

# Document Transcript 3

## The Gift-Giving Masque for Queen Elizabeth

Immediately after the beginning of the oration, Her Majesty called to her the French Ambassadors, whereof there were three, and divers [several] English lords, and willed them to harken [listen] – and she herself was very attentive, even until the end thereof. And the oration ended, after she had given great thanks therefore to Master Lymbert, she said to him, 'it is the best that ever I heard, you shall have my hand,' and pulled off her glove, and gave him her hand to kiss. Which before [her] kneeling on his knee, he arose and kissed, and then she departed to the Court [at Norwich Cathedral], without any other show that night, but that she sent back to know his name.

The next night, being Thursday, there was an excellent princely masque brought before her after supper, by Master Goldingham, in the Privy Chamber [at the Bishop's Palace]. It was of gods and goddesses, both strangely and richly apparelled.

The first that entered was MERCURY.

Then entered two torch-bearers in purple taffeta mandelians [long, sleeved coats] laid with silver lace, as all other [of] the torch-bearers were.

Then entered a consort of music, viz. [namely] six musicians, all in long vestures [clothing] of white sarcenet [thin silk] girded about them, and garlands on their heads, playing very cunningly [skilfully].

Then two torch-bearers more.

Then JUPITER and JUNO.

Then two torch-bearers more.

Then MARS and VENUS.

Then two torch-bearers more.

Then APOLLO and PALLAS.

Then two torch-bearers.

Then NEPTUNE and DIANA.

And last cometh CUPID, and concludeth the matter.

Thus when they had once marched about the chamber, MERCURY dischargeth his message in these words to the Queen:

'The good-meaning Mayor, and all his brethren, with the rest, have not rested from praying unto the gods to prosper thy coming hither. And the gods themselves, moved by their unfeigned prayers, are ready in person to bid thee worthily welcome. And I, MERCURY, the god of merchants and merchandise, and therefore a favourer of these citizens, being thought meekest [most appropriate] and chosen fittest to signify the same. Gods there be also which cannot come, being tied by the time of the year, as CERES in harvest, BACCHUS in wines, POMENA in orchards. Only HYMENUS denyeth his good will, either in presence, or in person: notwithstanding, DIANA hath so counter-checked him therefore, as he shall ever hereafter be at your commandment. For my part, as I am a rejoicer at your coming, so am I a furtherer of your welcome hither, and for this time, I bid you farewell.'

Then marched they [the gods, goddesses, and torch-bearers], and that done, JUPITER spoke to the Queen in this sort, and then gave her a riding wand [crop] of whale's fin, curiously wrought:

Fear not, O Queen, thou art beloved so,  
As subjects true, will truly thee defend:  
Fear not my power to overthrow thy woe,  
I am the god that can each miss [misfortune] amende.

Thou dost know, great JUPITER am I,  
That gave thee first thy happy sovereignty.

I give thee still, as ever thou hast had,  
A peerless power, unto thy dying day:  
I give thee rule to overcome the bad,  
And love, to love thy loving subjects aye [forever].  
I give thee here this small and slender wand,  
To show, thou shalt in quiet rule the Land.

Then JUNO spoke, whose gift was a purse, curiously wrought:

Is JUNO rich? No, sure she is not so,  
She wants that wealth, that is not wanting here:  
Thy good gets thee friends, my wealth wins many a foe,  
My riches rust, thine shine passing [very] clear.  
Thou art beloved of subjects far and nye [near],  
Which is such wealth as money cannot buy.

Farewell, fair Queen, I cannot give thee aught [anything],  
Nor take away thy good that is so bound:  
Thou canst not give, that I so long have sought,  
Nor can I hold the riches thou hast found.  
Yet take this gift, though poor I seem to be,  
That thou thyself shalt never poorer be.

## Document Transcript 3 (continued)

Then after they had marched again about [around], MARS gave his gift, which was a fair pair of knives, and said:

Where force doth fiercely seek to foster wrong,  
There MARS doth make him make a quick recoil  
[retreat],  
Nor can endure that he should harbour long,  
Where naughty wights [men] manure in goodly soil.  
This is the use that aids the force of War,  
That MARS doth mend, that force doth seek to  
marre.

And though, O Queen, thou beest [are] a prince  
of peace,  
Yet shalt thou have me fastly [quickly] sure at need:  
The storms of strife, and blustering broils [quarrels]  
to cease,  
Which foreign foes, or faithless friends may breed.  
To conquer, kill, to vanquish, and subdue,  
Such feigned folks, as love to live untrue.

These words were graven [engraved] on those knives:

*To hurt your foe, and help your friend,  
These knives are made unto that end.  
Both blunt and sharp you shall us find,  
As pleaseth best your princely mind.*

Then spoke VENUS, whose gift was a white dove:

In vain, fair Queen, from Heaven my coming was,  
To seek to amend that is no way amiss:  
For now I see thy favour so do pass [surpass],  
That none but thou, thou only she it is,  
Whose beauty bids each wight [man] to look  
on thee,  
By view they may another VENUS see.

