

Stage  SCREEN

Director's Amended Text



The DUCHESS of

# Malfi

by John Webster

GREENWICH  
THEATRE LONDON

## THE DUCHESS OF MALFI by John Webster

The Duchess of Malfi

Cariola, her waiting woman

Ferdinand, Duke of Calabria, her twin brother

The Cardinal of Aragon, their elder brother

Daniel de Bosola, provisor of horse to Duchess, retained as a spy by Ferdinand

Antonio Bologna, steward of the household to the Duchess, later her husband

Delio, his friend

Julia, the Cardinal's mistress

Castruccio, her aged husband

Old Lady, a midwife

Marquis of Pescara, a soldier

Malateste, a Count

Silvio, a Lord

Grisolan, a Lord

A Doctor

Two Pilgrims

Three young children

Eight Madmen – an astrologer, a broker, a doctor, a farmer, a gentleman usher, a lawyer, a priest, a tailor

Officers

Executioners

Attendants

Servants

1.1

*Enter ANTONIO and DELIO*

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

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

*Enter BOSOLA*

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.

*Enter CARDINAL*

Here's the Cardinal.

BOSOLA I do haunt you still.

CARDINAL So.

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

CARDINAL You enforce your merit too much.

BOSOLA I fell into the galleys in your service, where, for two years together, I  
wore two towels instead of a shirt, with a knot on the shoulder after the fashion of  
a Roman mantle. Slighted thus? I will thrive some way. Blackbirds fatten best in  
hard weather; why not I in these dog-days?

CARDINAL Would you could become honest!

BOSOLA With all your divinity, do but direct me the way to it.

*Exit CARDINAL*

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. 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 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. Who would rely upon these miserable dependencies, in expectation to be advanced tomorrow? What creature ever fed worse than hoping Tantalus? Nor ever died any man more fearfully than he that hoped for a pardon. There are rewards for hawks and dogs when they have done us service; but for a soldier that hazards his limbs in battle, nothing but a kind of geometry is his last supportation.

DELIO Geometry?

BOSOLA Ay, to hang in a fair pair of slings, take his latter swing in the world upon an honourable pair of crutches, from hospital to hospital. Fare ye well, sir. And yet do not you scorn us, for places in the court are but like beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower.

*Exit BOSOLA*

DELIO I knew this fellow seven years in the galleys  
For a notorious murder, and 'twas thought  
The Cardinal suborned it.

ANTONIO 'Tis great pity  
He should be thus neglected. I have heard  
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy  
Will poison all his goodness, for, I'll tell you,  
If too immoderate sleep be truly said  
To be an inward rust unto the soul,  
It then doth follow want of action  
Breeds all black malcontents, and their close rearing,  
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing.

*Enter SILVIO, CASTRUCCIO and GRISOLAN*

DELIO The presence 'gins to fill. You promised me  
To make me the partaker of the natures  
Of some of your great courtiers.

ANTONIO I shall.

*Enter FERDINAND*

Here comes the great Calabrian Duke.

FERDINAND When shall we leave this sportive action, and fall to action indeed?

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

FERDINAND Now for some gravity. Why, my lord?

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

FERDINAND No?

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

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

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

FERDINAND Thou told'st me thy wife could not endure fighting.

CASTRUCCIO True, my lord.

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

CASTRUCCIO She told him, my lord, he was a pitiful fellow, to lie, like the children of Israel, all in tents.

FERDINAND Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the chirurgeons o' the city, for although gallants should quarrel, and had drawn their weapons, and were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would make them put up.

CASTRUCCIO That she would, my lord.

FERDINAND How do you like my Spanish jennet?

SILVIO He is all fire.

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

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

*GRISOLAN and CASTRUCCIO laugh*

FERDINAND Why do you laugh? Methinks you that are courtiers should be my touchwood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

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

FERDINAND I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Lord Silvio.

SILVIO Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

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

ANTONIO 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.

GRISOLAN Your brother, the Lord Cardinal, and sister Duchess.

*Enter CARDINAL, DUCHESS, CARIOLA and JULIA*

CARDINAL Are the galleys come about?

GRISOLAN They are, my lord.

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

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

ANTONIO Some such flashes superficially hang on him, for form; but observe his inward character: he is a melancholy churchman. Where he is jealous of any man for he strews in his way flatterers, panders, intelligencers, atheists, and a thousand such political monsters. He should have been Pope, but instead of coming to it by the primitive decency of the church, he did bestow bribes so largely as if he would have carried it away without heaven's knowledge.

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

ANTONIO The Duke there? A most perverse and turbulent nature.  
If he laugh heartily,

It is to laugh all honesty out of fashion.

DELIO Twins?

ANTONIO In quality:  
He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits  
With others' ears; will seem to sleep o' th' bench  
Only to entrap offenders in their answers;  
Dooms men to death by information,  
Rewards by hearsay.

DELIO Then the law to him  
Is like a foul, black cobweb to a spider:  
He makes it his dwelling and a prison  
To entangle those shall feed him.

ANTONIO Most true.  
He never pays debts unless they be shrewd terms,  
And those he will confess that he doth owe.  
But for their sister, the right noble Duchess,  
You never fixed your eye on three fair medals  
Cast in one figure, of so different temper.  
For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,  
You only will begin then to be sorry  
When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder,







BOSOLA No, sir?

FERDINAND Do not you ask the reason, but be satisfied  
I say I would not.

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

FERDINAND Familiar! What's that?

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

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

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

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

BOSOLA No.

FERDINAND 'Tis yours. Is 't not worth thanks?

BOSOLA I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty,  
Which makes men truly noble, e'er should make  
Me a villain. 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' th' horse? Say then my corruption  
Grew out of horse-dung. I am your creature.

FERDINAND Away.

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



CARDINAL                      The marriage night  
Is the entrance into some prison.

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

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

*Exit CARDINAL*

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

FERDINAND                      You are my sister,  
This was my father's poniard: do you see?  
I'd be loth to see 't look rusty, 'cause 'twas his.  
I would have you give o'er these chargeable revels:  
A visor and a mask are whispering-rooms  
That were ne'er built for goodness. Fare ye well.  
Women like that part which, like the lamprey,  
Hath ne'er 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 FERDINAND*

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 achieved  
Almost impossible actions, so I through frights,  
And threatenings will assay this dangerous venture.  
Let old wives report I winked and chose a husband. Cariola.

*Enter 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.



ANTONIO                                Yes, your excellent self.

DUCHESS    In a winding-sheet?

ANTONIO                                In a couple.

DUCHESS    Saint Winifred, that were a strange will!

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

DUCHESS                What do you think of marriage?

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

DUCHESS                                How do you affect it?

ANTONIO    My banishment, feeding my melancholy,  
Would often reason thus: ---

DUCHESS                                Pray, let's hear it.

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

DUCHESS                                Fie, fie, what's all this?  
One of your eyes is bloodshot; 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 eyesight.

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*



I will remain the constant sanctuary  
Of your good name.

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

ANTONIO But for your brothers?

