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|  | The Gentleman Usher |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | By George Chapman |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | 1606 |  |
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|  |  | **INTRODUCTION to the PLAY** |
|  | *Dramatis Personae:* |  |
|  |  | *The Gentleman Usher* is George Chapman's crowning comedy achievement. It features one very lusty duke, an alcoholic noblewoman, a most vain usher, and a lot of genuine laugh-out-loud dialogue. Though the play includes much of Chapman's tell-tale obscurity, the comedic scenes are as entertaining today on the page as they must have been on the stage four centuries ago. |
|  | ***Duke Alphonso***. |
|  | ***Prince Vincentio***, his son. |
|  | ***Medice***, the duke's favourite. |
|  | A ***servant*** of Medice. |
|  |  |
|  | ***Strozza***, a Lord. |
|  | ***Cynanche***, wife of Strozza. |  |
|  | ***Poggio***, his nephew. | **NOTE on the PLAY'S SOURCE** |
|  | ***Ancilla***, a servant. |  |
|  |  | The text of the play is taken from Thomas Marc Parrott's 1913 collection *Chapman's Comedies*, fully cited below. |
|  | ***Earl Lasso***, an old Lord. |
|  | ***Bassiolo***, gentleman usher to Lasso. |  |
|  | ***Fungus***, a servant of Lasso. | **NOTES on the ANNOTATIONS** |
|  | ***Cortezza***, sister of Lasso. |  |
|  | ***Margaret***, daughter of Lasso. | Mention of Parrott and Smith in the annotations refers to the notes provided by each of these editors in their respective editions of this play, each cited fully below.  The most commonly cited sources are listed in the footnotes immediately below. The complete list of footnotes appears at the end of this play.  1. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online.  2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words.* London; New York: Penguin, 2002.  3. Parrott, Thomas Marc. *Chapman's Comedies*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1914.  5. Smith, John Hazel. *The Gentleman Usher*. Lincoln, NE: U. of Nebraska Press, 1970. |
|  |  |
|  | ***Benevemus***, a doctor. |
|  | ***Sarpego***, a pedant. |
|  | ***Julio***, a courtier. |
|  |  |
|  | Attendants, servants, huntsmen, |
|  | guards, two pages, maids. |
|  |  |
|  | *Figures in the Masques*: |
|  | Enchanter, Spirits, Sylvanus, |
|  | A Nymph, Broom-man, Rush-man, |
|  | a man-bug, a woman-bug. |
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|  | ACT I. |  |
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|  | SCENE I. |  |
|  | *Before the House of Strozza.* | **The Scene of the Play:** an unspecified duchy in Italy. |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Strozza, Cynanche, and Poggio.* | **Entering characters:** ***Cynanche*** is the wife of ***Lord Strozza***, ***Poggio*** his nephew. Poggio is a well-meaning lad, but a mental feather-weight, who talks in excess, and much of what he says is nonsense and hilariously self-contradictory. His primary role is the bearer of bad news. |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Stroz.***Haste, nephew; what, a sluggard? Fie, for shame! | = hurry up. = common expression of disdain. |
| 2 | Shall he that was our morning cock, turn owl, | 2: Strozza suggests that Poggio is not so much like the bird of the morning (*cock*), which is associated with leadership or supremacy, as he is the bird of the night (*owl*), with its own connotations of drowsiness or stupidity.1,5  Actually, the association of Poggio with an owl is even more significant: since ancient times, the screech of an owl was believed to be an omen of death or disaster: in Richard III, the king cries out, "Out on you, owls! nothing but songs of death?" (Act IV.iv). This ties in nicely with Poggio's primarily role in this play as the bearer of bad news. |
|  | And lock out daylight from his drowsy eyes? |
| 4 |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Pray pardon me for once, lord uncle, for I'll be |  |
| 6 | sworn I had such a dream this morning: methought one | = someone. |
|  | came with a commission to take a sorrel curtal that was | = a warrant or order. = a horse with its tail cut short or off. |
| 8 | stolen from him, wheresoever he could find him. And |  |
|  | because I feared he would lay claim to my sorrel curtal |  |
| 10 | in my stable, I ran to the smith to have him set on his | = (re)attach. |
|  | mane again and his tail presently, that the commission- | = right away. = ie. so that. |
| 12 | man might not think him a curtal. And when the smith |  |
|  | would not do it, I fell a-beating of him, so that I could |  |
| 14 | not wake for my life till I was revenged on him. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 16 | ***Cyn.*** This is your old valour, nephew, that will fight | = courage. |
|  | sleeping as well as waking. |  |
| 18 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** 'Slud, aunt, what if my dream had been true (as it | = a variation on *'Sblood*; both are short for "God's blood", an oath or swear. Parliament around this time passed a statute banning the explicit blasphemous use of God's name on stage, so such implied blasphemies became the norm. |
| 20 | might have been for anything I knew)! There's never a |
|  | smith in Italy shall make an ass of me in my sleep, if I |
| 22 | can choose. |
|  |  |  |
| 24 | ***Stroz.*** Well said, my furious nephew; but I see | 24*ff*: note that Strozza, a lord, speaks largely in verse, while his foolish nephew Poggio speaks mainly in prose. |
|  | You quite forget that we must rouse to-day | 25-27: a hunt is planned on the estate of Earl Lasso; Duke Alphonso, the ruler of the duchy, will be the featured guest. Strozza will want his entire family to appear for the event. |
| 26 | The sharp-tusked boar; and blaze our huntsmanship | = show off.1 |
|  | Before the Duke. |  |
| 28 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Forget, lord uncle? I hope not; you think belike | = it appears. |
| 30 | my wits are as brittle as a beetle, or as skittish as your | = Poggio's prattle is difficult to make any sense of: he begins by misspeaking the common expression, "blind as a beetle"; *brittle* conveys the sense of "weak", or perhaps "unreliable",1 as he is responding to Strozza's suggestion that he might have forgotten the hunt.  The word *beetle* could refer to the insect, with its concomitant brittleness, or to an old name for what is essentially a sledgehammer, and which was used as a byword for stupidity.1   30-31: *skittish...Barbary mare* = *skittish* could mean "fickle" or "frivolous", but also could have its modern meaning as applied to a horse, hence Poggio's use of *Barbary mare*. The famous horses of Barbaria, or Northern Africa, were frequently mentioned in drama of the era. |
|  | Barbary mare; one cannot cry wehee, but straight she | 31-32: *one cannot…tehee* = *wehee* is the whinny of a horse, *tehee* the laugh of a person; Poggio has gotten the two terms reversed.3 |
| 32 | cries tehee. |
|  |  |  |
| 34 | ***Stroz.***Well guessed, cousin Hysteron Proteron! | = this is the name for the rhetorical device of connecting two ideas in such a way that the one that occurs last in time is named first, to signify its greater importance. Strozza is of course teasing Poggio's confusing the order of his onomatopoeic words. |
|  |  |  |
| 36 | ***Pog.*** But which way will the Duke's Grace hunt to-day? | 36: *which way* = the sense seems to be "where", though Strozza responds to the directional sense of the phrase with *Toward* in line 38.  *the Duke's Grace* = ie. the duke; "His Grace" or "Your Grace" would be correct titles to use in discussing or addressing a duke.1 |
|  |  |
| 38 | ***Stroz.***Toward Count Lasso's house his Grace will hunt, |  |
|  | Where he will visit his late honoured mistress. | = ie. Count Lasso's daughter Margaret, whom the duke is interested to marry; *late* = most lately or recent. |
| 40 |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Who, Lady Margaret, that dear young dame? Will |  |
| 42 | his antiquity never leave his iniquity? | 42: *his antiquity* may be a parody of *His Grace*, describing the duke as an old man; *iniquity* refers to sinful or injurious actions.1 Poggio is thus expressing disapproval for the old duke's desire to match with the young Margaret. Note that *Iniquity* was also an alternative name for *Vice*, a buffoonish character from the old morality plays, who was frequently alluded to in Elizabethan drama. *Vice* played the role of the tempter of humanity. |
|  |  |  |
| 44 | ***Cyn.*** Why, how now, nephew? Turned Parnassus lately? | = ie. poet; *Parnassus* is a mountain in Greece, long considered a source of inspiration for literary and poetic accomplishment; hence, it stands for the world of poetry or literature in general.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 46 | ***Pog.*** “Nassus”? I know not; but I would I had all the | 46: *Nassus* = *nassus*, or *nasus*, is "nose" in Latin; perhaps this is what Poggio thinks he heard Cynanche say; or he may have no idea what she is talking about.  *would* = wish. |
|  | Duke's living for her sake; I'd make him a poor duke, | = wealth, income. = ie. by spending all his money on Margaret. |
| 48 | i'faith! |
|  |  |  |
| 50 | ***Stroz.*** No doubt of that, if thou hadst all his living. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 52 | ***Pog.*** I would not stand dreaming of the matter as I do |  |
|  | now. |  |
| 54 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Why, how do you dream, nephew? |  |
| 56 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Marry, all last night methought I was tying her | = a mild oath, derived from the Virgin Mary. |
| 58 | shoe-string. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 60 | ***Stroz.***What, all night tying her shoe-string? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 62 | ***Pog.*** Ay, that I was, and yet I tied it not neither; for, |  |
|  | as I was tying it, the string broke, methought, and |  |
| 64 | then, methought, having but one point at my hose, | = a tagged cord or ribbon used to attach hose to a doublet; *hose* and *doublet* were the basic male garments of Elizabethan society: hose covered the bottom half of the body, including the legs, while a doublet was a close-fitting garment for the upper body.  *withal* (line 65) = with. |
|  | methought, I gave her that to tie her shoe withal. |
| 66 |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** A point of much kindness, I assure you. |  |
| 68 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Whereupon, in the very nick, methought, the | = old form of "in the nick of time".1 |
| 70 | Count came rushing in, and I ran rushing out, with my |  |
|  | heels about my hose for haste. | 71: having given up his point for Margaret, Poggio's dream hose have fallen down around his ankles; but, confused again, Poggio has *heels* and *hose* backwards in this line.  Note also the alliteration in this last line. |
| 72 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***So, will you leave your dreaming, and dispatch? | = cease. = hurry up,1 ie. get ready. |
| 74 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Mum, not a word more, I'll go before, and | = "I'll leave first"; note the self-contradictory nature of the sentence. The reader should be prepared to pick up Poggio's absurd conflicting assertions throughout the play! |
| 76 | overtake you presently. |
|  |  |
| 78 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 80 | ***Cyn.*** My lord, I fancy not these hunting sports, | = Cynanche addresses Strozza, her husband. |
|  | When the bold game you follow turns again |  |
| 82 | And stares you in the face. Let me behold |  |
|  | A cast of falcons on their merry wings | 83-84: a number of terms from falconry appear here: a *cast* = a pair; *daring* = frightening; *to stoop* = to swoop down on: hence, *the* *stooped prey* = the prey upon which the falcon is set to swoop down; *shifting* = ie. acting to avoid the hawk.1,3 |
| 84 | Daring the stoopèd prey, that shifting flies; |  |
|  | Or let me view the fearful hare or hind, | 85-87: Cynanche compares the baying of the hunting *hounds* to musical *harmony*, in which the mixed barkings resemble the tossing around of a musical phrase or motif (*a music point*),1 as in a fugue.3 The baying accompanies the agitated (*tossed*)1 fleeing rabbit or deer (*hind*). Note the two senses of *tossed* here. |
| 86 | Tossed like a music point with harmony |
|  | Of well-mouthed hounds. This is a sport for princes. | = the sense is likely "strong-voiced": a 19th century poem tells us that "*well-mouthed* hound makes the music of the woods." |
| 88 | The other rude; boars yield fit game for boors. | 88: *boars* would have been pronounced like *boors*. |
|  |  |  |
| 90 | ***Stroz.***Thy timorous spirit blinds thy judgment, wife; |  |
|  | Those are most royal sports, that most approve | = test or demonstrate. |
| 92 | The huntsman's prowess and his hardy mind. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 94 | ***Cyn.*** My lord, I know too well your virtuous spirit; | = courageous. |
|  | Take heed, for God's love, if you rouse the boar, |  |
| 96 | You come not near him, but discharge aloof | = from a distance1 (to remain safe). |
|  | Your wounding pistol, or well-aimèd dart. | = arrow. |
| 98 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Ay, marry, wife, this counsel rightly flows |  |
| 100 | Out of thy bosom; pray thee take less care; | = "please (*pray thee*), don't worry so much." |
|  | Let ladies at their tables judge of boars, | = ie. by judging their taste. |
| 102 | Lords in the field. And so farewell, sweet love; |  |
|  | Fail not to meet me at Earl Lasso's house. |  |
| 104 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Pray pardon me for that. You know I love not | = ie. "from having to attend the event at the earl's house." |
| 106 | These solemn meetings. | = formal, ceremonial.2 |
|  |  |  |
| 108 | ***Stroz.*** You must needs for once |  |
|  | Constrain your disposition; and indeed |  |
| 110 | I would acquaint you more with Lady Margaret |  |
|  | For special reason. |  |
| 112 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Very good, my lord. | = according to the OED, this is the earliest known written use of the phrase *very good* to indicate assent. |
| 114 | Then I must needs go fit me for that presence. | = "prepare myself". |
|  |  |  |
| 116 | ***Stroz.*** I pray thee do, farewell! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 118 | [*Exit Cynanche*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 120 | *Enter Vincentio.* | **Entering Character: *Vincentio*** is the son and heir of Duke Alphonso, and a close friend of Strozza's. |
|  |  |
| 122 | Here comes my friend. − |  |
|  | Good day, my lord! Why does your Grace confront | = since Vincentio is royalty - his father the duke is the ruler of his land - he may properly be addressed as *your Grace*. |
| 124 | So clear a morning with so cloudy looks? | = Vincentio is obviously unhappy. |
|  |  |  |
| 126 | ***Vinc.***Ask'st thou my griefs that know'st my desp'rate love | 126-7: Vincentio, the duke's son, wants to marry Margaret, just as his father does! |
|  | Curbed by my father's stern riválity? |
| 128 | Must not I mourn that know not whether yet |  |
|  | I shall enjoy a stepdame or a wife? | 129: if Margaret marries Vincentio's father, she will be his step-mother! |
| 130 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***A wife, Prince, never doubt it; your deserts | 131-3: Strozza is confident Margaret will marry Vincentio. |
| 132 | And youthful graces have engaged so far |  |
|  | The beauteous Margaret that she is your own. |  |
| 134 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Oh, but the eye of watchful jealousy | 135-6: Vincentio has no chance to meet with Margaret because the duke always seems to have his eye on her. |
| 136 | Robs my desires of means t' enjoy her favour. |
|  |  |  |
| 138 | ***Stroz.*** Despair not: there are means enow for you: | = plural form of "enough". |
|  | Suborn some servant of some good respect | 139-143: Strozza's idea is that Vincentio should convince one of Margaret's family-servants to act as a go-between for her and Vincentio; the servant would be led to believe that their relationship is only just beginning, though in reality, the young couple already have an understanding (hence, *she needs no wooing*).  *That's near your choice* (line 140) = "one (ie. a servant) who has access to your beloved".5 |
| 140 | That's near your choice, who, though she needs no wooing, |
|  | May yet imagine you are to begin |
| 142 | Your strange young love-suit, and so speak for you, |
|  | Bear your kind letters, and get safe accéss. |
| 144 | All which when he shall do, you need not fear | 144-6: the servant, in helping Margaret and Vincentio, could not them give them away to the duke without implicating himself. |
|  | His trusty secrecy, because he dares not |  |
| 146 | Reveal escapes whereof himself is author; | 146: report any transgressions (*escapes*)1 which he is responsible for having arranged. |
|  | Whom you may best attempt, she must reveal; | 147: "she will have to let you know which servant is the one you should work on." |
| 148 | For, if she loves you, she already knows, |  |
|  | And in an instant can resolve you that. | = "inform you of". |
| 150 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***And so she will, I doubt not; would to Heaven | = "I wish". |
| 152 | I had fit time, even now, to know her mind! | = ie. which servant she will recommend. |
|  | This counsel feeds my heart with much sweet hope. | = ie. "this advice of yours, etc." |
| 154 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Pursue it then; 'twill not be hard t' effect: |  |
| 156 | The Duke has none for him, but Medice, | = assisting him; = *Medice* is a member of the duke's court, and his most trusted advisor; Strozza points out that unlike Vincentio, who has himself and Margaret on his side, Alphonso only has the lowly Medice to help him court Margaret.  *Medice* should be pronounced with the accent on the first syllable: *ME-di-ce*. |
|  | That fustian lord, who in his buckram face | 157: *fustian* and *buckram* are types of coarse fabric, the latter stiffened with gum; the terms are figuratively applied to mean "ridiculous" or "pompous" and "stiff" or "stuck-up" respectively.1 |
| 158 | Bewrays, in my conceit, a map of baseness. | = betrays, reveals. = the very image or representation.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 160 | ***Vinc.***Ay, there's a parcel of unconstruèd stuff, | 160: Medice is like a load of uninterpretable nonsense (*unconstrued stuff*);1 Smith interprets otherwise, suggesting Medice is like a section of woven fabric (*stuff*) not yet turned into anything. |
|  | That unknown minion raised to honour's height, | = the favourite (*minion*) of the duke's is *unknown* in that no one knows where he came from, |
| 162 | Without the help of virtue, or of art | = ie. possessing any. = skill or learning. |
|  | Or (to say true) of any honest part. | = quality. |
| 164 | Oh, how he shames my father! He goes like |  |
|  | A prince's footman, in old-fashioned silks, | 165: Medice's old-fashioned apparel makes him look like a *footman*, a servant who ran alongside a noble's carriage when it was in motion. |
| 166 | And most times in his hose and doubtlet only; | 166: perhaps making fun of Medice for not wearing a fashionable cloak or gown. |
|  | So miseráble, that his own few men | 167-8: Medice is so cheap (*miserable*) that his own servants must beg on the street to survive; English laws of the era banned vagrancy, but since Medice's servants are in fact employed, they would not be subject to arrest for violating the statutes; hence, their servants' uniforms (*livery*) could be said to protect them by acting as evidence of their employment.3 |
| 168 | Do beg by virtue of his livery; |
|  | For he gives none, for any service done him, |
| 170 | Or any honour, any least reward. |
|  |  |
| 172 | ***Stroz.***'Tis pity such should live about a prince: |  |
|  | I would have such a noble counterfeit nailed | 173-4: *noble counterfeit =* ie. one impersonating an aristocrat.  *nailed…pillory* = while secured in a pillory (a kind of stocks), a prisoner might have his ears nailed onto it, with the expectation that the ears would be torn off as the prisoner moved. |
| 174 | Upon the pillory, and, after, whipped |  |
|  | For his adultery with nobility. | = metaphor for Medice's illegally or improperly consorting with the nobility. |
| 176 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Faith, I would fain disgrace him by all means, | = truly = "like to" or "prefer to". |
| 178 | As enemy to his base-bred ignorance, |  |
|  | That, being a great lord, cannot write nor read. | 177-9: Vincentio would like to use Medice's illiteracy as a means to humiliate him. |
| 180 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** For that, we'll follow the blind side of him, | = "seek out his vulnerable side".1 |
| 182 | And make it sometimes subject of our mirth. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 184 | *Enter Poggio post-haste*. | = in a hurry. |
|  |  |  |
| 186 | ***Vinc.*** See, what news with your nephew Poggio? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 188 | ***Stroz.***None good, I warrant you! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 190 | ***Pog.*** Where should I find my lord uncle? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 192 | ***Stroz.***What's the huge haste with you? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 194 | ***Pog.*** O ho, you will hunt to-day! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 196 | ***Stroz.***I hope I will. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 198 | ***Pog.*** But you may hap to hop without your hope, for | = happen; = leap about, as on a horse;1 note Poggio's very silly wordplay with *hap*, *hop* and *hope*.  Smith cites a thesis by Akhiro Yamada16 which suggests Poggio is parodying or misapplying a proverb of the time, one version of which was published in a book by J. Florio in 1591: "he that lives in hope, doth dance in narrow scope."   198*ff*: Poggio describes how Strozza's hunting dogs have become unemployable for the hunt; *Killbuck* was a common name for a hound or beagle.13 |
|  | the truth is, Killbuck is run mad. |
| 200 |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***What's this? |  |
| 202 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Nay, 'tis true, sir: and Killbuck being run mad, |  |
| 204 | bit Ringwood so by the left buttock, you might have | = another common hunting dog name.13 |
|  | turned your nose in it. | 205: "stuck your nose into it and rotated it." |
| 206 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Out, ass! |  |
| 208 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** By Heaven, you might, my lord! D'ye think I lie? | = ie. "you really could (turn your nose in it)". |
| 210 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Zounds, might I? Let's blanket him, my lord. A | 211: *Zounds* = a euphemism for the oath "God's wounds".  *blanket him* = ie. "toss Poggio in a blanket"; a person who deserved humiliation for some misbehavior might be subject to this treatment. |
| 212 | blanket here! |
|  |  |  |
| 214 | ***Pog.*** Nay, good my lord Vincentio, by this rush I tell | = typical Elizabethan vow taken on an inanimate object; *rushes* were frequently strewn on the floor in this era. |
|  | you for good will: and Venus, your brach there, runs so | = female hound.1   215-6: *runs so proud* = is in such heat.1 |
| 216 | proud that your huntsman cannot take her down for his | = as we can see from Strozza's response to this line, Poggio has used the wrong expression: to *take* *(her) down* is a term from falconry, meaning to recall a hawk from flight. |
|  | life. |
| 218 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Take her up, fool, thou wouldst say. | = ie. handle or restrain her. |
| 220 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Why, sir, he would soon take her down, and he | = as soon. = "as" or "if". |
| 222 | could take her up, I warrant her! | = guarantee it. |
|  |  |  |
| 224 | ***Vinc.***Well said, hammer, hammer! | = a small bird, the yellowhammer, here meaning "fool".1,3 |
|  |  |  |
| 226 | ***Pog.*** Nay, good now, let's alone. And there's your |  |
|  | horse, Gray Strozza, too, has the staggers, and has | = a disease of horses, which causes them to stagger.2 |
| 228 | strook Bay Bettrice, your Barbary mare, so that she | = struck, though Smith suggests Poggio means "mated with". |
|  | goes halting o' this fashion, most filthily. | = "goes about limping (*halting*) like this": Poggio likely demonstrates how the horse limps. |
| 230 |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***What poison blisters thy unhappy tongue, |  |
| 232 | Evermore braying forth unhappy news? − | = like the *ass* that Vincentio called him in line 207 above. |
|  | Our hunting sport is at the best, my lord: | 232: "well, our hunting plans are in great shape, my lord."  232*f*: having finished berating Poggio, Strozza turns to Vincentio; he worries about disappointing the duke, who would expect Strozza to be an excellent hunting companion. |
| 234 | How shall I satisfy the Duke your father, |
|  | Defrauding him of his expected sport? |
| 236 | See, see, he comes. |
|  |  |  |
| 238 | *Enter Alphonso, Medice, Sarpego, with attendants*. | **Entering Characters:** ***Alphonso*** is the duke, **Medice** his minion (favourite), and ***Sarpego*** a pedant, or scholar. |
|  |  |
| 240 | ***Alph.***Is this the copy of the speech you wrote, Signor |  |
|  | Sarpego? |  |
| 242 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.***It is a blaze of wit poetical; | 243*ff*: Sarpego, a scholar, speaks with humorous and ridiculous rhetorical flourishes, indicating his high self-regard. |
| 244 | Read it, brave Duke, with eyes pathetical. | = ie. that would be moved or emotionally stirred.14 Note that Sarpego's opening lines comprise a rather awkward rhyming couplet. |
|  |  |  |
| 246 | ***Alph.*** We will peruse it straight: − well met, Vincentio, | = immediately. |
|  | And good Lord Strozza; we commend you both |  |
| 248 | For your attendance; but you must conceive |  |
|  | 'Tis no true hunting we intend to-day, | 249-252: rather than go hunting, the duke decides to court Margaret instead, by means of taking part in the production of a small play (known as a *masque*); one of the endearing traits of Elizabethan drama is the willingness of the characters to put on plays and shows for each other. |
| 250 | But an inducement to a certain show, | = prologue;5 the duke already has plans for an elaborate evening masque, and now intends to stage an additional earlier one as well. |
|  | Wherewith we will present our beauteous love, | 251: "at which I will formally bring the lovely Margaret (*our beauteous love*) to public notice". |
| 252 | And therein we bespeak your company. | = "engage your help" or "request your attendance."1 |
|  |  |  |
| 254 | ***Vinc.*** We both are ready to attend your Highness. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 256 | **Alph.**See then, here is a poem that requires |  |
|  | Your worthy censures, offered, if it like, | = judgments. = "pleases you". |
| 258 | To furnish our intended amorous show: | = use in. |
|  | Read it, Vincentio. |  |
| 260 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Pardon me, my lord. |  |
| 262 | Lord Medice's reading will express it better. | 262: Vincentio and Strozza now fulfill their earlier intention to tease Medice about his illiteracy. |
|  |  |
| 264 | ***Med.*** My patience can digest your scoffs, my lord. |  |
|  | I care not to proclaim it to the world: | 265: "I don't mind announcing it to the whole world". |
| 266 | I can nor write nor read; and what of that? |  |
|  | I can both see and hear as well as you. |  |
| 268 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Still are your wits at war. | 269: Alphonso's comment reveals that this is not the first time Medice and Vincentio have bared their fangs ateach other. |
| 270 | [*To Vincentio*] Here, read this poem. |
|  |  |
| 272 | ***Vinc.***[*Reads*] |  |
|  | “The red-faced sun hath firked the flundering shades, | = driven away.1 = stumbling or struggling shadows (of the night).1,5 |
| 274 | And cast bright ammel on Aurora's brow.” | = enamel,1 ie. colourful ornament. = goddess of the dawn. |
|  |  |  |
| 276 | ***Alph.***High words and strange! Read on, Vincentio. | 275: the outrageously pretentious and absurd nature of Sarpego's poetry is not lost on his listeners. |
|  |  |  |
| 278 | ***Vinc.*** “The busky groves that gag-toothed boars do shroud | = full of bushes.1 = having prominently extending teeth.1 |
|  | With cringle-crangle horns do ring aloud.” | = twisting;1 lines 278-9 offer another clunky rhyming couplet. |
| 280 |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** My lord, my lord, I have a speech here worth ten |  |
| 282 | of this, and yet I'll mend it too. | = improve or fix.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 284 | ***Alph.***How likes Vincentio? | 284: "How did you like it, Vincentio?" |
|  |  |  |
| 286 | ***Vinc.*** It is strangely good, |  |
|  | No inkhorn ever did bring forth the like. | = ink container. |
| 288 | Could these brave prancing words with action's spur, | 288-290 note Vincentio's extended metaphor (with *prancing*, *spur*, *ridden* and *managed*) comparing the reciting of Sarpego's poem for an audience to riding a horse.  The word *action* here, and in the next several lines, refers to the gestures an actor would make to accompany his speech. |
|  | Be ridden throughly, and managed right, | = used for "thoroughly", meaning "perfectly".1 |
| 290 | 'Twould fright the audience, and perhaps delight. | 289-290: Vincentio mocks Sarpego's rhyming couplets by making up one of his own - actually, with *fright*, a rhyming triplet of sorts. |
|  |  |  |
| 292 | ***Sarp.*** Doubt you of action, sir? | 292: "do you doubt I can act, sir?" |
|  |  |  |
| 294 | ***Vinc.*** Ay, for such stuff. | 294: "yes, to such garbage as this." |
|  |  |  |
| 296 | ***Sarp.***Then know, my lord, I can both act and teach |  |
|  | To any words; when I in Padua schooled it, | = *Padua* was well-known in England for its university. |
| 298 | I played in one of Plautus' comedies, | = *Plautus*, who lived around the 2nd-century B.C., was the most famous of Roman comic playwrights; about 20 of his plays are extant. |
|  | Namely, *Curculio*, where his part I acted, | = *Curculio* is the shortest of Plautus' plays, about 700 lines; Sarpego played Curculio, a parasite or hanger-on. |
| 300 | Projecting from the poor sum of four lines |
|  | Forty fair actions. |  |
| 302 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Let's see that, I pray. | 303: Alphonso requests a demonstration of Sarpego's portrayal of Curculio. |
| 304 |  |
|  | ***Sarp.***Your Highness shall command. |  |
| 306 | But pardon me, if in my action's heat, | 306-8: Sarpego intends to act the part as realistically as possible, which may entail him tripping over the others. |
|  | Entering in post post haste, I chance to take up | = presumably meaning "super-hurriedly". = ie. trip.3 |
| 308 | Some of your honoured heels. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 310 | ***Pog.*** Y' ad best leave out | 310-1: Poggio suggest Sarpego leave out the part where he bumps into the others; line 311's exact meaning is unclear, but perhaps Poggio is vaguely hinting at a retaliatory beating, should Sarpego knock him down. |
|  | That action for a thing that I know, sir. |
| 312 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.***Then shall you see what I can do without it. | 313: Sarpego agrees to leave out the collisions. |
| 314 |  |  |
|  | [*Sarpego puts on his parasite's costume*.] | = the *parasite*, a stock character of ancient comedies, was a person who ingratiated himself through flattery to a wealthy patron, who in return would feed and support him; we may also note here how absurd is Sarpego's desire to demonstrate his acting ability to the others, complete with a costume that he just happens to have with him! |
| 316 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** See, see! He hath his furniture and all. | = costume.2 |
| 318 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.*** You must imagine, lords, I bring good news, |  |
| 320 | Whereof being princely proud I scour the street, |  |
|  | And over-tumble every man I meet. |  |
| 322 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit Sarpego*.] |  |
| 324 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Beshrew my heart if he take up my heels! | 325: "damn him if he knocks me over!" |
| 326 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Sarpego, running about the stage*. |  |
| 328 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.*** *Date viam mihi, noti atque ignoti, dum ego* | **Translation:** "Known or unknown, make way for me, while here I execute my commission; fly all of you, be off, and get out of the way, lest I should hurt any person in my speed with my head, or elbow, or breast, or with my knee."15 |
| 330 | *hic officium meum.* |
|  | *Facio: fugite omnes, abite, et de via secedite,* |
| 332 | *Ne quern in cursu capite aut cubito aut pectore* |
|  | *offendam aut genu*. |
| 334 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Thanks, good Signor Sarpego. |  |
| 336 | How like you, lords, this stirring action? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 338 | ***Stroz.*** In a cold morning it were good, my lord, |  |
|  | But something harsh upon repletiön. | = after a full meal.3 |
| 340 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.*** Sir, I have ventured, being enjoined, to eat | = ie. asked (to perform). |
| 342 | Three scholars' commons, and yet drew it neat. | 342: *commons* = the share of food a college student was entitled to.1 |
|  |  | *drew it neat* = the sense seems to be "performed it skillfully." |
| 344 | ***Pog.*** Come, sir, you meddle in too many matters; let us, |  |
|  | I pray, tend on our own show at my lord Lasso's. |  |
| 346 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.***  Doing obeisance then to every lord, | = bowing |
| 348 | I now consort you, sir, even *toto corde*. | = attend.2 = with all my heart (Latin); Sarpego's inclination to speak in Latin would have been viewed as pretentious. |
|  |  |
| 350 | [*Exit Sarpego and Poggio*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 352 | ***Med.*** My lord, away with these scholastic wits, |  |
|  | Lay the invention of your speech on me, | 353: Medice asks the duke to let him write his speech for him. |
| 354 | And the performance too; I'll play my part |  |
|  | That you shall say, Nature yields more than Art. | = in such a way that. = ie. "natural talent is superior to learned skills." |
| 356 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Be't so resolved; unartificial truth | = decided. = natural.1 |
| 358 | And unfeigned passion can decipher best. | = genuine. = allow one to interpret (*decipher)*1 a role in the best way. |
|  |  |  |
| 360 | ***Vinc.***But 'twill be hard, my lord, for one unlearn'd. | 360: Vincentio again cruelly points out Medice's lack of education and literacy. |
|  |  |  |
| 362 | ***Med.*** Unlearn'd? I cry you mercy, sir; unlearn'd? | 362: Medice takes Vincentio's comment badly, perhaps interpreting *unlearned* in its harsher sense of ignorant or unsophisticated, as opposed to one simply lacking formal education. |
|  |  |  |
| 364 | ***Vinc.***I mean untaught, my lord, to make a speech | 364: Vincentio dissembles, pretending he only meant that Medice is untrained as an actor. |
|  | As a pretended actor, without clothes | = ie. a costume. |
| 366 | More gracious than your doublet and your hose. | 366: now Vincentio makes fun of Medice's unstylish clothes. |
|  |  |  |
| 368 | ***Alph.***What, think you, son, we mean t' express a speech |  |
|  | Of special weight without a like attire? | = important or exceptional.1 = a costume of similar distinction, ie. an appropriate outfit. |
| 370 |  |
|  | [*Alphonso puts rich robes on Medice*.] |  |
| 372 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Excuse me then, my lord; so stands it well. |  |
| 374 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Has brought them rarely in to pageant him. | 375: the duke brought regal clothing for Medice's use to honor him, as with a triumph,3 or to exhibit him.1 |
| 376 |  |
|  | ***Med.*** What, think you, lord, we think not of attire? |  |
| 378 | Can we not make us ready at this age? | 378: "are we not old enough to dress ourselves?" |
|  |  |  |
| 380 | ***Stroz.*** Alas, my lord, your wit must pardon his. | 380: Strozza addresses Vincentio. |
|  |  |  |
| 382 | ***Vinc.***I hope it will; his wit is pitiful. | = pitiable.5 |
|  |  |  |
| 384 | ***Stroz.*** [*To Medice*] |  |
|  | I pray stand by, my lord; y' are troublesome. |  |
| 386 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** To none but you; − am I to you, my lord? |  |
| 388 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Not unto me. |  |
| 390 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Why, then, you wrong me, Strozza. |  |
| 392 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Nay, fall not out, my lords. | = "don't argue". |
| 394 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** May I not know |  |
| 396 | What your speech is, my Liege? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 398 | ***Alph.***None but myself, and the Lord Medice. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 400 | ***Med.*** No, pray, my lord, |  |
|  | Let none partake with us. | 401: ie. "don't tell anyone what we are planning." |
| 402 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** No, be assured. |  |
| 404 | But for another cause: | 404: "but I have another matter (*cause*) I need to take care of." |
|  | [*Aside to Strozza*] a word, Lord Strozza; |
| 406 | I tell you true I fear Lord Medice |  |
|  | Will scarce discharge the speech effectually; |  |
| 408 | As we go, therefore, I'll explain to you |  |
|  | My whole intent, that you may second him | = support him, ie. take Medice's place. |
| 410 | If need and his debility require. | = ie. an inability to perform his role. |
|  |  |  |
| 412 | ***Stroz.***Thanks for this grace, my Liege. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 414 | [*Vincentio overhears*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 416 | ***Med.*** My lord, your son! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 418 | ***Alph.***Why, how now, son? Forbear. − Yet 'tis no matter, |  |
|  | We talk of other business, Medice; |  |
| 420 | And come, we will prepare us to our show. | 420, 424: the final two lines of the scene form, typically, a rhyming couplet. |
|  |  |
