

AUTOLYCUS: I have served Prince Florizell and in my time wore three-pile, but now I am out of service. My father named me Autolycus, who, being, as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. Beating and hanging are terrors to me. For the life to come, I sleep out the thought of it.

Enter Shepherd's Son.

A prize, a prize!

SHEPHERD'S SON: Let me see, every 'leven wether tods, every tod yields pound and odd shilling; fifteen hundred shorn, what comes the wool to?

AUTOLYCUS, *aside*: If the springe hold, the cock's mine.
He lies down.

SHEPHERD'S SON: I cannot do 't without counters. Let me see, what am I to buy for our sheep-shearing feast? (*He reads a paper.*) Three pound of sugar, five pound of currants, rice—what will this sister of mine do with rice? But my father hath made her mistress of the feast, and she lays it on.

AUTOLYCUS, *writhing as if in pain*: O, that ever I was born!

SHEPHERD'S SON: I' th' name of me!

AUTOLYCUS: O, help me, help me! Pluck but off these rags, and then death, death.

SHEPHERD'S SON: Alack, poor soul, thou hast need of more rags to lay on thee rather than have these off.

AUTOLYCUS: O sir, the loathsomeness of them offends me more than the stripes I have received, which are mighty ones and millions.

SHEPHERD'S SON: Alas, poor man, a million of beating may come to a great matter.

AUTOLYCUS I am robbed, sir, and beaten, my money and apparel ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon me.

SHEPHERD'S SON Lend me thy hand; I'll help thee. Come, lend me thy hand.

AUTOLYCUS O, good sir, softly, good sir. I fear, sir, my shoulder blade is out.

SHEPHERD'S SON How now? Canst stand?

AUTOLYCUS, *stealing the Shepherd's Son's purse*: Softly, dear sir, good sir, softly. You ha' done me a charitable office.

SHEPHERD'S SON: Dost lack any money? I have a little money for thee.

AUTOLYCUS : No, good sweet sir, no, I beseech you, sir. Offer me no money, I pray you; that kills my heart.

SHEPHERD'S SON: How do you now?

AUTOLYCUS: Sweet sir, much better than I was. I can stand and walk.

SHEPHERD'S SON: Shall I bring thee on the way?

AUTOLYCUS: No, good-faced sir, no, sweet sir.

SHEPHERD'S SON : Then fare thee well. I must go buy spices for our sheep-shearing.

AUTOLYCUS: Prosper you, sweet sir.

Shepherd's Son exits.

I'll be with you at your sheep-shearing too. If I make not this cheat bring out another, and the shearers prove sheep, let me be unrolled and my name put in the book of virtue.