

# A King, and No King

Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

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by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

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A KING, AND NO KING.

By Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

Persons Represented in the Play.

Arbaces, \_King\_ of Iberia.

Tigranes, \_King of\_ Armenia.

Gobrias, \_Lord Protector, and Father of\_ Arbaces.

Bacurius, \_another Lord\_.

Mardonius.)

Bessus, ) \_Two Captains\_

Ligo[n]es, \_Father of\_ Spaconia.

\_Two Gentlemen\_.

\_Three Men and a Woman\_.

Philip, \_a servant, and two Citizens Wives\_.

\_A Messenger\_.

\_A Servant to\_ Bacurius.

\_Two Sword-men\_.

\_A Boy\_.

Arane, ) \_The [Queen-Mother\_.

Panthea,) \_Her Daughter\_.

Spaconia,) \_A Lady Daughter of\_ Ligones

Mandane,) \_A waiting woman, and other attendants\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Actus primus. Scena prima\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Enter\_ Mardonius \_and\_ Bessus, \_Two Captains\_.

\_Mar\_.

\_Bessus\_, the King has made a fair hand on't, he has ended the Wars at a blow, would my sword had a close basket hilt to hold Wine, and the blade would make knives, for we shall have nothing but eating and drinking.

\_Bes\_.

We that are Commanders shall do well enough.

\_Mar\_.

Faith \_Bessus\_, such Commanders as thou may; I had as lieve set thee Perdue for a pudding i'th' dark, as \_Alexander\_ the Great.

\_Bes\_.

I love these jests exceedingly.

\_Mar\_.

I think thou lov'st 'em better than quarrelling \_Bessus\_, I'll  
say so much i'thy behalf, and yet thou 'rt valiant enough upon a  
retreat, I think thou wouldst kill any man that stopt thee if  
thou couldst.

\_Bes\_.

But was not this a brave Combate \_Mardonius\_?

\_Mar\_.

Why, didst thou see't?

\_Bes\_.

You stood wi'me.

\_Mar\_.

I did so, but me thought thou wink'dst every blow they strook.

\_Bes\_.

Well, I believe there are better souldiers than I, that never saw  
two Princes fight in lists.

\_Mar\_.

By my troth I think so too \_Bessus\_, many a thousand, but  
certainly all that are worse than thou have seen as much.

\_Bes\_.

'Twas bravely done of our King.

\_Mar\_.

Yes, if he had not ended the wars: I'me glad thou dar'st talk of  
such dangerous businesses.

\_Bes\_.

To take a Prince prisoner in the heart of's own Country in single  
combat.

\_Mar\_.

See how thy blood curdles at this, I think thou couldst be  
contented to be beaten i'this passion.

\_Bes\_.

Shall I tell you truly?

\_Mar\_.

I.

\_Bes\_.

I could willingly venture for't.

\_Mar\_.

Um, no venture neither \_Bessus\_.

\_Bes\_.

Let me not live, if I do not think 'tis a braver piece of service than that I'me so fam'd for.

\_Mar\_.

Why, art thou fam'd for any valour?

\_Bes\_.

Fam'd! I, I warrant you.

\_Mar\_.

I'me e'en heartily glad on't, I have been with thee e're since thou cam'st to th'wars, and this is the first word that ever I heard on't, prethee who fames thee.

\_Bes\_.

The Christian world.

\_Mar\_.

'Tis heathenishly done of'em in my conscience, thou deserv'st it not.

\_Bes\_.

Yes, I ha' don good service.

\_Mar\_.

I do not know how thou mayst wait of a man in's Chamber, or thy agility of shifting of a Trencher, but otherwise no service good

\_Bessus\_.

\_Bes\_.

You saw me do the service your self.

\_Mar\_.

Not so hasty sweet \_Bessus\_, where was it, is the place vanish'd?

\_Bes\_.

At \_Bessus\_ desp'rate redemption.

\_Mar\_.

