

**The Passion of Boudicca**  
**By Jared McDaris**  
**Sample**

**Act 2, Scene 2**

1 [Enter divers Britons, severally]

**1<sup>st</sup> Briton**

2 Is't true, that *Boudicca* is slain?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Briton**

3 Nay, she was disgraced by the Romans.

**1<sup>st</sup> Briton**

4 The Queen of *Suffolke*? What could quell her pride?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Briton**

5 Hold, here comes *Modred*.

6 [Enter the Clown]

**Clown**

7 A meteor will presage doom, and comets  
8 Declare the Monsters, summon dragons up  
9 To here devour and burn our homes to soot,  
10 Or so the learned men of Briton say,  
11 That ev'ry fracture in the Nighttime's sky  
12 Will force you out like ants and beetles, drive  
13 Into a moony toil th' sturdy thinkers,  
14 Into a dreamy fiction th' Poets, and  
15 To drink most ev'ry other ambulant  
16 Who calls himself the chief of Heaven's creatures.  
17 What latest grand Apocalypse here drives  
18 The sheep from out their folds? Go home and work,  
19 Or else be idle; learned, foul or fair,  
20 Be anything but here, a rowdy mob.

**1<sup>st</sup> Briton**

21 What folly driveth thee without, good *Modred*?

**Clown**

22 Thine.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Briton**

23 And where hast spent thy days this month?

**Clown**  
24 Away.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Briton**  
25 A way? Upon some pig path? Thou reekest of it.

**Clown**  
26 Oh mighty *Morrigan*, here slay my mind,  
27 For there's no greater curse than Wisdom, blight  
28 So vicious as to be a shepherd beset  
29 By willful sheep. Dry up my brains and kill  
30 My thoughts, that I might snicker at naught a thing  
31 And think it clever when the gods crack winds,  
32 Or clap a delver's back for puppeting  
33 A skull. To think imagination  
34 Could render men to men, when nothing is  
35 More beastly on this beauteous *Eden*. *Briton's*  
36 A Palace 'f Pearls for Swine to dine upon,  
37 A Tapestry for Moths, a land for Men.

**1<sup>st</sup> Briton**  
38 I prithee, leave thy mad and mottled tongues, thou babbler. What's the news from  
39 *Suffolke*?

**Clown**  
40 We birth, we eat, we kill, we die, and some  
41 Brave souls birth more, and they're the fools. And yet  
42 A tiny few, a baleful fool amongst  
43 The baleful fools will try to scrape some news  
44 Within this ancient wheel that turns, and turns,  
45 That every crack and flaw returneth o'er  
46 To damn our artless selves with our own features.  
47 This is News eternal, though better folk  
48 Than I've reported it 'til now. But you  
49 Enquire of *Boudicca*, I wager.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Briton**  
50 Aye,  
51 Deliver news worth telling, patch. The Seas  
52 Are green, the sky cerulean, but we  
53 Mere mortals cannot cadge a living from  
54 Thy bloated wisdom, Puck. Speak truth, but purpose.

**Clown**  
55 The path to *Boudicca* shall ne'er be found  
56 By such as you, though she appeareth present.

***1<sup>st</sup> Briton***

57 And what's that path that we shall never find?

***Clown***

58 Patience.

***1<sup>st</sup> Briton***

59 Ay, patience is at her end,  
60 Now where is *Boudicca*, thou frowning goblin?

***Clown***

61 Patience.

62 [*Queen enters with her daughters*]

***Queen***

63 Will no more come?

***Maeve***

64 My Queen, I prithee use the gossips here.  
65 If thou'lt unite the tribes, then here are those  
66 From ev'ry neighbor. Speak to Commoners.

***Queen***

67 Who haileth from the *Trinovants*?

***1<sup>st</sup> Briton***

68 I, madam.

***Queen***

69 Return, and seek my cousins out.

***1<sup>st</sup> Briton***

70 Wherefore?

***Queen***

71 Because the Queen of *Suffolk* orders it.

***1<sup>st</sup> Briton***

72 I'm not of *Suffolke*.

***Queen***

73 Yet art in my land.

***Maeve***

74 My Lady knowest well, a *Briton* serves  
75 Not shallow Degree, but worthiness divin'd  
76 From action and purpose. Prithee, show the worth  
77 Of *Boudicca* in argument, not Force,  
78 Divulge the rightness of thy bold Intent.

