The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations

Isaac Edward Salkinson's *Ithiel the Cushite of Venice* and *Ram and Jael*

A Bilingual Edition and Commentary
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Lily Kahn
This book is dedicated with love to Panda.
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Introduction

1 The historical and literary background to the first Hebrew Shakespeare translations

The first Hebrew Shakespeare translations are a product of the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment, a hugely influential social and intellectual movement that emerged in Berlin in the 1770s around the German Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn and his circle. The Haskalah evolved under the influence of the general European Enlightenment but with a specific focus on Jewish issues. Maskilim, adherents of the Haskalah, sought to promote greater integration of Jews into their European host societies with a view towards eventual emancipation. To this end they advocated educational reform, including engagement with science, mathematics, European languages, and other subjects that had been absent from the traditional Ashkenazic (Northern, Central, and Eastern European Jewish) educational system, which was dedicated solely to study of the canonical Jewish texts with a focus on the Babylonian Talmud. A central element of the Maskilic project was the creation of a modern literary culture in Hebrew including genres that had not previously existed among Ashkenazic Jewry. Early Maskilic literary production consisted primarily of critical essays, poetry, and some drama (Pelli 1979). At the time Hebrew was not a spoken language, having died out in the early centuries CE and remaining more or less solely a literary medium until its revernacularization in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Palestine (Sáenz-Badillos 1993). The Maskilim selected Hebrew as the chief vehicle of their literary project due to its central and venerable status in Jewish society as the language of its main religious, legal, and philosophical writings (Pelli 1979: 73–108; Shavit 1993; Schatz 2009; Eldar 2016). They typically expressed a preference for Biblical Hebrew over postbiblical varieties of the language, regarding the biblical stratum as the purest
form (Shavit 1993: 117–18) – although not all early Maskilim supported a strictly purist biblical style (Schatz 2009). They rejected Yiddish, the Central and Eastern European vernacular, and sought to replace it with German as the Jews’ spoken language (Shavit 1993: 114–15; Eldar 2016: 29). Over the course of the following decades, the Haskalah spread into Galicia and then further east into czarist Russia, where it gave rise to a much more extensive body of Hebrew literature including novels, short stories, novellas, and plays (Patterson 1988) in addition to a thriving press and other forms of non-fiction. Maskilic fiction included both original compositions and translations of European literature, mainly German or, in the later decades of the Haskalah, Russian (Toury 2012: 133, 162–72). The popularity of translations during the Haskalah was a product of the desire to expand the Hebrew literary canon (Toury 2012: 165), as in other cultures with newly emerging literary models (Even-Zohar 1990: 47).

Considering Shakespeare’s status as one of the most highly regarded authors in the European canon, it is unsurprising that the early Maskilim became interested in his work as part of their drive to develop a new Hebrew literature based on European models. Shakespeare’s particular eminence in Germany is especially relevant in this context both because of the great admiration for his work expressed by Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe – whom the Maskilic authors held in extremely high esteem – and because most Maskilim accessed and translated European literature through German intermediaries, with few of them trained in other European languages (Almagor 1975: 721–6; Toury 2012: 162–72). The early decades of the Haskalah saw the first attempt to translate Shakespeare into Hebrew, a rendition of fifteen lines of a speech by King Henry IV from *Henry IV Part Two* (via German) that appeared in a book on biblical poetics (Levisohn 1816). The translated excerpt was intended to serve as an example of the concept of the apostrophe (Toury 2012: 171).

Following this initial effort, there was a gap of twenty-five years before any further Shakespeare extracts appeared in Hebrew. Between the 1840s and 1870s, a small number of Maskilic writers produced half a dozen fragmentary translations, mostly monologues and all via German versions. These fragments include three excerpts from *Hamlet*; the first, by Fabius Mieses, was composed in 1842 but remained unpublished until 1891; the second, by Naftali Poper Krassensohn, appeared in the Maskilic periodical *Kokheve Yisḥaq* in 1856; and the third, by the prominent Hebrew literary figure Peretz Smolenskin, consists of four short extracts embedded in his novel *The Joy of the Godless*, which was published in the literary journal *HaShaḥar* in 1872. There were also two excerpts from *Macbeth*; the first appeared in an article by Joshua Steinberg published in 1868 in the Maskilic periodical *HaKarmel*; the second was translated by an S. Medliger and published in the periodical *Haaret* in 1871. Finally, an extract based on Herder’s version of a song from Cymbeline was translated by Simon Bacher and published in *Kokheve*.
Yiskaq in 1862.1 As Toury (2012: 171–2) observes, these fragments did very little to familiarize Maskilic readers with Shakespeare’s work or to establish a position for him within the nascent Hebrew literary library: with the exception of Peretz Smolenskin, the translators were all minor or unknown literary figures, the translations were typically published in relatively peripheral journals, and some of them (such as those of Smolenskin) were further obscured by appearing embedded within novels or articles.

This early period of marginal Hebrew Shakespeare translation ended with the publication of Isaac Edward Salkinson’s Hebrew version of Othello, Ithiel the Cushite of Venice (Vienna, 1874). Salkinson’s Ithiel marked the beginning of a new era in the story of Shakespeare in Hebrew because it was the first rendition of a complete play to appear in the language and the first to gain widespread critical attention in Maskilic literary circles. In addition, it was the first Hebrew Shakespeare version to be translated directly from the English original, constituting a departure from the earlier practice of indirect translation via German. Salkinson’s translations were thus the first to bring the English and Hebrew texts into a direct dialogue with each other, in contrast to the previous versions, which were shaped by the interpretive filter of the German intermediary. This is significant not only in the immediate context of early Hebrew Shakespeare translation, but in that of translated nineteenth-century Hebrew literature in more general terms, as throughout this period English literature in Hebrew was typically mediated via German, and the distinction between direct and indirect translation was relatively unknown (Toury 2012: 165–73). Salkinson’s pivotal role in the history of Hebrew Shakespeare translation is rooted in his singular biographical circumstances, which will be discussed in Section 2.

2 Isaac Edward (Eliezer) Salkinson’s life and works

Biographical information on Salkinson, in particular his early years, is relatively scant. He is believed to have been born in 1820 as Isaac Eliezer Salkinson in a small village near Shklov, a town in present-day Belarus that was then part of the Russian Empire. His father is thought to have been a poor scholar who was unsuccessful in securing a rabbinical post but served for a time as a judge in a rabbinical court in Shklov (Zitron 1925: 37–8); while some sources (e.g., Lapide 1984: 92) identify him as the Hebrew poet Solomon Salkind (1806–68), there does not seem to be any clear basis for this. Salkinson’s father was married twice. He had three children with his first wife, of whom Salkinson was the youngest. He and his first wife

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1 See Almagor (1975: 769–71) and Toury (2012: 171) for bibliographic details of these early fragmentary Hebrew Shakespeare translations, and Almagor (1975: 737–9) for a short discussion of them.
were divorced sometime during Salkinson’s childhood; he subsequently remarried and had another two children (Zitron 1925: 38). According to the only book-length biography of Salkinson (Cohen 1942: 12), his family life was unhappy and he was cruelly treated by his stepmother. The same account states that Salkinson’s mother died when he was seven and his father may have died around ten years later; by contrast, according to the short biographical sketch appearing in Dunlop (1894: 373), his father died seven years before his mother. Salkinson received a traditional Jewish education, which included study of the classical sources (the Hebrew Bible, the Mishnah, and especially the Talmud), and gained a reputation as an ilui, an outstanding scholar (Zitron 1925: 38). Like other Eastern European Jews of the period, his native vernacular was Yiddish.

When Salkinson was sixteen or seventeen he is believed to have left home and settled in Mogilev, a larger city in present-day Belarus, where he continued his studies of the traditional Jewish sources until he was forced into hiding at the house of an innkeeper in a nearby village in order to avoid being conscripted into the czarist army (Zitron 1925: 39–41). While in the village, the innkeeper introduced him
to a man who exposed him to the Maskilic principle of secular education in addition to Torah study and encouraged him to study medieval Hebrew literature as well as the Talmud (Zitron 1925: 42–3). The innkeeper wanted Salkinson to marry his granddaughter, and when Salkinson refused his host attempted to prevent him from leaving the village. Salkinson’s Maskilic friend helped him to obtain a travel permit and escape the village (Zitron 1925: 43–9). He travelled to Minsk and from there to Vilna, where he was introduced to Chayim Zalman Eliashevitz, a Maskil who took him in and introduced him to key Maskilic ideologies and texts. Under Eliashevitz’s guidance he studied Hebrew grammar, Moses Mendelssohn’s influential Judeo-German Bible translation, and the German and Russian languages. While Salkinson did not take to the study of Russian and abandoned it after a short time (Zitron 1925: 49), he immersed himself in the study of German language and literature with the intention of travelling to Germany to pursue further education (Cohen 1942: 18). While in Vilna he fell in love with Eliashevitz’s daughter, but she did not return his affections, preferring a rabbinical student who used to frequent Eliashevitz’s house (Zitron 1925: 50). According to Zitron, the rabbinical student would write Hebrew poetry for her, which impressed both her and her father. Apparently jealousy of his competitor spurred Salkinson to make his first attempt at literary translation into Hebrew, a rendition of the first act of Schiller’s drama Kabale und Liebe called נבלת אהבה ‘Deceit and Love’ (Zitron 1925: 50), which does not seem to have survived. While Eliashevitz and his Maskilic associates were impressed with the translation, it did not have the desired effect of winning over Eliashevitz’s daughter, and the rejection caused Salkinson to leave Vilna (Zitron 1925: 50). Lacking a foreign travel permit, he crossed the Prussian border illegally and made his way to Königsberg (present-day Kaliningrad), from whence he planned to continue on to Berlin (Zitron 1925: 52–3). The subsequent turn of events is somewhat unclear. According to Zitron (1925: 53), while working at the Königsberg port in order to make money for his trip to Berlin he met a converted Jewish ship’s captain who offered him free passage to London and persuaded him that it would be easier for him to continue his studies there. By contrast, Dunlop (1894: 373) states that he decided to go the United States in order to train under a ‘celebrated rabbi’ and stopped off in London on the way.

Regardless of the circumstances of his journey, it is clear that Salkinson arrived in London in the late 1840s. According to Zitron (1925: 53–4), the ship’s captain arranged for him to be taken to the London Missionary Society, an organization that was engaged in, among its many international missionary projects, converting London Jews to Christianity. At some point following this initial encounter Salkinson converted to Christianity, allegedly under the influence of an elderly converted Jewish couple who took him in, showed him hospitality, and encouraged him in his educational ambitions (Zitron 1925: 60–5; Cohen 1942: 21–3). Salkinson is one of a number of Eastern European Jewish translators and scholars to convert to
Christianity under missionary auspices in this period. Following his conversion, Salkinson completed a four-year course at the college of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, subsequently becoming a missionary of the British Society in Scotland while training as a Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh and Glasgow. He received his ordination in Glasgow in 1859 (Dunlop 1894: 373).

Around this time Salkinson began to engage in earnest with his interest in Hebrew translation. In an autobiographical sketch published in Dunlop (1894: 373), he recalls how upon first encountering the New Testament – in a Hebrew translation – he felt the need for ‘a version in idiomatic Hebrew’. Having acquired Greek language skills as part of his seminary training, he translated the Epistle to the Romans into Hebrew (Salkinson 1855 – although Salkinson himself cites a publication date of 1853). This was followed by a Hebrew translation of Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation: A Book for the Times (Walker 1841), an American missionary tract; the translation was commissioned by Salkinson’s fellow students at the United Presbyterian Seminary and was published in 1858. Dunlop (1894: 375–7) contains details of this book and Salkinson’s Hebrew translation of it. At some point he married a younger Jewish woman who had converted to Christianity and the couple had two children (Kamianski as cited in Zitron 1925: 71), but there is little additional information in this respect other than that his wife was ‘his invaluable helpmate in the Mission Field’ (Dunlop 1894: 382).

At this time Salkinson returned to literary translation, following a suggestion by his converted Jewish colleague Christian David Ginsburg that he produce a Hebrew version of Milton’s Paradise Lost (Dunlop 1894: 374). He began his translation in 1861 and completed it in 1870, when it was published with Ginsburg’s assistance under the title of ‘So He Drove Out the Man’. Reveler Joseph Rawson Lumby, Norrisian Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, commented (in Dunlop 1894: 377) that Salkinson’s Hebrew translation ‘sets forth Christian teaching almost as definitely as does the Apostles’ Creed’. This contrasts sharply with Salkinson’s later Shakespeare translations, in which he typically omits or Judaizes Christian elements, as discussed in Section 3.2.1.

At some point after Salkinson completed his studies in Scotland, the British Society posted him to Pressburg (present-day Bratislava), where there was a large Jewish community, in order to pursue his missionary activities there among his former coreligionists (Cohen 1942: 23). In 1876 he was transferred to Vienna, which

2 See Dunlop (1894) for a compilation of biographical sketches of Jewish converts to Christianity in Victorian Britain; see Ruderman (2015) for a discussion of the nineteenth-century missionary activity of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, focusing on the central figure of Alexander McCaul. See also Endelman (1987).

3 This title is a citation of the beginning of Gen. 3:24, in which God drives Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden after they eat from the tree of knowledge. See Dikman (in Salkinson 1874/2015: 234–5) for a brief discussion of Salkinson’s translation of Paradise Lost.
at the time was a pivotal hub of Maskilic literary culture, serving as the home of various major Hebrew writers (mostly émigrés from czarist Russia) and journals including the influential *HaShaḥar*, the chief forum for late nineteenth-century Hebrew literature (Holtzman 2010). In Vienna Salkinson met and became friends with Peretz Smolenskin, the Russian-born editor of *HaShaḥar* and an extremely prominent author of Maskilic Hebrew prose fiction. During his time in Vienna Salkinson seems to have spent a great deal of time associating with members of the Maskilic Hebrew literary circles, befriending well-known authors such as Judah Leib Gordon and Abraham Baer Gottlober; indeed, Zitron (1925: 67), who met Salkinson during his years in Vienna, suggests that this activity was more important to him than his missionary work. Hebrew writers who were acquainted with him seem to have regarded him as honest and upstanding, with a true love for the Hebrew language, and to have respected him (while simultaneously holding him in suspicion) for his openness regarding his missionary activities (Cohen 1942: 38).

Smolenskin had a longstanding desire to see Shakespeare’s plays in Hebrew, but lacked the English skills to conduct a translation from the original himself. Upon meeting Salkinson, who was a fluent English speaker and had experience with literary translation into Hebrew, he saw the rare opportunity for this dream to be fulfilled and commissioned him to translate an entire play, *Othello*. Salkinson’s acceptance of this commission is likely to have been rooted in his longstanding passion for literary translation, as well as in his evident desire to maintain a foothold in the Maskilic Hebrew cultural world despite his conversion. His *Othello* translation, entitled *Ithiel the Cushite of Venice*, was published in Vienna in 1874 with a lengthy preface by Smolenskin. This preface is itself a remarkable piece of early Hebrew Shakespeare criticism, which makes for fascinating reading in its own right. In it, Smolenskin analyses Shakespeare’s significance as a playwright and provides a psychological assessment of the characters appearing in the play, with a particular focus on Ithiel (Othello), Doeg (Iago), Phichol (Brabantio), and Asenath (Desdemona); in addition, he evaluates the ways in which the play’s themes are particularly relevant and instructive for a Jewish audience, and argues for his vision of good literature as a vehicle for the depiction of human nature in all its moral complexity.

The motivation behind Salkinson’s and Smolenskin’s selection of *Othello* as opposed to other Shakespearean works is unclear. Scolnicov (2001) proposes that the subject matter of *Othello* was particularly appealing to Salkinson because he identified with the protagonist’s liminal status as a foreigner and convert. This was followed by a translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, called *Ram and Jael*, published in 1878. See Section 3.1 for further details of the publication and reception of these two translations.
Romeo and Juliet hints at a particular interest in the themes of jealousy and love. (If so, perhaps this interest was inspired by Salkinson’s memories of his love for Eliashevitz’s daughter and his unsuccessful rivalry for her affections.) During this time, Salkinson also rendered Christoph August Tiedge’s early nineteenth-century German poetic work Urania into Hebrew at the request of the Reverend Jellinek in Vienna (Dunlop 1894: 374); the translation was published in 1877. Apparently he also translated Byron’s 1815 volume Hebrew Melodies into Hebrew, but this does not seem to have survived (Oz in Salkinson 1878/2016: 190).

Despite his obvious affinity for Maskilic cultural activity, Salkinson's autobiographical sketch and letters to John Dunlop – secretary of the British Society – predictably paint a very different picture of his time in Vienna, focusing on his attempts to convert the local Jews to Christianity while downplaying his work as a literary translator. Salkinson (in Dunlop 1894: 380–2) describes visits to the Temple Library in Vienna, where he attended lectures on Midrash and the Hebrew Bible in an attempt to raise the issue of the Messiah with the Jewish audience, his discussions with a Jewish doctor with whom he discussed the tenets of Christianity, and a friend from Breslau who converted under his influence. Nevertheless, regardless of such efforts Salkinson did admit that he felt translation to be his chief purpose in life, stating that ‘Hebrew translation seems [sic] to be the only talent given to me, and it I have consecrated to the Lord’ (Dunlop 1894: 382). It is thus unsurprising that even within the context of his missionary work, Salkinson’s most memorable achievement was in the realm of translation. The British Society, like Smolenskin, recognized his singular talent in this area and in 1877 commissioned him to produce a Hebrew version of the New Testament. In his autobiographical sketch (Dunlop 1894: 375) he notes: ‘I undertook the work with delight, the more so since many learned Jews repeatedly expressed to me their astonishment that I had not undertaken it long ago.’

Salkinson seems to have intended to continue juggling his Hebrew literary translation with his missionary activities. In the preface to Ram and Jael, Smolenskin puts forth his vision for a complete series of Hebrew Shakespeare plays translated by Salkinson. However, this dream was to go unrealized. According to the Hebrew writer David Isaiah Silberbusch (1936), following publication of Ram and Jael a fellow converted Jew called Josephus, who had taken a dislike to Smolenskin and was offended at his comparison of Shakespeare's work to the Holy Scriptures (made in the preface to Salkinson’s Ithiel), took his anger out on Salkinson by reporting him to the British Society for neglecting his missionary work and New Testament commission while instead spending his time translating Shakespeare into Hebrew. The British Society dismissed Salkinson from his post for a year and banned him from returning until he had completed his New Testament translation. While Salkinson, unsurprisingly, does not reference this incident directly in his autobiographical sketch, there is perhaps a veiled allusion to it when he says: ‘Under
peculiar circumstances, I was induced to translate, in my own hours of recreation, “Othello,” and “Romeo and Juliet” (Dunlop 1894: 374). The reference to ‘peculiar circumstances’ and ‘own hours of recreation’ may suggest a reluctance to admit to the British Society, in whose volume the sketch was published, of his close association with the Jewish literary circles in Vienna and his engagement with Hebrew translation unrelated to his missionary work. In his letters to John Dunlop from the early 1880s he mentions his progress with the New Testament translation, noting that he does not wish to sell the manuscript and copyright to the British Society but rather to give it away freely (Dunlop 1894: 383). Whether the suspension of duty made him reluctant to return to literary translation or not is uncertain, but he did not turn his hand to further Shakespeare renditions. He died on 5 June 1883 in Vienna. At the time his New Testament translation was not quite finished and the British Society asked Christian David Ginsburg to complete it (Dunlop 1894: 384). The finished translation was published in 1885 by the London-based Trinitarian Bible Society as ‘The Salkinson-Ginsburg Hebrew New Testament’. It has since been reissued in numerous editions and remains available to the present day.

3 Salkinson’s Shakespeare translations

3.1 Publication and reception

As discussed in the previous sections, Salkinson’s translations were the product of a longstanding Maskilic interest in Shakespeare. Like the first fragmentary renditions produced earlier in the nineteenth century, Salkinson’s *Ithiel* and *Ram and Jael* were intended as purely literary endeavours, designed for private reading by the largely Maskilic circles with an interest in Hebrew fiction. They were not envisioned for performance on stage, as they were composed several decades before the establishment of the first Hebrew theatres (following some intermittent Hebrew-language performances in Łódź and Riga towards the end of the nineteenth century, the first permanent Hebrew theatres were launched in St Petersburg and Białystock in 1909). *Ithiel* was published with Smolenskin’s support in a thousand copies (Almagor 1975: 753) by the Viennese printer Spitzer and Holzwarth Junior as a standalone volume (in contrast to many Maskilic Hebrew novels, which were serialized in literary journals such as Smolenskin’s *HaShaḥar*). According to the publication announcement printed in the leading Maskilic Hebrew periodical *HaMaggid* (10 March 1874), it was sold for eighty kopecks or three francs and could be purchased from the publishers or one of the agents selling *HaShaḥar*. The title page (Figures 2 and 3), which appeared in Hebrew and English, listed Salkinson

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only as ‘J.E.S., translator of Paradise Lost’, while acknowledging Smolenskin prominently as editor. (Salkinson was likewise listed only as J.E.S. on the title page of his other literary translations.) Upon its publication, Ithiel was very well received in the Maskilic literary circles at which it was aimed. The publication announcement in HaMaggid (10 March 1874: 97) described it in glowing terms, stating that its like had never before been seen, and that it was a precious jewel for the Hebrew language. A similarly positive review appeared in a slightly later issue of the same newspaper (HaMaggid, 26 May 1874: 185), in which it was praised as ‘one of the best and most faithful Hebrew translations that have been carried out in our days’; Smolenskin’s preface to the work was also lauded. However, in the following issue (HaMaggid, 2 June 1874: 193) the positive review was tempered by a notice drawing the reader’s attention to the fact that the unknown J.E.S. had been discovered to be none other than Isaac Salkinson, a convert and well-known missionary. A similar review appeared in another Hebrew periodical, HaLevanon (10 June 1874: 338), noting that the translation was magnificent and had rightly received praise, but that the anonymous translator was ‘not one of ours’.6

Smolenskin did not allow the criticism of Salkinson’s personal circumstances to deter him from pursuing his goal of seeing Shakespeare in Hebrew and he encouraged Salkinson to continue work on a further Shakespeare translation, supporting him in the production of Ram and Jael, which was published in 1878 in Vienna by the printer Georg Brög, again in a thousand copies (Almagor 1975: 753). However, the controversy surrounding Salkinson’s status is reflected in the fact that on the title page of this second translation, Smolenskin’s role in the project is played down, with his name appearing in miniscule letters under the publisher’s name (Figures 4 and 5). In his preface to Ram and Jael (which is much shorter than his preface to Ithiel), Smolenskin takes pains to explain to Salkinson that this decision should in no way be interpreted as an attempt to distance himself from his friend, but rather is rooted in a desire to spare Salkinson from the damage that would be done to the volume’s reputation were Smolenskin’s name to appear more prominently, given the latter’s many enemies in Maskilic literary circles. Perhaps surprisingly, despite the previously mentioned announcement in HaMaggid revealing the translator’s identity and convert status, when Ram and Jael was published a short review appeared in the prominent Hebrew periodical HaMeliṣ (11 March 1879: 190) praising the work and referring to the translator only as ‘the anonymous author J.E.S.’. Another positive review appeared in the periodical HaSefira (3 June 1879: 158), again without acknowledging the translator’s identity.

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6 See Cohen (1942: 63–64) and Almagor (1975: 744) for further discussion of these critical reactions to Salkinson’s unusual status within the Jewish community; see also Salkinson (1874/2015: 226–9) for the announcements in HaMaggid and HaLevanon.
Although Smolenskin’s dream of a complete series of Salkinson’s Hebrew Shakespeare translations was to remain unfulfilled, Ithiel and Ram and Jael quickly inspired others to follow suit, and the two decades following the publication of Salkinson’s groundbreaking work saw the appearance of another four translations of complete Shakespeare plays undertaken by various Eastern European Jewish authors. The first of these was Isaac Barb’s Macbeth (1883), followed by Judah Leib Elkind’s version of The Taming of the Shrew (1892), Samuel Leib Gordon’s translation of King Lear (1890), and Hayim Yehiel Bornstein’s Hamlet (1900–1). With the exception of Barb’s Macbeth, which was translated via Schiller’s early nineteenth-century German adaptation, all of these plays were (at least allegedly) translated directly from the English, a trend initiated by Salkinson. Although information on these authors is relatively scarce, Salkinson’s work was undoubtedly familiar to them and most likely served as a model; an example of this may be Elkind’s decision to name the Hebrew version of the protagonist Petruchio ‘Peretz’, which mirrors Salkinson’s choice of name for the character Petruchio appearing in Romeo and Juliet.\(^7\)

With the end of the Maskilic era and the rise of political Zionism in the late nineteenth century, the centre of Hebrew literary activity began to shift from Eastern Europe to Palestine. After the publication of Bornstein’s Hamlet there was a gap of more than twenty years before another complete Shakespeare play appeared in Hebrew (although a number of fragmentary renditions, a prose adaptation, and some sonnet translations were produced in the intervening years\(^8\)). The next translation of an entire play was David Frischmann’s Coriolanus, which was published in Warsaw in 1924. Frischmann had come of age during the late Haskalah and had published his early works in Maskilic newspapers and literary journals such as HaShahar and HaMelis (Bar-Yosef 2010), and as such would most likely have been familiar with Salkinson’s Shakespeare translation. However, by the 1920s, Jewish society and the status of Hebrew had changed radically, with the language now established both as a fully fledged vernacular in Palestine and as a much more widespread literary vehicle; as such, Frischmann’s translation belongs to a new generation of Hebrew Shakespeare rooted in a very different linguistic, literary, and cultural context from Salkinson’s. Frischmann’s Coriolanus was followed by Shimon Halkin’s version of The Merchant of Venice (Berlin, 1929) and Saul Tchernikovsky’s translation of Twelfth Night (Tel Aviv, 1930); a number of other plays were translated by Hebrew writers based in the United States during the 1930s (Almagor 1975: 752–3).

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\(^7\) See Ram and Jael, First Part, note 359. See Almagor (1975) for a summary discussion of these late nineteenth-century works and Kahn (forthcoming b) for an analysis of Bornstein’s Hamlet.

\(^8\) See Almagor (1975: 776–81) for a complete list.
Salkinson’s *Ithiel* and *Ram and Jael* remained the only Hebrew translations of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet* in this period, and his work continued to be read and referenced in the new Palestinian context. *Ithiel* was reissued in Tel Aviv in 1930, although significantly, Salkinson’s biblicized names for the characters9 were replaced by the English originals, reflecting a shift in translatorial norms that had taken place since the Maskilic era. Moreover, *Ithiel* was performed (under the updated title of *Othello*)10 in Mandate Palestine, at the Haifa Hebrew Theatre, under the direction of Benno Fraenkel and featuring the actor Avraham Shklarsh in the title role. It opened on 12 March 1936 and was reviewed by the prominent Hebrew poet Lea Goldberg in the Hebrew newspaper *Davar* (Goldberg 1936). It was revived as a one-man performance with Avraham Shklarsh at the HaOhel Theatre in Tel Aviv, debuting on 21 November 1946, and was reviewed in several different Hebrew newspapers (Malkin 1946; Roeh 1946; Zussman 1946). *Ram and Jael* does not seem to have been performed.

In the 1940s the Hebrew poets Lea Goldberg, Avraham Shlonsky, and Natan Alterman produced a new generation of Hebrew Shakespeare translations (Golomb 1998: 263–70). This included the first replacement for one of Salkinson’s works, Natan Alterman’s *Othello*, which was published in 1950. The translation was undertaken for Habima Hebrew Theatre, where it was first performed on 6 March 1950 in Tel Aviv. Alterman (1950; also cited in Almagor 1975: 743–4) acknowledged his debt to Salkinson’s *Ithiel*, expressing great admiration for – and indeed envy of – his predecessor’s work; however, he did not mimic Salkinson’s domesticating style,11 which was no longer the norm in Hebrew translation.12 In 1957 the Israeli poet and translator Raphael Eliaz published a new version of *Romeo and Juliet*. Like Alterman’s, Eliaz’s translation was performed on the Israeli stage; it was first shown at Tel Aviv’s Cameri Theatre in 1957. In the latter half of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century new Hebrew Shakespeare versions reflecting contemporary linguistic and translatorial practices were produced by well-known Israeli poets and scholars including Dan Almagor, Ted Carmi, Ehud Manor, Dan Miron, Avraham Oz, Shimon Sandbank, Meir Wieseltier, and, most recently, Dori Parnes. Salkinson’s work fell into obscurity (although certain respected literary figures such as the poet Ted Carmi continued to recall him with praise; Dikman in Salkinson 1874/2015: 243). This fate was not unique to Salkinson, but rather was part of a more general tendency to regard Maskilic literature as an antiquated body of writing reflecting awkward linguistic and literary conventions such as excessive

9 See Section 3.2.1.1 for discussion of this issue.
10 See the performance announcement in the Hebrew newspaper *Do’ar HaYom*, 23 February 1936: 7.
11 See Section 3.2.1 for analysis of this.
12 See Dikman (in Salkinson 1874/2015: 240–3) for a comparison of some aspects of Salkinson’s and Alterman’s *Othello* renditions.
reliance on biblical citations and melissa, a writing technique valued by Maskilim but later considered florid and bombastic (Shahevitch 1970; Pelli 1993; Kahn 2013). In the mid-to-late twentieth-century Israeli context, Salkinson’s translations were rarely read or studied, being viewed as ‘outdated curiosities’ (Golomb 1998: 261).

This situation changed in 2015 and 2016 when Salkinson’s Ithiel was reissued by the Israeli publisher Raav as the first in a series intended to bring forgotten works of Hebrew literature back into the public eye. The volume features an afterword on Salkinson’s life and work by Aminadav Dikman, a literary scholar and himself a Hebrew translator. The edition emphasizes Salkinson’s contribution to Hebrew literature and Dikman describes his Ithiel as a shining example of Hebrew literary translation that has been unjustly neglected. Upon its release the new edition of Ithiel was featured in two articles in the Israeli newspaper Ha’aretz (Arbel 2015; Ashkenazi 2015). In 2016, Salkinson’s Ram and Jael was published as part of the same series with an afterword by Avraham Oz, a theatre scholar and prominent Hebrew Shakespeare translator. Like Ithiel, Ram and Jael was the subject of an article in Ha’aretz (Almagor 2016). The two Raav editions and the press coverage that they have received mark the beginning of a new chapter in Salkinson’s reception history wherein his pioneering contribution to Hebrew literature is once again being given its rightful recognition. It is hoped that the present bilingual edition will continue this trend by making Salkinson’s remarkable work accessible to readers with or without knowledge of Hebrew and by highlighting the multifaceted significance of his work. Ithiel and Ram and Jael are obviously of major importance for Hebrew literary history because they were the first complete Shakespearean dramas to appear in the language and paved the way for all subsequent Hebrew translations of the plays. Moreover, they are of particular relevance for translation studies specialists in that they constitute some of the only examples globally of Shakespeare adaptations in a largely unspoken language. Finally, they have much to offer scholars and students of multicultural Shakespeare by providing a rare and invaluable insight into the reception of the plays in a nineteenth-century European minority society.

3.2 Translation style

Salkinson’s Ithiel and Ram and Jael exhibit various noteworthy characteristics that distinguish them markedly from the Shakespearean source text. In some respects, they can be regarded as relatively close to the original in that they often preserve the line divisions, do not omit significant amounts of material (with a few exceptions in Ram and Jael, which are indicated in the text of this edition as they occur), and usually render the overall sense of each character’s lines. These tendencies can be contrasted with certain well-known earlier European-language
Shakespeare translations such as Pierre-Antoine de La Place and Jean-François Ducis’ French adaptations (Schwartz-Gastine 2003: 225) and Christoph Martin Wieland’s German prose versions (Williams 1990: 51–8, 69), which depart much more radically from the source text. However, Salkinson’s translations are not at all literal: while he does not generally leave out lines and maintains the overall sense of individual speeches, the lines themselves are often merely paraphrases of the source text. This is due to a number of considerations, namely his domesticating translation style, the difficulty of finding equivalents for Shakespeare’s wording while relying heavily on the technique of *shibbuṣ* (the incorporation of biblical citations into a new composition), and, in some cases, the need to find Hebrew rhymes that echo those appearing in the source text (this is a particular issue in *Ram and Jael*, which is rich in rhyming couplets). The key features of Salkinson’s translations are outlined in the remainder of Section 3.2 and are discussed in further depth in the running commentary in the bilingual edition.

### 3.2.1 Domestication

Perhaps the most striking hallmark of Salkinson’s translation is its highly domesticating nature. Salkinson’s domesticating approach is rooted in the fact that his *skopos*, or translatorial aim (Pym 2010: 43–50), was a product of the Maskilic perspective on translation, which was not seen in neutral terms, but rather was an explicit strand in the ideological drive to rejuvenate the Jewish nation and was linked to the often fraught relationship between Jews and non-Jews in Europe. Smolenskin’s preface to *Ithiel* offers a striking illustration of this heavily loaded ideological attitude to literary translation, with its infamous (if perhaps somewhat tongue-in-cheek) description of Salkinson’s Hebrew play as an act of ‘revenge’:  

> Today we get revenge on the British; they have taken our Holy Scriptures and treated them as one treats one’s own property: they have translated them, scattered them to all corners of the earth as if they were their own, and so today we repay them for their deed, for we are taking the books which are as precious to them as the Holy Scriptures, the plays of Shakespeare, and we are bringing them into the treasure-house of our holy tongue; is this revenge not sweet?!

Smolenskin’s comments reflect an attitude prevalent among Eastern European Maskilim regarding the pivotal role of the translator as an agent of Jewish cultural

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13 Discussed in detail in Section 3.2.1.
14 See Section 3.2.1.5.
15 See Schleiermacher (1813), Venuti (2008), and Pym (2010: 30–3) for discussion of domesticating translation theory.
16 See Almagor (1975: 742–3), Golomb (1998: 255–9), and Scolnicov (2001: 184) for further discussion of Smolenskin’s statement. See the beginning of Smolenskin’s preface to *Ithiel* in this edition for the full text from which this citation is taken.
renewal, and of the Haskalah as a transformative acculturating project (Pelli 1979; Feiner 2002; Schatz 2009; Eldar 2016). It is not surprising that this Maskilic attitude to translation often resulted in a domesticating approach whereby non-Jewish elements appearing in European-language source texts underwent a process of Judaization when rendered into Hebrew. It should be noted that domesticating translation into Hebrew is not a Maskilic innovation, but rather is a much older Jewish tradition attested as early as the medieval period (Needler 1977; Singerman 1988); a prominent example of this type of Judaizing tendency is the thirteenth-century Hebrew version of the legend of King Arthur. The same approach is also commonly found in medieval and early modern translations into Yiddish, such as the Bovo-bukh, a sixteenth-century Yiddish adaptation of the English romance Bevis of Hampton via its Italian version Buovo d’Antona, as well as Sephardic Jewish versions of Spanish ballads.

At first glance it may appear surprising that Salkinson adopted a Judaizing translation strategy given his extremely liminal position in Jewish society as a Christian convert and missionary. However, his domesticating approach is not actually as remarkable as it may seem, being the logical product of his own background as well as the conditions surrounding the commission of his translations. As discussed in Section 2, Salkinson had received an advanced traditional Jewish education and as such was intimately familiar with canonical Hebrew and Aramaic texts including the Bible, Mishnah, and Talmuds (Cohen 1942: 12–3). Moreover, as mentioned previously, despite his conversion and missionary status he remained closely affiliated with the Jewish community, particularly during his time in Vienna. Finally, in contrast to his other translations, which were all of books with overt Christian content and designed to raise awareness of Christian tenets among a Hebrew readership, his Shakespeare translations were primarily literary endeavours not explicitly intended to deliver a Christian message to readers. Indeed, because Ithiel and Ram and Jael were commissioned by and conducted in close association with Peretz Smolenskin, a pillar of the Maskilic literary community, and were designed for a readership with a hostile attitude towards Christianity of which Salkinson would have been only too aware, it is perhaps only to be expected that he opted for a Judaizing strategy in keeping with Maskilic literary sensibilities despite his conversion and missionary status.

Salkinson’s domesticating translation style manifests itself in six key areas: his treatment of characters’ names; Christian rituals, institutions, and oaths; Classical

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17 See Kahn (forthcoming c) for discussion of this type of approach in a Maskilic translation of a historical text.
18 See Leviant (2003), Rovang (2009), and Valles (2013: 38–76) for details of this text.
19 See Rosenzweig (2016) for a scholarly edition of this work.
20 See Armistead and Silverman (1965) for details.
mythology; other non-Jewish cultural references; the technique of *shibbus* (the insertion of biblical verses and phrases into the composition); and foreign-language elements in the source text. The following is a brief summary of these strategies; the commentary accompanying the bilingual edition focuses on the same six areas and discusses each individual instance of domestication.

### 3.2.1.1 Names

One of Salkinson’s most immediately noticeable domesticating strategies is the replacement of almost all of Shakespeare’s characters’ names with Hebrew equivalents, typically biblical ones. This practice is a common feature of Maskilic Hebrew translations generally (Dikman in Salkinson 1874/2015: 239). Salkinson’s Hebraization of characters’ names conforms to three main patterns. First, in many cases he selects the biblical names wholly or primarily on the basis of a sound correspondence. Often the names belong to minor biblical characters lacking any kind of particular associations for readers. Examples include the replacement of Roderigo with Raddai (based on 1 Chron. 2:14–21) and of Gregory with Gera (based on Gen. 46:21 and several other locations in the Hebrew Bible).

In other instances Salkinson chooses his Hebrew names not only on the basis of sound correspondence but also in order to indicate a particular quality relevant to the character in question. For example, he replaces Romeo with Ram, the namesake of King David’s ancestor mentioned in Ruth 4:19, readers would have associated this name with the positive qualities of the Davidic line as well as with the romantic plot of the Book of Ruth, the classic biblical love story.

In a number of instances Salkinson selects his Hebrew name purely on the basis of meaning without attempting to find an equivalent with sound correspondence. Such a case is Romeo’s father Montague, whom he renames Abiram, which literally means ‘father of Ram’ and therefore links neatly to the title character, but also is the namesake of one of the members of Korach’s rebellion against Moses recounted in Numbers 16 and as such has connotations of arrogance and spite; another example is the replacement of Shakespeare’s Rosaline with Shoshannah, a postbiblical Hebrew female name meaning ‘rose’.

### 3.2.1.2 Christian references

Given the widespread distrust of Christianity on the part of Salkinson’s Eastern European Jewish audience, it is perhaps unsurprising that one of the main foci of his Judaizing translation strategy concerns Christian holidays, institutions, rituals,
and oaths. Salkinson has several different domesticating approaches to the translation of such terms. In some instances he simply omits them; this is particularly common in the case of Christian oaths. In other cases, he dechristianizes the reference but does not replace it with an explicitly Jewish one, instead choosing a religiously and culturally neutral equivalent. For example, in *Ram and Jael* he translates ‘evening mass’ as יָהֳרִים בֵּין ‘twilight’,\(^\text{26}\) which eradicates any religious connotations but preserves the temporal associations of the original. In still other instances, he replaces a Christian reference with an unambiguously Jewish dynamic equivalent (a translation that differs formally from that of the source text but serves an equivalent function in the target culture, thus making the translation more accessible to readers\(^\text{27}\)). Like the choice of biblical names, the selection of Jewish equivalents for Christian concepts has the effect of transforming the cultural context of the play into an unquestionably Jewish one. For example, Shakespeare’s ‘Easter’ becomes חַג הַמַּצּוֹת ‘Passover’.\(^\text{28}\)

### 3.2.1.3 Classical mythology

Another prominent area of domestication concerns Shakespeare’s references to figures from Classical mythology. Salkinson almost invariably domesticates such references just as he adapts the Christian allusions discussed previously. However, although the technique is the same, the reluctance to preserve Classical mythical elements has slightly different motivations. While explicit references to Christianity would have been seen as inappropriate for a Jewish readership, Maskilim generally professed an admiration for Classical literature, recognizing it as a central foundation of the European tradition upon which their own literary project was modelled. For example, in his preface to Salkinson’s *Ithiel*, Smolenskin praises the writings of Homer as the greatest literary works in history alongside Shakespeare and the Hebrew Bible. Throughout the nineteenth century, Maskilic authors produced fragmentary Hebrew translations of Classical texts (e.g., Micah Joseph Lebensohn’s 1849 adaptation of a portion of the Aeneid via Schiller’s German version). However, the Maskilic admiration for Classical sources was a new development among Central and Eastern European Jews, who typically regarded Classical culture as irrelevant, or indeed antithetical, to Jewish society and did not traditionally study Greek or Latin. As such, in-depth knowledge of Classical language and literature was relatively rare even among Maskilim, and many of the mythological figures mentioned in Shakespeare’s plays would likely have meant little to Salkinson’s audience. Moreover, Naphtali Hirz Wessely, a prominent early Maskil, instructed the editors of the first Maskilic Hebrew periodical,

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26 See *Ram and Jael*, Fourth Part, note 11.
27 See Nida (1964) and Nida and Taber (1969) for further discussion of dynamic equivalency.
The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations (HaMe’assef, 1 October 1873: 7–8). In this light, Salkinson’s decision to domesticate the Classical references in Shakespeare’s texts is unsurprising. His earlier translation of Paradise Lost exhibits the same strategy, most likely for similar reasons (Dikman in Salkinson 1874/2015: 234–5). As in the case of the aforementioned Christian references (particularly oaths), in some instances Salkinson simply omits Classical allusions, while in others he substitutes a reference to a Classical figure with one to the monotheistic God. In many cases, he goes further and finds a dynamic equivalent from within the Jewish tradition. A striking example of this is his replacement of Shakespeare’s ‘Venus’ (Romeo and Juliet 2.1.11) with ‘Ashtoreth’, a Canaanite goddess associated with love and fertility.29

3.2.1.4 Other non-Jewish cultural elements
In addition to domesticating Christian and Classical references, Salkinson has a tendency to Judaize other elements of the source text that he deemed inappropriate or irrelevant for his Hebrew translation. This includes European cultural references such as Queen Mab30 and the legend of King Cophetua,31 as well as flora and fauna lacking biblical equivalents, occupations not common among Eastern European Jews, and ethnic or geographical labels. Salkinson typically replaces such elements with dynamic equivalents familiar to Jewish readers from the Hebrew Bible, or with references to postbiblical Jewish religious culture, Eastern European Jewish realia and social conditions, and folk traditions. An example of this tactic is his substitution of Shakespeare’s ‘colliers’ (Romeo and Juliet 1.1.2) with עֵצִים חֹטְבֵי ‘woodcutters’:32 woodcutting would have been widely recognized among Hebrew readers as a classic form of manual labour due to its appearance in a well-known phrase from Joshua 9:21, ‘woodcutters and water carriers’, as well as due to the fact that it was a common occupation among Eastern European Jews.

3.2.1.5 Shibbuṣ
Another prominent domesticating strategy is the phenomenon of shibbuṣ, a common Hebrew literary technique whereby intact or adapted biblical verses or verse fragments are inserted into a new composition. Shibbuṣ is attested in numerous types of postbiblical Hebrew literature, but is commonly associated with Maskilic authors due to the fact that it was a particularly favoured technique for them. One of the reasons for the Maskilic penchant for shibbuṣ is ideological: as the Maskilic authors held the biblical text and language in extremely high esteem, incorporating

29 See Ram and Jael, Second Part, note 9.
30 See Ram and Jael, First Part, note 259.
31 See Ram and Jael, Second Part, note 12.
32 See Ram and Jael, First Part, note 7.
elements of it into their own writing served to raise the latter’s linguistic and literary prestige. Another reason is a more practical one: as Hebrew was not a vernacular in the Maskilic era, drawing on familiar biblical phrases was a convenient method of aiding their creative expression in the language.  

An example of biblical *shibbus* in Salkinson’s translations is the replacement of Shakespeare’s ‘Your son-in-law is far more fair than black’ (*Othello* 1.3.291) with את לוחם בניי אמר: כל זה פנים עם: and regarding your son-in-law I hereby say: the skin of the Cushite’s face shone*, 34 based on כוושי פנים עור קרנ: אומר הני חתנך ואל and ‘Moses’ face shone’ (Exod. 34:35). While some of Salkinson’s *shibbus* choices have symbolic meaning (which will be discussed in the commentary to the edition where relevant), in many cases he selected a given verse simply because it corresponded roughly in meaning to the equivalent line in the source text, without any deeper interpretive motivation.

While Salkinson’s *shibbus* is drawn primarily from biblical sources, contrary to common belief (as in Almagor 1975: 743; Scolnicov 2001: 185; Dikman in Salkinson 1874/2015: 243), his *Ithiel* also contains citations from rabbinic literature (the Babylonian Talmud) and a range of medieval and early modern sources well known to Eastern European Jews of his era, most typically the biblical commentaries of Rashi (eleventh century), Abraham Ibn Ezra (twelfth century), Isaac Abarbanel (fifteenth–sixteenth centuries), and Moses Alshekh (sixteenth century). Cases of *shibbus* from postbiblical sources are indicated in the commentary to the edition. An example of *shibbus* from a Mishnaic text is גוררת גוררת ‘one transgression brings another transgression’, from Mishnah *Avot* 4:2, as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘One unperfectness shows me another’ (*Othello* 2.3.292–3).  

An example of *shibbus* from a medieval text is בשלום ידהיכך ולא אכנקך אדמקה ‘indeed I can imagine you and describe you, though I do not know you by name’, 36 from Judah the Pious’ twelfth-century Hymn of Glory, as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘If thou hast no name to be known by’ (*Othello* 2.3.277–8).

### 3.2.1.6 Foreign-language material

The final domesticating strategy evident in Salkinson’s work concerns the foreign-language elements in *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Where French, Italian, or Latin words or phrases appear in the English, Salkinson routinely translates them into Hebrew, thus eradicating the linguistic variegation present in Shakespeare’s text. As in the case of the references to Classical mythological figures, this approach stems from the fact that, while in much of Europe these languages were commonly studied and enjoyed a prestigious status, they were generally unfamiliar to Eastern

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34 See *Ithiel*, First Part, note 259.
35 See *Ithiel*, Second Part, note 228.
36 See *Ithiel*, Second Part, note 223.
European Jews (including Maskilim) and would have lacked any meaningful associations for Salkinson’s readers. Examples of Salkinson’s treatment of such linguistic elements include his replacement of the Friar’s Latin greeting ‘Benedicite’ (Romeo and Juliet 2.3.27) with the Hebrew הַבָּא בָּרוּךְ ‘welcome’, and his replacement of Shakespeare’s ‘bonjour’ (Romeo and Juliet 2.4.43–5) with רְשָׁלוֹם ‘greetings’.

3.2.2 Poetry

One of the most immediately conspicuous features of Salkinson’s translations is that he has eradicated all of Shakespeare’s distinctions between verse and prose, rendering everything into verse. Salkinson’s verse is utterly free: it does not seem to exhibit either syllabic metre or a particular stress pattern; indeed, the only feature distinguishing it from prose is the formal distribution of the lines, which generally correspond more or less to Shakespeare’s, and the fact that the text is vocalized, which was the convention in Maskilic Hebrew poetry (as in that of present-day Hebrew). Salkinson’s poetry thus differs markedly from Shakespeare’s in its lack of iambic pentameter or other features of an accentual-syllabic metrical system. Moreover, it diverges from the typical Maskilic poetic convention, which was a purely syllabic system consisting of a fixed number of syllables, with stress on the penultimate syllable but otherwise free (Hrushovski-Harshav 2007: 613–14). The main ways in which Salkinson’s poetry resembles that of his Maskilic contemporaries is his frequent use of conjoint phrases (two juxtaposed synonymous or nearly synonymous expressions), a practice that echoes the parallelism that is a hallmark of biblical poetry, and of course his use of shibbus. Salkinson’s poetic style likewise differs from that of the Hebrew Bible, which is defined chiefly by parallelism and exhibits an accentual system with free variation of numbers of stresses in a verse unit (Hrushovski-Harshav 2007: 596, 598–9, 605).

While Ithiel and Ram and Jael do not resemble their English source texts in terms of metre, they do mirror them in terms of rhyme: where Shakespeare’s text contains rhymes, Salkinson finds Hebrew equivalents for them, but he does not add rhymes where they do not appear in the original. In most cases Salkinson’s rhyme schemes are the same as Shakespeare’s (typically rhyming couplets, but also ABAB, ABA, and ABBA patterns) and appear in the same line. However, occasionally Salkinson’s scheme differs from the original (most commonly ABAB instead of a rhyming couplet); such changes are generally due to difficulties finding a suitable rhyme fitting the original pattern. In cases where it is difficult to find a suitable rhyme while preserving the source text’s meaning, Salkinson typically prioritizes

37 See Ram and Jael, Second Part, note 125.
38 See Ram and Jael, Second Part, note 203.
39 See Gilulah (2013: 51–2) for analysis of some examples from Ithiel; see also Oz (in Salkinson 1878/2016: 193). See Toury (2012: 133, 139) for discussion of this practice in Maskilic writing in general.
the rhyme, often completely changing the sense of the lines in question. He does not typically seem to have regarded same-word rhymes in Shakespeare’s text (e.g., flower/flower, wife/wife) as such, given that he rarely reproduces them in his translation. Salkinson’s rhymes could be either masculine (i.e., stressed on the ultima) or feminine (i.e., stressed on the penult). As in the case of metre, this diverges from the Maskilic standard, which generally allowed only for feminine rhymes (Hrushovski-Harshav 2007: 613–15; Toury 2012: 151). This convention was inherited from earlier Italian Hebrew poetry, which was in turn based on the model of the Italian language, wherein nouns with penultimate stress were the norm. In the Sephardic (Southern and Southeastern European and North African) Hebrew pronunciation, only a small percentage of Hebrew words are stressed on the penult, whereas in the Ashkenazic pronunciation a much larger percentage of words have penultimate stress. When the Maskilim adopted the Italian Hebrew poetic convention, they allowed only words with penultimate stress according to the Sephardic pronunciation, despite the fact that their own Ashkenazic pronunciation would have given them a much larger repertoire on which to draw. This rule meant that Maskilic poets had to restrict themselves to a very marginal group of nouns, verbs, and prepositions on which to base their rhymes, with a concomitant constraining effect on their verse (Hrushovski-Harshav 2007: 614). It is possible that Salkinson broke away from this convention by including rhymes based on his Ashkenazic pronunciation (with its much larger range of penultimately stressed vocabulary) because it would have been too difficult for him to reproduce Shakespeare’s rhymes while restricting his options to the small pool of penultimately stressed Sephardic lexis.

3.2.3 Hebrew language

The language of Salkinson’s translations is predominantly biblicizing, which is in keeping with Maskilic authors’ expressed preference for Biblical Hebrew over the postbiblical strata in the composition of fiction, particularly poetry. This is evident in the grammar of Ithiel and Ram and Jael, which favours biblical forms and constructions (e.g., the wayyiqtol for preterite sequences; the cohortative and jussive; and conjunctions such as כי ‘because, that, if/when’ and אשר ‘which, that’ over their postbiblical counterparts, and in its lexis, which is typically drawn from the biblical corpus. A relatively common feature of Salkinson’s work is a readiness to utilize rare biblical vocabulary including hapax legomena (words that appear only once in the Bible); this was a widespread Maskilic technique often employed as a means of lexical enrichment (Kahn 2013). He also frequently employs pausal forms (e.g., לָחֶם ‘bread’ instead of לֶחֶם) before punctuation and at the end of lines; such forms are most commonly associated with the Hebrew Bible, in which they typically appear together with disjunctive accents (symbols marking breaks in the text, similar to punctuation) and at the end of verses (Fassberg 2013). The dominance of biblical structures and vocabulary goes hand-in-hand with Salkinson’s predilection for shibbus,
as he frequently imported biblical expressions and verses wholesale into his work. Salkinson’s use of *shibbus* reflects an extensive engagement with the entire Hebrew Bible, with all twenty-four books represented in his text at least once. However, certain books feature much more prominently than others: the most frequently appearing biblical intertexts are Psalms, Isaiah, and Proverbs, with more than 150 citations each, followed by Job, with approximately 130. By contrast, a few books, all from the Minor Prophets, are cited only one to three times (Haggai, Jonah, Nahum, Obadiah). Most of the remaining books are cited between twenty and a hundred times.

Despite Salkinson’s preference for the biblical stratum of Hebrew, a not insignificant number of postbiblical (rabbinic, medieval, and Maskilic) elements are attested in both *Ithiel* and *Ram and Jael* (belying the common belief, as expressed in Gilulah 2013: 50, and Dikman in Salkinson 1874/2015: 239, 243, that the language of *Ithiel* is purely biblical). Like the biblical elements, these postbiblical features are both grammatical and lexical. Certain grammatical features are traceable to the classical rabbinic period; for example, the possessive particle שֶׁל ‘of’ and sequences of *qatal* and *yiqtol* verbal forms. Constructions combining biblical and postbiblical elements are also attested (this is a common Maskilic phenomenon40). On occasion Salkinson employs grammatical constructions typical of nineteenth-century Eastern European Hebrew that lack precedent in the canonical sources (e.g., the *qatal* verbal conjugation to indicate a past progressive action41). Likewise, Salkinson utilizes numerous rabbinic vocabulary items throughout the two plays (e.g., רַצְﬠָן ‘shoemaker’, וּדְבָרִים דִּין ‘grievance’, פְּרוּצָה ‘strumpet, whore’), as well as a number of medieval terms (e.g., תְּכוּנָה ‘nature’, נֶפֶשׁ יְדִיד ‘beloved’, מִגְרָעוֹת ‘flaws’) and innovations of the Maskilic era (e.g., כָּדוּר ‘bullet’, רֹבֶה קְנֵה ‘gun’, רַע חֳלִי ‘cholera’).

### 3.3 Salkinson’s source text edition

Salkinson did not specify which Shakespeare edition he used, and given the large number of English versions that appeared in the decade preceding the publication of his translations it is extremely difficult to establish this with any certainty. However, both *Ithiel* and *Ram and Jael* seem to be based on Folio rather than Quarto versions. In the case of *Ithiel*, this is evidenced by the inclusion of certain elements such as the Willow Song in Act 5. In *Ram and Jael*, this is made clear, for example, by the absence of the Prologue, which does not appear in the Folio versions; more specifically, the assignment of certain lines to Rezin the Priest (Friar Laurence) instead

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40 See Kahn (2009) for discussion of this phenomenon.
of Ram (Romeo) suggests that Salkinson may have been working with an edition based on the Second, Third, or Fourth Folio.\textsuperscript{42} In addition to the English source text, Salkinson may have consulted the Schlegel-Tieck German translation of the two plays, which was very prominent and widely circulated, or perhaps another German version, but this is uncertain as he did not make explicit reference to it (in contrast to Smolenskin, who does mention consulting an unspecified German version of \textit{Othello}, possibly Philipp Kaufmann's\textsuperscript{43}).

4 This edition of \textit{Ithiel the Cushite of Venice} and \textit{Ram and Jael}

4.1 The Hebrew text

This edition reproduces the Hebrew text of Salkinson’s translations as they first appeared in print in the 1870s. The original spelling and vocalization have been preserved even where they differ from what would be expected. In such cases the standard equivalent is provided in a footnote on the Hebrew side of the edition indicated by an asterisk. (Note that Smolenskin included a small number of footnotes in his prefaces to the plays, as did Salkinson in his introductory letters and occasionally in the body of the translations; these are indicated by an asterisk followed by a round bracket, as in the original editions.) The only corrections made to the vocalization consist of a handful of changes that were listed as errata at the end of the original editions of \textit{Ithiel} and \textit{Ram and Jael}, which I have incorporated into the text without comment. The numerous citations of biblical and postbiblical sources appearing in the translations have been marked in bold font so as to make it easier for readers to identify them. Such citations, as well as any other issues requiring comment, are indicated by a numbered footnote and explained in the running commentary to the edition.\textsuperscript{44} The original format of the stage directions has largely been preserved, but inconsistencies have been ironed out.

4.2 The English back-translation

Salkinson’s Hebrew text is accompanied by a facing English back-translation. The primary purpose of the back-translation is to make Salkinson’s work accessible to readers without knowledge of Hebrew, whether scholars and students of multicultural Shakespeare, translation studies, comparative literature, or anyone with an interest in Shakespeare, Eastern European Jewish history, and/or Hebrew

\footnotesize{42} \textsuperscript{ See \textit{Ram and Jael}, Second Part, notes 94 and 99.  
43 \textsuperscript{ See \textit{Ithiel}, Publisher’s Note, note 2.  
44 \textsuperscript{ See Section 4.3.}
literature. With this in mind, I have favoured a relatively literal translation style so as to give readers as much of a feel for the Hebrew text as possible. However, I have modified Hebrew phrases or expressions that would be unidiomatic or very difficult to understand if rendered literally into English; in such cases literal translations are provided in footnotes. The translation tends towards a somewhat formal and slightly archaizing tone, which is designed to give readers a sense of Salkinson’s biblicizing language. The English translations of Smolenskin’s prefaces to the two plays (which are written in a cumbersome literary Hebrew style – not uncommon during this period – likewise replete with meliṣa and biblical references) are somewhat less literal while remaining relatively formal so as to match his style as closely as possible.

Each citation or allusion to a biblical or postbiblical textual source is marked in bold and accompanied by a numbered footnote. The English translations of the numerous biblical citations appearing in Salkinson’s work are my own. However, in formulating my translations I have consulted various English Bible versions, including traditional texts (the Geneva Bible and King James Bible) as well as more recent versions (the New English Bible, New Revised Standard Version, and New International Version) in addition to the Jewish Publication Society’s 1917 and 1985 editions. In most cases my translation choices are based on the King James Bible and Geneva Bible, which were felt to be the most appropriate as they lend an archaizing tone to the text that evokes the feel of Salkinson’s biblicizing Hebrew while simultaneously corresponding most closely to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century context of Shakespeare’s own writing. Moreover, in many instances the particular phrasing appearing in the traditional versions is more familiar to English-speaking readers than those of the contemporary translations. However, in cases where the King James and Geneva Bible renditions are at odds with Salkinson’s meaning, or contain archaic and unfamiliar vocabulary that might be confusing to readers, I have opted for a translation more closely resembling one of the modern versions. I have not usually indicated which English Bible version my back-translation is based on except in cases where the differences between them are relevant to the issue under discussion (e.g., the translation of the term כושי ‘Cushite’\(^\text{45}\)). The translations of Salkinson’s citations of rabbinic literature are likewise my own, but I have consulted English translations where these exist (most commonly Danby 1933 for the Mishnah).

I have generally maintained Salkinson’s punctuation except when it clashes markedly with English norms. Comparison of the Hebrew text with the facing English back-translation will make such cases clear.

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\(^{45}\) See Ithiel, First Part, note 26.
4.3 The commentary

The bilingual edition of Salkinson’s plays is accompanied by a running commentary indicated by numbered footnotes. The commentary serves five main purposes. First, it provides readers with a key to the various Hebrew textual sources (primarily biblical, but sometimes rabbinic and medieval) embedded in the translations. Second, it points out and analyses Salkinson’s domesticating translation choices, comparing them with the source text and discussing the motivations behind the decisions. Third, it elucidates issues with which many readers may be unfamiliar (chiefly biblical and postbiblical figures, biblical locations, and aspects of Jewish history, law, ritual, and culture). Fourth, where possible, given the constraints of the volume, it raises points of comparison between Salkinson’s and Shakespeare’s texts regarding issues other than domestication (e.g., the use of rhyme, omission of lines, conversion of prose to verse, resemblances to the Folio versus Quarto versions). Finally, it discusses issues of relevance to students and scholars of Hebrew language and literature, such as Salkinson’s use of particular lexical items or grammatical constructions that differ from the biblical standard (although due to space limitations and because these are not the primary focus of the edition, such issues are discussed only sparingly).

The rich array of biblical citations in Salkinson’s translations vary in length from two-word collocations to most or all of a verse. For the sake of comprehensiveness I have included references to almost all such sources, including the shorter ones, as even these may be useful to readers both because they help to highlight the extent to which Salkinson’s work is underpinned by intertextual references, and because they provide an explanation for what might otherwise seem to be unexpected or awkward turns of phrase lacking precedent in Shakespeare’s text. The only exceptions to this policy comprise collocations that appear so many times in the Hebrew Bible and/or are such basic and commonly used elements of all forms of Hebrew that Salkinson’s use of them is very unlikely to be directly traceable to a particular biblical source. When biblical phrases additionally appear in postbiblical Hebrew literature, these later sources are not cited in the footnotes because their ultimate source is the Bible.

When Salkinson incorporates a Hebrew textual source into his work without altering it, only the verse number is provided in the commentary. However, he often modifies his citations when inserting them into his translation; some such changes are intentional (e.g., changing the person or number of a possessive suffix in order to fit the story), but others (e.g., omitting or switching a preposition with no change in meaning) are most likely unintentional and are simply attributable to the fact that he was citing the sources from memory. When Salkinson’s version differs from the original source, the source is provided for comparison along with
an English translation of it. (In such cases the English translation of both the source and Salkinson’s modified version may be the same.)

When a citation appears on multiple occasions in the plays, I have referenced it in each case. This has been done for the reader’s convenience as well as to highlight the frequency of Salkinson’s employment of particular biblical citations and facilitate the identification of any possible patterns in his selections. Where more than one biblical verse may have informed the text in question, the most relevant is provided first but the others, which may be similar but not quite as close, are listed as well.

In many cases I have refrained from commenting on the possible motivations for Salkinson’s selection of a given biblical or postbiblical source. This is both because such an extended commentary is beyond the scope of this volume, and because in many instances Salkinson’s choices were most likely driven primarily or solely by the fact that the meaning of the sources in question fit his translatorial purposes rather than due to a desire to convey any particular symbolism or deeper meaning. However, in certain instances the citation in question has clear and striking associations that would almost certainly have resonated with the target audience and play a role in shaping the sense of the Hebrew text; in such cases I have provided an explanatory note to draw the reader’s attention to the significance of these overtones.

Although Smolenskin’s prefaces to the two plays are likewise replete with biblical and sometimes postbiblical citations, I have not referenced these unless they are of particular relevance to his discussion or would be difficult to understand without explanation. Likewise, I have not referenced or commented on the biblical names for characters (e.g., Ithiel for Othello, Ram for Romeo) mentioned in the prefaces; these are discussed when they first appear in the plays themselves.

I have used the standard scholarly Arden Third Series editions of Othello and Romeo and Juliet for the English line numbers and citations. Note that Salkinson’s Ram and Jael is based on the First Folio edition whereas the Arden version is based on the Second Quarto. Where there are differences between the Quarto and Folio editions reflected in Salkinson’s translation, these are indicated in the commentary.
Today we get revenge on the British; they have taken our Holy Scriptures and treated them as one treats one’s own property: they have translated them, scattered them to all corners of the earth as if they were their own, and so today we repay them for their deed, for we are taking the books which are as precious to them as the Holy Scriptures, the plays of Shakespeare, and we are bringing them into the treasure-house of our holy tongue; is this revenge not sweet?!

The plays of Shakespeare in the holy tongue! If the entire Jewish people understood the language of their forefathers and loved it, and if all of those who understood the language and loved it understood the great spoil that the translator of these plays is bringing into the treasure-house of our language, then the day on which the first Shakespeare play appeared in the Hebrew language would be like a victory holiday, because it is indeed a great victory for our holy tongue if such gems perfect its beauty. Such gems adorn it with grace and youth at this time, despite the desire of those who reject it, who do not understand it, who say that it is worn out, bound for the grave; who bury it, cover its face in obscurity and do not mention its name again.

*) For those who have not yet read the play, I recommend that they read this preface after they have read the play to the end, because much of what I say will be like a sealed book to them.
The plays of Shakespeare, the greatest playwright without compare in all the languages and tongues, except for the Holy Scriptures and Homer, to whom have been revealed all the human heart’s secret schemes, machinations, and wiles, who has displayed before
us the naked human heart, so that we may read, as from an open book, everything that is inscribed upon it, the desire and the lust which, for good or for ill, have a share in every thought, deed, and action, and who can show us as well as he how man behaves and
The impulses that drive him so that we might recognize and understand the
deceit of the cunning and the duplicity of scoundrels, the righteousness of the
righteous and the honesty of the honest, so that we might know and be wise,
rather than walking like a beast into the valley on this confounded earth, where
the apparent is so altered and twisted by men that we do not know which way to
go. For at times what appears to be the righteous path turns out to be death,
while the wicked or the foolish path is nevertheless paved with righteousness.
But this faithful guide leads us, a lamp in his hand lighting the way to ban-
ish the darkness so that we would not stumble but see and consider and judge
for ourselves. Shakespeare is unique; none but him has had the power and the
courage to lift the veil from the faces of actors who play their roles on this great
stage of ours, the earth. He exposes the deeds of nation and man alike, which
take place in the dark, when no human eye would see them as they are.

A long time passed from when his plays first appeared until his methods
became known and his project understood; for a long time all the hypocrites
and self-righteous priests and senseless authors were angry with him as
those who rebel against light fight the sunlight; these bats banded together
against him to extinguish the light of his plays and eradicate them from the face
of the earth as they sought to darken all brightness and light, but a sapphire

1 The phrase ‘like a beast into the valley’ is a citation of Isa. 63:14, but Smolenskin seems to be using it to
denote ignorance, whereas in Isaiah it refers to effortlessness.
will not stay wallowing in mud for eternity, and clouds will not cover the face of the sun forever, the mud will be removed and the sapphire will appear in all its glory, the clouds will dissipate and the sun will make the eye rejoice, and so it was also for Shakespeare, for his redeemers arose after two hundred years and showed everyone the worth of the precious stone which they had tried to strip of its purity by besmirching it, and although admittedly until this day not all readers appreciate this brilliant playwright, and from time to time senseless and witless men still arise to malign him, nevertheless the wise men have made themselves counted and have all determined that one who reviles Shakespeare reviles himself.

But it is no wonder if many have not understood, and to this day do not understand, the works of this great man, the most exalted of writers, for the masses do not understand and do not realize what truth is, for they have long since grown accustomed to calling lies truth. And if they were to see the truth, they would not recognize it, and they would say that it was a lie! And all of this is the fault of the authors who mislead their readers with pleasant lies in order to capture their heart.

Most authors and playwrights see everyone from their own perspective, and what is fitting to them they present to us as good and honest, while everything which they dislike, they besmirch. The characters they create in their plays, whom they present to us as good and upright, speak and converse only of the exalted spirit of their creators, and

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
any of them who does not speak or do as their creators’ heart desires is evil and a villain. Such authors mask men’s actions and thoughts, misleading their readers so that they cannot see what is really being done, since they do not show us men’s actions and desires but rather their own hearts’ desires, and if they succeed in following their hearts, then they raise up that which is low and lower that which is high, acquit the wicked and condemn the innocent. Authors who are honest also do so, only since they cannot be trusted to judge the matter as it is, but rather see everything from their own perspective, they corrupt justice and lead their readers astray by showing them perversions, not maliciously but rather in error. But there are authors even more evil than these (and they are the majority), playwrights who do not prevail on earth for the sake of truth and knowledge, but rather only in order to make a name and money for themselves, and they maliciously destroy all sense of morality and love of truth, for they attempt to present to their community of readers only that which is pleasant to them; they sing in their ears songs that are pleasing to the ear and extol with their tongue indecency and desire, speaking lustfully of everyone who prevails on earth by means of their wanton schemes and the impulses that drive them; they present to us as heroes men who violate law and morality, who mock truth and hate innocence, and every innocent man is like a powerless creature in their eyes, and as such the plays are of little dignity, and the places in which they
present to us the protagonists of these plays, the playhouses, whose purpose is to instruct the people in morality and wisdom, have become like thieves’ dens, like schools for youth to instruct them in how to chase after indecency and disgrace.

Not so is the lot of Shakespeare (and like him, so too all honest authors who have eyes to see what is in front of them, even if their spirit is not as great as his); he sits at the seat of judgement like a god judging the exalted; before his seat of judgement stand both king and slave, both nation and individual, and he considers everything, investigates everything, does not show partiality to anyone and does not favour his protagonists; no one is loved by him and no one is hateful in his eyes; he weighs everyone’s deeds on the scales and tells each man of the righteousness within him, even if he is a rogue and a villain, and he does not show partiality to the honest by ignoring their flaws, for no one is blameless in the land of the living. He does not refrain from pronouncing judgement for fear that hypocrites would rage at him, he does not pay heed to his audience for fear that the scene may displease them when they choose an opulently dressed lie over the naked truth. It is not in accordance with his own heart’s desire or others’ inclinations that he sets out a path for his characters and determines their end, but rather in accordance with the course, the rules, the accidents, and the circumstances of life, and therefore his plays contain a righteous man who perishes by his righteousness as he falls
On the paths of life we see each morning that the earth belongs to the mighty man, and the man who plots evil rules over everything, over the spirits of the innocent and their bodies, and in his cunning he makes even them into a weapon of destruction. On the paths of life we see that not only honesty triumphs over injustice, and the pure-hearted man does not always eat the fruits of his deeds. On the paths of life we observe that not all wrongdoers are brought to justice, as they know how to put a shield and buckler around themselves in their cunning, and justice is not powerful enough to punish many wicked men who have caused much suffering and ruin, even if their treachery is known in the community. Indeed, what is the punishment that should be borne by one who slanders his fellow with lies and deposes him from his position with the breath of his mouth, or brings him to the gates of death? The guileless man is led astray and falls, while the one who led him astray rises up and rejoices because he has accomplished his desire, or if a villain entices the innocent with a flattering tongue to do evil and spill blood, and the innocent man who commits the evil is judged and punished for his sin, whereas the villain who led him astray into the snare of evildoers, and a villain who lives long by his wickedness, because he is destined for great things, and there are those upon whom the hand of fate lands, when the righteous and the wicked together come to an end and meet their demise, for such are the paths of life.

בימים התורהзнא רבך בפרק יא והיהudiant וארץ שבה, היה תֵּלֵב לְבֵיתוֹ וְיִשְׂדֵּח רוֹאֵשֲׂוּ בְּיָדֶם שְׁאוֹרָה. בִּדְרֵךְ היהיםزاد ולא של רֶבֶם, אל נַעֲלֵי יאֱלָל מַמד על האַרְרֵב, וְלָא בָּאֶל בָּאֶל מַמד תָּנְר. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים תֶּבִּינוּ לא של דּוֹני על יוֹאָב בְּמַפש, בְּרִיתָם לִשְׁמָע עִלְיוֹ עֶלֶם עַל עַל. וּנְשֹׁרֵי בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, ויִדְּמָה בְּמַפש לוּדְמָה מַעְדָּה, וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּ�ם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּמוּ וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַפש. בִּדְרֵךְ היהים בְּמַפש, וּמַשָּם וּכְלָם אֲלָלָלָם מַשָּם וְלָא כָּל עַדְּתָם. כְּלָם עַל מַفش
with a lie stands and watches as the one who was lured kneels for slaughter, and if the one who led astray is a mighty or wealthy man, then he will be greatly honoured by the sages and will be counted among the wise counsellors, as a knowledgeable man; what will be the judgement of godless ones who toil in the vineyard of faith and earn their living from it, even if they exploit others in its name, or if they commit every indecency and abomination in private and mock their faith and their God? These men sit sheltered in their castles, and no hand can touch them, and if a knowledgeable man arises to make a judgement against the faith then he will be punished for his iniquity. – What is the punishment of those who rob lands and nations dishonestly and unjustly, who trample many men under their feet? Their sentence is that they become mighty men of the land, feared by gods, and exalted upon all lips, but if a hungry man helps himself to his fellow’s piece of bread, he is a thief and a criminal, and the whole nation sees the judgement which is brought against him and they consider it just, as if they were pure and blameless, and everything they do is achieved only through skill and justice and honesty. – How would the judges chastise a cruel father for ruling over his offspring like a cruel lord, reining in their spirit with a bit and bridle as if they were livestock bought with his money rather than his own flesh and blood, and for dealing with them in whichever way he fancies, forcing his son to take a wife not after his own
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heart but rather in accordance with the wishes of the father, who is thinking of family pedigree or great wealth; who binds the hands of his daughter who yearns for a man after her heart, giving her to someone who repulses her, robbing her of her joy and her life, and leading her to deceive the husband he has forced on her, for she gives him only her hand and not her heart. He thus brings evil upon her, upon her beloved, and also upon the one whom she despises, who has become her husband, for glory or money blinded his eyes, and he does not notice that he is violating lives, blameless lives, the lives of his offspring, which he is ruining, yet is there a judgement which will appropriately rebuke such cruel men whom we see at every moment? – Or is there an eye watching over the deeds of a hard-hearted man who cruelly humiliates his wife, deceives her with words and embitters her life without any compassion, such things as he would not do even to his servant, out of fear that he might run away from him, nor to his dog lest he grow angry and bite him with his teeth, as he knows that she is weak and will endure her pains? Power is right, this is what all powerful men say, and this is how they behave, and the sword of justice does not hang over them. Indeed, these are the paths of life, and is it a wonder that the number of honest men is extremely small, while the wicked prevail and grow powerful on earth, for anyone who turns away from evil is regarded as a madman by those who know him, and it is said of a successful man that he has great
strength of heart, so should we still be astonished if we see a righteous man perish in his righteousness, since his helpers are only few, and those who love evil, or who are in awe of it, comprise almost all men. Thus, if we desire to depict men's character with a true pen, then we must acknowledge such painful sights, as otherwise we deceive ourselves, for only the vision of our hearts and not that which is seen in life will be visible to our readers. Now admittedly we see not infrequently that wicked men are also caught in the bonds of their sin, for cunning men can be trapped in their cunning and their leg can be caught in the snare that they themselves set, but here too we know that it is not justice, nor the righteousness of men who seek only justice, that do this, but rather circumstance, which does not show partiality to anyone whether righteous or wicked, and how does it benefit the innocent who have been destroyed by the throng of evildoers if in the end the wicked get their just desserts, and they perish; will their dead live as they go down to the grave? Will the oppressed lift up their head when those who humiliate them are humiliated? Why, no! It is very easy to do evil, to annihilate and destroy, to reduce a multitude of men to dust with only a single breath, but not to do good, to support those who are falling, to exalt those who have surrendered their own honour. If you spread libel against a man, everyone who hears will immediately believe you without asking for much evidence, and will go on his way adding to it here and there. But
if you speak well of your fellows, you will not easily find attentive ears and a believing heart, and therefore you will do more evil than good, for in order to do evil power and might and wisdom are not required, only an evil heart, whereas in order to do good not only is a good heart required, but a willing spirit and courage and knowledge and much toil.

On account of which, every man of sense will understand that those who describe for us how only pious and righteous men become great, whereas wrongdoers are scattered, are lying; they are flattering their readers and leading them astray with lies, and everything that they do is only wickedness or grievous harm, for it does not cause men to do good or consider their conduct or understand the paths of life.

Many may ask: what is the lesson of a play that presents us with wicked men who succeed in their deeds, and what is the moral that we should take from the sight of righteous men perishing in their righteousness? Indeed, if we see that the wicked prosper, then we shall envy all traitors and refrain from seeking to learn to do well. Not so if we are shown the chastisement and punishment of the wicked; in that case we shall learn to fear doing evil – so say many who preach morality without knowing what it is. Truth endures forever; it stands above all, higher than any feeling, even honesty and justice and morality, for without truth these are all meaningless. Such feelings change their appearance from generation to generation and from era to era, and
there are things that previously were called justice, honesty, and morality, but now are considered acts of delusion or foolish wickedness, and there are such things which we now admire and honour as high morality, but if we enquire as to the earliest days and resolve to investigate previous generations, we see that previously lovers of morality found them distasteful, but truth endures forever; it does not change its appearance and men are powerful enough only to put a veil over its face, to cast dust on it until it cannot be seen by the eye, or to besmirch it until it becomes repulsive, but they cannot strip it of its purity; the day will come when the curtain will be lifted from its face and its beauty will be visible to everyone. The point of all morality is to seek the truth, and those who speak untruths hate morality or do not know what it is. What is to be gained from us leading the readers astray with plays that are false, where catastrophe is brought upon the wicked and the moment of punishment upon all evildoers, while the truth stands and cries out: it is a lie! for this is not what is done to them? What would be the lesson of such plays that do not depict the paths of life, but rather visions drawn from a heart that devises falsehood? Why, such plays delude their viewers, so that they do not examine their conduct and do not investigate and turn away from it, for they say to themselves: surely punishment follows on the heels of iniquity, and if we have not been punished, it is a sign that we have not sinned. What is the benefit of the fear generated by such plays, which depict only the punishment of the wicked; after all, it is pointless,
and it vanishes in an instant. This fear is like the fear put into children that they must recite the Shema\(^2\) or else a demon or corpse will come and strangle them, and the child believes and fears, but after he has tried to sleep without reciting the Shema and has slept well enough – the demons did not leave the fire of Sheol\(^3\) and the corpses did not shake themselves out of the dust – then he stops believing in anything, and he abandons everything that he has been instructed to do out of awe and fear. And so it is with any instruction that is accepted only after it has been forced like a burden upon those accepting it; as long as bearing the burden scares them, they will hold onto it, but when the fear has passed they will throw it away like an unwanted vessel; and it is such fear that is generated by this type of play, which depicts the punishment of the wicked; innocent men believe in it until they are opened and they see that they believed in misguided falsehood, for this is not the lot of the wicked on earth, and not every injury lands directly upon him, and not every woe affects only him, and not every corpse will come and strangle them, they believed in misguided falsehood, for their eyes are opened and they see that the righteous are not accursed, as men, covet falsehood and lie often.' Not so for the works of playwrights with open eyes, who read all of man’s deeds and thoughts and impulses as from an open book, and present them before our eyes naked as the day they were born; they do not turn evil

\(^{2}\) A central Jewish prayer consisting of the biblical passages Deut. 6:4–9, 11:13–21, and Num. 15:37–41. The Shema is recited at the morning and evening daily prayers and at bedtime.

\(^{3}\) The biblical abode of the dead.
into good and bitter into sweet, so high morals emerge for us from their words, for we see the truth and observe that honest men are but very few, and they are the choicest of the human race, and if our soul longs to be one of the choicest, then we must not pay heed to the delusions of the masses, for our own ideas should strengthen us, and the knowledge that we are doing good is the greatest reward that a human can receive; our eyes will open to see the impulses of our heart, which are like a gateway to sin, and if we deviate even a little bit from the good path, then we will go from bad to worse, for the beginning of every sin is but a scarlet thread, while its end is like the heavy cords of a cart; we see this, and we understand and know to be careful if we want to, and as for those who do not want to, no instruction or preacher will benefit them. And the benefit that emerges from plays faithful to the paths of life is very great and weighty, for they transform us into men of sense. Not every man is able to recognize the ways of men in the thousands with their changing desires and with the shifting circumstances of time, for our lives are short, and for the most part our eye does not penetrate the imaginings of the human heart; therefore

4 There are several biblical references to a scarlet thread, i.e., Gen. 38:28, 30, in which a scarlet thread is tied to the wrist of one of Tamar’s twin sons as he is born to identify him as the older one; Josh. 2:18, 21, in which Rahab, a resident of Jericho who shelters Joshua’s men from danger when they come to scout out the city, ties a scarlet thread to her window as an identifying sign so that they will know to avoid harming anyone in her house during their subsequent invasion; Song of Songs 4:3, in which it is used romantically as a simile for lips; and various locations in Exodus, in which it is one of the materials used to make the priestly garments. Smolenskin seems to be referring to the warning function of the scarlet thread as it appears in Josh. 2:18, 21, but is focusing on it being only a thin thread, as the mere possibility of sin first emerges.

5 This is a reference to Isa. 5:18, woe to those that draw iniquity with cords of falsehood, and sin as with the ropes of a cart.'
reliable authors become our eyes; they see with the eyes of the spirit and what they see, they tell us so that we might know, and their books become the best and most reliable teachers for us, for they guide us on the paths of life with open eyes so that we do not stumble. And the greatest of all teachers was Shakespeare; in his plays he shows us the chain of actions that sometimes unfolds from a trifling event, from a small desire of a small man’s heart, which expands and grows from day to day accompanied by various events until it becomes an instrument of destruction annihilating many men. He instructs us in the ways of desire, how it leads those trapped in its corrupt snares to the depths of the pit, and how the trapped ones also pull innocent men after them into the destruction that has opened up before them; there is none like him who knows how to weigh on a scale every trifling event, every object that at first was as nothing but in the end became a disaster that lays waste at midday. Let us look at this play before us, which is one of the best that he brought into existence with his great spirit, and let us try to make a judgement about each of the characters created by his imagination that appear in it.

‘Shakespeare sought to depict jealousy for us in this play, just as he depicted for us in Hamlet a man at his wits’ end, in Romeo and Juliet love, and in The Merchant of Venice revenge.’ Many of those who speak about him and his books have expressed their opinion in this manner, but in truth Shakespeare’s power is not one thing, he does not show us one desire, but rather his power is in
This is a direct citation of Lam. 4:3. Ostriches were associated with cruelty in the Hebrew Bible as they were known for neglecting their eggs and young (Job 29:13–8; Berlin and Brettler 2004b: 1599).
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The subject of the play is Ithiel the Cushite, after whom it is also named, and in this the author has shown us that this man is the protagonist of his story, even though Doeg (Diego) is the prime mover throughout the play, and he is the driving force for all the deeds that take place in it, for his primary desire was to show in this play how an innocent man can stumble by listening to the flattering tongue of a traitor, and the power of blind jealousy, which can turn an innocent lamb into a cruel leopard, annihilating and destroying even those who love it on the day of reckoning. Ithiel is a mighty man of valour in war, he has courage and a great spirit without equal, but only in order to position himself against his foes in an offensive war where he can see them with his eyes and observe their weapons; not so against a scheming man who goes about his business in the dark and whom he cannot see. Men like him who stand on the most elevated heights, and who have not tried to fight against everyday obstacles (which do not surround him)

* * *

Although admittedly it has not escaped me that Shakespeare took this play from an Italian-language story in which almost all the characters in the play appear in identical form, nevertheless we can see in them the hand of Shakespeare who arranged them authoritatively and breathed new life into them with his greatness.

Sic.

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like warriors but instead like deadly flies seeking to wound rather than kill), such men, who have spent all their days in the din and thundering of war and have not seen the war of life, have not been admitted to the confidence of those who pursue perversive pleasures and are not familiar with their deceitful ways, such men who are used to the enemy calling them to battle, are like gullible children and believe everything they hear; they believe it because they are used to seeing before them only servants, servants who bow their heads like reeds when they speak to them, servants who wish for their mercy, servants who fear and are in awe of them. Therefore, they think that no man would take pleasure in leading them into the void, them, the mighty warriors who instil their terror in the land of the living. And because they have been accustomed to open war their entire lives, they do not understand the cunning of the man who shoots his arrows in the dark, and since they have never deceived anyone (because circumstance has not imposed this on them), and because they would consider it a disgrace to do so while in power, they do not understand the deceit of the cunning. Ithiel too was such a man. Indeed here too we see how great is the power of this

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most exalted of playwrights, for he chose for himself) a military man from among the rulers of Venice, which had a republic rather than a monarchy. Whether he did this intentionally or unintentionally we cannot know, but we see clearly that his greatness elevated him above all error. He chose an army commander from a land which had a republic and not a monarchy, because in a land that is governed by a king, especially at that time, dukes and great army commanders were like lowly slaves before their lord the king; men advanced by means of deceit, speaking obsequiously to the king’s friends, with a flattering tongue to the women of rank who have audiences with the king; they carved a path for themselves with gossip, informing on others, and paved their way with deceit until they became exalted, while the innocent were forgotten, with no one turning to them and no one remembering their talent or wisdom. Therefore, if Ithiel had been a great army commander in a land ruled by a king, he would already have been familiar with deceitful conduct and he would not have been innocent, and if he were familiar with cunning and schemes, he would not have been so quick to believe the words of a schemer like Doeg, for he would have stopped and said to himself, surely he wants an eminent position, and to this end he is devising schemes; why, he is digging a pit for Chesed (Cassio) because he envies him, for that is what those who pursue position and office do. Not so in a land which bases its government on lawmakers, appointing and dismissing ministers not according to the counsel of hypocrites, but rather by law and accounts, because there is not just one
man sitting on the throne who could easily be drawn into a web of schemes; there are many. Therefore it is very difficult to treat them all obsequiously, and as such a man who has talent will be more successful; in such a land he has not seen the crooked paths of schemes, for he has advanced without flattery, only with his greatness, his honesty, and his innocence, and we can justly say of him what Doeg said of himself: 'If I were Ithiel, I would not be Doeg.' For indeed it is so; if Doeg were the elevated man that he wanted to be, he would not have hastened to act deceitfully, and if Ithiel were Doeg, he would not be Ithiel, for he would be a schemer and not an innocent man; but he was Ithiel, an innocent man, and therefore he believed in everyone, and it did not occur to him that a loathsome desire might drive one of his servants to put hooks in the nose of a leviathan such as himself and toy with him like a bird. It did not occur to him because such a thing cannot occur to a man such as he; especially since the man who was deposing him was destined for great things. Doeg knew well that an innocent soul like Ithiel would hate all deception, and when he heard the words treachery and deception, he would blaze with fury and he would not really take stock, and therefore he knew how to put doubt gradually into Ithiel's soul regarding his wife's innocence, and afterwards he showed him reliably that she was unfaithful, for she had deceived her father as well. This was enough to lead a man like Ithiel to believe that she had indeed been unfaithful and wayward from her youth. Why, she had deceived even her father with great cunning by
loving him, Ithiel, so who could guarantee him that she would not also trap him in the snare of deception by loving another man? – here the terrible things that Asenath’s father had cruelly said sprouted and formed a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood. Her father had warned him on the day his daughter left him, ‘Keep your eye on her, Cushite, lest she betray you as well, as she betrayed her father’, and the villain Doeg knew how to make these words into an instrument of destruction in his hand by reminding Ithiel that his wife had betrayed her father. Her father’s words thus became a net spread out on the path of his daughter and her husband, in which they were ensnared and trapped and together were doomed to die. Ithiel is the very image of every gullible person who believes everything, who becomes a game for every rogue and villain, and so are all of those who are not familiar with the ways of the earth and the schemes of the deceitful, for they become an instrument of destruction, annihilating themselves and honest men with their folly; such folly corrupts the path of the innocent like wickedness and lust, except that the wicked man condemns others in his wickedness, while they are found guilty by the wickedness of others.

The second character in the play, who is the first in every deed and the one who makes the whole play revolve, is Doeg. Through him, the very image of a man’s envy of his companion and the symbol of treachery is displayed before our eyes. There are very many men among the living with hearts like Doeg’s, half of them and perhaps even
more; men who try to improve their situation out of envy of their companions, and who would not hold back from any wicked deed, informing, bearing false witness, sowing discord between brothers and between a man and his wife, acting with ever greater deceit, only in order to achieve their desire, or at least to bring down their companion who is too great for them to endure, for every man who is greater than them is hateful to them, and they regard him as an enemy, and therefore they wage war against him, but since he is greater than them, and hence more powerful, they hide like ambushers on his way to set snares at his foot. Such men are extremely numerous, most of the traders and merchants of the earth, most of the ministers and dukes of the land, nor is their number few among the sages and teachers of law and judgement, but not many are as clever as Doeg at making every trifling event into an instrument of destruction, and not many have the fortune to be given an instrument of destruction such as they desire, and therefore they do not gain a reputation. By contrast, those who have been trapped by circumstances gain the reputation of the most deceitful men on earth. Conversely, if circumstances are favourable to them from when they first set out on their corrupted path until they achieve their goal and attain all their desires, they do not acquire the reputation of evildoers, for if a man is successful and becomes wealthy and holds a position, then has he not gained his desire by his righteousness and honesty? So say all who
know him, and who would search for the crooked paths along which he rolled in the midst of the ruins until he achieved his desire, if the beginning and end of the path are concealed from the eyes of every living being? And since he has acquired wealth, why, is it not the case that he no longer has any desire for deceit, for instead he can boldly do whatever he wants, and everyone who knows him praises him and says that he has done great things. Thus, if Doeg had achieved his desire and had become a minister, then he too would have been greatly respected, and no one would have dared to call this nobleman a scoundrel. It is not so for the fool whom circumstance allowed to realize his ambitions, but afterwards, before he had achieved his desire, brought him to justice and foiled his plans and revealed his iniquity to everyone; everyone recognizes that he was a traitor, and in the end he is called a scoundrel by all who know him. As I said, many have a heart like Doeg’s, but not many manage to carry out their deceit, and if they do, it is not always made public. There are many who are envious of their fellows’ happiness and greatness, and the starting point for this envy is sloth. The man who loves hard work makes his way through life in good faith, and rejoices in his work, so much so that he does not yearn to exchange it for another. Therefore he is

8 This expression is a slightly modified citation of Job 30:14. The Hebrew in the biblical verse is somewhat enigmatic and has been translated in various ways, including ‘in the desolation they rolled themselves’ (King James Bible), ‘amid the ruins they come rolling in’ (New International Version), ‘amid the ruins’ (New Revised Standard Version).
happy with his lot, even if he has a great deal of work, for nothing gives rest to the soul and peace to the heart like toil in the hands of the industrious. These men do not envy their fellows’ happiness, and they do not plot to depose them from their high position and take their place, for their heart is full of love for their work. However, there are not many such men, and in contrast to them there are many slothful men who seek the good of the land without any toil or labour. Since they shy away from labour, have no desire to work, and are unsuccessful in forging a good path through life by means of their own toil, they look with envy upon their fellows’ happiness, and all day they contemplate schemes regarding them, as if they were the ones robbing them of their prosperity. Such men have a passionate hatred for every rich and respected man; such men are not grateful to those who are good to them, because they consider the good things they receive to be only a small fraction of the payment for everything of which they have been robbed. We cannot trust such men, for they love us because we have often helped them (the very image of such men in all their conduct, behaviour, and wicked inclinations has been described for us with incomparable diligence by the wonderful author Dickens in his book Our Mutual Friend when he presented us with the destructive Silas Wegg), for at every occasion they seek and find excuses to say that we have not fulfilled our obligation to be good to them. We see such men by the hundreds in this

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In every prosperous man; who can count the number of men that secretly hate all those happier than them, and hatch plots to bring sudden disaster upon them. Yet such slothful men who shy away from work have tongues that know no sloth; they do their work all day, stirring up quarrels and provoking one man against his fellow and striking honest men with the breath of their mouth, like the case of the serpent who had no hands for fighting and no horns for goring, so instead he inflicted irreparable wounds with his tongue. And Doeg was one of this type of men or serpents who crawl on their belly to wound the feet of the trusting passer-by; he was not mighty in battle, and therefore he did not become exalted; he despised work and manual labour, and therefore he rushed to achieve through deceit that which he had not succeeded in achieving through talent. He plotted evil against Chesed, who had never done him ill; his only iniquity was that nature had graced him with a handsome face and a courageous heart and talent, inasmuch as he had succeeded in achieving a respected position based on his actions. He hated Ithiel passionately even though he treated him very well, because he had not promoted him, and therefore he concocted schemes to destroy these men that he hated. But even in this we see how great Shakespeare’s power is and how pure his eyes are in searching out the innermost depths, for he has not presented...
this villain to us – although he was a villain – as one who commits evil deeds with open eyes, no! Even this evil and corrupted man took stock, justifying himself in doing the terrible wrong; he told himself that he was justified in his deeds as he dug a pit for Ithiel, for according to what many people said, Ithiel had desecrated his bed, and therefore he had the right to exact revenge upon him. Even though he did not believe this libel – and who knows if he did not conceive and plot it on his own in order to delude himself – nevertheless, it was sufficient to silence the warnings of his conscience, which sometimes stirs even in a corrupted heart. And all those who plot evil do as he did: first they deceive themselves and lead themselves astray with false visions, and afterwards they come to rely on the deceit which they themselves had invented, so that they might lead others astray with lies. ‘Be faithful to yourself and be faithful to every man’ – Polonius says to his son Laertes in the play Hamlet. And indeed this is man’s teaching; he who does not deceive himself, and does not delude himself with false visions, will likewise not lie to his fellow; indeed, this is the gateway to sin for all those who delude men with their speech, for first they deceive themselves; one boasts to himself that he is truly more exalted than all his fellows, and afterwards he desires to mould them to his will; a second one says to himself that he is not being paid as he deserves and in accordance with his talent, and therefore he thinks that he has the right to exploit
others as well; and a third one wants to believe that he has been selected as a judge of elevated men to lead the multitudes with his authority and trample many men under his feet, and if a man breaks away from him and attempts to remove his yoke from his neck, he regards him as a rebel against the judge of elevated men who has dominion and majesty because of his power, and so numerous are the crooked paths upon which those who deceive themselves in order to lead others astray with their lies are caught. That is how this villain initially silenced the warnings of his conscience, and afterwards, when he had already concocted many violent schemes, he ceased taking stock of himself and he thought only about the practicalities of his schemes, until he finished what he had started and brought evil upon all the objects of his wrath. However, he too was trapped in his cunning and in the end his betrayal was revealed, and therefore he became a symbol for every traitor and criminal. Doeg is the very image of sloth, which begets envy of one man against his fellow, as well as deceit and betrayal.

