vortiger and Roxena; she suborns two Saxons to murder [Vortimer]; they swear performance and secrecy, and exeunt with Roxena. Then Vortiger left

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

alone draws his sword and offers to run himself thereon. Enter Horsus and prevents him; then the lords enter again and exit Horsus. Then is brought in the body of [Vortimer] in a chair, dead; they all in amazement and sorrow take Vortiger and upon his submission restore him, swearing him against the Saxons. Then enter Hengist with diverse Saxons, Vortiger and the rest with their swords drawn threaten their expulsion, whereat Hengist, amaz'd, sends one to entreat a peaceable parley, which seeming to be granted by laying down their weapons, exeunt severally.

[Chorus iv.]

Enter Raynulph.

### RAYNULPH

Of pagan blood a queen being chose,  
Roxena hight, the Britons rose,  
For [Vortimer] the[y] crowned king,  
But she soon poisoned that sweet spring.  
Then to rule they did restore  
Vortiger, and him they swore  
Against the Saxons; they, constrain'd,  
Begg'd peace treaty, and obtain'd.  
And now in numbers equally  
Upon the plain near Salisbury,  
A peaceful meeting they decreen  
Like men of love, no weapon seen.  
But Hengist, that ambitious lord,  
Full of guile, corrupts his word,  
As the sequel too well proves;  
On that your eyes, on us your loves.

Exit.

[IV.iii. A plain near Salisbury]

Enter Hengist, Gentleman [Saxon], and Saxons.

### HENGIST

If we let slip this opportuneful hour,  
Take leave of fortune, certainty or thought  
Of ever fixing, we are loose at root,  
And the least storm may rend us from the bosom  
Of this land's hopes forever. But, dear Saxons,  
Fasten we now, and our unshaken firmness  
Will assure after ages.

SAXON

We are resolv'd, my lord.

### HENGIST

Observ'd you not how Vortiger the king,  
Base in submission, threat'ned our expulsion,  
His arm held up against us? Is't not time

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

To make our best preventions? What should check me?  
H'as perfected that great work in our daughter  
And made her queen; she can ascend no higher.  
Nor can the incessant flow of his love['s] praises,  
Which yet still sways, take from that height it raises;  
She's sure enough. What rests then but that I  
Make happy mine own hopes, and policy  
[Forbids] no way, noble or treacherous ended:  
What best effects is of her best commended.  
Therefore be quick, dispatch; here, every man  
Receive into the service of his vengeance  
An instrument of steel, which will unseen  
Lurk like the snake under the innocent shade  
Of a spread summer's leaf, and as great substance  
Blocks itself up into less room in gold  
Than other metals, and less burthensome,  
So in the other hand lies all confin'd  
Full as much death as ever chang'd mankind.  
'Tis all the same time that a small watch shows  
As great church dials, and as true as those.  
Take heart: the commons love us; those remov'd  
That are the nerves, our greatness stands improv'd.

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Give us the word, my lord, and we are perfect.

### **HENGIST**

That's true, the word; I lose myself. Nemp your sexes:  
It shall be that.

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Enough, sir, then we strike.

### **HENGIST**

But the king's mine; take heed you touch him not.

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

We shall not be at leisure, never fear't;  
We shall have work enough of our own, my lord.

[Enter Vortiger and British Lords.]

### **HENGIST**

They come. Calm looks but stormy souls possess you.

### **VORTIGER**

We see you keep your word in all points firm.

### **HENGIST**

No longer may we boast of so much breath  
As goes to a word['s] making, than of care

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

In the preserving of it when 'tis made.

### VORTIGER

Y'are in a virtuous way, my Lord of Kent,  
And since w'are both sides well met like sons of peace,  
All other arms laid by in sign of favour  
If our conditions be embrac'd—

### HENGIST

[Th'are, th'are].

### VORTIGER

[Preparing to embrace him] We'll use no other but these only here.

### HENGIST

Nemp your sexes!

[The Saxons seize the Britons.]

### BRITISH LORDS

Treason, treason!

### HENGIST

Follow to th' heart,  
My trusty Saxons, 'tis your liberty,  
Your wealth and honour! Soft, y'are mine, my lord.

### VORTIGER

Take me not basely, when all sense and strength  
Lies bound up in amazement at this treachery.  
What devil hath breath'd this everlasting part  
Of falsehood into thee?

### HENGIST

Let it suffice  
I have you and will hold you prisoner,  
As fast as death holds your best props in silence.  
We know the hard conditions of our peace,  
Slavery or diminution, which we hate  
With a joint loathing: may all perish thus  
That seek to subjugate or lessen us.

### VORTIGER

Oh, you strange nooks of guile or subtlety,  
Where man so cunningly lies hid from man!  
Who could expect such treason from [your] breast,  
Such thunder from your voice? Or take you pride  
To imitate the fair uncertainty  
Of a bright day, that teems the sudden'st storm,  
When the world least expects one? But of all  
I'll never trust fair sky in a man again;

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

There's the deceitful weather. Will you heap  
More guilt upon you by detaining me,  
Like a cup taken after a full surfeit,  
Even in contempt of health and heaven together?  
What seek you?

### **HENGIST**

Ransom for your liberty  
As I shall like of, or you ne'er obtain 't.

### **VORTIGER**

Here's a most headstrong, dangerous ambition.  
Sow you the seeds of your aspiring hopes  
In blood and treason, and must I pay for 'em?  
Have not I rais'd you to this height?

### **HENGIST**

My lord,  
A work of mine own merit, since you enforce it.

### **VORTIGER**

There's even the general thanks of all aspirers:  
When they have all the honours kingdoms can impart,  
They write above it still their own desert.

