



**BRAVE SPIRITS THEATRE
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REHEARSAL SCRIPT
The Duchess of Malfi
2018

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BRAVE SPIRITS
VERSE AND VIOLENCE

The Duchess of Malfi

by John Webster

directed by
Casey Kaleba



October 2018

ACT I. SCENE I

[Enter] ANTONIO and DELIO

DELIO You are welcome to your country, dear Antonio;
You have been long in France, and you return
A very formal Frenchman in your habit:
How do you like the French court?

ANTONIO I admire it:
In seeking to reduce both state and people
To a fix'd order, their judicious king
Begins at home; quits first his royal palace
Of flattering sycophants, of dissolute
And infamous persons,—which he sweetly terms
His master's master-piece, the work of heaven;
Considering duly that a prince's court
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow
Pure silver drops in general, but if 't chance
Some curs'd example poison 't near the head,
Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
Here comes Bosola,
The only court-gall; yet I observe his railing
Is not for simple love of piety:
Indeed, he rails at those things which he wants;
Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,
Bloody, or envious, as any man,
If he had means to be so. —Here's the cardinal.

[Enter CARDINAL and BOSOLA]

BOSOLA I do haunt you still.

CARDINAL So.

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

CARDINAL You enforce your merit too much.

BOSOLA I fell into the galleys in your service: where, for two
years together, I wore two towels instead of a shirt.
Slighted thus! I will thrive some way. Black-birds
fatten best in hard weather; why not I in these dog-
days?

CARDINAL Would you could become honest!

BOSOLA With all your divinity do but direct me the way to it.
I have known many travel far for it, and yet return as
arrant knaves as they went forth, because they
carried themselves always along with them.

[Exit CARDINAL.]

Are you gone? Some fellows, they say, are possessed
with the devil, but this great fellow were able to
possess the greatest devil, and make him worse. Fare
ye well, sir: and yet do not you scorn us; for places in

the court are but like beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower.

[Exit.]

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

ANTONIO 'Tis great pity
He should be thus neglected: I have heard
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness.

ACT I. SCENE II

ANTONIO, DELIO, [Enter PESCARA, CASTRUCCIO, JULIA, RODERIGO and GRISOLAN]

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

ANTONIO The lord cardinal's
And other strangers' that are now in court?
I shall. —Here comes the great Calabrian duke.

[Enter FERDINAND and Attendants]

PESCARA Antonio Bologna, my lord.

FERDINAND Our sister duchess' great-master of her household?
Give him the jewel. —When shall we leave this
sportive action, and fall to action indeed?

CASTRUCCIO Methinks, my lord, you should not desire to go to
war in person.

FERDINAND Now for some gravity. —Why, my lord?

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

FERDINAND No?

CASTRUCCIO No, my lord; he were far better do it by a deputy.

FERDINAND Why should he not as well sleep or eat by a deputy?
This might take idle, offensive, and base office from
him, whereas the other deprives him of honour.

CASTRUCCIO Believe my experience, that realm is never long in
quiet where the ruler is a soldier.

FERDINAND Thou toldest me thy wife could not endure fighting.

CASTRUCCIO True, my lord.

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

FERDINAND Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the
chirurgeons o' the city; for although gallants should

quarrel, and had drawn their weapons, and were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would make them put up.

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

PESCARA He is all fire.

FERDINAND I am of Pliny's opinion, I think he was begot by the wind; he runs as if he were ballass'd with quicksilver.

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

FERDINAND Why do you laugh? Methinks you that are courtiers should be my touch-wood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh when I laugh, were the subject never so witty. I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Lord Pescara.

PESCARA Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

FERDINAND You are a good horseman, Antonio; you have excellent riders in France: what do you think of good horsemanship?

ANTONIO Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued many famous princes, so out of brave horsemanship arise the first sparks of growing resolution, that raise the mind to noble action.

FERDINAND You have bespoke it worthily.

PESCARA Your brother, the lord cardinal, and sister duchess.

[Enter CARDINAL, with DUCHESS, and CARIOLA]

CARDINAL Are the galleys come about?

FERDINAND They are, my lord. Here 's the Lord Pescara is come
to take his leave.

DELIO Now, sir, your promise: what 's that cardinal?
I mean his temper? They say he's a brave fellow,
Will play his five thousand crowns at tennis, dance,
Court ladies, and one that hath fought single combats.

ANTONIO Some such flashes superficially hang on him for
form; but observe his inward character: he is a
melancholy churchman. He should have been Pope;
but instead of coming to it by the primitive decency
of the church, he did bestow bribes so largely and so
impudently as if he would have carried it away
without heaven's knowledge. Some good he hath
done——

DELIO You have given too much of him. What 's his
brother?

ANTONIO The duke there? A most perverse and turbulent nature.
What appears in him mirth is merely outside;
If he laught heartily, it is to laugh
All honesty out of fashion.

DELIO

Twins?

ANTONIO

In quality.

He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits

With others' ears; will seem to sleep o' the bench

Only to entrap offenders in their answers;

Dooms men to death by information;

Rewards by hearsay.

DELIO

Then the law to him

Is like a foul, black cobweb to a spider,—

He makes it his dwelling and a prison

To entangle those shall feed him.

ANTONIO

Most true:

But for their sister, the right noble duchess,

You never fix'd your eye on three fair medals

Cast in one figure, of so different temper.

For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,

You only will begin then to be sorry

When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder,

She held it less vain-glory to talk much,

Than your penance to hear her. Whilst she speaks,

She throws upon a man so sweet a look

That it were able to raise one to a galliard.

That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote

On that sweet countenance; but in that look

There speaketh so divine a continence
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practis'd in such noble virtue,
That sure her nights, nay, more, her very sleeps,
Are more in heaven than other ladies' shrifts.
Let all sweet ladies break their flatt'ring glasses,
And dress themselves in her.

DELIO Fie, Antonio,
You play the wire-drawer with her commendations.

ANTONIO I'll case the picture up: only thus much;
All her particular worth grows to this sum,—
She stains the time past, lights the time to come.

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

ANTONIO I shall.

[Exeunt ANTONIO and DELIO.]

FERDINAND Sister, I have a suit to you.

DUCHESS To me, sir?

FERDINAND A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,
One that was in the galleys——

DUCHESS Yes, I know him.

FERDINAND A worthy fellow he is: pray, let me entreat for

The provisorship of your horse.

DUCHESS

Your knowledge of him

Commends him and prefers him.

FERDINAND

Call him hither.

[Exit Attendant.]

We [are] now upon parting. Good Lord Pescara,

Do us commend to all our noble friends

At the leaguer.

PESCARA

Sir, I shall.

[DUCHESS]

You are for Milan?

PESCARA

I am.

DUCHESS

Bring the caroches.—We 'll bring you down

To the haven.

[Exeunt DUCHESS, PESCARA, CASTRUCCIO, CARIOLA, JULIA, and Attendants.]

CARDINAL

Be sure you entertain that Bosola

For your intelligence. I would not be seen in 't;

And therefore many times I have slighted him

When he did court our furtherance, as this

morning.

FERDINAND

Antonio, the great-master of her household,

Had been far fitter.

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

[Exit.][Re-enter BOSOLA]

BOSOLA I was lur'd to you.

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

BOSOLA Never since he was in my debt.

FERDINAND There's gold.

BOSOLA So:
What follows? *[Aside.]* Never rain'd such showers as these
Without thunderbolts i' the tail of them. — Whose throat
must I cut?

FERDINAND Your inclination to shed blood rides post
Before my occasion to use you. I give you that
To live i' the court here, and observe the duchess;
To note all the particulars of her haviour,
What suitors do solicit her for marriage,
And whom she best affects. She's a young widow:
I would not have her marry again.

BOSOLA No, sir?

FERDINAND Do not you ask the reason; but be satisfied.

I say I would not.

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

FERDINAND
Familiar! What 's that?

BOSOLA
Why, a very quaint invisible devil in flesh,—
An intelligencer.

FERDINAND
Such a kind of thriving thing
I would wish thee; and ere long thou mayst arrive
At a higher place by 't.

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

FERDINAND
Sir, I'll take nothing from you that I have given.
There is a place that I procur'd for you
This morning, the provisorship o' the horse;
Have you heard on 't?

BOSOLA
No.

FERDINAND
'Tis yours: is 't not worth thanks?

BOSOLA
I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty
(Which makes men truly noble) e'er should make me
A villain. O, that to avoid ingratitude

For the good deed you have done me, I must do
All the ill man can invent! Thus the devil
Candies all sins o'er; and what heaven terms vile,
That names he complimentary.

FERDINAND

Be yourself;
Keep your old garb of melancholy; 'twill express
You envy those that stand above your reach,
Yet strive not to come near 'em. This will gain
Access to private lodgings, where yourself
May, like a politic dormouse——

BOSOLA

As I have seen some
Feed in a lord's dish, half asleep, not seeming
To listen to any talk; and yet these rogues
Have cut his throat in a dream. What 's my place?
The provisorship o' the horse? Say, then, my corruption
Grew out of horse-dung: I am your creature.

FERDINAND

Away!

[Exit.]

