

1. kind
2. gentle
3. dear
4. wish
5. watch
6. dismay
7. sudden
8. intern
9. gull
10. harrow
11. bounce
12. spoil
13. stress
14. sweet
15. burn

16. shiver

17. lock
18. original
19. try
20. chaste

A word on words: many of these were chosen for their long history, their evolution and devolution, what is bound into them and also forgotten by them. Many are the simplest words, drawn through the Anglo Saxon and Teutonic etymological heritage, but the difference between these and the legalistic or hierarchical experiences embedded in Latinate and French words is also registered through the inclusion of a few examples of the latter. I gave the single words to Barry as a skeletal genealogy for this performance, but also provided the etymologies to show how strong a frame our shared and mostly unrecognised linguistic history can provide. The actors could improvise on or around these words, enjoying the freedom to explore new genealogies through movement, speech and echo; but as for any actor in the theatre of language, cliché and custom inevitably restrain that freedom, and gestures towards innovation are recognisable because they are haunted by histories both foreign and the familiar. The histories of these words remind us of the ancient interplay between intimacy and exclusivity, the security of the linguistic tribe in the watches of the night, which still might be driving us into darkness. They trace the moveable boundary between generation and violence, value and price, love and harm.

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1. Kind From Old English, signifying kinship, rights, the inner nature or outer disposition, generations: and only in the 13th century does the kindness of sympathy begin to emerge. To whom are we kind?

2. Gentle And so also *gentle* Latinized, from *gens*, the tribe, through the Old French, a conqueror's word that institutes class, hierarchies, status: the gentle falcon, an excellent breed. This is polite language, for the relations of obsequiousness, a form of intimacy predicated on separation: gentle reader. 'Of an animal: tame, easily managed.' 'Of persons: mild.' To ingratiate ourselves with our superiors, and lay claim through behaviour to membership in the tribe.

3. Dear Another ancient word. from the Old English, and low and high Old German, through middle Dutch, Teutonic, Saxon: glory, high value; dearth. The law of supply and demand. Glory and cost. "The earlier sense was that of 'esteemed, valued', rather than loved." Is our affection determined by the rarity of its object, and the anticipation of loss?

4. Wish Desires for what may happen, might prove so, 'often implying some want of confidence or fear of the opposite', an unrealized or unrealizable desire. Occult influences, bewitching. Three wishes. "I wish I may". Wishing on a star. "Bot if mi wishes myhte availe, I wolde it were a groundles pet." 'At high wish': at the height of the fulfilment of one's wishes. An object of desire.

5. Watch To stay awake, in religious meditation, with the sick or the dead, or like the nightingale. In the dark watches of the night: the vigilance of the tribe. "A vicious turning of the night into day, 'chambering'." A feudal obligation, to watch and ward. From that meditative, vigilant watching of the dark, we turned to the clockface, hair-sprung time strapped to our body. Surveillance, 'implying the intent to attack or capture': watch out, of the trap, the trick. Do we watch to provide care, or for an opportunity to do you in?

6. Dismay Associated with the Spanish and Portuguese; to swoon. Radical loss of heart, which makes my body give way. "I wander as in darknesse of the night, / Affrayd of every dangers least dismay." Older forms are transitive: 'to deprive of moral courage'; 'to appal or paralyze with fear or the feeling of being undone'; 'to defeat or rout by sudden onslaught.' The loss of hope as a physical attack by my enemies.

7. Sudden An old French derivation, from the Latin *subite*, to go stealthily, under the radar. Unprovided for, unexpected events; sudden turnings, even in plants and animals' structure. Physical objects that appear from nowhere: "Ther come a sodayne armye upon this londe by see or by lande." Maladies: speedy, prompt, immediate, "Obs. exc. death". 'Of the eye: glancing quickly.'

8. Intern Latinate word, to turn inward, internal; "an inmate, as of a school". 'To enter or pearce into ones minde secretly': to become incorporated with another being, to confine to a place. The body as that place of confinement, of mysterious and sudden ruptures and invasion, where the other - disease, loved object, container - is kept. To imprison; also to work for free, of one's own volition, to be accommodated as a junior.

