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| The Gentleman Usher |
|  |
| By George Chapman |
|  |
| 1606 |
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| *Dramatis Personae:* |
|  |
| ***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. |
| ***Ancilla***, a servant. |
|  |
| ***Earl Lasso***, an old Lord. |
| ***Bassiolo***, gentleman usher to Lasso. |
| ***Fungus***, a servant of Lasso. |
| ***Cortezza***, sister of Lasso. |
| ***Margaret***, daughter of Lasso. |
|  |
| ***Benevemus***, a doctor. |
| ***Sarpego***, a pedant. |
| ***Julio***, a courtier. |
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| 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. |
|  |
| SCENE I. |
| *Before the House of Strozza.* |
|  |
| *Enter Strozza, Cynanche, and Poggio.* |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Haste, nephew; what, a sluggard? Fie, for shame! |
| Shall he that was our morning cock, turn owl, |
| And lock out daylight from his drowsy eyes? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Pray pardon me for once, lord uncle, for I'll be |
| sworn I had such a dream this morning: methought one |
| came with a commission to take a sorrel curtal that was |
| stolen from him, wheresoever he could find him. And |
| because I feared he would lay claim to my sorrel curtal |
| in my stable, I ran to the smith to have him set on his |
| mane again and his tail presently, that the commission- |
| 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 |
| not wake for my life till I was revenged on him. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** This is your old valour, nephew, that will fight |
| sleeping as well as waking. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** 'Slud, aunt, what if my dream had been true (as it |
| 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 |
| can choose. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Well said, my furious nephew; but I see |
| You quite forget that we must rouse to-day |
| The sharp-tusked boar; and blaze our huntsmanship |
| Before the Duke. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Forget, lord uncle? I hope not; you think belike |
| my wits are as brittle as a beetle, or as skittish as your |
| Barbary mare; one cannot cry wehee, but straight she |
| cries tehee. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Well guessed, cousin Hysteron Proteron! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** But which way will the Duke's Grace hunt to-day? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Toward Count Lasso's house his Grace will hunt, |
| Where he will visit his late honoured mistress. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Who, Lady Margaret, that dear young dame? Will |
| his antiquity never leave his iniquity? |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Why, how now, nephew? Turned Parnassus lately? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** “Nassus”? I know not; but I would I had all the |
| Duke's living for her sake; I'd make him a poor duke, |
| i'faith! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** No doubt of that, if thou hadst all his living. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** I would not stand dreaming of the matter as I do |
| now. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Why, how do you dream, nephew? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Marry, all last night methought I was tying her |
| shoe-string. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***What, all night tying her shoe-string? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Ay, that I was, and yet I tied it not neither; for, |
| as I was tying it, the string broke, methought, and |
| then, methought, having but one point at my hose, |
| methought, I gave her that to tie her shoe withal. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** A point of much kindness, I assure you. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Whereupon, in the very nick, methought, the |
| Count came rushing in, and I ran rushing out, with my |
| heels about my hose for haste. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***So, will you leave your dreaming, and dispatch? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Mum, not a word more, I'll go before, and |
| overtake you presently. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** My lord, I fancy not these hunting sports, |
| When the bold game you follow turns again |
| And stares you in the face. Let me behold |
| A cast of falcons on their merry wings |
| Daring the stoopèd prey, that shifting flies; |
| Or let me view the fearful hare or hind, |
| Tossed like a music point with harmony |
| Of well-mouthed hounds. This is a sport for princes. |
| The other rude; boars yield fit game for boors. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Thy timorous spirit blinds thy judgment, wife; |
| Those are most royal sports, that most approve |
| The huntsman's prowess and his hardy mind. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** My lord, I know too well your virtuous spirit; |
| Take heed, for God's love, if you rouse the boar, |
| You come not near him, but discharge aloof |
| Your wounding pistol, or well-aimèd dart. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Ay, marry, wife, this counsel rightly flows |
| Out of thy bosom; pray thee take less care; |
| Let ladies at their tables judge of boars, |
| Lords in the field. And so farewell, sweet love; |
| Fail not to meet me at Earl Lasso's house. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Pray pardon me for that. You know I love not |
| These solemn meetings. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** You must needs for once |
| Constrain your disposition; and indeed |
| I would acquaint you more with Lady Margaret |
| For special reason. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Very good, my lord. |
| Then I must needs go fit me for that presence. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** I pray thee do, farewell! |
|  |
| [*Exit Cynanche*.] |
|  |
| *Enter Vincentio.* |
|  |
| Here comes my friend. − |
| Good day, my lord! Why does your Grace confront |
| So clear a morning with so cloudy looks? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Ask'st thou my griefs that know'st my desp'rate love |
| Curbed by my father's stern riválity? |
| Must not I mourn that know not whether yet |
| I shall enjoy a stepdame or a wife? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***A wife, Prince, never doubt it; your deserts |
| And youthful graces have engaged so far |
| The beauteous Margaret that she is your own. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Oh, but the eye of watchful jealousy |
| Robs my desires of means t' enjoy her favour. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Despair not: there are means enow for you: |
| Suborn some servant of some good respect |
| That's near your choice, who, though she needs no wooing, |
| May yet imagine you are to begin |
| Your strange young love-suit, and so speak for you, |
| Bear your kind letters, and get safe accéss. |
| All which when he shall do, you need not fear |
| His trusty secrecy, because he dares not |
| Reveal escapes whereof himself is author; |
| Whom you may best attempt, she must reveal; |
| For, if she loves you, she already knows, |
| And in an instant can resolve you that. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***And so she will, I doubt not; would to Heaven |
| I had fit time, even now, to know her mind! |
| This counsel feeds my heart with much sweet hope. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Pursue it then; 'twill not be hard t' effect: |
| The Duke has none for him, but Medice, |
| That fustian lord, who in his buckram face |
| Bewrays, in my conceit, a map of baseness. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Ay, there's a parcel of unconstruèd stuff, |
| That unknown minion raised to honour's height, |
| Without the help of virtue, or of art |
| Or (to say true) of any honest part. |
| Oh, how he shames my father! He goes like |
| A prince's footman, in old-fashioned silks, |
| And most times in his hose and doubtlet only; |
| So miseráble, that his own few men |
| Do beg by virtue of his livery; |
| For he gives none, for any service done him, |
| Or any honour, any least reward. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***'Tis pity such should live about a prince: |
| I would have such a noble counterfeit nailed |
| Upon the pillory, and, after, whipped |
| For his adultery with nobility. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Faith, I would fain disgrace him by all means, |
| As enemy to his base-bred ignorance, |
| That, being a great lord, cannot write nor read. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** For that, we'll follow the blind side of him, |
| And make it sometimes subject of our mirth. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio post-haste*. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** See, what news with your nephew Poggio? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***None good, I warrant you! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Where should I find my lord uncle? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***What's the huge haste with you? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** O ho, you will hunt to-day! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***I hope I will. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** But you may hap to hop without your hope, for |
| the truth is, Killbuck is run mad. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***What's this? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Nay, 'tis true, sir: and Killbuck being run mad, |
| bit Ringwood so by the left buttock, you might have |
| turned your nose in it. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Out, ass! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** By Heaven, you might, my lord! D'ye think I lie? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Zounds, might I? Let's blanket him, my lord. A |
| blanket here! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Nay, good my lord Vincentio, by this rush I tell |
| you for good will: and Venus, your brach there, runs so |
| proud that your huntsman cannot take her down for his |
| life. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Take her up, fool, thou wouldst say. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Why, sir, he would soon take her down, and he |
| could take her up, I warrant her! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Well said, hammer, hammer! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Nay, good now, let's alone. And there's your |
| horse, Gray Strozza, too, has the staggers, and has |
| strook Bay Bettrice, your Barbary mare, so that she |
| goes halting o' this fashion, most filthily. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***What poison blisters thy unhappy tongue, |
| Evermore braying forth unhappy news? − |
| Our hunting sport is at the best, my lord: |
| How shall I satisfy the Duke your father, |
| Defrauding him of his expected sport? |
| See, see, he comes. |
|  |
| *Enter Alphonso, Medice, Sarpego, with attendants*. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Is this the copy of the speech you wrote, Signor |
| Sarpego? |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***It is a blaze of wit poetical; |
| Read it, brave Duke, with eyes pathetical. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** We will peruse it straight: − well met, Vincentio, |
| And good Lord Strozza; we commend you both |
| For your attendance; but you must conceive |
| 'Tis no true hunting we intend to-day, |
| But an inducement to a certain show, |
| Wherewith we will present our beauteous love, |
| And therein we bespeak your company. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** We both are ready to attend your Highness. |
|  |
| **Alph.**See then, here is a poem that requires |
| Your worthy censures, offered, if it like, |
| To furnish our intended amorous show: |
| Read it, Vincentio. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Pardon me, my lord. |
| Lord Medice's reading will express it better. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** My patience can digest your scoffs, my lord. |
| I care not to proclaim it to the world: |
| I can nor write nor read; and what of that? |
| I can both see and hear as well as you. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Still are your wits at war. |
| [*To Vincentio*] Here, read this poem. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***[*Reads*] |
| “The red-faced sun hath firked the flundering shades, |
| And cast bright ammel on Aurora's brow.” |
|  |
| ***Alph.***High words and strange! Read on, Vincentio. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** “The busky groves that gag-toothed boars do shroud |
| With cringle-crangle horns do ring aloud.” |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** My lord, my lord, I have a speech here worth ten |
| of this, and yet I'll mend it too. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***How likes Vincentio? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** It is strangely good, |
| No inkhorn ever did bring forth the like. |
| Could these brave prancing words with action's spur, |
| Be ridden throughly, and managed right, |
| 'Twould fright the audience, and perhaps delight. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** Doubt you of action, sir? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Ay, for such stuff. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***Then know, my lord, I can both act and teach |
| To any words; when I in Padua schooled it, |
| I played in one of Plautus' comedies, |
| Namely, *Curculio*, where his part I acted, |
| Projecting from the poor sum of four lines |
| Forty fair actions. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Let's see that, I pray. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***Your Highness shall command. |
| But pardon me, if in my action's heat, |
| Entering in post post haste, I chance to take up |
| Some of your honoured heels. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Y' ad best leave out |
| That action for a thing that I know, sir. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***Then shall you see what I can do without it. |
|  |
| [*Sarpego puts on his parasite's costume*.] |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** See, see! He hath his furniture and all. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** You must imagine, lords, I bring good news, |
| Whereof being princely proud I scour the street, |
| And over-tumble every man I meet. |
|  |
| [*Exit Sarpego*.] |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Beshrew my heart if he take up my heels! |
|  |
| *Enter Sarpego, running about the stage*. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** *Date viam mihi, noti atque ignoti, dum ego* |
| *hic officium meum.* |
| *Facio: fugite omnes, abite, et de via secedite,* |
| *Ne quern in cursu capite aut cubito aut pectore* |
| *offendam aut genu*. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Thanks, good Signor Sarpego. |
| How like you, lords, this stirring action? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** In a cold morning it were good, my lord, |
| But something harsh upon repletiön. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** Sir, I have ventured, being enjoined, to eat |
| Three scholars' commons, and yet drew it neat. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Come, sir, you meddle in too many matters; let us, |
| I pray, tend on our own show at my lord Lasso's. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***  Doing obeisance then to every lord, |
| I now consort you, sir, even *toto corde*. |
|  |
| [*Exit Sarpego and Poggio*.] |
|  |
| ***Med.*** My lord, away with these scholastic wits, |
| Lay the invention of your speech on me, |
| And the performance too; I'll play my part |
| That you shall say, Nature yields more than Art. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Be't so resolved; unartificial truth |
| And unfeigned passion can decipher best. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***But 'twill be hard, my lord, for one unlearn'd. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Unlearn'd? I cry you mercy, sir; unlearn'd? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***I mean untaught, my lord, to make a speech |
| As a pretended actor, without clothes |
| More gracious than your doublet and your hose. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***What, think you, son, we mean t' express a speech |
| Of special weight without a like attire? |
|  |
