The Beggers Ape.


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Bout that Moneth whose name at first begun
From great A V G V S T V S, that Romes Empire wonne:
When the fierce Dog of Heauen, began to rise
To baite the Lyon in th'Olympian skies.
Whose hot fire-breathing influence did cracke
With too much heate our aged Grandames backe,
Lapping vp Riuers with his blaring tongue
T'allay the thirst which his proud stomacke stung.
Then did each Creature languish pant and beate
Vnder the influence of this horrid heate,
And I that oft in my low seated Cell
Had felt the burning of his fury fell:
Vpon a time *Aurora* shining faire
Went forth to take the solace of the ayre.
And in those meades beyond the lofty Towers
Of that white Pallace, where the nightly houres
Haue oft bin spent in sounds of Musick sweet
And actiue motion of the nimble feet:
Where earthly sonnes by night were seene to moue,
Whilst many hearts were fir'd with flames of Loue.
There I made choyse to walke before the Sunne
Had shewne his face, within our Horizon;
But on those bankes by which each turning tide
*Thames* louely *Isis* with calme streames doth glide,
I had not walked long ere Dayes bright King
*T'Olympus* top his golden carre did bring:
Whose Steedes with sting of his free lashes driuen
With such swift speed did gallop through the heauen,
That Natures faire productions heere beneath
Did seeme to melt vnder their burning breath,
The wing'd inhabitants both of earth and skie
That too and fro in th'open ayre did flie
To Thickets, Woods, and Groues, swift concourse made
To shroud themselues vnder their leauie shade,
The bleating *Lambe* and little wandring *Sheepe*
That in the open fields before did keepe,
Forsaking their free laire, all flocking came
To seeke for shelter 'gainst Sol's burning flame.
And I 'mongst the rest compeld by heate
Which on my head did violently beat
To seeke some couert straight tooke my way
Vnto a Groue which neere confining lay.
Where when I came the lofty trees, I clad
In Summers pride did cast a cooling shade,
Vnder whose leaues from Phoebus burning rayes
Sweet birds sate singing their Melodious layes,
There sate I downe vpon the grassy ground
Amid'st those silent shades encompast round
By leauy trees that Arbour wise did spread
There goodly armes thicke brauncht aboue my head,
But as I there my selfe did closely shroud
The chearefull voyce of many laughing loude
All suddainely did penetrate myne eare
Which did apall my sence with suddaine feare.
And casting round about my rowling eye
Without the wood I chanced to espie
A ragged crue of folke all set around
About a sunny bancke vpon the ground
They all were clad in rags of Beggery
Taking no keepe of any faculty
Or honest calling to rely vpon,
For trade or true profession had they none;
And now to passe the tedious time away
With pleasant tales as in the Sunne they lay
Each one in course the other did succeed
Which much content 'mongst themselues did breed
And I to be partaker of their mirth
Being closely hidden with a hill of earth
Vnheard or seene conuey'd my selfe to heare
That all their chat I vn-espied did heare;
Some told of battailes and of bloody fights,
And some Ladies and of loues delights
And some of dire euents and Tragicall
And some of Iests and loues sports Comicall:
But 'mongst the rout one well I wot there was
Who with good vtterance that became him well
A pretty story of an Ape did tell.
All which for that it seemeth vnto mee
Worthy their view whose thoughts delighted bee
In morrall discipline I will vnfold it
And in those tearmes in which the Begger told it.

Not many yeares ( quoth he ) are past and gone
Since heauens faire Virgin in her siluer throne
From forth her lap such golden blessings threw
As if th'old Age againe shee would renew,
And at that time the vast worlds Forrest wide
Deckt in the Summers coate of Æstas pride
Did flourish and growe proude in lusty prime
Beneath the Sunne-shine of sweet summers time
There many Ioviall trees shoot vp on high
With threatening heads did seeme to vaile the skie
Beneath the shade of whose protecting armes
The Birds sate singing free from fearefull harmes,
The Beasts likewise might all securely goe
About the Forrest roaming too and fro,
For with the Eagle that skie climing bird
And his consorts they late had made accord,
And vnto peacefull state all things to bring
As meete it was they made the Lyon King;
And at that season many beasts found grace
That liu'd obscure before and in meane place.
'Mongst whome a beast that was of Secrops brood
Whome of a man Ioue in his irefull moode,
Detesting his deceitfull guile did make
So foule a beast, that no man could him take
T'haue bin a man, yet was it with such skill
That being a beast a man he fauoured still.
His limbes in lesser space then mans are knit
Beneath his Eyes his Nose more flat doth sit
And like the face which crabbed age doth spill
Deepe wrinkles frowne-like his front did fill;
There to his Apish limbs are every where
Thicke ouer-growne with sallow coloured haire,
And him in land of Apes Ile, Ioue did place
There to abide and never show his face
Amongst vs men, where hee not long did stay
Ere 'mongst the beasts lewd prakes hee gan to play;
For in the golden Age the worlds first spring
Euen in the pallace of the Forrests King,
His witty wiles he oft in practice put
Them to deceiue, for which his taile was cut;
Exiling him for euermore from thence
To the Ape Ile againe for his offence.
But he that long time there liu'd all a mort
His taile being cut, for comming to the Court
Of better fortunes now gan cogitate
And forth he comes to mende his meane estate,
His way vnto the Forrest straight he takes
And in his journey this obserruance makes
Who liu'd disgracefull, who in fauour were
And 'bout the Lyon who chiefe Place did beare;
The golden fleeced Sheepe he first did spie
Patterne of patience, and simplicitie
Grasing obscurely 'mongst the meaner sort
As being a stranger in the Lyons Court;
"For who so beares simplicities true badge
"To liue in Princes Courts doe seldome fadge.
And though the silly Sheepe contented were
For that plaine honest life, which he did beare
Yet for his golden Fleece against his will
Hee was acquainted with the Courtiers still.
Fast by the *Sheepe* the humble *Oxe* did graze
Who for he sought not his estate to raise,
Was held in base contempt for his meeke minde
"Meekenesse in Greatnesse we so seldom finde.
The *Ape* being glad to see the *Sheepes* bad case
And plaine simplicity in such disgrace
Thought with himselfe as true it was indeed
That wily wit would stand him in best steed,
And on his way he forth gan wend a pace
Hoping at Court to finde such future grace;
That in the end he doubted not to bring
Himselfe in fauour with the Forrest King.
Where when he came himselfe he did apply
T'observerue all fashions with an heedfull eye,
The first on whome he any notice tooke
Was that high horned beast who in his looke
Beares signes apparent of his secret minde
To wit the *Goat*, a louver borne by kinde
For he the habit had of all chiefe sleights
In wanton loues and Ladies Court delights.
On which most Gallants now their wits doe proue
To serue their Ladies and their Lemmons loue.
But he surpast them all for he could sing
in chaunting songs, and on the warbling string
Of Vyoll sweet thereto diuinely played
The sound of which would charme the chaistest Maide,
For which he was of Females so approu'd
That they 'boue all the rest him chiefely lou'd;
Yet he with whally eyes and shaggy beard
And welked hornes so *Satir*-like appeard
That such a grim fac'd fellow would affright
A lewd *Faustinaes* selfe in darkest night,
Thereto his body did so ranckly smell
That he himselfe might not abide it well;
But he that fault did hide with pleasing sent
Of sweet perfume when ere abroad he went,
The *Ape* him oft beheld in passing by
And in his seruice would his fortune try
By meanes made by the *Monkey*, his neere friend
Who on the *Goate* chief seuan did attend.
But loe not long hee stood thus all a mort,
Ere hee beheld at entring of the Court
A troupe of Gallants, rushing in the way
All proudly in strange and rich aray,
With wide-big-babon-lookes they all did gape
In passing by vpon the silly Ape.
For mickle pride (full well I wot) they tooke
To daunt a stranger with ascornefull looke;
Thereto, from fullest mouthes they tooke delight
With horrid Oathes, the golden Starres to smite,
Ne gaue they due regard, or Reuerend loue
Vnto the King of Gods the thundring Ioue,
But all their Paens consecrated bee
To drunken Bacchus on low bended knee.
The chiefe 'mongst these that bare supreamest sway
Was the fell Bore, who with the least delay
Euen for a looke misdeem'd, would hazard life
In any furious broyle or bloody strife,
With him came many Beasts that did delight
In sternefull rage, debate and bloody fight:
And therefore loued euer for to bee
Together with the Bore in company.
There came the Tyger, who withouten dread
Was into any danger headlong lead.
The wrathful Beare, whom in his fiery rage
Nought else but blood and vengeance might asswage,
The Bull and Ram, who both couragious were
But wanted wit in Fury to forbear.
Amidst this Crew a simple beast there was
To Court being newly come, to wit, the Asse,
Whom they with fawning speech and threats withall
So wrought unto their will, that at their call
They had both him and his, and sooth to say
Inricht with golden store, he was fit pray
For such in Court whose credit waxed bare,
So witlesse was hee and so voyd of care;
For he of late had left his Countrey home
His Sire being dead, and now to Court was come,
Where all a flaunt, hee ryots and consumes
In gold, in siluer, silke and sweet perfumes
His old Sires, ill-got-goods now goes to wracke,
Farnes, Forrests, Fields, hee beares vpon his backe,
And neuer deemes what Fate will him betide
When all is spent by his vnseemely pride.

