

**CHRISTOPHER
MARLOWE**

EDWARD THE
SECOND

Christopher Marlowe

Edward the Second

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Christopher Marlowe

Edward the Second

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

KING EDWARD THE SECOND.
PRINCE EDWARD, *his son, afterwards* KING EDWARD THE THIRD.
KENT, *brother to* KING EDWARD THE SECOND.
GAVESTON.
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.
BISHOP OF COVENTRY.
BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.
WARWICK.
LANCASTER.
PEMBROKE.
ARUNDER.
LEICESTER.
BERKELEY.
MORTIMER *the elder*.
MORTIMER *the younger, his nephew*.
SPENSER *the elder*.
SPENSER *the younger, his son*.
BALDOCK.
BAUMONT.
TRUSSEL.
GURNEY.
MATREVIS.
LIGHTBORN.
SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT.
LEVUNE.
RICE AP HOWEL.
ABBOT.
MONKS.
HERALD.
LORDS, POOR MEN, JAMES, MOWER, CHAMPION,
MESSENGERS, SOLDIERS, *and* ATTENDANTS.
QUEEN ISABELLA, *wife to* KING EDWARD THE SECOND.
NIECE *to* KING EDWARD THE SECOND, *_daughter to*
the DUKE OF GLOCESTER.
LADIES.

Enter GAVESTON, *reading a letter*.

*Gav. My father is deceas'd. Come, Gaveston,
And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend.
Ah, words that make me surfeit with delight!
What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston*

Than live and be the favourite of a king!
Sweet prince, I come! these, thy amorous lines
Might have enforc'd me to have swum from France,
And, like Leander, gasp'd upon the sand,
So thou wouldst smile, and take me in thine arms.
The sight of London to my exil'd eyes
Is as Elysium to a new-come soul:
Not that I love the city or the men,
But that it harbours him I hold so dear,—
The king, upon whose bosom let me lie,
And with the world be still at enmity.
What need the arctic people love star-light,
To whom the sun shines both by day and night?
Farewell base stooping to the lordly peers!
My knee shall bow to none but to the king.
As for the multitude, that are but sparks,
Rak'd up in embers of their poverty,—
Tanti,—I'll fawn first on the wind,
That glanceth at my lips, and flieth away.

Enter three Poor Men.

But how now! what are these?

Poor Men. Such as desire your worship's service.

Gav. What canst thou do?

First P. Man. I can ride.

Gav. But I have no horse.—What art thou?

Sec. P. Man. A traveller.

Gav. Let me see; thou wouldst do well

To wait at my trencher, and tell me lies at dinner-time;

And, as I like your discoursing, I'll have you.—

And what art thou?

Third P. Man. A soldier, that hath serv'd against the Scot.

Gav. Why, there are hospitals for such as you:

I have no war; and therefore, sir, be gone.

Third P. Man. Farewell, and perish by a soldier's hand,

That wouldst reward them with an hospital!

Gav. Ay, ay, these words of his move me as much

As if a goose should play the porcupine,

And dart her plumes, thinking to pierce my breast.

But yet it is no pain to speak men fair;

I'll flatter these, and make them live in hope.— [*Aside.*

You know that I came lately out of France,

And yet I have not view'd my lord the king:

If I speed well, I'll entertain you all.

All. We thank your worship.

Gav. I have some business: leave me to myself.

All. We will wait here about the court.

Gav. Do. [Exeunt Poor Men.

These are not men for me;
I must have wanton poets, pleasant wits,
Musicians, that with touching of a string
May draw the pliant king which way I please:
Music and poetry is his delight;
Therefore I'll have Italian masks by night,
Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows;
And in the day, when he shall walk abroad,
Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad;
My men, like satyrs grazing on the lawns,
Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay;
Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
With hair that gilds the water as it glides
Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
And in his sportful hands an olive-tree,
To hide those parts which men delight to see,
Shall bathe him in a spring; and there, hard by,
One like Actæon, peeping through the grove,
Shall by the angry goddess be transform'd,
And running in the likeness of an hart,
By yelping hounds pull'd down, shall seem to die:
Such things as these best please his majesty.—
Here comes my lord the king, and the nobles,
From the parliament. I'll stand aside. [*Retires.*

Enter KING EDWARD, KENT, LANCASTER, the elder MORTIMER, the younger MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, and Attendants.

