

Useful text extracts for comparison with Volpone

Here are some useful extracts from texts which had a possible influence on Jonson when he was writing *Volpone*. Complete texts and larger extracts can be found elsewhere on the web, but this is a short “taster”.

Anacreon's *Odes* are referenced in Act Two Scene Four.

The Merchant of Venice is referenced and undermined throughout, but particularly in Acts One, Four and Five.

Henry IV Part One is referenced in Act Three Scene Seven.

Romeo & Juliet is referenced in Act Two Scene Four

Othello is referenced throughout *Volpone*, but has special echoes in Act Two Scenes Two and Five.

Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* is referenced in Act One Scene Two

Horace's *Satire* is quoted in Act One Scene One

Jonson uses characters resembling Peregrine and Lady Would-Be in his own *Epigrams*.

The Opening of the *Odyssey* is referenced in Act Two Scene One.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are referenced in Act One Scene One and Act Three Scene Seven.

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ANACREON – ODES: TRANSLATED BY THOMAS MOORE 1801**Ode 14: *Count me, on the summer trees***

Count me, on the summer trees,
Every leaf that courts the breeze,
Count me, on the foamy deep,
Every wave that sinks to sleep;
Then, when you have number'd these
Billowy tides and leafy trees,
Count me all the flames I prove,
All the gentle nymphs I love.
First, of pure Athenian maids
Sporting in their olive shades,
You may reckon just a score,
Nay, I'll grant you fifteen more.
In the famed Corinthian grove,
Where such countless wantons rove,
Chains of beauties may be found,
Chains, by which my heart is bound;
There, indeed, are nymphs divine,
Dangerous to a soul like mine.
Many bloom in Lesbos' isle;
Many in Iona smile;
Rhodes a pretty swarm can boast;
Carla too contains a host.
Sum them all — of brown and fair
You may count two thousand there.
What, you stare? I pray you, peace!
More I'll find before I cease.
Have I told you all my flames,
'Mong the amorous Syrian dames?
Have I number'd every one,
Glowing under Egypt's sun?
Or the nymphs, who blushing sweet
Deck the shrine of Love in Crete;
Where the God, with festal play,

Holds eternal holiday?
Still in clusters, still remain
Gades' warm desiring train;
Still there lies a myriad more
On the sable India's shore;
These, and many far removed,
All are loving — all are loved!

Ode 16: *Thou, whose soft and rosy hues*

Thou, whose soft and rosy hues
Mimic form and soul infuse,
Best of painters, come portray
The lovely maid that's far away.
Far away, my soul! thou art,
But I've thy beauties all by heart.
Paint her jetty ringlets playing,
Silky locks, like tendrils straying,
And, if painting hath the skill
To make the spicy balm distil,
Let every little lock exhale
A sign of perfume on the gale.
Where her tresses' curly flow
Darkles o'er the brow of snow,
Let her forehead beam to light,
Burnish'd as the ivory bright.
Let her eyebrows smoothly rise
In jetty arches o'er her eyes;
Each, a crescent gently gliding,
Just commingling, just dividing.
But, hast thou any sparkles warm,
The lightning of her eyes to form?
Let them effuse the azure rays
That in Minerva's glances blaze,
Mix'd with the liquid light that lies
In Cytherea's languid eyes.
O'er her nose and cheek be shed

Flushing white and soften'd red;
Mingling tints, as when there glows
In snowy milk, the bashful rose.
Then her lip, so rich in blisses,
Sweet petitioner for kisses,
Rosy nest, where lurks Persuasion,
Mutely courting Love's invasion.
Next, beneath the velvet chin,
Whose dimple hides a Love within,
Mould her neck with grace descending,
In a heaven of beauty ending;
While countless charms, above, below,
Sport and flutter round its snow.
Now let a floating lucid veil
Shadow her form, but not conceal;
A charm may peep, a hue may beam,
And leave the rest to Fancy's dream.
Enough — 'tis she! 'Tis all I seek;
It glows, it lives, it soon will speak!

EXTRACTS FROM SHAKESPEARE'S *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE***From Act One Scene Three**

SHYLOCK

No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the earlings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being rank,
In the end of autumn turned to the rams,
And, when the work of generation was
Between these woolly breeders in the act,
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands,
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who then conceiving did in eaning time
Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

ANTONIO

This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

SHYLOCK

I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast:
But note me, signior.

ANTONIO

Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,

A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

From later in Act One Scene Three

SHYLOCK

Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
'Shylock, we would have moneys:' you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness, Say this;
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys'?

