

Cranky timon

TIMON

Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall,
That girdlest in those wolves, dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!
Obedience fail in children! slaves and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads! to general filths
Convert o' the instant, green virginity,
Do 't in your parents' eyes! bankrupts, hold fast;
Rather than render back, out with your knives,
And cut your trusters' throats! bound servants, steal!
Large-handed robbers your grave masters are,
And pill by law. Maid, to thy master's bed;
Thy mistress is o' the brothel! Son of sixteen,
pluck the lined crutch from thy old limping sire,
With it beat out his brains!
Plagues, incident to men,
Your potent and infectious fevers heap
On Athens, ripe for stroke! Thou cold sciatica,
Cripple our senators, that their limbs may halt
As lamely as their manners. Lust and liberty
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth,
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive,
And drown themselves in riot! Itches, blains,
Sow all the Athenian bosoms; and their crop
Be general leprosy! Breath infect breath,
at their society, as their friendship, may
merely poison! Nothing I'll bear from thee,
But nakedness, thou detestable town!
Take thou that too, with multiplying bans!
Timon will to the woods; where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.
The gods confound--hear me, you good gods all--
The Athenians both within and out that wall!
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high and low! Amen.

Friendly timon

TIMON

O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you: how had you been my friends else? why have you that charitable title from thousands, did not you chiefly belong to my heart? I have told more of you to myself than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf; and thus far I confirm you. O you gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of 'em? they were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for 'em, and would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits: and what better or properer can we can our own than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes! O joy, e'en made away ere 't can be born! Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks: to forget their faults, I drink to you.

Timon/Apemantus/Poet

TIMON

Wilt dine with me, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

No; I eat not lords.

TIMON

An thou shouldst, thou 'ldst anger ladies.

APEMANTUS

O, they eat lords; so they come by great bellies.

TIMON

That's a lascivious apprehension.

APEMANTUS

So thou apprehendest it: take it for thy labour.

TIMON

How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

Not so well as plain-dealing, which will not cost a man a doit.

TIMON

What dost thou think 'tis worth?

APEMANTUS

Not worth my thinking.

How now, poet!

Poet

How now, philosopher!

APEMANTUS

Thou liest.

Poet

Art not one?

APEMANTUS

Yes.

Poet

Then I lie not.

APEMANTUS

Art not a poet?

Poet

Yes.

APEMANTUS

Then thou liest: look in thy last work, where thou hast feigned him a worthy fellow.

Poet

That's not feigned; he is so.

APEMANTUS

Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labour: he that loves to be flattered is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!

TIMON

What wouldst do then, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

E'en as Apemantus does now; hate a lord with my heart.

TIMON

What, thyself?

APEMANTUS

Ay.

TIMON

Wherefore?

APEMANTUS

That I had no angry wit to be a lord.

TIMON

Digging

Earth, yield me roots!
Who seeks for better of thee, sauce his palate
With thy most operant poison! What is here?
Gold? yellow, glittering, precious gold? No, gods,
I am no idle votarist: roots, you clear heavens!
Thus much of this will make black white, foul fair,
Wrong right, base noble, old young, coward valiant.
Ha, you gods! why this? what this, you gods? Why, this
Will lug your priests and servants from your sides,
Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads:
This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions, bless the accursed,
Make the hoar leprosy adored, place thieves
And give them title, knee and approbation
With senators on the bench: this is it
That makes the wappen'd widow wed again;
She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores
Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
To the April day again. Come, damned earth,
Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds
Among the route of nations, I will make thee
Do thy right nature.

APEMANTUS

I scorn thy meat; 'twould choke me, for I should
ne'er flatter thee. O you gods, what a number of
men eat Timon, and he sees 'em not! It grieves me
to see so many dip their meat in one man's blood;
and all the madness is, he cheers them up too.

I wonder men dare trust themselves with men:
Methinks they should invite them without knives;
Good for their meat, and safer for their lives.

There's much example for't; the fellow that sits
next him now, parts bread with him, pledges the
breath of him in a divided draught, is the readiest
man to kill him: 't has been proved. If I were a
huge man, I should fear to drink at meals;

Lest they should spy my windpipe's dangerous notes:
Great men should drink with harness on their throats.

Lucilius, Philotus, Titus, Varro, Timon

Lucilius' Servant

And Sir Philotus too!

PHILOTUS

Good day at once.

Lucilius' Servant

Welcome, good brother.

What do you think the hour?

PHILOTUS

Labouring for nine.

Lucilius' Servant

So much?

PHILOTUS

Is not my lord seen yet?

Lucilius' Servant

Not yet.

PHILOTUS

I wonder on't; he was wont to shine at seven.

Lucilius' Servant

Ay, but the days are wax'd shorter with him:

You must consider that a prodigal course

Is like the sun's; but not, like his, recoverable.

I fear 'tis deepest winter in Lord Timon's purse;

That is one may reach deep enough, and yet

Find little.

PHILOTUS

I am of your fear for that.

TITUS

I'll show you how to observe a strange event.

Your lord wears jewels now of Timon's gift,

For which I wait for money.

Lucilius' Servant

Mark, how strange it shows,

Timon in this should pay more than he owes:

And e'en as if your lord should wear rich jewels,

And send for money for 'em.

Varro's First Servant

Yes, mine's three thousand crowns: what's yours?

Lucilius' Servant

Five thousand mine.

Varro's First Servant

'Tis much deep: and it should seem by the sun,

Your master's confidence was above mine;

Else, surely, his had equall'd.

