



P E N G U I N



C L A S S I C S

JOHN WEBSTER AND JOHN FORD

*The Duchess of Malfi, The White Devil,
The Broken Heart and 'Tis Pity She's a Whore*



John Webster
and John Ford

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI,
THE WHITE DEVIL,
THE BROKEN HEART
AND
'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

Edited and introduced by Jane Kingsley-Smith



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THE DUCHESS OF MALFI, THE WHITE DEVIL, THE BROKEN HEART AND
'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

JOHN WEBSTER was born in about 1578 in the parish of St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, London, the eldest son of a prosperous coachmaker. He probably attended Merchant Taylors' School, before studying law at the Middle Temple, where he developed the rhetorical skills needed for a life in the theatre. His writing career was mainly collaborative, beginning with a tragedy, *Caesar's Fall* (c. 1602, now lost), in which Anthony Munday, Thomas Middleton and Michael Drayton all had a hand, and ranging across a number of genres, including popular history (*Lady Jane I and II*, 1602), city comedy (*Westward Ho*, 1604), tragicomedy (*The Devil's Law-Case*, c. 1618) and civic pageantry (*Monuments of Honour*, 1624). Yet it was his two solo-authored tragedies, *The White Devil* (1612) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614), which sealed his reputation. There are no records of theatrical output between 1605 and 1612, though we know that in 1606 he married Sara Peniall, who was seven months pregnant, and they had at least four children. It may be that during this time Webster was labouring over his two greatest plays. He was clearly aggrieved at the negative reaction to *The White Devil* when it was first performed at the Red Bull Theatre by the Queen Anne's Men to an unenthusiastic audience. However, *The Duchess of Malfi*, performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars Theatre two years later, was an instant success. Despite this new fame, Webster continued to collaborate with all the major dramatists of the time and to work in genres other than tragedy until his death in the 1630s.

JOHN FORD was born in April 1586 in Ilsington, Devon, the second son of a wealthy landowner. We know very little about his life. He may have attended Exeter College, Oxford, before

studying law at the Middle Temple in London, an association he seems to have continued throughout his life. His first published work was an elegy entitled *Fame's Memorial* (1606) and his early career was wholly concerned with poetry and philosophical works. It was not until the 1620s that he began writing for the stage, collaborating with the more experienced dramatist Thomas Dekker on plays including *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) and a masque, *The Sun's Darling* (1624), and developing his connection with the King's Men by completing John Fletcher's *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (1626) with Webster and Philip Massinger. In the late 1620s Ford began writing alone, producing the eight plays on which his reputation is based. The precise dating of these works remains unknown, but the first three were probably *The Lover's Melancholy* (c. 1628), *The Broken Heart* (c. 1629) and *Beauty in a Trance* (c. 1630, now lost), performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars Theatre. Ford then changed his allegiance to the Queen Henrietta's Men at the Cockpit Theatre, Drury Lane, for whom he wrote *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (c. 1630), *Love's Sacrifice* (c. 1632), *Perkin Warbeck* (c. 1633) and *The Fancies, Chaste and Noble* (c. 1635). What looks like Ford's last play, *The Lady's Trial* (1638), was performed at the Cockpit by Beeston's Boys, after which nothing more of him is known.

JANE KINGSLEY-SMITH studied English at Oriel College, Oxford, and completed her PhD at the Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. She is the author of two monographs: *Shakespeare's Drama of Exile* (Palgrave, 2003) and *Cupid in Early Modern Literature and Culture* (Cambridge, 2010), and is currently editing *Love's Labour's Lost* for the new Norton Shakespeare. She is a Reader at Roehampton University, London, and a regular guest speaker at Shakespeare's Globe.

Chronology

c. 1578 John Webster born in Smithfield, London, the first son of John Webster Snr.

1586 John Ford baptized on 12 April at Ilsington, Devon, second son of Thomas Ford and Elizabeth Popham.

1598 Webster admitted to the Middle Temple, London, to study law.

1601 Ford matriculates at Exeter College, Oxford.

c. 1602 Webster collaborates on *Caesar's Fall* (with Anthony Munday, Thomas Middleton and Michael Drayton), *Lady Jane I and II* (with Thomas Dekker) and *Christmas Comes but Once a Year* (with Thomas Heywood), all lost.

Webster contributes a commendatory poem to Munday's translation of *Palmerin of England*, Part III.

Ford admitted to the Middle Temple, London, to study law.

1603 Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James I.

1604 Webster writes the Induction and other additions for a revised version of John Marston's *The Malcontent*, performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars Theatre.

Westward Ho by Webster and Dekker first performed by Paul's Boys.

Webster contributes a commendatory poem to Stephen Harrison's *Arches of Triumph*.

1605 *Northward Ho* by Webster and Dekker first performed by Paul's Boys.

Ford suspended from the Middle Temple for failure to pay his buttery bill.

1606 In March Webster marries Sara Peniall, aged seventeen and pregnant with their first child, John Webster Jnr, born in May 1606.

Ford publishes *Fame's Memorial*, an elegy for Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, dedicated to his widow, Penelope, *née* Devereux.

Ford publishes *Honour Triumphant*, a prose pamphlet dedicated to the Countesses of Pembroke and Montgomery.

1607 Publication of Webster and Dekker's *Westward Ho*, *Northward Ho* and *Sir Thomas Wyatt* (based on *Lady Jane*).

1608 Ford readmitted to the Middle Temple.

1610 Death of Ford's father; he inherits £ 10.

1612 Webster's *The White Devil* performed by the Queen Anne's Men at the Red Bull Theatre in Clerkenwell and published the same year.

Webster contributes prefatory poems to Heywood's *An Apology for Actors*.

Death of Henry, Prince of Wales. Webster publishes an elegy for him entitled *A Monumental Column*.

1613 Ford publishes a Stoic tract, *The Golden Mean*, dedicated to the imprisoned Earl of Northumberland.

Ford publishes the long poem *Christ's Bloody Sweat*, dedicated to the Earl of Pembroke.

Ford's comedy *An Ill Beginning Has a Good End* (now lost) performed at the Cockpit Theatre.

1614 Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars Theatre and the Globe Theatre.

Webster writes *The Guise* (now lost).

Death of Webster's father.

1615 Webster contributes thirty-two characters to the sixth edition of Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters*.

Webster claims membership of the Merchant Taylors' Company.

Ford's work (perhaps an elegy or pamphlet) *Sir Thomas Overbury's Ghost* (now lost) entered into the Stationers' Register.

1616 Death of William Shakespeare.

Death of Francis Beaumont.

Death of Ford's elder brother Henry, leaving Ford with an annuity of £ 20.

Ford contributes an elegy to the new edition of *Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife*.

1617 Ford reprimanded by the Middle Temple for demonstrating against wearing lawyers' caps in hall.

1618 Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* performed at court, before the Venetian ambassador, Orazio Busino.

Webster's *The Devil's Law-Case* perhaps first performed by the Queen Anne's Men, probably at the Cockpit Theatre.

Execution of Sir Walter Raleigh.

1620 Ford publishes a neo-Stoic pamphlet, *A Line of Life*, dedicated to Sir James Hay, the son-in-law of the Earl of Northumberland.

1621 Webster collaborates with Middleton on *Anything for a Quiet Life*.

The Witch of Edmonton, a tragedy by Ford, Dekker and William Rowley, first performed.

1623 Publication of Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, with a commendatory verse by Ford, and *The Devil's Law-Case*.

The Spanish Gipsy by Ford, Middleton and Rowley first performed.

The Welsh Ambassador by Ford and Dekker first performed.

The Laws of Candy by Ford and John Fletcher first performed.

Webster and Ford contribute commendatory verses to Henry Cockeram's *English Dictionary*.

1624 Webster collaborates with Ford, Dekker and Rowley on *The Late Murder of the Son upon the Mother, or Keep the Widow Waking* (now lost).

Ford's *The London Merchant* (now lost) first performed.

Ford and Dekker's *The Bristol Merchant* and *The Fairy Knight* (both now lost) first performed.

Ford and Dekker's *The Sun's Darling*, a masque (now lost) first performed at the Cockpit Theatre.

Webster writes the pageant *Monuments of Honour* for the inauguration of Lord Mayor, Sir John Gore, of the Merchant Taylors' Company.

1625 Death of James I; accession of Charles I.

Webster and Rowley collaborate on *A Cure for a Cuckold*.

Death of Fletcher. His *The Fair Maid of the Inn* completed by Webster, Ford and Philip Massinger.

1627 Webster collaborates with Heywood on the tragedy *Appius and Virginia*.

1628 Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy* first performed at the Blackfriars and Globe theatres by the King's Men.

Ford publishes commendatory verses to Shirley's *The Wedding* and Massinger's *The Roman Actor*.

1629 Publication of Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*, his first surviving independent play.

Ford's *The Broken Heart* probably first performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars Theatre.

1630 Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* perhaps first performed by Queen Henrietta's Men at the Cockpit Theatre in Drury Lane.

Ford's *Beauty in a Trance* (now lost) perhaps first performed.

Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* revived by the King's Men for performance in theatres and at court.

1632 Ford's *Love's Sacrifice* perhaps first performed.

Ford publishes commendatory verses to Richard Brome's *The Northern Lass*.

1633 Publication of Ford's *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*.

Ford's *Perkin Warbeck* perhaps first performed.

c. **1634** Death of Webster, in his mid-fifties.

Publication of Ford's *Perkin Warbeck*.

1635 Ford's *The Fancies, Chaste and Noble* perhaps first performed.

1636 Publication of Ford's commendatory verses to Massinger's *The Great Duke of Florence* and Charles Saltonstall's *The Navigator*.

1637 Death of Ben Jonson.

1638 Publication of Ford's *The Fancies, Chaste and Noble*.

Ford's *The Lady's Trial* first performed by Beeston's Boys at the Cockpit Theatre.

Ford publishes a tribute to Ben Jonson in the collection *Jonsonus Virbius*.

1639 Death of Massinger.

Publication of Ford's *The Lady's Trial*. Nothing more is heard of Ford.

1640 Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* published again.

1642 English Civil War begins. Closure of the London theatres.

1649 Execution of Charles I.

1653 Anonymous publication of Ford's *The Queen*.

Note on the Texts

All four plays have been edited from the earliest quartos, in consultation with modern editions. Spelling and punctuation have been modernized throughout, with any significant changes (for example, where the spelling of characters' names differs from editorial tradition) indicated in the notes. Where the quarto includes massed entries (a notable feature of Webster's plays) these have been divided up, with the originals available for consultation in the Textual Variants. Act and scene divisions have been imposed as consistent with editorial tradition. All additional stage directions are indicated by square brackets.

The White Devil was prepared from the 1612 Quarto in the Bodleian Library, STC 25178, in consultation with *John Webster: Three Plays*, ed. D. C. Gunby (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972, repr. 1987); *The Works of John Webster*, 3 vols, ed. David Gunby, David Carnegie and MacDonald P. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007–8); Christina Luckyj (ed.), *The White Devil* (London: A & C Black, 1996, rev. 2008); René Weis (ed.), *The Duchess of Malfi and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Martin Wiggins, 'Notes on Editing Webster', *Notes and Queries* 240 (1995), pp. 369–77.

The Duchess of Malfi was edited from the 1623 Quarto, British Library copy, STC 25176, in consultation with *John Webster: Three Plays*, ed. D. C. Gunby (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972, repr. 1987); Brian Gibbons (ed.), *The Duchess of Malfi* (London: A & C Black, 1964, repr. 2001); *The Works of John Webster*, 3 vols, ed. David Gunby, David Carnegie and

MacDonald P. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007–8); René Weis (ed.), *The Duchess of Malfi and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Martin Wiggins, ‘Notes on Editing Webster’, *Notes and Queries* 240 (1995), pp. 369–77.

The Broken Heart is based on the 1633 Quarto, STC 11156, British Library copy, and has been checked against the 1652 *Comedies, Tragi-Comedies and Tragedies* by John Ford, Wing (2nd ed.)/F1466 A, National Library of Scotland. Modern texts consulted are Brian Morris (ed.), *The Broken Heart* (London: A & C Black, 1994); T. J. B. Spencer (ed.), *The Broken Heart* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980); and Marion Lomax (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

'Tis Pity She's a Whore was edited from the 1633 Quarto, STC 11165, Huntingdon Library, and has been checked against the 1652 *Comedies, Tragi-Comedies and Tragedies* by John Ford, Wing (2nd ed.)/F1466 A, National Library of Scotland. It is also indebted to Brian Gibbons (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (London: A & C Black, 1968); Marion Lomax (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Martin Wiggins (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (London: A & C Black, 2003); and Sonia Massai (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (London: Methuen, 2011).

Introduction

In the first printed edition of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623) we find a brief eulogy by his fellow dramatist John Ford, praising it as a 'masterpiece'. Ford makes no mention of having seen the play in performance, nor does he imply any personal relationship with Webster – no account of the dramatists' meeting survives. Yet their professional careers and, perhaps less advantageously, their critical reputations would thereafter be intertwined.

In 1624 Webster and Ford worked on a play with Thomas Dekker and William Rowley, entitled *The Late Murder of the Son upon the Mother, or Keep the Widow Waking*. Perhaps they collaborated in person, though they may equally have written their parts of the manuscript alone. A curious hybrid of comedy and tragedy, the play (now lost) exemplifies both Webster's and Ford's interest in making sensational drama out of real events – here, the abduction and forced marriage of sixty-two-year-old widow Anne Elsdon, and the matricide committed by Nathaniel Tindall, both of which occurred just a few months before the play was performed. So painfully recent was the memory, that Anne's son-in-law tried to prosecute the dramatists for libel.¹ In the following year, Webster and Ford worked together again on John Fletcher's tragicomedy *The Fair Maid of the Inn* – another lost (though less controversial) play. But a subtler kind of collaboration, about which we have more detail, is the influence on Ford's dramatic work of Webster's two great single-authored tragedies, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. Ford's *Love's Sacrifice* opens with the same shocked response to banishment as *The White Devil*; Orgilus in Ford's *The Broken*

Heart dies quoting Webster's Flaminio: 'A mist hangs o'er mine eyes' (5.2); and there may be an allusion to *The Duchess of Malfi* in Giovanni's presentation of a dagger to his sister in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. As one critic has observed, 'in both contexts the giving of an unsheathed weapon signals the dangerous and unhealthy implications of a sexual relation between siblings and ironically foreshadows the violent cruelty to come'.² But if there are intriguing verbal and thematic links between Webster and Ford, perhaps their most enduring association has been created by their detractors.

Since the early nineteenth century both dramatists have been accused of the same crimes, most notably plagiarism, amorality and technical incompetence. Webster and Ford wrote for the King's Men, Shakespeare's company, at a time when its most celebrated playwright was either reducing his theatrical output or dead (see *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Broken Heart* respectively), but Shakespeare remained a tyrannical presence, compelling his successors to remember and revisit his works. Hence, *The White Devil* borrows from *Antony and Cleopatra*, with additional scenes from *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, and *'Tis Pity* rewrites *Romeo and Juliet*. For subsequent critics, this created the impression that Webster and Ford were decadent (i.e., operating after the great age of tragedy) and imaginatively defunct. More damaging than the charge of plagiarism has been that of amorality. In 1856 the novelist Charles Kingsley complained of all Jacobean tragedians (excluding only Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and Philip Massinger) that 'Revenge, hatred, villainy, incest and murder upon murder are their constant themes ... and they handle these horrors with little or no moral purpose, save that of exciting and amusing the audience.'³ Not only are Webster and Ford frequently blamed for being too sympathetic to their protagonists ('He draws this hero and heroine as if he loved them'),⁴ but they also notoriously fail to uphold the illusion of a moral universe or to reach any clear moral conclusions,

creating ‘a world in which no set of values is shown to be the “right” one, no attitude as intrinsically better than any other’.⁵ For an earlier generation of critics, these omissions were not just socially irresponsible, but potentially anarchic.⁶ Ford’s reputation has suffered particularly through his being made to represent the ‘decadent’ Caroline theatre, whose moral and political disengagement was considered one of the factors that led to the English Civil War (1642–9).⁷ Finally, both playwrights are found wanting in terms of dramatic structure and characterization. Charles R. Forker observes that *The White Devil* is ‘crammed with incidents that seem discontinuous, interruptive, tonally inconsistent with each other, even functionally gratuitous’;⁸ and both playwrights seem to struggle with Act Five, in which the piling-up of corpses after a protagonist’s death in Act Four (see *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Broken Heart*) has felt, to some critics, disappointingly random and chaotic.⁹ Of a piece with this is the sense that characters are fragmented, inconsistent and unconvincing. When George Bernard Shaw described Webster as the ‘Tussaud laureate’,¹⁰ he was not only condemning the dramatist’s amoral sensationalism (typified by the wax figures in *The Duchess of Malfi*), but also criticizing the lifelessness of his characters. Similarly, Ford’s protagonists have been seen to possess ‘a certain ethereal indistinctness as of figures passing in mist’,¹¹ and the dearth of soliloquies in his plays has been attributed to his lack of interest in psychology.

In the last fifty years the renewed popularity of Webster and Ford in the theatre has been complemented by a critical re-evaluation. Their reworking of Shakespeare is now more often attributed to a creative ingenuity, which challenges audience expectations, rather than to mere slavish devotion. For example, Ford invokes the innocent lovers destroyed by fate from *Romeo and Juliet* in order to raise questions about the moral guilt or innocence of the incestuous couple in *'Tis Pity*

She's a Whore. The dramatists' reputations for amorality have also been revised. Having claimed that Webster and Ford 'do not think on moral issues', David L. Frost argues in their defence that neither dramatist intended to write 'moral tragedy'. At the same time, he perceives them as 'oppressed by the hopeless complication and ambiguity of moral issues', exploring with visceral terror 'the impermanence and fluidity of things'.¹² The defence of Webster's and Ford's bloody and horrifying visual images – such as Annabella's heart on a dagger or the waxworks in *The Duchess of Malfi* – has also proved crucial to this re-evaluation. No longer deemed simply gratuitous, they are understood within a moral and philosophical framework, familiar to an early modern audience with a taste for reading emblems. As Richard Madelaine has shown, '[Ford's] stage images are usually carefully prepared for in terms of theme, character and verbal and visual imagery ... he is never at *heart* a mere sensationalist.'¹³ Finally, 'flaws' in structure and characterization tend now to be perceived as deliberate artistic choices. Rather than deplore the absence of a linear plot, Christina Luckyj identifies in Webster's work a concentric structure, created by patterns of repetition, which de-emphasizes causation and deepens tragic effect: 'a single idea is turned over and over, gaining in intensity and clarity as it is repeated and expanded.'¹⁴ Inconsistencies in characterization reflect the economic and social pressures on the early modern individual (particularly the effects of patriarchy on women), which prevented them from achieving a stable sense of self. As Martin Wiggins observes: '[Webster's] tragedies deal with people who cannot direct their own lives, cannot make their own choices. His theme is, so to speak, the "subjectivity of the subjected".'¹⁵ Hence, the elusiveness of Vittoria in *The White Devil* – a character who never reveals 'a "real", inner self'¹⁶ – is partly explained by the hostile, misogynist world in which she lives.

This edition groups together the four major tragedies of John Webster and John Ford – *The White Devil*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Broken Heart* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* – in the belief that, despite being written in the Jacobean and Caroline periods respectively, when read side by side they illuminate one another. Three out of four of these plays are based on true events in sixteenth-century Italy, although viewed from a distinctly Reformation perspective, hence the casting of cardinals and friars as villains and a morbid fascination with confession.¹⁷ They also exploit English assumptions about Italian vices – defined as violent sexual jealousy, ingenuity in murder and political hypocrisy or Machiavellianism¹⁸ – although both dramatists also refer satirically to contemporary English politics. Webster's plays, for example, are fascinated by the moral and fiscal corruption of the court of James I (1603–25) and by the disappointments of a new class of university-educated men, denied the opportunities for social advancement which humanism had promised.¹⁹

All four plays are indebted to Elizabethan revenge tragedy, in which a terrible crime must be avenged, despite the fact that the perpetrator is a powerful figure whose punishment will 'fall on th'inventors' heads' (*Hamlet*, 5.2.328). But while they deploy some revenge tragedy conventions, these later plays also stand sceptically and even mockingly apart from them. We might compare Shakespeare's Hamlet – a self-conscious but deeply troubled revenger – with Webster's witty Francisco, who declares: 'My tragedy must have some idle mirth in't, / Else it will never pass' (4.1.116–7). If the revenger here has lost interest in his own dilemma, this is partly because the focus has shifted to the female protagonist. Both Webster and Ford are deeply invested in the tragic potential of women – something that Webster helped to define for Ford – moving away from the spectacle of patient suffering to a more dynamic and morally ambiguous female agency.²⁰

Finally, three out of these four tragedies approach, with fascinated prurience, the possibility of incest between brother and sister. This finds its fullest (and most sympathetic) treatment in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, but a sister's sexual rebellion also drives her brother to insanity in *The Duchess of Malfi*; and in *The Broken Heart* the accusation of incest between Penthea and Ithocles, although unfounded, might explain the motive for Ithocles's disastrous intervention in his sister's betrothal. While incest is partly an expression of the sexual vice habitually deplored in Jacobean and Caroline tragedy – *The Broken Heart's* Bassanes declares that all kinds of incest are fashionable ' 'mongst youths of mettle' (2.2.124) – the brother-sister relationship is viewed as particularly susceptible to abuse, given that, in the absence of the father, a brother may be placed as guardian over his sister's chastity. Bassanes's assumption that 'Brothers and sisters are but flesh and blood' (2.2.117) emphasizes the bodily possessiveness and the lack of differentiation that defines all of these relationships, not least because the siblings are also twins.

Having identified these areas of shared interest, we need now to consider the individual plays in more detail, for each one raises a particular set of questions and possesses its own unique dramatic power.

The White Devil

The White Devil was first performed by the Queen Anne's Men in 1612 at the Red Bull Theatre in Clerkenwell. It was the achievement of a long and focused effort. Webster seems not to have written anything else between 1605 and 1612, and he must have been ambitious for its success. However, the tragedy found little favour in performance and was published that same year – often a sign that its theatrical life was thought to be over. In the preface, Webster complains that the 'uncapable multitude' simply didn't understand it, and it may

have been ill-suited to the unsophisticated tastes of the Red Bull crowd. Yet *The White Devil* seems always to have provoked and unsettled its audiences.

The play is based on contemporary accounts of an affair between Paulo Giordano, Duke of Bracciano, and Vittoria Accoramboni, in Rome and Padua in the 1580s, which led to the murder of their spouses and their own deaths through retribution. Yet, as J. R. Mulryne observes, ‘Webster’s restless, mocking intelligence is ... continually modifying the great and passionate events his narrative offered him.’²¹ At first glance, the material obviously lends itself to revenge tragedy: in the first half of Webster’s play two murders are committed; in the second, these are avenged by four more deaths. Yet *The White Devil* does not allow the audience access to either the moral conviction or sympathetic engagement usually evoked by this genre. For a start, where the initial crime was expected to be of some magnitude in order to generate horror, and to justify the taking of unlawful revenge, Isabella’s death by kissing a picture and Camillo’s by vaulting horse are too ‘quaintly done’ (2.2.38) not to inspire admiration and even amusement. Pathos is deadened by how little we know of the victims and by the distancing effect of dumbshows, accompanied by music and perhaps applause, as Bracciano responds to his wife’s tragedy: ‘Excellent, then she’s dead’ (2.2.24). Other revenge conventions are similarly undermined. ‘It harrows me with fear and wonder,’ says Horatio of the ghost of Hamlet’s father (1.1.42), whereas Francisco finds Isabella’s mournful spirit a hindrance to his revenge and contemptuously banishes it from the stage (4.1.109–10). Moreover, the villains – Bracciano, Vittoria and Flaminio – seem to have displaced the righteous avenger in the audience’s sympathies; Francisco is ‘the ultimate horror – the spirit of carefully nurtured hatred, inhumanly Machiavellian and bloodlessly disengaged’,²² who yet survives them all.

The White Devil is similarly problematic as love tragedy, for its erotic embraces are not only fatal but repulsive. Thus, Francisco curses Bracciano and Vittoria: ‘Let him cleave to her and both rot together’ (2.1.397), while Bracciano shrugs off Isabella’s kisses: ‘Oh, your breath! / Out upon sweetmeats and continued physic – / The plague is in them!’ (2.1.165–7). Here, her excessive consumption of sweets disguises a voracious sexual appetite or it conceals actual bodily decay, both of which threaten to infect him with venereal disease. And yet *The White Devil*’s distrust of *eros* is not simply attributable to man’s terror of mortality, for which woman acts as a scapegoat.²³ Rather, the play’s compulsive horror of suffocation – whether it be Flaminio’s account of ‘the fellow was smothered in roses’ (1.2.148), Vittoria’s nightmare of being buried alive (1.2.235) or Bracciano’s strangling by a ‘true-love knot’ (5.3.169) – implies a deeper fear of erotic self-loss that afflicts both men and women. Whereas love tragedy offers a transcendent vision of the couple becoming one through sex and death, *The White Devil*’s lovers remain stubbornly separate and apart, and it is this, as much as their adulterous, murderous appetites, that inhibits the play’s romantic effect. Not only do Bracciano and Vittoria never have a scene alone together, but Vittoria’s emotional investment in her lover remains uncertain. She fails to mention him in her dying speech and by implication regrets ever having met him: ‘Oh, happy they that never saw the court, / Nor ever knew great man but by report’ (5.6.259–60).

The dangers of intimacy with great men extend beyond Vittoria to her siblings, Flaminio and Marcello, to their mother, Cornelia, and even to the audience. Flaminio is Bracciano’s secretary, a role defined by the production of written correspondence, but also the keeping of secrets. As Angel Day suggests in *The English Secretary* (1586, repr. 1599), it was often imagined spatially:

The *Closet* in everie house, as it is a reposement of secrets, so it is onelie ... at the owners, and no others commaundement. The *Secretorie*, as hee is a *keeper and conserver of secrets*: so is hee by his Lorde or Maister, and by none other to bee directed. To a *Closet*, there belongeth properlie a *doore*, a *locke*, and a *key*: to a *Secretorie*, there appertaineth incidentlie, *Honestie*, *Care* and *Fidelitie*.²⁴

Flaminio controls the space of the closet when he has Bracciano hide in one in 1.2, and when he attends secret talks there in 5.1. His fall from power is signalled by his being barred from the new Duke's presence 'and all rooms / That owe him reverence' (5.4.30–31). In fact, Flaminio's machinations have from the start been inspired by displacement: he explains early on that his father sold all his land in order to finance an extravagant lifestyle, thereby destroying not only the family's income but the foundation of its gentrified status (1.2.306–8).²⁵ When socially sanctioned methods of advancement fail, Flaminio, Marcello and Vittoria are lured into the morally corrupt world of the court, with its opportunities to become pimp, murderer and whore. Moreover, by becoming the repository or closet for the great man's secrets, Flaminio exposes himself to corruption from within. This is made particularly clear in *The Duchess of Malfi*, where the Cardinal warns Julia, his would-be 'secretary' (5.2.227), not to seek the cause of his melancholy: ' 'Tis a secret / That, like a ling'ring poison, may chance lie / Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence' (5.2.260–62). In fact, the Cardinal will not wait nearly so long – the only safe secretary is a dead secretary.

Intimacy with great men may also pose a threat to the audience. As Dena Goldberg has argued, we are cast in the roles of eavesdropper and voyeur: '*attendants*, who lurk in corridors waiting to be summoned, are dismissed when private interviews are to take place and sometimes ... find [ourselves], perhaps inadvertently, behind the arras.'²⁶ While the audience experiences no physical danger (unlike Polonius behind the arras), we may find ourselves morally compromised through

taking pleasure in the spectacle of murder without being sympathetically engaged with the victim. When the murderer, Flaminio, draws a curtain to watch Cornelia winding his brother's corpse he finds a 'tragic entertainment distilled (for his and our aesthetic delectation) from human suffering'.²⁷ The theatre's potential to arouse moral feeling ('I have a strange thing in me, to th'which / I cannot give a name, without it be / Compassion', 5.4.108–10) comes to nothing in the thrilling climax when Flaminio prepares to force his reward from Vittoria with a brace of pistols.

But if *The White Devil* does little to justify claims by early modern apologists that theatre inculcates virtue and warns against vice, it also comes closest to its own definition of virtue through the role-playing of its protagonists. In 'The Arraignment of Vittoria' – a scene so significant that Webster separated it off with this title in his manuscript – Vittoria's compelling performance in the part of slandered chastity makes us question what we have believed about her guilt, perhaps reinforcing suspicions of the play's amorality, and questioning the capacity of the stage to present truth.²⁸ Yet it also works to expose the hypocrisy of her accuser, Monticelso, and his pose of moral righteousness. We may well applaud Vittoria's courage in taking on a corrupt judge and challenging the assumption that female sexual appetite is a more serious crime than murder. Similarly, Flaminio's performance as tragic hero in the final scene wins our admiration, though such an accolade is almost entirely undeserved. Denied the possibility of redemption by his guilt and despair, Flaminio faces extinction unconsolated. Only the theatrical ability to fashion his own end seems to give him comfort, and when he utters the memorable lines, 'We cease to grieve, cease to be Fortune's slaves, / Nay, cease to die by dying' (5.6.250–1) he borrows some of the glamour of the suicidal tragic hero, even though he has done everything he can to avoid death, including faking it. The act of self-assertion alone attains some kind of moral

stature, in a nihilistic universe where not only Flaminio but all of Webster's characters must live and die 'in a mist' (5.6.258).

The Duchess of Malfi

Webster's next tragedy, *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614), may have overlapped with his composition of *The White Devil* or it might represent a revisiting of that play, for there are obvious similarities in terms of plotting and characterization. Once again we encounter two brothers in conflict with their sexually adventurous sister, and an ambitious malcontent who murders in the hope of a preferment that never comes. Only with *The Duchess of Malfi*, however, did Webster find immediate admiration and acclaim. The play was first acted at the Blackfriars, an indoor theatre whose intimate atmosphere may have been more suited to Webster's style, and by Shakespeare's celebrated company, the King's Men. That they did justice to Webster's most haunting protagonist is attested to by Thomas Middleton, who claims that not just this play, but this one character, has secured the playwright's immortality: 'Thy epitaph only the title be, / Write "Duchess" – that will fetch a tear for thee' (Quarto 1623).

The real-life tragedy of the Duchess Giovanna d'Ancona (d. 1512) had been retold in a number of Italian *novelle* and translated into English by William Painter in his *Palace of Pleasure*, vol. 2 (1567), before Webster turned to it as a source for his play. As its title suggests – 'The Infortunate marriage of a Gentleman, called *Antonie Bologna*, with the Duchesse of *Malfi*, and the pitifull death of them both' – the focus is on Antonio, who 'ought to have contented himself with that degree and honor that hee had acquired by his deedes and glory of his vertues'.²⁹ Webster rewrites the narrative from a female perspective, building upon the heroic agency with which he had imbued Vittoria in *The White Devil*. But where the latter's claim to luminosity – 'Through darkness diamonds

spread their richest light' (3.2.292) – finds few supporters, the Duchess's virtue does indeed shine brightly, to such an extent that Ferdinand cannot bear to look upon her corpse: 'Mine eyes dazzle' (4.2.252). This moral investment in the female protagonist results in a tragedy of sharper ethical distinctions, without compromising the complexity of the Duchess's character or the tensions she creates.

The Duchess 'is caught between classes, between sexes, between tenses; as a young widow, she has a past and seeks a future; as an aristocrat who is also royal, she is independent, politically central, a ruler; but as a woman she is marginal, subordinate, dependent'.³⁰ Critics disagree over the extent to which Webster intended audiences to blame the widowed Duchess for her secret marriage to a social inferior. Though widely practised, the remarriage of widows was much criticized in Jacobean England. Not only did it represent a slight to the memory of the first husband (if the wife could be unfaithful after his death she might have been unfaithful before it – see *Hamlet*), it was also viewed as having a deleterious effect on her children, who might lose or be forced to share their inheritance (again, see *Hamlet*). Given these disadvantages, the widow's motivation could only be sexual desire; as Ferdinand states: 'They are most luxurious / Will wed twice' (1.2.209–10). What makes the Duchess's situation worse is that her choice of second husband will impact upon her noble family and her kingdom. The fact that she marries a steward represents an assault on the class distinctions which define her own social status (her only given name is 'Duchess of Malfi'); and suggests a more visceral contamination, not only through the mingling of bloods associated with intercourse, but through the mixed-class, 'bastard' children conceived outside Church-sanctified wedlock.³¹ Though she confines Antonio's rule to the bedchamber, the Duchess is also guilty of a dereliction of political duty in raising such a man to power – the play's tentative arguments in favour of

meritocracy fail to convince: ‘The clandestine marriage is too brief, marked by adulterous shame, fertile but socially and affectively undeveloped, politically unregenerative, and always exploitative of Antonio, the alienated nocturnal sex worker who furtively exits before morning.’³² As this latter description implies, the Duchess is often perceived as an excessively sensual woman whose greedy devouring of apricots, nurtured in dung, indicates her selfish and base desires.

But although these attitudes are all represented in the play – by Bosola, the Cardinal, Ferdinand and the Duchess’s gentlewoman, Cariola – we also find powerful counter-arguments. Despite recycling much of *The White Devil*’s misogynist invective, the play invests both the Duchess’s pregnancy and the sexuality it manifests with transcendent value. For all the queasiness it provokes in Bosola, the Duchess’s pregnant body is a positive symbol of authority: ‘Her wholeness, equanimity and fecundity in contrast to her brothers’ mental and physical dysfunction suggests that she is the most able ruler among her siblings.’³³ The fact that her son with Antonio will be raised to the throne ‘In’s mother’s right’ (5.5.116) implies the triumph of matrilineal succession. At the same time, the play supports the Duchess’s commitment to private, domestic life, casting a roseate glow around the marital bedchamber and deepening the pathos of her death scene through the promptings of maternal love: ‘look thou giv’st my little boy / Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl / Say her prayers ere she sleep’ (4.2.193–5). Perhaps most remarkable is the play’s validation of the Duchess’s declared right to sexual fulfilment, and her refusal to be rendered cold, chaste (and effectively dead) by the tyranny of her brothers: ‘This is flesh and blood, sir; / ’Tis not the figure, cut in alabaster, / Kneels at my husband’s tomb’ (1.2.362–4). She becomes a ‘hero of desire’,³⁴ making political sacrifices and even risking her life for the sake of private pleasure.

Fundamental to the Duchess's inscription as a heroine are the villains who seek to destroy her, namely her brother Ferdinand and her servant Bosola. Although Ferdinand justifies his fascination with his sister's chastity in moral and political terms, it is disturbingly intrusive – he does not merely wish to know the secrets of her bedchamber, he physically appears there, having procured his own key. While this prurience exposes patriarchal assumptions about the need to supervise and control women's bodies, it also hints at Ferdinand's incestuous desire. Showing her their father's dagger as a warning against sexual transgression, he invites the Duchess to die upon its point (3.2.292), 'die' being a common term for orgasm. He later offers her a hand and a ring to kiss, pretending that these are his own 'love-token[s]' (4.1.46), before 'revealing' them to be the possessions of her husband, Antonio, in whose place he compulsively imagines himself. Finally, his affliction with lycanthropy, a disease brought on by lovesickness, sees him once again in darkness, digging up graves to discover not just the buried secret of his sister's murder but his own shocking motives for that murder. As the Duchess's twin, Ferdinand is her dark double. His violent erotic fantasies contrast with the Duchess's innocent marital flirtations; his Grand Guignol deceptions cast into relief her petty lies.

Where Ferdinand acts as an inverted image of the Duchess and must remain so, Bosola is profoundly altered by her death. Like Flaminio, Bosola is an intelligent man, disappointed in hopes to use his skills as a university graduate and soldier in the service of a worthy administration. Instead, he becomes a spy and assassin for not one but two corrupt princes. Too late he discovers that his quest for someone deserving of his loyalty should have been directed to the Duchess – the spectacle of her dead body being 'As direful to my soul as is the sword / Unto a wretch hath slain his father' (4.2.354–5). His ill-starred attempt to rescue Antonio expresses his desire

to fulfil the Duchess's wishes posthumously. Yet the spectacle of her death also has a powerful emotional and spiritual effect. She becomes an object of rapturous and implicitly erotic adoration when he offers to add colour to her pale lips with his heart's blood. She is also a saintly, intercessionary figure when she briefly comes to life: 'Her eye opes / And heaven in it seems to ope, that late was shut, / To take me up to mercy' (4.2.334–6). Bosola's sense of being haunted by the Duchess prompts a range of emotions to which he had appeared invulnerable: pity, compassion, love and penitence.³⁵ It is this capacity to feel which qualifies him to deliver the play's final maxim – so conspicuously missing from *The White Devil*. Thus, he urges: 'Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust/To suffer death or shame for what is just' (5.5.106–8), even as he acknowledges that for him the revelation comes too late.

The Broken Heart

To read Ford's *The Broken Heart* after Websterian tragedy is to experience the shock of virtue. As T. J. B. Spencer has observed: 'There are no villains in *The Broken Heart*.'³⁶ Rather, we find characters trying to resist the promptings of desire, hatred and revenge, in an effort which ironically proves as destructive as no resistance at all.

The play, first performed *c.* 1629 by the King's Men at the Blackfriars, might be considered Ford's most sophisticated and stylized work. The action centres on King Amyclas's court, where the courtiers speak a measured, ceremonial language (the play is entirely in verse, unusual for Ford). They also perform carefully choreographed gestures, often accompanied by music or elaborated into dance, suggesting the influence of the court masque. The mood is sombre – Amyclas twice observes that there should be more vivacity in his court – and the sense of action unfolding in 'slow motion',³⁷ not least through the use of onstage tableaux, expresses the 'ideas of

freezing, of immobility and of lifelessness',³⁸ which lie at the heart of this tragedy.

Ford pointedly locates the action in ancient Sparta, a culture much admired in the seventeenth century not only for the valour of its warriors but for its Stoic values, which included implacability in the face of misfortune and a repudiation of affectionate ties.³⁹ Self-control was highly valued, as was heroic constancy to a particular ideal of the self. In a situation in which one might be forced to act in contradiction of this self or in which control over the emotions was no longer possible, suicide was not only a noble but a necessary choice.⁴⁰ Thus, Ford has fashioned an intensely repressive world, in which outbursts of passionate feeling and violence are ideologically shocking. But this is also the setting for a kind of 'problem play'⁴¹ that questions the value of subduing passion.

The crime which impels this revenge tragedy has no political ramifications, but is a private matter of the heart: the forced separation of the betrothed couple, Penthea and Orgilus, and the former's marriage to a man she cannot love. The prologue hints at a historical source: 'What may be here thought a fiction, when Time's youth / Wanted some riper years was known *A Truth*' – perhaps the enforced marriage between Lady Penelope Devereux (most famous as Sir Philip Sidney's Stella) and Lord Rich in 1581.⁴² But where Penelope subsequently defied convention by conducting an adulterous relationship with Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy,⁴³ by whom she had at least four children, *The Broken Heart's* Penthea is ruinously faithful to her vows, both to her husband, Bassanes, and to her previously contracted lord, Orgilus, provoking a catastrophic self-division: 'For she that's wife to Orgilus, and lives / In known adultery with Bassanes, / Is at the best a whore' (3.2.74–6). Vying with Calantha to be the broken heart of the title, Penthea descends into madness and starves herself to death. And yet, despite being 'in appearance the most pathetic of seventeenth-century stage women, Penthea is

simultaneously the most ruthless'.⁴⁴ She punishes Bassanes by withholding her affection and aggressively performing the role of chaste and passive wife; she angrily spurns Orgilus, misrepresenting their entire romantic history as lust when he presses his claim; and she takes a sadistic pleasure in Ithocles's frustrated love, urging heaven not to let his heart break until 'some wild fires' have 'Scorch[ed], not consume[d], it' (3.2.48–9). Orgilus's abject cry: 'I tell 'ee you grow wanton in my sufferance' (2.3.108) identifies the only kind of wantonness in which Penthea will take any pleasure.

Much of the play is spent in denial of revenge. Orgilus repeatedly insists that he has no violent or passionate impulses when eyed with suspicion by the older generation, despite the fact that his name means 'Angry'. What looks like the beginning of a revenge plot, when he puts on the disguise of a scholar/malcontent, comes to nothing. It is only the spectacle of Penthea's madness and the revelation of her own vengefulness ('[*Pointing again at ITHOCLES*] That's he, and still 'tis he'. 4.2.122),⁴⁵ that finally releases Orgilus from stasis. But even then, his plotting of revenge is curiously silent and subdued. Brian Morris has observed: 'I know no other Jacobean play⁴⁶ in which the figure of the revenger is presented with this degree of self-sufficiency. The audience is never permitted to share Orgilus' reasons; his thoughts are always his own.'⁴⁷ Perhaps Ford was too keenly aware of his belatedness: it was nearly fifty years since Hieronimo had appeared on stage debating the ethics of revenge in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, the play which had inaugurated the fashion for revenge tragedy and defined all of Shakespeare's works in this genre. It may be that Ford, even more than Webster, felt that the 'will he, won't he?' tension of revenge tragedy had been finally exhausted. But it is also true that *The Broken Heart*'s interests lie more with the dull attrition of despair than with the adrenaline rush of bloody revenge. It is more concerned with the morality of a self-denial

that causes suffering, than with the ethics of a revenge which claims to end it.

In general, the play praises those who control their emotions or at least hide them behind masks of implacability. Bassanes redeems himself under the influence of Stoic philosophy, changing from a ludicrously jealous husband to a more sober figure, worthy to be Sparta's marshal. Calantha's extraordinary repression of grief in the dance scene, where she continues as though unaffected after each tragic announcement, is also commended as admirably masculine behaviour and what is required of a monarch. Yet these characters are arguably diminished by their inhuman self-control. Indeed, Penthea's and Calantha's inability to keep up these poses without sustaining fatal internal injuries may be something of a relief to the audience, otherwise denied the extreme emotion which is one of tragedy's chief pleasures.

Perhaps the most fascinating instance of *The Broken Heart's* ambivalence about passion is the way in which it shapes the play's four major death scenes. Ford imitates Webster in viewing death as a theatrical opportunity for characters to achieve the idealized and stable identities which have eluded them in life: they strike poses and utter speeches, often in elaborate settings they have designed themselves, with accompanying music.⁴⁸ But if dying in *The Broken Heart* demonstrates the characters' Stoic heroism and consistency, it also acknowledges their victimization by and submission to passionate feeling. For example, Orgilus's decision to bleed to death, standing on the stage and grasping two posts (unlike his enemy who dies sitting down), expresses his commitment to Stoic values. Yet his bloodletting is also purgative: 'opening a vein too full, too lively' (5.2.123) was a recommended cure for those oppressed by excessive anger or lust. Similarly, having placed a ring on his corpse's finger, Calantha manifests Stoic consistency in wishing to follow her husband, Ithocles, into death, but also a kind of emotional incontinence in being

unable to live after he is gone. This is perfectly expressed through the ambiguity of her suicide in which she wills her heart to break. The cry of ‘Crack, crack’ as uttered by Olivia Williams in the 1994 RSC production was described by Peter Holland as ‘one of the most extraordinary and appalling sounds I have ever heard in the theatre’.⁴⁹ To what extent this appallingness lies in the self-destructive will of the heroine or in the repression which brought it about remains for the audience to decide.

'Tis Pity She's a Whore

With *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* – performed c. 1630 by Queen Henrietta's Men at the Cockpit Theatre – Ford develops further his interest in romantic ‘misalliance’ and the denial of the heart's desires for the sake of social convention.⁵⁰ Yet here he is much more daring, urging audiences to care for a brother and sister who give themselves up to incestuous lust.

Ford appears to have had no single source for his play, but to have drawn upon a number of incest narratives,⁵¹ perhaps inspired by a theatrical fascination which is hinted at in *The Duchess of Malfi*, but brought out into the open by Beaumont and Fletcher's *A King and No King* (1611), Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (1621) and Richard Brome's *The Lovesick Court* (1638). The incest theme has often been thought to exemplify the worst excesses of Jacobean and Caroline sensationalism. Yet it could produce a variety of effects, dependent on a basic division between innocent and knowing lovers, and between those who consummate the union and those who resist it. As Lois E. Bueler observes:

Unwitting incest plays tend to be plays about virtue, in which the triumph of good or at least good luck is actually aided by the aborted threat of incest. Witting incest plays, on the other hand, are about evil, the evil of an aggravated selfishness which takes that portion of one's own which is intended for others and reserves it for oneself.⁵²

Part of the fascination of Ford's treatment of incest in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* is the way in which it confuses these categories, with the lovers fully cognizant of their blood relationship and the sinfulness of incest as they consummate their union, yet maintaining an appearance of romantic heroism and even virtue. Although Giovanni's final appearance – soaked in blood, with the heart of Annabella on a dagger – is that of a 'frantic madman' (5.6.40), Ford's representation of incest at other points is surprisingly non-judgemental.

While incest was condemned from the early modern pulpit as a monstrous sin, it may also have been comparatively common. In a sermon given in 1628 Arthur Lake, Bishop of Bath and Wells, pointed out that if God had not created sexual aversion between close relatives, incest would be hard to avoid for 'the necessarie cohabitation of Parents and Children, Brethren and Sisters would yeeld too much opportunitie, and be too strong an incentive unto this unlawfull coniunction'.⁵³ Equally, the fact that brothers and sisters were often raised and educated apart (Giovanni has been at university; Annabella remained at home) created the conditions for what we might now identify as Genetic Sexual Attraction (GSA), where family members long separated, perhaps by the process of adoption, find themselves sexually compelled to one another when reunited. Not only was incest probably more common, it was leniently punished. Until 1650, along with fornication, adultery and drunkenness, incest was prosecuted by the ecclesiastical rather than the secular courts. The offender would be made to stand in the parish church, dressed in penitential white, with a placard bearing the words 'FOR INCEST', before confessing their sin and asking for forgiveness.⁵⁴ Though humiliating, this was far preferable to the physical punishments given out by the secular justice system, which included whipping and branding for prostitutes, and death by hanging for thieves. In fact, there were very few prosecutions for incest in the late sixteenth and early

seventeenth centuries in England. This may be because it occurred only rarely or because it remained secret or because it was a crime that did not unduly trouble local authorities.

In *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* incest repeatedly disappears from view, either reinvented as an ennobling passion or displaced by the crime of adultery. For example, the fact that Annabella's suitors are so flawed throws into relief the virtues of Giovanni,⁵⁵ whose love is free from any financial motive and is expressed in the play's most lyrical language. He invokes Petrarchan and Neoplatonic terms to praise Annabella's beauty: 'View well her face, and in that little round, / You may observe a world of variety: / For colour, lips; for sweet perfumes, her breath ...' (2.5.49–51), thereby casting incestuous love in an irresistibly romantic mould. This perverse idealization is reinforced by the play's allusions to *Romeo and Juliet*.⁵⁶ By providing Giovanni with the Friar as confidant, and Annabella with the Nurse-like Puttana, Ford establishes the couple as a pair of vulnerable, star-crossed lovers. Moreover, Annabella's infatuation begins as she unknowingly glimpses her brother from the balcony. Her dismay on discovering his identity is rendered more acceptable through its echoes of Shakespeare's Juliet: 'My only love sprung from my only hate! / Too early seen unknown, and known too late!' (1.5.135–6). We might afford Ford's lovers more pity, given that their tragedy is not enmity between their families, but too great an affinity because they are one family.

A further distraction from incest is the limelight-stealing role given to adultery. Where the former is quietly domestic, contained within Florio's household and not named as such until 3.6, adultery repeatedly breaks out into scenes of violence and confusion. Hippolita, the spurned mistress, attempts to poison Soranzo at his wedding feast, while her husband bungles a revenge plot to dispatch his rival, thereby causing the death of Bergetto. Soranzo and Giovanni are partly motivated to kill Annabella through their self-identification as

the cuckolded husband (Ford had a career-long fascination with *Othello*), rather than any moral outrage relating to incestuous love.⁵⁷ Finally, the Cardinal apparently overlooks incest in favour of adultery when he delivers his famous summation of the tragedy: ‘ ’Tis pity she’s a whore,’ (5.6.156) with ‘whore’ being a term to describe female infidelity. This shifting of blame on to the unchaste and adulterous Annabella may have been a feature of the play’s reception. In his commendatory poem, Thomas Ellice refers to Giovanni as ‘unblamed’ and focuses on Annabella: ‘With admiration I beheld this whore ...’⁵⁸

By comparison with its overt condemnation of adultery, the play’s interrogation of incest is both marginal – pushed to the edges of the play in the dialogues between Giovanni and the Friar (1.1, 2.5 and 5.3) – and surprisingly complex. Giovanni’s scholarly defence is blasphemous: the biblical prohibition carries no weight with him, and rather prompts him to deny divine providence and the existence of heaven and hell. Like Marlowe’s Dr Faustus, he is arguably directed by ‘a fatal intellectual pride’, both men ‘provid[ing] spectacular examples of the catastrophe attendant upon the misuse of the divinely given powers of reason’.⁵⁹ And yet, both of these rebellious thinkers have also inspired sympathy as they challenge old orthodoxies, responding to the new spirit of intellectual and personal ambition which defined the Renaissance world.⁶⁰ More specifically, Giovanni’s rejection of the incest taboo as ‘a peevish sound, / A customary form’ (1.1.24–5) may have gained credibility through its echoes of the nominalist philosophy of Pietro Pomponazzi (1462–1525) – like Giovanni, an alumnus of the University of Bologna – which questioned the existence of universal laws, and re-examined what was natural and unnatural.⁶¹ Remarkably, even the Friar admits that if one ignores divine law, the prohibition on incest will not hold (2.5.29–32).

Giovanni's shocking appearance in 5.6, drenched in his sister's blood and wielding her heart upon his dagger, represents a final judgement which seems to brook no further argument. It destroys the romantic illusions/allusions which have built up around the relationship by casting Giovanni as a sadistic Cupid, torturing the beloved. Moreover, the martyrological significance of the pierced heart finds Giovanni guilty of blasphemy and of idolatry,⁶² without the desire for self-immolation that partly redeems Romeo and Juliet's erotic passion (it is not clear whether Giovanni would commit suicide after Annabella's death, if given the chance to live). At the same time, this scene offers the clearest condemnation of incest as socially (and therefore psychologically) damaging. Giovanni's claustrophobic image of Annabella's heart as one 'in which mine is entombed' (5.6.25) echoes the anthropological basis for the taboo on incest, the latter defined as 'A refusal of social obligations, a withdrawal from "the formation and maintenance of suprafamilial bonds on which major economic, political and religious functions of the society are dependent"'.⁶³ Giovanni is physically isolated for most of the play, usually in private dialogue with the Friar or Annabella, and he is awkwardly integrated into larger social gatherings. Incest exacerbates his withdrawal far more than it does in the case of Annabella, who remains 'half in her brother's world of sexual self-indulgence but also, crucially, half out of it, placed in a wider social world and subject to the moderating demands of its conventional sexual morality'.⁶⁴ Thus, Giovanni's presentation of her heart on a dagger emblemizes a dangerously introverted, claustrophobic desire. But, equally, what started as a heavily romanticized passion, defined against the lovelessness of the play's other marriage arrangements, has been bled dry. R. J. Kaufmann argues that 'Giovanni's tragedy ... rests on the most terrible sacrifice of love – not of the object of love only, but of one's ability to give and receive love.'⁶⁵

It is this act of self-mutilation that we find resonating throughout the tragedies of Webster and Ford. Where *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* explore a new susceptibility to emotion experienced by the ruthless Flaminio and Bosola, Ford's tragedies dramatize this process in reverse, examining the consequences of a love that hardens into unfeeling (although in *The Broken Heart* this is only ever an illusion and the heart literally cracks under the strain). By reading all four plays together in this way, we may be further inclined to reject the notion of Webster and Ford as amoral sensationalists, committed to horror. Rather, they appear deeply engaged not only with the destruction of virtuous, life-giving characters, such as the Duchess and Annabella, but with villains whose capacity for love, compassion and remorse is awoken just at the moment when their lives must end. In these tragedies of wasted potential, Webster and Ford show a keen moral awareness, and a desire to extend the pity and compassion, not just of their protagonists, but of the audience as well.

NOTES

1. For further discussion, see Charles J. Sisson, *Lost Plays of Shakespeare's Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936, reprint 1970), pp. 80–110.
2. Charles R. Forker, *The Skull Beneath the Skin: The Achievement of John Webster* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), p. 496. On other possible echoes, see pp. 493–6.
3. Charles Kingsley, 'Plays and Puritans' (1856), reprinted in *Plays and Puritans and Other Historical Essays* (London, 1873), pp. 1–80, 18.
4. S. P. Sherman, discussing *'Tis Pity's* Giovanni and Annabella, in 'Forde's Contribution to the Decadence of the Drama' in *John Fordes Dramatische Werke*, ed. W. Bang (Louvain and London: David Nutt, 1908), pp. vii–xix, xii.
5. J. R. Mulryne on Webster in '*The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*', *Stratford-upon-Avon Studies* 1 (London: Edward Arnold, 1960), pp. 201–25, 204.
6. Kingsley concludes that 'We should call him a madman who allowed his daughters or his servants to see such representations,' 'Plays and Puritans', pp. 25–6.
7. See Sherman's discussion of *'Tis Pity* in 'Forde's Contribution', pp. xii–xiii. For a thorough rebuttal of this argument, see Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis 1632–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), and Julie Sanders,

Caroline Drama: The Plays of Massinger, Ford, Shirley and Brome (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1999).

8. Forker, *The Skull Beneath the Skin*, p. 288.
9. George Saintsbury remarked of the fifth act in *The Duchess of Malfi*: '[it] is a kind of gratuitous appendix of horrors stuck on without art or reason', *A History of Elizabethan Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1887), p. 278.
10. George Bernard Shaw, *Our Theatres in the Nineties*, 3 vols, (London: Constable, 1932), vol. 3, p. 317.
11. Sherman, 'Forde's Contribution', p. xviii.
12. David L. Frost, *The School of Shakespeare: The Influence of Shakespeare on English Drama 1600–42* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 122–3, 120, 131.
13. Richard Madelaine, 'Sensationalism and Melodrama in Ford's Plays' in *John Ford: Critical Re-Visions*, ed. Michael Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 29–54, 47, 51.
14. Christina Luckyj, *A Winter's Snake: Dramatic Form in the Tragedies of John Webster* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1989), p. 150.
15. Martin Wiggins, *Journeymen in Murder: The Assassin in English Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 165.
16. See Christina Luckyj (ed.), *The White Devil* (London: A & C Black, 1996, rev. 2008), p. xx.
17. On the tradition of anti-Catholicism in revenge tragedy see Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 23–55. On Ford's greater sympathy with Catholicism, see Lisa Hopkins, *John Ford's Political Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), and Gillian Woods, 'The Confessional Identities of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore' in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Critical Guide, ed. Lisa Hopkins (London and New York: Continuum, 2010), pp. 114–35.
18. On ideas of Italy in early modern England, see *Shakespeare's Italy: Functions of Italian Locations in Renaissance Drama*, ed. Michele Marrapodi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).
19. On Webster and Ford as court satirists, see Albert H. Tricomi, *Anti-Court Drama in England, 1603–1642* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1989), pp. 110–20.
20. See Lisa Hopkins, *The Female Hero in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 2, and Naomi Conn Liebler (ed.), *The Female Tragic Hero in English Renaissance Drama* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave, 2002).
21. Mulryne, 'The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi', p. 211.
22. Forker, *The Skull Beneath the Skin*, p. 264.
23. See Laure A. Finke, 'Painting Women: Images of Femininity in Jacobean Tragedy', *Theatre Journal* 35 (1984), pp. 357–70, 357.
24. Angel Day, *The English Secretary; or, Methode of writing epistles and letters* (London: C. Burbie, 1599), Part 2, p. 103. For further discussion of the eroticism of the closet and the secretary role, see Alan Stewart, 'The Early Modern Closet Discovered', *Representations* 50 (Spring 1995), pp. 76–100.

25. On the way in which Flaminio's experience of disinheritance and disappointment echoes that of many young Jacobean, see Tricomi, *Anti-Court Drama*, pp. 110–20.
26. Dena Goldberg, '“By Report”: The Spectator as Voyeur in Webster's *The White Devil*', *English Literary Renaissance* 17 (1987), pp. 67–84, 71.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
28. See Christina Luckyj, 'Gender, Rhetoric and Performance in John Webster's *The White Devil*' in *Enacting Gender on the English Renaissance Stage*, ed. Viviana Comensoli and Anne Russell (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 218–32, 226.
29. William Painter, *The second tome of the Palace of Pleasure* (London: Henry Bynneman and Nicholas England, 1567).
30. Mary Beth Rose, *The Expense of Spirit: Love and Sexuality in English Renaissance Drama* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 159–60.
31. The *de praesenti* marriage that the Duchess performs in Act one would have constituted a legal union, indissoluble once the couple had consummated it. However, it still needed to be performed in church to be fully legitimate.
32. Barbara Correll here summarizes the position of, for example, Frank Whigham and Theodora A. Jankowski, in 'Malvolio at Malfi: Managing Desire in Shakespeare and Webster', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58 (2007), pp. 65–92, 72.
33. Sid Ray, '“So Troubled with the Mother”: The Politics of Pregnancy in *The Duchess of Malfi*' in *Performing Maternity in Early Modern England*, ed. Kathryn M. Moncrief and Kathryn R. McPherson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 17–28, 22.
34. See Linda Woodbridge, 'Queen of Apricots: The Duchess of Malfi, Hero of Desire' in *The Female Tragic Hero in English Renaissance Drama*, pp. 161–84, 162.
35. This haunting extends to the play itself. Not only is the Duchess reanimated through the 'ECHO from the Duchess's grave' and the 'face folded in sorrow' experienced by Antonio in 5.3, but in some productions she reappears on stage as a ghostly figure to oversee her own revenge. Moreover, in Lewis Theobald's 1733 adaptation, *The Fatal Secret: A Tragedy* (pub. 1735), the Duchess is not actually dead, but lives on to be reconciled with Antonio.
36. T. J. B. Spencer (ed.), *The Broken Heart* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), p. 36.
37. Marion Lomax, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. xiii.
38. Hopkins, *John Ford's Political Theatre*, p. 162.
39. Ford's interest in Neo-Stoic ideas is evident in his two early prose works, *The Golden Mean* (1613) and *A Line of Life* (1620).
40. For further discussion, see Gilles D. Monsarrat, *Light from the Porch: Stoicism and English Renaissance Literature* (Paris: Didier Erudition, 1984).
41. This term is used by Sherman in 'Forde's Contribution', p. xi. For further discussion of the play's moral ambiguity, see Harriet Hawkins, 'Mortality, Morality and Modernity in *The Broken Heart*: Some Dramatic and Critical Counter-Arguments' in *John Ford: Critical Re-Visions*, pp. 129–52.

42. See S. P. Sherman, 'Stella and the *Broken Heart*', *PMLA* 24 (1909), pp. 274–85, and Giovanni M. Carsaniga, '“The Truth” in John Ford's *The Broken Heart*', *Comparative Literature* 10 (Autumn, 1958), pp. 344–8. A further allegorical level may be the identification of Calantha and Ithocles with Elizabeth and Essex, and of Nearchus's peaceful succession to the throne with that of James I. See Verna Ann Foster and Stephen Foster, 'Structure and History in *The Broken Heart*: Sparta, England and the “Truth”', *English Literary Renaissance* 18.2 (Spring, 1988), pp. 305–28.
43. Ford's first published work, *Fame's Memorial* (1606), was an elegy for Blount, dedicated to Penelope.
44. Clifford Leech, *John Ford* (Harlow: Longman, 1964), p. 27.
45. See Roberta Barker, 'Death and the Married Maiden: Performing Gender in *The Broken Heart*', *English Studies in Canada* 30.2 (June 2004), pp. 67–89, on Penthea's influence, particularly in Michael Boyd's 1994 production for the Royal Shakespeare Company.
46. The slip here is revealing: *The Broken Heart* is a Caroline rather than a Jacobean play, but its strong links with the earlier period, not least through its debts to Webster, explain the mistake.
47. Brian Morris (ed.), *The Broken Heart* (London: A & C Black, 1994), pp. xx–xxi.
48. Michael Neill describes the dramatists' 'self-perfecting aesthetic of death' in *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 355, 363. See also his discussion of *The Duchess of Malfi*, pp. 328–53.
49. Peter Holland, 'Modality Ford's Strange Journeys', *Times Literary Supplement* (28 October 1994), p. 41.
50. See R. J. Kaufmann's use of this term in 'Ford's Tragic Perspective', in *Elizabethan Drama: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. Kaufmann (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 356–72, 357.
51. Possible sources include Canace and Macareo in Ovid's *Heroides*, translated in Thomas Heywood's *Gunaikeion* (1624); and Doralice and her twin Lyzaran in Francois de Rosset's *Histoires Tragiques de Notre Temps* (1615).
52. Lois E. Bueler, 'The Structural Uses of Incest in English Renaissance Drama', *Renaissance Drama* 15 (1984), pp. 115–45, 127.
53. Arthur Lake, *Sermons with Some Religious and Divine Meditations* (London: Nathaniel Butter, 1629), pp. 21–2.
54. See Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 245–9.
55. Some critics find Parma fulfilling the same role, with Corinne S. Abate even identifying the city as the 'whore' of the play's title, 'Identifying the Real Whore of Parma' in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Critical Guide*, pp. 94–113. See also Sonia Massai's discussion of the fallen city in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (London: Methuen, 2011), pp. 6–20.
56. For further discussion, see Robert Smallwood, '*'Tis Pity and Romeo and Juliet*', *Cahiers Elisabethains* 20 (1981), pp. 49–70.
57. See Raymond Powell, 'The Adaptation of a Shakespearean Genre: *Othello* and Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*', *Renaissance Quarterly* 48 (1995), pp. 582–92.

58. This point is made by Sonia Massai, who argues that ‘What is staggeringly radical about Ford’s play is not its decadence, but its profoundly moral concern about the level of disorder unleashed by the extreme passions signified by Annabella as “whore”’, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, p. 36.
59. Cyrus Hoy, “Ignorance in Knowledge” Marlowe’s Faustus and Ford’s Giovanni’, *Modern Philology* 57 (1959–60), pp. 145–54, 146.
60. See John S. Wilks, *The Idea of Conscience in Renaissance Tragedy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 264.
61. See Richard McCabe, *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law 1550–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 216; and Massai, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, p. 12.
62. The fullest discussion of these meanings is given by Michael Neill, ‘“What Strange Riddle’s This?”: Deciphering *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*’ in *John Ford: Critical Re-Visions*, pp. 153–80.
63. McCabe, quoting the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, in *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law*, p. 18.
64. Martin Wiggins (ed.), *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (London: A & C Black, 2003), p. 19.
65. R. J. Kaufmann, ‘Ford’s Tragic Perspective’ in *Elizabethan Drama*, p. 370.



JOHN WEBSTER
THE WHITE DEVIL

List of Characters

VITTORIA COROMBONA *wife of Camillo; later married to Bracciano*

Duke of BRACCIANO, *Paulo Giordano Orsini, husband of Isabella; later married to Vittoria*

FLAMINIO¹ *secretary to Bracciano, brother to Vittoria and Marcello*

CORNELIA *mother of Vittoria, Flaminio and Marcello*

MARCELLO *soldier and follower of Francisco, brother of Vittoria and Flaminio*

ZANCHE *a Moor, servant to Vittoria*

MONTICELSO, *Lorenzo de, a Cardinal, later Pope Paul IV*

CAMILLO *husband of Vittoria, nephew of Monticelso*

FRANCISCO *de Medici, Duke of Florence, brother of Isabella, later disguised as Mulinassar, a Moor*

ISABELLA *sister of Francisco, wife of Bracciano*

GIOVANNI *son of Bracciano and Isabella*

JAQUES* *a Moor, page to Giovanni*

GUID-ANTONIO* *attendant or steward of Isabella*

LODOVICO² *an Italian count, later disguised as a Capuchin*

GASPARO *follower of Lodovico, later disguised as a Capuchin*

ANTONELLI *follower of Lodovico*

CARLO *and* PEDRO *attendants of Bracciano, secretly in league with Francisco*

DOCTOR *Julio, a physician and conjurer*

CHRISTOPHERO* *Doctor Julio's associate*

CONJURER

HORTENSIO *attendant of Bracciano*

YOUNG LORD *attendant of Bracciano*

FERNEZE* *servant of Bracciano*

PAGE *attendant on Cornelia*

COURTIER *attendant on Giovanni*

MATRON *of the House of Convertites*

SAVOY AMBASSADOR

Two FRENCH AMBASSADORS

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

SPANISH AMBASSADOR

Maltese AMBASSADOR

LAWYER

Cardinal of ARAGON

ARMOURER

Two PHYSICIANS

*Senators, four Captains, Chancellor, Register, Officers, Guards, Attendants, Servants, Cardinals, Ladies**

To The Reader

In publishing this tragedy, I do but challenge to¹ myself that liberty which other men have ta'en before me. Not that I affect praise by it, for *nos haec novimus esse nihil*;² only since it was acted in so dull a time of winter, presented in so open and black a theatre,³ that it wanted that which is the only grace and setting out of a tragedy – a full and understanding auditory; and that, since that time, I have noted, most of the people that come to that playhouse resemble those ignorant asses who, visiting stationers' shops, their use is not to enquire for good books but new books, I present it to the general view with this confidence:

Nec rhoncos metues, maligniorum,

*Nec scombris tunicas, dabis molestas.*⁴

If it be objected this is no true dramatic poem, I shall easily confess it; *non potes in nugas dicere plura meas ipse ego quam dixi*.⁵ Willingly, and not ignorantly, in this kind have I faulted; for should a man present to such an auditory the most sententious⁶ tragedy that ever was written, observing all the critical laws, as height of style and gravity of person, enrich it with the sententious *Chorus*, and, as it were, 'liven death⁷ in the passionate and weighty *Nuntius*,⁸ yet, after all this divine rapture – *O dura messorum ilia*¹ – the breath that comes from the incapable multitude is able to poison it, and ere it be acted, let the author resolve to fix to every scene, this of Horace:

*Haec hodie porcis comedenda relinques.*²

To those who report I was a long time in finishing this tragedy,³ I confess I do not write with a goose-quill, winged with two feathers; and if they will needs make it my fault, I

must answer them with that of Euripides to Alcestides,⁴ a tragic writer: Alcestides objecting that Euripides had only in three days composed three verses, whereas himself had written three hundred: ‘Thou tell’st truth,’ quoth he, ‘but here’s the difference: thine shall only be read for three days, whereas mine shall continue three ages.’

Detraction is the sworn friend to ignorance. For mine own part, I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other men’s worthy labours, especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman; the laboured and understanding⁵ works of Master Jonson; the no less worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher; and lastly (without wrong last to be named) the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare, Master Dekker and Master Heywood, wishing what I write may be read by their light; protesting that, in the strength of mine own judgement, I know them so worthy, that though I rest silent in my own work, yet to most of theirs I dare, without flattery, fix that of Martial:

*non norunt, haec monumenta mori.*⁶

ACT 1

Scene 1

Enter Count LODOVICO, ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO.

LODOVICO

Banished?

ANTONELLI

It grieved me much to hear the sentence.

LODOVICO

Ha, ha! O Democritus,¹ thy gods
That govern the whole world: courtly reward
And punishment. Fortune's a right whore;
If she give aught, she deals it in small parcels,²
That she may take away all at one swoop.
This 'tis to have great enemies, God 'quite them.
Your wolf no longer seems to be a wolf
Than when she's hungry.³

GASPARO

You term those 'enemies'
Are men of princely rank.

LODOVICO

10 Oh, I pray for them.
The violent thunder is adored by those
Are pashed⁴ in pieces by it.

ANTONELLI

Come, my lord,

You are justly doomed. Look but a little back
Into your former life. You have in three years
Ruined the noblest earldom.

GASPARO

Your followers
Have swallowed you like mummia,¹ and being sick
With such unnatural and horrid phisic
Vomit you up i'the kennel.²

ANTONELLI

All the damnable degrees
Of drinkings have you staggered through. One
citizen,
20 Is lord of two fair manors, called you master
Only for caviar.

GASPARO

Those noblemen
Which were invited to your prodigal feasts –
Wherein the phoenix³ scarce could 'scape your
throats –
Laugh at your misery, as fore-deeming you
An idle⁴ meteor which drawn forth the earth
Would be soon lost i'th' air –

ANTONELLI

Jest upon you,
And say you were begotten in an earthquake,
You have ruined such fair lordships.

LODOVICO [*Aside*]

Very good.

This well goes with two buckets;¹ I must tend²

The pouring out of either.

GASPARO

30

Worse than these,

You have acted certain murders here in Rome,

Bloody and full of horror.

LODOVICO

'Las, they were flea-bitings.

Why took they not my head then?

GASPARO

O my lord,

The law doth sometimes mediate; thinks it good

Not ever to steep violent sins in blood.

This gentle penance³ may both end your crimes,

And in the example better these bad times.

LODOVICO

So – but I wonder, then, some great men 'scape

This banishment. There's Paulo Giordano Orsini,

40 The Duke of Bracciano, now lives in Rome,

And by close⁴ panderism seeks to prostitute

The honour of Vittoria Corombona:

Vittoria – she that might have got my pardon

For one kiss to the Duke!

ANTONELLI

Have a full man within you.⁵

We see that trees bear no such pleasant fruit

There where they grew first, as where they are new
set.

Perfumes the more they are chafed, the more they
render

Their pleasing scents; and so affliction

Expresseth virtue fully, whether true

Or else adulterate.¹

LODOVICO

50
comforts!

Leave your painted²

I'll make Italian cut-works³ in their guts

If ever I return.

GASPARO

O sir!

LODOVICO

I am patient.

I have seen some ready to be executed

Give pleasant looks and money, and grown
familiar

With the knave hangman; so do I, I thank them,

And would account them nobly merciful

Would they dispatch me quickly.

ANTONELLI

Fare you well.

We shall find time, I doubt not, to repeal

Your banishment.

Enter SENATE [*who pass over the stage and exeunt*].

LODOVICO

I am ever bound to you.

[*He gives them money.*]

60 This is the world's alms – pray, make use of it.

Great men sell sheep thus to be cut in pieces,

When first they have shorn them bare and sold
their fleeces. *Exeunt.*

ACT 1

Scene 2

Enter BRACCIANO, CAMILLO, FLAMINIO, VITTORIA COROMBONA
[*and ATTENDANTS with torches*].

BRACCIANO [*to* VITTORIA]

Your best of rest.

VITTORIA

Unto my lord the Duke,

The best of welcome. [*To* ATTENDANTS] More
lights, attend the Duke!

[*Exeunt* VITTORIA *and* CAMILLO.]

BRACCIANO

Flaminio –

FLAMINIO

My lord.

BRACCIANO

Quite lost, Flaminio!

FLAMINIO

Pursue your noble wishes; I am prompt

As lightning to your service. (*Whispers*) O my lord!

The fair Vittoria, my happy sister,

Shall give you present audience. [*To ATTENDANTS*]
Gentlemen,

Let the caroché¹ go on, and 'tis his pleasure

You put out all your torches and depart.

[*Exeunt ATTENDANTS.*]

BRACCIANO

Are we so happy?

FLAMINIO

10 Can't² be otherwise?

Observed you not tonight, my honoured lord,

Which way so e'er you went she threw her eyes?

I have dealt already with her chamber-maid,

Zanche the Moor, and she is wondrous proud

To be the agent for so high a spirit.

BRACCIANO

We are happy above thought, because 'bove merit.

FLAMINIO

'Bove merit? – we may now talk freely – 'bove merit? What is't you doubt? Her coyness? That's but

the superficialities¹ of lust most women have. Yet why should ladies blush to hear

20 that named which they do not fear to handle? Oh, they are politic. They know our desire is increased by the difficulty of enjoying, whereas satiety is a blunt, weary and drowsy passion. If the buttery-hatch² at court stood continually open there would be nothing so passionate crowding, nor hot suit after the beverage.³

BRACCIANO

Oh, but her jealous husband!

FLAMINIO

Hang him! A gilder⁴ that hath his brains perished with quicksilver is not more cold in the liver.⁵ The great Barriers⁶ moulted not more feathers than he hath shed hairs,⁷ by the

30 confession of his doctor. An Irish gamester that will play himself naked, and then wage all downward at hazard,⁸ is not more venturous. So unable to please a woman that, like a Dutch doublet,⁹ all his back is shrunk into his breeches.

Shroud you within this closet,¹ good my lord.

Some trick now must be thought on to divide

My brother-in-law from his fair bed-fellow.

BRACCIANO

Oh, should she fail to come –

FLAMINIO

I must not have your lordship thus unwisely amorous. I myself have loved a lady and pursued her with a great deal of under-age protestation,² whom some three or four gallants

40 that have enjoyed would, with all their hearts,
have been glad to have been rid of. 'Tis just like a
summer bird-cage in a garden: the birds that are
without despair to get in, and the birds that are within
despair and are in a consumption for fear they shall
never get out. Away, away, my lord!

[BRACCIANO *withdraws from sight.*]

Enter CAMILLO.

See, here he comes. This fellow by his apparel
Some men would judge a politician,³
But call his wit in question, you shall find it
Merely an ass in's foot-cloth.⁴ [*To* CAMILLO] How
now, brother,

50 What, travelling to bed to your kind wife?

CAMILLO

I assure you, brother, no. My voyage lies
More northerly, in a far colder clime.
I do not well remember, I protest,
When I last lay with her.

FLAMINIO

Strange you should lose your count.⁵

CAMILLO

We never lay together but ere morning
There grew a flaw⁶ between us.

FLAMINIO

'Thad been your part
To have made up that flaw.

CAMILLO

True, but she loathes
I should be seen in't.

FLAMINIO

Why, sir, what's the matter?

CAMILLO

The Duke your master visits me. I thank him,
60 And I perceive how like an earnest bowler
He very passionately leans that way
He should have his bowl run.

FLAMINIO

I hope you do not think –

CAMILLO

That noblemen bowl booty?¹ 'Faith, his cheek
Hath a most excellent bias: it would fain
Jump with my mistress.²

FLAMINIO

Will you be an ass
Despite **your** Aristotle,³ or a cuckold
Contrary to your ephemerides,⁴
Which shows you under what a smiling planet
You were first swaddled?

CAMILLO

Pew wew, sir, tell not me
70 Of planets nor of ephemerides.

A man may be made cuckold in the day-time
When the stars' eyes are out.

FLAMINIO

Sir, God boy you.¹
I do commit you to your pitiful pillow
Stuffed with horn-shavings.²

CAMILLO

Brother –

FLAMINIO

God refuse me,³
Might I advise you now, your only course
Were to lock up your wife.

CAMILLO

'Twere very good.

FLAMINIO

Bar her the sight of revels.

CAMILLO

Excellent!

FLAMINIO

Let her not go to church, but like a hound
In [lyam](#)⁴ at your heels.

CAMILLO

'Twere for her honour.

FLAMINIO

80 And so you should be certain in one fortnight,

Despite her chastity or innocence,
To be cuckolded, which yet is in suspense.
This is my counsel and I ask no fee for't.

CAMILLO

Come, you know not where my nightcap wrings⁵
me.

FLAMINIO

Wear it i'th' old fashion: let your large ears⁶ come
through; it will be more easy. Nay, I will be bitter. Bar
your wife of her entertainment; women are more
willingly and more gloriously chaste when they are
least restrained of their liberty. It seems you would be
a fine, capricious, mathematically-jealous

90 coxcomb; take the height of your own horns with
a Jacob's staff¹ afore they are up. These politic
enclosures for paltry mutton² makes more rebellion in
the flesh than all the provocative electuaries³ doctors
have uttered⁴ since last Jubilee.⁵

CAMILLO

This doth not physic me.

FLAMINIO

It seems you are jealous. I'll show you the error of it
by a familiar example. I have seen a pair of spectacles
fashioned with such perspective art that, lay down but
one twelve pence o'th' board, 'twill appear as if there
were twenty. Now should you wear a pair of these
spectacles and see your wife

100 tying her shoe, you would imagine twenty
hands were taking up of your wife's clothes, and this
would put you into a horrible, causeless fury.

CAMILLO

The fault there, sir, is not in the eyesight.

FLAMINIO

True, but they that have the yellow jaundice think all objects they look on to be yellow. Jealousy is worse: her fits present to a man, like so many bubbles in a basin of water, twenty several crabbed faces; many times makes his own shadow his cuckold-maker.

Enter [VITTORIA] COROMBONA.

110 See, she comes. What reason have you to be jealous of this creature? What an ignorant ass or flattering knave might he be counted that should write sonnets to her eyes, or call her brow the snow of Ida,¹ or ivory of Corinth,² or compare her hair to the blackbird's bill when 'tis liker the blackbird's feather!³ This is all. Be wise; I will make you friends⁴ and you shall go to bed together. Marry, look you, it shall not be your seeking, do you stand⁵ upon that by any means. Walk you aloof; I would not have you seen in't.

[CAMILLO *stands apart.*]

Sister, [*aside*] my lord attends you in the banqueting-house. [*Aloud*] Your husband is wondrous discontented.

VITTORIA

120 I did nothing to displease him; I carved to him⁶ at supper-time.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

You need not have carved him, in faith: they say he is a capon⁷ already. I must now seemingly fall out with you. [*Aloud*] Shall a gentleman so well descended as Camillo – [*aside*] a lousy slave that within this twenty

years rode with the black-guard⁸ in the Duke's carriage
'mongst spits and dripping-pans –

CAMILLO

Now he begins to tickle her.

FLAMINIO [*Aloud*]

An excellent scholar – [*aside*] one that hath a head
filled with calves' brains⁹ without any sage in them –
[*aloud*] come crouching in the hams¹⁰ to you for a
night's lodging? – [*aside*]

130 that hath an itch in's hams¹¹ which, like the fire
at the glass-house,¹ hath not gone out this seven years.
[*Aloud*] Is he not a courtly gentleman? – [*aside*] when
he wears white satin one would take him by his black
muzzle to be no other creature than a maggot. [*Aloud*]
You are a goodly foil,² I confess, well set-out – [*aside*]
but covered with a false stone, yon counterfeit
diamond.

CAMILLO

He will make her know what is in me.

FLAMINIO

Come, my lord attends you. Thou shalt go to bed
to my

140 lord –

CAMILLO

Now he comes to't.

FLAMINIO

– with a relish as curious as a vintner going to taste
new wine. I am opening your case³ hard.

CAMILLO

A virtuous brother, o' my credit.

FLAMINIO

He will give thee a ring with a philosopher's stone⁴
in it.

CAMILLO

Indeed, I am studying alchemy.

FLAMINIO

Thou shalt lie in a bed stuffed with turtles'⁵ feathers,
swoon in perfumed linen like the fellow was
smothered in roses. So perfect shall be thy happiness
that, as men at sea think land

150 and trees and ships go that way they go, so both
heaven and earth shall seem to go your voyage. Shalt
meet him – 'tis fixed with nails of diamonds to
inevitable necessity.

VITTORIA [*Aside to FLAMINIO*]

How shall's rid him hence?

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

I will put breeze¹ in's tail; set him gadding² presently.

[*He approaches CAMILLO.*]

I have almost wrought her to it; I find her coming.³
But might I advise you now, for this night I would not
lie with her. I would cross her humour to make her
more humble.

CAMILLO

Shall I, shall I?

FLAMINIO

It will show in you a supremacy of judgement.

CAMILLO

160 True, and a mind differing from the tumultuary⁴
opinion, for *quae negata grata*.⁵

FLAMINIO

Right, you are the adamant⁶ shall draw her to you,
though you keep distance off.

CAMILLO

A philosophical reason.

FLAMINIO

Walk by her i'the nobleman's fashion, and tell her
you will lie with her at the end of the progress.⁷

CAMILLO [*coming forward*]

Vittoria, I cannot be induced, or, as a man would say,
incited –

VITTORIA

To do what, sir?

CAMILLO

To lie with you tonight. Your silkworm useth to fast
every

170 third day, and the next following spins the
better. Tomorrow, at night, I am for you.

VITTORIA

You'll spin a fair thread,¹ trust to't.

[*She stands apart.*]

FLAMINIO

But do you hear, I shall have you steal to her
chamber about midnight.

CAMILLO

Do you think so? Why, look you, brother, because you shall not think I'll gull² you, take the key, lock me into the chamber, and say you shall be sure of me.

FLAMINIO

In troth, I will. I'll be your jailer once. But have you ne'er a false door?

CAMILLO

180 A pox on't, as I am a Christian. Tell me tomorrow how scurvily³ she takes my unkind parting.

FLAMINIO

I will.

CAMILLO

Didst thou not mark the jest of the silkworm? Good night. In faith, I will use this trick often.

FLAMINIO

Do, do, do. *Exit* CAMILLO.

So, now you are safe. Ha, ha, ha! Thou entanglest thyself in thine own work like a silkworm.

Enter BRACCIANO.

Come, sister, darkness hides your blush. Women are like curst⁴ dogs: civility keeps them tied all daytime, but they are

190 let loose at midnight. Then they do most good or most mischief. My lord, my lord –

BRACCIANO [*To* VITTORIA]

Give credit,⁵ I could wish time would stand still
And never end this interview, this hour,

But all delight doth itself soon'st devour.

ZANCHE *brings out a carpet, spreads it and lays on it two fair cushions.* [BRACCIANO and VITTORIA sit.]

Enter CORNELIA [*who watches them*].

Let me into your bosom, happy lady,

Pour out instead of eloquence my vows.

Loose¹ me not, madam, for if you forgo me

I am lost eternally.

VITTORIA

Sir, in the way of pity

I wish you heart-whole.

BRACCIANO

You are a sweet physician.

VITTORIA

200 Sure, sir, a loathèd cruelty in ladies

Is as to doctors many funerals:

It takes away their credit.

BRACCIANO

Excellent creature!

We call the cruel 'fair'; what name for you

That are so merciful?

[*He kisses her.*]

ZANCHE [*Aside*]

See, now they close.²

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

Most happy union!

CORNELIA [*Aside*]

My fears are fall'n upon me. O my heart!
My son the pander! Now I find our house
Sinking to ruin. Earthquakes leave behind,
Where they have tyrannized, iron or lead or stone,
But, woe to ruin, violent lust leaves none.

210 BRACCIANO

What value is this jewel?

[*He examines her ring.*]

VITTORIA

'Tis the ornament
Of a weak fortune.

BRACCIANO

In sooth, I'll have it. Nay, I will but change
My jewel for your jewel.¹
[*He takes her ring and gives her a pendant.*]

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

Excellent!
His jewel for her jewel – well put in,² Duke!

BRACCIANO

Nay, let me see you wear it.

VITTORIA

Here, sir?
[*She holds it against her bosom.*]

BRACCIANO

Nay, lower; you shall wear my jewel lower.

*[She pins it at the lowest point of her bodice.]*³

FLAMINIO *[Aside]*

That's better; she must wear his jewel lower.

VITTORIA

220 To pass away the time I'll tell your grace

A dream I had last night.

BRACCIANO

Most wishedly.

VITTORIA

A foolish idle dream.

Methought I walked, about the mid of night,

Into a church-yard, where a goodly yew-tree

Spread her large root in ground. Under that yew,

As I sat sadly leaning on a grave⁴

Chequered with 'crostics,⁵ there came stealing in

Your Duchess and my husband. One of them

A pick-axe bore, th'other a rusty spade,

230 And in rough terms they 'gan to challenge me

About this yew.

BRACCIANO

That tree?

VITTORIA

This harmless yew.¹

They told me my intent was to root up
That well-grown yew, and plant i'th' stead of it
A withered blackthorn, and for that they vowed
To bury me alive. My husband straight
With pick-axe 'gan to dig, and your fell² Duchess
With shovel, like a fury,³ voided out
The earth and scattered bones. Lord, how
methought
I trembled, and yet for all this terror
240 I could not pray.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

No, the devil was in your dream.

VITTORIA

When to my rescue there arose, methought,
A whirlwind, which let fall a massy⁴ arm
From that strong plant,
And both were struck dead by that sacred yew
In that base, shallow grave that was their due.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

Excellent devil!
She hath taught him in a dream
To make away his Duchess and her husband.

BRACCIANO [*Embracing* VITTORIA]

250 Sweetly shall I interpret this your dream:

You are lodged within his arms who shall protect
you

From all the fevers of a jealous husband,
From the poor envy of our phlegmatic⁵ Duchess.
I'll seat you above law and above scandal;
Give to your thoughts the invention of delight
And the fruition. Nor shall government¹
Divide me from you longer than a care
To keep you great. You shall to me at once
Be dukedom, health, wife, children, friends and
all.

CORNELIA [*Coming forward*]

260 Woe to light hearts! They still forerun our fall.

FLAMINIO

What fury raised thee up? [*Aside to ZANCHE*]
Away, away!²

Exit ZANCHE.

CORNELIA

What make you here, my lord, this dead of night?
Never dropped mildew on a flower here
Till now.

FLAMINIO

I pray, will you go to bed then,
Lest you be blasted?³

CORNELIA

Oh, that this fair garden
Had *with* all poisoned herbs of Thessaly⁴
At first been planted, made a nursery

For witchcraft, rather **than** a burial plot
For both your honours.

VITTORIA

Dearest mother, hear me.

CORNELIA

Oh, thou dost make my brow bend to the earth
Sooner than nature. See the curse of children!

270 In life they keep us frequently in tears,
And in the cold grave **leave** us in pale fears.

BRACCIANO

Come, come, I will not hear you.

VITTORIA

Dear my lord –

CORNELIA

Where is thy Duchess now, adulterous Duke?
Thou little dreamed'st this night she is come to
Rome.

FLAMINIO

How? Come to Rome?

VITTORIA

The Duchess?

BRACCIANO

She had been better –

CORNELIA

The lives of princes should like dials¹ move,

Whose regular example is so strong,
They make the times by them go right or wrong.

FLAMINIO

So, have you done?

CORNELIA

Unfortunate Camillo!

VITTORIA [*kneeling*]

280 I do protest, if any chaste denial,
If anything but blood² could have allayed
His long suit to me –

CORNELIA [*kneeling*]

I will join with thee,
To the most woeful end e'er mother kneeled.
If thou dishonour thus thy husband's bed,
Be thy life short as are the funeral tears
In great men's.

BRACCIANO

Fie, fie, the woman's mad!

CORNELIA

Be thy act Judas-like: betray in kissing.
May'st thou be envied during his short breath,
And pitied like a wretch after his death.

VITTORIA

290 O me, accursed! *Exit*
VITTORIA.

FLAMINIO [*To* CORNELIA]

Are you out of your wits? [*To* BRACCIANO] My
lord,

I'll fetch her back again.

BRACCIANO

No, I'll to bed.

Send Doctor Julio to me presently.

Uncharitable woman, thy rash tongue

Hath raised a fearful and prodigious storm.

Be thou the cause of all ensuing harm. *Exit*

BRACCIANO.

FLAMINIO

Now, you that stand so much upon your honour,

Is this a fitting time o'night, think you,

To send a duke home without e'er a man?

300 I would fain know where lies the mass of
wealth

Which you have hoarded for my maintenance,

That I may bear my beard out of the level

Of my lord's stirrup.¹

CORNELIA

What, because we are poor

Shall we be vicious?

FLAMINIO

Pray, what means have you

To keep me from the galleys or the gallows?

My father proved himself a gentleman:
Sold all's land, and, like a fortunate fellow,
Died ere the money was spent. You brought me up
At Padua, I confess, where, I protest,
310 For want of means – the university judge me –
I have been fain to heel² my tutor's stockings
At least seven years. Conspiring with a beard¹
Made me a graduate; then to this Duke's service
I visited the court, whence I returned
More courteous, more lecherous by far,
But not a suit the richer; and shall I,
Having a path so open and so free
To my preferment, still retain your milk
In my pale forehead? No, this face of mine
320 I'll arm and fortify with lusty wine
'Gainst shame and blushing.

CORNELIA

Oh, that I ne'er had borne thee!

FLAMINIO

So would I;
I would the common'st courtesan in Rome
Had been my mother rather than thyself.
Nature is very pitiful to whores
To give them but few children, yet those children
Plurality of fathers; they are sure
They shall not want. Go, go,

Complain unto my great lord Cardinal;

330 Yet maybe he will justify the act.

Lycurgus² wondered much men would provide

Good stallions for their mares, and yet would
suffer

Their fair wives to be barren.

CORNELIA

Misery of miseries!

Exit

CORNELIA.

FLAMINIO

The Duchess come to court? I like not that.

We are engaged to mischief and must on.

As rivers, to find out the ocean,

Flow with crook¹ bendings beneath forcèd² banks,

Or as we see, to aspire some mountain's top,

340 The way ascends not straight, but imitates

The subtle foldings of a winter's snake,³

So who knows Policy and her true aspect

Shall find her ways winding and
indirect. *Exit.*

ACT 2

Scene 1

*Enter FRANCISCO de Medici, Cardinal MONTICELSO, MARCELLO,
ISABELLA, young GIOVANNI, with little JAQUES the Moor.*

FRANCISCO

Have you not seen your husband since you arrived?

ISABELLA

Not yet, sir.

FRANCISCO

Surely, he is wondrous kind.

If I had **such a** dove-house as Camillo's,

I would set fire on't, were't but to destroy

The pole-cats⁴ that haunt to't. [*To GIOVANNI*] My sweet cousin⁵ –

GIOVANNI

Lord uncle, you did promise me a horse

And armour.

FRANCISCO

That I did, my pretty cousin.

Marcello, see it fitted.

MARCELLO

My lord, the Duke is here.

FRANCISCO

Sister, away! You must not yet be seen.

ISABELLA

10 I do beseech you,

Entreat him mildly; let not your rough tongue

Set us at louder variance. All my wrongs

Are freely pardoned, and I do not doubt,

As men to try the precious unicorn's horn

Make of the powder a preservative circle
And in it put a spider,¹ so these arms
Shall charm his poison, force it to obeying,
And keep him chaste from an infected straying.

FRANCISCO

I wish it may. Be gone. *Exit*

[ISABELLA].

Enter BRACCIANO *and* FLAMINIO.

Void² the chamber.

[*Exeunt* FLAMINIO, MARCELLO, GIOVANNI *and* JAQUES.]

20 You are welcome; will you sit? [*To* MONTICELSO]
I pray, my lord,

Be you my orator. My heart's too full;

I'll second you anon.

MONTICELSO

Ere I begin,

Let me entreat your grace forgo all passion

Which may be raised by my free discourse.

BRACCIANO

As silent as i'th' church – you may proceed.

MONTICELSO

It is a wonder to your noble friends

That you **that have**, as 'twere, entered the world

With a free sceptre in your able hand,

And have to th' use of nature well applied

30 High gifts of learning, should in your prime age

Neglect your awful¹ throne for the soft down
Of an insatiate bed. O my lord,
The drunkard after all his lavish cups
Is dry, and then is sober; so at length,
When you awake from this lascivious dream,
Repentance then will follow, like the sting
Placed in the adder's tail. Wretched are princes
When fortune blasteth but a petty flower²
Of their unwieldy crowns, or ravisheth
40 But one pearl from their sceptre; but, alas!
When they to wilful shipwreck loose³ good fame
All princely titles perish with their name.⁴

BRACCIANO

You have said, my lord –

MONTICELSO

Enough to give you taste
How far I am from flattering your greatness.

BRACCIANO [*To FRANCISCO*]

Now you that are his second, what say you?
Do not, like young hawks, fetch a course about;⁵
Your game flies fair and for you.

FRANCISCO

Do not fear it.
I'll answer you in your own hawking phrase:
Some eagles that should gaze upon the sun

50 Seldom soar high, but take their lustful ease,
Since they from dunghill birds¹ their prey can
seize.

You know Vittoria?

BRACCIANO

Yes.

FRANCISCO

You shift² your shirt there

When you retire from tennis?

BRACCIANO

Happily.³

FRANCISCO

Her husband is lord of a poor fortune,

Yet she wears cloth of tissue.⁴

BRACCIANO

What of this?

Will you urge that, my good lord Cardinal,

As part of her confession at next shrift,

And know from whence it sails?

FRANCISCO

She is your strumpet.

BRACCIANO

Uncivil sir, there's hemlock in thy breath

60 And that black slander. Were she a whore of
mine,

All thy loud cannons and thy borrowed Switzers,⁵

Thy galleys, nor thy sworn confederates
Durst not supplant her.

FRANCISCO

Let's not talk on thunder.

Thou hast a wife, our sister – would I had given
Both her white hands to death, bound and locked
fast

In her last winding-sheet, when I gave thee
But one.

BRACCIANO

Thou hadst given a soul to God then.

FRANCISCO

True;

Thy ghostly¹ father, with all's absolution,
Shall ne'er do so by thee.

BRACCIANO

70 Spit thy poison.

FRANCISCO

I shall not need; Lust carries her sharp whip
At her own girdle. Look to't, for our anger
Is making thunderbolts.

BRACCIANO

Thunder? In faith,
They are but crackers.²

FRANCISCO

We'll end this with the cannon.

BRACCIANO

Thou'lt get nought by it but iron in thy wounds,
And gunpowder in thy nostrils.

FRANCISCO

Better that
Than change perfumes for plasters.³

BRACCIANO

Pity on thee,
'Twere good you'd show your slaves or men
condemned
Your new-ploughed⁴ forehead. Defiance – and I'll
meet thee,
80 Even in a thicket of thy ablest men.

MONTICELSO

My lords, you shall not word it⁵ any further
Without a milder limit.

FRANCISCO

Willingly.

BRACCIANO

Have you proclaimed a triumph that you bait
A lion thus?¹

MONTICELSO

My lord!

BRACCIANO

I am tame, I am tame, sir.

FRANCISCO

We send unto the Duke for conference
'Bout levies 'gainst the pirates; my lord Duke
Is not at home. We come ourself in person;
Still my lord Duke is busied. But we fear
90 When Tiber to each **prowling** passenger²
Discovers flocks of wild ducks,³ then, my lord –
'Bout moulting-time,⁴ I mean – we shall be certain
To find you, sure enough, and speak with you.

BRACCIANO

Ha?

FRANCISCO

A mere tale of a tub;⁵ my words are idle.
But to express the sonnet by natural reason,
When stags grow melancholic⁶ you'll find the
season.

Enter GIOVANNI [wearing armour, and JAQUES].

MONTICELSO

No more, my lord. Here comes a champion
Shall end the difference between you both,
Your son, the prince Giovanni. See, my lords,
100 What hopes you store in him; this is a casket
For both your crowns, and should be held like
dear.
Now is he apt for knowledge; therefore know,
It is a more direct and even way
To train to virtue those of princely blood

By examples than by precepts. If by examples,
Whom should he rather strive to imitate
Than his own father? Be his pattern, then.
Leave him a stock of virtue that may last,
Should fortune rend his sails and split his mast.

BRACCIANO

110 Your hand, boy. [*Shakes his hand*] Growing to
soldier?

GIOVANNI

Give me a pike.

[*JAQUES hands him a weapon.*]

FRANCISCO

What, practising your pike so young, fair coz?

GIOVANNI

Suppose me one of Homer's frogs,¹ my lord,
Tossing my bulrush thus. Pray, sir, tell me:
Might not a child of good discretion
Be leader to an army?

FRANCISCO

Yes, cousin, a young prince
Of good discretion² might.

GIOVANNI

Say you so?

Indeed, I have heard 'tis fit a general
Should not endanger his own person oft,

120 So that he make a noise when he's o'horseback

Like a Dansk³ drummer. Oh, 'tis excellent!
He need not fight – methinks his horse as well
Might lead an army for him. If I live,
I'll charge the French foe in the very front
Of all my troops, the foremost man –

FRANCISCO

What, what?

GIOVANNI

And will not bid my soldiers up and follow,
But bid them follow me.

BRACCIANO

Forward lapwing!¹
He flies with the shell on's head.

FRANCISCO

Pretty cousin!

GIOVANNI

The first year, uncle, that I go to war,
130 All prisoners that I take I will set free
Without their ransom.

FRANCISCO

Ha, without their ransom?
How then will you reward your soldiers
That took those prisoners for you?

GIOVANNI

Thus, my lord:

I'll marry them to all the wealthy widows
That falls that year.

FRANCISCO

Why then, the next year following
You'll have no men to go with you to war.

GIOVANNI

Why then, I'll press the women to the war,
And then the men will follow.

MONTICELSO

Witty prince!