BOSOLA

Let good men, for good deeds, covet good fame,
Since place and riches oft are bribes of shame.
Sometimes the devil doth preach.

[Exit.]

ACT I. [Scene III]

[Enter FERDINAND, DUCHESS, CARDINAL, and CARIOLA]

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

FERDINAND You are a widow:
You know already what man is; and therefore
Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence—

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

FERDINAND Marry! they are most luxurious
Will wed twice.

DUCHESS Diamonds are of most value,
They say, that have pass'd through most jewellers' hands.

FERDINAND Whores by that rule are precious.

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

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

FERDINAND Now hear me:

You live in a rank pasture, here, i' the court;
There is a kind of honey-dew that's deadly;
'T will poison your fame; look to 't. Be not cunning;
For they whose faces do belie their hearts
Are witches ere they arrive at twenty years,
Ay, and give the devil suck.

DUCHESS This is terrible good counsel.

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

CARDINAL You may flatter yourself,
And take your own choice; privately be married
Under the eaves of night——

FERDINAND Think 't the best voyage
That e'er you made; like the irregular crab,
Which, though 't goes backward, thinks that it goes right
Because it goes its own way: but observe,
Such weddings may more properly be said
To be executed than celebrated.

CARDINAL The marriage night
Is the entrance into some prison.

FERDINAND And those joys,

Those lustful pleasures, are like heavy sleeps
Which do fore-run man's mischief.

CARDINAL

Fare you well.

Wisdom begins at the end: remember it.

[Exit.]

DUCHESS

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

FERDINAND

You are my sister;

This was my father's poniard, do you see?

I'd be loth to see 't look rusty, 'cause 'twas his.

I would have you give o'er these chargeable revels:

A visor and a mask are whispering-rooms

That were never built for goodness,—fare ye well—

And women like variety of courtship.

What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale

Make a woman believe? Farewell, lusty widow.

[Exit.]

DUCHESS

Shall this move me? If all my royal kindred

Lay in my way unto this marriage,

I'd make them my low footsteps. And even now,

Even in this hate, as men in some great battles,

By apprehending danger, have achiev'd

Almost impossible actions (I have heard soldiers say so),

So I through frights and threatenings will assay
This dangerous venture. —Cariola,
To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life,—my fame.

CARIOLA

Both shall be safe;
For I'll conceal this secret from the world
As warily as those that trade in poison
Keep poison from their children.

DUCHESS

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

CARIOLA

He attends you.

DUCHESS

Good dear soul,
Leave me; but place thyself behind the arras,
Where thou mayst overhear us. Wish me good
speed;
For I am going into a wilderness,
Where I shall find nor path nor friendly clue
To be my guide.

[Cariola goes behind the arras.] [Enter ANTONIO]

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

ANTONIO

Yes.

DUCHESS What did I say?

ANTONIO That I should write somewhat.

DUCHESS O, I remember.
 After these triumphs and this large expense
 It 's fit, like thrifty husbands, we inquire
 What 's laid up for to-morrow.

ANTONIO So please your beauteous excellence.

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

ANTONIO I'll fetch your grace
 The particulars of your revenue and expense.

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

ANTONIO Where?

DUCHESS In heaven.
 I am making my will (as 'tis fit princes should,
 In perfect memory), and, I pray, sir, tell me,
 Were not one better make it smiling, thus,

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

ANTONIO O, much better.

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

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

DUCHESS All!

ANTONIO Yes, your excellent self.

DUCHESS In a winding-sheet?

ANTONIO In a couple.

DUCHESS Saint Winifred, that were a strange will!

ANTONIO 'Twere stranger if there were no will in you
To marry again.

DUCHESS What do you think of marriage?

ANTONIO I take 't, as those that deny purgatory,
It locally contains or heaven or hell;

There 's no third place in 't.

DUCHESS

How do you affect it?

ANTONIO

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

DUCHESS

Pray, let 's hear it.

ANTONIO

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

DUCHESS

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

ANTONIO

You have parted with it now.

DUCHESS

Yes, to help your eye-sight.

ANTONIO

You have made me stark blind.

DUCHESS

How?

ANTONIO

There is a saucy and ambitious devil

Is dancing in this circle.

DUCHESS Remove him.

ANTONIO How?

DUCHESS There needs small conjuration, when your finger
May do it: thus. Is it fit?

[She puts the ring upon his finger]: he kneels.

ANTONIO What said you?

DUCHESS Sir,
This goodly roof of yours is too low built;
I cannot stand upright in 't nor discourse,
Without I raise it higher. Raise yourself;
Or, if you please, my hand to help you: so.

[Raises him.]

ANTONIO Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,
That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms,
But in fair lightsome lodgings, and is girt
With the wild noise of prattling visitants,
Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
Conceive not I am so stupid but I aim
Whereto your favours tend: but he's a fool
That, being a-cold, would thrust his hands i' the fire
To warm them.

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

ANTONIO Truth speak for me;
I will remain the constant sanctuary
Of your good name.

DUCHESS I thank you, gentle love:
And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,
Being now my steward, here upon your lips
I sign your Quietus est. This you should have begg'd now.
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
As fearful to devour them too soon.

ANTONIO But for your brothers?

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

ANTONIO These words should be mine,
And all the parts you have spoke, if some part of it
Would not have savour'd flattery.

DUCHESS Kneel.

[Cariola comes from behind the arras.]

ANTONIO

Ha!

DUCHESS

Be not amaz'd; this woman 's of my counsel:
I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber
Per verba [de] presenti is absolute marriage.

[She and ANTONIO kneel.]

Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian which let violence
Never untwine!

ANTONIO

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

DUCHESS

Quickening, and make
The like soft music!

ANTONIO

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

DUCHESS

What can the church force more?

ANTONIO

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

DUCHESS

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

ANTONIO

What 's your conceit in this?

DUCHESS

I would have you lead your fortune by the hand
Unto your marriage-bed:
(You speak in me this, for we now are one:)
We 'll only lie and talk together, and plot
To appease my humorous kindred; and if you please,
Like the old tale in Alexander and Lodowick,
Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.
O, let me shrowd my blushes in your bosom,
Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets!

[Exeunt DUCHESS and ANTONIO.]

CARIOLA

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

[Exit.]

Act II. Scene I

[Enter] BOSOLA and CASTRUCCIO

BOSOLA

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

CASTRUCCIO

'Tis the very main of my ambition.

BOSOLA

Let me see: you have a reasonable good face for 't
already, and your night-cap expresses your ears
sufficient largely. I would have you learn to twirl the

strings of your band with a good grace, and in a set speech, at th' end of every sentence, to hum three or four times, or blow your nose till it smart again, to recover your memory. When you come to be a president in criminal causes, if you smile upon a prisoner, hang him; but if you frown upon him and threaten him, let him be sure to scape the gallows.

CASTRUCCIO

I would be a very merry president.

BOSOLS

Your wife 's gone to Rome: you two couple, and get you to the wells at Lucca to recover your aches. I have other work on foot.

[Exeunt CASTRUCCIO]

I observe our duchess
Is sick a-days, she pukes, her stomach seethes,
The fins of her eye-lids look most teeming blue,
She wanes i' the cheek, and waxes fat i' the flank,
And, contrary to our Italian fashion,
Wears a loose-bodied gown: there's somewhat in 't.
I have a trick may chance discover it,
A pretty one; I have bought some apricocks,
The first our spring yields.

[Enter ANTONIO and DELIO, DUCHESS, and CARIOLA]

DUCHESS

Your arm, Antonio: do I not grow fat?

I am exceeding short-winded. —Bosola,

I would have you, sir, provide for me a litter;

Such a one as the Duchess of Florence rode in.

BOSOLA

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

DUCHESS

I think she did. —Come hither, mend my ruff:

Here, when? thou art such a tedious lady; and

Thy breath smells of lemon-pills: would thou hadst done!

Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am

So troubled with the mother!

BOSOLA

[Aside.] I fear too much. - I have a present for your
grace.

DUCHESS

For me, sir?

BOSOLA

Apricocks, madam.

DUCHESS

O, sir, where are they?

I have heard of none to-year

BOSOLA

[Aside.] Good; her color rises.

DUCHESS

Indeed, I thank you: they are wondrous fair ones.

What an unskilful fellow is our gardener!

We shall have none this month.

BOSOLA

Will not your grace pare them?

DUCHESS

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

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

DUCHESS Why?

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

DUCHESS O, you jest. —
You shall judge: pray, taste one.

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

DUCHESS Sir, you are loth
To rob us of our dainties. 'Tis a delicate fruit;
They say they are restorative.

BOSOLA 'Tis a pretty art,
This grafting.

DUCHESS 'Tis so; a bettering of nature.

BOSOLA To make a pippin grow upon a crab,
A damson on a black-thorn. — [*Aside.*] How greedily she eats them!
A whirlwind strike off these bawd farthingales!
For, but for that and the loose-bodied gown,
I should have discover'd apparently
The young springal cutting a caper in her belly.

DUCHESS I thank you, Bosola: they were right good ones,

If they do not make me sick.

ANTONIO How now, madam!

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

BOSOLA [*Aside.*] Nay, you are too much swell'd already.