| 422 | [*Exeunt Alphonso, Medice, and attendants*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 424 | ***Stroz. and Vinc.***Which, as we can, we'll cast to overthrow. | = contrive, cause.1 = subvert or ruin.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 426 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT I, SCENE II. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Lasso.* |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Lasso, Bassiolo, Sarpego, two Pages;* | **Entering Characters: *Bassiolo*** is a **gentleman** **usher**, and as such he holds the second highest position in the household of ***Earl Lasso***, after the steward, and is responsible for managing many of the important activities of the home, including overseeing the hiring, firing and work of all the household's servants, supervising the preparation of meals, announcing callers, and preceding his master or mistress as he or she moves formally about.5  ***Earl Lasso*** is the father of Margaret, the young lady both the duke and his son Vincentio want to marry; ***Sarpego*** is our scholar, whom we met in the play's first scene.  Bassiolo enters the room without a servant's hat (*bare*), and preceding the others (*before*). A fascinating handbook of instructions, written by the Viscount Montague in the late 16th century, details the duties of the household servants; it specifically outlines when his gentleman usher shall wear his hat: for example, he writes, *"I will that my Gentleman Usher shall use me or my wife in all places convenient through cities, towns, &c* ***bare-headed*** *as well on horseback as on foot, saving that in the presence of an Earl or upwards he shall forebear to do so."*18 |
|  | *Bassiolo bare before*. |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Bass.***Stand by there, make place! | = "make room!" |
| 2 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** Say, now, Bassiolo, you on whom relies |  |
| 4 | The general disposition of my house |  |
|  | In this our preparation for the Duke, |  |
| 6 | Are all our officers at large instructed | = servants.2 = altogether.1 |
|  | For fit discharge of their peculiar places? | = particular jobs. |
| 8 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***At large, my lord, instructed. |  |
| 10 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.***Are all our chambers hung? Think you our house | = ie. with tapestries, etc. |
| 12 | Amply capacious to lodge all the train? | = ie. all those expected to be present.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 14 | ***Bass.***Amply capacious, I am passing glad. | = exceedingly. |
|  | And now, then, to our mirth and musical show, |  |
| 16 | Which, after supper, we intend t' endure, |  |
|  | Welcome's chief dainties; for choice cates at home | 17: *dainties* and *cates* both refer to delicacies |
| 18 | Ever attend on princes, mirth abroad. |  |
|  | Are all parts perfect? |  |
| 20 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.*** One I know there is. |  |
| 22 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** And that is yours. |  |
| 24 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.*** Well guessed, in earnest, lord! |  |
| 26 | I need not *erubescere* to take | = blush (Latin). |
|  | So much upon me; that my back will bear. |  |
| 28 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Nay, he will be perfectiön itself |  |
| 30 | For wording well and dextrous action, too. | 30: ie. in reciting his lines well and gesturing appropriately. |
|  |  |  |
| 32 | ***Lasso.***And will these waggish pages hit their songs? | = mischievous young servants. = succeed (in singing).5 |
|  |  |  |
| 34 | ***Both Pages.*** Re, mi, fa, sol, la. | 34: the boys sing or warm up. |
|  |  |  |
| 36 | ***Lasso.*** Oh they are practising; good boys, well done! |  |
|  | But where is Poggio? There y' are overshot, | 37-38: *y' are…his brain* = Lasso suggests Bassiolo has made a mistake in giving an important part to Poggio.  *y' are overshot* = "you have overshot the target" (from archery). |
| 38 | To lay a capital part upon his brain, |  |
|  | Whose absence tells me plainly he'll neglect him. | = it (ie. his part). |
| 40 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Oh no, my lord, he dreams of nothing else, | 41-42: Bassiolo assures Lasso that Poggio is actually waiting to perform his part with great anticipation, so much so that he is taking bets on his success; Parrott notes that it was common for people to act parts in a play on a bet. |
| 42 | And gives it out in wagers he'll excel; |
|  | And see (I told your lordship) he is come. |
| 44 |  |
|  | *Enter Poggio.* |  |
| 46 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** How now, my lord, have you borrowed a suit for | = costume. |
| 48 | me? Signor Bassiolo, can all say, are all things ready? | = ie. recite their parts properly. |
|  | The Duke is hard by, and little thinks that I'll be an | = close by, ie. almost arrived. |
| 50 | actor, i'faith; I keep all close, my lord. | = secret. |
|  |  |  |
| 52 | ***Lasso.*** Oh, 'tis well done, call all the ladies in; − |  |
|  | Sister and daughter, come, for God's sake, come, |  |
| 54 | Prepare your courtliest carriage for the Duke. | = bearing. |
|  |  |  |
| 56 | *Enter Cortezza, Margaret, and Maids*. | **Entering Characters: *Cortezza*** is Lasso's sottish sister, ***Margaret*** his daughter. |
|  |  |  |
| 58 | ***Cort.***And, niece, in any case remember this: | 58-65: Cortezza gives her niece advice on how to flirt with the duke. |
|  | Praise the old man, and when you see him first, |  |
| 60 | Look me on none but him, smiling and lovingly; | = ie. "look on": this is an example of the now lost grammatical form known as the *ethical dative*; the extra pronoun *me* after *Look* suggests extra interest on the part of the speaker to have the action completed. |
|  | And then, when he comes near, make beisance low, | = curtsy. |
| 62 | With both your hands thus moving, which not only |  |
|  | Is, as 'twere, courtly, and most comely too, | = attractive, pleasing.1 |
| 64 | But speaks (as who should say “Come hither, Duke.”) |  |
|  | And yet says nothing, but you may deny. | 62-65: the gestures Cortezza demonstrates for Margaret are intended to be seductive, but subtle enough that if anyone should accuse Margaret of coming on to the duke, she can credibly deny it. |
| 66 |  |
|  | ***Lasso.***Well taught, sister! |  |
| 68 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Ay, and to much end; | 69: "and for a great purpose"; Margaret is ironic. |
| 70 | I am exceeding fond to humour him. | 70: ie. "I would be very foolish (*fond*) to indulge the duke." |
|  |  |  |
| 72 | *Enter Enchanter, with spirits singing;* | 72-74: the show begins, as the performers enter the stage; Medice is dressed as *Sylvanus*, a god of the woods and fields. The duke, unusually, appears himself in the show, apparently tied up. |
|  | *after them Medice like Sylvanus, next the Duke* |
| 74 | *bound, Vincentio, Strozza, with others*. |
|  |  |  |
| 76 | ***Lasso.*** Hark! Does he come with music? What, and bound? | = ie. the duke. |
|  | An amorous device; daughter, observe! | = dramatic presentation or idea with a love-related theme. |
| 78 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***[*Aside to Strozza*] |  |
| 80 | Now let's gull Medice; I do not doubt | = play a trick on. |
|  | But this attire put on, will put him out. | = "put him out of sorts", ie. cause him to be unable to recite his lines properly. |
| 82 |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***[*Aside to Vincentio*] |  |
| 84 | We'll do our best to that end, therefore mark. | = to achieve that goal. = "let's be attentive" |
|  |  |  |
| 86 | ***Enchanter.*** Lady or Princess, both your choice commands, | 86: spoken to Margaret: "it is your choice as to whether you you remain a simple member of the nobility (*Lady*) or a duchess (*Princess*).3 |
|  | These spirits and I, all servants of your beauty, |  |
| 88 | Present this royal captive to your mercy. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 90 | ***Marg.***Captive to me, a subject? | 90: ie. a citizen of the duchy over which the duke rules. |
|  |  |  |
| 92 | ***Vinc.*** Ay, fair nymph! |  |
|  | And how the worthy mystery befell, |  |
| 94 | Sylvanus here, this wooden god, can tell. | = god of the woods, played by Medice; Smith notes Vincentio is also referring to Medice's stiff acting style.5  Note how the members of the show's "audience" continuously interrupt and converse during the performance. |
|  |  |
| 96 | ***Alph.***Now, my lord! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 98 | ***Vinc.***Now is the time, man, speak! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 100 | ***Med.*** Peace! | = "be quiet!" |
|  |  |  |
| 102 | ***Alph.*** Peace, Vincentio! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 104 | ***Vinc.*** 'Swounds, my lord, | = God's wounds (alternative form of *zounds*) |
|  | Shall I stand by and suffer him to shame you? − | = ie. "let him argue your cause so poorly (with his rotten acting)?"5 |
| 106 | My lord Medice! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 108 | ***Stroz.*** Will you not speak, my lord? | 108: Strozza, following Vincentio's lead, heckles Medice, without giving him a chance to speak; one can imagine Medice appearing to suffer from stage-fright here. |
|  |  |
| 110 | ***Med.*** How can I? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 112 | ***Vinc.*** But you must speak, in earnest. − |  |
|  | Would not your Highness have him speak, my lord? |  |
| 114 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Yes, and I will speak, and perhaps speak so |  |
| 116 | As you shall never mend: I can, I know. | = improve upon;1 but Parrott also sees an implied threat here.3 |
|  |  |
| 118 | ***Vinc.***Do then, my good lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 120 | ***Alph.*** Medice, forth! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 122 | ***Med.*** Goddess, fair goddess, for no less − no less – |  |
|  |  |  |
| 124 | [*Medice hesitates.*] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 126 | ***Alph.*** No less, no less? No more, no more! |  |
|  | [*To Strozza*] Speak you. | 127: Alphonso wastes no time in having Strozza take over the part from the faltering Medice. |
| 128 |  |
|  | ***Med.*** 'Swounds, they have put me out! |  |
| 130 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Laugh you, fair goddess? | 131-2: Vincentio addresses Margaret, who seems to have to be laughing at the goings-on; note that Vincentio has mockingly repeated Medice's use of the phrase *fair goddess*. |
| 132 | This nobleman disdains to be your fool. |
|  |  |
| 134 | ***Alph.***Vincentio, peace! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 136 | ***Vinc.*** 'Swounds, my lord, it is as good a show! − | 136: Medice's failure is as entertaining to watch as if he had carried off his speech successfully. |
|  | Pray speak, Lord Strozza. |
| 138 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Honourable dame – |  |
| 140 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Take heed you be not out, I pray, my lord. | 141: Now Vincentio harasses his friend! |
| 142 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** I pray forbear, my lord Vincentio. − |  |
| 144 | How this distressèd Prince came thus enthralled, | 144*f*: Strozza recites his lines. The *Prince* is the duke.   *enthralled* = bound, tied-up. |
|  | I must relate with words of height and wonder: | = ie. high style. |
| 146 | His Grace this morning, visiting the woods, |  |
|  | And straying far to find game for the chase, |  |
| 148 | At last out of a myrtle grove he roused | 148-9: the *myrtle* was sacred to Venus, and thus became a symbol of love; more apropos, as Smith notes, is that Venus' beloved, Adonis, hunted the boar that killed him in a myrtle grove, as described by Shakespeare in his long poem, *Venus and Adonis* (1593). |
|  | A vast and dreadful boar, so stern and fierce. |  |
| 150 | As if the fiend, fell Cruèlty herself, | 150: "as if Satan, in the personified guise of malevolent (*fell*) *Cruelty*, etc." |
|  | Had come to fright the woods in that strange shape. |
| 152 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Excellent good! |  |
| 154 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Too good, a plague on him! | 155: Vincentio does not want Strozza, nor anyone else for that matter, to perform well, because he knows the show is intended to be a cute and clever romantic device for the duke to court Margaret. |
| 156 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***The princely savage being thus on foot, | = ie. the boar. = on the move.1 |
| 158 | Tearing the earth up with his thundering hoof, |  |
|  | And with th' enragèd Ætna of his breath | = reference to Mt. Etna, Italy's famous volcano. |
| 160 | Firing the air, and scorching all the woods, |  |
|  | Horror held all us huntsmen from pursuit; | 161: notice the nice alliteration in this line. |
| 162 | Only the Duke, incensed with our cold fear, | = furious at or incited by1 the cowardice of those attending him in the hunt. |
|  | Encouraged like a second Hercules – | = inspired with courage.1 |
| 164 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Zounds, too good, man! |  |
| 166 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Pray thee let me alone! |  |
| 168 | And like the English sign of great Saint George – | 168: the reference is to the red cross on the banner or flag (*sign*) long associated with England, known as the Saint George's cross. |
|  |  |  |
| 170 | ***Vinc.***Plague of that simile! | 170: perhaps Vincentio is displeased because the image of the duke as St. George is too flattering to his father; George had saved a princess's life when he captured, and then slew, the dragon.11 |
|  |  |  |
| 172 | ***Stroz.***Gave valorous example, and, like fire, | = moving as fiercely as fire. |
|  | Hunted the monster close, and charged so fierce | = ie. the boar. |
| 174 | That he enforced him (as our sense conceived) | = forced it. |
|  | To leap for soil into a crystal spring; | = take to the water; to *take soil* is a hunting term, used to describe game taking refuge in a water source (*soil*).3 |
| 176 | Where on the sudden strangely vanishing, |  |
|  | Nymph-like, for him, out of the waves arose | = in his place. |
| 178 | Your sacred figure, like Diana armed, | = ie. meaning Margaret. = Roman goddess of the hunt. |
|  | And (as in purpose of the beast's revenge) | 179-180: a spirit in the figure of Margaret wounded Alphonso with an arrow, as if to retaliate against the duke on behalf of the boar; the arrow may perhaps be considered to have caused the duke to fall in love with Margaret, as if it had been shot by Cupid. |
| 180 | Discharged an arrow through his Highness' breast, |
|  | Whence yet no wound or any blood appeared; |  |
| 182 | With which the angry shadow left the light; | 182: then the spirit of Margaret disappeared. |
|  | And this enchanter, with his power of spirits, | = Strozza indicates the character of the Enchanter. |
| 184 | Brake from a cave, scattering enchanted sounds, |  |
|  | That strook us senseless, while in these strange bands | = common variation of *struck*, commonly used in the 17th century.  *bands* = chains.2 |
| 186 | These cruèl spirits thus enchained his arms, | = ie. the duke's. |
|  | And led him captive to your heavenly eyes, | 187-8: the Enchanter will next explain (*report*) why the bound duke has been brought before Margaret. |
| 188 | Th' intent whereof on their report relies. |
|  |  |  |
| 190 | ***Enchanter.*** Bright nymph, that boar figured your cruèlty, | = ie. Margaret. = represented.2 |
|  | Chargèd by love, defended by your beauty. |  |
| 192 | This amorous huntsman here we thus enthralled | = placed in bondage.1 |
|  | As the attendants on your Grace's charms, |  |
| 194 | And brought him hither, by your bounteous hands | 194-5: only Margaret can release the duke from his literal chains, which also act as a metaphor for the as-yet unreciprocated love he has for her. |
|  | To be released, or live in endless bands. |
| 196 |  |
|  | ***Lasso.***Daughter, release the Duke! − Alas, my Liege, |  |
| 198 | What meant your Highness to endure this wrong? | 198: Lasso is stunned that the duke has so lowered himself as to take such a demeaning role in the play. |
|  |  |  |
| 200 | ***Cort.***Enlarge him, niece; come, dame, it must be so. | = free. |
|  |  |  |
| 202 | ***Marg.*** What, madam, shall I arrogate so much? | = assume a responsibility or right to which one is not entitled.1 |
|  |  |
| 204 | ***Lasso.***His Highness' pleasure is to grace you so. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 206 | ***Alph.***Perform it then, sweet love, it is a deed |  |
|  | Worthy the office of your honoured hand. |  |
| 208 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Too worthy, I confess, my lord, for me, |  |
| 210 | If it were serious; but it is in sport, |  |
|  | And women are fit actors for such pageants. |  |
| 212 |  |  |
|  | [*She unbinds Alphonso*.] |  |
| 214 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Thanks, gracious love; why made you strange of this? | = "why were you so incompliant (*strange*)",1 ie. "hesitant to release me?" |
| 216 | I rest no less your captive than before; |  |
|  | For me untying, you have tied me more. − | 216-7: note the rhyming couplet. |
| 218 | Thanks, Strozza, for your speech. − |  |
|  | [*To Medice*] No thanks to you! |  |
| 220 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** No, thank your son, my lord! |  |
| 222 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** 'Twas very well, |  |
| 224 | Exceeding well performed on every part; |  |
|  | How say you, Bassiolo? |  |
| 226 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Rare, I protest, my lord! | = excellent. = swear. |
| 228 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***Oh, my lord Medice became it rarely; | = fit or played the part admirably; Smith suggests Cortezza's speech here (lines 229-231) is ironic, as she actually considers Medice's failure *unmanly*.5 As we will see later, though, Cortezza is actually attracted to the duke's minion. |
| 230 | Methought I liked his manly being out; | = being put off (from his speech), though Smith notes that Cortezza is likely being bawdy as well in referring to Medice's *manly being out*. |
|  | It becomes noblemen to do nothing well. |
| 232 |  |
|  | ***Lasso.***Now then, will't please your Grace to grace our house, |  |
| 234 | And still vouchsafe our service further honour? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 236 | ***Alph.*** Lead us, my lord; we will your daughter lead. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 238 | [*Exeunt all but Vincentio and Strozza*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 240 | ***Vinc.***You do not lead, but drag her leaden steps. | 240: Vincentio's comment is directed to the duke, who is out of hearing range; his use of *leaden*, referring to Margaret's unwilling and heavy steps, is intended to emphasize her unhappiness at being the target of Alphonso's attention.  Smith notes that the sound of *ea* in both *lead* and *leaden* would have been the same in those days, sounding like *a* in "hate", thus intensifying the wordplay. |
|  |  |
| 242 | ***Stroz.***How did you like my speech? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 244 | ***Vinc.*** Oh, fie upon't! | = a phrase of reproach. |
|  | Your rhetoric was too fine. |  |
| 246 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Nothing at all; |  |
| 248 | I hope Saint George's sign was gross enough: | = obvious.2 |
|  | But (to be serious) as these warnings pass, |  |
| 250 | Watch you your father, I'll watch Medice, |  |
|  | That in your love-suit we may shun suspect; | = avoid suspicion. |
| 252 | To which end, with your next occasion urge | = opportunity. |
|  | Your love to name the person she will choose, |  |
| 254 | By whose means you may safely write or meet. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 256 | ***Vinc.***That's our chief business; and see, here she comes. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 258 | *Enter Margaret in haste*. | 258*ff*: Margaret's quick visit to Vincentio confirms that they actually have an understanding. |
|  |  |
| 260 | ***Marg.***My lord, I only come to say, y' are welcome, |  |
|  | And so must say farewell. |  |
| 262 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** One word, I pray. |  |
| 264 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***What's that? |  |
| 266 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** You needs must presently devise |  |
| 268 | What person trusted chiefly with your guard |  |
|  | You think is aptest for me to corrupt | = cause to act immorally, ie. suborn so that he will act on the young couple's behalf. |
| 270 | In making him a mean for our safe meeting. | = means. |
|  |  |  |
| 272 | ***Marg.***My father's usher, none so fit. | = ie. Bassiolo, Lasso's gentleman usher, and the play's title character. |
|  | If you can work him well; − and so farewell, |
| 274 | With thanks, my good lord Strozza, for your speech. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 276 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 278 | ***Stroz.***I thank you for your patience, mocking lady. | = Strozza assumes that Margaret (like Vincentio) is not actually happy his recitation went so well. |
|  |  |
| 280 | ***Vinc.***Oh, what a fellow has she picked us out! |  |
|  | One that I would have choosed past all the rest |  |
| 282 | For his close stockings only. | = ie. close-fitting hose; Vincentio seems to be making fun of Bassiolo's old-fashioned attire (at this time, padded hose were growing more in style). |
|  |  |
| 284 | ***Stroz.*** And why not |  |
|  | For the most constant fashion of his hat? | = perhaps meaning "most current".5 |
| 286 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Nay, then, if nothing must be left unspoke, | 287: "well then, if we are to omit no issue from this conversation". |
| 288 | For his strict form thus still to wear his cloak. | = cloaks were worn over the doublet; Bassiolo may be wedded to wearing an old-fashioned long cloak. |
|  |  |  |
| 290 | ***Stroz.***Well, sir, he is your own, I make no doubt; | = "he's your man!"5 |
|  | For to these outward figures of his mind | 291: "for matching these external properties of his, etc."5 |
| 292 | He hath two inward swallowing properties | 292-4: Bassiolo has two personal qualities that they should take advantage of: greed (*avarice*) and high self-regard; if Vincentio gives him gifts and flatters him, he will surely help Vincentio out. |
|  | Of any gudgeons, servile avarice | = a small fish used for bait,3 hence a credulous fool. With *swallowing*, the phrase "swallows the bait" comes to mind. |
| 294 | And overweening thought of his own worth, |
|  | Ready to snatch at every shade of glory: |  |
| 296 | And, therefore, till you can directly board him, | = address or approach.2 |
|  | Waft him aloof with hats and other favours | = "wave at him with your hat from far away (*aloof*)".3 Strozza is explaining how Vincentio should butter up the usher with favorable attention, in preparation for asking him directly to act as an intermediary for him and Margaret.  Strozza's language in 296-7 is maritime in its metaphor: to *board* is to enter a ship; to *waft* is to either convoy a group of ships or guide a ship; and *aloof* describes a ship travelling into or on course with the wind to avoid being driven into shore.1  *Still as* in line 298 means "whenever". |
| 298 | Still as you meet him. |
|  |  |
| 300 | ***Vinc.*** Well, let me alone: |  |
|  | He that is one man's slave is free from none. |  |
| 302 |  |  |
|  | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | END OF ACT I. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ACT II. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | SCENE I. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Medice, Cortezza,* |  |
|  | *a Page with a cup of sack*. | = a white wine, and favorite drink of Shakespeare's Falstaff. |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Med.*** Come, lady, sit you here. Page, fill some sack. |  |
| 2 | [*Aside*] I am to work upon this agèd dame, | = Medice explains that he is trying to find out from Cortezza if she knows why her niece Margaret is resisting the duke's courting; Medice will do this by getting her drunk! |
|  | To glean from her if there be any cause |  |
| 4 | (In loving others) of her niece's coyness | = ie. perhaps she is in love with someone else. |
|  | To the most gracious love-suit of the Duke. – |  |
| 6 | Here, noble lady, this is healthful drink |  |
|  | After our supper. |  |
| 8 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Oh, 'tis that, my lord, |  |
| 10 | That of all drinks keeps life and soul in me. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 12 | ***Med.*** Here, fill it, page, for this my worthy love. |  |
|  | Oh, how I could embrace this good old widow! |  |
| 14 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***Now, lord, when you do thus you make me think | = ie. act or speak this way. |
| 16 | Of my sweet husband, for he was as like you; |  |
|  | E'en the same words and fashion, the same eyes, |  |
| 18 | Manly, and choleric, e'en as you are, just; | = hot-tempered.2 = exactly (like you).5 |
|  | And e'en as kind as you for all the world. |  |
| 20 |  |  |
|  | ***Med*.** Oh, my sweet widow, thou dost make me proud! | 21: Medice's comment is innocuous enough, but Cortezza thinks he is using *proud* in its sense of "lustful".1,5 |
| 22 |  |
|  | ***Cort.***Nay, I am too old for you. |  |
| 24 |  |  |
|  | ***Med*.** Too old! That's nothing; |  |
| 26 | Come, pledge me, wench, for I am dry again, | = "drink to my health". = a term of affection in those days. |
|  | And straight will charge your widowhood fresh, i'faith: |  |
| 28 |  |  |
|  | [*She drinks*.] |  |
| 30 |  |  |
|  | Why, that's well done! |  |
| 32 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Now fie on't, here's a draught! |  |
| 34 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Oh, it will warm your blood; if you should sip, | 35-36: Medice encourages Cortezza to drink heartily, which will warm her blood; if she only sips her booze, it will give her painful *heartburn*: *warm* and *burn* are thus paired, or opposed. |
| 36 | 'Twould make you heartburned. |
|  |  |
| 38 | ***Cort.*** 'Faith, and so they say; |  |
|  | Yet I must tell you, since I plied this gear, | = took up this business (*gear*),3 ie. of drinking. |
| 40 | I have been haunted with a whoreson pain here, |  |
|  | And every moon, almost, with a shrewd fever, | = once a month. = harsh, bad, undesirable.1 |
| 42 | And yet I cannot leave it; for, thank God! | = ie. stop drinking. |
|  | I never was more sound of wind and limb. | 43: "I have never been healthier." Cortezza, typically, is contradicting herself.   *wind and limb* = common phrase for the body in general. |
| 44 |  |  |
|  | [*Enter Strozza* *behind*.] | 45: Strozza is spying on the two. |
| 46 |  |  |
|  | Look you, I warrant you I have a leg, |  |
| 48 |  |  |
|  | [*Cortezza shows a great bumbasted leg*.] | = stuffed with cotton wool, so as to appear to be grossly swollen.1 This is one of the odder stage directions we have come across. |
| 50 |  |
|  | Holds out as handsomely – |
| 52 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Beshrew my life, |  |
| 54 | But 'tis a leg indeed, a goodly limb! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 56 | ***Stroz.***[*Aside*] This is most excellent! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 58 | ***Med.*** Oh, that your niece | = "if only". |
|  | Were of as mild a spirit as yourself! | = tender or indulgent, though Smith suggests "yielding". |
| 60 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Alas, Lord Medice, would you have a girl |  |
| 62 | As well seen in behaviöur as I? | 62: "as accomplished in courtly behavior as I am?3 |
|  | Ah, she's a fond young thing, and grown so proud, | = foolish. |
| 64 | The wind must blow at west still or she'll be angry. | 64: the notion that a *west wind* brings good weather was proverbial.17   *still* = ever. |
|  |  |  |
| 66 | ***Med.*** Mass, so methinks; how coy she's to the Duke! | = an oath. |
|  | I lay my life she has some younger love. |  |
| 68 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** 'Faith, like enough! |  |
| 70 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Gods me, who should it be? | = short for "God save me". |
| 72 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** If it be any − Page, a little sack − |  |
| 74 | If it be any, hark now, if it be – |  |
|  | I know not, by this sack − but if it be, |  |
| 76 | Mark what I say, my lord − I drink t'ye first. | note. |
|  |  |  |
| 78 | ***Med.*** Well said, good widow; much good do't thy heart! | = a toast; Smith adds the stage direction, "she drinks". |
|  | So, now what if it be? |  |
| 80 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Well, if it be − |  |
| 82 | To come to that, I said, for so I said – |  |
|  | If it be any, 'tis the shrewd young Prince; |  |
| 84 | For eyes can speak, and eyes can understand, |  |
|  | And I have marked her eyes; yet by this cup, | = it was common to swear on an inanimate object. |
| 86 | Which I will only kiss – |  |
|  |  |  |
| 88 | [*She drinks*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 90 | ***Stroz.*** [*Aside*]Oh, noble crone! |  |
|  | Now such a huddle and kettle never was. | = *huddle* and *kettle* are synonyms, both meaning "mess" or "confusion"; the latter survives in the phrase "a kettle of fish". Such pairing of redundant words was known as a *pleonasm*, and occurs frequently in drama. |
| 92 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** I never yet have seen − not yet, I say – | = Cortezza contradicts herself again. |
| 94 | But I will mark her after for your sake. | = pay (closer) attention to. |
|  |  |  |
| 96 | ***Med.*** And do, I pray, for it is passing like; | = exceedingly likely. |
|  | And there is Strozza, a sly counsellór | = Medice does not yet know Strozza is eavesdropping. |
| 98 | To the young boy: Oh, I would give a limb |  |
|  | To have their knavery limned and painted out. | = portrayed (as in a picture),2 so as to be made clearer to see. |
| 100 | They stand upon their wits and paper-learning; | 100: "Strozza and Vincentio think they are so smart, just because they are educated;" Medice reveals his bitterness at their mocking his illiteracy. |
|  | Give me a fellow with a natural wit | 101-3: Medice, perhaps protesting too much, suggests an innate ability to make one's way through the world - as he possesses - is preferable to any such skill gained through education. |
| 102 | That can make wit of no wit; and wade through |
|  | Great things with nothing, when their wits stick fast. |
| 104 | Oh, they be scurvy lords! |
|  |  |  |
| 106 | ***Cort.*** Faith, so they be! |  |
|  | Your lordship still is of my mind in all, | 107: "we think alike". |
| 108 | And e'en so was my husband. | 108: "just as my husband and I thought alike." |
|  |  |  |
| 110 | ***Med.*** [*Spying Strozza*.] Gods my life! |  |
|  | Strozza hath eavesdropped here, and overheard us. | 111: characters in Elizabethan drama are able to spy on each other at will without being discovered, at least until it serves the author's plot for discovery to be made. |
| 112 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** They have descried me. | = discovered; now that Strozza has overheard Cortezza tell Medice that Vincentio is Margaret's lover; he will have to urge Vincentio to move quickly with his courtship. |
| 114 | [*Advancing*.] What, Lord Medice, |  |
|  | Courting the lusty widow? |  |
| 116 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Ay, and why not? |  |
| 118 | Perhaps one does as much for you at home. | 118: snarky: "perhaps someone is courting *your* wife while you are out." |
|  |  |  |
| 120 | ***Stroz.*** What, choleric, man? And toward wedlock too? | = hot-tempered. = heading toward. |
|  |  |  |
| 122 | ***Cort.***And if he be, my lord, he may do worse. | 122: "and if he *is* courting me, he could do worse than to take me for his wife." |
|  |  |  |
| 124 | ***Stroz.***If he be not, madam, he may do better. | 124: Smith points out that Strozza responds to Cortezza as if she had been answering his first question in line 120: "and if he were not hot-tempered, then he might do better!" |
|  |  |
| 126 | *Enter Bassiolo with Servants,* |  |
|  | *with rushes and a carpet*. | = *rushes* (the marsh plant) were frequently strewn on the floors of Elizabethan homes, especially when guests were expected. |
| 128 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***My lords, and madam, the Duke's Grace entreats you | = ie. the duke. |
| 130 | T'attend his new-made Duchess for this night | = ie. Margaret, who will be more explicitly treated as if she were duchess during the evening's masque. |
|  | Into his presence. |
| 132 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***We are ready, sir. |  |
| 134 |  |  |
|  | [*Exeunt Cortezza, Medice, Strozza and Page*.] | 135: only the servants remain on the stage. |
| 136 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Come, strew this room afresh; spread here this carpet; |  |
| 138 | Nay, quickly, man, I pray thee; this way, fool; |  |
|  | Lay me it smooth, and even; look if he will! | = another example of the ethical dative: "lay it smoothly". |
| 140 | This way a little more; a little there. |  |
|  | Hast thou no forecast? 'Sblood, methinks a man | 141: *Hast thou no forecast?* = *forecast* can mean prudence or plan, hence "don't just throw them down any which way."2   *'Sblood* = God's blood, an oath. |
| 142 | Should not of mere necessity be an ass. | =complete. |
|  | Look, how he strows here, too: come, Sir Giles Goosecap, | = strews. = a reference to the title of one of Chapman's other plays, also performed in 1606, and meaning "fool".  *goosecap* = goose's head.3 |
| 144 | I must do all myself; lay me 'em thus, |  |
|  | In fine smooth threaves; look you, sir, thus, in threaves. | = small bundles (of rushes).1 |
| 146 | Perhaps some tender lady will squat here, |  |
|  | And if some standing rush should chance to prick her, | = sting; but this word has been used in its vulgar sense since the mid-16th century,1 and thus was frequently used suggestively, as here, by the old dramatists. |
| 148 | She'd squeak, and spoil the songs that must be sung. |
|  |  |
| 150 | *Enter Vincentio and Strozza*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 152 | ***Stroz.*** See, where he is; now to him, and prepare | 152-3: Strozza encourages Vincentio to begin cozying up to Bassiolo; needless to say, for a royal personage to behave so informally with a servant was highly unorthodox!  *familiarity* = intimacy.1 |
|  | Your familiarity. |
| 154 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Save you, master Bassiolo! | = common greeting, short for "God save you". |
| 156 | I pray a word, sir; but I fear I let you. | = hinder, ie. "get in your way (from doing your work)." |
|  |  |  |
| 158 | ***Bass.***No, my good lord, no let. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 160 | ***Vinc.*** I thank you, sir. |  |
|  | Nay, pray be covered; oh, I cry you mercy, | = upon being addressed by a superior, Bassiolo would have taken off his hat as a token of respect; Vincentio urges him to put it back on.  *I cry you mercy* = pardon me. |
| 162 | You must be bare. | 162: "I see you *should* be without your hat on"; Vincentio understands that by virtue of his position as gentleman usher, Bassiolo is required to have his hat off.5 |
|  |  |
| 164 | ***Bass.*** Ever to you, my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 166 | ***Vinc.*** Nay, not to me, sir. | 166-7: Vincentio wants Bassiolo to understand that he (the usher) should not feel obliged to keep his hat off for his (the prince's) sake, but only because his job demands it. |
|  | But to the fair right of your worshipful place. |
| 168 |  |  |
|  | [*Vincentio uncovers*.] | = Vincentio removes his hat to level out their statuses. |
| 170 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** [*Aside*] A shame of both your worships. | = on. |
| 172 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***What means your lordship? | 173: Bassiolo is unclear as to the significance of Vincentio's removing his hat. |
| 174 |  |
|  | [*Exit Strozza*.] |  |
| 176 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Only to do you right, sir, and myself ease. | = ie. Vincentio is more comfortable de-hatted, or so he says. |
| 178 | And what, sir, will there be some show to-night? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 180 | ***Bass.***A slender presentation of some music, |  |
|  | And something else, my lord. |  |
| 182 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** 'Tis passing good, sir; | = extremely. |
| 184 | I'll not be overbold t' ask the particulars. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 186 | ***Bass.***Yes, if your lordship please. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 188 | ***Vinc.*** Oh, no, good sir; |  |
|  | But I did wonder much, for, as me thought, |  |
| 190 | I saw your hands at work. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 192 | ***Bass.*** Or else, my lord, | = ie. "if I were not directing the work". |
|  | Our busïness would be but badly done. | = *business* is trisyllabic. |
| 194 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***How virtuous is a worthy man's example! |  |
| 196 | Who is this throne for, pray? | = a chair of state has been set out for Margaret to sit on. |
|  |  |  |
| 198 | ***Bass.*** For my lord's daughter. |  |
|  | Whom the Duke makes to represent his Duchess. |  |
| 200 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** 'Twill be exceeding fit; and all this room |  |
| 202 | Is passing well prepared; a man would swear | = exceedingly. |
|  | That all presentments in it would be rare. | = theatrical works, play-like performances.1 = superb. |
| 204 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Nay, see if thou canst lay 'em thus, in threaves. |  |
| 206 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***In threaves, d'ye call it? |  |
| 208 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Ay, my lord, in threaves. |  |
| 210 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***A pretty term! |  |
| 212 | Well, sir, I thank you highly for this kindness, |  |
|  | And pray you always make as bold with me | 213-4: Vincentio invites Bassiolo to be more familiar with him in the future. |
| 214 | For kindness more than this, if more may be. |
|  |  |  |
| 216 | ***Bass.***Oh, my lord, this is nothing. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 218 | ***Vinc.*** Sir, 'tis much! |  |
|  | And now I'll leave you, sir; I know y' are busy. |  |
| 220 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Faith, sir, a little! |  |
| 222 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** I commend me t' ye, sir. |  |
| 224 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit Vincentio*.] |  |
| 226 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** A courteous prince, believe it; I am sorry |  |
| 228 | I was no bolder with him; what a phrase |  |
