

Timon of Athens

2.2

Enter Flavius, with many bills in his hand

FLAVIUS

No care, no stop; so senseless of expense
That he will neither know how to maintain it
Nor cease his flow of riot, takes no account
How things go from him, nor resumes no care
Of what is to continue. Never mind 5
Was to be so unwise to be so kind.
What shall be done? He will not hear till feel.

[A sound of horns within]

I must be round with him, now he comes from hunting.
Fie, fie, fie, fie!

*Enter Caphis [at one door] and Servants of Isidore
and Varro [at another door]*

CAPHIS

Good even, Varro. What, you come for money? 10

VARRO'S SERVANT Is't not your business too?

CAPHIS

It is; and yours too, Isidore?

ISIDORE'S SERVANT It is so.

CAPHIS

Would we were all discharged.

VARRO'S SERVANT I fear it.

CAPHIS Here comes
the lord.

*Enter Timon and his train, amongst them
Alcibiades, [as from hunting]*

TIMON

So soon as dinner's done we'll forth again,
My Alcibiades.

Caphis meets Timon

With me? What is your will? 15

CAPHIS

My lord, here is a note of certain dues.

TIMON Dues? Whence are you?

CAPHIS Of Athens here, my lord.

TIMON Go to my steward.

CAPHIS

Please it your lordship, he hath put me off, 20
To the succession of new days, this month.
My master is awaked by great occasion
To call upon his own, and humbly prays you
That with your other noble parts you'll suit
In giving him his right.

TIMON Mine honest friend, 25
I prithee but repair to me next morning.

CAPHIS

Nay, good my lord.

TIMON Contain thyself, good friend.

VARRO'S SERVANT

One Varro's servant, my good lord.

ISIDORE'S SERVANT (to Timon)

From Isidore. He humbly prays your speedy payment.

CAPHIS (to Timon)

If you did know, my lord, my master's wants±± 30

VARRO'S SERVANT (to Timon)

'Twas due on forfeiture, my lord, six weeks and past.

ISIDORE'S SERVANT (to Timon)

Your steward puts me off, my lord, and I
Am sent expressly to your lordship.

TIMON Give me breath.±±

I do beseech you, good my lords, keep on.
I'll wait upon you instantly.

Exeunt Alcibiades and Timon's train

(To Flavius) Come hither. Pray you, 35

How goes the world, that I am thus encountered
With clamorous demands of broken bonds
And the detention of long-since-due debts,
Against my honour?

FLAVIUS (to Servants) Please you, gentlemen, 40
The time is unagreeable to this business;
Your importunacy cease till after dinner,
That I may make his lordship understand
Wherefore you are not paid.

TIMON (to Servants) Do so, my friends.
(To Flavius) See them well entertained.

Exit

FLAVIUS
draw near.

Pray

Exit

Enter Apemantus and Fool

CAPHIS

Stay, stay, here comes the fool with Apemantus.

45

Let's ha' some sport with 'em.

VARRO'S SERVANT Hang him, he'll abuse us.

ISIDORE'S SERVANT A plague upon him, dog!

VARRO'S SERVANT How dost, fool?

APEMANTUS Dost dialogue with thy shadow?

50

VARRO'S SERVANT I speak not to thee.

APEMANTUS No, 'tis to thyself. *(To Fool)* Come away.

ISIDORE'S SERVANT *(to Varro's Servant)* There's the fool
hangs on your back already.

APEMANTUS No, thou stand'st single: thou'rt not on him
yet.

CAPHIS *(to Isidore's Servant)* Where's the fool now?

APEMANTUS He last asked the question. Poor rogues' and
usurers' men, bawds between gold and want.

ALL SERVANTS What are we, Apemantus?

60

APEMANTUS Asses.

ALL SERVANTS Why?

APEMANTUS That you ask me what you are, and do not
know yourselves. Speak to 'em, fool.

FOOL How do you, gentlemen?

