

The devil, when Diccon had him—ich
hard him wondrous weel—
Said plainly, here before us, that Dame
Chat had your neele.

GAMMER. Then let us go and ask her
wherefore she minds to keep it!
Seeing we know so much, 'twere a mad-
ness now to slepe it.

HODGE. Go to her, gammer.

[Enter Chat.]

See ye not where she stands in her doors?
Bid her give you the neele. 'Tis none
of hers, but yours! 30

THE III ACT. THE III SCENE.

Gammer, Chat, Hodge.

GAMMER. Dame Chat, chold pray thee
fair, let me have that is mine!
Chill not this twenty years take one
fart that is thine.
Therefore give me mine own, and let
me live beside thee!

CHAT. Why art thou crept from home
hether to mine own doors to chide me?
Hence, doting drab, avaunt, or I shall
set thee further!
Intends thou and that knave me in my
house to murther?

GAMMER. Tush, gape not so on¹ me,
woman! Shalt not yet eat me!
Nor all the friends thou hast, in this
shall not entreat me!
Mine own goods I will have, and ask
thee on beleve.²

What, woman! Poor folks must have
right, though the thing you aggrieve. 10

CHAT. Give thee thy right, and hang thee
up, with all thy bagger's³ brood!
What, wilt thou make me a thief, and
say I stole thy good?

GAMMER. Chill say nothing, ich warrant
thee, but that ich can prove it well.
Thou fet my good even from my door,
cham able this to tell!

CHAT. Did I, old witch, steal oft⁴ was
thine? How should that thing be
known?

GAMMER. Ich cannot tell; but up thou
tookest it, as though it had been thine
own.

¹ Emended by Hadlitt. Original reads so.

² Belive, lively, at once.

³ Beggar's (?).

⁴ Aught.

CHAT. Marry, fie on thee, thou old gib,⁵
with all my very heart!

GAMMER. Nay, fie on thee, thou ramp,⁶
thou rig,⁷ with all that take thy
part!

CHAT. A vengeance on those lips that
layeth such things to my charge!

GAMMER. A vengeance on those callet-
ships whose conscience is so large!⁸ 20

CHAT. Come out, Hodge!

GAMMER. Come out, Hodge, and
let me have⁹ right!

CHAT. Thou arrant witch!

GAMMER. Thou bawdy bitch, chill
make thee curse this night!

CHAT. A bag and a wallet!¹⁰

GAMMER. A cart for a callet!¹¹

CHAT. Why, weenest thou thus to
prevail?

I hold thee a groat I shall patch thy
coat!

GAMMER. Thou wart¹² as good
kiss my tail!

Thou slut, thou cut,¹³ thou rakes,¹⁴ thou
jakes!¹⁵ Will not shame make thee
hide thee?

CHAT. Thou scald,¹⁶ thou bald, thou roit-
ten, thou glutton! I will no longer
chide thee!

But I will teach thee to keep home.

GAMMER. Wilt thou, drunken beast?

[They fight.]

HODGE. Stick to her, gammer! Take her by
the head! Chill warrant you this feast!
Smite, I say, gammer! Bite, I say, gam-
mer! I trow ye will be keen!

Where be your nails? Claw her by the
jaws! Pull me out both her eyes!¹⁷ 30

[Chat throws Gammer down.]

Gog's bones, gammer, hold up your head!

CHAT. I trow, drab, I shall dress thee.—
[To Hodge.] Tarry, thou knave! I hold
thee a groat I shall make these hands
bless thee!—

[Hodge retires.]

⁵ Cat. ⁷ Wanton woman.

⁶ Shameless woman. ⁸ Liberal, easy.

⁹ Manly's reading. Original reads *let have me*.

¹⁰ Accouterments of a beggar.

¹¹ A drab was commonly punished by being
whipped at the tail of a cart as it was driven
through the streets.

¹² Wart. ¹³ Privy.

¹⁴ Docked horse or dog. ¹⁵ Scabby person.

¹⁶ Dissolute person. ¹⁷ Old plural of eye.

Take thou this, old whore, for amends,
and learn thy tongue well to tame,
And say thou met at this bickering, not
thy fellow, but thy dame!

