LEAR Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee.
But where the greater malady is fixed,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear,
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou'dst meet the bear i'th'mouth. When the mind's free,
The body's delicate. This tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
Save what beats there: filial ingratitude.
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to't? But I will punish home.
No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out? Pour on, I will endure.
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril,
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all –
O that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.
KENT Good my lord, enter here.
LEAR Prithee, go in thyself, seek thine own ease.
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more; but I'll go in.

6 contentious] F; crulentious Q *uncorr.*; tempestious Q *corr.* *7 skin: so] skin.so F *uncorr.*; skinso F *corr.*; skin, so Q 9 Thou'dst] F; thou wouldst Q2 *10 thy] Q; they F 10 roaring] F; roring Q *corr.*; raging Q *uncorr.*, Q2 11 i'th'] F; it'h Q *12 body's] bodies Q, F *12 This] Q *corr.*; the Q *uncorr.*, Q2, F 14 beats] F, Q *corr.*; beares Q *uncorr.*, Q2 14 there: . . . ingratitude] there . . . ingratitude, F *uncorr.*; there, . . . ingratitude F *corr.*; their . . . ingratitude Q 16 to't] F, Q; to it Q2 16 home] F; sure Q 17–18 In . . . endure.] F; *not in* Q 19–21 O . . . that;] F *lineation; three verse lines ending* . . . father / . . . lies, [*turned over*] / . . . that. Q 20 gave] F; gaue you Q 21 lies] Q, F *corr.*; lie F *uncorr.* 22 here] F; *not in* Q 23 thine own] F; thy one Q

**8 greater malady** i.e. his mental torment, as 11–14 explain.

**8 fixed** set, established.

**11 i'th'mouth** i.e. face to face.

**11–14 When . . . ingratitude** Compare Montaigne, *Apology for Raymond Sebond*, iv.70: 'our senses are . . . many times dulled by the passions of the mind' (Muir).

**11 free** i.e. of pain, undisturbed, untroubled.

**12 delicate** sensitive.

**14 beats** (1) throbs, as of thought, (2) rages, as of a storm (Muir).

**15–16 Is . . . to't** Is it not as if my mouth should attack my hand for bringing food to it? The image suggests the absurd rebellion of one part of the body against another (compare *Cor.* 1.1.96 ff.). Lear conceives of the family – himself and his daughters – as an organic whole.

**16 home** thoroughly, to the full.

**18 Pour . . . endure** Lear asserts his titanism, his defiance against nature and all it can do to him. On F's addition, see Textual Analysis, p. 282 below.

**20 frank** (1) liberal, bounteous (of giving), (2) open, without guile.

**21 that way** i.e. dwelling upon his foolish generosity and his daughters' ingratitude.

**23 Prithee . . . ease** Lear has begun to consider others first, a marked change in his attitude and behaviour.

**25 things . . . more** Lear refers to filial ingratitude and his own foolishness. Compare 21 above.

**25 would** that would.



In, boy, go first. You houseless poverty –
Nay, get thee in; I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.
*Exit* [*Fool*]
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your looped and windowed raggedness defend you
From seasons such as these? O I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp,
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them
And show the heavens more just.

*Enter* FOOL

**Side #13 Start here (Edgar, Lear, Fool, Kent)**

EDGAR [*Within*] Fathom and half; fathom and half; poor Tom!
FOOL Come not in here, nuncle! Here's a spirit! Help me, help me!

26–7 In . . . sleep.] F; *not in* Q 26 poverty –] *Rowe*; pouertie, F 27 SD] *Johnson (subst.)*; *Exit.* F *(after 26)*; *not in* Q 29 storm] F; night Q *31 looped] loopt Q; lop'd, F 36 SD] *This edn*; *Enter Edgar, and Foole.* F; *The Fool runs out from the hovel. / Theobald (after 39; after 37, Capell)*; *not in* Q 37 EDGAR Fathom . . . Tom!] F; *not in* Q 37 SD] *Theobald*; *not in* F

**26–7 In, boy . . . sleep** See Textual Analysis. pp. 282–3 below. The lines, added or restored in F, underscore Lear's changing attitude and lead directly and naturally into his prayer, which is interrupted poignantly by insistent concern for his Fool.