|  | He used at parting, “I commend me t' ye.” | 229: Bassiolo is enchanted by Vincentio's parting phrase, and will use it repeatedly throughout the play! |
| 230 | I'll ha't, i'faith! | 230: "I'll have it, in faith!" |
|  |  |  |
| 232 | [*Enter Sarpego, half dressed*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 234 | ***Sarp.***Good Master Usher, will you dictate to me | = instruct, declare authoritatively.1 |
|  | Which is the part precédent of this night-cap, | 235-6: *Which is…posterior* = "which side of my hat is the front, and which is the back?" |
| 236 | And which posterior? I do *ignorare* | = "do not know", "am ignorant of". |
|  | How I should wear it. |  |
| 238 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Why, sir, this, I take it, |  |
| 240 | Is the precédent part; ay, so it is. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 242 | ***Sarp.*** And is all well, sir, think you? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 244 | ***Bass.*** Passing well. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 246 | *Enter Poggio and Fungus*. | = this servant's humorous name needs no comment. |
|  |  |  |
| 248 | ***Pog.*** Why, sir, come on; the usher shall be judge. − | = Bassiolo will arbitrate their dispute. |
|  | See, Master Usher, this same Fungus here, |  |
| 250 | Your lord's retainer, whom I hope you rule, | 250: *Your lord's retainer* = Fungus, like Bassiolo, is a servant of Count Lasso's.  *rule* = "are in charge of". |
|  | Would wear this better jerkin for the Rush-man, | = close-fitting jacket; the two are arguing over who should get to wear the jerkin in the masque. |
| 252 | When I do play the Broom-man, and speak first. |
|  |  |  |
| 254 | ***Fung.*** Why, sir, I borrowed it, and I will wear it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 256 | ***Pog.*** What, sir; in spite of your lord's gentleman usher? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 258 | ***Fung.*** No spite, sir, but you have changed twice already, | = ie. "changed your costume". |
|  | And now would ha't again. |  |
| 260 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Why, that's all one, sir, | = it's all the same. |
| 262 | Gentility must be fantastical. | 262: as a member of the gentry (*gentility*), Poggio claims the right to be capricious!1 |
|  |  |
| 264 | ***Bass.***I pray thee, Fungus, let Master Poggio wear it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 266 | ***Fung.*** And what shall I wear then? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 268 | ***Pog.*** Why, here is one | = Poggio may be holding his own, undesirable jacket. |
|  | That was a rush-man's jerkin, and I pray, |  |
| 270 | Were't not absurd then, a broom-man should wear it? | = would it not be. |
|  |  |  |
| 272 | ***Fung.*** Foh, there's a reason! I will keep it, sir. | = Fungus is sarcastic. |
|  |  |  |
| 274 | ***Pog.*** Will, sir? Then do your office, Master Usher, |  |
|  | Make him put off his jerkin; you may pluck | 275-6: *pluck…ears* = fire him.3 |
| 276 | His coat over his ears, much more his jerkin. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 278 | ***Bass.*** Fungus, y' ad best be ruled. | = "you better do as I say". |
|  |  |  |
| 280 | ***Fung.*** Best, sir! I care not. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 282 | ***Pog.*** No, sir? I hope you are my lord's retainer. | 282-3: Poggio suggests that Fungus, as a servant, owes his master obedience, while he himself, unrelated to Strozza and honourably born, does not. |
|  | I need not care a pudding for your lord: |
| 284 | But spare not, keep it, for perhaps I'll play |  |
|  | My part as well in this as you in that. |  |
| 286 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Well said. Master Poggio! |  |
| 288 | [*To Fungus*.] My lord shall know it. | 288: "I'm going to tell on you" |
|  |  |  |
| 290 | *Enter Cortezza, with the Broom-wench and* | 290*ff*: *Broom-wench...* = various actors in costumes enter and exit the scene, as they prepare for the evening's show. |
|  | *Rush-wench in their petticoats, cloaks over them,* | = either tight-fitting undergarments or skirts.1 |
| 292 | *with hats over their head-tires*. | = ie. technically any adornment worn on the head, here perhaps referring to wigs.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 294 | ***Cort.***Look, Master Usher, are these wags well dressed? | = fellows.1 |
|  | I have been so in labour with 'em truly. |  |
| 296 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Y' ave had a very good deliverance, lady. |  |
| 298 | [*Aside*] How I did take her at her labour there; | 298: Bassiolo is pleased with his punning on Cortezza's use of the word *labour* with *deliverance*. |
|  | I use to gird these ladies so sometimes. | = ie. like to gibe.1 |
| 300 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Lasso, with Sylvanus and a Nymph,* |  |
| 302 | *a man Bug, and a woman Bug*. | = bugbear, ie. bogeyman.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 304 | ***1st Bug.*** I pray, my lord, must not I wear this hair? | = wig. |
|  |  |  |
| 306 | ***Lasso.***I pray thee, ask my usher; come, dispatch, |  |
|  | The Duke is ready; are you ready there? |  |
| 308 |  |  |
|  | ***2nd Bug.*** See, Master Usher, must he wear this hair? |  |
| 310 |  |  |
|  | ***1st Bug.*** Pray, Master Usher, where must I come in? |  |
| 312 |  |  |
|  | ***2nd Bug.*** Am not I well for a Bug, Master Usher? |  |
| 314 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***What stir is with these boys here! God forgive me, | = ie. "a commotion there is". |
| 316 | If 'twere not for the credit on't, I'd see | = "reputation I will gain", or "credit I will receive," for it. |
|  | Your apish trash afire, ere I'd endure this. | = foolish.1 = before. |
| 318 |  |  |
|  | ***1st Bug.*** But pray, good Master Usher – |  |
| 320 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Hence, ye brats! | = get out of here! |
| 322 | You stand upon your tire; but for your action | 322: *stand upon your tire* = "make a great fuss over your costumes" (*tire* = attire).3   *action* = accompanying gestures or movements.1 |
|  | Which you must use in singing of your songs |  |
| 324 | Exceeding dextrously and full of life, |  |
|  | I hope you'll then stand like a sort of blocks, | = expect.3 *=* afterwards. *=* collection, group.1 |
| 326 | Without due motion of your hands and heads, |  |
|  | And wresting your whole bodies to your words; | 325-7: the boys must stand still after they have performed their song. |
| 328 | Look to't, y' are best, and in; go, all go in! |
|  |  |  |
| 330 | ***Pog.*** Come in, my masters; let's be out anon. | = immediately. |
|  |  |  |
| 332 | [*Exeunt all but Lasso and Bassiolo*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 334 | ***Lasso.***What, are all furnished well? | = costumed. |
|  |  |  |
| 336 | ***Bass.*** All well, my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 338 | ***Lasso.*** More lights then here, and let loud music sound. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 340 | ***Bass.***Sound music! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 342 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 344 | *Enter Vincentio, Strozza, bare, Margaret,* | = bareheaded. |
|  | *Cortezza and Cynanche bearing her train.* |  |
| 346 | *After her the Duke whispering with Medice,* |  |
|  | *Lasso with Bassiolo, etc*. |  |
| 348 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Advance yourself, fair Duchess, to this throne, |  |
| 350 | As we have long since raised you to our heart; |  |
|  | Better decorum never was beheld, |  |
| 352 | Than twixt this state and you: and as all eyes | = "between this throne and you." The duke invites Margaret to sit on the chair of honour. |
|  | Now fixed on your bright graces think it fit, | = attractive or graceful qualities.1 |
| 354 | So frame your favour to continue it. | = ie. permanently take this throne, ie. become his duchess. |
|  |  |  |
| 356 | ***Marg.*** My lord, but to obey your earnest will, | 356-7: "my lord, it is only to fulfill your wish, and not to raise a serious objection of conscience over something so frivolous as this (will I take this throne)". |
|  | And not make serious scruple of a toy, |
| 358 | I scarce durst have presumed this minute's height. | 358: Margaret is trying to resist the duke by ignoring the underlying meaning of his gesture; "I otherwise would dare not presume to raise myself to your status by sitting on this throne." |
|  |  |
| 360 | ***Lasso.***Usher, cause other music; begin your show. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 362 | ***Bass.***Sound, consort! Warn the Pedant to be ready. | 362: *Sound* = an imperative: "play!" |
|  |  | *consort* = band of musicians.   *the Pedant* = ie. Sarpego. |
| 364 | ***Cort.*** Madam, I think you'll see a pretty show. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 366 | ***Cyn.*** I can expect no less in such a presence. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 368 | ***Alph.***Lo! what attention and state beauty breeds, |  |
|  | Whose moving silence no shrill herald needs. | 369: *whose* refers to beauty; the sense is that *beauty*, which is quietly effective or powerful, requires no *herald* to announce its arrival or presence.3 |
| 370 |  |
|  | *Enter Sarpego*. |  |
| 372 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.*** Lords of high degree, | 373*ff*: the speeches of Sarpego, Poggio and Fungus will all consist of rhyming couplets. |
| 374 | And ladies of low courtesy, | = ie. respectful behaviour. |
|  | I the Pedant here, |  |
| 376 | Whom some call schoolmaster, |  |
|  | Because I can speak best, |  |
| 378 | Approach before the rest. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 380 | ***Vinc.***A very good reason. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 382 | ***Sarp.*** But there are others coming, |  |
|  | Without mask or mumming; | = disguises.2 |
| 384 | For they are not ashamed, |  |
|  | If need be, to be named; |  |
| 386 | Nor will they hide their faces, |  |
|  | In any place or places; |  |
| 388 | For though they seem to come, | 388-9: *come* would sound more like *broom* than the other way around. |
|  | Loaded with rush and broom, |
| 390 | The Broom-man, you must know, | = seller of brooms |
|  | Is Signor Poggio, |  |
| 392 | Nephew, as shall appear, |  |
|  | To my Lord Strozza here – |  |
| 394 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Oh, Lord! I thank you, sir; you grace me much. | 395: Smith suggests Strozza is mock-unhappy that Sarpego has publically identified Poggio as a member of Strozza's family. |
| 396 |  |
|  | ***Sarp.***And to this noble dame, |  |
| 398 | Whom I with finger name. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 400 | [*Pointing to Cynanche*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 402 | ***Vinc.***A plague of that fool's finger! | = on; the reason for Vincentio's sharp reaction is unclear; Smith wonders if Poggio has unwittingly made an obscene gesture, or maybe he is simply supporting Strozza in his last remark. |
|  |  |
| 404 | ***Sarp.***And women will ensue, |  |
|  | Which, I must tell you true, |  |
| 406 | No women are indeed, | 406-9: normally on the Elizabethan stage, young men or boys would play the roles of girls, presumably because their faces were more effeminate, their voices unchanged by puberty, and their facial hair still dormant. |
|  | But pages made, for need, |
| 408 | To fill up women's places, |
|  | By virtue of their faces, |
| 410 | And other hidden graces. |  |
|  | A hall, a hall! Whist, still, be mum! | = make room! = quiet!1 |
| 412 | For now with silver song they come. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 414 | *Enter Poggio, Fungus, with the song,* |  |
|  | *Broom-maid and Rush-maid.* |  |
| 416 | *Sylvanus, a Nymph, and two Bugs.* | = Medice had played Sylvanus in the afternoon masque, but unsurprisingly not for the evening performance; he instead sits in the audience. |
|  | *After which Poggio*. |
| 418 |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Heroes and heroines of gallant strain, |  |
| 420 | Let not these brooms' motes in your eyes remain, | = specks of dust. |
|  | For in the moon there's one bears withered bushes; | 421: superstitious observers of the man on the moon saw him as carrying a bundle of sticks or brush. |
| 422 | But we (dear wights) do bear green brooms, green rushes, | = an obsolete word for "people"; Poggio's speech has a number of such deliberate archaisms. |
|  | Whereof these verdant herbals, clepèd broom, | = used in a vague botanical sense.1 = another archaic word, meaning "called". |
| 424 | Do pierce and enter every lady's room; |  |
|  | And to prove them high-born, and no base trash, | 425*f*: in this very cute speech, Poggio identifies a number of common objects of the world at large that behave in their own ways as *brooms*; *them* refers to brooms. |
| 426 | Water, with which your physnomies you wash, | = faces.1 |
|  | Is but a broom. And, more truth to deliver, |  |
| 428 | Grim Hercules swept a stable with a river. | = Hercules' 5th labor was to clean the unimaginably large stables of King Augeas in a single day; Hercules managed this task by diverting a local river through the stables. |
|  | The wind, that sweeps foul clouds out of the air, |  |
| 430 | And for you ladies makes the welkin fair, | = sky. |
|  | Is but a broom: and oh, Dan Titan bright, | = *Titan* was the Roman sun god; *Dan* is a title of honor. |
| 432 | Most clerkly called the scavenger of night, | = "by scholars called".5 |
|  | What art thou, but a very broom of gold |  |
| 434 | For all this world not to be cried nor sold? | = *to cry* an object was to publically hawk or announce its sale. |
|  | Philosophy, that passion sweeps from thought, | 435: ie. philosophy (which requires reason) sweeps emotion (*passion*) out of the thinker's mind; *passion* is thus the object, not the subject, of the phrase. |
| 436 | Is the soul's broom, and by all brave wits sought: | = worthy. |
|  | Now if philosophers but broom-men are, |  |
| 438 | Each broom-man then is a philosopher. |  |
|  | And so we come (gracing your gracious Graces) | 439: the wordplay within the parentheses is pleasing. |
| 440 | To sweep Care's cobwebs from your cleanly faces. | = *Care*, meaning "anxiety", is personified. |
|  |  |  |
| 442 | ***Alph.***Thanks, good Master Broom-man! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 444 | ***Fung.***  For me Rush-man, then, | = seller of rushes. |
|  | To make rush ruffle in a verse of ten. | = bluster.12 = *verse of ten* refers to the 10-syllable nature of most Elizabethan verse, including that of its drama, which almost always consists of five pairs of two-syllable iambs, hence *iambic pentameter*. |
| 446 | A rush, which now your heels do lie on here – |  |
|  |  |  |
| 448 | [*Pointing to Vincentio*.] | 448: Fungus is identifying Vincentio as one who is resting his feet on the rushes!5 |
|  |  |  |
| 450 | ***Vinc.***  Cry mercy, sir! | 450: "I beg your pardon!", no doubt ironic. |
|  |  |  |
| 452 | ***Fung.*** Was whilome usèd for a pungent spear, | = once upon a time.1 = sharp.1 |
|  | In that odd battle never fought but twice |  |
| 454 | (As Homer sings) betwixt the frogs and mice. | 454: an ancient mock war epic, known as the *Battle of Frogs and Mice* (*Batrachomyomachia*), was attributed to Homer; in their brief fight, the frogs used sharp rushes as spears.3 Chapman, who had already translated the *Iliad* in the 1590's, would have been very familiar with this work, and in fact he went on to translate it too in the 1620's. |
|  | Rushes make true-love knots; rushes make rings; | = ornamental knots consisting of intertwined loops, representing true love.1 |
| 456 | Your rush maugre the beard of Winter springs. | 456: the rush grows (*springs*) in spite of (*maugre*) the snow of winter.1 The seasonal pun of *springs* with *winter* adds charm as well to the line. |
|  | And when with gentle, amorous, lazy limbs, |  |
| 458 | Each lord with his fair lady sweetly swims | = floats,1 used here as a euphemism for "fooling around". |
|  | On these cool rushes, they may with these bables, | = an obsolete form of *baubles*,7 meaning "things of no value."1 |
| 460 | Cradles for children make, children for cradles. | 460: a pleasantly suggestive line: out of the rushes, cradles can be weaved; and while "floating" on the rushes, the couple can procreate (*make children for cradles*). |
|  | And lest some Momus here might now cry “Push!” | 461: *Momus* = the Greek god of ridicule, hence any grumbler or complainer.1  *Push!* = an interjection demonstrating scorn, like *pshaw!* |
| 462 | Saying our pageant is not worth a rush, |  |
|  | Bundles of rushes, lo, we bring along, |  |
| 464 | To pick his teeth that bites them with his tongue. | = ie. mocks them.3 |
|  |  |  |
| 466 | ***Stroz.***See, see, that's Lord Medice! | 466: Strozza points to Medice, who is picking his teeth with a rush. |
|  |  |
| 468 | ***Vinc.*** Gods me, my lord! |  |
|  | Has he picked you out, picking of your teeth? | = "caught you", punning. |
| 470 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** What pick you out of that? |  |
| 472 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Not such stale stuff |  |
| 474 | As you pick from your teeth. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 476 | ***Alph.*** Leave this war with rushes. |  |
|  | Good Master Pedant, pray forth with your show. |  |
| 478 |  |  |
|  | ***Sarp.***Lo, thus far then (brave Duke) you see | 479-484: the first six lines of Strozza's speech rhyme. |
| 480 | Mere entertainment. Now our glee | = pure.1 = entertainment, ie. the masque. |
|  | Shall march forth in morality: | 481: shall identify the lesson of the show. |
| 482 | And this quaint Duchess here shall see |  |
|  | The fault of virgin nicety, | 483: ie. "how wrong it is to be too coy (*nice*) when one is courting her", an obvious allusion to the duke's growing frustration with Margaret. |
| 484 | First wooed with rural courtesy. |  |
|  | Disburthen them, prance on this ground, | = "relieve the dancers of their brooms and rushes".5 |
| 486 | And make your *Exit* with your round. | = circle dance.2 |
|  |  |  |
| 488 | [*Poggio and Fungus dance with the* | 488-9: a frequent occurrence in Elizabethan drama: all the action stops as the performers dance for both the stage and real audiences. |
|  | *Broom-maid and Rush-maid, and exeunt*.] |
| 490 |  |  |
|  | Well have they danced, as it is meet, | = appropriate. |
| 492 | Both with their nimble heads and feet. |  |
|  | Now, as our country girls held off, |  |
| 494 | And rudely did their lovers scoff, |  |
|  | Our Nymph, likewise, shall only glance |  |
| 496 | By your fair eyes, and look askance |  |
|  | Upon her feral friend that woos her, | = wild.1 = ie. lover, ie. Sylvanus. |
| 498 | Who is in plain field forced to loose her. | = free. |
|  | And after them, to conclude all |  |
| 500 | The purlieu of our pastoral, | 500: *purlieu* = originally the outskirts or margin of the woods,1 but as Smith indicates, here simply meaning "conclusion".  *pastoral* = any literary work in a rural setting, especially one involving shepherds or other similar "country" characters. |
|  | A female bug, and eke her friend, | = yet another archaic word, meaning "also". |
| 502 | Shall only come and sing, and end. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 504 | ***Bugs' Song:*** | 504: as indicated earlier, the Bugs were bugbears, or hobglobins.1 Their song is directed to Margaret. |
|  | Thus, Lady and Duchess, we conclude: |
| 506 | Fair virgins must not be too rude; |  |
|  | For though the rural wild and antic |  |
| 508 | Abused their loves as they were frantic, |  |
|  | Yet take you in your ivory clutches | = white hands. 509-510: the entire masque has been an exercise in wooing Margaret by the duke. |
| 510 | This noble Duke, and be his Duchess. |  |
|  | Thus thanking all for their *tacete*, | = silence (Latin). |
| 512 | I void the room, and cry *valete*. | = leave, exit. = good-bye (Latin). |
|  |  |  |
| 514 | [*Exit Sarpego with Nymph, Sylvanus,* |  |
|  | *and the two Bugs*.] |  |
| 516 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Generally well and pleasingly performed. |  |
| 518 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Now I resign this borrowed majesty, | 519-521: Margaret loses no time in removing the crownlet that may have been placed on her head earlier, and may even step quickly from her throne. |
| 520 | Which sate unseemly on my worthless head, | = was set.7 |
|  | With humble service to your Highness' hands. |  |
| 522 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Well you became it, lady, and I know | 523-4: notice how Alphonso almost, but never quite, brings himself to directly and explicitly ask Margaret to marry him. |
| 524 | All here could wish it might be ever so. |
|  |  |
| 526 | ***Stroz.***[*Aside*]Here's one says nay to that. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 528 | ***Vinc.*** [*Aside to Strozza*]  Plague on you, peace! | 528: "damn you, keep quiet!" |
|  |  |  |
| 530 | ***Lasso.*** Now let it please your Highness to accept |  |
|  | A homely banquet to close these rude sports. | = dessert. |
| 532 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***I thank your Lordship much. |  |
| 534 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Bring lights, make place! |  |
| 536 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Poggio in his cloak and broom-man's attire*. |  |
| 538 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** How d'ye, my lord? | = old form of "how do you do", and direct precursor to "howdy".1 |
| 540 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Oh, Master Broom-man, you did passing well. | = very; Poggio, we may remember, had at Act I.ii.49-50 made a point of saying he wanted to impress the duke with his acting. |
| 542 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Ah, you mad slave, you! You are a tickling actor. | = pleasing or amusing.1 |
| 544 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** I was not out, like my Lord Medice. − | = not put out or put off his speech. |
| 546 | How did you like me, aunt? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 548 | ***Cyn.*** Oh, rarely, rarely! | = very well. |
|  |  |  |
| 550 | ***Stroz.***Oh, thou hast done a work of memory, |  |
|  | And raised our house up higher by a story. | 551: a cute punning metaphor, in which Strozza describes his family (*house*) being raised in status (and by a *story*) thanks to Poggio's fine acting. |
| 552 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Friend, how conceit you my young mother here? | 553: Vincentio asks Cynanche what she thinks (*how conceit you*) of Margaret, whom he refers to as his *mother*; he is being careful to leave a paper-trail of comments demonstrating his acceptance of the duke's marrying her. |
| 554 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Fitter for you, my lord, than for your father. | 555: Cynanche is not buying it: "she would be a better match for you than for your father." |
| 556 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** No more of that, sweet friend; those are bugs' words. | = words that scare - because, as Smith notes, the duke might overhear them5 - but also punning on the song of the Bugs. Vincentio doesn't want anyone to even suggest Margaret should be marrying him! |
| 558 |  |
|  | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | END OF ACT II. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ACT III. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | SCENE I. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Medice after the song whispers alone with his servant*. | = the theatre's orchestra usually played music between acts.3 |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Med.*** Thou art my trusty servant, and thou know'st |  |
| 2 | I have been ever bountiful lord to thee, | 2: this assertion contradicts what Strozza said about him at Act I.i.167-170. |
|  | As still I will be; be thou thankful then, | = ever, always. |
| 4 | And do me now a service of import. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 6 | ***Serv.*** Any, my lord, in compass of my life. | = roughly, "within the limits (*compass)* of my ability." |
|  |  |  |
| 8 | ***Med.*** To-morrow, then, the Duke intends to hunt, |  |
|  | Where Strozza, my despiteful enemy, |  |
| 10 | Will give attendance busy in the chase; |  |
|  | Wherein (as if by chance, when others shoot |  |
| 12 | At the wild boar) do thou discharge at him, |  |
|  | And with an arrow cleave his cankered heart. | = malignant.2 |
| 14 |  |  |
|  | ***Serv.*** I will not fail, my lord. |  |
| 16 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Be secret, then, |  |
| 18 | And thou to me shalt be the dear’st of men. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 20 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT III, SCENE II. |  |
|  | *Another Room in the House of Lasso*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Vincentio and Bassiolo severally*. | = from different doors or directions |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Vinc.***[*Aside*] Now Vanity and Policy enrich me | 1-2: Vincentio apostrophizes to *Vanity* (either foolishness or high self-regard,1 referring to Bassiolo) and *Policy* (cunning) to bring him good luck (*fortune*) in convincing the usher to help him communicate with Margaret; note also the slight pun of *enrich* with *fortune*. |
| 2 | With some ridiculous fortune on this usher. − |  |
|  | Where's Master Usher? |  |
| 4 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Now I come, my lord. |  |
| 6 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Besides, good sir, your show did show so well. | 7: Vincentio begins again to praise Bassiolo; this flattery will quickly reach absurd levels. Note also that the Prince uses the formal and respectful "you" in addressing the usher, when he would be well within his right to use "thee" when speaking to a servant. |
| 8 |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Did it, indeed, my lord? |  |
| 10 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Oh, sir, believe it! |  |
| 12 | 'Twas the best-fashioned and well-ordered thing |  |
|  | That ever eye beheld; and, therewithal, | = in addition.1 |
| 14 | The fit attendance by the servants used, | 14-24: Vincentio compliments Bassiolo for the superior operation of his servants over the course of the evening. |
|  | The gentle guise in serving every guest | = manner.1 |
| 16 | In other entertainments; everything |  |
|  | About your house so sortfully disposed, | = appropriately.1 |
| 18 | That even as in a turn-spit called a jack | 18-24: Vincentio compares the smooth functioning of the interlocking wheels of a *turnspit* (a machine that can be wound up to rotate meat over a fire on its own, also called a *jack*),1 which spin so quietly, yet work together to achieve the desired end, to the successful coming off of the evening's entertainment.  *even* = pronounced here as a one-syllable word (*e'en*), with the *v* essentially omitted.  *vice* (line 19) = screw or similar mechanical device.1 |
|  | One vice assists another, the great wheels, |  |
| 20 | Turning but softly, make the less to whirr |  |
|  | About their business, every different part |  |
| 22 | Concurring to one cómmendable end, − |  |
|  | So, and in such conformance, with rare grace, |  |
| 24 | Were all things ordered in your good lord's house. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 26 | ***Bass.***The most fit simile that ever was. | 26: Bassiolo, with unbounded self-regard, swallows the flattery. |
|  |  |  |
| 28 | ***Vinc.***But shall I tell you plainly my conceit, | = (further) thoughts.2 |
|  | Touching the man that I think caused this order? | 29: ie. Bassiolo, of course. |
| 30 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Ay, good my lord! |  |
| 32 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** You note my simile? |  |
| 34 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Drawn from the turn-spit. |  |
| 36 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** I see you have me. | = "you understand me".3 |
| 38 | Even as in that quaint engine you have seen | = machine. |
|  | A little man in shreds stand at the winder, | 39-46: a mechanical device like a turnspit might have a small figure of a man (*little man*) built onto it, which gives the appearance of being the agent that turns the spit; Vincentio's point is that Lasso, like the little man, seemed to be the man responsible for everything going smoothly in his household that evening, but in reality he did nothing - Bassiolo was the one whose capable hands managed the whole affair.   *in shreds* = dressed in rags; since turning a spit was about the meanest possible job a servant could have in a home, it would be appropriate for him to be dressed poorly. |
| 40 | And seems to put all things in act about him, |  |
|  | Lifting and pulling with a mighty stir, | = movement or to-do.1 |
| 42 | Yet adds no force to it, nor nothing does: | = double negatives were perfectly acceptable in English in those days. |
|  | So (though your lord be a brave gentleman | = finely dressed, contrasting with the *little man in shreds*. |
| 44 | And seems to do this business) he does nothing; |  |
|  | Some man about him was the festival robe | 45-46: Bassiolo is like a splendid *robe* suitable to be worn at a feast, which makes its owner appear so richly and brightly. |
| 46 | That made him show so glorious and divine. |
|  |  |
| 48 | ***Bass.*** I cannot tell, my lord, yet I should know |  |
|  | If any such there were. |  |
| 50 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Should know, quoth you; | 51: Vincentio dismisses Bassiolo's modesty. |
| 52 | I warrant you know! Well, some there be | 52: warrant = ie. "am sure".  52-54: *some there….state* = some nobles are fortunate enough to have excellent servants (*rare men*) working on their behalves". |
|  | Shall have the fortune to have such rare men |  |
| 54 | (Like brave beasts to their arms) support their state, | = allusion to the many great animals that adorn coat-of-arms.3 |
|  | When others of as high a worth and breed | 55-56: Vincentio's point generally in this rhyming couplet is that some nobles are illy served by their dependents; he also may be indirectly referring to Medice (whom, we may note, he stingingly mentions several times in this conversation) as taking advantage of the credulous duke to raise his own station. |
| 56 | Are made the wasteful food of them they feed. |
|  | What state hath your lord made you for your service? | 57: "what gift or property (*state*)1 has your master given you for your services?" |
| 58 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***He has been my good lord, for I can spend | 59-61: Bassiolo is paid enough to allow him to buy property, which pays a nice income in rent; the *crown* was an English coin worth five shillings, or a quarter of pound, and was used through 1971. |
| 60 | Some fifteen hundred crowns in lands a year, |
|  | Which I have gotten since I served him first. |
| 62 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***No more than fifteen hundred crowns a year? |  |
| 64 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** It is so much as makes me live, my lord, | 65-66: Bassiolo receives enough income to live like a modest member of the gentry; in such a class-conscious society as was England, the goal of those not born into the aristocracy was to achieve the status of *gentleman*, which basically meant that they made enough money to not have to depend on their own manual labour to get along.  Our usher is not complaining at all! |
| 66 | Like a poor gentleman. |
|  |  |
| 68 | ***Vinc.*** Nay, 'tis pretty well; |  |
|  | But certainly my nature does esteem | = regard or estimate.1 |
| 70 | Nothing enough for virtue; and had I | = ie. indirectly, "that it is not enough compensation for your true worth." |
|  | The Duke my father's means, all should be spent |  |
| 72 | To keep brave men about me; but, good sir, | = worthy.2 |
|  | Accept this simple jewèl at my hands, |  |
| 74 | Till I can work persuasion of my friendship | 74-75: "till I can give evidence (*persuasion*)2 of my friendship with tokens (*arguments*)1 of greater value than this simple jewel." |
|  | With worthier arguments. |
| 76 |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** No, good my lord! |  |
| 78 | I can by no means merit the free bounties | = generous gifts. |
|  | You have bestowed besides. |  |
| 80 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Nay, be not strange, | = unfamiliar, distant.2 |
| 82 | But do yourself right, and be all one man |  |
|  | In all your actions; do not think but some | 83-86: *do not…virtue* = "you should believe that there are indeed some people who, having the same great personal qualities as yourself, will not choose who to associate with based on others' rank or wealth, but on their character." |
| 84 | Have extraordinary spirits like yourself, |
|  | And will not stand in their society |
| 86 | On birth and riches, but on worth and virtue; |  |
|  | With whom there is no niceness, nor respect | 87-88: *With whom…friendship* = "(and also) with whom there is no finickiness or choosiness (*niceness*) nor prejudiced regard (*respect*) against the lower statuses of those who want to be one's friend. |
| 88 | Of others' common friendship; be he poor |
|  | Or basely born, so he be rich in soul |
| 90 | And noble in degrees of qualities, |
|  | He shall be my friend sooner than a king. |  |
| 92 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** 'Tis a most kingly judgment in your lordship. |  |
| 94 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Faith, sir, I know not, but 'tis my vain humour. | 95: "truthfully, sir, I don't know about that; rather, I think of it as just my foolish or idle inclination (*vain humour*)", ie. "it's just the way I am." |
| 96 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Oh, 'tis an honour in a nobleman. | = honourable. |
| 98 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Y' ave some lords, now, so politic and proud, | = self-serving.2 |
| 100 | They scorn to give good looks to worthy men. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 102 | ***Bass.***Oh, fie upon 'em! By that light, my lord, | = shame. = it was common to swear on a candle or torch. |
|  | I am but servant to a nobleman, |  |
| 104 | But if I would not scorn such puppet lords, | = did. = imitation.1 |
|  | Would I were breathless! | 105: the sense is, "I would rather be dead", ie. literally without breath. |
| 106 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** You, sir? So you may; |  |
| 108 | For they will cog so when they wish to use men, | 108*f*: Vincentio is scorning those who would deceive with flattery (*cog*) those they wish to *use* for their own advantage; Vincentio, of course, is doing exactly this! |
|  | With, “Pray be covered, sir”, “I beseech you sit”, | = "please put your hat back on". |
| 110 | “Who's there? Wait of Master Usher to the door”. | = "accompany the". |
|  | Oh, these be godly gudgeons: where's the deeds? | = fish used as bait, hence meaning "gullible people". |
| 112 | The perfect nobleman? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 114 | ***Bass.*** Oh, good my lord − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 116 | ***Vinc.***Away, away, ere I would flatter so, | = before. |
|  | I would eat rushes like Lord Medice! | = humorous phrase referring to Medice's using a rush to pick his teeth, as he had been caught doing back at Act II.i.466-9.5 |
| 118 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Well, well, my lord, would there were more such princes! | 119: *Well, well* = Smith suggests that Bassiolo himself may have been about to use a rush as a toothpick, and his "Well, well" is a hurried response covering his embarrassment.  *would there were* = "if only there were". |
| 120 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Alas, 'twere pity, sir! They would be gulled | = deceived. |
| 122 | Out of their very skins. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 124 | ***Bass.*** Why, how are you, my lord? | = "how are you being gulled?"3 |
|  |  |  |
| 126 | ***Vinc.*** Who, I? I care not: |  |
|  | If I be gulled where I profess plain love, |  |
| 128 | Twill be their faults, you know. | = defects, ie. "it's their problem, not mine." |
|  |  |  |
| 130 | ***Bass.*** Oh, 'twere their shames. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 132 | ***Vinc.***Well, take my jewèl, you shall not be strange; | = ie. "so unfriendly with me." |
|  | I love not many words. | 132: Bassiolo fails of course to note the irony of this assertion. |
| 134 |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** My Lord, I thank you; |  |
| 136 | I am of few words too. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 138 | ***Vinc.*** 'Tis friendly said; |  |
|  | You prove yourself a friend, and I would have you |  |
| 140 | Advance your thoughts, and lay about for state | 140: "raise your expectations, and seek a position, etc". |
|  | Worthy your virtues; be the miniön | = favourite. |
| 142 | Of some great king or duke; there's Medice |  |
|  | The minion of my father − Oh, the Father! | = "Oh God!" Vincentio feigns rapture at the thought of Bassiolo occupying a position worthy of himself. |
| 144 | What difference is there? But I cannot flatter; | = ie. between Bassiolo and Medice; Vincentio's point is that Bassiolo is good enough to fill Medice's position. |
|  | A word to wise men! | 145: variation on the proverbial notion that "few words to the wise are enough", ie. a smart person doesn't need anything over-explained. |
| 146 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** I perceive your lordship, | = understand. |
| 148 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Your lordship? Talk you now like a friend? |  |
| 150 | Is this plain kindness? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 152 | ***Bass.*** Is it not, my lord? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 154 | ***Vinc.*** A palpable flatt'ring figure for men common: | 154: "it is an obviously flattering phrase (*figure* = figure of speech) fit to be used only by ordinary men", referring to the phrase *your lordship*. |
|  | O my word, I should think, if 'twere another, | = "if anyone other than you had called me that". |
| 156 | He meant to gull me. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 158 | ***Bass.*** Why, 'tis but your due. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 160 | ***Vinc.***  'Tis but my due if you be still a stranger; |  |
|  | But as I wish to choose you for my friend, |  |
| 162 | As I intend, when God shall call my father, | 162-4: *when God…not fit* = ie. "after my father dies (leaving me the new duke), I could tell you what I will do for you - but let's leave that unspoken - it is not appropriate to speak of the death of the duke." |
|  | To do I can tell what − but let that pass − |  |
