

# *Renascence Editions*

Return to  
[Renascence Editions](#)

## **The Duchess of Malfi**

**John Webster.**

[Act I](#) | [Act II](#) | [Act III](#) | [Act IV](#) | [Act V](#)

---

Note on the e-text: this [Renascence Editions](#) text was transcribed by Malcolm Moncrief-Spittle from the 1857 Hazlitt edition and graciously made available to Renascence Editions in June 2001. Content unique to this presentation is copyright © 2001 The University of Oregon. For nonprofit and educational uses only.

---

THE  
T R A G E D Y  
OF THE DVTCHESS  
Of Malfy.

*As it was Presented priuately, at the Black  
Friers; and publiquely at the Globe, By the  
Kings Maiefties Seruants*

The perfect and exact Coppy, with diuerse  
*things Printed, that the length of the Play would  
not beare in the Presentment*

Written by *John Webster.*

Horn. — *Si quid* —  
— *Candidas Imperti; si non, his intere mecum.*

LONDON:  
Printed by NICHOLAS OKES, for JOHN  
WATERSON, and are to be sold at the  
figne of the Crowne, in *Pauls*  
Church-yard 1623.

VOL. II.

L

---

TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE HARDING,  
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 poem 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 conduct or postilion: 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 ancien'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 scorners 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, 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.

## CHARACTERS:

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

CARIOLA (the Duchess' waiting woman)

DANIEL DE BOSOLA (steward of the Duchess' horses)

FERDINAND (Duke of Calabria)

CARDINAL (Ferdinand's brother)

ANTONIO BOLOGNA (steward of the Duchess' household)

DELIO (Antonio's friend)

CASTRUCCIO (a lord)

COUNT MALATESTA (a courtier)

THE MARQUIS OF PESCARA (a soldier)

RODERIGO (a courtier)

SILVIO (a courtier)

GRISOLAN (a courtier)

JULIA (Castruccio's wife and the Cardinal's mistress)

DOCTOR

Three Young Children

Two Pilgrims

An Old Lady  
Several Madmen  
Court Officers

## Act I, Scene I.

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.  
How do you like the French court?

Ant. I admire it:  
In seeking to reduce both state and people  
To a fixt order, their judicious king  
Begins at home; quits first his royal palace  
Of flattering sycophants, of dissolute  
And infamous persons, which he sweetly terms  
His master's masterpiece, the work of heaven;  
Considering duly, that a prince's court  
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow  
Pure silver drops in general, but if't chance  
Some curs'd example poison't near the head,  
Death and diseases through the whole land spread.  
And what is't makes this blessed government,  
But a most provident council, who dare freely  
Inform him the corruption of the times?  
Though some o'th' court hold it presumption  
To instruct princes what they ought to do,  
It is a noble duty to inform them  
What they ought to forsee. Here comes Bosola,  
The only court-gall; yet I observe his railing  
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. Here's the Cardinal.

Enter BOSOLA and CARDINAL.

Bos. I do haunt you still.

Card. So.

Bos. I have done you better service  
Than to be slighted thus.  
Miserable age, where only the reward  
Of doing well, is the doing of it!

Card. You enforce your merit too much.

Bos. I fell into the gallies 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:  
Black-birds fatten best in hard weather;  
Why not I in these dog-days?

Card. Would you could become honest!

Bos. 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?  
Some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil,  
But this great fellow were able to possess the greatest  
Devil, and make him worse.

Ant. He hath denied thee some suit?

Bos. He and his brother are like plum-trees that grow crooked  
Over standing-pools; they are rich, and o'erladen with  
Fruit, but none but crows, pies, and caterpillars feed  
On them. Could I be one of their flattering panders, I  
Would hang on their ears like a horseleech, till I were full, and  
Then drop off. I pray leave me.  
Who would rely upon these miserable dependencies; in expectation to  
Be advanced to-morrow? What creature ever fed worse, than hoping  
Tantalus? 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. Geometry!

Bos. 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.

Delio. I knew this fellow seven years in the gallies  
For a notorious murder; and 'twas thought  
The Cardinal suborn'd it: he was releas'd  
By the French general, Gaston de Foix,  
When he recover'd Naples.

Ant. 'Tis great pity,  
He should be thus neglected: I have heard  
He's very valiant. This fould 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.

Enter ANTONIO. DELIO, FERDINAND, CASTRUCCIO, SILVIO.

Delio. The presence 'gins to fill: you promis'd me  
To make me the partaker of the natures  
Of some of your great courtiers.

Ant. The lord cardinal's,  
And other strangers, that are now in court?  
I shall: here comes the great Calabrian Duke.

Ferd. Who took the ring oftenest?

Silvio. Antonio Bologna, my lord.

Ferd. Our sister Duchess' great master of her household:  
Give him the jewel. When shall we leave this sportive action,  
And fall to action indeed?

Cast. Methinks, my lord,  
You should not desire to go to war in person.

Ferd. Now, for some gravity; why, my lord?

Cast. It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not necessary  
A prince descend to be a captain.

Ferd. No?

Cast. No, my lord;  
He were far better do it by a deputy.

Ferd. 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.

Cast. Believe my experience: that realm is never long in quiet,  
Where the ruler is a soldier.

Ferd. Thou toldest me  
Thy wife could not endure fighting.

Cast. True, my lord.

Ferd. And of a jest she broke of a captain  
she met full of wounds: I have forgot it.

Cast. She told him, my lord, he was a pitiful fellow, to lie  
Like the children of Ismael, all in tents.

Ferd. Why, there's a wit were able to undo  
All the chirurgeons o'th' city, for although  
Gallants should quarrel, and had drawn their weapons,  
And were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would  
Make them put up.

Cast. That she would, my lord.  
How do you like my Spanish gennet?

Rod. He is all fire.

Ferd. I am of Pliny's opinion, I think he was begot by the wind;  
He runs as if he were ballasted with quicksilver.

Silvio. True, my lord, he reels from the tilt often.

Rod. Gris. Ha, ha, ha!

Ferd. Why do you laugh? methinks you that are courtiers  
Should be my touchwood, take fire when I give fire;  
That is, not laugh but when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

Cast. 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.

Ferd. But I can laugh at your fool, my lord.

Cast. He cannot speak, you know, but he makes faces:  
My lady cannot abide him.

Ferd. No?

Cast. Nor endure to be in merry company; for she says  
Too much laughing, and too much company, fills her  
Too full of the wrinkle.

Ferd. I would then have a mathematical instrument  
Made for her face,  
That she might not laugh out of compass. I shall shortly  
Visit you at Milan, Lord Silvio.

Silvio. Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

Ferd. You are a good horseman, Antonio: you have excellent  
Riders in France: what do you think of good horsemanship?

Ant. Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued



Many famous princes, so out of brave horsemanship  
Arise the first sparks of growing resolution, that raise  
The mind to noble action.

Ferd. You have bespoke it worthily.

Silvio. Your brother, the lord Cardinal, and sister Duchess.

Enter CARDINAL, DUCHESS, CARIOLA, and JULIA.

Card. Are the gallies come about?

Gris. They are, my lord.

Ferd. Here's the Lord Silvio is come to take his leave.

Delio. 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.

Ant. Some such flashes superficially hang on him, for form;  
But observe his inward character: he is a melancholy  
Churchman; the spring in his face is nothing but the  
Engendering of toads; where he is jealous of any man,  
He lays worse plots for him than ever was imposed on  
Hercules, for he strews in his way flatterers, panders,  
Intelligencers, 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.  
Some good he hath done-

Delio. You have given too much of him: what's his brother?

Ant. 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?

Ant. 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,  
Rewards by hearsay.

Delio. 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.

Ant. Most true:

He never pays debts unless they be shrewd turns,  
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.  
But for their sister, the right noble duchess,  
You never fix'd 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 vain-glory, to talk much,  
Than your penance to hear her: whilst she speaks,  
She throws upon a man so sweet a look,  
That it were able to raise one to a galliard  
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 practis'd in such noble virtue,  
That sure her nights, nay more, her very sleeps,  
Are more in heaven, than other ladies' shrifts.  
Let all sweet ladies break their flattering glasses,  
And dress themselves in her.

Delio. Fie, Antonio,  
You play the wire-drawer with her commendation.

Ant. I'll case the picture up: only thus much,

All her particular worth, grows to this sum;  
She stains the time past, lights the time to come.

Cari. You must attend my lady in the gallery,  
Some half an hour hence.

Ant. I shall.

[Exeunt Antonio and Delio.

Ferd. Sister, I have a suit to you.

Duch. To me, sir?

Ferd. A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,  
One that was in the gallies-

Duch. Yes, I know him.

Ferd. A worthy fellow h'is: pray let me entreat for  
The provisorship of your horse.

Duch. Your knowledge of him  
Commends him and prefers him.

Ferd. Call him hither.

[Exit Attendant.

We are now upon parting.- Good Lord Silvio,  
Do us commend to all our noble friens  
At the leaguer.

Silvio. Sir, I shall.

Ferd. You are for Milan?

Silvio. I am.

Duch. Bring the carroches: we'll bring you down to the haven.

[Exeunt all but the Cardinal and Ferdinand.]

Card. Be sure you entertain that Bosola  
For your intelligence: I would not be seen in't;  
And therefore many times I have slighted him,  
When he did court our furtherance, as this morning.

Ferd. Antonio, the great master of her household,  
Had been far fitter.

Card. You are deceiv'd in him:  
His nature is too honest for such business.  
He comes: I'll leave you

[Exit Cardinal.]

[Enter BOSOLA.]

Bos. I was lur'd to you.

Ferd. My brother here, the cardinal could never  
Abide you.

Bos. Never since he was in my debt.

Ferd. May be some oblique character in your face  
Made him suspect you.

Bos. 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  
The physician's whore, because she cozens him.  
He did suspect me wrongfully.

Ferd. For that  
You must give great men leave to take their times.  
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceiv'd:  
You see, the oft shaking of the cedar-tree  
Fastens it more at root.

Bos. Yet, take heed;  
For to suspect a friend unworthily,

Instructs him the next way to suspect you,  
And prompts him to deceive you.

Ferd. There's gold.

Bos. So,  
What follows? never rain'd such showers as these  
Without thunderbolts i' th' tail of them: whose throat must I cut?

Ferd. Your inclination to shed blood rides post  
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.

Bos. No, sir?

Ferd. Do not you ask the reason; but be satisfied  
I say I would not.

Bos. It seems you would create me  
One of your familiars.

Ferd. Familiar! what's that?

Bos. Why, a very quaint invisible devil in flesh;  
As intelligencer.

Ferd. Such a kind of thriving thing  
I would wish thee; and ere long, thou may'st arrive  
At a higher place by't.

Bos. Take your devils,  
Which hell calls angels: these curs'd gifts would make  
You a corrupter, me an impudent traitor;  
And should I take these, they'd take me to hell.

Ferd. Sir, I'll take nothing from you, that I have given:  
There is a place that I procur'd for you  
This morning, the provisorship o'th'horse;

Have you heard on't?

Bos. No.

Ferd. 'Tis yours: is't not worth thanks?

Bos. I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty  
(Which makes men truly noble) e'er should make  
Me a villain. O, 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.

Ferd. Be yourself;  
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 politic dormouse-

Bos. As I have seen some,  
Feed in a lord's dish, 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.

Ferd. Away.

Bos. 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 DUCHESS, CARDINAL, and CARIOLA.

Card. We are to part from you; and your own discretion  
Must now be your director.

Ferd. You are a widow:

You know already what man is; and therefore  
Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence-

Card. No,  
Nor anything without the addition, honour,  
Sway your high blood.

Ferd. Marry! they are most luxurious,  
Will wed twice.

Card. O, fie!

Ferd. Their livers are more spotted  
Than Laban's sheep.

Duch. Diamonds are of most value,  
They say, that have past through most jewellers' hands.

Ferd. Whores, by that rule, are precious.

Duch. Will you hear me?  
I'll never marry.

Card. So most widows say;  
But commonly that motion lasts no longer  
Than the turning of an hour-glass: the funeral sermon  
And it, end both together.

Ferd. Now hear me:  
You live in a rank pasture here, i'th' court;  
There is a kind of honey-dew that's deadly;  
'Twill posion 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.

Duch. This is terrible good counsel.

Ferd. Hypocrisy is woven of a fine small thread,  
Subtler than Vulcan's engine: yet, believ't,  
Your darkest actions, nay, your privat'st thoughts,  
Will come to light.

Card. You may flatter yourself,  
And take your own choice; privately be married  
Under the eaves of night-

Ferd. Think't the best voyage  
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.

Card. The marriage night  
Is the entrance into some prison.

Ferd. And those joys,  
Those lustful pleasures, are like heavy sleeps  
Which do forerun man's mischief.

Card. Fare you well.  
Wisdom begins at the end: remember it.

[Exit Cardinal.

Duch. I think this speech between you both was studied,  
It came so roundly off.

Ferd. You are my sister;  
This was my father's poinard, do you see?  
I'd be loath to see't look rusty, 'cause 'twas his.  
I would have you to give o'er these chargeable revels,  
A visor and a mask are whispering rooms  
That were never built for goodness;- fare ye well,  
And beware that part, which like the lamprey,  
Hath never a bone in't.