The Ape that had obseru'd with heedful eye
The stout demeanour of this Company,
Tooke little liking to this kind of life,
For hee ne loued for to bee in strife;
Ne fauour would hee with such perill winne,
"But thought best sleeping in the soundest skinne.
Long did hee lurke about the Court in vayne,
Before his close intent hee could obtayne:
"But hee that doth his Fate with heed attend,
"Seldome but findes good Fortune in the end.
And at the last good Fortune being his guide,
An old acquaintance he in Court espide;
To wit, the Fox, who found in Court such grace
That he about the King had gotten place.
For the Dread Lyon loathing Luxurie
"The Canker-worme of true Nobilitie,
T'allay the pride that in the flesh beares sway
And banish loathsome Idlenesse away:
To spend his golden houres still deuise
In Kingly pastime and faire exercise,
There to rich guifts, Prince-like he gaue to those,
That did themselues to exercise dispose;
Thereby to purge his Court to ease inclin'd,
And base sloath banish from the Noble mind.
In which the Fox, his Soueraigne did so please,
Seeming the common Enemie of ease:
That hee himselfe in mickle grace did bring
With the bold Lyon, his dread Lord and King.
But hee foule Carle ( not as his King) did make
This vse of exercise for vertues sake,
But gaue himselfe thereto with this intent
To creepe in fauour with foule blandishment
To him the Ape in humble manner came
To scrape acquaintance and make knowne his name;
But the proud Fox, though him hee well did know,
Like a true Courtier gan himselfe to show
With Elboe pride, and cast of scornfull eye
Hee stoutly stalk't vpon his tiptoes high
Disdaining to th'Apes words to lend his eare
Though hee of yore his old acquaintance were.
And in such proud contempt he passed by,
That the Apes former hopes began to dye;
Being in despaire his meane estate to mend
Forsaken thus of his old fellow friend.
  But the slie Fox advising all this while
How the Ape being wittie, prompt, and full of guile,
"And that two working wits will soone preuaile
"In any plot where one may chance to faile;
Straight sends vnto the Ape, and greets him well,
Bidding him come to him his case to tell.
The forlorne Ape being almost in despaire
With double diligence did make repaire
Vnto the Fox, to whom obeysance made
These famous words in humble wise hee said.

All haile ( graue Sir ) quoth hee, good fates attend
Your steps in Court, still Fortune be your freind
And in sweet showers, th'auspicious heau'ns down-shed
Their bounteous blessings on your reuerent head.

The Fox him thanking, answered in this sort,
But say ( Sir Ape ) what wind brings you to Court?
Seemes you haue liued in some barren place
And want lifes needements for to doe you grace;
That scarce your legs your limbs vpholden can.
For which, I weene, you want that wonted wit
And iudgements sharpe, that seem'd of yore to fit
In th'ilke same head, by which you could at need
Both helpe your selfe and stand your freind in steed.

Ah mee ( Sir Reynald ) sayd the wretched Ape
Of all the Forrest hardest is my hap
That I vnhappy wretch, thus as you see
Am made the scorne of other beasts to bee;
Yet ne'rthelesse Sir, if of your grace you please
You of your bounty may my fortunes ease,
And set my wit in the old working way
"Want of imployment makes best wits decay.

Now certes ( said the Fox ) yee say right well,
"For custome doth in power so excell;
"That vertues selfe in the most liberall minde
"For want of it oft times decay'd we find
"And vse being common made in vseful things
"Vice to inseperable habit brings.
The pitty t'were, so ripe a wit you haue
The want of good imploiment should depraue.
Read then, Sir Ape, what course you doe intend
And if in it my helpe may you befriended:
Doubt not to find for old acquaintance sake
My furtherance in any course you take.

To this the Ape, deepe sighing, thus did say
Ah (noble Sir) y blessed be this day,
That with such hap good fortune did me greet
As with your selfe so happily to meet;
For well I weene, I onely hope to rise
By sage instruction of your sound devise.
Then read ( faire Sir ) of fauour I you pray
What custome in the Court now beares cheife sway
To what things most is that Heroicke mind
Of our dread Soueraigne chiefly now enclind,
"For well I wot the subiect that will bring
"Himselfe in fauour with his Lord and King,
"What his Lord likes at least must seeme to loue
"And of his fancy must alwayes approue.

