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3 “The Bloody Proclamation to Escape”: Edgar and Romantic Outlawry

Abstract In contrast to the “gusto and energy” of his half-brother Edmund and his “richer” alter ego of Poor Tom, Edgar has been critiqued for emptiness — as “colourless” by Arnold Kettle, “excit[ing] the least enthusiasm” by A. C. Bradley, and “not even a shadow” by William R. Elton. Edgar is often perceived as a cipher for legitimacy, as “a mere mouthpiece for cliché,” and an emblem for law and a political hierarchy that is otherwise collapsing. This chapter will argue that this characterisation is largely set by Edmund, casting his brother as a dupe in “the old comedy” (1.2.134). Instead of an Attic Old Comedy, in which the “foolish” are swindled, as Edmund imagines (1.2.179); Edgar’s trajectory resembles that of older romance plays, such as *Mucedorus* and *Love and Fortune*. Poor Tom emerges as an innovative example of a traditional convention — the future prince, unjustly banished into pilgrim’s poverty. Mirroring Lear’s descent, Edgar’s chivalric adventure is an advent: the unveiling of a prince, a new heir to the kingdom. The upward, restorative trajectory implied by this convention and Shakespeare’s insistent *rota fortuna* references is then undermined by the final lines of the play, which contributes to the drama’s tragic climax.

The 1608 Quarto of *King Lear* includes, as was not unusual, the subplot on its title page:

> M. William Shak-speare:
> *HIS*
> True Chronicle Historie of the life and
> death of King LEAR and his three
> Daughters.
>
> *With the vnfortunate life of* Edgar*, sonne*
> and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his
> sullen and assumed humor of
> TOM of Bedlam.[1]

In the market for printed plays, narrative summaries — as much as the notations concerning the playwright, playing company, and theatre — helped distinguish specific iterations of a widely-known story. After all, there is no Edgar in prior versions of the tale.[2] On the other hand, Edgar is by no means Shakespeare’s only original contribution. If differentiation was the sole condition for front-page billing, the subtitle might have emphasised the murder of Cordelia, the rise and fall of Edmund, the banishment of Kent, or the betrayal of Gloucester. Instead, the stress

lands on "*the* [*u*]*nfortunate life of* Edgar." This chapter is not an attempt to reconstruct why the printer or the bookseller marketed the play with this particular detail. But from 1608, there has existed an invitation to the reader to consider Lear's tale in conjunction with Edgar's arc. Helpfully for my purposes, Edgar's identity — like Lear's — remains consistently "in question" throughout the play, as William R. Elton observes.[3] Furthermore, both of these lives are "[*u*]*nfortunate*" in a rich sense that evokes the romance genre to which the play is indebted.[4] Their sharp downturns are insistently characterised in terms of Fortune or Fortune's wheel: "I am even the natural fool of [F]ortune," "To be worst, / the lowest and most dejected things of [F]ortune" — though for Edgar, at least, "the wheel [comes] full circle" (4.6.187; 4.1.2-3; 5.3.172).[5]

There are other, more subtle affinities. The previous chapter showed that kingship was understood as a self-negating position: the king was a cipher, whether of divine sovereignty, law, or *pro bono publica*. In contrast to the "gusto and energy" of his half-brother Edmund and the "richer" *alter ego* of Poor Tom, Edgar himself has been considered comparatively "colourless" by Arnold Kettle, as "excit[ing] the least enthusiasm" by A. C. Bradley, and as being "not even a shadow" by Elton.[6] To some extent, Edgar has seemed a cipher too: as a "mere mouthpiece for cliché" as Ewan Fernie put it, but also as a living emblem for law, for legitimacy, and for a political hierarchy that is otherwise collapsing.[7] Even the name Edgar — "he whom my father named, your Edgar," Regan attests (2.1.92) — is associated with a rather bland law-giver king in Holinshed, who succeeded an Edmund.[8] Such readings often find their climax in the chivalric confrontation between Edgar and Edmund, the legitimate and the illegitimate, at the end of the play.[9] This chapter will analyse how this impression is constructed, and Edmund's specific role in producing it.

Edgar's status as a banished outlaw superficially complicates this reading: "The bloody proclamation to escape / That followed me so near" (5.3.182-3). However, Edgar finds himself in the company of the former sovereign — the two characters mirroring each other in the perils of a vestigial, exclusionary legal identity. Importantly, Edgar's response to his outlawry is generically romantic: he disguises himself in "rags," "a semblence / That very dogs disdained," even a "*habit*" (5.3.186-7, my emphasis). Edgar's ascetic disguise of Poor Tom, which has justly received more critical attention for its opaque, fiery expressions than its generic affinities, nevertheless conforms to the wider chivalric trope that he evokes: the future prince, unjustly banished into "pilgrim's poverty," who eventually returns to the "top of Fortune's wheel."[10] The chivalric Edgar's adventure is thereby also recognisable as a romantic *advent*: an unveiling of a prince, a new heir to the kingdom.[11] A sense of this upward, restorative trajectory is crucial to understanding Edgar's role in the play's tragic climax.

3.1 The Legitimate

In the wake of the first scene — a scene littered with oaths and invocations of various kinds — Edmund holds the stage. He begins with his own audacious invocation: "Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law / My services are bound" (1.2.1-2). The significance of these lines is straightforward. Edmund considers legal structures, particularly those guarding inheritance, as a "plague of custom" (1.2.3) and a "curiosity of nations" (1.2.4). He critiques primogeniture, questioning why he should lack a patrimony because he is "some twelve or fourteen moonshines / Lag of a brother" (1.2.5-6). But, in particular, he circles around the concept of bastardy, querying it as a term: "Why bastard? Wherefore base? / When my dimensions are as well compact / My mind as generous [...]" (1.2.6-8). He initially claims a parity of faculties between bastards and "honest madam's issue" (1.2.9), an egalitarian argument with which an audience might sympathise, but this gives way. Rather than "*as* well compact [...]" (1.2.7, my emphasis), Edmund goes a step further, inverting the structure completely:

> [F]Base, base?[F]
> Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
> More composition and fierce quality
> Than doth within a dull stale tired bed
> Go to the creating [Q]of[Q] a whole tribe of fops
> (1.2.10-4)

Bastards are therefore not as good as true-born children, they are better.[12] Edmund's early critique of the exclusionary political theologies surrounding ownership — in his case especially primogeniture and legitimacy, thereby developing the matrimony-patrimony premise of the opening scene — falters into a bleak kind of natural justice: "All with me's meet that I can fashion fit" (1.2.182). It is tempting to package Edmund's critique of these institutions, a critique which soon materialises into practice, with the play's wider depiction of the established hierarchy falling into emergency: "Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord," so goes Gloucester's lament (1.2.106-8). However, the structure of this speech — Edmund reframing the cliché of the wily bastard as a qualification for aristocratic power — supports Jonathan Dollimore's seminal reading: Edmund does not resent society's concentrations of power in general, but his inability to access them.[13] Ewan Fernie admits, with customary candour, Edmund's "glamourous power" while also conceding that the "cold eye of ideology critique" reveals this superficiality.[14] Indeed, as Fernie points out, Edgar's transformation into Poor Tom is the more creative.[15] Edmund's comparative appeal perhaps lies less in the "free artistry of [him]self" then, but in an intoxicating synthesis between the righteousness of the victim and the shamelessness of the transgressor.[16] But the success of this strategy, I suggest, also rests on Edmund's characterisation of his half-brother.

Edgar's critical reception has been tepid. To give some choice examples: "inconsequential," "faultless but without virility," "colourless," and "superficial."[17] His poor fortune in criticism reflects a sense that his character is subordinate to the needs of the narrative: as a naive and chivalric nemesis for his "panther" half-brother, as a mad doppelgänger and possible successor to the king, and as the Sidneyan guide for his blinded father.[18] Yet, on closer inspection, Edgar's cipher-function is impressed upon the audience in the earliest scenes of the play. Crucially, Edmund has a main hand in this, which should not surprise us. After all, Edmund's early stage-time hinges entirely on his own bastardy — he is introduced as such by his father within the first few lines of the play: "I have so often blushed to acknowledge him that now I am brazed to't" (1.1.9-10).

As Baker, Pollock, and Maitland observe, in common law bastardy was not a proper legal "condition" as such but merely a fictitious "absence of a legitimate family relation" — they were, in legal terms, a child with no father (*filius nullus*).[19] The result is the bastard, as Baker recounts, has the same civil rights as other free men, "with the single exception that he could not be heir to his parents nor have any collateral heir himself."[20] However, while the English legal doctrine of bastardy was not as harsh as medieval French and German customs — within which "the bastard is reckoned among the 'rightless'"— bastardy nevertheless constituted a serious impairment in a society stratified by inheritance.[21] Edmund's devotion to "[Nature's] law" and contempt for the "plague of custom" shows he resents this disqualification (1.2.1, 3) ― just as Goneril resents hers (see Chapter 4).

Yet, Edmund's speech shows that, while he repudiates the legal implications of bastardy, he has certainly internalised and essentialised bastardy's cultural associations.[22] This is explicit at the play's beginning and end: "Who in the lusty stealth of nature take / More composition and fierce quality," and "Some good I mean to do, / Despite of mine of nature," (1.2.11-2; 5.3.241-2). In other words, Edmund ― even more than Gloucester ― presents the circumstances of his birth as constitutive, even essential to his identity and person. So emphatically is this reiterated, that even if Edmund were not to mention Edgar, one might still begin to think of Edgar primarily as what Edmund is not: the true-born child of Gloucester. As the earl notes from the start, between jokes about Edmund's mother, Edgar is his "son, sir, by order of law" (1.1.18). This point even appears in the subtitle with which this chapter began: Edgar, "sonne and heire".[23] The glibness of Gloucester's family portrait evaporates in Edmund's monologue, and he drives this difference home: "Well, then, / *Legitimate* Edgar" (1.2.15-6, my emphasis). His assertion of this identity for Edgar — the legitimate child — is so strong that it supplants Edgar's name entirely:

> Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
> As to the legitimate. [F]Fine word, 'legitimate'![F]
> Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed
> And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
> Shall top the legitimate.
> (1.2.17-21)

This extraordinary insistence on the word "legitimate," five times in six lines, does more than suggest Edmund's fixation. With any intense repetition, meaning begins to weaken. Edmund's ironic tone reinforces this implied sense of legitimacy's arbitrariness. But further, Edmund effectively flattens his half-brother's character into "the legitimate," the heir, before he has even stepped foot on-stage. Indeed, when Edgar eventually enters the scene, as Edmund says, "he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy" (1.2.134), suggesting the convenient arrival of a plot-point: a mere cipher for the narrative, to be gulled and duped, so that Edmund may "grow [and] prosper" (1.2.21). From this perspective, Edmund emerges as the first wry critic in a long tradition to condemn Edgar for his theatrical conventionality.

Edmund's cryptic phrase — "the catastrophe of the old comedy" (1.2.134) — remains only tentatively glossed: though its ambiguities provide a convenient key to the rest of the subplot. "[C]atastrophe" is derived from Ancient Greek, meaning "a downward turn," which explains its exclusively negative connotation today.[24] In Renaissance England, more neutral interpretations of "catastrophe" were commonplace. In *Wily Beguiled*, a comedy dated between 1602-1606, the play concludes happily with the poor scholar and the usurer's daughter being able to marry despite her father's opposition.[25] The epilogue's final two lines are: "And if they [the audience] like our playes *Catastrophe,* / Then let them grace it with a *Plaudite*."[26] Similarly, Richard Dutton annotates Ben Jonson's erudite usage of "catastrophe" in his 1607 *Epistle to the Two Universities* by saying, "dénoument; last act […] Renaissance theory divided plays into four phases: *protasis*, *epitasis*, *catastasis*, and *catastrophe*."[27] The dramatic meaning of "catastrophe" is therefore the last movement of the narrative, whose essence is not necessarily good, nor ill, but simply conclusive.