FRANCISCO

See, a good habit¹ makes a child a man,
140 Whereas a bad one makes a man a beast.
Come, you and I are friends.

BRACCIANO

Most wishedly,
Like bones which broke in sunder and wellset
Knit the more strongly.

FRANCISCO [*To ATTENDANT offstage*]

Call Camillo hither.
You have received the rumour how Count Lodovic
Is turned a pirate?

BRACCIANO

Yes.

FRANCISCO

We are now preparing
Some ships to fetch him in.

[*Enter* ISABELLA.]

Behold your Duchess.

We now will leave you, and expect from you
Nothing but kind entreaty.

BRACCIANO

You have charmed me.

Exeunt FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, GIOVANNI [*and*
JAQUES].

You are in health we see.

ISABELLA

And above health
To see my lord well.

BRACCIANO

150 So – I wonder much
What amorous whirlwind hurried you to Rome.

ISABELLA

Devotion, my lord.

BRACCIANO

Devotion?¹

Is your soul charged with any grievous sin?

ISABELLA

'Tis burdened with too many, and I think
The oft'ner that we cast our reck'nings up,²

Our sleeps will be the sounder.

BRACCIANO

Take your chamber.³

ISABELLA

Nay, my dear lord, I will not have you angry.

Doth not my absence from you two months

Merit one kiss?

BRACCIANO

I do not use to kiss.

160 If that will dispossess your jealousy,

I'll swear it to you.

ISABELLA

O my lovèd lord,

I do not come to chide. My jealousy?

I am to learn what that Italian⁴ means.

You are as welcome to these longing arms

As I to you a virgin.

[*She kisses him.*]

BRACCIANO

Oh, your breath!

Out upon sweetmeats and continued physic –

The plague is in them!

ISABELLA

You have oft, for these two lips,

Neglected cassia¹ or the natural sweets

Of the spring violet; they are not yet much
withered.

170 My lord, I should be merry. These your frowns
Show in a helmet lovely, but on me,
In such a peaceful interview, methinks
They are too, too roughly knit.

BRACCIANO

O dissemblance!
Do you bandy factions² 'gainst me? Have you
learnt
The trick of impudent baseness to complain
Unto your kindred?

ISABELLA

Never, my dear lord.

BRACCIANO

Must I be haunted out,³ or was't your trick
To meet some amorous gallant here in Rome⁴
That must supply our discontinuance?

ISABELLA

180 I pray, sir, burst my heart, and in my death
Turn to your ancient pity, though not love.

BRACCIANO

Because your brother is the corpulent Duke,
That is the Great Duke – S' death, I shall not
shortly
Racket away five hundred crowns at tennis,

But it shall rest upon record! I scorn him
Like a shaved Polack;⁵ all his reverent wit
Lies in his wardrobe. He's a discreet fellow
When he's made up in his robes of state.
Your brother, the Great Duke, because h'as
galleys,
190 And now and then ransacks a Turkish fly-boat¹

—
Now all the hellish furies take his soul! —
First made this match. Accursèd be the priest
That sang the wedding mass, and even my issue!

ISABELLA

Oh, too, too far you have cursed.

BRACCIANO

Your hand I'll kiss:
This is the latest² ceremony of my love.
Henceforth I'll never lie with thee. By this,
This wedding-ring [*removing the ring*], I'll ne'er
more lie with thee;
And this divorce shall be as truly kept
As if the judge had doomed it. Fare you well;
Our sleeps are severed.

ISABELLA

200 Forbid it, the sweet union
Of all things blessed! Why, the saints in heaven
Will knit their brows at that.

BRACCIANO

Let not thy love
Make thee an unbeliever. This my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance. Let thy brother rage
Beyond a horrid tempest or sea-fight,
My vow is fixed.

ISABELLA

O my winding-sheet,
Now shall I need thee shortly! Dear my lord,
Let me hear once more what I would not hear:
210 Never?

BRACCIANO

Never.

ISABELLA

O my unkind lord, may your sins find mercy,
As I upon a woeful, widowed bed
Shall pray for you, if not to turn your eyes
Upon your wretched wife and hopeful son,
Yet that in time you'll fix them upon heaven.

BRACCIANO

No more. Go, go complain to the Great Duke.

ISABELLA

No, my dear lord, you shall have present witness
How I'll work peace between you. I will make

220 Myself the author of your cursèd vow;
I have some cause to do it, you have none.
Conceal it, I beseech you, for the weal¹
Of both your dukedoms, that you wrought the
means
Of such a separation. Let the fault
Remain with my supposed jealousy,
And think with what a piteous and rent heart
I shall perform this sad, ensuing part.

Enter FRANCISCO, FLAMINIO, MONTICELSO,
MARCELLO.

BRACCIANO

Well, take your course [*turning away from*
ISABELLA, *who weeps*]. – My honourable
brother –

FRANCISCO

Sister? This is not well, my lord. Why, sister!
She merits not this welcome.

BRACCIANO

230 Welcome, say?
She hath given a sharp welcome.

FRANCISCO [*To ISABELLA*]

Are you foolish?
Come, dry your tears. Is this a modest course:
To better what is naught,² to rail and weep?
Grow to a reconciliation, or, by heaven,

I'll ne'er more deal between you.

ISABELLA

Sir, you shall not;
No, though Vittoria upon that condition
Would become honest.¹

FRANCISCO

Was your husband loud
Since we departed?

ISABELLA

By my life, sir, no;
I swear by that I do not care to lose.
240 Are all these ruins of my former beauty
Laid out for a whore's triumph?

FRANCISCO

Do you hear?
Look upon other women, with what patience
They suffer these slight wrongs, with what justice
They study to requite them. Take that course.

ISABELLA

Oh, that I were a man, or that I had power
To execute my apprehended wishes,
I would whip some with scorpions.

FRANCISCO

What, turned fury?

ISABELLA

To dig the strumpet's eyes out, let her lie
Some twenty months a-dying, to cut off
250 Her nose and lips, pull out her rotten teeth,
Preserve her flesh like mummia, for trophies
Of my just anger. Hell to my affliction
Is mere snow-water. [*To BRACCIANO*] By your
favour, sir –
Brother, draw near, and my lord Cardinal –
[*To BRACCIANO*] Sir, let me borrow of you but one
kiss.
[*She kisses him.*]
Henceforth I'll never lie with you, by this,
This wedding ring.
[*She removes her ring.*]

FRANCISCO

How? Ne'er more lie with him?

ISABELLA

And this divorce shall be as truly kept
As if in throngèd court a thousand ears¹
260 Had heard it, and a thousand lawyers' hands
Sealed to the separation.

BRACCIANO

Ne'er lie with me?

ISABELLA

Let not my former dotage
Make thee an unbeliever. This my vow

Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied

With my repentance: *manet alta mente repostum.*²

FRANCISCO

Now, by my birth, you are a foolish, mad

And jealous woman!

BRACCIANO

You see 'tis not my seeking.

FRANCISCO

Was this your circle of pure unicorn's horn

You said should charm your lord? Now horns upon
thee,

270 For jealousy deserves them. Keep your vow

And take your chamber.

ISABELLA

No, sir, I'll presently to Padua;

I will not stay a minute.

MONTICELSO

O good madam –

BRACCIANO

'Twere best to let her have her humour.

Some half-day's journey will bring down her
stomach,¹

And then she'll turn in post.²

FRANCISCO

To see her come

To my lord Cardinal for a dispensation

Of her rash vow will beget excellent laughter.

ISABELLA [*Aside*]

Unkindness, do thy office: poor heart, break.

Those are the killing griefs which dare not
speak.³ *Exit.*

Enter CAMILLO.

MARCELLO

280 Camillo's come, my lord.

FRANCISCO

Where's the commission?

MARCELLO

'Tis here.

FRANCISCO

Give me the signet.

[*They confer apart.*]

FLAMINIO [*To BRACCIANO*]

My lord, do you mark their whispering? I will
compound a medicine out of their two heads, stronger
than garlic, deadlier than stibium.⁴ The cantharides,⁵
which are scarce seen to stick upon the flesh when
they work to the heart, shall not do it with more silence
or invisible cunning.

BRACCIANO

About the murder –

FLAMINIO

290 They are sending him to Naples, but I'll send
him to Candy.¹

Enter DOCTOR [*Julio*].

Here's another property² too.

BRACCIANO

Oh, the doctor.

FLAMINIO

A poor, quack-salving³ knave, my lord, one that should have been lashed for's lechery, but that he confessed a judgement, had an execution laid upon him, and so put the whip to a *non plus*.⁴

DOCTOR

And was cozened, my lord, by an arranter knave than myself, and made pay all the colourable execution.⁵

FLAMINIO

300 He will shoot pills into a man's guts, shall make them have more ventages than a cornet⁶ or a lamprey.⁷ He will poison a kiss, and was once minded for his masterpiece, because Ireland breeds no poison,⁸ to have prepared a deadly vapour in a Spaniard's fart⁹ that should have poisoned all Dublin.

BRACCIANO

Oh, Saint *Anthony's fire*!¹⁰

DOCTOR

Your secretary is merry, my lord.

FLAMINIO

O thou cursed antipathy to nature! Look, his eye's bloodshed¹ like a needle a chirurgeon² stitcheth a wound with. Let me embrace thee, toad, and love thee. O thou abominable,

310 loathsome gargarism,³ that will fetch up lungs,
lights,⁴ heart and liver by scruples!⁵

BRACCIANO

No more. I must employ thee, honest doctor;
You must to Padua and by the way
Use some of your skill for us.

DOCTOR

Sir, I shall.

BRACCIANO

But for Camillo?

FLAMINIO

He dies this night by such a politic strain⁶
Men shall suppose him by's own engine⁷ slain.
But for your Duchess's death –

DOCTOR

I'll make her sure.

BRACCIANO

Small mischiefs are by greater made secure.

FLAMINIO

320 Remember this, you slave: when knaves come
to preferment they rise as **gallows** are raised i'th' Low
Countries – one upon **another's** shoulders.⁸

Exeunt [BRACCIANO, FLAMINIO AND DOCTOR].

MONTICELSO

Here is an emblem,¹ nephew. Pray, peruse it.

'Twas thrown in at your window.
[*He hands CAMILLO a paper.*]

CAMILLO

At my window?

Here is a stag, my lord, hath shed his horns,
And for the loss of them the poor beast weeps;
The word:² '*Inopem me copia fecit*'.³

MONTICELSO

That is,
'Plenty of horns hath made him poor of horns'.⁴

CAMILLO

What should this mean?

MONTICELSO

I'll tell you. 'Tis given out
You are a cuckold.

CAMILLO

330 Is it given out so?
I had rather such report as that, my lord,
Should keep within doors.

FRANCISCO

Have you any children?

CAMILLO

None, my lord.

FRANCISCO

You are the happier.

I'll tell you a tale.

CAMILLO

Pray, my lord –

FRANCISCO

An old tale.¹

Upon a time, Phoebus, the god of light,
Or him we call the sun, would **needs** be married.

The gods gave their consent, and Mercury
Was sent to voice it to the general world.

But what a piteous cry there straight arose

340 Amongst smiths and felt-makers, brewers and
cooks,

Reapers and butter-women, amongst fishmongers
And thousand other trades, which are annoyed
By his excessive heat; 'twas lamentable!

They came to Jupiter, all in a sweat,
And do forbid the banns.² A great fat cook
Was made their speaker, who entreats of Jove
That Phoebus might be gelded, for if now,
When there was but one sun, so many men
Were like to perish by his violent heat,

350 What should they do if he were married
And should beget more, and those children
Make fireworks like their father? So say I,
Only I will apply it to your wife:

Her issue, should not providence prevent it,

Would make both nature, time, and man repent it.

MONTICELSO

Look you, cousin,

Go change the air,³ for shame. See if your absence

Will blast your cornucopia.⁴ Marcello

Is chosen with you joint commissioner

360 For the relieving our Italian coast

From pirates.

MARCELLO

I am much honoured in't.

CAMILLO

But, sir,

Ere I return the stag's horns may be sprouted

Greater than these are shed.

MONTICELSO

Do not fear it;

I'll be your ranger.¹

CAMILLO

You must watch i'th' nights;

Then's the most danger.

FRANCISCO

Farewell, good Marcello.

All the best fortunes of a soldier's wish

Bring you o'ship-board.

CAMILLO

Were I not best, now I am turned soldier,
Ere that I leave my wife, sell all she hath
And then take leave of her?

MONTICELSO

370 I expect good from you,
Your parting is so merry.

CAMILLO

Merry, my lord? O'th' captain's humour right;
I am resolvèd to be drunk this night.

Exeunt [CAMILLO and MARCELLO].

FRANCISCO

So, 'twas well fitted. Now shall we discern
How his wished absence will give violent way
To Duke Bracciano's lust.

MONTICELSO

Why, that was it;
To what scorned purpose else should we make
choice
Of him for a sea-captain? And besides,
Count [Lodovic](#), which was rumoured for a pirate,
Is now in Padua.

FRANCISCO

Is't true?

MONTICELSO

380 Most certain.
I have letters from him which are suppliant

To work his quick repeal from banishment.
He means to address himself for pension
Unto our sister¹ Duchess.

FRANCISCO

Oh, 'twas well.
We shall not want² his absence past six days.
I fain would have the Duke Bracciano run
Into notorious scandal, for there's naught
In such cursed dotage to repair his name,
Only the deep sense of some deathless shame.

MONTICELSO

390 It may be objected I am dishonourable
To play thus with my kinsman, but I answer:
For my revenge I'd stake a brother's life,
That being wronged durst not avenge himself.

FRANCISCO

Come to observe this strumpet.

MONTICELSO

Curse of greatness!
Sure, he'll not leave her.

FRANCISCO

There's small pity in't.
Like mistletoe on sere³ elms spent by weather,
Let him cleave to her and both rot
together. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 2

Enter BRACCIANO with one in the habit of a CONJURER.

BRACCIANO

Now, sir, I claim your promise. 'Tis dead
midnight,
The time prefixed to show me, by your art,
How the intended murder of Camillo
And our loathèd Duchess grow to action.

CONJURER

You have won me by your bounty to a deed
I do not often practise. Some there are,
Which by sophistic tricks aspire that name –
Which I would gladly lose – of [necromancer](#);¹
As some that use to juggle² upon cards,
10 Seeming to conjure when indeed they cheat;
Others that raise up their confederate spirits
'Bout windmills,³ and endanger their own necks
For making of a squib;⁴ and some there are
Will keep a curtal⁵ to show juggling tricks
And give out 'tis a spirit. Besides these,
Such a whole ream⁶ of almanac-makers, figure-
flingers,⁷
Fellows, indeed, that only live by stealth,
Since they do merely lie about stol'n goods,⁸

They'd make men think the devil were fast and loose,⁹

20 With speaking fustian¹⁰ Latin. Pray, sit down.

Put on this nightcap, sir; 'tis charmed.

[BRACCIANO *puts on a nightcap.*]

And now

I'll show you by my strong, commanding art

The circumstance that breaks your Duchess's heart.

A Dumb Show.

[*Music sounds.*] *Enter, suspiciously,*¹ [DOCTOR] *Julio and CHRISTOPHERO. They draw a curtain where BRACCIANO's picture is. They put on spectacles of glass which cover their eyes and noses, and then burn perfumes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture. That done, quenching the fire and putting off their spectacles, they depart, laughing.*

Enter ISABELLA, in her nightgown, as to bed-ward, with lights after her; Count LODOVICO, GIOVANNI, GUID-ANTONIO and others waiting on her. She kneels down as to prayers, then draws the curtain of the picture, does three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice. She faints and will not suffer them to come near it; dies. Sorrow expressed in GIOVANNI and in Count LODOVICO. She's conveyed out solemnly.

BRACCIANO

Excellent, then she's dead.

CONJURER

She's poisoned

By the fumed picture. 'Twas her custom nightly,

Before she went to bed, to go and visit

Your picture, and to feed her eyes and lips
On the dead shadow.² Doctor Julio,
Observing this, infects it with an oil
30 And other poisoned stuff, which presently
Did suffocate her spirits.

BRACCIANO

Methought I saw
Count Lodovic there.

CONJURER

He was, and by my art
I find he did most passionately dote
Upon your Duchess. Now turn another way
And view Camillo's far more politic fate.
Strike louder music from this charmed ground,¹
To yield, as fits the act, a tragic sound.

The Second Dumb Show.

[*Music sounds.*] Enter FLAMINIO, MARCELLO, CAMILLO, with four more as CAPTAINS. They drink healths and dance. A vaulting-horse is brought into the room. MARCELLO and two more whispered out of the room, while FLAMINIO and CAMILLO strip themselves into their shirts, as to vault; compliment who shall begin. As CAMILLO is about to vault, FLAMINIO pitcheth him upon his neck, and, with the help of the rest, writhes his neck about; seems to see if it be broke, and lays him folded double as 'twere under the horse; makes shows to call for help.

MARCELLO comes in, laments, sends for the Cardinal [MONTICELSO], and Duke [FRANCISCO], who comes forth with armed men; wonder at the act; [FRANCISCO] commands the

*body to be carried home, apprehends FLAMINIO, MARCELLO and
the rest, and go as 'twere to apprehend VITTORIA.*

BRACCIANO

'Twas quaintly² done; but yet each circumstance
I taste not fully.

CONJURER

Oh, 'twas most apparent.

40 You saw them enter, charged with their deep
healths

To their boon³ voyage, and, to second that,
Flaminio calls to have a vaulting-horse
Maintain their sport. The virtuous Marcello
Is innocently plotted forth the room,
Whilst your eye saw the rest and can inform you
The engine of all.

BRACCIANO

It seems Marcello and Flaminio
Are both committed.

CONJURER

Yes, you saw them guarded,
And now they are come with purpose to apprehend
Your mistress, fair Vittoria. We are now
50 Beneath her roof; 'twere fit we instantly
Make out by some back postern.¹

BRACCIANO

Noble friend,

You bind me ever to you. [*Shakes his hand*] This shall stand

As the firm seal annexèd to my hand.²

It shall enforce a payment.

CONJURER

Sir, I thank you.

Exit BRACCIANO.

Both flowers and weeds spring when the sun is warm,

And great men do great good or else great harm.

Exit CONJURER.

ACT 3

Scene 1

Enter FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO, *their* CHANCELLOR *and* REGISTER.

FRANCISCO

You have dealt discreetly to obtain the presence
Of all the grave, lieger³ ambassadors
To hear Vittoria's trial.

MONTICELSO

'Twas not ill;
For, sir, you know we have nought but
circumstances
To charge her with about her husband's death.
Their approbation, therefore, to the proofs
Of her black lust shall make her infamous

To all our neighbouring kingdoms. I wonder
If Bracciano will be here.

FRANCISCO

Oh fie!

10 'Twere impudence too palpable. [Exeunt
all.]

Enter FLAMINIO *and* MARCELLO *guarded, and a*
LAWYER.

LAWYER

What, are you in by the week?¹ So, I will try now
whether thy wit be close prisoner. Methinks none
should sit upon² thy sister but old whoremasters.

FLAMINIO

Or cuckolds, for your cuckold is your most terrible
tickler³ of lechery. Whoremasters would serve, for
none are judges at tilting⁴ but those that have been old
tilters.

LAWYER

My lord Duke and she have been very private.⁵

FLAMINIO

You are a dull ass; 'tis threatened they have been
very public.⁶

LAWYER

20 If it can be proved they have but kissed one
another –

FLAMINIO

What then?

LAWYER

My lord Cardinal will ferret⁷ them.

FLAMINIO

A cardinal, I hope, will not catch conies.¹

LAWYER

For to sow kisses – mark what I say – to sow kisses
is to reap lechery, and I am sure a woman that will
endure kissing is half won.

FLAMINIO

True, her upper part by that rule; if you will win her
nether part too, you know what follows.

[*Sennet sounds.*]

LAWYER

Hark! The ambassadors are lighted.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

30 I do put on this feignèd garb of mirth
To gull suspicion.

MARCELLO

O my unfortunate sister!
I would my dagger's point had cleft her heart
When she first saw Bracciano. You, 'tis said,
Were made his engine and his stalking-horse
To undo my sister.

FLAMINIO

I made a kind of path
To her and mine own preferment.

MARCELLO

Your ruin!

FLAMINIO

Hum! Thou art a soldier,
Followest the Great Duke, feedest his victories
As witches do their serviceable spirits,²
40 Even with thy prodigal³ blood. What hast got,
But, like the wealth of captains, a poor handful,
Which in thy palm thou bear'st, as men hold
water:
Seeking to gripe it fast, the frail reward
Steals through thy fingers.

MARCELLO

Sir –

FLAMINIO

Thou hast scarce maintenance
To keep thee in fresh chamois – ¹

MARCELLO

Brother!

FLAMINIO

Hear me –
And thus when we have even poured ourselves
Into great fights, for their ambition
Or idle spleen, how shall we find reward?
But as we seldom find the mistletoe,
50 Sacred to physic, on the builder² oak
Without a mandrake³ by it, so in our quest of gain.

Alas, the poorest of their forced dislikes
At a limb proffers, but at heart it strikes.⁴
This is lamented doctrine.

MARCELLO

Come, come!

FLAMINIO

When age shall turn thee
White as a blooming hawthorn –

MARCELLO

I'll interrupt you.
For love of virtue, bear an honest heart
And stride over every politic respect,
Which where they most advance they most infect.

60 Were I your father, as I am your brother,
I should not be ambitious to leave you
A better patrimony.

Enter SAVOY [AMBASSADOR].

FLAMINIO

I'll think on't.
The lord ambassadors!

*Here there is a passage of the lieger Ambassadors over the
stage severally.*

Enter FRENCH AMBASSADORS.

LAWYER

O my sprightly Frenchman! Do you know him? He's
an admirable tilter.

FLAMINIO

I saw him at last tilting; he showed like a pewter
candlestick fashioned like a man in armour, holding a
tilting-staff in his hand little bigger than a candle of
twelve i'th' pound.

LAWYER

Oh, but he's an excellent horseman.

FLAMINIO

70 A lame¹ one in his lofty tricks. He sleeps
o'horseback like a poulter.²

Enter ENGLISH *and* SPANISH [AMBASSADORS].

LAWYER

Lo, you, my Spaniard!

FLAMINIO

He carries his face in's ruff, as I have seen a serving-
man carry glasses in a cypress hat-band: monstrous
steady for fear of breaking. He looks like the claw of a
blackbird,³ first salted and then broiled in a
candle. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 2

The Arraignment of Vittoria.

Enter FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *the six lieger* AMBASSADORS,
BRACCIANO, VITTORIA [ZANCHE, FLAMINIO, MARCELLO], LAWYER
and a GUARD [*with* ATTENDANTS].

MONTICELSO

Forbear, my lord. Here is no place assigned you.
This business by his Holiness is left
To our examination.

BRACCIANO

May it thrive with you.
[*He*] *lays a rich gown under him.*

FRANCISCO

A chair there for his lordship!

BRACCIANO

Forbear your kindness. An unbidden guest
Should travel as Dutchwomen go to church:
Bear their stools with them.

MONTICELSO

At your pleasure, sir.
Stand to the table, gentlewomen. Now, signor,
Fall to your plea.

LAWYER

10 *Domine Judex converte oculos in hanc pestem
mulierum corruptissimam.*¹

VITTORIA

What's he?

FRANCISCO

A [lawyer](#) that pleads against you.

VITTORIA

Pray, my lord, let him speak his usual tongue.

I'll make no answer else.

FRANCISCO

Why? You understand Latin.

VITTORIA

I do, sir, but amongst this auditory¹

Which come to hear my cause, the half or more

May be ignorant in't.

MONTICELSO

Go on, sir.

VITTORIA

By your favour,

I will not have my accusation clouded

20 In a strange tongue. All this assembly

Shall hear what you can charge me with.

FRANCISCO

Signor,

You need not stand on't much. Pray, change your
language.

MONTICELSO

Oh, for God's sake. Gentlewoman, your credit²
Shall be more famous by it.

LAWYER

Well then, have at you.

VITTORIA

I am at the mark, sir; I'll give aim to you,³
And tell you how near you shoot.

LAWYER

Most literated judges, please your lordships
So to connive⁴ your judgements to the view
Of this debauched and diversivolent⁵ woman,
30 Who such a black concatenation¹
Of mischief hath effected, that to extirp
The memory of't must be the consummation
Of her and her projections.²

VITTORIA

What's all this?

LAWYER

Hold your peace!
Exorbitant sins must have exulceration.³

VITTORIA

Surely, my lords, this lawyer here hath swallowed
Some 'pothecary's bills⁴ or proclamations,⁵
And now the hard and undigestable words

Come up⁶ like stones we use give hawks for
physic.⁷

Why, this is Welsh⁸ to Latin.

LAWYER

40 My lords, the woman
Knows not her tropes nor figures, nor is perfect
In the academic derivation
Of grammatical elocution.

FRANCISCO

Sir, your pains
Shall be well spared, and your deep eloquence
Be worthily applauded amongst those
Which understand you.

LAWYER

My good lord –

FRANCISCO (*speaks this as in scorn*)

Sir,
Put up your papers in your fustian¹ bag –
Cry mercy, sir, 'tis buckram² – and accept
My notion of your learn'd verbosity.

LAWYER

50 I most graduatically³ thank your lordship.
I shall have use for them
elsewhere. [*Exit.*]

MONTICELSO

I shall be plainer with you, and paint out

Your follies in more natural red and white
Than that upon your cheek.

VITTORIA

Oh, you mistake.
You raise a blood as noble in this cheek
As ever was your mother's.

MONTICELSO

I must spare you, till proof cry 'whore' to that.
Observe this creature here, my honoured lords,
A woman of a most prodigious spirit
In her effected –

VITTORIA

60 Honourable my lord,
It doth not suit a reverend cardinal
To play the lawyer thus.

MONTICELSO

Oh, your trade instructs your language!
You see, my lords, what goodly fruit she seems.
Yet like those apples travellers report
To grow where Sodom and Gomorrah⁴ stood,
I will but touch her and you straight shall see
She'll fall to soot and ashes.

VITTORIA

Your envenomed
'Pothecary should do't.

MONTICELSO

I am resolved,
70 Were there a second paradise to lose
This devil would betray it.

VITTORIA

O poor charity,
Thou art seldom found in scarlet.¹

MONTICELSO

Who knows not how, when several night by night
Her gates were choked with coaches, and her
rooms
Outbraved the stars with several kind of lights;
When she did counterfeit a prince's court
In music, banquets and most riotous surfeits,
This whore, forsooth, was holy.

VITTORIA

Ha? 'Whore'? What's that?

MONTICELSO

Shall I expound 'whore' to you? Sure, I shall;
80 I'll give their perfect character.² They are first
Sweetmeats which rot the eater; in man's nostril
Poisoned perfumes. They are coz'ning³ alchemy,
Shipwrecks in calmest weather. What are whores?
Cold Russian winters that appear so barren,
As if that nature had forgot the spring.
They are the true material fire of hell,

Worse than those tributes⁴ i'th' Low Countries
paid –

Exactions upon meat, drink, garments, sleep;

Ay, even on man's perdition, his sin.

90 They are those brittle evidences of law

Which forfeit all a wretched man's estate

For leaving out one syllable. What are whores?

They are those flattering bells have all one tune

At weddings and at funerals; your rich whores

Are only treasuries by extortion filled,

And emptied by cursed riot. They are worse,

Worse than dead bodies which are begged at
gallows

And wrought upon by surgeons,¹ to teach man

Wherein he is imperfect. What's a whore?

She's like the guilty,² counterfeited coin

100 Which, whosoe'er first stamps it, **brings** in
trouble

All that receive it.

VITTORIA

This character 'scapes me.

MONTICELSO

You, gentlewoman –

Take from all beasts and from all minerals

Their deadly poison –

VITTORIA

Well, what then?

MONTICELSO

I'll tell thee;
I'll find in thee a 'pothecary's shop
To sample³ them all.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR [*Aside*]

She hath lived ill.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR [*Aside*]

True, but the Cardinal's too bitter.

MONTICELSO

You know what whore is: next the devil, Adult'ry,
Enters the devil, Murder.

FRANCISCO

110 Your unhappy husband
Is dead –

VITTORIA

Oh, he's a happy husband;
Now he owes nature nothing.

FRANCISCO

And by a vaulting-engine.

MONTICELSO

An active plot:
He jumped into his grave.

FRANCISCO

What a prodigy¹ was't

That from some two yards' height a slender man
Should break his neck!

MONTICELSO

I'th' rushes.²

FRANCISCO

And what's more,
Upon the instant lose all use of speech,
All vital motion, like a man had lain
Wound up³ three days. Now mark each
circumstance.

MONTICELSO

120 And look upon this creature was his wife.
She comes not like a widow; she comes armed
With scorn and impudence. Is this a mourning
habit?

VITTORIA

Had I foreknown his death, as you suggest,
I would have bespoke⁴ my mourning.

MONTICELSO

Oh, you are [cunning](#).

VITTORIA

You shame your wit and judgement
To call it so. What, is my just defence
By him that is my judge called impudence?
Let me appeal then from this Christian court
To the uncivil Tartar!¹

MONTICELSO

See, my lords,
She scandals² our proceedings.

VITTORIA [*kneeling*]

130 Humbly thus,
Thus low, to the most worthy and respected
Lieger ambassadors, my modesty
And womanhood I tender; but withal
So entangled in a cursèd accusation
That my defence, of force,³ like Perseus,⁴
Must personate masculine virtue to the point.⁵
Find me but guilty: sever head from body;
We'll part good friends. I scorn to hold my life
At yours or any man's entreaty, sir.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

She hath a brave spirit.

MONTICELSO

140 Well, well, such counterfeit
jewels
Make true ones oft suspected.

VITTORIA

You are deceived;
For know, that all your strict-combinèd⁶ heads,
Which strike against this mine of diamonds,
Shall prove but glassen hammers: they shall break.
These are but feignèd shadows of my evils.

Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils;
I am past such needless palsy.⁷ For your names
Of 'whore' and 'murd'ress', they proceed from
you;
As if a man should spit against the wind,
150 The filth returns in's face.

MONTICELSO

Pray you, mistress, satisfy me one question:
Who lodged beneath your roof that fatal night
Your husband brake his neck?

BRACCIANO

That question
Enforceth me break silence. I was there.

MONTICELSO

Your business?

BRACCIANO

Why, I came to comfort her
And take some course for settling her estate,
Because I heard her husband was in debt
To you, my lord.

MONTICELSO

He was.

BRACCIANO

And 'twas strangely feared
That you would cozen¹ her.

MONTICELSO

Who made you overseer?

BRACCIANO

160 Why, my charity, my charity, which should
flow

From every generous and noble spirit
To orphans and to widows.

MONTICELSO

Your lust!

BRACCIANO

Cowardly dogs bark loudest. Sirrah priest,
I'll talk with you hereafter. Do you hear?
The sword² you frame of such an excellent temper³
I'll sheathe in your own bowels.
There are a number of thy coat¹ resemble
Your common post-boys.²

MONTICELSO

Ha?

BRACCIANO

Your mercenary post-boys;
Your letters carry truth, but 'tis your guise
170 To fill your mouths with gross and impudent
lies.
[He makes to leave.]

SERVANT

My lord, your gown –
[He offers it to BRACCIANO.]

BRACCIANO

Thou liest, 'twas my stool.
Bestow't upon thy master that will challenge³
The rest o'th' household-stuff; for Bracciano
Was ne'er so beggarly to take a stool
Out of another's lodging. Let him make
Valance for his bed on't, or a demi-footcloth
For his most reverend moil.⁴ Monticelso,
*Nemo me impune lacessit.*⁵ *Exit* BRACCIANO.

MONTICELSO

Your champion's gone.

VITTORIA

The wolf may prey the better.

FRANCISCO

180 My lord, there's great suspicion of the murder,
But no sound proof who did it. For my part,
I do not think she hath a soul so black
To act a deed so bloody. If she have,
As in cold countries husbandmen plant vines,
And with warm blood manure them, even so
One summer she will bear unsavoury fruit,
And ere next spring wither both branch and root.
The act of blood let pass; only descend
To matter of incontinence.

VITTORIA

I discern poison

190 Under your gilded pills.¹

MONTICELSO [*bringing out a letter*]

Now the Duke's gone, I will produce a letter,
Wherein 'twas plotted **he** and you should meet
At an apothecary's summer-house,
Down by the river Tiber – view't, my lords –
[*He passes the letter to the AMBASSADORS.*]
Where, after wanton bathing and the heat
Of a lascivious banquet – I pray, read it.
I shame to speak the rest.

VITTORIA

Grant I was tempted;
Temptation to lust proves not the act;
*Casta est quam nemo rogavit.*²

200 You read his hot love to me, but you want³
My frosty answer.

MONTICELSO

Frost i'th' dog-days?⁴ Strange!

VITTORIA

Condemn you me for that the Duke did love me?
So may you blame some fair and crystal river
For that some melancholic, distracted man
Hath drowned himself in't.

MONTICELSO

Truly drowned, indeed.

VITTORIA

Sum up my faults, I pray, and you shall find
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart
And a good stomach to a feast are all,
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with.

210 In faith, my lord, you might go pistol¹ flies –
The sport would be more noble.

MONTICELSO

Very good.

VITTORIA

But take you your course. It seems you have
beggared me first,
And now would fain undo me. I have houses,
Jewels and a poor remnant of crusadoes;²
Would those would make you charitable.

MONTICELSO

If the devil
Did ever take good shape, behold his picture.

VITTORIA

You have one virtue left:
You will not flatter me.

FRANCISCO

Who brought this letter?

VITTORIA

I am not compelled to tell you.

MONTICELSO

220 My lord Duke sent to you a thousand ducats
The twelfth of August.

VITTORIA

'Twas to keep your cousin
From prison; I paid use³ for't.

MONTICELSO

I rather think
'Twas interest for his lust.

VITTORIA

Who says so but yourself? If you be my accuser,
Pray cease to be my judge. Come from the bench,
Give in your evidence 'gainst me, and let these
Be moderators. My lord Cardinal,
Were your intelligencing ears¹ as long
As to my thoughts, had you an honest tongue,
230 I would not care though you proclaimed them
all.

MONTICELSO

Go to, go to.
After your goodly and vainglorious banquet,
I'll give you a choke-pear.²

VITTORIA

O'your own grafting?

MONTICELSO

You were born in Venice,³ honourably descended

From the Vitelli. 'Twas my cousin's fate –
Ill may I name the hour – to marry you;
He bought you of your father.

VITTORIA

Ha?

MONTICELSO

He spent there in six months
Twelve thousand ducats, and to my acquaintance
240 Received in dowry with you not one julio.⁴
'Twas a hard penny-worth, the ware being so
light.⁵
I yet but draw the curtain; now to your picture:
You came from thence a most notorious strumpet,
And so you have continued.

VITTORIA

My lord!

MONTICELSO

Nay, hear me.
You shall have time to prate. My Lord Bracciano –
Alas, I make but repetition
Of what is ordinary and Rialto talk,
And [balladed](#),¹ and would be played o'th' stage,
But that vice many times finds such loud friends
250 That preachers are charmed silent.
You gentlemen, Flaminio and Marcello,
The court hath nothing now to charge you with;

Only you must remain upon your sureties²
For your appearance.

FRANCISCO

I stand for Marcello.

FLAMINIO

And my lord Duke for me.

MONTICELSO

For you, Vittoria, your public fault,
Joined to th'condition of the present time,
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity.
Such a corrupted trial have you made,
260 Both of your life and beauty, and been styled
No less in ominous fate than blazing stars
To [princes](#).³ Here's your sentence: you are
confined
Unto a house of convertites,⁴ and your bawd –

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

Who I?

MONTICELSO

– the Moor.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

Oh, I am a sound man again.

VITTORIA

A house of convertites? What's that?

MONTICELSO

A house

Of penitent whores.

VITTORIA

Do the noblemen in Rome
Erect it for their wives, that I am sent
To lodge there?

FRANCISCO

You must have patience.

VITTORIA

I must first have vengeance.
I fain would know if you have your salvation
By patent,¹ that you proceed thus.

MONTICELSO

270 Away with her!

Take her hence.

[GUARDS *lead* VITTORIA *and* ZANCHE *away*.]

VITTORIA

A rape, a rape!

MONTICELSO

How?

VITTORIA

Yes, you have ravished Justice,
Forced her to do your pleasure.

MONTICELSO

Fie, she's mad!

VITTORIA

Die with these pills in your most cursèd [maw](#)²
Should bring you health, or while you sit o'th'
bench
Let your own spittle choke you –

MONTICELSO

She's turned fury.

VITTORIA

– That the last day of judgement may so find you,
And leave you the same devil you were before.
Instruct me, some good horse-leech,¹ to speak
treason;
280 For since you cannot take my life for deeds,
Take it for words. Oh, woman's poor revenge
Which dwells but in the tongue! I will not weep;
No, I do scorn to call up one poor tear
To fawn on your injustice. Bear me hence
Unto this house of – what's your mitigating title?

MONTICELSO

Of convertites.

VITTORIA

It shall not be a house of convertites.
My mind shall make it honester to me
Than the Pope's palace, and more peaceable
290 Than thy soul, though thou art a cardinal.
Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spite:

Through darkness diamonds spread their richest
light.

Exeunt VITTORIA [*and* ZANCHE, *with* GUARDS].

Enter BRACCIANO.

BRACCIANO

Now you and I are friends, sir, we'll shake hands
In a friends' grave together – a fit place,
Being the emblem of soft peace t'atone our hatred.

FRANCISCO

Sir, what's the matter?

BRACCIANO

I will not chase more blood from that loved cheek;
You have lost too much already. Fare you
well. [*Exit.*]

FRANCISCO

How strange these words sound. What's the
interpretation?

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

300 Good, this is a preface to the discovery of the
Duchess's death. He carries it well. Because now I
cannot counterfeit a whining passion for the death of
my lady, I will feign a mad humour for the disgrace of
my sister, and that will keep off idle questions.
Treason's tongue hath a villainous palsy¹ in't; I will
talk to any man, hear no man, and for a time appear a
politic madman. [*Exit.*]

Enter GIOVANNI [*and*] Count LODOVICO [*both in mourning*].

FRANCISCO

How now, my noble cousin. What, in black?

GIOVANNI

Yes, uncle, I was taught to imitate you

In virtue, and you must imitate me

310 In colours for your garments. My sweet mother

Is –

FRANCISCO

How? Where?

GIOVANNI

– is there. No, yonder – indeed, sir, I'll not tell
you,

For I shall make you weep.

FRANCISCO

Is dead?

GIOVANNI

Do not blame me now.

I did not tell you so.

LODOVICO

She's dead, my lord.

FRANCISCO

Dead?

MONTICELSO

Blessèd lady, thou art now above thy woes.

Wilt please your lordships to withdraw a little?

[*Exeunt* AMBASSADORS.]

GIOVANNI

320 What do the dead do, uncle? Do they eat,
Hear music, go a-hunting and be merry,
As we that live?

FRANCISCO

No, coz, they sleep.

GIOVANNI

Lord, Lord, that I were dead!
I have not slept these six nights. When do they
wake?

FRANCISCO

When God shall please.

GIOVANNI

Good God, let her sleep ever!
For I have known her wake an hundred nights,
When all the pillow, where she laid her head,
Was brine-wet with her tears. I am to complain to
you, sir.

I'll tell you how they have used her, now she's
dead:

330 They wrapped her in a cruel fold of lead,
And would not let me kiss her.

FRANCISCO

Thou didst love her.

GIOVANNI

I have often heard her say she gave me suck;

And it should seem by that she dearly loved me,
Since princes seldom do it.¹

FRANCISCO

Oh, all of my poor sister that remains!
Take him away, for God's sake.

[*Exeunt* GIOVANNI *and* ATTENDANTS.]

MONTICELSO

How now, my lord?

FRANCISCO

Believe me, I am nothing but her grave,
And I shall keep her blessed memory
340 Longer than thousand
epitaphs. [Exeunt.]

ACT 3

Scene 3

Enter FLAMINIO *as distracted*¹ [*with* MARCELLO, *and* LODOVICO,
who observes unseen].

FLAMINIO

We endure the strokes like anvils or hard steel,
Till pain itself make us no pain to feel.

Who shall do me right now? Is this the end of
service? I'd rather go weed garlic; travel through
France, and be mine own ostler;² wear sheepskin
linings,³ or shoes that stink of blacking; be entered into
the list of the forty thousand pedlars in Poland.⁴

Enter SAVOY [AMBASSADOR].

Would I had rotted in some surgeon's house at Venice, built upon the pox as well as on piles,⁵ ere I had served Bracciano.

SAVOY AMBASSADOR

10 You must have comfort.

FLAMINIO

Your comfortable words are like honey. They relish well in your mouth that's whole, but in mine that's wounded they go down as if the sting of the bee were in them. Oh, they have wrought their purpose cunningly, as if they would not seem to do it of malice. In this a politician imitates the devil, as the devil imitates a cannon: wheresoever he comes to do mischief, he comes with his backside towards you.

Enter the FRENCH [AMBASSADORS].

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

The proofs are evident.

FLAMINIO

Proof? 'Twas corruption. O gold, what a god art thou! And

20 O man, what a devil art thou to be tempted by that cursed mineral! *Yon* diversivolent¹ lawyer, mark him. Knaves turn informers as maggots turn to flies; you may catch gudgeons² with either. A cardinal? I would he would hear me. There's nothing so holy but money will corrupt and putrify it, like *victual under the line*.³

Enter ENGLISH AMBASSADOR.

You are happy in England, my lord; here they sell justice with those weights they press men to death

with. O horrible salary!⁴

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

Fie, fie, Flaminio!

FLAMINIO

Bells ne'er ring well, till they are at their full pitch;⁵
and I

30 hope yon cardinal shall never have the grace to
pray well, till he come to the scaffold.

[*Exeunt* AMBASSADORS.]

If they were racked now to know the confederacy!
But your noblemen are privileged from the rack, and
well may,⁶ for a little thing would pull some of them
i' pieces afore they came to their arraignment.
Religion! Oh, how it is commeddled⁷ with policy.⁸ The
first bloodshed⁹ in the world happened about religion.
Would I were a Jew!

MARCELLO

Oh, there are too many.

FLAMINIO

40 You are deceived. There are not Jews enough,
priests enough, nor gentlemen enough.

MARCELLO

How?

FLAMINIO

I'll prove it. For if there were Jews enough, so many
Christians would not turn usurers; if priests enough,
one should not have six benefices; and if gentlemen
enough, so many early mushrooms,¹ whose best
growth sprang from a dunghill, should not aspire to

gentility. Farewell. Let others live by begging. Be thou one of them. Practise the art of Wolner² in England to swallow all's given thee; and yet let one purgation

50 make thee as hungry again as fellows that work in a sawpit. I'll go hear the screech-owl.³
xit. *E*

LODOVICO [*Aside*]

This was Bracciano's pander, and 'tis strange
That in such open and apparent guilt
Of his adulterous sister he dare utter
So scandalous a passion. I must wind⁴ him.

Enter FLAMINIO.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

How dares this banished count return to Rome,
His pardon not yet purchased?⁵ I have heard
The deceased Duchess gave him pension,
And that he came along from Padua
60 I'th' train of the young prince. There's somewhat
in't.

Physicians that cure poisons still do work
With counter-poisons.

MARCELLO [*Aside*]

Mark this strange encounter!

FLAMINIO [*To* LODOVICO]

The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison,
And let the stigmatic¹ wrinkles in thy face,

Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide,
One still overtake another.

LODOVICO

I do thank thee,
And I do wish ingeniously² for thy sake
The dog-days all year long.

FLAMINIO

How croaks the raven?³
Is our good Duchess dead?

LODOVICO

Dead.

FLAMINIO

O fate!

70 Misfortune comes like the crowner's⁴ business,
Huddle upon huddle.

LODOVICO

Shalt thou and I join housekeeping?

FLAMINIO

Yes, content.
Let's be unsociably sociable.

LODOVICO

Sit some three days together and discourse.

FLAMINIO

Only with making faces. Lie in our clothes –

LODOVICO

With faggots⁵ for our pillows.

FLAMINIO

And be lousy.⁶

LODOVICO

In taffeta linings – that's gentle¹ melancholy –
Sleep all day.

FLAMINIO

Yes, and like your melancholic hare
Feed after midnight.²

Enter ANTONELLI [and GASPARO, both laughing].

80 We are observed: see how yon couple grieve.

LODOVICO

What a strange creature is a laughing fool,
As if man were created to no use
But only to show his teeth.

FLAMINIO

I'll tell thee what,
It would do well, instead of looking-glasses,
To set one's face each morning by a saucer
Of a witch's congealèd blood.³

LODOVICO

Precious rogue,
We'll never part.

FLAMINIO

Never, till the beggary of courtiers,

The discontent of churchmen, want of soldiers,
And all the creatures that hang manacled,
90 Worse than strappadoed,⁴ on the lowest felly⁵
Of fortune's wheel be taught, in our two lives,
To scorn that world which life of means deprives.

ANTONELLI

My lord, I bring good news. The Pope on's death-
bed,
At th'earnest suit of the great Duke of Florence,
Hath signed your pardon, and restored unto you –

LODOVICO

I thank you for your news. [*Laughing*] Look up
again,
Flaminio, see my pardon!

FLAMINIO

Why do you laugh?
There was no such condition in our covenant.

LODOVICO

Why?

FLAMINIO

You shall not seem a happier man than I.
100 You know our vow, sir; if you will be merry,
Do it i'th' like posture, as if some great man
Sat while his enemy were executed.
Though it be very lechery unto thee,
Do't with a crabbèd politician's face.

LODOVICO

Your sister is a damnable whore.

FLAMINIO

Ha?

LODOVICO

Look you, I spake that laughing.

FLAMINIO

Dost ever think to speak again?

LODOVICO

Do you hear?

Wilt sell me forty ounces of her blood

To water a mandrake?

FLAMINIO

Poor lord, you did vow

To live a lousy creature.

LODOVICO

Yes.

FLAMINIO

110

Like one

That had forever forfeited the daylight

By being in debt.¹

LODOVICO

Ha, ha!

FLAMINIO

I do not greatly wonder you do break;¹

Your lordship learnt long since. But I'll tell you –

LODOVICO

What?

FLAMINIO

And't shall stick by you² –

LODOVICO

I long for it.

FLAMINIO

This laughter scurvily becomes your face.

If you will not be melancholy, be angry.

Strikes him.

See, now I laugh too.

MARCELLO

You are to blame. I'll force you hence.

Exeunt MARCELLO and FLAMINIO.

[ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO *restrain* LODOVICO.]

LODOVICO

Unhand me!

120 That e'er I should be forced to right myself

Upon a pander!

ANTONELLI

My lord!

LODOVICO

H' had been as good met with his fist a
thunderbolt.

GASPARO

How this shows!

LODOVICO

Ud's death,³ how did my sword miss him?

These rogues that are most weary of their lives

Still 'scape the greatest dangers.

A pox upon him! All his reputation –

Nay, all the goodness of his family –

Is not worth half this earthquake.

I learnt it of no fencer to shake thus.

130 Come, I'll forget him, and go drink some
wine. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 1

Enter FRANCISCO and MONTICELSO.

MONTICELSO

Come, come, my lord, untie your folded thoughts,

And let them dangle loose as a bride's hair.

Your sister's poisoned.

FRANCISCO

Far be it from my thoughts

To seek revenge.

MONTICELSO

What, are you turned all marble?

FRANCISCO

Shall I defy him, and impose a war
Most burdensome on my poor subjects' necks,
Which at my will I have not power to end?
You know, for all the murders, rapes and thefts,
Committed in the horrid lust of war,
10 He that unjustly caused it first proceed
Shall find it in his grave and in his seed.

MONTICELSO

That's not the course I'd wish you. Pray, observe
me:

We see that undermining¹ more prevails
Than doth the cannon. Bear your wrongs
concealed,
And, patient as the tortoise, let this camel
Stalk o'er your back unbruised. Sleep with the
lion,
And let this brood of secure, foolish mice
Play with your nostrils, till the time be ripe
For th'bloody audit and the fatal gripe.

20 Aim like a cunning fowler:¹ close one eye,
That you the better may your game espy.

FRANCISCO

Free me, my innocence, from treacherous acts.
I know there's thunder yonder, and I'll stand
Like a safe valley, which low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain, since I know

Treason, like spiders weaving nets for flies,
By her foul work is found, and in it dies.
To pass away these thoughts, my honoured lord,
It is reported you possess a book
30 Wherein you have quoted,² by intelligence,³
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the city.

MONTICELSO

Sir, I do;

And some there are which call it my 'black book'

—

Well may the title hold. For though it teach not
The art of conjuring, yet in it lurk
The names of many devils.

FRANCISCO

Pray, let's see it.

MONTICELSO

I'll fetch it to your lordship. *Exit*

MONTICELSO.

FRANCISCO

Monticelso,

I will not trust thee, but in all my plots

I'll rest as jealous⁴ as a town besieged.

40 Thou canst not reach what I intend to act.

Your flax soon kindles, soon is out again,

But gold slow heats, and long will hot remain.

Enter MONTICELSO [*who*] *presents* FRANCISCO *with a book*.¹

MONTICELSO

'Tis here, my lord.

FRANCISCO

First, your intelligencers – pray, let's see.

MONTICELSO [*turning the pages*]

Their number rises strangely, and some of them

You'd take for honest men. Next are panders.

These are your pirates; and these following leaves

For base rogues that undo young gentlemen

By taking up commodities;² for politic bankrupts;³

50 For fellows that are bawds to their own wives,

Only to put off⁴ horses and slight jewels,

Clocks, defaced plate and such commodities,

At birth of their first children –

FRANCISCO

Are there such?

MONTICELSO

These are for impudent bawds

That go in men's apparel; for usurers

That share with scriveners⁵ for their good
reportage;

For lawyers that will antedate their writs;

And some divines you might find folded there,

But that I slip them o'er for conscience' sake.

60 Here is a general catalogue of knaves.

A man might study all the prisons o'er,
Yet never attain this knowledge.

FRANCISCO [*reads*]

'Murderers'.
Fold down the leaf, I pray.
Good my lord, let me borrow this strange doctrine.

MONTICELSO

Pray, use't, my lord.
[*He gives him the book.*]

FRANCISCO

I do assure your lordship,
You are a worthy member of the state,
And have done infinite good in your discovery
Of these offenders.

MONTICELSO

Somewhat, sir.

FRANCISCO

O God,
Better than tribute of wolves paid in England!¹
'Twill hang their skins o'th' hedge.

MONTICELSO

70 I must make bold
To leave your lordship.

FRANCISCO

Dearly, sir, I thank you.
If any ask for me at court, report

You have left me in the company of knaves.

Exit MONTICELSO.

I gather now by this some cunning fellow
That's my lord's officer – one that lately skipped
From a clerk's desk up to a justice' chair –
Hath made this knavish summons, and intends,
As th'Irish rebels wont were to sell heads,²
So to make prize of these. And thus it happens:

80 Your poor rogues pay for't, which have not the
means

To present bribe in fist; the rest o'th' band
Are razed out of the knaves' record, or else
My lord he winks at them with easy will.

His man grows rich, the knaves are the knaves
still.

But to the use I'll make of it: it shall serve
To point me out a list of murderers,
Agents for any villainy. Did I want
Ten leash¹ of courtesans, it would furnish me;
Nay, laundress² three armies. That *in so* little paper

90 Should lie th'undoing of so many men!

'Tis not so big as twenty declarations.³

See the corrupted use some make of books!

Divinity, wrested⁴ by some factious blood,

Draws swords, swells battles, and o'erthrows all
good.

To fashion my revenge more seriously,
Let me remember my dead sister's face.
Call for her picture – no, I'll close mine eyes,
And in a melancholic thought I'll frame
Her figure 'fore me.

Enter ISABELLA'S GHOST.

Now I ha't – how strong

100 Imagination works! How she can frame

Things which are not! Methinks she stands afore
me,

And by the quick⁵ idea of my mind,

Were my skill pregnant,⁶ I could draw her picture.

Thought, as a subtle juggler,⁷ makes us deem

Things supernatural which have cause

Common as sickness. 'Tis my melancholy.

[*To GHOST*] How cam'st thou by thy death? – How
idle am I

To question mine own idleness!⁸ Did ever

Man dream awake till now? Remove this object;

110 Out of my brain with't! What have I to do

With tombs or death-beds, funerals or tears,

That have to meditate upon

revenge? [*Exit GHOST.*]

So now 'tis ended, like an old wives' story.

Statesmen think often they see stranger sights

Than madmen. Come, to this weighty business.

My tragedy must have some idle mirth in't,
Else it will never pass. I am in love,
In love with Corombona, and my suit
Thus halts to her in verse –

He writes.

120 I have done it rarely. Oh, the fate of princes!
I am so used to frequent flattery
That, being alone, I now flatter myself;
But it will serve; 'tis sealed.

Enter SERVANT.

Bear this

To th'house of convertites [*giving him the letter*]; and
watch your leisure

To give it to the hands of Corombona,
Or to the matron, when some followers
Of Bracciano may be by.

Away!

Exit SERVANT.

He that deals all by strength, his wit is shallow;
When a man's head goes through, each limb will
follow.

130 The engine for my business: bold Count
Lodovic.

'Tis gold must such an instrument procure,
With empty fist no man doth falcons lure.
Bracciano, I am now fit for thy encounter.
Like the wild Irish¹ I'll ne'er think thee dead,
Till I can play at football with thy head.

*Flectere sine quo superos, Acheronta movebo.*²

Exit MONTICELSO.

ACT 4

Scene 2

Enter the MATRON *and* FLAMINIO.

MATRON

Should it be known the Duke hath such recourse
To your imprisoned sister, I were like
T' incur much damage by it.

FLAMINIO

Not a scruple.¹
The Pope lies on his death-bed, and their heads
Are troubled now with other business
Than guarding of a lady.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT [*Aside*]

Yonder's Flaminio in conference
With the Matrona.

[FLAMINIO *withdraws*. SERVANT *approaches the*
MATRON.]

Let me speak with you.

I would entreat you to deliver for me

10 This letter to the fair Vittoria.

MATRON

I shall, sir.

Enter BRACCIANO.

SERVANT

– With all care and secrecy.

Hereafter you shall know me, and receive

Thanks for this
courtesy. [*Exit* SERVANT.]

FLAMINIO

How now, what's that?

MATRON

A letter.

FLAMINIO

To my sister? [*Taking the letter*] I'll see't
delivered.

[*Exit* MATRON.]

BRACCIANO

What's that you read, Flaminio?

FLAMINIO

Look.

BRACCIANO

Ha? [*Reads*] 'To the most unfortunate, his best
respected Vittoria.'

Who was the messenger?

FLAMINIO

I know not.

BRACCIANO

No? Who sent it?

FLAMINIO

20 Ud's foot,¹ you speak as if a man
Should know what fowl is confined² in a baked
meat
Afore you cut it up.

BRACCIANO

I'll open't, were't her heart! What's here
subscribed?
'Florence'? This juggling³ is gross and palpable.
I have found out the conveyance.⁴ Read it, read it!

FLAMINIO (*Reads the letter*)

'Your tears I'll turn to triumphs, be but mine.
Your prop is fall'n. I pity that a vine
Which princes heretofore have longed to gather,
Wanting supporters, now should fade and wither.'
30 Wine, i' faith, my lord, with lees⁵ would serve his
turn.

[*Reads*] 'Your sad imprisonment I'll soon
uncharm,

And with a princely, uncontrollèd⁶ arm
Lead you to Florence, where my love and care
Shall hang your wishes in my silver hair.'

A halter¹ on his strange equivocation!

[*Reads*] 'Nor for my years return me the sad
willow.²

Who prefer blossoms before fruit that's mellow?'

Rotten, on my knowledge, with lying too long i'th'
bed-straw!³

[*Reads*] 'And all the lines of age this line
convinces:⁴

40 The gods never wax old, no more do princes.'

A pox on't! Tear it! Let's have no more atheists,⁵
for God's sake.

BRACCIANO

Ud's death, I'll cut her into atomies,⁶

And let th'irregular⁷ north wind sweep her up

And blow her int' his nostrils! Where's this
whore?

FLAMINIO

That –? What do you call her?

BRACCIANO

Oh, I could be mad –

Prevent the cursed disease⁸ she'll bring me to,

And tear my hair off. Where's this changeable
stuff?⁹

FLAMINIO

O'er head and ears in water,¹⁰ I assure you.

She is not for your wearing.

BRACCIANO

In, you pander!

FLAMINIO

50 What me, my lord? Am I your dog?

BRACCIANO

A bloodhound.¹ Do you brave?² Do you stand³ me?

FLAMINIO

Stand you? Let those that have diseases run;⁴

I need no plasters.

BRACCIANO

Would you be kicked?

FLAMINIO

Would you have your neck broke?⁵

I tell you, Duke, I am not in Russia;⁶

My shins must be kept whole.

BRACCIANO

Do you know me?

FLAMINIO

Oh, my lord, methodically.

As in this world there are degrees of evils,

So in this world there are degrees of devils.

60 You're a great duke, I your poor secretary.

I do look now for a Spanish fig or an Italian sallet⁷
daily.

BRACCIANO

Pander, ply your convoy,⁸ and leave your prating.

FLAMINIO

All your kindness to me is like that miserable
courtesy of Polyphemus to Ulysses:⁹ you reserve me to
be devoured last. You would dig turves¹⁰ out of my
grave to feed your larks – that would be music to you.

Come, I'll lead you to her.
[*He walks out backwards.*]

BRACCIANO

Do you face me?

FLAMINIO

Oh sir, I would not go before a politic enemy with my back towards him, though there were behind me a whirlpool.

Enter VITTORIA to BRACCIANO and FLAMINIO.

BRACCIANO [*showing her the letter*]

70 Can you read, mistress? Look upon that letter.
There are no characters,¹ nor hieroglyphics.
You need no comment,² I am grown your receiver.³
God's precious,⁴ you shall be a brave, great lady,
A stately and advanced whore!

VITTORIA

Say, sir?

BRACCIANO

Come, come, let's see your cabinet.⁵ Discover
Your treasury of love-letters. Death and furies,
I'll see them all!

VITTORIA

Sir, upon my soul,
I have not any. Whence was this directed?

BRACCIANO

Confusion on⁶ your politic ignorance!

80 You are reclaimed,⁷ are you? I'll give you the bells⁸

And let you fly to the devil.

[BRACCIANO *gives her the letter.*]

FLAMINIO

'Ware **hawks**, my lord.

VITTORIA

[*reads*] 'Florence'? This is some treacherous plot, my lord.

To me, he ne'er was lovely,¹ I protest,

So much as in my sleep.

BRACCIANO

Right: they are plots.

Your beauty – oh, ten thousand curses on't!

How long have I beheld the devil in crystal?²

Thou hast led me, like an heathen sacrifice,

With music and with fatal yokes of flowers,

To my eternal ruin. Woman to man

Is either a god or a wolf.³

VITTORIA [*weeping*]

My lord –

BRACCIANO

90 Away!

We'll be as differing as two adamants:⁴

The one shall shun the other. What? Dost weep?

Procure but ten of thy dissembling trade,

Ye'd furnish all the Irish funerals

With howling, past wild Irish.⁵

FLAMINIO

Fie, my lord.

BRACCIANO

That hand, that cursèd hand, which I have wearied
With dotting kisses! O my sweetest Duchess,
How lovely art thou now! [*To VITTORIA*] Thy loose
thoughts

Scatter like quicksilver. I was bewitched;
For all the world speaks ill of thee.

VITTORIA

100

No matter.

I'll live so now I'll make that world recant
And change her speeches. You did name your
Duchess.

BRACCIANO

Whose death God pardon.

VITTORIA

Whose death God revenge
On thee, most godless Duke.

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

Now for two whirlwinds!

VITTORIA

What have I gained by thee but infamy?
Thou hast stained the spotless honour of my house,

And frightened thence noble society,
Like those which, sick o'th' palsy and retain
Ill-scenting foxes¹ 'bout them, are still shunned

110 By those of choicer nostrils. What do you call
this house?

Is this your palace? Did not the judge style it
A house of penitent whores? Who sent me to it?
Who hath the honour to advance Vittoria
To this incontinent college? Is't not you?
Is't not your high preferment?² Go, go brag
How many ladies you have undone, like me.
Fare you well, sir; let me hear no more of you.
I had a limb corrupted to an ulcer,
But I have cut it off; and now I'll go

120 Weeping to heaven on crutches.³ For your gifts,
I will return them all; and I do wish
That I could make you full executor
To all my sins. Oh, that I could toss myself
Into a grave as quickly. For all thou art worth
I'll not shed one tear more; I'll burst first.
She throws herself upon a bed.

BRACCIANO

I have drunk Lethe.¹ Vittoria?
My dearest happiness! Vittoria?
What do you ail, my love? Why do you weep?

VITTORIA

Yes, I now weep poniards.² Do you see?

BRACCIANO

Are not those matchless eyes mine?

VITTORIA

130 I had rather

They were not matches.³

BRACCIANO

Is not this lip mine?

VITTORIA

Yes, thus to bite it off, rather than give it thee.

FLAMINIO

Turn to my lord, good sister.

VITTORIA

Hence, you pander!

FLAMINIO

Pander? Am I the author of your sin?

VITTORIA

Yes, he's a base thief that a thief lets in.

FLAMINIO

We're blown up,⁴ my lord.

BRACCIANO

Wilt thou hear me?

Once to be jealous of thee is t'express

That I will love thee everlastingly,

And never more be jealous.

VITTORIA

O thou fool,

140 Whose greatness hath by much o'ergrown thy
wit!

What dar'st thou do that I not dare to suffer,
Excepting to be still thy whore? For that,
In the sea's bottom sooner thou shalt make
A bonfire.

FLAMINIO

Oh, no oaths, for God's sake.

BRACCIANO

Will you hear me?

VITTORIA

Never.

FLAMINIO

What a damned impostume¹ is a woman's will!

Can nothing break it? [*Aside to* BRACCIANO] Fie,
fie, my lord,

150 Women are caught as you take tortoises:

She must be turned on her back. [*To* VITTORIA]
Sister, by this hand,

I am on your side. [*To* BRACCIANO] Come, come,
you have wronged her.

[*Aside to* BRACCIANO] What a strange, credulous
man were you, my lord,

To think the Duke of Florence could love her?

Will any mercer² take another's ware

When once 'tis toused³ and sullied? [*To* VITTORIA]
And yet, sister,

How scurvily this frowardness⁴ becomes you!

[*Aside to* BRACCIANO] Young leverets stand not
long;⁵ and women's anger

Should, like their flight, procure a little sport:

A full cry⁶ for a quarter of an hour,

And then be put to th' dead quat.⁷

BRACCIANO

160

Shall these eyes,

Which have so long time dwelt upon your face,

Be now put out?

FLAMINIO

No cruel landlady i'th' world,

Which lends forth groats¹ to broom-men² and takes
use³ for them,

Would do't.

[*Aside to* BRACCIANO] Hand⁴ her, my lord, and kiss
her. Be not like

A ferret to let go your hold with blowing.⁵

BRACCIANO

Let us renew right hands.

[*He takes* VITTORIA's hand.]

VITTORIA

Hence.

BRACCIANO

Never shall rage, or the forgetful⁶ wine,

Make me commit like fault.

FLAMINIO [*Aside to BRACCIANO*]

170 Now you are i'th' way on't, follow't hard.

BRACCIANO

Be thou at peace with me; let all the world

Threaten the cannon.

FLAMINIO [*To VITTORIA*]

Mark his penitence.

Best natures do commit the grossest faults

When they're giv'n o'er to jealousy, as best wine

Dying makes strongest vinegar. I'll tell you,

The sea's more rough and raging than calm rivers,

But nor so sweet nor wholesome. A quiet woman

Is a still water under a great bridge:

A man may shoot her¹ safely.

VITTORIA

O ye dissembling men!

FLAMINIO

180 We sucked that, sister, from women's breasts

In our first infancy.

VITTORIA

To add misery to misery!

BRACCIANO

Sweetest –

VITTORIA

Am I not low enough?

Ay, ay, your good heart gathers like a snowball

Now your affection's cold.

FLAMINIO

Ud's foot, it shall melt

To a heart again, or all the wine in Rome

Shall run o'th' lees for't.

VITTORIA

Your dog or hawk should be rewarded better

Than I have been. I'll speak not one word more.

FLAMINIO

Stop her mouth with a sweet kiss, my lord.

[BRACCIANO *kisses* VITTORIA.]

190 So now the tide's turned, the vessel's come
about.

He's a sweet armful. Oh, we curled-haired men

Are still² most kind to women. This is well.

BRACCIANO [*To* VITTORIA]

That you should chide thus!

FLAMINIO

Oh, sir, your little chimneys

Do ever cast most smoke; I sweat for you.

Couple together with as deep a silence

As did the Grecians in their wooden horse.³

My lord, supply your promises with deeds;

You know that painted meat no hunger feeds.

BRACCIANO

Stay – Ingrateful Rome!

FLAMINIO

Rome? It deserves

200 To be called ‘Barbary’¹ for our villainous
usage.

BRACCIANO

Soft! The same project which the Duke of
Florence –

Whether in love or gullery² I know not –

Laid down for her escape will I pursue.

FLAMINIO

And no time fitter than this night, my lord:

The Pope being dead, and all the cardinals entered

The conclave³ for th’electing a new Pope;

The city in a great confusion.

We may attire her in a page’s suit,

Lay her post-horse,⁴ take shipping, and amain

210 For Padua.

BRACCIANO

I’ll instantly steal forth the Prince Giovanni,

And make for Padua. You two, with your old
mother

And young Marcello that attends on Florence,

If you can work him to it, follow me.

I will advance you all. For you, Vittoria,

Think of a duchess' title.

FLAMINIO

Lo you, sister!

Stay, my lord, I'll tell you a tale. The crocodile, which lives in the river Nilus, hath a worm *breeds* i'th' teeth of't which puts it to extreme anguish. A little bird, no bigger than a wren, is

220 barber-surgeon⁵ to this crocodile; flies into the jaws of't, picks out the worm, and brings present remedy. The fish, glad of ease but ingrateful to her that did it, that the bird may not talk largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth her chaps intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetual silence. But nature, loathing such ingratitude, hath armed this bird with a quill or prick on the head, top o'th' which wounds the crocodile i'th' mouth, forceth her open her bloody prison, and away flies the pretty tooth-picker from her cruel patient.

BRACCIANO

Your application is I have not rewarded
The service you have done me.

FLAMINIO

230 No, my lord.

You, sister, are the crocodile: you are blemished in your fame; my lord cures it. And though the comparison hold not in every particle, yet observe, remember, what good the bird with the prick i'th' head hath done you, and scorn ingratitude.

[*Aside*] It may appear to some ridiculous

Thus to talk knave and madman; and sometimes

Come in with a dried sentence,¹ stuffed with sage.²

But this allows³ my varying of shapes:

Knives do grow great by being great men's
apes. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 3

Enter LODOVICO, GASPARO *and six* AMBASSADORS. *At another door* [FRANCISCO,] *the Duke of Florence.*

FRANCISCO [*To* LODOVICO]

So, my lord, I commend your diligence.

Guard well the conclave, and, as the order is,

Let none have conference with the cardinals.

LODOVICO

I shall, my lord. Room for the ambassadors!

GASPARO

They're wondrous brave¹ today. Why do they wear

These several² habits?

LODOVICO

Oh, sir, they're knights

Of several orders.

That lord i'th' black cloak with the silver cross

Is Knight of Rhodes;³ the next, Knight of St
Michael;⁴

10 That of the Golden Fleece;⁵ the Frenchman there,

Knight of the Holy Ghost;⁶ my lord of Savoy,

Knight of th' Annunciation;⁷ the Englishman

Is Knight of th' honoured Garter,⁸ dedicated

Unto their saint, St George. I could describe to you

Their several institutions, with the laws

Annexed to their orders, but that time
Permits not such discovery.

FRANCISCO

Where's Count Lodovic?

LODOVICO

Here, my lord.

FRANCISCO

'Tis o'th' point of dinner time.
Marshal the cardinals' service.

LODOVICO

Sir, I shall.

Enter SERVANTS with several dishes covered.

20 Stand, let me search your dish. Who's this for?

[FIRST] SERVANT

For my Lord Cardinal Monticelso.

LODOVICO

Whose this?

[SECOND] SERVANT

For my Lord Cardinal of Bourbon.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

Why doth he search the dishes? To observe
What meat is dressed?¹

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

No, sir, but to prevent
Lest any letters should be conveyed in

To bribe or to solicit the advancement
Of any cardinal. When first they enter
'Tis lawful for the ambassadors of princes
30 To enter with them, and to make their suit
For any man their prince affecteth best;
But after, till a general election,
No man may speak with them.

LODOVICO

You that attend on the lord cardinals,
Open the window and receive their viands.

A CARDINAL [*At the window*]

You must return the service. The lord cardinals
Are busied 'bout electing of the Pope.
They have given o'er scrutiny² and are fallen
To
admiration.³ [Exit.]

LODOVICO

Away, away! [Exeunt SERVANTS with
dishes.]

FRANCISCO

40 I'll lay a thousand ducats you hear news
Of a Pope presently –
[*Sound of trumpets.*]
Hark! Sure, he's elected.
[Enter] Cardinal [*of ARAGON*] on the terrace.
Behold! My lord of Aragon appears

On the church battlements.

ARAGON [*Holding up a cross*]

*De nuntio vobis gaudium magnum. Reverendissimus
Cardinalis Lorenzo de Monticelso electus est in sedem
apostolicam, et elegit sibi nomen Paulum quartum.*¹

ALL

*Vivat Sanctus Pater Paulus Quartus!*²

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

SERVANT

Vittoria, my lord –

FRANCISCO

Well, what of her?

SERVANT

Is fled the city –

FRANCISCO

Ha?

SERVANT

With Duke Bracciano.

FRANCISCO

Fled? Where's the Prince Giovanni?

SERVANT

50

Gone with his father.

FRANCISCO

Let the matrona of the convertites

Be apprehended. Fled? Oh, damnable! [*Exit*
SERVANT.]

[*Aside*] How fortunate are my wishes. Why, 'twas this

I only laboured. I did send the letter

T' instruct him what to do. Thy fame, fond³ Duke,

I first have poisoned; directed thee the way

To marry a whore. What can be worse? This follows:

The hand must act to drown the passionate tongue.

I scorn to wear a sword and prate of wrong.

Enter MONTICELSO *in state* [*as* POPE PAUL IV].

MONTICELSO

60 *Concedimus vobis apostolicam benedictionem et remissionem peccatorum.*¹

[FRANCISCO *whispers to him.*]

My lord reports Vittoria Corombona

Is stol'n from forth the house of convertites

By Bracciano, and they're fled the city.

Now, though this be the first day of our state,

We cannot better please the divine power,

Than to sequester from the holy church

These cursèd persons. Make it therefore known,

We do denounce excommunication

70 Against them both. All that are theirs in Rome

We likewise banish. Set on.

Exeunt [*all except* FRANCISCO *and* LODOVICO].

FRANCISCO

Come, dear Lodovico,
You have ta'en the sacrament² to prosecute
Th'intended murder.

LODOVICO

With all constancy;
But, sir, I wonder you'll engage yourself
In person, being a great prince.

FRANCISCO

Divert me not.
Most of his court are of my faction,
And some are of my counsel. Noble friend,
Our danger shall be 'like in this design;
Enter MONTICELSO [*unseen*].

Give leave part of the glory may be mine. [*Exit*
FRANCISCO.]

MONTICELSO

80 Why did the Duke of Florence with such care
Labour your pardon? Say.

LODOVICO

Italian beggars will resolve you that,
Who, begging of an alms, bid those they beg of
Do good for their own sakes; or't may be
He spreads his bounty with a sowing¹ hand,
Like kings, who many times give out of measure,²
Not for desert so much as for their pleasure.

MONTICELSO

I know you're cunning. Come, what devil was that
That you were raising?

LODOVICO

Devil, my lord?

MONTICELSO

I ask you,

90 How doth the Duke employ you, that his bonnet
Fell with such compliment unto his knee
When he departed from you?

LODOVICO

Why, my lord,

He told me of a resty³ Barbary horse

Which he would fain have brought to the career,⁴

The 'sault⁵ and the ring-galliard.⁶ Now, my lord,

I have a rare French rider –

MONTICELSO

Take you heed,

Lest the jade⁷ break your neck. Do you put me off

With your wild horse-tricks? Sirrah, you do lie.

Oh, thou'rt a foul, black cloud, and thou dost
threat

A violent storm.

LODOVICO

100

Storms are i'th' air, my lord.

I am too low to storm.

MONTICELSO

Wretched creature!
I know that thou art fashioned for all ill,
Like dogs, that once get blood, they'll ever kill.
About some murder, was't not?

LODOVICO

I'll not tell you;
And yet I care not greatly if I do.
Marry, with this preparation: holy father,
I come not to you as an intelligencer,¹
But as a penitent sinner. What I utter
Is in confession merely, which you know
Must never be revealed.

MONTICELSO

110 You have o'erta'en² me.

LODOVICO

Sir, I did love Bracciano's Duchess dearly –
Or rather I pursued her with hot lust,
Though she ne'er knew on't. She was poisoned,
Upon my soul she was; for which I have sworn
T'avenge her murder.

MONTICELSO

To the Duke of Florence?

LODOVICO

To him I have.

MONTICELSO

Miserable creature!

If thou persist in this, 'tis damnable.

Dost thou imagine thou canst slide on blood

And not be tainted³ with a shameful fall?

120 Or like the black and melancholic yew-tree,

Dost think to root thyself in dead men's graves,

And yet to prosper? Instruction to thee

Comes like sweet showers to over-hard'ned
ground:

They wet, but pierce not deep. And so I leave thee

With all the furies hanging 'bout thy neck,

Till by thy penitence thou remove this evil,

In conjuring from thy breast that cruel devil.

Exit MONTICELSO.

LODOVICO

I'll give it o'er. He says 'tis damnable.

Besides, I did expect his suffrage¹

130 By reason of Camillo's death.

Enter SERVANT *and* FRANCISCO [*apart*].

FRANCISCO

Do you know that count?

SERVANT

Yes, my lord.

FRANCISCO

Bear him these thousand ducats to his lodging.

Tell him the Pope hath sent them. Happily

That will confirm more than all the rest.

[*Exit* FRANCISCO.]

SERVANT

Sir – [*He hands* LODOVICO *the money.*]

LODOVICO

To me, sir?

SERVANT

His Holiness hath sent you a thousand crowns,
And **wills** you, if you travel, to make him
Your patron for intelligence.²

LODOVICO

His creature,
Ever to be
commanded. [Exit SERVANT.]

140 Why, now 'tis come about. He railed upon me,
And yet these crowns were told out³ and laid
ready,
Before he knew my voyage. Oh, the art,
The modest form¹ of greatness, that do sit
Like brides at wedding-dinners, with their looks
turned
From the least wanton jests, their puling² stomach
Sick of the modesty, when their thoughts are
loose,³
Even acting of those hot and lustful sports
Are to ensue about midnight – such his cunning!

He sounds my depth thus with a golden plummet.⁴
150 I am doubly armed **now to** th'act of blood.
There's but three Furies found in spacious hell,
But in a great man's breast three thousand
dwell. [Exit.]

ACT 5

Scene 1

A passage over the stage of BRACCIANO, FLAMINIO, MARCELLO,
HORTENSIO, [VITTORIA] COROMBONA [*dressed as a bride*],
CORNELIA, ZANCHE *and others*.

[Enter FLAMINIO and HORTENSIO.]

FLAMINIO

In all the weary minutes of my life,
Day ne'er broke up till now. This marriage
Confirms me happy.

HORTENSIO

'Tis a good assurance.
Saw you not yet the Moor that's come to court?

FLAMINIO

Yes, and conferred with him i'th' Duke's closet.
I have not seen a goodlier personage,
Nor ever talked with man better experienced
In state affairs or rudiments of war.
He hath, by report, served the Venetian

10 In Candy¹ these twice seven years, and been
chief

In many a bold design.

HORTENSIO

What are those two
That bear him company?

FLAMINIO

Two noblemen of Hungary that, living in the Emperor's service as commanders, eight years since, contrary to the expectation of all the court, entered into religion, into the strict order of Capuchins.² But being not well settled in their undertaking, they left their order and returned to court, for which, being after troubled in conscience, they vowed their service against the enemies of Christ; went to Malta; were

20 there knighted; and in their return back, at this great solemnity, they are resolved forever to forsake the world, and settle themselves here in a house of Capuchins in Padua.

HORTENSIO

'Tis strange.

FLAMINIO

One thing makes it so: they have vowed forever to wear next their bare bodies those coats of mail they served in.

HORTENSIO

Hard penance. Is the Moor a Christian?

FLAMINIO

He is.

HORTENSIO

Why proffers he his service to our Duke?

FLAMINIO

Because he understands there's like to grow
30 Some wars between us and the Duke of
Florence,
In which he hopes employment.
I never saw one in a stern, bold look
Wear more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Express more knowing, or more deep contempt
Of our slight, airy courtiers. He talks
As if he had travelled all the princes' courts
Of Christendom; in all things strives t'express,
That all that should dispute with him may know,
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
40 But looked to near have neither heat nor light.¹
The Duke!

*Enter BRACCIANO, [FRANCISCO, Duke of] Florence disguised
like Mulinassar, LODOVICO, ANTONELLI,² GASPARO [all
disguised], FERNESE bearing their swords and helmets [CARLO,
PEDRO].*

BRACCIANO

You are nobly welcome. We have heard at full
Your honourable service 'gainst the Turk.
[To FRANCISCO] To you, brave Mulinassar, we
assign
A competent pension, and are inly sorrow³
The vows of those two worthy gentlemen
[indicating LODOVICO and GASPARO]

Make them incapable of our proffered bounty.
Your wish is you may leave your warlike swords
For monuments in our chapel. I accept it
50 As a great honour done me, and must crave
Your leave to furnish out our Duchess's revels.
Only one thing, as the last vanity
You e'er shall view, deny me not to stay
To see a barriers prepared tonight;
You shall have private standings. It hath pleased
The great ambassadors of several princes,
In their return from Rome to their own countries,
To grace our marriage, and to honour me
With such a kind of sport.

FRANCISCO

I shall persuade them
To stay, my lord.

BRACCIANO

60 Set on there to the presence.¹

Exeunt BRACCIANO, FLAMINIO and [HORTENSIO].

CARLO [*To FRANCISCO*]

Noble my lord, most fortunately welcome.
The conspirators here embrace.
You have our vows, sealed with the sacrament,
To second your attempts.

PEDRO

And all things ready.

He could not have invented his own ruin,
Had he despaired, with more propriety.

LODOVICO

You would not take my way.

FRANCISCO

'Tis better ordered.

LODOVICO

T' have poisoned his prayer-book, or a pair of
beads,

The pommel of his saddle,² his looking-glass,
Or th'handle of his racket – Oh that, that!

70 That while he had been bandying at tennis,
He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck
His soul into the hazard!³ O my lord,
I would have our plot be ingenious,
And have it hereafter recorded for example
Rather than borrow example.

FRANCISCO

There's no way
More speeding than this thought on.

LODOVICO

On then.

FRANCISCO

And yet methinks that this revenge is poor,
Because it steals upon him like a thief.

To have ta'en him by the casque¹ in a pitched field,
Led him to Florence –

LODOVICO

80 It had been rare. And there
Have crowned him with a wreath of stinking
garlic,
T' have shown the sharpness of his government
And rankness of his lust.

Enter FLAMINIO, MARCELLO *and* ZANCHE.

Flaminio comes.

Exeunt LODOVICO, ANTONELLI [GASPARO, PEDRO
and CARLO].

[FRANCISCO *stands apart.*]

MARCELLO

Why doth this devil haunt you? Say.

FLAMINIO

I know not;
For, by this light, I do not conjure for her.
'Tis not so great a cunning as men think
To raise the devil, for here's one up² already.
The greatest cunning were to lay him down.

MARCELLO

She is your shame.

FLAMINIO

I prithee, pardon her.

90 In faith, you see women are like to burs:

Where their affection throws them, there they'll
stick.

ZANCHE [*indicating* FRANCISCO]

That is my countryman, a goodly person.

When he's at leisure, I'll discourse with him

In our own language.

FLAMINIO

I beseech you, do. *Exit* ZANCHE.

How is't brave soldier? Oh, that I had seen

Some of your iron days! I pray, relate

Some of your service to us.

FRANCISCO

'Tis a ridiculous thing for a man to be his own
chronicle. I did never wash my mouth with mine own
praise for fear of

100 getting a stinking breath.

MARCELLO

You're too stoical. The Duke will expect other
discourse from you.

FRANCISCO

I shall never flatter him; I have studied man too
much to do that. What difference is between the Duke
and I?¹ No more than between two bricks, all made of
one clay. Only't may be one is placed on the top of a
turret; the other in the bottom of a well, by mere
chance. If I were placed as high as the Duke, I should
stick as fast, make as fair a show, and bear out weather
equally.²

FLAMINIO

110 If this soldier had a patent to beg in churches,³
then he would tell them stories.

MARCELLO

I have been a soldier too.

FRANCISCO

How have you thrived?

MARCELLO

'Faith, poorly.

FRANCISCO

That's the misery of peace: only outsides are then
respected. As ships seem very great upon the river
which show very little upon the seas, so some men
i'th' court seem Colossuses in a chamber who, if they
came into the field, would appear pitiful pigmies.

FLAMINIO

120 Give me a fair room yet hung with arras,¹ and
some great cardinal to lug me by th'ears as his
endeared minion –

FRANCISCO

And thou may'st do the devil knows what villainy.

FLAMINIO

And safely.

FRANCISCO

Right; you shall see in the country in harvest time,
pigeons, though they destroy never so much corn, the
farmer dare not present the fowling-piece to them.
Why? Because they belong to the lord of the manor,

whilst your poor sparrows, that belong to the Lord of heaven, they go to the pot for't.

FLAMINIO

I will now give you some politic instruction. The Duke says

130 he will give you pension – that's but bare promise; get it under his hand. For I have known men that have come from serving against the Turk; for three or four months they have had pension to buy them new wooden legs and fresh plasters, but after 'twas not to be had. And this miserable courtesy shows, as if a tormenter should give hot cordial drinks to one three-quarters dead o'th' rack, only to fetch the miserable soul again to endure more dog-days.

Enter HORTENSIO, *a* YOUNG LORD, ZANCHE *and two more.*

How now, gallants. What, are they ready for the barriers?

[*Exit* FRANCISCO.]

YOUNG LORD

Yes, the lords are putting on their armour.

HORTENSIO [*Aside to* FLAMINIO]

140 What's he?

FLAMINIO

A new upstart: one that swears like a falconer, and will lie in the Duke's ear day by day, like a maker of almanacs;¹ and yet, I knew him since he came to th'court smell worse of sweat than an under-tennis-court-keeper.

HORTENSIO

Look you, yonder's your sweet mistress.

FLAMINIO

Thou art my sworn brother; I'll tell thee, I do love that Moor, that witch, very constrainedly; she knows some of my villainy. I do love her just as a man holds a wolf by the ears.² But for fear of turning upon me and pulling out my throat, I

150 would let her go to the devil.

HORTENSIO

I hear she claims marriage of thee.

FLAMINIO

'Faith, I made to her some such dark promise, and in seeking to fly from't I run on, like a frightened dog with a bottle at's tail, that fain would bite it off and yet dares not look behind him. [*To ZANCHE*] Now, my precious gipsy!

ZANCHE

Ay, your love to me rather cools³ than heats.⁴

FLAMINIO

Marry, I am the sounder lover. We have many wenches about the town heat⁵ too fast.

HORTENSIO

What do you think of these perfumed gallants then?

FLAMINIO

160 Their satin¹ cannot save them. I am confident
They have a certain spice of the disease,
For they that sleep with dogs shall rise with fleas.

ZANCHE

Believe it! A little painting and gay clothes²
Make you loathe me.

FLAMINIO

How? Love a lady for painting or gay apparel? I'll
unkennel one example more for thee. Aesop had a
foolish dog that let go the flesh to catch the shadow; I
would have courtiers be better [diners](#).

ZANCHE

You remember your oaths?

FLAMINIO

170 Lovers' oaths are like mariners' prayers –
uttered in extremity, but when the tempest is o'er, and
that the vessel leaves tumbling, they fall from
protesting to drinking. And yet, amongst gentlemen,
protesting and drinking go together, and agree as well
as shoemakers and Westphalia bacon. They are both
drawers-on;³ for drink draws on protestation, and
protestation draws on more drink. Is not this discourse
better now than the [morality](#) of your sunburnt
gentleman?

Enter CORNELIA.

CORNELIA

Is this your perch, you haggard?⁴ Fly to th'stews.⁵
[*Strikes* ZANCHE.]

FLAMINIO

You should be clapped by th'heels⁶ now. Strike
i'th' court?⁷

[*Exit* CORNELIA.]

ZANCHE

180 She's good for nothing but to make her maids
Catch cold o'nights. They dare not use a bed-staff¹
For fear of her light² fingers.

MARCELLO

You're a strumpet –
An impudent one!
[*He kicks ZANCHE.*]

FLAMINIO

Why do you kick her? Say.
Do you think that she's like a walnut-tree?
Must she be cudgelled ere she bear good fruit?³

MARCELLO

She brags that you shall marry her.

FLAMINIO

What then?

MARCELLO

I had rather she were pitched upon a stake
In some new-seeded garden, to affright
Her fellow crows thence.

FLAMINIO

You're a boy, a fool.

190 Be guardian to your hound; I am of age.

MARCELLO

If I take her near you, I'll cut her throat.

FLAMINIO

With a fan of feathers?⁴

MARCELLO

And for you, I'll whip

This folly from you.

FLAMINIO

Are you choleric?⁵

I'll purge't with rhubarb.

HORTENSIO

O your brother!

FLAMINIO

Hang him!

He wrongs me most that ought t'offend me least.

[*To MARCELLO*] I do suspect my mother played
foul-play

When she conceived thee.

MARCELLO

Now, by all my hopes,

Like the two slaughtered sons of Oedipus,

The very flames of our affection

200 Shall turn **two** ways.¹ Those words I'll make
thee answer

With thy heart-blood.

FLAMINIO

Do. Like the geese² in the progress,

You know where you shall find me.

MARCELLO

Very good.

[*Exit* FLAMINIO.]

[*To* YOUNG LORD] And thou be'st a noble friend, bear him
my sword,

And bid him fit the length on't.

YOUNG LORD

Sir, I shall.

[*Exeunt all but* ZANCHE.]

Enter FRANCISCO *the Duke of Florence* [*disguised as*
Mulinassar].

ZANCHE [*Aside*]

He comes. Hence, petty thought of my disgrace!

[*To* FRANCISCO] I ne'er loved my complexion till
now,

'Cause I may boldly say, without a blush,

I love you.

FRANCISCO

Your love is untimely sown.

There's a spring at Michaelmas, but 'tis but a faint
one.

210 I am sunk in years, and I have vowed never to
marry.

ZANCHE

Alas, poor maids get more lovers than husbands.

Yet you may mistake my wealth; for, as when
ambassadors are sent to congratulate princes, there's

commonly sent along with them a rich present, so that, though the prince like not the ambassador's person nor words, yet he likes well of the presentment, so I may come to you in the same manner, and be better loved for my dowry than my virtue.

FRANCISCO

I'll think on the motion.

ZANCHE

Do. I'll now detain you no longer. At your better leisure, I'll

220 tell you things shall startle your blood.

Nor blame me that this passion I reveal:

Lovers die inward that their flames conceal.

FRANCISCO [*Aside*]

Of all intelligence this may prove the best.

Sure, I shall draw strange fowl from this foul nest. *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 2

Enter MARCELLO *and* CORNELIA [*with the* PAGE].

CORNELIA

I hear a whispering all about the court

You are to fight. Who is your opposite?

What is the quarrel?

MARCELLO

'Tis an idle rumour.

CORNELIA

Will you dissemble? Sure, you do not well
To fright me thus. You never look thus pale
But when you are most angry. I do charge you,
Upon my blessing – Nay, I'll call the Duke
And he shall school you.

MARCELLO

Publish not a fear
Which would convert to laughter; 'tis not so.
Was not this crucifix my father's?

CORNELIA

10 Yes.

MARCELLO

I have heard you say, giving my brother suck,
He took the crucifix between his hands
And broke a limb off.

CORNELIA

Yes, but 'tis mended.

Enter FLAMINIO.

FLAMINIO

I have brought your weapon back.

FLAMINIO *runs* MARCELLO *through*.

CORNELIA

Ha? Oh, my horror!

MARCELLO

You have brought it home indeed.

CORNELIA

Help! Oh, he's murdered!

FLAMINIO

Do you turn your gall up?¹ I'll to sanctuary,
And send a surgeon to you. [Exit.]

Enter CARLO, HORTENSIO, PEDRO.

HORTENSIO

How? O'th' ground?

MARCELLO

O mother, now remember what I told
Of breaking off the crucifix. Farewell.

20 There are some sins which heaven doth duly
punish

In a whole family. This it is to rise
By all dishonest means. Let all men know
That tree shall long time keep a steady foot
Whose branches spread no wider than the
root. [He dies.]

CORNELIA

O my perpetual sorrow!

HORTENSIO

Virtuous Marcello!
He's dead. Pray, leave him, lady. Come, you shall.
[He restrains CORNELIA.]

CORNELIA

Alas, he is not dead: he's in a trance.

Why, here's nobody shall get anything by his death.
Let me call him again, for God's sake.

CARLO

30 I would you were deceived.

CORNELIA

Oh, you abuse me, you abuse me, you abuse me!
How many have gone away thus for lack of tendance.
Rear up's head, rear up's head! His bleeding inward
will kill him.

HORTENSIO

You see he is departed.

CORNELIA

Let me come to him. Give me him as he is. If he be
turned to earth, let me but give him one hearty kiss,
and you shall put us both into one coffin. Fetch a
looking-glass – see if his breath will not stain it; or pull
out some feathers from my pillow and lay them to his
lips.¹ Will you lose him for a little

40 pains-taking?

HORTENSIO

Your kindest office is to pray for him.

CORNELIA

Alas! I would not pray for him yet. He may live to
lay me i'th' ground and pray for me, if you'll let me
come to him.

*Enter BRACCIANO all armed, save the beaver, with FLAMINIO
[and FRANCISCO and LODOVICO both disguised].*

BRACCIANO

Was this your handiwork?

FLAMINIO

It was my misfortune.

CORNELIA

He lies, he lies! He did not kill him. These have
killed him that would not let him be better looked to.

BRACCIANO

Have comfort, my grieved mother.

CORNELIA

O you screech-owl!¹
[*She tries to strike BRACCIANO.*]

HORTENSIO

50 Forbear, good madam!
[*He holds CORNELIA back.*]

CORNELIA

Let me go, let me go.

*She runs to FLAMINIO with her knife drawn and,
coming to him, lets it fall.*

The God of heaven forgive thee. Dost not wonder
I pray for thee? I'll tell thee what's the reason:
I have scarce breath to number twenty minutes;
I'd not spend that in cursing. Fare thee well.
Half of thyself lies there, and may'st thou live
To fill an hour-glass with his mouldered ashes,
To tell how thou shouldst spend the time to come
In blessed repentance.

BRACCIANO

Mother, pray tell me,

60 How came he by his death? What was the
quarrel?

CORNELIA

Indeed, my younger boy¹ presumed too much
Upon his manhood; gave him bitter words;
Drew his sword first; and so, I know not how –
For I was out of my wits – he fell with's head
Just in my bosom.

PAGE

This is not true, madam.

CORNELIA

I pray thee, peace.
One arrow's grazed² already; it were vain
T' lose this, for that will ne'er be found again.

BRACCIANO

Go, bear the body to Cornelia's lodging;

[*Exeunt* CARLO, PEDRO *and* HORTENSIO *with*
MARCELLO's *body.*]

70 And we command that none acquaint our
Duchess

With this sad accident. For you, Flaminio,
Hark you, I will not grant your pardon.

FLAMINIO

No?

BRACCIANO

Only a lease of your life. And that shall last
But for one day. Thou shalt be forced each evening
To renew it, or be hanged.

FLAMINIO

At your pleasure.

LODOVICO *sprinkles* BRACCIANO's beaver³ *with a
poison.*

Your will is law now; I'll not meddle with it.

BRACCIANO

You once did brave me in your sister's lodging;
I'll now keep you in awe for't. Where's our
beaver?

FRANCISCO [*Aside*]

He calls for his destruction. Noble youth,
I pity thy sad fate. Now to the barriers!
80 This shall his passage to the black lake¹ further:
The last good deed he did, he pardoned
murder. *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 3

*Charges and shouts. They fight at barriers; first single pairs,
then three to three.*

Enter BRACCIANO [*in armour*] *and* FLAMINIO *with others*
[VITTORIA, GIOVANNI *and* FRANCISCO, *disguised as Mulinassar,*
GUARDS *and* ATTENDANTS].

BRACCIANO

An armourer! Ud's death, an armourer!

FLAMINIO

Armourer! Where's the armourer?

BRACCIANO

Tear off my beaver!

FLAMINIO

Are you hurt, my lord?

BRACCIANO

Oh, my brain's on fire!

Enter ARMOURER.

The helmet is poisoned!

ARMOURER

My lord, upon my soul –

BRACCIANO

10 Away with him to
torture!

[Exeunt GUARDS with ARMOURER.]

There are some great ones that have hand in this,
And near about me.

VITTORIA

O my loved lord, poisoned?

FLAMINIO

Remove the bar.¹ Here's unfortunate revels!
Call the physicians.

Enter two PHYSICIANS.

A plague upon you!

10 We have too much of your cunning here already.

I fear the ambassadors are likewise poisoned.

BRACCIANO

Oh, I am gone already. The infection

Flies to the brain and heart. O thou strong heart!

There's such a covenant 'tween the world and it,

They're loath to break.

GIOVANNI

O my most loved father!

BRACCIANO

Remove the boy away.

[*Exeunt* ATTENDANTS *with* GIOVANNI.]

Where's this good woman? Had I infinite worlds

They were too little for thee. Must I leave thee?

What say yon screech-owls?² Is the venom mortal?

PHYSICIAN

Most deadly.

BRACCIANO

20 Most corrupted, politic
hangman!

You kill without book, but your art to save

Fails you as oft as great men's needy friends.

I, that have given life to offending slaves

And wretched murderers, have I not power

To lengthen mine own a twelvemonth?

[*To VITTORIA*] Do not kiss me, for I shall poison thee.

This unction is sent from the great Duke of Florence.

FRANCISCO

Sir, be of comfort.

BRACCIANO

O thou soft, natural death, that art joint-twin
30 To sweetest slumber, no rough-bearded comet
Stares on thy mild departure. The dull owl
Beats not against thy casement. The hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion.¹ Pity winds thy corpse,
Whilst horror waits on princes.

VITTORIA

I am lost forever!

BRACCIANO

How miserable a thing it is to die
'Mongst women howling!
[*Enter LODOVICO and GASPARO, disguised as Capuchins.*]

What are those?

FLAMINIO

Franciscans.²

They have brought the extreme unction.³

BRACCIANO

On pain of death, let no man name death to me;

It is a word infinitely terrible.

40 Withdraw into our cabinet.⁴

Exeunt [all] but FRANCISCO and FLAMINIO.

FLAMINIO

To see what solitariness is about dying princes. As heretofore they have unpeopled towns, divorced friends, and made great houses unhospitable, so now, O justice, where are their flatterers now? Flatterers are but the shadows of princes' bodies – the least thick cloud makes them invisible.

FRANCISCO

There's great moan made for him.

FLAMINIO

'Faith, for some few hours salt water will run most plentifully in every office o'th' court; but, believe it, most of them do but weep over their stepmothers' graves.¹

FRANCISCO

50 How mean you?

FLAMINIO

Why, they dissemble, as some men do that live within compass o'th' verge.²

FRANCISCO

Come, you have thrived well under him.

FLAMINIO

'Faith, like a wolf in a woman's breast, I have been fed with poultry.³ But for money? Understand me, I

had as good a will to cozen him as e'er an officer of them all, but I had not cunning enough to do it.

FRANCISCO

What didst thou think of him? 'Faith, speak freely.

FLAMINIO

He was a kind of statesman that would sooner have reckoned

60 how many cannon-bullets he had discharged against a town, to count his expense that way, than how many of his valiant and deserving subjects he lost before it.

FRANCISCO

Oh, speak well of the Duke.

FLAMINIO

I have done.