Surely, said Reynald, this which you haue spoken
Of your graue iudgement giues sufficient token,
And know, that now the Lyons chiefe delight
Is to behold those that in nimble fight,
Can best pursue the wilder beasts in chase
And such as they be now in speciall grace;
For he with idle ease may not away
The obstacle to vertues best assay.
And therefore least good dayes may be mispent
To noble exercise he still is bent:
Ne doe I doubt but you by pregnant wit
To any exercise your selfe can fit,
And though of footmanship you be not slow
Yet none amongst the best of beasts I know
In all the woods with you compar'd may bee
For nimblenes and swift Agility.
By which you may in frowning Fates despight
Purchase you fauor in your Soueraignes sight.

Ah ( deere Sir ) said the Ape, yblessed be
Your life with length of dayes for Charitie
To me poore wretch. But say Sir, I you pray
By what step shall I make my best assay
To gaine the Forests King vnto my friend
"A good beginning makes a happy end.

To this the Fox replyed, Sir Ape, said hee
Well haue you said, yet that my busines bee
Meane while your wits for my imploymcnt frame
For in the Forrest wee will find good game.
"Let Drudges by base toile there liuing get
"The generous borne will onely liue by wit;
This said, the subtle Fox in secret wise
The Ape gan counsell with such sound advise
That in short space in Court he got much grace
When those of more desert could find no place.
"For few there be, that for good guifts of mind
"Or vertues bare regard doe fauour find
"Onely they rise that can by guilefull wit
"Serue their owne turne with gainefull benefit,
"The honest mind from thence is made to flye
"When shamelesse ribaulds are advanced high
"The simple-hearted are accounted base,
"When bold and impudent are most in grace,
"Vaine boasting Thrasoies, soothing Flatterers,
"Sly cogging Gnatooes, secret whisperers,
"Tale-bearing Fleerers, and false accusing Iackes,
"There beare best shewes vpon their golden backes.
'Mongst whom the Ape did beare himselfe so well
That hee in rich attire did farre excell;
And eke his sides with flesh so filled were,
That not a bone did any where appeare.
Ne, few him knew that knew him well before
T'haue bin the wretched Ape he was of yore,
For neuer more did Proteus change his shape;
For to deceive, then did this wilie Ape
At first with lowly lookes and humble minde,
Himselfe in great States fauour he did winde,
With Sycophantlike trickes, hee tooke delight,
With euery Iacke to play the Parasite,
To sooth, to cogge, to fawne, to lye, to sweare,
To crouch, to glose, and patiently to beare
All grosse abuse, to take vp euery word
Falne from the lying lippes of some great Lord:
To laugh, looke sad, to like and dislike both,
To say and vnsay, sweare and forsweare troth.
But when by humble seruice and long suite
In Court hee came to bee of some repute,
Hee many subtle sleights did quickly find
T'exhalt himselfe when others came behind:
Then waxt hee proud, and bent his guilefull wit
To turne all things to his owne benefit;
False of his faith, yet prodigall in word,
Darke in his talke, yet seldom would afford
Poore Suitors hearing; but vnsesse they came
With golden warrants signed for the same:
Yet if that Suitors meanes for suites would vse,
Whom better, then Sir Ape, could any chuse;
For many a Canker worme of common state
Some farming Huckster, or Sea runagate,
T'increase their priuate good by publique ill,
Might through his helpe with ease obtaine their will.
Thus they slye Ape with naturall wit endow\'d,
Grew great in wealth, by wealth grew wondrous proud.
"For costly wealth euen to the basest wight
"Gives golden wings to soare a lofty flight.

Now while the Ape did study more and more
By daily begging to increase his store,
The Fox that idle was, but by his wit
For the Apes turne still layd foundation fit,
And on a time I weene, aboue the rest,
To th'Ape hee commeth with a merry Iest.
(Sir Ape) quoth hee, if you my friend will stand,
Wee will not want t'haue gold at our command;
For I in Court haue found a gallant gull
Whom of his gold, (of which hee yet is full)
We well may fleece, if you will lend your ayde
To which in hast, the Ape this answer made.

Say in good sooth, Sir Reynald, I you pray,
In what my word and deed you helpen may
And of what Mister wight make you report
I know him not? spends he his dayes in Court?
Yes, quoth the Fox, to Court he came of late
And well I wot hee is a Iolly mate;
It is to wit, the Asse, whose aged syre
Did toyle himselfe and drudge for daily hyre
And left his thrifty gaine vnto his sonne
To gentilize it here when he was gone.

Sayd then the Ape, foule shame such fooles betide
That to maintayne their sonnes vnthrifty pride
Will bow their labouring backes and take no pleasure
For all their paines vpon their hardrackt treasure.

The Fox reply\'d, you seeme to bee a Foe
To gentle kind; for if it were not so,
How should the Forrest in a moment space,
Breed so much gentle-blood of meaner race,
And sooth to say, this Asse though meanely borne
Yet though much wealth, made wondrous full of scorn.
An humour strange in his conceit doth feed
That by discent hee comes of Noble breed.
It was my chance the other day to be
With th\'horned Goate, and him in company,
Who both were clad in goodly rich array:
But in attire, the Asse was farre more gay.
His head with plume of Feathers was bedight,
The Beggers Ape.

His trappings all with Bells and Bosses bright
Was richly furnished, which with more pride
Hung downe vnto the ground on eyther side.
These lustie Gallants to increase their fame,
In their conceits at Knighthood both doth ayme.
Which if for them wee can by friends obtayne,
Wee shall not fayle for meed t'haue double gayne;
For the Asse so vaine appeares that he will giue
His whole estate, ere he vnknighted liue.
And for the Goate, we shall haue golden fee
Of Female kind, that they may Ladyed bee.
Being dub'd by him; Say then (Sir Ape) I pray
Good gaine is oft times lost by long delay.

Sir Reynald, said the Ape, my forward mind
Brookes no delay, where I a meane may find
To worke my will: but know that your intent
Makes me much doubt, the sequell of th'euent:
For this high Order is to those assign'd,
That famous be for vertue of the mind,
Or for some high atchieuement; for their meed
Haue purchas'd it, to glorifie their deed.
How may we then bring such a thing to passe,
As purchase Knighthood for the golden Asse.

Tush, quoth the Fox, the world now doth not see
The thing that is, but that which seemes to bee.
And hee whose tongue the tayle of Greatnesse lickes
If he will thrive, his Conscience neuer stickes
To ouergild, and lift vp to the skies
With deepest oaths, inuenions blackest lyes;
And that we may our purpose bring to passe,
We must obscure the folly of the Asse.
The vertues rare that beautifie his mind,
Wee must applaud, thereby the world to blind;
And say and sweare, that hee amongst the best
Of all the Forrest is the hopeful'st beast;
So to the world they both shall seeme to bee
For vertues sake, much worthy this degree.