**26 houseless poverty** Compare 'Poor naked wretches' (28 ff.). Here, concrete and abstract are combined in a typically Shakespearean phrase. Compare 31 below.

**27 I'll pray** 'In the night's bleak exposure he kneels down, like a child at bedtime, to pray' (Granville-Barker, p. 292). But most editions, except Oxford, omit a SD.

**28–36** Macready deliberately pointed this speech at Queen Victoria during a performance she attended (Bratton, p. 143).

**29 bide** endure.

**30 sides** Not the sides of the chest, as at 2.4.190, but the part of the body principally fed by nourishment, as in *Tim.* 4.3.12 (Schmidt).

**31 looped . . . raggedness** More yoking of concrete and abstract: the ragged clothes of the poor are full of loopholes and openings (windows).

**32–3 O . . . this** By assuming responsibility for the wretched state of his subjects, Lear takes a major step forward in understanding himself.

**33 physic** medical treatment, possibly a purge.

**33 pomp** Abstract for concrete, i.e. rich and powerful persons accustomed to splendour and luxury.

**34–6 Expose . . . just** This is the 'physic' Lear prescribes: the great ones of the earth should subject themselves to the experiences of the poor (as Lear himself now does); the action will lead them to surrender unnecessary possessions ('superflux'), and by giving them to the poor demonstrate how heaven can be more just than we realise. Compare Gloucester's speech, 4.1.62–6, where the same point is made.

**37 SD *Enter* FOOL** Q has no SD, while F has both Edgar and the Fool enter here, though Kent later calls Edgar (as Poor Tom) to come forth at 42–3. A line (37) is also missing from Q, which seems (like the Bedlam's entrance) a response to Lear's prayer (see Textual Analysis, p. 283 below). Theobald's emendations suggest a plausible staging of the scene: the Fool comes running out of the hovel badly frightened by what he sees there – the hideous figure of the Bedlam beggar, who utters a despairing cry from within. His hovel is an imagined place, entered perhaps from a trap (as in the 1990 Renaissance Theatre Company production) or from behind curtains upstage centre.

**37 Fathom . . . half** 'Edgar speaks as if he were a sailor sounding the depth of the water in the hold of a leaking ship. He is almost "swamped" by the storm' (Kittredge).

**38 spirit** supernatural being, demon.

KENT Give me thy hand. Who's there?
FOOL A spirit, a spirit! He says his name's Poor Tom.
KENT What art thou that dost grumble there i'th'straw? Come forth.

[*Enter* EDGAR, *disguised as a madman*]

EDGAR Away, the foul fiend follows me. Through the sharp hawthorn blow the winds. Humh! Go to thy bed and warm thee.
LEAR Didst thou give all to thy daughters? And art thou come to this?
EDGAR Who gives anything to Poor Tom, whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits, Tom's a-cold! O do, de, do, de, do de. Bless

41 a spirit] F; *not in* Q 41 name's] F, Q; name is Q2 42 i'th'] F; in the Q 43 SD] *Theobald; not in* Q, F 44 Through] F; thorough Q 45 blow the winds.] F; blowes the cold wind, Q 45 Humh!] F; *not in* Q 45 bed] F; cold bed Q 47 Didst thou give] F; Hast thou giuen Q 47 thy] F; thy two Q *50 through fire] Q; though Fire F 50 through flame] F; *not in* Q *50–1 ford and whirlpool] foord, and whirli-poole Q; Sword, and Whirle-poole F 51 hath] F; has Q 52 porridge] F; pottage Q *55 Bless] Q; Blisse F 55 O . . . de.] F; *not in* Q *55 Bless] Q; blisse F

**44 Away** i.e. keep away. As someone followed or attended by demons, Edgar warns the others off.

**44–5 Through . . . winds** See collation. Hunter follows Q and inserts 'cold' before 'winds', citing the same phrase at 89 below. Oxford omits 'cold' here but with Q inserts it before 'bed' in the next sentence, following *Shr.* Induction 1.9–10 (see *Textual Companion*, p. 535). F's omission of 'cold' in both places may seem odd (Duthie, p. 148), but the lines are satisfactory without the adjective; if anything, they are stronger for the omissions.

