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|  | **INDUCTION, SCENE 1**  *Enter****SLY****and****HOSTESS*** | ***SLY****and****HOSTESS****enter.* |
|  | **SLY**  I’ll pheeze you, in faith. | **SLY**  I’ll fix you, I swear. |
|  | **HOSTESS**  A pair of stocks, you rogue! | **HOSTESS**  You thug! I’ll call for a pair of  **[STOCKS](javascript:void(0);)**  [The “stocks” consisted of a wooden frame in which you could lock a criminal’s ankles so that he or she couldn’t move.](javascript:void(0);)  [stocks](javascript:void(0);)! |
|  | **SLY**  Y'are a baggage, the Slys are no rogues. Look in the chronicles—we came in with Richard Conqueror. Therefore *paucas pallabris*: let the world slide. Sessa! | **SLY**  There are no thugs in my family, whore! Read your history! We  **[SLYS](javascript:void(0);)**  [Sly means William the Conqueror; he is saying he can trace his family back to the time of England’s first king, but gets the name wrong.](javascript:void(0);)  [Slys](javascript:void(0);) came over with Richard the Conqueror. Oh, the hell with it. I can’t be bothered. Shut up! |
|  | **HOSTESS**  You will not pay for the glasses you have burst? | **HOSTESS**  You won’t pay for the glasses you smashed? |
|  | **SLY**  No, not a denier. Go by, Saint Jeronimy. Go to thy cold bed and warm thee. | **SLY**  No, not a penny. Get out of my face. Go play with yourself. |
|  | **HOSTESS**  I know my remedy. I must go fetch the thirdborough. | **HOSTESS**  I know my rights. I’ll call a policeman. |
|  | *Exit* | *She exits.* |
| 10 | **SLY**  Third, or fourth, or fifth borough, I’ll answer him by law.  I’ll not budge an inch, boy. Let him come, and kindly. | **SLY**  Call them all! I have a legal right to be here. I’m not moving an inch, pal. Let them come—I don’t care. |
|  | *Falls asleep* | *He falls asleep.* |
|  | *Wind horns Enter a****LORD****from hunting, with his train* | *A hunting horn is heard. A****LORD****who has been hunting enters with his hunstmen.* |

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| **LORD**  Huntsman, I charge thee, tender well my hounds.  Breathe Merriman, the poor cur is embossed,  And couple Clowder with the deep-mouthed brach.  Saw’st thou not, boy, how Silver made it good  At the hedge corner, in the coldest fault?  I would not lose the dog for twenty pound. | | | **LORD**  Huntsman, look after my hounds. Let Merriman catch his breath—the poor dog’s foaming at the mouth. And tie up Clowder together with the long-mouthed bitch. *(to his page)* Did you see, boy, how Silver picked up the scent at the hedge corner, where it was weakest? I wouldn’t part with that dog for twenty pounds. | | | | |
| 20 | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  Why, Belman is as good as he, my lord.  He cried upon it at the merest loss,  And twice today picked out the dullest scent.  Trust me, I take him for the better dog. | | | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  I think Belman is just as good, my lord. He set up a howl when the scent was lost completely and twice picked it up where it was weakest. I swear he’s the better dog. | |
|  | | | **LORD**  Thou art a fool. If Echo were as fleet,  I would esteem him worth a dozen such.  But sup them well and look unto them all.  Tomorrow I intend to hunt again. | | | | | **LORD**  You’re a fool. If Echo were as fast, he would be worth a dozen like Belman. But give them all a good dinner and look after them well. I’ll go hunting again tomorrow, I think. | |
| 25 | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  I will, my lord. | | | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  I will, my lord. | |
|  | | | **LORD**  What’s here? One dead, or drunk? See, doth he breathe? | | | | | **LORD**  What’s this? A drunkard or a corpse? Check and see if he’s breathing. | |
|  | | | **SECOND HUNTSMAN**  He breathes, my lord. Were he not warmed with ale,  This were a bed but cold to sleep so soundly. | | | | | **SECOND HUNTSMAN**  He is, my lord. But this would be too cold a place to sleep if he hadn’t warmed himself with ale. | |
| 30     35 | | | **LORD**  O monstrous beast, how like a swine he lies!  Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!  Sirs, I will practice on this drunken man.  What think you: if he were conveyed to bed,  Wrapped in sweet clothes, rings put upon his fingers,  A most delicious banquet by his bed,  And brave attendants near him when he wakes,  Would not the beggar then forget himself? | | | | | **LORD**  It’s disgusting, sleeping that way—like a pig in the gutter! Alas, grim death, how vile and ugly your near-twin, sleep, is! Gentlemen, I think I’ll play a trick on this lout. What do you think? Say we were to carry him to one of the bedrooms, put fresh clothes on him and rings on his fingers, lay out a wonderful feast by his bed, and have servants in fancy dress near him when he wakes up—wouldn’t the poor tramp be confused? | |
| **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  Believe me, lord, I think he cannot choose. | | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  I don’t think he’d have any choice, my lord. | | | |
|  | | | | **SECOND HUNTSMAN**  It would seem strange unto him when he waked. | | | | **SECOND HUNTSMAN**  When he woke, he wouldn’t know where he was. | |
