

THE WHITE DEVIL

By John Webster

Dramatis Personae

MONTICELSO a Cardinal; afterwards Pope Paul the Fourth.

FRANCISCO de Medicis Duke of Florence; in the 5th Act disguised for a Moor, under the name of MULINASSAR.

BRACHIANO otherwise Paulo Giordano Ursini, Duke of Brachiano, Husband to Isabella, and in love with Vittoria.

GIOVANNI his Son by Isabella.

LODOVICO an Italian Count, but decayed.

ANTONELLI his Friends, and Dependents of the Duke of Florence

GASPARO

CAMILLO Husband to Vittoria.

HORTENSIO one of Brachiano's Officers.

MARCELLO an Attendant of the Duke of Florence, and Brother to Vittoria.

FLAMINEO his Brother; Secretary to Brachiano.

JAQUES a Moor, Servant to Giovanni.

ISABELLA Sister to Francisco de Medicis, and Wife to Brachiano.

VITTORIA Corombona a Venetian Lady; first married to Camillo, afterwards to Brachiano.

CORNELIA Mother to Vittoria, Flamineo, and Marcello.

ZANCHE a Moor, Servant to Vittoria.

Ambassadors, Courtiers, Lawyers, Officers, Physicians, Conjuror, Armourer, Attendants.

THE SCENE - ITALY

Act 1

Scene 1

Enter Count LODOVICO, ANTONELLI, and GASPARO

Lodovico Banish'd!

Antonelli It griev'd me much to hear the sentence.

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

Gasparo You term those enemies,
Are men of princely rank.

Lodovico Oh, I pray for them:
The violent thunder is adored by those
Are pasht in pieces by it.

Antonelli Come, my lord,
You are justly doom'd; look but a little back
Into your former life: you have in three years
Ruin'd the noblest earldom.

Gasparo Your followers
Have swallowed you, like mummia, and being sick
With such unnatural and horrid physic,
Vomit you up i' th' kennel.

Antonelli All the damnable degrees
Of drinking have you stagger'd through. One citizen,
Is lord of two fair manors, call'd you master,
Only for caviare.

Gasparo Those noblemen
Which were invited to your prodigal feasts,
(Wherein the phoenix scarce could 'scape your throats)
Laugh at your misery, as fore-deeming you
An idle meteor, which drawn forth, the earth
Would be soon lost i' the air.

Antonelli Jest upon you,
And say you were begotten in an earthquake,
You have ruin'd such fair lordships.

Lodovico Very good.
This well goes with two buckets: I must tend
The pouring out of either.

Gasparo Worse than these.
You have acted certain murders here in Rome,
Bloody and full of horror.

Lodovico 'Las, they were flea-bitings:
Why took they not my head then?

Gasparo Oh, my lord!
The law doth sometimes mediate, thinks it good
Not ever to steep violent sins in blood:
This gentle penance may both end your crimes,
And in the example better these bad times.

Lodovico So; but I wonder then some great men 'scape
This banishment: there 's Paulo Giordano Ursini,
The Duke of Brachiano, now lives in Rome,
And by close panderism seeks to prostitute
The honour of Vittoria Corombona:
Vittoria, she that might have got my pardon
For one kiss to the duke.

Antonelli Have a full man within you:
We see that trees bear no such pleasant fruit
There where they grew first, as where they are new set.
Perfumes, the more they are chaf'd, the more they render
Their pleasing scents, and so affliction
Expresseth virtue fully, whether true,
Or else adulterate.

Lodovico Leave your painted comforts;
I'll make Italian cut-works in their guts
If ever I return.

Gasparo Oh, sir.

Lodovico I am patient.
I have seen some ready to be executed,
Give pleasant looks, and money, and grown familiar
With the knave hangman; so do I; I thank them,
And would account them nobly merciful
Would they dispatch me quickly.

Antonelli Fare you well;
We shall find time, I doubt not, to repeal
Your banishment.

Lodovico I am ever bound to you.
This is the world's alms; pray make use of it.
Great men sell sheep, thus to be cut in pieces,
When first they have shorn them bare, and sold their fleeces.

Exeunt.

Scene 2

Enter BRACHIANO, CAMILLO, FLAMINEO, VITTORIA

Brachiano Your best of rest.

Vittoria Unto my lord the duke,
The best of welcome. More lights: attend the duke.

Exeunt CAMILLO and VITTORIA.

Brachiano Flamineo.

Flamineo My lord.

Brachiano Quite lost, Flamineo.

Flamineo Pursue your noble wishes, I am prompt
As lightning to your service. O my lord!
The fair Vittoria, my happy sister,
Shall give you present audience - Gentlemen,
[Whisper.] Let the caroch go on - and 'tis his pleasure
You put out all your torches, and depart.

Brachiano Are we so happy?

Flamineo Can it be otherwise?
Observ'd you not tonight, my honour'd lord,
Which way soe'er you went, she threw her eyes?
I have dealt already with her chambermaid,
Zanche the Moor, and she is wondrous proud
To be the agent for so high a spirit.

Brachiano We are happy above thought, because 'bove merit.

Flamineo 'Bove merit! we may now talk freely: 'bove merit! what is 't you
doubt? her coyness! that's but the superficies of lust most women have; yet
why should ladies blush to hear that nam'd, which they do not fear to
handle? Oh, they are politic; they know our desire is increased by the
difficulty of enjoying; whereas satiety is a blunt, weary, and drowsy
passion. If the buttery-hatch at court stood continually open, there would
be nothing so passionate crowding, nor hot suit after the beverage.

Brachiano Oh, but her jealous husband

Flamineo Hang him; a gilder that hath his brains perished with quicksilver
is not more cold in the liver. The great barriers moulted not more
feathers, than he hath shed hairs, by the confession of his doctor. An
Irish gamester that will play himself naked, and then wage all downward, at
hazard, is not more venturous. So unable to please a woman, that, like a

Dutch doublet, all his back is shrunk into his breeches.
Shroud you within this closet, good my lord;
Some trick now must be thought on to divide
My brother-in-law from his fair bed-fellow.

Brachiano Oh, should she fail to come -

Flamineo I must not have your lordship thus unwisely amorous. I myself have loved a lady, and pursued her with a great deal of under-age protestation, whom some three or four gallants that have enjoyed would with all their hearts have been glad to have been rid of. 'Tis just like a summer bird-cage in a garden: the birds that are without despair to get in, and the birds that are within despair and are in a consumption for fear they shall never get out. Away, away, my lord.

Exit BRACHIANO as CAMILLO enters.

See here he comes. This fellow by his apparel
Some men would judge a politician;
But call his wit in question, you shall find it
Merely an ass in 's foot-cloth. How now, brother?
What, travelling to bed to your kind wife?

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

Flamineo Strange you should lose your count.

Camillo We never lay together, but ere morning
There grew a flaw between us.

Flamineo 'T had been your part
To have made up that flaw.

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

Flamineo Why, sir, what 's the matter?

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

Flamineo I hope you do not think -

Camillo That nobleman bowl booty? faith, his cheek
Hath a most excellent bias: it would fain
Jump with my mistress.

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

Camillo Pew wew, sir; tell not me
Of planets nor of Ephemerides.
A man may be made cuckold in the daytime,
When the stars' eyes are out.

Flamineo Sir, good-bye you;
I do commit you to your pitiful pillow
Stuffed with horn-shavings.

Camillo Brother!

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

Camillo 'Twere very good.

Flamineo Bar her the sight of revels.

Camillo Excellent.

Flamineo Let her not go to church, but, like a hound
In leon, at your heels.

Camillo 'Twere for her honour.

Flamineo And so you should be certain in one fortnight,
Despite her chastity or innocence,
To be cuckolded, which yet is in suspense:
This is my counsel, and I ask no fee for 't.

Camillo Come, you know not where my nightcap wrings me.

Flamineo Wear it a' th' old fashion; let your large ears come through, it
will be more easy - nay, I will be bitter - bar your wife of her
entertainment: women are more willingly and more gloriously chaste, when
they are least restrained of their liberty. It seems you would be a fine
capricious, mathematically jealous coxcomb; take the height of your own
horns with a Jacob's staff, afore they are up. These politic enclosures for
paltry mutton, makes more rebellion in the flesh, than all the provocative
electuaries doctors have uttered since last jubilee.

Camillo This doth not physic me -

Flamineo It seems you are jealous: I'll show you the error of it by a familiar example: I have seen a pair of spectacles fashioned with such perspective art, that lay down but one twelve pence a' th' board, 'twill appear as if there were twenty; now should you wear a pair of these spectacles, and see your wife tying her shoe, you would imagine twenty hands were taking up of your wife's clothes, and this would put you into a horrible causeless fury.

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

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

Enter VITTORIA Corombona.

See, she comes; what reason have you to be jealous of this creature? what an ignorant ass or flattering knave might he be counted, that should write sonnets to her eyes, or call her brow the snow of Ida, or ivory of Corinth; or compare her hair to the blackbird's bill, when 'tis liker the blackbird's feather? This is all. Be wise; I will make you friends, and you shall go to bed together. Marry, look you, it shall not be your seeking. Do you stand upon that, by any means: walk you aloof; I would not have you seen in 't. - Sister [my lord attends you in the banqueting-house,] your husband is wondrous discontented.

Vittoria I did nothing to displease him; I carved to him at suppertime.

Flamineo [You need not have carved him, in faith; they say he is a capon already. I must now seemingly fall out with you.] Shall a gentleman so well descended as Camillo [a lousy slave, that within this twenty years rode with the black-guard in the duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping-pans!] -

Camillo Now he begins to tickle her.

Flamineo An excellent scholar [one that hath a head fill'd with calves' brains without any sage in them,] come crouching in the hams to you for a night's lodging? [that hath an itch in 's hams, which like the fire at the glass-house hath not gone out this seven years] Is he not a courtly gentleman? [when he wears white satin, one would take him by his black muzzle to be no other creature than a maggot] You are a goodly foil, I confess, well set out [but cover'd with a false stone - yon counterfeit diamond].

Camillo He will make her know what is in me.

Flamineo Come, my lord attends you; thou shalt go to bed to my lord.

Camillo Now he comes to 't.

Flamineo [With a relish as curious as a vintner going to taste new wine.]
[To Camillo.] I am opening your case hard.

Camillo A virtuous brother, o' my credit!

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

Camillo Indeed, I am studying alchemy.

Flamineo Thou shalt lie in a bed stuffed with turtle's feathers; swoon in perfumed linen, like the fellow was smothered in roses. So perfect shall be thy happiness, that as men at sea think land, and trees, and ships, go that way they go; so both heaven and earth shall seem to go your voyage. Shalt meet him; 'tis fix'd, with nails of diamonds to inevitable necessity.

Vittoria How shalt rid him hence?

Flamineo [I will put brize in 's tail, set him gadding presently.] I have almost wrought her to it; I find her coming: but, might I advise you now, for this night I would not lie with her, I would cross her humour to make her more humble.

Camillo Shall I, shall I?

Flamineo It will show in you a supremacy of judgment.

Camillo True, and a mind differing from the tumultuary opinion; for, quae negata, grata.

Flamineo Right: you are the adamant shall draw her to you, though you keep distance off.

Camillo A philosophical reason.

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

Camillo Vittoria, I cannot be induc'd, or as a man would say, incited -

Vittoria To do what, sir?

Camillo To lie with you tonight. Your silkworm used to fast every third day, and the next following spins the better. Tomorrow at night, I am for you.

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

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

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

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

Camillo A pox on 't, as I am a Christian! tell me tomorrow how scurvily she takes my unkind parting.

Flamineo I will.

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

Flamineo Do, do, do.

Exit CAMILLO.

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

Enter BRACHIANO.

Come, sister, darkness hides your blush. Women are like cursed dogs: civility keeps them tied all daytime, but they are let loose at midnight; then they do most good, or most mischief. My lord, my lord!

ZANCHE brings out a carpet, spreads it, and lays on it two fair cushions. Enter CORNELIA listening, but unperceived.

Brachiano Give credit: I could wish time would stand still,
And never end this interview this hour;
But all delight doth itself soon'st devour.
Let me into your bosom, happy lady,
Pour out, instead of eloquence, my vows.
Loose me not, madam, for if you forgo me,
I am lost eternally.

Vittoria Sir, in the way of pity,
I wish you heart-whole.

Brachiano You are a sweet physician.

Vittoria Sure, sir, a loathed cruelty in ladies
Is as to doctors many funerals:
It takes away their credit.

Brachiano Excellent creature!
We call the cruel fair; what name for you

That are so merciful?

Zanche See now they close.

Flamineo Most happy union.

Cornelia [Aside.] My fears are fall'n upon me: oh, my heart!
My son the pander! now I find our house
Sinking to ruin. Earthquakes leave behind,
Where they have tyranniz'd, iron, or lead, or stone;
But woe to ruin, violent lust leaves none.

Brachiano What value is this jewel?

Vittoria 'Tis the ornament of a weak fortune.

Brachiano In sooth, I'll have it; nay, I will but change
My jewel for your jewel.

Flamineo Excellent;
His jewel for her jewel: well put in, duke.

Brachiano Nay, let me see you wear it.

Vittoria Here, sir?

Brachiano Nay, lower, you shall wear my jewel lower.
Flamineo That 's better: she must wear his jewel lower.

Vittoria To pass away the time, I'll tell your grace
A dream I had last night.

Brachiano Most wishedly.

Vittoria A foolish idle dream:
Methought I walked about the mid of night
Into a churchyard, where a goodly yew-tree
Spread her large root in ground: under that yew,
As I sat sadly leaning on a grave,
Chequer'd with cross-sticks, there came stealing in
Your duchess and my husband; one of them
A pickaxe bore, th' other a rusty spade,
And in rough terms they 'gan to challenge me
About this yew.

Brachiano That tree?

Vittoria This harmless yew;
They told me my intent was to root up
That well-grown yew, and plant i' the stead of it

A wither'd blackthorn; and for that they vow'd
To bury me alive. My husband straight
With pickaxe 'gan to dig, and your fell duchess
With shovel, like a fury, voided out
The earth and scatter'd bones: Lord, how methought
I trembled! and yet for all this terror I could not pray.

Flamineo No; the devil was in your dream.

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

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

Brachiano Sweetly shall I interpret this your dream.
You are lodg'd within his arms who shall protect you
From all the fevers of a jealous husband,
From the poor envy of our phlegmatic duchess.
I'll seat you above law, and above scandal;
Give to your thoughts the invention of delight,
And the fruition; nor shall government
Divide me from you longer, than a care
To keep you great: you shall to me at once.
Be dukedom, health, wife, children, friends, and all.

Cornelia [Advancing.] Woe to light hearts, they still forerun our fall!

Flamineo What fury raised thee up? away, away.

Exit ZANCHE.

Cornelia What make you here, my lord, this dead of night?
Never dropp'd mildew on a flower here till now.

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

Cornelia O that this fair garden
Had with all poison'd herbs of Thessaly
At first been planted; made a nursery
For witchcraft, rather than a burial plot
For both your honours!

Vittoria Dearest mother, hear me.

Cornelia Oh, thou dost make my brow bend to the earth.
Sooner than nature! See the curse of children!
In life they keep us frequently in tears;
And in the cold grave leave us in pale fears.

Brachiano Come, come, I will not hear you.

Vittoria Dear my lord.

Cornelia Where is thy duchess now, adulterous duke?
Thou little dream'st this night she 's come to Rome.

Flamineo How! come to Rome!

Vittoria The duchess!

Brachiano She had been better -

Cornelia The lives of princes should like dials move,
Whose regular example is so strong,
They make the times by them go right, or wrong.

Flamineo So, have you done?

