

## Chapter XXXII - The Appointed Time

It is night in Lincoln's Inn--perplexed and troublous valley of the shadow of the law, where suitors generally find but little day--and fat candles are snuffed out in offices, and clerks have rattled down the crazy wooden stairs and dispersed. The bell that rings at nine o'clock has ceased its doleful clangour about nothing; the gates are shut; and the night-porter, a solemn warder with a mighty power of sleep, keeps guard in his lodge. From tiers of staircase windows clogged lamps like the eyes of Equity, bleared Argus with a fathomless pocket for every eye and an eye upon it, dimly blink at the stars. In dirty upper casements, here and there, hazy little patches of candlelight reveal where some wise draughtsman and conveyancer yet toils for the entanglement of real estate in meshes of sheep-skin, in the average ratio of about a dozen of sheep to an acre of land. Over which bee-like industry these benefactors of their species linger yet, though office-hours be past, that they may give, for every day, some good account at last.

In the neighbouring court, where the Lord Chancellor of the rag and bottle shop dwells, there is a general tendency towards beer and supper. Mrs Piper and Mrs Perkins, whose respective sons, engaged with a circle of acquaintance in the game of hide and seek, have been lying in ambush about the by-ways of Chancery Lane for some hours and scouring the plain of the same thoroughfare to the confusion of passengers--Mrs Piper and Mrs Perkins have but now exchanged congratulations on the children being abed, and they still linger on a door-step over a few parting words. Mr Krook and his lodger, and the fact of Mr Krook's being 'continually in liquor,' and the testamentary prospects of the young man are, as usual, the staple of their conversation. But they have something to say, likewise, of the Harmonic Meeting at the Sol's Arms, where the sound of the piano through the partly opened windows jingles out into the court, and where Little Swills, after keeping the lovers of harmony in a roar like a very Yorick, may now be heard taking the gruff line in a concerted piece and sentimentally adjuring his friends and patrons to 'Listen, listen, listen, tew the wa-ter fall!' Mrs Perkins and Mrs Piper compare opinions on the subject of the young lady of professional celebrity who assists at the Harmonic Meetings and who has a space to herself in the manuscript announcement in the window, Mrs Perkins possessing information that she has been married a year and a half, though announced as Miss M. Melvilleson, the noted siren, and that her baby is clandestinely conveyed to the Sol's Arms every night to receive its natural nourishment during the entertainments. 'Sooner than which, myself,' says Mrs Perkins, 'I would get my living by selling lucifers.' Mrs Piper, as in duty bound, is of the same opinion, holding that a private station is better than public applause, and thanking heaven for her own (and, by implication, Mrs Perkins') respectability. By this

time the pot-boy of the Sol's Arms appearing with her supper-pint well frothed, Mrs Piper accepts that tankard and retires indoors, first giving a fair good night to Mrs Perkins, who has had her own pint in her hand ever since it was fetched from the same hostelry by young Perkins before he was sent to bed. Now there is a sound of putting up shop- shutters in the court and a smell as of the smoking of pipes; and shooting stars are seen in upper windows, further indicating retirement to rest. Now, too, the policeman begins to push at doors; to try fastenings; to be suspicious of bundles; and to administer his beat, on the hypothesis that every one is either robbing or being robbed.

It is a close night, though the damp cold is searching too, and there is a laggard mist a little way up in the air. It is a fine steaming night to turn the slaughter-houses, the unwholesome trades, the sewerage, bad water, and burial-grounds to account, and give the registrar of deaths some extra business. It may be something in the air--there is plenty in it--or it may be something in himself that is in fault; but Mr Weevle, otherwise Jobling, is very ill at ease. He comes and goes between his own room and the open street door twenty times an hour. He has been doing so ever since it fell dark. Since the Chancellor shut up his shop, which he did very early to-night, Mr Weevle has been down and up, and down and up (with a cheap tight velvet skull-cap on his head, making his whiskers look out of all proportion), oftener than before.

It is no phenomenon that Mr Snagsby should be ill at ease too, for he always is so, more or less, under the oppressive influence of the secret that is upon him. Impelled by the mystery of which he is a partaker and yet in which he is not a sharer, Mr Snagsby haunts what seems to be its fountain-head--the rag and bottle shop in the court. It has an irresistible attraction for him. Even now, coming round by the Sol's Arms with the intention of passing down the court, and out at the Chancery Lane end, and so terminating his unpremeditated after-supper stroll of ten minutes' long from his own door and back again, Mr Snagsby approaches.