At \_Bessus\_ desp'rate redemption, where's that?

\_Bes\_.

There where I redeem'd the day, the place bears my name.

\_Mar\_.

Pray thee, who Christened it?

\_Bes\_.

The Souldiers.

\_Mar\_.

If I were not a very merrily dispos'd man, what would become of thee? one that had but a grain of choler in the whole composition of his body, would send thee of an errand to the worms for putting thy name upon that field: did not I beat thee there i'th' head o'th' Troops with a Trunchion, because thou wouldst needs run away with thy company, when we should charge the enemy?

\_Bes\_.

True, but I did not run.

\_Mar\_.

Right \_Bessus\_, I beat thee out on't.

\_Bes\_.

But came I not up when the day was gone, and redeem'd all?

\_Mar\_.

Thou knowest, and so do I, thou meanedst to flie, and thy fear making thee mistake, thou ranst upon the enemy, and a hot charge thou gav'st, as I'll do thee right, thou art furious in running away, and I think, we owe thy fear for our victory; If I were the King, and were sure thou wouldst mistake alwaies and run away upon th' enemy, thou shouldst be General by this light.

\_Bes\_.

You'll never leave this till I fall foul.

\_Mar\_.

No more such words dear \_Bessus\_, for though I have ever known thee a coward, and therefore durst never strike thee, yet if thou proceedest, I will allow thee valiant, and beat thee.

\_Bes\_.

Come, our King's a brave fellow.

\_Mar\_.

He is so \_Bessus\_, I wonder how thou cam'st to know it. But if thou wer't a man of understanding, I would tell thee, he is vain-glorious, and humble, and angry, and patient, and merry and dull, and joyful and sorrowful in extremity in an hour: Do not think me thy friend for this, for if I ear'd who knew it, thou shouldst not hear it \_Bessus\_. Here he is with his prey in his foot.

\_Enter &c. Senet Flourish\_.

\_Enter\_ Arbaces \_and\_ Tigranes, \_Two Kings and two Gentlemen\_.

\_Arb\_.

Thy sadness brave \_Tigranes\_ takes away  
From my full victory, am I become  
Of so small fame, that any man should grieve  
When I o'rcome him? They that plac'd me here,  
Intended it an honour large enough, (though he  
For the most valiant living, but to dare oppose me single,  
Lost the day. What should afflict you, you are as free as I,  
To be my prisoner, is to be more free  
Than you were formerly, and never think  
The man I held worthy to combate me  
Shall be us'd servilely: Thy ransom is  
To take my only Sister to thy Wife.  
A heavy one \_Tigranes\_, for she is  
A Lady, that the neighbour Princes send  
Blanks to fetch home. I have been too unkind  
To her \_Tigranes\_, she but nine years old  
I left her, and ne're saw her since, your wars  
Have held me long and taught me though a youth,  
The way to victory, she was a pretty child,  
Then I was little better, but now fame  
Cries loudly on her, and my messengers  
Make me believe she is a miracle;  
She'l make you shrink, as I did, with a stroak  
But of her eye \_Tigranes\_.

\_Tigr\_.

Is't the course of \_Iberia\_ to use their prisoners thus?  
Had fortune thrown my name above \_Arbace\_,  
I should not thus have talk'd Sir, in \_Armenia\_  
We hold it base, you should have kept your temper  
Till you saw home again, where 'tis the fashion  
Perhaps to brag.

\_Arb\_.

Be you my witness earth, need I to brag,  
Doth not this captive Prince speak  
Me sufficiently, and all the acts  
That I have wrought upon his suffering Land;  
Should I then boast! where lies that foot of ground

Within his whole Realm, that I have not past,  
Fighting and conquering; Far then from me  
Be ostentation. I could tell the world  
How I have laid his Kingdom desolate  
By this sole Arm prop't by divinity,  
Stript him out of his glories, and have sent  
The pride of all his youth to people graves,  
And made his Virgins languish for their Loves,  
If I would brag, should I that have the power  
To teach the Neighbour world humility,  
Mix with vain-glory?