Duch. Fie, sir.

Ferd. Nay,  
I mean the tongue; variety of courtship;  
What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale  
Make a woman believe: Farewell, lusty widow.



[Exit Ferdinand.

Duch. Shall this move me? If all my royal kindred  
Lay in my way unto this marriage,  
I'd make them my low footsteps; and even now,  
Even in this hate, as men in some great battles,  
By apprehending danger, have achiev'd  
Almost impossible actions,- I have heard soldiers say so,-  
So I through frights and threatenings will assay  
This dangerous venture. Let old wives report  
I wink'd, and chose a husband. Cariola,  
To thy known secrecy I have given up  
More than my life- my fame.

Cari. 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.

Duch. Thy protestation  
Is ingenious and hearty: I believe it.  
Is Antonio come?

Cari. He attends you.

Duch. Good dear soul,  
Leave me; but place thyself behind the arras,  
Where thou may'st overhear us. Wish me good speed,  
For I am going into a wilderness  
Where I shall find no path, nor friendly clew,  
To be my guide.

[Exit Cariola.

Enter ANTONIO.

I sent for you: sit down;  
Take pen and ink, and write: are you ready?

Ant. Yes.

Duch. What did I say?

Ant. That I should write somewhat.

Duch. O, I remember.  
After these triumphs and this large expense,

It's fit, like thrifty husbands, we inquire  
What's laid up for to-morrow.

Ant. So please your beauteous excellence.

Duch. Beauteous! Indeed I thank you:  
I look young for your sake;  
You have ta'en my cares upon you.

Ant. I'll fetch your grace  
The particulars of your revenue and expence.

Duch. O, you are  
An upright treasurer; but you mistook:  
For when I said I meant to make inquiry  
What's laid up for to-morrow, I did mean  
What's laid up yonder for me.

Ant. Where?

Duch. 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,  
Than in deep groans, and terrible ghastly looks,  
As if the gifts we parted with procur'd  
That violent distraction?

Ant. O, much better.

Duch. If I had a husband now, this care were quit:  
But I intend to make you overseer.  
What good deed shall we first remember? say.

Ant. Begin with that first good deed begun i'th'world  
After man's creation, the sacrament of marriage:  
I'd have you first provide for a good husband;  
Give him all.

Duch. All?

Ant. Yes, your excellent self.

Duch. St. Winifred, that were a strange will!

Ant. 'Twere strange if there were no will in you  
To marry again.

Duch. What do you think of marriage?

Ant. I take't, as those that deny purgatory,  
It locally contains, or heaven, or hell,  
There's no third place in't.

Duch. How do you affect it?

Ant. My banishment, feeding my melancholy,  
Would often reason thus.

Duch. Pray, let's hear it.

Ant. Say a man never marry, nor have children,  
What takes that from him? only the bare name  
Of being a father, or the weak delight  
To see the little wanton ride a cock-horse  
Upon a painted stick, or hear him chatter  
Like a taught starling.

Duch. Fie, fie, what's all this?  
One of your eyes is blood-shot; use my ring to't,  
They say 'tis very sovereign: 'twas my wedding ring,  
And I did vow never to part with it  
But to my second husband.

Ant. You have parted with it now.

Duch. Yes, to help your eye-sight.

Ant. You have made me stark blind.

Duch. How?

Ant. There is a saucy and ambitious devil,  
Is dancing in this circle.

Duch. Remove him.

Ant. How?

Duch. There needs small conjuration, when your finger  
May do it; thus; is it fit?

[He kneels.

Ant. What said you?

Duch. 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.

Ant. Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,  
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 aim  
Whereto your favours tend: but he's a fool,  
That being a-cold, would thrust his hands i'th' fire  
To warm them.

Duch. So now the ground's broke,  
You may discover what a wealthy mine  
I make you lord of.

Ant. O, my unworthiness!

Duch. You were ill to sell yourself:  
This darkening of your worth is not like that  
Which tradesmen use i'th' city; their false lights  
Are to rid bad wares off; 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.

Ant. Were there nor heaven nor hell,  
I should be honest: I have long serv'd virtue,

And ne'er ta'en wages of her.

Duch. Now she pays it.  
The misery of us that are born great!  
We are forc'd to woo, because none dare woo us;  
And as a tyrant doubles with his words,  
And fearfully equivocates, so we  
Are forc'd 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:  
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 husbands 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.

Ant. Truth speak for me:  
I will remain the constant sanctuary  
Of your good name.

Duch. 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*. This you should have begg'd now;  
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,  
As fearful to devour them too soon.

Ant. But for your brothers?

Duch. Do not think of them:  
All discord without this circumference  
Is only to be pitied, and not fear'd:  
Yet, should they know it, time will easily  
Scatter the tempest.

Ant. These words should be mine,

And all the parts you have spoke, if some part of it  
Would not have savour'd flattery.

Duch. Kneel.

Enter CARIOLA.

Ant. Ha!

Duch. Be not amaz'd, this woman's of my counsel:  
I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber  
Per verba presenti is absolute marriage.  
Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian, which let violence  
Never untwine!

Ant. And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,  
Be still in motion.

Duch. Quickening, and make  
The like soft music.

Ant. That we may imitate the loving palms,  
Best emblem of a peaceful marriage  
That never bore fruit divided.

Duch. What can the church force more?

Ant. That fortune may not know an accident  
Either of joy, or sorrow, to divide  
Our fixed wishes.

Duch. How can the church build faster?  
We now are man and wife, and 'tis the church  
That must but echo this. Maid, stand apart:  
I now am blind.

Ant. What's your conceit in this?

Duch. I would have you lead your fortune 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 humourous kindred; and if you please,  
Like the old tale in Alexander and Lodowick,  
Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.  
O, let me shrowd my blushes in your bosom,  
Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets!

[Exeunt.

Cari. Whether the spirit of greatness, or of woman  
Reign most in her, I know not; but it shews  
A fearful madness: I owe her much of pity.

[Exit.

## Act I, Scene II.

Enter BOSOLA and CASTRUCCIO.

Bosola.. You say, you would fain be taken for an eminent courtier?

Cast. 'Tis the very main of my ambition.

Bos. Let me see: you have a reasonable good face for't already,  
And your night-cap expresses your ears sufficient largely.  
I 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 president  
In criminal causes, if you smile upon a prisoner, hang him, but if  
You frown upon him, and threaten him, let him be sure to 'scape  
The gallows.

Cast. I would be a very merry president.

Bos. Do not sup a' nights; 'twill beget you  
An admirable wit.

Cast. Rather it would make me have a good stomach to quarrel;  
For they say, your roaring boys eat meat seldom,  
And that makes them so valiant.  
But how shall I know whether the people take me

For an eminent fellow?

Bos. 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 for one of the prime night-caps.

Enter an OLD LADY.

You come from painting now.

Old Lady. From what?

Bos. 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 sloughs, the last progress.  
There was a lady in France, that having the small-pox,  
Flay'd 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. Do you call this painting?

Bos. No, no, but you call't careening of an old  
Morphewed lady, to make her disembugue again:  
There's rough-cast phrase to your plastic.

Old Lady. It seems you are well acquainted with my closet.

Bos. 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 childrens' 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, than kiss one of you fasting.  
Here are two of you, whose sin of your youth is the very  
Patrimony of the physician; makes him renew  
His foot-cloth with the spring, and change his  
High-priced courtezan 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 belov'd? 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.  
Man stands amaz'd 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 wolf and swinish measles,  
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; all our fear,  
Nay all our terror, is, lest our physician  
Should put us in the ground, to be made sweet.  
Your wife's gone to Rome: you two couple, and get you  
To the wells at Lucca, to recover your aches. I  
Have other work on foot.

[Exeunt Castruccio and the Old Lady.]

I observe our duchess  
Is sick a-days, she pukes, her stomach seethes,  
The fins 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-bodied gown; there's something in't.  
I have a trick may chance discover it,  
A pretty one: I have bought some apricocks,  
The first our spring yields-

Enter ANTONIO and DELIO.

Delio. And so long since married!  
You amaze me.

Ant. Let me seal your lips for ever:  
For did I think, that anything but th' air  
Could carry these words from you, I should wish  
You had no breath at all.- Now, sir, in your contemplation?  
You are studying to become a great wise fellow.

Bos. O, sir, the opinion of wisdom,  
Is a foul tetter, that runs

All over a man's body: if simplicity  
Direct us to have no evil,  
It directs us to a happy being: for the subtlest folly  
Proceeds from the subtlest wisdom:  
Let me be simply honest.

Ant. I do understand your inside.

Bos. Do you so?

Ant. Because you would not seem to appear to th' world  
Puft up with your preferment, you continue  
This out-of-fashion melancholy: leave it, leave it.

Bos. Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any  
Complement whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you?  
I look no higher than I can reach:  
They are the gods that must ride on winged 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.

Ant. You would look up to heaven, but I think  
The devil, that rules i'th'air stands in your light.

Bos. O, sir, you are lord of the ascendant,  
Chief man with the duchess; a duke was your  
Cousin-german removed. Say you were lineally  
Descended from King Pepin, 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 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 to 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 LADIES.

Duch. Your arm, Antonio: 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.

Bos. The duchess us'd one when she was great with child.

Duch. I think she did. Come hither, mend my ruff:  
Here, when? thou art such a tedious lady; and  
Thy breath smells of lemon pills: would thou hadst done!  
Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am  
So troubled with the mother.

Bos. I fear too much.

Duch. I have heard you say, that the French courtiers  
Wear their hats on fore the king.

Ant. I have seen it.

Duch. In the presence?

Ant. Yes.

Duch. Why should not we bring up that fashion?  
'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.

Ant. You must pardon me:  
I have seen, in colder countries than in France,  
Nobles stand bare to th' prince; and the distinction  
Methought shew'd reverently.

Bos. I have a present for your grace.

Duch. For me, sir?

Bos. Apricocks, madam.

Duch. O, sir, where are they?  
I have heard of none to year.

Bos. Good, her colour rises.

Duch. Indeed I thank you: they are wondrous fair ones:  
What an unskilful fellow is our gardner!  
We shall have none this month.

Bos. Will not your grace pare them?

Duch. No: they taste of musk, methinks; indeed they do.

Bos. I know not: yet I wish your grace had par'd 'em.

Duch. Why?

Bos. I forgot to tell you, the knave gardener,  
Only to raise his profit by them the sooner,  
Did ripen them in horse-dung.

Duch. O, you jest.-  
You shall judge: pray, taste one.

Ant. Indeed, madam,  
I do not love the fruit.

Duch. Sir, you are loath  
To rob us of our dainties: 'tis a delicate fruit;  
They say they are restorative.

Bos. 'Tis a pretty art,  
This grafting.

Duch. 'Tis so: a bettering of nature.

Bos. To make a pippin grow upon a crab,  
A damson on a black-thorn. How greedily she eats them!  
A whirlwind strike off these bawd farthingales!  
For, but for that, and the loose-bodied gown,  
I should have discover'd apparently

The young springal cutting a caper in her belly.

Duch. I thank you, Bosola: they were right good ones,  
If they do not make me sick.

Ant. How now, madam?

Duch. This green fruit and my stomach are not friends:  
How they swell me!

Bos. Nay, you are too much swell'd already.

Duch. O, I am in an extreme cold sweat!

Bos. I am very sorry.

[Exit.

Duch. Lights to my chamber. O, good Antonio,  
I fear I am undone!

Delio. Lights there, lights.

[Exit Duchess.

Ant. O my most trusty Delio, we are lost!  
I fear she's fallen in labour; and there's left  
No time for her remove.

Delio. Have you prepar'd  
Those ladies to attend her? and procur'd  
That politic safe conveyance for the midwife,  
Your duchess plotted?

Ant. I have.

Delio. Make use then of this forc'd occasion:  
Give out that Bosola hath poison'd her  
With these apricocks; that will give some colour  
For her keeping close.

Ant. Fie, fie, the physicians

Will then flock to her.

Delio. For that you may pretend  
She'll use some prepar'd antidote of her own,  
Lest the physicians should re-poison her.

Ant. I am lost in amazement: I know not what to think on't.

[Exeunt.

## Act II, Scene I.

Enter BOSOLA.

Bos. So, so, there's no question but her tetchiness  
And most vulturous eating of the apricocks, are  
Apparent signs of breeding.

Enter an OLD LADY.

Now?

Old Lady. I am in haste, sir.

Bos. There was a young waiting-woman, had a monstrous desire  
To see the glass-house-

Old Lady. Nay, pray let me go.

Bos. 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. I will hear no more of the glass house.  
You are still abusing women.

Bos. Who I? no, only, by the way, now and then,  
Mention your frailties. The orange-tree  
Bears ripe and green fruit and blossoms,  
Altogether: and some of you  
Give entertainment for pure loce, but more,  
For 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 Danaes still, to hold up  
Their laps to receive them. Didst thou never study  
The mathematics?

Old Lady. What's that, sir?

Bos. 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, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN.

Ant. Shut up the court-gates.

Rod. Why, sir? what's the danger?

Ant. Shut up the posterns presently, and call  
All the officers o'th'court.