| 164 | Thus 'tis not fit; let my friend be familiar, | = "you should". |
|  | Use not "my lordship", nor yet call me lord, | = "don't address me as". |
| 166 | Nor my whole name, Vincentio, but Vince, | 166-8: a reference to the common fashion for people to address each other with shortened first names, or nicknames.3 Vincentio notes that nicknames are now used even between people of different classes and those who are not related to each other;  *kindness* = relation by blood. |
|  | As they call Jack or Will; 'tis now in use |
| 168 | Twixt men of no equality or kindness. |
|  |  |
| 170 | ***Bass.***I shall be quickly bold enough, my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 172 | ***Vinc.***Nay, see how still you use that coy term, “lord.” |  |
|  | What argues this but that you shun my friendship? | = "is this not evidence"; Vincentio feigns having his feelings hurt. |
| 174 |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Nay, pray, say not so. |  |
| 176 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Who should not say so? |  |
| 178 | Will you afford me now no name at all? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 180 | ***Bass.***What should I call you? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 182 | ***Vinc.*** Nay, then 'tis no matter. |  |
|  | But I told you, “Vince”. |  |
| 184 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Why, then, my sweet Vince. |  |
| 186 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Why, so, then; and yet still there is a fault |  |
| 188 | In using these kind words without kind deeds; |  |
|  | Pray thee embrace me too. |  |
| 190 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Why then, sweet Vince. |  |
| 192 |  |  |
|  | [*He embraces Vincentio*.] |  |
| 194 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Why, now I thank you; 'sblood, shall friends be strange? | = God's blood. |
| 196 | Where there is plainness, there is ever truth; | = honest plain-speaking. |
|  | And I will still be plain since I am true. |  |
| 198 | Come, let us lie a little; I am weary. | = lie down, ie. rest. Smith notes that Vincentio, with *lie*, is punning with his argument that friends like they two should always speak *true* to each other. |
|  |  |
| 200 | ***Bass.***And so am I, I swear, since yesterday. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 202 | [*They lie down together*.] | 202: while it was normal for friends in Elizabethan times to share a bed, Vincentio and Bassiolo could of course here be lying down on separate couches or even the floor; but perhaps they simply sit down to rest. |
|  |  |  |
| 204 | ***Vinc.***You may, sir, by my faith; and, sirrah, hark thee, | 204: *sirrah* = a common form of address to a servant; but if Vincentio is trying to push the idea of equality on the usher, was this a mistake for him to use this term? Bassiolo, however, takes no notice.  *hark thee* = listen now; note that Vincentio has switched to using the pronoun *thee* in addressing Bassiolo, not as a signal of superiority, but to indicate intimacy and close friendship. |
|  | What lordship wouldst thou wish to have, i'faith, | 205-6: contradicting his earlier stated uneasiness in discussing what will happen when the old duke is dead, Vincentio asks Bassiolo to speculate as to what title he would like bestowed on him when Vincentio is duke. |
| 206 | When my old father dies? |
|  |  |
| 208 | ***Bass.*** Who, I? Alas! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 210 | ***Vinc.***Oh, not you! Well, sir, you shall have none; | = Vincentio's returning to "you" suggests a subtle break from the intimacy of his last line; Vincentio speaks with mock indignation. |
|  | You are as coy a piece as your lord's daughter. | = specimen or person.2 = finally, Vincentio brings the conversation around to Margaret. |
| 212 |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Who, my mistress? |  |
| 214 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Indeed! Is she your mistress? | 215: Bassiolo has used the word *mistress* to mean nothing more than his female boss, the female equivalent of *master*; but Vincentio equivocates, suggesting that Bassiolo is using *mistress* to mean "lover". Bassiolo doesn't catch on to this right away, though. |
| 216 |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** I'faith, sweet Vince, since she was three year old. |  |
| 218 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***And are not we two friends? |  |
| 220 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Who doubts of that? |  |
| 222 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***And are not two friends one? |  |
| 224 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Even man and wife. |  |
| 226 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Then what to you she is, to me she should be. | 227: Vincentio uses tortured logic here: "if Margaret is your *mistress* (ambiguous sense), and you and I are equal, then she should be my mistress too." |
| 228 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Why, Vince, thou wouldst not have her? | 229: Bassiolo is uncertain as to what Vincentio is getting at. |
| 230 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Oh, not I! | 231*ff*: note how in this part of the dialogue, Vincentio has returned to addressing Bassiolo with "you", signaling respect and formality, while Bassiolo assumes to stick with the informal "thee". Needless to say, this reversal of normal social norms would horrify any of their contemporaries who should chance to overhear them! |
| 232 | I do not fancy anything like you. |
|  |  |
| 234 | ***Bass.***Nay, but I pray thee tell me. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 236 | ***Vinc.***You do not mean to marry her yourself? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 238 | ***Bass.***Not I, by Heaven! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 240 | ***Vinc.*** Take heed now; do not gull me. | = deceive. |
|  |  |  |
| 242 | ***Bass.*** No, by that candle! | = another oath taken on an inanimate object. |
|  |  |  |
| 244 | ***Vinc.*** Then will I be plain. |  |
|  | Think you she dotes not too much on my father? |  |
| 246 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Oh yes, no doubt on't! |  |
| 248 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Nay, I pray you speak! | = "please speak on!" |
| 250 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***You seely man, you! She cannot abide him. | = innocent, simple (precursor to *silly*).1 |
| 252 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Why, sweet friend, pardon me; alas, I knew not! |  |
| 254 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** But I do note you are in some things simple, |  |
| 256 | And wrong yourself too much. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 258 | ***Vinc.*** Thank you, good friend. |  |
|  | For your plain dealing, I do mean, so well. |  |
| 260 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***But who saw ever summer mixed with winter? | = Margaret, young, is *summer*; the duke, old, is *winter*. |
| 262 | There must be equal years where firm love is. |  |
|  | Could we two love so well so suddenly, | = meaning he and Vincentio. |
| 264 | Were we not something equaller in years |  |
|  | Than he and she are? |  |
| 266 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** I cry ye mercy, sir, | = "I beg your pardon". |
| 268 | I know we could not; but yet be not too bitter, |  |
|  | Considering love is fearful. And, sweet friend, | = timid.2 |
| 270 | I have a letter t' entreat her kindness, |  |
|  | Which, if you would convey − |  |
| 272 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Ay, if I would, sir! | = Bassiolo perhaps emphasizes an incredulous *if*. |
| 274 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Why, faith, dear friend, I would not die requiteless. | = "without rewarding you". |
| 276 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Would you not so, sir? | 277-280: Bassiolo chides Vincentio for (1) framing his appeal to the usher to deliver a letter to Margaret as a formal request (by using *if...would* instead of *shalt*); and (2) continuing to use *you* instead of the intimate *thee*. |
| 278 | By Heaven a little thing would make me box you! |
|  | "Which if you would convey?" Why not, I pray, |
| 280 | “Which, friend, thou shalt convey?” |
|  |  |
| 282 | ***Vinc.*** Which, friend, you shall then. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 284 | ***Bass.***Well, friend, and I will then. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 286 | ***Vinc.***And use some kind persuasive words for me? | 286: we remember that for Vincentio's scheme to work, Bassiolo must believe that Vincentio is only just beginning to woo Margaret. |
|  |  |
| 288 | ***Bass.***The best, I swear, that my poor tongue can forge. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 290 | ***Vinc.***Ay, well said, "poor tongue!" Oh, 'tis rich in meekness; | 290: Vincentio compliment's both Bassiolo's turn of a phrase and his modesty. |
|  | You are not known to speak well? You have won | = earned. |
| 292 | Direction of the Earl and all his house, | 292: management of Lasso's household; notice Chapman sometimes refers to Lasso as *Earl*, sometimes *Count*; the two titles, outside of England, were interchangeable.1 |
|  | The favour of his daughter, and all dames | 293-4: Vincentio compliments the usher on his abilities with the ladies. |
| 294 | That ever I saw come within your sight, |
|  | With a poor tongue? A plague o' your sweet lips! |  |
| 296 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Well, we will do our best; and faith, my Vince, |  |
| 298 | She shall have an unwieldy and dull soul | 298-300: Bassiolo is highly confident in his ability to persuade Margaret to accept Vincentio's suit. |
|  | If she be nothing moved with my poor tongue − |
| 300 | Call it no better, be it what it will. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 302 | ***Vinc.***Well said, i'faith! Now if I do not think | 302-5: "If I didn't believe you could do more than just deliver the letter, such as get her to write me an answer, never believe me again!" Vincentio's manipulation is hardly subtle! |
|  | 'Tis possible, besides her bare receipt |
| 304 | Of that my letter, with thy friendly tongue |
|  | To get an answer of it, never trust me. |
| 306 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***An answer, man? 'Sblood, make no doubt of that! |  |
| 308 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***By Heaven, I think so; now a plague of Nature, | 309-310: *a plague…others* = "it is a vexatious characteristic of Nature that she grants to some people many skills and none to others." Vincentio is clearly identifying the usher with the former. |
| 310 | That she gives all to some, and none to others! |
|  |  |
| 312 | ***Bass.***[*rising, aside*] |  |
|  | How I endear him to me! − Come, Vince, rise; | = Bassiolo believes that his charms are solely responsible for Vincentio's growing affection for him. |
| 314 | Next time I see her I will give her this; | = ie. Vincentio's letter. |
|  | Which when she sees, she'll think it wondrous strange |  |
| 316 | Love should go by descent and make the son | = ie. from father to son. |
|  | Follow the father in his amorous steps. |  |
| 318 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***She needs must think it strange, that ne'er yet saw | 319-320: Vincentio expresses "worry" over how Margaret will react to his letter, when he has never yet spoken to her, and barely ever even seen her. |
| 320 | I durst speak to her, or had scarce her sight. |
|  |  |
| 322 | ***Bass.***Well, Vince, I swear thou shalt both see and kiss her. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 324 | ***Vinc.***Swears my dear friend? By what? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 326 | ***Bass.*** Even by our friendship. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 328 | ***Vinc.***Oh, sacred oath! Which how long will you keep? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 330 | ***Bass.***While there be bees in Hybla, or white swans | 330: *Hybla* = a town in ancient Sicily, famous for its honey.3  330-1: *white swans…Meander* = the *Meander* is a river in western Asia Minor; the reference to the *swans* comes from the *Heroides*, a series of verses by the Roman poet Ovid (author of the *Metamorphoses*), who in Poem #7 refers to the "shallows of Meander, (where) sings the white swan".3,9 |
|  | In bright Meander; while the banks of Po | *=* the *Po* is a river in northern Italy. |
| 332 | Shall bear brave lilies; or Italian dames |  |
|  | Be called the bona-robas of the world. | = prostitutes; Italy was considered by the English to be a particularly dissolute and debauched nation. Smith notes how anti-climactic Bassiolo's final analogy is, after having spoken in such sweetly poetic terms until then. |
| 334 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** 'Tis elegantly said; and when I fail, | = ie. to observe their friendship. |
| 336 | Let there be found in Hybla hives no bees; |  |
|  | Let no swans swim in bright Meander stream, |  |
| 338 | Nor lilies spring upon the banks of Po, |  |
|  | Nor let one fat Italian dame be found, |  |
| 340 | But lean and brawn-fall'n; ay, and scarcely sound. | 340: *brawn-fall'n* = thin, with the flesh (*brawn*) wasted away.1   *scarcely sound* = hardly healthy, ie. wracked with syphilis. |
|  |  |  |
| 342 | ***Bass.*** It is enough, but let's embrace withal. | = nevertheless. |
|  |  |  |
| 344 | ***Vinc.***With all my heart. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 346 | ***Bass.*** So, now farewell, sweet Vince! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 348 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 350 | ***Vinc.***Farewell, my worthy friend! − I think I have him. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 352 | *Enter Bassiolo*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 354 | ***Bass.*** [*Aside*] |  |
|  | I had forgot the parting phrase he taught me. − |  |
| 356 | I commend me t'ye, sir. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 358 | [*Exit instanter*.] | = immediately, ie. hurriedly.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 360 | ***Vinc.*** At your wished service, sir. − |  |
|  | Oh fine friend, he had forgot the phrase: |  |
| 362 | How serious apish souls are in vain form! | = foolishly copying or imitative.2 |
|  | Well, he is mine and he, being trusted most | = ie. Vincentio has successfully recruited Bassiolo to act as his agent. |
| 364 | With my dear love, may often work our meeting, | = arrange for Margaret and Vincentio to meet on the sly. |
|  | And being thus engaged, dare not reveal. | 365: and since Bassiolo is now up to his neck in his involvement in Vincentio's scheme, he cannot turn around and report it to anyone without implicating himself. |
| 366 |  |
|  | *Enter Poggio in haste, Strozza following*. |  |
| 368 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Horse, horse, horse, my lord, horse! Your father |  |
| 370 | is going a hunting. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 372 | ***Vinc.*** My lord horse? You ass, you! D'ye call my lord | 372-3: *D'ye…horse* = "are you calling my lord a horse?" |
|  | horse? |  |
| 374 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Nay, he speaks huddles still; let's slit his tongue. | = ie. confusingly.1 |
| 376 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Nay, good uncle now, 'sblood, what captious | = fault-finding.1 |
| 378 | merchants you be! So the Duke took me up even now, | = fellows.1 = "rebuked me".1 |
|  | my lord uncle here, and my old Lord Lasso. By Heaven |  |
| 380 | y' are all too witty for me; I am the veriest fool on you | = "greatest fool of". |
|  | all, I'll be sworn! |  |
| 382 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Therein thou art worth us all, for thou know'st | 383: *Therein…all* = "in that respect, you are equal to the rest of us combined".  383-4: *thou know'st thyself* = a reference to the ancient maxim "know thyself", which was famously inscribed at the entrance to Apollo's oracle at Delphi. |
| 384 | thyself. |
|  |  |  |
| 386 | ***Stroz.***But your wisdom was in a pretty taking last | = ironic title, addressing Poggio. = nice situation, good condition.1 |
|  | night; was it not, I pray? |
| 388 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Oh, for taking my drink a little? I'faith, my lord, |  |
| 390 | for that, you shall have the best sport presently, with | = regarding drinking. = entertainment. = in a moment. |
|  | Madam Cortezza, that ever was; I have made her so |  |
| 392 | drunk that she does nothing but kiss my lord Medice. |  |
|  | See, she comes riding the Duke; she's passing well | = exceedingly; the duke enters the stage supporting the drunken Cortezza; Poggio's use of *riding* and *mounting* are playfully suggestive. |
| 394 | mounted, believe it. |
|  |  |
| 396 | *Enter Alphonso, Cortezza leaning on the Duke,* |  |
|  | *Cynanche, Margaret, Bassiolo first, two women* |  |
| 398 | *attendants, and Huntsmen, Lasso*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 400 | ***Alph.***Good wench, forbear! | = affectionate term meaning simply "lady". |
|  |  |  |
| 402 | ***Cort.*** My lord, you must put forth yourself among | 402*ff*: Smith notes that Cortezza's drunken speeches are filled with double entendres, such as the phrase *put forth yourself*, and with *thumb* implying a man's organ. |
|  | ladies. I warrant you have much in you, if you would |  |
| 404 | show it; see, a cheek o' twenty, the body of a George, | = ie. a young man's face. = a second allusion in the play to the duke as St. George. |
|  | a good leg still, still a good calf, and not flabby, nor |  |
| 406 | hanging, I warrant you; a brawn of a thumb here, | = fleshy or muscular.1 |
|  | and 'twere a pulled partridge. − Niece Meg, thou shalt | = as if it were. = plucked.1 |
| 408 | have the sweetest bedfellow on him that ever called | = in. |
|  | lady husband; try him, you shame-faced bable you, | = bashful.1 = ie. bauble: a foolish person, or one who trifles.1 |
| 410 | try him. |
|  |  |  |
| 412 | ***Marg.***Good madam, be ruled. | = "please listen to the duke", or "please control yourself." |
|  |  |  |
| 414 | ***Cort.***What a nice thing it is! My lord, you must | = dainty, delicate. = ie. she, meaning Margaret. |
|  | set forth this gear, and kiss her; i'faith, you must! Get | = get this business (*gear*) going, ie. be the aggressor. |
| 416 | you together and be naughts awhile, get you together. | = literally "be quiet", but the phrase was also a common Elizabethan euphemism for having sex. |
|  |  |
| 418 | ***Alph.***Now, what a merry, harmless dame it is! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 420 | ***Cort.*** My lord Medice, you are a right noble man, and |  |
|  | will do a woman right in a wrong matter, and need be; |  |
| 422 | pray, do you give the Duke ensample upon me; you | = "give". = "an example (of a kiss) on me."1 Cortezza has, we remember, previously expressed her attraction to Medice. |
|  | come a wooing to me now; I accept it. |
| 424 |  |
|  | ***Lasso.***What mean you, sister? |  |
| 426 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***Pray, my lord, away; − consider me as I am, a | 427-8: the first utterance is likely directed to Lasso; the second, to Medice. |
| 428 | woman. |
|  |  |  |
| 430 | ***Pog.*** [*Aside*] Lord, how I have whittled her! | = made her drunk.3 |
|  |  |  |
| 432 | ***Cort.*** You come a wooing to me now; − pray thee, |  |
|  | Duke, mark my lord Medice; and do you mark me, | = "pay attention (to how Medice does this)". |
| 434 | virgin. Stand you aside, my lords all, and you, give | = young unmarried woman, ie. Margaret. |
|  | place. Now, my lord Medice, put case I be strange a | = suppose. = aloof. |
| 436 | little, yet you like a man put me to it. Come, kiss me, | = "force me to acquiesce." |
|  | my lord; be not ashamed*.* |  |
| 438 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Not I, madam! I come not a wooing to you. |  |
| 440 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***'Tis no matter, my lord, make as though you did, |  |
| 442 | and come kiss me; I won't be strange a whit. | = the least bit, at all. |
|  |  |  |
| 444 | ***Lasso.*** Fie, sister, y' are to blame! Pray will you go to |  |
|  | your chamber? |  |
| 446 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***Why, hark you, brother. | = listen. |
| 448 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** What's the matter? |  |
| 450 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** D'ye think I am drunk? |  |
| 452 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** I think so, truly. |  |
| 454 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** But are you sure I am drunk? |  |
| 456 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** Else I would not think so. |  |
| 458 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** But I would be glad to be sure on't. |  |
| 460 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** I assure you then. |  |
| 462 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***  Why, then, say nothing, and I'll begone. − |  |
| 464 | God b'w'y', Lord Duke, I'll come again anon. | 464: *God b'w'y'* = "God be with ye": one can see how this abbreviated form of the full phrase became the modern "goodbye."1  *anon* = soon. |
|  |  |
| 466 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 468 | ***Lasso.*** I hope your Grace will pardon her, my Liege, |  |
|  | For 'tis most strange; she's as discreet a dame |  |
| 470 | As any in these countries, and as sober, |  |
|  | But for this only humour of the cup. | 471: "except for this inclination (*humour*) of hers to drink." |
| 472 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** 'Tis good, my lord, sometimes. | 473: Alphonso is very understanding! |
| 474 | Come, to our hunting; now 'tis time, I think. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 476 | ***Omnes.*** The very best time of the day, my lord. | = everybody. |
|  |  |  |
| 478 | ***Alph.*** Then, my lord, I will take my leave till night, |  |
|  | Reserving thanks for all my entertainment |  |
| 480 | Till I return; − in meantime, lovely dame, | = the duke now addresses Margaret. |
|  | Remember the high state you last presented, | 481-4: the sense is, "remember how I placed you on the throne in the masque, and don't think it was just for show; but it rather symbolized exactly how I think of you." |
| 482 | And think it was not a mere festival show, |
|  | But an essential type of that you are | = representation or symbol.1 = ie. "that which". |
| 484 | In full consent of all my faculties, − | 481-4: the duke's continuing unwillingness to explicitly ask Margaret to marry him is a little aggravating; but it allows Margaret just enough wiggle-room to avoid having to make a direct answer. |
|  | And hark you, good my lord. |  |
| 486 |  |  |
|  | [*He whispers to Lasso*.] |  |
| 488 |  |  |
|  | [*Vincentio and Strozza have all this while* |  |
| 490 | *talked together a pretty way*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 492 | ***Vinc.***[*Aside to Strozza and Cynanche*] |  |
|  | See now, they whisper | 493-5: Vincentio worries that the duke and Lasso are secretly arranging a marriage between Margaret and Alphonso. |
| 494 | Some private order (I dare lay my life) | = bet. |
|  | For a forced marriage 'twixt my love and father; |  |
| 496 | I therefore must make sure; and, noble friends, |  |
|  | I'll leave you all when I have brought you forth | 497-8: *I'll leave…chase* = Vincentio plans to sneak away from the hunt (*chase*) once it is in full progress to meet with Margaret to learn how things stand with her. |
| 498 | And seen you in the chase; meanwhile observe | 498-502: *meanwhile…being* = Vincentio asks Strozza to keep an eye on whether Vincentio's absence from the hunt is noticed. |
|  | In all the time this solemn hunting lasts |
| 500 | My father and his minion, Medice, |
|  | And note if you can gather any sign |  |
| 502 | That they have missed me, and suspect my being; |  |
|  | If which fall out, send home my page before. | 503: "and if this occurs (*falls out*), ie. someone notices I am absent, send my page to warn me." |
| 504 |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** I will not fail, my lord. |  |
| 506 |  |  |
|  | [*Medice whispers with 1st Huntsman all this while*.] | 507: in Act III.i, the individual to whom Medice gave instructions to shoot Strozza was identified as his servant, not a huntsman. |
| 508 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Now take thy time. | = choose (Smith). |
| 510 |  |  |
|  | ***1st Hunts.***  I warrant you, my lord, he shall not scape me. | = escape |
| 512 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Now, my dear mistress, till our sports intended | 513-4: *till our…absence* = the sense is, "until the hunt ends, which will be when I withdraw from it, and I can return to you, etc."3,5 |
| 514 | End with my absence, I will take my leave. |
|  |  |
| 516 | ***Lasso.***Bassiolo, attend you on my daughter. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 518 | [*Exeunt Alphonso, Lasso, Medice, Strozza,* | 518-9: Vincentio, Margaret, Cynanche and Bassiolo remain onstage. |
|  | *Poggio, Huntsmen, and attendants*.] |
| 520 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***  I will, my lord. |  |
| 522 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** [*Aside*] Now will the sport begin; I think my love | 523-4: Vincentio prepares the audience for the next scene, in which Bassiolo will deliver his letter to Margaret; he expects Margaret will be able to humorously manipulate the usher as well as he did. |
| 524 | Will handle him as well as I have done. |
|  |  |
| 526 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 528 | ***Cyn.*** Madam, I take my leave, and humbly thank you. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 530 | ***Marg.*** Welcome, good madam; − maids, wait on my lady. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 532 | [*Exit Cynanche*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 534 | ***Bass.*** So, mistress, this is fit. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 536 | ***Marg.*** Fit, sir; why so? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 538 | ***Bass.*** Why so? I have most fortunate news for you. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 540 | ***Marg.*** For me, sir? I beseech you, what are they? | = note the plural treatment of *news*; Elizabethan writers went back and forth in treating *news* as singular or not. |
|  |  |
| 542 | ***Bass.*** Merit and fortune, for you both agree; |  |
|  | Merit what you have, and have what you merit. | = deserve. |
| 544 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Lord, with what rhetoric you prepare your news! |  |
| 546 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***I need not; for the plain contents they bear, |  |
| 548 | Uttered in any words, deserve their welcome; |  |
|  | And yet I hope the words will serve the turn. | = purpose. |
| 550 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** What, in a letter? |  |
| 552 |  |  |
|  | [*He* *offers her the letter*.] |  |
| 554 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Why not? |  |
| 556 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Whence is it? | = from where. |
| 558 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***From one that will not shame it with his name, | 559: "from one whose name will not discredit it". |
| 560 | And that is Lord Vincentio. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 562 | ***Marg.*** King of Heaven! |  |
|  | Is the man mad? |  |
| 564 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Mad, madam, why? |  |
| 566 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Oh, Heaven! I muse a man of your importance |  |
| 568 | Will offer to bring me a letter thus. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 570 | ***Bass.*** Why, why, good mistress, are you hurt in that? |  |
|  | Your answer may be what you will yourself. | 571: "you can answer the letter any way you wish." |
| 572 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Ay, but you should not do it; God's my life! | = ie. bring her such a letter. |
| 574 | You shall answer it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 576 | ***Bass.*** Nay, you must answer it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 578 | ***Marg.*** I answer it! Are you the man I trusted, | 578*ff*: Margaret plays the role of the innocent perfectly; notice how she sets the blame for the delivery of the the letter squarely onto Bassiolo's shoulders. |
|  | And will betray me to a stranger thus? |
| 580 |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** That's nothing, dame; all friends were strangers first. |  |
| 582 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Now, was there ever woman over-seen so | = *overseen* can mean (1) "mistaken", as Parrott believes, or (2) "looked after";1 either way, Margaret appears to be bemoaning her misplaced belief in the usher's ability or wisdom to manage her affairs, though she could also be referring to Vincentio's clumsy handling of the situation. |
| 584 | In a wise man's discretion? |
|  |  |  |
| 586 | ***Bass.*** Your brain is shallow; come, receive this letter. | = to be *shallow-brained* was to lack depth of intellect.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 588 | ***Marg.*** How dare you say so, when you know so well |  |
|  | How much I am engagèd to the duke? |  |
| 590 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***The duke? A proper match! A grave old gentleman, | = "well, that would be a fine marriage!" |
| 592 | Has beard at will, and would, in my conceit, | 592: *Has beard at will* = in pointing out that the duke can easily grow a full beard, Bassiolo is suggesting that Alphonso is too old for Margaret; Vincentio, in contrast, may be young enough to only have a few pubescent whiskers at this point.  *conceit* = imagination or thinking. |
|  | Make a most excellent pattern for a potter, | = model or example.2 = maker of ceramic ware, and drinking vessels specifically. |
| 594 | To have his picture stampèd on a jug, |  |
|  | To keep ale-knights in memory of sobriety. | = drunks.1 |
| 596 | Here, gentle madam, take it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 598 | ***Marg.*** Take it, sir? |  |
|  | Am I a common taker of love-letters? | = ordinary, but also base or vulgar.1 |
| 600 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Common? Why, when received you one before? |  |
| 602 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Come 'tis no matter; I had thought your care |  |
| 604 | Of my bestowing would not tempt me thus | = "regarding who I will marry". |
|  | To one I know not; but it is because |  |
| 606 | You know I dote so much on your direction. | = guidance;2 Margaret flatters the usher. |
|  |  |  |
| 608 | ***Bass.*** On my direction? | = Bassiolo misunderstands Margaret's phrase *on your direction* to mean "towards you", interpreting it as an expression of Margaret's fondness for him personally. |
|  |  |  |
| 610 | ***Marg.*** No, sir, not on yours! | 610: Margaret quickly disabuses the usher! Parrott, however, believes this line may be an aside. |
|  |  |
| 612 | ***Bass.*** Well, mistress, if you will take my advice |  |
|  | At any time, then take this letter now. |  |
| 614 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** 'Tis strange; I wonder the coy gentleman, | = ie. that the. |
| 616 | That seeing me so oft would never speak, | = Margaret here contradicts Vincentio's assertion to Bassiolo above at line 320 that he has scarcely ever even seen her. |
|  | Is on the sudden so far rapt to write. | = driven by emotion. |
| 618 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** It showed his judgment that he would not speak, |  |
| 620 | Knowing with what a strict and jealous eye | = ie. the duke's. |
|  | He should be noted; hold, if you love yourself. | = observed.5 |
| 622 | Now will you take this letter? Pray be ruled. | = "follow my advice." |
|  |  |  |
| 624 | [*Gives her the letter*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 626 | ***Marg.***Come, you have such another plaguy tongue! | = vexatious or damned,1 referring to the usher's ability to sway other's actions. |
|  | And yet, i'faith, I will not. |
| 628 |  |  |
|  | [*Drops the letter*.] |  |
| 630 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Lord of Heaven! |  |
| 632 | What, did it burn your hands? Hold, hold, I pray. |  |
|  | And let the words within it fire your heart. | = punning with *burn*. |
| 634 |  |  |
|  | [*Gives her the letter again*.] |  |
| 636 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** I wonder how the devil he found you out | = *devil* here is a one-syllable word: *de'il*. |
| 638 | To be his spokesman. − Oh, the Duke would thank you |  |
|  | If he knew how you urged me for his son. | = on behalf of. |
| 640 |  |  |
|  | [*Reads the letter*.] |  |
| 642 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***[*Aside*]The Duke! I have fretted her, | = "successfully worn down (*fretted*)1 her resistance" |
| 644 | Even to the liver, and had much ado | = the *liver* was believed to be the seat of passion. |
|  | To make her take it; but I knew 'twas sure, |  |
| 646 | For he that cannot turn and wind a woman |  |
|  | Like silk about his finger is no man. |  |
| 648 | I'll make her answer 't too. | 648: now that Bassiolo has gotten Margaret to finally receive the letter, he must convince her to answer it! |
|  |  |
| 650 | ***Marg.*** Oh, here's good stuff! |  |
|  | Hold, pray take it for your pains to bring it. |  |
| 652 |  |  |
|  | [*Returning the letter*.] |  |
| 654 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Lady, you err in my reward a little, |  |
| 656 | Which must be a kind answer to this letter. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 658 | ***Marg.*** Nay then, i'faith, 'twere best you brought a priest, | = "you might as well bring, etc." Margaret is sarcastic. |
|  | And then your client, and then keep the door. | = ie. keep watch at. |
| 660 | Gods me, I never knew so rude a man! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 662 | ***Bass.***Well, you shall answer; I'll fetch pen and paper. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 664 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 666 | ***Marg.***Poor usher, how wert thou wrought to this brake? | = manipulated into this snare or entanglement;2 Margaret expresses pity for Bassiolo for being deceived into becoming involved in Vincentio's scheme; but, as we noted, she plays her part perfectly. |
|  | Men work on one another for we women, |  |
| 668 | Nay, each man on himself; and all in one | = ie. all in one voice,5 ie. unanimously. |
|  | Say, “No man is content that lies alone.” |  |
| 670 | Here comes our gullèd squire. | = deceived. |
|  |  |  |
| 672 | ***Bass.*** Here, mistress, write. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 674 | ***Marg.***What should I write? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 676 | ***Bass.*** An answer to this letter. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 678 | ***Marg.***Why, sir, I see no cause of answer in it; | 678: "I see nothing in this letter that compels me to answer it." |
|  | But if you needs will show how much you rule me, |
| 680 | Sit down and answer it as you please yourself; |  |
|  | Here is your paper, lay it fair afore you. | = "squarely in front of".1,5 |
| 682 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Lady, content; I'll be your secretary. | = be satisfied. |
| 684 |  |  |
|  | [*He sits down to write*.] |  |
| 686 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***[*Aside*] I fit him in this task; he thinks his pen |  |
| 688 | The shaft of Cupid in an amorous letter. | = ie. "is like an arrow". |
|  |  |  |
| 690 | ***Bass.*** Is here no great worth of your answer, say you? | 690: "do you really think that there is nothing in this letter which deserves a response from you?" Bassiolo is responding to Margaret's assertion of line 678. |
|  | Believe it, 'tis exceedingly well writ. |
| 692 |  |
|  | ***Marg.***So much the more unfit for me to answer, |  |
| 694 | And therefore let your style and it contend. | = humorous: "why don't you see how well your writing (*style*) does in competition with Vincentio's?" |
|  |  |  |
| 696 | ***Bass.*** Well, you shall see I will not be far short, | = "my writing will not appear too poorly in comparison." |
|  | Although, indeed, I cannot write so well |  |
| 698 | When one is by as when I am alone. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 700 | ***Marg.***Oh, a good scribe must write though twenty talk, | = "even if a score of people are talking all around him (ie. so as to be great distractions)". |
|  | And he talk to them too. |
| 702 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Well, you shall see. |  |
| 704 |  |  |
|  | [*He writes*.] |  |
| 706 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] |  |
| 708 | A proper piece of scribeship, there's no doubt; | = OED defines the word as "the office of a scribe", but the sense here may be "writing". |
|  | Some words picked out of proclamatiöns, | 709-10: Margaret, for the audience's entertainment, details Bassiolo's expected inspirations for his writing. |
| 710 | Or great men's speeches, or well-selling pamphlets: |
|  | See how he rubs his temples; I believe |  |
| 712 | His muse lies in the back part of his brain, | = inspiration; Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*, all begin with an invocation to one of the nine Muses for inspiration; the Muses were Greek goddesses who dedicated themselves to the protection of all the arts. |
|  | Which, thick and gross, is hard to be brought forward. − | = *which* refers to *his muse* (Smith). = ie. hard-pressed. |
| 714 | What, is it loath to come? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 716 | ***Bass.*** No, not a whit: |  |
|  | Pray hold your peace a little. | = "be silent". |
| 718 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] |  |
| 720 | He sweats with bringing on his heavy style; | = serious or weighty.1 |
|  | I'll ply him still till he sweat all his wit out. − |  |
| 722 | What man, not yet? | = "not finished yet?" |
|  |  |  |
| 724 | ***Bass.***'Swoons, you'll not extort it from a man! | = yet another variation of *God's wounds* |
|  | How do you like the word *endear*? |  |
| 726 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** O fie upon't! | = a phrase expressing scornful reproach.1 |
| 728 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Nay, then, I see your judgment. What say you |  |
| 730 | to *condole*? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 732 | ***Marg.*** Worse and worse! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 734 | ***Bass.*** Oh brave! I should make a sweet answer, if I | = great (sarcastic). |
|  | should use no words but of your admittance. |  |
