

Piero di Mariano Muzi

The Play of the Fatted Calf

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For further discussion, see:

Nerida Newbigin, ed., *Nuovo corpus di sacre rappresentazioni fiorentine del Quattrocento* (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1983), 135–159.

Nerida Newbigin, *Making a Play for God: The Sacre Rappresentazioni of Renaissance Florence* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2021), 126–131.

Characters

THE FATHER

THE YOUNGER SON

THE OLDER SON

OTHER PEOPLE *in the household*

FREE WILL, *household bursar*

SEVEN DEADLY SINS, *boon companions*

PRIDE

AVARICE

ENVY

GLUTTONY

SLOTH

WRATH

LUST

SERVING BOY *who does not speak*

HOPE, *servant*

PROVIDENCE, *servant*

GOOD CHEER, *servant*

OTHER VIRTUES *who do not speak*

GUESTS *at the feast*

MUSICIANS

SERVANT *in the Father's house*

THE ANNUNCIATION
OF THE GOSPEL OF THE PRODIGAL SON
AND WHEN HE RETURNED TO HIS FATHER.
EVERYTHING WILL BE WRITTEN OUT HERE BELOW,
AND THE WORDS THAT THE OLDER SON SAID,
AND THE YOUNGER SON WAS THE ONE WHO LEFT THE FATHER.

THIS ADAPTATION OF THE
GOSPEL OF THE FATTED CALF
WAS DONE BY
PIERO DI MARIANO [MUZI],
PURSEMAKER, OF FLORENCE.

This is the beginning of the Annunciation of the Festa, and it begins with an ANGEL dressed in white. He speaks in this way:

1. May the almighty Father here be praised,
and Mary, our most holy Virgin Mother.
I come to bring you tidings, everyone
who's gathered in this confraternity,
to tell you that we're going to do a play
right now, and hope that it will be devout.
So listen with good zeal each one of you
to our Lord says in the Holy Gospel.
2. A father once there was who had two sons,
a wealthy man was he, of good estate.
His younger son went up to him and said:
"Father, I'll stay no more beneath your yoke.
I want the part that I'm entitled to
from you, and then I'll go and live elsewhere
and I'll not stay here with you any more.
Give me my share of my inheritance.
3. His father sees his mind is quite made up
to leave in spite of everything, and so
he grants that he will give to him his part
because he's understood he'll not agree
and not consent to stay longer with him.
Because he wants to go, he gives him leave.
He took his portion and he went away:
it was ill spent and didn't last him long.
4. He found himself cast into greatest ruin,
so that he didn't have a scrap to eat.

And seeing just how bad things were, the wretch
 remembered his dear father once again,
 and said: “Alas, oh woe is me, and shame,
 that I have so mismanaged what I had!
 I am a swineherd and I eat the shells
 of acorns: I can’t stand it any more.

5. Returning to his father, all devout
 he humbly placed his future in his hands.
 His father caught sight of him from afar,
 and recognised him too without delay.
 He went to him, embraced him, and then sent
 for clothes to dress him as honour required.
 The son confesses all his sins to God,
 and willingly entrusts himself to Him.

6. The father celebrated his return
 and held a feast with beautiful display,
 and sent out invitations to his friends
 and ordered that a fatted calf be killed.
 His elder son then came back into town
 (he’d been out at the farm), and hearing this
 he didn’t want to come into the house.
 His father went to make his peace with him.

7. You will all see this story. Each of you
 should watch devoutly, and then set your minds
 on doing what is good, and following
 the good example represented here.
 And let it be to God’s glory and praise.
 He feels much joy when sinners humbly come
 before him, with desire that fills their hearts.
 Now in God’s name you can begin the play.

When these stanzas have been spoken, the Father of the family comes, and the Sons and other people in their best clothes to keep him company, and they sit down. The Father sits in between his Sons, and when they have been sitting for a while the Younger Son gets up and turns to his father and says as follows. Then the stanzas follow on in order, what the Younger Son says to the Father, and how the Father answers him. And when the Younger Son fights with his Father before he agrees to give him leave. And when he had taken leave he set himself up with seven Boon Companions, with the result that they soon got him into trouble. And then it goes on that he left with wealth but in a short while he returned in poverty, and his Father forgave him and dressed him again richly and held a great feast for his return. And then it happened that the Older Son returned from the country, and hearing the feast, when he had heard the reason, he took offence and did not want to enter

the house. And when the Father heard this he went straight to him and made peace with him and took him into the house and he rejoiced with them. And it goes on with the Older Son's welcome to the Younger one, and how he embraced him and kissed him tenderly. So may it please you to stay and listen with devotion, and understand this play so that it does your souls some good. And may it please God that it does, so that we too may receive that goodness that never fails. For ever and ever. Amen.