\_Mar\_.

Indeed this is none.

\_Arb\_.

\_Tigranes\_, Nay did I but take delight  
To stretch my deeds as others do, on words,  
I could amaze my hearers.

\_Mar\_.

So you do.

\_Arb\_.

But he shall wrong his and my modesty,  
That thinks me apt to boast after any act  
Fit for a good man to do upon his foe.  
A little glory in a souldiers mouth  
Is well-becoming, be it far from vain.

\_Mar\_.

'Tis pity that valour should be thus drunk.

\_Arb\_.

I offer you my Sister, and you answer  
I do insult, a Lady that no suite  
Nor treasure, nor thy Crown could purchase thee,  
But that thou fought'st with me.

\_Tigr\_.

Though this be worse  
Than that you spake before, it strikes me not;  
But that you think to overgrace me with  
The marriage of your Sister, troubles me.  
I would give worlds for ransoms were they mine,  
Rather than have her.

\_Arb\_.

See if I insult  
That am the Conquerour, and for a ransom  
Offer rich treasure to the Conquered,

Which he refuses, and I bear his scorn:  
It cannot be self-flattery to say,  
The Daughters of your Country set by her,  
Would see their shame, run home and blush to death,  
At their own foulness; yet she is not fair,  
Nor beautiful, those words express her not,  
They say her looks have something excellent,  
That wants a name: yet were she odious,  
Her birth deserves the Empire of the world,  
Sister to such a brother, that hath ta'ne  
Victory prisoner, and throughout the earth,  
Carries her bound, and should he let her loose,  
She durst not leave him; Nature did her wrong,  
To Print continual conquest on her cheeks,  
And make no man worthy for her to taste  
But me that am too near her, and as strangely  
She did for me, but you will think I brag.

\_Mar\_.

I do l'le be sworn. Thy valour and thy passions sever'd, would  
have made two excellent fellows in their kinds: I know not  
whether I should be sorry thou art so valiant, or so passionate,  
wou'd one of 'em were away.

\_Tigr\_.

Do I refuse her that I doubt her worth?  
Were she as vertuous as she would be thought,  
So perfect that no one of her own sex  
Could find a want, had she so tempting fair,  
That she could wish it off for damning souls,  
I would pay any ransom, twenty lives  
Rather than meet her married in my bed.  
Perhaps I have a love, where I have fixt  
Mine eyes not to be mov'd, and she on me,  
I am not fickle.

\_Arb\_.

Is that all the cause?  
Think you, you can so knit your self in love  
To any other, that her searching sight  
Cannot dissolve it? So before you tri'd,  
You thought your self a match for me in [f]ight,  
Trust me \_Tigranes\_, she can do as much  
In peace, as I in war, she'l conquer too,  
You shall see if you have the power to stand  
The force of her swift looks, if you dislike,  
l'le send you home with love, and name your ransom  
Some other way, but if she be your choice,  
She frees you: To \_Iberia\_ you must.

\_Tigr\_.

Sir, I have learn'd a prisoners sufferance,  
And will obey, but give me leave to talk  
In private with some friends before I go.



\_Arb\_.

Some to await him forth, and see him safe,  
But let him freely send for whom he please,  
And none dare to disturb his conference,  
I will not have him know what bondage is,

[\_Exit Tigranes\_.

Till he be free from me. This Prince, \_Mardonius\_,  
Is full of wisdom, valour, all the graces  
Man can receive.

\_Mar\_.

And yet you conquer'd him.

\_Arb\_.

And yet I conquer'd him, and could have don't  
Hadst thou joyn'd with him, though thy name in Arms  
Be great; must all men that are vertuous  
Think suddenly to match themselves with me?  
I conquered him and bravely, did I not?

\_Bes\_.