DUCHESS O, I am in an extreme cold sweat!

BOSOLA I am very sorry.

[*Exit.*]

DUCHESS Lights to my chamber! —O good Antonio,
I fear I am undone!

DELIO Lights there, lights!

Exeunt DUCHESS [and Ladies.]

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

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

ANTONIO I have.

DELIO Make use, then, of this forc'd occasion.

Give out that Bosola hath poison'd her
With these apricocks; that will give some colour
For her keeping close.

ANTONIO Fie, fie, the physicians
Will then flock to her.

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

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

Exeunt.

Act II. Scene II

[Enter] BOSOLA and CARIOLA

BOSOLA So, so, there's no question but her techiness and
most vulturous eating of the apricocks are apparent
signs of breeding, now?

CARIOLA I am in haste, sir.

BOSOLA There was a young waiting-woman had a monstrous
desire to see the glass-house——

CARIOLA Nay, pray, let me go. I will hear no more of the glass-
house.

BOSOLA Go, go, give your foster-daughters good counsel: tell

them, that the devil takes delight to hang at a
woman's girdle, like
a false rusty watch, that she cannot discern how the
time passes.

[Exit CARIOLA.][Enter ANTONIO, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN]

ANTONIO Shut up the court-gates.

BOSOLA Why, sir? What 's the danger?

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

SERVANT Yes.

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

BOSOLA At her pleasure.

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

[Exeunt all except ANTONIO and DELIO.]

DELIO How fares it with the duchess?

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

DELIO Speak to her all happy comfort.

ANTONIO How I do play the fool with mine own danger!
 You are this night, dear friend, to post to Rome:
 My life lies in your service.

DELIO Do not doubt me.

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

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

[Exit.] [Enter CARIOLA]

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

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

Exeunt.

Act II. Scene III

[Enter BOSOLA, with a dark lantern]

BOSOLA Sure I did hear a woman shriek: list, ha!
And the sound came, if I receiv'd it right,
From the duchess' lodgings. There 's some stratagem
In the confining all our courtiers
To their several wards: I must have part of it;
My intelligence will freeze else. List, again!
It may be 'twas the melancholy bird,
Best friend of silence and of solitariness,
The owl, that screamed so. —Ha! Antonio!

[Enter ANTONIO with a candle, his sword drawn]

ANTONIO I heard some noise. —Who 's there? What art thou?
Speak.

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

ANTONIO Bosola! —

 [*Aside.*] This mole does undermine me. —Heard you not
 A noise even now?

BOSOLA From whence?

ANTONIO From the duchess' lodging.

BOSOLA Not I: did you?

ANTONIO I did, or else I dream'd.

BOSOLA Let 's walk towards it.

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

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

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

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

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

BOSOLA In sooth, I'll tell you:

Now all the court 's asleep, I thought the devil
Had least to do here; I came to say my prayers;
And if it do offend you I do so,
You are a fine courtier.

ANTONIO [*Aside.*] This fellow will undo me. —

You gave the duchess apricocks to-day:
Pray heaven they were not poison'd!

BOSOLA Poison'd! a Spanish fig

For the imputation!

ANTONIO Traitors are ever confident

Till they are discover'd. There were jewels stol'n too:

In my conceit, none are to be suspected
More than yourself.

BOSOLA You are a false steward.

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

BOSOLA May be the ruin will crush you to pieces.

ANTONIO You are an impudent snake indeed, sir:

Are you scarce warm, and do you show your sting?

You libel well, sir?

BOSOLA No, sir: copy it out,

And I will set my hand to 't.

ANTONIO

[*Aside.*] My nose bleeds.

One that were superstitious would count

This ominous, when it merely comes by chance.

Two letters, that are wrought here for my name,

Are drown'd in blood!

Mere accident. — For you, sir, I'll take order

I' the morn you shall be safe. — [*Aside.*] 'Tis that must color

Her lying-in. — Sir, this door you pass not:

I do not hold it fit that you come near

The duchess' lodgings, till you have quit yourself. —

[*Aside.*] The great are like the base, nay, they are the same,

When they seek shameful ways to avoid shame.

Exit.

BOSOLA

Antonio hereabout did drop a paper: —

Some of your help, false friend. — O, here it is.

What 's here? a child's nativity calculated!

[*Reads.*] 'The duchess was deliver'd of a son, 'tween

the hours twelve and one in the night, Anno Dom.

1504, — I have it to my wish!

This is a parcel of intelligency

Our courtiers were cas'd up for: it needs must follow

That I must be committed on pretence

Of poisoning her; which I'll endure, and laugh at.

If one could find the father now! but that

Time will discover. Old Castruccio

I' th' morning posts to Rome: by him I'll send
A letter that shall make her brothers' galls
O'erflow their livers. This was a thrifty way!
Though lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise,
She 's oft found witty, but is never wise.

[Exit.]

Act II. Scene IV

[Enter] CARDINAL and JULIA

CARDINAL Sit: thou art my best of wishes. Prithee, tell me
What trick didst thou invent to come to Rome
Without thy husband?

JULIA Why, my lord, I told him
I came to visit an old anchorite
Here for devotion.

CARDINAL Thou art a witty false one,—
I mean, to him.

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

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

JULIA How, my lord!

CARDINAL

You fear

My constancy, because you have approv'd
Those giddy and wild turnings in yourself.

JULIA

Did you e'er find them?

CARDINAL

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

JULIA

So, my lord.

CARDINAL

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

JULIA

I'll go home
To my husband.

CARDINAL

You may thank me, lady,
I have taken you off your melancholy perch,
Bore you upon my fist, and show'd you game,
And let you fly at it. —I pray thee, kiss me. —
When thou wast with thy husband, thou wast watch'd
Like a tame elephant: —still you are to thank me: —
Thou hadst only kisses from him and high feeding;
But what delight was that? 'Twas just like one
That hath a little fing'ring on the lute,

Yet cannot tune it: —still you are to thank me.

JULIA
You told me of a piteous wound i' th' heart,
And a sick liver, when you woo'd me first,
And spake like one in physic.

CARDINAL
Who 's that? ——

[Enter Servant]

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

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

CARDINAL
Let him enter: I'll withdraw.

SERVANT
He says
Your husband, old Castruccio, is come to Rome,
Most pitifully tir'd with riding post.

[Exit.] [Enter DELIO]

JULIA
[Aside.] Signior Delio! 'tis one of my old suitors.

DELIO
I was bold to come and see you.

JULIA
Sir, you are welcome.

DELIO
Do you lie here?

JULIA
Sure, your own experience
Will satisfy you no: our Roman prelates

Do not keep lodging for ladies.

DELIO

Very well:

I have brought you no commendations from your husband,
For I know none by him.

JULIA

I hear he's come to Rome.

DELIO

I never knew man and beast, of a horse and a knight,
So weary of each other. If he had had a good back,
He would have undertook to have borne his horse,
His breech was so pitifully sore.

JULIA

Your laughter

Is my pity.

DELIO

Lady, I know not whether

You want money, but I have brought you some.

JULIA

From my husband?

DELIO

No, from mine own allowance.

JULIA

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

DELIO

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

JULIA

I have a bird more beautiful.

DELIO

Try the sound on 't.

JULIA

A lute-string far exceeds it.

It hath no smell, like cassia or civet;

Nor is it physical, though some fond doctors
Persuade us seethe 't in cullises. I'll tell you,
This is a creature bred by——

[Re-enter Servant]

SERVANT Your husband 's come,

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

[Exit.]

JULIA Sir, you hear:

Pray, let me know your business and your suit
As briefly as can be.

DELIO With good speed: I would wish you,

At such time as you are non-resident
With your husband, my mistress.

JULIA Sir, I'll go ask my husband if I shall,

And straight return your answer.

Exit.

DELIO Very fine!

Is this her wit, or honesty, that speaks thus?
I heard one say the duke was highly mov'd
With a letter sent from Malfi. I do fear
Antonio is betray'd. How fearfully
Shows his ambition now! Unfortunate fortune!

They pass through whirl-pools, and deep woes do shun,
Who the event weigh ere the action 's done.

Exit.

Act II. Scene V

[Enter] CARDINAL and FERDINAND with a letter

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

CARDINAL Say you?

FERDINAND And I am grown mad with 't.

CARDINAL What 's the prodigy[?]

FERDINAND Read there,—a sister damn'd: she 's loose i' the hilts;
Grown a notorious strumpet.

CARDINAL Speak lower.

FERDINAND Lower!
Rogues do not whisper 't now, but seek to publish 't
(As servants do the bounty of their lords)
Aloud; and with a covetous searching eye,
To mark who note them. O, confusion seize her!
She hath had most cunning bawds to serve her turn,
And more secure conveyances for lust
Than towns of garrison for service.

CARDINAL Is 't possible?

Can this be certain? Shall our blood,

The royal blood of Arragon and Castile,
Be thus attainted?

FERDINAND

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

CARDINAL

What to do?

FERDINAND

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

CARDINAL

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

FERDINAND

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

CARDINAL

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

FERDINAND

Methinks I see her laughing,—
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat quickly,

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

CARDINAL

With whom?