The term has applications beyond this technical or dramatic sense. The 1609 edition of Robert Cawdrey's *Table Alphabetical* defined the term more broadly: "the end of a thing, overthrow."[28] This more general meaning of catastrophe is crudely played upon in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, *Part 2*, when a page threatens: "I'll tickle your catastrophe!" (*2H4*, 5.48-9). By contrast, John Denison's 1608 treatise on salvation summarised the afterlife thus: "we see a maine difference between the godly and the wicked: in that the day of death is a comical Catastrophe to the one, but a tragicall conclusion to the other."[29] Catastrophe may therefore signify ends of all kinds, from paradise to posteriors.

Edmund's elliptic phrase becomes clearer: "Pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy" (1.2.134).[30] Edgar takes his first steps onto the stage, just in time for "Edmund the base" to "overthrow"[31] or "top the legitimate" (1.2.20, 21), thereby seeming to secure a "comical Catastrophe" for himself, and "a tragicall conclusion to the other."[32] Yet, if "catastrophe" affords a simple explanation, "the old comedy" seems less straightforward. Foakes annotates it, "Edmund is constructing his own 'comedy'" (1.2.134n). This might be usefully connected to *King Lear*'s double-plot, traditionally considered a comic structure.[33] Elton suggests this line signals that Edmund and Edgar are the most theatrical characters of the play.[34] Yet, while these

readings may explain a reference to *a* comedy, neither resolve the use of the definite article with the adjective "old." Following Stanley Wells, I perceive only two possibilities: "the old comed[ies]" of the English dramatic tradition or "the [O]ld [C]omedy" of Athens (1.2.134).[35] The proposal is more troublesome than Wells's concise annotation suggests, since these two possibilities are antithetical in their customary conclusions.

Contrary to generic convention, the Old Comedies of the Greek tradition — as exemplified by Aristophanes — were believed to exhibit a mixture of "comical" and "tragicall" dimensions in their catastrophes. Renaissance literary theories suggest that comedies ought to end with "reconciliation," rather than retribution.[36] In Jonson's 1607 *Epistle*, he defends the bleak "catastrophe" — he uses the exact word — of *Volpone* (1605-6) because his ending was:

> not without some lines of example, drawn even in the ancients themselves, the goings out of whose comedies are not always joyful, but oft times the bawds, the servants, the rivals, yea, and the masters are mulcted.[37]

"[M]ulcted" derives from the Latin *mulctāre*, indicating the imposition of a punitive fine, especially an "arbitrary" one — increasingly associated with "swindl[ing]," or resulting from "deceit or extortion."[38] This double-meaning fits the catastrophe of Jonson's *Volpone* nicely, in which the central characters are undone through their reciprocal deceits, causing a pile of fines and convictions.[39]

From this perspective, Edmund might view Edgar's timely arrival as the prompt for a conclusive "mulct[ing]," swindling his half-brother and retributively gaining what his innate ability deserves: "Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit" (1.2.181). His capacity to deceive Edgar thereby becomes an index of his "fierce quality," a proof that he merits the lands more than his "credulous father" or "foolish" brother (1.2.12, 177, 179). Thus, in laying the final touches of his plot, Edgar's timely arrival might suggest to Edmund a "catastrophe of the [O]ld [C]omedy" (1.2.134).

The handling of this plot fits Edmund's wider character, which demonstrates satirical energy. He derides Gloucester's belief in the prognosticative powers of astrology — "[a]n admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition on the charge of a star" (1.2.126-8) — only to ironically mimic just such a position with Edgar: "O, these eclipses do portend these divisions" (1.2.136-7). Both the episode and its execution therefore resonate with Edmund "constructing his own comedy" in the Old Attic style, which was as much known for mockery as for swindling (1.2.134n). Aristophanes's satire of Socrates in *The Clouds*, for instance, was notorious among Elizabethan authors like Stephen Gosson, Robert Allott, and Richard Mulcaster.[40] In fact, where Jonson's plays have been read in relation to "tart Aristophanes," Jonson's more acidic sensibility is usually noted as a key debt.[41] With that said, if "the catastrophe of the old comedy" is a reference to the cruel comedy that Edmund believes he is bringing to a conclusion, he has misapprehended the actual play's structure and genre (1.2.134).[42] The Gloucester narrative is undoubtedly reminiscent of an old-fashioned comedic structure —

indeed, as I have already mentioned, the very presence of the double-plot itself could be considered a generic borrowing[43] — but it is a structure that does not conclude with a cynical mulcting but rather begins with it.

There are numerous English romances, both in prose and for the stage, that begin with the unjust banishment or exile of a nobleman, often an innocent heir.[44] These were popular at the beginning of Shakespeare's career, such that, when speaking of Shakespeare's Jacobean "romance plays," it is perhaps better to speak of them as part of a romantic revival.[45] For example, *Mucedorus* — a 1591 drama about an unfairly banished shepherd-prince — was revised and restaged by the King's Men in 1610, becoming the most popular printed play-text of the Jacobean and Caroline periods.[46] Prior to 1590, other extant dramas with this basic premise include: *The Country Knight* (1581), *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (1582), *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1587), *Suleiman and Perseda* (1588), and *The Wounds of Civil War* (1588).[47]

This specific trope and the broader romantic genre were even more popular in prose, judging by John Lyly's widely-imitated *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578).[48] In one of the many spin-offs, John Dickenson's prose romance *Arisbas* (1594) has an early account of a character called Aristophon, who was "falsely accused" and "banished" from Epirus by the "tyrannous doom of an vnnaturall Souereign."[49] His "innocencie oppressed by iniurie could not prevail," and so Aristophon is compelled to bear "with manlike patience the burthen of his exile."[50] However, in an almost certainly coincidental resonance, "Fortune ending frownes with fauours, did thus absolue *the Catastrophe of this roial Comedy*," and "guiltlesse Aristophon [is pardoned] from exile."[51] This is entirely conventional in the old-fashioned romantic structure, as is evident in *Love and Fortune* and *Mucedorus*, where unjustly banished noblemen are also restored as part of the climactic comic "reconciliation."[52] The role of Fortune as a superficially improvident providence is a recurring motif in these "[*u*]*nfortunate*" lives (to redeploy the Quarto's title-page description of Edgar).[53] In short, Edmund might compare his deceit of his family to the conclusion of an ancient comedy — in which "credulous[ness] and "foolish honesty" is "top[ped]" by "fierce quality," (1.2.177, 179, 21, 12) — but Edmund's plot actually produces the beginning of another kind of "old comedy," in which "Fortune end[s] frownes with fauours" and the "falsely accused" will be exonerated (1.2.134).[54]

This romantic idea of the "old comedy" explains Edgar's later trajectory, as I will show below. But, for now, Edmund, his "invention thriv[ing]" (1.2.20), makes short work of gulling both his "credulous father" (1.2.177) and his brother "[w]hose nature is so far from doing harms / That he suspects none" (1.2.178-9).[55] In another instance of Edmund's dark irony, he begins proving his brother's guilt by first arguing that his brother is innocent: "I dare pawn down my life for him, ^{F}that^{F} he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour and to no other pretence of danger" (1.2.85-8). By so doing, he further establishes himself in his "credulous father['s]" eyes as a "[l]oyal and natural boy" (1.2.177; 2.1.84). Gloucester himself says, prophetically, "I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution" (1.2.99-100),

confessing his need to be, as Foakes annotates it, "properly convinced, either of [Edgar's] guilt […] or perhaps of his innocence" (1.2.99-100n).[56] Turning over the management of this inquiry to Edmund — "frame the business after your own wisdom" (1.2.98-9) — Gloucester leaves the bastard a free hand to *frame* the business indeed. Inventively manufacturing a case of circumstantial evidence, including a self-inflicted wound (2.1.35SD), Edmund finally proceeds to slandering his brother directly (2.1.38-85).

Throughout these two scenes, Edgar's role is exceptionally passive. In the first scene of the two, only counting dialogue, Edgar speaks nine lines to Edmund's thirty-three — a significant difference, even without counting the three soliloquys Edmund has elsewhere in the scene (1.2.1-22, 118-36, 176-82). In their next scene, the discrepancy is even more severe, with Edgar only speaking once: "I am sure on't, not a word" (2.1.28). No wonder then that some have found Edgar rather "colourless" in comparison to Edmund.[57] This lack of speech contributes to the audience's early perception of Edgar as nothing more than "the legitimate," a cipher for an unfair political order, then dislodged by Edmund to "have [his] land" (1.2.16). Edgar, in short, is posed by Edmund as an emblem of positive "law," the "plague of custom" and "curiosity of nations" — only then to be toppled by Edmund's manipulation of the law itself (1.2.1, 3, 4). It is therefore not Edgar but Edmund who first presents their conflict in the emblematic, homiletic terms for which Edgar has been so often criticised.

3.2 The Ascetic Outlaw

If Edmund characterises Edgar as a symbolic cipher for the law, one might argue that Edgar's first substantive scene confirms this characterisation. Ousted from his family home, there is much he might say. However, in a structural repetition of Edmund's first soliloquy, Edgar's mind fastens on his legal position:

> I heard myself proclaimed,
> And by the happy hollow of a tree
> Escape the hunt. No port is free, no place
> That guard and most unusual vigilance
> Does not attend my taking.
> (2.2.172-6)

On the other hand, Edgar's legal identity has changed precipitously, and its effects are immanent: "I heard myself proclaimed" (2.2.172) — which he describes later as the "bloody proclamation to escape" (5.3.182). Foakes footnotes the former with "[proclaimed] as an outlaw," which corresponds with Gloucester's later remark, "I had a son, / Now outlawed from my blood" (2.2.172n; 3.4.162-3).

Common law outlawry was applied to those that fled a felony or refused to appear before the courts.[58] Henry de Bracton's phrase is consistently cited in the key legal dictionaries of the period: "*extunc enim gerunt caput lupinum*."[59] Much of the Latin that makes up these entries (of which the former is an excerpt) refers to the thirteenth-century legal tracts recorded under the name "Bracton."[60] Bracton's treatise, described as "the crown and flower of English medieval jurisprudence," has long been a key source for the *leges non scripta* (*lit.* unwritten laws) of English common law.[61] The terminology here is of particular interest and it translates as "henceforth they bear the wolf's head."[62] This formulation is not merely poetic ostentation on the part of Bracton, Cowell, and Blount; this was the specific phrasing by which outlawry was declared.

The fugitive's name is proclaimed in court as *caput gerunt lupinum* (*lit.* "bearing the wolf's head"), then with *hutesium et clamore* (*lit.* "hue and cry"), they are pursued in a "hunt," almost exactly as Edgar describes (2.2.174).[63] This tradition is presumably what Martin Wiggins has in mind when he summarises Edgar's flight as: "[Edmund] induces Edgar to flee as if he were guilty. Edgar evades the hue and cry."[64] By "induc[ing]" Edgar's flight — "Fly, brother, ^Qfly!^Q" (2.1.33) — Edmund has secured the "legitimate['s]" outlawry (1.2.18). This plan aligns with Edmund's ambitions for Edgar's lands. Pollock and Maitland explain: "if a man accused of felony flies, he can be outlawed," and "the outlaw forfeits all, life and limb, lands and goods."[65] A mere fifty lines after Edgar's flight, Gloucester confirms that Edmund will take his brother's place as heir to Gloucester: "I'll work the means to make thee capable" (2.1.84-5). Outlawry is therefore the exact tool by which Edmund's chiasmatic catastrophe is achieved: the legitimate has become illegitimate; the illegitimate has become legitimate. However, the illegitimacy that

Edgar faces is entirely different from that of bastardy. He is not simply disqualified from inheritance but from all protections and rights of law.

