

The Duchess of Malfi

Dramatis Personae

FERDINAND [Duke of Calabria]. **Damon Bonetti**

CARDINAL [his brother]. **Brian McCann**

ANTONIO [BOLOGNA, Steward of the Household to the Duchess]. **Adam Altman**

DELIO [his friend]. **Jake Blouch**

DANIEL DE BOSOLA [Gentleman of the Horse to the Duchess]. **Jared Delaney**

CASTRUCCIO, [an old Lord] **Mort Paterson**

MARQUIS OF PESCARA. **John Lopes**

[COUNT] MALATESTI. – DOCTOR **Robert DaPonte**

DUCHESS [OF MALFI]. **Charlotte Northeast**

CARIOLA [her woman]. **Megan Slater**

[JULIA, Castruccio's wife, and] the Cardinal's mistress. **Melissa Lynch**

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,  
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: 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.

ANTONIO. He hath denied thee some suit?

BOSOLA. He and his brother are like plum-trees that grow crooked  
over standing-pools; they are rich and o'erladen with fruit, but none  
but crows, pies, and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one  
of their flattering panders, I would hang on their ears like a  
horseleech, till I were full, and then drop off. I pray, leave me.  
Who would rely upon these miserable dependencies, in expectation  
to be advanc'd to-morrow? What creature ever fed worse than hoping  
Tantalus? Nor ever died any man more fearfully than he that hoped  
for a pardon. 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.

ANTONIO. 'Tis great pity  
He should be thus neglected: I have heard  
He 's very valiant. This foul melancholy  
Will poison all his goodness; for, I 'll tell you,  
If too immoderate sleep be truly said  
To be an inward rust unto the soul,  
If then doth follow want of action  
Breeds all black malcontents;  
Here comes the Duke

[Enter FERDINAND, PESCARA, CASTRUCCIO, JULIA and MALATESTA]

FERDINAND. Who took the ring oftenest?

PESCARA. Antonio Bologna, my lord.

FERDINAND. Our sister duchess' great-master of her household?  
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.  
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. Good my lord; you were far better do it by a deputy.

FERDINAND. Why should I not as well sleep or eat by a deputy?

This might take idle, offensive, and base office from me, whereas the other deprives me 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.

JULIA. True, my lord.

FERDINAND. Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the soldiers 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?

FERDINAND. He is all fire. I think he was begot by the wind.

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

PESCARA, DELIO, MALATESTI. Ha, ha, ha!

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.

CASTRUCCIO. True, my lord: I myself have heard a very good jest, and have scorn'd to seem to have so silly a wit as to understand it.

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

CASTRUCCIO. My lady cannot abide him.

FERDINAND. No?

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

FERDINAND. I would, then, have a mathematical instrument made for her face, that she might not laugh out of compass.--I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Castruccio.



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.  
We [are] now upon parting. Good Castruccio,  
Do us commend to all our noble friends  
At the leaguer.

CASTRUCCIO. Sir, I shall.

[DUCHESS.] You are for Milan?

CASTRUCCIO. I am.

DUCHESS. We 'll bring you down to the haven.  
[Exeunt all but CARDINAL and FERDINAND]

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

BOSOLA. Doth he study physiognomy?  
There 's no more credit to be given to the face  
Than to a sick man's urine, which some call  
The physician's whore, because she cozens him.  
He did suspect me wrongfully.

FERDINAND. For that  
You must give great men leave to take their times.  
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceiv'd.

BOSOLA.                    Yet take heed;  
For to suspect a friend unworthily  
Instructs him the next way to suspect you,  
And prompts him to deceive you.

FERDINAND.                There 's gold.

BOSOLA.                    So:  
What follows? 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.                    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.]

[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.

CARDINAL.        O, fie!

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.  
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.                    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:  
And beware that part, which like the lamprey,  
Hath never a bone in't.

DUCHESS: Fie, sir!

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

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. Let old wives report

I wink'd and chose a husband.--Cariola,  
To thy known secrecy I have given up  
More than my life,--my fame.

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. I 'd have you first provide for a good husband;  
Give him all.

DUCHESS. All!

ANTONIO. Yes, your excellent self.

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?  
How do you affect 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. Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,  
That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms,  
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.       O my unworthiness!

DUCHESS. If you will know where breathes a complete man

(I speak it without flattery), turn your eyes,  
And progress through yourself.

