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21L.016 / 21M.616 Learning from the Past: Drama, Science, Performance
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WORLD
TURNED
Upside Down

By the Students of
21L.01b and 21M.61b

SPRING 2007
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
CAMBRIDGE, MA

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

CHARACTER

ACTOR

AUTHOR

NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS:

Professor and Isaac Newton. . .	Teejana Beenessreesingh. . .	Xavier Gonzalez and Xavier Gonzalez
Philosopher and Girl.	Fernando Funakoshi.	Deirdre LaBounty and Mia Shandell
Nature.	Katherine Aull.	Alejandro Ojeda
Thomas Hobbes.	Mark Seifter.	Joe Tennent
William Harvey.	Jonathan Liu.	Jonathan Liu
Sweeper and Jones.	Irene Lee and.	Katherine Aull Deirdre LaBounty
Thomas Hobbes.	Mark Seifter.	Joe Tennent
Guy Chapman, Sailor.	Jose Sepulveda.	Fernando Funakoshi

LIVES OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE:

Wet-nurse.	Nicole Berdy.	Nicole Berdy
Young boy.	Deirdre LaBounty.	Mia Shandell
Unfaithful husband.	Fredrick Rojas.	Fredrick Rojas
Orange girl.	Mia Shandell.	Jose Sepulveda
Puritan.	Mark Seifter.	Noelle Steber

THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR:

Wanton troopers.	Noelle Steber & Company.	Mark Seifter
Forget-me-not girl.	Nicole Berdy.	Katherine Aull
Angry woman	Meg Rosenburg.	Mia Shandell
Our lady's messenger	Mariam Shaikh.	Teejana Beenessreesingh
Fond lover	Jonathan Liu.	Jose Sepulveda
Old woman	Noelle Steber.	Nicole Berdy
Old Royalist	Katherine Aull.	Nivair Gabriel

THE RESTORATION:

Prisoner/fiddler	Alejandro Ojeda.	Xavier Gonzalez
Charles II	Fernando Funakoshi.	Jose Sepulveda
Nell Gwynn	Meg Rosenburg.	Teejana Beenessreesingh
Catherine of Braganza	Diana Aude.	Mariam Shaikh
Protestant daughter	Nivair Gabriel.	Mariam Shaikh
Girl with Corset.	Teejana Beenessreesingh.	Diana Aude
Sister to Celia	Deirdre LaBounty.	Irene Lee
Upper-class adulterer	Mia Shandell.	Meg Rosenburg
Unfaithful wife	Yifan Zhang.	Yifan Zhang
Puritan journalist	Jose Sepulveda.	Mariam Shaikh
Nell Gwynn	Meg Rosenburg.	Teejana Beenessreesingh
Lady and servant Stephen	Deirdre LaBounty	Deirdre LaBounty and Fernando Funakoshi

NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS

PROFESSOR AND ISAAC NEWTON:

PROFESSOR: Ah, good afternoon, Mr. Newton. Come in, come in. So glad you could attend this meeting.

ISAAC NEWTON: Thank you, sir.

PROFESSOR: In short, Mr. Newton, your work is great in scope. Epic, even.

ISAAC NEWTON: I have spent much time in the research of it, sir.

PROFESSOR: Yet, Mr. Newton, it greatly lacks in organization. None of the pieces seem to have much to do with one another. In fact, this work could easily be split into ten, or even a hundred separate papers, all on completely different topics.

ISAAC NEWTON: Yes, Sir.

PROFESSOR: So, my suggestion for this assignment is, Mr. Newton, to choose one of your topics that can be completely examined in a ten-page analytic essay, and to only turn in that one ten-page essay to me. A thousand-page book on a variety of topics was completely unnecessary.

ISAAC NEWTON: I'm sorry, sir.

PROFESSOR: No, no, don't apologize, Mr. Newton. I daresay you think that thousand-page monster will gain you a great deal of fame and glory in the future. But university is not for fame. Neither are university writing assignments. I will not read your next assignment if it is longer than ten pages, as all assignments turned in for this class rightfully should be. Do you understand, Mr. Newton?

ISAAC NEWTON: Yes, sir.

PROFESSOR: You will not do it again in this class.

ISAAC NEWTON: No, sir.

PROFESSOR: Good-day, Mr. Newton.

ISAAC NEWTON: Good-day, sir.



PHILOSOPHER AND GIRL:

Place:

The edge of a field in the English countryside. There is a low stone wall with a small tree growing beside it, and summer shines down over the weed-infested plot and dusty dirt road beside it.

Characters:

The PHILOSOPHER, a young man with messy hair, wearing an open jerkin, a muddy white shirt, and loose short pants without shoes.

The GIRL, a young woman in a well-fitted dark brown dress with high neck and elbow-length sleeves, and a long full skirt. We know there are petticoats beneath, and that she does not wear shoes, from the angle at which she is seated along the side of the road.

PHILOSOPHER: And then he said he had snuck off with Maria last week after they had done bringing the sheep back in. Jacob thinks he was lying, but everyone knows Maria will do anything anyone wants her to.

GIRL: No she won't. Remember Stephen Knowles? She slapped his face and sent him packing. But he was twice as old as she was.

PHILOSOPHER: She's probably poxy.

GIRL: You can't get pox around here. That's only for rich people off in London, cavorting around in their high-class carriages with their high-class whores who all have high-class French diseases.