To explain the totality of this exclusion, Pollock and Maitland return to the force of *caput gerunt lupinum*, describing the plight of the outlaw as: "[...] outside [the law's] sphere; he was outlaw [...] It is the right and duty of every man to pursue him [...] to hunt him down like a wild beast and slay him; for a wild beast he is; not merely is he [*Friedlos*], he is a wolf [...] [and in later centuries] this old state of things was not forgotten."[66] This animalising rhetoric is important but, in claiming the outlaw "is a wolf," Pollock and Maitland go too far. To clarify this, Giorgio Agamben provides a more nuanced reading of this legal expression.

In so far as the formulation "*extunc enim gerunt caput lupinum*" has the force of juridical decree, Agamben is in agreement with Pollock and Maitland.[67] However, Agamben isolates this crucial point: "That such a man is defined as a wolf-man and not simply as a wolf [...] is decisive."[68] Thus, to say the outlaw "is a wolf" is inaccurate — rather, the outlaw is a wolfshead.[69] The wolfshead is "not a piece of animal nature without any relation to law and the city [...] the life of the [outlaw ...] is precisely *neither man nor beast*."[70] As Agamben also points out, this English formulation finds its analogues in Salic and Ripuarian law: the proclamation being "*wargus sic, hoc est expulsus*" (The outlaw is that which has been expelled).[71] Here the word for outlaw "*wargus*" shares its etymology with "*vargr*" (wolf), thereby linked to the medieval Latin "*garulphus*" and French "*loup-garou*" (werewolf) also.[72] This legal fiction of the outlaw being simultaneously neither man nor animal — a monstrous notion underpinning other romantic stock characters, like the *homo silvestris* and *cynocephali* — becomes crucial to Agamben's understanding of the relation between the human creature and law.[73]

This placing of life beyond the protections and rights of law is the central object of study in the first volume in Agamben's *Homo Sacer* series. English outlawry — and its lupine nomenclature — appear as one example within a broader politico-juridical paradigm of "bare life."[74] This term denotes lives or forms of life that are somehow posed as outside the law. This might occur on a conceptual level — as in the Greek distinction of *zoē* and *bios*, which I will discuss below — or they might be practiced and actualised through legal and political systems.[75] One might therefore say that the semi-animalising language of the "wolfshead" is a conceptual example of bare life, while the legal event of outlawry, in some sense, reifies it.

The demands that English outlawry places on the lawful population are not solely prohibitive. There is not only an injunction forbidding assistance: "He that conceals him, death!" exclaims Gloucester (2.1.63). The proclamation also has a positive injunction, obligating any and every subject to assist in the apprehension and/or killing of the outlaw. Edgar describes how in every port (meaning town-gate and seaport) the people with "most unusual vigilance [...] attend [his] taking" (2.2.174-6, 174n) — Gloucester described this effect earlier: "All ports I'll bar, the villain shall not scape" (2.1.80). Foakes here glosses Edgar's phrase, "attend my taking" (2.2.176), with the perhaps optimistic "look out for me to be arrested" (2.2.176n). Ultimately, the play does not provide a concrete answer on what will happen to Edgar if he is caught by the people — but it certainly permits the possibility that

this "taking" may refer to the sorts of extrajudicial killing that Bracton describes: "without judicial inquiry."[76] Cornwall sums up the text's ambiguity perfectly when he ominously remarks, "If he be taken, he shall never more / Be feared of doing harm" (2.1.111-2).

"The bloody proclamation to escape" is one then that renders its target precariously without the law (5.3.182). Edgar has "heard [his name] proclaimed," he has (to borrow Pollock and Maitland's phrase) "forfeited life and member and all he had," and is hunted like an animal (2.2.172).[77] This precarity certainly resembles the paradigm that Agamben proposes. Yet, to be outside the law — as Agamben insistently reminds us — is still a relation *with* the law. This exclusion is, in spite of appearances, an inclusion: it is, to borrow Agamben's insistent phrase, "an inclusive exclusion."[78] This point may seem superfluous, or a flourish. But the implicit logic of outlaw, as a term, is that the individual is, in some way, beyond the law. On the contrary, the law itself imposes this position. This conceptual slippage is evident in some *King Lear* criticism.

One of the more inventive monographs on *King Lear* in the last decade — Simon Palfrey's *Poor Tom* (2014) — exhibits this issue. Palfrey remarks that Tom "[is] not reducible to 'bare life,' if we mean by that some condition before or without political orders, common to all living beings."[79] In this, Palfrey also writes, "Tom either eludes or preempts the genealogy proposed by Agamben."[80] But Palfrey has therefore faltered at the exact point of which Agamben warns. From Agamben's perspective, individuals are not "reducible [… to] some condition before or without political orders."[81] Rather, he argues, certain juridico-political structures make this claim to effect the *apparent* exclusion or suspension of individuals from "political orders."[82] But as Agamben repeats insistently, they are still "included [through] exclusion."[83] Therefore, bare life is not a life "before or without political orders" but the opposite — bare life is only possible within a juridico-political order that produces it.

In fairness to Palfrey, this error is a common one, which reflects the muddiness of Agamben's work at times. Elizabeth D. Gruber raises a related point in an otherwise intriguing article on nature in *King Lear* and *Arden of Faversham*. She cites the distinction that opens Agamben's *Homo Sacer* project: "The Greeks had no single term to express what we mean by the word 'life'," but Gruber then notes "'*Zo[ē]*' pertains to 'bare life,' as it invokes 'the simple fact of living common to all […] beings,' while '*bios*' refers to 'the form or way of living proper to the individual or group'."[84] Yet, while *zoē* pertains to bare life, it is not interchangeable with it. *Zoē* may mean "the simple fact of living" in Ancient Greek[85] — this is almost certainly what Palfrey has in mind when he refers to life "before or without political orders"[86] — but it is Agamben's position that what appears as a "simple fact" is instead a complex political and cultural presupposition.

James Gordon Findlayson has convincingly refuted Agamben's Greek in this opening distinction between *zoē* and *bios*, which is in part a response to the opening pages of Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958).[87] Importantly, Agamben highlights the term *zoē* because he believes (perhaps erroneously) that it makes a

conceptual claim for a form of life "before or without political orders," not unlike the way *caput gerunt lupinum* makes a juridical claim for a monstrous life beyond the law. Agamben does not himself accept such claims. Indeed, Agamben deploys the term "bare life" (*nuda vita*) partly to highlight the political quality of these concepts.[88] His position is that the exclusion of a life from the political order, even on the conceptual level, is necessarily political. *Zoē*, outlawry, and so forth, represent discrete iterations of a paradigm of political exclusion.[89] It must be conceded that confusion on these points is not unsolicited by Agamben's work, which has a tendency toward esoteric, highly formalised analysis.[90]

Edgar's response to his exclusion from the juridical order is quite characteristic of Shakespeare's drama: he adopts a disguise. The play has one precedent of this already, namely the banished Kent, who has "razed [his] likeness" (1.4.4). This is not uniquely Shakespearean — drama of the period is packed with this convention, including many of the romance comedies I cited earlier: *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (1584), *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1587), and *Mucedorus* (1591). Each of these old comedies feature protagonists who have been unjustly outlawed or banished: Bomelio and Hermione in *Love and Fortune*, Carinus and Alphonsus in *Alphonsus*, and the titular hero of *Mucedorus*. Furthermore, these protagonists all adopt disguises or forms of life that are isolated and impoverished — often explicitly evoking the image of the hermit.[91]

Shakespeare's handling of Bolingbroke innovates this trope, by showing he deployed this ascetic identity for political effect: "I stole all courtesy from heaven, / And dress'd myself in such humility / That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts" (*1H4*, 3.2.50-2). In *King Lear*, Shakespeare departs from the pious hermit in favour of the mad beggar — a creative decision that reaps dramatic benefits as a counter-point to the genuine madness of Lear. Yet, the shared ascetic resonances between the hermit and the beggar are nevertheless evoked by Edgar's description of his initial disguise, which he defines by its extreme destitution. As he states it, he "take[s] the basest and most poorest shape" (2.2.178) — this return to "base[ness]" thereby reiterates the chiasmatic "top[ping]" with which Edmund "the base" initiated the sub-plot (1.2.20-1). Furthermore, the emphatic superlatives — "basest," "most poorest" — signal the extremity of this position, the "spirit of *utter* poverty" that Fernie describes.[92] This descriptive stress on poverty continues throughout the soliloquy:

> [I] am bethought
> To take the basest and most poorest shape
> That ever penury in contempt of man
> Brought near to beast. My face I'll grime with filth,
> Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots
> And with presented nakedness outface
> The winds and persecutions of the sky.
> (2.2.177-83)

Given the legal formulation of outlawry — *caput gerunt lupinum* — and the role of animalising rhetoric in conceptualising bare life, Edgar's description of his disguise

as "man / brought near to beast" is tempting (2.2.179-80). But the most obvious interpretation is certainly to be resisted. Edgar is not describing himself, nor is he describing other outlaws: "*penury* in contempt of man / Brought near to beast" (2.2.179-80, my emphases). In contrast to Lear's later observation of Poor Tom — "Thou art the thing itself," (3.4.104) — Edgar suggests that poverty limits the expression of humanity in its most dignified sense. In this, Edgar's line fits with Lear's early opinion that poverty renders "[m]an's life cheap as beast's" (2.2.457) — something the king's philosophical transformation leads him to refute. This does not commit me to Richard Wilson's position: that "sackcloth and ashes," and "*askesis*," are "*always* a form of exhibitionism and deliberate *aesthetic* choice."[93] On the contrary, Lear's "Off, off you lendings" suggests a decision that has aesthetic implications, but occurs in a register beyond the semiotic, at the level of attachment itself (3.4.106).

Even "near to beast" poverty appears preferable to Edgar: the "contempt" of "penury" is safer than "the hunt" (2.2.180, 179, 173). In other words, Edgar would rather be degraded within the hierarchy than placed outside of it: "Poor Tom, / That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am" (2.2.191-2). At least the beggar, though treated like an animal, exists within the protection of the law — even an iniquitous law, as the play suggests it probably is: "Through tattered clothes [^{Q}small^{Q}] vices do appear; / Robes and furred gowns hide all" (4.6.160-1).[94] Therefore, although the animalising rhetoric that often accrues around bare life is significant, the subject's relation to law presents the crucial criteria. It is precisely such a distinction that underpins Edgar's rationale for adopting his impoverished disguise.

