

УИЛЬЯМ ШЕКСПИР

THE LIFE OF
TIMON OF
ATHENS

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The Life of Timon of Athens

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William Shakespeare
The Life of Timon of Athens
THE LIFE OF TIMON OF ATHENS

by William Shakespeare

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

TIMON, a noble Athenian

LUCIUS

LUCULLUS flattering Lords.

SEMPRONIUS

VENTIDIUS, one of Timon's false Friends.

APEMANTUS, a churlish Philosopher.

ALCIBIADES, an Athenian Captain.

FLAVIUS, Steward to Timon.

FLAMINIUS

LUCILIUS Servants to Timon.

SERVILIUS

CAPHIS

PHILOTUS Servants to Timon's Creditors.

TITUS

HORTENSIUS

Servants of Ventidius, and of Varro and Isidore (two of Timon's Creditor's).

THREE STRANGERS.

AN OLD ATHENIAN.

A PAGE.

A FOOL.

Poet, Painter, Jeweller, and Merchant.

PHRYNIA Mistresses to Alcibiades.

TIMANDRA

Lords, Senators, Officers, Soldiers, Servants, Thieves, and Attendants

CUPID and Amazons in the Masque.

Scene. – Athens, and the neighbouring Woods

Act I. Scene I. – Athens. A Hall in TIMON'S House

[Enter Poet, Painter, Jeweller, Merchant, and Others, at several doors.]

POET

Good day, sir.

PAINTER

I am glad you're well.

POET

I have not seen you long. How goes the world?

PAINTER

It wears, sir, as it grows.

POET

Ay, that's well known;
But what particular rarity? what strange,
Which manifold record not matches? See,
Magic of bounty! all these spirits thy power
Hath conjur'd to attend! I know the merchant.

PAINTER

I know them both; th' other's a jeweller.

MERCHANT

O, 'tis a worthy lord!

JEWELLER

Nay, that's most fix'd.

MERCHANT

A most incomparable man; breath'd, as it were,
To an untirable and continue goodness.
He passes.

JEWELLER

I have a jewel here —

MERCHANT

O, pray let's see't: for the Lord Timon, sir?

JEWELLER

If he will touch the estimate: but for that —

POET

When we for recompense have prais'd the vile,
It stains the glory in that happy verse
Which aptly sings the good.

MERCHANT

[Looking at the jewel.]

'Tis a good form.

JEWELLER

And rich: here is a water, look ye.

PAINTER

You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication
To the great lord.

POET

A thing slipp'd idly from me.
Our poesy is as a gum, which oozes
From whence 'tis nourish'd: the fire i' the flint
Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame
Provokes itself, and like the current flies
Each bound it chafes. What have you there?

PAINTER

A picture, sir. When comes your book forth?

POET

Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.
Let's see your piece.

PAINTER

'Tis a good piece.

POET

So 'tis: this comes off well and excellent.

PAINTER

Indifferent.

POET

Admirable! How this grace
Speaks his own standing! what a mental power
This eye shoots forth! how big imagination
Moves in this lip! to the dumbness of the gesture
One might interpret.

PAINTER

It is a pretty mocking of the life.
Here is a touch; is't good?

POET

I'll say of it,
It tutors nature: artificial strife
Lives in these touches, livelier than life.

[Enter certain SENATORS, who pass over the stage.]

PAINTER

How this lord is followed!

POET

The senators of Athens: happy man!

PAINTER

Look, more!

POET

You see this confluence, this great flood of visitors.
I have, in this rough work, shap'd out a man
Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug
With amplest entertainment: my free drift
Halts not particularly, but moves itself
In a wide sea of wax: no levell'd malice
Infects one comma in the course I hold:
But flies an eagle flight, bold and forth on,
Leaving no tract behind.

PAINTER

How shall I understand you?

POET

I will unbolt to you.
You see how all conditions, how all minds —
As well of glib and slipp'ry creatures as
Of grave and austere quality – tender down
Their services to Lord Timon: his large fortune,

Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,
Subdues and properties to his love and tendance
All sorts of hearts; yea, from the glass-fac'd flatterer
To Apemantus, that few things loves better
Than to abhor himself: even he drops down
The knee before him, and returns in peace
Most rich in Timon's nod.

PAINTER

I saw them speak together.