K. Edw. Lancaster!

Lan. My lord?

Gav. That Earl of Lancaster do I abhor. [Aside.

K. Edw. Will you not grant me this?—In spite of them

I'll have my will; and these two Mortimers,

That cross me thus, shall know I am displeas'd. [Aside.

E. Mor. If you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston.

Gav. That villain Mortimer! I'll be his death. [Aside.

—Y. Mor. Mine uncle here, this earl, and I myself,

Were sworn to your father at his death,

That he should ne'er return into the realm:

And now, my lord, ere I will break my oath,

This sword of mine, that should offend your foes,

Shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need,

And underneath thy banners march who will,

For Mortimer will hang his armour up.

Gav. Mort dieu! [Aside.

K. Edw. Well, Mortimer, I'll make thee rue these words:

Beseems it thee to contradict thy king?

Frown'st thou thereat, aspiring Lancaster?
The sword shall plane the furrows of thy brows,
And hew these knees that now are grown so stiff.
I will have Gaveston; and you shall know
What danger 'tis to stand against your king.

Gav. Well done, Ned! [*Aside.*]

Lan. My lord, why do you thus incense your peers,
That naturally would love and honour you,
But for that base and obscure Gaveston?
Four earldoms have I, besides Lancaster,—
Derby, Salisbury, Lincoln, Leicester;
These will I sell, to give my soldiers pay,
Ere Gaveston shall stay within the realm:
Therefore, if he be come, expel him straight.

Kent. Barons and earls, your pride hath made me mute;
But know I'll speak, and to the proof, I hope.
I do remember, in my father's days,
Lord Percy of the North, being highly mov'd,
Brav'd Mowbray in presence of the king;
For which, had not his highness lov'd him well,
He should have lost his head; but with his look
Th' undaunted spirit of Percy was appeas'd,
And Mowbray and he were reconcil'd:
Yet dare you brave the king unto his face.—
Brother, revenge it, and let these their heads
Preach upon poles, for trespass of their tongues.

War. O, our heads!

K. Edw. Ay, yours; and therefore I would wish you grant.

War. Bridle thy anger, gentle Mortimer.

Y. Mor. I cannot, nor I will not; I must speak.—
Cousin, our hands I hope shall fence our heads,
And strike off his that makes you threaten us.—
Come, uncle, let us leave the brain-sick king,
And henceforth parley with our naked swords.

E. Mor. Wiltshire hath men enough to save our heads.

War. All Warwickshire will leave him for my sake.

Lan. And northward Lancaster hath many friends.—
Adieu, my lord; and either change your mind,
Or look to see the throne, where you should sit,
To float in blood, and at thy wanton head
The glozing head of thy base minion thrown.

[*Exeunt all except King Edward, Kent, Gaveston, and attendants.*]

K. Edw. I cannot brook these haughty menaces:
Am I a king, and must be over-rul'd!—
Brother, display my ensigns in the field:
I'll bandy with the barons and the earls,

And either die or live with Gaveston.
Gav. I can no longer keep me from my lord. [*Comes forward.*
K. Edw. What, Gaveston! welcome! Kiss not my hand:
Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee.
Why shouldst thou kneel? know'st thou not who I am?
Thy friend, thyself, another Gaveston:
Not Hylas was more mourned for of Hercules
Than thou hast been of me since thy exile.
Gav. And, since I went from hence, no soul in hell
Hath felt more torment than poor Gaveston.
K. Edw. I know it.—Brother, welcome home my friend.—
Now let the treacherous Mortimers conspire,
And that high-minded Earl of Lancaster:
I have my wish, in that I joy thy sight;
And sooner shall the sea o'erwhelm my land
Than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence.
I here create thee Lord High-chamberlain,
Chief Secretary to the state and me,
Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man.
Gav. My lord, these titles far exceed my worth.
Kent. Brother, the least of these may well suffice
For one of greater birth than Gaveston.
K. Edw. Cease, brother, for I cannot brook these words.—
Thy worth, sweet friend, is far above my gifts:
Therefore, to equal it, receive my heart.
If for these dignities thou be envied,
I'll give thee more; for, but to honour thee,
Is Edward pleas'd with kingly regiment.
Fear'st thou thy person? thou shalt have a guard:
Wanest thou gold? go to my treasury:
Wouldst thou be lov'd and fear'd? receive my seal,
Save or condemn, and in our name command
What so thy mind affects, or fancy likes.
Gav. It shall suffice me to enjoy your love;
Which whiles I have, I think myself as great
As Cæsar riding in the Roman street,
With captive kings at his triumphant car.