However, when Fernie remarks that Edgar describes beggary as "utter poverty," an issue of religious history must be addressed. In monastic theology, the most "absolute poverty" would not denote merely an absence of property, but indeed the absence of the legal right to property itself. This context pertains to the romance tradition that anticipated *King Lear* generally and the Edgar subplot in particular. The early stage romances routinely depended on some correspondences between the outlaw and the ascetic: Bomelio and Alphonsus both begin *Love and Fortune* and *Alphonsus* respectively as banished men who live as hermits, rather than moving to a new court or city.[95] The banished Mucedorus also disguises himself as a hermit, which Mouse puns about, implying the audience ought to recognise the cliché — "I never saw such a big emmet [ant] before!"[96] The ascetic connotations of Edgar's disguise are emphasised when he describes how he will "[s]trike in [his] numbed ^{F}and^{F} *mortified* ^{Q}bare^{Q} arms, / Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary" (2.2.186-7, my emphasis).[97] Holinshed's account of King Edgar incidentally notes that, in addition to the "princely qualities as appeared in him," he was "a great fauorer of Monks," and that "there passed no one yeare of his raigne, wherein he founded not one Abbay or other."[98] Both these internal and external ascetic resonances add additional weight to Edgar's own description of his beggarly disguise as a "habit" (5.3.187).

On a superficial level, the outlaw and the ascetic coincide in so far as they live outside of conventional society. However, there are deeper reasons for the cultural association between these otherwise contrasting figures. The externality of the

outlaw and the ascetic were conceptualised in similar terms. As Agamben reconstructs in *The Highest Poverty*, one of his less recognised works, the Franciscans posed a jurisprudence of life beyond or without law.[99] Indeed, it was this self-deprivation of law itself which the Minorites termed the "*altissima paupertas*" (the highest poverty).[100] The superlatives at stake in this monastic terminology are suggestively opposed from those that characterise Edgar's description above: "basest," "most poorest" (2.2.178). Where Edgar initially sees deep degradation in poverty, the Greyfriars pose their intense disavowal as quasi-divine. (Shakespeare depicted Franciscan cenobites in *Measure for Measure* in 1603 — superficially in the Duke's disguise, pointedly in Isabella's position as novice of the Franciscan "votarists of St Clare" (*MM*, 1.4.5).)[101] This absolute poverty posed by the Franciscans, including the abnegation of law itself, might therefore be read as a jurisprudential countertype to Edgar's position of outlawry.

The correlations of outlawry and monasticism find partial convergence in the legal fiction of "civil death," whose effect is summarised by *Black's* as: "the loss of rights — such as the rights to vote, make contracts, inherit, and sue — by a person who has been outlawed […] or who is considered to have left the temporal world for the spiritual by entering a monastery."[102] As Pollock and Maitland describe the monastic element: "A monk or nun can not [*sic*] acquire or have any proprietary rights. When a man becomes 'professed in religion,' his heir at once inherits from him any land he has, and, if he has made a will, it takes effect at once as though he were naturally dead."[103] The loss also is one of *persona standi in judicio*, the personal standing in judgement, the right to appear in court or vindicate a legal right.[104] With that said, the effects clearly differed: the monk's civil death did not expose them to the physical jeopardy that the outlaw faced. Putting the point firmly, Edgar's conception of his penury, superlative only in its "base[ness]," does not indicate an "absolute" poverty in this Franciscan sense. Instead, he sees "basest" poverty within the bounds of the law to be a preferable position than to remain excluded from it (2.2.178).

However, another interpretation of "basest" poverty presents itself (2.2.178). In a political discourse by Innocent Gentillet, translated by Simon Patrick in 1602, Gentillet outlines the difference between the Greyfriars' "superlative" "High Povertie," the "Meane Povertie" of Dominicans and Jacobins, and the "Base Povertie" of Augustines.[105] As I have already indicated, the Franciscan "high and soueraign poverty," whose phrasing evokes the classical philosophical inheritance of Christian monasticism, disavows not only ownership of "house, nor possession, […] nor moveables, nor apparrell" but even the "rights" to such possessions.[106] It is not only a disavowal of possessions, but a disavowal of the possibility of possession. By contrast, the "Mean Povertie" of Dominicans and Jacobins signifies that they may own "nothing in particular or proper, but somethings in common."[107] The Augustines' poverty is termed "[b]ase" as they may own things "proper, common, and in particular, whatsoever is justly necessary."[108] Legally-speaking then, Gentillet's "[b]ase" poverty is that which all beggars experience, the relative lack of possessions — and, in the hierarchy of Christian ascetic poverties, such

poverty is both the "basest" and, in a serious spiritual sense, the "most poorest" (2.2.178).[109]

To summarise, the jurisprudence of Christian asceticism presents a useful point of comparison to the well-studied figures of the sovereign and the outlaw. However, like the person of the king, the Franciscan monk presents a form of bare life that was not abject, but sacralised through their exclusion from the ordinary bounds of law.[110] On the other hand, this monastic identity was explicitly articulated as antithetical to office. According to a monastic precept set out in the sixth-century *Regula Magistri*, while the bad priest was still a priest, "an unworthy monk is simply not a monk."[111] Furthermore, in all of this I have indicated some of the deeper doctrinal resonances that underpin the wide-spread romance triad of extraordinary identities (Lat. *extrā ordinem*, *lit.* outside order): the outlaw, the ascetic, and the sovereign.

Despite these doctrinal affinities that I have begun to unpack, romantic dramas still reflect the substantive differences — and *King Lear* is no exception. As I have already suggested, the position of the outlaw and the position of the ascetic are not interchangeable. Edgar is, after all, adopting his impoverished disguise to avoid attention: "t'assume a semblance / That very dogs disdained" (5.3.186-7). The annals of romance drama are littered with outlaws whose hermit disguises foil their identification. In *Mucedorus*, for example, the clown is seeking Mucedorus as part of the *hutesium et clamor* associated with outlawry — "Here's a stir indeed! Here came hue after the crier"[112] — and the prince's disguise is successful. What this disguise-function proves, however, is that while the two positions do share a distinctive extraneousness (an exclusion, which is nevertheless an inclusion), there remains an indissoluble difference between the ascetic and the outlaw: the jeopardy of the life itself. For all the superlatives, despite being "basest" and "most poorest," despite the drastic poverty of Poor Tom, Tom's situation cannot approach the comprehensive juridical extirpation of legally-sanctioned life, the bare life, that outlawry represents. The play's attentiveness to this difference is both the crux and climax of Edgar's soliloquy: "Poor Tom / That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am" (2.2.191-2).

Edgar's sleight-of-hand then is from outside the legal sphere (superficially, given the "inclusive exclusion"), to the lowest possible position within it.[113] This hierarchy's top and "base", as Edmund's soliloquy established, is defined by property relations (1.2.20). Yet, Edgar's poetic language is ambiguous, in that it signals both the proximity and the distance between the position of outlaw and beggar. His description of the visual and material components of the disguise evokes a degraded coronation. The face "grime[d] with filth" is reminiscent of anointment. ("Anoint" is an obsolete sense of the verb "grime.")[114] The "blanket[ing]" resembles the investiture, where the sovereign is enrobed in the *colobium* or shroud tunic.[115] And finally, Edgar "elf[s] all [his] hair in knots," which presents the striking image of a crown. Even the order in which Edgar articulates these images — anointment, investment, crowning — mirrors the coronation process that James I underwent roughly two years earlier.[116]

This profane coronation presages Albany's offer of the throne to Edgar at the conclusion of the play: Edgar thereby anticipates what Wilson elsewhere calls "the degrading rites of investiture."[117] This reflects a generic convention of chivalric romances, where ascetic disguises often pave the way toward future sovereignty. As Roy Strong describes it, the coronation is a form of "self-obliteration,"[118] a point mirrored by Edgar's "I nothing am" (2.2.192). The strange gulf between his legally-negated self and even those "basest [...] most poorest shape[s]" appears analogous with the lawful subject contemplating sovereignty (2.2.178). This is not mere dissembling. There is a paltry and yet miraculous shift here, as his own phrasing of transforming "nothing" to "something" implies (2.2.192) — a statement that quietly sets itself against the grain of the pagan *ex nihilo nihil fit* ("nothing can be made of nothing") that famously repeats in the play (1.4.130; 1.1.90).[119] And, indeed, that the register of Edgar's thinking here maintains a juridical inflection is suggested by the very next lines, where he remarks that "[t]he country gives me *proof and precedent* / Of Bedlam beggars" (2.2.184-5, my emphasis).

Yet, the most significant aspect of this coronation is surely its poverty. Here, the conspicuous lack of glory counterpoints the pomp and ceremony of the earlier scenes: the rich spectacle of Lear's descent is accordingly mirrored by the "horrible object" of Edgar's ascent (2.2.188). This hints at a political comparison also. Lear dispenses with his property to avoid humility: he wishes to discard, with his belongings, the difficulties of governance and ownership in order that he might "*unburdened* crawl toward death" (1.1.40, F, my emphasis). Edgar, by contrast, has his rights and property taken but nevertheless suggests the figure of an ascetic king — a more desirable political alternative for an implied resilience to spectacle and to flattery.[120] Poor Tom therefore not only has romantic precedents in the disguise of the wilderness-dwelling hermit — as Sidney's *Arcadia* affirms[121] — but he is also implicated as the first rung in a ladder towards the throne.

This mirroring of Edgar and Lear's trajectories comes into conclusive contact in the scenes upon the heath. Howard Felperin quite elegantly argues that Tom's mock-madness, though "stagey and conventional" in its preoccupation with "'sin' and 'foul fiends'," also functions as a "shadow or parody of 'the thing itself'" in Lear.[122] He writes: "[Tom] has the status of a sign emptied of its significance and divorced from the realities of nakedness and madness to which it refers, the absent referent in both cases being supplied by Lear."[123] Yet, perhaps improperly, Tom seems more naked, more mad than Lear — and, indeed, so Lear and Gloucester seem to find him: "Here's three on's us are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself," "What, hath your grace no better company?" (3.4.103-4, 138).

The play therefore seems to produce a genuine abjection in Tom, which can overpower our feeling for its staged nature. If anything, Tom seems too real. Curiously, Felperin also writes that "madness is thus the opposite pole to morality".[124] But Tom and Lear's frenzied remarks are intensely preoccupied by morality: "[w]ine loved I deeply, dice dearly; and, in woman, out-paramoured the Turk," "Q[Q]here's another whose warped looks proclaim / What store her heart is made of[Q]" (3.4.88-90; 3.6.52-3). Like Lear, Tom's *folie* is not solipsistic, or anarchic, but,

in proto-psychoanalytic ways, develops the play's submerged concerns with rank, law, and ethics.

Tom's remarks stand apart from Lear's in their almost Delphic power — they possess poetic connections beyond Edgar's knowledge. In one of Tom's earliest speeches, he describes how "the foul fiend" has "laid knives under his pillow […] set ratsbane by his porridge, made him proud of heart […] to course his own shadow for a traitor" (3.4.50-6). Elton reads the final example — "course his own shadow for a traitor" (3.4.56) — as self-referential.[125] However, the preceding descriptions also stylise Edgar's own situation: a domestic threat (metaphorically expressed as "knives under his pillow […] ratsbane by his porridge"), culminating in him being "course[d]" — meaning hunted — "for a traitor" (3.4.56). They also presage the next scene: Edmund's betrayal of Gloucester to Cornwall, which commences the "cours[ing]" of another "published traitor" (3.4.56; 4.6.228).

Skirting the idea of outlawry, Tom's thought is then punctuated — as if to turn attention from it — by the statement: "Bless thy five wits, Tom's a-cold" (3.4.56-7). The blessing of the "five wits" — "[the] five faculties of the mind […] common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory" (3.4.57n) — suggests some possibilities, though it resists firm interpretation. The blessing might be for the present Lear and the absent Gloucester in the same moment — Edgar's godfather and father, both proclaimers of outlawry, both then hunted by their children. This blessing's ambiguity (in "ambiguity's" strong etymological sense of "driving in both directions,") is sustained by the subsequent: "bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting and taking" (3.4.58).[126] The whirlwinds evoke Lear's recent foray into the storm on the one hand; while the "star-blasting and taking" suggests Gloucester, with his predilection for prognosticative astrology, on the other.[127] But in either case, and in both, Poor Tom's benediction, with its focus on perception and mental acuity, becomes prophetic to the drama that is to unfold. Of the two aggrieved fathers in the play, one will perceive too readily his own state and, recoiling, wish to end it; whereas the other will abandon himself to it with appalling totality.