POET

Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill
Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd: the base o' the mount
Is rank'd with all deserts, all kind of natures
That labour on the bosom of this sphere
To propagate their states: amongst them all,
Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd
One do I personate of Lord Timon's frame,
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her;
Whose present grace to present slaves and servants
Translates his rivals.

PAINTER

'Tis conceiv'd to scope.
This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,
With one man beckon'd from the rest below,
Bowing his head against the steepy mount
To climb his happiness, would be well express'd
In our condition.

POET

Nay, sir, but hear me on.
All those which were his fellows but of late,
Some better than his value, on the moment
Follow his strides, his lobbies fill with tendance,

Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,
Make sacred even his stirrup, and through him
Drink the free air.

PAINTER

Ay, marry, what of these?

POET

When Fortune in her shift and change of mood
Spurns down her late beloved, all his dependants,
Which labour'd after him to the mountain's top
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,
Not one accompanying his declining foot.

PAINTER

'Tis common:
A thousand moral paintings I can show
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's
More pregnantly than words. Yet you do well
To show Lord Timon that mean eyes have seen
The foot above the head.

[Trumpets sound. Enter LORD TIMON, addressing himself courteously to every suitor: a MESSENGER from VENTIDIUS talking with him; LUCILIUS and other servants following.]

TIMON

Imprison'd is he, say you?

MESSENGER

Ay, my good lord. Five talents is his debt,
His means most short, his creditors most strait:
Your honourable letter he desires

To those have shut him up; which, failing,
Periods his comfort.

TIMON

Noble Ventidius! Well:
I am not of that feather to shake off
My friend when he must need me. I do know him
A gentleman that well deserves a help,
Which he shall have: I'll pay the debt and free him.

MESSENGER

Your lordship ever binds him.

TIMON

Commend me to him; I will send his ransom;
And being enfranchis'd, bid him come to me.
'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But to support him after. Fare you well.

MESSENGER

All happiness to your honour.

[Exit.]

[Enter an OLD ATHENIAN.]

OLD ATHENIAN

Lord Timon, hear me speak.

TIMON

Freely, good father.

OLD ATHENIAN

Thou hast a servant nam'd Lucilius.

TIMON

I have so: what of him?

OLD ATHENIAN

Most noble Timon, call the man before thee.

TIMON

Attends he here or no? Lucilius!

LUCILIUS

Here, at your lordship's service.

OLD ATHENIAN

This fellow here, Lord Timon, this thy creature,
By night frequents my house. I am a man
That from my first have been inclin'd to thrift,
And my estate deserves an heir more rais'd
Than one which holds a trencher.

TIMON

Well; what further?

OLD ATHENIAN

One only daughter have I, no kin else,
On whom I may confer what I have got:
The maid is fair, o' the youngest for a bride,
And I have bred her at my dearest cost
In qualities of the best. This man of thine
Attempts her love: I prithee, noble lord,
Join with me to forbid him her resort;
Myself have spoke in vain.

TIMON

The man is honest.

OLD ATHENIAN

Therefore he will be, Timon:
His honesty rewards him in itself;
It must not bear my daughter.

TIMON

Does she love him?

OLD ATHENIAN

She is young and apt:
Our own precedent passions do instruct us
What levity's in youth.
TIMON. [To Lucilius.]
Love you the maid?

LUCILIUS

Ay, my good lord, and she accepts of it.

OLD ATHENIAN

If in her marriage my consent be missing,
I call the gods to witness, I will choose
Mine heir from forth the beggars of the world,
And dispossess her all.

TIMON

How shall she be endow'd,
If she be mated with an equal husband?

OLD ATHENIAN

Three talents on the present; in future, all.

TIMON

This gentleman of mine hath serv'd me long:
To build his fortune I will strain a little,
For 'tis a bond in men. Give him thy daughter:
What you bestow, in him I'll counterpoise,
And make him weigh with her.

OLD ATHENIAN

Most noble lord,
Pawn me to this your honour, she is his.

TIMON

My hand to thee; mine honour on my promise.

LUCILIUS

Humbly I thank your lordship. Never may
That state or fortune fall into my keeping
Which is not owed to you!

[Exeunt LUCILIUS and OLD ATHENIAN.]

POET

[Presenting his poem]

Vouchsafe my labour, and long live your lordship!

TIMON

I thank you; you shall hear from me anon:
Go not away. What have you there, my friend?