| 40     45     50     55     60 | | | | **LORD**  Even as a flatt'ring dream or worthless fancy.  Then take him up and manage well the jest.  Carry him gently to my fairest chamber  And hang it round with all my wanton pictures.  Balm his foul head in warm distilled waters  And burn sweet wood to make the lodging sweet.  Procure me music ready when he wakes,  To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound.  And if he chance to speak, be ready straight  And with a low submissive reverence  Say, “What is it your Honor will command?”  Let one attend him with a silver basin  Full of rose-water and bestrewed with flowers,  Another bear the ewer, the third a diaper,  And say, “Will ’t please your Lordship cool your hands?”  Someone be ready with a costly suit  And ask him what apparel he will wear.  Another tell him of his hounds and horse,  And that his lady mourns at his disease.  Persuade him that he hath been lunatic,  And when he says he is, say that he dreams,  For he is nothing but a mighty lord.  This do, and do it kindly, gentle sirs.  It will be pastime passing excellent  If it be husbanded with modesty. | | | | **LORD**  It would be just like a nice daydream or fantasy. Well, take him on up and we’ll try to pull it off. Carry him to my best room—gently, so he doesn’t wake—and hang all my erotic paintings around him. Bathe his filthy head with warm, scented water. Burn fragrant wood to give the room a pleasant smell, and have musicians at hand, ready to produce sweet, soothing sounds when he awakes. You want to be ready in case he speaks. If he does, bow low and say deferentially, “What would your Honor have us do?” Have one servant wait on him with a basin of rosewater (throw in some petals), have another servant carry a pitcher, and a third a cloth. Say, “Would your Lordship care to freshen up?” Have someone standing by with expensive clothes, and ask him what he’d care to wear. Have another servant tell him about the dogs and horses that he owns and that his wife is grief-stricken over his illness. Convince him that he has been out of his mind—and when he says he’s out of his mind *now,* tell him he’s mistaken and that he is in fact a mighty lord. Do this—make it convincing—and we’ll have fun. It could work if it’s done subtly. | |
| 65 | | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  My lord, I warrant you we will play our part  As he shall think by our true diligence  He is no less than what we say he is. | | | | **FIRST HUNTSMAN**  My lord, I promise we will play our parts so skillfully that he will believe everything we tell him. | |
| **LORD**  Take him up gently, and to bed with him,  And each one to his office when he wakes. | **LORD**  Carry him gently to bed, and every man be ready at his post when he awakes. | | | | |
|  | *Some servants carry out****SLY****. Sound trumpets* | | | | | *Several servants carry****SLY****out. Trumpets sound.* | | | |
|  | Sirrah, go see what trumpet ’tis that sounds. | | | | | Go, lad, and find out what the trumpet’s sounding for. | | | |
|  | *Exit Servingman* | | | | | *A servant exits.* | | | |
| 70 | Belike some noble gentleman that means,  Traveling some journey, to repose him here. | | | | | It’s probably some noble gentleman stopping off in mid-journey, thinking to spend the night here. | | | |
|  | *Enter****SERVANT*** | | | | | *A****SERVANT****enters.* | | | |
|  | How now! who is it? | | | | | Well, who is it? | | | |
|  | **SERVANT**      An’t please your Honor, players  That offer service to your Lordship. | | | | | **SERVANT**  Sir, it’s a troupe of actors who want to perform for your Lordship. | | | |
|  | **LORD**  Bid them come near. | | | | | **LORD**  Have them come in. | | | |
|  | *Enter****PLAYERS*** | | | | | *The****PLAYERS*** *(actors) enter.* | | | |
| 75 | Now, fellows, you are welcome. | | | | | You are welcome here, my friends. | | | |
|  | **PLAYERS**  We thank your Honor. | | | | | **PLAYERS**  We thank your Honor. | | | |
|  | **LORD**  Do you intend to stay with me tonight? | | | | | **LORD**  Were you thinking of spending the night here? | | | |
|  | **A PLAYER**  So please your Lordship to accept our duty. | | | | | **A PLAYER**  Yes, if that would be all right with your Lordship. | | | |
| 80 | **LORD**  With all my heart. This fellow I remember  Since once he played a farmer’s eldest son.  'Twas where you wooed the gentlewoman so well.  I have forgot your name, but sure that part  Was aptly fitted and naturally performed. | | | | | **LORD**  By all means. I remember this fellow—he once played the eldest son of a farmer. It was the play in which you wooed the gentlewoman so successfully. I have forgotten your name, but you were well cast in the role and played it convincingly. | | | |
| **A PLAYER**  I think ’twas Soto that your Honor means. | | **A PLAYER**  I believe your Honor is thinking of a character called Soto. | | | | |