'What, Mr Weevle?' says the stationer, stopping to speak. 'Are YOU there?'

'Aye!' says Weevle, 'Here I am, Mr Snagsby.'

'Airing yourself, as I am doing, before you go to bed?' the stationer inquires.

'Why, there's not much air to be got here; and what there is, is not very freshening,' Weevle answers, glancing up and down the court.

'Very true, sir. Don't you observe,' says Mr Snagsby, pausing to sniff and taste the air a little, 'don't you observe, Mr Weevle, that you're--not to put too fine a point upon it--that you're rather greasy here, sir?'

'Why, I have noticed myself that there is a queer kind of flavour in the place to-night,' Mr Weevle rejoins. 'I suppose it's chops at the Sol's Arms.'

'Chops, do you think? Oh! Chops, eh?' Mr Snagsby sniffs and tastes again. 'Well, sir, I suppose it is. But I should say their cook at the Sol wanted a little looking after. She has been burning 'em, sir! And I don't think'--Mr Snagsby sniffs and tastes again and then spits and wipes his mouth--'I don't think-- not to put too fine a point upon it--that they were quite fresh when they were shown the gridiron.'

'That's very likely. It's a tainting sort of weather.'

'It IS a tainting sort of weather,' says Mr Snagsby, 'and I find it sinking to the spirits.'

'By George! I find it gives me the horrors,' returns Mr Weevle.

'Then, you see, you live in a lonesome way, and in a lonesome room, with a black circumstance hanging over it,' says Mr Snagsby, looking in past the other's shoulder along the dark passage and then falling back a step to look up at the house. 'I couldn't live in that room alone, as you do, sir. I should get so fidgety and worried of an evening, sometimes, that I should be driven to come to the door and stand here sooner than sit there. But then it's very true that you didn't see, in your room, what I saw there. That makes a difference.'

'I know quite enough about it,' returns Tony.

'It's not agreeable, is it?' pursues Mr Snagsby, coughing his cough of mild persuasion behind his hand. 'Mr Krook ought to consider it in the rent. I hope he does, I am sure.'

'I hope he does,' says Tony. 'But I doubt it.'

'You find the rent too high, do you, sir?' returns the stationer. 'Rents ARE high about here. I don't know how it is exactly, but the law seems to put things up in price. Not,' adds Mr Snagsby with his apologetic cough, 'that I mean to say a word against the profession I get my living by.'

Mr Weevle again glances up and down the court and then looks at the stationer. Mr Snagsby, blankly catching his eye, looks upward for a

star or so and coughs a cough expressive of not exactly seeing his way out of this conversation.

'It's a curious fact, sir,' he observes, slowly rubbing his hands, 'that he should have been--'

'Who's he?' interrupts Mr Weevle.

'The deceased, you know,' says Mr Snagsby, twitching his head and right eyebrow towards the staircase and tapping his acquaintance on the button.

'Ah, to be sure!' returns the other as if he were not over-fond of the subject. 'I thought we had done with him.'

'I was only going to say it's a curious fact, sir, that he should have come and lived here, and been one of my writers, and then that you should come and live here, and be one of my writers too. Which there is nothing derogatory, but far from it in the appellation,' says Mr Snagsby, breaking off with a mistrust that he may have unpolitely asserted a kind of proprietorship in Mr Weevle, 'because I have known writers that have gone into brewers' houses and done really very respectable indeed. Eminently respectable, sir,' adds Mr Snagsby with a misgiving that he has not improved the matter.

'It's a curious coincidence, as you say,' answers Weevle, once more glancing up and down the court.

'Seems a fate in it, don't there?' suggests the stationer.

'There does.'

'Just so,' observes the stationer with his confirmatory cough. 'Quite a fate in it. Quite a fate. Well, Mr Weevle, I am afraid I must bid you good night'--Mr Snagsby speaks as if it made him desolate to go, though he has been casting about for any means of escape ever since he stopped to speak--'my little woman will be looking for me else. Good night, sir!'

If Mr Snagsby hastens home to save his little woman the trouble of looking for him, he might set his mind at rest on that score. His little woman has had her eye upon him round the Sol's Arms all this time and now glides after him with a pocket handkerchief wrapped over her head, honouring Mr Weevle and his doorway with a searching glance as she goes past.