### **HENGIST**

I have writ mine true, my lord.

### **VORTIGER**

That's all their sayings.  
Have I not rais'd your daughter to a queen?

### **HENGIST**

Why, y'have the harmony of your pleasure for't;  
Y'have crown'd your own desires! What's that to me?

### **VORTIGER**

And what will crown yours, sir?

### **HENGIST**

Faith, things of reason:  
I demand Kent.

### **VORTIGER**

Why, y'have the earldom on't!

### **HENGIST**

The kingdom on't, I mean, without control,  
The full possession.

### **VORTIGER**

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

Hengist, King of Kent

This is strange in you.

**HENGIST**

It seems y'are not acquainted with my blood yet  
To call this strange.

**VORTIGER**

Never was king of Kent yet  
But who was general king.

**HENGIST**

I'll be the first then;  
Everything has beginning.

**VORTIGER**

No less title?

**HENGIST**

Not if you hope for liberty, my lord.  
So dear a happiness would be wrong'd by slighting.

**VORTIGER**

Well, take 't, I resign 't.

**HENGIST**

Why, I thank your grace.

**VORTIGER**

Is your great thirst suffic'd yet?

**HENGIST**

Faith, my lord,  
There's yet behind a pair of teeming sisters,  
Norfolk and Suffolk, and I have done with you.

**VORTIGER**

Y'have got a fearful thirst, my lord, of late,  
Howe'er you came by't.

**HENGIST**

It behooves me then  
For my blood's health to seek all means to quench it.

**VORTIGER**

Them too?

**HENGIST**

There's nothing will be abated, sir,  
Put your assurance in't.

**VORTIGER**

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

You have the advantage;  
He whom fate captivates must yield to all.  
Take 'em.

### **HENGIST**

And you your liberty and peace, my lord,  
With our best love and wishes. Here's an hour  
Begins us Saxons in wealth, fame and power.

Exit [with all save Vortiger].

### **VORTIGER**

Are these the noblest fruits and fair'st requitals  
From works of our own raising?  
Methinks the murder of Constantius  
Speaks to me in the voice on't, and the wrongs  
Of our late queen, slipp'd both into one organ.  
Here is no safety for me but what's most doubtful;  
The rank rout love me not, and the strength I had  
This foul, devouring treachery has demolish'd.

Enter Horsus.

Ambition, hell, mine own undoing, lust,  
And all the brood of plagues conspire against me.  
[I have not a friend left me.]

### **HORSUS**

My lord, he dies  
That says it but yourself, were't that thief-king  
That has so boldly stol'n his honours from you,  
A treason that wrings tears from honest manhood.

### **VORTIGER**

So rich am I now in thy love and pity,  
I feel no loss at all; but we must part,  
My queen and I, to Cambria.

### **HORSUS**

My lord,  
And I not nam'd, that have vow'd lasting service  
To life's extremest minute to your fortunes?

### **VORTIGER**

Is my ruin'd fate bless'd with so dear a friend?

### **HORSUS**

My lord, no space in earth nor breadth in sea  
Shall divide me from you.

### **VORTIGER**

IV.i. [A road near Thong Castle]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Oh, faithful treasure!  
All my lost happiness is made up in thee.

Exit.

### **HORSUS**

I'll follow you through the world to cuckold you;  
That's my way now. Everyone has his toy  
While he lives here: some men delight in building  
A trick of Babel and will ne'er be left,  
Some in consuming what was rais'd with toiling,  
Hengist in getting honour, I in spoiling.

Exit.

## **V.i. [A room in Simon's house]**

Enter Simon, clerk [Aminadab], Glover, Fellmonger, Grazier, etc. [as officers]. Music.

### **SIMON**

Is not that rebel Oliver, the fustian weaver,  
That traitor to my year, 'prehended yet?

### **[AMINADAB]**

Not yet, so please your worship.

### **SIMON**

Not yet, sayst thou?  
How dar'st thou say not yet, and see me present?  
Thou malapart clerk that's good for nothing but  
To write and read! Is his loom seiz'd on?

### **[AMINADAB]**

Yes,  
And it like your worship, and sixteen yards of fustian.

### **SIMON**

Good; let a yard be sav'd to mend me between the legs, the rest cut in pieces and given to the poor: 'tis heretic fustian, and should be burnt indeed, but being worn threadbare the shame will be as great. How think you, neighbours?

### **GLOVER**

Greater, methinks, the longer it is worn,  
Where being once burnt it can be burn'd no more.

### **SIMON**

True, wise and most senseless.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Enter a Footman.

How now, sirrah?  
What's he approaching here in dusty pumps  
And greasy hair?

**[AMINADAB]**

A footman, sir, to the great King of Kent.

**SIMON**

The King of Kent? Shake him by the hand for me.  
Footman, thou art welcome; lo, my deputy shakes thee:  
Come when my year's out and I'll do't myself.  
An't were a dog come from the King of Kent,  
I keep those officers would shake him, I trow.  
And what's the news with thee, [thou] well-stew'd footman?

**FOOTMAN**

The king my master---

**SIMON**

Ha?

**FOOTMAN**

With a few Saxons  
Intends this night to make merry with you.

**SIMON**

Merry with me? I should be sorry else, fellow,  
And take it in evil part, so tell Kent's king.  
Why was I chosen mayor but that great men  
Should make merry with me? There's a jest indeed;  
Tell him I look'd for't, and me much he wrongs  
If he forget Simon that cut out his thongs.

**FOOTMAN**

I'll run with your worship's answer.

Exit.