| 85     90     95 | | **LORD**  'Tis very true. Thou didst it excellent.  Well, you are come to me in happy time,  The rather for I have some sport in hand  Wherein your cunning can assist me much.  There is a lord will hear you play tonight;  But I am doubtful of your modesties,  Lest over-eyeing of his odd behavior—  For yet his Honor never heard a play—  You break into some merry passion  And so offend him. For I tell you, sirs,  If you should smile, he grows impatient. | | | | | **LORD**  Yes, that was it. You gave an excellent performance. Well, this is very fortunate, your arriving just at this moment. I happen to be planning a little entertainment and could really use your services. There is a particular lord who will watch you perform tonight. I’m a little worried, though—because his Honor has never seen a play before—that his odd behavior may strike you as funny. You might not be able to control your laughter and you might offend him. I warn you, he’s sensitive. The slightest smile provokes him. | | |
|  | | **A PLAYER**  Fear not, my lord, we can contain ourselves  Were he the veriest antic in the world. | | | | | **A PLAYER**  Don’t worry. We’ll restrain ourselves—no matter how bizarrely he behaves. | | |
| 100 | | **LORD**  Go, sirrah, take them to the buttery  And give them friendly welcome every one.  Let them want nothing that my house affords. | | | | | **LORD**  Go, lad, and take them to the pantry. Make them feel welcome and see to it that they have everything they require. | | |
|  | | *Exit one with the****PLAYERS*** | | | | | *A servant exits with the****PLAYERS****.* | | |
| 105 | | Sirrah, go you to Barthol’mew, my page,  And see him dressed in all suits like a lady.  That done, conduct him to the drunkard’s chamber  And call him “madam,” do him obeisance.  Tell him from me, as he will win my love,  He bear himself with honorable action,  Such as he hath observed in noble ladies  Unto their lords, by them accomplishèd. | | | | | You, fellow, go fetch my page, Bartholomew, and dress him up like a noble lady. When you’ve finished, bring him to the drunkard’s room, address him as “madam,” bow to him and treat him with all-round respect and deference, as though he were the lady of the house. Give him this message: if he wants to please me, he will conduct himself like a member of the aristocracy, mimicking the kind of behavior he’s seen noble ladies use toward their husbands. | | |
| 110     115     120     125 | | Such duty to the drunkard let him do  With soft low tongue and lowly courtesy,  And say, “What is ’t your Honor will command,  Wherein your lady and your humble wife  May show her duty and make known her love?”  And then with kind embracements, tempting kisses,  And with declining head into his bosom,  Bid him shed tears, as being overjoyed  To see her noble lord restored to health,  Who for this seven years hath esteemed him  No better than a poor and loathsome beggar.  And if the boy have not a woman’s gift  To rain a shower of commanded tears,  An onion will do well for such a shift,  Which in a napkin being close conveyed  Shall in despite enforce a watery eye.  See this dispatched with all the haste thou canst:  Anon I’ll give thee more instructions. | | | | | That’s just how I want him to behave toward the drunkard, speaking in a low, soft voice and in humble, courteous tones and saying fancy stuff like, “What does your Honor wish to command your lady, your humble wife, to do to show her devotion and demonstrate her love?” Tell him to give the drunkard fond embraces and alluring kisses, and lay his head on the other man’s breast, weeping like a woman overjoyed to see a husband restored to health who for the last seven years has imagined he was no better than a poor, pathetic beggar. The boy may lack a woman’s gift for weeping at will, so it might be good to have an onion handy, hidden in a handkerchief. That’ll make his eyes stream. Get this done as quickly as you can. I’ll give you more instructions later. | | |
|  | | Exit a servingman | | | | | A servant exits. | | |
| 130 | | I know the boy will well usurp the grace,  Voice, gait, and action of a gentlewoman.  I long to hear him call the drunkard “husband,”  And how my men will stay themselves from laughter  When they do homage to this simple peasant.  I’ll in to counsel them. Haply my presence  May well abate the over-merry spleen  Which otherwise would grow into extremes. | | | | | I know the boy will be a convincing gentlewoman, taking up her exact walk and talk and gentle gestures. I can’t wait to hear him call the drunkard “husband,” and to watch my men smother their laughter as they pay their respects to this simple peasant. I’ll go and coach them. My presence may put a damper on their high spirits, which might otherwise get out of control. | | |
|  | | Exeunt | | | | | They all exit. | | |
| **INDUCTION, SCENE 2**  *Enter aloft****SLY****, the drunkard, with Attendants, some with apparel, others with basin and ewer and other appurtenances, and****LORD****dressed as an attendant.* | | | | | ***SLY****appears above the stage. He is attended by several servants, some carrying clothing and others a basin, pitcher, and other accessories. The****LORD****also enters disguised as a servant.* | | | |
|  | | | | | **SLY**  For God’s sake, a pot of small ale. | | | | **SLY**  For God’s sake, would someone bring me a mug of beer! |
|  | | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  Will ’t please your Lordship drink a cup of sack? | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  Wouldn’t your Lordship prefer some imported wine? |
|  | | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  Will ’t please your Honor taste of these conserves? | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  Would your Honor like to try this dried fruit? |