ANTONIO. Were there nor heaven nor hell,  
I should be honest: I have long serv'd virtue,  
And ne'er ta'en wages of her.

DUCHESS.                    Now she pays it.  
The misery of us that are born great!  
We are forc'd to woo, because none dare woo us;  
And as a tyrant doubles with his words,  
And fearfully equivocates, so we  
Are forc'd to express our violent passions  
In riddles and in dreams, and leave the path  
Of simple virtue, which was never made  
To seem the thing it is not. Go, go brag  
You have left me heartless; mine is in your bosom:  
I hope 'twill multiply love there. You do tremble:  
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh,  
To fear more than to love me. Sir, be confident:  
What is 't distracts you? This is flesh and blood, sir;  
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster  
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake, man!  
I do here put off all vain ceremony,  
And only do appear to you a young widow  
That claims you for her husband, and, like a widow,  
I use but half a blush in 't.

ANTONIO. But for your brothers?

DUCHESS.                    Do not think of them:  
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.  
[She and ANTONIO kneel.]  
Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian which let violence  
Never untwine!

DUCHESS. What can the church force more?  
How can the church build faster?  
We now are man and wife, and 'tis the church  
That must but echo this. 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:  
O, let me shrowd my blushes in your bosom,  
Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets!  
[Exeunt DUCHESS and ANTONIO.]

## Act II

### Scene I

[Enter] BOSOLA  
Observe my meditation now.  
What thing is in this outward form of man  
To be belov'd? We account it ominous,  
If nature do produce a colt, or lamb,  
A fawn, or goat, in any limb resembling  
A man, and fly from 't as a prodigy:  
Man stands amaz'd to see his deformity  
In any other creature but himself.  
But in our own flesh though we bear diseases  
Which have their true names only ta'en from beasts,--  
As the most ulcerous wolf and swinish measles,--  
Though we are eaten up of lice and worms,  
And though continually we bear about us  
A rotten and dead body, we delight  
To hide it in rich tissue:  
I observe our duchess  
Is sick a-days, she pukes, her stomach seethes,  
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, talking together apart]

DELIO.                   And so long since married?  
You amaze me.

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

BOSOLA. O, sir, the opinion of wisdom is a foul tetter  
that runs all over a man's body: if simplicity direct us to have  
no evil, it directs us to a happy being; for the subtlest folly  
proceeds from the subtlest wisdom: let me be simply honest.

ANTONIO. I do understand your inside.

BOSOLA.                   Do you so?

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

BOSOLA. Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any compliment  
whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you? I look no higher than  
I can reach: for, mark me, when a man's mind rides faster than his horse  
can gallop, they quickly both tire. Some would think the souls of princes  
were brought forth by some more weighty cause than those of meaner  
persons: they are deceiv'd, there 's the same hand to them; the like  
passions sway them.

[Enter DUCHESS and Ladies]

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.

BOSOLA. 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  
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. 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. [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.

Exeunt.

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. You come from painting now.

CARIOLA. From what?

BOSOLA. Why, from your scurvy face-physic. To behold thee not painted inclines somewhat near a miracle. There was a lady in France that, having had the small-pox, flayed the skin off her face to make it more level; and whereas before she looked like a nutmeg-grater, after she resembled an abortive hedge-hog. I would sooner eat a dead pigeon taken from the soles of the feet of one sick of the plague, than kiss one of you fasting.

CARIOLA. Nay, pray, let me go. I will hear no more of the glass-house. You are still abusing women!

BOSOLA. Who, I? No; only, by the way now and then, mention your frailties. 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, DELIO, PESCARA and CASTRUCCIO]

ANTONIO. Shut up the court-gates.

BOSOLA. Why, sir? What 's the danger?

ANTONIO. Shut up the posterns presently.

CASTRUCCIO. I shall instantly.

DELIO. O, gentleman o' th' court, the foulest treason!

BOSOLA. [Aside.] If that these apricocks should be poison'd now, Without my knowledge?

DELIO.

There was taken even now a prowler in the duchess' bed-chamber----

BOSOLA. A prowler!

DELIO. With a pistol----

PESCARA. There was a cunning traitor!

DELIO.

And all the moulds of his buttons were leaden bullets.

PESCARA. To see what the devil can do!

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.  
[re-enter CASTRUCCIO]  
Are the gates shut?