Wilt hear some of my court wisdom?

Enter LODOVICO [*disguised*].

To reprehend princes is dangerous, and to commend some of them is palpable lying.

FRANCISCO

How is it with the Duke?

LODOVICO

Most deadly ill.

He's fall'n into a strange distraction.

He talks of battles and monopolies,

70 Levying of taxes, and from that descends

To the most brain-sick language. His mind fastens

On twenty several objects, which confound
Deep sense with folly. Such a fearful end
May teach some men that bear too lofty crest,
Though they live happiest, yet they die not best.
He hath conferred the whole state of the dukedom
Upon your sister, till the Prince arrive
At mature age.

FLAMINIO

There's some good luck in that yet.

FRANCISCO

See, here he comes.

*Enter BRACCIANO, presented in a bed, VITTORIA and others
[including GASPARO, disguised].*

There's death in's face already.

VITTORIA

O my good lord!

*These speeches are several kinds of distractions
and in the action should appear so.*

BRACCIANO

80 Away! You have abused me!
You have conveyed coin forth our territories,¹
Bought and sold offices, oppressed the poor,
And I ne'er dreamt on't! Make up your accounts;
I'll now be mine own steward.

FLAMINIO

Sir, have patience.

BRACCIANO

Indeed, I am too blame,¹
For did you ever hear the dusky raven²
Chide blackness? Or was't ever known the devil
Railed against cloven creatures?

VITTORIA

O my lord!

BRACCIANO

Let me have some quails to supper.

FLAMINIO

Sir, you shall.

BRACCIANO

90 No, some fried dog-fish;³ your quails feed on
poison.

That old dog-fox,⁴ that politician, Florence –
I'll forswear hunting and turn dog-killer.

Rare! I'll be friends with him, for, mark you, sir,
one dog

Still sets another a-barking. Peace, peace!

Yonder's a fine slave come in now.

FLAMINIO

Where?

BRACCIANO

Why, there:

In a blue bonnet, and a pair of breeches

With a great cod-piece. Ha, ha, ha!

Look you, his cod-piece is stuck full of pins
With pearls o'th head of them. Do not you know
him?

FLAMINIO

No, my lord.

BRACCIANO

100 Why, 'tis the devil!

I know him by a great rose he wears on's shoe
To hide his cloven foot. I'll dispute with him;
He's a rare linguist.⁵

VITTORIA

My lord, here's nothing.

BRACCIANO

Nothing? Rare! Nothing? When I want money
Our treasury is empty; there is nothing.
I'll not be used thus.
[He tries to get up.]

VITTORIA

Oh, lie still, my lord!

BRACCIANO

See, see – Flaminio, that killed his brother,
Is dancing on the ropes¹ there; and he carries
A money-bag in each hand to keep him even,
110 For fear of breaking's neck. And there's a
lawyer,
In a gown whipped² with velvet, stares and gapes

When the money will fall. How the rogue cuts
capers!

It should have been in a halter.³

'Tis there. [*Pointing to VITTORIA*] What's she?

FLAMINIO

Vittoria, my lord.

BRACCIANO

Ha, ha, ha! Her hair is sprinkled with *orris*⁴ powder
That makes her look as if she had sinned in the
pastry.⁵

[*Points to LODOVICO*] What's he?

FLAMINIO

A divine, my lord.

BRACCIANO

He will be drunk; avoid him. Th'argument
Is fearful when churchmen stagger in't.
Look you: six grey rats that have lost their tails
120 Crawl up the pillow. Send for a rat-catcher.
I'll do a miracle: I'll free the court
From all foul vermin. Where's Flaminio?

FLAMINIO [*Aside*]

I do not like that he names me so often,
Especially on's death-bed. 'Tis a sign
I shall not live long. [*Aloud*] See, he's near his end.

LODOVICO

Pray, give us leave.

BRACCIANO *seems here near his end.* LODOVICO and
GASPARO, *in the habit of Capuchins, present him,
in his bed, with a crucifix and hallowed candle.*¹

*Attende, Domine Bracciane –*²

FLAMINIO

See, see, how firmly he doth fix his eye
Upon the crucifix.

VITTORIA

Oh, hold it constant.
It settles his wild spirits; and so his eyes

130 Melt into tears.

LODOVICO (*By the crucifix*)

*Domine Bracciane, solebas in bello tutus esse tuo
clypeo, nunc hunc clypeum hosti tuo opponas
infernali.*³

GASPARO (*By the hallowed taper*)

*Olim hasta valuisti in bello; nunc hanc sacram
hastam vibrabis contra hostem animarum.*⁴

LODOVICO

*Attende, Domine Bracciane, si nunc quoque probas
ea quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in dextrum.*⁵

[BRACCIANO *turns his head to the right.*]

GASPARO

*Esto securus, Domine Bracciane: cogita quantum
habeas meritorum – denique memineris meam animam
pro tua oppignoratam si quid esset periculi.*¹

LODOVICO

140 *Si nunc quoque probas ea quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in laevum.*²

[BRACCIANO *turns his head to the left.*]

He is departing. Pray, stand all apart,
And let us only whisper in his ears
Some private meditations which our order
Permits you not to hear.

Here, the rest being departed, LODOVICO and GASPARO discover themselves.

GASPARO

Bracciano.

LODOVICO

Devil Bracciano! Thou art damned.

GASPARO

Perpetually.

LODOVICO

A slave condemned and given up to the gallows
Is thy great lord and master.³

GASPARO

True, for thou
Art given up to the devil.

LODOVICO

O you slave!

150 You that were held the famous politician,
Whose art was poison –

GASPARO

And whose conscience¹ murder.

LODOVICO

– That would have broke your wife's neck down
the stairs

Ere she was poisoned.²

GASPARO

That had your villainous sallets –

LODOVICO

And fine, embroidered bottles and perfumes,
Equally mortal with a winter plague.³

GASPARO

Now there's mercury –

LODOVICO

And copperas⁴ –

GASPARO

And quicksilver⁵ –

LODOVICO

With other devilish, 'pothecary stuff
A-melting in your politic brains. Dost hear?

GASPARO

This is Count Lodovico.

LODOVICO

This Gasparo;
And thou shalt die like a poor rogue.

GASPARO

160

And stink

Like a dead, fly-blown dog.

LODOVICO

And be forgotten before thy funeral sermon.

BRACCIANO

Vittoria! Vittoria!

LODOVICO

O the cursèd devil,

Come to himself again! We are undone.

[They quickly resume their disguises.]

Enter VITTORIA and the ATTENDANTS.

GASPARO *[Aside to LODOVICO]*

Strangle him in private.

[To VITTORIA] What? Will you call him again

To live in treble torments? For charity,

For Christian charity, avoid the chamber.

[Exeunt VITTORIA and ATTENDANTS.]

LODOVICO

You would prate, sir. This is a true-love knot,¹

Sent from the Duke of Florence.

BRACCIANO *is strangled.*

GASPARO

170

What, is it done?

LODOVICO

The snuff² is out. No woman-keeper³ i'th' world,

Though she had practised seven year at the pest-house,⁴

Could have done't quaintlier.⁵

[*Enter* VITTORIA, FRANCISCO, FLAMINIO *and* ATTENDANTS.]

My lords, he's dead.

ALL

Rest to his soul.

VITTORIA

O me! This place is hell.

Exeunt VITTORIA [*weeping*, GASPARO *and* ATTENDANTS.]

[LODOVICO *stands aside*.]

FRANCISCO

How heavily she takes it!

FLAMINIO

Oh, yes, yes.

Had women navigable rivers in their eyes

They would dispend¹ them all. Surely, I wonder

Why we should wish more rivers to the city,²

When they sell water so good cheap. I'll tell thee,

180 These are but moonish³ shades of griefs or fears;

There's nothing sooner dry than women's tears.

Why, here's an end of all my harvest: he has given me nothing.

Court promises! Let wise men count them cursed,

For while you live he that scores best pays worst.⁴

FRANCISCO

Sure, this was Florence' doing.

FLAMINIO

Very likely.

Those are found weighty strokes which come from
th'hand,

But those are killing strokes which come from
th'head.

Oh, the rare tricks of a Machiavellian!

He doth not come like a gross, plodding slave

190 And buffet you to death. No, my quaint⁵ knave

He tickles you to death, makes you die laughing,

As if you had swallowed down a pound of
saffron.⁶

You see the feat; 'tis practised in a trice –

To teach court-honesty it jumps on ice.⁷

FRANCISCO

Now have the people liberty to talk

And descant¹ on his vices.

FLAMINIO

Misery of princes,

That must of force be censured by their slaves!

Not only blamed for doing things are ill,

But for not doing all that all men will.

200 One were better be a thresher.

Ud's death, I would fain speak with this Duke yet.

FRANCISCO

Now he's dead?

FLAMINIO

I cannot conjure, but if prayers or oaths
Will get to th'speech of him, though forty devils
Wait on him in his livery of flames,
I'll speak to him and shake him by the hand,
Though I be blasted.² *Exit* FLAMINIO.

[LODOVICO *comes forward.*]

FRANCISCO

Excellent Lodovico!
What? Did you terrify him at the last gasp?

LODOVICO

Yes; and so idly, that the Duke had like
T'have terrified us.

FRANCISCO

How?
Enter [ZANCHE] *the Moor.*

LODOVICO

210 You shall hear that hereafter.
See, yon's the infernal³ that would make up sport.⁴
Now to the revelation of that secret
She promised when she fell in love with you.

FRANCISCO [*To* ZANCHE]

You're passionately met in this sad world.

ZANCHE

I would have you look up, sir. These court tears
Claim not your tribute to them. Let those weep
That guiltily partake in the sad cause.
I knew last night, by a sad dream I had,
Some mischief would ensue. Yet, to say truth,
My dream most concerned you.

LODOVICO [*Aside to FRANCISCO*]

220 Shall's fall a-dreaming?

FRANCISCO [*Aside to LODOVICO*]

Yes, and for fashion sake I'll dream with her.

ZANCHE

Methought, sir, you came stealing to my bed.

FRANCISCO

Wilt thou believe me, sweeting? By this light,
I was a-dreamt on thee too, for methought
I saw thee naked.

ZANCHE

Fie, sir! As I told you,
Methought you lay down by me.

FRANCISCO

So dreamt I;
And lest thou shouldst take cold, I covered thee
With this Irish mantle.

ZANCHE

Verily, I did dream

You were somewhat bold with me; but to come to't

—

LODOVICO [*Aside*]

230 How, how? I hope you will not go to't here.

FRANCISCO

Nay, you must hear my dream out.

ZANCHE

Well, sir, forth.

FRANCISCO

When I threw the mantle o'er thee, thou didst
laugh

Exceedingly methought.

ZANCHE

Laugh?

FRANCISCO

And cried'st out

The hair did tickle thee.

ZANCHE

There was a dream indeed.

LODOVICO [*Aside to FRANCISCO*]

Mark her, I prithee. She simpers like the suds

A collier¹ hath been washed in.

ZANCHE

Come, sir, good fortune 'tends you. I did tell you

I would reveal a secret: Isabella,
The Duke of Florence' sister, was empoisoned
240 By a fumed² picture; and Camillo's neck
Was broke by damned Flaminio, the mischance
Laid on a vaulting-horse.

FRANCISCO

Most strange!

ZANCHE

Most true.

LODOVICO [*Aside*]

The bed of snakes is broke.

ZANCHE

I sadly do confess I had a hand
In the black deed.

FRANCISCO

Thou kept'st their counsel?

ZANCHE

Right;
For which, urged with contrition, I intend
This night to rob Vittoria.

LODOVICO [*Aside*]

Excellent penitence!
Usurers dream on't while they sleep out sermons.

ZANCHE

To further our escape, I have entreated

250 Leave to retire me, till the funeral,
Unto a friend i'th' country. That excuse
Will further our escape. In coin and jewels
I shall, at least, make good unto your use
An hundred thousand crowns.

FRANCISCO

O noble wench!

LODOVICO [*Aside*]

Those crowns we'll share.

ZANCHE

It is a dowry,
Methinks, should make that sunburnt proverb
false,
And 'wash the Ethiop white'.¹

FRANCISCO

It shall. Away!

ZANCHE

Be ready for our flight.

FRANCISCO

An hour 'fore day.
Exit [ZANCHE] *the Moor.*

O strange discovery! Why, till now we knew not
260 The circumstance of either of their deaths.

Enter [ZANCHE *the*] *Moor.*

ZANCHE

You'll wait about midnight in the chapel?

FRANCISCO

There.

[*Exit ZANCHE.*]

LODOVICO

Why, now our action's justified.

FRANCISCO

Tush for justice!

What harms it justice? We now, like the partridge,

Purge the disease with laurel,¹ for the fame

Shall crown the enterprise and quit the
shame. *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 4

*Enter FLAMINIO and GASPARO at one door; another way
GIOVANNI, attended.*

GASPARO [*To FLAMINIO*]

The young Duke – Did you e'er see a sweeter
prince?

FLAMINIO

I have known a poor woman's bastard better
favoured² – this is behind him. Now, to his face: all
comparisons were hateful. Wise was the courtly
peacock that, being a great minion, and being
compared for beauty by some dottrels³ that stood by to
the kingly eagle, said the eagle was a far fairer bird
than herself, not in respect of her feathers but in

respect of her long tallants.⁴ His will grow out in time.
[To GIOVANNI] My gracious lord –

GIOVANNI

I pray, leave me, sir.

FLAMINIO

10 Your grace must be merry. 'Tis I have cause to
mourn, for wot⁵ you what said the little boy that rode
behind his father on horseback?

GIOVANNI

Why, what said he?

FLAMINIO

‘When you are dead, father,’ said he, ‘I hope then I
shall ride in the saddle.’ Oh, 'tis a brave thing for a
man to sit by himself: he may stretch himself in the
stirrups, look about, and see the whole compass of the
hemisphere. You're now, my lord, i'th' saddle.

GIOVANNI

Study your prayers, sir, and be penitent.

20 'Twere fit you'd think on what hath former been;
I have heard Grief named the eldest child of Sin.

Exeunt GIOVANNI [*with* ATTENDANTS *and* GASPARO].

FLAMINIO

Study my prayers? He threatens me divinely. I am
falling to pieces already. I care not, though like
Anacharsis¹ I were pounded to death in a mortar. And
yet that death were fitter for usurers: gold and
themselves to be beaten together to make a most
cordial cullis² for the devil.

He hath his uncle's villainous look already,

In *decimo-sexto*.³

Enter COURTIER.

Now sir, what are you?

COURTIER

It is the pleasure, sir, of the young Duke

30 That you forbear the presence,⁴ and all rooms

That owe him reverence.

FLAMINIO

So, the wolf and the raven

Are very pretty fools when they are young.

Is it your office, sir, to keep me out?

COURTIER

So the Duke wills.

FLAMINIO

Verily, Master Courtier, extremity is not to be used in all offices. Say that a gentlewoman were taken out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo,¹ to the tower yonder,² with nothing about her but her smock. Would it not show a cruel part in the gentleman-porter to lay claim

40 to her upper garment, pull it o'er her head and ears, and put her in naked?

COURTIER

Very good, you are merry. [*Exit.*]

FLAMINIO

Doth he make a court ejectment of me? A flaming³ firebrand casts more smoke without⁴ a chimney than

within't. I'll smoor⁵ some of them.

Enter [FRANCISCO, *Duke of*] *Florence* [*disguised as*
Mulinassar].

How now? Thou art sad.

FRANCISCO

I met, even now, with the most piteous sight.

FLAMINIO

Thou met'st another here: a pitiful,
Degraded courtier.

FRANCISCO

Your reverend mother

50 Is grown a very old woman in two hours.

I found them winding of Marcello's corpse,⁶

And there is such a solemn melody

'Tween doleful songs, tears and sad elegies –

Such as old grandams, watching by the dead,⁷

Were wont t'outwear the nights with – that, believe
me,

I had no eyes to guide me forth the room,

They were so o'er-charged with water.

FLAMINIO

I will see them.

FRANCISCO

'Twere much uncharity in you, for your sight

Will add unto their tears.

FLAMINIO

I will see them.

FRANCISCO

60 They are behind the traverse.¹ I'll discover
Their superstitious² howling.

[*He draws the traverse.*]

CORNELIA, [ZANCHE] *the Moor and three other* LADIES
discovered, winding MARCELLO's *corpse. A song.*

CORNELIA

This rosemary³ is withered; pray, get fresh.

I would have these herbs grow up in his grave
When I am dead and rotten. Reach the bays.⁴

I'll tie a garland here about his head:

'Twill keep my boy from lightning. This sheet

I have kept this twenty year, and every day

Hallowed it with my prayers. I did not think

He should have wore it.

ZANCHE

Look you who are yonder.

CORNELIA

70 Oh, reach me the flowers.

ZANCHE [*To* LADIES]

Her ladyship's foolish.⁵

LADY

Alas! Her grief

Hath turned her child again.

CORNELIA (*To* FLAMINIO)

You're very welcome.

There's rosemary for you, and rue¹ for you.

[*To* FRANCISCO] Heart's-ease² for you – I pray make much of it;

I have left more for myself.³

FRANCISCO

Lady, who's this?

CORNELIA

You are, I take it, the grave-maker.

FLAMINIO

So.

ZANCHE

'Tis Flaminio.

[CORNELIA *takes* FLAMINIO's *hand*.]

CORNELIA

Will you make me such a fool? Here's a white hand –

Can blood so soon be washed out?⁴ Let me see:

'When screech-owls croak upon the chimney-tops,

80 And the strange cricket i'th' oven sings and hops,

When yellow spots do on your hands appear,

Be certain then you of a corpse shall hear.'

Out upon't! How 'tis speckled! H'as handled a toad, sure.

Cowslip-water is good for the memory;
Pray, buy me three ounces of't.

FLAMINIO

I would I were from hence.

CORNELIA

Do you hear, sir?

I'll give you a saying which my grandmother
Was wont, when she heard the bell toll, to sing
o'er

Unto her lute.¹

FLAMINIO

Do, an you will, do.

CORNELIA *doth this in several forms of distraction.*

CORNELIA [*Sings*]

90 *Call for the robin redbreast and the wren,²*
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flow'rs do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole³
The ant, the field-mouse and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And, when gay tombs are robbed, sustain no harm.
But keep the wolf far thence that's foe to men,
For up again.⁴

100 They would not bury him 'cause he died in a
quarrel,

But I have an answer for them.

[Sings] *Let holy church receive him duly*

Since he paid the church tithes truly.

His wealth is summed,⁵ and this is all his store;⁶

This poor men get, and great men get no more.

Now the wares are gone, we may shut up shop.⁷

Bless you all, good people.

Exeunt CORNELIA [ZANCHE] *and* LADIES.

FLAMINIO

I have a strange thing in me, to th'which

I cannot give a name, without it be

110 Compassion. I pray, leave me.

Exit

FRANCISCO.

This night I'll know the utmost of my fate;

I'll be resolved what my rich sister means

T'assign me for my service. I have lived

Riotously ill, like some that live in court;

And sometimes, when my face was full of smiles,

Have felt the maze¹ of conscience in my breast.

Oft gay and honoured robes those tortures try;²

We think caged birds sing, when indeed they cry.

Enter BRACCIANO'S GHOST, *in his leather cassock*³ *and breeches, boots [and] a cowl,*⁴ *[carrying] a pot of lily-flowers with a skull in 't.*

Ha! I can stand thee. [*The GHOST approaches*]

Nearer, nearer yet.

120 What a mockery⁵ hath death made of thee!
Thou look'st sad.

In what place art thou? In yon starry gallery
Or in the cursèd dungeon?⁶ No? Not speak?
Pray, sir, resolve me: what religion's best
For a man to die in? Or is it in your knowledge
To answer me how long I have to live?
That's the most necessary question.
Not answer? Are you still like some great men
That only walk like shadows⁷ up and down,
And to no purpose? Say.

The GHOST throws earth upon him and shows him the skull.

130 What's that? Oh, fatal! He throws earth upon
me.

A dead man's skull beneath the roots of flowers.
I pray, speak, sir. Our Italian churchmen
Make us believe dead men hold conference
With their familiars, and many times
Will come to bed to them, and eat with
them. *Exit GHOST.*

He's gone, and see: the skull and earth are
vanished.

This is beyond melancholy.¹ I do dare my fate
To do its worst. Now to my sister's lodging
And sum up all these horrors: the disgrace

140 The Prince threw on me; next the piteous sight
Of my dead brother and my mother's dotage;

And last this terrible vision. All these
Shall with Vittoria's bounty turn to good,
Or I will drown this weapon in her blood.
[*Draws his sword and*] *Exit.*

ACT 5

Scene 5

Enter FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, *and* HORTENSIO [*watching them*].

LODOVICO

My lord, upon my soul, you shall no further.
You have most ridiculously engaged yourself
Too far already. For my part, I have paid
All my debts, so if I should chance to fall
My creditors fall not with me; and I vow
To 'quite² all in this bold assembly
To the meanest follower. My lord, leave the city,
Or I'll forswear the murder.

FRANCISCO

Farewell, Lodovico.
If thou dost perish in this glorious act,
10 I'll rear unto thy memory that fame
Shall in the ashes keep alive thy name.

[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO *and* LODOVICO.]

HORTENSIO

There's some black deed on foot. I'll presently¹
Down to the citadel and raise some force.

These strong court factions that do brook no
checks

In the career² oft break the riders'
necks. [*Exit.*]

ACT 5

Scene 6

*Enter VITTORIA with a book in her hand [and] ZANCHE;
FLAMINIO following them.*

FLAMINIO

What, are you at your prayers? Give o'er.

VITTORIA

How, Ruffin?³

FLAMINIO

I come to you 'bout worldly business.

Sit down, sit down. [ZANCHE makes to leave.] Nay, stay,
blowze,⁴ you may hear it.

The doors are fast enough.

VITTORIA

Ha, are you drunk?

FLAMINIO

Yes, yes, with wormwood⁵ water. You shall taste
Some of it presently.

VITTORIA

What intends the fury?

FLAMINIO

You are my lord's executrix, and I claim
Reward for my long service.

VITTORIA

For your service?

FLAMINIO

Come, therefore, here is pen and ink. Set down
10 What you will give me.

She writes.

VITTORIA

There.

FLAMINIO

Ha? Have you done already?
'Tis a most short conveyance.

VITTORIA

I will read it.

[*Reads*] 'I give that portion to thee, and no other,
Which Cain groaned under, having slain his
brother'.¹

FLAMINIO

A most courtly patent to beg by.

VITTORIA

You are a villain.

FLAMINIO

Is't come to this? **They** say affrights cure agues.
Thou hast a devil in thee; I will try
If I can **scare** him from thee. Nay, sit still.
My lord hath left me yet two case² of jewels
20 Shall make me scorn your bounty. You shall see
them.

[*Exit.*]

VITTORIA

Sure, he's distracted.

ZANCHE

Oh, he's desperate!

For your own safety give him gentle language.

[FLAMINIO] *enters with two case of pistols.*

FLAMINIO

Look, these are better far at a dead lift¹

Than all your jewel-house.

VITTORIA

And yet, methinks,

These stones have no fair lustre; they are ill-set.

FLAMINIO

I'll turn the right side towards you. You shall see

How **they** will sparkle.

VITTORIA

Turn this horror from me.

What do you want? What would you have me do?

Is not all mine, yours? Have I any children?

FLAMINIO

30 Pray thee, good woman, do not trouble me

With this vain, **worldly** business. Say your prayers.

I made a vow to my deceased lord

Neither yourself nor I should outlive him

The numb'ring of four hours.

VITTORIA

Did he enjoin it?

FLAMINIO

He did, and 'twas a deadly jealousy,
Lest any should enjoy thee after him,
That urged him vow me to it.² For my death,
I did propound it voluntarily, knowing
If he could not be safe in his own court,
40 Being a great duke, what hope then for us?

VITTORIA

This is your melancholy and despair.

FLAMINIO

Away!
Fool thou art to think that politicians
Do use to kill the effects of injuries
And let the cause live. Shall we groan in irons,
Or be a shameful and a weighty burden
To a public scaffold? This is my resolve:
I would not live at any man's entreaty,
Nor die at any's bidding.

VITTORIA

Will you hear me?

FLAMINIO

My life hath done service to other men;
50 My death shall serve mine own turn. Make you
ready.

VITTORIA

Do you mean to die indeed?

FLAMINIO

With as much pleasure
As e'er my father 'gat me.

VITTORIA [*Aside to ZANCHE*]

Are the doors locked?

ZANCHE [*Aside*]

Yes, madam.

VITTORIA

Are you grown an atheist? Will you turn your
body,
Which is the goodly palace of the soul,
To the soul's slaughter-house? O the cursed devil,
Which doth present us with all other sins
Thrice candied¹ o'er; despair with gall and
stibium,²

Yet we carouse it off³ – [*Aside to ZANCHE*] Cry out for
help!

60 – Makes us forsake that which was made for
man,

The world, to sink to that was made for devils,
Eternal darkness.

ZANCHE

Help! Help!

FLAMINIO

I'll stop your throat

With winter plums.¹

[*He threatens ZANCHE with the pistols.*]

VITTORIA

I prithee, yet remember

Millions are now in graves which at last day

Like mandrakes shall rise shrieking.

FLAMINIO

Leave your prating,

For these are but grammatical² laments,

Feminine³ arguments, and they move me

As some in pulpits move their auditory –

More with their exclamation⁴ than sense

Of reason or sound doctrine.

ZANCHE [*Aside to VITTORIA*]

70

Gentle madam,

Seem to consent. Only persuade him teach

The way to death: let him die first.

VITTORIA [*Aside to ZANCHE*]

'Tis good; I apprehend it.

[*To FLAMINIO*] To kill oneself is meat that we must
take

Like pills: not chew't but quickly swallow it.

The smart o'th' wound or weakness of the hand

May else bring treble torments.

FLAMINIO

I have held it
A wretched and most miserable life
Which is not able to die.

VITTORIA

Oh, but frailty –
80 Yet I am now resolved. Farewell, affliction!
Behold, Bracciano, I, that while you lived
Did make a flaming altar of my heart
To sacrifice unto you, now am ready
To sacrifice heart and all. Farewell, Zanche.

ZANCHE

How, madam? Do you think that I'll outlive you,
Especially when my best self, Flaminio,
Goes the same voyage?

FLAMINIO

O most lovèd Moor!

ZANCHE [*To FLAMINIO*]

Only, by all my love, let me entreat you,
Since it is most necessary none of us
90 Do violence on ourselves, let you or I
Be her sad taster¹ – teach her how to die.

FLAMINIO

Thou dost instruct me nobly. Take these pistols.
[*He gives VITTORIA and ZANCHE two pistols each.*]
Because my hand is stained with blood already,

Two of these you shall level at my breast,
Th'other 'gainst your own, and so we'll die,
Most equally contented. But first, swear
Not to outlive me.

VITTORIA *and* [ZANCHE *the*] MOOR

Most religiously.

FLAMINIO

Then here's an end of me. Farewell, daylight!
And O contemptible physic,² that dost take
100 So long a study only to preserve
So short a life, I take my leave of thee.

(*Showing the pistols*) These are two cupping-glasses³ that
shall draw

All my infected blood out. Are you ready?

BOTH

Ready.

FLAMINIO

Whither shall I go now? O Lucian, thy ridiculous
purgatory!¹ To find Alexander the Great cobbling
shoes, Pompey tagging points,² and Julius Caesar
making hair buttons,³ Hannibal selling blacking,⁴ and
Augustus crying garlic, Charlemagne selling lists⁵ by
the dozen, and King Pippin⁶ crying apples in

110 a cart drawn with one horse.

Whether I resolve to fire, earth, water, air,
Or all the elements by scruples,⁷ I know not,
Nor greatly care. Shoot, shoot!

Of all deaths the violent death is best,
For from ourselves it steals ourselves so fast,
The pain once apprehended is quite past.
They shoot and run to him and tread upon him.

VITTORIA

What, are you dropped?

FLAMINIO

I am mixed with earth already. As you are noble,
Perform your vows and bravely follow me.

VITTORIA

Whither? To hell?

ZANCHE

120 To most assured damnation.

VITTORIA

O thou most cursèd devil!

ZANCHE

Thou art caught –

VITTORIA

In thine own engine. I tread the fire out
That would have been my ruin.

FLAMINIO

Will you be perjured? What a religious oath was
Styx¹ that the gods never durst swear by and violate!
Oh, that we had such an oath to minister, and to be so
well kept in our courts of justice.

VITTORIA

Think whither thou art going.

ZANCHE

And remember

What villainies thou hast acted.

VITTORIA

This thy death

130 Shall make me, like a blazing, ominous star,²

Look up and tremble.

FLAMINIO

Oh, I am caught with a springe!³

VITTORIA

You see the fox comes many times short⁴ home;

'Tis here proved true.

FLAMINIO

Killed with a couple of braches.⁵

VITTORIA

No fitter off'ring for the infernal furies

Than one in whom they reigned while he was
living.

FLAMINIO

Oh, the way's dark and horrid! I cannot see.

Shall I have no company?

VITTORIA

Oh, yes, thy sins

Do run before thee to fetch fire from hell

To light thee thither.

FLAMINIO

Oh, I smell soot,

140 Most *stinking* soot; the *chimney is* a-fire.

My liver's parboiled like Scotch holy-bread.¹

There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts; it
scalds.

Wilt thou outlive me?

ZANCHE

Yes, and drive a stake

Through thy body;² for we'll give it out

Thou didst this violence upon thyself.

FLAMINIO

O cunning devils! Now I have tried your love

And doubled all your reaches.³ I am not wounded!

FLAMINIO *riseth*.

The pistols held no bullets. 'Twas a plot

To prove your kindness to me, and I live

150 To punish your ingratitude. I knew,

One time or other, you would find a way

To give me a strong potion. O men

That lie upon your death-beds, and are haunted

With howling wives, ne'er trust them! They'll
remarry

Ere the worm pierce your winding-sheet, ere the
spider

Make a thin curtain for your epitaphs.

How cunning you were to discharge! Do you practise at the artillery yard?⁴ Trust a woman? Never, never! Bracciano be my precedent. We lay our souls to pawn to the devil for a

160 little pleasure, and a woman makes the bill of sale. That ever man should marry! For one Hypermnestra that saved her lord and husband, forty-nine of her sisters cut their husbands' throats all in one night.¹ There was a shoal of virtuous horse-leeches.²

Here are two other instruments.³

Enter LODOVICO, GASPARO [*still disguised as Capuchins, with swords aloft*], PEDRO [*and*] CARLO.

VITTORIA

Help, help!

FLAMINIO

What noise is that? Ha? False keys i'th' court!

LODOVICO

We have brought you a masque.⁴

FLAMINIO

A matachin⁵ it seems,

By your drawn swords. Churchmen turned revellers?

CONSPIRATORS

Isabella, Isabella!

[*They throw off their disguises.*]

LODOVICO

Do you know us now?

FLAMINIO

170 Lodovico and Gasparo!

LODOVICO

Yes, and that Moor the Duke gave pension to
Was the great Duke of Florence.

VITTORIA

Oh, we are lost.

[GASPARO *seizes* VITTORIA. PEDRO *takes* FLAMINIO. CARLO *seizes*
ZANCHE.]

FLAMINIO

You shall not take justice from forth my hands.
Oh, let me kill her! I'll cut my *safety*
Through your coats of steel. Fate's a spaniel:
We cannot beat it from us. What remains now?
Let all that do ill take this *precedent*:
Man may his fate foresee, but not prevent.
And of all axioms this shall win the prize:
180 'Tis better to be fortunate than wise.

GASPARO

Bind him to the pillar.

[PEDRO *ties up* FLAMINIO.]

VITTORIA

Oh, your gentle pity!
I have seen a blackbird that would sooner fly
To a man's bosom, than to stay¹ the gripe

Of the fierce sparrow-hawk.

GASPARO

Your hope deceives you.

VITTORIA

If Florence be i'th' court, would he would kill me.

GASPARO

Fool! Princes give rewards with their own hands,
But death or punishment by the hands of others.

LODOVICO [*To FLAMINIO*]

Sirrah, you once did strike me – I'll strike you
Into the centre.²

FLAMINIO

190 Thou'lt do it like a hangman, a base hangman,
Not like a noble fellow, for thou seest
I cannot strike again.

LODOVICO

Dost laugh?

FLAMINIO

Wouldst have me die, as I was born, in whining?

GASPARO

Recommend yourself to heaven.

FLAMINIO

No, I will carry mine own commendations thither.

LODOVICO

Oh, could I kill you forty times a day

And use't four year together, 'twere too little!
Nought grieves's but that you are too few to feed
The famine of our vengeance. What dost think on?

FLAMINIO

200 Nothing, of nothing. Leave thy idle¹ questions.
I am i'th' way to study a long silence;
To prate were idle. I remember nothing.
There's nothing of so infinite vexation
As man's own thoughts.

LODOVICO [*To VITTORIA*]

O thou glorious strumpet,
Could I divide thy breath from this pure air
When't leaves thy body, I would suck it up
And breathe't upon some dunghill.

VITTORIA

You my death's-man?
Methinks thou dost not look horrid enough;
Thou hast too good a face to be a hangman.
210 If thou be, do thy office in right form.²
Fall down upon thy knees, and ask forgiveness.

LODOVICO

Oh, thou hast been a most prodigious comet,
But I'll cut off your train.³ [*To CARLO*] Kill the
Moor first.

VITTORIA

You shall not kill her first. Behold my breast!

I will be waited on in death; my servant
Shall never go before me.

GASPARO

Are you so brave?

VITTORIA

Yes, I shall welcome death
As princes do some great ambassadors:
I'll meet thy weapon halfway.

LODOVICO

Thou dost tremble;
220 Methinks fear should dissolve thee into air.

VITTORIA

Oh, thou art deceived. I am too true a woman:
Conceit¹ can never kill me. I'll tell thee what,
I will not in my death shed one base tear,
Or if look pale, for want of blood not fear.

CARLO

Thou art my task, black fury.

ZANCHE

I have blood
As red as either of theirs. Wilt drink some?
'Tis good for the falling sickness.² I am proud
Death cannot alter my complexion,
For I shall ne'er look pale.

LODOVICO

Strike, strike,

With a joint motion!

[*They stab* VITTORIA, FLAMINIO *and* ZANCHE.]

VITTORIA

230 'Twas a manly blow.

The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking infant,

And then thou wilt be famous.

FLAMINIO

Oh, what blade is't?

A Toledo or an English fox?¹

I ever thought a cutler² should distinguish

The cause of my death, rather than a doctor.

Search my wound deeper; tent³ it with the steel

That made it.

VITTORIA

Oh, my greatest sin lay in my blood.⁴

Now my blood pays for't.

FLAMINIO

Th'art a noble sister.

240 I love thee now. If woman do breed man

She ought to teach him manhood. Fare thee well.

Know many glorious women, that are famed

For masculine virtue, have been vicious;

Only a happier silence did betide them:

She hath no faults who hath the art to hide them.

VITTORIA

My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
Is driven I know not whither.

FLAMINIO

Then cast anchor.

Prosperity doth bewitch men, seeming clear,
But seas do laugh, show white, when rocks are
near.

250 We cease to grieve, cease to be Fortune's
slaves,

Nay, cease to die by dying.

[ZANCHE *dies*.]

Art thou gone?

[*To* VITTORIA] And thou so near the bottom? False
report

Which says that women vie with the nine Muses

For nine tough, durable lives. I do not look

Who went before, nor who shall follow me.

No, at myself I will begin and end:

While we look up to heaven we confound

Knowledge with knowledge. Oh, I am in a mist!

VITTORIA

Oh, happy they that never saw the court,

260 Nor ever knew great man but by
report. VITTORIA *dies*.

FLAMINIO

I recover, like a spent taper, for a flash –

And instantly go out.

Let all that belong to great men remember th'old
wives' tradition, to be like the lions i'th' Tower on
Candlemas day, to mourn if the sun shine, for fear of
the pitiful remainder of winter to come.¹

'Tis well; yet there's some goodness in my death:

My life was a black charnel. I have caught

An everlasting cold; I have lost my voice²

270 Most irrecoverably. Farewell, glorious villains!

This busy trade³ of life appears most vain,

Since rest breeds rest, where all seek pain by pain.

Let no harsh, flattering bells resound my knell.

Strike, thunder, and strike loud to my farewell!

[FLAMINIO] *dies*.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR [*Within*]

This way, this way. Break ope the doors! This way.

LODOVICO

Ha, are we betrayed?

Why then, let's constantly⁴ die all together,

And having finished this most noble deed,

Defy the worst of fate, not fear to bleed.

Enter AMBASSADORS *and* GIOVANNI [*with* GUARDS].

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

Keep back the Prince! Shoot, shoot!

[GUARDS *shoot at the conspirators.*]

LODOVICO

280

Oh, I am wounded!

I fear I shall be ta'en.

GIOVANNI

You bloody villains,
By what authority have you committed
This massacre?

LODOVICO

By thine.

GIOVANNI

Mine?

LODOVICO

Yes; thy uncle,
Which is a part of thee, enjoined us to't.
Thou know'st me, I am sure. I am Count Lodovic;
And thy most noble uncle, in disguise,
Was last night in thy court.

GIOVANNI

Ha?

CARLO

Yes, that Moor
Thy father chose his pensioner.

GIOVANNI

He turned murderer?

Away with them to prison and to torture! [GUARDS
seize hold of them]

290 All that have hands in this shall taste our
justice,

As I hope heaven.

LODOVICO

I do glory yet

That I can call this act mine own. For my part,

The rack, the gallows and the torturing wheel

Shall be but sound sleeps to me. Here's my rest:

I limned¹ this night-piece,² and it was my best.

GIOVANNI

Remove the bodies.

[*To the ENGLISH AMBASSADOR*] See, my honoured
lord,

What use you ought make of their punishment.

Let guilty men remember their black deeds

300 Do lean on crutches made of slender
reeds. [Exeunt.]

Instead of an Epilogue only this of Martial supplies me:

Haec fuerint nobis praemia si placui.¹

For the action of the play, 'twas generally well, and I dare affirm, with the joint testimony of some of their own quality² – for the true imitation of life, without striving to make nature a monster – the best that ever became them; whereof, as I make a general acknowledgement, so in particular I must remember

the well-approved industry of my friend, Master Perkins,³ and confess the worth of his action did

310 crown both the beginning and end.

FINIS.



JOHN WEBSTER
THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

List of Characters

The DUCHESS *of Malfi, a young widow, later secretly married to Antonio*

FERDINAND, *Duke of Calabria, the Duchess's twin*

The CARDINAL *of Aragon, elder brother of the Duchess and Ferdinand*

Daniel de BOSOLA *the Duchess's Master of the Horse, spying for the Cardinal and Ferdinand*

ANTONIO *Bologna the Duchess's steward, later her husband*

CARIOLA *the Duchess's waiting-maid*

DELIO *a courtier, Antonio's friend*

THREE CHILDREN¹ *of the Duchess and Antonio*

JULIA *wife of Castruchio, mistress of the Cardinal*

CASTRUCHIO² *an old courtier, Julia's husband*

OLD LADY *a courtier*

DOCTOR

Count MALATESTA *a Roman courtier*

Marquis of PESCARA *a soldier and courtier*

RODERIGO, GRISOLAN, SILVIO *courtiers at Amalfi*

FOROBOSCO* *an official at the Duchess's court*

Court Officers, Two Pilgrims, Eight Madmen, Executioners, Servants, Attendants, Ladies-in-

*Waiting,
Guards, Churchmen**

To the Right Honourable GEORGE
HARDING,¹ *BARON BERKELEY of*
Berkeley Castle and Knight of the Order of
the Bath to the Illustrious Prince
CHARLES.

My Noble Lord,

That I may present my excuse why, being a stranger to your Lordship, I offer this poem² to your patronage, I plead this warrant: men who never saw the sea yet desire to behold that regiment of waters, choose some eminent river to guide them thither, and make that, as it were, their conduct³ or postilion.⁴ By the like ingenious means has your fame arrived at my knowledge, receiving it from some of worth who, both in contemplation and practice, owe to your Honour their clearest service. I do not altogether look up at your title; the ancient'st nobility being but a relic of time past, and the truest honour, indeed, being for a man to confer honour on himself – which your learning strives to propagate, and shall make you arrive at the dignity of a great example. I am confident this work is not unworthy your Honour's perusal; for by such poems as this, poets have kissed the hands of great princes, and drawn their gentle eyes to look down upon their sheets of paper, when the poets themselves were bound up in their winding-sheets. The like courtesy from your Lordship shall make you live in your grave, and laurel spring out of it, when the ignorant scorers of the Muses, that, like worms in libraries, seem to live only to destroy learning, shall wither, neglected and forgotten. This work, and myself, I humbly present to your approved censure;¹

it being the utmost of my wishes to have your honourable self
my weighty and perspicuous comment; which grace so done
me, shall ever be acknowledged

By your Lordship's in all duty and observance,
John Webster

*In the just worth of that well-deserver, Mr
JOHN WEBSTER, and upon this
masterpiece of tragedy.*

In this thou imitat'st one rich and wise,
That sees his good deeds done before he dies.
As he by works, thou by this work of fame
Hast well provided for thy living name.
To trust to others' honourings is worth's crime;
Thy monument is raised in thy lifetime,
And 'tis most just; for every worthy man
Is his own marble, and his merit can
Cut him to any figure, and express
10 More art than Death's cathedral palaces,
Where royal ashes keep their court. Thy note
Be ever plainness; 'tis the richest coat.
Thy epitaph only the title be,
Write 'Duchess' – that will fetch a tear for thee.
For who e'er saw this Duchess live and die
That could get off under a bleeding eye?
In Tragaediam.
Ut lux ex tenebris ictu percussa Tonantis,
Illa, ruina malis, claris fit vita poetis.¹

20 Thomas Middletonus,² *Poeta & Chron
Londinensis*

To his friend, Master John Webster, upon his *Duchess of
Malfi*

I never saw thy Duchess till the day
That she was lively bodied in thy play.
Howe'er she answered¹ her low-rated love,
Her brothers' anger did so fatal prove;
Yet, my opinion is, she might speak² more,
But never in her life so well before.³

William Rowley⁴

30 *To the reader of the author, and his DUCHESS
OF MALFI*

Crown him a poet, whom nor Rome nor Greece
Transcend in all theirs, for a masterpiece
In which, whiles words and matter change, and
men
Act one another, he, from whose clear pen
They all took life, to Memory hath lent
A lasting fame, to raise his monument.

John Ford

ACT 1

Scene 1

[Enter] ANTONIO and DELIO.

DELIO

You are welcome to your country, dear Antonio.
You have been long in France, and you return
A very formal Frenchman in your habit.¹
How do you like the French court?

ANTONIO

I admire it;
In seeking to reduce both state and people
To a fixed order, their judicious king
Begins at home: quits first his royal palace
Of flatt'ring sycophants, of dissolute
And infamous persons – which² he sweetly terms
10 His Master's masterpiece, the work of heaven –
Consid'ring duly that a prince's court
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow
Pure silver drops in general; but if't chance
Some cursed example poison't near the head,
Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
And what is't makes this blessèd government
But a most provident council, who dare freely
Inform him the corruption of the times?
Though some o'th' court hold it presumption

20 To instruct princes what they ought to do,
It is a noble duty to inform them
What they ought to foresee.

[*Enter* BOSOLA.]

Here comes Bosola,
The only court-gall;¹ yet I observe his railing²
Is not for simple love of piety;
Indeed, he rails at those things which he wants;
Would be as lecherous, covetous or proud,
Bloody or envious, as any man,
If he had means to be so.

[*Enter* CARDINAL.]

Here's the Cardinal.

[ANTONIO *and* DELIO *stand aside*.]

BOSOLA

I do haunt you still.

CARDINAL

So.

BOSOLA

I have done you

30 Better service than to be slighted thus.
Miserable age, where only the³ reward
Of doing well is the doing of it!

CARDINAL

You enforce your merit too much.

BOSOLA

I fell into the galleys in your service, where, for two years together, I wore two towels instead of a shirt, with a knot on the shoulder, after the fashion of a Roman mantle. Slighted thus? I will thrive some way: blackbirds fatten best in hard weather; why not in these dog-days?⁴

CARDINAL

Would you could become honest.

BOSOLA

40 With all your divinity, do but direct me the way to it. I have known many travel far for it, and yet return as arrant knaves as they went forth, because they carried themselves always along with them. [*Exit* CARDINAL.]

Are you gone? [*To* ANTONIO *and* DELIO] Some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil, but this great fellow were able to possess the greatest devil and make him worse.

ANTONIO

He hath denied thee some suit?

BOSOLA

He and his brother are like plum trees that grow crooked over standing¹ pools: they are rich, and o'erladen with fruit,

50 but none but crows, pies² and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one of their flattering panders, I would hang on their ears like a horse-leech till I were full, and then drop off. I pray, leave me. Who would rely upon these miserable dependences in expectation to be advanced tomorrow? What creature ever fed

worse than hoping Tantalus?³ Nor ever **died** any man more fearfully than he that hoped for a **pardon**. There are rewards for hawks and dogs **when** they have done us service, but for a soldier that hazards his limbs in a battle – nothing but a kind of geometry is his last supportation.

DELIO

60 Geometry?

BOSOLA

Ay, to hang in a fair pair of slings, take his latter swing in the world upon an honourable pair of crutches, from hospital to hospital. Fare ye well, sir; and yet do not you scorn us, for places in the court are but **like** beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower. [Exit BOSOLA.]

DELIO

I knew this fellow seven years in the galleys
For a notorious murder, and 'twas thought
The Cardinal suborned it. He was released
70 By the French general, Gaston de **Foix**,¹
When he recovered Naples.

ANTONIO

'Tis great pity
He should be thus neglected; I have heard
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness, for, I'll tell you,
If too immoderate sleep be truly said

To be an inward rust unto the soul,
It then doth follow want of action
Breeds all black malcontents, and their close
rearing,
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing.

ACT 1

Scene 2

[Enter] CASTRUCCIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO and GRISOLAN.

DELIO

The presence² 'gins to fill. You promised me
To make me the partaker of the natures
Of some of your great courtiers.

ANTONIO

The Lord Cardinal's,
And other strangers that are now in court?
I shall.

[Enter FERDINAND.]

Here comes the great Calabrian Duke.

[ANTONIO and DELIO stand aside.]

FERDINAND

Who took the ring³ oft' nest?

SILVIO

Antonio Bologna, my lord.

FERDINAND

Our sister Duchess's great master of her household?
Give him the jewel.¹ When shall we leave this sportive
action and

10 fall to action indeed?

CASTRUCCIO

Methinks, my lord, you should not desire to go to
war in person.

FERDINAND [*Aside*]

Now for some gravity – why, my lord?

CASTRUCCIO

It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not
necessary a prince descend to be a captain.

FERDINAND

No?

CASTRUCCIO

No, my lord, he were far better do it by a deputy.

FERDINAND

Why should he not as well sleep or eat by a deputy?
This might take idle, offensive and base office from
him, whereas the other deprives him of honour.

CASTRUCCIO

20 Believe my experience: that realm is never long
in quiet where the ruler is a soldier.

FERDINAND

Thou told'st me thy wife could not endure
fighting.

CASTRUCCIO

True, my lord.

FERDINAND

And of a jest she broke, of a captain she met, full of
wounds – I have forgot it.

CASTRUCCIO

She told him, my lord, he was a pitiful fellow to lie,
like the children of Ismael, all in tents.²

FERDINAND

Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the
chirurgeons¹ o'the city; for although gallants should
quarrel, and had drawn

30 their weapons and were ready to go to it, yet her
persuasions would make them put up.²

CASTRUCCIO

That she would, my lord,

FERDINAND

How do you like my Spanish *jennet*?³

RODERIGO

He is all fire.

FERDINAND

I am of Pliny's opinion:⁴ I think he was begot by the
wind. He runs as if he were *ballasted*⁵ with quicksilver.

SILVIO

True, my lord, he reels⁶ from the tilt⁷ often.

RODERIGO [*and*] GRISOLAN

Ha, ha, ha!

FERDINAND

Why do you laugh? Methinks you that are courtiers should

40 be my touchwood – take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

CASTRUCCIO

True, my lord. I myself have heard a very good jest, and have scorned to seem to have so silly a wit as to understand it.

FERDINAND

But I can laugh at your fool, my lord.

CASTRUCCIO

He cannot speak, you know, but he makes faces. My lady cannot abide him.

FERDINAND

No?

CASTRUCCIO

Nor endure to be in merry company, for she says too much laughing and too much company fills her too full of the

50 wrinkle.

FERDINAND

I would then have a mathematical instrument made for her face, that she might not laugh out of compass.¹ I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Lord Silvio.

SILVIO

Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

FERDINAND

You are a good horseman, Antonio. You have excellent riders in France. What do you think of good horsemanship?

ANTONIO [*coming forward*]

Nobly, my lord. As out of the Grecian horse² issued many famous princes, so out of brave horsemanship arise the first sparks of growing resolution that raise the mind to noble

60 action.

FERDINAND

You have bespoke it worthily.

[*Enter* CARDINAL, DUCHESS, CARIOLA, JULIA *and* ATTENDANTS.]

SILVIO

Your brother, the Lord Cardinal, and sister Duchess.

CARDINAL

Are the galleys come about?

GRISOLAN

They are, my lord.

FERDINAND

Here's the Lord Silvio is come to take his leave.

[*All except* ANTONIO *and* DELIO *stand apart.*]

DELIO [*To* ANTONIO]

Now, sir, your promise: what's that Cardinal – I mean his temper? They say he's a brave fellow,

Will play his five thousand crowns at tennis,
dance,

Court ladies, and one that hath fought single
combats.

ANTONIO

70 Some such flashes superficially hang on him, for
form;¹ but observe his inward character: he is a
melancholy churchman. The spring in his face is
nothing but the engendering of toads.² Where he is
jealous of any man he lays worse plots for them than
ever was imposed on Hercules, for he strews in his
way flatterers, panders, intelligencers,³ atheists, and a
thousand such political monsters. He should have been
Pope, but instead of coming to it by the primitive
decency of the Church, he did bestow bribes so largely,
and so impudently, as if he would have carried it away
without heaven's knowledge.

80 Some good he hath done –

DELIO

You have given too much of him. What's his
brother?

ANTONIO

The Duke there? A most perverse and turbulent
nature;

What appears in him mirth is merely outside.

If he laugh heartily, it is to laugh

All honesty out of fashion.

DELIO

Twins?

ANTONIO

In quality.

He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits

With others' ears; will seem to sleep o'th' bench

Only to entrap offenders in their answers;

Dooms men to death by information,⁴

Rewards by hearsay.

DELIO

90

Then the law to him

Is like a foul, black cobweb to a spider:

He makes it his dwelling, and a prison

To entangle those shall feed him.

ANTONIO

Most true.

He never pays debts, unless they be **shrewd** turns,¹

And those he will confess that he doth owe.

Last, for his brother there, the Cardinal:

They that do flatter him most say oracles

Hang at his lips; and verily I believe them,

For the devil speaks in them.

100 But for their sister, the right noble Duchess,

You never fixed **your** eye on three fair medals,

Cast in one figure, of so different temper.

For her discourse, it is so full of rapture

You only will begin then to be sorry

When she doth end her speech; and wish, in
wonder,
She held it less vainglory to talk much,
Than your penance to hear her.² Whilst she speaks,
She throws upon a man so sweet a look
That it were able raise one to a galliard³
110 That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote
On that sweet countenance; but in that look
There speaketh so divine a continence
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practised in such noble virtue
That sure her nights – nay more, her very sleeps –
Are more in heaven than other ladies' shrifts.⁴
Let all sweet ladies break their flatt'ring glasses,
And dress themselves in her.⁵

DELIO

Fie, Antonio,
You play the wire-drawer⁶ with her
commendations.

ANTONIO

120 I'll case the picture up.¹ Only thus much –
All her particular worth grows to this sum:
She stains² the time past, lights the time to come.

CARIOLA

You must attend my lady in the gallery,
Some half an hour hence.

ANTONIO

I shall.

[*Exeunt* ANTONIO AND DELIO.]

FERDINAND

Sister, I have a suit to you.

DUCHESS

To me, sir?

FERDINAND

A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,

One that was in the galleys –

DUCHESS

Yes, I know him.

FERDINAND

A worthy fellow h'is. Pray, let me entreat for

The provisorship of your horse.³

DUCHESS

Your knowledge of him

Commends him and prefers him.

FERDINAND

130

Call him hither.

[*Exit* ATTENDANT.]

We **are** now upon parting. Good Lord Silvio,

Do us commend to all our noble friends

At the **leaguer**.⁴

SILVIO

Sir, I shall.

DUCHESS

You are for Milan?

SILVIO

I am.

DUCHESS

Bring the caroches.¹ We'll bring you down to the
haven.

[Exeunt all but CARDINAL and FERDINAND.]

CARDINAL

Be sure you entertain that Bosola
For your intelligence.² I would not be seen in't;
And therefore many times I have slighted him
When he did court our furtherance,³ as this
morning.

FERDINAND

140 Antonio, the great master of her household,
Had been far fitter.

CARDINAL

You are deceived in him;
His nature is too honest for such business.

[Enter BOSOLA.]

He comes. I'll leave you. *[Exit*
CARDINAL.]

BOSOLA

I was lured to you.

FERDINAND

My brother here, the Cardinal, could never
Abide you.

BOSOLA

Never since he was in my debt.

FERDINAND

Maybe some oblique character in your face
Made him suspect you?

BOSOLA

Doth he study physiognomy?
There's no more credit to be given to th' face
Than to a sick man's urine, which some call
150 The physician's whore because she cozens¹
him.

He did suspect me wrongfully.

FERDINAND

For that
You must give great men leave to take their times.
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceived;
You see the oft shaking of the cedar tree
Fastens it more at root.

BOSOLA

Yet take heed,
For to suspect a friend unworthily
Instructs him the next² way to suspect you,
And prompts him to deceive you.

FERDINAND

There's gold.

[*He gives BOSOLA money.*]

BOSOLA

So:

What follows? Never rained such showers as these

160 Without thunderbolts i'th' tail of them.³

Whose throat must I cut?

FERDINAND

Your inclination to shed blood rides post⁴

Before my occasion to use you. I give you that

To live i'th' court here, and observe the Duchess,

To note all the particulars of her 'haviour:

What suitors do solicit her for marriage,

And whom she best affects. She's a young widow;

I would not have her marry again.

BOSOLA

No, sir?

FERDINAND

Do not you ask the reason, but be satisfied

I say I would not.

BOSOLA

170 It seems you would create me

One of your familiars.¹

FERDINAND

Familiar? What's that?

BOSOLA

Why, a very quaint,² invisible devil in flesh:
An intelligencer.

FERDINAND

Such a kind of thriving thing
I would wish thee, and ere long thou may'st arrive
At a higher place by't.

BOSOLA [*scorning the money*]

Take your devils,
Which hell calls angels.³ These cursed gifts would
make
You a corrupter, me an impudent traitor;
And should I take these they'd take me **to** hell.

FERDINAND

Sir, I'll take nothing from you that I have given.
180 There is a place that I procured for you
This morning: the provisorship o'th' horse.
Have you heard **on't**?

BOSOLA

No.

FERDINAND

'Tis yours. Is't not worth thanks?

BOSOLA

I would have you curse yourself now, that your
bounty,

Which makes men truly noble, e'er should make
Me a villain. Oh, that to avoid ingratitude
For the good deed you have done me, I must do
All the ill man can invent! Thus the devil
Candies all sins o'er, and what heaven terms vile,
That names he complemental.¹

FERDINAND

Be yourself:

190 Keep your old garb of melancholy. 'Twill
express

You envy those that stand above your reach,
Yet strive not to come near 'em. This will gain
Access to private lodgings, where yourself
May, like a politic² dormouse³ –

BOSOLA

As I have seen some
Feed in a lord's dish,⁴ half asleep, not seeming
To listen to any talk, and yet these rogues
Have cut his throat in a dream. What's my place?
The provisorship o'th' horse? Say, then, my
corruption
Grew out of horse-dung. I am your creature.

FERDINAND

200 Away!

BOSOLA

Let good men for good deeds covet good fame,

Since place and riches oft are bribes of shame.

Sometimes the devil doth preach. *Exit*

BOSOLA.

[*Enter* CARDINAL *and* DUCHESS.]

CARDINAL [*To* DUCHESS]

We are to part from you, and your own discretion

Must now be your director.

FERDINAND

You are a widow:

You know already what man is; and, therefore,

Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence –

CARDINAL

No, nor anything without the addition, honour,

Sway your high blood.

FERDINAND

Marry? They are most luxurious¹

Will wed twice.

CARDINAL

Oh, fie!

FERDINAND

210 Their livers² are more spotted

Than Laban's sheep.³

DUCHESS

Diamonds are of most value,

They say, that have passed through most jewellers'
hands.

FERDINAND

Whores, by that rule, are precious.

DUCHESS

Will you hear me?

I'll never marry.

CARDINAL

So most widows say,

But commonly that motion⁴ lasts no longer

Than the turning of an hour-glass; the funeral
sermon

And it end both together.

FERDINAND

Now hear me:

You live in a rank pasture here, i'th' court.

There is a kind of honey-dew⁵ that's deadly:

220 'Twill poison your fame. Look to't. Be not
cunning,

For they whose faces do belie their hearts

Are witches ere they arrive at twenty years,

Ay, and give the devil suck.

DUCHESS

This is terrible good counsel.

FERDINAND

Hypocrisy is woven of a fine, small thread,

Subtler than Vulcan's engine.¹ Yet, believe't,

Your darkest actions – nay, your privat'st thoughts

–

Will come to light.

CARDINAL

You may flatter yourself,

And take your own choice: privately be married

Under the eves of night –

FERDINAND

Think't the best voyage

230 That e'er you made, like the irregular crab

Which, though't goes backward, thinks that it goes
right

Because it goes its own way. But observe:

Such weddings may more properly be said

To be executed than celebrated.

CARDINAL

The marriage night

Is the entrance into some prison.

FERDINAND

And those joys,

Those lustful pleasures, are like heavy sleeps

Which do forerun man's mischief.

CARDINAL

Fare you well.

Wisdom begins at the end:² remember it.

[*Exit* CARDINAL.]

DUCHESS

I think this speech between you both was studied,³
It came so roundly off.

FERDINAND

240 You are my sister;

 This was my father's poniard [*drawing a dagger*].
Do you see?

 I'd be loath to see't look rusty,¹ 'cause 'twas his.

 I would have you to give o'er these chargeable²
revels;

 A visor and a masque are whispering-rooms

 That were ne'er built for goodness. Fare ye well –

 And women like that part which, like the lamprey,³

 Hath ne'er a bone in't.

DUCHESS

 Fie, sir!⁴

FERDINAND

 Nay,

 I mean the tongue: variety of courtship.

 What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale⁵

250 Make a woman believe? Farewell, lusty widow.

 [*Exit* FERDINAND.]

DUCHESS

 Shall this move me? If all my royal kindred

 Lay in my way unto this marriage

 I'd make them my low foot-steps.⁶ And, even now,

Even in this hate, as men in some great battles,
By apprehending danger, have achieved
Almost impossible actions – I have heard soldiers
say so –

So I, through frights and threat'nings, will assay
This dangerous venture. Let old wives report
I winked⁷ and chose a husband.

[*Enter* CARIOLA.]

Cariola,

260 To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life: my fame.¹

CARIOLA

Both shall be safe;
For I'll conceal this secret from the world
As warily as those that trade in poison
Keep poison from their children.

DUCHESS

Thy protestation
Is ingenious and hearty;² I believe it.
Is Antonio come?

CARIOLA

He attends you.

DUCHESS

Good. Dear soul,
Leave me, but place thyself behind the arras,³

Where thou may'st overhear us. Wish me good speed,

For I am going into a wilderness

270 Where I shall find nor path nor friendly clew⁴
To be my guide.

[CARIOLA goes behind the arras. Enter ANTONIO.]

I sent for you. Sit down.

Take pen and ink, and write. Are you ready?

ANTONIO [*sitting at a desk*]

Yes.

DUCHESS

What did I say?

ANTONIO

That I should write somewhat.

DUCHESS

Oh, I remember:

After [these](#) triumphs,¹ and this large expense,

It's fit, like thrifty husbands,² we enquire

What's laid up for tomorrow.

ANTONIO

So please your beauteous excellence.

DUCHESS

Beauteous?

Indeed, I thank you. I look young for your sake.³

280 You have ta'en my cares upon you.

ANTONIO [*rising*]

I'll fetch your Grace the particulars
Of your revenue and expense.

DUCHESS

Oh, you are an upright⁴ treasurer, but you mistook;
For when I said I meant to make enquiry
What's laid up for tomorrow, I did mean
What's laid up yonder for me.

ANTONIO

Where?

DUCHESS

In heaven.

I am making my will, as 'tis fit princes should
In perfect memory; and I pray, sir, tell me:

Were not one better make it smiling thus,

290 Than in deep groans and terrible, ghastly looks,

As if the gifts we parted with procured⁵

That violent destruction?

ANTONIO

Oh, much better.

DUCHESS

If I had a husband now, this care were quit;

But I intend to make **you** overseer.¹

What good deed shall we first remember? Say.

ANTONIO

Begin with that first good deed began i'th' world,
After man's creation: the sacrament of marriage.
I'd have you first provide for a good husband;
Give him all.

DUCHESS

All?

ANTONIO

Yes, your excellent self.

DUCHESS

In a winding-sheet?

ANTONIO

300 In a [couple](#).²

DUCHESS

[St Winifred](#),³ that were a strange will!

ANTONIO:

'Twere strange if there were no will in you
To marry again.

DUCHESS

What do you think of marriage?

ANTONIO

I take't as those that deny purgatory:
It locally contains or heaven or hell;
There's no third place in't.

DUCHESS

How do you [affect](#)⁴ it?

ANTONIO

My banishment,¹ feeding my melancholy,
Would often reason thus –

DUCHESS

Pray, let's hear it.

ANTONIO

Say a man never marry, nor have children,
310 What takes that from him? Only the bare name
Of being a father, or the weak delight
To see the little wanton² ride a-cock-horse
Upon a painted stick, or hear him chatter
Like a taught starling.

DUCHESS

Fie, fie, what's all this?
One of your eyes is bloodshot. Use my ring to't;
[*She gives him a ring.*]
They say 'tis very sovereign.³ 'Twas my wedding-
ring,
And I did vow never to part with it
But to my second husband.

ANTONIO

You have parted with it now.

DUCHESS

Yes, to help your eyesight.

ANTONIO

You have made me stark blind.

DUCHESS

320

How?

ANTONIO

There is a saucy and ambitious devil
Is dancing in this circle.

DUCHESS

Remove him.

ANTONIO

How?

DUCHESS

There needs small conjuration when your finger
May do it thus –
[She puts the ring on his finger.]
Is it fit?

ANTONIO

What said you?
He kneels.

DUCHESS

Sir,
This goodly roof of yours is too low-built.
I cannot stand upright in't, nor discourse
Without I raise it higher. Raise yourself,
Or, if you please, my hand to help you: so.
[The DUCHESS raises him up.]

ANTONIO

Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,
330 That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms
But in fair, lightsome lodgings, and is girt
With the wild noise of prattling *visitants*,
Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
Conceive not I am so stupid but I aim¹
Whereto your favours tend, but he's a fool
That, being a-cold, would thrust his hands i'th' fire
To warm them.

DUCHESS

So, now the ground's broke,
You may discover what a wealthy mine
I make you lord of.

ANTONIO

Oh, my unworthiness!

DUCHESS

340 You were ill to sell yourself.
This dark'ning of your worth is not like that
Which tradesmen use i'th' city: their false lights
Are to rid bad wares off;¹ and I must tell you,
If you will know where breathes a complete man –
I speak it without flattery – turn your eyes
And progress through yourself.

ANTONIO

Were there nor heaven nor hell,

I should be honest. I have long served Virtue
And ne'er ta'en wages of her.

DUCHESS

Now she pays it.

350 The misery of us that are born great!
We are forced to woo because none dare woo us;
And, as a tyrant doubles with his words,
And fearfully equivocates, so we
Are forced to express our violent passions
In riddles and in dreams, and leave the path
Of simple virtue, which was never made
To seem the thing it is not. Go, go brag
You have left me heartless. Mine is in your bosom;
I hope 'twill multiply love there. You do tremble.

360 Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh
To fear more than to love me. Sir, be confident.
What is't distracts you? This is flesh and blood,
sir;
'Tis not the figure, cut in alabaster,
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake,
man!
I do here put off all vain ceremony,
And only do appear to you a young widow
That claims you for her husband, and, like a
widow,
I use but half a blush in't.

ANTONIO

Truth speak for me:
I will remain the constant sanctuary
Of your good name.

DUCHESS

370 I thank you, gentle love,
And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,
Being now my steward, here upon your lips
I sign your *Quietus est*.¹
[*She kisses him.*]
This you should have begged now.
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
As fearful to devour them too soon.

ANTONIO

But for your brothers?

DUCHESS

Do not think of them.
[*She embraces him.*]
All discord, without this circumference,²
Is only to be pitied, and not feared.
Yet, should they know it, time will easily
Scatter the tempest.

ANTONIO

380 These words should be mine,
And all the parts³ you have spoke, if some part of
it

Would not have savoured flattery.

DUCHESS

Kneel.

[*They kneel. CARIOLA comes from behind the arras.*]

ANTONIO

Ha?

DUCHESS

Be not amazed. This woman's of my counsel.
I have heard lawyers say a contract in a chamber,
Per verba de presenti,⁴ is absolute marriage.
Bless, heaven, this sacred Gordian,¹ which let
violence
Never untwine.

ANTONIO

And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,
Be still² in motion –

DUCHESS

390 Quick'ning, and make
The like soft music –

ANTONIO

That we may imitate the loving palms,³
Best emblem of a peaceful marriage,
That ne'er bore fruit divided.

DUCHESS

What can the Church force⁴ more?

ANTONIO

That Fortune may not know an accident,
Either of joy or sorrow, to divide
Our fixèd wishes.

DUCHESS

How can the Church build faster?⁵

[*They stand up.*]

We now are man and wife, and 'tis the Church
That must but echo this. [*To CARIOLA*] Maid, stand
apart.

[*Covering her eyes*] I now am blind.

ANTONIO

400 What's your conceit in this?

DUCHESS

I would have you lead your Fortune⁶ by the hand
Unto your marriage bed.

You speak in me this, for we now are one.

We'll only lie and talk together, and plot

T'appease my humorous¹ kindred; and, if you
please,

Like the old tale in *Alexander and Lodowick*,²

Lay a naked sword between us; keep us chaste.

Oh, let me shroud³ my blushes in your bosom,

Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets.

CARIOLA [*Aside*]

410 Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman

Reign most in her, I know not, but it shows
A fearful madness. I owe her much of
pity. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 1

[*Enter*] BOSOLA [*and*] CASTRUCCIO.

BOSOLA

You say you would fain be taken for an eminent
courtier?⁴

CASTRUCCIO

'Tis the very main of my ambition.

BOSOLA

Let me see: you have a reasonable good face for't
already, and your night-cap⁵ expresses your ears
sufficient largely. I

5 would have you learn to twirl the strings of your
band with a good grace, and in a set speech at th'end
of every sentence to hum three or four times, or blow
your nose, till it smart again, to recover your memory.
When you come to be a president¹ in criminal causes,
if you smile upon a prisoner,

10 hang him, but if you frown upon him and
threaten him, let him be sure to 'scape the gallows.

CASTRUCCIO

I would be a very merry president.

BOSOLA

Do not sup a' nights; 'twill beget you an admirable
wit.

CASTRUCCIO

Rather it would make me have a good stomach to quarrel, for they say your roaring-boys² eat meat seldom, and that makes them so valiant. But how shall I know whether the people take me for an eminent fellow?

BOSOLA

I will teach a trick to know it: give out you lie a-dying, and if you hear the common people curse you, be sure you are taken

20 for one of the prime night-caps.

[*Enter* OLD LADY.]

You come from painting³ now?

OLD LADY

From what?

BOSOLA

Why, from your scurvy face-physic. To behold thee not painted inclines somewhat near a miracle. These in thy face, here, were deep ruts and foul sloughs⁴ the last progress.⁵ There was a lady in France that, having had the smallpox, flayed the skin off her face to make it more level; and whereas before she looked like a nutmeg-grater, after she resembled an abortive hedgehog.

OLD LADY

30 Do you call this painting?

BOSOLA

No, no, but careening¹ of an old, morphewed² lady, to make her disembogue³ again. There's rough-cast⁴

phrase to your plastic.⁵

OLD LADY

It seems you are well acquainted with my closet.⁶

BOSOLA

One would suspect it for a shop of witchcraft, to find in it the fat of serpents, spawn of snakes, Jews' spittle, and their young **children's ordure**, and all these for the face. I would sooner eat a dead pigeon, taken from the soles of the feet of one sick of the plague,⁷ than kiss one of you fastings.⁸ Here are two of

40 you whose sin of your youth is the very patrimony of the physician – makes him renew his footcloth⁹ with the spring, and change his **high-priced** courtesan with the fall of the leaf.

I do wonder you do not loathe yourselves.

Observe my meditation now:

What thing is in this outward form of man

To be beloved? We account it ominous

If nature do produce a colt or lamb,

A fawn or goat, in any limb resembling

A man, and fly from't as a prodigy.

50 Man stands amazed to see his deformity

In any other creature but himself;

But in our own flesh, though we bear diseases

Which have their true names only ta'en from
beasts,

As the most ulcerous wolf¹ and swinish measles;²

Though we are eaten up of lice and worms,

And though continually we bear about us

A rotten and dead body, we delight

To hide it in rich tissue.³ All our fear –

Nay, all our terror – is lest our physician

60 Should put us in the ground to be made sweet.

[*To CASTRUCCIO*] Your wife's gone to Rome. You two
couple, and get you

To the wells at Lucca,⁴ to recover your aches.

[*Exeunt CASTRUCCIO and OLD LADY.*]

I have other work on foot. I observe our Duchess

Is sick a'days. She pukes, her stomach seethes,

The fins⁵ of her eyelids look most teeming blue,

She wanes i'th' cheek and waxes fat i'th' flank;

And, contrary to our Italian fashion,

Wears a loose-bodied⁶ gown. There's somewhat
in't.

I have a trick may chance discover it,

70 A pretty one. I have bought some apricots,

The first our spring yields.

[*Enter DELIO and ANTONIO who talk apart.*]

DELIO

And so long since married?

You amaze me.

ANTONIO

Let me seal your lips forever;

For did I think that anything but th'air

Could carry these words from you, I should wish
You had no breath at all.

[*To BOSOLA*] Now, sir, in your contemplation?

You are studying to become a great, wise fellow.

BOSOLA

Oh sir, the opinion of wisdom is a foul tetter¹ that
runs all over a man's body. If simplicity direct us to
have no evil, it

80 directs us to a happy being; for the subtlest folly
proceeds from the subtlest wisdom. Let me be simply
honest.

ANTONIO

I do understand your inside.

BOSOLA

Do you so?

ANTONIO

Because you would not seem to appear to th' world
Puffed up with your preferment, you continue
This out-of-fashion melancholy. Leave it, leave it.

BOSOLA

Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any
compliment whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you?
I look no higher than I can reach. They are the gods
that must ride on winged

90 horses. A lawyer's mule of a slow pace will both
suit my disposition and business; for, mark me, when a
man's mind rides faster than his horse can gallop, they
quickly both tire.

ANTONIO

You would look up to heaven, but I think
The devil, that rules i'th' air, stands in your light.

BOSOLA

Oh, sir, you are lord of the ascendant,² chief man
with the Duchess. A duke was your *cousin-german*,
removed.³ Say you were lineally descended from King
Pippin,⁴ or he himself, what of this? Search the heads
of the greatest rivers in the world, you shall find them
but bubbles of water. Some would

100 think the souls of princes were brought forth by
some more weighty cause than those of meaner
persons. They are deceived. There's the same hand to
them; the like passions sway them; the same reason
that makes a vicar go to law for a tithe-pig and undo
his neighbours makes them spoil a whole province,
and batter down goodly cities with the cannon.

[Enter DUCHESS and ATTENDANTS.]

DUCHESS

Your arm, Antonio.

[She leans upon him.]

Do I not grow fat?

I am exceeding short-winded. Bosola,

I would have you, sir, provide for me a litter –

Such a one as the Duchess of Florence rode in.

BOSOLA

110 The Duchess used one when she was great with
child.

DUCHESS

I think she did. [*To ATTENDANT*] Come hither;
mend my ruff.

Here. When? Thou art such a tedious lady, and
Thy breath smells of **lemon** pills.¹ Would thou
hadst done!

Shall I **swoon** under thy fingers? I am
So troubled with the mother.²

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

I fear too much.

DUCHESS [*To ANTONIO*]

I have heard you say that the French **courtiers**
Wear their hats on 'fore the King.

ANTONIO

I have seen it.

DUCHESS

In the presence?

ANTONIO

Yes.

DUCHESS

Why should not we bring up that fashion?
120 'Tis ceremony more than duty that consists
In the removing of a piece of felt.
Be you the example to the rest o'th' court:
Put on your hat first.

ANTONIO

You must pardon me.

I have seen, in colder countries than in France,
Nobles stand bare to th'prince; and the distinction
Methought showed reverently.

BOSOLA

I have a present for your Grace.

DUCHESS

For me, sir?

BOSOLA

Apricots, madam.

DUCHESS

Oh, sir, where are they?

I have heard of none to-year.

[BOSOLA *gives her the fruit.*]

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

Good, her colour rises.

DUCHESS [*eating greedily*]

130 Indeed, I thank you. They are wondrous fair
ones.

What an unskilful fellow is our gardener!

We shall have none this month.

BOSOLA

Will not your Grace pare them?

DUCHESS

No – they taste of musk, methinks; indeed, they
do.

BOSOLA

I know not; yet I wish your Grace had pared 'em.

DUCHESS

Why?

BOSOLA

I forgot to tell you: the knave gardener,
Only to raise his profit by them the sooner,
Did ripen them in horse-dung.

DUCHESS

Oh, you jest!

[*To ANTONIO*] You shall judge. Pray, taste one.

ANTONIO [*refusing*]

140 Indeed, madam,

I do not love the fruit.

DUCHESS

Sir, you are loath
To rob us of our dainties.¹ 'Tis a delicate fruit.
They say they are restorative.

BOSOLA

'Tis a pretty art,
This grafting.²

DUCHESS

'Tis so: a bett'ring of nature.

BOSOLA

To make a pippin grow upon a crab,

A damson on a blackthorn. [*Aside*] How greedily she eats them!

A whirlwind strike off these bawd-farthingales,³
For, but for that and the loose-bodied gown,
I should have discovered apparently⁴

150 The young springal⁵ cutting a caper⁶ in her belly.

DUCHESS

I thank you, Bosola. They were right good ones –
If they do not make me sick.

[*The DUCHESS appears unwell.*]

ANTONIO

How now, madam?

DUCHESS

This green fruit and my stomach are not friends.
How they swell me!

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

Nay, you are too much swelled already.

DUCHESS

Oh, I am in an extreme cold sweat!

BOSOLA

I am very sorry. [*Exit.*]

DUCHESS [*To SERVANTS*]

Lights to my chamber! [*Aside*] O good Antonio,
I fear I am undone. *Exeunt* DUCHESS [*and*
ATTENDANTS].

DELIO

Lights there, lights!

ANTONIO

O my most trusty Delio, we are lost!

I fear she's fall'n in labour, and there's left

No time for her remove.

DELIO

160 Have you prepared

Those ladies to attend her, and procured

That politic, safe conveyance for the midwife

Your Duchess plotted?

ANTONIO

I have.

DELIO

Make use, then, of this forced occasion.

Give out that Bosola hath poisoned her

With these apricots – that will give some colour

For her keeping close.

ANTONIO

Fie, fie! The physicians

Will then flock to her.

DELIO

For that you may pretend

She'll use some prepared antidote of her own,

170 Lest the physicians should re-poison her.

ANTONIO

I am lost in amazement. I know not what to think on't.

Exeunt.

ACT 2

Scene 2

[*Enter*] BOSOLA [*and*] OLD LADY.

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

So, so, there's no question but her **tetchiness** and most **vulturous** eating of the apricots are apparent signs of breeding.

[*To* OLD LADY] Now –

OLD LADY

I am in haste, sir.¹

BOSOLA

There was a young waiting-woman had a monstrous desire to see the glass-house –²

OLD LADY

Nay, pray let me go.

BOSOLA

– And it was only to know what strange instrument it was should swell up a glass to the fashion of a woman's belly.

OLD LADY

10 I will hear no more of the glass-house. You are still abusing women.

BOSOLA

20 Who, I? No, only by the way, now and then, mention your frailties. The orange tree bears ripe and green fruit, and blossoms all together; and some of you give entertainment³ for pure love, but more, for more precious reward. The lusty spring smells well, but drooping autumn tastes well. If we have the same golden showers that rained in the time of Jupiter the Thunderer, you have the same Danæes still, to hold up their laps to receive them.⁴ Didst thou never study the mathematics?

OLD LADY

What's that, sir?

BOSOLA

Why, to know the trick how to make a many lines meet in one centre. Go, go give your foster-daughters good counsel. Tell them that the devil takes delight to hang at a woman's girdle, like a false, rusty watch, that she cannot discern how the time passes. [*Exit* OLD LADY.]

[*Enter* ANTONIO, DELIO, RODERIGO *and* GRISOLAN.]

ANTONIO

Shut up the court gates!

RODERIGO

Why, sir? What's the danger?

ANTONIO

Shut up the posterns presently,¹ and call
All the officers o'th' court.

GRISOLAN

I shall, instantly. [*Exit.*]

ANTONIO

Who keeps the key o'th' park-gate?

RODERIGO

30 Forobosco.

ANTONIO

Let him bring't presently.

[*Exeunt* ANTONIO *and* RODERIGO.]

[*Enter* OFFICERS.]

[FIRST] OFFICER

Oh, gentlemen o'th' court, the foulest treason!

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

If that these apricots should be poisoned now,
Without my knowledge!

[FIRST] OFFICER

There was taken even now a Switzer² in the
Duchess's bedchamber.

SECOND OFFICER

A Switzer?

[FIRST] OFFICER

With a pistol¹ in his great codpiece.

BOSOLA

Ha, ha, ha!

[FIRST] OFFICER

40 The codpiece was the case for't.

SECOND OFFICER

There was a cunning traitor! Who would have searched his codpiece?

[FIRST] OFFICER

True, if he had kept out of the ladies' chambers – and all the moulds of his buttons were leaden bullets.

SECOND OFFICER

Oh wicked cannibal!² A fire-lock³ in's codpiece?

[FIRST] OFFICER

'Twas a French plot,⁴ upon my life!

SECOND OFFICER

To see what the devil can do!

[*Enter* ANTONIO, RODERIGO *and* GRISOLAN.]

ANTONIO

All the **officers** here?

OFFICERS

We are.

ANTONIO

Gentlemen,

We have lost much plate, you know; and but this evening

50 Jewels to the value of four thousand ducats

Are missing in the Duchess's cabinet.⁵

Are the gates shut?

OFFICERS

Yes.

ANTONIO

'Tis the Duchess's pleasure
Each officer be locked into his chamber
Till the sun-rising, and to send the keys
Of all their chests, and of their outward doors,
Into her bedchamber. She is very sick.

RODERIGO

At her pleasure.

ANTONIO

She entreats you take't not ill. The innocent
Shall be the more approved by it.

BOSOLA

60 Gentleman o'th' wood-yard,¹ where's your
Switzer now?

[FIRST] OFFICER

By this hand, 'twas credibly reported by one o'th'
black-guard.²

[Exeunt all but ANTONIO and DELIO.]

DELIO

How fares it with the Duchess?

ANTONIO

She's exposed
Unto the worst of torture, pain and fear.

DELIO

Speak to her all happy comfort.

ANTONIO

How I do play the fool with mine own danger!

You are this night, dear friend, to post to Rome;
My life lies in your service.

DELIO

Do not doubt me.

ANTONIO

Oh, 'tis far from me, and yet fear presents me
Somewhat that looks like danger.

DELIO

70 Believe it,
'Tis but the shadow of your fear, no more.
How superstitiously we mind¹ our evils!
The throwing-down salt, or crossing of a hare,
Bleeding at nose, the stumbling of a horse,
Or singing of a cricket,² are of power
To daunt whole man³ in us. Sir, fare you well.
I wish you all the joys of a blessed father,
And, for my faith, lay this unto your breast:
Old friends, like old swords, still are trusted best.
[Exit DELIO.]

[Enter CARIOLA, holding an infant.]

CARIOLA

80 Sir, you are the happy father of a son.
Your wife commends him to you.

ANTONIO

Blessed comfort!

For heaven's sake, tend her well. I'll presently
Go set a figure for's nativity.⁴ *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 3

[*Enter*] BOSOLA [*with a dark lantern*].⁵

BOSOLA

Sure, I did hear a woman shriek. List! Ha?
And the sound came, if I received it right,
From the Duchess's lodgings. There's some
stratagem

In the confining all our courtiers
To their several wards. I must have part of it;
My intelligence will freeze else. List again!
It may be 'twas the melancholy bird,
Best friend of silence and of solitariness,
The owl, that screamed so –

[*Enter ANTONIO, with a light and his sword drawn.*]

Ha? Antonio?

ANTONIO

10 I heard some noise. **Who's** there? What art thou?
Speak.

BOSOLA

Antonio! Put not your face nor body
To such a forced expression of fear.
I am Bosola, your friend.

ANTONIO

Bosola?

[*Aside*] This mole does undermine me. [*Aloud*] Heard
you not

A noise even now?

BOSOLA

From whence?

ANTONIO

From the Duchess's
lodging?

BOSOLA

Not I. Did you?

ANTONIO

I did, or else I dreamed.

BOSOLA

Let's walk towards it.

ANTONIO

No. It may be 'twas
But the rising of the wind.
[*He sheathes his sword.*]

BOSOLA

Very likely.
Methinks 'tis very cold, and yet you sweat.
You look wildly.

ANTONIO

I have been setting a figure¹
20 For the Duchess's jewels.²

BOSOLA

Ah, and how falls your question?
Do you find it radical?³

ANTONIO

What's that to you?
'Tis rather to be questioned what design,
When all men were commanded to their lodgings,
Makes you a night-walker.⁴

BOSOLA

In sooth, I'll tell you:
Now all the court's asleep, I thought the devil
Had least to do here. I came to say my prayers;
And if it do offend you I do so,
You are a fine courtier.

ANTONIO [*Aside*]

This fellow will undo me.
30 [*Aloud*] You gave the Duchess apricots today.
Pray heaven they were not poisoned!

BOSOLA

Poisoned? A Spanish fig⁵
For the imputation!

ANTONIO

Traitors are ever confident

Till they are discovered. There were jewels stol'n
too.

In my conceit, none are to be suspected
More than yourself.

BOSOLA

You are a false steward.

ANTONIO

Saucy slave, I'll pull thee up by the roots!

BOSOLA

Maybe the ruin will crush you to pieces.

ANTONIO

You are an impudent snake, indeed, sir.

40 Are you scarce warm, and do you show your
sting?

BOSOLA

...¹

ANTONIO

You libel well, sir.

BOSOLA

No, sir. Copy it out,
And I will set my hand to't.

ANTONIO

My nose bleeds.

[He takes out a handkerchief, and drops a paper.]

One that were superstitious would count

This ominous, when it merely comes by chance.

Two letters² that are wrought here for my name
Are drowned in blood. Mere accident.

[*To BOSOLA*] For you, sir, I'll take order.

I'th' morn you shall be safe. [*Aside*] 'Tis that must
colour

50 Her lying-in. [*Aloud*] Sir, this door you pass not:

I do not hold it fit that you come near

The Duchess's lodgings till you have **quit** yourself.

[*Aside*] The great are like the base – nay, they are
the same –

When they seek shameful ways to avoid
shame. *Exit.*

BOSOLA

Antonio hereabout did drop a paper.

Some of your help, false friend. [*Holding up the
lantern*]

Oh, here it is.

[*He takes up the paper.*]

What's here? A child's nativity calculated!

[*Reads*] 'The Duchess was delivered of a son,
'tween the hours twelve and one, in the night, Anno
Domini 1504' –

60 that's this year – 'decimo nono Decembris' –
that's this night – 'taken according to the meridian of
Malfi' – that's our Duchess. Happy discovery! – 'The
lord of the first house, being combust¹ in the
ascendant, signifies short life; and Mars being in a
human sign,² joined to the tail of the Dragon,³ in the

eighth house,⁴ doth threaten a violent death. *Caetera non scrutantur.*⁵

Why, now 'tis most apparent. This precise⁶ fellow
Is the Duchess's bawd! I have it to my wish.

This is a parcel of intelligency

70 Our courtiers were *cased-up* for. It needs must
follow

That I must be committed on pretence

Of poisoning her, which I'll endure and laugh at.

If one could find the father now – but that

Time will discover. Old Castruccio

I'll th' morning posts to Rome. By him I'll send

A letter that shall make her brothers' galls

O'erflow their livers. This was a thrifty⁷ way.

Though Lust do masque in ne'er so strange
disguise,

She's oft found witty, but is never
wise. *[Exit.]*

ACT 2

Scene 4

[Enter] CARDINAL *and* JULIA.

CARDINAL

Sit; thou art my best of wishes. Prithee tell me,
What trick didst thou invent to come to Rome
Without thy husband?

JULIA

Why, my lord, I told him
I came to visit an old anchorite¹
Here, for devotion.

CARDINAL

Thou art a witty, false one –
I mean, to him.

JULIA

You have prevailed with me
Beyond my strongest thoughts. I would not now
Find you inconstant.

CARDINAL

Do not put thyself
To such a voluntary torture, which proceeds
Out of your own guilt.

JULIA

How, my lord?

CARDINAL

10

You fear

My constancy, because you have approved
Those giddy and wild *turnings* in yourself.

JULIA

Did you e'er find them?

CARDINAL

Sooth, generally, for women.
A man might strive to make glass malleable
Ere he should make them fixed.

JULIA

So, my lord.

CARDINAL

We had need go borrow that fantastic glass¹
Invented by Galileo the Florentine,
To view another spacious world i'th' moon,
And look to find a constant woman there.

JULIA [*weeping*]

This is very well, my lord.

CARDINAL

20

Why do you weep?

Are tears your justification? The self-same tears
Will fall into your husband's bosom, lady,
With a loud protestation that you love him
Above the world. Come, I'll love you wisely –
That's jealously – since I am very certain

You cannot me make cuckold.

JULIA

I'll go home
To my husband.

CARDINAL

You may thank me, lady.

I have taken you off your melancholy perch,

Bore you upon my fist, and showed you game,

30 And let you fly at it.² I pray **thee**, kiss me.

When thou wast with thy husband, thou wast
watched

Like a tame elephant³ – still you are to thank me.

Thou hadst only kisses from him, and high
feeding,

But what delight was that? 'Twas just like one

That hath a little fing'ring on the lute,

Yet cannot tune it – still you are to thank me.

JULIA

You told me of a piteous wound i'th' heart

And a sick **liver**, when you wooed me first,

And spake like one in physic.¹

[*Knocking*]

CARDINAL

Who's that?

40 Rest firm. For my affection to thee,

Lightning **moves** slow to't.

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

SERVANT

Madam, a gentleman

That's come post from Malfi desires to see you.

CARDINAL

Let him enter. I'll withdraw. *Exit.*

SERVANT

He says

Your husband, old Castruccio, is come to Rome,

Most pitifully tired with riding post. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter* DELIO.]

JULIA

Signor Delio! [*Aside*] 'Tis one of my old suitors.

DELIO

I was bold to come and see you.

JULIA

Sir, *you are* welcome.

DELIO

Do you lie here?

JULIA

Sure, your own experience

Will satisfy you, no. Our Roman prelates

Do not keep lodging for ladies.

DELIO

50

Very well.

I have brought you no commendations from your husband,

For I know none by him.

JULIA

I hear he's come to Rome?

DELIO

I never knew man and beast, of a horse and a knight,

So weary of each other. If he had had a good back,
He would have undertook to have borne his horse,
His breech was so pitifully sore.

JULIA

Your laughter
Is my pity.

DELIO

Lady, I know not whether
You want money, but I have brought you some.

JULIA

From my husband?

DELIO

No, from mine own allowance.

JULIA

60 I must hear the condition, ere I be bound to take it.

DELIO

Look on't; 'tis gold. Hath it not a fine colour?

JULIA

I have a bird more beautiful.

DELIO

Try the sound on't.

JULIA

A lute-string far exceeds it.

It hath no smell, like cassia or civet;¹

Nor is it physical,² though some fond doctors

Persuade us *seeth't* in cullisses.¹ I'll tell you,

This is a creature bred by –

[*Enter* SERVANT.]

SERVANT

Your husband's come,

Hath delivered a letter to the Duke of Calabria

That, to my thinking, hath put him out of his
wits. [*Exit.*]

JULIA

70 Sir, you hear?

Pray, let me know your business and your suit

As briefly as can be.

DELIO

With good speed. I would wish you –

At such time as you are non-resident

With your husband – my mistress.

JULIA

Sir, I'll go ask my husband if I shall,
And straight return your answer. *Exit.*

DELIO

Very fine.

Is this her wit or honesty that speaks thus?

I heard one say the Duke was highly moved

With a letter sent from Malfi. I do fear

80 Antonio is betrayed. How fearfully

Shows his ambition now: unfortunate Fortune!

They pass through whirlpools, and deep woes do
shun,

Who the event weigh, ere the action's
done. *Exit.*

ACT 2

Scene 5

[*Enter*] CARDINAL *and* FERDINAND *with a letter.*

FERDINAND

I have this night digged up a mandrake.¹

CARDINAL

Say you?

FERDINAND

And I am grown mad with't.

CARDINAL

What's the **prodigy**?²

FERDINAND

Read there [*handing him the letter*]. A sister
damned! She's loose i'th' hilts;³

Grown a notorious strumpet!

CARDINAL

Speak lower.

FERDINAND

Lower?

Rogues do not whisper't now but seek to publish't,

As servants do the bounty of their lords:

Aloud, and with a covetous, searching eye

To mark who note them. Oh, confusion seize her!

She hath had most cunning bawds to serve her
turn,

10 And more secure conveyances for lust,

Than towns of garrison for service.

CARDINAL

Is't possible?

Can this be certain?

FERDINAND

Rhubarb!¹ Oh, for rhubarb

To purge this choler! Here's the cursèd day²

To prompt my memory, and here it shall stick,

Till of her bleeding heart I make a sponge

To wipe it out.

CARDINAL

Why do you make yourself

So wild a tempest?

FERDINAND

Would I could be one,
That I might toss her palace 'bout her ears,
Root up her goodly forests, blast her meads,
20 And lay her general territory as waste
As she hath done her honours.

CARDINAL

Shall our blood,
The royal blood of Aragon and Castile,
Be thus attainted?³

FERDINAND

Apply desperate physic!
We must not now use balsamum⁴ but fire,
The smarting cupping-glass, for that's the mean
To purge infected blood, such blood as hers.
[*Weeping*] There is a kind of pity in mine eye.
I'll give it to my handkercher – [*wiping his eyes*]
and now 'tis here.
I'll bequeath this to her bastard!

CARDINAL

What to do?

FERDINAND

30 Why, to make soft lint for his *mother's* wounds
When I have hewed her to pieces!

CARDINAL

Curs'd creature!
Unequal Nature, to place women's hearts
So far upon the left¹ side!

FERDINAND

Foolish men,
That e'er will trust their honour in a bark²
Made of so slight, weak bulrush as is woman,
Apt every minute to sink it.

CARDINAL

Thus
Ignorance, when it hath purchased honour,
It cannot wield it.

FERDINAND

Methinks I see her laughing –
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat, quickly,
40 Or my imagination will carry me
To see her in the shameful act of sin.

CARDINAL

With whom?

FERDINAND

Happily with some strong-thighed bargeman,
Or **one** o'th' wood-yard that can quoit the sledge³
Or toss the bar; or else some lovely squire
That carries coals⁴ up to her privy lodgings.⁵

CARDINAL

You fly beyond your reason.

FERDINAND

Go to, mistress!

'Tis not your whore's milk that shall quench my
wild-fire,

But your whore's blood!

CARDINAL

50 How idly shows this rage, which carries you,
As men conveyed by witches, through the air
On violent whirlwinds. This intemperate noise
Fitly resembles deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud, thinking all other men
To have their imperfection.

FERDINAND

Have not you

My palsy?¹

CARDINAL

Yes, I can be angry

Without this rupture. There is not in nature

A thing that makes man so deformed, so beastly,

As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself.

60 You have divers men who never yet expressed
Their strong desire of rest, but by unrest,
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself
In tune.

FERDINAND

So I will only study to seem
The thing I am not. I could kill her now,
In you or in myself, for I do think
It is some sin in us heaven doth revenge
By her.

CARDINAL

Are you stark mad?

FERDINAND

I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coal-pit, with the ventage stopped,
That their curs'd smoke might not ascend to
heaven;
70 Or dip the sheets they lie in in pitch or sulphur,
Wrap them in't, and then light them like a match;
Or else to boil their bastard to a cullis,²
And give't his lecherous father to renew
The sin of his back.¹

CARDINAL

I'll leave you.

FERDINAND

Nay, I have done.
I am confident, had I been damned in hell
And should have heard of this, it would have put
me
Into a cold sweat. In, in, I'll go sleep.
Till I know who leaps² my sister, I'll not stir.

That known, I'll find scorpions to string my
whips,³

80 And fix her in a general eclipse.⁴ *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 1

[*Enter*] ANTONIO *and* DELIO.

ANTONIO

Our noble friend, my most beloved Delio,
Oh, you have been a stranger long at court.
Came you along with the Lord Ferdinand?

DELIO

I did, sir; and how fares your noble Duchess?

ANTONIO

Right fortunately well. She's an excellent
Feeder of pedigrees. Since you last saw her,
She hath had two children more – a son and
daughter.

DELIO

Methinks 'twas yesterday! Let me but wink,
And not behold your face – which to mine eye
10 Is somewhat leaner – verily, I should dream
It were within this half-hour.

ANTONIO

You have not been in law, friend Delio,
Nor in prison, nor a suitor at the court,

Nor begged the reversion of some great man's
place,

Nor troubled with an old wife, which doth make
Your time so **insensibly** hasten.

DELIO

Pray, sir, tell me:

Hath not this news arrived yet to the ear
Of the Lord Cardinal?

ANTONIO

I fear it hath.

The Lord Ferdinand, that's newly come to court,
Doth bear himself right dangerously.

DELIO

20

Pray, why?

ANTONIO

He is so quiet that he seems to sleep
The tempest out, as dormice do in winter.
Those houses that are haunted are most still
Till the devil **be** up.

DELIO

What say the common people?

ANTONIO

The common rabble do directly say
She is a strumpet.

DELIO

And your graver heads,

Which would be politic, what censure they?

ANTONIO

They do observe I grow to infinite purchase¹
The left-hand² way, and all suppose the Duchess
30 Would amend it if she could. For, say they,
Great princes, though they grudge their officers
Should have such large and unconfined means
To get wealth under them, will not complain,
Lest thereby they should make them odious
Unto the people; for other obligation
Of love or marriage between her and me,
They never dream of.

[*Enter* FERDINAND, DUCHESS *and* BOSOLA.]

DELIO

The Lord Ferdinand
Is going to bed.

[*DELIO and ANTONIO withdraw.*]

FERDINAND

I'll instantly to bed,
For I am weary. I am to *bespeak*
A husband for you.

DUCHESS

40 For me, sir? Pray, who is't?

FERDINAND

The great Count Malateste.

DUCHESS

Fie upon him!

A count? He's a mere stick of sugar-candy;

You may look quite through him. When I choose

A husband, I will marry for your honour.

FERDINAND

You shall do well in't. [*Seeing* ANTONIO] How is't,
worthy Antonio?

DUCHESS [*interrupts*]

But sir, I am to have private conference with you

About a scandalous report is spread

Touching mine honour.

FERDINAND

Let me be ever deaf to't:

One of Pasquil's paper bullets.¹ Court-calumny –

50 A pestilent air which princes' palaces

Are seldom purged of. Yet, say that it were true:

I pour it in your bosom, my fixed love

Would strongly excuse, extenuate, nay deny

Faults, **were** they apparent in you. Go, be safe

In your own innocency.

DUCHESS

Oh bless'd comfort!

This deadly air is purged.