'You'll know me again, ma'am, at all events,' says Mr Weevle to himself; 'and I can't compliment you on your appearance, whoever you are, with your head tied up in a bundle. Is this fellow NEVER coming!'

This fellow approaches as he speaks. Mr Weevle softly holds up his finger, and draws him into the passage, and closes the street door. Then they go upstairs, Mr Weevle heavily, and Mr Guppy (for it is he) very lightly indeed. When they are shut into the back room, they speak low.

'I thought you had gone to Jericho at least instead of coming here,' says Tony.

'Why, I said about ten.'

'You said about ten,' Tony repeats. 'Yes, so you did say about ten. But according to my count, it's ten times ten--it's a hundred o'clock. I never had such a night in my life!'

'What has been the matter?'

'That's it!' says Tony. 'Nothing has been the matter. But here have I been stewing and fuming in this jolly old crib till I have had the horrors falling on me as thick as hail. THERE'S a blessed- looking candle!' says Tony, pointing to the heavily burning taper on his table with a great cabbage head and a long winding-sheet.

'That's easily improved,' Mr Guppy observes as he takes the snuffers in hand.

'IS it?' returns his friend. 'Not so easily as you think. It has been smouldering like that ever since it was lighted.'

'Why, what's the matter with you, Tony?' inquires Mr Guppy, looking at him, snuffers in hand, as he sits down with his elbow on the table.

'William Guppy,' replies the other, 'I am in the downs. It's this unbearably dull, suicidal room--and old Boguey downstairs, I suppose.' Mr Weevle moodily pushes the snuffers-tray from him with his elbow, leans his head on his hand, puts his feet on the fender, and looks at the fire. Mr Guppy, observing him, slightly tosses his head and sits down on the other side of the table in an easy attitude.

'Wasn't that Snagsby talking to you, Tony?'

'Yes, and he--yes, it was Snagsby,' said Mr Weevle, altering the construction of his sentence.

'On business?'

'No. No business. He was only sauntering by and stopped to prose.'

'I thought it was Snagsby,' says Mr Guppy, 'and thought it as well that he shouldn't see me, so I waited till he was gone.'

'There we go again, William G.!' cried Tony, looking up for an instant. 'So mysterious and secret! By George, if we were going to commit a murder, we couldn't have more mystery about it!'

Mr Guppy affects to smile, and with the view of changing the conversation, looks with an admiration, real or pretended, round the room at the Galaxy Gallery of British Beauty, terminating his survey with the portrait of Lady Dedlock over the mantelshelf, in which she is represented on a terrace, with a pedestal upon the terrace, and a vase upon the pedestal, and her shawl upon the vase, and a prodigious piece of fur upon the shawl, and her arm on the prodigious piece of fur, and a bracelet on her arm.

'That's very like Lady Dedlock,' says Mr Guppy. 'It's a speaking likeness.'

'I wish it was,' growls Tony, without changing his position. 'I should have some fashionable conversation, here, then.'

Finding by this time that his friend is not to be wheedled into a more sociable humour, Mr Guppy puts about upon the ill-used tack and remonstrates with him.

'Tony,' says he, 'I can make allowances for lowness of spirits, for no man knows what it is when it does come upon a man better than I do, and no man perhaps has a better right to know it than a man who has an unrequited image imprinted on his heart. But there are bounds to these things when an unoffending party is in question, and I will acknowledge to you, Tony, that I don't think your manner on the present occasion is hospitable or quite gentlemanly.'

'This is strong language, William Guppy,' returns Mr Weevle.

'Sir, it may be,' retorts Mr William Guppy, 'but I feel strongly when I use it.'

Mr Weevle admits that he has been wrong and begs Mr William Guppy to think no more about it. Mr William Guppy, however, having got the advantage, cannot quite release it without a little more injured remonstrance.

'No! Dash it, Tony,' says that gentleman, 'you really ought to be careful how you wound the feelings of a man who has an unrequited image imprinted on his 'eart and who is NOT altogether happy in those chords which vibrate to the tenderest emotions. You, Tony, possess in yourself all that is calculated to charm the eye and allure the taste. It is not--happily for you, perhaps, and I may wish that I could say the same--it is not your character to hover around one flower. The ole garden is open to you, and your airy pinions carry you through it. Still, Tony, far be it from me, I am sure, to wound even your feelings without a cause!'