CASTRUCCIO. Yes.

ANTONIO. 'Tis the duchess' pleasure  
Each man 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.

PESCARA. 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.

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.

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. 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!--  
--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. 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?  
For you, sir, I'll take order  
I' the morn you shall be safe 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:--  
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,'--that 's  
this year--'decimo nono Decembris,'--that 's this night--  
'taken according to the meridian of Malfi,'--that 's our  
duchess: happy discovery!--'The lord of the first house  
being combust in the ascendant, signifies short life;  
and Mars being in a human sign, joined to the tail of the  
Dragon, in the eighth house, doth threaten a violent death.  
Why, now 'tis most apparent; this precise fellow  
Is the duchess' bawd:--I have it to my wish!  
This is a parcel of intelligency  
Our courtiers were cas'd up for: it needs must follow  
That I must be committed on pretence  
Of poisoning her; which I'll endure, and laugh at.  
If one could find the father now! but that  
Time will discover. Old Castruccio  
I' th' morning posts to Rome: by him I'll send  
A letter that shall make her brothers' galls  
O'erflow their livers. This was a thrifty way!  
Though lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise,  
She 's oft found witty, but is never wise.

[Exit.]

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. This is very well, my lord.

CARDINAL.                        Come, I 'll love you wisely,  
That 's jealously; since I am very certain

You cannot make me cuckold.

JULIA.                    I 'll go home  
To my husband.

CARDINAL.     You may thank me, lady,  
I have taken you off your melancholy perch,  
Bore you upon my fist, and 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.

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

CARDINAL. Let him enter: I 'll withdraw.  
Exit.

MALATESTI.                    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.

[Re-enter MALATESTI]

MALATESTI. 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.







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:  
That known, I 'll find scorpions to string my whips,  
And fix her in a general eclipse.  
Exeunt.

### Act III

#### Scene I

[Enter] ANTONIO and DELIO

ANTONIO. Our noble friend, my most beloved Delio!  
O, you have been a stranger long at court:  
Came you along with the Lord Ferdinand?

DELIO. I did, sir: and how fares your noble duchess?

ANTONIO. Right fortunately well.

DELIO. Pray, sir, tell me,  
Hath not this news arriv'd yet to the ear  
Of the lord cardinal?

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

DELIO. Pray, why?

ANTONIO. He is so quiet that he seems to sleep  
The tempest out, as dormice do in winter.

Those houses that are haunted are most still  
Till the devil be up.

DELIO. Do they suspect?

ANTONIO. Of love or marriage between her and me  
They never dream of.

[Enter DUCHESS, FERDINAND, and Attendants]

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

DUCHESS. For me, sir! Pray, who is 't?

FERDINAND. The great Count Malatesti.

DUCHESS. Fie upon him!  
A count! He 's a mere stick of sugar-candy;  
You may look quite through him. When I choose  
A husband, I will marry for your honour.

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

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

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

DUCHESS. [Aside.] O bless'd comfort!  
This deadly air is purg'd.  
Exeunt [DUCHESS, ANTONIO, DELIO, and Attendants.]

FERDINAND. Her guilt treads on  
Hot-burning coulters.

Enter BOSOLA  
Now, Bosola,  
How thrives our intelligence?

BOSOLA. Sir, uncertainly:  
'Tis rumour'd she hath had a bastard, 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. Can your faith give way  
To think there 's power in potions or in charms,  
To make us love whether we will or no?

BOSOLA. Most certainly.

FERDINAND. Away! these are mere gulleries, horrid things,  
Invented by some cheating mountebanks  
To abuse us.  
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.

## Scene II

[Enter] DUCHESS, ANTONIO, and CARIOLA

DUCHESS. 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.

ANTONIO. O, fie upon this single life! forgo it.  
We read how Daphne, for her peevish flight,  
Became a fruitless bay-tree; whereas those  
Which married, or prov'd kind unto their friends,  
Became flowers, precious stones, or eminent stars.

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

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-favour'd ladies,  
For the most part, keep worse-favour'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 colour of my hair 'gin to change?  
When I wax gray, I shall have all the court  
Powder their hair with arras, to be like me.  
You have cause to love me; I 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. I 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.--And for thee, vile woman,  
If thou do wish thy lecher may grow old  
In thy embracements, Let not thou the sun  
Shine on him till he 's dead; let dogs and monkeys  
Only converse with him, and such dumb things  
To whom nature denies use to sound his name;  
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue,  
Lest it bewray him.