The YOUNGER SON stands up beside the father and asks for his share saying:

8. O father, listen now a while to these few words that I just want to say to you. I want to travel far away from here, I want to journey to some distant land to have a good time feasting, singing, playing, and I would like to set out right away. Give me my substance, and that part that I am due, for I don't want another trade.

THE FATHER replies:

9. My son, what's this that you are telling me? How can you want to leave your father when you are so happy living here with me, and you are rich, and have the finest clothes? Ah, stay with me and you'll be far more blest! I've suffered greatly for you to be rich. So that you should inherit what I've earned I've worked myself right to the brink of death.

THE SON replies:

10. Father, I have decided as I've said: it is my wish to stay with you no more. I want to follow my own heart's desire, and what I've told you that's what I will do. I hope indeed that I'll enjoy myself so now I'll leave you and go far away. Give me the money that is mine to have right now because I want to leave at once.

THE FATHER to the Son:

11. Do not, my son, answer me in this way! Think first, I beg you, about what you'll do! If you could see the evil that awaits you there, you wouldn't take yourself from me.

Don't leave, I beg you, tarry here a while,
and in the meantime you'll regret this choice,
and don't be so impatient to depart.
If you depart you'll never find repose.

THE SON *speaks to the Father*:

12. Say what you like, O father: there are none
so deaf as those who do not want to hear.
I've told you my decision several times,
and told you that I want to go away.
I do not care a fig for what you say,
I won't agree to what you're telling me.
You want to hold me back and I refuse:
because I'd like to leave here right away.

THE FATHER *replies to the Son*:

13. My son, you know that in the past you gave
all signs of being obedient to me.
You're speaking very rudely to me now,
and show me not a glimmer of respect.
I see that just because I use soft words
you answer me the more with brazenness.
Insist on going and you'll have no part.
The property is mine: it's in my name.

THE SON *replies to the Father, and throws his purse*:

14. O father, it is yet the custom here
that you must give me all the share I'm due.
I want it now, so don't try to resist:
I know that it is well within your power.
If I have spoken ill, I beg your pardon.
Just send me on my way and I'll be gone.
Don't make me stay, I beg you, here with you
a moment more, or it's the death of me.

THE FATHER *gets up and moves angrily towards the Son and says to him as follows*:

15. Now I can truly see your stubbornness
and that you've gone completely off your mind.
You haven't taken in a word I've said
and you refuse to do what I command.
You do not wish to stay on in this place,
but you'll be truly sorry if you leave.
You'll find yourself surrounded by such friends
who'll set you on the path of wickedness.

THE SON *replies to the Father*:

16. I do not care a fig for what you say.
You surely must have understood my words
and I'm intent on doing what I want.
I've fixed my heart on setting out at once.
Talking to me's like talking to a wall.
I haven't listened to a word you've said.
Give me at once all the inheritance
that I'm entitled to: I want to leave.

THE FATHER *says to the Son*:

17. My son, I here release and set you free
for I can see you still desire to go.
You'll travel on your quest through many lands.
I'll give you your inheritance but you
will not believe the truth I have to tell,
so great is your desire to come to grief.

THE FATHER *turns to his Steward and says*:

Free Will, o faithful steward of my house,
give to the broker ten thousand gold florins.

Free Will hands over the money and the Son does not let him count it out. Instead he tries to grab the money, uncounted, and makes a show of using arms against him. When he has handed over the money, FREE WILL says:

18. Ten thousand florins I have given him
and I have put them all on his account.
I wouldn't want some error to arise
that he might challenge later or contest.
He's made some threat to harm me, and he seems
to be afflicted by some strange condition.
I want to place this on the record here:
to my mind he's a very rude young man.