The third character in the play is Phichol (Brabantio), Asenath’s father, who was the starting point for all the evil that befell his daughter and her husband. Through him we are given a description of the love of false honour, which hardens the heart and blinds the one who possesses it until he cannot distinguish between good and evil or between truth and lies, and he does much evil, even if he has an honest heart, like all evildoers.

השלישי בהתחיהו הוא פיכל (ברבנטיא)
Phichol, Asenath’s father, was a great and wealthy minister, respected in his city and his country, and a counsellor in the government; as such, it goes without saying that since he had a daughter he intended to give her to a man as exalted as himself, and for such men, an exalted man is not one who has made a name for himself by his wisdom, courage, or talent; they honour and respect such men when they find them pleasing, but what nobleman would give his daughter to such a man? For the daughters of noblemen, a man from among the noblemen is required, whoever he may be: an unsuccessful man, a villain, someone who chases intoxication and lewdness, or is empty-headed; it does not matter, if only he has hereditary pedigree, for those with pedigree do not consider all these sins to be iniquities. Indeed, a man is called a drunkard only if he gets drunk on beer, but not if he gets drunk on champagne; in that case he is only called a lover of life, and there are many sins like these for which only men lacking a title are condemned, but not members of the elite, for ancestral pedigree purifies every impurity, cleanses all grime and makes the wise man who was clever enough to be born to noblemen privileged from the womb. So how great is the pain of Phichol, the minister and the counsellor, when he finds out that his daughter has given her heart to a man who acquired all his honour only by means of his toil and courage; consuming rage burned within him, and he forgot that he was his daughter’s father, pushing her away with both hands and

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saying to her in front of everyone, ‘You are not my daughter.’ Indeed, such is most fathers’ love for their children; only as long as they do their bidding like faithful servants, only as long as they rule over their bodies as well as their souls, do they exalt them, elevate them, toil for them, and glory in their love, but if for a moment the idea enters the children’s mind that they too are people and that they too have a heart and feelings and want to live in accordance with their desires, then these merciful fathers do not recognize them and are not their fathers. Most fathers act in this manner, and their conscience does not rebuke them for this iniquity, because they inherited it from their fathers and their fathers’ fathers. Indeed, if Phichol had said to himself, ‘What right do I have over my daughter to sell her like a contemptible maidservant to a man whom she reviles? Who gave me the authority to rob her of her heart’s desire and to embitter her life forever? After all, her soul and her heart are hers, and she can give them to whomever she pleases; if he had taken stock in this way he would have said to himself that indeed a daughter only spends a quarter of her life in her parents’ house, but must spend three-quarters of her life in her husband’s house, and if she is given to a man who is alien to her, why then all her days will be pain and anger, and she will prefer death to such a bitter life; if he had said such a thing to himself, perhaps he would have repented, regretted his thoughts, and had mercy on his daughter, and would not have pushed her away in anger. But like most
fathers, he did not consider such things, and his selfishness made him harden his heart against his daughter as if she were a stranger to him, and he did not remember all his mercy and love for her on that day of wrath; ‘I no longer have a daughter’ – he called out in his wrath – and did not repent. Indeed, if he had only done this, if he had only acted like a stranger to her, then his evil would not have been so great, but no! He wrought much more profound destruction without considering what he was doing. Indeed, if Asenath had been a stranger to him, would he have dared to tell her in public that she would become a whore, a strumpet in the future? Would he have had the nerve to tell a man that he had an adulterous wife? – ‘Keep your eye on her, for she will surely betray you!’ – he would not have done such a thing, and if he had done such a thing he would have been punished, and his disgrace would have returned to him twofold; but this merciful father who a moment previously had said, ‘I no longer have a daughter!’ and as such regarded Asenath as a stranger to him, nevertheless did not contain his fury, continuing to scold her and curse her in front of everyone, because of what? Because he was her father and he felt that he still had right and authority over her, since he had been her father for some years. With this judgement he brought the evil upon her that drove her to the grave, for the words that he spoke in his anger spawned a poisonous fruit in the furrows of Ithiel’s heart, who, like any man, did not think much either, and did not tell himself that
Phichol might have been lying when he said that his daughter had betrayed him, for she had not betrayed him; on the contrary, he had betrayed her and alienated himself from her. Choosing a husband for herself did not constitute a betrayal; rather, she was acting in accordance with the law of nature. Was it her fault that on the day she was created fate gave her a heart which had an open chamber for love to settle in? She did not betray her father, in that she did not say to him: ‘You are not my father’; rather he betrayed her, saying: ‘You are not my daughter!’ but nevertheless, Ithiel did not oppose him when he heard him insulting his wife, because of what? Because he too had been misled like every man to think that indeed the father has the authority and the right to do as he pleases with his daughter, and since he had been misled to think thus, he saw her as a traitor to her father, and since he saw her as a traitor, he paid heed to the informer who destroyed her with his speech, saying that Asenath had betrayed her husband as she had betrayed her father. This is the outcome of the perverted ruling that has become rooted in men’s hearts, from which they have refused to distance themselves. This perverted ruling – that fathers have the right to do as they please with their children – corrupted her father so that he did not have mercy upon her and brought evil upon his beloved daughter, as well as upon himself (for he too died from affliction, evil, and sorrow over his daughter, whom he had considered a traitor), and her husband, so that he did not have mercy upon her
on the day of his fury, and did not tell himself: ‘Indeed she did not betray her father, and even if she had betrayed him, there is no other reliable indication that she has betrayed me, for a husband is not like a father; she did not choose her father of her own free will, whereas she chose her husband, and she would not betray him.’ Instead, since he too had been blinded by the perverted ruling, he listened to someone who slandered in secret and brought about the death of this blameless girl, innocent of any iniquity. Phichol is the very image of the love of false honour, which lives on perverted rulings and kills those who possess it.

The rest of the men who appear in the story are not honourable in their actions; Chesed is a naive man who fell into the net of cunning unwittingly; Raddai is an empty-headed man chasing after desire who is trapped by his desire and goes to the grave because of his desire and folly.

But Asenath is the very image of pure and faithful love, which knows no limits and sees no obstacles on its path; her love leads her to follow a man who has won over her conscience and heart; her love also sustains her to endure pain inflicted by her beloved, and her love does not abandon her even in death, and she blesses the name of her lover who destroyed her in his anger.

This is the power of Shakespeare, for all the women who appear in his plays do not speak much and do not perform great deeds, but in few words we see them as if they were living before our eyes. Ophelia (in Hamlet),

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Many have regarded Asenath's love as exaggerated, and now too many regard it as impossible, that this wretched girl who was murdered by the bridegroom of blood not long after her wedding, that this wretched girl should still continue to love him and should take such great blame upon herself as her soul departed, saying, 'My hands did this!' But they do not understand women's hearts. Almost all women and children – as well as many men – who are not used to waging war with the vicissitudes of circumstance, feel desire only as long as it is far from their reach, whereas if it is given to them without toil they do not rejoice in it. So too with their love: if they obtain it without obstacles or misfortunes, then they do not value it. Only with a multitude of obstacles in their way does their love grow, does its intensity increase without them searching out schemes to achieve their desire. Instead, they sit and quarrel with their circumstances, feeling angry.

Julia in *Romeo and Julia*, and Asenath (Desdemona) in *Ithiel* speak only little, but nevertheless we see the power of their limitless love. Even in death she did not abandon her love, and before her soul departed, she even tried to clear her beloved of any blame, saying, 'My hands did this', and these few words were potent enough to depict the power of love for us much better than entire books intensely praising its greatness and worth.

Many have regarded Asenath's love as exaggerated, and now too many regard it as impossible, that this wretched girl who was murdered by the bridegroom of blood not long after her wedding, that this wretched girl should still continue to love him and should take such great blame upon herself as her soul departed, saying, 'My hands did this!' But they do not understand women's hearts. Almost all women and children – as well as many men – who are not used to waging war with the vicissitudes of circumstance, feel desire only as long as it is far from their reach, whereas if it is given to them without toil they do not rejoice in it. So too with their love: if they obtain it without obstacles or misfortunes, then they do not value it. Only with a multitude of obstacles in their way does their love grow, does its intensity increase without them searching out schemes to achieve their desire. Instead, they sit and quarrel with their circumstances, feeling angry.

9 Sic.
10 This is a reference to Exod. 4:25. See Fifth Act, note 73.
with their misfortunes and mourning over them, and since they are not accustomed to act, the idea grows more and more powerful, becoming master over their whole heart, until they cannot find the strength to stop thinking about their love even for a moment; not so are those who have experience waging war against the vicissitudes of life; misfortunes spur them to action, to do away with every stumbling block and remove every obstacle from their way. And if they are successful they rejoice, but if they see that they have been ineffectual, and all their toil has been in vain, they say to themselves: there's nothing for it, and toiling to no end is utter futility, and in this way they find some comfort and relief. But women, who for the most part are not accustomed to physical battle, are always intoxicated in their love. And each stumbling block and misfortune stirs them not to obtain their desire by practical means, but rather to desire more intensely. Because of this, if a man shows his beloved frequent signs of love, he does not cause her love to intensify; conversely, if he treats her like a stranger and appears not to seek her love, then the love is ignited in her heart like an infernal blaze, and a woman will bear everything calmly, even condemnations and abuse, even blows from her lover’s hand, especially if she sees that he did it out of jealousy, for jealousy in her lover’s heart – even if it treats her very badly and embitters her life and forces her to sit at home like a bird in a cage and not to speak a word to anyone – even brings joy to her heart, as she thinks: indeed he is only
jealous because of his love, and this idea is enough for her to silence herself, and so too Asenath’s love did not weaken when her husband struck her down; on the contrary, it grew even more intense, especially as she was convinced that he had acted out of jealousy, so she forgave him for all of his wrongs, and she was even prepared to kiss the hands that had brought an end to her life. It is no wonder that she tried to clear her husband of all blame, her beloved, as she thought that he had acted only out of his love for her, and the lie that she told seemed to her like truth and justice, because through it she sought to save her husband from disgrace or punishment.

But she did not tell a lie, for indeed her hands had done this to her: she had failed because of her great love and innocence; she trusted in her love too much, and because of that she pressured Ithiel to restore Chessed to his position, and it never even occurred to her that what she was saying might be a burden to him, that she might be asking something of him which should not be done even for love – namely, issuing a corrupt ruling and desecrating his honour. Only senseless youths follow love with closed eyes wherever it leads them and do everything that it commands them, performing strange deeds and uttering perversities. Not so for men who have made their mark on the world by their might and uprightness, and whose honour, which they have obtained with great toil, is more precious to them than all of life’s pleasures, even more than love, even more than life. A sense of honour is extremely precious to those who understand its value, and they will forcibly remove everything from their
path that has the power to tarnish their honour even slightly – even if the deed that they must do sickens them greatly. A faithful judge who has gained a reputation for his righteousness will not become biased, desecrating his honourable name, even if love commands him to do so; a warrior who has gained the reputation of a hero through his strength of spirit will not stop a war while his enemy is before him, even if love asks it of him; a man who has followed his conscience and stood up to speak the truth in public, rebuking misguided men for their folly and sinners for their sins, will not act deceitfully again, not even for love. Thus, no man who is sustained by a sense of honour and who found his path in life before he knew love will abandon his path for it, for the sense that had inspired him for a long time and had been like a light illuminating his path does not dim quickly; even if its voice is hidden for a day or two by the roar of love’s voice, it will grow stronger in the end and will make itself heard with greater force. Only those who lack any noble yearnings in life wander after love like a beast into the valley,\(^\text{11}\) going so far as to commit strange and perverse acts, for they would commit strange and perverse acts even without love, since they have not chosen a sound path for themselves. Many women fail to understand this and place too much trust in the power of love, asking of their lovers things that it is inappropriate for them to do; in this way they do themselves ill, for if once or twice the lover disregards and overrides his honour, the power of love is indeed thereby weakened, and woe to love if its

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\(^{11}\) See note 1.
power is weakened even slightly, for then it continues to diminish until it disappears and not infrequently turns into enmity, being a burden. However, many women are ignorant of this and dig a grave – an eternal grave – for their love with their own hands. This was the case for Asenath too; she did not act wisely in pressuring her husband to do what he had refused to do. Even if the rot of jealously had not set into his bones (which she did not know), it still would not have been wise of her to ask this of him; she should have known that a wife must not interfere with state governance and military judgements. She would have known this if she had been familiar with the ways of the world and men’s hearts, but in her innocence she did not understand this. Thus her innocence and love became a trap and a snare, and the villain Doeg made even them into an instrument of destruction to obliterate those with whom he was angry by advising Chesed to plead repeatedly to her, convincing her to speak repeatedly to her husband, and showing Ithiel that she was only doing this because she loved Chesed. His evil words easily made inroads into Ithiel’s heart, since what she was saying would have caused him grief even without the jealousy, and even if he had listened to her the first time, he would have undoubtedly grown angry at her if she had tried to do such a thing a second time. And through Asenath’s few words, Shakespeare managed like none other to show women how to follow love without stumbling, without trusting too much in the power of love and without digging a grave for it with their own hands, over which they would cry all the days of their lives without a future or hope.
In Milcah he has presented us with a woman on a lower level than Asenath, a woman who says decisively that she would not shy away from sin if she were to receive a great payment, and that it would not be her own fault, but rather the fault of her husband, the villain who had mistreated her (as indeed, according to her, all men do). The number of such women on earth, who are corrupted by their husbands and forget the honest way, is not small; indeed, it is much bigger than the number of women like Asenath.

Anah is a woman on the lowest level among women, equivalent to Raddai’s level among men, about whom there is not much to say, and in these three we have been given a reliable portrait of almost all women, with the diversity of their characters and inclinations.

From all these, we see that this exalted play becomes like an illuminating light, like a faithful guide for the multitudes, instructing them in the ways of the world and the desires, schemes, and inclinations of men’s hearts. For this playwright is not a playwright for one people or one land, he is a playwright for all peoples and all lands, for he does not show us the conduct of a member of a single people or individual men, but rather the conduct of men in general. Therefore he is like a teacher for all men, and should not be considered a stranger even to us in our language, for if we observe just a little, we see that among us too there are men like Ithiel and Phichol and Doeg and their ilk.

Although admittedly we do not have great army commanders like Ithiel, who display their prowess and courage on the battlefield, instead we have in our midst members of the elite who are innocent in their conduct of affairs in all their multitude, innocent of the desires, schemes, and inclinations of men’s hearts.

The Exalted Play of Milcah has presented us with a woman on a lower level than Asenath, a woman who says decisively that she would not shy away from sin if she were to receive a great payment, and that it would not be her own fault, but rather the fault of her husband, the villain who had mistreated her (as indeed, according to her, all men do). The number of such women on earth, who are corrupted by their husbands and forget the honest way, is not small; indeed, it is much bigger than the number of women like Asenath.

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Although admittedly we do not have great army commanders like Ithiel, who display their prowess and courage on the battlefield, instead we have in our midst members of the elite who are innocent in their conduct of affairs in all their multitude, innocent of the desires, schemes, and inclinations of men’s hearts.
their conduct, innocent rabbis, teachers, community leaders, and rich men who turn an attentive ear to the words of those who slander in secret, to crooked-hearted men who would guide their leaders into oblivion in order to acquire money or a position, corrupting justice, pursuing blameless men who have done no wrong, and spreading quarrels and strife in each and every community. And the Jewish people are not at all lacking in men like Doeg; in almost each and every town, in each and every community, there are men like him by the dozens, who with their lying and deception set cities aflame, sow discord, and cause destruction. One calls on the name of faith and puts a God-fearing veil over his face in order to destroy many followers of the Haskalah by making judgements against those who have forgotten God, while another carries the banner of the Haskalah on his shoulders in order to oppress those whom he considers to be fools and simpletons, as they draw water from the well of faith in order to sustain themselves; and together they all surround the great ones with their deceit and the lesser ones with their fear or their intellect, and they cause a great deal of failure wherever they go. Indeed, all such men are Doeg’s friends, and they camp under his banner.

But men like Phichol, who are blinded by the desire for power, are perhaps even more numerous among the Jewish people than among all other peoples. There is almost no people on earth which regards its sons and daughters as livestock bought with its money, doing what it pleases with them, like the Jewish people do. Among all peoples we see that only their great men and leaders are
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

Indifferent to their offspring’s feelings, marrying them off to whomever they deem suitable in order to gain honour and increase their family’s honour, whereas among the Jewish people almost everyone, from the most insignificant to the greatest among them, from the wisest to the most foolish among them, are all the sons of kings, and family honour and pedigree are the things that make matches for them. But they falsely boast that no one is as merciful towards their children as they are, and that they toil their whole lives only in order to grant their children success, but in truth it is not for their children but rather for themselves, in order to increase their honour that they do so. If they were really thinking of their children’s success, they would take care to make a path for them in life, to teach them a trade if they are not suited for study, and they would not constantly think about how this would ruin their pedigree. If they really wanted to grant their daughters success, they would not choose husbands for them by means of messengers and matchmakers, they would not consider familial honour, or a foolish rabbi who bestows his glory upon the whole family, or a rich man who has robbed strangers of their wealth and has become successful and bestowed the radiance of his gold upon all the members of his family.

Indeed, what is the pedigree of most Jewish families? One has become rich through deception, and has managed to buy the sixth Torah portion and maftir.12

This refers to the practice of dividing the Sabbath Torah reading in synagogues into seven portions and giving different members of the community the honour of being called up to recite the blessings over each portion. The sixth portion is particularly esteemed and is often assigned to learned members of the community. The maftir portion follows the seventh portion; it consists of the last few lines of the seventh portion followed by the haftarah, a selection from the Prophets with links to the Torah reading.
for many years, to occupy a leading position in the synagogue, and to buy Torah scrolls and so forth, and he becomes a precious cornerstone for his entire family and all of his descendants derive their honour from him and mention his name with great pride. Another has borrowed money without repaying it on multiple occasions, yet nevertheless he is considered generous, for he is a friend of the burial societies and gives of his stolen money to charity; a third one acted corruptly and committed every indecency in his trading with partners from other lands in the days of his youth, and yet in his old age he sits in a prayer-shawl and phylacteries for two hours a day in the study-house and is called a righteous man, and all his sons and daughters boast of his honour; a fourth one made his wealth through deceit overnight on the stock market and became respected by all, and this man has a rabbi or dayyan or ritual slaughterer in his family, whose honour is as naught in his eyes, and when he speaks to them he lords it over them because he is rich and they are poor, but on the day when it comes to discussing a marriage match for his son or daughter, he puffs himself up like a frog and mentions the name of the exalted man, because he too is illuminated by the light of his honour. And they all (except a small number of people, and they are very few, who with their hearts as well as their mouths seek only their children’s happiness) see their sons and daughters only as a way of increasing the family honour, and even if the girl cries out bitterly: ‘I have no desire
for a man whom I despise; I would prefer to die rather than to give my life to a man who is alien to me,’ and even if the son begs, ‘I am repulsed by the daughter of this rich or pedigreed man who has a corrupted character and a hollow heart, so how can I endanger my life and spend my days groaning?’ These afflicted souls cry out and howl how they feel, but there is no one to listen to them among their merciful fathers, who live only for them and toil intensively for them, and gain wealth for them through deceit and dishonesty. In one case a pious and ignorant man teaches his daughter languages, and how to strum on a harp, and how to go out to merrymakers’ dances, and she studies and is successful and acquires knowledge, yet in the end she is to become the wife of an ignorant fool, a pious man from a pedigreed family, and she cries out: ‘Why did you bring trouble upon me, father, by letting me acquire knowledge and open my eyes, so that I might see my destruction? If I were like one of the ignorant girls, then I would be happy, for I would not know the glory of men, I would not know the worth of an exalted man compared to a despicable man; but you have brought destruction upon me by giving me knowledge, and now you continue to rob me of my happiness and my life by tying me to a block of wood!’ – She cries out and howl how she feels, but her merciful father’s ears are closed, because he is doing this for her happiness. In another case a man befriends Maskilim and appears to be an enthusiast of the Haskalah in order to gain honour, and his daughter has learned since her youth to honour Maskilim and the Haskalah, seeking not wealth,
dancing chariots, or palaces of pleasure, but rather a man who has won her mind and heart. But on the day when her match is arranged, her father chooses a wealthy man, even though he is devoid of knowledge, intellect, and manly qualities, and he throws his daughter at the foot of this ass in order for him to trample on her with a pridelful foot, for he desires a rich man, and his daughter’s distress does not soften his heart, for he is giving her money for her happiness and success. If the tears welling up from the eyes of these afflicted souls were gathered into one place, they would become a flowing stream; if all the groans emanating from such broken hearts were united, they would become a very fearsome storm wind, but no one counts them, no one gathers them, no one pays attention to them; they sell their sons and their daughters like slaves in order to satisfy their own desire for honour, and therefore wretched people proliferate, and true peace in a Jew’s home (especially at this time, when the hearts of the Jewish people have been divided into the camps of the God-fearing and the Maskilim) is a very precious thing. In countries where the Jews have not yet adopted Gentile ways, we hear of strife and quarrels between a man and his wife; on a daily basis we see men going to the courthouses to grant bills of divorce to their wives whom their fathers had given them; we see miserable divorcées and desolate abandoned wives at every step. Meanwhile, in the countries where men are ashamed to get rid of their wives, because it is a disgrace, each man does as he pleases, following his eyes and heart, and their wives also learn their ways, and this is the success upon whose altars
the merciful fathers who toil only for the benefit of their offspring place their sons and daughters. These Jewish students of Phichol who choose to follow in his footsteps will see their conduct and their actions in this play as if in a polished mirror, and perhaps they will understand what lies in store for them; innocent men like Ithiel will see how traitorous scoundrels behave and will know to be wary of them; the entire people will see the behaviour of traitors like Doeg and will not go chasing after it. It is all the same; therefore I say that this play is also for us just as it is for all peoples, and therefore we must be grateful to this translator for bringing such a precious object into the treasure-house of our language, a precious object that will be a beauty and a delight for our language. And it gladdens my heart very much when I recall that I spurred the translator on to perform this labour, and that he relied upon my judgement to bring his work to light, because for a long time I had yearned to see the work of the greatest of playwrights dressed in the mantle of our language; for a long time, when I saw that our authors – those deserving of the title of author as well as those who take this title for themselves without any justification – were all turning to foreign books and dressing them in the garment of our language, books foreign to our people, our spirit, and our language, books that bring no benefit or knowledge, books not even worth printing in the language in which they were written, let alone translating into another language, our authors were choosing such books with which to enrich the treasure-house of our literature; when I saw such things, I always said: ‘Have they all been stricken
with madness, choosing only what is evil and corrupt, with no one stirring to give us good and beneficial words? If only a man could be found to translate the plays of Shakespeare into our language, he would receive the blessing of all lovers of our language who understood his work’ – I always said this to my friends, and look, today someone to redeem our language has been found, someone who has begun to try his hand at this work; he has tried it and has succeeded most greatly, as readers will see. If only he should desire to continue with this labour of his, to glorify the prestige of our language, and to draw in many of its readers, who do not yet know how to judge what is good and what is bad, paying attention only to good and exalted books like these! May his good deed be his wages, for he does not wish or hope for any other wages, other than to increase and magnify the honour of our language, and I know with certainty that he will not be put to shame in his hope, because all readers will praise him for his work just as I praise him and bless him for the good that he has done.

Vienna, the ninth of the month of Shevat, 5634.\textsuperscript{15}

Peretz ben Moses Smolenskin.

\textsuperscript{15} This date on the Hebrew calendar corresponds to 27 January 1874.
Letter from the translator to the publisher

I have fulfilled your desire, my friend, and translated Othello from English into Hebrew. I have also obeyed you and called it Ithiel in Hebrew, which resembles Othello only in pronunciation, and not Athlaf as I had called it in the beginning, and which is its correct translation. But after I finished the work, I was disheartened, for while reading the original, each and every utterance chimed in my ears with a voice full of power and glory, like the voice of a living man emerging from Shakespeare’s throat, but my translation was not like this, for its voice issued like a ghost from the ground, and my words spoke from the dust. And even though I knew well the Hebrew language twittered by a man such as Shakespeare, full of power and glory, like the voice of a living man emerging from Shakespeare’s mouth; and thus is man; he should not be judge of the work of his hands or testify about it either for good or for ill, because the judgement is for others. Therefore I had called it in the beginning, and which is not the same, that I had translated the author’s ideas faithfully and had not strayed from his thoughts to the right or the left, nevertheless the road is long between the living language emerging from the mouth of the greatest man among the Anakim and the Hebrew language twittered by a man such as myself. It is in no way lost on me that the man contemplating the work of his own hands resembles a woman looking at her face in a polished mirror; she cannot know whether she is beautiful or not if she has not heard so from someone else’s mouth; and thus is man; he should not be judge of the work of his hands or testify about it either for good or for ill, because the judgement is for others. Therefore

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This minor biblical character, mentioned in Ezra 10:28, was a Judean who had intermarried but was influenced by the scribe Ezra to send away his foreign wife. See First Part, note 94. Apart from this brief statement and one editorial comment at the end of the play (see Publisher’s Note, note 1), there does not seem to be any documented indication as to the extent of Smolenskin’s changes to Salkinson’s translation, nor as to how Salkinson might have regarded such alterations to his work.

The greatest man among the Anakim is a citation of Josh. 14:15; the Anakim or Anakites were a race of primordial giants mentioned on various occasions in the Hebrew Bible.
I am hereby sending you the translation, and you must decide as you see fit: if you say that it is healthy and that the reincarnation from English to Hebrew has been conducted appropriately, then it is in your power to publish it and introduce it to the Jewish community, but if you find that Shakespeare’s flavour has not remained in my jar, and the scent of our holy tongue has been altered in my translation, tell me so decisively, and I shall be prepared to destroy the work of my hand and to hand over my toil as fuel for the fire, for why should I bring frogs into Egypt and a bad translation into the camp of the Hebrews? Do they have too few bad and corrupted translations, with which Jewish authors have been swarming like the Nile for generation after generation? Or do I have no other work to keep me occupied, other than mistreating a beautiful woman and defiling her beauty, to the point where the viewer would be repulsed by her and Shakespeare’s name would be desecrated at my hand? Indeed, it is true that I translated Paradise Lost and printed it and took it upon myself to ensure that it would see the light of day, without taking advice from knowledgeable people, but there were two reasons for that; the first reason is that this great and important book is constructed from beginning to end on the foundation of the Holy Scriptures, and because of my great love for the books of the Lord I determined to present this voluntary offering upon the altar of our language for the good of the Jewish people; and if they scorn my offering, I shall not take it to heart because the Lord, who sees into the heart, knows that I did this for His honour.  

*) If readers scorn the offering that he has brought them with his book So He Drove Out the Man, it is not because he was unsuccessful in his work, for all understanding readers have praised his work and have marvelled very greatly at his talent and the Lord who sees into the heart, knows that I did this for His honour.  

Paradise Lost

J.E.S.
second reason is that *Paradise Lost* is not so well known among the Jewish people; while there are many among its foremost sages and authors who have heard of it, and that it is the work of a great artist, nevertheless they have not read it, have not seen its glory and do not know what it is, and therefore I responded though no one had asked me, and translated the book for the Hebrews, in order that they might know and recognize the worth of Milton, the greatest of the righteous among the nations, and what he achieved with his book, which I have called by the title *So He Drove Out the Man*, because wondrous things can be seen in it which have not been devised in any nation until this day. It is not so with Shakespeare; his books are read in the four corners of the world in seventy languages, and viewers can see his plays on the stage in every big city; therefore I have no desire to bring his books into the Jewish community before I hear from the mouth of a great and powerful man like yourself that my translation is correct and that it is permitted to enter the community. And if afterwards the critics come and find any indecency in it, you, my friend, will bear it on your own, and I shall have rescued myself.

*Your friend who respects and honours you*  
*J.E.S.*

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18 The title of Salkinson’s translation of *Paradise Lost* is a citation of the beginning of Gen. 3:24, in which God drives Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden after they eat from the tree of knowledge.
The names of the speakers

Duke. .................................................. The Prince of the Land in Venice\(^{19}\)
Brabantio. .......................... Phichol counsellor at the gate of the state\(^{20}\)
Senators .......................................................... Two other counsellors
Gratiano .......................................................... Gether Phichol’s brother
Lodovico .......................................................... Lud Phichol’s friend
Othello the Moor .......................................................... Ithiel the Cushite
Cassio .......................................................... Chesed his officer
Jago\(^{21}\) .................................................. Doeg his standard-bearer
Roderig\(^{22}\) ................................................. Raddai one of the noblemen of Venice
Montano ......................... Kenaz the governor on the island of Caphtor before Ithiel’s arrival
Chlown\(^{23}\) .................................................. Clown attendant to Ithiel
Herald .......................................................... Herold\(^{24}\)
Desdemona ............................. Asenath Phichol’s daughter; Ithiel’s wife
Emilie\(^{25}\) .......................................................... Milcah Doeg’s wife
Bianco\(^{26}\) .......................................................... Anah Chesed’s concubine

Officers, noblemen, couriers, musicians, sailors, attendants, and others.

The scene in the first part is in Venice, and the rest of the scenes are on the seashore on the island of Caphtor [Cyprus].

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\(^{19}\) Salkinson provided this English cast list alongside the Hebrew one.

\(^{20}\) In biblical times a city’s gate served as the gathering place for its judges and other authority figures.

\(^{21}\) Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Iago’.

\(^{22}\) Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Roderigo’.

\(^{23}\) Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Clown’.

\(^{24}\) Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Herald’.

\(^{25}\) Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Emilia’.

\(^{26}\) Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Bianca’.
Ithiel the Cashite of Venice

Duke

Brabantio

Senators

Gratiano

Lodovico

Othello the Moor

Cassio

Jago

Roderig

Montano

Chlown

Herold

Desdemona

Emilie

Bianco

Cyprus

Ithiel the Cashite of Venice
First Part

SCENE I Venice – street (Raddai and Doeg)

RADDAI Be silent! Do not speak to me further

Behold, my purse is perpetually open before you

And you know this – I am deeply angry.5

DOEG But why, devil!6 You are not listening to my words

If I have turned my attention to this matter

If I have ever pondered such a thing, you may indeed abhor me.

RADDAI Why, you told me that you hate him.

DOEG May I be a laughingstock if the matter is not so.

Three of the great men of the city7 urged him from day to day8

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1 Salkinson uses the Hebrew wordחלל 'part' rather than a more specific term for 'act', most likely because there was no widely established Hebrew theatre terminology at the time.

2 Salkinson retains the Italian place names appearing in Shakespeare’s text. While this seems to deviate from his overall Judaizing strategy, it may be rooted in his recognition of the longstanding and prominent Jewish presence in Italy and could point to a concomitant decision to interpret his characters as Italian Jews (Kahn 2017).

3 1 Chron. 2:14. Raddai was the fifth son of Jesse and older brother of King David. Salkinson most likely selected the name primarily or solely on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Roderigo’.

4 1 Sam. 22:18, 22; Ps. 52:2. Doeg was an Edomite and chief herdsman to King Saul who carried out the execution of a large number of priests. Edom was an enemy nation for biblical Israel; in rabbinic literature, it became a symbol of the Jews’ Roman conquerors and of Christianity in general. In light of these points, Scolnicov (2001: 186) proposes that Salkinson selected Doeg as the equivalent of Iago in order to highlight the character’s murderous proclivities and to mark him as a Christian enemy in contrast to the Jewish Ithiel (see note 94). The partial sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Iago’ most likely also played a role.

5 Jon. 4:9.

6 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Sblood’ (1.1.3). Salkinson has neutralized the Christian connotations of this oath, a contraction of ‘God’s blood’. While ‘Sblood’ was expurgated from the text of the First Folio (Honigmann 1997: 115), it seems to have been present in the edition that Salkinson was using (which generally corresponds to the Folio in other respects). The Hebrew term typically means ‘adversary’ in the Bible, but takes on the sense of ‘devil’ or ‘Satan’ in postbiblical texts. Salkinson is using it in the latter meaning.

7 2 Kings 10:6.

To raise me up and let me be an officer for him

And I hereby swear by my faith that my strength is sufficient for me

And I am not unworthy to bear the obligation of such an office

But he in his arrogance has a different spirit with him

And he replied to them with false and misleading oracles

And he behaved deceitfully towards them, saying that it was a time of war

And that he would not be able to fulfil that which they had urged on my behalf

For he had already chosen an officer, a man after his own heart.

And who is this officer? Who is the man after his own heart?

A man by the name of Chessed, a native of the city of Florence

Who has understanding of the times and is the servant of a beautiful concubine

But to lead a troop in the field, to command an army of war

He has no more knowledge than one who grasps the spindle.

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9 Cf. Shakespeare's 'lieutenant' (1.1.8). The Hebrew word פקิด is much more general than the English 'lieutenant'; as Dikman (in Salkinson 1874/2015: 239) has observed, Salkinson uses it to translate distinct English terms ('lieutenant' and 'officer'), thus obscuring the differences between them.

10 Deut. 33:7 'לֶבַן וְרָב יָדָיו' i.e., 'give him the strength'.

11 Num. 14:24 'ﬠִמּוֹ אַחֶ֙רֶ֔ת רוּחַ הָֽיְתָ֞ה' he had a different spirit with him'.

12 Lam. 2:14.

13 1 Sam. 13:14.

14 One of the sons of Abraham's brother Nahor mentioned in Genesis 22:22 (spelled Kesed in some English Bible translations). Salkinson most likely selected this name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare's 'Cassio'.

15 1 Chron. 12:33 'לַﬠִתִּ֔ים בִּינָה יִשָּׂשכָ֗ר וּמִבְּנֵ֣י' And of the sons of Issachar, who had understanding of the times'.

16 Prov. 31:19 'ךְ פָלֶתְמוּ וְכַפֶּ֗יהָ' and her hands grasp the spindle'. Salkinson appears to have taken Shakespeare's 'spinster' (1.1.23) to mean 'one who spins'.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
For he has not experienced these, and he has learned war

Only from the book; he has no counsel or might

And no action on a day of battle in the manner of a valiant man

Except for tongue and lips, and this is his whole lot.

But he has chosen him, and placed the office on his shoulders

Whereas I am poor and wretched; though with his eyes he has seen

My ability and my might on the island of Caphtor and Rhodes

In the Christians' portion of land and among the people of a foreign god.

I must place a muzzle on my mouth and bind my face in the hidden place

Lest the lender and the creditor oppress me because it is too heavy for me.

Look down from heaven and see that I have waited for your salvation!

Chesed has become an officer, whereas I am the Cushite's standard-bearer!

17 2 Kings 18:20 쉿ועה בונורתיו לילכוה מלקومة 'counsel and might for the war'.
18 Ps. 78:9; Zech. 14:3.
19 A place-name mentioned in various places in the Bible, the precise location of which is unclear. It is referred to as an island in Jeremiah 47:4 and is typically thought to correspond to Crete, although some argue that it denotes the southern coast of Turkey.
20 Somewhat unusually, Salkinson has not replaced this place-name with a biblical equivalent.
21 Gen. 33:19; 2 Sam. 23:11; Ruth 2:3, 4; 1 Chron. 11:13.
22 Ps. 39:2 מַחְס֑וֹם לְפִ֥י אֶשְׁמְרָ֥ה 'I shall guard my mouth with a muzzle'.
23 Job 40:13 בַּטָּמֽוּן חֲבֹ֣שׁ פְ֝נֵיהֶ֗ם 'bind their faces in the hidden place'.
24 Isa. 63:15; Ps. 80:15 (80:14 in English Bibles).
26 The Hebrew word כושי is a gentilic adjective appearing on numerous occasions in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., 2 Sam. 18:21; Jer. 13:23; Zeph. 2:12; Num. 12:1 [in the feminine form, referring to Moses' wife]; Amos 9:7 [in the plural]). It is based on the toponym כוש, which is first mentioned in Gen. 2:13 and appears in various other places in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., 2 Kings 19:9; Isa. 11:11; Ps. 68:32 [68:31 in English] 18:20 17 only from the book; he has no counsel or might' 18 and no action on a day of battle in the manner of a valiant man 18 except for tongue and lips, and this is his whole lot. 19 but he has chosen him, and placed the office on his shoulders 19 whereas i am poor and wretched; though with his eyes he has seen 20 my ability and my might on the island of caphtor 20 and rhodes 21 in the christians' portion of land 21 and among the people of a foreign god. i must place a muzzle on my mouth 22 and bind my face in the hidden place 23 lest the lender and the creditor oppress me because it is too heavy for me. look down from heaven and see 24 that i have waited for your salvation! 25 chesed has become an officer, whereas i am the cushite's 26 standard-bearer!
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

There is no remedy for this illness; this is the curse of those who serve.

Step after step, a man on the heels of his brother.

One rises up while another stays on the lowest step.

And now tell me sir, am I obliged

To love the Cushite?

Leave him and do not continue to serve him.

Do not fear, sir; I serve him for myself.

In order that I might also happen to repay him his recompense.

We cannot all be masters, but not every servant.

Serves his master. There are senseless faithful men.

That bend a knee and bear a burden all the days.

To bear him in order to hang him is better than bearing his standard.

To bear him and do not continue to serve him.

Do not fear, sir; I serve him for myself.

In order that I might also happen to repay him his recompense.

We cannot all be masters, but not every servant.

Serves his master. There are senseless faithful men.

That bend a knee and bear a burden all the days.

The location to which the toponym refers is uncertain, but is generally believed to denote a region in northeastern Africa (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 1: 466–7), possibly Ethiopia (Schulman 2007). This uncertainty is reflected in the English translations of both the toponym and its associated adjectives. Some translations (e.g., the New English Bible, New International Version, and English Standard Version) generally prefer the terms ‘Cush’ and ‘Cushite’, while others (e.g., the King James Bible, Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, and New Revised Standard Version) favour ‘Ethiopia’ and ‘Ethiopian’. (Note, however, that there is internal inconsistency within individual translations; for example, the King James Bible uses ‘Ethiopia’ in Gen. 2:13 but ‘Cush’ in Isa. 11:11.) In the modern period, the adjective came to refer more generally to anyone of African descent. I have chosen the translation ‘Cushite’ here as it more closely resembles the Hebrew and is geographically less specific, which is in keeping with the uncertainty surrounding the meaning of Shakespeare’s ‘Moor’.

27 Gen. 25:26 - 'and his hand was grasping Esau’s heel'.
29 Eccles. 10:4.
30 Psalms 28:4 - 'repay them their recompense'.
They serve their masters, like asses for straw and fodder, 31
Who send them away in their old age like a wife forsaken 32
And of them it is said: ‘a rod for the back of fools’. 33
Whereas others appear outwardly to be as faithful servants
But they are faithful to themselves, for by their apparent service
They prosper before their masters, they accumulate a fortune, fill their bags
And in their latter days they become masters. These are men of sense
And I am as one of them. On your name Raddai I swear
If I were the Cushite, I would no longer be Doeg,
And I go after him in order to arrive at my desired haven 34
Not out of love or innocence of heart – as God is my witness 35
But rather with a flattering mouth 36 until I arrive at the target
For God forbid that I should reveal by the work of my hand and my service
What my desires and my hidden thoughts are,
Lest I reveal my heart in the assembly in broad daylight 37

31 Gen. 24:32.
32 Isa. 54:6 'and the wife of one's youth when forsaken'.
33 Alshekh to Prov. 10.
34 Ps. 107:30 'to their desired haven'.
35 Job 16:19.
36 Prov. 11:9.
37 Num. 25:4; 2 Sam. 12:12.
So that ravens of the valley might pick it out, not thus am I with myself.

I am not the man in the heart, as you see me in the eyes.

What great wealth and riches this big-lipped one will have.

If he can carry out his plan!

Do not let go of him; put hemlock in his pleasures.

Proclaim his name outside and rouse all the members of her family.

Release flies upon him so that they bite him in a peaceful abode.

And if his face glows from joy, may his eye grow dim from grief.

This is her father's house; behold, I shall call out loud.

Call out in a sound of terror, in a sound of loud rumbling.

Like one who calls out while fire devours a peaceful city at night.

Ho, ho, Phichol! My lord Phichol, arise!

Arise, Phichol, wake up! Thieves, robbers in the night!

So that ravens of the valley might pick it out, not thus am I with myself.

I am not the man in the heart, as you see me in the eyes.

What great wealth and riches this big-lipped one will have.

If he can carry out his plan!

Do not let go of him; put hemlock in his pleasures.

Proclaim his name outside and rouse all the members of her family.

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Like one who calls out while fire devours a peaceful city at night.

Ho, ho, Phichol! My lord Phichol, arise!

Arise, Phichol, wake up! Thieves, robbers in the night!

38 Prov. 30:17.
39 1 Sam. 16:7 ‘man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart’.
40 Ps. 112:3.
41 Josh. 10:6; Prov. 4:13; Ps. 138:8.
42 Isa. 32:18.
43 Ps. 6:8 (6:7 in English Bibles) ‘my eye grows dim from grief’; also Ps. 31:10 (31:9 in English Bibles).
44 Gen. 38:11; Lev. 22:13; Num. 30:17; Deut. 22:20; Josh. 6:25; Judg. 19:2, 3.
45 Job 15:21.
46 Ezek. 3:12, 3:13.
47 Commander of Abimelech's army, mentioned in Gen. 21:22, 32, 26:26. Abimelech was a Philistine king contemporary with the patriarch Abraham. Salkinson may have selected the name in order to evoke associations of leadership and prowess, as there is no clear sound correspondence between Phichol and Shakespeare's Brabantio.
48 Obad. 1:5.
Thieves! Thieves!  

Look to your house, look to your daughter and your bags of money, Thieves, thieves!

(Phichol looks out through the window)  

PHICHL  What is the sound of shouting there? What is this I hear?  

RADDAY  Are all the members of your household, my lord, inside the house?  

DOEG  Are the doors closed?  

PHICHL  Why do you ask such a thing? Why do you ask such a thing?  

DOEG  Why, 51 you have been robbed, my lord!  

(But put on your robe, for you are naked)  

Your heart has been torn to pieces, and your flesh has been half consumed  

Behold, now at this very moment, an old black ram  

Is pounding your ewe purer than milk. Arise, go  

With the sound of the ram’s horn and shouting, and assemble the citizens  

Who are sprawled on their beds. If you wait a bit longer  

Soon you will be embracing your grandchild, that son of Azazel.

49  Judg. 5:28 ‘she peered out through the window’ (Sisera’s mother).  
50  1 Sam. 4:14.  
51  Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds’ (1.1.85); Salkinson has removed the Christian oath.  
52  Num. 12:12 ‘and its flesh has been half consumed’.  
53  Gen. 28:2; Num. 22:20; Deut. 10:11; 1 Kings 17:9; Jer. 13:6; Jon. 1:2, 3:2.  
54  2 Sam. 6:15 ‘with shouting and the sound of the ram’s horn’.  
55  Amos 6:4.  
56  The term Azazel appears in Lev. 16:8–10, in the description of the Yom Kippur ritual whereby the sins of the community were symbolically placed upon a goat that was sent out into the wilderness, ‘to Azazel’.
Arise, I proclaim to you!

**PHICHOL** Are you mad?

**RADDAI** My chief and lord, do you recognize my voice?

**PHICHOL** I do not recognize you; who are you?

**RADDAI** My name is Raddai.

**PHICHOL** As such my anger and fury at your coming here is doubled,

Why, I have warned you not to lie in wait at the door of my house

And I have said clearly to your ears that my daughter will not be for you

Yet now you have come from your carousing, behaving like a madman from the evening’s wine

With a spirit of confusion mixed within you, in order to disturb my rest.

**RADDAI** My lord, my lord…

**PHICHOL** Indeed know that my strength is sufficient

And your end will be bitter.

**RADDAI** Please, my lord, please, wait a little while.

**PHICHOL** What did you tell me about quarrel and strife?

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The meaning of this term is uncertain: some English Bible versions (e.g., the King James Bible and the New International Version) translate it as ‘scapegoat’, while others (e.g., the English Standard Version, the Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, and the New Revised Standard Version) translate it as ‘Azazel’. In rabbinic literature, Azazel is interpreted variously as an area of mountainous cliffs from which the goat was pushed to its death; as the name of the goat (possibly based on a fusion of the names of two fallen angels, Uzza and Azael, whose sins it was intended to atone for); or as the name of a demon (Ahituv 2007). The thirteenth-century Jewish commentator Nahmanides supports the latter interpretation, and the association of Azazel with a demon has remained dominant in Jewish tradition. Salkinson’s translation is based on this interpretation.

57 Isa. 19:14 ‘the Lord has mixed a spirit of confusion within her’.

58 Deut. 33:7 ‘strengthen his hands’ (more literally: ‘let his hands be sufficient for him’); i.e., ‘give him the power’.

59 Hab. 1:3.
This is, after all, the city of Venice, and my house is a wall house – שָׂםָה אֲנָה תֵּעָר יְעָרֵי נָבְיֵה בְּתֵית

RADDAI
Honourable sir, with an innocent and pure heart I have come to you – רָדַּדַי

DOEG
You, my lord, are like one of the men Who afflict the mouth of the devil when he commands them To serve God. Behold, we come for your own good Yet you would make us out to be villains. Is it good in your eyes that an ass should cleave to your daughter and it be said of the offspring of the ass That he is your offspring?

PHICHOL
Who are you? A mouth speaking folly?

DOEG
I am the man who has come to tell you: Behold, right now your daughter stands before the Cushite As if she were standing before a steer, a bull to lie with her.

PHICHOL
Your mouth testifies against you that you are a villain.

This speech is prose in the original (1.1.107–12).

60 This speech is prose in the original (1.1.107–12).

61 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds’ (1.1.107); as previously, Salkinson has omitted the Christian oath.

62 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Barbary horse’ (1.1.110), i.e., a North African horse (Honigmann 1997: 123, note 110). Salkinson has removed this geographic reference and replaced the horse with an ass. Scolnicov (2001: 187) suggests that this replacement serves to preserve Shakespeare’s bestial imagery via a veiled allusion to Ezek. 23:20, זִרְמָתָם סוּסִים וְזִרְמַת בְּשָׂרָם בְּשַׂר־חֲמוֹרִים אֲשֶׁר פִּלַּגְשֵׁיהֶם静脉 upon their paramours, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is as the issue of horses’.

63 Gen. 2:24 אֶחָֽד לְבָשָׂר וְהָי֖וּ בְּאִשְׁתּ֣וֹ וְדָבַ֣ק וְאֶת־אִמּ֑וֹ אֶת־אָבִ֖יו יַֽﬠֲזָב־אִישׁﬠַל־כֵּֽן therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh’.

64 Isa. 9:16 (9:17 in English Bibles).

65 This speech is prose in the original (1.1.114–15).

66 Lev. 18:23 לְרִבְﬠָהּ בְהֵמָה לִפְנֵי לֹֽא־תַﬠֲמֹ֞ד וְאִשָּׁ֗ה静脉 a woman must not stand before a beast to lie with it’.

67 2 Sam. 1:16 מְתַﬠֲגְּבָ֣ה for your mouth has testified against you’.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

DOEG

Your mouth testifies against you\(^68\) that you are a counsellor.

PHICHL

You will bear all of these yourself, for I know you, Raddai.

RADDAI

All of these I shall bear, just please listen to me:

If this matter had been from my lord
And it were the desire of your heart
That your delicate daughter
Should be brought in the middle of the night and the darkness\(^69\) by one of the sailors
To set her in the bosom of the Cushite, a man of lust and desires
In order that he abuse her;\(^70\) if it is your heart’s desire
Then we have erred very gravely, and our sin is too great to bear.\(^71\)

But if you were not aware of the matter, it is my opinion and my belief that
Your rebuking us is not fair and not just.
Please don’t, my lord! I am not insane
That I should come to mock you.
And I hereby say further
If the girl has acted on her own volition and has not sought your counsel\(^72\)
She is profaning her father. – How can a daughter of good sense

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\(^{68}\) 2 Sam. 1:16 ‘for your mouth has testified against you’.

\(^{69}\) Prov. 7:9.

\(^{70}\) Judg. 19:25 ‘and they abused her all night’ (as part of a gruesome incident whereby a Levite man allows the men of Gibeah to rape and kill his concubine, this reference would have had strong associations for Salkinson’s readers).

\(^{71}\) Gen. 4:13 ‘my iniquity is too great to bear’ (Cain speaking to God after killing his brother Abel).

\(^{72}\) Josh. 9:14 ‘but they did not ask the LORD’s counsel’.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
A beautiful, educated daughter,
let herself be sold to a
foreign man!73

A noble daughter74 like her, to a
fugitive and a wanderer75 like a
goof!76

And now see, if you can find her in
the house or in the chamber

Pronounce me guilty at the gate of
judgement for I have wearied you
falsely

PHICHO. Hurry, bring out fire! – Bring light
at once!

Call all of my men to me – behold,
this matter

Disturbs me like a bad dream; I fear
lest the matter is true

Dreams do not speak in
vain – light! Light!

(Exits from the window)

DOEG. Behold, I am going to my place, and
as for you, farewell to you, Raddai

I shall not stand with you any longer
lest the matter be discovered

That I am one of those who rebel
against the Cushite, and I destroy
my inheritance.77

I know that the prince of the
land writes bitter things
against him78

But he will not depose him from
his station79 at this time of war.

73 Deut. 17:15; Eccles. 6:2.
74 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
75 Gen. 4:12 (referring to Cain’s fate after killing Abel).
76 2 Sam. 6:20.
77 Ruth 4:6 ‘lest I destroy my inheritance’.
78 Job 13:26 ‘for you write bitter things against me’.
79 Isa. 22:19 ‘and I shall depose you from your station’.
And he has already arranged to go down with the ships to perform service\(^{80}\) in Caphtor

For he is a valiant man; there is none like him in the land.\(^{81}\)

And even though I despise him like the pains of Sheol\(^{82}\)

Nevertheless I sense that the matter is necessary

To raise the banner as a sign that his banner over me is love.\(^{83}\)

And you will surely find him if you instruct the guards

And search for him in a certain inn\(^{84}\)

For there you will find him and me together. (Exits)

(Phichol and servants with torches)

PHICHL\ O

This evil has surely befallen me,\(^{85}\)

the girl is gone\(^{86}\)

What will be the end of my days except for poison and wormwood?\(^{87}\)

Tell me Raddai! Where did you see her?

Where has the wretched girl been cast? With the Cushite, you told me?

Who should want to be a father? Who would raise up maidens?

How did you recognize her, that it was her you saw there?

---

80 Num. 4:23, 8:24.
81 Job 1:8, 2:3.
82 2 Sam. 22:6; Ps. 18:6. Sheol is the biblical abode of the dead. Salkinson has found a particularly close Hebrew equivalent to Shakespeare’s ‘hell-pains’ (1.1.52).
83 Song of Songs 2:4.
84 Salkinson has generalized Shakespeare’s reference to a specific inn, the Sagittary, an inn with the sign of Sagittarius (the Centaur, mythological half-man half-horse – see Honigmann 1997: 126, note 156), which would have had little meaning to nineteenth-century Hebrew readers.
85 Rashi to Job 21:28 באתני asher הרעה 'the evil which has befallen me'.
86 Gen. 37:30 לילה 'the boy is gone'.
87 Deut. 29:17 (29:18 in English Bibles).
Now I know well that you have deceived me

And you have spoken lies to me – what did she say to you?

Bring lamps and torches – call all my relatives! –

Do you think, Raddai, that she is also married?

Raddai

I think so now, that she is married.

Phichol

How did the daughter of a perverse and rebellious woman get out?

Fathers, do not trust your daughters any more –

Is the matter true, that a maiden in the days of her youth get out?

Might heed the voice of charmers to hand over her honour?

Have you read, Raddai, things such as this in books?

Raddai

Yes, my lord, I have read such things in books.

Phichol

Call my brother for me – if only you had married her –

Go some this way, some that way –

Do you know where we may catch her and the Cushite?

Raddai

I shall surely find him if you give me guards

And you also go with us.

Phichol

Come, lead us.

---

88 Judg. 16:10.
89 In postbiblical forms of Hebrew this can also mean ‘one who has lost her virginity’ (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 191); Scolnicov (2001: 186) argues that Salkinson intended the latter meaning.
90 1 Sam. 20:30 ‘son of a perverse and rebellious woman’.
91 Ezek. 16:60 ‘in the days of your youth’.
92 Ps. 58:6 (58:5 in English Bibles) ‘that does not heed the voice of charmers’.
Behold, I shall enter every house, even if with a strong hand!

Bring weapons and guards who surround the city at night –

Lead, Raddai, my friend, there is payment for your labour.

(Exeunt)

scene 2

A city street in a different place

(Ithiel, Doeg, and attendants)

DOEG

Even though I have killed men in the battles of war

My heart does not permit me to kill a soul with malicious forethought

For I am not wicked enough to do evil even for my own good.

How many times have I raised my hand to strike him in the belly.

ITHIEL

It is good that you did not strike him.

DOEG

But who can hear ridicule and disgrace from his mouth

As he scorned your name and spoke rebellion against you.

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93 Exod. 3:19, 6:1, 13:9; Deut. 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 9:26, 26:8; Ezek. 20:33–4; Ps. 136:12; Dan. 9:15.

94 This is the name of two minor biblical characters, a) one of two addressees of Agur’s oracle, mentioned in Prov. 30:1, and b) a Benjaminite returning from Babylonian exile to Jerusalem, mentioned in Neh. 11:7. The name seems to have been selected primarily on the basis of the sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Othello’. Note that, as mentioned in his letter to Smolenskin directly preceding the beginning of the play, Salkinson originally planned to name his protagonist Athlai, after the minor biblical character the mentioned in Ezra 10:28, a Judean who had intermarried but was influenced by the scribe Ezra to send away his foreign wife. This likewise corresponds in sound to ‘Othello’, although perhaps not as closely as Ithiel. Scolnicov (2001: 186) argues that the selection of Ithiel, an Israelite name for Othello (as opposed to most of the other characters, who bear the names of non-Israelites), serves to highlight the fact that Salkinson regarded his protagonist as a Jew and used the name to underscore his foreignness in the Venetian context. If this was indeed the intention, Salkinson’s initial choice would have made the point more vividly, since the biblical Athlai is known precisely for his status as a Judean with a foreign wife.

95 2 Sam. 4:6, 20:10.

96 Jer. 29:32 ‘for he has spoken rebellion against the Lord’.
I would have *grown weary of enduring* his words had the fear of heaven not prevented me.

But I shall ask you one thing; inform me whether the wedding was *according to the law*?

You know that the counsellor is dear and honourable.

And he is as powerful at the gate as our lord the prince of the land.

And he will force you to give a *bill of divorce* to your wife.

Or punishment will be meted out against you according to the laws of the land.

Which he has the power to impose however he desires.

Let him do whatever is in his power.

My service for the government will mollify all of his complaints.

In my heart there would also be the courage to boast in the *midst of the assembly and congregation*.

If I knew that a boaster would be honoured by his own mouth.

I am also from a family of rulers; I *came out of the loins* of kings.

And the honour which I have taken for myself with *my sword and my bow*.  

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97 Jer. 6:11 'and I am filled with the wrath of the LORD; I am weary of enduring it'.

98 Ps. 27:4 'one thing I have asked of the LORD'.

99 Esther 1:8, 4:16.

100 Alshekh to Ps. 36:8.

101 Deut. 24:1.

102 Prov. 5:14.

103 Exod. 1:5 'all the souls who came out of the loins of Jacob'.

104 Ps. 44:7 'for I shall not trust in my bow, neither will my sword save me'. Salkinson has inverted the meaning of this citation, but the resemblance suggests that he may have had it in mind.
Is greater than the honour of the counsellors who boast with their head-covering.

And who would scorn me saying that I am a fugitive and a wanderer? And who would scorn me saying that I am a fugitive and a wanderer? 105

Indeed I love to wander and to be free in the land. 106 And had not the love of Asenath kept me dwelling at home? Indeed I love to wander and to be free in the land. 106 And had not the love of Asenath kept me dwelling at home? A far-flung journey would be better for me than all the abundance of the sea, 108 But look, what are these torches coming up from there? (Chesed and attendants with torches in their hands enter from afar) 109

DOEG Her father and her relatives are coming here in anger and great wrath. 109 Please get into the house.

ITHIEL No, rather I shall stand here. Should such a man as I flee? I shall not turn away from anyone 110 But are these the men? 111

105 Gen. 4:12 (referring to Cain’s fate after killing Abel).
106 Jer. 14:10 (referring to Cain’s fate after killing Abel).
107 Asenath is Joseph’s wife. In Gen. 41:45, 50, 46:20 she is identified as the daughter of the Egyptian priest Potiphar. In some places in rabbinic literature (e.g., Genesis Rabba) she is said to be the daughter of Potiphar’s wife, while in others (e.g., Pirke deRabbi Eliezer) she is said to be the daughter of Joseph’s sister Dinah. See Standhartinger (2009) for discussion of Asenath in Jewish literary tradition. Scolnicov (2001: 186) suggests that Salkinson selected this name for his version of Desdemona because Asenath was a non-Jewish married to a prominent Jewish family, and she argues that this was designed to underscore Salkinson’s interpretation of Ithiel as a lone Jew among Christians, an ethnic outsider like Othello. Unlike many of the other Hebrew names in the play, there is no obvious sound correspondence between Asenath and Desdemona.

109 Deut. 29:27 (29:28 in English Bibles) ‘and in anger and in great wrath’; also Jer. 21:5.
110 Neh. 6:11.
111 Responsa of Spanish Talmudic authority Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet (1326–1408, known as Ribash), section 394. First published in Constantinople in 1546, these responsa were widely studied and would have been familiar to Salkinson.
DOEG: As my lord lives, these are not the men.  

ITHIEL: Why, they are the servants of the prince with my officer Chesed.  

Greetings, my brothers! What news is in your mouth?  

CHESED: The prince enquires after your health, army commander! And asks to see you at once.  

Do you know what he desires?  

CHESED: In my opinion it is on the matter of Caphtor.  

For regarding that the matter was urgent.  

Messenger after messenger and courier after courier in the night  

Went out hastened and rushed by the men of the ships  

And the counsellors were called and gathered before the prince in his palace  

And he also sent for you but you could not be found at home  

Therefore they again sent other messengers from the council house  

Who appointed three leaders to look for you throughout the whole city.  

ITHIEL: It is good that you found me.  

Wait a little while so that I may give some orders to the household  

And afterwards let us go together.  

(Exits into the house)

---

112 Salkinson has replaced Shakespeare’s ‘by Janus’ (1.2.33) with this expression, which lacks any associations with Classical mythology but resembles the common biblical oath יהוה חֵי ‘as the Lord lives’.  

113 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘general’ (1.2.36); this phrase appears numerous times in the Bible; for example, 1 Sam. 17:55; 1 Kings 1:19; Jer. 52:25.  

114 Esther 3:15ךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּדְבַר דְחֻפִים יָצְאוּ הָרָצִים ‘the couriers went out, hastened by the king’s command’.  

94 The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
CHESED  Tell me, standard-bearer, what is he doing here?

DOEG  He captured a mighty ship tonight.

And if his action is according to the law let him be a successful man.

CHESED  Your words are too wondrous for me; I do not understand your language.

DOEG  He was married tonight.

CHESED  And whose daughter is she? (Ithiel re-enters from the house)

DOEG  Will you go, army commander? Will you go right now?

ITHIEL  Behold, I am going, and who would stop me.

CHESED  Behold, another troop is coming here to look for you.

(Phichol, Raddai and the guards who surround the city with torches and weapons)

DOEG  Behold, Phichol is coming; guard yourself from him, army commander.

For he plots evil.

ITHIEL  Desist, stand!

RADDAI  My lord Phichol, here is the Cushite.

PHICHOL  Behold, this is the robber! Destroy, destroy!

(They draw their swords on either side)

115  This collocation appears in the Babylonian Talmud *Nidda* 31a, with a different meaning, namely ‘someone who has experienced a miracle’ (the Hebrew word נֵס can mean ‘miracle’ or ‘banner, standard’).


117  Esther 1:8, 4:16.

118  Gen. 39:2.

119  Prov. 30:18.

120  Prov. 6:14.
DOEG  Prepare yourself Raddai, come, let us face each other. 121

ITHIEL  Let each man return his sword to its sheath

Lest rot appear on the blade from the droplets of dew.
And you Phichol, I said a multitude of days should speak 122

For the mouth of an elderly like you is better than the edge of your sword. 124

PHICHOL  Kidnapper, 125 foul barbarian! Where have you hidden my daughter?

With cords of magic you have pulled her after you, man whom I have determined to destroy? 126

For if her hands are not bound with chains of enchantment

Who with sense would believe that a tender and delicate maiden

Who has never desired to marry any man

And who has hidden her face from the desirable young men, the honourable ones of our nation;

That such a pleasant maiden would deceive her father

And flee to everlasting disgrace, to lie in your bosom, despicable Cushite

---

121 2 Kings 14:8; 2 Chron. 27:17 (both in the context of battle).
122 Job 32:7 ‘I said, days should speak and multitude of years should teach wisdom’.
123 Lit. ‘mouth’ (play on words with ‘mouth’ in the beginning of the line).
124 Gen. 34:26 ‘with the edge of the sword’ (referring to Jacob’s sons killing Shechem for raping their sister).
125 Deut. 24:7.
126 1 Kings 20:42.
127 1 Sam. 16:18 (referring to King David).
128 Deut. 28:56 ‘with the edge of the sword’ (referring to Joseph’s brothers killing Shechem for raping their sister).
129 Ezek. 23:6, 12, 23.
130 Jer. 20:11.
Whose face is like a furnace, to cast dread upon children

And damsels do not love you? – Understand, judges of the earth

Whether I have spoken truly, that he came to her with charms

And gave her a cup of intoxicants to drink, or a mixture from a cup of poison

Which takes a maiden's heart and incites the flame of desire in her.

With this I have proven sufficiently, that the matter has substance

And also a reliable sign that he has committed this abomination

And therefore I have come to imprison him, as one who violates the laws of the state

And as one who engages in the craft of sorcery, which must not be done

Catch him quickly, and if he stands against you

Lay a hand on him, for his blood is on his head

Ithiel Be silent, calm down all of you, let no man raise his hand

Both on this side and that side. If I desired to fight

My arm would save me and I would not call for help

An indirect reference to Shakespeare's 'sooty bosom' (1.2.70).

Isa. 40:23.

Zech. 12:2.

This is a postbiblical expression first appearing in the Mishnah (e.g., Oholot 16:3 ‘the matter has substance’).

Deut. 7:24 ‘no man will be able to stand against you’; see also Deut. 11:25.

i.e., with intent to kill; this is a common biblical idiom.

Josh. 2:19; Ezek. 33:4.
But you choose yourselves, where must I go

To give a response to the judges, for my transgression and my sin? 138

phichol

To the prison house you will go, until the appointed day comes

When you stand before the judges, to prove your innocence for your life.

ithiel

If I go in compliance with your command, what will our lord the prince 139 say

He who sent messengers to me, who stand here next to me

To bring me before him, so that he might say something to me

Regarding the affairs of state?

the officer

The matter is thus, honourable lord

The prince sits here, in the company of his counselling ministers

And you, too, have been called to come amongst those summoned.

phichol

The prince sits in the company of his council on this night

Bring him before him. My quarrel is not a small quarrel

Both the prince himself and my brothers the counsellors of the nation

Will consider this violence against me as violence and robbery 140 against themselves.

138 Exod. 34:7 ‘iniquity and transgression and sin’; see also Lev. 16:16, 21; Ps. 32:5; Dan. 9:24 for similar collocations.

139 Cf. Shakespeare's 'duke' (1.2.14).

140 Jer. 6:7, 20:8; Ezek. 45:9; Amos 3:10.
If such deeds can be done and no one stands at the breach\textsuperscript{141}

Servants and foreigners will before long rule the land.
(All exit)

\textbf{SCENE 3}

\textbf{THE PRINCE}

The council house (The prince and the counsellors sit at the table and attendants stand over them)

\textbf{THE PRINCE}

The reports that are arriving do not correspond to each other

And one can hardly believe them.

\textbf{COUNSELLOR 1}

One says this way and another says that way\textsuperscript{142}

In my letters it is written a hundred and seven ships.

\textbf{THE PRINCE}

And in my letters, a hundred and forty.

\textbf{COUNSELLOR 2}

And in my letters, two hundred;

Although the number is not the same, as is the way of rumours

Regardless, they are unanimous\textsuperscript{143} that the Turks\textsuperscript{144}

Are descending on ships to Caphtor.

\textbf{THE PRINCE}

One who understands matters precisely\textsuperscript{145} will admit that it is thus

\textsuperscript{141} Ezek. 22:30; see also a similar collocation in Ps. 106:23.

\textsuperscript{142} 1 Kings 3:23 ‘one says, my son is the living one and your son is the dead one, and the other one says no’.

\textsuperscript{143} Josh. 9:2; 1 Kings 22:13; 2 Chron. 18:12.

\textsuperscript{144} The Hebrew epithet תוגרמה 'Togarmah' appears in Gen. 10:3, where it denotes one of Japheth's grandsons. It also appears in Ezek. 27:14 and 38:6, where it is referred to as a nation from the far north, possibly in a region corresponding to today's Armenia (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 1688). In the medieval and Maskilic periods it became identified with Turkey (Even-Shoshan 2003, 6: 1984); this is the sense in which Salkinson is using it.

\textsuperscript{145} Prov. 14:15 ‘the simple man believes everything, but the prudent man considers his steps’.

\textit{Ithiel the Cushite of Venice}
And who would rely on numerical errors to live in safety\textsuperscript{146}?

It is enough for us with this report, to hurry and take heed.

\textit{(A sailor knocks outside)}

Open the door for me.

\textit{(An attendant brings the sailor)}

This is a messenger sent by the men of the ships.

\textbf{THE ATTENDANT}

What does he have to say?

\textbf{THE PRINCE}

The Turks' army is headed for Rhodes

Thus the military commander\textsuperscript{147} ordered me to tell the prince.

\textbf{THE PRINCE}

What do you think about this new matter?

\textbf{COUNSELOR I}

The matter is not so; it is only deceit for the eyes

To pull us by a misleading bridle in a different direction.

Let us first consider with good judgement and knowledge\textsuperscript{148}.

What the island of Caphtor is worth to the Turks

And how much higher its value is than Rhodes in their eyes

For it is easy for them to besiege it and conquer it

\textsuperscript{146} Deut. 12:10 'and you will live in safety'; 1 Sam. 12:11 'and you lived in safety'.

\textsuperscript{147} 1 Sam. 18:13.

\textsuperscript{148} Ps. 119:66.
Since a peaceful and secure people\(^{149}\) inhabits the island

And there is no army or weaponry to stand against the enemy.

Not so is Rhodes, a place of citadel and weapons of war

And therefore if the wisdom of the Turks has not decayed\(^{150}\)

They will not abandon the island which is easy for them to possess

In order to go and try to take possession of Rhodes

Because their work will be made difficult and they will not find reward there.

THE PRINCE

My heart is resolved\(^{151}\) that they are not advancing\(^{152}\) on Rhodes.

THE ATTENDANT

Behold, another messenger.

THE MESSENGER

Please, honourable lords!

The Turks’ ships which have gone towards the island of Rhodes

Have joined there with other ships.

COUNSELLOR I

I knew that this would happen –

What is the number of additional ships?

THE MESSENGER

About thirty. But behold, now they have gone back and turned around

---

149 Judg. 18:27.

150 Jer. 49:7 ‘their wisdom has decayed’.

151 Ps. 112:8 ‘his heart is resolved; he does not fear’.

152 Hab. 1:9.
Going back towards Caphtor.

And Kenaz, the bravest of the warriors and a faithful servant of the government

Has enquired after your wellbeing, saying that you may trust his words.

THE PRINCE

It is clear to us that they are advancing towards Caphtor –

Is Marcos in the city?

COUNSELLOR I

He has gone to Florence.

THE PRINCE

Write to him in my name to hurry and return on horseback.

COUNSELLOR I

Behold, here comes Phichol with the valiant warrior the Cushite.

(Phichol, Ithiel, Doeg, Radai, and attendants)

THE PRINCE

Ithiel, valiant warrior! Look, I hereby command you To go out towards the army of the Turks, our enemies.

(To Phichol) Greetings, dear Phichol!

I am not seeing you here to seek counsel and sound wisdom from your mouth.

153 This is the name of three minor biblical characters, namely a son of Esau's son Eliphaz (Gen. 36:11, 15, 42; 1 Chron. 1:36, 53); Caleb's brother and the judge Othniel's father (Josh. 15:17; Judg. 1:13, 3:9, 11; 1 Chron. 4:13); and the son of Caleb's son Elah (1 Chron. 4:15). The motivation for Salkinson's selection of this name as an equivalent of Shakespeare's Montano is unclear, as there is no sound correspondence between the two and no obvious parallel in meaning.

154 Amos 2:16

155 Cf. Shakespeare's Marcus Luccicos (1.3.45). This is the only name in the play that Salkinson does not Hebraize (cf. Balthasar and Peter in Ram and Jael; see Ram and Jael, First Part, note 18 and Second Part, note 210 respectively). There does not seem to be a clear motivation for his decision. Salkinson has changed 'Marcus' to 'Marcos', possibly in order to echo the second name Luccicos, which he has omitted.

156 Prov. 8:14.
PHICHOL  And I too am not seeing you
to ask for such things from
your mouth

Please pardon me, prince of our
nation! It is not the burden of
my obligation

Nor the report of war that has
brought me here from my bed

And neither can I devote
attention to the concerns of
the state

For the distress of my soul has
engulfed me like a storm
against the wall!

And all the distresses of others
have sunk in the sea of my
distress

And I do not know anything
except for pain before me.

THE PRINCE  What is wrong with you? What
has happened?

PHICHOL  My daughter, my daughter! Oh, the fruit of my loins!

COUSELLOR  Is she dead?

PHICHOL  To me she is dead

For she is defiled and
deflowered, stolen by
night

By magic and poison wine of
spellcasters

For an innocent, educated, and
sensible soul such as her

Would not be capable of erring
by committing such follies
Except by sorcery.

**THE PRINCE**  As I live! Indeed that man
Who tricked your daughter and enticed her away from you
**Shall bear his guilt** in judgement according to the book of statute and law
Which you shall read to him well and plainly in his ears,
Even if he is one of my own he shall not go unpunished.

**PHICHOL**  Let me find favour in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me.
The man is this Cushite who stands before you
For you have called him regarding affairs of state.

**THE PRINCE**  We are very sorry.

**PHICHOL**  There is nothing save to confess his sin.

**ITHIEL**  Honourable rulers, judges of righteousness and truth,
Ones who know law and judgement! Indeed the matter is true
The daughter of this elder, I took her for myself as a wife
And this is the whole of my crime and my sin from root to branch

---

163  Exod. 28:38.
164  Deut. 27:8.
166  Pirqe DeRabbi Eliezer 14; Abarbanel to Exod. 22 and 2 Sam. 24.
And there is no other iniquity. I am not a man of words.\textsuperscript{167}

And I do not know how to speak clearly\textsuperscript{168} like the inhabitants of quiet resting places\textsuperscript{169}

For from the days of my youth when I was seven years old

Until nine months ago, in which time I have rested,

I wandered from tent to tent to teach my hands battle

Upon the open field, and I know nothing on the earth

Except the din of weapons and the noise of war

And therefore I have not come with grace of lips\textsuperscript{170} to prove my innocence here.

But if you let me open my mouth in your kindness

I shall tell the ways of love in an honest and sincere language

In order that you may know the magic and the charms and the sorceries

The secrecies of sorcerous wonders which have been calculated as guilt against me

And according to which I enticed the heart of the lass to myself.

PHICHEL A lass who has never known brazenness

For she walks modestly in a spirit of humility and quietness

\textsuperscript{167} Exod. 4:10.
\textsuperscript{168} Isa. 32:4.
\textsuperscript{169} Isa. 32:18.
\textsuperscript{170} Prov. 22:11 ‘the grace of his lips’.
\textsuperscript{171} Ezek. 16:63, 29:21.
So that even at the sound of marching her face reddens from shame;

Would she risk her soul – a soft and delicate soul

Forgetting her father’s house and her native land

And all of her precious things, to cleave to the love of a man

At whose face she feared to look? Such a thing has not been seen

Such a thing has not been, and indeed will not be;

And only a senseless, witless, and mindless one

Would believe such strange things, for there is perversity in his heart

And by means of false tricks, deceit of demons

He means to prove in the sight of the sun that the matter is thus.

And therefore I say one thing: this is the attestation of my mouth

That with a mixture which ignites a fire in the blood

Or with water that brings a curse he enticed her away from me.

THE PRINCE  Such an attestation of the mouth is not like trustworthy testimony.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Hebrew Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Sam. 5:24.</td>
<td>נֶ֝אֱמָנָ֗ה יְהוָ֥הﬠֵד֥וּת</td>
<td>the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. 38:11; Lev. 22:13; Num. 30:17; Deut. 22:20; Josh. 6:25; Judg. 19:2, 3.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. 19:8 (19:7 in English Bibles)</td>
<td>נֶ֝אֱמָנָ֗ה יְהוָ֥ה CLUB</td>
<td>the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But perhaps you have stronger and more trustworthy signs

Than this thin and insubstantial testimony which has no basis.\(^\text{178}\)

COUNSELOR I  Pray tell, Ithiel

Whether you captured the soul of the lass by crooked paths\(^\text{179}\)

And forced her with a strong hand\(^\text{180}\) to give you her love

Or drew her in with pleasing words and supplications

As is the custom of one person to another and the way of a man with a maiden?\(^\text{181}\)

ITHIEL  Please call to the woman of a certain house\(^\text{182}\)

And ask her before her father and in broad daylight\(^\text{183}\)

If according to her words you may find iniquity in me

Not only may you punish me by taking me down from my station,

But also by taking my soul down to Sheol.\(^\text{184}\)

THE PRINCE  Bring Asenath here.

ITHIEL  Go with them Doeg, for you know her location.

(Doeg and attendants exit)

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\(^\text{178}\) Isa. 8:20  שָׁחַר אֵין לּוֹ אֲשֶׁר 'which has no basis'.
\(^\text{179}\) Judg. 5:6.
\(^\text{180}\) Exod. 3:19, 6:1, 13:9; Deut. 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 9:26, 26:8; Ezek. 20:33–34; Ps. 136:12; Dan. 9:15.
\(^\text{181}\) Prov. 30:19.
\(^\text{182}\) See note 84.
\(^\text{183}\) Num. 25:4; 2 Sam. 12:12.
\(^\text{184}\) Gen. 42:38  וַחֲזָקִים נֶאֱמָנִים מופְתִים לְךָ יֵשׁ אוּלַי אַךְ לָהּ אֵין אֲשֶׁר זוֹאת וְרָזָה קַלָּה מִתְּעוּדָה 178 181 שָׁחַר אֵין לּוֹ אֲשֶׁר 'and you will take my grey head in sorrow down to Sheol'.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice 107
But before she comes I shall tell some words of truth\(^\text{185}\) in your ears.

I shall conceal nothing, as from God in heaven.

In order that you might know how I won the heart of the gracious woman\(^\text{186}\) and how she won my heart.

**The Prince**

Speak.

**Ithiel**

Her father loved me and called me to come to his house.

Not once and not twice,\(^\text{187}\) for he desired to hear from my mouth.

All the chronicles of the days of the years of my life\(^\text{188}\).

All the wars and the sieges and the hardships that had befallen me.

And so I fulfilled his desire and I told him of all the times.

That I had been through from the days of my childhood onwards, from beginning to end,\(^\text{189}\).

Every disaster and misfortune and all the great terrors.

Whether by sea or on land; how I escaped from the fangs of death.

When I stood in the breach;\(^\text{190}\) how I fell into the hand of the enemy\(^\text{191}\).

\(^{185}\) Eccles. 12:10.

\(^{186}\) Prov. 11:16.

\(^{187}\) 2 Kings 6:10.

\(^{188}\) Gen. 25:7, 47:9; 2 Sam. 19:35.

\(^{189}\) 1 Sam. 3:12.

\(^{189}\) Ezek. 22:30 ‘had not Moses his chosen one stood in the breach’.

\(^{190}\) Lam. 1:7 ‘when her people fell into the hand of the enemy’.
And was sold as a captive of the sword and how I was redeemed from the house of bondage.  

In addition to what my eyes saw on each and every journey.

Huge fearsome caves and barren howling wilderness.

Rock quarries, mountain ranges, rocks, and everlasting hills.

Whose peaks touch the clouds. And thus I made known that which surely was.

For I responded to what they asked me about, about wild men in the wilderness.

Who eat men and each man lives on the flesh of his fellow

And strange men whose faces are like those of a hunchback

And their heads are under their shoulders. These strange things

Drew in the ear of Asenath to hear them from my mouth with eagerness

And when they summoned her to attend to the affairs of her household.

Thus she hastily performed all of her actions and her work

And quickly she returned like a thirsty woman to hear my words.

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192 Exod. 13:3 and many other locations in the Hebrew Bible.
193 Leviticus Rabbah 36.
194 Deut. 32:10.
195 Hab. 3:6.
196 Hosea 5:9.
197 Job 24:5. In the biblical verse פְּרָאִים means ‘wild donkeys’; since Shakespeare does not mention donkeys but rather cannibals and men whose heads grow beneath their shoulders (1.3.143–6), it is more likely that Salkinson is using the word in the sense of ‘wild men’, which it acquired only in the medieval period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1524).
198 Prov. 31:7.
My eye saw this and I also did not delay

To find an acceptable moment of rest and give her the opportunity

Until she stood and implored me ardently

To tell her again the whole account of my life and my experiences

As she had not heard a word spoken properly

But rather separate parts, fragments.

And I acquiesced to her and several times I succeeded

In bringing forth, with that which dropped from my lips, drops of water from her eyes

For she was filled with pity upon hearing my affliction and my misery from my youth

When my words were finished she gave me sufficient recompense

For she sighed from the chambers of her heart and spread her palms saying:

On my life, these are strange things – wondrously strange –

My heart is faint hearing such things – my heart is very faint –

If only I had not heard such things – if only I had found such a man!

Afterwards she gave her hand to thank me for my kindness

Ps. 69:14 (69:13 in English Bibles).

Prov. 25:11.

Lam. 3:19.

Jer. 4:19.

Lam. 5:17 'for this our heart is faint'.
And she said further to me that if I had a friend and companion who desired her, it would be well for me to instruct him to tell the account of my life in her ears and she would be his. And I hastened to contemplate what her words were hinting at. And I lifted my eyes to her and my soul clove to her soul.204 She loved me for passing as a man through a sea of trouble.205 And I loved her because her compassion was stirred for me. This is the charm and the sorcery that I worked. Now behold, the woman comes before us; let her arise and testify against me. (Asenath, Doeg, and attendants)

**THE PRINCE**

Such a clever and smooth speech would be powerful enough to entice my daughter too. Phichol my friend, I counsel you, your vessel has broken in two. Take the good half out of the two parts. A broken weapon is better than empty hands in war.

**PHICHOL**

Please consent to hear the testimony of her mouth.208

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204 Gen. 34:3; Zech. 10:11; Prov. 6:24; Ps. 119:88 'and his soul clove to Dinah'; Alshekh to Gen. 34 'his soul clove to her soul'.

205 Gen. 34:3; Zech. 10:11 'and they will pass through the sea of trouble'.

206 1 Kings 3.26.

207 Prov. 6:24.

208 Ps. 119:88 'the testimony of Your mouth'.

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Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
If she admits before you that her hand is also among the conspirators.

I shall die if I place iniquity on his head.

Listen, my daughter, my only one! Look at the faces of those gathered here.

Which of ours will you obey more than his fellow?

There are two opinions before me, and I must hobble between them both.

I am yours, as is everything that belongs to me, for you gave me life.

And also raised me, and therefore I indeed honour you.

According to the law and the commandment; you are lord at my head.

And I am your daughter, your maidservant. However, there is my husband in front of me.

And therefore all the honour which my mother gave to you.

As she forgot her father’s house and went after her lord.

Such honour I too give to my lord the Cushite.

Go after him in peace – there are no more words on my tongue.
Bring the prince! Turn to the affairs of state.

It would be better for me to collect a son from a market than to beget offspring of my loins.

Approach me, O Cushite! I hereby give you my daughter.

Since you married her in secret,

For if you had not already married her, I would not give her to you now.

And you, delightful daughter, have put joy in my heart.

That you are my only child and I have no other daughter.

For your flight from my house would have made me merciless to your sister.

Enclosing her with planks of cedar — My words are finished.

Desist so that I may propose some words to be a little help.

As the entrance to the dwelling of peace, to turn the heart of the father to the children:

In the absence of healing for the break, let worry and terror retreat.

For a man girds himself to bear the distress in its time;

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215 Jer. 31:20 'delightful child'.
216 Ps. 4:8 (4:7 in English Bibles) 'you (masc.) have put joy in my heart'.
217 Song of Songs 8:9 'we shall enclose her with planks of cedar'.
218 Dan. 11:34.
219 Mal. 3:24 (4:6 in English Bibles) 'he will turn the heart of the fathers to the children'.
220 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'ended/depended' (1.3.203–4).
Do not cry out with a bitter soul over that which has passed and is no more.\(^{221}\)

For this is the way to create distress twice;\(^{222}\)

If the ewe has gone and the stray cannot be returned\(^{223}\)

**With long forbearance** the damage will turn into gain;\(^{224}\)

When a robbed man laughs, he steals a portion from the plunderer\(^{225}\)

But he steals from himself if he cries out like a madman.

PHICHOL. Thus if the Turks dare to go up to Caphtor\(^{226}\)

It will not be torn away from us but rather our mouths will be filled with laughter;\(^{227}\)

Happy is he who rejoices in his judgement and delights even in the inferno\(^{228,229}\)

From poison he extracts sweetness for himself, from wormwood he sucks pure honey;

But woe to him who has a worried heart\(^{230}\) and no patience in his spirit\(^{231}\)

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\(^{221}\) Job 21:25.

\(^{222}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘gone/on’ (1.3.205–6).

\(^{223}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘takes/makes’ (1.3.207–8).

\(^{224}\) Prov. 25:15.

\(^{225}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘thief/grief’ (1.3.209–10).

\(^{226}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘beguile/Smile’ (1.3.211–12).

\(^{227}\) Ps. 126:2.

\(^{228}\) This word appears on a number of occasions in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 7:31, 32, 19:6, 11–14) but as a place-name, Topheth, a location in Jerusalem where idol-worshippers would sacrifice their children; in the medieval period it became a label for hell (Even-Shoshan 2003, 6: 2030), and this is the sense in which Salkinson is employing it.

\(^{229}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘bears/hears’ (1.3.213–14).

\(^{230}\) Deut. 28:65.

\(^{231}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘sorrow/borrow’ (1.3.215–16).
For when he is judged he is tormented by pain and despondency;

And parables, why they are as sharp as an ox-goad or a nail

To one like sugar cane; to another, more bitter than gall;

But what do mere words have that they might be good medicine?

Can healing for a broken spirit go in through the ears? –

Now please resolve to turn your attention to the affairs of state.

THE PRINCE The Turks with a great army are descending towards Caphtor

And you, Ithiel, know well the citadel of that place

And as for the governor whom we have, though he is a valiant man

Everyone says unanimously that you excel in dignity and power

And therefore for several days you must cease taking pleasure in your light

Which is shining for you like a new star, in order to set your feet on

232 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘gall/equivocal’ (1.3.217–18).
233 2 Kings 18:20; Isa. 36:5.
234 Prov. 17:22: חָסִילָה וְיֶתֶר שְֹאֵת יֶתֶר, ‘a joyful heart is good medicine’.
235 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘hear/ear’ (1.3.219–20).
237 This speech is prose in the original (1.3.222–9).
238 2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 36:2.
239 Josh. 9:2; 1 Kings 22:13; 2 Chron. 18:12.
240 Gen. 49:3. 'excelling in dignity and excelling in power'.
On a road of snares and uneven ground and a field of din and shouting

For you shall go at the head of the company to command the army of war.

ITHIEL  The hand of cruel time has taught me like a nurse from youth

To lie in a field of war on a bed of iron and lead

As on a pillow of fur and down, and a spirit of power and might

Spurs me to perform any service, even to fight against the Turks.

And therefore I hereby present my plea before the honour of the rulership

To be a shield and protector for my wife who stands here

To support her in an established house as befits the house of her birth.

THE PRINCE  If you are willing, she may stay in her father’s house.

PHICHL  Her father refuses to allow her to return to his house.

ITHIEL  As do I.

ASENATH  As do I; for I have no desire

To disturb my father’s peace whenever he sees me in his house.

And to you, O prince, I raise my eyes that you might be an advocate for me

To take hold of that which I ask with an innocent heart.

242  Jer. 38:26  מַפִּיל אֲנִי לִפְנֵי תְחִינָתִ֖י  менא  ‘I have presented my plea before the king’.
What is your request, 244
Asenath?

That I love the Cushite in order
that I might live with him
Is known in all the land, since
I left my father
And went out from his house in a
storm, for I saw the heart of
my husband. 245

And my soul cleave to his soul, 246
until I forgot my kindred
And all of my precious things
from previously, in order that
I be called by his name
To revel in the glory of his power,
and with his honour my honour
might be joined.

And now, honourable ministers!
If he goes to the war
And I stay here like a lonely bird
on a rooftop 247
What will remain with me, of all
my desire and my love?
How can I sit many days, without
a father, without a husband
Alone, abandoned like an orphan
and like a widow, a widow
whose husband is alive? 248
Let me go with him.

Please consent, ministers! To give
her her desire;
My witness is in heaven! That I do
not yearn for this before you

244 Esther 5:3, 6, 7-2, 9:12.
245 1 Sam. 16:7 "man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart."
246 Gen. 34:3 ‘and his soul cleave to Dinah’; Alshekh to Ruth 1 ‘my soul cleave to your soul.’
247 Ps. 102:8 (102:7 in English Bibles).
248 2 Sam. 20:3.
Because I desire to satisfy the hunger of my soul
And to drink new wine from my own vineyard for I am thirsty
It is for nothing other than to fulfil her wishes that I have asked.
And God forbid you should say that when she goes with me
I shall abandon the labour which you have entrusted into my hand.
If I have given myself up to the delights of men, many concubines,
And have become like the target for arrows of love from the hand of an archer,
Which seizes the heart of its master and casts sluggishness upon his delights
So as not to engage in the labour which keeps its master alive,
May my wife grind grain for another man; may my honour turn into shame;
And may the bronze helmet on my head become the cooking women’s pot!

THE PRINCE
Look, you have the power to choose as is best in your eyes
But choose for yourself quickly, whether you will go or whether you will leave off

Because I desire to satisfy the hunger of my soul
ולשחתו מקרום של ויו חדש כ באנא מי אני טוען את השאלות עשה.
It is for nothing other than to fulfil her wishes that I have asked.
והשלללה 로ל אאמר משער תשורי
I shall abandon the labour which you have entrusted into my hand.
אם החכמה ימשגחו בז אום שחרה
If I have given myself up to the delights of men, many concubines.
And have become like the target for arrows of love from the hand of an archer,
Which seizes the heart of its master and casts sluggishness upon his delights
So as not to engage in the labour which keeps its master alive,
May my wife grind grain for another man; may my honour turn into shame;
And may the bronze helmet on my head become the cooking women’s pot!