Where beauty boasts, and favour doth not fail,  
What may I give to thee, O worthy wight [person]?  
This is my gift: there shall no woe prevail  
That seeks thy will, against thy will's delight,  
Not where they will, but where it likes thy mind,  
Accept that friend, if loyal thou him find.

The dove being cast off [released], ran directly to the Queen, and being taken up and set upon the table before Her Majesty, sat so quietly, as if it had been tied.

Then after they had marched again about [around], APOLLO presented his gift, which was an instrument called a bandonet, and did sing to [the tune of] the said instrument this ditty, as he played:

It seemeth strange to see such strangers here,  
Yet not so strange, but strangers know you well:  
Your virtuous thoughts to gods do plain appear,  
Your acts on earth bewrays [reveals] how you excel:  
You cannot die, Love here hath made your lease,  
Which gods have sent, and God sayeth shall  
not cease.  
Virtuous desire desired me to sing,  
No subject's suit, though suitors they were all,  
APOLLO'S gifts are subjects to no king,

Rare are thy gifts, that did APOLLO call.  
Then still rejoice, since God and man say so,  
This is my gift: thou never shall have woe.

PALLAS then speaketh, and presenteth her gift, which was a Book of Wisdom:

Most worthy wight [person], what wouldst thou  
have of me?  
Thou hast so much, thou canst enjoy no more:  
I cannot give, that [which] once I gave to thee,  
Nor take away thy good I gave before.  
I robbed was by Nature's good consent  
Against my will, and yet I was content.  
A PALLAS thou, a princess I will be:  
I, Queen of loss, thou, goddess which hast got:  
I sometime was, thou only now art she,  
I take, thou gavest that luck that was my lot,  
I give not thee this Book to learn [teach] thee aught  
[anything],  
For that I know already thou art taught.

Then after they had marched again about [around], NEPTUNE did speak. His gift was a great artificial fish, and in the belly thereof a noble pike, which he threw out before Her Majesty:

What art thou, Queen, that gods do love thee so?  
Who won their wills to be so at thy will?  
How can the world become thy cruel foe?  
How can Disdain or Malice seek to kill?  
Can sea or earth devise to hurt thy hap [good  
fortune],  
Since thou by gods dost sit in Fortune's lap.

As Heaven and Earth have vowed to be thine,  
So NEPTUNE'S seas have sworn to drench thy foes,  
As I am God, and all the waters mine,  
Still shalt thou get, but never shalt thou lose.  
And since on Earth my wealth is nought [nothing]  
at all,  
Accept good will, the gift is very small.

DIANA presented a bow and arrows, nocked [fletched] and headed with silver. Her speech was this:

Whoever found on Earth a constant friend,  
That may compare with this, my Virgin Queen?  
Whoever found a body and a mind  
So free from stain, so perfect to be seen?  
O heavenly hue [figure], that aptest [most fitted] is  
to soil,  
And yet does live from [without] blot of any  
foil [failure].  
Rare is thy gift, and given to few, or none,  
Maliced therefore of some that dare not say,  
More shines thy light, for that I know but one,  
That any such show, to follow on their way.  
Thou, thou art she: take thou the only praise,  
For, chastest Dame, in this our happy days,  
Accept my bow, since best thou dost deserve,  
Though well I know thy mind can thee preserve.

## Document Transcript 3 (continued)

CUPIDO his speech, his gift an arrow of gold:

Ah ha, I see my mother [Venus] out of sight,  
Then let the boy now play the wag [mischievous  
child] a while.  
I seem but weak, yet weak is not my might!  
My boyish wit can oldest folk beguile.  
Who so doth think I speak this but in jest,  
Let me but shoot, and I shall quench his rest!  
Mark here my shafts [arrows]: this all is made  
of wood,  
Which is but soft, and breeds but soft goodwill.  
Now this is gilt, yet seems it gold full good,  
And doth deceive blind, loving people still.  
But here is one [which] is seldom felt or seen:  
This is of gold, meet [fit] for the noblest Queen.  
Wherefore, Dame fair, take thou this gift of me,  
Though some deserve, yet none deserve like you,  
Shoot but the shaft [arrow] at king or Caesar: He,  
And he is thine, and if thou wilt allow.  
It is a gift that many here would crave,  
Yet none, but thou, this golden shaft may have.