65

ALL SERVANTS Gramercies, good fool. How does your
mistress?

FOOL She's e'en setting on water to scald such chickens
as you are. Would we could see you at Corinth.

APEMANTUS Good; gramercy.

70

Enter Page with two letters

FOOL Look you, here comes my mistress' page.

PAGE Why, how now, captain? What do you in this wise
company? How dost thou, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS Would I had a rod in my mouth, that I might
answer thee profitably.

75

PAGE Prithee, Apemantus, read me the superscription of
these letters. I know not which is which.

APEMANTUS Canst not read?

PAGE No.

APEMANTUS There will little learning die then that day 80
thou art hanged. This is to Lord Timon, this to
Alcibiades. Go, thou wast born a bastard, and thou'lt
die a bawd.

PAGE Thou wast whelped a dog, and thou shalt famish a
dog's death. Answer not; I am gone. 85

Exit

APEMANTUS E'en so thou outrunn'st grace. Fool, I will go
with you to Lord Timon's.

FOOL Will you leave me there?

APEMANTUS If Timon stay at home. (*To Servants*) You
three serve three usurers? 90

ALL SERVANTS Ay. Would they served us.

APEMANTUS So would I: as good a trick as ever hangman
served thief.

FOOL Are you three usurers' men?

ALL SERVANTS Ay, fool. 95

FOOL I think no usurer but has a fool to his servant. My
mistress is one, and I am her fool. When men come to
borrow of your masters they approach sadly and go
away merry, but they enter my mistress's house merrily
and go away sadly. The reason of this? 100

VARRO'S SERVANT I could render one.

APEMANTUS Do it then, that we may account thee a
whoremaster and a knave, which notwithstanding thou
shalt be no less esteemed.

VARRO'S SERVANT What is a whoremaster, fool? 105

FOOL A fool in good clothes, and something like thee. 'Tis
a spirit; sometime 't appears like a lord, sometime like
a lawyer, sometime like a philosopher with two stones
more than's artificial one. He is very often like a knight;
and generally in all shapes that man goes up and down 110
in from fourscore to thirteen, this spirit walks in.

VARRO'S SERVANT Thou art not altogether a fool.

FOOL Nor thou altogether a wise man. As much foolery
as I have, so much wit thou lack'st.

APEMANTUS That answer might have become Apemantus. 115

Enter Timon and Flavius

ALL SERVANTS Aside, aside, here comes Lord Timon.

APEMANTUS Come with me, fool, come.

FOOL I do not always follow lover, elder brother, and
woman: sometime the philosopher.

Exeunt Apemantus and Fool

FLAVIUS (to Servants)

Pray you, walk near. I'll speak with you anon. 120

Exeunt Servants

TIMON

You make me marvel wherefore ere this time
Had you not fully laid my state before me,
That I might so have rated my expense
As I had leave of means.

FLAVIUS You would not hear me.
At many leisures I proposed±±

TIMON Go to. 125

Perchance some single vantages you took,
When my indisposition put you back,
And that unaptness made your minister
Thus to excuse yourself.

FLAVIUS O my good lord,
At many times I brought in my accounts, 130
Laid them before you; you would throw them off
And say you summed them in mine honesty.

When for some trifling present you have bid me
Return so much, I have shook my head and wept,
Yea, 'gainst th'authority of manners prayed you 135

To hold your hand more close. I did endure
Not seldom nor no slight checks when I have
Prompted you in the ebb of your estate
And your great flow of debts. My loveÁd lord±±
Though you hear now too late, yet now's a time±± 140
The greatest of your having lacks a half
To pay your present debts.

TIMON Let all my land be sold.

FLAVIUS

'Tis all engaged, some forfeited and gone,
And what remains will hardly stop the mouth
Of present dues. The future comes apace. 145
What shall defend the interim, and at length

How goes our reck'ning?

TIMON

To Lacedaemon did my land extend.

FLAVIUS

O my good lord, the world is but a word.

