

The Witch of Edmonton by Rowley, Dekker, Ford
M/F SmS, SS, Kn, R&D, QS

III, ii. ROWLEY, DEKKER, AND FORD

1465

Y. THOR. [*Aside.*] What a thorn this rose
grows on! Parting were sweet;
But what a trouble 'twill be to obtain
it!—

Come, again and again, farewell!—
(*Kisses.*) Yet wilt return? 120

All questions of my journey, my stay,
employment,

And revisitation, fully I have answered
all.

There's nothing now behind but—
nothing.

Sus. And
That "nothing" is more hard than any-
thing,

Than all the everythings. This request—

Y. THOR. What is it?

Sus. That I may bring you through one
pasture more

Up to yon knot of trees; amongst those
shadows

I'll vanish from you—they shall teach
me how.

Y. THOR. Why, 'tis granted; come, walk,
then.

Sus. Nay, not too fast.
They say slow things have best perfec-
tion; 130

The gentle shower wets to fertility,
The churlish storm may mischief with
his bounty;

The baser beasts take strength even from
the womb,

But the lord lion's whelp is feeble long.

Exeunt.

[SCENA iii.

A field with a small grove.]

*Enter Dog.*¹

Dog. Now for an early mischief and a
sudden!

The mind's about it now; one touch from
me

Soon sets the body forward.

Enter Young Thorney, Susan.

Y. THOR. Your request is out; yet will you
leave me?

Sus. What? So churlishly? You'll make
me stay forever

Rather than part with such a sound from
you.

¹ The Dog is, of course, invisible to all but the
audience.

Y. THOR. Why, you almost anger me.
Pray you, begone.

You have no company, and 'tis very
early;

Some hurt may betide you homewards.

Sus. Tush! I fear none;

To leave you is the greatest hurt I can
suffer. 10

Besides, I expect your father and mine
own

To meet me back, or overtake me with
you.

They began to stir when I came after you.

I know they'll not be long.

Y. THOR. [*Aside.*] So! I shall have more
trouble. (*Dog rubs him.*) Thank you
for that.

Then I'll ease all at once. 'Tis done
now—

What I ne'er thought on.—You shall not
go back.

Sus. Why, shall I go along with thee?
Sweet music!

Y. THOR. No, to a better place.

Sus. Any place I;

I'm there at home where thou pleasest to
have me. 20

Y. THOR. At home? I'll leave you in your
last lodging;

I must kill you.

Sus. O, fine! You'd fright me from
you.

Y. THOR. You see I had no purpose; I'm
unarmed;

'Tis this minute's decree, and it must be.
Look, this will serve your turn.

[*Draws a knife.*]

Sus. I'll not turn from it,
If you be ear[ne]st, sir; yet you may tell
me

Wherefore you'll kill me.

Y. THOR. Because you are a whore.

Sus. There's one deep wound already. A
whore!

'Twas ever further from me than the
thought

Of this black hour. A whore?

Y. THOR. Yes, I'll prove it, 30

And you shall confess it. You are my
whore—

No wife of mine; the word admits no
second.

I was before wedded to another, have her
still.

I do not lay the sin unto your charge;
 'Tis all mine own. Your marriage was
 my theft,
 For I espoused your dowry, and I have
 it.
 I did not purpose to have added mur-
 ther;
 The devil did not prompt me. Till this
 minute
 You might have safe returned; now you
 cannot.
 You have dogged your own death.

Stabs her.

Sus. And I deserve it; 40
 I'm glad my fate was so intelligent.¹
 'Twas some good spirit's motion. Die?
 O, 'twas time!
 How many years might I have slept in
 sin,
 Sin of my most hatred, too, adultery?

Y. THOR. Nay, sure, 'twas likely that the
 most was past,
 For I meant never to return to you
 After this parting.

Sus. Why, then, I thank you more.
 You have done lovingly, leaving yourself,
 That you would thus bestow me on
 another.

Thou art my husband, Death, and I em-
 brace thee 50
 With all the love I have. Forget the stain
 Of my unwitting sin; and then I come
 A crystal virgin to thee. My soul's purity
 Shall with bold wings ascend the doors
 of Mercy,

For Innocence is ever her companion.

Y. THOR. Not yet mortal? I would not
 linger you,
 Or leave you a tongue to blab.

[Stabs her again.]

Sus. Now heaven reward you ne'er the
 worse for me!
 I did not think that Death had been so
 sweet,
 Nor I so apt to love him. I could ne'er
 die better, 60
 Had I stayed forty years for preparation,
 For I'm in charity with all the world.
 Let me for once be thine example,
 heaven;
 Do to this man as I him free forgive,
 And may he better die and better live.

*Moritur.*²

¹ Communicative.

² She dies.

Y. THOR. 'Tis done; and I am in! Once
 past our height,
 We scorn the deep'st abyss. This follows
 now,
 To hele³ her wounds by dressing of the
 weapon.
 Arms, thighs, hands, any place; we must
 not fail *Wounds himself.*
 Light scratches, giving such deep ones.
 The best I can 70
 To bind myself to this tree. Now's the
 storm,
 Which if blown o'er, many fair days may
 follow. *Dog ties him.*
 So, so, I'm fast; I did not think I could
 Have done so well behind me. How
 prosperous
 And effectual mischief sometimes is!
 Help! Help!
 Murther, murther, murther!

Enter Carter and Old Thorney.

[O.] CART. Ha! Whom tolls the bell for?
 Y. THOR. O, O!

O. THOR. Ah me!
 The cause appears too soon. My child,
 my son!

[O.] CART. Susan, girl, child! Not speak
 to thy father? Ha!

Y. THOR. O, lend me some assistance to
 o'ertake 80
 This hapless woman.

O. THOR. Let's o'ertake the murderers.
 Speak whilst thou canst; anon may be too
 late.

I fear thou hast death's mark upon thee
 too.

Y. THOR. I know them both; yet such an
 oath is passed

As pulls damnation up if it be broke.
 I dare not name 'em. Think what forced
 men do.

O. THOR. Keep oath with murderers?
 That were a conscience
 To hold the devil in.

Y. THOR. Nay, sir, I can describe 'em.
 Shall show them as familiar as their
 names. 8

The taller of the two at this time wear
 His satin doublet white, but crimson
 lined,

Hose of black satin, cloak of scarlet—

³ I.e., conceal the source of.