

J. J. Bibb # 1180035
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THE FINAL STROKE
A play in two acts

Robert M. Beadell Jr.

- Bartholemew- ✓ *Miller* A young man of Tutney. He is the son of the orchard keeper. Bartholemew is a bright and energetic youth.
- Ann- ✓ Bartholemew's mother, Ann is a kindly woman who dearly loves her only son.
- Roger- ✓ *Miller* Ann's husband is a hardworking but somewhat gruff fellow. *Spencer*
- Balavignus- ~~III~~ Is a Jew from London. He had taught at the University until 1347, when many Jews were forced out of their jobs. He has retired to a life of research in Tutney.
- The Reeve- ~~4~~ *Provost* An official of the village, the Reeve is a happy, large man who loves life and wine. His job is to keep peace in the village. He is loved by all the people.
- The Bishop- ~~4~~ A cruel aristocrat who lives only for his own pleasure.
- Ruth- ~~4~~ A young girl who works for the Bishop.
- Tom- *Wynne* A crippled young man of the village, he scrapes out a living by working various errand-type jobs.
- Timothy- ~~4~~ A friend of Rogers.
- Sylvia- ✓ Daughter of a farmer, she is in love with Bart.
- The Doctor- A foolish, pompous man, who knows nothing of medicine.
- Carl- ✓ Bartholemew's boyhood friend, also a clever youth.
- Kate- Friend of Ann, a gossip, with a kind heart.

Melan. x G. Laskin

Mummy

Seminario Multidisciplinario
José Emilio González

SMJEG

Facultad de Humanidades
UPR-PR

unintentional - mistake
Scene I: A dwelling in a small English Village. The year is 1348, late in October. As the scene opens an old woman rudley sets a plate of food in front of her husband who is seated at a rough hewn table.

*Talton -
marty*

Roger
Did you have the chickens fix my supper? *what does he mean?*

to eat /
Ann
You have no where to go, you can wait for your food.

Roger
I work hard all day, I ask only to have my supper.

to eat /
Ann
And you have it, push your face into it.

Exquisite Roger - to eat Ann to serve food.
Roger
Where's the boy?

to scold B.
Ann
Is it good?

to get compliment.
Roger
Where's the boy?

to scold B.
Ann
They've called a meeting in the village, he'll be along.

Roger
Who's called a meeting? He should be at this table.

Ann
You don't look up from your plate once you've started eating, how would you know if he were here?

Roger
(Bartholemew enters, he is young, energetic and happy with life.)

Exquisite Roger to scold the boy Ann - to get compliment.
Bart
(dramatically) Death upon our houses, let the black night swallow the dawn and all men perish.

Ann
Eat your food.

Roger
What's this meeting?

Bart
There's somebody sick in France. I have to stand outside the village like a fool.

L) Isn't he excited about Emmanuel?

Ann
What's this nonsense?

Bart
We've all been appointed, the young fellows, to keep out the sickness.

Ann
Sickness. Who's got it?

Some Frenchman. [?] Roger — *or Bart?*

Ann
I haven't seen.....

Bart
The disease is on it's way, I have to guard.

Roger
The fools, on whose time? I need you here.

Bart
There was a vote, it's all decided, three hours a day.

Roger
To watch the road?

Bart
Yes, it won't be bad.

Roger
Whose idea was this?

Bart
The doctor, and the Bishop. — *where is the Bishop?*

Ann
The Bishop!

Bart
He wrote a letter, sent it to the reeve. I didn't understand a lot of it but the bishop said to be on our guard.

Roger
Well I suppose if it's to help the bishop. What is it's a feast or something? *level # 4*

Bart
It's a sickness, I've told you. We're not to let anyone in.

Roger
Who will buy our apples?

Bart
You'll have to ask the bishop.

Ann
He's coming?

Bart
Yes, in two weeks. He'll probably want to take me back to London with him, as an advisor.

Roger
I don't know that the bishop needs another fool in London, the city's crawling with them.

Ann
When have you been there?

Roger
I've heard. I've talked to plenty of people.

Bart
One day I'll own a large house in London...

Roger
You keep your mind on the orchard and make some money and when you are old, you can go to London. (pause) How long is this guarding to go on?

Bart
No one seems to know. They say that everyone is dead in France.

Roger
From the drought?
mi 94 p 3

Bart
From the plague!

Roger
What does it do?

Bart
Terrible things.. Apparently it goes around as a black cloud, "killing both man and beast as it rolls it's pestiferous way". The people apparently drop in one or two days. | Everyone coughing up blood...
is it too inhibited?

Ann
Please!

Roger
How will you keep out a 4th class?

Bart
No one seems to know. They don't seem to be saying anything about it.

Roger
How will you keep out a black cloud?

Bart
No one seems to know. They aren't certain of anything about it.
(pause)

Roger
It's so very dry.

Bart
Mines alright. (indicating food)

Roger
Outside, the weather.

Bart
That was another thing.

Ann
What?

Bart
In France they had a drought also but lately they've been
drowning in rain, "Torrents", said the Bishop.

Ann
We've had our worst season ever, and now they want to bring in a
sickness on top of it.

Bart
It will probably stay in France.

Ann
How long will you have to watch?

Bart
A couple of weeks. I'm sure everyone will see that it's a waste of
time. It won't be so bad.

Roger
Of course not, you'll be sitting on your ass while I'm doing your
work.

Bart
I've got to protect you and mum, haven't I?

Roger
You'll go because the bishop has asked, If it was the doctor's
idea....

Bart
The reeve didn't seem to care whether we watched or not.

Ann

All he thinks about is wine.

Roger

The reeve's a fine man....

Scene II

(The home of Balavignus, a Jewish scholar, he is reading aloud to his man, Tom, who is busy at some task)

Balavignus

"The boils once burst emit a foul odor and in all cases the patient dies soon there after, the skin of the diseased is flushed with fever but otherwise unaffected by the sickness. Once infected (puts book down), not very pleasant, eh Tom?"

Tom

No sir, I think not.

Balavignus

How long have you been here?

Tom

Not yet an hour sir, you see my wife...

Balavignus

No, I ask how long you've lived here in Tutney.

Tom

All my life, 26 years, sir.

Balavignus

Have you ever seen everyone so poor, so little rain?

Tom

No, sir. The seasons are all confused.

Balavignus

Confused?

Tom

Everything is early or late, The animals have been unsettled by it.

Balavignus

Unsettled? You can tell by their actions?

Tom

The cattle have lost their sense of direction, they walk into each other.

Balavignus

That's odd. Have you an explanation?

Tom

Sir?

Balavignus
The cattle, the weather, what's caused the change?

Tom
Well, (pause) nothing sir. It just has happened, or God's will, might that be it?

Balavignus
Tom, have you no curiosity about the workings of nature? Do you accept everything?

Tom
All thats given me.

Balavignus
Bah. (pause) Who holds the letter, the one from the bishop?
By how does he know?

Tom
The reeve, he's got it up on his wall, first one he's ever gotten, in ten years. Bishop didn't know his name...

