

[SCENA TERTIA.

*Before Merrythought's house.]**Enter Mistress Merrythought.*

WIFE. Look, George, here comes Mistress Merrythought again! And I would have Rafe come and fight with the giant; I tell you true, I long to see 't.

CIT. Good Mistress Merrythought, be gone, I pray you, for my sake; I pray you, forbear a little; you shall have audience presently. I have a little business.

WIFE. Mistress Merrythought, if it please you to refrain your passion a [10 little, till Rafe have despatched the giant out of the way, we shall think ourselves much bound to you. I thank you, good Mistress Merrythought.

*Exit Mistress Merrythought.]**Enter a Boy.*

CIT. Boy, come hither. Send away Rafe and this whoreson giant quickly.

BOY. In good faith, sir, we cannot; you'll utterly spoil our play, and make it to be hissed; and it cost money; you will not suffer us to go on with our plot.— [20 I pray, gentlemen, rule him.

CIT. Let him come now and despatch this, and I'll trouble you no more.

BOY. Will you give me your hand of that?

WIFE. Give him thy hand, George, do; and I'll kiss him. I warrant thee, the youth means plainly.¹

BOY. I'll send him to you presently.

WIFE. [Kissing him.] I thank you, [30 little youth.—(Exit Boy.) Faith, the child hath a sweet breath, George; but I think it be troubled with the worms. *Carduus Benedictus*² and mare's milk were the only thing in the world for 't.—O, Rafe's here, George!—God send thee good luck, Rafe!

[SCENA QUARTA.

*Before a barber's shop.]**Enter Rafe, Host, Squire, and Dwarf.*

HOST. Puissant knight, yonder his mansion is.

Lo, where the spear and copper basin are!

¹ Sincerely.² The Blessed Thistle, regarded as a panacea.

Behold that string, on which hangs many a tooth,

Drawn from the gentle jaw of wand'ring knights!

I dare not stay to sound;³ he will appear.

RAFE. O, faint not, heart! Susan, my lady dear,

The cobbler's maid in Milk Street, for whose sake

I take these arms, O, let the thought of thee

Carry thy knight through all adventurous deeds;

And, in the honor of thy beauteous self,

May I destroy this monster Barbaroso!—¹⁰ Knock, squire, upon the basin till it break

With the shrill strokes, or till the giant speak. [*Squire knocks upon the basin.*]

Enter Barber.

WIFE. O, George, the giant, the giant!— Now, Rafe, for thy life!

BARBER. What fond unknowing wight is this that dares

So rudely knock at Barbaroso's cell, Where no man comes but leaves his fleece behind?

RAFE. I, traitorous caitiff, who am sent by fate

To punish all the sad enormities²⁰ Thou hast committed against ladies gent

And errant knights. Traitor to God and men,

Prepare thyself! This is the dismal hour Appointed for thee to give strict account

Of all thy beastly, treacherous villainies.

BARBER. Foolhardy knight, full soon thou shalt aby⁴

This fond reproach; thy body will I bang;

And, lo, upon that string thy teeth shall hang!

Prepare thyself, for dead soon shalt thou be.

RAFE. Saint George for me! *They fight.*

BARBER. Gargantua for me! ³⁰

³ Blow horn.⁴ Pay for.

WIFE. To him, Rafe, to him! Hold up the giant; set out thy leg before, Rafe!

CIT. Falsify¹ a blow, Rafe, falsify a blow! The giant lies open on the left side.

WIFE. Bear 't off, bear 't off still! There, boy!—O, Rafe's almost down, Rafe's almost down!

RAFE. Susan, inspire me! Now have up again.

WIFE. Up, up, up, up, up! So, Rafe! Down with him, down with him, Rafe!

CIT. Fetch him o'er the hip, boy! 41
[Rafe knocks the Barber down.]

WIFE. There, boy! Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, Rafe!

CIT. No, Rafe; get all out of him first.

RAFE. Presumptuous man, see to what desperate end

Thy treachery hath brought thee! The just gods,

Who never prosper those that do despise them,

For all the villainies which thou hast done

To knights and ladies, now have paid thee home

By my stiff arm, a knight adventurous. 50

But say, vile wretch, before I send thy soul

To sad Avernus, whither it must go,
What captives hold'st thou in thy sable cave?

BARBER. Go in, and free them all; thou hast the day.

RAFE. Go, squire and dwarf, search in this dreadful cave,

And free the wretched prisoners from their bonds.

Exeunt Squire and Dwarf.

BARBER. I crave for mercy, as thou art a knight,

And scorn'st to spill the blood of those that beg.

RAFE. Thou showed'st no mercy, nor shalt thou have any;

Prepare thyself, for thou shalt surely die. 60

Enter Squire, leading One winking, with a basin under his chin.

SQUIRE. Behold, brave knight, here is one prisoner,
Whom this wild man hath us'd as you see.

WIFE. This is the first wise word I heard the squire speak.

RAFE. Speak what thou art, and how thou hast been used,

That I may give [him]² condign punishment.

1 KNI. I am a knight that took my journey post

Northward from London; and in courteous wise

This giant trained me to his loathsome den 69

Under pretense of killing of the itch;

And all my body with a powder strewed,
That smarts and stings, and cut away my beard,

And my curled locks wherein were ribands tied,

And with a water washed my tender eyes

(Whilst up and down about me still he skipped),

Whose virtue is that, till my eyes be wiped

With a dry cloth, for this my foul disgrace

I shall not dare to look a dog i' th' face.

WIFE. Alas, poor knight!—Relieve him, Rafe; relieve poor knights, whilst you live.

RAFE. My trusty squire, convey him to the town, 81

Where he may find relief.—Adieu, fair knight. *Exit [1] Knight.*

Enter Dwarf, leading One with a patch o'er his nose.

DWARF. Puissant knight, of the Burning Pestle hight,

See here another wretch, whom this foul beast

¹ Counterfeit.

² Original reads *Exit*.

³ From 1635 edn. Original reads *That that I may give*.