DUCHESS Do not think of them.  
All discord without this circumference,  
Is only to be pitied, and not feared; 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 savoured flattery.

DUCHESS Kneel.

*They kneel. CARIOLA comes from behind the arras*

ANTONIO Hah?

DUCHESS Be not amazed, this woman's of my counsel.  
I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber  
*Per verba de presenti* is absolute marriage.  
Bless, heaven, this sacred Gordian which let violence  
Never untwine.

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

DUCHESS Quickening, and make  
The like soft music.

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

DUCHESS What can the church force more?

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

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

ANTONIO What's your conceit in this?

DUCHESS I would have you lead your fortune by the hand,  
Unto your marriage bed (You speak in me this, for we now are one).

We'll only lie and talk together, and plot  
T' appease my humorous kindred; and if you please,  
Like the old tale, in 'Alexander and Lodovic',  
Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.  
O, let me shroud my blushes in your bosom,  
Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets.

*Exeunt DUCHESS and ANTONIO*

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

*Exit*



## 2.1 (Night) (Interior?)

*Enter BOSOLA and CASTRUCCIO*

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

CASTRUCCIO 'Tis the very main of my ambition.

BOSOLA Let me see, you have a reasonable good face for 't already, and your night-cap expresses your ears sufficient largely. I would have you learn to twirl the strings of your band with a good grace, and in a set speech, at th' end of every sentence, to hum three or four times, or blow your nose till it smart again, to recover your memory. When you come to be a president in criminal causes, if you smile upon a prisoner, hang him; but if you frown upon him and threaten him, let him be sure to 'scape the gallows.

CASTRUCCIO I would be a very merry president.

BOSOLA Do not sup o' nights, 'twill beget you an admirable wit.

CASTRUCCIO Rather it would make me have a good stomach to quarrel, for they say, your roaring boys eat meat seldom, and that makes them so valiant. But how shall I know whether the people take me for an eminent fellow?

BOSOLA I will teach a trick to know it: give out you lie a-dying, and if you hear the common people curse you, be sure you are taken for one of the prime lawyers.

*Enter OLD LADY*

You come from painting now.

OLD LADY From what?

BOSOLA Why, from your scurvy face-physic. To behold thee not painted inclines somewhat near a miracle. These, in thy face here, were deep ruts and foul sloughs the last progress. 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 hedgehog.

OLD LADY Do you call this painting?

BOSOLA No, no, but careening of an old morphewed lady, to make her disemboque again. There's rough-cast phrase to your plastic.

OLD LADY It seems you are well acquainted with my closet.

BOSOLA One would suspect it for a shop of witchcraft, to find in it the fat of serpents, spawn of snakes, Jews' spittle, and their young children's ordures; and all these for the face. I would sooner eat a dead pigeon, taken from the soles of the feet of one sick of the plague, than kiss one of you fasting. Here are two of you, whose sin of your youth is the very patrimony of the physician; makes him renew his foot-cloth with the spring, and change his high-prized courtesan with the fall of the leaf. I do wonder you do not loathe yourselves. Observe my meditation now:

What thing is in this outward form of man  
To be beloved? We account it ominous,  
If nature do produce a colt, or lamb,  
A fawn, or goat, in any limb resembling

A man, and fly from 't as a prodigy.  
Man stands amazed to see his deformity  
In any other creature but himself.  
But in our own flesh, though we bear diseases  
Which have their true names only ta'en from beasts,  
As the most ulcerous wolf and swinish measles,  
Though we are eaten up of lice and worms,  
And though continually we bear about us  
A rotten and dead body, we delight  
To hide it in rich tissue. All our fear,  
Nay, all our terror, is lest our physician  
Should put us in the ground to be made sweet.  
Your wife's gone to Rome: you two couple, and get you  
To the wells at Lucca to recover your aches.

*Exeunt CASTRUCCIO and OLD LADY*

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

*Enter ANTONIO and DELIO in conversation 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.

                                                  (*To BOSOLA*) 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 puffed up with  
your preferment, you continue this out-of-fashion melancholy. Leave it, leave it.

BOSOLA Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any compliment  
whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you? I look no higher than I can reach.  
They are the gods that must ride on winged horses; a lawyer's mule of a slow  
pace will both suit my disposition and business; for mark me, when a man's mind  
rides faster than his horse can gallop, they quickly both tire.

ANTONIO You would look up to heaven, but I think

The devil, that rules i' th' air, stands in your light.

BOSOLA O, sir, you are lord of the ascendant, chief man with the Duchess, a Duke was your cousin-german removed. Say you were lineally descended from King Pepin, or he himself, what of this? Search the heads of the greatest rivers in the world, you shall find them but bubbles of water. Some would think the souls of princes were brought forth by some more weighty cause than those of meaner persons. They are deceived; there's the same hand to them, the like passions sway them: the same reason that makes a vicar go to law for a tithe-pig and undo his neighbours, makes them spoil a whole province, and batter down goodly cities with the cannon.

*Enter DUCHESS, CARIOLA and OLD LADY*

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 used one when she was great with child.

DUCHESS I think she did. *(To OLD LADY)* Come hither, mend my ruff.  
Here, when? Thou art such a tedious lady, and  
Thy breath smells of lemon pills. Would thou hadst done!  
Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am  
So troubled with the mother.

BOSOLA *(aside)* I fear too much.

DUCHESS I have heard you say that the French courtiers  
Wear their hats on 'fore the King.

ANTONIO I have seen it.

DUCHESS Why should not we bring up that fashion?  
'Tis ceremony more than duty that consists  
In the removing of a piece of felt.  
Be you the example to the rest o' th' court,  
Put on your hat first.

ANTONIO You must pardon me:  
I have seen, in colder countries than in France,  
Nobles stand bare to th' Prince; and the distinction  
Methought showed reverently.

BOSOLA I have a present for your grace.

DUCHESS For me, sir?

BOSOLA Apricots, madam.

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

*He gives her them*

BOSOLA *(aside)* Good, her colour rises.

DUCHESS Indeed I thank you; they are wondrous fair ones.

BOSOLA Will not your grace pare them?

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

BOSOLA I know not, yet I wish your grace had pared 'em.

DUCHESS Why?

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

DUCHESS O you jest.  
(to ANTONIO) You shall judge: pray, taste one.

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

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

BOSOLA 'Tis a pretty art,  
This grafting.

DUCHESS 'Tis so: a bettering of nature.

BOSOLA To make a pippin grow upon a crab,  
A damson on a black-thorn. (Aside) How greedily she eats them! But for that lose  
bodied gown, I should have discovered the young spring-al 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 swelled already.

DUCHESS O, I am in an extreme cold sweat!

BOSOLA I am very sorry.

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

DELIO Lights there, lights!

*Exeunt all except ANTONIO and DELIO*

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

DELIO           Have you prepared  
Those ladies to attend her? And procured  
That politic safe conveyance for the midwife  
Your Duchess plotted?

ANTONIO        I have.