FERDINAND

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

CARDINAL

You fly beyond your reason.

FERDINAND

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

CARDINAL

How idly shows this rage, which carries you,
As men convey'd by witches through the air,
On violent whirlwinds! This intemperate noise
Fitly resembles deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud, thinking all other men
To have their imperfection.

FERDINAND

Have not you
My palsy?

CARDINAL

Yes, [but] I can be angry
Without this rupture. There is not in nature
A thing that makes man so deform'd, so beastly,

As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself.
You have divers men who never yet express'd
Their strong desire of rest but by unrest,
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself
In tune.

FERDINAND

So I will only study to seem
The thing I am not. I could kill her now,
In you, or in myself; for I do think
It is some sin in us heaven doth revenge
By her.

CARDINAL

Are you stark mad?

FERDINAND

I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coal-pit with the vantage stopp'd,
That their curs'd smoke might not ascend to heaven;
Or dip the sheets they lie in in pitch or sulphur,
Wrap them in 't, and then light them like a match;
Or else to-boil their bastard to a cullis,
And give 't his lecherous father to renew
The sin of his back.

CARDINAL

I'll leave you.

FERDINAND

Nay, I have done.
I am confident, had I been damn'd in hell,
And should have heard of this, it would have put me

Into a cold sweat. In, in; I'll go sleep.

Till I know who [loves] my sister, I'll not stir.

Now, Bosola,

How thrives our intelligence?

BOSOLA

Sir, uncertainly:

'Tis rumor'd she hath had bastards, but

By whom we may go read i' the stars.

FERDINAND

Why, some

Hold opinion all things are written there.

BOSOLA

Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.

I do suspect there hath been some sorcery

Us'd on the duchess.

FERDINAND

Sorcery! to what purpose?

BOSOLA

To make her dote on some desertless fellow

She shames to acknowledge.

FERDINAND

The witch-craft lies in her rank blood. This night

I will force confession from her. You told me

You had got, within these two days, a false key

Into her bed-chamber.

BOSOLA

I have.

FERDINAND

As I would wish.

BOSOLA

What do you intend to do?

FERDINAND Can you guess?

BOSOLA No.

FERDINAND Do not ask, then:
He that can compass me, and know my drifts,
May say he hath put a girdle 'bout the world,
And sounded all her quick-sands.

BOSOLA I do not
Think so.

FERDINAND What do you think, then, pray?

BOSOLA That you
Are your own chronicle too much, and grossly
Flatter yourself.

FERDINAND Give me thy hand; I thank thee:
I never gave pension but to flatterers,
Till I entertained thee. Farewell.
That friend a great man's ruin strongly checks,
Who rails into his belief all his defects.

Exeunt.

Act III. Scene II

[Enter] DUCHESS, ANTONIO, and CARIOLA

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

ANTONIO Indeed, I must persuade one.

DUCHESS Very good:

 I hope in time 'twill grow into a custom,
 That noblemen shall come with cap and knee
 To purchase a night's lodging of their wives.

ANTONIO I must lie here.

DUCHESS Must! You are a lord of mis-rule.

ANTONIO Indeed, my rule is only in the night.

DUCHESS I'll stop your mouth.

[Kisses him.]

ANTONIO Nay, that 's but one; Venus had two soft doves
 To draw her chariot; I must have another. —

[She kisses him again.]

 When wilt thou marry, Cariola?

CARIOLA Never, my lord; but I pray you, tell me,
 If there were propos'd me, wisdom, riches, and beauty,
 In three several young men, which should I choose?

ANTONIO 'Tis a hard question. This was Paris' case,
 And he was blind in 't, and there was a great cause;
 For how was 't possible he could judge right,
 Having three amorous goddesses in view,
 And they stark naked? 'Twas a motion

Were able to benight the apprehension
Of the severest counsellor of Europe.
Now I look on both your faces so well form'd,
It puts me in mind of a question I would ask.

CARIOLA

What is 't?

ANTONIO

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

DUCHESS

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

ANTONIO

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

Exeunt [ANTONIO and CARIOLA.]

DUCHESS

Doth not the color of my hair 'gin to change?
When I wax gray, I shall have all the court
Powder their hair with arras, to be like me.
You have cause to love me; I ent'red you into my heart

[Enter FERDINAND unseen]

Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.
We shall one day have my brothers take you napping.
Methinks his presence, being now in court,
Should make you keep your own bed; but you 'll say
Love mix'd with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you,
You shall get no more children till my brothers
Consent to be your gossips. Have you lost your tongue?
'Tis welcome:
For know, whether I am doom'd to live or die,
I can do both like a prince.

FERDINAND

Die, then, quickly!

Giving her a poniard.

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

DUCHESS

Pray, sir, hear me.

FERDINAND

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

DUCHESS

Sir——

FERDINAND

Do not speak.

DUCHESS

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

FERDINAND O most imperfect light of human reason,
That mak'st [us] so unhappy to foresee
What we can least prevent! Pursue thy wishes,
And glory in them: there's in shame no comfort
But to be past all bounds and sense of shame.

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

FERDINAND So!

DUCHESS Happily, not to your liking: but for that,
Alas, your shears do come untimely now
To clip the bird's wings that 's already flown!
Will you see my husband?

FERDINAND Yes, if I could change
Eyes with a basilisk.

DUCHESS Sure, you came hither
By his confederacy.

FERDINAND The howling of a wolf
Is music to thee, screech-owl: prithee, peace. —
Whate'er thou art that hast enjoy'd my sister,
For I am sure thou hear'st me, for thine own sake
Let me not know thee. I came hither prepar'd
To work thy discovery; yet am now persuaded
It would beget such violent effects
As would damn us both. I would not for ten millions

I had beheld thee: therefore use all means
I never may have knowledge of thy name;
Enjoy thy lust still, and a wretched life,
On that condition.

DUCHESS

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

FERDINAND

Thou art undone;
And thou hast ta'en that massy sheet of lead
That hid thy husband's bones, and folded it
About my heart.

DUCHESS

Mine bleeds for 't.

FERDINAND

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

DUCHESS

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

FERDINAND

Dost thou know what reputation is?
I'll tell thee,—to small purpose, since the instruction
Comes now too late.
Upon a time Reputation, Love, and Death,

Would travel o'er the world; and it was concluded
That they should part, and take three several ways.
Death told them, they should find him in great battles,
Or cities plagu'd with plagues: Love gives them counsel
To inquire for him 'mongst unambitious shepherds,
Where dowries were not talk'd of, and sometimes
'Mongst quiet kindred that had nothing left
By their dead parents: 'Stay,' quoth Reputation,
'Do not forsake me; for it is my nature,
If once I part from any man I meet,
I am never found again. ' And so for you:
You have shook hands with Reputation,
And made him invisible. So, fare you well:
I will never see you more.

DUCHESS

Why should only I,
Of all the other princes of the world,
Be cas'd up, like a holy relic? I have youth
And a little beauty.

FERDINAND

So you have some virgins
That are witches. I will never see thee more.

Exit. Re-enter ANTONIO with a pistol, [and CARIOLA]

DUCHESS

You saw this apparition?

ANTONIO

Yes: we are
Betray'd. How came he hither? I should turn

This to thee, for that.

CARIOLA

Pray, sir, do; and when

That you have cleft my heart, you shall read there

Mine innocence.

DUCHESS

That gallery gave him entrance.

ANTONIO

I would this terrible thing would come again,

That, standing on my guard, I might relate

My warrantable love. —

(She shows the poniard.)

Ha! what means this?

DUCHESS

He left this with me.

ANTONIO

And it seems did wish

You would use it on yourself.

DUCHESS

His action seem'd

To intend so much.

ANTONIO

This hath a handle to 't,

As well as a point: turn it towards him, and

So fasten the keen edge in his rank gall.

[Knocking within.]

How now! who knocks? More earthquakes?

DUCHESS

I stand

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

CARIOLA 'Tis Bosola.

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

Exit ANTONIO. Enter BOSOLA

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

DUCHESS So late?

BOSOLA He told me, as he mounted into the saddle,
You were undone.

DUCHESS Indeed, I am very near it.

BOSOLA What 's the matter?

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

BOSOLA Strange! — [*Aside.*] This is cunning.

DUCHESS And hereupon

 My brother's bills at Naples are protested

 Against. —Call up our officers.

BOSOLA I shall.

Exit. [Re-enter ANTONIO]

DUCHESS The place that you must fly to is Ancona:

 Hire a house there; I'll send after you

 My treasure and my jewels. Our weak safety

 Runs upon enginous wheels: short syllables

 Must stand for periods. I must now accuse you

 Of such a feigned crime, a noble lie,

 'Cause it must shield our honours. —Hark! they are coming.

[Re-enter BOSOLA and Officers]

ANTONIO Will your grace hear me?

DUCHESS I have got well by you; you have yielded me

 A million of loss: I am like to inherit

 The people's curses for your stewardship.

 You had the trick in audit-time to be sick,

 Till I had sign'd your quietus; and that cur'd you

 Without help of a doctor. —Gentlemen,

 I would have this man be an example to you all;

 We do confiscate,

 Towards the satisfying of your accounts,

All that you have.