PHILOSOPHER: But what about Thomas the Butcher? He has it, he's all spotty in the face, and he's not rich.

GIRL: He was a sailor. That's different. The sailors have been to France directly, they didn't have to import their French diseases at high cost. . . . Are you still going to Cambridge in the fall?

PHILOSOPHER: Yes. I still want to be a Philosopher. Like Hobbes. He's brilliant. I can go to university, and learn philosophy, and what the Bible really means, and how Galileo's telescope works. It'll be wonderful.

GIRL: I wish I could go to university.

PHILOSOPHER: I had to promise to do work for them so I could go. Clean rich snobs' rooms and such. Serve food.

GIRL: But you still get to be in the city. Wear fancy clothes and meet rich people.

PHILOSOPHER: Rich people with the pox.

GIRL: Who got it from their high-class French whores. Catholic whores.

PHILOSOPHER: Unlike all those Protestant whores rich people get the pox from.

GIRL: Which do you think more people get the pox from? Protestant or Catholic whores? You shall have to come back and tell me.

PHILOSOPHER: I will. I will make it into a philosophic inquiry, in which I shall ask every rich poxy personage I meet whether he received his affliction from a Protestant or a Catholic whore. Those who did not get their pox from whores I shall not count.

GIRL: Agreed. And while I look after sheep and find myself a husband, you shall learn philosophy.

PHILOSOPHER: Mayhaps someday I shall come back and make sheep the instruments of philosophy.

GIRL: Then my having kept them shall become a worthy pursuit indeed.

PHILOSOPHER: As worthy as Hobbes' studies.

NATURAL PHILOSOPHER:

Middle-aged
Place: England
Time: After sunset

How wisely nature did decree the kingdom of plants with all its mystery and splendor? I have studied Her work of plants and it is all perfectly ordered and flawless. The tone of colors in flowers, the texture of tree bark, the different shapes of leaves, the uniqueness of every plant, it is all perfect. How wisely nature did decree the kingdom of animals with all its might and authority? I have studied Her work of animals and it is all perfectly ordered and flawless. The symmetry of animal bodies, the speed at which they can travel, their abilities to adapt to different temperatures, their hunting abilities, it is all flawless. How wisely nature did decree the human race with all its wanton lust? I have studied Her work of humans and it is repulsive and impure. Humans desire, they covet, their involvement in theatrical affairs, it is all an abomination.

THOMAS HOBBS:

I'm hungry. I believe I'll go make a sandwich. Mm, ham sandwiches...I love ham sandwiches. When I was a boy, my mother would make ham sandwiches with unleavened bread and the meats we had..."acquired" from the Egyptians. Stupid Gypsies should learn their place in society. *(picks up letter)* To Thomas Hobbes from..."Robert Boyle, of the Royal Society of London for the Improvement" of Our Own Egos, thank you very much. Please. I've had quite enough of these clowns. Who do they think they are, barging in with this "infallible empirical evidence?" Don't make me laugh! What do they hope to prove? So Boyle can connect a piston to a brass cylinder; what does it matter? I've seen far more reliable facts come from a child's toy. The silly contraption doesn't even work all the time. And if it doesn't work the same every time, how can one hope to prove anything substantial? And why all the secrecy? When I try to enter the testing room, I was barred at the entrance! What kind of truth hides behind locked doors for only the elite to hear? No truth I want to hear, that's what! Who does he think he is, Francis Bacon?

WILLIAM HARVEY:

Harvey in pajama pants, stripes of grey, slightly worn down, necklace of a cross (wooden with beads), barefoot, room temperature. He awakes from sleep at some odd hour in the night.

(Startles awake) Oh, Lord what time is it? Damn, at this rate I'll never get any sleep. *(Drinks water)* S'blood, I'm thirsty. *(Drinks more...falls to silence for a few moments, with eyes fixed at feet.)* Mmmmm. What could it be? What's the missing link? What am I missing!?

(Getting angry) Damnit I'm so tired of this problem, this waste, this...I can't think. My brain. My heart. My pulse. Explosion. I need to get rest!!

(Gets out of bed, paces around, calmer but brisk) Now, with my hand on my chest *(puts hand on chest)*, I feel the jumping of my heart. When I am happy it jumps harder. When I am about to sleep, it jumps slower. *(Pause)* Galen writes that the jumps are when the heart sucks in blood and air from my lungs. No... No... no it can't be. I know it can't be. His system is too complicated – two types and paths of blood? With the vital and the nutritive? Hah! No..

Why not make it three types of blood, one for the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost each. Haha! The old man's words have outlasted their welcome... but God how does this work?

I'm obsessed. This blood. This jumping. My heart. (*Collapses back on bed, speaks slower, focused eyes*) Some nights I sit. I sit and I cut my thigh slowly, slowly, just to see if blood still exists. (*pause*) If it still moves. (*pause*) If men really bleed at all.

Heh, Liz yells at me when she sees this, of course. She runs at me and slaps me before bandaging me. Once with her long nails she came at me across the cheek... hehe, saved my leg another cut!

Tomorrow I'll buy another goat. I'll figure this bastard out if it kills me.



SWEEPER AND JONES:

The curtain opens, revealing two men on stage: Dr. Bertram Jones, and the unnamed Sweeper. Jones is a man in his thirties, simply but impeccably groomed. He stands before a table on stage right, facing offstage, packing surgical equipment neatly away in a suitcase. The Sweeper stands behind him on stage left. He is past middle age, wearing wrinkled and stained peasant attire, and holding a pushbroom.

