

The Two Noble Kinsmen

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Enter the Jailer, the Wooer, and the Doctor

DOCTOR Her distraction is more at some time of the moon than at other some, is it not?

JAILER She is continually in a harmless distemper: sleeps little; altogether without appetite, save often drinking; dreaming of another world, and a better; and what broken piece of matter soe'er she's about, the name 'Palamon' lards it, that she farces every business

Enter the Jailer's Daughter

withal, fits it to every question. Look where she comes±± you shall perceive her behaviour.

They stand apart

JAILER'S DAUGHTER I have forgot it quite±±the burden on't 10 was 'Down-a, down-a', and penned by no worse man than Giraldo, Emilia's schoolmaster. He's as fantastical, too, as ever he may go upon's legs±±for in the next world will Dido see Palamon, and then will she be out of love with Aeneas. 15

DOCTOR What stuff's here? Poor soul.

JAILER E'en thus all day long.

JAILER'S DAUGHTER Now for this charm that I told you of±±you must bring a piece of silver on the tip of your tongue, or no ferry: then, if it be your chance to come where the blessed spirits are±±there's a sight now! We 20 maids that have our livers perished, cracked to pieces with love, we shall come there and do nothing all day long but pick flowers with Proserpine. Then will I make Palamon a nosegay, then let him mark me, then±± 25

DOCTOR How prettily she's amiss! Note her a little further.

JAILER'S DAUGHTER Faith, I'll tell you: sometime we go to barley-break, we of the blessed. Alas, 'tis a sore life they have i'th' other place±±such burning, frying, boiling, hissing, howling, chattering, cursing±±O they 30 have shrewd measure±±take heed! If one be mad or hang or drown themselves, thither they go, Jupiter bless us, and there shall we be put in a cauldron of

lead and usurers' grease, amongst a whole million of cutpurses, and there boil like a gammon of bacon that will never be enough.

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DOCTOR How her brain coins!

JAILER'S DAUGHTER Lords and courtiers that have got maids with child±±they are in this place. They shall stand in fire up to the navel and in ice up to th' heart, 40 and there th'offending part burns, and the deceiving part freezes±±in truth a very grievous punishment as one would think for such a trifle. Believe me, one would marry a leprous witch to be rid on't, I'll assure you.

DOCTOR How she continues this fancy! 'Tis not an 45 engrafted madness, but a most thick and profound melancholy.

JAILER'S DAUGHTER To hear there a proud lady and a proud city wife howl together! I were a beast an I'd call it good sport. One cries, 'O this smoke!', th'other, 50 'This fire!'; one cries, 'O that ever I did it behind the arras!', and then howls±±th'other curses a suing fellow and her garden-house.

(Sings) 'I will be true, my stars, my fate . . .'
Exit Daughter

JAILER *(to the Doctor)* What think you of her, sir? 55

DOCTOR I think she has a perturbed mind, which I cannot minister to.

JAILER Alas, what then?

DOCTOR Understand you she ever affected any man ere she beheld Palamon? 60

JAILER I was once, sir, in great hope she had fixed her liking on this gentleman, my friend.

WOOER I did think so too, and would account I had a great penn'orth on't to give half my state that both she and I, at this present, stood unfeignedly on the 65 same terms.

DOCTOR That intemperate surfeit of her eye hath dis-tempered the other senses. They may return and settle again to execute their preordained faculties, but they are now in a most extravagant vagary. This you must do: confine her to a place where the light may rather 70

seem to steal in than be permitted; take upon you,
young sir her friend, the name of Palamon; say you
come to eat with her and to commune of love. This
will catch her attention, for this her mind beats upon±± 75
other objects that are inserted 'tween her mind and
eye become the pranks and friskins of her madness.
Sing to her such green songs of love as she says
Palamon hath sung in prison; come to her stuck in as
sweet flowers as the season is mistress of, and thereto 80
make an addition of some other compounded odours
which are grateful to the sense. All this shall become
Palamon, for Palamon can sing, and Palamon is sweet
and every good thing. Desire to eat with her, carve
her, drink to her, and still among intermingle your 85
petition of grace and acceptance into her favour. Learn
what maids have been her companions and playferes,
and let them repair to her, with Palamon in their
mouths, and appear with tokens as if they suggested
for him. It is a falsehood she is in, which is with 90
falsehoods to be combated. This may bring her to eat,
to sleep, and reduce what's now out of square in her
into their former law and regiment. I have seen it
approved, how many times I know not, but to make
the number more I have great hope in this. I will 95
between the passages of this project come in with my
appliance. Let us put it in execution, and hasten the
success, which doubt not will bring forth comfort.

Exeunt