**SIMON**

[Do, I prithee.]  
That fellow will be roasted against supper;  
He's half enough already, his [brows] baste him.  
The King of Kent! The king of Kirsendom  
Shall not be better welcome to me,  
For you must imagine now, neighbours, this is  
The time that Kent stands out of Kirsendom,  
For he that's king there now was never kirsen'd.  
This for your more instruction I thought fit,

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

That when y'are dead you may teach your children wit.  
Clerk!

**[AMINADAB]**

At your worship's elbow.

**SIMON**

I must turn you  
From the hall to the kitchen tonight.  
Give order that pigs be roasted yellow,  
Nine geese, and some three larks for piddling meat,  
But twenty woodcocks; I'll bid all my neighbours.  
Give charge the mutton come in all blood–raw;  
That's infidel meat! The King of Kent's a pagan,  
And must be serv'd so. And let those officers  
That seldom or never go to church bring 't in,  
'Twill be well taken; run.

[Exit Aminadab.]

[To an officer] Come hither you now.  
Take all the cushions down and thwack 'em soundly  
After my feast of millers, for their buttocks  
Has left a peck of flour in 'em; beat 'em carefully  
O'er a bolting–hutch: there'll be enough  
For a pan–pudding, as your dame will handle it.  
Then put fresh water into both the bough–pots,  
And burn a little juniper i' th' hall chimney;  
Like a beast as I was, I piss'd out the fire last night  
And never thought of the king's coming.

[Enter Aminadab.]

How now,  
Return'd so quickly?

**[AMINADAB]**

Please your worship, there's a certain company of players.

**SIMON**

Ha, players!

**[AMINADAB]**

Country comedians, interluders, sir, [desire] your worship's leave and favour to enact in the town hall.

**SIMON**

I' th' town hall? 'Tis ten to one I never grant it. Call 'em before my worship. If my house will not serve their turn, I would fain see the proudest he lend a barn to 'em.

Enter Cheaters.

## Hengist, King of Kent

Now, sirs, are you comedians?

### **SECOND CHEATER**

We are anything, sir: comedians, tragedians, tragi-comedians, comi-tragedians, pastorists, humourists, clownists, and satirists; we have 'em, sir, from the smile to the laugh, from the laugh to the handkerchief.

### **SIMON**

You are very [strong i' th'] wrists; and shall these good parts y'are indued withal be cast away upon peddlers and maltmen?

### **FIRST CHEATER**

For want of better company, and't please your worship.

### **SIMON**

What think you of me, my masters? Have you audacity enough to play before so high a person? Will not my countenance daunt you? For if you play before me I shall often look at you; I give you that warning beforehand. Take it not ill, my masters; I shall laugh at you, and truly when I'm least offended with you: my humour 'tis, but be not you abash'd.

### **FIRST CHEATER**

Sir, we have play'd before a lord ere now,  
Though we be country actors.

### **SIMON**

A lord? Ha, ha!  
You'll find it a harder thing to please a mayor.

### **FIRST CHEATER**

We have a play wherein we use a horse.

### **SIMON**

Fellows, you use no horseplay in my house.  
My rooms are rubb'd; keep it for hackney-men.

### **FIRST CHEATER**

We will not offer 't to your worship, sir.

### **SIMON**

Give me a play without a beast, I charge you.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

That's hard. Without a cuckold or a drunkard?

### **SIMON**

Oh, those beasts are often the best men i' th' parish, and must not be kept out! But which is your merriest play now? That I would hearken after.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Why, your worship shall hear the names all o'er and take your choice.

### **SIMON**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

And that's plain dealing, trust me. Come, begin, sir.

**SECOND CHEATER**

The Whirligig, The Whibble, Carwidgen—

**SIMON**

Heyday, what names are these?

**SECOND CHEATER**

New names of late.  
The Wild Goose Chase.

**SIMON**

I understand thee now.

**SECOND CHEATER**

Gull upon Gull.

**SIMON**

Why, this is somewhat yet.

**SECOND CHEATER**

Woodcock of Our Side.

**SIMON**

Get you further off then.

**FIRST CHEATER**

The Cheater and the Clown.

**SIMON**

Is that come up again?  
That was a play when I was prentice first.

**SECOND CHEATER**

Ay, but the cheater has learn'd more tricks since, sir,  
And gulls the clown with new additions.

**SIMON**

Then is [your] clown a coxcomb? Which is he?

**CLOWN**

I am the clown, sir.

**SIMON**

[Fie, fie, your company must fall upon him and beat him]; he's too fair to make the people laugh.

**FIRST CHEATER**

Not as he may be dress'd, sir.

**SIMON**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

Faith, dress him how you will, I'll give him that gift he'll never look half scurvily enough. Oh, the clowns that I have seen in my time! The very peeping out of 'em would have made a young heir laugh if his father had lain a-dying; a man undone in law the day before, the saddest case that can be, might for his twopence have burst himself with laughing and ended all his miseries. Here was a merry world, my masters!

Some talk of things of state, of puling stuff;  
There's nothing in a play to a clown's part,  
If he have the grace to hit on't, that's the thing indeed:  
The king shows well, but he sets off the king,  
But not the King of Kent, I mean not so;  
The king I mean is one I do not know.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Your worship speaks with safety, like a rich man,  
And for your finding fault, our hope is greater,  
Neither with him the clown nor me the cheater.

### **SIMON**

Away then; shift, clown, to thy motley crupper:  
We'll see 'em first, the king shall after supper.

[Exeunt] Cheater[s].

### **GLOVER**

I commend your worship's wisdom in that, Master Mayor.