Tony again entreats that the subject may be no longer pursued, saying emphatically, 'William Guppy, drop it!' Mr Guppy acquiesces, with the reply, 'I never should have taken it up, Tony, of my own accord.'

'And now,' says Tony, stirring the fire, 'touching this same bundle of letters. Isn't it an extraordinary thing of Krook to have appointed twelve o'clock to-night to hand 'em over to me?'

'Very. What did he do it for?'

'What does he do anything for? HE don't know. Said to-day was his birthday and he'd hand 'em over to-night at twelve o'clock. He'll have drunk himself blind by that time. He has been at it all day.'

'He hasn't forgotten the appointment, I hope?'

'Forgotten? Trust him for that. He never forgets anything. I saw him to-night, about eight--helped him to shut up his shop--and he had got the letters then in his hairy cap. He pulled it off and showed 'em me. When the shop was closed, he took them out of his cap, hung his cap on the chair-back, and stood turning them over before the fire. I heard him a little while afterwards, through the floor here, humming like the wind, the only song he knows-- about Bibo, and old Charon, and Bibo being drunk when he died, or something or other. He has been as quiet since as an old rat asleep in his hole.'

'And you are to go down at twelve?'

'At twelve. And as I tell you, when you came it seemed to me a hundred.'

'Tony,' says Mr Guppy after considering a little with his legs crossed, 'he can't read yet, can he?'

'Read! He'll never read. He can make all the letters separately, and he knows most of them separately when he sees them; he has got on that

much, under me; but he can't put them together. He's too old to acquire the knack of it now--and too drunk.'

'Tony,' says Mr Guppy, uncrossing and recrossing his legs, 'how do you suppose he spelt out that name of Hawdon?'

'He never spelt it out. You know what a curious power of eye he has and how he has been used to employ himself in copying things by eye alone. He imitated it, evidently from the direction of a letter, and asked me what it meant.'

'Tony,' says Mr Guppy, uncrossing and recrossing his legs again, 'should you say that the original was a man's writing or a woman's?'

'A woman's. Fifty to one a lady's--slopes a good deal, and the end of the letter 'n,' long and hasty.'

Mr Guppy has been biting his thumb-nail during this dialogue, generally changing the thumb when he has changed the cross leg. As he is going to do so again, he happens to look at his coat-sleeve. It takes his attention. He stares at it, aghast.

'Why, Tony, what on earth is going on in this house to-night? Is there a chimney on fire?'

'Chimney on fire!'

'Ah!' returns Mr Guppy. 'See how the soot's falling. See here, on my arm! See again, on the table here! Confound the stuff, it won't blow off--smears like black fat!'

They look at one another, and Tony goes listening to the door, and a little way upstairs, and a little way downstairs. Comes back and says it's all right and all quiet, and quotes the remark he lately made to Mr Snagsby about their cooking chops at the Sol's Arms.

'And it was then,' resumes Mr Guppy, still glancing with remarkable aversion at the coat-sleeve, as they pursue their conversation before the fire, leaning on opposite sides of the table, with their heads very near together, 'that he told you of his having taken the bundle of letters from his lodger's portmanteau?'

'That was the time, sir,' answers Tony, faintly adjusting his whiskers. 'Whereupon I wrote a line to my dear boy, the Honourable William Guppy, informing him of the appointment for to-night and advising him not to call before, Boguey being a slyboots.'



The light vivacious tone of fashionable life which is usually assumed by Mr Weevle sits so ill upon him to-night that he abandons that and his whiskers together, and after looking over his shoulder, appears to yield himself up a prey to the horrors again.

'You are to bring the letters to your room to read and compare, and to get yourself into a position to tell him all about them. That's the arrangement, isn't it, Tony?' asks Mr Guppy, anxiously biting his thumb-nail.

'You can't speak too low. Yes. That's what he and I agreed.'

'I tell you what, Tony--'

'You can't speak too low,' says Tony once more. Mr Guppy nods his sagacious head, advances it yet closer, and drops into a whisper.

'I tell you what. The first thing to be done is to make another packet like the real one so that if he should ask to see the real one while it's in my possession, you can show him the dummy.'

'And suppose he detects the dummy as soon as he sees it, which with his biting screw of an eye is about five hundred times more likely than not,' suggests Tony.