DELIO Make use, then, of this forced occasion.  
Give out that Bosola hath poisoned her  
With these apricots: that will give some colour  
For her keeping close.

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

DELIO For that you may pretend  
She'll use some prepared antidote of her own,  
Lest the physicians should repositon her.

ANTONIO I am lost in amazement, I know not what to think.

*Exeunt*

## **2.2 (Segue ?)**

*Enter BOSOLA*

BOSOLA So, so: there's no question but her tetchiness and most vulturous  
eating of the apricots are apparent signs of breeding.

*Enter OLD LADY. BOSOLA intercepts her*

OLD LADY Now? I am in haste, sir.

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

OLD LADY Nay, pray, let me go.

BOSOLA And it was only to know what strange instrument it was should swell up  
a glass to the fashion of a woman's belly.

OLD LADY 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. The  
orange tree bears ripe and green fruit and blossoms all together, and some of  
you give entertainment for pure love, but more, for more precious reward. Go, go,  
give your foster-daughters good counsel: tell them that the devil takes delight to  
hang at a woman's girdle, like a false rusty watch, that she cannot discern how  
the time passes.

*Exit OLD LADY. Enter ANTONIO, DELIO and GRISOLAN*

ANTONIO Shut up the court gates.

DELIO                                                 Why, sir? What's the danger?

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

GRISOLAN I shall instantly.

*Exit GRISOLAN*

ANTONIO Who keeps the key o' th' park-gate?

DELIO Forobosco.

ANTONIO Let him bring 't presently.

*Re-enter GRISOLAN with 2 Officers*

ANTONIO O, gentleman o' th' court, the foulest treason!

BOSOLA (*Aside*) If that these apricots should be poisoned now,  
Without my knowledge!

FIRST OFFICER There was taken even now a Switzer in the Duchess' bed-  
chamber.

DELIO A Switzer?

SECOND OFFICER With a pistol in his great cod-piece.

FIRST OFFICER The cod-piece was the case for 't.

GRISOLAN There was a cunning traitor. Who would have searched his cod-  
piece?

SECOND OFFICER 'Twas a French plot, upon my life.

FIRST OFFICER To see what the devil can do!

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

OFFICERS Yes.

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

GRISOLAN At her pleasure.

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

BOSOLA (*to FIRST OFFICER*) Gentlemen o' the wood-yard, where's your  
Switzer now?

FIRST OFFICER By this hand, 'twas credibly reported by one o' the black guard.

*Exeunt all except ANTONIO and DELIO*

DELIO How fares it with the Duchess?

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

DELIO Speak to her all happy comfort.

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

DELIO Do not doubt me.

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

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

*Exit DELIO. 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*

### **2.3 (Night) (Exterior?)**

*Enter BOSOLA, with a dark lantern*

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

*Enter ANTONIO*

Ha! Antonio!

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

BOSOLA Antonio? Put not your face nor body  
To such a forced expression of fear:  
I am Bosola, your friend.

ANTONIO Bosola!  
(*Aside*) This mole does undermine me. (*To him*) 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 dreamed.

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 questioned what design,  
When all men were commanded to their lodgings,  
Makes you a night-walker.

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

ANTONIO (*Aside*) This fellow will undo me.  
(*To him*) You gave the Duchess apricots today.  
Pray heaven they were not poisoned!

BOSOLA Poisoned! A Spanish fig  
For the imputation!

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

BOSOLA You are a false steward.



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

BOSOLA Maybe the ruin will crush you to pieces.

ANTONIO You are an impudent snake indeed, sir:  
Are you scarce warm, and do you show your sting?

BOSOLA ... ..

ANTONIO You libel well, sir.

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

ANTONIO (*Aside*) My nose bleeds.

*He draws an initialled handkerchief*

One that were superstitious would count  
This ominous, when it merely comes by chance:  
Two letters, that are wrought here for my name,  
Are drowned in blood! Mere accident.  
(*To him*) For you, sir, I'll take order:  
I' th' morn you shall be safe. (*Aside*) 'Tis that must colour  
Her lying-in. (*To him*) Sir, this door you pass not:  
I do not hold it fit that you come near  
The Duchess' lodgings, till you have quit yourself.  
(*Aside*) The great are like the base, nay, they are the same,  
When they seek shameful ways to avoid shame.

*Exit Antonio*

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

(*Reads*) 'The Duchess was delivered of a son, 'tween the hours twelve and one in  
the night, Anno Dom. 1504' - that 's this year - 'decimo nono Decembris' - that's  
this night - 'taken according to the meridian of Malfi' - that 's our Duchess: happy  
discovery! - 'The lord of the first house being combust in the ascendant, signifies  
short life; and Mars being in a human sign, joined to the tail of the Dragon, in the  
eighth house, doth threaten a violent death; Caetera non scrutantur.'

Why, now 'tis most apparent. I have it to my wish.  
This precise fellow is the duchess' drudge  
This is a parcel of intelligency  
Our courtiers were cased up for! It needs must follow  
That I must be committed on pretence  
Of poisoning her; which I'll endure, and laugh at.  
If one could find the father now; but that  
Time will discover. Old Castruccio  
I' 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*

## **2.4 (Rome)**

*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 prevailed with me  
Beyond my strongest thoughts; I would not now  
Find you inconstant.

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

JULIA               How, my lord?

CARDINAL               You fear  
My constancy, because you have approved  
Those giddy and wild turnings in yourself.

JULIA Did you e'er find them?

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

JULIA               So, my lord.

CARDINAL We had need go borrow that fantastic 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               Why do you weep?  
Are tears your justification? The self-same tears  
Will fall into your husband's bosom, lady,  
With a loud protestation that you love him  
Above the world. Come, I'll love you wisely,  
That's jealousy; since I am very certain  
You cannot make me cuckold.

JULIA               I'll go home  
To my husband.

CARDINAL       You may thank me, lady,

I have taken you off your melancholy perch,  
Bore you upon my fist, and showed you game,  
And let you fly at it. I pray thee, kiss me.  
When thou wast with thy husband, thou wast watched  
Like a tame elephant: still you are to thank me.  
Thou hadst only kisses from him and high feeding;  
But what delight was that? 'Twas just like one  
That hath a little fingering on the lute,  
Yet cannot tune it: still you are to thank me.

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

*Knocking within*

CARDINAL                      Who's that?  
Rest firm, for my affection to thee,  
Lightning moves slow to't.

*Enter Servant*

SERVANT                      Your husband, old Castruccio is come to Rome.  
He hath delivered a letter to the duke of Calabria that,  
to my thinking, hath put him out of his wits.

CARDINAL                      I'll withdraw.

*Exit CARDINAL*

SERVANT                      Madam, a gentleman,  
That's come post from Malfi desires to see you.  
He says Your husband is come to Rome most pitifully tired with riding post.

*Exit Servant. Enter DELIO*

JULIA Signor Delio! (*Aside*) 'Tis one of my old suitors.

DELIO I was bold to come and see you.

JULIA                              Sir, you are welcome.