### **SIMON**

Nay, 'tis a point of justice, an't be well examined, not to offer the king worse than I'll see myself, for a play may be dangerous; I have known a great man poison'd in a play.

### **GLOVER**

What, have you, Master Mayor?

### **SIMON**

But to what purpose many times I know not.

### **FELLMONGER**

Methinks they should destroy one another so.

### **SIMON**

No, no, he that's poison'd is always made privy to it;  
That's one good order they have amongst 'em.

Shout.

What joyful throat is that, Aminadab?

What is the meaning of this cry?

### **[AMINADAB]**

The rebel is ta'en.

### **SIMON**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

Oliver the puritan?

**[AMINADAB]**

Oliver, puritan and fustian weaver altogether.

**SIMON**

Fates, I thank you for this victorious day!  
Bonfires of pease–straw burn; let the bells ring.

**GLOVER**

There's two a–mending, sir, you know they cannot.

**SIMON**

'Las, the tenor's broken; ring forth the treble.

Enter Oliver [guarded].

I'm overcloy'd with joy! Welcome, thou rebel.

**OLIVER**

I scorn thy welcome.

**SIMON**

Art thou yet so stout?  
Wilt thou not stoop for grace? Then get thee out.

**OLIVER**

I was not born to stoop but to my loom;  
That seiz'd upon, my stooping days are done.  
In plain terms, if thou hast anything to say to me, send me away quickly; this is no biding place. I understand there's players in the house. Dispatch me, I charge thee, in the name of all the brethren.

**SIMON**

Nay now, proud rebel, I will make thee stay,  
And to thy greater torment see the play.

**OLIVER**

Oh, devil, I conjure thee by Amsterdam!

**SIMON**

Our word is past;  
Justice may wink a while but see at last.

[A trumpet sounds, and Oliver struggles.]

The play begins. Hold, stop him, stop him!

**OLIVER**

Oh, oh, that profane trumpet!

**SIMON**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

Set him down there, I charge you, officers.

**OLIVER**

I'll hide mine ears and stop mine eyes.

**SIMON**

Down with his golls, I charge you!

**OLIVER**

Oh, tyranny! Revenge it, tribulation!

**SIMON**

For rebels there are many deaths, but sure the only way  
To execute a puritan is seeing of a play.

**OLIVER**

Oh, I shall swoon!

**SIMON**

But if thou dost, to fright thee,  
A player's boy shall bring thee [aqua-vitae].

Enter First Cheater [and another].

**OLIVER**

Oh, I'll not [swoon] at all for't, though I die.

**SIMON**

Peace, here's a rascal; list and edify.

**FIRST CHEATER**

I say still he's an ass that cannot live by his wits.

**SIMON**

What a bold rascal's this! He calls us all asses at first dash; sure none of us lives by our wits, neighbours, unless it be Oliver the puritan.

**OLIVER**

I scorn as much to live by my wits as the proudest on you all.

**SIMON**

Why, you are an ass for company, Oliver, and so hold your prating.

Enter [Second] Cheater.

**SECOND CHEATER**

Fellows in arms, welcome. The news, the news?

**SIMON**

Fellows in arms, quoth 'a? He may well call 'em fellows in arms, for they are all out o' th' elbows.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

### **FIRST CHEATER**

Be lively, my heart, be lively; the booty's at hand. He's but a fool of a yeoman's eldest son; he comes balanc'd on both sides, bully: he's going to pay rent with th' one pocket, and buy household stuff with th' other.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

And if this be his last day, my chuck, he shall forfeit his lease, quoth th' one pocket, and eat his meat i' th' old wooden platters, quoth th' other.

### **SIMON**

Faith, then he's not so wise as he ought to be if he let such tatterdemalions get th' upper hand on him.

Enter Clown.

### **FIRST CHEATER**

He comes, he comes.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Ay, but do you mark how he comes? Small to our comfort, with both his hands in's pockets. How is't possible to pick a lock when the key's o' th' inside o' th' door?

### **SIMON**

Ay, here's the part now, neighbours, that carries away the play. If the clown miscarry, farewell my hopes forever, the play's spoil'd.

### **CLOWN**

They say there's a foolish thing call'd cheaters abroad that will gull any yeoman's son of his purse and laugh in's [face] like an Irishman. I would fain meet with one of those cheaters; I'm in as good state to be gull'd now as ever I was in my life, for I have two purses at this time about me, and I'd fain be acquainted with that rascal that would but take one of 'em now.

### **SIMON**

Faith, thou mayst be acquainted with two or three that will do their good wills I warrant you.

### **FIRST CHEATER**

That way's too plain, too easy I'm afraid.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Come, come, sir, your familiar cheats takes best;  
They show like natural things and least suspected:  
Give me a round shilling quickly.

### **FIRST CHEATER**

'Twill but fetch one of his hands neither if it take.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Thou art [too] covetous. Let's have one at first, prithee;  
There's time enough to fetch out th'other after.  
[Loudly] Thou liest, 'tis lawful money, current money.

[They draw.]

Hengist, King of Kent

**FIRST CHEATER**

[Loudly] Ay, so is copper in some countries, sir.

**CLOWN**

Here's a fray towards, but I'll hold my hands,  
Let whose will part 'em.

**SECOND CHEATER**

Copper! I defy thee,  
And now I shall disprove thee. Look you, sir,  
Here comes an honest yeoman's son o' th' country,  
A man of judgment.

**CLOWN**

Pray be cover'd, sir;  
I have eggs in my cap, and cannot put it off.

**FIRST CHEATER**

Will you be tried by him?

**SECOND CHEATER**

I am content, sir.

**SIMON**

They look rather as if they would be tried next sessions.