THE SON *replies to Free Will and says as follows*:

19. I will not heed the harsh words that you've said,
because, Free Will, you've treated me amiss.
I must make haste, I will not count them now,
but I am sure that I am much deceived
and many men have come to grief when they
take leave of you and go without your blessing.
If you weren't in my father's service, I
would run you through and kill you on the spot.

FREE WILL *replies*:

20. I am Free Will, a loyal steward here,
I settle the accounts of all who come.
and to my master you have spoken ill
of me, and you are taking the wrong path;
I've given you the florins you are due
and with your slander you have done me ill;
and I have given you all that you're due,
you can't complain of anything I've done.

THE FATHER *says to the Son*:

21. Is this what you would wish as you depart:
that Free Will should become your enemy?
You have complained to me about him here,
but listen well to what I have to say.
I've known him through long experience
and he has never erred, so I don't care
a fig, and will ignore all that you say.
I know he does what's right for everyone.

22. You have already started arguing
before you've even set out on your way.
I know you do not have the slightest cause,
and though I warned you, that was of no use.
You are reduced to such a wretched state
that you can barely wait until you're gone.
So if you want to go, go when you like:
you have the money that makes up your share.

THE SON *speaks to the Father*:

23. Father, I'm on my way, and with good cheer.
I'm sure I'll find no shortage of good friends
who'll join me as companions straight away
because I have no shortage of gold coin.
And all of them will show me great respect:
so I'll have fun with them all the day long.
I take my leave and I'll be on my way.
I am all done with staying here with you.¹

THE SON *leaves the Father and says as follows*:

24. A purse brimful of florins have I here:
who wants to come with me and be my friend?
I'll dress him in the finest set of clothes,
and we'll enjoy this property of mine.
They'll welcome us as wealthy citizens,
and those who want to come should make their way!

We'll take some dogs, a-hunting we will go,
and fowling too with falcons and with hawks.

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS *answer the Son in this fashion:*

25. We're seven boon companions and we'll come
with you, and willingly, let's leave at once,
and we will treat you as our truest friend.
We'll take our falcons and our dogs with us
and anyone who chides us is our foe.
We'll take with us a string of noble steeds
and all that money will be ours to spend.
We'll have a good time while the money lasts.

THE SON *asks them who they are:*

26. I'd really like to know who you all are
and to know something of your way of life.
And so you answer when I call for you
I'd like to know your names and hear from you
whether you love each other, so that when
we're all together in a group and when
we call out to each other to set out
and have a good time, we'll always reply.

PRIDE *replies for all the Sins and names them one by one,
drawing them to him:*

27. I am the captain of this happy band:
Pride is the name I'm known by to all.
And this chap here is Avarice by name,
and this is Envy, good for everywhere,
and this is Gluttony, who's much beloved,
and this is Sloth, who always hangs around,
and this is Wrath, who rushes to your side,
and this one, for our pleasure, is called Lust.

THE SON *replies:*

28. Dear boon companions, I accept you all.
Let's leave at once, because my purse is full.
We'll sup on birds and hares and every kind
of wild game in the greatest quantity,
and never lack good capons when we dine.
And misers can all watch us in dismay.
And those who stay we bid you all adieu,
I'm off to follow my own heart's delight.

*The Son leaves. THE FATHER of the family speaks in this
fashion to the Older Son. He says:*

29. You've seen your younger brother, seen the way
he has abandoned me completely here.
The wretched boy, he's gone and left me here,
led quite astray by wicked company,
determined to rebel against my yoke.
Nothing that I could say did any good.
Make sure, my son, that you show me respect,
and always be obedient to me.

THE OLDER SON *replies to his Father:*

30. O dearest father, I am full of woe
for you and for the sorrow you have had.
About my brother set your heart at peace
because whatever you may need I'll do,
and I will never leave you here alone.
I beg you, put this all behind you now.
Tell me what I must do, and you will see
I'll do it and you'll always be obeyed.

THE FATHER *says to the Older Son:*

31. You know that we have many plots of land
so what I need is for you to set out
and go through our accounts for all of them
with all our workers, every single one,
and make sure none of them makes any fuss.
And if you were to find among them cheats
who didn't what to settle up with you,
then you'll tell me and I'll imprison them.