The Sweeper pauses for a moment, staring at Jones' back. He resumes sweeping for another moment, pauses again, and speaks.

SWEEPER: Sir.

(Jones does not respond)

SWEEPER: Bertram Jones, sir.

JONES: Have you business with me?

SWEEPER: Sir.

JONES: Well then. Speak your business.

SWEEPER: You been looking for - for bodies, sir.

JONES: Ah. You've taken to grave-digging, then?

SWEEPER: No, sir.

JONES: Then what have you?

SWEEPER: Twas my sister, sir.

JONES: You propose to - you propose to sell me your sister. Her corpse.

SWEEPER: Yes, sir.

JONES: You've seen the dissections?

SWEEPER: Sir.

JONES: Would you sell her off so freely while she lived?

SWEEPER: Sir. I've honest work, here, that would pay her funeral. But she had children, sir. Three children, and all of 'em wanting for shoes and coats this winter. She'd give anything for them children. And tis her body, sir, no more a soul. Her soul's in Paradise. Just this morning, it's gone. I tell you, sir –

JONES: Enough! Peace. We won't speak ill of the dead. (*pause*) You say she's fresh, then?

SWEEPER: Sir?

JONES: What time did she die?

SWEEPER: Just this morning, sir.

JONES: Well then. How much do you want?

SWEEPER: Your usual fee, sir.

JONES: Do you know it?

SWEEPER: Men say fifty pence, sir.

JONES: (*calmly*) Swindler. Men get that who risk a hanging, digging the graveyards late at night.

SWEEPER: And the body no more fitted, sir, not more fit for showing by the extra wear. Tis the body you buy, sir.

JONES: Twenty pence.

SWEEPER: Thirty-two.

JONES: Thirty-two? How's that?

SWEEPER: She'd have been thirty-two years tomorrow, sir.

JONES: You'd bring her here tonight.

SWEEPER: Yes, sir. I could. She lies but a stretch from here. Only—only let the priest be done with her first.

JONES: You've a touch of the brass about you. What's your name?

SWEEPER: I'd like to not say, sir.

JONES: And sensible. Thirty-two pence, then.

THOMAS HOBBS:

(drinking whiskey—and quite far gone)

This Boyle fellow's been getting on my nerves. He hasn't backed down! Such nerve! Such disrespect for the elders! Such...ah, who are we talking about again? Oh yes, that Doyle fellow. Such-erm, what? Boyle? You must mean Doyle? Yes, yes, definitely Doyle. He thinks he can change the world! Ha! Well this old fool won't budge an inch! Though I have to admit...eh, that doesn't matter! The true philosophy will prevail above all! Doyle can't keep us these silly games forever; eventually he'll have to give up! He must! His experiments lack logic! Mathematical reasoning! What does he hope to gain from this debate? Think of the future; for centuries they'll conduct faulty experiments basing their "infallible conclusions" on problematical man-made constructs! What kind of philosophy is this? ...Where's my sandwich?

GUY CHAPMAN, SAILOR:

(talking to his companion)

Now this *(points to the map)* is where ole Burton said the ships had sunk due to that terrible storm. That means that prices in the market will rise and that there are unexplored lands off the coast here *(signals to the map again)* and we could definitely make a fortune there. If we leave Tuesday, we can hope to arrive in about 3 months after going through our usual route past the African continent. I hope the day of our departure is not as foul as today, with all this dratted fog and wind.

(pause while gazing out the window)

So go on and tell the men about the plan. I will be in the pub if any trouble arises. After my drink I might stop by Madame Fifi's house, depending on how the spirits move me. *(playful grin)* Tell the men to begin packing and preparing to stock the ships tomorrow. Go and rest well. *(pause)* Oh, and tell the missus if she can make some of her famous minced-meat pies for the trip. And don't forget to get some action, because once we depart we won't be getting any until XYZ. And you know those wenches are expensive for what they offer.

(laughs and pats companion on back)

So long.



LIVES OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

WET-NURSE:

A wet-nurse talks to her charge

Come little infant, hold me now. Hush, now, hush, there's no need to cry. What reason have you to cry, hmm?, tell me that. You've been fed, you've a warm enough place to stay. Your mommy and daddy won't be kicked out of their fine house, so hush your crying. Come little infant, you have nothing to fear. You will never have to know hunger, or the pains of childbirth, or the bitter cold of the streets in winter. No, your life will be full of leisure and fine meals and close friends. When you get older you will have many fine playmates, boys about your age from families of similar standing. –Is that a smile I see on your little face? I tell you life will be grand. And then someday you will marry a beautiful wife to keep house for you and make you very happy. Be good to your wife, little one. Never beat her. Be good to her, or she may break, and it is true that we women are fragile creatures. We can only take so much hurt and loss. Oh, child, don't cry. I will talk of nicer things for you. Don't fret child, I won't bore you with the troubles this old woman's been through. When you're small you can only deal with small things, like hunger and Nana. Come little infant, hold me now.

