

ARDEN OF FAVERSHAM

Author Unknown

MOSBY: Disturbed thoughts drives me from company
 And dries my marrow with their watchfulness;
 Continual trouble of my moody brain
 Feebles my body by excess of drink,
 And nips me as the bitter north-east wind
 Doth check the tender blossoms in the spring.
 Well fares the man, howe'er his cates do taste,
 That tables not with foul suspicion ;
 And he but pines amongst his delicates.
 Whose troubled mind is stuffed with discontent.
 My golden time was when I had no gold ;
 Though then I wanted, yet I slept secure ;
 My daily toil begat me night's repose.
 My night's repose made daylight fresh to me.
 But since I climbed the top-bough of the tree
 And sought to build my nest among the clouds.
 Each gentle stirry gale doth shake my bed.
 And makes me dread my downfall to the earth.
 But whither doth contemplation carry me ?
 The way I seek to find, where pleasure dwells,
 Is hedged behind me that I cannot back,
 But needs must on, although to danger's gate.
 Then, Arden, perish thou by that decree ;
 For Greene doth ear the land and weed thee up
 To make my harvest nothing but pure corn.
 And for his pains I 'll hive him up a while,
 And after smother him to have his wax :
 Such bees as Greene must never live to sting.
 Then is there Michael and the painter too,
 Chief actors to Arden's overthrow ;
 Who when they shall see me sit in Arden's seat,
 They will insult upon me for my meed.
 Or fright me by detecting of his end.
 I'll none of that, for I can cast a bone
 To make these curs pluck out each other's throat.
 And then am I sole ruler of mine own.
 Yet Mistress Arden lives ; but she's myself,
 And holy Church rites makes us two but one.
 But what for that ? I may not trust you, Alice :
 You have supplanted Arden for my sake,

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And will extirpen me to plant another.
'Tis fearful sleeping in a serpent's bed,
And I will cleanly rid my hands of her