**FIRST CHEATER**

Pray give your judgment of this piece of coin, sir.

**CLOWN**

Nay, an't be coin you strive about, let's see't;  
I love to handle money.

**FIRST CHEATER**

Look on't well, sir.

[They pick his pocket.]

**SECOND CHEATER**

Let him do his worst, sir.

**CLOWN**

Y'ad need to wear cut clothes, gentlemen,  
Y'are so choleric.

**SECOND CHEATER**

Nay, rub it and spare't not, sir.

**CLOWN**

Now by this silver, gentlemen, 'tis good money;  
Would y'had a hundred of 'em.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

**SECOND CHEATER**

We hope well, sir.

[Aside to First Cheater] Th'other pocket now and we are made men.

[Exeunt Cheaters, manet Clown].

**SIMON**

Oh, neighbours, I begin to be sick to see  
This fool so cozen'd; I would make the case mine own.

**CLOWN**

Still would I fain meet with this thing call'd cheaters.

**SIMON**

A whoreson coxcomb! They have met with thee!  
I can endure him no longer with patience.

**CLOWN**

Oh, my rent, my whole year's rent!

**SIMON**

A murrain on you!  
This makes us landlords stay so long  
Without our money.

**CLOWN**

The cheater[s] have been here!

**SIMON**

A scurvy hobby-horse, that could not leave his money with me, having such a charge about him! A pox on thee for an ass! Thou play a clown? I will commit thee for offering on't. Officer, away with him.

**GLOVER**

What means your worship? Why, you'll spoil the play, sir.

**SIMON**

Before the King of Kent shall be thus serv'd,  
I'll play the clown myself. Away with him!

**CLOWN**

With me? An't please your worship, 'twas my part.

**SIMON**

But 'twas as foolish a part as ever thou play'd'st in thy life, and I'll make thee smoke for't. I'll teach thee to understand to play a clown, thou shalt know; every man is not born to't. Look thee, away with him quickly,

Exit [officer] with Clown.

He'll have the other pocket; I [heard] him say 't with mine own ears.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

[Enter Second Cheater.]

See, he comes in another disguise to cheat thee again.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

[Aside] Pish, whither goes he now? He spoils all my part.

### **SIMON**

Come on, sir, let's see what your knaveship can do at me now. You must not think now, rascal, you have no fool in hand; I have committed for playing the part so like an ass.

[He throws off his gown, discovering his doublet with a satin forepart and a canvas back.]

### **SECOND CHEATER**

What's here to do?

### **GLOVER**

Fie, good sir, come away.

Will your worship base yourself to play a clown?

### **SIMON**

Away, brother, 'tis not good to scorn anything: a man does not know what he may come to; everyone knows his ending but not his beginning. Proceed, varlet, do thy worst, I defy thee!

### **SECOND CHEATER**

I beseech your worship let's have our own clown; I know not how to go forward else.

### **SIMON**

Knave, play out thy part with me or I'll lay thee by the heels all the days of thy life else. Why, how now, my masters, who's that laugh'd now? Cannot a man of worship play the clown a little for his pleasure but he must be laugh'd at? Do you know who I am? Is the king's deputy of no better accompt amongst you? Was I chosen to be laugh'd at? Where's my clerk?

### **[AMINADAB]**

Here, an't please your worship.

### **SIMON**

Take a note of all those that laugh at me, that when I have done I may commit 'em. Let me see who dares do't now. And now to you once again, sir cheater; look you, here's my purse—strings, I defy thee.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Good sir, tempt me not; my part is so written that I should cheat your worship and you were my father.

### **SIMON**

I should have much joy to have such a rascal to my son.

### **SECOND CHEATER**

Therefore I beseech your worship pardon me; the part has more knavery than when your worship saw it first. I assure you you'll be deceiv'd in't, sir; the new additions will take any man's purse in Kent or Kirsendom.

### **SIMON**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

And thou canst take mine now, I'll give't thee freely,  
And do thy worst, I charge thee, as thou'lt answer't.

**SECOND CHEATER**

I shall offend your worship.

**SIMON**

Knave, do't quickly!

**SECOND CHEATER**

Say you so? Then there's for you, and here's for me then.

[Throws meal in his face, takes his purse, and exit.]

**SIMON**

Oh, bless me, neighbours, I am in a fog,  
A cheater's fog! I can see nobody!

**GLOVER**

Run, follow him, officers!

[Exeunt Aminadab and officers.]

**SIMON**

Away, let him go! He'll have all your purses, and he come back. A pox on your new additions! They spoil all the plays that ever they come in; the old way had no such roguery in't, I remember. Call you this a merry comedy, when as a man's eyes are put out? Brother Honeysuckle.

**BRAZIER**

What says your sweet worship?

**SIMON**

I make you my deputy to rule the town till I can see again, which I hope will be within nine days at furthest. Nothing grieves me but that I hear Oliver the rebel laugh at me. Pox on your puritan face! This will make you in love with plays ever hereafter; we shall not keep you from 'em now.

**OLIVER**

In sincerity, I was never better edify'd at an exercise.

**SIMON**

Neighbours, what colour is the rascal's dust he threw in my face?

**GLOVER**

'Tis meal, an't please your worship.

**SIMON**

Meal? I'm glad on't; I'll hang the miller for selling on't.

**GLOVER**

Nay, ten to one the cheater never bought it;  
He stole it certainly.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

### **SIMON**

Why, then I'll hang the cheater for stealing on't, and the miller for being out of the way when he did it.

### **FELLMONGER**

Ay, but your worship was in the fault yourself;  
You bade him do his worst.