Exeunt [DUCHESS, ANTONIO *and* DELIO.]

FERDINAND

Her guilt treads on
Hot, burning **coulters**.¹ Now, Bosola,
How thrives our intelligence?

BOSOLA

Sir, uncertainly.
'Tis rumoured she hath had three bastards, but
By whom we may go read i'th' stars.

FERDINAND

60
Why, some
Hold opinion all things are written there.

BOSOLA

Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.
I do suspect there hath been some sorcery
Used on the Duchess.

FERDINAND

Sorcery? To what purpose?

BOSOLA

To make her dote on some desertless fellow
She shames to acknowledge.

FERDINAND

Can your faith give way
To think there's power in potions or in charms
To make us love, whether we will or no?

BOSOLA

Most certainly.

FERDINAND

70 Away! These are mere gulleries,¹ horrid things
Invented by some cheating mountebanks
To abuse us. Do you think that herbs or charms
Can force the will? Some trials have been made
In this foolish practice, but the ingredients
Were lenitive² poisons, such as are of force
To make the patient mad; and straight the witch
Swears, by equivocation, they are in love.
The witchcraft lies in her rank blood. This night
I will force confession from her. You told me
80 You had got, within these two days, a false key
Into her bedchamber?

BOSOLA

I have.

FERDINAND

As I would wish.

BOSOLA

What do you intend to do?

FERDINAND

Can you guess?

BOSOLA

No.

FERDINAND

Do not ask then.

He that can compass me, and know my drifts,
May say he hath put a girdle 'bout the world,
And sounded all her quick-sands.

BOSOLA

I do not
Think so.

FERDINAND

What do you think then, pray?

BOSOLA

That you are
Your own chronicle too much, and grossly
Flatter yourself.

FERDINAND

90 Give me thy hand; I thank thee.
I never gave pension but to flatterers
Till I entertained thee. Farewell;
That friend a great man's ruin strongly checks,
Who rails into his belief all his defects. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 2

[*Enter*] DUCHESS, ANTONIO [*and*] CARIOLA.

DUCHESS [*To* CARIOLA]

Bring me the casket hither, and the glass.

[*To ANTONIO*] You get no lodging here tonight, my lord.

ANTONIO

Indeed, I must persuade one.

DUCHESS

Very good;

I hope in time 'twill grow into a custom

That noblemen shall come with cap and knee

To purchase a night's lodging of their wives.

ANTONIO

I must lie here.

DUCHESS

Must? You are a lord of misrule.¹

ANTONIO

Indeed, my rule is only in the night.

DUCHESS

To what use will you put me?

ANTONIO

We'll sleep together.

DUCHESS

10 Alas, what pleasure can two lovers find in sleep?

CARIOLA

My lord, I lie with her often, and I know

She'll much disquiet you –

ANTONIO

See, you are complained of.

CARIOLA

– for she's the sprawling'st bedfellow.

ANTONIO

I shall like her the better for that.

CARIOLA

Sir, shall I ask you a question?

ANTONIO

I pray thee, Cariola.

CARIOLA

Wherefore still when you lie with my lady

Do you rise so early?

ANTONIO

Labouring men

Count the clock oft'nest, Cariola;

Are glad when their task's ended.

DUCHESS

20

I'll stop your mouth.

[She kisses him.]

ANTONIO

Nay, that's but one. Venus had two soft doves

To draw her chariot – I must have another.

[He kisses her.]

When wilt thou marry, Cariola?

CARIOLA

Never, my lord.

ANTONIO

Oh, fie upon this single life! Forgo it.

We read how Daphne, for her peevish flight,

Became a fruitless bay-tree; Syrinx turned

To the pale, empty reed; Anaxarete¹

Was frozen into marble; whereas those

Which married, or proved kind unto their friends,²

30 Were, by a gracious influence, trans-shaped

Into the olive, pomegranate, mulberry;

Became flowers, precious stones or eminent stars.

CARIOLA

This is a vain poetry; but, I pray you, tell me:

If there were proposed me wisdom, riches and
beauty,

In three several young men, which should I
choose?

ANTONIO

'Tis a hard question. This was Paris's case

And he was blind in't, and there was great cause:

For how was't possible he could judge right,

Having three amorous goddesses in view,

40 And they stark naked? 'Twas a motion³

Were able to benight the apprehension

Of the severest counsellor of Europe.

Now I look on both your faces, so well formed,

It puts me in mind of a question I would ask.

CARIOLA

What is't?

ANTONIO

I do wonder why hard-favoured ladies,
For the most part, keep worse-favoured waiting-
women
To attend them, and cannot endure fair ones?

DUCHESS

Oh, that's soon answered.
Did you ever in your life know an ill painter
50 Desire to have his dwelling next door to the shop
Of an excellent picture-maker? 'Twould disgrace
His face-making,⁴ and undo him. I prithee,
When were we so merry? My hair tangles.

ANTONIO [*Aside*]

Pray thee, Cariola, let's steal forth the room
And let her talk to herself. I have divers times
Served her the like, when she hath chafed
extremely.

I love to see her angry. Softly, Cariola.

Exeunt [ANTONIO *and* CARIOLA].

DUCHESS

Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change?
When I wax grey, I shall have all the court
60 Powder their hair with *orris*¹ to be like me.

[*Enter FERDINAND behind.*]

You have cause to love me: I entered you into my heart

Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.

We shall one day have my brothers take you napping.

Methinks his presence, being now in court,

Should make you keep your own bed; but you'll say

Love mixed with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you,

You shall get no more children till my brothers

Consent to be your gossips.² Have you lost your tongue?

[*Sees FERDINAND holding a poniard.*]

'Tis welcome;

70 For know, whether I am doomed to live or die,

I can do both like a prince.

FERDINAND *gives her a poniard.*

FERDINAND

Die then, quickly.

Virtue, where art thou hid? What hideous thing

Is it that doth eclipse thee?

DUCHESS

Pray sir, hear me –

FERDINAND

Or is it true, thou art but a bare name,

And no essential thing?

DUCHESS

Sir –

FERDINAND

Do not speak.

DUCHESS

No, sir:

I will plant my soul in mine ears to hear you.

FERDINAND

O most imperfect light of human reason,

That mak'st **us** so unhappy to foresee

80 What we can least prevent! Pursue thy wishes

And glory in them. There's in shame no comfort,

But to be past all bounds and sense of shame.

DUCHESS

I pray, sir, hear me! I am married.

FERDINAND

So.

DUCHESS

Happily,¹ not to your liking; but for that,

Alas, your shears do come untimely now

To clip the bird's wings that's already flown.

Will you see my husband?

FERDINAND

Yes, if I could change

Eyes with a basilisk.²

DUCHESS

Sure, you came hither

By his confederacy?

FERDINAND

The howling of a wolf

90 Is music to³ thee, screech-owl. Prithee, peace!

[More loudly] Whate'er thou art that hast enjoyed
my sister –

For I am sure thou hear'st me – for thine own sake

Let me not know thee. I came hither prepared

To work thy discovery, yet am now persuaded

It would beget such violent effects

As would damn us both. I would not for ten
millions

I had beheld thee; therefore, use all means

I never may have knowledge of thy name.

Enjoy thy lust still, and a wretched life,

100 On that condition. *[To DUCHESS]* And for thee,
vile woman,

If thou do wish thy lecher may grow old

In thy embracements, I would have thee build

Such a room for him as our anchorites

To holier use inhabit. Let not the sun

Shine on him till he's dead. Let dogs and monkeys

Only converse with him, and such dumb things

To whom nature denies use to sound his name.
Do not keep a paraquito,¹ lest she learn it.
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue
Lest it bewray him.

DUCHESS

110 Why might not I marry?
I have not gone about in this to create
Any new world or custom.

FERDINAND

Thou art undone;
And thou hast ta'en that massy sheet of lead
That hid thy husband's bones and folded it
About my heart.

DUCHESS

Mine bleeds for't.

FERDINAND

Thine? Thy heart?
What should I name't, unless a hollow bullet²
Filled with unquenchable wild-fire?

DUCHESS

You are in this
Too strict; and were you not my princely brother,
I would say too wilful. My reputation
Is safe.

FERDINAND

120

Dost thou know what reputation is?

I'll tell thee – to small purpose, since th' instruction
Comes now too late.

Upon a time, Reputation, Love and Death

Would travel o'er the world; and it was concluded

That they should part and take three several ways.

Death told them they should find him in great
battles,

Or cities plagued with plagues. Love gives them
counsel

To enquire for him 'mongst unambitious
shepherds,

Where dowries were not talked of, and sometimes

130 'Mongst quiet kindred that had nothing left

By their dead parents. 'Stay,' quoth Reputation,

'Do not forsake me, for it is my nature

If once I part from any man I meet

I am never found again.' And so, for you:

You have **shook** hands with Reputation,

And made him invisible. So, fare you well.

I will never see you more.

DUCHESS

Why should only I,

Of all the other princes of the world,

Be cased-up like a holy relic? I have youth

And a little beauty.

FERDINAND

140 So you have some virgins

That are witches. I will never see thee
more. *Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO with a pistol [and CARIOLA].

DUCHESS

You saw this apparition?

ANTONIO Yes, we are

Betrayed. How came he hither? I should turn

This to thee for that.

[He points the pistol at CARIOLA.]

CARIOLA

Pray, sir, do; and when

That you have cleft my heart, you shall read there

Mine innocence.

DUCHESS

That gallery gave him entrance.

ANTONIO

I would this terrible thing would come again

That, standing on my guard, I might relate

My warrantable love.

She shows the poniard.

Ha, what means this?

DUCHESS

He left this with me.

ANTONIO

150 And, it seems, did wish
 You would use it on yourself.

DUCHESS

 His action seemed
 To intend so much.

ANTONIO

 This hath a handle to't
 As well as a point. Turn it towards him,
 And so fasten the keen edge in his rank gall.
 [*Knocking*]
 How now! Who knocks? More earthquakes?

DUCHESS

 I stand
 As if a mine, beneath my feet, were ready
 To be blown up.

CARIOLA

 'Tis Bosola.

DUCHESS

 Away!
 O misery, methinks unjust actions
 Should wear these masks and curtains, and not we.
160 You must instantly part hence. I have fashioned
 it already.

Exit ANTONIO.

[*Enter* BOSOLA.]

BOSOLA

The Duke your brother is ta'en up in a whirlwind;
Hath took horse and's rid post to Rome.

DUCHESS

So late?

BOSOLA

He told me, as he mounted into th'saddle,
You were undone.

DUCHESS

Indeed, I am very near it.

BOSOLA

What's the matter?

DUCHESS

Antonio, the master of our household,
Hath dealt so falsely with me in's accounts.
My brother stood engaged¹ with me for money,
Ta'en up of certain Neapolitan Jews,
170 And Antonio lets the bonds be forfeit.²

BOSOLA

Strange! [*Aside*] This is cunning.

DUCHESS

And hereupon
My brother's bills at Naples are protested
Against.³ Call up our officers.

BOSOLA

I shall. *Exit.*

[*Enter* ANTONIO.]

DUCHESS

The place that you must fly to is Ancona.
Hire a house there. I'll send after you
My treasure and my jewels. Our weak safety
Runs upon ingenious wheels;⁴ short syllables
Must stand for periods.¹ I must now accuse you
Of such a feignèd crime, as Tasso² calls
180 *Magnanima mensogna* – a noble lie,
'Cause it must shield our honours. Hark, they are
coming!

[*Enter* BOSOLA *and* OFFICERS.]

ANTONIO

Will your Grace hear me?

DUCHESS

I have got well by you,³ you have yielded me
A million of loss. I am like to inherit
The people's curses for your stewardship.
You had the trick in audit-time to be sick,
Till I had signed your *Quietus*,⁴ and that cured you
Without help of a doctor. Gentlemen,
I would have this man be an example to you all;
190 So shall you hold my favour. I pray, let him;⁵
For h'as done that, alas, you would not think of,
And, because I intend to be rid of him,

I mean not to publish. [*To ANTONIO*] Use your fortune elsewhere.

ANTONIO

I am strongly armed to brook my overthrow,
As commonly men bear with a hard year.

I will not blame the cause on't, but do think
The necessity of my malevolent star

Procures this, not her humour. Oh, the inconstant
And rotten ground of service you may see:

200 'Tis ev'n like him that in a winter night

Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,

As loath to part from't, yet parts thence as cold

As when he first sat down.

DUCHESS

We do confiscate,

Towards the satisfying of your accounts,

All that you have.

ANTONIO

I am all yours, and 'tis very fit

All mine should be so.

DUCHESS

So, sir, you have your pass.

ANTONIO

You may see, gentlemen, what 'tis to serve

A prince with body and soul. *Exit.*

BOSOLA

Here's an example for extortion! What moisture is drawn

210 out of the sea, when foul weather comes, pours down and runs into the sea again.

DUCHESS

I would know what are your opinions
Of this Antonio.

SECOND OFFICER

He could not abide to see a pig's head gaping; I thought your Grace would find him a Jew.¹

THIRD OFFICER

I would you had been his officer, for your own sake.

FOURTH OFFICER

You would have had more money.

FIRST OFFICER

He stopped his ears with black wool; and to those came to him for money said he was thick of hearing.

SECOND OFFICER

220 Some said he was an hermaphrodite, for he could not abide a woman.

FOURTH OFFICER

How scurvy proud he would look when the treasury was full! Well, let him go.

FIRST OFFICER

Yes, and the chippings of the buttery¹ fly after him to scour his gold chain!²

DUCHESS

Leave us. *Exeunt* [OFFICERS].

[*To* BOSOLA] What do you think of these?

BOSOLA

That these are rogues that in's prosperity,

But to have waited on his fortune, could have
wished

230 His dusty stirrup riveted through their noses,

And followed after's mule like a bear in a ring;³

Would have prostituted their daughters to his lust,

Made their *first-born intelligencers*; thought none
happy

But such as were born under his blessed planet

And wore his livery; and do these lice drop off
now?

Well, never look to have the like again.

He hath left a sort of flatt'ring rogues behind him;

Their doom must follow. Princes pay flatterers

In their own money. Flatterers dissemble their
vices,

240 And they dissemble their lies – that's justice.

Alas, poor gentleman!

DUCHESS

Poor? He hath amply filled his *coffers*.

BOSOLA

Sure, he was too honest. Pluto,⁴ the god of riches,

When he's sent by Jupiter to any man,
He goes limping, to signify that wealth
That comes in God's name comes slowly; but
when he's sent

On the devil's errand he rides post,⁵ and comes in
by scuttles.⁶

Let me show you what a most unvalued⁷ jewel
You have, in a wanton humour, thrown away
250 To bless the man shall find him. He was an
excellent

Courtier, and most faithful; a soldier that thought it
As beastly to know his own value too little
As devilish to acknowledge it too much.
Both his virtue and form deserved a far better
fortune.

His discourse rather delighted to judge itself than
show itself.

His breast was filled with all perfection,
And yet it seemed a private, whisp'ring-room,
It made so little noise of't.

DUCHESS

But he was basely descended.

BOSOLA

Will you make yourself a mercenary herald,¹
260 Rather to examine men's pedigrees than
virtues?

You shall want him;

For know, an honest statesman to a prince
Is like a cedar planted by a spring:
The spring bathes the tree's root; the grateful tree
Rewards it with his shadow. You have not done so.
I would sooner swim to the [Bermudas](#)² on
Two politicians' rotten bladders, [tied](#)
Together with an intelligencer's heart-string,
Than depend on so changeable a prince's favour!

270 Fare thee well, Antonio, since the malice of the
world

Would needs down with thee. It cannot be said yet
That any ill happened unto thee,
Considering thy fall was accompanied with virtue.

DUCHESS

Oh, you render me excellent music!

BOSOLA

Say you?

DUCHESS

This good one that you speak of is my husband.

BOSOLA

Do I not dream? Can this ambitious age
Have so much goodness in't as to prefer
A man merely for worth, without these shadows
Of wealth and painted honours? Possible?

DUCHESS

I have had three children by him.

Which I will wear on th'inside of my heart!

DUCHESS

You shall take charge of all my coin and jewels,
And follow him, for he retires himself
To Ancona.

BOSOLA

So.

DUCHESS

[Whither](#), within few days,
I mean to follow thee.

BOSOLA

Let me think:

I would wish your Grace to feign a pilgrimage
To Our Lady of Loreto, scarce seven leagues
From fair Ancona; so may you depart

Your country with more honour, and your flight

310 Will seem a princely progress, retaining

Your usual train about you.

DUCHESS

Sir, your direction

Shall lead me by the hand.

CARIOLA

In my opinion,

She were better progress to the baths

At Lucca,¹ or go visit the Spa²

In Germany; for, if you will believe me,
I do not like this jesting with religion,
This feigned pilgrimage.

DUCHESS

Thou art a superstitious fool!

Prepare us instantly for our departure.

Past sorrows, let us moderately lament them;

320 For those to come, seek wisely to prevent them.

Exeunt [DUCHESS *and* CARIOLA].

BOSOLA

A politician is the devil's quilted anvil:

He fashions all sins on him, and the blows

Are never heard. He may work in a lady's
chamber,

As here for proof. What rests, but I reveal

All to my lord? Oh, this base quality¹

Of intelligencer! Why, every quality i'th' world

Prefers² but gain or commendation.

Now for this act I am certain to be raised,

And men that paint weeds to the life are
praised. *Exit.*

ACT 3

Scene 3

[*Enter*] CARDINAL, MALATESTA [*on one side*]. FERDINAND, DELIO,
SILVIO, PESCARA [*on the other*].

CARDINAL

Must we turn soldier then?

MALATESTES

The Emperor,
Hearing your worth that way, ere you attained
This reverend garment,³ joins you in commission
With the right fortunate soldier, the Marquis of
Pescara,
And the famous Lannoy.⁴

CARDINAL

5 He that had the honour
Of taking the French king prisoner?

MALATESTES

The same.
Here's a plot drawn for a new fortification
At Naples.
[They talk apart.]

FERDINAND

This great Count Malateste, I perceive,
Hath got employment.

DELIO

10 No employment, my lord:
A marginal note in the muster-book¹ that he is
A voluntary lord.

FERDINAND

He's no soldier?

DELIO

He has worn gunpowder in's hollow tooth
For the toothache.

SILVIO

He comes to the leaguer² with a full intent
To eat fresh beef and garlic; means to stay
Till the **scent** be gone, and straight return to court.

DELIO

He hath read all the late service³
As the city chronicle relates it,
20 And **keeps** two pewterers going, only to express
Battles in model.

SILVIO

Then he'll fight by the book?⁴

DELIO

By the almanac, I think,
To choose good days and shun the critical.
That's his mistress' scarf?

SILVIO

Yes, he protests
He would do much for that taffeta.

DELIO

I think he would run away from a battle
To save it from taking prisoner.

SILVIO

He is horribly afraid

Gunpowder will spoil the perfume on't.

DELIO

I saw a Dutchman break his pate¹ once

30 For calling him 'pot-gun';² he made his head

Have a bore³ in't, like a musket.

SILVIO

I would he had made a touch-hole⁴ to't!

He is, indeed, a guarded sumpter-cloth,⁵

Only for the remove of the court.

[*Enter BOSOLA, who speaks to the CARDINAL and
FERDINAND.*]

PESCARA

Bosola arrived? What should be the business?

Some falling-out amongst the cardinals.

These factions amongst great men! They are like

Foxes: when their heads are divided

They carry fire in their tails,⁶ and all the country

About them goes to wrack for't.

SILVIO

40

What's that Bosola?

DELIO

I knew him in Padua: a fantastical scholar, like such
who study to know how many knots was in Hercules'
club, of what colour Achilles' beard was, or whether
Hector were not troubled with the toothache. He hath
studied himself half blear-eyed to know the true

symmetry of Caesar's nose by a shoeing-horn; and this he did to gain the name of a speculative man.

PESCARA

Mark Prince Ferdinand.

A very salamander¹ lives in's eye,

50 To mock the eager violence of fire.

SILVIO

That Cardinal hath made more bad faces with his
oppression than ever Michelangelo made good ones.
He lifts up's nose like a foul porpoise before a storm.

PESCARA

The Lord Ferdinand laughs.

DELIO

Like a deadly cannon,

That lightens ere it smokes.

PESCARA

These are your true pangs of death:

The pangs of life that struggle with great
statesmen.

DELIO

In such a deformed silence, witches whisper

Their charms.

[SILVIO, DELIO *and* PESCARA *stand aside.*]

CARDINAL

60 Doth she make religion her riding-hood

To keep her from the sun and tempest?

FERDINAND

That,
That damns her. Methinks her fault and beauty,
Blended together, show like leprosy:
The whiter, the fouler. I make it a question
Whether her beggarly brats were ever christened.

CARDINAL

I will instantly solicit the state of Ancona
To have them banished.

FERDINAND

You are for Loreto?
I shall not be at your ceremony; fare you well.
[To BOSOLA] Write to the Duke of Malfi, my young
nephew
70 She had by her first husband,¹ and acquaint
him
With's mother's honesty.

BOSOLA

I will.

FERDINAND

Antonio!
A slave, that only smelled of ink and **counters**,²
And ne'er in's **life** looked like a gentleman,
But in the audit-time. Go, go presently.
Draw me out an **hundred** and fifty of our horse,
And meet me at the fort-bridge. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 4

[Enter] Two PILGRIMS to the Shrine of Our Lady of Loreto.

FIRST PILGRIM

I have not seen a goodlier shrine than this,
Yet I have visited many.

SECOND PILGRIM

The Cardinal of Aragon
Is this day to resign his cardinal's hat.
His sister Duchess likewise is arrived
To pay her vow of pilgrimage. I expect
A noble ceremony.

FIRST PILGRIM

No question. – They come.

Here the ceremony of the CARDINAL'S instalment, in the habit [of] a soldier, performed in delivering up his cross, hat, robes and ring at the shrine, and investing him with sword, helmet, shield and spurs. Then ANTONIO, the DUCHESS and their CHILDREN,¹ having presented themselves at the shrine, are, by a form of banishment in dumbshow, expressed towards them by the CARDINAL and the State of Ancona, banished. During all which ceremony, this ditty is sung, to very solemn music, by divers churchmen and then Exeunt [all except the PILGRIMS].

The Author disclaims this ditty to be his.

CHURCHMEN [Sing]

*Arms and honours deck thy story,
To thy fame's eternal glory.*

10 *Adverse fortune ever fly thee,
No disastrous fate come nigh thee.
I alone will sing thy praises,
Whom to honour virtue raises;
And thy study, that divine is,
Bent to martial discipline is.
Lay aside all those robes lie by thee,
Crown thy arts with arms: they'll beautify thee.
O worthy of worthiest name, adorned in this
manner,
Lead bravely thy forces on, under war's warlike
banner.*

20 *Oh, may'st thou prove fortunate in all martial
courses.²*

*Guide thou still by skill, in arts and forces.
Victory attend thee nigh, whilst Fame sings loud
thy powers,
Triumphant conquest crown thy head, and
blessings pour down showers.*

FIRST PILGRIM

Here's a strange turn of state. Who would have
thought
So great a lady would have matched herself
Unto so mean a person? Yet the Cardinal
Bears himself much too cruel.

SECOND PILGRIM

They are banished.

FIRST PILGRIM

But I would ask what power hath this state
Of Ancona to determine of a free prince?

SECOND PILGRIM

They are a free state, sir, and her brother showed
30 How that the Pope, forehearing of her looseness,
Hath seized into th' protection of the Church
The dukedom which she held as dowager.

FIRST PILGRIM

But by what justice?

SECOND PILGRIM

Sure, I think by none –
Only her brother's instigation.

FIRST PILGRIM

What was it, with such violence, he took
Off from her finger?

SECOND PILGRIM

'Twas her wedding ring,
Which he vowed shortly he would sacrifice
To his revenge.

FIRST PILGRIM

Alas, Antonio!
If that a man be thrust into a well,

40 No matter who sets hand to't, his own weight
Will bring him sooner to th' bottom. Come, let's
hence.

Fortune makes this conclusion general:

All things do help th'unhappy man to
fall. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 5

[*Enter*] ANTONIO, DUCHESS [*and two*] CHILDREN, CARIOLA
[*carrying an infant*], SERVANTS.

DUCHESS

Banished Ancona?

ANTONIO

Yes, you see what power
Lightens¹ in great men's breath.

DUCHESS

Is all our train
Shrunk to this poor remainder?

ANTONIO

These poor men,
Which have got little in your service, vow
To take your fortune; but your wiser buntings,²
Now they are fledged, are gone.

DUCHESS

They have done wisely.
This puts me in mind of death: physicians thus,

With their hands full of money, use to give o'er
Their patients.

ANTONIO

Right³ the fashion of the world:

10 From decayed fortunes every flatterer shrinks;
Men cease to build where the foundation sinks.

DUCHESS

I had a very strange dream tonight.

ANTONIO

What was't?

DUCHESS

Methought I wore my coronet of state,
And on a sudden all the diamonds
Were changed to pearls.

ANTONIO

My interpretation
Is you'll weep shortly; for, to me, the pearls
Do signify your tears.

DUCHESS

The birds that live i'th' field,
On the wild benefit¹ of nature, live
Happier than we, for they may choose their mates,
20 And carol their sweet pleasures to the spring.

[*Enter* BOSOLA.]

BOSOLA

You are happily o'erta'en.

[*He hands the DUCHESS a letter.*]

DUCHESS

From my brother?

BOSOLA

Yes, from the Lord Ferdinand, your brother,
All love and safety.

DUCHESS

Thou dost blanch mischief;

Wouldst make it white. See, see, like to calm
weather

At sea, before a tempest, false hearts speak fair

To those they intend most mischief.

[*Reads*] (*A Letter*) 'Send Antonio to me. I want his
head in a business.'

A politic equivocation!

He doth not want your counsel, but your head;

30 That is, he cannot sleep till you be dead.

And here's another pitfall that's strewed o'er

With roses; mark it – 'tis a cunning one.

[*Reads*] 'I stand engaged for your husband for
several debts at Naples. Let not that trouble him. I
had rather have his heart than his money.'

And I believe so too.

BOSOLA

What do you believe?

DUCHESS

That he so much distrusts my husband's love
He will by no means believe his heart is with him
Until he see it. The devil is not cunning enough
40 To circumvent us in riddles.

BOSOLA

Will you reject that noble and free league
Of amity and love which I present you?

DUCHESS

Their league is like that of some politic kings:
Only to make themselves of strength and power
To be our after-ruin. Tell them so.

BOSOLA [*To ANTONIO*]

And what from you?

ANTONIO

Thus tell him
I will not come.

BOSOLA

And what of this?

ANTONIO

My brothers¹ have dispersed
Bloodhounds abroad, which till I hear are muzzled
50 No truce, though hatched with ne'er such politic
skill,
Is safe that hangs upon our enemies' will.
I'll not come at them.

BOSOLA

This proclaims your breeding.
Every small thing draws a base mind to fear,
As the adamant¹ draws iron. Fare you well, sir.
You shall shortly hear from's. *Exit.*

DUCHESS

I suspect some ambush;
Therefore, by all my love, I do conjure you
To take your eldest son and fly towards Milan.
Let us not venture all this poor remainder
In one unlucky bottom.²

ANTONIO

You counsel safely.
60 Best of my life, farewell. Since we must part
Heaven hath a hand in't; but no otherwise
Than as some curious artist takes in sunder
A clock or watch when it is out of frame,
To bring't in better order.

DUCHESS

I know not which is best:
To see you dead or part with you. [*To her eldest son*]
Farewell, boy.
Thou art happy that thou hast not understanding
To know thy misery; for all our wit
And reading brings us to a truer sense

Of sorrow. [*To* ANTONIO] In the eternal Church,³
sir,

I do hope we shall not part thus.

ANTONIO

70

Oh, be of comfort!

Make patience a noble fortitude,

And think not how unkindly we are used.

Man, like to cassia,⁴ is proved best being bruised.

DUCHESS

Must I, like to a slave-born Russian,

Account it praise to suffer tyranny?

And yet, O heaven, thy heavy hand is in't.

I have seen my little boy oft scourge his top,¹

And compared myself to't: naught made me e'er

Go right but heaven's scourge-stick.

ANTONIO

Do not weep.

80 Heaven fashioned us of nothing, and we strive

To bring ourselves to nothing. Farewell, Cariola,

And thy sweet armful.² [*To the* DUCHESS] If I do
never see thee more,³

Be a good mother to your little ones,

And save them from the tiger. Fare you well.

[*He kisses her.*]

DUCHESS

Let me look upon you once more, for that speech

Came from a dying father. Your kiss is colder
Than that I have seen an holy anchorite⁴
Give to a dead man's skull.

ANTONIO

My heart is turned to a heavy lump of lead
90 With which I sound my danger⁵. Fare you well.
Exeunt [ANTONIO and his eldest son].

DUCHESS

My laurel is all withered.⁶

CARIOLA

Look, madam, what a troop of armèd men
Make toward us.
Enter BOSOLA [*masked*] with a GUARD⁷ [*wearing vizards*].

DUCHESS

Oh, they are very welcome.
When Fortune's wheel is overcharged with
princes,
The weight makes it move swift. I would have my
ruin
Be sudden. [*To* BOSOLA] I am your adventure,¹ am I
not?

BOSOLA

You are. You must see your husband no more.

DUCHESS

What devil art thou that counterfeits heaven's
thunder?

BOSOLA

Is that terrible? I would have you tell me

100 Whether is that note worse that frights the silly²
birds

Out of the corn, or that which doth allure them

To the nets? You have hearkened to the last too
much.

DUCHESS

O misery! Like to a rusty o'ercharged cannon,

Shall I never fly in pieces? Come: to what prison?

BOSOLA

To none.

DUCHESS

Whither then?

BOSOLA

To your palace.

DUCHESS

I have heard that Charon's boat serves to convey

All o'er the dismal lake,³ but brings none back
again.

BOSOLA

Your brothers mean you safety and pity.

DUCHESS

Pity?

With such a pity men preserve alive

110 Pheasants and quails, when they are not fat
enough

To be eaten.

BOSOLA

These are your children?

DUCHESS

Yes.

BOSOLA

Can they prattle?

DUCHESS

No,

But I intend, since they were born accursed,
Curses shall be their first language.

BOSOLA

Fie, madam,
Forget this base, low fellow.

DUCHESS

Were I a man,
I'd beat that counterfeit face¹ into thy other.

BOSOLA

One of no birth.

DUCHESS

Say that he was born mean,
Man is most happy when's own actions
Be arguments and examples of his virtue.

BOSOLA

120 A barren, beggarly virtue.

DUCHESS

I prithee, who is greatest? Can you tell?
Sad tales befit my woe; I'll tell you one.
A salmon, as she swam unto the sea,
Met with a dog-fish, who encounters her
With this rough language: 'Why art thou so bold
To mix thyself with our high state of floods,
Being no eminent courtier, but one
That for the calmest and fresh time o'th' year
Dost live in shallow rivers, rank'st thyself

130 With silly [smelts](#)² and shrimps? And darest thou
Pass by our dog-ship without reverence?'
'O,' quoth the salmon, 'sister, be at peace.
Thank Jupiter, we both have passed the net.
Our value never can be truly known,
Till in the fisher's basket we be shown.
I'th' market then my price may be the higher,
Even when I am nearest to the cook and fire.'
So, to great men the moral may be stretched:
Men oft are valued high, when th'are most
wretch'd.

140 But come: [whither](#) you please. I am armed
'gainst misery,

Bent to all sways of the oppressor's will.

There's no deep valley, but near some great
hill. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 1

[*Enter*] FERDINAND, BOSOLA [*and*] SERVANTS
[*with torches*].¹

FERDINAND

How doth our sister Duchess bear herself
In her imprisonment?

BOSOLA

Nobly; I'll describe her:
She's sad, as one long used to't, and she seems
Rather to welcome the end of misery
Than shun it; a behaviour so noble,
As gives a majesty to adversity.
You may discern the shape of loveliness
More perfect in her tears than in her smiles.
She will muse four hours together, and her silence,
10 Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.

FERDINAND

Her melancholy seems to be fortified
With a strange disdain.

BOSOLA

'Tis so; and this restraint,
Like English mastiffs that grow fierce with tying,
Makes her too passionately apprehend

Those pleasures she's kept from.

FERDINAND

Curse upon her!

I will no longer study in the book

Of another's heart. Inform her what I told
you. *Exit.*

[*Enter* DUCHESS *and* CARIOLA.]

BOSOLA

All comfort to your Grace –

DUCHESS

I will have none.

Pray thee, why dost thou wrap thy poisoned pills

20 In gold and sugar?

BOSOLA

Your elder brother,¹ the Lord Ferdinand,

Is come to visit you, and sends you word

'Cause once he rashly made a solemn vow

Never to see you more, he comes i'th' night;

And prays you, gently, neither torch nor taper

Shine in your chamber. He will kiss your hand

And reconcile himself, but, for his vow,

He dares not see you.

DUCHESS

At his pleasure.

Take hence the lights. [*Exeunt* SERVANTS *with*
torches.]

[*Enter* FERDINAND.]

He's come.

FERDINAND

Where are you?

DUCHESS

Here, sir.

FERDINAND

This darkness suits you well.

30 DUCHESS

I would ask you pardon.

FERDINAND

You have it;

For I account it the honorabl'st revenge,

Where I may kill, to pardon. Where are your cubs?

DUCHESS

Whom?

FERDINAND

Call them your children;

For though our national law distinguish bastards

From true, legitimate issue, compassionate nature

Makes them all equal.

DUCHESS

Do you visit me for this?

You violate a sacrament o'th' Church

Shall make you howl in hell for't.

FERDINAND

It had been well

40 Could you have lived thus always; for, indeed,

You were too much i'th' light.¹ But no more;

I come to seal my peace with you. Here's a hand,

To which you have vowed much love. The ring
upon't

You gave.

[*He*] gives her a dead man's hand.²

DUCHESS

I affectionately kiss it.

FERDINAND

Pray do, and bury the print of it in your heart.

I will leave this ring with you for a love-token,

And the hand, as sure as the ring; and do not doubt

But you shall have the heart too. When you need a
friend,

Send it to him that owed it; you shall see

Whether he can aid you.

DUCHESS

50 You are very cold.

I fear you are not well after your travel.

Ha? Lights! Oh horrible!

FERDINAND

Let her have lights enough. *Exit.*

[*Enter SERVANTS with torches.*]

DUCHESS

What witchcraft doth he practise that he hath left
A dead man's hand here?

*Here is discovered, behind a traverse,¹ the artificial figures of
ANTONIO and his CHILDREN, appearing as
if they were dead.²*

BOSOLA

Look you, here's the piece from which 'twas ta'en.
He doth present you this sad spectacle
That, now you know directly they are dead,
Hereafter you may wisely cease to grieve
60 For that which cannot be recoverèd.

DUCHESS

There is not between heaven and earth one wish
I stay for after this. It wastes me more
Than were't my picture, fashioned out of wax,
Stuck with a magical needle, and then buried
In some foul dunghill. And yond's an excellent
property³
For a tyrant, which I would account mercy.

BOSOLA

What's that?

DUCHESS

If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk,¹
And let me freeze to death.

BOSOLA

Come, you must live.

DUCHESS

70 That's the greatest torture souls feel in hell:
In hell that they must live, and cannot die.
Portia, I'll new-kindle thy coals again,
And revive the rare and almost dead example
Of a loving wife.²

BOSOLA

O fie! Despair? Remember
You are a Christian.

DUCHESS

The Church enjoins fasting:
I'll starve myself to death.

BOSOLA

Leave this vain sorrow.
Things being at the worst begin to mend;
The bee when he hath shot his sting into your hand
May then play with your eyelid.

DUCHESS

Good, comfortable³ fellow,
80 Persuade a wretch that's broke upon the wheel⁴
To have all his bones new-set; entreat him live
To be executed again. Who must dispatch me?
I account this world a tedious theatre,
For I do play a part in't 'gainst my will.

BOSOLA

Come, be of comfort; I will save your life.

DUCHESS

Indeed, I have not leisure to tend so small a business.

BOSOLA

Now, by my life, I pity you.

DUCHESS

Thou art a fool then,
To waste thy pity on a thing so wretched
As cannot pity it. I am full of daggers.¹

90 Puff! Let me blow these vipers² from me.

[*To SERVANT*] What are you?

SERVANT

One that wishes you long life.

DUCHESS

I would thou wert hanged for the horrible curse
Thou hast given me. I shall shortly grow one
Of the miracles of pity. I'll go pray – No,
I'll go curse.

BOSOLA

Oh fie!

DUCHESS

I could curse the stars –

BOSOLA

Oh fearful!

DUCHESS

And those three smiling seasons of the year
Into a Russian winter – nay, the world
To its first chaos.

BOSOLA

Look you, the stars shine still.

DUCHESS

Oh, but you must remember,
100 My curse hath a great way to go –
Plagues, that make lanes³ through largest families,
Consume them.

BOSOLA

Fie, lady!

DUCHESS

Let them, like tyrants,
Never be remembered but for the ill they have
done.
Let all the zealous prayers of mortified
Churchmen forget them.

BOSOLA

Oh uncharitable!

DUCHESS

Let heaven a little while cease crowning martyrs,
To punish them.
Go, howl them this, and say I long to bleed.

It is some mercy when men kill with speed.

Exeunt [DUCHESS *and* CARIOLA *with* SERVANTS].

[*Enter* FERDINAND.]

FERDINAND

110 Excellent! As I would wish. She's plagued in
art.¹

These presentations are but framed in wax
By the curious² master in that quality,
Vincentio Lauriola,³ and she takes them
For true, substantial bodies.

BOSOLA

Why do you do this?

FERDINAND

To bring her to despair.

BOSOLA

'Faith, end here,
And go no farther in your cruelty.
Send her a penitential garment to put on
Next to her delicate skin, and furnish her
With beads and prayer-books.

FERDINAND

120 Damn her! That body of hers,
While that my blood ran pure in't, was more worth
Than that which thou wouldst comfort, called a
soul.
I will send her masques of common courtesans,

Have her meat served up by bawds and ruffians,
And, 'cause she'll needs be mad, I am resolved
To remove forth the common hospital
All the mad-folk and place them near her lodging.
There let them practise together: sing and dance
And act their gambols to the full o'th' moon.

130 If she can sleep the better for it, let her.
Your work is almost ended.

BOSOLA

Must I see her again?

FERDINAND

Yes.

BOSOLA

Never.

FERDINAND

You must.

BOSOLA

Never in mine own shape;
That's forfeited by my intelligence,¹
And this last cruel lie. When you send me next,
The business shall be comfort.

FERDINAND

Very likely!
Thy pity is nothing of kin to thee. Antonio
Lurks about Milan. Thou shalt shortly thither

To feed a fire as great as my revenge,
140 Which ne'er will slack till it have spent his fuel.
Intemperate agues make physicians
cruel. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 2

[*Enter*] DUCHESS [*and*] CARIOLA.

DUCHESS

What hideous noise was that?

CARIOLA

'Tis the wild consort¹
Of madmen, lady, which your tyrant brother
Hath placed about your lodging. This tyranny,
I think, was never practised till this hour.

DUCHESS

Indeed, I thank him. Nothing but noise and folly
Can keep me in my right wits, whereas reason
And silence make me stark mad. Sit down;
Discourse to me some dismal tragedy.

CARIOLA

Oh, 'twill increase your melancholy.

DUCHESS

Thou art deceived;
10 To hear of greater grief would lessen mine.
This is a prison?

CARIOLA

Yes, but you shall live
To shake this durance off.

DUCHESS

Thou art a fool.
The robin redbreast and the nightingale
Never live long in cages.

CARIOLA

Pray, dry your eyes.
What think you of, madam?

DUCHESS

Of nothing.
When I muse thus, I sleep.

CARIOLA

Like a madman, with your eyes open?

DUCHESS

Dost thou think we shall know one another
In th'other world?

CARIOLA

Yes, out of question.

DUCHESS

20 Oh, that it were possible we might
But hold some two days' conference with the
dead.
From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure

I never shall know here. I'll tell thee a miracle:
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow.
Th' heaven o'er my head seems made of molten
brass,
The earth of flaming sulphur,¹ yet I am not mad.
I am acquainted with sad misery,
As the tanned galley-slave is with his oar.
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,
30 And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like
now?

CARIOLA

Like to your picture in the gallery:
A deal of life in show,² but none in practice;
Or rather like some reverend monument
Whose ruins are even pitied.

DUCHESS

Very proper;
And Fortune seems only to have her eyesight³
To behold my tragedy.

[*Noises of MADMEN within.*]

How now,

What noise is that?

[*Enter SERVANT.*]

SERVANT

I am come to tell you
Your brother hath intended you some sport.

A great physician, when the Pope was sick
40 Of a deep melancholy, presented him
With several sorts of madmen, which wild object,
Being full of change and sport, forced him to laugh
And so th' impostume¹ broke. The self-same cure
The Duke intends on you.

DUCHESS

Let them come in.

SERVANT

There's a mad lawyer and a secular priest;²
A doctor that hath forfeited his wits
By jealousy; an astrologian
That in his works said such a day o'th' month
Should be the day of doom, and failing of't
50 Ran mad; an English tailor, crazed i'th' brain
With the study of new fashion; a gentleman-usher
Quite beside himself with care to keep in mind
The number of his lady's salutations,
Or 'How do you?', she employed him in each
morning;
A farmer too, an excellent knave in grain,³
Mad 'cause he was hindered transportation;⁴
And let one broker⁵ that's mad loose to these,
You'd think the devil were among them.

DUCHESS

Sit, Cariola. [*To SERVANT*] Let them loose when
you please,

60 For I am chained to endure all your tyranny.

[*Enter MADMEN.*]

*Here, by a MADMAN, this song is sung, to a dismal kind of
music.*

[*MADMAN sings*] *Oh, let us howl some heavy note,*

Some deadly, doggèd howl,

Sounding, as from the threat'ning throat,

Of beasts and fatal fowl.

As ravens, screech-owls, bulls and bears,

We'll bill¹ and bawl our parts,

Till irksome noise have cloyed your ears,

And corrosived² your hearts.

At last, when as our choir wants breath,

70 *Our bodies being blessed,*

We'll sing like swans to welcome death,³

And die in love and rest.

MAD ASTROLOGER

Doomsday not come yet? I'll draw it nearer by a
perspective,⁴ or make a glass⁵ that shall set all the
world on fire upon an instant. I cannot sleep –

my pillow is stuffed with a litter of porcupines.

MAD LAWYER

Hell is a mere glass-house,⁶ where the devils are
continually blowing up women's souls on hollow
irons, and the fire never goes out.

MAD PRIEST

80 I will lie with every woman in my parish the tenth night; I will tithe them over like haycocks.

MAD DOCTOR

Shall my 'pothecary outgo me because I am a cuckold? I have found out his roguery: he makes alum¹ of his wife's urine and sells it to Puritans that have sore throats with over-straining.

MAD ASTROLOGER

I have skill in heraldry.

MAD LAWYER

Hast?

MAD ASTROLOGER

You do give for your crest a woodcock's head,² with the brains picked out³ on't. You are a very ancient gentleman.

MAD PRIEST

Greek is turned Turk;⁴ we are only to be saved by the

90 Helvetian translation.⁵

MAD ASTROLOGER [*To the* MAD LAWYER]

Come on, sir, I will lay⁶ the law to you.

MAD LAWYER

Oh, rather lay a corrosive – the law will eat to the bone.

MAD PRIEST

He that drinks but to satisfy nature is damned.

MAD DOCTOR

If I had my glass here, I would show a sight should
make all the women here call me mad doctor.

MAD ASTROLOGER [*pointing at the* MAD PRIEST]

What's he? A rope-maker?

MAD LAWYER

No, no, no, a snuffling knave that, while he shows
the tombs, will have his hand in a wench's placket.¹

MAD PRIEST

Woe to the caroche that brought home my wife
from the

100 masque at three o'clock in the morning! It had
a large featherbed in it.

MAD DOCTOR

I have pared the devil's nails forty times, roasted
them in raven's eggs, and cured agues with them.

MAD PRIEST

Get me three hundred milch-bats to make possets² to
procure sleep.

MAD DOCTOR

All the college may throw their caps at me,³ I have
made a soap-boiler costive.⁴ It was my masterpiece.

*Here the dance, consisting of eight MADMEN, with music
answerable thereunto, after which [they exeunt and]
BOSOLA, [disguised] like an old man, enters.*

DUCHESS [*Indicating* BOSOLA]

Is he mad too?

SERVANT

Pray, question him. I'll leave you. [*Exit.*]

BOSOLA

I am come to make thy tomb.

DUCHESS

Ha? My tomb?

110 Thou speak'st as if I lay upon my death-bed,
Gasping for breath. Dost thou perceive me sick?

BOSOLA

Yes, and the more dangerously since thy sickness is
insensible.⁵

DUCHESS

Thou art not mad, sure. Dost know me?

BOSOLA

Yes.

DUCHESS

Who am I?

BOSOLA

Thou art a box of worm-seed;¹ at best, but a
salvatory² of green mummy.³ What's this flesh? A little
crudded⁴ milk, fantastical puff-paste.⁵ Our bodies are
weaker than those paper

120 prisons boys use to keep flies in – more
contemptible, since ours is to preserve earthworms.
Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in
the body: this world is like her little turf of grass, and
the heaven o'er our heads like her looking-glass, only
gives us a miserable knowledge of the small compass
of our prison.

DUCHESS

Am not I thy Duchess?

BOSOLA

Thou art some great woman, sure, for riot⁶ begins to sit on thy forehead, clad in grey hairs, twenty years sooner than on a merry milkmaid's. Thou sleep'st worse than if a mouse

130 should be forced to take up her lodging in a cat's ear. A little infant that breeds its teeth, should it lie with thee, would cry out, as if thou wert the more unquiet bedfellow.

DUCHESS

I am Duchess of Malfi still.

BOSOLA

That makes thy sleeps so broken.

Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
But looked to near, have neither heat nor light.⁷

DUCHESS

Thou art very plain.

BOSOLA

My trade is to flatter the dead not the living;
I am a tomb-maker.

DUCHESS

140 And thou com'st to make my tomb?

BOSOLA

Yes.

DUCHESS

Let me be a little merry:
Of what stuff wilt thou make it?

BOSOLA

Nay, resolve me first of what fashion.

DUCHESS

Why, do we grow fantastical in our death-bed?
Do we affect fashion in the grave?

BOSOLA

Most ambitiously. Princes' images on their tombs do not lie, as they were wont, seeming to pray up to heaven, but with their hands under their cheeks, as if they died of the toothache.

150 They are not carved with their eyes fixed upon the stars, but as their minds were wholly bent upon the world – the self-same way they seem to turn their faces.

DUCHESS

Let me know fully, therefore, the effect
Of this thy dismal preparation,
This talk fit for a charnel.

BOSOLA

Now, I shall.

[Enter EXECUTIONERS with] a [shrouded] coffin, cords and a bell.

Here is a present from your princely brothers,
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings
Last benefit, last sorrow.

DUCHESS

Let me see it.

I have so much obedience in my blood,

160 I wish it in their veins to do them good.

BOSOLA

This is your last presence-chamber.

[He reveals the coffin.]

CARIOLA

O my sweet lady!

DUCHESS

Peace, it affrights not me.

BOSOLA

I am the common bellman,¹

That usually is sent to condemned persons

The night before they suffer.

DUCHESS

Even now thou said'st

Thou wast a tomb-maker.

BOSOLA

'Twas to bring you

By degrees to mortification.² Listen!

[BOSOLA rings the bell.]

Hark, now everything is still,

The screech-owl and the whistler³ shrill

170 *Call upon our dame, aloud,*

*And bid her quickly don her shroud.
Much you had of land and rent,
Your length in clay's now competent.⁴
A long war disturbed your mind,
Here your perfect peace is signed.
Of what is't fools make such vain keeping?
Sin their conception, their birth weeping,
Their life a general mist of error,
Their death a hideous storm of terror.*

180 *Strew your hair with powders sweet,¹
Don clean linen, bathe your feet,
And – the foul fiend more to check –
A crucifix let bless your neck.
'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day;
End your groan and come away.*

[The EXECUTIONERS approach.]

CARIOLA

Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers! Alas,
What will you do with my lady? – Call for help!

DUCHESS

To whom? To our next neighbours? They are mad
folks.

BOSOLA

Remove that noise.

[EXECUTIONERS seize CARIOLA.]

DUCHESS

Farewell, Cariola.

190 In my last will, I have not much to give.

A many hungry guests have fed upon me;

Thine will be a poor reversion.²

CARIOLA

I will die with her.

DUCHESS

I pray thee, look thou giv'st my little boy

Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl

Say her prayers ere she sleep.

[*Exeunt* EXECUTIONERS *with* CARIOLA.]

Now what you please:

What death?

BOSOLA

Strangling.

[*Re-enter* EXECUTIONERS.]

Here are your executioners.

DUCHESS

I forgive them.

The apoplexy, catarrh or cough o'th' lungs

Would do as much as they do.

BOSOLA

Doth not death fright you?

DUCHESS

200

Who would be afraid on't,

Knowing to meet such excellent company
In th'other world?

BOSOLA

Yet, methinks
The manner of your death should much afflict you;
This cord should terrify you.

DUCHESS

Not a whit.

What would it pleasure me to have my throat cut
With diamonds, or to be smothered
With cassia, or to be shot to death with pearls?

I know death hath ten thousand several doors
For men to take their exits; and 'tis found

210 They go on such strange, geometrical hinges,

You may open them both ways.¹ Any way, for
heaven' sake,

So I were out of your whispering! Tell my brothers
That I perceive death, now I am well awake,
Best gift is they can give or I can take.

I would fain put off my last woman's fault:²

I'd not be tedious to you.

[EXECUTIONERS *place the noose around her neck and hold each
end.*]

EXECUTIONER

We are ready.

DUCHESS

Dispose my breath how please you, but my body
Bestow upon my women. Will you?

EXECUTIONER

Yes.

DUCHESS

Pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength

220 Must pull down heaven upon me.

Yet, stay. Heaven gates are not so highly arched

As princes' palaces; they that enter there

Must go upon their knees. [*Kneels*] Come, violent
death,

Serve for mandragora¹ to make me sleep.

Go tell my brothers, when I am laid out²

They then may feed in quiet.

They strangle her.

BOSOLA

Where's the waiting-woman?

Fetch her. Some other strangle the children.

[EXECUTIONERS *exeunt and re-enter with CARIOLA.*]

Look you, there sleeps your mistress.

CARIOLA

Oh, you are damned

Perpetually for this! My turn is next;

Is't not so ordered?

BOSOLA

230

Yes, and I am glad

You are so well prepared for't.

CARIOLA

You are deceived, sir;
I am not prepared for't. I will not die!
I will first come to my answer, and know
How I have offended.

BOSOLA [*To EXECUTIONERS*]

Come, dispatch her.

[*To CARIOLA*] You kept her counsel, now you shall
keep ours.

CARIOLA

I will not die; I must not. I am contracted
To a young gentleman.

EXECUTIONER

Here's your wedding-ring.
[*Showing her the noose*]

CARIOLA

Let me but speak with the Duke: I'll discover
Treason to his person.

BOSOLA

Delays – throttle her!

EXECUTIONER

She bites and scratches.

CARIOLA

I am damned! I have not been at confession
This two years.

BOSOLA

When?¹

CARIOLA

I am quick with child.

BOSOLA

Why then,

Your credit's² saved.

[EXECUTIONERS *strangle* CARIOLA.]

Bear her into th'next room.

Let this lie still.

[*Exeunt* EXECUTIONERS *with* CARIOLA's *body*.]

[*Enter* FERDINAND.]

FERDINAND

Is she dead?

BOSOLA

She is what

You'd have her. But here begin your pity.

[*He draws a curtain and*] *shows the children
strangled.*

Alas, how have these offended?

FERDINAND

The death

Of young wolves is never to be pitied.

BOSOLA [*indicating the* DUCHESS]

Fix your eye here.

FERDINAND

Constantly.

BOSOLA

Do you not weep?

Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out.

250 The element of water moistens the earth,

But blood flies upwards and bedews the heavens.

FERDINAND

Cover her face. Mine eyes dazzle.¹ She died
young.

BOSOLA

I think not so [*covering her face*]; her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.

FERDINAND

She and I were twins,
And should I die this instant, I had lived
Her time to a minute.

BOSOLA

It seems she was born first.
You have bloodily approved the ancient truth
That kindred commonly do worse agree
Than remote strangers.

FERDINAND

Let me see her face again.

[BOSOLA *uncovers her.*]

260 Why didst not thou pity her? What an excellent,
Honest man might'st thou have been
If thou hadst borne her to some sanctuary,
Or, bold in a good cause, opposed thyself
With thy advanced sword above thy head,
Between her innocence and my revenge!
I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits,
Go kill my dearest friend,¹ and thou hast *done't*.
For let me but examine well the cause:
What was the meanness of her match to me?

270 Only, I must confess, I had a hope,
Had she continued widow, to have gained
An infinite mass of treasure by her death,²
And that was the main cause: her marriage –
That drew a stream of gall quite through my heart.
For thee – as we observe in tragedies
That a good actor many times is cursed
For playing a villain's part – I hate thee for't,
And, for my sake, say thou hast done much ill
well.

BOSOLA

Let me quicken your memory, for I perceive
280 You are falling into ingratitude. I challenge³
The reward due to my service.

FERDINAND

I'll tell thee
What I'll give thee –

BOSOLA

Do.

FERDINAND

I'll give thee a pardon
For this murder.

BOSOLA

Ha?

FERDINAND

Yes, and 'tis
The largest bounty I can study to do thee.
By what authority didst thou execute
This bloody sentence?

BOSOLA

By yours.

FERDINAND

Mine? Was I her judge?
Did any ceremonial form of law
Doom her to not-being? Did a complete jury
Deliver her conviction up i'th' court?
290 Where shalt thou find this judgement registered
Unless in hell? See, like a bloody fool
Th'hast forfeited thy life, and thou shalt die for't.

BOSOLA

The office of justice is perverted quite
When one thief hangs another. Who shall dare
To reveal this?

FERDINAND

Oh, I'll tell thee:
The wolf shall find her grave, and scrape it up –
Not to devour the corpse, but to discover
The horrid murder.¹

BOSOLA

You, not I, shall quake for't.

FERDINAND

Leave me.

BOSOLA

I will first receive my pension.

FERDINAND

You are a villain.

BOSOLA

300 When your ingratitude
Is judge, I am so.

FERDINAND

O horror!
That not the fear of him which binds the devils
Can prescribe man obedience!
Never look upon me more.

BOSOLA

Why, fare thee well.

Your brother and yourself are worthy men;

You have a pair of hearts are hollow graves,

Rotten, and rotting others; and your vengeance,

Like two chained bullets,¹ still goes arm-in-arm.

You may be brothers: for treason, like the plague,

310 Doth take much in a blood.² I stand like one

That long hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream;

I am angry with myself now that I wake.

FERDINAND

Get thee into some unknown part o'th' world

That I may never see thee.

BOSOLA

Let me know

Wherefore I should be thus neglected? Sir,

I served your tyranny, and rather strove

To satisfy yourself than all the world;

And though I loathed the evil, yet I loved

You that did counsel it, and rather sought

320 To appear a true servant than an honest man.

FERDINAND

I'll go hunt the badger by owl-light³ –

'Tis a deed of darkness. *Exit.*

BOSOLA

He's much distracted. Off, my painted¹ honour!

While with vain hopes our faculties we tire,

We seem to sweat in ice, and freeze in fire.

What would I do, were this to do again?

I would not change my peace of conscience

For all the wealth of Europe.

[*The DUCHESS sighs.*]

She stirs! Here's life!

Return, fair soul, from darkness, and lead mine

330 Out of this sensible² hell. She's warm. She
breathes!

Upon thy pale lips I will melt my heart,

To store them with fresh colour.

[*He kisses her.*]

[*Noises offstage*]

Who's there?

Some cordial³ drink! – Alas, I dare not call;

So pity would destroy pity. Her eye opes,

And heaven in it seems to ope, that late was shut,

To take me up to [mercy](#).

DUCHESS

Antonio?

BOSOLA

Yes, madam, he is living.

The dead bodies you saw were but feigned statues.

He's reconciled to your brothers. The Pope hath wrought

The atonement.

DUCHESS

340

Mercy.

She dies.

BOSOLA

Oh, she's gone again. There the cords of life⁴ broke.

O sacred Innocence, that sweetly sleeps

On turtles' feathers, whilst a guilty conscience

Is a black register wherein is writ

All our good deeds and bad: a perspective

That shows us hell. That we cannot be suffered

To do good when we have a mind to it!

[*Weeping*] This is manly sorrow:

These tears, I am very certain, never grew

350 In my mother's milk. My estate is sunk

Below the degree of fear. Where were

These penitent fountains while she was living?

Oh, they were frozen up. Here is a sight

As direful to my soul as is the sword

Unto a wretch hath slain his father.

Come, I'll bear thee hence,

And execute thy last will – that's deliver

Thy body to the reverend dispose

Of some good women; that the cruel tyrant

360 Shall not deny me. Then I'll post to Milan,
Where somewhat I will speedily enact
Worth my dejection.¹ *Exit* [*carrying the* DUCHESS'S
body.]

ACT 5

Scene 1

[*Enter*] ANTONIO [*and*] DELIO.

ANTONIO

What think you of my hope of reconcilment
To the Aragonian brethren?

DELIO

I misdoubt it,

For though they have sent their letters of safe
conduct

For your repair to Milan, they appear

But nets to entrap you. The Marquis of Pescara,

Under whom you hold certain land in 'cheat,²

Much 'gainst his noble nature, hath been moved

To seize those lands, and some of his dependents

Are, at this instant, making it their suit

10 To be invested in your revenues.

I cannot think they mean well to your life

That do deprive you of your means of life –

Your living.

ANTONIO

You are still an heretic

To any safety I can shape myself.

[*Enter* PESCARA.]

DELIO

Here comes the Marquis. I will make myself
Petitioner for some part of your land
To know *whither* it is flying.

ANTONIO

I pray, do.

[ANTONIO *stands aside.*]

DELIO

Sir, I have a suit to you.

PESCARA

To me?

DELIO

An easy one.

There is the citadel of St Bennet,¹

20 With some demesnes,² of late in the possession
Of Antonio Bologna. Please you, bestow them on
me.

PESCARA

You are my friend; but this is such a suit
Nor fit for me to give, nor you to take.

DELIO

No, sir?

[*Enter* JULIA.]

PESCARA

I will give you ample reason for't
Soon in private. Here's the Cardinal's mistress.

JULIA

My lord, I am grown your poor petitioner,
And should be an ill beggar, had I not
A great man's letter here, the Cardinal's,
To court you in my favour.

[*She gives PESCARA the letter which he reads.*]

PESCARA

He entreats for you

30 The citadel of Saint Bennet, that belonged
To the banished Bologna.

JULIA

Yes.

PESCARA

I could not have thought of a friend I could
Rather pleasure with it: 'tis yours.

JULIA

Sir, I thank you;
And he shall know how doubly I am engaged
Both in your gift, and speediness of giving,
Which makes your grant the greater. *Exit.*

ANTONIO [*Aside*]

How they fortify
Themselves with my ruin!

DELIO [*To PESCARA*]

Sir, I am

Little bound to you.

PESCARA

Why?

DELIO

Because you denied this suit to me, and gave't
To such a creature.

PESCARA

40 Do you know what it was?

It was Antonio's land – not forfeited
By course of law, but ravished from his throat
By the Cardinal's entreaty. It were not fit
I should bestow so main a piece of wrong
Upon my friend; 'tis a gratification
Only due to a strumpet, for it is injustice.
Shall I sprinkle the pure blood of innocents
To make those followers I call my friends
Look ruddier¹ upon me? I am glad

50 This land, ta'en from the owner by such wrong,
Returns again unto so foul an use
As salary for his lust. Learn, good Delio,
To ask noble things of me, and you shall find
I'll be a noble giver.

DELIO

You instruct me well.

ANTONIO [*Aside*]

Why, here's a man, now, would fright impudence
From sauciest beggars.

PESCARA

Prince Ferdinand's come to Milan
Sick, as they give out, of an apoplexy;
But some say 'tis a frenzy.² I am going
To visit him. *Exit.*

ANTONIO [*coming forward*]

'Tis a noble old fellow.

DELIO

60 What course do you mean to take, Antonio?

ANTONIO

This night I mean to venture all my fortune –
Which is no more than a poor, ling'ring life –
To the Cardinal's worst of malice. I have got
Private access to his chamber, and intend
To visit him about the mid of night,
As once his brother did our noble Duchess.
It may be that the sudden apprehension
Of danger – for I'll go in mine own shape –
When he shall see it **fraught** with love and duty,
70 May draw the poison out of him, and work
A friendly reconciliation. If it fail,
Yet it shall rid me of this infamous calling;¹
For better fall once than be ever falling.

DELIO

I'll second you in all danger and, *howe'er*,²
My life keeps rank with yours.

ANTONIO

You are still my loved and best friend. *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 2

[Enter] PESCARA [and] a DOCTOR.

PESCARA

Now, Doctor, may I visit your patient?

DOCTOR

If't please your lordship, but he's instantly
To take the air here in the gallery,³
By my direction.

PESCARA

Pray thee, what's his disease?

DOCTOR

A very pestilent⁴ disease, my lord,
They call 'lycanthopia'.

PESCARA

What's that?
I need a dictionary to't.

DOCTOR

I'll tell you:
In those that are possessed with't there o'erflows

Such melancholy humour, they imagine
10 Themselves to be transformed into wolves:
Steal forth to churchyards in the dead of night,
And dig dead bodies up; as, two nights since,
One met the Duke, 'bout midnight, in a lane
Behind St Mark's church, with the leg of a man
Upon his shoulder; and he howled fearfully,
Said he was a wolf – only the difference
Was a wolf's skin was hairy on the outside,
His on the inside; bade them take their swords,
Rip up his flesh, and try. Straight I was sent for,
20 And having ministered to him, found his Grace
Very well recovered.

PESCARA

I am glad on't.

DOCTOR

Yet not without some fear of a relapse.
If he grow to his fit again I'll go
A nearer¹ way to work with him than ever
Paracelsus² dreamed of. If they'll give me leave,
I'll buffet³ his madness out of him.
Stand aside. He comes.

[*Enter* FERDINAND, MALATESTA, CARDINAL *and*
BOSOLA.]

FERDINAND

Leave me.

MALATESTES

Why doth your lordship love this solitariness?

FERDINAND

30 Eagles commonly fly alone. They are crows,
daws and starlings that flock together. Look, what's
that follows me?

MALATESTES

Nothing, my lord.

FERDINAND

Yes.

MALATESTES

'Tis your shadow.

FERDINAND

Stay it! Let it not haunt me.¹

MALATESTES

Impossible if you move and the sun shine.

FERDINAND

I will throttle it.

[*He throws himself onto the shadow.*]

MALATESTES

Oh, my lord, you are angry with nothing!

FERDINAND

You are a fool.

40 How is't possible I should catch my shadow
Unless I fall upon't? When I go to hell,
I mean to carry a bribe, for look you,

Good gifts ever more make way for the worst persons.

PESCARA

Rise, good my lord.

FERDINAND

I am studying the art of patience.

PESCARA

'Tis a noble virtue.

FERDINAND

To drive six snails before me from this town to Moscow; neither use goad² nor whip to them, but let them take their own time – the patient'st man i'th' world match me for an

50 experiment! – and I'll crawl after like a sheep-biter.³

CARDINAL

Force him up.

[*They get FERDINAND to his feet.*]

FERDINAND

Use me well, you were best. What I have done, I have done;

I'll confess nothing.⁴

DOCTOR

Now let me come to him. Are you mad, my lord? Are you out of your princely wits?

FERDINAND

What's he?

PESCARA

Your doctor.

FERDINAND

Let me have his beard sawed off, and his eyebrows
filed more civil.¹

DOCTOR [*Aside*]

60 I must do mad tricks with him, for that's the only
way on't.
[*Aloud*] I have brought your grace a salamander's² skin
to keep you from sun-burning.

FERDINAND

I have cruel sore eyes.

DOCTOR

The white of a cockatrice's³ egg is present remedy.

FERDINAND

Let it be a new-laid one, you were best. [*To* PESCARA]
Hide me from him! Physicians are like kings: they
brook no contradiction.

DOCTOR

Now he begins to fear me. Now let me alone with
him.

[*FERDINAND starts to undress.*]

CARDINAL

How now, put off your gown?

[*The* CARDINAL *restrains him.*]

DOCTOR

70 Let me have some forty urinals filled with rose-water. He and I'll go pelt one another with them. Now he begins to fear me. – Can you fetch a frisk,¹ sir? – Let him go, let him go, upon my peril.

[*The CARDINAL releases him.*]

I find by his eye he stands in awe of me; I'll make him as tame as a dormouse.

[FERDINAND *attacks the* DOCTOR.]

FERDINAND

80 Can you fetch your frisks, sir? I will stamp him into a cullis,² flay off his skin to cover one of the anatomies³ this rogue hath set i'th' cold yonder, in Barber-Chirurgeons' Hall. Hence, hence! You are all of you like beasts for sacrifice; there's nothing left of you but tongue and belly – flattery and lechery. [Exit.]

PESCARA

Doctor, he did not fear you thoroughly.

DOCTOR

True, I was somewhat too forward. [Exit.]

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

Mercy upon me, what a fatal judgement
Hath fall'n upon this Ferdinand!

PESCARA

Knows your Grace
What accident hath brought unto the Prince
This strange distraction?

CARDINAL [*Aside*]

I must feign somewhat. [*Aloud*] Thus they say it grew:

You have heard it rumoured for these many years,
90 None of our family dies but there is seen
The shape of an old woman, which is given
By tradition to us to have been murdered
By her nephews for her riches. Such a figure
One night, as the Prince sat up late at's book,
Appeared to him, when, crying out for help,
The gentlemen of's chamber found his Grace
All on a cold sweat, altered much in face
And language; since which apparition,
He hath grown worse and worse, and I much fear
100 He cannot live.

BOSOLA [*To the* CARDINAL]

Sir, I would speak with you.

PESCARA

We'll leave your Grace,
Wishing to the sick Prince, our noble lord,
All health of mind and body.

CARDINAL

You are most welcome.

[*Exeunt all except* CARDINAL AND BOSOLA.]

[*Aside*] Are you come? So. This fellow must not know

By any means I had intelligence

In our Duchess's death; for, though I counselled it,
The full of all th'engagement¹ seemed to grow
From Ferdinand. [*To BOSOLA*] Now sir, how fares
our sister?

I do not think but sorrow makes her look
110 Like to an *oft-dyed* garment. She shall now
Taste comfort from me. Why do you look so
wildly?

Oh, the fortune of your master here, the Prince,
Dejects you; but be you of happy comfort.
If you'll do *one* thing for me, I'll entreat,
Though he had a cold tombstone o'er his bones,²
I'd make you what you would be.

BOSOLA

Anything.
Give it me in a breath, and let me fly to't.
They that think long, small expedition³ win,
For musing much o'th' end, cannot begin.
[*Enter JULIA.*]

JULIA

Sir, will you come in to supper?

CARDINAL

120 I am busy. Leave me.

JULIA [*Aside*]

What an excellent shape hath that fellow! *Exit.*

CARDINAL

'Tis thus: Antonio lurks here in Milan.
Enquire him out and kill him. While he lives
Our sister cannot marry, and I have thought
Of an excellent match for her. Do this, and style
me
Thy advancement.¹

BOSOLA

But by what means shall I find him out?

CARDINAL

There is a gentleman called Delio,
Here in the camp, that hath been long approved
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow,
130 Follow him to Mass: may be Antonio,
Although he do account religion
But a school-name,² for fashion of the world
May accompany him; or else go enquire out
Delio's confessor, and see if you can bribe
Him to reveal it. There are a thousand ways
A man might find to trace him, as to know
What fellows haunt the Jews for taking up³
Great sums of money – for sure he's in want;
Or else to go to th'picture-makers and learn
140 Who **bought** her picture lately. Some of these
Happily⁴ may take.

BOSOLA

Well, I'll not freeze i'th' business.

I would see that wretched thing, Antonio,
Above all sights i'th' world.

CARDINAL

Do, and be happy. *Exit.*

BOSOLA

This fellow doth breed basilisks in's eyes.
He's nothing else but Murder. Yet he seems
Not to have notice of the Duchess's death.
'Tis his cunning. I must follow his example:
There cannot be a surer way to trace
Than that of an old fox.
[*Enter JULIA, pointing a pistol at him.*]

JULIA

So, sir, you are well met.

BOSOLA

How now?

JULIA

150 Nay, the doors are fast enough.
Now, sir, I will make you confess your treachery.

BOSOLA

Treachery?

JULIA

Yes, confess to me
Which of my women 'twas you hired to put
Love-powder into my drink.

BOSOLA

Love-powder?

JULIA

Yes, when I was at Malfi;
Why should I fall in love with such a face else?
I have already suffered for thee so much pain,
The only remedy to do me good
Is to kill my longing.

BOSOLA

Sure, your pistol holds
160 Nothing but perfumes or kissing comfits.¹
Excellent lady,
You have a pretty way on't to discover
Your longing. Come, come, I'll disarm you,
And arm you thus. [*Embracing her*] Yet this is
wondrous strange!

JULIA

Compare thy form and my eyes together,
You'll find my love no such great miracle.
[*She kisses him.*]
Now you'll say I am wanton. This nice¹ modesty
In ladies is but a troublesome familiar
That haunts them.

BOSOLA

Know you me? I am a blunt soldier.

JULIA

The better;

170 Sure, there wants² fire where there are no lively sparks

Of roughness.

BOSOLA

And I want compliment.³

JULIA

Why,

Ignorance in courtship cannot make you do amiss,

If you have a heart to do well.

BOSOLA

You are very fair.

JULIA

Nay, if you lay beauty to my charge,

I must plead unguilty.

BOSOLA

Your bright eyes

Carry a quiver of darts in them, sharper

Than sunbeams.

JULIA

You will mar me with commendation.

Put yourself to the charge of courting me,

Whereas now I woo you.

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

180 I have it: I will work upon this creature.

[*To JULIA*] Let us grow most amorously familiar.
If the great Cardinal now should see me thus,
Would he not count me a villain?

JULIA

No, he might count me a wanton,
Not lay a scruple of offence on you;
For if I see and steal a diamond,
The fault is not i'th' stone but in me the thief
That purloins it. I am sudden with you;
We that are great women of pleasure use to cut off
190 These uncertain wishes and unquiet longings,
And in an instant join the sweet delight
And the pretty excuse together. Had you been in
th'street,
Under my chamber window, even there
I should have courted you.

BOSOLA

Oh, you are an excellent lady!

JULIA

Bid me do somewhat for you presently,¹
To express I love you.

BOSOLA

I will, and if you love me
Fail not to effect it.
The Cardinal is grown wondrous melancholy;
Demand the cause. Let him not put you off

200 With feigned excuse; discover the main ground
on't.

JULIA

Why would you know this?

BOSOLA

I have depended on him,
And I hear that he is fall'n in some disgrace
With the Emperor. If he be, like the mice
That forsake falling houses, I would shift
To other dependence.

JULIA

You shall not need follow the wars;
I'll be your maintenance.

BOSOLA

And I your loyal servant;
But I cannot leave my calling.

JULIA

Not leave
An ungrateful general for the love of a sweet lady?
You are like some cannot sleep in featherbeds,
But must have blocks for their pillows.

BOSOLA

210 Will you do this?

JULIA

Cunningly.

BOSOLA

Tomorrow I'll expect th'intelligence.

JULIA

Tomorrow? Get you into my cabinet;¹

You shall have it with you. Do not delay me,

No more than I do you. I am like one

That is condemned: I have my pardon promised,

But I would see it sealed. Go, get you in.

You shall see me wind my tongue about his heart

Like a skein of silk.

[BOSOLA *withdraws into the cabinet.*]

[*Enter* CARDINAL.]

CARDINAL

Where are you?

[*Enter* SERVANTS.]

SERVANTS

Here.

CARDINAL

Let none, upon your lives,

220 Have conference with the Prince Ferdinand

Unless I know it. [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.]

[*Aside*] In this distraction

He may reveal the murder.

[*Seeing* JULIA] Yond's my ling'ring consumption.

I am weary of her, and by any means

Would be quit of.

JULIA

How now, my lord,
What ails you?

CARDINAL

Nothing.

JULIA

Oh, you are much altered.
Come, I must be your secretary and remove
This lead from off your bosom. What's the matter?

CARDINAL

I may not tell you.

JULIA

230 Are you so far in love with sorrow
You cannot part with part of it? Or think you
I cannot love your Grace when you are sad,
As well as merry? Or do you suspect
I, that have been a secret to your heart
These many winters, cannot be the same
Unto your tongue?

CARDINAL

Satisfy thy longing.
The only way to make thee keep my counsel
Is not to tell thee.

JULIA

Tell your echo this,
Or flatterers that, like echoes, still report
240 What they hear, though most imperfect, and not
me.

For, if that you be true unto yourself,¹
I'll know.

CARDINAL

Will you rack² me?

JULIA

No, judgement shall
Draw it from you. It is an equal fault
To tell one's secrets unto all, or none.

CARDINAL

The first argues folly.

JULIA

But the last tyranny.

CARDINAL

Very well. Why, imagine I have committed
Some secret deed, which I desire the world
May never hear of.

JULIA

Therefore may not I know it?
250 You have concealed for me as great a sin
As adultery. Sir, never was occasion
For perfect trial of my constancy
Till now. Sir, I beseech you.

CARDINAL

You'll repent it.

JULIA

Never.

CARDINAL

It hurries thee to ruin; I'll not tell thee.

Be well advised, and think what danger 'tis

To receive a prince's secrets. They that do

Had need have their breasts hooped with adamant³

To contain them. I pray thee, yet be satisfied.

Examine thine own frailty. 'Tis more easy

260 To tie knots than unloose them. 'Tis a secret

That, like a ling'ring poison, may chance lie

Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence.

JULIA

Now you dally with me.

CARDINAL

No more: thou shalt know it.

By my appointment the great Duchess of Malfi

And two of her young children, four nights since,

Were strangled.

JULIA

Oh heaven! Sir, what have you done?

CARDINAL

How now? How settles this?¹ Think you your
bosom

Will be a grave dark and obscure enough
For such a secret?

JULIA

You have undone yourself, sir.

CARDINAL

Why?

JULIA

It lies not in me to conceal it.

CARDINAL

270

No?

Come, I will swear you to't upon this book.

JULIA

Most religiously.

CARDINAL

Kiss it.

[She kisses the book.]

Now you shall never utter it. Thy curiosity

Hath undone thee; thou'rt poisoned with that book.

Because I knew thou could'st not keep my
counsel,

I have bound thee to't by death.

BOSOLA *emerges from the cabinet.*

BOSOLA

For pity sake, hold!

CARDINAL

Ha, Bosola?

JULIA

I forgive you

This equal piece of justice you have done,

For I betrayed your counsel to that fellow.

280 He overheard it; that was the cause I said

It lay not in me to conceal it.

BOSOLA

Oh foolish woman,

Could'st not thou have poisoned him?

JULIA

'Tis weakness

Too much to think what should have been done.

I go I know not *whither*. [*She dies.*]

CARDINAL

Wherefore com'st thou hither?

BOSOLA

That I might find a great man, like yourself,

Not out of his wits as the Lord Ferdinand,

To remember¹ my service.

CARDINAL

I'll have thee hewed in pieces!

BOSOLA

Make not yourself such a promise of that life

Which is not yours to dispose of.

CARDINAL

290

Who placed thee here?

BOSOLA

Her lust, as she intended.

CARDINAL

Very well,

Now you know me for your fellow murderer.

BOSOLA

And wherefore should you lay fair marble colours¹

Upon your rotten purposes to me?

Unless you imitate some that do plot great
treasons,

And, when they have done, go hide themselves

I'th' graves of those were actors in't?²

CARDINAL

No more, there is a fortune attends thee.

BOSOLA

Shall I go sue to Fortune any longer?

300 'Tis the fool's pilgrimage.

CARDINAL

I have honours in store for thee.

BOSOLA

There are a many ways that conduct to seeming

Honour – and some of them very dirty ones.

CARDINAL

Throw to the devil
Thy melancholy. The fire burns well.
What need we keep a-stirring of't, and make
A greater *smother*?³ Thou wilt kill Antonio?

BOSOLA

Yes.

CARDINAL

Take up that body.

BOSOLA

I think I shall
Shortly grow the common *bier*⁴ for churchyards!

CARDINAL

310 I will allow thee some dozen of attendants
To aid thee in the murder.

BOSOLA

Oh, by no means.

Physicians that apply horse-leeches to any rank
swelling use to cut *off* their tails, that the blood may
run through them the faster. Let me have no train when
I go to shed blood, lest it make me have a greater when
I ride to the gallows.

CARDINAL

Come to me after midnight to help to remove that
body to her own lodging. I'll give out she died o'th'
plague: 'twill breed the less enquiry after her death.

BOSOLA

Where's Castruccio, her husband?

CARDINAL

320 He's rode to Naples to take possession
Of Antonio's citadel.

BOSOLA

Believe me, you have done a very happy turn.

CARDINAL

Fail not to come. There is the master-key
Of our lodgings, and by that you may conceive
What trust I plant in you.

BOSOLA

You shall find me ready.

Exit [CARDINAL.]

O poor Antonio! Though nothing be so needful
To thy estate as pity, yet I find
Nothing so dangerous. I must look to my footing:
In such slippery ice-pavements men had need
330 To be frost-nailed¹ well; they may break their
necks else.

The precedent's here afore me: how this man
Bears up in blood,² seems fearless! Why, 'tis well:
Security³ some men call the suburbs of hell –
Only a dead⁴ wall between. Well, good Antonio,
I'll seek thee out, and all my care shall be
To put thee into safety from the reach
Of these most cruel biters that have got
Some of thy blood already.¹ It may be

I'll join with thee in a most just revenge.

340 The weakest arm is strong enough, that strikes

With the sword of justice. Still, methinks the
Duchess

Haunts me.

There, there; 'tis nothing but my melancholy.²

O Penitence, let me truly taste thy cup,

That throws men down, only to raise them up.

Exit [with JULIA's body].

ACT 5

Scene 3

[*Enter*] ANTONIO, DELIO, [*and*] ECHO *from the Duchess's grave.*³

DELIO

Yond's the Cardinal's window. This fortification

Grew from the ruins of an ancient abbey,

And to yond side o'th' river lies a wall,

Piece of a cloister, which in my opinion

Gives the best echo that you ever heard:

So hollow and so dismal,⁴ and withal

So plain in the distinction of our words,

That many have supposed it is a spirit

That answers.

ANTONIO

I do love these ancient ruins.

10 We never tread upon them but we set

Our foot upon some reverend⁵ history,
And, questionless, here in this open court,
Which now lies naked to the injuries
Of stormy weather, some men lie interred
Loved the church so well, and gave so largely to't,
They thought it should have canopied their bones
Till doomsday. But all things have their end:
Churches and cities, which have diseases¹ like to
men,
Must have like death that we have.

ECHO

Like death that we have.

DELIO

20 Now the echo hath caught you.

ANTONIO

It groaned, methought, and gave
A very deadly accent.

ECHO

Deadly accent.

DELIO

I told you 'twas a pretty one. You may make it
A huntsman or a falconer, a musician,
Or a thing of sorrow.

ECHO

A thing of sorrow.

ANTONIO

Ay, sure, that suits it best.

ECHO

That suits it best.

ANTONIO

'Tis very like my wife's voice.

ECHO

Ay, wife's voice.

DELIO

Come, **let us** walk farther from't:

I would not have you go to th'Cardinal's tonight.

Do not.

ECHO

30 *Do not.*

DELIO

Wisdom doth not more moderate wasting sorrow

Than time. Take time for't; be mindful of thy
safety.

ECHO

Be mindful of thy safety.

ANTONIO

Necessity compels me.

Make scrutiny throughout the passes¹

Of your own life; you'll find it impossible

To fly your fate.

ECHO

Oh, fly your fate!

DELIO

Hark, the dead stones seem to have pity on you
And give you good counsel.

ANTONIO

Echo, I will not talk with thee,
For thou art a dead thing.

ECHO

40 *Thou art a dead thing.*

ANTONIO

My Duchess is asleep now,
And her little ones, I hope, sweetly. O heaven,
Shall I never see her more?

ECHO

Never see her more.

ANTONIO

I marked not one repetition of the echo
But that, and on the sudden, a clear light
Presented me a face folded in sorrow.

DELIO

Your fancy, merely.

ANTONIO

Come, I'll be out of this ague;²
For to live thus is not indeed to live:
It is a mockery and abuse of life.

50 I will not, henceforth, save myself by halves:

Lose all, or nothing.

DELIO

Your own virtue save you.

I'll fetch your eldest son and second you.

It may be that the sight of his¹ own blood,

Spread² in so sweet a figure, may beget

The more compassion.

ANTONIO

However,³ fare you well.

Though in our miseries Fortune have a part,

Yet in our noble suff'rings she hath none.

Contempt of pain – that we may call our
own. *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 4

[*Enter*] CARDINAL, PESCARA, MALATESTA, RODERIGO [*and*]
GRISOLAN [*carrying torches*].

CARDINAL

You shall not watch tonight by the sick prince.

His Grace is very well recovered.

MALATESTA

Good my lord, suffer⁴ us.

CARDINAL

Oh, by no means.

The noise, and change of object in his eye,
Doth more distract him. I pray, all to bed;
And though you hear him in his violent fit,
Do not rise, I entreat you.

PESCARA

So sir, we shall not.

CARDINAL

Nay, I must have you promise
Upon your honours; for I was enjoined to't
10 By himself, and he seemed to urge it sensibly.¹

PESCARA

Let [our](#) honours bind² this trifle.

CARDINAL

Nor any of your followers.

MALATESTA

Neither.

CARDINAL

It may be, to make trial of your promise,
When he's asleep, myself will rise and feign
Some of his mad tricks, and cry out for help,
And feign myself in danger.

MALATESTA

If your throat were cutting,
I'd not come at you, now I have protested³ against
it.

CARDINAL

Why, I thank you.

[CARDINAL *stands apart.*]

GRISOLAN

20 'Twas a foul storm tonight.

RODERIGO

The Lord Ferdinand's chamber shook like an
osier.⁴

MALATESTA

'Twas nothing but pure kindness in the devil
To rock his own child.

Exeunt [all except CARDINAL].

CARDINAL

The reason why I would not suffer these
About my brother is because at midnight
I may, with better privacy, convey
Julia's body to her own lodging. O my conscience!
I would pray now, but the devil takes away my
heart

Fro' having any confidence in prayer.

[*Enter BOSOLA, unseen.*]

30 About this hour I appointed Bosola
To fetch the body. When he hath served my turn,
He dies. *Exit.*

BOSOLA

Ha? 'Twas the Cardinal's voice. I heard him name

Bosola, and my death. Listen, I hear one's footing.¹

[*Enter* FERDINAND.]

FERDINAND

Strangling is a very quiet death.

BOSOLA [*Aside*]

Nay then, I see I must stand upon my guard.

FERDINAND

What say' to that? Whisper softly: do you agree to't?

So. It must be done i'th' dark. The Cardinal

Would not for a thousand pounds the Doctor should see it.

Exit.

BOSOLA

40 My death is plotted; here's the consequence of murder.

We value not desert nor Christian breath,

When we know black deeds must be cured with death.

[*Enter* SERVANT *with* ANTONIO.]

SERVANT

Here stay, sir, and be confident, I pray.

I'll fetch you a dark lantern. *Exit.*

ANTONIO

Could I take him

At his prayers, there were hope of pardon.

BOSOLA

Fall right my sword!

I'll not give thee so much leisure as to pray.

[He stabs ANTONIO in the dark.]

ANTONIO

Oh, I am gone! Thou hast ended a long suit¹

In a minute.

BOSOLA

What art thou?

ANTONIO

A most wretched thing,

50 That only have thy benefit² in death,

To appear myself.

[Enter SERVANT with a dark lantern.]

SERVANT

Where are you, sir?

ANTONIO

Very near my home – Bosola?

SERVANT

Oh misfortune!

BOSOLA *[To SERVANT]*

Smother thy pity! Thou art dead else – Antonio!

The man I would have saved 'bove mine own life!

We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and banded³

Which way please them. O good Antonio,
I'll whisper one thing in thy dying ear
Shall make thy heart break quickly: thy fair
Duchess
And two sweet children –

ANTONIO

60 Their very names
Kindle a little life in me.

BOSOLA

– are murdered!

ANTONIO

Some men have wished to die
At the hearing of sad tidings. I am glad
That I shall do't in sadness.⁴ I would not now
Wish my wounds balmed nor healed, for I have no
use
To put my life to. In all our quest of greatness,
Like wanton boys whose pastime is their care,
We follow after bubbles blown in th'air.
Pleasure of life, what is't? Only the good hours
80 Of an ague; merely a preparative to rest,
To endure vexation. I do not ask
The process of my death. Only commend me
To Delio.

BOSOLA

Break, heart!

ANTONIO

And let my son fly the courts of princes. [*He dies.*]

BOSOLA [*To SERVANT*]

Thou seem'st to have loved Antonio?

SERVANT

I brought him **hither**

To have reconciled him to the Cardinal.

BOSOLA

I do not ask thee that.

Take him up, if thou tender thine own life,

90 And bear him where the Lady Julia

Was wont to lodge. [*Aside*] Oh, my fate moves swift!

I have this Cardinal in the forge already.

Now I'll bring him to th'hammer. O direful misprision!¹

I will not imitate things glorious,

No more than base; I'll be mine own example.

[*To SERVANT*] On, on, and look thou represent, for silence,

The thing thou bear'st.²

Exeunt [BOSOLA and SERVANT carrying ANTONIO'S body].

ACT 5

Scene 5

Revenues with thee.

BOSOLA

Thy prayers and proffers
Are both unseasonable.

CARDINAL [*shouts*]

Raise the watch! We are betrayed!

BOSOLA

I have confined your flight.
I'll suffer your retreat to Julia's chamber,
But no further.

CARDINAL

Help! We are betrayed!

[*Enter above MALATESTI, RODERIGO, GRISOLAN and PESCARA.*]

MALATESTI

20 Listen.

CARDINAL

My dukedom for rescue!

RODERIGO

Fie upon his counterfeiting!

MALATESTI

Why, 'tis not the Cardinal.

RODERIGO

Yes, yes, 'tis he,
But I'll see him hanged ere I'll go down to him.

CARDINAL

Here's a plot upon me. I am assaulted! I am lost
Unless some rescue!

GRISOLAN

He doth this pretty well,
But it will not serve to laugh me out of mine
honour.

CARDINAL

The sword's at my throat!

RODERIGO

You would not bawl so loud then.

MALATESTA

Come, come, [let's](#) go to bed.

30 He told us thus much aforehand.

PESCARA

He wished you should not come at him, but,
believe't,

The accent of the voice sounds not in jest.

I'll down to him, howsoever, and with engines¹

Force ope the doors. [*Exit.*]

RODERIGO

Let's follow him aloof,

And note how the Cardinal will laugh at him.

[*Exeunt* MALATESTA, RODERIGO *and* GRISOLAN.]

BOSOLA

There's for you first –

He kills the SERVANT.

'Cause you shall not unbarricade the door
To let in rescue.

CARDINAL

What cause hast thou to pursue my life?

BOSOLA

Look there!

CARDINAL

Antonio?

BOSOLA

40 Slain by my hand, unwittingly.
Pray, and be sudden. When thou killed'st thy sister,
Thou took'st from Justice her most equal balance,²
And left her naught but her sword.

CARDINAL

Oh, mercy!

BOSOLA

Now it seems thy greatness was only outward,
For thou fall'st faster of thyself than calamity
Can drive thee. I'll not waste longer time. There!
[*He stabs the CARDINAL.*]

CARDINAL

Thou hast hurt me!

BOSOLA

Again!
[*Stabs him again.*]

CARDINAL

Shall I die like a leveret,
Without any resistance? Help, help, help!
I am slain!
[*Enter* FERDINAND.]

FERDINAND

50 Th'alarum!¹ Give me a fresh horse!
Rally the vanguard² or the day is lost!³
[*To the* CARDINAL] Yield, yield! I give you the
honour of arms,
Shake my sword over you. Will you yield?

CARDINAL

Help me! I am your brother.

FERDINAND

The devil?
My brother fight upon the adverse party?
He wounds the CARDINAL *and, in the scuffle, gives* BOSOLA *his*
death-wound.

There flies your ransom.

CARDINAL

Oh, justice!
I suffer now for what hath former been:
Sorrow is held the eldest child of Sin.

FERDINAND

Now you're brave⁴ fellows. Caesar's fortune was
harder than

60 Pompey's: Caesar died in the arms of prosperity,
Pompey at the feet of disgrace. You both died in the
field. The pain's nothing – pain, many times, is taken
away with the apprehension of greater, as the
toothache with the sight of a barber that comes to pull
it out. There's philosophy for you.

BOSOLA

Now my revenge is perfect.

He kills FERDINAND.

Sink, thou main cause

Of my undoing! The last part of my life

Hath done me best service.

FERDINAND

Give me some wet hay; I am broken-winded.¹

70 I do account this world but a dog-kennel.

I will vault credit,² and affect³ high pleasures

Beyond death.

BOSOLA

He seems to come to himself,

Now he's so near the bottom.

FERDINAND

My sister! Oh, my sister! There's the cause on't.

Whether we fall by ambition, blood or lust,

Like diamonds we are cut with our own dust. [*He
dies.*]

CARDINAL [*To* BOSOLA]

Thou hast thy payment⁴ too.

BOSOLA

Yes, I hold my weary soul in my teeth;
'Tis ready to part from me. I do glory
That thou, which stood'st like a huge pyramid,
80 Begun upon a large and ample base,
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

[*Enter* PESCARA, MALATESTA, RODERIGO *and*
GRISOLAN.]

PESCARA

How now, my lord?

MALATESTA

O sad disaster!

RODERIGO

80 How comes [this](#)?

BOSOLA

Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi, murdered
By th' Aragonian brethren; for Antonio,
Slain by this hand; for lustful Julia,
Poisoned by this man; and lastly, for myself,
That was an actor in the main of all,
Much 'gainst mine own good nature, yet i'th' end
Neglected.

PESCARA

How now, my lord?

CARDINAL

He gave us these large wounds as we were
struggling

Here i'th' rushes.¹ And now, I pray, let me

Be laid by and never thought of. [*He dies.*]

PESCARA

How fatally, it seems, he did withstand

His own rescue!

MALATESTA

Thou wretched thing of blood,

How came Antonio by his death?

BOSOLA

In a mist – I know not how.

Such a mistake as I have often seen

In a play. Oh, I am gone!

100 We are only like dead² walls, or vaulted graves

That, ruined, yields no echo. Fare you well.

It may be pain, but no harm to me to die

In so good a quarrel. Oh, this gloomy world!

In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness,

Doth womanish and fearful mankind live!

Let worthy minds ne'er stagger¹ in distrust

To suffer death or shame for what is just.

Mine is another voyage. [*He dies.*]

PESCARA

The noble Delio, as I came to th'palace,

110 Told me of Antonio's being here, and showed
me

A pretty gentleman: his son and heir.

[*Enter DELIO with ANTONIO's eldest son.*]

MALATESTA

Oh sir, you come too late.

DELIO

I heard so, and

Was armed for't ere I came. Let us make noble use
Of this great ruin, and join all our force

To establish this young, hopeful gentleman

In's mother's right.² These wretched eminent
things

Leave no more fame behind 'em than should one

Fall in a frost, and leave his print in snow;

As soon as the sun shines, it ever melts,

120 Both form and matter. I have ever thought

Nature doth nothing so great for great men,

As when she's pleased to make them lords of truth.

Integrity of life is fame's best friend,

Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the
end. *Exeunt.*

FINIS.



JOHN FORD
THE BROKEN HEART

*To the most worthy deserver of the noblest
titles in honour, WILLIAM, LORD
CRAVEN, Baron of Hamstead Marshall.*¹

My lord,

The glory of a great name, acquired by a greater glory of action, hath in all ages lived the truest chronicle to his own memory. In the practice of which argument, your growth to perfection, even in youth, hath appeared so sincere, so unflattering a pen-man, that posterity cannot with more delight read the merit of noble endeavours than noble endeavours merit thanks from posterity to be read with delight. Many nations, many eyes, have been witnesses of your deserts and loved them. Be pleased, then, with the freedom of your own nature, to admit one, amongst all, particularly into the list of such as honour a fair example of nobility. There is a kind of humble ambition, not uncommendable, when the silence of study breaks forth into discourse, coveting rather encouragement than applause; yet herein [censure](#) commonly is too severe an auditor, without the moderation of an able patronage. I have ever been slow in courtship of greatness,² not ignorant of such defects as are frequent to opinion; but the justice of your inclination to industry emboldens my weakness of confidence to relish an experience of your mercy, as many brave dangers have tasted of your courage. Your lordship strove to be known to the world, when the world knew you least, by voluntary but excellent attempts.³ Like allowance I plead of being known to your lordship, in this low presumption, by tendering to a favourable entertainment¹ a devotion offered from a heart that can be as truly sensible of

any least respect,³ as ever profess the owner in my best, my
readiest services, a lover of your natural love to virtue,

John Ford

The Prologue

Our scene is Sparta. He whose best of art
Hath drawn this piece calls it *The Broken Heart*.
The title lends no expectation here
Of apish laughter, or of some lame jeer
At place or persons; no pretended clause
Of jests,¹ fit for a brothel, courts applause
From vulgar admiration. Such low songs,
Tuned to unchaste ears, suit not modest tongues.
The virgin sisters² then deserved fresh bays³
10 When innocence and sweetness crowned their
lays.⁴
Then vices gasped for breath, whose whole
commerce⁵
Was whipped to exile by unblushing verse.
This law we keep in our presentment⁶ now:
Not to take freedom more than we allow.
What may be here thought a fiction, when Time's
youth
Wanted⁷ some riper years was known *A Truth*;⁸
In which, if words have clothed the subject right,
You may partake a pity with delight.

List of Characters

ORGILUS (angry)¹ *formerly betrothed to Penthea, disguised as a scholar named Aplotes (simplicity)*

CROTOLON (noise) *father of Orgilus, a counsellor to the King*

EUPHRANIA (joy) *sister of Orgilus, later wife to Prophilus*

TECNICUS (artist) *a philosopher, adviser to Orgilus*

PENTHEA (complaint) *formerly betrothed to Orgilus, now wife of Bassanes*

BASSANES (vexation) *Penthea's husband, a wealthy nobleman*

GRAUSIS² (old beldam) *Penthea's attendant*

PHULAS (watchful) *Bassanes's servant*

ITHOCLES (honour of loveliness) *twin brother of Penthea, General of the King's army*

ARMOSTES (an appeaser) *uncle to Ithocles and Penthea, a counsellor to the King*

PROPHILUS (dear) *Ithocles's friend, later husband to Euphrania*

AMYCLAS (common to the kings of Laconia) *King of Sparta*

CALANTHA (flower of beauty) *Princess of Sparta, later betrothed to Ithocles*

NEARCHUS (young prince) *Prince of Argos, Calantha's cousin and suitor*

AMELUS (trusty) *friend of Nearchus*

CHRYSTALLA (crystal) *lady-in-waiting to Calantha*

PHILEMA (a kiss) *lady-in-waiting to Calantha*

LEMOPHIL¹ (glutton) *courtier*

GRONEAS (tavern-haunter) *courtier*

Lords, Courtiers, Officers, Attendants, Servants, Musicians

The Scene: Sparta

ACT 1

Scene 1

Enter CROTOLON and ORGILUS.

CROTOLON

Dally not further. I will know the reason
That speeds thee to this journey.

ORGILUS

Reason? Good sir,
I can yield many.

CROTOLON

Give me one, a good one –
Such I expect, and ere we part must have.
Athens? Pray, why to Athens? You intend not
To kick against the world, turn Cynic, Stoic,¹
Or read the logic lecture,² or become
An Areopagite³ and judge in causes
Touching the commonwealth? For, as I take it,
10 The budding of your chin⁴ cannot prognosticate
So grave an honour.

ORGILUS

All this I acknowledge.

CROTOLON

You do? Then, son, if books and love of
knowledge
Inflame you to this travel, here in Sparta

You may as freely study.

ORGILUS

'Tis not that, sir.

CROTOLON

Not that, sir? As a father I command thee
To acquaint me with the truth.

ORGILUS

Thus I obey 'ee.