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  
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 my people.

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 as Tasso calls  
A noble lie, 'cause it must shield our honours.  
--Hark! they are coming.

[Re-enter BOSOLA, CASTRUCCIO and PESCARA]

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;  
So shall you hold my favour; I pray, let him;  
For h'as done that, alas, you would not think of,  
And, because I intend to be rid of him,  
I mean not to publish.--Use your fortune elsewhere.

ANTONIO. I am strongly arm'd to brook my overthrow,  
As commonly men bear with a hard year.  
I will not blame the cause on 't; but do think  
The necessity of my malevolent star  
Procures this, not her humour.

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

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

DUCHESS.                So, sir, you have your pass.

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

BOSOLA. Alas, poor gentleman!

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

BOSOLA. Sure, he was too honest. 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 seem'd a private whisp'ring-room,  
It made so little noise of 't.

DUCHESS. But he was basely descended.

BOSOLA. Will you make yourself a mercenary herald,



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

BOSOLA. So.

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

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

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.



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 brat was ever christ'ned.

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

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.

#### Scene IV

[Enter] DUCHESS, ANTONIO, Children, CARIOLA, and Servants

DUCHESS. Banish'd Ancona!

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

DUCHESS. I had a very strange dream to-night.

ANTONIO. What was 't?

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

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

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

[Enter BOSOLA with a letter]

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 our only 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.

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. Do not weep:  
Heaven fashion'd us of nothing; and we strive  
To bring ourselves to nothing.--Farewell, Cariola.

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?

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

DUCHESS. O misery! Come, to what prison?

BOSOLA. To none.

DUCHESS. Whither, then?

BOSOLA. To your palace.

DUCHESS. I have heard  
That Charon's boat serves to convey all o'er  
The dismal lake, but brings none back again.

BOSOLA. Your brothers mean you safety and pity.

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

BOSOLA. Fie, madam!  
Forget this base, low fellow -- one of no birth.

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

BOSOLA. A barren, beggarly virtue.

DUCHESS. I prithee, who is greatest? Can you tell?  
\*[Sad tales befit my woe: I 'll tell you one.  
A salmon, as she swam unto the sea.  
Met with a dog-fish, who encounters her  
With this rough language; 'Why art thou so bold  
To mix thyself with our high state of floods,  
Being no eminent courtier, but one  
That for the calmest and fresh time o' th' year  
Dost live in shallow rivers, rank'st thyself  
With silly smelts and shrimps? And darest thou  
Pass by our dog-ship without reverence?'  
'O,' quoth the salmon, 'sister, be at peace:  
Thank Jupiter we both have 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.

## INTERMISSION

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 behaviour so noble  
As gives a majesty to adversity:  
You may discern the shape of loveliness

More perfect in her tears than in her smiles:  
She will muse for hours together; and her silence,  
Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.

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

BOSOLA. 'Tis so; and this restraint,  
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.  
Exit.

[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.

\*[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 practise, that he hath left  
A dead man's hand here?

BOSOLA. 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.



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

DUCHESS.                           Thou art a fool, then,  
To waste thy pity on a thing so wretched  
As cannot pity itself. I am full of daggers.

BOSOLA.    I would wish you long life.

DUCHESS. I would thou wert hang'd for the horrible curse  
Thou hast given me: I shall shortly grow one  
Of the miracles of pity. I 'll go pray;--  
No, I 'll go curse.

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.  
This presentation was but fram'd and false  
And she takes it for true substantial fact.

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.  
Your work is almost ended.

BOSOLA.                   Must I see her again?

FERDINAND. Yes.

BOSOLA.               Never.

FERDINAND.            You must.

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

FERDINAND.            Very likely;  
Thy pity is nothing of kin to thee. Antonio  
Lurks about Milan: thou shalt shortly thither,  
To feed a fire as great as my revenge,  
Which nev'r will slack till it hath spent his fuel:  
Intemperate agues make physicians cruel.  
Exeunt.



Whose ruins are even pitied.

DUCHESS.                   Very proper;  
And Fortune seems only to have her eye-sight  
To behold my tragedy.--How now!  
What noise is that?

[Enter BOSOLA]

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,  
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 be a little merry:--of what stuff wilt thou make it?