### **SIMON**

His worst? That's true,  
But he has done his best, the rascal, for I know not how a villain could put out a man's eyes better, and leave 'em  
in's head, than he has done.

Enter clerk [Aminadab].

### **[AMINADAB]**

Where's my master's worship?

### **SIMON**

How now, Aminadab? I hear thee though I see thee not.

### **[AMINADAB]**

Y'are sure cozen'd, sir; they are all cheaters professed! They have stol'n three silver spoons too, and the clown  
took his heels with all celerity; they only take the name of country comedians to abuse simple people with a  
printed play or two they bought at Canterbury last week for sixpence, and which is worst, they speak but what  
they list on't and fribble out the rest.

### **SIMON**

Here's no abuse to th' commonwealth,  
If a man could see to look into't!  
But mark the cunning of these cheating slaves:  
First they make justice blind, then play the knaves.

Enter Hengist.

### **GLOVER**

'Od's precious brother, the King of Kent's new lighted!

### **SIMON**

The King of Kent? Where is he, where is he?  
Oh, that I should live to this day, and yet  
Not live to see to bid him welcome!

### **HENGIST**

Now where's Simonides, our friendly host?

### **SIMON**

As blind as one that had been fox'd a [se'nnight].

### **HENGIST**

Why, how now, man?

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

### **SIMON**

Faith, practising a clown's part for your grace  
I have practis'd both mine eyes out.

### **HENGIST**

What need you practise that?

### **SIMON**

A man's never too old to learn; your grace will say so when you hear all the villainy. The truth 'tis, my lord, I meant to have been merry, and now 'tis my luck to weep water and oatmeal; but I shall see again at supper-time, I make no doubt on't.

### **HENGIST**

This is strange to me, sirs.

Enter Gentleman [Saxon].

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

Arm, arm, my lord—

### **HENGIST**

What's that?

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

With swiftest speed,  
If ever you'll behold the queen your daughter  
Alive again!

### **HENGIST**

Roxena!

### **GENTLEMAN SAXON**

They're besieg'd,  
Aurelius Ambrose and his brother Uther,  
With numbers infinite in Britain forces,  
Beset their castle, and they cannot 'scape  
Without your speedy succour.

### **HENGIST**

For her safety  
I'll forget food and rest. Away!

### **SIMON**

I hope  
Your grace will hear the jest afore you go.

### **HENGIST**

The jest! Torment me not. Set forward!

### **SIMON**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

I'll follow you  
To Wales with a dog and a bell, but I'll tell't you.

**HENGIST**

Unreasonable folly!

Exit [with Gentleman Saxon].

**SIMON**

'Tis sign of war when great ones disagree;  
Look to the rebel well till I can see,  
And when my sight's recover'd,  
I'll have his eyes put out for a fortnight.

**OLIVER**

Hang thee! Mine eyes! A deadly sin or two  
Shall pluck 'em out first, that's my resolution.

Exeunt omnes.

[V.ii. Before a castle in Wales]

Enter Aurelius and Uther with soldiers.

**UTHER**

My lord, the castle is so fortify'd—

**AURELIUS**

So fortify'd? Let wildfire ruin it,  
That his destruction may appear to him  
I' th' figure of heaven's wrath at the last day,  
That murderer of our brother! Haste away;  
I'll send my heart no peace till 't be consum'd.

Vortiger, Horsus on the walls.

**UTHER**

There he appears again; behold, my lord.

**AURELIUS**

Oh, that the zealous fire on my soul's altar,  
To the high birth of virtue consecrated,  
Would fit me with a [lightning] now to blast him  
Even as I look upon him!

**UTHER**

Good my lord,  
Your anger is too noble and too precious  
To waste [itself] on guilt so foul as his;  
Let ruin work her will.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

**VORTIGER**

Begirt all round?

**HORSUS**

All, all, my lord, 'tis folly to make doubt on't;  
You question things that horror long ago  
Resolv'd us on.

**VORTIGER**

Give me leave, Horsus, though—

**HORSUS**

Do what you will, sir; question 'em again,  
I'll tell 'em over to you.

**VORTIGER**

Not so, sir;  
I will not have 'em told again.

**HORSUS**

It rests then.

**VORTIGER**

That's an ill word put in, when thy heart knows  
There is no rest at all but torment-making.

**HORSUS**

True, my heart finds it, that sits weeping blood now  
For poor Roxena's safety. You'll confess, my lord,  
My love to you has brought me to this danger?  
I could have liv'd like Hengist, King of Kent,  
And London, York, Lincoln, and Winchester  
Under the power of my command, the portion  
Of my most [just] desert; it fell to't, enjoy'd now  
By lesser deservers.

**VORTIGER**

Say you so, sir,  
And you'll confess? Since you begin confession,  
A thing I should have died before I'd thought on:  
I'm out of your love's debt; i' th' [same] condition,  
Y'have marred the fashion of your affection utterly  
In your own wicked counsel. There you paid me;  
You could not but in conscience love me afterward.  
You were bound to do't, as men in honesty  
That vitiate virgins to give dowries to 'em:  
My faith was pure before to faithful woman.

**HORSUS**

My lord, my counsel—

**VORTIGER**

'Tis the map now spread  
That shows me all my miseries and discovers  
Strange newfound ruin to me; all these objects  
That in a dangerous ring circle my safety  
Are yours and of your fashioning.

**HORSUS**

Death mine!  
Extremity breeds the wildness of a desert  
Into your soul, and since y'have lost your thankfulness,  
Which is the noblest part in king or subject:  
My counsel do't!

**VORTIGER**

Why, I'll be judg'd by those  
That knit [death] in their brows, and think me now  
Not worthy the acception of a flattery;  
Most of those faces smil'd when I smil'd once.  
My lords!