**Queen**

79 Is't come to this, that I who brav'd the whip  
80 And dared command the gods take up my cause  
81 Must bandy now with swain and swineherd simples?

**Maeve**

82 If thou would'st have their loyalty, then yes.

**Queen**

83 You men of *Briton*, suffer me to speak.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Briton**

84 Ay, suffer is the word, when *Boudicca* wails.

**Queen**

85 I will not mow, nor will I beg entreaties.  
86 I come to you as neither Queen nor beggar  
87 But fellow *Briton*. Though we of *Suffolk* lately  
88 Have felt the harshest of gross *Nero*'s boot,  
89 Yet all have sens'd the neatness of *Rome*'s shame,  
90 To call us bridled cattle at the best  
91 Of times, and cull our merest glance at worst.  
92 Today sharp *Rome* hath fallen onto *Suffolk*,  
93 Yet growing still within thy memory  
94 Good *Trinovant*, lord *Justus*' grand display  
95 Upon your sons and grandsires, even to  
96 Th'extremes of *Cambridgeshire*. Your druids, learned,  
97 And greater in discourse than any narrow  
98 Academe out of *Nero*'s school, were felled  
99 As hoary timber. *Norfolk*, yesterday  
100 It seems when your good princess was defiled  
101 As mine own were today. I tell you, *Norfolk*,  
102 I do not boast to say if *Suffolk* had  
103 Been made to suffer 's *Norfolk* were, then she'd  
104 Command the fires of *Hell* to her Revenge  
105 If gods and men were deaf, and here you hear  
106 That she make good upon that pledge. Low *Essex*,  
107 What shame is left to you when ev'ry grain,  
108 Yeh ev'ry scintilla of harvesting  
109 Is gather'd up by your Lord *Caius* for

110 His fattening. If he would fat himself  
111 Alike a bullock, then constellations say  
112 We sacrifice that boweless calf. The sin'f  
113 Gross Pride is thrown into my teeth, always  
114 As though to shame me. Chuff me not, for shame's  
115 For those that have no Pride, not those that are  
116 Born up by it. I seek not to subvert  
117 Your sovereignty as *Rome* attempts, nor to  
118 Convert you to mine iron gripe. I sue  
119 With worth to here command you all, with neither  
120 The ego of the fool nor slaveborn pang,  
121 But with the Right of Cause. Our lady Justice  
122 Commands you heed. Our wailing children cry  
123 That you obey my suit. And if your brains  
124 Are moved not by sense, then let your Faith  
125 Hold sway, for I will conjure any that  
126 Will hear my call for vengeance. The Gods  
127 Rebuk'd my cries when my great Princesses  
128 Were made to bleat as animals beneath  
129 The *Roman* seat of shame, and there refused  
130 T'defend their chast minds nor honor'd thews.  
131 If men will prove as senseless as the Gods,  
132 Then I will plead my cause unto the Devils  
133 Who love Revenge beyond a mortal scope.  
134 Then if you worry for my Soul, or ache  
135 To keep our *Briton* free of cruel corruption,  
136 (For my Heart informs me you would never welcome  
137 The Enemy of all into our borders)  
138 Stand here, and carry my command to all:  
139 Purge *Rome*, our physic cleanses them from out  
140 Of *Suffolk, Norfolk*, all of *Briton*. Stand!

***Britons***

141 Stand!

***Queen***

142 Stand!

***All***

143 Stand!

***Queen***

144 Fly out, and bring your vengeful spirits back to me.

***All***

145 Fly out! Fly out!

146 [*Divers Britons fly out*]

***Queen***

147 Come, daughters, we will take up swords and slay  
148 The Vermin that believ'd a hound's slaver  
149 Could e'er translate a swan into a daw,  
150 And if we cannot cut them down ourselves,  
151 We'll mince their corsers in celebration.