[Hodge returns with a club.]

HODGE. Where is the strong stewed
whore? Chill gear¹ a whore's mark!
Stand out one's way that ich kill none
in the dark!

Up, gammer, and ye be alive! Chill
fight now for us both.

Come no near me, thou scald callet! To
kill thee ich were loath.

CHAT. Art here again, thou hoddypeak!²
What, Doll, bring me out my spit!

HODGE. Chill broach thee with this!
Bim father soul, chill conjure that
foul sprite!—

Let door stand, Cock! Why comes in-
deed? Keep door, thou whoreson boy!

CHAT. Stand to it, thou dastard, for thine
ears! Ise³ teach thee a sluttish toy!

HODGE. Gog's wounds, whore, chill make
thee avaunt! [Flees into the house.]

Take heed, Cock, pull in the latch!

CHAT. I' faith, sir loose-breech, had ye
tarried, ye shold have found your
match!

[Gammer attacks Chat from behind.]

GAMMER. Now ware thy throat, losel!⁴
Thouse⁵ pay⁶ for all!

[Throws Chat down.]

HODGE. Well said, gammer,
by my soul!

Hoise⁷ her! Souse her! Bounce her!
Trounce her! Pull out her throatbol!⁸

CHAT. Com'st behind me, thou withered
witch? And I get once on foot,

Thouse pay for all, thou old tarleather!⁹
I'll teach thee what longs¹⁰ to it!

Take thee this to make up thy mouth till
time thou come by more!

[Chat beats Gammer and goes out.]

HODGE. Up, gammer! Stand on your
feet. Where is the old whore? 50

Faith, would chad her by the face!
Chould crack her callet crown!

GAMMER. Ah, Hodge, Hodge, where was
thy help, when fixen had me down?

¹ Gi' her, give her. ⁴ Worthless person.

² Simpleton. ⁵ Thou shalt.

³ I shall.

⁶ Emended by Doddsley. Original reads *prag*.

⁷ Lift. ⁸ Strip of dried sheepskin.

⁹ Adam's apple. ¹⁰ Belongs.

HODGE. By the Mass, gammer, but for my
staff, Chat had gone nigh to spill you!
Ich think the harlot had not cared, and
chad not come, to kill you.
But shall we lose our neele thus?

GAMMER. No, Hodge, chwar¹¹ loath
do so.

Thinkest thou chill take that at her
hand? No, Hodge, ich tell thee, no!

HODGE. Chold yet this fray were well take
up, and our own neele at home.

'Twill be my chance else some to kill,
wherever it be, or whom!

GAMMER. We have a parson, Hodge, thou
knows, a man esteeméd wise,

Mast' Doctor Rat; chill for him send,
and let me hear his advice. 60

He will her shrive for all this gear, and
give her penance straight;

Wese¹² have our neele, else Dame Chat
comes ne'er within heaven-gate!

HODGE. Yea, marry, gammer, that ich
think best. Will you now for him send?

The sooner Doctor Rat be here, the
sooner wese ha' an end.

And here, gammer! Diccon's devil, as
ich remember well,

Of cat, and Chat, and Doctor Rat a
felonious tale did tell.

Chold you forty pound that is the way
your neele to get again!

GAMMER. Chill ha' him straight! Call out
the boy; wese make him take the pain.

HODGE. What, Cock, I say! Come out!
What devil, canst not hear?

[Enter Cock.]

COCK.¹³ How now, Hodge? How does
gammer? Is yet the weather clear? 70

What wold chawe me to do?

GAMMER. Come hether, Cock, anon!
Hence swith to Doctor Rat! Hie thee
that thou were gone!

And pray him come speak with me; cham
not well at ease.

Shalt have him at his chamber, or¹⁴ else
at Mother Bee's;

Else seek him at Hob Filcher's shop, for,
as chard it reported,

There is the best ale in all the town, and
now is most resorted.

¹¹ Ich were, I were. Bradley's emendation for
chwarde.

¹² We shall.

¹³ Original assigns this speech to Gammer

¹⁴ Original reads *at*.