| [*Alphonso puts rich robes on Medice*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Excuse me then, my lord; so stands it well. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Has brought them rarely in to pageant him. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** What, think you, lord, we think not of attire? |
| Can we not make us ready at this age? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Alas, my lord, your wit must pardon his. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***I hope it will; his wit is pitiful. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** [*To Medice*] |
| I pray stand by, my lord; y' are troublesome. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** To none but you; − am I to you, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Not unto me. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Why, then, you wrong me, Strozza. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Nay, fall not out, my lords. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** May I not know |
| What your speech is, my Liege? |
|  |
| ***Alph.***None but myself, and the Lord Medice. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** No, pray, my lord, |
| Let none partake with us. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** No, be assured. |
| But for another cause: |
| [*Aside to Strozza*] a word, Lord Strozza; |
| I tell you true I fear Lord Medice |
| Will scarce discharge the speech effectually; |
| As we go, therefore, I'll explain to you |
| My whole intent, that you may second him |
| If need and his debility require. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Thanks for this grace, my Liege. |
|  |
| [*Vincentio overhears*.] |
|  |
| ***Med.*** My lord, your son! |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Why, how now, son? Forbear. − Yet 'tis no matter, |
| We talk of other business, Medice; |
| And come, we will prepare us to our show. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt Alphonso, Medice, and attendants*.] |
|  |
| ***Stroz. and Vinc.***Which, as we can, we'll cast to overthrow. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT I, SCENE II. |
| *A Room in the House of Lasso.* |
|  |
| *Enter Lasso, Bassiolo, Sarpego, two Pages;* |
| *Bassiolo bare before*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Stand by there, make place! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Say, now, Bassiolo, you on whom relies |
| The general disposition of my house |
| In this our preparation for the Duke, |
| Are all our officers at large instructed |
| For fit discharge of their peculiar places? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***At large, my lord, instructed. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Are all our chambers hung? Think you our house |
| Amply capacious to lodge all the train? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Amply capacious, I am passing glad. |
| And now, then, to our mirth and musical show, |
| Which, after supper, we intend t' endure, |
| Welcome's chief dainties; for choice cates at home |
| Ever attend on princes, mirth abroad. |
| Are all parts perfect? |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** One I know there is. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** And that is yours. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** Well guessed, in earnest, lord! |
| I need not *erubescere* to take |
| So much upon me; that my back will bear. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Nay, he will be perfectiön itself |
| For wording well and dextrous action, too. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***And will these waggish pages hit their songs? |
|  |
| ***Both Pages.*** Re, mi, fa, sol, la. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Oh they are practising; good boys, well done! |
| But where is Poggio? There y' are overshot, |
| To lay a capital part upon his brain, |
| Whose absence tells me plainly he'll neglect him. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Oh no, my lord, he dreams of nothing else, |
| And gives it out in wagers he'll excel; |
| And see (I told your lordship) he is come. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio.* |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** How now, my lord, have you borrowed a suit for |
| me? Signor Bassiolo, can all say, are all things ready? |
| The Duke is hard by, and little thinks that I'll be an |
| actor, i'faith; I keep all close, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Oh, 'tis well done, call all the ladies in; − |
| Sister and daughter, come, for God's sake, come, |
| Prepare your courtliest carriage for the Duke. |
|  |
| *Enter Cortezza, Margaret, and Maids*. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***And, niece, in any case remember this: |
| Praise the old man, and when you see him first, |
| Look me on none but him, smiling and lovingly; |
| And then, when he comes near, make beisance low, |
| With both your hands thus moving, which not only |
| Is, as 'twere, courtly, and most comely too, |
| But speaks (as who should say “Come hither, Duke.”) |
| And yet says nothing, but you may deny. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Well taught, sister! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Ay, and to much end; |
| I am exceeding fond to humour him. |
|  |
| *Enter Enchanter, with spirits singing;* |
| *after them Medice like Sylvanus, next the Duke* |
| *bound, Vincentio, Strozza, with others*. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Hark! Does he come with music? What, and bound? |
| An amorous device; daughter, observe! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***[*Aside to Strozza*] |
| Now let's gull Medice; I do not doubt |
| But this attire put on, will put him out. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***[*Aside to Vincentio*] |
| We'll do our best to that end, therefore mark. |
|  |
| ***Enchanter.*** Lady or Princess, both your choice commands, |
| These spirits and I, all servants of your beauty, |
| Present this royal captive to your mercy. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Captive to me, a subject? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Ay, fair nymph! |
| And how the worthy mystery befell, |
| Sylvanus here, this wooden god, can tell. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Now, my lord! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Now is the time, man, speak! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Peace! |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Peace, Vincentio! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Swounds, my lord, |
| Shall I stand by and suffer him to shame you? − |
| My lord Medice! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Will you not speak, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** How can I? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** But you must speak, in earnest. − |
| Would not your Highness have him speak, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Yes, and I will speak, and perhaps speak so |
| As you shall never mend: I can, I know. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Do then, my good lord. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Medice, forth! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Goddess, fair goddess, for no less − no less – |
|  |
| [*Medice hesitates.*] |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** No less, no less? No more, no more! |
| [*To Strozza*] Speak you. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** 'Swounds, they have put me out! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Laugh you, fair goddess? |
| This nobleman disdains to be your fool. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Vincentio, peace! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Swounds, my lord, it is as good a show! − |
| Pray speak, Lord Strozza. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Honourable dame – |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Take heed you be not out, I pray, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** I pray forbear, my lord Vincentio. − |
| How this distressèd Prince came thus enthralled, |
| I must relate with words of height and wonder: |
| His Grace this morning, visiting the woods, |
| And straying far to find game for the chase, |
| At last out of a myrtle grove he roused |
| A vast and dreadful boar, so stern and fierce. |
| As if the fiend, fell Cruèlty herself, |
| Had come to fright the woods in that strange shape. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Excellent good! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Too good, a plague on him! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***The princely savage being thus on foot, |
| Tearing the earth up with his thundering hoof, |
| And with th' enragèd Ætna of his breath |
| Firing the air, and scorching all the woods, |
| Horror held all us huntsmen from pursuit; |
| Only the Duke, incensed with our cold fear, |
| Encouraged like a second Hercules – |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Zounds, too good, man! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Pray thee let me alone! |
| And like the English sign of great Saint George – |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Plague of that simile! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Gave valorous example, and, like fire, |
| Hunted the monster close, and charged so fierce |
| That he enforced him (as our sense conceived) |
| To leap for soil into a crystal spring; |
| Where on the sudden strangely vanishing, |
| Nymph-like, for him, out of the waves arose |
| Your sacred figure, like Diana armed, |
| And (as in purpose of the beast's revenge) |
| Discharged an arrow through his Highness' breast, |
| Whence yet no wound or any blood appeared; |
| With which the angry shadow left the light; |
| And this enchanter, with his power of spirits, |
| Brake from a cave, scattering enchanted sounds, |
| That strook us senseless, while in these strange bands |
| These cruèl spirits thus enchained his arms, |
| And led him captive to your heavenly eyes, |
| Th' intent whereof on their report relies. |
|  |
| ***Enchanter.*** Bright nymph, that boar figured your cruèlty, |
| Chargèd by love, defended by your beauty. |
| This amorous huntsman here we thus enthralled |
| As the attendants on your Grace's charms, |
| And brought him hither, by your bounteous hands |
| To be released, or live in endless bands. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Daughter, release the Duke! − Alas, my Liege, |
| What meant your Highness to endure this wrong? |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Enlarge him, niece; come, dame, it must be so. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** What, madam, shall I arrogate so much? |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***His Highness' pleasure is to grace you so. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Perform it then, sweet love, it is a deed |
| Worthy the office of your honoured hand. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Too worthy, I confess, my lord, for me, |
| If it were serious; but it is in sport, |
| And women are fit actors for such pageants. |
|  |
| [*She unbinds Alphonso*.] |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Thanks, gracious love; why made you strange of this? |
| I rest no less your captive than before; |
| For me untying, you have tied me more. − |
| Thanks, Strozza, for your speech. − |
| [*To Medice*] No thanks to you! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** No, thank your son, my lord! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** 'Twas very well, |
| Exceeding well performed on every part; |
| How say you, Bassiolo? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Rare, I protest, my lord! |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Oh, my lord Medice became it rarely; |
| Methought I liked his manly being out; |
| It becomes noblemen to do nothing well. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Now then, will't please your Grace to grace our house, |
| And still vouchsafe our service further honour? |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Lead us, my lord; we will your daughter lead. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt all but Vincentio and Strozza*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***You do not lead, but drag her leaden steps. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***How did you like my speech? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Oh, fie upon't! |
| Your rhetoric was too fine. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Nothing at all; |
| I hope Saint George's sign was gross enough: |
| But (to be serious) as these warnings pass, |
| Watch you your father, I'll watch Medice, |
| That in your love-suit we may shun suspect; |
| To which end, with your next occasion urge |
| Your love to name the person she will choose, |
| By whose means you may safely write or meet. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***That's our chief business; and see, here she comes. |
|  |
| *Enter Margaret in haste*. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***My lord, I only come to say, y' are welcome, |
| And so must say farewell. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** One word, I pray. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***What's that? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** You needs must presently devise |
| What person trusted chiefly with your guard |
| You think is aptest for me to corrupt |
| In making him a mean for our safe meeting. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***My father's usher, none so fit. |
| If you can work him well; − and so farewell, |
| With thanks, my good lord Strozza, for your speech. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***I thank you for your patience, mocking lady. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Oh, what a fellow has she picked us out! |
| One that I would have choosed past all the rest |
| For his close stockings only. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** And why not |
| For the most constant fashion of his hat? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Nay, then, if nothing must be left unspoke, |
| For his strict form thus still to wear his cloak. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Well, sir, he is your own, I make no doubt; |
| For to these outward figures of his mind |
| He hath two inward swallowing properties |
| Of any gudgeons, servile avarice |
| And overweening thought of his own worth, |
| Ready to snatch at every shade of glory: |
| And, therefore, till you can directly board him, |
| Waft him aloof with hats and other favours |
| Still as you meet him. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Well, let me alone: |
| He that is one man's slave is free from none. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| ACT II. |
|  |
| SCENE I. |
| *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |
|  |
| *Enter Medice, Cortezza,* |
| *a Page with a cup of sack*. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Come, lady, sit you here. Page, fill some sack. |
| [*Aside*] I am to work upon this agèd dame, |
| To glean from her if there be any cause |
| (In loving others) of her niece's coyness |
| To the most gracious love-suit of the Duke. – |
| Here, noble lady, this is healthful drink |
| After our supper. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Oh, 'tis that, my lord, |
| That of all drinks keeps life and soul in me. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Here, fill it, page, for this my worthy love. |
| Oh, how I could embrace this good old widow! |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Now, lord, when you do thus you make me think |
| Of my sweet husband, for he was as like you; |
| E'en the same words and fashion, the same eyes, |
| Manly, and choleric, e'en as you are, just; |
| And e'en as kind as you for all the world. |
|  |
| ***Med*.** Oh, my sweet widow, thou dost make me proud! |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Nay, I am too old for you. |
|  |
| ***Med*.** Too old! That's nothing; |
| Come, pledge me, wench, for I am dry again, |
| And straight will charge your widowhood fresh, i'faith: |
|  |
| [*She drinks*.] |
|  |
| Why, that's well done! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Now fie on't, here's a draught! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Oh, it will warm your blood; if you should sip, |
| 'Twould make you heartburned. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** 'Faith, and so they say; |
| Yet I must tell you, since I plied this gear, |
| I have been haunted with a whoreson pain here, |