|  | | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  What raiment will your Honor wear today? | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  What garment would your Honor like to wear today? |
| 5 | | | | | **SLY**  I am Christophero Sly. Call not me “Honor” nor “Lordship.” I ne'er drank sack in my life. An if you give me any conserves, give me conserves of beef. Ne'er ask me what raiment I’ll wear, for I have no more doublets than backs, no more stockings than legs, nor no more shoes than feet, nay sometime more feet than shoes, or such shoes as my toes look through the over-leather. | | | | **SLY**  I’m Christopher Sly. Don’t call me “your Honor” and “your Lordship.” I’ve never had imported wine in my life, and if you want to bring me something “dried,” try beef jerky. Why ask me what “garment” I’ll wear? I have no more jackets than I have backs, no more leggings than I have legs, and no more shoes than I have feet—in fact, sometimes I have *fewer* shoes than feet, as I’m not sure the ones where my toes stick out can be called “shoes.” |
|  | | | | | **LORD**  Heaven cease this idle humor in your Honor!  Oh, that a mighty man of such descent,  Of such possessions and so high esteem,  Should be infusèd with so foul a spirit! | | | | **LORD**  May Heaven put an end to this foolish fantasy of your Honor’s! How terrible that a man of your influence and noble family, with so much wealth and an excellent reputation, should be infected with such a horrible illness! |
| 10 | | | | | **SLY**  **What, would you make me mad? Am not I Christopher Sly, old Sly’s son of Burton Heath, by birth a peddler, by education a cardmaker, by transmutation a bearherd, and now by present profession a tinker? Ask Marian Hacket, the fat alewife of Wincot, if she know me not! If she say I am not fourteen pence on the score for sheer ale, score me up for the lying’st knave in Christendom. What! I am not bestraught! Here’s—** | | | | **SLY**  **What, are you trying to make me crazy? I’m Christopher Sly, son of old Sly of Barton-on-Heath, a peddler by birth, a**  **[CARDMAKER](javascript:void(0);)**  **[A cardmaker made tools for working with wool.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[cardmaker](javascript:void(0);) by trade, a keeper of trained bears by bad luck, and now, by present profession, a tinker. Go ask Marian Hacket, the fat innkeeper of Wincot. She knows me! She’ll tell you about the tab I’ve run up—fourteen pence just for ale. If she doesn’t, call me the biggest liar in Christendom. I’m not crazy! Just look at how—** |
|  | | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  **Oh, this it is that makes your lady mourn!** | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  **Oh, this is why your poor wife is mourning!** |
|  | | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  **Oh, this is it that makes your servants droop!** | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  **And this is why your servants hang their heads in sorrow!** |
| 15     20 | | | | | **LORD**  **Hence comes it that your kindred shuns your house,**  **As beaten hence by your strange lunacy.**  **O noble lord, bethink thee of thy birth,**  **Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment,**  **And banish hence these abject lowly dreams.**  **Look how thy servants do attend on thee,**  **Each in his office ready at thy beck.**  **Wilt thou have music? Hark! Apollo plays,** | | | | **LORD**  **And this is why your relatives never visit, frightened away by this unnatural insanity of yours. Oh noble lord, consider your lineage. Try to recall your former state of mental health and forget these crass, lowly desires. Look how your servants wait on you, each one ready to do whatever you command. Would you care to hear some music? Listen! That’s**  **[APOLLO](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Apollo was the Greek god of music and song.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Apollo](javascript:void(0);) playing.** |
|  | | | | | **Music** | | | | **Music plays.** |
| 25     30 | | | | | **And twenty cagèd nightingales do sing:**  **Or wilt thou sleep? We’ll have thee to a couch**  **Softer and sweeter than the lustful bed**  **On purpose trimmed up for Semiramis.**  **Say thou wilt walk, we will bestrew the ground.**  **Or wilt thou ride? Thy horses shall be trapped,**  **Their harness studded all with gold and pearl.**  **Dost thou love hawking? Thou hast hawks will soar**  **Above the morning lark. Or wilt thou hunt?**  **Thy hounds shall make the welkin answer them**  **And fetch shrill echoes from the hollow earth.** | | | | **And those birds you hear—twenty caged nightingales. Do you want to sleep? We’ll have a couch made up that’s softer and more fragrant even than the bed of lustful**  **[SEMIRAMIS](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Semiramis was an Assyrian queen famous for her active sex life.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Semiramis](javascript:void(0);). Say you want to take a walk, and we’ll sprinkle the ground with flowers. Or do you want to go horseback riding? Your horses will be adorned with harnesses decorated in gold and pearls. Do you like hawking? You have hawks that can soar higher than the morning lark. Or do you want to hunt? Your hounds will make the sky echo with their high-pitched voices.** |