9. Gull Welsh, Breton or Cornish word? Compare the Breton *goelaff*, to weep. The long-winged bird of the family *Laridae*, associated with greed. "Cormerauntes, greedy gullcs; yea, men that would eate up menne, women, and children, are the causes of Sedition!" Yellow, pale. To swallow, to guzzle. Of water: to make channels, wear down, wear out. An unfledged bird, and a simpleton or unsuspecting person, not on his watch. A trick. A cheat. The throat.

10. Harrow A heavy frame set with teeth, used to break up clods in the ploughed earth. The simple revenge on working land. A diagonal arrangement of soldiers; also migratory fowl in the air – combing the earth and sky, breaking up its resistance. Cutting through the substance, ‘to lacerate or wound the feelings of; to vex’. Harrowing words, which make me feel raked through, my nerves separated and snapping. To castrate. A cry of distress, a call for succour. ‘To cry harrow’ on anyone is to denounce them. A related word: *Harry*: Old Nick, playing with the devil. To overrun, ravage, lay waste, sack, pillage, spoil. As Christ did in hell: harassing, robbing birds’ nests. To worry, ravish, plunder. The attack in all its stages, from invasion, through mental torment and physical violations, through to carrying away the spoils. The age of iron, when the earth refuses to yield its fruits except with violence.

11. Bounce An obscure word, onomatopoeic. At first, it is a heavy blow: “He gave her a bounce Full upon the gorge.” How many of these words contain violence, especially towards women? And then it is the noise which attends an explosion, the burst in air: “He speakes plaine Cannon fire, and smoake, and bounce.” This hot air becomes rhetorical: a boast, a swagger. “Early in 16th cen. we find the interjectional use of *bounce* to imitate the report of a gun”. Only much later does it mean to bound like a ball. ‘In early use *To bounce it* (said of a woman dancing)’. Imitating the sound of a gun, the report, thumping the ground.

12. Spoil To the victor go the spoils. Even of the law? ‘The public offices, or positions of emolument, distributed among the supporters of a successful political party on its accession to power. Chiefly U.S.’ The stripped-off skin of an animal, a snake; *spolia opima*. The uneaten parts. That which is taken is of no use. To unclothe, strip the clothes away, to be made useless, ‘to ruin in respect of commerce or trade’. ‘To injure by over-indulgence; to treat with excessive kindness.’

13. Stress An aphetic form of distress? The meaning has also adopted the Old French sense of narrowness, straitness, from Latin *strictus*. Hardship, adversity, affliction; 'to effect ravages', to summon to undergo trial. Physical suffering: wherever the land can suffer, so can the body. To force, pressure or compel; to torture (chiefly *U.S.*). A strong blast of wind. In argument: the weight of evidence, the insistence or emphasis, where everything in the trial hinges. Stress house: a house of detention, lock-up. To abridge the liberty, incarcerate; to tax or burden. Of tears: to burst forth, gush. Also poetic emphasis. Metaphoric meanings dilute the rough violence of language?

14. Sweet Another complex of etymologies, including Indo-european *swad*, Sanskrit *svadus*, Greek, Latin, Gothic... Pleasing to the taste, especially 'having the characteristic flavour (ordinarily pleasant when not in excess) of sugar, honey, and many ripe fruits, which corresponds to one of the primary sensations of taste.' A favourite of proverbs: "Hungur makyth harde bonys sweete." Not corrupt, putride, sour or stale; free from taint; wholesome. Fresh not salt water, unleavened bread, fresh milk, harmonious music. Lovely to the senses - from the primary sense of taste, meanings spread (atrophy) toward the adult's reliance on sight. An epithet expressive of the speaker's personal feelings as to the attractiveness of the object. Easily managed. Dearly loved, prized, precious; gracious, benign. To be smitten with. The infant understands the world by trying to incorporate it, putting objects in its mouth. The desire to consume.