| And every moon, almost, with a shrewd fever, |
| And yet I cannot leave it; for, thank God! |
| I never was more sound of wind and limb. |
|  |
| [*Enter Strozza* *behind*.] |
|  |
| Look you, I warrant you I have a leg, |
|  |
| [*Cortezza shows a great bumbasted leg*.] |
|  |
| Holds out as handsomely – |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Beshrew my life, |
| But 'tis a leg indeed, a goodly limb! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***[*Aside*] This is most excellent! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Oh, that your niece |
| Were of as mild a spirit as yourself! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Alas, Lord Medice, would you have a girl |
| As well seen in behaviöur as I? |
| Ah, she's a fond young thing, and grown so proud, |
| The wind must blow at west still or she'll be angry. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Mass, so methinks; how coy she's to the Duke! |
| I lay my life she has some younger love. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** 'Faith, like enough! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Gods me, who should it be? |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** If it be any − Page, a little sack − |
| If it be any, hark now, if it be – |
| I know not, by this sack − but if it be, |
| Mark what I say, my lord − I drink t'ye first. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Well said, good widow; much good do't thy heart! |
| So, now what if it be? |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Well, if it be − |
| To come to that, I said, for so I said – |
| If it be any, 'tis the shrewd young Prince; |
| For eyes can speak, and eyes can understand, |
| And I have marked her eyes; yet by this cup, |
| Which I will only kiss – |
|  |
| [*She drinks*.] |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** [*Aside*]Oh, noble crone! |
| Now such a huddle and kettle never was. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** I never yet have seen − not yet, I say – |
| But I will mark her after for your sake. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** And do, I pray, for it is passing like; |
| And there is Strozza, a sly counsellór |
| To the young boy: Oh, I would give a limb |
| To have their knavery limned and painted out. |
| They stand upon their wits and paper-learning; |
| Give me a fellow with a natural wit |
| That can make wit of no wit; and wade through |
| Great things with nothing, when their wits stick fast. |
| Oh, they be scurvy lords! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Faith, so they be! |
| Your lordship still is of my mind in all, |
| And e'en so was my husband. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** [*Spying Strozza*.] Gods my life! |
| Strozza hath eavesdropped here, and overheard us. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** They have descried me. |
| [*Advancing*.] What, Lord Medice, |
| Courting the lusty widow? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Ay, and why not? |
| Perhaps one does as much for you at home. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** What, choleric, man? And toward wedlock too? |
|  |
| ***Cort.***And if he be, my lord, he may do worse. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***If he be not, madam, he may do better. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo with Servants,* |
| *with rushes and a carpet*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***My lords, and madam, the Duke's Grace entreats you |
| T'attend his new-made Duchess for this night |
| Into his presence. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***We are ready, sir. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt Cortezza, Medice, Strozza and Page*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Come, strew this room afresh; spread here this carpet; |
| Nay, quickly, man, I pray thee; this way, fool; |
| Lay me it smooth, and even; look if he will! |
| This way a little more; a little there. |
| Hast thou no forecast? 'Sblood, methinks a man |
| Should not of mere necessity be an ass. |
| Look, how he strows here, too: come, Sir Giles Goosecap, |
| I must do all myself; lay me 'em thus, |
| In fine smooth threaves; look you, sir, thus, in threaves. |
| Perhaps some tender lady will squat here, |
| And if some standing rush should chance to prick her, |
| She'd squeak, and spoil the songs that must be sung. |
|  |
| *Enter Vincentio and Strozza*. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** See, where he is; now to him, and prepare |
| Your familiarity. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Save you, master Bassiolo! |
| I pray a word, sir; but I fear I let you. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***No, my good lord, no let. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I thank you, sir. |
| Nay, pray be covered; oh, I cry you mercy, |
| You must be bare. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Ever to you, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, not to me, sir. |
| But to the fair right of your worshipful place. |
|  |
| [*Vincentio uncovers*.] |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** [*Aside*] A shame of both your worships. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***What means your lordship? |
|  |
| [*Exit Strozza*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Only to do you right, sir, and myself ease. |
| And what, sir, will there be some show to-night? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***A slender presentation of some music, |
| And something else, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Tis passing good, sir; |
| I'll not be overbold t' ask the particulars. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Yes, if your lordship please. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Oh, no, good sir; |
| But I did wonder much, for, as me thought, |
| I saw your hands at work. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Or else, my lord, |
| Our busïness would be but badly done. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***How virtuous is a worthy man's example! |
| Who is this throne for, pray? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** For my lord's daughter. |
| Whom the Duke makes to represent his Duchess. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Twill be exceeding fit; and all this room |
| Is passing well prepared; a man would swear |
| That all presentments in it would be rare. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, see if thou canst lay 'em thus, in threaves. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***In threaves, d'ye call it? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Ay, my lord, in threaves. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***A pretty term! |
| Well, sir, I thank you highly for this kindness, |
| And pray you always make as bold with me |
| For kindness more than this, if more may be. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Oh, my lord, this is nothing. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Sir, 'tis much! |
| And now I'll leave you, sir; I know y' are busy. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Faith, sir, a little! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I commend me t' ye, sir. |
|  |
| [*Exit Vincentio*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** A courteous prince, believe it; I am sorry |
| I was no bolder with him; what a phrase |
| He used at parting, “I commend me t' ye.” |
| I'll ha't, i'faith! |
|  |
| [*Enter Sarpego, half dressed*.] |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***Good Master Usher, will you dictate to me |
| Which is the part precédent of this night-cap, |
| And which posterior? I do *ignorare* |
| How I should wear it. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why, sir, this, I take it, |
| Is the precédent part; ay, so it is. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** And is all well, sir, think you? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Passing well. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio and Fungus*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Why, sir, come on; the usher shall be judge. − |
| See, Master Usher, this same Fungus here, |
| Your lord's retainer, whom I hope you rule, |
| Would wear this better jerkin for the Rush-man, |
| When I do play the Broom-man, and speak first. |
|  |
| ***Fung.*** Why, sir, I borrowed it, and I will wear it. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** What, sir; in spite of your lord's gentleman usher? |
|  |
| ***Fung.*** No spite, sir, but you have changed twice already, |
| And now would ha't again. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Why, that's all one, sir, |
| Gentility must be fantastical. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***I pray thee, Fungus, let Master Poggio wear it. |
|  |
| ***Fung.*** And what shall I wear then? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Why, here is one |
| That was a rush-man's jerkin, and I pray, |
| Were't not absurd then, a broom-man should wear it? |
|  |
| ***Fung.*** Foh, there's a reason! I will keep it, sir. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Will, sir? Then do your office, Master Usher, |
| Make him put off his jerkin; you may pluck |
| His coat over his ears, much more his jerkin. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Fungus, y' ad best be ruled. |
|  |
| ***Fung.*** Best, sir! I care not. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** No, sir? I hope you are my lord's retainer. |
| I need not care a pudding for your lord: |
| But spare not, keep it, for perhaps I'll play |
| My part as well in this as you in that. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well said. Master Poggio! |
| [*To Fungus*.] My lord shall know it. |
|  |
| *Enter Cortezza, with the Broom-wench and* |
| *Rush-wench in their petticoats, cloaks over them,* |
| *with hats over their head-tires*. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Look, Master Usher, are these wags well dressed? |
| I have been so in labour with 'em truly. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Y' ave had a very good deliverance, lady. |
| [*Aside*] How I did take her at her labour there; |
| I use to gird these ladies so sometimes. |
|  |
| *Enter Lasso, with Sylvanus and a Nymph,* |
| *a man Bug, and a woman Bug*. |
|  |
| ***1st Bug.*** I pray, my lord, must not I wear this hair? |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***I pray thee, ask my usher; come, dispatch, |
| The Duke is ready; are you ready there? |
|  |
| ***2nd Bug.*** See, Master Usher, must he wear this hair? |
|  |
| ***1st Bug.*** Pray, Master Usher, where must I come in? |
|  |
| ***2nd Bug.*** Am not I well for a Bug, Master Usher? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***What stir is with these boys here! God forgive me, |
| If 'twere not for the credit on't, I'd see |
| Your apish trash afire, ere I'd endure this. |
|  |
| ***1st Bug.*** But pray, good Master Usher – |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Hence, ye brats! |
| You stand upon your tire; but for your action |
| Which you must use in singing of your songs |
| Exceeding dextrously and full of life, |
| I hope you'll then stand like a sort of blocks, |
| Without due motion of your hands and heads, |
| And wresting your whole bodies to your words; |
| Look to't, y' are best, and in; go, all go in! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Come in, my masters; let's be out anon. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt all but Lasso and Bassiolo*.] |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***What, are all furnished well? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** All well, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** More lights then here, and let loud music sound. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Sound music! |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
| *Enter Vincentio, Strozza, bare, Margaret,* |
| *Cortezza and Cynanche bearing her train.* |
| *After her the Duke whispering with Medice,* |
| *Lasso with Bassiolo, etc*. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Advance yourself, fair Duchess, to this throne, |
| As we have long since raised you to our heart; |
| Better decorum never was beheld, |
| Than twixt this state and you: and as all eyes |
| Now fixed on your bright graces think it fit, |
| So frame your favour to continue it. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** My lord, but to obey your earnest will, |
| And not make serious scruple of a toy, |
| I scarce durst have presumed this minute's height. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Usher, cause other music; begin your show. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Sound, consort! Warn the Pedant to be ready. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Madam, I think you'll see a pretty show. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** I can expect no less in such a presence. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Lo! what attention and state beauty breeds, |
| Whose moving silence no shrill herald needs. |
|  |
| *Enter Sarpego*. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** Lords of high degree, |
| And ladies of low courtesy, |
| I the Pedant here, |
| Whom some call schoolmaster, |
| Because I can speak best, |
| Approach before the rest. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***A very good reason. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.*** But there are others coming, |
| Without mask or mumming; |
| For they are not ashamed, |
| If need be, to be named; |
| Nor will they hide their faces, |
| In any place or places; |
| For though they seem to come, |
| Loaded with rush and broom, |
| The Broom-man, you must know, |
| Is Signor Poggio, |
| Nephew, as shall appear, |
| To my Lord Strozza here – |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Oh, Lord! I thank you, sir; you grace me much. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***And to this noble dame, |
| Whom I with finger name. |
|  |
| [*Pointing to Cynanche*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***A plague of that fool's finger! |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***And women will ensue, |
| Which, I must tell you true, |
| No women are indeed, |
| But pages made, for need, |
| To fill up women's places, |
| By virtue of their faces, |
| And other hidden graces. |
| A hall, a hall! Whist, still, be mum! |
| For now with silver song they come. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio, Fungus, with the song,* |
| *Broom-maid and Rush-maid.* |
| *Sylvanus, a Nymph, and two Bugs.* |
| *After which Poggio*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Heroes and heroines of gallant strain, |
| Let not these brooms' motes in your eyes remain, |
| For in the moon there's one bears withered bushes; |
| But we (dear wights) do bear green brooms, green rushes, |
| Whereof these verdant herbals, clepèd broom, |
| Do pierce and enter every lady's room; |
| And to prove them high-born, and no base trash, |
| Water, with which your physnomies you wash, |
| Is but a broom. And, more truth to deliver, |
| Grim Hercules swept a stable with a river. |
| The wind, that sweeps foul clouds out of the air, |
| And for you ladies makes the welkin fair, |
| Is but a broom: and oh, Dan Titan bright, |
| Most clerkly called the scavenger of night, |
| What art thou, but a very broom of gold |
| For all this world not to be cried nor sold? |
| Philosophy, that passion sweeps from thought, |
| Is the soul's broom, and by all brave wits sought: |
| Now if philosophers but broom-men are, |
| Each broom-man then is a philosopher. |
| And so we come (gracing your gracious Graces) |
| To sweep Care's cobwebs from your cleanly faces. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Thanks, good Master Broom-man! |
|  |
| ***Fung.***  For me Rush-man, then, |
| To make rush ruffle in a verse of ten. |
| A rush, which now your heels do lie on here – |
|  |
| [*Pointing to Vincentio*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***  Cry mercy, sir! |
|  |
| ***Fung.*** Was whilome usèd for a pungent spear, |
| In that odd battle never fought but twice |
| (As Homer sings) betwixt the frogs and mice. |
| Rushes make true-love knots; rushes make rings; |
| Your rush maugre the beard of Winter springs. |
| And when with gentle, amorous, lazy limbs, |
| Each lord with his fair lady sweetly swims |
| On these cool rushes, they may with these bables, |
| Cradles for children make, children for cradles. |
| And lest some Momus here might now cry “Push!” |
| Saying our pageant is not worth a rush, |
| Bundles of rushes, lo, we bring along, |
