



**Two Kinsmen from Thebes**



**GLAUCUS.** Great son of Tydeus, why ask my lineage?  
Human generations are blown away  
like leaves, but new leaves come in spring  
and young men spring up when old ones pass.



He sent me to Troy and charged me  
always to be the bravest and the best  
and not bring shame on my fathers' race,  
the best in Ephyre and in wide Lycia.  
This is my lineage, from this blood I spring.





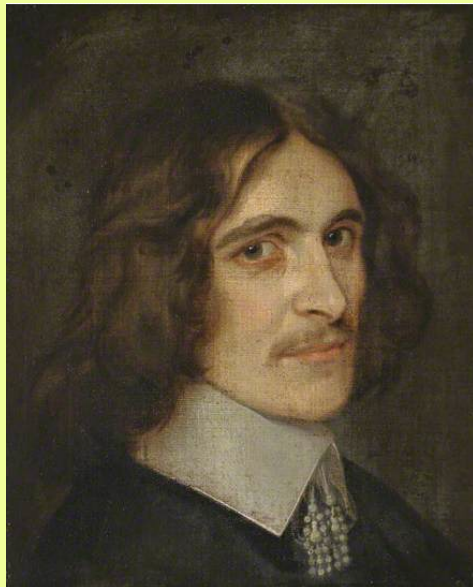
James (Theseus)



Anne (Hippolyta)



Elizabeth (Emilia)



Cowley (Arcite)



S'thampton (Palamon)



Robert Cecil (Pirithous)





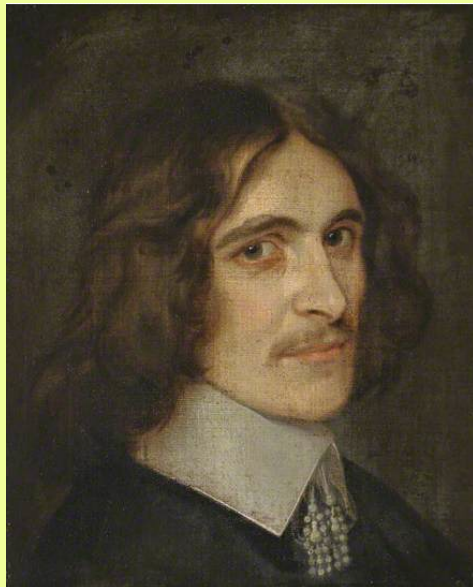
Theseus (James)



Hippolyta (Anne)



Emilia (Elizabeth)



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Palamon (S'thampton)



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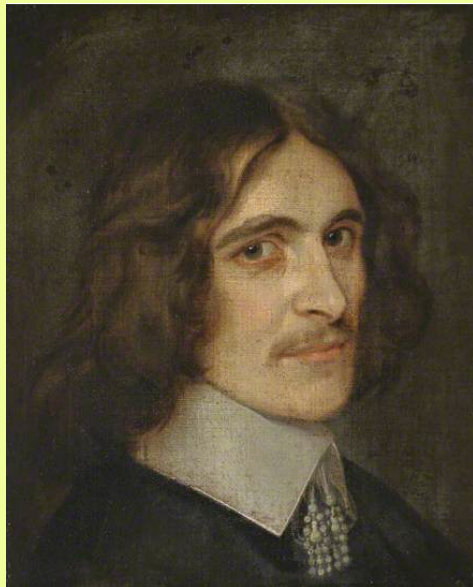
Theseus