YOUNG BOY:

She never listens. Mum will get her back. Mum will catch her trying to fill her stomach with the pigs' feed. We can't do this. She can't do it. No. No. Mum says no, and mum brings me bread and turnips, bread, radish, ewww, apples sometimes. If mum were here, she wouldn't go. She wouldn't get caught cause mum could try to fill the stomach. Not with chocolate though. The sun melts it sticky, but good. Good. They will get her. I can't get her. I'm five. Yes, mum will get her. Fill her holes. I'm only five. I could play with her. We could go to the river and bring the sticks and the rocks. We could hit the fish with the rocks. Get the fish. Forget apples, and, and, the chocolate! mmmmm, chocolate. No. no. Mum says fish. The rocks say fish. Maybe. Maybe we could just get the fish.



UNFAITHFUL HUSBAND:

My lovely wife...
(Opens letter)

My Love,

You mentioned to me that you would work late. I decided to bring you a meal. Much to my surprise, you were not working, but fucking with the blacksmith's whore of a widow. I have gathered all my belongings and the children, and left you... Good bye.

From,
Mary

Now here I sit, in an empty house, pondering over my actions and their consequences. For the first couple of days, I was relieved that I no longer had to sustain a web of lies. I also had the luxury of having the entire house to myself, with my own set of rules. With the absence of the baby's cries, for once I could actually think. No chores. No manners. But now, I realize the cost of my actions. I actually miss my annoying children and my nagging wife. But there is something I miss far, far more than any of these things... my wife's cooking.

I sit at the dinner table, the empty dinner table. There is one plate full of the meat that my mistress cooked for me last night. Unfortunately, cooking is not one of her specialties. I couldn't force myself to swallow even one mouthful. In opposition, my wife's pot roast was something to die for... She kept it simmering in a pot for an entire day. So, by the time I arrived from work, the smell of perfectly mixed spices had already filled the entire house. The meat itself was so tender that I never needed a knife. Not to mention that once I put it into my mouth, a flood of mouth-watering juices submerged my tongue. The mere thought of it makes me salivate. This unfortunate cost has led me to regret my actions with the blacksmith's widow. Yes, infidelity has 'thus ended my love, but this doth grieve me most,' I will never again taste my wife's pot roast.

ORANGE GIRL:

(Orange Girl walks on stage, carrying her basket of oranges. Walks up to character on stage)

'Oy sir, fancy an orange on a hot day like today?

(Character turns away. Another man walks on stage, passing the Orange Girl)

Come now, 'elp a poor orange girl make her days wage, won't you?

(Man brushes off orange girl and continues to walk)

Will you walk away from a lady without givin' 'er an answer?

(Throws an orange at man's head)

Ha! See that got yer attention now.

You won't be walkin' away now lest you want another orange 'ittin yer 'ead.

(Man looks at Orange Girl, now showing interest in her)

Oh, I could throw 'em all day, I always grab a few extras 'specially for the rude ones.

(Playfully taps Man on nose)

'Sides, the real wages lie in the breeches of gentlemen, if ya know what I mean.

(Man says something playful, calling the Orange Girl a whore)

A whore, sir!?

'Ere's a man for yeh, callin' a pretty little thing like me a whore.

I'll 'ave you know a whore cares not 'oo she lays with, 'slong as she can make a six-pence.

I entertain only the best of 'em, and maybe someday I can call meself a mistre-

(Man chuckles at this statement)

(Defensive) Do you laugh at me, sir?

I'll 'ave you know just the other day the owner of the large estate in the Meadows brought me to 'is 'ome.

(Man now listens with amusement)

'E even gave me this 'at, an' says a pretty girl like me ought'nt let the sun ruin 'er features.

I ask you, sir, to show me a whore that ever received such treatment.

(Dreamily) Someday I won't be sellin' oranges no more, then I'll live in a beautiful 'ouse with a nice gentleman takin' care of me.

(Man begins to walk away, no longer interested)

(Yelling after Man) Now, you gonna buy an orange or not, I don' 'ave time to be talkin' with you all day...



PURITAN:

On a cold and windy day in January, 1633, a man dressed in somber Puritan clothing is hurrying down a London street. On this street a theater is open and attracting noisy, gaily dressed crowds. This Puritan shivers as he pauses to watch the crowds enter the theater.

For shame! 'Tis a holy day of the Lord, and what has the Devil placed before my eyes but a theater! A place of temptation on the way to the church doors! 'Tis no wonder the world is full of sin. Temptation lies even on the path to a holy service. And on such a cold, windy day, like as not sinners will succumb and enter the theater before the church.

And it is condoned! That French queen--that, that Papist whore--encourages acting! Faugh! With such examples, I believe the minister when he says that the Devil is loose in England. But there is goodness too. Good Brother Prynne's new book condemning the theater. Surely Brother Prynne is one of the saints, God's elect.

(Glances at the theater again, begins to shake with rage)

Acting upon the stage, spreading her Papist heresies. Surely the Devil is acting through her!

But alas, the Devil has a hold on me as well. The minister says that wrath is a tool of the Devil, and to stand idle by a theater door is a grievous sin. I must pray to the Lord and repent my sin. If I speak out, it must be like Brother Prynne, with holy godly words. I will spend much time tonight in prayer.

THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

WANTON TROOPERS:

(spoken in overlapping fragments by a company of actors: near the end, the words are spoken in unison)

The wanton troopers riding by intrude upon my solitude. The thoughts and confidences that were mine alone in quiet peace are raped like the land as ignorant armies clash. Raped by the wanton troopers riding by. They pass one way and then the other, with shaven heads or shining mail, it matters not which, for the peace is shattered all the same. Shattered and broken like a precious vase. Shattered by the wanton troopers riding by. What could I say? What could I do? The weight of the world drags upon their shoulders like the arms they carry, and yet they remain unknowing to the plight of those whose paths they cross, focused on the enemy, an implacable enemy who day by day grows more demonic in their minds, less human. And so they become less human themselves, a match made of brimstone and hellfire. And the simple folk--quiet, still, defenseless--the simple folk cannot deny them. Cannot deny them or withstand them. The simple folk cannot survive them. Survive the wanton troopers riding by. Is this the angelic host that shall lead us to Providence? Is it the demonic force of Satan's rebellion? But in truth it is neither. It is a weary band of men, young men, with families too...They live like us. They love like us. They bleed like us. They are just like us, the wanton troopers riding by.

FORGET-ME-NOT GIRL:

He gave this to me, just this hour - a forget me not. So shy was he in giving it, he could scarcely look upon my face. And yet I knew his look.

Oh, I'm a fool. He's on to fight the Roundheads. They fight for England, God keep them, but I fear. How many lumps on the grass now, where the earth digests fine men? Not love he speaks, but fear. Had he but world enough and time, he'd find a proper maid, who doesn't burn the

bread or blush so when she's nervous.

And yet. How many times would he come past the store on some excuse? Tis not for knitting needles he came. And I would hide my blush in a pack of cloth, while he tried to talk of sewing.

He leaves tomorrow. Had I but world enough and time, I would learn my letters, so I could leave a parchment for him like a court spy. Ah! I have my ribbon. I'll tie it to this flower, and put it in his window. He'll surely know it's mine. He'll take it with him. Aye, that or laugh. But it might serve for keeping him warm.

ANGRY WOMAN:

Mother at the start of the Civil War

I cannot let you go with them! Your mind is not true. Your cause is not true. The truth is that you will get injured. You will die if you go with them. What will I do when you're gone? I have no one else to take care of me! You...you, you are selfish. I have given you life, food, happiness, and you repay me with your back in my face. I know you think you're doing well for your country...for your cause. But no. No. You are plunging the people you think you're fighting for deeper into pain. You can't leave me in my pain. Who will take care of things? The payments, the shop...my beloved chicken, Henrietta? OHHH Henrietta! How dare you leave her?! She is weak. My dear pet is weak. I am weak! We can't take care of things. Only you can. You are so stupid! Of the one son I've had, you are the stupidest. How dare you leave Henrietta and me to fend for ourselves?! I will never forgive you. Never. Never. Henrietta will never forgive you. Never.

OUR LADY'S MESSENGER:

After two sittings our lady states
The man who kills shall be banned from the kingdom
For he who sins shall be dismissed

After two sittings our lady states
The lady who trades her flesh shall be buried

For she who diminishes the vessel of life shall be blinded from our people's eyes

After two sittings our lady states
The child who steals should be thrown in a well
For a bud to cross the path of crime shall never be condoned

After two sittings our lady states
The family who seeks asylum shall be burnt alive
For how dare they think of this kingdom as an orphanage

After two sittings our lady states
That the one who does not forgive perishes in hell
For thee who dismissed, blinded and burned did so without god's ruling



FOND LOVER:

Early morning; Partly cloudy, a blood-red sun begins to rise, shining a faint light on a battle coming to its conclusion. Townspeople look out upon a field of corpses, unable to sleep through the night due to the agonizing sounds of battle. A young man, a supporter of Cromwell, stands with his young wife. As the Royalists are quickly defeated, he can only watch in awe until he notices his wife, dressed only in her night clothes, is shaking from a mixture of cold and fear.

Why so pale and wan fond lover?

Does it seem a dreary world falls heavily upon your shoulders?

Take comfort in your husband's embrace, then, for soon England will again find itself under proper government.

Those who would push us to the brink of chaos shall soon feel the musket's barrel and the sword's edge. Do you tremble for England's sake?

Look you upon the fields as each traitor meets his fate. Witness as they pay for our England's turmoil with their blood, and cry out 'gainst their former wrongs.

'Tis order restored, I tell you;

'Tis the price we all pay to ensure England stays afloat in a sea of troubles.

Such a scene shouldst lift thy melancholy, and set forth the flow of new life within you!

Why, then, do you continue to blanch at the sight before you?

If you must, make mine eyes, a lover's eyes, as a lens with which to view the world about you, and know it is done for you, for me, for England.

Or, rather close thine eyes, and feel in your husband's embrace the embrace of dawn at the end of a long cold night.



OLD WOMAN:

English village before beheading of the king

I *told* her not to let the fire go out. I told her, and told her, and now that girl has gone and let the fire go out. She ought to be lucky I begged a bit of flint off that last group of soldiers passing through, or else it would be *her* bones going in this soup and not the nice pork bone from last week.

Those last soldiers were nice boys, a bit too far with the politic, but they were nice boys who know how to treat an old woman. One of them gave me half a loaf of bread all for myself. I didn't eat it all of course, oh no. That is not what is done if one has a family to support. I did the proper thing and brought the loaf home for my family. O' course, I never told no one about the cheese that came with the loaf, but that's a secret for me and that soldier. Oh, if I was twenty years younger...but no. He even dared to ask me what I thought about the king. Hah! Like anyone's ever really cared what this old woman thinks. But I told him anyway, I told him that it don't matter whose bottom sits on the big chair in London, royalty or not, because there isn't anything going to be done to help me feed my family and keep the fire going, whatever they say. *Then* my soldier lad had the nerve to mention some man with a fancy name, Crumbun or somesuch, and I set him straight on *that* matter too. I told him that it don't matter, his tea cake man will send soldiers just the same as any king, but at least some soldiers are kind to poor old women, and don't they make their mothers proud? My soldier looked thoughtful at this and gave me an apple and bid me have a good day, it was lovely talking, but he had to get back to his fellows.