| To pick his teeth that bites them with his tongue. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***See, see, that's Lord Medice! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Gods me, my lord! |
| Has he picked you out, picking of your teeth? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** What pick you out of that? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Not such stale stuff |
| As you pick from your teeth. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Leave this war with rushes. |
| Good Master Pedant, pray forth with your show. |
|  |
| ***Sarp.***Lo, thus far then (brave Duke) you see |
| Mere entertainment. Now our glee |
| Shall march forth in morality: |
| And this quaint Duchess here shall see |
| The fault of virgin nicety, |
| First wooed with rural courtesy. |
| Disburthen them, prance on this ground, |
| And make your *Exit* with your round. |
|  |
| [*Poggio and Fungus dance with the* |
| *Broom-maid and Rush-maid, and exeunt*.] |
|  |
| Well have they danced, as it is meet, |
| Both with their nimble heads and feet. |
| Now, as our country girls held off, |
| And rudely did their lovers scoff, |
| Our Nymph, likewise, shall only glance |
| By your fair eyes, and look askance |
| Upon her feral friend that woos her, |
| Who is in plain field forced to loose her. |
| And after them, to conclude all |
| The purlieu of our pastoral, |
| A female bug, and eke her friend, |
| Shall only come and sing, and end. |
|  |
| ***Bugs' Song:*** |
| Thus, Lady and Duchess, we conclude: |
| Fair virgins must not be too rude; |
| For though the rural wild and antic |
| Abused their loves as they were frantic, |
| Yet take you in your ivory clutches |
| This noble Duke, and be his Duchess. |
| Thus thanking all for their *tacete*, |
| I void the room, and cry *valete*. |
|  |
| [*Exit Sarpego with Nymph, Sylvanus,* |
| *and the two Bugs*.] |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Generally well and pleasingly performed. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Now I resign this borrowed majesty, |
| Which sate unseemly on my worthless head, |
| With humble service to your Highness' hands. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Well you became it, lady, and I know |
| All here could wish it might be ever so. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***[*Aside*]Here's one says nay to that. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** [*Aside to Strozza*]  Plague on you, peace! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Now let it please your Highness to accept |
| A homely banquet to close these rude sports. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***I thank your Lordship much. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Bring lights, make place! |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio in his cloak and broom-man's attire*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** How d'ye, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Oh, Master Broom-man, you did passing well. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Ah, you mad slave, you! You are a tickling actor. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** I was not out, like my Lord Medice. − |
| How did you like me, aunt? |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh, rarely, rarely! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Oh, thou hast done a work of memory, |
| And raised our house up higher by a story. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Friend, how conceit you my young mother here? |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Fitter for you, my lord, than for your father. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** No more of that, sweet friend; those are bugs' words. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| ACT III. |
|  |
| SCENE I. |
| *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |
|  |
| *Medice after the song whispers alone with his servant*. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Thou art my trusty servant, and thou know'st |
| I have been ever bountiful lord to thee, |
| As still I will be; be thou thankful then, |
| And do me now a service of import. |
|  |
| ***Serv.*** Any, my lord, in compass of my life. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** To-morrow, then, the Duke intends to hunt, |
| Where Strozza, my despiteful enemy, |
| Will give attendance busy in the chase; |
| Wherein (as if by chance, when others shoot |
| At the wild boar) do thou discharge at him, |
| And with an arrow cleave his cankered heart. |
|  |
| ***Serv.*** I will not fail, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Be secret, then, |
| And thou to me shalt be the dear’st of men. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT III, SCENE II. |
| *Another Room in the House of Lasso*. |
|  |
| *Enter Vincentio and Bassiolo severally*. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***[*Aside*] Now Vanity and Policy enrich me |
| With some ridiculous fortune on this usher. − |
| Where's Master Usher? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Now I come, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Besides, good sir, your show did show so well. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Did it, indeed, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Oh, sir, believe it! |
| 'Twas the best-fashioned and well-ordered thing |
| That ever eye beheld; and, therewithal, |
| The fit attendance by the servants used, |
| The gentle guise in serving every guest |
| In other entertainments; everything |
| About your house so sortfully disposed, |
| That even as in a turn-spit called a jack |
| One vice assists another, the great wheels, |
| Turning but softly, make the less to whirr |
| About their business, every different part |
| Concurring to one cómmendable end, − |
| So, and in such conformance, with rare grace, |
| Were all things ordered in your good lord's house. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***The most fit simile that ever was. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***But shall I tell you plainly my conceit, |
| Touching the man that I think caused this order? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Ay, good my lord! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** You note my simile? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Drawn from the turn-spit. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I see you have me. |
| Even as in that quaint engine you have seen |
| A little man in shreds stand at the winder, |
| And seems to put all things in act about him, |
| Lifting and pulling with a mighty stir, |
| Yet adds no force to it, nor nothing does: |
| So (though your lord be a brave gentleman |
| And seems to do this business) he does nothing; |
| Some man about him was the festival robe |
| That made him show so glorious and divine. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** I cannot tell, my lord, yet I should know |
| If any such there were. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Should know, quoth you; |
| I warrant you know! Well, some there be |
| Shall have the fortune to have such rare men |
| (Like brave beasts to their arms) support their state, |
| When others of as high a worth and breed |
| Are made the wasteful food of them they feed. |
| What state hath your lord made you for your service? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***He has been my good lord, for I can spend |
| Some fifteen hundred crowns in lands a year, |
| Which I have gotten since I served him first. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***No more than fifteen hundred crowns a year? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** It is so much as makes me live, my lord, |
| Like a poor gentleman. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, 'tis pretty well; |
| But certainly my nature does esteem |
| Nothing enough for virtue; and had I |
| The Duke my father's means, all should be spent |
| To keep brave men about me; but, good sir, |
| Accept this simple jewèl at my hands, |
| Till I can work persuasion of my friendship |
| With worthier arguments. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** No, good my lord! |
| I can by no means merit the free bounties |
| You have bestowed besides. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, be not strange, |
| But do yourself right, and be all one man |
| In all your actions; do not think but some |
| Have extraordinary spirits like yourself, |
| And will not stand in their society |
| On birth and riches, but on worth and virtue; |
| With whom there is no niceness, nor respect |
| Of others' common friendship; be he poor |
| Or basely born, so he be rich in soul |
| And noble in degrees of qualities, |
| He shall be my friend sooner than a king. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** 'Tis a most kingly judgment in your lordship. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Faith, sir, I know not, but 'tis my vain humour. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Oh, 'tis an honour in a nobleman. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Y' ave some lords, now, so politic and proud, |
| They scorn to give good looks to worthy men. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Oh, fie upon 'em! By that light, my lord, |
| I am but servant to a nobleman, |
| But if I would not scorn such puppet lords, |
| Would I were breathless! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** You, sir? So you may; |
| For they will cog so when they wish to use men, |
| With, “Pray be covered, sir”, “I beseech you sit”, |
| “Who's there? Wait of Master Usher to the door”. |
| Oh, these be godly gudgeons: where's the deeds? |
| The perfect nobleman? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh, good my lord − |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Away, away, ere I would flatter so, |
| I would eat rushes like Lord Medice! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well, well, my lord, would there were more such princes! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Alas, 'twere pity, sir! They would be gulled |
| Out of their very skins. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why, how are you, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Who, I? I care not: |
| If I be gulled where I profess plain love, |
| Twill be their faults, you know. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh, 'twere their shames. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Well, take my jewèl, you shall not be strange; |
| I love not many words. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** My Lord, I thank you; |
| I am of few words too. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Tis friendly said; |
| You prove yourself a friend, and I would have you |
| Advance your thoughts, and lay about for state |
| Worthy your virtues; be the miniön |
| Of some great king or duke; there's Medice |
| The minion of my father − Oh, the Father! |
| What difference is there? But I cannot flatter; |
| A word to wise men! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** I perceive your lordship, |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Your lordship? Talk you now like a friend? |
| Is this plain kindness? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Is it not, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** A palpable flatt'ring figure for men common: |
| O my word, I should think, if 'twere another, |
| He meant to gull me. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why, 'tis but your due. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***  'Tis but my due if you be still a stranger; |
| But as I wish to choose you for my friend, |
| As I intend, when God shall call my father, |
| To do I can tell what − but let that pass − |
| Thus 'tis not fit; let my friend be familiar, |
| Use not "my lordship", nor yet call me lord, |
| Nor my whole name, Vincentio, but Vince, |
| As they call Jack or Will; 'tis now in use |
| Twixt men of no equality or kindness. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***I shall be quickly bold enough, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Nay, see how still you use that coy term, “lord.” |
| What argues this but that you shun my friendship? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Nay, pray, say not so. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Who should not say so? |
| Will you afford me now no name at all? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***What should I call you? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, then 'tis no matter. |
| But I told you, “Vince”. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why, then, my sweet Vince. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Why, so, then; and yet still there is a fault |
| In using these kind words without kind deeds; |
| Pray thee embrace me too. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why then, sweet Vince. |
|  |
| [*He embraces Vincentio*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Why, now I thank you; 'sblood, shall friends be strange? |
| Where there is plainness, there is ever truth; |
| And I will still be plain since I am true. |
| Come, let us lie a little; I am weary. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***And so am I, I swear, since yesterday. |
|  |
| [*They lie down together*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***You may, sir, by my faith; and, sirrah, hark thee, |
| What lordship wouldst thou wish to have, i'faith, |
| When my old father dies? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Who, I? Alas! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Oh, not you! Well, sir, you shall have none; |
| You are as coy a piece as your lord's daughter. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Who, my mistress? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Indeed! Is she your mistress? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** I'faith, sweet Vince, since she was three year old. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***And are not we two friends? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Who doubts of that? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***And are not two friends one? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Even man and wife. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Then what to you she is, to me she should be. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Why, Vince, thou wouldst not have her? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Oh, not I! |
| I do not fancy anything like you. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Nay, but I pray thee tell me. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***You do not mean to marry her yourself? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Not I, by Heaven! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Take heed now; do not gull me. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** No, by that candle! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Then will I be plain. |
| Think you she dotes not too much on my father? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh yes, no doubt on't! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, I pray you speak! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***You seely man, you! She cannot abide him. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Why, sweet friend, pardon me; alas, I knew not! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** But I do note you are in some things simple, |
| And wrong yourself too much. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Thank you, good friend. |
| For your plain dealing, I do mean, so well. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***But who saw ever summer mixed with winter? |
| There must be equal years where firm love is. |
| Could we two love so well so suddenly, |
| Were we not something equaller in years |
| Than he and she are? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I cry ye mercy, sir, |
| I know we could not; but yet be not too bitter, |
| Considering love is fearful. And, sweet friend, |
| I have a letter t' entreat her kindness, |
| Which, if you would convey − |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Ay, if I would, sir! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Why, faith, dear friend, I would not die requiteless. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Would you not so, sir? |
| By Heaven a little thing would make me box you! |
| "Which if you would convey?" Why not, I pray, |