PAINTER

A piece of painting, which I do beseech
Your lordship to accept.

TIMON

Painting is welcome.
The painting is almost the natural man;
For since dishonour traffics with man's nature,
He is but outside: these pencill'd figures are
Even such as they give out. I like your work;
And you shall find I like it: wait attendance
Till you hear further from me.

PAINTER

The gods preserve you!

TIMON

Well fare you, gentleman: give me your hand;
We must needs dine together. Sir, your jewel
Hath suffered under praise.

JEWELLER

What, my lord! dispraise?

TIMON

A mere satiety of commendations;
If I should pay you for 't as 'tis extoll'd,
It would unclew me quite.

JEWELLER

My lord, 'tis rated
As those which sell would give: but you well know,
Things of like value, differing in the owners,
Are prized by their masters. Believe't, dear lord,
You mend the jewel by the wearing it.

TIMON

Well mock'd.

MERCHANT

No, my good lord; he speaks the common tongue,
Which all men speak with him.

TIMON

Look who comes here. Will you be chid?

[Enter APEMANTUS.]

JEWELLER

We'll bear, with your lordship.

MERCHANT

He'll spare none.

TIMON

Good morrow to thee, gentle Apemantus!

APEMANTUS

Till I be gentle, stay thou for thy good morrow;
When thou art Timon's dog, and these knaves honest.

TIMON

Why dost thou call them knaves? thou know'st them not.

APEMANTUS

Are they not Athenians?

TIMON

Yes.

APEMANTUS

Then I repent not.

JEWELLER

You know me, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

Thou know'st I do; I call'd thee by thy name.

TIMON

Thou art proud, Apemantus.

APEMANTUS

Of nothing so much as that I am not like Timon.

TIMON

Whither art going?

APEMANTUS

To knock out an honest Athenian's brains.

TIMON

That's a deed thou'lt die for.

APEMANTUS

Right, if doing nothing be death by the law.

TIMON

How likest thou this picture, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

The best, for the innocence.

TIMON

Wrought he not well that painted it?

APEMANTUS. He wrought better that made the painter; and yet he's but a filthy piece of work.

PAINTER

You're a dog.

APEMANTUS

Thy mother's of my generation: what's she, if I be a dog?

TIMON

Wilt dine with me, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

No; I eat not lords.

TIMON

An thou shouldst, thou'dst anger ladies.

APEMANTUS

O! they eat lords; so they come by great bellies.

TIMON

That's a lascivious apprehension.

APEMANTUS

So thou apprehendest it, take it for thy labour.

TIMON

How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS. Not so well as plain dealing, which will not cost a man a doit.

TIMON

What dost thou think 'tis worth?

APEMANTUS

Not worth my thinking. How now, poet!

POET

How now, philosopher!

APEMANTUS

Thou liest.

POET

Art not one?

APEMANTUS

Yes.

POET

Then I lie not.

APEMANTUS

Art not a poet?

POET

Yes.

APEMANTUS. Then thou liest: look in thy last work, where thou hast feigned him a worthy fellow.

POET

That's not feigned; he is so.

APEMANTUS

Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labour: he that loves to be flattered is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!

TIMON

What wouldst do then, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

Even as Apemantus does now; hate a lord with my heart.

TIMON

What, thyself?

APEMANTUS

Ay.

TIMON

Wherefore?

APEMANTUS

That I had no angry wit to be a lord. Art not thou a merchant?

MERCHANT

Ay, Apemantus.

APEMANTUS

Traffic confound thee, if the gods will not!

MERCHANT

If traffic do it, the gods do it.

APEMANTUS

Traffic's thy god, and thy god confound thee!

[Trumpet sounds. Enter a MESSENGER.]

TIMON

What trumpet's that?

MESSENGER

'Tis Alcibiades, and some twenty horse,
All of companionship.

TIMON

Pray entertain them; give them guide to us.

[Exeunt some attendants.]

You must needs dine with me. Go not you hence
Till I have thank'd you; when dinner's done,
Show me this piece. I am joyful of your sights.

[Enter ALCIBIADES, with the his Company.]

Most welcome, sir!

[They salute.]

APEMANTUS

So, so, there!
Aches contract and starve your supple joints!
That there should be small love 'mongst these sweet knaves,
And all this courtesy! The strain of man's bred out
Into baboon and monkey.