Now certes, said the Ape, this is good leasing
And to the Lyon it will sure be pleasing:
When in the Forrest hee shall heare the same,
Which in their high applause wee can proclaime.
Meane time, Sir Reynald, backe returne with speed
Vnto them both, and tell them 'tis decreed,
That worthy they shall weare the golden Spurre
Like two true sonnes of Mars, and ne're incurr
The hazard of the Filed, but onely this,
To haue our fee before, we may not misse.

    Tush, quoth the Fox, bee confident in mee,
A foole hee is that will behind hand bee:
If that our purpose haue but good euent
The gaine is ours, neere thinke your paines mispent.
This said, themselues they both began t'apply
T'effect their purpose, all their friends they try;
And such applauses daily they impute
To the Asse and Goat, for whom they make this suite
That in the end both twaine in pompe and pride
Were dubd Knights errand, of the Forrest wide
Of whom in guerdon of their mickle paines
The begging Ape and Fox had golden gaines,
So both thinke well themselues apayd to bee
They with their Knighthood, th'other with their Fee.
But let not such base Lossels that account
All merit vayne, and onely hope to mount
Themselues with golden wings to such degree
That seeke to purchase it with baser Fee;
And thinke a siluer silken vestiment
A gilded Spurre, or strange acoutrement
The fruits of brainsicke fancies fond delight
The onely meanes to make a perfect Knight.
Let not such dunghill brood of Kestrill kinde
That vnto honour neuer cast their minde
Dismay the noble spirit that assayes
Through deeds of Armes his name on high to raise;
For bare degrees that want true vertues merit
Shall inames golden booke no place inherit.
When Honour, Meede, and noble vertues praise
In Swan-white age findes fresh and youthfull dayes;
Then let not fond Sir Asse, disgracefull seeme
To those that for their worth and high esteeme
In vertues bare regard exalted bee
By Princes grace to place of such degree;
Let boasting Bragadochioes of our time
And golden-handed Churles, that seeke to clime
To places of such high credit, inly burne
And with the vaine Sir Asse, the Begger spurne;
So shall the Ape their follies still deride
And fleece their store for their aspiring pride.
Who tasting once the sweet delights that came
By this his Begging trade, himselfe did frame
With golden fees of dayly Begging base,
Shamelight on gaine got with so foule disgrace;
Yet shamelesse hee continued begging still
To glut the gulfe of his vnsatiate will.
Which many noble beasts did soone espie
On whome the Lyons safetie did relye,
To whose great wisdome and fore-casting cares
Committed were the Forrests chiefe Affaires.
But 'mongst them all, that most illustrate beast
That worthy Counsellor from heau'n yblest,
The noble Elephant tooke speciall heed
That out of Court such Beggers he might weed.
And sooth to say, as Greekes doe well recite
With crooked Trumpet he could truely write,
And by the working of his prudent mind
Could oft obscure the wits of humaine kind;
For on his care the Kingdomes happines
Did most depend, and for her worthines
To him committed was in custodie
The keeping of the common Treasurie.
This worthy Peere, who dayly did behold
The shamelesse begging of these Beggers bold
In wisedome divers wayes did cast about
To finde the wily Apes foule knavery out.
But th'Ape so well him bore that long it was
E're th'Elephant could bring his will to passe;
Meane time like as the Leach vpon the store
From greedy sucking ne're desists, before
The place be bloodlesse left exhausted dry
So did th'Ape to th'Asse himselfe apply.

For when the doultish beast ycleped was
Through all the Court ( by name of hight Sir Asse )
Puft vppe with pride, he thought himselfe to bee
The fairest beast that euer eye did see,
Hee learned had to praunce with stately pace
To rayne his Asses head with lofty grace
And in each point himselfe so high to beare
As if that hee some noble Palfray were;
Which pride of his, was laughed so to scorne
Of euery beast that knew him to bee borne
Of base descent, yet hee through want of wit
Swolne proud by wealth, such folly did commit,
That he their common Gull accounted was
And bore the title of the *golden Asse*.

Which th' *Ape* did well perceiue, & with vaine showes
Of fained friendship gan with him to close,
With soothing tongue his folly he did feed
And gaue him counsell by some glorious deed
To amplify his name in euery place,
Hee knew he was not come of *Asses* race;
But ra[t]her sprung of some such noble breed
As swift wing'd *Pegasus* that heau'nly Steed.
He wisht him therefore in a single race
To chalenge th'Horse, thereby to get him grace
Ne did he doubt but he should win the day
If hee with courage bold but gaue th'Assay.