Enter the BISHOP OF COVENTRY.

K. Edw. Whither goes my Lord of Coventry so fast? *Bish. of Cov.* To celebrate your father's exequies. But is that wicked Gaveston return'd? *K. Edw.* Ay, priest, and lives to be reveng'd on thee, That wert the only cause of his exile. *Gav.* 'Tis true; and, but for reverence of these robes, Thou shouldst not plod one foot beyond this place. *Bish. of Cov.* I did no more than I was bound to do: And, Gaveston, unless thou be reclaim'd, As then I did incense the parliament, So will I now, and thou shalt back to France. *Gav.* Saving your reverence, you must pardon me. *K. Edw.* Throw off his golden mitre, rend his stole, And in the channel christen him anew. *Kent.* Ay, brother, lay not violent hands on him! For he'll complain unto the see of Rome. *Gav.* Let him complain unto the see of hell: I'll be reveng'd on him for my exile. *K. Edw.* No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods: Be thou lord

bishop, and receive his rents, And make him serve thee as thy chaplain: I give him thee; here, use him as thou wilt. *Gav.* He shall to prison, and there die in bolts. *K. Edw.* Ay, to the Tower, the Fleet, or where thou wilt. *Bish. of Cov.* For this offence be thou accurs'd of God! *K. Edw.* Who's there? Convey this priest to the Tower. *Bish. of Cov.* True, true. *K. Edw.* But, in the meantime, Gaveston, away, And take possession of his house and goods. Come, follow me, and thou shalt have my guard To see it done, and bring thee safe again. *Gav.* What should a priest do with so fair a house? A prison may beseem his holiness. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter, on one side, the elder MORTIMER, and the younger MORTIMER; on the other, WARWICK, and LANCASTER.

War. 'Tis true, the bishop is in the Tower,

And goods and body given to Gaveston.

Lan. What, will they tyrannise upon the church?

Ah, wicked King! accursed Gaveston!

This ground, which is corrupted with their steps,

Shall be their timeless sepulchre or mine.

Y. Mor. Well, let that peevish Frenchman guard him sure;

Unless his breast be sword-proof, he shall die.

E. Mor. How now! why droops the Earl of Lancaster?

Y. Mor. Wherefore is Guy of Warwick discontent?

Lan. That villain Gaveston is made an earl.

E. Mor. An earl!

War. Ay, and besides Lord-chamberlain of the realm,

And Secretary too, and Lord of Man.

E. Mor. We may not nor we will not suffer this.

Y. Mor. Why post we not from hence to levy men?

Lan. "My Lord of Cornwall" now at every word;

And happy is the man whom he vouchsafes,

For vailing of his bonnet, one good look.

Thus, arm in arm, the king and he doth march:

Nay, more, the guard upon his lordship waits,

And all the court begins to flatter him.

War. Thus leaning on the shoulder of the king,

He nods, and scorns, and smiles at those that pass.

E. Mor. Doth no man take exceptions at the slave?

Lan. All stomach him, but none dare speak a word.

Y. Mor. Ah, that bewrays their baseness, Lancaster!

Were all the earls and barons of my mind,

We'd hale him from the bosom of the king,

And at the court-gate hang the peasant up,

Who, swoln with venom of ambitious pride,

Will be the ruin of the realm and us.

War. Here comes my Lord of Canterbury's grace.

Lan. His countenance bewrays he is displeas'd.

Enter the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, and an Attendant.