|  | | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  **Say thou wilt course. Thy greyhounds are as swift**  **As breathed stags, ay, fleeter than the roe.** | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  **If you care to hunt rabbits, your greyhounds are as swift as healthy stags and faster than young deer.** |
| 35 | | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  **Dost thou love pictures? We will fetch thee straight**  **Adonis painted by a running brook**  **And Cytherea all in sedges hid,**  **Which seem to move and wanton with her breath,**  **Even as the waving sedges play with wind.** | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  **Do you like pictures? We’ll be right back with one of**  **[ADONIS](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Adonis was a handsome mortal youth loved by Venus, the goddess of love. Cytherea is another name for Venus (in Greek, Aphrodite).](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Adonis](javascript:void(0);) stretched out beside a rushing brook, with Venus spying on him, hidden in rushes that seem to move and undulate with her lustful sighs, like grass waving in the wind.** |
| 40 | | | | | **LORD**  **We’ll show thee Io as she was a maid**  **And how she was beguileèd and surprised,**  **As lively painted as the deed was done.** | | | | **LORD**  **There’s one that shows Io as a maid, before she was turned into a cow, in which**  **[JUPITER](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Io was a mortal girl whom the goal Zeus (called Jupiter by Romans) raped. Out of jealousy, Zeus wife transformed her into a cow.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Jupiter](javascript:void(0);) tricks and takes her. It’s so realistic, it seems to be happening right before your eyes.** |
| 45 | | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  **Or Daphne roaming through a thorny wood,**  **Scratching her legs that one shall swear she bleeds,**  **And at that sight shall sad Apollo weep,**  **So workmanly the blood and tears are drawn.** | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  **There’s one of**  **[DAPHNE](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Daphne was a nymph whom Apollo loved and changed into a tree as she was trying to escape from him.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Daphne](javascript:void(0);) running through the woods, her legs so scratched by thorns that Apollo himself would weep at the sight. You’ll swear the blood and tears are real.** |
|  | | | | | **LORD**  **Thou art a lord, and nothing but a lord.**  **Thou hast a lady far more beautiful**  **Than any woman in this waning age.** | | | | **LORD**  **You are nothing less than a lord. You have a noble wife who is much more beautiful than any other woman in this declining age.** |
| 50 | | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  **And till the tears that she hath shed for thee**  **Like envious floods o'errun her lovely face,**  **She was the fairest creature in the world—**  **And yet she is inferior to none.** | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  **Before she began shedding tears all over her lovely face, she was the fairest creature in the world—and even now she has no equal.** |
| 55     60 | | | | | **SLY**  **Am I a lord, and have I such a lady?**  **Or do I dream? Or have I dreamed till now?**  **I do not sleep: I see, I hear, I speak.**  **I smell sweet savors and I feel soft things.**  **Upon my life, I am a lord indeed**  **And not a tinker, nor Christopher Sly.**  **Well, bring our lady hither to our sight,**  **And once again, a pot o' the smallest ale.** | | | | **SLY**  **I’m really a lord? And do I really have a wife like that? Isthis a dream? Or has everything up till now been a dream? I don’t seem to be asleep: I can see and hear and speak. I can smell sweet smells and feel things that are soft to the touch. I’ll be damned! I guess I really am a lord and not a tinker, and not Christopher Sly, either. Well, bring my wife to me. Oh, and don’t forget the beer.** |
| 65 | | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  **Will ’t please your Mightiness to wash your hands?**  **O, how we joy to see your wit restored!**  **O, that once more you knew but what you are!**  **These fifteen years you have been in a dream**  **Or, when you waked, so waked as if you slept.** | | | | **SECOND SERVANT**  **Would your Mightiness care to wash his hands? We’re overjoyed to see you sane again. If only you had a clearer memory of who you are! These past fifteen years you have been living in a dream, and even when you were awake, it was as though you slept.** |
|  | | | | | **SLY**  **These fifteen years! By my fay, a goodly nap.**  **But did I never speak of all that time?** | | | | **SLY**  **Fifteen years! That’s some nap. But I never spoke the whole time?** |