In Tom's second speech, which according to Naseeb Shaheen is a "garbled version of the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and related Scriptures," Tom cries out: "Take heed o'the foul fiend; obey thy parents, keep thy word justly, swear not, commit not with man's sworn spouse" (3.4.78-80).[128] Shaheen notes the Biblical echoes with customary precision: *Eph*. 6.1: "Children, obey your parents," *Ex*. 20.12, *Deut*. 5.16: "Honour thy father and thy mother," *Matt*. 5.33-4: "Thou shalt not forsweare thy selfe, but shalt performe thine othes […] Sweare not at all," and so forth.[129] Intriguingly, this parodic sermon anticipates the sins of his half-brother: Edmund conspires against his father (3.5.20-1), forswears himself (5.3.98-102), and is party to adultery (5.1.56-66). Furthermore, all these injunctions cohere not only to the three substantial precepts of monasticism — obedience, humility, chastity[130] — but safeguard the legitimacy of patrimony itself, the very structure towards which Edmund announced his opposition.

In the context of these dense passages, with their dramatic and theological allusions, Poor Tom's taciturn moments are just as notable. If any utterance sticks in the mind, it is "Tom's a-cold." The expression appears just five times, four of

which are within a single scene (3.4.57, 81, 143, 169; 4.1.55). The phrase is memorable perhaps due to its careful placement. It appears at points of peculiar stress — in which Poor Tom fills an empty space or replaces a thought — more specifically, in response to thoughts or remarks concerning Edgar's juridical situation. This displacement function perhaps explains why, in the Folio, his first "Tom's a-cold" is also accompanied by a string of nonsense noises: "O do, de, do, de, do, de" (3.4.57). The phrase therefore punctuates moments in the dialogue, drawing our attention to Edgar's relationship to the preceding content, and supplying us with a certain amount of space to sift it. When Tom offers his description of "cours[ing] his own shadow for traitor," or when he presents the mock sermon, listing Edmund's sins, as discussed above, he concludes both with "Tom's a cold" (3.4.56-7, 78-81).

In these first two instances, Tom therefore uses the phrase to punctuate his own elliptic commentary. But, having established this convention, the phrase begins to encroach upon the remarks of others:

> Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile
> That it doth hate what gets it.
> Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.
> (3.4.141-3)

Here, Tom's utterance underscores the dramatic irony of Gloucester's statement, reminding us of Edgar's presence. But it also highlights an even deeper dramatic irony — for, as the audience knows, Gloucester's statement is only partly mistaken: it would be entirely true of Edmund, as Poor Tom has cryptically acknowledged. The fourth and final instance of Tom's phrase in this scene emerges as Gloucester speaks to Kent:

> Glo. I'll tell thee, friend,
> I am almost mad myself. I had a son,
> Now outlawed from my blood; he sought my life,
> But lately, very late. I loved him, friend,
> No father his son dearer. True to tell thee,
> The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's this?
> I do beseech your grace.
> Lear. O, cry you mercy, [F]sir.[F]
> Noble philosopher, your company.
> Edg. Tom's a-cold.
> (3.4.161-9)

This is, in my opinion, one of the most exquisite passages of the play. Gloucester's first mention of madness carries with it the air of conversational hyperbole, "I'll tell thee, friend, / I am almost mad myself" (3.4.161-2). But the nuances of his description of the situation — the past tense "I *had* a son," the powerful immediacy of feeling that underpins "[b]ut lately, very late" (3.4.162, 164, my emphasis) — all build towards the brief story's emotional conclusion. Here, in a refrain of the opening, but with a more confessional preface, his comment carries more weight for its repetition, "True to tell thee, / The grief hath crazed my wits" (3.4.165-6).

Admitting this, Gloucester's grief seems to bloom into such delicacy that he turns from it. He shifts Kent's (and our) attention from his inner stillness to the turbulence outside: "What a night's this?" (3.4.166). The deflection is transparent and the more tender for it. And so Gloucester tries again, redirecting us to the troubled Lear, "I do beseech your grace" (3.4.166-7). Lear makes to leave with Tom. All that Tom can seem to say, in response to his father's account, is "Tom's a-cold" (3.4.169).

The bareness of Tom's response permits a range of performance possibilities. But beneath this line's apparent simplicity, I suspect, is one of the key moments of Edgar's arc. First, it represents the culmination of a phrase conspicuously repeated throughout this scene, seemingly at points of significance touching his experience as "outlawed from [Gloucester's] blood" (3.4.163). "Tom's a-cold" emerges as a vocalisation that conceals, but thereby also articulates, Edgar's trauma: a trauma which he initially fails to express in positive terms. Rather than intersecting this scene with asides, Edgar disclosing his suffering point-by-point, instead the tortured language of Tom refracts the emotional significance of Edgar's exclusion. That such subtextual weight is intended is suggested by Gloucester's reaction:

> Edg. Tom's a-cold.
> Glo. In fellow, there, into the hovel; keep thee warm.
> (3.4.169-70)

The shift from hermit to mad beggar, along with the decision to withhold the reunion of Edgar and Gloucester — are both significant deviations from the narrative source in Sidney's *Arcadia*.[131] In my view, the pair of lines above — "Tom's a-cold," Edgar's forlorn remark in response to his father's story, who responds with "In, fellow, there, into the hovel; keep thee warm" (3.4.169-70) — represents the emotional apex of Shakespeare's experimentation with the disguised outlaw. The bereft father, unwittingly shooing his innocent son away; the innocent son, faced by his unrecognising father, softly ushered back into the dark.

Except for one aside — in which Edgar comments on the difficulty of performing his role given the moving spectacle of Lear's madness (3.6.59-60) — the Folio text offers little to suggest Edgar's experience of performing Tom. However, the Quarto text provides a retrospective soliloquy at the conclusion of 3.6. Edgar formulates the trauma, shared between himself and Lear, as: "He childed as I fathered" (3.6.107). This may mean he paternally comforted a childlike Lear, by chasing away the king's imaginary dogs: "Avaunt, you curs" (3.6.62). But Foakes annotates: "as Lear has been cast out by his daughters, so Edgar has been banished by his father" (3.6.107n). Edgar's use of the verb "fathered" is surprising — not 'brothered' as one might expect. Edmund engineered his outlawry, and some of Tom's lines imply Edgar suspects as much. But from Edgar's perspective, both Lear's daughters and his father have failed a test of loyalty. This line — "He childed as I fathered" (3.6.107) — therefore not only re-emphasises the mirroring of Lear and Edgar; but it also expresses Edgar's otherwise subterranean resentment. After all, Gloucester railed against the collapse of families — "nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects […] there's son against father […] there's father against child" (1.2.105-12). Nevertheless, he is turned quickly against his heir, despite "[n]o father [loving] his son dearer" (3.4.165).[132]

The insistent use of couplets in this soliloquy differs from Edgar's earlier blank verse. Perhaps the "joy" of Tom's "carnival rhyme" might start to suffuse Edgar's own speech,[133] which would complicate Arnold Kettle's view that Edgar discards the persona of Tom without any lasting impact.[134] The more persuasive possibility, for my purposes, is that the play is increasingly evoking Edgar's antiquated romantic role and "the old comed[ic]" structure that buttresses this subplot (1.2.134). The rhyme scheme climaxes:

> Edg. He childed as I fathered. Tom, away;
> Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray
> When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
> In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
> (3.6.107-10)

Skirting his anger toward his father's "defil[ing]" "wrong thoughts", Edgar leaps back into Poor Tom: "Tom, away[!]" (3.6.109, 107). His disguise, he declares, may be shed once he is "repeal[ed] and reconcile[d]" (3.6.108-10). This accords with the romantic clichés in superannuated dramas like *Love and Fortune* (1582), *Alphonsus* (1587), and *Mucedorus* (1591). In these old comedies, the noblemen banished by slander or deceit — "false opinion" (3.6.109) — then reveal themselves at critical moments, leading to their repeal or reconciliation.[135] More importantly, these climactic re-incorporations into the *polis* are capped by their ascent onto the throne.

3.3 The Catastrophic Advent

At the opening of Act 4, Edgar is still kicking about as Poor Tom. He begins a soliloquy that insists on the phenomenology of law:

> The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
> Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
> The lamentable change is from the best,
> The worst returns to laughter.
> (4.1.3-6)

Once more, Edgar is speaking of his legal circumstances. But it would not be fair to characterise this as legalistic: the register of his thought, his vocabulary, has shifted towards an emotional and intellectual response, even an embodied response, to his outlawry. The emphases land on qualitative terms — "dejected," "esperance," "fear," "lamentable," and "laughter" (4.1.3-6). This suggests Edgar's own "descent into feeling," to borrow Elton's phrase.[136] On the other hand, there remains a proverbial distance, something that feels "crudely moralising, platitudinous".[137] Indeed, this is the old-fashioned, generic "mode of thought" that Michael J. Warren described as "Christian romantic-heroic," which presumes "virtue usually triumphs."[138] The self-description as "the lowest and most dejected thing of fortune" is therefore pivotal, in both senses.

Fortune's wheel (*rota fortuna*) is an important generic motif. The distinctive connotation of Fortune's wheel — as opposed to ladders, chains, or other hierarchical metaphors — lies in its mutability, which is the thrust of Edgar's soliloquy. Indeed, Edgar hopes his fortune can only improve — which, as Susan Snyder remarks, contributes to a wider effect: "a long range hope, based on the well-established assumptions of comedy, that all the confusion and pain is leading to a positive conclusion."[139] On the one hand, Edgar's statement accentuates the impact of Gloucester's imminent arrival, blinded and cast out.[140] But, on the other, this speech also builds an expectation for a conventional romantic ending.