ALCIBIADES

Sir, you have sav'd my longing, and I feed
Most hungerly on your sight.

TIMON

Right welcome, sir!

Ere we depart we'll share a bounteous time
In different pleasures. Pray you, let us in.

[Exeunt all but APEMANTUS.]

[Enter two LORDS.]

FIRST LORD

What time o' day is't, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

Time to be honest.

FIRST LORD

That time serves still.

APEMANTUS

The more accursed thou that still omitt'st it.

SECOND LORD

Thou art going to Lord Timon's feast.

APEMANTUS

Ay; to see meat fill knaves and wine heat fools.

SECOND LORD

Fare thee well, fare thee well.

APEMANTUS

Thou art a fool to bid me farewell twice.

SECOND LORD

Why, Apemantus?

APEMANTUS

Shouldst have kept one to thyself, for I mean to give thee none.

FIRST LORD

Hang thyself!

APEMANTUS. No, I will do nothing at thy bidding: make thy requests to thy friend.

SECOND LORD

Away, unpeaceable dog! or I'll spurn thee hence.

APEMANTUS

I will fly, like a dog, the heels of an ass.

[Exit.]

FIRST LORD

He's opposite to humanity. Come, shall we in,

And taste Lord Timon's bounty? he outgoes
The very heart of kindness.

SECOND LORD

He pours it out; Plutus, the god of gold,
Is but his steward: no meed but he repays
Sevenfold above itself; no gift to him
But breeds the giver a return exceeding
All use of quittance.

FIRST LORD

The noblest mind he carries
That ever govern'd man.

SECOND LORD

Long may he live in fortunes! Shall we in?

FIRST LORD

I'll keep you company.

[Exeunt.]

Scene II. – The Same. A room of state in TIMON'S House

[Hautboys playing loud music. A great banquet served in; FLAVIUS and Others attending: then enter LORD TIMON, ALCIBIADES, Lords, and Senators, VENTIDIUS and Attendants. Then comes, dropping after all, APEMANTUS, discontentedly, like himself.]

VENTIDIUS

Most honour'd Timon,
It hath pleas'd the gods to remember my father's age,

And call him to long peace.
He is gone happy, and has left me rich:
Then, as in grateful virtue I am bound
To your free heart, I do return those talents,
Doubled with thanks and service, from whose help
I deriv'd liberty.

TIMON

O! by no means,
Honest Ventidius: you mistake my love;
I gave it freely ever; and there's none
Can truly say he gives, if he receives:
If our betters play at that game, we must not dare
To imitate them; faults that are rich are fair.

VENTIDIUS

A noble spirit.

[They all stand ceremoniously looking on TIMON.]

TIMON

Nay, my lords, ceremony was but devis'd at first
To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes,
Recanting goodness, sorry ere 'tis shown;
But where there is true friendship there needs none.
Pray, sit; more welcome are ye to my fortunes
Than my fortunes to me.

[They sit.]

FIRST LORD

My lord, we always have confess'd it.

APEMANTUS

Ho, ho! confess'd it; hang'd it, have you not?

TIMON

O! Apemantus, you are welcome.

APEMANTUS

No,
You shall not make me welcome:
I come to have thee thrust me out of doors.

TIMON

Fie! thou'rt a churl; ye've got a humour there
Does not become a man; 'tis much to blame.
They say, my lords, Ira furor brevis est;
But yond man is ever angry.
Go, let him have a table by himself;
For he does neither affect company,
Nor is he fit for it, indeed.

APEMANTUS

Let me stay at thine apperil, Timon:
I come to observe; I give thee warning on't.

TIMON

I take no heed of thee; thou'rt an Athenian, therefore, welcome.
I myself would have no power; prithee; let my meat make thee
silent.

APEMANTUS

I scorn thy meat; 't'would choke me, for I should
Ne'er flatter thee. O you gods! what a number
Of men eats Timon, and he sees 'em not!
It grieves me to see so many dip their meat
In one man's blood; and all the madness is,
He cheers them up too.
I wonder men dare trust themselves with men:
Methinks they should invite them without knives;
Good for their meat, and safer for their lives.
There's much example for 't; the fellow that
Sits next him now, parts bread with him, pledges
The breath of him in a divided draught,
Is the readiest man to kill him: 't has been prov'd.
If I were a huge man, I should fear to drink at meals;
Lest they should spy my wind-pipe's dangerous notes:
Great men should drink with harness on their throats.