Cornelia Unfortunate Camillo!

Vittoria I do protest, if any chaste denial,
If anything but blood could have allay'd
His long suit to me -

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

Brachiano Fie, fie, the woman 's mad.

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

Vittoria O me accurs'd!

EXIT.

Flamineo Are you out of your wits? my lord,
I'll fetch her back again.

Brachiano No, I'll to bed:
Send Doctor Julio to me presently.

Uncharitable woman! thy rash tongue
Hath rais'd a fearful and prodigious storm:
Be thou the cause of all ensuing harm.

EXIT.

Flamineo Now, you that stand so much upon your honour,
Is this a fitting time a' night, think you,
To send a duke home without e'er a man?
I would fain know where lies the mass of wealth
Which you have hoarded for my maintenance,
That I may bear my beard out of the level
Of my lord's stirrup.

Cornelia What! because we are poor
Shall we be vicious?

Flamineo Pray, what means have you
To keep me from the galleys, or the gallows?
My father prov'd himself a gentleman,
Sold all 's land, and, like a fortunate fellow,
Died ere the money was spent. You brought me up
At Padua, I confess, where I protest,
For want of means - the University judge me -
I have been fain to heel my tutor's stockings,
At least seven years; conspiring with a beard,
Made me a graduate; then to this duke's service,
I visited the court, whence I return'd
More courteous, more lecherous by far,
But not a suit the richer. And shall I,
Having a path so open, and so free
To my preferment, still retain your milk
In my pale forehead? No, this face of mine
I'll arm, and fortify with lusty wine,
'Gainst shame and blushing.

Cornelia O that I ne'er had borne thee!

Flamineo So would I;
I would the common'st courtesan in Rome
Had been my mother, rather than thyself.
Nature is very pitiful to whores,
To give them but few children, yet those children
Plurality of fathers; they are sure
They shall not want. Go, go,
Complain unto my great lord cardinal;
It may be he will justify the act.
Lycurgus wonder'd much, men would provide
Good stallions for their mares, and yet would suffer
Their fair wives to be barren.

Cornelia Misery of miseries!

EXIT.

Flamineo The duchess come to court! I like not that.
We are engag'd to mischief, and must on;
As rivers to find out the ocean
Flow with crook bendings beneath forced banks,
Or as we see, to aspire some mountain's top,
The way ascends not straight, but imitates
The subtle foldings of a winter's snake,
So who knows policy and her true aspect,
Shall find her ways winding and indirect.

EXIT.

Act 2

Scene 1

Enter FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, CARDINAL MONTICELSO, MARCELLO,
ISABELLA, young
GIOVANNI, with little JAQUES the Moor.

Francisco Have you not seen your husband since you arrived?

Isabella Not yet, sir.

Francisco Surely he is wondrous kind;
If I had such a dove-house as Camillo's,
I would set fire on 't were 't but to destroy
The polecats that haunt to it - My sweet cousin!

Giovanni Lord uncle, you did promise me a horse,
And armour.

Francisco That I did, my pretty cousin.
Marcello, see it fitted.

Marcello My lord, the duke is here.

Francisco Sister, away; you must not yet be seen.

Isabella I do beseech you,
Entreat him mildly, let not your rough tongue
Set us at louder variance; all my wrongs
Are freely pardon'd; and I do not doubt,
As men to try the precious unicorn's horn
Make of the powder a preservative circle,

And in it put a spider, so these arms
Shall charm his poison, force it to obeying,
And keep him chaste from an infected straying.

Francisco I wish it may. Begone.

Exit ISABELLA as BRACHIANO, and FLAMINEO enter.

Void the chamber.

Exeunt FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, GIOVANNI, and JAQUES.

You are welcome; will you sit? - I pray, my lord,
Be you my orator, my heart 's too full;
I'll second you anon.

Monticelso Ere I begin,
Let me entreat your grace forgo all passion,
Which may be raised by my free discourse.

Brachiano As silent as i' th' church: you may proceed.

Monticelso It is a wonder to your noble friends,
That you, having as 'twere enter'd the world
With a free sceptre in your able hand,
And having to th' use of nature well applied
High gifts of learning, should in your prime age
Neglect your awful throne for the soft down
Of an insatiate bed. O my lord,
The drunkard after all his lavish cups
Is dry, and then is sober; so at length,
When you awake from this lascivious dream,
Repentance then will follow, like the sting
Plac'd in the adder's tail. Wretched are princes
When fortune blasteth but a petty flower
Of their unwieldy crowns, or ravisheth
But one pearl from their sceptre; but alas!
When they to wilful shipwreck lose good fame,
All princely titles perish with their name.

Brachiano You have said, my lord -

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

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

Francisco Do not fear it:
I'll answer you in your own hawking phrase.
Some eagles that should gaze upon the sun
Seldom soar high, but take their lustful ease,
Since they from dunghill birds their prey can seize.
You know Vittoria?

Brachiano Yes.

Francisco You shift your shirt there,
When you retire from tennis?

Brachiano Happily.

Francisco Her husband is lord of a poor fortune,
Yet she wears cloth of tissue.

Brachiano What of this?
Will you urge that, my good lord cardinal,
As part of her confession at next shrift,
And know from whence it sails?

Francisco She is your strumpet -

Brachiano Uncivil sir, there 's hemlock in thy breath,
And that black slander. Were she a whore of mine,
All thy loud cannons, and thy borrow'd Switzers,
Thy galleys, nor thy sworn confederates,
Durst not supplant her.

Francisco Let 's not talk on thunder.
Thou hast a wife, our sister; would I had given
Both her white hands to death, bound and lock'd fast
In her last winding sheet, when I gave thee
But one.

Brachiano Thou hadst given a soul to God then.

Francisco True:
Thy ghostly father, with all his absolution,
Shall ne'er do so by thee.

Brachiano Spit thy poison.

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

Brachiano Thunder! in faith,
They are but crackers.

Francisco We'll end this with the cannon.

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

Francisco Better that,
Than change perfumes for plasters.

Brachiano Pity on thee!
'Twere good you 'd show your slaves, or men condemn'd,
Your new-plough'd forehead. Defiance! and I'll meet thee,
Even in a thicket of thy ablest men.

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

Francisco Willingly.

Brachiano Have you proclaim'd a triumph, that you bait
A lion thus?

Monticelso My lord!

Brachiano I am tame, I am tame, sir.

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

Brachiano Ha!

Francisco A mere tale of a tub: my words are idle.
But to express the sonnet by natural reason,

Enter GIOVANNI

When stags grow melancholic you'll find the season.

Monticelso No more, my lord; here comes a champion
Shall end the difference between you both;
Your son, the Prince Giovanni. See, my lords,
What hopes you store in him; this is a casket
For both your crowns, and should be held like dear.
Now is he apt for knowledge; therefore know
It is a more direct and even way,

To train to virtue those of princely blood,
By examples than by precepts: if by examples,
Whom should he rather strive to imitate
Than his own father? be his pattern then,
Leave him a stock of virtue that may last,
Should fortune rend his sails, and split his mast.

Brachiano Your hand, boy: growing to a soldier?

Giovanni Give me a pike.

Francisco What, practising your pike so young, fair cousin?

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

Francisco Yes, cousin, a young prince
Of good discretion might.

Giovanni Say you so?
Indeed I have heard, 'tis fit a general
Should not endanger his own person oft;
So that he make a noise when he 's a-horseback,
Like a Danske drummer, - Oh, 'tis excellent! -
He need not fight! methinks his horse as well
Might lead an army for him. If I live,
I'll charge the French foe in the very front
Of all my troops, the foremost man.

Francisco What! what!

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

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

Francisco Pretty cousin!

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

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

Giovanni Thus, my lord:

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

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

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

Monticelso Witty prince!

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

Brachiano Most wishedly:
Like bones which, broke in sunder, and well set,
Knit the more strongly.

Francisco Call Camillo hither. -
You have receiv'd the rumour, how Count Lodowick
Is turn'd a pirate?

Brachiano Yes.

Francisco We are now preparing
Some ships to fetch him in. Behold your duchess.
We now will leave you, and expect from you
Nothing but kind entreaty.

Brachiano You have charm'd me.

Exeunt FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, and GIOVANNI.
Enter ISABELLA.

You are in health, we see.

Isabella And above health,
To see my lord well.

Brachiano So: I wonder much
What amorous whirlwind hurried you to Rome.

Isabella Devotion, my lord.

Brachiano Devotion!
Is your soul charg'd with any grievous sin?

Isabella 'Tis burden'd with too many; and I think
The oftener that we cast our reckonings up,
Our sleep will be the sounder.

Brachiano Take your chamber.

Isabella Nay, my dear lord, I will not have you angry!
Doth not my absence from you, now two months,
Merit one kiss?

Brachiano I do not use to kiss:
If that will dispossess your jealousy,
I'll swear it to you.

Isabella Oh, my loved lord,
I do not come to chide: my jealousy!
I am to learn what that Italian means.
You are as welcome to these longing arms,
As I to you a virgin.

Brachiano Oh, your breath!
Out upon sweetmeats and continued physic,
The plague is in them!

Isabella You have oft, for these two lips,
Neglected cassia, or the natural sweets
Of the spring-violet: they are not yet much wither'd.
My lord, I should be merry: these your frowns
Show in a helmet lovely; but on me,
In such a peaceful interview, methinks
They are too roughly knit.

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

Isabella Never, my dear lord.

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

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

Brachiano Because your brother is the corpulent duke,
That is, the great duke, 'sdeath, I shall not shortly
Racket away five hundred crowns at tennis,
But it shall rest 'pon record! I scorn him
Like a shav'd Polack: all his reverend wit
Lies in his wardrobe; he 's a discreet fellow,
When he 's made up in his robes of state.
Your brother, the great duke, because h'as galleys,

And now and then ransacks a Turkish fly-boat,
(Now all the hellish furies take his soul!)
First made this match: accursed be the priest
That sang the wedding-mass, and even my issue!

Isabella Oh, too, too far you have curs'd!

Brachiano Your hand I'll kiss;
This is the latest ceremony of my love.
Henceforth I'll never lie with thee; by this,
This wedding-ring, I'll ne'er more lie with thee!
And this divorce shall be as truly kept,
As if the judge had doomed it. Fare you well:
Our sleeps are sever'd.

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

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

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

Brachiano Never.

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

Brachiano No more; go, go, complain to the great duke.

Isabella No, my dear lord; you shall have present witness
How I'll work peace between you. I will make
Myself the author of your cursed vow;
I have some cause to do it, you have none.
Conceal it, I beseech you, for the weal
Of both your dukedoms, that you wrought the means
Of such a separation: let the fault
Remain with my supposed jealousy,
And think with what a piteous and rent heart

I shall perform this sad ensuing part.

Enter FRANCISCO, FLAMINEO, MONTICELSO, and CAMILLO

Brachiano Well, take your course. - My honourable brother!

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

Brachiano Welcome, say!
She hath given a sharp welcome.

Francisco Are you foolish?
Come, dry your tears: is this a modest course
To better what is naught, to rail and weep?
Grow to a reconcilment, or, by heaven,
I'll ne'er more deal between you.

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

Francisco Was your husband loud
Since we departed?

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

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

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

Francisco What! turn'd fury!

Isabella To dig the strumpet's eyes out; let her lie
Some twenty months a-dying; to cut off
Her nose and lips, pull out her rotten teeth;
Preserve her flesh like mummia, for trophies
Of my just anger! Hell, to my affliction,
Is mere snow-water. By your favour, sir; -
Brother, draw near, and my lord cardinal, -
Sir, let me borrow of you but one kiss;
Henceforth I'll never lie with you, by this,

This wedding-ring.

Francisco How, ne'er more lie with him!

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

Brachiano Ne'er lie with me!

Isabella Let not my former dotage
Make thee an unbeliever; this my vow
Shall never on my soul be satisfied
With my repentance: manet alta mente repostum.

Francisco Now, by my birth, you are a foolish, mad,
And jealous woman.

Brachiano You see 'tis not my seeking.

Francisco Was this your circle of pure unicorn's horn,
You said should charm your lord! now horns upon thee,
For jealousy deserves them! Keep your vow
And take your chamber.

Isabella No, sir, I'll presently to Padua;
I will not stay a minute.

Monticelso Oh, good madam!

Brachiano 'Twere best to let her have her humour;
Some half-day's journey will bring down her stomach,
And then she'll turn in post.

Francisco To see her come
To my lord cardinal for a dispensation
Of her rash vow, will beget excellent laughter.

Isabella 'Unkindness, do thy office; poor heart, break:
Those are the killing griefs, which dare not speak.'

Exit.

Marcello Camillo 's come, my lord.

Enter CAMILLO

Francisco Where 's the commission?

Marcello 'Tis here.

Francisco Give me the signet.

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

Enter DOCTOR

Brachiano About the murder?

Flamineo They are sending him to Naples, but I'll send him to Candy. Here 's another property too.

Brachiano Oh, the doctor!

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

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

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

Brachiano Oh, Saint Anthony's fire!

Doctor Your secretary is merry, my lord.

Flamineo O thou cursed antipathy to nature! Look, his eye's bloodshot, like a needle a surgeon stitcheth a wound with. Let me embrace thee, toad, and love thee, O thou abominable, loathsome gargarism, that will fetch up lungs, lights, heart, and liver, by scruples!

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

Doctor Sir, I shall.

Brachiano But for Camillo?

Flamineo He dies this night, by such a politic strain,
Men shall suppose him by's own engine slain.
But for your duchess' death -

Doctor I'll make her sure.

Brachiano Small mischiefs are by greater made secure.

Flamineo Remember this, you slave; when knaves come to preferment, they rise as gallows are raised in the Low Countries, one upon another's shoulders.

Exeunt.

MONTICELSO, CAMILLO, and FRANCISCO coming forward.

Monticelso Here is an emblem, nephew, pray peruse it:
'Twas thrown in at your window.

Camillo At my window!
Here is a stag, my lord, hath shed his horns,
And, for the loss of them, the poor beast weeps:
The word, *Inopem me copia fecit*.

Monticelso That is,
Plenty of horns hath made him poor of horns.

Camillo What should this mean?

Monticelso I'll tell you; 'tis given out
You are a cuckold.

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

Francisco Have you any children?

Camillo None, my lord.

Francisco You are the happier:
I'll tell you a tale.

Camillo Pray, my lord.

Francisco An old tale.
Upon a time Phoebus, the god of light,
Or him we call the sun, would need be married:
The gods gave their consent, and Mercury
Was sent to voice it to the general world.
But what a piteous cry there straight arose
Amongst smiths and felt-makers, brewers and cooks,
Reapers and butter-women, amongst fishmongers,
And thousand other trades, which are annoyed
By his excessive heat! 'twas lamentable.

They came to Jupiter all in a sweat,
And do forbid the banns. A great fat cook
Was made their speaker, who entreats of Jove
That Phoebus might be gelded; for if now,
When there was but one sun, so many men
Were like to perish by his violent heat,
What should they do if he were married,
And should beget more, and those children
Make fireworks like their father? So say I;
Only I will apply it to your wife;
Her issue, should not providence prevent it,
Would make both nature, time, and man repent it.

Monticelso Look you, cousin,
Go, change the air for shame; see if your absence
Will blast your cornucopia. Marcello
Is chosen with you joint commissioner,
For the relieving our Italian coast
From pirates.

Marcello I am much honour'd in 't.

Camillo But, sir,
Ere I return, the stag's horns may be sprouted
Greater than those are shed.

Monticelso Do not fear it;
I'll be your ranger.

Camillo You must watch i' th' nights;
Then 's the most danger.

Francisco Farewell, good Marcello:
All the best fortunes of a soldier's wish
Bring you a-shipboard.