Dollimore makes a rare error in suggesting that "princes only see the hovels of wretches during progresses […] in flight or in fairy tale. Even in fiction the wheel of fortune rarely brings them that low."[141] In fact, Shakespeare ironises the popularity of this theme in *As You Like It*, when Celia consoles Rosalind about her banished father by "mocking the good housewife Fortune from her wheel" (*AYLI*, 1.2.24).[142] This convention can be traced past the romance tradition at least as far as Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy* (*c.* 424), which was translated by Elizabeth I.[143] In his treatise, the aristocratic Boethius, who characterises himself as unjustly "banished," is consoled by Philosophy, who describes the *rota fortuna* in "Fortune's own words" thus:

> This power that I wield comes naturally to me; this is my perennial sport. I turn my wheel on its whirling course, and take delight in switching the base to the summit, and the summit to the base.[144]

This chiasmatic switching of "the base to the summit, and the summit to the base" resonates particularly with the evoked rotation in Edmund's early remark: "Edmund the base / Shall top the legitimate" (1.2.20-1). This language reappears throughout the subplot. For example, as well as "the lowest and most dejected thing of [F]ortune," Edgar describes himself as a "most poor man, made tame to [F]ortune's blows," and in his chivalric challenge, Edgar faces Edmund "despite [Edmund's] victor sword and fire-new fortune," (4.1.3; 4.6.217; 5.3.130). Elton reads Edmund's "descend, brother, I say" as pre-empting a kind of infernal *katabasis* in the Dantean mode for Edgar: a descent into wisdom (2.1.20).[145] However, in the context of *rota fortuna*, "descend" sits just as featly within Edmund's own attempt to "[switch] the base to the summit, and the summit to the base," particularly given the preceding line: "Briefness and *fortune* work! / Brother, a word; descend, brother, I say" (2.1.19-20, my emphasis).[146] The *rota fortuna* thereafter becomes a commonplace symbol throughout the play for the dramatic shifting of places in the hierarchy: "Fortune, good night," the banished and stocked Kent laments, "smile once more: turn thy wheel" (2.2.171).[147]

As Kent's remarks suggest, Fortune's wheel need not only topple the good for the bad but *vice versa*. The exiled prince Alphonsus, the protagonist of Robert Greene's 1587 romantic drama, moves "from pit of pilgrim's poverty […] to the top of Fortune's wheel."[148] Likewise, in *Love and Fortune*, Fortune herself intervenes in a climactic *deus ex machina* to acquit Bomelio and Hermione from their banishment.[149] In other words, as much as Fortune is reviled when order collapses, she is also a common device in romance drama to signal the restoration of order, allegorically figured in the return of the unjustly banished prince.[150] In chivalric romance, as Alex Davis implies, such conclusions demonstrate an important preoccupation with "justifying rank and precedence through assertions of pedigree and lineage."[151] In the moment Edgar vanquishes Edmund, the bastard asks: "But what art thou / That hast this fortune over me?" (5.3.162-3). When Edgar reveals his identity with pointed reference to the status of their "blood" (5.3.165), Edmund articulates the convention that his plot had been operating within: "The wheel is come full circle" (5.3.172). Here, for a moment, the romantic promise that the "worst returns to laughter" seems plausible (4.1.6).

While other banished heroes leap from the pit to the top, Edgar's ascension is more carefully gradated. Foakes is critical of interpreting Edgar as "a kind of everyman," who performs various positions of society.[152] To some extent, I agree that to reduce Edgar to a general performer is to "diminish" him.[153] But John F. Danby was right to highlight that Edgar's multiple roles underpin the play's plot.[154] Poor Tom is a vital counterpoint for Lear's narrative. Then the plain peasant — "Chi'll be plain with you." (4.6.238) — kills the sophisticated Oswald, and undoes Goneril by delivering her intercepted letter to Albany.[155] Last, in the visage of an

unknown knight, Edgar defeats Edmund in single combat. The bastard's defeat prompts Goneril's lamenting that the bastard had not invoked the chivalric "law of war" — poetic justice, given Edmund's earlier contempt for the "plague of custom" (5.3.150; 1.2.3).[156]

The play demonstrates a general preoccupation with "distinctions of rank" — when Kent trips Oswald, he scolds, "Come, sir, [F]arise, away,[F] I'll teach you differences" (1.4.88n, 88). At the end of the play, Albany and Edmund's simmering dislike orbits around such "differences": "Sir, by your patience, / I hold you but a subject of this war, / Not as a brother" (5.3.60-2). Yet, these attempts to enforce rank and precedence are matched, if not overpowered, by the dissolving of such distinctions. This up-ending of the play-world's hierarchical structure is reflected throughout, with touches that are easily overlooked: for example, the earl in the stocks, the peasants turning away the storm-drenched king, and the old tenant guiding Gloucester through his own lands (2.2.123-71; 3.2.65-6; 4.1.10-9).

In this context, Edgar's slow ascent through the conventional hierarchy — "Poor Tom, a peasant, a messenger, a knight […] ruler"[157] — can be read as reinscribing a politico-theological structure that is otherwise in crisis. John F. Danby persuasively argued that, without an appreciation of the careful sequencing that Shakespeare follows, Edgar's arc seems like "otherwise inexplicable and arbitrary transformations."[158] Elton suggests this upward trajectory produces the impression of Edgar's "suffering ascent."[159] When combined with the conventions of the banishment romance and the explicit invocation that Fortune's "wheel has come full circle," Albany's offer of the throne to Edgar — whose "very gait did prophesy / A royal nobleness" — materialises as an entirely generic proposal to resolve the subplot (5.3.173-4). Thus, *King Lear* runs towards the catastrophe of the old English comedy instead of Edmund's Greek one: Edgar's adventure, starting with a swindling, seems set to end with the advent of a new prince.

The transformations suggest that Edgar's identity, like Lear's, remains "in question."[160] However, their sequential nature indicate some important differences. First, the two characters' responses to their respective absence or "defect[s] of identity" are by no means parallel.[161] Lear learns to parodically distance himself from his political identities, critiquing them while undertaking a deeper recovery of self (see Chapter 5). By contrast, Edgar adopts new political identities from scene to scene, none of which settle into a sense of self. Second, and more importantly, Edgar's trajectory augurs a conclusive identity: as restorer of the legitimate order. Both Danby and Foakes see the sequence pointing toward, as Foakes phrases it, Edgar "in his final role of ruler."[162] However, Michael L. Hays goes too far by saying that Edgar "succeeds Lear as king, [thereby] ratifying chivalric romance and endorsing its idealism."[163] The play's tragic conclusion, in part, depends upon eliciting this expectation, before then withholding it.

There is a textual variation between the Quarto and Folio endings. Albany offers to divide the kingdom — "[Y]ou twain, / Rule in this realm and the gored state sustain" (5.3.318-9) — and, in both, Kent rejects the offer: "I have a journey, sir, shortly to go. / My master calls me, I must not say no" (5.3.320-1). His couplet prompts the closing quatrain:

The weight of this sad time we must obey,
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath born most; we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.
(5.3.322-5)

These are attributed to Albany in the Quarto, Edgar in the Folio. Among editors, the preference leans modestly toward Edgar.[164] This preference holds more decisively in performance.[165] In Albany's favour is a point of "dramatic etiquette" as Schmidt termed it,[166] specifically that a tragedy ought to conclude with "the person of greatest authority" or "the highest-ranking character left alive."[167] On the other hand, Edgar has been asked to "rule in this realm," which perhaps complicates this point (5.3.319). Others have argued the Duke is due a reply and, without these lines, it would be unseemly for Edgar to make no response.[168] Foakes offers a subtle interpretation, pointing out that the attribution of these lines to Edgar reflects the qualitative enhancement — though notably not an expansion — of his role in the Folio.[169]

This variation's possibilities are, paradoxically, clarifying. In response to the offer and the injunction to "sustain the gored state," Edgar either speaks the final lines — and by closing the play, according to dramatic custom, implicitly assumes "the position of highest authority" — or he says nothing. In the first instance, in contrast to the pomp and ceremony of the opening procession, which precedes Lear's resignation, the death march punctuates Edgar's implied acceptance of the throne. In the second, when offered his own kingdom, Edgar instead pauses at the brink, saying nothing — perhaps unable, like Cordelia, to "heave / [his] heart into [his] mouth" (1.1.91-2). In either case, the play closes with a shadow of the opening.

In some respects, the closing lines fit Edgar's style. They are at once prophetic and proverbial, simplistic yet enigmatic.[170] Indeed, the uncertainty of their original ownership presents a sublime crux. For a character that has borrowed, imitated, and emulated so many other voices, what could be more appropriate? Whether Edgar adopts this ambiguous closing statement, or he maintains his silence, the effect is the same: in a curiously unromantic gesture, the returned prince offers no comfort as to what will follow. In this final moment, Edgar is not the "St George" figure that some have described or that an audience might expect.[171] He is either unable or unwilling to reconstitute a national identity in the moment of his triumph. He has no bride, no heir, no obvious ambition to govern or to restore peace. So it is precisely at this moment, in which the play withholds solace or hope, that the playwright transmutes the glistering promise of romance into tragedy.

The play concludes with three characters, Kent, Albany, and Edgar, in an uncertain political arrangement. Kent's rejection of Albany's offer echoes Lear's initial rejection of sovereign responsibility, which precipitated the play's crises. Despite protesting Lear's resignation, Kent, like his master, chooses an "[u]nburdened crawl towards death" rather than govern in Lear's wake (1.1.40, F). Similarly, Albany seems anxious to avoid untrammelled sovereignty over Britain, first offering "absolute power" to the bereft Lear (5.3.299), and then proposing

another division of the kingdoms to Kent and Edgar (5.3.318-9).[172] Finally, the surviving son of Gloucester, our romantic hero, either says nothing or he speaks cryptically regarding the country's future: "we that are young / Shall never see so much, nor live so long" (5.3.324-5). As Warren writes, with dry understatement: "[i]n neither text is the prospect for the country a matter of great optimism."[173] The cumulative effect of these choices is the privation of any certainty in the audience.

It is through this uncertainty that the play abandons us, offering only the faintest sense of remaining order: a grim order at that. The final three figures on the stage are male aristocrats, surrounded by the bodies of the old, of women, and of the illegitimate. "[T]he gods are just," Edgar coldly remarks of his own father's blinding and death — the hierarchy has been preserved (5.3.168). Yet, without a political resolution, even the conservative gesture suggested by Edgar's reintegration feels ineffectual. The romantic hero may have returned, he may have triumphed over those that unfairly banished him, but the "gored state" has no serious candidate for restoration, let alone meaningful change (5.3.319). In this, *Lear* exploits the conventions of chivalric romance, while also resisting them. Unlike the old comedies, Shakespeare's *Lear* refuses to end with a glorious ascension. Instead, this play's catastrophe is precisely that: a collapse. All that is left is for the verse to fall into silence, the overturned play-world still ringing in a state of dramatic emergency.

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[1] William Shakespeare, *True Chronicle Historie of the Life and Death of King Lear and His Three Daughters*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 904:11 (London: Printed [by Nicholas Okes] for Nathaniel Butter, 1608), img. 1/41.

[2] Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), 7:284.

[3] William R. Elton, *King Lear and the Gods* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 85.

[4] For the play being a 'heady brew of romance,' see Maynard Mack, *King Lear: In Our Time* (London: Metheun, 1966), 5.

[5] Parenthetical citations containing only act, scene, and line-number refer to William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. R. A. Foakes (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2009). Other plays and poems by Shakespeare are cited parenthetically with an abbreviation of their title. These refer to William Shakespeare, *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Modern Critical Edition*, ed. Gary Taylor et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[6] A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 281; Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 85; Arnold Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear', in *King Lear: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Kiernan Ryan (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 22, 20.

[7] Ewan Fernie, *The Demonic* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 224, 227; Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear', 19–20; for Howard Felperin's description of the action as 'simple and homiletic,' see Howard Felperin, 'Plays Within Plays', in *King Lear: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Kiernan Ryan (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 34; Leonard Tennenhouse, 'The Theatre of Punishment', in *King Lear: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Kiernan Ryan (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 66, 69–70; Kiernan Ryan, 'King Lear: The Subversive Imagination', in *King Lear: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Kiernan Ryan (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 78; Michael L. Hays, *Shakespearean Tragedy as Chivalric Romance: Rethinking Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello, and King Lear* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 192, 205.

[8] Holinshed has 150+ references to Edgar. For a few examples of references to Edgar's father, Edmund Ironside, and to Edgar's laws, support of monks, and good government, see Raphael Holinshed, *The Firste [Laste] Volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 1897:08 (At London: Imprinted for Iohn Hunne, 1577), img. 252-254/1493.

[9] Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear', 19–20; for Kathleen McLuskie's view that the 'ordered formality' is disrupted by the 'unseemly disorder' of the women, see Kathleen McLuskie, 'The Patriarchal Bard: Feminist Criticism and King Lear', in *King Lear: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Kiernan Ryan (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 52; Paul A. Cantor, 'The Cause of Thunder: Nature and Justice in King Lear', in *King Lear: New Critical Essays*, ed. Jeffrey Kahan (New York: Routledge, 2008), 243.

