

A King and No King, 3.3 -- MASTER

Enter MARDONIUS.

Mardonius

I'll move the king; he is most strangely alter'd: I guess the cause, I fear, too right. Heaven has some secret end in't, and 'tis a scourge, no question, justly laid upon him. He has follow'd me through twenty rooms; and ever, when I stay to wait his command, he blushes like a girl, and looks upon me as if modesty kept in his business; so turns away from me; but, if I go on, he follows me again.

Enter ARBACES.

See, here he is. I cannot choose but weep to see him: his very enemies, I think, whose wounds have bred his fame, if they should see him now, would find tears i' their eyes.

Arbaces

I cannot utter it! Why should I keep
A breast to harbour thoughts I dare not speak?
Darkness is in my bosom; and there lie
A thousand thoughts that cannot brook the light.

Mardonius

How do you, sir?

Arbaces

Why very well, Mardonius.
How dost thou do?

Mardonius

Better than you, I fear.

Arbaces

I hope thou art; for, to be plain with thee,
Thou art in hell else! Secret scorching flames,
Are crept into me, and there is no cure.

Mardonius

Sir, either I mistake, or there is something hid, that you would utter to me.

Arbaces

So there is: but yet I cannot do it.

Mardonius

Out with it, sir. If it be dangerous, I will not shrink to do you service. Let me but know what I shall do for you.

Arbaces

It will not out! Were you with Gobrias,
And bade him give my sister all content
The place affords, and give her leave to send
And speak to whom she please?

Mardonius

Yes, sir, I was.

Arbaces

And did you to Bacurius say as much
About Tigranes?

Mardonius

Yes.

Arbaces

That's all my business.

Mardonius

Oh, say not so.

Arbaces

I do beseech thee,
By all the love thou hast profess'd to me,
To see my sister from me.

Mardonius

Well; and what?

Arbaces.

Bear her this ring, then; and on more advice,
Thou shalt speak to her: Tell her I do love
My kindred all; wilt thou?

Mardonius

Is there no more?

Arbaces

Oh, yes! And her the best;
Better than any brother loves his sister:
That is all.

Mardonius

Methinks, this need not have been delivered with such a caution. I'll do it.

Arbaces

There is more yet: Wilt thou be faithful to me?

Mardonius

Sir, if I take upon me to deliver it after I hear it, I'll pass through fire to do it.

Arbaces

I love her better than a brother ought.
Dost thou conceive me?

Mardonius

I hope you do not, Sir.

Arbaces

No! thou art dull. Kneel down before her,
And never rise again, till she will love me.

Mardonius

Why, I think she does.

Arbaces

But, better than she does: another way;
As wives love husbands.

Mardonius

Why, I think there are few wives that love their husbands better than she does you.

Arbaces

Thou wilt not understand me! Is it fit
This should be utter'd plainly? Take it, then
Naked as 'tis; I would desire her love
Lasciviously, lewdly, incestuously,
To do a sin that needs must damn us both;
And thee too. Dost thou understand me now?

Mardonius

Yes; there's your ring, again. What have I done,
Dishonestly, in my whole life, name it,
That you should put so base a business to me?

Arbaces

Didst thou not tell me, thou wouldst do it?

Mardonius

Yes, if I undertook it: But if all
My hairs were lives, I would not be engaged
In such a cause to save my last life.

Arbaces

Oh, guilt, how poor and weak a thing art thou!
This man, that is my servant, whom my breath
Might blow about the world, might beat me here
Having this cause; whilst I, press'd down with sin,
Could not resist him.—Hear, Mardonius!
It was a motion mis-beseeming man,
And I am sorry for it.

Mardonius

Heaven grant you may be so! You must understand,
nothing that you can utter can remove my love and
service from my prince: but if you do this crime, you ought
to have no laws; for, after this, it will be great injustice in
you to punish any offender, for any crime. For myself, I
find my heart too big; I feel, I have not patience to look
on, whilst you run these forbidden courses.

Arbaces

Mardonius! Stay, Mardonius! for, though
My present state requires nothing but knaves
To be about me, such as are prepared
For every wicked act, yet who does know,
But that my loathed fate may turn about,
And I have use for honest men again?
I hope I may; I pr'ythee leave me not.

Enter BESSUS.

Bessus

Where is the king?

Mardonius

There.

Bessus

An't please your majesty, there's the knife.

Arbaces

What knife?

Bessus

The sword is eaten.

Mardonius

Away, you fool! the king is serious
And cannot now admit your vanities.