15. Burn A lost meaning from the Old Teutonic is 'spring, fountain', stream or brook. It can also be a contracted form of burden. 'The act or effect of burning; especial an injury to the body caused by burning; a burnt place.' Fire and water. '*Skin and birn*': 'the whole of anything'. An ancient root, coming all the way from Aryan **bhren*. "the state of activity characteristic of fire'. Is it the wood, or the flame which is burning? 'Of the passions, as love, wrath, etc.; also *poet.* of a battle.' To glow,

pant, desire ardently. The threat of being consumed by what we desire to consume. Of money: the owner is eager to spend it. Of water: in a violent agitation (rare). Of the sea: to be phosphorescent. Of crops: to be withered by the sun. Of deities: to make a burnt offering. Food which is spoiled by overcooking. With metonymy of the object: *To burn a country*, i.e. to set fire to all objects on the surface of the ground.

16. Shiver Teutonic root *skif*, to split. A fragment, chip, splinter; broken into small pieces. Shiver me timbers. “The Moncks and Abbots of my knowledge, cut large shivers of the loafer for which they never sweate, to make themselves strong in the peoples favour and opinion.” The breastplate of a plough. Trembling, especially of the body under the influence of cold, emotion, etc. “It may doubtfully be suggested that the word may originally have had reference to the chattering of the teeth from cold, and that with the app. synonymous *chivel* v. it is connected with the early ME *cheovele*, *chefle* to wag the jaws, chatter.” To pour forth with a trembling motion. To shake in the wind. To quiver, tremble with a shaking motion.

17. Lock Compare the Old Norse, *lykkja*, loop, bend. A tress, the portion of hair which naturally divides itself. ‘Fickly under her lock’: having guile in her head. A lovelock, an artificial tress of hair; a tuft of wool. The great diversity of meanings in the Teutonic words suggests two or more independent but formally identical substantival formations from the root. A contrivance for fastening. “Godes engel undyde ða locu ðaes cwearternes”. A hobble or a shackle on a horse’s hoof to stop it straying. In fire-arms, the piece of mechanism by means of which the charge is exploded. A grapple or trick in wrestling. A hospital for the treatment of venereal diseases. A receiver of stolen goods. To shut up or confine. To enclose, hem in, surround. To lock horns (chiefly U.S.). To turn a person out, bar the door against him. Keeping out or keeping in?

18. Original From the Latin *originem*, beginning, source; from *ori-ri*, to arise. Arising or springing from something. Particular ancestor, race, descent, extraction, parentage; source. The proximal or more fixed end or attachment of a muscle. “What are those dolefull tunes, but offsprings of pensive furies, and origins of more vehement melancholie fits?” Original sin: the innate depravity, corruption, or evil tendency of man’s nature, in all individuals of the human race, held to be inherited from Adam in consequence of the fall. Opposed to actual sin. Applied to anything in relation to that which is a representation or reproduction of it. First-hand. The valued original: not an imitation, just as ‘all individuals’ are original in their common sinfulness?

19. Try From the old French, and medieval Latin *triare*: to sift or pick out. The legal use appears to have been developed in Anglo-French, where it is known c. 1280; the origin of the French word is unknown. To separate; distinguish, set apart. To choose. To separate the good part of the thing from the rest. To extract, separate metal from the ore, refine, purify by fire. To extract oil from fat by heat, to melt down. To search out something secret by examination. To test the goodness, strength, value of, persons or things. To have experience of. To venture. Trans., to attempt or solicit (a woman); to endeavour to seduce, also of a stallion, to attempt to cover a mare. Purification, testing, experiment, by which we try others first, then later ourselves.

20. Chaste Via the Old French from Latin *castus*, pure, holy. Continent, virtuous. Celibate, single, pertaining to sexual purity. Undeclared, decent; restrained; modest; Pure in artistic or literary style. *Agnus Castus*: the chaste tree, or chaste lamb. ‘It is called agnos that is chaste because weomen kepinge chastite in the sacrifices of Ceres used to straw this bushe upon the ground.’ To correct or amend by discipline, to bring up under restraint. To reprove, rebuke. Tranquillize. ‘Let me not name it to you, you chaste starres’.