Gris. I shall instantly.

[Exit.

Ant. Who keeps the key o'th' park gate?

Rod. Forobosco.

Ant. Let him bring't presently.

[Enter GRISOLAN and SERVANTS.

First Serv. O, gentlemen o'th' court, the foulest treason!

Bos. If that these apricocks should be poison'd now,  
Without my knowledge!

Serv. There was taken even now a Switzer in the duchess' bed-chamber-

Second Serv. A Switzer!

Serv. With a pistol in his great cod-piece.

Bos. Ha, ha, ha!

Serv. The cod-piece was the case for't.

Second Serv. There was a cunning traitor; who would have search'd his cod-piece?

Serv. True, if he had kept out of the ladies' chambers: and all the moulds of his buttons were leaden bullets.

Second Serv. O, wicked cannibal! a firelock in's codpiece!

Serv. 'Twas a French plot, upon my life.

Second Serv. To see what the devil can do!

Ant. Are all the officers here?

Servants. We are.

Ant. Gentlemen,  
We have lost much plate you know; and but this evening  
Jewels, to the value of four thousand ducats,  
Are missing in the duchess' cabinet.  
Are the gates shut?

Serv. Yes.

Ant. 'Tis the duchess' pleasure  
Each officer be lock'd into his chamber  
Till the sun-rising; and to send the keys  
Of all their chests, and of their outward doors  
Into her bed-chamber. She is very sick.

Rod. At her pleasure.



Ant. She entreats you tak't not ill: the innocent  
Shall be the more approv'd by it.

Bos. Gentlemen o'th' wood-yard, where's you Switzer now?

Serv. By this hand 'twas credibly reported by one o'th' blackguard.

[Exeunt Gentlemen.

Delio. How fares it with the duchess?

Ant. She's expos'd  
Unto the worst of torture, pain and fear.

Delio. Speak to her all happy comfort.

Ant. 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.

Ant. O, 'tis far from me! and yet fear presents me  
Somewhat that looks like danger.

Delio. Believe it,  
'Tis but the shadow of your fear, no more:  
How superstitiously we mind our evils!  
The throwing down salt, or crossing of a hare,  
Bleeding at nose, the stumbling of a horse,  
Or singing of a cricket, are of power  
To daunt whole man in us. Sir, fare you well:  
I wish you all the joys of a blest father;  
And, for my faith, lay this unto your breast,  
Old friends, like old swords, still are trusted best.

[Exit.

Enter CARIOLA.

Cari. Sir, you are the happy father of a son:  
Your wife commends him to you.

Ant. Blessed comfort!  
For heaven' sake tend her well: I'll presently  
Go set a figure for's nativity.

[Exeunt.

## Act II, Scene III.

Enter BOSOLA, with a dark lantern.

Bos. Sure I did hear a woman shriek: list, ha!  
And the sound came, if I receiv'd it right,  
From the duchess' 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 scream'd so. Ha! Antonio!

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. I heard some noise. Who's there? what art thou? speak.

Bos. Antonio? put not your face nor body  
To such a forc'd expression of fear:  
I am Bosola, your friend.

Ant. Bosola!  
This mole does undermine me- Heard you not  
A noise even now?

Bos. From whence?

Ant. From the duchess' lodging.

Bos. Not I: did you?

Ant. I did, or else I dream'd.

Bos. Let's walk towards it.

Ant. No: it may be 'twas  
But the rising of the wind.

Bos. Very likely:  
Methinks 'tis very cold, and yet you sweat.  
You look wildly.

Ant. I have been setting a figure  
For the duchess' jewels.

Bos. Ah, and how falls your question?  
Do you find it radical?

Ant. What's that to you?  
'Tis rather to be question'd what design,  
When all men were commanded to their lodgings,  
Makes you a night-walker.

Bos. 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.

Ant. This fellow will undo me.  
You gave the duchess apricocks to-day:  
Pray heaven they were not poison'd.

Bos. Poison'd! a Spanish fig  
For the imputation.

Ant. Traitors are ever confident,  
Till they are discover'd. There were jewels stol'n too:  
In my conceit, none are to be suspected  
More than yourself.

Bos. You are a false steward.

Ant. Saucy slave, I'll pull thee up by the roots.

Bos. Maybe the ruin will crush you to pieces.

Ant. You are an impudent snake indeed, sir.  
Are you scarce warm, and do you show your sting?  
You libel well, sir.

Bos. No, sir: copy it out,  
And I will set my hand to't.

Ant. My nose bleeds.  
One that were superstitious would count  
This ominous, when it merely comes by chance:  
Two letters, that are wrote here for my name,  
Are drown'd in blood!  
Mere accident.- For you, sir, I'll take order  
I'th' morn you shall be safe- 'tis that must colour  
Her lying in- sir, this door you pass not:  
I do not hold it fit that you come near  
The duchess' lodgings, till you have quit yourself.-  
The great are like the base, nay, they are the same,  
When they seek shameful was to avoid shame.

[Exit.

Bos. Antonio hereabout did drop a paper.  
Some of your help, false friend. O, here it is:  
What's here? a child's nativity calculated!

The Duchess was delivered of a son, tween the hours  
twelve and one in the night, Anno Dom. 1504, (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 combust  
in the ascendant, signifies short life; and Mars being in a  
human sign, joined to the tail of the Dragon, in the eighth  
house, doth threaten a violent death. Caetera non scrutantur.  
Why, now 'tis most apparent: this precise fellow  
Is the duchess' bawd- I have it to my wish!  
This is a parcel of intelligency  
Our courtiers were cas'd 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'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 thrifty way.  
Though lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise,  
She's oft found witty, but is never wise.

[Exit.

## Act II, Scene IV.

Enter CARDINAL, and JULIA.

Card. 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 anchorite  
Here, for devotion.

Card. Thou art a witty false one;  
I mean, to him.

Julia. You have prevail'd with me  
Beyond my strongest thoughts: I would not now  
Find you inconstant.

Card. Do not put thyself  
To such a voluntary torture, which proceeds  
Out of your own guilt.

Julia. How, my lord?

Card. Sooth, generally; for women,  
A man might strive to make glass malleable,  
Ere he should make them fixed.

Julia. So, my lord.

Card. We had need go borrow that fantastic glass,  
Invented by Galileo the Florentine,  
To view another spacious world i'th' moon,  
And look to find a constant woman there.

Julia. This is very well, my lord.

Card. 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 jealousy; since I am very certain  
You cannot make me cuckold.

Julia. I'll go home  
To my husband.

Card. You may thank me, lady:  
I have taken you off your melancholy perch,  
Bore you upon my fist, and shew'd you game,  
And let you fly at it.- I pray thee kiss me.-  
When thou was't with thy husband, thou was't watch'd  
Like a tame elephant:- (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 fingering 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 woo'd me first,  
And spake like one in physic.

Card. Who's that?-

Enter SERVANT.

Rest firm, for my affection to thee,  
Lightning moves slow to't.

Serv. Madam, a gentleman,  
That's come post from Malfi, desires to see you.

Card. Let him enter: I'll withdraw.

[Exit.

Serv. He says,  
Your husband, old Castruccio, is come to Rome,  
Most pitifully tired with riding post.

[Exit.

Enter DELIO.

Julio. Signior Delio! '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. 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 bought you some.

Julia. From my husband?

Delio. No, from mine own allowance.

Julia. I must hear the condition, ere I be bound to take it.

Delio. Look on't, 'tis gold; hath it not a fine colour?

Julis. I have a bird more beautiful.

Delio. Try the sound on't.

Julia. A lute-spring far exceeds it:  
It hath no smell, like cassia, or civet;  
Nor is it physical, though some fond doctors  
Persuade us seeth't in cullises. I'll tell you,  
This is a creature bred by-

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Your husband's come,  
Hath deliver'd a letter to the Duke of Calabria,  
That to my thinking, hath put him out of his wits.

[Exit.

Julia. 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 mov'd



With a letter sent from Malfi. I do fear  
Antonio is betray'd: how fearfully  
Shews 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 II, Scene V.

Enter CARDINAL, and FERDINAND with a letter.

Ferd. I have this night digg'd up a mandrake.

Card. Say you?

Ferd. And I am grown mad with't.

Card. What's the prodigy?

Ferd. Read there, a sister damn'd: she's loose i'th' hilts;  
Grown a notorious strumpet.

Card. Speak lower.

Ferd. 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. O, confusion seize her!  
She hath had most cunning bawds to serve her turn,  
And more secure conveyances for lust,  
Than towns of garrison for service.

Card. Is't possible?  
Can this be certain?

Ferd. Rhubarb, O, for rhubarb,  
To purge this choler! here's the cursed day  
To prompt my memory; and here't shall stick  
Till of her bleeding heart I make a sponge  
To wipe it out.

Card. Why do you make yourself  
So wild a tempest?

Ferd. Would I could be one,  
That I might toss her palace 'bout her ears,  
Root up her goodly forests, blast her meads,  
And lay her general territory as waste,  
As she hath done her honours.

Card. Shall our blood,  
The royal blood of Arragon and Castile,  
Be thus attained?

Ferd. Apply desperate physic:  
We must not now use balsamum, but fire,  
The smarting cupping-glass, for that's the mean  
To purge infected blood, such blood as hers.  
There is a kind of pity in mine eye,  
I'll give it to my handkerchief; and now 'tis here  
I'll bequeath this to her bastard.

Card. What to do?

Ferd. Why, to make soft lint for his mother's wounds,  
When I have hewed her to pieces.

Card. Curs'd creature!  
Unequal nature, to place women's hearts  
So far upon the left side!

Ferd. Foolish men,  
That e'er will trust their honour in a bark  
Made of so slight weak bulrush as is woman,  
Apt every minute to sink it!

Card. Thus  
Ignorance, when it hath purchas'd honour,  
It cannot wield it.

Ferd. Methinks I see her laughing:-  
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat, quickly,

Or my imagination will carry me  
To see her in the shameful act of sin.

Card. With whom?

Ferd. Happily with some strong-thigh'd bargeman,  
Or one o'th' wood-yard, that can quoit the sledge,  
Or toss the bar, or else some lovely squire  
That carries coals up to her privy lodgings.

Card. You fly beyond your reason.

Ferd. Go to, mistress!  
'Tis not your whore's milk that shall quench my wild-fire,  
But your whore's blood.

Card. How idly shews this rage, which carries you,  
As men convey'd 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.

Ferd. Have not you  
My palay?

Card. Yes; I can be angry  
Without this rupture: there is not in nature  
A thing that makes man so deform'd, so beastly,  
As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself.  
You have divers men, who never yet express'd  
Their strong desire of rest, but by unrest,  
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself  
In tune.

Ferd. So: I will not 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.

Card. Are you stark mad?

Ferd. I would have their bodies  
Burnt in a coal-pit with the ventage stopp'd,  
That their curs'd smoke might not ascend to heaven;  
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  
And give't his lecherous father, to renew  
The sin of his back.

Card. I'll leave you.

Ferd. Nay, I have done.  
I am confident, had I been damn'd 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 leaps my sister, I'll not stir:  
That known, I'll find scorpions to string my whips,  
And fix her in a general eclipse.

[Exeunt.

## Act III, Scene I.

Enter ANTONIO and DELIO.

Antonio. Our noble friend, my most beloved Delio!  
O, 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?

Ant. 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; but let me wink,  
And not behold your face- which to mine eye  
Is somewhat leaner- verily I should dream  
It were within this half hour.

Ant. You have not been in law, friend Delio,

Nor in prison, nor a suitor at the court,  
Nor begg'd 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 arriv'd tet to the ear  
Of the lord Cardinal?

Ant. I fear it hath:  
The Lord Ferdinand, that's newly come to court,  
Doth bear himself right dangerously.

Delio. Pray, why?

Ant. He is so quiet, that he seems to sleep  
The tempest out, as dormice do in winter:  
These houses that are haunted, are most still  
Till the devil be up.

Delio. What say the common people?

Ant. The common rabble do directly say  
She is a strumpet.

Delio. And your graver heads,  
Which would be politic, what censure they?

Ant. They do observe, I grow to infinite purchase,  
The left hand way; and all suppose the duchess  
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.

Delio. The Lord Ferdinand  
Is going to bed.

Enter DUCHESS, FERDINAND, BOSOLA.

Ferd. I'll instantly to bed,  
For I am weary. I am to bespeak  
A husband for you.

Duch. For me, sir! pray who is't?

Ferd. The great Count Malateste.

Duch. 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.

Ferd. You shall do well in't. How is't, worthy Antonio?

Duch. But, sir, I am to have private conference with you  
About a scandalous report is spread  
Touching mine honour.

Ferd. Let me be ever deaf to't:  
One of Pasquil's paper-bullets, court-calumny,  
A pestilent air, which princes' palaces  
Are seldom purg'd of. Yet, say that it were true,  
I pour it in your bosom: my fix'd love  
Would strongly excuse, extenuate, nay, deny  
Faults, were they apparent in you. Go, be safe  
In your own innocency.

Duch. O bless'd comfort!  
This deadly air is purg'd.

[Exeunt all but Ferdinand and Bosola.]