After so many quarrels as dissension,
Fury and rage had **broached** in blood, and
sometimes

With death to such confederates as sided
20 With now-dead Thrasus¹ and yourself, my lord,
Our present king, Amyclas, reconciled
Your eager swords and sealed a gentle peace.
Friends you professed yourselves; which to
confirm,
A resolution for a lasting league
Betwixt your families was entertained,
By joining in a Hymenean bond²
Me and the fair Penthea, only daughter
To Thrasus.

CROTOLON

What of this?

ORGILUS

Much, much, dear sir.

A freedom of converse, an interchange
30 Of holy and chaste love so fixed our souls
In a firm growth of **holy union**, that no time
Can eat into the pledge. We had enjoyed
The sweets our vows expected, had not cruelty
Prevented all those triumphs³ we prepared for
By Thrasus his untimely death.

CROTOLON

Most certain.

ORGILUS

From this time sprouted up that poisonous stalk
Of aconite,⁴ whose ripened fruit hath ravished
All health, all comfort of a happy life.
For Ithocles her brother, proud of youth
40 And prouder in his power, nourished closely¹
The memory of former discontents
To glory in revenge. By cunning partly,
Partly by threats, 'a woos at once and forces
His virtuous sister to admit a marriage
With Bassanes – a nobleman in honour
And riches, I confess, beyond my fortunes.

CROTOLON

All this is no sound reason to importune
My leave for thy departure.

ORGILUS

Now it follows:

Beauteous Penthea, wedded to this torture
50 By an insulting² brother, being secretly
Compelled to yield her virgin freedom up
To him who never can usurp her heart,
Before contracted mine, is now so yoked
To a most barbarous thraldom, misery,
Affliction, that he savours not humanity³
Whose sorrow melts not into more than pity
In hearing but her name.

CROTOLON

As how, pray?

ORGILUS

Bassanes,
The man that calls her wife, considers truly
What heaven of perfections he is lord of
60 By thinking fair Penthea his. This thought
Begets a kind of monster-love, which love
Is nurse unto a fear so strong and servile
As brands all dotage with a jealousy.⁴
All eyes who gaze upon that shrine of beauty,
He doth resolve,¹ do homage to the miracle.
Someone, he is assured, may now or then –
If opportunity but sort² – prevail.
So much, out of a self-unworthiness,
His fears transport him; not that he finds cause

70 In her obedience, but his own distrust.

CROTOLON

You spin out your discourse.

ORGILUS

My griefs are violent.

For knowing how the maid was heretofore

Courted by me, his jealousies grow wild

That I should steal again into her favours,

And undermine her virtues – which, the gods

Know, I nor dare nor dream of. Hence, from hence

I undertake a voluntary exile.

First, by my absence to take off the cares

Of jealous Bassanes; but chiefly, sir,

80 To free Penthea from a hell on earth;

Lastly, to lose the memory of something

Her presence makes to live in me afresh.

CROTOLON

Enough, my Orgilus, enough. To Athens

I give a full consent – alas, good lady!

We shall hear from thee often?

ORGILUS

Often.

Enter EUPHRANIA.

CROTOLON

See,

Thy sister comes to give a farewell.

EUPHRANIA

Brother.

ORGILUS

Euphrania, thus upon thy cheeks I print
A brother's kiss, more careful of thine honour,
Thy health and thy well-doing than my life.
[*He kisses her.*]

90 Before we part, in presence of our father,
I must prefer a suit¹ to 'ee –

EUPHRANIA

You may style it,
My brother, a command.

ORGILUS

– That you will promise
To pass never to any man, however worthy,
Your faith, till, with our father's leave,
I give a free consent.

CROTOLON

An easy motion.²
I'll promise for her, Orgilus.

ORGILUS

Your pardon:
Euphrania's oath must yield me satisfaction.

EUPHRANIA

By Vesta's³ sacred fires, I swear.

CROTOLON

And I,

By great Apollo's⁴ beams, join in the vow;

100 Not without thy allowance to bestow her

On any living.

ORGILUS

Dear Euphrania,

Mistake me not. Far, far 'tis from my thought,

As far from any wish of mine, to hinder

Preferment to an honourable bed

Or fitting fortune. Thou art young and handsome,

And 'twere injustice – more, a tyranny –

Not to advance thy merit. Trust me, sister,

It shall be my first care to see thee matched

As may become thy choice and our contents.¹

I have your oath?

EUPHRANIA

110 You have. But mean you, brother,

To leave us as you say?

CROTOLON

Ay, ay, Euphrania,

He has just grounds direct him. I will prove

A father and a brother to thee.

EUPHRANIA

Heaven

Does look into the secrets of all hearts.

Gods, you have mercy with 'ee, else –

CROTOLON

Doubt² nothing;

Thy brother will return in safety to us.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

Souls sunk in sorrows never are without 'em;

They change fresh airs,³ but bear their griefs about
'em.

Exeunt.

ACT 1

Scene 2

Flourish. Enter AMYCLAS *the King*, ARMOSTES, PROPHILUS *and*
ATTENDANTS.

AMYCLAS

The Spartan gods are gracious. Our humility

Shall bend before their altars, and perfume

Their temples with abundant sacrifice.

See, lords, Amyclas, your old king, is ent'ring

Into his youth again. I shall shake off

This silver badge of age, and change this snow

For hairs as gay as are Apollo's locks.¹

Our heart leaps in new vigour.

ARMOSTES

May old time

Run back to double your long life, great sir.

AMYCLAS

10 It will; it must, Armostes. Thy bold nephew,
Death-braving Ithocles, brings to our gates
Triumphs and peace upon his conquering sword.
Laconia² is a monarchy at length;³
Hath, in this latter war, trod underfoot
Messene's⁴ pride. Messene bows her neck
To Lacedemon's⁵ royalty. Oh, 'twas
A glorious victory, and doth deserve
More than a chronicle – a temple, lords,
A temple to the name of Ithocles!
Where didst thou leave him, Prophilus?

PROPHILUS

20 At Pephnon,⁶
Most gracious sovereign. Twenty of the noblest
Of the Messenians there attend your pleasure,
For such conditions as you shall propose
In settling peace and liberty of life.

AMYCLAS

When comes your friend, the General?

PROPHILUS

He promised
To follow with all speed convenient.

Enter CROTOLON, CALANTHA, CHRYSTALLA, PHILEMA [*with a garland*] and EUPHRANIA.

AMYCLAS

Our daughter! – Dear Calantha, the happy news,
The conquest of Messene, hath already
Enriched thy knowledge?

CALANTHA

With the circumstance
30 And manner of the fight, related faithfully
By Prophilus himself. – But pray, sir, tell me,
How doth the youthful General demean¹
His actions in these fortunes?

PROPHILUS

Excellent Princess,
Your own fair eyes may soon report a truth
Unto your judgement, with what moderation,
Calmness of nature, measure, bounds and limits
Of thankfulness and joy 'a doth digest
Such amplitude of his success as would
In others, moulded of a spirit less clear,
40 Advance 'em to comparison with heaven.
But Ithocles –

CALANTHA

Your friend –

PROPHILUS

He is so, madam,

In which the period of my fate² consists.
He, in this firmament of honour, stands
Like a star fixed, not moved with any thunder
Of popular applause, or sudden lightning
Of self-opinion. He hath served his country,
And thinks 'twas but his duty.

CROTOLON

You describe
A miracle of man.

AMYCLAS

Such, Crotolon,
On forfeit of a king's word, thou wilt find him.
Flourish.

50 Hark, warning of his coming! All attend him.

Enter ITHOCLES, LEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS, *the rest*
of the LORDS *ushering him in.*

AMYCLAS

Return into these arms, thy home, thy sanctuary,
Delight of Sparta, treasure of my bosom,
Mine own, own Ithocles!
[AMYCLAS *embraces him.*]

ITHOCLES

Your humblest subject.

ARMOSTES

Proud of the blood I claim an interest in,

As brother to thy mother, I embrace thee,
Right noble nephew.

[ARMOSTES *embraces him.*]

ITHOCLES

Sir, your love's too partial.

CROTOLON

Our country speaks by me, who, by thy valour,
Wisdom and service, shares in this great action,
Returning thee, in part¹ of thy due merits,
A general welcome.

[CROTOLON *embraces him.*]

ITHOCLES

60

You exceed in bounty.

CALANTHA

Chrystalla, Philema: the chaplet.²

[*They hand CALANTHA a garland.*]

Ithocles,

Upon the wings of fame the singular
And chosen fortune of an high attempt
Is borne so past the view of common sight
That I myself, with mine own hands, have wrought
To crown thy temples this provincial¹ garland.
Accept, wear and enjoy it as our gift:
Deserved, not purchased.²

[*She places the garland on ITHOCLES's head.*]

ITHOCLES

Y'are a royal maid.

AMYCLAS

She is, in all, our daughter.

ITHOCLES

Let me blush,

70 Acknowledging how poorly I have served,

What nothings I have done, compared with
th'honours

Heaped on the issue of a willing mind;

In that lay mine ability, that only.

For who is he so sluggish from his birth,

So little worthy of a name or country,

That owes not out of gratitude for life

A debt of service, in what kind so ever

Safety or counsel of the commonwealth

Requires for payment?

CALANTHA

'A speaks truth.

ITHOCLES

Whom heaven

80 Is pleased to style victorious, there, to such,

Applause runs madding, like the drunken priests

In Bacchus³ sacrifices, without reason,

Voicing the leader-on⁴ a demi-god;

When as, indeed, each common soldier's blood

Drops down as current⁵ coin in that hard purchase,
As his whose much more delicate condition
Hath sucked the milk of ease. Judgement
commands,
But resolution executes. I use not,
Before this royal presence, these fit slights¹
90 As in contempt of such as can direct.

My speech hath other end: not to attribute
All praise to one man's fortune, which is
strengthened
By many hands. For instance, here is Prophilus,
A gentleman – I cannot flatter truth –
Of much desert; and, though in other rank,
Both Lemophil and Groneas were not missing
To wish their country's peace. For, in a word,
All there did strive their best, and 'twas our duty.

AMYCLAS

Courtiers turn soldiers? We vouchsafe our hand.
[LEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS *kiss* AMYCLAS's *hand*.]
Observe your great example.²

LEMOPHIL

100 With all diligence.

GRONEAS

Obsequiously and hourly.

AMYCLAS

Some repose

After these toils are needful. We must think on
Conditions for the conquered; they expect³ 'em.
On! Come, my Ithocles.

[PROPHILUS *offers* EUPHRANIA *his arm.*]

EUPHRANIA

Sir, with your favour,
I need not a supporter.⁴

PROPHILUS

Fate instructs me.

Exeunt, all except LEMOPHIL, GRONEAS,
CHRYSTALLA *and* PHILEMA.

LEMOPHIL *stays* CHRYSTALLA. GRONEAS [*stays*]
PHILEMA.

CHRYSTALLA

With me?

PHILEMA

Indeed, I dare not stay.

LEMOPHIL [*To* CHRYSTALLA]

Sweet lady,
Soldiers are blunt. Your lip –
[*He tries to kiss her.*]

CHRYSTALLA

Fie, this is rudeness!
You went not hence such creatures.

GRONEAS

Spirit of valour

Is of a mounting¹ nature.

PHILEMA

It appears so.

110 Pray, in earnest, how many men apiece

Have **you** two been the death of?

GRONEAS

'Faith, not many:

We were composed of mercy.

LEMOPHIL

For our daring

You heard the General's approbation

Before the King.

CHRYSTALLA

You 'wished your country's peace':

That showed your charity. Where are your spoils,

Such as the soldier fights for?

PHILEMA

They are coming.

CHRYSTALLA

By the next carrier, are they not?

GRONEAS

Sweet Philema,

When I was in the thickest of mine enemies,

Slashing off one man's head, another's nose,

Another's arms and legs –

PHILEMA

120

And all together.

GRONEAS

– Then would I with a sigh remember thee,
And cry ‘Dear Philema, ’tis for thy sake
I do these deeds of wonder!’ Dost not love me
With all thy heart now?

PHILEMA

Now as heretofore.
I have not put my love to use.¹ The principal
Will hardly yield an interest.

GRONEAS

By Mars,²
I’ll marry thee.

PHILEMA

By Vulcan,³ y’are forsworn,
Except⁴ my mind do alter strangely.

GRONEAS

One word.

CHRYSTALLA

You lie beyond all modesty. Forbear me.

LEMOPHIL

130 I’ll make thee mistress of a city. ’Tis
Mine own by conquest.

CHRYSTALLA

By petition. Sue for't
*In forma pauperis.*⁵ City? Kennel! Gallants,
Off with your *feathers*. Put on aprons,⁶ gallants.
Learn to reel,¹ thrum,² or trim a lady's dog,
And be good, quiet souls of peace. Hobgoblins!³

LEMOPHIL

Chrystalla!

CHRYSTALLA

Practise to drill⁴ hogs in hope
To share in the acorns. Soldiers? Corn-cutters,⁵
But not so valiant: they oft-times draw blood,
Which you durst never do. When you have
practised
140 More wit, or more civility, we'll rank'ee
I'th' list of men; till then, brave things-at-arms,
Dare not to speak to us. Most potent Groneas!
[*She curtsies.*]

PHILEMA

And Lemophil the hardy! [*Curtseying*] At your
services.

Exeunt CHRYSTALLA *and* PHILEMA.

GRONEAS

They scorn us as they did before we went.

LEMOPHIL

Hang 'em! Let us scorn them and be revenged.

GRONEAS

Shall we?

LEMOPHIL

We will, and when we slight them thus,
Instead of following them, they'll follow us;
It is a woman's nature.

GRONEAS

'Tis a scurvy one. *Exeunt.*

ACT 1

Scene 3

Enter TECNICUS, *a philosopher, and* ORGILUS, *disguised like a scholar of his [carrying a book].*

TECNICUS

Tempt not the stars, young man. Thou canst not
play

With the severity of fate. This change
Of habit, and disguise in outward view,
Hides not the secrets of thy soul within thee
From their quick-piercing eyes, which dive at all
times

Down to thy thoughts. In thy aspect¹ I note
A consequence² of danger.

ORGILUS

Give me leave,
Grave Tecnicus, without fore-dooming³ destiny,
Under thy roof to ease my silent griefs

10 By applying to my hidden wounds the balm

Of thy oraculous lectures. If my fortune
Run such a crooked by-way as to wrest
My steps to ruin, yet thy learnèd precepts
Shall call me back, and set my footings straight.
I will not court the world.

TECNICUS

Ah, Orgilus,
Neglects in young men of delights and life
Run often to extremities. They care not
For harms to others who contemn⁴ their own.

ORGILUS

But I, most learnèd artist,¹ am not so much
20 At odds with nature that I **grudge** the thrift²
Of any true deserver; nor doth malice³
Of present hopes so check them with despair
As that I yield to thought of more affliction
Than what is incident to frailty;⁴ wherefore,
Impute not this retirèd course of living
Some little time to any other cause
Than what I justly render: the information⁵
Of an unsettled mind, as the effect
Must clearly witness.

TECNICUS

Spirit of truth inspire thee!
30 On these conditions I conceal thy change,

And willingly admit thee for an auditor.

I'll to my study.

ORGILUS

I to contemplations

In these delightful walks. [Exit

TECNICUS.]

Thus metamorphosed,

I may, without suspicion, hearken after⁶

Pentheia's usage and Euphrania's faith.

Love, thou art full of mystery! The deities

Themselves are not secure. In searching out

The secrets of those flames which, hidden, waste

A breast made tributary to⁷ the laws

40 Of beauty, physic yet hath never found

A remedy to cure a lover's wound.

PROPHILUS *passeth over [the stage], supporting*

EUPHRANIA *and whispering.*

Ha? Who are those that cross yon private walk

Into the shadowing grove, in amorous foldings?¹

My sister? Oh, my sister! 'Tis Euphrania

With Prophilus, supported too. I would

It were an apparition. Prophilus

Is Ithocles his friend. It strangely puzzles me.

Enter again PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANIA.

Again? Help me, my book. This scholar's habit

Must stand my privilege.² My mind is busy;

Mine eyes and ears are open.

Walk[s] by, reading [then stands aside].

PROPHILUS

50

Do not waste

The span of this stol'n time, lent by the gods

For precious use, in niceness!³ Bright Euphrania,

Should I repeat old vows, or study new,

For purchase of belief to my desires –

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

Desires?

PROPHILUS

My service, my integrity –

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

That's better.

PROPHILUS

I should but repeat a lesson

Oft conned⁴ without a prompter but thine eyes.

My love is honourable –

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

So was mine

To my Penthea, chastely honourable.

PROPHILUS

60 Nor wants there more addition to my wish

Of happiness than having thee a wife,

Already sure of Ithocles, a friend

Firm and unalterable.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

But a brother

More cruel than the grave.

EUPHRANIA

What can you look for

In answer to your noble protestations

From an unskilful¹ maid but language suited

To a divided mind?

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

Hold out, Euphrania.

EUPHRANIA

Know, Prophilus, I never undervalued –

From the first time you mentioned worthy love –

70 Your merit, means or person. It had been

A fault of judgement in me, and a dullness

In my affections, not to weigh and thank

My better stars that offered me the grace

Of so much blissfulness. For, to speak truth,

The law² of my desires kept equal pace

With yours, nor have I left that resolution;

But only, in a word, whatever choice³

Lives nearest in my heart must first procure

Consent both from my father and my brother,

Ere he can own me his.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

80

She is forsworn else.

PROPHILUS

Leave me that task.

EUPHRANIA

My brother, ere he parted

To Athens, had my oath.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

Yes, yes, 'a had, sure.

PROPHILUS

I doubt not, with the means the court supplies,

But to prevail at pleasure.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

Very likely.

PROPHILUS

Meantime, best, dearest, I may build my hopes

On the foundation of thy constant suff'rance¹

In any opposition?

EUPHRANIA

Death shall sooner

Divorce life and the joys I have in living

Than my chaste vows from truth.

PROPHILUS

On thy fair hand

90 I seal the like.²

[*He kisses her hand.*]

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

There is no faith in woman.
Passion, O be contained! My very heartstrings
Are on the tenters.³

EUPHRANIA [*startled*]

Sir, we are overheard!
Cupid protect us! 'Twas a stirring, sir,
Of someone near.

PROPHILUS

Your fears are needless, lady.
None have access into these private pleasures,⁴
Except some near in court, or bosom-student
From Tecnicus his oratory,⁵ granted
By special favour lately from the King
Unto the grave philosopher.

EUPHRANIA

100

Methinks

I hear one talking to himself. I see him!

PROPHILUS

'Tis a poor scholar, as I told you, lady.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

I am discovered. [*Aloud*]¹ Say it: is it possible
With a smooth tongue, a leering countenance,
Flattery or force of reason – I come t'ee, sir –

To turn or to appease the raging sea?
Answer to that. – Your art? What art to catch
And hold fast in a net the sun's small atoms?
No, no, they'll out, they'll out. Ye may as easily
110 Out-run a cloud, driven by a northern blast,
As fiddle-faddle² so. Peace, or speak sense.

EUPHRANIA

Call you this thing a scholar? 'Las, he's lunatic.

PROPHILUS

Observe him, sweet; 'tis but his recreation.

ORGILUS

But will you hear a little? You are so tetchy.
You keep no rule in argument. Philosophy
Works not upon impossibilities
But natural conclusions. – Mew!³ Absurd!
The metaphysics are but speculations⁴
Of the celestial bodies, or such accidents
120 As, not mixed perfectly, in the air engendered,
Appear to us unnatural; that's all.
Prove it. – Yet, with a reverence to your gravity,
I'll balk⁵ illiterate⁶ sauciness, submitting
My sole opinion to the touch⁷ of writers.
[*He consults his book.*]

PROPHILUS

Now let us fall in with him.

ORGILUS

Ha, ha, ha!

These apish boys, when they but taste the
grammates¹

And principles of theory, imagine

They can oppose their teachers. Confidence

Leads many into errors.

PROPHILUS [*To* ORGILUS]

By your leave, sir.

EUPHRANIA

Are you a scholar, friend?

ORGILUS

130

I am, gay creature,

With pardon of your deities, a mushroom

On whom the dew of heaven drops now and then.

The sun shines on me too, I thank his beams.

Sometime I feel their warmth, and eat and sleep.

PROPHILUS

Does Tecnicus read to² thee?

ORGILUS

Yes, forsooth,

He is my master, surely. Yonder door

Opens upon his study.

PROPHILUS

Happy creatures!

Such people toil not, sweet, in heats of state,

Nor sink in thaws of greatness. Their affections
140 Keep order with the limits of their modesty.³
Their love is love of virtue. – What's thy name?

ORGILUS

Aplotes, sumptuous master, a poor wretch.

EUPHRANIA

Dost thou want¹ anything?

ORGILUS

Books, Venus, books.

PROPHILUS

Lady, a new conceit² comes in my thought,
And most available³ for both our comforts.

EUPHRANIA

My lord?

PROPHILUS

Whiles I endeavour to deserve
Your father's blessing to our loves, this scholar
May daily, at some certain hours, attend
What notice I can write of my success,
150 Here in this grove, and give it to your hands;
The like from you to me. So can we never,
Barred of our mutual speech, want sure
intelligence,⁴
And thus our hearts may talk when our tongues
cannot.

EUPHRANIA

Occasion is most favourable; use it.

PROPHILUS

Aplotes, wilt thou wait us twice a day,
At nine i'th' morning and at four at night,
Here in this bower, to convey such letters
As each shall send to other? Do it willingly,
Safely and secretly, and I will furnish

160 Thy study, or what else thou canst desire.

ORGILUS

Jove make me thankful! Thankful, I beseech thee,
Propitious Jove! I will prove sure and trusty.
You will not fail me books?

PROPHILUS

Nor aught besides
Thy heart can wish. This lady's name's Euphrania,
Mine Prophilus.

ORGILUS

I have a pretty¹ memory;
It must prove my best friend. I will not miss
One minute of the hours appointed.

PROPHILUS

Write
The books thou wouldst have bought thee in a
note,
Or take thyself some money.

ORGILUS

No, no money.

170 Money to scholars is a spirit invisible;
We dare not finger it – or books or nothing.

PROPHILUS

Books of what sort thou wilt. Do not forget
Our names.

ORGILUS

I warrant 'ee, I warrant 'ee.

PROPHILUS

Smile, Hymen, on the growth of our desires.
We'll feed thy torches with eternal fires.
Exeunt [PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANIA].

ORGILUS

Put out thy torches, Hymen, or their light
Shall meet a darkness of eternal night.
Inspire me, Mercury,² with swift deceits.
Ingenious fate has leapt into mine arms,
180 Beyond the compass of my brain. Mortality
Creeps on the dung of earth, and cannot reach³
The riddles which are purposed by the gods.
Great [acts](#) best write themselves in their own
stories;
They die too basely who outlive their
glories. *Exit.*

ACT 2

Scene 1

Enter BASSANES and PHULAS.

BASSANES

I'll have that window next the street dammed up.
It gives too full a prospect to temptation,¹
And courts a gazer's glances. There's a lust
Committed by the eye that sweats and *travails*,
Plots, wakes, contrives, till the deformed bear-
whelp,
Adultery, be licked into the act,²
The very act. That light³ shall be dammed up –
D'ee hear, sir?

PHULAS

I do hear, my lord. A mason
Shall be provided suddenly.⁴

BASSANES

Some rogue,
10 Some rogue of your confederacy – factor⁵
For slaves and strumpets – to convey close
packets⁶
From this spruce springal⁷ and the t'other
youngster,
That gaudy earwig,⁸ or my lord, your patron,
Whose pensioner⁹ you are. I'll tear thy throat out –
Son of a cat, ill-looking hound's-head – rip up
Thy *ulcerous* maw,¹⁰ if I but scent a paper,
A scroll, but half as big as what can cover

A wart upon thy nose, a spot, a pimple,
Directed to my lady. It may prove
20 A mystical¹ preparative to lewdness.

PHULAS

Care shall be had. I will turn every thread
About me to an eye.² [*Aside*] Here's a sweet life!

BASSANES

The city housewives,³ cunning in the traffic⁴
Of chamber-merchandise, set all at price
By wholesale;⁵ yet they wipe **their** mouths and
simper,
Cull,⁶ kiss and cry 'Sweetheart!', and stroke the
head
Which they have branched,⁷ and all is well again.
Dull clods of dirt, who dare not feel the rubs⁸
Stuck on their foreheads!

PHULAS

'Tis a villainous world.
One cannot hold his own in't.

BASSANES

30 Dames at court,
Who flaunt in riots,⁹ run another bias.¹⁰
Their pleasure heaves¹¹ the patient ass that suffers¹²
Upon the stilts of office, titles, incomes.
Promotion justifies the shame, and sues for't.

Poor Honour, thou art stabbed and bleed'st to death

By such unlawful hire.¹³ The country mistress
Is yet more wary, and in blushes hides
Whatever trespass draws her troth to guilt.
But all are false. On this truth I am bold:

40 No woman but can fall, and doth, or would.
Now for the newest news about the city –
What blab the voices, sirrah?

PHULAS

O my lord,
The rarest, quaintest, strangest, tickling news
That ever –

BASSANES

Hey-day!¹ Up and ride me,² rascal!
What is't?

PHULAS

Forsooth, they say the King has mewed³
All his grey beard, instead of which is budded
Another of a pure carnation⁴ colour,
Speckled with green and russet.

BASSANES

Ignorant block!

PHULAS

50 Yes, truly; and 'tis talked about the streets
That since Lord Ithocles came home, the lions

Never left roaring, at which noise the bears
Have danced their very hearts out.

BASSANES

Dance out thine, too.

PHULAS

Besides, Lord Orgilus is fled to Athens
Upon a fiery dragon,⁵ and 'tis thought
'A never can return.

BASSANES

Grant it, Apollo!

PHULAS

Moreover, please your lordship, 'tis reported
For certain that whoever is found jealous,
Without apparent proof that's¹ wife is wanton,
60 Shall be divorced. But this is but she-news:
I had it from a midwife. I have more yet.

BASSANES

Antic,² no more! Idiots and stupid fools
Grate³ my calamities. Why to be fair
Should yield presumption of a faulty soul –
Look to the doors.

PHULAS [*Aside*]

The horn of plenty crest him!⁴ *Exit* PHULAS.

BASSANES

Swarms of confusion huddle in my thoughts

In rare distemper. Beauty? Oh, it is
An unmatched blessing or a horrid curse.

Enter PENTHEA and GRAUSIS, an old lady.

She comes, she comes! So shoots the morning
forth,

70 Spangled with pearls of transparent dew!

The way to poverty is to be rich,
As I in her am wealthy; but for her,
In all contents a bankrupt. – Loved Penthea,
How fares my heart's best joy?

GRAUSIS

In sooth, not well;
She is so over-sad.

BASSANES

Leave chattering, magpie.

To PENTHEA] Thy brother is returned, sweet, safe,
and honoured

With a triumphant victory. Thou shalt visit him.

We will to court, where, if it be thy pleasure,

Thou shalt appear in such a ravishing lustre

80 Of jewels above value that the dames

Who brave it¹ there, in rage to be outshined,

Shall hide them in their closets,² and unseen

Fret in their tears, whiles every wond'ring eye

Shall crave none other brightness but thy presence.

Choose thine own recreations. Be a queen

Of what delights thou fanciest best, what company,
What place, what times. Do anything, do all things
Youth can command, so thou wilt chase these
clouds
From the pure firmament of thy fair looks.

GRAUSIS

90 Now 'tis well said, my lord. What, lady? Laugh!
Be merry! Time is precious.

BASSANES [*Aside to GRAUSIS*]

Furies³ whip thee!

PENTHEA

Alas, my lord, this language to your handmaid
Sounds as would music to the deaf. I need
No braveries⁴ nor cost of art to draw
The whiteness of my name into offence.
Let such – if any such there are – who covet
A curiosity⁵ of admiration,
By laying out their plenty to full view,
Appear in gaudy outsides. My attires
100 Shall suit the inward fashion of my mind;
From which, if your opinion, nobly placed,
Change not the livery⁶ your words bestow,
My fortunes with my hopes are at the highest.

BASSANES

This house, methinks, stands somewhat too much
inward.⁷

[*Aside to GRAUSIS*] Damnable bitch-fox!

GRAUSIS

I am thick of

hearing

Still,⁵ when the wind blows southerly. What think
'ee

If your fresh lady breed young bones, my lord?

Would not a chopping⁶ boy d'ee good at heart?

But, as you said –

BASSANES [*Aside to GRAUSIS*]

I'll spit thee on a stake,

Or chop thee into collops!¹

GRAUSIS

Pray, speak louder.

Sure, sure, the wind blows south still.

PENTHEA

Thou prat'st madly.

BASSANES

'Tis very hot. I sweat extremely.²

Enter PHULAS.

Now?

PHULAS

A herd of lords, sir.

BASSANES

Ha?

PHULAS

A flock of ladies.

BASSANES

Where?

PHULAS

Shoals of horses.

BASSANES

Peasant, how?

PHULAS

130

Caroches³

In drifts – th'one enter, th'other stand without, sir.

And now I vanish. *Exit* PHULAS.

Enter PROPHILUS, LEMOPHIL, GRONEAS, CHRYSTALLA *and*
PHILEMA.

PROPHILUS

Noble Bassanes.

BASSANES

Most welcome, Prophilus. Ladies, gentlemen,

To all my heart is open. You all honour me –

[*Aside*] A tympany¹ swells in my head already –

[*Aloud*] Honour me bountifully. [*Aside*] How they
flutter,

Wagtails and jays² together!

PROPHILUS [*To* PENTHEA]

From your brother,

By virtue of your love to him, I require

Your instant presence, fairest.

PENTHEA

He is well, sir?

PROPHILUS

140 The gods preserve him ever. Yet, dear beauty,
I find some alteration in him lately,
Since his return to Sparta. – My good lord,
I pray, use no delay.

BASSANES

We had not needed
An invitation if his sister's health
Had not fallen into question. – *Haste*, Penthea;
Slack not a minute. Lead the way, good Prophilus;
I'll follow step by step.

PROPHILUS

Your arm, fair madam.

Exeunt all except BASSANES and GRAUSIS.

BASSANES

One word with your old bawdship. Th'hadst been
better

Railed at the sins thou worshipping'st³ than have
thwarted

My will. I'll use thee cursedly.

GRAUSIS

150 You dote.

You are beside yourself. A politician¹

In jealousy? No, y'are too gross, too vulgar.
Pish, teach not me my trade. I know my cue.
My crossing you sinks me into her trust,
By which I shall know all. My trade's a sure one.

BASSANES

Forgive me, Grausis. 'Twas consideration
I relished not.² But have a care now.

GRAUSIS

Fear not,
I am no new-come to't.

BASSANES

Thy life's upon it,
And so is mine. My agonies are
infinite! *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 2

Enter ITHOCLES, *alone.*

ITHOCLES

Ambition? 'Tis of viper's breed: it gnaws
A passage through the womb that gave it motion.³
Ambition, like a seelèd dove,⁴ mounts upward,
Higher and higher still, to perch on clouds,
But tumbles headlong down with heavier ruin.
So squibs and crackers⁵ fly into the air.
Then, only breaking with a noise, they vanish

In stench and smoke. Morality, applied
To timely practice,¹ keeps the soul in tune,
10 At whose sweet music all our actions dance.
But this is form of books and school-tradition;
It physics not the sickness of a mind
Broken with griefs. Strong fevers are not eased
With counsel, but with best receipts² and means,
Means, speedy means and certain; that's the cure.
Enter ARMOSTES and CROTOLON.

ARMOSTES

You stick, Lord Crotolon, upon a point
Too nice³ and too unnecessary. Prophilus
Is every way desertful. I am confident
Your wisdom is too ripe to need instruction
From your son's tutelage.

CROTOLON

20 Yet not so ripe,
My lord Armostes, that it dares to dote
Upon the painted meat⁴ of smooth persuasion,
Which tempts me to a breach of faith.

ITHOCLES

Not yet
Resolved, my lord? Why, if your son's consent
Be so available,⁵ we'll write to Athens
For his repair to Sparta. The King's hand

Y'are bold and bitter.

ITHOCLES

'A presses home the injury; it smarts.

[*To* ARMOSTES] No reprehensions, uncle, I deserve
'em.

[*To* CROTOLON] Yet, gentle sir, consider what the
heat

Of an unsteady youth, a giddy brain,

Green indiscretion, flattery of greatness,

Rawness of judgement, wilfulness in folly,

Thoughts vagrant as the wind and as uncertain,

Might lead a boy in years to. 'Twas a fault,

50 A capital¹ fault. For then I could not dive

Into the secrets of commanding love.

Since when, experience – by the extremities in
others –

Hath forced me to collect;² and trust me, Crotolon,

I will redeem those wrongs with any service

Your satisfaction can require for current.³

ARMOSTES

Thy acknowledgement is satisfaction.

[*To* CROTOLON] What would you more?

CROTOLON

I'm conquered. If Euphrania

Herself admit¹ the motion, let it be so.

I doubt not my son's liking.

ITHOCLES

Use my fortunes;

60 Life, power, sword, and heart, all are your own.

Enter BASSANES, PROPHILUS, CALANTHA, PENTHEA, EUPHRANIA,
CHRYSTALLA, PHILEMA *and* GRAUSIS.

ARMOSTES

The Princess, with your sister.

CALANTHA [*leading forward* PENTHEA]

I present 'ee

A stranger here in court, my lord. For did not
Desire of seeing you draw her abroad,
We had not been made happy in her company.

ITHOCLES

You are a gracious princess. – Sister, wedlock
Holds too severe a passion in your nature
Which can engross all duty to your husband,
Without attendance on so dear a mistress.
'Tis not my brother's² pleasure, I presume,
T'immure her in a chamber?

BASSANES

70 'Tis her will.

She governs her own hours. Noble Ithocles,
We thank the gods for your success and welfare.
Our lady has of late been indisposed,
Else we had waited on you with the first.

BASSANES

The joys of marriage are the heaven on earth.
Life's paradise, great Princess, the soul's quiet,
Sinews of concord, earthly immortality,
Eternity of pleasures – no restoratives

90 Like to a constant woman. [*Aside*] But where is she?

'Twould puzzle all the gods but to create
Such a new monster. [*Aloud*] I can speak by proof,
For I rest in Elysium; 'tis my happiness.

CROTOLON

Euphrania, how are you resolved – speak freely –
In your affections to this gentleman?

EUPHRANIA

Nor more nor less than as his love assures me,³
Which, if your liking with my brother's warrants,
I cannot but approve in all points worthy.

CROTOLON [*To* PROPHILUS]

So, so, I know your answer.

ITHOCLES

'T had been pity
100 To sunder hearts so equally consented.

Enter LEMOPHIL.

LEMOPHIL

The King, Lord Ithocles, commands your
presence;

And, fairest Princess, yours.

CALANTHA

We will attend him.

Enter GRONEAS.

GRONEAS

Where are the lords? All must unto the King
Without delay. The Prince of Argos¹ –

CALANTHA

Well, sir?

GRONEAS

Is coming to the court, sweet lady.

CALANTHA

How!

The Prince of Argos?

GRONEAS

'Twas my fortune, madam,

T' enjoy the honour of these happy tidings.

ITHOCLES

Penthea.

PENTHEA

Brother?

ITHOCLES

Let me an hour hence

Meet you alone within the palace grove.

110 I have some secret with you. [*To* PROPHILUS]
Prithee, friend,

Conduct her thither, and have special care
The walks be cleared of any to disturb us.

PROPHILUS

I shall.

BASSANES [*Aside*]

How's that?

ITHOCLES

Alone, pray be alone.

[*To* CALANTHA] I am your creature, Princess. – On,
my lords!

Exeunt [*all except* BASSANES].

BASSANES

'Alone', 'alone'? What means that word 'alone'?
Why might not I be there? Hum! He's her brother.
Brothers and sisters are but flesh and blood,
And this same whoreson court-ease¹ is temptation
To a rebellion in the veins. Besides,

120 His fine friend, Prophilus, must be her
guardian.

Why may not he dispatch a business² nimbly
Before the other come? Or pand'ring, pand'ring
For one another, be't to sister, mother,
Wife, cousin, anything, 'mongst youths of mettle
Is in request.³ It is so. Stubborn fate!

But if I be a cuckold, and can know it,
I will be fell⁴ and fell.

Enter GRONEAS.

GRONEAS

My lord, y'are called for.

BASSANES

Most heartily, I thank ye. Where's my wife, pray?

GRONEAS

Retired amongst the ladies.

BASSANES

Still I thank 'ee.

130 There's an old waiter⁵ with her. Saw you her
too?

GRONEAS

She sits i'th' presence-lobby¹ fast asleep, sir.

BASSANES

Asleep? Sleep, sir?

GRONEAS

Is your lordship troubled?

You will not to the King?

BASSANES

Your humblest vassal.

GRONEAS

Your servant, my good lord.

BASSANES

I wait² your footsteps. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 3

[*Enter*] PROPHILUS [*and*] PENTHEA.

PROPHILUS

In this walk, lady, will your brother find you;
And, with your favour, give me leave a little
To work a preparation.³ In his fashion⁴
I have observed of late some kind of slackness
To such alacrity as nature
And custom took delight in. Sadness grows
Upon his recreations, which he hoards
In such a willing⁵ silence, that to question
The grounds will argue little skill in friendship,
And less good manners.

PENTHEA

10 Sir, I'm not inquisitive
Of secrecies without an invitation.

PROPHILUS

With pardon, lady, not a syllable
Of mine implies so rude a sense. The drift –
Enter ORGILUS [*disguised as Aplotes*].

[*To* ORGILUS]

Do thy best
To make this lady merry for an hour.

ORGILUS

Your will shall be a law, sir. *Exit*
[PROPHILUS].

PENTHEA

Prithee, leave me.
I have some private thoughts I would account
with.¹
Use thou thine own.

ORGILUS

Speak on, fair nymph. Our souls
Can dance as well to music of the spheres²
20 As any's who have feasted with the gods.

PENTHEA

Your school-terms³ are too troublesome.

ORGILUS

What heaven
Refines mortality from dross of earth,
But such as uncompounded beauty hallows
With glorified perfection?⁴

PENTHEA

Set thy wits
In a less wild proportion.⁵

ORGILUS

Time can never
On the white table of unguilty faith
Write counterfeit dishonour. Turn those eyes,

The arrows of pure love, upon that fire
Which once rose to a flame, perfumed with vows
30 As sweetly scented as the incense smoking
The holiest altars. Virgin tears, like those
On Vesta's odours, sprinkled dew to feed 'em
And to increase their fervour.¹

PENTHEA

Be not frantic.

ORGILUS

All pleasures are but mere imagination,
Feeding the hungry appetite with steam
And sight of banquet, whilst the body pines,
Not relishing the real taste of food.
Such is the leanness of a heart divided
From intercourse of troth-contracted loves.
40 No horror should deface that precious figure,
Sealed with the lively stamp of equal² souls.

PENTHEA

Away! Some fury hath bewitched thy tongue.
The breath of ignorance that flies from thence
Ripens a knowledge in me of afflictions
Above all suff'rance. Thing of talk, be gone!
Be gone without reply!

ORGILUS

Be just, Penthea,

In thy commands. When thou send'st forth a doom
Of banishment, know first on whom it lights.
Thus I take off the shroud in which my cares

50 Are folded up from view of common eyes.

[He removes his disguise.]

What is thy sentence next?

PENTHEA

Rash man, thou layest
A blemish on mine honour with the hazard
Of thy too-desperate life. Yet I profess,
By all the laws of ceremonious wedlock,
I have not given admittance to one thought
Of female change,¹ since cruelty enforced
Divorce betwixt my body and my heart.
Why would you fall from goodness thus?

ORGILUS

Oh, rather

Examine me how I could live to say

60 I have been much, much wronged. 'Tis for thy
sake

I put on this imposture. Dear Penthea,
If thy soft bosom be not turned to marble,
Thou'lt pity our calamities. My interest²
Confirms me thou art mine still.

PENTHEA

Lend your hand.

With both of mine I clasp it thus, thus kiss it,
Thus kneel before ye.

[*She kneels.*]

ORGILUS

You instruct my duty.³

[*He kneels.*]

PENTHEA

We may stand up.

[*They rise.*]

Have you aught else to urge

Of new demand? As for the old, forget it.

'Tis buried in an everlasting silence,

70 And shall be, shall be ever. What more would
ye?

ORGILUS

I would possess my wife! The equity

Of very reason bids me.

PENTHEA

Is that all?

ORGILUS

Why, 'tis the all of me, myself.

PENTHEA

Remove

Your steps some distance from me. At this space

A few words I dare change,¹ but first put on

Your borrowed shape.

[*He resumes his disguise.*]

ORGILUS

You are obeyed; 'tis done.

PENTHEA

How, Orgilus, by promise I was thine

The heavens do witness. They can witness too

A rape done on my truth. How I do love thee

80 Yet, Orgilus, and yet, must best appear

In tendering² thy freedom. For I find

The constant preservation of thy merit

By thy not daring to attempt my fame³

With injury of any loose conceit,⁴

Which might give deeper wounds to discontents.

Continue this fair race.⁵ Then, though I cannot

Add to thy comfort, yet I shall more often

Remember from what fortune I am fallen,

And pity mine own ruin. Live, live happy –

90 Happy in thy next choice, that thou may'st
people

This barren age⁶ with virtues in thy issue.

And oh, when thou art married, think on me

With mercy, not contempt. I hope thy wife,

Hearing my story, will not scorn my fall.

Now let us part.

ORGILUS

Part? Yet advise thee better:

Penthea is the wife to Orgilus,
And ever shall be.

PENTHEA

Never shall nor will.

ORGILUS

How!

PENTHEA

Hear me: in a word I'll tell thee why.

The virgin-dowry which my birth bestowed

100 Is ravished by another. My true love

Abhors to think that Orgilus deserved

No better favours than a second bed.

ORGILUS

I must not take this reason.

PENTHEA

To confirm it:

Should I outlive my bondage, let me meet

Another worse than this – and less desired –

If, of all the men alive, thou shouldst but touch

My lip or hand again.

ORGILUS

Penthea, now

I tell 'ee you grow wanton in my sufferance.¹

Come, sweet, th'art mine!

[He tries to embrace her.]

PENTHEA

Uncivil sir, forbear,

110 Or I can turn affection into vengeance!

Your reputation, if you value any,

Lies bleeding at my feet. Unworthy man,

If ever henceforth thou appear in language,

Message, or letter to betray my frailty,

I'll call thy former protestations lust,

And curse my stars for forfeit of my judgement.¹

Go thou, fit only for disguise and walks²

To hide thy shame. This once I spare thy life.

I laugh at mine own confidence. My sorrows

120 By thee are made inferior to my fortunes.³

If ever thou didst harbour worthy love,

Dare not to answer. My good genius⁴ guide me,

That I may never see thee more. Go from me!

ORGILUS

I'll tear my veil of politic frenzy⁵ off,

And stand up like a man resolved to do.

Action, not words, shall show me.⁶ O Penthea!

Exit ORGILUS.

PENTHEA

'A sighed my name, sure, as he parted from me.

I fear I was too rough. Alas, poor gentleman,

'A looked not like the ruins of his youth,

130 But like the ruins of those ruins. Honour,
How much we fight with weakness to preserve
thee!

Enter BASSANES and GRAUSIS.

BASSANES

Fie on thee! Damn thee, rotten maggot, damn thee!
Sleep? Sleep at court? And now? Aches,
convulsions,
Impostumes,⁷ rheums,⁸ gouts, palsies⁹ clog thy
bones
A dozen years more yet!

GRAUSIS

Now y'are in humours.¹⁰

BASSANES [*seeing* PENTHEA]

She's by herself. There's hope of that. She's sad,
too.
She's in strong contemplation, yes, and fixed.¹
The signs are wholesome.

GRAUSIS

Very wholesome, truly.

BASSANES

Hold your chops,² nightmare! [*To* PENTHEA] Lady,
come.
Your brother

140 Is carried to his closet. You must thither.

PENTHEA

Not well, my lord?

BASSANES

A sudden fit, 'twill off –
Some surfeit or disorder. How dost, dearest?

PENTHEA

Your news is none o'th' best.

Enter PROPHILUS.

PROPHILUS

The chief of men,
The excellentest Ithocles, desires
Your presence, madam.

BASSANES

We are hasting to him.

PENTHEA

In vain we labour in this course of life
To piece our journey out at length, or crave
Respite of breath. Our home is in the grave.

BASSANES

Perfect philosophy!

PENTHEA

[Then let us care](#)

150 To live so that our reckonings may fall even
When w'are to make account.

PROPHILUS

He cannot fear
Who builds on noble grounds. Sickness or pain

Is the deserver's exercise,¹ and such
Your virtuous brother to the world is known.
Speak comfort to him, lady; be all gentle.
Stars fall, but in the grossness of our sight,
A good man dying, th'earth doth lose a
light.² *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 1

Enter TECNICUS *and* ORGILUS *in his own shape.*³

TECNICUS

Be well advised; let not a resolution
Of giddy rashness choke the breath of reason.

ORGILUS

It shall not, most sage master.

TECNICUS

I am jealous;⁴
For if the borrowed shape so late put on
Inferred a consequence, we must conclude
Some violent design of sudden nature
Hath shook that shadow off, to fly upon
A new-hatched execution.⁵ Orgilus,
Take heed thou hast not, under our integrity,
10 Shrouded unlawful plots. Our mortal eyes
Pierce not the secrets of your hearts; the gods
Are only privy to them.

ORGILUS

Learnèd Tecnicus,
Such doubts are causeless; and, to clear the truth
From misconceit,¹ the present state² commands
me.

The Prince of Argos comes himself in person

In quest of great Calantha for his bride,
Our kingdom's heir. Besides, mine only sister,
Euphrania, is disposed³ to Prophilus.
Lastly, the King is sending letters for me
20 To Athens, for my quick repair to court.
Please to accept these reasons.

TECNICUS

Just ones, Orgilus,
Not to be contradicted. Yet beware
Of an unsure foundation. No fair colours
Can fortify a building faintly⁴ jointed.
I have observed a growth in thy aspect⁵
Of dangerous extent, sudden, and – look to't –
I might add, certain –

ORGILUS

My aspect? Could art
Run through mine inmost thoughts, it should not
sift
An inclination there more than what suited
With justice of mine honour.

TECNICUS

30 I believe it;
But know then, Orgilus, what honour is.
Honour consists not in a bare opinion
By doing any act that feeds content⁶ –
Brave in appearance, 'cause we think it brave.

Such honour comes by accident, not nature,
Proceeding from the vices of our passion,
Which makes our reason drunk. But real honour
Is the reward of virtue, and acquired
By justice or by valour, which for **basis**
40 Hath justice to uphold it. He then fails
In honour who, for lucre¹ or revenge,
Commits thefts, murders, treasons and adulteries,
With such like, by entrenching on just laws,
Whose sov'reignty is best preserved by justice.
Thus, as you see how honour must be grounded
On knowledge, not opinion – for opinion
Relies on probability and accident,
But knowledge on necessity and truth –
I leave thee to the fit consideration
50 Of what becomes the grace of real honour,
Wishing success to all thy virtuous meanings.

ORGILUS

The gods increase thy wisdom, reverend oracle,
And in thy precepts make me ever thrifty.²

TECNICUS

I thank thy wish. *Exit* ORGILUS.

Much mystery of fate
Lies hid in that man's fortunes. Curiosity³
May lead his actions into rare attempts.⁴

But let the gods be moderators still;
No human power can prevent⁵ their will.

Enter ARMOSTES [with a casket].

From whence come 'ee?

ARMOSTES

From King Amyclas. Pardon

60 My interruption of your studies. Here,
In this sealed box, he sends a treasure dear
To him as his crown. 'A prays your gravity
You would examine, ponder, sift and bolt⁶
The pith and circumstance of every tittle
The scroll within contains.

TECNICUS

What is't, Armostes?

ARMOSTES

It is the health of Sparta, the King's life,
Sinews and safety of the commonwealth –
The sum of what the oracle delivered
When last he visited the prophetic temple
70 At Delphos.¹ What his reasons are for which,
After so long a silence, he requires
Your counsel now, grave man, his majesty
Will soon himself acquaint you with.

TECNICUS

Apollo

Inspire my intellect! [*Taking the casket*] The
Prince of Argos

Is entertained?²

ARMOSTES

He is, and has demanded
Our Princess for his wife, which I conceive
One special cause the King importunes you
For resolution³ of the oracle.

TECNICUS

My duty to the King, good peace to Sparta,
And fair day to Armostes.

ARMOSTES

80 Like⁴ to Tecnicus. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 2

*Soft music. A song [within]. During which time, enter
PROPHILUS, BASSANES, PENTHEA, GRAUSIS, passing over the
stage. BASSANES and GRAUSIS enter again softly, stealing to
several stands,¹ and listen.*

Can you paint a thought or number,

Every fancy in a slumber?

Can you count soft minutes roving

From a dial's point by moving?

Can you grasp a sigh, or, lastly,

Rob a virgin's honour chastely?

No, oh no! Yet you may

*Sooner do both that and this,
This and that, and never miss,
10 Than by any praise display
Beauty's beauty. Such a glory
As beyond all fate, all story,
All arms, all arts,
All loves, all hearts,
Greater than those, or they,
Do, shall and must obey.*

BASSANES

All silent, calm, secure. – Grausis, no creaking?
No noise? Dost hear nothing?

GRAUSIS

Not a mouse,
Or whisper of the wind.

BASSANES

The floor is matted.
20 The bed-posts, sure, are steel or marble. Soldiers
Should not affect, methinks, strains so effeminate.
Sounds of such delicacy are but fawnings
Upon the sloth of luxury:¹ they heighten
Cinders of covert lust up to a flame.

GRAUSIS

What do you mean, my lord? Speak low. That
gabbling
Of yours will but undo us.

BASSANES

Chamber-combats²
Are felt not heard.

PROPHILUS [*Within*]

'A wakes.

BASSANES

What's that?

ITHOCLES [*Within*]

Who's there?

Sister? – All quit the room else.

BASSANES

'Tis consented.

Enter PROPHILUS.

PROPHILUS

30 Lord Bassanes, your brother³ would be private.
We must forbear; his sleep hath newly left him.
Please 'ee withdraw.

BASSANES

By any means, 'tis fit.

PROPHILUS

Pray, gentlewoman, walk too.

GRAUSIS

Yes, I will, sir. *Exeunt.*

[*Enter*] ITHOCLES *discovered*⁴ *in a chair, and* PENTHEA.

ITHOCLES

Sit nearer, sister, to me – nearer yet.
We had one father, in one womb took life,
Were brought up twins together, yet have lived
At distance like two strangers. I could wish
That the first pillow whereon I was cradled
Had proved to me a grave.

PENTHEA

You had been happy;
40 Then had you never known that sin of life
Which blots all following glories with a
vengeance,
For forfeiting the last will of the dead,¹
From whom you had your being.

ITHOCLES

Sad Penthea,
Thou canst not be too cruel. My rash spleen
Hath, with a violent hand, plucked from thy bosom
A lover-blessed heart to grind it into dust –
For which mine's now a-breaking.

PENTHEA

Not yet, heaven,
I do beseech thee. First, let some wild fires
Scorch, not consume, it. May the heat be cherished
50 With desires infinite, but hopes impossible.

ITHOCLES

Wronged soul, thy prayers are heard.

PENTHEA

Here, lo, I breathe,
A miserable creature, led to ruin
By an unnatural brother.

ITHOCLES

I consume
In languishing affections for that trespass,
Yet cannot die.

PENTHEA

The handmaid to the wages
Of country toil² drinks the untroubled streams,
With leaping kids and with the bleating lambs,
And so allays her thirst secure,¹ whiles I
Quench my hot sighs with fleetings² of my tears.

ITHOCLES

60 The labourer doth eat his coarsest bread,
Earned with his sweat, and lies him down to sleep;
While every bit I touch turns in digestion
To gall, as bitter as Penthea's curse.
Put me to any penance for my tyranny,
And I will call thee merciful.

PENTHEA

Pray, kill me.
Rid me from living with a jealous husband.
Then we will join in friendship, be again

Brother and sister. Kill me, pray – nay, will 'ee?

ITHOCLES

How does thy lord esteem thee?

PENTHEA

Such an one

70 As only you have made me: a faith-breaker,

A spotted³ whore! Forgive me; I am one

In [act](#), not in desires, the gods must witness.

ITHOCLES

Thou dost belie thy friend.⁴

PENTHEA

I do not, Ithocles;

For she that's wife to Orgilus, and lives

In known adultery with Bassanes,

Is at the best a whore. Wilt kill me now?

The ashes of our parents will assume

Some dreadful figure and appear, to charge

Thy bloody guilt that hast betrayed their name

80 To infamy in this reproachful match.

ITHOCLES

After my victories abroad, at home

I meet despair. Ingratitude of nature

Hath made my actions monstrous. Thou shalt stand

A deity, my sister, and be worshipped

For thy resolvèd martyrdom. Wronged maids

And married wives shall to thy hallowed shrine
Offer their orisons,¹ and sacrifice
Pure turtles,² crowned with myrtle,³ if thy pity
Unto a yielding brother's pressure lend
One finger but to ease it.

PENTHEA

90 Oh, no more!

ITHOCLES

Death waits to waft me to the Stygian banks,⁴
And free me from this chaos of my bondage;
And till thou wilt forgive, I must endure.

PENTHEA

Who is the saint you serve?⁵

ITHOCLES

Friendship or [nearness](#)
Of birth to any but my sister durst not
Have moved that question, as a secret, sister,
I dare not murmur to myself.

PENTHEA

Let me –
By your new protestations I conjure 'ee –
Partake her name.

ITHOCLES

Her name? 'Tis – 'tis – I dare not.

PENTHEA

Only in thee, Penthea mine.

PENTHEA

If sorrows

Have not too much dulled my infected brain,

I'll cheer invention for an active strain.⁴

ITHOCLES

Madman! Why have I wronged a maid so
excellent?

*Enter BASSANES with a poniard,¹ PROPHILUS, GRONEAS,
LEMOPHIL and GRAUSIS.*

BASSANES

120 I can forbear no longer! More, I will not.

Keep off your hands, or fall upon my point!²

Patience is tired, for like a slow-paced ass

Ye ride my easy nature, and proclaim

My sloth-to-vengeance a reproach and property.³

ITHOCLES

The meaning of this rudeness?

PROPHILUS

He's distracted.

PENTHEA

O my grieved lord!

GRAUSIS

Sweet lady, come not near him.

He holds his perilous weapon in his hand

To prick 'a cares not whom nor where. See, see,
see!

BASSANES [*To* ITHOCLES]

My birth is noble, though the popular blast
130 Of vanity,⁴ as giddy as thy youth,
Hath reared thy name up to bestride a cloud,⁵
Or progress⁶ in the chariot of the sun.⁷
I am no clod of trade to lackey⁸ Pride,
Nor, like your slave of expectation,⁹ wait¹⁰
The bawdy hinges of your doors, or whistle
For mystical conveyance¹ to your bed-sports.

GRONEAS

Fine humours! They become him.

LEMOPHIL

How 'a stares,
Struts, puffs and sweats. Most admirable² lunacy!

ITHOCLES

But that I may conceive the spirit of wine
140 Has took possession of your soberer custom,
I'd say you were unmannerly.

PENTHEA

Dear brother –

BASSANES

Unmannerly? Mew, kitling!³ Smooth Formality
Is usher to the rankness of the blood,
But Impudence bears up the train. Indeed, sir,

Your fiery mettle or your springal⁴ blaze
Of huge renown is no sufficient royalty
To print upon my forehead the scorn 'cuckold'.

ITHOCLES

His jealousy has robbed him of his wits.
'A talks 'a knows not what.

BASSANES

Yes, and 'a knows
150 To whom 'a talks: to one that franks⁵ his lust
In swine-security of bestial incest.

ITHOCLES

Ha, devil?

BASSANES

I will halloo't,⁶ though I blush more
To name the filthiness than thou to act it.

ITHOCLES

Monster!
[*He draws his sword.*]

PROPHILUS

Sir, by our friendship –

PENTHEA

By our bloods,
Will you quite both undo us, brother?

GRAUSIS

Out on him!

These are his megrims,¹ firks² and melancholies.

LEMOPHIL

Well said, old touch-hole.³

GRONEAS

Kick him out at doors.

PENTHEA

With favour, let me speak. – My lord, what
slackness

In my obedience hath deserved this rage?

160 Except⁴ humility and silent duty

Have drawn on your unquiet, my simplicity

Ne'er studied your vexation.⁵

BASSANES

Light of beauty,

Deal not ungently with a desperate wound!

No breach of reason dares make war with her

Whose looks are sovereignty, whose breath is
balm.

Oh, that I could preserve thee in fruition⁶

As in devotion!

PENTHEA

Sir, may every evil

Locked in Pandora's box¹ shower, in your
presence,

On my unhappy head, if, since you made me

170 A partner in your bed, I have been faulty

In one unseemly thought against your honour.

ITHOCLES

Purge not his griefs, Penthea.

BASSANES

Yes, say on,

Excellent creature. [*To* ITHOCLES] Good,² be not a hindrance

To peace and praise of virtue. Oh, my senses

Are charmed with sounds celestial! [*To* PENTHEA] On, dear, on!

I never gave you one ill word. Say, did I?

Indeed, I did not.

PENTHEA

Nor, by Juno's forehead,³

Was I e'er guilty of a wanton error.

BASSANES

A goddess! Let me kneel.

[*He falls to his knees.*]

GRAUSIS

Alas, kind animal.

ITHOCLES [*sheathing his sword*]

No, but for penance –

BASSANES

180

Noble sir, what is it?

With gladness I embrace it. Yet, pray, let not

My rashness teach you to be too unmerciful.

ITHOCLES

When you shall show good proof that manly
wisdom,
Not over-swayed by passion or opinion,
Knows how to lead judgement, then this lady –
Your wife, my sister – shall return in safety
Home to be guided by you. But till first
I can, out of clear evidence, approve¹ it,
She shall be my care.

BASSANES

Rip my bosom up;
190 I'll stand the execution with a constancy.
This torture² is insufferable!

ITHOCLES

Well, sir,
I dare not trust her to your fury.

BASSANES

But
Pentheia says not so?

PENTHEA

She needs no tongue
To plead excuse, who never purposed wrong.

LEMOPHIL [*To GRAUSIS*]

Virgin of reverence and antiquity,
Stay you behind.

GRONEAS

The court wants not your diligence.

Exeunt all, except BASSANES and GRAUSIS.

GRAUSIS

What will you do, my lord? My lady's gone!

I am denied to follow.

BASSANES

I may see her

Or speak to her once more.

GRAUSIS

And feel her too, man.

200 Be of good cheer. She's your own flesh and
bone.

BASSANES

Diseases desperate must find cures alike.

She swore she has been true.

GRAUSIS

True, on my modesty.

BASSANES

Let him want truth¹ who credits not her vows.

Much wrong I did her, but her brother infinite.

Rumour will voice me the contempt of manhood,

Should I run on thus. Some way I must try

To outdo art,² and cry a'
jealousy.³ *Exeunt.*

Scene 3

Flourish. Enter AMYCLAS, NEARCHUS *leading* CALANTHA,
ARMOSTES, CROTOLON, EUPHRANIA, CHRYSTALLA, PHILEMA *and*
AMELUS.

AMYCLAS

Cousin of Argos, what the heavens have pleased,
In their unchanging counsels, to conclude
For both our kingdoms' weal we must submit to;
Nor can we be unthankful to their bounties
Who, when we were even creeping to our [grave](#),
Sent us a daughter, in whose birth our hope
Continues of succession. As you are
In title next, being grandchild to our aunt,
So we in heart desire you may sit nearest
10 Calantha's love – since we have ever vowed
Not to enforce affection by our will,
But by her own choice to confirm it gladly.

NEARCHUS

You speak the nature of a right just father.
I come not hither roughly to demand
My cousin's thralldom, but to free mine own.
Report of great Calantha's beauty, virtue,
Sweetness and singular perfections courted
All ears to credit¹ what I find was published²
By constant truth; from which, if any service
20 Of my desert can purchase fair construction,

This lady must command it.

CALANTHA

Princely sir,
So well you know how to profess observance³
That you instruct your hearers to become
Practitioners in duty;⁴ of which number
I'll study to be chief.

NEARCHUS

Chief, glorious virgin,
In my devotions, as in all men's wonder.

AMYCLAS

Excellent cousin,⁵ we deny no liberty;
Use thine own opportunities.
[CALANTHA *and* NEARCHUS *talk apart*.]
Armostes,
We must consult with the philosophers.
The business is of weight.

ARMOSTES

30

Sir, at your pleasure.

AMYCLAS

You told me, Crotolon, your son's returned
From Athens. Wherefore comes 'a not to court
As we commanded?

CROTOLON

He shall soon attend

Your royal will, great sir.

AMYCLAS

The marriage
Between young Prophilus and Euphrania
Tastes of too much delay.

CROTOLON

My lord –

AMYCLAS

Some pleasures
At celebration of it would give life
To th'entertainment of the Prince, our kinsman.
Our court wears gravity more than we relish.

ARMOSTES

40 Yet the heavens smile on all your high attempts,¹
Without a cloud.

CROTOLON

So may the gods protect us.
[CALANTHA *and* NEARCHUS *come forward*.]

CALANTHA

A prince a subject?

NEARCHUS

Yes, to Beauty's sceptre;
As all hearts kneel, so mine.

CALANTHA

You are too courtly.

[*Enter*] to them ITHOCLES, ORGILUS [*and*] PROPHILUS.

ITHOCLES [*To* ORGILUS]

Your safe return to Sparta is most welcome.
I joy to meet you here, and as occasion
Shall grant us privacy, will yield you reasons
Why I should covet to deserve the title
Of your respected friend. For, without compliment,
Believe it, Orgilus, 'tis my ambition.

ORGILUS

50 Your lordship may command me, your poor
servant.

ITHOCLES [*Aside, observing* CALANTHA]

So amorously close so soon? My heart!

PROPHILUS

What sudden change is next?

ITHOCLES

Life to the King!
To whom I here present this noble gentleman,
New-come from Athens. Royal sir, vouchsafe
Your gracious hand in favour of his merit.

[ORGILUS *kisses* AMYCLAS's *hand*.]

CROTOLON [*Aside*]

My son preferred¹ by Ithocles?

AMYCLAS

Our bounties

Shall open to thee, Orgilus; for instance, –
Hark in thine ear – if, out of those inventions²
Which flow in Athens, thou hast there engrossed³
60 Some rarity of wit to grace the nuptials
Of thy fair sister, and renown⁴ our court
In th'eyes of this young prince, we shall be debtor
To thy conceit.⁵ Think on't.

ORGILUS

Your Highness honours me.

NEARCHUS

My tongue and heart are twins.

CALANTHA

A noble birth,
Becoming such a father. – Worthy Orgilus,
You are a guest most wished for.

ORGILUS

May my duty
Still¹ rise in your opinion, sacred Princess.

ITHOCLES [*To* NEARCHUS]

Euphrania's brother, sir – a gentleman
Well worthy of your knowledge.

NEARCHUS

We embrace him,
Proud of so dear acquaintance.

AMYCLAS

70

All prepare

For revels and disport.² The joys of Hymen,
Like Phoebus³ in his lustre, puts to flight
All mists of dullness. Crown the hours with
gladness.

No sounds but music; no discourse but mirth.

CALANTHA

Thine arm, I prithee, Ithocles. [*To NEARCHUS*] Nay,
good

My lord, keep on your way; I am provided.

NEARCHUS

I dare not disobey.

ITHOCLES

Most heavenly lady! *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 4

Enter CROTOLON [*and*] ORGILUS.

CROTOLON

The King hath spoke his mind.

ORGILUS

His will he hath;
But were it lawful to hold plea⁴ against
The power of greatness, not the reason, haply
Such under-shrubs as subjects sometimes might
Borrow of nature justice to inform¹

That licence² sovereignty holds without check
Over a meek obedience.

CROTOLON

How resolve you
Touching your sister's marriage? Prophilus
Is a deserving and a hopeful³ youth.

ORGILUS

10 I envy not his merit, but applaud it;
Could wish him thrift⁴ in all his best desires;
And, with a willingness, enleague our blood
With his for purchase of full growth in friendship.
He never touched on any wrong that maliced⁵
The honour of our house, nor stirred our peace.
Yet, with your favour, let me not forget
Under whose wing he gathers warmth and
comfort,
Whose creature he is bound, made, and must live
so.

CROTOLON

Son, son, I find in thee a harsh condition.⁶

20 No courtesy can win it; 'tis too rancorous.

ORGILUS

Good sir, be not severe in your construction.
I am no stranger to such easy calms
As sit in tender bosoms. Lordly Ithocles
Hath graced my entertainment in abundance,

Too humbly hath descended from that height
Of arrogance and spleen which wrought the rape
On grieved Penthea's purity. His scorn
Of my untoward⁷ fortunes is reclaimed
Unto a courtship, almost to a fawning.

30 I'll kiss his foot, since you will have it so.

CROTOLON

Since I will have it so? Friend, I will have it so,
Without our ruin by your politic plots,
Or wolf of hatred snarling in your breast.
You have a spirit, sir, have ye? A familiar¹
That posts² i'th' air for your intelligence?³
Some such hobgoblin hurried you from Athens,
For yet you come unsent for.

ORGILUS

If unwelcome,
I might have found a grave there.

CROTOLON

Sure, your business
Was soon dispatched, or your mind altered quickly.

ORGILUS

40 'Twas care, sir, of my health cut short my
journey;

For there, a general infection⁴
Threatens a desolation.

CROTOLON

And I fear

Thou hast brought back a worse infection with
thee:

Infection of thy mind; which, as thou say'st,
Threatens the desolation of our family.

ORGILUS

Forbid it, our dear genius!⁵ I will rather
Be made a sacrifice on Thrasus' monument,
Or kneel to Ithocles, his son, in dust,
Than woo a father's curse. My sister's marriage
50 With Prophilus is from my heart confirmed.
May I live hated, may I die despised,
If I omit to further it in all
That can concern me.

CROTOLON

I have been too rough.
My duty to my king made me so earnest.
Excuse it, Orgilus.

ORGILUS

Dear sir.
[*They embrace.*]

Enter to them PROPHILUS, EUPHRANIA, ITHOCLES, GRONEAS [*and*]
LEMOPHIL.

CROTOLON

Here comes
Euphrania, with Prophilus and Ithocles.

*Like soft hours never ceasing;
Plenty's pleasure, peace complying,
Without jars or tongues envying;
Hearts by holy union wedded,
More than theirs by custom bedded;
Fruitful issues, life so graced,
Not by age to be defaced;
Budding, as the year ensu'th,
Every spring another youth;²*

80 *All what thought can add beside,
Crown this bridegroom and this bride.*

PROPHILUS

You have sealed joy close to my soul. – Euphrania,
Now I may call thee mine.

ITHOCLES

I but exchange
One good friend for another.

ORGILUS [*indicating* GRONEAS *and* LEMOPHIL]

If these gallants
Will please to grace a poor invention,
By joining with me in some slight device,³
I'll venture on a strain⁴ my younger days
Have studied for delight.

LEMOPHIL

With thankful willingness

I offer my attendance.

GRONEAS

No endeavour

Of mine shall fail to show itself.

ITHOCLES

90

We will

All join to wait on thy directions, Orgilus.

ORGILUS

O my good lord, your favours flow towards

A too unworthy worm. But, as you please:

I am what you will shape me.

ITHOCLES

A fast friend.

CROTOLON

I thank thee, son, for this acknowledgement;

It is a sight of gladness.

ORGILUS

But¹ my duty.

Exeunt.

ACT 3

Scene 5

Enter CALANTHA, PENTHEA [*with a paper*], CHRYSTALLA [*and*]

PHILEMA.

CALANTHA

Whoe'er would speak with us, deny his entrance.

Be careful of our charge.

CHRYSTALLA

We shall, madam.

CALANTHA

Except the King himself, give none admittance;

Not any.

PHILEMA

Madam, it shall be our care.

Exeunt [CHRYSTALLA *and* PHILEMA].

CALANTHA

Being alone, Penthea, you have granted¹

The opportunity you sought, and might

At all times have commanded.

PENTHEA

'Tis a benefit

Which I shall owe your goodness even in death
for.

My glass² of life, sweet Princess, hath few minutes

10 Remaining to run down; the sands are spent.

For by an inward messenger I feel

The summons of departure short³ and certain.

CALANTHA

You feed too much your melancholy.

PENTHEA

Glories

Of [human](#) greatness are but pleasing dreams,

And shadows soon decaying. On the stage
Of my mortality, my youth hath acted
Some scenes of vanity, drawn out at length
By varied pleasures, sweetened in the mixture,
But tragical in issue.⁴ Beauty, pomp –
20 With every sensuality⁵ our giddiness
Doth frame an idol – are unconstant friends
When any troubled passion makes assault
On the unguarded castle of the mind.

CALANTHA

Contemn not your condition for the proof
Of bare opinion only.⁶ To what end
Reach all these moral texts?

PENTHEA

To place before 'ee
A perfect mirror, wherein you may see
How weary I am of a ling'ring life,
Who count the best a misery.

CALANTHA

Indeed,
30 You have no little cause; yet none so great
As to distrust a remedy.

PENTHEA

That remedy
Must be a winding-sheet, a fold of lead,¹

And some untrod-on corner in the earth.
Not to detain your expectation, Princess,
I have an humble suit.

CALANTHA

Speak, I [enjoin](#) it.

PENTHEA

Vouchsafe, then, to be my executrix,
And take that trouble on 'ee to dispose
Such legacies as I bequeath impartially.
I have not much to give; the pains are easy.
40 Heaven will reward your piety, and thank it
When I am dead. For, sure, I must not live.
I hope I cannot.

CALANTHA [*in tears*]

Now, beshrew thy sadness;
Thou turn'st me too much woman.

PENTHEA [*Aside*]

Her fair eyes
Melt into passion. Then I have assurance
Encouraging my boldness. [*Aloud*] In this paper
My will was characterized,² which you, with pardon,
Shall now know from mine own mouth.

CALANTHA

Talk on, prithee;
It is a pretty earnest.³

PENTHEA

I have left me

But three poor jewels to bequeath. The first is

50 My youth, for though I am much old in griefs,

In years I am a child.

CALANTHA

To whom that?

PENTHEA

To virgin wives, such as abuse not wedlock

By freedom of desires, but covet chiefly

The pledges of chaste beds for ties of love,

Rather than ranging of their blood;¹ and next

To married maids, such as prefer the number

Of honourable issue in their virtues,

Before the flattery of delights by marriage:

May those be ever young.

CALANTHA

A second jewel

You mean to part with.

PENTHEA

60 'Tis my fame – I trust

By scandal yet untouched. This I bequeath

To Memory, and Time's old daughter, Truth.²

If ever my unhappy name find mention

When I am fall'n to dust, may it deserve

Beseeming³ charity without dishonour.

CALANTHA

How handsomely thou play'st with harmless sport
Of mere imagination! Speak the last;
I strangely like thy will.

PENTHEA

This jewel, madam,
Is dearly precious to me. You must use
70 The best of your discretion to employ
This gift as I intend it.

CALANTHA

Do not doubt me.

PENTHEA

'Tis long ago since first I lost my heart;
Long I have lived without it, else for certain
I should have given that too; but instead
Of it, to great Calantha, Sparta's heir,
By service bound and by affection vowed,
I do bequeath, in holiest rites of love,
Mine only brother, Ithocles.

CALANTHA

What said'st thou?

PENTHEA

Impute not, heaven-blessed lady, to ambition
80 A faith as humbly perfect as the prayers

Of a devoted suppliant can endow it.
Look on him, Princess, with an eye of pity –
How like the ghost of what he late appeared
'A moves before you.

CALANTHA [*Aside*]

Shall I answer here,
Or lend my ear too grossly?¹

PENTHEA

First, his heart
Shall fall in cinders, scorched by your disdain,
Ere he will dare, poor man, to ope an eye
On these divine looks, but with low-bent thoughts
Accusing such presumption. As for words,
90 'A dares not utter any but of service.
Yet this lost creature loves 'ee. Be a princess
In sweetness as in blood. Give him his doom,
Or raise him up to comfort.

CALANTHA

What new change
Appears in my behaviour that thou dar'st
Tempt my displeasure?

PENTHEA

I must leave the world
To revel in Elysium, and 'tis just
To wish my brother some advantage here.

Yet, by my best hopes, Ithocles is ignorant
Of this pursuit.¹ But if you please to kill him,
100 Lend him one angry look, or one harsh word,
And you shall soon conclude how strong a power
Your absolute authority holds over
His life and end.

CALANTHA

You have forgot, Penthea,
How still I have a father.

PENTHEA

But remember
I am a sister, though to me this brother
Hath been, you know, unkind. Oh most unkind!

CALANTHA

Chrystalla, Philema, where are 'ee? – Lady,
Your check² lies in my silence.

Enter CHRYSTALLA *and* PHILEMA.

BOTH

Madam, here.

CALANTHA

I think 'ee sleep, 'ee drones. Wait on Penthea
110 Unto her lodging. [*Aside*] Ithocles? Wronged
lady!

PENTHEA [*Aside*]

My reckonings are made even.³ Death or fate

Can now nor strike too soon, nor force too
late. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 1

Enter ITHOCLES *and* ARMOSTES.

ITHOCLES

Forbear your inquisition. Curiosity¹
Is of too subtle and too searching nature;
In fears of love too quick, too slow of credit.
I am not what you doubt me.²

ARMOSTES

Nephew, be then
As I would wish. All is not right. Good heaven
Confirm your resolutions for dependence
On worthy ends,³ which may advance your quiet.

ITHOCLES

I did the noble Orgilus much injury,
But grieved Penthea more. I now repent it.
10 Now, uncle, now, this 'now' is now too late.
So provident is folly in sad issue,
That after-wit,⁴ like bankrupt's debts, stands
tallied,
Without⁵ all possibilities of payment.
Sure, he's an honest, very honest gentleman;
A man of single⁶ meaning.

ARMOSTES

So cheap that let him take it who dares stoop for't,
And give it at next meeting to a mistress.
She'll thank him for't, perhaps.

Casts it to ITHOCLES [*who picks it up*].

AMELUS

The ring, sir, is

30 The Princess's. I could have took it up.

ITHOCLES

Learn manners, prithee. [*To* CALANTHA] To the
blessed owner,

Upon my knees –

[*He offers her the ring.*]

NEARCHUS

Y'are saucy.

CALANTHA

This is pretty.

I am, belike, a 'mistress'? Wondrous pretty!

Let the man keep his fortune, since he found it.

He's worthy on't. – On, cousin.

ITHOCLES [*To* AMELUS]

Follow, spaniel;

I'll force 'ee to a fawning, else.

AMELUS:

You dare not.

Exeunt all except ITHOCLES *and* ARMOSTES.

ARMOSTES

My lord, you were too forward.

ITHOCLES

Look'ee, uncle,

Some such there are whose liberal contents¹

Swarm without care in every sort of plenty;

40 Who, after full repasts, can lay them down

To sleep – and they sleep, uncle – in which silence

Their very dreams present 'em choice of pleasures,

Pleasures – observe me, uncle – of rare object.

Here heaps of gold, there increments of honours,

Now change of garments, then the votes of people,

Anon varieties of beauties,² courting

In flatteries of the night, exchange of dalliance;

Yet these are still but dreams. Give me felicity

Of which my senses waking are partakers,

50 A real, visible, material happiness –

And then, too, when I stagger in expectance

Of the least comfort that can cherish life.

I saw it, sir, I saw it; for it came

From her own hand.

ARMOSTES

The Princess threw it t'ee.

ITHOCLES

True, and she said – well I remember what.

Her cousin prince would beg it.

ARMOSTES

Yes, and parted

In anger at your taking on't.

ITHOCLES [*Aside*]

Pentheia!

Oh thou hast pleaded with a powerful language.

I want a fee to gratify thy merit.¹

But I will do –

ARMOSTES

What is't you say?

ITHOCLES

60

In anger,

In anger let him part; for could his breath,

Like whirlwinds, toss such servile slaves as lick

The dust his footsteps print into a vapour,

It durst not stir a hair of mine. It should not;

I'd rend it up by th'roots first. To be anything

Calantha smiles on is to be a blessing

More sacred than a petty prince of Argos

Can wish to equal, or² in worth or title.

ARMOSTES

Contain yourself, my lord. Ixion, aiming

70 To embrace Juno, bosomed³ but a cloud,

And begat centaurs; 'tis an useful moral.

Ambition hatched in clouds of mere opinion
Proves but in birth a prodigy.⁴

ITHOCLES

I thank'ee;
Yet, with your licence, I should seem uncharitable
To gentler fate if, relishing the dainties
Of a soul's settled peace, I were so feeble
Not to digest it.

ARMOSTES

He deserves small trust
Who is not privy counsellor to himself.
Enter NEARCHUS, ORGILUS *and* AMELUS.

NEARCHUS

Brave¹ me?

ORGILUS

Your Excellence mistakes his temper;
80 For Ithocles in fashion of his mind
Is beautiful, soft, gentle, the clear mirror
Of absolute perfection.

AMELUS

Was't your modesty
Termed any of the Prince his servants 'spaniel'?
Your nurse, sure, taught you other language.

ITHOCLES

Language?

NEARCHUS

A gallant man-at-arms is here, a doctor²
In feats of chivalry, blunt and rough-spoken,
Vouchsafing not the fustian³ of civility,
Which rash spirits style good manners.

ITHOCLES

Manners?

ORGILUS

No more, illustrious sir; 'tis matchless Ithocles.

NEARCHUS

You might have understood who I am.

ITHOCLES

90

Yes,

I did, else – but the presence⁴ calmed th' affront.
Y'are cousin to the Princess.

NEARCHUS

To the King too –
A certain instrument that lent supportance
To your colossic greatness. To that King too,
You might have added.

ITHOCLES

There is more divinity
In beauty than in majesty.

ARMOSTES

Oh, fie, fie!

NEARCHUS

This odd youth's pride turns heretic in loyalty.

Sirrah, low mushrooms¹ never rival cedars.

Exeunt NEARCHUS *and* AMELUS.

ITHOCLES

Come back! What pitiful, dull thing am I

100 So to be tamely scolded at! Come back!

Let him come back and echo once again

That scornful sound of 'mushroom'. Painted colts,²

Like heralds' coats gilt o'er with crowns and
sceptres,

May bait a muzzled lion.³

ARMOSTES

Cousin, cousin,

Thy tongue is not thy friend.

ORGILUS

In point of honour

Discretion knows no bounds. Amelus told me

'Twas all about a little ring.

ITHOCLES

A ring

The Princess threw away and I took up.

Admit she threw't to me, what arm of brass

110 Can snatch it hence? No, could 'a grind the
hoop

To powder, 'a might sooner reach my heart

Than steal and wear one dust on't. – Orgilus,
I am extremely wronged.

ORGILUS

A lady's favour
Is not to be so slighted.

ITHOCLES

Slighted?

ARMOSTES

Quiet
These vain, unruly passions, which will render ye
Into a madness.

ORGILUS

Griefs will have their vent.

Enter TECNICUS [*with a scroll*].

ARMOSTES

Welcome. Thou com'st in season, reverend man,
To pour the balsam of a [suppling](#)¹ patience
Into the festering wound of ill-spent fury.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

What makes he here?

TECNICUS

120 The hurts are yet but mortal,²
Which shortly will prove deadly. To the King,
Armotes, see in safety thou deliver
This sealed-up counsel. Bid him with a constancy

Peruse the secrets of the gods. O Sparta!
O Lacedemon! Double-named, but one
In fate. When kingdoms reel – mark well my saw³
–

Their heads must needs be giddy. Tell the King
That henceforth he no more must enquire after
My aged head – Apollo wills it so.
I am for Delphos.

ARMOSTES

130 Not without some conference
With our great master.

TECNICUS

Never more to see him.
A greater prince¹ commands me. – Ithocles,
*‘When youth is ripe, and age from time doth part,
The lifeless trunk shall wed the broken heart.’*

ITHOCLES

What’s this, if understood?

TECNICUS

List, Orgilus;
Remember what I told thee long before –
These tears shall be my witness.

ARMOSTES

’Las, good man.

TECNICUS

‘Let craft with courtesy a while confer;

Revenge proves its own executioner.'

ORGILUS

140 Dark sentences are for Apollo's priests;
I am not Oedipus.²

TECNICUS

My hour is come.
Cheer up the King. Farewell to all. O Sparta!
O Lacedemon! *Exit* TECNICUS.

ARMOSTES

If prophetic fire
Have warmed this old man's bosom, we might
construe
His words to fatal sense.

ITHOCLES

Leave to the powers
Above us the effects of their decrees;
My burden lies within me. Servile fears
Prevent¹ no great effects. [*Aside*] Divine Calantha!

ARMOSTES

The gods be still propitious!
Exeunt all except ORGILUS.

ORGILUS

Something oddly
150 The book-man prated; yet 'a talked it weeping.
'Let craft with courtesy a while confer;

Revenge proves its own executioner.'

Con² it again. For what? It shall not puzzle me;

'Tis dotage of a withered brain. Penthea

Forbade me not her presence. I may see her,

And gaze my fill. Why, see her then I may;

When if I faint to speak I must be
silent. *Exit* ORGILUS.

ACT 4

Scene 2

Enter BASSANES, GRAUSIS *and* PHULAS.

BASSANES

Pray, use your recreations. All the service
I will expect is quietness amongst 'ee.
Take liberty at home, abroad, at all times,
And in your charities appease the gods,
Whom I, with my distractions, have offended.

GRAUSIS

Fair blessings on thy heart!

PHULAS [*Aside*]

Here's a rare change!
My lord, to cure the itch, is surely gelded.
The cuckold, in conceit,¹ hath cast his horns.

BASSANES

Betake 'ee to your several occasions,²
10 And wherein I have heretofore been faulty,
Let your constructions mildly pass it over.
Henceforth, I'll study reformation. More
I have not for employment.

GRAUSIS

O sweet man,
Thou art the very 'Honeycomb of Honesty'.

PHULAS

The 'Garland of Goodwill'.³ Old lady, hold up
Thy reverend snout and trot behind me softly,
As it becomes a moil⁴ of ancient carriage.

Exeunt [*except for* BASSANES].

BASSANES

Beasts, only capable of sense,⁵ enjoy

The benefit of food and ease with thankfulness.

20 Such silly creatures, with a grudging, kick not

Against the portion nature hath bestowed;

But men, endowed with reason and the use

Of reason, to distinguish from the chaff

Of abject scarcity⁶ the quintessence,

Soul and elixir of the earth's abundance,

The treasures of the sea, the air, nay, heaven,

Repining at these glories of creation

Are verier beasts than beasts; and of those beasts

The worst am I. I, who was made a monarch

30 Of what a heart could wish for – a chaste wife –

Endeavoured what in me lay to pull down

That temple, built for adoration only,

And level't in the dust of causeless scandal.

But to redeem a sacrilege so impious,

Humility shall pour, before the deities

I have incensed, a largesse of more patience

Than their displeasèd altars can require.

No tempests of commotion shall disquiet

The calms of my composure.

Enter ORGILUS.

ORGILUS

I have found thee,

40 Thou patron of more horrors than the bulk
Of manhood, hooped about with ribs of iron,
Can cram within thy breast. Penthea, Bassanes,
Cursed by thy jealousies – more, by thy dotage –
Is left a prey to words.¹

BASSANES

Exercise

Your trials² for addition to my penance;

I am resolved.

ORGILUS

Play not with misery

Past cure. Some angry minister of fate hath

Deposed the empress of her soul, her reason,

From its most proper throne; but – what's the
miracle

50 More new – I, I have seen it, and yet live!

BASSANES

You may delude my senses, not my judgement.

'Tis anchored into a firm resolution.

Dalliance of mirth or wit can ne'er unfix it.

Practise yet further.³

ORGILUS

May thy death-of-love to her
Damn all thy comforts to a lasting fast
From every joy of life. Thou barren rock,
By thee we have **been** split in ken¹ of harbour.

Enter ITHOCLES, PENTHEA, *her hair about her ears*,² PHILEMA,
CHRYSTALLA [*ARMOSTES and CROTOLON*].

ITHOCLES

Sister, look up! Your Ithocles, your brother,
Speaks t'ee. Why do you weep? Dear, turn not
from me –

60 Here is a killing sight! Lo, Bassanes,
A lamentable object.

ORGILUS

Man, dost see't?
Sports are more gamesome. Am I yet in
merriment?
Why dost not laugh?

BASSANES

Divine and best of ladies,
Please to forget my outrage. Mercy ever
Cannot but lodge under a **roof** so excellent.
I have cast off that cruelty of frenzy
Which once appeared **imposterous**,³ and then
juggled⁴
To cheat my sleeps of rest.

ORGILUS

Was I in earnest?

PENTHEA

Sure, if we were all sirens⁵ we should sing
pitifully;

70 And 'twere a comely music, when in parts⁶

One sung another's knell. The turtle⁷ sighs

When he hath lost his mate; and yet some say

'A must be dead first. 'Tis a fine deceit

To pass away in a dream. Indeed, I've slept

With mine eyes open a great while. No falsehood

Equals a broken faith. There's not a hair

Sticks on my head but, like a leaden plummet,

It sinks me to the grave. I must creep thither;

The journey is not long.

ITHOCLES

But thou, Penthea,

80 Hast many years, I hope, to number yet,

Ere thou canst travel that way.

BASSANES

Let the sun first

Be wrapped up in an everlasting darkness,

Before the light of nature, chiefly formed

For the whole world's delight, feel an eclipse

So universal.

ORGILUS

Wisdom, look'ee, begins

To rave! [*To* BASSANES] Art thou mad too,
Antiquity?¹

PENTHEA

Since I was first a wife, I might have been
Mother to many pretty, prattling babes.

They would have smiled when I smiled; and, for
certain,

90 I should have cried when they cried. – Truly,
brother,

My father would have picked me out a husband,
And then my little ones had been no bastards.

But 'tis too late for me to marry now;

I am past child-bearing. 'Tis not my fault.

BASSANES

Fall on me, if there be a burning Etna,²

And bury me in flames! Sweats, hot as sulphur,

Boil through my pores! Affliction hath in store

No torture like to this.

ORGILUS

Behold a patience!¹

Lay by thy whining, grey Dissimulation.

100 Do something worth a chronicle. Show justice

Upon the author of this mischief! Dig out

The jealousies that hatched this thralldom first

With thine own poniard. Every antic rapture²

Can roar as thine does.

ITHOCLES

Orgilus, forbear!

BASSANES

Disturb him not. It is a talking motion³
Provided for my torment. What a fool am I
To bawdy⁴ passion! Ere I'll speak a word,
I will look on and burst.

PENTHEA [*To ORGILUS*]

I loved you once.

ORGILUS

Thou didst, wronged creature, in despite of malice;
For it, I love thee ever.

PENTHEA

110 Spare⁵ your hand.

Believe me, I'll not hurt it.

[*ORGILUS offers his hand.*]

ORGILUS

Pain my heart too.

PENTHEA

Complain not, though I wring it hard. I'll kiss it.

Oh, 'tis a fine, soft palm. Hark in thine ear:

Like whom do I look, prithee? Nay, no whispering.

Goodness, we had been happy! Too much
happiness

Will make folk proud, they say. But that is he
(*points at* ITHOCLES) –

And yet he paid for't home.¹ Alas, his heart
Is crept into the cabinet² of the Princess.
We shall have points and bride-laces.³ Remember
120 When we last gathered roses in the garden?
I found my wits, but truly you lost yours.
[*Pointing again at* ITHOCLES] That's he, and still
'tis he.

ITHOCLES

Poor soul, how idly⁴
Her fancies guide her tongue.

BASSANES [*Aside*]

Keep in, vexation,
And break not into clamour.

ORGILUS [*Aside*]

She has tutored me.
Some powerful inspiration checks⁵ my laziness.
[*To* PENTHEA] Now let me kiss your hand, grieved
beauty.

PENTHEA

Kiss it.
[ORGILUS *kisses her hand.*]
Alack, alack, his lips be wondrous cold!
Dear soul, h'as lost his colour. Have 'ee seen
A straying heart? All crannies!⁶ Every drop
130 Of blood is turned to an amethyst,⁷
Which married bachelors hang in their ears.

ORGILUS

Peace usher her into Elysium!

[*Aside*] If this be madness, madness is an oracle.⁸

Exit ORGILUS.

ITHOCLES

Chrystalla, Philema, when slept my sister?

Her ravings are so wild.

CHRYSTALLA

Sir, not these ten days.

PHILEMA

We watch by her continually. Besides,

We cannot any way pray her to eat.

BASSANES

Oh, misery of miseries!

PENTHEA

Take comfort:

You may live well, and die a good old man.

140 [To CROTOLON] By yea and nay¹ – an oath not to
be broken –

If you had joined our hands once in the temple –

'Twas since my father died, for had he lived

He would have **done't** – I must have called you
father.

O my wracked honour, ruined by those tyrants:

A cruel brother and a desperate dotage!

There is no peace left for a ravished wife,

Widowed by lawless marriage. To all memory,
Penthea's, poor Penthea's name is strumpeted!
But since her blood was seasoned, by the forfeit
150 Of noble shame, with mixtures of pollution,
Her blood – 'tis just – be henceforth never
heightened

With taste of sustenance. Starve. Let that fullness
Whose pleurisy² hath severed faith and modesty –
Forgive me – Oh, I faint.

ARMOSTES

Be not so wilful,
Sweet niece, to work thine own destruction.

ITHOCLES

Nature
Will call her daughter monster. What? Not eat?
Refuse the only ordinary means
Which are ordained for life? Be not, my sister,
A murderess to thyself. – Hear'st thou this,
Bassanes?

BASSANES

160 Foh! I am busy; for I have not thoughts
Enough to think. All shall be well anon.
'Tis tumbling in my head. There is a mastery¹
In art to fatten and keep smooth the outside;
Yes, and to comfort up the vital spirits
Without the help of food. Fumes or perfumes,

Perfumes or fumes – Let her alone. I'll search out
The trick on't.

PENTHEA

Lead me gently. Heavens reward ye.
Griefs are sure friends; they leave, without control,
Nor cure nor comforts for a leprous soul.

Exeunt the maids [CHRYSTALLA and PHILEMA] supporting
PENTHEA.

BASSANES

170 I grant t'ee; and will put in practice instantly
What you shall still admire.² 'Tis wonderful,
'Tis super-singular, not to be matched!
Yet when I've *done't, I've done't*; ye shall all
thank me.

Exit BASSANES.

ARMOSTES

The sight is full of terror.

ITHOCLES

On my soul
Lies such an infinite clog³ of massy dullness,
As that I have not sense enough to feel it.

Enter NEARCHUS *and* AMELUS.

See, uncle, *th'angry* thing returns again.

Shall's welcome him with thunder? We are
haunted,

And must use exorcism to conjure down

This spirit of malevolence.

ARMOSTES

180

Mildly, nephew.

NEARCHUS

I come not, sir, to chide your late disorder,¹
Admitting that th'inurement to a roughness
In soldiers of your years and fortunes, chiefly
So lately prosperous, hath not yet shook off
The custom of the war in hours of leisure.
Nor shall you need excuse, since y'are to render
Account to that fair excellence, the Princess,
Who in her private gallery expects it
From your own mouth alone. I am a messenger
But to her pleasure.

ITHOCLES

190

Excellent Nearchus,

Be prince still² of my services, and conquer
Without the combat of dispute. [*Kneeling*] I
honour 'ee.

NEARCHUS

The King is on a sudden indisposed.
Physicians are called for. 'Twere fit, Armostes,
You should be near him.

ARMOSTES

Sir, I kiss your hands.

Exeunt all except NEARCHUS *and* AMELUS.

NEARCHUS

Amelus, I perceive Calantha's bosom
Is warmed with other fires than such as can
Take strength from any fuel of the love
I might address to her. Young Ithocles,
200 Or ever³ I mistake, is lord ascendant⁴
Of her devotions; one, to speak him truly,
In every disposition nobly fashioned.

AMELUS

But can your Highness brook to be so rivalled,
Considering th'inequality of the persons?

NEARCHUS

I can, Amelus; for affections injured
By tyranny or rigour of compulsion,
Like tempest-threatened trees unfirmly rooted,
Ne'er spring to timely growth. Observe, for
instance,
Life-spent Penthea and unhappy Orgilus.

AMELUS

How does your Grace determine?

NEARCHUS

210 To be jealous
In public of what privately I'll further;
And though they shall not know, yet they shall find
it.

Exeunt.

ACT 4

Scene 3

Enter LEMOPHIL and GRONEAS leading AMYCLAS, and placing him in a chair, followed by ARMOSTES [with a casket], CROTOLON and PROPHILUS.

AMYCLAS

Our daughter is not near?

ARMOSTES

She is retired, sir,
Into her gallery.

AMYCLAS

Where's the Prince, our cousin?

PROPHILUS

New walked into the grove, my lord.

AMYCLAS

All leave us,
Except Armostes, and you, Crotolon;
We would be private.

PROPHILUS

Health unto your Majesty!

Exeunt PROPHILUS, LEMOPHIL and GRONEAS.

AMYCLAS

What, Tecnicus is gone?

ARMOSTES

He is, to Delphos;
And to your royal hands presents this box.

AMYCLAS

Unseal it, good Armostes. Therein lies
The secrets of the oracle. Out with it.

10 Apollo live our patron! Read, Armostes.

ARMOSTES [*Reads*]

*‘The plot in which the vine takes root,
Begins to dry from head to foot.
The stock soon withering, want of sap
Doth cause to quail¹ the budding grape.
But from the neighbouring elm a dew
Shall drop, and feed the plot anew.’*

AMYCLAS

That is the oracle. What exposition
Makes the philosopher?

ARMOSTES

This brief one only:

*‘The plot is Sparta; the dried vine the King;
The quailing grape his daughter; but the thing
20 Of most importance, not to be revealed,
Is a near prince, the elm; the rest concealed.
Technicus.’*

AMYCLAS

Enough. Although the opening² of this riddle
Be but itself a riddle, yet we construe
How near our labouring age draws to a rest.

But must Calantha quail too? That young grape
Untimely budded? I could mourn for her;
Her tenderness hath yet deserved no rigour,
So to be crossed by fate.

ARMOSTES

30 You misapply, sir –
With favour let me speak it – what Apollo
Hath clouded in hid sense. I here conjecture
Her marriage with some neighb'ring prince, the
dew
Of which befriending elm shall ever strengthen
Your subjects with a sovereignty of power.

CROTOLON

Besides, most gracious lord, the pith of oracles
Is to be then digested when th'events
Expound their truth, not brought as soon to light
As uttered. Truth is child of Time; and herein
40 I find no scruple,¹ rather cause of comfort,
With unity of kingdoms.

AMYCLAS

May it prove so,
For weal² of this dear nation. Where is Ithocles?
Armostes, Crotolon, when this withered vine
Of my frail carcass on the funeral pile
Is fired into its ashes, let that young man
Be hedged about still with your cares and loves.

Much owe I to his worth, much to his service.

Let such as wait come in now.

ARMOSTES

All attend here!

Enter ITHOCLES, CALANTHA, PROPHILUS, ORGILUS, EUPHRANIA,
LEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS.

CALANTHA

Dear sir, king, father!

ITHOCLES

O my royal master!

AMYCLAS

50 Cleave not my heart, sweet twins of my life's
solace,

With your fore-judging fears. There is no physic³
So cunningly restorative to cherish
The fall of age, or call back youth and vigour,
As your consents in duty. I will shake off
This languishing disease of time, to quicken
Fresh pleasures in these drooping hours of sadness.
Is fair Euphrania married yet to Prophilus?

CROTOLON

This morning, gracious lord.

ORGILUS

This very morning,
Which, with your Highness' leave, you may
observe too.

60 Our sister looks, methinks, mirthful and
sprightly,

As if her chaster fancy could already
Expound the riddle of her gain in losing
A trifle maids know only that they know not.

[*To EUPHRANIA*] Pish! Prithee, blush not. 'Tis but
honest change

Of fashion in the garment: loose for straight;¹
And so the modest maid is made a wife.
Shrewd² business, is't not, sister?

EUPHRANIA

You are pleasant.

AMYCLAS

We thank thee, Orgilus; this mirth becomes thee.
But wherefore sits the court in such a silence?

70 A wedding without revels is not seemly.

CALANTHA

Your late indisposition, sir, forbade it.