DELIO Do you lie here?

JULIA                              Sure, your own experience  
Will satisfy you, no: our Roman prelates  
Do not keep lodging for ladies.

DELIO                              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.



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

CARDINAL Speak lower.

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

CARDINAL Is 't possible?  
Can this be certain?

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

CARDINAL Why do you make yourself  
So wild a tempest?

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

CARDINAL Shall our blood,  
The royal blood of Aragon and Castile,  
Be thus attainted?

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

CARDINAL What to do?

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

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

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

CARDINAL Thus ignorance, when it hath purchased honour,  
It cannot wield it.

FERDINAND           Methinks I see her laughing.  
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat quickly,  
Or my imagination will carry me  
To see her in the shameful act of sin.

CARDINAL With whom?

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

CARDINAL You fly beyond your reason.

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

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

FERDINAND           Have not you  
My palsy?

CARDINAL Yes, I can be angry  
Without this rupture. There is not in nature  
A thing that makes man so deformed, so beastly,  
As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself.  
You have divers men who never yet expressed  
Their strong desire of rest but by unrest,  
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself in tune.

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

CARDINAL Are you stark mad?

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

CARDINAL           I'll leave you.



### 3.1 (Malfi – a year later)

*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. She's an excellent  
Feeder of pedigrees: since you last saw her,  
She hath had two children more, twins, a son and daughter.

DELIO Methinks 'twas yesterday. Let me but wink,  
And not behold your face, which to mine eye  
Is somewhat leaner, verily I should dream  
It were within this half hour. Pray, sir, tell me,  
Hath not this news arrived yet to the ear  
Of her brothers?

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

DELIO Pray, how?

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

DELIO What say the common people?

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

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

ANTONIO They do observe I grow to infinite purchase  
The left hand way, and all suppose the Duchess  
Would amend it, if she could. For, say they,  
Great princes, though they grudge their officers  
Should have such large and unconfined means  
To get wealth under them, will not complain  
Lest thereby they should make them odious  
Unto the people; for other obligation  
Of love or marriage between her and me  
They never dream of.

*Enter FERDINAND and DUCHESS*

FERDINAND I'll instantly to bed,  
For I am weary. *(To Duchess)* I am to bespeak  
A husband for you.

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

FERDINAND The great Count Malateste.





This night I will force confession from her. You told me  
You had got, within these two days, a false key  
Into her bedchamber.

BOSOLA I have.

FERDINAND As I would wish.

BOSOLA What do you intend to do?

FERDINAND Can you guess?

BOSOLA No.

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

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*

### 3.2

*Enter DUCHESS, ANTONIO and CARIOLA*

DUCHESS Bring me the casket hither, and the glass.  
You get no lodging here tonight, my lord.

ANTONIO Indeed, I must persuade one.

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

ANTONIO I must lie here.

DUCHESS Must? You are a lord of misrule.

ANTONIO Indeed, my rule is only in the night.

DUCHESS To what use will you put me?



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

CARIOLA What is 't?

ANTONIO I do wonder why hard-favoured ladies,  
For the most part, keep worse-favoured waiting-women  
To attend them, and cannot endure fair ones?

DUCHESS O, that's soon answered.  
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  
Served her the like, when she hath chafed extremely.  
I love to see her angry. Softly, Cariola.

*Exeunt ANTONIO and CARIOLA*

DUCHESS Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change?  
When I wax gray, I shall have all the court  
Powder their hair with orris to be like me.

*Enter FERDINAND unseen*

You have cause to love me: I entered you into my heart  
Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.  
We shall one day have my brothers take you napping.  
Methinks his presence, being now in court,  
Should make you keep your own bed; but you'll say  
Love mixed with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you,  
You shall get no more children till my brothers  
Consent to be your gossips. Have you lost your tongue?

*Sees FERDINAND who holds a poinard*

'Tis welcome:  
For know, whether I am doomed to live or die,  
I can do both like a prince.

*He gives her the poinard*

FERDINAND Die, then, quickly.  
Virtue, where art thou hid? What hideous thing  
Is it that doth eclipse thee?

DUCHESS Pray, sir, hear me.

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

DUCHESS Sir ---

FERDINAND Do not speak.

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

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

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

FERDINAND So!

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

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

DUCHESS Sure, you came hither  
By his confederacy.

FERDINAND The howling of a wolf  
Is music to thee, screech-owl: prithee, peace.  
Whate'er thou art that hast enjoyed my sister  
(For I am sure thou hear'st me), for thine own sake  
Let me not know thee. I came hither prepared  
To work thy discovery, yet am now persuaded  
It would beget such violent effects  
As would damn us both. I would not for ten millions  
I had beheld thee; therefore use all means  
I never may have knowledge of thy name.  
Enjoy thy lust still, and a wretched life,  
On that condition. And for thee, vile woman,  
If thou do wish thy lecher may grow old  
In thy embracements, I would have thee build  
Such a room for him as our anchorites  
To holier use inhabit. Let not the sun  
Shine on him till he's dead. Let dogs and monkeys  
Only converse with him, and such dumb things  
To whom nature denies use to sound his name.  
Do not keep a paraquito, lest she learn it.  
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue,  
Lest it bewray him.

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 fathers bones, and folded it  
About my heart.





Of such a feigned crime as Tasso calls  
*Magnanima menzogna*, a noble lie,  
'Cause it must shield our honours. Hark! They are coming.

*Re-enter BOSOLA, GRISOLAN and Officers*

ANTONIO Will your grace hear me?

DUCHESS I have got well by you: you have yielded me  
A million of loss. I am like to inherit  
The people's curses for your stewardship.  
You had the trick in audit-time to be sick,  
Till I had signed your quietus; and that cured you  
Without help of a doctor. (*To Officers*) Gentlemen,  
I would have this man be an example to you all:  
So shall you hold my favour. I pray, let him;  
For he's done that, alas, you would not think of,  
And, because I intend to be rid of him,  
I mean not to publish. (*To Antonio*) Use your fortune elsewhere.

ANTONIO I am strongly armed to brook my overthrow,  
As commonly men bear with a hard year.  
I will not blame the cause on 't, but do think  
The necessity of my malevolent star  
Procures this, not her humour. O, the inconstant  
And rotten ground of service! You may see.  
'Tis even like him, that in a winter night,  
Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,  
As loth to part from 't, yet parts thence as cold  
As when he first sat down.

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

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

DUCHESS                So, sir, you have your pass.

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

*Exit ANTONIO*

DUCHESS I would know what are your opinions of this Antonio.  
FIRST OFFICER He stopped his ears with black wool; and to those came to him  
for money said he was thick of hearing.

SECOND OFFICER Some said he was an hermaphrodite, for he could not abide  
a woman.

GRISOLAN How scurvy proud he would look when the treasury was full! Well, let  
him go.

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



DUCHESS Leave us.

*Exeunt GRISOLAN and Officers*

What do you think of these?