TIMON

My lord, in heart; and let the health go round.

SECOND LORD

Let it flow this way, my good lord.

APEMANTUS

Flow this way! A brave fellow! he keeps his tides well. Those
healths will make thee and thy state look ill, Timon.
Here's that which is too weak to be a sinner,
Honest water, which ne'er left man i' the mire:
This and my food are equals; there's no odds:
Feasts are too proud to give thanks to the gods.

Immortal gods, I crave no pelf;
I pray for no man but myself.
Grant I may never prove so fond
To trust man on his oath or bond;

Or a harlot for her weeping;
Or a dog that seems a-sleeping;
Or a keeper with my freedom;
Or my friends, if I should need 'em.
Amen. So fall to't.
Rich men sin, and I eat root.

[Eats and drinks.]

Much good dich thy good heart, Apemantus!

TIMON

Captain Alcibiades, your heart's in the field now.

ALCIBIADES

My heart is ever at your service, my lord.

TIMON. You had rather be at a breakfast of enemies than a dinner of friends.

ALCIBIADES. So they were bleeding – new, my lord, there's no meat like 'em: I could wish my best friend at such a feast.

APEMANTUS. 'Would all those flatterers were thine enemies then, that then thou mightst kill 'em, and bid me to 'em.

FIRST LORD. Might we but have that happiness, my lord, that you would once use our hearts, whereby we might express some part of our zeals, we should think ourselves for ever perfect.

TIMON. O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you: how had you been my friends else? why have you that charitable title from thousands, did not you chiefly belong to my heart? I have told more of you to myself than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf; and thus far I confirm you. O you gods! think I, what need we have any friends if we should ne'er have need of 'em? they were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for 'em; and would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases, that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have often wished myself poorer that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits; and what better or properer can we call our own than the riches of our friends? O! what a precious comfort

'tis to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes!
O joy! e'en made away ere it can be born. Mine eyes cannot hold out
water, methinks: to forget their faults, I drink to you.

APEMANTUS

Thou weepest to make them drink, Timon.

SECOND LORD

Joy had the like conception in our eyes,
And, at that instant like a babe, sprung up.

APEMANTUS

Ho, ho! I laugh to think that babe a bastard.

THIRD LORD

I promise you, my lord, you mov'd me much.

APEMANTUS

Much!

[Tucket sounded.]

TIMON

What means that trump?

[Enter a SERVANT.]

How now!

SERVANT. Please you, my lord, there are certain ladies most desirous of admittance.

TIMON

Ladies? What are their wills?

SERVANT. There comes with them a forerunner, my lord, which bears that office, to signify their pleasures.

TIMON

I pray, let them be admitted.

[Enter CUPID.]

CUPID

Hail to thee, worthy Timon; and to all
That of his bounties taste! The five best Senses
Acknowledge thee their patron; and come freely
To gratulate thy plenteous bosom. Th' Ear,
Taste, Touch, Smell, pleas'd from thy table rise;
They only now come but to feast thine eyes.

TIMON

They are welcome all; let 'em have kind admittance:
Music, make their welcome!

[Exit CUPID.]

FIRST LORD

You see, my lord, how ample you're belov'd.

[Music. Re-enter CUPID, with a masque of LADIES as Amazons, with lutes in their hands, dancing and playing.]

APEMANTUS

Hoy-day! what a sweep of vanity comes this way:
They dance! they are mad women.
Like madness is the glory of this life,
As this pomp shows to a little oil and root.
We make ourselves fools to disport ourselves;
And spend our flatteries to drink those men
Upon whose age we void it up again,
With poisonous spite and envy.
Who lives that's not depraved or depraves?
Who dies that bears not one spurn to their graves
Of their friend's gift?
I should fear those that dance before me now
Would one day stamp upon me: it has been done:
Men shut their doors against a setting sun.

[The LORDS rise from table, with much adoring of TIMON; and to show their loves, each singles out an Amazon, and all dance, men with women, a lofty strain or two to the hautboys, and cease.]

TIMON

You have done our pleasures much grace, fair ladies,
Set a fair fashion on our entertainment,
Which was not half so beautiful and kind;
You have added worth unto 't and lustre,
And entertain'd me with mine own device;
I am to thank you for 't.