**45 Humh** Edgar, half-naked, shivers with cold (Kittredge).

**45–6 Go . . . thee** See 44–5 n. above. Duthie, p. 149, thinks an actor may have interpolated 'cold' before 'bed' to make an antithesis. He follows F both here and earlier, though NS retains Q's 'cold' before 'winds'.

**47–8 Didst . . . this** Lear's monomania becomes evident, and his descent into madness is aided by the image of the Bedlam beggar. 'Immediately after the *Poor naked wretches* speech [Lear] finds a figure with whom he can wholly identify himself and whose role (of madman) he can take over' (Hunter).

**49–58 foul fiend . . . there** As Theobald first noted, many details of this speech are indebted to Harsnett's *Declaration*. See also Muir, 'Samuel Harsnett and *King Lear*', *RES*, n.s., 2 (1951), 17. Suicide, a result of the sin of despair, was a favourite temptation of the devil. Compare Marlowe, *Dr Faustus* 2.2.20–2: 'then swordes and kniues, / Poyson, gunnes, halters, and invenomd steele / Are layde before me to dispatch my selfe' (Steevens, cited by Muir).

**50 ford** 'Sword' in F is an apparent manuscript misreading (Duthie, p. 178). All the other dangers are natural phenomena: 'Sword' is exceptional; Q's 'foord' is doubtless right.

**51 that** i.e. he that.

**52 pew** A 'gallery in a house or outside a chamber window – not a pew in church' (Kittredge; from Old French *puye*, 'parapet, balustrade, balcony' (*OED*); compare Cotgrave, *Appuye*: 'An open, and outstanding terrace, or gallery, set on th'outside with railes to lean vpon').

**52 porridge** thick soup.

**53–4 ride . . . bridges** i.e. perform a difficult feat, like walking a tight-rope.

**54 course** chase. Compare the image of a cat chasing its own tail (NS) and Tilley S281, 'To be afraid of one's own shadow'.

**55 five wits** These are common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory. They were sometimes confused with the five senses, though not in Sonnet 141.9–10.

**55 O do . . . de** Sounds of chattering teeth.



thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking. Do Poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. There could I have him now, and there, and there again, and there.

*Storm still*

LEAR What, has his daughters brought him to this pass?
Couldst thou save nothing? Wouldst thou give 'em all?
FOOL Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.
LEAR Now all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults, light on thy daughters!
KENT He hath no daughters, sir.
LEAR Death, traitor! Nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment: 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.
EDGAR Pillicock sat on Pillicock Hill; alow, alow, loo, loo.
FOOL This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

56 star-blasting] F; starre-blusting Q 58 and there again, and there.] F; and and there againe Q 58 SD] F; *not in* Q *59 What, has] What, Q; Ha's F 60 Wouldst] F; didst Q 60 'em] F; them Q 63 light] F; fall Q 69 begot] F; *begins next line* Q 71 Pillicock Hill] F; pelicocks hill Q 71 alow, alow, loo, loo.] F; a lo lo lo. Q

**56 star-blasting** In astrology, the adverse influence of malignant stars, which could afflict one with disease.

**56 taking** The state of becoming infected, blasted.

**57–8 There . . . there** 'Edgar makes grabs at different parts of his body as if to catch vermin – or devils' (Kittredge).

**59 What, has** See collation. On metrical and other grounds, Duthie, pp. 15–16, recommends combining Q and F. Q may have inadvertently omitted 'has'; in correcting Q, the F collator or compositor may have misread the correction as a substitution instead of an addition.

**59 pass** predicament, extremity (Schmidt).

**61 reserved** NS suggests an allusion to Lear's 'reservation' of a hundred knights.

**62–3 all . . . faults** The idea that infectious plagues were airborne was commonplace, as was the notion of 'star-blasting' (56), the infliction of disease as a punishment for malefactors.