THE OLDER SON *replies to the Father:*

32. What you command I gladly will obey
and what you say I'll do most willingly.
I'm glad to make a trip out to our farms
and I'll do the accounts just as you say.
I'll take care too to make sure that I don't
argue with anyone or start a fight.
There'll be some who are peeved to settle up
because that is the way of country men.

33. Have the books and the contracts brought to me
because I'm sure that they'll try to deny
To tell the truth, they are hard-headed men
and they've deceived us in the past, I'm sure,
by giving us short weights and measures, and
not giving us our quarter share of crops.
I'll do the very best I can with them,

and presently I'll be right back with you.

THE FATHER *speaks to Free Will:*

34. Free Will, give him the Black Book of accounts
and find a young servant to go with him
so that he can uncover all the truth;
and keep the other books back here with you.
I'll always be quite straight in my accounts,
and merciful with those who are our friends.
If they ask honestly, without deceit,
I'll make arrangements to cancel their debt.

*Free Will gives him the book, and the young servant, and then
the Son asks his Father for leave to go, and his Father gives it
to him, and he goes to the country and stays away some time.*

*And in the meantime, the YOUNGER SON returns and asks his
Father's mercy and says as follows. He comes back to him with
all his clothes in tatters, and dressed in fustian and all shaggy:*

35. O sweetest father, I've come home to you
and I confess that I have greatly erred
and I've offended our almighty God
and I have sinned against you very much;
and I'm not worthy even to be called
your servant, let alone be called your son.
Receive me, father, who are full of love,
treat me as if I were your labourer.²

THE FATHER *replies to the Son and goes to meet him and
embraces him and says as follows:*

36. My dearest son, you are most welcome here!
O dearest son, where have you been till now?
O dearest son, you're all just skin and bone!
O dearest son, you've lost so much condition!
My son, I hardly recognized you there!
My son, I see that you are quite transformed.
My heart is overflowing with great joy
because you have returned, my dearest son.

THE FATHER *calls a Virtue and says:*

37. Come here, o Hope, my faithful servitor,
clothe him in the best clothes that you can find,
and let them all be of the richest silk,
and put upon his finger a fine ring
adorned with a great jewel, rich in colour
and set upon a band of finest gold;

and bring to put upon his feet good shoes
that do him honour like his suit of clothes.

THE FATHER *turns to the Son and says:*

38. Come here, my son, for I forgive you now
for what you did to me back in the past.
I'll not forsake you if you stay with me:
make sure you never fall again to sin.
Your self-humiliation has been good
enough to please me and I've pardoned you,
and I'll proclaim a feast for your return
and everybody here will join the fun.

39. Dear son, I feel that I can hardly wait
to see you clothed in all the honour due,
to see you stripped of all those tattered rags
that seemed to have about them a bad smell.
Now I want you to tell me all your woes.
Tell me, dear son, I pray, and right away:
where you have been and what you've done. When you
returned you looked as if you'd lost your mind.

THE SON *talks to the Father and tells him all that has happened
to him and begins as follows:*

40. Dear father, I had already resolved
to tell my story just as you command,
and it will be the whole truth, certainly,
that you'll hear in the presence of these men.
I went and brought great shame upon myself,
and many days I spent with naught to eat.
My whole inheritance did not last long:
I wasted all I took with me on sin.

41. And seven boon companions came with me
who gave me every sign of loving me.
They were base rascals, full of wickedness,
and all they brought me was the greatest pain.
They kept me captive, villains that they were,
and kept me there in bondage with their chains.
A sweet condition came and set me free:
contrition is the name of that sweet state.

42. I spent my waking hours in doing ill
and so I came to a far distant land
where all my time was spent pursuing lust
and wasting all my substance on that shame.
Impoverished, I couldn't help myself,
and had to struggle for my daily bread.

A famine struck that land, and then I found
I wanted bread and none was to be had.

43. A noble citizen gave me a place,
since in that country they were hard to find.
Famine spread every day throughout the land
and I could find no way of getting bread.
His farm had acorns so he sent me there,
and though I ate them greedily, I could
never escape the gnawing lack of food.
I herded swine and slept amid their filth.