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

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

Camillo Merry, my lord! a' th' captain's humour right,
I am resolved to be drunk this night.

Exeunt.

Francisco So, 'twas well fitted; now shall we discern
How his wish'd absence will give violent way

To Duke Brachiano's lust.

Monticelso Why, that was it;
To what scorn'd purpose else should we make choice
Of him for a sea-captain? and, besides,
Count Lodowick, which was rumour'd for a pirate,
Is now in Padua.

Francisco Is 't true?

Monticelso Most certain.
I have letters from him, which are suppliant
To work his quick repeal from banishment:
He means to address himself for pension
Unto our sister duchess.

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

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

Francisco Come, to observe this strumpet.

Monticelso Curse of greatness!
Sure he'll not leave her?

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

Exeunt.

Scene 2

Enter BRACHIANO, with one in the habit of a CONJURER

Brachiano Now, sir, I claim your promise: 'tis dead midnight,
The time prefix'd to show me by your art,
How the intended murder of Camillo,
And our loath'd duchess, grow to action.

Conjurer You have won me by your bounty to a deed
I do not often practise. Some there are,
Which by sophistic tricks, aspire that name
Which I would gladly lose, of necromancer;
As some that use to juggle upon cards,
Seeming to conjure, when indeed they cheat;
Others that raise up their confederate spirits
'Bout windmills, and endanger their own necks
For making of a squib; and some there are
Will keep a curtal to show juggling tricks,
And give out 'tis a spirit; besides these,
Such a whole ream of almanac-makers, figure-flingers,
Fellows, indeed, that only live by stealth,
Since they do merely lie about stol'n goods,
They 'd make men think the devil were fast and loose,
With speaking fustian Latin. Pray, sit down;
Put on this nightcap, sir, 'tis charm'd; and now
I'll show you, by my strong commanding art,
The circumstance that breaks your duchess' heart.

Dumb Show

Enter suspiciously Julio and Christophero: they draw a curtain where Brachiano's picture is; they put on spectacles of glass, which cover their eyes and noses, and then burn perfumes before the picture, and wash the lips of the picture; that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles, they depart laughing.

Enter Isabella in her night-gown, as to bedward, with lights, after her, Count Lodovico, Giovanni, Guidantonio, and others waiting on her: she kneels down as to prayers, then draws the curtain of the picture, does three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice; she faints, and will not suffer them to come near it; dies; sorrow expressed in Giovanni, and in Count Lodovico. She is conveyed out solemnly.

Brachiano Excellent! then she 's dead.

Conjurer She 's poisoned
By the fumed picture. 'Twas her custom nightly,
Before she went to bed, to go and visit
Your picture, and to feed her eyes and lips
On the dead shadow: Doctor Julio,
Observing this, infects it with an oil,
And other poison'd stuff, which presently
Did suffocate her spirits.

Brachiano Methought I saw
Count Lodowick there.

Conjurer He was; and by my art,

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

The Second Dumb Show

Enter Flamineo, Marcello, Camillo, with four more as captains: they drink healths, and dance; a vaulting horse is brought into the room; Marcello and two more whispered out of the room, while Flamineo and Camillo strip themselves into their shirts, as to vault; compliment who shall begin; as Camillo is about to vault, Flamineo pitcheth him upon his neck, and, with the help of the rest, writhes his neck about- seems to see if it be broke, and lays him folded double, as 'twere under the horse; makes shows to call for help; Marcello comes in, laments; sends for the cardinal and duke, who comes forth with armed men; wonders at the act; commands the body to be carried home; apprehends Flamineo, Marcello, and the rest, and go, as 'twere, to apprehend Vittoria.

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

Conjurer Oh, 'twas most apparent!
You saw them enter, charg'd with their deep healths
To their boon voyage; and, to second that,
Flamineo calls to have a vaulting horse
Maintain their sport; the virtuous Marcello
Is innocently plotted forth the room;
Whilst your eye saw the rest, and can inform you
The engine of all.

Brachiano It seems Marcello and Flamineo
Are both committed.

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

Brachiano Noble friend,
You bind me ever to you: this shall stand
As the firm seal annexed to my hand;
It shall enforce a payment.

Conjurer Sir, I thank you.

Exit BRACHIANO.

Both flowers and weeds spring, when the sun is warm,
And great men do great good, or else great harm.

Exit.

Act 3

Scene 1

Enter FRANCISCO de Medicis, and MONTICELSO, their Chancellor and Register.

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

Monticelso 'Twas not ill;
For, sir, you know we have naught but circumstances
To charge her with, about her husband's death:
Their approbation, therefore, to the proofs
Of her black lust shall make her infamous
To all our neighbouring kingdoms. I wonder
If Brachiano will be here?

Francisco Oh, fie! 'Twere impudence too palpable.

Exeunt.

Enter FLAMINEO and MARCELLO guarded, and a LAWYER

Lawyer What, are you in by the week? So - I will try now whether thy wit be
close prisoner - methinks none should sit upon thy sister, but old whore-
master -

Flamineo Or cuckolds; for your cuckold is your most terrible tickler of
lechery. Whore-masters would serve; for none are judges at tilting, but
those that have been old tilters.

Lawyer My lord duke and she have been very private.

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

Lawyer If it can be proved they have but kissed one another -

Flamineo What then?

Lawyer My lord cardinal will ferret them.

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

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

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

Lawyer Hark! the ambassadors are 'lighted

Flamineo I do put on this feigned garb of mirth,
To gull suspicion.

Marcello Oh, my unfortunate sister!
I would my dagger-point had cleft her heart
When she first saw Brachiano: you, 'tis said,
Were made his engine, and his stalking horse,
To undo my sister.

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

Marcello Your ruin.

Flamineo Hum! thou art a soldier,
Followest the great duke, feed'st his victories,
As witches do their serviceable spirits,
Even with thy prodigal blood: what hast got?
But, like the wealth of captains, a poor handful,
Which in thy palm thou bear'st, as men hold water;
Seeking to grip it fast, the frail reward
Steals through thy fingers.

Marcello Sir!

Flamineo Thou hast scarce maintenance
To keep thee in fresh chamois.

Marcello Brother!

Flamineo Hear me:
And thus, when we have even pour'd ourselves
Into great fights, for their ambition,
Or idle spleen, how shall we find reward?
But as we seldom find the mistletoe,
Sacred to physic, or the builder oak,
Without a mandrake by it; so in our quest of gain,
Alas, the poorest of their forc'd dislikes
At a limb proffers, but at heart it strikes!
This is lamented doctrine.

Marcello Come, come.

Flamineo When age shall turn thee
White as a blooming hawthorn -

Marcello I'll interrupt you:
For love of virtue bear an honest heart,
And stride o'er every politic respect,
Which, where they most advance, they most infect.
Were I your father, as I am your brother,
I should not be ambitious to leave you
A better patrimony.

Flamineo I'll think on 't.

Enter Savoy AMBASSADOR.

The lord ambassadors.

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

Enter FRENCH Ambassador

Lawyer Oh, my sprightly Frenchman! Do you know him? he 's an admirable
tilter.

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

Lawyer Oh, but he 's an excellent horseman!

Flamineo A lame one in his lofty tricks; he sleeps a-horseback, like a
poulterer.

Enter ENGLISH and SPANISH

Lawyer Lo you, my Spaniard!

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

Exeunt.

Scene 2: The Arraignment of Vittoria

Enter FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, the six Lieger AMBASSADORS, BRACHIANO,
VITTORIA, ZANCHE, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, LAWYER, and a GUARD.

Monticelso Forbear, my lord, here is no place assign'd you.
This business, by his Holiness, is left
To our examination.

Brachiano May it thrive with you.

Lays a rich gown under him.

Francisco A chair there for his lordship.

Brachiano Forbear your kindness: an unbidden guest
Should travel as Dutch women go to church,
Bear their stools with them.

Monticelso At your pleasure, sir.
Stand to the table, gentlewoman. Now, signior,
Fall to your plea.

Lawyer Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pestem, mulierum
corruptissimam.

Vittoria What 's he?

Francisco A lawyer that pleads against you.

Vittoria Pray, my lord, let him speak his usual tongue,
I'll make no answer else.

Francisco Why, you understand Latin.

Vittoria I do, sir, but amongst this auditory
Which come to hear my cause, the half or more
May be ignorant in 't.

Monticelso Go on, sir.

Vittoria By your favour,
I will not have my accusation clouded
In a strange tongue: all this assembly
Shall hear what you can charge me with.

Francisco Signior,
You need not stand on 't much; pray, change your language.

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

Lawyer Well then, have at you.

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

Lawyer Most literated judges, please your lordships
So to connive your judgments to the view
Of this debauch'd and diversivolent woman;
Who such a black concatenation
Of mischief hath effected, that to extirp
The memory of 't, must be the consummation
Of her, and her projections -

Vittoria What 's all this?

Lawyer Hold your peace!
Exorbitant sins must have exulceration.

Vittoria Surely, my lords, this lawyer here hath swallow'd
Some 'pothecaries' bills, or proclamations;
And now the hard and undigestible words
Come up, like stones we use give hawks for physic.
Why, this is Welsh to Latin.

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

Francisco Sir, your pains
Shall be well spar'd, and your deep eloquence
Be worthily applauded amongst those
Which understand you.

Lawyer My good lord.

Francisco Sir,
Put up your papers in your fustian bag -

Francisco speaks this as in scorn.

Cry mercy, sir, 'tis buckram and accept
My notion of your learn'd verbosity.

Lawyer I most graduatically thank your lordship:
I shall have use for them elsewhere.

Monticelso I shall be plainer with you, and paint out
Your follies in more natural red and white
Than that upon your cheek.

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

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

Vittoria My honourable lord,
It doth not suit a reverend cardinal
To play the lawyer thus.

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

Vittoria Your envenom'd 'pothecary should do 't.

Monticelso I am resolv'd,
Were there a second paradise to lose,
This devil would betray it.

Vittoria O poor Charity!
Thou art seldom found in scarlet.

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

Vittoria Ha! whore! what 's that?

Monticelso Shall I expound whore to you? sure I shall;
I'll give their perfect character. They are first,
Sweetmeats which rot the eater; in man's nostrils
Poison'd perfumes. They are cozening alchemy;
Shipwrecks in calmest weather. What are whores!
Cold Russian winters, that appear so barren,
As if that nature had forgot the spring.
They are the true material fire of hell:
Worse than those tributes i' th' Low Countries paid,
Exactions upon meat, drink, garments, sleep,
Ay, even on man's perdition, his sin.
They are those brittle evidences of law,
Which forfeit all a wretched man's estate
For leaving out one syllable. What are whores!
They are those flattering bells have all one tune,
At weddings, and at funerals. Your rich whores

Are only treasuries by extortion fill'd,
And emptied by curs'd riot. They are worse,
Worse than dead bodies which are begg'd at gallows,
And wrought upon by surgeons, to teach man
Wherein he is imperfect. What 's a whore!
She 's like the guilty counterfeited coin,
Which, whosoe'er first stamps it, brings in trouble
All that receive it.

Vittoria This character 'scapes me.

Monticelso You, gentlewoman!
Take from all beasts and from all minerals
Their deadly poison -

Vittoria Well, what then?

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

French

Ambassador She hath liv'd ill.

English

Ambassador True, but the cardinal 's too bitter.

Monticelso You know what whore is. Next the devil adultery,
Enters the devil murder.

Francisco Your unhappy husband
Is dead.

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

Francisco And by a vaulting engine.

Monticelso An active plot; he jump'd into his grave.

Francisco What a prodigy was 't,
That from some two yards' height, a slender man
Should break his neck!

Monticelso I' th' rushes!

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

Monticelso And look upon this creature was his wife!
She comes not like a widow; she comes arm'd
With scorn and impudence: is this a mourning-habit?

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

Monticelso Oh, you are cunning!

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

Monticelso See, my lords,
She scandals our proceedings.

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

English

Ambassador She hath a brave spirit.

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

Vittoria You are deceiv'd:
For know, that all your strict-combined heads,
Which strike against this mine of diamonds,
Shall prove but glassen hammers: they shall break.
These are but feigned shadows of my evils.
Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils,
I am past such needless palsy. For your names
Of 'whore' and 'murderess', they proceed from you,
As if a man should spit against the wind,
The filth returns in 's face.

Monticelso Pray you, mistress, satisfy me one question:
Who lodg'd beneath your roof that fatal night
Your husband broke his neck?

Brachiano That question
Enforceth me break silence: I was there.

Monticelso Your business?

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

Monticelso He was.

Brachiano And 'twas strangely fear'd,
That you would cozen her.

Monticelso Who made you overseer?

Brachiano Why, my charity, my charity, which should flow
From every generous and noble spirit,
To orphans and to widows.

Monticelso Your lust!

Brachiano Cowardly dogs bark loudest: sirrah priest,
I'll talk with you hereafter. Do you hear?
The sword you frame of such an excellent temper,
I'll sheathe in your own bowels.
There are a number of thy coat resemble
Your common post-boys.

Monticelso Ha!

Brachiano Your mercenary post-boys;
Your letters carry truth, but 'tis your guise
To fill your mouths with gross and impudent lies.

Servant My lord, your gown.

Brachiano Thou liest, 'twas my stool:
Bestow 't upon thy master, that will challenge
The rest o' th' household-stuff; for Brachiano
Was ne'er so beggarly to take a stool
Out of another's lodging: let him make
Vallance for his bed on 't, or a demy foot-cloth
For his most reverend moil. Monticelso,
Nemo me impune lacessit.

Exit.

Monticelso Your champion 's gone.

Vittoria The wolf may prey the better.

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

Vittoria I discern poison
Under your gilded pills.

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

Vittoria Grant I was tempted;
Temptation to lust proves not the act:
Casta est quam nemo rogavit.
You read his hot love to me, but you want
My frosty answer.

Monticelso Frost i' th' dog-days! strange!

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

Monticelso Truly drown'd, indeed.

Vittoria Sum up my faults, I pray, and you shall find,
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart,
And a good stomach to feast, are all,
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with.
In faith, my lord, you might go pistol flies,
The sport would be more noble.

Monticelso Very good.

Vittoria But take your course: it seems you've beggar'd me first,
And now would fain undo me. I have houses,

Jewels, and a poor remnant of crusadoes;
Would those would make you charitable!

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

Vittoria You have one virtue left,
You will not flatter me.

Francisco Who brought this letter?

Vittoria I am not compell'd to tell you.

Monticelso My lord duke sent to you a thousand ducats
The twelfth of August.

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

Monticelso I rather think,
'Twas interest for his lust.

Vittoria Who says so but yourself?
If you be my accuser,
Pray cease to be my judge: come from the bench;
Give in your evidence 'gainst me, and let these
Be moderators. My lord cardinal,
Were your intelligencing ears as loving
As to my thoughts, had you an honest tongue,
I would not care though you proclaim'd them all.

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

Vittoria O' your own grafting?

Monticelso You were born in Venice, honourably descended
From the Vittelli: 'twas my cousin's fate,
Ill may I name the hour, to marry you;
He bought you of your father.

Vittoria Ha!

Monticelso He spent there in six months
Twelve thousand ducats, and (to my acquaintance)
Receiv'd in dowry with you not one julio:
'Twas a hard pennyworth, the ware being so light.
I yet but draw the curtain; now to your picture:
You came from thence a most notorious strumpet,

And so you have continued.

Vittoria My lord!

Monticelso Nay, hear me,
You shall have time to prate. My Lord Brachiano -
Alas! I make but repetition
Of what is ordinary and Rialto talk,
And ballated, and would be play'd a' th' stage,
But that vice many times finds such loud friends,
That preachers are charm'd silent.
You, gentlemen, Flamineo and Marcello,
The Court hath nothing now to charge you with,
Only you must remain upon your sureties
For your appearance.