**63 fated** destined (i.e. to fall).

**63 light** alight, fall.

**65 subdued** reduced; accent on the first syllable.

**65 nature** i.e. human nature.

**67–8 Is . . . flesh** Lear refers to Edgar's mortified body (see 2.3.15–16). In his monomania, he insists Edgar must be the victim of ungrateful and cruel daughters, despite Kent's statement (64). Edwin Booth as Lear drew a thorn or spike from Edgar's arm and stuck it in his own (Sprague, cited by NS).

**69 Judicious** Fitting, well-judged.

**69–70 'twas . . . daughters** The bawdry that Lear utters in his madness (e.g. 4.5.108–25) may be traced to this perception.

**70 pelican daughters** The pelican was proverbial for feeding its young with its own flesh and blood, and the young were proverbial for cruelty to their parents.

**71 Pillicock . . . Hill** Edgar's fragment, suggested by 'pelican', may be part of a nursery rhyme: 'Pillycock, Pillycock sat on a hill; / If he's not gone, he sits there still' (Collier, cited by Furness). Compare 'Pillicock' = (1) term of endearment, darling, (2) the penis; 'Pillicock Hill' = female genitals (Partridge).

**71 alow . . . loo** Variously explained. Furness suggests the sound of a cockcrow; Kittredge, a wild 'halloo' as if to a hawk; Perrett, a Bedlam's horn; etc., etc.

EDGAR Take heed o'th'foul fiend, obey thy parents, keep thy words' justice, swear not, commit not with man's sworn spouse, set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

LEAR What hast thou been?

EDGAR A servingman, proud in heart and mind, that curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap, served the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her. Swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven. One that slept in the contriving of lust and waked to do it. Wine loved I dearly, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramoured the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the

*74 words' justice] *Schmidt 1879;* words Iustice F; words iustly Q; word justly *Pope;* word's justice *Knight* 75 sweet heart] Q; Sweet-heart F *77 servingman,] Q; Seruingman? F 82 I dearly] F; I deeply Q

**73 foul fiend** Possibly suggested by similar-sounding 'fool' in the preceding line (NS, citing Kökeritz, p. 75, who also notes word-play in *3H6* 5.6.18–20).

**73–5 obey . . . array** A version of five of the Ten Commandments; specifically, to honour one's parents, not to commit false witness, take the Lord's name in vain, commit adultery, or engage in covetousness. Compare also 1 Tim. 2.9: '. . . that they aray them selues in comely apparell, with shamefastnes and modestie, not with . . . golde, or pearles, or costly apparell' (Noble, Shaheen).

**73–4 keep . . . justice** Duthie, p. 150, originally defended the F reading, but in NS favours Q. Muir retains F, but makes 'words' singular possessive. The sense seems to be 'keep the integrity of your utterances', i.e. do not lie or bear false witness. The parody of the Commandments strengthens the F reading. Muir and Shaheen compare the Catechism, 'bee true and iust in all my dealing'.

**75 proud array** fancy clothes.

**77–88 A servingman . . . fiend** Compare Donne's Elegy IV (*c.* 1595) (Davenport, p. 21).

**77 servingman** Either (1) servant, or (2) lover; possibly both. The description of a dandified servant as courtier fits Oswald as well.

**77 proud in heart** Shaheen compares Prov. 16.5: 'All that are proude in heart, are an abomination to the Lord', and 21.4: 'A hautie loke, and a proude heart, which is the light of the wicked, is sinne.' 'Proud' could also signify 'lustful' (Booth, p. 164, n. 19).

**77–8 curled my hair** Malone (cited by Furness) quotes a long passage from Harsnett, p. 54, in which Master Mainy 'curled his hair' and otherwise demonstrated the sin of pride. The passage continues, as the present one does, with a catalogue of deadly sins represented by devils in the shape of animals, including the dog and the wolf, which Shakespeare may have remembered.