| “Which, friend, thou shalt convey?” |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Which, friend, you shall then. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well, friend, and I will then. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***And use some kind persuasive words for me? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***The best, I swear, that my poor tongue can forge. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Ay, well said, "poor tongue!" Oh, 'tis rich in meekness; |
| You are not known to speak well? You have won |
| Direction of the Earl and all his house, |
| The favour of his daughter, and all dames |
| That ever I saw come within your sight, |
| With a poor tongue? A plague o' your sweet lips! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well, we will do our best; and faith, my Vince, |
| She shall have an unwieldy and dull soul |
| If she be nothing moved with my poor tongue − |
| Call it no better, be it what it will. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Well said, i'faith! Now if I do not think |
| 'Tis possible, besides her bare receipt |
| Of that my letter, with thy friendly tongue |
| To get an answer of it, never trust me. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***An answer, man? 'Sblood, make no doubt of that! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***By Heaven, I think so; now a plague of Nature, |
| That she gives all to some, and none to others! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***[*rising, aside*] |
| How I endear him to me! − Come, Vince, rise; |
| Next time I see her I will give her this; |
| Which when she sees, she'll think it wondrous strange |
| Love should go by descent and make the son |
| Follow the father in his amorous steps. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***She needs must think it strange, that ne'er yet saw |
| I durst speak to her, or had scarce her sight. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well, Vince, I swear thou shalt both see and kiss her. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Swears my dear friend? By what? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Even by our friendship. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Oh, sacred oath! Which how long will you keep? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***While there be bees in Hybla, or white swans |
| In bright Meander; while the banks of Po |
| Shall bear brave lilies; or Italian dames |
| Be called the bona-robas of the world. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Tis elegantly said; and when I fail, |
| Let there be found in Hybla hives no bees; |
| Let no swans swim in bright Meander stream, |
| Nor lilies spring upon the banks of Po, |
| Nor let one fat Italian dame be found, |
| But lean and brawn-fall'n; ay, and scarcely sound. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** It is enough, but let's embrace withal. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***With all my heart. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** So, now farewell, sweet Vince! |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Farewell, my worthy friend! − I think I have him. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** [*Aside*] |
| I had forgot the parting phrase he taught me. − |
| I commend me t'ye, sir. |
|  |
| [*Exit instanter*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** At your wished service, sir. − |
| Oh fine friend, he had forgot the phrase: |
| How serious apish souls are in vain form! |
| Well, he is mine and he, being trusted most |
| With my dear love, may often work our meeting, |
| And being thus engaged, dare not reveal. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio in haste, Strozza following*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Horse, horse, horse, my lord, horse! Your father |
| is going a hunting. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** My lord horse? You ass, you! D'ye call my lord |
| horse? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Nay, he speaks huddles still; let's slit his tongue. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Nay, good uncle now, 'sblood, what captious |
| merchants you be! So the Duke took me up even now, |
| my lord uncle here, and my old Lord Lasso. By Heaven |
| y' are all too witty for me; I am the veriest fool on you |
| all, I'll be sworn! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Therein thou art worth us all, for thou know'st |
| thyself. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***But your wisdom was in a pretty taking last |
| night; was it not, I pray? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Oh, for taking my drink a little? I'faith, my lord, |
| for that, you shall have the best sport presently, with |
| Madam Cortezza, that ever was; I have made her so |
| drunk that she does nothing but kiss my lord Medice. |
| See, she comes riding the Duke; she's passing well |
| mounted, believe it. |
|  |
| *Enter Alphonso, Cortezza leaning on the Duke,* |
| *Cynanche, Margaret, Bassiolo first, two women* |
| *attendants, and Huntsmen, Lasso*. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Good wench, forbear! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** My lord, you must put forth yourself among |
| ladies. I warrant you have much in you, if you would |
| show it; see, a cheek o' twenty, the body of a George, |
| a good leg still, still a good calf, and not flabby, nor |
| hanging, I warrant you; a brawn of a thumb here, |
| and 'twere a pulled partridge. − Niece Meg, thou shalt |
| have the sweetest bedfellow on him that ever called |
| lady husband; try him, you shame-faced bable you, |
| try him. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Good madam, be ruled. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***What a nice thing it is! My lord, you must |
| set forth this gear, and kiss her; i'faith, you must! Get |
| you together and be naughts awhile, get you together. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Now, what a merry, harmless dame it is! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** My lord Medice, you are a right noble man, and |
| will do a woman right in a wrong matter, and need be; |
| pray, do you give the Duke ensample upon me; you |
| come a wooing to me now; I accept it. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***What mean you, sister? |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Pray, my lord, away; − consider me as I am, a |
| woman. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** [*Aside*] Lord, how I have whittled her! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** You come a wooing to me now; − pray thee, |
| Duke, mark my lord Medice; and do you mark me, |
| virgin. Stand you aside, my lords all, and you, give |
| place. Now, my lord Medice, put case I be strange a |
| little, yet you like a man put me to it. Come, kiss me, |
| my lord; be not ashamed*.* |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Not I, madam! I come not a wooing to you. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***'Tis no matter, my lord, make as though you did, |
| and come kiss me; I won't be strange a whit. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Fie, sister, y' are to blame! Pray will you go to |
| your chamber? |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Why, hark you, brother. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** What's the matter? |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** D'ye think I am drunk? |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** I think so, truly. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** But are you sure I am drunk? |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Else I would not think so. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** But I would be glad to be sure on't. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** I assure you then. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***  Why, then, say nothing, and I'll begone. − |
| God b'w'y', Lord Duke, I'll come again anon. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** I hope your Grace will pardon her, my Liege, |
| For 'tis most strange; she's as discreet a dame |
| As any in these countries, and as sober, |
| But for this only humour of the cup. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** 'Tis good, my lord, sometimes. |
| Come, to our hunting; now 'tis time, I think. |
|  |
| ***Omnes.*** The very best time of the day, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Then, my lord, I will take my leave till night, |
| Reserving thanks for all my entertainment |
| Till I return; − in meantime, lovely dame, |
| Remember the high state you last presented, |
| And think it was not a mere festival show, |
| But an essential type of that you are |
| In full consent of all my faculties, − |
| And hark you, good my lord. |
|  |
| [*He whispers to Lasso*.] |
|  |
| [*Vincentio and Strozza have all this while* |
| *talked together a pretty way*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***[*Aside to Strozza and Cynanche*] |
| See now, they whisper |
| Some private order (I dare lay my life) |
| For a forced marriage 'twixt my love and father; |
| I therefore must make sure; and, noble friends, |
| I'll leave you all when I have brought you forth |
| And seen you in the chase; meanwhile observe |
| In all the time this solemn hunting lasts |
| My father and his minion, Medice, |
| And note if you can gather any sign |
| That they have missed me, and suspect my being; |
| If which fall out, send home my page before. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** I will not fail, my lord. |
|  |
| [*Medice whispers with 1st Huntsman all this while*.] |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Now take thy time. |
|  |
| ***1st Hunts.***  I warrant you, my lord, he shall not scape me. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Now, my dear mistress, till our sports intended |
| End with my absence, I will take my leave. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Bassiolo, attend you on my daughter. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt Alphonso, Lasso, Medice, Strozza,* |
| *Poggio, Huntsmen, and attendants*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.***  I will, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** [*Aside*] Now will the sport begin; I think my love |
| Will handle him as well as I have done. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Madam, I take my leave, and humbly thank you. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Welcome, good madam; − maids, wait on my lady. |
|  |
| [*Exit Cynanche*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** So, mistress, this is fit. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Fit, sir; why so? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why so? I have most fortunate news for you. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** For me, sir? I beseech you, what are they? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Merit and fortune, for you both agree; |
| Merit what you have, and have what you merit. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Lord, with what rhetoric you prepare your news! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***I need not; for the plain contents they bear, |
| Uttered in any words, deserve their welcome; |
| And yet I hope the words will serve the turn. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** What, in a letter? |
|  |
| [*He* *offers her the letter*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why not? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Whence is it? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***From one that will not shame it with his name, |
| And that is Lord Vincentio. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** King of Heaven! |
| Is the man mad? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Mad, madam, why? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh, Heaven! I muse a man of your importance |
| Will offer to bring me a letter thus. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why, why, good mistress, are you hurt in that? |
| Your answer may be what you will yourself. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Ay, but you should not do it; God's my life! |
| You shall answer it. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, you must answer it. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I answer it! Are you the man I trusted, |
| And will betray me to a stranger thus? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** That's nothing, dame; all friends were strangers first. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Now, was there ever woman over-seen so |
| In a wise man's discretion? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Your brain is shallow; come, receive this letter. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** How dare you say so, when you know so well |
| How much I am engagèd to the duke? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***The duke? A proper match! A grave old gentleman, |
| Has beard at will, and would, in my conceit, |
| Make a most excellent pattern for a potter, |
| To have his picture stampèd on a jug, |
| To keep ale-knights in memory of sobriety. |
| Here, gentle madam, take it. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Take it, sir? |
| Am I a common taker of love-letters? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Common? Why, when received you one before? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Come 'tis no matter; I had thought your care |
| Of my bestowing would not tempt me thus |
| To one I know not; but it is because |
| You know I dote so much on your direction. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** On my direction? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** No, sir, not on yours! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Well, mistress, if you will take my advice |
| At any time, then take this letter now. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** 'Tis strange; I wonder the coy gentleman, |
| That seeing me so oft would never speak, |
| Is on the sudden so far rapt to write. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** It showed his judgment that he would not speak, |
| Knowing with what a strict and jealous eye |
| He should be noted; hold, if you love yourself. |
| Now will you take this letter? Pray be ruled. |
|  |
| [*Gives her the letter*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Come, you have such another plaguy tongue! |
| And yet, i'faith, I will not. |
|  |
| [*Drops the letter*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Lord of Heaven! |
| What, did it burn your hands? Hold, hold, I pray. |
| And let the words within it fire your heart. |
|  |
| [*Gives her the letter again*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I wonder how the devil he found you out |
| To be his spokesman. − Oh, the Duke would thank you |
| If he knew how you urged me for his son. |
|  |
| [*Reads the letter*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.***[*Aside*]The Duke! I have fretted her, |
| Even to the liver, and had much ado |
| To make her take it; but I knew 'twas sure, |
| For he that cannot turn and wind a woman |
| Like silk about his finger is no man. |
| I'll make her answer 't too. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh, here's good stuff! |
| Hold, pray take it for your pains to bring it. |
|  |
| [*Returning the letter*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Lady, you err in my reward a little, |
| Which must be a kind answer to this letter. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Nay then, i'faith, 'twere best you brought a priest, |
| And then your client, and then keep the door. |
| Gods me, I never knew so rude a man! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well, you shall answer; I'll fetch pen and paper. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Poor usher, how wert thou wrought to this brake? |
| Men work on one another for we women, |
| Nay, each man on himself; and all in one |
| Say, “No man is content that lies alone.” |
| Here comes our gullèd squire. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Here, mistress, write. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***What should I write? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** An answer to this letter. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Why, sir, I see no cause of answer in it; |
| But if you needs will show how much you rule me, |
| Sit down and answer it as you please yourself; |
| Here is your paper, lay it fair afore you. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Lady, content; I'll be your secretary. |
|  |
| [*He sits down to write*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.***[*Aside*] I fit him in this task; he thinks his pen |
| The shaft of Cupid in an amorous letter. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Is here no great worth of your answer, say you? |
