

*Asp.* With you, sir, now, to do me the fair  
office 10  
To help me to your lord.

*Ser.* What, would you serve him?

*Asp.* I'll do him any service; but, to haste,  
For my affairs are earnest, I desire  
To speak with him.

*Ser.* Sir, because you are in such haste, I  
would 15  
Be loath delay you longer: you can not.

*Asp.* It shall become you, though, to tell  
your lord.

*Ser.* Sir, he will speak with nobody;  
But in particular, I have in charge,  
About no weighty matters.

*Asp.* This is most strange. 20  
Art thou gold-proof? There's for thee; help  
me to him. [*Gives money.*]

*Ser.* Pray be not angry, sir: I'll do my best.  
*Exit.*

*Asp.* How stubbornly this fellow answer'd  
me!

There is a vild dishonest trick in man,  
More than in women. All the men I meet 25  
Appear thus to me, are harsh and rude,  
And have a subtilty in everything,  
Which love could never know; but we fond  
women

Harbour the easiest and the smoothest thoughts,  
And think all shall go so. It is unjust 30  
That men and women should be match'd to-  
gether.

*Enter Amintor and his man*

*Amin.* Where is he?

*Ser.* There, my lord.

*Amin.* What would you, sir?

*Asp.* Please it your lordship to command  
your man

Out of the room, I shall deliver things  
Worthy your hearing.

*Amin.* Leave us. [*Exit Servant.*]

*Asp.* Oh, that that shape 35  
Should bury falsehood in it! *Aside.*

*Amin.* Now your will, sir.

*Asp.* When you know me, my lord, you needs  
must guess

My business; and I am not hard to know;  
For, till the chance of war mark'd this smooth  
face

With these few blemishes, people would call  
me 40

My sister's picture, and her mine. In short,  
I am the brother to the wrong'd Aspatia.

*Amin.* The wrong'd Aspatia! Would thou  
wert so too

Unto the wrong'd Amintor! Let me kiss

That hand of thine, in honour that I bear 45  
Unto the wrong'd Aspatia. Here I stand  
That did it. Would he could not! Gentle youth,  
Leave me; for there is something in thy looks  
That calls my sins in a most hideous form  
Into my mind; and I have grief enough 50  
Without thy help.

*Asp.* I would I could with credit!  
Since I was twelve years old, I had not seen

My sister till this hour I now arriv'd:  
She sent for me to see her marriage, —  
A woeful one! but they that are above 55

Have ends in everything. She us'd few words,  
But yet enough to make me understand  
The baseness of the injuries you did her.

That little training I have had is war:  
I may behave myself rudely in peace; 60  
I would not, though. I shall not need to tell  
you

I am but young, and would be loath to lose  
Honour, that is not easily gain'd again.  
Fairly I mean to deal: the age is strict

For single combats; and we shall be stopp'd, 65  
If it be publish'd. If you like your sword,  
Use it; if mine appear a better to you,  
Change; for the ground is this, and this the  
time,

To end our difference. [*Draws.*]

*Amin.* Charitable youth,  
If thou be'st such, think not I will maintain 70  
So strange a wrong: and, for thy sister's sake,  
Know, that I could not think that desperate  
thing

I durst not do; yet, to enjoy this world,  
I would not see her; for, beholding thee,  
I am I know not what. If I have aught 75  
That may content thee, take it, and begone,  
For death is not so terrible as thou:  
Thine eyes shoot guilt into me.

*Asp.* Thus, she swore,  
Thou wouldst behave thyself, and give me  
words

That would fetch tears into my eyes; and so 80  
Thou dost indeed. But yet she bade me watch  
Lest I were cozen'd; and be sure to fight  
Ere I return'd.

*Amin.* That must not be with me.  
For her I'll die directly; but against her  
Will never hazard it.

*Asp.* You must be urg'd. 85  
I do not deal uncivilly with those  
That dare to fight; but such a one as you  
Must be us'd thus. *She strikes him.*

*Amin.* I prithee, youth, take heed.  
Thy sister is a thing to me so much 90  
Above mine honour, that I can endure  
All this — Good gods! a blow I can endure. —

But stay not, lest thou draw a timeless death  
Upon thyself.

*Asp.* Thou art some prating fellow —  
One that has studied out a trick to talk, 95  
And move soft-hearted people — to be kick'd.