AMYCLAS

Be it thy charge, Calantha, to set forward
The bridal-sports, to which I will be present;
If not, at least consenting. – Mine own Ithocles,
I have done little for thee yet.

ITHOCLES

Y'have built me
To the full height I stand in.

CALANTHA [*Aside*]

Now or never –

[*Aloud*] May I propose a suit?

AMYCLAS

Demand and have it.

[AMYCLAS *takes* CALANTHA *and* ITHOCLES *to one side*. ORGILUS
listens in.]¹

CALANTHA

Pray, sir, give me this young man, and no further

Account him yours than he deserves in all things

80 To be thought worthy mine. I will esteem him

According to his merit.

AMYCLAS

Still th'art my daughter,

Still grow'st upon my heart. [*To* ITHOCLES] Give
me thine hand.

Calantha, take thine own.

[*He joins their hands together.*]

In noble actions

Thou'lt find him firm and absolute.² – I would not

Have parted with thee, Ithocles, to any

But to a mistress who is all what I am.

ITHOCLES

A change, great king, most wished for, 'cause the
same.

CALANTHA [*To* ITHOCLES]

Th'art mine. Have I now kept my word?

ITHOCLES [*To CALANTHA*]

Divinely.

ORGILUS

Rich **fortunes** – guard to favour of a princess –

90 Rock thee, brave man, in ever-crownèd plenty.

Y'are minion¹ of the time; be thankful for it.

[*Aside*] Ho, here's a swinge² in destiny! Apparent,³

The youth is up on tiptoe, yet may stumble.

[AMYCLAS, CALANTHA *and* ITHOCLES *rejoin the others.*]

AMYCLAS

On to your recreations! Now convey me

Unto my bedchamber. None on his forehead

Wear a distempered look.

ALL

The gods preserve 'ee!

CALANTHA [*Aside to* ITHOCLES]

Sweet, be not from my sight.

ITHOCLES [*Aside to* CALANTHA]

My whole felicity!

*Exeunt, carrying out of the KING. ORGILUS stays*⁴

ITHOCLES.

ORGILUS

Shall I be bold, my lord?

ITHOCLES

Thou canst not, Orgilus.

Call me thine own, for Prophilus must henceforth

100 Be all thy sister's. Friendship, though it cease
not

In marriage, yet is oft at less command

Than when a single freedom can dispose it.

ORGILUS

Most right, my most good lord, my most great
lord,

My gracious, princely lord – I might add 'royal'.

ITHOCLES

Royal? A subject royal?

ORGILUS

Why not, pray, sir?

The sovereignty of kingdoms, in their nonage,¹

Stooped to desert, not birth. There's as much merit

In clearness of affection² as in puddle

Of generation.³ You have conquered love

110 Even in the loveliest. If I greatly err not,

The son of Venus hath bequeathed his quiver

To Ithocles his manage,⁴ by whose arrows

Calantha's breast is opened.

ITHOCLES

Can't be possible?

ORGILUS

Bent knees, hearts paved to tread on!

ITHOCLES

With a friendship
So dear, so fast as thine.

ORGILUS

I am unfitting
For office; but for service –

ITHOCLES

We'll distinguish
Our fortunes merely in the title: partners
In all respects else but the bed –

ORGILUS

The bed?
Forfend¹ it Jove's own jealousy – till lastly
We slip down in the common earth together,
And there our beds are equal, save some
monument
To show this was the king, and this the subject.
Soft sad music.

140 List, what sad sounds are these? Extremely sad
ones.

ITHOCLES

Sure, from Penthea's lodgings.

ORGILUS

Hark, a voice too!
A Song [within]²

*Oh, no more, no more, too late
Sighs are spent. The burning tapers
Of a life as chaste as fate,
Pure as are unwritten papers,
Are burnt out. No heat, no light
Now remains. 'Tis ever night.
Love is dead. Let lovers' eyes,
Locked in endless dreams,*

150 *Th'extremes of all extremes,
Ope no more, for now Love dies,
Now Love dies, implying
Love's martyrs must be ever, ever dying.*

ITHOCLES

Oh, my misgiving heart!

ORGILUS

*A horrid stillness
Succeeds this deathful air. Let's know the reason.
Tread softly: there is mystery¹ in
mourning. *Exeunt.**

ACT 4

Scene 4

Enter CHRYSTALLA *and* PHILEMA, *bringing in* PENTHEA *in a chair, veiled. Two other* SERVANTS *placing two chairs, one on the one side, and the other with an engine² on the other. The maids [CHRYSTALLA and PHILEMA] sit down at her feet, mourning. The* SERVANTS *go out; meet them* ITHOCLES *and* ORGILUS.

SERVANT [*Aside to* ORGILUS]

'Tis done; that on her right hand.

ORGILUS [*Aside to* SERVANT]

Good. Be gone.

[*Exeunt* SERVANTS.]

ITHOCLES

Soft peace enrich this room.

ORGILUS

How fares the lady?

PHILEMA

Dead.

CHRYSTALLA

Dead!

PHILEMA

Starved.

CHRYSTALLA

Starved!

ITHOCLES

Me miserable!

ORGILUS

Tell us

How parted she from life?

PHILEMA

She called for music,

And begged some gentle voice to tune a farewell

To life and griefs. Chrystalla touched the lute;
I wept the funeral song.

CHRYSTALLA

Which scarce was ended,
But her last breath sealed up these hollow sounds:
'O cruel Ithocles, and injured Orgilus!'
So down she drew her veil, so died.

ITHOCLES

10

So died?

ORGILUS

Up! You are messengers of death; go from us.
Here's woe enough to court without a prompter.
Away! And hark ye: till you see us next,
No syllable that she is dead. Away!
Keep a smooth brow. *Exeunt PHILEMA and*
CHRYSTALLA.

My lord –

ITHOCLES

Mine only sister!
Another is not left me.

ORGILUS

Take that chair;
I'll seat me here in this. Between us sits
The object of our sorrows. Some few tears
We'll part among us. I, perhaps, can mix
20 One lamentable story to prepare 'em.

There, there, sit there, my lord.

ITHOCLES

Yes, as you please.

ITHOCLES *sits down and is caught in the engine.*

What means this treachery?

ORGILUS

Caught! You are caught,

Young master! 'Tis thy throne of coronation,

Thou fool of greatness. See, I take this veil off.

[*He reveals PENTHEA's face.*]

Survey a beauty withered by the flames

Of an insulting¹ Phaeton,² her brother.

ITHOCLES

Thou mean'st to kill me basely?

ORGILUS

I foreknew

The last act of her life, and trained³ thee hither

To sacrifice a tyrant to a turtle.⁴

30 You dreamt of kingdoms, did 'ee? How to
bosom⁵

The delicacies of a youngling princess;

How with this nod to grace that subtle courtier;

How with that frown to make this noble tremble;

And so forth – whiles Penthea's groans and
tortures,

Her agonies, her miseries, afflictions,

Ne'er touched upon your thought. As for my injuries,

Alas, they were beneath your royal pity;

But yet they lived, thou proud man, to confound thee!

Behold thy fate: this steel.

[He draws his sword.]

ITHOCLES

Strike home! A courage

40 As keen as thy revenge shall give it welcome.

But, prithee, faint not. If the wound close up,

Tent¹ it with double force, and search it deeply.

Thou look'st that I should whine and beg compassion,

As loath to leave the vainness of my glories?

A statelier resolution arms my confidence:

To cozen² thee of honour. Neither could I,

With equal trial of unequal fortune,

By hazard of a duel – 'twere a bravery³

Too mighty for a slave intending murder.

50 On to the execution, and inherit

A conflict with thy horrors.

ORGILUS

By Apollo,

Thou talk'st a goodly language. For requital,

I will report thee to thy mistress richly,

And take this peace along:⁴ some few short
minutes

Determined,⁵ my resolves shall quickly follow
Thy wrathful ghost.⁶ Then, if we tug for mastery,
Penthea's sacred eyes shall lend new courage.
Give me thy hand. Be healthful in thy parting
From lost mortality. Thus, thus, I free it.

[*Stabs*] *him*.

ITHOCLES

Yet, yet, I scorn to shrink.

ORGILUS

60 Keep up thy spirit.

I will be gentle even in blood. To linger
Pain, which I strive to cure, were to be cruel.

[*Stabs him again.*]

ITHOCLES

Nimble in vengeance, I forgive thee. Follow
Safety, with best success. O may it prosper!
Penthea, by thy side thy brother bleeds –
The earnest¹ of his wrongs to thy forced faith.
Thoughts of ambition, or delicious banquet,
With beauty, youth, and love, together perish
In my last breath, which on the sacred altar

70 Of a long-looked-for peace now moves to
heaven. *He dies.*

ORGILUS

Farewell, fair spring of manhood. Henceforth
welcome

Best expectation of a noble suff'rance.

I'll lock the bodies safe, till what must follow

Shall be approved.² Sweet twins, shine stars
forever.

In vain they build their hopes whose life is shame;

No monument lasts but a happy name.

Exit ORGILUS [*with the bodies*].

ACT 5

Scene 1

Enter BASSANES *alone*.

BASSANES

Athens, to Athens I have sent – the nursery
Of Greece for learning, and the fount of
knowledge –

For here in Sparta there's not left amongst us
One wise man to direct; we're all turned madcaps.

'Tis said Apollo is the god of herbs;

Then certainly he knows the virtue of 'em.

To Delphos I have sent, [too](#). If there can be

A help for nature, we are sure yet.

Enter ORGILUS.

ORGILUS

Honour

Attend thy counsels ever!

BASSANES

I beseech thee

10 With all my heart, let me go from thee quietly.

I will not aught to do with thee, of all men.

The [doubles](#)¹ of a hare, or, in a morning,

Salutes from a splay-footed² witch, to drop

Three drops of blood at th'nose,³ just and no more,

Croaking of ravens or the screech of owls,⁴

Are not so boding mischief as thy crossing

My private meditations. Shun me, prithee;

And if I cannot love thee heartily,

I'll love thee as well as I can.

ORGILUS

Noble Bassanes,

Mistake me not –

BASSANES

20 Phew!⁵ Then we shall be troubled.

Thou wert ordained my plague. Heaven make me
thankful,

And give me patience too, heaven, I beseech thee.

ORGILUS

Accept a league of amity; for henceforth

I vow, by my best genius,⁶ in a syllable

Never to speak vexation. I will study

Service and friendship, with a zealous sorrow

For my past incivility towards 'ee.

BASSANES

Hey-day! Good words, good words! I must believe
'em,

And be a coxcomb for my labour.

ORGILUS

Use not

30 So hard a language. Your misdoubt¹ is causeless.

For instance, if you promise to put on

A constancy of patience – such a patience

As chronicle or history ne'er mentioned,

As follows not example,² but shall stand

A wonder and a theme for imitation,

The first, the index³ pointing to a second –

I will acquaint'ee with an unmatched secret,

Whose knowledge to your griefs shall set a period.

BASSANES

Thou canst not, Orgilus; 'tis in the power

40 Of the gods only. Yet, for satisfaction,

Because I note an earnest in thine utterance,

Unforced and naturally free, be resolute

The virgin bays shall not withstand the lightning

With a more careless danger⁴ than my constancy

The full of thy relation.⁵ Could it move

Distraction in a senseless marble statue,

It should find me a rock. I do expect now

Some truth of unheard moment.⁶

ORGILUS

To your patience

You must add privacy, as strong in silence

50 As mysteries locked up in Jove's own bosom.

BASSANES

A skull hid in the earth a treble age

Shall sooner prate.

ORGILUS

Lastly, to such direction

As the severity of a glorious action

Deserves to lead your wisdom and your
judgement,

You ought to yield obedience.

BASSANES

With assurance

Of will and thankfulness.

ORGILUS

With manly courage

Please then to follow me.

BASSANES

Where'er, I fear not.

Exeunt.

ACT 5

Scene 2

*Loud music. Enter GRONEAS and LEMOPHIL leading EUPHRANIA;
CHRYSTALLA and PHILEMA leading PROPHILUS; NEARCHUS*

supporting CALANTHA; CROTOLON *and* AMELUS [*and*
ATTENDANTS]. *Cease loud music. All make a stand.*¹

CALANTHA

We miss our servant, Ithocles, and Orgilus.
On whom attend they?

CROTOLON

My son, gracious Princess,
Whispered some new device,¹ to which these
revels
Should be but usher; wherein I conceive
Lord Ithocles and he himself are actors.

CALANTHA

A fair excuse for absence; as for Bassanes,
Delights to him are troublesome. Armestes
Is with the King?

CROTOLON

He is.

CALANTHA

On to the dance.
[*To* NEARCHUS] Dear cousin, hand you² the bride.
The bridegroom must be
10 Entrusted to my courtship. – Be not jealous,
Euphrania; I shall scarcely prove a temptress.
Fall to our dance!

Music.

NEARCHUS *dance[s] with* EUPHRANIA, PROPHILUS *with*
CALANTHA, CHRYSTALLA *with* LEMOPHIL, PHILEMA *with*
GRONEAS. *Dance the first change,*³ *during which enter*
ARMOSTES.

ARMOSTES (*In CALANTHA's ear*)

The King your father's dead.

CALANTHA

To the other change.

ARMOSTES

Is't possible?

[*He stands aside.*]

Dance again. Enter BASSANES.

BASSANES

Oh, madam!

Pentheia, poor Pentheia's starved.

CALANTHA

Beshrew thee!

Lead to the next.

BASSANES

Amazement dulls my senses.

[*He stands aside.*]

Dance again. Enter ORGILUS.

ORGILUS

Brave Ithocles is murdered, murdered cruelly!

CALANTHA

How dull this music sounds! Strike up more
sprightly!

Our footings¹ are not active like our heart,
Which treads the nimbler measure.

ORGILUS

20 I am thunder-struck.

[He stands aside.]

Last change. Cease music.

CALANTHA

So, let us breathe a while. Hath not this motion
Raised fresher colour on your cheeks?

NEARCHUS

Sweet Princess,
A perfect purity of blood enamels
The beauty of your white.

CALANTHA

We all look cheerfully;
And, cousin, 'tis, methinks, a rare presumption
In any who prefers our lawful pleasures
Before their own sour censure to interrupt
The custom of this ceremony bluntly.

NEARCHUS

None dares, lady.

CALANTHA

30 Yes, yes; some hollow voice delivered to me
How that the King was dead.

ARMOSTES

The King is dead.

That fatal news was mine; for in mine arms

He breathed his last, and with his crown
bequeathed 'ee

Your mother's wedding ring, which here I tender.

[*Presents the ring to CALANTHA.*]

CROTOLON

Most strange!

CALANTHA

Peace crown his ashes! We are queen then.

NEARCHUS

Long live Calantha, Sparta's sovereign queen!

ALL

Long live the Queen!

CALANTHA

What whispered Bassanes?

BASSANES

That my Penthea, miserable soul,

Was starved to death.

CALANTHA

She's happy; she hath finished

40 A long and painful progress. A third murmur

Pierced mine unwilling ears.

ORGILUS

That Ithocles
Was murdered – rather butchered, had not bravery
Of an undaunted spirit, conquering terror,
Proclaimed his last act triumph over ruin.

ARMOSTES

How? Murdered?

CALANTHA

By whose hand?

ORGILUS

By mine. This weapon
[*Showing his sword*] Was instrument to my
revenge. The reasons
Are just and known. Quit him of these, and then
Never lived gentleman of greater merit,
Hope or abiliment¹ to steer a kingdom.

CROTOLON

Fie, Orgilus!

EUPHRANIA

Fie, brother!

CALANTHA

50

You have done it?

BASSANES

How it was done let him report, the forfeit
Of whose allegiance to our laws doth covet
Rigour of justice; but that done it is,
Mine eyes have been an evidence of credit

Too sure to be convinced.² Armestes, **rend** not
Thine arteries with hearing the bare circumstances
Of these calamities. Thou'st lost a nephew,
A niece, and I a wife. Continue man still.
Make me the pattern of digesting evils,
60 Who can outlive my mighty ones, not shrinking
At such a pressure as would sink a soul
Into what's most of death, the worst of horrors.
But I have sealed a covenant with sadness,
And entered into bonds without condition
To stand these tempests calmly. Mark me, nobles:
I do not shed a tear, not for Penthea.
Excellent misery!

CALANTHA

We begin our reign
With a first act of justice. Thy confession,
Unhappy Orgilus, dooms thee a sentence;
70 But yet thy father's or thy sister's presence
Shall be excused. Give, Crotolon, a blessing
To thy lost son. Euphrania, take a farewell,
And both be gone.

CROTOLON [*To* ORGILUS]

Confirm thee, noble sorrow,
In worthy resolution.

EUPHRANIA

Could my tears speak,
My griefs were slight.

ORGILUS

All *goodness* dwell amongst ye.
Enjoy my sister, Prophilus. My vengeance
Aimed never at thy prejudice.¹

CALANTHA

Now withdraw.

Exeunt CROTOLON, PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANIA.

[*To* ORGILUS] Bloody relater of thy stains in blood,
For that thou hast reported him – whose fortunes
80 And life by thee are both at once snatched from
him –

With honourable mention, make thy choice
Of what death likes thee best. There's all our
bounty.

[*To* NEARCHUS] But to excuse² delays, let me, dear
cousin,

Entreat you and these lords see execution
Instant before 'ee part.

NEARCHUS

Your will commands us.

ORGILUS

One suit, just Queen: my last. Vouchsafe your
clemency

That by no common hand I be divided

From this, my humble frailty.³

CALANTHA

To their wisdoms

Who are to be spectators of thine end

90 I make the reference.⁴ Those that are dead

Are dead. Had they not now died, of necessity

They must have paid the debt they owed to nature

One time or other. Use dispatch, my lords.

We'll suddenly¹ prepare our coronation.

Exeunt CALANTHA, PHILEMA [*and*] CHRYSALLA.

ARMOSTES

'Tis strange these tragedies should never touch on

Her female pity.

BASSANES

She has a masculine spirit.

And wherefore should I pule² and, like a girl,

Put finger in the eye? Let's be all toughness,

Without distinction betwixt sex and sex.

NEARCHUS

Now, Orgilus, thy choice.

ORGILUS

100

To bleed to death.³

ARMOSTES

The executioner?

ORGILUS

Myself; no surgeon.

I am well skilled in letting blood. Bind fast

This arm, that so the pipes⁴ may from their
conduits⁵

Convey a full stream. Here's a skilful instrument.

[*Showing his sword*]

Only I am a beggar to some charity

To speed me in this execution,

By lending th'other prick to th' tother arm,

When this is bubbling life out.

BASSANES

I am for 'ee.

It most concerns my art, my care, my credit.

Quick, fillet⁶ both his arms.

[SERVANTS *bind him.*]⁷

ORGILUS

110

Gramercy,¹ friendship;

Such courtesies are real which flow cheerfully

Without an **expectation** of requital.

Reach me a staff in this hand.

[*BASSANES gives him a staff to support himself.*]

If a proneness

Or custom in my nature, from my cradle,

Had been inclined to fierce and eager bloodshed,

A coward guilt, hid in a coward quaking,

Would have betrayed fame² to ignoble flight,

And vagabond pursuit of dreadful³ safety.

But look upon my steadiness, and scorn not

120 The sickness of my fortune, which, since
Bassanes

Was husband to Penthea, had lain bed-rid.

We trifle time in words. Thus I show cunning⁴

In opening of a vein too full, too lively.

[He cuts an artery in his own arm.]

ARMOSTES

Desperate courage!

NEARCHUS

Honourable infamy!

LEMOPHIL

I tremble at the sight.

GRONEAS

Would I were loose!⁵

BASSANES

It sparkles like a lusty wine, new-broached.

The vessel must be sound from which it issues.

Grasp hard this other stick.

[He gives ORGILUS another staff.]

I'll be as nimble.

But, prithee, look not pale. Have at 'ee; stretch out

130 Thine arm with vigour and unshook virtue.

[He opens an artery in ORGILUS's other arm.]

Good. Oh, I envy not a rival, fitted

To conquer in extremities. This pastime
Appears majestic. Some high-tuned poem
Hereafter shall deliver to posterity
The writer's glory, and his subject's triumph.
How is't, man? Droop not yet.

ORGILUS

I feel no palsies.
On a pair-royal¹ do I wait in death:
My sovereign, as his liegeman; on my mistress,
As a devoted servant; and on Ithocles,
140 As if no brave, yet no unworthy enemy.
Nor did I use an engine to entrap
His life out of a slavish fear to combat
Youth, strength or cunning, but for that I durst not
Engage² the goodness of a cause on fortune,
By which his name might have out-faced my
vengeance.

O Tecnicus, inspired with Phoebus' fire,
I call to mind thy augury; 'twas perfect:
'Revenge proves its own executioner.'
When feeble man is bending to his mother,³
150 The dust 'a was first framed on, thus he totters.

[ORGILUS *collapses.*]

BASSANES

Life's fountain is dried up.

ORGILUS

So falls the [standard](#)⁴
Of my prerogative⁵ in being a creature.
A mist hangs o'er mine eyes.⁶ The sun's bright
splendour
Is clouded in an everlasting shadow.
Welcome, thou ice that sit'st about my heart;
No heat can ever thaw
thee. [He] dies.

NEARCHUS

Speech hath left him.

BASSANES

'A has shook hands with time. His funeral urn
Shall be my charge. Remove the bloodless body.
The coronation must require attendance.
160 That past, my few days can be but one
mourning. *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 3

An altar covered with white; two lights of virgin¹ wax, during which music of recorders. Enter four bearing ITHOCLES on a hearse, or in a chair, in a rich robe, and a crown on his head. [They] place him on one side of the altar. After him enter CALANTHA in a white robe and crowned, EUPHRANIA, PHILEMA, CHRYSTALLA in white; NEARCHUS, ARMOSTES, CROTOLON, PROPHILUS, AMELUS, BASSANES, LEMOPHIL and GRONEAS. CALANTHA goes and kneels before the altar. The rest stand off, the women kneeling behind. Cease recorders during her

*devotions. Soft music. CALANTHA and the rest rise, doing
obeisance to the altar.*

CALANTHA

Our orisons² are heard: the gods are merciful.
Now tell me, you whose loyalties pays tribute
To us, your lawful sovereign, how unskilful³
Your duties or obedience is to render
Subjection to the sceptre of a virgin,
Who have been ever fortunate in princes
Of masculine and stirring composition?¹
A woman has enough to govern wisely
Her own demeanours, passions, and divisions.²
10 A nation warlike, and inured to practice
Of policy and labour, cannot brook
A feminine authority. We therefore
Command your counsel, how you may advise us
In choosing of a husband whose abilities
Can better guide this kingdom.

NEARCHUS

Royal lady,
Your law is in your will.

ARMOSTES

We have seen tokens
Of constancy too lately to mistrust it.

CROTOLON

Yet, if your highness settle on a choice

By your own judgement both allowed and liked of,
20 Sparta may grow in power, and proceed
To an increasing height.

CALANTHA

Hold you the same mind?

BASSANES

Alas, great mistress, reason is so clouded
With the thick darkness of my *infinite* woes
That I forecast nor dangers, hopes, or safety.
Give me some corner of the world to wear out
The remnant of the minutes I must number,
Where I may hear no sounds but sad complaints
Of virgins who have lost contracted partners;
Of husbands howling that their wives were
ravished
30 By some untimely fate; of friends divided
By churlish opposition; or of fathers
Weeping upon their children's slaughtered
carcasses;
Or daughters groaning o'er their fathers' hearses,
And I can dwell there, and with these keep
consort¹
As musical as theirs. What can you look for
From an old, foolish, peevish, doting man,
But craziness of age?

CALANTHA

Cousin of Argos –

NEARCHUS

Madam.

CALANTHA

Were I presently

To choose you for my lord, I'll open freely

40 What articles I would propose to treat on²

Before our marriage.

NEARCHUS

Name them, virtuous lady.

CALANTHA

I would presume you would retain the royalty

Of Sparta in her own bounds. Then in Argos

Armostes might be viceroy; in Messene

Might Crotolon bear sway; and Bassanes –

BASSANES

I, Queen? Alas, what I?

CALANTHA

Be Sparta's marshal.

The multitudes of high employments could not

But set a peace to private griefs. These gentlemen,

Groneas and Lemophil, with worthy pensions

50 Should wait upon your person in your chamber.

I would bestow Chrystalla on Amelus –

She'll prove a constant wife – and Philema

Thus I new-marry him whose wife I am;
Death shall not separate us. O my lords,
I but deceived your eyes with antic¹ gesture.

When one news straight came huddling on another,
70 Of death, and death, and death, still I danced
forward,

But it struck home, and here [*pointing to her
heart*], and in an instant.

Be such mere women, who with shrieks and
outcries,

Can vow a present end to all their sorrows,

Yet live to vow new pleasures,² and outlive them.

They are the silent griefs which cut the heart-
strings;³

Let me die smiling.

NEARCHUS

'Tis a truth too ominous.

CALANTHA

One kiss on these cold lips, my last.

[*She kisses ITHOCLES's corpse.*]

Crack, crack!

Argos now's Sparta's king. Command the voices

Which wait at th'altar now to sing the song

I fitted for my end.

NEARCHUS

80

Sirs, the song.

A Song.

ALL *Glories, pleasures, pomps, delights and
ease*

Can but please

Th'outward senses, when the mind

Is or¹ untroubled, or by peace² refined.

1³ *Crowns may flourish and decay;*

Beauties shine, but fade away.

2 *Youth may revel, yet it must*

Lie down in a bed of dust.

3 *Earthly honours flow and waste;*

Time alone doth change and last.

ALL *Sorrows mingled with contents prepare*

Rest for care.

Love only reigns in death, though art

Can find no comfort for a broken heart.

[CALANTHA *dies.*]

ARMOSTES

Look to the Queen!

BASSANES

Her heart is broke indeed.

O royal maid, would thou had'st missed this part;

Yet 'twas a brave one. I must weep to see

Her smile in death.

ARMOSTES

Wise Tecnicus, thus said he:

'When youth is ripe, and age from time doth part,

100 *The lifeless trunk shall wed the broken heart.'*

'Tis here fulfilled.

NEARCHUS

I am your king.

ALL

Long live

Nearchus, King of Sparta!

NEARCHUS

Her last will

Shall never be digressed from. Wait in order

Upon these faithful lovers, as becomes us.

The counsels¹ of the gods are never known,

Till men can call th' effects of them their
own. [*Exeunt*].

FINIS.

The Epilogue

Where noble judgements and clear eyes are fixed

To grace endeavour, there sits truth, not mixed

With ignorance. Those censures² may command

110 Belief which talk not till they understand.

Let some say 'This was flat'; some 'Here the scene

Fell from its height'; another that 'The mean³

Was ill observed in such a growing passion,

As it transcended either state or fashion.'

Some few may cry ' 'Twas pretty well', or 'So,

But – ’, and there shrug in silence. Yet we know
Our writer’s aim was in the whole addressed
Well to deserve of all, but please the best;
Which granted, by th’allowance of this strain,¹
120 *The Broken Heart* may be pieced up again.

FINIS.



JOHN FORD

'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

List of Characters

GIOVANNI *brother of Annabella*

ANNABELLA *sister of Giovanni*

FRIAR *Bonaventura, tutor and confessor to Giovanni*

PUTTANA¹ *tutoress to Annabella*

FLORIO *a citizen of Parma, father of Giovanni and Annabella*

Lord SORANZO *a nobleman, later husband of Annabella*

VASQUEZ² *servant to Soranzo, a Spaniard*

DONADO *a citizen of Parma, uncle of Bergetto*

BERGETTO *nephew of Donado, suitor of Annabella and later
Philotis*

POGGIO *servant of Bergetto*

RICHARDETTO *husband of Hippolita, believed dead; disguised
as a doctor*

HIPPOLITA *wife of Richardetto, formerly mistress of Soranzo*

PHILOTIS *niece of Richardetto*

GRIMALDI *a Roman gentleman and soldier, suitor to Annabella*

The CARDINAL *Nuncio to the Pope*

SERVANT *to the Cardinal*

BANDITTI

Officers of the Watch, Ladies, Attendants

To the truly noble JOHN, EARL OF
PETERBOROUGH, *Lord Mordaunt, Baron*
*of Turvey.*¹

My lord,

Where a truth of merit hath a general warrant,² there love is but a debt, acknowledgement a justice. Greatness cannot often claim virtue by inheritance; yet in this, yours appears most eminent, for that you are not more rightly heir to your fortunes, than glory shall be to your memory. Sweetness of disposition ennobles a freedom³ of birth; in both, your lawful interest adds honour to your own name and mercy to my presumption. Your noble allowance⁴ of these first fruits of my leisure in the action⁵ emboldens my confidence of your as noble construction⁶ in this presentment;⁷ especially since my service must ever owe particular duty to your favours, by a particular engagement.⁸ The gravity of the subject may easily excuse the lightness⁹ of the title. Otherwise, I had been a severe judge against mine own guilt. Princes have vouchsafed grace to trifles, offered from a purity of devotion. Your lordship may likewise please to admit into your good opinion, with these weak endeavours, the constancy of affection from the sincere lover of your deserts in honour,

John Ford

To my Friend, the Author.

With admiration I beheld this whore,
Adorned with beauty, such as might restore
(If ever being as thy Muse¹ hath famed)
Her Giovanni, in his love unblamed.
The ready Graces² lent their willing aid.
Pallas³ herself now played the chambermaid,
And helped to put her dressings on. Secure
Rest thou that thy name herein shall endure
To th'end of age; and Annabella be
Gloriously fair, even in her infamy.

Thomas Ellice.⁴

ACT 1

Scene 1

Enter FRIAR *and* GIOVANNI.

FRIAR

Dispute no more in this; for know, young man,¹
These are no school-points.² Nice³ philosophy
May tolerate unlikely arguments,
But heaven admits⁴ no jest. Wits⁵ that presumed
On wit too much, by striving how to prove
There was no God, with foolish grounds of art⁶
Discovered first the nearest way to hell,
And filled the world with devilish atheism.
Such questions, youth, are fond;⁷ for better 'tis
10 To bless the sun than reason why it shines –
Yet He thou talk'st of is above the sun.
No more! I may not hear it.

GIOVANNI

Gentle father,
To you I have unclasped my burdened soul,
Emptied the store-house of my thoughts and heart,
Made myself poor of secrets, have not left
Another word untold which hath not spoke
All what I ever durst or think or know;
And yet is here the comfort I shall have?
Must I not do what all men else may: love?

FRIAR

Yes, you may love, fair son.

GIOVANNI

20 Must I not praise
That beauty which, if framed anew, the gods
Would make a god of, if they had it there,
And kneel to it, as I do kneel to them?

FRIAR

Why, foolish madman!

GIOVANNI

Shall a peevish¹ sound,
A customary form from man to man,²
Of brother and of sister, be a bar
'Twixt my perpetual happiness and me?
Say that we had one father, say one womb –
Curse to my joys! – gave both us life and birth;
30 Are we not therefore each to other bound
So much the more by nature, by [the links](#)
Of blood, of reason – nay, if you will have't,
Even of religion – to be ever one?
One soul, one flesh,³ one love, one heart, one all.

FRIAR

Have done, unhappy⁴ youth, for thou art lost!

GIOVANNI

Shall then, for that⁵ I am her brother born,

My joys be ever banished from her bed?
No, father, in your eyes I see the change
Of pity and compassion. From your age,
40 As from a sacred oracle, distils
The life of counsel. Tell me, holy man,
What cure shall give me ease in these extremes?

FRIAR

Repentance, son, and sorrow for this sin;
For thou hast moved a majesty above
With thy unrankèd¹ almost blasphemy.

GIOVANNI

Oh, do not speak of that, dear confessor.

FRIAR

Art thou, my son, that miracle of wit
Who once, within these three months, wert
esteemed
A wonder of thine age throughout [Bologna](#)?²
50 How did the university applaud
Thy government,³ behaviour, learning, speech,
Sweetness, and all that could make up a man!
I was proud of my tutelage, and chose
Rather to leave my books than part with thee.
I did so; but the fruits of all my hopes
Are lost in thee, as thou art in thyself.
O Giovanni, hast thou left the schools
Of knowledge to converse with Lust and Death?

For Death waits⁴ on thy lust. Look through the world,

60 And thou shalt see a thousand faces shine
More glorious than this idol thou ador'st.
Leave her, and take thy choice; 'tis much less sin,
Though in such games as those they lose that win.⁵

GIOVANNI

It were more ease to stop the ocean
From floats and ebbs⁶ than to dissuade my vows.

FRIAR

Then I have done, and in thy wilful flames
Already see thy ruin. Heaven is just –
Yet hear my counsel.

GIOVANNI

As a voice of life.

FRIAR

Hie¹ to thy father's house. There lock thee fast
70 Alone within thy chamber, then fall down
On both thy knees and grovel on the ground.
Cry to thy heart, wash every word thou utter'st
In tears – and if't be possible – of blood.
Beg heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust
That rots thy soul. Acknowledge what thou art:
A wretch, a worm, a nothing. Weep, sigh, pray
Three times a day, and three times every night.
For seven days' space do this; then, if thou find'st

No change in thy desires, return to me.

80 I'll think on remedy. Pray for thyself

At home, whilst I pray for thee here. Away!

My blessing with thee; we have need to pray.

GIOVANNI

All this I'll do to free me from the rod

Of vengeance; else I'll swear my fate's my
god. *Exeunt.*

ACT 1

Scene 2

Enter GRIMALDI, and VASQUEZ, ready to fight.²

VASQUEZ

Come, sir, stand to your tackling.³ If you prove
craven,⁴ I'll make you run quickly.

GRIMALDI

Thou art no equal⁵ match for me.

VASQUEZ

Indeed, I never went to the wars to bring home news;
nor cannot play the mountebank¹ for a meal's meat,
and swear I got my wounds in the field. See you these
grey hairs? They'll not flinch for a bloody nose. Wilt
thou to this gear?²

GRIMALDI

Why, slave, think'st thou I'll balance my reputation
with a cast-suit?³ Call thy master; he shall know that I
dare –

VASQUEZ

10 Scold like a cotquean⁴ – that's your profession, thou poor shadow of a soldier. I will make thee know my master keeps servants thy betters in quality and performance. Com'st thou to fight or prate?⁵

GRIMALDI

Neither with thee. I am a Roman⁶ and a gentleman, one that have got mine honour with expense of blood.

VASQUEZ

You are a lying coward and a fool. Fight, or by these hilts I'll kill thee –

[GRIMALDI *draws his sword.*]

Brave my lord, you'll fight!

GRIMALDI

Provoke me not, for if thou dost –

VASQUEZ

20 Have at you!

They fight. GRIMALDI hath the worst.

Enter FLORIO, DONADO [and], SORANZO.

FLORIO

What **mean** these sudden broils⁷ so near my doors?

Have you not other places but my house

To vent the spleen⁶ of your disordered bloods?

Must I be haunted still with such unrest,

As not to eat or sleep in peace at home?

Is this your love, Grimaldi? Fie, 'tis naught.

DONADO

And, Vasquez, I may tell thee 'tis not well

To broach these quarrels. You are ever forward
In seconding contentions.

*Enter above*¹ ANNABELLA *and* PUTTANA.

FLORIO

What's the ground?²

SORANZO

30 That, with your patience, signors, I'll resolve:³

This gentleman, whom fame reports a soldier –

For else I know not⁴ – rivals me in love

To Signor Florio's daughter, to whose ears

He still prefers⁵ his suit to my disgrace,

Thinking the way to recommend himself

Is to disparage me in his report.

But know, Grimaldi, though may be thou art

My equal in thy blood, yet this bewrays⁶

A lowness in thy mind, which, wert thou noble,

40 Thou wouldst as much disdain as I do thee

For this unworthiness. [*To* FLORIO] And on this
ground

I willed my servant to correct this tongue,

Holding a man so base no match for me.

VASQUEZ

And had **not** your sudden coming prevented us, I had
let my gentleman blood under the gills.⁷ [*To* GRIMALDI]

I should have wormed you, sir, for running mad.⁸

GRIMALDI

I'll be revenged, Soranzo.

VASQUEZ

50 On a dish of warm broth to stay your stomach?¹
Do, honest Innocence, do! Spoon-meat² is a
wholesomer diet than a Spanish blade.

GRIMALDI

Remember this.

SORANZO

I fear thee not, Grimaldi. *Exit* GRIMALDI.

FLORIO

My lord Soranzo, this is strange to me,
Why you should storm, having my word³ engaged.
Owing⁴ her heart, what need you doubt her ear?
Losers may talk, by law of any game.⁵

VASQUEZ

Yet the **villainy** of words, Signor Florio, may be such
as would make any unspleened⁶ dove choleric. Blame
not my lord in this.

FLORIO

Be you more silent!

60 I would not, for my wealth, my daughter's love
Should cause the spilling of one drop of blood.

Vasquez, put up.⁷ Let's end this fray in wine.

Exeunt [FLORIO, DONADO, SORANZO *and* VASQUEZ].

PUTTANA

How like you this, child? Here's threatening,
challenging, quarrelling and fighting on every side,

and all is for your sake. You had need look to yourself,
charge, you'll be stolen away sleeping else, shortly.

ANNABELLA

But, tut'ress, such a life gives no content
To me. My thoughts are fixed on other ends.
Would you would leave me.

PUTTANA

70 Leave you? No marvel else!¹ Leave me no
leaving, charge; this is love outright. Indeed, I blame
you not. You have choice fit for the best lady in Italy.

ANNABELLA

Pray, do not talk so much.

PUTTANA

Take the worst with the best. There's Grimaldi the
soldier: a very well-timbered² fellow. They say he is a
Roman, nephew to the Duke [Monferrato](#). They say he
did good service in the wars against the [Milanese](#). But
'faith, charge, I do not like him, [an't be](#) for nothing but
for being a soldier. One amongst twenty of your
skirmishing captains but have some privy

80 maim³ or other that mars their standing upright.⁴
I like him the worse; he crinkles so much in the hams.⁵
Though he might serve if there were no more men, yet
he's not the man I would choose.

ANNABELLA

Fie, how thou prat'st!

PUTTANA

As I am a very woman, I like Signor Soranzo well.
He is wise; and, what is more, rich; and, what is more

than that, kind; and, what is more than all this, a nobleman. Such a one, were I the fair Annabella myself, I would wish and pray for. Then he is bountiful; besides he is handsome; and, by my

90 troth, I think wholesome⁶ – and that’s news in a gallant of three-and-twenty! Liberal,¹ that I know; loving, that you know; and a man,² sure, else he could never ha’ purchased such a good name with Hippolita, the lusty widow, in her husband’s lifetime. An ’twere but for that report, sweetheart, would ’a were thine! Commend a man for his qualities, but take a husband as he is a plain-sufficient,³ naked man. Such a one is for your bed, and such a one is Signor Soranzo, my life for’t!

ANNABELLA

Sure, the woman took her morning’s draught⁴ too soon!

Enter BERGETTO and POGGIO.

PUTTANA

100 But look, sweetheart, look, what thing comes now. Here’s another of your ciphers⁵ to fill up the number. O brave old ape in a silken coat!⁶ Observe.

BERGETTO

Didst thou think, Poggio, that I would spoil my new clothes and leave my dinner to fight?⁷

POGGIO

No, sir, I did not take you for so arrant a baby.

BERGETTO

I am wiser than so; for I hope, Poggio, thou never heard’st of an elder brother that was a coxcomb,⁸ didst,

Poggio?

POGGIO

Never, indeed, sir, as long as they had either land or money left them to inherit.

BERGETTO

110 Is it possible, Poggio? Oh, monstrous! Why, I'll undertake with a handful of silver to buy a headful of wit at any time. But, sirrah, I have another purchase in hand. I shall have the wench, mine uncle says. I will but wash my face, and shift¹ socks, and then have at her, i'faith! Mark my pace, Poggio.

[He puts on an exaggerated walk.]

POGGIO

Sir, I have seen an ass and a mule trot the Spanish pavan² with a better grace, I know not how often.

Exeunt [BERGETTO and POGGIO].

ANNABELLA

This idiot haunts me too.

PUTTANA

Ay, ay, he needs no description. The rich magnifico³ that is below with your father, charge, Signor Donado his uncle, for

120 that he means to make this his cousin a golden calf, thinks that you will be a right Israelite and fall down⁴ to him presently;⁵ but I hope I have tutored you better. They say a fool's bauble⁶ is a lady's playfellow. Yet you, having wealth enough, you need not cast upon the dearth of flesh⁷ at any rate. Hang him! Innocent!

Enter GIOVANNI.

GIOVANNI

Lost, I am lost! My fates have doomed my death.

140 The more I strive, I love; the more I love,

The less I hope. I see my ruin, certain.

What judgement or endeavours could apply

To my incurable and restless wounds

I thoroughly² have examined, but in vain.

Oh, that it were not in religion sin

To make our love a god and worship it!

I have even wearied heaven with prayers, dried up

The spring of my continual tears, even starved

My veins with daily fasts. What wit³ or art

150 Could counsel I have practised. But, alas,

I find all these but dreams and old men's tales

To fright unsteady youth. I'm still the same;

Or⁴ I must speak or burst. 'Tis not, I know,

My lust, but 'tis my fate that leads me on.

Keep fear, and low, faint-hearted shame with
slaves!¹

I'll tell her that I love her, though my heart

Were rated at the price of that attempt.²

Enter ANNABELLA and PUTTANA.

O me! She comes.

ANNABELLA

Brother –

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

If such a thing
As courage dwell in men, ye heavenly powers,
160 Now double all that virtue in my tongue.

ANNABELLA

Why, brother, will you not speak to me?

GIOVANNI

Yes; how d'ee, sister?

ANNABELLA

Howsoever I am, methinks you are not well.

PUTTANA

Bless us, why are you so sad, sir?

GIOVANNI

Let me entreat you leave us a while, Puttana.

Sister, I would be private with you.

ANNABELLA

Withdraw, Puttana.

PUTTANA

I will. [*Aside*] If this were any other company for her,
I should think my absence an office of some credit;³
but I will leave them together. *Exit* PUTTANA.

GIOVANNI

170 Come, sister, lend your hand. Let's walk
together.

I hope you need not blush to walk with me;

Here's none but you and I.

ANNABELLA

How's this?

GIOVANNI

'Faith, I mean no harm.

ANNABELLA

Harm?

GIOVANNI

No, good faith. How is't with'ee?

ANNABELLA [*Aside*]

I trust he be not frantic.¹

[*Aloud*] I am very well, brother.

GIOVANNI

Trust me, but I am sick. I fear, so sick

180 'Twill cost my life.

ANNABELLA

Mercy forbid it! 'Tis not so, I hope.

GIOVANNI

I think you love me, sister.

ANNABELLA

Yes, you know I do.

GIOVANNI

I know't, indeed. – Y'are very fair.

ANNABELLA

Nay, then, I see you have a merry sickness.

GIOVANNI

That's as it proves. [The](#) poets feign, I read,

That Juno² for her forehead did exceed
All other goddesses, but I durst swear
Your forehead exceeds hers, as hers did theirs.

ANNABELLA

Troth, this is pretty.

GIOVANNI

190 Such a pair of stars
As are thine eyes would, like Promethean fire,¹
If gently glanced,² give life to senseless stones.

ANNABELLA

Fie upon'ee!

GIOVANNI

The lily and the rose, most sweetly strange,³
Upon your dimpled cheeks do strive for 'change.⁴
Such lips would tempt a saint; such hands as those
Would make an anchorite⁵ lascivious.

ANNABELLA

D'ee mock me or flatter me?

GIOVANNI

If you would see a beauty more exact
200 Than Art can counterfeit or Nature frame,
Look in your glass, and there behold your own.

ANNABELLA

Oh, you are a trim⁶ youth!

GIOVANNI

Here.

[He] offers his dagger to her.

ANNABELLA

What to do?

GIOVANNI

And here's my breast. Strike home!

Rip up my bosom! There thou shalt behold

A heart in which is writ the truth I speak.

Why stand'ee?⁷

ANNABELLA

Are you earnest?

GIOVANNI

Yes, most earnest.

You cannot love?

ANNABELLA

Whom?

GIOVANNI

Me! My tortured soul

Hath felt affliction in the heat of death.¹

O Annabella, I am quite undone!

210 The love of thee, my sister, and the view

Of thy immortal beauty hath untuned

All harmony, both of my rest and life.

Why d'ee not strike?

ANNABELLA

Forbid it, my just² fears!

If this be true, 'twere fitter I were dead.

GIOVANNI

True, Annabella? 'Tis no time to jest.

I have too long suppressed the hidden flames

That almost have consumed me. I have spent

Many a silent night in sighs and groans,

Ran over all my thoughts, despised my fate,

220 Reasoned against the reasons of my love,

Done all that smooth-cheeked³ Virtue could
advise,

But found all bootless.⁴ 'Tis my destiny

That you must either love, or I must die.

ANNABELLA

Comes this in sadness⁵ from you?

GIOVANNI

Let some mischief

Befall me soon if I dissemble aught.

ANNABELLA

You are my brother, Giovanni.

GIOVANNI

You

My sister, Annabella. I know this,

And could afford you instance why to love

So much the more for this, to which intent

230 Wise Nature first in your creation meant

To make you mine; else't had been sin and foul
To share one beauty to a double soul.
Nearness in birth or blood doth but persuade
A nearer nearness in affection.
I have asked counsel of the holy Church,
Who tells me I may love you; and 'tis just,
That since I may, I should and will, yes, will.
Must I now live, or die?

ANNABELLA

Live. Thou hast won
The field and never fought. What thou hast urged
240 My captive heart had long ago resolved.
I blush to tell thee – but I'll tell thee now –
For every sigh that thou hast spent for me,
I have sighed ten; for every tear, shed twenty;
And not so much for that I loved, as that
I durst not say I loved, nor scarcely think it.

GIOVANNI

Let not this music be a dream, ye gods,
For pity's sake, I beg'ee!

ANNABELLA

On my knees,

She kneels.

Brother, even by our mother's dust I charge you,
Do not betray me to your mirth or hate:

260 After so many tears as we have wept,
Let's learn to court in smiles, to kiss and
sleep. *Exeunt.*

ACT 1

Scene 3

Enter FLORIO and DONADO.

FLORIO

Signor Donado, you have said enough.
I understand you, but would have you know
I will not force my daughter 'gainst her will.
You see I have but two: a son and her –
And he is so devoted to his book
As, I must tell you true, I doubt¹ his health.
Should he miscarry,² all my hopes rely
Upon my girl. As for worldly fortune,
I am, I thank my stars, blessed with enough.
10 My care is how to match her to her liking.
I would not have her marry wealth but love;
And if she like your nephew, let him have her.
Here's all that I can say.

DONADO

Sir, you say well,
Like a true father; and for my part, I,
If the young folks can like – 'twixt you and me –
Will promise to assure my nephew presently³

Three thousand florins yearly during life,⁴
And, after I am dead, my whole estate.

FLORIO

'Tis a fair proffer, sir. Meantime, your nephew
20 Shall have free passage to commence his suit.
If he can thrive, he shall have my consent.
So for this time I'll leave you, signor. *Exit.*

DONADO

Well,
Here's hope yet, if my nephew would have wit.
But he is such another dunce, I fear
He'll never win the wench. When I was young
I could have done't, i' faith, and so shall he
If he will learn of me –

Enter BERGETTO and POGGIO.

and in good time
He comes himself.
How now, Bergetto, *whither* away so fast?

BERGETTO

30 O uncle, I have heard the strangest news that
ever came out of the mint¹ – have I not, Poggio?

POGGIO

Yes, indeed, sir.

DONADO

What news, Bergetto?

BERGETTO

Why, look ye, uncle, my barber told me just now that there is a fellow come to town who undertakes to make a mill go without the mortal help of any water or wind, only with sandbags! And this fellow hath a strange horse – a most excellent beast, I'll assure you, uncle, my barber says – whose head, to the wonder of all Christian people, stands just

40 behind where his tail is.² Is't not true, Poggio?

POGGIO

So the barber³ swore, forsooth.

DONADO

And you are running **thither**?

BERGETTO

Ay, forsooth, uncle.

DONADO

Wilt thou be a fool still? Come, sir, you shall not go. You have more mind of a puppet play⁴ than on the business I told ye. Why, thou great baby, wilt never have wit? Wilt make thyself a May-game¹ to all the world?

POGGIO

Answer for yourself, master.

BERGETTO

Why, uncle, **should** I sit at home still, and not go abroad to

50 see fashions like other gallants?

DONADO

To see hobby-horses!² What wise talk, I pray, had you with Annabella when you were at Signor Florio's

house?

BERGETTO

Oh, the wench! Uds sa' me,³ uncle, I tickled her with a rare speech, that I made her almost burst her belly with laughing.

DONADO

Nay, I think so; and what speech was't?

BERGETTO

What did I say, Poggio?

POGGIO

Forsooth, my master said that he loved her almost as well as he loved [Parmesan](#),⁴ and swore – I'll be sworn for him – that she wanted but such a nose as his was to be as pretty a young

60 woman as any was in Parma.

DONADO

Oh, gross!

BERGETTO

Nay, uncle, then she asked me whether my father had any more children than myself, and I said, 'No, 'twere better he should have had his brains knocked out first.'

DONADO

This is intolerable.

BERGETTO

Then said she, 'Will Signor Donado, your uncle, leave you all his wealth?'

DONADO

Ha! That was good. Did she harp upon that string?

BERGETTO

Did she harp upon that string? Ay, that she did. I answered,

70 'Leave me all his wealth? Why, woman, he hath no other wit.¹ If he had, he should hear on't to his everlasting glory² and confusion. I know,' quoth I, 'I am his white boy,³ and will not be gulled.'⁴ And with that she fell into a great smile, and went away. Nay, I did fit her.⁵

DONADO

Ah, sirrah, then I see there is no changing of nature. Well, Bergetto, I fear thou wilt be a very ass still.

BERGETTO

I should be sorry for that, uncle.

DONADO

Come, come you home with me. Since you are no better a speaker, I'll have you write to her after some courtly manner,

80 and enclose some rich jewel in the letter.

BERGETTO

Ay, marry, that will be excellent.

DONADO

Peace, innocent!

Once in my time I'll set my wits to school.

If all fail, 'tis but the fortune of a fool.

BERGETTO

Poggio, 'twill do, Poggio.

Exeunt.

ACT 2

Scene 1

Enter GIOVANNI and ANNABELLA, as from their chamber.

GIOVANNI

Come, Annabella; no more sister now,
But love – a name more gracious. Do not blush,
Beauty's sweet wonder, but be proud to know
That, yielding,¹ thou hast conquered and enflamed
A heart whose tribute² is thy brother's life.

ANNABELLA

And mine is his. Oh, how these stol'n contents³
Would print a modest crimson on my cheeks,
Had any but my heart's delight prevailed!

GIOVANNI

I marvel why the chaster of your sex
10 Should think this pretty toy⁴ called maidenhead
So strange a loss, when, being lost, 'tis nothing,⁵
And you are still the same.

ANNABELLA

'Tis well for you;
Now you can talk.

GIOVANNI

Music as well consists
In th'ear as in the playing.⁶

ANNABELLA

Oh, y'are wanton!

Tell on't, y'are best, do.

GIOVANNI

Thou wilt chide me, then.

Kiss me. [*They kiss*] So. Thus hung Jove on Leda's neck,¹

And sucked divine ambrosia from her lips.

I envy not the mightiest man alive,

But hold myself, in being king of thee,

20 More great than were I king of all the world.

But I shall lose you, sweetheart.

ANNABELLA

But you shall not.

GIOVANNI

You must be married, mistress.

ANNABELLA

Yes? To whom?

GIOVANNI

Someone must have you.

ANNABELLA

You must.

GIOVANNI

Nay, some other.

ANNABELLA

Now, prithee, do not speak so without jesting;

You'll make me weep in earnest.

GIOVANNI

What? You will not.

But tell me, sweet, canst thou be dared to swear
That thou wilt live to me,² and to no other?

ANNABELLA

By both our loves, I dare; for didst thou know,
My Giovanni, how all suitors seem
30 To my eyes hateful, thou wouldst trust me then.

GIOVANNI

Enough, I take thy word. Sweet, we must part.
Remember what thou vow'st: keep well my heart.

ANNABELLA

Will you be gone?

GIOVANNI

I must.

ANNABELLA

When to return?

GIOVANNI

Soon.

ANNABELLA

Look you do.

GIOVANNI

Farewell. *Exit.*

ANNABELLA

Go where thou wilt, in mind I'll keep thee here;
And where thou art, I know I shall be there.

[*Calls*] Guardian!

Enter PUTTANA.

PUTTANA

Child, how is't, child? Well, thank heaven, ha?

ANNABELLA

O guardian, what a paradise of joy

40 Have I passed over!¹

PUTTANA

Nay, what a paradise of joy have you passed under!²
Why, now I commend thee, charge. Fear nothing,
sweetheart. What, though he be your brother? Your
brother's a man, I hope; and I say still, if a young
wench feel the fit³ upon her, let her take anybody:
father or brother, all is one.

ANNABELLA

I would not have it known for all the world.

PUTTANA

Nor I, indeed, for the speech of the people;⁴ else
'twere nothing.

FLORIO (*Within*)

Daughter Annabella!

ANNABELLA

O me, my father! – Here, sir! [*To* PUTTANA] Reach
my work.

[PUTTANA *gives her a piece of needlework.*]

FLORIO (*Within*)

What are you doing?

ANNABELLA [*To* PUTTANA]

50

So, let him come now.

Enter FLORIO, RICHARDETTO [*disguised*] *like a doctor of physic,*¹ *and* PHILOTIS *with a lute in her hand.*

FLORIO

So hard at work? That's well; you lose² no time.

Look, I have brought you company. Here's one,

A learned doctor, lately come from Padova,³

Much skilled in physic; and for that I see

You have of late been sickly,⁴ I entreated

This reverend man to visit you some time.

ANNABELLA

Y'are very welcome, sir.

RICHARDETTO

I thank you, mistress.

Loud fame in large⁵ report hath spoke your praise,

As well for virtue as perfection;⁶

60 For which I have been bold to bring with me

A kinswoman of mine, a maid, for song

And music. One, perhaps, will give content.

Please you to know her?

ANNABELLA

They are parts¹ I love,

And she for them most welcome.

PHILOTIS

Thank you, lady.

FLORIO

Sir, now you know my house, pray make not
strange;²

And if you find my daughter need your art,³
I'll be your pay-master.

RICHARDETTO

Sir, what I am
She shall command.

FLORIO

You shall bind me to you.

Daughter, I must have conference with you
70 About some matters that concerns us both.
Good master Doctor, please you but walk in;
We'll crave a little of your cousin's⁴ cunning.⁵
I think my girl hath not quite forgot
To touch an instrument;⁶ she could have done't.⁷
We'll hear them both.

RICHARDETTO

I'll wait upon you, sir. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 2

Enter SORANZO in his study, reading a book.

SORANZO

‘Love’s measure is extreme; the comfort, pain;

The life, unrest; and the reward, disdain.’

What’s here? Look’t o’er again. ’Tis so, so writes

This smooth, licentious poet in his rhymes.

But, Sannazar,¹ thou liest; for had thy bosom

Felt such oppression as is laid on mine,

Thou wouldst have kissed the rod that made the
smart.

To work then, happy Muse,² and contradict

What Sannazar hath, in his envy, writ:

10 [*Writes*] ‘Love’s measure is the mean,³ sweet his
annoys,⁴

His pleasures life, and his reward all joys.’

Had Annabella lived when Sannazar

Did in his brief *encomium* celebrate

Venice, that queen of cities, he had left⁵

That verse, which gained him such a sum of gold,

And for one only look from Annabel

Had writ of her, and her diviner cheeks.

Oh, how my thoughts are –

VASQUEZ (*Within*)

Pray, forbear! In rules of civility, let me give notice
on’t. I

20 shall be taxed of⁶ my neglect of duty and service.

SORANZO

What rude intrusion interrupts my peace?

Can I be nowhere private?

VASQUEZ (*Within*)

Troth, you wrong your modesty.

SORANZO

What's the matter, Vasquez? Who is't?

Enter HIPPOLITA [*dressed in mourning*] and VASQUEZ.

HIPPOLITA

'Tis I;

Do you know me now?¹ Look, perjured man, on
her

Whom thou and thy distracted lust have wronged.

Thy sensual rage of blood² hath made my youth

A scorn to men and angels; and shall I

Be now a foil to thy unsated change?³

30 Thou know'st, false wanton, when my modest
fame⁴

Stood free from stain or scandal, all the charms

Of hell or sorcery could not prevail

Against the honour of my chaster bosom.

Thine eyes did plead in tears, thy tongue in oaths,

Such and so many that a heart of steel

Would have been wrought to pity, as was mine.

And shall the conquest of my lawful bed,

My husband's death urged on by his disgrace,⁵

My loss of womanhood,⁶ be ill rewarded

40 With hatred and contempt? No, know Soranzo,
I have a spirit doth as much distaste
The slavery of fearing thee, as thou
Dost loathe the memory of what hath passed.

SORANZO

Nay, dear Hippolita –

HIPPOLITA

Call me not ‘dear’,
Nor think with supple words to smooth the
grossness
Of my abuses. ’Tis not your new mistress,
Your goodly Madam Merchant, shall triumph
On my dejection. Tell her thus from me:
My birth was nobler, and by much more free.¹

SORANZO

You are too violent.

HIPPOLITA

50 You are too double²
In your dissimulation. See’st thou this,
This habit, these black mourning-weeds³ of care?
’Tis thou art cause of this, and hast divorced
My husband from his life and me from him,
And made me widow in my widowhood.⁴

SORANZO

Will you yet hear?

HIPPOLITA

More of [thy](#) perjuries?

Thy soul is drowned too deeply in those sins;

Thou need'st not add to th' number.

SORANZO

Then I'll leave you;

You are past all rules of sense.

HIPPOLITA

And thou of grace.

VASQUEZ

60 Fie, mistress, you are not near the limits of reason. If my lord had a resolution as noble as virtue itself, you take the course to unedge⁵ it all. [*To SORANZO*] Sir, I beseech you, do not perplex¹ her. Griefs, alas, will have a vent. I dare undertake Madam Hippolita will now freely hear you.

SORANZO

Talk to a woman frantic? Are these the fruits of your love?

HIPPOLITA

They are the fruits of thy untruth, false man.

Didst thou not swear whilst yet my husband lived,

That thou wouldst wish no happiness on earth

More than to call me wife? Didst thou not vow,

70 When he should die, to marry me? For which

The devil in my blood, and thy protests,²

Caused me to counsel him to undertake

A voyage to [Leghorn](#),³ for that we heard

His brother there was dead, and left a daughter
Young and unfriended, who with much ado
I wished him to bring hither. He did so,
And went, and, as thou know'st, died on the way.
Unhappy man to buy his death so dear
With my advice! Yet thou, for whom I did it,
80 Forget'st thy vows, and leav'st me to my shame.

SORANZO

Who could help this?

HIPPOLITA

Who, perjured man? Thou could'st,
If thou hadst faith or love.

SORANZO

You are deceived:
The vows I made, if you remember well,
Were wicked and unlawful. 'Twere more sin
To keep them than to break them. As for me,
I cannot mask my penitence. Think thou
How much thou hast digressed from honest shame
In bringing of a gentleman to death
Who was thy husband; such a one as he,

90 So noble in his quality,¹ condition,
Learning, behaviour, entertainment,² love,
As Parma could not show a braver³ man.

VASQUEZ

You do not well; this was not your promise.

SORANZO

I care not; let her know her monstrous life.

Ere I'll be servile to so black a sin,

I'll be a **corpse**. [*To* HIPPOLITA] Woman, come here
no more.

Learn to repent and die; for, by my honour,

I hate thee and thy lust. You have been too foul.

[*Exit* SORANZO.]

VASQUEZ

This part has been scurvily played.

HIPPOLITA

100 How foolishly this beast contemns his fate,
And shuns the use of that which I more scorn
Than I once loved: his love. But let him go.
My vengeance shall give comfort to his woe.⁴

She offers to go away.

VASQUEZ [*following after her*]

Mistress, mistress! Madam Hippolita!

Pray, a word or two.

HIPPOLITA

With me, sir?

VASQUEZ

With you, if you please.

HIPPOLITA

What is't?

VASQUEZ

I know you are infinitely moved now, and you think
you

110 have cause. Some, I confess, you have, but,
sure, not so much as you imagine.

HIPPOLITA

Indeed?

VASQUEZ

Oh, you were miserably bitter, which you followed
even to the last syllable. 'Faith, you were somewhat
too shrewd.¹ By my life, you could not have took my
lord in a worse time since I first knew him. Tomorrow
you shall find him a new man.

HIPPOLITA

Well, I shall wait his leisure.

VASQUEZ

Fie, this is not a hearty² patience; it comes sourly
from you.

120 Troth, let me persuade you for once.

HIPPOLITA [*Aside*]

I have it, and it shall be so. Thanks, Opportunity.

[*Aloud*] Persuade me to what?

VASQUEZ

Visit him in some milder temper. Oh, if you could
but master a little your female spleen,³ how might you
win him!

HIPPOLITA

He will never love me. Vasquez, thou hast been a too trusty servant to such a master, and I believe thy reward in the end will fall out like mine.

VASQUEZ

So, perhaps, too.

HIPPOLITA

Resolve thyself, it will. Had I one so true, so truly honest, so

130 secret to my counsels, as thou hast been to him and his,⁴ I should think it a slight acquittance⁵ not only to make him master of all I have, but even of myself.⁶

VASQUEZ

Oh, you are a noble gentlewoman!

HIPPOLITA

Wilt thou feed always upon hopes? Well, I know thou art wise, and seest the reward of an old servant daily what it is.

VASQUEZ

Beggary and neglect.

HIPPOLITA

True, but Vasquez, wert thou mine, and wouldst be private to me and my designs, I here protest, myself, and all what I can else call mine, should be at thy dispose.¹

VASQUEZ [*Aside*]

140 Work you that way, old mole?² Then I have the wind of you.³ [*Aloud*] I were not worthy of it, by any desert that could lie within my compass. If I could –

HIPPOLITA

What then?

VASQUEZ

I should then hope to live, in these my old years,
with rest and security.

HIPPOLITA

Give me thy hand. Now promise but thy silence,
And help to bring to pass a plot I have,
And here in sight of heaven, that being done,
I make thee lord of me and mine estate.

VASQUEZ

150 Come, you are merry!⁴ This is such a happiness
that I can neither think or believe.

HIPPOLITA

Promise thy secrecy, and 'tis confirmed.

VASQUEZ

Then here I call our good genii⁵ for witnesses
whatsoever your designs are, or against whomsoever, I
will not only be a special actor therein, but never
disclose it till it be effected.

HIPPOLITA

I take thy word, and with that, thee for mine.
Come, then, let's more confer of this anon.
On this delicious bane¹ my thoughts shall banquet;
Revenge shall sweeten what my griefs have
tasted. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 3

Enter RICHARDETTO [*in disguise as the Doctor*] and PHILOTIS.

RICHARDETTO

Thou seest, my lovely niece, these strange
mishaps;
How all my fortunes turn to my disgrace,
Wherein I am but as a looker-on,
Whiles others act my shame, and I am silent.

PHILOTIS

But, uncle, wherein can this borrowed shape
Give you content?

RICHARDETTO

I'll tell thee, gentle niece:
Thy wanton aunt in her lascivious riots
Lives now secure;² thinks I am surely dead
In my late journey to [Leghorn](#) for you,
10 As I have caused it to be rumoured out.
Now would I see with what an impudence
She gives scope to her loose adultery,
And how the common voice³ allows hereof:
Thus far I have prevailed.

PHILOTIS

Alas, I fear
You mean some strange revenge.

RICHARDETTO

Oh, be not troubled;
Your ignorance shall plead for you in all.

But to our business: what, you learnt for certain
How¹ Signor Florio means to give his daughter
In marriage to Soranzo?

PHILOTIS

Yes, for certain.

RICHARDETTO

20 But how find you young Annabella's love
Inclined to him?

PHILOTIS

For aught I could perceive,
She neither fancies him or any else.

RICHARDETTO

There's mystery in that which time must show.
She used² you kindly?

PHILOTIS

Yes.

RICHARDETTO

And craved your company?

PHILOTIS

Often.

RICHARDETTO

'Tis well; it goes as I could wish.
I am the doctor now, and, as for you,
None knows you. If all fail not, we shall thrive.
But who comes here?

Enter GRIMALDI.

I know him. 'Tis Grimaldi:

A Roman and a soldier, near allied

30 Unto the Duke of Monferrato, one

Attending on the *Nuncio*³ of the Pope

That now resides in Parma, by which means¹

He hopes to get the love of Annabella.

GRIMALDI

Save you,² sir.

RICHARDETTO

And you, sir.

GRIMALDI

I have heard

Of your approvèd skill, which through the city

Is freely talked of, and would crave your aid.

RICHARDETTO

For what, sir?

GRIMALDI

Marry, sir, for this –

But I would speak in private.

RICHARDETTO

Leave us, cousin.³

Exit PHILOTIS.

GRIMALDI

I love fair Annabella, and would know

40 Whether in arts⁴ there may not be receipts⁵
To move affection.

RICHARDETTO

Sir, perhaps there may,
But these will nothing profit you.

GRIMALDI

Not me?

RICHARDETTO

Unless I be mistook, you are a man
Greatly in favour with the Cardinal.

GRIMALDI

What of that?

RICHARDETTO

In duty to his grace,
I will be bold to tell you, if you seek
To marry Florio's daughter, you must first
Remove a bar 'twixt you and her.

GRIMALDI

Who's that?

RICHARDETTO

Soranzo is the man that hath her heart,
50 And while he lives, be sure you cannot speed.¹

GRIMALDI

Soranzo? What, mine enemy, is't he?

RICHARDETTO

Is he your enemy?

GRIMALDI

The man I hate

Worse than confusion.² I'll **kill** him straight.

RICHARDETTO

Nay, then, take mine advice:

Even for his grace's sake, the Cardinal,

I'll find a time when he and she do meet,

Of which I'll give you notice; and to be sure

He shall not 'scape you, I'll provide a poison

To dip your rapier's point in. If he had

60 As many heads as Hydra³ had, he dies.

GRIMALDI

But shall I trust thee, Doctor?

RICHARDETTO

As yourself;

Doubt not in aught. [*Aside*] Thus shall the Fates
decree:

By me Soranzo falls, that **ruined**
me. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 4

Enter DONADO [*with a letter*], BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

DONADO

Well, sir, I must be content to be both your secretary¹
and your messenger myself. I cannot tell what this

letter may work, but, as sure as I am alive, if thou come once to talk with her, I fear thou wilt mar whatsoever I make.

BERGETTO

You make, uncle? Why, am not I big enough to carry mine own letter, I pray?

DONADO

Ay, ay, carry a fool's head o'thy own. Why, thou dunce, wouldst thou write a letter and carry it thyself?

BERGETTO

Yes, that I would, and read it to her with my own mouth; for

10 you must think, if she will not believe me myself when she hears me speak, she will not believe another's handwriting. Oh, you think I am a blockhead, uncle! No, sir, Poggio knows I have indited² a letter myself, so I have.

POGGIO

Yes, truly, sir. I have it in my pocket.

DONADO

A sweet one, no doubt. Pray, let's see't.

[POGGIO *hands* BERGETTO *the letter*.]

BERGETTO

I cannot read my own hand very well, Poggio.
Read it, Poggio.

DONADO

Begin.

POGGIO (*Reads*)

‘Most dainty and honey-sweet mistress, I could call you fair, and lie as fast³ as any that loves you; but my uncle, being the

20 elder man, I leave it to him as more fit for his age and the colour of his beard.¹ I am wise enough to tell you I can board² where I see occasion; or, if you like my uncle’s wit better than mine, you shall marry me. If you like mine better than his, I will marry you in spite of your teeth.³ So, commending my best parts⁴ to you, I rest

Yours upwards and downwards, or you may **choose**,
Bergetto.’

BERGETTO

Ah ha! Here’s stuff, uncle!

DONADO

Here’s stuff, indeed, to shame us all. Pray, whose advice did

30 you take in this learned letter?

POGGIO

None, upon my word, but mine own.

BERGETTO

And mine, uncle. Believe it, nobody’s else. ’Twas mine own brain, I thank a good wit for’t.

DONADO

Get **you** home, sir, and look you keep within doors till I return.

BERGETTO

How? That were a jest, indeed. I scorn it, i’ faith.

DONADO

What, you do not?

[*He threatens to strike him.*]

BERGETTO

Judge me, but I do now.

POGGIO

Indeed, sir, 'tis very unhealthy.

DONADO

Well, sir, if I hear any of your apish¹ running to motions² and

40 fopperies till I come back, you were as good no.³ Look to't!

Exit.

BERGETTO

Poggio, shall's steal⁴ to see this horse with the head in's tail?

POGGIO

Ay, but you must take heed of whipping.

BERGETTO

Dost take me for a child, Poggio? Come, honest Poggio.

Exeunt.

ACT 2

Scene 5

Enter FRIAR and GIOVANNI.

FRIAR

Peace! Thou hast told a tale whose every word

Threatens eternal slaughter to the soul.
I'm sorry I have heard it. Would mine ears
Had been one minute deaf before the hour
That thou cam'st to me! O young man, cast away
By the religious number⁵ of mine order,
I day and night have waked **my** agèd eyes,
Above my strength to weep on thy behalf.
But heaven is angry, and, be thou resolved,
10 Thou art a man remarked⁶ to taste a mischief.
Look for't; though it come late, it will come sure.

GIOVANNI

Father, in this you are uncharitable.⁶
What I have done I'll prove both fit and good.
It is a principle, which you have taught
When I was yet your scholar, that the **frame**
And composition of the mind doth follow
The frame and composition **of the body**;
So where the body's furniture¹ is beauty,
The mind's must needs be virtue; which allowed,
20 Virtue itself is Reason but refined,
And Love the quintessence² of that. This proves
My sister's beauty, being rarely fair,
Is rarely virtuous; chiefly in her love,
And chiefly in that love, her love to me.
If hers to me, then so is mine to her,
Since in like causes are effects alike.

FRIAR

O ignorance in knowledge! Long ago
How often have I warned thee this before!
Indeed, if we were sure there were no deity,
30 Nor heaven nor hell, then to be led alone
By nature's light – as were philosophers
Of elder times – might instance some defence;
But 'tis not so. Then, madman, thou wilt find
That nature is in heaven's positions blind.³

GIOVANNI

Your age o'er-rules you; had you youth like mine,
You'd make her love your heaven, and her divine.

FRIAR

Nay, then, I see th'art too far sold to hell;
It lies not in the compass of my prayers
To call thee back. Yet let me counsel thee:
40 Persuade thy sister to some marriage.

GIOVANNI

Marriage? Why, that's to damn her; that's to prove
Her greedy of variety of lust.

FRIAR

O fearful! If thou wilt not, give me leave
To shrive her,¹ lest she should die unabsolved.

GIOVANNI

At your best leisure, father; then she'll tell you

How dearly she doth prize my matchless love.
Then you will know what pity 'twere we two
Should have been sundered from each other's
arms.

View well her face, and in that little round,
50 You may observe a world of variety:
For colour, lips; for sweet perfumes, her breath;
For jewels, eyes; for threads of purest gold,
Hair; for delicious choice of flowers, cheeks;
Wonder in every portion of that throne.
Hear her but speak, and you will swear the spheres
Make music to the citizens in heaven;²
But father, what is else for pleasure framed,³
Lest I offend your ears shall go unnamed.

FRIAR

The more I hear, I pity thee the more –
60 That one so excellent should give those parts⁴
All to a second death!⁵ What I can do
Is but to pray; and yet I could advise thee,
Wouldst thou be ruled.

GIOVANNI

In what?

FRIAR

Why, leave her yet.
The throne of mercy is above your trespass.
Yet time is left you both –

GIOVANNI

To embrace each other;
Else let all time be struck quite out of number.¹
She is like me, and I like her, resolved.

FRIAR

No more; I'll visit her. This grieves me most:
Things being thus, a pair of souls are
lost. *Exeunt.*

ACT 2

Scene 6

Enter FLORIO, DONADO, ANNABELLA [*and*], PUTTANA.

FLORIO

Where's Giovanni?

ANNABELLA

Newly walked abroad,
And, as I heard him say, gone to the Friar,
His reverend tutor.

FLORIO

That's a blessèd man,
A man made up of holiness. I hope
He'll teach him how to gain another world.

DONADO

Fair gentlewoman, here's a letter sent
To you from my young cousin. I dare swear
He loves you in his soul. Would you could hear

Sometimes what I see daily: sighs and tears,
10 As if his breast were prison to his heart.

[He holds out the letter.]

FLORIO

Receive it, Annabella.

ANNABELLA

Alas, good man.

[She takes the letter.]

DONADO

What's that she said?

PUTTANA

An't please you, sir, she said, 'Alas, good man'.
[Aside to DONADO] Truly, I do commend him to her
every night before her first sleep,¹ because I would
have her dream of him, and she hearkens to that most
religiously.²

DONADO *[Aside to PUTTANA]*

Say'st so? Godamercy,³ Puttana, there's something
for thee *[gives her money]*. And, prithee, do what thou
canst on his behalf. Sha' not be lost labour, take my
word for't.

PUTTANA *[Aside to DONADO]*

Thank you most heartily, sir. Now I have a feeling⁴ of
your

20 mind, let me alone to work.

ANNABELLA

Guardian!

PUTTANA

Did you call?

ANNABELLA

Keep this letter.

DONADO

Signor Florio, in any case bid her read it instantly.

FLORIO

Keep it for what? Pray, read it me here right.⁵

ANNABELLA

I shall, sir.

She reads.

DONADO

How d'ee find her inclined, signor?

FLORIO

Troth, sir, I know not how; not all so well

As I could wish.

ANNABELLA

Sir, I am bound to rest your cousin's debtor.

The jewel I'll return; for if he love,

I'll count that love a jewel.

DONADO [*Aside to FLORIO*]

30

Mark you that?

[*Aloud*] Nay, keep them both, sweet maid.

ANNABELLA

You must excuse me;

Sir, with your leave;
Please you to give me freedom?

FLORIO

Yes, you **have**'t.

ANNABELLA

Signor Donado, if your nephew mean
To raise his better fortunes in his match,
The hope of me will hinder such a hope.
Sir, if you love him, as I know you do,
Find one more worthy of his choice than me.
In short, I'm sure I sha' not be his wife.

DONADO

50 Why, here's plain dealing; I commend thee for't,
And all the worst I wish thee is heaven bless thee!
Your father yet and I will still be friends,
Shall we not, Signor Florio?

FLORIO

Yes, why not?

Enter BERGETTO [*with his head bandaged*] and POGGIO.

Look, here your cousin comes.

DONADO [*Aside*]

O coxcomb, what doth he make here?

BERGETTO

Where's my uncle, sirs?

DONADO

What's the news now?

BERGETTO

Save you,¹ uncle, save you. You must not think I come for nothing, masters. [*To ANNABELLA*] And how and how is't?

60 What, you have read my letter? Ah, there I tickled you, i' faith.

POGGIO [*Aside*]

But 'twere better you had tickled her in another place.

BERGETTO

Sirrah sweetheart, I'll tell thee a good jest, and riddle² what 'tis.

ANNABELLA

You say you'd tell me.

BERGETTO

As I was walking just now in the street, I met a swaggering fellow would needs take the wall of me;¹ and because he did thrust me, I very valiantly called him rogue. He hereupon bade me draw. I told him I had more wit than so; but when

70 he saw that I would not, he did so maul me with the hilts of his rapier, that my head sung whilst my feet capered in the kennel.

DONADO [*Aside*]

Was ever the like ass seen?

ANNABELLA

And what did you all this while?

BERGETTO

Laugh at him for a gull,² till I see the blood run about mine ears, and then I could not choose but find in my heart to cry, till a fellow with a broad beard³ – they say he is a new-come doctor – called me into his house, and gave me a plaster. Look you, here 'tis. And, sir, there was a young wench washed

80 my face and hands most excellently. I'faith, I shall love her as long as I live for't. Did she not, Poggio?

POGGIO

Yes, and kissed him too.

BERGETTO

Why, la, now, you think I tell a lie, uncle, I warrant.

DONADO

Would he that beat thy blood out of thy head had beaten some wit into it, for I fear thou never wilt have any.

BERGETTO

O uncle, but there was a wench would have done a man's heart good to have looked on her. By this light, she had a face, methinks, worth twenty of you, Mistress Annabella.

DONADO [*Aside*]

Was ever such a fool born?

ANNABELLA

90 I am glad she liked¹ you, sir.

BERGETTO

Poggio?

POGGIO

I'll warrant you, sir.

DONADO

Signor Florio, I thank you for your free recourse¹ you gave for my admittance; and to you, fair maid, that jewel I will give you 'gainst² your marriage. [*To BERGETTO*] Come, will

110 you go, sir?

BERGETTO

Ay, marry, will I. Mistress, farewell, mistress. I'll come again tomorrow. Farewell, mistress.

Exeunt DONADO, BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

Enter GIOVANNI.

FLORIO

Son, where have you been? What, alone, alone, still, still?

I would not have it so. You must forsake

This over-bookish humour.³ Well, your sister

Hath shook the fool off.

GIOVANNI

'Twas no match for her.

FLORIO

'Twas not, indeed; I meant it nothing less.

Soranzo is the man I only like.⁴

120 Look on him, Annabella. Come, 'tis supper-time,

And it grows late.

Exit FLORIO.

GIOVANNI

Whose jewel's that?

ANNABELLA

Some sweetheart's.

GIOVANNI

So I think.

ANNABELLA

A lusty youth, Signor Donado, gave it me
To wear against my marriage.

GIOVANNI

But you shall not wear it.
Send it him back again.

ANNABELLA

What, you are jealous?

GIOVANNI

That you shall know anon, at better leisure.
Welcome, sweet Night! The evening crowns the
day.

Exeunt.

ACT 3

Scene 1

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

BERGETTO

Does my uncle think to make me a baby still? No, Poggio, he shall know I have a sponce¹ now.

POGGIO

Ay, let him not bob you off² like an ape with an apple.³

BERGETTO

'Sfoot,⁴ I will have the wench, if he were ten uncles, in despite of his nose, Poggio.

POGGIO

Hold him to the grindstone, and give not a jot of ground. She hath, in a manner, promised you already.

BERGETTO

True, Poggio, and her uncle the Doctor swore I should marry her.

POGGIO

10 He swore, I remember.

BERGETTO

And I will have her, that's more. Didst see the codpiece-point⁵ she gave me, and the box of marmalade?⁶

POGGIO

Very well, and kissed you that my chops¹ watered at the sight on't. There's no way but to clap up² a marriage in hugger-mugger.³

BERGETTO

I will do't; for I tell thee, Poggio, I begin to grow valiant, methinks, and my courage begins to rise.⁴

POGGIO

Should you be afraid of your uncle?

BERGETTO

Hang him, old doting rascal, no! I say I will have her.

POGGIO

20 Lose no time, then.

BERGETTO

I will beget a race of wise men, and constables⁵ that shall cart whores⁶ at their own charges, and break the duke's peace ere I have done myself. Come, away!

Exeunt.

ACT 3

Scene 2

Enter FLORIO, GIOVANNI, SORANZO, ANNABELLA, PUTTANA *and*
VASQUEZ.

FLORIO

My lord Soranzo, though I must confess
The proffers that are made me have been great
In marriage of my daughter, yet the hope
Of your still-rising honours have prevailed
Above all other jointures.¹ Here she is.
She knows my mind. Speak for yourself to her;
And hear you, daughter, see you use him nobly.
For any private speech, I'll give you time.
Come, son, and you the rest. Let them alone,
Agree as they may.

SORANZO

10 I thank you, sir.

GIOVANNI [*Aside to* ANNABELLA]

Sister, be not all woman.² Think on me.

SORANZO

Vasquez!

VASQUEZ

My lord?

SORANZO

Attend me without.³

Exeunt all but SORANZO and ANNABELLA.

ANNABELLA

Sir, what's your will with me?

SORANZO

Do you not know what I should tell you?

ANNABELLA

Yes,

You'll say you love me.

SORANZO

And I'll swear it too.

Will you believe it?

ANNABELLA

'Tis not point of faith.⁴

Enter GIOVANNI above.

SORANZO

Have you not will to love?

ANNABELLA

Not you.

SORANZO

Whom then?

ANNABELLA

That's as the Fates infer.¹

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

Of those I'm regent now.

SORANZO

What mean you, sweet?

ANNABELLA

To live and die a maid.

SORANZO

20 Oh, that's unfit.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

Here's one can say that's but a woman's note.²

SORANZO

Did you but see my heart, then would you swear –

ANNABELLA

That you were dead.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

That's true, or somewhat near it.

SORANZO

See you these true love's tears?

ANNABELLA

No.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

Now she winks.³

SORANZO

They plead to you for grace.

ANNABELLA

Yet nothing speak.

SORANZO

Oh, grant my suit!

ANNABELLA

What is't?

SORANZO

To let me live –

ANNABELLA

Take it.

SORANZO

– still yours.

ANNABELLA

That is not mine to give.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

One such another word would kill his hopes.

SORANZO

Mistress, to leave those fruitless strifes of wit,
30 I know I have loved you long, and loved you
truly.

Not hope of what you have, but what you are
Have drawn me on; then let me not in vain
Still feel the rigour of your chaste disdain.
I'm sick, and sick to th'heart.

ANNABELLA

Help! Aqua-vitae!¹

SORANZO

What mean you?

ANNABELLA

Why, I thought you had been sick!

SORANZO

Do you mock my love?

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

There, sir, she was too nimble.²

SORANZO [*Aside*]

'Tis plain; she laughs at me.

[*To ANNABELLA*] These scornful taunts

Neither become your modesty or years.

ANNABELLA

You are no looking-glass, or, if you were,

I'd dress my language by you.¹

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

40

I'm confirmed!

ANNABELLA

To put you out of doubt, my lord, methinks

Your common sense should make you understand

That if I loved you, or desired your love,

Some way I should have given you better taste;²

But since you are a nobleman, and one

I would not wish should spend his youth in hopes,³

Let me advise you here to forbear⁴ your suit;

And think I wish you well I tell you this.

SORANZO

Is't you speak this?

ANNABELLA

Yes, I myself. Yet know –

50 Thus far I give you comfort – if mine eyes
Could have picked out a man, amongst all those
That sued to me, to make a husband of,
You should have been that man. Let this suffice.
Be noble in your secrecy, and wise.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

Why, now I see she loves me.

ANNABELLA

One word more:

As ever virtue lived within your mind,
As ever noble courses were your guide,
As ever you would have me know you loved me,
Let not my father know hereof by you.

60 If I hereafter find that I must marry,
It shall be you or none.

SORANZO

I take that promise.

ANNABELLA

Oh, oh, my head!

SORANZO

What's the matter? Not well?

ANNABELLA

Oh, I begin to sicken.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

Heaven forbid!

Exit from above.

SORANZO

Help, help, within there! Ho!

Enter FLORIO, GIOVANNI, [*and*] PUTTANA.

Look to your daughter, Signor Florio.

FLORIO

Hold her up! She swoons.

[GIOVANNI *takes her in his arms.*]

GIOVANNI

Sister, how d'ee?

ANNABELLA

Sick! Brother, are you there?

FLORIO

Convey her to her bed instantly, whilst I send for a physician. Quickly, I say.

PUTTANA

70 Alas, poor child!
all but SORANZO.

Exeunt

Enter VASQUEZ.

VASQUEZ

My lord.

SORANZO

O Vasquez, now I doubly am undone,

Both in my present and my future hopes.
She plainly told me that she could not love,
And thereupon soon sickened, and I fear
Her life's in danger.

VASQUEZ [*Aside*]

By'r Lady, sir, and so is yours, if you knew all.
[*Aloud*] 'Las, sir, I am sorry for that. Maybe 'tis but the
maid's sickness¹ – an overflux of youth – and then, sir,
there is no such present²

80 remedy as present marriage. But hath she given
you an absolute denial?

SORANZO

She hath, and she hath not. I'm full of grief –
But what she said, I'll tell thee as we
go. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 3

Enter GIOVANNI and PUTTANA.

PUTTANA

O sir, we are all undone, quite undone, utterly
undone and shamed forever! Your sister, O your sister!

GIOVANNI

What of her? For heaven's sake, speak! How does
she?

PUTTANA

Oh, that ever I was born to see this day!

GIOVANNI

She is not dead, ha? Is she?

PUTTANA

Dead? No, she is quick!³ 'Tis worse, she is with child. You know what you have done, heaven forgive'ee! 'Tis too late to repent now, heaven help us!

GIOVANNI

With child? How dost thou know't?

PUTTANA

10 How do I know't? Am I, at these years,¹ ignorant what the meanings of qualms² and water-pangs³ be, of changing of colours, queasiness of stomachs, pukings, and another thing that I could name?⁴ Do not, for her and your credit's⁵ sake, spend the time in asking how and which way 'tis so. She is quick, upon my word. If you let a physician see her water⁶ y'are undone.

GIOVANNI

But in what case⁷ is she?

PUTTANA

Prettily amended; 'twas but a fit, which I soon espied, and she must look for often henceforward.

GIOVANNI

20 Commend me to her. Bid her take no care.⁸
Let not the Doctor visit her, I charge you.
Make some excuse till I return. [*Aside*] O me,
I have a world of business⁹ in my head!
[*Aloud*] Do not discomfort her. [*Aside*] How do this news perplex me!

[*Aloud*] If my father come to her, Tell him she's
recovered well.

Say 'twas but some Ill diet.¹⁰ D'ee hear, woman?

Look you to't.

PUTTANA

I will, sir.

Exeunt.

ACT 3

Scene 4

Enter FLORIO *and* RICHARDETTO [*disguised*].

FLORIO

And how d'ee find her, sir?

RICHARDETTO

Indifferent¹ well.

I see no danger, scarce perceive she's sick,
But that she told me she had lately eaten
Melons and, as she thought, those disagreed
With her young stomach.

FLORIO

Did you give her aught?

RICHARDETTO

An easy surfeit-water,² nothing else.
You need not doubt her health; I rather think
Her sickness is a fullness of her blood³ –
You understand me?

FLORIO

I do – you counsel well –
10 And once within these few days will so order't
She shall be married, ere she know the time.⁴

RICHARDETTO

Yet let not haste, sir, make unworthy choice;
That were dishonour.

FLORIO

Master Doctor, no,
I will not do so neither. In plain words,
My lord Soranzo is the man I mean.

RICHARDETTO

A noble and a virtuous gentleman.

FLORIO

As any is in Parma. Not far hence
Dwells Father Bonaventure, a grave friar,
Once tutor to my son; now at his cell
I'll have 'em married.

RICHARDETTO

20 You have plotted wisely.

FLORIO

I'll send one straight to speak with him tonight.

RICHARDETTO

Soranzo's wise; he will delay no time.

FLORIO

It shall be so.

Enter FRIAR and GIOVANNI.

FRIAR

Good peace be here and love.

FLORIO

Welcome, religious¹ friar, you are one
That still² bring blessing to the place you come to.

GIOVANNI

Sir, with what speed I could, I did my best
To draw this holy man from forth his cell
To visit my sick sister, that with words
30 Of ghostly³ comfort in this time of need
He might absolve her, whether she live or die.

FLORIO

'Twas well done, Giovanni: thou herein
Hast showed a Christian's care, a brother's love.
[*To the FRIAR*] Come, father, I'll conduct you to her
chamber,
And one thing would entreat you –

FRIAR

Say on, sir.

FLORIO

I have a father's dear impression,¹
And wish, before I fall into my grave,
That I might see her married, as 'tis fit.
A word from you, grave man, will win her more

Than all our best persuasions.

FRIAR

40

Gentle sir,

All this I'll say, that heaven may prosper
her. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 5

Enter GRIMALDI.

GRIMALDI

Now if the Doctor keep his word, Soranzo,
Twenty-to-one you miss your bride. I know
'Tis an un-noble act, and not becomes
A soldier's valour; but in terms of love,
Where merit cannot sway, policy² must.
I am resolved: if this physician
Play not on both hands³ then Soranzo falls.

Enter RICHARDETTO [disguised, with a box].

RICHARDETTO

You are come as I could wish. This very night
Soranzo, 'tis ordained, must be affied⁴
10 To Annabella, and, for aught I know,
Married.

GRIMALDI

How!

RICHARDETTO

Yet your patience.

The place? 'Tis **Friar** Bonaventure's cell.

Now I would wish you to bestow¹ this night

In watching thereabouts. 'Tis but a night.

If you miss now, tomorrow I'll know all.

GRIMALDI

Have you the poison?

RICHARDETTO

Here 'tis in this box.

[*He hands GRIMALDI the poison.*]

Doubt nothing, this will do't. In any case,

As you respect your life, be quick and sure.

GRIMALDI

I'll speed him.²

RICHARDETTO

Do. Away, for 'tis not safe

20 You should be seen much here. Ever my love.

GRIMALDI

And mine to you.

Exit GRIMALDI.

RICHARDETTO

So, if this hit,³ I'll laugh and hug revenge;

And they that now dream of a wedding-feast

May chance to mourn the lusty bridegroom's ruin.

But to my other business:

Niece Philotis!

Enter PHILOTIS.

PHILOTIS

Uncle?

RICHARDETTO

My lovely niece,
You have bethought 'ee?⁴

PHILOTIS

Yes, and, as you counselled,
Fashioned my heart to love him; but he swears
He will tonight be married, for he fears
30 His uncle else, if he should know the drift,
Will hinder all, and call his *coz* to shrift.¹

RICHARDETTO

Tonight? Why, best of all. But let me see:
I – ha – yes – so it shall be: in disguise
We'll early to the Friar's, I have thought on't.

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

PHILOTIS

Uncle, he comes.

RICHARDETTO

Welcome, my worthy *coz*.

BERGETTO

Lass, pretty lass, come buss,² lass!
[*He kisses her.*]
Aha, Poggio!

POGGIO

There's hope of this yet.

RICHARDETTO

You shall have time enough. Withdraw a little:

We must confer at large.³

BERGETTO

40 Have you not sweetmeats or dainty devices⁴ for me?

PHILOTIS

You shall enough, sweetheart.

BERGETTO

'Sweetheart'? Mark that, Poggio! [*To PHILOTIS*] By my troth, I cannot choose but kiss thee once more for that word 'sweetheart'.

[*Kisses her.*]

Poggio, I have a monstrous swelling¹ about my stomach, whatsoever the matter be.

POGGIO

You shall have physic² for't, sir.

RICHARDETTO

Time runs apace.

BERGETTO

Time's a blockhead.

[*Kisses her.*]

RICHARDETTO

50 Be ruled! When we have done what's fit to do,

Then you may kiss your fill, and bed her
too. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 6

Enter the FRIAR in his study, sitting in a chair, ANNABELLA kneeling and whispering to him, a table before them and wax-lights.³ She weeps and wrings her hands.

FRIAR

I am glad to see this penance; for, believe me,
You have unripped⁴ a soul so foul and guilty
As, I must tell you true, I marvel how
The earth hath borne you up! But weep, weep on:
These tears may do you good. Weep faster yet,
Whiles I do read a lecture.⁵

ANNABELLA

Wretched creature!

FRIAR

Ay, you are wretched, miserably wretched,
Almost condemned alive. There is a place –
List,¹ daughter! – in a black and hollow vault,
10 Where day is never seen. There shines no sun,
But flaming horror of consuming fires,
A lightless sulphur, choked with smoky fogs
Of an infected darkness. In this place
Dwell many thousand, thousand sundry sorts
Of never-dying deaths. There damnèd souls

Roar without pity; there are gluttons fed
With toads and adders; there is burning oil
Poured down the drunkard's throat; the usurer
Is forced to sup whole draughts² of molten gold;
20 There is the murderer forever stabbed,
Yet can he never die; there lies the wanton
On racks of burning steel, whiles in his soul
He feels the torment of his raging lust.

ANNABELLA

Mercy, oh mercy!

FRIAR

There stands these wretched things,
Who have dreamt out whole years in lawless
sheets³
And secret incests,⁴ cursing one another.
Then you will wish each kiss your brother gave
Had been a dagger's point. Then you shall hear
How he will cry 'Oh, would my wicked sister
30 Had first been damned when she did yield to
lust!'
But soft, methinks I see repentance work
New motions⁵ in your heart. Say, how is't with
you?

ANNABELLA

Is there no way left to redeem my miseries?

FRIAR

There is: despair not. Heaven is merciful
And offers grace, even now. 'Tis thus agreed:
First, for your honour's safety, that you marry
The Lord Soranzo; next, to save your soul,
Leave off this life, and henceforth live to him.¹

ANNABELLA

Ay me!

FRIAR

Sigh not. I know the baits of sin
40 Are hard to leave. Oh, 'tis a death to do't!
Remember what must come.² Are you content?

ANNABELLA

I am.

FRIAR

I like it well. We'll take the time.³

[*Sounds of approach.*]

Who's near us there?

Enter FLORIO [*and*], GIOVANNI.

FLORIO

Did you call, father?

FRIAR

Is Lord Soranzo come?

FLORIO

He stays below.⁴

FRIAR

Have you acquainted him at full?

FLORIO

I have,
And he is overjoyed.

FRIAR

And so are we.
Bid him come near.

GIOVANNI [*Aside*]

My sister weeping, ha?
I fear this friar's falsehood. [*Aloud*] I will call
him. *Exit.*

FLORIO

Daughter, are you resolved?

ANNABELLA

Father, I am.

Enter GIOVANNI, SORANZO *and* VASQUEZ.

FLORIO

50 My lord Soranzo, here
Give me your hand; for that I give you this.
[*He joins* SORANZO *and* ANNABELLA's hands.]¹

SORANZO

Lady, say you so too?

ANNABELLA

I do, and vow
To live with you and yours.

FRIAR

Timely resolved;
My blessing rest on both. More to be done,²
You may perform it on the morning
sun. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 7

*Enter GRIMALDI, with his rapier drawn, and a dark lantern.*³

GRIMALDI

'Tis early night as yet, and yet too soon
To finish such a work. Here I will lie
To listen who comes next.

He lies down.

*Enter BERGETTO and PHILOTIS disguised,¹ and after
RICHARDETTO [disguised] and POGGIO.*

BERGETTO

We are almost at the place, I hope, sweetheart.

GRIMALDI [*Aside*]

I hear them near, and heard one say 'Sweetheart'.
'Tis he! Now guide my hand, some angry Justice,
Home to his bosom. [*Aloud*] Now, have at you, sir!
Strikes BERGETTO and exits.

BERGETTO

Oh help, help! Here's a stitch fallen² in my guts. Oh,
for a flesh-tailor³ quickly! Poggio!

PHILOTIS

10 What ails my love?

BERGETTO

I am sure I cannot piss forward and backward, and
yet I am wet before and behind.

Lights, lights! Ho, lights!

PHILOTIS

Alas, some villain here has slain my love!

RICHARDETTO

Oh heaven forbid it! Raise up the next neighbours
instantly, Poggio, and bring lights.

Exit POGGIO.

How is't, Bergetto? Slain? It cannot be. Are you sure
y'are hurt?

BERGETTO

Oh, my belly seethes like a porridge-pot. Some cold
water! I shall boil over else. My whole body is in a
sweat, that you

20 may wring my shirt. Feel here! – Why, Poggio!

Enter POGGIO *with* OFFICERS, *and lights and*
*halberds.*⁴

POGGIO

Here! Alas, how do you?

RICHARDETTO

Give me a light! What's here? All blood! O sirs,
Signor Donado's nephew now is slain!
Follow the murderer with all the haste
Up to the city;¹ he cannot be far hence.

Follow, I beseech you!

OFFICERS

Follow, follow, follow!

Exeunt OFFICERS.

RICHARDETTO [*To* PHILOTIS]

Tear off thy linen,² coz, to stop his wounds.

[*To* BERGETTO] Be of good comfort, man.

BERGETTO

Is all this mine own blood? Nay, then, goodnight
with me.

30 Poggio, commend me to my uncle, dost hear?
Bid him, for my sake, make much of this wench. Oh, I
am going the wrong way, sure! My belly aches so. Oh,
farewell, Poggio!

Oh, oh!

[*He*] *dies*.

PHILOTIS

Oh, he is dead!

POGGIO

How? Dead?

RICHARDETTO

He's dead, indeed.

'Tis now too late to weep. Let's have him home,

And, with what speed we may, find out the
murderer.

POGGIO

O my master, my master, my master!

Exeunt.

ACT 3

Scene 8

Enter VASQUEZ and HIPPOLITA.

HIPPOLITA

Betrothed?

VASQUEZ

I saw it.