Hippolyta



Emilia



Arcite

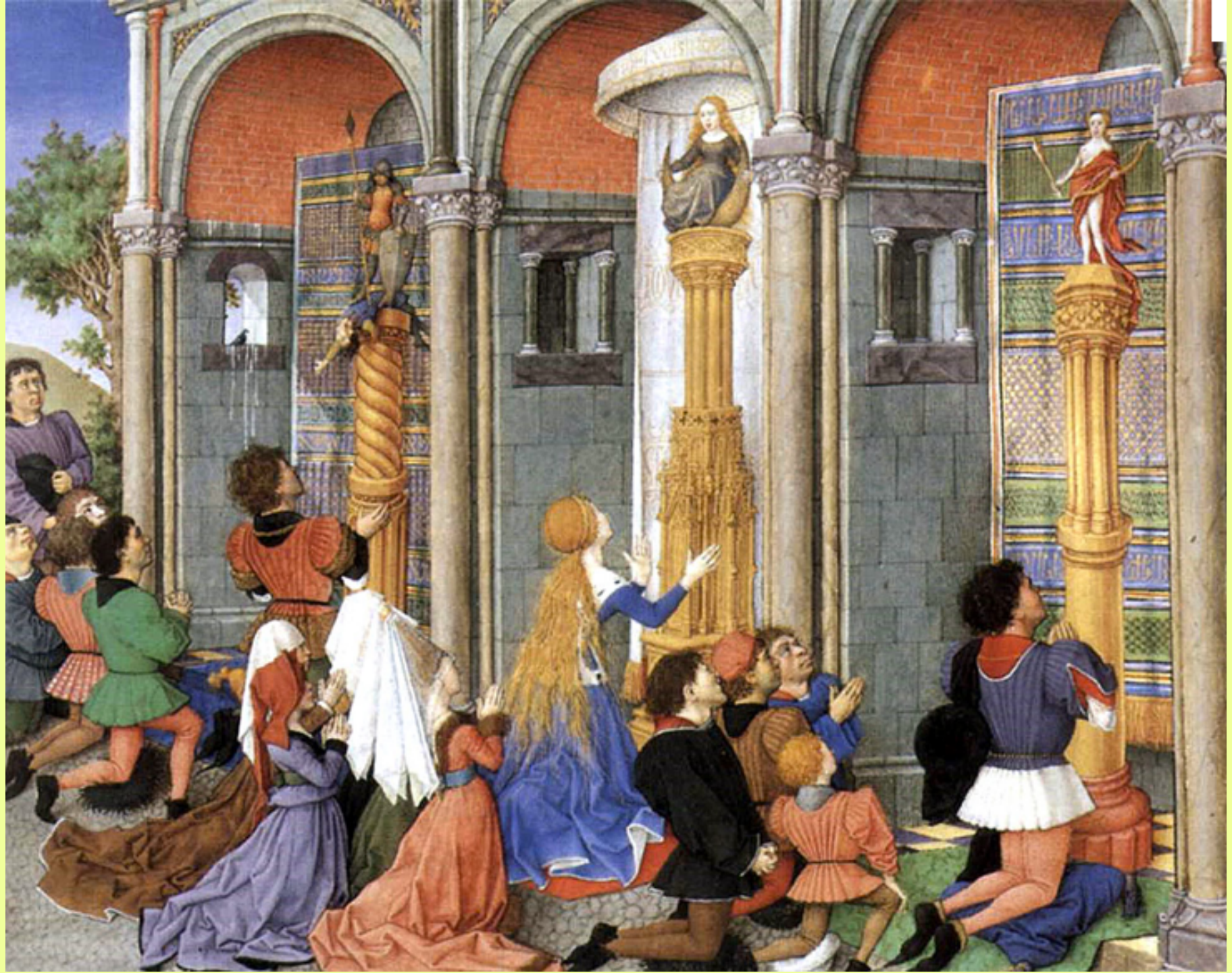


Palamon



Pirithous







[Exeunt Palamon and his Knights]

[Still Musicke. Enter Emilia in white, her haire about her shoulders, wearing a wheaten wreath, before the altar of Diana.]



## Two Kinsmen from Thebes

(Act 5 of The Two Noble Kinsmen)

By William Shakespeare

# THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN:

Presented at the Blackfriars  
by the Kings Maiesties servants,  
with great applause:

Written by the memorable Worthies  
of their time;  
{M<sup>r</sup>. John Fletcher, and } Gent.  
{M<sup>r</sup>. William Shakspeare. }



Printed at London by Tho. Cotes, for Iohn Waterfon:  
and are to be sold at the signe of the Crowne  
in Pauls Church-yard. 1634.

## Prelude







The scene is set in Athens.

A year has passed since the wedding of Duke Theseus  
and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons,  
which was delayed by a war against Creon, king of Thebes.



Two Theban cousins, Arcite and Palamon,  
were captured during the war  
and held to ransom in Athens.

From the window of their prison they saw Emilia,  
sister of Hippolyta.

Both fell in love with her — and became bitter rivals.





Arcite was ransomed  
on condition that he never set foot again in Athens  
(and could therefore never see Emilia again).

Palamon remained in prison  
(where he could see Emilia in her garden every day).



Arcite returned to Athens under an assumed name, making himself so important at court that he became Emilia's attendant.

Palamon escaped from prison and hid in a forest.





The two rivals met by chance in a clearing,  
during a celebration of Mayday.

Neither would renounce his love.

They agreed to meet again, secretly,  
and fight to the death.