44. And coming to my senses I said this:
“It can be said that in my father’s house
every man has as much bread as he wants
and here I am upon the road to death.
Oh woe is me, I think my heart will break,
it’s better to return than suffer here.
And thus I recognized that I had sinned,
and gave myself to contrite penitence.

45. I’ll tell my father, with tears in my eyes,
that he should treat me like the lowest hand
he has, if he thinks fit, for I deserve
to suffer every punishment there is.”
I clothed myself in all humility.
“And I will say: ‘Dear father, do not say
that you will treat me as you dearest son
but rather as a servant, for you can’.”

46. And so I left without further delay
and fearfully I came back home to you.
You came to meet me, gave me your embrace.
And I confessed my sin with contrite heart
and then I saw you filled again with joy.
You kissed me with a sweet and gentle kiss,
and for that I give thanks to God on high.
Father, to you I now commend my life.

THE FATHER *calls a Virtue and gives orders to her as follows:*

47. Come, Providence, I want to celebrate
because my son has come home to my house.
Give orders for a banquet, and invite
good people, and set everything in train.
Take invitations out to all our friends,
and send someone to bring the fatted calf.
Let it be killed, and we will feast on it and let us banquet to our
hearts’ delight.

Providence goes and invites everyone as she has been ordered and they come to the feast. THE FATHER greets them warmly and says as follows:

48. My warmest welcome to each one of you
and greetings to each one a thousand times.
This is my son who's here before me now.
He has returned, and that's why you have come.
Let's celebrate together with a song.
I know that Providence has explained why:
I'm celebrating, that's why I have sent
for you, so that you can rejoice with us.

THE GUESTS reply, one speaking for all of them:

49. When we received the message you had sent,
that your dear younger son has come back home,
this group of us joined you in happiness,
and we have all come with our hearts full of joy
to celebrate this day of his return,
and to show you the love that we all bear
to you, let us now sing a song of joy,
and let the music play so we can dance.

THE FATHER calls a Virtue by the name of Good Cheer and gives her this message:

50. Come here, Good Cheer! Go seek the players! Tell
them all to come before me here at once
because I'm giving a most noble feast.
Tell them to bring their instruments at once
in order to fill all our hearts with cheer,
with happy dancing and with songs of joy,
and to increase our pleasure on this day
find something for our supper later on.

GOOD CHEER goes and finds the Players, and then when she has brought them she says as follows:

51. I've done just as you told me and I've brought
these players who have come back here with me,
and I've been told they're masters in their art,
and getting them was very difficult.
Their services are in immense demand,
but I secured them for a mighty price.
Now if you want to be truly amazed
give them their signal now to start to play.

The Players play festive music. In the meantime the Older Son returns from the country and one of the Father's servants goes out and THE OLDER SON says to him as follows:

52. Tell me, boy, what's the meaning of all this?
I hear sounds of loud music in the house
which seems very remarkable to me.
Pray tell me what it means, and tell me why
there's such a loving party going on,
because it's not the season for such things.
Tell me I pray, what news has just arrived
to be the cause of such a banquet here.

THE SERVANT says to the Older Son:

53. It's all because your younger brother's back,
and they're rejoicing that he has returned
and everything is being prepared inside
for a big banquet feting his return.
And for this feast they've slaughtered a young beast,
to be known henceforth as the Fatted Calf.
Now I have told you why there's music here.
Enter, I pray you. Come inside the house.

THE OLDER SON replies angrily to the Servant:

54. It's true, then. He's rejoicing that he's back?
In my opinion, this is just not right.
He had his share and he's consumed it all,
keeping bad company and having fun.
My father should have packed him off again
for leaving in defiance of his will.
I will have naught to do with such a crowd.
Go, boy, and take this answer to him now.

THE SERVANT says to the Father:

55. I have a message to give you, good sir.
Your older son has come and he's outside
and he refuses to set foot in here
because he's just got wind that there's a feast
and he has asked me what it's all about.
I told him and explained what had occurred.
It would be good if you could send for him
or went at once to fetch him for yourself.

THE FATHER, hearing the Servant's message, goes out of the house and walks up to the Son and says as follows:

56. What is this message that you've sent to me?
My son, I beg you, don't give way to wrath.

My servant says that you refuse to come
and won't set foot inside the house with us.
I would be most displeased if you did this:
come with me now and celebrate with us.
Your brother has returned and is with us:
once he was lost and now is found again.