Francisco I stand for Marcello.

Flamineo And my lord duke for me.

Monticelso For you, Vittoria, your public fault,
Join'd to th' condition of the present time,
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity,
Such a corrupted trial have you made
Both of your life and beauty, and been styl'd
No less an ominous fate than blazing stars
To princes. Hear your sentence: you are confin'd
Unto a house of convertites, and your bawd -

Flamineo [Aside.] Who, I?

Monticelso The Moor.

Flamineo [Aside.] Oh, I am a sound man again.

Vittoria A house of convertites! what 's that?

Monticelso A house of penitent whores.

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

Francisco You must have patience.

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

Monticelso Away with her,

Take her hence.

Vittoria A rape! a rape -

Monticelso How?

Vittoria Yes, you have ravish'd justice;
Forc'd her to do your pleasure.

Monticelso Fie, she 's mad -

Vittoria Die with those pills in your most cursed maw,
Should bring you health! or while you sit o' th' bench,
Let your own spittle choke you!

Monticelso She 's turn'd fury.

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

Monticelso Of convertites.

Vittoria It shall not be a house of convertites;
My mind shall make it honester to me
Than the Pope's palace, and more peaceable
Than thy soul, though thou art a cardinal.
Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spite,
Through darkness diamonds spread their richest light.

Exit.

Enter BRACHIANO

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

Francisco Sir, what 's the matter?

Brachiano I will not chase more blood from that lov'd cheek;
You have lost too much already; fare you well.

Exit.

Francisco How strange these words sound! what 's the interpretation?

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

Exit.

Enter GIOVANNI, and Count LODOVICO

Francisco How now, my noble cousin? what, in black!

Giovanni Yes, uncle, I was taught to imitate you
In virtue, and you must imitate me
In colours of your garments. My sweet mother
Is -

Francisco How? where?

Giovanni Is there; no, yonder: indeed, sir, I'll not tell you,
For I shall make you weep.

Francisco Is dead?

Giovanni Do not blame me now,
I did not tell you so.

Lodovico She 's dead, my lord.

Francisco Dead!

Monticelso Bless'd lady, thou art now above thy woes!
Will 't please your lordships to withdraw a little?

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

Francisco No, coz; they sleep.

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

Francisco When God shall please.

Giovanni Good God, let her sleep ever!
For I have known her wake an hundred nights,
When all the pillow where she laid her head

Was brine-wet with her tears. I am to complain to you, sir;
I'll tell you how they have us'd her now she 's dead:
They wrapp'd her in a cruel fold of lead,
And would not let me kiss her.

Francisco Thou didst love her?

Giovanni I have often heard her say she gave me suck,
And it should seem by that she dearly lov'd me,
Since princes seldom do it.

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

Exit GIOVANNI.

Monticelso How now, my lord?

Francisco Believe me, I am nothing but her grave;
And I shall keep her blessed memory
Longer than thousand epitaphs.

Exeunt.

Scene 3

Enter FLAMINEO as distracted, MARCELLO, and LODOVICO

Flamineo We endure the strokes like anvils or hard steel,
Till pain itself make us no pain to feel.
Who shall do me right now? is this the end of service? I 'd rather go weed
garlic; travel through France, and be mine own ostler; wear sheep-skin
linings, or shoes that stink of blacking; be entered into the list of the
forty thousand pedlars in Poland.

Enter SAVOY AMBASSADOR.

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

Savoy

Ambassador You must have comfort.

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

Enter FRENCH AMBASSADOR

French

Ambassador The proofs are evident.

Flamineo Proof! 'twas corruption. O gold, what a god art thou! and O man, what a devil art thou to be tempted by that cursed mineral! Yon diversivolent lawyer, mark him! knaves turn informers, as maggots turn to flies, you may catch gudgeons with either. A cardinal! I would he would hear me: there 's nothing so holy but money will corrupt and putrify it, like victual under the line.

Enter ENGLISH AMBASSADOR.

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

English

Ambassador Fie, fie, Flamineo.

Flamineo Bells ne'er ring well, till they are at their full pitch; and I hope yon cardinal shall never have the grace to pray well, till he come to the scaffold. If they were racked now to know the confederacy: but your noblemen are privileged from the rack; and well may, for a little thing would pull some of them a-pieces afore they came to their arraignment. Religion, oh, how it is commeddled with policy! The first blood shed in the world happened about religion. Would I were a Jew!

Marcello Oh, there are too many!

Flamineo You are deceived; there are not Jews enough, priests enough, nor gentlemen enough.

Marcello How?

Flamineo I'll prove it; for if there were Jews enough, so many Christians would not turn usurers; if priests enough, one should not have six benefices; and if gentlemen enough, so many early mushrooms, whose best growth sprang from a dunghill, should not aspire to gentility. Farewell: let others live by begging: be thou one of them practise the art of Wolner in England, to swallow all 's given thee: and yet let one purgation make thee as hungry again as fellows that work in a saw-pit. I'll go hear the screech-owl.

Exit.

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

Re-enter FLAMINEO

Flamineo How dares this banish'd count return to Rome,
His pardon not yet purchas'd! I have heard
The deceased duchess gave him pension,
And that he came along from Padua
I' th' train of the young prince. There 's somewhat in 't:
Physicians, that cure poisons, still do work
With counter-poisons.

Marcello Mark this strange encounter.

Flamineo The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison,
And let the stigmatic wrinkles in thy face,
Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide,
One still overtake another.

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

Flamineo How croaks the raven?
Is our good duchess dead?

Lodovico Dead.

Flamineo O fate!
Misfortune comes like the coroner's business
Huddle upon huddle.

Lodovico Shalt thou and I join housekeeping?

Flamineo Yes, content:
Let 's be unsociably sociable.

Lodovico Sit some three days together, and discourse?

Flamineo Only with making faces;
Lie in our clothes.

Lodovico With faggots for our pillows.

Flamineo And be lousy.

Lodovico In taffeta linings, that 's genteel melancholy;
Sleep all day.

Flamineo Yes; and, like your melancholic hare,
Feed after midnight.

Enter ANTONELLI and GASPARO.

We are observed: see how yon couple grieve.

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

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

Lodovico Precious rogue!
We'll never part.

Flamineo Never, till the beggary of courtiers,
The discontent of churchmen, want of soldiers,
And all the creatures that hang manacled,
Worse than strappadoed, on the lowest felly
Of fortune's wheel, be taught, in our two lives,
To scorn that world which life of means deprives.

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

Lodovico I thank you for your news. Look up again,
Flamineo, see my pardon.

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

Lodovico Why?

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

Lodovico Your sister is a damnable whore.

Flamineo Ha!

Lodovico Look you, I spake that laughing.

Flamineo Dost ever think to speak again?

Lodovico Do you hear?
Wilt sell me forty ounces of her blood

To water a mandrake?

Flamineo Poor lord, you did vow
To live a lousy creature.

Lodovico Yes.

Flamineo Like one
That had for ever forfeited the daylight,
By being in debt.

Lodovico Ha, ha!

Flamineo I do not greatly wonder you do break,
Your lordship learn'd 't long since. But I'll tell you.

Lodovico What?

Flamineo And 't shall stick by you.

Lodovico I long for it.

Flamineo This laughter scurvily becomes your face:
If you will not be melancholy, be angry.

Strikes him.

See, now I laugh too.

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

Lodovico Unhand me.

Exeunt MARCELLO and FLAMINEO.

That e'er I should be forc'd to right myself,
Upon a pander!

Antonelli My lord.

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

Gasparo How this shows!

Lodovico Ud's death! how did my sword miss him?
These rogues that are most weary of their lives
Still 'scape the greatest dangers.
A pox upon him; all his reputation,
Nay, all the goodness of his family,
Is not worth half this earthquake:
I learn'd it of no fencer to shake thus:

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

Exeunt.

Act 4

Scene 1

Enter FRANCISCO and MONTICELSO

Monticelso Come, come, my lord, untie your folded thoughts,
And let them dangle loose, as a bride's hair.
Your sister 's poison'd.

Francisco Far be it from my thoughts
To seek revenge.

Monticelso What, are you turn'd all marble?

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

Monticelso That 's not the course I 'd wish you; pray observe me.
We see that undermining more prevails
Than doth the cannon. Bear your wrongs conceal'd,
And, patient as the tortoise, let this camel
Stalk o'er your back unbruis'd: sleep with the lion,
And let this brood of secure foolish mice
Play with your nostrils, till the time be ripe
For th' bloody audit, and the fatal gripe:
Aim like a cunning fowler, close one eye,
That you the better may your game espy.

Francisco Free me, my innocence, from treacherous acts!
I know there 's thunder yonder; and I'll stand,
Like a safe valley, which low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain: since I know
Treason, like spiders weaving nets for flies,
By her foul work is found, and in it dies.
To pass away these thoughts, my honour'd lord,
It is reported you possess a book,
Wherein you have quoted, by intelligence,
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the city.

Monticelso Sir, I do;
And some there are which call it my black-book.
Well may the title hold; for though it teach not
The art of conjuring, yet in it lurk
The names of many devils.

Francisco Pray let 's see it.

Monticelso I'll fetch it to your lordship.

Exit.

Francisco Monticelso,
I will not trust thee, but in all my plots
I'll rest as jealous as a town besieg'd.
Thou canst not reach what I intend to act:
Your flax soon kindles, soon is out again,
But gold slow heats, and long will hot remain.

Enter MONTICELSO, with the book

Monticelso 'Tis here, my lord.

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

Monticelso Their number rises strangely;
And some of them
You 'd take for honest men.
Next are panders.
These are your pirates; and these following leaves
For base rogues, that undo young gentlemen,
By taking up commodities; for politic bankrupts;
For fellows that are bawds to their own wives,
Only to put off horses, and slight jewels,
Clocks, defac'd plate, and such commodities,
At birth of their first children.

Francisco Are there such?

Monticelso These are for impudent bawds,
That go in men's apparel; for usurers
That share with scriveners for their good reportage:
For lawyers that will antedate their writs:
And some divines you might find folded there,
But that I slip them o'er for conscience' sake.
Here is a general catalogue of knaves:
A man might study all the prisons o'er,
Yet never attain this knowledge.

Francisco Murderers?

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

Monticelso Pray, use 't, my lord.

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

Monticelso Somewhat, sir.

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

Monticelso I must make bold
To leave your lordship.

Francisco Dearly, sir, I thank you:
If any ask for me at court, report
You have left me in the company of knaves.

Exit MONTICELSO.

I gather now by this, some cunning fellow
That 's my lord's officer, and that lately skipp'd
From a clerk's desk up to a justice' chair,
Hath made this knavish summons, and intends,
As th' rebels wont were to sell heads,
So to make prize of these. And thus it happens:
Your poor rogues pay for 't, which have not the means
To present bribe in fist; the rest o' th' band
Are raz'd out of the knaves' record; or else
My lord he winks at them with easy will;
His man grows rich, the knaves are the knaves still.
But to the use I'll make of it; it shall serve
To point me out a list of murderers,
Agents for any villainy. Did I want
Ten leash of courtesans, it would furnish me;
Nay, laundress three armies. That in so little paper
Should lie th' undoing of so many men!
'Tis not so big as twenty declarations.
See the corrupted use some make of books:
Divinity, wrested by some factious blood,
Draws swords, swells battles, and o'erthrows all good.
To fashion my revenge more seriously,
Let me remember my dead sister's face:
Call for her picture? no, I'll close mine eyes,
And in a melancholic thought I'll frame

Enter ISABELLA'S GHOST.

Her figure 'fore me. Now I ha't - how strong
Imagination works! how she can frame
Things which are not! methinks she stands afore me,
And by the quick idea of my mind,
Were my skill pregnant, I could draw her picture.
Thought, as a subtle juggler, makes us deem
Things supernatural, which have cause
Common as sickness. 'Tis my melancholy.
How cam'st thou by thy death? - how idle am I
To question mine own idleness! - did ever
Man dream awake till now? - remove this object;
Out of my brain with 't: what have I to do
With tombs, or death-beds, funerals, or tears,
That have to meditate upon revenge?

Exit GHOST.

So, now 'tis ended, like an old wife's story.
Statesmen think often they see stranger sights
Than madmen. Come, to this weighty business.
My tragedy must have some idle mirth in 't,
Else it will never pass. I am in love,
In love with Corombona; and my suit
Thus halts to her in verse. -

He writes.

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

Enter SERVANT.

Bear this
To the House of Convertites, and watch your leisure
To give it to the hands of Corombona,
Or to the Matron, when some followers
Of Brachiano may be by. Away!

Exit SERVANT.

He that deals all by strength, his wit is shallow;
When a man's head goes through, each limb will follow.
The engine for my business, bold Count Lodowick;
'Tis gold must such an instrument procure,
With empty fist no man doth falcons lure.
Brachiano, I am now fit for thy encounter:

Like the wild Irish, I'll ne'er think thee dead
Till I can play at football with thy head,
Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

Exit.

Scene 2

Enter the MATRON, and FLAMINEO

Matron Should it be known the duke hath such recourse
To your imprison'd sister, I were like
T' incur much damage by it.

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

Enter SERVANT

Servant Yonder 's Flamineo in conference
With the Matrona. - Let me speak with you:
I would entreat you to deliver for me
This letter to the fair Vittoria.

Matron I shall, sir.

Enter BRACHIANO

Servant With all care and secrecy;
Hereafter you shall know me, and receive
Thanks for this courtesy.

Exit.

Flamineo How now? what 's that?

Matron A letter.

Flamineo To my sister? I'll see 't deliver'd.

Brachiano What 's that you read, Flamineo?

Flamineo Look.

Brachiano Ha! 'To the most unfortunate, his best respected Vittoria'.
Who was the messenger?

Flamineo I know not.

Brachiano No! who sent it?

Flamineo Ud's foot! you speak as if a man
Should know what fowl is coffin'd in a bak'd meat
Afore you cut it up.

Brachiano I'll open 't, were 't her heart. What 's here subscrib'd!
Florence! this juggling is gross and palpable.
I have found out the conveyance. Read it, read it.

Flamineo [Reads the letter.]
"Your tears I'll turn to triumphs, be but mine;
Your prop is fallen: I pity, that a vine,
Which princes heretofore have long'd to gather,
Wanting supporters, now should fade and wither." -
Wine, i' faith, my lord, with lees would serve his turn. -
"Your sad imprisonment I'll soon uncharm,
And with a princely uncontrolled arm
Lead you to Florence, where my love and care
Shall hang your wishes in my silver hair." -
A halter on his strange equivocation! -
"Nor for my years return me the sad willow;
Who prefer blossoms before fruit that 's mellow?" -
Rotten, on my knowledge, with lying too long i' th' bedstraw. -
"And all the lines of age this line convinces;
The gods never wax old, no more do princes." -
A pox on 't, tear it; let 's have no more atheists, for God's sake.

Brachiano Ud's death! I'll cut her into atomies,
And let th' irregular north wind sweep her up,
And blow her int' his nostrils: where 's this whore?

Flamineo What? what do you call her?

Brachiano Oh, I could be mad!
Prevent the curs'd disease she'll bring me to,
And tear my hair off. Where 's this changeable stuff?

Flamineo O'er head and ears in water, I assure you;
She is not for your wearing.

Brachiano In, you pander!

Flamineo What, me, my lord? am I your dog?

Brachiano A bloodhound: do you brave, do you stand me?

Flamineo Stand you! let those that have diseases run;
I need no plasters.

Brachiano Would you be kick'd?