THE PRINCE
Look, you have the power to choose as is best in your eyes
But choose for yourself quickly, whether you will go or whether you will leave off

249 Eccles. 2:8 וְשִׁדוֹת וְשִׁדוֹת הָאָדָם בְּנֵי וְתַﬠֲנוּגֹת 'and the delights of men, many concubines'.
250 Salkinson has deleted the reference to Classical mythology in this translation of Shakespeare’s ‘light-winged toys/Of feathered Cupid’ (1.3.269–70).
251 Gen. 21:20.
252 Job 31:10.
253 1 Sam. 17:5 עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ נְחֹשֶׁת וְכּוֹבַע 'and there was a bronze helmet on his head'.
For the matter is extremely urgent, and you are due to leave tonight.

**ASENATH** Tonight?

**THE PRINCE** This very night.

**ITHIEL** Behold, I shall go with all my heart.

**THE PRINCE** Tomorrow **at the morning watch**\(^{254}\) we shall gather here again.

Ithiel, please appoint one of your men to stay behind you

And he will bring to your hand our document of attestation

With the rest of the supplies required for you on the way.

**ITHIEL** I shall appoint my standard-bearer, an honest and faithful man

Whom I shall assign\(^{255}\) to bring me my wife

With the rest of the things that you will send **as is fitting in your eyes**.\(^{256}\)

**THE PRINCE** Let it be so – go in peace, each **man to his house**.\(^{257}\)

And you, noble Phichol! Listen to the wise pronouncement of the ruler

Indeed I shall honour a man of valour, as long as I still have my sense\(^{258}\).

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254 Exod. 14:24; 1 Sam. 11:11 (sometimes translated as ‘last watch of the night’).
255 This verb appears only once in the Hebrew Bible (Num. 31:16), with unclear meaning; it becomes commonly used only in postbiblical texts starting with the Mishnah (Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 1026).
256 Gen. 19:18; Esther 8:8.
257 Judg. 20:8; 1 Sam. 10:25; 2 Sam. 6:19; 1 Kings 12:24, 22:17; Hag. 1:9; 1 Chron. 16:43; 2 Chron. 11:4, 18:16.
258 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lack/black’ (1.3.290–1).

*Ithiel the Cushite of Venice*
And regarding your son-in-law
I hereby say: the skin of the Cushite’s face shone.  

COUNSELLOR 1
Go in peace, Ithiel; do well by your wife Asenath.

PHICHL
Keep your eye on her, Cushite, for there is deceit in her mouth. 

And regarding your son-in-law
I hereby say: the skin of the Cushite’s face shone.

259 Exod. 34:35 ‘the skin of Moses’ face shone’ (after speaking with God). This phrase also appears in the thirteenth-century Hebrew book of fables Meshal haQadmoni by the poet and scholar Isaac ben Solomon abi Sahula, where it refers to a husband whose wife has been unfaithful to him by playing on the homonymy of the word קֶרֶן, which can mean ‘ray of light’ or ‘horn’. Sahula draws on the medieval European notion of the wronged husband wearing horns. It is possible that Salkinson was aware of the text and its interpretation, and had it in mind when selecting this particular phrase. Thanks to Marc Sapirstein for this observation.

259 ‘and there was no deceit in his mouth’.

260 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘see/thee’ (1.3.293–4).

261 ‘for he has tricked me twice now’.

262 Gen. 27:36 ‘I shall be surety for him’.

263 Gen. 43:9 ‘I shall be surety for him’.

264 Ezek. 16:8.
DOEG What do you say, willing-hearted one?265

RADDAI Tell me, what should I do now?

DOEG Go to your house and lie on your bed.

RADDAI I am going to drown in the river momentarily.

DOEG If you do so, I shall not continue To love you. But why, my dear fool?

RADDAI Because it is folly to keep myself alive Since life is cholera and death is the doctor.

DOEG You are speaking like a shameless one.266

RADDAI Approximately four times seven years have passed on my head And from the day that I started to distinguish between good and evil I have not found a single man who knew how to honour himself.

As for myself, instead of going to drown because of a beautiful hen I would go to exchange my life for the life of a monkey.

RADDAI But I do not know what I should do – Shamefacedly I admit that my love has grown greater than the strength of bearing the burden.267

265 Exod. 35:22; 2 Chron. 29:31.
266 This and the following speeches until Raddai’s line ‘Where shall we see each other tomorrow’ are prose in the original (1.3.307–73).
267 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die’ (1.3.309–10). Cholera was the most common infectious disease affecting Eastern European Jews in the second half of the nineteenth century (see Markel 1997: esp. 87–8). Cf. Ram and Jael, Fifth Part, note 28.
268 Job 2:10
269 Lev. 27:12, 14 (with a slightly different meaning: ‘whether good or evil’).
270 Neh. 4:4 (4:10 in English Bibles).
And I have no more spirit to extinguish the flame.  

DOEG
Your spirit is futility; For the strength is in our hands to be thus or thus. Man’s body is a garden, and the master of the garden is the will; I have the power to plant weeds in it and to sow greens in it, When I will it hyssop rises up, and when I will it that which my hand has planted is torn up, When I will it I sow one species, or species of different kinds, It is in my power to make it like the field of a slothful man, neither pruned nor weeded Or like the garden of an industrious man full of blessed fruit, All these come into being in accordance with my desire, which is ruler over everything.

If you ponder the way of life and there is no sense on the scale To outweigh the scale full of desire and lusts Who could stand up against the inclination of the heart, which is evil from one’s youth!  

But indeed, our sense is with us, and the strength is in our hands

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271 Josh. 5:1 ḥa’shū’ē ḫūṭ ḥa’āmēh ‘and they had no more spirit’; 1 Kings 10:5 ‘and she had no more spirit’.

272 Abarbanel to 1 Kings 11.

273 Prov. 24:30.

274 Isa. 5:6 ḫāṭēr le-khāliš ‘neither pruned nor weeded’.

275 Prov. 5:6 ‘lest you (or: she) ponder the way of life’.

276 Mishnah Avot 2:9  ‘if all the sages of Israel were in one pan of a scale and Eliezer ben Hyrcanus were in the other, he would outweigh them all’.

277 Gen. 8:21 ‘the inclination of man’s heart is evil from his youth’.
To put out the fire of lust and the desire of the life of the flesh. 278

And therefore the desire in your heart, which you have called by the name of love

Is an alien branch in your garden and a foreign vine. 279

God forbid, do not say such a thing.
The soul of desire is in the blood, and the will can rule over it;
Arise, be a man, and do not chatter like a fool
About destroying yourself with your hands; throw vermin and mice in the water
Or puppies, puppies without eyes.
As for me, my soul is tied to you by unbreakable bonds
And now the time has come to help you with my love.
Put money in your purse and go after the army of war,
Disguise yourself with a long beard and do not forget your bag of money;
Indeed, Asenath will not love the Cushite for long.
Therefore put money in your purse – and he will not love her forever
A love that is hasty at its beginning soon reaches its end.
And therefore, just put the money in the mouth of your sack 281

278 Prov. 14:30.
279 Isa. 17:10.
280 Isa. 66:17 'and the vermin and the mice'.
281 Gen. 42:27 'and he saw that his money was at the mouth of his sack'; see also Gen. 49:21 for a similar phrasing.
Indeed the Cushites change the desire of their hearts like clothing

So therefore, fill your sack with money.

The food which is as sweet to him today as pure honey

Will be as bitter to him tomorrow as the venom of asps.

And moreover, she is tender in years; she will desire a change and replacements.

When she has had her fill of his flesh, she will recognize her mistake

And she will set her sights on a change, and her change will surely come;

Therefore I say to you, prepare your bag of money.

But if you want to send your soul down to the land of the dead

Choose for yourself the death of the righteous, and do not descend into the depths.

Arise, collect all the money that you have to hand.

Behold, my hand is stretched out and the whole assembly of the dead is with me

To nullify the link between this foreign sojourner

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282 Ps. 19:11 (19:10 in English Bibles). It is unclear whether Salkinson chose this translation in order to avoid the non-kosher connotations of the original ‘locusts’ (1.3.349), or because he was aware of the interpretation according to which the English term refers to the sweet juice of the carob (see Honigmann 1997: 157, note 349; Crystal and Crystal 2002: 266).

283 Deut. 32:33; Job 20:16; פְּתָנִים is sometimes translated as ‘cobras’ or ‘vipers’.

284 Num. 23:10.

285 Prov. 21:16.

286 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Barbarian’ (1.3.356). In the Hebrew Bible this term denotes a resident foreigner in Israelite territory (Lieber 2007). Conversely, in rabbinic and later Jewish literature, as well as in Yiddish, it refers to a convert to Judaism (Rabinowitz and Eichhorn 2007). As Salkinson’s readers would have been familiar with both meanings of the word, the translation can be understood on two levels: Ithiel is at once a foreigner residing in Venice, and a convert to a different religion, which echoes Othello’s implied conversion to Christianity in the original text. See Ram and Jael, First Part, note 340 for a similar use of this word.
And that deceitful soul, the beautiful daughter of Venice.

And if my power is not gone, you will go in to her and be her husband.

Therefore, prepare your money – and let your plan to drown in the river

Become a bane and a curse, for this is not a good plan.

It is better for you to be hanged in peace and honour on a tree

After you have drunk your fill of stolen water

Than to go die in the depths before you have tasted a thing.

If I do as you say

Will you stand at my right-hand side to grant me my desires when there is a chance?

Let your heart be firm because you trust in me.

Go and gather up all the money that you have to hand; why, I have already told you

And I shall tell you a second time and a third time that with absolute hatred

I hate the Cushite, and I do not hate him for nothing.

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287 Prov. 19:15; in the biblical verse the word רְמִיָּה is translated as ‘idle’, but in Salkinson’s text it has the meaning of ‘deceitful’, which corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘super-subtle’ (1.3.357, used in the sense of ‘crafty’; see Honigmann 1997: 158, note 357). This latter meaning of רְמִיָּה is attested in a different collocation in Mic. 6:12 (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 1243–4) and is also standard in later forms of Hebrew.

288 Deut. 32:36 רְמִיָּה ‘[their] strength is gone’.


290 Abarbanel to Numbers 5 מָאָרָה מַכָּבָּא ‘a bane and a curse’.

291 Prov. 9:17.

292 Ps. 32:6.

293 Ps. 112:7 לִבּוֹ בָּטֻ֥חַ בֱּהוָֽה ‘his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD’.

294 Ps. 139:22 שְׂנֵאתִ֑ים ‘I hate them with absolute hatred’.

295 This collocation is first attested in rabbinic literature; for example, Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 22b.
Just like your hatred, the root of the matter is found for it as well.

Come, let us take counsel together in order to exact revenge upon him;

If you desecrate his bed, you will be pleased and I shall laugh.

And who else then knows what the day will bring?

For much counsel runs this way and that

Until it emerges from the womb when the days of conception are complete.

Go and prepare your money, and tomorrow we shall speak further.

Raddai: Where shall we see each other tomorrow?

Doeg: At my house.

Raddai: Early in the morning I shall come to see you.

Doeg: Go in peace – do you hear me, Raddai?

Raddai: What do you ask of me?

Doeg: Do not talk further of drowning in the river – do you hear?

Raddai: My heart is turned within me; I shall sell the field of my possession.

Doeg: Go in peace! Put enough money in your purse. (Raddai exits)

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296 Job 19:28: ‘and the root of the matter is found in me’.
297 1 Chron. 5:1: ‘and when he defiled his father’s bed’ (referring to Jacob’s son Reuben, who slept with his father’s concubine).
298 Prov. 27:1: ‘for you do not know what the day will bring’.
299 Lam. 1:20.
300 Lev. 27:16, 22, 28: ‘of the field of his possession’.
Thus I shall find for myself a bag of money, by means of this senseless man.

For it would be a disgrace for a shrewd man like me to waste pleasant words in the ears of a fool like him, if not for profit and amusement.

And I hate the Cushite, and many even say that he has gone up on my bed; and even though I do not know whether the matter is indeed true, nevertheless I shall recompense him solely for what my ears have heard, as if I had seen it with my eyes.

And because of his great trust in my faithfulness, as quick as lightning he will fall into my hunting-net.

And Chesed is the man who will be like a desired tool in my hand; but how will he be of profit to me if not to dispossess him in order to take his office and satiate my eye with vengeance because with a desired tool like him I shall carry out a double act of deceit.

But how will the deceit succeed? Desist—I shall ponder the matter in several days, I shall report him to the Cushite's ears, saying that I saw him sporting with the lady Asenath.

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301 Ps. 92:7 (92:6 in English Bibles).
302 Isa. 11:3 and not by what his ears hear'.
303 Job 35:3 'what profit is it to you'.
304 Gen. 26:8 'and he saw Isaac sporting with his wife Rebecca'.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
And the spirit of jealousy will come upon him, thinking that his wife has strayed.

For her soul desired the officer, a man with a flattering tongue and lips.

As he is also handsome in form and appearance.

And the Cushite in his innocence will not recognize my cunning.

For he considers me to be faithful, as I appear in his eyes.

And he will go where I lead him, like an ass pulled by the bridle.

Aha! Just now, I have conceived a sin in the world, and Sheol and the darkness answer: behold, evil is born.

(Exits)

End of First Part.

305 Num. 5:14 סער רוח קיין 'and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him'; see also Num. 5:30.
306 Gen. 34:8 חישק במשב באנף 'his soul desires your daughter'.
307 Prov. 28:23.
308 Gen. 39:6 יוסי ופייו יוסי ייפליפל יפה מראהו 'and Joseph was handsome in form and appearance'.
309 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘night/light’ (1.3.402–3).
Second Part

scene 1  A town by the seashore on Caphtor
Stage overlooking the courtyard
(Kenaz and two men)

KENAZ  What do you see there on the face of
the sea?

MAN 1 I see nothing except the breakers of
the stormy sea

And there is no mast or ship between
the heavens and the depths.

KENAZ  The storm is growing stronger over
the dry land

Because of it towers are trembling,
rampart and wall are quaking

And if it whirls over the sea every
mast will break

The strength of oak will not
withstand it and the ships will
split apart

From the mass of great water that
rises and falls like mountains

But what report is heard of the
Turks' ships?

MAN 2 That they have been broken in the
heart of the sea and the Turks are
no more.

Stand here on the shore whose face
is white with foam

And look at the depths which are
throwing their waters up to the
clouds

And its waves are rising to the
heavens to extinguish the Pleiades and Orion

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1 Ps. 93:4.
2 Lam. 2:8.
3 Hab. 3:15  'a mass of great waters'.
4 Amos 5:8.
And the Bear with its cubs and all of the constellations of the heavens above have never seen a raging sea as this my eye has never seen.

The Turks' ships have sunk if they have not reached the shore. For who could withstand such a storm and tempest.

(A third man enters)

There are good tidings in my mouth; we are no longer at war. The storm struck the Turks and foiled their plan. The men on the ship from Venice saw their calamity from afar. For they were smashed to pieces in the storm and most of their ships were broken.

What are you telling us? The ship stands at the shore and Chesed has come up from within it. He is the officer of Ithiel the Cushite, a mighty man of valour.

And he is also crossing over the sea, to come to us, to Caphtor. For the Prince has sent him, to become leader here.

You have brought me a good report, for the man is very honourable.

But that Chesed, who told us of the destruction of the Turks, is distressed about the Cushite lest a disaster befall him. Since he was separated from him in a great storm.

5 Job 38:32. 6 Isa. 29:6. 7 Ruth 2:1.
If only the Lord would protect him from every woe.

I served in the army under the standard of this warrior,

He is very great in strength and commands like a man of war.

But let us all go see the men of the ship

On the seashore, and let our eyes look out for the Cushite's ship

For we shall not leave there until we can no longer distinguish

Between the blue hue of the sky and the hue of the sea's surface.

Come, let us go

For new faces are soon to arrive.

Please take my blessing, men of valour who inhabit the island!

For you have spoken well regarding Ithiel the Cushite

And I raise my eyes to God Most High, that He might protect him from upheavals and accidents

For I was separated from him in the heart of a most raging sea.

Is his ship good and strong?

Its planks are cedar and oak, and the oarsmen and captain

Are all wise and experienced in dealing with great waters.

Therefore I have not lost hope that he will indeed arrive safely.

(A voice from outside, Ship coming, ship!)

(A fourth man enters)

What is this voice?
The town is abandoned and empty, and a crowd of many people is standing on the seashore and shouting, 'ship, ship'.

Perhaps the army commander is arriving, for I have waited for him.

(Sound of cannons)

Behold, the sound of the cannons to welcome him with honour. And if he is not there, it is our allies who are coming.

Go see and tell us who the ones coming are.

I am your servant. (Exits)

Tell me officer, is your master married?

He found a good woman whose graceful proportion is beyond description.

And the pen of a scribe is not enough to praise her splendour and majesty.

She is unique among women, there is none like her among the daughters of the land.

(To man 2 as he reenters) Who is coming there in the ship?

A man called Doeg, the army commander's standard-bearer.

He set out on his way beforehand and has succeeded in arriving safely.
A storm wind, a raging sea, and a
great upheaval

Teeth of rock, cliffs, and heaps of
sand and mud

That lie in wait to hunt ships, have
all forgotten to lay waste this time

Because they had mercy on a beautiful
woman of good judgement

And they let the happy Asenath pass
safely.

Who is this Asenath?

She is the woman whom
I mentioned, a crown for the
Cushite’s head

And who was given to Doeg for him
to bring her here

And he came quickly, a week before
I imagined.

God of the sea and the dry land!
Grant the shield of Your
salvation to Ithiel

And with the spirit of Your noble
breath guide his ship safely

So that he arrives at the port, at this
desired haven of his

To embrace the bosom of his
beloved, to enjoy himself with his
wife Asenath

And to restore the breath of life to
all of us, for our soul has sunk
down into the dust

And to be a sign of blessing to all
inhabitants of this island.

14 Prov. 12:4 'a woman of valour is her husband’s crown'.
15 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘great Jove’ (2.1.77); Salkinson has replaced the reference to a Classical deity with one to
the monotheistic God.
16 2 Sam. 22:36; Ps. 18:36 (18:35 in English Bibles).
17 Ps. 107:30 אִישׁ לְאִיתִיאֵל, לְאִיתִיאֵל ‘to their desired haven’.
18 Ps. 44:26 (44:25 in English Bibles).

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
Behold the treasure-house of a precious vessel from the ship on the dry land

Bend your knee before her, all inhabitants of the island

Welcome, lady! Welcome to Captor!

May the God of the heavens be gracious to you and crown you with mercy and compassion.

Asenath Thank you, dear and honourable Chesor!

Can you tell me about the health of my husband and lord?

Chesor I know nothing, except that he is well and he is indeed coming and will not delay.

Asenath My heart trembles within me – how were you separated from him?

Chesor Storms of the heavens on the sea separated me from him.

But listen to the voice of the crowd –

(Voice from outside: Ship, ship! Afterwards the sound of the cannons)

Man 2 The sound of the cannons from a ship before the citadel

19 This is the name of two biblical characters, a) Abraham’s brother Nahor’s wife, mentioned in Gen. 11:29, 22:20, 23, 24, 24:15, 24, 47 and b) one of Zelophehad’s daughters, mentioned in Num. 26:33, 27:1, 36:11; Josh. 17:3. Salkinson is likely to have selected the name based on its partial sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s Emilia, as well as perhaps because of the qualities of strength and independence associated with Zelophehad’s daughters: in the biblical narrative they made a successful public protest against the unjustness of the law barring daughters from inheriting land, and are recognized for their bravery in subsequent Jewish tradition (e.g., the Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 119b).

20 Hosea 13:15

21 Zech. 7:9; Ps. 103:4.

22 Zech. 4:7; lit. ‘shouts of grace, grace’. This expression was used in the sense of ‘thank you’ in the medieval and early modern periods, as well as in early revernacularized Modern Hebrew (Even-Shoshan 2003, 2: 580).

23 Hab. 2:3.
As a sign that they are our trusted friends. 24

CHESED

Go see who the ones coming are?  
(Man 2 exits)

Greetings, standard-bearer!

(To Milcah) Greetings, woman of valour! 25  Let it not be displeasing in your eyes,  26 Doeg, 
That I honour your wife, for I have been educated to do so from my youth (Kisses her)

DOEG

If she responds to you with her lips as she is accustomed to respond to me with her tongue 
You will have more than enough.

ASENATH

Why, there is not a word on her tongue. 27

DOEG

She has an endless number of words;

For I have found her thus, when I want to give sleep to my eyes 28

But before you, my lady, her tongue cleaves to the roof of her mouth 29

And only in her heart does she rebel, but her voice is not heard. 30

MILCAH

You attack me baselessly, for you have found no fault in me. 31

DOEG

A woman in the streets and squares 32 resembles a picture on a scroll;

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24 Jer. 38:22 שֵׁלֹמֶ֔ה 'your trusted friends'; also Obad. 1:7.
25 Prov. 12:4, 31:10; Ruth 3:11.
26 Gen. 21:12; 2 Sam. 11:25.
27 Ps. 139:4 בִּלְשׁוֹנִ֑י מִ֭לָּה אֵ֣ין 'for there is no word on my tongue'.
28 Prov. 6:4 אֵ֔ל עַ֖ל שְׁנָֽה־תִּתֵּ֣ן 'do not give sleep to your eyes'.
29 Ps. 137:6 שָׁלוֹםְ־לָתֵ֥ן 'may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth'.
30 1 Sam. 1:13.
31 1 Sam. 29:3 מְא֔וּמָה וְלֹֽא־מָצָ֤אתִי 'and I have found no fault in him'.
32 Song of Songs 3:2.
At home, clanging cymbals; and in the cooks’ house an evil beast.

She is too modest to rebuke others but a villain when she herself is rebuked.

She plays during her work, and she is a woman of valour in bed.

Asenath: How do you know no shame, talebearer?

Doeg: May I be called a Turk if the matter is not so.

You arise from your sleep to play and go to bed for work.

Milcah: I shall not ask my praise to be written in the book by your hand.

Doeg: Do not ask me, for I shall not do it.

Asenath: What would you write about me, if you wanted to praise me?

Doeg: Do not urge me, my lady, to come with the tool of a scribe.

For I have no power save with the staff of punishment.

Asenath: Please try with all that is in your power –

Has anyone gone to the shore?

Doeg: Yes, my dear lady, one man has gone from here.

Asenath: My heart is not at peace, but I disguise myself with a laughing face

Lest it be discovered that I am sad of spirit –

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33 Ps. 150:5.
34 Gen. 37:20, 33; Lev. 26:6; Ezek. 14:15, 34:25.
35 Prov. 12:4, 31:10; Ruth 3:11.
36 Prov. 11:13, 20:19.
37 Ruth 1:16.
38 Judg. 5:14; שבט typically means ‘staff’ or ‘rod’.

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37 Ruth 1:16.
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Say what kind of commendation and praise you would give me with your mouth?

DOEG Right now your servant is indeed pondering from the depths of the heart

And conceiving as a woman conceives and goes into labour, and now I have come to the moment of birth.

And this is what I have given birth to:

If the woman is beautiful and wise – wisdom and beauty are friends.

Wisdom is pleasing to the soul, and beauty to the soul of others.

ASENATH Your praise is fitting, but what if she is black and wise?

DOEG If she is as black as a Cushite woman and she has a portion of wisdom.

A man with white on his wing will cover her like a shield.

ASENATH Stop, lest you go from evil to evil.

MILCAH And what would you say about a beautiful and senseless woman?

DOEG There is no beautiful woman without the sense to do good and evil.

For even in her folly, she is wise enough to produce offspring.

ASENATH These are old sayings, to serve as amusement for fools.

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39 2 Kings 19:3; Isa. 37:3 ‘children have come to the moment of birth’.

40 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘wit/it’ (2.1.129–30).

41 Ps. 33:1-2 ‘praise is fitting for the upright’; also Ps. 147:1.

42 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘wit/fit’ (2.1.132–3).

43 Ps. 91:4 ‘with his wing he will cover you and under his wings you will find shelter; his faithfulness will be your shield and buckler’.

44 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘fair/heir’ (2.1.136–7).

45 This speech is prose in the original (2.1.138–40).
And melodies to drinkers of alcohol; but what wicked slander

Would you bring forth with the lash of your tongue, concerning a despised and foolish woman?

There is no despised and foolish woman innocent of sin and folly

For she twists and turns on her ways like a beautiful wise woman.

This way of yours is wickedness of folly, for you favour the wicked woman

Over her better. But tell me, do not conceal

What is fitting praise for a happy, honourable woman

For whom even injustice shuts its mouth before the righteousness of her soul?

A woman of perfect beauty but a stranger and alien to pride

Her tongue is a learned tongue and she is not wayward or riotous

Wealth and riches are in her house, yet she does not have many jewels or sashes

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46 Ecclesiastes Rabbah 9.
47 Job 5:21; 'from the lash of the tongue'.
48 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'thereunto/do' (2.1.141–2).
49 Jer. 2:23.
50 This speech is prose in the original (2.1.143–7).
51 Eccles. 7:25.
52 Josh. 7:19; 'and tell me what you have done; do not conceal it from me'.
53 Job 5:16; 'and injustice shuts its mouth'.
54 Ezek. 27:3; Lam. 2:15.
55 Ps. 69:9 (69:8 in English Bibles); 'I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons'.
56 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'proud/loud' (2.1.148–9).
57 Isa. 50:4.
58 Ps. 112:3; 'wealth and riches are in his house'.
59 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'gay/may' (2.1.150–1).
She scorns the grapes of lust even when it is the time of the first ripe fruits.

And even in anger and jealousy and destructive revenge that has already been decreed.

She says to her anger, 'desist', and to her jealousy 'be gone'.

And her mind examines in order to know what is elevated and low.

For the tail of lions is better than the head of foxes.

And she has counsel and sound wisdom yet does not disclose her words.

And she does not look back if there are bachelors behind her –

Such a woman is one in a thousand – and it is her due.

Asenath And what is her due?

Doeg To uncover a breast to suckle fools and to serve drinkers of alcohol.

Asenath Who has heard such perverse words?

Milcah, do not learn his ways, even though he is your husband.

What do you say Chesed, to this bad counsellor and villain?

Chesed There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but it is as a soldier.

—  

139 Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
That he will please you, my lady, and not as a scholar.

*DOEG*:

*(Speaking to himself)* He holds her hand and whispers in her ears

With these spider-webs, I shall hunt a fly as big as Chesed.

**Make your face shine at her** and babble pleasantries into her ears

And prepare for yourself the trap in which your soul will be caught.

If you knew your end, that another will take your office

You would not touch her hand and you would not kiss your fingers in front of her

But you err, fool, by kissing your fingers again

It would be better for you, if your thumbs were cut off.

*(Sound of a blast)*

Behold, this is the Cushite, for I know the blast of that horn.

**CHESED**

I also know the sound of that blast.

**ASENATH**

Come, let us go receive him.

**CHESED**

Behold, he is coming towards us.

*(Ithiel and his men)*

**ITHIEL**

Greetings, *my love*, daughter of valour on the day of battle!

**ASENATH**

Greetings, Ithiel, my beloved!

**ITHIEL**

To the wonderment of my heart and to my joy, you have arrived here first.

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71 This speech is prose in the original (2.1.167–78).

72 Ps. 104:15 ‘to make one's face shine from oil’.

73 Judg. 1:7 ‘with their thumbs and big toes cut off’.

74 Song of Songs 1:9, 15, 2:2, 10, 13, 4:1, 7, 5:2, 6:4.

75 Ps. 140:8 (140:7 in English Bibles).
See, my soul’s delight, if after every storm
Such a pleasant calm as this should arise, I would laugh at storm and tempest⁷⁶
I would not fear if the earth gave way,⁷⁷ and Sheol would not terrify me
For I would be at peace in my ship, even if it rose up towards the heavens
Went down to the depths, or was like to break apart in the heart of the sea.⁷⁹
If my end were to come today, I would die in peace now
For I fear very much that such a great delight
I shall not see again in all the days to come.

Asenath May the One Who Dwells on High forbid it!
I trust in Him, that just as He multiplies our days
So He will continue to multiply our love with delights.⁸⁰

Ithiel Amen! – May God say so –
How inadequate my heart is to contain this great delight
And how weak my tongue is to tell the excitement of my joy
I cannot speak further, for my soul years⁸¹ (Kisses her)

⁷⁶ Ps. 55:9 (55:8 in English Bibles) ‘from the stormy wind and tempest’.
⁷⁷ Ps. 46:3 (46:2 in English Bibles) ‘we will not fear, though the earth give way’.
⁷⁸ Jon. 1:4 ‘and the ship was like to break apart’.
⁷⁹ Exod. 15:8; Prov. 23:34, 30:19.
⁸⁰ Song of Songs 7:7 (7:6 in English Bibles).
⁸¹ Ps. 84:3 (84:2 in English Bibles).
If only our hearts might be undivided for eternity

Let only the sound of rejoicing and jubilation be heard in our land

The sound of lovers' kisses, like this and like this…

**DOEG** *(Speaking to himself)* Your heart is set on rejoicing, but I swear on my faith

That I shall set the strings for a song of mourning rather than of joy.

**ITHIEL** Let us go to the palace; haven't you heard, my brothers

We are no longer at war, the Turks have been drowned in the sea.

How fare my companions of old, all my acquaintances on this island?

I know that they will greet you with love and favour, my love

For since I sojourned with them they have loved me greatly.

See, the one whom my soul loves, from my much musing and joy in you

My speech is disordered and my lips are like the lips of those who sleep.

Go Doeg, bring the baggage from the ship

The captain will also come with you to the palace

In order that I might do him kindness and honour him according to his great worth.

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82 Jer. 7:34, 16:9, 25:10, 33:11.
83 Exod. 15:4 ‘and his choicest officers were drowned in the Sea of Reeds’.
84 Alshekh to Lev. 20.
85 Song of Songs 1:9, 15, 2:2, 10, 13, 4:1, 7, 5:2, 6:4.
86 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
87 Song of Songs 7:10 (7:9 in English Bibles).
And now I call again, welcome, Asenath!
Welcome to Caphtor!
(Ithiel, Asenath, and their attendants exit)

DOEG
(To Raddai) Go forth to the shore and let us meet together there.

If you are brave of heart (as they say,

Love increases bravery even in a wicked and corrupt heart)

Then you will understand my words. You see, the officer Chesed

Will be standing before the citadel on his guard duty tonight –

But you must first know that Asenath loves him.

RADDAI
She loves him? This cannot be so.

DOEG
Put your hand on your mouth and take heed of my wisdom:

She loves the Cushite with a powerful and strong love

Only on account of the moving of his lips and worthless words of wonder

So now, then, do you think that her love will continue?

Do not think thus, if you have understood a little.

Why, this woman seeks to satisfy her eyes


88 This and the following speeches until Raddai’s exit are prose in the original (2.1.212–83).
89 Ezek. 21:31 (21:26 in English Bibles).
90 Judg. 18:19.
91 Alshekh to Prov. 22 and Song of Songs 7.
92 Job 16:5 שְׂפָתַי וְנִ֖יד 'and the moving of my lips' (sometimes translated as ‘the solace of my lips’).
So what could she see in the Cushite, what could she see in the face of Azazel?\(^53\)

When the fire of her love goes out and her blood is cold within her

She will seek a new face to refresh the hunger of her soul

And only a man young in years,\(^94\) handsome in form and appearance\(^95\)

And resplendent with grace and glory, he is the man that she will choose

And not this Cushite who lacks all of these;

For a woman of good sense like her will grow sick of a man

Who has flaws and not a single advantage

And quick as lightning she will regret and sigh with the anguish of her spirit\(^96\)

And instead of the scorned Cushite she will seek for herself a man after her own heart.\(^97\)

And now who is the one closest to her, whose lot it will be to seize her

If not this Chesed, an industrious man\(^98\) and a villain,

A man who appears to pursue innocence and honesty

But inwardly he sets his ambush,\(^99\) to perform every abomination of his heart?

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93 See note 56.
94 Abarbanel to 1 Kings 14 and the introductions to Jeremiah and Ezekiel.
95 Gen. 39:6 מַרְאֶה וִיפֵה יְפֵה־תֹ֖אַר יוֹסֵ֔ף ‘and Joseph was handsome in form and appearance’.
96 Job 7:11, 10:1 'וָיֹשֶׁר תֹּם מְאוּמָה יִתְרוֹן לוֹ ‘with the anguish of my spirit’.
97 1 Sam. 13:14 קֵלֵבָה ‘a man after his own heart’.
98 Ibn Ezra to Prov. 12; Alshekh to Prov. 22.
99 Jer. 9:7 (9:8 in English Bibles).
Who could seize her other than him? There is no man, there is no man!

For there is none as quick in cunning and schemes as he who knows how to keep his appointed time and utter a word in due season.

And even from absolutely nothing can find advantage and great reward.

And only he is the adversary for us, because he is still young in days.

With beautiful eyes, a comely appearance and he is perfect in his splendour.

Whom foolish young damsels seek to love.

And the woman has already raised her eyes to this villain.

I cannot believe this wicked slander about her for she is honourable, and full of blessings of heaven.

Full of false blessings – The wine that she drinks, even it is grape juice.

100 Abarbanel to Gen. 32, Exod. 30, 2 Sam. 24.
101 Prov. 15:23.
102 Alshekh to Job 40.
103 Ps. 19:12 (19:11 in English Bibles).
104 Alternatively, ‘devil’ (based on the postbiblical meaning of the word).
105 1 Sam. 16:12 ‘with beautiful eyes and a comely appearance’ (referring to King David in his youth).
106 She’iltat Yave, part 2, 143 (a well-known work of responsa by the prominent German rabbi Jacob Emden [1697–1776]).
107 Ecclesiastes Rabbah 9.
109 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘the wine she drinks is made of grapes’ (2.1.249–50), which may be a mocking reference to sacramental wine (Schwarz 2004: 101) but is somewhat vague and subject to interpretation (Honigmann 1997: 179, notes 249–50); Salkinson has transformed this into an unambiguous and religiously neutral example of falseness.
If she were full of blessings of heaven, she would not cling to the Cushite;

And what are her blessings? Didn’t you see

How she placed her fingers smoothly on his palm?

Didn’t you see this? –

Raddai
She did this as a sign that he pleased her.

Doeg
As a sign of lewdness and lusts, and this is the opening for indecent behaviour.111

When they spoke mouth to mouth, they brought their lips close

As if for lovers’ kisses, and that is enough to understand, Raddai,

That they are plotting evil, and after secret love112

They will of course carry out their plot and become one flesh.113

And now listen to me, for this is why I brought you from Venice.

Stand watch tonight as I shall show you

For I shall keep guard opposite and shall not go far from you.

And when you see the officer, who will consider you a stranger,

Look for a pretext to provoke him and anger him

With harsh and bitter words, or with mockery and lies

Whatever you find occasion for.114

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110 Gen. 49:25.
111 Mishnah Gittin 9:10.
112 Prov. 27:5.
113 Gen. 2:24 (referring to Adam and Eve).
114 Judg. 9:33.
And afterwards –

He is quick to anger and his rage rises up within a moment

And when he lifts his hand against you, provoke him with words

So that he strikes you with his staff. As for my part, this blow will be enough for me

To rouse the inhabitants of Caphtor to conspire to rebel

And they will not be at peace and will not rest until Chesed is banished from here.

And thereby your hope will come, for I am going to help you

For after the obstacle is gone and there is no more adversary or misfortune Who will stop me from fulfilling your soul’s every desire?

I shall do as you say if I can find the opportunity.

Take my palm, for you will succeed on your way.

Go to the citadel and there we shall speak further

And as for me, I am going to bring his baggage from the ship.

Go in peace. (Raddai exits)

How easy to believe that Chesed desires to take her to his bed

And who would vouch for her that she might not desire as well

But the Cushite, who is hateful in my eyes, is a dear and innocent man

115 Job 3:26: ‘and I have no peace and no rest’.
116 1 Kings 5:18 (5:4 in English Bibles): ‘there is no adversary and there is no misfortune’.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
And the expression of his face testifies to his love and faithfulness for his wife.

And I am determined to love her as well;

Not out of passion and lust, like the sins of my youth.

But rather out of the spirit of jealousy, after hearing the slander of many.

Saying that the Cushite desecrated my bed in secret.

And this spirit of jealousy has stirred like rot in my bones.

And I cannot calm it until I am avenged of it.

With the seah that he has measured for me – a wife for a wife.

And if I do not succeed in this desire

I shall ignite the fire of jealousy in the heart of this man whom I have appointed for destruction.

Until the waters of his wisdom are unable to extinguish the blaze.

And the fool of Venice, instead of chasing the east wind is prepared for the rod of punishment, and he will be the instrument of my scheme,

[117] Isa. 3:9 — 'the expression of their faces testifies against them'.

[118] Ps. 25:7.

[119] Jer. 20:10; Ps. 31:14 (31:13 in English Bibles).

[120] Hab. 3:16.

[121] A measurement used in the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature, equivalent to approximately 13.3 litres.

[122] Exod. 21:24 — 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot'; Lev. 24:20 — 'a breach for a breach, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth'.

[123] 1 Kings 20:42.


[125] Prov. 22:15.
For if he stands on his watch as I instructed him
Chesed will fall into my hunting-net, he who stands as an adversary against me on the way

For I shall strike him down with my tongue and incite the Cushite to destroy him
And he will love me more and will give me my sufficient reward
In exchange for managing to lead him like a beast into the valley
And disturbing his peace and his rest until he goes mad.
Here my scheme is yet, confused in desolation by night
Like every deceit and abomination, before it emerges into the light of the sun (Exits)

scene 2 (Herald on the town street with many people before him)

In the name of the army commander, our lord the leader Ithiel,
Be informed that the Turks’ ships have been destroyed in the sea
And therefore today is for you a day of feasting and joy
A day of celebrations and delights, bonfires and dances
For each man as his soul desires, and this joy for you is doubled

126 Num 22:22, ‘and the angel of the Lord stood on the way as an adversary against him’.
127 Is. 63:14. Like Smolenskin (Ithiel, Preface, note 1), Salkinson seems to be using this citation to denote ignorance, whereas in Isaiah it refers to effortlessness.
128 Job 30:3, ‘by night in desolation and waste’.
129 ‘This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘confused/used’ (2.1.309–10).’
130 This speech is prose in the original (2.2.1–12).
131 Esther 9:17, 18.
132 Alshekh to Prov. 21.
For on this day you will celebrate
the army commander’s wedding
And you will rejoice with him at
the head of his joy, in all the
chambers of the palace
For they will be open for all those
who come
To eat, to drink, and to laugh
there, until the middle of
the night.
Long live the inhabitants
of Caphtor! Long live Ithiel
the army commander!
(Exeunt)

scene 3
The innermost chamber133 of
the palace (Ithiel, Asenath, Chesed,
and attendants)

ithiel
Pay attention, Chesed, on the watch
tonight
We would do well to be careful, to
fulfil all service and duty
Even in times of pleasure, lest we
forget what our task is.

chesed
I have appointed Doeg to do the
things that must be done
And I am also with him, and my
eyes are upon all his ways.134

ithiel
He is a loyal man in his service. Go
in peace, Chesed
Tomorrow early in the
morning come appear
before me.135

(To Asenath) And you whom my
soul loves!136

---

133 This word is attested in the Hebrew Bible, but assumes the sense of ‘innermost chamber in a palace’ only
from the medieval period onwards (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 291).
134 Jer. 16:17 עַל־כָּל־דַּרְכֵיהֶ֔ם עֵינַי֙ ‘my eyes are upon all their ways’.
135 Exod. 34:24 יְהוָה אֶת־פְּנֵי לֵרָאוֹת ‘to appear before the L ord’; also Deut. 31:11.
136 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
Come, let us satiate ourselves from the tree which we planted with the sweat of our brow. The tree is desirable to look upon and the fruit is a delight for the eyes.

(Ithiel, Asenath, and their men exit and Doeg enters)

CHESED

Greetings Doeg; let us make our way to the watch duty.

DOEG

Not on this watch; the commander ordered us to go. Before the appointed time, for the love of Asenath was pressing upon him.

But we shall not condemn him in this night of his pleasure.

The first-night marital pleasures for a loving and graceful doe.

Whose graceful proportion is so great as to cheer God and men.

CHESED

She is a woman very much praised for her beauty.

DOEG

And she has a heart for laughter and delights.

CHESED

She is tender and delicate, like a budding rose.

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137 Gen. 3:19 'by the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread’ (referring to Adam after eating from the tree of knowledge).
138 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘ensue/you’ (2.3.9–10).
139 Gen. 3:6 'the tree was good for food and it was a delight to the eyes and the tree was desirable’.
140 This and the following speeches until Chesed’s exit are prose in the original (2.3.13–44).
141 Isa. 21:4 'my night of pleasure he has turned to terror’.
142 Prov. 5:19 'a loving hind and graceful doe’.
143 Job 41:4 (41:12 in English Bibles) ‘and his graceful proportion’ (referring to the mythological sea creature Leviathan).
144 Judg. 9:13 ‘should I leave my wine, which cheers God and men?’ This is Salkinson’s translation of Shakespeare’s ‘she is sport for Jove’ (2.3.17), with the Classical reference removed.
145 2 Sam. 14:25 ‘but in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty’.
146 Isa. 47:1 ‘for you shall no longer be called tender and delicate’.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
DOEG
How beautiful her eyes are, like arrows she shoots in the heart of those who see her.

CHESED
Her eyes radiate grace and humility together.

DOEG
And how pleasant her speech is, like a herald\(^\text{147}\) of love.

CHESED
She is wholly beautiful, and she is without blemish.\(^{148}\)

DOEG
Let them take their pleasure on their bed in peace.

And now, officer, listen to me; I have a little wine here

And the desirable young men\(^\text{149}\) of the town are standing there outside

And want to drink a cup to the life of the lord and the lady.

CHESED
Not this night, my dear; I cannot drink wine

It is too strong for me. If only a different pleasure

Could be found instead of drinking wine to make life merry.\(^\text{150}\)

DOEG
Do not refuse me;\(^\text{151}\) behold, there are beloved companions outside

Won't you drink one cup, and I shall drink the rest instead of you.

CHESED
Indeed I have already drunk one cup tonight mixed with water\(^\text{152}\)

And my insides are turning over like fire for the wine inflames me

---

\(^{147}\) This expression derives from Isa. 40:3 '[a voice crying out in the wilderness]', but the meaning of 'herald' is thought to have originated in the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1638). It could alternatively be translated 'a voice crying out for love', following the biblical meaning.

\(^{148}\) Num. 19:2 (a description of the red heifer, a cow brought to the priests for sacrifice and whose ashes were used for ritual purification).

\(^{149}\) Ezek. 23:6, 12, 23.

\(^{150}\) Eccles. 10:19; Ps. 132:10; 2 Chron. 6:42.

\(^{151}\) Ps. 132:10; 2 Chron. 6:42.

\(^{152}\) Isa. 1:22.
One cup is too much for me; I am no champion in drinking.

This is a weakness of my soul, and I cannot violate my rule.

DOEG Why are you babbling pointlessly? Indeed, tonight is a night of celebrations

And you cannot abstain from the wishes of the desirable young men. 153

CHESED So where are they?

DOEG They are standing at the door; go bring them into the house.

CHESED I shall do so without desire. 154 (Chesed exits)

DOEG If I manage to give him one cup to drink

In addition to the first cup that he drank this evening

He will hasten to quarrel and fight like the small dog in my mistress’ lap

And Raddai, who in the sickness of his love sees strange things and perversities 155

Has emptied bottles of wine to Asenath’s life not once or twice

And he stands on the watch with the three lads

The noblest of the sons of Caphtor, proudly exulting 156 and easily angered 157

Whom I have already given drink until their heart was warm.

---

153 Ezek. 23:6, 12, 23.
154 2 Chron. 21:20.
155 Prov. 23:33 ‘your eyes see strange things, and your heart utters perversities’.
156 Isa. 13:3 ‘my proudly exulting ones’; Zeph. 3:11 ‘your proud exulting ones’.
157 Prov. 22:24 ‘do not associate with one easily angered’.

Ithiel the Cashite of Venice
And among this gang of drunkards
I shall stir up Chesed
To do something to anger all the
inhabitants of the island.
And behold, here they all come;
they stagger from strong
drink\( ^{158} \) –

If my dream is true and its meaning
emerges into the light\( ^{159} \)
It will come quickly like a boat in the
wind and the flow of the stream
(Chesed returns with Kenaz and the
lads of the town)

**CHESED**
As I live! They have already given
me too much to drink.

**KENAZ**\(^{160} \)
On my word and my faith! One
small measure
Not more than a log.\(^ {161} \)

**DOEG**
Bring wine. (Holds a cup in his hand
and sings)
Drink my spiced mixed drink
gsweeter than song\(^ {162} \)
Do not be bitterness for the chief
cupbearer\(^ {163} \)
A man of valour, a man of palate
and throat
And the measure of the days of a
man's life is a little finger
And therefore a man of valour must
drink wine. –

Bring wine! (Wine is brought)

---

\(^{158}\) Isa. 31:11 'and they stagger from strong drink'.

\(^{159}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘dream/stream’ (2.3.59–60).

\(^{160}\) This and the following speeches (except the two songs) until Chesed’s exit are prose in the original (2.3.62–115).

\(^{161}\) A small liquid measure equivalent to a sixth of a litre.

\(^{162}\) This song is composed of two pairs of rhyming lines. It differs substantially from the original, which reads
‘And let me the cannikin clink, clink/And let me the cannikin clink./A solider’s a man,/O, man’s life’s but
a span,/Why then let a soldier drink?’ (2.3.65–9).

\(^{163}\) Gen. 40:2, 9, 20; 41:9.
CHESED  How dear and pleasant is the song.

DOEG  I learned this song in England

For the men of England are heroes in drinking wine.\(^{164}\)

Next to them the men of Germany,
Denmark, or Holland

Are all as naught and nothing.\(^{165}\)

CHESED  Do the men of England have great power in drinking?

DOEG  Who can withstand a native of England?

Why, a man of Denmark would spin around, sway, and fall down like a dead man

A man of the land of Germany would wallow under the table

And a man of Holland would surely spew vomit and filth with no place untouched\(^{166}\)

Before the Englishman had opened the second bottle.

CHESED  I hereby raise my glass to the life of the army commander.

KENAZ  As do I; my mouth is like your mouth;
I shall not deceive.

DOEG  Dear England! (Sings)

A man of many deeds was King Split\(^{167}\)

And he wore cloth trousers, two for a silver shekel\(^{168}\)

---

\(^{164}\) Isa. 5:22.

\(^{165}\) Isa. 41:12, "as nothing and naught".

\(^{166}\) Isa. 28:8, "for all the tables are filled with vomit and filth with no place untouched".

\(^{167}\) In the Hebrew this song forms an ABAB rhyme. The king’s name, which is a nonsensical replacement for Shakespeare’s ‘Stephen’ (2.3.85), appears to have been chosen because it rhymes with the last word of the third line.

\(^{168}\) A shekel is a biblical weight (commonly used with reference to silver and gold) corresponding to approximately ten grams.
And he complained because half a shekel had been added to his price.

And he called the trousers' tailor a dirty dog.

He was mighty and elevated in the highest places of the city.

Whereas you sit in a low place; you were born for labour and toil.

Land after land is ruined because of pride.

Arise, don your coat, a worn and patched coat.

Bring wine. –

This song is even more pleasant than the first.

Do you want to hear it again?

I do not wish it –

A man who does this will not be prepared to stay at his post –

The heavens are above us – many will inherit eternal life.

But many will not inherit it.

You have spoken well, dear and pleasant officer.

And I expect to be one of the inheritors.

Not to the bitterness of spirit of either the army commander or one of the ministers.

And so do I.

You will not come into your inheritance before I have inherited.

169 Prov. 9:3.
170 Eccles. 10:6 יֵשֵׁבוּ בַּשֵּׁפֶל וַﬠֲשִׁירִים 'while the rich sit in a low place'.
171 Exod. 10:29.
172 Gen. 26:35.
For the officer comes before the standard-bearer.

But that’s enough for us – let us go on our way

Forgive all iniquity! Each man to his work –

Do not think, my brothers, that I am drunk,

This is my standard-bearer – this is my right hand –

And this is my left hand – I am not an intoxicated drunk now

Why, I am standing and not swaying, and my lips speak clearly.

**ALL**

*Your speech is comely* and pleasant.

**CHESED**

If so, then do not consider me drunk. *(Exits)*

**KENAZ**

Arise, let us go to the camp and set the watch.

**DOEG**

Did you see the man who went out from here?

He is a man of valour; **he could stand before kings**

But his carousing destroys him, for his soul contains good and evil

Like **light and darkness** in turn, this against that –

**My compassion is stirred for him,** and I also worry about the army commander

Lest he be put to shame because of his hope, as he has placed much trust in him

---

173 Song of Songs 4:3.
174 Prov. 22:29. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘He is a soldier fit to stand by Caesar’ (2.3.118). Salkinson has replaced the culturally specific ‘Caesar’ with a more generic biblical reference to royalty.
175 Job 38:19.
176 Hosea 11:8.
177 Isa. 20:5 'and they will be afraid and put to shame because of Cush their hope'.
For with misfortune he will bring about confusion in the land.

KENAZ
Is this his usual way?

DOEG
This is always his way; before he lay down on his bed He would be able to keep a second watch

If only the drinking did not cast sleep over his eyelids. 178

KENAZ
In my opinion the obligation is upon us to inform the army commander of the matter.

Maybe he is unaware of this, or he closes his eyes

Against seeing the shame of his officer, instead of the good that is in him;

What do you think?

(Raddai enters)

DOEG
(In a whisper) What is wrong with you, Raddai? Go hurry after the officer.

(Raddai exits)

KENAZ
I am very sorry to see that the noble Cushite

Has chosen as his second-in-command a man who has a grievous evil within him

Surely, it is good and upright to reveal the matter to his ears.

DOEG
Even if you gave me the island as my payment, I would not do this

For I am a friend to Chesed and seek a cure for his illness.

But what is this voice? –

178 Prov. 6:4 ‘do not give sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids’.
179 Eccles. 5:12 (5:13 in English Bibles).
180 Ps. 25:8.
Scoundrel! Villain! –

What is wrong with you, officer? What is this?

I shall strike and wound this scoundrel.

Strike me, please strike me.

Do you still open your mouth wide, scoundrel? (Strikes Raddai with a powerful blow)

Please don’t, officer! Stay your hand! (Grasps his hands)

Let go; why should I strike a blow to the cheek to you as well?

Go out, go out, why, you are drunk –

I am drunk? (They fight each other with their swords)

(In a whisper to Raddai) Go quickly outside and call mutiny, mutiny!

Please don’t, officer, my friend! Please don’t, sirs! –

Help, help us! Desist, Chesed! Kenaz, my lord! –

Desist, my lord! – Help, rescue – why are you silent?

Is this the watch? – (Sound of the tower bell clamouring)

Who is making a rumbling sound? – Why, the whole town is astir

Desist Chesed, let go! Lest you become a disgrace

A voice from outside, Save us, save us! Chesed is chasing Raddai!

Chesed

What is wrong with you, officer?

Chesed

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

181 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, you rogue! you rascal!’ (2.3.141); Salkinson has omitted the Christian oath. 182 Ezek. 3:12. 183 Ruth 1:19 ‘and the whole town was astir’.
And your shame can never be erased. (Ithiel and his men enter)

Ithiel

What is this?

Kenaz

My blood is spilling onto the earth, he stabbed me with deathly cuts. Indeed he will also die –

Ithiel

Stay your hands, for your lives depend on it.

Doeg

Stay your hand, officer! My lord Kenaz! – Look, sirs! – Do you not have the sense to know what you and your deeds are? And do you not have an eye to see before whom you stand? You have gone too far, men – the army commander is speaking here – How do you know no shame –

Ithiel

Ah, what is this? From whence has this woe come upon us? Have we risen up instead of the Turks to swallow each other Since they have been powerless to do us ill? Feel shame, feel humiliation because of your waywardness, cease to do evil The man who causes further disturbances will be condemned to death.

184 Prov. 6:33 'הָרַע אֵין מַכַּה וְלֹא מַקְרַת, וְחֶרְפָּתְךָ לֹא וְמָמַתָה 'and his shame will never be erased'.
185 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, I bleed still’ (2.3.160); Salkinson has removed the Christian oath.
186 Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 28b.
187 Isa 1:16.
188 1 Sam. 20:31; 2 Sam. 12:5.
If he lifts his hand and his foot, he will surely be put to death within a moment.

Bring down the man who is ringing the tower bell,

This tumult of this bell is frightening all the inhabitants of the town.

And you, dear Doeg, I see that your face has fallen from sadness and grief, say who had a hand in this disloyalty?

Do not conceal anything from me; indeed I command you.

DOEG I know nothing; in the beginning they were sitting together.

Friends like a groom and bride before they go to their bed,

But within a moment the wheel turned, and led them astray.

For they drew their flashing swords and they struck each other.

Until blood spilled upon them and their swords devoured flesh.

And I still do not know what the grievance between them was.

If only I could have died on the battlefield with honour.

Before I came to see such indecency in our camp.

ITHIEL What was wrong with you, Chesed, that you did this?

CHESED Please forgive me, my lord! I cannot speak.

---

189 Jer. 38:14.
190 Deut. 32:41 'when I sharpened my flashing sword'.
191 Deut. 32:42 'and my sword devours flesh'.
Kenaz! Indeed you have long been dear and honourable

Blameless and good-hearted in the land, and wise men have mentioned your name

What came over you that you sullied your reputation\(^{192}\) within a moment

You cast down your name which was like precious ointment,\(^ {193}\) and you made another name for yourself

As a man of contention\(^ {194}\) and blows? Will you not answer, Kenaz!

Kenaz

Look, honourable Ithiel, I have been struck a mortal blow

Your servant Doeg saw, and will surely tell you everything

Whereas I shall refrain from speaking,\(^ {195}\) for speech is difficult for me;

Only this I shall say, that I have not done wrong tonight

And I have not sinned with a word of the mouth nor with a deed of the hand

If it is not considered a sin for a man to save himself

And an iniquity for one to guard his life from violence and murder.

My heart grows hot within me,\(^ {196}\) I have no more rule over my spirit\(^ {197}\)

\(^{192}\) Exod. 5:21

\(^{193}\) Eccles. 7:1

\(^{194}\) Jer. 15:10.

\(^{195}\) Job 4:2

\(^{196}\) Ps. 39:4 (39:3 in English Bibles).

\(^{197}\) Prov. 25:28

The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
And instead of justice my soul's 
unrest rises up there;

If I now arise and raise my 
outstretched arm

Even the best of you will perish; 
from my rebuke he will become as nothing.

Speak, how did the quarrel break 
out? Whose hand has been first 
in the trespass? 199

And the man whose iniquity is in 
him, even if he is my brother,

I shall by no means clear him, for I shall not favour a brother or friend.

Is it really possible in a time of war, 
in a town full of terror and fear

To stir up a quarrel at night, before 
the guards in the citadel?

It is an outrage and a disgrace; 
Doeg, who started the outburst?

If out of love and brotherhood, you add to a word of truth 
Or take away from it, you are not a man of valour.

That's enough from you. –

May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth 202 if I speak a word

To cause pain to Chesed's heart; God forbid that I should do him ill

But nevertheless my heart is resolved 203 that I shall not deceive.

198 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Zounds, if I once stir' (2.3.203); Salkinson has omitted the oath.
199 Ezra 9:2 'and the hand of the princes and rulers has been first in this trespass'.
200 Exod. 34:7 ‘and He will by no means clear [the guilty].
201 Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 16b and elsewhere in rabbinic and medieval Hebrew literature.
202 Ps. 137:6.
203 Ps. 112:8 ‘his heart is resolved; he does not fear’.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
So now, listen, commander! The matter was thus:

I was sitting and talking with Kenaz

When all of a sudden a man came, crying out to save him

While Chesed, with drawn sword, was chasing after him in order to strike him

Then Kenaz approached and urged him to put his sword back in its sheath

And meanwhile the man had fled outside

Crying out in a loud voice as he fled, and I ran after him

In order that he not make his voice heard, lest he frighten the inhabitants of the town,

But he, light on his feet, fled from me and was gone,

And I was in a rush to come back into the house

Since I heard the sound of quarrelling and the sound of weapons

And curses and condemnations from Chesed; I had never heard such things.

And when I arrived I found the two of them with their swords against each other.

As you saw with your own eyes when you arrived as well.

With this I have told you everything that I know

For I know nothing more than this.

Indeed, this is the way of men, and even the most upright among them

204 Judg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:20.
Stumbles when there is a chance. Indeed, it is true that Chesed

Strayed from the righteous path and rushed to raise his hand against Kenaz

As a man does to his fellow, in his anger and rage

Despite this, in my opinion the iniquity is on the head of the man that fled

Who aroused his rage and his fury until there was no remedy.

I know Doeg, that in your love and your faithfulness to Chesed You are trying to make light of his iniquity. – Listen to me, Chesed! I love you with all my heart

But you will no longer be my officer from this time forth and forevermore.

Because I am making you an example for many.

Asenath What has happened here, my dear one?

Rest has been restored; let us return to our rest. And as for your wounds, Kenaz, I shall heal them

Lead the man off from here. – (They lead Kenaz off)

Doeg, guard the town, quieten quarrel and strife.

Ps. 32:6.

2 Chron. 36:16.

Isa. 9:6, 59:21; Mic. 4:7; Ps. 113:2, 115:18, 121:8, 125:2, 131:3.

Exod. 14:27 'and in the morning the sea returned to its normal course'.

Hab. 1:3.
Come back, Asenath my love, let us return to our bed. –

This is the lot of man, the lot of one who bears his weapon.

That the sound of tumult and shouting should wake him up in his night of pleasure.

(All exit, but Doeg and Chesed remain)

DOEG What is wrong with you, officer? Is there a wound in your flesh?

CHESED There is indeed, but there is no remedy for my wound.

DOEG God forbid.

CHESED My honourable name, my honourable name, woe, for I have lost it!

My only glory in life has gone and is no more

And what remains in my flesh is unclean like the flesh of a beast

My honourable name, Doeg, oh, my honourable name!

DOEG By my faithful life! Indeed I thought that you had been struck

Or had borne a severe wound which causes more pain than any blow to the soul.

Of what account is an honourable name? Why, it is pointlessness and futility!

Many acquire one without a price, and are stripped of it for no reason

210 Song of Songs 1:9, 15, 2:2, 10, 13, 4:1, 7, 5:2, 6:4.

211 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘life,strife’ (2.3.253–4).


213 Isa. 21:4 לַחֲרָדָֽה לִ֖י שָׂ֥ם חִשְׁקִ֔י נֶ֣שֶׁף אֵ֚ת ‘my night of pleasure he has turned to terror’.

214 This and the following speeches until Chesed’s exit are prose in the original (2.3.258–330).

215 Isa. 2:22 מִמֶּנִּי גָלָה כִּי אוֹי, כְּבוֹדִי שֵׁם, כְּבוֹדִי שֵׁם, כְּבוֹדִי שֵׁם ‘for of what account is he?’

216 Alshekh to Job 7.
And your honourable name has not departed unless you announce so yourself.

Get up, be a man, many ways are open for us

To make amends with the army commander; he removed you from your position

Not out of enmity and hate, but for a different reason

Like a man who strikes his dog that has not sinned against him

Just in order to scare the lion. And now entreat him

And he will favour you and be well disposed towards you.

It would be better for me become a disgrace than to be an officer to Ithiel

Desecrating his honour with a servant as drunk, worthless, and despicable as me.

For what am I now? A drunken, reviling, and blaspheming man

A man of strife and blows, stammering in a tongue that cannot be understood

Like a crane or a swallow chattering with its mouth or like a madman playing with his shadow.

Oh, evil and destructive spirit that hides within wine!

ִכָּשֶׁד      It would be better for me become a disgrace than to be an officer to Ithiel.

לְהַפְחִיד   Just in order to scare the lion. And now entreat him.

וְיִרְצֶךָ   And he will favour you and be well disposed towards you.

כָּמוֹנִי   For what am I now? A drunken, reviling, and blaspheming man.

כְּשָׁר   Not out of enmity and hate, but for a different reason.

כָּפַר   Like a man who strikes his dog that has not sinned against him.

לְאִתִיאֵל   And he will favour you and be well disposed towards you.

כְּסֵו   Like a crane or a swallow I chatter.’
Indeed I can imagine you and describe you, though I do not know you by name.

If your name is not Satan. –

**DOEG**

Who was the man whom you were chasing with your sword?

What evil did he do to you?

**CHESED**

I do not know.

**DOEG**

The matter is very strange.

**CHESED**

Like a dream from too much activity, and nothing is clear to me

I remember words of a quarrel, but I do not know what about.

How can a man bring a foe and enemy inside himself which captures his heart? How can we rejoice at the wine banquet and leap and dance so that we resemble a beast?

**DOEG**

Why are you still complaining, when the wine has left you?

See how quick as lightning your soul has become upright within you.

**CHESED**

The wine, one evil spirit, has indeed left me

But another spirit has come instead of it; it is anger and rage

**One transgression brings another transgression, and therefore I despise myself.**

---

222 Hymn of Glory, a twelfth-century acrostic hymn appearing at the end of the Shabbat morning liturgy. The hymn is attributed to Judah the Pious or to his father Samuel the Pious. Judah the Pious was an extremely prominent medieval scholar based in Speyer and Regensburg.

223 Eccles. 5:2 (5:3 in English Bibles) ‘for a dream comes from too much activity’.

224 Lam. 4:12; Esther 7:6.

225 2 Sam. 6:16 יְהוָ֔ה לִפְנֵ֣י וּמְכַרְכֵּר֙ מְפַזֵּ֤ז דָּוִד֙ אֶת־הַמֶּ֤לֶךְ וַתֵּ֨רֶא ’and she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord’ (referring to David’s wife Michal, watching him receive the Ark in Jerusalem).

226 Hab. 2:4 לא־יְשֶׁר תֵּשֶׁר בָּךְ ’his soul is not upright within him’.

227 Mishnah Avot 4:2.
Desist, that’s enough from you, do not chastise yourself too much.

If only that which happened to us had not happened.

But be insightful and wise, and turn the incident into good.

When I entreat him to return me to my position

And he says to me: ‘Why, you’re a drunkard’:

What shall I answer him with my mouth? Even if I had a thousand mouths

Why, every mouth would be blocked, for I cannot find a response.

Who would have said to a man of sense that he should turn into a brute!

Cursed be the cup which is not according to the law! Its wine is the wine of sea-serpents!

Please don’t, Chesed, do not curse the wine

For it is very good if it goes down smoothly.

And of course you know that I love you with a pure heart.

And as a sign, I satisfied your desire and drank the cup from your hand.

This way or that, a man may get drunk two or three times

Nonetheless he is not a drunkard.

And now come, I shall advise you that which happened to us had not happened.

If only that which happened to us had not happened.

But be insightful and wise, and turn the incident into good.

When I entreat him to return me to my position

And he says to me: ‘Why, you’re a drunkard’:

What shall I answer him with my mouth? Even if I had a thousand mouths

Why, every mouth would be blocked, for I cannot find a response.

Who would have said to a man of sense that he should turn into a brute!

Cursed be the cup which is not according to the law! Its wine is the wine of sea-serpents!

Please don’t, Chesed, do not curse the wine

For it is very good if it goes down smoothly.

And of course you know that I love you with a pure heart.

And as a sign, I satisfied your desire and drank the cup from your hand.

This way or that, a man may get drunk two or three times

Nonetheless he is not a drunkard.

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And of course you know that I love you with a pure heart.

And as a sign, I satisfied your desire and drank the cup from your hand.

This way or that, a man may get drunk two or three times

Nonetheless he is not a drunkard.

And now come, I shall advise you
Behold, the lady Asenath rules over the army commander

For her beauty captures his heart and her splendour is like a spell over him

Pour out your heart in her bosom, and you will be saved by her.

For she is most merciful, and she has a willing spirit

And if you urge her, to sew up the bond of love

Whose threads have been severed, between you and her husband

I warrant you that the bond will be twice as strong

As it was before.

chesed Your advice is good.

doeg My advice stems from my honesty, from a source of faithful love.

chesed So my heart tells me; tomorrow early in the morning

I shall come to beseech her to help me in my wretchedness

And if my request does not come to pass, I shall know that I am lost.

doeg Thus your path is straight ahead. Go to your bed in peace.

Meanwhile, I’ll go to my watch.

chesed Go in peace, faithful Doeg.

(Chesed exits)

doeg Who would say of me, that I am a villain?

Why, I have given him good and sound advice

chesed Your advice is good.

doeg My advice stems from my honesty, from a source of faithful love.

chesed So my heart tells me; tomorrow early in the morning

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And if my request does not come to pass, I shall know that I am lost.

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Meanwhile, I’ll go to my watch.

chesed Go in peace, faithful Doeg.

(Chesed exits)

doeg Who would say of me, that I am a villain?

Why, I have given him good and sound advice

232 Ps. 51:14 (51:12 in English Bibles).

233 Ibn Ezra to Exod. 18; Sefer Hasidim section 134 (a twelfth- or thirteenth-century work by Judah the Pious on the daily life of medieval German Jews; it was well known among later Ashkenazic Jewish readers and would have been familiar to Salkinson).
Of how he might regain favour with the Cushite, for how easy it would be

To persuade Asenath to intercede on his behalf

And if she intercedes, the Cushite will not turn her away

For he is ensnared in her love and after she speaks he will not change anything.

And if she told him to separate himself from the congregation of the Lord

Or to risk his life, he would not refuse her

For he is weak and she rules over him.

And since I have given Chesed sound advice to help him,

Who would consider me a bad counsellor and villain? –

Except that my paths are the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death

For both the devil and I put on righteousness as a cloak

So that we might do evil. For when this simpleton in his innocence

Beseeches Asenath to restore him to his position

---

234 1 Sam. 29:4 ‘and how might he regain favour with his master’.
235 Job 29:22 ‘after I spoke they did not speak again’; Ps. 89:35 ‘and I shall not alter what has gone forth from my lips’.
236 Salkinson has removed the explicitly Christian content of Shakespeare’s ‘to renounce his baptism’ (2.3.338).
237 Judg. 9:17 ‘and he risked his life’.
238 Gen. 3:16 ‘and he will rule over you’ (God speaking to Eve about her husband Adam).
239 Prov. 7:27 ‘her house is the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death’.
240 Isa. 59:17 ‘he put on righteousness as a breastplate […] and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak’.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
And she intercedes on his behalf to her husband the Cushite,

Then I shall whisper in his ears that it is only because she desires him

That she intercedes on his behalf like this, and the more determined she is

To do kindness to Chesed, the more she will fall in her husband’s eyes

And the kindness which she planned to do, will be a snare for her

And her goodness will become brimstone and all her kindness will become pitch

And from there fire will come out and devour them all.

(To Raddai as he enters) Are you well, Raddai?

**Raddai**241 I am running here and there, not like a dog hunting prey

But rather barking at the hunters.

Indeed I have been struck this night, **blows to the innermost parts of the belly**242

And my money has gone from my purse, so **why should I wait any longer?**243

Is this the fruit of my labour, that I should return to Venice

With the benefit of little knowledge, with a **cruel chastisement**, and with no money.

---

241 These lines are prose in the original (2.3.358–64).
242 Prov. 20:30.
243 2 Kings 6:33 ‘why should I wait for the Lord any longer?’
244 Jer. 30:14.
How wretched is man, if he has no patience?

Who can cure the sick man, if not gradually?

And after all, you know that we are bringing our work to light

By counsel, wisdom, and cunning, and not by witchcraft

And therefore our work must take its time, and must not be rushed

Lest its end not be blessed. Has your way not been successful?

Chesed struck you a small blow and you deposed him from his position

And what is wrong with you, that you cried out? Plants grow in the sun

But their fruit does not ripen before they bud and bloom.

Wait a moment and you will eat the fruit of your deeds.

But look, the morning has dawning with much work and joy

The night is over and gone, quick, return to the place of your watch

And I shall tell you the rest of the pleasing words at the appointed time.

Why do you still hesitate? Hurry, do not stay standing.

Judg. 18:23. Although the meaning of the root ק ע צ means 'gather' or 'assemble' in the nif'al stem, Salkinson seems to have had in mind the meaning of the qal, 'cry out'; the likelihood of this is reinforced by the fact that he uses the same expression in other contexts where it clearly has the sense of 'cry out' (see Fifth Part, note 19 and Ram and Jael, First Part, note 315).

Isa. 3:10 יאכֵּלוּ מַﬠַלְלֵיהֶם פְּרִ֥י 'they will eat the fruit of their deeds'.

Gen. 44:3.

Song of Songs 2:11 וְיִצְמָחוּ יַבְשִׁילוּ לֹא 'the rain is over and gone'.

Eccles. 12:10.
With two things my plan will be complete, I shall send my wife
To convince her lady to go out to save Chesed
And as for the Cushite, I shall lead him astray, by speaking to him privately.
And bring him without knowledge to a place where he will find Chesed
Pleading before his wife. –
This is the way and the gate, to execute a scheme and a deception
And indeed the appointed time is close, and my hands will achieve success.

End of Second Part.
Third Part

SCENE I  In front of the citadel (Chesed and musicians)

CHESED

Musicians, I shall pay your wages and you will play well

Receiving the army commander with a song of blessing for the dawn.

(The musicians cheer and the clown emerges from the house)

THE CLOWN

What are these instruments in your hand, are they from Naples

That they issue their sound like a sound coming out of the nostrils?

THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

What is wrong with you, my friend, that you ask such a thing?

THE CLOWN

Tell me, are these called wind instruments?

THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Yes, my friend, that is what they are called.

THE CLOWN

I know that their wind is futility and has no benefit.

THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Our spirit is willing within us, and we are not planning evil.

THE CLOWN

The wind instruments release all their wind, and hot air comes out of their mouths.

But here is money for you, sufficient for your wages

---

1 This and the following speeches until Doeg’s entrance are prose in the original (3.1.3–4).
2 This is a play on words referring back to ‘wind’ in the previous line, as the word רוּחַ means both ‘wind’ and ‘spirit’.
3 Ps. 51:12 ‘and renew a willing spirit within me’.
4 Can also mean ‘futility’.

175
Now the army commander said that the sound of your playing is very pleasant.

Therefore save it for another day, and do not play it today.

If it does not please him, we shall not continue further.

If you know how to play without making a sound,

Do as is best in your eyes, but if the sound of song is heard

It will not please the ears of the army commander, so those who know him say.

We do not know how to play as you wish.

If so, then put your instruments in your sacks

For I shall go from here, and as for you, watch and do as I do.

(The musicians exit)

Please listen to the word of my mouth, my honest friend.

If so, then put your instruments in your sacks

For I shall go from here, and as for you, watch and do as I do.

(The musicians exit)

I shall listen to the word of your mouth and not the mouth of your honest friend.

Do away with laughter and deceit, and take this shekel from my hand;

And if the woman who attends the lady rises from her bed

Say to her that Chesed is asking to see her.

---

5 Isa. 51:3; Ps. 98:5.
6 This is a double-entendre; it could also mean ‘the word of the mouth of your honest friend’.
7 This response is based on the double-entendre from the previous line; it is a close parallel of Shakespeare’s ‘Dost thou hear, mine honest friend?/No, I hear not your honest friend, I hear you’ (3.1.21–2).
8 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘a poor piece of gold’ (3.1.23–4). A shekel is a biblical weight (commonly used with reference to silver and gold) corresponding to approximately ten grams.
Will you do this for me?

THE CLOWN
She is rising from her bed, and when she arises to come here
I shall indeed tell the matter to her.

CHESED
Go and do as you say, my friend.

DOEG
Have you not lain down on your bed all night?

CHESED
No, for the morning had dawned before we parted.

DOEG
I shall send her to you immediately
And I shall seek a pretext to lead the Cushite somewhere else
In order that you might speak with the lady, according to everything which is in your heart,
And there will be no stranger with you. (Exits)

CHESED
With all my heart I thank you for this great kindness of yours
For such a man of great kindness and such a faithful friend in sorrow as you
I have not found even in Florence, my native city.

---

9 Isa. 49:8.
10 Gen. 44:3.
11 1 Kings 10:2, "and she spoke to him about everything that was in her heart".
Welcome, dear officer!

Your sorrow is my sorrow and I am distressed at your distress.

But quickly, go out into a spacious place and sorrow and sighing will flee.

The army commander and his wife are speaking about you.

She is striving with all her might to have you acquitted.

And he is responding that the man whom you gave many wounds
Is honourable among his people and his family is exalted in the land.

Therefore he has pronounced his sentence, to remove you until the anger passes.

However, he is saying that you are dear in his eyes.

And his love for you will supplicate on your behalf even without any entreating.

And indeed he will wait for an appropriate time to restore you to your position.

Indeed, if only you would listen to me, do me a kindness.

And ask that I be given the opportunity to see the lady.

In order that I might speak a few words with her alone.

Come into the house; I shall give you the opportunity.

So that you might pour out your lament which is in your heart.

12 2 Sam. 22:20: 'and He brought me out into a spacious place'.
13 Isa. 35:10.
14 Isa. 26:20.
15 Ps. 102:1: ‘and he pours out his lament before the LORD’.
I shall never forget this kind deed of yours. (Exeunt)

A chamber in the citadel (Ithiel, Doeg, and a few noblemen)

Give these letters, Doeg, to the ship’s captain

So that he might give them to our lord the prince of the nation

As for me, I am going to inspect the ramparts and walls in the citadel

And there you will find me.

Yes, my lord.

Will you go with me, ministers, to see the citadel?

We shall follow our lord. (Exeunt)

Do not fear, dear Chesed, may your heart be confident

That I shall do everything which is in my power to save you.

Do so, my lady, for my husband is greatly distressed

And it grieves his heart just like the anguish of his own soul.

It is a testimony to your husband that he is faithful of spirit.

I shall never forget this kind deed of yours. (Exeunt)

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Do so, my lady, for my husband is greatly distressed

And it grieves his heart just like the anguish of his own soul.

It is a testimony to your husband that he is faithful of spirit.

16 Lam. 2:8.
17 Gen. 6:6 'and it grieved His heart’ (referring to God’s regret at having made humans after seeing how wicked they had become).
As for you, Chesed, do not fear, for I shall make peace
Between you and my husband, and you will be friends as before.

**Chesed**

My generous lady! Your generosity has made me great;¹⁸
Consider me your faithful servant, and let come on me what may.¹⁹

**Asenath**

I give you my thanks, for you are a friend to my husband
And you have been a man of his confidence and faithful to his house for many days
And although he may be acting as a stranger to you, his heart is not distant from you
Other than by outward appearance.²⁰

**Chesed**

So it is, my lady;
Except that the outward appearance may continue for many days
For it grazes on wind and fills its stomach with the east wind;²¹
Or he might find a new pretext not to bring back his banished one.²²
And since I have been abandoned and another is taking my office
The army commander will forget my love and will no longer remember my service.

**Asenath**

God forbid, do not say such a thing; behold, I stand as surety

---

¹⁸ 2 Sam. 22:36; and Your gentleness has made me great; also Ps. 18:36 (18:35 in English Bibles).
²⁰ This phrase derives from Eccles. 6:9, where it appears with the meaning ‘what the eye can see’, but seems to be used here with the meaning of a similar collocation מראה עין, which appears numerous times in rabbinic and later Hebrew literature and denotes a principle of Jewish law whereby one should refrain from engaging in behaviour that, although permissible, might mistakenly appear to an onlooker to constitute a prohibited activity.
²¹ Job 15:2
²² 2 Sam. 14:13; ‘would a wise man answer with windy knowledge, and fill his stomach with the east wind?’
In the sight of this Milcah that you shall return to your position
And let your heart be resolute; if a word has gone out of my mouth
That I shall ensure to fulfil it, and I shall not alter what has gone out of my lips.  
For I shall urge my husband and I shall not give him rest
But rather I shall pressure him with words and I shall make his bed like a school
And his table like a set table filled with chastisement and rebuke
And everywhere that he turns he shall hear Chesed's case from my mouth,
Therefore make your heart merry for your salvation is near
For I shall give myself over to death rather than abandon arguing your case.

(Ithiel and Doeg enter from afar)

milcah My lady, my lord is coming towards us over there.
chesed My lady, I shall go from here.
asenath But why are you going? Stay, so that I might speak about you.
chesed I can stay no longer, for my soul is terrified
And my spirit is not prepared within me to please my lord.
asenath If so, turn around and go in accordance with your heart's desire. (Chesed exits)

23 Ps. 89:35 (89:34 in English Bibles).
24 Ezek. 23:41; this phrase is also the title of Joseph Caro's authoritative code of Jewish law (first published in Venice, 1564–5).
DOEG  This matter is not good in my eyes.

What is this that you said?

Nothing, commander, or I do not know what I said.

Is that not Chesed, who parted from my wife there?

Chesed? No, my lord! My heart does not allow me to consider
That upon seeing your face, he would steal away to leave here
Like a criminal and guilty man.

Yet my heart tells me that he was there.

Listen to me, my husband, my lord!
Behold, I have just spoken here
With a sad and wretched man who years for you for he despairs from your rebuke and is dying in your anger.

And who is this about whom you are speaking?

Why, it is your officer Chesed. If I have found favour in your eyes And if I have power to guide you, won’t you grant his request For he went astray in error, and not with wilful intent or deceit For if you have not found his heart to be faithful before you

Who is he, and where is he, who is faithful in the land?

So now, please, my dear one, please call upon him to return.

25 Ps. 86:4 אֶשָּֽׂא נַפְשִׁ֥י אֲדֹנָ֗י אֵלֶ֥יךָ כִּ֥י ‘because I yearn for You, O Lord’.
26 The terms בשגגה ‘in error’ and בזדון ‘with wilful intent’ are concepts in Jewish law discussed in various sources including the Babylonian Talmud, in Moses Maimonides’ twelfth-century legal guide Mishneh Torah (Hilkhot Teshuva 1:1), and in the Yom Kippur liturgy.
27 Esther 7:5.
Ithiel: Has he gone from here?

Asenath: With a broken heart, he went from me and left his grief in my bosom.

And I am very distressed at his distress. Please, the one whom my soul loves,

Summon him to return.

Ithiel: Not now, pleasant Asenath, but at another time.

Asenath: But when? Will he come soon?

Ithiel: He will come quickly, for your sake.

Asenath: This evening at mealtime?

Ithiel: Not this evening.

Asenath: Tomorrow for the noontime meal?

Ithiel: At noon I shall not sit at home

For I shall dine with the military men in the citadel.

Asenath: If so, then tomorrow in the evening

Or on Tuesday in the morning, at noon, or in the evening

Or on Wednesday morning. Please set the appointed time

But do not postpone it more than three days.

On my life! Indeed he confesses and repents with all his heart

Even though his iniquity is trivial in men’s eyes.

Indeed the matter is true that punishing one who is dear and honourable

Is good and proper at a time of war, to make him an example for many

Ps. 51:19 (51:17 in English Bibles).

Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.

Josh. 4:13.

Prov. 28:13.
But the rebuke is enough for him, on account of his small mistake.

Speak, Ithiel, when may he come? As for me, I wonder very much

If you were to ask something of me, whether I would be able to refuse you

And turn here and there like you. Is it not Chessed

Who came with you to bring me into the covenant of your love

And whenever I refused, he guided my heart towards you

So how is the matter to be atoned for now so weighty?

If it were me instead of you, believe me –

Ithiel Please, that's enough from you! Indeed he can come at any time; For I cannot refuse you.

Asenath It is not kindness from you; just as if I had implored you

To eat food, to put on a garment, and to protect yourself from cold

Or to do something for your own good

Who would consider it kindness, that you did this?

But if I should come to seek kindness and compassion from you

To test the power of your love, I would not come with a small matter

But rather I would seek to ask difficult and weighty things

Please, that's enough from you!

Indeed he can come at any time; For I cannot refuse you.

It is not kindness from you; just as if I had implored you

To eat food, to put on a garment, and to protect yourself from cold

Or to do something for your own good

Who would consider it kindness, that you did this?

But if I should come to seek kindness and compassion from you

To test the power of your love, I would not come with a small matter

But rather I would seek to ask difficult and weighty things

32 This meaning of the verbal root  ה ל פ in the hitpa’el stem is first attested in the medieval period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1483). While the form occurs in the Hebrew Bible, it has a different meaning, 'to display marvellous power' (Job 10:16).
Until terror seized your soul\(^{33}\) to fulfil my request.

Ithiel: I shall deny you nothing –

Just one thing I ask of you; grant me this request of mine

Wait for me a little bit so that I may speak with myself alone.

Asenath: Shall I deny you anything?

I am going.

Ithiel: Go in peace. I shall come to see you quick as lightning.

Asenath: Do as you desire, my husband

For everything which you say, I shall do and obey.\(^{34}\)

(Exits with Milcah)

Ithiel: Beautiful and wretched one! May death destroy me if I do not love you;

Your love is stored in my heart, and if I should not love you any longer

Then everything would revert to void.

Doeg: Noble-spirited\(^{35}\) lord –

Ithiel: What do you say, Doeg?

Doeg: Did Chesed know before you married the lady

That you desired her?

Ithiel: He was my man of confidence from the beginning to the end.

But why do you ask such a thing?

Doeg: I wanted to know this in order to calm the thoughts of my heart

---

\(^{33}\) Job 21:6

\(^{34}\) Exod. 24:7

\(^{35}\) Prov. 17:27.
And there is nothing to disturb your spirit.

Ithiel

And what are the thoughts of your heart?

Doeg

I did not imagine that Chesed had known her since then.

Ithiel

It is so, and he was also the messenger between us

Whom we sent from time to time.

Doeg

He was the messenger? –

Ithiel

He was the messenger! He and not another –

What strange things do you see here? Is he not faithful?

Doeg

Faithful?

Ithiel

Faithful, I said.

Doeg

According to what I think, my lord –

Ithiel

What do you think?

Doeg

What do I think, my lord?

Ithiel

‘Think, my lord’

As I live, it is like a heavenly echo, 36
he is repeating my words

As if his heart were full of strange and terrible thoughts.

If thoughts have arisen in your heart, tell them in the sight of the sun. 37

When Chesed went away from my wife, I heard you say

That ‘the matter is not good’; what is not good in your eyes?

And when you heard that he was my man of confidence in my love

36 The heavenly echo (Hebrew קול בֶּת קֹול bat qol, lit. ‘daughter of a voice’), is a concept in the Mishnah, Talmud, and other rabbinic literature, denoting a divine voice that reveals God’s will to humans (see Rothkoff 2007).

37 2 Sam. 12:11.
And he was the messenger between us, you called out in bewilderment of heart.\textsuperscript{38}

‘He was the messenger?’ And your face pursed up suddenly.\textsuperscript{39}

As if a terrible idea had arisen in your heart and led your thoughts astray.

If you love me truly and sincerely,\textsuperscript{40} tell me your thoughts.

\textbf{DOEG} You know, my lord, that I love you.

\textbf{ITHIEL} I know that it is so;

And because I trust that your love is pure

And because you weigh your words on a scale before they pass your lips

Therefore the signs of your face and your few words frighten me.

If a cunning man and a scoundrel does such a thing it is deception

As these are his ways, continually to deceive and lead astray his fellow;

But in a pure-hearted\textsuperscript{41} man like you, they are a faithful testimony

That there is a war within you which you cannot sustain.

\textbf{DOEG} I can trust in Chesed and can also say on oath

That he is faithful.

\textbf{ITHIEL} I also think him to be so.

\textbf{DOEG} A man should always be in secret as in the open

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{38} Deut. 28:28.
\textsuperscript{39} This verb originates in the rabbinic period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1675); although the root in this stem is attested in the Hebrew Bible (in Job 22:16), it has a different meaning, ‘to be snatched’.
\textsuperscript{40} Judg. 9:16, 19.
\textsuperscript{41} Ps. 24:4.
\end{flushright}
And not one man in the open and another man in secret.

Ithiel

To be one man in mouth and heart, this is the instruction for mankind.  

Doeg

Therefore my heart thinks that Chesed is faithful.

Ithiel

But apart from that, there are other things in your heart

Please tell me everything that your heart whispers

Let your lips utter clearly even an evil and bitter matter

For evil tidings should only be made known with bitter words.

Doeg

Please forgive me, my noble lord:

Indeed I am prepared to keep all your commandments

But not to do something which even a despicable slave would not do.

Shall I reveal the hidden treasures of my heart, if my heart is pondering calamities?

And shall I not restrain the fruit of my lips, if I have conceived destruction and disaster?

Where is the palace through which an unclean thing has not passed?

Or a pure heart which has never turned aside to accuse

And has not made a perverted judgement like a truthful and righteous judge?

42 2 Sam. 7:19.
43 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘every act of duty’ (3.3.137); Salkinson has replaced this with an explicitly Jewish formulation of duty, mitzvoth, or commandments.
44 Isa. 57:19 שְׂפָתָ֑יִם נִ֣יב
45 Hab. 1:4.
Ithiel  
If you are thinking in your heart that a man has done me an injustice
And you do not reveal it to me, you too, Doeg, are among the conspirators.

Doeg  
I admit before you, commander, regarding my affliction and my pain
That this is my way at times, to spy out with an evil eye
And to find iniquity in men who are innocent of any iniquity
For out of my great zeal for my lord, or also out of sorrow of heart.

I see the shadow of mountains as mountains; therefore I beg of you
Do not take heed of my words and do not make trouble for yourself
For my knowledge is very trivial and the visions of my heart lead me astray
And you will not find rest in my words, nor benefit to you
Nor is it an advantage or wisdom for me to inform you of what is in my ponderings.

Ithiel  
What do your words hint at?

Doeg  
A reputation is better for a man and a woman than any glory or jewel.
The one who steals my bag of money steals dirt and dust
For it is as naught and nothing, the money was in my hand
And now it is in his hand, as it was in the hands of others before me.

46  Neh. 2:2.
47  This expression denoting paranoid exaggeration is thought to have originated in the modern era (Even-Shoshan 2003, 2:422), but is based loosely on Judg. 9:36–37:6 ‘you see the shadow of the mountains as if they were men’ (which is uncertain in meaning; see Amit 2004:532).
48  Job 15:12 "and what do your eyes wink at?" Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds! What dost thou mean?’ (3.3.157).
But the one who **sullies my reputation** wrongs my soul, and he has made me like an empty vessel.

**Ithiel**

As I live, I shall not turn aside until I know your thoughts.

**Doeg**

You will not be able to know them, not even if my heart were in your hand. As long as I am still master over it.

**Ithiel**

Indeed?

**Doeg**

Guard yourself from the spirit of jealousy, for it comes like rot. And like a maggot it scorns the food upon which it lives.

Happy is the one who turns a blind eye to his wife, if she is adulterous, yet the fire of jealousy does not devour him.

But woe to the husband who loves and is jealous over his wife. Both his love and his jealousy become, like death and Sheol, an abode for him.

**Ithiel**

Woe is me, wretched man!

**Doeg**

Poor and happy in his lot, he is the man of great wealth. But the man of great wealth who constantly fears lest he become poor is none so poor as he. – O **God of the spirits**!

Please save my tribe from the spirit of jealousy.

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49 Exod. 5:21 
50 Jer. 51:34 
51 Num. 16:22 
52 Salkinson has chosen to translate Shakespeare's 'my tribe' (3.3.177) with an expression that is used in rabbinic and later literature to refer specifically to Jews (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 211); see, for example, Mishnah Bava Qamma 1:2.
Ithiel

Why are you speaking your words? Does jealousy graze on my soul?

Or do I change my face in the mornings, like the changes of the face of the moon

To search here and there, in case I might find some indecent thing?  

It is not so, Doeg; if my wife has caused me

To fear whether she has been unfaithful to me, then I have already made my judgement.

It is better for me to be like a goat in the forest

Than to watch after a woman lest she go whoring away from me.

If it is said in my ears that my wife is beautiful

Loves banquets and companions, her mouth is open to speak clearly

And she knows how to play well, to sing and to dance

All this will not arouse the spirit of jealousy within me

For these additions add charm to an honest woman.

Nor is it because I am unworthy that I fear lest she betray me

Going after strangers who are greater than me in my worth

For she saw me with her eyes and she chose me with her soul’s desire,

Therefore I say one thing: I shall not judge her

54 Hosea 1:2
55 Isa. 32:4.
Until I see what disgrace is found in her\(^{56}\)

And when I find some flaw in her, then I shall investigate and enquire.

And if there is iniquity in her, there will be no more discussion.

For destruction will be decreed,\(^ {57} \) and love and jealousy will be no more.

**DOEG**

I am happy to hear this from your mouth, for now I am prepared.

To show you my love and my service, without obstacles or hindrances.

So now, listen to my word and I shall tell everything which is in my heart.

But I shall not present my case,\(^ {58} \) what evidence is in my hand?

But I shall say at the start, keep your eye on your wife.

And observe her when she is sitting together with Chesed.

Not with a jealous eye, nor with too much trust.

For I fear that a sinful thing might be done

To a noble-hearted man such as you, and therefore I say guard yourself.

For the women of Venice do things in secret.

Which they would not do before their husbands’ eyes.

And every meditation of their hearts\(^ {59} \) is only to hide their deeds.

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\(^{56}\) Job 26:14. מִשְׁמַעְתָּא דָּבָר וּמַה־שֵּׁ֣מֶץ 'and how faint (or: whispering) a word is heard of Him'; Salkinson seems to have been using the word שֶׁמֶץ in its medieval sense of ‘condemnation’ or ‘disgrace’ (Even-Shoshan 2003, 6: 1921).

\(^{57}\) Isa. 10:23, 28:22; Dan. 9:27.

\(^{58}\) Job 5:8.