THE SON *replies to the Father*:

57. I will not put one foot inside this house,
as I've already told the serving boy.
Is it true you intend to hold a feast
in honour of my brother's disrespect?
I'm quite amazed that you would treat him so!
You'd never even killed a goat for me.
I've always been here, keeping by your side
and always done whatever you command.

THE FATHER *replies to the Son*:

58. You've always given me greatest respect
and so it will be in the future too,
that you'll abide by all that I decide,
and do not think of straying from that path.
So that I see you enter gladly here,
I beg you, do not do as you would wish.
Your brother, who we first believed was dead
has now risen again and returned home.

THE SON *replies to the Father*:

59. Dear father, I will do what you now ask,
for I can't rightly do what you oppose.
I've always done your will, as you well know,
and all my reservations I will quell.
I want to do whatever you will ask,
and don't intend to argue more with you.
If I have erred in what I said to you,
father, forgive me now for what I've done.

THE FATHER *takes him into the house with him and says as follows*:

60. Now come into the house with me at once
to greet your brother, fruit of the same loins.
Rejoice with him when he comes out, and say
"That we be equal: that is what I wish,
and everything I have is yours as well."
And smile on him with royal graciousness,
and kiss him and embrace him with all love,

and show that you are joyful in your heart.

THE OLDER BROTHER, *when he has heard his Father's wishes, greets his Younger Brother and says as follows:*

61. I bid you, dearest brother, welcome home!
For me, this is the greatest happiness
that I should once again have found you here:
I feel a sweetness deep within my heart.
It's been a long time since you went away,
you left us filled with gnawing bitterness.
I can't, dear brother, take my eyes off you;
at least there will be time enough for that.

THE YOUNGER BROTHER *to the Older Brother:*

62. I'm filled with happiness right to the heart
that our father welcomed me back this way
and very lovingly accepted me
and that you too have given me such proof.
I praise our Lord and God for this: may he
grant me the grace that I should know Him well.
For all the goodness I have now received
I thank both God and you from whom it's come.

He turns to THE FATHER, and he says to his sons and to all those who are watching the festa:

63. We all must learn, dear sons, from our Lord God
who stands waiting for us with open arms
and grants forgiveness when the sinner wants
to come back to Him in humility.
And He accepts him with His endless love
and grants him His forgiveness for his sins.
Abase yourselves and you will be exalted;
exalt yourselves and you will be abased.³

The end of the Annunciation of the Festa.

This is the stanza of thanks, and THE ANGEL who announced the Festa appears and bids farewell to everybody saying:

64. Fathers and brothers who dwell here within,
we say to all of you who have been here:
if we have been deficient in our play
we humbly beg you to excuse us all,
and ask you to forgive what we have done.
We say farewell, that's all there is today.
We ask that God protect you from all woe,
and we'll be back to play for you next year.

After this, everybody stands up and they do a dance and they sing a hymn that goes like this:

*Be sure to keep yourselves from harm
and from bad company because
such friends are evil, and they lead
their fellows into sinfulness.*

1. Someone says you are his brother
and pretends he likes you well.
This is worse than any knife
in the wounds that it inflicts.
This is something that will happen
practically in every case
to the folk who haven't mastered
keeping folk like these away.

Be sure to keep yourselves from harm.

2. It's a very special art
keeping clear of wicked folk,
and from all the food they eat,
and from their lascivious vice.
But if you fall in with them,
go some place and mix with friends,
always keep these words in mind,
say them quietly to yourselves:

Be sure to keep yourselves from harm.

3. Being alone is always better
than being in bad company,
for if something goes astray
they're accused immediately.
And if something's stolen when
you're with them around the town,
they will always be the first
to come to mind and be picked up.

Be sure to keep yourselves from harm.

4. Those who die a sorry death
do so for this single cause:
they hang out with such as these
and don't use their heads to think.
They chase after every cause
that's iniquitous and wrong.
not believing any truth,
always deep in wickedness.

Be sure to keep yourselves from harm.

5. Oftentimes I've gone to be
with someone about to die,
and I've always heard from them
the last words they've had to say.
And for those who wished to hear
this is what they always said:
I am here because I let
myself fall always into sin.⁴

Be sure to keep yourselves from harm.