| Believe it, 'tis exceedingly well writ. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***So much the more unfit for me to answer, |
| And therefore let your style and it contend. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Well, you shall see I will not be far short, |
| Although, indeed, I cannot write so well |
| When one is by as when I am alone. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Oh, a good scribe must write though twenty talk, |
| And he talk to them too. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Well, you shall see. |
|  |
| [*He writes*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] |
| A proper piece of scribeship, there's no doubt; |
| Some words picked out of proclamatiöns, |
| Or great men's speeches, or well-selling pamphlets: |
| See how he rubs his temples; I believe |
| His muse lies in the back part of his brain, |
| Which, thick and gross, is hard to be brought forward. − |
| What, is it loath to come? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** No, not a whit: |
| Pray hold your peace a little. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] |
| He sweats with bringing on his heavy style; |
| I'll ply him still till he sweat all his wit out. − |
| What man, not yet? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***'Swoons, you'll not extort it from a man! |
| How do you like the word *endear*? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** O fie upon't! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, then, I see your judgment. What say you |
| to *condole*? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Worse and worse! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh brave! I should make a sweet answer, if I |
| should use no words but of your admittance. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Well, sir, write what you please. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***  Is *model* a good word with you? |
|  |
| ***Marg.***  Put them together, I pray. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** So I will, I warrant you! [*He writes*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] See, see, see, now it comes pouring |
| down. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** I hope you'll take no exceptions to *believe it*. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Out upon't! That phrase is so run out of breath |
| in trifles, that we shall have no belief at all in earnest |
| shortly. “Believe it, 'tis a pretty feather.” “Believe it, a |
| dainty rush.” “Believe it, an excellent cockscomb.” |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** So, so, so; your exceptions sort very collaterally. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Collaterally! There's a fine word now; wrest |
| in that if you can by any means. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** I thought she would like the very worst of them |
| all! − How think you? Do not I write, and hear, and |
| talk too now? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** By my soul, if you can tell what you write now, |
| you write very readily. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** That you shall see straight. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** But do you not write that you speak now? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh yes; do you not see how I write it? I cannot |
| write when anybody is by me, I! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** God's my life! Stay, man; you'll make it too |
| long. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, if I cannot tell what belongs to the length |
| of a lady's device, i'faith! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** But I will not have it so long. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** If I cannot fit you! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh me, how it comes upon him! Prithee be |
| short. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Well, now I have done, and now I will read it: |
|  |
| Y*our lordship's motive accommodating my* |
| *thoughts with the very model of my heart's mature* |
| *consideration, it shall not be out of my element to* |
| *negotiate with you in this amorous duello; wherein* |
| *I will condole with you that our project cannot he so* |
| *collaterally made as our endeared hearts may very* |
| *well seem to insinuate*. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** No more, no more; fie upon this! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Fie upon this? He's accursed that has to do with |
| these unsound women of judgment: if this be not good, |
| i'faith! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** But 'tis so good, 'twill not be thought to come |
| from a woman's brain. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** That's another matter. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Come, I will write myself. |
|  |
| [*She sits down to write*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.***O' God's name lady! And yet I will not lose this |
| I warrant you; I know for what lady this will serve as |
| fit. |
|  |
| [*Folding up his letter*.] |
|  |
| Now we shall have a sweet piece of inditement. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** How spell you *foolish*? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** F-oo-l-i-sh. |
| [*Aside*] She will presume t' indite that cannot spell. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** How spell you *usher*? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** 'Sblood, you put not in those words together, do |
| you? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** No, not together. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** What is betwixt, I pray? |
|  |
| ***Marg.***  *As the*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** *Ass the*? Betwixt *foolish* and *usher*? God's |
| my life, *foolish ass the usher*! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Nay, then, you are so jealous of your wit! Now |
| read all I have written, I pray. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** [*Reads*] “*I am not so foolish as the usher* |
| *would make me*” − Oh, so foolish as the usher would |
| make me? Wherein would I make you foolish? |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Why, sir, in willing me to believe he loved me |
| so well, being so mere a stranger. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh, is't so? You may say so, indeed. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Cry mercy, sir, and I will write so too. |
|  |
| [*She begins to write, but stops*.] |
|  |
| And yet my hand is so vile. Pray thee sit thee down, |
| and write, as I bid thee. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** With all my heart, lady! What shall I write now? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** You shall write this, sir: *I am not so foolish to* |
| *think you love me, being so mere a stranger* − |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** [*Writing*] “So mere a stranger” − |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *And yet I know love works strangely* − |
|  |
| ***Bass.***  “Love works strangely” − |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *And therefore take heed by whom you speak* |
| *for love* − |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** “Speak for love” − |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *For he may speak for himself* − |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** “May speak for himself” − |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *Not that I desire it* − |
|  |
| ***Bass.***  “Desire it” − |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *But, if he do, you may speed, I confess*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** “Speed, I confess.” |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *But let that pass, I do not love to discourage* |
| *anybody* − |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** “Discourage anybody – “ |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** *Do you, or he, pick out what you can; and* |
| *so, farewell!* |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** “And so, farewell.” Is this all? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Ay, and he may thank your siren's tongue that |
| it is so much. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** [*Looking over the letter*] A proper letter, if you |
| mark it. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Well, sir, though it be not so proper as the |
| writer, yet 'tis as proper as the inditer. Every woman |
| cannot be a gentleman usher; they that cannot go |
| before must come behind. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Well, lady, this I will carry instantly: I commend |
| me t'ye, lady. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Pitiful usher, what a pretty sleight |
| Goes to the working up of everything! |
| What sweet variety serves a woman's wit! |
| We make men sue to us for that we wish. |
| Poor men, hold out awhile, and do not sue. |
| And, spite of custom, we will sue to you. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
|  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| ACT IV. |
|  |
| SCENE I. |
| *Before the House of Strozza*. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio, running in,* |
| *and knocking at Cynanche's door*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Oh, God, how weary I am! Aunt, Madam |
| Cynanche, aunt! |
|  |
| *Enter Cynanche*. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** How now? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** O God, aunt! O God, aunt! O God! |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** What bad news brings this man? Where is my lord? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Oh, aunt, my uncle! He's shot! |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Shot? Ay me! |
| How is he shot? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Why, with a forkèd shaft, |
| As he was hunting, full in his left side. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh me accursed! Where is he? Bring me; where? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Coming with Doctor Benevemus; |
| I'll leave you, and go tell my Lord Vincentio. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| *Enter Benevemus, with others,* |
| *bringing in Strozza with an arrow in his side*. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** See the sad sight; I dare not yield to grief, |
| But force feigned patience to recomfort him. − |
| My lord, what chance is this? How fares your lordship? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Wounded, and faint with anguish; let me rest. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** A chair! |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh, Doctor, is't a deadly hurt? |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** I hope not, madam, though not free from danger. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Why pluck you not the arrow from his side? |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** We cannot, lady; the forked head so fast |
| Sticks in the bottom of his solid rib. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***No mean then, Doctor, rests there to educe it? |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** This only, my good lord, to give your wound |
| A greater orifice, and in sunder break |
| The piercèd rib, which being so near the midriff, |
| And opening to the region of the heart, |
| Will be exceeding dangerous to your life. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** I will not see my bosom mangled so, |
| Nor sternly be anatomized alive; |
| I'll rather perish with it sticking still. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh no! Sweet Doctor, think upon some help. |
|  |
| ***Ben.***  I told you all that can be thought in art, |
| Which since your lordship will not yield to use, |
| Our last hope rests in Nature's secret aid, |
| Whose power at length may happily expel it. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Must we attend at Death's abhorrèd door |
| The torturing delays of slavish Nature? |
| My life is in mine own powers to dissolve: |
| And why not then the pains that plague my life? |
| Rise, Furies, and this fury of my bane |
| Assail and conquer: what men madness call |
| (That hath no eye to sense, but frees the soul, |
| Exempt of hope and fear, with instant fate) |
| Is manliest reason; − manliest reason, then, |
| Resolve and rid me of this brutish life, |
| Hasten the cowardly protracted cure |
| Of all diseases. King of physicians, Death, |
| I'll dig thee from this mine of misery. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh, hold, my lord! This is no Christian part, |
| Nor yet scarce manly, when your mankind foe, |
| Imperious Death, shall make your groans his trumpets |
| To summon resignation of Life's fort, |
| To fly without resistance; you must force |
| A countermine of fortitude, more deep |
| Than this poor mine of pains, to blow him up, |
| And spite of him live victor, though subdued; |
| Patience in torment is a valour more |
| Than ever crowned th' Alcmenean conqueror. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Rage is the vent of torment; let me rise. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Men do but cry that rage in miseries, |
| And scarcely beaten children become cries; |
| Pains are like women's clamours, which the less |
| They find men's patience stirred, the more they cease. |
| Of this 'tis said afflictions bring to God, |
| Because they make us like him, drinking up |
| Joys that deform us with the lusts of sense, |
| And turn our general being into soul, |
| Whose actions, simply formèd and applied, |
| Draw all our body's frailties from respect. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Away with this unmed'cinable balm |
| Of worded breath! Forbear, friends, let me rest; |
| I swear I will be bands unto myself. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** That will become your lordship best indeed. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***I'll break away, and leap into the sea, |
| Or from some turret cast me headlong down |
| To shiver this frail carcase into dust. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh, my dear lord, what unlike words are these |
| To the late fruits of your religious noblesse? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Leave me, fond woman! |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** I'll be hewn from hence |
| Before I leave you; − help, me, gentle Doctor. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** Have patience, good my lord. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Then lead me in; |
| Cut off the timber of this cursèd shaft, |
| And let the forked pile canker to my heart. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Dear lord, resolve on humble sufferance. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***I will not hear thee, woman; be content. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Oh, never shall my counsels cease to knock |
| At thy impatient ears, till they fly in |
| And salve with Christian patience pagan sin. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT IV, SCENE II. |
| *A Room in the House of Lasso.* |
|  |
| *Enter Vincentio with a letter in his hand, Bassiolo*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***This is her letter, sir; − you now shall see |
| How seely a thing 'tis in respect of mine, |
| And what a simple woman she has proved |
| To refuse mine for hers; I pray look here. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Soft, sir, I know not, I being her sworn servant, |
| If I may put up these disgraceful words, |
| Given of my mistress, without touch of honour. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Disgraceful words! I protest I speak not |
| To disgrace her, but to grace myself. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Nay then, sir, if it be to grace yourself, |
| I am content; but otherwise, you know, |
| I was to take exceptions to a king. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Nay, y' are i' th' right for that; but read, I pray; |
| If there be not more choice words in that letter |
| Than in any three of Guevara's *Golden Epistles*, |
| I am a very ass. How think you, Vince? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** By Heaven, no less, sir; it is the best thing − |
|  |
| [*He rends it*.] |
|  |
| Gods, what a beast am I! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** It is no matter, |
| I can set it together again. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Pardon me, sir, I protest I was ravished; |