Balavignus
I'd like to look at it, I'd like to follow the course of the disease

Tom
Do you know what it is, sir?

Balavignus
I've just read it to you. The Chinese had it for two years, it moved on to India and was thought quelled. Seems highly contagious, kills many people. (pause) I'd like to see that letter.

Tom
I don't think....

Balavignus
Of course, I'd hardly be a proper holder of the church's property. I'm not thought highly of in the town.

Tom
I rather like you sir.

Balavignus
Highly *ben*eficent of you Tom. (pause) I've come to expect either direct rudeness or total apathy from the common weal.

Tom
Sir, did I tell you about my guard duty?

Balavignus
You mentioned that there would be guards. What time will you watch?

Tom
During the night sir. I can't sleep anyway. I'm better out of
the house. *where?*

Balavignus
Does your wife still bring the cow indoors?

Tom
She says it keeps her healthy.

Balavignus
Your wife?

Tom
The cow, better milk sir.

Balavignus
Get some firewood for this evening, it's been chilly.

Tom
I'll have to cut some and after I'd be very thirsty, do you
think sir that possibly....

Balavignus
An advance, to be thrown away on wine. (pause) We might make an
arrangement.

Tom
Arrangement sir?

Balavignus
I'll ~~give~~ give you a portion of your wage. Which is far beyond your
worth, if you will try to slip that letter to me for only a few
minutes, if you cannot, so be it, but try Tom, will you?
(pulls out purse and gives coins to Tom) Now, after that wood.

Tom
Thank you sir. It's a bit of spy work, isn't it? (exits)

Balavignus
A cruel world has forced me along a surreptitious path, to give
money, to apply pressure, I am no better than...

(A woman enters suddenly, she is obviously frightened)

Minnie
Your excellency!

Balavignus
Are you addressing me Madame?

Minnie
Yes sir, thank you. I've, I cannot, the first thing, sir?
Will I be able, I'm...

Balavignus
Calm down, come in, relax, I'm not the damned vicar. Sit down.

Minnie
Thank you sir, It's only, do you know about sickness?

Balavignus
I've been ill all my life.

Minnie
I mean the curing of it, sir?

Balavignus
I've studied Hippocrates, and the Romans.

Minnie
Romans?

do you know about trees?

Balavignus
Large green people with two heads who eat trees.

Minnie
Oh no, trees, sir? (Beat)

Balavignus
Have you the aforementioned illness?

Minnie
Its my boy, Walter. He's never been strong, bad color, white. He can't run, wheezes, coughs all night, poor boy. I don't know how to help him. *How old is he?*

Balavignus
Has he a fever?

Minnie
Sometimes, sir. Never bad, just warm.

Balavignus
Anything else?

Minnie
He gets dizzy, sir, so that he can't stand.

Balavignus
I'd have to see him, to look at him, listen to his chest.

Minnie
Listen? For what?

Balavignus
For congestion, for a possible.... never mind just bring him here. Wrap him warmly.

Minnie
I can't bring the boy here, my husband.

*why does the husband
never appear if kid dies?*

Balavignus
Of course, he's the brilliant fellow who wanted so desperately for me to leave Tutney, a petition and all. You would come to the Jew? *If he is Balavignus - enemy why doesn't he appear.*

Minnie
You are a wise man, I've heard them talk, teaching at the University in London, You've got to help, you...

Balavignus
I am sorry.

Minnie
(falls to her knees) He is only eight years old and I want him to live a long life.

Balavignus
I may not be able to help at all.

Minnie
I will bring him, somehow.

Balavignus
Take him to our good doctor.

Minnie
The man is a fool. Do not make me beg will you see him?

Balavignus
Of course, but be discrete.

Minnie
What?

Balavignus
Discrete, (pause) never mind.

Minnie
Thank you sir. (exits)

Balavignus
The most hated man in the village yet they come with their problems in secret. They ignore me on the streets yet they envy my knowledge. I am alone among many who dislike an image of me without ever knowing who, or what I am....

Scene III: (On the street in Tutney, two women are talking, one is Ann, the other is Kate, the wife of the baker, she is a large woman who loves gossip.)

Ann *What was Kate doing? ANN, why was she there?*
There he goes.

Kate
Doctor indeed!

Ann
He's a small man. *How are we going to change this line*

Kate
He runs around.

Ann
Talks, talks nonsense if you ask me.

Kate
Whats he doing?

Ann
Bothering the reeve about something.

Kate
That man!

Ann
The reeve?

Kate
Drinking....

Ann
Don't I know? Didn't I tell you...

Kate
Oh yes, and he's done it again just behind the church.

Ann *done what?*
The church?

Kate
And that other one.

Ann
The doctor?

Kate
A whore monger.

Ann
The doctor?

Kate
The little Jenkins girl.

Ann
Jenkins, from the farm? She's just fourteen.

Kate
I won't say.

Ann
I have seen him chase around.

Kate
Last year when I was ill he wanted to see my....(whispers into
Ann's ear)

Ann
He didn't

Kate
An evil man.

Ann
He doesn't know anything.

Kate
He did cure our pig.

Ann
Pig cured itself, he's never helped anyone...

Kate
Except into the grave.

(They watch him walk away)

Ann
He thinks he knows so much.

Kate
Been to London.

Ann
Had himself a time.

Kate
He was married.

Ann
His wife died.

How does she know?

Are there any other Jenkins?

what happened?

Kate
At his hand?

Ann
I'd not doubt it.

Kate
He'll never touch me.

Ann
Who's that?

Kate
Where....?

↳ is it someone new in the village?

Ann
Don't look. Who is it?

Kate
I can't tell you if I can't look.

Scene IV: (Outside the village Bart enters followed by Carl the butcher's son, they both carry rakes)

Bart
It's like a holiday. The whole afternoon to watch the clouds.

no rain but clouds.

Carl
I still don't understand, what're we to do?

↳ wasn't he at the meeting?

Bart
We are here to stop the sickness.

Carl
How will we know who has it and who does not?

Bart
According to the Bishop we're not to let anyone in.

Carl
Yes but, well, my father, he's away at Leftport, must I stop him? I'd be a fool to try.

Bart
Of course your father would be allowed in, I don't suppose he'd have it.

Carl
Always has been healthy, (pause), another thing, why flowers? (indicating necklace of flowers that each of them wear).

Bart
It's supposed to keep the disease off. They thought we'd
prefer these to garlic. *herbs and*

Carl
Wise choice. Which end of town will you take, as if I need ask?

Bart
What do you mean?

Carl
Just outside of the east end lives the fair Sylvia does she not?

Bart
And so?

Carl
And so, my friend you will go to the east and watch the clouds
assisted by another pair of eyes.

Bart
If I decide to go, I need not see her, (Beat) your suggestion
is interesting, yes I do believe I'll take the east end.

Carl
(dramatically) Together we stand between our loved ones and
death.

Bart
Staunch guardians!
Reestavar - Rya kallad.

Carl
Steadfast!
constant/inguevarkalle -

Bart
Loyal!

Carl
To our King!