Ferd. Her guilt treads on  
Hot burning culcers. Now, Bosola,  
How thrives our intelligence?

Bos. Sir, uncertainly:  
'Tis rumour'd she hath had three bastards, but  
By whom, we may go read i'th' stars.

Ferd. Why some  
Hold opinion, all things are written there.

Bos. Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.  
I do suspect, there hath been some sorcery  
Us'd on the duchess.

Ferd. Sorcery! to what purpose?

Bos. To make her dote on some desertless fellow,  
She shames to acknowledge.

Ferd. Can your faith give way  
To think there's power in potions, or in charms,  
To make us love whether we will or no?

Bos. Most certainly.

Ferd. Away, these are mere gulleries, 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 lenitive poisons, such as are of force  
To make the patient mad; and straight the witch  
Swears by equivocation they are in love.  
The witch-craft lies in her rank blood. This night  
I will force confession from her. You told me  
You had got, within these two days, a false key  
Into her bed-chamber.

Bos. I have.

Ferd. As I would wish.

Bos. What do you intend to do?

Ferd. Can you guess?

Bos. No.

Ferd. 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 quicksands.

Bos. I do not think so.

Ferd. What do you think, then, pray?

Bos. That you are  
Your own chronicle too much, and grossly  
Flatter yourself.

Ferd. 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 III, Scene II.

Enter DUCHESS, ANTONIO, and CARIOLA.

Duch. Bring me the casket hither, and the glass.  
You get no lodging here to night, my lord.

Ant. Indeed, I must persuade one.

Duch. 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.

Ant. I must lie here.

Duch. Must! you are a lord of misrule.

Ant. Indeed, my rule is only in the night.



Duch. To what use will you put me?

Ant. We'll sleep together.

Duch. Alas,  
What pleasure can two lovers find in sleep!

Cari. My lord, I lie with her often; and I know  
She'll much disquiet you.

Ant. See, you are complain'd of.

Cari. For she's the sprawlingest bedfellow.

Ant. I shall like her the better for that.

Cari. Sir, shall I ask you a question?

Ant. Ay, pray thee, Cariola.

Cari. Wherefore still, when you lie with my lady,  
Do you rise so early?

Ant. Labouring men  
Count the clock oftenest, Cariola;  
Are glad when their task's ended.

Duch. I'll stop your mouth.

Ant. Nay, that's but one; Venus had two soft doves  
To draw her chariot; I must have another.  
When wilt thou marry, Cariola?

Cari. Never, my lord.

Ant. O, fie upon this single life! forego it.  
We read how Daphne, for her peevish flight,  
Became a fruitless bay-tree; Syrinx turn'd  
To the pale empty reed; Anaxarete  
Was frozen into marble: whereas those  
Which married, or prov'd kind unto their friends,  
Were by a gracious influence, transhap'd

Into the olive, pomegranate, mulberry,  
Became flowers, precious stones, or eminent stars.

Cari. This is a vain poetry; but I pray you tell me,  
If there were propos'd me, wisdom, riches, and beauty,  
In three several young men, which should I choose.

Ant. 'Tis a hard question: this was Paris' 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,  
And they stark naked? 'twas a motion  
Were able to benight the apprehension  
Of the severest counsellor of Europe.  
Now I look on both your faces so well form'd,  
It puts me in mind of a question I would ask.

Cari. What is't?

Ant. I do wonder why hard-favour'd ladies,  
For the most part, keep worse-favour'd waiting women,  
To attende them, and cannot endure fair ones.

Duch. O, that's soon answer'd.  
Did you ever in your life know an ill painter  
Desire to have his dwelling next door to the shop  
Of an excellent picture-maker? 'twould disgrace  
His face-making, and undo him. I prithee,  
When were we so merry? My hair tangles.

Ant. Pray thee, Cariola, let's steal forth the room,  
And let her talk to herself: I have divers times  
Serv'd her the like, when she hath chaf'd extremely.  
I love to see her angry. Softly. Cariola.

[Exeunt.

Duch. Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change?  
When I wax gray, I shall have all the court  
Powder their hair with arras to be like me.  
You have cause to love me; I enter'd you into my heart  
Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.

Enter FERDINAND unseen.

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 mixt with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you,  
You shall get no more children till my brothers  
Consent to be your gossips. Have you lost your tongue?

'Tis welcome:

For know, whether I am doom'd to live or die,  
I can do both like a prince.

Ferd. Die then quickly.

[Ferdinand gives her a poniard.]

Virtue, where art thou hid? what hideous thing  
Is it that doth eclipse thee?

Duch. Pray, sir, hear me.

Ferd. Or is it true thou art but a bare name,  
And no essential thing?

Duch. Sir-

Ferd. Do not speak.

Duch. No, sir:  
I will plant my soul in mine ears, to hear you.

Ferd. O, most imperfect light of human reason,  
That mak'st us so unhappy to foresee  
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.

Duch. I pray, sir, hear me: I am married.

Ferd. So.

Duch. Happily, 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?

Ferd. Yes.  
If I could change eyes with a basilisk.

Duch. Sure, you came hither  
By his confederacy.

Ferd. The howling of a wolf  
Is music to thee, screech-owl: prithee, peace.  
Whate'er thou art that hast enjoy'd my sister,  
For I am sure thou hears't me, for thine own sake  
Let me not know thee. I come hither prepar'd  
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,  
On that condition. 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 monkies  
Only converse with him, and such dumb things  
To whom nature denies use to sound his name;  
Do not keep a paraquito, lest she learn it;  
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue  
Lest it bewray him.

Duch. Why might not I marry?  
I have not gone about in this to create  
Any new world or custom.

Ferd. 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.

Duch. Mine bleeds for't!

Ferd. Thine! thy heart!  
What should I name't, unless a hollow bullet  
Fill'd with unquenchable wild-fire?

Duch. You are in this  
Too strict; and were you not my princely brother,  
I would say, too wilful: my reputation  
Is safe.

Ferd. 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 plagu'd with plagues: Love gives them counsel  
To enquire for him 'mongst unambitious shepherds,  
Where dowries were not talk'd of, and sometimes  
'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.

[Exit.

Enter ANTONIO with a pistol.

Duch. You saw this apparition?

Ant. Yes: we are  
Betray'd. How come he hither? I should turn  
This to thee, for that.

Cari. Pray, sir, do; and when  
That you have cleft my heart, you shall read there  
Mine innocence.

Duch. That gallery gave him entrance.

Ant. I would this terrible thing would come again,  
That, standing on my guard, I might relate  
My warrantable love! Ha! what means this?

[She shews the poniard.

Duch. He left this with me.

Ant. And it seems, did wish  
You would use it on yourself.

Duch. His action  
Seem'd to intend so much.

Ant. 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.  
How now! who knocks? more earthquakes!

Duch. I stand  
As if a mine beneath my feet were ready  
To be blown up.

Cari. 'Tis Bosola.

Duch. Away.  
O misery! methinks unjust actions  
Should wear these masks and curtains, and not we.  
You must instantly part hence: I have fashion'd it already.

[Exit ANTONIO.

Enter BOSOLA.

Bos. The duke your brother is ta'en up in a whirlwind;  
Hath took horse, and 's rid post to Rome.

Duch. So late!

Bos. He told me, as he mounted into th' saddle,

You were undone.

Duch. Indeed, I am very near it.

Bos. What's the matter?

Duch. Antonio, the master of our household,  
Hath dealt so falsely with me in's accounts:  
My brother stood engag'd with me for money  
Ta'en up of certain Neapolitan Jews,  
And Antonio lets the bonds be forfeit.

Bos. Strange!- this is cunning!

Duch. And hereupon  
My brother's bills at Naples are protested  
Against. Call up our officers.

Bos. I shall.

[Exit.

Enter ANTONIO.

Duch. 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 enginous wheels: short syllables,  
Must stand for periods. I must now accuse you  
Of such a feigned crime, as Tasso calls  
Magnanima menzogna, a noble lie,  
'Cause it must shield our honours:- hark, they are coming!

Enter BOSOLA and Gentlemen.

Ant. Will your grace hear me?

Duch. I have got well by you; 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 sign'd your Quietus; and that cur'd you

Without help of a doctor. Gentlemen,  
I would have this man be an example to you all,  
So shall you hold my favour; I pray, let him;  
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. Use your fortune elsewhere.

Ant. I am strongly arm'd 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. O, the inconstant  
And rotten ground of service! you may see,  
'Tis even like him, that in a winter night,  
Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,  
A-loath to part from't; yet parts thence as cold,  
As when he first sat down.

Duch. We do confiscate  
Towards the satisfying of your accounts,  
All that you have.

Ant. I am all yours; and 'tis very fit  
All mine should be so.

Duch. So, sir, you have your pass.

Ant. You may see, gentlemen, what it is to serve  
A prince with body and soul.

[Exit.

Bos. Here's an example for extortion: what moisture  
Is drawn out of the sea, when foul weather comes  
Pours down, and runs into the sea again.

Duch. I would know what are your opinions  
Of this Antonio.

Second Off. He could not abide to see a pig's head  
gaping: I thought your grace would find him a Jew.



Third Off. I would you had been his officer, for your own sake.

Fourth Off. He stopped his ears with black wool, and to those came to him for money, said he was thick of hearing.

Second Off. Some said he was an hermaphrodite, for he could not abide a woman.

Fourth Off. How scurvy proud he would look, when the treasury was full! well, let him go.

First Off. Yes, and the chippings of the buttery fly after him, to scour his gold chain.

Duch. Leave us,

[Exeunt.

What do you think of these?

Bos. That these are rogues, that in's prosperity,  
But to have waited on his fortune, could have wish'd  
His dirty stirrup rivetted through their noses;  
And follow'd after's mule, like a bear in a ring.  
Would have prostituted their daughters to his lust;  
Made their first-born intelligencers; thought none happy  
But such as were born under his blest 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 flattering rogues behind him;  
Their doom must follow. Princes pay flatterers  
In their own money: flatterers dissemble their vices,  
And they dissemble their lies; that's justice.  
Alas, poor gentlemen!

Duch. Poor! he hath amply fill'd his coffers.

Bos. Sure he was too honest. Plutus, the god of riches,  
When he's sent by Jupiter to any man,  
He goes limping, to signify that wealth  
That comes on god's name, comes slowly; but when he's sent

On the devil's errand, he rides post and comes in by scuttles.  
Let me shew you, what a most unvalued jewel  
You have in a wanton humour thrown away,  
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 deserv'd a far better fortune.  
His discourse rather delighted to judge itself, than shew itself:  
His breast was fill'd with all perfection,  
And yet it seemed a private whispering-room,  
It made so little noise of't.

Duch. But he was basely descended.

Bos. Will you make yourself a mercenary herald,  
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 Bermoothes on  
Two politicians' rotten bladders, tied  
Together with an intelligencer's heart-string,  
Than depend on so changeable a prince's favour.  
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.

Duch. O, you render me excellent music!

Bos. Say you?

Duch. This good one that you speak of, is my husband.

Bos. 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?

Duch. I have had three children by him.

Bos. Fortunate lady!  
For you have made your private nuptial bed  
The humble and fair seminary of peace.  
No question but many an unbenefic'd scholar  
Shall pray for you for this deed, and rejoice  
That some preferment in the world can yet  
Arise from merit. The virgins of your land  
That have no dowries, shall hope your example  
Will raise them to rich husbands. Should you want  
Soldiers, 'twould make the very Turks and Moors  
Turn Christians, and serve you for this act.  
Last, the neglected poets of your time,  
In honour of this trophy of a man,  
Rais'd by that curious engine, your white hand,  
Shall thank you, in your grave, for't; and make that  
More reverend than all the cabinets  
Of living princes. For Antonio,  
His fame shall likewise flow from many a pen,  
When heralds shall want coats to sell to men.

Duch. As I taste comfort in this friendly speech,  
So would I find concealment.

Bos. O, the secret of my prince,  
Which I will wear on th' inside of my heart!

Duch. You shall take charge of all my coin and jewels,  
And follow him; for he retires himself  
To Ancona.

Bos. So.

Duch. Whither, within few days,  
I mean to follow thee.

Bos. Let me think:  
I would wish your grace to feign a pilgrimage  
To our lady of Loretto, scarce seven leagues  
From fair Ancona; so may you depart  
Your country with more honour, and your flight  
Will seem a princely progress, retaining  
Your usual train about you.

Duch. Sir, your direction  
Shall lead me by the hand.

Cari. In my opinion,  
She were better progress to the baths at Lucca,  
Or go visit the Spa  
In Germany: for, if you will believe me,  
I do not like this jesting with religion,  
This feigned pilgrimage.

Duch. Thou art a superstitious fool!  
Prepare us instantly for our departure.  
Past sorrows, let us moderately lament them,  
For those to come, seek wisely to prevent them.

[Exeunt Duchess and Cariola.

Bos. 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? O, this base quality  
Of intelligencer! why, every quality i'th' world  
Prefers but gain or commendation.  
Now, for this act I am certain to be rais'd,  
And men that paint weeds to the life, are prais'd.

[Exit.

### Act III, Scene III.

Enter CARDINAL, FERDINAND, MALATESTA, PESCARA, DELIO, and SILVIO.