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

DUCHESS
So, sir, you have your pass.

ANTONIO
You may see, gentlemen, what 'tis to serve
A prince with body and soul.

Exit.

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

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

BOSOLA
Let me show you what a most unvalu'd jewel
You have in a wanton humour thrown away,
To bless the man shall find him. He was an excellent
Courtier and most faithful; a soldier that thought it
As beastly to know his own value too little
As devilish to acknowledge it too much.
Both his virtue and form deserv'd a far better fortune:
His discourse rather delighted to judge itself than show itself:
His breast was fill'd with all perfection,
And yet it seemed a private whisp'ring-room,
It made so little noise of 't.

Will seem a princely progress, retaining
Your usual train about you.

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

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

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

[Exeunt DUCHESS and CARIOLA.]

BOSOLA
A politician is the devil's quilted anvil;
He fashions all sins on him, and the blows
Are never heard: he may work in a lady's chamber,
As here for proof. What rests but I reveal
All to my lord? O, this base quality
Of intelligencer! Why, every quality i' the world
Prefers but gain or commendation:
Now, for this act I am certain to be rais'd,
And men that paint weeds to the life are prais'd.

[Exit.]

Act III. Scene III

[Enter] CARDINAL, FERDINAND, MALATESTI, PESCARA, DELIO, and PESCARA

CARDINAL Must we turn soldier, then?

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

CARDINAL He that had the honor
Of taking the French king prisoner?

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

FERDINAND This great Count Malatesti, I perceive,
Hath got employment?

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

FERDINAND He's no soldier.

DELIO He has worn gun-powder in 's hollow tooth for the
tooth-ache.

PESCARA He comes to the leaguer with a full intent
To eat fresh beef and garlic, means to stay
Till the scent be gone, and straight return to court.

[Enter BOSOLA]

PESCARA Bosola arriv'd! What should be the business?
Some falling-out amongst the cardinals.
These factions amongst great men, they are like
Foxes, when their heads are divided,
They carry fire in their tails, and all the country
About them goes to wrack for 't.

PESCARA What 's that Bosola?

DELIO I knew him in Padua,—a fantastical scholar, like
such who study to know how many knots was in
Hercules' club, of what color Achilles' beard was, or
whether Hector were not troubled with the tooth-
ache. He hath studied himself half blear-eyed to
know the true symmetry of Caesar's nose by a
shoeing-horn; and this he did to gain the name of a
speculative man.

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

PESCARA That cardinal hath made more bad faces with his

oppression than ever Michael Angelo made good
ones. He lifts up 's nose, like a foul porpoise before a
storm.

PESCARA The Lord Ferdinand laughs.

DELIO Like a deadly cannon
That lightens ere it smokes.

PESCARA These are your true pangs of death,
The pangs of life, that struggle with great statesmen.

DELIO In such a deformed silence witches whisper their
charms.

CARDINAL Doth she make religion her riding-hood
To keep her from the sun and tempest?

FERDINAND That, that damns her. Methinks her fault and beauty,
Blended together, show like leprosy,
The whiter, the fouler. I make it a question
Whether her beggarly brats were ever christ'ned.

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

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

With 's mother's honesty.

BOSOLA I will.

FERDINAND Antonio!

A slave that only smell'd of ink and counters,
And never in 's life look'd like a gentleman,
But in the audit-time. —Go, go presently,
Draw me out an hundred and fifty of our horse,
And meet me at the foot-bridge.

Exeunt.

Act III. Scene IV

[Enter] Two Pilgrims to the Shrine of our Lady of Loretto

[Here the ceremony of the Cardinal's instalment, in the habit of a soldier, perform'd in delivering up his cross, hat, robes, and ring, at the shrine, and investing him with sword, helmet, shield, and spurs; then ANTONIO, the DUCHESS and their children, having presented themselves at the shrine, are, by a form of banishment in dumb-show expressed towards them by the CARDINAL and the state of Ancona, banished: during all which ceremony, this ditty is sung, to very solemn music, by divers churchmen: and then exeunt [all except the] Two Pilgrims.

— POSSIBLE INTERMISSION —

Act III. Scene V

[Enter] DUCHESS, ANTONIO, Children, CARIOLA

DUCHESS Banish'd Ancona!

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

DUCHESS Is all our train
Shrunk to this poor remainder?

[Enter BOSOLA with a letter]

BOSOLA You are happily o'erta'en.

DUCHESS From my brother?

BOSOLA Yes, from the Lord Ferdinand your brother
All love and safety.

DUCHESS Thou dost blanch mischief,
Would'st make it white. See, see, like to calm weather
At sea before a tempest, false hearts speak fair
To those they intend most mischief.
[Reads.] 'Send Antonio to me; I want his head in a
business.'
A politic equivocation!
He doth not want your counsel, but your head;
That is, he cannot sleep till you be dead.
And here 's another pitfall that 's strew'd o'er
With roses; mark it, 'tis a cunning one:
[Reads.] 'I stand engaged for your husband for several
debts at Naples: let not that trouble him; I had rather
have his heart than his money': —
And I believe so too.

BOSOLA What do you believe?

DUCHESS That he so much distrusts my husband's love,
He will by no means believe his heart is with him

Until he see it: the devil is not cunning enough
To circumvent us In riddles.

BOSOLA Will you reject that noble and free league
Of amity and love which I present you?

DUCHESS Their league is like that of some politic kings,
Only to make themselves of strength and power
To be our after-ruin; tell them so.

BOSOLA And what from you?

ANTONIO Thus tell him; I will not come.

BOSOLA And what of this?

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

BOSOLA This proclaims your breeding.
Every small thing draws a base mind to fear,
As the adamant draws iron. Fare you well, sir;
You shall shortly hear from 's.

Exit.

DUCHESS I suspect some ambush;
Therefore by all my love I do conjure you

To take your eldest son, and fly towards Milan.

Let us not venture all this poor remainder

In one unlucky bottom.

ANTONIO

You counsel safely.

Best of my life, farewell. Since we must part,

Heaven hath a hand in 't; but no otherwise

Than as some curious artist takes in sunder

A clock or watch, when it is out of frame,

To bring 't in better order.

DUCHESS

I know not which is best,

To see you dead, or part with you. —Farewell, boy:

Thou art happy that thou hast not understanding

To know thy misery; for all our wit

And reading brings us to a truer sense

Of sorrow. —In the eternal church, sir,

I do hope we shall not part thus.

ANTONIO

O, be of comfort!

Make patience a noble fortitude,

And think not how unkindly we are us'd:

Man, like to cassia, is prov'd best, being bruis'd.

DUCHESS

Must I, like to slave-born Russian,

Account it praise to suffer tyranny?

And yet, O heaven, thy heavy hand is in 't!

I have seen my little boy oft scourge his top,

And compar'd myself to 't: naught made me e'er
Go right but heaven's scourge-stick.

ANTONIO

Do not weep:
Heaven fashion'd us of nothing; and we strive
To bring ourselves to nothing. —Farewell, Cariola,
And thy sweet armful. —If I do never see thee more,
Be a good mother to your little ones,
And save them from the tiger: fare you well.

DUCHESS

Let me look upon you once more, for that speech
Came from a dying father. Your kiss is colder
Than that I have seen an holy anchorite
Give to a dead man's skull.

ANTONIO

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

Exeunt [ANTONIO and his son.]

DUCHESS

My laurel is all withered.

CARIOLA

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

Re-enter BOSOLA [visarded,] with a Guard

DUCHESS

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

Pass by our dog-ship without reverence? '
'O,' quoth the salmon, 'sister, be at peace:
Thank Jupiter we both have pass'd the net!
Our value never can be truly known,
Till in the fisher's basket we be shown:
I' th' market then my price may be the higher,
Even when I am nearest to the cook and fire. '
So to great men the moral may be stretched;
Men oft are valu'd high, when they're most wretched. —
But come, whither you please. I am arm'd 'gainst misery;
Bent to all sways of the oppressor's will:
There 's no deep valley but near some great hill.

Exeunt.

Act IV. Scene I

[Enter] FERDINAND and BOSOLA

FERDINAND	How doth our sister duchess bear herself In her imprisonment?
BOSOLA	Nobly: I'll describe her. She 's sad as one long us'd to 't, and she seems Rather to welcome the end of misery Than shun it; a behavior so noble As gives a majesty to adversity: You may discern the shape of loveliness More perfect in her tears than in her smiles:

She will muse for hours together; and her silence,
Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.

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

BOSOLA 'Tis so; and this restraint,
Like English mastives that grow fierce with tying,
Makes her too passionately apprehend
Those pleasures she is kept from.

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

[Enter DUCHESS and Attendants]

BOSOLA All comfort to your grace!

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

BOSOLA Your elder brother, the Lord Ferdinand,
Is come to visit you, and sends you word,
'Cause once he rashly made a solemn vow
Never to see you more, he comes i' th' night;
And prays you gently neither torch nor taper
Shine in your chamber. He will kiss your hand,
And reconcile himself; but for his vow

He dares not see you.

DUCHESS

At his pleasure. —

Take hence the lights. —He's come.