Bart
To the Lord! *— 1348*

Carl
I to the west!

Bart
And I to the east!

Carl
Bold warriors, clear hearts!

Bart
I shall see death stalking, lurking, black with flowing robes,
we'll stop, look one another in the eye....

Carl
He with a scythe....(playing the role)

Guadalupe (pasa cayer)
Bart
And I with my trusty rake. Staring, knowing that only one of us
would walk away.

Carl
Your youth would make him hesitate and then...(They playfully
fight with their rakes, Bart stands above Carl in the
"ready to kill position").

Bart
But I would be merciful. Death would see my passion for life
and scurry away, thankful that I spared him.

Carl
You are mad.(pause) Will some one bring us a supper?

is it optimum in writing
Bart
I've made my own arrangements, man must provide for himself.
(Beat) I'll bet that my father is cursing me right now.

Carl
We are hard workers, we deserve the rest. Besides we're
fending off the plague, remember?

defender
Bart
Oh yes, of course, well to our posts, sir.

Carl
Good of you to talk with me, sir.

Bart
Entirely my pleasure, sir.

Carl
I'll not smile until I see you again, sir.

Bart
May you have a fine day sir.

Carl
May your duty be as short as your mothers temper, dogface!
(he slaps Bart and runs off)

Scene V: (Balavignus sits at a table, he holds a book)

Balavignus
Stand up there, Kech, stand straight! Tell me Mr. Kech about Aristotle, I know that you've read your lesson because I saw you drinking without stint or measure last night and could not have done so until you'd fully understood the reading, am I correct, Kech? Sit down. Do you suppose that I enjoy wasting my time on you boys? If you will not read you cannot learn, it is a simple matter. I ask only that....

(Tom enters)

Tom
Sir?

Balavignus
(not noticing Tom) You pay close attention to the examples of....

Tom
Sir, excuse me?

Balavignus
(without looking up) Yes?

Tom
Sir, I was going home now, if you needed something?

Balavignus
I'd get it myself. Goodnight Tom. (Tom exits, Balavignus picks a page in a book.)

The Assyrians lads, there was a race. They were cruel beyond measure but they advanced. They put their knowledge to use, (reading) "And scaling the walls with a force of 500,000 brave men we conquered the city and it's riches." Boys we must take the treasures of past knowledge, fortune trundles over the weak and stupid, you lads....

Tom
(Re-enters embarrassedly) Sir?

Balavignus
Yes, what now?

Tom
I've forgotten the bread.

Balavignus
We'll take it, can't have your family eating one another.

Tom
No sir, Sir?

Balavignus
Yes.

Tom
I haven't a right to ask. I was wondering who you were speaking to a moment ago.

Balavignus
To no one.....

Tom
But sir?

Balavignus
To my past then Tom, leave me please.

Tom
Sorry, sir. (He exits)

Balavignus
No need to be sorry. Young men have dreams, we must be satisfied with memories. (pause)

Scene VI: (Roger is seated on a stool, Ann is rubbing his shoulder) *Roger is left.*

Roger
It's going to fall off if I have to work alone any longer.

Ann
It's up to the bishop....

Roger
Sickness! Have you seen anyone falling dead? That boy should be working.

Ann
Go easy on him, he's having a hard time.

Roger
Hard time, he doesn't know the meaning...

Ann
Don't you remember being young, how important you felt when you'd help the blacksmith, when no other boy was strong enough, he'll be working all of his life, He's growing so fast.....

Roger
He eats more, I know that.

Ann
And he's in love.

Roger
He's got work to do, he doesn't have time to be in love.

Ann
You still have time, haven't you?

Roger
That's different, I own something, I owe my living to no man.

Ann
Oh, Roger, did you hear what happened in the village?

potatoes & apples?
Roger
Oh yes, a potatoe ^{potatoes & apples?} shouted up at me, "like to hear the news from town?" Told me everything. (pause) What news?

Ann
Minnie Lemkin was caught selling her own child to the jew...

when did it happen?
Roger
What?

Ann
The Jew, she had the boy wrapped up, sickly little soul anyway.

Roger
And she was selling him?

Ann
That's what they suspect, she won't say a word.

Roger
What would he want the boy for?

Ann
Well you know Jews, what they'll do.

Roger
No, actually he's the only one I've ever seen, scholar isn't he? Books, writing, burning the late oil.

Ann
So they say. Also practices the black arts, a witch, a devil perhaps.

Roger
I can't imagine selling your own son.

Ann
They'll probably burn him.

Roger
The boy?

Ann
The Jew, they'll try him, he'll get his...

Roger
Who will be the judge?

Ann
The Reeve, or the Bishop.

Roger
Our good bishop, the family has never worked, he owns land that he has stolen, has fabulous horses and he will be the judge, the hypocrite!
carry on parcel

Ann
Roger! You musn't speak against the bishop, it's a sin.

Roger
He is not one of us, he is an aristocrat, he knows nothing of the people in his diocese.
is he really?

Ann
Then perhaps when he arrives next week you'll tell him how to do his job.

Roger
Perhaps I will.

Scene VII: (Outside the village. The bishop enters he is a small man of 40, he is as aristocratic as 14th century England will allow. He is accompanied by a pretty yet ragged young woman who carries his large trunk, she sets it down rudely)

Ruth
I can't go any further. } Bishop: Be careful!

Bishop
It is a lovely day. The air is still and fragrant, the birds sing traveling songs for us and the road unfolds beneath us like a carpet of silk. Soon enough we will arrive at Tugville...
How could it be so lovely day?

Ruth *But how could it be like a carpet*
Tutney.

Bishop
Yes. (pause) We'll be there before nightfall and be back in London in three days time.

Ruth *o my fault?*
If my legs hold.

Bishop
You have greater strength than you allow yourself.

Ruth
Why do we need go to this place?

Bishop
I've never been here before. There is no money in Toghham...

Ruth
Tutney.

Bishop
I said Tutney! No one does anything. The lord of the area, a fool, set loose all of his fiefs. The people farm and scrape out a living. The reeve of their village wrote me a letter which was almost unreadable. I thought it my duty to visit; there are a number of ceremonies that I have neglected there and will take care of so I'll never need return.

Ruth
Why don't we rest for a bit, I've heard a river near by, we could drink a bit of wine, lie back and watch the water and perhaps...

Bishop
We haven't time and I'll not have you drinking in front of the villagers.

Ruth
You won't have me drinking? Then perhaps we'll sleep apart also.

Bishop
You will do what I tell you. You live very well my pretty and are in no position to bargain with me, I have a great deal of money and you have none. I have no family to worry over but you have those miserable sisters.....

Ruth
They are beautiful.

Bishop
Pick it up, we've wasted too much time, I've simply got to be back for the Ball. Hurry up, you ingrate!

Ruth
I work hard for you sir.

Bishop
You are a vile little toad.

Ruth
Good words from an educated man, you are a great man; a saint.

(Sylvia and Bart enter they are [#]disheveled and are covered with leaves and grass)

despeinado / desahogado

Bart
Your Grace, we've just been, well we were...