***Brigid***

152 I prithee, mother, combat likes me not.

***Queen***

153 But you will like of it, and cleave unto  
154 The battlefield as lice unto the rinds  
155 Of those debased panderers. Thou art  
156 No mouse, thou art a Princess, shalt display  
157 The majesty of thine anointed blood  
158 By spilling theirs, or else art none of mine.  
159 We march to *Colchester*; whatever end.

160 [*The Queen exits*]

***Maeve***

161 We needs but stand, and let the soldiers work.

***Brigid***

162 O let me not seek out that poison that I  
163 Now live to fly from. War without and war  
164 Within will surely crack my skull, and I'll  
165 Be made, a sty in the aspect of our  
166 Great Majesty. I hunger for my Death  
167 As ev'ning's respite from a laborous day,  
168 But t'die in Infamy, I cannot bear.

***Maeve***

169 No more of Death. No more. I cannot spy  
170 Into your mind, nor harmonize how sharp  
171 Your suffering might echo mine. I daren't  
172 Decry my aches as foul as yours, though I  
173 A likewise evil did endure. Your pains  
174 Are yours alone; I cannot harvest them,  
175 Nor weigh their value 'gainst another's worth.  
176 But, Sister, suffer thou another day,  
177 And ev'ry breath thou draw'st is surety

178 With me, that to your Honor I'll prove champion.  
179 'tis fashion with some Celts and Picts to paint  
180 Themselves for war, and make a monster of  
181 Their mortal grace. This Art will our purpose serve.  
182 *Th'Iceni* are embolden'd by our Queen,  
183 And many women make defiance. I'll find  
184 Some Changeling in our ranks of thine own stature,  
185 And paint her face with mine, and she'll defiance  
186 Proclaimeth in thy stead. I prithee fly  
187 Into the woods and find the knotted elm  
188 Where we so oft had played, and keep thee there  
189 Until the battle's won.

***Brigid***

190 And if it's lost?

191 [Enter Clown]

***Clown***

192 Is *Saul* among the Prophets, for I rant  
193 Amidst a throng of fools ecstatical,  
194 Nay knaves mercurial, what madness, Love.  
195 What other mania will clown a man?  
196 What low derangement else will kill a man?  
197 Will any fair delirium so poison  
198 That we, like that insipid *Socrates*  
199 Will reach out for the cup and say 'tis good?  
200 I once beheld a woodcock, drawn by nightshade  
201 That had been dowsed with sweet perfumes, ensared  
202 By a spring that broke and caught its legs. There fallen,  
203 Dying, that bird did limp, defying death,  
204 To reach that cloying smelling poison. Love!  
205 And here come its most present victims. Look!

206 [*Enter Ester and Helio, two shepherds*]

***Ester***

207 Desist, poor *Helio*, thou cynic fry,  
208 Thou dog'st with all devotion to a master  
209 That longeth but to spurn thee further. Go.

***Helio***

210 The Sun is made a football by the Heavens,  
211 That Angels will bombard him cross the sky,  
212 And so will *Helio* beg to be bombarded  
213 By thee, o *Ester*, prithee be no stranger to

214 My love, let us not live estranged, *Ester*.  
215 My friend would not condemn me so, o *Ester*.

***Ester***

216 Thy friendship is an airy apparatus;  
217 A spider that hangs upon a thread call'd Love,  
218 And if that thread is sever'd by the Fly  
219 Th' Spider falls and wails the Fly's own cruelty.  
220 I have no love of Spiders, so farewell.

***Helio***

221 I prithee let me prove thy champion.  
222 A *Roman* have I slain within these woods,  
223 A fierce combatant, mighty arm'd, and great  
224 As twenty men. I prithee stay, and I'll  
225 Present his armor unto you, a token  
226 Of passionate zealotry, my worship of you.

227 [*Exit Helio*]

***Clown***

228 His boasting's higher than the Queen's; I found  
229 This Roman whom he speaks, and he  
230 Was wounded by a Boar, lying naked by  
231 A stream, his life there trickling out into  
232 The waters as he moaned.