| 736 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Well, sir, write what you please. |  |
| 738 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***  Is *model* a good word with you? | = Parrot has cleverly figured out that *endear*, *condole* and *model* were all words which, as of 1606, were relatively new to the English vocabulary, appearing for the first time in surviving texts in 1586, 1588, and 1570 respectively, as per the OED; Bassiolo is trying very hard to incorporate such effective and new words into his letter, and show off his learning at the same time. |
| 740 |  |
|  | ***Marg.***  Put them together, I pray. |  |
| 742 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** So I will, I warrant you! [*He writes*.] |  |
| 744 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] See, see, see, now it comes pouring |  |
| 746 | down. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 748 | ***Bass.*** I hope you'll take no exceptions to *believe it*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 750 | ***Marg.*** Out upon't! That phrase is so run out of breath | 750*f*: Margaret complains about how trite the phrase *believe* *it* has become. |
|  | in trifles, that we shall have no belief at all in earnest |
| 752 | shortly. “Believe it, 'tis a pretty feather.” “Believe it, a |  |
|  | dainty rush.” “Believe it, an excellent cockscomb.” | = fool (indirectly suggesting Bassiolo). |
| 754 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** So, so, so; your exceptions sort very collaterally. | 755: "your objections fall out (*sort*) away from the main point (*collaterally*).3 |
| 756 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Collaterally! There's a fine word now; wrest | = work, with a sense of "twisting".1 |
| 758 | in that if you can by any means. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 760 | ***Bass.*** I thought she would like the very worst of them | = ie. of the sophisticated words. |
|  | all! − How think you? Do not I write, and hear, and |  |
| 762 | talk too now? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 764 | ***Marg.*** By my soul, if you can tell what you write now, |  |
|  | you write very readily. |  |
| 766 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** That you shall see straight. | = right away. |
| 768 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** But do you not write that you speak now? | = ie. that which. |
| 770 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Oh yes; do you not see how I write it? I cannot |  |
| 772 | write when anybody is by me, I! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 774 | ***Marg.*** God's my life! Stay, man; you'll make it too | = ie. "stop already". |
|  | long. |  |
| 776 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Nay, if I cannot tell what belongs to the length | 777-8: "as if I could not tell how long a lady's instrument of wooing should be", with a bawdy sense. |
| 778 | of a lady's device, i'faith! |
|  |  |  |
| 780 | ***Marg.*** But I will not have it so long. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 782 | ***Bass.*** If I cannot fit you! | = satisfy, suit. Lines 780-2 are no doubt intended by Chapman to be double entendres. |
|  |  |
| 784 | ***Marg.*** Oh me, how it comes upon him! Prithee be |  |
|  | short. |  |
| 786 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Well, now I have done, and now I will read it: |  |
| 788 |  |  |
|  | Y*our lordship's motive accommodating my* | 789-795: Bassiolo demonstrates, in this very funny attempt at a love letter, that he does not really understand yet how to use the aforementioned new words, or many others, such as *accommodating*, *negotiate*, and *duello*,as well as the phrase *out of one's element*, all of which first appeared in the late 16th century. |
| 790 | *thoughts with the very model of my heart's mature* |
|  | *consideration, it shall not be out of my element to* |
| 792 | *negotiate with you in this amorous duello; wherein* |
|  | *I will condole with you that our project cannot he so* |
| 794 | *collaterally made as our endeared hearts may very* |
|  | *well seem to insinuate*. |  |
| 796 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** No more, no more; fie upon this! |  |
| 798 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Fie upon this? He's accursed that has to do with |  |
| 800 | these unsound women of judgment: if this be not good, | = ie. women of unsound judgment. |
|  | i'faith! |  |
| 802 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** But 'tis so good, 'twill not be thought to come | 803-4: the sense is, "oh, no, you misunderstand me: you wrote too good a letter for anyone to believe it had been composed by me, a mere woman." |
| 804 | from a woman's brain. |
|  |  |  |
| 806 | ***Bass.*** That's another matter. | 806: Margaret has mollified the momentarily upset usher. |
|  |  |  |
| 808 | ***Marg.*** Come, I will write myself. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 810 | [*She sits down to write*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 812 | ***Bass.***O' God's name lady! And yet I will not lose this | 812-4: Bassiolo will hang on to his masterpiece to use on behalf of another lady; however, Chapman never follows up on this idea. |
|  | I warrant you; I know for what lady this will serve as |
| 814 | fit. |
|  |  |  |
| 816 | [*Folding up his letter*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 818 | Now we shall have a sweet piece of inditement. | = composition.2 Bassiolo has low expectations for Margaret's letter. |
|  |  |
| 820 | ***Marg.*** How spell you *foolish*? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 822 | ***Bass.*** F-oo-l-i-sh. | 822: in his 1578 publication, *First Fruits*, lexicographer John Florio, in writing out the alphabet, listed *ee* and *oo* as "letters" distinct from *e* and *o* in its alphabet. |
|  | [*Aside*] She will presume t' indite that cannot spell. | 823: "she, who cannot spell, will presume to compose (*indite*)." |
| 824 |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** How spell you *usher*? |  |
| 826 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** 'Sblood, you put not in those words together, do |  |
| 828 | you? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 830 | ***Marg.*** No, not together. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 832 | ***Bass.*** What is betwixt, I pray? | = ie. between the two words. |
|  |  |  |
| 834 | ***Marg.***  *As the*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 836 | ***Bass.*** *Ass the*? Betwixt *foolish* and *usher*? God's |  |
|  | my life, *foolish ass the usher*! |  |
| 838 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Nay, then, you are so jealous of your wit! Now | = vigilant or protective.1 = cleverness. |
| 840 | read all I have written, I pray. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 842 | ***Bass.*** [*Reads*] “*I am not so foolish as the usher* |  |
|  | *would make me*” − Oh, so foolish as the usher would |  |
| 844 | make me? Wherein would I make you foolish? | = "how do". |
|  |  |  |
| 846 | ***Marg.***Why, sir, in willing me to believe he loved me |  |
|  | so well, being so mere a stranger. | = complete. |
| 848 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Oh, is't so? You may say so, indeed. |  |
| 850 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Cry mercy, sir, and I will write so too. |  |
| 852 |  |  |
|  | [*She begins to write, but stops*.] |  |
| 854 |  |  |
|  | And yet my hand is so vile. Pray thee sit thee down, | = handwriting. |
| 856 | and write, as I bid thee. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 858 | ***Bass.*** With all my heart, lady! What shall I write now? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 860 | ***Marg.*** You shall write this, sir: *I am not so foolish to* |  |
|  | *think you love me, being so mere a stranger* − |  |
| 862 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** [*Writing*] “So mere a stranger” − |  |
| 864 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** *And yet I know love works strangely* − |  |
| 866 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***  “Love works strangely” − |  |
| 868 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** *And therefore take heed by whom you speak* | 869-870: "be careful regarding by whose agency (ie. meaning Bassiolo) you speak of your love for me -" |
| 870 | *for love* − |
|  |  |  |
| 872 | ***Bass.*** “Speak for love” − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 874 | ***Marg.*** *For he may speak for himself* − | 874*ff*: *he* again refers to the usher, and though Margaret's flood of pronouns makes her exact intent ambiguous, she seems to be suggesting that Vincentio must be careful because Bassiolo may use his powers of persuasion to work on her for himself, which further serves to implicate the usher in their plot. Either way, as Smith observes, Bassiolo is oblivious to the substance of her dictation, as he is too busy writing, and "cannot write and think simultaneously" (p. 70). |
|  |  |
| 876 | ***Bass.*** “May speak for himself” − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 878 | ***Marg.*** *Not that I desire it* − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 880 | ***Bass.***  “Desire it” − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 882 | ***Marg.*** *But, if he do, you may speed, I confess*. | = *speed* here means "fail", though it was often used to mean "succeed"; Margaret continues to equivocate.1,5 |
|  |  |
| 884 | ***Bass.*** “Speed, I confess.” |  |
|  |  |  |
| 886 | ***Marg.*** *But let that pass, I do not love to discourage* |  |
|  | *anybody* − |  |
| 888 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** “Discourage anybody – “ |  |
| 890 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** *Do you, or he, pick out what you can; and* | = perhaps meaning "extract whatever meaning you can from this letter", or "both you and he are free to try to obtain (my love) as best as you can"; Margaret continues to be obscure. |
| 892 | *so, farewell!* |
|  |  |
| 894 | ***Bass.*** “And so, farewell.” Is this all? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 896 | ***Marg.*** Ay, and he may thank your siren's tongue that | = the *Sirens* were the mythological sea creatures who lured sailors to their deaths with their singing; the allusion here thus compliments Bassiolo again for his smooth tongue. |
|  | it is so much. |
| 898 |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** [*Looking over the letter*] A proper letter, if you |  |
| 900 | mark it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 902 | ***Marg.*** Well, sir, though it be not so proper as the |  |
|  | writer, yet 'tis as proper as the inditer. Every woman | = the one who composed it; note Margaret's little rhyme. |
| 904 | cannot be a gentleman usher; they that cannot go | 904-5: *go before* = the usher, as we have observed, would precede his master or mistress as he or she moved about. |
|  | before must come behind. |
| 906 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Well, lady, this I will carry instantly: I commend |  |
| 908 | me t'ye, lady. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 910 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 912 | ***Marg.*** Pitiful usher, what a pretty sleight | = trickery.2 |
|  | Goes to the working up of everything! |  |
| 914 | What sweet variety serves a woman's wit! |  |
|  | We make men sue to us for that we wish. |  |
| 916 | Poor men, hold out awhile, and do not sue. | 914-5: in this scene-closing rhyming couplet, Margaret gives some heartfelt advice to men: "if you stop so obviously pursuing women, the women, against tradition, will come after you." |
|  | And, spite of custom, we will sue to you. |
| 918 |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | END OF ACT III. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ACT IV. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | SCENE I. |  |
|  | *Before the House of Strozza*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Poggio, running in,* |  |
|  | *and knocking at Cynanche's door*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Pog.*** Oh, God, how weary I am! Aunt, Madam |  |
| 2 | Cynanche, aunt! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 4 | *Enter Cynanche*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 6 | ***Cyn.*** How now? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 8 | ***Pog.*** O God, aunt! O God, aunt! O God! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 10 | ***Cyn.*** What bad news brings this man? Where is my lord? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 12 | ***Pog.*** Oh, aunt, my uncle! He's shot! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 14 | ***Cyn.*** Shot? Ay me! |  |
|  | How is he shot? |  |
| 16 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Why, with a forkèd shaft, | = barbed arrow;3 the head of the arrow would, at its base, have two hooks extending in the reverse direction, making it impossible to pull out without causing greater damage to the wounded person's insides. |
| 18 | As he was hunting, full in his left side. |
|  |  |
| 20 | ***Cyn.*** Oh me accursed! Where is he? Bring me; where? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 22 | ***Pog.*** Coming with Doctor Benevemus; |  |
|  | I'll leave you, and go tell my Lord Vincentio. |  |
| 24 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
| 26 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Benevemus, with others,* |  |
| 28 | *bringing in Strozza with an arrow in his side*. | = the others could be carrying Strozza in, or he could be walking with their support. |
|  |  |
| 30 | ***Cyn.*** See the sad sight; I dare not yield to grief, |  |
|  | But force feigned patience to recomfort him. − | = hearten or console.1 |
| 32 | My lord, what chance is this? How fares your lordship? | = "what happened?" *chance* = occurrence. |
|  |  |  |
| 34 | ***Stroz.***Wounded, and faint with anguish; let me rest. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 36 | ***Ben.*** A chair! | 36: the doctor calls for a litter. |
|  |  |  |
| 38 | ***Cyn.*** Oh, Doctor, is't a deadly hurt? | = a mortal wound. |
|  |  |  |
| 40 | ***Ben.*** I hope not, madam, though not free from danger. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 42 | ***Cyn.*** Why pluck you not the arrow from his side? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 44 | ***Ben.*** We cannot, lady; the forked head so fast |  |
|  | Sticks in the bottom of his solid rib. |  |
| 46 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***No mean then, Doctor, rests there to educe it? | = means, ie. way. = draw it out.1 |
| 48 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.*** This only, my good lord, to give your wound |  |
| 50 | A greater orifice, and in sunder break | = into separate pieces.1 |
|  | The piercèd rib, which being so near the midriff, | = the sense seems to be "ribcage". |
| 52 | And opening to the region of the heart, |  |
|  | Will be exceeding dangerous to your life. |  |
| 54 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** I will not see my bosom mangled so, |  |
| 56 | Nor sternly be anatomized alive; | = roughly or harshly.2 = dissected.1 |
|  | I'll rather perish with it sticking still. |  |
| 58 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Oh no! Sweet Doctor, think upon some help. |  |
| 60 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.***  I told you all that can be thought in art, | = knowledge or science.2 |
| 62 | Which since your lordship will not yield to use, |  |
|  | Our last hope rests in Nature's secret aid, | = *Nature* could refer to the body's own power to heal itself.1 |
| 64 | Whose power at length may happily expel it. | = I am reminded of the wound received by Union General Winfield Scott Hancock during the Battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, in the middle of the American Civil War; a minié ball (rifle bullet) had entered his leg, and for many months afterwards pieces of bone would be expelled by the hideous wound. |
|  |  |
| 66 | ***Stroz.*** Must we attend at Death's abhorrèd door |  |
|  | The torturing delays of slavish Nature? |  |
| 68 | My life is in mine own powers to dissolve: | 68-69: "since I can myself choose to end my life, can I not therefore end my pains with the same decision?" |
|  | And why not then the pains that plague my life? |  |
| 70 | Rise, Furies, and this fury of my bane | 70-71: *Rise…conquer* = Strozza invokes the *Furies* (classical mythology's spirits of madness) to drive him mad, and in so doing *conquer* his pain by making him senseless to it.3  *this fury of my bane* = his pain (*bane* = ruin or destruction)2. |
|  | Assail and conquer: what men madness call | 71-74: *what men…reason* = madness, which is not capable of experiencing physical sensation, stops a man's ability to reason, thus ending his hoping and fearing; and thus to choose madness is reasonable. |
| 72 | (That hath no eye to sense, but frees the soul, |
|  | Exempt of hope and fear, with instant fate) |
| 74 | Is manliest reason; − manliest reason, then, |  |
|  | Resolve and rid me of this brutish life, | = dissolve. = animal-like existence. |
| 76 | Hasten the cowardly protracted cure | 76-7: *Hasten…diseases* = "quickly bring on death (*the cure*), which men hold onto in a cowardly fashion."5 |
|  | Of all diseases. King of physicians, Death, |  |
| 78 | I'll dig thee from this mine of misery. | 78: a brief mining metaphor, with *dig* and *mine*. |
|  |  |  |
| 80 | ***Cyn.*** Oh, hold, my lord! This is no Christian part, | = Christianity has always looked on suicide as a sin. |
|  | Nor yet scarce manly, when your mankind foe, |  |
| 82 | Imperious Death, shall make your groans his trumpets | 82-87: an extended military metaphor, comparing one's life to a *fort* that must be defended. The *trumpets* are the signals sent by the besiegers of a fort, summoning a parley to discuss surrender (*resignation*). Similarly, Death will hear Strozza's groans as a signal that he is ready to surrender his life. |
|  | To summon resignation of Life's fort, |
| 84 | To fly without resistance; you must force |  |
|  | A countermine of fortitude, more deep | = a besieging force would often dig a tunnel (or mine) underneath a fort, hoping to cause a collapse of the walls above the tunnel, sometimes with the help of explosives; those inside a fort might dig a tunnel in the opposite direction (a *countermine*) to intercept the original tunnel. |
| 86 | Than this poor mine of pains, to blow him up, |  |
|  | And spite of him live victor, though subdued; | = "and in spite of death, conquer it, even as it overcomes you." |
| 88 | Patience in torment is a valour more |  |
|  | Than ever crowned th' Alcmenean conqueror. | 88-89: patience displayed while one is tormented by pain deserves more honour than was ever even showered on Hercules (the *Alcmenean conqueror,* whose parents were the god Zeus and the mortal *Alcmene* of Thebes).  There may also be an allusion by Cynanche to the story of the death of the hero: his wife Deianeira, worried Hercules would fall in love with a young princess he had recently captured, sent him a charmed garment to wear in the hopes it would keep him loyal to her; the garment, which unbeknownst to Deianeira was poisoned, caused Hercules such suffering that he could not bear it, and only his death could bring him relief.  If this indeed is the story Cynanche has in mind, then her point would be that Strozza has an opportunity to surpass Hercules in glory if he can keep his composure now when even Hercules, similarly situated, could not. |
| 90 |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Rage is the vent of torment; let me rise. |  |
| 92 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Men do but cry that rage in miseries, |  |
| 94 | And scarcely beaten children become cries; | 94: crying is fitting for *scarcely beaten children*, ie. it *becomes* them.3 |
|  | Pains are like women's clamours, which the less | 95-96: as with a nagging woman, pain will choose to bother you less if you ignore it. |
| 96 | They find men's patience stirred, the more they cease. |  |
|  | Of this 'tis said afflictions bring to God, | = ie. bring one closer to God. |
| 98 | Because they make us like him, drinking up | 98-99: *drinking up…sense* = ie. by taking away one's pleasures with which we indulge our sensual needs, taking us away from God." |
|  | Joys that deform us with the lusts of sense, |
| 100 | And turn our general being into soul, |  |
|  | Whose actions, simply formèd and applied, | 101-2: typically difficult Chapman lines: the soul, when brought into being and put into operation (*applied*)1 on its own (*simply*),1 removes the body's weaknesses from consideration (*respect*),1,3 ie. the human soul, when existing without a body, does not suffer from the infirmities and pain that afflict the body. |
| 102 | Draw all our body's frailties from respect. |
|  |  |  |
| 104 | ***Stroz.***Away with this unmed'cinable balm | = having no curative powers.1 |
|  | Of worded breath! Forbear, friends, let me rest; |  |
| 106 | I swear I will be bands unto myself. | = restraint;1 Strozza promises not to hurt himself. |
|  |  |  |
| 108 | ***Ben.*** That will become your lordship best indeed. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 110 | ***Stroz.***I'll break away, and leap into the sea, | 110-2: Parrott suggests this outburst from Strozza, so emotional compared with his previous, measured utterance, must be the result of a fresh wave of agonizing pain. |
|  | Or from some turret cast me headlong down |  |
| 112 | To shiver this frail carcase into dust. | = break into small pieces.1 = carcass, body. |
|  |  |  |
| 114 | ***Cyn.*** Oh, my dear lord, what unlike words are these | 114-5: Cynanche reacts to Strozza's sudden change in tone. |
|  | To the late fruits of your religious noblesse? | = ie. "(your) previous statement". = pious nobility.3 |
| 116 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Leave me, fond woman! | = foolish. |
| 118 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** I'll be hewn from hence | = severed, as with an axe;1 the sense of the line is similar to "they will have to drag me away from you." |
| 120 | Before I leave you; − help, me, gentle Doctor. |
|  |  |  |
| 122 | ***Ben.*** Have patience, good my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 124 | ***Stroz.*** Then lead me in; |  |
|  | Cut off the timber of this cursèd shaft, |  |
| 126 | And let the forked pile canker to my heart. | = arrowhead. = cause to corrode or waste away.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 128 | ***Cyn.*** Dear lord, resolve on humble sufferance. | 128: "please decide to humbly accept this suffering", ie. as opposed to violently ranting about wanting to die. |
|  |  |
| 130 | ***Stroz.***I will not hear thee, woman; be content. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 132 | ***Cyn.*** Oh, never shall my counsels cease to knock | 132-4: Cynanche shall not cease to admonish Strozza until Christian patience succeeds in removing her husband's desire to die (his *pagan sin*); *salve* = heal. |
|  | At thy impatient ears, till they fly in |
| 134 | And salve with Christian patience pagan sin. |
|  |  |  |
| 136 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT IV, SCENE II. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Lasso.* |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Vincentio with a letter in his hand, Bassiolo*. | = based on Bassiolo's speech at 17*f* below, the letter Vincentio carries is the one the usher wrote on behalf of Margaret. |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Bass.***This is her letter, sir; − you now shall see | 1-4: having previously given Vincentio the letter Margaret wrote, Bassiolo asks the prince to read his own missive; he cannot believe Margaret chose to send her own letter over his! |
| 2 | How seely a thing 'tis in respect of mine, | = feeble. = ie. compared to. |
|  | And what a simple woman she has proved |  |
| 4 | To refuse mine for hers; I pray look here. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 6 | ***Vinc.***Soft, sir, I know not, I being her sworn servant, | = "hold on there". = lover or devotee. |
|  | If I may put up these disgraceful words, | = put up with, tolerate. |
| 8 | Given of my mistress, without touch of honour. | 8: *Given of* = spoken about; Vincentio pretends to be offended by the usher's criticism of Margaret's own composition.  *without touch of honour* = "without it tarnishing my honour." |
|  |  |
| 10 | ***Bass.*** Disgraceful words! I protest I speak not |  |
|  | To disgrace her, but to grace myself. |  |
| 12 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Nay then, sir, if it be to grace yourself, |  |
| 14 | I am content; but otherwise, you know, |  |
|  | I was to take exceptions to a king. | 15: "I would take exception even if a king had said such words." |
| 16 |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Nay, y' are i' th' right for that; but read, I pray; |  |
| 18 | If there be not more choice words in that letter |  |
|  | Than in any three of Guevara's *Golden Epistles*, | = *Antonio de Guevara* (1490-1544) was a Spanish monk, bishop, and writer. The book referred to is *Epistolas familiares*, an influential work which was translated into all the major European languages. A comment of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911) on the *Epistolas* is worth quoting: this book is "in reality a collection of stiff and formal essays which have long ago fallen into merited oblivion."10 |
| 20 | I am a very ass. How think you, Vince? |
|  |  |
| 22 | ***Vinc.*** By Heaven, no less, sir; it is the best thing − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 24 | [*He rends it*.] | 24: Vincentio tears up the letter; Smith suggests he does so accidentally. |
|  |  |  |
| 26 | Gods, what a beast am I! | 26: Vincentio immediately expresses regret. |
|  |  |  |
| 28 | ***Bass.*** It is no matter, | 28-29: Vincentio may have dropped the two halves of the letter, which Bassiolo picks up here; alternatively, the usher may simply take the pieces out of Vincentio's hands. |
|  | I can set it together again. |
| 30 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Pardon me, sir, I protest I was ravished; | = "I swear I was overcome with emotion." Vincentio is swept away by the power of the usher's writing! |
| 32 | But was it possible she should prefer | 32-33: Vincentio says he cannot imagine that Margaret would think her own letter better than Bassiolo's. |
|  | Hers before this? |
| 34 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Oh, sir, she cried “Fie upon this!”' |  |
| 36 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***  Well, I must say nothing; love is blind, you know, |  |
| 38 | and can find no fault in his beloved. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 40 | ***Bass.***Nay, that's most certain. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 42 | ***Vinc.*** Gi'e 't me; I'll have this letter. | 42: Vincentio cleverly wants to keep the letter written by Bassiolo; this evidence of the usher's participation in the plot will guarantee his silence!  *Gi'e 't me* = "give it to me." |
|  |  |
| 44 | ***Bass.*** No, good Vince; 'tis not worth it. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 46 | ***Vinc.*** I'll ha't, i'faith. [*Taking Bassiolo's letter*.] | = have it. |
|  | Here's enough in it to serve for my letters as long as | = ie. "serve as a model for future letters I will write". |
| 48 | I live; I'll keep it to breed on as 'twere. |  |
|  | But I much wonder you could make her write. |  |
| 50 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***  Indeed there were some words belonged to that. | 51: "indeed, it took some doing on my part" (Smith, p. 54). |
| 52 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** How strong an influence works in well-placed words! |  |
| 54 | And yet there must be a preparèd love | 54*ff*: continuing to manipulate Bassiolo, Vincentio now suggests the usher's power to persuade Margaret must have been inspired by her love for Bassiolo. The sense of *prepared* in line 54 seems to be "pre-existing". |
|  | To give those words so mighty a command. |
| 56 | Or 'twere impossible they should move so much: |
|  | And will you tell me true? |
| 58 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** In anything. |  |
| 60 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***  Does not this lady love you? |  |
| 62 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Love me? Why, yes; I think she does not hate me. |  |
| 64 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Nay, but, i'faith, does she not love you dearly? |  |
| 66 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** No, I protest! |  |
| 68 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Nor have you never kissed her? |  |
| 70 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Kissed her? That's nothing. | 71: Bassiolo assumes Vincentio is referring to an innocent kiss, especially as Bassiolo would likely have been in the household since Margaret was a child. |
| 72 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** But you know my meaning; |  |
| 74 | Have you not been, as one would say, afore me? | = before; Vincentio intends this to be understood as suggestive. |
|  |  |
| 76 | ***Bass.*** Not I, I swear! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 78 | ***Vinc.*** Oh, y' are too true to tell. | = loyal (to Margaret). |
|  |  |  |
| 80 | ***Bass.*** Nay, by my troth, she has, I must confess, | = "I swear". |
|  | Used me with good respect, and nobly still; | = treated. = always. |
| 82 | But for such matters − |  |
|  |  |  |
| 84 | **Vinc.**[*Aside*] Very little more | 84-85: "if I keep pushing him, I can get him to take responsibility for (*take upon*) the loss of Margaret's virginity (*maidenhead*) on himself!" |
|  | Would make him take her maidenhead upon him. − |
| 86 | Well, friend, I rest yet in a little doubt, | 86-87: switching tactics, Vincentio now indirectly accuses Bassiolo of forging the letter from Margaret. |
|  | This was not hers. |
| 88 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** 'Twas, by that light that shines! | = ie. "I swear (on that candle)!" |
| 90 | And I'll go fetch her to you to confirm it. | 90: Vincentio has successfully tricked Bassiolo into fetching Margaret to meet him. |
|  |  |  |
| 92 | ***Vinc.*** O passing friend! | 92: "what a good friend!" |
|  |  |  |
| 94 | ***Bass.*** But when she comes, in any case be bold, | 94*ff*: Bassiolo now presumes to advise Vincentio how to woo Margaret. |
|  | And come upon her with some pleasing thing, | = Bassiolo means "some clever response", but the phrase is suggestive. |
| 96 | To show y' are pleased, however she behaves her: |
|  | As, for example, if she turn her back, |  |
| 98 | Use you that action you would do before, | = gesturing. |
|  | And court her thus: |  |
| 100 | “Lady, your back part is as fair to me |  |
|  | As is your fore-part.” |  |
| 102 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** 'Twill be most pleasing. |  |
| 104 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Ay, for if you love |  |
| 106 | One part above another, 'tis a sign |  |
|  | You like not all alike; and the worst part |  |
| 108 | About your mistress you must think as fair, |  |
|  | As sweet and dainty, as the very best, |  |
| 110 | So much for so much, and considering, too, |  |
|  | Each several limb and member in his kind. | = individual. = "according to its nature" (quoting Parrott). |
| 112 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** As a man should. |  |
| 114 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** True! Will you think of this? | = remember. |
| 116 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** I hope I shall. |  |
| 118 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** But if she chance to laugh, |  |
| 120 | You must not lose your countenance, but devise | = ie. composure. |
|  | Some speech to show you pleased, even being laughed at. |  |
| 122 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Ay, but what speech? |  |
| 124 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** God's precious, man, do something of yourself! |  |
| 126 | But I'll devise a speech. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 128 | [*He studies*.] | = thinks hard. |
|  |  |  |
| 130 | ***Vinc.*** [*Aside*] Inspire him, Folly. | 130: Vincentio apostrophizes to personified *Folly*. |
|  |  |  |
| 132 | ***Bass.*** Or 'tis no matter; be but bold enough, | 132-4: Bassiolo cannot yet come up with another witty comeback. |
|  | And laugh when she laughs, and it is enough; |
| 134 | I'll fetch her to you. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 136 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 138 | ***Vinc.***Now was there ever such a demi-lance, | = literally a cavalryman carrying a short lance, but applied humorously in Chapman's time to mean "cavalier."1 |
|  | To bear a man so clear through thick and thin? | = unharmed.5 |
| 140 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Bassiolo.* |  |
| 142 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Or hark you, sir, if she should steal a laughter | 143-5: Bassiolo finally has come up with a clever quip for Vincentio to make should Margaret laugh at him. |
| 144 | Under her fan, thus you may say: “Sweet lady, |  |
|  | If you will laugh and lie down, I am pleased.” | = the name of a card game; Vincentio, in his response, picks up on the phrase's suggestive character. |
| 146 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** And so I were, by Heaven! How know you that? | = would be. |
| 148 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** 'Slid, man, I'll hit your very thoughts in these things! | 149: the sense is, "by God, I know exactly how to fit my words to your thoughts in this area!"  *'Slid* = God's eyelid, one of the odder Elizabethan oaths. |
| 150 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Fetch her, sweet friend; I'll hit your words, I warrant! |  |
| 152 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Be bold then, Vince, and press her to it hard; | 153-4: Bassiolo's last lines before exiting (albeit only briefly) comprise a rhyming couplet, as is sometimes done in Elizabethan drama; such final words often express a pithy and proverbial-sounding sentiment.  *of* in line 154 means "from". |
| 154 | A shame-faced man is of all women barred. |
|  |  |
| 156 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 158 | ***Vinc.***How eas'ly worthless men take worth upon them, | 158-160: note Vincentio's repeated use of the word *worth* to make his point. |
|  | And being over-credulous of their own worths, |
| 160 | Do underprize as much the worth of others. |  |
|  | The fool is rich, and absurd riches thinks | 161-2: to a rich fool, the clinking of his coins is like bells *ringing out* to proclaim all his merit.3 |
| 162 | All merit is rung out where his purse chinks. |
|  |  |  |
| 164 | *Enter Bassiolo and Margaret*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 166 | ***Bass.*** My lord, with much entreaty here's my lady. − |  |
|  | Nay, madam, look not back; − why, Vince, I say! | = Margaret tries to leave, which allows Vincentio at lines   173-4 to playfully use the first of the absurd flirting lines taught him by Bassiolo. |
| 168 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] Vince? Oh monstrous jest! | 169: Margaret is shocked that the usher dares call the prince by his first name! |
| 170 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** To her, for shame! | = "go to her" |
| 172 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Lady, your back part is as sweet to me |  |
| 174 | As all your fore-part. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 176 | ***Bass.*** [*Aside*] He missed a little: he said her back part | = misspoke, ie. messed up his line. |
|  | was sweet, when he should have said fair; but see, she |  |
| 178 | laughs most fitly to bring in the tother. − | = ie. the other, referring to the second riposte the usher gave Vincentio to use. |
|  | Vince, to her again; she laughs. |
| 180 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Laugh you, fair dame? |  |
| 182 | If you will laugh and lie down, I am pleased. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 184 | ***Marg.*** What villanous stuff is here? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 186 | ***Bass.*** Sweet mistress, of mere grace embolden now | 186-190: Bassiolo believes that Margaret is responding to Vincentio's lack of aggression in his wooing, rather than his quip, and nudges her to encourage (*embolden*) him.5 |
|  | The kind young prince here; it is only love |  |
| 188 | Upon my protestation that thus daunts | = "I swear" (*protestation* = affirmation).1 |
|  | His most heroic spirit: so awhile |  |
| 190 | I'll leave you close together; Vince, I say − | = privately, ie. alone. |
|  |  |  |
| 192 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 194 | ***Marg.*** Oh horrible hearing! Does he call you Vince? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 196 | ***Vinc.*** Oh, ay, what else? And I made him embrace me, |  |
|  | Knitting a most familiar league of friendship. | = tying together, uniting. = very common phrase of the era. |
| 198 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** But wherefore did you court me so absurdly? | = why. |
| 200 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** God's me, he taught me! I spake out of him. | = ie. "I swear", a phrase of attestation to the truth of an assertion. |
| 202 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Oh fie upon't! Could you for pity make him | 203-8: Margaret feels sorry for Bassiolo, that he must be the victim of Vincentio's manipulation. |
| 204 | Such a poor creature? 'Twas abuse enough | = agent or instrument.2 |
|  | To make him take on him such saucy friendship; | = impudent, ie. improper; Margaret rues that Vincentio insisted on shattering the difference in class between prince and servant. |
| 206 | And yet his place is great, for he's not only | 206-8: one of the usher's roles, as has been described previously, is to *go before*, ie. precede, his master or mistress in a procession; punning nicely, Margaret suggests Bassiolo is actually usher to the world, as he *goes before it* in all folly, ie. is the most foolish person on earth. |
|  | My father's usher, but the world's beside, |
| 208 | Because he goes before it all in folly. |
|  |  |  |
| 210 | ***Vinc.*** Well, in these homely wiles must our loves mask, | 210: "well, we must disguise our loves in these artless deceptions (*homely wiles*)."1 |
|  | Since power denies him his apparent right. | 211: an unclear line, but based on Margaret's response, perhaps Vincentio means something like, "since the powers that be are denying me of my right to openly love you." |
| 212 |  |
|  | ***Marg.***But is there no mean to dissolve that power, |  |
| 214 | And to prevent all further wrong to us |  |