| 70 | | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  **O, yes, my lord, but very idle words.**  **For though you lay here in this goodly chamber,**  **Yet would you say ye were beaten out of door;**  **And rail upon the hostess of the house,**  **And say you would present her at the leet,**  **Because she brought stone jugs and no sealed quarts.**  **Sometimes you would call out for Cicely Hacket.** | | | | **FIRST SERVANT**  **Oh yes, you spoke, my lord, but total nonsense. For instance, you’d be lying here in this comfortable room, but you’d say that you were being thrown out of some tavern and would shout at a landlady about how you were going to take her to court for cheating you. Sometimes you would call out for one Cicely Hacket.** |
| 75 | | | | | **SLY**  **Ay, the woman’s maid of the house.** | | | | **SLY**  **Yes, the landlady’s maid.** |
| 80 | | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  **Why, sir, you know no house nor no such maid,**  **Nor no such men as you have reckoned up,**  **As Stephen Sly and old John Naps of Greece,**  **And Peter Turph and Henry Pimpernell,**  **And twenty more such names and men as these,**  **Which never were, nor no man ever saw.** | | | | **THIRD SERVANT**  **But sir, there is no such house, no such maid, and no such men as you have dreamed up, like a certain Stephen Sly and one old John Naps of Greece, a Peter Turph, one “Henry Pimpernell,” and twenty more men of this sort—who never actually existed.** |

|  |  |
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| ORIGINAL TEXT | MODERN TEXT |
|  | **SLY**  Now Lord be thanked for my good amends! | **SLY**  Well, thank God I’m cured! |
|  | **ALL**  Amen. | **ALL**  Amen. |
|  | **SLY**  I thank thee. Thou shalt not lose by it. | **SLY**  I thank you all. You won’t regret this. |
|  | *Enter the****PAGE****as a lady, with attendants* | *The****PAGE****enters, disguised as a noble lady and accompanied by servants.* |
| 85 | **PAGE**  How fares my noble lord? | **PAGE**  How is my noble lord? |
|  | **SLY**      Marry, I fare well,  For here is cheer enough. Where is my wife? | **SLY**  Not bad, actually. This is all quite pleasant. Where is my wife? |
|  | **PAGE**  Here, noble lord. What is thy will with her? | **PAGE**  Here, noble lord. What is your wish with regard to her? |
|  | **SLY**  Are you my wife and will not call me “husband”?  My men should call me “lord.” I am your goodman. | **SLY**  You call yourself my wife, yet you don’t call me “husband”? It’s my men who should call me “lord.” I’m your man, your fellow. |
| 90 | **PAGE**  My husband and my lord, my lord and husband,  I am your wife in all obedience. | **PAGE**  My husband *is* my lord and my lord is my husband. For I am your all-obedient wife. |
|  | **SLY**  I know it well.—What must I call her? | **SLY**  Yes, I see.—*(to the* LORD*)* What should I call her? |
|  | **LORD**       “Madam.” | **LORD**  “Madam.” |
|  | **SLY**  “Alice Madam,” or “Joan Madam”? | **SLY**  “  **[MADAM](javascript:void(0);)**  [Sly is asking what her name is. He doesn’t understand that “Madam” is like “Sir,” or “My lord.”](javascript:void(0);)  [Madam](javascript:void(0);) Alice?” Or “Madam Joan?” |
|  | **LORD**  “Madam,” and nothing else. So lords call ladies. | **LORD**  Just “madam.” That’s how noblemen address their wives. |
| 95 | **SLY**  **Madam wife, they say that I have dreamed**  **And slept above some fifteen year or more.** | **SLY**  **Madam wife, they say I’ve been dreaming or asleep for more than fifteen years.** |
|  | **PAGE**  **Ay, and the time seems thirty unto me,**  **Being all this time abandoned from your bed.** | **PAGE**  **Yes, and it seemed twice as long to me, having been kept from your bed that whole time.** |
| 100 | **SLY**  **'Tis much.—Servants, leave me and her alone.**  **Madam, undress you and come now to bed.** | **SLY**  **That’s too long.—Servants, leave her and me alone. Now, madam, undress and come to bed.** |
| 105 | **PAGE**  **Thrice noble lord, let me entreat of you**  **To pardon me yet for a night or two,**  **Or if not so, until the sun be set.**  **For your physicians have expressly charged,**  **In peril to incur your former malady,**  **That I should yet absent me from your bed.**  **I hope this reason stands for my excuse.** | **PAGE**  **Thrice noble lord, I beg you to excuse me for another night or two—or at least until nightfall. Your doctors have expressly forbidden me to sleep with you, as there’s a risk that you might have a relapse. I hope this explanation will stand as my excuse.** |
|  | **SLY**  **Ay, it stands so that I may hardly tarry so long. But I would be loath to fall into my dreams again. I will therefore tarry in despite of the flesh and the blood.** | **SLY**  **Well, something’s standing up. I’m not sure I can wait that long. Still, I’d hate to see my former dreams return. So I will wait, however**  **[FLESH AND BLOOD](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Sly means that he is sexually aroused.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[flesh and blood](javascript:void(0);) may feel about it.** |
|  | **Enter a MESSENGER** | **A MESSENGER.** |
| 110     115 | **MESSENGER**  **Your Honor’s players, hearing your amendment,**  **Are come to play a pleasant comedy,**  **For so your doctors hold it very meet,**  **Seeing too much sadness hath congealed your blood,**  **And melancholy is the nurse of frenzy.**  **Therefore they thought it good you hear a play**  **And frame your mind to mirth and merriment,**  **Which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.** | **MESSENGER**  **Your Honor’s actors, hearing of your recovery, have come to perform a pleasing comedy for you—and your doctors approve wholeheartedly. They say that too much suffering has made your blood coagulate, and that sadness leads to madness. So they think it’s a good idea for you to watch a play and direct your thoughts toward laughter and merriment—two strong preventive medicines th** |