Flamineo Would you have your neck broke?
I tell you, duke, I am not in Russia;
My shins must be kept whole.

Brachiano Do you know me?

Flamineo Oh, my lord, methodically!
As in this world there are degrees of evils,
So in this world there are degrees of devils.
You 're a great duke, I your poor secretary.
I do look now for a Spanish fig, or an Italian sallet, daily.

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

Flamineo All your kindness to me, is like that miserable courtesy of
Polyphemus to Ulysses; you reserve me to be devoured last: you would dig
turfs out of my grave to feed your larks; that would be music to you. Come,
I'll lead you to her.

Brachiano Do you face me?

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

Enter VITTORIA to Brachiano and Flamineo

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

Vittoria Say, sir?

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

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

Brachiano Confusion on your politic ignorance!
You are reclaim'd, are you? I'll give you the bells,
And let you fly to the devil.

Flamineo Ware hawk, my lord.

Vittoria Florence! this is some treacherous plot, my lord;

To me he ne'er was lovely, I protest,
So much as in my sleep.

Brachiano Right! they are plots.
Your beauty! Oh, ten thousand curses on 't!
How long have I beheld the devil in crystal!
Thou hast led me, like an heathen sacrifice,
With music, and with fatal yokes of flowers,
To my eternal ruin. Woman to man
Is either a god, or a wolf.

Vittoria My lord

Brachiano Away!
We'll be as differing as two adamants,
The one shall shun the other. What! dost weep?
Procure but ten of thy dissembling trade,
Ye 'd furnish all the Irish funerals
With howling past wild Irish.

Flamineo Fie, my lord!

Brachiano That hand, that cursed hand, which I have wearied
With doting kisses! - Oh, my sweetest duchess,
How lovely art thou now! - My loose thoughts
Scatter like quicksilver: I was bewitch'd;
For all the world speaks ill of thee.

Vittoria No matter;
I'll live so now, I'll make that world recant,
And change her speeches. You did name your duchess.

Brachiano Whose death God pardon!

Vittoria Whose death God revenge
On thee, most godless duke!

Flamineo Now for ten whirlwinds.

Vittoria What have I gain'd by thee, but infamy?
Thou hast stain'd the spotless honour of my house,
And frighted thence noble society:
Like those, which sick o' th' palsy, and retain
Ill-scenting foxes 'bout them, are still shunn'd
By those of choicer nostrils. What do you call this house?
Is this your palace? did not the judge style it
A house of penitent whores? who sent me to it?
Who hath the honour to advance Vittoria
To this incontinent college? is 't not you?
Is 't not your high preferment? go, go, brag

How many ladies you have undone, like me.
Fare you well, sir; let me hear no more of you!
I had a limb corrupted to an ulcer,
But I have cut it off; and now I'll go
Weeping to heaven on crutches. For your gifts,
I will return them all, and I do wish
That I could make you full executor
To all my sins. O that I could toss myself
Into a grave as quickly! for all thou art worth
I'll not shed one tear more - I'll burst first.

She throws herself upon a bed.

Brachiano I have drunk Lethe: Vittoria!
My dearest happiness! Vittoria!
What do you ail, my love? why do you weep?

Vittoria Yes, I now weep poniards, do you see?

Brachiano Are not those matchless eyes mine?

Vittoria I had rather
They were not matches.

Brachiano Is not this lip mine?

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

Flamineo Turn to my lord, good sister.

Vittoria Hence, you pander!

Flamineo Pander! am I the author of your sin?

Vittoria Yes; he 's a base thief that a thief lets in.

Flamineo We 're blown up, my lord

Brachiano Wilt thou hear me?
Once to be jealous of thee, is t' express
That I will love thee everlastingly,
And never more be jealous.

Vittoria O thou fool,
Whose greatness hath by much o'ergrown thy wit!
What dar'st thou do, that I not dare to suffer,
Excepting to be still thy whore? for that,
In the sea's bottom sooner thou shalt make
A bonfire.

Flamineo Oh, no oaths, for God's sake!

Brachiano Will you hear me?

Vittoria Never.

Flamineo What a damn'd imposthume is a woman's will!
Can nothing break it? [Aside.] Fie, fie, my lord,
Women are caught as you take tortoises,
She must be turn'd on her back. Sister, by this hand
I am on your side. - Come, come, you have wrong'd her;
What a strange credulous man were you, my lord,
To think the Duke of Florence would love her!
Will any mercer take another's ware
When once 'tis tow'd and sullied? And yet, sister,
How scurvily this forwardness becomes you!
Young leverets stand not long, and women's anger
Should, like their flight, procure a little sport;
A full cry for a quarter of an hour,
And then be put to th' dead quat.

Brachiano Shall these eyes,
Which have so long time dwelt upon your face,
Be now put out?

Flamineo No cruel landlady i' th' world,
Which lends forth goats to broom-men, and takes use
For them, would do 't.
Hand her, my lord, and kiss her: be not like
A ferret, to let go your hold with blowing.

Brachiano Let us renew right hands.

Vittoria Hence!

Brachiano Never shall rage, or the forgetful wine,
Make me commit like fault.

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

Brachiano Be thou at peace with me, let all the world
Threaten the cannon.

Flamineo Mark his penitence;
Best natures do commit the grossest faults,
When they 're given o'er to jealousy, as best wine,
Dying, makes strongest vinegar. I'll tell you:
The sea 's more rough and raging than calm rivers,
But not so sweet, nor wholesome. A quiet woman
Is a still water under a great bridge;

A man may shoot her safely.

Vittoria O ye dissembling men!

Flamineo We suck'd that, sister,
From women's breasts, in our first infancy.

Vittoria To add misery to misery!

Brachiano Sweetest!

Vittoria Am I not low enough?
Ay, ay, your good heart gathers like a snowball,
Now your affection 's cold.

Flamineo Ud's foot, it shall melt
To a heart again, or all the wine in Rome
Shall run o' th' lees for 't.

Vittoria Your dog or hawk should be rewarded better
Than I have been. I'll speak not one word more.

Flamineo Stop her mouth
With a sweet kiss, my lord. So,
Now the tide 's turn'd, the vessel 's come about.
He 's a sweet armful. Oh, we curl-hair'd men
Are still most kind to women! This is well.

Brachiano That you should chide thus!

Flamineo Oh, sir, your little chimneys
Do ever cast most smoke! I sweat for you.
Couple together with as deep a silence,
As did the Grecians in their wooden horse.
My lord, supply your promises with deeds;
You know that painted meat no hunger feeds.

Brachiano Stay, ungrateful Rome -

Flamineo Rome! it deserves to be call'd Barbary,
For our villainous usage.

Brachiano Soft; the same project which the Duke of Florence,
(Whether in love or gullery I know not)
Laid down for her escape, will I pursue.

Flamineo And no time fitter than this night, my lord.
The Pope being dead, and all the cardinals enter'd
The conclave, for th' electing a new Pope;
The city in a great confusion;

We may attire her in a page's suit,
Lay her post-horse, take shipping, and amain
For Padua.

Brachiano I'll instantly steal forth the Prince Giovanni,
And make for Padua. You two with your old mother,
And young Marcello that attends on Florence,
If you can work him to it, follow me:
I will advance you all; for you, Vittoria,
Think of a duchess' title.

Flamineo Lo you, sister!
Stay, my lord; I'll tell you a tale. The crocodile, which lives in the
River Nilus, hath a worm breeds i' th' teeth of 't, which puts it to
extreme anguish: a little bird, no bigger than a wren, is barber-surgeon to
this crocodile; flies into the jaws of 't, picks out the worm, and brings
present remedy. The fish, glad of ease, but ungrateful to her that did it,
that the bird may not talk largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth
her chaps, intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetual silence.
But nature, loathing such ingratitude, hath armed this bird with a quill or
prick on the head, top o' th' which wounds the crocodile i' th' mouth,
forceth her open her bloody prison, and away flies the pretty tooth-picker
from her cruel patient.

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

Flamineo No, my lord.
You, sister, are the crocodile: you are blemish'd in your fame, my lord
cures it; and though the comparison hold not in every particle, yet
observe, remember, what good the bird with the prick i' th' head hath done
you, and scorn ingratitude.
It may appear to some ridiculous
Thus to talk knave and madman, and sometimes
Come in with a dried sentence, stuffed with sage:
But this allows my varying of shapes;
Knaves do grow great by being great men's apes.

Exeunt.

Scene 3

Enter FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, GASPARO, and SIX AMBASSADORS

Francisco So, my lord, I commend your diligence.
Guard well the conclave; and, as the order is,
Let none have conference with the cardinals.

Lodovico I shall, my lord. Room for the ambassadors.

Gasparo They 're wondrous brave today: why do they wear
These several habits?

Lodovico Oh, sir, they 're knights
Of several orders:
That lord i' th' black cloak, with the silver cross,
Is Knight of Rhodes; the next, Knight of St. Michael;
That, of the Golden Fleece; the Frenchman, there,
Knight of the Holy Ghost; my Lord of Savoy,
Knight of th' Annunciation; the Englishman
Is Knight of th' honour'd Garter, dedicated
Unto their saint, St. George. I could describe to you
Their several institutions, with the laws
Annexed to their orders; but that time
Permits not such discovery.

Francisco Where 's Count Lodowick?

Lodovico Here, my lord.

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

Lodovico Sir, I shall.

Enter Servants, with several dishes covered.

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

Servant For my Lord Cardinal Monticelso.

Lodovico Whose this?

Servant For my Lord Cardinal of Bourbon.

French

Ambassador Why doth he search the dishes? to observe
What meat is dressed?

English

Ambassador No, sir, but to prevent
Lest any letters should be convey'd in,
To bribe or to solicit the advancement
Of any cardinal. When first they enter,
'Tis lawful for the ambassadors of princes
To enter with them, and to make their suit
For any man their prince affecteth best;
But after, till a general election,

No man may speak with them.

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

Cardinal [Within.] You must return the service: the lord cardinals
Are busied 'bout electing of the Pope;
They have given o'er scrutiny, and are fallen
To admiration.

Lodovico Away, away.

Francisco I'll lay a thousand ducats you hear news
Of a Pope presently. Hark; sure he 's elected:
Behold, my Lord of Arragon appears
On the church battlements.

A CARDINAL on the terrace.

Arragon Denuntio vobis gaudium magnum: Reverendissimus Cardinalis Lorenzo
de Monticelso electus est in sedem apostolicam, et elcgit sibi nomen Paulum
Quartum.

Omnes Vivat Sanctus Pater Paulus Quartus!

Servant Vittoria, my lord -

Francisco Well, what of her?

Servant Is fled the city

Francisco Ha!

Servant With Duke Brachiano.

Francisco Fled! where 's the Prince Giovanni?

Servant Gone with his father.

Francisco Let the Matrona of the Convertites
Be apprehended. Fled? O damnable!
How fortunate are my wishes! why, 'twas this
I only labour'd: I did send the letter
T' instruct him what to do. Thy fame, fond duke,
I first have poison'd; directed thee the way
To marry a whore; what can be worse? This follows:
The hand must act to drown the passionate tongue,
I scorn to wear a sword and prate of wrong.

Enter MONTICELSO in State

Monticelso Concedimus vobis Apostolicam benedictionem, et remissionem peccatorum.

My lord reports Vittoria Corombona
Is stol'n from forth the House of Convertites
By Brachiano, and they 're fled the city.
Now, though this be the first day of our seat,
We cannot better please the Divine Power,
Than to sequester from the Holy Church
These cursed persons. Make it therefore known,
We do denounce excommunication
Against them both: all that are theirs in Rome
We likewise banish. Set on.

Exeunt all but FRANCISCO and LODOVICO.

Francisco Come, dear Lodovico;
You have ta'en the sacrament to prosecute
Th' intended murder?

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

Francisco Divert me not.
Most of his court are of my faction,
And some are of my council. Noble friend
Our danger shall be like in this design:
Give leave part of the glory may be mine.

Exit FRANCISCO.
Enter MONTICELSO.

Monticelso Why did the Duke of Florence with such care
Labour your pardon? say.

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

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

Lodovico Devil, my lord?

Monticelso I ask you,
How doth the duke employ you, that his bonnet
Fell with such compliment unto his knee,

When he departed from you?

Lodovico Why, my lord,
He told me of a resty Barbary horse
Which he would fain have brought to the career,
The sault, and the ring galliard: now, my lord,
I have a rare French rider.

Monticelso Take you heed,
Lest the jade break your neck. Do you put me off
With your wild horse-tricks? Sirrah, you do lie.
Oh, thou 'rt a foul black cloud, and thou dost threat
A violent storm!

Lodovico Storms are i' th' air, my lord;
I am too low to storm.

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

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

Monticelso You have o'erta'en me.

Lodovico Sir, I did love Brachiano's duchess dearly,
Or rather I pursued her with hot lust,
Though she ne'er knew on 't. She was poison'd;
Upon my soul she was: for which I have sworn
T' avenge her murder.

Monticelso To the Duke of Florence?

Lodovico To him I have.

Monticelso Miserable creature!
If thou persist in this, 'tis damnable.
Dost thou imagine, thou canst slide on blood,
And not be tainted with a shameful fall?
Or, like the black and melancholic yew-tree,
Dost think to root thyself in dead men's graves,
And yet to prosper? Instruction to thee
Comes like sweet showers to o'er-harden'd ground;

They wet, but pierce not deep. And so I leave thee,
With all the furies hanging 'bout thy neck,
Till by thy penitence thou remove this evil,
In conjuring from thy breast that cruel devil.

Exit.

Lodovico I'll give it o'er; he says 'tis damnable:
Besides I did expect his suffrage,
By reason of Camillo's death.

Enter SERVANT and FRANCISCO

Francisco Do you know that count?

Servant Yes, my lord.

Francisco Bear him these thousand ducats to his lodging.
Tell him the Pope hath sent them. Happily
That will confirm more than all the rest.

Exit.

Servant Sir.

Lodovico To me, sir?

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

Lodovico His creature ever to be commanded. -
Why now 'tis come about. He rail'd upon me;
And yet these crowns were told out, and laid ready,
Before he knew my voyage. Oh, the art,
The modest form of greatness! that do sit,
Like brides at wedding-dinners, with their looks turn'd
From the least wanton jests, their puling stomach
Sick of the modesty, when their thoughts are loose,
Even acting of those hot and lustful sports
Are to ensue about midnight: such his cunning!
He sounds my depth thus with a golden plummet.
I am doubly arm'd now. Now to th' act of blood.
There 's but three furies found in spacious hell,
But in a great man's breast three thousand dwell.

Exit.

Act 5

Scene 1

A passage over the stage of BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, HORTENSIO, COROMBONA, CORNELIA, ZANCHE, and others: FLAMINEO and HORTENSIO remain.

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

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

Flamineo Yes, and conferr'd with him i' th' duke's closet.
I have not seen a goodlier personage,
Nor ever talk'd with man better experienc'd
In State affairs, or rudiments of war.
He hath, by report, serv'd the Venetian
In Candy these twice seven years, and been chief
In many a bold design.

Hortensio What are those two
That bear him company?

Flamineo Two noblemen of Hungary, that, living in the emperor's service as commanders, eight years since, contrary to the expectation of all the court, entered into religion, into the strict Order of Capuchins; but, being not well settled in their undertaking, they left their Order, and returned to court; for which, being after troubled in conscience, they vowed their service against the enemies of Christ, went to Malta, were there knighted, and in their return back, at this great solemnity, they are resolved for ever to forsake the world, and settle themselves here in a house of Capuchins in Padua.

Hortensio 'Tis strange.

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

Hortensio Hard penance!
Is the Moor a Christian?

Flamineo He is.

Hortensio Why proffers he his service to our duke?