|  | Which it may work by forcing marriage rites |  |
| 216 | Betwixt me and the Duke? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 218 | ***Vinc.*** No mean but one, | = means. |
|  | And that is closely to be married first, | = secretly. |
| 220 | Which I perceive not how we can perform; |  |
|  | For at my father's coming back from hunting, |  |
| 222 | I fear your father and himself resolve | 222-3: Vincentio worries that Strozza and the duke have concluded an agreement to have Margaret marry the prince's father immediately; *present* = immediate. |
|  | To bar my interest with his present nuptials. |
| 224 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***That shall they never do; may not we now | 225-6: vows taken by a couple pledging themselves to be man and wife were for practical purposes as binding as if they had been officially married by a minister or priest, especially if these vows were made in front of witnesses. |
| 226 | Our contract make, and marry before Heaven? |  |
|  | Are not the laws of God and Nature more | = ie. more powerful, to be respected more. |
| 228 | Than formal laws of men? Are outward rites | 228-230: *Are outward…within* = "is the superficial acting out of a formal wedding ceremony more powerful, ie. legally effective (*virtuous*)1 than the intent of the souls that take part in it?" The linguistic contrast is between *outward* and *within*. |
|  | More virtuous than the very substance is |
| 230 | Of holy nuptials solemnized within? |  |
|  | Or shall laws made to curb the common world, | = restrain or tame. = ordinary world, ie. the masses.2 |
| 232 | That would not be contained in form without them, | 232: common people's actions would not fall within the limits of moral behaviour if the laws did not exist to demarcate those boundaries. |
|  | Hurt them that are a law unto themselves? | 233: "so why should those laws be allowed to bring undesirable results to those of us who are born superior to the common people?" Smith notes that Chapman frequently commented on the superiority of the nobleclasses over the great unwashed (p. 81). |
| 234 | My princely love, 'tis not a priest shall let us; | = "hinder us", ie. by marrying Margaret to the duke. |
|  | But since th' eternal acts of our pure souls |  |
| 236 | Knit us with God, the soul of all the world, |  |
|  | He shall be priest to us; and with such rites |  |
| 238 | As we can here devise we will express |  |
|  | And strongly ratify our hearts' true vows, |  |
| 240 | Which no external violence shall dissolve. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 242 | ***Vinc.*** This is our only mean t' enjoy each other: |  |
|  | And, my dear life, I will devise a form |  |
| 244 | To execute the substance of our minds | = aim or goal.1 |
|  | In honoured nuptials. First, then, hide your face |  |
| 246 | With this your spotless white and virgin veil; | = without stain or sin. |
|  | Now this my scarf I'll knit about your arm, | = a broad sash-like cloth worn to ornament the prince's presumably fine clothes.1 |
| 248 | As you shall knit this other end on mine; |
|  | And as I knit it, here I vow by Heaven, |  |
| 250 | By the most sweet imaginary joys | = imagined; note how in lines 250-2 Vincentio intensifies his vow by swearing on a whole host of abstract concepts. |
|  | Of untried nuptials, by Love's ushering fire | = ie. as yet untested or not yet experienced. |
| 252 | Fore-melting beauty, and Love's flame itself, | = melting before or in front of .1 |
|  | As this is soft and pliant to your arm |  |
| 254 | In a circumferent flexure, so will I | = an encircling (*circumferent*) form.  *flexure* = condition of being curved.1 |
|  | Be tender of your welfare and your will | = solicitous. |
| 256 | As of mine own, as of my life and soul, |  |
|  | In all things, and for ever; only you |  |
| 258 | Shall have this care in fulness, only you | = "my exclusive care" (Smith, p. 82). |
|  | Of all dames shall be mine, and only you |  |
| 260 | I'll court, commend and joy in, till I die. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 262 | ***Marg.*** With like conceit on your arm this I tie, |  |
|  | And here in sight of Heaven, by it I swear | = when used in verse, *Heaven* is usually pronounced as a one-syllable word, with the medial *v* essentially omitted: *Hea'n*. |
| 264 | By my love to you, which commands my life, |  |
|  | By the dear price of such a constant husband | = high value. |
| 266 | As you have vowed to be, and by the joy |  |
|  | I shall embrace by all means to requite you, |  |
| 268 | I'll be as apt to govern as this silk, | = ie. to be ruled. |
|  | As private as my face is to this veil, | = ie. exclusive to Vincentio (Smith, p. 83). |
| 270 | And as far from offence as this from blackness. | = referring to her white veil. |
|  | I will be courted of no man but you; | = by. |
| 272 | In and for you shall be my joys and woes: |  |
|  | If you be sick, I will be sick, though well; |  |
| 274 | If you be well, I will be well, though sick: |  |
|  | Yourself alone my complete world shall be |  |
| 276 | Even from this hour to all eternity. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 278 | ***Vinc.***It is enough, and binds as much as marriage. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 280 | *Enter Bassiolo.* |  |
|  |  |  |
| 282 | ***Bass.***I'll see in what plight my poor lover stands, − |  |
|  | God's me, a beckons me to have me gone! | = he; Vincentio is waving him away. |
| 284 | It seems he's entered into some good vein; |  |
|  | I'll hence; Love cureth when he vents his pain. | = get out of here. = ie. is finally able to discourse on his love. |
| 286 |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
| 288 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Now, my sweet life, we both remember well |  |
| 290 | What we have vowed shall all be kept entire | = ie. maintained, insisted on. |
|  | Maugre our fathers' wraths, danger, and death; | = (even) in spite of. 2 |
| 292 | And to confirm this shall we spend our breath? | 292: "shall we swear to keep our wedding vows no matter what our fathers do or threaten to do to us?" |
|  | Be well advised, for yet your choice shall be | 293-4: Vincentio gives Margaret the opportunity to change her mind. |
| 294 | In all things as before, as large and free. | 294: *large* and *free* both mean unfettered or independent. |
|  |  |  |
| 296 | ***Marg.*** What I have vowed I'll keep, even past my death. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 298 | ***Vinc.*** And I: and now in token I dissolve | = symbolically. |
|  | Your virgin state, I take this snowy veil | = unmarried condition. |
| 300 | From your much fairer face, and claim the dues |  |
|  | Of sacred nuptials; and now, fairest Heaven, | 301-5: *fairest…respects* = Vincentio asks Heaven to bless their marriage; he compares the differences in purity between their marriage and those of the general population to the differences between the essential natures of Heaven and earth. |
| 302 | As thou art infinitely raised from earth, |  |
|  | Different and opposite, so bless this match, |  |
| 304 | As far removed from custom's popular sects, | = the customary beliefs of the general population.3 |
|  | And as unstained with her abhorred respects. | = untainted. = properties or qualities.1 |
| 306 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Bassiolo.* |  |
| 308 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Mistress, away! Poggio runs up and down, |  |
| 310 | Calling for Lord Vincentio; come away. |  |
|  | For hitherward he bends his clamorous haste. | = towards here. = turns. |
| 312 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Remember, love! |  |
| 314 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit Margaret and Bassiolo*.] |  |
| 316 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Or else forget me Heaven! |  |
| 318 | Why am I sought for by this Poggio? |  |
|  | The ass is great with child of some ill news, | = pregnant; this is a great line, a fabulous metaphor! |
| 320 | His mouth is never filled with other sound. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 322 | *Enter Poggio*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 324 | ***Pog.*** Where is my lord Vincentio? Where is my lord? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 326 | ***Vinc.***Here he is, ass; what an exclaiming keep'st thou! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 328 | ***Pog.*** 'Slud, my lord, I have followed you up and |  |
|  | down like a Tantalus pig till I have worn out my hose | 329: *Tantalus pig* = Poggio, mistaken, should have said *Tantony pig. Tantony* is short for *St. Anthony*, the patron saint of swineherds.1 According to Parrott, the pigs owned by the Hospital of St. Anthony in London were sometimes fed by passing people, and the pigs would occasionally then follow their benefactors around; thus, a *Tantony pig* became proverbial to describe a person who followed another around.3   *Tantalus*, on the other hand, was a Greek king and son of Zeus, who was punished for divulging his father's secrets by being forced to endure eternal punishment in Hades, wherein he was forever thirsty and hungry, the water and hanging fruit before him always shying away from his reach whenever he stretched out to get at them.8  Smith notes that in line 329, Poggio means "breeches" for *hose*; *passing* in line 331 means "exceedingly". |
| 330 | here-abouts, I'll be sworn, and yet you call me ass still, |
|  | but I can tell you passing ill news, my lord. |
| 332 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** I know that well, sir; thou never bring'st other; |  |
| 334 | What's your news now, I pray? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 336 | ***Pog.*** Oh, Lord, my lord uncle is shot in the side with an |  |
|  | arrow. |  |
| 338 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Plagues take thy tongue! Is he in any danger? |  |
| 340 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Oh, danger, ay; he has lien speechless this two | = lain. |
| 342 | hours, and talks so idly. | = crazily.2 note the ridiculously self-contradictory nature |
|  |  | of Poggio's assertions. |
| 344 | ***Vinc.*** Accursèd news! Where is he? Bring me to him. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 346 | ***Pog.*** Yes, do you lead, and I'll guide you to him. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 348 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT IV, SCENE III. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Strozza*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Strozza brought in a chair,* | = litter. |
|  | *Cynanche, with others*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Cyn.***  How fares it now with my dear lord and husband? |  |
| 2 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Come near me, wife; I fare the better far | 3*f*: Strozza's lengthy and touching speech, an encomium to wives, shows off Chapman's primary skill as a writer, the extended declamation on a single idea. You may wish also to note the several rhyming couplets tucked into the verse.  Note the wordplay of *fare* and *far* in line 3, the brief dining metaphor of *fare* and *sweet food* in line 4, and the extended alliteration with the letter *f* in lines 3 and 4 together. |
| 4 | For the sweet food of thy divine advice. |  |
|  | Let no man value at a little price | = ie. "too little a". |
| 6 | A virtuous woman's counsel; her winged spirit |  |
|  | Is feathered oftentimes with heavenly words, |  |
| 8 | And (like her beauty) ravishing, and pure; | = strongly moving, exciting high emotion. |
|  | The weaker body, still the stronger soul: | 9: a woman may be physically weaker than a man, but she always (*still*) has a *stronger soul*. |
| 10 | When good endeavours do her powers apply, | = "put her powers to use" (Smith, p. 85). |
|  | Her love draws nearest man's felicity. | = happiness. |
| 12 | Oh, what a treasure is a virtuous wife, |  |
|  | Discreet and loving! Not one gift on earth |  |
| 14 | Makes a man's life so highly bound to Heaven; |  |
|  | She gives him double forces, to endure | 15-16: a virtuous wife doubles a man's ability to both endure difficulties and enjoy pleasures. |
| 16 | And to enjoy, by being one with him, |
|  | Feeling his joys and griefs with equal sense; |  |
| 18 | And like the twins Hippocrates reports, | = ancient sources refer to a pair of brothers whom the 5th century B.C. physician Hippocrates declared to be twins, because the same disease struck each of them at the same time and progressed at the same rate and in the same way.3 Literature of the 16th century refers frequently to "Hippocrates' twins" who, for example, "the one suffering, both suffers: the one reioycing, both reioyce." |
|  | If he fetch sighs, she draws her breath as short; |  |
| 20 | If he lament, she melts herself in tears; |  |
|  | If he be glad, she triumphs; if he stir, |  |
| 22 | She moves his way; in all things his sweet ape: | = mimicker. |
|  | And is in alterations passing strange, | 23: a wife is, in such ability to match her mood to her husband's, quite exceptional (*passing strange*).1 |
| 24 | Himself divinely varied without change. | 24: a difficult line, but Smith gives it a try: though united as one, the wife is divinely different from her husband (as Eve was from Adam), but they are without meaningful difference (p. 86). |
|  | Gold is right precious, but his price infects | 25-30: Strozza compares other valuable objects and ideas to wives; superficially they appear just as dear as wives, but at closer inspection fall short in comparison.  *his price infects* = its (ie. gold's) value infects its owner, etc. |
| 26 | With pride and avarice; authority lifts | 26-28: *authority…hearts* = a man in position of authority or power can cause others to raise their hats or bow to him out of due respect, but cannot make even the most submissive person love him. |
|  | Hats from men's heads, and bows the strongest knees, |
| 28 | Yet cannot bend in rule the weakest hearts; |  |
|  | Music delights but one sense, nor choice meats; | 29-30: music delights only one sense - the hearing - and furthermore, its influence *fades* quickly once it stops playing; and delicacies and quality foods (*choice meats*) give pleasure to the sense of taste, but cause licentious thoughts (a surprisingly large number of foods were believed at the time to be aphrodisiacs). |
| 30 | One quickly fades, the other stirs to sin; |
|  | But a true wife both sense and soul delights, |  |
| 32 | And mixeth not her good with any ill; |  |
|  | Her virtues (ruling hearts) all powers command; | 33: by nature of her virtue, a loyal wife can get anyone to do anything. |
| 34 | All store without her leaves a man but poor, | = wealth or abundance.2 |
|  | And with her poverty is exceeding store; | 35: a man in literal poverty is wealthy if he has a good wife. |
| 36 | No time is tedious with her; her true worth |  |
|  | Makes a true husband think his arms enfold, |  |
| 38 | With her alone, a complete world of gold. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 40 | ***Cyn.*** I wish, dear love, I could deserve as much |  |
|  | As your most kind conceit hath well expressed; | = notion or elaborate expression.1 |
| 42 | But when my best is done, I see you wounded, |  |
|  | And neither can recure nor ease your pains. | = heal; this variation of "cure" was common in the 15th and 16th centuries.1 |
| 44 |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Cynanche, thy advice hath made me well; |  |
| 46 | My free submission to the hand of Heaven |  |
|  | Makes it redeem me from the rage of pain. |  |
| 48 | For though I know the malice of my wound |  |
|  | Shoots still the same distemper through my veins, | = disorder or derangement of the body.1 |
| 50 | Yet the judicial patience I embrace | = sensible, rational.1 |
|  | (In which my mind spreads her impassive powers | = ie. its (his mind's) insensibility to pain. |
| 52 | Through all my suff'ring parts) expels their frailty; | = ie. "the weakness (of my veins)." One wonders whether Chapman's audience would really be able to clearly follow such intricate sentences with their parenthetical asides and numerous pronouns. |
|  | And rendering up their whole life to my soul, |  |
| 54 | Leaves me nought else but soul; and so like her, | = ie. "nothing is left of me but my soul"; the sense of 50-55 is that Strozza has eased his own suffering by focusing on practicing *patience*, thereby separating himself from his violent and harmful emotions. |
|  | Free from the passions of my fuming blood. |
| 56 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Would God you were so; and that too much pain | 57-58: "I hope you are now free from such malignant emotions for the reason you state, and that your lack of pain at this moment is not caused by having too much of it"; Cynanche is hinting at her fear that Strozza has been driven out of his mind by his pain. |
| 58 | Were not the reason you felt sense of none. |
|  |  |  |
| 60 | ***Stroz.***Think'st thou me mad, Cynanche, for mad men, | 60-61: Strozza touches again on his earlier idea that madness ends one's ability to sense pain. |
|  | By pains ungoverned, have no sense of pain? |
| 62 | But I, I tell you, am quite contrary, |  |
|  | Eased with well governing my submitted pain; | = pain he has subdued or submitted to.1 |
| 64 | Be cheered then, wife, and look not for, in me, |  |
|  | The manners of a common wounded man. | 65: the immature and unrestrained behaviour he had previously exhibited, which was that expected of a common person, but not so acceptable in a noble. |
| 66 | Humility hath raised me to the stars; |  |
|  | In which (as in a sort of crystal globes) | = collection of crystal balls.1 |
| 68 | I sit and see things hid from human sight. | 68: Strozza announces he has received the gift of second sight. |
|  | Ay, even the very accidents to come | = occurrences, events.2 |
| 70 | Are present with my knowledge; the seventh day |  |
|  | The arrow-head will fall out of my side. |  |
| 72 | The seventh day, wife, the forked head will out. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 74 | ***Cyn.*** Would God it would, my lord, and leave you well! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 76 | ***Stroz.***Yes, the seventh day, I am assured it will; |  |
|  | And I shall live, I know it; I thank Heaven, |  |
| 78 | I know it well; and I'll teach my physician |  |
|  | To build his cures hereafter upon Heaven |  |
| 80 | More than on earthly med'cines; for I know |  |
|  | Many things shown me from the opened skies |  |
| 82 | That pass all arts. Now my physiciän | = surpass all science or knowledge. |
|  | Is coming to me; he makes friendly haste; |  |
| 84 | And I will well requite his care of me. | = repay, reward. |
|  |  |  |
| 86 | ***Cyn.*** How know you he is coming? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 88 | ***Stroz.*** Passing well; | 88: "extremely well I know it." |
|  | And that my dear friend, Lord Vincentio, |  |
| 90 | Will presently come see me too; I'll stay | = hold here, keep from leaving.2 |
|  | My good physician till my true friend come. |  |
| 92 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.***  [*Aside*] Ay me, his talk is idle; and, I fear, | 93-94: the foolish (*idle*) babbling of a sick man was believed to presage his death.3 |
| 94 | Foretells his reasonable soul now leaves him. | = the soul controlled the faculty of reason. |
|  |  |  |
| 96 | ***Stroz.***Bring my physician in; he's at the door. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 98 | ***Cyn.*** Alas, there's no physician! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 100 | ***Stroz.*** But I know it; |  |
|  | See, he is come. |  |
| 102 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Benevemus*. |  |
| 104 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.*** How fares my worthy lord? |  |
| 106 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Good Doctor, I endure no pain at all, |  |
| 108 | And the seventh day the arrow's head will out. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 110 | ***Ben.*** Why should it fall out the seventh day, my lord? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 112 | ***Stroz.*** I know it; the seventh day it will not fail. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 114 | ***Ben.*** I wish it may, my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 116 | ***Stroz.*** Yes, 'twill be so. |  |
|  | You come with purpose to take present leave, | 117: "you've come to say good-bye". |
| 118 | But you shall stay awhile; my lord Vincentio |  |
|  | Would see you fain, and now is coming hither. | = "would be pleased (*fain*) to see you". |
| 120 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.*** How knows your lordship? Have you sent for him? |  |
| 122 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***No, but 'tis very true; he's now hard by, | = close by. |
| 124 | And will not hinder your affairs a whit. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 126 | ***Ben.*** [*Aside*] How want of rest distempers his light brain! − | 126: Strozza's inability to rest is causing derangement in his brain, which now feels no pain (is *light*).1 Smith suggests "delirious" for *light*, which, if correct, would predate the earliest usage identified by the OED. |
|  | Brings my lord any train? | = ie. "is anyone else with the prince?" |
| 128 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** None but himself. |  |
| 130 | My nephew Poggio now hath left his Grace. | = ie. the prince. |
|  | Good Doctor, go, and bring him by his hand, |  |
| 132 | (Which he will give you) to my longing eyes. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 134 | ***Ben.*** 'Tis strange, if this be true. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 136 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 138 | ***Cyn.*** The Prince, I think, |  |
|  | Yet knows not of your hurt. |  |
| 140 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Vincentio holding the Doctor's hand*. |  |
| 142 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Yes, wife, too well. | = ie. "yes, he does"; through his clairvoyance, Strozza knows that Poggio has reported his injury to Vincentio. |
| 144 | See, he is come; − welcome, my princely friend! |
|  | I have been shot, my lord; but the seventh day |  |
| 146 | The arrow's head will fall out of my side, |  |
|  | And I shall live. |  |
| 148 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** I do not fear your life; − | = ie. fear for. |
| 150 | But, Doctor, is it your opinion |  |
|  | That the seventh day the arrow-head will out? |  |
| 152 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***No, 'tis not his opinion, 'tis my knowledge; |  |
| 154 | For I do know it well; and I do wish, |  |
|  | Even for your only sake, my noble lord, |  |
| 156 | This were the seventh day, and I now were well, |  |
|  | That I might be some strength to your hard state, | = grim condition.1 |
| 158 | For you have many perils to endure: |  |
|  | Great is your danger, great; your unjust ill | 159-160: *your unjust…mortal* = ie. "your life is unfairly in extreme danger"; *passing* = extremely. Strozza is making another prediction to his ignorant friend. |
| 160 | Is passing foul and mortal; would to God | = "I wish". |
|  | My wound were something well, I might be with you! |  |
| 162 |  |  |
|  | [*Cynanche and Benevenius whisper*.] | 163: this stage direction was added by Smith. |
| 164 |  |  |
|  | Nay, do not whisper; I know what I say |  |
| 166 | Too well for you, my lord; I wonder Heaven |  |
|  | Will let such violence threat an innocent life. | 167: "would allow such violence to threaten the innocent Vincentio's life." |
| 168 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Whate'er it be, dear friend, so you be well, |  |
| 170 | I will endure it all; your wounded state |  |
|  | Is all the danger I fear towards me. |  |
| 172 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Nay, mine is nothing; for the seventh day |  |
| 174 | This arrow-head will out, and I shall live; |  |
|  | And so shall you, I think; but very hardly; | = with great difficulty, ie. only barely; the original meaning of many Elizabethan adverbs can be understood if the word is considered literally: *hardly* = in a hard (difficult) way. Similarly, a word like *careful* originally meant *full of care*, ie. anxious. |
| 176 | It will be hardly you will scape indeed. |
|  |  |
| 178 | ***Vinc.*** Be as will be, pray Heaven your prophecy |  |
|  | Be happily accomplished in yourself, |  |
| 180 | And nothing then can come amiss to me. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 182 | ***Stroz.*** What says my doctor? Thinks he I say true? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 184 | ***Ben.*** If your good lordship could but rest awhile, |  |
|  | I would hope well. |  |
| 186 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Yes, I shall rest, I know, |  |
| 188 | If that will help your judgment. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 190 | ***Ben.*** Yes, it will; |  |
|  | And, good my lord, let's help you in to try. |  |
| 192 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***You please me much; I shall sleep instantly. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT IV, SCENE IV. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Alphonso and Medice*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Alph.***Why should the humorous boy forsake the chase, | = capricious.1  1*ff*: Duke Alphonso has learned that Vincentio has disappeared during the hunt; the hunters, we must remember, would have been well spread out during the chase, so that Vincentio could easily sneak away and be gone quite for a while before anyone noticed. |
| 2 | As if he took advantage of my absence |  |
|  | To some act that my presence would offend? | 3: "to do something that he would not do if I were present?" *offend* here likely means "prevent", though it would predate the OED's first citation of this usage by more than four decades.5 |
| 4 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** I warrant you, my lord, 'tis to that end; | = guarantee. |
| 6 | And I believe he wrongs you in your love. |  |
|  | Children, presuming on their parents' kindness, |  |
| 8 | Care not what unkind actions they commit | = ie. unnatural actions, in that they are performed by children against their own parents. |
|  | Against their quiet: and were I as you, | = their parents' peace of mind. = "if I were in your situation". |
| 10 | I would affright my son from these bold parts, | = Medice suggests the duke should scare these audacious qualities (*bold parts*) out of Vincentio; but *parts* could also mean "territories", so Medice could also be hinting the duke should exile his son. |
|  | And father him as I found his deserts. | = ie. "as he deserves." |
| 12 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***I swear I will: and can I prove he aims | 13-15: Alphonso realizes Vincentio may have snuck away to meet with Margaret. |
| 14 | At any interruption in my love, |
|  | I'll interrupt his life. |  |
| 16 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** We soon shall see. |  |
| 18 | For I have made Madame Cortezza search | 18-20: Cortezza, we remember, is keen on Medice, and also favours Margaret's marriage to the duke; yet it is still surprising that she would spy on her own household for the minion. |
|  | With pick-locks all the ladies' cabinets | = small chests or boxes in which valuables were kept. |
| 20 | About Earl Lasso's house; and if there be |  |
|  | Traffic of love twixt any one of them |  |
| 22 | And your suspected son 'twill soon appear |  |
|  | In some sign of their amorous merchandize; | = exchanges;5 with *traffic* in line 21, a commercial metaphor. |
| 24 | See where she comes, loaded with gems and papers. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 26 | *Enter Cortezza*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 28 | ***Cort.***See here, my lord, I have robbed all their caskets. | = another name for the small chests or boxes used for storing valuables.1 |
|  | Know you this ring, this carcanet, this chain? | = necklace or ornamented collar.1 |
| 30 | Will any of these letters serve your turn? | = purpose. |
|  |  |  |
| 32 | ***Alph.*** I know not these things; but come, let me read |  |
|  | Some of these letters. |  |
| 34 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Madam, in this deed | 35-43: while Medice and Cortezza speak, the duke looks over the correspondence. |
| 36 | You deserve highly of my lord the Duke. | 36: "the duke is greatly indebted to you (for this service)." |
|  |  |  |
| 38 | ***Cort.*** Nay, my lord Medice, I think I told you |  |
|  | I could do pretty well in these affairs. |  |
| 40 | Oh, these young girls engross up all the love | = amass, accumulate.2 |
|  | From us, poor beldams; but, I hold my hand, | = old women. = "I swear", a vow. |
| 42 | I'll ferret all the cony-holes of their kindness | 42: *ferret* = search out.1   *cony-holes* = rabbit holes; but *cony* also referred to a woman's genitals, and so *cony-holes* is quite bawdy.1  *kindness* = affection. |
|  | Ere I have done with them. | = before. |
| 44 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Passion of death! |  |
| 46 | See, see. Lord Medice, my trait'rous son | = perhaps Alphonso has read the original letter Vincentio sent to Margaret: see lines 54-55 below. |
|  | Hath long joyed in the favours of my love; |
| 48 | Woe to the womb that bore him, and my care |  |
|  | To bring him up to this accursèd hour, |  |
| 50 | In which all cares possess my wretched life! | = ie. "all the world's anxieties". |
|  |  |  |
| 52 | ***Med.*** What father would believe he had a son |  |
|  | So full of treachery to his innocent state? |  |
| 54 | And yet, my lord, this letter shows no meeting, |  |
|  | But a desire to meet. |  |
| 56 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Yes, yes, my lord, |  |
| 58 | I do suspect they meet; and I believe |  |
|  | I know well where too; I believe I do; |  |
| 60 | And therefore tell me, does no creature know | = person. |
|  | That you have left the chase thus suddenly, | = ie. hunt. |
| 62 | And are come hither? Have you not been seen | = to here. |
|  | By any of these lovers? |  |
| 64 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Not by any. |  |
| 66 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***Come then, come follow me; I am persuaded |  |
| 68 | I shall go near to show you their kind hands. | = loving (*kind*) hands, perhaps meaning "hands held in love."3 |
|  | Their confidence that you are still a-hunting | 69-71: Cortezza suspects that Vincentio and Margaret would be less careful in meeting at this moment, because they would believe the duke is still on his hunting trip. |
| 70 | Will make your amorous son, that stole from thence, |  |
|  | Bold in his love-sports; come, come, a fresh chase! | = "a new hunt is at hand!" |
| 72 | I hold this pick-lock, you shall hunt at view. | 72: *I hold this pick-lock* = another vow.  *at view* = a hunting term, referring to when the pack of hunting dogs follow the prey by sight, rather than by scent.3 Cortezza of course means she expects to lead the duke to catch Vincentio and Margaret together. |
|  | What, do they think to scape? An old wife's eye | = escape. |
| 74 | Is a blue crystal full of sorcery. | 73-74: *An old wife…sorcery* = Cortezza refers to herself; old women were traditionally associated with the supernatural.5  *crystal* = crystal ball , suggesting second sight: the metaphor is apt, considering the spherical shape of the eye. |
|  |  |
| 76 | ***Alph.***If this be true the trait'rous boy shall die. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 78 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT IV, SCENE V. |  |
|  | *Another Rooom in the House of Lasso* | **Scene v:** I follow Smith in making this a separate scene. |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Lasso, Margaret, Bassiolo going before*. | = as usual, the usher precedes his master as he moves around. |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Lasso.***Tell me, I pray you, what strange hopes they are | 1-4: briefly, "what expectations (*hopes*) do you have that take precedence over the *assured greatness* you would achieve by marrying the duke?"; Lasso does not yet know of Margaret's relationship with Vincentio, but he is getting annoyed by her continued resistance to Alphonso.  In line 2, *coy* means "standoffish".2 |
| 2 | That feed your coy conceits against the Duke, |
|  | And are preferred before th' assurèd greatness |
| 4 | His Highness graciously would make your fortunes? |
|  |  |
| 6 | ***Marg.*** I have small hopes, my lord, but a desire |  |
|  | To make my nuptial choice of one I love; | 7: "to select my own husband, based on who I actually love." |
| 8 | And as I would be loath t' impair my state, | = just as; Margaret, in 8-9, is making a comparison: "just as I would not wish to decrease or harm my status (*state*), I would not presume to take on *honours* that *exceed* them." |
|  | So I affect not honours that exceed it. |
| 10 |  |
|  | ***Lasso.***Oh, you are very temp'rate in your choice, |  |
| 12 | Pleading a judgment past your sex and years. | 12: sarcastic: "you are apparently wise beyond your gender and age." |
|  | But I believe some fancy will be found | 13-14: *I believe…glosses* = "I believe we will discover the love or infatuation (*fancy*) that is the fashioner (*forge*) of these spurious (*gay*) explanations or excuses *glosses*)."1,3 |
| 14 | The forge of these gay glosses: if it be, |
|  | I shall decipher what close traitor 'tis | = secret, unknown. |
| 16 | That is your agent in your secret plots − | = "who is helping you". |
|  |  |  |
| 18 | ***Bass.***[*Aside*] 'Swoons! | 18: God's wounds; Bassiolo realizes that Lasso has unwittingly described him! |
|  |  |  |
| 20 | ***Lasso.*** And him for whom you plot; and on you all | = "the person for whom you scheme." |
|  | I will revenge thy disobedience |  |
| 22 | With such severe correction as shall fright | = punishment. |
|  | All such deluders from the like attempts: | = trying anything similar. |
| 24 | But chiefly he shall smart that is your factor. | = suffer. = agent. |
|  |  |  |
| 26 | ***Bass.*** [*Aside*] Oh me accursed! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 28 | ***Lasso.*** Meantime I'll cut |  |
|  | Your poor craft short, i'faith! | = clever plan or deceit.1,2 |
| 30 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Poor craft, indeed, | = skill or art.5 |
| 32 | That I or any others use for me! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 34 | ***Lasso.***Well, dame, if it be nothing but the jar | 34-36: "if it be nothing other than a discord or derangement (*jar*) of an irrational whim (*unfitted fancy*) that causes your headstrong aloofness (*wilful coyness*) towards the duke, etc."1,5 |
|  | Of your unfitted fancy that procures |
| 36 | Your wilful coyness to my lord the Duke, |
|  | No doubt but time and judgment will conform it |  |
| 38 | To such obedience as so great desert | 38-39: *as so…acceptance* = the sense is, "as so great an action (*desert*),1 ie. offer, has been presented to you for you to accept." |
|  | Proposed to your acceptance doth require. − |
| 40 | To which end do you counsel her, Bassiolo. − | = ie. "I want you to". |
|  | And let me see, maid, gainst the Duke's return, | = in preparation for. |
| 42 | Another tincture set upon your looks | = hue.1 |
|  | Than heretofore; for, be assured, at last |  |
| 44 | Thou shalt consent, or else incur my curse. − |  |
|  | Advise her you, Bassiolo. |  |
| 46 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
| 48 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Ay, my good lord: |  |
| 50 | [*Aside*] God's pity, what an errant ass was I |  |
|  | To entertain the Prince's crafty friendship! |  |
| 52 | 'Sblood, I half suspect the villain gulled me! | = God's blood. = deceived. |
|  |  |  |
| 54 | ***Marg.*** Our squire, I think, is startled. | = servant.2 |
|  |  |  |
| 56 | ***Bass.*** Nay, lady, it is true; |  |
|  | And you must frame your fancy to the Duke; |  |
| 58 | For I protest I will not be corrupted, | = vow. |
|  | For all the friends and fortunes in the world, |  |
| 60 | To gull my lord that trusts me. | = ie. deceive Lasso. |
|  |  |  |
| 62 | ***Marg.*** Oh, sir, now |  |
|  | Y' are true too late. | = loyal. |
| 64 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** No, lady, not a whit; |  |
| 66 | 'Slud, and you think to make an ass of me, | = God's eyelid. = if. |
|  | May chance to rise betimes; I know't, I know. | = ie. "you have to get up pretty early in the morning (*betimes*) to do so." |
| 68 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Out, servile coward! Shall a light suspect, | = slight suspicion. |
| 70 | That hath no slend'rest proof of what we do, |  |
|  | Infringe the weighty faith that thou hast sworn | = solemn vow, punning on *light* in line 69. |
| 72 | To thy dear friend, the Prince, that dotes on thee, |  |
|  | And will in pieces cut thee for thy falsehood? |  |
| 74 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***I care not. I'll not hazard my estate | = "risk my situation or position". |
| 76 | For any prince on earth; and I'll disclose |  |
|  | The complot to your father, if you yield not | = conspiracy. |
| 78 | To his obedience. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 80 | ***Marg.*** Do, if thou dar'st, |  |
|  | Even for thy scraped-up living, and thy life; | = "just to protect the livelihood you have scraped together". |
| 82 | I'll tell my father, then, how thou didst woo me |  |
|  | To love the young Prince; and didst force me, too, |  |
| 84 | To take his letters: I was well inclined, |  |
|  | I will be sworn, before, to love the Duke; |  |
| 86 | But thy vile railing at him made me hate him. | = ranting or speaking abusively about. |
|  |  |  |
| 88 | ***Bass.*** I rail at him? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 90 | ***Marg.*** Ay, marry, did you sir; | = an oath. = a phrase of mock formality, employing the respectful *you*; otherwise, Margaret addresses her inferior with the appropriate *thou*, and Bassiolo always uses *you* to address his mistress. |
|  | And said he was a pattern for a potter, |
| 92 | Fit t' have his picture stamped on a stone jug, |
|  | To keep ale-knights in memory of sobriety. |
| 94 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***[*Aside*] Sh'as a plaguy memory! | = the sense is "damnable" or "vexatious". |
| 96 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** I could have loved him else; nay, I did love him, |  |
| 98 | Though I dissembled it to bring him on, | 98: "I was only pretending (*dissembling*) to be coy with the duke, in order to encourage him to be more forward." |
|  | And I by this time might have been a duchess; |
| 100 | And, now I think on't better, for revenge |  |
|  | I'll have the Duke, and he shall have thy head | = ie. marry. |
| 102 | For thy false wit within it to his love. | = ie. Bassiolo's head. |