Sylvia
Praying, for....

Bart
For the crops, for more rain. (They kneel)

Bishop
Dominus Vescum Domine. Get up, where is this place?

Bart
Almost Tutney sir, perhaps a mite more.

(Ruth lifts up Bart's chin)

Ruth
Do they all look like this in Tutney.

Do he speak clearly?

Bishop
Silence! Is this all the greeting that I'm to receive.

Sylvia
I think they were expecting you next week.

Bishop
Fools! I wrote clearly in my letter to expect me annon.

Bart
The Reeve must have misread.

Bishop
I'm very tired, I need food and a cart, I cannot walk further.

What time is it?

Sylvia
My father owns a fine cart.

Bishop
Don't stand there, get it, bring it here, and quickly.

Sylvia
I'll try, your excellency. My father uses the cart, takes loads at...

Bishop
Shut up. Get the cart! (Sylvia exists)

Bart
Have you more news of the illness?

Bishop
Daily reports from France, disgusting buisness, from the letters one would think that the end of the world was imminent.

Bart
Then you fear it will reach Tutney?

Bishop
That is the reason I had guards appointed. I suppose ^{they} he is further up the road.

Bart
No, sir.

Bishop
No. Do you mean that my letter was ignored?

Bart
I, I am the guard.

Bishop
You? An important job is given you and you play in the bushes with a farm wench.

Bart
She will be my wife!

Bishop
You will guard this village or she will be dead, all of you dead. This illness is a God send if you ask me, if it arrives in London I'll shut myself up in my home and watch out the windows as His awesome hand thins out the rabble. When it is over I shall have fewer beggars bothering me, the game on my estate will run unafraid of poachers...

Bart
You'd not help them?...

Bishop
What do I know of medicine? I leave that to the doctors.

Bart
But to provide comfort, to give the last rites.

Bishop
And risk my life, do you think me a fool?

Bart
You are a tool of God on earth.

Bishop
You impudent child! My task on this earth is to provide for myself, to make myself richer and happier...

to would he say that - plainly?

Scene VIII: (The home of the Reeve, Tom stands in the room with the Reeve.)

Reeve
And you've brought the Jew here? I don't suppose he's wild, frothing at the mouth? He does speak English? I don't know which coat to wear, the black I suppose, bring it here Tom.

Tom
What should we do with him?

Reeve
Who?

Tom
The Jew, I've got him standing outside.

Reeve
Alone?

Tom
With the doctor. What shall we do with him?

Reeve
Talk to him, find out what he eats, we'll have to sup soon.

Tom
Won't we be burning him?

Reeve
God, I hope not, can you imagine the smell? Take some wine out to them and tell them to wait.

Tom
Yes, sir. (He exits)

Reeve
In all my years as reeve I've never had to deal with a man's life, usually a sick cow sold or a husband and wife beating one another.

(Tom re-enters)

Tom
What will you do with him?

Reeve
I'll have to wait for the Bishop. Maybe we can banish the Jew, I've always been fond of banishment. "Wander the four corners of the earth but return not here," how's that?

Tom
I think that most of the townsfolk would like him burned.

Reeve
You won't get my blessing. (pause) He'd be screaming, someone would have to clean it all up and, no it's much to grotesque. Tom get us a little wine, I must relax....

Tom
They are waiting.

Reeve
Let them wait. This is a solemn occasion, let's give it some time.

Tom
Fine with me sir, I rather like the man.

Reeve
The Jew? What's his name?

Tom
Balavignus.

Reeve
Pardon me?

Tom
Bal-a-vig-nus. He never treated me ill sir.

Reeve
Did he pay you well?

Tom
I get by fine, between the stable and him.

It must be here a stable

Reeve
Well if he is burned or banished maybe you'd come and work for me. I'd hate to see you idle. I'd not work you hard.

Tom
That's very generous, sir. Just between us, I think I'd like to work for a christian again. He's a good man but odd sir.

Reeve
Odd?

Tom
Reads, all the time.

Reeve
Reads? Reads what?

Tom
I don't know. Always reading aloud, and speaking, to people...

Reeve
Yes, to what people?

Tom
To no one, an empty room and he'd be shouting.

Reeve
Mad?

Tom
You tell me sir, I've never known a madman.

Reeve
Where's he from?

Tom
London, You've never spoken to him?

Reeve
Never had the chance, he never comes to the tavern.

Tom
No, I suppose not.

Reeve
When do you go to guard?

Tom
Tonight, sir.

Reeve
Good, have more wine and for me. (Holds out his glass)

Tom
Must we go through with the guarding?

Reeve
It wasn't my thought. The bishop wrote me. I don't believe it. I've seen no one sick.

Tom
Nor I. Keeping everyone out, it's nonsense.

Reeve
We'll keep it up for a week.

Tom
I'll not mind it so badly.

Reeve
Let's have a bit more.

Tom
Go easy, sir.

Reeve
The bishop will have us all dead in three weeks if he has his way. I'm preparing for the sickness by cleansing the soul, washing the sin away with wine.

Tom
Sir, if I might say something.

Reeve
Speak, man!

Tom
I believe that the Bishop is a fool.

Reeve
Admirably said, we'll get on fine Tom.

Tom
Yes, sir. What do you suppose he wanted with the boy? *for*

Reeve
I'd never thought about it. (pause) You know him, what would he have done?

Tom
Perhaps he'd have read him some Latin. Wouldn't have hurt him.
He got very angry at me but never struck me. Why don't you
ask him?

Reeve
Ask him?

Tom
About the boy. I say the woman's mad, sir. I'd not hold
the Jew responsible.

Reeve
I've been told not to trust him.

Tom
You've also been told not to drink, sir.

Reeve
I see your point, Tom. (pause) The woman could hardly explain
losing the boy. I'll question them both.

Scene IX: (The Town Square)

What are they doing?

Ann
Selling her own child, to a Jew.

Kate
The boy would be part of the soup if she hadn't been caught.

Ann *mustiness*
They perform eerie spells.

Kate
Don't I know.

Ann
With the hearts of young christians.

Kate
I've heard as much.

Ann
Oh, haven't I told you?..

Kate
What?

Ann
The most important thing.

What is it? Kate

The Bishop. Ann

Yes? Kate

He's on his way. Ann

Dying? Kate

No, he's coming to town. Ann

When? Kate

This very day, the young Sylvia went for her father's cart. Ann

For the bishop? Kate

So she says. She was visiting our Bartholemew. Ann

Visiting? Kate

How you think, they were eating lunch. Ann

Will they marry? Kate

Perhaps, that boy could have his choice. Ann

My Marie? Kate

She's only five. Ann

She won't stay that. (pause) Why is the bishop coming? Kate

Ann
About the sickness, I suppose.

Kate
Does he know about the Jew?

Ann
He will soon enough.

Kate
I'd like to see the trial, I never trusted Minny.

Ann
She was your friend.

Kate
Friends' of mine don't sell their children.

Scene X: (Balavignus and Bartholemew)

Where? out of their house.