Sir *Asse*, with selfe conceit being mou'd in minde
To heare his praise, forgot himselfe by kinde
T'haue bin an *Asse*, and in in this humour sent
A chalenge to the Horse with this intent,
To runne with him before the Forrest King
In hope himselfe in fauour for to bring.
The day was set and chosen was the place
Vpon the open Plaine to runne this race;
Where the dread King of beasts stood to behold
The stout Sir *Asse*, performe his chalenge bold;
The time being come forth came the lustie Horse
With comely grace to runne th'expected course,
Who by his stately gesture gan to show
Stout signes in proud contempt of his base foe.
His crested neck hee often bow'd to ground
With foaming mouth as if he would confound
The earth at once, and from his nosthrils came
A fierie breath as from a furnace flame;
His pricking Eares stood startling on his head
And of a common cutome inlye bred,
In iollity of pride which did abound,
His hollow hoofe still played vpon the ground;
At last from his strong necke in neighing shrill
With sound thereof the Forrest hee did fill,
Seeming thereby to call vpon Sir *Asse*,
That in this challenge the appellant was.
Who vainely vaunting with a gallant trayne
Came proudly prauncing on the ample Plaine;
Where when hee came beholding well the Horse
His comely grace, braue shape, and wondrous force:
Halfe in despaire hee hid himselfe repent
Of his proud challenge and bold hardiment.
Yet with the vayne applause of flattering mates
Being proudly prickt, with Courage bold he waites,
The time appointed to begin the race
Before the Forrest King being then in place;
The signe once giuen, Sir Asse, began to runne
With greedy hope great fame thereby t'haue wonne.
But the braue Horse in pace away did goe
Like winged shaft shot from a Tuscan bowe,
Or like a Swallow in the welkin bright
That sheeres the subtle ayre with nimble flight,
Leauing the sluggishe Asse with shame behind
To know himselfe to be an Asse by kind.
With mickle laughter bred in euery place
Amongst the beasts that stood to see the race,
Which the Ape did well obserue with slye intent
As he that knew, what would be he euent;
For when the Asse, amongst the better sort
Was held in base contempt throughout the Court,
And left forlorne for his stupidity
The Ape alone, did keepe him company.
Whose doltish nature by his cunning wit
In all his actions done he did so fit,
That in the end by craft and cousening slye
Hee gull'd the simple beast and suckt him dry.
Who left forlorne returned all a mort
Vnto his Country home, from Princes Court.
There helplesse to bewaile in wofull wise
His lauish will and wanton riotize;
O wretched end of idle vanity,
Of misexpence and Prodigality.
You younger wits that spend your golden houres,
Your selues and substance in great Princes bowers;
That quaffe downe Court delights, and dayly swill
The seeming sugred Nectar of your ill;
That weare your large left patrimonies bare
In Drinke, in Dice, Dauncing and dainty fare.
That vp and downe in Antick shapes doe jet,
And on your golden backs doe beare your debt,
And with a vaine bewitching hope struck blind
Of idle fame doe watch to catch the wind,
Yet thinke your selues all others to surpasse
In reaching wit. Behold this forlorne Asse,
Who 'mongst the best, once iolly blithe and trim
In deepest waws of sweet delight did swim;  
Now of his golden good he being bereft  
And driuen home, when scarce no home was left:  
In stead of stately bower, where he had bin  
An homely Cottage gladly enters in,  
Where with sad sighes his wretched eyes doe fill  
In stead of Arras and sweet paintings skill,  
Vpon the broken rooфе and slender walls  
Sticks smoakie black and Spiders dusty coales,  
In stead of sweet perfumes, the bitter smoake  
With foggy clouds his tender sight doth choake,  
In stead of Siluer plate, or purest Glasse  
Hee with the Beggers dish now pleased was,  
In which for Wine to glad his wofull hart  
Hee takes cold Whey and water in good part,  
His Courtly dyet fraught with many a dish  
Of divers kindes of dainty Flesh and Fish,  
Is now become the almes of some good house  
Or homely morsell of some hungry Mouse.  
The ground his board, greene grasse his Carpet makes  
And for his Bed a pad of Straw he takes  
In which distresse, by his owne folly bred  
Hee weeps, he sighes, and shakes his wofull head;  
Blaming his bitter Fate, but all in vaine  
Since of his wealthy store naught doth remaine.  
Meane time the Ape that liu'd vpon his losse  
Seeing the wretched fortune of the Asse,  
Did laugh to scorne his wofull misery  
And pitch'd his nets with fraud and subtilty;  
To circumvent the weake and simple sort  
That vsed to frequent the Princes Court.  
But thus while th'Ape such things to passe did bring  
About the pallace of the Forrest King  
The greedy Wolfe his part did also play  
In woods abroad t'obtaine his wished pray,  
Who was a bloody beast of wicked brood  
And sought to liue by spoyle of others good.  
Yet had he large possessions of his owne,  
And in the woods was mighty wealthy growne,  
Whereby he daily sought in Cruell wise  
Vpon the poorer Beasts to Tyrannize,  
The Woods in Common, and th'adioyning Plaine  
Hee did convert vnto his priuate gaine;  
And meaner beasts that nigh his Den did dwell,
Hee from their owne abodes did oft expell.
'Mongst whom the Urchin and the Squirrel hight,
By the Apes helpe, he robbed of their right:
For in close thicket farre from sight of Sunne
Where in his darksome Den the Wolfe did wonne,
The industrious Urchin in his little Cell,
Not farre from thence alone did chance to dwell.
At whose good hap the Wolfe did much repine
And daily did behold with enuisous eyne,
How he is sharpest Winter did enjoy
The fruites of Sommers toyle without annoy;
For when Pomona did in winters scorne
The Woods greene heads with golden fruit adorne,
When fields foe seem to laugh, when flowers doe spring
When Beasts doe play, and Birds doe sweetly sing;
Then would the Urchin watch with curious eye,
When Boreas blasts did cuffe the Clouds in skye
And shake the Tree when like thicke showers of raine
The Fruit would fall, the which with mickle paine
Vpon his brisled backe, the Vrchin bore
Home to his Cell to make his winters store,
Whereby from winters thrall hee liu'd secure,
When other Beasts much sorrow did endure.
Now at the entry of the sterne Wolfes denne
The place of his abode had long time bin;
That 'gainst the state nought could be done or sayd,
But by the Vrchin it might be bewrayed.
The Wolfe likewise out of his greedy moode
Did seeke t'inlarge the place of his abode,
By proud incroaching of that little Cell
In which his neigghbour, th'Vrchin vs'd to dwell;
Wherefore hee sought by death or some disgrace,
To dispossesse the Urchin of that place.
And on a time from home as th'Vrchin went
Abroad into the Forrest with intent
As was his wont, to get such labours meed,
As Fortune in the Forrest had decreed.
Loe in the way the rauening Wolfe did watch
This silly beast within his pawes to catch,
Whom he did often thinke to make his prey,
Yet durst hee not at that time giue th'Assay,
So well the Vrchin did his body arme
With coate of proowe, 'gainst all intended harme.
The Wolfe therefore perceiuing force to faile
The Beggers Ape.

Did seeke by flattering falshood to preuaile.
For in the way finding occasion meet
With fawning words, thus th’Urchin hee did greet.

Now neighbour, quoth the Wolfe, you will be well met
Vpon what high atchieuement be you set,
That you thus armed bee, seemes you doe stand
In dangers doubt, and feare some harme at hand.

Nay certes, quoth the Urchin, nought I feare
Of harme t’ensue, this armed coate I weare
For no such cause; but that with paine I may
Vpon my brisled hide, such fruit conuay
To my poore home, which in the woods I find,
Least with the sluggard vnto ease inclin’d,
On Summers pleasure I doe fondly feed,
And want in Winter to sustaine my need.

The Wolfe replyed, y blessed be thy paine
And labour, that deserues to reape good gaine;
Yet let me now disswade thee to disarme
Thy selfe this once, and feare no future harme,
This day desist from toyle and goe with mee
Vnto our friend, where wee will welcome bee;
For to all Beasts, this day is by the Bore
Kept festiuall, where we shall finde good store
Of diuers dainty Fruits, of which at will
Withouten labour thou mayest haue thy fill.

This sayd, he vsed such kinde courtsie
Mix’d with such friendly Importunitie;
That the poore Urchin, thought his meaning good
And would with him vnto the neighbouring Wood,
Whereas the Bore should wonne; but loe at need
A friend was by, to helpe him at that steed.
And sure the silly Urchin that same day
Vnto the Rauening Wolfe had beene a prey,
But that the Squirrel from the leauie Tree,
Vnseene to them the Wolves intent did see;
Who to the Urchin, call’d with loude exclaime;
Fond foole said hee, what madnes is this same?
How darest thou credit that same cruell Beast,
That on thy Carkasse seekes to make his Feast.
Take heed, by his seducements bee not led,
If thou disarme thy selfe thou art but dead.
For hence I did behold how in the way
In secret couert hid, he lurking lay,
And hadst thou not with stiffe quill’d pointed hide
The Beggers Ape.

Beene arm'd about; by him thou sure hadst dy'd.