[Exeunt Attendants with lights.][Enter FERDINAND]

FERDINAND

Where are you?

DUCHESS

Here, sir.

FERDINAND

This darkness suits you well.

DUCHESS

I would ask you pardon.

FERDINAND

You have it;

For I account it the honorabl'st revenge,

Where I may kill, to pardon. —Where are your cubs?

DUCHESS

Whom?

FERDINAND

Call them your children;

For though our national law distinguish bastards

From true legitimate issue, compassionate nature

Makes them all equal.

DUCHESS

Do you visit me for this?

You violate a sacrament o' th' church

Shall make you howl in hell for 't.

FERDINAND

It had been well,

Could you have liv'd thus always; for, indeed,

You were too much i' th' light: —but no more;
I come to seal my peace with you. Here 's a hand

Gives her a dead man's hand.

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

DUCHESS I affectionately kiss it.

FERDINAND Pray, do, and bury the print of it in your heart.
I will leave this ring with you for a love-token;
And the hand as sure as the ring; and do not doubt
But you shall have the heart too. When you need a friend,
Send it to him that ow'd it; you shall see
Whether he can aid you.

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

FERDINAND Let her have lights enough.

Exit.

DUCHESS What witchcraft doth he practice, that he hath left
A dead man's hand here?

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

BOSOLA Look you, here 's the piece from which 'twas ta'en.
He doth present you this sad spectacle,

That, now you know directly they are dead,
Hereafter you may wisely cease to grieve
For that which cannot be recovered.

DUCHESS

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

BOSOLA

What 's that?

DUCHESS

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

BOSOLA

Come, you must live.

DUCHESS

That 's the greatest torture souls feel in hell,
In hell, that they must live, and cannot die.
Portia, I'll new kindle thy coals again,
And revive the rare and almost dead example
Of a loving wife.

BOSOLA

O, fie! despair? Remember
You are a Christian.

DUCHESS

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

Of the miracles of pity. I'll go pray; —

[Exit Servant.]

No, I'll go curse.

BOSOLA O, fie!

DUCHESS I could curse the stars.

BOSOLA O, fearful!

DUCHESS And those three smiling seasons of the year
Into a Russian winter; nay, the world
To its first chaos.

BOSOLA Look you, the stars shine still[.]

DUCHESS O, but you must
Remember, my curse hath a great way to go. —
Plagues, that make lanes through largest families,
Consume them! —

BOSOLA Fie, lady!

DUCHESS Let them, like tyrants,
Never be remembered but for the ill they have done;
Let all the zealous prayers of mortified
Churchmen forget them! —

BOSOLA O, uncharitable!

DUCHESS Let heaven a little while cease crowning martyrs,

To punish them! —
Go, howl them this, and say, I long to bleed:
It is some mercy when men kill with speed.

Exit. [Re-enter FERDINAND]

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

BOSOLA Why do you do this?

FERDINAND To bring her to despair.

BOSOLA Faith, end here,
And go no farther in your cruelty:
Send her a penitential garment to put on
Next to her delicate skin, and furnish her
With beads and prayer-books.

FERDINAND Damn her! that body of hers.
While that my blood run pure in 't, was more worth
Than that which thou wouldst comfort, call'd a soul.
I will send her masques of common courtesans,
Have her meat serv'd up by bawds and ruffians,
And, 'cause she 'll needs be mad, I am resolv'd
To move forth the common hospital

Act IV. Scene II

[Enter] DUCHESS and CARIOLA

DUCHESS What hideous noise was that?

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

DUCHESS Indeed, I thank him. Nothing but noise and folly
Can keep me in my right wits; whereas reason
And silence make me stark mad. Sit down;
Discourse to me some dismal tragedy.

CARIOLA O, 'twill increase your melancholy!

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

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

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

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

DUCHESS

Of nothing;
When I muse thus, I sleep.

CARIOLA

Like a madman, with your eyes open?

DUCHESS

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

CARIOLA

Yes, out of question.

DUCHESS

O, that it were possible we might
But hold some two days' conference with the dead!
]From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure,
I never shall know here. —How now!
What noise is that?

[Enter Servant]

SERVANT

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

DUCHESS

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

[Enter Madman]

Here by a Madman this song is sung to a dismal kind of music

O, LET US HOWL SOME HEAVY NOTE,
SOME DEADLY DOGGED HOWL,
SOUNDING AS FROM THE THREATENING THROAT
OF BEASTS AND FATAL FOWL!
AS RAVENS, SCREECH-OWLS, BULLS, AND BEARS,
WE 'LL BELL, AND BAWL OUR PARTS,
TILL IRKSOME NOISE HAVE CLOY'D YOUR EARS
AND CORROSIV'D YOUR HEARTS.
AT LAST, WHENAS OUR CHOIR WANTS BREATH,
OUR BODIES BEING BLEST,
WE 'LL SING, LIKE SWANS, TO WELCOME DEATH,
AND DIE IN LOVE AND REST.

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

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

FIRST MADMAN I have skill in heraldry.

SECOND MADMAN Hast?

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

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

FIRST MADMAN Come on, sir, I will lay the law to you.

SECOND MADMAN O, rather lay a corrosive: the law will eat to the bone.

THIRD MADMAN He that drinks but to satisfy nature is damn'd.

FOURTH MADMAN If I had my glass here, I would show a sight should
make all the women here call me mad doctor.

FIRST MADMAN What 's he? a rope-maker?

SECOND MADMAN No, no, no, a snuffling knave that, while he shows
the tombs, will have his hand in a wench's placket.

THIRD MADMAN Woe to the carochethat brought home my wife from
the masque at three o'clock in the morning! It had a
large feather-bed in it.

FOURTH MADMAN I have pared the devil's nails forty times, roasted
them in raven's eggs, and cured agues with them.

THIRD MADMAN Get me three hundred milch-bats, to make possets
to procure sleep.

FOURTH MADMAN All the college may throw their caps at me: I have
made a soap-boiler costive; it was my masterpiece.

Here the dance, consisting of Eight Madmen, with music answerable thereunto; after which, BOSOLA, like an old man, enters.

DUCHESS Is he mad too?

SERVANT Pray, question him. I'll leave you.

[Exeunt Servant and Madmen.]

BOSOLA I am come to make thy tomb.

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

BOSOLA Yes, and the more dangerously, since thy sickness is
insensible.

DUCHESS Thou art not mad, sure: dost know me?

BOSOLA Yes.

DUCHESS Who am I?

BOSOLA Thou art a box of worm-seed, at best but a salvatory
of green mummy. What 's this flesh? a little crudded
milk, fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker
than those paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in;
more contemptible, since ours is to preserve earth-
worms. Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is
the soul in the body: this world is like her little turf
of grass, and the heaven o'er our heads like her
looking-glass, only gives us a miserable knowledge
of the small compass of our prison.

DUCHESS Am not I thy duchess?

BOSOLA Thou art some great woman, sure, for riot begins to

sit on thy forehead (clad in gray hairs) twenty years
sooner than on a merry milk-maid's. Thou sleepest
worse than if a mouse should be forced to take up
her lodging in a cat's ear: a little infant that breeds
its teeth, should it lie with thee, would cry out, as if
thou wert the more unquiet bedfellow.

DUCHESS I am Duchess of Malfi still.

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

DUCHESS Thou art very plain.

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

DUCHESS And thou comest to make my tomb?

BOSOLA Yes.

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

BOSOLA Now I shall: —

[Enter Executioners, with] a coffin, cords, and a bell

Here is a present from your princely brothers;
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings

Last benefit, last sorrow.

DUCHESS

Let me see it:

I have so much obedience in my blood,
I wish it in their veins to do them good.

BOSOLA

This is your last presence-chamber.

CARIOLA

O my sweet lady!

DUCHESS

Peace; it affrights not me.

BOSOLA

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

DUCHESS

Even now thou said'st
Thou wast a tomb-maker.

BOSOLA

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

CARIOLA

Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers! Alas!
What will you do with my lady? —Call for help!

DUCHESS

To whom? To our next neighbors? They are mad-folks.

BOSOLA

Remove that noise.

DUCHESS

Farewell, Cariola.
In my last will I have not much to give:
A many hungry guests have fed upon me;

Thine will be a poor reversion.

CARIOLA

I will die with her.

DUCHESS

I pray thee, look thou giv'st my little boy
Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep.

[Cariola is forced out by the Executioners.]

Now what you please:

What death?

BOSOLA

Strangling; here are your executioners.

DUCHESS

I forgive them:

The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough o' th' lungs,
Would do as much as they do.

BOSOLA

Doth not death fright you?

DUCHESS

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

BOSOLA

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

DUCHESS

Not a whit:
What would it pleasure me to have my throat cut
With diamonds? or to be smothered

With cassia? or to be shot to death with pearls?
I know death hath ten thousand several doors
For men to take their exits; and 'tis found
They go on such strange geometrical hinges,
You may open them both ways: any way, for heaven-sake,
So I were out of your whispering. Tell my brothers
That I perceive death, now I am well awake,
Best gift is they can give or I can take.
I would fain put off my last woman's-fault,
I'd not be tedious to you.