\(^{59}\) Ps. 49:4 (49:3 in English Bibles) לִבִּי וְהָג֖וּת 'and the mediation of my heart'.
And not to keep iniquity far away.

Ithiel
Is this the testimony of your mouth?

Doeg
Why, she deceived her father when she married you
And while she was acting as a stranger, as if she were afraid
To look you in the eye, she already desired you.

Ithiel
The matter is true.

Doeg
If one as tender in years as she is possesses such cunning
To cover her father’s eyes with a blanket lest he see anything
Until he believed that it was witchcraft –
Indeed I fear greatly, lest I have sinned with my lips,
Forgive me my lord, for your great love has pressured me.

Ithiel
I shall never forget your great love and kindness for all days.

Doeg
I see that your heart has sunk.

Ithiel
No, no, it is nothing.

Doeg
But I see that you are saddened,
Indeed I hope that you will have the wisdom to see
That my words spring from a source of love and friendship,
But I am distressed to see you**grieved in your heart**
And therefore please, my lord, do not think deeply in order to find in my words
A different notion and interpretation;
I have only come to warn you.

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60 Gen. 6:6

אֶל־לִבּֽוֹ וַיִּתְﬠַצֵּב
‘and it grieved His heart’ (referring to God’s regret at having made humans upon seeing how wicked they had become).

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ITHIEL I do not seek a different interpretation.

DOEG For a different interpretation would lead you into the wasteland where there is no path. Which my words do not contain and which has not occurred to me.

As Chesed is my faithful friend – but I see

That my lord’s face has fallen, and your spirit is troubled within you.

ITHIEL Only very little –

For in my opinion, Asenath’s spirit is faithful to me.

DOEG If only it were so, and so may it be in your eyes For all time.

ITHIEL But the heart is devious and easily turns away from the path; and therefore I also say

That the woman is baffling in my eyes, and she has a strange way about her.

Indeed many desirable young men possessing good looks and splendour

From among the most honourable men of her native land, urged her to marry them

But she turned her back and refused to look at them

Not in the manner of damsels and not according to the manner of all the earth

61 Ps. 107:40.
62 Gen. 41:8 רוּח֔וֹ וַתִּפָּﬠֶ֑ם ‘and his spirit was troubled’; also Dan. 2:3.
63 Jer. 17:9.
64 Isa. 30:11 מִנֵּי־דֶ֔רֶךְ סָוּרוּ ‘turn away from the road; go off the path’.
65 Isa. 8:14.
66 Ezek. 23:6, 12, 23.
So who would not say that there is a spirit of confusion within her? 68

But please forgive me my lord, I am not a slanderer.

And I would not disparage her, if I were not very worried.

Lest she open her eyes to weigh on the balance of her mind.

The men of her land against your worth, and deduct from your worth.

Go in peace –

If you find anything else, please tell me.

Order your wife to keep her watch with open eyes.

And now go and leave me alone.

I am going, my lord. (He makes to exit)

Why did I take a wife for myself?

This blameless man uncovers a handbreadth and covers two handbreadths.

And out of what he has seen or knows, he has not told me the half.

Please let me entreat you; please do not question either in the depths or in the heights above; every unknown thing will be made known and will be revealed in time. And if you have determined to restore Chesed, for he is a man of valour, and keeps his watch in faith, it would be better after a few days.

68 Isa. 19:14 ‘the Lord has mixed a spirit of confusion within her’.

69 Babylonian Talmud Nedarim 20b ‘he uncovers a handbreadth and covers a handbreadth’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘sees and knows more – much more – than he unfolds’ (3.3.247).

70 1 Kings 10:7 ‘not even the half had been told to me’.

71 Isa. 7:11 ‘ask either in the depth or in the heights above’.
So that you might familiarize yourself with him in his ways, because he will make himself known by his actions. And examine your wife as well when she intercedes on his behalf. And observe her, how she pressures you intensely to restore him. For with this touchstone her heart can be well examined. But you will do well if you consider me hasty. And mock my fear, because I am afraid for nothing, For she is pure and there is no iniquity in her. And regarding this I beseech you to listen to the voice of your servant.  

ithiel I know how to control my spirit; do not worry about me. doeg Now I am going, in accordance with your words. (Exits)  

ithiel This man is honest and faithful, and he has a proud soul. Understanding the ways of men and their deeds, both small and large. If I find that my wife has strayed from me. Even though I have kept her close to me, like a seal on my heart. And I have tied her with bonds of love, like frontlets on my arm.

72 Prov. 20:11.  
73 This expression derives originally from Isa. 28:16, but the meaning of ‘touchstone’ or ‘acid test’ is thought to be a modern innovation (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 8).  
74 Mishnah Avot 5:19.  
75 Song of Songs 8:6 ךָﬠַל־לִבֵּהּ כַֽחוֹתָ֜ם שִׂימֵ֨נִי ‘place me like a seal on your heart’.  
76 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘jesses’ (3.3.265), straps attached between a hawk’s leg and the falconer’s wrist (Honigmann 1997: 225, note 265; Crystal and Crystal 2002: 247). Salkinson has domesticated this image by replacing the falconry term with an allusion to the Jewish commandment of tying tefillin, or phylacteries, on the arm for weekday morning prayers.
I shall sever the ties from my arms like thread\(^{77}\)

And send her away like a swallow to fly where the wind is.

Maybe all of this has come upon me because I am black and a Cushite

And there is no honey under my tongue\(^{78}\) to speak flattery and smoothness;

Or because I am old, past half my days and more,

But despite this it is not right that she should have been unfaithful to me.

Woe is me, woe is me! The unfaithful girl is not mine –

And all my comfort in my wretchedness\(^{79}\) is that I might loathe her.

I took her for myself as a curse, and her beauty is a heartache to me

I am ashamed that I trusted, for she is not mine. –

It would be better for me to be a locust, to hop over the earth\(^{80}\)

Or to live on mist and steam in a prison

Than to dwell with my soul’s beloved one when strangers have a share of her

This is the lot of commanders and the inheritance of the earth’s great men,

Because it is not for us to live in safety,\(^{81}\) like the poor masses

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\(^{77}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘I’d whistle her off’ (3.3.266); as previously (see preceding note), Salkinson has exchanged Shakespeare’s falconry reference for an image of Jewish prayer with tefillin.

\(^{78}\) Song of Songs 4:11 ‘there is honey and milk under your tongue’.

\(^{79}\) Ps. 119:50.

\(^{80}\) Lev. 11:21 ‘but these you may eat of every flying creeping thing that goes on all four, which has legs above its feet with which to hop upon the earth’.

\(^{81}\) Deut. 12:10 ‘and you will live in safety’; 1 Sam 12:11 ‘and you lived in safety’.
And as soon as we have left the womb, evil pursues us and lies in wait like death at the door – but Asenath is at the door.

(Asenath enters with Milcah)

If she is unfaithful, even the heavens are not pure in my eyes.

But I shall not yet plan evil for her without cause.

Ithiel, my beloved, what is wrong with you?

The noontime meal is prepared, and the honourable men of the town who have been invited are waiting for your arrival.

It was not right of me to be late.

What is wrong with you, my husband, that you speak so seriously?

Do you not feel well?

My head, my head –

Because you are often wakeful and do not sleep enough;

Let me bind your head with my handkerchief, and your pain will pass in a moment.

Your handkerchief is too small to bind my head.

Come into the chamber; I shall come after you.

— (Removes the handkerchief from his head and drops it on the ground)

82 Job 15:15 בְﬠֵינָיו לֹא־זַכּוּ וְשָׁמַיִם 'even the heavens are not pure in His eyes'.

83 Mishnah Berakhot 5:1 (also appears in the Tosefta and in later rabbinic literature).

84 2 Kings 4:19.

85 This word appears twice in the Hebrew Bible (Isa. 3:22 and Ruth 3:15), where it means ‘shawl’ or ‘cloak’. From the rabbinic period onwards it more commonly means ‘handkerchief’; Salkinson is using it in the latter sense.
I am sorry for your pain. *(Ithiel and Asenath exit)*

To my heart’s joy I have found this handkerchief here

It is the first present that he gave her as a sign of their covenant.  

My fickle and strange husband has urged me a hundred times

To steal it and give it to him; but it is precious in her eyes

In keeping with the Cushite’s oath for her to keep it as an eternal memento

And she carries it by her bosom continually and keeps it like a precious amulet

And she also utters words to it and kisses it in her love

But now that I have found it, I shall give it to my husband Doeg.

I cannot understand what he will do with the stolen item –

God alone knows, and I do not know what

But I shall do this, in order to calm his spirit.

What are you doing here by yourself?

Do not argue with me, when in my hand there is something to give you.

Something for me? Something wherein there is no pleasure –

In what do you have no pleasure?

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86 Gen. 9:13, 17:11.
87 This noun is attested in Num. 5:15, but the sense of 'memento' in which Salkinson is using it is thought to be a medieval innovation (Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 924).
DOEG In a foolish wife.89

MILCAH And therefore you find pleasure in the tongue of the sly90 and destructive words91

But what would you say if I gave you the handkerchief?

DOEG Which handkerchief?

MILCAH The handkerchief that the Cushite gave to Asenath as a memento

And which you have urged me several times to steal.

DOEG And you have stolen it.

MILCAH God forbid that I steal it, it only happened to fall

And I was summoned here and found the lost item

Look; here it is in my hand.

DOEG I knew that you were a woman of valour92 – give it to me.

MILCAH But tell me, what does the handkerchief have to do with you?

What do you want to do with it, that you persuaded me to obtain it?

DOEG What’s it to you to know that? (Snatches the handkerchief from her hand)

MILCAH What gain is there for you in this handkerchief? Give it back to me

Lest my lady lose her wits when she sees that it is gone.

DOEG See that no one finds out, lest you become a disgrace

But I want it; get up and go. (She exits)

89 Prov. 9:13.
90 Job 15:5.
91 Ps. 52:6 (52:4 in English Bibles).
92 Prov. 12:4, 31:10; Ruth 3:11.
I shall throw this handkerchief into Chesed's chamber when no one is looking

And he will find it there. A jealous man believes

In signs more trifling than vapour as in wonders more reliable than the heavens.

And this will thus provide a small benefit and will not come back empty-handed,

As the cup of reeling\(^{93}\) which I have poured for the Cushite has already started to take its effect

For deceitful words, like poisoned water, are pleasing to the palate

Until they mix with the blood and turn into a stream of brimstone.\(^{94}\)

(Ithiel enters)

Behold, he comes towards me – no intoxicating water or mixed wine

And no balm or remedy\(^{95}\) will bring the sleep to your eyes

Nor the slumber to your eyelids\(^{96}\) which was so sweet for you last night.

Ithiel Has she indeed betrayed me? Has she betrayed me? –

Doeg That's enough from you, army commander, of speaking about this matter.

Ithiel Stand back\(^{97}\) After all, you are the one who has brought the distress upon me;

\(^{93}\) Isa. 51:17.

\(^{94}\) Isa. 30:33.

\(^{95}\) Alshekh to Exod. 13, Deut. 4, Prov. 6, 18, 19.

\(^{96}\) Prov. 6:4 cordially and not slumber to your eyelids'.

\(^{97}\) Gen. 19:9.
I swear, I would prefer the woman’s infidelity to be in secret

Than to hear about the infidelity, its edge but not all of it.98

DOEG What is my lord talking about?

ITHIEL I knew nothing of her harlotry99 in secret

I did not notice or take heed, and I lacked for nothing,

I was calm previously and my sleep was pleasant100

And I did not find the kisses of Chesed’s mouth upon her lips.

A robbed man who does not recognize what has been stolen from him

Is not a robbed man, unless an informant has told him.

DOEG I am sorry to hear your words.

ITHIEL If only the men of the army, each insignificant and honourable man in the camp,

Tasted bread in secrecy from my bread and stolen water101 from my well

And I did not know anything, I would be calm and quiet in my happiness

But now my heart fails me;102 I cannot continue to rejoice in my lot. –

What do I have to do with you any more, all armed men carrying bows103

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98 Num. 23:13 תִרְאֶ֑ה לֹ֣א וְכֻלּ֖וֹ תִרְאֶ֔ה קָצֵ֣הוּ אֶפֶס 'you will see its edge, but you will not see all of it'.
100 Jer. 31:26.
101 Prov. 9:17 יִנְﬠָֽם סְתָרִ֣ים וְלֶ֖חֶם יִמְתָּ֑קוּ מַֽיִם־גְּנוּבִ֥ים 'stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasing'.
102 Ps. 40:13 (40:12 in English Bibles).
103 Ps. 78:9.
What do I have to do with you any more, all of my glorious troops
Which take pleasure in battles and boast with sword and spear
Remove, take away from me the sound of the horses’ neighing
The sound of timbrel and cymbals and all the thundering of weapons of war.
Remove from me standard and banner and all the shields of gold
Remove my splendid chariots and all my glorious beauty, And you, instruments of the angels of death, from whose mouth arrogance comes out
Like the lightning of the God of the heavens and like the roar of His mighty thunder
Turn away, leave me alone! For the might of Ithiel is finished.
Who would believe it, hearing such a thing?
Look, villain! You must establish That my beloved is committing adultery. (Seizes him by his neck)
That you swear by the One who lives forever
That your end will be bitter. It would be much better for you

104 1 Sam. 17:45, 47.
105 Alshekh to Isa. 59.
106 1 Sam. 8:7; 1 Chron. 18:7.
107 Isa. 22:18 ‘your glorious chariots’.
109 1 Sam. 2:3 ‘let [not] arrogance come out of your mouth’.
110 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Jove’s dread clamours’ (3.3.359); Salkinson has replaced this with a reference to the monotheistic God.
111 Dan. 12:7 ‘and he swore by the One who lives forever’.
To have been a dog from the womb, than to stand before my wrath.

DOEG
Have we come to this?

ITHIEL
Show me the vile thing; give me a reliable sign

Which cannot be criticized; and if there is no such thing

Woe to you, woe to you!

DOEG
My noble lord! –

ITHIEL
If you have slandered her in order to torture me

Do not implore favour any more.

Go frowardly in the way of your heart!

Add horror to horror with a high hand.

Shake the heavens, make the earth tremble with your iniquity

And all these things will not add guilt to your guilt.

DOEG
Hurry, angels of mercy come to protect me!

Are you a man? Do you have a soul and a spirit?

Take my office from me – and may God help you.

Whereas I am a fool and a wretch, for I have lived

To see my honesty considered as a sin.

ITHIEL
But wait a bit more, perhaps you are honest and faithful.

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113 Isa. 57:17 מָּשְׁבִּית בָּשֹׁם מִלָּוּ תָּחֹת, 'but he went frowardly in the way of his heart'.
114 Exod. 14:8; Num. 15:30, 33:3.
115 Hag. 2:21 אֵין קְרִים פָּרָשִׁים, 'I am going to shake the heavens'.
116 Isa. 14:16 אֵין קלָפְסָק אֶפֶם, 'the man who made the earth tremble'.
117 The source text has a rhyming couplet here 'hence/offence' (3.3.382–3) which Salkinson has not reproduced.
DOEG

But I am not wise, because the honest man is a fool
And does not obtain that which he seeks.

ITHIEL

Sometimes I believe that my wife is faithful
And sometimes not; sometimes I believe
That you are honest, and sometimes not.
Therefore I say one thing; you must prove the matter to my eyes.
Indeed there are sufficient fetters with me, a knife and a deathly wrath
And also enough fire and water to exact revenge upon those who despise me.
For I have grown tired of bearing it; I cannot endure it any longer
I seek only a true investigation at the start.

DOEG

Look, your heart burns like an oven, and fire consumes your bones
I regret that I ignited this fire for you
But after all, you seek a true investigation.

ITHIEL

I seek it, and I shall not desist until I find it.

DOEG

Indeed you may find it as you seek, but what might suffice for you?
Would you stand watching with your eyes, while Chesed bends over her?

118 Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare’s ‘Her name, that was as fresh/As Dian’s visage, is now begrimed and black/As mine own face’ (3.3.389–91), which appears directly before this sentence in the Folio editions. (This entire speech is missing from the Quarto, but the fact that Salkinson has retained most of it indicates that he was working from a source text that included it.)
ITHIEL: O, 

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119

Job 28:22 אֲבַדּוֹן וָ֭מָוֶת 'destruction and death'.

DOEG

120

Num. 25:8 'and he pierced both of them through, the Israelite and the woman through her belly' (referring to Phineas, Aaron's grandson, driving a spear through an Israelite man and Moabite woman out of disapproval at intermarriage between the two groups).

121

Neh. 9:10; similar collocations with these two nouns appear in numerous other locations in the Hebrew Bible (referring to God's signs and wonders), e.g., Exod. 7:3; Deut. 4:34.

122

Ps. 12:7 (12:6 in English Bibles) 'pure silver in an earthen furnace, refined seven times'.
Indeed after I started to uncover 

disgrace

Because my great love and faith pressed me

I shall finish that which I started. 

One time at night

I was sleeping with Chesed in the bed, and because of a powerful toothache

I could not sleep. You know that there are people

Who talk in their sleep, the secrets of their heart's inclination

And Chesed is one of them. And so he called out in his sleep in my ears

‘Asenath, whom my soul loves!’

Let us take sweet counsel together

And let our love be kept secret’. After that he seized my hand

And called: ‘My darling, my beautiful one!’ And he kissed me with the kisses of his mouth

As one kisses kissing lips, and he rested his leg on my thigh

And he sighed and embraced and kissed and called out in a bitter voice

‘An evil and cruel fate gave you to the Cushite’. 

Ithiel

I grow faint from hearing.
DOEG  Indeed he did not say this, except in a dream.

DOEG  And this may also be of benefit in reinforcing other tests.

DOEG  In order that we may rely on them, even though they be small.

ITHIEL  But there is no dream without some business beforehand.

ITHIEL  And such evil dreams do not speak falsely.

DOEG  Indeed he did not say this, except in a dream.

ITHIEL  But there is no dream without some business beforehand.

DOEG  And this may also be of benefit in reinforcing other tests.

DOEG  In order that we may rely on them, even though they be small.

DOEG  Do not be hasty in your spirit, lest she is faithful.

DOEG  And has not transgressed a holy covenant; but tell me this.

DOEG  Have you seen a handkerchief in her hand with woven pomegranates on it?

ITHIEL  I am going to tear her apart as one tears apart a kid.

ITHIEL  I gave her such a one, and it was the first gift from my hand.

ITHIEL  That was not known to me. Indeed today I noticed that it was with a silk handkerchief which I had seen in your wife’s hand.

ITHIEL  That Chessed was wiping the sweat from his face.

129 Judg. 14:6 ‘and he tore it apart as one tears apart a kid’ (Samson tearing apart a lion with his bare hands).

130 Dan. 11:28, 30.

131 This word is attested in the Hebrew Bible (1 Kings 6:29, 32, 7:31), but has the meaning of ‘carvings’ or ‘engravings’; the sense of ‘weaving’ in which Salkinson is using it originates in the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 1082).

132 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘strawberries’ (3.3.438). Salkinson’s translation of ‘pomegranates’ has distinct connotations in Jewish culture. It is one of the seven fruits of the Land of Israel mentioned in Deut. 8:8, and is also frequently mentioned in the Song of Songs as well as in rabbinic literature. For example, a well-known reference (Song of Songs Rabbah 6:11) compares rows of students studying Torah to the rows of seeds in the pomegranate. Moreover, pomegranates are traditionally eaten on Rosh HaShanah, the Jewish New Year. Pomegranates also feature prominently in Jewish art, for example, the silver decorations covering the rollers on Torah scrolls are called rimmonim ‘pomegranates’. See Feliks (2007) for discussion of pomegranates in Jewish tradition.
Ithiel: Was it precisely that one? –

Doeg: If it was that one, or another one which she has

I cannot say; it is as naught whether this one or another

After all, it will testify against her that she is guilty.

Ithiel: If only that despicable slave

Had many lives instead of one life

For one is not enough to sink my wrath into.

Now I know, Doeg, that the matter is true

And therefore I shall scatter my love to the four winds of the heavens

I shall blow upon it and it will be gone –

Come, jealous wrath! Rise up from the depths of Sheol

And fill all the chambers of my heart with hatred instead of love

And enmity instead of affection, for I have been bitten

And moreover my belly is swollen from the cruel venom of asps

Doeg: Hold your spirit in check.

Ithiel: I am thirsty, Doeg, I am thirsty for blood.

Doeg: Calm the roar of your anger, lest you regret it in the end.

Ithiel: I shall never regret it; for like the Pontic sea

133 Dan. 8:8, 11:4 see also Zech. 2:10 for a similar phrase.
134 Deut. 32:22.
135 Num. 5:27 הַשְּׁוָאָה יֵצֶרֶת יָבְעָה בִּטְנָהּ וְצָבְתָה ‘and her belly will swell’ (describing the punishment for adulterous women).
136 Deut. 32:33.
137 Somewhat unusually, Salkinson has not replaced this name with a biblical equivalent.
Flowing ahead in a stream of mighty waters

It will not rest and will not repose and will not turn back

Until it pours out in the harbour of Pont

So the flood of my spirit passes by in a burst of anger

It will not look back and will not remember youthful love

Until it is swallowed up in the rage of the great sea

That is the sea of revenge. And now, before the heavens above!

(He kneels on his knees)

I raise my hand in a curse and an oath that I shall not violate my word.

DOEG

Wait for me a bit – (He kneels as well)

You are witnesses today, bright lights of heaven!

And the earth below is a witness! And Doeg has dedicated his life

And has given himself up with all his might to serve Ithiel zealously

And to roll away the shame from him, in everything that he commands him

And he will not pull back his hand even from spilling blood.

ITHIEL

And I also thank you, not with empty words

138 Exod. 15:10.
139 The word used here is Elath, a proper noun denoting a port city on the Red Sea (modern-day Eilat at Israel’s southern tip), mentioned in Deut. 2:8; 2 Kings 14:22, 16:6.
140 Isa. 54:8.
141 Neh. 10:30 (10:29 in English Bibles) בְּאָלָה ‘in a curse and an oath’.
142 Ezek. 32:8.

* Hellespont
Your love is precious in my eyes and your work shall be rewarded.\(^{143}\)

And now do not delay your work! Within three days\(^{144}\)

Announce to me that Chesed has been cut off from the land of the living.\(^{145}\)

DOEG

In accordance with your word, so be it\(^{146}\) – my friend Chesed is dead,

But have mercy on your wife, please have mercy and indeed let her live.

ITHIEL

Destroy the cursed whore! Destroy her without mercy!

Go with me to another place so that I may obtain a weapon of destruction

In order to take the beautiful daughter of Sheol down to Sheol in blood.\(^{147}\)

And I make you today my officer instead of Chesed.

DOEG

I shall be your servant forever. (Exeunt)

SCENE 4

(Asenath, Milcah, and the clown)

ASENATH\(^{148}\)

Hurry, call Chesed for me, do you know his abode?\(^{149}\)

THE CLOWN

I fear for my life to say that he has an abode.\(^{150}\)

ASENATH

And why is it that you fear?

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\(^{143}\) Jer. 31:16: 'for your work shall be rewarded'.

\(^{144}\) Gen. 40:13, 19; Josh. 1:11.

\(^{145}\) Isa. 53:8.

\(^{146}\) Gen. 44:10: 'in accordance with your words, so be it'; also Josh. 2:21.

\(^{147}\) 1 Kings 2:9: 'and you will bring his grey head in blood down to Sheol'.

\(^{148}\) All of the lines between this and the clown's exit are prose in the original (3.4.1–22).

\(^{149}\) This word is a homonym with the additional meaning of 'fright'.

\(^{150}\) See preceding note.
THE CLOWN  Because he is a soldier, and if I were to say of a soldier
That he has fright, I would endanger my head.  

ASENATH  Please don’t; indeed, where does he reside?

THE CLOWN  If I were to tell you, my lady, where he resides, I would be dealing falsely against my own life.

ASENATH  Is there reason and sense in this man’s words?

THE CLOWN  I do not know his residence, and if I were to say that he resides there
Or resides here, I would be speaking lies.

ASENATH  Go forth and look for his residence; ask others so that they may tell you.

THE CLOWN  I shall look in all the land, and I shall bring many questions and answers.

ASENATH  Go and seek him and bring him here when you find him.

Tell him that I have entreated my husband on his behalf
And I shall make peace between the two of them.

THE CLOWN  This matter is not elevated beyond the limit of human wit
And therefore I shall rush to do it.  (Exits)

151  See note 149.
152  Dan. 1:10ךְלַמֶּלֶת רֹאשִׁי וְחִיַּבְתֶּם ‘you would endanger my head with the king’.
153  2 Sam. 18:13 ‘otherwise I would have dealt falsely against my own life’.
154  Prov. 13:5, 29:12.  This collocation is commonly used in Hebrew to denote rabbinic responsa, i.e., the written rulings on questions regarding various aspects of Jewish law given by legal authorities. See Ta-Shma, Tal, and Slae (2007) for discussion of responsa literature.
ASENATH Where did I leave my handkerchief, Milcah?

MILCAH I do not know, my lady.

ASENATH The loss of my handkerchief is more severe in my eyes than a bag of gold shekels.  

For how easy it would be for my husband to think strange thoughts Were he not pure-hearted and the spirit of jealousy had not come upon him.  

MILCAH Has the spirit of jealousy never come upon him?  

ASENATH God forbid, the sun in his native land Dried out all the damp of jealousy from his bones.  

MILCAH Look, who's this coming over there?

ASENATH I shall not relent from him until he presently restores Chesed to his position.  

(To Ithiel upon his entrance) Greetings my husband, my lord!  

ITHIEL Are you well, my love?  

(To himself) It is difficult to speak with a double heart.  

Do you lack anything, Asenath?

ASENATH I lack nothing, my lord.  

ITHIEL Give me your hand; your hand is very soft.

ASENATH It has not yet lived through many years

\[156\] Cf. Shakespeare's 'crusadoes' (3.4.26), Portuguese coins marked with a cross (Crystal and Crystal 2002: 109). A shekel is a biblical weight (commonly used with reference to silver and gold) corresponding to approximately ten grams.

\[157\] Ps. 24:4.

\[158\] Num. 5:14 'and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him'; see also Num. 5:30.

\[159\] Num. 5:14 'and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him'; see also Num. 5:30.

\[160\] Song of Songs 1:9, 15, 2:2, 10, 13, 4:1, 7, 5:2, 6:4.

\[161\] Psalms 12:3 (12:2 in English Bibles).
Nor many sorrows.

ITHIEL Therefore you are fruitful, and your spirit is a willing spirit.

And your hand is hot and soft; indeed it would be better for you to be closed in

So that you might sit alone to fast, to afflict yourself, and to pray

For an unfaithful spirit has resided in you since your youth

Yet your hand is good and willing.

ASENATH You have spoken well

As you acquired my hand, you acquired my heart.

ITHIEL As a sign that your hand is willing.

In olden times the acquisition of the heart

Preceded the acquisition of the hand, but now a hand is a hand and not a heart.

ASENATH I do not know of that; but please make good on the matter

That you promised me.

ITHIEL Which matter, my dove?

ASENATH Why, I sent for Chesed to be summoned to come and speak with you.

ITHIEL I have a pain in my nose, for a cold has seized me

Lend me your handkerchief.

ASENATH Here it is, my lord.

ITHIEL The one that I gave you.

ASENATH It is not with me.

ITHIEL It is not?

162 Ps. 51:14 (51:12 in English Bibles).
163 Exod. 10:29.
Asenath: It is not with me, my lord.

Ithiel: I consider this as a sin on your part. Indeed this handkerchief was originally given to my mother by an Egyptian witch who knew how to examine the kidneys and the heart with her witchcraft.

Asenath: Well and truly she did, and this handkerchief was given to my mother by an Egyptian witch.

Ithiel: And she said to my mother that as long as she kept it she would find favour in the eyes of those who saw her and my father would be intoxicated in her love, 165 but if indeed she lost it, or gave it to a stranger, my father would be disgusted by her and would turn his eyes to other women.

Asenath: Indeed this handkerchief, as that handkerchief which my mother gave me and commanded me to give it to my wife before my wedding, and so I did. Therefore take heed of its great worth, guard it like the apple of your eye 166 for if it indeed gets lost and falls into the hands of strangers, you will be guilty.

Ithiel: The matter is true and sure; the weave is magic, a witch who had seen the sun two hundred times in its cycle.

Asenath: Are you speaking truly and sincerely? 167

Ithiel: The matter is true and sure; the weave is magic, a witch who had seen the sun two hundred times in its cycle.

164 Jer. 11:20 וְלֵב כְּלָיוֹת 'examines the kidneys and the heart' (i.e., the thoughts and mind).
165 Prov. 5:19 תָּמִד תִּשְׁגֶּה בְּאַהֲבָתָהּ 'may you always be intoxicated in her love'.
166 Zech. 2:12 (2:8 in English Bibles) נֹגֵעַ בָּכֶםּ הַנֹּגֵעַ כִּי 'for whoever touches you touches the apple of his own eye'.
167 Judg. 9:16, 19.
When the Spirit rested upon her\textsuperscript{168},\footnote{Num. 11:25 וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ הָרוּחַ עֲלֵיהֶם כְּנֽוֹחַ וַיְהִי 'and when the Spirit rested upon them they prophesied'.} she sewed it and did the embroidery

And the silk was spun by worms from a holy place

And it was painted with vermillion\textsuperscript{169} which the Egyptian woman had prepared in her wisdom

From the hearts of virgins embalmed in the coffin.

Asenath

Why, surely you are mocking me.

Ithiel

My mouth speaks the truth;\textsuperscript{170} therefore take heed of its value.

Asenath

If only I had never seen your handkerchief.

Ithiel

Why then?

Asenath

Why do you speak in haste and look at me with a penetrating eye?

Ithiel

Speak; is it lost? Or is it not here in your hand?

Asenath

Save me, God in heaven, save us!

Ithiel

But speak –

Asenath

I have not lost it; but what if I had?

Ithiel

What did you say?

Asenath

I have not lost it, I say.

Ithiel

Go and bring it, so that I might see it with my eyes.

Asenath

I can do so, but I am not going to now

Because you are searching for a pretext to distance me from my desire.

Please restore your officer Chesed to his place.

\textsuperscript{168} Num. 11:25 וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ הָרוּחַ עֲלֵיהֶם כְּנֽוֹחַ וַיְהִי 'and when the Spirit rested upon them they prophesied'.

\textsuperscript{169} Jer. 22:14 בַּשָּׁשַׁר וּמָשׁוֹחַ 'and painted with vermillion'.

\textsuperscript{170} Prov. 9:7.
Bring me the handkerchief; my heart tells me evil things.

Stop it;

A better officer than him you will not find in all the land.

The handkerchief –

I want to speak about Chesed now.

The handkerchief –

Why, he is the man who has honoured your life more than gold

Your love is wonderful to him, more than any item or amulet. And in every distress and anguish he has taken his life in his hands in order to rescue you.

The handkerchief –

You are not just, I tell you…

Depart from me! (Ithiel exits)

Has the spirit of jealousy come upon this man?

I have never seen such a thing apart from today

And there must be nothing other than witchcraft in the handkerchief

I am very sorry that I lost it.

We cannot know the nature of a man in one or two years

Men are like a stomach, and we are all like a meal to them


171 2 Sam. 1:26 [Your love was wonderful to me, more than the love of women].
172 Isa. 30:6; Prov. 1:27.
173 1 Sam. 19:5.
174 Job 33:12.
175 Num. 5:14 [‘and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him’; also Num. 5:30].
When they are hungry they swallow us, and after they are satiated they spew us out. אֲךֵרֵי יִבְלְעוּנוּ נַפְשָׁם לְרַﬠֲבוֹן יְקִיאוּנוּ. שָׁמָּהּ בָּאִים וּבַﬠֲלִי כֶּשֶֹד הִנֵּה רְאִי אַךְ (וכשד דואג) לָךְ תּוֹשִׁיעַ יָדָהּ בִּלְתִּי, אַחֶרֶת דֶּרֶךְ אֵין דואג וְהִתְחַנֵּן קְרַב, פֹּה מָצָאנוּהָ וְלִתְשׁוﬠָתֵנוּ. לְפָנֶיהָ? הַיָּקָר כֶּשֶֹד בְּפִיךָ חָדָשׁ דָּבָר הֲיֵשׁ אסנת גְּבִרְתִּי בַﬠֲדִי הַפְגִּיﬠִי, תְּחִנָּתִי לְחַדֵּשׁ הִנְנִי כשד לַאֲדֹנִי אָשׁוּב לְמַﬠַן, עוֹד תְּאַחְרִי אל בְּרִית כְּבֶן וְהָיִיתִי כְּנַפְשִׁי אֲהַבְתִּיו אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵיתוֹ הָיִיתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר, וּלְשָׁרְתוֹ לְפָנָיו לַﬠֲבֹדָתִי אֱמוּנָתִי 176, מִנְּשׂא גדוולﬠֲוֹנִי מִנְּשׂא גדוולﬠֲוֹנִי וְאִם יִזְכֹּר לֹא לוֹ אֵין כִּי 177, וּמְרוּדִיﬠָנְיִי וּמְרוּדִיﬠָנְיִי יַבִּיט וְלֹא בִּי חֵפֶץ עוֹד תִּקְוָה אֵין כִּי, לָדַﬠַת אז ليי טוב רוּחִי את לְכַלְכֵּל כֹּחַ אַחֲלִיף בזֹאת כִּי אַחֲת וַאֲבַקֵּשׁ שְׁחֹרִים וְאֶלְבַּשׁ אֵצֵא הַכְּהֻנּוֹת. לָחֶם פַּת לֶאֱכֹל, אֶמְצָא אֲשֶׁר בַּמָּקוֹם. 176 Gen. 4:13 מִנְּשֹֽׂאﬠֲוֺנִ֖י גָּדוֹל ‘my iniquity is too great to bear’ (Cain speaking to God after killing his brother Abel). 177 Lam. 3:19.
Asenath
Oh, dear-spirited Chesed! Today I would intercede in vain
My prayer would become a sin; my husband has become another man;
He is no longer my husband. If the Cushite were to change his skin\(^{178}\)
As he has changed his heart, I would no longer recognize him.
May all the angels of mercy intercede on my behalf
As I have supplicated in order to arouse his mercy for you
And I have not held back from speaking so harshly as to arouse his rage against me.
So now go wait further and I shall do everything that is in my power
For I care for you more than I care for myself.

Doeg
Is the commander angry?
Milcah
He left here full of anger and wrath.
Doeg
Is he angry and wrathful? Indeed I have seen the cannon
Which felled a great multitude from the army of his ranks to the ground
And also snatched away his brother like a robber\(^{179}\) from his right hand
And he did not tremble and did not rage, yet now his face is angry?\(^{180}\)

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\(^{178}\) Jer. 13:23 ‘can a Cushite change his skin?’
\(^{179}\) Prov. 23:28.
\(^{180}\) Dan. 1:10 ‘why should he see your faces looking haggard’. Salkinson seems to have had this particular collocation in mind, but is using the root פְּעֵז in its alternative sense of ‘to rage, to be angry’.
It is indeed a matter – I shall go to him and see him,

For it is not without cause that smoke is rising from his nostrils.\(^{181}\)

—asenath

Do so, my friend – (Doeg exits)

It is nothing other than reports from Venice that are alarming him

Or his spirit has suddenly been stirred up by a conspiracy of traitors on Caphtor

For so is the way of a man when others vex him

He pours out his wrath\(^{182}\) and his anger on the members of his household.

In this way we know well that from a pain in the little finger

Our whole body hurts, for a man is flesh and not a god

And we cannot expect a time of love\(^{183}\) every day.

Look, Milcah, I have almost become a quarrelsome woman\(^{184}\)

For I began to cry out that I had been wronged\(^{185}\) because he had grieved me,

But now I know that the testimony of my mouth is not reliable

And I have no right to fall upon him undeservedly.

\(^{181}\) 2 Sam. 22:9: ANDLEAM ותאנה ‘smoke rose from his nostrils’; also Ps. 18:9 (18:8 in English Bibles).

\(^{182}\) Jer. 10:25: WithErrorETH ‘pour out Your wrath’; similar collocations appear in Ezek. 14:19, 20:8, 13, 21, 22:22, 30:15, 36:18; Ps. 79:6. The phrasing from Jer. 10:25 and Ps. 79:6 is also very well known from its appearance in the Passover Haggadah.

\(^{183}\) Ezek. 16:8.

\(^{184}\) Prov. 26:21: WithErrorETH ‘and a quarrelsome man’.

\(^{185}\) Job 19:7: WithErrorETH ‘I cry out that I have been wronged’.
MILCAH If only it were as you say, that it is because of a matter of state
And not because he has let himself be fooled into becoming jealous over you.

ASENATH Oh! Indeed from me there has been no cause for his jealousy.

MILCAH A jealous man does not need a reason for his jealousy
But rather, he is jealous because he is a jealous man.

For jealousy is a worm that infests the flesh beneath it.

ASENATH My God! Save Ithiel's soul from this worm.

MILCAH Amen and amen. 186

ASENATH I'll go look for him, and you, Chesed, walk about here And if I find him at a favourable time I shall strive with all my might To entreat him to grant your heart's desires.

CHESED I thank the lady's kindness with the humbleness of my heart.

(Asenath and Milcah exit)

ANAH 188 Greetings Chesed, my beloved.

CHESED What has brought you here, beautiful and pleasant Anah? Are you well? I was almost about to go to your lodgings.

Ps. 41:14 (41:13 in English Bibles), 72:19, 89:53 (89:52 in English Bibles).
187 Isa. 49:8.
188 The mother of one of Esau's wives, mentioned in Gen. 36:2, 14, 18. (Note that many interpretations of this verse, including that of the prominent medieval Jewish commentator Rashi, understand Anah to be a man.) Salkinson's motivation for selecting this name as an equivalent of Shakespeare's Bianca is unclear, as there is no obvious correspondence in meaning or sound. It is possible that he saw the shared 'an' sound in both names as a partial correspondence, and/or that he was inspired by the biblical Anah's associations with idolatry and immorality.
Whereas I had set out to look for you in your residence.

I haven’t seen you for a week; seven days night and day;

A hundred and sixty-eight degrees on the sundial

And each degree for a woman in her love is longer than a whole day

My soul is too tired to calculate all these.

Forgive me Anah

Great sorrows have enveloped me for the past few days

And when I see relief, I shall turn back the sundial.

(Gives her Asenath’s handkerchief)

But take this from me and make me another one like it.

Where did you get this, Chesed?

Who gave you this, if not a new companion? You have acquired it for yourself recently

And did she give you this handkerchief as a token of love?

Now I know the reason why you have not come to see me.

Stand back, woman –

The devil’s hand is with you in this evil slander
For he has incited you against me and has instilled the spirit of jealousy within you.

By saying that the token is in my hand that I have entered a new covenant,

You have erred, Anah, you have erred greatly.

If so, then whose is the handkerchief?

I do not know, my daughter, for I found it in my chamber.

And its craftsmanship is very beautiful; therefore I desire for you to make me another one based on this pattern,

Before the person who lost it comes to demand it from me.

Go and do so for me, and leave me alone.

But why must I leave you now?

Because I am waiting here to speak to the army commander.

And he will not regard it in my favour if he sees a woman at my right hand.

But lead me on the way a little and say whether you will see me in the evening.

I shall lead you a little distance; I shall not go far from here.
And if nothing stops me, I shall come to dinner.

Anah: The word of your mouth is good; it has calmed my heart.

I know that a woman like me is only good in her time.

(Both exit)

End of Third Part.

192 In the Hebrew these two lines form a rhyming couplet, which lacks a parallel in Shakespeare's single-line statement 'Tis very good; I must be circumstanced' (3.4.202).
Fourth Part

scene 1  (Ithiel and Doeg)

DOEG  Do you believe this, commander?

ITHIEL  Do I believe this? Doeg?

DOEG  Is it possible? To kiss in secret!

ITHIEL  Secret kisses are stolen kisses.

DOEG  Is it possible that a naked woman would lie with a stranger in bed

ITHIEL  And say that they did not have ill intent?

DOEG  Naked with a stranger in bed, and say that they did not have ill intent,

ITHIEL  Even the devil would scold them, saying that it is ungodliness.

DOEG  And if blameless ones do this, the devil tests them

ITHIEL  And they test their Creator.

DOEG  If they have not committed lewdness and indecency, they will be forgiven;

ITHIEL  However, if I had given a handkerchief to my wife –

DOEG  The handkerchief would be hers, and she would have the right to give it to a stranger.

ITHIEL  Her honour is also hers; should she give her honour to a stranger?

DOEG  Honour is not visible to the eye, and the hand cannot touch it

ITHIEL  There are many who inherit honour, but shame is their due,

DOEG  But the handkerchief –

ITHIEL  If only I could forget it – you told me –
Like a raven that flies speedily to the stench of the houses of the sick
Which becomes an evil omen to the eyes of the afflicted ones in the house,
So is the memory of the handkerchief for me – because it is in his hand.

**DOEG**
Is its worth still great in your eyes?

**ITHIEL**
Its worth is as naught in my eyes.

**DOEG**
What if you heard me say that I had seen him desecrating your bed

Or that I had heard this vile thing\(^1\) from his lips

In the manner of villains who tempt their companions' wives

And do not cover the sin,\(^2\) but rather speak rashly of it with their lips\(^3\) –

**ITHIEL**
Did he say anything with his mouth?

**DOEG**
He said the thing; but believe me, my lord

That just as he said it, so he will deny it with a curse and an oath.\(^4\)

**ITHIEL**
And what did he say?

**DOEG**
That he was with her – but I – I do not know more.

**ITHIEL**
What did he say that he did?

**DOEG**
He lay –

**ITHIEL**
With her?

**DOEG**
With her, on her, reckon it as you see fit.

**ITHIEL\(^5\)** With her? – On her? – Indecency!\(^6\) –

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2. Prov. 28:13 'he who covers up his sins will not prosper'.
3. Ps. 106:33 'and he spoke rashly with his lips'.
4. Neh. 10:30 (10:29 in English Bibles) 'in a curse and an oath'.
5. This speech is prose in the original (4.1.35–43).
He must confess – handkerchief – he must confess – handkerchief –
He must confess and be hung upon a tree – No! He must be hung upon a tree
And then he must confess. And as for me, trembling has gripped me.

It is a grim vision, and it is not without cause that it has terrorized me.

It is not the sound of words, but rather a picture before my eyes

Noses – ears – lips – what is this that I see?

Confess – handkerchief – oh, destruction! –

(Falls unconscious)

Do your work, my medicine, give him an intoxicating cup to drink,

Such fools are caught in the snare of deception

And even the best of the righteous women become a shame and disgrace. –

Oh, army commander! What is wrong with you, army commander Ithiel?

(Chesed enters)

My lord Ithiel! – What do you have to say, Chesed?

What has happened here?

A convulsion has seized my lord and he has fainted twice now.

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7 Isa. 21:4.
8 Isa. 21:2.
9 Ps. 35:26.
10 2 Sam. 1:9.  "agony has seized me"; the word שׁבָּץ appearing in this verse is a hapax legomenon with somewhat uncertain meaning (having been interpreted as ‘death throes’, ‘agony’, or ‘convulsions’; Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 1402). Salkinson uses it as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘epilepsy’ (4.1.50). The same citation is used in a different sense in Ram and Jael; see Ram and Jael, Third Part, note 99.
chesed  Anoint his temple.

doeq  Leave him be

It is no good to wake him up before the end of the deep sleep, lest he bring forth drool from his mouth and behave madly like a lunatic.

See, behold, he is stirring, and soon he will arise and go to his home; therefore go out from here and return to me in a little while, because I have a matter for you.

(Chesed exits)

What happened, army commander? Is your head not injured?

ithiel  Are you mocking me?

doeq  Am I mocking? God forbid that I should mock Rather, my whole aim is only that you should bear the changes of the time like a man and face your fate like a man.

ithiel  The man whose wife has been unfaithful to him Resembles a goat, or one of the wild asses in the wilderness.

doeq  If so, you can find many goats and a multitude of wild asses in every big city.

ithiel  Has he confessed with his own mouth?

doeq  My lord, be a man,

11 Ezek. 16:47.
12 In Hebrew this and the previous line employ two different words for ‘man’.
13 Job 24:5. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘A horned man’s a monster, and a beast’ (4.1.62). Salkinson’s replacement of ‘monster’ with ‘goat’ may be an attempt to preserve an element of the English expression ‘horned man’.
Many honourable men bear the burden of a woman on their neck
And let them bear the burden like you; thousands of thousands of men
Lie down in the night on their bed which is impure
And boast in their heart, saying\(^{14}\) that their bed is honourable,
But your fate is better than theirs; they embrace and kiss
A whoring and defiled wife\(^{15}\) like an upright and modest wife
Filling the devil's mouth with laughter, and the sons of Sheol clap their hands,
But you, it is better for you to know who you are
And who the wife of your covenant\(^{16}\) is.

**Ithiel**
Indeed every mouth would admit that you are wise

**Doeg**
Go and hide opposite and wait there a little while.

Chesed was here while you were lying on the bed of languishing\(^{17}\)
For you had swooned due to great agitation and anger
Which is not fitting for a brave-hearted man such as yourself.
I lied to him, saying that a deep sleep had fallen upon you,\(^{18}\)
And he will indeed return here, as I commanded him

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\(^{14}\) Deut. 28:18 (28:19 in English Bibles) ‘and he boasts in his heart, saying’.
\(^{15}\) Lev. 21:7.
\(^{16}\) Mal. 2:14.
\(^{17}\) Ps. 41:4 (41:3 in English Bibles).
\(^{18}\) Gen. 15:12 ‘a deep sleep fell upon Abram’.

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*Ithiel the Cushite of Venice*
Therefore hide there so that you are not visible

_in order that you might hear with your own ears everything that he says to me_.

And you will see the mockery and the derision from between his eyelids

_and the shameful spewing from his lips, which he pours over your honour._

For I shall guide the topic until he tells me again

_How he came to your wife on such-and-such a day and in such-and-such a place_

_And how many times he has come and when he will come to her again._

Indeed, observe his speech and examine the expression of his face

_But restrain yourself greatly and sit quietly_

_Because if not, one who sees you will say_

_That your sense has departed and there is no human spirit within you._

_iThiel_ Listen to me, Doeg, I shall sit as quiet as a stone

_But afterwards (do you hear?!) I shall arise as a man of blood._

_dOeg_ Thus you must do and not sin, but do the thing in its time.

_And now go and hide (Ithiel hides and Doeg continues speaking to himself)_

_Meanwhile, I shall ask Chesed about the concubine Anah_

_19_ Hab. 2:16 'and shameful spewing upon your honour'.

_20_ 2 Sam. 16:8; translated as ‘a murderer’ in some English Bible versions (e.g., Geneva Bible and New International Version).

_21_ Prov. 15:23 'and a word (or: matter) in its time'.
Who sells him her love for bread and a garment
And she loves him with all the desire of her heart
Because such is the way of the whore; she deceives many men
And one man deceives her, and when he hears her name from my mouth
He will deride and scoff and will not be able to stop himself from laughing
And as he laughs, so Ithiel will grow madder
For in his jealousy he will think that the wretched Chesed
Is mocking his wife Asenath –
(To Chesed upon his return) Are you well, officer Chesed?

There is no wellness in my bones, and the title of my office from your mouth
Increases my sorrow unto death.
Entreat Asenath, if you are not succeeding on your path.
(To Chesed upon his return) Are you well, officer Chesed?

Chesed
Silly senseless heifer –

Ithiel
(To himself) See how he opens his mouth wide in laughter.

Doeg
Her love for you is great; I have not seen her equal among women.

22 Ps. 38:4.
23 Ps. 143:11
24 Hosea 7:11

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
Perhaps this poor wretch desires me truly and sincerely.  

(To himself) He denies the matter as if mocking, and his derision testifies against him.

Are you listening?

(To himself) He is a wise man in his ways.

She is saying in the town that you are going to take her to wife

Do you want to take her?

(To himself) Do you laugh now?

Do you laugh, son of Florence?

Am I insane, that I should take a whore to wife?

Please do not ascribe to me words that are not so

And do not degrade my worth with such laughter and mockery.

(To himself) He commits adultery with a woman and fills his mouth with laughter.

The report has gone out in the town, that you are indeed going to marry her.

Please speak the truth; do not lie.

You may consider me a villain if I have not spoken the truth.

25 Judg. 9:16, 19.
26 Salkinson has omitted Cassio’s immediately preceding line ‘Ha, ha, ha’ (4.1.118).
27 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Do ye triumph, Roman, do you triumph?’ (4.1.119), an ironic reference to the Roman entrance ceremony by a victorious general (Honigmann 1997: 262, note 119). Salkinson has simplified this into a straightforward reference to Chesed’s native city.
28 This and the following speeches until the arrival of Lud, Asenath, and the servants are all prose in the original (4.1.120–212).
29 Ps. 126:2 פִּינוּ שְׂחֹק יִמָּלֵא אָז ‘then our mouths will fill with laughter’.
30 As previously, Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare’s ‘Ha, ha, ha!’ appearing at the end of Cassio’s speech in the previous line (4.1.122).
ITHIEL (To himself) To cover me with everlasting disgrace, you say that the matter is good.

CHESED Only from the mouth of the she-ass has this report gone out

Because her love is so great, she boasts in vain

That I shall indeed marry her, although I have said nothing.

ITHIEL (To himself) Doeg is waving a hand at me to listen, for now he is going to begin

To tell of the lewdness of his fornication.

CHESED And here too she met me a few moments ago

For she is always running after me. Yesterday I stood

With guests from Venice on the seashore

And the fool came suddenly and fell upon my neck –

ITHIEL (To himself) And she called out, Chesed, my love, my chosen one…

CHESED And she embraced and kissed me and wept upon my neck

And drew me to go after her…

ITHIEL (To himself) Now he will tell of how she drew him in her love

And brought him to my bedchamber. I see now

Your nose on your face, but not the dog

Before which I shall throw it.

---

31 Jer. 20:11.
32 Jer. 13:27 'the lewdness of your fornication'.
And therefore I have determined to leave her and to sever the bond of our covenant.

But look over there, who is coming towards us.

(Anah enters)

Here comes this Lilith perfumed with myrrh and frankincense – What is there between you and me, Anah, that you constantly pursue me?

May Azazel and all of the evil angels pursue you!

Indeed, what is the story with you and the handkerchief that you gave me?

How could I have been so stupid as to believe that you found such a precious lost item in your lodgings, and that you do not know who its owner is?

Why, this is the gift of a woman as a token of love

So how could you give it to me to make another one like it?

Take it and give it back to the woman whom you have chosen

For my hands will not be doing such work.

Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘fitchew’ (4.1.145), a polecat, skunk, or prostitute (Crystal and Crystal 2002: 177). Although Lilith is almost totally absent from the Bible (there is a single somewhat opaque attestation of the name in Isaiah 34:14), she became prominent in postbiblical Jewish literature, featuring in the Babylonian Talmud, in rabbinic midrash (homiletical and narrative commentary on the Hebrew Bible), and in medieval mystical texts. She is a familiar feature of Eastern European Jewish folklore as Adam’s first wife who became a she-demon given to kidnapping and murdering new-born boys (Petrovsky-Shtern 2010).

Song of Songs 3:6.

Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘the devil and his dam’ (4.1.147). The name Azazel first appears in Lev. 16:8, 10 in the description of a Yom Kippur ritual whereby a goat was sent into the wilderness symbolically bearing the community’s sins. The meaning of the name is unclear. In Talmudic times there were variant interpretations of the term, one of which was as a demonic figure (Ahituv 2007); this is the sense in which Salkinson is using it. The phrase ‘evil angels’ appears in Ps. 78:49. See First Part, note 56 for further discussion of the name Azazel.
chesed  Please don’t, Anah, please don’t, pleasant Anah.

Why do you rage without cause?

ithiel  (To himself) On my life, that’s my handkerchief.

anah  If so, then come to dinner today

And if you do not want to today, I shall wait until you do want to.

(Exits)

doe  Go forth and follow her.

chesed  I'll go with her, so that she does not talk about me outside.

doe  Will you go to her house, to eat with her in the evening?

chesed  I shall do so.

doe  Maybe I shall come to see you there, for I have news to tell you.

chesed  Do so, my friend, as you have said.

doe  Go in peace, until we see each other.

(Chesed exits)

ithiel  How shall I kill him, Doeg?

doe  Did you see how he laughed about having committed the indecency?

ithiel  I saw.

doe  And did you also see the handkerchief?

ithiel  But is this the one?

doe  It is your handkerchief, on your life!

And now, see

How esteemed your wife, this foolish woman, is in his eyes

If he took the gift of her hand and gave it as a **whore’s fee**.  

ithiel  If I had the power to slay him, it would be a killing lasting nine years.

---

36  Deut. 23:19 (23:18 in English Bibles).
Is this the woman of whom they say that she is of perfect beauty?37

Unique among women and pure to the husband of her covenant!

DOEG Remove all this from your heart, and remember her beauty no longer.

Ithiel May her bones rot in the grave and may destruction cover her guilt

For she shall not live any longer, and she shall not see the light of dawn.

And as for me, my heart is harder than a stone and I have set my face like flint38 –

Who has seen such a beautiful woman as she in all the land?

Kings look at her and put the royal crown on her head.39

DOEG But you, commander, do not look at her thus.

Ithiel May the king of terrors40 take her!

I can only speak of her graceful proportion,41

She is praised for her handiwork and she plays magnificently

Every heart softens at her voice and indeed every stone melts,

In skilful crafts42 she is ten times better43

And in wisdom, understanding, and wit she surpasses all of her companions.

DOEG Therefore her guilt is seven times greater.

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37 Ezek. 27:3; Lam. 2:15.
38 Isa. 50:7 (עֹשְׂמִי פָּנַי שַׂמְתִּי 'I have set my face like flint'.
39 Esther 2:7 (וַיָּשֶׂם כֶּתֶר מַלְכוּת 'and he put the royal crown on her head'.
40 Job 18:14 (an epithet for Death; see Gruber 2004: 1528).
41 Job 41:4 (41:12 in English Bibles) (ְﬠֶרְכּוֹ וְחִ֣ין 'and his graceful proportion' (referring to the mythological sea creature Leviathan).
42 Exod. 35:33 (בִּכָּל מְלֶ֥אכֶת 'in every skilful craft'.
43 Dan. 1:20.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

Ithiel. It is seventy-seven times greater—although her spirit is willing.

Doeg. Too willing.

Ithiel. Too much, and therefore my compassion is stirred. How can I not be compassionate, Doeg, how can I not have mercy on her?

Doeg. If her lewdness is good in your eyes, allow her to sin. And no one will take heed of her, and the sin will be yours alone.

Ithiel. I shall cut her into pieces—and she take strangers instead of her husband?

Doeg. How great is the vileness!

Ithiel. To lie with my servant—

Doeg. It is double vileness.

Ithiel. Prepare for me, Doeg, a cup of poison tonight.

I shall not come to argue with her again.

Lest her beauty blind my eyes and her splendour captivate my heart.

Prepare the cup for me tonight.

Doeg. Do not give her a cup of poison to drink; choose to strangle her.

On her bed, on the bed which she has desecrated.

Ithiel. Your judgement is true and righteous, and so I shall do as you have determined.

Doeg. And to make a judgement against Chesed, leave him in my hands.

And at midnight you will hear how the matter has been resolved.

44 Hosea 11:8.
45 Lev. 1:6 וְנִתַּח אֹתָ֖הּ וְנִתַּ֥ח אִֽתֶּאֲלָֽה" (and he must cut it into pieces).
(The sound of a trumpet from outside)

**ITHIEL**

Your word is very good – but what is the sound of the trumpet?

**DOEG**

Lud⁴⁶ has come here from Venice, as the prince has sent him. And your wife is with him. (Lud, Asenath, and attendants)

**LUD**

Long live the army commander!

**ITHIEL**

Welcome!

**LUD**

The prince and counsellors give you their greetings. (Hands over a letter)

**ITHIEL**

God be with you, honourable messenger who brings me their greetings. (Opens and reads the letter)

**ASENATH**

What news is in your mouth, Lud, my flesh and blood?⁴⁷

**DOEG**

I am happy to see your face, my lord; welcome to Caphtor!

**LUD**

Are you well, Doeg? Is officer Chesed well?

**DOEG**

He still lives.

**ASENATH**

Quarrel and strife⁴⁸ have broken out between him and my lord husband. But you, my kin, will make peace between them.

**ITHIEL**

Do you know this definitely?

**ASENATH**

Of what does my lord speak?

---

⁴⁶ This is the name of one of the sons of Noah’s son Shem, mentioned in Gen. 10:22 and 1 Chron. 1:17; it also appears in Isa. 66:19 and Ezek. 27:10, 30:5 as the name of a foreign nation. Salkinson seems to have chosen the name as an equivalent of Shakespeare’s Lodovico based on the sound correspondence between the two.

⁴⁷ Gen. 29:14; 2 Sam. 19:13, 14 (19:12, 13 in English Bibles).

⁴⁸ Hab. 1:3.
Ithiel (Reads the letter) ‘*Please act in accordance with your desire; do not turn from it*’

Lud He was not speaking to you, but rather is pondering the letter; Have there been matters of controversy between your husband and Chesed?

Asenath Unfortunately, there have been, to the anguish of my spirit, And I desire that they make amends, due to my great love for Chesed.

Ithiel Oh, fire and brimstone!

Asenath My lord husband – Does your sense remain in you?

Ithiel Does your sense remain in you?

Asenath Is my lord angry?

Lud Perhaps he is angry after reading the letter Because he must return to Venice, and Chesed is to replace him.

Asenath As for me, I am happy to hear these good tidings.

Ithiel Are you happy?

Asenath My lord husband – I am happy to see you without sense.

Ithiel I am happy to see you without sense.

Asenath Why do you speak thus, Ithiel my beloved?

Ithiel Daughter of Sheol! ( Strikes her with his hand)

Asenath Aah! What is my crime?

---

49 Josh. 1:7.
50 Deut. 17:8.
51 Gen. 26:35 ‘bitterness of spirit’.
52 Ezek. 38:22; Ps. 11:6. ‘its flavour (can also mean ‘sense’) remained in it’.
53 Jer. 48:11 ‘and its flavour (can also mean ‘sense’) remained in it’.
54 Prov. 11:22.
LUD If I tell this in Venice, they will not believe the report;
You have done a strange deed which should not be done, commander.
And now please go humble yourself, for she is crying.

ITHIEL Oh, daughter of Sheol and destruction!
If the earth could bring forth seeds from women's tears
From every tear that fell to the earth, a twisting serpent would come forth –
Be gone from my sight.

ASENATH I am leaving, so as not to vex you further. (Exits)

LUD Indeed this is a woman who obeys her husband.
Please, army commander, call her to come back.

ITHIEL Come back, woman! –

ASENATH Here I am, my lord.

ITHIEL Noble Lud, do you have something to discuss with her?
LUD I have nothing to discuss with her.

ITHIEL Well, you wanted me to call her to come back
And she can come back and go out and come back again
And she can cry and obey me, as my lord says
For she has an attentive ear, an overly attentive ear.
Pour out your tears, woman, give yourself no respite

55 Prov. 15:11.
56 Isa. 27:1 (referring to the mythological sea creature Leviathan). Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘crocodile’ (4.1.245).
57 Lam. 2:18.
I know how to pretend; be gone from here until I send for you.

And as for the letter, I am to return to Venice –

Be gone from here immediately. – (Asenath exits)

Chesed is to take my office – and I anticipate that your noble self

Will come eat with me in the evening.

Welcome to Caphtor! Welcome goats and monkeys!

(Exits)

LUD Is this the mighty Cushite in whom

All the counselling ministers have trusted as the pillar of the nation?

Is this the powerful man, the hero who rules over his spirit

And is this his strength of heart, he of whom they say

He regards the enemy’s arrows as straw, and the rattling of the scimitar is a game to him? 58

DOEG His heart is turned within him 59 and he has become a different man.

LUD Are his wits straight, and his sense has not departed?

DOEG You see him as he is; I cannot give my opinion

If only he were now, as he was previously

And not as he is today.

LUD But to strike his wife for no fault 60 –

DOEG On my life! This deed is not good

58 Job 41:21 (41:29 in English Bibles) ‘a club is regarded as a piece of straw, and he laughs at the rattling of the scimitar’ (referring to the mythological sea creature Leviathan).

59 Lam. 1:20 ‘my heart is turned within me’.

60 Ps. 59:5 (59:4 in English Bibles).
But if only it were all his sin.

LUD Is this his way, that he has grown accustomed to doing so,

Or perhaps the matter of the letter has made his blood boil today?

DOEG My loyalty does not allow me to tell what I have seen and know

But observe him and his ways will testify against him

As for me, I shall put my hand to my mouth. Please go after him and see

What else he does.

LUD I am very sorry that my hope has been disappointed.

SCENE 1 A chamber in the citadel (Ithiel and Milcah)

ITHIEL And you did not see anything?

MILCAH Nor did I hear anything, and it did not occur to me.

ITHIEL But nevertheless you saw her together with Chesed.

MILCAH But I saw no wrongdoing, although I heard

Every single word that came out of their mouths.

ITHIEL Did they not whisper?

MILCAH I never saw them whispering.

ITHIEL Did they not sometimes send you away from them?

MILCAH They did not send me away from them, not even once.

ITHIEL To fetch something from outside, or from another chamber?

MILCAH * שלחנו ממלכה

MILCAH ** לפניהם, אָזָא אֶל ממלכה

MILCAH *** לא שלחונינו, ממלכה

MILCAH **** פנו אֲצֵל

* שלחנו

** שלחנו

*** שלחנו

# Sic; should read 'Scene 2'.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

They did not send me to fetch anything.

The matter is strange in my eyes.

I place my own life as surety that she is pure and blameless,

And now my lord, please remove wicked thoughts from within you

For this is not fitting for a pure-hearted man such as you.

And if some villain has incited you against her

He is as cursed as the serpent under the Lord’s heavens,

For if your wife is not honest, pure, and innocent,

There is no good woman on the earth and there is no helpmeet for man

And even the best one among them is as much of an abomination as a slanderer in secret.

Go and tell her to come here. (She exits)

Who would listen to the testimony of her mouth, for she says her words

Like any whorehouse madam. But my wife is a cunning whore

She commits her vile acts behind lock and key,

And nevertheless my eyes have seen that she kneels to her God

And does not reduce her prayers.

Here I am, my lord – what do you seek from me?

And even the best one among them is as much of an abomination as a slanderer in secret.

Ps. 24:4.

62 Ps. 24:4.
ITHIEL Come, my dove, come to me.

ASENATH Here I am – what is your desire?

ITHIEL Show me your eyes, look me in the eye.

ASENATH What further strange things and perversities do you seek from me?

ITHIEL (To Milcah) Do your office with the whores;

Leave the two lovers alone and close the door,

And if someone comes, sneeze and whistle to warn us;

Quickly, leave here and stand at your post.

(Milcah exits)

ASENATH On my knees I beg before you, explain your words to me,

Your fury terrifies me, and I do not understand the words of your mouth.

ITHIEL Tell me who you are?

ASENATH I am the wife of your bosom, my lord, the faithful wife of your covenant.

ITHIEL Swear to me falsely, in order that your iniquity be completed

And so that evil angels will no longer be able to say in their heart

That you fear God and be afraid to touch you,

Therefore, swear on your soul that you have not desecrated your covenant

63 Prov. 23:33 'your eyes see strange things, and your heart utters perversities'.
64 Deut. 13:7 (13:6 in English Bibles).
65 Mal. 2:14.
And your soul will be doubly guilty.

**ASENATH**

By the faithful witness in heaven, I am pure.

**ITHIEL**

By the faithful witness in heaven, you are false.

**ASENATH**

To whom have I then been false? When have I spoken falsely?

**ITHIEL**

It is bitter for me, Asenath, bitter; get out, get out of my sight.

**ASENATH**

Oh, bitter day! Why do you weep, Ithiel?

Have I caused your tears? Perhaps you are saying in your heart That on the advice of my father at the gate you have been summoned to return from here? But what am I, that you place iniquity upon me?

If he has abandoned you and has refused to be a father to you Then I have also been abandoned, and am regarded as a stranger to him.

**ITHIEL**

If only God would test me with great distress and anguish;

If only He would rain down on my head fire and brimstone from the heavens;

If He were to give my possessions over as plunder so that I lacked my food and my clothing; Or if He were to take me into captivity, with no hope or future.

---

66 Ps. 89:38 (89:37 in English Bibles).
67 Ps. 89:38 (89:37 in English Bibles).
68 Isa. 30:6; Prov. 1:27.
69 Midrash Tanhumah to Gen. 18:1–22:24; Alshekh to Exod. 16 and 2 Sam. 22.
70 Jer. 29:11"奼談א תוחנה אפרית 'a future and a hope'.

_Ithiel the Cushite of Venice_
I would still find comfort as long as my soul was within me.

But to set me up as the target for arrows of scorn and derision\(^\text{71}\)

To become a spectacle all day and an amusement for every passer-by

Aah, who could endure it?

But even in such an iron furnace\(^\text{72}\) perhaps I shall prevail, and emerge refined

But it has destroyed the spring from which comes the source of my life\(^\text{73}\)

And my well on which I live, or I would cease to be,

Has become a strange narrow well,\(^\text{74}\) full of scum and refuse.\(^\text{75}\)

In it a snail melts as it goes along,\(^\text{76}\) and frogs dance there

And who could still have hope in this valley of troubles!\(^\text{77}\) –

\textit{ASENATH} I hope, my lord, that you regard me as faithful.

\textit{ITHIEL} I regard you as the summer flies in the slaughterhouse

Who leave their eggs in the meat, and that which is crushed hatches into a maggot\(^\text{78}\)

\textsuperscript{71} Ps. 44:14 (44:13 in English Bibles), 79:4.

\textsuperscript{72} Deut. 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jer. 11:4.

\textsuperscript{73} Prov. 4:23 ‘for from it come the sources of life’.

\textsuperscript{74} Prov. 23:27 ‘for a whore is a deep pit, and a strange woman is a narrow well’.

\textsuperscript{75} Lam. 3:45.

\textsuperscript{76} Ps. 58:9 (58:8 in English Bibles). The meaning of this biblical expression is unclear, although it seems to form part of a curse (Berlin and Brettler 2004a: 1345).

\textsuperscript{77} Joshua 7:24, 15:7; Isa. 65:10; Hosea 2:17 (originally a place name, the Valley of Achor, this term came to be used as an epithet for a place of suffering and trouble; see Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1373).

\textsuperscript{78} Isa. 59:5 ‘and that which is crushed hatches into a viper’.
Woe, alien vine! How beautiful your appearance is
And how pleasant is the fragrance of your oils – if only you had not emerged into the light of the world.

ASENATH What is my crime, and what is my sin? How have I erred, inform me?
ITHIEL How can a splendid paper have the name of whore inscribed upon it? A scroll more precious than gold, with the name of prostitute on the title page? – How have I erred, you ask, a whore in an open place!

When I tell your sin, my cheeks will redden like fire, And my humility will disappear from my face like straw in a heated oven; If I made known in public what you did in secret

The moon would be too abashed to listen, and the sun would be ashamed
And the earth would not endure your disgrace, sly-hearted whore!

ASENATH I raise my hand up on high, that you attack me without cause.

79 Isa. 17:10.
80 Song of Songs 1:3, 4:10.
81 In the Hebrew Bible this word is typically translated as ‘cult prostitute’, ‘temple prostitute’, or ‘shrine prostitute’ (see, e.g., Deut. 23:18 [23:17 in English Bibles]), and is generally understood as referring to sacred prostitution, which was a common feature of the ancient Near East and is particularly associated with the Canaanite goddess Astarte. However, Salkinson seems to be using it in the straightforward sense of ‘prostitute, whore’, which is thought to have evolved in the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1632).
82 Gen. 38:18 (referring to Judah’s daughter-in-law Tamar, who dressed up as a temple prostitute in order to trick Judah into honouring his broken vow to her).
83 Hosea 7:4.
84 Isa. 24:23 ‘the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed’.
85 Prov. 7:10 ‘dressed as a whore and sly-hearted’.
86 Gen. 14:22 ‘I raise my hand up to the Lord’.
Ithiel: Are you not an adulteress?

Aseth: As I am a Christian, I am innocent of any crime; if I have guarded my vessels so that no stranger's hand might touch them, and have known only my husband, and have not given my honour to another, then I am not a treacherous woman.

Ithiel: And are you not a prostitute?

Aseth: No, no, may God help me.

Ithiel: Is the matter so?

Aseth: Please save me, my God, please save us!

Ithiel: Forgive me this time; here I in my haste thought you to be a cunning whore from Venice. And Ithiel became her husband– come back, Milcah.

(Milcah re-enters)

The key to the heavens is in the hand of Petros, and the key to Sheol is in your hand; you are the woman– you are she, and no other–

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87 Mic. 7:7; Hab. 3:18; Ps. 25:5; Ps. 27:9. Cf. Shakespeare's 'as I am a Christian' (4.2.84). Salkinson's version is religiously neutral; however, Scolnicov (2001: 188) suggests that his selection of the word יִשְׁﬠִי 'my salvation' was intended as a veiled punning reference to יֵשׁוּעַ 'Jesus'.

88 See note 81.

89 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Saint Peter' (4.2.93). This is noteworthy as one of the only instances in either of Salkinson's Shakespeare translations in which he leaves a Christian reference intact. Note the Italianate suffix -os, comparable to 'Marcos' (First Part, note 155).
Indeed we have completed the matter of our desire; here’s money for your wages

Open the door for me and let no man enter our confidence. (Exits)

MILCAH This man, I do not know what has happened to him –

What is wrong with you, my lady, what is wrong with you, my precious lady?

ASENATH I am like one dreaming.

MILCAH Tell me, my lady, what has happened to my lord?

ASENATH To which lord?

MILCAH To my lord, I say.

ASENATH Who is your lord?

MILCAH Your lord is my lord.

ASENATH I have no lord; do not speak further to me Milcah

I have no strength to weep; my fountain of tears has dried up

And I cannot give a reply. Put my wedding garments

On my bed tonight; remember this, and do not forget

And call your husband to me.

MILCAH (As she exits) How her day has changed for her!

ASENATH Is he treating me as I deserve today?

What wrong, what disgrace has he found in me

— Jer. 8:23 (9:1 in English Bibles) ‘if only my head were waters and my eye a fountain of tears’.

Job 26:14 ‘and how faint (or: whispering) a word is heard of Him’. See Third Part, note 56 for discussion of Salkinson’s use of this expression.

90 Jer. 8:23 (9:1 in English Bibles) ‘if only my head were waters and my eye a fountain of tears’.

91 Job 26:14 ‘and how faint (or: whispering) a word is heard of Him’. See Third Part, note 56 for discussion of Salkinson’s use of this expression.
That he accuses me without cause and places a great sin upon me?

(Milcah re-enters with Doeg)

DOEG How is the lady? What is her command, and it will be done.

ASENATH I cannot answer. One who disciplines a child

Chastises him with a light rebuke and does not push him away with both hands

So why did he not also chastise me in this manner

For with respect to enduring rebukes and reprimands, I am still a girl.

DOEG What has happened here, my lady?

MILCAH Oh, Doeg, my lord called her a wife of whoredom

And poured contempt and shame on a precious soul, too much to bear.

ASENATH Is this name fitting for me?

DOEG Which name?

ASENATH The name that your wife said, which my husband gave to me.

MILCAH He called her a whore. Even a pauper through whom wine has flowed

Would not give this name to his wife because she vexes him.

DOEG So why did he do this?

ASENATH This I do not know; I know only one thing

---

92 Hosea 1:2.
93 Prov. 6:26.
94 Ezek. 23:32.
That he has never seen an indecent thing⁹⁵ in me.

DOEG

Restrain your voice, my lady, restrain your voice from weeping⁹⁶

Woe to the day!

MILCAH

Did she indeed refuse princes who wanted to take her

And leave her land, her native land, and her father

In order to be called by the name of whore? Now, who would not fall down weeping?⁹⁷

ASENATH

Such is my wicked fate.

DOEG

Raise your voice to him and rebuke him

Who has mixed this spirit of confusion within him?⁹⁸

ASENATH

God only knows.

MILCAH

I’ll give my soul to killers if it is not one of the foolish fellows⁹⁹

A rascal and a cunning hypocrite, a despicable slave¹⁰⁰ and a villain

Has brought the libel against her in order to obtain one of the offices

If his hand is not in this, I’ll give my soul to killers.

DOEG

It is a vain oath; there is no such man on earth.

ASENATH

But if there is such a one on earth, may God forgive him.

MILCAH

May only a noose pardon him

마 luxe (23:15 (23:14 in English Bibles), 24:1).

Jer. 31:16.

Isa. 15:3.

Isa. 19:14 ‘the Lord has mixed a spirit of confusion within her’.

2 Sam. 6:20.

Alshekh to Eccles. 10.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
And may his bones be broken apart in hell. Why did he call her a whore?

Who has come to her? To whom has she raised her eyes?

On which day, in which place? Does this lie have substance? 

It is nothing other than that the Cushite, falsely seduced, led astray

By cunning of the son of a base man, a disgraceful and shameful son

An abominable and vile rascal. If only the heavens

Would reveal the iniquity of this man and the hand of every honest man

Would seize a rod for whipping and lead the worthless one naked

Smiting him as they led him all over the land, from east to west.

DOEG Slowly, slowly, woman, do not make your voice heard outside.

MILCAH May mention of him be ignominy outside. Maybe this is the villain

Who led you astray as well, saying

That the Cushite had spread his garment over me.

DOEG That's enough from you, foolish woman, arise and get out.

ASENATH Tell me, dear Doeg, what then should I do

101 This is a postbiblical expression first appearing in the Mishnah (e.g., Oholot 16:3 לדבר רגלים 'the matter has substance').

102 Job 30:8 בְלִי־שֵׁם גַּם־בְּנֵי־נָבָל 'sons of fools, indeed sons of base men'.


104 Job 15:16.

105 This is a modern expression based on Zech. 11:7 קָרָ֣אתִי וּלְאַחַד נֹ֙ﬠַם קָרָ֤אתִי לְאַחַד מַקְל֗וֹת 'and I took two rods; I called one Beauty and the other Bands' (see Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 1081).

106 Ruth 3:9ﬠַל־אֲמָ֣תְךָ כְנָפֶ֙ךָ וּפָרַשָּׂ֣ת אֲמָתֶ֔ךָ ר֣וּת אָנֹכִי֙ וַתֹּ֗אמֶר 'and she said, “I am your maidservant Ruth; spread your garment over your maidservant” (i.e., marry your maidservant).
In order to win back the heart of my husband? You go and speak kindly to him.

I raise my hand up on high\textsuperscript{107} that I do not know why he has turned away from me.

Before the One who examines the kidneys and the heart,\textsuperscript{108} on my knees I say

If I have violated my holy covenant between me and my husband;  
If I have ever sinned, in speech, in thought, or in deed

And have desired a stranger’s form, rather than his;

If my love for him is not as strong today as previously  
And if my love departs, even if he drives me out from his house,

Do not save me, my God! –

Harsh matters, matters too harsh for me, and his harsh hand may kill me,  
But until I die I shall not remove my love.

I cannot bring the name whore to my lips  
And when I mention it on this day all my bones tremble\textsuperscript{109}

But to commit the sin and be called by the name of my deed

Even if the earth were given to me as my wages, I would not do this.

Doeg  
Please be strong, my lady, distress will not arise twice;

Why, it is due to matters of the nation that his spirit is broken\textsuperscript{110} at this time

---

\textsuperscript{107} Gen. 14:22: ‘אֶל־יְהוָה יָדִ֤י הֲרִימֹ֨תִי’  
\textsuperscript{108} Jer. 11:20.
\textsuperscript{109} Jer. 23:9: ‘כָּל־ﬠַצְמוֹתַ֔י רָֽחֲפוּ֙’  
\textsuperscript{110} Prov. 15:13: ‘וַיֶּלֹּה־לִי צָרָה לֹא מִגָּאָֽה’ also 17:22, 18:14.
And therefore he has exhausted his fury on you.  

**ASENATH** If only it were nothing other than that.

**DOEG** Other than that there is nothing.

*(The sound of a bell)*

But listen, the sound of the bell calling for the evening meal

There the noblemen of the nation, the messengers of Venice are gathered

Refrain your eyes from tears and come eat bread with them

And wait for the conclusion of the matter, because it will work out well for you.

*(Asenath exits with Milchac and Raddai enters)*

What do you have to say, Raddai?

**RADDAI** Thus far I have not found that you are dealing with me in good faith.

**DOEG** Not in good faith?

**RADDAI** Each and every day you brush me off with some excuse.

And you do not let me see a doorway of good hope.

And even I cannot continue to endure it, for the strength of the burden-bearer has given out.

Nor shall I be quiet or sit silently any longer

---

111 Ezek. 6:12 בָּֽם חֲמָתִ֖י וְכִלֵּיתִ֥י ‘and I shall exhaust my fury on them’.

112 Jer. 31:16 מִדִּמְﬠָ֑ה וְﬠֵינַ֖ יִךְ מִבֶּ֔כִי קוֹלֵךְ֙ מִנְﬠִי ‘refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears’.

113 The remainder of this scene is in prose in the original (4.2.175–246).

114 This is a postbiblical expression traceable to the Babylonian Talmud, Hullin 27b. Salkinson’s use of the phrase includes an infinitive absolute, which is a more characteristically biblical form.

115 Hosea 2:17 (2:15 in English Bibles).

116 Neh. 4:4 (4:10 in English Bibles).
Regarding everything which I have borne like a senseless man until now.

DOEG Will you give me an attentive ear?

RADDAI On my faith, I have listened to you too much

For your words and your deeds do not fit together.

DOEG You rebuke me without cause, and unfairly and unjustly.

RADDAI Not without cause, but rather fairly and justly.

Indeed I have freely distributed my property and my possessions and precious stones and jewels

Half of which would be enough to tempt even the heart of a priest’s daughter

I handed them over to you to give them as a gift to Asenath

And you promised me that soon she would come

To delight herself with me in love and to restore my spirit,

But there is no sound and no response.

DOEG Go forth, go forth, the matter is good.

RADDAI ‘Go forth, go forth, the matter is good’; I cannot go forth

Nor is the matter good, but rather very bad

117 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘votarist’ (i.e., ‘nun’; see Crystal and Crystal 2002: 484). The specifically Jewish connotations of Salkinson’s expression would have been obvious to his readers: it is typically used to denote a bat kohen or daughter of a Cohen (member of the priestly class), a status that has certain implications in Jewish law. This changes the sense somewhat, as a Cohen’s daughter (as indeed a priest’s daughter) would not be bound by the rules of chastity governing the life of a nun.

118 Prov. 7:18 בָּאֳהָבִֽים נִ֝תְﬠַלְּסָ֗ה ‘let us delight ourselves in love’.

119 Ruth 4:15 נֶ֔פֶשׁ לְמֵשִׁ֣יב לָךְ֙ וְהָ֤יָה ‘and he will restore your spirit’.

120 2 Kings 4:31.
For now my eyes have been opened to see lies and deception.

DOEG The matter is very good.

RADDAI I testify to you today that the matter is not very good.

Look, I am going to go tell the matter to Asenath;

If she returns the jewels to me, I shall turn away and let her be

And I shall smite my thigh because I desired not according to the law

But if she does not return them to me, I shall indeed demand them from you.

DOEG Just now you have told me everything that is in your heart.

RADDAI Thus I have told you, and thus I shall do today.

And I have not said anything which I shall not do.

DOEG Behold, now I know that you are mighty in strength and understanding

And therefore I place my trust in you today, more than I did previously

For your hands will achieve success. Give me your hand, Raddai,

You are right to argue with me; nevertheless I shall instruct you and teach you

That all my deeds are good for you.

RADDAI I have not noticed such a thing until now.

121 Jer. 31:19 (a sign of abhorrence, regret, or grief); see also Ezek. 21:17.
122 Esther 4:16.
123 Job 36:5.
124 Job 5:12 “and their hands do not achieve success”.
125 Ps. 32:8.
DOEG I know that you have not noticed, and therefore your complaint against me is strong. With \textit{words that are right}^{126} to the ear. But if you are a man of valour More so than I thought in days gone by And moreover do not lack discretion and great bravery and strength, Prepare yourself tonight to carry out \textit{the end of the matter}^{127} And if you do not rejoice over Asenath tomorrow You may prepare \textit{instruments of violence}^{128} for yourself and ambush me in order to take my life.

RADDAI And what do I have to do, in order to carry out \textit{the end of the matter}?^{129} Is this deed possible for me? Will it succeed for me?

DOEG The messengers of Venice have come in order to move Ithiel from here And to install Chesed in his place. If so, why then Ithiel and Asenath will return to Venice. He is going to an eastern land,^{130} and he will take Asenath with him Except if a snare is set for him which will stop him from leaving here And there is no snare ready for him except if Chesed

Is removed from the earth.^{131}

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127 Eccles. 7:8.
128 Gen. 49:5.
129 Eccles. 7:8.
130 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Mauretania' (4.2.226), the North African homeland of the Moors (Honigmann 1997: 287, note 226). Salkinson's substitution fits in with his reshaping of the play's protagonist as a Cushite – or, alternatively, as Scolnicov (2001) suggests, a Jew (despite the fact that he is not labelled as such).
131 Exod. 9:15 מִן־הָאָֽרֶץ וַתִּכָּחֵ֖ד 'and you will be removed from the earth'.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
Raddai
And how will he be removed from the earth?\(^{132}\)

Doeg
If you smash his skull, he will be removed from the earth\(^{133}\)

And he will no longer sit on Ithiel's chair.

Raddai
And you are telling me to do this work?

Doeg
If there is strength in your right hand and you want to be of benefit to yourself

The work is fitting for you. Behold, he is eating bread

In the whore's house tonight, and there I shall join up with him

And he does not yet know that his horn is exalted high.\(^{134}\)

If you lie in wait for him when he returns after midnight

You will find his life in your hand, and I shall keep watch opposite

To be of assistance to you, and he will be killed by the hand of us both.

Do not look at me as if pricked in the heart\(^ {135}\) – rise up and go with me

And I shall teach you that death is necessary and very good for him

And also that it is your right to kill him. But mealtime is approaching –

And midnight is near; arise and let us go on our way.

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132 See preceding note.
133 See note 131.
134 1 Sam. 2:1 'my horn is exalted in the Lord', indicating joy or strength. Cf. Shakespeare's 'his honourable fortune' (4.3.236).
135 Ps. 73:21 'and I was pricked in the heart'.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

**Raddai**
Teach me your way so that I may know.

**Doeg**
And you will see, and your soul will rejoice.

*(Both exit)*

**Scene 3**
The citadel (Ithiel, Lud, Asenath, Milcah, and attendants)

**Lud**
Please do not trouble yourself, commander, to go with me in order to send me off.

**Ithiel**
But it will do me good to walk around a bit outside.

**Lud**
Take my blessing, lady, according to the honour which you have done me.

**Asenath**
Go in peace, my lord; I am honoured by your honour.

**Ithiel**
Are you not going? –
And you, Asenath –

**Asenath**
Here I am, my husband, my lord!

**Ithiel**
Hurry to your bed, and I shall come soon
And send the woman who attends you out of the room
Remember this, and do not forget.

**Asenath**
I shall do so, my lord.

*(Ithiel, Lud, and the attendants exit)*

**Milcah**
What do you say now? Why, his anger has left him.

**Asenath**
He told me that he will return quickly
And he commanded me to lie upon my bed and to send you away.

**Milcah**
And to send me away?

**Asenath**
So he commanded me; therefore give me, Milcah,
My garment for bed tonight and go in peace;

We had best be careful, so as not to vex him further.

**MILCAH**

If only, my lady, you had never seen him.

**ASENATH**

Whereas the desires of my heart are not so, for he is pleasant in his rebuking

And my insides are moved for him despite his anger so cruel.

Yea, unfasten the hooks for me and remove my robe.

**MILCAH**

Behold, I have placed the garments on your bed as you commanded.

**ASENATH**

What is the difference between one garment and another? Why, one is like the other;

How we resemble children, and folly is bound up in our hearts –

If I die before you die, dress my corpse, Milcah,

In this linen robe.

**MILCAH**

Do not bring forth such words from your lips.

**ASENATH**

My mother had a maidservant who was promised to a man, and her name was Azubah.

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136 This is a postbiblical expression traceable to the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 16b) and appearing elsewhere in rabbinic, medieval, and early modern literature.

137 Jer. 31:20 וּלְשָׁלוֹם לָךְ וּלְכִי הַלַּיְלָה לְמִשְׁכַּב כְּסוּתִי;علاוי: ‘my insides are moved for him’; see also a similar phrase in Song of Songs 5:4.

138 Gen. 49:7 נִדְמִינוּ לְעֹלֲלִים – ‘and their fury so cruel’.

139 Prov. 22:15 וַחֲנֵנָה וַחֲנֵנָה זוֹאת קְשׁוּרָה אִוֶּלֶת; ‘folly is bound up in the heart of a child’.

140 Esther 8:15. In the biblical verse, the linen robe appears in a celebratory context; Salkinson seems to have borrowed the phrase without intending to evoke these positive connotations.


142 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Barbary’ (4.3.24). Azubah is the name of two minor biblical characters, the wife of Caleb mentioned in 1 Chron. 2:18, and the mother of the king Jechoshaphat mentioned in 1 Kings 22:42 and 2 Chron. 20:31. Salkinson seems to have intended it as a play on words, as the name literally means ‘abandoned (fem.)’; see also note 144.
And her beloved lost his mind and abandoned her and went away.

And in her mouth there was an ancient song by the name of ‘Willows of the Brook’\(^\text{143}\) Whose words were pleasant for a sad-spirited woman like Azubah\(^\text{144}\)

And she sang this song as her soul departed.

And I have set this song before my eyes tonight\(^\text{145}\) And I almost wanted to sing, as Azubah did –

But hurry, finish your work.

MILCAH Shall I go bring you the nightgown?

ASENATH Loosen the ties for me first –

How good and precious is the man Lud, my relative.\(^\text{146}\)

MILCAH He is an honourable man and very handsome.

ASENATH And how pleasant is his speech.

MILCAH I know a woman in Venice who would not see it as a burden

To walk barefoot to the Holy Land\(^\text{148}\) for a kiss of his lips.

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\(^{143}\) Lev. 23:40; Job 40:22.

\(^{144}\) Isa. 54:6 יְהוָ֑ה קְרָאָ֣ךְ ר֖וּחַ וַﬠֲצ֥וּבַתﬠֲזוּבָ֛ה כִּֽי־כְאִשָּׁ֧ה ‘for the Lord has called you like a wife abandoned and sad-spirited’ (this is a play on words, as זָוַעַבָּה is both the name ‘Azubah’ and the word ‘abandoned [fem.].’).

\(^{145}\) Ps. 16:8 לְנֶגְדִּי יְהוָ֣ה שִׁוִּיתִ֬י ‘I have set the Lord before me continually’.

\(^{146}\) Salkinson has added the word קְרוֹבִי ‘my relative’, which does not feature in the original (4.3.34-5).

\(^{147}\) These lines are prose in the original (4.3.37–8).

\(^{148}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Palestine’ (4.3.38); Salkinson’s translation is a very commonly used Hebrew term for the Land of Israel.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice 261
(Asenath sings)

Beneath an oak of weeping\(^{149}\) an abandoned woman\(^{150}\) weeps over the bridle-groom of her youth\(^{151}\)

Willows\(^{152}\) weep, sway to the destruction of the wretched one in love

Her hand on her head and her head between her knees

Cry, wait, oh! Willows, willows, willows.

The brook opposite answers, wails to the sound of her wailing

Willows weep, sway at the destruction of the wretched one in love

Her eyes are red from weeping and the stones grow wet from her tears

(To Milcah) Put that down, Milcah –

Cry, wait, oh! Willows, willows, willows!

(To Milcah) Hurry, finish your work, he will be coming any moment –

With the willows of the brook upon my death, make a garland for me

\(^{149}\) Gen. 35:8; in the biblical verse the oak tree is the location where the matriarch Rebecca’s nurse Deborah was buried; in most English Bibles the phrase ‘oak of weeping’ is translated as a proper name, Allon(- )bacuth.

\(^{150}\) Or ‘Azubah’; see notes 142 and 144.

\(^{151}\) Joel 1:8.

\(^{152}\) Scolnicov (2001: 189) argues that Salkinson’s selection of the plural form here, in contrast to Shakespeare’s singular ‘willow’ (4.3.40ff), is intended as a reference to Ps. 137:1–2, which contains a mention of willows (in the plural) as part of a lament about exile from Zion; as such, Salkinson is linking the sadness of spurned lovers to the Jews’ mourning for loss of a national homeland. While it is possible that Salkinson had such associations in mind, it is perhaps more likely that the use of the plural is rooted primarily or solely in a desire to maintain consistency with the initial appearance of the word in Asenath’s speech (as the song’s title), which is in the plural because it is a citation of Lev. 23:40 and Job 40:22 (see note 143).
They will weep at my destruction, they will sway to the wretched one in love

Even in his rage I love him, do not speak ill of him

Cry, wail, oh, willows, willows, willows

(To Milcah) Behold, he knocks –

Milcah
It is not he, but only the wind blowing.

(Asenath sings)

I called him deceitful, and he answered me with the sweetness of his lips –

Willows weep, sway to the destruction of the wretched one in love –

‘Do not go after strange men, and I shall not approach a strange woman’

Cry, wail, oh! Willows, willows, willows.

Now my eyes grow dim; is that a sign of weeping?

Milcah
I do not know the interpretation of the matter.

Asenath
Whereas I have heard such a thing – men are harsher than us –

Tell me, Milcah, is it possible for a woman

To violate a covenant and oath and to be unfaithful to the bridegroom of her youth?

153 Salkinson’s choice of this word is particularly appropriate in the context of this song, as its single biblical appearance (in Jer. 15:18) is often translated as ‘deceptive brook’, referring to a seasonally dry brook or river.