***Maeve***

233 Did'st kill the fiend?

***Clown***

234 Nay I did comfort to that wailing *Roman*.  
235 He mewled *I die o Fool*; and I did comfort  
236 To him, saying *A blessing, the sooner you'll*  
237 *Be free of wretched pain*. He sobb'd *I thirst,*  
238 *O Fool*, and I did comfort him, *A blessing,*  
239 *For thirst allays the pangs of hunger*. But  
240 He whimpered more *I hurt o Fool*, and I  
241 Did comfort that: *A Blessing*, I declared,  
242 *For pain assures us we are living still,*  
243 *I'sooth, there seems no separation between*  
244 *One's pain and life; it is as much to say*  
245 *I hurt as say I live, so when thou moan'st*  
246 *I hurt, as well thou moan'st I live, and if*  
247 *Thou fearest death, then must rejoice at pain.*  
248 And there he gasp'd, *I suffer fool*, and I



249 Did therein comfort most of all, *It is*  
250 *Our lot, I preached, to suffer fools, but this*  
251 *As well shall pass, and soon thy suffering,*  
252 *Thine hunger and thy pain shall all away,*  
253 *And dying too shall pass.* And thus he died,  
254 And thus was he reprieved of suffering,  
255 And thus a Clown gave comfort to a Fool.

256 [*Helio reenters, carrying armor*]

***Helio***

257 I pray you throw regard upon this trophy.

***Ester***

258 Dishonest taler, boasting both of love  
259 And valor, sanguiny is far from you.  
260 This man was done in by a pig, thou perjure.

***Helio***

261 Nay love, I smote him on the hillock side.

***Ester***

262 I'll say it twice and done: 'twas bacon-slain.

***Helio***

263 I swear by all the pools and bogs, by all  
264 The hillocks, ev'ry log, and ev'ry sheep e'er o'er  
265 I held command, I slew the man who wore  
266 These arms, and all for thee.

***Ester***

267 Then thou wilt lie  
268 Wi'the very sheep thou swearest by, thou false  
269 Foreswearing fraud. Thou liar, lie with sheep.

***Helio***

270 I prithee take this armor as my token.

***Ester***

271 I'll have it, sure, to leave thee naked here  
272 And open to my scornful strikes. Begone.

***Helio***

273 O Ester!

274 [*Exit Helio*]

**Clown**

275 O Shepherd, tender to your sheep.  
276 Fear not, good shepherdess, I'll comfort him.

277 [*Exit Clown*]

**Ester**

278 Fair princess, take this low grotesquery  
279 Away, it frightens me as though it were  
280 Still occupied.

**Maeve**

281 Just so: dear *Brigid*, don  
282 This armor, it shall shield thee from attack.  
283 If *Boudicca* should fall, then pass thyself  
284 As squire to that same fallen Roman, who sleeps  
285 Nearby in some now reddened stream. The shepherds  
286 O'th' Forest shall fear thee, and soldiers shall  
287 Respect thy case.

**Brigid**

288 Then should I hunt that boar  
289 Who slew the lately bearer of this armor,  
290 And bear his fearsome visage on my shield?  
291 Would that deformity defend me too?  
292 Should we all wear our villains on our breasts?

**Maeve**

293 Queen *Boudicca* will not be lost. If I arrive,  
294 Or other messenger should seek thee out,  
295 Or if grand *Hell* itself erupts, by signs  
296 As these shalt thou report our Victory.

297 [*Maeve exits*]

**Ester**

298 What man is true? They cower in a stream,  
299 They gore a flying fool, or else they mock  
300 A fallen man, or worst they boast and lie  
301 And call it love. Be't pig or clown or cautil,  
302 Or worst a shepherd, they are monstrous.

**Brigid**

303 Then I will don a monster's mask, and dance  
304 In their unholy sacraments, and shake

305 The friends who lately welcomed me. With this  
306 I will repel all forays, all incursions  
307 Will slide like rainfall from my curious  
308 Disguise. I prithee Ester keep my secret.

*Ester*

309 I prithee prithee not, I weary o' prithee.

*Brigid*

310 Then I command thee, hold thy peace, and mine.

311 [*Exeunt*]

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