Balavignus *sure!*
You see lad, it's the formation of the stars. The alignment of Venus, Saturn and Mars. It's no wonder that the earth is affected, even Aristotle warned us of this....

Bart
Is he from London?

is he reading from a book or something because if it is during the day, Bart should be quarantining our village.

Balavignus
No, he was a brilliant man....

Bart
Like you?

Balavignus
Like I could only dream of being. (pause) Bartholemew, have you noticed the dryness of the weather?

Bart
How could I not?

Balavignus
Do you wonder why?

Bart
I suppose it's God's will.

28
4 - How did Bart get to know - Balav.
Is this the first time, Is Bart back from
quarantining since it's evening.

Balavignus
Bartholemew, think about two trees, one planted a few years before the other. When the elder becomes large and fills with leaves the other shrinks and dies, do you know why?

Bart
The younger gets no sun, sir.

Balavignus
That's right. Is that God's will?

Bart
Yes, sir. God allows less...

Balavignus
No, it is a natural process upon which no one can act except man. If I had the desire I could replant the young sapling so that it too would get sun. Man can help himself, take for instance this sickness.... *sickness*

Bart
I'm helping with the watch.

Balavignus
So you are, though I don't know whether it will do any good.

Bart
Sir?

Balavignus
We know nothing of the sickness really. I think that all we may be able to do is escape it.

Bart
Escape?

Balavignus
Leave the sickness miles and oceans away.

Scene XI: (The edge of Town)

Sylvia
Bartholemew!

Bart
Hello. Stand where you are.

Sylvia
Oh sir, I am but an honest country girl, have pity.

Bart
I'll not kill you, yet, you are far too beautiful.

Sylvia
The flowers are for me?

Bart
Perhaps.

Sylvia
Or for Betty from town.

Bart
Betty, Betty? Yes, it seems I know a Betty.

Sylvia
Do you think her pretty?

Bart
As beautiful....

Sylvia
Oh!

Bart
As a frog. Come here!

Sylvia
Lay down your weapon. (He drops rake)

Bart
Done. (They embrace)

Sylvia
Will we marry soon?

Bart
I am very young, Sylvia. I've need to make my fortune.
Wouldn't you rather marry a knight.

Sylvia
I want you.

Bart
I mean me of course, I'm a very brave fellow.

Sylvia
(Picks up rake) I dub thee Sir Daisy, steadfast in the service
of the King, fighting peddlers, passing drunkards...

Bart
(Hurt) This is important.

Sylvia
Of course.

Bart
And it is my duty, I protect you from this dread disease...

Sylvia
I love you.

Bart
Passing drunkards!

Sylvia
I'm sorry. I've brought a lunch.

Bart
Who made the bread?

Sylvia
My mother.

Bart
Good. (pause) I mean that your mother is a fine baker.

Sylvia
And I am not?

Bart
Oh no, yours are fine loaves, I had thought of selling them to ships captains as anchors.

Sylvia
Anchors?!? (They wrestle playfully, as they do a man enters he is cloaked heavily.)

enlapped
Timothy
Yo there.

Bart
Yo to you sir, I know you not.

Timothy
Nor I you.

Bart
I am the town's guard.

Timothy
With a rake?

Bart
Against the disease.

Timothy
It's here?

Bart
No, sir. I've told you, I'm preventing it.

Timothy
Your name is?

Bart
Bartholemew Miller, sir.

Timothy
Roger's boy?

Bart
The same.

Timothy
Excuse me, I am Timothy, from Longsport, your father has spoken
of me?

Bart
I'm not sure....

Timothy
We grew up together. (whispers) You have him tell you about
the Lions Head on Christmas. (looks at Sylvia) Ah, this is
a pretty young thing.

Bart
She will be my wife.

Timothy and Sylvia
When!?

Bart
You say you know my father.

Timothy
You'd better latch on to this girl soon. (pause) I've known
him and we've beaten each other's heads but you'll not find
a finer man.

Bart
No Sir.

Timothy
I've just come from France.

Sylvia
France!, then you've seen the plague.

Timothy

Actually I never left the ship. We'd come from Spain, with a load of wool, stolen, says I. Nonetheless we pulled into Petreu on the coast and the first thing that we saw was a Greek ship, heading for us, my mates and I hoped to make some trade with them. As their ship approached we saw no one on deck and soon realized that they were adrift, we came alongsides and heard only the groaning of the ropes against the wood and the empty sails snapping in the breeze. Soon enough the smell reached us. All on board must have been dead, as we tried to dock we were warned by a cannon shot and a man called out in various languages to travel on, that all were dying.

Sylvia

How does it travel?

Bart

Were there black clouds?

Timothy

Clouds, no, but in the heavens...

Bart

The Stars?

Timothy

Something strange.

Bart

The three stars, Balavignus told me.

Timothy

Who?

Bart

A wise man of our village.

Sylvia

A Jew.

Bart

Shhh. A very wise man. And he told me about the stars. I didn't understand though.

Timothy

Can you take me to your home?

Bart

But you musn't enter.

Sylvia

Bartholemew!

Bart
He's an outsider, I'd let you in but the Bishop....

Timothy
Bishop?

Bart
He's here, in Tutney.

Timothy
From where?

Bart
Pardon?

Timothy
From where did His Grace come?

Bart
London.

Timothy
And is that not outside?

Bart
Well, yes but the Bishop!

Sylvia
Your father's friend.

Bart
You're sure that you are not ill?

Timothy
Do I look it?

Bart
You look like a good man and we shall tary here no longer,
you are a guest and I'll make you wait no more to see your
old friend.

End of Act I

ACT II

Scene I (The Bishop)

where? (At the Rabbi's?)

P 35-40

Come in, woman! Bishop
(Minnie enters)

Your grace! Minny
(Falls to her knees)

Get up! Bishop

The blessing. Minny

Shut up and tell me about the Jew. What does he do, how does he control you? Bishop

Your grace? Minny

Why do you lie for him? Bishop

I've told you, the boy was sick. Minny

The plague? Bishop

No sir, from the day he was born he never slept well, cried, coughed, poor little fellow. I didn't know how to help him. Minny

So you sold him? Bishop

I took him to the Jew that he might help the boy. Minny

Put a spell on him? Bishop

A spell? Minny

I've heard of witchery among Jews. (pause) So you supposed that he could help where your doctor could not? Bishop

Minny
The doctor is a fool. I'd say it to his face. Have you talked with him?

Bishop
I've no need to, I am sure that he is a qualified man. (pause)
You, I don't trust, you are a liar and a peasant.

Minny
Your Grace? Are you not a man of God?

Bishop
✓ I am rich and you are poor, it is as simple as that. Had you trusted your superiors, as I'm sure your doctor is, you'd not be in this predicament.

Minny
But, sir. I thought only of the boy.

Bishop
Bring the boy to me.

Minny
But, your grace....

Bishop
I will see the merchandise of the devil.

Minny
He is dead sir.

Bishop
What?

Minny
The boy....

Bishop
Then murder is the charge!

