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PHILASTER

BELLARIO.

Alas, my lord, your pulse keeps madman's time.
So does your tongue.

PHILASTER. You will not kill me then?

ARETHUSA.

Kill you!

BELLARIO. Not for the world.

PHILASTER. I blame not thee,

Bellario. Thou hast done but that which gods
Would have transform'd themselves to do. Be gone. 60

Leave me without reply. This is the last
Of all our meeting. *Exit Bellario.*

Kill me with this sword.

Be wise, or worse will follow. We are two
Earth cannot bear at once. Resolve to do,
Or suffer. 65

ARETHUSA.

If my fortune be so good to let me fall
Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.
Yet tell me this: there will be no slanders,
No jealousy in the other world, no ill there?

PHILASTER.

No.

ARETHUSA. Show me then the way.

PHILASTER. Then guide 70

My feeble hand, you that have power to do it,
For I must perform a piece of justice. If your youth
Have any way offended heaven, let prayers
Short and effectual reconcile you to it.

ARETHUSA.

I am prepar'd. 75

Enter a Country Fellow.

COUNTRY FELLOW.

I'll see the king if he be in the forest. I have hunted
him these two hours. If I should come home and not
see him, my sisters would laugh at me. I can see nothing
but people better hors'd than myself that outride me. I
can hear nothing but shouting. These kings had need of 80

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good brains; this whooping is able to put a mean man
out of his wits. There's a courtier with his sword drawn;
by this hand, upon a woman. I think!

PHILASTER.

Are you at peace?

ARETHUSA.

With heaven and earth. 85

PHILASTER.

May they divide thy soul and body! [*Wounds her.*]

COUNTRY FELLOW.

Hold, dastard! Strike a woman! Thou'rt a craven; I
warrant thee, thou wouldst be loath to play half a dozen
venies at wasters with a good fellow for a broken head.

PHILASTER.

Leave us, good friend. 90

ARETHUSA.

What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself
Upon our private sports, our recreations?

COUNTRY FELLOW.

God 'uds me, I understand you not, but I know the
rogue has hurt you.

PHILASTER.

Pursue thy own affairs. It will be ill 95
To multiply blood upon my head,
Which thou wilt force me to.

COUNTRY FELLOW.

I know not your rhetoric, but I can lay it on if you
touch the woman. *They fight.*

PHILASTER.

Slave, take what thou deservest! 100

ARETHUSA.

Heaven guard my lord.

81. *mean*] of low degree; undistinguished in position; opposite of
"noble" or "gentle" (*OED*).

86. S.D. [*Wounds her*] added by Weber and later editors; Q1,
"Philaster wounds her" following l. 84.

89. *venies at wasters*] "bouts at cudgels" (Dyce).

93. 'uds] judge (the Q1 reading).

96. *To . . . head*] to force me into more killings.

98. *rhetoric*] in the sense of elegant language.

COUNTRY FELLOW.

Oh, do you breathe?

PHILASTER.

I hear the tread of people. I am hurt.

The gods take part against me; could this boor

Have held me thus else? I must shift for life 105

Though I do loathe it. I would find a course

To lose it rather by my will than force. *Exit Philaster.*

COUNTRY FELLOW.

I cannot follow the rogue. I pray thee, wench, come and
kiss me now.*Enter Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, and Woodmen.*

PHARAMOND.

What art thou? 110

COUNTRY FELLOW.

Almost kill'd I am for a foolish woman. A knave has
hurt her.

PHARAMOND.

The princess, gentlemen! Where's the wound, madam?

Is it dangerous?

ARETHUSA.

He has not hurt me. 115

COUNTRY FELLOW.

By god, she lies. H'as hurt her in the breast. Look else.

PHARAMOND.

Oh sacred spring of innocent blood!

DION.

'Tis above wonder! Who should dare this?

ARETHUSA.

I felt it not.

PHARAMOND.

Speak, villain, who has hurt the princess? 120

COUNTRY FELLOW.

Is it the princess?

DION.

Ay.

COUNTRY FELLOW.

'Then I have seen something yet.

PHARAMOND.

But who has hurt her?

COUNTRY FELLOW.

I told you, a rogue. I ne'er saw him before, I. 125

PHARAMOND.

Madam, who did it?

ARETHUSA.

Some dishonest wretch. Alas, I know him not

And do forgive him.

COUNTRY FELLOW.

He's hurt, too. He cannot go far. I made my father's
old fox fly about his ears. 130

PHARAMOND.

How will you have me kill him?

ARETHUSA.

Not at all. 'Tis some distracted fellow.

PHARAMOND.

By this hand, I'll leave never a piece of him bigger than
a nut and bring him all to you in my hat.

ARETHUSA.

Nay, good sir, 135

If you do take him, bring him quick to me

And I will study for a punishment

Great as his fault.

PHARAMOND.

I will.

ARETHUSA.

But swear. 140

PHARAMOND.

By all my love, I will. Woodman, conduct the princess
to the king and bear that wounded fellow to dressing.

Come, gentlemen, we'll follow the chase close.

*Exeunt Arethusa, Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, and
First Woodman.*130. *old fox*] Old English broadsword (Dyce).136. *quick*] alive.142. *that wounded fellow*] the first clear indication that Philaster
wounded the country fellow in their fight.