| But was it possible she should prefer |
| Hers before this? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh, sir, she cried “Fie upon this!”' |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***  Well, I must say nothing; love is blind, you know, |
| and can find no fault in his beloved. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Nay, that's most certain. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Gi'e 't me; I'll have this letter. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** No, good Vince; 'tis not worth it. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I'll ha't, i'faith. [*Taking Bassiolo's letter*.] |
| Here's enough in it to serve for my letters as long as |
| I live; I'll keep it to breed on as 'twere. |
| But I much wonder you could make her write. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***  Indeed there were some words belonged to that. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** How strong an influence works in well-placed words! |
| And yet there must be a preparèd love |
| To give those words so mighty a command. |
| Or 'twere impossible they should move so much: |
| And will you tell me true? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** In anything. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***  Does not this lady love you? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Love me? Why, yes; I think she does not hate me. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, but, i'faith, does she not love you dearly? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** No, I protest! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nor have you never kissed her? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Kissed her? That's nothing. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** But you know my meaning; |
| Have you not been, as one would say, afore me? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Not I, I swear! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Oh, y' are too true to tell. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, by my troth, she has, I must confess, |
| Used me with good respect, and nobly still; |
| But for such matters − |
|  |
| **Vinc.**[*Aside*] Very little more |
| Would make him take her maidenhead upon him. − |
| Well, friend, I rest yet in a little doubt, |
| This was not hers. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** 'Twas, by that light that shines! |
| And I'll go fetch her to you to confirm it. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** O passing friend! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** But when she comes, in any case be bold, |
| And come upon her with some pleasing thing, |
| To show y' are pleased, however she behaves her: |
| As, for example, if she turn her back, |
| Use you that action you would do before, |
| And court her thus: |
| “Lady, your back part is as fair to me |
| As is your fore-part.” |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** 'Twill be most pleasing. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Ay, for if you love |
| One part above another, 'tis a sign |
| You like not all alike; and the worst part |
| About your mistress you must think as fair, |
| As sweet and dainty, as the very best, |
| So much for so much, and considering, too, |
| Each several limb and member in his kind. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** As a man should. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** True! Will you think of this? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I hope I shall. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** But if she chance to laugh, |
| You must not lose your countenance, but devise |
| Some speech to show you pleased, even being laughed at. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Ay, but what speech? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** God's precious, man, do something of yourself! |
| But I'll devise a speech. |
|  |
| [*He studies*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** [*Aside*] Inspire him, Folly. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Or 'tis no matter; be but bold enough, |
| And laugh when she laughs, and it is enough; |
| I'll fetch her to you. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Now was there ever such a demi-lance, |
| To bear a man so clear through thick and thin? |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo.* |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Or hark you, sir, if she should steal a laughter |
| Under her fan, thus you may say: “Sweet lady, |
| If you will laugh and lie down, I am pleased.” |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** And so I were, by Heaven! How know you that? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** 'Slid, man, I'll hit your very thoughts in these things! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Fetch her, sweet friend; I'll hit your words, I warrant! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Be bold then, Vince, and press her to it hard; |
| A shame-faced man is of all women barred. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***How eas'ly worthless men take worth upon them, |
| And being over-credulous of their own worths, |
| Do underprize as much the worth of others. |
| The fool is rich, and absurd riches thinks |
| All merit is rung out where his purse chinks. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo and Margaret*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** My lord, with much entreaty here's my lady. − |
| Nay, madam, look not back; − why, Vince, I say! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] Vince? Oh monstrous jest! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** To her, for shame! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Lady, your back part is as sweet to me |
| As all your fore-part. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** [*Aside*] He missed a little: he said her back part |
| was sweet, when he should have said fair; but see, she |
| laughs most fitly to bring in the tother. − |
| Vince, to her again; she laughs. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Laugh you, fair dame? |
| If you will laugh and lie down, I am pleased. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** What villanous stuff is here? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Sweet mistress, of mere grace embolden now |
| The kind young prince here; it is only love |
| Upon my protestation that thus daunts |
| His most heroic spirit: so awhile |
| I'll leave you close together; Vince, I say − |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh horrible hearing! Does he call you Vince? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Oh, ay, what else? And I made him embrace me, |
| Knitting a most familiar league of friendship. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** But wherefore did you court me so absurdly? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** God's me, he taught me! I spake out of him. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh fie upon't! Could you for pity make him |
| Such a poor creature? 'Twas abuse enough |
| To make him take on him such saucy friendship; |
| And yet his place is great, for he's not only |
| My father's usher, but the world's beside, |
| Because he goes before it all in folly. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Well, in these homely wiles must our loves mask, |
| Since power denies him his apparent right. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***But is there no mean to dissolve that power, |
| And to prevent all further wrong to us |
| Which it may work by forcing marriage rites |
| Betwixt me and the Duke? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** No mean but one, |
| And that is closely to be married first, |
| Which I perceive not how we can perform; |
| For at my father's coming back from hunting, |
| I fear your father and himself resolve |
| To bar my interest with his present nuptials. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***That shall they never do; may not we now |
| Our contract make, and marry before Heaven? |
| Are not the laws of God and Nature more |
| Than formal laws of men? Are outward rites |
| More virtuous than the very substance is |
| Of holy nuptials solemnized within? |
| Or shall laws made to curb the common world, |
| That would not be contained in form without them, |
| Hurt them that are a law unto themselves? |
| My princely love, 'tis not a priest shall let us; |
| But since th' eternal acts of our pure souls |
| Knit us with God, the soul of all the world, |
| He shall be priest to us; and with such rites |
| As we can here devise we will express |
| And strongly ratify our hearts' true vows, |
| Which no external violence shall dissolve. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** This is our only mean t' enjoy each other: |
| And, my dear life, I will devise a form |
| To execute the substance of our minds |
| In honoured nuptials. First, then, hide your face |
| With this your spotless white and virgin veil; |
| Now this my scarf I'll knit about your arm, |
| As you shall knit this other end on mine; |
| And as I knit it, here I vow by Heaven, |
| By the most sweet imaginary joys |
| Of untried nuptials, by Love's ushering fire |
| Fore-melting beauty, and Love's flame itself, |
| As this is soft and pliant to your arm |
| In a circumferent flexure, so will I |
| Be tender of your welfare and your will |
| As of mine own, as of my life and soul, |
| In all things, and for ever; only you |
| Shall have this care in fulness, only you |
| Of all dames shall be mine, and only you |
| I'll court, commend and joy in, till I die. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** With like conceit on your arm this I tie, |
| And here in sight of Heaven, by it I swear |
| By my love to you, which commands my life, |
| By the dear price of such a constant husband |
| As you have vowed to be, and by the joy |
| I shall embrace by all means to requite you, |
| I'll be as apt to govern as this silk, |
| As private as my face is to this veil, |
| And as far from offence as this from blackness. |
| I will be courted of no man but you; |
| In and for you shall be my joys and woes: |
| If you be sick, I will be sick, though well; |
| If you be well, I will be well, though sick: |
| Yourself alone my complete world shall be |
| Even from this hour to all eternity. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***It is enough, and binds as much as marriage. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo.* |
|  |
| ***Bass.***I'll see in what plight my poor lover stands, − |
| God's me, a beckons me to have me gone! |
| It seems he's entered into some good vein; |
| I'll hence; Love cureth when he vents his pain. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Now, my sweet life, we both remember well |
| What we have vowed shall all be kept entire |
| Maugre our fathers' wraths, danger, and death; |
| And to confirm this shall we spend our breath? |
| Be well advised, for yet your choice shall be |
| In all things as before, as large and free. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** What I have vowed I'll keep, even past my death. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** And I: and now in token I dissolve |
| Your virgin state, I take this snowy veil |
| From your much fairer face, and claim the dues |
| Of sacred nuptials; and now, fairest Heaven, |
| As thou art infinitely raised from earth, |
| Different and opposite, so bless this match, |
| As far removed from custom's popular sects, |
| And as unstained with her abhorred respects. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo.* |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Mistress, away! Poggio runs up and down, |
| Calling for Lord Vincentio; come away. |
| For hitherward he bends his clamorous haste. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Remember, love! |
|  |
| [*Exit Margaret and Bassiolo*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Or else forget me Heaven! |
| Why am I sought for by this Poggio? |
| The ass is great with child of some ill news, |
| His mouth is never filled with other sound. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Where is my lord Vincentio? Where is my lord? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Here he is, ass; what an exclaiming keep'st thou! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** 'Slud, my lord, I have followed you up and |
| down like a Tantalus pig till I have worn out my hose |
| here-abouts, I'll be sworn, and yet you call me ass still, |
| but I can tell you passing ill news, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I know that well, sir; thou never bring'st other; |
| What's your news now, I pray? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Oh, Lord, my lord uncle is shot in the side with an |
| arrow. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Plagues take thy tongue! Is he in any danger? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Oh, danger, ay; he has lien speechless this two |
| hours, and talks so idly. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Accursèd news! Where is he? Bring me to him. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Yes, do you lead, and I'll guide you to him. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT IV, SCENE III. |
| *A Room in the House of Strozza*. |
|  |
| *Enter Strozza brought in a chair,* |
| *Cynanche, with others*. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.***  How fares it now with my dear lord and husband? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Come near me, wife; I fare the better far |
| For the sweet food of thy divine advice. |
| Let no man value at a little price |
| A virtuous woman's counsel; her winged spirit |
| Is feathered oftentimes with heavenly words, |
| And (like her beauty) ravishing, and pure; |
| The weaker body, still the stronger soul: |
| When good endeavours do her powers apply, |
| Her love draws nearest man's felicity. |
| Oh, what a treasure is a virtuous wife, |
| Discreet and loving! Not one gift on earth |
| Makes a man's life so highly bound to Heaven; |
| She gives him double forces, to endure |
| And to enjoy, by being one with him, |
| Feeling his joys and griefs with equal sense; |
| And like the twins Hippocrates reports, |
| If he fetch sighs, she draws her breath as short; |
| If he lament, she melts herself in tears; |
| If he be glad, she triumphs; if he stir, |
| She moves his way; in all things his sweet ape: |
| And is in alterations passing strange, |
| Himself divinely varied without change. |
| Gold is right precious, but his price infects |
| With pride and avarice; authority lifts |
| Hats from men's heads, and bows the strongest knees, |
| Yet cannot bend in rule the weakest hearts; |
| Music delights but one sense, nor choice meats; |
| One quickly fades, the other stirs to sin; |
| But a true wife both sense and soul delights, |
| And mixeth not her good with any ill; |
| Her virtues (ruling hearts) all powers command; |
| All store without her leaves a man but poor, |
| And with her poverty is exceeding store; |
| No time is tedious with her; her true worth |
| Makes a true husband think his arms enfold, |
| With her alone, a complete world of gold. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** I wish, dear love, I could deserve as much |
| As your most kind conceit hath well expressed; |
| But when my best is done, I see you wounded, |
| And neither can recure nor ease your pains. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Cynanche, thy advice hath made me well; |
| My free submission to the hand of Heaven |
| Makes it redeem me from the rage of pain. |
| For though I know the malice of my wound |
| Shoots still the same distemper through my veins, |
| Yet the judicial patience I embrace |
| (In which my mind spreads her impassive powers |
| Through all my suff'ring parts) expels their frailty; |
| And rendering up their whole life to my soul, |
| Leaves me nought else but soul; and so like her, |
| Free from the passions of my fuming blood. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Would God you were so; and that too much pain |
| Were not the reason you felt sense of none. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Think'st thou me mad, Cynanche, for mad men, |
| By pains ungoverned, have no sense of pain? |
| But I, I tell you, am quite contrary, |
| Eased with well governing my submitted pain; |
| Be cheered then, wife, and look not for, in me, |
| The manners of a common wounded man. |
| Humility hath raised me to the stars; |
| In which (as in a sort of crystal globes) |
| I sit and see things hid from human sight. |
| Ay, even the very accidents to come |