Enter TIMON, in a rage

TIMON

What, are my doors opposed against my passage?

Have I been ever free, and must my house

Be my retentive enemy, my gaol?

The place which I have feasted, does it now,

Like all mankind, show me an iron heart?

Lucilius' Servant

Put in now, Titus.

TITUS

My lord, here is my bill.

Lucilius' Servant

Here's mine.

Varro's First Servant

And ours, my lord.

PHILOTUS

All our bills.

TIMON

Knock me down with 'em: cleave me to the girdle.

Lucilius' Servant

Alas, my lord,-

TIMON

Cut my heart in sums.

TITUS

Mine, fifty talents.

TIMON

Tell out my blood.

Lucilius' Servant

Five thousand crowns, my lord.

TIMON

Five thousand drops pays that.

What yours?--and yours?

Varro's First Servant

My lord,--

TIMON

Tear me, take me, and the gods fall upon you!

Alcibiades & Senator

Alcibiades pleads for the life of one of his soldiers

ALCIBIADES

My lord,--

First Senator

You cannot make gross sins look clear:
To revenge is no valour, but to bear.

ALCIBIADES

My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,
If I speak like a captain.

Why do fond men expose themselves to battle,
And not endure all threats? sleep upon't,
And let the foes quietly cut their throats,
Without repugnancy? O my lords,
As you are great, be pitifully good:
Who cannot condemn rashness in cold blood?

Second Senator

You breathe in vain.

ALCIBIADES

In vain! his service done
At Lacedaemon and Byzantium
Were a sufficient briber for his life.

First Senator

What's that?

ALCIBIADES

I say, my lords, he has done fair service,
And slain in fight many of your enemies:
How full of valour did he bear himself
In the last conflict, and made plenteous wounds!

First Senator

He has made too much plenty with 'em;
He's a sworn rioter: he has a sin that often
Drowns him, and takes his valour prisoner:

If there were no foes, that were enough
To overcome him: in that beastly fury
He has been known to commit outrages,
And cherish factions: 'tis inferr'd to us,
His days are foul and his drink dangerous.
He dies.

ALCIBIADES

Hard fate! he might have died in war.
My lords, if not for any parts in him--
Though his right arm might purchase his own time
And be in debt to none--yet, more to move you,
Take my deserts to his, and join 'em both:
And, for I know your reverend ages love
Security, I'll pawn my victories, all
My honours to you, upon his good returns.
If by this crime he owes the law his life,
Why, let the war receive 't in valiant gore
For law is strict, and war is nothing more.

First Senator

Do you dare our anger?

'Tis in few words, but spacious in effect;
We banish thee for ever.

ALCIBIADES

Banish me!

Banish your dotage; banish usury,
That makes the senate ugly.

First Senator

If, after two days' shine, Athens contain thee,
Attend our weightier judgment. And, not to swell
our spirit,
He shall be executed presently.

Sempronius and Servant

SEMPRONIUS

Must he needs trouble me in 't,--hum!--'bove all others?
He might have tried Lord Lucius or Lucullus;
And now Ventidius is wealthy too,
Whom he redeem'd from prison: all these
Owe their estates unto him.

Servant

My lord,
They have all been touch'd and found base metal, for
They have au denied him.

SEMPRONIUS

How! have they denied him?
Has Ventidius and Lucullus denied him?
And does he send to me? Three? hum!
It shows but little love or judgment in him:
Must I be his last refuge! His friends, like physicians,
Thrive, give him over: must I take the cure upon me?
Has much disgraced me in't; I'm angry at him,
That might have known my place: I see no sense for't,
But his occasion might have woo'd me first;
For, in my conscience, I was the first man
That e'er received gift from him:
And does he think so backwardly of me now,
That I'll requite its last? No:
So it may prove an argument of laughter
To the rest, and 'mongst lords I be thought a fool.
I'd rather than the worth of thrice the sum,
Had sent to me first, but for my mind's sake;
I'd such a courage to do him good. But now return,
And with their faint reply this answer join;
Who bates mine honour shall not know my coin.

Exit

Servant

Excellent! Your lordship's a goodly villain. The
devil knew not what he did when he made man
politic; he crossed himself by 't: and I cannot
think but, in the end, the villainies of man will
set him clear. How fairly this lord strives to
appear foul! takes virtuous copies to be wicked,
like those that under hot ardent zeal would set
whole realms on fire:
And this is all a liberal course allows;
Who cannot keep his wealth must keep his house.

Poet & Painter

Poet

Good day, sir.

Painter

I am glad you're well.

Poet

I have not seen you long: how goes the world?

Painter

It wears, sir, as it grows.

You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication
To the great lord.

Poet

A thing slipp'd idly from me.

Our poesy is as a gum, which oozes
From whence 'tis nourish'd: the fire i' the flint
Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame
Provokes itself and like the current flies
Each bound it chafes. What have you there?

Painter

A picture, sir. When comes your book forth?

Poet

Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.
Let's see your piece.

Painter

'Tis a good piece.

Poet

So 'tis: this comes off well and excellent.

Painter

Indifferent.

Poet

Admirable: how this grace
Speaks his own standing! what a mental power
This eye shoots forth! how big imagination
Moves in this lip! to the dumbness of the gesture
One might interpret.

Painter

It is a pretty mocking of the life.
Here is a touch; is't good?

Poet

I will say of it,
It tutors nature: artificial strife
Lives in these touches, livelier than life.