154 Prov. 16:21 'and sweetness of lips'.

155 Ps. 6:8 (6:7 in English Bibles) ‘my eye grows dim from grief’; also Ps. 31:10 (31:9 in English Bibles).

156 Eccles. 8:1 ‘and who knows the interpretation of a matter’.

157 Joel 1:8.
**MILCAH** It is, it is.

**ASENATH** Would you commit this vile deed, for the whole earth?

**MILCAH** And why would I not do so; wouldn’t you?

**ASENATH** Before the sun! I swear I would not do this thing.

**MILCAH** Before the sun, I would not do it either

But in the darkness of the night –

**ASENATH** And if the earth were to be given to you, would you do this evil thing?

**MILCAH** The earth is a huge payment for this small iniquity.

**ASENATH** Whereas I think that you would not do this, God forbid.

**MILCAH** I do not think so, but rather I would sin and then repent.

Indeed I would not do this for a gift of trifling value,

For a ring and a necklace,\(^{159}\) for two cubits\(^{160}\) of linen and silk;

But for the whole earth, why, that is a matter.

Who would not be unfaithful to her husband, in order to make him

King over the whole earth?\(^{161}\)

For such a great gift

Even the inferno\(^{162}\) would be a laughing matter to me, and I would not fear the fire of hell.

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158 These lines are prose in the original (4.3.70–6).
159 Exod. 35:22.
160 A measurement equivalent to approximately 45cm.
162 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘purgatory’ (4.3.76). Salkinson has replaced the Christian term with a close Jewish equivalent. The word appears on a number of occasions in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 7:31, 32, 19:6, 11–4) but as a place-name, Topheth, a location in Jerusalem where idol-worshippers would sacrifice their children; in the medieval period it became a label for hell (Even-Shoshan 2003, 6: 2030), and this is the sense in which Salkinson is employing it.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

As for me, on my life, I would not commit the sin

Even if the whole earth were given to me as my payment.

Why, this sin can only be done on earth

And since the earth would be yours, the sin would be yours alone

And afterwards you could repent, and who could tell you what you must do.

But my heart tells me that there is no such woman on earth.

There is a great number on earth, in accordance with the number of pleasure seekers.

However, the snare of the women comes on account of the iniquity of their husbands

Who do not fulfil that which is lacking for them, or scatter their might

In the laps of strange and alien women, or are jealous regarding their wives without cause

And lock them up for nothing; or raise their hand to strike them;

Or hold back our money in order to hurt us

And do not notice that we also have a heart

And after our patience, we also take revenge.

For why do they not notice that their wives also

Have an eye to see, a nose to smell, and a palate to taste sweet and bitter?

Why, for pleasure they exchange us for other women
And the love of pleasure comes from desire of the flesh.

And desire of the flesh comes from weakness of the soul.

Therefore they should know that we also have a portion.

In weakness of the soul, in desire of the flesh, and in the love of pleasure.

And now take instruction, men, and do well with the wives of your bosom. 163

But if you do not do well, and iniquity is found in us,

Know that it was planted by your hand, for we have learned your deeds.

ASENATH  Go in peace – my rock! 164 Instruct me in the way of salvation 165

To choose good over evil and not to learn iniquity and transgression. 166

(Exeunt)

End of Fourth Part.

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163 This rhymes with the last word of the speech’s last line, echoing Shakespeare’s ‘know/so’ (4.3.101–2) except that the latter is a rhyming couplet. Salkinson most likely opted for a different pattern because he could not find a workable rhyme for the last two lines of the speech. He has employed the pausal form of the Hebrew word for ‘bosom’ (as opposed to the standard חיקכם) for purposes of the rhyme.

164 A designation for God (see, e.g., 2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 18:3 [18:2 in English Bibles]).

165 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘send/mend’ (4.3.103–4).

166 Exod. 34:7; Num. 14:18.
Fifth Part

scene 1  
A Street in the Town (Doeg and Raddai)

DOEG  
Stand here behind the wall; he is coming towards us

Draw your sword and strike him like a skilled warrior¹

Do not fear and do not lose heart,² for I shall save you;

Remember that this night is the end for us;

On it we shall act and succeed; or we shall fall and perish

Therefore be strong and courageous.³

RADDAI  
Position yourself opposite me, lest I miss with my sword when I strike.

DOEG  
I shall position myself opposite; hold fast to your sword, go up and succeed.⁴

(Doeg goes and positions himself opposite)

RADDAI  
I have no desire to commit this act

But he tricked me and persuaded me with the wisdom of his words,

That only one soul will go to its eternal home⁵ –

Awaken, my sword, and strike this man who must die!⁶

(Goes and stands in his position)

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¹ Jer. 50:9.
² Deut. 1:21; Josh. 8:1; 1 Chron. 22:13, 28:20.
³ Deut. 31:7, 23; Josh. 1:6, 7, 9, 18; 1 Chron. 22:13.
⁴ 1 Kings 22:15 וְהַצְלַחﬠֲלֵה 'go up and succeed'.
⁵ Eccles. 12:5 עֹלָמ֔וֹ אֶל־בֵּיֵ֖ת הָאָדָֽם 'for man goes to his eternal home'.
⁶ 1 Sam. 20:31; 2 Sam. 12:5.
As for this rash man, I have touched his wound and his bruise,\(^7\)

And out of his pain he has cried out against me,\(^8\) and now he will kill Chesed.

Or Chesed will kill him, or they will kill each other;

Any of these three will be of benefit to me.

If Raddai survives, he will surely demand from me

Gold and precious stones, which I took from him

To give to Asenath, and therefore I seek to take his life

Whereas if Chesed lives, I will not be able to withstand him

For he has more beautiful eyes and a more comely appearance\(^9\) than me,

And moreover, perhaps the Cushite will tell him of my plan for him

And therefore he must die\(^10\) – but here he comes.

\((\text{Chesed passes by)}\)

RADDAI

I hear the sound of his feet; your blood is on your head,\(^11\) rascal!

\((\text{Runs and strikes him with his sword)}\)

CHESED

You tried to strike me down like a foe with a single blow

But you did not know that my armour is tougher than the edge of your sword

And now I shall also try.

---

\(^7\) Isa. 1:6

\(^8\) Jer. 12:8

\(^9\) 1 Sam. 16:12

\(^10\) 1 Sam. 20:31; 2 Sam. 12:5.

\(^11\) Josh. 2:19

\(\text{שִׁרְיוֹנִי} *\)
(Draws sword and wounds Raddai)

Raddai
Aah, I am dead! –

(Doeg runs and strikes an injurious blow to Chesed’s leg from behind him and flees to his position)

Chesed
Aah, I am wounded – murderers!

Murderers! (Falls to the ground)

Ithiel enters from afar

Ithiel
The voice is the voice of Chesed;¹² Doeg has kept his promise.

Raddai
Woe is me, for I have done wrong –

Ithiel
Let me listen to the voice again – it is his voice.

Chesed
Come to my aid – bring light, and a surgeon for my wound.

Ithiel
It is definitely his voice; Doeg is a man of valour

An honest and faithful man, who fights his friend’s fight as his own

You have been a model to me, my friend –

As for you, tender and delicate one,¹³ see, your lover is slain by the sword¹⁴

And the time of your punishment is also coming; I am on my way to you, adulteress

Beautiful-eyed one, abomination, I despise your youthful love¹⁵

And the bed which you have desecrated will be stained with your lifeblood.

¹² Gen. 27:22 ‘the voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau’.
¹³ Isa. 47:1, in reference to Babylon, which is prophesied destruction and will no longer be called tender or delicate. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘minion’ (5.1.33), which commonly means ‘darling’ but here is used in the sense of ‘hussy’ (Honigmann 1997: 298, note 33; Crystal and Crystal 2002: 282). The negative context of the biblical citation suggests that Salkinson was aware of the insulting sense of the English original and expected his readers to interpret the Hebrew endearment ironically.
¹⁴ Num. 19:16.
¹⁵ This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘blotted/spotted’ (5.1.35–6).

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
(Ithiel exits)

(Lud and Gether from afar)

 Chesed Are there no night watchmen? Does no one pass by?

 I have been murdered! I have been murdered!

 Gether I hear an anguished voice, a voice crying bitterly. 17

 Chesed Arise to my aid…

 Lud Listen to the voice.

 Raddai Cursed be the villain!

 Lud Two or three shout, and there is a heavy darkness tonight;

 Perhaps they shout deceitfully; we cannot come to their voice

 Unless there are other men with us.

 Raddai No one comes to my aid, and my blood is spilling onto the earth.

 (Doeg enters with a torch in his hand)

 Lud Look, who goes there?

 Gether Behold, a man in his robe, with a torch and weapons in his hand.

 Doeg Who is there? Who cried out there, ‘I have been murdered’?

 Lud We do not know.

 Doeg Did you not hear the voice crying out?

 Chesed Hurry, come here, hurry to my aid –

 Doeg What is wrong with you there, that you cried out? 19

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16 This is Shem’s grandson and Aram’s son, mentioned in Gen. 10:23 and 1 Chron. 1:17. Salkinson has selected the name based on its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s Gratiano.

17 Zeph. 1:14 ‘the voice of the day of the Lord, wherein the mighty man cries bitterly’.

18 Exod. 10:22 (referring to the darkness that afflicted Egypt as one of the ten plagues).

19 Judg. 18:23. Although the meaning of the root קעז means ‘gather’ or ‘assemble’ in the nifal stem, Salkinson seems to have had in mind the meaning of the qal, ‘cry out’. (See also Second Part, note 245 and Ram and Jael, First Part, note 316.)
This is Ithiel's standard-bearer.

I know him, for he is a man of valour.

Who are you there, making the sound of your wailing heard?

Come to me, Doeg, robbers have struck me and wounded me

Hurry to my aid.

Doeg Chesed, my dear officer, who laid a hand on you?

Chesed One of the robbers is lying close to me

For he cannot move from his position.

Doeg Where are they, where are they, bloodthirsty and deceitful men?

Raddai Please save me.

Chesed That is one of them.

Doeg Are you a bloodthirsty and deceitful man?

(Doeg stabs Raddai)

Raddai Oh, despicable dog! Ignominy of men! –

Oh! Oh! Oh!…

Doeg Would you murder a soul in the dark? Where are the rest of the robbers?

The whole town sits quietly, while murderers are on its streets.

And who are you there – are you good or evil?

As we consider ourselves, so shall you call us.

Are you the noble Lud?

20 Song of Songs 5:7.
21 Ps. 38:23 (38:22 in English Bibles).
22 Ps. 55:24 (55:23 in English Bibles).
23 Ps. 5:7 (5:6 in English Bibles).
24 Prov. 23:7 (23:6 in English Bibles).
LUD  I am he.

DOEG  Please pardon me; behold, Chesed
lies here

Beaten and wounded by the
robbers.

GATHER  Chesed?

DOEG  Is there a wound in your flesh, my
brother?

CHESED  My leg has been cut in half.

DOEG  God forbid you should say so; show
me in the light of the lamp
So that I may bind the wound with
my robe.

ANAH  What is this? Who cried out a great
and bitter cry?

DOEG  Are you asking who it is that
cried out?

ANAH  Woe is me, Chesed my glory and my
splendour!

DOEG  Be quiet, whore, strumpet! What do
you think, Chesed
Who wounded your leg?

CHESED  I do not know.

GATHER  I am sorry that it is thus for you;
I had gone to seek you.

DOEG  Lend me a belt so that I may bind
the wound
And bring me a chair to bear him in
comfort.

ANAH  Woe is me, he is fainting – Chesed,
Chesed, Chesed!

DOEG  Listen to me, minsters, my heart
tells me

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25  Gen. 27:34
26  Alshekh to Prov. 14 and Dan. 4.
That this sack of filth has also had a hand in the conspiracies

But it is not the time to investigate; be strong and show yourself courageous, Chesed.

Bring the lamp over; do you know this man's face?

Why, he is my friend and companion, a son of my native city.

Is this Raddai? No, no, but perhaps it is him

Shudder, O heavens! It is Raddai and none other –

Doeg, yes, my lord; do you know him?

Gether, indeed I do know him.

Doeg, these severe woes have not allowed me to welcome you

With the honour befitting you; indeed I beg your pardon.

Gether, I am happy to see your face.

Doeg, what can I do for you, Chesed? – Bring another chair –

(A second chair is brought)

Gether, is it he – who among us, kind men,

Will carry him in comfort away from here, while I call the doctor.

(To Anah) As for you, woman, do not labour in vain

Did you know that the stricken Chesed was my best friend –

What was the quarrel between you?

---

27 Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 152a צואה מלא חמה 'a woman is a sack full of filth'.
28 2 Sam. 10:12 וְנִתְחַזַּק חֲזַ֤ק 'be strong and let us show ourselves courageous'.
29 Jer. 2:12.
There was no quarrel between us, nor do I know the man.

Now why is it that your face grows pale?

Take them both away from the street.

(Chesed and Raddai are taken out in their chairs)

Stand and look, ministers, why is it that her face grows pale
Look at her face to face; the look in her eyes testifies against her.

If you look thus at us, we shall draw out the hidden matters of your heart,

The wickedness will issue its voice, even if her lips are dumb.

What has happened? What has happened, my husband?

Raddai and other men fell upon Chesed in the dark;
The men fled for their lives; Chesed is still alive
But Raddai is dead.

My soul weeps for the dead man, and my heart for dear-spirited Chesed.

This is the fruit of whoredom; go, Milcah, and enquire

Where Chesed ate his bread tonight.

(To Anah) Now why is it that trembling has seized you?

He ate in my house; but trembling has not seized me.

If so, then go with me to be put to the test.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

MILCAH May shame cover you, wife of whoredom.

ANAH I am not a wife of whoredom, but rather an honest woman.

Like you, who insults me without cause.

MILCAH Taunts and insults are fitting for a woman like you.

DOEG Go with me, ministers, so that we may give Chesed a remedy.

And as for you, woman, go with us and tell us everything.

Hurry, Milcah, to the citadel, to the commander and the lady.

And tell them what has happened. (To himself) As for me, tonight I shall run.

In order to arrive at my desired haven, or to decreed destruction.

(All exit)

SCENE 2 The bedchamber – Asenath sleeps and a light burns

ITHIEL Why, the matter is true, the matter is true, on my life!

But I shall not mention the abomination, before the pure stars;

And even if the matter is true, I shall not spill her blood,

I shall not tear the skin of her flesh; it is whiter than snow.

30 Hosea 1:2.
31 Hosea 1:2.
32 Ezek. 5:15 'a taunt and an insult'.
33 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'night/quite' (5.1.128–9).
34 Ps. 107:30 'to their desired haven'.
35 Isa. 10:22.
And as smooth as a marble memorial stone. (Removes his sword from his thigh)

Nevertheless she shall surely die, so that she cannot seduce another man.

I shall put out the light here and put out the light there,

If I put out the light of the chamber, I can light it again should I have regrets

But if I put out the light of the Lord, the ultimate work of the hands of a skilled craftsman

That illuminates the innermost parts, who can light it again?

Even an angel and a seraph cannot light the wick again.

If I pluck a rose from its stalk, it cannot be planted again

For it shall surely wilt; I can smell it now

While it is still on its stalk. (Kisses Asenath)

Your scent is pleasant and comely; you still have enough power

To persuade the judge to let the sword of justice fall from his hand

I shall kiss you once more – once more again –

You were comely in life and you will be comely in your death as well –

I shall kill you with my hand, and afterwards I shall love you again.

36 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
37 Midrash Tanhuma to Exod. 30:11–34:35; Alshekh to Isa. 6 and Song of Songs 1.
38 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘I know not where is that Promethean heat/That can thy light relume’ (5.2.12–13); Salkinson has omitted the Classical reference.
39 Or: ‘continue to love you’; either meaning of the Hebrew עוד ‘still’, ‘again’ is a possible translation for Shakespeare’s ‘I will kill thee and love thee after’ (5.2.18–19).
And this is my last kiss – the kiss of the angel of death –

My compassion is stirred for you, yet I spill the tears of a cruel man

Like the fearsome king most high who gathers in those He loves.

But she awakens –

Who is this? Ithiel?
It is I, Asenath.
Will you lie with me in the bed, my lord?
Have you prayed tonight?
I have not forgotten my prayer.
If there is still iniquity in you and you have not entreated your God, Hurry, entreat Him now.
Oh, my lord! What do your words hint at?
Pray a short prayer, and I shall stand afar
I cannot kill you before you reconcile yourself with the God of the spirits
God forbid that I should destroy the spirit with the body.
Do you intend to kill me?
Yes.
My God, my God, have mercy on me!
Amen and amen!

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

And Joseph hurried out, for his compassion was stirred for his brother'.

for the Lord on high is fearsome; a great king over the whole earth'.

and what do your eyes wink at?

God of the spirits of all flesh', also Num. 27:16.
If you say amen, I hope that you will not kill me.

Whereas I do not hope so.

I fear your roaming eyes, for you are fearsome

Although I do not know why I fear you

For I have not sinned against you and have not done you ill.

Nevertheless, deathly horror has overwhelmed me.

Pay heed to your iniquities.

To my love which I have for you.

And therefore you deserve to die.

Death is unjust, for who would kill someone

Because she loved him? Indeed, why do you purse your lips

And tremble where you stand, like one who plans to engulf and destroy all?

They are terrible signs; nevertheless, I hope and await

That it is not upon me, Ithiel, not upon me that you will pour out your wrath.

Be silent; do not speak further.

I shall not speak further, but what else do you seek?

The handkerchief which is precious to me, which I gave you as a gift

44 Ps. 55:5.
45 Jer. 17:11.
46 Prov. 16:30 'he purses his lips and brings about evil'.
47 Hab. 3:16 'and I tremble where I stand'.
48 Abarbanel to Ezek. 7; Alshekh to Gen. 27 and numerous other locations therein.
49 Jer. 10:25 'pour out Your wrath'; similar collocations appear in Ezek. 14:19, 20:8, 13, 21, 22:22, 30:15, 36:18; Ps. 79:6. The phrasing from Jer. 10:25 and Ps. 79:6 is also very well known from its appearance in the Passover Haggadah.
You gave it to Chesed –

**Asenath**

On my life and soul! Indeed I did not do this

Send for and summon the man, and ask him.

**Ithiel**

Guard yourself, precious soul, guard yourself from a false oath.

You are lying in the bed from which you will not get out.

**Asenath**

But not to die in it tonight.

**Ithiel**

Indeed you shall die momentarily; therefore make confession

For all of your iniquities; if you deceive with a curse and an oath

Saying, 'I have not sinned', it will not benefit you and will not save you

The word has gone out of my mouth, to the anguish of my spirit, and it cannot be put back;

Indeed you shall die, Asenath.

**Asenath**

Have mercy upon me, God in heaven!

**Ithiel**

I too shall lift up my hands and say amen.

**Asenath**

If so, then have mercy upon me too

I have not transgressed your covenant, and I do not love Chesed

Except in that he is a person; I love him like any person

---

50 Prov. 6:26.
51 Zech. 8:17.
52 Neh. 10:30 (10:29 in English Bibles) ואֲנִי קָרָה נֶפֶשׁ לָךְ; קָרָה נֶפֶשׁ לָךְ 'in a curse and an oath'.
53 Gen. 26:35 יַצִּילֵךְ וְלֹא יוֹﬠִילֵךְ לֹא, חָטָאתִי לֹא לֵאמֹר, ‘anguish of spirit’.
According to the law and the commandment, but I have not given him a token.

ItiHEL

On my life! Indeed I saw my handkerchief in his hand

And you, in your lying, force me to harden my heart like a rock

To complete my task as a murderer and not as one sacrificing a burnt offering or a sin offering

For indeed with my eyes I saw the handkerchief.

Asenath

If so, then he found it

For I never gave it to him

Summon him here so that he may tell you the truth.

ItiHEL

He has already told the matter.

And what did he tell you, my lord?

That he came to you.

He came to me?

Yes.

Such a thing he cannot say.

Because his mouth is blocked –

Doeg, the most faithful in all my house, fulfilled my instructions.

Have I understood your words, and he is dead as I fear?!

If there were as many lives inside him as hairs on his flesh

The stomach of my revenge would not be too small to swallow him entirely.

Oh! He has been caught in the snare, and I am done for, done for.

55 2 Chron. 14:3 (14:4 in English Bibles) 'the law and the commandment'. See First Part, note 212 for discussion of this collocation.
ithiel Does your heart dare, whore, to weep for him to my face?

asenath Send me to prison, my lord, but please do not kill me.56

ithiel Your end approaches, whore.

asenath Please kill me in the morning, but let me live tonight.

ithiel If you resist me –

asenath Let go of me, just for a few moments.

ithiel Your time has come, and the appointed time cannot be delayed.

asenath Let me pray a short prayer.

ithiel The appointed time has already passed. (Strangles her)

milcah (From outside) Open up for me, commander, please open the door for me

Hurry, my lord –!

ithiel What is the sound of shouting there? – Your soul is still within you!

There still remains breath in you? Although I am cruel

I cannot prolong your death pangs without cause

I shall press my hand heavily upon you, a little here, a little there58

And that is it for you.

milcah (From outside) Please, my lord, my lord!...

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56 1 Kings 3:26 and do not kill him’.  
57 Job 33:7 and my hand will not be heavy upon you’.  
58 Isa. 28:10 a little here, a little there’.
ITHIEL Who knocks there?

MILCAH (From outside) My dear lord, I have something to tell you.

ITHIEL It is Milcah – stand there for a brief moment –

Behold, she is dead, and this one comes to bring me the tidings

That Chesed is dead, for she raises her voice like a herald.

Do you still move? No, no, she is already dead

And she lies as still as the grave – shall I open the door for Milcah –

Perhaps there is still breath in her nostrils – no, there is no feeling in her.

And if I open the door, Milcah will indeed come

To speak to my wife – oh, who is my wife now?

Oh, woe to this day! The sun above has grown dark upon me

The moon is clothed in darkness, and the earth crumbles underneath.

MILCAH (From outside) Have mercy, open up for me, commander, so that I may speak a word to you.

ITHIEL I almost forgot you, Milcah, please come here –

Indeed I shall hurry to spread the curtain over the bed –

Where are you, where are you? What is wrong with you, that you called out?

59 This word is attested in the Hebrew Bible, but it is a *hapax legomenon* (appearing in Ps. 55:15 [55:14 in English Bibles]) with the meaning of ‘throng’ or ‘unrest’. Salkinson is instead using it in the sense of ‘feeling’ or ‘sensation’, which dates to the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1748).

60 Isa. 50:3 קַדְר֑וּת שָׁמַ֖יִם אַלְבִּ֥ישׁ 'I clothe the heavens in darkness'.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

(Opens the door)

MILCAH Oh, my lord! There are murderous deeds in our midst.

ITHIEL When did it happen?

MILCAH Just now.

ITHIEL This is the fault of the moon, for it has drawn near to the earth and struck its inhabitants with madness.

MILCAH Chesed struck one of the lads, Raddai of Venice.

ITHIEL Raddai has been killed? And Chesed has been killed?

MILCAH Chesed has not been killed.

ITHIEL If Chesed has not been killed, there is no advantage to the murder and the revenge is not sweet.

ASENATH Without cause I have been murdered, for nothing.

MILCAH What is this voice?

ITHIEL What voice?

MILCAH It is the voice of my lady, oh, come, hurry to save her –

Speak again, my lady! Speak, dear Asenath, speak!

ASENATH I die blameless.

MILCAH Who has laid a hand on you?

ASENATH My hand did this, and there is no one besides me.

Farewell! And commend me to my noble husband.

Farewell, farewell! – (Dies)

MILCAH Who indeed knows?

ITHIEL How, then, has she been killed?

MILCAH Oh, my lord! There are murderous deeds in our midst.

ITHIEL Who indeed knows?
MILCAH: I did hear this from her mouth, and as I heard, so shall I tell.

ITHIEL: There is lying under her tongue, and she will go down to Sheol as a liar For I killed her with my hand.

MILCAH: Therefore, then, she resembles one of the angels on high And you are one of the evil angels.

ITHIEL: She went astray like a shameless woman, for she was a whore.

MILCAH: You are speaking like a demon, and you are bearing false witness against her.

ITHIEL: The falseness has borne witness against her; her recklessness resembled water.

MILCAH: And you are as rash as fire, and your wicked libel is worthless and false; She was as pure as the very heavens.

ITHIEL: Chesed defiled her, ask your husband and he will tell you.

I would go down to the depths of Sheol if I did not know well That I killed her justly, and your husband knows and is witness.

MILCAH: My husband is witness?

ITHIEL: Your husband is witness.

MILCAH: That she defiled herself in a stranger’s bed?

ITHIEL: Chesed lay with her;
If she had been true to me, I raise my hand up on high.

That I would not have exchanged her for all the earth and the fullness thereof.

Even if its dust were gold and its stones were gems of Ophir.

If she had been true to me, I raise my hand up high.

That I would not have exchanged her for all the earth and the fullness thereof.

Even if its dust were gold and its stones were gems of Ophir.

My husband is witness? 

He was the first who opened my eyes,

For he is a faithful man and despises the daubing of whitewash.

Over wicked men.

My husband? 

Why have you asked twice? Why, I’ve said your husband.

Deceit has increased in the land, and love has stumbled in the street.

Did my husband really say that my lady is an adulteress? 

Your husband, woman, your husband I said with pure speech.

Do you not yet know who your husband is? He is Doeg, my faithful friend.

If he said such a thing, may rot eat his flesh.

One grain a day; for he has spoken deceit from his heart.

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67 Gen. 14:22 אֶל־יְהוָה֙ יָדִ֤י הֲרִימֹ֨תִי 'I raise my hand up to the L ord'.
68 Deut. 33:16; Isa. 34:1; Jer. 8:16, 47:2; Ezek. 19:7, 30:12; Mic. 1:2.
69 A region renowned in the Hebrew Bible for its wealth; see, for example, 1 Kings 10:11, which describes the riches that King Solomon received from Ophir.
70 Based on Ezek. 22:28 'and her prophets have daubed them with whitewash'.
71 2 Sam. 3:34, 7:10; 1 Chron. 17:9.
72 Isa. 59:14 אֱמֶ֔ת בָֽרְחוֹב֙ 'for truth has stumbled in the street'.
73 Zeph. 3:9.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice 285
Her love was too great, for a bridegroom of blood\textsuperscript{74} To an abominable and vile\textsuperscript{75} man –

\textbf{Ithiel} How dare you?

\textbf{Milcah} Do whatever is in your power; your deed is worthy of God's law\textsuperscript{76} Just as you were worthy of a pure woman like her.

\textbf{Ithiel} I advise you to put a hand to your mouth.

\textbf{Milcah} I have more ability to suffer than any ill you could do to me.

\textbf{Strong-boned ass!}\textsuperscript{77} Wild donkey!\textsuperscript{78} As brutish as a pig in muck!

You have done an evil deed – I do not fear your flashing sword\textsuperscript{79}

For twenty times I would risk my life\textsuperscript{80} To make your deeds known at the gates – oh, oh! Hurry, come!

The Cushite has killed my lady – murderer! Murderer!

(\textit{Kenaz, Gether, and Doeg enter})

\textbf{Kenaz} What has happened here? What is wrong with you, army commander?

\textbf{Milcah} You have done well to come, Doeg, since the murderer

\textsuperscript{74} Exod. 4:25. This expression appears in a very different context in the biblical source; it is uttered by Moses' wife Zipporah in an enigmatic episode whereby she circumcizes her son and touches Moses' feet with the blood. See Ben-Shushan (2006) for a detailed study of the 'bridegroom of blood' motif in biblical and postbiblical Hebrew literature.

\textsuperscript{75} Job 15:16.

\textsuperscript{76} Josh. 24:26; this is also a very common phrase in all postbiblical forms of Hebrew meaning 'God's Torah'. Salkinson has chosen this phrase as a translation for Shakespeare's 'heaven' (5.2.156), in an undermotivated act of Judaization.

\textsuperscript{77} Gen. 49:14.

\textsuperscript{78} Job 11:12.

\textsuperscript{79} Deut. 32:41 ‘when I sharpened my flashing sword’.

\textsuperscript{80} Judg. 9:17 ‘and he risked his life’. 
Has placed his iniquity upon your head.

GETHER What has happened here?

MILCAH If you are a man, testify against the villain’s lies

He says you told him that his wife was unfaithful to him

But I know well that you did not say so

For you are not a villain; speak, for my heart is hot.  

DOEG I told him everything that I knew

And I did not add anything that he did not find

To be so.

MILCAH But did you also say that his wife was whoring?

DOEG Yes.

MILCAH You have spoken lies and falsehood; lies, falsehood, and slander

As the Lord lives! Indeed you have deliberately spoken lies.

Did this blameless one lie with Chesed?

With Chesed, you said?

DOEG I told you, woman, Chesed is the man

But hurry, get out of here and hold your tongue.

MILCAH Behold, it is time to speak, and I shall not hold my tongue

My lady lies here, murdered on her bed.

ALL May God forbid.

81 Ps. 39:4 (39:3 in English Bibles).
MILCAH And you, with the lash of your tongue, caused the murder.  

ITHIEL Do not stare, brothers; behold, the matter is true.

GETHER The matter is dreadful, and who can endure it?

KENAZ A most appalling and horrible thing!  

MILCAH Deceit, deceit, and vileness! –  

While I muse a fire burns for thus I thought previously  

I shall kill myself, for my pain is too great to bear  

Oh, deceit and vileness! –  

DOEG Have you lost your senses? Get out and go to your house.

MILCAH Forgive me, ministers, so that I may speak; I must obey him.  

But not now; who yet knows, Doeg,  

Perhaps I shall never again go to my house.

ITHIEL (Bending down over his wife) Woe, woe, woe! –

MILCAH Roll around in the dust and wail; you murdered a pure soul  

A precious, blameless soul; there is none like her among women.

ITHIEL (Rising) She was a deceitful soul –  

I did not recognize you, my uncle; here lies your niece

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82 Job 5:21.  
83 Joel 2:11.  
84 Jer. 5:30.  
85 Ps. 77:7.  
86 Ps. 39:4 (39:3 in English Bibles).  
87 Mic. 1:10.
Who died here, for I strangled her with my hand.

I know that the deed is evil, the deed of a cruel man’s hands.

My daughter, my daughter Asenath!
It is well for your father that he died in his misery

For the thread of his life was severed by the bond of your covenant at that time

If he were still alive, he would go mad now at the sight of his eyes

And he would brazenly reproach his God and die as a reviler and a blasphemer. 88

Evil and bitter is the deed, 89 but Doeg knows

That she committed vile deeds with Chesed a hundred times;

Chesed confessed and did not deny it, and she, in her love for him,

Gave him as a gift that very token

Which I had given her, and which I saw in his hand

Why, it is an embroidered silk handkerchief from antiquity

Which my father originally gave my mother as a token of love.

Oh God, oh God of hosts! 90

Be silent, restrain yourself. 91

The spirit within me compels me, 92 and a fire is shut up in my bones 93

iadela4ם 90: גוס ויהי היא ודית
אורי 90: עזרה הצרעה שעה לחרפה 88
אורי 89: אברבנאל 1 שמע 16; אלשק to Deut. 12 and Prov. 5, 5.
אורי 90: Hosea 12:6 (12:5 in English Bibles); Amos 3:13, 6:14.
אורי 91: Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, hold your peace’ (5.2.216).
אורי 92: Job 32:18 ‘the spirit within me compels me’.
אורי 93: Jer. 20:9 ‘like a burning fire shut up in my bones’.

88 Ps. 44:17 (44:16 in English Bibles).
89 Abarbanel to 1 Sam. 16; Alshekh to Deut. 12 and Prov. 5, 20.
90 Hosea 12:6 (12:5 in English Bibles); Amos 3:13, 6:14.
91 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, hold your peace’ (5.2.216).
92 Job 32:18 ‘the spirit within me compels me’.
93 Jer. 20:9 ‘like a burning fire shut up in my bones’.
I cannot control myself; shall I be silent this time?

Not so, my husband; I must speak that I may find relief. 94

And even if heavens and earth and all men

As well as all the evil angels95 should surely scorn me

I shall not hold back from speaking and shall not control myself any longer.

DOEG Listen, be wise and go to your house.

MILCAH I shall not go.

(Doeg raises his sword against his wife)

GETHER How can you raise a sword against a woman? It is a disgrace.

MILCAH Listen, senseless Cushite, the handkerchief of which you speak

I happened to find it and gave it to my husband

For he had urged me several times to steal it.

DOEG You are speaking like a shameless woman.96

MILCAH Did she give the handkerchief to Chesed? God forbid; I found it

And gave it to my husband.

DOEG You speak lies,97 despicable woman.

MILCAH I have not lied, as the Lord lives! I have not lied, ministers;

Oh, foolish murderer! What could a senseless man98 like you have to do

94 Job 32:20.
95 Ps. 78:49.
96 Job 2:10 תְּדַבֵּ֔רִי הַנְּבָלוֹת אַחַ֤ת כְּדַבֵּ֞ר 'you are speaking like a shameless woman'.
97 Zech. 13:3 'Shake your handkerchiefs'.
98 Ps. 92:7 (92:6 in English Bibles).
With an honourable woman like her?

(Doeg stabs Milcah and flees)

ithiel Are there no stones of fire\(^99\) in the heavens, with which to stone this villain?

gether The woman is falling; he has killed his wife.

milcah Behold, I am dying; lay me next to my lady.

gether He has fled for his life, and his wife has been killed by his hand.

kenaz Does such a villain exist! – Take this sword

Which I took from the Cushite’s hand, and guard the door from outside

Lest he leave the doors of his house, and if he passes by, stab him.

Meanwhile, I shall run after this villain.

(Kenaz and Gether exit)

ithiel I am no longer a man of valour;

Even one of the youths may take my sword from my hand.

But what is the benefit of might, when I have no justness

Therefore, then, I lose everything in one day.

milcah Asenath! What is the song that you sang before your death

I too shall follow in your footsteps, and like you, I shall sing as I die

Willows, willows, willows…

Listen to me, cruel Cushite! Your wife kept her covenant

And loved you with an eternal love; if there is a lie in my mouth

\(^{99}\) Ezek. 28:14, 16.
Do not save me, my God! – And I shall utter with my tongue
What my heart utters, and with the meditation of my tongue and my heart

I shall vent my spirit and die. (Dies)

Ithiel I have another sword, in the depths of this chamber
It is sharpened and also polished, from the weapons house in Spain
Open the door for me, Gether my uncle, so that I may indeed go out.

Gether Forbear, and do not go out, for it will cost you your life
There is no weapon in your hand, and your blood will be on your head

Ithiel If so, then come into the house to speak with me
Lest I break out and attack you with no sword or spear.
(Gether enters the house)

Gether What do you want from me?

Ithiel Look, there is a sword in my hand
You have not seen a better one than it on a warrior's thigh.
I remember the days when with this sword of mine in my hand
I split a way for myself between twenty obstacles like you

---

100 Ps. 19:15 (19:14 in English Bibles) ‘the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart’
101 Prov. 29:11 ‘a fool vents all of his spirit’.
102 Ezek. 21:14 (21:9 in English Bibles) ‘a sword, sharpened and also polished’.
103 Prov. 7:23 ‘and he does not know that it will cost him his life’.
104 1 Kings 2:37 ‘your blood will be on your head’.
105 Salkinson has not reproduced Shakespeare’s rhyming couplet ‘me/thee’ (5.2.255).
106 Ps. 45:4 (45:3 in English Bibles).
But in vain I boast now, for the wheel has turned
And who might turn back its cycle?
Do not fear me
And let my sword not frighten you.
Indeed, I have come to my end;
Here is the limit of my lifespan. Here is the shore for my ship
So why should you fear me? Even from the waving of a soft reed
Ithiel would retreat – but where should I go?
How do I see your face, cursed, despoiled, wretched girl
Your face is white as snow and your flesh is cold as ice.
When we stand in judgement, why, at the sight of my eyes
I shall fall from the heavens to Sheol, among evil angels. 107
You are cursed, wicked slave!
Insolent destroyer of my soul! –
Come, devils and demons, strike me, tear me to pieces
So that I do not gaze there at my eyes’ delight
Put my flesh into a stream of brimstone, 108 sow my dust into the wind
And take my soul down to rivers and streams of fire 109 –
Asenath, whom my soul loves? 110
Asenath, Asenath, Asenath! –
(Lud, Kenaz, Chesed laid out on a chair and attendants with Doeg bound in shackles)

107     Ps. 78:49.
108     Isa. 30:33.
109     Job 20:17 ventus. דבש לחש וחרזים, 'rivers and streams of honey and butter'.
110     Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
**LUD** Where is that rash, wretched man?

**Ithiel** I am the man who was called Ithiel.

**LUD** And the wicked viper, where is he? Bring him before us.

**Ithiel** I want to look upon him, what the soles of his feet are

But maybe it is a fable that the fable-tellers devised from their own hearts

If you are a demon, indeed I cannot kill you.

(\textit{Ithiel strikes Doeg an injurious blow})

**LUD** Take his sword from his hand.

**Doeg** My blood is spilling onto the earth, but I have not been struck a mortal blow.

**Ithiel** My eye is not distressed to see you, for you are still alive

There is nothing better for you than death, and there is nothing more bitter for you than life.

**LUD** Ithiel! You were dear and noble in the days of old

But after you fell into the pit of this wicked slave

What can we say, how would we speak of you?

**Ithiel** Call me a murderer, if it is good in your eyes

But please know and see that it was not out of insolence

But rather with innocence of heart that I did what I did.

**LUD** This villain has almost confessed to all his crimes;

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111 1 Kings 12:33

מִלִּבָּם 

שְׁחִיתוֹת

*Shabdahot*
Did you act together with him, to kill Chesed?

Ithiel: Yes.

Chesed: My lord, army commander! How have I ever sinned against you?

Ithiel: Now I know that you are in the right; please forgive me.

And now, please ask this evil destroyer

Why he gave himself over to corrupting my soul and my body together.

Doeg: Do not ask me anything; you know what you know

And from now on, I shall not open my mouth to speak a word.

Lud: But will you not open your mouth even for prayer?

Gather: Pains will open your lips.

Ithiel: Choose for yourself what is best in your eyes.

Lud: And you, my lord, must know that which you do not yet know

That we found letters in the pocket of the slain Raddai

And from one letter we know that there was an order between them

For Chesed to be killed by Raddai's hand.

Ithiel: Is there any villain like him?

Chesed: Even among the followers of a foreign god none like him can be found.

Lud: And furthermore there is a letter of complaint which Raddai wrote to Doeg

But before he sent it, Doeg came and stabbed him.
ithiel

Evil and despicable dog –

But tell me, Chesed, how did

The handkerchief which belonged to

my wife come into your hand?

chesed

I found it in my lodgings.

And he with his own mouth said here

that he had thrown it there

In order to carry out the scheme of

his heart.

ithiel

How I have become a fool, a stupid

fool with no wisdom

in order to carry out the scheme of

his heart.

chesed

And even Raddai in his letters cries

out that he has been wronged

by Doeg

Because he incited him to become

involved in a fight with me on the

watch

For which I was removed from my

position

And when he was dying, before

he passed away he cried, ‘Doeg

struck me,

Doeg led me astray’.

lud

(To Ithiel) As for you, come out of the

house, for you must go with us;

Your post has been stripped from you

and has been placed on Chesed’s

shoulders

He is in charge on Caphtor. And with

respect to this wicked man

If the chastisement of a cruel

man, painful, malicious, and

prolonged, can be found

Let him be disciplined and afflicted

thereby. As for you, you will stay

in prison

112 Prov. 21:30.
113 Job 19:7
114 Jer. 30:14.
Until your judgement goes forth from the gate of Venice.

Go and bring him to the watch.

Ithiel Before you leave here, wait for me a little while

So that I may speak a few words.

Indeed it is known in Venice

That I served her faithfully and you do not have to mention this

But when you write the chronicles in a book

And the evil which has found us, mention my name in the prescribed manner

Do not show me partiality and do not condemn me without cause.

And this is what you must say: that I loved without wisdom.

But my love was complete; the spirit of jealousy is strange to me

But when it passed over me, it overflowed and reached the neck

Until I acted foolishly and was ensnared like that Judean

Who threw a sapphire from his hand more precious than all the wealth of Israel.

115 Prov. 21:30.
116 Isa. 8:8.
117 Alternatively, ‘Jew’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Indian’ (Quarto and Second, Third, and Fourth Folios) or ‘Judean’ (First Folio) (5.2.345). The Hebrew word יְהוּדִי typically means ‘Judean’ (i.e., someone of the tribe of Judah) in the Hebrew Bible, but in later biblical texts (e.g., Esther) it begins to be used in the sense of ‘Jew’, which becomes standard in the postbiblical period. Salkinson’s readers would have been aware of both meanings, and as such, the reference would have had unmistakably Jewish associations. In addition, Scolnicov (2001: 189) points out that, as the name ‘Judah’ is the Hebrew equivalent of ‘Judas’, Salkinson’s Ithiel is drawing an explicit comparison between his actions and the betrayal of Jesus.
118 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘pearl’ (5.2.345). The Hebrew word is sometimes translated as ‘lapis lazuli’; see Exod. 24:10, 28:18; Ezek. 1:26, 10:1, 28:13; Job 28:6, 16; Lam. 4:7.
119 Salkinson has replaced Shakespeare’s undefined ‘his tribe’ (5.3.346) with this very specific reference, which can be interpreted either as an allusion to biblical Israel (in keeping with ‘Judean’ in the preceding line) or as a label for the Jewish people, which ‘Israel’ commonly denotes in postbiblical usage.
And my eyes, which from my youth had not learned to shed a tear
drip drops of water like olive trees[120] in Arabia.

And you must also tell this: when I was in Aram-zobah[121]
I saw an Ishmaelite, an arrogant, haughty man[123]
in his turban

Strike one of our brothers to the disgrace of the nation of Venice
And I seized that circumcized dog and thrust my sword into his stomach

Like this – (Thrusts his sword into his stomach)

Oh, decreed destruction!\[124\

Indeed grace of lips[125] is in vain; everything that is said is marred.

(Falls on Asenath) I kissed you before I killed you
I made you cleave to me in my life; so shall I make you cleave to me in my death.
I lay hand on myself, and I die with a kiss.

(Dies)

This is what I feared, for I know his breadth of heart[126]
But I thought one thing, that there was no weapon in his hand.

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120 1 Kings 6:23, 31, 32, 33.
121 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Aleppo’ (5.3.350). Ps. 60:2 (60:1 in English Bibles); an Aramean state in southern Syria that arose in the late second millennium or early first millennium BCE, mentioned only here in the Hebrew Bible. The name is associated with the city of Aleppo in medieval and later Jewish tradition (see Ashtor 2007: 613), and is therefore an appropriate translation for ‘Aleppo’.
122 The Ishmaelites, descendants of the biblical patriarch Abraham’s elder son Ishmael, are equated with the Arabs in postbiblical Jewish tradition.
123 Prov. 21:24.
124 Isa. 10:22.
125 Prov. 22:11 נ麋 ‘the grace of his lips’.
126 1 Kings 5:9 (1 Kings 4:29 in English Bibles).
(To Doeg) Bold-spirited\textsuperscript{127} dog!

More evil than any affliction, than hunger, plague, or a flood of water

Look at the slain ones who lie here in the bed

They were killed by your hand; the outcome of the deeds of your hands.

Who could see this sight and still have breath left in him –

Hide all of these; hide them from the eye of observers.

Arise, Gether, take possession of the house and all the property of the Cushite

For you shall succeed him. As for you, Chesed, governor of the land,

Make a terrible judgement against this destroyer

Recompense him according to his deeds;\textsuperscript{128} do not look compassionately upon him.

As for me, in the bitterness of my soul\textsuperscript{129} I shall go to sea by ship

To tell at the gates of Venice all the words of lament.

(All exit)

The end of the book.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{127} Cf. Shakespeare's 'Spartan' (5.3.359).
\textsuperscript{128} Hosea 12:3 (12:2 in English Bibles) וְלֹ֣י יָשִּׁ֔יב כְּמַﬠֲלָ֖לוֹ 'He will recompense him according to his deeds'.
\textsuperscript{129} Job 7:11.
Publisher’s note

On page 197 the translator translated: ‘more precious than all the tribes of Israel’, but I changed the translation and wrote: ‘more precious than all the wealth of Israel’.

And it seems to me that I am correct in this change, for in the English language it says ‘richer’ and this word has two senses; the first is wealth and the second is honour, and I chose the first sense, and so did the German translator as well, for he did not translate Besser als sein Stamm, sondern: reicher als sein Stamm, and the difference between these two translations is very great, as every perceptive reader will understand on his own.

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130 In the original edition of Ithiel. As in the case of Smolenskin’s request that Salkinson change the name of the play (see Letter from the Translator to the Publisher, note 1), there is no attested indication of Salkinson’s opinion regarding this alteration.

131 Smolenskin does not name the German translator to whom he refers, but the phrase ‘reicher als sein Stamm’ appears in Philipp Kaufmann’s Othello translation of 1832 (Kaufmann 1832: 184); interestingly, it does not appear in the influential Schlegel-Tieck German translation that was the standard throughout much of the nineteenth century.
Letter to the translator

Vienna, fifteenth of Ab 5638.¹

My honourable friend!

You asked me for my opinion regarding the translation of the wonderful play Romeo and Julia,² the love song par excellence, like our Song of Songs, as wise men have called it, and whose name you have changed – with good sense – to Ram and Jael, so that it could also bear a Hebrew name, since in the Hebrew clothing wherein you have dressed it no one would recognize that the hands of a Hebrew had not created it, the hands of a Hebrew who speaks the language of his own playwrights and performs as wondrously in his tongue. You ask for my opinion, but surely you should have known it even before you asked me, for it is no secret to you that I admire the exalted playwright who created Ithiel and Ram and Jael and the rest of his plays (which I pray will also have the good fortune to be written in Hebrew) and I envy the British, for he belongs to them, and since there is none amongst us who can write as wonderfully as he does, I hereby exalt the work of an honest man who sacrifices his time and his toil to do only kindness to our wretched language, made wretched at

¹ This Hebrew date corresponds to 14 August 1878.
² Sic.
The hands of those who mock it and even more wretched at the hands of most of those who love it, who in their love for it besmirch it much more than those who scorn its image, for those who scorn its image turn their backs on it and pass it by, never darkening...
it with their shadow and leaving it to spread its radiance, whereas those who love it close in on it and dance around it and cover its face with the dust of their feet until it becomes repulsive. So how could I not recognize the labours of the man who has the power to show
its beauty and charm to everyone, who has the magical ability to put in the mouth of the playwright Shakespeare words like those of the prophet Isaiah? For the playwright’s ideas would cross the prophet’s lips without any difficulty and, equally, the prophet’s words don the playwright’s thoughts like a well-fitting garment. But after all, you already know all these things; I have already told you and let you know that indeed you are the man who has the power to bring this precious object into the treasure-house of our language, and I have already asked and begged you to do so, for if you do not do this, there is no one among us who knows how to do this like you, and I give you my blessing and my thanks from the bottom of my heart for this new blessing just as I blessed you when you brought me the offering of Ithiel, for this work of yours is not inferior to that work, and is perhaps even more exalted than it.

But indeed, if despite all these things I am not taking upon myself the work of publishing this book and putting my name on the translation do not wonder; indeed, you have heard the words of the grumblers who instead of blessing you for your labour and me for spurring you to do this precious work, have banded together against us and have made you and me an example, as if together we had dug a deep pit for our people into which they will fall and will not be able to get out, the fathers and sons alike, and even those who have lost the faith and it has been severed from their hearts, even they have seized on the spade of faith with which to dig dirt in order to fling it at...
him, and together we have become like sinners, so why therefore should I bring more wood to make the bonfire bigger?

But do not imagine that, out of my fear for myself lest shameless men damage my honour again, I cower and fear to add my name to your book; it is not so! I am already used to hear the whistling of the arrows that such archers shoot at me, and they pass by me and do not touch me, and I do not even notice them, but I know with certainty that it is not as they said deceitfully when they placed your sin on me, it is not so in truth but rather the opposite; you are being punished for my iniquity; if you had joined the authors’ ranks in the first instance and had not made an alliance with me, they would have treated you like a prince, all those who now are shouting loudly against you and me; they would have lionized you and given you glorious praise in their hope that the day would come when you would recompense them according to their deeds, and indeed that you would exalt them and praise them as they had praised you. Indeed, by setting your foot over the threshold of the Hebrew language you would undoubtedly choose the way of its priests, praising and extolling anyone who praises and extols. However, by allying yourself with me, a man of quarrel and strife with Rabbi Akiva and his friends...
and Ben Menachem and his companions, who does not show partiality to those who praise and does not fear those who profane, you too are punished for my iniquity and they set you up too as a target for their arrows, and as they are unable to find weaknesses in your work, they seek flaws in you − so why should you stir up the vengeful anger still further? This is what made me decide to withdraw my hand from this book of yours, my most very dear son, and if my concealed love for this work of yours is good enough for you, then I hereby say to you that I rejoiced very greatly upon reading this wonderful translation, and from the bottom of my heart I blessed you, and I shall likewise bless you in the coming days as well, and likewise everyone who loves the gates of Zion will bless your name and recognize your work, for indeed you are one of the chief builders at these gates, and it will remain as an eternal memorial for future generations.

Your faithful friend

P. Smolenskin

5 Moses Mendelssohn, central figure of the early Haskalah.
Message from the translator

I found three snares before me in the translation of this book; the first snare is that the book’s original (like all the rest of Shakespeare’s books) is replete from beginning to end with paronomasia or parody, that is to say melissa,6 as Jewish authors call it, wordplay. And even though it is one of the most precious treasures of the Hebrew language, nevertheless it is very difficult to translate such melissa and render it properly from language to language. The second snare is Jael’s nurse, who was an obstacle to me at every turn. This woman, as Shakespeare presents her, has no graceful lips and no learned tongue, and does not even know how to stammer in English; therefore I rendered some of her lines in a manner that was true to the Hebrew rather than following the rules of a faithful translation. If the critic catches me in this iniquity, perhaps he might reconsider and have a little mercy on me as one who has confessed his sins. But the third snare is the chief among the three, for it closed the book’s original (like all the rest of Shakespeare’s books) is replete from beginning to end with paronomasia or parody, that is to say melissa,6 as Jewish authors call it, wordplay. And even though it is one of the most precious treasures of the Hebrew language, nevertheless it is very difficult to translate such melissa and render it properly from language to language. The second snare is Jael’s nurse, who was an obstacle to me at every turn. This woman, as Shakespeare presents her, has no graceful lips and no learned tongue, and does not even know how to stammer in English; therefore I rendered some of her lines in a manner that was true to the Hebrew rather than following the rules of a faithful translation. If the critic catches me in this iniquity, perhaps he might reconsider and have a little mercy on me as one who has confessed his sins. But the third snare is the chief among the three, for it closed

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6 This term denotes a writing style strongly associated with Maskilic Hebrew and characterized by flowery language replete with biblical citations. See Shahevitch (1970), Pelli (1993), and Kahn (2013) for discussion of melissa.
me in like a fence and did not allow me to pass in two or three places, until I said to myself, everywhere that it does not allow me to pass because the fence cannot be broken through, I shall rise above it, skip over it, and pass by it. And so I skipped over the places where I did not find a way open before me. And this terrible obstacle which fenced me in is Meraioth, Mercutio, a diligent lad, one of the earth’s greatest men, who had much wisdom, knowledge, and skill in foreign languages, but was a lover of clowning and poured his scorn on everyone near him, for in his love of joking he did not distinguish friend from foe, and it was not enough for him to clown in one language, but rather there was also a French word on his tongue, or an Italian one, and as such he uttered with his lips empty and meaningless words like one who scatters chaff in the wind, as well as powerful words like one who shoots sparks and sharpened arrows. I trust that every understanding reader will admit that a Hebrew author does not have the power to translate all the words of Mercutio as they are. Authors of Shakespeare’s biography have already told us that one of his acquaintances asked him why he did not let Mercutio live until the end of the whole story, and he answered as follows: ‘If I had not arisen early to kill him, he would have killed me.’ And thus I say as well, if I had not shortened his words, he would have shortened my life, for he would have killed me with the breath of his lips.

And now I shall justify myself to those who love the Hebrew language. I know that they are the people of the Lord and they do not deem it appropriate to encounter vileness or foul language in their holy tongue, and
therefore they will make a judgement against me, because in some places in this book I translated utterances as they were written, at whose sound the ears of the pure-minded ones in the camp of the Hebrews will tingle, and they will say that it would have been much better for me to take the garment, turn my face backwards, and cover the nakedness of the father of poets. And to this I respond that indeed Shakespeare is a trustworthy author before God and men, and out of all the various men who act upon the stage (upon the earth), he displays before us each man and his speech as it is, and if there are rash and worthless men among them who speak fouly and sully their mouths, they will be judged, as the Talmud says; there will be a deeper hell for everyone with a foul mouth, but the trustworthy author or the translator who does his work faithfully is blameless. For if it is not so, dear reader, why do you not also quarrel with the wisest man of all because he presented us with an adulterous woman who spoke flattering words in the ears of a senseless youth, and with the brazeness of a whore uttered words that pure-hearted men should not hear. And if you say that he intended only to warn us, and that he did all of this to instruct us in good morals, then I shall also ask you why you do not judge Shakespeare favourably as well. Open this book to page 32 and listen to the words of Meraioth, who opened

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7 This is a reference to Gen. 9:23, in which Noah’s sons Shem and Japheth take a garment to cover their father’s nakedness with their faces turned away while he lies in a drunken sleep.
8 King Solomon, traditionally considered the author of the biblical books Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.
9 This is a reference to Prov. 2:16 and 7:5, which advise caution against flattering adulteresses.
10 In the original edition; see Ram and Joel, First Part, note 273 in this edition.
Regarding the book’s value I have nothing to say, for I am its relative and friend; if it contains anything desirable, let a stranger praise it, rather than me. But I would like to anticipate the reader when he asks me the following: is it good for Jewish youth to study such a book, which begins with madness and lust, and ends in murder, killing, and destruction? To this I respond that in my opinion the book is very good for Jewish youth, and will benefit them as they go through their life, for in it they can see not only the fruit of hatred and strife, which have felled many victims, but...
also how many victims of love there are and how numerous those slain by it are. Consider, dear reader, the son of Abiram, a desirable and pleasant boy, who has a wealth of might and glory, but is consumed by unbounded love. In the beginning he had set his sights on a certain girl and clung to her, but since she paid him no heed, he went around all day gloomy under the weight of his heart, and at night he could not sleep. After days of sorrow and mourning, dark days when he loathed his life, he met another girl, better than the first one, and the fire of his love burned within him again like the flame of the Lord, and she too joined him in the bond of the covenant, but her parents, his enemies, were willing for both him and their daughter to be stabbed to death, rather than letting them enter this covenant. In dangerous circumstances he managed to see her once in secret in the dead of night, and he kissed her as he parted from her in bitterness; with this kiss he forfeited his entire future, for this was the reward for all his toil, and from that time onwards he found no rest until he killed himself and the girl of his youthful covenant did likewise, and the fire of love devoured both of them. And this is what I meant when I said that this book will present lessons and manners and good education to the youth who studies it, for he will recognize how to take care to keep his eyes open wherever he goes, and if it comes time for him to fall in love, he will enter only into a covenant of love by which he may live, rather than becoming attached to a graceful maiden on account of whom he will die.
The names of the speakers

Escalus\(^{12}\) .................................................. Eshcol\(^{11}\) the prince in Verona
Paris .................................................. Paris a young nobleman and friend of the prince
Montague two heads of ancestral houses between whom there is a quarrel and war
Capulet
Uncle to Capulet .................................................. Elder
Romeo .................................................. Ram Abiram’s son
Mercutio .................................................. Meraioth acquaintance of the prince and Ram’s friend
Benvolio .................................................. Benaiah Abiram’s nephew and Ram’s friend
Tybalt . Tubal nephew of Abiel’s wife
Friar Laurence two Christian priests
Iohn
Balthasar .................................................. Balthasar Ram’s servant
Sampson Abiel’s servants
Gregory
Peter Peter servant of Jael’s nurse
Abram . Bera Abiram’s servant
An Apothecary Apothecary of medicines
Musicians .................................................. Musicians
Chorns\(^{13}\) .................................................. Chorus of singers
Two Pages Two youths attendants to Paris
Lady Montague .................................................. Abiram’s wife
Lady Capulet .................................................. Abiel’s wife
Juliet Jael Abiel’s daughter
Nurse to Juliet .................................................. Nurse to Juliet

Natives of the city of Verona; men and women related to the two ancestral houses; people wearing masks over their eyes; guards; night watchmen and attendants.

*Four of the scenes\(^{14}\) are in Verona, and the fifth scene is in Mantua.*

11 This is the name of an Amorite allied with Abraham (Gen. 14:13, 24).
12 Salkinson provided this English cast list alongside the Hebrew one.
13 Sic; this appears in Salkinson’s English cast list instead of the expected ‘Chorus’.
14 Salkinson is clearly referring to acts rather than scenes, but uses a word that he elsewhere employs in the sense of ‘scene’.  

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Ram and Joel
First Part

SCENE I  A street in Verona: (Shimshai and Gera carrying shields and bearing swords)

SHIMSHAI I say one thing, Gera; we shall no longer cut wood.

GERA You have spoken well, for why should we be woodcutters?

SHIMSHAI Why, what I am saying is this: when smoke rises from my nose, I draw my sword.

GERA As long as there is breath in your nose, draw your neck from your neck-chain.

SHIMSHAI I strike quick as lightning when my heart is angered.

GERA But your heart is not angered to strike quick as lightning.

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1 Salkinson’s translation seems to be based on the Folio version of Romeo and Juliet, as it omits the prologue (‘Two households, both alike in dignity…’) appearing in the Quarto versions.

2 As in Ithiel, Salkinson preserves the Italian place names appearing in Shakespeare’s text. See Kahn (2017) for discussion of the possibility that this strategy is rooted in an acknowledgement of the longstanding and prominent Jewish presence in Italy.

3 A scribe mentioned in Ezra 4:8, 9, 17, and 23. Salkinson seems to have chosen this name based purely on its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s Sampson; he most likely chose this minor character over the more similar-sounding Samson because he wanted to avoid the strong associations of the latter, a prominent figure well known from Judges 13–16. In addition, Salkinson may have been motivated by the fact that the Hebrew root on which the name Shimshai is based means ‘to serve’, making it a particularly appropriate choice for a servant of the Abiel household.

4 A name referring to various minor biblical characters, namely one of Benjamin’s sons (Gen. 46:21); the judge Ehud’s father (Judg. 3:15); and the father of Shimei the Benjaminite, who cursed David (2 Sam. 16:5). Gera is also listed as Benjamin’s grandson in 1 Chron. 8:3. The name may denote a particular Benjaminite family, and so the aforementioned instances may not all refer to different individuals. Salkinson most likely selected the name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s Gregory.

5 This and the following speeches until Benaiah’s next line are prose in the original (1.1.1–61).

6 Exod. 10:29.

7 Salkinson’s ‘cut wood’ and ‘woodcutters’ replace Shakespeare’s ‘carry coals’ (1.1.1) and ‘colliers’ (1.1.2). These substitutions are explicitly Judaizing dynamic equivalents to the original English terms: woodcutting was a common occupation among Eastern European Jews well into the twentieth century (Salsitz 2002: 84–7); moreover, it would have been widely recognized among Hebrew readers as a classic form of manual labour due to its appearance in a well-known phrase from Joshua 9:21, וְשֹֽׁאֲבֵי־מַ֙יִם֙, ‘woodcutters and water carriers’.

8 i.e., ‘when I grow angry’ – the nose growing hot is a biblical idiom denoting anger.

9 Exod. 15:9.

10 Salkinson seems to have chosen to use the word ‘nose’ with two different senses, and the verb ‘to draw’ in this and the preceding line, to echo Shakespeare’s pun on choler/collar ‘an we be in choler’ (1.1.3) and ‘draw your neck out of collar’ (1.1.4).
Even a dog from the house of Abiram\(^{11}\) would arouse all my anger.

One who is aroused in his anger moves, whereas a warrior stands.

And therefore, when you are aroused you flee for your life.

A dog from this family would arouse my anger to take a stand before him.

And I would chase away every man and woman of the whole house of Abiram.

As one who pisses against the wall,\(^{12}\) and the wall would be mine.

And this is a sign for me that you are faint-hearted\(^{13}\)

For every weakling leans against the wall.

Indeed the matter is true, for they push the women

For they are soft, to lean against the wall.

And therefore I shall do this to the house of Abiram when I push

The males away from the wall and press the females to the wall.

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\(^{11}\) Salkinson’s choice of אבירם ‘Abiram’ as an equivalent for Shakespeare’s ‘Montague’ does not take sound correspondence into account, but rather is based solely on the name’s significance. This choice functions on two distinct levels in Hebrew. First, it literally means ‘Ram’s father’. As Salkinson’s has dubbed his equivalent of Romeo ‘Ram’ (see note 44), this name would have served explicitly to establish the familial link between the father and son in Hebrew readers’ minds. Second, the biblical figure of Abiram would have been familiar to Salkinson’s audience from his appearance in Numbers 16, as one of the members of Korach’s rebellion against Moses’ leadership of the Israelites during their forty-year sojourn in the desert following their liberation from Egypt. Abiram would thus have been synonymous with spite, arrogance, and disloyalty, not to mention the horrifying punishment of being swallowed by the earth.

\(^{12}\) This phrase appears in several locations in the Hebrew Bible (1 Sam. 25:22, 25:34; 1 Kings 14:10, 16:11, 21:21; 2 Kings 9:8), as an idiom meaning ‘male’; here, Salkinson takes advantage of the fact that it contains the word קיר ‘wall’, thereby serving as a play on the same word in the following clause.

\(^{13}\) 2 Chron. 13:7.
The quarrel is between our master and their master, and between us, the men.

I do not distinguish between man and woman like a cruel tyrant; When I have fought against the lads, I shall fight with furious cruelty Against the virgin lasses, and smash their head.

Will you smash the head of the virgins? I shall smash the head of the virgins, or the head of their virginity And you must understand my words in accordance with your good sense.

Only those who have their feeling within them to perceive sense will understand your words.

But they will know my sense and my bow, for it sits firmly And it is not concealed from anyone’s eyes that I am great of flesh.

You are great of flesh, and not a thin fish But lift up your weapons; behold, there are two Abirams opposite.

(17) Bera and Balthasar enter

14 Prov. 27:4.
15 This is a relatively literal translation of Shakespeare’s ‘the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads’ (1.1.24); in contrast to the English ‘maidenheads’, the Hebrew phrase ‘head of their virginity’ is not an established phrase and does not constitute a true play on words.
16 The Hebrew pronoun is feminine, referring specifically to the maidens.
17 Salkinson has chosen to alter the one biblical name that actually appears in Shakespeare’s text, changing Abra(ha)m into בֶּרַע ‘Bera’. This likely reflects a reluctance for Montague’s retainer to bear the name of the first biblical patriarch and symbolic father of the Jewish people (Almagor 1975: 748). The choice of ‘Bera’, the king of Sodom mentioned in Genesis 14:2, indicates that Salkinson regarded a minor biblical character with negative associations (and dating to the same period as the great patriarch) to be a more appropriate equivalent.
18 This is one of the only names in the play that Salkinson has not Hebraized. Instead, he has transliterated the English name into Hebrew. As in the case of Marcos in Ithiel (First Part, note 155), there is no clear need for Hebraization.
**Shimshai** Why, my sword is drawn; provoke them, and I shall be behind you.

**Gera** And you will turn away from me and turn your back to flee?

**Shimshai** Do not let it cross your mind that I am afraid.

**Gera** Indeed it would not cross my mind; would a man such as you flee?

**Shimshai** Let them begin the quarrel so that the law will be with us.

**Gera** I shall wink an eye at them, and let them answer as is good in their eyes.

**Shimshai** Not as is good in their eyes, but rather as they are able;

**Gera** That which he says, and he has not said,

**Shimshai** I shall put my thumb in my mouth to mock them

**Gera** And it will be a disgrace for them if they do not respond.

**Bera** Did you put your thumb in your mouth to mock us?

**Shimshai** I put my thumb in my mouth –

**Bera** Was it to mock us that you put your thumb in your mouth?

**Shimshai** (In a whisper to Gera) If I say yes, with whom will the law be?

**Gera** (In a whisper to Shimshai) Then the law will not be with us.

**Shimshai** It was not to mock you that I put my thumb in my mouth

**Bera** Do you quarrel with us?

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motivation for this. The decision not to domesticate this name is particularly surprising given the existence of the similar-sounding Hebrew בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר 'Belteshazzar', another name for the biblical Daniel. It is possible that Salkinson chose to avoid this solution out of a reluctance to name Ram’s servant after the venerated biblical figure, but it is unclear why he did not select another Hebrew name as he did in most other cases.

19 Alshekh to Gen. 6 and many other locations therein.
BERA Would I quarrel? The matter is not so.20

SHIMSHAI If you would quarrel with us, I am ready for you
The master whom I serve is not inferior to your master.

BERA Nor better than him.

SHIMSHAI And what else will you answer?

(Benaiah21 enters from opposite)

GERA (To Shimshai) Say better than him; behold, an acquaintance of our master is coming.

SHIMSHAI He is better, better than him.

BERA You lie.

SHIMSHAI Draw your swords if you are men – remember, Gera,
All the prideful words which you uttered. (They fight each other)

BENAIAH Desist, senseless men! Return your swords to their sheaths
Why, you do not know what you are doing. (Strikes with his sword and knocks their swords from their hands)

TUBAL22 Are you, with a drawn sword, involving yourself with these lowly servants?

BENAIAH I only came to silence the quarrel; put back your sword in peace

20 2 Sam. 20:21.
21 This is the name of various minor characters mentioned in a number of locations in the Hebrew Bible, the most prominent of which is a warrior loyal to King David (e.g., 2 Sam. 23:20–3). Salkinson most likely chose the name because of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Benvolio’.
22 One of Noah’s grandsons, mentioned in Gen. 10:2; Salkinson most likely selected this name on the basis of its close sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Tybalt’.
Or brandish it to help me separate the brawlers.

**TUBAL**
What does peace have to do with a drawn sword? I hate your peace.

Like Sheol, like the house of Abiram and like your despised self!

Come towards me, weak-handed one (They fight each other)

* (Several men from among the allies of the two families approach the fight, and afterwards the townspeople come with axes and hammers)*

**ONE OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE**
Hurry townspeople, strike with axes and hammers

Destroy the Abiels! Destroy the Abirams!

* (Abiel wrapped in a coat, and his wife)*

**ABIEL**
What is the sound of confusion? Give me my large sword.

**ABIEL’S WIFE**
A staff for one who leans on a staff; what use have you for the sword?

**ABIEL**
I said to give me my sword; there old Abiram

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23 The biblical abode of the dead.
24 2 Sam. 17:2.
25 Ps. 74:6.
26 The name **'Abiel**', Salkinson’s translation of Shakespeare’s ‘Capulet’, literally means ‘Jael’s father’, referring to the fact that Salkinson has named his version of Juliet ‘Jael’ (see note 174). In selecting the name ‘Abiel’, Salkinson has created an exact parallel to ‘Abiram’, his translation for ‘Montague’ (which literally means ‘Ram’s father’; see note 11). The name **'Abiel** does not actually appear in the Hebrew Bible, but is pronounced identically to the name **'Abiel**’, which denotes two different biblical characters, the grandfather of King Saul mentioned in 1 Sam. 9:1 and 14:51, and one of King David’s warriors mentioned in 1 Chron. 11:32.
27 2 Sam. 3:29. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘A crutch, a crutch!’ (1.1.74).
Is waving the blade of his sword in order to vex me.

(Abiram and his wife)

Abiram

Come, you villain Abiel! – let go of me, so that I may go forth to him.

Abiram’s wife

You shall not step from here even one step to seek an enemy for yourself.

(The prince enters with his guards)

The prince

Oh, assembly of traitors! Peace-hating people!

Ones who desecrate an iron weapon with their brothers’ flesh

Are you not listening? – You are wild asses, not men

Who put out the fire of your rage in a fountain of blood flowing from your veins.

Throw the instruments of violence from your hands, which are full of blood.

Lest you bear your iniquity in a furnace of affliction with a burden on your loins

And listen to the words of your masters, whom you have vexed today.

Three times now there has been the sound of distress and cries of lament in our squares

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28 Jer. 9:1 (9:2 in English Bibles).
29 Job 20:24.
30 Gen. 49:5.
31 Isa. 48:10.
32 Ps. 66:11.
33 Ps. 144:14

* מִיְדֵיכֶם: ‘may there be no breaches or going out [into captivity], and no cries of lament in our squares’. 
As stirring up anger by words
more trifling than breath

Between Abiel and Abiram has brought forth quarrel and strife

Until it has led Verona astray, and its citizens and elders

Have stripped off their ornaments and their honour and have seized worn swords

And rotten iron tools with which to destroy the rot of their hatred.

If you break out again and disturb the peace in the city

I shall have but one law: to put to death, and your blood will be on your heads.

And now all those gathered here, go, each man to his house

Only you, Abiel, shall indeed go with me

And moreover you, Abiram, shall come to me when midday is past

And I shall announce my words at the gate of judgement in the town of Horon

---

34 Prov. 30:33: ‘and stirring up anger brings forth quarrels’.

35 Exod. 33:6: ‘and the children of Israel stripped off their ornaments by Mount Horeb’.

36 Esther 4:11: ‘he has but one law: to put to death’.

37 Ezek. 33:4: ‘his blood will be on his head’.

38 1 Kings 18:29.

39 Alshekh to Gen. 19.

40 This is Salkinson’s translation of Shakespeare’s ‘Freetown’ (1.1.100). Horon is part of the place name Beth-Horon, which denotes two neighbouring towns mentioned on various occasions in the Hebrew Bible. These towns do not have any particular associations with law or judgements, either in the biblical period or later (although several Talmudic scholars came from Beth-Horon). Rather, the selection of this name in the present context is likely be rooted in the phonetic similarity between חורין ‘Horon’ and the rabbinic word חורין ‘free’ (which most commonly appears in the phrase בחרין בן ‘free man’), thereby evoking echoes of the English ‘Freetown’.

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And as for all of those gathered here, I order you again

Go back, each man on his way, for it will cost you your lives. 41

(The prince exits, and after him his attendants, Abiel and his wife, Tubal, and all the inhabitants of the city)

ABIRAM Whose hand renewed the old quarrel today?

Tell me, my nephew, did you see how it began?

BENAIAH Your enemy’s servants were fighting with your servants

Before I reached them, for I sought to separate them,

Suddenly the rash Tubal came with drawn sword

And provoked me to fight against him; and he was raising and lowering his sword

Brandishing it in every direction, as if striking the wind around him

But the wind was not struck by its striker, and whistled as if mocking him

And while we rushed to fight with blows and beatings in turn

A great crowd came and each man struck straight ahead with a high hand 42, 43

Until the prince came and scattered all the fighting men.

And as for all of those gathered here, I order you again

Go back, each man on his way, for it will cost you your lives. 41

(הנסיך הולך😀 ואחריו נושאים, ובאילך והשתחוו́ת́ ווֹטוֹל כָּל בֵּן הֵתיֵרָה)

אבירם יִדּוֹ מוֹ חַלּוּתְוֵי לַהוֹדְשֵׂת הַחָנִיתָה?

JsonProperty: 40

נַגְּלַיְהַל בֵּי אָחִי אֵיךְ הֲרָאִיתָ?

בֶּנֶיהוּ הַתְּגְרַה לְחַדֵּשׁ, הָיְתָה מִי יַד אֵבירם? חַרְבּוֹ וְמוֹרִיד סְבִיוֹ הָרוּחַ כִּמַּכֶּה,

כְּלֹﬠֵג בְּמַדְחֵפוֹת לְהִתְﬠַשֵּׂק חַשְׁנוּ וּבְעוֹד חֲלִיפוֹת וּמַהֲלֻמוֹת בְּיָד בְּיָד נֶגְדּוֹ אִישׁ וַיַכּוֹ רָב הָמוֹן בָּא, 43 וַיִּשְׁרֹק מַכֵּהוּ מִיַּד הֻכָּה לֹא וְהָרוּחַ לוֹ כְּלֹﬠֵג בְּמַדְחֵפוֹת לְהִתְﬠַשֵּׂק חַשְׁנוּ וּבְעוֹד חֲלִיפוֹת וּמַהֲלֻמוֹת בְּיָד בְּיָד נֶגְדּוֹ אִישׁ וַיַכּוֹ רָב הָמוֹן בָּא 43 , 42

רָמָה רָמָה אַנְשֵׁי כָּל וַיָּפֶץ הַנָּסִיךְ בָּא אֲשֶׁר חַד. 43

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41 Prov. 7:23 אַלִּי־אָדָם אֲלִיָּד, כִּי־בְנַפְשׁוֹ וְלֹֽא־יָ֝דַ֗ע ’and he does not know that it will cost him his life’.

42 Exod. 14:8; Num. 15:30, 33:3.

43 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘part/part’ (1.1.112–13). This is unusual, as Salkinson does not usually recognize same-word rhymes in his translation.
ABIRAM’S WIFE

Where is my son Ram? Have you seen him today, Benaiha? It is enough for me that he was not in this quarrel.

BENAIHA

Before the dawn had broken, ere from the windows of the firmament The glory of the sun peeked from the east, I arose to stroll in the field.

For my spirit constrained me, and at that time I saw your son Walking back and forth between the boulevards of sycamores Which are to the west of the city, and when I turned towards him His eye saw me and he stole away under the shady trees in the woods And I, from how my face was set, recognized how his face was set.

44 Salkinson selected ‘Ram’ as the Hebrew equivalent of ‘Romeo’ on the basis of both sound correspondence and meaning. Ram is a biblical character mentioned in Ruth 4:19 as the ancestor of King David. Because King David and his genealogical line are exalted in Jewish tradition, and readers of Salkinson’s text would have been familiar with the biblical Ram from the annual synagogue recitation of the Book of Ruth during the festival of Shavuot, they would have associated Shakespeare’s protagonist with the positive qualities of the Davidic line. Likewise, the fact that the name derives from the Book of Ruth is itself significant: as Ruth is the archetypal biblical love story, the name would have had romantic associations in readers’ minds.
45 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘today/fray’ (1.1.114–15).
46 Gen. 24:63.
47 Job 40:21. The word צֶאֱלִים appears only twice in the Hebrew Bible (here and in the following verse, Job 40:22), and its meaning is somewhat unclear. The translation ‘shady trees’ is based on the King James Bible, and has been selected because it most closely parallels Shakespeare’s ‘the covert of the wood’ (1.1.123), but other possibilities include ‘bramble bush’ and ‘bough’ (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 992), as well as ‘lotus plants’ (e.g., New Revised Standard Version, English Standard Version).
48 This form appears in the Hebrew Bible but seems to be a place name; the meaning of ‘woods’ is believed to have originated in the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 2: 615).
49 Hab. 1:9 ‘their faces are set as the east wind’.
50 רַב רַב
For I, like he, sought to converse
with myself alone

Lest someone be a hindrance to me, 
for I was a burden to myself\(^1\)

And therefore I went on my way and
I turned away from him as my
soul desired

Just as he, as his soul desired, fled
and turned away from me.

Thus he has been seen two or three
times, walking back and forth
there in the woods

His eyes drip water to supplement
the dewdrops

And with the groaning of his spirit
he clouds his surroundings,
multiplying the morning clouds

And when the dawn stirs and rolls
back the curtain

From the chambers of the east and
the sun emerges from its canopy\(^2\)

To make the soul of every living
being rejoice, thus my son
returns home

Gloomy with the oppression of his
heart; he closes and blocks the
windows of his chamber

Lest light come from its dwelling-
place and make morning of his
darkness.

This broken spirit\(^3\) has been
a mortal illness from the
beginning\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Job 7:20 'why have You set me as your target, so that I am a burden to myself?'; Salkinson seems to be using the word מִפְגָּע, which means 'target' in the biblical text, in the sense of 'hindrance' or 'obstacle', which is first attested in the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 1050).

\(^2\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘the shady curtains from Aurora’s bed’ (1.1.134); Salkinson has removed the reference to Aurora, the Roman goddess of the dawn, which would have had little meaning or relevance in the Eastern European Jewish context.

\(^3\) Prov. 15:13, 17:22, 18:14.

\(^4\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘prove/remove’ (1.1.139–40).
And if we do not find a remedy, it will be bitterness in the end. 55

Benaiyah
My noble uncle, do you know what his anguish of spirit 56 is?

Abiram
Several times have I enquired, and many others too
But he is concealing the matter, and will not reveal his secret
And everyone who enquires and seeks of him is like one who enquires of a flower of the field 57
Whose insides have been eaten by a maggot and it withers and dries 58
Before it has spread out its foliage to be seen and its glorious beauty 59 to the sun
If we could find the root of the matter 60 on account of which his soul is wretched 61
It would not be impossible to find a remedy. 62
(Ram can be seen from afar)

Benaiyah
Please turn aside, my lord; here he comes towards me 63
And I shall question him and enter his confidence, for I shall urge him with my love.

Abiram
If only profound worry could be drawn out from a pit of water 64

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55 2 Sam. 2:26.
56 Gen. 26:35; Hosea 11:10; ‘anguish of spirit’.
57 Isa. 40:6; Ps. 103:15.
58 Ps. 90:6.
59 Jer. 30:13, 46:11.
60 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘grow/know’ (1.1.152–3).
61 ‘This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘aside/denied’ (1.1.154–5).
62 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘stay/away’ (1.1.156–7).
63 Salkinson’s insertion of the phrase יָדָיִם לָהֶם לְמַﬠַן ‘in order to give them space’, which has no basis in the original, seems to have been rooted solely in a desire to make these two lines rhyme.

Ram and Joel
Arise, my wife, and let us go from here to give them space.

(Abiram and his wife exit)

Benaiah
I am happy to have met you this morning; are you well, my brother?

Ram
And I thought that the morning watch had passed

Time is long for the man whose path is hidden.

But who hurried to go away from here? Was it my father?

Benaiah
Yes. But who is making your days lengthy and evil?

Ram
Indeed my lot is not such that the days pass by like moments.

Benaiah
Are you lovesick?

Ram
I am loveless.

Benaiah
Is your soul lacking love?

Ram
I am lacking the one whom my soul loves, for she has abandoned me.

Benaiah
What is more pleasant than delicate love, at a time when favour is upon its lips?

And who is as cruel as it is, without mercy at a time when it hides its face?

65 This is the Hebrew dynamic equivalent of Shakespeare’s nonspecific kinship term ‘cousin’ (1.1.158) (see Weis 2012: 135, note 158, and Crystal and Crystal 2002: 105 for discussion of Shakespeare’s use of ‘cousin’ in this sense).

66 Exod. 14:24; 1 Sam. 11:11.

67 Job 3:23.

68 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘young/long’ (1.1.158–9).

69 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.

70 Isa. 49:8.

71 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in the original, though perhaps Salkinson interpreted Shakespeare’s ‘view/proof’ (1.1.167–8) as a rhyme.

72 The expression ‘hide one’s face’ appears on many occasions in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Deut. 31:18; Isa. 8:17; Ezek. 39:23; Ps. 27:9) and refers to God turning away from the Israelites in punishment for their sins. This concept of hester panim, or divine concealment (lit. ‘hiding one’s face’), is a theme in Jewish philosophy. See Wolpe (1997) for a discussion of hester panim in modern Jewish thought.
And how does this love with its eyes covered twist and turn on its ways?  

And in blindness pave a path to the place where it desires to go? –

Where shall we dine at noon? –

Woe, for there is strife and violence in the city?  

But cease telling me, for I have heard everything.

We have had enough of quarrelling with enmity and doubly with love.

Oh woe, love full of brawling!  

Hatred mixed with affection!  

You are something created out of nothing, a matter trifling yet too heavy to bear.

Pointlessness full of weighty matters, an image that is despised yet pleasing to the sight.

A wing of lead, bright smoke, and a cold flame

Healthy of flesh yet sick of soul, a spirit of deep sleep yet an alert heart;

This is my love, strange and shifting before the eye.

And this is the lot of my soul, drunk, but not with wine.

Do you not laugh?

---

73 Jer. 2:23 מִשְׂרֶכֶת 'she twists and turns on her ways'.

74 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's ‘still/will’ (1.1.169–70).

75 Ps. 55:10 (55:9 in English Bibles) מְשָׂרֶכֶת 'violence and strife in the city'.

76 The last word in this line does not rhyme with the last word in the following line, in contrast to Shakespeare's 'hate/create' (1.1.174–5). However, the final vowel of the last word of both lines is הוהי (ויו), which may suggest that Salkinson was unable to find a fully rhyming translation and selected these two words because of their partial sound correspondence.

77 Gen. 41:2 בָּשָׂר וּבְרִיאֹת 'and fat (lit. healthy) of flesh'.

78 Isa. 29:10.

79 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'is/this' (1.1.179–80).

80 Isa. 51:21.
BENAIAH Not so, my brother; I want to weep.  

RAM But for what, my beloved friend?  

BENAIAH For the distress of your soul, because I know its pain.  

RAM Why, this is the law of love, a bad law.

The oppression of my heart is severe, and my spirit crushes me like a millstone.

And you, because you are distressed on account of my distress, harass me further.

And your faithful love for me, which has been demonstrated to me,

Adds anguish to my anguish, which I have grown weary of bearing.

Love is the smoke of hearts rising from an excess of sighs.

And when the smoke is cleansed it burns, and the lovers' eyes shine

But it transforms itself with the sound of rebuke and becomes a river of tears.

And what else is love? Madness with much scheming

More bitter than the poison of asps and sweeter than all delights.

And now, farewell – (Makes to exit)

BENAIAH Wait and we'll go together; I desire your company.

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81 Judg. 9:53; 2 Sam. 11:21.
82 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'breast/pressed' (1.1.184–5).
83 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'shown/own' (1.1.186–7).
84 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'sighs/eyes' (1.1.188–9).
85 Lam. 2:18.
86 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'discreet/sweet' (1.1.191–2).
87 Deut. 32:33; Job 20:16.
88 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'along/wrong' (1.1.193–4).
Please listen to me, do not abandon me.

RAM
I have also been abandoned, and so I do not understand. 89

Ram is not here; he is wandering lost at every corner. 90

BENAIAH
Tell me, who is she whom you desire?

RAM
Should I groan bitterly, telling you who she is?

BENAIAH
Do not groan bitterly; pour out your heart and say who she is.

RAM
When you tell a suffering man, 91 hurry to make a will for your household. 92

At this his heart melts, 93 for he regards his blow to be mortal.

Only this shall I say in sadness, that I love a woman.

BENAIAH
Before you told me, I thought so as well.

RAM
You are a wise thinker, and my beloved is good-looking.

BENAIAH
It is easy to shoot at a good-looking target, and you have struck well.

RAM
You have shot your words for nothing, and you have not hit the target.

She laughs at the arrow-shooters, 94 and stands like a fortified city. 95

Please listen to me, do not abandon me.

RAM
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BENAIAH
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RAM
You have shot your words for nothing, and you have not hit the target.

She laughs at the arrow-shooters, 94 and stands like a fortified city. 95

89 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘here/otherwhere’ (1.1.195–6).
90 Prov. 7:12.
91 Isa. 53:3.
92 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘will/ill’ (1.1.200–1).
93 i.e., in fear; Josh. 2:11 ; Lev. 18:26 ; and our heart melted; see also Josh. 5:1, 7:5.
94 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Cupid’s arrow’ (1.1.207); Salkinson has replaced the Classical mythological reference with an expression devoid of any particular cultural overtones.
95 Isa. 47:10.
Her mind is like God's mind; there is no counsel or strength before her.

The shield of her perfection is strong, and the whole fortress of her strength is stone.

She does not fear a drawn bow; she regards arrows of love as straw.

Pleading does not help; she does not look favourably upon words of love.

She is not moved by tears, and she turns her gaze away from arrogant eyes.

She has no desire for gold, she scorns wealth.

Her great wealth is the charm of her face, and poverty would follow her.

For on the day of her death, beauty will die with her.

benaiah Has she sworn a vow to abstain from men, to sit barren all her days?

ram By abstaining she withholds her love, but indeed she is missing out.

96 Cf. Shakespeare's 'She hath Dian's wit' (1.1.207). Salkinson has replaced Diana, the Roman goddess of hunting, with the monotheistic God. This differs from the many cases in which he simply removes references to Classical mythological figures. It is possible that he chose to retain the divine associations of the original phrase in order to preserve the point that Rosaline/Shoshana has a superhuman mind (in contrast to other cases, such as the directly preceding reference to Cupid, where the sense of the English can be conveyed without recourse to the divine).

97 2 Kings 18:20; Isa. 11:2, 36:5.

98 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'hit/wit' (1.1.206–7).

99 Isa. 21:15.

100 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'armed/uncharmed' (1.1.208–9).

101 This and the following two lines form an ABA rhyme, mirroring the original except that the latter has instead a rhyming couplet in the last two lines of the speech, 'poor/store' (1.1.213–14). This difference may suggest that Salkinson was unable to find a suitable rhyme in the two adjacent lines and decided on this solution as a partial correspondence to the English version.

102 This last word in Benaiah's line rhymes with the last word of the following line (spoken by Ram), echoing the English original (again, split between Benvolio and Romeo) 'chaste/waste' (1.1.215–16).
For the beautiful maiden in her virginity, who refuses to build a house,  

La תְּמָאֵן לַיָּפָה לִבְנוֹת.  

Will not bequeath to eternity the fruit of her womb like olive shoots.

לִפְרִי לֶחָיִים לֹא בְּשָׂרִים נַפְשֶךָ.  

She denies her great beauty, and she calls the life of the flesh the shadow of death.

וְתִקְרָא תִּתְﬠַקֵּשׁ רַב לְיָפְיָהּ צַלְמָוֶת שַׁﬠֲרֵי שַׁﬠֲרֵי.  

In her hope to inherit eternal life, she has brought me to the gates of death.

בֵּית כִּשְׁתִילֵי ביטְנָה פְּרִי לַדּוֹר תַנְחִיל לֹא בְּשָׂרִים לְחַיֵּי וְתִקְרָא תִּתְﬠַקֵּשׁ רַב לְיָפְיָהּ צַלְמָוֶת שַׁﬠֲרֵי שַׁﬠֲרֵי.  

She has issued a ban on touching the tree of knowledge, to my anger and my wrath.

וַחֲמָתִי לְךָ לְהַגִּיד חַי וְרַק אֲנִי גּוֵֹעַ זֶה וּבְאִסָּר.  

And from this ban I am dying, and live only to tell you of my love.

בֵּיתוֹ קָשֹׁב יִשְׁכָּח אֶהְגֶּה לְבַל לִשְׁכֹּחַ אֵיךְ הוֹרֵנִי רַם בִּבְנוֹת וּרְאֵה מִסָּבִיב עֵינֶיךָ אַרְצֶךָ תְּאַוֶּה אָשֶׁר כְּכֹל הֵנָּה טֹבֹת לֹא אִם הַדֶּרֶךְ זֹה אַךְ רַם.  

Listen, and forget it from your heart, and do not ponder the core of the obsession.

רָמָה אַף/cs. לְהוֹרֵנִי אַחַת יָפָתִי כִּי לְיִי לְהוֹרוֹת?  

Teach me how to forget, lest I ponder all thoughts.

בֵּית שַׁﬠֲרֵי שַׁﬠֲרֵי פְּנֵי שָׁחֹר לְמַסְוֶה אֹמַר מָה הַדֶּרֶךְ זֹה אַךְ רַם.  

Look around you and see if the daughters of your land are not as good as anyone whom your soul desires.

רָמָה אַף/cs. לְהוֹרֵנִי אַחַת יָפָתִי כִּי לְיִי לְהוֹרוֹת?  

Indeed this is the way

לְבַל לִשְׁכֹּחַ אֵיךְ הוֹרֵנִי רַם בִּבְנוֹת וּרְאֵה מִסָּבִיב עֵינֶיךָ אַרְצֶךָ תְּאַוֶּה אָשֶׁר כְּכֹל הֵנָּה טֹבֹת לֹא אִם הַדֶּרֶךְ זֹה אַךְ רַם.  

To teach me that my beautiful one is unique among women.

מְאֹר לֶמֹאָה שָׁרֵר עַל פֶּרֶבֶּת?  

What could I say of a black veil over the face of a charming girl?

103 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘severity/posterity’ (1.1.217–18).

104 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘fair/despair’ (1.1.219–20).

105 Ps. 9:14, 107:18; Job 38:17.

106 Gen. 2:9, 17.

107 Jer. 32:31 ‘לִפְרִי לֶחָיִים לֹא בְּשָׂרִים נַפְשֶךָ’.

108 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘vow/now’ (1.1.221–2).

109 This last word in Benaiah’s line rhymes with the last word of the following line (spoken by Ram). There is no precedent for this in Shakespeare’s ‘her/think’ (1.1.223–4).

110 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet. This lacks precedent in the source text; Salkinson may have understood Shakespeare’s ‘eyes/beauties’ (1.1.225–6) as a rhyme, although it is not generally recognized as one (Weis 2012: 419).
Except to distinguish between the
veil and that which is behind
the veil

Can a blind man forget how sweet
was the light of the sun

Which he had seen previously,
before he was struck with
blindness?

If I find a beautiful maiden, she
will only be a reminder to me

Which multiplies by the power of
ten and yet does not reach its
full measure

So how can you advise me to
forget the one who is superior
to all of them?!!

BENAIAH
If my advice is not good, I
shall go down to Sheol
mourning.\textsuperscript{112,113}

(Exeunt)

SCENE 2\textsuperscript{114}
Street (Abiel, Paris,\textsuperscript{115} and
attendants)

ABIEL
Abiram was also warned like me
that a punishment would be
imposed upon him

And he has measured a judgement
for both of us with a single line;
but for elders like us

I do not regard it as a burden
to seek ways of peace.

PARIS
Why, you are both considered to
be among the greatest and most
respected men in the city

111 This last word in Ram's line rhymes with the last word of the following line (spoken by Benaiah), echoing
the English original (again, split between Romeo and Benvolio) 'forget/debt' (1.1.235–6).