FIRST LADY

My lord, you take us even at the best.
APEMANTUS. Faith, for the worst is filthy; and would not hold taking, I doubt me.

TIMON

Ladies, there is an idle banquet
Attends you; please you to dispose yourselves.

ALL LADIES

Most thankfully, my lord.

[Exeunt CUPID and LADIES.]

TIMON

Flavius!

FLAVIUS

My lord!

TIMON

The little casket bring me hither.

FLAVIUS

Yes, my lord. [Aside.] More jewels yet!
There is no crossing him in 's humour;
Else I should tell him well, i' faith, I should,
When all's spent, he'd be cross'd then, an he could.
'Tis pity bounty had not eyes behind,
That man might ne'er be wretched for his mind.

[Exit.]

FIRST LORD

Where be our men?

SERVANT

Here, my lord, in readiness.

SECOND LORD

Our horses!

[Re-enter FLAVIUS, with the casket.]

TIMON

O, my friends! I have one word to say to you;
Look you, my good lord,
I must entreat you, honour me so much
As to advance this jewel; accept it and wear it,
Kind my lord.

FIRST LORD

I am so far already in your gifts —

ALL

So are we all.

[Enter a SERVANT.]

SERVANT

My lord, there are certain nobles of the Senate
Newly alighted and come to visit you.

TIMON

They are fairly welcome.

FLAVIUS

I beseech your honour,
Vouchsafe me a word; it does concern you near.

TIMON

Near! why then, another time I'll hear thee.
I prithee let's be provided to show them entertainment.

FLAVIUS

[Aside.]

I scarce know how.

[Enter another SERVANT.]

SECOND SERVANT

May it please your honour, Lord Lucius,
Out of his free love, hath presented to you
Four milk-white horses, trapp'd in silver.

TIMON

I shall accept them fairly; let the presents
Be worthily entertain'd.

[Enter a third SERVANT.]

How now! What news?

THIRD SERVANT. Please you, my lord, that honourable gentleman, Lord Lucullus, entreats your company to-morrow to hunt with him, and has sent your honour two brace of greyhounds.

TIMON

I'll hunt with him; and let them be receiv'd,
Not without fair reward.

FLAVIUS

[Aside.] What will this come to?

He commands us to provide, and give great gifts,
And all out of an empty coffer;
Nor will he know his purse, or yield me this,
To show him what a beggar his heart is,
Being of no power to make his wishes good.
His promises fly so beyond his state
That what he speaks is all in debt; he owes
For every word: he is so kind that he now
Pays interest for 't; his land's put to their books.
Well, would I were gently put out of office
Before I were forc'd out!
Happier he that has no friend to feed
Than such that do e'en enemies exceed.
I bleed inwardly for my lord.

[Exit.]

TIMON

You do yourselves much wrong;
You bate too much of your own merits;
Here, my lord, a trifle of our love.

SECOND LORD

With more than common thanks I will receive it.

THIRD LORD

O! he's the very soul of bounty!

TIMON

And now I remember, my lord, you gave
Good words the other day of a bay courser
I rode on: it is yours because you lik'd it.

THIRD LORD

O! I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, in that.

TIMON

You may take my word, my lord: I know no man
Can justly praise but what he does affect:
I weigh my friend's affection with mine own.
I'll tell you true; I'll call to you.

ALL LORDS

O! none so welcome!

TIMON

I take all and your several visitations
So kind to heart, 'tis not enough to give;
Methinks, I could deal kingdoms to my friends,
And ne'er be weary. Alcibiades,
Thou art a soldier, therefore seldom rich;
It comes in charity to thee; for all thy living
Is 'mongst the dead, and all the lands thou hast

Lie in a pitch'd field.

ALCIBIADES

Ay, defil'd land, my lord.

FIRST LORD

We are so virtuously bound, —

TIMON

And so am I to you.

SECOND LORD

So infinitely endear'd, —

TIMON

All to you. Lights, more lights!

FIRST LORD

The best of happiness,
Honour, and fortunes, keep with you, Lord Timon!

TIMON

Ready for his friends.

[Exeunt ALCIBIADES, Lords, and etc..]

APEMANTUS

What a coil's here!
Serving of becks and jutting out of bums!
I doubt whether their legs be worth the sums
That are given for 'em. Friendship's full of dregs:
Methinks, false hearts should never have sound legs.
Thus honest fools lay out their wealth on curtsies.