And please your Majesty, I was afraid at first.

\_Mar\_.

When wert thou other?

\_Arb\_.

Of what?

\_Bes\_.

That you would not have spy'd your best advantages, for your  
Majesty in my opinion lay too high, methinks, under favour, you  
should have lain thus.

\_Mar\_.

Like a Taylor at a wake.

\_Bes\_.

And then, if please your Majesty to remember, at one time, by my  
troth I wisht my self wi'you.

\_Mar\_.

By my troth thou wouldst ha' stunk 'em both out o'th' Lists.

\_Arb\_.

What to do?

\_Bes\_.

To put your Majesty in mind of an occasion; you lay thus, and  
\_Tigranes\_ falsified a blow at your Leg, which you by doing thus  
avoided; but if you had whip'd up your Leg thus, and reach'd him  
on the ear, you had made the Blood-Royal run down his head.

\_Mar\_.

What Country Fence-school learn'st thou at?

\_Arb\_.

Pish, did not I take him nobly?

\_Mar\_.

Why you did, and you have talked enough on't.

\_Arb\_.

Talkt enough?  
Will you confine my word? by heaven and earth,  
I were much better be a King of beasts  
Than such a people: if I had not patience  
Above a God, I should be call'd a Tyrant  
Throughout the world. They will offend to death  
Each minute: Let me hear thee speak again,  
And thou art earth again: why this is like  
\_Tigranes\_ speech that needs would say I brag'd.  
\_Bessus\_, he said I brag'd.

\_Bes\_.

Ha, ha, ha.

\_Arb\_.

Why dost thou laugh?  
By all the world, I'm grown ridiculous  
To my own Subjects: Tie me in a Chair  
And jest at me, but I shall make a start,  
And punish some that others may take heed  
How they are haughty; who will answer me?  
He said I boasted, speak \_Mardonius\_,  
Did I? He will not answer, O my temper!  
I give you thanks above, that taught my heart  
Patience, I can endure his silence; what will none  
Vouchsafe to give me answer? am I grown  
To such a poor respect, or do you mean  
To break my wind? Speak, speak, some one of you,  
Or else by heaven.

\_1 Gent\_.

So please your.

\_Arb\_.

Monstrous,  
I cannot be heard out, they cut me off,  
As if I were too saucy, I will live  
In woods, and talk to trees, they will allow me  
To end what I begin. The meanest Subject  
Can find a freedom to discharge his soul  
And not I, now it is a time to speak,  
I hearken.

\_1 Gent\_.

May it please.

\_Arb\_.

I mean not you,  
Did not I stop you once? but I am grown  
To balk, but I defie, let another speak.

\_2 Gent\_.

I hope your Majesty.

\_Arb\_.

Thou drawest thy words,  
That I must wait an hour, where other men  
Can hear in instants; throw your words away,  
Quick, and to purpose, I have told you this.

\_Bes\_.

And please your Majesty.

\_Arb\_.

Wilt thou devour me? this is such a rudeness  
As you never shew'd me, and I want  
Power to command too, else \_Mardonius\_  
Would speak at my request; were you my King,  
I would have answered at your word \_Mardonius\_,  
I pray you speak, and truly, did I boast?

\_Mar\_.

Truth will offend you.

\_Arb\_.

You take all great care what will offend me,  
When you dare to utter such things as these.

\_Mar\_.

You told \_Tigranes\_, you had won his Land,  
With that sole arm propt by Divinity:  
Was not that bragging, and a wrong to us,  
That daily ventured lives?

\_Arb\_.

O that thy name  
Were as great, as mine, would I had paid my wealth,  
It were as great, as I might combate thee,  
I would through all the Regions habitable  
Search thee, and having found thee, wi' my Sword  
Drive thee about the world, till I had met  
Some place that yet mans curiosity  
Hath mist of; there, there would I strike thee dead:  
Forgotten of mankind, such Funeral rites  
As beasts would give thee, thou shouldst have.