*She kicks him.*  
Thus to be kick'd. — Why should he be so slow  
In giving me my death? *Aside.*

*Amin.* A man can bear  
No more, and keep his flesh. Forgive me,  
then!  
I would endure yet, if I could. Now show 100  
[*Draws.*]

The spirit thou pretend'st, and understand  
Thou hast no hour to live.  
*They fight. [Aspatia is wounded.]*  
What dost thou mean?

Thou canst not fight: the blows thou mak'st at  
me  
Are quite besides; and those I offer at thee.  
Thou spread'st thine arms, and tak'st upon thy  
breast, 105  
Alas, defenceless!

*Asp.* I have got enough,  
And my desire. There is no place so fit  
For me to die as here. [*Falls.*]

*Enter Evadne, her hands bloody, with a knife*

*Evad.* Amintor, I am loaden with events,  
That fly to make thee happy; I have joys, 110  
That in a moment can call back thy wrongs,  
And settle thee in thy free state again.  
It is Evadne still that follows thee,  
But not her mischiefs. 114

*Amin.* Thou canst not fool me to believe  
again;  
But thou hast looks and things so full of news,  
That I am stay'd.

*Evad.* Noble Amintor, put off thy amaze;  
Let thine eyes loose, and speak. Am I not fair?  
Looks not Evadne beauteous with these rites  
now? 120

Were those hours half so lovely in thine eyes  
When our hands met before the holy man?  
I was too foul within to look fair then:  
Since I knew ill, I was not free till now.

*Amin.* There is presage of some important  
thing 125  
About thee, which, it seems, thy tongue hath  
lost.

Thy hands are bloody, and thou hast a knife.

*Evad.* In this consists thy happiness and  
mine.

Joy to Amintor! for the king is dead.

*Amin.* Those have most power to hurt us,  
that we love; 130  
We lay our sleeping lives within their arms.

<sup>124</sup> timeless: untimeiy <sup>124</sup> besides: random  
shed: (not in Q 1) <sup>160</sup> sharper: ('crueller' Q 1)

Why, thou hast rais'd up mischief to his height,  
And found one to out-name thy other faults;  
Thou hast no intermission of thy sins  
But all thy life is a continued ill. 135

Black is thy colour now, disease thy nature.  
Joy to Amintor! Thou hast touch'd a life,  
The very name of which had power to chain  
Up all my rage, and calm my wildest wrongs.

*Evad.* 'T is done; and, since I could not find  
a way 140  
To meet thy love so clear as through his life,  
I cannot now repent it.

*Amin.* Couldst thou procure the gods to  
speak to me,  
To bid me love this woman and forgive, 144  
I think I should fall out with them. Behold,  
Here lies a youth whose wounds bleed in my  
breast,

Sent by his violent fate to fetch his death  
From my slow hand! And, to augment my woe,  
You now are present, stain'd with a king's  
blood

Violently shed. This keeps night here, 150  
And throws an unknown wilderness about me.

*Asp.* Oh, oh, oh!

*Amin.* No more; pursue me not.  
*Evad.* Forgive me, then,  
And take me to thy bed: we may not part. [*Kneels.*]

*Amin.* Forbear, be wise, and let my rage go  
this way. 155

*Evad.* 'T is you that I would stay, not it.  
*Amin.* Take heed;

It will return with me.

*Evad.* If it must be,  
I shall not fear to meet it. Take me home.

*Amin.* Thou monster of cruelty, forbear!

*Evad.* For Heaven's sake look more calm!  
Thine eyes are sharper 160

Than thou canst make thy sword.

*Amin.* Away, away!

Thy knees are more to me than violence.

I am worse than sick to see knees follow me  
For that I must not grant. For God's sake,  
stand.

*Evad.* Receive me, then.

*Amin.* I dare not stay thy language. 165  
In midst of all my anger and my grief,  
Thou dost awake something that troubles me,  
And says, I lov'd thee once. I dare not stay;  
There is no end of woman's reasoning.

*Leaves her.*

*Evad.* [*rising.*] Amintor, thou shalt love me  
now again. 170

Go; I am calm. Farewell, and peace for ever!  
Evadne, whom thou hat'st, will die for thee.

*Stabs herself.*

<sup>123</sup> out-name: excel in fame <sup>148-150</sup> And . . .  
<sup>145</sup> stay: abide