Flamineo Because he understands there 's like to grow
Some wars between us and the Duke of Florence,
In which he hopes employment.

I never saw one in a stern bold look
Wear more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Express more knowing, or more deep contempt
Of our slight airy courtiers. He talks
As if he travell'd all the princes' courts
Of Christendom: in all things strives t' express,
That all, that should dispute with him, may know,
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
But look'd to near, have neither heat nor light.
The duke.

Enter BRACHIANO, FRANCISCO disguised like MULINASSAR, LODOVICO and
GASPARO,
bearing their swords, their helmets down, ANTONELLI, FARNESE.

Brachiano You are nobly welcome. We have heard at full
Your honourable service 'gainst the Turk.
To you, brave Mulinassar, we assign
A competent pension: and are inly sorry,
The vows of those two worthy gentlemen
Make them incapable of our proffer'd bounty.
Your wish is, you may leave your warlike swords
For monuments in our chapel: I accept it,
As a great honour done me, and must crave
Your leave to furnish out our duchess' revels.
Only one thing, as the last vanity
You e'er shall view, deny me not to stay
To see a barriers prepar'd tonight:
You shall have private standings. It hath pleas'd
The great ambassadors of several princes,
In their return from Rome to their own countries,
To grace our marriage, and to honour me
With such a kind of sport.

Francisco I shall persuade them to stay, my lord.

Brachiano Set on there to the presence.

Exeunt BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, and HORTENSIO.

Lodovico Noble my lord, most fortunately welcome;

The conspirators here embrace.

You have our vows, seal'd with the sacrament,
To second your attempts.

Gasparo And all things ready;
He could not have invented his own ruin
(Had he despair'd) with more propriety.

Lodovico You would not take my way.

Francisco 'Tis better order'd.

Lodovico T' have poison'd his prayer-book, or a pair of beads,
The pummel of his saddle, his looking-glass,
Or th' handle of his racket, - Oh, that, that!
That while he had been bandying at tennis,
He might have sworn himself to hell, and strook
His soul into the hazard! Oh, my lord,
I would have our plot be ingenious,
And have it hereafter recorded for example,
Rather than borrow example.

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

Lodovico On, then.

Francisco And yet methinks that this revenge is poor,
Because it steals upon him like a thief:
To have ta'en him by the casque in a pitch'd field.
Led him to Florence -

Lodovico It had been rare: and there
Have crown'd him with a wreath of stinking garlic,
T' have shown the sharpness of his government,
And rankness of his lust. Flamineo comes.

Exeunt LODOVICO, ANTONELLI, and GASPARO.

Enter FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, and ZANCHE

Marcello Why doth this devil haunt you, say?

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

Marcello She is your shame.

Flamineo I pray thee pardon her.
In faith, you see, women are like to burs,
Where their affection throws them, there they'll stick.

Zanche That is my countryman, a goodly person;
When he 's at leisure, I'll discourse with him

In our own language.

Flamineo I beseech you do.

Exit ZANCHE.

How is 't, brave soldier? Oh, that I had seen
Some of your iron days! I pray relate
Some of your service to us.

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

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

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

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

Marcello I have been a soldier too.

Francisco How have you thrived?

Marcello Faith, poorly.

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

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

Francisco And thou mayest do the devil knows what villainy.

Flamineo And safely.

Francisco Right: you shall see in the country, in harvest-time, pigeons,
though they destroy never so much corn, the farmer dare not present the
fowling-piece to them: why? because they belong to the lord of the manor;
whilst your poor sparrows, that belong to the Lord of Heaven, they go to
the pot for 't.

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

Exit FRANCISCO.

Enter HORTENSIO, a young LORD, ZANCHE, and TWO more.

How now, gallants? what, are they ready for the barriers?

Young lord Yes: the lords are putting on their armour.

Hortensio What 's he?

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

Hortensio Look you, yonder 's your sweet mistress.

Flamineo Thou art my sworn brother: I'll tell thee, I do love that Moor, that witch, very constrainedly. She knows some of my villainy. I do love her just as a man holds a wolf by the ears; but for fear of her turning upon me, and pulling out my throat, I would let her to the devil.

Hortensio I hear she claims marriage of thee.

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

Zanche Ay, your love to me rather cools than heats.

Flamineo Marry, I am the sounder lover; we have many wenches about the town heat too fast.

Hortensio What do you think of these perfumed gallants, then?

Flamineo Their satin cannot save them: I am confident
They have a certain spice of the disease;
For they that sleep with dogs shall rise with fleas.

Zanche Believe it, a little painting and gay clothes make you loathe me.

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

Zanche You remember your oaths?

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

Enter CORNELIA

Cornelia Is this your perch, you haggard? fly to th' stews.

Strikes ZANCHE.

Flamineo You should be clapped by th' heels now: strike i' th' court!

Exit CORNELIA.

Zanche She 's good for nothing, but to make her maids
Catch cold a-nights: they dare not use a bedstaff,
For fear of her light fingers.

Marcello You 're a strumpet,
An impudent one.

Kicks ZANCHE.

Flamineo Why do you kick her, say?
Do you think that she 's like a walnut tree?
Must she be cudgell'd ere she bear good fruit?

Marcello She brags that you shall marry her.

Flamineo What then?

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

Flamineo You 're a boy, a fool,
Be guardian to your hound; I am of age.

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

Flamineo With a fan of feathers?

Marcello And, for you, I'll whip
This folly from you.

Flamineo Are you choleric?
I'll purge 't with rhubarb.

Hortensio Oh, your brother!

Flamineo Hang him,
He wrongs me most, that ought t' offend me least:
I do suspect my mother play'd foul play,
When she conceiv'd thee.

Marcello Now, by all my hopes,
Like the two slaughter'd sons of Oedipus,
The very flames of our affection
Shall turn two ways. Those words I'll make thee answer
With thy heart-blood.

Flamineo Do, like the geese in the progress;
You know where you shall find me.

Marcello Very good.

Exit Flamineo.

And thou be'st a noble friend, bear him my sword,
And bid him fit the length on 't.

Young Lord Sir, I shall.

Exeunt all but ZANCHE.

Zanche He comes. Hence petty thought of my disgrace!

Enter FRANCISCO

I ne'er lov'd my complexion till now,
'Cause I may boldly say, without a blush,
I love you.

Francisco Your love is untimely sown; there 's a spring at Michaelmas, but
'tis but a faint one: I am sunk in years, and I have vowed never to marry.

Zanche Alas! poor maids get more lovers than husbands: yet you may mistake
my wealth. For, as when ambassadors are sent to congratulate princes, there
's commonly sent along with them a rich present, so that, though the prince
like not the ambassador's person, nor words, yet he likes well of the
presentment; so I may come to you in the same manner, and be better loved
for my dowry than my virtue.

Francisco I'll think on the motion.

Zanche Do; I'll now detain you no longer. At your better leisure, I'll tell you things shall startle your blood:
Nor blame me that this passion I reveal;
Lovers die inward that their flames conceal.

Francisco Of all intelligence this may prove the best:
Sure I shall draw strange fowl from this foul nest.

Exeunt.

Scene 2

Enter MARCELLO and CORNELIA

Cornelia I hear a whispering all about the court,
You are to fight: who is your opposite?
What is the quarrel?

Marcello 'Tis an idle rumour.

Cornelia Will you dissemble? sure you do not well
To fright me thus: you never look thus pale,
But when you are most angry. I do charge you
Upon my blessing - nay, I'll call the duke,
And he shall school you.

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

Cornelia Yes.

Marcello I have heard you say, giving my brother suck
He took the crucifix between his hands,

Enter Flamineo.

And broke a limb off.

Cornelia Yes, but 'tis mended.

Flamineo I have brought your weapon back.

FLAMINEO runs MARCELLO through.

Cornelia Ha! Oh, my horror!

Marcello You have brought it home, indeed.

Cornelia Help! Oh, he 's murder'd!

Flamineo Do you turn your gall up? I'll to sanctuary,
And send a surgeon to you.

Exit.

Enter LODOVICO, HORTENSIO, and GASPARO.

Hortensio How! o' th' ground!

Marcello Oh, mother, now remember what I told
Of breaking of the crucifix! Farewell.
There are some sins, which heaven doth duly punish
In a whole family. This it is to rise
By all dishonest means! Let all men know,
That tree shall long time keep a steady foot,
Whose branches spread no wider than the root.

Dies.

Cornelia Oh, my perpetual sorrow!

Hortensio Virtuous Marcello!
He 's dead. Pray leave him, lady: come, you shall.

Cornelia Alas! he is not dead; he 's in a trance. Why, here 's nobody shall
get anything by his death. Let me call him again, for God's sake!

Lodovico I would you were deceived.

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

Hortensio You see he is departed.

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

Hortensio Your kindest office is to pray for him.

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

Enter BRACHIANO, all armed, save the beaver, with FLAMINEO and others

Brachiano Was this your handiwork?

Flamineo It was my misfortune.

Cornelia He lies, he lies! he did not kill him: these have killed him, that would not let him be better looked to.

Brachiano Have comfort, my griev'd mother.

Cornelia Oh, you screech-owl!

Hortensio Forbear, good madam.

Cornelia Let me go, let me go.

She runs to Flamineo with her knife drawn, and coming to him lets it fall.

The God of Heaven forgive thee! Dost not wonder
I pray for thee? I'll tell thee what 's the reason,
I have scarce breath to number twenty minutes;
I'd not spend that in cursing. Fare thee well:
Half of thyself lies there; and mayst thou live
To fill an hour-glass with his moulder'd ashes,
To tell how thou shouldst spend the time to come
In blessed repentance!

Brachiano Mother, pray tell me
How came he by his death? what was the quarrel?

Cornelia Indeed, my younger boy presum'd too much
Upon his manhood, gave him bitter words,
Drew his sword first; and so, I know not how,
For I was out of my wits, he fell with 's head
Just in my bosom.

Page This is not true, madam.

Cornelia I pray thee, peace.
One arrow 's graz'd already; it were vain
T' lose this, for that will ne'er be found again.

Brachiano Go, bear the body to Cornelia's lodging:
And we command that none acquaint our duchess
With this sad accident. For you, Flamineo,
Hark you, I will not grant your pardon.

Flamineo No?

Brachiano Only a lease of your life; and that shall last
But for one day: thou shalt be forc'd each evening
To renew it, or be hang'd.

Flamineo At your pleasure.

Lodovico sprinkles Brachiano's beaver with a poison.

Enter FRANCISCO

Your will is law now, I'll not meddle with it.

Brachiano You once did brave me in your sister's lodging:
I'll now keep you in awe for 't. Where 's our beaver?

Francisco [Aside.] He calls for his destruction. Noble youth,
I pity thy sad fate! Now to the barriers.
This shall his passage to the black lake further;
The last good deed he did, he pardon'd murder.

Exeunt.

Scene 3

Charges and shouts.

They fight at barriers; first single pairs, then three to three

Enter BRACHIANO and FLAMINEO, with others.

Brachiano An armourer! ud's death, an armourer!

Flamineo Armourer! where 's the armourer?

Brachiano Tear off my beaver.

Flamineo Are you hurt, my lord?

Brachiano Oh, my brain 's on fire!

Enter ARMOURER.

The helmet is poison'd.

Armourer My lord, upon my soul

Brachiano Away with him to torture.
There are some great ones that have hand in this,
And near about me.

Enter VITTORIA Corombona

Vittoria Oh, my lov'd lord! poison'd!

Flamineo Remove the bar. Here 's unfortunate revels!

Call the physicians.

Enter two PHYSICIANS.

A plague upon you!
We have too much of your cunning here already:
I fear the ambassadors are likewise poison'd.

Brachiano Oh, I am gone already! the infection
Flies to the brain and heart. O thou strong heart!
There 's such a covenant 'tween the world and it,
They 're loath to break.

Giovanni Oh, my most loved father!

Brachiano Remove the boy away.
Where 's this good woman? Had I infinite worlds,
They were too little for thee: must I leave thee?
What say you, screech-owls, is the venom mortal?

Physicians Most deadly.

Brachiano Most corrupted politic hangman,
You kill without book; but your art to save
Fails you as oft as great men's needy friends.
I that have given life to offending slaves,
And wretched murderers, have I not power
To lengthen mine own a twelvemonth?
[To Vittoria.] Do not kiss me, for I shall poison thee.
This unction 's sent from the great Duke of Florence.

Francisco Sir, be of comfort.

Brachiano O thou soft natural death, that art joint-twin
To sweetest slumber! no rough-bearded comet
Stares on thy mild departure; the dull owl
Bears not against thy casement; the hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion: pity winds thy corse,
Whilst horror waits on princes'.

Vittoria I am lost for ever.

Brachiano How miserable a thing it is to die
'Mongst women howling!

Enter LODOVICO and GASPARO, as Capuchins.

What are those?

Flamineo Franciscans:

They have brought the extreme unction.

Brachiano On pain of death, let no man name death to me:
It is a word infinitely terrible.
Withdraw into our cabinet.

Exeunt all but FRANCISCO and FLAMINEO.

Flamineo To see what solitariness is about dying princes! as heretofore they have unpeopled towns, divorced friends, and made great houses un hospitable, so now, O justice! where are their flatterers now? flatterers are but the shadows of princes' bodies; the least thick cloud makes them invisible.

Francisco There 's great moan made for him.

Flamineo 'Faith, for some few hours salt-water will run most plentifully in every office o' th' court; but, believe it, most of them do but weep over their stepmothers' graves.

Francisco How mean you?

Flamineo Why, they dissemble; as some men do that live within compass o' th' verge.

Francisco Come, you have thrived well under him.

Flamineo 'Faith, like a wolf in a woman's breast; I have been fed with poultry: but for money, understand me, I had as good a will to cozen him as e'er an officer of them all; but I had not cunning enough to do it.

Francisco What didst thou think of him? 'faith, speak freely.

Flamineo He was a kind of statesman, that would sooner have reckoned how many cannon-bullets he had discharged against a town, to count his expense that way, than how many of his valiant and deserving subjects he lost before it.

Francisco Oh, speak well of the duke!

Flamineo I have done.

Enter LODOVICO.

Wilt hear some of my court-wisdom? To reprehend princes is dangerous; and to over-commend some of them is palpable lying.

Francisco How is it with the duke?

Lodovico Most deadly ill.

He 's fall'n into a strange distraction:
He talks of battles and monopolies,
Levying of taxes; and from that descends
To the most brain-sick language. His mind fastens
On twenty several objects, which confound
Deep sense with folly. Such a fearful end
May teach some men that bear too lofty crest,
Though they live happiest yet they die not best.
He hath conferr'd the whole state of the dukedom
Upon your sister, till the prince arrive
At mature age.

Flamineo There 's some good luck in that yet.

Francisco See, here he comes.

Enter BRACHIANO, presented in a bed, VITTORIA and others.

There 's death in 's face already.

Vittoria Oh, my good lord!

Brachiano Away, you have abus'd me:

These speeches are several kinds of distractions, and in the action should appear so.

You have convey'd coin forth our territories,
Sought and sold offices, oppress'd the poor,
And I ne'er dreamt on 't. Make up your accounts,
I'll now be mine own steward.

Flamineo Sir, have patience.

Brachiano Indeed, I am to blame:
For did you ever hear the dusky raven
Chide blackness? or was 't ever known the devil
Rail'd against cloven creatures?

Vittoria Oh, my lord!

Brachiano Let me have some quails to supper.

Flamineo Sir, you shall.

Brachiano No, some fried dog-fish; your quails feed on poison.
That old dog-fox, that politician, Florence!
I'll forswear hunting, and turn dog-killer.
Rare! I'll be friends with him; for, mark you, sir, one dog
Still sets another a-barking. Peace, peace!