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

DUCHESS. Why, do we grow fantastical on our deathbed?  
Do we affect fashion in the grave?

BOSOLA. Most ambitiously. Princes' images on their tombs do not  
lie, as they were wont, seeming to pray up to heaven; but with their  
hands under their cheeks, as if they died of the tooth-ache. They  
are not carved with their eyes fix'd upon the stars, but as their  
minds were wholly bent upon the world, the selfsame way they seem  
to turn their faces.

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

BOSOLA.                    Now I shall:--  
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:  
[Enter Executioners, with a coffin and rope]  
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.

Hark, now everything is still,  
The screech-owl and the whistler shrill  
Call upon our dame aloud,  
And bid her quickly don her shroud!  
Much you had of land and rent;  
Your length in clay 's now competent:  
A long war disturb'd your mind;  
Here your perfect peace is sign'd.  
Of what is 't fools make such vain keeping?  
Sin their conception, their birth weeping,  
Their life a general mist of error,  
Their death a hideous storm of terror.  
Strew your hair with powders sweet,  
Don clean linen, bathe your feet,  
And (the foul fiend more to check)  
A crucifix let bless your neck.  
'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day;  
End your groan, and come away.]\*

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

DUCHESS. To whom?

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 him  
Say his prayers ere he 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.

BOSOLA.                    We are ready.

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

BOSOLA. 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?  
[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, despatch 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.

BOSOLA. Here 's your wedding-ring.

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

BOSOLA. Delays:--throttle her.

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

BOSOLA. [To Executioners.] Well?

CARIOLA. I am quick with child.

BOSOLA. Why, then,  
Your credit 's saved.

[Executioners strangle Cariola.]

Bear her into the next room;

Let her be still.

[Exeunt the Executioners with the body of CARIOLA.]

[Enter FERDINAND]

FERDINAND. Is she dead?

BOSOLA. She is what  
You 'd have her. 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. I charge thee  
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.  
Exit.

BOSOLA. He 's much distracted. Off, my painted honour!  
While with vain hopes our faculties we tire,  
We seem to sweat in ice and freeze in fire.  
What would I do, were this to do again?  
I would not change my peace of conscience  
For all the wealth of Europe.--She stirs; here 's life:--  
Return, fair soul, from darkness, and lead mine  
Out of this sensible hell:--she 's warm, she breathes:--  
Upon thy pale lips I will melt my heart,  
To store them with fresh colour.--Her eye opes,  
And heaven in it seems to ope, that late was shut,  
To take me up to mercy.

DUCHESS. Antonio!

BOSOLA.                    Yes, madam, he is living;  
He 's reconcil'd to your brothers; the Pope hath wrought  
The atonement.

DUCHESS.                  Mercy!  
Dies.

BOSOLA. O, she 's gone again! there the cords of life broke.  
O sacred innocence, that sweetly sleeps  
On turtles' feathers, whilst a guilty conscience  
Is a black register wherein is writ  
All our good deeds and bad, a perspective  
That shows us hell! That we cannot be suffer'd  
To do good when we have a mind to it!

This is manly sorrow;  
These tears, I am very certain, never grew  
In my mother's milk. My estate is sunk  
Below the degree of fear: where were  
These penitent fountains while she was living?  
O, they were frozen up! Here is a sight  
As direful to my soul as is the sword  
Unto a wretch hath slain his father.  
Come, I 'll bear thee hence,  
And execute thy last will; that 's deliver  
Thy body to the reverend dispose  
Of some good women: that the cruel tyrant  
Shall not deny me. Then I 'll post to Milan,  
Where somewhat I will speedily enact  
Worth my dejection.  
Exit [with the body].

## Act V

### Scene I

[Enter] ANTONIO and DELIO

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

DELIO. I misdoubt it;  
For though they have sent their letters of safe-conduct  
For your repair to Milan, they appear  
But nets to entrap you. The Marquis of Pescara,  
Under whom you hold certain land in cheat,  
Much 'gainst his noble nature hath been mov'd  
To seize those lands; and some of his dependants  
Are at this instant making it their suit  
To be invested in your revenues.  
I cannot think they mean well to your life  
That do deprive you of your means of life,  
Your living.

ANTONIO. You are still an heretic

To any safety I can shape myself.