The End

¹ After *ottava* 23, BCIS, I.II.33, fol. 5r adds a stanza:

THE OLDER BROTHER *to the Younger Brother*:

Dear brother, come, I pray you, take my hand
and if you please give heed to what I say.
Don't leave me with such anger in your heart
and don't abandon me completely here.

THE YOUNGER BROTHER *to the Older Brother*:

Don't waste your breath! Find something else to do.
I don't have time to hear these blandishments.

THE OLDER BROTHER:

I'm saying this because I hold you dear.

THE YOUNGER BROTHER:

Mind your own business and let me mind mine.

² After *ottava* 35, BCNF, Conv. Soppr. F.3.488, fol. 18r–v (closely associated with the youth confraternity of the Purification) adds two stanzas (the remaining sixteen lines of fol. 18v are blank):

Now TWO FARMERS come to the Father and complain about the Older Son, saying as follows:

God save you, worthy master, we have come
to air some of our grievances with you.
This son of yours does not give us our due.
He used to take grain in return for grain. [f. 18v]
Now that its price has dropped, he has resolved
to give five hundred for each bushel when
it's worth ten, and I have a hundred more,
and seven thousand wouldn't cover costs.

He's stolen from me too, a simple shepherd,
and taken from me all the fattest sheep
and left me with the ones that cannot walk.
I've been deceived by him in the same way.

I want to make you understand how he
 does his accounts with us, and steals from us
 with taxes and with levies, and robs
 me of my living, so I'll have to leave.

Siena, BCI, MS I.ii.33, fol. 7r, inserts a different stanza:

A SERVANT *to the Father*:

Master, I come to you as I am sent
 by your dear son who's in a foreign land
 and I can tell you he is much reduced
 and all his money's wasted and misspent.
 I do not think he has a penny left,
 he's eaten naught but acorns these last months,
 and now he's even very short of them.
 I beg of you, have pity on him now.

³ In Siena, BCI, MS I.ii.33, fol. 11v, the final stanza reads:

Dear sons, I want you now to hear these words
 your loving father's written down for you:
 May each of you always find happiness
 within the grace of God that is so sweet.
 And now one more instruction for you all:
 that you should always choose humility.
 Abase yourselves and you will be exalted;
 exalt yourselves and you will be abased.

⁴ The *laude* was enormously popular. The tune is one of the *canzoni a ballo* that Benedetto Dei knew by heart (Benedetto Dei, *La cronica dall'anno 1400 all'anno 1500*, a cura di Roberto Barducci, Florence: Papafava, 1984, p. 183; F. Luisi, 'Minima fiorentina. Sonetti a mente, canzoni a ballo e cantimpanca nel Quattrocento, in *Musica Franca: Essays in Honor of Frank D'Accone*, ed. I. Alm, A. McLamore, and C. Reardon, Dtuyvesant, NY, Pendragon, 1996, pp. 89-90). It is included in 1485 edition of *Laude (Laude facte e composte da più persone spirituali*, Florence, Francesco Bonaccorsi, 1485/6) where it is attributed to Piero di Mariano Muzi with the indication there is that it is to be sung to the tune of another *ballata grande*, 'Deh sappiatevi guardare / O garzon, di non tór moglie.' That tune does not survive, but in a later edition, *Laude facte & composte da piu persone spirituali ... a petitione di ser Piero Pacini da Pescia* [Florence: Bartolomeo de' Libri, after 1507], the *cantasi come* reads: 'Cantasi come 'De sappiatevi guardare, O garzon, di non tor moglie' e come 'Horamai sono in eta[de]', c. e8'. On this text see Blake Wilson, '“Hora mai sono in età”: Savonarola and Music in Laurentian Florence', in *Una città e il suo profeta: Firenze di fronte a Savonarola*, atti del convegno internazionale, Florence, 10-13 dicembre 1998, ed. G. C. Garfagnini, Florence: SISMEL, 2001, pp. 283-309. According to Giulio Cattin, this second *ballata grande* is a *travestimento* of another yet anonymous *canzonetta* 'Hora may che fora son | non voio esser più monica', for which music does survive in Madrid, Escorial, MS IV.a.24, ff. 90v-91r.