HIPPOLITA

And when's the marriage-day?

VASQUEZ

Some two days hence.

HIPPOLITA

Two days? Why, man, I would but wish two hours
To send him to his last and lasting sleep;¹
And, Vasquez, thou shalt see, I'll do it bravely.

VASQUEZ

I do not doubt your wisdom, nor, I trust, you my
secrecy.

I am infinitely yours.

HIPPOLITA

I will be thine in spite of my disgrace.²

So soon? O wicked man, I durst be sworn

10 He'd laugh to see me weep.

VASQUEZ

And that's a villainous fault in him.

HIPPOLITA

No, let him laugh. I'm armed in my resolves.
Be thou still true.

VASQUEZ

I should get little by treachery against³ so hopeful a
preferment as I am like to climb to.

HIPPOLITA

Even to my bosom, Vasquez. Let my youth¹
Revel in these new pleasures. If we thrive,
He now hath but a pair of days to
live. *Exeunt.*

ACT 3

Scene 9

Enter FLORIO, DONADO [*weeping*], RICHARDETTO
[*disguised*], POGGIO *and* OFFICERS.

FLORIO

'Tis bootless² now to show yourself a child,³
Signor Donado. What is done, is done.
Spend not the time in tears, but seek for justice.

RICHARDETTO

I must confess, somewhat I was in fault,
That had not first acquainted you what love
Passed 'twixt him and my niece; but, as I live,
His fortune grieves me as it were mine own.

DONADO

Alas, poor creature! He meant no man harm,
That I am sure of.

FLORIO

I believe that too.

10 But stay, my masters, are you sure you saw
The murderer pass here?

OFFICER

And it please you, sir, we are sure we saw a ruffian,
with a naked⁴ weapon in his hand, all bloody, get into
my Lord Cardinal's grace's gate, that we are sure of;
but for fear of his grace – bless us! – we durst go no
further.

DONADO

Know you what manner of man he was?

OFFICER

Yes, sure, I know the man. They say 'a is a soldier.
[To FLORIO] He that loved your daughter, sir, an't
please ye. 'Twas he, for certain.

FLORIO

Grimaldi, on my life!

OFFICER

20 Ay, ay, the same.

RICHARDETTO

The Cardinal is noble; he, no doubt,
Will give true justice.

DONADO

Knock someone at the gate!

POGGIO

I'll knock, sir.

POGGIO *knocks*.

SERVANT (*Within*):

What would'ee?

FLORIO

We require speech with the Lord Cardinal
About some present¹ business. Pray, inform
His grace that we are here.

Enter CARDINAL *and* GRIMALDI.

CARDINAL

Why, how now, friends? What saucy mates² are
you

That know nor duty nor civility?

Are we a person fit to be your host?

30 Or is our house become your common inn,

To beat our doors at pleasure? What such haste

Is yours, as that it cannot wait fit times?³

Are you the masters of this commonwealth

And know no more discretion? [*Sees* DONADO] Oh,
your news

Is here before you. You have lost a nephew,

Donado, last night by Grimaldi slain.

Is that your business? Well, sir, we have
knowledge on't.

Let that suffice.

GRIMALDI [*Kneels*.]

In presence of your grace,¹

In thought² I never meant Bergetto harm;
40 But, Florio, you can tell with how much scorn
Soranzo, backed with his confederates,
Hath often wronged me. I, to be revenged,
For that I could not win him else³ to fight,
Had thought by way of ambush to have killed him,
But was unluckily therein mistook,
Else he had felt what late Bergetto did.
And though my fault to him were merely chance,
Yet humbly I submit me to your grace,
To do with me as you please.

CARDINAL

Rise up, Grimaldi.

[GRIMALDI *stands*.]

50 You citizens of Parma, if you seek
For justice, know, as Nuncio from the Pope,
For this offence I here receive Grimaldi
Into his Holiness's protection.
He is no common man, but nobly born,
Of prince's blood, though you, Sir Florio,
Thought him too mean⁴ a husband for your
daughter.
If more you seek for, you must go to Rome,
For he shall thither. Learn more wit,⁵ for shame.
Bury your dead. Away, Grimaldi; leave 'em.

Exeunt CARDINAL *and* GRIMALDI.

DONADO

60 Is this a churchman's voice? Dwells Justice here?

FLORIO

Justice is fled to heaven⁶ and comes no nearer.
Soranzo? Was't for him? Oh, impudence!
Had he the face to speak it, and not blush?
Come, come, Donado, there's no help in this,
When cardinals think murder's not amiss.
Great men may do their wills; we must obey.
But heaven will judge them for't another
day. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 1

A banquet. Hautboys.¹

Enter the FRIAR, GIOVANNI, ANNABELLA [*as a bride*],
PHILOTIS, SORANZO, DONADO, FLORIO, RICHARDETTO
[*disguised*], PUTTANA *and* VASQUEZ.

FRIAR

These holy rites performed, now take your times
To spend the remnant of the day in feast.
Such fit repasts² are pleasing to the saints
Who are your guests, though not with mortal eyes
To be beheld. Long prosper in this day,
You happy couple, to each other's joy!

SORANZO

Father, your prayer is heard. The hand of
goodness³

Hath been a shield for me against my death;

And, more to bless me, hath enriched my life

10 With this most precious jewel [*indicating*
ANNABELLA] – such a prize

As earth hath not another like to this.

Cheer up, my love – and gentlemen, my friends,

Rejoice with me in mirth. This day we'll crown

With lusty⁴ cups to Annabella's health.

GIOVANNI (*Aside*)

Oh, torture! Were¹ the marriage yet undone!

Ere I'd endure this sight – to see my love

Clipped² by another – I would dare confusion,³

And stand the horror of ten thousand deaths.

VASQUEZ

Are you not well, sir?

GIOVANNI

Prithee, fellow, wait.⁴

20 I need not thy officious diligence.

FLORIO

Signor Donado, come. You must forget

Your late mishaps, and drown your cares in wine.

SORANZO

Vasquez?

VASQUEZ

My lord.

SORANZO

Reach me that weighty bowl.⁵

[VASQUEZ *hands him the cup.*]

Here, brother Giovanni, here's to you.

Your turn comes next, though now a bachelor.

Here's to your sister's happiness and mine.

[SORANZO *drinks and offers GIOVANNI the cup.*]

GIOVANNI

I cannot drink.

SORANZO

What?

GIOVANNI

'Twill indeed offend⁶ me.

ANNABELLA

Pray, do not urge him if he be not willing.

[*Sounds are heard offstage.*]

FLORIO

How now, what noise is this?

VASQUEZ

30 O sir, I had forgot to tell you: certain young maidens of Parma, in honour to Madam Annabella's marriage, have sent their loves to her in a masque,¹ for which they humbly crave your patience and silence.

SORANZO

We are much bound to them, so much the more

As it comes unexpected. Guide them
in. [Exit VASQUEZ.]

Hautboys. Enter HIPPOLITA and LADIES [masked] in white robes with garlands of willows [led in by VASQUEZ].² Music and a dance.

SORANZO

Thanks, lovely virgins. Now, might we but know
To whom we have been beholding for this love,
We shall acknowledge it.

HIPPOLITA

Yes, you shall know.
[*She removes her mask.*]
What think you now?

ALL

Hippolita?

HIPPOLITA

'Tis she,
40 Be not amazed – nor blush, young lovely bride.
I come not to defraud you of your man.
[*To SORANZO*] 'Tis now no time to reckon up³ the
talk,
What Parma long hath rumoured of us both.
Let rash report⁴ run on; the breath that vents it
Will, like a bubble, break itself at last.
[*To ANNABELLA*] But now to you, sweet creature,
lend's your hand.

[*She takes ANNABELLA's hand.*]

Perhaps it hath been said that I would claim
Some interest in Soranzo, now your lord?¹

What I have right to do, his soul knows best;

50 But in my duty to your noble worth,

Sweet Annabella, and my care of you,

Here take, Soranzo, take this hand from me.

I'll once more join what, by the holy Church,

Is finished and allowed.²

[*She joins their hands together.*]

Have I done well?

SORANZO

You have too much engaged us.³

HIPPOLITA

One thing more:

That you may know my single charity,⁴

Freely I here remit⁵ all interest

I e'er could claim, and give you back your vows;

And to confirm't – [*To VASQUEZ*] Reach me a cup
of wine.

60 My lord Soranzo, in this draught I drink

Long rest t'ee. [*Aside*] Look to it, Vasquez!

VASQUEZ [*Aside to HIPPOLITA*]

Fear nothing.

He gives her a poisoned cup. She drinks.

SORANZO

Hippolita, I thank you, and will pledge⁶

This happy union as another life. [*To VASQUEZ*]
Wine there!

VASQUEZ

You shall have none; neither shall you pledge her.

HIPPOLITA

How?

VASQUEZ

Know now, Mistress She-Devil, your own
mischievous treachery hath killed you. I must not
marry you.

HIPPOLITA

Villain!

ALL

What's the matter?

VASQUEZ

70 Foolish woman, thou art now like a firebrand
that hath kindled others and burnt thyself. *Troppo*
sperar inganna:¹ thy vain hope hath deceived thee.
Thou art but² dead. If thou hast any grace, pray.

HIPPOLITA

Monster!

VASQUEZ

Die in charity,³ for shame. [*To the others*] This thing
of malice, this woman, had privately corrupted me
with promise of *marriage*, under this politic⁴
reconciliation to poison my lord, whiles she might

laugh at his confusion⁵ on his marriage-day. I promised her fair,⁶ but I knew what my reward should

80 have been,⁷ and would willingly have spared her life, but that I was acquainted with the danger of her disposition, and now have fitted her a just payment in her own coin. There she is; she hath yet – [*To HIPPOLITA*] –⁸ and end thy days in peace, vile woman. As for life, there's no hope; think not on't.

ALL

Wonderful justice!

RICHARDETTO

Heaven, thou art righteous!

HIPPOLITA

Oh, 'tis true,

I feel my minute¹ coming. Had that slave

Kept promise – Oh, my torment! – thou this hour

Hadst died, Soranzo – Heat above hell-fire! –

90 Yet, ere I pass away – cruel, cruel flames! –

Take here my curse amongst you: may thy bed

Of marriage be a rack unto thy heart. –

Burn, blood, and boil in vengeance. Oh, my heart!

My flame's intolerable! – May'st thou live

To father bastards; may her womb bring forth

Monsters; and die together in your sins,

Hated, scorned and unpitied! – Oh!

Oh! [*She*] *dies*.

FLORIO

Was e'er so vile a creature?

RICHARDETTO

Here's the end
Of lust and pride.

ANNABELLA

100 It is a fearful sight!

SORANZO

Vasquez, I know thee now a trusty servant,
And never will forget thee. [*To ANNABELLA*] Come,
my love,
We'll home, and thank the heavens for this escape.
Father and friends, we must break up this mirth;
It is too sad a feast.

DONADO [*To VASQUEZ*]

Bear hence the body.

FRIAR [*Aside to GIOVANNI*]

Here's an ominous change!
Mark this, my Giovanni, and take heed.
I fear the event:¹ that marriage seldom's good,
Where the bride-banquet² so begins in blood.

Exeunt [with the body].

ACT 4

Scene 2

Enter RICHARDETTO *and* PHILOTIS.

RICHARDETTO

My wretched wife – more wretched in her shame
Than in her wrongs to me – hath paid too soon
The forfeit of her modesty and life.³

And I am sure, my niece, though vengeance hover,
Keeping aloof yet from Soranzo's fall,
Yet he will fall, and sink with his own weight.

I need not – now my heart persuades me so –
To further his confusion;⁴ there is one
Above begins to work. For, as I hear,

10 Debates⁵ already 'twixt his wife and him
Thicken and run to head.⁶ She, as 'tis said,
Slightens⁷ his love, and he abandons hers;
Much talk I hear. Since things go thus, my niece,
In tender love and pity of your youth,
My counsel is that you should free your years⁸
From hazard of these woes by flying hence
To fair Cremona,⁹ there to vow your soul
In holiness a holy votaress.¹⁰

Leave me to see the end of these extremes.¹

20 All human worldly courses are uneven;²
No life is blessed but the way to heaven.

PHILOTIS

Uncle, shall I resolve to be a nun?

RICHARDETTO

Ay, gentle niece, and in your hourly prayers

Remember me, your poor unhappy uncle.

Hie³ to Cremona now, as Fortune leads;

Your home your cloister, your best friends your
beads.⁴

Your chaste and single life shall crown your birth:

Who dies a virgin **lives** a saint on earth.

PHILOTIS

Then farewell, world, and worldly thoughts, adieu.

30 Welcome, chaste vows; myself I yield to
you. *Exeunt.*

ACT 4

Scene 3

Enter SORANZO *unbraced*,⁵ [*with his sword drawn,*] and
ANNABELLA *dragged in.*

SORANZO

Come, strumpet, famous⁶ whore! Were every drop

Of blood that runs in thy adulterous veins

A life, this sword – dost see't? – should in one
blow

Confound⁷ them all. Harlot, rare, notable harlot,

That with thy brazen face maintain'st⁸ thy sin,

Was there no man in Parma to be bawd⁹

To your loose, cunning whoredom else but I?
Must your hot itch and pleurisy¹ of lust,
The heyday of your luxury,² be fed
10 Up to a surfeit? And could none but I
Be picked out to be cloak³ to your close tricks,⁴
Your belly-sports? Now I must be the dad
To all that gallimaufry⁵ that's stuffed
In thy corrupted, bastard-bearing womb?
Say, must I?

ANNABELLA

Beastly man! Why, 'tis thy fate:
I sued not to thee, for – but that I thought
Your over-loving lordship would have run
Mad on denial⁶ – had ye lent me time,
I would have told 'ee in what case⁷ I was,
But you would needs be doing.⁸

SORANZO

20 Whore of whores!
Dar'st thou tell me this?

ANNABELLA

Oh yes! Why not?
You were deceived in me; 'twas not for love
I chose you, but for honour.⁹ Yet know this:
Would you be patient yet, and hide your shame,
I'd see whether I could love you.

SORANZO

Excellent quean!¹⁰

Why, art thou not with child?

ANNABELLA

What needs all this,

When 'tis superfluous? I confess I am.

SORANZO

Tell me by whom.

ANNABELLA

Soft, sir, 'twas not in my bargain.¹

Yet somewhat, sir, to stay your longing stomach²

30 I'm content t'acquaint you with. The man,

The more than man, that got this sprightly boy –

For 'tis a boy, [that's for your glory](#), sir:

Your heir shall be a son.

SORANZO

Damnably monster!

ANNABELLA

Nay, and you will not hear, I'll speak no more.

SORANZO

Yes, speak, and speak thy last.

ANNABELLA

A match, a match.³

This noble creature was in every part

So angel-like, so glorious, that a woman

Who had not been but human, as was I,
Would have kneeled to him, and have begged for
love.

40 You? Why, you are not worthy once to name
His name without true worship, or, indeed,
Unless you kneeled, to hear another name him.

SORANZO

What was he called?

ANNABELLA

We are not come to that.
Let it suffice that you shall have the glory
To father what so brave⁴ a father got.
In brief, had not this chance fall'n out as't doth,
I never had been troubled with a thought
That you had been a creature;¹ but for marriage,
I scarce dream yet of that.

SORANZO

Tell me his name.

ANNABELLA

50 Alas, alas, there's all.
Will you believe?

SORANZO

What?

ANNABELLA

You shall never know.

SORANZO

How!

ANNABELLA

Never; if you do, let me be cursed.

SORANZO

Not know it, strumpet? I'll rip up thy heart
And find it there.

ANNABELLA

Do, do!

SORANZO

And with my teeth
Tear the prodigious² lecher joint by joint!

ANNABELLA

Ha, ha, ha! The man's merry.

SORANZO

Dost thou laugh?
Come, whore, tell me your lover, or by truth
I'll hew thy flesh to shreds. Who is't?

ANNABELLA (*sings*)

*Che morte più dolce che morire per amore?*³

SORANZO [*grabbing* ANNABELLA]

60 Thus will I pull thy hair, and thus I'll drag
Thy lust-belepered¹ body through the dust.
Yet tell his name.

ANNABELLA (*sings*)

*Morendo in grazia a lui, morirei senza dolore.*²

SORANZO

Dost thou triumph? The treasure of the earth
Shall not redeem³ thee. Were there kneeling kings
Did beg thy life, or angels did come down
To plead in tears, yet should not all prevail
Against my rage.

[He points his sword at her heart.]

Dost thou not tremble yet?

ANNABELLA

At what? To die? No, be a gallant hangman.⁴

70 I dare thee to the worst: strike, and strike home.

I leave revenge behind, and thou shalt feel't.

SORANZO

Yet tell me ere thou diest, and tell me truly:
Knows thy old father this?

ANNABELLA

No, by my life.

SORANZO

Wilt thou confess, and I will spare thy life?

ANNABELLA

My life? I will not buy my life so dear.

SORANZO

I will not slack⁵ my vengeance.

Enter VASQUEZ.

VASQUEZ

What d'ee mean, sir?

[*He gets between ANNABELLA and SORANZO's sword.*]

SORANZO

Forbear, Vasquez! Such a damnèd whore
Deserves no pity.

VASQUEZ

Now the gods forfend!¹

80 And would you be her executioner, and kill her in your rage too? Oh, 'twere most unmanlike! She is your wife. What faults hath been done by her before she married you, were not against you. Alas, poor lady, what hath she committed which any lady in Italy, in the like case, would not? Sir, you must be ruled by your reason and not by your fury – that were unhuman and beastly.

SORANZO

She shall not live.

VASQUEZ

Come, she must. You would have her confess the authors of her present misfortunes, I warrant 'ee. 'Tis an unconscionable

90 demand, and she should lose the estimation that I, for my part, hold of her worth if she had done it. Why, sir, you ought not, of all men living, to know it. Good sir, be reconciled. Alas, good gentlewoman!

ANNABELLA

Pish, do not beg for me. I prize my life
As nothing. If the man will needs be mad,

Why, let him take it.

SORANZO

Vasquez, hear'st thou this?

VASQUEZ

Yes, and commend her for it. In this she shows the nobleness of a gallant spirit, and beshrew² my heart but it becomes her rarely. [*Aside to SORANZO*] Sir, in any case smother your

100 revenge. Leave the scenting-out your wrongs to me. Be ruled, as you respect your honour, or you mar all. [*Aloud*] Sir, if ever my service were of any credit with you, be not so violent in your distractions.³ You are married now. What a triumph might the report of this give to other neglected suitors! 'Tis as manlike to bear extremities,¹ as godlike to forgive.

SORANZO

O Vasquez, Vasquez, in this piece of flesh,

This faithless face of hers, had I laid up

The treasure of my heart! [*To ANNABELLA*] Hadst thou been virtuous,

Fair, wicked woman, not the matchless joys

110 Of life itself had made me wish to live

With any saint but thee. Deceitful creature,

How hast thou mocked my hopes, and in the shame

Of thy lewd womb even buried me alive!

I did too dearly love thee.

VASQUEZ (*Aside [to SORANZO]*)

This is well.

Follow this temper² with some passion; be brief
and moving – 'tis for the purpose.

SORANZO [*To ANNABELLA*]

Be witness to my words thy soul and thoughts,
And tell me: didst not think that in my heart
I did too superstitiously³ adore thee?

ANNABELLA

120 I must confess, I know you loved me well.

SORANZO

And wouldst **thou** use me thus? O Annabella,
Be thou assured, whatsoe'er the villain was
That thus hath tempted thee to this disgrace,
Well he might lust, but never loved like me.
He doted on the picture that hung out
Upon thy cheeks, to please his humorous⁴ eye,
Not on the part I loved which was thy heart,
And, as I thought, thy virtues.

ANNABELLA

O my lord,

These words wound deeper than your sword could
do.

VASQUEZ

130 Let me not ever take comfort, but I begin to
weep myself, so much I pity him. Why, madam, I
knew when his rage was overpassed what it would
come to.

SORANZO [*Sheathing his sword*]

Forgive me, Annabella. Though thy youth
Hath tempted thee above thy strength to folly,
Yet will not I forget what I should be,
And what I am: a husband. In that name
Is hid divinity. If I do find
That thou wilt yet be true, here I remit¹
All former faults, and take thee to my bosom.

VASQUEZ

140 By my troth, and that's a point of noble charity.

ANNABELLA [*Kneeling*]

Sir, on my knees –

SORANZO

Rise up; you shall not kneel.
Get you to your chamber; see you make no show
Of alteration.² I'll be with you straight.
My reason tells me now that 'tis as common
To err in frailty as to be a woman.
Go to your chamber. *Exit*

ANNABELLA.

VASQUEZ

So, this was somewhat to the matter. What do you
think of your heaven of happiness now, sir?

SORANZO

I carry hell about me. All my blood
150 Is fired in swift revenge.

VASQUEZ

That may be, but know you how, or on whom? Alas, to marry a great¹ woman, being made great in the stock² to your hand, is a usual sport in these days; but to know what *ferret* it was that haunted³ your cunny-berry,⁴ there's the cunning.

SORANZO

I'll make her tell herself, or –

VASQUEZ

Or what? You must not do so. Let me yet persuade your sufferance a little while. Go to her; use her mildly; win her, if it be possible, to a voluntary,⁵ to a weeping tune. For the rest,

160 if all hit,⁶ I will not miss my mark. Pray, sir, go in. The next news I tell you shall be wonders.

SORANZO

Delay in vengeance gives a heavier
blow. *Exit.*

VASQUEZ

Ah, sirrah, here's work for the nonce!⁷ I had a suspicion of a bad matter in my head a pretty while ago, but after my madam's scurvy looks here at home, her waspish perverseness and loud fault-finding, then I remembered the proverb that 'Where hens crow, and cocks hold their peace, there are sorry houses.'⁸ Sfoot, if the lower parts of a she-tailor's⁹ cunning can cover such a swelling in the stomach, I'll never

170 blame a false stitch in a shoe whiles I live again. Up,¹⁰ and up so quick? And so quickly too? 'Twere a fine policy to learn by whom; this must be known.

Enter PUTTANA [*weeping*].

And I have thought on't – here's the way or none. [*To* PUTTANA] What, crying, old mistress? Alas, alas, I cannot blame 'ee. We have a lord, heaven help us, is so mad¹ as the devil himself, the more shame for him.

PUTTANA

O Vasquez, that ever I was born to see this day! Doth he use thee so too sometimes, Vasquez?

VASQUEZ

Me? Why, he makes a dog of me; but if some were of my

180 mind, I know what we would do. As sure as I am an honest man, he will go near to kill my lady with unkindness. Say she be with child: is that such a matter for a young woman of her years to be blamed for?

PUTTANA

Alas, good heart; it is against her will full sore.

VASQUEZ

I durst be sworn, all his madness is for that she will not confess whose 'tis, which he will know; and when he doth know it, I am so well acquainted with his humour² that he will forget all straight. Well, I could wish she would in plain terms tell all, for that's the way indeed.

PUTTANA

190 Do you think so?

VASQUEZ

Foh, I know't, provided that he did not win her to't by force.³ He was once in a mind, that you could tell,

and meant to have wrung it out of you, but I somewhat pacified him for that. Yet, sure, you know a great deal

—

PUTTANA

Heaven forgive us all, I know a little, Vasquez.

VASQUEZ

Why should you not? Who else should? Upon my conscience, she loves you dearly, and you would not betray her to any affliction⁴ for the world.

PUTTANA

Not for all the world, by my faith and troth, Vasquez.

VASQUEZ

200 'Twere pity of your life if you should; but in this you should both relieve her present discomforts, pacify my lord, and gain yourself everlasting love and preferment.

PUTTANA

Dost think so, Vasquez?

VASQUEZ

Nay, I know't. Sure, 'twas some near and entire¹ friend.

PUTTANA

'Twas a dear friend, indeed, but —

VASQUEZ

But what? Fear not to name him — my life between you and danger! 'Faith, I think 'twas no base fellow.

PUTTANA

Thou wilt stand between me and harm?

VASQUEZ

Ud's pity,² what else?³ You shall be rewarded too,
trust me.

PUTTANA

210 'Twas even no worse than her own brother.

VASQUEZ

Her brother Giovanni, I warrant 'ee?

PUTTANA

Even he, Vasquez: as brave⁴ a gentleman as ever
kissed fair lady. Oh, they love most perpetually.

VASQUEZ

A brave gentleman, indeed. Why, therein I commend
her choice. [*Aside*] Better and better! [*Aloud*] You are
sure 'twas he?

PUTTANA

Sure; and you shall see he will not be long from her,
too.

VASQUEZ

He were to blame if he would. But may I believe
thee?

PUTTANA

220 Believe me? Why, dost think I am a Turk or a
Jew?¹ No, Vasquez, I have known their dealings too
long to belie them now.

VASQUEZ

Where are you? There within, sirs!

Enter BANDITTI.²

PUTTANA

How now? What are these?

VASQUEZ

You shall know presently.³ Come, sirs, take me this old, damnable hag, gag her instantly, and put out her eyes! Quickly, quickly!

[*The BANDITTI seize* PUTTANA.]

PUTTANA

Vasquez, Vasquez!

VASQUEZ

Gag her, I say! 'Sfoot, d'ee suffer her to prate? What, d'ee fumble about? Let me come to her. I'll help your old gums,

230 you toad-bellied bitch!

[*He gags* PUTTANA.]

Sirs, carry her closely⁴ into the coal-house, and put out her eyes instantly. If she roars, slit her nose. D'ee hear? Be speedy and sure.

Exeunt [BANDITTI] *with* PUTTANA.

Why, this is excellent and above expectation! Her own brother? Oh, horrible! To what a height of liberty⁵ in damnation hath the devil trained⁶ our age! Her brother? Well, there's yet but a beginning. I must to my lord, and tutor him better in his points of vengeance. Now I see how a smooth tale goes beyond a smooth tail.⁷

Enter GIOVANNI.

240 But soft, what thing comes next? Giovanni, as I would wish. My belief is strengthened; 'tis as firm as

winter and summer.

GIOVANNI

Where's my sister?

VASQUEZ

Troubled with a new sickness, my lord; she's somewhat ill.

GIOVANNI

Took too much of the flesh,¹ I believe.

VASQUEZ

Troth, sir, and you, I think, have e'en hit it.² But my virtuous lady!

GIOVANNI

Where's she?

VASQUEZ

In her chamber. Please you visit her? She is alone.
[GIOVANNI gives him money.] Your liberality hath doubly made me your

250 servant, and ever shall, ever!

Exit GIOVANNI.

Enter SORANZO.

Sir, I am made a man. I have plied my cue³ with cunning and success. I beseech you, let's be private.

SORANZO

My lady's brother's come; now he'll know all.

VASQUEZ

Let him know't. I have made some of them fast⁴ enough.

How have you dealt with my lady?

SORANZO

Gently, as thou hast counselled. Oh, my soul
Runs circular⁵ in sorrow for revenge,
But, Vasquez, thou shalt know –

VASQUEZ

Nay, I will know no more, for now comes your turn
to know.

260 I would not talk so openly¹ with you. Let my
young master take time enough, and go at pleasure. He
is sold to death, and the devil shall not ransom him.
Sir, I beseech you – your privacy.

SORANZO

No conquest can gain glory of my
fear.² *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 1

Enter ANNABELLA above [with a letter].

ANNABELLA

Pleasures, farewell, and all ye thriftless³ minutes
Wherein false joys have spun a weary life;
To these, my fortunes, now I take my leave.
Thou precious Time, that swiftly rid'st in post⁴
Over the world to finish up the race
Of my last fate, here stay thy restless course,
And bear to ages that are yet unborn

A wretched, woeful woman's tragedy.

My conscience now stands up against my lust⁵

10 With **depositions**⁶ characterized in guilt,⁷

Enter FRIAR [*below*].

And tells me I am lost. Now I confess,

Beauty that clothes the outside of the face

Is cursèd if it be not clothed with grace.

Here, like a turtle,¹ mew'd up² in a cage,

Unmated,³ I converse with air and walls,

And descant on my vile unhappiness.

O Giovanni, that hast had the spoil⁴

Of thine own virtues and my modest fame;

Would thou hadst been less subject to those stars

20 That luckless reign'd at my nativity!

Oh, would the scourge due to my black offence

Might pass from thee, that I alone might feel

The torment of an uncontrollèd flame.⁵

FRIAR [*Aside*]

What's this I hear?

ANNABELLA

That man, that blessèd friar,

Who joined in ceremonial knot my hand

To him whose wife I now am, told me oft

I trod the path to death, and showed me how.

But they who sleep in lethargies of lust

Hug their confusion, making heaven unjust,⁶
And so did I.

FRIAR [*Aside*]

30 Here's music to the soul.

ANNABELLA

Forgive me, my good genius,⁷ and this once
Be helpful to my ends.⁸ Let some good man
Pass this way, to whose trust I may commit
This paper, double-lined with tears and blood;
Which, being granted, here I sadly⁹ vow
Repentance, and a leaving of that life
I long have died in.

FRIAR [*coming forward*]

Lady, heaven hath heard you,
And hath by providence ordained that I
Should be his minister for your behoof.¹

ANNABELLA

Ha, what are you?

FRIAR

40 Your brother's friend, the friar,
Glad in my soul that I have lived to hear
This free confession 'twixt your peace and you.
What would you, or to whom? Fear not to speak.

ANNABELLA

Is heaven so bountiful? Then I have found

More favour than I hoped. Here, holy man,
[*She*] *throws [down] a letter.* [*The FRIAR takes it up.*]

Commend me to my brother. Give him that,
That letter. Bid him read it and repent.

Tell him that I – imprisoned in my chamber,
Barred of all company, even of my guardian,²

50 Who³ gives me cause of much suspect⁴ – have
time

To blush at what hath passed. Bid him be wise,
And not believe the friendship of my lord.
I fear much more than I can speak. Good father,
The place is dangerous, and spies are busy;
I must break off. You'll do't?

FRIAR

Be sure I will,
And fly with speed. My blessing ever rest
With thee, my daughter. Live to die more
blessed. *Exit* FRIAR.

ANNABELLA

Thanks to the heavens, who have prolonged my
breath

To this good use. Now I can welcome
death. *Exit.*

ACT 5

Scene 2

Enter SORANZO and VASQUEZ.

VASQUEZ

Am I to be believed now? First, marry a strumpet,
that cast herself away upon you but to laugh at your
horns,¹ to feast on your disgrace, riot² in your
vexations, cuckold you in your bride-bed, waste your
estate upon panders and bawds –

SORANZO

No more, I say no more!

VASQUEZ

A cuckold is a goodly, tame beast,³ my lord.

SORANZO

I am resolved! Urge not another word.

My thoughts are great,⁴ and all as resolute

As thunder. In meantime, I'll cause our lady

10 To deck herself in all her bridal robes,

Kiss her, and fold her gently in my arms.

Be gone. Yet hear you, are the banditti ready

To wait in ambush?

VASQUEZ

Good sir, trouble not yourself about other business
than your own resolution. Remember that time lost
cannot be recalled.

SORANZO

With all the cunning words thou canst, invite

The states⁵ of Parma to my birthday's feast.

Haste to my brother-rival and his father;

20 Entreat them gently; bid them not to fail.

Be speedy and return.

VASQUEZ

Let not your pity betray you till my coming back:

Think upon incest and cuckoldry.

SORANZO

Revenge is all the ambition I aspire;¹

To that I'll climb or fall. My blood's on
fire! *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 3

Enter GIOVANNI.

GIOVANNI

Busy opinion² is an idle fool,

That, as a school-rod³ keeps a child in awe,

Frights the unexperienced temper of the mind.

So did it me, who, ere my precious sister

Was married, thought all taste of love would die

In such a contract; but I find no change

Of pleasure in this formal law of sports.⁴

She is still one⁵ to me, and every kiss

As sweet and as delicious as the first

10 I reaped, when yet the privilege of youth

Entitled her a virgin. Oh, the glory

Of two united hearts like hers and mine!

Let poring bookmen dream of other worlds;
My world, and all of happiness, is here,
And I'd not change it for the best to come.
A life of pleasure is Elysium.

Enter FRIAR.

Father, you enter on the jubilee¹
Of my retired² delights. Now I can tell you,
The hell you oft have prompted³ is nought else
20 But slavish and fond, superstitious fear,
And I could prove it too –

FRIAR

Thy blindness slays thee!
Look there; 'tis writ to thee.
Gives [him] the letter.

GIOVANNI

From whom?

FRIAR

Unrip the seals and see.
[GIOVANNI *reads the letter.*]
The blood's yet seething-hot that will anon
Be frozen harder than congealed coral.⁴
Why d'ee change colour, son?

GIOVANNI

'Fore heaven, you make
Some petty devil factor⁵ 'twixt my love

And your religion-maskèd sorceries.

Where had you this?

FRIAR

30 Thy conscience, youth, is seared,⁶
Else thou wouldst stoop⁷ to warning.

GIOVANNI

'Tis her hand,

I know't; and 'tis all written in her blood.

She writes I know not what. 'Death'? I'll not fear

An armèd thunderbolt aimed at my heart.

She writes we are discovered. Pox on dreams

Of low, faint-hearted cowardice! 'Discovered'?

The devil we are! Which way is't possible?

Are we grown traitors to our own delights?

Confusion take such dotage;¹ 'tis but forged.

40 This is your peevish chattering, weak old man.

Enter VASQUEZ.

Now, sir, what news bring you?

VASQUEZ

My lord, according to his yearly custom keeping this day a feast in honour of his birthday, by me invites you thither. Your worthy father, with the Pope's reverend Nuncio and other magnificos of Parma, have promised their presence. Wilt please you to be of the number?

GIOVANNI

Yes, tell them I dare come.

VASQUEZ

Dare come?

GIOVANNI

So I said; and tell him more, I will come.

VASQUEZ

50 These words are strange to me.

GIOVANNI

Say I will come.

VASQUEZ

You will not miss?²

GIOVANNI

Yet more? I'll come. Sir, are you answered?

VASQUEZ

So I'll say. My service to you. *Exit*

VASQUEZ.

FRIAR

You will not go, I trust.

GIOVANNI

Not go? For what?

FRIAR

Oh, do not go! This feast, I'll gage³ my life,

Is but a plot to train⁴ you to your ruin.

Be ruled, you sha' not go.

GIOVANNI

Not go? Stood Death

Threat'ning his armies of confounding plagues,
60 With hosts of dangers, hot as blazing stars,¹
I would be there. Not go? Yes, and resolve
To strike as deep in slaughter as they all,
For I will go.

FRIAR

Go where thou wilt. I see
The wildness of thy fate draws to an end,
To a bad, fearful end. I must not stay
To know thy fall. Back to [Bologna](#) I
With speed will haste, and shun this coming blow.
Parma, farewell! Would I had never known thee,
Or aught² of thine! Well, young man, since no
prayer
70 Can make thee safe, I leave thee to
despair. *Exit* FRIAR.

[GIOVANNI](#)

Despair or tortures of a thousand hells –
All's one to me: I have set up my rest.³
Now, now, work serious thoughts on baneful⁴
plots.
Be all a man, my soul! Let not the curse
Of old prescription⁵ [rend](#) from me the gall⁶
Of courage, which enrolls⁷ a glorious death.
If I must totter like a well-grown oak,
Some under-shrubs shall in my weighty fall

Be crushed to splits;⁸ with me they all shall
perish. *Exit.*

ACT 5

Scene 4

Enter SORANZO, VASQUEZ *and* BANDITTI.

SORANZO

You will not fail, or shrink in the attempt?

VASQUEZ

I will undertake for¹ their parts. [*To the* BANDITTI] Be
sure, my masters, to be bloody enough, and as
unmerciful as if you were preying upon a rich booty²
on the very mountains of Liguria.³ For your pardons,⁴
trust to my lord; but for reward you shall trust none but
your own pockets.

ALL THE BANDITTI

We'll make a murder!

SORANZO

Here's gold [*giving them money*]; here's more;
want⁵ nothing. What you do

Is noble and an act of brave revenge.

10 I'll make ye rich banditti, and all free.

ALL

Liberty, liberty!

VASQUEZ

Hold! Take every man a vizard.⁶

[*The* BANDITTI *put on masks.*]

When ye are withdrawn, keep as much silence as you can possibly. You know the watchword, till which be spoken move not; but when you hear that, rush in like a stormy flood. I need not instruct ye in your own profession.

ALL

No, no, no.

VASQUEZ

In, then. Your ends are profit and preferment.
Away!

Exeunt BANDITTI.

SORANZO

The guests will all come, Vasquez?

VASQUEZ

20 Yes, sir, and now let me a little edge¹ your resolution. You see nothing is unready to this great work but a great mind in you. Call to your remembrance your disgraces, your loss of honour, Hippolita's blood, and arm your courage in your own wrongs. So shall you best right those wrongs in vengeance which you may truly call your own.

SORANZO

'Tis well. The less I speak, the more I burn,
And blood shall quench that flame.

VASQUEZ

Now you begin to turn Italian!² This beside: when my young incest-monger comes, he will be sharp set on his old bit.³

30 Give him time enough; let him have your chamber and bed at liberty. Let my hot hare⁴ have law⁵ ere he be hunted to his death, that if it be possible, he may post⁶ to hell in the very act of his damnation.

Enter GIOVANNI.

SORANZO

It shall be so; and see, as we would wish,
He comes himself first. [*To* GIOVANNI] Welcome,
my much-loved brother.
Now I perceive you honour me; y'are welcome.
But where's my father?⁷

GIOVANNI

With the other states,
Attending on the Nuncio of the Pope
To wait upon him hither. How's my sister?

SORANZO

40 Like a good housewife – scarcely ready yet.
Y'are best walk to her chamber.

GIOVANNI

If you will.

SORANZO

I must expect¹ my honourable friends.
Good brother, get her forth.

GIOVANNI

You are busy, sir. *Exit* GIOVANNI.

VASQUEZ

Even as the great devil himself would have it! Let him go and glut himself in his own destruction.

Flourish.

Hark, the Nuncio is at hand. Good sir, be ready to receive him.

Enter CARDINAL, FLORIO, DONADO, RICHARDETTO
[*disguised*] and ATTENDANTS.

SORANZO [*To the* CARDINAL]

Most reverend lord, this grace² hath made me proud:

That you vouchsafe³ my house. I ever rest
Your humble servant for this noble favour.

CARDINAL

50 You are our friend, my lord. His Holiness
Shall understand how zealously you honour
Saint Peter's vicar⁴ in his substitute.
Our special love to you.

SORANZO

Signors, to you
My welcome, and my ever best of thanks
For this so memorable courtesy.
Pleaseth your grace to walk near?

CARDINAL

My lord, we come
To celebrate your feast with civil mirth,
As ancient custom teacheth. We will go.

SORANZO [*To ATTENDANTS*]

Attend his grace, there! [*To his guests*] Signors, keep
your way.¹ *Exeunt.*

ACT 5

Scene 5

Enter GIOVANNI and ANNABELLA, lying on a bed.

GIOVANNI

What, changed² so soon? Hath your new, sprightly
lord

Found out a trick in night-games³ more than we
Could know in our simplicity? Ha, is't so?

Or does the fit⁴ come on you to prove treacherous
To your past vows and oaths?

ANNABELLA

Why should you jest

At my calamity, without all sense

Of the approaching dangers you are in?

GIOVANNI

What danger's half so great as thy revolt?

Thou art a faithless sister, else, thou know'st,

10 Malice, or any treachery beside,

Would stoop to my bent brows.⁵ Why, I hold fate

Clasped in my fist, and could command the course

Of time's eternal motion hadst thou been

One thought more steady than an ebbing sea.

And what? You'll now be honest? That's resolved?

ANNABELLA

Brother, dear brother, know what I have been,
And know that now there's but a dying-time
'Twixt us and our confusion.¹ Let's not waste
These precious hours in vain and useless speech.
20 Alas, these gay attires² were not put on
But to some end; this sudden, solemn³ feast
Was not ordained to riot in expense.⁴
I, that have now been chambered here alone,
Barred of my guardian, or of any else,
Am not for nothing at an instant freed
To fresh access.⁵ Be not deceived, my brother:
This banquet is an harbinger of death
To you and me. Resolve yourself it is,
And be prepared to welcome it.

GIOVANNI

Well then,
30 The schoolmen⁶ teach that all this globe of earth
Shall be consumed to ashes in a minute.

ANNABELLA

So I have read too.

GIOVANNI

But 'twere somewhat strange
To see the waters burn. Could I believe
This might be true, I could believe as well

There might be hell or heaven.

ANNABELLA

That's most certain.

GIOVANNI

A dream, a dream; else in this other world
We should know one another.

ANNABELLA

So we shall.

GIOVANNI

Have you heard so?

ANNABELLA

For certain.

GIOVANNI

But d'ee think,
That I shall see you there, you look on me?
40 May we kiss one another, prate¹ or laugh,
Or do as we do here?

ANNABELLA

I know not that;
But, good,² for the present, what d'ee mean
To free yourself from danger? Some way think
How to escape. I'm sure the guests are come.

GIOVANNI

Look up, look here: what see you in my face?

ANNABELLA

Distraction and a troubled countenance.

GIOVANNI

Death and a swift, repining³ wrath! Yet look:
What see you in mine eyes?

ANNABELLA

Methinks you weep.

GIOVANNI

I do, indeed. These are the funeral tears
50 Shed on your grave; these furrowed up my
cheeks
When first I loved and knew not how to woo.
Fair Annabella, should I here repeat
The story of my life, we might lose time.
Be record, all the spirits of the air,
And all things else that are, that day and night,
Early and late, the tribute which my heart
Hath paid to Annabella's sacred love
Hath been these tears, which are her mourners
now.
Never till now did Nature do her best
60 To show a matchless beauty to the world,
Which, in an instant, ere it scarce was seen,
The jealous Destinies¹ require again.
Pray, Annabella, pray. Since we must part,
Go thou, white in thy soul, to fill a throne
Of innocence and sanctity in heaven.

Pray, pray, my sister.

ANNABELLA

Then I see your drift.²

Ye blessed angels, guard me!

GIOVANNI

So say I.

Kiss me.

[*They kiss.*]

If ever after-times should hear

Of our fast-knit affections, though perhaps

70 The laws of conscience and of civil use³

May justly blame us, yet when they but know

Our loves, that love will wipe away that rigour⁴

Which would in other incests be abhorred.

Give me your hand. How sweetly life doth run

In these well-coloured veins! How constantly

These palms do promise health! But I could chide

With Nature for this cunning flattery.⁵

Kiss me again.

[*They kiss.*]

Forgive me.

ANNABELLA

With my heart.

GIOVANNI

Farewell.

ANNABELLA

Will you be gone?

GIOVANNI

Be dark, bright sun,

80 And make this midday night, that thy gilt rays

May not behold a deed will turn their splendour

More sooty than the poets feign their Styx.¹

One other kiss, my sister.

[He draws a dagger.]

ANNABELLA

What means this?

GIOVANNI

To save thy fame,² and kill thee in a kiss.

Stabs her [as they kiss].

Thus die, and die by me, and by my hand.

Revenge is mine;³ honour doth love command.

ANNABELLA

O brother, by your hand?

GIOVANNI

When thou art dead

I'll give my reasons for't; for to dispute

With thy – even in thy death – most lovely beauty

90 Would make me stagger⁴ to perform this act

Which I most glory in.

ANNABELLA

Forgive him, heaven,
And me my sins. Farewell, brother unkind,⁵
unkind.

Mercy, great heaven! Oh, oh! [She]
dies.

GIOVANNI

She's dead. Alas, good soul. The hapless¹ fruit
That in her womb received its life from me,
Hath had from me a cradle and a grave.
I must not dally. This sad marriage-bed,
In all her best, bore her alive and dead.
Soranzo, thou hast missed thy aim in this;
100 I have prevented now thy reaching² plots
And killed a love for whose each drop of blood
I would have pawned my heart. Fair Annabella,
How over-glorious³ art thou in thy wounds,
Triumphing over infamy and hate!
Shrink not, courageous hand. Stand up, my heart,
And boldly act my last and greater part!

Exit with the body.

ACT 5

Scene 6

A banquet.

Enter CARDINAL, FLORIO, DONADO, SORANZO,
RICHARDETTO [*disguised*], VASQUEZ *and* ATTENDANTS.

They take their places [at the table].

VASQUEZ [*Aside to SORANZO*]

Remember, sir, what you have to do. Be wise and resolute.

SORANZO [*Aside to VASQUEZ*]

Enough! My heart is fixed. [*To the CARDINAL*]
Pleaseth your grace

To taste these coarse confections?⁴ Though the use
Of such set⁵ entertainments more consists
In custom than in cause,⁶ yet, reverend sir,
I am still made your servant by your presence.

CARDINAL

And we your friend.

SORANZO

But where's my brother, Giovanni?

Enter GIOVANNI, with a heart upon his dagger.

GIOVANNI

Here, here, Soranzo, trimmed¹ in reeking² blood
That triumphs over death; proud in the spoil
10 Of love and vengeance!³ Fate, or all the powers
That guide the motions of immortal souls,
Could not prevent me.

CARDINAL

What means this?

FLORIO

Son Giovanni?

SORANZO [*Aside*]

Shall I be forestalled?

GIOVANNI

Be not amazed. If your misgiving⁴ hearts
Shrink at an idle⁵ sight, what bloodless fear
Of coward passion would have seized your senses,
Had you beheld the rape⁶ of life and beauty
Which I have acted? My sister, O my sister!

FLORIO

Ha! What of her?

GIOVANNI

The glory of my deed
20 Darkened the midday sun, made noon as night.
You came to feast, my lords, with dainty fare.
I came to feast too, but I digged for food
In a much richer mine than gold or stone⁵
Of any value balanced.¹ 'Tis a heart,
A heart, my lords, in which is mine entombed.
Look well upon't. D'ee know't?

VASQUEZ

What strange riddle's this?

GIOVANNI

'Tis Annabella's heart, 'tis! Why d'ee startle?²
I vow 'tis hers. This dagger's point ploughed up
30 Her fruitful womb, and left to me the fame
Of a most glorious executioner.

FLORIO

Why, madman, art thyself?

GIOVANNI

Yes, father, and that times to come may know
How, as my fate, I honoured my revenge,
List, father: to your ears I will yield up
How much I have deserved to be your son.³

FLORIO

What is't thou say'st?

GIOVANNI

Nine moons have had their changes
Since I first throughly⁴ viewed and truly loved
Your daughter and my sister.

FLORIO

How? Alas,
My lords, he's a frantic madman!

GIOVANNI

40

Father, no.

For nine months' space, in secret I enjoyed
Sweet Annabella's sheets; nine months I lived
A happy monarch of her heart and her.
Soranzo, thou know'st this; thy paler cheek
Bears the confounding print of thy disgrace.
For her too fruitful womb too soon bewrayed¹
The happy passage² of our stol'n delights,

And made her mother to a child unborn.

CARDINAL

Incestuous villain!

FLORIO

Oh, his rage³ belies him!⁴

GIOVANNI

50 It does not. 'Tis the oracle of truth –
I vow it is so.

SORANZO

I shall burst with fury!
[*To VASQUEZ*] Bring the strumpet forth!

VASQUEZ

I shall, sir.

GIOVANNI

Do, sir. *Exit VASQUEZ.*

Have you all no faith
To credit yet my triumphs? Here I swear,
By all that you call sacred, by the love
I bore my Annabella whilst she lived,
These hands have from her bosom ripped this
heart.

Enter VASQUEZ.

Is't true or no, sir?

VASQUEZ

'Tis most strangely true.

FLORIO

Cursèd man, have I lived to – [He] dies.

CARDINAL

Hold up, Florio!

60 [To GIOVANNI] Monster of children, see what
thou hast done:

Broke thy old father's heart! [To the others] Is
none of you Dares venture on him?¹

GIOVANNI

Let 'em! O my father!

How well his death becomes him in his griefs!

Why, this was done with courage. Now survives

None of our house but I, gilt² in the blood

Of a fair sister and a hapless father.

SORANZO

Inhuman scorn of men, hast thou a thought

T'outlive thy murders?

GIOVANNI

Yes, I tell thee, yes;

For in my fists I bear the twists of life.³

70 Soranzo, see this heart which was thy wife's:

Thus I exchange it royally⁴ for thine,⁵

[He stabs SORANZO.]

And thus and thus! [Stabs him again.] Now brave
revenge is mine.

VASQUEZ

I cannot hold any longer. You, sir, are you grown insolent in your butcheries? Have at you!

GIOVANNI

Come, I am armed to meet thee!

[VASQUEZ *and* GIOVANNI] *fight*. [VASQUEZ *wounds* GIOVANNI.]

VASQUEZ

No? Will it⁶ not be yet? If this will not, another shall.

[*He stabs* GIOVANNI *again*.]

Not yet? I shall fit you¹ anon. [*Shouts*]
Vengeance!²

Enter BANDITTI [*masked, with weapons drawn*].

GIOVANNI

Welcome! Come more of you; whate'er you be,
I dare your worst –

[*They fight*. GIOVANNI *is wounded*.]

80 Oh, I can stand no longer. Feeble arms,
Have you so soon lost strength?

VASQUEZ

Now, you are welcome, sir. [*To the* BANDITTI] Away, my masters! All is done. Shift for yourselves³ – your reward is your own – shift for yourselves!

BANDITTI

Away, away!

Exeunt BANDITTI.

VASQUEZ [*To* SORANZO]

How d'ee, my lord? See you this? How is't?

SORANZO

Dead, but in death well pleased that I have lived
To see my wrongs revenged on that black devil.

O Vasquez, to thy bosom let me give

90 My last of breath.⁴ Let not that lecher live –
Oh! [*He*] *dies*.

VASQUEZ

The reward of peace and rest be with him, my ever-
dearest lord and master.

GIOVANNI

Whose hand gave me this wound?

VASQUEZ

Mine, sir; I was your first man. Have you enough?

GIOVANNI

I thank thee. Thou hast done for me

But what I would have else done on myself.

Art sure thy lord is dead?

VASQUEZ

O impudent slave,

As sure as I am sure to see thee die!

CARDINAL

Think on thy life and end, and call for mercy.

GIOVANNI

100 Mercy? Why, I have found it in this justice.

CARDINAL

Strive yet to cry to heaven.

GIOVANNI

Oh, I bleed fast.

Death, thou art a guest long looked-for; I embrace

Thee and thy wounds. Oh, my last minute comes.

Where'er I go, let me enjoy this grace:

Freely to view my Annabella's face. [He]
dies.

DONADO

Strange miracle of justice!

CARDINAL

Raise up the city! We shall be murdered all!

VASQUEZ

You need not fear. You shall not. This strange task
being ended, I have paid the duty to the son which I
have vowed to

110 the father.

CARDINAL

Speak, wretched villain, what incarnate fiend

Hath led thee on to this?

VASQUEZ

Honesty, and pity of my master's wrongs. For know,
my lord, I am by birth a Spaniard,¹ brought forth my
country in my youth by Lord Soranzo's father, whom,
whilst he lived, I served faithfully; since whose death I
have been to this man, as I was to him. What I have
done was duty, and I repent nothing but that the loss of
my life had not ransomed his.

CARDINAL

Say, fellow, know'st thou any yet unnamed

120 Of counsel¹ in this incest?

VASQUEZ

Yes, an old woman, sometimes² guardian to this
murdered lady.

CARDINAL

And what's become of her?

VASQUEZ

Within this room she is, whose eyes, after her
confession, I caused to be put out, but kept alive to
confirm what from Giovanni's own mouth you have
heard. Now, my lord, what I have done you may judge
of, and let your own wisdom be a judge in your own
reason.

CARDINAL

Peace! First, this woman,³ chief in these effects:

130 My sentence is that forthwith she be ta'en

Out of the city, for example's sake,

There to be burnt to ashes.

DONADO

'Tis most just.

CARDINAL

Be it your charge, Donado: see it done.

DONADO

I shall.

VASQUEZ

What for me? If death, 'tis welcome. I have been
honest to the son, as I was to the father.

CARDINAL

Fellow, for thee, since what thou didst was done
Not for thyself, being no Italian,
We banish thee forever, to depart
140 Within three days. In this we do dispense¹
With grounds of reason,² not of thine offence.³

VASQUEZ

'Tis well. This conquest is mine, and I rejoice that a
Spaniard outwent an Italian in
revenge. *Exit* VASQUEZ.

CARDINAL

Take up these slaughtered bodies, see them buried;
And all the gold and jewels, or whatsoever,
Confiscate by the canons of the Church,
We seize upon to the Pope's proper⁴ use.

RICHARDETTO [*removing his disguise*]

Your Grace's pardon. Thus long I lived disguised
To see the effect of pride and lust at once
150 Brought both to shameful ends.

CARDINAL

What, Richardetto, whom we thought for dead?

DONADO

Sir, was it you –

RICHARDETTO

Your friend.

CARDINAL

We shall have time

To talk at large⁵ of all; but never yet

Incest and murder have so strangely met.

Of one so young, so rich in Nature's store,⁵

Who could not say, ' 'Tis pity she's a whore'?⁶

Exeunt [with the bodies].

FINIS.

[PRINTER'S AFTERWORD]

The general commendation deserved by the actors, in their presentment¹ of this tragedy, may easily excuse such few faults as are escaped in the printing. A common charity may allow him the ability of spelling, whom a secure confidence assures that he cannot ignorantly err in the application of sense.²

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Textual Variants

The White Devil

To the Reader

'liven [Edd] life'n

1.1.6 swoop [Edd] swope

19 you [Edd] you, you

1.2.22 whereas [Edd] where a

66 your [Edd] you

79 lyam [Edd] Leon

183 mark [Edd] make

227 'crostics [This edn] crosse-sticks

264 with [Edd] not in Q

266 than [Edd] not in Q

271 leave [Edd] leaves

289 his [Edd] this

2.1.3 such a [Edd] a such

27 that have [Edd] have

51 prey [Edd] pery

86 and 94 SP FRANCISCO [Edd] *Flan.*

90 prowling [Edd] proling

144 Lodovic [Edd] *Lodowicke*

226 heart [Edd] heare

227 Q's SD includes CAMILLO, here delayed until 279

265 *repostum* [Edd] *repositum*

305 Anthony's fire [Edd] *Anthony* fire

321 gallows [Edd] gallouses

322 another's [Edd] another

336 needs [Edd] neede

379 Lodovic [Edd] *Lodowicke*

2.2.8 necromancer [Edd] Nigromancer

32 Lodovic [Edd] *Lodowicke*

35 fate [Edd] face

46 SP BRACCIANO [Edd] *Mar.*

3.1.48 on [Edd] Or

3.2.0 SD Q includes ISABELLA

10 SP LAWYER [Edd] missing in Q

100 brings [Edd] bring

124 cunning [Q] conning

192 he [Edd] her

208 a feast [This edn] feast

228 long [Edd] louing

248 balladed [Edd] ballated

262 princes. Here's [Edd] Princes heares;

263 Q adds SP *Vit.*

274 maw [Edd] mawes

323.5 SP GIOVANNI [Edd] missing in Q

3.3.21 Yon [Edd] You

25 **victual under the line** [Edd] vittel vnder the liue
50–1 **a sawpit** [Edd] saw-pit
77 **gentle** [Edd] gentile
86 **rogue** [Edd] gue
4.1.89 **in so** [Edd] so in
4.2.81 **hawks** [Edd] hawke
94 **Ye'd** [Edd] Yee'ld
218 **breeds** [Edd] bredes
4.3.17 **Lodovic** [Edd] *Lodowicke*
60–1 **Concedimus ... peccatorum** [Edd] missing in this version
of Q; added in press correction
80 **SP MONTICELSO** [Edd] missing in Q
89.5 **SP MONTICELSO** [Edd] attributed to *Lod.* in Q
137 **wills** [Edd] will
150 **now to** [Edd] now. Now to
5.1.31 **Q has SD Enter Duke Brachiano**
60 **SP BRACCIANO** [Edd] missing in Q
168 **diners** [Edd] *Diuers*
177 **morality** [Edd] mortality
200 **two** [Edd] 10
208, 218, 223 **SP FRANCISCO** [Edd] *Fla.*
5.2.24 **wider** [Edd] wilder
5.3.115 **orris** [Edd] Arras
156 **copperas** [Edd] copperesse
175, 185, 195, 202, 214 **SP FRANCISCO** [Edd] *Flo.*
193 **feat** [Edd] seat

233.5 **SP FRANCISCO** [Edd] *Fla.*
5.4.60 **SP FRANCISCO** [Edd] not in Q
71.5 **SP LADY** [Edd] *Wom.*
5.6.16 **They** [Edd] the
18 **scare** [Edd] scarre
27 **they** [Edd] the
31 **worldly** [Edd] wordly
140 **stinking** [Edd] sinking
chimney is [Edd] chimneis
174 **safety** [Edd] sasty
177 **precedent** [Edd] president
198 **grieves's** [Edd] greeu's
263 **wives'** [Edd] wides

The Duchess of Malfi

1.1.0 **SD [Enter] ANTONIO and DELIO** [Edd] ANTONIO *and* DELIO,
BOSOLA, CARDINALL
56 **died** [Edd] did
pardon [Edd] pleadon
57 **when** [Edd] and, when
64 **like** [Edd] likes
70 **Foix** [Edd] Foux
1.2.0 **SD [Enter] CASTRUCHIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO and GRISOLAN**
[Edd] ANTONIO, DELIO, FERDINAND, CARDINALL, DUTCHESS,
CASTRUCHIO, SILUIO, RODOCICO, GRISOLAN, BOSOLA, IULIA,
CARIOLA
33 **SP FERDINAND** [Edd] missing in Q

Jennet [Edd] Gennit
36 ballasted [Edd] ballass'd
75 flatterers [Edd] Flatters
94 shrewd [Edd] shewed
101 your [Edd] you
131 are [Edd] missing in Q
133 leaguer [Edd] Leagues
134.5 SP DUCHESS [Edd] *Ferd.*
158.5 SP FERDINAND [Edd] *Berd.*
178 to [Edd] missing in Q
182 on't [Edd] out
188 o'er [Edd] are
vile [Edd] vild
275 these [Edd] this
294 you [Edd] yon
300 couple [Edd] cople
301 St Winifred [Edd] St *Winfred*
332 visitants [Edd] visitans
351 woo ... woo [Edd] woe ... woe
386 *de presenti* [Edd] *presenti*
2.1 SD [*Enter*] BOSOLA [*and*] CASTRUCHIO [Edd] BOSOLA,
CASTRUCHIO, An OLD LADY, ANTONIO, DELIO, DUCHESS,
RODORICO, GRISOLAN
27 flayed [Edd] Flead
31 but [Edd] but you call
37 children's [Edd] children

ordure [Edd] ordures
42 high-priced [This edn] high-prized
61 couple [Edd] cople
96 cousin-german [Edd] Cosen German
113 lemon [Edd] Lymmon
114 swoon [Edd] sound
116 courtiers [Edd] Courties
119 SP DUCHESS [Edd] missing in Q
126 Methought [Edd] My thought
2.2.0 SD [*Enter*] BOSOLA [*and*] OLD LADY [Edd] BOSOLA, OLD
LADY, ANTONIO, RODORIGO, GRISOLAN: SERVANTS, DELIO,
CARIOLA
1 tetchiness [Edd] teatchiues
1–2 vulturous [Edd] vulterous
13 bears [Edd] beare
32–62 SPs [1ST] OFFICER/OFFICERS/[2ND] OFFICER [This edn]
Seruant/Seru./Ser./2.Ser.
48 officers [Edd] Offices
70 looks [Edd] looke
2.3.0 SD [*Enter*] BOSOLA [*with a dark lantern*] [Edd] BOSOLA,
ANTONIO.
10 Who's [Edd] whose
52 quit [Edd] quite
65 eighth [Edd] eight
Caetera [Edd] *Caeteta*
70 cased-up [Edd] caside-vp

2.4.0 SD [*Enter*] CARDINAL *and* JULIA [Edd] CARDINALL, *and*
JULIA, SERUANT, *and* DELIO

12 *turnings* [Edd] turning

29 *Bore* [Edd] Boare

30 *thee* [Edd] the

38 *liver* [Edd] liuour

41 *moves* [Edd] moonnes

47 *you are* [Edd] your

66 *seethe't* [Edd] seeth's

2.5.2 *prodigy* [Edd] progedy

3 *damned* [Edd] dampn'd

30 *mother's* [Edd] mother

44 *one o'th* [Edd] one th'

3.1.0 SD [*Enter*] ANTONIO *and* DELIO [Edd] ANTONIO, *and*
DELIO, DUCHESS, FERDINAND, BOSOLA

16 *insensibly* [Edd] inseucibly

27 *be* [Edd] he

37 *of* [Edd] off

39 *bespeak* [Edd] be be-speak

51 *of* [Edd] off

54 *were* [Edd] where

57 *coulters* [Edd] cultures

78 *blood* [Edd] bood

3.2.0 SD [*Enter*] DUCHESS, ANTONIO [*and*] CARIOLA [Edd]

DUCHESS, ANTONIO, CARIOLA, FERDINAND, BOSOLA, OFFICERS

60 *orris* [Edd] Arras

79 us [This edn] missing in Q
89 confederacy [Edd] consideracy
90 thee [Edd] the
screech-owl [Edd] Schrech-Owle
96 damn [Edd] dampe
115.5 SP FERDINAND [Edd] *Ford*.
135 shook [Edd] shooked
202 As loath [Edd] A-loth
233 first-born intelligencers [Edd] first-borne and
Intelligencers
242 coffers [Edd] cofers
246 in God's [Edd] on god's
246–7 sent On [Edd] sent One
266 Bermudas [Edd] *Bermoothes*
267 tied [Edd] tide
304 Whither [Edd] Whether
3.3.0 SD [*Enter*] CARDINAL, MALATESTTE [*on one side*].
FERDINAND, DELIO, SILVIO, PESCARA [*on the other*] [Edd]
CARDINALL, FERDINAND, MALLATESTTE, PESCARA, SILUIO,
DELIO, BOSOLA
17 scent [Edd] sent
20 keeps [Edd] keepe
31 bore [Edd] boare
45 symmetry [Edd] semitry
53 porpoise [Edd] Por-pisse
72 counters [Edd] coumpters

73 *life* [Edd] like

75 *hundred* [Edd] hundreth

3.4.36 *Off* [Edd] Of

3.5.0 SD [*Enter*] ANTONIO, DUCHESS [*and two*] CHILDREN,
CARIOLA [*carrying an infant*], SERVANTS [Edd] ANTONIO,
DUCHESS, CHILDREN, CARIOLA, SERUANTS, BOSOLA,
SOULDIERS, *with Vizards*

103 *o'er-charged* [Edd] ore-char'd

105 *Whither* [Edd] Whether

130 *smelts* [Edd] Smylts

140 *whither* [Edd] whether

4.1.0 SD [*Enter*] FERDINAND, BOSOLA [*and*] SERVANTS [*with
torches*] [Edd] FERDINAND, BOSOLA, DUTCHESSE, CARIOLA,
SERUANTS

4.2.0 SD [*Enter*] DUCHESS [*and*] CARIOLA [Edd] DUCHESS,
CARIOLA, SERUANT, MAD-MEN, BOSOLA, EXECUTIONERS,
FERDINAND

67 *irksome* [Edd] yerk some

73 SP MAD ASTROLOGER [This edn] I. *Mad-man*

77 SP MAD LAWYER [This edn] 2. *Mad.*

80 SP MAD PRIEST [This edn] 3. *Mad.*

82 SP MAD DOCTOR [This edn] 4. *Mad.*

267 *done't* [Edd] don't

336 *mercy* [Edd] merry

5.1.0 SD [*Enter*] ANTONIO [*and*] DELIO [Edd] ANTONIO, DELIO,
PESCARA, IULIA

6 *'cheat* [Edd] Cheit

17 **whither** [Edd] whether

69 **fraught** [Edd] freight

74 **howe'er** [Edd] how ere

5.2.0 **SD** [*Enter*] **PESCARA** [*and*] **a DOCTOR** [Edd] PESCARA, A
DOCTOR, FERDINAND, CARDINALL, MALATESTES, BOSOLA, IULIA

77 **flay** [Edd] flea

110 **oft-dyed** [Edd] oft-di'd

114 **one** [Edd] on

140 **bought** [Edd] brought

179 **woo** [Edd] woe

276 **thee** [Edd] the

285 **whither** [Edd] whether

307 **smother** [Edd] smoother

309 **bier** [Edd] Beare

313 **off** [Edd] of

5.3.26 **Ay** [Edd] I

27 **Ay** [Edd] I

28 **let us** [Edd] let's us

36 **SP ECHO** [Edd] missing in Q

55.5 **SP ANTONIO** [Edd] missing in Q

5.4.0 **SD** [*Enter*] **CARDINAL, PESCARA, MALATESTES, RODERIGO**
[*and*] **GRISOLAN** [*carrying torches*] [Edd] CARDINALL,
PESCARA, MALATESTES, RODERIGO, GRISOLAN, BOSOLA,
FERDINAND, ANTONIO, SERUANT

11 **our** [Edd] out

29 **Fro'** [This edn] For

34 quiet [Edd] quiein

56 struck [Edd] strooke

76 hither [Edd] hether

5.5.0 SD [*Enter*] CARDINAL, *with a book* [Edd] CARDINALL
(*with a Booke*) BOSOLA, PESCARA, MALATESTTE, RODORIGO,
FERDINAND, DELIO, SERUANT *with* ANTONIO's *body*.

29 let's [Edd] lets's

59 fellows [Edd] followes

83 this [Edd] his

The Broken Heart

Dedication

censure [Edd] *Censore*

1.1.18 broached [Edd] brauch't

31 holy union [uncorrected Q] union

1.2.20 Pephnon [Edd] *Pephon*

111 you [Edd] yon

133 feathers [Edd] Fathers

1.3.20 grudge [Edd] grutch

183 acts [Edd] Arts

2.1.4 travails [Edd] trauels

16 ulcerous [Edd] vlturous

29 their [Edd] the

45 Hey-day! [Edd] Hey da

130 Shoals [Edd] Shoalds

145 Haste [Edd] Hast

2.3.9 little [Edd] not in Q

31 altars [Edd] Artars

124 I'll [Edd] I'e

frenzy [Edd] French

134 rheums [Edd] rhemes

149.5 SP PENTHEA Then let us ... account [Edd] Attributed to
BASSANES in Q

3.1.39 basis [Edd] Bases

41 or [Edd] of

58 human [Edd] humane

72 Your [Edd] You

3.2.27 heard [Edd] hard

56 Of country toil drinks the untroubled streams [Edd] The
vntroubled of Country toyle, drinkes streames

62 While [Edd] Which

digestion [Edd] disgestion

72 act [Edd] art

94 nearness [Edd] not in Q

160 silent [Edd] sinlent

3.3.5 grave [Edd] graves

51 close [Edd] close close

3.5.14 human [Edd] humane

35 enjoin [Edd] enioy

36 SP PENTHEA [Edd] missing in Q

72 ago [Edd] agone

96 in [Edd] missing in Q

4.1.12 [stands](#) [Edd] stand
25 [be denied](#) [Edd] beny'd
118 [suppling](#) [Edd] supplying
4.2.36 [largesse](#) [Edd] largenesse
57 [been](#) [Edd] bee
65 [roof](#) [Edd] root
67 [imposterous](#) [Edd] Impostors
81 [sun](#) [Edd] Swan
111 [too](#) [Edd] to
112 [SP PENTHEA](#) [Edd] missing in Q
143 [done't](#) [Edd] don't
161 [Enough](#) [Edd] Enow
173 [done't ... done't](#) [Edd] don't ... don't
177 [th'angry](#) [Edd] th'augury
4.3.89 [fortunes](#) [Edd] fortuness
96 [Wear](#) [Edd] Were
5.1.7 [too](#) [Edd] to
12 [doubles](#) [Edd] doublers
5.2.55 [rend](#) [Edd] rent
75 [goodness](#) [Edd] gooddesse
110 [his](#) [Edd] this
112 [expectation](#) [Edd] expection
124.5 [SP NEARCHUS](#) [Edd] *Org.*
151 [standard](#) [Edd] Standards
5.3.23 [infinite](#) [Edd] infinites
64 [mother's](#) [Edd] mother

83 **Th'outward** [Edd] outward

84 **Is or** [Edd] Is not

'Tis Pity She's a Whore

1.1.31 **the links** [Edd] the the links

49 **Bologna** [Edd] *Bononia*

1.2.21 **mean** [Edd] meant

44 **not** [Edd] missing in Q

56 **villainy** [Edd] villaine

76 **Monferrato** [Edd] *Mount Ferratto*

77 **Milanese** [Edd] *Millanoys*

78 **an't be** [Edd] and be

115 **pavan** [Edd] pauin

118 **Ay, ay** [Edd] I, I

123 **bauble** [Edd] bable

186 **The** [Edd] they

221 **smooth-cheeked** [Edd] smooth'd-cheeke

1.3.29 **SP DONADO** [Edd] SP *Pog.*

whither [Edd] whether

42 **thither** [Edd] hither

43 **Ay** [Edd] I

46 **wilt ... Wilt** [Edd] wu't ... wu't

49 **should** [Edd] shu'd

58 **Parmesan** [Edd] Parmasent

2.2.1 **SP SORANZO** [Edd] not in Q

13 **encomium** [Edd] *Euconium*

56 **thy** [Edd] the
73 **Leghorn** [Edd] *Ligorne*
96 **corpse** [Edd] Curse
134 **Wilt** [Edd] Wu't
153 **for witnesses** [Edd] foe-witnesses
2.3.9 **Leghorn** [Edd] *Ligorne*
31 **Nuncio** [Edd] *Nuntio*
48 **Who's** [Edd] Whose
53 **kill** [Edd] tell
63 **ruined** [Edd] min'd
2.4.4 **wilt** [Edd] wu't
26 **choose** [Edd] chose
34 **you ... you** [Edd] you ... yon
2.5.8 **my** [Edd] Thy
15 **frame** [Edd] Fame
17 **of the body** [Edd] of *Body*
2.6.12 **An't please** [Edd] And please
43 **have't** [Edd] haue
78 **his** [Edd] this
3.1.8 **SP BERGETTO** [Edd] SP *Pog.*
3.2.65 **SP SORANZO** [Edd] SP *Gio.*
66 **swoons** [Edd] sounes
3.5.12 **Friar** [Edd] Fryars
31, 35 **coz** [Edd] Couze
37.5 **SP POGGIO** [Edd] SP *Phi.*

3.9.38 *Let* [Edd] *Le*

4.1.1 *rites* [Edd] *rights*

71 *inganna* [Edd] *niganna*

77 *marriage* [Edd] *malice*

4.2.28 *lives* [Edd] *liue*

4.3.15 *Say* [Edd] *They*

32 *that's for your glory* [Edd] *that for glory*

59 *Che morte più dolce che morire per amore?* [Edd] *Che morte plus dolce morire per amore*

63 *Morendo in grazia a lui, morirei senza dolore* [Edd] *Morendo in gratia Lei morirere senza dolore*

122 *thou* [Edd] *thus*

154 *ferret* [Edd] *Secret*

5.1.10 *depositions* [Edd] *dispositions*

5.3.66 *Bologna* [Edd] *Bononia*

71 *SP GIOVANNI* [Edd] *missing in Q*

75 *rend* [Edd] *rent*

5.6.7 SD *a heart* [Edd] *at heart*



THE BEGINNING

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1 *FLAMINIO*: spelled FLAMINEO in the Quarto; however, the current spelling is the accurate Italian version, found in Webster's source, and also offers a better guide to pronunciation

2 *LODOVICO*: spelled LODOWICKE in the Quarto

* non-speaking parts

1 *challenge to*: claim for

2 *nos ... nihil*: 'We know these efforts of ours to be worth nothing' (Martial, *Epigrams*, 13.2)

3 *theatre*: the Red Bull at Clerkenwell, a large, open-air theatre

4 *Nec ... molestas*: 'You [the poet's book] will not fear the sneers of the malicious, nor supply wrappers for mackerel' (Martial, *Epigrams*, 4.86)

5 *non ... dixi*: 'You cannot say more against these trifles of mine than I have said myself' (Martial, *Epigrams*, 13.2)

6 *sententious*: full of maxims, characteristic of Seneca

7 *'liven death*: make death come alive

8 *Nuntius*: messenger of classical tragedy who often described acts of offstage violence

- 1 *O ... ilia*: 'O strong stomachs of harvesters' (Horace, *Epodes*, 3.4), referring to their love of garlic
- 2 *Haec ... relinques*: 'What you leave will today become food for pigs' (Horace, *Epistles*, 1.7.19)
- 3 *long time ... tragedy*: there is no record of Webster writing anything between 1605 and 1612
- 4 *Alcestides*: Webster's misspelling of 'Alcestis', an otherwise unknown classical poet mentioned in Jonson's *Discoveries* (pub. 1641)
- 5 *understanding*: intellectual
- 6 *non ... mori*: 'These monuments know not death' (Martial, *Epigrams*, 10.2)

1 *Democritus*: Ancient Greek philosopher and scientist, recorded in Antonio de Guevera's *Diall of Princes* (trans. 1557) as stating that the gods of reward and punishment ruled the world

2 *parcels*: portions

3 *wolf ... hungry*: wolves no longer appear wolvisch once their appetites are satisfied

4 *pashed*: smashed

1 *mumma*: medicine ('physic') prepared from mummified (usually human) flesh, proverbially difficult to swallow

2 *kennel*: gutter

3 *phoenix*: this mythical Arabian bird lived for 500 to 600 years, then consumed itself in flames and rose again from its own ashes

4 *idle*: worthless

1 *This ... buckets*: both men (perhaps one on each side of Lodovico) draw from the same 'well' of truisms

2 *tend*: attend, listen to

3 *3 gentle penance*: i.e., banishment

4 *close*: secret

5 *Have ... you*: be self-sufficient

1 *adulterate*: fake, with a pun on ‘adulterous’

2 *painted*: artificial

3 *Italian cut-works*: a popular kind of embroidery in which holes were cut into the cloth and stitched round

1 *caroche*: luxurious coach, used in town

2 *Can't*: can it?

- 1 *superficies*: external covering
- 2 *buttery-hatch*: a half-door to the buttery (where provisions were stored) over which food and drink were served
- 3 *beverage*: usually ale
- 4 *gilder*: one who gilds objects for a living; gilders might suffer mercury ('quicksilver') poisoning, symptoms of which were tremors and insanity
- 5 *liver*: thought to be the origin of passion in the body
- 6 *Barriers*: a jousting competition conducted on either side of a low railing; Flaminio may be recalling the festivities of Christmas 1609 when Prince Henry, the future Prince of Wales, displayed his military prowess
- 7 *moulted ... hairs*: feathers may have fallen off the barriers or the competitors' helmets; hair loss is a symptom of syphilis
- 8 *wage ... hazard*: he will wager even his genitals, rendering himself impotent
- 9 *Dutch doublet*: close-fitting, worn with wide breeches, suggesting the shrinking of Camillo's penis and the enlargement of his buttocks, perhaps an allusion to sodomy

- 1 *closet*: small, private room, its entrance sometimes hidden from view
- 2 *under-age protestation*: immature wooing
- 3 *politician*: crafty person; Camillo is presumably wearing long robes
- 4 *foot-cloth*: a richly decorated cloth covering the back of a horse
- 5 *count*: a variant spelling of 'cunt', may have been pronounced alike
- 6 *flaw*: disagreement, with a pun on female genitalia

- 1 *bowl booty*: cheat at bowls by ganging up on another player, i.e., Flaminio and Bracciano against Camillo
- 2 *his cheek ... mistress*: Bracciano's cheek/buttock, like the weighted bowling ball, curves towards the white target, the 'mistress'; 'jump with', to have sex with
- 3 *Aristotle*: synonymous with logic
- 4 *ephemerides*: tables depicting the position of the planets on a particular day

- 1 *God boy you*: contracted version of 'God be with you'
- 2 *horn-shavings*: the cuckold was imagined to possess a pair of horns on his forehead
- 3 *God refuse me*: an oath
- 4 *In lyam*: on a leash
- 5 *wrings*: pinches, because of his cuckold's horns
- 6 *large ears*: implying that he is an ass

- 1 *Jacob's staff*: instrument for measuring height and distance
- 2 *enclosures ... mutton*: enclosures for sheep-farming were notoriously detrimental to the poor and inspired riots ('rebellion'); 'mutton' is also slang for a promiscuous woman
- 3 *provocative electuaries*: aphrodisiacs
- 4 *uttered*: issued
- 5 *Jubilee*: a year instituted by the Roman Catholic Church in which the penal consequences of sin were avoided by various kinds of penance; it occurred every twenty-five years, with the most recent being 1600

- 1 *Ida*: sacred mountain in Crete or Phrygia, near Troy
- 2 *Corinth*: a city famous for its luxury, also slang for a brothel
- 3 *blackbird's bill ... feather*: yellow hair was judged the ideal of beauty, rather than Vittoria's black
- 4 *friends*: lovers
- 5 *stand*: insist
- 6 *carved to him*: served him or showed him great courtesy
- 7 *capon*: a castrated cock
- 8 *black-guard*: the lowest kitchen servants, in charge of kitchen utensils when a nobleman moved residences
- 9 *calves' brains*: foolishness; to be unseasoned with 'sage' implies the brain unimproved by knowledge
- 10 *crouching in the hams*: bending servilely
- 11 *itch in's hams*: venereal disease or unfulfilled sexual desire

1 *fire ... glass-house*: the glass factory near the Blackfriars Theatre kept its furnace constantly burning

2 *foil*: setting for a precious stone

3 *case*: legal case, female genitalia

4 *philosopher's stone*: thought by alchemists to turn base materials into gold, prolong life and cure disease, with a pun on 'stone' as testicle

5 *turtles*: turtle doves, associated with faithful love

1 *breeze*: gadflies

2 *gadding*: wandering

3 *coming*: receptive

4 *tumultuary*: confused

5 *quae negata grata*: 'Whatever is denied is desired'

6 *adamant*: magnet

7 *progress*: procession, taken by royal or other noble person, defined by its flamboyant self-display

1 *thread*: with a pun on 'semen'

2 *gull*: trick

3 *scurvily*: rudely, crossly

4 *curst*: vicious, bad-tempered

5 *Give credit*: believe me

1 *Loose*: release, abandon

2 *close*: come together

- 1 *jewel*: often used to describe a woman's marital chastity or virginity
- 2 *put in*: demanded, with a sexual pun
- 3 *lowest ... bodice*: i.e., over her vagina
- 4 *grave*: gravestone
- 5 *'crostics*: acrostics, which often appeared on memorial stones

1 *yew*: tree associated with death, also pun on 'you'

2 *fell*: fierce, cruel

3 *fury*: the three Furies were figures of female revenge in classical mythology, often depicted with snakes for hair

4 *massy*: weighty

5 *phlegmatic*: not easily impassioned

1 *government*: the act of governing

2 *Exit ZANCHE*: perhaps suggesting Flaminio is already involved with Zanche, against his mother's wishes

3 *blasted*: blighted, withered

4 *Thessaly*: district of northern Greece associated with the vengeful Medea and with poisonous plants

1 *princes ... dials*: an allusion to one of Webster's sources for the play, Guevara's *The Dial of Princes*

2 *blood*: bloodshed, but also reciprocal sexual desire

1 *bear ... stirrup*: get a promotion above the role of unmounted footman

2 *fain to heel*: obliged to mend

1 *Conspiring with a beard*: insinuating himself into the affections of an older man, perhaps sexually; 'beard' might also be a misprint for 'beadle', the university official who collected fees

2 *Lycurgus*: Spartan lawgiver, described in Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* as urging men to share their wives with other worthy men in order to produce the best children

1 *crook*: crooked

2 *forcèd*: man-made

3 *subtle ... snake*: coiled up whilst hibernating, possibly alluding to the mythical, two-headed snake amphisbaena, which sought out cold temperatures

4 *pole-cats*: foul-smelling, predatory mammals, also term for a prostitute

5 *cousin*: used also to describe a nephew or niece

1 *unicorn's horn ... spider*: powdered unicorn's horn was thought to offer protection against poison, the test for which was to place a spider inside a circle of powder and if it remained there the remedy was effective

2 *Void*: clear

- 1 *awful*: awe-inspiring, magnificent
- 2 *flower*: another name for a jewel in a crown
- 3 *loose*: lose
- 4 *name*: reputation
- 5 *fetch ... about*: change direction

1 *dunghill birds*: carrion birds, i.e., Camillo

2 *shift*: change

3 *Happily*: perhaps, with a pun on 'gladly'

4 *tissue*: cloth interwoven with gold or silver, only to be worn by women of high birth

5 *Switzers*: Swiss mercenaries, used at many European courts for protection

- 1 *ghostly*: spiritual, i.e., his confessor
- 2 *crackers*: fireworks
- 3 *plasters*: to cover the sores of venereal disease
- 4 *new-ploughed*: furrowed with rage
- 5 *word it*: argue

1 *triumph ... thus*: in 1604 James I experimented with lion-baiting at the Tower of London, a few days before his triumphal entry into the city (see Stow's *Annals*, 1605); the lion killed the dogs that were set upon it

2 *passenger*: abbreviation of passenger (peregrine) falcon

3 *wild ducks*: also a term for prostitutes

4 *moulting-time*: i.e., when Bracciano's hair starts to fall out he will realize that Vittoria is no better than a prostitute

5 *tale of a tub*: cock and bull story, also an allusion to the sweating tubs used to cure venereal disease

6 *stags ... melancholic*: stags (horned like the cuckold) supposedly went off to lie alone after mating, i.e., after Bracciano has finished with Vittoria he will find time ('the season') to meet with them

1 *Homer's frogs*: in *The Battle of Frogs and Mice*, a burlesque poem attributed to Homer, the frogs carry bulrushes as pikes

2 *discretion*: judgement

3 *Dansk*: Danish, famous for their military music

1 *lapwing*: a proverbially precocious bird, thought to run as soon as it is hatched

1 *habit*: costume, but also behaviour

1 *Devotion*: Isabella means marital devotion, but Bracciano chooses to misunderstand her meaning as religious duty

2 *cast ... up*: tally our sins and good deeds

3 *Take your chamber*: go to your room

4 *that Italian*: Italians were notoriously jealous; Isabella claims that this emotion is so unnatural to her it is a foreign word (even though she was historically Italian)

- 1 *cassia*: a kind of cinnamon, renowned for its sweet smell
- 2 *bandy factions*: conspire
- 3 *haunted out*: pursued, followed
- 4 *To meet ... Rome*: in the historical source, Isabella did have a lover
- 5 *Polack*: Polish men famously shaved their heads except for the forehead; a worthless person

1 *fly-boat*: a pinnace or fast sailing boat

2 *latest*: last

1 *weal*: good

2 *To better what is naught*: to exceed what is immoral, i.e., Isabella's upbraiding her husband is worse than his infidelity

1 *honest*: chaste

1 *a thousand ears*: i.e., the theatre audience

2 *manet ... repostum*: 'It shall be treasured up in the depths of my mind' (Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.26); the line expresses Juno's anger at being passed over by Paris in favour of Venus; unlike Juno, whose revenge contributed to the Trojan wars, Isabella feigns anger to prevent war

1 *stomach*: pride, vexation

2 *turn in post*: return post-haste

3 *Those ... speak*: a common proverb, found in Seneca's *Phaedra*, 607

4 *stibium*: metallic antimony, used as an emetic or poison

5 *cantharides*: Spanish fly, applied to create blisters, but poisonous when ingested in large quantities

- 1 *Candy*: Crete, whose inhabitants were supposed to eat poisonous snakes, i.e., death
- 2 *property*: a tool, with allusion to a stage prop
- 3 *quack-salving*: peddling fake medicines
- 4 *confessed ... non plus*: acknowledged a previous prosecution for debt, was taken into custody and so escaped whipping
- 5 *cozened ... execution*: tricked by someone pretending to be his creditor and forced to pay all that was supposedly owed
- 6 *cornet*: wind instrument
- 7 *lamprey*: eel-like fish with holes on the side of its head
- 8 *Ireland ... poison*: according to myth, St Patrick banished all poisonous animals from Ireland
- 9 *Spaniard's fart*: a Spaniard called Don Diego was famous for farting in St Paul's Cathedral
- 10 *Saint Anthony's fire*: a skin disease or possibly slang for flatulence

1 *bloodshed*: bloodshot

2 *chirurgion*: surgeon

3 *gargarism*: gargle or mouth-wash

4 *lights*: lungs

5 *by scruples*: in small quantities

6 *politic strain*: a cunning device, with a pun on 'strain' meaning strong muscular effort, alluding to his attempt at vaulting

7 *engine*: means

8 *one ... shoulders*: rather than use a wooden platform, one man would lift another up to the noose; Flaminio may be insinuating that Bracciano will similarly dispatch the Doctor when he has made use of him

1 *emblem*: moral allegory in the form of an illustration and explanatory text

2 *word*: motto

3 '*Inopem ... fecit*': 'Abundance has rendered me poor' (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 3.466)

4 '*Plenty ... horns*': i.e., by being made a cuckold many times over Camillo has lost his own sexual potency, or referring to Bracciano as the stag whose sexual activity has resulted in venereal disease and impotence

1 *old tale*: taken from *The Fables of Esop in English* (1596)

2 *banns*: public notice given in church of an intended marriage

3 *change the air*: leave this place

4 *cornucopia*: horn of plenty, a symbol of fertility, here meaning his cuckold's horns

1 *ranger*: gamekeeper

1 *sister*: either used here as a courtesy title or indicating that Webster has confused Monticelso with Isabella's real-life brother, who was also a cardinal

2 *want*: lack

3 *sere*: dry, withered

- 1 *necromancer*: magician, conjurer
- 2 *juggle*: play tricks
- 3 *windmills*: fanciful schemes
- 4 *squib*: firework
- 5 *curtal*: a horse with its tail docked; a horse called Morocco was famous in 1590s London for its tricks, including counting money and playing dead
- 6 *ream*: realm, and quantity of paper
- 7 *figure-flingers*: horoscope-casters
- 8 *lie ... goods*: horoscopes were sometimes consulted to locate property
- 9 *fast and loose*: unscrupulous
- 10 *fustian*: invented, i.e., gibberish

1 *suspiciously*: in a manner arousing suspicion

2 *dead shadow*: lifeless image

1 *Strike ... ground*: the music was probably heard from under the stage

2 *quaintly*: skilfully

3 *boon*: prosperous

1 *postern*: entrance

2 *hand*: signature

3 *lieger*: resident

- 1 *in ... week*: caught
- 2 *sit upon*: judge, with sexual pun
- 3 *tickler*: chastiser, provoker
- 4 *tilting*: a form of jousting, but also sexual intercourse
- 5 *private*: secret, intimate
- 6 *public*: open, promiscuous
- 7 *ferret them*: hunt them down, ferrets being used to catch rabbits

1 *conies*: rabbits; to catch 'conies' also meant to trick fools out of money or have sex with women

2 *witches ... spirits*: witches were thought to feed their familiars with their own milk or blood

3 *prodigal*: wastefully spent

1 *chamois*: leather jerkins worn under armour

2 *builder*: used for building

3 *mandrake*: a medicinal plant that supposedly shrieked when it was pulled from the earth, the sound inducing madness in the hearer

4 *the poorest ... strikes*: the least of their dislikes appears to injure superficially, but does mortal harm

1 *lame*: also implying impotence

2 *poulter*: traders in poultry, who went to market early in the morning and so were associated with falling asleep on horseback, also with a sexual connotation

3 *He looks ... blackbird*: an allusion to the wide Spanish ruff

1 *Domine ... corruptissimam*: 'Lord Judge, turn your eyes upon this plague, the most corrupt of women'

1 *auditory*: audience, includes spectators at the Red Bull Theatre, some of whom may have been sitting on the stage

2 *credit*: reputation

3 *give aim*: in archery, to let the shooter know how near the target they are

4 *connive*: direct, but also 'to be complicit with', casting suspicion on the judges' impartiality

5 *diversivolent*: strife-wishing, a nonce word

- 1 *concatenation*: plot
- 2 *projections*: schemes
- 3 *exulceration*: punishment; literally, the lancing of an ulcer
- 4 *bills*: prescriptions, often included a long list of difficult words
- 5 *proclamations*: royal commands, often expressed in high-flown terms
- 6 *Come up*: are vomited
- 7 *like stones ... physic*: overheated birds were thought to be cured by eating stones
- 8 *Welsh*: often assumed to be an incomprehensible language

1 *fustian*: coarse cloth, also inflated language

2 *buckram*: coarse linen used for lawyers' bags

3 *graduatically*: like a graduate, a nonce word

4 *Sodom and Gomorrah*: biblical cities destroyed by flame as punishment for the inhabitants' sins, particularly unlawful sexual practices; the image of fruit made of ashes derives from Deuteronomy 32:32

1 *scarlet*: colour of clerical and legal robes

2 *character*: a formal description of a character type; Webster contributed several to an edition of Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters* (1615)

3 *coz'ning*: deceiving

4 *tributes*: taxes

1 *surgeons*: the barber-surgeons were legally allowed the bodies of four executed criminals per year on which to demonstrate anatomy; they may have 'begged' more

2 *guilty*: with a pun on 'gilt', golden

3 *sample*: stand as a parallel or match

1 *prodigy*: strange occurrence

2 *rushes*: leaves used as a floor covering in private houses and on the stage

3 *Wound up*: corpses were usually wrapped in a winding sheet

4 *bespoke*: ordered

- 1 *Tartar*: synonymous with cruelty and barbarism
- 2 *scandals*: disgraces
- 3 *of force*: of necessity
- 4 *Perseus*: in classical mythology Perseus saved Andromeda from a sea monster and cut off the head of Medusa; synonymous with masculine courage and virtue in Jonson's *Masque of Queens* (1609)
- 5 *to the point*: in every detail, with a pun on the point of a sword
- 6 *strict-combinèd*: closely allied
- 7 *palsy*: trembling

1 *cozen*: cheat

2 *sword*: the sword of Justice

3 *temper*: Monticelso's anger, and the process of tempering metal to make a sword

1 *coat*: i.e., his profession of cleric

2 *post-boys*: letter-carriers

3 *challenge*: lay claim to

4 *moil*: mule

5 *Nemo ... lacessit*: 'No one injures me with impunity'

1 *gilded pills*: apothecaries sometimes covered their pills in gold to justify a higher price

2 *Casta ... rogavit*: 'She is chaste whom no one has solicited' (Ovid, *Amores* 1.8.43), though originally used to persuade a woman to take many lovers

3 *want*: lack

4 *dog-days*: characterized by oppressive heat; a time when lust and other malignant influences dominate

1 *pistol*: fire a pistol at

2 *crusadoes*: Portuguese coins, stamped with a crown

3 *use*: interest

- 1 *intelligencing ears*: i.e., those of an informer or spy
- 2 *choke-pear*: unpalatable pear, rebuke
- 3 *Venice*: the historical Vittoria was born in Gubbio; Webster may have chosen Venice because of its reputation for courtesans
- 4 *julio*: silver Italian coin, with a possible pun on 'Doctor Julio', who arranged Camillo's death
- 5 *ware ... light*: the goods being so worthless, unchaste

- 1 *balladed*: popularized in a ballad
- 2 *sureties*: those who make themselves liable for another's appearance at court
- 3 *blazing ... princes*: comets were thought to portend the fall of princes
- 4 *house of convertites*: institution for reformed prostitutes, like Bridewell in London

1 *By patent*: the patent or monopolies system granted individuals the control of a particular trade; it was notoriously used by James I to raise funds

2 *maw*: throat

1 *horse-leech*: thought to have two tongues, synonymous with the rhetorician

1 *palsy*: trembling

1 *gave me suck*: breastfed me; the nobility generally used wet nurses, though there was a growing demand in conduct literature that mothers nurse their own children

1 *as distracted*: the stage conventions of madness included disordered dress and speech

2 *ostler*: groom, stable boy

3 *linings*: underclothes

4 *forty ... Poland*: Poles were famously poor

5 *piles*: haemorrhoids, the treatment of which is the basis for the doctor's wealth, and the wooden foundations of the Venetian house

- 1 *diversivolent*: strife-wishing; Flaminio uses the Lawyer's own word against him
- 2 *gudgeons*: small fish
- 3 *under the line*: at the equator
- 4 *salary*: reward
- 5 *full pitch*: highest point in the bell-tower
- 6 *well may*: with good reason
- 7 *commeddled*: mixed together, contaminated
- 8 *policy*: intrigue
- 9 *first bloodshed*: i.e., Cain's killing of Abel, anticipating Flaminio's murder of his brother

- 1 *mushrooms*: young upstarts
- 2 *Wolner*: a famous glutton who died from eating raw eel
- 3 *screech-owl*: a bird of ill-omen
- 4 *wind*: find out about
- 5 *purchased*: obtained

- 1 *stigmatic*: ignominious, suggesting villainy
- 2 *ingeniously*: often used to mean 'ingenuously'
- 3 *raven*: another bird associated with death
- 4 *crowner's*: coroner's
- 5 *faggots*: bundles of sticks
- 6 *lousy*: infested with lice

1 *gentle*: fit for a gentleman

2 *melancholic ... midnight*: hares were believed to be cold-blooded, and therefore melancholic, and to sleep all day and feed at night

3 *witch's ... blood*: witches were also believed to be melancholic

4 *strappadoed*: a form of torture, being lifted from the ground by one's hands when they were tied behind one's back

5 *felly*: part of a wheel rim

1 *forfeited ... debt: i.e., in prison*

- 1 *break*: break your promise, go bankrupt
- 2 *stick by you*: remain in your memory
- 3 *Ud's death*: by God's death – an oath

1 *undermining*: laying mines as a military strategy

1 *fowler*: a hunter of fowl

2 *quoted*: set down

3 *intelligence*: information gained by spies

4 *jealous*: vigilant

1 *presents ... book*: since he proceeds to turn the pages, Monticelso may show Francisco the book, but not yet hand it over to him

2 *taking up commodities*: to avoid the prohibitions on high interest rates 'rogues' lend cheap goods at a highly inflated price

3 *politic bankrupts*: men who feign bankruptcy to avoid creditors

4 *put off*: pay for

5 *scriveners*: notaries, also brought moneylenders and clients together

1 *tribute ... England*: in the tenth century the Welsh were ordered by King Edgar to pay a tribute of three hundred wolves per year to the English

2 *Irish ... heads*: Elizabeth's officers paid a bounty for heads in the Irish rebellions

- 1 *leash*: equivalent to three, used in hunting
- 2 *laundress*: provide laundry workers for the army, synonymous with prostitution
- 3 *declarations*: official proclamations
- 4 *wrested*: stirred
- 5 *quick*: lively, agile
- 6 *pregnant*: fertile
- 7 *juggler*: conjurer, magician
- 8 *idleness*: delusion

1 *Irish*: notoriously bloodthirsty

2 *Flectere ... movebo*: 'If I cannot change the will of heaven, I shall release hell'
(Virgil, *Aeneid*, 7.312)

1 *scruple*: jot, thought that troubles the conscience

1 *Ud's foot*: by God's foot – an oath

2 *coffined*: enclosed

3 *juggling*: deception

4 *conveyance*: means of communication, but also a document by which property (i.e., Vittoria) was transferred

5 *lees*: dregs

6 *uncontrolled*: not under anyone else's authority

- 1 *halter*: noose, echoing the use of 'hang', wishing that Francisco be hanged instead
- 2 *willow*: sign of a rejected lover
- 3 *bed-straw*: fruit was often ripened in straw
- 4 *lines ... line*: the written line overpowers ('convinces') his lines of age, i.e., wrinkles
- 5 *atheists*: refers to the fact that Francisco has invoked the pagan gods
- 6 *atomies*: tiny particles
- 7 *irregular*: disorderly
- 8 *disease*: syphilis, its symptoms included hair loss
- 9 *changeable stuff*: fabric that appears to change colour depending on the angle, i.e., watered silk
- 10 *water*: tears

- 1 *bloodhound*: as a pander, the 'blood' he pursues is also sexual desire
- 2 *brave*: defy
- 3 *stand*: withstand
- 4 *run*: move away, ooze
- 5 *neck broke*: an allusion to Camillo's fate
- 6 *Russia*: thought to punish bankrupts by beating them on the shins
- 7 *sallet*: salad; this and the fig were both forms of poisoning
- 8 *ply your convoy*: get on with your business
- 9 *courtesy ... Ulysses*: in the *Odyssey* Polyphemus, a Cyclops, promised Ulysses the favour of being eaten last (9.369–70)
- 10 *turves*: turfs

- 1 *characters*: cabbalistic signs
- 2 *comment*: commentary
- 3 *receiver*: an official who received petitions for Parliament, also a pimp
- 4 *God's precious*: by God's precious blood – an oath
- 5 *cabinet*: casket containing private letters and jewels
- 6 *Confusion on*: damn
- 7 *reclaimed*: a falconry term, meaning called back after being released
- 8 *bells*: attached to the hawk's legs to help them be reclaimed

- 1 *lovely*: amorous, attractive
- 2 *beheld the devil in crystal*: proverbial for deceiving oneself
- 3 *Woman ... wolf*: proverbial
- 4 *adamants*: magnets
- 5 *Irish*: supposedly hired women to mourn the dead, synonymous with false grief

1 *foxes*: known for their unpleasant smell, but used in the cure of palsy

2 *preferment*: promotion

3 *Weeping ... crutches*: an echo of Mark 9:45

1 *Lethe*: a classical river, its waters prompted forgetfulness

2 *poniards*: daggers, i.e., angrily

3 *not matches*: not symmetrical, i.e., she regrets her beauty

4 *blown up*: shattered, destroyed by a mine

- 1 *impostume*: abscess, festering sore
- 2 *mercier*: dealer in silks, velvets and other expensive fabrics
- 3 *toused*: rumpled
- 4 *frowardness*: perversity
- 5 *stand not long*: do not hold out long in the hunt
- 6 *full cry*: pursuit, weeping
- 7 *quat*: hare's squatting position when cornered

1 *groats*: pennies

2 *broom-men*: road-sweepers

3 *takes use*: collects interest

4 *Hand*: fondle

5 *ferret ... blowing*: blowing on a ferret was supposed to loosen its grip

6 *forgetful*: causing forgetfulness

1 *shoot*: descend a river, sexually penetrate

2 *still*: always

3 *Grecians ... horse*: the Greeks entered the besieged city of Troy by hiding in a wooden horse

- 1 *Barbary*: a country in North Africa, associated with barbarousness
- 2 *gullery*: deception
- 3 *conclave*: place where cardinals meet to elect a new pope
- 4 *lay her post-horse*: supply her with horses (those kept for hire at inns)
- 5 *barber-surgeon*: barbers also served as dentists in this period

1 *sentence*: maxim

2 *sage*: herb, also wisdom

3 *allows*: authorizes

- 1 *brave*: finely dressed
- 2 *several*: various
- 3 *Rhodes*: the Maltese ambassador
- 4 *St Michael*: one of the French ambassadors, dressed in silver and white
- 5 *Golden Fleece*: the Spanish ambassador, dressed in crimson and gold
- 6 *Holy Ghost*: dressed in a cape of silver, orange and white
- 7 *Annunciation*: the Savoy ambassador, wearing white and purple, with a gold collar
- 8 *Garter*: dressed in crimson and purple with a jewelled chain around the neck and a gold garter on the left leg

1 *meat is dressed*: food is prepared

2 *scrutiny*: the taking of individual votes

3 *admiration*: choice by divine instruction; each cardinal kneels before his preferred candidate

1 *De nuntio ... quartum*: 'I bring you tidings of great joy. The Most Reverend Cardinal Lorenzo de Monticelso has been elected to the Apostolic See and has chosen for himself the title of Paul IV.'