Card. Must we turn soldier then?

Mal. The emperor,  
Hearing your worth that way, ere you attain'd  
This reverend garment, joins you in commission  
With the right fortunate soldier, the Marquess of Pescara,  
And the famous Lannoy.

Card. He that had the honour  
Of taking the French king prisoner?

Mal. The same.  
Here's a plot drawn for a new fortification  
At Naples.

Ferd. This great count Malateste, I perceive,  
Hath got employment?

Delio. No employment, my lord;  
A marginal note in the muster-book, that he is  
A voluntary lord.

Fer. He's no soldier.

Delio. He has worn gunpowder in's hollow tooth, for the tooth-ache.

Sil. He comes to the leaguer 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 service,  
As the City Chronicle relates it:  
And keeps two pewterers going, only to express  
Battles in model.

Sil. Then he'll fight by the book.

Delio. By the almanack, I think,  
To choose good days, and shun the critical;  
That's his mistress' scarf.

Sil. Yes, he protests  
He would do much for that taffata.

Delio. I think he would run away from a battle,  
To save it from taking prisoner.

Sil. He is horribly afraid  
Gunpowder will spoil the perfume on't.

Delio. I saw a Dutchman break his pate once  
For calling him pot-gun; he made his head  
Have a bore in't like a musket.

Sil. I would he had made a touchhole to't.  
He is indeed a guarded sumpter-cloth,  
Only for the remove of the court.

Enter BOSOLA.

Pes. Bosola arriv'd! 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, and all the country  
About them goes to wrack for't.

Sil. What's that Bosola?

Delio. I knew him in Padua,- a fantastical scholar,  
Like such, who study how many knots was in  
Hercules' club, of what colour Achilles' beard was,  
Or whether Hector were not troubled  
With the tooth-ache.  
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.

Pes. Mark prince Ferdinand:  
A very salamander lives in's eye,  
To mock the eager violence of fire.

Sil. That Cardinal hath made more bad faces with his  
oppression than ever Michael Angelo made good ones: he  
lifts up's nose, like a foul porpoise before a storm.

Pes. The Lord Ferdinand laughs.

Delio. Like a deadly cannon,  
That lightens ere it smokes.

Pes. 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.

Card. Doth she make religion her ridinghood  
To keep her from the sun and tempest?

Ferd. That, that damns her.  
Methinks her fault and beauty,  
Blended together, shew like leprosy,  
The whiter, the fouler. I make it a question  
Whether her beggarly brats were ever christen'd.

Card. I will instantly solicit the state of Ancona  
To have them banish'd.

Ferd. You are for Loretto:  
I shall not be at your ceremony; fare you well.  
Write to the Duke of Malfi, my young nephew  
She had by her first husband, and acquaint him  
With's mother's honesty.

Bos. I will.

Ferd. Antonio!  
A slave that only smell'd of ink and counters  
And never in's life look'd 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 III, Scene IV.

Enter TWO PILGRIMS to the Shrine of our Lady of Loretto.

First Pil. I have not seen a goodlier shrine than this,  
Yet I have visited many.

Second Pil. The cardinal of Arragon

Is this day to resign his cardinal's hat:  
His sister duchess likewise is arriv'd  
To pay her vow of pilgrimage. I expect  
A noble ceremony.

First Pil. 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, having presented themselves at the shrine, are, by a form of banishment in dumb-show 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:

Arms, and honours deck thy story,  
To thy fame's eternal glory:  
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, adorn'd in this manner,  
Lead bravely thy forces on, under war's warlike banner!  
O, may'st thou prove fortunate in all martial courses!  
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 Pil. Here's a strange turn of state! who would have thought  
So great a lady would have match'd herself  
Unto so mean a person? yet the cardinal  
Bears him much too cruel.

Second Pil. They are banish'd.

First Pil. But I would ask what power hath this state  
Of Ancona, to determine of a free prince?



Second Pil. They are a free state, sir, and her brother shew'd  
How that the Pope fore-hearing of her looseness,  
Hath seiz'd into the protection of the church  
The dukedom, which she held as dowager.

First Pil. But by what justice?

Second Pil. Sure I think by none,  
Only her brother's instigation.

First Pil. What was it with such violence he took  
Off from her finger?

Second Pil. 'Twas her wedding ring.  
Which he vow'd shortly he would sacrifice  
To his revenge.

First Pil. Alas, Antonio!  
If that a man be thrust into a well,  
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 III, Scene V.

Enter DUCHESS, ANTONIO, CHILDREN, CARIOLA and SERVANTS.

Duch. Banish'd Ancona!

Ant. Yes, you see what power  
Lightens in great men's breath.

Duch. Is all our train  
Shrunk to this poor remainder?

Ant. These poor men,  
Which have got little in service, vow

To take your fortune: but your wiser buntings,  
Now they are fledg'd, are gone.

Duch. 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.

Ant. Right the fashion of the world:  
From decay'd fortunes every flatterer shrinks;  
Men cease to build where the foundation sinks.

Duch. I had a very strange dream to night.

Ant. What was't?

Duch. Methought I wore my coronet of state,  
And on a sudden all the diamonds  
Were chang'd to pearls.

Ant. My interpretation  
Is, you'll weep shortly; for to me the pearls  
Do signify your tears.

Duch. The birds that live i'th' field  
On the wild benefit of nature, live  
Happier than we; for they may choose their mates,  
And carol their sweet pleasures to the spring.

Enter BOSOLA with a letter.

Bos. You are happily o'erta'en.

Duch. From my brother?

Bos. Yes, from the Lord Ferinand, your brother.  
All love and safety.

Duch. Thou dost blanch mischief,  
Would'st make it white.  
See, see, like to calm weather  
At sea before a tempest, false hearts speak fair

To those they intend most mischief.  
Send Antonio to me; I want his head in a business.

[Reads the letter.

A politic equivocation!  
He doth not want your counsel, but your head;  
That is, he cannot sleep till you be dead.  
And here's another pitfall that's strew'd o'er  
With roses; mark it, 'tis a cunning one;  
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.

Bos. What do you believe?

Duch. 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  
To circumvent us in riddles.

Bos. Will you reject that noble and free league  
Of amity and love, which I present you?

Duch. 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.

Bos. And what from you?

Ant. Thus tell him; I will not come.

Bos. And what of this?

Ant. My brothers have dispers'd  
Blood-hounds abroad; which till I hear are muzzled,  
No truce, though hatch'd with ne'er such politic skill,  
Is safe, that hangs upon our enemies' will.  
I'll not come at them.

Bos. This proclaims your breeding:

Every small thing draws a base mind to fear,  
As the adamant draws iron. Fare you well, sir:  
You shall shortly hear from 's.

[Exit.

Duch. 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.

Ant. You counsel safely.  
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.

Duch. I know not which is best,  
To see you dead, or part with you. 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. In the eternal church, sir,  
I do hope we shall not part thus.

Ant. O, be of comfort!  
Make patience a noble fortitude,  
And think not how unkindly we are us'd:  
Man, like to cassia, is prov'd best, being bruise'd.

Duch. Must I, like to a slav-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,  
And compar'd myself to't: nought made me e'er go right  
But heaven's scourge-stick.

Ant. Do not weep:  
Heaven fashion'd us out of nothing; and we strive  
To bring ourselves to nothing. Farewell, Cariola,  
And thy sweet armful. If I do never see thee more,

Be a good mother to your little ones,  
And save them from the tiger: fare you well.

Duch. 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 anchorite  
Give to a dead man's skull.

Ant. My heart is turn'd to a heavy lump of lead,  
With which I sound my danger: fare you well.

[Exit.

Duch. My laurel is all wither'd.

Cari. Look, madam, what a troop of armed men  
Make toward us.

Enter BOSOLA and SOLDIERS, with vizards.

Duch. O, they are very welcome!  
When fortune's wheel is over-charg'd with princes,  
The weight makes it move swift: I would have my ruin  
Be sudden. I am your adventure, am I not?

Bos. You are: you must see your husband no more.

Duch. What devil art thou, that counterfeits heaven's thunder?

Bos. Is that terrible? I would have you tell me  
Whether is that note worse that frights the silly birds  
Out of the corn, or that which doth allure them  
To the nets? you have hearken'd to the last too much.

Duch. O misery! like to a rusty o'er-charg'd cannon.  
Shall I ne'er fly in pieces? Come, to what prison?

Bos. To none.

Duch. Whither, then?

Bos. To your palace.

Duch. I have heard that Charon's boat serves to convey  
All o'er the dismal lake, but brings none back again.

Bos. Your brothers mean you safety and pity.

Duch. Pity! With such a pity men preserve alive  
Pheasants and quails, when they are not fat enough  
To be eaten.

Bos. These are your children?

Duch. Yes.

Bos. Can they prattle?

Duch. No:  
But I intend, since they were born accurs'd,  
Curses shall be their first language.

Bos. Fie, madam,  
Forget this base, low fellow.

Duch. Were I a man,  
I'd beat that counterfeit face into thy other.

Bos. One of no birth.

Duch. Say that he was born mean,  
Man is most happy when's own actions  
Be arguments and examples of his virtue.

Bos. A barren, beggarly virtue.

Duch. 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  
With silly smelts 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 past 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 valu'd high, when th' are most wretched.  
But come, whither you please. I am arm'd 'gainst misery;  
Bent to all sways of the oppressor's will:  
There's no deep valley but near some great hill.

[Exeunt.

## Act IV, Scene I.

Enter FERDINAND and BOSOLA.

Ferdinand. How doth our sister duchess bear herself  
In her imprisonment?

Bos. Nobly: I'll describe her.  
She's sad, as one long us'd 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 for hours together; and her silence,  
Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.

Ferd. Her melancholy seems to be fortified  
With a strange disdain.

Bos. 'Tis so; and this restraint,  
Like English mastiffs that grow fierce with tying,  
Makes her too passionately apprehend  
Those pleasure's she's kept from.

Ferd. Curse upon her!  
I will no longer study in the book  
Of another's heart. Inform her what I told you.

[Exit.

Enter DUCHESS.

Bos. All comfort to your grace.

Duch. I will have none.  
Pray thee, why dost thou wrap thy poison'd pills  
In gold and sugar?

Bos. Your elder brother, 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.

Duch. At his pleasure.  
Take hence the lights; he's come.

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Where are you?

Duch. Here, sir.

Ferd. This darkness suits you well.

Duch. I would ask you pardon.

Ferd. You have it;  
For I account it the honorabl'st revenge,  
Where I may kill, to pardon. Where are your cubs?

Duch. Whom?



Ferd. Call them your children,  
For though our national law distinguish bastards  
From true legitimate issue, compassionate nature  
Makes them all equal.

Duch. Do you visit me for this?  
You violate a sacrament o'th' church  
Shall make you howl in hell for't.

Ferd. It had been well,  
Could you have liv'd thus always; for indeed,  
You were too much i'th' light- but no more;  
I come to seal my peace with you. Here's a hand,

[Gives her a dead man's hand.

To which you have vow'd much love; the ring upon't  
You gave.

Duch. I affectionately kiss it.

Ferd. 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 ow'd it: you shall see  
Whether he can aid you.

Duch. You are very cold:  
I fear you are not well after your travel.  
Ha! lights! O, horrible!

Ferd. Let her have lights enough.

[Exit.

Duch. What witchcraft doth he practise, that he hath left  
A dead man's hand here?

[Here is discovered, behind a traverse, the artificial  
figures of Antonio and his children, appearing as  
if they were dead.

Bos. 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  
For that which cannot be recovered.

Duch. There is not between heaven and earth one wish  
I stay for after this: it wastes me more  
Than were't my picture, fashion'd out of wax,  
Stuck with a magical needle, and then buried  
In some foul dunghill; and yond's an excellent property  
For a tyrant, which I would account mercy.

Bos. What's that?

Duch. If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk,  
And let me freeze to death.

Bos. Come, you must live.

Duch. 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.

Bos. O fie! despair? remember  
You are a Christian.

Duch. The church enjoins fasting:  
I'll starve myself to death.

Bos. 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.

Duch. Good comfortable fellow!  
Persuade a wretch that's broke upon the wheel  
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.

Bos. Come, be of comfort; I will save your life.

Duch. Indeed I have not leisure to tend so small a business.

Bos. Now, by my life, I pity you.

Duch. Thou art a fool then,  
To waste thy pity on a thing so wretched  
As cannot pity itself. I am full of daggers.  
Puff, let me blow those vipers from me.

Enter SERVANT.

What are you?

Serv. One that wishes you long life.

Duch. I would thou wert hang'd 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.

Bos. O, fie!

Duch. I could curse the stars.

Bos. O, fearful!

Duch. And those three smiling seasons of the year  
Into a Russian winter: nay the world  
To its first chaos.

Bos. Look you, the stars shine still.

Duch. O, but you must remember,  
My curse hath a great way to go:-  
Plagues, that make lanes through largest families,  
Consume them!

Bos. Fie, lady.

Duch. Let them like tyrants  
Never be remember'd, but for the ill they have done;  
Let all the zealous prayers of mortified  
Churchmen forget them!

Bos. O, uncharitable!

Duch. 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.

[Exit.