FIRST EXECUTIONER We are ready.

DUCHESS Dispose my breath how please you; but my body
Bestow upon my women, will you?

FIRST EXECUTIONER Yes.

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

They strangle her.

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

[Enter CARIOLA]

Look you, there sleeps your mistress.

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

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

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

BOSOLA Come, dispatch her. —
You kept her counsel; now you shall keep ours.

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

FIRST EXECUTIONER Here 's your wedding-ring.

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

BOSOLA Delays: —throttle her.

FIRST EXECUTIONER She bites and scratches.

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

BOSOLA [*To Executioners.*] When?

CARIOLA I am quick with child.

BOSOLA Why, then,
Your credit 's saved.

[Executioners strangle Cariola.]

Bear her into the next room;
Let these lie still.

[Exeunt the Executioners with the body of CARIOLA.] [Enter FERDINAND]

FERDINAND Is she dead?

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

Shows the Children strangled.

Alas, how have these offended?

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

BOSOLA Fix your eye here.

FERDINAND Constantly.

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

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

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

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

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

FERDINAND Let me see her face
Again. Why didst thou not pity her? What
An excellent honest man mightst thou have been,
If thou hadst borne her to some sanctuary!
Or, bold in a good cause, oppos'd thyself,
With thy advanced sword above thy head,
Between her innocence and my revenge!
I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits,
Go kill my dearest friend, and thou hast done 't.

For let me but examine well the cause:
What was the meanness of her match to me?
Only I must confess I had a hope,
Had she continu'd widow, to have gain'd
An infinite mass of treasure by her death:
And that was the main cause,—her marriage,
That drew a stream of gall quite through my heart.
For thee, as we observe in tragedies
That a good actor many times is curs'd
For playing a villain's part, I hate thee for 't,
And, for my sake, say, thou hast done much ill well.

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

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

BOSOLA Do.

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

BOSOLA Ha!

FERDINAND Yes, and 'tis
The largest bounty I can study to do thee.
By what authority didst thou execute

This bloody sentence?

BOSOLA

By yours.

FERDINAND

Mine! was I her judge?

Did any ceremonial form of law

Doom her to not-being? Did a complete jury

Deliver her conviction up i' the court?

Where shalt thou find this judgment register'd,

Unless in hell? See, like a bloody fool,

Thou 'st forfeited thy life, and thou shalt die for 't.

BOSOLA

The office of justice is perverted quite

When one thief hangs another. Who shall dare

To reveal this?

FERDINAND

O, I'll tell thee;

The wolf shall find her grave, and scrape it up,

Not to devour the corpse, but to discover

The horrid murder.

BOSOLA

You, not I, shall quake for 't.

FERDINAND

Leave me.

BOSOLA

I will first receive my pension.

FERDINAND

You are a villain.

BOSOLA

When your ingratitude

Is judge, I am so.

FERDINAND

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

BOSOLA

Why, fare thee well.
Your brother and yourself are worthy men!
You have a pair of hearts are hollow graves,
Rotten, and rotting others; and your vengeance,
Like two chain'd-bullets, still goes arm in arm:
You may be brothers; for treason, like the plague,
Doth take much in a blood. I stand like one
That long hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream:
I am angry with myself, now that I wake.

FERDINAND

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

BOSOLA

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

FERDINAND

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

They call lycanthropia.

PESCARA

What 's that?

I need a dictionary to 't.

DOCTOR

I'll tell you.

In those that are possess'd with 't there o'erflows
Such melancholy humor they imagine
Themselves to be transformed into wolves;
Steal forth to church-yards in the dead of night,
And dig dead bodies up: as two nights since
One met the duke 'bout midnight in a lane
Behind Saint Mark's church, with the leg of a man
Upon his shoulder; and he howl'd fearfully;
Said he was a wolf, only the difference
Was, a wolf's skin was hairy on the outside,
His on the inside; bade them take their swords,
Rip up his flesh, and try. Straight I was sent for,
And, having minister'd to him, found his grace
Very well recover'd.

PESCARA

I am glad on 't.

DOCTOR

Yet not without some fear
Of a relapse. If he grow to his fit again,
I'll go a nearer way to work with him
Than ever Paracelsus dream'd of; if
They 'll give me leave, I'll buffet his madness out of him.

Stand aside; he comes.

[Enter FERDINAND, CARDINAL, and BOSOLA]

FERDINAND Leave me.

PESCARA Why doth your lordship love this solitariness?

FERDINAND Eagles commonly fly alone: they are crows, daws,
and starlings that flock together. Look, what 's that
follows me?

PESCARA Nothing, my lord.

FERDINAND Yes.

PESCARA 'Tis your shadow.

FERDINAND Stay it; let it not haunt me.

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

FERDINAND I will throttle it.

[Throws himself down on his shadow.]

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

FERDINAND You are a fool: how is 't possible I should catch my
shadow, unless I fall upon 't? When I go to hell, I
mean to carry a bribe; for, look you, good gifts
evermore make way for the worst persons.

PESCARA Rise, good my lord.

FERDINAND I am studying the art of patience.

PESCARA 'Tis a noble virtue.

FERDINAND To drive six snails before me from this town to Moscow; neither use goad nor whip to them, but let them take their own time; —the patient'st man i' th' world match me for an experiment: — an I'll crawl after like a sheep-biter.

CARDINAL Force him up.

[They raise him.]

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

DOCTOR Now let me come to him. —Are you mad, my lord? are you out of your princely wits?

FERDINAND What 's he?

PESCARA Your doctor.

FERDINAND Let me have his beard saw'd off, and his eye-brows fil'd more civil.

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

FERDINAND I have cruel sore eyes.

PESCARA Doctor, he did not fear you thoroughly.

DOCTOR True; I was somewhat too forward.

BOSOLA Mercy upon me, what a fatal judgment
Hath fall'n upon this Ferdinand!

BOSOLA Sir, I would speak with you.

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

CARDINAL You are most welcome.

[Exeunt PESCARA and DOCTOR.]

Are you come? so. Why do you look so wildly?
O, the fortune of your master here the prince
Dejects you; but be you of happy comfort:
If you 'll do one thing for me I'll entreat,
Though he had a cold tomb-stone o'er his bones,
I'd make you what you would be.

BOSOLA Any thing;
Give it me in a breath, and let me fly to 't.
They that think long small expedition win,
For musing much o' th' end cannot begin.

[Enter JULIA]

JULIA Sir, will you come into supper?

CARDINAL

I am busy; leave me[.]

JULIA

[*Aside.*]What an excellent shape hath that fellow!

Exit.

CARDINAL

'Tis thus. Antonio lurks here in Milan:
Inquire him out, and kill him. While he lives,
Our sister cannot marry; and I have thought
Of an excellent match for her. Do this, and style me
Thy advancement.

BOSOLA

But by what means shall I find him out?

CARDINAL

There is a gentleman call'd Delio
Here in the camp, that hath been long approv'd
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow;
Follow him to mass; may be Antonio,
Although he do account religion
But a school-name, for fashion of the world
May accompany him; or else go inquire out
Delio's confessor, and see if you can bribe
Him to reveal it. There are a thousand ways
A man might find to trace him; as to know
What fellows haunt the Jews for taking up
Great sums of money, for sure he's in want;
Or else to go to the picture-makers, and learn
Who bought her picture lately: some of these
Happily may take.

BOSOLA Well, I'll not freeze i' th' business:

I would see that wretched thing, Antonio,

Above all sights i' th' world.

CARDINAL Do, and be happy.

Exit.

BOSOLA This fellow doth breed basilisks in 's eyes,

He's nothing else but murder; yet he seems

Not to have notice of the duchess' death.

'Tis his cunning; I must follow his example;

There cannot be a surer way to trace

Than that of an old fox.

[Re-enter JULIA, with a pistol]

JULIA So, sir, you are well met.

BOSOLA How Now!

JULIA Nay, the doors are fast enough:

Now, sir, I will make you confess your treachery.

BOSOLA Treachery!

JULIA Yes, confess to me

Which of my women 'twas you hir'd to put

Love-powder into my drink?

BOSOLA Love-powder!

JULIA Yes, when I was at Malfi.

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

BOSOLA

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

JULIA

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

BOSOLA

Know you me, I am a blunt soldier.

JULIA

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

BOSOLA

[*Aside.*] I have it, I will work upon this creature. —
Let us grow most amorously familiar:
If the great cardinal now should see me thus,

Would he not count me a villain?

JULIA

No; he might count me a wanton,
Not lay a scruple of offence on you;
For if I see and steal a diamond,
The fault is not i' th' stone, but in me the thief
That purloins it. I am sudden with you.
We that are great women of pleasure use to cut off
These uncertain wishes and unquiet longings,
And in an instant join the sweet delight
And the pretty excuse together. Had you been i' th' street,
Under my chamber-window, even there
I should have courted you.

BOSOLA

O, you are an excellent lady!

JULIA

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

BOSOLA

I will; and if you love me,
Fail not to effect it.
The cardinal is grown wondrous melancholy;
Demand the cause, let him not put you off
With feign'd excuse; discover the main ground on 't.