112 Gen. 37:35 'indeed I shall go down to my son to Sheol mourning'.

113 Cf. Shakespeare's 'I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt' (1.2.236); Salkinson has neutralized the
Christian connotations of the source text's 'doctrine'.

114 Salkinson typically uses numerals to designate scenes, but in a few cases, such as this one, he uses
ordinals spelled out as words. This English translation mirrors the Hebrew in all cases.

115 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Paris'. Salkinson has chosen to use the Hebrew name of the city.
Therefore we are greatly distressed that you have not made peace long ago.

But what do you say to me, who desires your daughter?

Abiel 

Behold, I say today that which I said long ago

My daughter has not yet seen many days in her lifetime

She has not yet seen the passing of fourteen years

Therefore we shall let her see another two years in her greenness

Then her time will come to be wed to a man whom she loves.

Paris

I have seen a girl younger than her, a joyous mother of children.

Abiel

When a young girl takes a husband, she ages before her time.

All my treasures from the days of yore have been swallowed up and been obliterated

And only my daughter is the reviver of my soul and will inherit my estate.

As for you, dear Paris, go befriend her

And turn her heart towards you with good and faithful words

And if she desires you and is willing after two years

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116 Job 8:12 יִקָּטֵ֑ף לֹ֣א בְ֭אִבּוֹ עֹדֶ֣נּוּ 'while it is still in its greenness and not cut down'. The relatively literal translation 'in her/its greenness' follows the King James Bible; other translations include 'green', 'in flower', or 'growing'.

117 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘pride/bride’ (1.2.10–11).

118 Ps. 113:9.

119 Ps. 19:8 (19:7 in English Bibles) יִשְׁחַר אִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר אֵלֶּה 'a reviver of the soul'; see also Ruth 4:15 and Lam. 1:16 for similar constructions.

120 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘heart/part’ (1.2.15–16). Note that here, and in the following rhyming couplets, the Hebrew pairs of lines do not correspond exactly to their English counterparts.
To be a wife for you, I shall not refuse to give her. This evening I am holding a banquet, as I have done every year. And many are the guests, whose company is pleasant to me. And you are also counted as one of the guests. To increase their number and add to our delights. Please come tonight to my house when the wealthiest gather.

And there you will see the lights of the land illuminating the darkness of night. Like youths who love rejoicing and are happy about everything, They revel at the time of singing of birds after the winter is past. Thus will you revel on this night in the deligts and glory all around. Indeed they are the delicate women who are as delightful as the blossoms in spring. Set your eyes on beauty and hear that which is pleasing to the ears. And afterwards weigh on the scales which girl is better than all of them.

121 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘choice/voice’ (1.2.17–18). The single Hebrew rhyme extends over three lines.

122 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘feast/guest’ (1.2.19–20). ‘Feast’ and ‘guest’ rhymed in early modern English (Crystal 2011: 304).

123 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘store/more’ (1.2.21–2).

124 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘night/light’ (1.2.23–4).

125 Song of Songs 2:12. This is Salkinson’s translation of Shakespeare’s ‘well-apparelled April’ (1.2.26), reflecting a desire to avoid reference to the Gregorian calendar.

126 Song of Songs 2:11.

127 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘feel/heel’ (1.2.25–6).

128 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘delight/night’ (1.2.27–8).
And when you raise your eyes up again, like a shepherd seeking out his flock.  

Knowing who is thin and flawed, and who is honourable and splendid.

Regard my daughter as a ewe of the weak sort and not the strong sort.

And choose the first of the flock for yourself, for this is what young men do.

(Gives a missive to his servant) Go around the city and invite the people mentioned.

As their names are written on this scroll,

Say that my table is set and my house is wide open.

And I am waiting for their arrival at the family sacrifice.

(Abel and Paris exit)

I must find the men who are on the list.

I know what is written: there is no craftsman without tools:

There is no tailor without an awl, no shoemaker.

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129  Ezek. 34:12.
130  This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘see/be’ (1.2.29–30).
131  This is a reference to Gen. 30:42: ‘but when the sheep and goats were weaker, he did not put them in, so the weaker ones went to Laban and the stronger ones went to Jacob’, in which Jacob tricked his uncle Laban by separating the flocks that he was herding for Laban to his own advantage.
132  This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘one/none’ (1.2.31–2).
133  Judg. 14:10.
134  This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘about/out’ (1.2.33–4).
135  This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘say/stay’ (1.2.35–6).
136  1 Sam. 20:29 ‘a family sacrifice’.
137  This speech is prose in the original (1.2.37–43).
Without a needle, no fisherman
without a pen,
And no painter without a net, but
how can I find the people
Who are on the list, when I do not
know what the writer wrote
In this missive? – Indeed I shall go
seek advice
From those who know how to read;
perhaps I shall succeed in my desire.

(Benaiah and Ram)

Why, a burn can be healed with a
burn, by adding burning
fire
And the pain of your soul will
depart with the pain of
another soul;
If your heart flutters, spin and
move to calm yourself
And let your companion’s bruises
and wounds cleanse your
bruises and wounds;
If evil has come upon you which
you do not understand
Seek to bring down disaster upon
yourself and you will be able
to pacify the evil.

Your leaf is a good medicine and
a remedy for this break.

For which break?

138 Jer. 20:9.
139 This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring the source text except that the latter has an ABAB rhyming pattern: ‘burning/anguish/turning/languish’ (1.2.44–7).
140 Ps. 38:11 (38:10 in English Bibles) ‘my heart flutters’.
141 Prov. 20:30 ‘bruises and wounds cleanse evil’.
142 Isa. 47:11 ‘and evil will come upon you which you do not understand’.
143 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘eye/die’ (1.2.49).
144 Isa. 47:11 ‘and disaster will fall upon you’.
145 Salkinson has simplified Shakespeare’s ‘plantain leaf’ (1.2.50).
Ram and Jael

Ram

For your broken leg.

Benaiah

Are you mad?

Ram

I am not mad, but I am bound like a madman

And trapped in prison without food or sustenance

My body is given over to abusers and my soul to oppressors and also –

(To the servant) What do you seek, my fellow? Are you well?

The servant

May the peace of the Lord be with you, my lord; tell me, can you read?

Ram

Because of all that has befallen me, I can read my future.

The servant

You learned that without a book, but tell me Do you understand how to read every piece of writing that you see?

Ram

If I know the letters of the writing and the words of the language.

The servant

You have spoken honestly here – and now farewell to you.

Ram

Do not leave, man, I know how to read.

(Takes the missive and reads it)

Commander Marsena\(^{146}\) with his wife and daughters

Minister Shalmon\(^{147}\) and his pleasant sisters

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\(^{146}\) One of the seven princes of Persia mentioned in Esther 1:14; Salkinson most likely selected this name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare's 'Martino' (1.2.63).

\(^{147}\) This is likely to be a typographical error for Salmon, who is listed in Ruth 4:20–1 as one of the ancestors of King David. Salkinson probably suggested this name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare's 'Anselm' (1.2.64).
The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations

The lady widow of Ahitub  
Commander Pelatiah and his brother’s pleasant daughters
Meraioth and his brother Gibbethon
My uncle Abiel with his wife and daughters
My brother’s daughter Shoshannah, the most beautiful among girls, with Livia
Count Irad with his close relative Tubal
Luz with the gracious Hilne.

148 This name appears in various locations in the Hebrew Bible. It can refer to the grandson of Eli the priest mentioned in 1 Sam. 14:3 and the father of Zadok, a priest in the time of King David mentioned in 2 Samuel 8:17, as well as possibly one or two other minor figures mentioned in Nehemiah and 1 Chronicles. Salkinson may have selected it on the basis of its partial sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Vitruvio’ (1.2.65).

149 This name can refer to four different minor biblical characters, namely the son of Benaiyah mentioned in Ezekiel 11:1, one of the signatories of the covenant mentioned in Neh. 10:23 (Neh. 10:22 in English Bibles), the son of Hananiah and grandson of Zerubbabel mentioned in 1 Chron. 3:21, and a captain of a band of marauders in the reign of King Hezekiah mentioned in 1 Chron. 4:42. Salkinson most likely chose the name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Placentio’ (1.2.66).

150 This name appears in several locations in the Hebrew Bible and refers to various minor characters; for example, the head of a priestly house mentioned in Neh. 12:15 and a descendant of Aaron’s son Eleazar mentioned in 1 Chron. 5:32 (6:6 in English Bibles). Salkinson most likely selected the name because of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Mercutio’ (1.2.67).

151 This is the name of a town allotted to the tribe of Dan in Josh. 19:44. It is unclear why Salkinson selected this name as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘Valentine’ (1.2.67), since it denotes a location rather than a person. The location does not have any particular associations with the English name, and does not clearly correspond in sound.

152 Shoshannah is a common postbiblical Hebrew female name meaning ‘rose’. Salkinson most likely selected this name as the translation of ‘Rosaline’ (1.2.69) because, in contrast to most other names appearing in the play, it has a transparent meaning with an easily identifiable Hebrew equivalent.

153 This is not a Hebrew name but rather a word meaning ‘decorative wreath’ (Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 829); Salkinson most likely selected it because of its exact sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Livia’ (1.2.69).

154 Enoch’s son, mentioned in Gen. 4:18.

155 Lev. 21:2: ‘his close relative’; this collocation also appears in Num. 27:11. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (1.2.70).

156 This is not a Hebrew name or word. Salkinson most likely chose it simply as a Hebraized transliteration of Shakespeare’s ‘Lucio’ (1.2.71). However, it resembles the Hebrew verbal root צ ל. ‘mock’, which may have played some role in his decision. Note that I have transliterated it according to the traditional convention in English Bibles whereby the Hebrew letter צ tsadi is rendered as z.

157 This is not a Hebrew name or word; as in the case of Luz (see preceding note) it seems simply to be a Hebraized transliteration of Shakespeare’s ‘Helena’ (1.2.71).
(Returning the missive)

A select gathering, but
where will they gather?

THE SERVANT
In an upper room.

RAM
In which house?

THE SERVANT
In our house for the evening banquet.

RAM
In whose house?

THE SERVANT
In my master’s house.

RAM
If only I had asked this in the beginning.

THE SERVANT
I shall answer before you ask: my master is

The great and honourable Abiel; and if you are not
from the house of Abiram

Come as well to empty a cup of wine – and farewell to
you. (Exits)

BENAIAH
Abiel holds this banquet
from year to year

And Shoshannah, whom you love, will also be there

Among the precious daughters of Verona,
comparable to fine gold

Come and with a clear eye
compare her face

To the faces of other girls
that the hand of the one who lies in wait will
show you

158 These lines are prose in the original (1.2.78–82).
159 1 Sam. 7:16; Zech. 14:16; 2 Chron. 24:5.
160 Lam. 4:2; ‘the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold’.
161 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘show/crow’ (1.2.87–8).
Salkinson’s seemingly puzzling selection of the phrase הָאוֹרֵב יַד ‘the hand of the one who lies in wait’ instead of Shakespeare’s I (1.2.87) is motivated simply by the necessity of finding a rhyme for the word עֹרֵב ‘crow’ at the end of the following line.
And then your beautiful dove will appear as a crow in your eyes.

If my eyes see as your senseless heart sees

The fountain of my tears will become a blazing scorching fire

And my eyes, which have drowned in tears and disappeared from time to time,

Will burn like heretics and apostates in a blaze.

Even the sun above, which sees everything before the eyes,

Has not seen anyone more beautiful than my beautiful one since the day when the earth and heavens were created.

You found her beautiful by the balance, by the scales which you made

The trays of your balance were your eyes, and you saw her with one.

Without a weight on the other one to tell you that you had erred

If your beautiful one were weighed against another maiden

Whom I shall show you at the banquet as clear as the very heavens.

162 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring Shakespeare's 'eye/fires/die/liars' (1.2.89–92).
163 Jer. 8:23 (9:1 in English Bibles) 'if only my head were waters and my eye a fountain of tears'.
164 Isa. 68:15 'like a blazing fire'; Prov. 16:27 'like a scorching fire'.
165 Abarbanel to Ezek. 5.
166 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'sun/begun' (1.2.93–4).
167 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'by/eye' (1.2.95–6). The Hebrew rhyme extends over three lines rather than two.
168 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring the original except that the latter is made up of two rhyming couplets: 'weighed/maid', 'feast/best' (1.2.97–100).
169 Exod. 24:10.
You would say of the one who is
now better in your eyes than
all the charming and glorious
maidens

That she has neither splendour
nor radiance.

I shall go with you, not to see
another light\(^{170}\)
But rather to take delight in my
light, like the morning star,
son of the dawn.\(^{171}\)

(Exeunt)

THIRD SCENE A chamber in Abiel’s house
(Abel’s wife and the nurse)

Nurse! Where is my daughter?
Call her to come to me.

On my life! Indeed when she
was twelve years old
I called her then – but what is
wrong with you, graceful
doe!\(^{172}\)

What is wrong with you,
sparrow?\(^{173}\) God forbid! –

Where is the girl, then? – Are
you coming, Jael?\(^{174}\)

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\(^{170}\) This word and the last word of the following line do not rhyme visually or in Modern Hebrew pronunciation, but would have done so in Salkinson’s Ashkenazic pronunciation. As such, the two lines echo Shakespeare’s rhyming couplet ‘shown/own’ (1.2.101–2).

\(^{171}\) Isa. 14:12. This expression is associated with the planet Venus in postbiblical Hebrew literature (see Even-Shoshan 2003, 2: 381). This phrase lacks an equivalent in the original, which reads ‘But to rejoice in splendour of mine own’ (1.2.102). Salkinson most likely inserted it primarily or solely out of the desire to find a rhyme for the previous line.

\(^{172}\) Prov. 5:19. This is also a play on words referring to the heroine יָﬠֵל Jael (Juliet): the name literally means ‘mountain goat’ (sometimes translated as ‘ibex’ or ‘deer’), and the noun יְﬠֵלָה or יַﬠֲלָה translated above as ‘doe’ denotes the female of the same species (Even-Shoshan 2003, 2: 704). See note 174 for further discussion of the name Jael.

\(^{173}\) This collocation is traceable to Rabbinic Hebrew, appearing in, for example, Mishnah Nega‘Im 8:4 and Babylonian Talmud Be‘ṣa 24a.

\(^{174}\) Salkinson’s selection of יָﬠֵל ‘Jael’ as a translation of ‘Juliet’ is rooted partially in sound correspondence, but has symbolic connotations as well. Jael would have been well known among Jewish audiences as the protagonist of the biblical story recounted in Judges 4 and 5, in which she saved the Israelites from crushing defeat and conquest by the Canaanites when she courageously lured the enemy general Sisera into her tent and killed him. Moreover, Jael has a prominent place in postbiblical Jewish tradition, with the Babylonian Talmud (Naziṭ 23b) considering her to be more meritorious than even the four biblical matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. As such, by bestowing the name Jael upon Shakespeare’s
Jael: Who called me?

The Nurse: Your mother called you.

Jael: Here I am, my lady mother, what is your desire with me?

Abiel’s wife: This is the matter of my desire – go away from here, Nurse.

We have a secret matter – come back, Nurse, and let us take sweet counsel together.¹⁷⁵

You know, after all, that my daughter is soon to become a young woman.

The Nurse: I know the days of her life from day to day.¹⁷⁶

Abiel’s wife: Why, she is fourteen years old today.

The Nurse: I shall give my fourteen teeth if she is fourteen today

Even though there are no more than four in my mouth;

She is not fourteen, for such-and-such a holiday

On the first night of the fifth month has not yet come.¹⁷⁷

When will that holiday come?

Abiel’s wife: In two weeks and two or three days.

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¹⁷⁵ Ps. 55:15 (55:14 in English Bibles) הַגְּבִירָה אִמֵּי הִנְנִי יִעַל מִזֶּה אֹמֶנֶת לָךְ לְכִי – חֶפְצִי דְּבַר זה אביעל אשת יַחְדָּו יַחְדָּו וְאֹמֶנֶת שׁוּבִי – לָנוּ סֵתֶר דְּבַר 175 סוֹד נַמְתִּיק יַחְדָּו ‘we took sweet counsel together’.

¹⁷⁶ Num. 30:15 (30:14); 1 Chron. 16:23.

¹⁷⁷ The English original (1.3.16) refers to Lammastide, the Anglo-Saxon holiday marking the wheat harvest that takes place on the first of August. Salkinson replaces this with ‘such-and-such a holiday’ that takes place on the first day of the fifth month. The reference to the ‘first night of the fifth month’ is a veiled allusion to Lammastide: the first month in the Hebrew Bible corresponds approximately to April on the Gregorian calendar, and as such the fifth month would equate to August. Thus, Salkinson’s translation serves to neutralize the Christian connotations of the original name (which has no established Hebrew equivalent and would not have been familiar to Jewish readers in any case) by substituting it with a nondescript label and placing it within the context of the biblical calendar. It is likely that Salkinson chose this strategy in the present instance because there is no Jewish holiday that falls at a similar time to and could easily be equated with Lammastide. (Note that in order to introduce this description of the holiday, Salkinson has substantially rephrased and expanded on the original.)
The day of that holiday is the day of her birth

It is a night of vigil for me each and every year.

And at that time she will turn fourteen.

And Shoshannah was the same age as her; she was born with her in the same year.

But she is not with us, for she walks with God.

And I already said on the first of the fifth she will be fourteen

For I remember well; it is eleven years since the earthquake

On the day when she was weaned, and I shall never forget that day

For it is unique in the year; there is none like it among all the days.

For in order to wean her from the milk of my breasts, I put wormwood on my bosom

178 Exod. 12:42.
179 Esther 9:21, 27.
180 The name Susan derives from the Hebrew word and female name שושנה, meaning ‘lily’ or ‘rose’, and as such Shoshannah is an appropriate equivalent. As a result, the two characters Rosaline and Susan share a name in Salkinson’s version.
181 Salkinson has omitted the Christian expression appearing in the original, ‘Susan and she, God rest all Christian souls,/Were of an age’ (1.3.19–20). This is a typical strategy that he adopts with respect to oath formulas and other phatic expressions containing allusions to Christian figures and concepts.
182 Gen. 5:24 את־הָאֱלֹהִים חֲנוֹךְ וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ ‘and Enoch walked with God’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Susan is with God’ (1.3.20). Enoch is one of the figures appearing in a genealogical table chronicling the first generations of humankind. His account is enigmatic because, in contrast to the other figures in the list, it is not stated explicitly that he died, but rather simply that he walked with God and was no more, for God took him. This ambiguity has led to various proposals relating to his fate, including the proposal appearing in rabbinic literature (e.g., certain midrashim and Targumim) that he was a righteous man who ascended to the heavens without suffering the throes of death (Sarna 2007). While it is uncertain whether Salkinson had these associations in mind when settling on this translation, the fact that he has omitted Shakespeare’s ‘She was too good for me’ (1.3.21), which directly follows ‘Susan is with God’, may support the possibility that he chose the verse intentionally in order to suggest to readers that Shoshannah, like Enoch, was taken to heaven due to her righteousness, and that he felt the following line to be unnecessary.
While I was sitting under the dovecote in the courtyard

And you, my lady, were at that time with my lord in Mantua 183

And I remember well, as I have already told the matter

That as soon as she touched with her mouth and sucked the nipple

The pleasant fool went mad when she tasted the wormwood

And became enraged at my breasts because it was very bitter to her

And suddenly the dovecote shook to and fro because the earthquake had begun

And I saw that there was no way out except to flee from the midst of the destruction 184

And it is eleven years since the day of that event

And at that time she could walk and run to every corner 185

Because before that day, she fell to the ground on her forehead

And my husband, peace be upon him 186 (he was a good man, with a merry heart 187)

Set the girl upright and spoke tenderly to her, 188 saying

183  Note that Salkinson has retained this Italian place name, like the others appearing in his two Shakespeare translations. This may be rooted in a recognition and acknowledgement of the prominent and longstanding Jewish presence in Italy and concomitant decision to interpret his characters as Italian Jews (Kahn 2017).

184  Gen. 19:29.

185  Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare's overtly Christian phatic expression 'by th' rood' (1.3.37), i.e., 'by Christ's cross' (Weis 2012: 151, note 37).

186  The Hebrew expression used here is the one traditionally uttered after mentioning a departed relative or loved one. This lends a specifically Jewish nuance to the nurse's speech.

187  Prov. 15:13, 17:22.

188  Gen. 34:3 and he spoke tenderly to the maiden'; similar constructions occur in Gen. 50:21 and 2 Chron. 32:6.
"Today you have fallen on your face, but when you grow wise, you will fall backwards; is it not so, Jael?" And I swear that that foolish girl heard and fell silent and said, ‘Yes’ and now do you not understand the jest that she made of us.

If I were to live a thousand years, on my life I would never forget this for when he said this thing, ‘Is it not so, Jael?’ She stopped crying in her folly and fell silent and said, ‘Yes’. That’s enough from you now, do not speak further of this matter.

But how, my lady, can I contain myself and not laugh when I remember that she stopped crying and with her mouth said ‘Yes’ and despite that, on my faith, she had a wound as big as an egg on her forehead, and she issued a lamentation and bitter weeping.

But when my husband said ‘Indeed you have fallen on your face’ wait until you become advanced in years, and then you will fall backwards is it not so, Jael?’ She ceased and said ‘Yes’.

189 Jer. 31:15 "Kol krah veshemesh ha-ba’ bekcheinum" 'a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping'.
JAEIL  Listen to me, Nurse, and cease you too.

THE NURSE  Indeed I have listened and ceased, and may God help you!

How much more beautiful, how much more pleasant you are than all the infants that I nursed!

And only this is my entire desire, to see you married to a husband.¹⁹⁰

ABIEL’S WIFE  I too wish to speak about the matter of husbands

What do you say, my daughter Jael, to discussion of you being married?

JAEIL  Such an honour has not occurred to me, while waking or in a dream.

THE NURSE  Who will merit this honour? – If I were not your nurse, I would say that you had suckled from breasts of wisdom from the time that you came out of the womb.

ABIEL’S WIFE  Turn your attention to the matter of the wedding now; girls younger than you in Verona

From among the daughters of the city’s noblemen are embracing their babies.

And I was your mother by the time I had reached your age,

And you are still a virgin; so to tell you everything I say:

¹⁹⁰ Gen. 20:3; Deut. 22:22.
Behold, Paris, a man of valour, desires you for his wife.

**THE NURSE**

Oh, noble daughter! He is a man of valour without equal.

He is splendid and complete in his beauty like a statue cast by a craftsman.

**ABIEL’S WIFE**

Even in Verona in the summer there is no flower as pleasant as he.

**THE NURSE**

He is a pleasant and agreeable flower! A cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of Verona!

**ABIEL’S WIFE**

Tell me, my daughter, would you want to be wed to a man like him?

Tonight you will see him at the banquet, for he is one of a thousand.

Study him like a book, for there is a good treasure in him.

Deep wisdom and goodly words; there is no deceit in him.

So you will find the Parisian when you see the expressions of his face as one.

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191 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
192 Isa. 40:19.
193 Salkinson has not reproduced the same-word rhyming couplet ‘flower/flower’ (1.3.78–9) in the source text.
194 Song of Songs 1:14 ‘my beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of En-gedi’. This has no basis in the source text, in which the speech consists of a single sentence.
195 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence. This differs from the English, which has an ABBA scheme: ‘gentleman-feast/face/pen’ (1.3.80–4).
196 The phrase ‘for he is one of a thousand’ lacks precedent in the original. As in several other cases discussed elsewhere in this volume, Salkinson most likely included it solely in order to find a rhyme for the last word in the previous line. Such cases illustrate the difficulties in finding Hebrew equivalents for the English wordplays that Salkinson alluded to in his introduction to the translation.
198 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lineament/content’ (1.3.84–5).
One by one\textsuperscript{199} they are comely, and together they are pleasant

And if you find in this book something obscure or insipid\textsuperscript{200}

Look in the scroll of his eyes and the spark of his fire will make the darkness shine\textsuperscript{203}

And this precious book has made a glorious name for itself\textsuperscript{202}

And he lacks nothing save good glue\textsuperscript{203} in the binding.

Indeed he walks in the open space, like a fish that swims in the depths\textsuperscript{204}

And who is suitable to hunt him, if not my virgin daughter!

Many regard him as a jewel of fine gold,\textsuperscript{205} he is a delight to the eyes\textsuperscript{206, 207}

And his interior is inlaid with love,\textsuperscript{208} whose value cannot be matched by the gold of Parvaim\textsuperscript{209}

And therefore you will have all, if you have him as your husband\textsuperscript{210}

\textsuperscript{199} Ezek. 37:17 ‘and join them one to another into one stick, and they will be as one in your hand’.

\textsuperscript{200} This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lies/eyes’ (1.3.86–7).

\textsuperscript{201} Job 18:5 ‘and the spark of his fire shall not shine’.

\textsuperscript{202} This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lover/cover’ (1.3.88–9).

\textsuperscript{203} Isa. 41:7 ‘he says of the welding, “it is good”’. This citation is used idiomatically to indicate acceptance of a marriage match (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 292); Salkinson has capitalized on it to make a bookbinding pun based on the fact that the word דבֶּק ‘welding’ also means ‘glue’.

\textsuperscript{204} This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘pride/hide’ (1.3.90–1).

\textsuperscript{205} Job 28:17.

\textsuperscript{206} Gen. 3:6.

\textsuperscript{207} This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘glory/story’ (1.3.92–3).

\textsuperscript{208} Song of Songs 3:10.

\textsuperscript{209} 2 Chron. 3:6. Parvaim is a geographical name of uncertain reference, possibly a region of Arabia (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 964). Beginning in the modern period the expression ‘the gold of Parvaim’ came to be used in Hebrew to denote something extremely pure and precious (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1529).

\textsuperscript{210} This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘possess/less’ (1.3.94–5).
And of that which is yours he will not take even a thread or a shoelace.  

THE NURSE
A woman takes the wealth of her husband, but what does he take from her hands?  

ABIEL’S WIFE
Speak, my daughter, is Paris good in your eyes or not?  

JAEL
Behold, I shall raise my eye to him if he attracts me with his appearance  

But I shall control my spirit and shall not go following after my eyes  

More than would be pleasing to you and more than your counsel guides me.  

THE SERVANT  
My lady, the guests have arrived; the table is already set  

The people gathered are waiting for your arrival and are enquiring where the lady’s daughter is  

In the house of the cooking women they are cursing the nurse and they are all in great confusion  

And I am in a hurry to return to my post; please come quickly after me.
ABIEL’S WIFE  We are coming after you – Jael, the lord wants to see you.

216  אשת אביעל, והיא מתה – יָﬠֵל, הַשַּׂר.

THE NURSE  Go and find for yourself delightful nights for your delightful days.

(Exeunt)

217  המנח את בינה, bah נעש עת אשיש.

FOURTH SCENE  Street (Ram, Meraioth, Benaiah with men dressed in masks and carrying torches, and other men)

RAM  Must we say anything about why we have come?

Or shall we come to the house without an excuse?

217  על פיה פתית פיה פיה פיה דָּבָר לְדַבֵּר לְנוּ.

BENAIAH  The old custom of coming with an excuse has already ceased

And none of us is coming like an idol with covered eyes

Whose bow is painted with vermilion like a bow of the children of Kedar

The quiver rattles against it, casting terror over the women

Like the figure of an archer in the presence of every winged bird

218  הביאו את מנהות בינה, אביעל.

219  אין לשוを利用する, יָﬠָל.

220  אשר צהלו משתחוות כיסחה, קשת.

221  והמנהגות יָﬠָל, אֶחַד.

222  הכמות רכוב קשת, יָﬠָל.

216  This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘stays/days’ (1.3.105–6).

217  This expression appears in Ezek. 16:63, 29:21 in the sense of ‘the ability to speak’; in the rabbinic period it began to mean ‘excuse’, ‘pretext’ (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1560); it is used here in the postbiblical sense.

218  See preceding note.

219  As elsewhere in his work, Salkinson has chosen not to translate Shakespeare’s ‘Cupid’ (1.4.4), and has replaced it with a generic reference to an ‘idol’ (which itself reflects the traditional Jewish perception of Classical mythological figures).


221  Kedar is a nomadic tent-dwelling biblical nation descended from Ishmael’s second son (mentioned in Gen. 25:13) from a region that most likely corresponds to somewhere in northwestern Arabia. Salkinson selected the children of Kedar as the equivalent of Shakespeare’s ‘Tartar’ (i.e., Mongol). His choice is likely to be rooted in the fact that they are mentioned in Isa. 21:17 in conjunction with archery (‘גִּבּוֹרֵי מִסְפַּר־קֶשֶׁת וּשְׁאָר יִמְﬠָ֑טְו בְּנֵֽי־קֵדָ֖ר’; and the remainder of the number of archers, the warriors of the children of Kedar, will be few’), which corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘Bearing a Tartar’s painted bow of lath’ (1.4.5).

222  Job 39:23.

And we shall not meet the people gathered even with a learned tongue\footnote{Isa. 50:4.}

For what do their thoughts which they will think about us have to do with us?

After all, they understand that it is time to dance and not time to speak

And we came to go forth in the dances of the merrymakers\footnote{Jer. 31:4} until we leave.

And I shall carry a torch, for I do not have the heart\footnote{Jer. 15:1.} for this galloping;

The light grows dark in my tent,\footnote{Job 18:6} and I shall carry a torch to give me light.

Not so, Ram my friend; you will leap with us.

The matter is too weighty for me; your feet in the shoes are light

And you are light on your feet; not so am I with myself

My soul inside of me is lead, and my feet cannot move under me.

Indeed you are known to love; go borrow wings for yourself from it\footnote{Salkinson has replaced Shakespeare’s ‘borrow Cupid’s wings’ (1.4.17) with this neutral mention of ‘love’ (thereby rendering the reference to wings somewhat opaque).}

And fly up above and let your soul not bow down to the dust.\footnote{Ps. 44:26 (44:25 in English Bibles) (thereby rendering the reference to wings somewhat opaque).}
Love’s arrows have struck me, and my neck has been placed in an iron collar.

And how can a prisoner like me fly on wing and feather?

Love is a burden to me, and I lie beneath my burden.

If you lie, be a burden to your love which is too tender to bear a burden as heavy as you.

Is love tender? It is heavier than the burden of sand.

Harder than a rod of iron, and as piercing as a painful thorn.

If love is heavy upon you, make your hand heavy upon it.

And indeed stab it, thrust upon thrust. —

Give me a mask to cover my face.

One disguised man against another! Now, why should I worry further?

If a penetrating eye finds disgrace in my face.

Why, the form of my face over my face will blush on my account.

Come on, knock on the door and let us go into the house.

And there each man who has legs will spin and move.
RAM

But give me a torch; lads who love rejoicing are dancing

And trampling the place where reeds and rushes\(^{239}\) are spread out over the floor

And I shall repeat with my own mouth a proverb\(^{240}\) greatly timeworn\(^{241}\)

‘The one who holds a candle for others sees but does not share in their joy’\(^{242,243}\), when I have finished my dances.

MERAIOTH

You have finished the first dance, but the second dance is starting;

And if like the ball of a children’s game\(^{245}\) you have been pushed into a place of mire\(^{246}\)

We shall pull you out to remove the discharge of love and the filth of the soul –

Indeed come with us, lest the torches burn at dawn.\(^{247}\)

RAM

Why do you speak rashly with your lips\(^{248}\) of a matter which has no basis?\(^{249}\)

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240 This word appears in the Hebrew Bible, where it means ‘decree’ (see Eccles. 8:11 and Esther 1:20); Salkinson is using it in the sense of ‘proverb’, which originates in the modern period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1557).
241 Num. 5:17.
242 Prov. 14:10 ‘and a stranger does not share in its joy’.
243 Salkinson has not reproduced the rhyming couplet ‘on/dun’ (1.4.38–9) in the source text.
244 Eccles. 2:2.
245 This translation differs markedly from the original ‘If thou art dun’ (1.4.41). Salkinson’s translation may be based on a commentary noting that ‘Dun is in the mire’ seems to be a reference to an old Christmas game (see Weis 2012: 160, note 41).
246 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no basis for this in Shakespeare’s ‘mire/stickest’ (1.4.41–2).
247 Ps. 106:33 ‘and he spoke rashly with his lips’.
248 Isa. 8:20 ‘if they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no basis’.
249 ‘Who speaks rashly with his lips?’.
**MERAIOTH**
This is my word: if we delay on account of empty words,
The torches burn pointlessly like a candle at noon.
But treat my thinking favourably, for the meditation of our heart.
Has five times the truth of any parable or riddle.

**RAM**
Even as we go to the dances, the meditation of our heart is true.
But one who understands riddles would not desire to go.

**MERAIOTH**
But why?

**RAM**
Because I dreamt a dream tonight.

**MERAIOTH**
So did I in my dream.

**RAM**
And what did you see?

**MERAIOTH**
I saw that those who dream see false and misleading oracles.

**RAM**
And there are those who see truths while they are sprawled on their beds.

**MERAIOTH**
Perhaps the spirit which governs night visions has come to you.

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250 2 Kings 18:20; Isa. 36:5; Prov. 14:23.
251 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘delay/day’ (1.4.44–5).
252 Rashi to the Babylonian Talmud Hullin 3 and Shabbat 6.
253 Ps. 49:4 (49:3 in English Bibles) ‘and the meditation of my heart will be understanding’.
254 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘sits/wits’ (1.4.46–7).
255 Ps. 49:4 (49:3 in English Bibles) ‘and the meditation of my heart will be understanding’.
256 In Salkinson’s Ashkenazic pronunciation this word forms a near rhyme with Meraioth’s next line, mirroring the original (also split between Romeo and Mercutio) ‘masque/ask’ (1.4.48–9).
257 This word rhymes with the last word in Ram’s next line. In this respect it corresponds to the original, except that in the latter the rhyme starts one utterance later and as such is split between Mercutio’s lines ‘I/lie’ (1.4.50–1).
258 Lam. 2:14.
259 This last word in Meraioth’s line rhymes with the last word of the following line (spoken by Ram), echoing the source text (although in the latter the rhyme is one line later, and as such is split between Romeo and Mercutio rather than the other way around) ‘true/you’ (1.4.52–3).
260 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Queen Mab’ (1.4.53). It is likely that Salkinson chose to avoid a direct translation of the fairy’s name because it would have had no meaning for his readers; his paraphrased description of Queen
After all, she is the midwife of the beautiful daughters of demons. And she is as small as an opal in a ring which the town elder Wears on his finger; her team of horses is like fine dust. And she comes to sleeping men through their nostrils. The poles of her chariot are a lizard's feet and its canopy is a locust's wings. Her seat is a spider's web and the horses' ornaments and sashes are like rays of moonlight, moister than the droplets of the night. The whip is a thin hair grasped in a cricket's leg. The charioteer is a small ant, like a moth that eats wool. And the chariot is the seed of a small nut whose insides have been eaten by worms. For they are the builders of the chariot belonging to the beautiful daughters of demons.

Mab is not based directly on the original but sums up her role as overseer of dreams that is detailed by Meroioth/Mercutio later in this speech.

261 Cf. Shakespeare's 'faeries'. 'Demons' is a dynamic Hebrew equivalent reflecting the fact that faeries do not occupy a meaningful position in Jewish culture, whereas demons feature relatively prominently; they are first mentioned in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Deut. 32:17), and appear throughout rabbinic, medieval, and early modern Jewish literature (Trachtenberg 2004; Petrovsky-Shtern 2010).

262 Cf. Shakespeare's 'agate stone' (1.4.55). The term לֶשֶׁם appears in Exod. 28:19 and 39:12 as one of the gemstones on the High Priest's breastplate. Its precise meaning is uncertain; in addition to 'opal' (which is its meaning in Modern Hebrew), it has been translated in various English Bible versions as 'jacinth', 'ligure', and 'topaz'. Oddly, the word לֶשֶׁם is directly followed in these two biblical verses by the name of another gemstone, שְׁבוֹ, which is typically translated as 'agate', and therefore would have been a much closer equivalent to Shakespeare's term.

263 Isa. 29:5.

264 Song of Songs 5:2.

265 Isa. 51:8. 'and the moth will eat them like wool'.

266 סָ֑ס יֹאכְלֵ֣ם וְכַצֶּ֖מֶר 'and the moth will eat them like wool'.
In this bounding chariot, the midwife travels every night
And visits the houses of thought belonging to those who know love
And afterwards each man dreams in accordance with his soul’s desire.

Those who serve at the royal court dream of how to bend their knee;
The advocates in the courthouses calculate on their fingers what their wages are
And when she touches women’s lips, they dream of kisses
And when she grows angry at them because the breath of their mouth is spoiled
From sweets which they have eaten to excess, she punishes their iniquity with a pox.
And when she passes by and touches the nose of those who serve the king
Quick as lightning they scent that their time to be elevated has come
And if she touches the nose of the priests of the congregation with a hair or a feather
They dream that one of the priestly appointments has been added to their lot.

[269] Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘parson’s nose’ (1.4.79). The Hebrew term כֹּהֵן can refer to a Christian priest, but also has strong associations with the priests of the biblical Temple in Jerusalem, as well as with the descendants of the priestly class in later Jewish society (who have a particular standing in Jewish law). See Haran, Stern, and Bldstein (2007) for further information about the priestly class in the biblical and postbiblical periods.
[270] Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘tithe-pig’s tail’, a pig paid to settle the tithe on produce pledged to the Church (Weis 2012: 163, note 79). Salkinson’s translation is religiously neutral.
[271] Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘benefice’ (1.4.81), meaning a permanent church appointment; Salkinson’s translation lacks these Christian associations.
And if she passes in her chariot over the necks of soldiers
They dream that they have cut off their enemies’ heads
And that they have breached, ambushed, and plundered a fortune and weapons
And they are drinking wine from a faithful spring which does not deceive;
But suddenly they stir, they awaken to the sound of a drum in their ears
Then they tremble, they utter a grievous curse and fall asleep again.
This is the witch that stretches out a hand against the hairs of the horses’ necks at night
Or the locks of men’s heads until they interlace
And they become thick, fastened ropes stuck with the filth of their head
And if they are separated or shaved, their owners will consider it a bad sign for themselves.
And she is the one who presses the virgins lying on their backs in bed

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272 1 Kings 2:8 ‘and he uttered a grievous curse against me’. In selecting this verse, Salkinson has replaced Shakespeare’s ‘prayer’ (1.4.87) with 클לח.’ His choice may reflect an understanding of Shakespeare’s ‘swears’ in a negative sense, but it may equally lack deeper significance. There is no clear motivation for the translation in the Schlegel-Tieck German translation, which has Gebete ‘prayers’.

273 Judg. 16:13 ‘if you weave the seven locks of my head’. This line is spoken by Samson to Delilah, who has enquired about the source of his physical strength. The same collocation also appears in Judg. 16:19. Salkinson has chosen this as an equivalent of Shakespeare’s ‘elf-locks’ (1.4.90), a term denoting knotted locks of hair (Weis 2012: 164, note 90); the reference to Samson is apt as the description of his hair may have referred to dreadlocks.

274 This and the following line are the ones to which Smolenskin refers in his preface to Ram and Jael.
So that they learn to bear the burden of men upon them

And moreover she...

RAM

That's enough from you, Meraioth, rashly speaking in vain and to no purpose. 275

MERAIOOTH

Indeed I am speaking about matters of dreams

For they are frivolous sons, the children of pointless and insipid thoughts

Their foundation is as thin as shadow and lighter than a blowing wind

It is the wind which sometimes embraces the bosom of ice

Lying naked before it in the uttermost parts of the north, and sometimes changes direction

And rolls onto the layer of dew in the chambers of the south.

BENAIAH

And it is the wind which pushes and distances our hearts

Outside the border of our souls. But mealt ime has passed

And we are going to arrive after the appointed time.

RAM

I fear that we are rushing before the appointed time.

My heart tells me that evil has looked down from the stars

275 Isa. 30:7.
276 Isa. 14:13; Ezek. 38:6, 15, 39:2; Ps. 48:3 (48:2 in English Bibles).
277 Exod. 16:13, 14.
278 Job 9:9.
279 Mishnah Mo‘ed Qatan 1:3.
And on this night of rejoicing begins to run the path of its course

And it will put an end to my soul, which has grown weary of its life

And which has become a snare bringing death before its time;  

But my ship is in the hand of the sailor; he will guide it where he wishes

Let us go, merry friends! Let us go to the dances.

benaiah
Come, strike the drum.
(All exit)

fifth scene
The palace of the Abiel household (Musicians stand and attendants enter)

attendant 1
Where is Ben Mahbi? Help us to clear up the house; Is it time to lick the plates and eat that which remains with your hands?

attendant 2
These are the good traits that I was given To keep them in these hands of mine that are stained with the filth of choice fruits What will become of the glory of the traits? –

281 The servants’ dialogue (from here until the next stage direction) is in prose in the original (1.5.1–15). Salkinson’s ‘Servant 1’ corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘Head Servingman’.

282 This name, which corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘Potpan’ (1.5.1), is comprised of the word בֶּן ‘son’ (used in the formation of Jewish patronymics), followed by a diminutive of מַחֲבַת, meaning ‘griddle’ or ‘pan’. The name evokes associations with certain rabbinic sages; for example, Ben Azzai and Ben Zoma.

283 Salkinson has conflated two characters from the original (1 and 2 Servingman) into one (Servant 2). This Servant 2 seems to speak as Ben Mahbi (in contrast to Shakespeare’s Potpan, who does not have any lines).

280 Job 15:32.
attendant 1

Take the household vessels away from here and put back the silver vessels in the chest. And you will do well to find me a couple of cakes284, 285 And tell the gatekeeper to open up for Shoshannah286 and Sebabah, 287 the daughters of Rechab. 288, 289

Where are you, Puti290 Ben Mahbi? –

attendant 2

I did as you commanded me.

attendant 1

Hurry into the chamber, for they have asked about you. And their eye is expecting to see your face.

attendant 2

We cannot be in two places at once. Be happy, rejoice, lads! Do not be sad today. Give in to your masters with graceful meekness, for the meek shall inherit the earth.291

285 2 Sam. 13:6, 8, 10. Salkinson has replaced Shakespeare’s term ‘marchpane’ (1.5.8), i.e., marzipan, with this less specific label.
286 As in the case of the nurse’s daughter, Salkinson’s Shoshannah replaces the English Susan (see note 180).
287 Salkinson’s motivation for selecting Sebabah here is unclear, for she is not a Hebrew name or word. It resembles the root בִּי, meaning ‘to be grey-haired, old’, and Salkinson may have created the form Sebabah in order to evoke a female name denoting something like ‘grey-haired woman’. Presumably Salkinson’s Sebabah is intended as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘Nell’ (1.5.9; see note 289), but there is no obvious correspondence in either sound or meaning between these two names. Note that I have transliterated it according to the traditional convention in English Bibles whereby the Hebrew letter ב vet is rendered as b.
288 This is the name of three different biblical characters: a captain in the service of Saul’s son Ish-bosheth (mentioned in 2 Sam. 4:2); the ancestor of the Rechabite tribe (mentioned in 1 Chron. 2:55); and the father of Malchiah, ruler of the Beth-hacerem district in Jerusalem after the return from Babylonian exile (Neh. 3:14).
289 This list of names corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘Susan Grindstone, Nell, and Anthony’ (1.5.9). Salkinson has designated the first two characters as the daughters of the third, which lacks precedent in the original.
290 Salkinson’s choice of this name may be rooted in the sound correspondence between it and Shakespeare’s ‘Potpan’. His decision to give the character a first name has no basis in the original (which refers only to ‘Potpan’). Puti is itself not a Hebrew name, but Salkinson might have had it in mind as a shortened version of the biblical Putiel (the name of a man whose daughter married Aaron’s son Eleazar, mentioned in Exod. 6:25).
291 Ps. 37:11.
(The attendants retreat)

(Abiel, Abiel’s wife, Tubal, and the members of the household with the guests wearing masks on their faces.)

Abiel

Welcome, friends! The women whose toes

Are not afflicted with a painful root expect to go forth in the dances of the merrymakers

Come, daughters of valour! The one among you who refuses to dance

Is the woman who has an affliction on the toes of her feet.

And you too, new faces! Friends, welcome

I remember the day when I wore a mask over my eyes

And put pleasant words in the ears of a beautiful girl

But the day has passed, the day has passed and will not return.

Welcome, friends! Musicians, play well

Make room! Make room! Go forth, damsels playing timbrels!

(The musicians play and people go forth dancing two by two)

(To the attendants) Bring more candles and bear the tables away from here

And put out the fire in the oven, for it is very hot in the house.

How my heart rejoices to see the guests dancing

292 Jer. 31:4; and you will go forth in the dances of the merrymakers’.

293 Ps. 68:26 (68:25 in English Bibles).
Whom I have not invited sit with me, my brother Abiel

For our dancing days are done. What is the number of years

From the day when we danced together with a mask on our face?

SECOND ABIEL About thirty years.

ABIEL What are you talking about? Why, you have added to the number

For on the next festival of Shavuot it will be twenty-five years

To the day of Luz’s wedding, and that is the day when we last danced.

SECOND ABIEL More than twenty-five, for his son is older than that, His son is around thirty.

ABIEL Do not speak like this, for it is two years

Since I have seen his son, and he was still a youth.

294 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Ah, sirrah, this unlooked-for sport comes well’ (1.5.29). Shakespeare’s ‘unlooked-for’, meaning ‘unexpected’, refers to the dancing, whereas Salkinson has changed it into a reference to the uninvited guests (Ram, Benaiah, and Meraioth). There is no basis for Salkinson’s change in the Schlegel-Tieck German translation of the play, which he may have consulted.

295 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (1.2.30); see note 65.

296 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Cousin Capulet’.

297 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Pentecost’ (1.5.36). The Jewish festival of Shavuot, which commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, is the dynamic equivalent of the Christian Pentecost as the former is the historical antecedent of the latter and both fall at a similar time of the year, in late spring or early summer. Moreover, Salkinson would have struggled to find another way of translating the term given the lack of a recognized Hebrew label for Pentecost. The substitution also serves to neutralize the Christian connotations of the original and replace them with explicitly Jewish ones, given that Salkinson’s audience would have automatically understood the reference as being to the Jewish holiday rather than to the Christian one.

298 Salkinson has conflated his translation of Shakespeare’s ‘Lucentio’ (1.5.35) with that of ‘Lucio’ (1.2.71); see note 156.

299 2 Chron. 34:3.
Who is the damselsitting on the captain’s arm at the dance? 300

I do not know who she is, my lord. 301

She teaches the candles to illuminate and to spread light. 302

The sparkle of her splendour can be seen on the face of the night. 303

Like an emerald stone in the ear of a black Cushite woman. 304

She is elevated above those who dwell in houses of clay; she is without compare in wealth or riches.

Like a dove purer than snow soaring among crows. 305

So this noble daughter looks down from among her companions.

After this dance I’ll observe where she rests from her toil. 306

And if only I might touch her hand, my soul will live because of her. 307

As I live! I shall never love another from this day forth. 308

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300 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence; this can be contrasted with the original, which is comprised of two rhyming couplets ‘bright/night’, ‘ear/dear’ (1.5.43–6).
301 Exod. 28:17, 39:10. This is translated as ‘beryl’ in some English Bible versions.
302 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Ethiop’ (1.5.45). The Hebrew term translated here as ‘Cushite’ is often associated with Ethiopia, and is translated as ‘Ethiopian’ in a number of English Bible versions. See Ithiel, First Part, note 26.
303 Job 4:19 (denoting ordinary mortals). Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘for earth too dear’ (1.5.46).
304 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘crows/shows’ (1.5.47–8).
305 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
306 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘stand/hand’ (1.5.49–50).
307 Gen. 12:13 ‘ךְבִּגְלָלָהוּ נַפְשִׁי וְחָיְתָה’ ‘and my soul will live because of you’.
308 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘sight/night’ (1.5.51–2).
For never have I seen perfect beauty* other than tonight.

His voice testifies against him that he is from the house of Abiram –

Who is on my side, who?* Bring me my sword – this villain

What is he doing here, that he has disguised himself in a strange mask

And has come to see our nakedness* and mock us at our festival.

By the name of my father's house I swear, and by the honour of my great family* That it would not be considered an iniquity for me to bring him in blood down to Sheol.*

What is wrong with you, my flesh and blood? What is wrong with you, that you cried out?

Look, my uncle, one of the Abirams, hated of our souls,* Has come here to cause anguish of spirit,* to mock us on the night of our festival.

Is he Ram, son of Abiram?

He is the villain Ram.

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309 Ezek. 27:3; Lam. 2:15.
310 2 Kings 9:32.
311 Gen. 42:9, 24:9, 36:20. Tubal says 'you are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land'.
312 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'kin/sin' (1.5.57–8).
313 1 Kings 2:9 'and you must bring his grey head down in blood to Sheol'.
314 Prov. 5:11 'your flesh and body' (used literally in this verse, but idiomatically in Salkinson’s text).
315 Judg. 18:23. Although the meaning of the root קעץ means ‘gather’ or ‘assemble’ in the nif'al stem, Salkinson seems to have had in mind the meaning of the qal, ‘cry out’. See also Ithiel, Second Part, note 245 and Fifth Part, note 19.
316 2 Sam. 5:8 קעץ "hated of David’s soul'.
317 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, echoing but differing from the original, in which the rhyme begins a line earlier, in Capulet’s speech, and is split between Capulet and Tybalt ‘so?/foe’ (1.5.59–60).
318 Gen. 26:35.
abiel
Please let him go, my son, let him go, let him be

For his speech is comely" and his gait is like the steps of a nobleman

And moreover all the sons of the city tell of his glory at the gate.

For he is a valiant man, a wise son who has control over his spirit

Even if you were to give me the treasures of this entire city

I would not let a single one of his hairs fall to the ground after he came under the shelter of my roof

Therefore restrain your spirit, and do not pay heed to him

And if you seek my wellbeing, please let your heart be merry

Remove the angry countenance and do not make the joy of our festival cease.

an angry countenance is fitting for me, if a villain such as he interferes with the joy of our festival; I shall not endure him.

And what can you say, young man? Indeed, I have said

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abiel

Song of Songs 4:3

Proverbs 10:5

Proverbs 16:32

2 Samuel 14:11

Genesis 19:8

Judges 19:9

Genesis 14:45 and 1 Kings 1:52

Proverbs 25:23.

Lamentations 5:15

Proverbs 25:23.

Salkinson has not replicated the rhyming couplet ‘feast/guest’ (1.5.73–4) between this and the next line in the source text (possibly because he did not recognize the rhyme as such).
That I shall endure him. Are you the master of the house.  

Or am I the master of the house? Go out and boast that you will not endure him.

I know that you want to bring confusion among the guests.

And stand at the head of them all, like a mighty rooster among the birds.

TUBAL

It is a disgrace, my uncle, a disgrace to us.

ABIEL

That’s enough from you, stubborn lad; this is your way, to vex me continually.

Guard yourself from the force of your hand, lest you be swallowed up.

Make your hearts merry, friends; celebrate well at the dance!

I said to you be silent, senseless one, rooster with no understanding!

Bring more candles, attendants – and as for you, sit silently.

Make your hearts merry, friends!

TUBAL

Control over the spirit with a strong hand and a blocked fire of wrath.

330 This seems to be based on Shakespeare’s ‘cock-a-hoop’ (1.5.80), which is actually an idiom for starting a riot, with ‘cock’ meaning the tap or stopcock of a barrel of ale (the idiom derives from the idea that setting the stopcock on top of the hoop, or barrel, would lead to free-flowing ale, resulting in intoxication and lack of restraint; see Weis 2012: 172, note 80). Salkinson seems to have understood the word to mean ‘rooster’.

331 Ps. 39:11 (39:10 in English Bibles).

332 2 Sam. 17:16 ‘lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up’.

333 Job 38:36 ‘who gave the rooster understanding?’

334 Isa. 47:5 ‘sit silently’.

335 Prov. 25:28 ‘a man who has no control over his spirit’.

336 Isa. 8:11 ‘a man who has no control over his spirit’.

337 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘meeting/greeting’ (1.5.88–9).
Have met together in my bones, like a bellows in a bonfire

But I shall restrain myself and go forth, although the interloper among us is not acceptable to me.

The dance will please him for a moment; afterwards he will bite like an adder.

(Exits)

RAM (To Jael) When my hand touches holiness, the hem of one who is pure and awesome.

I shall give this ransom, and distance the profane from the holy

Indeed I am a sojourner with you and with a lip red from shame

I shall wipe clean the touch of my hand and atone for my iniquity with a kiss.

JAEL Do not detract from the worth of your hand, dear and pleasant guest.

You have not violated good manners and your hand is not a burden upon me.

338 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘shall/gall’ (1.5.91).

339 Prov. 23:32 ‘in the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder’.

340 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, echoing Shakespeare’s ‘hand/this/stand/kiss’ (1.5.92–5).

341 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘pilgrims’ (1.5.94). In the Hebrew Bible, the word ‘גֵּר’ denotes a resident foreigner in Israelite territory constituting a distinct class in the biblical legal system (Lieber 2007). By contrast, in rabbinic and later Jewish literature, as well as in Salkinson’s Yiddish vernacular, the term refers to a convert to Judaism (Rabinowitz and Eichhorn 2007). Both the biblical and postbiblical meanings of the word would have been familiar to Salkinson’s readers. As such, the translation can be understood on two levels, each of which retains the notion of religious migration while situating the utterance within an unambiguously Jewish frame of reference. See Ithiel, First Part, note 286 for a similar use of this word.

342 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘much/this/touch/kiss’ (1.5.96–9).
Sojourners touch the hands of holy men, and the holy men the hands of new arrivals.

For this is the way of peace for all wayfarers.

Why, holy men as well as guests have lips like your lips.

They have lips like my lips, which I open for my prayer.

Therefore I spread my palms and with my lip I entreat you!

And you, as a holy angel, must listen, lest I despair of my faith.

Holy men do not move though they might hear a supplication.

Therefore stand at the ready and I shall test you with a touchstone.

Behold, my lips touch yours and my iniquity is removed.

(Kisses her)

And now I have sinned with my lips on your mouth, my lord.

I hereby wipe the sin clean, for I repent in dust and ashes.

(Kisses her again)

343 See note 341.
344 This is Salkinson’s religiously more neutral translation of Shakespeare’s ‘saints’ (1.5.98).
345 This and the subsequent three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘too/prayer/do/despair’ (1.5.100–4).
346 This is a medieval expression (Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1371) based on Dan. 4:10, 20.
347 This forms a rhyming couplet with the following line, echoing the English ‘Saints do not move, though grant for prayers’ sake./Then move not while my prayer’s effect I take’ (1.5.104–5).
348 This is not a recognized collocation in Hebrew, but is clearly based on the similar expression בֹּחַן אֶבֶן ‘touchstone’, a modern idiom derived from the appearance of the phrase (with a different meaning) in Isa. 28:16 (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 8). Salkinson has altered the final word of the phrase in order to fit in with his rhyme scheme.
349 Isa. 6:7 כָּﬠֲוֺנֶ וְסָר ‘and your iniquity is removed’.
350 This and the following three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring the original except that the latter has an ABAB pattern: ‘purged/took/urged/book’ (1.5.106–9).
JAELE
You know how to kiss according to what is written in the book.

THE NURSE
Noble daughter, your mother desires to speak a word to you.

RAM
Who is her mother?

THE NURSE
Her mother is the mistress of the house, a wise woman of valour. And I am nurse to her daughter, who stands with you here; And you, young man, I'll have you know, a word has left my mouth. That the one who finds her finds life.

RAM
Is she the daughter of Abiel?

I grow faint from hearing that I have been caught in the enemy's hand.

BENAIAH
Come, let us go while they are still dancing to the sound of timbrel and harp.

RAM
I fear that this dance is becoming an occasion of mourning for me.

ABIEL
No, friends, do not rush to depart from here. Various choice delicacies to restore the soul have yet been prepared.

352 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
353 Prov. 12:4, 31:10; Ruth 3:11.
354 Esther 7:8 'as soon as the word left the king's mouth'.
355 Prov. 8:35 'for the one who finds Me finds life'.
356 Isa. 21:3.
357 1 Sam. 10:5 'harp and timbrel'.
358 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring the original except that in the latter there are two rhyming couplets instead of one in the corresponding lines: 'Capulet/debt', 'best/unrest' (1.5.117–19).
But if the appointed time for your departure has come, take my blessing.

And go in peace, friends! – Bring torches here.

Go to your houses in peace! (To the second Abiel) Go in peace, my brother.

Indeed, the night will soon be over and I seek rest.

(All exit except for Jael and the nurse)

JAEL Look there, my nurse, who is that man?

THE NURSE He is the son and heir of Tabrimon.  

JAEL And whose son is the youth going out at the door?

THE NURSE That is the son of Peretz the Pirathonite.

JAEL And who is this one going out after him, who refused to dance?

THE NURSE I do not know.

JAEL Ask what his name is; if the man is a woman's husband

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359 The father of Ben-hadad, king of Aram, mentioned in 1 Kings 15:18. Salkinson seems to have chosen this name based on its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s 'Tiberio' (1.5.128).

360 This name denotes two different biblical characters, a) the son of Judah and Tamar whose story is told in Genesis 38, and b) an ancestor of Boaz, protagonist of the Book of Ruth mentioned in Ruth 4:18. Salkinson most likely chose this name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s 'Petruchio' (1.5.130). Note that Judah Leib Elkind, who translated The Taming of the Shrew into Hebrew in 1892, chose Peretz for his version of Petruchio, possibly inspired by Salkinson (see Kahn [forthcoming a] for discussion of the symbolism of this choice in Elkind [1892]). It is unclear why Salkinson has made this character the son of Peretz, while in Shakespeare’s version the reference is to Petruchio, not his son.

361 This is a gentilic adjective denoting a native of the town of Pirathon; it appears in Judg. 12:13, 15; 2 Sam. 23:30; and 1 Chron. 11:31, 27:14. As in the case of the personal name Peretz (see preceding note), Salkinson undoubtedly selected this name based on its sound correspondence with the original ‘Petruchio’ (1.5.130). However, it is uncertain why he chose to add the gentilic adjective, which has no basis in the source text.

362 Exod. 21:3.

363 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's ‘married/bed’ (1.5.133–4).
I know that the palanquin to my wedding will be my grave.

THE NURSE That is Ram, only son of Abiram, your greatest enemy.

JAEL From the quarry of an ancient hate a great love has been dug for me and this is a froward generation and this is a strange love. To a man whom I hate like death, I say ‘you are my life’. 

THE NURSE What is this matter? What is your tongue speaking of?

JAEL Two rhyming lines which I learned here. From the mouth of a boy my age at the dance. (A voice calls from inside) Jael! Indeed we shall come in the blink of an eye – Come, let us depart from this place, for there is no one here. (Exeunt)

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364 Isa. 51:1 ‘look to the rock from which you were hewn, and the quarry from which you were dug’. 
365 This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyme, mirroring the original except that the latter is composed of two rhyming couplets: ‘hate/late’, ‘me/enemy’ (1.5.137–40).
366 Deut. 32:20. 
367 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘anon/gone’ (1.5.143).
The first desire has fallen, and is soon to die on its bed. And its eye is watching for desire’s son to succeed it. Who said to Ram, who was ill and sickly in his love That he should arise and shake himself free, to embrace the bosom of a strange woman. Indeed the love of Ram and Jael sprang up overnight. For they were pulled by ropes of magic, in tumult and without rest. He trembles and complains, how an enemy might be made his wife And she gathers morsels of love from the sides of the mouth of the chasm. He cannot approach the house of his enemy Abiel out of fear So how then can he swear to his daughter that his love is pure and powerful?

In Salkinson’s version this speech appears at the end of the First Part, while in the original it typically marks the beginning of Act 2. It is possible that Salkinson was working from an English version that placed it at the end of Act 1, although this is difficult to establish with certainty.

This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lie/heir/die/fair’ (2.0.1–4).

Prov. 5:20 וְּתַחַבֵּ֗ק וּ֝תְחַבֵּ֗ק ‘and embrace the bosom of a strange woman’.

This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘again/looks/complain/books’ (2.0.5–8).

Ps. 55:15 (55:14 in English Bibles). This phrase is often translated as ‘among the crowd’, ‘in the throng’, or ‘in company’, but Salkinson is using it in the sense of ‘tumult’ or ‘agitation’, which is the chief meaning of the root.

Prov. 29:9.

Jer. 48:28.

This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘access/swear/less/anywhere’ (2.0.9–12).
And as for her, her soul like his soul is filled with love and terror alike.

And it is beyond the maiden to do anything.

But love has wings, and the lovers fly upon them.\textsuperscript{376}

And two ends\textsuperscript{377} will meet, if they both have one wind.\textsuperscript{378}

\textit{(Exeunt)}

End of First Part.

\textsuperscript{376} This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘meet/sweet’ (2.0.13–14).

\textsuperscript{377} Exod. 28:25, 39:18.

\textsuperscript{378} This has a double sense, as \textit{רוּחַ} also means ‘spirit’.
Second Part

scene I

Open street before Abiel’s vineyard, surrounded by a wall

Ram
How can I return to my way when my soul, my only one, is there?
I am a house of clay without a soul or spirit
I seek my soul – (Ascends the wall and leaps into the vineyard)
(Benaiah and Meraioth)

Benaiah
Where are you, Ram? Where are you, Ram, my brother?

Meraioth
He is a wise man, for he has gone in secret to his house
And lain down upon his bed.

Benaiah
He has ascended the wall and jumped into the vineyard.
Please call to him.

Meraioth
I shall also make him swear that he is listening to the voice of charmers –

Ram! Hasty to love! Fool! The man of the spirit is mad!

Make the sound of your sighing heard to me; or one or two words From the noise of your songs with which your insides moan and it will be enough for me;

Call as was your way previously, ‘Oh, my dove, my undefined one!’

1. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (2.1.3); see First Part, note 65.
2. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘orchard’ (2.1.5). Salkinson’s substitution is most likely rooted in the fact that vineyards feature more prominently in the Hebrew Bible than orchards.
3. Ps. 58:6 (58:5 in English Bibles) so that it does not listen to the voice of charmers’.
6. Isa. 16:11 ‘therefore my insides moan for Moab like a harp’.
7. Song of Songs 5:2, 6:9.
8. These last two words rhyme in Hebrew, mirroring the English ‘love’ and ‘dove’ (2.1.10).
Or call on the name of Ashtoreth, nine
weary from adultery.

And on the name of the heir to her
house, a blind child and an archer

Who shot his flaming arrows into
the heart of King So-and-So.

Until he fell ill in his love of a poor
and needy girl. –

But what has happened to him, that
he does not listen to me?

I have called but no one answers;
I have cried out but there
is no voice and no one pays
attention.

The young hart is dead; but I shall
raise him up with sorcery

I adjure you by the name of
Shoshannah whom you love

By the flash of the light of her eyes,
by the splendour of her brow and
the grace of her lips,

By the glory of her legs and her
thighs, and by the treasure of all
her chambers

9 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Venus’ (2.1.11). Ashtoreth was one of the chief goddesses of the Canaanite pantheon
and is associated with love and fertility (Frymer 2007: 581); moreover, she has been linked to Aphrodite
in Ancient Near Eastern sources from the first millennium BCE (Ackerman 2009). In the Hebrew Bible the
Israelites are condemned on multiple occasions for worshipping Ashtoreth (e.g., Judg. 2:13–14, 10:6–7, 1
Sam. 7:3–4, 12:10). Salkinson was clearly aware of the links between Ashtoreth and the Greek and Roman
goddess of love, and thus selected her as a suitable domesticating equivalent.

10 Ezekiel 23:43.

11 Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare’s mention of ‘Abraham Cupid’ (2.1.13). The omission of ‘Cupid’ is
a typical example of his avoidance of Classical mythological figures, and the omission of the biblical
Abraham is likely due to the fact that including this reference on its own might have lacked relevance in the
context and caused confusion to readers.

12 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘King Cophetua’ (2.1.14), referring to the legend of a king who falls in love with a beggar.
Salkinson most likely made this replacement because his Eastern European Jewish audience would not
have been familiar with Cophetua.

13 1 Kings 18:29

14 Song of Songs 2:9, 17; 8:14. Salkinson has chosen this as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘The ape is dead’
(2.1.16), possibly because the wordmekufof ‘ape, monkey’ is a rare feature of the Hebrew Bible, appearing only
twice (1 Kings 10:22 and 2 Chron. 9:21), whereas deer are mentioned more frequently. This substitution
changes the sense of the line, as the original ‘ape’ was meant in the sense of ‘fool’ (Weis 2012: 182, note
16), whereas Salkinson’s version lacks such a nuance.

15 Prov. 22:11 שְׁפָתֶיהָ שָׁקִית וּבְרַקְתֶּיהָ נֶעָר יָדָיו

16 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘thigh/lie’ (2.1.19–20).
By all of these I adjure you to reveal yourself to us at once.

benaiah with such words you will vex him and arouse his wrath.

eraioth I shall not arouse his wrath with this. If I had adjured a ghost
to enter his beloved's sphere and not move from there

until with her magic she made it bow before her feet on the ground

then would his wrath rise up; but he will be pleased with the whisper of my lips

for I have adjured him by the name of his beloved truly and sincerely

To rise from the dead.

benaiah come, let us go, for he has hidden in the trees of the garden

And his eye waits for twilight, keeping company with gloom

his love has no eyes, and therefore over light he chooses darkness.

eraioth if love has no eyes, how can it send its arrows to the target?

and he is sitting under the tree, and his only desire now

is that his beautiful one should become a pomegranate, and he a palm branch

17 Judg. 9:16, 19.
18 Job 24:15
19 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring the original except that the latter starts one line earlier and is split between Benvolio and Mercutio: ‘dark/mark’ (2.1.32–3).
20 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘medlar’ (2.1.34–5), a fruit similar to an apple. The pomegranate is mentioned on numerous occasions in the Hebrew Bible, including in a romantic context in Song of Songs 4:3 and 6:7 (ךלְצַמָּת מִבַּﬠַד רַקָּתֵךְ הָֽרִמּוֹן כְּפֶ֤לַח like a piece of a pomegranate are your temples behind your locks’), which makes it an appropriate choice for inclusion in Ram’s speech.
21 This comparison lacks a direct basis in the original, which does not refer to Romeo at this point, but only to Rosaline: ‘And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit/As maids call medlars when they laugh alone’ (2.1.35–6). Salkinson may have chosen to insert this reference to palm branch here because its shape evokes the bawdy connotations of the original lines more clearly than ‘pomegranate’ (see preceding note).
Or she a flower, and he the bud in the middle.  

May it be for you Ram as you desire, and may the night be pleasant for you  

As for me, I am going to my bed; I shall not lodge on the cold street.  

Arise, Benaiah, let us go.  

For it is pointless to seek a man who seeks to sit in secrecy.  

(Exeunt)

scene 2 Abiel's vineyard

A man who has not known affliction laughs at a sore or a scar  

(Jael looks down from the window)  

But what is that light there that spills out of the window there?  

The window is the face of the east, and Jael is the sun shining there  

Arise, my light, my sun! And the moon will not shine its light  

It is brokenhearted from its jealousy of your beauty, and its face grows pale.  

For in its heart it says that you are its maidservant yet more beautiful than it is.  

Do not be a maidservant to such a jealous mistress as it.  

For out of jealousy it is full of greenish sores.
But not so you, for you are entirely beautiful and pure –

This is my love! This is the one whom my soul loves

If only she would say, ‘My beloved is mine and I am his’.

Her lips move as she speaks, but her voice cannot be heard

She bats her eyelids: I shall respond to her;

Indeed her words are not for me, so how can I approach like one fierce of countenance?

This is nothing other than two twinkling stars

That, having some business, have asked her to stand in their place

And to shine with her two eyes, until they return to their course.

How comely is this substitution! Her eyes shine light in the firmament

And the stars are fixed in her head; they are ashamed of the light of her face

1 Song of Songs 1:9, 15, 2:2, 10, 13, 4:1, 7, 5:2, 6:4.
2 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
3 Song of Songs 6:3
4 1 Sam. 1:13 now Hannah was speaking in her heart; her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘She speaks, yet she says nothing’ (2.2.12). Salkinson’s rendition serves to draw a parallel between Jael and the biblical heroine Hannah whose silent entreaty is renowned in the rabbinic tradition as the model of Jewish prayer (see Kadari 2009).
5 1 Sam. 1:16 ‘and they walk with necks stretched forth and bat their eyes’.
6 Deut. 28:50; Dan. 8:23.
7 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘bright/night’ (2.2.21–2). Note that the Hebrew and English rhyming couplets do not correspond in terms of meaning; the actual Hebrew translation of the English rhyming couplet is several lines further on and does not rhyme.
8 1 Kings 18:27 ‘indeed he has some business’.
9 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘hand/hand’ (2.2.23–4). As in the case of the rhyme discussed in note 31, the Hebrew and English rhyming couplets do not correspond in terms of meaning; the actual Hebrew translation of the English rhyming couplet is several lines further on and does not rhyme. (Salkinson does not typically recognize words rhyming with themselves, such as ‘hand/hand’, as rhymes in his own text.)
As a torch is ashamed of the daylight, and from her eyes in the heights of the heavens

Radiance and light flow until the birds of the heavens

Sing among the branches, for the night shines like the day. And now she has leaned her cheek on the palm of her hand

If only I could become the skins of kid goats

And gloves upon her hand, and her cheek would lean upon me.

JAEIL Woe is me! She has begun to speak.

RAM She has begun to speak.

Continue, angel of God! Continue, speak, speak For you have been revealed to me tonight in all majesty and glory.

Like a winged messenger on high riding on a swift cloud

He flies and breaks through the heavens before the eyes of mortals

Who watch and look at him and are amazed at the sight of him

So you stand above me and I raise my eyes to you.

JAEIL Oh, son of Abiram! Why are you called Ram?

Say to your father, I have never seen you and you will no longer be called Ram

And if not, swear to me with an oath of love

34 Ps. 104:12

35 Ps. 139:12.

36 Gen. 27:16.

37 Mic. 7:1; Job 10:15.

38 Isa. 19:1.

39 Ps. 79:11, 102:21 (102:20 in English Bibles).

40 Job 8:18 (in the context of disowning).
And I shall not be the daughter of Abiel; there will be no mention of him in my name.\footnote{Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘And I’ll no longer be a Capulet’ (2.2.36). Salkinson’s replacement is appropriate for his translation given that the Hebrew version of Capulet, Abiel, means ‘Jael’s father’.}

Shall I continue to listen, or respond to her now?\footnote{Num 22:22 ‘and the angel of the Lord stood on the way as an adversary against him’.
}

Only your name \textit{stands as an adversary against me on the way}\footnote{2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Chron. 11:1.}

If you were not called an Abiramite, I would honour you as you are honoured.

What is the name Abiram? It is not hand nor foot

Nor arm nor face, nor any other part

From among the parts of man; choose a new name for yourself

For what is a name? If you change the name of the rose it will not change its appearance and its scent will be as pleasant as formerly

And so Ram’s sense will remain in him, if he is no longer called Ram

And he will not exchange his worth when he exchanges his name

Erase your name, Ram, and instead of this name

Which is not \textit{your flesh and blood},\footnote{2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Chron. 11:1.} I shall be \textit{your flesh and blood}.

I take you today at your word

You are mine and I am yours, and I make your covenant\footnote{Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Call me but love and I’ll be new baptized’ (2.2.50). The covenant can be regarded as a fitting Jewish dynamic equivalent of Christian baptism because it is the model used to describe the relationship between God and Israel. This covenantal model is mentioned on numerous occasions throughout biblical, rabbinic, and later Hebrew literature (Weinfeld 2007).} with a new name

\textit{Ram (To himself)}

\footnote{Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘And I’ll no longer be a Capulet’ (2.2.36). Salkinson’s replacement is appropriate for his translation given that the Hebrew version of Capulet, Abiel, means ‘Jael’s father’.}
And the name Ram will not be mentioned, will not be heard from my mouth.

JAEL But who and what are you, that you have come in the middle of the night?  
To set a snare for me and enter into my confidence?

RAM I am a nameless son
For my name is scorned in my eyes just as it is despised in your eyes.
If it were written in ink, I would erase it from the book.

JAEL My ear has not yet heard a hundred words from your mouth
But I know the voice; why, you are Ram son of Abiram!

RAM Who is Ram and who is Abiram? Why, you hate them both.

JAEL But tell me how you have come and why you have come here?
Indeed, the wall is high; who can ascend it
And death lies in wait for you in the vineyard; if the members of my household find you they will kill you.

RAM Wings of love have carried me, and have brought me up over the wall
For wall and fence cannot stop love.
Love has great power and can do anything
And therefore all of my enemies are not a terror to me.

JAEL If they see you, you will be killed at once.
RAM I fear one of your eyes, but not twenty swords of my enemies

46 Prov. 7:9.
47 Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare’s ‘dear saint’ (2.2.55) from this line.
48 Salkinson has not reproduced the rhyme ‘me/thee’ between this and the next line in the source text (2.2.69–70).
Set your eye favourably upon me, and their hatred will be in my eyes like straw to a stone.

JAEL Nevertheless I fear for your life, lest they see you here.

RAM The night is a hiding place for me; in its wings it hides me from their eyes

If only you love me, I shall not fear them finding me

It would be better for me to fall victim to the edge of the sword of their hatred

Than to live many long days without the beloved of my soul.49

JAEL Who showed you this place that you have found?

RAM The love of my heart guided me to spy out and search for your dwelling place

It gave me counsel, and I paid heed and found it.

For if you lived in distant lands by the last sea

I would go to sea in a ship, even though I am no sailor or captain

And I would risk my life50 to find so great a treasure as you.

JAEL Why, I know that the night is like a veil upon my face

For were it not so, my cheeks would redden from shame

Because of everything that I have declared to you from my mouth here tonight.

If only I had spoken to you one way with the mouth and one way with the heart;51

49 Jer. 12:7.

50 Judg. 9:17: ‘and he risked his life’.

51 This appears in various locations in medieval Hebrew literature; for example, Rashi to Gen. 37:4.
If only I could now deny everything which I have declared to you here—

But what does a maiden like me have to do with the way of all the earth?—

Do you really love me? I know that you will say ‘yes’

And I shall believe your words; therefore, do not swear to me

Lest you give me false hope, for I have heard people say

The heavenly host laughs at the breach of love’s covenant.

Please, dear Ram, if your love is sincere

Tell me so with faithful, pure speech.

And if you say in your heart that I have been captured too easily,

I shall also do this: I shall put on an angry countenance

I shall choose the way of stubbornness and go contrarily against you.

Then you will fall to my feet and beseech me with your love.

Indeed it is true, son of Abiram, that I love you very much

And therefore you may rebuke, saying that I am light.

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52 Gen. 19:31; Josh. 23:14; 1 Kings 2:2.
53 This replaces Shakespeare’s ‘Jove’ (2.2.93). Salkinson has preserved the sense of the original in that Jove or Jupiter, the Greco-Roman sky god, can be equated with the ‘heavenly host’, a term for God’s army of angels mentioned in Isa. 24:21 and on numerous occasions in rabbinic, medieval, and early modern Hebrew literature.
54 Zeph. 3:9.
55 Prov. 25:23.
56 Lev. 26:27 ‘and you go contrarily against Me’.
57 This corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘light’ (2.2.99), used in the sense of ‘wanton’ (Weis 2012: 193, note 99). While the Hebrew adjective is not typically used in this particular sense, it can convey a variety of closely related negative meanings including ‘trifling’, ‘insubstantial’, etc.
But know, my friend, that you will find
my heart more faithful before you
Than the heart of all the women who
know how to act like a stranger in the
sight of the eye.

But I admit that you would have found
me acting like a stranger as well
Had you not first heard my words from
the bottom of my heart
Before it became known to me that you
were listening in secret.

But since you came into my confidence
in the middle of the night and the
darkness

Please do not say that my love is hasty
and light.

Indeed I swear my lady, on the moon
going in brightness there

From the brightness of whose
presence, the tops of the trees
appear white as silver –

Please do not swear on the moon, on
the moon which shifts
And which changes its face from time to
time in its cycle
Lest your love also change its face as it does.

So what shall I swear on?

Do not swear on anything

Indeed if you desire, swear to me on
yourself

Which I honour like God, and I shall
trust in your words.

On my life, which is bound to your life –

58 Prov. 7:9.
59 See note 57.
60 Job 31:26 'and the moon going in brightness'.
61 2 Sam. 22:13; Ps. 18:13 (18:12 in English Bibles).
62 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘the god of my idolatry’ (2.2.114). Salkinson may have simplified the text in this way
because the notion of Jael honouring Ram like God would have sufficed to convey the image of idolatry to
his readers without the need for further detail.
JAEL  Desist, do not bring forth an oath from your mouth—
     Although I rejoice over you, I do not rejoice over our covenant
     Which we have made tonight, for it was made in haste
     Without steady counsel, and it is as hasty as lightning
     Which flashes for a moment and is gone before the one who has seen it can say
     'My eyes have seen light' – go in peace, my friend,
     And I shall watch and hope63 that you will return at this time next year64
     And the blossom of our love in the clear heat65 becomes a ripening fruit.66
     Go, restore your soul with sleep after the toil which you have done67
     Just as you have restored my soul and reserved some of your spirit for me.
RAM  Would you leave me now, for naught, without recompense?
JAEL  What power do I have to recompense you tonight?
RAM  The faithful oath of your covenant in exchange for my oath.
JAEL  I raised my hand in an oath before you asked it of me
But I wish it had not come out of my mouth until now.
RAM  Do you regret that it came out of your mouth? Please tell me why.

63 Mic. 7:7 'and I shall watch for the Lord; I shall wait for the God of my salvation'.
64 Gen. 18:10 'I shall indeed return to you at this time next year'.
65 Isa. 18:4 'in the clear heat'.
66 Isa. 18:5.
67 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘rest/breast’ (2.2.123–4).
JAEL. Because I desire to make the oath again with a willing spirit. For with everything that I have brought forth there still remains much in me.

My willingness is broader than the sea, and my love is deeper than the watery abyss.

And the more I continue to bring it forth, the more it multiplies and spreads within me.

(The nurse calls from within)

I hear a voice from within; go in peace, my beloved –

I am coming, Nurse – be sincere, son of Abiram!

But stay a little while yet, for I shall come here again.

(She exits from the window)

RAM. Oh, twilight that I have longed for, night of vigil. I fear greatly

That it is a dream which I see in this vision of the night

The vision is too agreeable and pleasant to be so while waking.

(Jael re-enters)

JAEL. There is yet one word to tell you; afterwards go in peace.

If your love is pure and you desire to wed me,

Set the place and the day for our wedding.

68 Ps. 51:14 (51:12 in English Bibles).

69 This rhymes with the last word two lines beneath (which itself forms a rhyming couplet with the line following it; see note 72). This may be an attempt to replicate in some measure Shakespeare’s rhyming couplet ‘sea/thee’ (2.2.133–4), which corresponds in meaning to the two Hebrew lines following this one.

70 Job 11:9 מִנָּי יָֽם וּרְחָבָ֗ה 'and broader than the sea'.

71 Exod. 1:12 לָא בֵּר לֵבָנָה עָלֵיהּ יְלִֽדָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל 'and the more it multiplied and spread'.

72 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘adieu/true’ (2.2.136–7).

73 Isa. 21:42.

74 Exod. 12:42.
And inform me of all this tomorrow by the hand of one of the youths
Whom I shall send to you; and I shall be yours, and all that is mine
You will be the chief at my head, and where you go, I shall go.²⁵

Jael, my lady!
I’ll come at once – but if there is another spirit with you²⁶
Please listen to me –

My lady!
Wait for me a moment and I’ll come – Let me be,²⁷ and leave me in the bitterness of my soul²⁸

Indeed I swear²⁹ –

Go, and may your sleep be sweet,³⁰ a thousand times in accordance with my blessing.
(Exits from the window)

Without the light of your face, how can my sleep be pleasant?
A boy goes to his school in sadness; afterwards he goes out to freedom³¹

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²⁵ Ruth 1:16
²⁶ Num. 14:24
²⁷ Job 7:16
²⁸ Job 7:11, 10:1
²⁹ This rhymes with the following two lines. In this respect it mirrors the original ‘night/light’ (2.2.154–5), except that in Salkinson’s version the rhyme starts a line earlier and extends over three lines rather than two.
³⁰ Prov. 3:24
³¹ This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘books/looks’ (2.2.156–7).
And a man meets his beloved in joy but parts in sorrow and sighing.  

(He goes slowly on his way)

(Jael re-enters)

JAEL

Listen, Ram; come back! If only I had the voice of a falcon!  
To whistle and to bring back this pleasant hawk.

But a trapped maiden like myself has no way to make her voice heard

Except as a ghost from the earth! For if it were not so I would raise my voice with force and call out the name of Ram my chosen one Until the valley opposite split apart at my voice.

RAM

The voice is the voice of the beloved of my soul; she is calling my name How agreeable and pleasant is the voice of love at night. Like the sound of skilful playing to a listening ear.

JAEL

Ram!

RAM

Here I am, graceful doe.

JAEL

At what time tomorrow shall I send the youth to you?

RAM

In the morning.

JAEL

And the time until the morning will be as prolonged for me as twenty years Admittedly I have forgotten why I called you to come back.

---

82 Isa. 35:10, 51:11.
83 This bird is mentioned three times in the Hebrew Bible (Lev. 11:14; Deut. 14:13; Job 28:7). It is translated as ‘kite’ in some English Bible versions (e.g., the King James Bible). Salkinson’s ‘falcon’ replaces Shakespeare’s ‘falconer’ (2.2.158), and as such lends a very different sense to the line, evoking the image of one bird summoning another.
84 Isa. 29:4.
85 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘the cave where Echo lies’ (2.2.161). This is in keeping with Salkinson’s strategy of removing references to Classical mythological figures.
86 Jer. 12:7.
87 Prov. 5:19. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘my nyas’ (2.2.167), i.e., fledgling hawk. As in many other cases, Salkinson has not retained Shakespeare’s hawking imagery, which would lack relevance for his audience. See also First Part, note 171.

The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
Ram
I shall stand here until the matter comes to your mind.

Jael
And I shall continue to forget, so that you might continue to stand
And only this I remember, that I long for your closeness.

Ram
And I shall continue to stand so that you might continue to forget
And I shall also forget everything, except for this place.

Jael
I am willing for you to go, because the morning is near
But do not distance yourself further than a bird
Which is grasped by a scarlet cord in the hand of its mistress
The bird walks a little bit, like a prisoner with his leg in a chain
And it returns from time to time because it is pulled by the rope
Since its lady, out of the jealousy of her love, will not set it free.

Ram
If only I were the bird.

Jael
My desire is like your desire, chosen one of my soul;
Though I worry that I might kill you with my excessive fondness.
Now descend, Ram, turn around, go in peace.
To bless you and send you away in peace is a joy, but it ends with a sigh
Therefore I shall detain you and bless you until the sun shines.
(Exits from the window)

Ram
May peace reside in your heart and slumber on your eyelids, beloved!

---

88 Josh. 2:21 “בַּחַלּֽוֹן הַשָּׁנִ֖י אֶת־תִּקְוַ֥ת וַתִּקְשֹׁ֛ר’ and she tied the scarlet cord in the window’.
89 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in the source text ‘gyves/again’ (2.2.179–80).
90 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘sorrow/morrow’ (2.2.184–5).
91 2 Kings 3:22.
92 Prov. 6:4 “ךָלְּﬠַפְﬠַפֶּֽי וּ֝תְנוּמָ֗ה’ nor slumber to your eyelids’.
93 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s original ‘breast/rest’ (2.2.186–7).
If only I were peace and slumber and dwelled in pleasantness there —

Now I shall go to the chamber of the priest, who teaches about the secret of redemption,

To tell him the matters of the covenant and to ask his advice and counsel.

(Exits)

**SCENE 3 Chamber of Rezin**

The dawn has opened its eyelids; it is peering through the lattice.

It scatters the eastern clouds, turns its eye to the dark places.

The night moves like a drunkard and does not stand still in the dark.

For it retreats from the wheels of the sun's chariot.

Indeed before light dawns, ere it sends out its heat

To make the day rejoice, to dry out all moisture until it is gone.

---

94 In the Arden edition, based on the Second Quarto (and also corresponding to the First Folio), Romeo speaks four lines here (2.2.188–91) that Salkinson instead assigns to the opening of Rezin's speech at the beginning of the following scene; see note 99.

95 This corresponds to Shakespeare's 'my ghostly sire' (2.2.192). See First Part, note 268 for further discussion of the Hebrew term 'כֹּהֵן' 'priest'.

96 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'cell/tell' (2.2.192–3). Salkinson most likely inserted the phrase 'who teaches the secret of redemption', which is not based on the original, for purposes of the rhyme.

97 The name of an eighth-century BCE king of the biblical kingdom of Aram who attacked Judah (2 Kings 15:37). There is no obvious correspondence in sound or meaning between this name and Shakespeare's Laurence. It is possible that Salkinson chose the name Rezin as a veiled reference to the character's status as a Catholic friar, because in Jewish sources Aram was sometimes associated with Rome and Christianity (Jastrow 1903: 123), but this is uncertain. This would fit in with Salkinson's description of Rezin as a 'Christian priest' in the list of characters at the beginning of the play.

98 Song of Songs 2:9 'וכִּי יָרָה לָעָוהַר מִמְצִיץ' 'he is peering through the lattice'.

99 In the Arden edition, which is based on the Second Quarto and also corresponds to the First Folio, this and the following three lines are spoken by Romeo at the end of the previous scene (2.2.188–91). The fact that Salkinson places them here suggests that he was working from an English edition based on the Second, Third, or Fourth Folio, in which these lines are spoken by Friar Laurence.

100 This and the next three lines form a pair of rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare's 'night/light', 'reels/wheels' (2.2.188–91).

101 This is Salkinson's culturally neutral equivalent of Shakespeare's 'Titan's wheels' (2.2.191).

102 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'eye/dry' (2.3.1–2).
I shall gather lights in my basket, evil and bitter herbs. And blossoms that give off a scent of precious perfumes. The earth is the mother of nature, and nature is buried in the earth. She is the womb of everything that is born, and also a burial site. Her womb is always great, and her children are most diverse. They all satiate themselves with her bread, and drink their fill from the milk of her breasts. Many of them are honourable, each with its own worth. They differ from each other, each according to its kind, none created in vain. Who can match the worth of herbs; how exalted is their work! Or the strength of stones by the thousands, and the plants of the field by the myriads! Even the lowest of the low which the earth abhors. The root of the matter is found in it to benefit the mother who bore him. And everything created on the earth which is considered a precious gift.

103 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘ours/flowers’ (2.3.3–4).
104 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘tomb/womb’ (2.3.5–6).
105 Jer. 20:17.
106 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘kind/find’ (2.3.7–8).
107 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘excellent/different’ (2.3.9–10).
108 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lies/qualities’ (2.3.11–12).
109 Job 6:12.
110 Ezek. 16:7 נִנְתַּתִי הַשָּׂדֶה כְּצֶ֤מַח רְבָבָ֗ה ’I have caused you to multiply [lit. grow by the myriads] like the plants of the field’.
111 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘live/give’ (2.3.13–14).
112 Job 19:28 וְשָׁנַ֖ה הַגְּדוּלֵי בָּאָרי הָֽעָנִים ‘as the root of the matter is found in me’.
113 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘use/abuse’ (2.3.15–16).
Turns into a **stone of stumbling** when it corrupts its straight path.

Even justice not in its time is regarded as wickedness

And an evildoer who does noble things is elevated as one whose transgression is forgiven.

Consider this tender blossom still in its greenness

In it is concealed the **elixir of death** and the **elixir of life** is also in its heart

If a man smells it, its good scent gladdens him

But if he tastes its drink, it is poison and kills him.

So is the good and evil inclination; two warriors, hawks

Fight in man’s heart as in the heart of herbs and blossoms

And if the evil lifts up its head and the good sinks down below

Then the man’s end is near and the plant dies, into the grave.

**RAM**

Greetings to you, father!

---

114 Isa. 8:14.
115 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘misapplied/dignified’ (2.3.17–18).
116 Ps. 32:1.
117 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘flower/power’ (2.3.19–20).
118 Mishnah **Ḥullin** 3:5.
119 Babylonian Talmud **Yoma** 72b.
119 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘part/heart’ (2.3.21–2).
120 This refers to a principle in Jewish thought that all humans are born with two opposing inclinations, one
to do good and the other to do evil, and must strive throughout their lives to keep the evil inclination
under control. This concept is mentioned in the Mishnah (**Berakhot** 9:5) and in numerous other locations
in rabbinic and later Jewish literature.
121 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘still/will’ (2.3.23–4). Salkinson’s
seemingly unmotivated use of the word ‘hawks’ here is most likely rooted in the need to find a
suitable rhyme.
122 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘predominant/plant’ (2.3.25–6).
123 This forms a rhyming couplet with the following line. There is no precedent for this in Shakespeare’s
‘father/me’ (2.3.27–8).
Welcome!

Who enquires after my wellbeing at dawn, with sweetness and great pleasantness?

Have you, my son, left your bed while it is still night?

It is nothing other than agitated sorrow in your heart.

An old heart full of worry seeks a resting place but there is none.

Where worry dwells, there sleep flees from the eye.

But one possessed of the power and soul of youth does not know distress. He lies down in safety and his sleep is sweet for him.

But you, because you have risen early, and have come to me in the darkness.

By this I know that you have been afflicted and woe is hurling you violently.

And if it is not so, Ram, I shall tell you where you were.

For you have wandered the whole night and have not been to your bed.

My rest was pleasant for me, although I have not seen sleep.

May God forgive iniquity – were you with Shoshannah?

125 This replaces Shakespeare’s ‘Benedicite’. Salkinson’s substitution of the Hebrew greeting for the original Latin is in keeping with his strategy of replacing Latin and French elements with Hebrew ones, thereby homogenizing the linguistic variation present in the source text.

126 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘head/bed’ (2.3.29–30).