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Excellent, as I would wish; she's plagu'd in art:  
These presentations are but fram'd in wax,  
By the curious master in that quality,  
Vincentio Lauriola, and she takes them  
For true substantial bodies.

Bos. Why do you do this?

Ferd. To bring her to despair.

Bos. '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.

Ferd. 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 masks of common courtesans,  
Have her meat sev'd up by bawds and ruffians,  
And, 'cause she'll needs be mad, I am resolv'd  
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 set their gambols to the full o'th' moon:

If she can sleep the better for it, let her.  
Your work is almost ended.

Bos. Must I see her again?

Ferd. Yes.

Bos. Never.

Ferd. You must.

Bos. Never in mine own shape;  
That's forfeited by my intelligence,  
And this last cruel lie: when you send me next,  
The business shall be comfort.

Ferd. 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,  
Which never will slack till it have spent his fuel:  
Intemperate agues make physicians cruel.

[Exeunt.

## Act IV, Scene II.

Enter DUCHESS and CARIOLA.

Duch. What hideous noise was that?

Cari. 'Tis the wild consort  
Of madmen, lady, which your tyrant brother  
Hath plac'd about your lodging: this tyranny,  
I think, was never practis'd till this hour.

Duch. 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.

Cari. O, 'twill increase your melancholy.

Duch. Thou art deceiv'd:  
To hear of greater grief would lessen mine.  
This is a prison.

Cari. Yes, but you shall live  
To shake this durance off.

Duch. Thou art a fool:  
The robin-red-breast and the nightingale  
Never live long in cages.

Cari. Pray, dry your eyes:  
What think you of, madam?

Duch. Of nothing;  
When I muse thus, I sleep.

Cari. Like a madman, with your eyes open?

Duch. Dost thou think we shall know one another  
In th'other world?

Cari. Yes, out of question.

Duch. O, that it were possible we might  
But hold some two days' conference with the dead!  
From them O 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, yet I am not mad.  
I am acquainted with sad misery,  
As the tann'd galley-slave is with his oar;  
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,  
And custom makes it easy. Whom do I look like now?

Cari. Like to your picture in the gallery,  
A deal of life in show, but none in practice;  
Or rather like some reverend monument  
Whose ruins are even pitied.

Duch. Very proper;  
And fortune seems only to have her eyesight,  
To behold my tragedy. How now!  
What noise is that?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. I am come to tell you,  
Your brother hath intended you some sport.  
A great physician, when the pope was sick  
Of a deep melancholy, presented him  
With several sorts of madmen, which wild oject  
Being full of change and sport, forc'd him to laugh,  
And so th' imposthume broke: the selfsame cure  
The duke intends on you.

Duch. Let them come in.

Enter MADMEN.

Serv. There's a mad lawyer; and a secular priest;  
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,  
Ran mad; an English tailor, craz'd 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 employ'd him in each morning;  
A farmer too, an excellent knave in grain,  
Mad 'cause he was hinder'd transportation;  
And let one broker that's mad loose to these,  
You'd think the devil were among them.

Duch. Sit, Cariola. Let them loose when you please,  
For I am chain'd to endure all your tyranny.

Here by a madman this Song is sung, to a dismal kind of music.

O, let us howl some heavy note,  
Some deadly dogged howl,

Sounding, as from the threatening throat  
Of beasts and fatal fowl!  
As ravens, screech-owls, bulls, and bears,  
We'll bell, and bawl our parts,  
Till irksome noise have cloy'd your ears,  
And corrasiv'd your hearts.  
At last, whenas our quire wants breath,  
Our bodies being blest,  
We'll sing, like swans, to welcome death,  
And die in love and rest.

First Madman. Doom's-day not come yet! I'll draw it nearer by a perspective, or make a glass that shall set all the world on fire upon an instant. I cannot sleep; my pillow is stuffed with a litter of porcupines.

Second Madman. Hell is a mere glass-house, where the devils are continually blowing up women's souls on hollow irons, and the fire never goes out.

Third Madman. I will lie with every woman in my parish the tenth night; I will tythe them over like haycocks.

Fourth Madman. Shall my 'pothecary outgo me, because I am a cuckold? I have found out his roguery; he makes alum of his wife's urine, and sells it to Puritans that have sore throats with overstraining.

First Madman. I have skill in heraldry.

Second Madman. Hast?

First Madman. You do give for your crest a woodcock's head, with the brains picked out on't; you are a very ancient gentleman.

Third Madman. Greek is turned Turk: we are only to be saved by the Helvetian translation.

First Madman. Come on, sir, I will lay the law to you.

Second Madman. O, rather lay a corrasive; the law will eat to the bone.

Third Madman. He that drinks but to satisfy nature, is damned.



Fourth Madman. If I had my glass here, I would shew a sight should make all the women here call me mad doctor.

First Madman. What's he, a rope-maker?

Second Madman. No, no, no, a snuffling knave, that while he shews the tombs, will have his hand in a wench's placket.

Third Madman. Woe to the caroch, that brought home my wife from the mask at three a'clock in the morning! it had a large featherbed in it.

Fourth Madman. I have pared the devil's nails forty time, roasted them in ravens' eggs, and cured agues with them.

Third Madman. Get me three hundred milch bats, to make possets to procure sleep.

Fourth Madman. All the college may throw their caps at me; I have made a soapboiler costive: it was my masterpiece.

[Here the dance, consisting of eight madmen, with music answerable thereunto; after which, Bosola, like an old man, enters.

Duch. Is he mad too?

Serv. Pray question him. I'll leave you.

[Exeunt all but the Duchess and Bosola.

Bos. I am come to make thy tomb.

Duch. Ha! my tomb!  
Thou speak'st, as if I lay upon my death-bed,  
Gasping for breath: dost thou perceive me sick?

Bos. Yes, and the more dangerously, since thy sickness  
Is insensible.

Duch. Thou art not mad sure: dost thou know me?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Who am I?

Bos. Thou art a box of worm-seed, at best but a salvatory  
Of green mummy. What's this flesh? a little cruded milk  
Fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker than those  
Paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in; more contemptible,  
Since ours is to preserve earth-worms. 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.

Duch. Am not I thy duchess?

Bos. Thou art some great woman sure, for riot  
Begins to sit on thy forehead (clad in gray hairs)  
Twenty years sooner  
Than on a merry milkmaid's.  
Thou sleepest worse than if a mouse  
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.

Duch. I am Duchess of Malfi still.

Bos. That makes thy sleep so broken:  
Glories, like glowworms afar off shine bright,  
But look'd to near, have neither heat nor light.

Duch. Thou art very plain.

Bos. My trade is to flatter the dead, not the living;  
I am a tomb-maker.

Duch. And thou com'st to make my tomb?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Let me be a little merry:

Of what stuff wilt thou make it?

Bos. Nay, resolve me first, of what fashion?

Duch. Why, do we grow fantastical in our death-bed?  
Do we affect fashion in the grave?

Bos. 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 tooth-ache: they are not carved  
With their eyes fixt upon the stars; but  
As their minds were wholly bent upon the world,  
The selfsame way they seem to turn their faces.

Duch. Let me know fully, therefore, the effect  
Of this thy dismal preparation,  
This talk, fit for a charnel.

Bos. Now I shall:

[A coffin, cords, and a bell brought in.

Here is a present from your princely brothers,  
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings  
Last benefit, last sorrow.

Duch. Let me see it:  
I have so much obedience in my blood,  
I wish it in their veins to do them good.

Bos. This is your last presence-chamber.

Cari. O, my sweet lady!

Duch. Peace; it affrights not me.

Bos. I am the common bellman,  
That usually is sent to condemn'd persons  
The night before they suffer.

Duch. Even now thou said'st

Thou wast a tomb-maker.

Bos. 'Twas to bring you  
By degrees to mortification. Listen:

[dirge.

Hark, now everything is still,  
The screech-owl, and the whistler shrill,  
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:  
A long war disturb'd your mind;  
Here your perfect peace is sign'd.  
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.  
Strew your hair with powders sweet,  
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.

Cari. Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers! alas!  
What will you do with my lady?- Call for help.

Duch. To whom, to our next neighbours? they are mad-folks.

Bos. Remove that noise.

Duch. Farewell, Cariola.  
In my last will, I have not much to give:  
A many hungry guests have fed upon me;  
Thine will be a poor reversion.

Cari. I will die with her.

Duch. 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.- Now what you please:

[Cariola is forced out.

What death?

Bos. Strangling; here are your executioners.

Duch. I forgive them:  
The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough o'th' lungs,  
Would do as much as they do.

Bos. Doth not death fright you?

Duch. Who would be afraid on't,  
Knowing to meet such excellent company  
In th' other world?

Bos. Yet, methinks,  
The manner of your death should much afflict you;  
This cord should terrify you.

Duch. 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  
They go on such strange geometrical hinges,  
You may open them both ways: 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,  
I'd not be tedious to you.

Execut. We are ready.

Duch. Dispose my breath how please you, but my body  
Bestow upon my women, will you?

Execut. Yes.

Duch. Pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength,  
Must pull down heaven upon me:  
Yet stay, heaven-gates are not so highly arch'd  
As princes' palaces; they that enter there,  
Must go upon their knees. Come, violent death,  
Serve for mandragora, to make me sleep:  
Go, tell my brothers, when I am laid out,  
They then may feed in quiet.

[They strangle her.

Bos. Where's the waiting-woman?  
Fetch her: some other strangle the children.

Enter CARIOLA.

Look you, there sleeps your mistress.

Cari. O, you are damn'd  
Perpetually for this! My turn is next;  
Is't not so order'd?

Bos. Yes, and I am glad  
You are so well prepar'd for't.

Cari. You are deceiv'd, sir,  
I am not prepared for't; I will not die:  
I will first come to my answer, and know  
How I have offended.

Bos. Come, dispatch her.  
You kept her counsel, now you shall keep ours.

Cari. I will not die, I must not; I am contracted  
To a young gentleman.

Execut. Here's your wedding-ring.

Cari. Let me but speak with the duke; I'll discover  
Treason to his person.

Bos. Delays:- throttle her.

Execut. She bites and scratches.

Cari. If you kill me now,  
I am damn'd; I have not been at confession  
This two years.

Bos. When?

Cari. I am quick with child.

Bos. Why then,  
Your credit's sav'd.- Bear her into the next room;  
Let this lie still.

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Is she dead?

Bos. She is what  
You'd have her. But here begin your pity:

[Shews the children strangled.

Alas! how have these offended?

Ferd. The death  
Of young wolves is never to be pitied.

Bos. Fix your eye here.

Ferd. Constantly.

Bos. Do you not weep?  
Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out:  
The element of water moistens the earth,  
But blood flies upwards and bedews the heavens.

Ferd. Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle: she died young.

Bos. I think not so; her infelicity  
Seem'd to have years too many.

Ferd. She and I were twins;  
And should I die this instant, I had liv'd  
Her time to a minute.

Bos. It seems she was born first:  
You have bloodily approv'd the ancient truth,  
That kindred commonly do worse agree  
Than remote strangers.

Ferd. Let me see her face again.  
Why didst not thou pity her? what an excellent  
Honest man might'st thou have been  
If thou hadst born her to some sanctuary;  
Or, bold in a good cause, oppos't thyself,  
With thy advanced sword above thy head,  
Between her innocence and my revenge.  
I had thee, when I was distracted of my wits,  
Go kill my dearest friend, and thou hast done't.  
For let me but examine well the cause:  
What was the meanness of her match to me?  
Only I must confess I had a hope,  
Had she continu'd widow, to have gain'd  
An infinite mass of treasure by her death;  
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 curs'd  
For playing a villain's part, I hate thee for't,  
And for my sake say thou hast done much ill, well.

Bos. Let me quicken your memory, for I perceive  
You are falling into ingratitude; I challenge  
The reward due to my service.

Ferd. I'll tell thee  
What I'll give thee.

Bos. Do.

Ferd. I'll give thee a pardon  
For this murder.



Bos. Ha!

Ferd. Yes, and 'tis  
The largest bounty I can study to do thee.  
By what authority didst thou execute  
This bloody sentence?

Bos. By yours.

Ferd. 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?  
Where shalt thou find this judgment register'd,  
Unless in hell? see, like a bloody fool,  
Th' hast forfeited thy life, and thou shalt die for't.

Bos. The office of justice is perverted quite,  
When one thief hangs another. Who shall dare  
To reveal this?

Ferd. O, 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.

Bos. You, not I, shall quake for't.

Ferd. Leave me.

Bos. I will first receive my pension.

Ferd. You are a villain.

Bos. When your ingratitude  
Is judge, I am so.

Ferd. O horror,  
That not the fear of him, which binds the devils,  
Can prescribe man obedience!  
Never look upon me more.

Bos. 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 chain'd bullets, still goes arm in arm.  
You may be brothers; for treason, like the plague,  
Doth take much in a blood. I stand like one  
That long hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream:  
I am angry with myself, now that I wake.

Ferd. Get thee into some unknown part o'th' world,  
That I may never see thee.

Bos. Let me know  
Wherefore I should be thus neglected? Sir,  
I serv'd your tyranny, and rather strove,  
To satisfy yourself, than all the world:  
And though I loath'd the evil, yet I lov'd  
You that did counsel it; and rather sought  
To appear a true servant, than an honest man.