BOSOLA That these are rogues that in his prosperity,  
But to have waited on his fortune, could have wished  
His dirty stirrup riveted through their noses,  
And followed after his mule, like a bear in a ring;  
Would have prostituted their daughters to his lust;  
Made their first-born intelligencers; thought none happy  
But such as were born under his blest planet,  
And wore his livery: and do these lice drop off now?  
Well, never look to have the like again.  
He hath left a sort of flattering rogues behind him;  
Their doom must follow. Princes pay flatterers  
In their own money. Flatterers dissemble their vices,  
And they dissemble their lies: that's justice.  
Alas, poor gentleman!

DUCHESS Poor? He hath amply filled his coffers.

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

DUCHESS But he was basely descended.

BOSOLA Will you make yourself a mercenary herald,  
Rather to examine men's pedigrees than virtues?  
For know an honest statesman to a prince  
Is like a cedar, planted by a spring:  
The spring bathes the tree's root, the grateful tree  
Rewards it with his shadow. You have not done so.  
I would sooner swim to the Bermudes on  
Two politicians' rotten bladders, tied  
Together with an intelligencer's heart-string,  
Than depend on so changeable a prince's favour.  
Fare thee well, Antonio; since the malice of the world  
Would needs down with thee, it cannot be said yet  
That any ill happened unto thee,  
Considering thy fall was accompanied with virtue.

DUCHESS O, you render me excellent music.

BOSOLA Say you?

DUCHESS This good one that you speak of is my husband.

BOSOLA Do I not dream? Can this ambitious age  
Have so much goodness in 't as to prefer  
A man merely for worth, without these shadows  
Of wealth and painted honours? Possible?

DUCHESS I have had three children by him.

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

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

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

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

BOSOLA So.

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

BOSOLA Let me think:  
I would wish your grace to feign a pilgrimage  
To our Lady of 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 Ferdinand? O, this base quality  
Of intelligencer! Why, every quality i' th' world  
Prefers but gain or commendation.  
Now, for this act I am certain to be raised.

*Exit*

– INTERVAL –

### 3.3

*Enter CARDINAL and MALATESTES, FERDINAND with DELIO and  
SILVIO,  
and PESCARA apart*

CARDINAL Must I turn soldier then?

MALATESTES                           The Emperor,  
Hearing your worth that way ere you attained  
This reverend garment, joins you in commission  
With the right fortunate soldier the Marquis of Pescara.  
Here's a plot drawn for a new fortification at Naples.

*They study the battle plans*

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

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

FERDINAND       He's no soldier?

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

DELIO He hath read all the late service  
As the City Chronicle relates it,  
And keeps two painters going only to express  
Battles in model.

SILVIO           Then he'll fight by the book.

DELIO By the almanac, I think,



To have them banished.

FERDINAND            You are for Loretto?  
I shall not be at your ceremony; fare you well.  
Antonio: a slave that only smelled of ink and counters,  
And never in 's life looked like a gentleman,  
But in the audit-time. Go, go presently,  
Draw me out an hundred and fifty of our horse,  
And meet me at the fort-bridge.

*Exeunt*

### 3.4

*Enter Two Pilgrims to the Shrine of our Lady of Loretto*

FIRST PILGRIM I have not seen a goodlier shrine than this,  
Yet I have visited many.

SECOND PILGRIM        The Cardinal of Aragon  
Is this day to resign his cardinal's hat.  
His sister Duchess likewise is arrived  
To pay her vow of pilgrimage. I expect  
A noble ceremony.

FIRST PILGRIM        No question. They come.

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

CHURCHMEN        *Arms and honours deck thy story  
To thy fame's eternal glory;  
Adverse fortune ever fly thee,  
No disastrous fate come nigh thee.  
I alone will sing thy praises,  
Whom to honour virtue raises;  
And thy study that divine is,  
Bent to martial discipline is.  
Lay aside all those robes lie by thee,  
Crown thy arts with arms, they'll beautify thee.*

*Exeunt*

### 3.5

*Enter DUCHESS, ANTONIO, CARIOLA, Children and Servants*

DUCHESS Banished Ancona!

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

DUCHESS                            Is all our train



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 dispersed  
Bloodhounds abroad; which till I hear are muzzled,  
No truce, though hatched with ne'er such politic skill,  
Is safe that hangs upon our enemies' will.  
I'll not come at them.

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

*Exit*

DUCHESS I suspect some ambush:  
Therefore, by all my love, I do conjure you  
To take our eldest son, and fly towards Milan.  
Let us not venture all this poor remainder  
In one unlucky bottom.

ANTONIO You counsel safely.  
Best of my life, farewell. Since we must part,  
Heaven hath a hand in 't; but no otherwise  
Than as some curious artist takes in sunder  
A clock or watch when it is out of frame,  
To bring 't in better order.

DUCHESS I know not which is best,  
To see you dead, or part with you. (*To son*) Farewell, boy,  
Thou art happy that thou hast not understanding  
To know thy misery, for all our wit  
And reading brings us to a truer sense  
Of sorrow. In the eternal church, sir,  
I do hope we shall not part thus.

ANTONIO O, be of comfort!  
Make patience a noble fortitude,  
And think not how unkindly we are used:  
Man, like to cassia, is proved best, being bruised.

DUCHESS Must I, like to slave-born Russian,  
Account it praise to suffer tyranny?  
And yet, O heaven, thy heavy hand is in 't!  
I have seen my little boy oft scourge his top,  
And compared myself to 't: naught made me e'er  
Go right but heaven's scourge-stick.

ANTONIO Do not weep:  
Heaven fashioned us of nothing, and we strive  
To bring ourselves to nothing. Farewell, Cariola,

And thy sweet armful. (*To Duchess*) If I do never see thee more,  
Be a good mother to your little ones,  
And save them from the tiger: fare you well.

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

ANTONIO My heart is turned 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 with a guard of soldiers, all wearing vizards*

DUCHESS O, they are very welcome.  
When Fortune's wheel is over-charged 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 What devil art thou that counterfeits heaven's thunder?

BOSOLA Is that terrible? I would have you tell me whether  
Is that note worse that frights the silly birds  
Out of the corn, or that which doth allure them  
To the nets? You have hearkened to the last too much.

DUCHESS O misery! Like to a rusty o'ercharged cannon,  
Shall I never fly in pieces? Come: to what prison?

BOSOLA To none.

DUCHESS Whither, then?

BOSOLA To your court.

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 These are your children?

DUCHESS Yes.



BOSOLA

Can they prattle?

DUCHESS

No:

But I intend, since they were born accursed,  
Curses shall be their first language.

BOSOLA

Fie, madam,  
Forget this base, low fellow.

DUCHESS

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

BOSOLA One of no birth.

DUCHESS

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

BOSOLA 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 passed the net.  
Our value never can be truly known  
Till in the fisher's basket we be shown;  
I' th' market then my price may be the higher,  
Even when I am nearest to the cook and fire.'  
So to great men the moral may be stretched:  
Men oft are valued high, when they're most wretched.  
But come, whither you please. I am armed 'gainst misery,  
Bent to all sways of the oppressor's will.  
There's no deep valley but near some great hill.