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

ANTONIO. I pray, do.  
[Withdraws.]

[Enter PESCARA]

DELIO. Sir, I have a suit to you.

PESCARA. To me?

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

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

DELIO. No, sir?

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

[Enter JULIA]

JULIA. My lord, I am grown your poor petitioner,  
And should be an ill beggar, had I not  
A great man's letter here, the cardinal's,  
To court you in my favour.  
[Gives a letter.]

PESCARA. He entreats for you  
The Citadel of Saint Bennet, that belong'd  
To the banish'd Antonio.

JULIA. Yes.

PESCARA. I could not have thought of a friend I could rather  
Pleasure with it: 'tis yours.

JULIA.                    Sir, I thank you;  
And he shall know how doubly I am engag'd  
Both in your gift, and speediness of giving  
Which makes your grant the greater.

Exit.

ANTONIO.                    How they fortify  
Themselves with my ruin!

DELIO.                    Sir, I am  
Little bound to you.

PESCARA.                    Why?

DELIO. Because you deni'd this suit to me, and gave 't  
To such a creature.

PESCARA.                    Do you know what it was?  
It was Antonio's land; not forfeited  
By course of law, but ravish'd from his throat  
By the cardinal's entreaty. It were not fit  
I should bestow so main a piece of wrong  
Upon my friend; 'tis a gratification  
Only due to a strumpet, for it is injustice.  
Shall I sprinkle the pure blood of innocents  
To make those followers I call my friends  
Look ruddier upon me? I am glad  
This land, ta'en from the owner by such wrong,  
Returns again unto so foul an use  
As salary for his lust. Learn, good Delio,  
To ask noble things of me, and you shall find  
I'll be a noble giver.

DELIO.                    You instruct  
Me well.

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

ANTONIO. 'Tis a noble old fellow.

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

ANTONIO. This night I mean to venture all my fortune,  
Which is no more than a poor ling'ring life,  
To the cardinal's worst of malice. I have got  
Private access to his chamber; and intend  
To visit him about the mid of night,  
As once his brother did our noble duchess.  
It may be that the sudden apprehension  
Of danger,--for I 'll go in mine own shape,--  
When he shall see it fraught with love and duty,  
May draw the poison out of him, and work  
A friendly reconcilment. If it fail,  
Yet it shall rid me of this infamous calling;  
For better fall once than be ever falling.

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

ANTONIO. You are still my lov'd and best friend.  
Exeunt.

## Scene II

[Enter] PESCARA and DOCTOR MALATESTI

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

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

PESCARA. Pray thee, what 's his disease?

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

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

MALATESTI. I 'll tell you.  
In those that are possess'd with 't there o'erflows  
Such melancholy humour they imagine  
Themselves to be transformed into wolves;  
Steal forth to church-yards in the dead of night,  
And dig dead bodies up: as two nights since  
One met the duke 'bout midnight in a lane  
Behind Saint Mark's church, 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.

MALATESTI. 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 CASTRUCCIO]

FERDINAND. Leave me.

CASTRUCCIO. 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.

CARDINAL. 'Tis your shadow.

FERDINAND. Stay it; let it not haunt me.

CASTRUCCIO. 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.

MALATESTI. 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.

MALATESTI. 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.



He cannot live.

[Enter BOSOLA]

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, MALATESTI, and CASTRUCCIO.]  
Are you come? so--[Aside.] This fellow must not know  
By any means I had intelligence  
In our duchess' death; for, though I counsell'd it,  
The full of all th' engagement seem'd to grow  
>From Ferdinand.--Now, sir, how fares our sister?  
I do not think but sorrow makes her look  
Like to an oft-dy'd garment: she shall now  
Take comfort from me. Why do you look so wildly?  
O, the fortune of your master here the prince  
Dejects you; but be you of happy comfort:  
If you 'll do one thing for me I 'll entreat,  
Though he had a cold 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.

Exit JULIA.

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 court, that hath been long approv'd  
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow;  
Follow him to mass; may be Antonio,  
Shall 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; 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 dagger]

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 threat 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. And I want compliment.

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

BOSOLA.               You are very fair.

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

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

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

BOSOLA. 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  
With the emperor: if he be, like the mice  
That forsake falling houses, I would shift  
To other dependance.

JULIA.        You shall not need  
Follow the wars: I 'll be your maintenance.