Minny
The Jew never saw him. I told you that the boy had gotten worse, that's why.... There's no use explaining to someone without a heart.
(She begins to exit) *What he or didn't he see the boy?*

Bishop
Won't this be a pretty tale to tell, wait! Come back and sit by me, we'll talk to the Jew. I'll catch you both in your lies.

Minny
No, sir please. I've caused the man too much trouble...

(The Reeve and Balavignus enter)

Bishop
He's caused his own problems. Sit down. I assume that you have men gathering wood.

Reeve
Wood sir?

Bishop
If I find that he has killed a christian child, he will be burned!

Reeve
Might we try him first? I'll ask a question.

Bishop
Proceed.

Reeve
What did you want with the boy?

Balavignus
Which boy?

Reeve
The Bilgus' boy. *I thought that her last name was ~~Franks~~ Lemkin page 17*

Balavignus
Which, they have six, I believe.

Reeve
Young Walter.

Balavignus
Fine lad.

Reeve
He is that, you'd not've hurt him?

Balavignus
I don't know why I would.

Reeve
Do you perform spells?

Balavignus
Spells??

Reeve
Incantations, the black arts.

Balavignus
Of course not.

Reeve
I didn't think so, (beat) leave the man alone he's done nothing.

Bishop
What was the woman doing with the boy if not selling him?

Reeve
Dancing?

Bishop
~~We are having a trial here; please... she has to say.~~

(The doctor enters)

Doctor
I came as quickly as possible. (silence from all) I suppose
that my testimony is required. (silence) I am the doctor.
(silence) Who is presiding?

Bishop
(to Reeve) What does he want?

Reeve
What do you want here?

Doctor
Want? I want to be of service, a crime has been committed in
which medical knowledge was used as a tool, or using the
knowledge or should I say training or perhaps the reading
of.....

Bishop
Please, leave us sir!

Doctor
Leave? My testimony sir, is highly important.

Reeve
We know where to find you should we need you.

Doctor
The Jew is accused?

Reeve
Yes, we've determined that.

Bishop
Kindly leave us sir!

Doctor
Your Grace, I should suppose that a man of some breeding....

Bishop
Cattle are bred, doctor, and fools must make themselves.

Doctor
My testimony will no doubt prove invaluable.

Bishop
Wait! Tell me of this plague, what will you do to help?

Doctor
It seems to me that the disease will be best cured by bleeding, so that the patient becomes white in the face and cold to the touch, he must be wrapped in clothes soaked with cold water to cool the fever. The boils should be swathed in camphor oil.

Balavignus
(To Reeve) That would kill a healthy man.

Reeve
Have you cured anyone, using this method?

Doctor
Well, no.

Bishop
Jew! How would you cure the disease?

Balavignus
I am sure that nothing can be done.

Bishop
No cure?

Balavignus
I think not.

Bishop
And you claim to be qualified as a doctor?

Balavignus
I make no such claim. I was helping, as a friend helps another with the harvest, lending my knowledge, not healing! This plague has ravaged Asia. In India almost all are dead. No one can stop the disease. Putting this poor fool against the plague would be like stopping a river with one piece of straw!

Bishop
Why had you need of a young christian?

Balavignus
(To Reeve) Has he heard nothing?

Bishop
Do you always use young boys in your experiments?

Balavignus
What type of experiments?

Bishop
Scientific, alchemy, wizerdry....

Balavignus
Do you know of what you speak?

Bishop
Witchery, Satan worship.....

Balavignus
Tell me more, how are the ceremonies performed? Does one wear makeup on the face? Are dances performed? Is a fire necessary to call the spirits? Do you drink the blood of young children?

Bishop
I! You are the heathen. *pagano salvaje*

Balavignus
You have cast aside your riches and helped the poor?

Bishop
What?

Balavignus
You are a hypocrite and a fool. Have you listened to anyone except yourself today? The boy is the issue, I wanted only to help him, he had an ailment that this poor excuse for a doctor could do nothing about. I hadn't asked for the boy, the mother came to me.

Doctor
It's obvious that the mother has been possessed.

Balavignus
Please!

Scene II (Bart is standing alone at the edge of the village, he has become tired and bored and is playing with his shoe. As he is totally off-guard, he is startled by the entrance of Melvin.)

Melvin
Praise God, help me!

Bart
I was just.....

Melvin
It's Tutney just ahead, is it not?

Bart
What is it, are you being persuaded?

Melvin
I will be persuaded always. (beat) No there is no one following, I am all alone.

Bart
I am Bartholemew Kemp and you?
middle name?

Melvin
Melvin Gloskin, I'm the smith in Storby, (pause) what was Storby.

Bart
Are you ill?

Melvin
Many are, I was (beat) lucky.

Bart
I'm the guard here, we've heard about the plague. I don't think it will ever reach Tutney.

Melvin
Don't be too sure, it was upon us before we knew.

Bart
I've never been ill a day, sir and glad of it, my mother has.....

(The man is looking away)

Are you all right?

Melvin
No, I have been forsaken by God.

Bart
Do not ever think that.

Melvin
I have seen His most awesome wrath....

Melvin

The sickness spread like a flood in my village, we bolted the doors and cowered like children from a ghost. We heard screams in the street and a man shouted that the prison had been thrown open and that the criminals rode in the wake of the sickness preying on the weak. My wife and I huddled together in our house, she was white with fear and I, no less afraid tried to comfort her. The screaming came closer, they pounded on our door, sick, insane or murderer, one, I knew not and I let the bolt lay in the lock, we heard scratching and moaning but dared not open. In the night the fires raged, first just the bodies, for lack of graves, but soon the whole village roared. The heat rose in our little refuge until we could not breath, I tried the door but could not open it, for the bodies stacked against it. We crawled through the window at the back of the house and into a nightmare. Every where people running, chasing or being chased, crying and tearing at their hair. Children wandered alone. Poor creatures moaned in the streets lying in their own vomit. Men were running with objects saved from their homes. The plague lapped at the people like a flame, reaching out grabbing lightly at first and then flaring into madness. There were fiends stealing money from the dead, taking even their clothing. I could watch no longer and turned to run, I looked at my wife in horror and saw in her eyes a consuming madness, she clutched my arm like an animal, I felt her breath hot against my face and she wailed and would not let go. I tried to pull her along but she made herself heavy and her fingernails dug into my arm, she cried louder than ever, she clung to me and my head swam. I felt like an animal caught in a trap. (pause) I struck her, not hard and tried to tear away but she only gripped more tightly. I struck out again and again, each blow harder than the last and finally when her face was bloody she relaxed her grip and I pushed her away and ran.

Bart

You left her to die?

Melvin

What could I do? I was afraid and God had left me. Striking out, screaming like all the other fools.

Bart

How is it that you escaped the disease?

Melvin

I know not.

Bart

You can thank God that you are alive.

Melvin

I am living in my own hell.....

Sequencia 2
Scene III (The street, Ann and Kate)

Kate
The whole Bilgus family has it, I've heard the coughing.

Ann
And I spoke to her not a fortnight ago.

Kate
I can smell them from my house.

