

The King and the Miller of Mansfield

HM_L2HO1

Extract from Scene 1 Page 1

Sherwood Forest

King 'Harry' is lost in the forest with one of his courtiers.

King: I am lost, quite lost-indeed...What is a King?
Is he not wiser than another man?
Not without his counsellors, I plainly find.

GUN SHOT

Enter the Miller

Miller: I believe I hear the rogue, who's there?

King: No rogue, I assure you...

Miller: Come, come, Sirrah, confess; you have shot one of
the King's Deer, have not you?

Miller: Pray who are you? What's your name?

King: Name?

Miller: Name! Yes name. Why you have a name, have not you?
Where do you come from? What is your business here?

King: These are questions I have not been used to honest man.

Miller: May be so; but they are questions, no honest man would be afraid to
answer. So, if you can give no better account of yourself, I shall make
bold to take you along with me, if you please.

GLOSSARY OF WORDS:

rogue *a dishonest man*

Sirrah *boy or man, often
said to somebody less
important than you*

authority *permission*

account *explanation*

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Extract from Scene 1 Page 2

King: With you! What authority have you to –

Miller: The King's authority...I am John Cockle, the Miller of Mansfield, one of his Majesty's keepers in this forest of Sherwood; and I will let no suspected fellow past this way that cannot give better account of himself that you have done...

King: I have the honour to belong to the King as well as you...I came down with him to hunt in this forest... and I have lost my way...

If you attend me to Nottingham, if I am near it; or give me a night's lodgings in your own house, here is something to pay for your trouble.

Miller: I am convinced you are a courtier; here is a little bribe...
Here, take it back.

John Cockle is no courtier, he can do what he ought – without a bribe...

You are twelve miles from Nottingham, and all the way through this thick wood... if you will accept of such poor entertainment as a miller can give, you shall be welcome to stay all night and in this morning I will go with you myself.

King: And cannot you go with me tonight?

Miller: I would not go with you tonight if you were the King.

King: Then I must go with you, I think.



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Scene 4 Page 1

The Mill

Margery and Kate knitting

Kate: I love ghost stories. Tell me more!

Margery: Then a tall white thing came in, all bloody, with great flaring eyes, wailing...

***KNOCKING AT DOOR –
frightens them and they scream
out, throwing down their knitting***

Kate: Oh dear, mother...they say talk of the devil and he'll appear.

Margery: Kate, go and see who's at the door.

Kate: I daren't go mother, you go.

Margery: Come, let's both go...
Who's there?

Dick: What, won't you let me in?

Kate: O Gemini! It's like our Dick, I think.
He's certainly dead, and it's his spirit.

Margery: Heaven forbid! It's he himself.
Open the door Kate.

Kate: No, you open it.

GLOSSARY OF WORDS:

'O Gemini!' *in the 17th century this was a mild swear word. It comes from the Latin phrase 'Jesu domine' meaning 'Lord Jesus'*

fowl *a bird such as a turkey or goose*

sincere *truthful, or honest*

Margery: Come, we'll both open it.

They open the door, enter Dick

Margery: I'm overjoyed to see you.

Kate: I'm glad to see you. How are you?

Dick: Very well Kate. But where's my father?

Margery: He heard a gun go off and he's gone to see who it is.

Dick: They still like venison in Mansfield I suppose?

Miller: Hey Madge! Kate! Bring a light here!

Kate: Has he caught the rogue, I wonder?

Enter the King and the Miller

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Scene 4 Page 2

Margery: Who have you got?

Miller: I have brought thee a stranger...

Madge: We must give him supper and lodging.

Margery: You've got a better stranger to see you - Dick's here.

Miller: Sir, you must excuse me - I was over-joyed to see my boy.
He has been in London, and I have not seen him these four years.

King [Aside]: Well, I shall once in my life have the happiness of being
treated as a common man...

Miller: What has brought you home so unexpectedly?

Dick: I'll tell you soon.

Miller: I'll look forward to that. In the meantime, this honest gentleman has
been hunting in the forest with the King today and has lost his way.
Come Madge, make some supper. Kill a couple of the best fowl; and go
you, Kate, and draw a pitcher of ale. We are famous Sir at Mansfield for
ale - for honest fellows that know how to drink it.

King: Good ale is welcome as I'm thirsty.
But tell me, why did your son have to go to London?

Miller: I'm not sure Dick would wish to share that story.

King: Then I don't wish to hear it.



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Scene 4 Page 3

Kate enters with the ale

Miller: Now go and help your mother.
Sir, my hearty service to you.

King: Thank ye, Sir.

[Aside]: He seems sincere and treats me like any other man, something a King doesn't ever experience.

Narrator: *Dick tells his father how disappointed with London he is. He failed to get a job as a courtier. He thinks that the people who work in Court have got their jobs through flattery and bribery.*

King: Do you know that I am a courtier?!

Dick: It's not my fault if you disagree with me. There may be exceptions and I hope you may be one.

King: I hope you have better success the next time you come to London.

Dick: I thank ye, but I don't want to see it again in a hurry.

Miller: No, no Dick instead of descending upon Lords' promises, depend upon the labour of thine own hands...

Miller: But come, I want a description of London!

Dick: I've seen large houses with small hospitality and fine ladies who do nothing at all...

Miller: Well, if this is London, give me my country cottage, which may not be a great house, nor a fine house, but is my house and I can show a receipt for the building of it.

King: I agree with you.

Miller: Come Sir, our supper I believe is ready for us, by this time, and to such as I have, you're as welcome as a Prince.

King: I thank you.

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Scene 6b Page 1

The Miller's cottage

The Miller, his son Dick and the King are present

Enter Peggy

Miller: What wind blew you hither prey!
You should be ashamed to set
foot in my house.