127 Ps. 39:3 ‘and my sorrow was agitated’.

128 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘eye/lie’ (2.3.31–2).

129 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘brain/reign’ (2.3.33–4).

130 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘assure/distemperature’ (2.3.35–6).

131 Isa. 22:17.

132 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘right/today’ (2.3.37–8).

133 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘mine/Rosaline’ (2.3.39–40).
I was not with Shoshannah, not so, my father,  

I have forgotten like a dead man from my mind that name which recalls woe.

The matter is good, my son, but where were you, tell me.

I shall tell you, before you ask me again; At a time of feasting and gladness I met my enemy He drew his bow and broke through the covering of my heart And I shot my arrow and wounded him

But you, faithful physician, will save us both The path of revenge is distant from me; look, please look, my father.

I seek medicine for the affliction of an enemy as for the affliction of my own heart.

Speak, my son, with pure speech; let the parables and riddles be

If one confesses and repents in riddles, the pardon will also be like a riddle.

Therefore know with certainty that my soul desires

The only daughter of Abiel with a great and pure love

This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘no/woe’ (2.3.41–2).

Ps. 31:13 (31:12 in English Bibles) ‘I have been forgotten from the mind like a dead man.’

This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘then/again’ (2.3.43–4).

Esther 9:17, 18, 22.

This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, echoing the English except that the latter consists of two rhyming couplets: ‘enemy/me’, ‘remedies/lies’ (2.3.45–8).

Hosea 13:8 ‘and I shall tear open the covering of their heart’.

This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lo/foe’ (2.3.49–50).

Zeph. 3:9.

This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘drift/shrift’ (2.3.51–2).

Prov. 28:13.

This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, echoing the English except that the latter consists of two rhyming couplets: ‘set/Capulet’, ‘mine/combine’ (2.3.53–6).
And she is also bound to me; she is my beloved.

Nothing is lacking, except the bond according to the Law. 

But when, where, and how I saw her, fell in love with her, and betrothed her.

I shall inform you at a different time, or you will hear it from her mouth.

Just please consent, instructor of justice and faith!

To bring us on this day into the tradition of the wedding covenant.

REZIN

Oh! My heart pricks me at this hasty change.

How you have abandoned your beloved Shoshannah like a withering rose.

Young people go mad in their love as if overcome with wine.

But love does not lodge in their hearts, only rests upon the eye.

How many tears have you poured like rain on a garden.

Arousing mercy and compassion to turn Shoshannah’s heart.

145 Alternatively, ‘according to the Torah’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘holy marriage’ (2.3.57). The word תורָה typically means ‘law’ or ‘instruction’ when appearing in the Hebrew Bible, but in postbiblical Hebrew it generally denotes the Torah (which in its narrow sense refers to the Pentateuch and in its broader sense the whole of Jewish law and tradition). Salkinson’s readers would have been aware of both the biblical and postbiblical meanings of the word, but the postbiblical sense would have been salient, as the phrase ‘according to the Torah’ is commonly used in Jewish texts and speech.

146 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘how/vow’ (2.3.57–8).

147 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘pray/today’ (2.3.59–60).

148 This neutral expression replaces Shakespeare’s ‘Holy Saint Francis’ (2.3.61).

149 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘here/dear’ (2.3.61–2).

150 Isa. 28:1.

151 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lies/eyes’ (2.3.63–4).

152 Salkinson has omitted the Catholic exclamation ‘Jesu Maria’ that appears directly before this mention of tears in the original.

153 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘brine/Rosaline’ (2.3.65–6).

154 Zech. 7:9; Ps. 103:4.
What is the profit in the drops of water\textsuperscript{155} that you have spilled from the spring of your eyes\textsuperscript{156}?

To grow a plant of love from which you have not tasted

Your sighs have not yet dried up; they have risen like steam into the eye of the sun\textsuperscript{157}

My ears still tingle at the sound of your wailing; you wailed last night

Where, then, has the sorrow fled? How has the weeping been forgotten?\textsuperscript{158}

You are still stained with tears; they have not yet been wiped from your cheek.

If you are Ram, and from your mouth has come forth mourning and woe\textsuperscript{159, 160}

You have no woman on earth except for Soshannah alone

But now, are you changed? – Tell me, lad, truthfully!\textsuperscript{161}

Who can mock fallen women if there is no strength in men.

**RAM** When I loved Shoshannah, you chastised me relentlessly.\textsuperscript{162}

**REZIN** Not because you loved, but rather because you were like a madman.

**RAM** Why, you commanded me to bury my love in the river of forgetfulness\textsuperscript{163, 164}.
Not to bury one and raise another up from the grave.

Leave off chastisement this time and spare the rod of punishment.

This damsel that I desire, she is not like the damsel I left

She shows compassion and is shown compassion, and loves as she is loved

Not so was the other one.

She knew that your love was like the voice of joy and prayer

Like a learned tongue in the mouth of a child without understanding the interpretation of the word

But come with me, son trifling as chaff in a storm

On account of one matter I shall be a help to you in distress

Perhaps as a result of your wedding quarrel and strife will cease

And your fathers' enmity will retreat because of the children's love.

I am in a great rush, and in my haste I am babbling.

One who is cunning makes his way, but one who rushes sins with his legs.

(Exeunt)

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165 Prov. 13:24 'he who spares the rod hates his child'.
166 This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, mirroring the English except that the latter is composed of a rhyming couplet: 'now/allow' (2.3.81–2). Salkinson's speech has four lines, whereas Shakespeare's has three.
167 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'well/spell' (2.3.83–4).
168 Isa. 50:4.
169 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'me/be' (2.3.85–6).
170 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'prove/love' (2.3.87–8).
171 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'haste/fast' (2.3.89–90).
MERAIOTH Where is Ram hiding? Did he stay in his house tonight?

BENAIAH He did not stay in his father’s house, so I heard from the mouth of his men.

MERAIOTH That maiden Shoshannah, stiff-necked and white of face

Indeed tortures his soul to the point of driving him mad.

BENAIAH Tubal, who is kin to old Abiel, sent a letter to his father’s house.

MERAIOTH It is a letter of summons, to face him in battle.

BENAIAH And Ram will answer the summons.

MERAIOTH Any man who knows how to write can write a response.

BENAIAH He will answer the summons and will come to face him.

MERAIOTH I am distressed for the wretch, for he has surely been torn to pieces.

A pure maiden has pierced him through with the flaming arrows of her black eyes

An arrow of love songs has entered his flesh through his ear

And his heart has been split by arrows from the hand of the blind archer

So how can he involve himself in fighting against Tubal?

172 This speech is prose in the original (2.4.1–2).
173 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Where the devil’; Salkinson has transformed this into a neutral interrogative.
174 This speech is prose in the original (2.4.11–12).
175 This speech is prose in the original (2.4.13–17).
177 Ezek. 33:32.
BENAIAM But who is Tubal, and what is his power?

Meraioth 179 He is more powerful than the commander of the grasshopper army 180 And he is greatly praised among damsels playing timbrels 181 For he wages war like one who strums upon the harp 182 Who keeps the time of playing note by note by the book He raises and lowers his voice and rests once or twice according to the rules. And the third time he plunges his sword into the heart of his enemy Who has approached him and remained unharmed? Even a bud and blossom 183 Cannot withstand him, and wherever he turns, he inflicts punishment 184 He is a goring man from his youth Noble and a son of great men, one who knows the speech of date palms and demons 186

179 This speech is prose in the original (2.4.19–26).
180 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Prince of Cats’ (2.4.19). Grasshoppers are mentioned twice in the Hebrew Bible, in Num. 13:33 and Isa. 40:22. In both cases they are depicted as small and insignificant, which may have inspired Salkinson to select them in the present context.
181 Ps. 68:26 (68:25 in English Bibles).
184 1 Sam. 14:47.
185 This term appears in Exod. 21:29 and 21:36, and refers to an ox that habitually gores.
186 Babylonian Talmud Bava Batra 134a, Sukkah 28a 187 This speech is prose in the original (2.4.19–26).
And all the words of the Frenchmen that they call out on the day of battle are not concealed from him.

Behold, Ram is coming, Ram is coming, behold.

Ram’s face is sad, he is low and not elevated. Why is he so meagre? Meagre of flesh like a thin fish. And the expression of his face testifies against him that he is now composing poems like the poems of the poet Petrarch to his beloved Laura.

But what is Laura worth compared to Ram’s gorgeous beloved? Why, she stands before her like one of the royal perfumers. Dida the wanderer beautifies herself in vain, and Cleopatra’s charm is a lie.
And who are Helena197 and Hera,198 daughters of whoredom and lewd women!199

And Thisbe,200 one eye painted,201 of what account is she?202

(To Ram upon his entrance)

Greetings to you,203 Frenchman! Greetings to your red trousers!204, 205

I am happy to see your faces, my brothers and companions both.

I have donned the red trousers not in order for you to look at me

But in order to attract the eyes of this woman who is coming towards us

Who has ornaments on207 and is dressed in crimson and purple

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197 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Helen’ (2.4.42). While the reference in the English source text is to Helen of Troy, Salkinson’s Helena is the Queen of Adiabene, who converted to Judaism in c. 30 ce. Queen Helena is mentioned in the Mishnah (Yoma 3:10 and Nazir 3:6). See Schalit and Gibson (2007) for further details.

198 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Hero’ (2.4.42), from the Greek myth of Hero and Leander. As in the case of Dida, this name does not appear in Jewish literature; again, Salkinson has changed the final vowel from - o to - a, which is the standard Hebrew feminine marker, but has not otherwise domesticated it. While Hero is not a historical figure, Salkinson may have decided not to Judaize it because it appears as part of a list of names of historical and literary personages. The fact that Hero was a mortal rather than a god may have made him feel more comfortable forgoing domestication.

199 Ezek. 23:44.

200 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Thisbe’ (2.4.42), the tragic heroine of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe from Ovid’s Metamorphoses. As in the case of Dida and Hera, this name does not appear in Jewish literature; again, Salkinson may have chosen to retain it because he thought that it was more appropriate than a domesticated equivalent within the context of this list of historical and literary personages. As in the case of Hera, the fact that Thisbe was a mortal rather than a god may have made domestication a less pressing concern.

201 Jer. 4:30 לַשָּׁוְא עֵינַיִךְ בַפּוּךְ ‘that you enlarge your eyes with paint in vain’.

202 Isa. 2:22 הוּא נֶחְשָׁב כִּי־בַמֶּה ‘for of what account is he?’

203 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Signor Romeo, bonjour’ (2.4.43–4). Salkinson has replaced the French greeting with a Hebrew one, in keeping with his general strategy of homogenizing linguistic variation within the source text.

204 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘French slop’ (2.4.44–5), i.e., French trousers. Salkinson’s motivation for replacing ‘French’ with ‘red’ may be rooted in a desire to insert a comedic component into his translation in order to compensate for his subsequent omission of a large section of source text (see next note).

205 Salkinson has omitted the next 52 lines of the source text, beginning with the last sentence of 2.4.45 and ending with 2.4.96, which consist primarily of a bantering exchange between Romeo and Mercutio. The omission is most likely due to the fact that, as in the case discussed in note 189, the English lines include numerous puns that Salkinson found difficult to translate.

206 This speech has little basis in the original, which consists solely of ‘Here’s goodly gear!/ A sail, a sail’ (2.4.97–8). The motivation for Salkinson’s expansion, including a reference to the red trousers and a comically exaggerated description of the nurse’s larger-than-life appearance, may be rooted in a desire to make up for omitting the source text’s witty repartee between Romeo and Mercutio (see notes 204 and 205) by injecting an element of comedy into the translation.

207 Exod. 33:4 יִשְׁעָל אֶל נַעְלֵי ‘and no one put on his ornaments’.
Who looks down like a merchant’s ship\(^{208}\) and is as awesome as an army with banners.\(^{209}\)

**Meraioth**

Make way for the ship! A ship with an oar behind it.

(\textit{The nurse with her attendant Peter\(^{210}\)})

**The Nurse**\(^{211}\)

Peter!

**Peter**

Here I am.

**The Nurse**

Give me the fan.

**Meraioth**

Give her the fan, dear Peter

So that it may be an eye-covering\(^{212}\) for her, because its face is better than her face.\(^{213}\)

**The Nurse**

Who is this man who dares to provoke me?

**Ram**

He is a formed weapon,\(^{214}\) which God created

In order to destroy the work of His hands.

**Meraioth\(^{215}\)**

Do well with your tongue, Frenchman, and speak honour\(^{216}\) before the old lady.

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\(^{208}\) Prov. 31:14

\(^{209}\) Song of Songs 6:4, 10.

\(^{210}\) This is not a Hebrew name. As such, it could be interpreted as a straightforward transliteration of the source text’s ‘Peter’, which would be a departure from Salkinson’s usual strategy of Hebraizing characters’ names (the only other such cases are Balthasar in this play (First Part, note 18) and Marcos in Ithiel (First Part, note 155). However, it is a Hebrew word meaning ‘firstborn’ (commonly used with reference to livestock), and Salkinson may have chosen to retain it in his translation because of this somewhat comedic association.

\(^{211}\) All lines from here until Ram’s mention of Rezin are prose in the original (2.4.98–172) (although some of these lines are missing from Salkinson’s version; see notes 213 and 215).

\(^{212}\) Gen. 20:16.

\(^{213}\) Salkinson has omitted the next five lines of source text, consisting of a punning dialogue between Mercutio and Nurse (2.4.105–9). This is most likely because, as in the case of other such omissions, he found the language difficult to translate.

\(^{214}\) Isa. 54:17.

\(^{215}\) Salkinson has created this speech based on a fusion of two separate utterances by Mercutio appearing later in the original, namely ‘No hare, sir, unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent’ (2.4.128–9) and ‘Farewell, ancient lady, farewell lady, “lady, lady”’ (2.4.137–8). Salkinson’s version of the first line is very different from the English, including another mention of Ram as a ‘Frenchman’ and omitting the original reference to Lent; the only resemblance it bears to the source text is the allusion to the nurse’s age. Salkinson seems to have placed this speech here in order to hasten Meraioth’s exit, as he found the character’s lines particularly challenging to translate.

\(^{216}\) This is a pun based on the fact that the Hebrew word for ‘honour’ can also mean ‘heavy weight’ or ‘burden’ (see next note).
The lady is weighty\(^{217}\) (in a singing voice), lady, lady, lady!

(Meraioth and Benaiah exit)

**THE NURSE**
Can you tell me where I might find the youth Ram?

**RAM**
I hereby tell you, that I am he;
I am very sorry that I have no other name.

**THE NURSE**
You have spoken well.\(^{218}\)

But what do I have to do with this villain

Who has spread mockery and poured scorn like a fool?\(^{219}\)

Am I like one of the damsels, like one of the girls of his age

With whom he amuses himself for a moment and scoffs at for a moment?

My wrath is at you, Peter, for you saw a strange man

Coming to satiate his eye with me, and you stood opposite

**LIKE A MAN WHO CANNOT SAVE.**\(^{220}\)

I have never seen a man come to satiate his eye with you;

If I saw him, I would not be too weak to draw my sword

And show him who I am. For to save an oppressed man from the hand of his oppressor

As long as it is according to the law and the commandment,\(^{221}\) there is none better than me.

---

217 This is a pun linked to the noun כבוד ‘honour’ in the previous line (see preceding note).
218 This is a complete single-line speech in the original, ‘You say well’ (2.4.120). Salkinson has merged it with a later speech by the nurse (2.4.144) and omitted the intervening lines (2.4.121–43), except for Meraioth/Mercurio’s lines (2.4.128–9 and 2.4.137–8) mentioned in note 215.
219 2 Sam. 6:20.
220 Jer. 14:9 ‘like a warrior who cannot save’.
221 2 Chron. 14:3 (14:4 in English Bibles) ‘the law and the commandment’.
The nurse: That worthless mocker has provoked my bitter anger.

A fire is kindled in my anger, and my knees are knocking against each other.

But his day will yet come, and I shall look upon his wretchedness.

Now please, my lord, let me speak a word in your ears.

As I have already said, my lady sent me to see you.

But the matter which she commanded me to tell you, I shall keep in my heart;

Only this shall I say at the beginning, if you lead my lady astray.

To a false paradise, because you delude her in the end, your glory will not be on this path.

For the damsel is tender and delicate, and anyone who touches her for ill is like one who touches the apple of my eye.

Please greet your lady in my name.

And I say to you: A man intoxicates with love.

How beautiful are your words that come forth from a faithful heart.

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222 Hosea 12:15 (12:14 in English Bibles) ‘Ephraim has provoked bitter anger’.

223 Deut. 32:22; Jer. 15:14.

224 Dan. 5:6: 'and his knees knocked against each other'. This is the only example in Salkinson's translations of shibbus from an Aramaic portion of the Hebrew Bible.

225 Num. 11:15 ‘and let me not look upon my wretchedness’.

226 Judg. 4:9: ‘your glory will not be on the path that you are going on’.

227 Isa. 47:1.

228 Zech. 2:12 (2:8 in English Bibles) ‘for whoever touches you touches the apple of his own eye’.

229 Prov. 5:19 ‘may you always be intoxicated in her love’.
How much she will rejoice and take delight to lie in your bosom.

**RAM**

What will you tell her; indeed, you have not understood my word.

**THE NURSE**

I have understood your word well, and I shall tell it to her

Just as you told me here that you are intoxicated in her love.

So speaks an honourable man who desires to take a wife.

**RAM**

Tell her to ask permission to come today to the prayerhouse

To confess at noon and there in the chamber of Rezin the priest

She shall confess and enter into a covenant with me –

And take this for yourself as your payment.

**THE NURSE**

I shall not take anything from your hand, not even a single coin.

**RAM**

But I say that you must take it from my hand.

**THE NURSE**

Is it today at noon? Why, she will come as you have said.

**RAM**

And you, dear Nurse, stand behind the wall

Near the priest's chamber and there you will find my servant

Who will bring you ropes bound together in the manner of a ladder

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230 Prov. 5:19

231 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Friar' (2.4.174).

232 This word appears only once in the Hebrew Bible, in 1 Sam. 2:36. It is typically translated either as 'small amount of money', 'piece of silver', or 'payment'.

233 Cf. Shakespeare's 'abbey wall' (2.4.179); Salkinson has omitted the reference to the Christian institution.
That is the ladder on which I shall ascend to my greatest joy \(^{234}\) tonight.

Just keep the secret, and know that there is payment for your toil.

Now go in peace, and greet your mistress.

**THE NURSE**

May the Lord give you His blessing; but please listen to me.

**RAM**

Speak, woman of valour.\(^{235}\)

**THE NURSE**

Is your servant faithful, and will not reveal a secret?

Haven't you heard any of the proverbs of the masses?

‘Two can keep a secret if one of them goes to the grave.’

**RAM**

I vouch for my servant with my life; like a mute, he will not open his mouth.\(^{236}\)

**THE NURSE\(^{237}\)**

My lady is unique among women, unique among all charming girls

If you had seen her in her childhood, at that time when she had just started to babble!

If you had heard the prattling of her lips, which was sweeter than any pleasant words,\(^{238}\)

And even Paris, one of the noblemen, of the aristocrats who are in our city

Yearns and lies in wait to catch this fish on his hook

But she spurns him, and will not consider him

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\(^{234}\) Ps. 137:6.

\(^{235}\) Prov. 12:4, 31:10; Ruth 3:11.

\(^{236}\) Ps. 38:14 (38:13 in English Bibles).

\(^{237}\) This speech is prose in the original (2.4.191–9).

\(^{238}\) Prov. 15:26, 16:24.
For she utterly abhors him; she utterly detests him[239] as an abomination.

How many times have I mocked her, until I angered her

Saying, Paris is the man under whose wings she should find shelter[240]

And as for her, her face grew pale from anger like a white handkerchief[241]

Like fine Egyptian linen[242] on a cow’s table.

A cow does not have a table; maybe King Pharaoh.[243]

But tell me, what is the first letter of your name?

Is it like the first letter of the names ‘friend’ and ‘shepherd’?[244]

Why do you ask such a thing?

Resh is the first of the three names.

Get out,[245] mocker, I know that the letter resh

Is the first of the name of a small dog that belongs to my lady.[246]
But there is no resh in your name.
Indeed, in any case
If only you could hear with your
own ears as my lady sings
‘Ram, my friend, my shepherd –
Ram, my friend, my shepherd’
I know that you would take
pleasure in it. And she told me
That the first letter of these three
names is the same.
ram
Please mention me to your lady.
the nurse
I shall mention your name
evening, morning, and noon.\(^{247}\) – (Ram exits)
peter!
here I am.
the nurse
Take the fan and go before me.
(Exeunt)

scene 5
Abiel’s vineyard
jael
Indeed at the ninth hour I sent
the nurse
And within half an hour she promised me to return
Perhaps she has not found him –
but the matter is not so
It is only that she limps, and
love demands messengers as swift\(^{248}\)
As thoughts that run ten times
faster than the sun’s rays
Which run to drive out the shadows from dark mountains.\(^{249}\)
Because of this doves and young pigeons\(^{250}\) are chosen

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\(^{247}\) Ps. 55:18 (55:17 in English Bibles)Ps. 55:18 (55:17 in English Bibles)

\(^{248}\) Isa. 18:2

\(^{249}\) Jer. 13:16.

\(^{250}\) Lev. 5:7
Those possessed of wing and feather, to pull the wagon of love
And all messengers of love are possessed of arrows and have wings\textsuperscript{251}
And behold, the sun in its cycle has risen up to the height of the chariot-wheel
And from the ninth hour until now it has been three long hours
And she still has not returned. If she had a warm heart
And youthful blood in her veins, her feet would not have delayed until now
For she would have hastened on her way like a catapult from the slinger’s hand
To bring the words to the one whom my soul loves\textsuperscript{252}
And to return to inform me at once of what he answered and what he spoke\textsuperscript{253}
But the old are not living; they have a different spirit\textsuperscript{254, 255}
They move heavily from their place; their soul is a burden and their foot is lead.
But here she comes – *(The nurse and Peter)*
My nurse! My nurse! Are you well? What are the tidings in your mouth?
Have you seen him? Tell the servant to go.

\textsuperscript{251} This corresponds to Shakespeare's 'And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings' (2.5.8); as usual, Salkinson has omitted the mythological reference.
\textsuperscript{252} Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
\textsuperscript{253} Jer. 23:35 'what has the Lord answered, and what has the Lord spoken?'
\textsuperscript{254} Num. 14:24.
\textsuperscript{255} This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'dead/lead' (2.5.16–17).
THE NURSE Peter, go and stand by the gate. (Peter exits)

JAEL Now my nurse, my comfort – but why is your face sad?256 If there are bad tidings in your mouth, inform me of them with favourable lips And if they are good, why do you vex me with a broken spirit?257

THE NURSE Indeed my soul is weary; wait for me a little while The exertion of the way has been too much for me; all of my bones have wasted away.258

JAEL Give me the word of your tidings and I shall give you my bones But please, my nurse, my dear nurse, please speak.

THE NURSE Why are you pressing me?259 Wait for me a little while longer. Do you not see that there is no breath left in me?260

JAEL How can you tell me that there is no breath left in you When there is breath in you to tell me that there is no breath left in you? Out of impatience you refuse to give an answer to my question While you are multiplying words261 for nothing on the matter of impatience Just tell me this, are your tidings good or bad? Say good or bad and I shall be silent and wait for you.

256 Neh. 2:2 פֶּטֶרֶךְ מִלֵּךְ 'why is your face sad'.
258 Ps. 31:11 (31:10 in English Bibles).
259 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Jesu, what haste!' (2.5.29). Salkinson has omitted the Catholic oath.
260 1 Kings 17:17 הַדֶּרֶךְ לָכְכָּךְ 'there was no breath left in him'.
261 Job 35:16 יַכְבִּיר מִלִּין 'he multiplies words'.
Please say and calm me down. Are they good or bad?

The Nurse

It is just as easy for me to choose one of these two paths.

As it is for you to choose one of the men to marry.

Behold, your chosen one Ram has more beautiful eyes than many.

Indeed his legs, his hands, and his feet, nothing on earth is their equal.

He does not know flattery, and is not much for pleasant words.

Yet all those who see him perceive that he is an unblemished lamb.

Go, my delightful girl, serve the Lord and be well.

Where did you eat at noon?

Jael

Desist, all these things I knew long ago.

But what did he answer regarding the matter of the wedding?

What did he say about this?

The Nurse

Oh, my head, my head! My head is splitting into pieces.

And my shoulder is like to break apart; my shoulder is going to fall off my back.

The Nurse

This speech is prose in the original (2.5.38–45).

1 Sam. 16:12. 263

Job 41:25 (41:33 in English Bibles) מָשְׁלוֹ אֵֽין־ﬠַל־ﬠָפָ֥ר ‘nothing on earth is his equal’.

Prov. 15:26, 16:24. 265

Exod. 12:5. 266

2 Kings 4:19. 267

Jonah 1:4 ‘the ship was like to break apart’. 268
May the One Who Deals
Bountifully not deal bountifully
with you as He has with me

For you have sent me here and
there in order to bring me to
the gates of death.\(^{269}\)

JAELE
I am distressed, I am greatly
distressed, that there is no
peace in your bones

But tell me, my nurse, what did
the man of my covenant say?

THE NURSE
The man of your covenant
speaks like a blameless and
upright man\(^{270}\)

Like one with a faithful spirit,\(^{271}\)
like one with a willing heart,\(^{272}\)
like one with beautiful eyes\(^{273}\)

And also, on my life! Indeed he
speaks as a valiant man.\(^{274}\)

Where is your mother?

JAELE
Where is my mother? Where
indeed might she be?

She is sitting inside the house.

What has become of you, that
you respond so strangely?

‘The man of your covenant speaks
like a man of valour – where is
your mother?’

THE NURSE
But why are you speaking in
haste?\(^{275}\) Are you intent on
fighting with me?

Is this the balm for my pain, and
the medicine for my bones?

Next time you go on this errand
instead of me.

\(^{269}\) Ps. 107:18.

\(^{270}\) Job 1:8, 2:3.

\(^{271}\) Prov. 11:13.

\(^{272}\) Exod. 35:22; 2 Chron. 29:31.

\(^{273}\) 1 Sam. 16:12.

\(^{274}\) The Hebrew has a question mark here, but the utterance seems to be a statement.

\(^{275}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘O God’s Lady’ (2.5.61); Salkinson has removed the reference to the Virgin Mary.
JAEL
That’s enough for us of this confusion; tell me, what did Ram say?

THE NURSE
Do you have permission to go to the prayerhouse today?

JAEL
Yes.

THE NURSE
If so, hurry, go to the chamber of Rezin the priest

Jael: There you will find the man, and there too you will become his wife.

See how your cheeks have reddened from the heat of your young blood

I know that your face reddens like crimson at a piece of news.

Hurry to the prayerhouse, whereas I shall go a different way

I must bring the ladder on which your beloved will ascend

In the middle of the night and the darkness, like one ascending to a bird’s nest.

I am an ass of burden and through my toil your lover will find you

But when night comes, you will lie under your burden.

Go, my daughter, to the prayerhouse; as for me, my mealtime is approaching.

Jael: I shall hurry to my greatest joy, and farewell, my good nurse! (Exits)

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276 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church’ (2.5.72); Salkinson’s version is religiously neutral.
277 Prov. 7:9.
278 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘delight/night’ (2.5.75–6).
279 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘cell/farewell’ (2.5.77–8).
280 Ps. 137:6.
scene 6  Prayerhouse chamber (Rezin and Ram)

Rezin

May the heavens pour out a blessing, and may the pleasantness of the Lord be upon us.

Without visiting with affl ictions our deeds that we do today.

Rezin

Amen and amen! But of what account

Are all affl ictions and pains compared to the greatest of delights

Which seeing her face will give me in one moment?

Please unite our two hearts in the bond of holy covenant

And I shall not fear the sword of the angel of death that might come

It is enough for me, enough to say: Jael is mine.

Rezin

The end of such bursting desire will be burst upon burst.

For like fire and gunpowder the ones who desire will burst

They will unite, will kiss each other, and like smoke will be consumed together.

Even honey can become loathsome because of its great sweetness

And when we eat too much of it, we become satiated with it and vomit it.

Therefore love calmly and your love will not become loathsome.

While the hasty man is as late as the lazy man to arrive at the target.

(Jael enters)

281  Ps. 41:14 (41:13 in English Bibles), 72:19, 89:53 (89:52 in English Bibles).
282  Job 16:14 срочный установлённый премудрый

‘burst upon burst’.

283  This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘so/slow’ (2.6.14–15).
Behold, the bride comes, as swift-footed as a deer.284

But what is swifter than breath?285 And many people become worthless through vanity of vanities.286

(Jael gives her hand to Ram and afterwards to Rezin)

JAEL Greetings, my honourable teacher.

REZIN Ram answers your greeting, my daughter, for himself and also for me.

JAEL My greetings to you both, or else his greeting would turn back to him.

RAM If your cup of joy, my bride, runs over like my cup of joy And there is a learned tongue in your mouth to magnify and glorify the joy

Please let me hear your voice, for it is sweet,288 making our hearts rejoice At this favourable time and this good union.

JAEL The rich man boasts of his possessions, not of the blossoms in his field

He who can count the number of his possessions is poor and needy

Whereas I in my love have found wealth beyond measure and weight. And if I were to go to count it, not even half could be tallied.

REZIN Stand and I shall bring you into the covenant, for the appointed time must not be delayed.

284 Abarbanel to Amos 2:18 ‘as swift-footed as a deer’. Cf. 2 Sam. 2:18 כִּי־בְּרָגְלָיו קַלָּה כָּאַמָּדְת. כְּאַחַד בְּרַגְלֶיהָ קַלָּה.
285 Can also be translated as ‘vanity’ (in the sense of ‘pointlessness’) depending on the context.
286 Eccles. 1:2, 12:8.
287 Isa. 50:4.
288 Song of Songs 2:14 הָאַיָּלִים הָאַיָּלִים כְּאַחַד בְּרַגְלֶיהָ קַלָּה.
289 Isa. 41:7 אֵילֵי בְּרַגְלֶיהָ קַלָּה "let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet".
290 Isa. 41:7. He says of the welding, “it is good”; this citation is used idiomatically to indicate acceptance of a marriage match (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 292).
Behold, as you hear two or three words come out of my mouth. You will become one flesh according to our holy Law.

(Exeunt)

End of Second Part.

291 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘alone/one’ (2.6.36–7).

292 Gen. 2:24 ‘and they will become one flesh’.

293 Alternatively, ‘our holy Torah’ (see note 145). Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘holy church’ (2.6.37).
A street in Verona (Meroioth, Benaiah, and attendants)

Benaiah

Please, Meroioth, my friend, come, let us return home

Behold, the heat of the day is great, and the Abiels are all around outside

And if we meet them, they will stir up quarrel and strife.¹ ²

For the heat will boil their blood and strike them with madness.

Meroioth³

You are like one of the men who come to the winehouse

There he hangs his sword on the peg, telling it, relax and be silent

Yet before he has emptied the cup into his mouth twice

He arises like a soldier and draws his sword against the pourer of his drink.

Benaiah

Am I like this soldier?

Meroioth⁵

You are quick to anger, like one of the Italians⁶

Your heart grows hot in your anger, and you become angry when your heart grows hot.

Benaiah

And what else is under your tongue?

¹ Hab. 1:3.
² This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in Shakespeare’s ‘brawl/stirring’ (3.1.3–4).
³ This speech is prose in the original (3.1.5–9).
⁴ In Hebrew this is a pun on ‘empties’ in the previous line, as the same verb means ‘empty’ and ‘draw a sword’.
⁵ This speech is prose in the original (3.1.11–13).
⁶ Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘as any in Italy’ (3.1.12); Salkinson’s phrasing suggests that he intends the characters in his translation to be understood as Italian Jews (with their biblical names, Hebrew speech, and Jewish customs), as opposed to the non-Jewish Italians referred to here.
⁷ Deut. 19:6 ‘while his heart is hot’ (i.e., while angry).
If there were two like you, not even one would remain

For one man would seize his fellow’s side and they would both die at once.

Why, you would quarrel with one man because he has

One more hair in his beard, or one less than you;

With another you would quarrel because he cracked a nut

On the grounds that your eye looks like that nut;

Like an egg full of yolk, so your head is full of quarrels

Even though your head has been struck and beaten like an egg yolk in your quarrels;

Once you grumbled at an elderly wayfarer

Because with his sneezes he woke your dog who was sleeping on the street;

You caused anguish to a certain tailor with words that go down into the innermost parts of the belly

And what was his crime? That he wore a new cloth tunic

And did not save it for Passover.

And moreover you did not pardon a shoemaker

Because he tied his old shoes with a new lace

And you are the man who comes to instruct me

---

8 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.15–32).
9 Prov. 18:8
10 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Easter’ (3.1.28). Passover falls at the same time of year as and is the historical setting for Easter; as such it is an appropriate domesticating translation choice.
To desist from quarrel and contention? 11

If I too were a man of strife like yourself

No man would give a homer of barley for the length of my life

For my time would not last longer than a handbreadth and a quarter.

A homer of barley for an ass. 16

By the life of my head! Indeed the Abiels are coming.

By the life of my foot! Indeed I do not fear them.

(Tubal and his men)

Follow me and I shall speak with these men –

May you be well, honourable men! I have a word for one of you.

Only one word? And only for one of us?

Add something to the one word

Say a short word and strike a great blow.

I am prepared to act in accordance with your word, if you give me a pretext.

Why can’t you find a pretext for yourself, without me delivering it to your hand?

11  Isa. 58:4.
12  This speech is prose in the original (3.1.30–2).
13  Lev. 27:16; Hosea 3:2. A homer is a biblical measurement equivalent to approximately 394 litres.
14  A biblical measurement equivalent to approximately 9cm.
15  Lev. 27:16; Hosea 3:2. A homer is a biblical measurement equivalent to approximately 394 litres.
16  This is a pun based on the sound correspondence between חֹמֶר 'barley' and חֲמוֹר ‘ass’.
17  Salkinson is echoing Shakespeare’s wordplay ‘The fee-simple? O simple!’ (3.1.33).
18  This speech is prose in the original (3.1.40–1).
19  This speech is prose in the original (3.1.42–3).
TUBAL
I hear Ram's tunes from your mouth; do you assist him?

MERAIOTH
I help him with his tunes, so that you might dance for us.

And if you do not dance, I shall turn your dancing to mourning. 21, 22

BENAIAH
Here we are on the street and many are listening to our voice.

Come, let us depart from here to a quiet place.

And quietly present your arguments and grievances there without restraint.

Or depart, each man to his house, for the eyes of all the people are upon us.

MERAIOTH
Eyes were given to the people to look, so why should they not look in accordance with their desire?

On account of the people's eyes and ears, I shall not depart.

(Ram enters)

TUBAL
Go in peace, my lord; behold, I have found my lad there.

MERAIOTH
May the king of terrors take me if this lad is your attendant.

Except when you go forth to battle; then he goes forth after you.

As a lad after his master.

TUBAL
Why, you know, Ram, that I hate you with a deathly hatred.

20 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.45–8).
21 Lam. 5:15 'our dancing has turned to mourning'.
22 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Zounds, "consort"!' (3.1.48); Salkinson has removed the Christian oath.
23 Job 18:14 (an epithet for Death; see Gruber 2004: 1528).
And you shall no longer be called Ram; rather, your name shall be villain.  24

I am willing to love you with a love greater than your hatred
Therefore I shall calm my wrath and not consider it as an iniquity of yours
That you have scorned my name, although I am not a villain
Therefore depart in peace, for you do not know who I am.

None of these will benefit you, and I shall not forgive you
For the evil that you have done to me – draw your sword and come forth.

The matter is not so; I have never done you evil
And moreover my love for you is greater than you reckon
Because you do not know from whom the reason for this love derives.

Know, Abielite, that your name is more precious to me than my name
And therefore I shall wait for you to reconcile yourself with me.

Who surrenders with such scorned and despised humility
The edge of the sword will inform us who is righteous in his quarrel.

This word corresponds directly to Shakespeare’s ‘villain’ (3.1.60). It is also the name of a biblical character, the first husband of King David’s wife Abigail (initially mentioned in 1 Samuel 25:3 and appearing throughout 1 Samuel 25); Nabal’s character is in keeping with the name’s meaning.

Judg. 9:54; 1 Sam. 31:4; 1 Chron. 10:4.

This speech is a modified conflation of two separate English speeches by Mercutio (3.1.72–4 and 76–81, the latter in prose); Salkinson has omitted Tybalt’s intervening line (3.1.75).
Come, valiant warrior, who has struggled with grasshoppers and prevailed.  
Draw – and let us face each other!

TUBAL
I am coming for you. (They both draw their swords)

RAM
Meraioth, my friend, desist, put your sword back in its sheath.

MERAIOTH
Hurry, hasten, Tubal, lest you be stabbed at once.

(They fight each other)

RAM
Come, Benaiah, between them; knock the weapons from their hand –

Be ashamed and disgraced by your deeds, do not commit such ignominy

Tubal! Meraioth! Why are you violating the prince’s command

Gathering together and waging battle on the streets of Verona?

Desist, Tubal, let it be, Meraioth my friend.

(Tubal and his men exit)

MERAIOTH
I have been struck down. –

Cursed be both ancestral houses together! I am dying.

Has he left here and not one of his hairs has fallen to the ground?

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27 Gen. 32:29 ‘for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed’.
28 1 Chron. 21:27 ‘and he put his sword back in its sheath’.
29 Ezek. 36:32 ‘be ashamed and disgraced’.
30 This translation follows the Folio version; the Second Quarto has a different stage direction followed by Petruchio’s ‘Away, Tybalt!’ (3.1.90), which does not appear here.
31 1 Kings 1:52 ‘not one of his hairs will fall to the ground’.
BENAIAH
What is this matter, have you been struck down?

MERAIOTH
One scratch in my flesh, a scratch that will cost me my life

(To his attendant) Go and call the doctor for me. (The servant exits)

RAM
Please be courageous, Meraioth; the wound is not great.

MERAIOTH
It is not as deep as a well and it is not as wide as the entrance to the Hall

But it is enough to end my life. Come here and ask tomorrow

And you will find me like a silent man who is considered wise.

The mocker is no more, the mockery is finished – cursed be both ancestral houses!

How can a despicable dog, how can a cat, a rat, or a mouse

Make a fatal scratch on a man from which he would die

Behold, that dog learned to bark and not to bite

But you, the middlemen, when you came between us

You helped with your arms to stab me.

RAM
My intention was for good.

MERAIOTH
Please bring me, Benaiah, to some house

For I am dying – cursed be both your ancestral houses!

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32  Prov. 7:23 ‘and he does not know that it will cost him his life’.
33  This speech is prose in the original (3.1.98–105).
34  Mishnah Middot 3:7 ‘the entrance to the Hall’ (of the Temple in Jerusalem). Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church door’ (3.1.99).
35  Prov. 17:28 ‘ even a silent fool is considered wise’.
36  Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, a dog’ (3.1.102).
They have made my flesh into food for maggots and worms
And may a sword devour both the houses. – (Benaiah and his servants lead Meraioth off)

Meraioth, who is kinsman of the Prince’s house and a friend like a brother to me
Was dealt a mortal blow while defending my cause
And Tubal, whom I almost considered my flesh and blood
Maligned my name and besmirched me.
Oh, my beautiful Jael! Your beauty has softened my heart
You have turned the arrow of my might into straw, and the stones of my sling into chaff.

(Benaiah re-enters)

Ram, Ram my brother! Meraioth has been snatched away before his time
With the strength of his lofty spirit he has split the clouds and ascended
He has scorned dwelling on earth and has made his seat in the heavens.
The destroyer started with one, but will yet strike down several

37 Ps. 35:14.
38 Jer. 51:36 ‘I shall defend your cause’.
39 Prov. 5:11 ‘your flesh and body’ (used literally in this verse, but idiomatically in Salkinson’s text).
40 Nah. 3:6 ‘and I shall besmirch you’.
41 Job 15:32.
42 This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets; cf. Shakespeare’s ‘depend/end’ (3.1.121–2).
Salkinson has added an extra two lines to this speech. The reason for this is unclear as the added lines do not appear in the Folio or Quarto versions.
The quiver of time is open, like a belly full of children; 
This one has burst forth first, his father's firstborn son
And the hand of each child is grasping the heel of his brother. ⁴³

(Tubal re-enters)

Benaiah
Behold, Tubal in his fury comes again. ⁴⁴

Ram
He lives in his haughtiness, while Meraioth has fallen by the sword—
Depart, compassion, from my eyes; mercy, leave me
I shall don zeal as my garment and in a consuming fire I shall exhaust my wrath—
Tubal! You have reviled me for nothing; say that you regret it
For Meraioth's soul is still floating over our heads
And waiting until your soul leaves, to keep it company there
For you or I, or both of us together Shall keep it company momentarily.

Tubal
Despoiled lad! Behold, you were his friend in life
Therefore in his death, you shall not be separated from him.

Ram
The sword will decide our case.
(They fight each other and Tubal falls)

Benaiah
Go from here, Ram, flee at once
Behold, the residents of the city are coming and Tubal lies dead.

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⁴³ This is a reference to Gen. 25:26 ‘and his hand was grasping Esau's heel', referring to the patriarch Jacob when he was born.
⁴⁴ Salkinson's text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare's 'again/slain' (3.1.123–4).
Do not stand as if stunned – if you are found here you will surely die today according to the prince’s commandment.

**RAM**

Arise, flee for your life.\(^{45, 46}\) Woe to a foolish son\(^{47}\) who prospers like me!

**BENAIAH**

Why do you still tarry?\(^{(A crowd of people and city officials)}\)

**THE CHIEF OFFICIAL**

Which way did he flee, the one who struck Meraioth? He is the murderer Tubal, which way did he flee?\(^{48}\)

**BENAIAH**

There lies Tubal, the man whom you seek.

**THE OFFICIAL**

Arise, come with me, quick, stand on your feet. Why, I command you in the prince’s name.\(^{49}\)

**THE PRINCE**

Who are they that have burst out to wreak destruction on our streets?

**BENAIAH\(^{50}\)**

Please, my lord prince! I am prepared to tell in the bitterness of my soul\(^{51}\)

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45 Gen. 19:17.
46 Salkinson’s text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare’s ‘away/stay’ (3.1.137–8).
47 Prov. 17:25.
48 The Hebrew text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare’s ‘he/me’ (3.1.140–1).
49 The Hebrew text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare’s ‘obey/fray’ (3.1.142–3).
50 Salkinson has not included any rhyming couplets in this speech, in contrast to Shakespeare’s ‘all/brawl’ and ‘Romeo/Mercutio’ (3.1.144–5 and 146–7).
51 Job 7:11, 10:1.
Of the horrors that have been committed from the beginning to the end.

There lies the man whom the lad Ram killed

Because he had killed Meraioth, a mighty man of valour

Who is kin to my lord the prince.

Abiel’s wife

Tubal – Tubal is dead – Tubal, my brother’s son –

See, my lord the prince! See, look, my husband!

Oh, there is spilled the blood of my brother’s son, whom I love

Please, my lord! Command according to the greatness of your mercy

And let the blood of the house of Abiram be spilled to atone for this blood.

My brother’s son! – My brother’s son, my flesh and blood!

The Prince

Tell me, Benaiah, what happened from beginning to end?

Benaiah

Tubal, who has fallen here, fell by Ram’s hand

That is the same Ram who, when he encountered him, spoke to him tenderly

52 Ruth 2:1.

53 The last word in this line rhymes with the last word in the following two lines, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘child/spilled’ (3.1.148–9) except that the latter is a rhyming couplet. Salkinson may have added the third rhyming line to compensate for the fact that there are no further rhymes in this speech, in contrast to Shakespeare’s ‘true/Montague’ (3.1.150–1) and ‘fray/slay’ (3.1.153–4), the latter split between Capulet’s wife and Benvolio. This discrepancy most likely reflects a difficulty in finding suitable rhymes while maintaining the desired meaning.

54 Num. 14:19.

Saying to relent from a quarrel which has no basis
And that it would be fitting for him to guard himself, so as not to violate the prince’s command
And even though he implored him with a willing spirit and a beseeching tongue
His words fell to the ground, for Tubal in his haste stiffened his neck
And was like a deaf man; he would not listen to words of peace and truth
And he made the point of his sword fly, tearing the covering of Meraioth’s heart
And Meraioth too brandished his weapon against weapon
And stood opposite him like a mighty expert man made without fear
With one of his hands he drove back the one who sought to take his life
While with his other hand he sought the life of his enemy
But Tubal also drove him back, because he knew how to heed a warning
And meanwhile Ram raised his voice mightily

56 Ps. 51:14 (51:12 in English Bibles).
57 Jer. 19:15 הִקְשְׁוּם ‘they have stiffened their necks’.
58 Esther 9:30.
59 Ezek. 21:20 (21:15 in English Bibles) אבְחַת-חָ֑רֶב ‘the point of the sword’. The meaning of this phrase is uncertain; this translation follows the King James Bible, but other possibilities include ‘the fear of the sword’ (Geneva Bible), ‘the threat of the sword’ (New English Bible), and ‘the glittering sword’ (English Standard Version).
60 Hosea 13:8 לִבָּם סְגוֹר וְאֶקְרַע ‘and I shall tear open the covering of their heart’.
61 Jer. 50:9.
62 Job 41:25 (41:33 in English Bibles).
63 Ps. 40:15 (40:14 in English Bibles) מְבַקֵּשִׁי נַפְשִׁי לִסְפּוֹתָהּ ‘those who seek to take my life’.
‘Cease, brothers! Cease doing evil!’ And swift as an eagle he turned aside
And stood between the fighters to knock the instruments of death from their hand
But then Tubal’s sword struck Meraioth’s living soul
And Tubal saw and fled, but afterwards he returned to Ram
Upon whom the spirit of jealousy had come and who bore a grudge in his heart
Then they both burst forth like lightning, one man against his fellow
And before I could separate them Tubal bowed over and fell down dead.
As for Ram, he fled; my eye has not seen him again
These are words of truth, and if they are a lie you may surely kill me.
He is from Abiram’s family and in his love he is twisting his words
His tongue speaks falsehoods and his face testifies to his lies
Not with the hand of one man was Tubal struck a winning blow
Roughly twenty men fought and killed a single soul
And the voice of his blood cries out to the prince, it will not give you rest

64 Num. 5:14 ‘and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him’; see also Num. 5:30.
65 This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘fly/die’ (3.1.176–7).
67 Gen. 4:10 ‘the voice of your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground’ (referring to Abel, who has just been killed by his brother Cain).
68 Isa. 62:7 ‘and do not give him rest’.

Ram and Joel
Ram killed me, and Ram's blood must be spilled like my blood'.

The Prince

Tubal struck Meroiath and Ram struck Tubal.

And on whose head is the bloodguilt? Who should be brought to slaughter?

Abiram

And the voice of Meroiath's blood cries out bitterly from the ground.

'Not my friend Ram, who destroyed the murderer

And on whose head is the bloodguilt? Who should be brought to slaughter?

For he acted as a judge in his zeal

And this is his only sin.'

The Prince

Because of this sin of his which is not large.

We pronounce this judgement, that he shall go into exile

The blows of your hand, men of violence, have brought down many victims.

Including my flesh and blood, wallowing in blood in the road.

Indeed I impose a ransom upon you and set a large fine

So that you might smite your thigh and wail over my dead one

---

69 This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare's 'Mercutio/owe' (3.1.184–5).
70 Gen. 4:10 מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֵלַי צֹﬠֲ קִים אָחִיךָ דְּמֵי ק֚וֹל 'the voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground' (referring to Abel, who has just been killed by his brother Cain); Zeph. 1:14 הקָּלֶים יִתְאַלֶּה פָּר עֵפָה 'the voice of the day of the Lord, wherein the mighty man cries bitterly'.
71 This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare's 'friend/end' (3.1.186–7).
72 This speech is composed of six rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare's 'offence/hence', 'proceeding/a-bleeding', 'fine/mine', 'excuses/abuses', 'haste/last', 'will/kill' (3.1.188–99).
73 Ps. 39:11 (39:10 in English Bibles) יָ֝דְךָ֗ מִתִּגְרַ֥ת 'from the blows of Your hand'.
74 Prov. 7:26.
75 Gen. 29:14; 2 Sam. 19:13, 14 (19:12, 13 in English Bibles).
76 2 Sam. 20:12 יָ֝דְךָ֗ מִתִּגְרַת 'from the blows of Your hand'.
77 Jer. 31:19 כְּלָל וְזֶה בְּקִנְאָתוֹ כַּשּׁוֹפֵט 'the voice of the day of the Lord, wherein the mighty man cries bitterly'.

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77 Jer. 31:19 כְּלָל וְזֶה בְּקִנְאָתוֹ כַּשּׁוֹפֵט 'the voice of the day of the Lord, wherein the mighty man cries bitterly'.
Prayers I shall not hear, like a deaf man; I shall not have mercy on wickedness

And rivers of tears and beseeching cannot erase a crime

And as for you, do not entreat me, do not raise a voice of wailing.

Ram shall surely be exiled, or let his blood be upon his own head.

Remove the slain man’s bones from here and take instruction from the matter of the strife

And know that he who has mercy on a murderer is like one who ends a life maliciously.

(Exeunt)

scene 2  A chamber in Abiel’s house

Jael

Hurry, chariot of the sun, complete the day’s cycle

Who would brandish a whip at horses of fire while the wheels rise like a storm

Because the sun strives for its shelter, for its tent at the end of the day

And we yearn for the night, for the night that attends to lovers

For it unfurls the veil that is spread over all faces

So that Ram might come to embrace me when no eye sees.

78 Jer. 9:18 (9:19 in English Bibles).
79 Ezek. 33:4 ‘his blood shall be upon his own head’.
80 Gersonides to 1 Kings 1:50.
81 Cf. Shakspeare’s ‘Phaeton’ (3.2.3); as usual, Salkinson has removed the Classical mythological reference.
82 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Phoebus’ (3.2.2), i.e., Apollo, the Greco-Roman sun god.
83 Isa. 25:7 ‘and the veil which is spread over all the nations’.

Ram and Joael
Lovers wait for the season of night, saying, no eye will see us\(^{84}\).

In their beauty they see light, so what use have they for the light of the sun?

Love is struck by blindness, and the night suits it.

Therefore I call to you, O night, to teach me the way of women.

For as a dark yet comely\(^{85}\) woman you are full of knowledge.

To teach me to acquire a master over me for the price of my pure virginity.

But cover my face with a veil, for it reddens from shame.

Until little by little I learn to know a man.

If one does something and repeats it, he is given his due in the end:

Come to me tonight, come to me, Ram, my chosen one.

You are a shining light, you are my sun in my darkness.

Like snow on a raven’s back, so you rest on the wings of night.

Please come, night of my desire and bring me Ram.

And when his time comes and he is taken away, cut him into pieces.

And set the pieces in the wheel so that they might shine like the stars in the firmament.

And from that day onwards all men

\(^{84}\) Job 24:15. לֹא־תְשׁוּרֵנִי, ‘no eye will see me’.

\(^{85}\) Song of Songs 1:5. וְֽנָאוָ֔ה אֲנִי שְׁחוֹרָ֤ה, ‘I am dark yet comely’.

\(^{86}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘when I shall die’ (3.2.21); Salkinson’s version lacks the double-entendre present in the source text (see Weis 2012: 249, note 21).
Will love night more than day, for they will rejoice in the stars of light

And will no longer bow down to the sun; they will surely scorn it. –

Now I have bought an abode of love but have not dwelled in it

I have been placed like clay in the potter’s hand but he has not made me into a vessel

Like the length of the night to a child before a day of feasting and gladness

Whose parents have made a new coat of many colours for him

But he cannot wear it before the appointed time arrives

That is how long this day is to me – but my nurse approaches me

And her mouth is full of news and every mouth which mentions Ram’s name

Speaks as clearly in my ears as an interceding angel on high.

(The nurse enters with ropes in her hand)

What do you have to say, my nurse? What are those in your hand?

Are they the ropes which Ram commanded you to bring?

They are the ropes to be hanged on – (Threw them to the ground)

87 Liturgical poem sung at the Yom Kippur evening service ‘like clay in the potter’s hand’. Cf. Jer. 18:4 ‘and the vessel which he was making from the clay was ruined in the potter’s hand’.

88 Esther 9:17, 18.


90 Job 33:23.
JAEL  Woe is me! What has happened to us? Why do you wring your hands?

THE NURSE  Woe unto us this day! He is dead, he is dead, he is dead!

JAEL  Could such wrath, such cruelty come forth from the heavens?

THE NURSE  Not from the heavens, but rather from Ram’s hand it has come forth

Who would have said to us that Ram would do such a thing –

Oh, son of Abiram!

JAEL  What do you have against me, cursed woman, that you have come to affict me today?

You are speaking like one of the daughters of Sheol, killing me with the breath of your lips.

Has Ram laid a hand on himself? Tell me if it is so

And that word will be like a sharp sword adding to the slain ones

Life and death are in the power of the tongue, 92 in the power of a single word

Say the word and it will bring me down into the pit of destruction.

THE NURSE  I saw his wound, my eyes saw the wound

91 Isa. 11:4 רָשָֽׁע יָמִ֥ית שְׂפָתָ֖יו וּבְר֥וּחַ ‘and with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked’.

92 Prov. 18:21 בְּיַד־לָשׁ֑וֹן וְ֭חַיִּים מָ֣וֶת ‘death and life are in the power of the tongue’.

93 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘no/woe’ (3.2.50–1).

94 Ps. 55:24 (55:23 in English Bibles) שַׁ֗חַת לִבְאֵ֬ר תּוֹרִדֵ֬ם אֱלֹהִ֨ים וְאַתָּ֤ה ‘and You, God, will bring them down into the pit of destruction’.

95 יְבִעַר וֶלְּהוּא גְּבִרְתִּי אָבַדְנוּ אָבַדְנוּ אָבָדְנוּ ‘our strength has departed, our strength has departed, our strength has departed’.

96 בָּאת לְﬠַנּוֹתֵנִי בָּאת כִּי לָנוּ אוֹי! ‘let me enter your prayer, let me enter your prayer! God gave me, God gave me!’

97 לַהֲמִתֵנִי לַהֲמִתֵנִי שְׁדֵי שָׁם מִבְּנוֹת כְּאַחַת ‘let me die, let me die, the gods of sheol have come forth from my kids as one’.

98 לַהֲמִית לַהֲמִית שָׁחַת שָׁחַת עֵינַי, מַכָּתוֹ עֵינַי רָאִיתִי ‘let me die, let me die, my eyes saw his wound, my eyes saw his wound’.

99 כָּזֹאת כָּזֹאת יָצָאָה רָם מִיַּד אִם כִּי, הַשָּׁמַיִּים מִן לֹא האומנת – כָּזֹאת יַﬠֲשֶׂה רָם כִּי לָנוּ מִלֵּל מִי! ‘as was as was came forth Ram’s hand from his mother – as was Ram will do such a thing for us!’

100 אֲבִירָם בֶּן אֲהָהּ לְﬠַנּוֹתֵנִי בָּאת כִּי לָנוּ אוֹי! ‘Abiram’s son, enter into your prayer, Abiram’s son, enter into your prayer!’
A bleeding wound\(^{95}\) in his flesh, at his mighty heart

The whiteness of his face was like ash, and his tunic was rolled in blood\(^{96}\)

Slain by the sword,\(^{97}\) slain, dead, a corpse, a corpse trampled underfoot.\(^{98}\)

All this my eyes saw, until agony seized me.\(^{99}\)

JAEL

Split, my heart, into pieces; crumble, all my bones

It is too much for you to see, my eyes; let me alone, breath of my nose

For a clod of dust\(^{100}\) like me establish a gravestone as a memorial\(^{101}\)

For what else is my desire, except to lie with him in the coffin.

THE NURSE

Tubal, Tubal, my friend, Tubal, chief among those who ever loved me!

How pleasant you were to me, how honourable you were, honourable man,

Is it for this that I have lived so many days, to see your death?

JAEL

What is this storm that is coming from the other side?

Has Ram been killed and Tubal is also dead?

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95 Isa. 1:6.
96 Isa. 9:4 (9:5 in English Bibles).
97 Num. 19:16.
98 Isa. 14:19.
99 2 Sam. 1:9. See Ithiel, Fourth Part, note 10 for a different use of this citation.
100 Job 7:5.
101 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘here/bier’ (3.2.59–60).
Tubal is my age and my brother, and Ram is the beau of my youth.

So why does the trumpet not sound that the day of dread has come?

Who is still living, if they have both gone and are no more?

THE NURSE Tubal was struck down and is dead, whereas Ram, who struck him down, will surely go into exile.

JAEL Did Ram’s hand spill Tubal’s blood?

THE NURSE His hand did this, his hand spilled the blood.

JAEL Oh, serpent’s heart, while the face is the face of a beloved man

Who has seen such a viper’s den in the form of a palace like your body?

A beautiful-eyed cruel man, an adversary and enemy in the likeness of an angel’s face

A raven in a dove’s feathers, a mauling wolf in an ewe’s skin

An evil beast from the woods in the image of the face of God.

You are the opposite in the heart from your outward appearance

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102 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.66); see First Part, note 65.
103 Jer. 3:4.
104 Dan. 10:11, 19.
105 Isa 11:8.
106 1 Sam. 16:12.
107 Esther 7:6.
108 1 Sam. 16:7 "man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart"
An honourable holy man\textsuperscript{109} of the Lord on the outside, while your insides are an
abomination of desolation.\textsuperscript{110}

How has the Rock\textsuperscript{111} taken dust from the earth of paradise

And wondrously made your body glorious like the seal of perfection\textsuperscript{112}

And afterwards blown breath into your nostrils from the valley of the dead –

Who has seen a book full of devouring words\textsuperscript{113}

In a gold embroidered handkerchief? How in a tower of strength,\textsuperscript{114}

In a temple where everyone speaks of glory\textsuperscript{115} can there dwell such deceit as this?

\textbf{THE NURSE} There is no more confidence, for all men are liars\textsuperscript{116}

There is no truth, there is no faith, the faithful have vanished from among the sons of men\textsuperscript{117}

All speak lies, all swear falsely

All are hypocrites – but hurry, my servant, where are you?

Hurry, sustain me with a raisin cake\textsuperscript{118} – all the woes and distresses and groaning

\textsuperscript{109} Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘saint’ (3.2.79).
\textsuperscript{110} Dan. 11:31.
\textsuperscript{111} A name for God; see Deut. 32:4.
\textsuperscript{112} Ezek. 28:12.
\textsuperscript{113} Ps. 52:6 (52:4 in English Bibles).
\textsuperscript{114} Judg. 9:51; Ps. 61:4 (61:3 in English Bibles); Prov. 18:10.
\textsuperscript{115} Ps. 29:9 ‘and in His temple everyone speaks of glory’.
\textsuperscript{116} Ps. 116:11.
\textsuperscript{117} Ps. 12:2 (12:1 in English Bibles).
\textsuperscript{118} Song of Songs 2:5 ‘sustain me with raisin cakes’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘give me some aqua vitae’ (3.2.88).
They have all come upon me, and I have grown old before my old age.

May disgrace descend upon Ram!

May your tongue rot in your mouth for this curse of yours.

Disgrace will not descend upon Ram, for it fears to approach him.

Nothing but honour and splendour will crown him and a throne is prepared for him.

Like a king who rules over all. – How foolish I was to revile his name!

Do you honour the name of the one who murdered your brother? 119

Would I defame the name of my husband? Oh, my husband!

Who would bring your name upon his lips in honour and glory?

When your wife on her wedding day mentions it with gnashing of teeth?

But why, villain, did you strike down my brother? 120

Admittedly, if you had not struck him down, my brother the villain would have taken your life.

So therefore it is not in mourning that my eyes shed a tear.

But rather, they are tears of joy and a time of dancing.

119 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.96); see First Part, note 65.
120 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.100); see First Part, note 65.
121 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.101); see First Part, note 65.
Because my husband lives, he whom Tubal sought to kill
And because Tubal is dead, he who sought to kill my husband
So why am I still weeping, why is my heart faint? 122
And I do not rejoice in my suffering which has befallen me so pleasantly?
But I heard another word, a word more bitter than Tubal's death
And it is like a sword in my bones; 123 I cannot remove it from my heart
For it oppresses me like a lower millstone, 124 like a sin worthy of death 125
Which oppresses the heart of sinners: it is this evil word
That after Tubal’s death Ram is to go into exile.
This word pierces my kidneys 126 tens of thousands of times more than Tubal’s death
At the death of my brother Tubal, I find woe and sorrow 127 enough.
But if it is the way of woes for each one to love its fellow 128
And woe comes on top of woe, disaster on top of disaster
Why did the messenger stop when she gave me the tidings
That Tubal was dead, and not go on to say

122 Jer. 8:18; Lam. 1:22.
123 Ps. 42:11 (42:10 in English Bibles).
124 Job 41:16 (41:24 in English Bibles).
125 Deut. 21:22.
126 Job 16:13.
127 Ps. 116:3.
128 Exod. 11:2.
That my father too was dead, or my mother, or even both of them?  
But she said that Ram will surely go into exile  
The word of this report, it is as if I had heard  
That my father and mother and Tubal and Ram and Jael are all slain, dead.  
‘Ram will surely go into exile’ and Jael will be left as a widow whose husband is alive  
This is like a spear in my belly, my heart is pierced by an arrow  
My destruction is as vast as the ocean; it cannot be measured, cannot be fathomed  
There is not a word on my tongue to tell of my woe enough to explain it. –  
Tell me, my nurse, where are my father and my mother?

**The Nurse**  
They went to mourn for Tubal, to spill a tear over his blood  
And I shall take you to them, if you would go with me.

**Jael**  
They spill their tears over the one who is going to his eternal home  
Whereas I shall keep my tears for the one who is going down living to Sheol

---

129 2 Sam. 20:3.  
130 This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘bound/sound’ (3.2.125–6), except that Salkinson’s rhyme extends over four lines whereas Shakespeare’s is composed only of two.  
131 Ps. 139:4.  
132 While this does not rhyme with the last word on the next line visually or in Modern Hebrew pronunciation, it does form a near rhyme in Ashkenazic pronunciation, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘spent/banishment’ (3.2.130–1).
Take the ropes away from here, the ropes which are as humiliated as me.  

For they were brought in order to become a ladder, to raise up Ram to my palanquin.  

And they groan with me, for Ram is going into exile.  

Please bring me to my bed, where I hoped to become a man’s wife.  

But there I shall perish, I shall die a virgin widow.  

She shall not be wife to Ram, but rather to death.  

THE NURSE  

Come on, come into your room and I shall bring comfort to you.  

You will see Ram tonight, because I know where he is.  

He is hiding in the priest’s chamber; I shall go and bring him to you.  

JAEL  

Go, seek him and give him my ring  

Tell him that he must visit me before he goes and is no more.  

(Both exit)  

THIRD SCENE  

The priest’s chamber (Rezin and Ram)  

This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘beguiled/exiled’ (3.2.132–3).  

This forms a near rhyme with the following two lines, which themselves comprise a rhyming couplet; cf. Shakespeare’s ‘bed/widowed’ (3.2.134–5).  

Due to the fact that the rhyme scheme in this speech is different in Salkinson’s version than in Shakespeare’s, this final line does not rhyme with anything, whereas in the source text the last two lines form a rhyming couplet ‘bed/maidenhead’ (3.2.136–7).  

This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyme, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘night/cell/knight/farewell’ (3.2.140–3).
Approach me, Ram, approach me, misfortunate man.  
Misfortune and destruction pursue you, and the hand of love is upon you for ill  
You call grief ‘my sister’, and woe ‘the wife of my covenant’.  

Of what would you inform me, my father? What is the prince’s judgement?  
Is there another new woe that desires me  
Of which I do not know thus far?  
Are you lacking in woes? – Listen to me, my dear son  
For I shall inform you of what has been decreed upon you from the mouth of the prince.  

What is the decree, if not a decree equal to a death sentence?  
The prince has lightened your sentence for he has had mercy upon you  
You shall not go into the valley of the shadow of death, but rather into exile.  
Be merciful to me and say death, and do not mention to me the word exile  
The valley of the shadow of death would be better for me than wandering in exile  
The name of exile is dreadful and terrible, and more bitter to me than the bitterness of death.

137 Jer. 22:30.  
138 Ps. 23:4.  
139 Ps. 23:4.  
140 1 Sam. 15:32.
REZIN  You have only been banished from the city of Verona, therefore do not fear. For the land is spacious, and you still have hope.

RAM  All the earth outside of the city of Verona is formless and void. It can be considered as Sheol and destruction as burning fire in hell. And if I am banished from the city of Verona to settle in some place, why, I have been banished from the land of the living to settle like a dead man in the grave. For Verona is my life’s home, and my exile is death. And you cut off my head today with a golden axe. And raise your voice in laughter saying that you are merciful. REZIN  Does one who has been treated mercifully scorn mercy? Does the one who has been treated compassionately mock compassion? Why, you have committed a sin worthy of death because you spilled blood. But the prince delights in kindness; he has given you the chance to flee. So that you might save yourself as in one of the cities of refuge.

141 Gen. 1:2; Jer. 4:23.
142 Prov. 15:11. Cf. Shakespeare’s “purgatory” (3.3.18), which does not have a direct biblical parallel.
143 Deut. 21:22.
144 Mic. 7:18.
145 This refers to the six cities set aside under biblical law as places of asylum to which perpetrators of manslaughter could flee (Num. 35:11, 13, 14).
Yet you do not recognize his kindness.

It is a furnace of affliction\(^{146}\) rather than mercy and kindness

Why, Jael lives here, and this city is like the garden of the LORD

And every creeping creature, abomination, and mouse, every unclean thing\(^{147}\)

Can walk to and fro in the garden\(^{148}\) and behold the pleasantness of her face

But Ram cannot set the sole of his foot\(^{149}\) here.

The flies are like honourable free men; they are free

To approach Jael, to take delight in the whiteness of her hands

And moreover at a suitable time during sleep, or even while awake,

They can steal in to kiss her mouth and to suck the pure honey of her lips

But Ram himself is trapped like a sinning soul in Sheol

He cannot enter the city, cannot approach her

The flies can approach and touch her, but Ram cannot approach

For he is driven out and chased off, and banishment and excommunication are upon him.

So how can you say that my exile is not my death?

Do you not have a cup of poison,\(^{150}\) or a sharp knife

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146 Isa. 48:10.
147 Lev. 5:2.
148 Gen. 3:8 (גarden, ‘walking to and fro in the garden’).
149 Deut. 2:5.
150 Zech. 12:2.
Or some instrument of death to kill me with one blow
And not to inflict my soul with exile, banishment, and excommunication
These dreadful judgements at whose mere mention

The ghosts tremble underneath and Sheol quakes at them?

Why, you are a holy man of God, a doctor for the illnesses of the soul
Who pardons iniquities for those who repent from sin and is also a faithful friend to me
How do you presume to crush me with such words?

rezin Senseless lad, listen to what I have to say too.
ram When you open your lips you will inform me further about exile.
rezin I shall give you oil and balm for the wound of exile
To be a remedy for you even as you go into exile
It is the balm of understanding and the precious oil from the spring of wisdom.

ram Again you have come to mention the matter of exile to me
What use have I for wisdom? Hang it up before the sun
Does it have the power to build me a new Verona
And to create another Jael, or to move the prince’s heart

151 Job 26:5.
152 Isa. 59:20.
153 Ezek. 27:17.
154 Isa 39:2.
155 Alshekh to Isa. 44.
156 Num. 25:4

Hang it up before the sun.”
To remove the evil of the decree?\(^\text{157}\)

None of these is in its power for wisdom has no advantage over folly.\(^\text{158}\)

Therefore listen to me and be silent, and you will be considered a wise man.

REZIN I know that madmen have ears but do not hear.\(^\text{159}\)

RAM Because the clear-sighted have eyes but do not see.\(^\text{160}\)

REZIN Come, let us consult together, Ram, regarding your position.

RAM Do not speak a word which you do not know yourself.

And do not judge a man’s position until you arrive in his place.\(^\text{161}\)

If you were a young man like me and Jael’s soul was bound to your soul.

And on this day, your wedding day, Tubal was struck down by your hand;

Your love was as strong as death\(^\text{162}\) and it was decreed upon you to go into exile,

Then you would have the right to speak, to pull out the hair of your head

To wallow in the dust and to lie out flat, as I do here

To take my measure on the ground to be the measure of my grave.

---

\(^\text{157}\) This is based on שחרбот העד הקירעה איינ גל אלא בידה "but repentance, prayer, and charity remove the evil of the decree", from Unetane Toqef, a medieval composition forming part of the Rosh HaShanah (Jewish New Year) liturgy.

\(^\text{158}\) Eccles. 2:13 מין ההסכלות לחה מלחמה ירי אינ שמש אשי "and I saw that wisdom has an advantage over folly".

\(^\text{159}\) Jer. 5:21; Ps. 115:6. כל שמעי ותחררו והקומת היו רצע "I know that madmen have ears but do not hear".

\(^\text{160}\) Jer. 5:21; Ps. 115:5. אתカラ תגיעה עד איש מאמר כה ראשית אלי "Because the clear-sighted have eyes but do not see".

\(^\text{161}\) Mishnah Avei 2:5 לא תדרי את חברך עד 당יע כי לקומית "and do not judge your fellow until you arrive in his place".

\(^\text{162}\) Song of Songs 8:6 אהי אצר איץ ל ניהל "love is as strong as death".
(Falls and lies out flat on the ground) (Sound of someone knocking outside)

**Rezin**

Behold, someone is knocking; arise and hide.

**Ram**

I shall not hide, unless my lament and sighing

Rise up like steam from the depths of my heart and become a shelter for me

(Sound of someone knocking outside)

**Rezin**

Men are pounding on the door; hide lest you be caught –

Who knocks there? I'm coming at once –

Go quickly and hide in the library –

Who knocks there forcefully? Who are you there?

From where do you come, and what do you seek here?

**The Nurse** (Outside)

Open up for me, and you will know who I am and what I have to say

Why, I come from the lady Jael.

**Rezin**

Come into the house in peace.

**The Nurse**

Tell me, man of God! Please tell me, holy man of the Lord!  

Where is the lady's husband? Where is the son of Abiram?

**Rezin**

He is lying in his tears there drunk, but not with wine.  

**The Nurse**

He is like the lady, and the lady is also like him.

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163 Cf. Shakespeare’s 'holy Friar' (3.3.81).
164 Isa. 51:21 'drunk, but not with wine'.
They have one soul and one spirit and one heart.

They have one soul and one spirit, and one heart.

She is also lying like him;

Crying, wailing, and weeping; wailing, wailing, and crying—

Arise, my lord, stand up on your feet, be a man.

Arise, Ram, for Jael, for her be a man.

How have you fallen astoundingly and lie like a man without strength.

The nurse?!

The nurse?

My lord, my lord, this is my only comfort in my misery.

That everything has an end; why, it is death.

Are you speaking about Jael? How is she now?

Does she regard me as a murderer, since I have spilled blood

The blood of her flesh and blood, and have turned our youthful joy into mourning.

Where, then, is she, the sorrowful one? What is she doing?

What does my secret wife say regarding our concealed love?

She says nothing, but has indeed been weeping all night

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165 Lam. 1:9 (‘and she fell astoundingly’).
166 Ps. 88:5 (88:4 in English Bibles).
167 Prov. 5:11 (‘your flesh and body’ (used literally in this verse, but idiomatically in Salkinson’s text)).
168 Jer. 31:13 (‘and I shall turn their mourning into joy’).
169 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cancelled’ (3.3.97), i.e., invalidated or annulled (Weis 2012: 264, note 97, and Crystal and Crystal 2002: 62); in Salkinson’s version, the love is concealed rather than invalidated.
She arises from the bed and falls and arises again.

Tubal, she says, and her eyes indeed shed tears

And then she cries out, Ram, and falls again.

**Ram**

*My name is a lead bullet from a gun*

Which has torn the covering of her heart, like my cursed hand

Which tore her brother’s heart. Tell me, righteous priest

In which part of my body my name resides?

So that I might destroy that abode which I had

In my anger and my wrath. (Draws his sword)

**Rezin**

Stay your hand, despairing man, empty-headed man with no sense

Are you a man? The form of your face is like that of a man

Yet the tears of your eyes say that you have become a woman

Your wrath is like a wild ass of a man, like the wrath of a beast of Lebanon

The soul of a beast of the forest in the likeness of a man’s face.

I am dismayed to see that it is thus for you, it would not be believed if it were told.

By the Temple service! Indeed you are inferior to what I had considered you to be until now

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170 Hosea 13:8 ‘I shall tear open the covering of their heart’.
171 Jer. 32:31.
172 Job 11:12.
173 2 Chron. 25:18 ‘a wild beast in Lebanon’.
174 Ps. 50:10, 104:20.
175 Hab. 1:5 ‘you would not believe it if it were told’.
176 This is a Talmudic oath (Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1334); Salkinson has Judaized Shakespeare’s overtly Catholic oath ‘by my holy order’ (3.3.113). Cf. Fifth Part, note 30.
You have already taken Tubal’s life; do you mean to take your own as well.

And also take Jael’s life, which is bound to yours.

For your life is her life, and with you she too will die.

Why do you curse your birth and profane earth and heavens? 

As if you desired to shake yourself free from the three of them, even though they have all as one

Been given to you as a blessing? Be ashamed and humiliated by your deeds

Because you have covered the beauty of your face, your prodigious love, and your intellect

With a great shame and disgrace which cannot be erased.

Indeed in intellect, good looks, and love you have ten shares,

Yet you do not know how to find advantage in one of them.

You are a miserly rich man and your money is of no benefit to you

The beauty of your glorious face is like a wax mask

It is beautiful to the eyes, but it has no spirit

And as for your exceeding love for Jael which you swore to her on your life

You swore it in vain and falsely, for with your hand you have killed her.

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177 Gen. 2:4; Ps. 148:13.
178 2 Sam. 19:44 (19:43 in English Bibles).
And your intellect, which gloriously crowns your beauty and love
You have destroyed completely, like a vessel in which there is no pleasure
And it has become like gunpowder in a foolish soldier’s pouch
Which has gone forth like lightning and devoured its owner
So the light of your intellect has become a flame of consuming fire
Consuming not your enemies, but rather yourself.
Therefore awaken, son of Abiram! Gird your loins like a man
The graceful doe whom you love and for whom you are lying like a dead man
Is still alive! Remember this and rejoice, young man!
Tubal came to kill you, so you rose early and killed him
Remember this and rejoice, young man! According to the law of the land
You were condemned to death, but by the law of kindness you have been banished from the city
And you have had your life as a prize of war; remember this and rejoice, young man!

180 Zech. 9:14.
181 Joel 2:5.
182 Job 38:3, 40:7.
183 Prov. 5:19; see First Part, note 171.
184 Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 58a. ‘if a man comes to kill you, rise early and kill him first’. This is a well-known principle in Jewish law.
185 1 Sam. 20:31; 2 Sam. 12:5.
186 Prov. 31:26.
187 Jer. 39:18; 52:21; ‘and you shall have your life as a prize of war’.

Ram and Joel 451
Behold, you bear a bag of many blessings on your shoulders,
And everywhere you go kindness and love pursue you
But like a froward girl who gnashes and hisses with the abundance of everything
So you complain about your love and your happiness which is so great
Therefore I say, guard yourself, my friend
Because men who complain for nothing do not have a good end
Arise, go to the one whom your soul loves as discussed
Ascend to her, to the upper chamber, and speak words of comfort to her heart
But do not dawdle there lest the watchmen come
For they will not let you pass to the city of Mantua
And you will dwell in that city, until we find a favourable time
To announce at the gate of Bath-rabbim that your wedding was according to the law
And also to make peace between all those who quarrel with you
And to reconcile you to the prince so that he restores you to your position
Then your heart will swell from joy when you return to your native city
For the gladness will be twenty thousand times greater

188  Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
189  Isa. 49:8.
190  Song of Songs 7:5 (7:4 in English Bibles). Bath-rabbim, which literally means 'daughter of many', is the name of one of the gates in the biblical city of Heshbon, mentioned in the same verse.
191  Esther 1:8, 4:16.
192  Isa. 41:12.
Than your sorrow on this day, the day when you depart for the city of refuge. –

As for you, Nurse, depart before him and mention me to your lady

Tell her to act wisely and to hasten to send the members of the household to their beds

And they, out of sadness and sorrow, will be willing to obey her

For behold, Ram is coming.

The Nurse

Great in counsel? You have wisdom, counsel, and sound judgement.

Here I would be willing to sit all night, for your words are pleasant

The sweetness of hearty counsel. – Why, you will come, won’t you, my lord Ram

I shall go to my mistress to tell her that you are coming.

Ram

Please act in accordance with your word, and tell her that I am prepared

To hear scolding from her mouth.

The Nurse

Take my lady’s ring, which she sent you as a token

But hurry and come, for the night is passing by.

Ram

By this my spirit lives, and my soul has returned to its strength.

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193 See note 145.
194 Jer. 32:19.
195 Prov. 8:14.
196 Prov. 27:9

פַּל אַוְיִית שְׁבוּת כְּלָהּ, כִּי גָּדוֹל הָﬠֵצָה הָﬠֵצָה גָּדוֹל הָﬠֵצָה גָּדוֹל האומנתה והlopediaוֹתָהּ. הַלַּיְלָה כָּל שֶׁבֶת אִוִּיתִי פֹּה דְּבָרֶיךָ רָם תָּבוֹא הֲלֹא –

ומֵﬠֲצַת נָפֶשׁ רֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵﬠֵ所有情节 ‘and the sweetness of a man’s friend by hearty counsel’.
REZIN

Now go in peace, be strong and courageous so that it may go well with you.

Before the morning dawns rise early and set out for Mantua

And if you do not rise early, disguise yourself in a woman's garment

So that the watchmen do not recognize you. Meanwhile, I shall find one loyal to your house

By whose hand I may inform you from time to time

Everything that happens here until your desire comes to light.

Give me your hand and go in peace, for the appointed time has come.

RAM

And peace to you too. – If only the morning were not waiting there for my arrival

Through the lattice like a messenger of God in a vision

My heart would not allow me to part from you in haste. (Exeunt)

FOURTH SCENE Abiel’s house (Abiel and his wife with Paris)

ABIEL

Many woes have engulfed us and we have not seen relief thus far

And we have not found a favourable time for our daughter to be spoken for

198 There is no basis for this in the source text, nor in the Schlegel-Tieck German translation.
199 Judg. 5:28.
200 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘me/thee’ (3.3.172–3). Note that Salkinson’s rhyme is in the last two lines of the speech, whereas Shakspeare’s is in the first two.
201 Isa. 49:8
202 Song of Songs 8:8.
Her spirit is bitter over Tubal, who was of her age and family.

And I also loved him, but man's end is to die.

You will not see my daughter tonight, for she will not come out of her room.

And if you were not here, I would also already be in bed for it is close to midnight.

Pleasant words203 in a time of distress are words not in their time.

Take my blessing, my lady, and lie down, and may your sleep be sweet204

And tomorrow mention me to your daughter.

So I shall do in accordance with your word, and tomorrow in the morning I shall ask her consent205

For at this time we are all desolate and it is bitter for her.

Listen to me, Lord Paris, indeed my daughter's desire is as mine

For she obeys my command, therefore I am prepared to give her to you

And for the one to whom I give her, I know that she will be his.

Go, my wife, to her chamber before you go to your bed

And tell her the desire of my son Paris' heart.

203 Eccles. 12:10.
204 Prov. 3:24 'you shall lie down and your sleep shall be sweet'.
205 Gen. 24:57 'and we shall ask her consent'.
For Wednesday – have you been listening to me?

Wednesday is – but wait

What is today?

PARIS

Today is Monday.

ABIEL

Wednesday is not suitable, for it is close

But Thursday will be the day of her wedding

On that very day she will be wed to this lord

But what do you say, are you prepared for Thursday

Or do you desire to delay the appointed time? The number of wedding guests

Will be very small for us, two or three friends, not more

Lest those who talk say: we are holding a banquet and festival

And not paying heed to Tubal, our flesh and blood, who is dead

Therefore let six or seven guests gather and that will be enough for us.

Speak, dear Paris, is Thursday good in your eyes?

PARIS

What can I say: if only Thursday were tomorrow.

ABIEL

Now go in peace and Thursday will be the day.

Speak, my wife, with Jael, before you go to your bed

So that she may know that Thursday is to be her bridal day.

Go in peace, my lord – bring a light to the bedroom

The night has almost passed; soon we will see the dawn;

Go, lie down in peace.

(All exit)

SCENE 2

The lattice of Jael’s upper chamber, which overlooks the vineyard (Ram and Jael)

JAEL

Dawn has not yet broken; would you go now?

The voice which rings in your ears is the voice of the nightingale

Which gives its songs in the night from the pomegranate tree there

And not the voice of the bird which twitters in the early morning

As you thought in your fear. Believe me, my beloved

It is the voice of the nightingale, and the night is yet long.

RAM

It is the voice of the bird that awakens the dawn

And not the voice of the nightingale; look, beloved of my soul

Over there white spots, because they are jealous of us,

Assemble like a wreath on the edges of the clouds in the east

207 Sic; should read ‘SCENE 5’.
208 Job 35:10 ‘בַּלָּֽיְלָה זְמִירוֹת’; ‘the one who gives songs in the night’.
209 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘lark’ (3.5.2). The Hebrew term שָׁפָרְיָה ‘lark’ is a modern innovation (Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1407) which was not yet standard in Salkinson’s time; given the lack of a precise equivalent for the English, Salkinson has chosen to provide a description of the lark’s characteristics.
The nighttime candles have gone out and the dawn is **leaping over the mountains**. If I move on from here, I shall not die, but if I stay, I shall not live. I know that that light is not the light of morning. It is a burning torch which the sun has spewed out. To be a lamp unto your feet tonight to guide you on the way to Mantua. Therefore stay yet with me, for it is not time to leave. Here I stand, and when they find me and kill me I shall die with a glad heart, because I have stayed here at your desire. And now I say, the white spots over there are not the eyelids of dawn, moreover the voice which I heard Twittering in the firmament above our heads is the voice of the nightingale and not the voice of the bird which sings the morning song. And indeed I also long to stay with you rather than to go from here. The morning has not come, let us take our fill of love, in the darkness.
Flee, my love, the sun is peering through the lattice. And moreover the voice of the bird is a voice that tears the ear and heart. It always used to have a beautiful voice and play well. But now I take no pleasure in it, because it has become the sound of the trumpet, the sound of destruction and trembling, which comes to separate those who cleave together.

The dawn is growing lighter on the mountain and the lowlands. Hurry, hasten to Mantua and do not let yourself die.

It is a pillar of cloud to me, a cloud of darkness and gloom. The day has darkened over me and morning has turned into the shadow of death for me.

Jael!

My nurse?

Guard yourself Jael, your lady mother is about to come into the chamber.

The sun goes forth over the land and my lord Ram has not yet left.

Please come, light of day, and leave, light of my soul, from my window.

Song of Songs 2:9.

Ezek. 33:32

218 This and the next three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, mirroring Shakespeare's 'affray/day', 'grows/woes' (3.5.33–6) except that the latter is composed of two rhyming couples.

219 This refers to the pillar of cloud in which God travelled alongside the Israelites after their exodus from Egypt (Exod. 13:21; mentioned also in Num. 12:5; Deut. 31:15; Ps. 99:7; Neh. 9:12).

220 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'about/out' (3.5.40–1).
On my only life! Jael, my flesh and blood 223, 224. I shall but kiss you this once and leave, for this is my only recompense. (Exits from the window)

Will you leave, will you forsake me now, my beau, the husband of my youth 225. Will you not make known to me how you are faring every day at every hour. For every hour in my love will be in my eyes like many days. And therefore you will find upon your return that I have grown old, advanced in years. 226.

Trust in me, the one whom my soul loves, 227 when I find the opportunity. I shall not desist from asking how you are faring and from making known to you how it goes with me.

Do you think that you will return to me and I shall see your face again?

I trust that we shall see relief, and that this woe and distress 228. Will become for us in the coming days good and sweet discourse.

Yet my heart tells me terrible things; God’s terrors array themselves against me 229, 230.

223 Gen. 29:14; 2 Sam. 19:13, 14 (19:12, 13 in English Bibles).
224 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘descend/friend’ (3.5.42–3). Note, however, that in Salkinson’s version the couplet is contained within Ram’s two-line speech, whereas in Shakespeare’s it is split between Romeo (whose speech consists of a single line) and Juliet.
225 Joel 1:8 ‘the husband of her youth’.
226 Josh. 23:2.
227 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
228 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in the source text ‘serve/come’ (3.5.52–3).
230 This and the next three lines form an ABBA rhyming sequence, which partially mirrors the source text’s ‘soul/low’ (3.5.54–5), except that the latter consists of a single rhyming couplet. (‘Soul/low’ was considered a workable rhyme in Shakespeare’s day; see Weis 2012: 420.)
For as you have descended and stand at the bottom of the steps
Your face looks to me like a dead man, like a slain man lying in the valley of slaughter

And I do not know whether your face has grown pale, or my eyes have deceived me.

Such a thing I too have seen in your face from where I stand

Trembling has gripped me and I do not know what is wrong with me
This is nothing but sorrow, sucking our lifeblood

Live, my soul's beloved! And may the merciful father have mercy upon us.

(Exits through the vineyard)

Men say that the prince of fortune is lucky
He is fickle and strange and trifling, frivolous in doing good and evil

If so, what could he have to do with my husband, a man who stands by his opinion
Indeed luck is quick to do good and quick to pour out its anger
It has pushed him away in its rage and will restore him in accordance with its desire.

My daughter, are you not sleeping?

(Outside)

232 This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘you/adiéu’ (3.5.58–9) except that the latter consists of a single rhyming couplet (which makes up the whole of the speech). Salkinson has expanded the speech by two lines, but has not altered the meaning in any significant sense.
233 Isa. 21:4.
Jaelay

Is it my mother’s voice?

If she has risen from her bed, or has she not lain down tonight?

I cannot know what her desire is at such a time.

(Abieł’s wife enters)

Abiel’s wife

What is wrong with you, Jael?

Jael

I am not well, my mother.

Abiel’s wife

How long will you mourn over Tubal’s death?

If you wash his flesh in your tears indeed he will not arise. Therefore give yourself respite, do not shed tears in vain.

Mourning according to the measure is a sign of great love.

But mourning in excess of the measure is a sign of little intellect.

Jael

The destruction is too great to bear, so how can I not mourn?

Abiel’s wife

Your mourning will not benefit the one for whom you mourn.

For one who goes down into the silence of the grave knows nothing.

Jael

My heart knows my bitterness of spirit; I cannot restrain myself.

Therefore I indeed weep over my friend’s destruction.

Abiel’s wife

Not over his death, my daughter, does your eye stream relentlessly.

234 Lam. 2:18 ‘give yourself no respite’.

235 Lam. 3:49 ‘my eye flows and does not cease, relentlessly’.

462 The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
But rather over the villain who killed him and still lives.

JAEL Who is the villain, my mother?

ABIEL'S WIFE He is the villain Ram.

JAEL (To herself) He is as far from a villain as the east is far from the west –

(To her mother) God will pardon him, and I have already forgiven him. 

Although there is no man who pains my heart as he does.

ABIEL'S WIFE Because he is a killer.

JAEL How great is my desire that others’ hands not touch him 

But rather that he fall into my hand to do with him in accordance with my desire to exact vengeance from him and to redeem my brother’s spilled blood.

ABIEL'S WIFE Do not fear, my daughter, behold, we shall find an opportunity

To take revenge against him, but cease crying

Behold, I shall send to Mantua, where the murderer has gone into exile

And there is a man known to us there who will give him the cup of our wrath to drink

And he too will go to the place where Tubal went, to be with him.

236 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.5.86); see First Part, note 65.
237 Isa. 51:22 ‘the cup of my wrath’; see also Isa. 51:17.
Then you will see and shine, and your eye will be sated with our enemy.

My eye will not be sated with Ram until I see him dead.

For the death of my flesh and blood does not give me rest.

And now if you have a man, a loyal messenger to send
I shall prepare cup of poison to give to Ram to drink
And when he tastes of it he will sleep and awaken no more.

How bitter is my heart when I hear the name of Ram from a mouth other than my own.

And I cannot find a way to calm the fire of my zeal against him.

And to atone for the blood, the blood of my brother whom I love.

Prepare the poison of death, and I shall send the messenger of death.

And now listen to me, my daughter, for there are good tidings in my mouth.

Good tidings are welcome at such a time of distress.

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238 Isa. 60:5.
239 Salkinson has not reproduced Shakespeare’s same-word rhyming couplet ‘satisfied/satisfied’ (3.5.92–3).
240 Prov. 5:11 אֶת מַלַּאכַּי מַלַּאכַּי הָמָוֶת מַלַּאכַּי מַלַּאכַּי, ‘your flesh and body’ (used literally in this verse, but idiomatically in Salkinson’s text).
241 This and the following two lines form an ABA rhyme, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘him/cousin/him’ (3.100–2); this is unusual as Salkinson does not typically reproduce same-word rhymes.
242 Ezek. 36:5; Zeph. 3:8.
243 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.5.101); see First Part, note 65.
244 Mishnah Hullin 3:5.
245 Prov. 16:14 מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים מַלַּאכִים."messenger of death’. This phrase is also very commonly used in postbiblical texts in the sense of ‘angel of death’, and both the senses ‘messenger’ and ‘angel’ would have been apparent to Salkinson’s readers.
But what is the message? Tell me, my lady mother.

Abiel’s wife: You know that your father seeks your wellbeing and your good all the days.

And he has sought and found a fitting day to turn your mourning into joy.

It is the day which you have not expected, and which had not entered my mind either.

Jael: If only it were a good day, but which is it?

Abiel’s wife: This coming Thursday in the morning.

A young man, praiseworthy in grace, beauty, and wealth will come to our house.

He is Lord Paris, a rod from the stem of the prince.

And he will take you to the Temple of Michael the Prince of the Presence.

As a resplendent and joyful bride, to enter into a covenant with you there.

