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**Anonymous**

***The King and a Poor Northern Man (1623-1661)***

Shewing how a Poor Northumberland man, a Tenant to the King, being wronged by a Lawyer (his Neighbour) went to the King himself to make known his grievances: full of simple mirth, and merry plain jests.

To the tune of, The Slut

To drive away the weary day,  
a book I chanc'd to take in hand,  
And therein I read assuredly  
a story, as you shall understand,  
Perusing many a history over,  
among the leaves I chanc'd to view,  
The Books name and Title is this,  
The second Lesson, too good to be true.

There read I of a Northumberland man,  
that was born and brought up in the Kings Land  
Hee paid good twenty shillings Rent  
to the King, as I do understand,

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By him there dwelt a Lawyer false,  
that with his Farm was not content,  
But over the poor man still hang'd his Nose,  
because hee did gather the Kings Rent.

The poor man pray'd him for to cease,  
and content himself if hee would be willing,  
And pick no vantage in my Lease,  
and I shall give thee forty shillings  
It's neither forty shillings, nor forty pound,  
Ice warrant thee so, can agree thee and mee,  
Unless thou yeeld mee thy Farm so round,  
and stand unto my courtesie.

This poor man said hee might not do sa  
his Wife and his Bearn's will make ill wark,  
If thou wilt with my Farm let mee ga,  
thou seems a gud fello. Ice give thee five mark  
The Lawyer would be not so content,  
but further i'th' matter hee means to smell,  
The neighbors bad the poor man provide his Rent  
and make a submission to the King himsel.

Hee gat a humble staff on his back,  
a Jerkin I wat that was of gray,  
With a good blew Bonnet, hee thought it no lack,  
to the King is ganging as fast as he may.  
He had not gone a mole out o'th' Toon,  
but one of his Neighbours hee did espy.  
How far ist to th King, for thither I'm boon,  
as fast as ever I can hye.

I am sorry for you Neighbour, hee said,  
for your simplicity I make moan.  
Ice warrant you, you may ask to the King,  
when nine or ten daies journies you have gone,  
Had I wist the King wond so far,  
Ice never a sought him a mile out o'th' Toon,  
He's either a sought mee, or weed near a come nar  
at home I had rather ha spent a crown.

But when hee came into th' City of London,  
of every man for the King hee did call,  
they told him, that him hee need not to fear,

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For the King hee lyes now at the Whitehall.  
And with spying of Farlies in the City,  
because hee had never been there beforne,  
Hee lee so long a bed the next day,  
the Court was removed to Windsor that morn.

You ha lain too long, then said his Host.  
You ha lain too long by a great while,  
The King is now to Windsor gone,  
hee's further to seek by twenty mile.  
I think I was curst, then said the poor man,  
if I had been wise, I might a consider  
Belike the King of mee has gotten some weet  
he had ne're gone away had I not come hither.

Hee fled not from you, said the Host,  
but hye you to Windsor as fast as you may,  
Be sure it will requite your cost,  
for look what's past the King will pay,  
But when hee came at Windsor Castle,  
with his humble staff upon his back,  
although the Gates wide open stood,  
hee laid on them till hee made um crack.

Why stay, pray friend, art mad, quoth the Porter,  
what makes thee keep this stir to day,  
Why I am a Tenant of the Kings,  
and have a Message to him to say,  
The King hath men enough, said the Porter,  
your Message well that they can say  
Why there's nere a Knave the King doth keep  
shall ken my secret mind to day.

I were told ere I came from home,  
ere I got hither it would be dear bought,  
Let mee in, Ice give thee a good single penny  
I see thou will ha small ere thou do it for nought,  
Gray-mercy, said the Porter then,  
thy reward's so great, I cannot say nay,  
Yonders a Noble-Man within the Court,  
Ile first hear what hee will say.

When the Porter came to the Noble-man,  
hee said hee would shew him a pretty sport.

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There's sike a Clown come to the Gate,  
as came not this seven years to the Court,  
Hee calls all Knaves the King doth keep,  
he raps at Gates, and makes great din,  
Hee's passing liberal of reward,  
hee'd given a good single penny to be let in.

Let him in then, said the Noble-man,  
come in fellow, the Porter gan say  
If thou come within thy self, hee said,  
thy staff behinde the Gate must stay.  
Beshrew thy limbs, then said the poor man,  
then may'st thou count mee a fool, or worse,  
I wot not what Bankerupt lyes by the King,  
for want of mony hee may pick my purse.

Let him in with his staff, said the Noble-man,  
with that he gave a nod with's head & beck with's knee  
If you be Sir King, then said the poor man  
as I can very well think you be  
For I was told ere I came from home,  
you'r the goodliest man ere I saw befor,  
With so many jingle jangles about ones neck  
as is about yours I never saw none.

I am not the King, said the Noble-man,  
Fellow, although I have a proud Coat,  
If you be not the king, help me to the speech of him  
you seem a good feloow. Ice gi you a groat,  
Graymercy said the Noble-man,  
thy reward is so great I cannot say nay,  
Ile go know the Kings pleasure if I can,  
till I come again, be sure thou stay.

Here's sike a staying then said the poor man,  
belike the Kings better than any in our Country  
I might a gane to th'farthest nuke i'th' house  
neither Lad nor Lown to trouble mee;  
When the Noble-man came to the King,  
hee said hee could shew his grace good sport,  
Here's such a Clown come to the Gate,  
as came not this seven years to the Court.