It wasn't a bad apple by far, and I've had much worse. I still have the core in my pocket, and maybe when it gets warmer I'll plant the seeds and eat apples all the time and no one is going to take that away from me. Ever.



OLD ROYALIST:

I am so old, now. It seems to me that the world has become so tired in the time I have been alive. The King is dead. Long live the King.

The ways of the Roundheads are as strange to me as microscopes, or air pumps, or the world moving around the sun. My daughter is a fine young woman now, and at her age I was seeing the world for the first time, but the England she is discovering is not the one I lived in. I wonder now if I ever looked around me properly, because I have no recollection of any place like this. I thought not of poverty, of need, of government — even of books or of learning. My thoughts were with my brother and how to best him at kicking a ball through a hoop.

It is not so simple, now. I stand on this street waiting to die, knowing as I do that a new world is coming that will pass through me completely. I want no part of it. I never knew this existed; it happened behind and underneath and around my eyes but never in front of them. For years men fought and died while I looked the other way, and when I turned back it was to find the head of a King dropping to icy ground in front of a crowd of wide-eyed, careless subjects. We are as lost as he.

People want to be closer to God, they want whores to be queens, they want to pay taxes only so they can get them returned. People want kings who love them.

For that, I see now, heads must roll.



THE RESTORATION

PRISONER/FIDDLER:

Alas how pleasant are their days! My friends in England finally get to enjoy peace, prosperity. Before this Glorious Restoration, the mad Puritans had a wretched hold of the nation. They would ban things left and right and even get in the way of our alcohol. CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? They even dared to get in the way of me and my whisky. WHAT A BUNCH OF MAD MEN! They truly were beasts.

But those days are over. Thank God! *(looks up at sky)*. Only blue skies for England now with our new king and queen. Good pair they make too. How I wish I was back home in England celebrating with my mates. I am getting sick of the French and their stench. I am sick of their fancy food and pompous accent. I am sick of the way they look me in the eye and immediately plunge me beneath the lowest of the low. I am sick of them. Curse the French!

I just want to get out of this prison and run away to my sweet home London. How I miss drinking with my mates at the pub and playing my fiddle.

(sighs and looks away despairingly through the bars of his prison cell)

CHARLES II:

King Charles II stands high on a stool in an elegant dressing room, surrounded by four of his servants, who are quick to agree with Charles on every matter. Charles talks out loud, but most of his speech seems to be for himself except when he acknowledges or calls for input from his servants.

CHARLES: I think this wig makes me look pretty regal, eh? Reminds me of Father, but bigger, more powerful, more....

SERVANT 1: Amazing!

SERVANT 2: Glorious!

SERVANT 3: Magnifique!

(Servant 4 is distraught for something to say)

CHARLES: (*Pleased*) Oh, I think everyone will think it's quite a good look for me-

SERVANT 4: Tre Chic!

CHARLES: (*Pauses, dismissing the interruption*) To think, after years in exile, I'm in my rightful place. Father...Mother...I do wish you could be here now.

(Servants begin to cross themselves, but quickly stop one another)

I won't let the past repeat itself. A little more adjustment...

(Servants begin to fight over Charles, who doesn't acknowledge it)

There! Not bad at all. Who says a King's crown should be made of metal? Even the King of the Jungle wears a crown of hair about his head. If only all cats could be so noble. That's why I do prefer dogs, so loyal and trusting. They'd never turn on me and...(*Amused*) do me in, demmé.

(Charles and servants laugh until Charles signals a stop)

If I'm going to look like a King I should probably learn to speak like one.

It's that simple woman I've been having my fun with. But I believe that's what attracts me to her. The clothes I've given her make her look stunning on the outside, yet inside she remains who she always was.

The others in the court at times call her vulgar (*Servants show disagreement, except for one who cannot hide agreement*), but I like the fact that all this luxury doesn't affect her like other women...

NELL GWYNN:

Ha, ha ha...hi hi hi...

I turn around and fix my eyes sultrily on Charles who chases me...

You cannot catch me, you just cannot...Ha ha ha, I'm too fast for you...

What is my reward if I surrender? Tell me, come on, tell me...How much do you want your little cockney queen? Hurry, your queen is impatient. Come grasp your queen, come pleasure her and take her to ecstasy

Charlie, you know what the sacrifice is-just say you accept and I shall jump right in your arms to make you a happy king...

What am I craving? I want to act on stage—

Yes, on stage! I want an audience with eyes to caress me, with hands to move in unison with mine.

The nobs will stand and applaud in appreciation--

Even you will desire me like you never did. I want to act. I want to be seen. I want my juices to flow as the crowd cheers for me.

Can you satisfy my wants? Can you? Ha, ha, ha...If yes, you know who will be the happiest king tonight!



CATHERINE OF BRAGANZA:

Catherine of Braganza, age 25. The Queen of England, wife of Charles II.