Ann
How awful, what can be done?

Kate
The doctor says....

Ann
That doctor!

Kate
Says that nothing can be done until it develops....

Ann
And when it develops, you're dead. The man's a fool.

Kate
Maybe not, had my boy help him get his trunk down.

Ann
His trunk!

Kate
One morning soon and we'll have no doctor.

Ann
And with this sickness!

Kate
He doesn't care about people. He wants to save his own skin.

Ann
I wonder where he'll go.

Kate
Who knows he'll only bring trouble where ever it is.

Ann
He walked in on the trial.

Kate
So I heard.

Ann
Walked in important as you please, told them he'd give testimony.

Kate
I've heard.

Ann
And the bishop says....

Kate
I told you.

Ann
Oh, I'd forgotten (They walk off together)

*Possible problem
with Ann - from
one scene to other.*

Scene IV (Roger and Ann)

Ann
It was the oddest thing, the one man, apparently the leader carried a long stick with leather whips on it. He stood in the center of their circle, all the men took off their cloaks and had on white skirts underneath. The leader spoke to them, something that I didn't understand and they all lay on the ground and he called out and then struck out with the whip. Each of the leather pieces had a spike in it and as he whipped them the spikes would sometimes stick in their skin....

Roger
My God, they were in the village?

Ann
Right in front of the church, moaning and what all. (Beat)
They were all praying and seemed to be good men, they wouldn't take a penny from anyone.

Roger
Where have they come from?

Ann
I've heard that they started in London and it seems that they pick up members in each town.

Roger
What about the guard?

Ann
What?

Roger
Why weren't they stopped?

Ann
These are holy men, surely they could bring us no evil.

Roger
How long will they stay?

Ann
Oh, perhaps three days, They've sent a note to the Bishop asking his blessing.

Roger
A lot of damned fools if you ask me.

Ann
They're holy men, good brothers. What harm have they done you?

Roger
None, I suppose. Where do they sleep?

Ann
Outdoors, in front of the church.

Roger
What if it rains?

Ann
It hasn't rained in a month.

Roger
What if it does, where will they sleep?

Ann
Inside of the church.

Roger
The roof leaks.

Ann
It won't rain.

Roger
If it did the roof would leak. (pause) What are these fellows praying for?

Ann
For the illness....

Roger
So the flogging isn't enough they want to be sick also.

Ann
They're trying to stop the disease, so that we'll be safe.

Roger
I've still to see anyone sick. Are these men priests?

Ann
No, just good religious fellows.

Roger
And they like to be beaten.?

Ann
No, of course not, it's their penance.

Roger
I don't understand why they have to roam all over the country side, couldn't they beat themselves in their own homes?

Ann
This way certain people who never go to church can see what humbling himself before God is like.

Roger
Meaning me? Bah, I don't know how laying my back open could ever be a service to God. (Beat) You didn't invite any of them to our supper?

Ann
No, I've told you they won't take food or money. Though some of them look very weak or tired.

Scene V: (Bishop and Timothy)

Timothy
Your Grace, I've heard that in France a number of Jews have confessed to the poisoning of wells, that is where the sickness comes from.

Bishop
The wells? Of course, it's devious, everyone must use water.

Timothy
The one who's on trial, what's he done?

Bishop
Stolen a child.

Timothy
Was the boy hurt?

Bishop
He's dead now.

Timothy
Poison?

Bishop
What else could it be?

Timothy
I'd look through his belongings, find what he's been up to. I heard last week that a Jew in Basle confessed on the rack to poisoning wells. All of the Jews in the town, some 500 were put into a large wooden building and the building set afire, the screams were heard for miles and the heat drove the town into a frenzy of wild abandon, as the Jews burned, the people frolicked and danced and drank in the eerie light of the blazing building.

Bishop
Took them all out in one crush.

Timothy
It was terrible.

Bishop
They were punished. (pause) Poison from one's own well?

Timothy
Has anyone been ill here sir?

Bishop
Not yet. It was heard of a few miles to the south. Lucky we caught him before he'd gotten the poison in.

Timothy
Good thing, he might have killed the whole village.

Scene VI (Roger and Ann)

Roger
I, I think, I don't feel well.

Ann
Too much to drink.

Roger
I feel very warm.

*is it a Sunday or Saturday or just late afternoon
of weekday.*

Ann
Come here, I'll tell you if you are warm. (She feels his head)

Roger
I'd better lie down. I am so weak.

Ann
This is not like you. What is the matter?

Roger
My head is burning, all of my joints are stiff. Ann, please bring me water.

Ann
You cannot be, let me look at you, no, you are not well, water, just a minute.
(Ann exits)
(Roger sits, head in hands)
(Ann returns with water in mug)

Roger
I was fine not more than an hour ago.

Ann
You've been working so hard.

Roger
Thank-you. Where is Bartholemew?

Ann
He went to visit the Jew.

Roger
Where are they keeping him?

Ann
At the Reeve's

Roger
Why don't they leave the poor man alone, he's done no harm.

Ann
That friend of your's got the Bishop fired up.

Roger
Tim?

Ann
Who else? Whats a Jew ever done to him?

Roger
He's a good fellow. Just fired up about sailing, always looking for trouble.

Ann
Can I do anything for you?

Roger
You are a good woman.

Ann
What?

Roger
You are a good woman. You care for a fool like me....

Ann
Stop it, your brain has heated over.

Roger
I'd better sleep, lets not have Bart see me all right?

Ann
Why not?

Roger
You know as well as I, we won't risk infecting the boy.

Ann
You're right of course, we'll bolt the door and call to him.

Roger
Leave Tim's things outside he'll be back.

Ann
Like a bad dream.....

Scene VII (The Bishop, Tom and Ruth, as the Bishop enters
Ruth has been playing up to Tom, they are both
startled.)

ausfado, sobriolado.

Bishop
What goes on here?

Tom
Your Grace, sir I've done nothing.

Bishop
(To Ruth) Get out you little slut! (Ruth exits)

The worst of animals are better than the most foolish of men.
That's where this illness has come from. Dirty women like
her, dogs and rats in the streets. Tom bring me water that
I might wash my hands.

Yes, sir. Tom
(Cries)

Wretched pigs. Bishop
(pause) I'll have the dogs killed. They
must carry filth, biting people.

(Tom returns with bowl of water)

Tom, tell the Reeve that we'll kill the dogs. Bishop

Dogs? Are you sure? Tom

You dare to question me? Go and tell him. Bishop

(Tom starts to go)

Wait. You worked for the Jew?

I'm sorry, what sir? Tom

The Jew. Bishop

Yes? Tom

You worked for him. Bishop

Oh yes, kind man. Tom

Kind? Bishop

Very kind, to me and my family. Bought food for us when were
in a bad way. Tom

Where did he get the money? Bishop

His family apparently had some money, he'll sell a diamond
every once in a while in London, he doesn't buy anything but
books. Tom

Bishop
Did you see him perform experiments?

Tom
Oh no, sir. Just read things. (pause) Your Grace?

Bishop
What?