[10] Robert Greene, *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Malone Society, 1926), TLN 377-379.

[11] For the etymological connection between adventure and the Christian Latin *adventus*, see Giorgio Agamben, *The Adventure*, trans. Lorenzo Chiesa (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2018), 23.

[12] Elton describes the superiority of bastards as a "ubiquit[ous]" Renaissance *topos*, providing an extensive footnote on the subject. See Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 131–2n.

[13] See Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 201.

[14] Ewan Fernie, *Shakespeare for Freedom: Why the Plays Matter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 5, 176.

[15] Ibid., 176.

[16] Ibid., 164.

[17] Jeffrey Kahan, 'Introduction: Shakespeare's King Lear', in *King Lear: New Critical Essays*, ed. Jeffrey Kahan (New York: Routledge, 2008), 53; G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy* (London: Metheun, 1978), 177; Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear', 22; Felperin, 'Plays Within Plays', 35.

For overviews of this critical contempt, see Kahan, 'Introduction', 53; Simon Palfrey, *Poor Tom: Living King Lear* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 16–17.

[18] Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 206.

[19] J. H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History*, 3rd ed. (London: Butterworths, 1990), 558, 557.

[20] Ibid., 558.

[21] Frederick Pollock and Frederic William Maitland, *The History of English Law Before the Time of Edward I*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898), 2:397.

[22] Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 131–2n.

[23] Shakespeare, *True Chronicle Historie*, img. 1/41.

[24] 'Catastrophe, n.', in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 3 October 2019, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/28794.

J. R. R. Tolkien subdivided the literary "catastrophe," terming the comic variant a '*eucatastrophe*' (good catastrophe) to explicitly work against the prevailing negative sense. See 'Eucatastrophe, n.', in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 3 October 2019, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/272958.

[25] For the dating of plays, unless otherwise noted, I follow Martin Wiggins, *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, 9 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

For the plot and dating of this specific play, see ibid., 4:367-370.

[26] Anon., *A Pleasant Comedie, Called VVily Beguilde*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 1016:23 (London: Printed by H[umphrey] L[ownes] for Clement Knight, 1606), img. 39/39.

[27] Richard Dutton, 'Volpone', in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, by Ben Jonson, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Epistle.82n.

[28] Robert Cawdry, *A Table Alphabeticall Contayning and Teaching the True Writing and Vnderstanding of Hard Vsuall English Wordes, Borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French &c.*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 1829:44 (London: Printed by T.S. for Edmund Weauer, 1609), img. 15/75.

[29] John Denison, *A Three-Fold Resolution, Verie Necessarie to Saluation*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 1094:07 (London: Printed by Richard Field for Iohn Norton, 1608), img. 169/297.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Robert Cawdry, *A Table Alphabeticall Contayning and Teaching the True Writing and Vnderstanding of Hard Vsuall English Wordes, Borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French &c.*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 1829:44 (London: Printed by T.S. for Edmund Weauer, 1609), img. 15/75.

[32] Denison, *A Three-Fold Resolution*, img. 169/297.

[33] Susan Snyder, *The Comic Matrix of Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 141, 143; see Elton's 'jest-earnest' polarity, Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 319.

[34] Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 87.

[35] Stanley Wells does not indicate a preference: "the denouement of a classical, or old-fashioned, comedy." See William Shakespeare, *The History of King Lear*, ed. Stanley Wells (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 2.125n.

[36] Dutton, 'Volpone', Epistle.83n.

[37] Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, ed. Robert N. Watson (London: New Mermaids, 2003), 169.

[38] 'Mulct, v.', in *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1, 2b, 3, accessed 21 August 2019, https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/123414; 'Mulct, n.', in *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1, accessed 21 August 2019, https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/123413#eid35918081.

[39] Jonson, *Volpone*, 5.12.106-151; for an outstanding essay on this play's ending, see Ian Donaldson, *Jonson's Magic Houses: Essays In Interpretations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 106–24.

[40] Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in Fiue Actions Prouing That They Are Not to Be Suffred in a Christian Common Weale*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 384:21 (London: Imprinted for Thomas Gosson, 1582), img. 33/62; Robert Allott, *VVits Theater of the Little World*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 733:02 (London: Printed by I[ames] R[oberts] for N[icholas] L[ing], 1599), img. 131/284; Richard Mulcaster, *Positions Wherin Those Primitiue Circumstances Be Examined, Which Are Necessarie for the Training vp of Children*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 426:05 (London: By Thomas Vautrollier for Thomas Chare [i.e. Chard], 1581), img. 57/163.

Paul Cantor uses Aristophanes as a starting-point for his essay. See Cantor, 'Cause of Thunder', 231.

[41] Ben Jonson, 'To the Memory of My Belovèd, The Author Master William Shakespeare and What He Hath Left Us', in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5:641; P. H. Davison, 'Volpone and the Old Comedy', *Modern Language Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (1963): 151–57; Coburn Gum, *The Aristophanic Comedies of Ben Jonson* (The Hague: Mouton, 1969), 10–11.

[42] For an analogous reading of Mosca, see Robert N. Watson, 'Introduction', in *Volpone*, by Ben Jonson, ed. Robert N. Watson (London: New Mermaids, 2003), xxiv; readers interested in the influence of Old Comedy on Jonson's play, see Davison, 'Volpone and the Old Comedy'.

Shakespeare plays with this device elsewhere. Consider, the conspirators of *Julius Caesar* speaking as though they reached the climax of their narrative: "How many ages hence […]" (*JC*, 3.1.113)

[43] Snyder, *Comic Matrix*, 141, 143.

[44] Ladan Niayesh, 'Introduction', in *Three Romances of Eastern Conquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 6.

[45] Ibid., 3; Claude Fretz, *Dreams, Sleep, and Shakespeare's Genres* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 3.

[46] For analysis of this play, touching themes explored in this chapter, see Alexander Thom, '"Figures of Exclusion" in Mucedorus (c. 1591)', *Law & Literature* 33, no. 1 (2021): 49–72; for the definitive essay on the play's popularity, see Peter Kirwan, 'Mucedorus', in *The Elizabethan Top Ten*, ed. Andy Kesson and Emma Smith (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 223–34.

[47] I am grateful to Martin Wiggins for providing an extensive list of banishment and exile narratives from his *Catalogue* records.

[48] For the popularity of romances in general, see Louise Wilson, 'Serial Publication and Romance', in *The Elizabethan Top Ten*, ed. Andy Kesson and Emma Smith (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 214; for the imitations of Lyly, see Andy Kesson, *John Lyly and Early Modern Authorship* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 75.

[49] John Dickenson, *Arisbas, Euphues amidst His Slumbers: Or Cupids Iourney to Hell*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 380:16 (London: By Thomas Creede, for Thomas Woodcocke, 1594), img. 9/34.

Kesson notes that *Arisbas* has closer compositional ties to Sidney than Lyly. See Kesson, *John Lyly*, 75.

[50] Dickenson, *Arisbas*, img. 9/34.

[51] Ibid., img. 34/34, my emphasis.

For those interested in the comparison, there are other resemblances between *Arisbas* and *King Lear*. For example, *Arisbas* begins with the protagonist wandering a storm-wracked wilderness in a frenzy of loss. He is lodged in a shepherd's dwelling — a romance convention that Shakespeare pointedly inverts with the "hard house" that "scant[s] courtesy," forcing Lear and Kent into the hovel (3.2.63, 67). It features a *katabasis* (descent into hell), as discussed in Chapter 5. Boreas inflicts a retributive storm against the Arcadians. Finally, most significantly, Arisbas's father, the King, "desirous to disburthen himselfe of the heavie charge of gouernment, and inuest his age with ease, surrendred his esate & resigned ye regiment to *Arisbas*" (img. 34/34). With that said, my impression is their similarities more likely derive from common generic conceits, rather than deliberate imitation.

[52] Dutton, 'Volpone', Epistle.83n.

[53] For a contrasting view on Fortune and providence, see Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 10–11, 16–28.

[54] Dickenson, *Arisbas*, img. 34/34.

[55] For the forensic history of 'invention' as a rhetorical category, see Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), esp. 1-2, 7-9.

[56] Elton notes the echo of Lear's abdication. See Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 155.

[57] Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear', 22; or 'colorless' in Palfrey, *Poor Tom*, 21.

[58] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 1:449; for a more recent account of medieval outlawry, see Susan Stewart, 'Outlawry as an Instrument of Justice in the Thirteenth Century', in *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England: Crime, Government and Society, c.1066-c.1600*, ed. John C. Appleby and Paul Dalton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 37–53.

There is also 'civil' outlawry, related to non-criminal matters. I am still unclear over the exact mechanisms and extent of this practice.

[59] John Cowell, ed., 'Outlawry (Utlagaria)', in *The Interpreter*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 723:01 (Cambridge: John Legate, 1607); John Cowell, ed., 'Vtlawrie (Vtlagaria, Alias Vtlagatio)', in *The Interpreter*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 723:01 (Cambridge: John Legate, 1607); Thomas Blount, ed., 'Utlary or Utlawry', in *Nomo-Lexikon*, Early English Books, 1641-1700 / 168:09 (In the Savoy: Thomas Newcomb, for John Martin and Henry Herringman, 1670).

[60] Authorial questions remain. See Frederick Bernays Wiener, 'Did Bracton Write Bracton?', *American Bar Association Journal* 64, no. 1 (1978): 72–75.

[61] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 1:206.

[62] Henry de Bracton, *On the Laws and Customs of England*, trans. Samuel E. Thorne (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 2:354.

[63] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 2:578.

[64] Wiggins, *Catalogue*, 5:253.

[65] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 2:466, 461.

[66] Ibid., 2:449; Pollock and Maitland translate "*Friedlos*" as 'friendless'; Agamben prefers 'without peace'. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 104.

[67] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 105.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 1:449.

[70] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 105.

This woolly passage has caused endless difficulties. Critics often take this to mean — against the grain of the book — that Agamben believes "animal nature is without any relation to law and the city." Instead, Agamben is describing how, within the medieval cultural frame, the "wolfshead" is not presented as utterly detached from society but rather as a threshold between the city and the wilderness, between law and nature. This offers a clue to the odd, juridically marginal position of the outlaw. For an example of how Agamben's muddy prose has caused issues, even among the most perceptive critics, see Laurie Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 34–35.

[71] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 105, my translation.

[72] Ibid., 105.

[73] Leland De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 202; for more imaginary figures of the animal-human threshold, see Karl Steele, 'Centaurs, Satyrs, and Cynocephali: Medieval Scholarly Teratology and the Question of the Human', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*, ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Peter J. Dendle (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 257–74.

[74] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 104–8.

[75] Agamben does not pose (and, perhaps, does not perceive) any distinction between abstract and implemented bare life.

[76] Bracton, *Laws and Customs*, 2:354.

[77] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 2:462.

[78] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 7, 8, 11, 21, 27, 85.

[79] Palfrey, *Poor Tom*, 107.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 17–19.

[84] Elizabeth D. Gruber, 'Nature on the Verge: Confronting "Bare Life' in Arden of Faversham and King Lear', *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 22, no. 1 (2015): 99; see also Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 1.

[85] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 1; Agamben's Greek has been robustly criticised in this instance, see James Gordon Finlayson, '"Bare Life" and Politics in Agamben's Reading of Aristotle', *The Review of Politics* 72, no. 1 (2010): 97–126.