Archb. of Cant. First, were his sacred garments rent and torn;

Then laid they violent hands upon him; next,
Himself imprison'd, and his goods asseiz'd:
This certify the Pope: away, take horse. [*Exit Attendant.*
Lan. My lord, will you take arms against the king?
Archb. of Cant. What need I? God himself is up in arms
When violence is offer'd to the church.
Y. Mor. Then will you join with us, that be his peers,
To banish or behead that Gaveston?
Archb. of Cant. What else, my lords? for it concerns me near;
The bishoprick of Coventry is his.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Y. Mor. Madam, whither walks your majesty so fast?
Q. Isab. Unto the forest, gentle Mortimer,
To live in grief and baleful discontent;
For now my lord the king regards me not,
But dotes upon the love of Gaveston:
He claps his cheeks, and hangs about his neck,
Smiles in his face, and whispers in his ears;
And, when I come, he frowns, as who should say,
"Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston."
E. Mor. Is it not strange that he is thus bewitch'd?
Y. Mor. Madam, return unto the court again:
That sly inveigling Frenchman we'll exile,
Or lose our lives; and yet, ere that day come,
The king shall lose his crown; for we have power,
And courage too, to be reveng'd at full.
Archb. of Cant. But yet lift not your swords against the king.
Lan. No; but we will lift Gaveston from hence.
War. And war must be the means, or he'll stay still.
Q. Isab. Then let him stay; for, rather than my lord
Shall be oppress'd with civil mutinies,
I will endure a melancholy life,
And let him frolic with his minion.
Archb. of Cant. My lords, to ease all this, but hear me speak:
We and the rest, that are his counsellors,
Will meet, and with a general consent
Confirm his banishment with our hands and seals.
Lan. What we confirm the king will frustrate.
Y. Mor. Then may we lawfully revolt from him.
War. But say, my lord, where shall this meeting be?
Archb. of Cant. At the New Temple.
Y. Mor. Content.
Archb. of Cant. And, in the meantime, I'll entreat you all
To cross to Lambeth, and there stay with me.
Lan. Come, then, let's away.
Y. Mor. Madam, farewell.

Q. Isab. Farewell, sweet Mortimer, and, for my sake,
Forbear to levy arms against the king.

Y. Mor. Ay, if words will serve; if not, I must. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter GAVESTON and KENT.

Gav. Edmund, the mighty prince of Lancaster,
That hath more earldoms than an ass can bear,
And both the Mortimers, two goodly men,
With Guy of Warwick, that redoubted knight,
Are gone towards Lambeth: there let them remain. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, the elder MORTIMER,
the younger MORTIMER, the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, and
Attendants.*

Lan. Here is the form of Gaveston's exile; May it please your lordship to subscribe your name.
Archb. of Cant. Give me the paper. [*He subscribes, as the others do after him.* *Lan.* Quick, quick, my lord; I long to write my name. *War.* But I long more to see him banish'd hence. *Y. Mor.* The name of Mortimer shall fright the king, Unless he be declin'd from that base peasant.

Enter KING EDWARD, GAVESTON, and KENT.

K. Edw. What, are you mov'd that Gaveston sits here?
It is our pleasure; we will have it so.

Lan. Your grace doth well to place him by your side,
For nowhere else the new earl is so safe.

E. Mor. What man of noble birth can brook this sight?
Quam male conveniunt!—

See, what a scornful look the peasant casts!

Pem. Can kingly lions fawn on creeping ants?

War. Ignoble vassal, that, like Phaeton,
Aspir'st unto the guidance of the sun!

Y. Mor. Their downfall is at hand, their forces down:
We will not thus be fac'd and over-peer'd.

K. Edw. Lay hands on that traitor Mortimer!

E. Mor. Lay hands on that traitor Gaveston!

Kent. Is this the duty that you owe your king?

War. We know our duties; let him know his peers.

K. Edw. Whither will you bear him? stay, or ye shall die.

E. Mor. We are no traitors; therefore threaten not.

Gav. No, threaten not, my lord, but pay them home.
Were I a king—

Y. Mor. Thou, villain! wherefore talk'st thou of a king,
That hardly art a gentleman by birth?

K. Edw. Were he a peasant, being my minion,
I'll make the proudest of you stoop to him.

Lan. My lord—you may not thus disparage us.—
Away, I say, with hateful Gaveston!