\_Bes\_.

The King rages extreamly, shall we slink away? He'l strike us.

\_2 Gent\_.

Content.

\_Arb\_.

There I would make you know 'twas this sole arm.  
I grant you were my instruments, and did  
As I commanded you, but 'twas this arm  
Mov'd you like wheels, it mov'd you as it pleas'd.  
Whither slip you now? what are you too good  
To wait on me (\_puffe\_) I had need have temper  
That rule such people; I have nothing left  
At my own choice, I would I might be private:  
Mean men enjoy themselves, but 'tis our curse,  
To have a tumult that out of their loves  
Will wait on us, whether we will or no;  
Go get you gone: Why here they stand like death,  
My words move nothing.

\_1 Gent\_.

Must we go?

\_Bes\_ I know not.

\_Arb\_.

I pray you leave me Sirs, I'me proud of this,  
That you will be intreated from my sight:  
Why now the[y] leave me all: \_Mardonius\_.

[\_Exeunt all but\_ Arb. \_and\_ Mar.

\_Mar\_.

Sir.

\_Arb\_.

Will you leave me quite alone? me thinks  
Civility should teach you more than this,  
If I were but your friend: Stay here and wait.

\_Mar\_.

Sir shall I speak?

\_Arb\_.

Why, you would now think much  
To be denied, but I can scar[c]e intreat  
What I would have: do, speak.

\_Mar\_.

But will you hear me out?

\_Arb\_.

With me you Article to talk thus: well,  
I will hear you out.

\_Mar\_.

Sir, that I have ever lov'd you, my sword hath spoken for me;  
that I do, if it be doubted, I dare call an oath, a great one to  
my witness; and were you not my King, from amongst men, I should  
have chose you out to love above the rest: nor can this challenge  
thanks, for my own sake I should have done it, because I would  
have lov'd the most deserving man, for so you are.

\_Arb\_.

Alas \_Mardonius\_, rise you shall not kneel,  
We all are souldiers, and all venture lives:  
And where there is no difference in mens worths,  
Titles are jests, who can outvalue thee?  
\_Mardonius\_ thou hast lov'd me, and hast wrong,  
Thy love is not rewarded, but believe  
It shall be better, more than friend in arms,  
My Father, and my Tutor, good \_Mardonius\_.

\_Mar\_.

Sir, you did promise you would hear me out.

\_Arb\_.

And so I will; speak freely, for from thee  
Nothing can come but worthy things and true.

\_Mar\_.

Though you have all this worth, you hold some qualities that do  
Eclipse your vertues.

\_Arb\_.

Eclipse my vertues?

\_Mar\_.

Yes, your passions, which are so manifold, that they appear even in this: when I commend you, you hug me for that truth: but when I speak your faults, you make a start, and flie the hearing but.

\_Arb\_.

When you commend me? O that I should live  
To need such commendations: If my deeds  
Blew not my praise themselves about the earth,  
I were most wretched: spare your idle praise:  
If thou didst mean to flatter, and shouldst utter  
Words in my praise, that thou thoughtst impudence,  
My deeds should make 'em modest: when you praise I hug  
you? 'tis so [false], that wert thou worthy thou shouldst receive  
a death, a glorious death from me: but thou shalt understand  
thy lies, for shouldst thou praise me into Heaven, and there  
leave me inthron'd, I would despise thee though as much as  
now, which is as much as dust because I see thy envie.

\_Mar\_.

However you will use me after, yet for your own promise sake,  
hear me the rest.

\_Arb\_.

I will, and after call unto the winds, for they shall lend as  
large an ear as I to what you utter: speak.

\_Mar\_.

Would you but leave these hasty tempers, which  
I do not say take from you all your worth, but darken 'em,  
then you will shine indeed.

\_Arb\_.

Well.

\_Mar\_.

Yet I would have you keep some passions, lest men should take you  
for a God, your vertues are such.