Tom
I heard the Reeve say that only sinners would get the sickness.

Bishop
That's right.

Tom
Even if they stayed in their own houses?

Bishop
They would be sought out by the Lord!
casignati, buscati

Tom
Even if they were, say, in the employ of a Holy man, like yourself?

Bishop
Even then, God would punish the sinner. Do you know one?

Tom
A sinner, oh no sir. (Begins to go)

Bishop
Don't forget the dogs.

Tom
Yes your excellency.

*Why is Bart here? Last late?
Why is he not guarding?
Tutney —*

Scene VIII (Bart and Balavignus)

Bart
Have they hurt you?

Balavignus
If pride can be hurt, yes, otherwise they've been humane.

Bart
The Reeve will help you.

Balavignus
You were right about him, he has been most kind to me. I notice that he takes particular pleasure in refuting the Bishop.

Bart
When will they pass sentence?

Balavignus
Tomorrow, in the morning. (Beat) Bartholemew, listen to me, you must leave Tutney.

Bart
Leave, but why?

Balavignus
To save yourself from the sickness, you young lads should leave quickly.

Bart
But, sir?

Balavignus
Yes.

Bart
What about Sylvia?

Balavignus
The young girl?

Bart
I love her.

Balavignus
Take her along.

Bart
But we're not married.

Balavignus
You love her and will care for her, in this difficult time things will be accepted. Your safety is more important than propriety.

depression / Ours
Bart
Yes sir. Where shall we go?

Balavignus
To the north across water, go until the weather is cold. The warmer climes seem to breed the disease. You will be safe, you are young and strong.

Bart
And you sir?

Balavignus
I, I will probably die here, the Bishop has closed his ears to me. He is a man who needs to prove his own worth by taking away that of others. I am surprised that he even left London, most of the rich have locked themselves in their houses. The man will not be happy until I have died.

Bart
Perhaps I could...

Balavignus
No, there is nothing that you can do. I want you to save yourself. You are a good boy and have listened and learned, there are so many people who do not know the art of listening. (beat) Go from here, my love goes with you.

Bart
Thank-you sir. (He begins to go) But my parents!

Balavignus
Speak to them quickly and go, they want you safe more than I do....

Scene IX (Bart and Sylvia)

*is here?
Is it after he talks to Balavignus?*

Bart
We'll leave this evening.

Sylvia
Why not now in the light of day, we could go very far.

Bart
We'll leave this evening, I (beat) promised Balavignus that we'd wait for him.

Sylvia
I thought he'd be burned by now.

Bart
Don't say that, he'll get out safely, he's much smarter than the bishop.

Sylvia
Is he really?

Bart
He taught in the University, he has read so much.....

Sylvia
You are worried for him, I'll wait if you'd like to go back.

Bart
We'll give it an hour, and then I'll go, the Bishop is an evil man.

Sylvia
Why do they stay knowing that the disease is on its way?

Bart
They will realize soon enough that the sickness approaches, we're lucky to leave so quickly, the roads are clear.

Sylvia
What will we take along?

Bart
Only food. We don't know that the disease hasn't reached London by now. We'll have to be very careful.

Sylvia
I love danger!

Bart
I will protect you.

Sylvia
And if you were knocked down and a knight was going to run you through and I could protect you.

Bart
No, it's not done, you are the one who needs protecting, you are the woman.

Sylvia
I can see that you have much to learn on our way to London. Bartholemew?

Bart
Yes?

Sylvia
What did your parents say did they give us their blessing?

Bart
I spoke to them through the door...

Sylvia
The door?

Bart
Father has the disease.

Sylvia
I'm so very sorry. What did they say?

Bart
That they loved us very much, and wished us good lives and many children. I felt so helpless outside of the door knowing that they would both be dead in a matter of days.

Sylvia
Was your mother alright?

Bart
She is a good woman, I am glad that they are together now.

Sylvia
I went to the house this afternoon, everyone had gone.

Bart
Everyone? They never tried to find you.

Sylvia
The cart was gone, and all of the things from the house.

Bart
This is a miserable time, fear has taken over the thinking.

Sylvia
You'll stay, you'll not leave me?

Bart
Never, if we must die, we'll die together.

Sylvia
You are a good man.

Bart
I will go back, wait for me here.

Sylvia
What are you going to do? You said that you'd not leave.

Bart
I'll be back in an hour. (he exits)

Scene:X (Kate stands alone in the square)

Kate
And I says to Betty, you're not going to make trouble for him are you, well she looks me right in the eye a calls me a liar right to my face.(pause) What've we done to deserve this? All the people of Tutney are good christians, what could we possibly have done?

Scene:XI (The Bishop, the Reeve and Balavignus are sitting at the Reeve's. Bartholemew enters wearing a hooded cloak)

Man
God help me your grace, save me , the disease, my whole family so very ill...

Bishop
Get him out of here.

Man
Give me the blessing, I'll die soon. Help me, I pray to God.

Bishop
No! Get away, I'll not touch you, go away!

Reeve
You'll not help the man.

Bishop
Let him die. You can all die, pigs! (Bishop exits quickly)

Reeve
I hope you'll not die too soon, we'll have some wine.

Bart
I suddenly feel so much better.(pause) I'll pass the wine, I've got to meet someone.

Balavignus
Such a clever young boy, you'll do well for yourself.

Reeve
Glad to see that man go. Bishop, bah!

Bart
(To the Reeve) Is Balavignus free? He has done nothing.

Reeve
Of course, I know that he meant the boy no harm.

Bart
Then you are free to go. (pause) Will you travel with us?

Balavignus
Yes, but only to London. I've friends to talk to before we're all dead.

Bart
And you? (To the Reeve)

Reeve
My place is here. My love goes with you three. Bartholemew, I've watched you grow from a boy, you will do well.

Tom
(entering) You should have seen him, the Bishop was running down the street like a madman, he tripped into a mud puddle. Got back up and kept running. It was a sight.

Bart
We'll go now.

Balavignus
I'll get my books, I've got a trunk....

Bart
I'm sorry we've got to go empty handed, we have no time to waste.

Balavignus
Of course you are right.

(They exit)

Tom
Then he hadn't done anything.

Reeve
I never believed he did.

Tom
That Bishop.....

1
It hasn't rained
in

Reeve
Power in the wrong hands. ✓

Seemingly sticking about his line

Tom
Will we get the illness?

Reeve
I'm afraid so, we don't even know that those three will escape.... We'll all die soon, yet it matters not, life has become a series of small mysteries, the only pleasure I can gain is discovery, I welcome death, it intrigues me. Now that I know the manner in which to live I know that death will find me unworried and content. I'll drink wine and breathe the clear air and walk in the countryside, for I enjoy the simplicity of these things. I'll help the villagers because they've paid me to stay alive, we've helped one another. And I've had a good many years. Tom, bring out the oldest wine, we've a good deal of work ahead and must prepare ourselves! (pause) I will do my best to help the people relax for the reaper shall take in his harvest here, we should face him eye to eye, showing the dignity of living gracefully.

THE END