'Then we'll face it out. They don't belong to him, and they never did. You found that, and you placed them in my hands--a legal friend of yours--for security. If he forces us to it, they'll be producible, won't they?'

'Ye-es,' is Mr Weevle's reluctant admission.

'Why, Tony,' remonstrates his friend, 'how you look! You don't doubt William Guppy? You don't suspect any harm?'

'I don't suspect anything more than I know, William,' returns the other gravely.

'And what do you know?' urges Mr Guppy, raising his voice a little; but on his friend's once more warning him, 'I tell you, you can't speak too low,' he repeats his question without any sound at all, forming with his lips only the words, 'What do you know?'

'I know three things. First, I know that here we are whispering in secrecy, a pair of conspirators.'

'Well!' says Mr Guppy. 'And we had better be that than a pair of noodles, which we should be if we were doing anything else, for it's the only way of doing what we want to do. Secondly?'

'Secondly, it's not made out to me how it's likely to be profitable, after all.'

Mr Guppy casts up his eyes at the portrait of Lady Dedlock over the mantelshelf and replies, 'Tony, you are asked to leave that to the honour of your friend. Besides its being calculated to serve that friend in those chords of the human mind which--which need not be called into agonizing vibration on the present occasion--your friend is no fool. What's that?'

'It's eleven o'clock striking by the bell of Saint Paul's. Listen and you'll hear all the bells in the city jangling.'

Both sit silent, listening to the metal voices, near and distant, resounding from towers of various heights, in tones more various than their situations. When these at length cease, all seems more mysterious and quiet than before. One disagreeable result of whispering is that it seems to evoke an atmosphere of silence, haunted by the ghosts of sound--strange cracks and tickings, the rustling of garments that have no substance in them, and the tread of dreadful feet that would leave no mark on the sea-sand or the winter snow. So sensitive the two friends happen to be that the air is full of these phantoms, and the two look over their shoulders by one consent to see that the door is shut.

'Yes, Tony?' says Mr Guppy, drawing nearer to the fire and biting his unsteady thumb-nail. 'You were going to say, thirdly?'

'It's far from a pleasant thing to be plotting about a dead man in the room where he died, especially when you happen to live in it.'

'But we are plotting nothing against him, Tony.'

'May be not, still I don't like it. Live here by yourself and see how YOU like it.'

'As to dead men, Tony,' proceeds Mr Guppy, evading this proposal, 'there have been dead men in most rooms.'

'I know there have, but in most rooms you let them alone, and--and they let you alone,' Tony answers.

The two look at each other again. Mr Guppy makes a hurried remark to the effect that they may be doing the deceased a service, that he

hopes so. There is an oppressive blank until Mr Weevle, by stirring the fire suddenly, makes Mr Guppy start as if his heart had been stirred instead.

'Fah! Here's more of this hateful soot hanging about,' says he. 'Let us open the window a bit and get a mouthful of air. It's too close.'

He raises the sash, and they both rest on the window-sill, half in and half out of the room. The neighbouring houses are too near to admit of their seeing any sky without craning their necks and looking up, but lights in frowsy windows here and there, and the rolling of distant carriages, and the new expression that there is of the stir of men, they find to be comfortable. Mr Guppy, noiselessly tapping on the window-sill, resumes his whispering in quite a light-comedy tone.

'By the by, Tony, don't forget old Smallweed,' meaning the younger of that name. 'I have not let him into this, you know. That grandfather of his is too keen by half. It runs in the family.'

'I remember,' says Tony. 'I am up to all that.'

'And as to Krook,' resumes Mr Guppy. 'Now, do you suppose he really has got hold of any other papers of importance, as he has boasted to you, since you have been such allies?'

Tony shakes his head. 'I don't know. Can't Imagine. If we get through this business without rousing his suspicions, I shall be better informed, no doubt. How can I know without seeing them, when he don't know himself? He is always spelling out words from them, and chalking them over the table and the shop-wall, and asking what this is and what that is; but his whole stock from beginning to end may easily be the waste-paper he bought it as, for anything I can say. It's a monomania with him to think he is possessed of documents. He has been going to learn to read them this last quarter of a century, I should judge, from what he tells me.'

'How did he first come by that idea, though? That's the question,' Mr Guppy suggests with one eye shut, after a little forensic meditation. 'He may have found papers in something he bought, where papers were not supposed to be, and may have got it into his shrewd head from the manner and place of their concealment that they are worth something.'