Dick: Don't be angry; I asked her
here to do me justice.

Peggy: That's all I can do.

My reputation is ruined and all my
friends have abandoned me.

King: Pray let me know the story of your
misfortunes; perhaps it may be in
my power to fix things.

Peggy: Shame will not let me speak,
or hear it told.

Peggy exits

King: She's very pretty.

GLOSSARY OF WORDS:

flee	<i>('fled' in the past tense) - to run away (usually from a place of danger)</i>
hither	<i>towards a place</i>
humanity	<i>human beings / people</i>
jest	<i>to joke about</i>
justice	<i>to do the right thing (usually by law, but can also mean morally)</i>
nobleman	<i>a person who is in the upper class because of his job or by birth</i>
passion	<i>love</i>
temper	<i>someone's state of mind; how they react to situations - be that calmly or angrily</i>

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Scene 6b Page 2

Dick: O Sir, I once thought her an angel; I loved her dearer than my life, and did believe her passion was the same for me. But a young nobleman seeing her youth and blooming beauty tried to attract her attention. When he discovered she was not interested because she was in love with me, he invented a story about me being on the verge of marrying someone else! He also warned me to leave Mansfield and paid a woman to spread nasty rumours about me. That's when I fled to London.

King: So how do you propose to do justice?

Dick: Why, as the King is in the forest hunting, we hope to take some opportunity of throwing ourselves at his feet and complaining of the injustice done us by this noble villain.

Miller: Ah, Dick! I expect this would just become a jest in the King's court.

King: Those that can make a jest of what ought to be shocking to humanity, do not deserve to be called a nobleman.

Dick: Do you know something of the King's temper?

King: Why, I think he would not allow a nobleman in his court to do wrong to anyone. But who is the nobleman that is capable of such actions as these?

Dick: Do you know Lord Lurewell?

King: Yes.

Dick: That's the man...

King: Well I would suggest you put your plan in action. I am sure the King will not only hear your complaint but will put things right.

Miller: I hope that you are right.

The King and the Miller of Mansfield

by Robert Dodsley, 1738

HM_L2HO4

The Cast

MEN:

The King Henry II (King between 1154-89)

John Cockle the Miller of Mansfield

Richard the Miller's Son

Courtiers including **Lord Lurewell**

Keepers of the Forest

WOMEN:

Margery the Miller's Wife

Kate the Miller's Daughter

Peggy Richard's love interest

Phoebe Peggy's housemaid

GLOSSARY OF WORDS:

nobleman *a courtier or someone upper class*

poach *to kill animals illegally
(usually for food)*

apprehend *to stop and ask questions*

mark *a coin worth two thirds of a pound*



The King and the Miller of Mansfield by Robert Dodsley, 1738

HM_L2HO4

Scene 1

John Cockle, the Miller of Mansfield, comes across a nobleman lost in Sherwood Forest. He accuses the man of poaching the King's deer. He does not know that he is speaking to the King himself! The King pretends to be one of his own courtiers and asks the Miller to show him the way back to Nottingham. It is too late to go back through the forest, so the miller offers the nobleman lodgings at his cottage.



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Scene 2

We meet Richard (called Dick for short) who has received a letter from the young woman he is in love with, Peggy.

In her letter Peggy admits that despite being in love with Dick, she has had a romantic liaison with another man who tricked her into believing Dick was about to marry another woman.

She is begging Dick to visit her to sort things out.

Scene 3

We meet Peggy and her maid Phoebe. Peggy is very upset and can't sit still. She is desperate for Dick's forgiveness.

When Dick arrives, she explains to him how she was tricked by her suitor, a nobleman in the King's Court.

She explains her plan to find the King, (who is hunting in the nearby Sherwood Forest) and to inform him about the bad behaviour of one of his courtiers.

Dick thinks this is a good plan and tells Peggy to meet him at his father's cottage.

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Scene 4

We meet the Miller's wife, Margery, and his daughter, Kate. They are knitting together and Margery is telling Kate a ghost story. When there is a knock at the door they are startled and wonder if it's the devil.

In actual fact it is Dick, the Miller's son, back from four years working in London.

Shortly the Miller returns with his nobleman (the King).

The Miller and his family show their guest great hospitality. They feed him dinner and give him Mansfield ale to drink. The King enjoys the Miller's honest and familiar manner.

Dick complains that London is full of people with big houses and little hospitality and fine ladies that do nothing at all.

Scene 5

Back in the woods, we see the Keepers of the Forest apprehend a small group of men who they assume have been poaching the King's deer.

The Keepers take the men to the Miller's cottage where they can be held until they can be further questioned.



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Scene 6a

Back at the Miller's cottage, the Miller, his wife and the 'nobleman' drink to the King's health.

They are entertained by one of the men who works in the mill, who sings a song.

Scene 6b

Peggy arrives at the Miller's cottage. She is very ashamed about what she has done. She dare not speak of it or hear about it again and leaves the room.

Dick then tells the full story about how Peggy was tricked and also about being driven out of Mansfield when his reputation was ruined.

He describes their plan to get the King to listen to their story about the wrongdoings of a member of his court, so that he might use his powers to put things right.

He tells the 'nobleman' that the culprit is a man called Lord Lurewell and asks him what he thinks the King would make of their story.

The King says that he thinks the King would not allow his courtiers to treat anyone in the Kingdom so badly and that he would put things right.

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Scene 6c

One of the Forest Keepers enters with the two noblemen he has apprehended - one of whom is Lord Lurewell.

The noblemen reveal the King's true identity. The King calls Lurewell to account for his actions and orders him to pay Peggy £300 a year in compensation.

He gives the Miller a knighthood, becoming Sir John Cockle and earning him 1000 Marks a year, in recognition of his hospitality and fine morals.