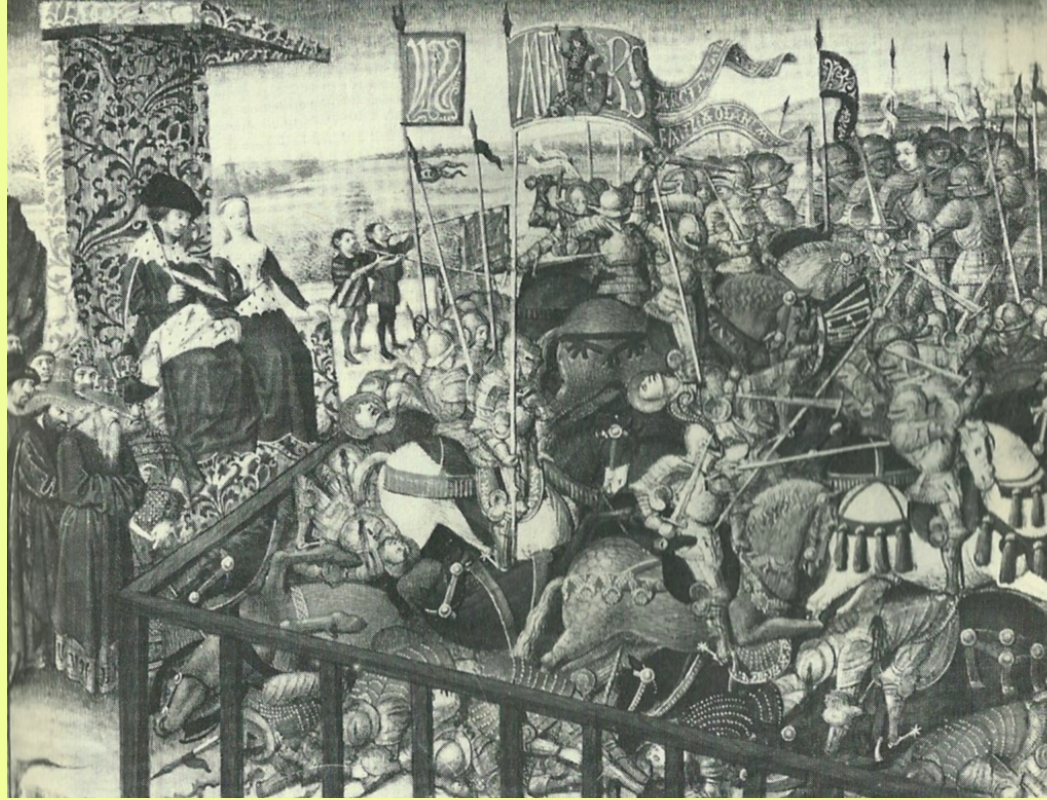
Their private duel was interrupted by Theseus.

The kinsmen were re-imprisoned and sentenced to death.

But Hippolyta has intervened.

She has persuaded Theseus  
to allow the rivals to fight for the hand of Emilia  
in a proper chivalrous tournament.

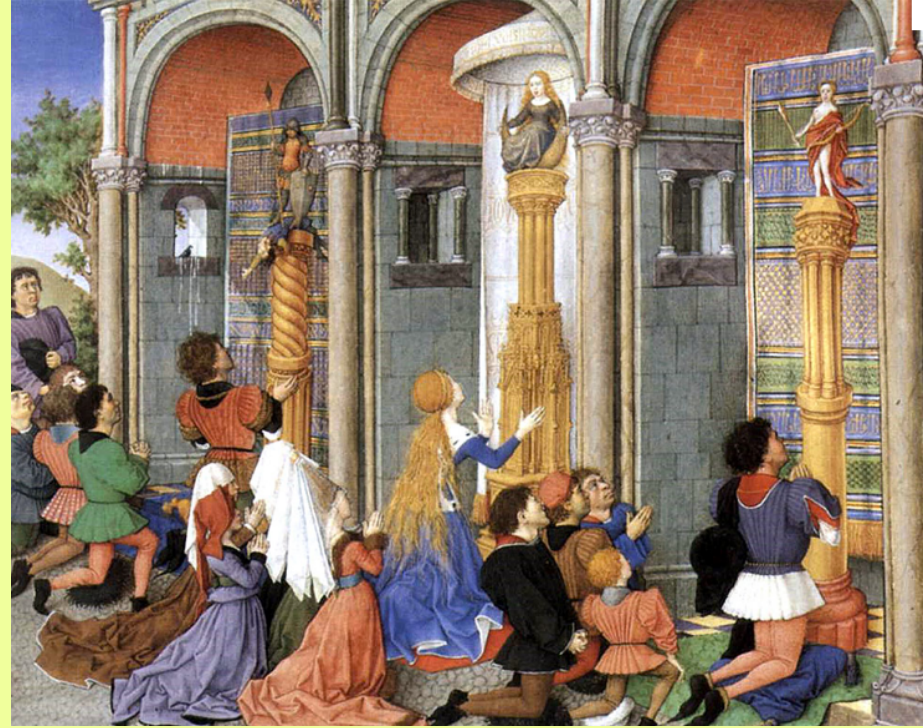




Each shall appear in the lists after an interval of three months, each accompanied by three knights, as 'Assistants'.