E. Mor. And with the Earl of Kent that favours him.

[Attendants remove Gaveston and Kent.]

K. Edw. Nay, then, lay violent hands upon your king:

Here, Mortimer, sit thou in Edward's throne;

Warwick and Lancaster, wear you my crown.

Was ever king thus over-rul'd as I?

Lan. Learn, then, to rule us better, and the realm.

Y. Mor. What we have done, our heart-blood shall maintain.

War. Think you that we can brook this upstart['s] pride?

K. Edw. Anger and wrathful fury stops my speech.

Archb. of Cant. Why are you not mov'd? be patient, my lord,

And see what we your counsellors have done.

Y. Mor. My lords, now let us all be resolute,

And either have our wills, or lose our lives.

K. Edw. Meet you for this, proud over-daring peers!

Ere my sweet Gaveston shall part from me,

This isle shall fleet upon the ocean,

And wander to the unfrequented Inde.

Archb. of Cant. You know that I am legate to the Pope:

On your allegiance to the see of Rome,

Subscribe, as we have done, to his exile.

Y. Mor. Curse him, if he refuse; and then may we

Depose him, and elect another king.

K. Edw. Ay, there it goes! but yet I will not yield:

Curse me, depose me, do the worst you can.

Lan. Then linger not, my lord, but do it straight.

Archb. of Cant. Remember how the bishop was abus'd:

Either banish him that was the cause thereof,

Or I will presently discharge these lords

Of duty and allegiance due to thee.

K. Edw. It boots me not to threat; I must speak fair:

The legate of the Pope will be obey'd.– [Aside.]

My lord, you shall be Chancellor of the realm;

Thou, Lancaster, High-Admiral of our fleet;

Young Mortimer and his uncle shall be earls;

And you, Lord Warwick, President of the North;

And thou of Wales. If this content you not,

Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,

And share it equally amongst you all,

So I may have some nook or corner left,

To frolic with my dearest Gaveston.

Archb. of Cant. Nothing shall alter us; we are resolv'd.

Lan. Come, come, subscribe.

Y. Mor. Why should you love him whom the world hates so?

K. Edw. Because he loves me more than all the world.

Ah, none but rude and savage-minded men

Would seek the ruin of my Gaveston!

You that be noble-born should pity him.

War. You that are princely-born should shake him off:

For shame, subscribe, and let the lown depart.
E. Mor. Urge him, my lord.
Archb. of Cant. Are you content to banish him the realm?
K. Edw. I see I must, and therefore am content:
 Instead of ink, I'll write it with my tears. [*Subscribes.*]
Y. Mor. The king is love-sick for his minion.
K. Edw. 'Tis done: and now, accursed hand, fall off!
Lan. Give it me: I'll have it publish'd in the streets.
Y. Mor. I'll see him presently despatch'd away.
Archb. of Cant. Now is my heart at ease.
War. And so is mine.
Pem. This will be good news to the common sort.
E. Mor. Be it or no, he shall not linger here.

[Exeunt all except King Edward.]

K. Edw. How fast they run to banish him I love!
They would not stir, were it to do me good.
Why should a king be subject to a priest?
Proud Rome, that hatchest such imperial grooms,
With these thy superstitious taper-lights,
Wherewith thy antichristian churches blaze,
I'll fire thy crazed buildings, and enforce
The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground,
With slaughter'd priests make Tiber's channel swell,
And banks rais'd higher with their sepulchres!
As for the peers, that back the clergy thus,
If I be king, not one of them shall live.

Re-enter GAVESTON.

Gav. My lord, I hear it whisper'd everywhere,
That I am banish'd and must fly the land.
K. Edw. 'Tis true, sweet Gaveston: O were it false!
The legate of the Pope will have it so,
And thou must hence, or I shall be depos'd.
But I will reign to be reveng'd of them;
And therefore, sweet friend, take it patiently.
Live where thou wilt, I'll send thee gold enough;
And long thou shalt not stay; or, if thou dost,
I'll come to thee; my love shall ne'er decline.
Gav. Is all my hope turn'd to this hell of grief?
K. Edw. Rend not my heart with thy too-piercing words:
Thou from this land, I from myself am banish'd.
Gav. To go from hence grieves not poor Gaveston;
But to forsake you, in whose gracious looks
The blessedness of Gaveston remains;
For nowhere else seeks he felicity.