There was written upon the shaft:

*My colour, joy, my substance, pure,  
My virtue [is] such as shall endure.*

**FINIS [the end]. Goldingham.**

Her Majesty received these gifts very thankfully; the gods and goddesses with the rest of the masque marched about [around] the chamber again, and then departed in like manner as they came in. Then the Queen called to Master Robert Wood, the Mayor of Norwich, whom first she heartily thanked, and took by the hand, and used secret conference, but what, I know not. And thus this delightful night passed, to the joy of all which saw Her Grace in so pleasant plight [situation].

The next day, being Friday, in which day the Court removed [departed], the streets towards St Benet's Gate were hanged [hung], from the one side to the other, with cords made of herbs and flowers, with garlands, coronets [small crowns], pictures, rich cloths, and a thousand devices. At the gates themselves, there was a stage made, very richly apparelled with cloth of gold and crimson velvet, whereupon in a close place made thereon for the purpose, was placed very sweet music, and one ready to tender [present] her this speech following.

The doleful hour of her departure came, she passed from the Court, to those gates, with such countenances [facial expressions], both of Her Majesty's part, and her subjects: now dolorous [sad], now cheerful, as plainly showed the loving hearts of both sides. When she came there [to the gates], the speech was thus uttered unto her:

Terrestrial [earthly] joys are tied with slender  
file [thread],  
Each happy hap [fortune] full hastily doth slide.  
As summer season lasteth but a while,  
So winter storms do longer times abide.  
Alas, what bliss can any time endure?  
Our sunshine day is dashed with sudden shower.

Could tongue express our secret joys of heart,  
O mighty prince, when thou didst come in place?  
No, no, God wot [knows], nor can express  
the smart  
Thy subjects feel in this departing case.  
But, gracious Queen, let here thy grace remain  
In gracious wise [manner], till thy return again.

In lieu [place] whereof, receive thy subjects' hearts,  
In fixed faith continually thine own:  
Who ready rest to lose their vital parts  
In thy defence, when any blast [tempest] is blown.  
Thou art our Queen, our rock and only stay,  
We are thine own, to serve by night and day.

Farewell, O Queen, farewell, O Mother dear,  
Let Jacob's God thy sacred body guard:  
All is thine own that is possessed here,  
And, all in all, is but a small reward  
For thy great grace. God length thy life like  
Noe [Noah],  
To govern us, and eke [also] thy realm in joy.  
AMEN.

*FINIS [the end] Bernard Garter, and spoken by himself,  
to whom Her Majesty said, 'we thank you heartily'.*

Then, with the music in the same place, was sung this short ditty following, in a very sweet voice:

What vailleth [is the point to] life, where sorrow  
soaks the heart?  
Who feareth death, that is in deep distress?  
Release of life doth best abate the smart  
Of him, whose woes are quite without redress.  
Lend me your tears, resign your sighs to me,  
Help all to wail the dolour [sadness] which you see.

What have we done, [that] she will no longer stay?  
What may we do, to hold her with us still?  
She is our Queen, we subjects must obey.  
Graunt (though with grief) to her departing will.  
Conclude we then, and sing with sobbing breath,  
God length thy life, O Queen Elizabeth!

**FINIS [the end]. Bernard Garter.**

# Document Transcript 3 (continued)

## Glossary

**Apollo** – in Greek and Roman mythology, the god of music, poetry, prophecy, and the sun (among other things). Twin brother of Diana.

**Bacchus** – in Roman mythology, the merry god of wine and revelry.

**Bandonet** – this is a stringed instrument which resembles a lute.

**Ceres** – in Roman mythology, the goddess of the harvest.

**Cupido** – more commonly known as Cupid, the mischievous young god of love. Often portrayed with a bow and arrows. Love and sexual attraction were said to be caused by Cupid firing an arrow at a person.

**Diana** – in Roman mythology, the virgin goddess of hunting and the moon. Queen Elizabeth was often associated with Diana because of her decision not to marry. Twin sister of Apollo.

**Garter** – Bernard Garter was one of the writers and performers of this masque.

**Goldingham** – Henry Goldingham was another of the writers and performers of this masque.

**Hymenus** – the Roman god of the ceremony of marriage.

**Jacob** – in the Old Testament of the Bible, an important patriarch of the Israelites, who was favoured by God. Jacob is the father of the twelve sons famous to us from the musical Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat: they founded the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Juno** – in Roman mythology, the goddess of marriage. As the wife of Jupiter, she was Queen of the Gods.

**Jupiter** – in Roman mythology, the god of the sky and thunder, and King of the Gods.

**Mars** – in Roman mythology, the aggressive god of war.

**Mercury** – in Roman mythology, the trickster god of commerce and eloquence.

**Neptune** – in Roman mythology, the god of the sea.

**Pallas** – in Roman mythology, the goddess of wisdom and military strategy.

**Pomona** – in Roman mythology, the goddess of orchards and fruit.

**Venus** – in Roman mythology, the goddess of love and sexual desire. Mother of Cupid.