The King's marriage to Catherine of Braganza, Princess of Portugal, was a political match, in which her large dowry led to the acquisition of Tripoli and Bombay. Catherine was a pious, humble and honest person whose gentle virtues could be seen as foil for the rampant corruption and extravagances that plagued the King's Court. A devout Catholic, she incurred the wrath of many Englishmen who disliked her practices. Moreover, she had several miscarriages and could not deliver a living heir. Adding to her frustration and hurt were the king's many infidelities. Nevertheless, she remained loyal to her King.

This monologue is based on true events and takes place when Catherine comes down with a severe illness, leading many to believe she will die. As the King grieves for her, others in his Court, such as Lady Castlemaine and the Duke of Buckingham, conspire to arrange his next marriage to the beautiful Frances Stuart in the event of the Queen's death. At the time, Frances Stuart is one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting. Much to their dismay, the Queen eventually recovers and is restored to her duties as the King's consort. In the words of Samuel Pepys, "Catherine of Braganza regained some of her husband's affection through a wholly fortuitous piece of good fortune; she almost died."

Now: In the King's residence at Whitehall Palace. London, England , October 1663. Nighttime. The wind howls outside with the tree branches rapping at the window of the Queen's bedchamber.

The Queen nears her death due to spotted fever and is sweating profusely in her bed. She asks her maiden for her cross that bears a carving of Christ and addresses it. Drifting in and out of a coherent state, she imagines she is speaking to her husband.

Ay, Sir.

Ay, my Lord.

My King, my Protector, my Rex.

Rex non potest peccare¹
For the Queen shall bear all sin.

I leave this world in failure.
Not in my love for you,
But in my barren state
Unable to provide an heir.

Fie! Your next conquest shall be grand.
The Stuart girl has her charms,
She hooks your eye like no other.
That I might do the same!
What is wanted of a Queen?

Alas, I am called to a Higher Being.
To pray for you from above
That she begets you not a Duke but a King.
Your new Queen shall fulfill such promise
I am sure of it!

I beseech your pardon
That you remember me as a loyal wife,
Not a bane to your blood.
I shall punish you no further
For the Lord taketh away.



PROTESTANT DAUGHTER:

Lucy Staunton, age 17: a potential courtesan.

One of Charles II's bishops has aspirations to become Archbishop of Canterbury. To win over the King, he conspires to have his daughter seduce the King and become one of his courtesans. He plans to use his daughter as a tool for influencing the King's actions. The bishop's daughter, Lucy, is a striking beauty who is opposed to this.

It is a late afternoon in London in May 1661, pleasant and breezy in the garden of the Staunton residence, where Lucy used to play as a child. Lucy and her father have just heard of the King's wishes to see her at night. Lucy's father is pressuring her to accept this offer. She asks for a moment alone and excuses herself from the room.

¹ Latin for "The King cannot sin."

For shame, father!
That you would lower yourself into the company of sinners
Alas, what glimmer of your former self has expired!

You raised your kin in a poor Christian household
Though we were rich in our Anglican ideals
To consider no man, not even the King, could come before our God
And I, most of all, was prepared to devote myself to The Almighty.

But my father, once a priest, has forsaken his robes
And his call to the Higher Being
To answer the calls of his King, scandalous though they may be!

Pray tell, father
How do you plan to become Archbishop?
How do you plan for the King to open his heart and his purse to you?
Your merit can only bring you so far
Leave the last Act to be the gift of your beautiful daughter
And think nothing of her honor!

The King has been tempted thus far
My resistance has done nothing to quell his interest
But has made him all the more hungry!

Alas, I am resigned to my fate.
Lord forgive my trespasses,
For I have no choice but to prostrate myself to the King
To make a final conquest of all of me...And I him

After I spread my legs at night
I shall not let his attention sway
I shall make him lend his ears to my cause
And make a Protestant man of him yet!



GIRL WITH CORSET:

Mama tied this corset too tight. Binding me to myself. It's suffocating. It's just... so... suffocating...
I must breathe, they must let me breathe. I have the right to breathe.

Look at this dress... One could almost be fooled by its cyan softness. Its beauty an impenetrable
disguise for torture.

Why can this dress not let me scream if it won't let me love? Why must it rob me of my breath and my heart? It is an outfit for a corpse, not a woman.

Damned instrument of society! My body displayed to be chosen by the richest husband as his property. I cannot become Lord Richard's property, no matter how much you pressure my heart - it will never yield. It will always beat for another, surviving in the name of a woman's right to love.



SISTER TO CELIA:

In Celia's face a question did arise,
Which were more beautiful
Her lips or her eyes?
In my face another question did arise,
How in Jove's name am I sister to Celia?
Her eyes do sparkle, do entice men;
The delicacy of her lips
Beguiles them to hear her speak
Though she has nothing
But trivial words to say.
Her voice is soft and melodic,
And they fall more deeply more
In love with her than before.
And they have no time for me
As my eyes are sharp and dark
And my lips are parchment thin
For they barely contain the bitterness
I have for fair Celia within.



ADULTERER:

The speaker is a woman of the upper class, and the scene takes place in her bedroom (or perhaps the antechamber) in 1645. The day is fair and her husband Robert is hunting. She speaks to her lover, Jack, a petty officer in Cromwell's army. Eavesdropping by servants is a constant threat throughout the speech.

Fear not, dear love, that I'll reveal
Those hours of pleasure we two steal.