Bessus

Why, may not valour approach him?

Mardonius

Yes; but he has affairs. Depart, or I shall be something
unmannerly with you!

Arbaces

No; let him stay, Mardonius; let him stay;
I have occasion with him very weighty,
And I can spare you now.

Mardonius

Sir?

Arbaces

Why, I can spare you now.

Bessus

Mardonius, give way to the state affairs.

Mardonius

Indeed, you are fitter for his present purpose.

Exit MARDONIUS.

Arbaces

Bessus, I should employ thee: Wilt thou do't?

Bessus

Do't for you? By this air, I will do anything, without
exception, be it a good, bad, or indifferent thing.

Arbaces

Do not swear.

Bessus

By this light, but I will; anything whatsoever.

Arbaces

But I shall name the thing
Thy conscience will not suffer thee to do.

Bessus

I would fain hear that thing.

Arbaces

Why, I would have thee get my sister for me,—
Thou understand'st me,—in a wicked manner.

Bessus

Oh, you would have a bout with her? I'll do't, I'll do't,
i'faith.

Arbaces

Wilt thou? dost thou make no more on't?

Bessus

More? No. Why, is there anything else?
If there be, trust me, it shall be done too.
And when this is dispatched, if you have a mind to your
mother, tell me, and you shall see I'll set it hard.

Arbaces

My mother?—Heaven forgive me, to hear this!
I am inspired with horror.—Now I hate thee
Worse than my sin; which, if I could come by,
Should suffer death eternal, ne'er to rise
In any breast again. Know I will die
Languishing mad, as I resolve I shall,
Ere I will deal by such an instrument:
Thou art too sinful to employ in this.
Out of the world, away! [Beats him.]

Bessus

What do you mean, sir?

Arbaces

If there were no such instruments as thou,
We kings could never act such wicked deeds!
Away, I say!—

Exit BESSUS.

I will not do this sin.

I'll press it here, till it do break my breast:
It heaves to get out; but thou art a sin,
And, spite of torture, I will keep thee in.

Exit.

A King and No King, 3.3 -- ARBACES

..... *he follows
me again.*

Enter ARBACES.

..... *tears i'
their eyes.*

I cannot utter it! Why should I keep
A breast to harbour thoughts I dare not speak?
Darkness is in my bosom; and there lie
A thousand thoughts that cannot brook the light.

..... *How
do you, sir?*

Why very well, Mardonius.
How dost thou do?

..... *Better than
you, I fear.*

I hope thou art; for, to be plain with thee,
Thou art in hell else! Secret scorching flames,
Are crept into me, and there is no cure.

.....
utter to me.

So there is: but yet I cannot do it.

..... *what I shall
do for you.*

It will not out! Were you with Gobrias,
And bade him give my sister all content
The place affords, and give her leave to send
And speak to whom she please?

..... *Y
es, sir, I was.*

And did you to Bacurius say as much
About Tigranes?

.....
..... *Yes.*

That's all my business.

..... *Oh
, say not so.*

I do beseech thee,
By all the love thou hast profess'd to me,
To see my sister from me.

..... *Well;
and what?*

Bear her this ring, then; and on more advice,
Thou shalt speak to her: Tell her I do love
My kindred all; wilt thou?

..... *Is
there no more?*

Oh, yes! And her the best;
Better than any brother loves his sister:
That is all.

.....
..... *I'll do it.*

There is more yet: Wilt thou be faithful to me?

.....
..... *fire to do it.*

I love her better than a brother ought.
Dost thou conceive me?

.....
..... *do not, Sir.*

No! thou art dull. Kneel down before her,
And never rise again, till she will love me.

.....
..... *she does.*

But, better than she does: another way;
As wives love husbands.

.....
she does you.

Thou wilt not understand me! Is it fit
This should be utter'd plainly? Take it, then
Naked as 'tis; I would desire her love
Lasciviously, lewdly, incestuously,
To do a sin that needs must damn us both;
And thee too. Dost thou understand me now?

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business to me?

Didst thou not tell me, thou wouldst do it?

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... my last life.

Oh, guilt, how poor and weak a thing art thou!
This man, that is my servant, whom my breath
Might blow about the world, might beat me here
Having this cause; whilst I, press'd down with sin,
Could not resist him.—Hear, Mardonius!
It was a motion mis-beseeming man,
And I am sorry for it.

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forbidden courses.