*Exeunt*

#### 4.1

*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 used to 't, and she seems  
Rather to welcome the end of misery  
Than shun it; a behaviour so noble  
As gives a majesty to adversity.  
You may discern the shape of loveliness  
More perfect in her tears than in her smiles.  
She will muse for hours together, and her silence,  
Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.

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

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

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

*Exit FERDINAND. Enter DUCHESS*

BOSOLA All comfort to your grace.

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

BOSOLA Your 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.

*BOSOLA removes the lights and walks apart. Enter FERDINAND*

FERDINAND He's come. Where are you?

DUCHESS Here, sir.

FERDINAND This darkness suits you well.

DUCHESS I would ask you pardon.

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

DUCHESS Whom?

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

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

FERDINAND It had been well,  
Could you have lived 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  
To which you have vowed much love; the ring upon 't  
You gave.

*Gives her a dead man's hand*

DUCHESS I affectionately kiss it.

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

DUCHESS You are very cold.  
I fear you are not well after your travel.  
Ha? Lights!

*BOSOLA brings up the 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?

*A curtain opens. Here is discovered, behind a traverse, the figures of ANTONIO  
and the children, appearing as if they were dead*

BOSOLA Look you: here's the piece from which 'twas ta'en.  
He doth present you this sad spectacle,  
That, now you know directly they are dead,  
Hereafter you may wisely cease to grieve  
For that which cannot be recovered.

DUCHESS There is not between heaven and earth one wish  
I stay for after this. It wastes me more

Than were 't my picture, fashioned out of wax,  
Stuck with a magical needle, and then buried  
In some foul dunghill; and yon's an excellent property  
For a tyrant, which I would account mercy.

BOSOLA What's that?

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

BOSOLA Come, you must live.

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

BOSOLA O fie! Despair? Remember  
You are a Christian.

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

BOSOLA Leave this vain sorrow.  
Things being at the worst begin to mend.  
The bee when he hath shot his sting into your hand  
May then play with your eyelid.

DUCHESS Good comfortable fellow,  
Persuade a wretch that's broke upon the wheel  
To have all his bones new set; entreat him live  
To be executed again. Who must despatch me?  
I account this world a tedious theatre,  
For I do play a part in 't 'gainst my will.

BOSOLA Now, by my life, I pity you.

DUCHESS Thou art a fool then,  
To waste thy pity on a thing so wretch'd  
As cannot pity itself. I am full of daggers.  
Puff! Let me blow these vipers from me.

*Enter GRISOLAN*

What are you?

GRISOLAN One that wishes you long life.

DUCHESS I would thou wert hanged for the horrible curse  
Thou hast given me.

*Exit GRISOLAN*

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 DUCHESS. Re-enter FERDINAND*

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

BOSOLA Why do you do this?

FERDINAND To bring her to despair.

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

FERDINAND Damn her! That body of hers,  
While that my blood run pure in 't, was more worth  
Than that which thou wouldst comfort, called a soul.  
And, 'cause she'll needs be mad, I am resolved  
To remove forth the common hospital  
All the mad-folk, and place them near her lodging;  
There let them practise together, sing and dance,  
And act their gambols to the full o' th' moon:  
If she can sleep the better for it, let her.  
Your work is almost ended.

BOSOLA Must I see her again?

FERDINAND Yes.

BOSOLA Never.

FERDINAND You must.

BOSOLA Never in mine own shape;  
That's forfeited by my intelligence,  
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 ne'er will slack till it hath spent his fuel:  
Intemperate agues make physicians cruel.

*Exeunt*

#### 4.2

*Enter DUCHESS and CARIOLA*

DUCHESS What hideous noise was that?

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

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

CARIOLA O, 'twill increase your melancholy.

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

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

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

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

DUCHESS Of nothing:  
When I muse thus, I sleep.

CARIOLA Like a madman, with your eyes open?

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

CARIOLA Yes, out of question.

DUCHESS O, that it were possible we might  
But hold some two days' conference with the dead,  
From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure  
I never shall know here. I'll tell thee a miracle:  
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow.  
Th' heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass,  
The earth of flaming sulphur, yet I am not mad.  
I am acquainted with sad misery,  
As the tanned galley-slave is with his oar.  
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,  
And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like now?

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

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

*Enter GRISOLAN*

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

DUCHESS Let them come in.

GRISOLAN There's a mad lawyer, and a secular priest,  
A doctor that hath forfeited his wits  
By jealousy; an astrologian  
That in his works said such a day o' th' month  
Should be the day of doom, and, failing of 't,  
Ran mad; an English tailor crazed i' the brain  
With the study of new fashions; a gentleman usher  
Quite beside himself with care to keep in mind  
The number of his lady's salutations;  
A farmer, too, an excellent knave in grain,  
Mad 'cause he was hindered transportation:  
And let one broker that's mad loose to these,  
You'd think the devil were among them.

DUCHESS Sit, Cariola. Let them loose when you please,  
For I am chained to endure all your tyranny.

*Enter Madmen. Here by the Madmen this song is sung to a dismal kind of music*







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

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

*BOSOLA rings the bell*

*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 disturbed your mind,  
Here your perfect peace is signed.  
Of what is 't fools make such vain keeping?  
Sin their conception, their birth weeping;  
Their life a general mist of error,  
Their death a hideous storm of terror.  
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.*

*Executioners approach*

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

DUCHESS To whom? To our next neighbours? They are mad-folks.

BOSOLA Remove that noise.

*Executioners seize CARIOLA*

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

CARIOLA                      I will die with her.

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

*Executioners force CARIOLA off*

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. 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.

EXECUTIONER We are ready.

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

EXECUTIONER Yes.

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

*They strangle her*

BOSOLA Where's the waiting-woman?  
Fetch her. Bring the children.

*Executioners bring CARIOLA, and some go to strangle the children*

Look you, there sleeps your mistress.

CARIOLA O, you are damned  
Perpetually for this. My turn is next,  
Is 't not so ordered?

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

CARIOLA You are deceived sir,  
I am not prepared for 't, I will not die;  
I will first come to my answer, and know



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

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

FERDINAND Let me see her face again.  
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, opposed thyself,  
With thy advanced sword above thy head,  
Between her innocence and my revenge!  
I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits,  
Go kill my dearest friend, 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 continued widow, to have gained  
An infinite mass of treasure by her death;  
And that was the main cause. Her marriage,  
Drew a stream of gall quite through my heart.  
For thee (as we observe in tragedies  
That a good actor many times is cursed  
For playing a villain's part) I hate thee for 't.

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' th' court?  
Where shalt thou find this judgment registered,  
Unless in hell? See: like a bloody fool  
Thou 'st forfeited thy life, and thou shalt die for 't.

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

FERDINAND O, I'll tell thee:  
The wolf shall find her grave, and scrape it up;  
Not to devour the corpse, but to discover  
The horrid murder.

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

FERDINAND Leave me.