Yonder 's a fine slave come in now.

Flamineo Where?

Brachiano Why, there,
In a blue bonnet, and a pair of breeches
With a great cod-piece: ha, ha, ha!
Look you, his cod-piece is stuck full of pins,
With pearls o' th' head of them. Do not you know him?

Flamineo No, my lord.

Brachiano Why, 'tis the devil.
I know him by a great rose he wears on 's shoe,
To hide his cloven foot. I'll dispute with him;
He 's a rare linguist.

Vittoria My lord, here 's nothing.

Brachiano Nothing! rare! nothing! when I want money,
Our treasury is empty, there is nothing:
I'll not be us'd thus.

Vittoria Oh, lie still, my lord!

Brachiano See, see Flamineo, that kill'd his brother,
Is dancing on the ropes there, and he carries
A money-bag in each hand, to keep him even,
For fear of breaking 's neck: and there 's a lawyer,
In a gown whipped with velvet, stares and gapes
When the money will fall. How the rogue cuts capers!
It should have been in a halter. 'Tis there; what 's she?

Flamineo Vittoria, my lord.

Brachiano Ha, ha, ha! her hair is sprinkl'd with orris powder,
That makes her look as if she had sinn'd in the pastry.
What 's he?

Flamineo A divine, my lord.

Brachiano seems here near his end; Lodovico and Gasparo, in the habit of
Capuchins, present him in his bed with a crucifix and hallowed candle.

Brachiano He will be drunk; avoid him: th' argument
Is fearful, when churchmen stagger in 't.
Look you, six grey rats that have lost their tails
Crawl up the pillow; send for a rat-catcher:
I'll do a miracle, I'll free the court
From all foul vermin. Where 's Flamineo?

Flamineo I do not like that he names me so often,
Especially on 's death-bed; 'tis a sign
I shall not live long. See, he 's near his end.

Lodovico Pray, give us leave. Attende, domine Brachiane.

Flamineo See how firmly he doth fix his eye
Upon the crucifix.

Vittoria Oh, hold it constant!
It settles his wild spirits; and so his eyes
Melt into tears.

Lodovico [By the crucifix.] Domine Brachiane, solebas in bello tutus esse
tuo clypeo; nunc hunc clypeum hosti tuo opponas infernati.

Gasparo [By the hallowed taper.] Olim hasta valuisti in bello; nunc hanc
sacram hastam vibrabis contra hostem animarum.

Lodovico Attende, Domine Brachiane, si nunc quoque probas ea, quae acta
sunt inter nos, flecte caput in dextrum.

Gasparo Esto securus, Domine Brachiane; cogita, quantum habeas meritorum;
denique memineris meam animarm pro tua oppignoratam si quid esset periculi.

Lodovico Si nunc quoque probas ea, quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput
in laevum.

He is departing: pray stand all apart,
And let us only whisper in his ears
Some private meditations, which our order
Permits you not to hear.

Here, the rest being departed, LODOVICO and GASPARO discover themselves.

Gasparo Brachiano.

Lodovico Devil Brachiano, thou art damn'd.

Gasparo Perpetually.

Lodovico A slave condemn'd and given up to the gallows.
Is thy great lord and master.

Gasparo True; for thou
Art given up to the devil.

Lodovico Oh, you slave!
You that were held the famous politician,
Whose art was poison.

Gasparo And whose conscience, murder.

Lodovico That would have broke your wife's neck down the stairs,
Ere she was poison'd.

Gasparo That had your villainous sallets.

Lodovico And fine embroider'd bottles, and perfumes,
Equally mortal with a winter plague.

Gasparo Now there 's mercury -

Lodovico And copperas -

Gasparo And quicksilver -

Lodovico With other devilish 'pothecary stuff,
A-melting in your politic brains: dost hear?

Gasparo This is Count Lodovico.

Lodovico This, Gasparo:
And thou shalt die like a poor rogue.

Gasparo And stink
Like a dead fly-blown dog.

Lodovico And be forgotten
Before thy funeral sermon.

Brachiano Vittoria! Vittoria!

Lodovico Oh, the cursed devil
Comes to himself again! we are undone.

Gasparo Strangle him in private.

Enter VITTORIA and the ATTENDANTS.

What! will you call him again
To live in treble torments? for charity,
For Christian charity, avoid the chamber.

VITTORIA and the REST retire.

Lodovico You would prate, sir? This is a true-love-knot
Sent from the Duke of Florence.

BRACHIANO is strangled.

Gasparo What, is it done?

Lodovico The snuff is out. No woman-keeper i' th' world,

Though she had practis'd seven year at the pest-house,
Could have done 't quaintlier. My lords, he 's dead.

VITTORIA and the OTHERS come forward.

Omnes Rest to his soul!

Vittoria Oh me! this place is hell.

Exit.

Francisco How heavily she takes it!

Flamineo Oh, yes, yes;
Had women navigable rivers in their eyes,
They would dispend them all. Surely, I wonder
Why we should wish more rivers to the city,
When they sell water so good cheap. I'll tell thee,
These are but moonish shades of griefs or fears;
There 's nothing sooner dry than women's tears.
Why, here 's an end of all my harvest; he has given me nothing.
Court promises! let wise men count them curs'd;
For while you live, he that scores best, pays worst.

Francisco Sure this was Florence' doing.

Flamineo Very likely:
Those are found weighty strokes which come from th' hand,
But those are killing strokes which come from th' head.
Oh, the rare tricks of a Machiavellian!
He doth not come, like a gross plodding slave,
And buffet you to death; no, my quaint knave,
He tickles you to death, makes you die laughing,
As if you had swallow'd down a pound of saffron.
You see the feat, 'tis practis'd in a trice;
To teach court honesty, it jumps on ice.

Francisco Now have the people liberty to talk,
And descant on his vices.

Flamineo Misery of princes,
That must of force be censur'd by their slaves!
Not only blam'd for doing things are ill,
But for not doing all that all men will:
One were better be a thresher.
Ud's death! I would fain speak with this duke yet.

Francisco Now he 's dead?

Flamineo I cannot conjure; but if prayers or oaths

Will get to th' speech of him, though forty devils
Wait on him in his livery of flames,
I'll speak to him, and shake him by the hand,
Though I be blasted.

Exit.

Francisco Excellent Lodovico!
What! did you terrify him at the last gasp?

Lodovico Yes, and so idly, that the duke had like
T' have terrified us.

Francisco How?

Enter the MOOR

Lodovico You shall hear that hereafter.
See, yon 's the infernal, that would make up sport.
Now to the revelation of that secret
She promis'd when she fell in love with you.

Francisco You 're passionately met in this sad world.

Zanche I would have you look up, sir; these court tears
Claim not your tribute to them: let those weep,
That guiltily partake in the sad cause.
I knew last night, by a sad dream I had,
Some mischief would ensue: yet, to say truth,
My dream most concern'd you.

Lodovico Shall 's fall a-dreaming?

Francisco Yes, and for fashion sake I'll dream with her.

Zanche Methought, sir, you came stealing to my bed.

Francisco Wilt thou believe me, sweeting? by this light,
I was a-dreamt on thee too; for methought
I saw thee naked.

Zanche Fie, sir! as I told you,
Methought you lay down by me.

Francisco So dreamt I;
And lest thou shouldst take cold, I cover'd thee
With this Irish mantle.

Zanche Verily I did dream
You were somewhat bold with me: but to come to 't -

Lodovico How! how! I hope you will not go to 't here.

Francisco Nay, you must hear my dream out.

Zanche Well, sir, forth.

Francisco When I threw the mantle o'er thee, thou didst laugh
Exceedingly, methought.

Zanche Laugh!

Francisco And criedst out, the hair did tickle thee.

Zanche There was a dream indeed!

Lodovico Mark her, I pray thee, she simpers like the suds
A collier hath been wash'd in.

Zanche Come, sir; good fortune tends you. I did tell you
I would reveal a secret: Isabella,
The Duke of Florence' sister, was empoison'd
By a fum'd picture; and Camillo's neck
Was broke by damn'd Flamineo, the mischance
Laid on a vaulting-horse.

Francisco Most strange!

Zanche Most true.

Lodovico The bed of snakes is broke.

Zanche I sadly do confess, I had a hand
In the black deed.

Francisco Thou kept'st their counsel.

Zanche Right;
For which, urg'd with contrition, I intend
This night to rob Vittoria.

Lodovico Excellent penitence!
Usurers dream on 't while they sleep out sermons

Zanche To further our escape, I have entreated
Leave to retire me, till the funeral,
Unto a friend i' th' country: that excuse
Will further our escape. In coin and jewels
I shall at least make good unto your use
An hundred thousand crowns.

Francisco Oh, noble wench!

Lodovico Those crowns we'll share.

Zanche It is a dowry,
Methinks, should make that sun-burnt proverb false,
And wash the Aethiop white.

Francisco It shall; away.

Zanche Be ready for our flight.

Francisco An hour 'fore day.

Exit ZANCHE.

Oh, strange discovery! why, till now we knew not
The circumstance of either of their deaths.

Re-enter ZANCHE

Zanche You'll wait about midnight in the chapel?

Francisco There.

Exit Zanche.

Lodovico Why, now our action 's justified.

Francisco Tush for justice!
What harms it justice? we now, like the partridge,
Purge the disease with laurel; for the fame
Shall crown the enterprise, and quit the shame.

Exeunt.

Scene 4

Enter Flamineo and Gasparo, at one door;
another way, Giovanni, attended.

Gasparo The young duke: did you e'er see a sweeter prince?

Flamineo I have known a poor woman's bastard better favoured - this is behind him. Now, to his face - all comparisons were hateful. Wise was the courtly peacock, that, being a great minion, and being compared for beauty by some dottrels that stood by to the kingly eagle, said the eagle was a far fairer bird than herself, not in respect of her feathers, but in respect of her long talons: his will grow out in time. - My gracious lord.

Giovanni I pray leave me, sir.

Flamineo Your grace must be merry; 'tis I have cause to mourn; for wot you, what said the little boy that rode behind his father on horseback?

Giovanni Why, what said he?

Flamineo When you are dead, father, said he, I hope then I shall ride in the saddle. Oh, 'tis a brave thing for a man to sit by himself! he may stretch himself in the stirrups, look about, and see the whole compass of the hemisphere. You're now, my lord, i' th' saddle.

Giovanni Study your prayers, sir, and be penitent:
'Twere fit you 'd think on what hath former been;
I have heard grief nam'd the eldest child of sin.

Exit.

Flamineo Study my prayers! he threatens me divinely! I am falling to pieces already. I care not, though, like Anacharsis, I were pounded to death in a mortar: and yet that death were fitter for usurers, gold and themselves to be beaten together, to make a most cordial cullis for the devil. He hath his uncle's villainous look already,
In decimo-sexto.

Enter COURTIER.

Now, sir, what are you?

Courtier It is the pleasure, sir, of the young duke,
That you forbear the presence, and all rooms
That owe him reverence.

Flamineo So the wolf and the raven are very pretty fools when they are young. Is it your office, sir, to keep me out?

Courtier So the duke wills.

Flamineo Verily, Master Courtier, extremity is not to be used in all offices: say, that a gentlewoman were taken out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo, to the tower yonder, with nothing about her but her smock, would it not show a cruel part in the gentleman-porter to lay claim to her upper garment, pull it o'er her head and ears, and put her in naked?

Courtier Very good: you are merry. [Exit.

Flamineo Doth he make a court-ejectment of me? a flaming firebrand casts more smoke without a chimney than within 't. I'll smoor some of them.

Enter FRANCISCO de Medicis.

How now? thou art sad.

Francisco I met even now with the most piteous sight.

Flamineo Thou meet'st another here, a pitiful
Degraded courtier.

Francisco Your reverend mother
Is grown a very old woman in two hours.
I found them winding of Marcello's corse;
And there is such a solemn melody,
'Tween doleful songs, tears, and sad elegies;
Such as old grandames, watching by the dead,
Were wont t' outwear the nights with, that, believe me,
I had no eyes to guide me forth the room,
They were so o'ercharg'd with water.

Flamineo I will see them.

Francisco 'Twere much uncharity in you; for your sight
Will add unto their tears.

Flamineo I will see them:
They are behind the traverse; I'll discover
Their superstitious howling.

He draws the traverse. Cornelia, the Moor, and three other Ladies
discovered winding Marcello's corse.

A Song.

Cornelia This rosemary is wither'd; pray, get fresh.
I would have these herbs grow up in his grave,
When I am dead and rotten. Reach the bays,
I'll tie a garland here about his head;
'Twill keep my boy from lightning. This sheet
I have kept this twenty year, and every day
Hallow'd it with my prayers; I did not think
He should have wore it.

Zanche Look you, who are yonder?

Cornelia Oh, reach me the flowers!

Zanche Her ladyship 's foolish.

Woman Alas, her grief
Hath turn'd her child again!

Cornelia [To Flamineo.] You 're very welcome:

There 's rosemary for you, and rue for you,
Heart's-ease for you; I pray make much of it,
I have left more for myself.

Francisco Lady, who 's this?

Cornelia You are, I take it, the grave-maker.

Flamineo So.

Zanche 'Tis Flamineo.

Cornelia Will you make me such a fool? here 's a white hand.
Can blood so soon be washed out? let me see;
When screech-owls croak upon the chimney-tops,
And the strange cricket i' th' oven sings and hops,
When yellow spots do on your hands appear,
Be certain then you of a corse shall hear.
Out upon 't, how 'tis speckled! h'as handled a toad sure.
Cowslip water is good for the memory:
Pray, buy me three ounces of 't.

Flamineo I would I were from hence.

Cornelia Do you hear, sir?
I'll give you a saying which my grandmother
Was wont, when she heard the bell toll, to sing o'er
Unto her lute.

Flamineo Do, an you will, do.

Cornelia Call for the robin redbreast, and the wren,

Cornelia doth this in several forms of distraction.

Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the fieldmouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robb'd) sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence, that 's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.
They would not bury him 'cause he died in a quarrel;
But I have an answer for them:
Let holy Church receive him duly,
Since he paid the church-tithes truly.
His wealth is summ'd, and this is all his store,
This poor men get, and great men get no more.

Now the wares are gone, we may shut up shop.
Bless you all, good people.

Exeunt CORNELIA and LADIES.

Flamineo I have a strange thing in me, to th' which
I cannot give a name, without it be
Compassion. I pray leave me.

Exit FRANCISCO.

This night I'll know the utmost of my fate;
I'll be resolv'd what my rich sister means
T' assign me for my service. I have liv'd
Riotously ill, like some that live in court,
And sometimes when my face was full of smiles,
Have felt the maze of conscience in my breast.
Oft gay and honour'd robes those tortures try:
We think cag'd birds sing, when indeed they cry.

Enter BRACHIANO'S GHOST, in his leather cassock and breeches, boots, a
cowl, a pot of lily flowers, with a skull in 't.

Ha! I can stand thee: nearer, nearer yet.
What a mockery hath death made thee! thou look'st sad.
In what place art thou? in yon starry gallery?
Or in the cursed dungeon? No? not speak?
Pray, sir, resolve me, what religion 's best
For a man to die in? or is it in your knowledge
To answer me how long I have to live?
That 's the most necessary question.
Not answer? are you still, like some great men
That only walk like shadows up and down,
And to no purpose; say -

The Ghost throws earth upon him, and shows him the skull.

What 's that? O fatal! he throws earth upon me.
A dead man's skull beneath the roots of flowers!
I pray speak, sir: our Italian churchmen
Make us believe dead men hold conference
With their familiars, and many times
Will come to bed with them, and eat with them.