**78 wore . . . cap** i.e. wore the favours of his mistress like a courtly lover or gallant.

**81 slept . . . lust** i.e. dreamt of plotting lascivious deeds.

**82 dearly . . . dearly** See collation. F's repetition appears intentional and emphatic.

**82–3 out-paramoured the Turk** i.e. had more lovers than the Turkish sultan had in his harem.

**83 light of ear** 'credulous of evil, ready to receive malicious reports' (Johnson, cited by Furness); i.e. a gossip-monger. Kittredge quotes from *The Schole-House of Women*: 'So light of eare they be and sowre, / That of the better they neuer record, / The worse reherce they word by word.'

**84–5 hog . . . prey** Edgar gives an abbreviated list parodying the Seven Deadly Sins, which were often represented by animals. Compare 77–8 n. above, and Florio, *Second Fruites*, p. 165: 'lyon for surquedry, goate for letcherie, dragon for crueltie' (cited by Muir).

**85 prey** preying.

**85–6 Let . . . silks** The sounds a woman makes as she walks. Creaking shoes were fashionable (Kittredge).



rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman. Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lender's books, and defy the foul fiend. Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind, says suum, mun, nonny. Dauphin, my boy, boy, *cessez!* let him trot by.

*Storm still*

LEAR Thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! Here's three on's are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself. Unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here.

86 rustling] F; ruslngs Q 86 woman] F; women Q 87 brothels] F; brothell Q 87 plackets] F; placket Q 88 books] F; booke Q 89 says suum, mun, nonny] F; hay no on ny Q 89–90 Dauphin, my boy, boy, *cessez!*] *This edn;* Dolphin my boy, my boy, caese Q; Dolphin my Boy, Boy *Sesey*: F; Dauphin, my boy! Boy, *cessez*; *Oxford* 90 SD] F; *not in* Q 91 Thou] F; Why thou Q 91 a] F; thy Q 92 than] then F; but Q 93 ow'st] F; owest Q 94 Ha!] Ha? F; *not in* Q 97 lendings! Come, unbutton here.] F; leadings, come on be true. Q *uncorr.*, Q2; lendings, come on Q *corr.*

**87 plackets** (1) slits or openings in petticoats, (2) a euphemism for the female pudendum (Partridge).

**87–8 pen . . . books** A sure way to fall into trouble was to borrow from moneylenders.

**89 suum, mun, nonny** The first two words suggest the sound of the wind (Knight, cited by Furness). The third word is used often in ballad refrains. (Steevens apparently invented a ballad about a battle in France in which the French king did not want to risk his son the Dauphin: see Furness.) Some editions, e.g. NS, conflate emended Q and F, 'suum, mun, hay nonny nonny', since Edgar utters the kind of nonsense that could end in a ballad tag. For 'nonny-nonny' NS quotes *OED*: 'meaningless refrain, formerly often used to cover indelicate allusions'. Compare *Ham.* 4.5.166, *Ado* 2.3.69.

**89–90 Dauphin . . . by** Unexplained. See collation. Johnson was the first to suggest French *cessez* for F '*Sesey*', but the reference to the Dauphin of France is unclear. Johnson thought it referred to a servant or attendant, others that it is from a ballad or song, but evidence is absent. John Crow suggested to Muir that 'Dolphin' (Dauphin) could mean the devil; he quoted a Noah mystery play: 'I pray to Dolphin, prince of dead, / Scald you all in his lead.' The identification with the devil derives from English hatred of the French, and Edgar often refers to devils or fiends who accompany or torment him.

**91 answer** respond, encounter.

**92–3 Is . . . well** Compare Hebrews 2.6: 'What is man, that thou shouldest bee mindfull of him? or the sonne of man that thou wouldest consider him?' (Noble, Shaheen). Nearly the same words appear in Ps. 8.4. G. C. Taylor cites parallels from Montaigne's *Apology for Raymond Sebonde*, iii.250, 268; vi.189–90 (in Florio's translation, quoted in Muir, NS).

**94 cat** i.e. the civet cat, from whose glands ingredients for perfume are obtained.

**95 sophisticated** adulterated, artificially altered.

**95–6 Unaccommodated** Unfurnished with the trappings of civilisation, i.e. unadorned with clothes.

**96 forked** two-legged. Compare *2H4* 3.2.311, where Falstaff describes Justice Shallow as 'a forked radish'.

**97 lendings** clothes, i.e. the borrowings mentioned in 93–4. Lear begins tearing off his clothes, the 'ironic conclusion' to the divestiture begun in 1.1 of everything but the name of king and the reservation of a hundred knights (Heilman, p. 76). Now he strips down to 'nothing'.