BOSOLA. And I your loyal servant: but I cannot  
Leave my calling.

JULIA. Not leave an ungrateful  
General for the love of a sweet lady!  
You are like some cannot sleep in feather-beds,  
But must have blocks for their pillows.

BOSOLA. Will you do this?

JULIA. Cunningly.

BOSOLA. To-morrow I 'll expect th' intelligence.

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

[Exit BOSOLA.]

[Re-enter CARDINAL]

CARDINAL. Malatesti?

[Enter MALATESTI.]

MALATESTI. Here.

CARDINAL. Let none, upon your lives, have conference  
With the Prince Ferdinand, unless I know it.--

[Exeunt MALATESTI.]

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

JULIA. How now, my lord! what ails you?

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.  
Be well advis'd, and think what danger 'tis  
To receive a prince's secrets. They that do,  
Had need have their breasts hoop'd with adamant  
To contain them. I pray thee, yet be satisfi'd;  
Examine thine own frailty; 'tis more easy  
To tie knots than unloose them. 'Tis a secret  
That, like a ling'ring poison, may chance lie  
Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence.

JULIA. Now you dally with me.

CARDINAL. No more; thou shalt know it.  
By my appointment the great Duchess of Malfi  
To quit a secret marriage, four nights since,  
Was 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.  
For that I knew thou couldst not keep my counsel,  
I have bound thee to 't by death.

[Re-enter BOSOLA]

BOSOLA. For pity-sake, hold!

CARDINAL. Ha, Bosola!

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

BOSOLA. O foolish woman,  
Couldst not thou have poison'd him?

JULIA. 'Tis weakness,  
Too much to think what should have been done. I go,  
I know not whither.  
[Dies.]

CARDINAL. Wherefore com'st thou hither?

BOSOLA. That I might find a great man like yourself,  
Not out of his wits, as the Lord Ferdinand,  
To 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 honours in store for thee.

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

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

BOSOLA. Yes.

CARDINAL.    Take up that body.

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

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

BOSOLA. O, by no means. Physicians that apply horse-leeches  
to any rank swelling use to cut off their tails, that the blood  
may run through them the faster: let me have no train when I go  
to shed blood, less it make me have a greater when I ride  
to the gallows.

CARDINAL. Come to me after midnight, to help to remove  
That body to her own lodging. I 'll give out  
She died o' th' plague; 'twill breed the less inquiry  
After her death.

BOSOLA. Where 's Castruccio her husband?

CARDINAL. He 's rode to Naples, to take possession  
Of Antonio's citadel. There is the master-key

Of our lodgings; and by that you may conceive  
What trust I plant in you.

BOSOLA.                    You shall find me ready.

Exit CARDINAL.

The precedent 's here afore me. How this man  
Bears up in blood! seems fearless! Why, 'tis well;  
Security some men call the suburbs of hell,  
Only a dead wall between. Well, good Antonio,  
I'll seek thee out; and all my care shall be  
To put thee into safety from the reach  
Of these most cruel biters that have got  
Some of thy blood already. It may be,  
I'll join with thee in a most just revenge.  
The weakest arm is strong enough that strikes  
With the sword of justice. Still methinks the duchess  
Haunts me: there, there!--'Tis nothing but my melancholy.  
O Penitence, let me truly taste thy cup,  
That throws men down only to raise them up!  
Exit.

### Scene III

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

DELIO. Yond 's the cardinal's window. This fortification  
Grew from the ruins of an ancient abbey;  
And to yond side o' th' river lies a wall,  
Piece of a cloister, which in my opinion  
Gives the best echo that you ever heard,  
So hollow and so dismal, and withal  
So plain in the distinction of our words,  
That many have suppos'd it is a spirit  
That answers.

ANTONIO.     I do love these ancient ruins.  
We never tread upon them but we set  
Our foot upon some reverend history;  
And, questionless, here in this open court,  
Which now lies naked to the injuries  
Of stormy weather, some men lie interr'd  
Lov'd the church so well, and gave so largely to 't,

They thought it should have canopied their bones  
Till dooms-day. But all things have their end;  
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,  
Must have like death that we have.

ECHO.                                Like death that we have.

DELIO. Now the echo hath caught you.

ANTONIO. It groan'd methought, and gave  
A very deadly accent.

ECHO.                                Deadly accent.