Mardonius! Stay, Mardonius! for, though
My present state requires nothing but knaves
To be about me, such as are prepared
For every wicked act, yet who does know,
But that my loathed fate may turn about,
And I have use for honest men again?
I hope I may; I pr'ythee leave me not.

.....*there'*
s the knife.

What knife?

..... *unmannerly*
with you!

No; let him stay, Mardonius; let him stay;
I have occasion with him very weighty,

And I can spare you now.

.....
Sir?

Why, I can spare you now.

.....
present purpose.

Bessus, I should employ thee: Wilt thou do't?

..... *or*
indifferent thing.

Do not swear.

.....*anything*
whatsoever.

But I shall name the thing
Thy conscience will not suffer thee to do.

..... *hear*
that thing.

Why, I would have thee get my sister for me,—
Thou understand'st me,—in a wicked manner.

..... *I'll*
do't, i'faith.

Wilt thou? dost thou make no more on't?

.....
... set it hard.

My mother?—Heaven forgive me, to hear this!
I am inspired with horror.—Now I hate thee
Worse than my sin; which, if I could come by,
Should suffer death eternal, ne'er to rise
In any breast again. Know I will die
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Ere I will deal by such an instrument:
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... mean, sir?

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We kings could never act such wicked deeds!
Away, I say !—

Exit BESSUS.

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See, here he is. I cannot choose but weep to see him: his very enemies, I think, whose wounds have bred his fame, if they should see him now, would find tears i' their eyes.

.....bro
ok the light.

How do you, sir?

.....How
dost thou do?

Better than you, I fear.

.....no cure.

Sir, either I mistake, or there is something hid, that you would utter to me.

.....
cannot do it.

Out with it, sir. If it be dangerous, I will not shrink to do you service. Let me but know what I shall do for you.

.....to whom
she please?

Yes, sir, I was.

.....abo
ut Tigranes?

Yes.

.....all
my business.

Oh, say not so.

.....sist
er from me.

Well; and what?

.....wilt thou?

Is there no more?

.....That is all.

Methinks, this need not have been delivered with such a caution. I'll do it.

.....fai
thful to me?

Sir, if I take upon me to deliver it after I hear it, I'll pass through fire to do it.

.....Dost thou
conceive me?

I hope you do not, Sir.

.....
will love me.

Why, I think she does.

.....As wives love
husbands.

Why, I think there are few wives that love their husbands better than she does you.

.....understan
d me now?

Indeed, you are fitter for his present purpose.

Exit MARDONIUS.

Yes; there's your ring, again. What have I done,
Dishonestly, in my whole life, name it,
That you should put so base a business to me?

.....
wouldst do it?

Yes, if I undertook it: But if all
My hairs were lives, I would not be engaged
In such a cause to save my last life.

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... sorry for it.

Heaven grant you may be so! You must understand,
nothing that you can utter can remove my love and
service from my prince: but if you do this crime, you ought
to have no laws; for, after this, it will be great injustice in
you to punish any offender, for any crime. For myself, I
find my heart too big; I feel, I have not patience to look
on, whilst you run these forbidden courses.

.....*Where*
is the king?

There.

.....*The*
sword is eaten.

Away, you fool! the king is serious
And cannot now admit your vanities.

.....
approach him?

Yes; but he has affairs. Depart, or I shall be something
unmannerly with you!

.....
spare you now.

Sir?

..... *to the*
state affairs.

A King and No King, 3.3 -- BESSUS

.....I pr'ythee
leave me not.

Enter BESSUS.

Where is the king?

.....
.....*There.*

An't please your majesty, there's the knife.

.....
.....*...What knife?*

The sword is eaten.

.....*admit*
.....*your vanities.*

Why, may not valour approach him?

.....
.....*spare you now.*

Mardonius, give way to the state affairs.

.....*Wi*
.....*It thou do't?*

Do't for you? By this air, I will do anything, without
exception, be it a good, bad, or indifferent thing.

.....*D*
.....*o not swear.*

By this light, but I will; anything whatsoever.

.....*suffer*
.....*thee to do.*

I would fain hear that thing.

.....*a*
.....*wicked manner.*

Oh, you would have a bout with her? I'll do't, I'll do't,
i'faith.

..... *no*
..... *more on't?*

More? No. Why, is there anything else?

If there be, trust me, it shall be done too.

And when this is dispatched, if you have a mind to your
mother, tell me, and you shall see I'll set it hard.

.....*Out of the*
..... *world, away!*

What do you mean, sir?

.....*A*
..... *way, I say !—*

Exit BESSUS.