Ferd. I'll go hunt the badger by owl-light:  
'Tis a deed of darkness.

[Exit.

Bos. He's much distracted. Off, my painted 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. She stirs; here's life:-  
Return, fair soul, from darkness, and lead mine  
Out of this sensible hell:- she's warm, she breathes:-  
Upon thy pale lips I will melt my heart,  
To store them with fresh colour.- Who's there!  
Some cordial 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.

Duch. Antonio!

Bos. Yes, madam, he is living;  
The dead bodies you saw, were but feign'd statues;  
He's reconcil'd to your brothers; the Pope hath wrought  
The atonement.

Duch. Mercy!

[She dies.

Bos. O, she's gone again! there the cords of life 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 shews us hell! That we cannot be suffer'd  
To do good when we have a mind to it!  
This is manly sorrow;  
These tears, I am very certain, never grew  
In my mother's milk: my estate is sunk  
Below the degree of fear: where were  
These penitent fountains, while she was living?  
O, 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  
Shall not deny me. Then I'll post to Milan,  
Where somewhat I will speedily enact  
Worth my dejection.

[Exit.

## Act V, Scene I.

Enter ANTONIO and DELIO.

Antonio. What think you of my hope of reconcilment  
To the Arragonian brethren?

Delio. I misdoubt it;  
For though they have sent letter 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,  
Much 'gainst his noble nature hath been mov'd  
To seize those lands, and some of his dependents  
Are at this instant making it their suit  
To be invested in your revenues.  
I cannot think they mean well to you life,  
That do deprive you of your means of life,  
Your living.

Ant. You are still an heretic  
To any safety I can shape myself.

Delio. Here comes the marquis: I will make myself  
Petitioner for some part of your land,  
To know whither it is flying.

Ant. I pray do.

Enter PESCARA.

Delio. Sir, I have a suit to you.

Pes. To me?

Delio. An easy one:  
There is the citadel of St. Bennet,  
With some demesnes, of late in the possession  
Of Antonio Bologna,- please you bestow them on me.

Pes. You are my friend; but this is such a suit,  
Nor fit for me to give, nor you to take.

Delio. No, sir?

Pes. I will give you ample reason for't,  
Soon in private: here's the cardinal's mistress.

Enter JULIA.

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.

Pes. He entreats for you  
The citadel of St. Bennet, that belong'd  
To the banish'd Bologna.

Julia. Yes.

Pes. 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 engag'd  
Both in your gift, and speediness of giving,  
Which makes your grant the greater.

[Exit.

Ant. How they fortify  
Themselves with my ruin!

Delio. Sir, I am  
Little bound to you.

Pes. Why?

Delio. Because you denied this suit to me, and gave't  
To such a creature.

Pes. Do you know what it was?  
It was Antonio's land; not forfeited  
By course of law, but ravish'd 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 ruddier upon me? I am glad

This land, ta'en from the owner by such a 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  
T'll be a noble giver.

Delio. You instruct me well.

Ant. Why, here's a man now, would fright impudence  
From sauciest beggars.

Pes. Prince Ferdinand's come to Milan,  
Sick, as they give out, of an apoplexy;  
But some say, 'tis a frenzy: I am going  
To visit him.

[Exit.

Ant. 'Tis a noble old fellow.

Delio. What course do you mean to take, Antonio?

Ant. This night I mean to venture all my fortune,  
Which is no more than a poor lingering 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 fright with love and duty,  
May draw the poison out of him, and work  
A friendly reconciliation: if it fail,  
Yet is shall rid me of this infamous calling;  
For better fall once, than be ever falling.

Delio. I'll second you in all danger, and, howe'er;  
My life keeps rank with yours.

Ant. You are still my lov'd and best friend.

[Exeunt.

## Act V, Scene II.

Enter PESCARA and DOCTOR.

Pes. Now, doctor, may I visit your patient?

Doc. If't please your lordship: but he's instantly  
To take the air here in the gallery  
By my direction.

Pes. Pray thee, what's his disease?

Doc. A very pestilent disease, my lord,  
They call lycanthropia.

Pes. What's that?  
I need a dictionary to't?

Doc. I'll tell you.  
In those that are possess'd with't there o'erflows  
Such melancholy humour, they imagine  
Themselves to be transformed into wolves;  
Steal forth to church-yards 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 howl'd 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,  
And having minister'd unto him, found his grace  
Very well recover'd.

Pes. I am glad on't.

Doc. Yet not without some fear  
Of a relapse. If he grow to his fit again,  
I'll go a nearer way to work with him  
Than ever paracelsus dream'd of; if

They'll give me leave, I'll buffet his madness out of him.  
Stand aside; he comes.

Enter FERDINAND, MALATESTA, CARDINAL, and BOSOLA.

Ferd. Leave me.

Mal. Why doth your lordship love this solitariness?

Ferd. Eagles commonly fly alone: they are crows,  
Daws, and starlings that flock together. Look,  
What's that follows me?

Mal. Nothing, my lord.

Ferd. Yes.

Mal. 'Tis your shadow.

Ferd. Stay it; let it not haunt me.

Mal. Impossible, if you move, and the sun shine.

Ferd. I will throttle it.

Mal. O, my lord, you are angry with nothing.

Ferd. You are a fool:  
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 evermore make way for the worst persons.

Pes. Rise, good my lord.

Ferd. I am studying the art of patience.

Pes. 'Tis a noble virtue.

Ferd. To drive six snails before me from this town  
To Moscow; neither use goad nor whip to them,  
But let them take their own time;- (the patient'st man i'th' world



Match me for an experiment)- and I'll crawl  
After like a sheep-biter.

Card. Force him up.

Ferd. Use me well, you were best.  
What I have done, I have done: I'll confess nothing.

Doc. Now let me come to him.- Are you mad,  
My lord, are you out of your princely wits?

Ferd. What's he?

Pes. Your doctor.

Ferd. Let me have his beard sawed off,  
And his eye-brows filed more civil.

Doc. I must do mad tricks with him, for that's the only way on't.- I have brought  
Your grace a salamander's skin, to keep you  
From sun-burning.

Ferd. I have cruel sore eyes.

Doc. The white of a cockatrix's egg is present remedy.

Ferd. Let it be new-laid one, you were best.  
Hide me from him: physicians are like kings,  
They brook no contradiction.

Doc. Now he begins to fear me:  
Now let me be alone with him.

Card. How now? put off your gown!

Doc. 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, sir?  
Let him go, let him go upon my peril:  
I find by his eye he stands in awe of me;  
I'll make him as tame as a dormouse.

Ferd. Can you fetch your frisks, sir! I will stamp him  
Into a cullis,  
Flay off his skin, to cover one of the anatomies  
This rogue hath set i'th' cold yonder  
In Barber-Chirurgeon's-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.

Pes. Doctor, he did not fear you thoroughly.

Doc. True; I was somewaht too forward.

Bos. Mercy upon me, what a fatal judgement  
Hath fall'n upon this Ferdinand!

Pes. Knows your grace  
What accident hath brought unto the prince  
This strange distraction?

Card. I must feig somewhat:- Thus they say it grew.  
You have heard it rumour'd for these many years,  
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 murder'd  
By her nephews, for her riches. Such a figure  
One night, as the prince sat up late at's book,  
Appear'd to him; when, crying out for help,  
The gentleman of's chamber, found his grace  
All on a cold sweat, alter'd much in face  
And language: since which apparition,  
He hath grown worse and worse, and I much fear  
He cannot live.

Bos. Sit, I would speak with you.

Pes. We'll leave your grace,  
Wishing to the sick prince, our noble lord,  
All health of mind and body.

Card. You are most welcome.

[Exeunt all but Cardinal and Bosola.

Are you come? so.- This fellow must not know  
By any means I had intelligence  
In our duchess' death; for though I counsell'd it,  
The full of all th' engagement seem'd to grow  
From Ferdinand.- Now, sir, how fares our sister?  
I do not think but sorrow makes her look  
Like to an oft-dy'd garment: she shall now  
Taste comfort from me. Why do you look so wildly?  
O, 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,  
I'd make you what you would be.

Bos. Anything,  
Give it me in a breath, and fly to't:  
They that think long, small expedition win,  
For musing much o'th' end, cannot begin.

Enter JULIA.

Julia. Sir, will you come in to supper?

Card. I am busy; leave me.

Julia. What an excellent shape hath that fellow!

[Exit.

Card. '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.

Bos. But by what means shall I find him out?

Card. There is a gentleman call'd Delio,

Here in the camp, that hath been long approv'd  
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow;  
Follow him to mass; maybe Antonio,  
Although he do account religion  
But a school-name, 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 up  
Great sums of money, for sure he's in want;  
Or else to go to th' picture-makers, and learn  
Who bought her picture lately: some of these  
Happily may take.

Bos. Well, I'll not freeze i'th' business:  
I would see that wretched thing, Antonio,  
Above all sights i'th' world.

Card. Do, and be happy.

[Exit.

Bos. This fellow doth breed basilisks in's eyes,  
He's nothing else but murder; yet he seems  
Not to have notice of the duchess' 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.

Julia. So, sir, you are well met.

Bos. How now?

Julia. Nay, the doors are fast enough:  
Now, sir, I will make you confess your treachery.

Bos. Treachery!

Julia. Yes, confess to me

Which of my women 'twas you hired to put  
Love-powder into my drink?

Bos. Love-powder!

Julia. Yes, when I was at Malfi.  
Why should I fall in love with such a face else?  
I have already suffer'd for thee so much pain,  
The only remedy to do me good,  
Is to kill my longing.

Bos. Sure your pistol holds  
Nothing but perfumes, or kissing-comforts. Excellent lady!  
You have a pretty way on't to discover  
Your longing. Come, come, I'll disarm you,  
And arm you thus: yet this is wondrous strange.

Julia. Compare thy form and my eyes together,  
You'll find my love no such great miracle. Now you'll say  
I am wanton: this nice modesty in ladies  
Is but a troublesome familiar  
That haunts them.

Bos. Know you me, I am a blunt soldier.

Julia. The better;  
Sure, there wants fire, where there are no lively sparks  
Of roughness.

Bos. And I want compliment.

Julia. Why, ignorance in courtship cannot make you do amiss,  
If you have a heart to do well.

Bos. You are very fair.

Julia. Nay, if you lay beauty to my charge,  
I must plead unguilty.

Bos. Your bright eyes  
Carry a quiver of darts in them, sharper  
Than sun-beams.

Julia. You will mar me with commendation,  
Put yourself to the chard of courting me,  
Whereas now I woo you.

Bos. I have it; I will work upon this creature.-  
Let us grow most amorously familiar:  
If the great cardinal 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  
These uncertain wishes and unquiet longings,  
And in an instant join the sweet delight  
And the pretty excuse together. Had you been i'th' street,  
Under my chamber window, even there  
I should have courted you.

Bos. O, you are an excellent lady!

Julia. Bid me do somewhat for you presently,  
To express I love you.

Bos. 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  
With feign'd excuse; discover the main ground on't.

Julia. Why would you know this?

Bos. I have depende 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 dependance.

Julia. You shall not need follow the wars:  
I'll be your maintenance.

Bos. 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 feather-beds,  
But must have blocks for their pillows.

Bos. Will you do this?

Julia. Cunningly.

Bos. To-morrow, I'll expect th'intelligence.

Julia. To-morrow! get you into my cabinet;  
You shall have it with you. Do not delay me,  
No more than I do you: I am like one  
That is condemn'd; I have my pardon promis'd,  
But I would see it seal'd. Go, get you in:  
You shall see me wind my tongue about his heart,  
Like a skein of silk.

[Exit Bosola.

Enter CARDINAL and SERVANTS.

Card. Where are you?

Serv. Here.

Card. Let none, upon your lives  
Have conference with the prince Ferdinand,  
Unless I know it:-

[Exeunt Servants.

In this distraction, he may reveal the murder.  
Yond's my lingering consumption:  
I am weary of her, and by any means  
Would be quit of.

Julia. How now, my lord, what ails you?

Card. Nothing.

Julia. O, you are much alter'd!  
Come, I must be your secretary, and remove  
This lead from off your bosom: what's the matter?

Card. I may not tell you.

Julia. 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?

Card. 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  
What they hear though most imperfect, and not me;  
For, if that you be true unto yourself,  
I'll know.

Card. Will you rack me?

Julia. No, judgment shall  
Draw it from you: it is an equal fault,  
To tell one's secrets unto all or none.

Card. The first argues folly.

Julia. But the last tyranny.

Card. Very well; why, imagine I have committed  
Some secret deed, which I desire the world  
May not hear of.

Julia. Therefore may not I know it?



You have conceal'd for me as great a sin  
As adultery. Sir, never was occasion  
For perfect trial of my constancy  
Till now: sir, I beseech you-

Card. You'll repent it.

Julia. Never.

Card. It hurries thee to ruin: I'll not tell thee.  
Be well advis'd, and think what danger 'tis  
To receive a prince's secrets: they that do,  
Had need have their breasts hoop'd with adamant  
To contain them. I pray thee yet be satisfied;  
Examine thine own frailty; 'tis more easy  
To tie knots, than unloose them: 'tis a secret  
That, like a lingering poison, may chance lie  
Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence.