The winner of the tournament shall marry Emilia.

The loser and his companion knights shall all be put to death.



Today is the day of the tournament.

Before it begins, the three protagonists  
(the suitors and Emilia)  
will pray for a good outcome to the god of their choice:

Arcite to Mars, the god of war;  
Palamon to Venus, goddess of love;  
Emily to Diana, the chaste huntress. .

How will the gods answer the suppliants?

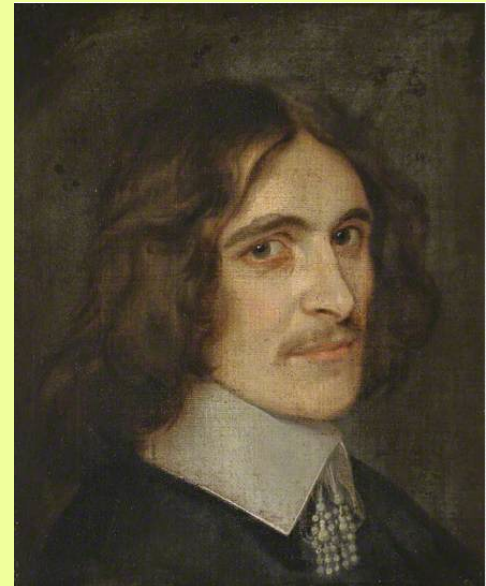




## Two Kinsmen from Thebes

INTRADA

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta and Pirithous]



[Enter Arcite and Palamon]





[Exit Theseus, and his train.]



[Exeunt Palamon and his Knights.]





[Arcite prays to Mars]





*[There is heard clanging of Armour, with a short Thunder as the burst of a Battaile]*





[Arcite prays to Mars]





[Exeunt Arcite and his Knights]

[Enter Palamon and his Knights.]





[Palamon prays to Venus]





*[Here Musicke is heard, Doves are seene to flutter]*





[Palamon prays to Venus]





[Exeunt Palamon and his Knights]

[Still Musicke. Enter Emilia in white, her haire about her shoulders, wearing a wheaten wreath, before the altar of Diana.]





[Emilia prays to Diana]





[Over the Altar ascends a Rose Tree, having one Rose upon it.]





[Here is heard a sodaine twang of Instruments, and the Rose falls  
from the Tree]



Scene 2. (A Place near the Lists.)

**INTRADA**

[Enter Theseus, Hipolita, Emilia, Perithous, and some Attendants]





[Exeunt Theseus, Hippolita, Pirithous, &c.]







[Cornets and Trompets sound as to a charge.]



[Cornets. A great cry and noise within, crying 'a Palamon'.]

[Enter Servant.]





[Shout, and Cornets: Crying, 'a Palamon.']



[Another cry and showt within, and Cornets.]

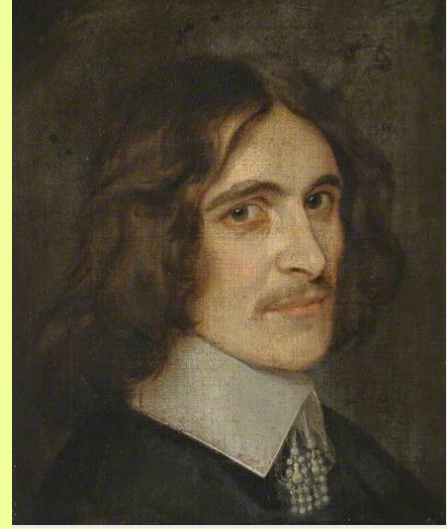




[Cornets. Cry within: Arcite, Arcite.]



[Cornets. A great showt and cry, 'Arcite, victory!']



## INTRADA

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Pirithous, Arcite as victor, and attendants]



Scene 3. (A Place of Execution ; a Block prepared.)

**INTRADA**



[Enter Palamon and his Knights pinion'd: Jaylor, Executioner, and Guard.]



[Lies on the Blocke.]

[A great noise within crying, 'run, save, hold!'.]





[Enter Pirithous in haste.]



[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Emilia, Arcite in a chaire.]





**FINIS**