2 *Vivat ... Quartus*: 'Long live the Holy Father Paul IV'

3 *fond*: foolish, infatuated

1 *Concedimus ... peccatorum*: 'We grant you the Apostolic benediction and remission of sins'

2 *Ta'en the sacrament*: received Holy Communion to support his oath

- 1 *sowing*: scattering, with hopes to reap
- 2 *out of measure*: excessively
- 3 *resty*: stubborn, restive
- 4 *career*: a gallop brought up short
- 5 *'sault*: leaps and vaults
- 6 *ring-galliard*: circular manoeuvre
- 7 *jade*: an ill-tempered horse

- 1 *intelligencer*: spy, informer
- 2 *o'erta'en*: entrapped
- 3 *tainted*: injured, found guilty

1 *suffrage*: support, prayers

2 *intelligence*: secret information

3 *told out*: counted out

1 *form*: outward appearance

2 *puling*: weak, sickly

3 *loose*: unchaste

4 *plummet*: ball of lead attached to a line, for measuring depth, i.e., money

1 *Candy*: Crete

2 *Capuchins*: an order of monks, deriving from the Franciscans, who wore long, pointed hoods

1 *Glories ... light*: a favourite couplet of Webster's, taken from Alexander's *Alexandrian Tragedy* and reused in *The Duchess of Malfi*, 4.2

2 *ANTONELLI*: despite beginning the play as one of Lodovico's two partners in crime, Antonelli plays no part in the murders and his inclusion here may be an error

3 *sorrow*: grieved, regretful

1 *presence*: presence chamber, where a monarch or noble received visitors

2 *saddle*: a Catholic called Edward Squire was executed in 1598 for poisoning the Queen's saddle

3 *hazard*: peril, also the inner wall of a tennis court

1 *casque*: helmet

2 *one up*: perhaps an allusion to Flaminio's erect penis, as well as to Zanche

1 *What difference ... Duke and I*: particularly true, given that they are both Italian dukes with fair skin

2 *If ... equally*: borrowed from Stefano Guazzo's *Civil Conversation* (English translation, 1581)

3 *soldier ... churches*: unemployed soldiers were often forced into beggary, but needed a licence to avoid arrest

1 *arras*: tapestry (for hiding behind)

1 *maker of almanacs*: fortune-teller

2 *man ... ears*: proverbial

3 *cools*: abates

4 *your love ... heats*: this, and the reference to Zanche as 'gipsy', recalls Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*

5 *heat*: become lustful, infected with venereal disease

- 1 *satin*: perhaps with a pun on 'Satan'
- 2 *painting ... clothes*: i.e., the attractions of other women
- 3 *shoemakers ... drawers-on*: the shoemaker puts shoes on feet; bacon draws on thirst
- 4 *haggard*: a wild female hawk, also a promiscuous woman
- 5 *stews*: brothel
- 6 *clapped by th'heels*: imprisoned in iron chains or the stocks
- 7 *Strike i'th' court*: punishments for this included having one's right hand cut off

1 *bed-staff*: a stick for making the bed, but also possibly a male companion

2 *light*: thieving, unchaste

3 *Must ... fruit*: proverbial

4 *feathers*: indicating his transformation into a courtier

5 *choleric*: angry, produced by an excess of choler

1 *Like ... two ways*: Oedipus' sons Eteocles and Polinices were killed in their struggle to claim his throne; at their joint funeral the flames parted to show their ongoing hatred

2 *geese*: prostitutes who followed the progress, with a pun on 'gesses' or stopping-places

1 *turn your gall up*: become more angry; Flaminio expresses surprise because bloodletting was supposed to cure anger

1 *Fetch ... lips*: borrows from the death of Cordelia in Shakespeare's *King Lear*

1 *screech-owl*: bird of ill-omen

1 *my younger boy*: younger sons were famously disgruntled, given that they would not inherit the estate

2 *graz'd*: lost in the grass ('grassed'), also wounded

3 *beaver*: the lower part of a helmet's face-guard

1 *black lake*: Acheron, a black river in the classical hell

1 *bar*: barrier, at which they have been fighting onstage

2 *screech-owls*: referring to the doctors who predict his death

1 *comet ... carrion*: all portents of doom

2 *Franciscans*: both Franciscan monks and followers of Francisco

3 *extreme unction*: sacrament involving the anointing of the dying, but here also poison

4 *cabinet*: private room, perhaps the curtained discovery space

1 *stepmothers' graves*: another example of false grief, stepmothers standing in the way of the children's inheritance

2 *within ... th' verge*: within twelve miles of court, ruled over by the Lord High Steward

3 *like a wolf ... poultry*: the 'wolf' is an ulcer, usually treated by applying raw meat; there may be a pun on poultry/paltry

1 *conveyed ... territories*: exporting money was a serious offence; Henry VIII issued a statute forbidding it

1 *blame*: blameworthy

2 *raven*: another bird predicting death

3 *dog-fish*: a small shark

4 *dog-fox*: a male fox

5 *linguist*: one who knows many languages, a rhetorician

1 *the ropes*: a tightrope

2 *whipped*: trimmed

3 *halter*: the rope, indicating that Flaminio deserves hanging

4 *orris*: iris root, used for whitening and perfuming hair, reflecting Vittoria's status as a bride

5 *pastry*: a place where pastry is made

1 *crucifix ... candle*: symbols of hope and comfort to the dying; the murderers perform the *Commendatio Animae* or ritual commending of the soul to God

2 *Attende ... Bracciane*: ‘Listen, Lord Bracciano’

3 *Domine ... infernali*: ‘Lord Bracciano, you were accustomed to be guarded in battle by your shield; now this shield [the crucifix] you shall oppose against your infernal enemy’

4 *Olim ... animarum*: ‘Once with your spear you prevailed in battle; now this holy spear [the hallowed taper] you shall wield against the enemy of souls’

5 *Attende ... dextrum*: ‘Listen, Lord Bracciano, if you now also approve what has been done between us, turn your head to the right’

1 *Esto ... periculi*: ‘Rest assured, Lord Bracciano: think how many good deeds you have done – lastly remember that my soul is pledged for yours if there should be any peril’

2 *Si ... laevum*: ‘If you now also approve what has been between us, turn your head to the left’

3 *A slave ... master*: the *Commendatio animae* ought to commend Bracciano’s soul to God

1 *conscience*: inmost thought

2 *broke ... poisoned*: probably a reference to the Earl of Leicester, who was suspected of attempting to poison his wife, Amy Robsart, and of having her thrown down the stairs in order to clear a path for his marriage to Elizabeth I; according to the pamphlet *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584) he employed a poisoner named Doctor Julio

3 *winter plague*: a plague that could survive winter was regarded as particularly deadly

4 *copperas*: a sulphate of copper, iron or zinc

5 *quicksilver*: mercury

- 1 *true-love knot*: a noose, also recalls Francisco's fake courtship of Vittoria
- 2 *snuff*: proverbial description of death as a candle going out in a snuff
- 3 *woman-keeper*: nurse, often suspected of killing their patients
- 4 *pest-house*: plague hospital
- 5 *quaintlier*: more skilfully

1 *dispend*: spend, exhaust

2 *I ... city*: a scheme to create a new river that would provide Londoners with water had begun in 1608

3 *moonish*: changeable

4 *he that ... worst*: he that runs up the most credit pays most for it

5 *quaint*: ingenious

6 *saffron*: supposed to cause merriment, but fatal in large doses

7 *jumps on ice*: is precarious

- 1 *descant*: expound
- 2 *blasted*: struck down by supernatural force
- 3 *infernal*: devil
- 4 *make up sport*: complete our entertainment

1 *collier*: coal-miner, i.e., producing black suds when washed

2 *fumed*: perfumed

1 *wash ... white*: proverbial, based on Jeremiah 13:23

1 *laurel*: the plant from which victory wreaths were woven

2 *better favoured*: more good-looking

3 *dottrels*: proverbially stupid birds

4 *tallants*: talons, talents

5 *wot*: know

1 *Anacharsis*: a Scythian philosopher, killed by his brother with an arrow; Webster has him confused with Anaxarchus, who was pounded to death in a pestle and mortar because he challenged the authority of a tyrant

2 *cullis*: health-giving broth

3 *In decimo-sexto*: i.e., in a smaller version; a decimo-sexto page was one sixteenth of a full sheet of paper

4 *presence*: presence chamber

1 *Castle Angelo*: the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome was the site of the real Vittoria's imprisonment

2 *tower yonder*: the audience might think of the Tower of London in which Arbella Stuart had lately been imprisoned for marrying without James I's permission

3 *flaming*: Flaminio puns on his own name

4 *without*: outside

5 *smoor*: suffocate

6 *winding ... corpse*: wrapping it in the winding sheet, leaving the face uncovered

7 *watching ... dead*: the practice of staying with the dead through the night, with candles burning, was dying out in England

- 1 *traverse*: a curtain at the back of the stage, covering the discovery space
- 2 *superstitious*: excessive
- 3 *rosemary*: an evergreen herb, symbolizing immortality and remembrance
- 4 *bays*: laurel leaves, associated with fame and supposed to protect from lightning
- 5 *foolish*: not making sense

- 1 *rue*: evergreen shrub, symbolizing sorrow and repentance
- 2 *Heart's-ease*: pansy, representing thoughts and tranquillity
- 3 *I pray ... myself*: Webster is clearly recalling Ophelia in *Hamlet*, 4.5
- 4 *Can ... out*: echoes *Macbeth*, 5.1

- 1 *lute*: mad Ophelia carries a lute in Q1 *Hamlet* and perhaps Cornelia does so here
- 2 *robin ... wren*: both birds were thought to cover up dead bodies
- 3 *dole*: rites
- 4 *wolf ... again*: the wolf was believed to dig up the corpses of those who had been murdered and thence to act as an agent of revenge
- 5 *summed*: reckoned
- 6 *store*: perhaps indicating his corpse
- 7 *shut up shop*: Cornelia might have retreated to the discovery space where she now draws the curtain

- 1 *maze*: labyrinth, confusion
- 2 *try*: experience
- 3 *cassock*: long coat or cloak worn by soldiers; a leather version was often worn by stage ghosts
- 4 *cowl*: monastic hood
- 5 *mockery*: counterfeit, absurdity
- 6 *starry gallery ... dungeon*: probably gesturing to the gallery of the theatre and the 'hell' space below the stage
- 7 *shadows*: insubstantial persons, actors

- 1 *beyond melancholy*: i.e., something more than the projection of Flaminio's mood
- 2 *'quite*: revenge

1 *presently*: immediately

2 *career*: gallop at full speed

3 *Ruffin*: a name for a devil

4 *blowze*: a fat, red-faced woman, which Zanche is not

5 *wormwood*: a bitter-tasting plant

1 *I ... brother*: according to Genesis, Cain was accursed after slaying his brother Abel and became the first exile

2 *case*: a pair

1 *at a dead lift*: in a sudden emergency

2 *He did ... to it*: perhaps alluding to King Herod, who ordered his wife Mariam to be killed; Webster may have known Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613)

1 *candied*: sugared

2 *stibium*: antimony, a poison

3 *despair... off*: unlike other sins, despair tastes bitter yet we drink it, prompting suicide

- 1 *winter plums*: hard fruit, i.e., bullets
- 2 *grammatical*: conventional, merely following the rules
- 3 *Feminine*: i.e., weak
- 4 *exclamation*: emphatic speech

1 *taster*: a servant who tastes his master's food and drink to detect poison

2 *physic*: medical science

3 *cupping-glasses*: surgical vessels, heated and then placed on the body to draw off blood

- 1 *O Lucian ... purgatory*: Lucian's *Menippos* includes such examples of great men's absurd fates
- 2 *tagging points*: fixing metal tips on the laces that held together Jacobean clothing
- 3 *hair buttons*: Caesar was famously bald
- 4 *blackening*: boot polish, here sold by Hannibal, who was black-skinned
- 5 *lists*: strips of cloth
- 6 *Pippin*: a variety of apple; the correct French spelling of the king's name is Pepin
- 7 *scruples*: small degrees

- 1 *Styx*: river in the classical underworld, used by the ancients to swear by
- 2 *ominous star*: a comet, thought to foretell the fall of princes
- 3 *springe*: snare for trapping birds and small mammals
- 4 *short*: without his tail
- 5 *braches*: bitches (female dogs)

- 1 *Scotch holy-bread*: sodden sheep's liver
- 2 *drive ... body*: treatment of suicides who were then buried at crossroads
- 3 *reaches*: plots, contrivances
- 4 *artillery yard*: in 1610 the Artillery Gardens at Billingsgate became a popular resort for gentlemen and merchants to practise shooting

1 *For one ... night*: Danaus learned in an oracle that he would be killed by one of his brother's fifty sons; he married his fifty daughters to those sons and ordered them to kill their husbands on the wedding night; only Hypermnestra refused

2 *horse-leeches*: bloodsuckers, rhetoricians

3 *instruments*: i.e., Vittoria and Zanche

4 *masque*: Jacobean courtly entertainment, usually featuring masked dancers; often used to bring revenge tragedy to a close, e.g., Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy*

5 *matachin*: sword dance, with masks and elaborate costumes

1 *stay*: wait for

2 *centre*: heart, soul

1 *idle*: foolish, irrelevant

2 *Do ... form*: executioners conventionally sought their victim's forgiveness beforehand

3 *train*: tail of the comet, but also attendants

- 1 *Conceit*: the imagining of death, female vanity, the conception of a child
- 2 *falling sickness*: epilepsy

- 1 *Toledo ... fox*: different kinds of short sword
- 2 *cutler*: a trader in knives and cutting implements
- 3 *tent*: clean out the wound to heal it, but also 'heal' Flaminio by stabbing him again
- 4 *blood*: sexual passion, kinship

1 *Let all ... to come*: it was proverbial that if Candlemas day (2nd February) was fair, winter would last longer

2 *I ... voice*: perhaps another metatheatrical joke, given the length of Flaminio's part

3 *trade*: habitual course

4 *constantly*: resolutely

1 *limned*: painted, fashioned

2 *night-piece*: painting of a night scene or other tragic composition

1 *Haec ... placui*: 'These things will be our reward, if I have pleased' (Martial, 2.91.8)

2 *quality*: profession

3 *Master Perkins*: Richard Perkins, leading player of the Queen Anne's Men, probably took the role of Flaminio

* non-speaking parts

1 *THREE CHILDREN*: a small boy and girl and a male infant, perhaps represented by a doll

2 *CASTRUCHIO*: his name suggests 'castrated', providing a motive for Julia's sexual betrayal

1 *GEORGE HARDING*: eighth Baron of Berkeley (1601–58), son and grandson to the Lords Hunsdon, who patronized the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and a prominent literary patron, the dedicatee of Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621)

2 *poem*: fictional work

3 *conduct*: conductor

4 *postilion*: escort

1 *approved censure*: tested judgement

1 *In ... poetis*: 'To Tragedy', 'As light springs from darkness at the stroke of the Thunderer, /May it – ruin to evil! – be life for famous poets'

2 *Thomas Middleton*: poet and dramatist (1580–1628), who collaborated with Webster, appointed to the post of London Chronologer in 1620

1 *answered*: defended

2 *speak*: have spoken

3 *so well before*: i.e., as in the play

4 *William Rowley*: (c. 1585–1626) dramatist, actor and playwright, who collaborated with Webster

1 *habit*: dress

2 *which*: i.e., the act of clearing out sycophants

1 *court-gall*: a court satirist or malcontent

2 *railing*: abusive language

3 *only the*: the only

4 *dog-days*: a period of oppressively hot weather in which malignant influences were thought to prevail

1 *standing*: stagnant

2 *pies*: magpies

3 *Tantalus*: a mythological figure, punished in Hades with hunger and thirst, while food and drink remained tantalisingly beyond his reach

- 1 *Gaston de Foix*: historically, he was a child when Naples was recovered in 1501
- 2 *presence*: presence chamber, where a monarch or noble would receive visitors
- 3 *took the ring*: a game in which jousts vied to carry a ring on the end of their lance, introduced to the English court by James I

1 *jewel*: a tournament prize, also anticipates Antonio's winning of the Duchess and her chastity

2 *tents*: outdoor shelters, dressings for a wound

1 *chirurgeons*: surgeons

2 *put up*: sheathe their weapons

3 *Spanish jennet*: a light, sporting horse

4 *Pliny's opinion*: Pliny claimed that Portuguese mares conceived by means of the West Wind, which made their colts swift

5 *ballasted*: weighted with

6 *reels*: swings about, staggers away from

7 *tilt*: listing of a ship, jousting tournament and also copulation

1 *out of compass*: immoderately

2 *Grecian horse*: a wooden horse, filled with Greek soldiers, which was taken inside the besieged city of Troy and led to its destruction

1 *form*: external appearance

2 *The spring ... toads*: his capacity for tears, usually a sign of humanity, is the slime which breeds toads

3 *intelligencers*: spies

4 *information*: private intelligence

- 1 *shrewd turns*: injuries
- 2 *Than ... her*: than you hold it spiritually redemptive
- 3 *galliard*: an energetic dance
- 4 *shrifs*: confessions
- 5 *dress themselves in her*: use her as their mirror, model themselves on her
- 6 *play the wire-drawer*: spin out

1 *case ... up*: put the picture away in its case

2 *stains*: eclipses, but also makes appear tainted

3 *provisorship ... horse*: an important court appointment, given by Elizabeth I to her favourite (and sometime potential husband) the Earl of Leicester

4 *leaguer*: military camp

- 1 *caroches*: luxurious coaches for town use
- 2 *entertain ... intelligence*: keep Bosola on the payroll as your spy
- 3 *court our furtherance*: ask us for reward or promotion

1 *cozens*: deceives

2 *next*: nearest

3 *showers ... them*: an allusion to Jupiter, who famously wielded thunderbolts, but visited Danae in a shower of gold

4 *rides post*: runs ahead

- 1 *familiars*: servants, intimate friends, also spirits through whom magic is worked
- 2 *quaint*: cunning
- 3 *angels*: gold coins, bearing an image of St Michael killing a dragon

1 *complemental*: a mark of courtly accomplishment

2 *politic*: cunning

3 *dormouse*: according to Pliny, the dormouse sleeps all winter and thereby renews its vigour

4 *Feed ... dish*: dine at a lord's table

1 *luxurious*: lecherous

2 *livers*: regarded as the seat of passion, including lust

3 *Laban's sheep*: parti-coloured, see Genesis 30:31–3

4 *motion*: impulse

5 *honey-dew*: a sweet, sticky substance found on plants

- 1 *Vulcan's engine*: Vulcan used a net to catch the adulterous Venus and Mars
- 2 *Wisdom ... end*: proverbial, e.g., 'Think on the end before you begin'
- 3 *studied*: rehearsed

1 *rusty*: because it has first been covered in blood

2 *chargeable*: expensive

3 *lamprey*: eel-like fish

4 *Fie, sir!*: the Duchess's shock suggests that she is thinking of the penis, an assumption that Ferdinand can take as evidence of her lustfulness

5 *tale*: also implies 'tail', penis

6 *low foot-steps*: steps up to the altar; there may also be a reference to Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, in which the conqueror uses his enemy king as a footstool

7 *winked*: closed my eyes, in the sense of ignoring the consequences or the immorality of her actions

1 *fame*: reputation

2 *hearty*: heartfelt

3 *arras*: curtain, perhaps the one at the back of the stage over the discovery space

4 *clew*: ball of thread, as used by Theseus to find his way through the labyrinth

1 *triumphs*: court festivities

2 *husbands*: managers of a household, as well as in the marital sense

3 *for your sake*: thanks to you

4 *upright*: with a pun on the fact that Antonio is now standing

5 *procured*: brought about

1 *overseer*: specifically, a person appointed to assist or oversee the work of the executors of a will

2 *couple*: bond of wedlock

3 *St Winifred*: a seventh-century Welsh saint, whose head was struck off by a rejected suitor, but restored by St Bruno

4 *affect*: feel about

1 *my banishment*: historically, Antonio followed the deposed King of Naples, Federico, to exile in France

2 *wanton*: rogue, term of endearment for a child

3 *sovereign*: effective; gold was believed to cure a stye on the eyelid

1 *aim*: guess

1 *rid bad wares off*: get rid of spoiled merchandise

- 1 *Quietus est*: written at the end of an account, meaning that all debts are settled, synonymous with paying one's debt to Death
- 2 *without ... circumference*: i.e., outside of her arms
- 3 *parts*: particulars, with a theatrical sense, i.e., the Duchess is playing the male role
- 4 *Per ... presenti*: a kind of marriage that involved no more than the couple's verbal agreement made before a witness
- 1 *this sacred Gordian*: i.e., the Duchess's hand holding Antonio's; in ancient history an oracle predicted that whoever cut the knot tied by King Gordius would rule Asia; Alexander the Great was successful
- 2 *still*: perpetually
- 3 *loving palms*: according to Pliny, single palm trees do not bear fruit
- 4 *force*: enforce
- 5 *faster*: stronger, more lastingly
- 6 *Fortune*: the personification of Fortune was often depicted as blind in order to suggest impartiality

1 *humorous*: ill-humoured, capricious

2 *Alexander and Lodowick*: in legend, two friends so alike they were mistaken for each other; when Lodowick married a princess in Alexander's name, he placed a sword between them in bed so as not to betray his friend

3 *shroud*: hide from view, but also to cover with a death shroud

4 *courtier*: both in the usual sense and meaning a lawyer or judge

5 *night-cap*: the sergeant-at-law wore a white skullcap; here it emphasizes Castruccio's large ears, implying he is an ass

1 *president*: judge

2 *roaring-boys*: rowdy youths

3 *painting*: applying cosmetics

4 *sloughs*: potholes

5 *progress*: a spectacular ceremonial tour taken by royalty or nobility

- 1 *careening*: cleaning or scraping, usually of the hull of a ship
- 2 *morphewed*: having diseased and (specifically) discoloured skin
- 3 *disembogue*: put out to sea
- 4 *rough-cast*: made of lime and gravel, i.e., putting it in crude terms
- 5 *plastic*: a smooth complexion, a more delicate turn of phrase
- 6 *closet*: a private room, also a chest for valuables
- 7 *a dead pigeon ... the plague*: a recognized treatment for plague; Prince Henry had freshly killed pigeons applied to the soles of his feet in 1612
- 8 *fasting*: self-starvation, causing bad breath
- 9 *footcloth*: a decorative cloth placed over the back of a horse, symbolic of high status

- 1 *wolf*: a type of ulcer; in Latin *lupus* means ulcer
- 2 *measle*: a disease in swine as well as humans
- 3 *tissue*: delicate fabric
- 4 *Lucca*: Italian city, famous as a spa
- 5 *fins*: edges
- 6 *loose-bodied*: with a pun on morally 'loose'

- 1 *tetter*: a skin disease
- 2 *lord of the ascendant*: dominant influence, rising star
- 3 *cousin-german, removed*: first cousin, once removed
- 4 *Pippin*: Pepin, king of the Franks and father of Charlemagne

1 *smells of lemon pills*: an extra sensitivity to smells is another symptom of pregnancy

2 *the mother*: hysteria, with an obvious pun

1 *dainties*: choice foods, luxuries

2 *grafting*: gardening method, with an ironic allusion to the Duchess's breeding with the lower-class Antonio

3 *farthingales*: hooped petticoats; 'bawd' because they hide the evidence of sexual sin

4 *apparently*: clearly

5 *springal*: stripling

6 *cutting a caper*: dancing

- 1 *in haste, sir*: the Old Lady may be hurrying to attend the Duchess's lying-in
- 2 *glass-house*: there was a glass factory near the Blackfriars Theatre
- 3 *entertainment*: sexual favours
- 4 *If we ... receive them*: because she had received Jupiter in a shower of gold, Danae became an emblem of the mercenary woman

1 *presently*: immediately

2 *Switzer*: Swiss mercenary

- 1 *pistol*: pronounced without the 't', rendering it more like pizzle, i.e., penis
- 2 *cannibal*: a more general term of abuse for a villain
- 3 *fire-lock*: a gun or musket
- 4 *French plot*: syphilis, its symptoms including a burning sensation, was often called the 'French disease'
- 5 *cabinet*: a private room or box for treasured belongings

- 1 *Gentleman o' th' wood-yard*: Bosola is mocking his low status
- 2 *black-guard*: scullions or low kitchen servants

1 *mind*: remember, think upon

2 *throwing ... cricket*: all bad omens

3 *whole man*: resolution

4 *set ... nativity*: cast his horoscope

5 *dark lantern*: designed to conceal its light, indicates to the audience that the scene is night, but also associated with villainy

- 1 *setting a figure*: casting a horoscope
- 2 *jewels*: astrology was often used in an attempt to find stolen goods
- 3 *how ... radical*: both 'question' and 'radical' are astrological terms: is the governing planet also the planet in the ascendant?
- 4 *night-walker*: nocturnal criminal
- 5 *Spanish fig*: a rude gesture made by thrusting the thumb between two fingers, also poison

1 *BOSOLA*: ...: there is a line missing here

2 *letters*: embroidered onto the handkerchief

- 1 *combust*: burnt up, losing influence
- 2 *human sign*: i.e., Aquarius, Gemini, Virgo or Sagittarius
- 3 *tail of the Dragon*: where the moon crosses the sun's orbit as it descends
- 4 *eighth house*: associated with death
- 5 *Caetera ... scrutantur*: 'The rest is not examined'
- 6 *precise*: strict, puritanical
- 7 *thrifty*: successful, prosperous

1 *anchorite*: religious recluse or hermit

1 *glass*: Galileo's telescope, built in 1609

2 *I have ... fly at it*: imagining Julia as a falcon

3 *tame elephant*: a real elephant had been put on display in London in 1594; tame could also mean sexually frustrated

1 *in physic*: undergoing medical treatment

1 *cassia or civet*: both are perfumes

2 *physical*: medicinal

1 *cullisses*: healthful broths

1 *mandrake*: a medicinal plant that supposedly shrieked when it was pulled from the earth, the sound inducing madness in the hearer

2 *prodigy*: surprising news

3 *loose i'th' hilt*: unchaste

- 1 *Rhubarb*: customarily used to treat anger
- 2 *cursèd day*: the horoscope that Bosola has included in his letter
- 3 *attainted*: a legal term for a familial line being tainted, also diseased
- 4 *balsamum*: balm

- 1 *left*: the Latin 'sinistra' means left, but also unlucky
- 2 *bark*: ship
- 3 *quoit the sledge*: throw the hammer
- 4 *carries coals*: proverbial for any menial work
- 5 *privy lodgings*: a private apartment, with a bawdy meaning

1 *palsy*: shaking disease

2 *cullis*: a curative broth

1 *sin of his back*: sexual intercourse

2 *leaps*: has sex with, usually used of animals

3 *scorpions*: knotted or barbed scourges, see 1 Kings 12:11

4 *general*: total

- 1 *purchase*: wealth
- 2 *left-hand*: corrupt

¹ *Pasquil's paper bullets*: satires or lampoons; Pasquillo was the name of a statue to which lampoons were traditionally attached in sixteenth-century France

1 *coulter*: the blades in front of a ploughshare; to walk on hot coulter was a trial of chastity in Old English law

1 *gulleries*: tricks

2 *lenitive*: gentle so as to go unnoticed, also aphrodisiac

1 *lord of misrule*: a person of low social status chosen to preside over feasts and revels, representing a temporary reversal of hierarchy

1 *Daphne ... Syrinx ... Anaxarete*: figures from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; unlike Daphne and Syrinx, whose metamorphoses preserved their chastity, Anaxarete's refusal of love was punished by her transformation into a stone statue

2 *friends*: lovers

3 *motion*: show

4 *face-making*: portrait-painting

1 *orris*: iris root, used to whiten and perfume the hair

2 *gossips*: godparents for their children

1 *Happily*: perhaps

2 *basilisk*: mythical serpent whose gaze was supposed to be fatal

3 *to*: compared to

1 *paraquito*: a small parrot

2 *bullet*: cannon ball

1 *stood engaged*: acted as security

2 *lets the bonds be forfeit*: i.e., by falling behind in the payments

3 *bills ... Against*: promissory notes are not accepted

4 *enginous wheels*: as in a clock, where small movements produce the larger motion of the hands

- 1 *periods*: in oratory, the peroration or summing-up
- 2 *Tasso*: (1544–95) Italian poet, author of *Gerusalemme Liberata*, in which a character called Soprina falsely accuses herself of a crime to save the lives of many Christians
- 3 *got well*: with a pun on begot well, referring to their children
- 4 *Quietus*: agreement that the account was settled, a receipt
- 5 *let him*: let him go free

1 *Jew*: conventionally greedy and financially untrustworthy

- 1 *chippings of the buttery*: parings of bread crust
- 2 *gold chain*: the steward's chain of office
- 3 *bear in a ring*: performing bears were a popular London entertainment
- 4 *Pluto*: this should be Plutus, god of wealth; Pluto was lord of the underworld
- 5 *rides post*: post-haste, i.e., speedily
- 6 *scuttles*: short, hurried runs
- 7 *unvalued*: priceless, but with a pun on unappreciated

1 *herald*: the Heralds' Office determined people's ancestry and sold the right to bear a coat of arms and call oneself a gentleman

2 *Bermudas*: islands notoriously associated with tempests and shipwrecks

1 *unbeneficed*: without an ecclesiastical post

2 *curious*: delicate

3 *want coats*: lack a coats of arms

- 1 *Lucca*: a town near Pisa, famous for its waters
- 2 *Spa*: a famous watering place in Belgium

1 *quality*: profession

2 *Prefers*: facilitates

3 *reverend garment*: the robes of a cardinal

4 *Lannoy*: Charles de Lannoy (1487–1527) defeated Francis I at the Battle of Pavia in 1525

1 *muster-book*: military register

2 *leaguer*: army camp

3 *service*: military action

4 *by the book*: according to the rules, but also in theory only

1 *break his pate*: hit him over the head

2 '*pot-gun*': a child's toy gun

3 *bore*: hole

4 *touch-hole*: a hole in the breech for igniting the charge

5 *sumpter-cloth*: cloth covering a mule or packhorse, with ornamental trimmings ('guarded')

6 *Foxes ... tails*: in Judges 15:4 Samson tied pairs of foxes together, attached firebrands to their tails and used them to burn down the Philistines' crops

1 *salamander*: a lizard supposed to live in fire, symbol of passion

1 *my young nephew ... first husband*: this is the only reference to this other child. Since he would inherit the Duchess's property, rather than Ferdinand, it seems likely that Webster changed his mind, but forgot to delete this reference

2 *counters*: small discs used in accounting

1 *CHILDREN*: these are a girl old enough to say her prayers, a small boy and an infant, probably represented by a doll

2 *courses*: encounters

- 1 *Lightens*: flashes like lightning
- 2 *buntings*: small birds, related to the lark
- 3 *Right*: Just

1 *benefit*: gift

1 *brothers*: brothers-in-law

1 *adamant*: magnet

2 *venture ... bottom*: proverbial: 'Venture not all in one bottom'

3 *eternal Church*: among the saved in heaven

4 *cassia*: a kind of cinnamon, the scent released when the bark is rubbed

- 1 *scourge his top*: refers to the child's spinning top, made to turn by whipping it with a 'scourge-stick'
- 2 *sweet armful*: Cariola is carrying their youngest child
- 3 *never see thee more*: this phrase echoes throughout the play – see 3.2, 4.1 and 5.3
- 4 *anchorite*: hermit
- 5 *heavy ... danger*: like a plummet that measures the depth of water
- 6 *laurel ... withered*: laurel proverbially withered at the death of a king
- 7 *GUARD*: plural here

1 *adventure*: target, what you seek

2 *silly*: weak, defenceless

3 *Charon ... lake*: in classical mythology, Charon conveyed the dead across the river Styx into Hades

1 *counterfeit face*: mask

2 *smelts*: small fish, related to the salmon

1 *torches*: indicating that the scene takes place at night

¹ *elder brother*: since Ferdinand is supposed to be the Duchess's twin, Webster may have made a mistake here; in the source, Ferdinand is the elder brother

1 *i'th' light*: in the public eye, but also 'light' meaning wanton

2 *dead man's hand*: thought to cure madness

1 *traverse*: a curtain over the discovery space

2 *dead*: if the waxworks were performed by the actors, the audience's first reaction would be that of the Duchess, believing them really to be dead

3 *property*: device

1 *bind me to that lifeless trunk*: the image of a living person bound to a corpse was traditionally meant to symbolize ill-matched unions; this line may have inspired the final act of Ford's *The Broken Heart*

2 *Portia ... wife*: Brutus' wife, who committed suicide by swallowing burning coals on hearing of her husband's defeat and death

3 *comfortable*: offering comfort, supportive

4 *wheel*: a method of torture

1 *daggers*: sharp pains

2 *vipers*: poisonous thoughts

3 *make lanes*: like a cannonball through troops in a battle

1 *in art*: by artifice

2 *curious*: ingenious

3 *Vincentio Lauriola*: since no reference to him remains, he may be Webster's invention

1 *intelligence*: spying

1 *consort*: company, often used of a group of musicians

1 *molten brass ... flaming sulphur*: from Deuteronomy 28:23 and 29:23

2 *in show*: in appearance

3 *Fortune ... eyesight*: Fortune was proverbially blind

1 *impostume*: abscess

2 *secular priest*: one not living in monastic seclusion

3 *knave in grain*: both a crooked dealer in grain and one whose villainy is engrained

4 *transportation*: export; in 1613 there had been a prohibition on exporting grain

5 *broker*: dealer, retailer

1 *bill*: utter through the beak

2 *corrosived*: corroded

3 *swans ... death*: swans were thought to sing sweetly only at the moment before death

4 *perspective*: telescope

5 *glass*: magnifying glass

6 *glass-house*: glass factory

- 1 *alum*: a white mineral salt used in medicine
- 2 *woodcock*: a proverbially stupid bird
- 3 *picked out*: removed, also embroidered
- 4 *Greek is turned Turk*: holy language turned heathen
- 5 *Helvetian translation*: the Genevan Bible of 1560, favoured by Puritans but condemned by James I in 1603 as 'partial' and 'seditious'
- 6 *lay*: explain, apply as a medicine

- 1 *placket*: slit at the top of the skirt
- 2 *possets*: hot milk with spiced wine or ale
- 3 *throw ... me*: a gesture to acknowledge superiority
- 4 *costive*: constipated. Soap-makers traditionally suffered from diarrhoea
- 5 *insensible*: unfelt

1 *worm-seed*: a general term for plants whose dried flower heads were used to treat intestinal worms; also food for worms

2 *salvatory*: ointment box

3 *mummy*: medicine from mummified corpses

4 *crudded*: curdled, congealed; also allusion to Job 10:10

5 *puff-paste*: puff pastry

6 *riot*: riotous, extravagant living

7 *Glories ... light*: this couplet also appears in *The White Devil*, 5.1

- 1 *bellman*: paid to make speeches urging repentance under the prison window of condemned criminals
- 2 *mortification*: a spiritual process, leading to the rejection of worldly existence and repentance
- 3 *whistler*: a bird of ill-omen
- 4 *competent*: sufficient

1 *Strew ... sweet*: the same advice as given to brides in epithalamia

2 *reversion*: bequest

1 *both ways*: i.e., by pulling or pushing; by suicide or murder

2 *woman's fault*: i.e., being talkative

1 *mandragora*: mandrake root, having narcotic properties

2 *laid out*: prepared for burial, waiting in bed as a bride

1 *When?*: i.e., when will I be obeyed?

2 *credit*: reputation, i.e., death will prevent the social disgrace of an illegitimate child

1 *dazzle*: the Duchess is consistently associated with light, Ferdinand with darkness; his eyes may also be dazzled because they are filled with tears

1 *friend*: companion or lover

2 *I had a hope ... by her death*: this motive would be contradicted by the existence of a son by her dead husband, perhaps an oversight on Webster's part

3 *challenge*: demand

1 *The wolf ... horrid murder*: echoes *The White Devil*, 5.4

1 *chained bullets*: cannonballs linked by chains, mainly used in naval warfare

2 *take much in a blood*: takes hold in families

3 *owl-light*: dusk

1 *painted*: false, superficial

2 *sensible*: palpable, living

3 *cordial*: reviving

4 *corde of life*: heartstrings

1 *dejection*: abasement, also despair

2 '*cheat*: an escheat, i.e., the property reverts to another if the owner is convicted of a felony or treason

1 *Bennet*: Benedict

2 *demesnes*: land

1 *ruddier*: more favourably

2 *frenzy*: inflammation of the brain

- 1 *calling*: position
- 2 *howe'er*: whatever happens
- 3 *gallery*: a long room designed for walking
- 4 *pestilent*: deadly

1 *nearer*: more direct

2 *Paracelsus*: (1493–1541) famous Swiss doctor and scientist

3 *buffet*: whip

1 *haunt me*: the image of a man afraid of his own shadow was used as an emblem for guilt in Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* (1586)

2 *goad*: pointed stick used for driving cattle

3 *sheep-biter*: dog that worries sheep

4 *What ... nothing*: recalls Iago at the end of *Othello*, 5.2.309–10

- 1 *Let me ... more civil*: if the Doctor and Cariola were played by the same boy actor, he may have worn an exaggerated beard and eyebrows to make the distinction
- 2 *salamander*: a lizard believed to live in fire
- 3 *cockatrice's egg*: thought to be deadly

1 *fetch a frisk*: dance

2 *cullis*: meat broth

3 *anatomies*: skeletons, displayed in the entrance to Barber-Surgeons' Hall, where dissections were performed for medical students

1 *engagement*: employment (of Bosola)

2 *Though ... bones*: even if the consequence were his death

3 *expedition*: progress

- 1 *style ... advancement*: name me as a means for your preferment
- 2 *school-name*: invention of Church fathers
- 3 *taking up*: borrowing
- 4 *Happily*: by chance, fortunately

1 *kissing confits*: sweets used to freshen the breath

1 *nice*: fastidious

2 *wants*: lacks

3 *want compliment*: lack courtly manners

1 *presently*: immediately

1 *cabinet*: private chamber

1 *if ... yourself*: because Julia is his second self

2 *rack*: torture instrument to elicit confession

3 *adamant*: very hard rock or mineral

1 *How settles this?* What do you mean by this?

1 *remember*: reward

1 *fair marble colours*: i.e., a good appearance; wood was often painted to resemble marble

2 *graves ... in't*: i.e., they kill their accomplices

3 *A greater smother*: more stifling smoke

4 *bier*: a stretcher used to carry corpses to the grave

1 *frost-nailed*: given hobnailed boots

2 *Bears up in blood*: keeps up his courage

3 *Security*: suggesting not enough concern for the state of the soul and its vocation after death

4 *dead*: continuous

1 *Some ... already*: i.e., his children

2 *melancholy*: remorse

3 *ECHO*: presumably a reminder to the actor speaking the lines offstage, rather than implying an entrance

4 *dismal*: boding ill

5 *reverend*: venerable

1 *diseases*: disturbances

1 *passes*: events

2 *ague*: fever

1 *his*: i.e., the Cardinal's

2 *Spread*: displayed

3 *However*: howsoever

4 *suffer*: allow

1 *sensibly*: passionately

2 *bind*: confirm us

3 *protested*: vowed

4 *osier*: willow tree

1 *footing*: footsteps

- 1 *suit*: petition, quest
- 2 *benefit*: assistance
- 3 *banded*: bandied, hit randomly
- 4 *sadness*: earnest

1 *misprision*: mistake

2 *represent ... bear 'st*: be as silent as the corpse you carry

1 *ghastly*: fearful

2. *determination*: resolution

1 *engines*: devices, perhaps a battering ram

2 *equal balance*: Justice was usually depicted holding scales as well as a sword

1 *alarum*: call to arms on the battlefield

2 *vanguard*: foremost division of the army

3 *Give ... lost*: the echoes of Shakespeare's *Richard III* ('My kingdom for a horse') would have been reinforced by the fact that the actor playing Ferdinand, Richard Burbage, had also played that king

4 *brave*: splendid

1 *wet hay*: a customary cure for broken-winded horses

2 *vault credit*: ignore reputation

3 *affect*: aspire to

4 *payment*: i.e., his death wound

1 *rushes*: plants used as floor-covering for houses and also the stage

2 *dead*: continuous

1 *stagger*: hesitate, waver

2 *right*: inheritance, position

1 *WILLIAM ... Marshall*: William Craven, Earl of Craven (1608–97), one of the nine wealthiest peers in England and a distinguished soldier, having commanded English troops on behalf of Frederick, the Elector Palatine, in Germany; he provided lifelong support, financial and chivalrous, to the Elector's wife (and James I's daughter) Elizabeth of Bohemia

2 *courtship of greatness*: courting great men as patrons

3 *voluntary ... attempts*: presumably because he volunteered for military service

1 *entertainment*: reception

2 *least respect*: smallest sign of favour

- 1 *clause of jests*: passage of ribald jokes
- 2 *virgin sisters*: the nine Muses
- 3 *bays*: laurel leaves, signs of victory and poetic achievement
- 4 *lays*: songs
- 5 *commerce*: trade
- 6 *presentment*: presentation (of the play)
- 7 *Wanted*: lacked
- 8 *A Truth*: the relationship between Sir Philip Sidney and Lady Penelope Devereux may have been one of the sources for the play and part of its audience appeal (see Introduction)

1 *angry*: all the names in the cast list of the 1633 Quarto include these translations of their meaning

2 *GRAUSIS*: spelled GRANSIS throughout the stage directions and speeches and 'Gran' in speech prefixes; however, its meaning suggests this revised spelling, which also appeared in the cast list of some quartos

1 *lemophil*: consistently spelled HEMOPHIL or HEMOPHILL in stage directions and speeches; however, the name LEMOPHIL is used from 5.2 onwards and better fits the definition 'glutton'

1 *Cynic, Stoic*: schools of Greek philosophy: Cynics reject pleasure and wealth; Stoics renounce the world and patiently endure suffering

2 *read the logic lecture*: study logic

3 *Areopagite*: a member of the uppermost Athenian criminal court

4 *budding of your chin*: youthful facial hair

1 *Thrasus*: included in the original cast list as the dead father of Ithocles and Penthea, his name meant 'fierceness'

2 *Hymenean bond*: marriage, Hymen being the god of marriage

3 *triumphs*: marriage celebrations

4 *aconite*: wolfsbane, a poisonous plant

1 *close*ly: secretly

2 *insulting*: boastful, arrogant

3 *savours not humanity*: is not human

4 *As brands ... jealousy*: makes any innocent admiration of Penthea look suspicious

1 *resolve*: conclude

2 *sort*: present itself

- 1 *prefer a suit*: make a request
- 2 *motion*: proposal
- 3 *Vesta*: Roman goddess of the hearth, associated with chastity
- 4 *Apollo*: god of the sun, but also of poetry and reason

1 *contents*: satisfaction

2 *Doubt*: fear

3 *fresh airs*: location

- 1 *Apollo's locks*: the god was usually depicted with long, golden hair
- 2 *Laconia*: a region in the south-west of the Peloponnese, its capital city was Sparta
- 3 *monarchy at length*: finally united under one rule
- 4 *Messene*: capital city of Messenia, a country bordering Laconia
- 5 *Lacedemon*: another name for Laconia
- 6 *Pephnon*: an ancient town on the border between Laconia and Messenia

1 *demean*: conduct

2 *period of my fate*: height of my good fortune

1 *part*: part payment

2 *chaplet*: a wreath for the head

- 1 *provincial*: given to the conqueror of a province
- 2 *purchased*: acquired through his own action
- 3 *Bacchus*: god of wine
- 4 *leader-on*: main priest in an orgiastic rite
- 5 *current*: in circulation

- 1 *fit slights*: appropriate, self-deprecatory remarks
- 2 *Observe your great example*: i.e., model yourselves on Ithocles
- 3 *expect*: are waiting for
- 4 *supporter*: an escort, also physical support by taking her arm

1 *mounting*: aspiring, with a sexual pun

- 1 *put ... to use*: loaned it out with interest
- 2 *Mars*: Roman god of war
- 3 *Vulcan*: husband of Venus, cuckolded by Mars
- 4 *Except*: unless
- 5 *In forma pauperis*: a kind of legal aid
- 6 *aprons*: working clothes

- 1 *reel*: to wind wool or silk
- 2 *thrum*: make tufts in cloth
- 3 *Hobgoblins*: mischievous sprites, often blamed for domestic misfortunes
- 4 *drill*: train in military exercises
- 5 *Corn-cutters*: chiropodists, a notoriously degrading profession

- 1 *aspect*: horoscope, also face
- 2 *consequence*: augury, warning
- 3 *Fore-dooming*: prejudging
- 4 *contemn*: despise

- 1 *artist*: philosopher, scholar
- 2 *thrift*: success
- 3 *malice*: discouragement
- 4 *incident to frailty*: necessarily part of the human condition
- 5 *information*: moulding into a firm shape
- 6 *hearken after*: hear news of
- 7 *tributary to*: subject to

- 1 *amorous foldings*: embraces
- 2 *stand my privilege*: justify my being here
- 3 *niceness*: coyness
- 4 *conned*: memorized

1 *unskilful*: inexperienced

2 *law*: governing power

3 *choice*: chosen lover

1 *suff'rance*: endurance

2 *seal the like*: vow the same

3 *tenters*: hooks for stretching cloth

4 *pleasures*: pleasure grounds

5 *Tecnicus his oratory*: Tecnicus's school for public speaking

1 *Aloud*: Orgilus disputes with an imagined companion, uttering scraps of Greek and medieval philosophy, intended to sound old-fashioned to Ford's audience

2 *fiddle-faddle*: fuss, waste your time

3 *Mew!*: an expression of contempt

4 *speculations*: observations of astronomical phenomena

5 *balk*: shun

6 *illiterate*: uninformed

7 *touch*: touchstone

1 *taste the grammates*: acquire the rudiments

2 *read to*: teach

3 *modesty*: modest position in life

1 *want*: lack

2 *conceit*: idea

3 *available*: efficacious

4 *want sure intelligence*: lack reliable information

- 1 *pretty*: skilful, fine
- 2 *Mercury*: Roman god of eloquence and trickery
- 3 *reach*: comprehend

1 *prospect to temptation*: outlook onto temptation, but also offering a tempting glimpse of Penthea

2 *licked ... act*: according to Pliny, bear cubs were licked into shape by their mothers

3 *light*: window

4 *suddenly*: at once

5 *factor*: agent

6 *close packets*: secret (sealed) letters

7 *springal*: youth

8 *earwig*: flatterer (wiggler into the ear)

9 *pensioner*: person who receives a payment

10 *maw*: throat

- 1 *mystical*: secret
- 2 *I will ... eye*: in classical mythology, one-hundred-eyed Argos guarded the chastity of Io; he was often depicted wearing a gown covered in eyes
- 3 *housewives*: hussies
- 4 *traffic*: trade
- 5 *set ... wholesale*: sell sexual favours in large numbers, without making a profit
- 6 *Cull*: embrace
- 7 *branched*: horned, made a cuckold
- 8 *rubs*: bumps, literally uneven terrain in bowling
- 9 *riots*: debauchery, wanton revels
- 10 *run another bias*: run from the straight path of virtue, take a different approach to adultery
- 11 *heaves*: lifts up, raises
- 12 *ass ... suffers*: cuckold husband
- 13 *hire*: advancement at court

1 *Hey-day*: exclamation of surprise or wonder

2 *Up and ride me*: get on with it

3 *mewed*: moulted

4 *carnation*: flesh-coloured

5 *fled ... dragon*: allusion to the flight of vengeful Medea to Athens, as described by Euripides and Ovid

1 *that's*: that his

2 *Antic*: fool

3 *Grate*: exacerbate

4 *The horn ... him*: may he be cuckolded many times!

- 1 *brave it*: flaunt themselves
- 2 *closets*: private chambers
- 3 *Furies*: female agents of revenge in classical mythology, punished evildoers in hell by whipping
- 4 *braveries*: extravagancies, fine clothes
- 5 *Curiosity*: excessive degree
- 6 *livery*: clothing that displays loyalty and ownership, here an appearance of value
- 7 *inward*: withdrawn from the street

1 *mews*: seagulls

2 *stewed*: confined in narrow quarters, sent to a brothel

3 *juggling*: deceitful

4 *pounded*: put into a pound, like a stray animal

5 *Still*: always

6 *chopping*: strapping

1 *collops*: chunks of meat

2 *sweat*: sweating was thought to be one of the physical signs of jealousy

3 *Caroches*: luxurious coaches

1 *tympany*: a tumour or swelling, used figuratively of jealousy, perhaps cuckold's horns

2 *Wagtails and jays*: birds often used as symbols of unchaste women

3 *Th'hadst ... worshipp'st*: you would have done better to blaspheme against the sins you worship

1 *politician*: schemer

2 *consideration ... not*: a point I hadn't thought of

3 *viper ... motion*: Pliny argued that this was how snakes were born

4 *seelèd dove*: with its eyes sewn shut, so it would have no sense of direction and fly upwards

5 *squibs and crackers*: fireworks

- 1 *timely practice*: present business
- 2 *receipts*: recipes for medicine
- 3 *nice*: pedantic, scrupulous
- 4 *painted meat*: bait
- 5 *available*: able to produce a result

1 *capital*: deadly

2 *collect*: reconsider

3 *current*: payment

1 *admit*: accept

2 *brother*: brother-in-law's

1 *sad*: grave

2 *demur*: delay

3 *assures me*: makes me confident, also promises me marriage

1 *Argos*: territory to the north-east of Laconia

- 1 *court-ease*: leisurely life at court
- 2 *dispatch a business*: make a sexual conquest
- 3 *in request*: fashionable
- 4 *fell*: cruel, ruthless
- 5 *waiter*: attendant

1 *presence-lobby*: the anteroom of a reception chamber

2 *wait*: attend on, follow

3 *work a preparation*: prepare you in advance

4 *fashion*: behaviour

5 *willing*: determined

1 *account with*: occupy myself with

2 *music of the spheres*: the revolution of the planets was thought to produce music, synonymous with harmony and order

3 *school-terms*: language of scholastic philosophy, pedantry

4 *What heaven ... perfection*: must not heaven, which creates man out of earth, also sanctify pure beauty with the name of perfection?

5 *proportion*: order

1 *Virgin ... fervour*: i.e., virgin tears enhanced the power of their vows, just as the perfume on Vesta's altars is enhanced by the addition of water

2 *equal*: equally consenting

1 *change*: inconstancy

2 *interest*: claim, through their former betrothal

3 *instruct my duty*: teach me what I should do

- 1 *change*: exchange
- 2 *tendering*: cherishing
- 3 *attempt my fame*: endanger my reputation
- 4 *loose conceit*: improper suggestion
- 5 *race*: course of action
- 6 *barren age*: barren in terms of virtue

1 *wanton in my sufferance*: reckless or violent in making me suffer or increasing my pain

- 1 *forfeit of my judgement*: i.e., in loving Orgilus
- 2 *walks*: covered walks
- 3 *My ... fortunes*: I feel less sorrow than would otherwise be caused by my misfortunes
- 4 *good genius*: good angel
- 5 *veil of politic frenzy*: disguise of cunning madness
- 6 *show me*: demonstrate what I am
- 7 *Impostumes*: abscesses
- 8 *rheums*: mucous secretions
- 9 *palsies*: tremors or paralysis
- 10 *in humours*: in a disordered state, bad-tempered

1 *fixed*: abstracted

2 *chops*: tongue, literally jaws

- 1 *exercise*: discipline
- 2 *light*: sun or moon, as opposed to the shooting star
- 3 *in his own shape*: i.e., no longer in disguise
- 4 *jealous*: suspicious
- 5 *execution*: scheme

1 *misconceit*: misunderstanding

2 *state*: state of affairs

3 *disposed*: betrothed

4 *faintly*: weakly

5 *growth in thy aspect*: change in your appearance, alteration in horoscope

6 *feeds content*: satisfies vanity

- 1 *lucre*: money
- 2 *thrifty*: careful, prosperous
- 3 *Curiosity*: intellectual ambition
- 4 *rare attempts*: exceptional deeds
- 5 *prevent*: anticipate
- 6 *bolt*: sieve

1 *Delphos*: a combination of Delphi, the famous site of an oracle, and Delos, the island birthplace of Apollo

2 *entertained*: received as a guest

3 *resolution*: interpretation

4 *Like*: the same

1 *several stands*: separate positions

1 *luxury*: lechery

2 *Chamber-combats*: bedroom encounters

3 *brother*: brother-in-law

4 *discovered*: perhaps a curtain was drawn to reveal him in the discovery space

1 *the dead*: i.e., of their father, Thrasus, who wanted her to marry Orgilus

2 *handmaid ... toil*: country girl

1 *secure*: untroubled

2 *fleeting*s: streams, flowings

3 *spotted*: blemished in character

4 *friend*: this could be Bassanes, Orgilus or Ithocles himself

1 *orisons*: prayers

2 *turtles*: turtle doves, symbolic of monogamous love

3 *myrtle*: plant sacred to Venus, symbolic of love

4 *Stygian banks*: in classical mythology, the dead had to cross the river Styx before reaching the lands of the dead

5 *saint you serve*: woman you adore

- 1 *respects*: expressions of respect
- 2 *injuries*: injuries to you
- 3 *bravery*: boasting
- 4 *cheer ... strain*: try to devise a plan of action

- 1 *poniard*: dagger
- 2 *point*: blade of the dagger
- 3 *property*: personal characteristic
- 4 *popular ... vanity*: public adulation, the inherently worthless voice of the people
- 5 *bestride a cloud*: in classical mythology Ixion was deceived by Jupiter when he attempted to seduce Juno, embracing only a cloud
- 6 *progress*: make a ceremonious journey
- 7 *chariot of the sun*: Phaeton, son of Apollo, who stole his father's chariot of the sun and was killed; an example of youthful presumption
- 8 *lackey*: run errands for
- 9 *slave of expectation*: servant in hopes of reward
- 10 *wait*: wait outside

1 *mystical conveyance*: secret communication

2 *admirable*: to be wondered at

3 *kitling*: kitten

4 *springal*: youthful

5 *franks*: satisfies; a frank is an enclosure in which boars are fattened

6 *halloo ʔ*: proclaim it

1 *megrims*: low spirits

2 *firks*: caprices

3 *touch-hole*: bawd; one who infects with venereal disease like the part of a gun through which the charge is ignited

4 *Except*: unless

5 *studied your vexation*: intended to annoy you

6 *preserve thee in fruition*: Bassanes expresses the desire to retain his physical possession of Penthea and to keep her image alive, perhaps by begetting children

- 1 *Pandora's box*: in classical mythology Pandora opened a box containing all the world's evils
- 2 *Good*: good sir
- 3 *Juno's forehead*: Juno was goddess of marriage; her beauty, as symbolized by her forehead, is also praised in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*

1 *approve*: be certain of

2 *This torture*: i.e., the loss of Penthea

- 1 *want truth*: not be believed
- 2 *outdo art*: make the pose into reality
- 3 *cry a' jealousy*: declaim against jealousy

1 *credit*: believe

2 *published*: made public

3 *observance*: courteous attention, amorous devotion

4 *duty*: homage

5 *cousin*: used of any kinsman, here meaning 'nephew'

1 *high attempts*: noble enterprises

- 1 *preferred*: put forward for advancement
- 2 *inventions*: literary compositions, including plays
- 3 *engrossed*: acquired
- 4 *renown*: make famous
- 5 *conceit*: invention

- 1 *Still*: always
- 2 *disport*: entertainment
- 3 *Phoebus*: Greek god of the sun (Apollo)
- 4 *hold plea*: try a legal action

- 1 *inform*: control, guide
- 2 *licence*: authority, scope
- 3 *hopeful*: promising
- 4 *thrift*: success
- 5 *maliced*: threatened
- 6 *condition*: state of mind
- 7 *untoward*: declining, unprosperous

- 1 *familiar*: supernatural assistant of a witch
- 2 *posts*: travels
- 3 *intelligence*: secret information
- 4 *infection*: plague
- 5 *genius*: guiding spirit

1 *smooth*: kindly

2 *only*: alone

3 *greater ceremony*: the wedding itself

- 1 *conclude an omen*: infer a happy outcome
- 2 *Every spring ... youth*: i.e., another son every year
- 3 *device*: theatrical performance, also cunning stratagem
- 4 *strain*: literary endeavour

1 *But*: no more than

- 1 *granted*: been granted
- 2 *glass*: hourglass
- 3 *short*: imminent
- 4 *issue*: conclusion
- 5 *sensuality*: sensual pleasure
- 6 *proof ... opinion*: to prove commonplaces true

1 *fold of lead*: coffin

2 *charactered*: written

3 *earnest*: seriousness, taste of what's to come

1 *ranging of their blood*: sexual experience outside marriage

2 *Time ... Truth*: one of Ford's favourite proverbs is 'Truth is the daughter of Time', also associated with revenge tragedy

3 *Beseeming*: befitting

1 *grossly*: indelicately

1 *pursuit*: request

2 *check*: rebuke

3 *My reckonings are made even*: I have balanced with good deeds any evil I have done

- 1 *Curiosity*: excessive care
- 2 *doubt me*: fear me to be
- 3 *resolutions ... ends*: i.e., may your decision to trust in Orgilus have a positive outcome
- 4 *after-wit*: knowledge after the event
- 5 *Without*: beyond
- 6 *single*: direct, sincere

1 *livery*: visual token, signifying loyalty and service

1 *liberal contents*: easygoing contentedness

2 *beauties*: beautiful women

1 *I want ... merit*: I lack the means to reward you as you deserve

2 *or*: either

3 *bosomed*: embraced

4 *prodigy*: monster

- 1 *Brave*: challenge, defy
- 2 *doctor*: expert
- 3 *fustian*: bombast
- 4 *presence*: i.e., the royal presence

1 *low mushrooms*: upstarts, as opposed to kings (cedars)

2 *Painted colts*: decorated young horses, synonymous with headstrong will and folly

3 *lion*: it was believed that lions were afraid of royal blood and might be deceived by the herald's coat adorned with royal emblems

1 *suppling*: softening

2 *but mortal*: i.e., dangerous but not yet fatal

3 *saw*: proverbial saying

1 *A greater prince*: i.e., Apollo

2 *Oedipus*: mythological figure famous for solving the riddle of the Sphinx

1 *Prevent*: anticipate, foretell

2 *Con*: study, memorize

1 *in conceit*: in his own imagination

2 *several occasions*: various activities

3 *Honeycomb ... Goodwill*: perhaps both are titles of popular ballad collections; *A Garland of Goodwill* was published in 1593 and 1631

4 *moil*: mule

5 *capable of sense*: responsive only to sense impressions, i.e., not rational

6 *chaff ... scarcity*: poor sustenance of the poor

1 *words*: scandal, defamation

2 *trials*: tests of endurance

3 *Practise yet further*: try harder to deceive or distress me

1 *ken*: sight

2 *her hair about her ears*: a theatre convention for madness, though early modern brides also wore their hair loose

3 *imposterous*: seemed to be practising an imposture on me

4 *juggled*: tricked me

5 *sirens*: mythological creatures, part-woman, part-bird, whose song lured sailors to their deaths

6 *in parts*: taking different parts

7 *turtle*: turtle dove

1 *Antiquity*: suggesting that Bassanes is an old man

2 *Etna*: volcano in north-east Sicily

- 1 *Behold a patience*: Orgilus is being sarcastic
- 2 *antic rapture*: actor's onstage passion
- 3 *motion*: puppet show, entertainment
- 4 *bawdy*: cheapen
- 5 *Spare*: give me

1 *he paid for 't home*: he suffered for it

2 *cabinet*: private chamber, jewel box

3 *points and bride-laces*: wedding favours, respectively lacework and pieces of gold, silk or lace to tie up sprigs of rosemary

4 *idly*: madly, pointlessly

5 *checks*: reproaches

6 *crannies*: holes, fissures

7 *amethyst*: supposed to have the power to prevent intoxication, so inhibiting revenge, also a weak purple colour

8 *an oracle*: i.e., a source of instruction

1 *By yea and nay*: a mild Puritan oath

2 *pleurisy*: excess

1 *mastery*: skill

2 *admire*: wonder at

3 *clog*: heavy piece of wood used to prevent escape

1 *disorder*: unmannerly conduct

2 *still*: always

3 *Or ever*: unless

4 *lord ascendant*: an astrological term, referring to the planet within the house of the ascendant, i.e., influential

1 *quail*: dry up, fade

2 *opening*: interpretation

1 *scruple*: cause for anxiety

2 *weal*: prosperity

3 *physic*: medicine

1 *loose for straight*: the loose gown of pregnancy, but also sexual experience as opposed to the 'strait' state of virginity

2 *Shrewd*: cunning

1 *AMYCLAS takes ... ORGILUS listens in*: a stage direction separating off this part of the action seems to be required by the fact that Nearchus is later surprised to learn of Calantha's betrothal to Ithocles

2 *absolute*: without imperfection

1 *minion*: favourite

2 *swinge*: whirling movement, like that of Fortune's wheel

3 *Apparent*: obviously

4 *stays*: stops

- 1 *nonage*: early stages of their history
- 2 *clearness of affection*: purity of love
- 3 *puddle of generation*: dark or compromised heredity
- 4 *Ithocles his manage*: into the hands of Ithocles
- 5 *Still*: even so

1 *Forfend*: forbid

2 *A Song*: later said to have been sung by Philema

1 *mystery*: a divine secret that resists human understanding

2 *engine*: mechanism; a chair capable of entrapping the sitter's arms was also used in Barnabe Barnes's play *The Devil's Charter* (1607)

1 *insulting*: arrogant

2 *Phaeton*: son of Apollo, who stole his father's chariot of the sun and was killed; an example of youthful presumption

3 *trained*: lured

4 *turtle*: turtle dove

5 *bosom*: embrace

- 1 *Tent*: probe
- 2 *cozen*: cheat
- 3 *a bravery*: act of bravado
- 4 *take ... along*: take this consolation into death
- 5 *Determined*: having elapsed
- 6 *my resolves ... ghost*: i.e., Orgilus will commit suicide

1 *earnest*: payment

2 *approved*: made good

- 1 *doubles*: sharp turns made when being pursued
- 2 *splay-footed*: thought to be one of the distinguishing marks of a witch
- 3 *drops ... nose*: thought to foretell the victim's death (see Antonio in *The Duchess of Malfi*); three was especially unlucky
- 4 *doubles ... owls*: all bad omens
- 5 *Phew*: an expression of weariness or disgust
- 6 *genius*: guiding spirit

1 *misdoubt*: mistrust

2 *follows not example*: has no precedent

3 *index*: pointing hand included in the margin of early modern books to draw attention to something

4 *a more careless danger*: greater disregard for danger; bay trees were thought to be resistant to lightning

5 *full ... relation*: full disclosure of your secret

6 *unheard moment*: unprecedented significance

1 *make a stand*: come to a halt

1 *device*: performance

2 *hand you*: conduct

3 *change*: a figure or set of steps in dancing

1 *footings*: steps

1 *abiliment*: capability

2 *convinced*: refuted

- 1 *at thy prejudice*: at injuring you
- 2 *excuse*: obviate
- 3 *humble frailty*: mortal life
- 4 *make the reference*: defer the judgement

1 *suddenly*: immediately

2 *pule*: whine

3 *bleed to death*: a method of suicide favoured by the Stoics

4 *pipes*: veins

5 *conduits*: arteries

6 *fillet*: bind with a narrow strip of cloth

7 *SERVANTS bind him*: or alternatively Lemophil, Groneas or Nearchus

- 1 *Gramercy*: thank you
- 2 *fame*: reputation
- 3 *dreadful*: fearful, cowardly
- 4 *cunning*: skill
- 5 *loose*: free to leave

- 1 *pair-royal*: three of a kind in a card game, i.e., Penthea, Ithocles and Amyclas
- 2 *Engage*: stake
- 3 *mother*: Mother Earth
- 4 *standard*: flag raised as the sign of a king or military commander, sign of excellence
- 5 *prerogative*: distinguishing quality, privilege i.e., Orgilus has been defined by his Stoic endurance or uprightness and now falls
- 6 *A mist ... eyes*: perhaps borrowed from Flaminio's death speech in *The White Devil*

1 *virgin*: candles were made from a special purified bees wax

2 *orisons*: prayers

3 *unskilful*: unwise

1 *how unskilful ... composition*: this is ironic, given how successfully England had been ruled by Elizabeth I

2 *divisions*: conflicts

- 1 *consort*: fellowship, harmony
- 2 *treat on*: negotiate
- 3 *Vesta's temple*: i.e., become a Vestal virgin

1 *antic*: grotesque, also theatrical

2 *vow new pleasures*: remarry

3 *They ... heart-strings*: a translation of Seneca's *Hippolytus*, 607

1 *or*: either

2 *peace*: i.e. of approaching death

3 *l*: numbers suggest that the song was sung in parts

- 1 *counsels*: secret designs
- 2 *censures*: opinions
- 3 *The mean*: necessary artistic restraint

1 *allowance of this strain*: approval of this offspring

1 PUTTANA: spelled PUTANA in Q, but corrected here to the contemporary Italian spelling

2 VASQUEZ: spelled VASQUES in Q, but corrected here to the contemporary Spanish spelling

1 *JOHN ... Turvey*: (1599–1643) came from a Catholic family and his father was arrested over the Gunpowder Plot (1605); he nevertheless became a favourite with James I and converted to Protestantism in 1625

2 *hath ... warrant*: is generally acknowledged

3 *freedom*: distinction

4 *allowance*: appraisal

5 *action*: performance, i.e., Mordaunt must have already seen the play on stage

6 *construction*: judgement

7 *this presentment*: the published text and, specifically, the dedication

8 *particular engagement*: it is not known what Ford means here

9 *lightness*: triviality, but also ‘light’, meaning ‘unchaste’

- 1 *Muse*: nine goddesses presiding over the Arts in classical mythology
- 2 *Graces*: three daughters of Zeus, symbolizing beauty, kindness and grace
- 3 *Pallas*: goddess of wisdom and war, also associated with the Arts
- 4 *Thomas Ellice*: (b. 1607) was a member of Gray's Inn and part of Ford's literary circle; Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy* is dedicated to his brother Robert, among others

- 1 *young man*: the literal translation of 'giovane' in Italian
- 2 *school-points*: arguments raised in a university debate
- 3 *Nice*: abstract, subtle
- 4 *admits*: allows
- 5 *Wits*: intellectuals, particularly university students
- 6 *grounds of art*: scholarly proofs
- 7 *fond*: foolish

1 *peevish*: senseless, spiteful

2 *customary ... man*: i.e., not divinely prohibited, but outlawed merely by social custom

3 *one flesh*: recalls the terms of the marriage ceremony

4 *unhappy*: ill-fated

5 *for that*: because

1 *unrangèd*: limitless, uncontrolled

2 *Bologna*: the location of Italy's oldest university, with a reputation for blasphemous free-thinking

3 *government*: self-discipline, temperance

4 *waits*: attends, follows

5 *less sin ... win*: the Friar condemns sex outside marriage, but views it as a lesser sin than incest

6 *floats and ebbs*: high and low tides

- 1 *Hie*: go immediately
- 2 *ready to fight*: only Vasquez has his sword drawn
- 3 *tackling*: weapons, i.e., prepare to fight
- 4 *craven*: cowardly
- 5 *no equal*: because Vasquez is only a servant

- 1 *mountebank*: a travelling medicine man, charlatan
- 2 *gear*: the matter at hand, i.e., the fight
- 3 *cast-suit*: someone reliant on cast-off clothing, characteristic of a servant
- 4 *cotquean*: low-born housewife, harlot
- 5 *prate*: chatter
- 6 *Roman*: of ancient Italian descent
- 7 *broils*: quarrels
- 8 *spleen*: violent temper, associated with an imbalance of the blood

- 1 *above*: on the stage balcony
- 2 *ground*: cause of the argument
- 3 *resolve*: explain
- 4 *For ... not*: he has seen no evidence of it himself
- 5 *prefers*: puts forward
- 6 *betrays*: reveals
- 7 *let ... gills*: have cut Grimaldi's throat
- 8 *wormed*: to prevent rabies, dogs had a ligament under their tongues cut, called the 'worm'

- 1 *stay your stomach*: satisfy your appetite
- 2 *Spoon-meat*: liquid food eaten by infants, invalids and the very old
- 3 *word*: consent
- 4 *Owing*: possessing
- 5 *Losers ... game*: it is natural for losers to complain, but not for the winner
- 6 *unspleened dove*: doves' spleens were not thought to produce cholera, the humour which made people aggressive
- 7 *put up*: sheathe your sword

- 1 *No marvel else*: it's no wonder you want me to
- 2 *well-timbered*: well-built
- 3 *privy maim*: hidden wound
- 4 *standing upright*: also ability to maintain an erection
- 5 *crinkles ... hams*: bows obsequiously or shrinks from sex
- 6 *wholesome*: not suffering from venereal disease

- 1 *Liberal*: generous with money, perhaps implying Soranzo has bribed Puttana for access to Annabella
- 2 *a man*: i.e., sexually capable
- 3 *plain-sufficient*: adequate
- 4 *morning's draught*: usually a drink of beer or wine
- 5 *ciphers*: nonentities
- 6 *brave ... coat*: from the proverb, an ape is an ape though clad in fine ('brave') clothing
- 7 *leave my dinner*: unlike Florio and the others whose meal was interrupted by the fighting, Bergetto stayed behind to finish
- 8 *coxcomb*: fool

1 *shift*: change

2 *pavan*: slow, stately dance

3 *magnifico*: wealthy and influential citizen

4 *Israelite ... down*: an allusion to Exodus 32 in which the Israelites worship the golden calf, with a sexual pun on 'fall down'

5 *presently*: immediately

6 *bauble*: the professional fool's carved stick, also penis

7 *cast ... flesh*: take decisions based on a shortage of suitors ('flesh' also alluding to penises)

1 *partage*: a share

2 *thoroughly*: thoroughly

3 *wit*: wisdom

4 *Or*: either

- 1 *Keep ... slaves*: may fear and ... shame dwell with slaves.
- 2 *though ... attempt*: though the attempt should cost me my heart
- 3 *credit*: reward, i.e., other people would have to bribe Puttana for this opportunity

1 *frantic*: insane

2 *Juno*: goddess of marriage, both twin sister and wife to Jupiter

- 1 *Promethean fire*: in classical mythology Prometheus stole fire from the gods and used it to animate mankind
- 2 *glanced*: looked at, struck to produce sparks
- 3 *strange*: opposite to one another
- 4 *lily and the rose ... 'change*: i.e., Annabella is alternately pale and blushing
- 5 *anchorite*: a religious recluse, by definition celibate
- 6 *trim*: proper, because flattering
- 7 *Why stand'ee?*: Why do you hesitate?

- 1 *affliction ... death*: has suffered the fires of hell
- 2 *just*: well-founded
- 3 *smooth-cheeked*: beardless, i.e., youthful, sexually inexperienced
- 4 *bootless*: in vain
- 5 *in sadness*: sincerely

1 *good sooth*: truthfully

2 *Say ... earnest*: i.e., that you believe me to be sincere

3 *and I*: I mean it too

4 *change*: exchange

5 *Elysium*: a pagan version of heaven

1 *doubt*: fear

2 *miscarry*: die before having produced an heir

3 *presently*: now

4 *Three thousand florins*: equivalent to £250, not lavish as incomes went

- 1 *mint*: i.e., the newest news, freshly minted
- 2 *strange horse*: a popular fairground trick
- 3 *barber*: a profession notorious for spreading lies
- 4 *puppet play*: another fairground entertainment

1 *May-game*: i.e., a laughing stock

2 *hobby-horses*: a horse costume worn in Morris dances and stage entertainments, but also a term for prostitutes

3 *Uds sa' me*: God save me

4 *Parmesan*: either the hard Italian cheese or a style of drinking

- 1 *wit*: thought
- 2 *glory*: a malapropism – he means ‘shame’
- 3 *white boy*: favourite child
- 4 *gulled*: cheated
- 5 *fit her*: answer her aptly

1 *yielding*: giving up her virginity

2 *tribute*: tax or homage

3 *contents*: pleasures

4 *toy*: trivial thing

5 *nothing*: of no importance, also 'vagina'

6 *Music ... playing*: i.e., the pleasure of sex is partly in talking about it; also that to take the passive (feminine) role of the ear, receiving music, is as pleasurable as the active (masculine) part

1 *Leda*: in classical mythology the god Jove, disguised as a swan, seduced or raped Leda

2 *live to*: be faithful to

1 *passed over*: experienced

2 *under*: referring to her sexual position under Giovanni

3 *fit*: sexual desire, like a sickness

4 *speech of the people*: vulgar gossip

1 *physic*: medicine

2 *lose*: waste

3 *Padova*: city in the north-east of Italy, famous for its medical school so an appropriate part of Richardetto's cover story

4 *sickly*: perhaps because Annabella is already pregnant

5 *large*: generous, ubiquitous

6 *perfection*: beauty and graceful accomplishments

1 *parts*: skills, with a pun on musical parts

2 *make not strange*: don't be a stranger

3 *art*: medical skill

4 *cousin*: niece

5 *cunning*: skill

6 *instrument*: also a euphemism for penis, alluding unconsciously to Annabella's loss of virginity

7 *could have done 't*: used to be able to

1 *Sannazar*: Neapolitan poet Jacopo Sannazaro (1457–1530), author of a Latin eulogy of Venice (1535), for which the city awarded him 600 crowns

2 *Muse*: perhaps Erato, the Muse of love poetry

3 *mean*: happy medium

4 *annoys*: troubles

5 *left*: abandoned

6 *taxed of*: blamed for

- 1 *Do ... now*: perhaps Hippolita is wearing a mourning veil, which she lifts up
- 2 *blood*: lustful frenzy
- 3 *unsated*: still unsatisfied; Soranzo uses Hippolita as a 'foil' or contrast to set off the attractions of Annabella
- 4 *modest fame*: reputation for modesty
- 5 *disgrace*: Hippolita implies he partly died from shame at being cuckolded
- 6 *womanhood*: here defined as marital chastity

1 *free*: honourable, well-bred

2 *double*: duplicitous

3 *weeds*: clothes

4 *widow ... widowhood*: Soranzo's abandonment makes her a widow for the second time; widows were notoriously lustful, which Soranzo's seduction appears to confirm

5 *unedge*: make blunt

1 *perplex*: torment

2 *protests*: promises (to marry her)

3 *Leghorn*: coastal town of Livorno, reached from Parma only through dangerous mountain regions, notorious for outlaws and highwaymen

- 1 *quality*: social standing
- 2 *entertainment*: hospitality
- 3 *braver*: finer
- 4 *woe*: the misery he has caused her

- 1 *shrewd*: malicious
- 2 *hearty*: heartfelt
- 3 *spleen*: anger, rage
- 4 *his*: Soranzo's father
- 5 *acquittance*: repayment of debt
- 6 *of myself*: i.e., by marrying him

1 *dispose*: disposal

2 *old mole*: because the mole works underground, but also because Hippolyta is blind to Vasquez's true nature

3 *have the wind of you*: like a predator upwind of its prey, he has her scent

4 *merry*: only joking

5 *genii*: a pagan version of guardian angels

1 *bane*: poison

2 *secure*: unsuspecting

3 *common voice*: popular opinion

1 *How*: that

2 *used*: treated

3 *Nuncio*: representative of the Pope at a foreign court, possessing ecclesiastical and political powers

- 1 *means*: connection
- 2 *Save you*: God save you
- 3 *cousin*: also used to mean 'niece'
- 4 *arts*: medical science
- 5 *receipts*: recipes (for love potions)

1 *speed*: succeed

2 *confusion*: perdition, ruin

3 *Hydra*: in classical mythology a many-headed monster that grew two heads for every one that was cut off

1 *secretary*: because he has written the letter

2 *indited*: written

3 *fast*: easily, absolutely

1 *colour of his beard*: presumably white, denoting his gravity

2 *board*: make sexual advances

3 *in spite of your teeth*: whether you like it or not; an unflattering reference to her beauty, like that to her nose

4 *parts*: accomplishments, genitals

- 1 *apish*: foolish
- 2 *motions*: puppet shows
- 3 *as good no*: it would be better you hadn't
- 4 *steal*: sneak away
- 5 *number*: members
- 6 *remarked*: marked out
- 7 *uncharitable*: lacking in Christian love

1 *furniture*: equipment, trappings

2 *quintessence*: purest manifestation

3 *nature ... blind*: i.e., Nature is ignorant about the 'positions', or rather absolutes, decreed by God

- 1 *shrive her*: hear her confession and absolve her of her sins
- 2 *spheres ... music*: it was argued in Ptolemaic cosmology that the movement of the planets around the earth produced music
- 3 *else ... framed*: her genitals, here unchristianly associated with pleasure and not procreation
- 4 *parts*: abilities
- 5 *second death*: damnation

1 *number*: sequence

1 *first sleep*: early part of sleep, associated with erotic dreams

2 *religiously*: fervently

3 *Godamercy*: thank you

4 *feeling*: understanding

5 *right*: straightaway

1 *match*: marry

1 *Save you*: God save you

2 *riddle*: guess

1 *take the wall of me*: it was preferable to walk close to the wall in Caroline England because of the gutter ('kennel') that ran down the centre of the street; Bergetto's assailant has aggressively pushed between him and the wall, perhaps because he assumes himself to be of higher social status

2 *gull*: fool

3 *broad beard*: perhaps part of Richardetto's disguise

1 *liked*: pleased

2 *given him the lie*: told him he was lying – a serious insult

3 *dry*: severe

- 1 *recourse*: access
- 2 *'gainst*: in anticipation of
- 3 *humour*: personality trait
- 4 *the man I only like*: my preferred suitor

- 1 *sconce*: head
- 2 *bob you off*: distract you with a toy
- 3 *ape ... apple*: apes were thought to be lecherous, apples an aphrodisiac
- 4 *S'foot*: by God's foot
- 5 *codpiece-point*: lace for fastening a codpiece
- 6 *marmalade*: any fruit preserve

1 *chops*: mouth

2 *clap up*: hastily arrange

3 *hugger-mugger*: secret

4 *to rise*: with a pun on getting an erection

5 *constables*: local officers of justice, proverbially dim-witted

6 *cart whores*: prostitutes were often punished by being driven in a cart through the streets; to pay for this out of his own purse would be a sign of wealth and public-spiritedness

1 *jointures*: gifts of property given by a fiancé to his intended bride, here offered by Annabella's suitors

2 *all woman*: i.e., inconstant

3 *without*: outside

4 *not point of faith*: not an article of faith necessary for salvation, i.e., I don't have to believe you

1 *infer*: determine

2 *a woman's note*: i.e., a lie, given that Annabella has lost her virginity

3 *winks*: closes her eyes

1 *Aqua-vitae*: medicinal beverage

2 *nimble*: quick-witted

1 *no looking-glass ... you*: i.e., if Soranzo were a better role model as lover (looking glass) Annabella would imitate his behaviour

2 *given you better taste*: been nicer to you

3 *hopes*: vain hopes

4 *forbear*: cease

1 *maid's sickness*: believed to be cured by sexual intercourse

2 *present*: immediate

3 *quick*: alive, but also pregnant

- 1 *at these years*: at my age
- 2 *qualms*: fainting
- 3 *water-pangs*: needing to urinate frequently
- 4 *another thing*: i.e., that Annabella has stopped menstruating
- 5 *credit's*: reputation's
- 6 *water*: urine
- 7 *case*: condition
- 8 *take no care*: not to worry
- 9 *business*: cares, distress
- 10 *Ill diet*: food poisoning

1 *Indifferent*: moderately

2 *surfeit-water*: mild indigestion remedy

3 *fullness of her blood*: i.e., maid's sickness, to be cured by sex

4 *ere she know the time*: before she knows it, with a pun on 'the time' as the period of confinement before labour

1 *religious*: holy

2 *still*: always

3 *ghostly*: spiritual

1 *a father's dear impression*: loving notion typical of fathers, but also Annabella is the 'impression' or replication of her father, whom he is ambitious to have make further copies

2 *policy*: cunning

3 *Play not on both hands*: doesn't behave duplicitously

4 *affied*: betrothed

1 *bestow*: spend

2 *speed him*: send him on his journey to death, i.e., kill him

3 *hit*: succeed

4 *bethought 'ee*: considered what to do

1 *call his coz to shrift*: make his kinsman (Bergetto) repent

2 *buss*: kiss

3 *at large*: at length

4 *dainty devices*: fanciful presents

- 1 *swelling*: courage, also an erection
- 2 *physic*: remedy, here referring to the sexual intercourse following marriage
- 3 *wax-lights*: candles or tapers
- 4 *unripped*: disclosed in confession
- 5 *read a lecture*: deliver an admonitory speech

1 *List*: Listen

2 *draughts*: liquid drunk down in one go

3 *lawless sheets*: illicit sexual relationships

4 *incests*: the first time that the word is used in the play

5 *motions*: impulses, emotions

1 *live to him*: be a faithful wife to him

2 *what must come*: i.e., hell

3 *the time*: the present opportunity (to get Soranzo and Annabella betrothed)

4 *stays below*: waits downstairs

- 1 *joins ... hands*: a crucial part of the betrothal ritual, also called 'handfasting'
- 2 *More to be done*: i.e., the wedding ceremony
- 3 *dark lantern*: a lantern with a slide or shutter that allows the light to be concealed, often associated with villainy

1 *disguised*: perhaps masked

2 *stitch fallen*: a clothing metaphor, referring to a burst seam

3 *flesh-tailor*: surgeon

4 *halberds*: military weapon, resembling a battle axe combined with a spear

1 *city*: the central administrative district

2 *linen*: petticoats

1 *last ... sleep*: death

2 *my disgrace*: presumably the disgrace of marrying a servant

3 *against*: compared with

- 1 *my youth*: Soranzo
- 2 *bootless*: pointless
- 3 *a child*: i.e., by weeping
- 4 *naked*: unsheathed

1 *present*: urgent

2 *saucy mates*: rude fellows

3 *fit times*: i.e., until morning

1 *In ... grace*: i.e., and therefore speaking truthfully

2 *thought*: intention

3 *else*: by any other means

4 *mean*: lowly

5 *wit*: judgement

6 *Justice is fled to heaven*: in classical mythology Astraea, the goddess of justice, abandoned the earth at the beginning of the Iron Age, partly because of human crimes like murder

1 *Hautboys*: wind instruments, resembling the oboe

2 *repasts*: meals

3 *hand of goodness*: divine providence

4 *lusty*: merry

- 1 *were*: if only
- 2 *Clipped*: embraced
- 3 *confusion*: damnation
- 4 *wait*: attend to the other guests
- 5 *bowl*: goblet
- 6 *offend*: cause me physical discomfort

1 *masque*: an entertainment featuring music and dance by masked performers, often performed at weddings

2 *willow*: symbolic of unrequited love

3 *reckon up*: go over in detail

4 *report*: gossip

- 1 *lord*: husband
- 2 *allowed*: approved
- 3 *engaged us*: placed us in your debt
- 4 *single charity*: special kindness
- 5 *remit*: renounce
- 6 *pledge*: drink a toast to

- 1 *Troppo sperar inganna*: ‘to hope too much deceives’
- 2 *but*: as good as
- 3 *in charity*: i.e., by speaking well of others
- 4 *politic*: cunningly expedient
- 5 *confusion*: ruin
- 6 *promised her fair*: encouraged her
- 7 *my reward ... been*: perhaps assuming that she would have broken her promise and pinned the murder on him
- 8 – [*To HIPPOLITA*] –: dashes here indicate gaps in the text where the printer found the copy illegible

1 *minute*: moment of death

- 1 *the event*: consequences for Soranzo and Annabella
- 2 *bride-banquet*: wedding breakfast
- 3 *life*: spiritual life, health of the soul
- 4 *confusion*: damnation
- 5 *Debates*: quarrels
- 6 *run to head*: move to a climax
- 7 *Slightens*: scorns, treats contemptuously
- 8 *years*: youth
- 9 *Cremona*: neighbouring town, notable for its many nunneries
- 10 *holy votaress*: nun

- 1 *extremes*: dire events, tragedies
- 2 *uneven*: morally irregular
- 3 *Hie*: go quickly
- 4 *beads*: rosary beads used by Catholics to count prayers
- 5 *unbraced*: with his clothes unfastened, often a sign of madness on stage
- 6 *famous*: infamous
- 7 *Confound*: destroy
- 8 *maintain 'st*: defends
- 9 *bawd*: brothel-keeper or pimp

- 1 *pleurisy*: excess, also a feverish disease
- 2 *heyday of your luxury*: climax of your lust
- 3 *cloak*: disguise
- 4 *close tricks*: secret liaisons
- 5 *gallimaufry*: patchwork of materials, i.e., a bastard
- 6 *on denial*: at being denied
- 7 *case*: condition
- 8 *doing*: making a match, with a sexual pun
- 9 *honour*: reputation
- 10 *quean*: prostitute

- 1 *not in my bargain*: not part of our agreement
- 2 *stay ... stomach*: satisfy your appetite (like a pregnancy craving)
- 3 *match*: deal
- 4 *brave*: excellent

1 *That you had been a creature*: that you existed

2 *prodigious*: monstrous

3 *Che morte ... per amore?*: 'What death is sweeter than to die for love?'

- 1 *lust-belepered*: made leprous through lust
- 2 *Morendo ... senza dolore*: 'Dying in favour with him, I would die without pain'
- 3 *redeem*: ransom
- 4 *hangman*: a shameful occupation, well beneath Soranzo's rank
- 5 *slack*: delay

1 *forfend*: forbid

2 *beshrew*: may evil befall

3 *distractions*: mad ravings

- 1 *extremities*: injuries
- 2 *temper*: composure
- 3 *superstitiously*: idolatrously
- 4 *humorous*: fanciful, changeable

1 *remit*: pardon

2 *show of alteration*: sign of disturbance, evidence of backsliding

- 1 *great*: well born, pregnant
- 2 *stock*: body, line of descent
- 3 *haunted*: frequently resorted
- 4 *cunny-berry*: rabbit burrow, also vagina
- 5 *voluntary*: improvised part of a musical performance
- 6 *if all hit*: if everything comes off
- 7 *nonce*: present occasion
- 8 *Where ... houses*: proverb, meaning that where the wife rules the husband there is domestic strife
- 9 *she-tailor*: women's dressmaker
- 10 *Up*: pregnant

1 *mad*: furious

2 *humour*: temperament

3 *not ... by force*: if her confession were not extracted by violence

4 *betray ... affliction*: expose her to suffering

1 *entire*: intimate

2 *Ud's pity*: by God's pity

3 *what else?*: of course

4 *brave*: fine

- 1 *a Turk or a Jew*: proverbially untrustworthy
- 2 BANDITTI: a gang of Italian outlaws and robbers
- 3 *presently*: immediately
- 4 *closey*: secretly
- 5 *liberty*: licentiousness
- 6 *trained*: led, tutored
- 7 *how ... tail*: how persuasive flattery overcomes a wanton woman

- 1 *Took ... flesh*: ate too much meat, had too much sex
- 2 *hit it*: made the right diagnosis
- 3 *plied my cue*: played my part
- 4 *fast*: secure
- 5 *Runs circular*: moves but makes no progress, like an animal tied to a stake

1 *openly*: publicly

2 *No ... fear*: perhaps 'No revelation will make me afraid' or 'Whatever defeat I suffer I will not show fear'

3 *thriftless*: profitless

4 *in post*: as a messenger, in haste

5 *stands up ... lust*: i.e., in court

6 *depositions*: written testimony

7 *charactered in guilt*: written in guilty terms, with a pun on 'gilt' (gold)

- 1 *turtle*: turtle dove, proverbially loyal to its mate
- 2 *mewed up*: confined
- 3 *Unmated*: without a mate
- 4 *had the spoil*: plundered, destroyed
- 5 *uncontrolled flame*: i.e., in hell
- 6 *making heaven unjust*: insisting that heaven is unjust to prohibit their desires
- 7 *good genius*: guardian angel
- 8 *ends*: purposes
- 9 *sadly*: solemnly

1 *for your behoof*: on your behalf

2 *my guardian*: Puttana

3 *Who*: the absence of whom

4 *suspect*: suspicion

1 *horns*: signs of his being a cuckold or sexually betrayed husband

2 *riot*: revel

3 *beast*: monster

4 *great*: pregnant, full of matter

5 *states*: dignitaries

1 *aspire*: wish for

2 *Busy opinion*: interfering public opinion, conventional thinking

3 *school-rod*: birch twigs used for corporal punishment

4 *formal law of sports*: the legalization of Annabella's sexual activity through marriage

5 *one*: the same

- 1 *jubilee*: time of celebration
- 2 *retired*: private
- 3 *prompted*: spoken of
- 4 *congealed coral*: thought to harden on contact with the air
- 5 *factor*: intermediary
- 6 *seared*: cauterized
- 7 *stoop to*: submit to, obey

1 *dotage*: stupidity

2 *miss*: fail to attend

3 *gage*: wager

4 *train*: lure

1 *blazing stars*: comets, thought to be a bad omen

2 *aught*: any, i.e., Giovanni

3 *set up my rest*: staked everything, as in a card game

4 *baneful*: destructive

5 *prescription*: custom

6 *gall*: bodily fluid thought to produce aggression, also a secretion from the oak tree used to make ink

7 *enrols*: writes down in the annals of history

8 *splits*: splinters

- 1 *undertake for*: guarantee they will fulfil their parts
- 2 *booty*: plunder associated with robbers
- 3 *Liguria*: a mountainous region of north-west Italy
- 4 *pardons*: banditti were often assumed to be outlaws
- 5 *want*: lack
- 6 *vizard*: mask

1 *edge*: sharpen

2 *Italian*: assumed to be hot-tempered and prone to outbursts of jealousy and revenge

3 *set on his old bit*: keen for sex with his usual lover

4 *hare*: associated with lust

5 *law*: a head-start

6 *post to*: ride swiftly

7 *my father*: father-in-law

- 1 *expect*: await
- 2 *grace*: honour
- 3 *vouchsafe*: deign to visit
- 4 *Saint Peter's vicar*: thought to be the first Pope

- 1 *keep your way*: carry on in the same direction
- 2 *changed*: alluding to Annabella's repentance
- 3 *Hath ... night-games*: i.e., is Soranzo a more sophisticated, experienced lover?
- 4 *fit*: impulse
- 5 *stoop ... brows*: submit on seeing me frown

- 1 *confusion*: damnation
- 2 *gay attires*: Annabella is wearing her bridal clothes
- 3 *solemn*: ceremonious
- 4 *to riot in expense*: to waste money
- 5 *fresh access*: to receive visitors
- 6 *schoolmen*: scholars, scholastic philosophers

1 *prate*: chatter

2 *good*: dear one

3 *repining*: discontented

1 *Destinies*: three goddesses in classical mythology who dictated the course and span of a man's life

2 *drift*: intention

3 *civil use*: social custom

4 *rigour*: passionate extremity

5 *cunning flattery*: dissimulation, because Annabella is on the point of death

- 1 *Styx*: a black and poisonous river in the classical underworld
- 2 *fame*: reputation
- 3 *Revenge is mine*: an echo of Romans 12:19, where revenge belongs exclusively to God, often quoted in revenge tragedy, for example Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (c.1587)
- 4 *stagger*: hesitate
- 5 *unkind*: cruel, unnatural, unkinlike

- 1 *hapless*: unfortunate
- 2 *reaching*: far-sighted
- 3 *over-glorious*: superlatively beautiful
- 4 *coarse confections*: humble dishes
- 5 *set*: formal
- 6 *cause*: reason

1 *trimmed*: decorated

2 *reeking*: steaming hot

3 *spoil of love and vengeance*: the destruction of his love and Soranzo's vengeance, but also suggesting that the heart is the plunder taken by Love and Vengeance

4 *misgiving*: fearful

5 *idle*: mere

6 *rape*: violent theft

7 *stone*: precious stones

1 *balanced*: calculated

2 *startle*: start

3 *son*: with an allusion to his being Florio's son-in-law

4 *thoroughly*: thoroughly

1 *bewrayed*: betrayed

2 *passage*: sequence of events

3 *rage*: frenzy

4 *belies him*: makes him lie

1 *venture on him*: take him on

2 *gilt*: gilded, but also guilty

3 *twists of life*: in classical mythology human life is represented by threads which the three Fates spin out, weave and finally cut

4 *royally*: generously

5 *exchange ... thine*: it is not clear how this is staged; perhaps Giovanni stabs Soranzo with the dagger still bearing the heart or he might remove the heart and give it to Soranzo before stabbing him

6 *it*: i.e., Giovanni's death

- 1 *fit you*: impose an apt punishment on you
- 2 *Vengeance*: the code word agreed on with the Banditti
- 3 *Shift for yourselves*: look to your own safety
- 4 *last of breath*: dying words

1 *Spaniard*: conventionally thought to hide malice behind an appearance of friendliness

- 1 *Of counsel*: complicit
- 2 *sometimes*: formerly
- 3 *this woman*: Puttana or Annabella

1 *dispense*: offer a dispensation by commuting the punishment from execution to banishment

2 *reason*: motive

3 *not of thine offence*: not ignoring the seriousness of his crime

4 *proper*: personal

5 *at large*: in full

6 *store*: gifts

7 *'Tis Pity she's a whore*: the fact that this line is italicized in the quarto might suggest the phrase was already familiar

1 *presentment*: performance

2 *A common ... sense*: it is only fair to assume that a person who understands the meaning of the words he uses also knows how to spell them