ANTONIO

I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,

Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.

From Act Two Scene Seven

MOROCCO

Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand:
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady:
And yet to be afraid of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint:
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia:

The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
 Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
 To stop the foreign spirits, but they come,
 As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.
 One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
 Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation
 To think so base a thought: it were too gross
 To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
 Or shall I think in silver she's immured,
 Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?
 O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
 Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
 A coin that bears the figure of an angel
 Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon;
 But here an angel in a golden bed
 Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
 Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

PORTIA

There, take it, prince; and if my form lie there,
 Then I am yours.

[He unlocks the golden casket]

MOROCCO

O hell! what have we here?
 A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
 There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

[Reads]

All that glitters is not gold;
 Often have you heard that told:
 Many a man his life hath sold
 But my outside to behold:
 Gilded tombs do worms enfold.
 Had you been as wise as bold,
 Young in limbs, in judgment old,

Your answer had not been inscroll'd:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.
Cold, indeed; and labour lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too griev'd a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

[Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets]

PORTIA
A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so.

From Act Four Scene One

PORTIA
The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

EXTRACT FROM SHAKESPEARE'S *HENRY IV PART ONE***Act Five Scene One**

PRINCE HENRY

Why, thou owest God a death.

Exit PRINCE HENRY

FALSTAFF

'Tis not due yet; I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on? how then? Can honour set to a leg? no: or an arm? no: or take away the grief of a wound? no. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? no. What is honour? a word. What is in that word honour? What is that honour? air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no. Doth he hear it? no. 'Tis insensible, then. Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? no. Why? detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon: and so ends my catechism.

EXTRACT FROM SHAKESPEARE'S *ROMEO & JULIET***Act Two Scene One (leading into Scene Two)**

MERCUTIO

Nay, I'll conjure too.

Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh:
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but 'Ay me!' pronounce but 'love' and 'dove';
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,
When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid!
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

BENVOLIO

And if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

MERCUTIO

This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it and conjured it down;
That were some spite: my invocation
Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name
I conjure only but to raise up him.

BENVOLIO

Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
To be consorted with the humorous night:
Blind is his love and best befits the dark.

MERCUTIO

If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar tree,
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.
Romeo, that she were, O, that she were
An open et caetera, thou a poperin pear!
Romeo, good night: I'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?

BENVOLIO

Go, then; for 'tis in vain
To seek him here that means not to be found.

[Exeunt]

Scene Two. Capulet's orchard.

[Enter ROMEO]

ROMEO

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

JULIET appears above at a window

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady, O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET
Ay me!

ROMEO
She speaks:
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

EXTRACTS FROM SHAKESPEARE'S *OTHELLO*

Act Four Scene Two

OTHELLO

Why, what art thou?

DESDEMONA

Your wife, my lord; your true
And loyal wife.

OTHELLO

Come, swear it, damn thyself
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double damn'd:
Swear thou art honest.

DESDEMONA

Heaven doth truly know it.

OTHELLO

Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

DESDEMONA

To whom, my lord? with whom? how am I false?

OTHELLO

O Desdemona! away! away! away!

DESDEMONA

Alas the heavy day! Why do you weep?
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?
If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me: If you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

OTHELLO

Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction; had they rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head.
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips,
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience: but, alas, to make me
A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at!
Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,
Where either I must live, or bear no life;
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in! Turn thy complexion there,
Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin,--
Ay, there, look grim as hell!

DESDEMONA

I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

OTHELLO

O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst
ne'er been born!

DESDEMONA

Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

OTHELLO

Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write 'whore' upon? What committed!
Committed! O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks,

That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds. What committed!
Heaven stops the nose at it and the moon winks,
The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it. What committed!
Impudent strumpet!

DESDEMONA
By heaven, you do me wrong.

OTHELLO
Are you not a strumpet?

DESDEMONA
No, as I am a Christian:
If to preserve this vessel for my lord
From any other foul unlawful touch
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

OTHELLO
What, not a whore?

DESDEMONA
No, as I shall be saved.

OTHELLO
Is't possible?

DESDEMONA
O, heaven forgive us!

OTHELLO
I cry you mercy, then:
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice
That married with Othello.
You, mistress,
That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell!

From Act Five Scene Two

DESDEMONA
Who's there? Othello?

OTHELLO
Ay. Desdemona.

DESDEMONA
Will you come to bed, my lord?

OTHELLO
Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA
Ay, my lord.

OTHELLO
If you bethink yourself of any crime
Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

DESDEMONA
Alas, my lord, what do you mean by that?