'Or he may have been taken in, in some pretended bargain. Or he may have been muddled altogether by long staring at whatever he HAS got, and by drink, and by hanging about the Lord Chancellor's Court and hearing of documents for ever,' returns Mr Weevle.

Mr Guppy sitting on the window-sill, nodding his head and balancing all these possibilities in his mind, continues thoughtfully to tap it, and clasp it, and measure it with his hand, until he hastily draws his hand away.

‘What, in the devil's name,’ he says, ‘is this! Look at my fingers!’

A thick, yellow liquor defiles them, which is offensive to the touch and sight and more offensive to the smell. A stagnant, sickening oil with some natural repulsion in it that makes them both shudder.

‘What have you been doing here? What have you been pouring out of window?’

‘I pouring out of window! Nothing, I swear! Never, since I have been here!’ cries the lodger.

And yet look here--and look here! When he brings the candle here, from the corner of the window-sill, it slowly drips and creeps away down the bricks, here lies in a little thick nauseous pool.

‘This is a horrible house,’ says Mr Guppy, shutting down the window. ‘Give me some water or I shall cut my hand off.’

He so washes, and rubs, and scrubs, and smells, and washes, that he has not long restored himself with a glass of brandy and stood silently before the fire when Saint Paul's bell strikes twelve and all those other bells strike twelve from their towers of various heights in the dark air, and in their many tones. When all is quiet again, the lodger says, ‘It's the appointed time at last. Shall I go?’

Mr Guppy nods and gives him a ‘lucky touch’ on the back, but not with the washed hand, though it is his right hand.

He goes downstairs, and Mr Guppy tries to compose himself before the fire for waiting a long time. But in no more than a minute or two the stairs creak and Tony comes swiftly back.

‘Have you got them?’

‘Got them! No. The old man's not there.’

He has been so horribly frightened in the short interval that his terror seizes the other, who makes a rush at him and asks loudly, ‘What's the matter?’

'I couldn't make him hear, and I softly opened the door and looked in. And the burning smell is there--and the soot is there, and the oil is there--and he is not there!' Tony ends this with a groan.

Mr Guppy takes the light. They go down, more dead than alive, and holding one another, push open the door of the back shop. The cat has retreated close to it and stands snarling, not at them, at something on the ground before the fire. There is a very little fire left in the grate, but there is a smouldering, suffocating vapour in the room and a dark, greasy coating on the walls and ceiling. The chairs and table, and the bottle so rarely absent from the table, all stand as usual. On one chair-back hang the old man's hairy cap and coat.

'Look!' whispers the lodger, pointing his friend's attention to these objects with a trembling finger. 'I told you so. When I saw him last, he took his cap off, took out the little bundle of old letters, hung his cap on the back of the chair--his coat was there already, for he had pulled that off before he went to put the shutters up--and I left him turning the letters over in his hand, standing just where that crumbled black thing is upon the floor.'

Is he hanging somewhere? They look up. No.

'See!' whispers Tony. 'At the foot of the same chair there lies a dirty bit of thin red cord that they tie up pens with. That went round the letters. He undid it slowly, leering and laughing at me, before he began to turn them over, and threw it there. I saw it fall.'

'What's the matter with the cat?' says Mr Guppy. 'Look at her!'

'Mad, I think. And no wonder in this evil place.'

They advance slowly, looking at all these things. The cat remains where they found her, still snarling at the something on the ground before the fire and between the two chairs. What is it? Hold up the light.

Here is a small burnt patch of flooring; here is the tinder from a little bundle of burnt paper, but not so light as usual, seeming to be steeped in something; and here is--is it the cinder of a small charred and broken log of wood sprinkled with white ashes, or is it coal? Oh, horror, he IS here! And this from which we run away, striking out the light and overturning one another into the street, is all that represents him.

Help, help, help! Come into this house for heaven's sake! Plenty will come in, but none can help. The Lord Chancellor of that court, true to his title in his last act, has died the death of all lord chancellors in all

courts and of all authorities in all places under all names soever, where false pretences are made, and where injustice is done. Call the death by any name your Highness will, attribute it to whom you will, or say it might have been prevented how you will, it is the same death eternally--inborn, inbred, engendered in the corrupted humours of the vicious body itself, and that only--spontaneous combustion, and none other of all the deaths that can be died.