

King Lear

Act II, sc. 4 (line 68 – Prose/Verse)

FOOL

We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it: but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,

And follows but for form,

Will pack when it begins to rain,

And leave thee in the storm,

But I will tarry; the fool will stay,

And let the wise man fly:

The knave turns fool that runs away;

The fool no knave, perdy.