[86] Palfrey, *Poor Tom*, 107.

[87] Finlayson, '"Bare Life" and Politics in Agamben's Reading of Aristotle'.

Finlayson's critique of Agamben's wider project runs aground at key points. For example, Finlayson struggles with a core premise of the book in a footnote, 105n.

See also, Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 12-13, 27.

[88] *Nude life* might be the better sense, since "nudity" suggests a noticeable absence. Compare with Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), esp. 50-90.

[89] Foucault reads factories, schools, and prisons as disciplinary institutions — this does not entail that they are interchangeable, or that their paradigmatic similarities dissolve other particularities.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 135–94.

[90] For an example of such criticism, see Cary Wolfe, *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 24, 33; for Agamben's own account of his method, see Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, trans. Luca di Santo and Kevin Attell (New York: Zone Books, 2009).

[91] 'Enter Bomelio solus like an Hermite,' in Anon., *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Malone Society, 1930), TLN 571; 'thy fathers Cell,' and 'Carinus in this sillie groue / Will spend his daies with praiers and horizons [orisons],' in Greene, *Alphonsus*, TLN 173, 177-178; Anon., 'Mucedorus', in *William Shakespeare and Others: Collaborative Plays*, ed. Jonathan Bate et al. (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 11.23.

[92] Ewan Fernie, 'Introduction: Shakespeare, Spirituality and Contemporary Criticism', in *Spiritual Shakespeares*, ed. Ewan Fernie (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 17, my emphasis.

[93] Richard Wilson, *Free Will: Art and Power on Shakespeare's Stage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 251, my emphases.

[94] Foakes prefers the Folio's "*Through tattered clothes* great *vices* […]."

[95] Anon., *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, TLN 571; Greene, *Alphonsus*, TLN 173, 177-178.

[96] Anon., 'Mucedorus', 11.23.

[97] For mortification (in its widest sense) in relation to sensation and numbness in the play, see Giulio J. Pertile, 'King Lear and the Uses of Mortification', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 67, no. 3 (2016): 319–43.

[98] Holinshed, *Chronicles*, img. 253, 252, 254/1493.

[99] Giorgio Agamben, *The Highest Poverty: Monastic Rules and Form-of-Life*, trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 108–43.

Franciscans contended their rigorous code was neither legal nor penal. Monastic punishments were not retributions. Rather, corrections were constitutive of monastic life in and of itself. At the level of precept: the life is the rule, the rule is the life. This displacement of rule from the level of praxis to the level of selfhood, or even of being, is critical for Agamben but, as I argued in Chapter 1, not quite as distinct from law as he perhaps hopes.

[100] Ibid., 122.

[101] For an adroit reading of Franciscan poverty in *Measure for Measure*, see Natasha Korda, *Shakespeare's Domestic Economies: Gender and Property in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 165–76.

[102] Bryan A. Garner, ed., 'Death', in *Black's Law Dictionary* (St. Paul: Thomson Reuters, 2009); Bryan A. Garner, ed., 'De Catallis Felonum', in *Black's Law Dictionary* (St. Paul: Thomson Reuters, 2009).

[103] Pollock and Maitland, *The History of English Law*, 1:434.

[104] Bryan A. Garner, ed., 'Persona Standi in Judicio', in *Black's Law Dictionary* (St. Paul: Thomson Reuters, 2009), 1260.

[105] Innocent Gentillet, *A Discourse Vpon the Meanes of Vvel Governing and Maintaining in Good Peace, a Kingdome, or Other Principalitie*, trans. Simon Patrick, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 888:02 (London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1602), img. 174/196.

[106] Ibid.; Francis Gerald Downing, *Cynics and Christian Origins* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992); for Cynicism as a high, even sovereign office, see Epictetus,

Discourses, Fragments, Handbook, ed. Christopher Gill, trans. Robin Hard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 181–93.

[107] Gentillet, *Governing and Maintaining*, img. 174/196.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Franciscans articulated this poverty through animalising rhetoric, importantly without any insinuation of that indicating their manner of living was undignified. See Agamben, *The Highest Poverty*, 110–11.

[110] One implicit issue is whether bare life can be chosen or if it must be imposed. See *devotio* in Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 96–99.

[111] Agamben, *The Highest Poverty*, 84.

I hardly need note that this precept did not foreclose the infamy of monasteries across Europe. Desiderius Erasmus, an ordained canon regular, writes: "What you doe in your dennes, and how you vse holie virgins, and nunnes, the worlde knoweth well enough. As for the houses of rich men that you haunt so much, how little the better or the honester they are for your comming thither, is sufficiently knowne to all men, euen to the poreblinde and barbers." See Desiderius Erasmus, *Seven Dialogues Both Pithie and Profitable*, trans. William Burton, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 833:07 (London: Printed [by Valentine Simmes] for Nicholas Ling, 1606), img. 79/86.

[112] Anon., 'Mucedorus', 9.71-2.

[113] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 21.

[114] 'Grime, v.', in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), b, accessed 2 October 2019, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/81491.

Harsnett's *Declaration*, an identified source for Edgar's later scenes, resounds with figurative and literal references to anointment and coronations. See Samuel Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 889:05 (London: Printed by Iames Roberts, 1603), img. 21, 23, 45, 48, 52-53, 56, 81, 85/148.

[115] The formula for English coronations is set out in an illuminated manuscript entitled *Liber Regalis*, held in Westminster Abbey. Printed versions were also disseminated. For details, see Anon., *A Collection out of the Book Called Liber Regalis, Remaining in the Treasury of the Church of Westminster*, Thomason Tracts / 161:E.1081[3] (London: Printed by R. D. for Charls Adams, 1661). For James I's coronation, see Sybil M. Jack, '"A Pattern for a King's Inauguration": The Coronation of James I in England', *Parergon* 21, no. 2 (2004): 87–88.

[116] Jack, '"A Pattern for a King's Inauguration"', 87–88.

[117] Wilson, *Free Will*, 260.

[118] Roy Strong, *Coronation* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005), 4.

[119] For the seminal reading of *ex nihilo* creation and King Lear, see Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 54–55, 181–88.

[120] For *King Lear*'s appearance within a trend of Jacobean 'flattery plays', see Meredith Skura, *Shakespeare the Actor and the Purposes of Playing* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993), 168–71.

[121] Bullough, *Sources*, 7:402-6.

[122] Felperin, 'Plays Within Plays', 41.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 85.

[126] 'Ambiguous, Adj.', in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 17 September 2019, https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/6145.

[127] For Gloucester's astrological interests, see Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 147–61.

[128] Naseeb Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), 150.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Agamben, *The Highest Poverty*, 36.

[131] Bullough, *Sources*, 7:402-406.

[132] The Dover sequence might be fruitfully re-read in light of the romance convention, in which chaste lovers, like Ariosto's Ariodant and unlike Shakespeare's Gloucester, are imagined to have leaped from cliffs as a proof of their fidelity.

[133] Fernie, *The Demonic*, 226.

[134] Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear'.

[135] Anon., *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, TLN 379-432, 1739-1772; Greene, *Alphonsus*, TLN 139-172, 1931-2085; Anon., 'Mucedorus', 7.70-71; 14.30-55.

[136] Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 85.

[137] Fernie, *The Demonic*, 224.

[138] Michael Warren, 'Quarto and Folio King Lear and the Interpretation of Albany and Edgar', in *William Shakespeare's King Lear*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), 53.

[139] Snyder, *Comic Matrix*, 141.

[140] Frank Kermode, 'Introduction', in *King Lear: A Casebook*, ed. Frank Kermode (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 18.

[141] Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy*, 191.

To provide just a few examples, see Greene, *Alphonsus*, TLN 377-380; Thomas Heywood, *The Four Prentices of London: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition*, ed. Mary Ann Weber Gasior (New York: Garland Publishing, 1980), 1.1.1-12; for a romance in which Fortune herself intervenes to restore an exiled nobleman, see Anon., *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, TLN 1729-1857.

[142] For a monograph-length study that explicitly counters the idea that references to Fortune are merely 'conventional,' see Frederick Riefer, *Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1983).

[143] P. G. Walsh, 'Introduction', in *The Consolation of Philosophy*, by Boethius (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), xlviii.

[144] Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. P. G. Walsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 14, 21–22; for an excellent overview of the passage of the *rota fortuna* trope from medieval literature onto the Renaissance stage, see Helen Cooper, *Shakespeare and the Medieval World* (London: Metheun, 2010), 141–46.

[145] Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 85.

[146] Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, 21–22.

[147] Consider the Fool's warning: "Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill lest it break thy neck with following ^{Q}it^{Q}; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw thee after" (2.2.261-3).

[148] Greene, *Alphonsus*, TLN 377-379.

[149] Anon., *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, TLN 1729-1857.

[150] For an authoritative account of Fortune in Shakespeare's drama, see also Cooper, *Shakespeare and the Medieval World*, 143–49.

[151] Alex Davis, *Chivalry and Romance in the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 3.

[152] Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

[154] John F. Danby, *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear* (London: Faber and Faber, 1949), 171.

[155] Edgar's Mummerset or Cotswold dialect for this peasant character, potentially out of place in Dover, does at least reflect his Gloucestershire origins.

[156] For three readings of why Edmund does not invoke his right to refuse to fight an 'unknown opposite,' see Davis, *Chivalry and Romance*, 136–37.

[157] R. A. Foakes, 'Introduction', in *King Lear*, by William Shakespeare (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2009), 46.

[158] Danby, *Doctrine of Nature*, 171.

[159] Elton, *King Lear and the Gods*, 86.

[160] Ibid., 85.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Foakes, 'Introduction', 46; Danby, *Doctrine of Nature*, 171.

[163] Hays, *Chivalric Romance*, 192; Davis, *Chivalry and Romance*, 3.

[164] William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Horace Howard Furness (Philadelphia: New Variorum, 1880), 5.3.324-327; William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Lear*, ed. Jay L. Halio (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 5.3.297-300; William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (New York: Washington Square Press, 1993), 5.3.392-395; William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. George Hunter (London: Penguin, 2005), 5.3.321-324; William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2009), 5.3.346-349; Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 2009, 5.3.322-325.

For examples to the contrary, see William Shakespeare, 'King Lear', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Modern Critical Edition*, ed. John Jowett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 24.319-322; Shakespeare, *The History of King Lear*, 24.318-321.

[165] I have yet to see a production conclude with Albany. For filmed productions that end with Edgar, see Peter Brook, *King Lear* (Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2007); Trevor Nunn, *King Lear* (Metrodome, 2008); Gregory Doran, *King Lear* (Royal Shakespeare Company, 2016); Richard Eyre, *King Lear* (BBC, 2018).

[166] Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 1880, 5.3.324n.

[167] Ibid.; Shakespeare, 'King Lear', 2016, 24.319n.

[168] Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 1880, 5.3.324n.

[169] Foakes, 'Introduction', 142.

[170] For a contrasting reading of these lines "shading into a kind of Tom-ness," see Palfrey, *Poor Tom*, 247. For a more detailed comparison of Edgar and Albany across the Quarto and Folio, see Warren, 'Quarto and Folio', 45–56.

[171] Kettle, 'The Humanity of King Lear', 20.

[172] As Bradley observes, whether Albany intends to provide Albion to Kent and Edgar, or just Cornwall's powers and properties is unclear. The latter seems likely — as the earldoms of Kent and Gloucester would lie in the east and west halves of Cornwall's presumably southern dominion. Gloucester refers to Cornwall as "The noble Duke, my master, / My worthy arch and patron" (2.1.58-59). See Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, 275.

[173] Warren, 'Quarto and Folio', 55.

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