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246 Jer. 31:13 ‘and I shall turn their mourning into joy’.
247 Isa. 11:1 ‘a rod from the stem of Jesse’ (a messianic prophecy referring to a king of the Davidic line).
248 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church’ (3.5.114). Salkinson’s version refers to the Temple in Jerusalem, which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE but has remained the symbolic heart of the Jewish people and religion until the present day and is recalled on multiple occasions in the daily liturgy. See also note 250.
249 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’ (3.5.114). The angel Michael is mentioned in various places in the Hebrew Bible (most famously in the Book of Daniel) as well as in rabbinic literature (Midrash Rabba 2:20) as God’s right-hand ministering angel. However, this specific phrase ‘Michael, the Prince of the Presence’ is a reference to the extremely prominent exegetical work of the eleventh-century scholar Rashi, as his commentary on the book of Isaiah (63:9) is the most well-known Jewish source in which this particular wording appears. Jews traditionally study the Hebrew Bible together with Rashi’s commentary, and therefore this reference would have been immediately recognizable to Salkinson’s audience. While the Archangel Michael also has a place in various Christian traditions, appearing in the Book of Revelation (12:7–9) as one of the leaders of God’s army against Satan and revered in later Christian theology, the conscious decision to employ the precise phrasing from Rashi’s commentary underscores the fact that Salkinson intended his translation for a Jewish readership.
By the name of the Temple!  
And by the name of Michael 
the Prince of the Presence!  
Indeed he shall not take me as 
 a joyous bride to enter into a 
covenant with him

Such knowledge is too 
 wondrous for me;  
why should I hurry to marry 
the man

Before he has told me that he 
desires me 
And before he has asked me 
whether I desire him. 
Please, my lady mother, tell my 
father these words 
I am tender in years and my 
time has not yet come 
And if my day comes I shall 
marry Ram, whom I hate, 
Rather than marry Paris his 
chosen one – these are my 
tidings.

Tidings for tidings. 

Behold, your father is coming; 
tell him what you have to say 
And afterwards see what 
tidings there are for you. 

(Abiel and the nurse) 

After the sun goes down, the 
heavens let drops of dew fall 
But since my brother’s son went 
down, the rain has been 
flooding relentlessly 

__250__ Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church’ (3.5.116); this expression refers even more unambiguously than the previous one (see note 248) to the Temple in Jerusalem; the collocation is a postbiblical one that is used invariably in this capacity, in contrast to the single word מִקְדָּשׁ appearing above, which could theoretically simply mean ‘sanctuary’.  

__251__ Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’ (3.5.116); see note 249.  

__252__ Ps. 139:6. 

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JAEEL

By the name of the Temple!  
And by the name of Michael 
the Prince of the Presence!  
Indeed he shall not take me as 
 a joyous bride to enter into a 
covenant with him

Such knowledge is too wondrous for me;  
why should I hurry to marry the man

Before he has told me that he desires me 
And before he has asked me whether I desire him. 
Please, my lady mother, tell my father these words 
I am tender in years and my time has not yet come 
And if my day comes I shall marry Ram, whom I hate, 
Rather than marry Paris his chosen one – these are my tidings. 

Tidings for tidings. 

Behold, your father is coming; tell him what you have to say 
And afterwards see what tidings there are for you. 

(Abiel and the nurse) 

After the sun goes down, the heavens let drops of dew fall 
But since my brother’s son went down, the rain has been flooding relentlessly 

Abiel’s wife

Behold, your father is coming; tell him what you have to say 
And afterwards see what tidings there are for you. 

(Abiel and the nurse) 

Abiel

After the sun goes down, the heavens let drops of dew fall 
But since my brother’s son went down, the rain has been flooding relentlessly 

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250 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church’ (3.5.116); this expression refers even more unambiguously than the previous one (see note 248) to the Temple in Jerusalem; the collocation is a postbiblical one that is used invariably in this capacity, in contrast to the single word מִקְדָּשׁ appearing above, which could theoretically simply mean ‘sanctuary’.

251 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’ (3.5.116); see note 249.

252 Ps. 139:6.
The water still floods through your waterspouts, my daughter

Like a flowing brook and does not deceive. Behold, your body is small

Yet it contains within it water and a storm wind and a ship

The waters of your eyes that go to and fro resemble the sea

Your groaning a storm wind, and your soul a storm-tossed ship

On these salty waters, and in the absence of one to turn the storm to calm

Your ship circles and sways and is broken in the heart of the sea.

Have you told her, my wife, the matter that we have decided?

Abiel’s wife She answered to thank you but that she will not be able to fulfil your desire

Leave this foolish girl, let the grave and not a man take her.

(She makes to exit)

Abiel You have spoken well, my wife; I am going with you –

Does she not intend to marry and to thank us for our gracious act?

Does she not consider it a blessing, pride, and glory

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253 Prov. 18:4.
254 Hab. 2:3.
255 Ps. 107:29 — ‘He turns the storm to calm’.
256 The Hebrew words for ‘grave’ and ‘man’ rhyme, creating an internal play on words lacking direct precedent in the source text.
That we have found for her a husband perfect in his graceful proportion.

When she is not even fit to be a maidservant?

I cannot be proud because you have acted graciously towards me.

I only desire to thank you for taking the trouble.

How can I be proud of a matter which I hate?

Even though I thank you for that which I hate.

Since I know that you consider it to be good.

Who is this that I am hearing? Thinking too deep, too deep to fathom.

Who could understand these ‘I am proud and I desire to thank you.

But nevertheless I am not proud, nor do I thank,

Even though I thank; listen to me, noble daughter.

Do not continue to thank me, do not continue to be proud.

Just prepare your heap of bones.

Bone to bone, for Thursday morning.

To go with Paris to the Temple of the Prince of the Presence.

And if you refuse to go, I’ll drag you like an abominable branch.

Like a corpse trampled underfoot, a sprawling carcass, shame of your father’s house!

257 Job 41:4 (41:12 in English Bibles).
258 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
259 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’s church’ (3.5.154); see notes 248 and 249.
260 Isa. 14:19.
261 Isa. 14:19.
ABIEL’S WIFE: Be ashamed and humiliated by your words; have you lost your senses?

JAEL: But please, my father, on my knees I hereby bend.

Please be kind enough to let me speak a word.

ABIEL: Hang yourself and be silent, false seed! Daughter of a perverse and rebellious woman! What use have I for worn out rags, a filthy cloth like you?

Now choose: go out as a bride towards the groom.

Or go out from my presence and I shall see you no more.

Do not speak a word, do not give me a response.

And do not open your mouth, lest I stretch out my upraised hand. –

How we have erred in complaining that the LORD has withheld from us.

Fruit of the womb apart from this one; now we have seen with our own eyes.

That even this one is excessive for us, for she has become a curse.

263. 1 Sam. 20:30.
265. Isa. 64:5 (64:6 in English Bibles).
266. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘get thee to church a’ Thursday’ (3.5.161). Salkinson’s Judaized equivalent is traceable to Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 59b כלה לֵקְרַאת חָתָן ‘a groom towards a bride’ and Alshekh to Ps. 14 יִצָּא כְּכַלָּה לֵקְרַאת חָתָן ‘he will go out as a groom towards a bride’.
267. Gen. 30:2 פּוּר בֶּטֶן מִמֶּנּוּ ‘am I in place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?’
And not a blessing in our house – cursed be the villainous daughter!

THE NURSE

May the God of the heavens pour His blessing upon her –

The matter is not good, my lord, to bring disaster upon her with both hands.

ABIEL

What is wrong with you, wisest of women? Put a lock on your mouth or preach your wise words in the women’s banquet house.

THE NURSE

My lips speak no wrong.

ABIEL

Go in the name of the LORD.

THE NURSE

May I not speak a word?

ABIEL

Be silent, fool, clamorous woman!

Make a speech over a cup of wine in the neighbour women’s houses

We have no need now.

ABIEL’S WIFE

Your heart is hot within you, that’s enough from you, my husband.

ABIEL

My heart burns within me, and I am mad from the sight of my eye

Indeed by day or night, at twilight or in the morning

In the house or outside, while I am sitting alone or in company

Whether waking or sleeping, I have thought only one thing

When will I succeed in my desire to marry her off

268 Ps. 39:4 (39:3 in English Bibles) בְּקִרְבִּי חַם־לִבִּי 'my heart was hot within me'.
And after I found a man after my own heart, from a family of princes

A man of wealth and riches, tender in years yet great in wisdom.

He is also a mighty man of valour, with beautiful eyes and a comely appearance

For he is perfect in his splendour – after all these things

This daughter of my sorrow dares, between her groans, to say 'I shall not take this blessing, I am tender in years. The time of love has not arrived, and I cannot marry. Forgive me my father, for I do not desire him'

And I say to you, if you refuse to marry, I forgive you in accordance with your word, but go graze in such place as you can find; You shall not live with me in the house. Look what is before you. Consider again, for I am not accustomed to jesting. Behold, Thursday is close; pay heed and take counsel. If you are to be my daughter then I shall give you to the man of my choice

1 Sam. 13:14 (כִּלְבָב֗וֹ אִישׁ כִּלְבָבִי מָצָאתִי אֲשֶׁר וְאַחֲרֵי שָׂרִים מִמִּשְׁפָּחַת אֲבֹתִי)

Sifre to Deut. 1; Genesis Rabbah 50; Rashi to Gen. 41.

1 Sam. 16:12 (בְּחָכְמָה וְטוֹבﬠֵינַיִם יְפֵה וְטוֹבﬠֵינַיִם, הֵוּא חַיִל גִּבּוֹר גַּם)

Ezek. 16:14 (בַּהֲדָרִי הוּא כָּלִיל כִּי בַּהֲדָרִי הוּא כָּלִיל כִּי אֵלֶּה כָּל כַּאֲנָקָה, הַזֹּאת אֹנִי בַּת תָּﬠִיז לֵאמֹר בְּנַאֲקוֹתֶיהָ אֲנִי רַכָּה, הַזֹּאת הַבְּרָכָה אֶקַּח לֹא "בְשָׂרִים וּלְהִנָּשֵׂא בָאָה לֹא 274 בְּדֹדִים 274 לֹא בְּדֹדִים 274 אוּכָל לֹא")

Ezek. 16:8 (ךָכִּדְבָרֶֽךְ סָלַ֖חְתִּי)

Num. 14:20 (ךָכִּדְבָרֶֽךְ סָלַ֖חְתִּי)

This is a reference to Gen. 35:18, in which the matriarch Rachel names her second son ‘Ben-oni’ (lit. ‘son of my sorrow’) as she is dying in childbirth.

Ezek. 16:14 (כִּלְבָל אֲנִי אָבִי לָכְיַע תְּמָאֲנִי אִם, לָךְ אֲמִיר וַאֲנִי לִרְעוֹת לְכִי רַק)

Ezek. 16:8 (לִבֵּךְ שִׁיתִי קָרוֹב הַחֲמִישִׁי יוֹם הֵן 274ﬠֵצָה וְﬠֻצִי לְאִישׁ אֶתְּנֵךְ אָז לְבַת לִי תִּהְיִי אִם בְּחִירִי)

1 Sam. 13:14 (כִּלְבָב֗וֹ אִישׁ כִּלְבָבִי מָצָאתִי אֲשֶׁר וְאַחֲרֵי שָׂרִים מִמִּשְׁפָּחַת אֲבֹתִי)

1 Sam. 16:12 (בְּחָכְמָה וְטוֹבﬠֵינַיִם יְפֵה וְטוֹבﬠֵינַיִם, הֵוּא חַיִל גִּבּוֹר גַּם)

Ezek. 16:14 (כִּלְבָל אֲנִי אָבִי לָכְיַע תְּמָאֲנִי אִם, לָךְ אֲמִיר וַאֲנִי לִרְעוֹת לְכִי רַק)

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And if not, go hang yourself, or go from house to house.276

And die of hunger on the city streets, for on my life!

I shall not be your father and I shall not give you a portion or inheritance.277

Of that with which God has graced me. Now know and believe That I have not sworn falsely.

(Exits)

JAEL Are there no merciful eyes in the heavens to see my pain And the plague of my heart?278

Oh, my mother, mother who gave me birth!

Do not cast me away! Postpone the wedding date By a month, at least ten days,279 and if you will not do so for me Put my bed in the grave of my brother Tubal And there I shall lie with him on the day appointed for my wedding.

ABIEL’S WIFE Do not entreat me for I shall not say a word Do what is good in your eyes, for you are not my daughter.

(Exits)

JAEL Oh, God! What shall I do, my nurse?

276 Tosefta Pe’a 4:8 הפתחים על מסבב ‘going from house to house’.

277 Gen. 31:14; Deut. 10:9, 12:12, 14:27, 29.

278 1 Kings 8: 38 ‘the plague of his own heart’.

279 Gen. 24:55.
How can I escape from a snare in which I have been trapped like a bird?

Indeed, my husband is alive on the earth and my oath is a testimony on high

And as long as he still lives and has not ascended on high

Who can disallow my oath, who can undo the bond of my covenant?

Give me counsel, give me help in distress;

Will it issue from the Mouth Most High to plant snares at my feet,

To pursue dry straw, to harass a windblown leaf like me?

To whom can I turn now, from where will my help come?

Is there nothing, my nurse, is there nothing you can say to comfort me?

THE NURSE  Certainly there is, there is, but please listen to me:

Indeed Ram is shut up in exile and it is known in all the earth

That he does not dare to return to see you

And if he does indeed come, he will come only like a thief in secret.

In respect of which my counsel is to become wife to Lord Paris

For he is an honourable man and wondrously desirable

And indeed Ram next to him is only a potsherd next to gold

How can I escape from a snare in which I have been trapped like a bird?

Indeed, my husband is alive on the earth and my oath is a testimony on high

And as long as he still lives and has not ascended on high

Who can disallow my oath, who can undo the bond of my covenant?

Give me counsel, give me help in distress;

Will it issue from the Mouth Most High to plant snares at my feet,

To pursue dry straw, to harass a windblown leaf like me?

To whom can I turn now, from where will my help come?

Is there nothing, my nurse, is there nothing you can say to comfort me?

THE NURSE  Certainly there is, there is, but please listen to me:

Indeed Ram is shut up in exile and it is known in all the earth

That he does not dare to return to see you

And if he does indeed come, he will come only like a thief in secret.

In respect of which my counsel is to become wife to Lord Paris

For he is an honourable man and wondrously desirable

And indeed Ram next to him is only a potsherd next to gold

280  Job 13:25 ‘will you harass a windblown leaf, and will you pursue dry straw?’
281  Ps. 121:1.
282  Isa. 12:5.

Ram and Joel
His eyes are burning torches and sparkle more than the eagle’s eyes.

I have never seen anyone with such beautiful eyes as he.

May God do thus to me if the second husband is not better than the first, and if it is not so in your eyes.

Why the first one is dead, for even if he lives he is like a dead man to you, for he is of no benefit to you.

Jael Are you saying such things with all your heart?

The Nurse May God do thus to me and more also!

If I have not said such things with all my heart and all my soul.

Jael Amen!

The Nurse What did you answer?

Jael Why, your counsel is marvellously good, and most marvellous.

Go and say to my mother: because I have vexed my father.

I shall go to the house of God to confess my iniquity.

So that I may be forgiven.

The Nurse Thus you must do, as you have spoken; for me, I am going.

(Exits)

Jael The primeval serpent speaks through her mouth, the enemy, oppressor of men’s souls.

283 1 Sam. 16:12.
284 This is part of a biblical oath formula appearing in 2 Sam. 3:35, 19:14 (19:13 in English Bibles); 1 Kings 2:23; 2 Kings 6:31.
285 This is the full oath formula mentioned in the preceding note.
Cursed by the Lord – and it has become a trifling matter in her eyes to deceive me

To violate the oath of covenant, for she also lashed out with her tongue

To scorn my husband’s name; a thousand times she said yesterday

That he cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, yet today he is a potsherd with the potsherds of the earth

I have had enough compassion, counsel, and sound wisdom from your mouth, my nurse

Here is the Rock of Divisions, for the partnership has been dissolved.

Now I shall go to the priest of God Most High

Perhaps he will help me to free me from my distress

And if not, my own hand will save me, to die in my blamelessness. (Exits)

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286 Job 28:16 ‘it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir’. Ophir is a region renowned in the Hebrew Bible for its wealth.

287 Isa. 45:9 ‘a potsherd with the potsherds of the earth’.

288 Prov. 8:14.

289 1 Sam. 23:28; this refers to the place where Saul was obliged to stop his ongoing pursuit of David and go to fight the Philistines. In some English Bible versions (e.g., Geneva Bible, King James Bible, New International Version) the name is not translated but appears in transliteration as Sela-hammahlekoth or similar.

290 Babylonian Talmud Giṭṭin 59b.


292 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘remedy/die’ (3.5.242-3). This was a workable rhyme in Shakespeare’s day (Weis 2012: 420).
Fourth Part

SCENE I  (Rezin and Paris)

Rezin
On Thursday? Why, it is very close.

Paris
So my father Abiel desires, and as for me, I have no desire
To hinder or persuade him to postpone the appointed time.

Rezin
You, my lord, said to me that you have not asked the maiden's consent
And you do not know what is in her heart: the matter is not fitting in my eyes
For this is not the way. 1

Paris
She is weeping for Tubal; she refuses to be comforted thus far
And I have spoken with her but very little
For words of love are not pleasant to one bitter of soul
But her father was concerned for her, lest the sorrow overwhelm her
Therefore in his wisdom he appointed a close day for her wedding
For only when she is sitting alone does it grieve her in her heart.
But in her husband's house quick as lightning she will forget sorrow and sighing. 3

This is the secret of the matter, why the wedding is close.

1 2 Kings 6:19.
2 Jer. 31:15 ‘Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted’.
3 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Venus'; Salkinson has omitted the Classical mythological reference.
4 Gen. 6:6 ‘and it grieved Him in his heart’.
5 Isa. 35:10, 51:11.
REZIN (To himself) If only I did not know the secret, why the wedding is distant –

Look, my lord, behold, the damsel is coming into the chamber.

(Jael enters)

PARIS I rejoice to see your face here, my beautiful bride.⁶

JAEL That will be my title when the day of my wedding comes.

PARIS Thursday is close, and then the matter will come and take place.

JAEL When it is fitting for it to come, so it shall come and so it shall take place.

REZIN The entrance into your word⁷ is enough for one who understands.

PARIS Have you come to confess here before the priest?

JAEL To answer you this is like confessing before you.

PARIS Go and confess before him, and tell him that you love me.

JAEL I shall confess before you that I love him.

PARIS And likewise you will confess before him that you love me.

JAEL The matter would be better if I were to tell such things by the walls⁸

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⁶ This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring either ‘wife/wife’ (4.1.18–19) or ‘next/text’ (4.1.20–1) in the source text. In terms of meaning, Salkinson’s rhyme corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘wife/wife’, but the fact that Salkinson did not typically recognize the original’s same-word pairs as rhymes, combined with the fact that he did not attempt to find a separate rhyme for his next two lines, suggest that he may have instead had ‘next/text’ in mind as his model.

⁷ Ps. 119:130

⁸ Ezekiel 33:30
Rather than telling it to your face.

**PARIS** The expression of your face testifies against it* that it has suffered from a surfeit of tears.

**JAEL** My tears must not boast that they have prevailed over my face

Since even in the beginning, of what account was my face?**

**PARIS** With this you have spoken wicked slander against your face.

**JAEL** I spoke against my face, but it was not false slander.

**PARIS** Your face is mine, for you have become my treasure

And you have spoken wicked slander against my allotted possession.

**JAEL** Perhaps the matter is so, for my face does not belong to me –

And now, my father and teacher, is this time suitable for you

Or should I return to you at twilight?***

**REZIN** I am ready to serve you, my sad-spirited daughter –

Please, sir, please let me fulfil the duty of my office.

**PARIS** God forbid that I should be an obstacle interfering with the holy work –

On Thursday morning I shall come to awaken you, Jael, from your sleep.

I’ll depart from you. (Kisses her and exits)

**JAEL** Close the door and sit to weep with me

There is no more hope, there is no medicine and no help.

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9 Isa. 3:9 'the expression of their faces testifies against them'.

10 Isa. 2:22 'for of what account is he?'

11 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘at evening mass’ (4.1.38); Salkinson has replaced the explicitly Catholic reference with a religiously neutral one that preserves the temporal sense of the original.
Oh, Jael, my daughter! I know your pain. I am distressed at your distress, for it has touched my very heart. You have been brought between the straits  and you have no refuge or sanctuary. For Thursday is the day that I heard which they have set as your appointed time for this lord to take you to wife.

Please do not tell me, for I have heard this thing. Unless you know a remedy and can heal my wound. If your wisdom is not sufficient to bring me salvation. Say that I am wise enough to find guidance for myself. And this knife will bind my wound with a single blow. Behold, God has linked my heart and Ram's heart with bonds of love. And with the tie and the bond of the covenant you yourself linked our hands. So before my hand severs the tie, to make another tie, Before my heart grows unfaithful, whoring after a strange man. This knife is raised to devour them both. And now, give me counsel, for there is wisdom with the aged.

12 Lam. 1:3; translated as 'in the midst of her distress' in some English Bible versions (e.g., New Revised Standard Version, New International Version, English Standard Version).
13 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Tell me not, Friar’ (4.1.50).
14 Ezek. 20:37.
15 Job 12:12.
But if not, look, this knife will bring me forth into a broad space\textsuperscript{16}

And that which you have not been able to do by means of counsel and sound wisdom\textsuperscript{17}

With all your days and your wisdom, my hand will surely be able to do.

Now hurry, speak, for I have already decreed my judgement\textsuperscript{18}

And if you have no counsel, I desire to die.

REZIN

Wait, my daughter, something like a door of hope\textsuperscript{19} appears to me from afar

But in order to arrive at the desired haven you must do a terrible thing

Almost like that thing from which we strive to escape

Behold, you have the courage of spirit to kill yourself

In order not to marry Paris, because it is a disgrace in your eyes

So you can indeed find the courage to risk your life\textsuperscript{20}

In order to escape the disgrace which is more bitter to you than death.

So now, if you are prepared, command and I shall help you.

JAEL

Command me to cast myself down from the top of the tower there

Rather than to become Paris’ wife; command me to sojourn in robbers’ lairs

\textsuperscript{16} Ps. 18:20 (18:19 in English Bibles) ‘He brought me forth into a broad place’.

\textsuperscript{17} Prov. 8:14.

\textsuperscript{18} This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘die/remedy’ (4.1.66–7).

\textsuperscript{19} Hosea 2:17 (2:15 in English Bibles).

\textsuperscript{20} Judg. 9:17 ‘and he risked his life’. 
In a desert of serpents and scorpions, in an asp’s hole and a viper’s nest; 21
Or imprison me in fetters and throw me among raging bears; 22
Or to be shut up to spend the whole night in a house of corpses
Full of bones rich in marrow, skulls, and rotting shankbones;
Or give me the word to descend into a new grave
To wrap myself in a single shroud with the corpse lying there –
Words which, upon hearing them, trembling seizes me and I convulse –
All these I would do today and would not cry out and would not complain
If only I might have hope to live like an upright and blameless wife
With my husband whom my soul loves. 23
rezin Return to your house with a laughing face and reconcile yourself with your father, saying
That you will marry Paris; and tomorrow, which is Wednesday,
Do not let your nurse lie down with you in the bedchamber
But rather, lie down alone, and take this jar to your bed
And when you lie down, drink the mixture from the jar
Quick as lightning your tendons will be filled with a cold spirit, a spirit of deep sleep 24
The blood will freeze, it will not run and will not beat in your veins

21 Isa. 11:8
22 Prov. 28:15
23 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
24 Isa. 29:10.
The heat of the fl esh will pass and
the blush of the lips and the cheeks
will depart.

No breath will remain in you, and the
shadow of death will rest upon your
eyelids.

The only small dominion in this small
body of yours
Will be the command of its life spirit,
there will be no other prince or
servant.

There will be no authority and no
service, and there shall be none
shut up or left at large.25

Every joint, every member will be cold
and heavy, it will not move, like
a corpse.

And in the image of a lifeless form you
will lie for forty-two hours
But afterwards you will awaken and
arise as if from a sweet sleep.

And when Paris comes on Thursday
morning
To wake you from sleep, he will find
you dead in the bed
Then they will dress you in linen
garments and bear you in an
open cof fin
In the manner of the people of our
place— to the cavern of your
forefathers’ graves.

25 Deuteronomy 32:36.
26 This custom clashes with that of Jewish tradition, according to which coffins are always closed and
the deceased may not be viewed. Salkinson has chosen to retain this detail of the source text, but has
rephrased it from Shakespeare’s ‘Then, as the manner of our country is, / In thy best robes, uncovered on
the bier’ (4.1.109–10), moving the reference to the manner of the country from the beginning of the unit
until the end. This change has the effect of drawing attention to the uncovered coffin as a custom of the
land (rather than both the robes and the bier). Salkinson may have done this in order subtly to highlight
the fact that this is a custom of the local Italian non-Jews, rather than a Jewish custom. In addition, he has
changed Shakespeare’s ‘best robes’ to ‘linen garments’, a reference to the Jewish practice of clothing the
dead in a plain linen shroud (Hillers and Kashani 2007: 293). These decisions result in a text reflecting a
singular fusion of Jewish and non-Jewish funeral customs.

27 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘vault’ (4.1.111); Salkinson’s translation is a reference to the biblical practice of burying
the dead in family caves, most famously the Cave of Machpelah which the patriarch Abraham purchased as
a family tomb (see Gen. 23).
The Abiels from generation to generation.28 And meanwhile

Before you awaken from your sleep, I shall send a letter to Ram
And make known to him everything that has been done, and he will hurry to come here
And he and I together will keep watch when you awaken from your deep sleep
And on that very night you will travel with Ram to Mantua.

This is the way in which the disgrace will be removed from you
If only your heart stays steady, and you do not know fright
Nor the fear of a woman's heart to carry out this scheme.

Give it to me, give it to me, and do not mention the name of fear.
Here it is, and go in peace, go with this strength of yours and be saved
Meanwhile, I shall quickly send one of the sons of the prophets to Mantua.29

May love give strength, and may the Gods of love give salvation.
And you, my dear father, farewell! (Both exit)

Scene 2 Abiel's house (Abiel and his wife and the nurse with servants)

28 Exod. 17:16.
29 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘friar’ (4.1.123); Salkinson has replaced this explicitly Catholic term with a biblical expression used to denote the disciples of a prophet (see, e.g., 1 Kings 20:35; 2 Kings 2:15).
30 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lord/afford’ (4.1.124–5).
Go and call all the men listed here by their names.

(To a second servant) Go and hire for me twenty expert bakers and cooks.

They will all be experts, for I shall test them first.

To see if they are experts at licking their fingers.

How will they be tested by that?

A cook who is not expert in licking his fingers is senseless.

And such a senseless cook as this I shall not take with me.

Go forth, go forth on your way – (The second servant exits)

We shall not be able to prepare everything that we need in such a short time.

Has my daughter gone to Rezin the priest?

Yes, she has gone.

Perhaps this priest will benefit the perverse-hearted and stiff-necked girl.

This rebellious daughter.

Behold, she returns, and her face is favourable.

The peace-loving priest has restored her heart to her parents.

(31) This speech is prose in the original (4.2.3–4).
(32) This speech is prose in the original (4.2.6–8).
From whence comes the wayward heifer? From which valley of vision do you come?

I come from the house of God, where I learned to repent of my iniquity

For I have rebelled against your word and have not obeyed my parents

But here I fall on my face as the man of God commanded me

Saying: I pray you, pardon my sin just this once

And from this day forth I shall keep the commandment of your mouth.

Summon Paris for me, go and tell him this

As for me, I shall not rest until tomorrow's morning light

Which will illuminate my eyes to see them emerging from their wedding canopy.

I saw the lord's face in the chamber of Rezin the priest

And I spoke many words of love and affection to him there

Without transgressing the limit of the laws of modesty.

How good and how pleasant is the matter; arise, my daughter

This is what I have desired – summon Paris for me

Hurry, go, why, I've commanded you; bring him to me

34 Isa. 22:1, 5.
35 1 Sam. 15:25.
36 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘I’ll have this knot knit up tomorrow’ (4.2.24). Salkinson’s mention of the traditional canopy under which the couple and close family stand during a Jewish wedding ceremony serves to transform the reference into a specifically Jewish one.
37 Ps. 133:1.
On my life! The holy priest of my LORD is honourable.  
And may all the city's inhabitants honour his name.

JAEL

Will you go with me, my nurse, to the upper chamber
To see which of the garments, jewels, and sashes
Are best for me to wear tomorrow?

ABIEL'S WIFE

Not today, we still have much time
To see them tomorrow.

ABIEL

Go with her, Nurse; tomorrow morning we shall go to the prayerhouse.

(Jael and the nurse exit)

ABIEL'S WIFE

Why, the time is too short for us to prepare everything
For night is near.

ABIEL

Desist, I am hereby ready to perform every task
Trust me, wife, that nothing will be lacking.

Go help Jael choose her bridal garments
And I shall toil here all night – do not mock me
Behold, this time I want to be the mistress of the house in your stead.

But what has become of them? They have all gone and are not here
I shall go on my own feet to see and speak with Lord Paris

38 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘this reverend holy friar’ (4.2.31).
39 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘we’ll to church tomorrow’ (4.2.37).
In order that he might be prepared for the morning – indeed, the vigour of youth has returned to me.  

Since the maiden repented to follow the best of young men.  

(Abiel and his wife exit)

Scene 3

Jael’s chamber (Jael and the nurse)

Jael

These linen garments are the best of them all

But my dear nurse, leave me alone tonight

For after all, you know my position and all the sins of my youth

And I have many things to petition the God of mercy

To guide me on the path on which I must go, for my path is not paved.

(Abiel’s wife enters)

Abiel’s wife

Have you not yet finished your business? Can I help you?

Jael

Please don’t, my lady mother; we have already chosen

Each thing with certainty as befits us for tomorrow.

Now, please leave me to be on my own

And take the nurse to stay up with you tonight

40 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in Shakespeare’s ‘light/reclaimed’ (4.2.46–7).

41 Ruth 3:10 ‘not following the young men’.

42 Ps. 25:7.
Because there is too much work for you to prepare everything
For the occasion that has suddenly descended upon us.

Abiel’s wife
Go to your bed in peace and may your rest be pleasant
For you need it. (Abiel’s wife and the nurse exit)

Jael
Go in peace! – God knows when I shall see you again –
Something like a cold wind spreads through my tendons,
and my sinews take no rest

My heat disappears from its place and my blood is like frost and ice
I shall call to my mother to return to me to comfort me in a time of distress.
My nurse! – But what use have I for the nurse now?
I shall drink the cup of poison myself, and let no stranger interfere with me
Here is the jar, here is the potion for my bones.
But if the potion is insipid and of no effect
Then they will force me to marry Paris with a strong hand
Indeed this shall not be; this dagger is ready to help me.

(Places the dagger next to her)

43 Job 30:17.
44 Job 6:17 ñאיה וּדְמֵעה מָכָּה מְכַלָּהְךָ ‘when it is hot they disappear from their place’.
45 Prov. 3:8 קִפָּאָה וְדָמִי ‘and a potion for your bones’.
46 Exod. 3:19, 6:1, 13:9; Deut. 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 9:26, 26:8; Ezek. 20:33–4; Ps. 136:12; Dan. 9:15.
But perhaps there is death in the jar, for the priest is indeed cunning.
And he desires to kill me, because he fears for his life.
Lest I marry Paris and his disgrace be revealed in public.
When my first marriage, which was performed by his hand in secret, becomes known.
I fear this; nevertheless, I fear in vain.
Until now I have found his heart faithful in all his ways.
But now the righteous priest is to have become a bloody and deceitful man?
This cannot be so, I shall not ascribe to him things which are not so. –
But what will happen if they lower me into the grave in the cavern?
And I awaken before Ram comes to redeem me?
Why, then I shall suffocate in this courtyard of death.
For the cavern is full of thick vapours from one end to the other.
No fresh wind enters there, and when Ram arrives there
He will find me dead. And even if I am still alive.

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47 2 Kings 4:40 (בַּסִּיר מָוֶת ‘there is death in the pot’ (referring to poison in a pot of stew)).
48 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Friar’ (4.3.24).
49 Ps. 5:7 (5:6 in English Bibles).
50 Ezek. 21:31 (21:26 in English Bibles).
51 See note 27.
52 Ezra 9:11.
53 Jer. 4:11. In this verse, the word צַח is typically translated as ‘dry’, ‘burning’, or ‘searing’, but it additionally means ‘fresh’ or ‘clean’.

Ram and Joel 489
Why, the dread of death will terrify me more than fear of the night

In this terrible place in which are buried

The bones of my fathers’ fathers and the members of my family from yesteryear;

Tubal has been interred there in his blood and his flesh rots away in his shrouds;

I have heard that the ghosts gather together there at night.

Woe, who can live in fear and the terrors of the shadow of death

Driven into the dimness of darkness and anguish, smoke, stink of decay, and stench;

Who can stand and listen to the whistles of the ghosts

Why, they are like the groans of mandrakes when they are torn from their roots

At which anyone who hears them goes mad. And even if it is not this

Why, an evil spirit dwelling between the graves will terrify me, I shall let my spittle run over my lips, and go mad among the bones of the dead,

I shall throw Tubal out of his coffin, to provoke him

And in my burning wrath I shall seize a thigh or cheek of one of my forefathers

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54 Zech. 14:12.  
55 Job 24:17.  
56 Isa. 8:22.

*) Mandrakes, according to the popular belief in Shakespeare’s day, made a groaning sound like animals when they were torn from their roots, and all who heard their groaning went mad at the sound. [Salkinson’s note]
And smash my skull – but what is this I see?

Tubal’s spirit is awakening in his rage, roaming towards Ram

Because he stabbed him with the edge of his sword – stand back, Tubal!

I have come to help you, my husband; for you I drink the jar.

(Empties the jar into her mouth and falls upon the bed)

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**Scene 4**

**Abiel’s house (Abiel’s wife and the nurse)**

**Abiel’s wife**

Take the keys and bring us various spices and perfumes.

**The Nurse**

The bakers are asking there for oil and honey for the cakes And almonds and pomegranates for the delicacies.

**Abiel**

Hurry, hasten, bakers – hurry, graceful daughters The cock has called twice now, and the bell has tolled For the third watch is starting – go, see, beautiful one Whether that which is being baked in the oven is as it should be.

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58 2 Chron. 16:14, ‘perfumes and various spices’.
59 Jer. 41:8; Ezek. 16:19.
60 Tosefta Terumot 2:4; Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 22a.
61 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Angelica’ (4.4.5).
62 Lev. 2:4, ‘baked in an oven’.

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Ram and Joel
THE NURSE  Why are you looking at the cooking pot, my lord? Why are you looking at the stove?

Is the way of women upon you? 63 Please go to your bed
And may your eyes see sleep, lest you fall ill on the morrow.

ABIEL  How many nights have I kept guard and not seen sleep in my eyes
For I was pursuing small delights, and I have never fallen ill
Yet now I should fall ill on the morrow because I have not slept tonight?

ABIEL’S WIFE  I know that you have lain in wait at night from the days of your youth
And you have kept guard in order to hunt a silly dove 64
But such times are no more, and I shall guard you from keeping guard.

(Abiel’s wife and the nurse exit)

ABIEL  This is the way of women, it is jealousy, and it will become a lament –

(Servants bearing meat-forks, wood, and baskets)

What are you bearing?

FIRST SERVANT  A basket for the cooking women’s house, but I do not know what is inside it.

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63 Gen. 31:35 לִ֑י נָשִׁ֖ים כִּי־דֶ֥רֶךְ ‘for the way of women is upon me’ (spoken by the matriarch Rachel).
64 Hosea 7:11.
Pave a road for one bearing a basket, so that he might go quickly.

((To a second servant) Your wood is wet; go call Peter.
And he will show you dry wood.

What might you have to do with Peter, my lord? Behold, I am here.

And no dry block of wood is missing.

Your mouth has testified against you that you are a block of wood –

But the morning has dawned, and Paris is to come with the musicians.

For so he told me, and I also hear the sound of his footsteps.

(The sound of singing outside)

Nurse! – Wife! – Where are you, Nurse?

(The nurse re-enters)

Go wake up Jael, put her bridal garments on her.
And I shall go to Paris and converse with him a little.

Hurry, hasten, why do you stand, behold, the groom is coming.
Hurry, I command you. (Exeunt)

Scene 5 Jael lies in her bedchamber (The nurse enters)

This line contains a play on words based on a sound correspondence and shared etymology between the verbal root לָלַס 'to pave' and the nouns מְסִלָּה 'road' and סַל 'basket'. This wordplay most likely represents an attempt to find an equivalent for Shakespeare’s pun between ‘logs’ (4.4.15, 17) and ‘loggerhead’ (4.4.19), which begins in the corresponding line (given that the Hebrew translation of the latter exchange is not itself a pun).

Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare’s ‘Mass, and well said’ (4.4.19).

Gen. 44:3.
The nurse   Lady! Delicate bride! – **Blessed above women be Jael**!68 –

Innocent sleeping ewe-lamb – is it time for you to sleep? It is a disgrace

It is a disgrace for you, my only one; when will you arise, bride?

There is no word on your tongue, for the sleep is sweet for you

Continue to sleep a long sleep, as long as seven days

For I know well that on the next night

Paris will rob your sleep from your eyes and will not give you rest

Perhaps I have sinned with my lips, but there is forgiveness with the Lord –

How sleep has overcome her – I shall wake her, for the appointed time has come

Arise, my lady, arise lest you be put to shame by the lord

When he finds you in bed? Is it not so, Jael?

But what is this? Has she donned linen garments

And adorned herself with her jewels and sashes, and then gone to sleep again?

Such knowledge is too wondrous for me;69 I shall quickly wake her so that I may know

My lady, my lady, my lady, arise! –

What do my eyes see? Oh, oh! Come, help!

68 Judg. 5:24.

69 Ps. 139:6.
The bride is dead, she is dead in the bed!

Woe to me that I was born – support me, lest I die

Oh, lord! Oh, lady!

(Abiel's wife enters)

Abiel's wife
What is this noise?

The nurse
This is a day of distress.

Abiel's wife
What has happened?

The nurse
Look what has happened – a day of distress and anguish!  

Abiel's wife
Woe, woe, woe! – My daughter, my only daughter

Come back, live, my daughter, open your eyes, oh, I shall die with you –

Help! – Help! –

(Abiel enters)

Abiel
Why do you delay? Bring Jael

Behold, the groom has arrived.

The nurse
She has perished and died – woe to this day!

Abiel's wife
Woe to this day! She is dead, dead!

Abiel
Leave her to me so that I may see – her flesh is cold as ice

Her blood has frozen in her veins, every limb and joint is stiff

Her breath has left her, has long ago left her lips

Like the frost of heaven falling on the flowers of the field

The bride is dead, she is dead in the bed!

Woe to me that I was born – support me, lest I die

Oh, lord! Oh, lady!

(Abiel's wife enters)

Abiel's wife
What is this noise?

The nurse
This is a day of distress.

Abiel's wife
What has happened?

The nurse
Look what has happened – a day of distress and anguish!  

Abiel's wife
Woe, woe, woe! – My daughter, my only daughter

Come back, live, my daughter, open your eyes, oh, I shall die with you –

Help! – Help! –

(Abiel enters)

Abiel
Why do you delay? Bring Jael

Behold, the groom has arrived.

The nurse
She has perished and died – woe to this day!

Abiel's wife
Woe to this day! She is dead, dead!

Abiel
Leave her to me so that I may see – her flesh is cold as ice

Her blood has frozen in her veins, every limb and joint is stiff

Her breath has left her, has long ago left her lips

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Come back, live, my daughter, open your eyes, oh, I shall die with you –

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Like the frost of heaven falling on the flowers of the field

The bride is dead, she is dead in the bed!

Woe to me that I was born – support me, lest I die

Oh, lord! Oh, lady!

(Abiel's wife enters)

Abiel's wife
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This is a day of distress.

Abiel's wife
What has happened?

The nurse
Look what has happened – a day of distress and anguish!  

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Come back, live, my daughter, open your eyes, oh, I shall die with you –

Help! – Help! –

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Oh, lord! Oh, lady!

(Abiel's wife enters)

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The nurse
This is a day of distress.

Abiel's wife
What has happened?

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Look what has happened – a day of distress and anguish!  

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Woe, woe, woe! – My daughter, my only daughter

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Leave her to me so that I may see – her flesh is cold as ice

Her blood has frozen in her veins, every limb and joint is stiff

Her breath has left her, has long ago left her lips

Like the frost of heaven falling on the flowers of the field

70 Isa. 30:6; Prov. 1:27.
71 Job 38:29.
72 Isa. 40:6; Ps. 103:15.
So does death lie upon her.

THE NURSE

Oh, day of distress and anguish.  

73

ABIEL'S WIFE

Time of darkness and the shadow of death.  

74

ABIEL

Death has devoured my only daughter and summoned me for weeping and mourning

But it has made my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; like a mute I am unable to speak.

(Rezin the priest and Paris with musicians enter)

REZIN

Let us go! Is the bride ready to go to the house of God?

76

ABIEL

She is ready to go, but she will never return from there –

Oh, my son, my son, the night before the day of the wedding

Death came to your bride, look, there she lies

Like the rose of Sharon she was budding, but it, being stronger than her, has forced itself upon her

Death is my son-in-law, death will be my heir

It has taken my daughter for itself, it will take my life

I shall die now and leave everything in its hand.

---

73 Isaiah 30:6; Proverbs 1:27.
74 Psalms 107:10, 14; Job 3:5, 10:21.
75 Psalms 137:6: תִּדְבַּ֥ק־לְשׁוֹנִי ‘may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth’.
76 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘to church’ (4.5.33).
77 Song of Songs 2:1.
78 2 Samuel 13:14: קְצָרָה צָרָה ‘but he, being stronger than her, forced himself upon her’.

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496 The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
How I have waited, how I have anticipated

For this day to come, yet now this is the day for which I had hoped.

Cursed be this day! Let it be a damnation and a curse in the land

Let evil angels terrify it and let no blessing come upon it

It is a more evil and bitter day than all the days of trouble in the world.

Just one daughter, just one single, tender girl

Did I have in my time, to restore my spirit

But death, bitter and cruel, has torn her from my hand.

Woe is me. woe and sorrow! Woe to this day!

Woe to my eyes, which see this; I have never seen such a thing

Oh, day of rage and anger, day of fury and disgrace

Who has seen such a day, it is terrible and dreadful

As destruction from the Almighty it has come; as for that day, let it not be blessed.

Death, the king of terrors has swallowed me, it has devoured me, it has crushed me
It has made me an empty vessel, a vessel full of shame and humiliation.

What is my life that I should hope, what is my hope, that I should live?

Where is my love! Where is my life! My life is not alive

And my love descends into the grave.

Ariel

I am spurned, I am broken and feeble; I have fallen, I cannot get up.

Oh, day of rage! Why have you called an appointed time against me?

To destroy me, to destroy my house and turn my feast into mourning?

My daughter, my daughter Jael! You are not Jael, but rather my life.

For your death is my death, and having been bereaved I perish.

My daughter, my daughter has perished, and with my daughter my delight has also been buried.

Rezin

That's enough from you, those who curse the day! Do not make the sound of your wailing heard.

With the sound of mournful wailing the break will not heal.

Jael had three masters: her mother, her father, and her God.

But now she has one master, for God has taken her.

---

85 Jer. 51:34 ‘Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me, he has made me an empty vessel, he has swallowed me’.
86 Job 6:11 ‘what is my strength, that I should hope’.
87 Ps. 38:9 (38:8 in English Bibles) ‘I am feeble and broken’.
88 Lam. 1:15 ‘He has called an appointed time against me’.
89 Amos 8:10 ‘I shall turn your feasts into mourning’.
90 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘dead/buried’ (4.5.63–4).
91 Job 3:8.
92 Gen. 5:24 ‘for God took him’.
And it is better for her now than previously; one master is better than three.

Your portion in her you could not save from death

But the portion which belongs to the Lord is preserved for eternal life

Indeed, to magnify and elevate her was your whole desire

Yet now that she is elevated, for she has ascended on high

You weep and rage as if you view her happiness with hostility.

You have been intoxicated in your daughter’s love: this love is not good

She is bound in the bundle of life, so what else do you desire?

A woman married to a husband cannot delight in his love forever

But happy is the woman whose husband is her maker, the Lord.

Therefore wipe your tears; put blossoms and flowers upon your beloved daughter, and bear her in her bridal garments

93 Prov. 5:19. המִשְׁלֹשָה לְהַצִּיל יְכָלְתֶּם אַתֶּם בָּהּ חֶלְקְכֶם מִמָּוֶת נֶצַח לְחַיֵּי שָׁמוּר הוא לַאֲדֹנָי אֲשֶׁר וְהַחֵלֶק חֶפְצֵכֶם כָּל הָיָה

94 1 Sam. 25:29. In the biblical verse this expression is a metaphor for long life, but in postbiblical Jewish tradition it denotes the afterlife (Bar-Efrat 2004: 609–10); Salkinson is using it in the latter sense.

95 Ps. 1:1. אֲרָשִּׁ־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־הָאִשָּׁה וְאַשְׁרֵי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הָאִשָּׁה אַשְׁרֵי

96 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘rosemary’ (4.5.79), a symbol of remembrance (Weis 2012: 309, note 79). Flowers are not traditionally a feature of Jewish funerals. As in the case of the open coffin mentioned in note 26, Salkinson has not substituted Shakespeare’s reference with a Jewish equivalent. However, he has replaced the mention of a specific herb, which would likely have meant little to readers, with one of generic ‘blossoms and flowers’, which would have been identifiable as a Christian funeral custom.
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense\(^{97}\) to the house appointed for all the living.\(^{28}\)

Eyes of flesh\(^{99}\) weep abundantly\(^{100}\) for the one going to his eternal home\(^{105, 102}\).

But for those who have knowledge of the Most High,\(^{103}\) tears are laughter.

**Abiel**

My house, a house of feasting, has turned into a house of mourning

Merrymaking and dancing into laments, and damsels playing timbrels\(^{104}\) into professional mourning women

Robes and precious gifts into sackcloth and ashes\(^{105}\) and the wedding canopy\(^{106}\) into a coffin and shroud

Joyous cries of young men into an elegy and songs of joy into sorrow and sighing\(^{107}\)

Perfumes and various prepared spices\(^{108}\) to fill the bed of my dead one in the grave

And blossoms and flowers and sashes into an ornament of grace\(^{109}\) for burial

All the valuables which I prepared have changed and become the opposite.

\(^{97}\) Song of Songs 3:6.

\(^{98}\) Job 30:23 (a reference to death). Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘to church’ (4.5.81).


\(^{100}\) Isa. 15:3 ‘weeping abundantly’.

\(^{101}\) Alshekh to Isa. 51, Prov. 6, Eccles. 12.

\(^{102}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lament/merriment’ (4.5.82–3).

\(^{103}\) Num. 24:16.

\(^{104}\) Ps. 68:26 (68:25 in English Bibles).

\(^{105}\) Isa. 58:5; Esther 4:1, 3; Dan. 9:3 (a biblical sign of mourning).

\(^{106}\) See note 36.

\(^{107}\) Isa. 35:10, 51:11.

\(^{108}\) 2 Chron. 16:14.

\(^{109}\) Prov. 1:9, 4:9.
Go, my lord Abiel, prepare yourself, you and your wife
And Lord Paris with you; be prepared, the three of you
To follow the coffin to the grave there in the cavern.
Behold, anger looks down from above and the heavens thunder\(^{110}\)
Declare the heavens innocent and do not hate the Lord's discipline
For if you provoke further anger, the fury will not pass
Therefore let yourselves take instruction, give in, tremble, and do not sin.\(^{111}\)

(All exit)

End of Second\(^{112}\) Part.\(^{113}\)

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\(^{110}\) This and the next three lines form an ABAB rhyming sequence, which resembles Shakespeare's 'ill/will' (4.5.94–5) except that the latter is a single rhyming couplet.

\(^{111}\) Ps. 4:5 (4:4 in English Bibles) מְאֹדֶה תְּשָׁנָאָו (אֲמוֹדֶה תְּשָׁנָאָו) 'tremble and do not sin'.

\(^{112}\) Sic; should be Fourth Part.

\(^{113}\) Salkinson has omitted the rest of this scene (4.5.100–41), which consists of an exchange between Peter and the musicians. The omitted lines appear in the Quarto and Folio versions, and as such would most likely have been printed in the English version which Salkinson utilized. His decision not to translate these lines (which are not explicitly essential to the plot of the play) may be rooted in the fact that they contain a number of puns and would therefore have been difficult to render into Hebrew.
Fifth Part

SCENE I  A street in Mantua

RAM If visions of the night\(^1\) are honest and faithful

And dreams when deep sleep falls\(^2\) do not speak falsely

Then my waiting will not be prolonged, and my salvation is close.

Because of this, this morning a new spirit has come upon me

And in my mind I imagine that my love sits before me

Like a queen in the inner chamber of a palace, and I have become like a king

For in my dream I saw that I was dead

(How strange is the dream which a dead man can see)

When behold, Jael came and kissed me with the kisses of her mouth\(^3\)

And when her lips touched my lips, she restored my life to me

And I tasted the sweetness of her lips and the honey of her mouth like the precious things of heaven\(^4\)

Which cannot be told. And now, what can I say

If the shadow of love is sweeter than any pure honey

How sweet is love!

---

1 Job 4:13.
2 Job 4:13.
3 Song of Songs 1:2 ‘let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth’.
4 Deut. 33:13.
Greetings, Balthasar! What have you brought me from Verona?

Are there no letters in your hand from the priest for me?

How fares my bride? Does my father still live?

And I ask again: how fares my bride Jael?

For she is my only desire and if she is well

I shall be well, and shall know no evil.

---

Balthasar

She and you both fare well, and shall know no evil

For she has been gathered in peace to the graves of her forefathers

And her spirit has ascended on high to the God who had given it to her

When I saw this, I hastened to come and tell you

Even though it distresses me to report such tidings

But you commanded me to tell you everything which has happened.

---

Ram

If the matter is so, whom else have I to fear?

Those who dwell on earth are as nothing to me, and I charge the heavenly host with folly –

As for you, bring a scroll of paper, a pen, and ink to my lodgings

And hire horses for me, because I must go to Verona tonight.

---

Balthasar

Please, my lord, listen to me; before you do anything
Ponder the path of your ways, for your face testifies against you. That you are considering doing an evil thing.

RAM
Desist, put your hand over your mouth and do as you have been commanded.

For you have mistaken what you saw. But tell me
Are the priest’s letters not in your hand?

BALTHASAR
There are no letters in my hand, my lord.

RAM
If so, then, go forth and bring me the horses.

And I shall come quickly after you. (Balthasar exits)

I am coming to you, Jael, and I shall lie with you tonight.

And now I shall turn my attention to how I may succeed in my desire.

Why, a man despairing of life as I am today
Is quick in thinking of how to take his own life.

Behold, I remember the apothecary whom I saw
He is poor and needy and gathers mountain herbs.

His eyebrows are long and his garments are worn and patched
Meagreness and misfortune greet him and want follows at his feet.

5 Prov. 4:26 'ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established'.
6 Ps. 72:13, 82:4.
7 Prov. 27:25.
And in his shop I have seen a tortoise and a serpent upon a pole

A few embalmed fish and old empty pitchers

As well as broken vessels and torn and mended drinking skins

And on the windowsill a bit of seed scattered and separated

Four or five olive berries and the ends of tendons and threads

And old pots of rose ointments to attract the customers’ eyes

And when I examined this shop, I said to myself

If a man were seeking to take a poison of death today

This shop owner in his poverty would be prepared to sell it

Even though in Mantua it is a sin worthy of death for those who sell it.

This thought entered my mind before I knew

That I would be the one buying from this seller.

Here is his house, but the poor man has locked his shop

For it is a holiday today. (Knocks on the door)

Where are you, apothecary? Open the door for me!

---

8 Num. 21:8

9 Judg. 7:16.

10 Josh. 9:4

11 Isaiah 17:6

12 Isaiah 17:6

13 Mishnah Hullin 3:5.

14 Deut. 21:22.
Who is calling there with all his voice?

Come to me, man – I know that you are poor

Take forty shekels\(^{15}\) of gold for yourself, and in exchange for them give me

A few drops of poison that will kill the one who drinks it

Who despises his life and whose soul has become a burden to him

So that it might mix with his blood and touch all of his veins

Until he quickly dies and his spirit leaves his body

Like gunpowder from a gun as it fires.

I have such poisons, but I cannot sell them

For according to the law of the land the seller must surely be put to death.

You are impoverished, you have nothing, yet you fear death?

Behold, you lack bread and you have no robe.

Your bones are as dry as potsherds, and your flesh is like a drinking skin in the smoke\(^{16}\)

You are hated by men and relatives do not love you

Dogs bark at you and youths cast stones at you.

---

\(^{15}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘ducats’ (5.1.59). A shekel is a biblical weight (commonly used with reference to silver and gold) corresponding to approximately ten grams.

\(^{16}\) Ps. 119:83.
The laws of the earth were not made for you to become wealthy.

And the earth does not rush to find out if you are sated or hungry.

So why should you rush to keep the law of the land?

Take the gold from my hand, and be poor no longer.

I take the gold because I am a pauper.

Rather than out of my heart’s desire.

Put these drugs in a cup of water or mixed wine.

Until they melt; then drink from the mixture.

And even if your strength is like the strength of stones, you will be cut off from the earth at once.

The gold which you took is a cup of poison for men.

It has cast down many more victims, and more numerous are all its slain in the world.

Than the victims of poisons such as those that you have no leave to sell.

I sold you the poison of death. I and not you

---

17 Job 6:12 אִפְּרַת אֲבָנִים מָכִי ‘is my strength the strength of stones’.
18 Exod. 9:15.
20 Prov. 7:26 כִּי־רַבִּים כִּלְחָלִים וַ֝ﬠֲצֻמִ֗ים הִפִּילָה לָהּ כִּֽי־רַבִּ֣ים ‘for she has cast down many victims; numerous are all her slain’.
21 Mishnah Hullin 3:5.
Go in peace! Buy food and clothing for yourself.
And be healthy –
As for you, jar of poison, your name is not poison of death.
But rather elixir of life, because you are a remedy for my soul.
And I shall bring you to Jael’s grave, to finish feast and dinner.
There you will become pure honey in my mouth and there I shall find rest for myself. (Exeunt)

SCENE 2

Verona. Chamber of Rezin the priest
(Hanan the priest enters)

Where is my brother Rezin? Where is the righteous priest?

(Rezin enters)

The voice is the voice of Hanan – have you come from Mantua?
What did Ram say to you? Or is his letter in your hand?

Indeed I went to seek a brother walking barefoot like myself.
To go with me to Mantua, and I found him in a certain house.
To which he had gone to visit someone lying on his deathbed.
And the city guards saw and said

22 Mishnah Hullin 3:5.
23 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘me/thee’ (5.1.85–6).
24 This is the name of a number of minor biblical characters; for example, one of the Levites who helped Ezra explain the Law to the people (Neh. 8:7). Salkinson most likely selected it as a translation of Shakespeare’s ‘John’ because it (or, more typically, its variant יַﬠֲקֹב, ‘Johanan’) is the usual Hebrew equivalent of this name.
25 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Holy Franciscan friar’ (5.2.1).
26 Gen. 27:22 יַﬠֲקֹב קֹל הַקֹּל ‘the voice is the voice of Jacob’.
27 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘one of our order’ (5.2.6); Salkinson has neutralized the explicitly Catholic associations of this phrase.
28 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘the infectious pestilence’ (5.2.10). Cholera was the most common infectious disease affecting Eastern European Jews in the second half of the nineteenth century (see Markel 1997: esp. 87–8). Cf. Ithiel, First Part, note 267.

29 The Hebrew term can denote any serious contagious disease.

30 This is a Talmudic oath (Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1334); Salkinson has Judaized Shakespeare’s overtly Catholic oath ‘by my brotherhood’ (5.2.17). Cf. Third Part, note 176.
And she will grumble to me that Ram did not come at the appointed time

For I have not informed him of anything that has happened

But I shall write again and send a messenger to Mantua.

A precious soul\(^{31}\) is lying in a coffin, like a soul cut off out of the land of the living\(^{32,33}\)

And until Ram arrives, she will be kept watch over in the chamber with me. (Exits)

---

**Scene 3**  *Graveyard in which there is a tower and cavern, the burial site of the Abiels (Paris with a youth in whose hand is a torch and bunch of flowers)*

**Paris** Give me the torch, and leave my presence

But I misspoke; put out the torch

So that no one's eye sees, and lie there on the ground

And listen carefully behind the thicket and if a man comes

And treads over the ground\(^{34}\) whose clods have crumbled

And which is as hollow as a sieve and riddled with holes and graves

Only then, when you hear the sound of footsteps, whistle with your mouth

As a sign for me that a man's feet are in the courtyard of death

---

31 Prov. 6:26.
32 Isa. 53:8: יָמַ֛ע דַּיְמָ֖ו לָא נִגְזַרָ֣ה כִּ֗י 'for he was cut off out of the land of the living'.
33 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'come/tomb' (5.2.28–9).
34 Cf. Shakespeare's 'churchyard' (5.3.5).
And now, give me the flowers, and go, do as I have commanded you.

_The youth (to himself)_

I almost fear to stand in the courtyard of death by myself.

But I shall go and do as my master has commanded me. _(Exits)_

_Paris_ Every flower, _O beauty_ I shall glorify your wedding canopy with blossoms.

Woe is me, woe is me! Your wedding canopy is dust and stones.

Here each night I shall pour out my heart in my sighing.

My lament will drop as the rain, like the dew I shall water you with my tears.

At midnight my abandoned desolate soul will arise and with weeping and moaning I shall sacrifice for you plaited chains of flowers.

And I shall raise up a dirge and lament for twelve months.

This I vow, Jael, and as I have vowed so I shall fulfil.

_(The youth whistles with his mouth)_

---

35   Cf. Shakespeare's 'in the churchyard' (5.3.11).
36   2 Sam. 1:19 (David's lament for Saul and Jonathan).
37   Cf. Shakespeare's 'thy bridal bed' (5.3.12). See Fourth Part, note 36 for discussion of 'wedding canopy'.
38   This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare's 'strew/stones/dew/moans' (5.3.12–15) except that the latter is composed of an ABAB pattern.
39   Deut. 32:2 'My teaching shall drop as the rain'.
40   Isa. 16:9.
41   This and the next three lines form an ABBA rhyming pattern, mirroring Shakespeare's 'keep/weep' (5.3.16–17) except that the latter consists of a single rhyming couplet. Salkinson has turned Shakespeare's two lines into four; the discrepancy most likely reflects a difficulty in conveying the necessary information and finding suitable rhymes within the space of the original two lines.
42   Mal. 2:13.
43   Exod. 28:22.
The youth has given me a sign that he has heard the sound of footsteps. Who would dare to come here, to be an adversary against me tonight? When I have come to the grave to fulfil the vow of my love, but behold, a man is coming, and moreover there is a torch in his hand. I shall retreat for a moment and hide in the wings of night.

(Retreats)

(Ram and Balthasar enter with a torch and axes and various iron tools)

Ram

Give me the iron tools and take this letter.

And tomorrow morning see to transmit it to the hand of my lord father. Give me the torch, and I adjure you to stand afar. Guard yourself from descending after me, for your blood will be on your head. If you see or hear something, do not move from your place. And do not approach in order to stop my labour, for it will cost you your life. As for me, I shall go down to the chambers of death to see my bride and also to remove from her finger a ring with a precious stone which will benefit me for I shall indeed divine with it.

44 In the Ashkenazic Hebrew pronunciation this and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's ‘tonight/rite’ (5.3.19–20).
45 1 Kings 2:37.
46 Prov. 7:23 ‘and he does not know that it will cost him his life’.
47 Prov. 7:27 ‘her house is the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death’.
Now go and stand afar, and do not forget that I have warned you.

That if you presume to approach and to see what I shall do further, I testify to you today that I shall cut your flesh to pieces and scatter them over the graves so that their dust might be made fat.

This place is dreadful; my heart is as stormy as the sea. And I have no rule over my spirit, like a hungry leopard in the forest.

Balthasar: I shall keep your command and shall not be a burden to you.

Ram: I shall consider this as righteousness on your part; take this for yourself as a gift.

And now go in peace, and be a successful, good, and faithful man.

Balthasar (To himself): As for me, I shall hide so that I may see him, for I fear the anger and the wrath.

I do not believe his words, for he speaks with cunning. His face testifies evil, and around his eyes is dread.

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48 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘this hungry churchyard’ (5.3.36).
49 Isa. 34:7 ‘and their dust will be made fat with fatness’.
50 Gen. 28:17.
51 Prov. 25:28 ‘a man who has no rule over his spirit’.
52 Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 16b.
53 Deut. 9:19 ‘for I fear the anger and the wrath’.
54 This and the next three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, echoing Shakespeare’s ‘hereabout/doubt’ (5.3.43–4), except that the latter consists of a single rhyming couplet. Salkinson has expanded the speech by two lines, adding details about the specific nature of Balthasar’s suspicions regarding Ram’s intentions.
Like one considering destroying himself.

(Goes and hides)

Oh, grave hungry for prey! Gluttonous belly of Sheol!

You have swallowed the best of the earth’s delicacies, yet you do not say ‘enough’

Behold, I shall open your mouth with force and not by your will

And place more in your gullet. (Breaks and opens the door in the tower)

This is the son of Abiram, who was exiled for his guilt

Who killed my bride’s brother and she died from sadness and sorrow

And here he comes to the house of bones of the dead

To commit a villainous deed – why, I shall catch this villain –

What are you doing here, son of Abiram? What are you doing here, scoundrel?

Would you chase the bones of the dead? And would you take revenge from those who sleep in the dust?

Come with me, man condemned to death, for you shall surely die.

You have spoken truly; I am about to die, for that is why I have come here

But I counsel you, noble son, not to fight with me

---

55 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (5.3.50); see First Part, note 65.
56 Judg. 18:3; 1 Kings 19:9, 13; Isa. 22:16.
57 This appears in the Amida, the central prayer of the daily Jewish liturgy.
58 Salkinson has not reproduced Shakespeare’s rhyming couplet in the last two lines of this speech ‘thee/die’ (5.3.56–7).
59 1 Sam. 20:31; 2 Sam. 12:5.
Better for a man to meet a bear robbed of her whelps than a man despairing of his life.  

Turn away from me and pass by; do not anger me further. 

Remember those lying here in their graves. 

Guard yourself greatly, lest your end be like theirs. 

Again I urge you, pleasant and agreeable young man. 

Do not ignite my wrath and do not force me to sin further. 

To add iniquity to my iniquity. Please obey me and live. 

Flee for your life, which I value more than my own life. 

Because it is for my life and not for yours that I have brought instruments of violence. 

Please listen to my counsel; pass by from here and live. 

And regarding the son of Abiram, open your mouth and call out.

That the madman in his mercy gave you faithful counsel. 

PARIS I shall not take notice of your words, and all your oaths are in vain. 

For I shall take you, criminal, and present you at the gate of judgement. 

RAM Now I am blameless regarding your blood; draw your sword, youth!

(They fight each other)

“חיה נאה ביצות נ推動 נחש מים

משה מנהל יד ברא נחש בנים

אני לא ידע לך כל בני דתם

משה בודד ינשך בוץ כמו

מה ידע לשוןBatman שיר חזק

כףالتهاب

מִשְׁפָּט בְּשַׁﬠַר

וְהַצִּ֥יגוּוּ

and establish judgement at the gate’.

60 Prov. 17:12 ‘better for a man to meet a bear robbed of her whelps than a fool in his folly’.
61 Gen. 49:5.
62 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘say/away’ (5.3.66–7).
63 Amos 5:15 ‘and establish judgement at the gate’.

Ram and Joel 515
PARIS’ YOUTH
Oh! They are fighting; I shall go and call for the city watchmen.

(He exits and Paris falls)

PARIS
I have been struck a mortal blow – deal mercifully with me

Open the grave and lay me next to Jael. (Dies)

RAM
Indeed I shall do so – yea, I shall examine his face

He is Meraioth’s kin; Paris is of the seed of princes

What did my youth say to me, when I was riding on the way

And due to the great agitation of my soul I did not listen to his words?

If I am not mistaken, why, he told me

That Paris was due to wed Jael.

Did he tell me such a thing? Or was I like one dreaming?

Or perhaps when I heard that Jael was to be spoken for

My sense departed from me and I imagined that he had told me this?

Give me your hand, you are a brother in distress

Your judgement has been decreed in the same book as mine has been decreed

And I shall bury you in a grave of strength; but it is not a grave

It is a palace full of light, for there lies Jael

And where she is, her beauty is like the dawn light, shining ever brighter.

---

64 Dan. 1:3 וּמִנָּה הַמְּלוּכָה וְמִזֶּרַע, וְמִזֶּרַע פָּרִיז.
65 Prov. 4:18.
Lie here, young man, I have killed you

Behold, I shall bury you, though I too am dead like you.

(Lays Paris out next to Jael)

Indeed, I have heard people say that a man before his death

Finds some small relief, but where is my relief?

Oh, Jael, my wife! Jael, whom my soul loves!

Even death, which has sucked the sweetness of your lips' breath,

Has not taken dominion over your beauty, and your splendour has not yet departed

Your lips are still as scarlet, and grace rests upon your face

The sword of death has touched you, but you have not yet been destroyed –

Is that you there, Tubal, in a cloak rolled in blood?! I laid my hand on you and snuffed out your life

I struck you down with my sword, and shortened the days of your youth

I hereby lay a hand on myself, a life for a life

Look, your enemy's soul will be with you in a moment

So what more can I do; how can I find favour with you

---

66 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
67 Isa. 9:4 (9:5 in English Bibles).
68 Ps. 89:46 (89:45 in English Bibles) וְקָצַרְתִּי יָדִי לְפִי הִפַּלְתֵּיךְ ‘you have shortened the days of his youth’.
69 Exod. 21:23; Lev. 24:18.
Forgive me now, my brother, \(^{70}\)
and say that I have calmed your wrath –

At the sight of you, precious Jael,
at the lovely sight of you I am pricked in the heart\(^ {71}\)

The angel of death has brought you down, yet the radiance of your face has not dimmed

Before him you have knelt, you have fallen, yet he has not laid his hand upon your beauty;

Admittedly he who has no flesh on his bones

Loves the daughters of men, for they are fair\(^ {72}\)

So has he brought you to the dungeon in order to take you to his bed?

This I feared, so I have come; I shall not part from you again.

Among maggots and worms, which serve you here

I shall be a watchman at your head; I shall never depart from here

Here I desire to dwell; this is my rest forever\(^ {73}\)

Here I shall cast off the yoke of my life, and all my woes will cease.

My eyes! Look just once more before your light wanes

And you, my arms, embrace, embrace a last embrace

And you, lips of my mouth, you doors of my breath

\(^{70}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (5.3.101); see First Part, note 65.

\(^{71}\) Ps. 73:21 ‘ַֽ֝בַּלְּפָּה עַלְּבָּאֵלָא־אֶנְּבֹּאֶל—I was pricked in the heart’.

\(^{72}\) Gen. 6:2 ‘וַיְרָא֤וּ אֶת־בְּנ֣וֹת בְּנֵי־הָֽאֱלֹהִים֙ וַיִּרְא֤וּ אֶת־בְּנ֣וֹת בָּאָ֔דָם—they saw the daughters of God, and the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair’.

\(^{73}\) Ps. 132:14 ‘אֵ֥ת־בָּאָ֑דָם אֲשֶׁ֥ר חָלַֽב־וֹ לָֽנֶצַּֽח—this is my rest forever; here I shall dwell, for I desired it’.
Kiss a last kiss before I die and am no more;
As a sign that I have paid my debt to the destroying angel
Who has had a contract with man since the days of old.
Come, guide! Come, you who lead men into the valley of the shadow of death.
And like a sailor on a raging sea lead my storm-tossed ship
Through rocks and cliffs so that it breaks into splinters.
(Drinks the poison of death) To your love, Jael, I drink this cup of poison! –
The apothecary’s words were true; he did not deceive me in his poverty
His poison has made an end to my life at once, and with a kiss I die. (Dies)
(Rezin enters the graveyard from another side, a torch in his hand, with an axe and hammers)
The Holy One Most High in heaven! Be a shield for me tonight
And let the furrows of these graves not be a snare for me
Who are you over there?
A man whose heart is faithful to you, for I know you, my lord.
May the Lord grant you peace; but tell me

74 Ps. 23:4.
75 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Francis be my speed’ (5.3.121).
What is that torch burning over there from afar

As a lamp that shines for those who sleep in the dust, or for maggots and worms?

If I have not erred in vision, why, it is in the tower of the Abiels.

BALTHASAR
You have not erred in vision; my master, whom you love, is there.

REZIN
And what is your master's name?

BALTHASAR
Ram.

REZIN
When did he come to the tower?

BALTHASAR
More than half an hour ago.

REZIN
Come with me to the tower.

BALTHASAR
I cannot go, for it will cost me my life.

For I have been commanded by my master to turn away and not to watch him

For if I watch what he is doing there

My blood will be on my head.

REZIN
If so, stay here, and I shall go myself

I fear greatly that evil has been done there.

BALTHASAR
When I lay here by this thicket

I saw as if in a dream that my master struck a man

And after they both fought, the other fell by the sword.

REZIN
Where are you, Ram?

(Entering the tower)

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76 This appears in the Amida, the central prayer of the daily Jewish liturgy.
77 Prov. 7:23
    "עָשָׂה לְפָדָיו וּמַה שֵׁם רָצוּנוּ, וְלֹא יָדַע", 'and he does not know that it will cost him his life'.
78 Ezek. 33:4
    "יִֽהְיֶֽה בְרֹאשׁ֖וֹ דָּמ֥וֹ", 'his blood will be on his head'.

(בְּרֹאשִׁי יִהְיֶֽה דָּמִי)  "If so, stay here, and I shall go myself"

(בְּרֹאשׁ֖וֹ יִהְיֶֽה דָּמ֥וֹ)  "And if I watch what he is doing there

(בְּאִישׁ נָפַל)  "My blood will be on my head.

(בְּאִישׁ נָפַל שְׁנֵיהֶם נִלְחָמֻ)  "Where are you, Ram?

(בְּרֹאשׁ֖וֹ יִהְיֶֽה דָּמ֥וֹ)  "I fear greatly that evil has been done there.

(בְּאִישׁ נָפַל שְׁנֵיהֶם נִלְחָמֻ)  "I saw as if in a dream that my master struck a man

(בְּאִישׁ נָפַל שְׁנֵיהֶם נִלְחָמֻ)  "And after they both fought, the other fell by the sword.

(בְּאִישׁ נָפַל שְׁנֵיהֶם נִלְחָמֻ)  "Where are you, Ram?"
Oh! I see blood on the stones of the path 
Before the entrance to the tower; what
are these swords
In the resting house of the dead, with
the blood of a slain man upon them?
(As he enters the tower) Ram! Oh, you
are dead
And you too, Paris; here you have fallen
by the edge of the sword
This day is an evil day, it is an evil time –
But behold, Jael awakens.

Rezin, restorer of my soul! You have
kept your word
And I have awoken in the place which
you designated for me
Where is Ram? Where is my
husband Ram?
(The sound of men’s feet is heard outside)
I hear the sound of men’s steps outside
Arise, Jael, and let us leave this
valley of the shadow of death
This is not the place for us, and this is
not the repose.
The ruler over mortal deeds has
thwarted the plans of our hearts
Arise, come with me; your husband lies
here dead
And Paris is also dead. I shall take you
to the women’s house
That is to say, the holy women who sit
continually before the Lord.

79 Ps. 23:4.
80 Isa. 28:12 ‘and this is the repose’.
81 Ps. 33:10 ‘the Lord nullifies the counsel of the nations; He thwarts
the plans of the peoples’.
82 Esther 2:3 ‘to the women’s house’.
83 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘a sisterhood of holy nuns’ (5.3.157); Salkinson has transformed the explicitly Catholic
reference into a vague and religiously neutral one while retaining the general sense of the line.
Do not ask me anything here; for the watchmen are coming.

(Sound of men’s feet outside)

Hurry, come with me; I cannot stay here.

JAEAL

Go on your own; I shall not go with you. (Resin exits)

But what is this cup in the hand of the one whom my soul loves?  

A mixture of poisons within it, and with this he has quickly been cut off and grown weak

How have you drunk and drained the dregs of the cup of staggering

And have left nothing for me to drink and follow you.

Your mouth I shall kiss, Ram, I shall suck the juice of your lips

Perhaps I shall find a sufficient portion for myself in what remains on your lips.

(Kisses him) Your lips are moist and hot.

CAPTAIN OF THE WATCHMEN (Outside)

Come, guide me, youth, which way shall we go up?

JAEAL

Behold, men are coming; I must hurry to complete my task.

It is good that you have girded your sword upon your thigh.

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84 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
85 Ps. 90:10 ‘for it is quickly cut off and we fly away’.
86 Isa. 51:17 ‘you have drunk and drained to the dregs the cup of staggering’.
87 In English Bible versions the word תַּרְﬠֵלָה is typically translated as ‘staggering’, ‘reeling’, ‘trembling’, or ‘wrath’. However, it literally means ‘poison’, and this is the sense in which Salkinson is using it.
88 2 Kings 3:8 ‘which way shall we go up’.
89 Ps. 45:4 (45:3 in English Bibles) ‘gird your sword upon your thigh, mighty one’. 

522 The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
(Draws the sword from upon his thigh)

Return, sword, to your scabbard! This is the scabbard that has been prepared for you!

(Plunges the sword into her flesh and falls upon Ram as she dies)

(The chief watchman with Paris’ youth)

The youth There is the place where the torch burns.

Chief watchman This is a field of blood; go search in the graveyard If you find someone, bring him here.

(Some of the watchmen exit) Whose heart would not feel ill to see the valley of slaughter Here the lord has been struck down and Ram lies dead And upon him Jael lies stabbed through, flowing with hot blood As if she has just now died, though she died and was buried Two days ago. – Go tell the prince Call the Abiels so that they might come, tell it in the house of Abiram And the rest of you, go and search wherever you might find.

(Some of the watchmen exit)

89 Jer. 47:6 המכשף תרב אל מטרד! This is the return to your scabbard.

90 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘churchyard’ (5.3.172).

91 Jer. 7:32, 19:6. המכשף תרב אל מטרד! This is the return to your scabbard.

92 Judg. 4:22 מֵ֔ת נֹפֵ֣ל סִֽיסְרָא֙ and behold, Sisera lay dead’.

93 Salkinson has not reproduced the rhyming couplet ‘dead/buried’ (5.3.175–6) in the source text.

Ram and Joel 523
In this place a terrible, dreadful deed has been done.

But how it was done
I cannot know

Until we enquire and investigate
and bring forth to light that which is hidden.

(The watchmen bring Balthasar)

This is a servant of Ram whom we found in the graveyard.

Keep watch over him until the prince arrives.

(Other watchmen with Rezin)

We found this priest coming out of the graveyard.

And he is sullen and angry, sighing and weeping abundantly.

With an axe and hammers in his hand, these which we have taken from him.

In this priest and his tools there are great searchings of heart.

Keep watch over him as well.

(The prince arrives with his servants)

What has happened here, what thing has been done?

94 This and the following three lines form an ABA rhyme, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lie/woes/descry’ (5.3.179–81).
95 Job 28:11.
96 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘churchyard’ (5.3.182).
97 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘friar’ (5.3.184).
98 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘churchyard’ (5.3.186).
100 Isa. 24:7.
101 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘friar’ (5.3.187).
102 Judg. 5:16.
103 1 Sam. 4:16; 2 Sam. 1:4.
That they have disturbed my rest, coming at the break of dawn?

(Abiel and his wife enter with other people)

Abiel

What is this consternation? Why is the city in such an uproar? 1 Kings 1:41.

Abiel's wife

People on the street are calling 'Ram', other people 'Jael'

While some are calling 'Paris', and everyone, hastened and rushed 105

Is raging and running towards our tower in the graveyard.

Abiel

What is this consternation? Why is the city in such an uproar? 1 Kings 1:41.

Abiel's wife

As what is this? Is not there consternation? Is not there tumult?

Abiel

Why is the city in such an uproar? 1 Kings 1:41.

People on the street are calling 'Ram', other people 'Jael'

While some are calling 'Paris', and everyone, hastened and rushed 105

Is raging and running towards our tower in the graveyard.

Abiel

What is this consternation? Why is the city in such an uproar? 1 Kings 1:41.

Abiel's wife

And anyone whose voice rang in your ears, my lord prince! We found Lord Paris here slain by the sword, 107

next to him the son of Abiram, dead

And Jael, daughter of Abiel, who died two days ago

Flowing with hot blood, as if she had been stabbed through just now.

The prince

Enquire and investigate the matter, from whence this murder has come.

Chief watchman

Here is this priest, and this is a servant of the dead Ram

And in both their hands we found these iron tools to open the graves.

1 Kings 1:41.
105 Esther 8:14.
106 Jer. 30:5.
107 Num. 19:16.
Abiel: Look, my wife, oh! Why, our daughter is bleeding. The sword has been drawn from its scabbard on Ram’s thigh. And driven into her heart.

Abiel’s wife: This scene before my eyes is like a bell tolling. For the professional mourning women and those skilful in lamentation to come bring my grey head down to Sheol.

(Abiram and his men enter)

The Prince: Come here Abiram; you have arisen early at dawn today. In order to see your son, who arose early in order to close his day at the dawn of his life.

Abiram: Oh, my lord prince! My wife died tonight. For she was grieved at the distress of her son, who had been exiled and was no more. Is there another pain to be inflicted upon me in my old age?

The Prince: Open your eyes and see.

Abiram: Rash son! Why have you done such a thing to me? Why have you hastened before your father to find a grave for yourself?

The Prince: Put your hand over your mouth; do not cry out. It is time for us to restrain ourselves and not to give vent to all of our feelings.

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108 Amos 5:16.
109 Gen. 42:38; 44:29. שְׁאוֹלָה בְּיָגוֹן אֶת־שֵׂיבָתִי וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם ‘you will bring my grey head in sorrow down to Sheol’; Gen. 44:29. שְׁאוֹלָה בְּרָﬠָה אֶת־שֵׂיבָתִי וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם ‘and you will bring my grey head in sadness down to Sheol’.
110 1 Kings 1:6.
Until the source is found, from which the evil came forth

And we remove the shroud cast over the field of graves

And the veil which is spread over all the nations\(^{11}\)

Then I shall go before you as a father at the head of mourners

Leading you according to the tune of death\(^{112}\)

Please bring the men whom you suspect

In order that they might be interrogated before me.

\(\text{rezin}\)

You have set your eyes upon me, and I am the first

From whom you seek revenge for these people's blood

But please know that there is no man on earth

Who guards himself from shedding blood as I do

Yet here I stand before you to condemn myself

---

\(^{11}\) Isa. 25:7

He will destroy the shroud cast over all the peoples and the veil which is spread over all the nations.'

\(^{112}\) Ps. 9:1

This is the only occurrence of the word \(\text{ﬠַל־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִֽם} \) in the Hebrew Bible (it is a feature of medieval and later Hebrew, but in the meaning of 'youth' or 'youthfulness', which do not seem appropriate here). The Psalm's phrase \(\text{ﬠַל־כָּל־הָֽﬠַמִּ֑ים} \) is enigmatic and has given rise to various explanations. Many English Bible versions, for example, the Geneva Bible, the King James Bible, the New Revised Standard Version, the English Standard Version, and the Jewish Publication Society 1917 Tanakh, interpret it as a personal name Muthlabben. Others, for example, the New International Version, interpret the entire phrase literally as 'upon the death of the son'; this translation also appears in certain ancient Bible translations. Certain translations; for example, the New Revised Standard Version and the New International Version, understand \(\text{ﬠַל־כָּל־הָֽﬠַמִּ֑ים} \) as 'according to' or 'according to the tune of', since the phrase forms part of the Psalm's introductory musical instructions. Some medieval Jewish commentators, such as Ibn Ezra and Dunash ben Labrat, interpret the first word literally as 'upon the death of' and the second word as a personal name, Labben. By contrast, the prominent medieval commentator Rashi interprets the phrase very differently, translating it as 'to brighten the youth' (a reading based on the medieval understanding of the word \(\text{ﬠַל־כָּל־הָֽﬠַמִּ֑ים} \) as 'youth' or 'youthfulness' and of \(\text{לַבֵּן} \) as a form of the root \(\text{לַֽבֵּן} \) meaning 'to whiten' or 'to brighten'). Salkinson has selected part of the phrase (leaving off the final word \(\text{לַבֵּן} \)) in the line corresponding to Shakespeare's 'And lead you even to death' (5.3.220); as such, he seems to have intended the word in the Psalm to serve as a reference to death rather than as a reference to youthfulness or as part of a personal name.
Though my innocence will also come to light, for I am blameless.

I am both the prosecutor and the defender.

If so, tell us the root of the matter that you know.

I shall tell everything, but shall not draw out my speech.

For out of shortness of breath I cannot speak at length.

Ram, who lies dead here, was husband to Jael.

And Jael, who lies dead there, was the wife of his covenant.

For I brought them into the covenant of marriage according to law.

And on the day of their concealed marriage Tubal was taken away before his time.  

And Ram, who killed him, was exiled from his city in his night of pleasure.

And it was over him that Jael mourned, not over Tubal’s death.

And her parents, who meant to remove the sadness from her heart

Promised her to Paris and forced her to marry him

And, being extremely distressed, she came to me in great confusion

Asking if I had the power to save her from the second marriage

---

113 Job 15:32.
114 Isa. 21:4

I am my shepherd, thou art nourished in my hand.  

For out of shortness of breath I cannot speak at length.

Ram, who lies dead here, was husband to Jael.

And Jael, who lies dead there, was the wife of his covenant.

For I brought them into the covenant of marriage according to law.

And on the day of their concealed marriage Tubal was taken away before his time.

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And it was over him that Jael mourned, not over Tubal’s death.

And her parents, who meant to remove the sadness from her heart

Promised her to Paris and forced her to marry him

And, being extremely distressed, she came to me in great confusion

Asking if I had the power to save her from the second marriage

---

Job 15:32.

Isa. 21:4

I am my shepherd, thou art nourished in my hand.  

For out of shortness of breath I cannot speak at length.
And if not, she would take her own life at once
Therefore I gave her a mixture which I had learned to make
And when she drank from it, a sleep like the sleep of death fell upon her
And she lay in her deep sleep as if dead for two days, as I had planned
And I wrote to Ram to come on this night of distress
At the appointed time when she would arise from her grave so that he could take her to his place
For after two days she would shake herself free from my mixed wine
But the messenger with the letter, Hanan the priest,\(^{115}\) Was caught and shut up in the city, and yesterday evening
He returned my letter to me; therefore I went myself
Before midnight to be there in the cavern
At the time when she was to awaken from her sleep, for I intended To take her and hide her in my house until I found an opportunity
To send word and tell Ram; but when I arrived at the place
Before she arose from her grave, I found Lord Paris
And Ram, the faithful man,\(^{116}\) both of them slain, dead.

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\(^{115}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Friar’ (5.3.250).
\(^{116}\) Prov. 20:6.
Then her soul returned to her flesh grew warm and she came alive.

And I urged her to be courageous, to go with me and not to despise the rod of discipline, for it is the discipline of the Lord.

But a rumbling sound outside caused me to flee from the cavern and her soul was bitter, so she refused to go with me And as it looks to me, she took her own life.

And regarding the matter of her wedding, which was done according to the law, Her nurse knows, for she was a witness.

All this I know, and I have told you in faith And if you have found evil in my deeds and lay the sin upon me Do with me according to the law; I do not ask for kindness And I am ready for my grey head to go down in blood to Sheol.

THE PRINCE Thus far I have known you to be an honourable holy man of the Lord – Bring Ram's servant, and let us hear what he has to say.

117 2 Kings 4:34 118 Prov. 22:15. 119 Ezek. 3:12. 120 Esther 1:8, 4:16. 121 Num. 12:11 ‘please do not lay the sin upon us’. 122 1 Kings 2:9 ‘and you must bring his grey head down in blood to Sheol’.
When I gave my master the tidings that Jael was dead, he rushed to return here on horses from Mantua. And came to the graveyard before this tower, and gave me a letter to hurry and deliver to his father. And he also commanded me to return to my house, not to watch him. As he entered the cavern, for it would cost me my life. Give me the letter so that I might see what is written in it – Where is Paris' youth, who called the city watchmen? Tell me, you there, what was your master doing here?

He had brought flowers to strew over his bride's grave. And I stood from afar for so I was commanded. When lo, a man with a torch in his hand opened the grave. And my master fought with him, and they brandished their swords before them. And I was afraid, and ran and called the watchmen.

This letter is testimony that the words of the priest are true. Regarding the secret love and the report of Jael's death.

123 Prov. 7:23 'and he does not know that it will cost him his life'.
124 Ezek. 32:10 'when I brandish my sword before them'.
125 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Friar' (5.3.286).
And it also says that he bought the poison of death. From a poor apothecary, and that he came to the grave. In order to die and lie with Jael – where are you, who bear a grudge!

Where are you, Abiel and Abiram! This is the curse. That lies upon strife, and this is the fruit of the enmity.

But instead of the wrath of your hatred, which burned like fire, the fire of love has gone forth and devoured those pleasing to your eyes. And I, because I averred my eyes and did not stop quarrel and strife, have lost two young men of my family. We have all been guilty, and the wrath has gone forth over us all.

Come, my brother Abiram! Give me your hand in peace. This is my daughter’s portion; this peace. Is all that she has left behind as a memorial – and more I cannot ask for.

Whereas I am prepared to give more than you desire. For out of gold of Ophir, I shall establish a statue in her likeness.

126 Mishnah Hullin 3:5.
127 Lam. 2:4 ‘all that were pleasant to the eye’.
128 Hab. 1:3.
129 1 Chron. 29:4. Ophir is a region renowned in the Hebrew Bible for its wealth.
Made by the greatest craftsman of all the master artisans

And as long as the city of Verona stands on its mound

This statue will be the foremost of all its treasures.

As a memorial for Jael, daughter of truth and faith.

And that craftsman shall likewise hew a statue of Ram.

And both figures will stand touching each other.

In order to commemorate the names of our children, who fell because of our iniquity.

The morning has brought us peace, but has not wiped away our tears.

And the sun is too ashamed to shine on a day of mourning and sighing.

Go now, each man to his own house, where we shall gather again and converse.

130 Josh. 11:13.

131 The corresponding lines in the source text form a rhyming couplet ‘set/Juliet’ (5.3.301–2). Salkinson has not reproduced this rhyme. Admittedly in the Ashkenazic Hebrew pronunciation the last word of each line would have been pronounced with the same vowel, thus forming a near rhyme, but Salkinson’s rhymes typically consist of a matching final consonant as well as vowel, which casts doubt on the possibility that he intended these lines to serve as a rhyming couplet.

132 The equivalent speech in the source text consists of a single rhyming couplet ‘lie/enmity’ (5.3.303–4). Salkinson has added a line and has not reproduced the rhyming couplet. However, the first and last line of his speech form an ABA near rhyme (the final vowel rhymes, but not the preceding consonant). This may represent an intentional attempt to echo the original; alternatively, it is possible that Salkinson did not recognize Shakespeare’s lines as a rhyme, given that ‘lie’ and ‘enmity’ would not have rhymed in the late nineteenth century.

133 Ezek. 3:13.

134 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. Salkinson has expanded this speech from six to ten lines. Shakespeare’s speech consists of an ABAB rhyming sequence followed by a final rhyming couplet, so there is no precise equivalent to this initial rhyming couplet in his text (although the couplet’s content overlaps with that of the first two lines of Shakespeare’s speech).

135 This and the next three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘brings/head/things/punished’ (5.3.305–8) – although because Salkinson has added four lines to this speech, the content of these lines does not correspond precisely to that of the equivalent rhyming lines in the source text.
Regarding this evil matter, regarding the deeds of the noblemen

I shall recompense you according to your deeds, whether punishment or pardon

Kindness is suitable for the blameless one, whereas for the wicked one, the punishment of judges.

Indeed here we shall establish a pillar as a monument in the graveyard

It is a lamentation for all generations, which will be chanted by the male and female singers

Oh, Ram and Jael! In their very love they were destroyed

They were lovely and pleasant in their life, and in their death they have not been divided.

(Exeunt)

The End of the Book.
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This first bilingual edition and analysis of the earliest Shakespeare plays translated into Hebrew – Isaac Edward Salkinson’s *Ithiel the Cushite of Venice* (Othello, Vienna, 1874) and *Ram and Jael* (Romeo and Juliet, Vienna, 1878) – offers a fascinating and unique perspective on global Shakespeare. Differing significantly from the original English, the translations are replete with biblical, rabbinic, and medieval Hebrew textual references and reflect a profoundly Jewish religious and cultural setting. The volume includes the full text of the two Hebrew plays alongside a complete English back-translation with a commentary examining the rich array of Hebrew sources and Jewish allusions that Salkinson incorporates into his work. The edition is complemented by an introduction to the history of Jewish Shakespeare reception in Central and Eastern Europe; a survey of Salkinson’s biography including discussion of his unusual status as a Jewish convert to Christianity; and an overview of his translation strategies. The book makes Salkinson’s pioneering work accessible to a wide audience, and will appeal to anyone with an interest in multicultural Shakespeare, translation studies, the development of Modern Hebrew literature, and European Jewish history and culture.

Lily Kahn is Reader in Hebrew and Jewish Languages at UCL. Her main research areas are Hebrew in Eastern Europe, Yiddish, and other Jewish languages. Her publications include *A Grammar of the Eastern European Hasidic Hebrew Tale* (2015), *Handbook of Jewish Languages* (co-edited with Aaron Rubin, 2016) and *North Sámi: An Essential Grammar* (with Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi, 2017).