   The Vrchin hearing this, vpon his chin
Did set his feet and drew his brisled skin
About his body round, as any ball
To shield himselfe, and shun his fall fall.

Which when the Wolfe perceiu'd, hee went his way
Inrag'd in minde, and vow'd without delay
To act a swift reuenge vpon them both,
And for his cause, vnto the Ape he goeth;
To whom, Complaint against them he doth bring
To be preferr'd vnto the Forrests King.
Hee told, how th'Vrchin like a theeuish wight
Did steale abroad in dead of darksome night,
Vsing to sucke the full-fed Kine vnkept,
While the poore Neatheard all securely slept:
And how the Squirrel to augment his store,
Did rob the Forrest of the Fruit it bore;
And to his will, that he might better shape
The greedy fancy of the Begging Ape,
Hee wish'd him begge the forfeit of their Goods,
Since none amongst the Beasts about the woods
There was, with whom such treasures could be found
As with them twaine which chifly did abound
With Nuts, and Aples, which the Wolfe could tell
Aboue all things, the Ape lou'd wondrous well.
And sooth to say these tidings did so please
Th'Apes greedy humor, that with little ease
The Wolfe obtain'd his wish for in small space
The Urchin and the Squirrel wanting grace
Of friends to backe their cause were from those Woods
Exil'd for aye, and forfeited there goods;
Whereby the Wolfe possession did obtaine
Of th'Vrchins little Cell, and th'Ape did gaine
By begging Nuts and Aples which of yore
By others paines were hoarded vp in store.
Thus dayly did the subtile Ape obtaine
Pleasure and profit both withouten paine,
By which I weene compar'd to all the rest
"Amongst all Craftsmen Beggers are the best:
For eu'n the proud'st that thinkes paines taking's base
To turne oft Begger thinkes it no disgrace.
But whilst the Ape lull'd in security
Did swim in pleasures and felicity
Not wanting ought, for seldom did he craue
The gift of ought but he the same might haue,  
The noble *Elephant* that in the Court  
Did beare chiefe sway amongst the supreme sort  
Like a true Statesman, for the Forrest good  
Against the *Apes* incessant begging stood.  
Whereby the *Ape* did stoope his gallant minde  
For though by information he might finde  
Ought worthy begging, yet the *Princes* grant  
Hee did not craue; because by th' *Elephant*  
Oft to reuoke his grant the King was mou'd  
If to the state it preiudiciall stood;  
Therefore the *Ape* that liu'd before secure  
And thought his golden begging would endure  
For euer certaine: with a heauy cheere  
Now hung the head; for well it did appeare  
Hee might goe swinke and sweat to get his liuing  
Since that the Forrest Prince did cease from giuing,  
Sir *Reynald* likewise that same crafty mate  
That did in the *Apes* beg'd guifts participate  
Now wanted meanes, whereby he might support  
His brauery 'mongst the gallants of the Court  
For long he watched had, and cast about  
By his fine wit to finde some purchase out  
Some ancient Ruine of Antiquitie  
Or ought that might be term'd invtilie,  
But naught he found that in the Forrest stood  
That was invtilie for common good,  
Which when he did perceiue: halfe in despaire  
Vnto the *Ape* his friend he made repaire  
Who to each other often though in vaine  
Their sad mishap in secret did complaine.  
Yet in the end the *Fox* did finde a fetch  
"For dire constraint, the wit at large doth stretch,  
Hee well remembred that if any beast  
Were found offensiue to the Kings beheast  
Or did infringe the Law through all the Woods  
By penall statutes lost both Lands and goods,  
The which without controle, as lawfull gaine  
Th'Ape for a boone by begging might obtaine,  
This once being thought vpon the wily *Ape*  
As carefull of their good this speech shape.  
Sir *Reynald* (said the *Ape*) wee be in case  
To be vndone vnlesse by *Ioues* good grace  
Against the storme, in time we doe prouide.
"Time runnes away and no man stayes the tide.
You see that wee be needy and in lacke
And in the Court, the eyes of euery Iacke
Are fix'd vpon vs, and these garments old
Cannot in Court our countenance long vphold.
Then say (Sir Reynald ) as yee be right wise
What hopefull course for vs you can devise
Wee must prouide for helpe without delay
Or hopelesse leaue the Court and runne away.

The Fox reply'd full little did I weene
That in this case so witlesse you had beene
So long as hope remaines; why should we doubt
Haue wee not working wit to cast about,
Then haue good hope, for wee in little space
Will worke our selues againe in Fortunes grace,
We know right well the Oxe and silly Sheepe
Though they themselues from Court in priuate keepe
As being but rusticke Chuffes of base account
Yet they in wealthy substance farre surmount
Whom if by subtilty we can but draw
Within the compasse of the Princes law
To stop mouthes we shall haue golden fee
So much they feare in danger for to bee.
And if this faile; yet we vpon our oath
As loyal subiects can appeach them both
For speaches spoken 'gainst the Gouernment
Or other trespasse, which we can inuent,
Which that wee may to better purpose bring
We can disguis'd, talke of the Forrest King
And aske what tydings in the Princes Court
What vice in common they doe most support
And in their speech if we them tripping take
VVee by addition can the matter make
To seeme farre worse; by which if they i'th'end
Conuicted bee; then that which we intend
VVee haue obtayn'd; for we theyr goods haue wonne
In recompence of our good seruice done.
This said, the Ape approuing Reynald wit
In that hee at a pinch, could helpe with it
VVith speed in some strange habit, both disguis'd
VVould put in practice what hee had deuis'd,
They both agreed themselues forthwith to clad
Like stranger Countrymen of late decayed,
VVhose habit and demeanor had you seene
You would haue though[t] the wretched Ape t'haue been
Some sturdy Clowne that late had left the Carre
And in this strange disguise had come from farre,
Hee was y clad all in a Russet gray
Of coursest stuffe, yet with such meane aray,
Hee seemed well appay'd as did appeare
Being well contented with his countrey weare.
His russet Ierkin, many yeares y wore
Was waxen bare, and at the elboes torne:
His Breeches of the same made scanty wise
So close did fit vnto his brawny thighes,
That his fat flankes that plumpe and jolly were
Like two round Balls did through the same appeare;
Thereto, his blew round Cap him well became
With a plume Feather pendant on the same,
Which o'th'one side of his head he euer wore
As if in minde some high conceit hee bore.
A rusty Sword hee carryed by his side
And at his backe a Dagger well ytide,
For many hackes therein made long agoe
Sufficient proofes did of the mettall show,
His woollen Hose were of the purest white
Of thicke strong knit, and yet in open sight
Were broken 'bove the heeles, and both his Shooes
Worne with long trauell out about the toes.
And thus he trauayl'd with his fellow Foxe
About the Forrest for to finde the Oxe,
And silly Sheepe, whom the Ape had first espide
In Field farre off fast by the Riuer side,
And said vnto the Foxe; Behold I see
In yon same field, where both grasing bee:
Now proue your wit Sir Reynald, if you can,
Begin you first, you are the grauer man.
This sayd, they came wher th'Oxe and Sheepe did grase,
Whom thus the Foxe did greet with fawning phrase?
All haile (Sir Oxe) said hee, full glad am I
To see you beare your lofty head so high,
It seemes to vs by this your goodly port
You are in fauour in the Princes Court,
You can informe vs of some tidings there
And 'bout the Lyon who chiefe place doth beare.
"The Oxe reply'd, (good Sir) you deeme amisse
"For your coniecture goes astray in this,
"Seeing Courtly fauour is no cause that I
"Seeme thus to beare my branched head so hie,
"But humble thoughts, which wounded harts doe heale
"In sweet content, is cause of all weale,
"Pale enuy poyson to the Statesmans good
"Nere gnawes my heart ne suckes my vitall blood,
"Nor greedy Auarice of others shares
"Disturbes my sweet content with boundlesse cares;
"These pastures bounds my thoughts doe euer bound,
"Ne doe I ioy to feed in stranger ground,
"But with my Fate suffic'd I still abide
"Not fearing any ill that may betide,
"Of Musickes rarest skill I take no keepe
"At any time to summon timely sleepe,
"But sweet voyc'd Birds, and milde Streames gently gushes
"My weary limbes, in restfull quiet Hushes.
"The often horrid sounds of Courts Alarmes
"Ne're startle me from sleepe for feare of harmes,
"But sleeping till the morne secure of feares,
"The Birds sing sweet Bon-jours about mine eares:
"Yhus liue I happy in content of minde,
"Which wee in Courtly greatnesse seldome finde.