**97 Come . . . here** Perhaps a delirious command to a groom, but more likely Lear speaking to himself. Compare 5.3.283. *Hysterica passio* is evidently afflicting Lear. As he tears off his clothing, Kent and the Fool try to restrain him. See collation and compare Clayton, pp. 127–8; Stone, pp. 225–6. Furness suggests 'unbutton here' may be a SD.

FOOL Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart – a small spark, all the rest on's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire.

*Enter* GLOUCESTER *with a torch*

EDGAR This is the foul Flibbertigibbet; he begins at curfew and walks till the first cock. He gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the harelip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

[*Chants*] Swithold footed thrice the wold,
He met the nightmare and her ninefold;

98 contented; 'tis] F; content, this is Q **100** on's] F; in Q **101** SD] F (*after 97*); *Enter Gloster.* Q **102** foul] F; foule fiend Q **102** Flibbertigibbet] F; *Sriberdegibit* Q *uncorr.*; *fliberdegibek* Q *corr.*; *Sirberdegibit* Q2 ***103** till the] Q; at F **103** gives] F, Q *corr.*; gins Q *uncorr.*, Q2 **103** web and the pin, squints] F; web, the pin- / queues Q *uncorr.*; web, & the pin, squemes Q *corr.*; web, the pinqueuer Q2 **104** harelip] Hare-lippe F; harte lip Q *uncorr.*, Q2; hare lip Q *corr.* **106** SD] *This edn; not in* Q, F; [*Sings*] / *Oxford* **106–10** Swithold . . . thee!] *Capell's lineation; four lines ending* . . . old, / . . . nine-fold; / . . . -plight, / . . . thee. F; *as prose* Q **106** Swithold] F; swithald Q ***106** wold] *Theobald;* old Q, F **107** He . . . nightmare] F, Q *corr.*; a nellthu night more Q *uncorr.*; anellthu night More Q2

**98 naughty** wicked.

**98 swim** Perhaps suggested by Lear's movements and the wet weather.

**99 little fire . . . heart** As the Fool sees Gloucester advancing through the field, the comparison is dramatically apt. Accordingly, some editions, e.g. NS, move the SD for Gloucester's entrance to 99 after 'swim in'.

**99 wild** uncultivated, not bearing crops (NS).

**101 walking fire** i.e. someone carrying a torch. Here the Fool begins his lapse into silence. Upstaged initially by Edgar as Poor Tom in both Q and F, the Fool later – in Q – tries to regain his position, but not in F, as the texts diverge significantly (Kerrigan, p. 226; see Textual Analysis, p. 270 below).

**102 Flibbertigibbet** A dancing devil in Harsnett.

**102 curfew** 9 p.m.

**103 first cock** midnight.

**103 web . . . pin** cataract of the eye. Compare *OED* Web *sb* 7.

**103 squints** i.e. causes to squint. See collation. Q corr. 'squemes' may be a miscorrection of Q uncorr. '-queues' for 'squenies' or 'squenes' (Duthie, p. 193); compare 4.5.132. Greg, *Variants*, pp. 165–7, believes F 'squints' is a sophistication, but other evidence suggests authorial revision (*Textual Companion*, p. 536). Muir, who prints 'squinies', cites Armin's use of 'squiny' as well as 'squened' in his *Nest of Ninnies* (1608) and 'squeaning' in *The Italian Taylor* (1609), also cited by Greg.

**104 white wheat** grain almost ripe for harvesting. Compare John 4.35: 'loke on the regions: for they are white already vnto haruest' (NS).