K. Edw. And only this torments my wretched soul,
That, whether I will or no, thou must depart.
Be governor of Ireland in my stead,
And there abide till fortune call thee home.
Here, take my picture, and let me wear thine:

[*They exchange pictures.*]

O, might I keep thee here, as I do this,
Happy were I! but now most miserable.
Gav. 'Tis something to be pitied of a king.
K. Edw. Thou shalt not hence; I'll hide thee, Gaveston.
Gav. I shall be found, and then 'twill grieve me more.
K. Edw. Kind words and mutual talk makes our grief greater:
Therefore, with dumb embracement, let us part,
Stay, Gaveston; I cannot leave thee thus.
Gav. For every look, my love drops down a tear:
Seeing I must go, do not renew my sorrow.
K. Edw. The time is little that thou hast to stay,
And, therefore, give me leave to look my fill.
But, come, sweet friend; I'll bear thee on thy way.
Gav. The peers will frown.
K. Edw. I pass not for their anger. Come, let's go:
O, that we might as well return as go!

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. Isab. Whither goes my lord?
K. Edw. Fawn not on me, French strumpet; get thee gone!
Q. Isab. On whom but on my husband should I fawn?
Gav. On Mortimer; with whom, ungentle queen,—
I judge no more—judge you the rest, my lord.
Q. Isab. In saying this, thou wrong'st me, Gaveston:
Is't not enough that thou corrupt'st my lord,
And art a bawd to his affections,
But thou must call mine honour thus in question?
Gav. I mean not so; your grace must pardon me.
K. Edw. Thou art too familiar with that Mortimer,
And by thy means is Gaveston exil'd:
But I would wish thee reconcile the lords,
Or thou shalt ne'er be reconcil'd to me.
Q. Isab. Your highness knows, it lies not in my power.
K. Edw. Away, then! touch me not.—Come, Gaveston.
Q. Isab. Villain, 'tis thou that robb'st me of my lord.
Gav. Madam, 'tis you that rob me of my lord.
K. Edw. Speak not unto her: let her droop and pine.
Q. Isab. Wherein, my lord, have I deserv'd these words?
Witness the tears that Isabella sheds,
Witness this heart, that, sighing for thee, breaks,
How dear my lord is to poor Isabel!

K. Edw. And witness heaven how dear thou art to me:
There weep; for, till my Gaveston be repeal'd,
Assure thyself thou com'st not in my sight.

[Exeunt King Edward and Gaveston.]

Q. Isab. O miserable and distressed queen!
Would, when I left sweet France, and was embarked,
That charming Circe, walking on the waves,
Had chang'd my shape! or at the marriage-day
The cup of Hymen had been full of poison!
Or with those arms, that twin'd about my neck,
I had been stifled, and not liv'd to see
The king my lord thus to abandon me!
Like frantic Juno, will I fill the earth
With ghastly murmur of my sighs and cries;
For never doted Jove on Ganymede
So much as he on cursed Gaveston:
But that will more exasperate his wrath;
I must entreat him, I must speak him fair,
And be a means to call home Gaveston:
And yet he'll ever dote on Gaveston;
And so am I for ever miserable.