|  | Now go and tell my father; pray begone! |  |
| 104 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Why, and I will go. |  |
| 106 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Go, for God's sake, go! Are you here yet? | = ie. still here. |
| 108 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Well, now I am resolved. [*Going*] | = determined; Margaret and Bassiolo are playing a dangerous game here: who will blink first? |
| 110 |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** 'Tis bravely done; farewell! But do you hear, sir? |  |
| 112 | Take this with you, besides: the young Prince keeps |  |
|  | A certain letter you had writ for me |  |
| 114 | (*Endearing*, and *condoling*, and *mature*) | = possibly an error: the third word Bassiolo had originally struggled with was *model*, though *mature* also appears in the letter; see Act III.i.787-793. |
|  | And if you should deny things, that, I hope, |
| 116 | Will stop your impudent mouth: but go your ways, |  |
|  | If you can answer all this, why, 'tis well. | = answer for, ie. "successfully talk yourself out of". |
| 118 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***  Well, lady, if you will assure me here |  |
| 120 | You will refrain to meet with the young Prince, |  |
|  | I will say nothing. |  |
| 122 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Good sir, say your worst, |  |
| 124 | For I will meet him, and that presently. | = ie. "immediately, too." |
|  |  |  |
| 126 | ***Bass.*** Then be content, I pray, and leave me out, |  |
|  | And meet hereafter as you can yourselves. |  |
| 128 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** No, no, sir, no; 'tis you must fetch him to me, |  |
| 130 | And you shall fetch him, or I'll do your errand. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 132 | ***Bass.***[*Aside*] 'Swounds, what a spite is this! I will resolve |  |
|  | T 'endure the worst; 'tis but my foolish fear |  |
| 134 | The plot will be discovered − O the gods! |  |
|  | Tis the best sport to play with these young dames; − | 135: Bassiolo decides the best course after all is to humour Margaret. |
| 136 | I have dissembled, mistress, all this while; |  |
|  | Have I not made you in a pretty taking? | 137: "haven't I gotten you into a nice situation?" |
| 138 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Oh, 'tis most good! Thus you may play on me; |  |
| 140 | You cannot be content to make me love | 140-6: Margaret "criticizes" the usher for his responsibility in convincing her to fall in love with Vincentio. |
|  | A man I hated till you spake for him |
| 142 | With such enchanting speeches as no friend |  |
|  | Could possibly resist; but you must use |  |
| 144 | Your villanous wit to drive me from my wits; |  |
|  | A plague of that bewitching tongue of yours, |  |
| 146 | Would I had never heard your scurvy words! | 141-6: in criticizing Bassiolo, Margaret actually flatters him for his persuasive skill. |
|  |  |
| 148 | ***Bass.***Pardon, dear dame, I'll make amends, i'faith! |  |
|  | Think you that I'll play false with my dear Vince? |  |
| 150 | I swore that sooner Hybla should want bees, | = lack. |
|  | And Italy bona-robas, than I faith; | = prostitutes, courtesans. = loyalty. |
| 152 | And so they shall. |  |
|  | Come, you shall meet, and double meet, in spite |  |
| 154 | Of all your foes, and dukes that dare maintain them. |  |
|  | A plague of all old doters! I disdain them. | = on. = elderly lovers, but *doters* also had a sense of "senile old men"; the allusion is of course to the duke. |
| 156 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Said like a friend; oh, let me comb thy coxcomb. | 157: a *coxcomb* was a fool's head, so the mild insult to Bassiolo is clear; the pun with *comb* is also obvious. Smith posits that Margaret, sympathetic to the usher, may even be running her fingers through his hair here. |
| 158 |  |
|  | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | END OF ACT IV. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ACT V. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | SCENE I. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Alphonso, Medice, Lasso, Cortezza above.* | = the characters enter the balcony or gallery at the back of, and above, the main stage. From here they can spy on the scene between Vincentio and Margaret unfolding before them. Elizabethan drama allowed for characters to spy on each other in this way without being noticed. |
|  |  |
| 1 | ***Cort.*** Here is the place will do the deed, i'faith! |  |
| 2 | This, Duke, will show thee how youth puts down age, | = defeats. |
|  | Ay, and perhaps how youth does put down youth. | 3: we could assign a sophisticated meaning to this line of Cortezza's: for example, "*youth*, in the sense of immature and irresponsible behavior, will cause its own ruin"; but Smith suggests Cortezza is just being her usual bawdy self, referring to the likelihood that the duke will get to see one youth (Vincentio) lay down (*put down*) another youth (Margaret) in order to copulate. |
| 4 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** If I shall see my love in any sort | = *my* *love* here refers to his emotion, not Margaret. |
| 6 | Prevented or abused, th' abuser dies. | = anticipated or preceded.1 |
|  |  |  |
| 8 | ***Lasso.*** I hope there is no such intent, my Liege, |  |
|  | For sad as death should I be to behold it. |  |
| 10 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** You must not be too confident, my lord, | = Medice addresses Lasso. |
| 12 | Or in your daughter or in them that guard her. | = either. |
|  | The Prince is politic, and envies his father; | = cunning. |
| 14 | And though not for himself, nor any good | 14-16: Medice suggests Vincentio is pursuing Margaret only to hurt his father, and not because he loves her. |
|  | Intended to your daughter, yet because |
| 16 | He knows 'twould kill his father, he would seek her. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 18 | ***Cort.***Whist, whist, they come! | = be quiet!2 |
|  |  |  |
| 20 | *Enter Bassiolo, Vincentio, and Margaret*. | 20*ff*: the characters on the balcony can see and hear everything that goes on on the main stage, but Bassiolo, Vincentio and Margaret will be ignorant of the presence of the duke's party above them. |
|  |  |  |
| 22 | ***Bass.*** Come, meet me boldly, come. | = "meet boldly"; Bassiolo uses the ethical dative. |
|  | And let them come from hunting when they dare. |  |
| 24 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Has the best spirit. | = "he (Bassiolo) has". |
| 26 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Spirit? What, a plague! | = the sense is "fahgetaboutit!" |
| 28 | Shall a man fear capriches? − You forsooth | 28: *capriches* = ie. foolish fancies, whims.19  *you*: Bassiolo advises Margaret how to behave.  *forsooth* = truly. |
|  | Must have your love come t'ye, and when he comes |  |
| 30 | Then you grow shamefaced, and he must not touch you: |  |
|  | But “Fie, my father comes!” and “Foh, my aunt!” |  |
| 32 | Oh, 'tis a witty hearing, is't not, think you? | = ie. "thing to hear";1 Bassiolo is proud of how clever he is. |
|  |  |  |
| 34 | ***Vinc.*** Nay, pray thee, do not mock her, gentle friend. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 36 | ***Bass.*** Nay, you are even as wise a wooer too; | = ie. just as; the line is ironic. |
|  | If she turn from you, you even let her turn, | = ie. should. |
| 38 | And say you do not love to force a lady, |  |
|  | 'Tis too much rudeness. Gosh hat! What's a lady? | = Parrott believes this expression is a slurred corruption of something like "God's heart", and indicates that Bassiolo is actually a bit drunk, having imbibed to fortify his courage. There will be further clues to suggest Parrott is correct. |
| 40 | Must she not be touched? What, is she copper, think you, | 40-41: *is she…touchstone* = a *touchstone* was a stone used to test a material for precious metal content; *copper*, of course, would "fail" such a test. |
|  | And will not bide the touchstone? Kiss her, Vince, |
| 42 | And thou dost love me, kiss her. | = if. |
|  |  |  |
| 44 | ***Vinc.*** Lady, now |  |
|  | I were too simple if I should not offer. | = would be foolish. |
| 46 |  |  |
|  | [*He kisses her*.] |  |
| 48 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***  O God, sir, pray away! This man talks idly. | 49: *pray away* = "please get away from me," ie. "stop that!" Margaret is embarrassed that she and Vincentio must continue to humour the ridiculous usher.   *idly* = frivolously, in vain.1 |
| 50 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** How shay by that? Now by that candle there, | = the drunk usher slurs *shay* for "say". = Bassiolo vows on the nearby light. |
| 52 | Were I as Vince is, I would handle you |  |
|  | In rufty-tufty wise, in your right kind. | = rough and tumble.3 Bassiolo's bold comments give further evidence of his inebriation. |
| 54 |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] |  |
| 56 | Oh, you have made him a sweet beagle, ha' y' not? | 56: Margaret again chastises Vincentio for what he has caused Bassiolo to become; here, she compares the loquacious and loud usher to the noisy little *beagle*.5 |
|  |  |
| 58 | ***Vinc.*** [*Aside*] 'Tis the most true believer in himself |  |
|  | Of all that sect of folly; faith's his fault. | = "faith in himself is his sin (*fault*)"; Vincentio has used a neat religious metaphor here, with *believer* and *sect*. |
| 60 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** So, to her, Vince! I give thee leave, my lad. | = permission. |
| 62 | “Sweet were the words my mistress spake, | 62-63: the Folger Library in Washington D.C. contains a manuscript from 1595 of collected verse and jokes, one of which is:  *Sweet were the words my mistress said  Put off thy clothes and come to bed.*20 |
|  | When tears fell from her eyes.” |
| 64 |  |
|  | [*He lies down by them*.] |  |
| 66 |  |  |
|  | Thus, as the lion lies before his den, |  |
| 68 | Guarding his whelps, and streaks his careless limbs, | = strokes. = free of care or anxiety. |
|  | And when the panther, fox, or wolf comes near, |  |
| 70 | He never deigns to rise to fright them hence, | = condescends, ie. it is not worth the effort. |
|  | But only puts forth one of his stern paws, |  |
| 72 | And keeps his dear whelps safe, as in a hutch. | = ie. "as if they were in a pen for animals."1 |
|  | So I present his person, and keep mine. | = represent the lion. = "keep my offspring (ie. Vincentio and Margaret) safe." |
| 74 | Foxes, go by, I put my terror forth. | 74: Bassiolo speaks as if he were the lion who is not interested in the near-by fox: "move on, foxes, before I raise myself to terrify you."   The phrase *go by*, meaning "get away", appeared in the popular play *The Spanish Tragedy*, written in the 1580's by Thomas Kyd, and became a stock Elizabethan catch-phrase. |
|  |  |  |
| 76 | *Cantat* | = a song. |
|  | Let all the world say what they can, |  |
| 78 | Her bargain best she makes, |  |
|  | That hath the wit to choose a man |  |
| 80 | To pay for that he takes. |  |
|  | *Belle piu*, *etc*. | = Parrott suggests this may be the title or refrain of a song. |
| 82 |  |  |
|  | *Iterum cantat*. | 83: "he sings the same song again."5 |
| 84 |  |  |
|  | Dispatch, sweet whelps; the bug, the Duke, comes straight: | 85: *Dispatch* = ie. "wrap it up."   *bug* = bugbear, imaginary cause of fear.2   *straight* = ie. any minute. |
| 86 | Oh, 'tis a grave old lover, that same Duke, |  |
|  | And chooses minions rarely, if you mark him, | = excellently (sarcastic). = note. |
| 88 | The noble Medice, that man, that Bobadilla, | = a reference to the boastful yet cowardly soldier from Ben Jonson's 1598 comedy *Every Man in his Humour*. |
|  | That foolish knave, that hose and doublet stinkard. | = the basic male Elizabethan outfit: the *hose* were leg coverings or breeches, and the *doublet* a close-fitting jacket; note that normally the phrase was written *doublet and hose*, but are reversed by Chapman here to fit the meter.  A man of means or nobility would typically wear a cloak or other outer garment over the ensemble; so in referring to Medice as a *hose and doublet stinkard*, the inebriated Bassiolo is highlighting the minion's presumed low-birth. |
| 90 |  |
|  | ***Med.*** 'Swounds, my lord, rise, let's endure no more! |  |
| 92 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** A little, pray, my lord, for I believe | = ie. "let's wait a little longer before revealing ourselves": |
| 94 | We shall discover very notable knavery. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 96 | ***Lasso.*** Alas, how I am grieved and shamed in this! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 98 | ***Cort.*** Never care you, lord brother, there's no harm done! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 100 | ***Bass.***But that sweet creature, my good lord's sister, |  |
|  | Madam Cortezza, she, the noblest dame |  |
| 102 | That ever any vein of honour bled; | 102: "that any noble lineage ever produced".5 |
|  | There were a wife now, for my lord the Duke, | = "now there is a woman who would make a fine wife". |
| 104 | Had he the grace to choose her; but indeed, |  |
|  | To speak her true praise, I must use some study. | 105: an ambiguous sentiment: "I need time to figure out how to describe her true worth." |
| 106 |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Now truly, brother, I did ever think |  |
| 108 | This man the honestest man that e'er you kept. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 110 | ***Lasso.*** So, sister, so; because he praises you. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 112 | ***Cort.*** Nay, sir, but you shall hear him further yet. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 114 | ***Bass.*** Were not her head sometimes a little light, | = *light* is a loaded word: Bassiolo's primary meaning here is "frivolous", punning with *weight* (ie. serious) in the next line; but it could also mean lustful or wanton. |
|  | And so unapt for matter of much weight, |
| 116 | She were the fittest and the worthiest dame |  |
|  | To leap a window and to break her neck | = ie. from a. |
| 118 | That ever was. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 120 | ***Cort.*** God's pity, arrant knave! | = absolute.2 |
|  | I ever thought him a dissembling varlet. | = always. |
| 122 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Well now, my hearts, be wary, for by this | = by now. |
| 124 | I fear the Duke is coming; I'll go watch |  |
|  | And give you warning. I commend me t'ye. |  |
| 126 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
| 128 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***  Oh, fine phrase! |  |
| 130 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** And very timely used. |  |
| 132 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** What now, sweet life, shall we resolve upon? | 132: "what should we do (about our situation)?" |
| 134 | We never shall enjoy each other here. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 136 | ***Marg.*** Direct you, then, my lord, what we shall do, |  |
|  | For I am at your will, and will endure |  |
| 138 | With you the cruell’st absence from the state | = a hint that they have been considering going into exile. |
|  | We both were born to that can be supposed. |  |
| 140 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** That would extremely grieve me; could myself | 141-2: *could myself / Only endure* = "if I were the only one forced to endure, etc." |
| 142 | Only endure the ill our hardest fates |
|  | May lay on both of us, I would not care; |  |
| 144 | But to behold thy sufferance I should die. | = suffering. |
|  |  |  |
| 146 | ***Marg.*** How can your lordship wrong my love so much, | 146-150: "How can you think so little of me not to realize that the more I suffer on your behalf, the stronger (*comfort* = strength) I am? Unfortunately, I have no other way to elevate my own claim to excellence so that it even remotely approaches the same level as your own towering worthiness." |
|  | To think the more woe I sustain for you |
| 148 | Breeds not the more my comfort? I, alas, |
|  | Have no mean else to make my merit even |
| 150 | In any measure with your eminent worth. |
|  |  |
| 152 | *Enter Bassiolo.* |  |
|  |  |  |
| 154 | ***Bass.***[*Aside*]Now must I exercise my timorous lovers, |  |
|  | Like fresh-armed soldiers, with some false alarms, | = newly-armed (ie. raw) recruits. |
| 156 | To make them yare and wary of their foe, | = alert, prepared.1,5 |
|  | The boist'rous, bearded Duke: I'll rush upon them |  |
| 158 | With a most hideous cry. − The Duke! the Duke! the Duke! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 160 | [*Vincentio and Margaret run out*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 162 | Ha, ha, ha! Wo ho, come again, I say! | = a falconer shouts this to recall his hawk. |
|  | The Duke's not come, i'faith! |  |
| 164 |  |  |
|  | [*Enter Vincentio and Margaret*.] |  |
| 166 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** God's precious, man! |  |
| 168 | What did you mean to put us in this fear? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 170 | ***Bass.***Oh, sir, to make you look about the more: |  |
|  | Nay, we must teach you more of this, I tell you; |  |
| 172 | What, can you be too safe, sir? What, I say, | = secure. |
|  | Must you be pampered in your vanities? | = "indulged in your profitless behaviour".1 |
| 174 | [*Aside*] Ah, I do domineer, and rule the roast. | = "am completely in charge"; this phrase has been in use since as early as 1500; in the 18th century, *roast* transformed into *roost*.1 Interestingly, the later-appearing *rule the roost* makes intuitive sense, as *roost* means henhouse; but the original meaning of *rule the roast* has long been lost to time.1 |
|  |  |
| 176 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 178 | ***Marg.***Was ever such an ingle? Would to God | 178: *ingle* = a favorite young man or boy (though usually applied in a sexual sense).1   178-9: *Would to...saw him* = "I wish to God my father could see him now, except for the fact that it would compromise us." |
|  | (If 'twere not for ourselves) my father saw him. |
| 180 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** Minion, you have your prayer, and my curse, | = hussy,2 meaning Margaret. |
| 182 | For your good huswifery. | = housewife-like behaviour, but also meaning "promiscuity";2 Lasso, still on the balcony, is out of Margaret's earshot. |
|  |  |
| 184 | ***Med.*** What says your Highness? |  |
|  | Can you endure these injuries any more? |  |
| 186 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** No more, no more! Advise me what is best |  |
| 188 | To be the penance of my graceless son. | = immoral or pitiless,1 but also punning on its religious sense of being out of God's favor, with *penance*. |
|  |  |
| 190 | ***Med.*** My lord, no mean but death or banishment |  |
|  | Can be fit penance for him, if you mean |  |
| 192 | T' enjoy the pleasure of your love yourself. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 194 | ***Cort.*** Give him plain death, my lord, and then y' are sure. | 194: Cortezza is a bit bold here in encouraging the duke to execute his own son. |
|  |  |
| 196 | ***Alph.*** Death, or his banishment, he shall endure, |  |
|  | For wreak of that joy's exile I sustain. | = revenge for.1 = the duke interestingly suggests his own joy is in exile, balancing nicely with his determination to possibly exile (*banish)* his son. |
| 198 | Come, call our guard, and apprehend him straight. |
|  |  |
| 200 | [*Exeunt Alphonso, Lasso, Medice, and Cortezza*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 202 | ***Vinc.***I have some jewèls then, my dearest life, |  |
|  | Which, with whatever we can get beside, |  |
| 204 | Shall be our means, and we will make escape. | = means of survival. |
|  |  |  |
| 206 | *Enter Bassiolo running.* |  |
|  |  |  |
| 208 | ***Bass.*** 'Sblood, the Duke and all come now in earnest. |  |
|  | The Duke, by Heaven, the Duke! |  |
| 210 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Nay, then, i' faith, |  |
| 212 | Your jest is too too stale. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 214 | ***Bass.*** God's precious! |  |
|  | By these ten bones, and by this hat and heart, | 215: Bassiolo's affirming the truth of his report on his fingers (*ten bones*), hat and heart reveals his high level of alarm! |
| 216 | The Duke and all comes! See, we are cast away. |
|  |  |  |
| 218 | [*Exeunt Bassiolo and Vincentio*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 220 | *Enter Alphonso, Medice, Lasso, Cortezza, and Julio.* |  |
|  |  |  |
| 222 | ***Alph.*** Lay hands upon them all; pursue, pursue! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 224 | ***Lasso.*** Stay, thou ungracious girl! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 226 | ***Alph.*** Lord Medice, |  |
|  | Lead you our guard, and see you apprehend |  |
| 228 | The treacherous boy, nor let him scape with life, | = the play's remaining twists of plot turn on the duke's instruction here to Medice to kill Vincentio if need be. |
|  | Unless he yield to his eternal exile. |
| 230 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** 'Tis princely said, my lord. |  |
| 232 |  |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
| 234 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** And take my usher. | 235: "and capture my usher while you are at it." |
| 236 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Let me go into exile with my lord; |  |
| 238 | I will not live, if I be left behind. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 240 | ***Lasso.*** Impudent damsel, wouldst thou follow him? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 242 | ***Marg.*** He is my husband, whom else should I follow? | 242, 248: note how Margaret's responses repeat words from the questions posed to her; this technique has the effect of intensifying the connection between the single lines of dialogue. |
|  |  |
| 244 | ***Lasso.*** Wretch, thou speakest treason to my lord the Duke. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 246 | ***Alph.*** Yet love me, lady, and I pardon all. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 248 | ***Marg.*** I have a husband, and must love none else. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 250 | ***Alph.*** Despiteful dame, I'll disinherit him, | = malicious.2 Note also the marked alliteration in this line. |
|  | And thy good father here shall cast off thee, |  |
| 252 | And both shall feed on air, or starve, and die. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 254 | **Marg.**If this be justice, let it be our dooms: | = judgments. |
|  | If free and spotless love in equal years, | = free of stain or sin. = a biting comment on how the duke is much too old for her. |
| 256 | With honours unimpaired, deserve such ends, | = the subject of *deserve* is *love*; note the lack of grammatical agreement. |
|  | Let us approve what justice is in friends. | 257: "we will show you (*approve* = demonstrate) what justice is between lovers (*friends*)." |
| 258 |  |  |
|  | ***Lasso.*** You shall, I swear. − Sister, take you her close | = "take her and keep her shut up, etc." |
| 260 | Into your chamber; lock her fast alone, |  |
|  | And let her stir, nor speak with any one. |  |
| 262 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***  She shall not, brother. − Come, niece, come with me. |  |
| 264 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Heaven save my love, and I will suffer gladly. | = ie. Vincentio. |
| 266 |  |  |
|  | [*Exeunt Cortezza and Margaret*.] |  |
| 268 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Haste, Julio, follow thou my son's pursuit, | = *Julio*, a noble member of the court, makes his first appearance of the play here in Act V. |
| 270 | And will Lord Medice not to hurt nor touch him, | = command. |
|  | But either banish him or bring him back; |  |
| 272 | Charge him to use no violence to his life. | 272: the duke hopes to recall his instructions to Medice to kill Vincentio if necessary. |
|  |  |
| 274 | ***Jul.*** I will, my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 276 | [*Exit Julio*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 278 | ***Alph.*** Oh, Nature, how, alas, |  |
|  | Art thou and Reason, thy true guide, opposed! |  |
| 280 | More bane thou tak'st to guide sense, led amiss, |  |
|  | Than, being guided, Reason gives thee bliss. | 278-281: very difficult lines: the duke describes how a person's visceral emotions (personified *Nature*, whom he is specifically addressing) and logic (*Reason*) create contradictory impulses. When *Nature* guides one's mind or judgment (*sense*), it leads to ruin (*bane*), but if *Reason* leads, the result is *bliss*.  Alphonso may be describing the struggle within himself regarding how to deal with his recalcitrant son - if he follows his own instinct to banish the boy, it will lead to unhappiness for all; but Smith argues that the duke is commenting on Vincentio's lack of rational thinking, in failing to follow Alphonso's reasoned guidance, and, in chasing his own desires instead, the prince has brought disaster on them both.  279: *Reason* is described as Nature's *true guide*, because the rational mind properly acts to control one's instinctive behavior and desires. |
| 282 |  |  |
|  | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT V, SCENE II. |  |
|  | *A Room in the House of Strozza*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Cynanche, Benevemus, Ancilla,* | = *Ancilla* is simply Latin for maid, but she may have been a character who at some point edited out. |
|  | *Strozza having the arrow head in his hand*. | = holding. |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Stroz.*** Now, see, good Doctor, 'twas no frantic fancy | = insane.2 |
| 2 | That made my tongue presage this head should fall | = predict. = ie. arrowhead. |
|  | Out of my wounded side the seventh day; |  |
| 4 | But an inspired rapture of my mind, |  |
|  | Submitted and conjoined in patiënce | = combined with. |
| 6 | To my Creator, in whom I foresaw |  |
|  | (Like to an angel) this divine event. | = ie. like. |
| 8 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.*** So is it plain, and happily approved |  |
| 10 | In a right Christian precedent, confirming | = example. |
|  | What a most sacred med'cine patience is, |  |
| 12 | That with the high thirst of our souls' clear fire, |  |
|  | Exhausts corporeal humour and all pain, |  |
| 14 | Casting our flesh off, while we it retain. | 11-14: in these complex lines, Benevemus, like Cynanche earlier, expounds on the positive results when one focuses on the health of one's soul instead of one's body; the sense may be something like, "patience, combined with the desires of guiltless (*clear*) souls, draws out or drains (*exhausts*) bodily sickness (*humour*) and pain, thus metaphorically casting off our flesh, even as we hang on to it in a literal sense."   As Smith notes, the doctor's philosophy borrows directly from Christian theology, which sees the body and soul as distinct from each other.21 Ancient philosophy further saw the soul as a *fire* which nourished and gave life to the body.22  *Humour* is a complex word: among its other meanings, *humours* referred to the four fluids of the body (blood, phlegm, choler and black bile) that determined one's health, depending on whether those *humours* were present in the right proportions or not. |
|  |  |  |
| 16 | ***Cyn.*** Make some religious vow then, my dear lord, |  |
|  | And keep it in the proper memory |  |
| 18 | Of so celestiäl and free a grace. | = freely bestowed divine favour.1,5 |
|  |  |  |
| 20 | ***Stroz.*** Sweet wife, thou restest my good angel still, | = remain. |
|  | Suggesting by all means these ghostly counsels. | = spiritual. |
| 22 | Thou weariest not thy husband's patient ears | 22-26: Strozza, in praising Cynanche, lists the kinds of trivial desires she does *not* urge on her husband, as most wives do. |
|  | With motions for new fashions in attire, | = suggestions. |
| 24 | For change of jewèls, pastimes, and nice cates, | = delicacies. |
|  | Nor studiest eminence and the higher place | 25: she does not seek (*study*) advancement of her social status. |
| 26 | Amongst thy consorts, like all other dames; | = companions. 1 = wives of nobles.1 |
|  | But knowing more worthy objects appertain |  |
| 28 | To every woman that desires t' enjoy |  |
|  | A blessed life in marriage, thou contemn'st | = scorns. |
| 30 | Those common pleasures, and pursu'st the rare, | = vulgar. = exquisite.2 |
|  | Using thy husband in those virtuous gifts | = familiarizing or treating.1 = with. |
| 32 | For which thou first didst choose him, and thereby |  |
|  | Cloy'st not with him, but lov'st him endlessly. | = *cloy* normally means "to become satiated with", so the sense of the clause seems to be "grow full with her husband", ie. jaded with or tired of him. |
| 34 | In reverence of thy motion, then, and zeal | = proposal. = spiritual devotion. |
|  | To that most sovereign power that was my cure, |  |
| 36 | I make a vow to go on foot to Rome, |  |
|  | And offer humbly in Saint Peter's Temple | = at the time of our play (1606), the construction of St. Peter's Basilica, begun in 1506, was not to be finished for another decade. |
| 38 | This fatal arrow-head: which work let none judge | = "let no man judge this pilgrimage to be, etc." |
|  | A superstitious rite, but a right use, |  |
| 40 | Proper to this peculiar instrument, | 40: "appropriate for this particular means or agent", meaning the arrowhead. |
|  | Which, visibly resigned to memory, | = "displayed as a visible reminder or memorial in the church" (Parrott) or "once seen, its meaning will be committed to one's memory" (Smith). |
| 42 | Through every eye that sees will stir the soul |  |
|  | To gratitude and progress, in the use |  |
| 44 | Of my tried patience, which, in my powers ending, | = tested. = ie. "should I die without having the arrowhead set out for the public to see". |
|  | Would shut th' example out of future lives. | 41-45: the sense of these dense lines is, "the arrowhead will serve as a memorial to, and an example of, the benefits of patience, which, when people will recall the image of it after having seen it, will cause in them a feeling of gratitude, so long as it remains visible at the church; otherwise, when I die, the example of my behavior will disappear with me."3  Smith notes that this process of consigning an image to memory which, when recalled, leads to an emotional response, is "orthodox Renaissance psychophysics" (p. 107). |
| 46 | No act is superstitious that applies | = ascribes. |
|  | All power to God, devoting hearts through eyes. |  |
| 48 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.*** Spoke with the true tongue of a nobleman: |  |
| 50 | But now are all these excitations toys, | = trivialities. |
|  | And Honour fats his brain with other joys. | = healthily feeds. = ie. its. |
| 52 | I know your true friend, Prince Vincentio, |  |
|  | Will triumph in this excellent effect |  |
| 54 | Of your late prophecy. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 56 | ***Stroz.*** Oh, my dear friend's name |  |
|  | Presents my thoughts with a most mortal danger |  |
| 58 | To his right innocent life: a monstrous fact | = crime or deed.1 |
|  | Is now effected on him. |  |
| 60 |  |  |
|  | ***Cyn.*** Where, or how? |  |
| 62 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***I do not well those circumstances know, |  |
| 64 | But am assured the substance is too true. − | = ie. basic idea. |
|  | Come, reverend Doctor, let us harken out | = seek out.1 |
| 66 | Where the young Prince remains, and bear with you |  |
|  | Med'cines, t' allay his danger: if by wounds, | = "if his life is in danger due to wounds received, etc." |
| 68 | Bear precious balsam, or some sovereign juice; | = carry, ie. bring. = effective (usually used referring to remedies).1 |
|  | If by fell poison, some choice antidote; | = terrible or villainous.1 |
| 70 | If by black witchcraft, our good spirits and prayers |  |
|  | Shall exorcise the devilish wrath of hell |  |
| 72 | Out of his princely bosom. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 74 | *Enter Poggio running*. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 76 | ***Pog.*** Where, where, where? |  |
|  | Where's my lord uncle, my lord my uncle? |  |
| 78 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Here's the ill-tidings bringer; what news now |  |
| 80 | With thy unhappy presence? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 82 | ***Pog.*** Oh, my lord, my lord Vincentio, |  |
|  | Is almost killed by my lord Medice. |  |
| 84 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***  See, Doctor, see, if my presage be true! | = prediction. |
| 86 | And well I know if he have hurt the Prince, |  |
|  | 'Tis treacherously done, or with much help. |  |
| 88 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Nay, sure he had no help, but all the Duke's | 89*f*: Poggio's relation of events is as full of hilarious self-contradictions as ever. |
| 90 | guard; and they set upon him indeed; and after he had |
|  | defended himself − d'ye see? − he drew, and having as |  |
| 92 | good as wounded the lord Medice almost, he strake at | = struck. |
|  | him, and missed him − d'ye mark? |  |
| 94 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***What tale is here? Where is this mischief done? |  |
| 96 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** At Monkswell, my lord; I'll guide you to him | = according to John Stow's 1598 *Survey of London*, a street called *Monkswell*, named after a well at that location which served a local hermitage, was near Cripplegate; in Stow's time, a dozen alms-houses lined Monkswell.  Note that Poggio has forgotten that the play takes place in Italy; such lapses were common in the drama of the time.  *presently* (line 98) means "immediately". |
| 98 | presently. |
|  |  |
| 100 | ***Stroz.*** I doubt it not; fools are best guides to ill, |  |
|  | And mischief's ready way lies open still. | = always. |
| 102 | Lead, sir, I pray. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 104 | [*Exeunt*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT V, SCENE III. |  |
|  | *Cortezza's Chamber*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Cortezza and Margaret above.* | = Margaret's appearance on the balcony is meant to convey a sense of her confinement in Lasso's tower. |
|  |  |
| 1 | ***Cort.*** Quiet yourself, niece; though your love be slain, |  |
| 2 | You have another that's worth two of him. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 4 | ***Marg.*** It is not possible; it cannot be |  |
|  | That Heaven should suffer such impiety. |  |
| 6 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***'Tis true, I swear, niece. |  |
| 8 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Oh, most unjust truth! |  |
| 10 | I'll cast myself down headlong from this tower, |  |
|  | And force an instant passage for my soul |  |
| 12 | To seek the wand'ring spirit of my lord. | = ie. soul of the deceased Vincentio. |
|  |  |  |
| 14 | ***Cort.***Will you do so, niece? That I hope you will not; | 14*ff*: note that Cortezza's long-winded advice to Margaret is not always helpful, usually self-contradictory, and always funny. |
|  | And yet there was a maid in Saint Mark's street | = no such street appears in any of the contemporary published surveys of London; several, including Stow's book mentioned above, describe a *Mart* Street, which the author notes had over time been corrupted to *Mark* Street. Other plays of the era, such as Francis Beaumont's *The Woman Hater*,also mention *Saint Marks Street*.   Edward Sugden's 1925 *A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists* suggests the playwrights might be referring to the Piazza San Marco in Venice.23 |
| 16 | For such a matter did so, and her clothes | 16-17: *her clothes…no harm* = the maid's petticoat or skirt, acting as a parachute, saved her from injury. |
|  | Flew up about her so as she had no harm; |
| 18 | And, grace of God, your clothes may fly up too, |  |
|  | And save you harmless, for your cause and hers | 19-20: *your cause…can be* = "you and the maid both suffer for the same reason." |
| 20 | Are e'en as like as can be. |
|  |  |  |
| 22 | ***Marg.*** I would not scape; | = escape (from death). |
|  | And certainly I think the death is easy. |  |
| 24 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.*** Oh, 'tis the easiest death that ever was; |  |
| 26 | Look, niece, it is so far hence to the ground |  |
|  | You should be quite dead long before you felt it. |  |
| 28 | Yet do not leap, niece. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 30 | ***Marg.*** I will kill myself |  |
|  | With running on some sword, or drink strong poison; |  |
| 32 | Which death is easiest I would fain endure. | = gladly. |
|  |  |  |
| 34 | ***Cort.*** Sure Cleopatra was of the same mind, | 34-35: Plutarch, in his *Lives*, wrote that Cleopatra collected and tested the effects of various poisons on condemned prisoners. |
|  | And did so; she was honoured ever since: |
| 36 | Yet do not you so, niece. |
|  |  |  |
| 38 | ***Marg.*** Wretch that I am, my heart is soft and faint, |  |
|  | And trembles at the very thought of death, |  |
| 40 | Though thoughts tenfold more grievous do torment it: |  |
|  | I'll feel death by degrees, and first deform |  |
| 42 | This my accursèd face with ugly wounds; |  |
|  | That was the first cause of my dear love's death. | = her face was the *first cause* of Vincentio's death, in that it was his falling in love with it that set off the chain of events leading to his supposed slaughter.  *First Cause* is also a philosophical phrase, referring impersonally to the creator of the universe. |
| 44 |  |  |
|  | ***Cort.***That were a cruèl deed; yet Adelasia, | 45-49: the correct title of the cited work is *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure*, written by the English romance writer George Pettie (1548-1589) and published in 1576. Pettie's book, a collection of romance stories, was written in a vein deliberately similar to that of William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure*, a collection of about 100 stories translated from Latin, French, Greek and Italian, published in 1566-7.4  Chapman's memory of the story is faulty: it was not *Adelasia*, but Florinda who harmed her own face, and she did it by striking herself with a stone, not a knife; and finally, it was Painter in his book who related this story, not Pettie. Parrott suggests Chapman seems to have written these lines based on only a vague memory of the story. (Thanks to Chapman editor Thomas Parrott for all his leg work on this reference).  As a side note, Painter's *Palace* was hugely influential in the Elizabethan era; many of the plays of the time were inspired directly or indirectly by his collection, including Shakespeare's *All Well That Ends Well* and *Romeo and Juliet*.  Pettie's book apparently also greatly influenced dramatist John Lyly, whose controversial style of writing known as *Euphuism* was directly inspired by Pettie.4 |