Exit GHOST.

He 's gone; and see, the skull and earth are vanish'd.
This is beyond melancholy. I do dare my fate
To do its worst. Now to my sister's lodging,
And sum up all these horrors: the disgrace

The prince threw on me; next the piteous sight
Of my dead brother; and my mother's dotage;
And last this terrible vision: all these
Shall with Vittoria's bounty turn to good,
Or I will drown this weapon in her blood.

Exit.

Scene 5

Enter FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, and HORTENSIO

Lodovico My lord, upon my soul you shall no further;
You have most ridiculously engag'd yourself
Too far already. For my part, I have paid
All my debts: so, if I should chance to fall,
My creditors fall not with me; and I vow,
To quit all in this bold assembly,
To the meanest follower. My lord, leave the city,
Or I'll forswear the murder.

Exit.

Francisco Farewell, Lodovico:
If thou dost perish in this glorious act,
I'll rear unto thy memory that fame,
Shall in the ashes keep alive thy name.

Exit.

Hortensio There 's some black deed on foot. I'll presently
Down to the citadel, and raise some force.
These strong court-factions, that do brook no checks,
In the career oft break the riders' necks.

Exit.

Scene 6

Enter VITTORIA with a book in her hand, ZANCHE; FLAMINEO following them.

Flamineo What, are you at your prayers? Give o'er.

Vittoria How, ruffian?

Flamineo I come to you 'bout worldly business.
Sit down, sit down. Nay, stay, blowze, you may hear it:
The doors are fast enough.

Vittoria Ha! are you drunk?

Flamineo Yes, yes, with wormwood water; you shall taste
Some of it presently.

Vittoria What intends the fury?

Flamineo You are my lord's executrix; and I claim
Reward for my long service.

Vittoria For your service!

Doctor Come, therefore, here is pen and ink, set down
What you will give me.

Vittoria There.

She writes.

Flamineo Ha! have you done already?
'Tis a most short conveyance.

Vittoria I will read it:
I give that portion to thee, and no other,
Which Cain groan'd under, having slain his brother.

Flamineo A most courtly patent to beg by.

Vittoria You are a villain!

Flamineo Is 't come to this? they say affrights cure agues:
Thou hast a devil in thee; I will try
If I can scare him from thee. Nay, sit still:
My lord hath left me yet two case of jewels,
Shall make me scorn your bounty; you shall see them.

Exit.

Vittoria Sure he 's distracted.

Zanche Oh, he 's desperate!
For your own safety give him gentle language.

He enters with two cases of pistols.

Flamineo Look, these are better far at a dead lift,
Than all your jewel house.

Vittoria And yet, methinks,
These stones have no fair lustre, they are ill set.

Flamineo I'll turn the right side towards you: you shall see
How they will sparkle.

Vittoria Turn this horror from me!
What do you want? what would you have me do?
Is not all mine yours? have I any children?

Flamineo Pray thee, good woman, do not trouble me
With this vain worldly business; say your prayers:
I made a vow to my deceased lord,
Neither yourself nor I should outlive him
The numbering of four hours.

Vittoria Did he enjoin it?

Flamineo He did, and 'twas a deadly jealousy,
Lest any should enjoy thee after him,
That urged him vow me to it. For my death,
I did propound it voluntarily, knowing,
If he could not be safe in his own court,
Being a great duke, what hope then for us?

Vittoria This is your melancholy, and despair.

Flamineo Away:
Fool thou art, to think that politicians
Do use to kill the effects of injuries
And let the cause live. Shall we groan in irons,
Or be a shameful and a weighty burthen
To a public scaffold? This is my resolve:
I would not live at any man's entreaty,
Nor die at any's bidding.

Vittoria Will you hear me?

Flamineo My life hath done service to other men,
My death shall serve mine own turn: make you ready.

Vittoria Do you mean to die indeed?

Flamineo With as much pleasure,
As e'er my father gat me.

Vittoria Are the doors lock'd?

Zanche Yes, madam.

Vittoria Are you grown an atheist? will you turn your body,
Which is the goodly palace of the soul,
To the soul's slaughter-house? Oh, the cursed devil,

Which doth present us with all other sins
Thrice candied o'er, despair with gall and stibium;
Yet we carouse it off. [Aside to Zanche.] Cry out for help!
Makes us forsake that which was made for man,
The world, to sink to that was made for devils,
Eternal darkness!

Zanche Help, help!

Flamineo I'll stop your throat
With winter plums.

Vittoria I pray thee yet remember,
Millions are now in graves, which at last day
Like mandrakes shall rise shrieking.

Flamineo Leave your prating,
For these are but grammatical laments,
Feminine arguments: and they move me,
As some in pulpits move their auditory,
More with their exclamation than sense
Of reason, or sound doctrine.

Zanche [Aside.] Gentle madam,
Seem to consent, only persuade him teach
The way to death; let him die first.

Vittoria 'Tis good, I apprehend it. -
To kill one's self is meat that we must take
Like pills, not chew'd, but quickly swallow it;
The smart o' th' wound, or weakness of the hand,
May else bring treble torments.

Flamineo I have held it
A wretched and most miserable life,
Which is not able to die.

Vittoria Oh, but frailty!
Yet I am now resolv'd; farewell, affliction!
Behold, Brachiano, I that while you liv'd
Did make a flaming altar of my heart
To sacrifice unto you, now am ready
To sacrifice heart and all. Farewell, Zanche!

Zanche How, madam! do you think that I'll outlive you;
Especially when my best self, Flamineo,
Goes the same voyage?

Flamineo O most loved Moor!

Zanche Only, by all my love, let me entreat you,
Since it is most necessary one of us
Do violence on ourselves, let you or I
Be her sad taster, teach her how to die.

Flamineo Thou dost instruct me nobly; take these pistols,
Because my hand is stain'd with blood already:
Two of these you shall level at my breast,
The other 'gainst your own, and so we'll die
Most equally contented: but first swear
Not to outlive me.

Vittoria &
Zanche Most religiously.

Flamineo Then here 's an end of me; farewell, daylight.
And, O contemptible physic! that dost take
So long a study, only to preserve
So short a life, I take my leave of thee.

Showing the pistols.

These are two cupping-glasses, that shall draw
All my infected blood out. Are you ready?

Both Ready.

Flamineo Whither shall I go now? O Lucian, thy ridiculous purgatory! to
find Alexander the Great cobbling shoes, Pompey tagging points, and Julius
Caesar making hair- buttons, Hannibal selling blacking, and Augustus crying
garlic, Charlemagne selling lists by the dozen, and King Pepin crying
apples in a cart drawn with one horse!
Whether I resolve to fire, earth, water, air,
Or all the elements by scruples, I know not,
Nor greatly care. - Shoot! shoot!
Of all deaths, the violent death is best;
For from ourselves it steals ourselves so fast,
The pain, once apprehended, is quite past.

They shoot, and run to him, and tread upon him.

Vittoria What, are you dropped?

Flamineo I am mix'd with earth already: as you are noble,
Perform your vows, and bravely follow me.

Vittoria Whither? to hell?

Zanche To most assur'd damnation?

Vittoria Oh, thou most cursed devil!

Zanche Thou art caught -

Vittoria In thine own engine. I tread the fire out
That would have been my ruin.

Flamineo Will you be perjured? what a religious oath was Styx, that the
gods never durst swear by, and violate! Oh, that we had such an oath to
minister, and to be so well kept in our courts of justice!

Vittoria Think whither thou art going.

Zanche And remember
What villainies thou hast acted.

Vittoria This thy death
Shall make me, like a blazing ominous star,
Look up and tremble.

Flamineo Oh, I am caught with a spring!

Vittoria You see the fox comes many times short home.
'Tis here prov'd true.

Flamineo Kill'd with a couple of braches!

Vittoria No fitter offering for the infernal furies,
Than one in whom they reign'd while he was living.

Flamineo Oh, the way 's dark and horrid! I cannot see:
Shall I have no company?

Vittoria Oh, yes, thy sins
Do run before thee to fetch fire from hell,
To light thee thither.

Flamineo Oh, I smell soot,
Most stinking soot! the chimney 's afire:
My liver 's parboil'd, like Scotch holly-bread;
There 's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds.
Wilt thou outlive me?

Zanche Yes, and drive a stake
Through thy body; for we'll give it out,
Thou didst this violence upon thyself.

Flamineo Oh, cunning devils! now I have tried your love,
And doubled all your reaches: I am not wounded.

FLAMINEO riseth.

The pistols held no bullets; 'twas a plot
To prove your kindness to me; and I live
To punish your ingratitude. I knew,
One time or other, you would find a way
To give a strong potion. O men,
That lie upon your death-beds, and are haunted
With howling wives! ne'er trust them; they'll remarry
Ere the worm pierce your winding-sheet, ere the spider
Make a thin curtain for your epitaphs.
How cunning you were to discharge! do you practise at the Artillery yard?
Trust a woman? never, never; Brachiano be my precedent. We lay our souls to
pawn to the devil for a little pleasure, and a woman makes the bill of
sale. That ever man should marry! For one Hypermnestra that saved her lord
and husband, forty-nine of her sisters cut their husbands' throats all in
one night. There was a shoal of virtuous horse leeches! Here are two other
instruments.

Enter LODOVICO, GASPARO, still disguised as Capuchins

Vittoria Help! help!

Flamineo What noise is that? ha! false keys i' th' court!

Lodovico We have brought you a mask.

Flamineo A matachin it seems by your drawn swords.
Churchmen turned revellers!

Gasparo Isabella! Isabella!

Lodovico Do you know us now?

Flamineo Lodovico! and Gasparo!

Lodovico Yes; and that Moor the duke gave pension to
Was the great Duke of Florence.

Vittoria Oh, we are lost!

Flamineo You shall not take justice forth from my hands,
Oh, let me kill her! - I'll cut my safety
Through your coats of steel. Fate 's a spaniel,
We cannot beat it from us. What remains now?
Let all that do ill, take this precedent:
Man may his fate foresee, but not prevent;
And of all axioms this shall win the prize:
'Tis better to be fortunate than wise.

Gasparo Bind him to the pillar.

Vittoria Oh, your gentle pity!
I have seen a blackbird that would sooner fly
To a man's bosom, than to stay the gripe
Of the fierce sparrow-hawk.

Gasparo Your hope deceives you.

Vittoria If Florence be i' th' court, would he would kill me!

Gasparo Fool! Princes give rewards with their own hands,
But death or punishment by the hands of others.

Lodovico Sirrah, you once did strike me; I'll strike you
Unto the centre.

Flamineo Thou'lt do it like a hangman, a base hangman,
Not like a noble fellow, for thou see'st
I cannot strike again.

Lodovico Dost laugh?

Flamineo Wouldst have me die, as I was born, in whining?

Gasparo Recommend yourself to heaven.

Flamineo No, I will carry mine own commendations thither.

Lodovico Oh, could I kill you forty times a day,
And use 't four years together, 'twere too little!
Naught grieves but that you are too few to feed
The famine of our vengeance. What dost think on?

Flamineo Nothing; of nothing: leave thy idle questions.
I am i' th' way to study a long silence:
To prate were idle. I remember nothing.
There 's nothing of so infinite vexation
As man's own thoughts.

Lodovico O thou glorious strumpet!
Could I divide thy breath from this pure air
When 't leaves thy body, I would suck it up.
And breathe 't upon some dunghill.

Vittoria You, my death's-man!
Methinks thou dost not look horrid enough,
Thou hast too good a face to be a hangman:
If thou be, do thy office in right form;
Fall down upon thy knees, and ask forgiveness.

Lodovico Oh, thou hast been a most prodigious comet!

But I'll cut off your train. Kill the Moor first.

Vittoria You shall not kill her first; behold my breast:
I will be waited on in death; my servant
Shall never go before me.

Gasparo Are you so brave?

Vittoria Yes, I shall welcome death,
As princes do some great ambassadors;
I'll meet thy weapon half-way.

Lodovico Thou dost tremble:
Methinks, fear should dissolve thee into air.

Vittoria Oh, thou art deceiv'd, I am too true a woman!
Conceit can never kill me. I'll tell thee what,
I will not in my death shed one base tear;
Or if look pale, for want of blood, not fear.

Gasparo Thou art my task, black fury.

Zanche I have blood
As red as either of theirs: wilt drink some?
'Tis good for the falling-sickness. I am proud:
Death cannot alter my complexion,
For I shall ne'er look pale.

Lodovico Strike, strike,
With a joint motion.

They strike.

Vittoria 'Twas a manly blow;
The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking infant;
And then thou wilt be famous.

Flamineo Oh, what blade is 't?
A Toledo, or an English fox?
I ever thought a culter should distinguish
The cause of my death, rather than a doctor.
Search my wound deeper; tent it with the steel
That made it.

Vittoria Oh, my greatest sin lay in my blood!
Now my blood pays for 't.

Flamineo Th' art a noble sister!
I love thee now; if woman do breed man,
She ought to teach him manhood. Fare thee well.

Know, many glorious women that are fam'd
For masculine virtue, have been vicious,
Only a happier silence did betide them:
She hath no faults, who hath the art to hide them.

Vittoria My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
Is driven, I know not whither.

Flamineo Then cast anchor.
Prosperity doth bewitch men, seeming clear;
But seas do laugh, show white, when rocks are near.
We cease to grieve, cease to be fortune's slaves,
Nay, cease to die by dying. Art thou gone?
And thou so near the bottom? false report,
Which says that women vie with the nine Muses,
For nine tough durable lives! I do not look
Who went before, nor who shall follow me;
No, at myself I will begin the end.
While we look up to heaven, we confound
Knowledge with knowledge. Oh, I am in a mist!

Vittoria Oh, happy they that never saw the court,
Nor ever knew great men but by report!

Vittoria dies.

Flamineo I recover like a spent taper, for a flash,
And instantly go out.
Let all that belong to great men remember th' old wives' tradition, to be
like the lions i' th' Tower on Candlemas day; to mourn if the sun shine,
for fear of the pitiful remainder of winter to come.
'Tis well yet there 's some goodness in my death;
My life was a black charnel. I have caught
An everlasting cold: I have lost my voice
Most irrecoverably. Farewell, glorious villains.
This busy trade of life appears most vain,
Since rest breeds rest, where all seek pain by pain.
Let no harsh flattering bells resound my knell;
Strike, thunder, and strike loud, to my farewell!

Dies.

Enter AMBASSADORS and GIOVANNI

English

Ambassador This way, this way! break open the doors! this way!

Lodovico Ha! are we betray'd?
Why then let 's constantly die all together;
And having finish'd this most noble deed,

Defy the worst of fate, nor fear to bleed.

English

Ambassador Keep back the prince: shoot! shoot!

Lodovico Oh, I am wounded!
I fear I shall be ta'en.

Giovanni You bloody villains,
By what authority have you committed
This massacre?

Lodovico By thine.

Giovanni Mine!

Lodovico Yes; thy uncle, which is a part of thee, enjoined us to 't:
Thou know'st me, I am sure; I am Count Lodowick;
And thy most noble uncle in disguise
Was last night in thy court.

Giovanni Ha!

Lodovico Yes, that Moor thy father chose his pensioner.

Giovanni He turn'd murderer!
Away with them to prison, and to torture:
All that have hands in this shall taste our justice,
As I hope heaven.

Lodovico I do glory yet,
That I can call this act mine own. For my part,
The rack, the gallows, and the torturing wheel,
Shall be but sound sleeps to me: here 's my rest;
I limn'd this night-piece, and it was my best.

Giovanni Remove the bodies. See, my honour'd lord,
What use you ought make of their punishment.
Let guilty men remember, their black deeds
Do lean on crutches made of slender reeds.