**105 creature** Collective for 'creatures'.

**106 Swithold** Most editors see 'Swithold' as a contraction of 'St Withold', mentioned in *The Troublesome Raigne of Iohn King of England* (1591): 'Sweete S. *Withold* of thy lenitie, defend vs from extremitie' (1184). The saint, of whom only this is known, was apparently a protector from harms in general. Oxford emends to 'Swithune', following Tate. Swithune, or Swithun (also spelled Swithin), was a popular English saint famous for healing and associated with rain (*Textual Companion*, p. 518, arguing for common *a/u* and *l*/minim misreadings in Q of 'Swithune' – and presumably *e/d* misreading as well). Q's 'swithald' and F's '*Swithold*' reinforce each other, however, and the precedent in *The Troublesome Raigne* is persuasive, since (as *Textual Companion* recognises) Tate may have been only simplifying.

**106 footed thrice** The saint walks over the downs three times (a magical number).

**106 wold** upland plain, or downs; Q/F 'old' suggests the dialectal pronunciation.

**107 nightmare . . . ninefold** The nightmare was 'a female spirit or monster supposed to beset people and animals by night, settling upon them when they are asleep and producing a feeling of suffocation by its weight' (*OED* Nightmare *sb* 1).



Bid her alight
And her troth plight,
And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee! **Side #13 End here.**

KENT How fares your grace?

LEAR What's he?

KENT Who's there? What is't you seek?

GLOUCESTER What are you there? Your names?

EDGAR Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cowdung for salads, swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog, drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stocked, punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body,
Horse to ride, and weapon to wear;
But mice and rats and such small deer
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.
Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!

GLOUCESTER What, hath your grace no better company?

108 alight] a-light F; O light Q, Q2 **109** troth plight] Q; troth-plight F **110** aroint] F; arint Q (*both times*) **110** witch] F, Q *corr.*; with Q *uncorr.*, Q2 **116** tadpole] tode pold Q *uncorr.*; tod pole Q *corr.*; Tod-pole F **116** wall-newt] F, Q *corr.*; wall-wort Q *uncorr.*, Q2 **120** stocked, punished,] F; stock-punisht Q ***120** had] Q; *not in* F **122** Horse . . . wear;] F; *part of preceding prose* Q **124** Have] F; Hath Q **125** Smulkin] F; snulbug Q

Note the derivation from Anglo-Saxon 'mare' = incubus, which has nothing to do with 'mare' = she-horse (Kittredge). But Q corr. 'nine fold' (F nine-fold) may = 'nine fole' (i.e. 'foal') (Tyrwhitt, cited by Furness). Excrescent *-d* is common in Shakespeare, as in 'vilde' for 'vile' (129). Oxford prints 'foal'. Capell thought the 'nine-fold' referred to the attendant train of imps or familiars. Nine, as a multiple of three, is another magic number. NS and others cite a similar charm to cure the nightmare from Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) and elsewhere.

**108 Bid her alight** i.e. get down off the sleeper's chest.

**109 troth plight** i.e. promise to do no more harm.

**110 aroint thee** Command to the demon (or witch who invoked her) to be gone, as in *Mac.* 1.3.6.

**111–13 How . . . seek?** Kent addresses Lear first, then Gloucester. Sisson, p. 237, believes the first query is properly Gloucester's; but since Lear, now subdued, has just undergone a vigorous struggle, the question by Kent is appropriate.

**116 wall-newt** wall-lizard.

**116 water** i.e. water-newt.

**116–17 in the fury . . . rages** i.e. when the mad fit is upon him.

**118 ditch-dog** dead dogs thrown into ditches (Delius, cited by Furness).

**118–19 green mantle . . . pool** scum from a stagnant pond. Compare *MV* 1.1.89.

**119–20 whipped . . . imprisoned** Vagabonds under a statute of 1572 could be punished in these ways until driven back to wherever they belonged or whoever would take them in.

**119 tithing** A rural district originally containing ten households.

**120 stocked** i.e. placed in the stocks.

**120–1 three . . . body** Compare 2.2.14 n. on a servingman's allowance.

**123–4 mice . . . year** Compare the popular romance, *Bevis of Hampton*: 'Ratons and myce and soche smale dere / That was hys mete that seven yere' (Capell, cited by Kittredge).

**123 deer** game in general.

**125 Smulkin** A minor devil (in mouse's form in Harsnett, p. 140).

**126 What . . . company** This speech and Gloucester's next two are directed to Lear.