| 46 | In Pettie's *Palace of Petit Pleasure*, |
|  | For all the world, with such a knife as this |
| 48 | Cut off her cheeks and nose, and was commended |
|  | More than all dames that kept their faces whole. |
| 50 |  |  |
|  | [*Margaret seizes the knife and offers to cut her face*.] | = attempts. |
| 52 |  |  |
|  | Oh, do not cut it. |  |
| 54 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** Fie on my faint heart! | = curse, beshrew. |
| 56 | It will not give my hand the wishèd strength; |  |
|  | Behold the just plague of a sensual life, | 57-59: though her *Reason* tells her to kill herself, her innate will to live prevents her from doing so, thus keeping her physical senses (*sensual life*) intact, which ironically cause suffering worse than death. |
| 58 | That to preserve itself in Reason's spite, |
|  | And shun Death's horror, feels it ten times more. |
| 60 | Unworthy women! Why do men adore |  |
|  | Our fading beauties, when, their worthiest lives |  |
| 62 | Being lost for us, we dare not die for them? − |  |
|  | Hence, hapless ornaments that adorned this head, | 63-66: in figuring out how to disfigure herself, Margaret begins by tearing out any accessories she has in her hair, and then messes up her hair.   *Hence* (line 64) = "Away!"  *hapless* = unlucky. |
| 64 | Disorder ever these enticing curls, |
|  | And leave my beauty like a wilderness |
| 66 | That never man's eye more may dare t' invade. |
|  |  |
| 68 | ***Cort.***I'll tell you, niece − and yet I will not tell you |  |
|  | A thing that I desire to have you do − |  |
| 70 | But I will tell you only what you might do, |  |
|  | Cause I would pleasure you in all I could. |  |
| 72 | I have an ointment here, which we dames use |  |
|  | To take off hair when it does grow too low |  |
| 74 | Upon our foreheads, and that, for a need, |  |
|  | If you should rub it hard upon your face |  |
| 76 | Would blister it, and make it look most vildly. | = ie. vilely; *vild* and *vile* were used interchangeably. |
|  |  |  |
| 78 | ***Marg.*** Oh, give me that, aunt! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 80 | ***Cort.*** Give it you, virgin? That were well indeed; |  |
|  | Shall I be thought to tempt you to such matters? |  |
| 82 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** None (of my faith) shall know it; gentle aunt, | = no one else. = "I promise". |
| 84 | Bestow it on me, and I'll ever love you. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 86 | ***Cort.*** God's pity, but you shall not spoil your face! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 88 | ***Marg.***  I will not, then, indeed. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 90 | ***Cort.*** Why, then, niece, take it; |  |
|  | But you shall swear you will not. |  |
| 92 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.*** No, I swear! |  |
| 94 |  |  |
|  | [*She seizes the box and rubs her face* |  |
| 96 | *with the ointment*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 98 | ***Cort.***What, do you force it from me? God's my dear! |  |
|  | Will you misuse your face so? What, all over? | = mistreat. |
| 100 | Nay, if you be so desp'rate, I'll be gone. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 102 | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 104 | ***Marg.***Fade, hapless beauty; turn the ugliest face |  |
|  | That ever Æthiop or affrightful fiend | = Elizabethan term for a black person; generally in this era, the darker one's skin, the less attractive one was considered to be. |
| 106 | Showed in th' amazèd eye of profaned light; |  |
|  | See, precious love, if thou be yet in air, | 107: *precious love* = Margaret apostrophizes to the (presumed) dead Vincentio.  *yet in air* = ie. his soul not yet arrived to Heaven. |
| 108 | And canst break darkness and the strongest towers | 108: "and your soul, or conscious self, can penetrate darkness and towers like the one I am being kept in". |
|  | With thy dissolvèd intellectual powers, |  |
| 110 | See a worse torment suffered for thy death | = in recompense for |
|  | Than if it had extended his black force | = ie. personified Death. |
| 112 | In sevenfold horror to my hated life. − |  |
|  | Smart, precious ointment, smart, and to my brain | = "hurt!", ie. "cause me pain!", an imperative. |
| 114 | Sweat thy envenomed fury; make my eyes |  |
|  | Burn with thy sulphur like the lakes of hell, | = material known to burn easily. |
| 116 | That fear of me may shiver him to dust | = break into many pieces. = ie. the duke. |
|  | That eat his own child with the jaws of lust. | = perhaps comparing the duke to the Greek god Cronos: see the note at line 76 in Scene iv below. |
| 118 |  |
|  | [*Exit*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | ACT V, SCENE IV. |  |
|  | *A Room in Lasso's House*. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | *Enter Alphonso, Lasso, and others.* |  |
|  |  |  |
| 1 | ***Alph.***I wonder how far they pursued my son |  |
| 2 | That no return of him or them appears; |  |
|  | I fear some hapless accident is chanced | = unfortunate. = has occurred. |
| 4 | That makes the news so loath to pierce mine ears. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 6 | ***Lasso.***High Heaven vouchsafe no such effect succeed | 6-7: "God grant (*vouchsafe*) that no such results (*effects*) come after (*succeed*) the *causes* that began in my home". |
|  | Those wretched causes that from my house flow, |
| 8 | But that in harmless love all acts may end. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 10 | *Enter Cortezza.* |  |
|  |  |  |
| 12 | ***Cort.***What shall I do? Alas, I cannot rule | = control, manage. |
|  | My desperate niece; all her sweet face is spoiled, |  |
| 14 | And I dare keep her prisoner no more: |  |
|  | See, see, she comes frantíc and all undressed. | = unkempt; Margaret no longer cares about her appearance. |
| 16 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Margaret*. |  |
| 18 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Tyrant, behold how thou hast used thy love! | 19*f*: indignant, Margaret uses the contemptuous "thee" in addressing the duke. |
| 20 | See, thief to nature, thou hast killed and robbed, |
|  | Killed what myself killed, robbed what makes thee poor. |  |
| 22 | Beauty (a lover's treasure) thou hast lost, |  |
|  | Where none can find it; all a poor maid's dower | = the only dowry a poor maid brings with her is her looks. |
| 24 | Thou hast forced from me; all my joy and hope. |  |
|  | No man will love me more; all dames excel me. | = ie. in looks. |
| 26 | This ugly thing is now no more a face, |  |
|  | Nor any vile form in all earth resembled, | 27: "nor does it resemble any vile thing on earth". |
| 28 | But thy foul tyranny; for which all the pains |  |
|  | Two faithful lovers feel, that thus are parted, |  |
| 30 | All joys they might have felt, turn all to pains; |  |
|  | All a young virgin thinks she does endure | = maiden. |
| 32 | To lose her love and beauty, on thy heart |  |
|  | Be heaped and pressed down till thy soul depart. | 33: Margaret wishes that the duke's heart be crushed by the trio of ideas described in 28-32: (1) the pain two parted lovers feel; (2) the pain caused by never getting to experience the joys they might have had; and (3) the despair experienced by a woman when her looks are gone. |
| 34 |  |
|  | *Enter Julio*. |  |
| 36 |  |  |
|  | ***Jul.*** Haste, Liege, your son is dangerously hurt! |  |
| 38 | Lord Medice, contemning your command, | = scorning. = ie. not to injure or kill Vincentio. |
|  | By me delivered as your Highness willed, |  |
| 40 | Set on him with your guard, who strook him down; |  |
|  | And then the coward lord with mortal wounds |  |
| 42 | And slavish insolency plowed up his soft breast; |  |
|  | Which barbarous fact, in part, is laid on you, | 43-44: *Which barbarous…enjoining it* = wow! Julio quite daringly heaps blame directly on the duke for having irresponsibly given Medice license to slay Vincentio in the first place!   *fact* = deed or crime. |
| 44 | For first enjoining it, and foul exclaims | 44: *and foul exclaims…breathe* = "the people, in pity for Vincentio, are crying out angrily, etc." |
|  | In pity of your son your subjects breathe |  |
| 46 | Gainst your unnatural fury; amongst whom | = abnormal, acting against one's natural feelings of kinship. |
|  | The good lord Strozza desperàtely raves, |  |
| 48 | And vengeance for his friend's injustice craves. |  |
|  | See where he comes, burning in zeal of friendship. |  |
| 50 |  |  |
|  | *Enter Strozza, Vincentio brought in a chair,* | = litter. |
| 52 | *Benevemus, Poggio, Cynanche, with a guard,* |  |
|  | *and Medice*. |  |
| 54 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Where is the tyrant? Let me strike his eyes |  |
| 56 | Into his brain with horror of an object. − |  |
|  | See, pagan Nero, see how thou hast ripped | 57-61: a common Elizabethan sentiment was that a person lives on through his or her descendents. Nero only killed his mother, but the duke has done a worse thing, because by killing his son he has also killed his own parents, who will no longer live through their descendent.3 |
| 58 | Thy better bosom, rooted up that flower |
|  | From whence thy now spent life should spring anew, |
| 60 | And in him killed (that would have bred thee fresh) |
|  | Thy mother and thy father. |
| 62 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Good friend, cease! |  |
| 64 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** What hag with child of monster would have nursed | = ie. by a; the *monster* is the father. |
| 66 | Such a prodigious longing? But a father | = monstrous.2   66-69: *But a father…entrails* = the sense is, "a real father would rather eat his own flesh than allow his lustful desires to be satisfied by means of his own child's death." |
|  | Would rather eat the brawn out of his arms | = flesh.2 |
| 68 | Than glut the mad worm of his wild desires | = *worm* was commonly used to describe a "maggot" of the brain, an entity that causes a fit of madness or unnatural desires;1 but Chapman's *worm*, metaphorically representing the duke's lust, also characterizes a maggot that eats the flesh (*entrails*) of the dead.1  *issue's* = offspring's. |
|  | With his dear issue's entrails. |
| 70 |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** Honoured friend, |  |
| 72 | He is my father, and he is my prince, | = ie. king. |
|  | In both whose rights he may command my life. |  |
| 74 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***What is a father? Turn his entrails gulfs | = "one who turns his *entrails* into whirlpools (*gulfs*)".1 |
| 76 | To swallow children when they have begot them? | 76: there is an allusion here to the story of Zeus's birth: Zeus' father, Cronos, was the king of the Gods; a prophecy told him one of his children would depose him, so he took to swallowing his children as soon as they were born. However, when Zeus was born, Cronos' wife Rhea gave him a stone wrapped in cloth to swallow, which he believed to be his child. Meanwhile, Zeus was hidden and raised secretly, and he did indeed return to depose his father.8 |
|  | And what's a prince? Had all been virtuous men, | 77-79: "and what is a king? If all men were virtuous, there would be no need for kings or subjects, for all men would be kings." |
| 78 | There never had been prince upon the earth, |
|  | And so no subject; all men had been princes: |
| 80 | A virtuous man is subject to no prince, |  |
|  | But to his soul and honour; which are laws |  |
| 82 | That carry fire and sword within themselves, |  |
|  | Never corrupted, never out of rule; | = in disorder.1 |
| 84 | What is there in a prince that his least lusts | 84-87: "why should the slightest needs or desires of a king be worth more than the lives of his subjects? Instead, such faults, which when possessed by others are considered ordinary, should be looked on as monstrosities (*prodigies*) in a king, and his coarse or vulgar desires (*gross dotage*) should be despised instead of overlooked or assented to (*soothed*)."1 |
|  | Are valued at the lives of other men, |
| 86 | When common faults in him should prodigies be, |
|  | And his gross dotage rather loathed than soothed? |
| 88 |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** How thick and heavily my plagues descend, |  |
| 90 | Not giving my mazed powers a time to speak! | = stunned. |
|  | Pour more rebuke upon me, worthy lord, |  |
| 92 | For I have guilt and patience for them all: − |  |
|  | Yet know, dear son, I did forbid thy harm; |  |
| 94 | This gentleman can witness, whom I sent | = indicating Julio. |
|  | With all command of haste to interdict | = forbid.1 |
| 96 | This forward man in mischief not to touch thee: − | = "this man (ie. Medice) who was eager (*forward*) to do mischief, etc." |
|  | Did I not, Julio? Utter nought but truth. | = nothing. |
| 98 |  |  |
|  | ***Jul.*** All your guard heard, my lord, I gave your charge | = command. |
| 100 | With loud and violent iteratiöns, |  |
|  | After all which Lord Medice cowardly hurt him. |  |
| 102 |  |  |
|  | ***The Guard.*** He did, my princely lord. |  |
| 104 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Believe then, son, |  |
| 106 | And know me pierced as deeply with thy wounds: − |  |
|  | And pardon, virtuous lady, that have lost |  |
| 108 | The dearest treasure proper to your sex, | 108: ie. a woman's good looks. |
|  | Ay me, it seems by my unhappy means! | = "due to my ill-fated agency," ie. "it is my fault." |
| 110 | Oh, would to God, I could with present cure |  |
|  | Of these unnatural wounds, and moaning right | 111: *these unnatural wounds* = Vincentio's wounds are *unnatural* in that they were brought on by his own father.   *moaning right* = referring to Margaret's justifiable lamentations.5 |
| 112 | Of this abusèd beauty, join you both |  |
|  | (As last I left you) in eternal nuptials. |  |
| 114 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.*** My lord, I know the malice of this man, | 115-6: ie. "my lord, I know that what was done to us was caused by the malice of Medice (*this man*), and not from any unnatural ill-feeling of your own." |
| 116 | Not your unkind consent, hath used us thus. | = referring to feelings that are not normal between parent and child. |
|  | And since I make no doubt I shall survive |
| 118 | These fatal dangers, and your Grace is pleased |  |
|  | To give free course to my unwounded love, | = in contrast to his wounded body. |
| 120 | 'Tis not this outward beauty's ruthful loss | = pitiful; in 120-1, Vincentio notes that Margaret's mutilation cannot cause him to change his mind about her. |
|  | Can any thought discourage my desires: − |  |
| 122 | And therefore, dear life, do not wrong me so | = Vincentio now addresses Margaret. |
|  | To think my love the shadow of your beauty; | = "the image of", ie. dependent on: his love is not lessened because her beauty is (Smith, p. 117). |
| 124 | I woo your virtues, which as I am sure |  |
|  | No accident can alter or impair, |  |
| 126 | So, be you certain, nought can change my love. | = nothing. |
|  |  |  |
| 128 | ***Marg.***I know your honourable mind, my lord, |  |
|  | And will not do it that unworthy wrong, | 129-131: "I will not wrong you by requiring you to expend energy striving (going against what you see) to love me in this deformed condition;" *it* in line 130 refers to Vincentio's love. |
| 130 | To let it spend her forces in contending |
|  | (Spite of your sense) to love me thus deformed; |  |
| 132 | Love must have outward objects to delight him, | = it, ie. personified *Love*. |
|  | Else his content will be too grave and sour. |  |
| 134 | It is enough for me, my lord, you love, |  |
|  | And that my beauty's sacrifice redeemed | 135-6: *my beauty's…slaughter* = Margaret is satisfied knowing that her face's ruin in a sense ransomed and saved Vincentio's life. |
| 136 | My sad fear of your slaughter. You first loved me |  |
|  | Closely for beauty; which being withered thus, | = "secretly for my beauty." |
| 138 | Your love must fade: when the most needful rights | 138-142: *when the…again* = Margaret's point is that they can be together again in death, when appearances no longer matter. |
|  | Of Fate and Nature have dissolved your life, |
| 140 | And that your love must needs be all in soul, |
|  | Then will we meet again; and then, dear love, |  |
| 142 | Love me again; for then will beauty be |  |
|  | Of no respect with love's eternity. | = of no matter, ie. will no longer be an issue. |
| 144 |  |  |
|  | ***Vinc.***Nor is it now; I wooed your beauty first |  |
| 146 | But as a lover; now as a dear husband, |  |
|  | That title and your virtues bind me ever. |  |
| 148 |  |  |
|  | ***Marg.***Alas, that title is of little force | 149: "unfortunately, the title of "husband" by itself has little power, etc." |
| 150 | To stir up men's affections! When wives want | = lack. |
|  | Outward excitements, husbands' loves grow scant. | = exterior stimulations for passion, ie. good looks.1 |
| 152 |  |  |
|  | ***Ben.*** Assist me, Heaven and Art! − Give me your mask; − | 153: *Art* = human or medical skill.  *Give me your mask* = Smith assumes this line is addressed to Heaven and Art, and that the doctor takes a mask out of his medical kit. Parrott suggests the Benevemus has asked one of the ladies present to give him her mask; Elizabethan women often wore masks outside to protect their faces from the elements. |
| 154 | Open, thou little store-house of great Nature, | 154: now the doctor addresses his medical bag, and removes from it a potion he hopes will cure Margaret's disfigurement. |
|  | Use an elixir drawn through seven years' fire, | = extracted or distilled.1 |
| 156 | That like Medea's cauldron can repair | = in a story related by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, Medea the sorceress (and wife of Jason the Argonaut) restored the youth of Aeson, Jason's aged father. |
|  | The ugliest loss of living temp'rature; | = *temperature* refers to the mixture of the four humours in the body that determine the state of one's health1 (see the note at Act V.ii.11); the doctor's wish is to find a remedy that can fix even the worst derangement (*ugliest loss*) of one's constitution.3 |
| 158 | And for this princely pair of virtuous turtles | = turtledoves. |
|  | Be lavish of thy precious influence. − |  |
| 160 | Lady, t' atone your honourable strife, | = to appease.2 |
|  | And take all let from your love's tender eyes, | = obstacles.2 = ie. Vincentio's loving or affectionate eyes. |
| 162 | Let me for ever hide this stain of beauty |  |
|  | With this recureful mask. | = ie. capable of curing. |
| 164 |  |  |
|  | [*Putting a mask on Margaret's face*.] |  |
| 166 |  |  |
|  | Here be it fixed |  |
| 168 | With painless operation; of itself, |  |
|  | (Your beauty having brooked three days' eclipse) | = put up with. = ie. covering, or deprivation of light;1 Margaret must wear the mask continuously for three days. |
| 170 | Like a dissolvèd cloud it shall fall off, | 170-1: in this meteorological metaphor, the doctor suggests Margaret's regained beauty will be like the sun shining forth after a covering cloud disappears (*dissolves*). |
|  | And your fair looks regain their freshest rays; |  |
| 172 | So shall your princely friend (if Heaven consent) | 172-3: Vincentio will also be cured, but it will take twice as long (six days); *friend* (line 172) = lover. |
|  | In twice your suffered date renew recure; |
| 174 | Let me then have the honour to conjoin |  |
|  | Your hands, conformèd to your constant hearts. | = faithful, loyal. |
| 176 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Grave Benevemus, honourable Doctor, | = respected.1 |
| 178 | On whose most sovereign Æsculapian hand | = Aesculapius was the Greek god of healing.8 |
|  | Fame with her richest miracles attends, |  |
| 180 | Be fortunate, as ever heretofore, |  |
|  | That we may quite thee both with gold and honour, | = requite, repay. |
| 182 | And by thy happy means have power to make |  |
|  | My son and his much injured love amends; |  |
| 184 | Whose well-proportioned choice we now applaud, | = well-conceived or laid-out.1 |
|  | And bless all those that ever furthered it. − |  |
| 186 | Where is your discreet usher, my good lord, | 186-7: having blessed the union of the prince and Margaret, Alphonso even feels warm regard for Bassiolo, the man who surreptitiously, if unwittingly, assisted in their scheme. |
|  | The special furtherer of this equal match? |
| 188 |  |
|  | ***Jul.***  Brought after by a couple of your guard. |  |
| 190 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Let him be fetched, that we may do him grace. | = "honour him." |
| 192 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** I'll fetch him, my lord; away, you must not go. Oh, |  |
| 194 | here he comes. [*Enter Bassiolo guarded*.] Oh, Master |  |
|  | Usher, I am sorry for you; you must presently be |  |
| 196 | chopped in pieces. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 198 | ***Bass.***Woe to that wicked Prince that e'er I saw him! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 200 | ***Pog.*** Come, come, I gull you, Master Usher; you are | = "I am fooling with you". |
|  | like to be the Duke's minion, man; d'ye think I would | = likely to become. = favourite. |
| 202 | have been seen in your company and you had been out | = if. |
|  | of favour? − Here's my friend Master Usher, my lord. |  |
| 204 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Give me your hand, friend; pardon us, I pray. | = Alphonso honors Bassiolo not only by shaking his hand, but by addressing the servant with the respectful "you". |
| 206 | We much have wronged your worth, as one that knew |
|  | The fitness of this match above ourselves. | = "more than I did." |
| 208 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.***Sir, I did all things for the best, I swear, |  |
| 210 | And you must think I would not have been gulled; |  |
|  | I know what's fit, sir, as I hope you know now. − |  |
| 212 | Sweet Vince, how far'st thou? Be of honoured cheer. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 214 | ***Lasso.***Vince, does he call him? Oh, fool, dost thou call |  |
|  | The Prince Vince, like his equal? | = "as if you were". |
| 216 |  |  |
|  | ***Bass.*** Oh, my lord, alas! |  |
| 218 | You know not what has passed twixt us two. − | = between. |
|  | Here in thy bosom I will lie, sweet Vince, |  |
| 220 | And die if thou die, I protest by Heaven. | = swear. |
|  |  |  |
| 222 | ***Lasso.***I know not what this means. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 224 | ***Alph.*** Nor I, my lord; |  |
|  | But sure he saw the fitness of the match |  |
| 226 | With freer and more noble eyes than we. | = as sovereign, Alphonso uses the "royal we", meaning "I". |
|  |  |  |
| 228 | ***Pog.*** Why, I saw that as well as he, my lord. I knew |  |
|  | 'twas a foolish match betwixt you two; did not you think |  |
| 230 | so, my lord Vincentio? Lord uncle, did not I say at first |  |
|  | of the Duke: “Will his antiquity never leave his |  |
| 232 | iniquity?” |  |
|  |  |  |
| 234 | ***Stroz.***Go to, too much of this; but ask this lord | = "please get out of here!" = ie. Medice. |
|  | If he did like it. |  |
| 236 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Who, my lord Medice? |  |
| 238 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Lord Stinkard, man, his name is. Ask him: “Lord |  |
| 240 | Stinkard, did you like the match?” Say. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 242 | ***Pog.*** My lord Stinkard, did you like the match betwixt |  |
|  | the Duke and my lady Margaret? |  |
| 244 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** Presumptuous sycophant, I will have thy life! | 245: the incensed Medice presumably is addressing his long-time nemesis Strozza.  The OED cites this line as an example of *sycophant's* meaning of "imposter" or "deceiver", but *sycophant* could also mean "slanderer", which may make more sense here. |
| 246 |  |
|  | [*Draws*.] |  |
| 248 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Unworthy lord, put up: thirst'st thou more blood? | = ie. "put away your sword." |
| 250 | Thy life is fittest to be called in question |  |
|  | For thy most murth'rous cowardice on my son; | = murderous. |
| 252 | Thy forwardness to every cruèlty | = over-eagerness or boldness.1 |
|  | Calls thy pretended noblesse in suspect. | 253: the duke suggests that a true nobleman would be less prone to violent cruelty than Medice has been. |
| 254 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.***Noblesse, my lord? Set by your princely favour, | = the phrase *set by* was commonly used to mean "put aside", so that the lines 255-6 could be interpreted as an imperative: "set aside (*set by*) your viewing Medice with favour"; but insofar as line 256 ends with a comma, Smith's reading of *Set by* as "except for" may be preferable. |
| 256 | That gave the lustre to his painted state, | = counterfeited, but also punning with *lustre* on the normal meaning of *painted*. |
|  | Who ever viewed him but with deep contempt, |
| 258 | As reading vileness in his very looks? |  |
|  | And if he prove not son of some base drudge, | = menial servant. |
| 260 | Trimmed up by Fortune, being disposed to jest | 260-1: *Trimmed up...state* = Strozza suggests that *Fortune*, a notoriously fickle god, has, with its usual perverse sense of humour, bestowed success and prosperity on the undeserving Medice. |
|  | And dally with your state, then that good angel |
| 262 | That by divine relation spake in me, |  |
|  | Foretelling these foul dangers to your son, |  |
| 264 | And without notice brought this reverend man | = ie. the doctor, Benevemus. |
|  | To rescue him from death, now fails my tongue, |  |
| 266 | And I'll confess I do him open wrong. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 268 | ***Med.*** And so thou dost; and I return all note |  |
|  | Of infamy or baseness on thy throat: | = down. |
| 270 | Damn me, my lord, if I be not a lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 272 | ***Stroz.***My Liege, with all desert even now you said | = deserving. |
|  | His life was daily forfeit for the death |  |
| 274 | Which in these barbarous wounds he sought your son; |  |
|  | Vouchsafe me then his life, in my friend's right, | = "grant me the right to dispose of his life as I see fit". |
| 276 | For many ways I know he merits death; |  |
|  | Which (if you grant) will instantly appear, |  |
| 278 | And that, I feel, with some rare miracle. | = exceptional. |
|  |  |  |
| 280 | ***Alph.*** His life is thine, Lord Strozza; give him death. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 282 | ***Med.*** What, my lord, |  |
|  | Will your Grace cast away an innocent life? |  |
| 284 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Villain, thou liest; thou guilty art of death |  |
| 286 | A hundred ways, which now I'll execute. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 288 | ***Med.*** Recall your word, my lord. | = take back. |
|  |  |  |
| 290 | ***Alph.*** Not for the world! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 292 | ***Stroz.***Oh, my dear Liege, but that my spirit prophetic | 292-6: *but that…penitence* = "except for the fact my sixth sense tells me that Medice is guilty of such sins as deserve death and damnation, I would give him time to confess before I kill him." Strozza prefers Medice not be given an opportunity to save his soul from eternal damnation by confessing and doing penance.  *leave* (line 295) = permission. |
|  | Hath inward feeling of such sins in him |
| 294 | As ask the forfeit of his life and soul, |
|  | I would, before I took his life, give leave |
| 296 | To his confession and his penitence: |
|  | Oh, he would tell you most notorious wonders |  |
| 298 | Of his most impious state; but life and soul |  |
|  | Must suffer for it in him, and my hand |  |
| 300 | Forbidden is from Heaven to let him live |  |
|  | Till by confession he may have forgiveness. |  |
| 302 | Die therefore, monster! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 304 | ***Vinc.***Oh, be not so uncharitable, sweet friend, |  |
|  | Let him confess his sins, and ask Heaven pardon. |  |
| 306 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** He must not, princely friend; it is Heaven's justice | 307-8: Strozza's clairvoyance permits him to claim that he knows that God wants Medice damned forever. |
| 308 | To plague his life and soul, and here's Heaven's justice. |
|  |  |  |
| 310 | [*Draws*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 312 | ***Med.*** Oh, save my life, my lord! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 314 | ***Lasso.*** Hold, good Lord Strozza! |  |
|  | Let him confess the sins that Heaven hath told you, |  |
| 316 | And ask forgiveness. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 318 | ***Med.*** Let me, good my lord, |  |
|  | And I'll confess what you accuse me of: |  |
| 320 | Wonders indeed, and full of damned deserts. | = fully deserving to be damned. |
|  |  |  |
| 322 | ***Stroz.***I know it, and I must not let thee live |  |
|  | To ask forgiveness. |  |
| 324 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** But you shall, my lord, |  |
| 326 | Or I will take his life out of your hand. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 328 | ***Stroz.*** A little then I am content, my Liege: − | = Strozza accepts Alphonso's suggestion that Medice be given an opportunity to confess. |
|  | Is thy name Medice? |
| 330 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** No, my noble lord, |  |
| 332 | My true name is Mendice. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 334 | ***Stroz.*** Mendice? See, | 334-5: Medice has dishonored the great name of Medici by assuming it for himself. |
|  | At first a mighty scandal done to honour. − | = from the first.5 |
| 336 | Of what country art thou? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 338 | ***Med.*** Of no country I, |  |
|  | But born upon the seas, my mother passing | = ie. on a ship. |
| 340 | Twixt Zant and Venice. | = the large Ionian island of Zante, or Zakynthos.3 |
|  |  |  |
| 342 | ***Stroz.***Where wert thou christened? |  |
|  |  |  |
| 344 | ***Med.*** I was never christened, |  |
|  | But, being brought up with beggars, called Mendice, | = Medice's true appellation recalls the name of the *Mendicant* movement of the Middle Ages, which grew in reaction to the feudal organization of the greater church; the friars who took part in it lived amongst the poorest citizens, sharing their poverty, working when they could, and begging when they had to.10  Note also the powerful alliteration of line 345. |
| 346 |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Strange and unspeakable! |  |
| 348 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** How cam'st thou then |  |
| 350 | To bear that port thou didst, ent'ring this Court? | 350: Strozza asks Medice how he learned to act like an an aristocrat; *port* = demeanor or bearing. |
|  |  |
| 352 | ***Med.*** My lord, when I was young, being able-limbed, |  |
|  | A captain of the gipsies entertained me, | 353: *gipsies* = Smith notes that there was "official concern" regarding gypsies in early 17th century England; in 1601, a woman was even hanged for consorting with gypsies (p. 123).  *entertained me* = "took me in". |
| 354 | And many years I lived a loose life with them; |  |
|  | At last I was so favoured that they made me |  |
| 356 | The King of Gipsies; and being told my fortune |  |
|  | By an old sorceress that I should be great |  |
| 358 | In some great prince's love, I took the treasure |  |
|  | Which all our company of gipsies had |  |
| 360 | In many years by several stealths collected; | 360: ie. stolen over many years. |
|  | And leaving them in wars, I lived abroad |  |
| 362 | With no less show than now; and my last wrong | = insult, injury. |
|  | I did to noblesse was in this high Court. | = the notion of nobility, as one of honourable behaviour. |
| 364 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Never was heard so strange a counterfeit. |  |
| 366 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Didst thou not cause me to be shot in hunting? |  |
| 368 |  |  |
|  | ***Med.*** I did, my lord; for which, for Heaven's love, pardon. |  |
| 370 |  |  |
|  | ***Stroz.*** Now let him live, my lord; his blood's least drop |  |
| 372 | Would stain your Court more than the sea could cleanse; |  |
|  | His soul's too foul to expiate with death. |  |
| 374 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.*** Hence then; be ever banished from my rule, | = "go from here". |
| 376 | And live a monster, loathed of all the world. | = by. |
|  |  |  |
| 378 | ***Pog.*** I'll get boys and bait him out o' th' Court, my lord. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 380 | ***Alph.***Do so, I pray thee; rid me of his sight. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 382 | ***Pog.*** Come on, my lord Stinkard, I'll play “Fox, Fox, | 382-3: *Fox…hole* = Parrott identifies this as a Christmas game, in which "boys beat each other with gloves or bits of leather tied to string."3  However, the famed philosopher Thomas Hobbes, in a whimsical book he wrote in 1656 entitled *Six lessons to the professors of the mathematiques*, described a game called "Empura", in which one boy, being summoned by the call described by Poggio, begins to hop about. |
|  | come out of thy hole”' with you, i'faith. |
| 384 |  |
|  | ***Med.*** I'll run and hide me from the sight of Heaven. |  |
| 386 |  |  |
|  | ***Pog.*** Fox, fox, go out of thy hole! A two-legged fox, |  |
| 388 | a two-legged fox! |  |
|  |  |  |
| 390 | [*Exit with Pages beating Medice*.] |  |
|  |  |  |
| 392 | ***Ben.*** Never was such an accident disclosed. | = occurrence. |
|  |  |  |
| 394 | ***Alph.***Let us forget it, honourable friends, |  |
|  | And satisfy all wrongs with my son's right, |  |
| 396 | In solemn marriage of his love and him. |  |
|  |  |  |
| 398 | ***Vinc.*** I humbly thank your Highness: − honoured Doctor, |  |
|  | The balsam you infused into my wounds |  |
| 400 | Hath eased me much, and given me sudden strength |  |
|  | Enough t' assure all danger is exempt | = removed.5 |
| 402 | That any way may let the general joy |  |
|  | My princely father speaks of in our nuptials. |  |
| 404 |  |  |
|  | ***Alph.***Which, my dear son, shall with thy full recure |  |
| 406 | Be celebrate in greater majesty |  |
|  | Than ever graced our greatest ancestry. |  |
| 408 | Then take thy love, which Heaven with all joys bless, |  |
|  | And make ye both mirrors of happiness. |  |
| 410 |  |  |
|  | FINIS |  |
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|  | **Chapman's Invented Words** |  |
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|  | Like all of the writers of the era, George Chapman made up |  |
|  | words when he felt like it, usually by adding prefixes and |  |
|  | suffixes to known words, combining words, or using a word |  |
|  | in a way not yet used before. The following is a list of words |  |
|  | from *The Gentleman Usher* that are indicated by the OED as |  |
|  | being either the first or only use of a given word, or, as |  |
|  | noted, the first use with a given meaning: |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | **conformance** |  |
|  | **cringle-crangle** (used as an adjective) |  |
|  | **crystal globe** |  |
|  | **dictate** (meaning to declare authoritatively) |  |
|  | **formelting** (as an adjective) |  |
|  | **huddle** (meaning confusion) |  |
|  | **pageant** (as a verb) |  |
|  | **recureful** |  |
|  | **sortfully** |  |
|  | **stooped** (as an adjective) |  |
|  | **substance** (meaning aim or purpose) |  |
|  | **threave** (meaning a bundle) |  |
|  | **turnspit** (meaning roasting jack) |  |
|  | **unfitted** (meaning not provided with something suitable) |  |
|  | **unmedicinable** (meaning "no power to cure") |  |
|  | **very good** (phrase used to indicate assent) |  |
|  | **well-selling** |  |
|  | **wooden** (meaning "of the woods") |  |
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|  | **FOOTNOTES** |  |
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|  | The footnotes in the annotations correspond as follows:  1. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online.  2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words.* London; New York: Penguin, 2002.  3. Parrott, Thomas Marc. *Chapman's Comedies*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1914.  4. Stephen, L. and Lee, S. ed. *Dictionary of National Biography.* London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1885-1900.  5. Smith, John Hazel. *The Gentleman Usher*. Lincoln, NE: U. of Nebraska Press, 1970.  6. Farmer, J. and Henley, W. *A Dictionary of Slang and Colloquial English*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1912.  7. *A New English Dictionary*. London: Trubner and Co., 1859.  8. Smith, W., ed. *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman* *Biography and Mythology*. London: John Murray, 1849.  9. Ovid, *Heroides and Amores.* Showerman, Grant, translator. London: William Heinemann, 1914.  10. *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. 11th edition. New York: 1911.  11. Herbermann, Charles G., *et al*., ed. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1917.  12. Onions, Charles T. *A Shakespeare Glossary*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1911.  13. Cox, Nicholas. *The Gentlemen's Recreation in Four Parts, etc*. London, 1686.  14. Bailey, Nathan. *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary*. London: Printed for T. Osborne etc., 1763.  15. Riley, Henry Thomas, trans. *The Comedies of Plautus.* London: George Bell and Sons, 1894.  16. Yamada, Akihiro. *An Edition of George Chapman's A Gentleman Usher.* M.A. Thesis, U. of Birmingham, 1962.  17. Dent, R.W. *Proverbial Language in English Drama Exclusive of Shakespeare, 1495-1616*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.  18: *Elizabethan.org* website. *Anthony Viscount Montague's Book of Orders and Rules*. Retrieved 2/1/2018: http://elizabethan.org/book-of-orders-and-rules/index.html.  19. Gordon G. et al. *Dictionarium Britannicum*. London: The Lamb, 1730.  20. Folger Library Manuscript MS X.d.177. From the University of Warwick website. Retrieved 3/7/2018: web.warwick.ac.uk/english/perdita/html/ms\_\_msitem5.7.htm.  21. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Website. *Dualism*. Retrieved 3/8/2018: www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4041.  22. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Website. *Soul*. Retrieved 3/8/2018: www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10963.  23. Sugden, Edward. *A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists*. Manchester: The University Press, 1925. |  |
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