No! No, don't--! There's no need for any of that. I-- I didn't mean it, Jack. Of course you are, and I love you—I love you, Jack, look at me. Darling, I only meant we should be careful, more cautious. With the days getting shorter, your duties getting longer, they will find out—and *we* won't matter once they know, you know. We'll be trampled on, dirt under their feet—nameless faces with no past and certainly no future! Oh, I can't, Jack, I can't let that happen. I can't lose like that. No--! No. Your threats mean nothing. You'd be casting yourself out as well as me if Robert found out. Ambition? Military honors? All gone, Jack, and for what? For me? Not for *me--for pride*. Get out. Go your ways, and if you dare reveal our secret—if I am compromised in any way—your commander will hear of it next, mark my words. It's the smoothest course, you know, best for both of us. Always remember that I love you, Jack. Farewell.



UNFAITHFUL WIFE:

I love that my husband lets me come here, a gentleman's private room. My marriage to him really could not have been more perfect. I know he loves me so much it warms my heart to think of how softly he holds me in his arms at night.

What am I doing here, waiting, for *him*, for any sound that come from *him*. This spying that I do, it drives me to a forbidden thought, I know it. God told me to love my neighbor but surely this rush in my body, this urgency that strains my corset, I more lust than love.

I should not have spoken with him last week; every attention given to me just feeds my flighty heart, feeds my discontent for my poor husband, feeds my need to sin. What is it I want? Is love enough to satisfy me? Why does he never look at me with such raw passion in his eyes, and why am I letting myself be seduced by such a shallow physical urge?

Perhaps, I should speak to him about this, so we can put out our growing fires before it is too late. Oh, to have just a taste of what it is like, that's all I need....I am a *horrid* woman.

PURITAN JOURNALIST:

Ned Cunningham, 34: journalist and pamphleteer (loosely based on the life of Marchamont Nedham)

Ned's father was the Earl of Sussex during the reign of Charles I (1625-49). Disillusioned with the extravagances and corruption of the Cavalier government, 18-year-old Ned slowly adopted the Puritan cause. He fell in love with and married the Puritan daughter of his father's mistress, for which his father disowned him. Left with little money, Ned joined the Roundheads in the Civil War and later, during the Interregnum (1649-60), wrote influential political pamphlets and spread propaganda in support of the Protectorate. In the meantime, his father and family were in exile to escape persecution.

Upon the dissolution of the Protectorate and the restoration of Charles II, Ned's father is appointed as one of the King's chief advisors, a position that restores his father's reputation and grants him more power than he had before. Ned is fearful that his father and the Royalist government will censure the press, and thereby ruin his career as a Puritan journalist. Ned is determined to stop his father from once again taking away his rights.

It is dusk in May 1660 in London, England, on the eve of Charles II's restoration to the throne. It is hot and humid in Ned's office, where he has just received the news that Charles II will appoint his father as one of his chief advisors.

Has it come to this?
An unjust man no longer a father
Is to introduce himself as the King's advisor
And reenter my life?

Long have I had Cromwell's power
To assist my castigation of Royalists,
Of the corruption elicited by that man

His thievery, his mockery, his severity.
Cannot he accept a Puritan daughter,
As his son's entitlement?

Nay, I am Banished.

Ah! But punishment is due.
My words carry the weight of power.
A weapon that can sway the masses,
And Englishmen against the new King.

The Vices of the Court shall be known,
And England shall pray for a Puritan return.

I shall expose the schemes of the King's advisor,
Creating more if I must,
To reduce him to a man
Lurking in the shadows of a false King.

NELL GYWNN:

Oh! An insult! An insult to a prolific actress of my standard! How could the crown treat me with such manners?

For I, a lessee? A lessee! In my own house! How could Charlie inflict this on me? I mother of his two sons deserves comfort and gratitude!

I shall not accept this offense! Being a lessee at 70 Pall Mall, how inappropriate!

I am to complain immediately to Joseph Williamson—I will not tolerate this injustice! He shall write to the crown as Madame Gwinn has no house yet, a lessee she is!

Ah, how much I have contributed to the Crown and yet here I am! By no means shall I accept this property till it is conveyed free to me by an Act of Parliament!

LADY AND SERVANT STEPHAN:

Lady Frances Paget, wife to Baron William Paget, age 51. The year is 1663, the place, London, England, at Lady Frances's home, where she is about to be joined by Lady Frances Stuart and Lady Virginia Castelmaine. She confides the whole of this monologue to her servant, Stephen, as he arranges the sitting room to her liking.

Stephen, no, no, Stephen, it should go closer to the fire. Closer! Not that close! Lady F. will not appreciate visiting me if my salon is afire.

The French, Stephen . . . Steph-anne, the French know that a good servant does not disobey the

order of his mistress, but the French also expect their servants to have a measure of bon sens . . . Common sense.

May God have mercy upon me, for want of French servants. Do not disappoint me so in future, Stephen. We shall all to hell for this.

Lady F. is a confidant of the King's mistress, and some say that his Majesty intends to have Lady F. next. She is not much older than my daughter. My children, Stephen – Steph-anne, my children are almost grown. When they are flown, I must roost here, a mother hen clucking over her lazy servants!

Oh, would I were in France now, as the King was, dining with King Lou-eez, instead of ordering the masses about and seeking to reason with the most obscene and adulterous sluts in all of England! There is no virtue in any of them, but to look pretty and please their betters. Can they have no respect for themselves? I stay here, I bear my husband's children, and I make room for them to come and cackle over new-fangled drinks.

But wait . . . they're here.

(The entire cast enters for a brief dance and bow)