\_Arb\_.

Why now you flatter.

\_Mar\_.

I never understood the word, were you no King, and free from  
these moods, should I choose a companion for wit and pleasure, it  
should be you; or for honesty to enterchange my bosom with, it  
should be you; or wisdom to give me counsel, I would pick out  
you; or valour to defend my reputation, still I should find you

out; for you are fit to fight for all the world, if it could come in question: Now I have spoke, consider to your self, find out a use; if so, then what shall fall to me is not material.

\_Arb\_.

Is not material? more than ten such lives, as mine, \_Mardonius\_: it was nobly said, thou hast spoke truth, and boldly such a truth as might offend another. I have been too passionate and idle, thou shalt see a swift amendment, but I want those parts you praise me for: I fight for all the world? Give me a sword, and thou wilt go as far beyond me, as thou art beyond in years, I know thou dar'st and wilt; it troubles me that I should use so rough a phrase to thee, impute it to my folly, what thou wilt, so thou wilt par[d]on me: that thou and I should differ thus!

\_Mar\_.

Why 'tis no matter Sir.

\_Arb\_.

Faith but it is, but thou dost ever take all things I do, thus patiently, for which I never can requite thee, but with love, and that thou shalt be sure of. Thou and I have not been merry lately: pray thee tell me where hadst thou that same jewel in thine ear?

\_Mar\_.

Why at the taking of a Town.

\_Arb\_.

A wench upon my life, a wench \_Mardonius\_ gave thee that jewel.

\_Mar\_.

Wench! they respect not me, I'm old and rough, and every limb about me, but that which should, grows stiffer, I'those businesses I may swear I am truly honest: for I pay justly for what I take, and would be glad to be at a certainty.

\_Arb\_.

Why, do the wenches encroach upon thee?

\_Mar\_.

I by this light do they.

\_Arb\_.

Didst thou sit at an old rent with 'em?

\_Mar\_.

Yes faith.

\_Arb\_.

And do they improve themselves?

\_Mar\_.

I ten shillings to me, every new young fellow they come acquainted with.

\_Arb\_.

How canst live on't?

\_Mar\_.

Why I think I must petition to you.

\_Arb\_.

Thou shalt take them up at my price.

\_Enter two Gentlemen and\_ Bessus.

\_Mar\_.

Your price?

\_Arb\_.

I at the Kings price.

\_Mar\_.

That may be more than I'me worth.

\_2 Gent\_.

Is he not merry now?

\_1 Gent\_.

I think not.

\_Bes\_.

He is, he is: we'l shew our selves.

\_Arb\_.

Bessus, I thought you had been in \_Iberia\_ by this, I bad you hast; \_Gobrias\_ will want entertainment for me.

\_Bes\_.

And please your Majesty I have a sute.

\_Arb\_.

Is't not lousie \_Bessus\_, what is't?



\_Bes\_.

I am to carry a Lady with me.

\_Arb\_.

Then thou hast two sutes.

\_Bes\_.

And if I can prefer her to the Lady \_Pentha\_ your Majesties Sister, to learn fashions, as her friends term it, it will be worth something to me.

\_Arb\_.

So many nights lodgings as 'tis thither, wilt not?

\_Bes\_.

I know not that Sir, but gold I shall be sure of.

\_Arb\_.

Why thou shalt bid her entertain her from me, so thou wilt resolve me one thing.

\_Bes\_.

If I can.

\_Arb\_.

Faith 'tis a very disputable question, and yet I think thou canst decide it.

\_Bes\_.

Your Majesty has a good opinion of my understanding.

\_Arb\_.

I have so good an opinion of it: 'tis whether thou be valiant.

\_Bes\_.

Some body has traduced me to you: do you see this sword Sir?

\_Arb\_.

Yes.

\_Bes\_.

If I do not make my back-biters eat it to a knife within this week, say I am not valiant.

\_Enter a Messenger\_.

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