**UTHER**

Reply not, brother.

**VORTIGER**

Seeds of scorn,  
I mind you not; I speak to those alone  
Whose force makes yours a power, which else were none.  
Show me the main food of your hate, my lords,  
Which cannot be the murder of Constantius  
That crawls in [your] revenges, for your love  
Was violent long since that.

**GENTLEMAN**

And had been still,  
If from that [pagan] woman thou'dst slept free;  
But when thou fledd'st from heaven, we fled from thee.

**VORTIGER**

[To Horsus] Was this your counsel now?

**HORSUS**

Mine? 'Twas the counsel  
Of your own lust and blood; your appetite knows it.

**VORTIGER**

May thunder strike me from these walls, my lords,  
And leave me many leagues off from your eyes,  
If this be not the man whose Stygian soul  
Breath'd forth that counsel to me, and sole plotter  
Of all these false, injurious disgraces

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

That have abus'd the virtuous patience  
Of our religious queen.

**HORSUS**

A devil in madness!

**VORTIGER**

Upon whose life, I swear, there sticks no stain  
But what's most wrongful, and where now she thinks  
A rape dwells on her honour, only I  
Her ravisher was, and his the policy.

**AURELIUS**

Inhuman practice!

**VORTIGER**

Now you know the truth,  
Will his death serve your fury?

**HORSUS**

Mine? My death?

**VORTIGER**

Will't do't?

**HORSUS**

What if it would?

**VORTIGER**

Say, will it do't?

**HORSUS**

Say they should say it would.

**VORTIGER**

Why, then it must.

**HORSUS**

It must?

**VORTIGER**

It shall; speak but the words, my lord,  
He shall be yielded up.

**HORSUS**

I yielded up?  
My lords, believe him not; he cannot do't.

**VORTIGER**

Cannot?

Hengist, King of Kent

**HORSUS**

'Tis but a false and base insinuation  
For his own life, and like his late submission.

**VORTIGER**

Oh, sting to honour, alive or dead thou goest  
For that word's rudeness only!

[Stabs him.]

**GENTLEMAN**

See, sin needs  
No more destruction than it breeds  
In [its] own bosom.

**VORTIGER**

Such another brings him.

**HORSUS**

What, has thy wild rage stamp'd a wound upon me?  
I'll send one to thy soul shall never heal for't.

**VORTIGER**

How, to my soul?

**HORSUS**

It shall be thy master torment  
Both for the pain and the everlastingness.

**VORTIGER**

Ha, ha!

**HORSUS**

Dost laugh? Take leave on't; all eternity  
Shall never see thee do so much again:  
Know thou art a cuckold.

**VORTIGER**

What!

**HORSUS**

You change too soon, sir.  
Roxena, whom th'ast rais'd to thine own ruin,  
She was my whore in Germany.

**VORTIGER**

Burst me open,  
You violence [of] whirlwinds!

**HORSUS**

Hear me out first:

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

For her embrace, which yet my flesh sits warm in,  
I was thy friend and follower.

**VORTIGER**

Deafen me,  
Thou most imperious noise that starts the world!

**HORSUS**

And to serve [both] our lust[s] I practis'd with thee  
Against thy virtuous queen---

**VORTIGER**

Bane to all comforts!

**HORSUS**

Whose faithful sweetness, too precious for thy blood,  
I made thee change for love's hypocrisy.

**VORTIGER**

Insufferable!

**HORSUS**

Only to make my way to pleasure fearless,  
Free and fluent.

**VORTIGER**

Hell's trump is in that throat!

**HORSUS**

It shall sound shriller.

**VORTIGER**

I'll dam it up with death first.

[They stab each other.]

I am at thy heart, I hope!

**HORSUS**

Hold out breath  
And I shall find thee quickly.

[Roxena enters in fear.]

**ROXENA**

Oh, for succour!  
Who's near me? Help me, save [me], the flame follows me!  
It's the figure of poor [Vortimer] the prince,  
Whose life I took by poison.

**VORTIGER**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

I'll tug out  
Thy soul here.

**HORSUS**  
Do, monster!

**ROXENA**  
Vortiger!

**VORTIGER**  
Monster!

**ROXENA**  
My lord!

**VORTIGER**  
Slave!

**ROXENA**  
Horsus, Horsus!

**HORSUS**  
Murderer!

**ROXENA**  
My lord!

**VORTIGER**  
Toad, pagan!

**HORSUS**  
Viper, Christian!

**ROXENA**  
Hear me, help me!  
My love, my lord, I'm scorch'd! What, all in blood?  
Oh, happy men, that ebb shows you're near falling.  
Have you chose that way yourselves rather to die  
By your own swords than feel fire's keener torment  
And will not kill me that most needs that pity?  
Captain, my lord, send me some speedier death  
And one less painful; I have a woman's sufferings.  
Oh, think upon't! Go not away so easily  
And leave the harder conflict to my weakness.  
Most wretched! I'm not worth so much destruction  
As would destroy me quickly. And turn back?  
I cannot. Oh, 'tis here, my lord, 'tis here!  
Horsus, look up, if not to succour me,  
To see me yet consum'd. Oh, what is love  
When life is not regarded?

**VORTIGER**

What strength's left  
I'll fix upon thy throat.

**HORSUS**

I have some force yet.

[Both stab, Horsus falls.]