BOSOLA I will first receive my pension.

FERDINAND You are a villain.

BOSOLA When your ingratitude  
Is judge, I am so.

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

BOSOLA Why, fare thee well.  
Your brother and yourself are worthy men;  
You have a pair of hearts are hollow graves,  
Rotten, and rotting others; and your vengeance,  
Like two chained bullets, still goes arm in arm.  
I stand like one that long hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream:  
I am angry with myself, now that I wake.

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

BOSOLA Let me know  
Wherefore I should be thus neglected, sir.  
I served your tyranny, and rather strove  
To satisfy yourself than all the world;  
And though I loathed the evil, yet I loved  
You that did counsel it, and rather sought  
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 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



5.1

*Enter ANTONIO and DELIO*

ANTONIO What think you of my hope of reconciliation  
To the Aragonian brethren?

DELIO I misdoubt it,  
For though they have sent their letters of safe conduct  
For your repair to Milan, they appear  
But nets to entrap you. The Marquis of Pescara,  
Under whom you hold certain land in cheat,  
Much 'gainst his noble nature hath been moved  
To seize those lands, and some of his dependents  
Are at this instant making it their suit  
To be invested in your revenues.

*Enter PESCARA*

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

ANTONIO I pray, do.

*ANTONIO retires*

DELIO Sir, I have a suit to you.

PESCARA To me?

DELIO An easy one.  
There is the Citadel of Saint Benet,  
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.

*Enter JULIA*

Here's the Cardinal's mistress.

JULIA My lord, I am grown your poor petitioner,  
And should be an ill beggar, had I not  
A great man's letter here, the Cardinal's,

To court you in my favour.

*Gives PESCARA a letter which he reads*

PESCARA He entreats for you  
The Citadel of Saint Benet, that belonged  
To the banished Bologna.



JULIA Yes.

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

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

*Exit JULIA*

ANTONIO (*aside*) How they fortify  
Themselves with my ruin!

DELIO Sir, I am  
Little bound to you.

PESCARA Why?

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

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

DELIO You instruct me well.

ANTONIO (*aside*) Why, here's a man now would fright impudence  
From sauciest beggars.

PESCARA Duke 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 PESCARA*

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,  
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,  
When he shall see me fraught with love and duty,  
May draw the poison out of him and work  
A friendly reconciliation.

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

*Exeunt*

### 5.3

*Enter PESCARA and DOCTOR*

PESCARA Now, doctor, may I visit your patient?

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

PESCARA Pray thee, what's his disease?

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

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

DOCTOR I'll tell you.  
In those that are possessed with 't there o'erflows  
Such melancholy humour they imagine  
Themselves to be transformed into wolves,  
Steal forth to churchyards in the dead of night,  
And dig dead bodies up; as two nights since  
One met the Duke, 'bout midnight in a lane  
Behind Saint Mark's church, with the leg of a man  
Upon his shoulder; and he howled fearfully;  
Said he was a wolf, only the difference  
Was, a wolf's skin was hairy on the outside,  
His on the inside. Soft, he comes.

*Enter FERDINAND, CARDINAL, SILVIO and MALATESTA, and BOSOLA apart*

FERDINAND Leave me.

SILVIO 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?

MALATESTA 'Tis your shadow.

FERDINAND Stay it, let it not haunt me.

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

FERDINAND I will throttle it.

*Throws himself down on his shadow*

SILVIO 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) and I'll crawl after like a sheep-biter.

CARDINAL Force him up.

*They raise him*

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

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

FERDINAND What's he?

PESCARA Your doctor.

FERDINAND Let me have his beard sawed off, and his eye-brows filed more civil.  
Hide me from him. Physicians are like kings, they brook no contradiction.

DOCTOR Now he begins to fear me, now let me alone with him.

*FERDINAND tries to undress; the CARDINAL restrains him*

CARDINAL How now, put off your gown?

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

*CARDINAL releases FERDINAND*

FERDINAND (*lunging for the DOCTOR*) I will stamp you into a cullis and flay off your skin. Hence, hence! You are all of you like beasts for sacrifice, there's nothing left of you but tongue and belly, flattery and lechery.

*Exit FERDINAND*

PESCARA Doctor, he did not fear you thoroughly.

DOCTOR True, I was somewhat too forward.

*Exit DOCTOR*



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 called Delio  
Here in the camp, that hath been long approved  
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow,  
Follow him to mass; maybe Antonio,  
Although he do account religion  
But a school-name, for fashion of the world  
May accompany him; or else go inquire out  
Delio's confessor, and see if you can bribe  
Him to reveal it.

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 CARDINAL*

BOSOLA This fellow doth breed basilisks in 's eyes,  
He's nothing else but murder; yet he seems  
Not to have notice of the Duchess' death.  
'Tis his cunning. I must follow his example;  
There cannot be a surer way to trace  
Than that of an old fox.

*Re-enter JULIA, with a pistol*

JULIA So, sir, you are well met.

BOSOLA How now?

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

BOSOLA Treachery?

JULIA Yes, confess to me  
Which of my women 'twas you hired to put  
Love-powder into my drink?

BOSOLA Love-powder!

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

BOSOLA Sure, your pistol holds  
Nothing but perfumes or kissing-comfits.  
Excellent lady, you have a pretty way on 't to discover  
Your longing. Come, come, I'll disarm you,

And arm you thus (*embraces her*); 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 (*aside*) I have it, I will work upon this creature.  
(*To her*) Let us grow most amorously familiar.  
If the great Cardinal now should see me thus,  
Would he not count me a villain?

JULIA No, he might count me a wanton,  
Not lay a scruple of offence on you;  
For if I see and steal a diamond,  
The fault is not i' th' stone, but in me the thief  
That purloins it. I am sudden with you;  
We that are great women of pleasure use to cut off  
These uncertain wishes and unquiet longings,  
And in an instant join the sweet delight  
And the pretty excuse together. 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 feigned excuse; discover the main ground on 't.

JULIA Why would you know this?

BOSOLA I have depended on him,  
And I hear that he is fallen in some disgrace  
With the Emperor. If he be, like the mice  
That forsake falling houses, I would shift  
To other dependence. Will you do this?

JULIA Cunningly.

BOSOLA Tomorrow I'll expect th' intelligence.

JULIA Tomorrow? Get you into my cabinet,  
You shall have it with you now. O not delay me,  
No more than I do you. I am like one  
That is condemned: I have my pardon promised,  
But I would see it sealed. Go, get you in,  
You shall see my wind my tongue about his heart,  
Like a skein of silk.

*BOSOLA withdraws. Re-enter CARDINAL*

CARDINAL Where are you?  
(*Aside*) Yon's my lingering consumption.  
I am weary of her, and by any means  
Would be quit of her.

JULIA How now, my lord?  
What ails you?

CARDINAL Nothing.

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

CARDINAL I may not tell you.

JULIA 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 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 concealed for me as great a sin





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

*JULIA 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 Very well;  
Now you know me for your fellow murderer.  
I'll have thee hewed in pieces.