Julia. Now you dally with me.

Card. No more, thou shalt know it.  
By my appointment, the great Duchess of Malfi,  
And two of her young children, four nights since,  
Were strangl'd.

Julia. O heaven! sir, what have you done?

Card. How now! how settles this? think you  
Your bosom will be a grave dark and obscure enough  
For such a secret?

Julia. You have undone yourself, sir.

Card. Why?

Julia. It lies not in me to conceal it.

Card. No! Come, I will swear you to't upon this book.

Julia. Most religiously.

Card. Kiss it.

Now you shall never utter it; thy curiosity  
Hath undone thee: thou art poison'd with that book;  
Because I knew thou couldst not keep my counsel,  
I have bound thee to't by death.

Enter BOSOLA.

Bos. For pity sake, hold.

Card. Ha, Bosola!

Julia. I forgive you  
This equal piece of justice you have done;  
For I betray'd your counsel to that fellow:  
He overheard it; that was the cause I said  
It lay not in me to conceal it.

Bos. O, foolish woman,  
Couldst not thou have posison'd him?

Julia. 'Tis weakness,  
Too much to think what should have been done.  
I go, I know not whither.

[Dies.

Card. Wherefore com'st thou hither?

Bos. That I might find a great man, like yourself,  
Not out of his wits, as the Lord Ferdinand,  
To remember my service.

Card. I'll have thee hew'd in pieces.

Bos. Make not yourself such a promise of that life,  
Which is not yours to dispose of.

Card. Who plac'd thee here?

Bos. Her lust, as she intended.

Card. Very well: now you know me  
For your fellow-murderer.

Bos. And wherefore should you lay your fair marble colours  
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?

Card. No more;  
There is a fortune attends thee.

Bos. Shall I go sue to fortune any longer?  
'Tis the fool's pilgrimage.

Card. I have honours in store for thee.

Bos. There are a many ways that conduct to seeming  
Honour, and some of them very dirty ones.

Card. Throw to the devil  
Thy melancholy. The fire burns well;  
What need we keep a stirring of't, and make  
A greater smother? thou wilt kill Antonio?

Bos. Yes.

Card. Take up that body.

Bos. I think I shall  
Shortly grow the common bier for church-yards.

Card. I will allow thee some dozen of attendants,  
To aid thee in the murder.

Bos. O, by no means.  
Physicians that apply horseleeches 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.

Card. 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.

Bos. Where's Castruccio, her husband?

Card. He's rode to Naples, to take possession  
Of Antonio's citadel.

Bos. Believe me, you have done a very happy turn.

Card. Fail not to come: there is the master-key  
Of our lodgings; and by that you may conceive  
What trust I plant in you.

Bos. 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  
To be frost-nail'd well, they may break their necks else;  
The precedent's here afore me. How this man  
Bears up in blood! seems fearless! why, 'tis well:  
Security some men call the suburbs of hell,  
Only a dead wall between. Well, good Antonio,  
I'll seek thee out; and all my cares shall be  
To put thee into safety from the reach  
Of these most cruel biters, that have got  
Some of thy blood already. It may be,  
I'll join with thee, in a most just revenge:  
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.  
O Penitence, let me truly taste thy cup,  
That throws men down, only to raise them up!

[Exit.

Act V, Scene III.

Enter ANTONIO and DELIO.

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, and withal  
So plain in the distinction of our words,  
That many have suppos'd it is a spirit  
That answers.

Ant. I do love these ancient ruins.  
We never tread upon them, but we set  
Our foot upon some reverend history:  
And, questionless, here in this open court,  
Which now lies naked to the injuries  
Of stormy weather, some men lie interr'd  
Lov'd the church so well, and gave so largely to't,  
They thought it should have canopied their bones  
Till doom's-day; but all things have their end:  
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,  
Must have like death that we have.

Echo (from the Duchess' grave). Like death that we have.

Delio. Now the echo hath caught you.

Ant. It groan'd, 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.

Ant. Ay sure, that suits it best.

Echo. That suits it best.

Ant. '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 to-night:  
Do not.

Echo. 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 the safety.

Ant. Necessity compels me:  
Make scrutiny throughout the passes  
Of your own life, you'll find it impossible  
To fly your fate.

Echo. O fly your fate!

Delio. Hark! the dead stones seem to have pity on you,  
And give you good counsel.

Ant. Echo, I will not talk with thee,  
For thou art a dead thing.

Echo. Thou art a dead thing.

Ant. My duchess is a-sleep now,  
And her little ones, I hope sweetly: O heaven,  
Shall I never see her more?

Echo. Never see her more.

Ant. I mark'd 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.

Ant. Come, I'll be out of this ague,  
For to live thus, is not indeed to live;  
It is a mockery and abuse of life:  
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 his own blood  
Spread in so sweet a figure, may beget  
The more compassion.  
However, fare you well.  
Though in our miseries fortune have a part,  
Yet in our noble sufferings she hath none;  
Contempt of pain, that we may call our own.

[Exeunt.

## Act V, Scene IV.

Enter CARDINAL, PESCARA, MALATESTA, RODERIGO, GRISOLAN.

Card. You shall not watch to-night by the sick prince;  
His grace is very well recover'd.

Mal. Good, my lord, suffer us.

Card. O, 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.

Pes. So, sir; we shall not.

Card. Nay, I must have you promise  
Upon your honours, for I was enjoin'd to't  
By himself; and he seem'd to urge it sensibly.

Pes. Let our honours bind this trifle.

Card. Nor any of your followers.

Mal. Neither.

Card. 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.

Mal. If your throat were cutting,  
I'd not come at you, now I have protested against it.

Card. Why, I thank you.

Gris. 'Twas a foul storm to-night.

Rod. The Lord Ferdinand's chamber shook like an osier.

Mal. 'Twas nothing but pure kindness in the devil,  
To rock his own child.

[Exeunt all but the Cardinal.

Card. 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  
For having any confidence in prayer.  
About this hour I appointed Bosola  
To fetch the body: when he hath served my turn,  
He dies.

[Exit.

Enter BOSOLA.

Bos. Ha! 'twas the cardinal's voice; I heard him name  
Bosola, and my death: listen, I hear one's footing.



Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Strangling is a very quiet death.

Bos. Nay then, I see I must stand upon my guard.

Ferd. 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.

Bos. My death is plotted; here's the consequence of murder.  
We value not desert nor Christian breath,  
When we know black deeds must be cur'd with death.

Enter SERVANT and ANTONIO.

Serv. Here stay, sir, and be confident, I pray:  
I'll fetch you a dark lantern.

[Exit.

Ant. Could I take him at his prayers,  
There were hope of pardon.

Bos. Fall right my sword:  
I'll not give thee so much leisure as to pray.

Ant. O, I am gone! Thou hast ended a long suit  
In a minute.

Bos. What art thou?

Ant. A most wretched thing,  
That only have the benefit in death,  
To appear myself.

Enter SERVANT with a light.

Serv. Where are you, sir?

Ant. Very near my home.- Bosola!

Serv. O, misfortune!

Bos. Smother thy pity, thou art dead else.- Antonio!  
The man I would have sav'd 'bove mine own life!  
We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and banded  
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-

Ant. Their very names  
Kindle a little life in me.

Bos. Are murder'd.

Ant. Some men have wish'd to die  
At the hearing of sad tidings; I am glad  
That I shall do't in sadness: I would not now  
Wish my wounds balm'd nor heal'd, 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  
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.

Bos. Break, heart!

Ant. And let my son fly the courts of princes.

[Dies.

Bos. Thou seem'st to have lov'd Antonio?

Serv. I brought him hither,  
To have reconcil'd him to the Cardinal.

Bos. I do not ask thee that:

Take him up, if thou tender thy own life,  
And bear him where the lady Julia  
Was want to lodge.- O my fate moves swift!  
I have this cardinal in the forge already,  
Now I'll bring him to th' hammer. O direful misprision!  
I will not imitate things glorious,  
No more than base; I'll be mine own example.-  
On, on, and look thou represent, for silence,  
The thing thou bear'st.

[Exeunt.

## Act V, Scene V.

Enter CARDINAL, with a book.

Card. I am puzzled in a question about hell:  
He says, in hell there's one material fire,  
And yet it shall not burn all men alike.  
Lay him by. How tedious is a guilty conscience!  
When I look into the fish-ponds in my garden,  
Methinks I see a thing arm'd with a rake,  
That seems to strike at me.-

Enter BOSOLA and the SERVANT.

Now, art thou come? thou look'st ghastly;  
There sits in thy face some great determination,  
Mix'd with some fear.

Bos. Thus it lightens into action:  
I am come to kill thee.

Card. Ha! help! our guard!

Bos. Thou art deceiv'd;  
They are out of thy howling.

Card. Hold; and I will faithfully divide  
Revenues with thee.

Bos. Thy prayers and proffers  
Are both unseasonable.

Card. Raise the watch! we are betray'd.

Bos. I have confin'd your flight:  
I'll suffer your retreat to Julia's chamber,  
But no further.

Card. Help! we are betray'd.

Enter MALATESTES, PESCARA, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN, above.

Mal. Listen.

Card. My dukedom for rescue!

Rod. Fie upon his counterfeiting.

Mal. Why, 'tis not the Cardinal.

Rod. Yes, yes, 'tis he:  
But I'll see him hang'd ere I'll go down to him.

Card. Here's a plot upon me; I am assaulted! I am lost  
Unless some rescue!

Gris. He doth this pretty well;  
But it will not serve to laugh me out of mine honour.

Card. The sword's at my throat!

Rod. You would not bawl so loud then.

Mal. Come, come, let's go to bed: he told us thus much aforehand.

Pes. He wish'd 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 engines  
Force ope the doors.

[Exit.

Rod. Let's follow him aloof,  
And note how the Cardinal will laugh at him.

[Exeunt, above, Malateste, Roderigo, and Grisolan.]

Bos. There's for you first,  
'Cause you shall not unbarricade the door  
To let in rescue.

[He kills the servant.]

Card. What cause hast thou to pursue my life?

Bos. Look there.

Card. Antonio!

Bos. Slain by my hand unwittingly:  
Pray, and be sudden: when thou kill'd'st thy sister,  
Thou took'st from justice her most equal balance,  
And left her nought but her sword.

Card. O mercy!

Bos. 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.

[Stabs him.]

Card. Thou hast hurt me.

Bos. Again.

Card. Shall I die like a leveret,  
Without any resistance? Help, help, help!  
I am slain.

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Th' alarum! give me a fresh horse;

Rally the vaunt-guard, or the day is lost.  
Yield, yield: I give you the honours of arms,  
Shake my sword over you; will you yield?

Card. Help me, I am your brother!

Ferd. 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.

Card. O justice!  
I suffer now for what hath former bin:  
Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin.

Ferd. Now you're brave fellows.  
Caesar's fortune was harder than Pompeys'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 time is taken away with  
The apprehension of greater, as the tooth-ache with the sight  
Of a barber that comes to pull it out: there's philosophy for you.

Bos. Now my revenge is perfect. Sink, thou main cause

[He stabs Ferdinand.

Of my undoing. The last part of my life  
Hath done me best service.

Ferd. Give me some wet hay, I am broken-winded.  
I do account this world but a dog-kennel:  
I will vault credit and affect high pleasures,  
Beyond death.

Bos. He seems to come to himself, now he's so near the bottom.

Ferd. My sister, O 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.

[Dies.

Card. Thou hast thy payment too.

Bos. 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  
Begun upon a large and ample base,  
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

Enter PESCARA and the others.

Pes. How now, my lord!

Mal. O, sad disaster!

Rod. How comes this?

Bos. Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi, murder'd  
By the Arragonian brethren; for Antonio,  
Slain by this hand; for lustful Julia,  
Poison'd 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.

Pes. How now, my lord!

Card. Look to my brother:  
He gave us these large wounds, as we were struggling  
Here i'th' rushes. And now, I pray, let me  
Be laid by and never thought of.

[Dies.

Pes. How fatally, it seems, he did withstand  
His own rescue!

Mal. Thou wretched thing of blood,  
How came Antonio by his death?

Bos. In a mist: I know not how:  
Such a mistake as I have often seen  
In a play. O, I am gone!  
We are only like dead walls, or vaulted graves,  
That ruin'd, yield no echo. Fare you well.  
It may be pain, but no harm to me to die,  
In so good a quarrel. O, this gloomy world!  
In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness,  
Doth womanish and feaful mankind live!  
Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust  
To suffer death or shame for what is just:  
Mine is another voyage.

[Dies.

Pes. The noble Delio, as I came to th' palace,  
Told me of Antonio's being here, and shew'd me  
A pretty gentleman, his son and heir.

Enter DELIO, and Antonio's SON.

Mal. O sir, you come too late!

Delio. I heard so, and  
Was arm'd 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. 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,  
Both form and matter. I have ever thought  
Nature doth nothing so great for great men,  
As when she's pleas'd to make them lords of truth:  
Integrity of life is fame's best friend,  
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.

The End.





Renaissance Editions