**ROXENA**

No way to 'scape? Is this the end of glory?  
Doubly beset with enemy's wrath and fire!  
See, for an arm of lust, I'm now embrac'd  
With one that will destroy me, where I read  
The horror of dishonest actions, guile,  
And dissemblance. It comes nearer now, rivers  
And fountains fall; tears were now a blessing.  
It sucks away my breath; I cannot give  
A curse to sin and hear't out while I live.  
Oh, help, help, help!

[She falls.]

**VORTIGER**

Burn, burn; now I can tend thee.  
Take time with her in torments, call her life  
Afar off to thee, dry up her strumpet blood  
And hardly parch the skin; let one heat strangle her,  
Another fetch her to her sense again,  
And the worst pain be only her reviving!  
Follow her eternally; give her not o'er  
But in a bitter shape. I shall be cold  
Before thy rage reach me. Oh, mystical harlot!  
Thou hast thy full due, whom lust crown'd queen before  
Flames crown her [now] for a triumphant whore,  
And that end crowns 'em all.

Falls.

**AURELIUS**

Our peace is full now  
In yon usurper's fall, nor have I known  
A judgment meet more fearfully.  
Here, take this ring, deliver the good queen  
And those grave pledges of her injur'd honour,  
Her worthy father and her noble uncle,  
Too long, too much abus'd, whose clear-ey'd fames  
I reverence with respect to holiness due,  
A spotless name being sanctity now in few.

[Trumpets sound.]

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

## Hengist, King of Kent

How now, my lords! The meaning of these sounds?

[Enter] Devonshire, Stafford, leading Hengist prisoner.

### **HENGIST**

The consumer has been here; she's gone, she's lost,  
In glowing cinders now lie all my joys!  
The headlong fortune of my rash captivity  
Strikes not so fierce a wound into my hopes  
As thy dear loss.

### **AURELIUS**

Her father and her uncle!

### **GENTLEMAN**

They are indeed, my lord.

### **AURELIUS**

Part of my wishes.  
What fortunate power has prevented me  
And, ere my love came, brought 'em victory?

### **GENTLEMAN**

My wonder sticks in Hengist, King of Kent.

### **DEVONSHIRE**

My lord, to make that plain which now I see  
Fix'd in astonishment: the only name  
Of your return and being brought such gladness  
To this distracted kingdom, that, to express  
A thankfulness to heaven, it grew great  
In charitable actions, from which goodness  
We tasted liberty that lay engag'd  
Upon the innocence of woman's honour,  
A kindness that even threat'ned to undo us;  
And having newly but enjoy'd the benefit  
And fruits of our enlargement, 'twas our happiness  
To intercept this monster of ambition,  
Bred in these times of usurpation,  
The rankness of whose insolence and treason  
Grew to such height, 'twas arm'd to bid you battle,  
Whom, as our fames' redemption, on our knees  
We present captiv'd.

### **AURELIUS**

Had it needed reason  
You rightly came provided. What is he?

### **GENTLEMAN**

My lord, that treacherous Hengist, King of Kent.

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

**AURELIUS**

I understand not your desert till now, my lords.  
Is this that German Saxon whose least thirst  
Could not be satisfied under a province?

**HENGIST**

Had but my fate directed this bold arm  
To thy life, the whole kingdom had been mine,  
That was my hope's great aim; I have a thirst  
Could never have been full quench'd under all:  
The whole land must, or nothing.

**AURELIUS**

A strange drouth!  
And what a little ground shall death now teach you  
To be content withal!

**HENGIST**

Why, let it then,  
For none else can; y'have nam'd the only way:  
When I'm content, it must be when I'm clay.

**AURELIUS**

My lords, the best requital yet we give you  
Is a fair inward joy. Speak to your fames  
Glories unblemish'd, for the queen your daughter  
Lives firm in honour, neither by consent  
Or act [of] violence stain'd, as her grief judges;  
'Twas her own lord abus'd her honest fear,  
Whose ends sham'd him, only to make her clear.

**DEVONSHIRE**

Had your grace given a kingdom for a gift  
[It] had not been so welcome.

Enter Castiza, a Gentleman.

**AURELIUS**

Here she comes  
Whose virtues I must reverence.

**CASTIZA**

[Kneeling] Oh, my lord,  
I kneel a wretched woman.

**AURELIUS**

[Raising her] Arise with me,  
Great in true joy and honour.

**HENGIST**

V.i. [A room in Simon's house]

Hengist, King of Kent

This sight splits me;  
It brings Roxena's ruin to my memory.

**CASTIZA**

My lord, it is too great a joy for life.

**AURELIUS**

'Tis truth, and that I know you ever joy'd in,  
His end confess'd it.

**CASTIZA**

Are you return'd, soul's comforts?

**AURELIUS**

Nay, to approve thy pureness to posterity,  
The fruitful hopes of a fair, peaceful kingdom  
Here will I plant.

**CASTIZA**

Too worthless are my merits.

**AURELIUS**

There speaks thy modesty, and to the firmness  
Of truth's plantation in this land forever,  
Which always groans under some curse without it,  
As I begin my rule with the destruction  
Of this ambitious pagan, so shall all  
With his adulterate faith distain'd and soil'd  
Either turn Christians, die, or live exil'd.

**OMNES**

A blessing on those virtues!

Flourish. Exeunt.

[Chorus v.]

Enter Raynulph.

[RAYNULPH]

For story of truth compact  
I choose these times, these men to act,  
As careful now to make you glad  
As this were the first day they play'd;  
And though some that give none their due  
Please to mistake 'em, do not you,  
Whose censures have been ever kind:  
We hope 'tis good, but if we find  
Your grace and love by pleas'd signs understood,  
We cease to hope, for then we know 'tis good.

Hengist, King of Kent

Exit. Music.

FINIS

**HENGIST, KING OF KENT**