Hee calls all Knaves your Highness keeps,

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and more than that, hee terms them worse,  
Hee'l not come in without his great staff  
for fear some Bankrupt will pick his purse:  
Let him in with his staff, then said our king,  
that of his sport wee may see some.  
wee'l see how hee'l handle every thing,  
as soon as the match of Bowls is done.

The Noble-man led him through many a room,  
and through many a Gallery gay,  
what a deel doth the King with so many toomhouses  
that hee gets um not fill'd with Corn and Hay;  
At last they spide the King in an Alley,  
yet from his Game hee did not start.  
The day was so hot hee had cast off his Doublet  
he had nothing from the wast up left but his shirt.

Lo yonders the King, said the noble-man,  
behold fellow, lo where he goes,  
Beleeve't hee's some unthrift, saies the poor man,  
that hath lost his mony, and pawn'd his cloaths,  
But when hee came before the King,  
the Noble-man did his courtesie,  
The poor man followed after him  
and gave a nod with his head, and a beck with his knee

If you be sir King, the said the poor man,  
as I can hardly think yee be,  
Here is a gude fellow that brought me hither,  
is liker to be the King than yee.  
I am the King, his Grace now said,  
Fellow let mee thy cause understand,  
If you be Sir King, I'm a Tenant of yours  
that was born & up brought within your own land.

There dwells a Lawyer hard by mee,  
and fault in my Lease hee saies hee hath found  
And all was for felling five poor Ashes,  
to build a house upon my own ground.  
Hast thou a Lease here, said the King,  
or canst thou shew to mee the deed,  
Hee put it into the Kings own hand,  
and said, Sir 'tis here, if that you can red.

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Why what if I cannot, said our King,  
that which I cannot, another man may,  
I have a Boy of mine own not seven years old  
a will read you as swift as you'l run ith' highway  
Let's see thy Lease, then said our King,  
then from his bosome hee pull's it out,  
Hee gave into the Kings own hand,  
with four or five knots ti'd fast in a clout.

Weese never unlose these knots, said the King,  
he gave it to one that behinde him did stay,  
It is a proud horse, then said the poor man,  
Pay mee forty shillings, as Ice pay you,  
I will not think much to unlose a knot,  
I would I were so occupied every day,  
Ise unlose a score on um for a groat.

When the King had gotten these Letters read,  
and found the truth was very so.  
I warrant thee thou hast not forfeit thy Lease,  
if thou hadst fell'd five Ashes more.  
I every one can warrant mee,  
but all your warrants are not worth a flee,  
For hee that troubles mee and will not let me go  
neither cares for warrant of you nor mee.

Thou'st have an Injunction, said our king  
from troubling of mee hee will cease,  
Hee'l either shew thee good cause why  
or else hee'l let thee live in peace  
What's that Injunction saies the poor man,  
good Sir to mee, I pray you say;  
Why it is a letter Ile cause to be written,  
but art thou as simple as thou shewest for to day.

Why if't be a Letter, I'm nere the better,  
keep't to thy self, and trouble not mee.  
I could ha had a Letter written cheaper at home  
and nere a come out of my own Country,  
Thou'st have an Attachment, said our King  
charge all thou seest to take thy part  
Till hee pay thee an hundred pound  
be sure thou never let him start.

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If any seem against thee to stand  
be sure thou come hither staright away  
I marry, is that all Ice get for my labour  
then I may come trotting every day.  
Thou art hard of beleef, then said our King  
to please him with Letters he was right willing  
I see you have taken great pains in writing  
with all my heart Ile give you a shilling.

Ile have none of thy shilling said our King  
man with thy mony God give thee win  
Hee threw it into the Kings bosome  
the mony lay cold next to his skin.  
Beshrew thy heart, then said our King  
thou art a Carle something too bold  
Dost thou not see I am not with bowling  
and the mony next to my skin lyes cold.

I nere wist that before, said the poor man  
before sike time as I came hither  
If the Lawyers in our Country thought't was cold  
they would not hep up so much together.  
The King call'd up his Treasurer  
and have him fetch him twenty pound  
If ever try errand lye here away  
Ile hear thy charges up and down.

When the poor man saw the gold down tendered  
for to receive if hee was willing  
If I had thought the King had had so mickle gold  
beshrew my heart Ide ha kept my shilling.  
The poor man got home next Sunday,  
the Lawyer doon him did espy  
O Sir, you have been a stranger long,  
I think from mee you have kept you by.

It was for you indeed, said the poor man  
the matter to the King, as I have tell  
I did as my neighbours put into my head  
and made a submission to th' King my sell  
What a deel didst thou with th' King said the lawyer  
could not neighbours & friends agree thee & mee  
The deel a neighbour or friend that I had  
that would ha been sike a daies-man as hee.

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He has gin me a Letter, but I know not what they call't  
but if the Kings words be true to mee  
When you have read and perus'd it over  
I hope you'l leave, and let me be.  
He has gin mee another, but I know what 'tis  
but I charge you all to hold him fast  
I will go tye him fast tull a post.

Marry God forbid the Lawyer said,  
then the Tatchment was read before them there  
Thou must needs something credit mee  
till I go home and fetch some mear,  
Credit, nay that's if the King forbad  
hee hade if I got thee I should thee stay  
The Lawyer paid him a hundred pound  
in ready money ere hee went away.

Wou'd every Lawyer were served thus,  
from troubling poor men they would cease,  
They'd either shew them good cause why  
or else they'd let them live in peace.  
And thus I end my merry Song  
which shews the plain mans simpleness  
And the Kings great mercy in rightning his wrong,  
and the Lawyers stand and wickedness.