Cetes, said the Ape, it seemes yee be right wise
That can of worldly weale so well aduise,
And yet in this me seemes you haue digrest,
For 'mongst the best you being a goodly beast
To great aduancement, may your selfe soone bring
And authorize high Seruice for the King.

"Alas, (quoth the Oxe ) How vulgar is affection
"In vainely seeking after fond promotion,
"As well th'Ignoble as the Noble blood
"Deeme vading pompe the happie mans chiefe good.
"Yet view the Court and marke the misery
"Of those that swim in Court felicitie,
"Whose wretched steps in Princes Courts attends
"His slauish will on others wills depends,
"His turn-coat thoughts more light then lightest feather
"Turn'd with the winde and return'd with the weather
"Eu'n as his Masters changing humour is,
"Must turne and Change to like of that or this
"Against his Conscience praise impietie,
"And sooth foule sinne with fawning flatterie.
"And yet suppose thou shouldst exalted bee
"To some place past Court-crouching with the knee,
"And by the helpe of Greatnesse finde such grace
"As neere the steps of Maiestie t'haue place,
"Yet marke (fond foole) and see what vnseeen woe
"Would follow thee though in Gold shouldst goe,
"To bee a Partner in the Priuitie
"And close concealement of Authoritie,
"Though to thy second selfe thou shew the same
"Oft winnes thee Death, and neuer dying shame;
"Yet in thy Conscience to conceale such things
"VVhen life is gone, Death worse then death it brings.
"Oh then how blest and happy a wight is hee
"That liues from Court though nere so base he bee.

T'enlarge the Theame the Sheepe did silence breake,
"Deare neighbor Oxe (quoth he) the truth you speake,
"Yet more then this, doe many vndergoe
"That in the Court doe make a goodly show,
"For many there that beare so bold a face
"And deeme all vulgars beggerly and base,
"That strut on Tiptoe, and with Elboe pride
"Aspire to reach the square from side to side,
"Oft stoope their gallant mindes and prowe I weene,
"VVorse Beggers farre then those that Beggers beene;
"VVith fawning tongue and Court eclipsing guile
"They claw the Great in vices more then vile,
"And then of this or that in daily begging,
"They still sollicite them with tedious gaping.
"But loe alas, what proues this hardracket store
"Got by encroaching on the pined poore,
"Lifes bitter curse, while heere on Earth wee dwell
"And soules sad burthen bearing downe to Hell.
"Why then doe those that tediously importune
"The royall Lyon to aduance their Fortune,
"Thus base and Begger-like sollicite still
"T'increase their profit by a generall ill:
"They knew the noble Lyons Royall minde
"To humble Suitors is by nature kinde,
"Nor stearne nor statefull to the Subjectes base.
"But full of Lenitie and Gentle grace.
"They know hee striuves by his benignitie
"To imitate the Gods in Charitie,
"Which they will still abuse, being Begger-lipt,
"Till from his Court such Beggers base be whipt.

This speech so toucht the Ape, that with much paine
Hee could himselfe in quiet moode containe.

But Reynald thus reply'd. "Well haue your spoken
"In this behalfe, for these your words betoken
"Your common care, which nature tyes vs to,
"Not for our selues being onely borne to doe.
"Yet you (me seemes Sir Oxe ) without such shift
"By merit may your selfe to honour lift,
"Seeing euery where true merit hath her place
"At least it can no where receiue disgrace

The Oxe reply'd. "I would thy words were true
"Would merit euery where might haue her due,
"Then I should not behold vnto my griefe
"The meritorious want without reliefe.
"But loe, Ah lasse, behold the noble Horse
"That eu'n hath spent the vtmost of his force,
"'Gainst the Ægle and the Dragon his proud mate
"Who both of late made warre vpon our State,
"How oft haue I beheld him with delight
"Preparing of himselfe for bloody fight,
"Who neuer fear'd what might by foes bee done
"With ha, ha, ha, the Battaile hath begun,
"The eyes of Gorgon burning in his head
"With feare hath made his fainting foes halfe dead.
"And proudly prauncing with a side-long pace
"Lifting his fetlockes vp with nimble grace,
"All Rainbow-like hee bore his crest deckt necke
"In proud contempt of any Counterchecke,
"Then on the hard ground hauing made some proofe
"Of the strong battery of his hardy hoofe,
"With nimble Capers in a stately daunce
"He towards the battaile bold would proudly praunce,
"And being come in sight of th'Armed foes
"Hee sniffes, he puffs, he Boggles, snoarts and blowes,
"And neighing with shrill voyce, hee seemes to cry
"And call for Combate with the Enemy.
"Then like the Lightning from the Easterne ayre
"Or swiftest whirlewind, in his fierce repayre
"To flie 'mongst thickest troupes he hath bin seene
"To lose his life, or worthy Conquest winne,
"VVhere in a moment, from the dusty ground
"Into the ayre hee vp would lightly bound,
"And falling downe againe, with finewise shankes
"VVould beat and batter downe the thickest rankes,
"From whence he oftentimes (though wounded) came
"VVith Conquests high renowne, and endlesse fame.
"But now where is the meed of his true merit?
"VVho now yeelds comfort to his fainting spirit?
"Liue not the sonnes of Mars in euery eye
"The perfect maps of Ragged beggery,
"As often as their wounds they doe behold
"The which they tooke their Countries cause t'vphold,
"Their eyes, lippes, hands, and harts, to heau'n doe goe,
"VVishing pale Death to end their helplesse woe;
"VVhich being deny'd dire need doth them constraine
"To doe the thing their soules did once disdaine,
"Eu'n Begger-like one single Mite to craue
"Poore life within his halfe-staru'd house, to saue.
"This said, the Foxe forthwith with winking eyne
"To th'Ape as was decreed gaue priuie signe.
Who stepping forth with countenance fell, thus spake
"Friend Foxe quoth hee, your witnesse here I take
"Of their disloyall words, which intimate
"Their treacherous thoughts against the Prince & State.
" Sure sayd the Fox, their speeches doe import
"As much as Treason, if 'twere heard in Court.
"But they perchance will happily repent
"Let me dissuade you then from your intent,
"For if the Councell of the Lyon dread
"Bee certified of this, they are but dead.
"They shall compound with you, and 'twere not good
"For you to seeke the shedding of their blood.
With this intent the Fox thus spake, as hee
That thought thereby to gaine some golden fee
To stop their mouths, but both the Sheepe and Oxe,
Perceiving well the knauery of the Foxe,
As they that guiltlesse were, withouten doubt
Defied both Fox and Ape with courage stout.