TIMON

Now, Apemantus, if thou wert not sullen,
I would be good to thee.

APEMANTUS. No, I'll nothing; for if I should be bribed too, there would be none left to rail upon thee, and then thou wouldst sin the faster. Thou givest so long, Timon, I fear me thou wilt give away thyself in paper shortly: What needs these feasts, pomps, and vain-glories?

TIMON. Nay, an you begin to rail on society once, I am sworn not to give regard to you. Farewell; and come with better music.

[Exit.]

APEMANTUS

So: Thou wilt not hear me now; thou shalt not then;
I'll lock thy heaven from thee.
O! that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!

[Exit.]

Act II

Scene I. Athens. A Room in a SENATOR'S House

[Enter A SENATOR, with papers in his hand.]

SENATOR

And late, five thousand: to Varro and to Isidore
He owes nine thousand; besides my former sum,
Which makes it five-and-twenty. Still in motion
Of raging waste! It cannot hold; it will not.
If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog
And give it Timon, why, the dog coins gold;
If I would sell my horse, and buy twenty more
Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon,
Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me straight,
And able horses. No porter at his gate,
But rather one that smiles and still invites
All that pass by. It cannot hold; no reason
Can found his state in safety. Caphis, ho!
Caphis, I say!

[Enter CAPHIS.]

CAPHIS

Here, sir; what is your pleasure?

SENATOR

Get on your cloak, and haste you to Lord Timon;
Importune him for my moneys; be not ceas'd
With slight denial, nor then silenc'd when —
'Commend me to your master' – and the cap
Plays in the right hand, thus; – but tell him,
My uses cry to me; I must serve my turn
Out of mine own; his days and times are past,
And my reliances on his fracted dates
Have smit my credit: I love and honour him,
But must not break my back to heal his finger;

Immediate are my needs, and my relief
Must not be toss'd and turn'd to me in words,
But find supply immediate. Get you gone:
Put on a most importunate aspect,
A visage of demand; for I do fear,
When every feather sticks in his own wing,
Lord Timon will be left a naked gull,
Which flashes now a phoenix. Get you gone.

CAPHIS

I go, sir.

SENATOR

Take the bonds along with you,
And have the dates in compt.

CAPHIS

I will, sir.

SENATOR

Go.

[Exeunt.]

Scene II. The same. A Hall in TIMON'S House

[Enter FLAVIUS, with many bills in his hand.]

FLAVIUS

No care, no stop! So senseless of expense,
That he will neither know how to maintain it,
Nor cease his flow of riot: takes no account

How things go from him, nor resumes no care
Of what is to continue: never mind
Was to be so unwise, to be so kind.
What shall be done? He will not hear, till feel:
I must be round with him. Now he comes from hunting.
Fie, fie, fie, fie!

[Enter CAPHIS, and the SERVANTS Of ISIDORE and VARRO.]

CAPHIS

Good even, Varro. What! You come for money?

VARRO'S SERVANT

Is't not your business too?

CAPHIS

It is: and yours too, Isidore?

ISIDORE'S SERVANT

It is so.

CAPHIS

Would we were all discharg'd!

VARRO'S SERVANT

I fear it.

CAPHIS

Here comes the lord!

[Enter TIMON, ALCIBIADES, and Lords, etc.]

TIMON

So soon as dinner's done, we'll forth again.
My Alcibiades. With me? what is your will?

CAPHIS

My lord, here is a note of certain dues.

TIMON

Dues! Whence are you?

CAPHIS

Of Athens here, my lord.

TIMON

Go to my steward.

CAPHIS

Please it your lordship, he hath put me off
To the succession of new days this month:
My master is awak'd by great occasion
To call upon his own; and humbly prays you

That with your other noble parts you'll suit
In giving him his right.

TIMON

Mine honest friend,
I prithee, but repair to me next morning.

CAPHIS

Nay, good my lord, —

TIMON

Contain thyself, good friend.

VARRO'S SERVANT

One Varro's servant, my good lord, —

ISIDORE'S SERVANT

From Isidore; he humbly prays your speedy payment.

CAPHIS

If you did know, my lord, my master's wants, —

VARRO'S SERVANT

'Twas due on forfeiture, my lord, six weeks and past.

ISIDORE'S SERVANT

Your steward puts me off, my lord; and
I am sent expressly to your lordship.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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