DELIO. I told you 'twas a pretty one. You may make it  
A huntsman, or a falconer, a musician,  
Or a thing of sorrow.

ECHO.                                A thing of sorrow.

ANTONIO. Ay, sure, that suits it best.

ECHO.                                That suits it best.

ANTONIO. 'Tis very like my wife's voice.

ECHO.                                Ay, wife's voice.

DELIO. Come, let us walk further from't.  
I would not have you go to the cardinal's to-night:  
Do not.

ECHO. Do not.

DELIO. Wisdom doth not more moderate wasting sorrow  
Than time. Take time for 't; be mindful of thy safety.

ECHO. Be mindful of thy safety.

ANTONIO. Necessity compels me.  
Make scrutiny through the passages  
Of your own life, you 'll find it impossible  
To fly your fate.

ECHO. O, fly your fate!

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

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

ECHO. Thou art a dead thing.

ANTONIO. My duchess is asleep now,  
And her little ones, I hope sweetly. O heaven,  
Shall I never see her more?

ECHO. Never see her more.

ANTONIO. I mark'd not one repetition of the echo  
But that; and on the sudden a clear light  
Presented me a face folded in sorrow.

DELIO. Your fancy merely.

ANTONIO. Come, I 'll be out of this ague,  
For to live thus is not indeed to live;  
It is a mockery and abuse of life.  
I will not henceforth save myself by halves;  
Lose all, or nothing.

DELIO. Your own virtue save you!  
Though in our miseries Fortune have a part,  
Yet in our noble sufferings she hath none.  
Contempt of pain, that we may call our own.  
Exeunt.

#### Scene IV

[Enter] CARDINAL, PESCARA, and 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.

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

PESCARA. Let our honours bind this trifle.

CARDINAL. Nor any of your followers.

MALATESTI. Neither.

CARDINAL. It may be, to make trial of your promise,  
When he 's asleep, myself will rise and feign  
Some of his mad tricks, and cry out for help,  
And feign myself in danger.

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

CARDINAL. Why, I thank you.

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]

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

BOSOLA. Fall right, my sword!--

[Stabs him.]

I'll not give thee so much leisure as to pray.

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

BOSOLA. What art thou?

ANTONIO. A most wretched thing,  
That only have thy benefit in death,  
To appear myself.

BOSOLA. What are you, sir?

ANTONIO. Very near my home.--Bosola!



There sits in thy face some great determination  
Mix'd with some fear.

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

CARDINAL.            Ha!--Help! our guard!

BOSOLA. Thou art deceiv'd; they are out of thy howling.

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

BOSOLA.            Thy prayers and proffers  
Are both unseasonable.

CARDINAL.            Raise the watch!  
We are betray'd!

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

CARDINAL.            Help! we are betray'd!

[Enter, above, PESCARA, MALATESTI]

PESCARA. Listen.

CARDINAL. My dukedom for rescue!

MALATESTI. Fie upon his counterfeiting!

PESCARA. Why, 'tis not the cardinal.

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

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

PESCARA.            He doth this pretty well;

MALATESTI.

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

PESCARA. He wish'd you should not come at him; but, believe 't,  
The accent of the voice sounds not in jest:  
I 'll down to him, howsoever, and with engines  
Force ope the doors.

[Exit above.]

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. Help, help, help!  
I am slain!

[Enter FERDINAND]

FERDINAND. Th' alarum! Give me a fresh horse;  
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. Now you 're brave fellows. Caesar's fortune was harder  
than Pompey's; Caesar died in the arms of prosperity, Pompey at the  
feet of disgrace. You both died in the field. The pain 's nothing;  
pain many times is taken away with the apprehension of greater,  
as the 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. How fatally, it seems, he did withstand  
His own rescue!

PESCARA. 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.]

[Enter DELIO]

PESCARA. O sir, you come too late!

DELIO. I feared so, and  
Was arm'd for 't, ere I came. Let us make noble use  
Of this great ruin; and join all our force  
To establish hence Antonio's princely son  
In 's mother's right. These wretched eminent things  
Leave no more fame behind 'em, than should one  
Fall in a frost, and leave his print in snow;  
As soon as the sun shines, it ever melts,  
Both form and matter. I have ever thought  
Nature doth nothing so great for great men  
As when she 's pleas'd to make them lords of truth:  
Integrity of life is fame's best friend,  
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.  
Exeunt.