Were it all yours to give it in a breath, 150

How quickly were it gone.

TIMON

You tell me true.

FLAVIUS

If you suspect my husbandry or falsehood,

Call me before th'exactest auditors

And set me on the proof. So the gods bless me,

When all our offices have been oppressed 155

With riotous feeders, when our vaults have wept

With drunken spilth of wine, when every room

Hath blazed with lights and brayed with minstrelsy,

I have retired me to a wasteful cock,

And set mine eyes at flow.

TIMON

Prithee, no more.

160

FLAVIUS

`Heavens,' have I said, `the bounty of this lord!

How many prodigal bits have slaves and peasants

This night englutted! Who is not Timon's?

What heart, head, sword, force, means, but is Lord

Timon's?

Great Timon, noble, worthy, royal Timon! 165

Ah, when the means are gone that buy this praise,

The breath is gone whereof this praise is made.

Feast won, fast lost; one cloud of winter show'rs,

These flies are couched.'

TIMON

Come, sermon me no further.

No villainous bounty yet hath passed my heart.

170

Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.

Why dost thou weep? Canst thou the conscience lack

To think I shall lack friends? Secure thy heart.

If I would broach the vessels of my love

And try the argument of hearts by borrowing, 175

Men and men's fortunes could I frankly use

As I can bid thee speak.

FLAVIUS

Assurance bless your thoughts!

TIMON

And in some sort these wants of mine are crowned
That I account them blessings, for by these
Shall I try friends. You shall perceive how you 180
Mistake my fortunes. I am wealthy in my friends.±±
Within there, Flaminius, Servilius!

Enter Flaminius, Servilius, and a Third Servant

ALL SERVANTS

My lord, my lord.

TIMON I will dispatch you severally,

(*To Servilius*) You to Lord Lucius,

(*To Flaminius*) to Lord

Lucullus you±±

I hunted with his honour today±± 185

(*To Third Servant*) You to Sempronius. Commend me
to their loves,

And I am proud, say, that my occasions have
Found time to use 'em toward a supply of money.
Let the request be fifty talents.

FLAMINIUS As you have said, my lord. 190

Exeunt Servants

FLAVIUS

Lord Lucius and Lucullus? Hmh!

TIMON

Go you, sir, to the senators,
Of whom, even to the state's best health, I have
Deserved this hearing. Bid 'em send o'th' instant
A thousand talents to me.

FLAVIUS I have been bold, 195

For that I knew it the most general way,
To them, to use your signet and your name;
But they do shake their heads, and I am here
No richer in return.

TIMON Is't true? Can't be?

FLAVIUS

They answer in a joint and corporate voice 200
That now they are at fall, want treasure, cannot
Do what they would, are sorry, you are honourable,
But yet they could have wished±±they know not±±
Something hath been amiss±±a noble nature

May catch a wrench±±would all were well±±'tis pity; 205
And so, intending other serious matters,
After distasteful looks and these hard fractions,
With certain half-caps and cold moving nods
They froze me into silence.

TIMON

You gods reward them!

Prithee, man, look cheerly. These old fellows 210

Have their ingratitude in them hereditary.

Their blood is caked, 'tis cold, it seldom flows.

'Tis lack of kindly warmth they are not kind;

And nature as it grows again toward earth

Is fashioned for the journey dull and heavy. 215

Go to Ventidius. Prithee, be not sad.

Thou art true and honest±±ingenuously I speak±±

No blame belongs to thee. Ventidius lately

Buried his father, by whose death he's stepped

Into a great estate. When he was poor, 220

Imprisoned, and in scarcity of friends,

I cleared him with five talents. Greet him from me.

Bid him suppose some good necessity

Touches his friend, which craves to be remembered

With those five talents. That had, give't these fellows 225

To whom 'tis instant due. Ne'er speak or think

That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink.

FLAVIUS

I would I could not think it. That thought is bounty's
foe:

Being free itself, it thinks all others so.

Exeunt [severally]