

And thou shalt glean beside us. As for Boaz—
For Boaz is the master of this field—
I care not what he thinketh.

Ruth.

Maidens, nay;

I would not give you trouble with your lord;
But rather let me tarry till he comes,
And, if I should find grace within his sight,
Then will I come and glean beside you here.

Rebecca.

If Boaz were a man like other men,
So sweet a face would surely find thee grace;
Yet as it is, I cannot vouch for him:
But here he comes to answer for himself.

(Enter Boaz.)

Ruth.

My lord, I fain would ask a favor of thee.

Boaz.

Speak maiden, what is it that thou desirest?
And I will surely grant it if I can.

Rebecca (aside).

He is, in sooth, more human than I thought him.

Ruth.

I seek for leave to glean within thy fields
For Naomi my mother, and myself.

Boaz.

What is thy name?

Ruth.

My lord, my name is Ruth.

Boaz.

Little thou askest, Ruth; and I would give.
More than thou askest; for mine ears have heard
Of all thy kindness unto Naomi
Since Mahlon died; therefore I bid thee stay,
And seek no fields but mine wherein to glean;
But every day returning hither, glean
With Martha and her daughters, wheresoe'er
Thou listest. None shall do thee any hurt.
And I will strictly charge the younger men
To watch and minister to all thy needs;
And when at noon we eat beside the field,
Then shalt thou take thy fill of parched corn,
And dip thy morsel in the vinegar,
And I myself will bear thee company;
For I am kinsman unto Naomi,
And therefore I am kinsman unto thee.

(Exit Boaz.)

Rebecca.

What thinkest thou of Boaz, Ruth?