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

CARDINAL 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 churchyards.

CARDINAL No, come to me after midnight, to help to remove that body  
To her own lodging then. 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. Fail not to come. There is the master-key  
Of our lodgings; and by that you may conceive  
What trust I plant in you.

BOSOLA You shall find me ready.

*Exit CARDINAL*

O poor Antonio, though nothing be so needful  
To thy estate as pity, yet I find  
Nothing so dangerous. I must look to my footing.  
In such slippery ice-pavements men had need  
To be frost-nailed well; they may break their necks else.  
The precedent's here afore me: how this man  
Bears up in blood! Seems fearless! Why, 'tis well:  
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.  
Still me thinks the Duchess haunts; 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*

### 5.3

*Enter ANTONIO and DELIO*

DELIO Yon 's the Cardinal's window. This fortification  
Grew from the ruins of an ancient abbey,  
And to yond side lies a wall,  
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 supposed 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 weather, some men lie interred  
Loved the church so well, and gave so largely to 't,  
They thought it should have canopied their bones  
Till doomsday. But all things have their end:  
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,  
Must have like death that we have.

ECHO Like death that we have.

DELIO Now the echo hath caught you. 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 tonight:  
Do not.

ECHO Do not.

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

DELIO Your own virtue save you!  
I'll fetch your eldest son, and second you.  
It may be that the sight of his own blood  
Spread in so sweet a figure may beget  
The more compassion.

ANTONIO Fare you well.  
Though in our miseries Fortune have a part,  
Yet in our noble sufferings she hath none.  
Contempt of pain, that we may call our own.

*Exeunt*

#### 5.4

*Enter CARDINAL, PESCARA, MALATESTES and SILVIO*

CARDINAL You shall not watch tonight by the sick Duke.  
His grace is very well recovered.

MALATESTES So, sir; we shall not.

CARDINAL Nay, I must have you promise

Upon your honours, for I was enjoined to 't  
By himself; and he seemed to urge it sensibly.

SILVIO Let our honours bind this trifle.

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.

MALATESTES 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 O, my conscience!  
I would pray now; but the devil takes away my heart  
For having any confidence in prayer.  
About this hour I appointed Bosola  
To fetch the body. When he hath served my turn,  
He dies.

*Exit CARDINAL. Enter BOSOLA*

BOSOLA Ha? 'Twas the Cardinal's voice. I heard him name  
Bosola and my death.

*Enter ANTONIO and Servant*

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

*Exit Servant*

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 the benefit in death,  
To appear myself.

*Re-enter Servant with a lantern*

SERVANT Where are you, sir?

ANTONIO Very near my home. Bosola?

SERVANT

O, misfortune!

BOSOLA Smother thy pity, thou art dead else. Antonio!  
The man I would have saved 'bove mine own life!  
We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and banded  
Which way please them. O good Antonio,  
I'll whisper one thing in thy dying ear  
Shall make thy heart break quickly: thy fair Duchess  
And two sweet children ----

ANTONIO                      Their very names  
Kindle a little life in me.

BOSOLA                      Are murdered.

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

BOSOLA    Break, heart!

ANTONIO                      And let my son fly the courts of princes.

*ANTONIO dies*

BOSOLA Thou seem'st to have loved Antonio?

SERVANT                                              I brought him hither,  
To have reconciled him to the Cardinal.

BOSOLA I do not ask thee that. Take him up, if thou tender thine own life,  
O, my fate moves swift!  
I have this Cardinal in the forge already,  
Now I'll bring him to th' hammer.  
(*To Servant*) On, on, and look thou represent, for silence,  
The thing thou bear'st.

*Exeunt, with the Servant carrying ANTONIO's body*

## 5.5

*Enter CARDINAL, with a book*

CARDINAL I am puzzled in a question about hell.  
He says, in hell there's one material fire,  
And yet it shall not burn all men alike.  
Lay him by. How tedious is a guilty conscience!  
When I look into the fishponds in my garden,

Methinks I see a thing armed with a rake,  
That seems to strike at me.

*Enter BOSOLA, and Servant bearing ANTONIO'S body*

Now, art thou come?

Thou look'st ghastly:  
There sits in thy face some great determination,  
Mixed with some fear.

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

CARDINAL Ha? Help! Our guard!

BOSOLA Thou art deceived:  
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 betrayed!

*Enter, above, PESCARA, MALATESTA and SILVIO*

MALATESTA Listen.

CARDINAL My dukedom for rescue!

SILVIO Fie upon his counterfeiting!

PESCARA Why, 'tis not the Cardinal?

SILVIO Yes, yes, 'tis he,

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

SILVIO He doth this pretty well;

MALATESTA But it will not serve to laugh me out of mine honour.

CARDINAL The sword's at my throat!

MALATESTA You would not bawl so loud then.

SILVIO Let's go to bed: he told us this much aforehand.

PESCARA The accent of the voice sounds not in jest.  
I'll down to him.

*Exit PESCARA*

SILVIO Let's follow him aloof,

MALATESTES And note how the Cardinal will laugh at him.

*Exeunt all above*

BOSOLA There's for you first,

*He kills the Servant*

'Cause you shall not unbarricade the door  
To let in rescue.

CARDINAL What cause hast thou to pursue my life?

BOSOLA Look there.

CARDINAL Antonio?

BOSOLA Slain by my hand unwittingly.  
Pray, and be sudden. When thou killed'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!

*Stabs him again*

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

*Enter FERDINAND*

FERDINAND Th' alarum! Give me a fresh horse:  
Rally the vanguard, or the day is lost.  
*(Threatens the Cardinal)* Yield, yield! I give you the honour of arms,  
Shake my sword over you, will you yield?

CARDINAL Help me, I am your brother.

FERDINAND The devil?  
My brother fight upon the adverse party?  
There flies your ransom.

*He stabs the CARDINAL, and, in the scuffle, gives BOSOLA his death-wound*

CARDINAL O Justice!  
I suffer now for what hath former been:  
Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin.

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

BOSOLA Now my revenge is perfect.

*He kills FERDINAND*

Sink, thou main cause  
Of my undoing! The last part of my life  
Hath done me best service.

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

*FERDINAND 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 PESCARA, MALATESTA and SILVIO*

PESCARA How now, my lord?

MALATESTA O sad disaster!

SILVIO How comes this?

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

*The CARDINAL dies*



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

MALATESTES 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, ruined, 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.

*BOSOLA dies. Enter DELIO with ANTONIO's son*

MALATESTES O sir, you come too late!

DELIO Let us make noble use  
Of this great ruin; and join all our force  
To establish this young hopeful gentleman  
In 's mother's right. These wretched eminent things  
Leave no more fame behind 'em, than should one  
Fall in a frost, and leave his print in snow;  
As soon as the sun shines, it ever melts,  
Both form and matter. I have ever thought  
Nature doth nothing so great for great men  
As when she's pleased to make them lords of truth:  
Integrity of life is fame's best friend,  
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.

*Exeunt*