|  | **SLY**  **Marry, I will. Let them play it. Is not a comonty a**  **Christmas gambold or a tumbling-trick?** | **SLY**  **Okay, bring on the play. But what’s a “**  **[COMONTY](javascript:void(0);)**  **[With “comonty,” Sly is trying to say “comedy” but gets the word wrong, never having heard it before.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[comonty](javascript:void(0);)?” Some sort of Christmas skit or display of acrobatics?** |
|  | **PAGE**  **No, my good lord, it is more pleasing stuff.** | **PAGE**  **No, my good lord, this is nicer stuff.** |
| 120 | **SLY**  **What, household stuff?** | **SLY**  **What, like stuff from a house?** |
|  | **PAGE**  **It is a kind of history.** | **PAGE**  **No, it’s a story.** |
|  | **SLY**  **Well, we’ll see ’t. Come, madam wife, sit by my side and let the world slip. We shall ne'er be younger.** | **SLY**  **Well, let’s watch it. Come, madam wife, sit here beside me. Let’s forget our cares. We’re not getting any younger.** |
|  | **They sit** | **They sit.** |
|  | **ACT 1 SCENE 1** | **MODERN TEXT** |
|  | **Flourish. Enter LUCENTIO and his man TRANIO** | **The sound of trumpet fanfare. LUCENTIO and his servant TRANIO enter.** |
| 5     10     15     20 | **LUCENTIO**  **Tranio, since for the great desire I had**  **To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,**  **I am arrived for fruitful Lombardy,**  **The pleasant garden of great Italy,**  **And by my father’s love and leave am armed**  **With his goodwill and thy good company.**  **My trusty servant, well approved in all,**  **Here let us breathe and haply institute**  **A course of learning and ingenious studies.**  **Pisa, renownèd for grave citizens,**  **Gave me my being and my father first,**  **A merchant of great traffic through the world,**  **Vincentio, come of the Bentivolii.**  **Vincentio’s son, brought up in Florence,**  **It shall become to serve all hopes conceived**  **To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds.**  **And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study**  **Virtue, and that part of philosophy**  **Will I apply that treats of happiness**  **By virtue specially to be achieved.**  **Tell me thy mind, for I have Pisa left**  **And am to Padua come, as he that leaves**  **A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep**  **And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.** | **LUCENTIO**  **Well, Tranio, here we are in fertile Lombardy, garden of Italy, about to fulfill my lifelong dream. You know how I’ve always longed to see the fair city of Padua, famous for its arts and letters, and now, thanks to my father’s generosity, here I am—with his blessing and your good company. So, my trusty servant—and you’ve never let me down—why don’t we settle here for a time to institute a course of study, a really rigorous curriculum. I was born in Pisa, famous for its serious citizens, like my father before me; my father, Vincentio, a successful, world-traveled merchant, was one of the**  **[BENTIVOLII](javascript:void(0);)**  **[The Bentivolis were one of the leading families of Bologna, wielding great political power and influence.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Bentivolii](javascript:void(0);). It’s only fitting that I, his son, reared in Florence, should concentrate on adding more virtuous deeds to my father’s own, stacking them on top of his wealth. For this reason, Tranio, I’ll study ethics and—for the time being, anyway—pursue those areas of**  **[PHILOSOPHY](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Lucentio is referring to the philosophy of Aristotle.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[philosophy](javascript:void(0);) that teach a man how to achieve happiness through virtue. What do you think of all this? Leaving Pisa for Padua,**  **[I FEEL](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Lucentio means he is overwhelmed.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[I feel](javascript:void(0);) a little like a thirsty man who turns from a puddle to a vast lake he can drink from.** |
| 25     30     35     40 | **TRANIO**  **Mi perdonato, gentle master mine.**  **I am in all affected as yourself,**  **Glad that you thus continue your resolve**  **To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.**  **Only, good master, while we do admire**  **This virtue and this moral discipline,**  **Let’s be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray,**  **Or so devote to Aristotle’s checks**  **As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured.**  **Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,**  **And practice rhetoric in your common talk;**  **Music and poesy use to quicken you;**  **The mathematics and the metaphysics—**  **Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you.**  **No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en.**  **In brief, sir, study what you most affect.