OTHELLO
Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No; heaven forfend! I would not kill thy soul.

DESDEMONA
Talk you of killing?

OTHELLO
Ay, I do.

DESDEMONA
Then heaven have mercy on me!

OTHELLO

Amen, with all my heart!

DESDEMONA

If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

OTHELLO

Hum!

DESDEMONA

And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then
When your eyes roll so: why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not; but yet I feel I fear.

OTHELLO

Think on thy sins.

DESDEMONA

They are loves I bear to you.

OTHELLO

Ay, and for that thou diest.

DESDEMONA

That death's unnatural that kills for loving.
Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:
These are portents; but yet I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.

OTHELLO

Peace, and be still!

DESDEMONA

I will so. What's the matter?

OTHELLO

That handkerchief which I so loved and gave thee
Thou gavest to Cassio.

DESDEMONA

No, by my life and soul!
Send for the man, and ask him.

OTHELLO

Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy deathbed.

DESDEMONA

Ay, but not yet to die.

OTHELLO

Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

DESDEMONA

Then Lord have mercy on me!

OTHELLO

I say, amen.

DESDEMONA

And have you mercy too! I never did
Offend you in my life; never loved Cassio
But with such general warranty of heaven
As I might love: I never gave him token.

OTHELLO

By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in's hand.
O perjured woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And makest me call what I intend to do
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.

DESDEMONA
He found it then;
I never gave it him: send for him hither;
Let him confess a truth.

OTHELLO
He hath confess'd.

DESDEMONA
What, my lord?

OTHELLO
That he hath used thee.

DESDEMONA
How? unlawfully?

OTHELLO
Ay.

DESDEMONA
He will not say so.

OTHELLO
No, his mouth is stopp'd;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't.

DESDEMONA
O! my fear interprets: what, is he dead?

OTHELLO
Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
Had stomach for them all.

DESDEMONA
Alas! he is betray'd and I undone.

OTHELLO

Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my face?

DESDEMONA

O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!

OTHELLO

Down, strumpet!

DESDEMONA

Kill me to-morrow: let me live to-night!

OTHELLO

Nay, if you strive--

DESDEMONA

But half an hour!

OTHELLO

Being done, there is no pause.

DESDEMONA

But while I say one prayer!

OTHELLO

It is too late.

EXTRACTS FROM *IN PRAISE OF FOLLY* BY DESIDERIUS ERASMUS,**Taken from the Online Library of Liberty**

Let us feign now a person ignorant of the laws and constitutions of that realm he lives in, an enemy to the public good, studious only for his own private interest, addicted wholly to pleasures and delights, a hater of learning, a professed enemy to liberty and truth, careless and unmindful of the common concerns, taking all the measures of justice and honesty from the false beam of self-interest and advantage, after this hang about his neck a gold chain, for an intimation that he ought to have all virtues linked together; then set a crown of gold and jewels on his head, for a token that he ought to overtop and outshine others in all commendable qualifications; next, put into his hand a royal sceptre for a symbol of justice and integrity; lastly, clothe him with purple, for an hieroglyphic of a tender love and affection to the commonwealth. If a prince should look upon this portraiture, and draw a comparison between that and himself, certainly he would be ashamed of his ensigns of majesty, and be afraid of being laughed out of them.

Next to kings themselves may come their courtiers, who, though they are for the most part a base, servile, cringing, low-spirited sort of flatterers, yet they look big, swell great, and have high thoughts of their honour and grandeur. Their confidence appears upon all occasions; yet in this one thing they are very modest, in that they are content to adorn their bodies with gold, jewels, purple, and other glorious ensigns of virtue and wisdom, but leave their minds empty and unfraught; and taking the resemblance of goodness to themselves, turn over the truth and reality of it to others.

EXTRACT FROM HORACE'S SATIRES BOOK 2 SATIRE III.

Damasippus, in a conversation with Horace, proves this paradox of the Stoic philosophy, that most men are actually mad.

An example is nothing to the purpose, that decides one controversy by creating another. If any person were to buy lyres, and [when he had bought them] to stow them in one place; though neither addicted to the lyre nor to any one muse whatsoever: if a man were [to buy] paring-knives and lasts, and were no shoemaker; sails fit for navigation, and were averse to merchandizing; he every where deservedly be styled delirious, and out of his senses. How does he differ from these, who boards up cash and gold [and] knows not how to use them when accumulated, and is afraid to touch them as if they were consecrated? If any person before a great heap of corn should keep perpetual watch with a long club, and, though the owner of it, and hungry, should not dare to take a single grain from it; and should rather feed upon bitter leaves: if while a thousand hogsheads of Chian, or old Falernian, is stored up within (nay, that is nothing—three hundred thousand), he drink nothing, but what is mere sharp vinegars again—if, wanting but one year of eighty, he should lie upon straw, who has bed-clothes rotting in his chest, the food of worms and moths; he would seem mad, belike, but to few persons: because the greatest part of mankind labors, under the same malady.