*Re-enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, the elder MORTIMER,
and the younger MORTIMER.*

Lan. Look, where the sister of the king of France
Sits wringing of her hands and beats her breast!
War. The king, I fear, hath ill-treated her.
Pem. Hard is the heart that injures such a saint.
Y. Mor. I know 'tis 'long of Gaveston she weeps.
E. Mor. Why, he is gone.
Y. Mor. Madam, how fares your grace?
Q. Isab. Ah, Mortimer, now breaks the king's hate forth,
And he confesseth that he loves me not!
Y. Mor. Cry quittance, madam, then, and love not him.
Q. Isab. No, rather will I die a thousand deaths:
And yet I love in vain; he'll ne'er love me.
Lan. Fear ye not, madam; now his minion's gone,
His wanton humour will be quickly left.
Q. Isab. O, never, Lancaster! I am enjoin'd,
To sue unto you all for his repeal:
This wills my lord, and this must I perform,
Or else be banish'd from his highness' presence.
Lan. For his repeal, madam! he comes not back,
Unless the sea cast up his shipwreck'd body.
War. And to behold so sweet a sight as that,

There's none here but would run his horse to death.
Y. Mor. But, madam, would you have us call him home?
Q. Isab. Ay, Mortimer, for, till he be restor'd,
The angry king hath banish'd me the court;
And, therefore, as thou lov'st and tender'st me,
Be thou my advocate unto these peers.
Y. Mor. What, would you have me plead for Gaveston?
E. Mor. Plead for him that will, I am resolv'd.
Lan. And so am I, my lord: dissuade the queen.
Q. Isab. O, Lancaster, let him dissuade the king!
For 'tis against my will he should return.
War. Then speak not for him; let the peasant go.
Q. Isab. 'Tis for myself I speak, and not for him.
Pem. No speaking will prevail; and therefore cease.
Y. Mor. Fair queen, forbear to angle for the fish
Which, being caught, strikes him that takes it dead;
I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston,
That now, I hope, floats on the Irish seas.
Q. Isab. Sweet Mortimer, sit down by me a while,
And I will tell thee reasons of such weight
As thou wilt soon subscribe to his repeal.
Y. Mor. It is impossible: but speak your mind.
Q. Isab. Then, thus;—but none shall hear it but ourselves.
[Talks to *Y. Mor.* apart.
Lan. My lords, albeit the queen win Mortimer,
Will you be resolute and hold with me?
E. Mor. Not I, against my nephew.
Pem. Fear not; the queen's words cannot alter him.
War. No? do but mark how earnestly she pleads!
Lan. And see how coldly his looks make denial!
War. She smiles: now, for my life, his mind is chang'd!
Lan. I'll rather lose his friendship, I, than grant.
Y. Mor. Well, of necessity it must be so.—
My lords, that I abhor base Gaveston
I hope your honours make no question.
And therefore, though I plead for his repeal,
'Tis not for his sake, but to our avail;
Nay, for the realm's behoof, and for the king's.
Lan. Fie, Mortimer, dishonour not thyself!
Can this be true, 'twas good to banish him?
And is this true, to call him home again?
Such reasons make white black, and dark night day.
Y. Mor. My Lord of Lancaster, mark the respect.
Lan. In no respect can contraries be true.
Q. Isab. Yet, good my lord, hear what he can allege.
War. All that he speaks is nothing; we are resolv'd.
Y. Mor. Do you not wish that Gaveston were dead?
Pem. I would he were!
Y. Mor. Why, then, my lord, give me but leave to speak.

E. Mor. But, nephew, do not play the sophister.

Y. Mor. This which I urge is of a burning zeal
To mend the king and do our country good.
Know you not Gaveston hath store of gold,
Which may in Ireland purchase him such friends
As he will front the mightiest of us all?
And whereas he shall live and be belov'd,
'Tis hard for us to work his overthrow.

War. Mark you but that, my lord of Lancaster.

Y. Mor. But, were he here, detested as he is,
How easily might some base slave be suborn'd
To greet his lordship with a poniard,
And none so much as blame the murderer,
But rather praise him for that brave attempt,
And in the chronicle enrol his name
For purging of the realm of such a plague!

Pem. He saith true.

Lan. Ay, but how chance this was not done before?

Y. Mor. Because, my lords, it was not thought upon.
Nay, more, when he shall know it lies in us
To banish him, and then to call him home,
'Twill make him vail the top flag of his pride,
And fear to offend the meanest nobleman.