** | **TRANIO**  **Pardon me, gentle master. As usual, I’m in complete agreement with you about everything, and glad that you still relish the idea of studying philosophy—and let me add that I admire your virtue and your moral discipline. That said, let’s not become total**  **[STOICS](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Stoics were ancient Greek philosophers who advocated indifference to pain or pleasure.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[stoics](javascript:void(0);) or unfeeling blocks of wood and give up all thought of pleasure. We don’t want to become so focused on**  **[ARISTOTLE](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Aristotle’s writings would have beencentral to the university curriculum. In contrast, the poet Ovid wrote frequently about erotic love, and much of his work was considered scandalous.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Aristotle](javascript:void(0);) that we forget to read Ovid. Here’s my thought: practice your logic as you chat with your friends, and your rhetoric in ordinary conversation. Use music and poetry to excite your senses. Math and metaphysics—well, I’d play them by ear, spending only as much time on them as you can stand. There’s nothing to be gained from things we take no pleasure in. What I’m saying, sir, is this: study what you most enjoy.** |
| 45 | **LUCENTIO**  **Gramercies, Tranio, well dost thou advise.**  **If, Biondello, thou wert come ashore,**  **We could at once put us in readiness**  **And take a lodging fit to entertain**  **Such friends as time in Padua shall beget.**  **But stay awhile. What company is this?** | **LUCENTIO**  **Thanks, Tranio. That’s good advice. Now if only Biondello would get here, we could find a nice place to stay where the friends we’ll make here in Padua could visit us. Wait! Who are all these people?** |
|  | **TRANIO**  **Master, some show to welcome us to town.** | **TRANIO**  **Maybe it’s a parade to welcome us to town, master.** |
|  | **LUCENTIO and TRANIO stand by** | **LUCENTIO and TRANIO stand off to one side** |
|  | **Enter BAPTISTA, KATHERINE, BIANCA, GREMIO, and HORTENSIO** | **BAPTISTA enters with his elder daughter, KATHERINE, the younger daughter, BIANCA, and two suitors toBIANCA, an old man named GREMIO and a younger man named HORTENSIO.** |
| 50 | **BAPTISTA**  **Gentlemen, importune me no farther,**  **For how I firmly am resolved you know—**  **That is, not to bestow my youngest daughter**  **Before I have a husband for the elder.**  **If either of you both love Katherina,**  **Because I know you well and love you well**  **Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.** | **BAPTISTA**  **Enough, gentlemen! You can’t influence me on this point. You know how I feel. I’m determined not to permit my younger daughter to marry until I have a husband for the elder one. I’ve long regarded you both as good friends. Therefore, if either of you is partial to Katherina, he shall have my permission to court her freely.** |
| 55 | **GREMIO**  **To cart her, rather. She’s too rough for me.—**  **There, there, Hortensio, will you any wife?** | **GREMIO**  **[CART](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Gremio refers to an Elizabethan practice in which prostitutes and women who “scolds” were tied behind a cart and whipped as it moved through town.](javascript:void(0);)**  **[Cart](javascript:void(0);) her, you mean. She’s too much for me. How about you, Hortensio? Are you still interested in marrying?** |
|  | **KATHERINE**  **(to BAPTISTA) I pray you, sir, is it your will**  **To make a stale of me amongst these mates?** | **KATHERINE**  **(to BAPTISTA) May I ask, sir, if it’s your intention to publicly humiliate me, showing me off like a whore in front of these suitors?** |
| 60 | **HORTENSIO**  **“Mates,” maid? how mean you that? No mates for you**  **Unless you were of gentler, milder mold.** | **HORTENSIO**  **We’re not your suitors, that’s for sure! Not until you improve your temper, girl!** |
| 65 | **KATHERINE**  **I' faith, sir, you shall never need to fear.**  **I wis it is not halfway to her heart.**  **But if it were, doubt not her care should be**  **To comb your noddle with a three-legged stool**  **And paint your face and use you like a fool.** | **KATHERINE**  **Don’t worry, I couldn’t care less. The only possible interest I could take in you would be to hit you on the head with a stool, paint your face with blood, and make a fool out of you.** |
|  | **HORTENSIO**  **From all such devils, good Lord, deliver us!** | **HORTENSIO**  **May the good Lord keep me safe from all women like her!** |
|  | **GREMIO**  **And me too, good Lord!** | **GREMIO**  **Me too, Lord!** |
| 70 | **TRANIO**  **(aside to LUCENTIO)**  **Husht, master, here’s some good pastime toward.**  **That wench is stark mad or wonderful froward.** | **TRANIO**  **(speaking so that only LUCENTIO can hear) Wow! This’ll be fun to watch! This girl is either completely crazy or incredibly willful.** |
|  | **LUCENTIO**  **(aside to TRANIO) But in the other’s silence do I see**  **Maid’s mild behavior and sobriety.**  **Peace, Tranio.** | **LUCENTIO**  **(speaking so that only TRANIO can hear) But her sister seems quiet and well behaved, as a young girl should be. Shhh, Tranio.** |