TWO OF JONSON'S EPIGRAMS

LXII.

*To Fine Lady **Would-be.***

Fine Madam *Would-be*, wherefore should you fear,
That Love to make so well, a Child to bear?
The World reposes you Barren: but I know
Your 'pothecary, and his Drug says no.
Is it the Pain affrights? that's soon forgot.
Or you Complexions loss? you have a Pot,
That can restore that. Will it hurt your Feature?
To make amends yo'are thought a wholesome Creature.
What should the cause be? Oh, you live at Court:
And there's both loss of Time, and loss of Sport
In a great Belly. Write, then on thy Womb;
Of the not Born, yet Buried, here's the Tomb.

LXXXV.

*To Sir Henry **Goodyere.***

Goodyere, I'm glad, and grateful to report,
My self a Witness of thy few days sport:
Where I both learn'd, why wise-men Hawking follow,
And why that Bird was sacred to *Apollo*,
She doth instruct men by her gallant flight,
That they to Knowledge so should tour upright,
And never stoop, but to strike Ignorance:
Which if they miss, yet they should re-advance
To former height, and there in Circle tarry,
Till they be sure to make the Fool their Quarry.
Now, in whose Pleasures I have this discerned,
What would his serious Actions me have learned?

THE OPENING OF GEORGE CHAPMAN'S 1614-6 TRANSLATION OF *THE ODYSSEY*

Wound with his wisdom to his wished stay;
That wandered wondrous far, when he the town
Of sacred Troy had sack'd and shivered down;
The cities of a world of nations,
With all their manners, minds, and fashions,
He saw and knew; at sea felt many woes,
Much care sustained, to save from overthrows
Himself and friends in their retreat for home;
But so their fates he could not overcome,
Though much he thirsted it. O men unwise,
They perish'd by their own impieties,
That in their hunger's rapine would not shun
The oxen of the lofty-going Sun,
Who therefore from their eyes the day bereft
Of safe return. These acts, in some part left,
Tell us, as others, deified Seed of Jove.

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES – ARTHUR GOLDING'S 1567 TRANSLATION**BOOK 1: lines 87-112**

Howbeit yet of all this while, the creature wanting was,
Farre more devine, of nobler minde, which should the residue passe
In depth of knowledge, reason, wit, and high capacitie,
And which of all the residue should the Lord and ruler bee
Then eyther he that made the worlde, and things in order set,
Of heavenly seede engendred Man: or else the earth as yet
Yong, lustie, fresh, and in hir floures, and parted from the skie,
But late before, the seede thereof as yet held inwardlie.
The which Prometheus tempring straight with water of the spring,
Did make in likenesse to the Gods that governe everie thing.
And where all other beasts behold the ground with groveling eie,
He gave to Man a stately looke replete with majestie.
And willde him to behold the Heaven wyth countnance cast on hie,
To marke and understand what things were in the starrie skie
And thus the earth which late before had neyther shape nor hew,
Did take the noble shape of man, and was transformed new.
Then sprang up first the golden age, which of it selfe maintainde
The truth and right of every thing unforct and unconstraine.
There was no feare of punishment, there was no threatning lawe
In brazen tables nayled up, to keepe the folke in awe.
There was no man would crouch or creepe to Judge with cap in hand,
They lived safe without a Judge, in everie Realme and lande.
The loftie Pynetree was not hewen from mountaines where it stood,
In seeking straunge and forren landes, to rove upon the flood
Men knew none other countries yet, than where themselves did keepe:
There was no towne enclosed yet, with walles and diches deepe.

BOOK 15: lines 103-111

But that same auncient age
Which wee have naamd the golden world, cleene voyd of all such rage,
Livd blessedly by frute of trees and herbes that grow on ground,
And stayned not their mouthes with blood. Then birds might safe and sound
Fly where they listed in the ayre. The hare unscaard of hound
Went pricking over all the feeldes. No angling hooke with bayt
Did hang the seely fish that bote mistrusting no deceyt.
All things were voyd of guylfulnesse: no treason was in trust
But all was freendshippe, love and peace.



Because plays are
written to be seen.