The Ape perceiving this swore by his head
For these their words, they should ere long be dead.
And so enrag'd to Court he went againe
With Reynald his slye copesmate to complaine.
Where when they came, such Treason they detect
Which 'gainst the Oxe and Sheepe they did obiect,
That with swift summoning they cyted were
Before the Lyons Councell to appeare.
The time was set, and loe those Royall Peeres
That on their backes the Forrests burthen beares
Ioue-like in Councell, each one tooke his place
To giue their judgement in so weightie a case.
The Guard attendent on the Forrest King
The Oxe and Sheepe, vnto the Barre did bring;  
Then with shrill voyce, the Cryer' mongst them all  
A general silence through the Court did call,  
Which every where awisefull audience bred  
While thus th'Inditement by the Clerke was read.  
"Come forth Sir Oxe (sayd hee) stand at the Barre,  
"And thou Sir Sheepe, yee both Indited are  
"For Treason, 'gainst the Lyon our dread King  
"Which th'Ape and Foxe of late to light did bring,  
"And for lewd Speech vs'd 'mongst the vulgar sort  
"Seeking therby for to defame the Court;  
"Intitling those by names of Beggers base,  
"That for desert are in the Princes grace:  
"And which is worse for your disloyal hate  
"And treasonable grudging 'gainst the state  
"Of all which treasons worthy vengefull wreake  
"If you be guilty or not guilty speake?  
"To this, the Oxe not guilty did reply  
"And therewithall he craued liberty  
"With humble suite that he might answer shape  
"Gainst this Inditement of the Fox and Ape,  
"Which granted after humble reverence made  
"Vnto the bench, these words he boldly sayd.  
"Right honored Lords, Peeres of a peerelesse King  
"From whose sole care our common good doth spring,  
"The greatest part of treason vrged heere  
"As by the inditement read may well appeare  
"Consists in words wich as our foes report  
"By us were spoken 'gainst the King and Court :  
"But daigne dread Lords, to marke what we haue sayd  
"And what construction thereof they haue made;  
"Naught 'gainst the Court or Courtier did wee say  
"But 'gainst such Vice as in the Court beares sway.  
"The Court where wonnes so many a Iouiall spring  
"Made famous by the influence of a noble King,  
"As like Ioues Pallace 'boue the starry skye,  
"Rather to bee admir'd, then judg'd with mortall eye;  
"Yet as in a Paradise of sweet delight  
"With rarest Fruits and fairest Flowers bedight,  
"Ne'rethelesse the care the cunning Gardener takes  
"His hookes, his fyshes, his pickaxe, spade and rakes,  
"Some fruitlesse weeds are growing on the ground:  
"So in our Kings own Pallace may bee found  
"Amongst the number that praise-worthy bee
Some wicked Beasts of more then base degree.
And against such Vice, as they doe there support
Wee did inueigh; and not against the Court:
Ne did we say, that such haue Beggers bin
That by desert doe Grace or fauour winne:
But such as dayly use with restlesse gaping
with cloaked fasehood and with tedious begging
Of our dread Soueraignes golden guifts to craue
Although no merit in themselues they haue;
This is the summe in brief of what we spake
And this is it which they would treason make.
This said, dumbe silence for a certaine space
Did shut the lips of all that were in place
Till at the last, that great Heroe rose
Who of the Forrests treasure doth dispose
The noble Elephant, who as he stood
From his sweet mouth poured forth a fluent flood
Of honied eloquence, which wanting skill
If I expresse the same, soone I should spill
With sharpe inuectiue, first against that sort
Of hungry Beggers that frequent the Court
Hee did inueigh, then by his powerfull with
Hee shewed since he in Counsels seat did sit;
How many priuate States had changed bin
Which by obseruance he had mark'd and seene,
Supplanted all by cousenage of the Ape
Or by some falsehood which the Fox did shape.
Then 'gainst the Ape, his speech he gan to frame
Hee shew'd what Beast he was and whence he came
How Ioue at first, for his deceiptfull guile
Made him, of man a Beast, and in that Isle
Call'd Ape Isle of his name, alone him put
And how his taile at length for craft was cut.
Then question's he the Fox, to know if hee
Against the Oxe and Sheepe would witnes bee
And what true depositions he could bring
That they intended treason 'gainst the King.
The Fox though halfe amaz'd with suddaine feare
To heare such words from such a mighty Peere,
Yet that his witnes might seeme more t'haue troth
Hee did vnbidden seeke to take his oath.
The booke was brought; but loe the Eternall Ioue
Who by his power protecteth from aboue
The cause of Innocence, with dreadfull frowne
The Beggers Ape.

From Heau'ns high Pallace cast his count'nance downe.
And as the Foxe his oath began to take
As Ioue but stirr'd, hee made Olympus shake,
And thundring horribly aboue the skie,
Through the ayre hee made a sulphurie flash to flie,
Which fell vpon the Foxe, for his foule sinne;
And for his judgement strange, so syng'd his skinne
That since, All Foxes smell of it and beare
A synged colour euer in their haire.
This suddaine change, amaz'd the standers by
Who all with one consent, gan glorifie
The name of Ioue, and s'judgement forthwith gaue
Against the Ape, who now no wit could saue
From punishment; for 'bout the Forrest wide
They whipt him well, and soundly lasht his hide.

So did the Begger bluntly end his Tale,
In which (your pardon I craue ) if ought I faile,
And if in reading, Beggerly you hold it,
Dislike it not, because a Begger told it.

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