JULIA

Why would you know this?

BOSOLA

I have depended on him,
And I hear that he is fall'n in some disgrace

CARDINAL

Where are you?

JULIA

How now, my lord! what ails you?

CARDINAL

Nothing.

JULIA

O, you are much alter'd:

Come, I must be your secretary, and remove

This lead from off your bosom: what 's the matter?

CARDINAL

I may not tell you.

JULIA

Are you so far in love with sorrow

You cannot part with part of it? Or think you

I cannot love your grace when you are sad

As well as merry? Or do you suspect

I, that have been a secret to your heart

These many winters, cannot be the same

Unto your tongue?

CARDINAL

Satisfy thy longing,—

The only way to make thee keep my counsel

Is, not to tell thee.

JULIA

Tell your echo this,

Or flatterers, that like echoes still report

What they hear though most imperfect, and not me;

For if that you be true unto yourself,

I'll know.

CARDINAL

Will you rack me?

JULIA

No, judgment shall

Draw it from you: it is an equal fault,

To tell one's secrets unto all or none.

CARDINAL

The first argues folly.

JULIA

But the last tyranny.

CARDINAL

Very well: why, imagine I have committed

Some secret deed which I desire the world

May never hear of.

JULIA

Therefore may not I know it?

You have conceal'd for me as great a sin

As adultery. Sir, never was occasion

For perfect trial of my constancy

Till now: sir, I beseech you——

CARDINAL

You 'll repent it.

JULIA

Never.

CARDINAL

It hurries thee to ruin: I'll not tell thee.

'Tis a secret

That, like a ling'ring poison, may chance lie

Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence.

JULIA

Now you dally with me.

CARDINAL No more; thou shalt know it.

 By my appointment the great Duchess of Malfi
 And two of her young children, four nights since,
 Were strangl'd.

JULIA O heaven! sir, what have you done!

CARDINAL How now? How settles this? Think you your bosom
 Will be a grave dark and obscure enough
 For such a secret?

JULIA You have undone yourself, sir.

CARDINAL Why?

JULIA It lies not in me to conceal it.

CARDINAL No?

 Come, I will swear you to 't upon this book.

JULIA Most religiously.

CARDINAL Kiss it.

[She kisses the book.]

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

[Re-enter BOSOLA]

CARDINAL

Wherefore com'st thou hither?

BOSOLA

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

CARDINAL

I'll have thee hew'd in pieces.

BOSOLA

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

CARDINAL

Who plac'd thee here?

BOSOLA

Her lust, as she intended.

CARDINAL

Very well:

Now you know me for your fellow-murderer.

BOSOLA

And wherefore should you lay fair marble colours
Upon your rotten purposes to me?
Unless you imitate some that do plot great treasons,
And when they have done, go hide themselves i' th' grave
Of those were actors in 't?

CARDINAL

No more; there is
A fortune attends thee.

BOSOLA

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

CARDINAL

I have honors in store for thee.

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

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

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

BOSOLA You shall find me ready.

Act V. Scene III

[Enter] ANTONIO and DELIO. Echo (from the DUCHESS'S Grave)

(I need a very good reason to keep this scene in.)

Act V. Scene IV

[Enter] CARDINAL, PESCARA, MALATESTI,

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

MALATESTI Good my lord, suffer us.

CARDINAL O, by no means;
 The noise, and change of object in his eye,
 Doth more distract him. I pray, all to bed;
 And though you hear him in his violent fit,
 Do not rise, I entreat you.

PESCARA So, sir; we shall not.

Exeunt [all except the CARDINAL].

CARDINAL

The reason why I would not suffer these
About my brother, is, because at midnight
I may with better privacy convey
Julia's body to her own lodging. O, my conscience!
I would pray now; but the devil takes away my heart
For having any confidence in prayer.
About this hour I appointed Bosola
To fetch the body. When he hath serv'd my turn,
He dies.

Exit. [Enter BOSOLA]

BOSOLA

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

[Enter FERDINAND]

FERDINAND

Strangling is a very quiet death.

BOSOLA

[Aside.] Nay, then, I see I must stand upon my guard.

FERDINAND

What say to that? Whisper softly: do you agree to 't?
So; it must be done i' th' dark; the cardinal would
not for a thousand pounds the doctor should see it.

Exit.

BOSOLA

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

[Enter ANTONIO and Servant]

Which way please them. —O good Antonio,
I'll whisper one thing in thy dying ear
Shall make thy heart break quickly! Thy fair duchess
And two sweet children——

ANTONIO Their very names
Kindle a little life in me.

BOSOLA Are murder'd.

ANTONIO Some men have wish'd to die
At the hearing of sad tidings; I am glad
That I shall do 't in sadness. I would not now
Wish my wounds balm'd nor heal'd, for I have no use
To put my life to. In all our quest of greatness,
Like wanton boys whose pastime is their care,
We follow after bubbles blown in th' air.
Pleasure of life, what is 't? Only the good hours
Of an ague; merely a preparative to rest,
To endure vexation. I do not ask
The process of my death; only commend me
To Delio.

BOSOLA Break, heart!

ANTONIO And let my son fly the courts to princes.

[Dies.]

BOSOLA Thou seem'st to have lov'd Antonio.

SERVANT

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

BOSOLA

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

Exeunt.

Act V. Scene V

[Enter] CARDINAL, with a book

CARDINAL

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

[Enter BOSOLA, and Servant bearing ANTONIO'S body]

Now, art thou come?

CARDINAL What cause hast thou to pursue my life?

BOSOLA Look there.

CARDINAL Antonio!

BOSOLA Slain by my hand unwittingly.
Pray, and be sudden. When thou kill'd'st thy sister,
Thou took'st from Justice her most equal balance,
And left her naught but her sword.

CARDINAL O, mercy!

BOSOLA Now it seems thy greatness was only outward;
For thou fall'st faster of thyself than calamity
Can drive thee. I'll not waste longer time; there!

[Stabs him.]

CARDINAL Thou hast hurt me.

BOSOLA Again!

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

[Enter FERDINAND]

FERDINAND Th' alarum! Give me a fresh horse;
Rally the vaunt-guard, or the day is lost,
Yield, yield! I give you the honour of arms
Shake my sword over you; will you yield?

CARDINAL Help me; I am your brother!

FERDINAND The devil!

My brother fight upon the adverse party!

He wounds the CARDINAL, and, in the scuffle, gives BOSOLA his death-wound.

There flies your ransom.

CARDINAL O justice!

I suffer now for what hath former bin:

Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin.

FERDINAND The pain 's nothing; pain many times is taken away
with the apprehension of greater, as the tooth-ache
with the sight of a barber that comes to pull it out.
There 's philosophy for you.

BOSOLA Now my revenge is perfect. —Sink, thou main cause

Kills FERDINAND.

Of my undoing! —The last part of my life

Hath done me best service.

FERDINAND Give me some wet hay; I am broken-winded.

I do account this world but a dog-kennel:

I will vault credit and affect high pleasures

Beyond death.

BOSOLA He seems to come to himself,

Now he's so near the bottom.

FERDINAND My sister, O my sister! there 's the cause on 't.
Whether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust,
Like diamonds, we are cut with our own dust.

[Dies.]

CARDINAL Thou hast thy payment too.

BOSOLA Yes, I hold my weary soul in my teeth;
'Tis ready to part from me. I do glory
That thou, which stood'st like a huge pyramid
Begun upon a large and ample base,
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

[Enter, below, PESCARA, MALATESTI]

PESCARA How now, my lord!

MALATESTI O sad disaster!

PESCARA How comes this?

BOSOLA Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi murdered
By the Arragonian brethren; for Antonio
Slain by this hand; for lustful Julia
Poison'd by this man; and lastly for myself,
That was an actor in the main of all
Much 'gainst mine own good nature, yet i' the end
Neglected.

PESCARA How now, my lord!

CARDINAL

Look to my brother:

He gave us these large wounds, as we were struggling

Here i' th' rushes. And now, I pray, let me

Be laid by and never thought of.

[Dies.]

MALATESTI

Thou wretched thing of blood,

How came Antonio by his death?

BOSOLA

In a mist; I know not how:

Such a mistake as I have often seen

In a play. O, I am gone!

We are only like dead walls or vaulted graves,

That, ruin'd, yield no echo. Fare you well.

It may be pain, but no harm, to me to die

In so good a quarrel. O, this gloomy world!

In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness,

Doth womanish and fearful mankind live!

Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust

To suffer death or shame for what is just:

Mine is another voyage.

[Dies.]

PESCARA

The noble Delio, as I came to th' palace,

Told me of Antonio's being here, and show'd me

A pretty gentleman, his son and heir.

[Enter DELIO]

MALATESTI

O sir, you come too late!

DELIO

I heard so, and

Was arm'd for 't, ere I came. These wretched eminent things

Leave no more fame behind 'em, than should one

Fall in a frost, and leave his print in snow;

As soon as the sun shines, it ever melts,

Both form and matter. I have ever thought

Nature doth nothing so great for great men

As when she 's pleas'd to make them lords of truth:

Integrity of life is fame's best friend,

Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.

Exeunt.