E. Mor. But how if he do not, nephew?

Y. Mor. Then may we with some colour rise in arms;
For, howsoever we have borne it out,
'Tis treason to be up against the king;
So shall we have the people of our side,
Which, for his father's sake, lean to the king,
But cannot brook a night-grown mushroom,
Such a one as my Lord of Cornwall is,
Should bear us down of the nobility:
And, when the commons and the nobles join,
'Tis not the king can buckler Gaveston;
We'll pull him from the strongest hold he hath.
My lords, if to perform this I be slack,
Think me as base a groom as Gaveston.

Lan. On that condition Lancaster will grant.

War. And so will Pembroke and I.

E. Mor. And I.

Y. Mor. In this I count me highly gratified,
And Mortimer will rest at your command.

Q. Isab. And when this favour Isabel forgets,
Then let her live abandon'd and forlorn.—
But see, in happy time, my lord the king,
Having brought the Earl of Cornwall on his way,
Is new return'd. This news will glad him much:
Yet not so much as me; I love him more
Than he can Gaveston: would he lov'd me

But half so much! then were I treble-blest.

Re-enter KING EDWARD, mourning.

K. Edw. He's gone, and for his absence thus I mourn:
Did never sorrow go so near my heart
As doth the want of my sweet Gaveston;
And, could my crown's revenue bring him back,
I would freely give it to his enemies,
And think I gain'd, having bought so dear a friend.

Q. Isab. Hark, how he harps upon his minion!

K. Edw. My heart is as an anvil unto sorrow,
Which beats upon it like the Cyclops' hammers,
And with the noise turns up my giddy brain,
And makes me frantic for my Gaveston.
Ah, had some bloodless Fury rose from hell,
And with my kingly sceptre struck me dead,
When I was forc'd to leave my Gaveston!

Lan. Diablo, what passions call you these?

Q. Isab. My gracious lord, I come to bring you news.

K. Edw. That you have parled with your Mortimer?

Q. Isab. That Gaveston, my lord, shall be repeal'd.

K. Edw. Repeal'd! the news is too sweet to be true.

Q. Isab. But will you love me, if you find it so?

K. Edw. If it be so, what will not Edward do?

Q. Isab. For Gaveston, but not for Isabel.

K. Edw. For thee, fair queen, if thou lov'st Gaveston;

I'll hang a golden tongue about thy neck,
Seeing thou hast pleaded with so good success.

Q. Isab. No other jewels hang about my neck
Than these, my lord; nor let me have more wealth
Than I may fetch from this rich treasury.

O, how a kiss revives poor Isabel!

K. Edw. Once more receive my hand; and let this be
A second marriage 'twixt thyself and me.

Q. Isab. And may it prove more happy than the first!
My gentle lord, bespeak these nobles fair,
That wait attendance for a gracious look,
And on their knees salute your majesty.

K. Edw. Courageous Lancaster, embrace thy king;
And, as gross vapours perish by the sun,
Even so let hatred with thy sovereign's smile:
Live thou with me as my companion.

Lan. This salutation overjoys my heart.

K. Edw. Warwick shall be my chiefest counsellor:
These silver hairs will more adorn my court
Than gaudy silks or rich embroidery.
Chide me, sweet Warwick, if I go astray.

War. Slay me, my lord, when I offend your grace.
K. Edw. In solemn triumphs and in public shows
Pembroke shall bear the sword before the king.
Pem. And with this sword Pembroke will fight for you.
K. Edw. But wherefore walks young Mortimer aside?
Be thou commander of our royal fleet;
Or, if that lofty office like thee not,
I make thee here Lord Marshal of the realm.
Y. Mor. My lord, I'll marshal so your enemies,
As England shall be quiet, and you safe.
K. Edw. And as for you, Lord Mortimer of Chirke,
Whose great achievements in our foreign war
Deserve no common place nor mean reward,
Be you the general of the levied troops
That now are ready to assail the Scots.
E. Mor. In this your grace hath highly honour'd me,
For with my nature war doth best agree.
Q. Isab. Now is the king of England rich and strong,
Having the love of his renowned peers.
K. Edw. Ay, Isabel, ne'er was my heart so light.—
Clerk of the crown, direct our warrant forth,
For Gaveston, to Ireland!

Enter BEAUMONT with warrant.

Beaumont, fly
As fast as Iris or Jove's Mercury.
Beau.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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