| Are present with my knowledge; the seventh day |
| The arrow-head will fall out of my side. |
| The seventh day, wife, the forked head will out. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Would God it would, my lord, and leave you well! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Yes, the seventh day, I am assured it will; |
| And I shall live, I know it; I thank Heaven, |
| I know it well; and I'll teach my physician |
| To build his cures hereafter upon Heaven |
| More than on earthly med'cines; for I know |
| Many things shown me from the opened skies |
| That pass all arts. Now my physiciän |
| Is coming to me; he makes friendly haste; |
| And I will well requite his care of me. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** How know you he is coming? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Passing well; |
| And that my dear friend, Lord Vincentio, |
| Will presently come see me too; I'll stay |
| My good physician till my true friend come. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.***  [*Aside*] Ay me, his talk is idle; and, I fear, |
| Foretells his reasonable soul now leaves him. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Bring my physician in; he's at the door. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Alas, there's no physician! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** But I know it; |
| See, he is come. |
|  |
| *Enter Benevemus*. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** How fares my worthy lord? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Good Doctor, I endure no pain at all, |
| And the seventh day the arrow's head will out. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** Why should it fall out the seventh day, my lord? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** I know it; the seventh day it will not fail. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** I wish it may, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Yes, 'twill be so. |
| You come with purpose to take present leave, |
| But you shall stay awhile; my lord Vincentio |
| Would see you fain, and now is coming hither. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** How knows your lordship? Have you sent for him? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***No, but 'tis very true; he's now hard by, |
| And will not hinder your affairs a whit. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** [*Aside*] How want of rest distempers his light brain! − |
| Brings my lord any train? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** None but himself. |
| My nephew Poggio now hath left his Grace. |
| Good Doctor, go, and bring him by his hand, |
| (Which he will give you) to my longing eyes. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** 'Tis strange, if this be true. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** The Prince, I think, |
| Yet knows not of your hurt. |
|  |
| *Enter Vincentio holding the Doctor's hand*. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Yes, wife, too well. |
| See, he is come; − welcome, my princely friend! |
| I have been shot, my lord; but the seventh day |
| The arrow's head will fall out of my side, |
| And I shall live. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I do not fear your life; − |
| But, Doctor, is it your opinion |
| That the seventh day the arrow-head will out? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***No, 'tis not his opinion, 'tis my knowledge; |
| For I do know it well; and I do wish, |
| Even for your only sake, my noble lord, |
| This were the seventh day, and I now were well, |
| That I might be some strength to your hard state, |
| For you have many perils to endure: |
| Great is your danger, great; your unjust ill |
| Is passing foul and mortal; would to God |
| My wound were something well, I might be with you! |
|  |
| [*Cynanche and Benevenius whisper*.] |
|  |
| Nay, do not whisper; I know what I say |
| Too well for you, my lord; I wonder Heaven |
| Will let such violence threat an innocent life. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Whate'er it be, dear friend, so you be well, |
| I will endure it all; your wounded state |
| Is all the danger I fear towards me. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Nay, mine is nothing; for the seventh day |
| This arrow-head will out, and I shall live; |
| And so shall you, I think; but very hardly; |
| It will be hardly you will scape indeed. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Be as will be, pray Heaven your prophecy |
| Be happily accomplished in yourself, |
| And nothing then can come amiss to me. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** What says my doctor? Thinks he I say true? |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** If your good lordship could but rest awhile, |
| I would hope well. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Yes, I shall rest, I know, |
| If that will help your judgment. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** Yes, it will; |
| And, good my lord, let's help you in to try. |
|  |
| ***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*. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Why should the humorous boy forsake the chase, |
| As if he took advantage of my absence |
| To some act that my presence would offend? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** I warrant you, my lord, 'tis to that end; |
| And I believe he wrongs you in your love. |
| Children, presuming on their parents' kindness, |
| Care not what unkind actions they commit |
| Against their quiet: and were I as you, |
| I would affright my son from these bold parts, |
| And father him as I found his deserts. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***I swear I will: and can I prove he aims |
| At any interruption in my love, |
| I'll interrupt his life. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** We soon shall see. |
| For I have made Madame Cortezza search |
| With pick-locks all the ladies' cabinets |
| About Earl Lasso's house; and if there be |
| Traffic of love twixt any one of them |
| And your suspected son 'twill soon appear |
| In some sign of their amorous merchandize; |
| See where she comes, loaded with gems and papers. |
|  |
| *Enter Cortezza*. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***See here, my lord, I have robbed all their caskets. |
| Know you this ring, this carcanet, this chain? |
| Will any of these letters serve your turn? |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** I know not these things; but come, let me read |
| Some of these letters. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Madam, in this deed |
| You deserve highly of my lord the Duke. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Nay, my lord Medice, I think I told you |
| I could do pretty well in these affairs. |
| Oh, these young girls engross up all the love |
| From us, poor beldams; but, I hold my hand, |
| I'll ferret all the cony-holes of their kindness |
| Ere I have done with them. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Passion of death! |
| See, see. Lord Medice, my trait'rous son |
| Hath long joyed in the favours of my love; |
| Woe to the womb that bore him, and my care |
| To bring him up to this accursèd hour, |
| In which all cares possess my wretched life! |
|  |
| ***Med.*** What father would believe he had a son |
| So full of treachery to his innocent state? |
| And yet, my lord, this letter shows no meeting, |
| But a desire to meet. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Yes, yes, my lord, |
| I do suspect they meet; and I believe |
| I know well where too; I believe I do; |
| And therefore tell me, does no creature know |
| That you have left the chase thus suddenly, |
| And are come hither? Have you not been seen |
| By any of these lovers? |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Not by any. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Come then, come follow me; I am persuaded |
| I shall go near to show you their kind hands. |
| Their confidence that you are still a-hunting |
| Will make your amorous son, that stole from thence, |
| Bold in his love-sports; come, come, a fresh chase! |
| I hold this pick-lock, you shall hunt at view. |
| What, do they think to scape? An old wife's eye |
| Is a blue crystal full of sorcery. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***If this be true the trait'rous boy shall die. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT IV, SCENE V. |
| *Another Rooom in the House of Lasso* |
|  |
| *Enter Lasso, Margaret, Bassiolo going before*. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Tell me, I pray you, what strange hopes they are |
| That feed your coy conceits against the Duke, |
| And are preferred before th' assurèd greatness |
| His Highness graciously would make your fortunes? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I have small hopes, my lord, but a desire |
| To make my nuptial choice of one I love; |
| And as I would be loath t' impair my state, |
| So I affect not honours that exceed it. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Oh, you are very temp'rate in your choice, |
| Pleading a judgment past your sex and years. |
| But I believe some fancy will be found |
| The forge of these gay glosses: if it be, |
| I shall decipher what close traitor 'tis |
| That is your agent in your secret plots − |
|  |
| ***Bass.***[*Aside*] 'Swoons! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** And him for whom you plot; and on you all |
| I will revenge thy disobedience |
| With such severe correction as shall fright |
| All such deluders from the like attempts: |
| But chiefly he shall smart that is your factor. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** [*Aside*] Oh me accursed! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Meantime I'll cut |
| Your poor craft short, i'faith! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Poor craft, indeed, |
| That I or any others use for me! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Well, dame, if it be nothing but the jar |
| Of your unfitted fancy that procures |
| Your wilful coyness to my lord the Duke, |
| No doubt but time and judgment will conform it |
| To such obedience as so great desert |
| Proposed to your acceptance doth require. − |
| To which end do you counsel her, Bassiolo. − |
| And let me see, maid, gainst the Duke's return, |
| Another tincture set upon your looks |
| Than heretofore; for, be assured, at last |
| Thou shalt consent, or else incur my curse. − |
| Advise her you, Bassiolo. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Ay, my good lord: |
| [*Aside*] God's pity, what an errant ass was I |
| To entertain the Prince's crafty friendship! |
| 'Sblood, I half suspect the villain gulled me! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Our squire, I think, is startled. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, lady, it is true; |
| And you must frame your fancy to the Duke; |
| For I protest I will not be corrupted, |
| For all the friends and fortunes in the world, |
| To gull my lord that trusts me. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh, sir, now |
| Y' are true too late. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** No, lady, not a whit; |
| 'Slud, and you think to make an ass of me, |
| May chance to rise betimes; I know't, I know. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Out, servile coward! Shall a light suspect, |
| That hath no slend'rest proof of what we do, |
| Infringe the weighty faith that thou hast sworn |
| To thy dear friend, the Prince, that dotes on thee, |
| And will in pieces cut thee for thy falsehood? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***I care not. I'll not hazard my estate |
| For any prince on earth; and I'll disclose |
| The complot to your father, if you yield not |
| To his obedience. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Do, if thou dar'st, |
| Even for thy scraped-up living, and thy life; |
| I'll tell my father, then, how thou didst woo me |
| To love the young Prince; and didst force me, too, |
| To take his letters: I was well inclined, |
| I will be sworn, before, to love the Duke; |
| But thy vile railing at him made me hate him. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** I rail at him? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Ay, marry, did you sir; |
| And said he was a pattern for a potter, |
| Fit t' have his picture stamped on a stone jug, |
| To keep ale-knights in memory of sobriety. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***[*Aside*] Sh'as a plaguy memory! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I could have loved him else; nay, I did love him, |
| Though I dissembled it to bring him on, |
| And I by this time might have been a duchess; |
| And, now I think on't better, for revenge |
| I'll have the Duke, and he shall have thy head |
| For thy false wit within it to his love. |
| Now go and tell my father; pray begone! |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Why, and I will go. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Go, for God's sake, go! Are you here yet? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Well, now I am resolved. [*Going*] |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** 'Tis bravely done; farewell! But do you hear, sir? |
| Take this with you, besides: the young Prince keeps |
| A certain letter you had writ for me |
| (*Endearing*, and *condoling*, and *mature*) |
| And if you should deny things, that, I hope, |
| Will stop your impudent mouth: but go your ways, |
| If you can answer all this, why, 'tis well. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***  Well, lady, if you will assure me here |
| You will refrain to meet with the young Prince, |
| I will say nothing. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Good sir, say your worst, |
| For I will meet him, and that presently. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Then be content, I pray, and leave me out, |
| And meet hereafter as you can yourselves. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** No, no, sir, no; 'tis you must fetch him to me, |
| And you shall fetch him, or I'll do your errand. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***[*Aside*] 'Swounds, what a spite is this! I will resolve |
| T 'endure the worst; 'tis but my foolish fear |
| The plot will be discovered − O the gods! |
| Tis the best sport to play with these young dames; − |
| I have dissembled, mistress, all this while; |
| Have I not made you in a pretty taking? |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Oh, 'tis most good! Thus you may play on me; |
| You cannot be content to make me love |
| A man I hated till you spake for him |
| With such enchanting speeches as no friend |
| Could possibly resist; but you must use |
| Your villanous wit to drive me from my wits; |
| A plague of that bewitching tongue of yours, |
| Would I had never heard your scurvy words! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Pardon, dear dame, I'll make amends, i'faith! |
| Think you that I'll play false with my dear Vince? |
| I swore that sooner Hybla should want bees, |
| And Italy bona-robas, than I faith; |
| And so they shall. |
| Come, you shall meet, and double meet, in spite |
| Of all your foes, and dukes that dare maintain them. |
| A plague of all old doters! I disdain them. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Said like a friend; oh, let me comb thy coxcomb. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| ACT V. |
|  |
| SCENE I. |
| *A Room in the House of Lasso*. |
|  |
| *Enter Alphonso, Medice, Lasso, Cortezza above.* |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Here is the place will do the deed, i'faith! |
| This, Duke, will show thee how youth puts down age, |
| Ay, and perhaps how youth does put down youth. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** If I shall see my love in any sort |
| Prevented or abused, th' abuser dies. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** I hope there is no such intent, my Liege, |
| For sad as death should I be to behold it. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** You must not be too confident, my lord, |
| Or in your daughter or in them that guard her. |
| The Prince is politic, and envies his father; |
| And though not for himself, nor any good |
| Intended to your daughter, yet because |
| He knows 'twould kill his father, he would seek her. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Whist, whist, they come! |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo, Vincentio, and Margaret*. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Come, meet me boldly, come. |
| And let them come from hunting when they dare. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Has the best spirit. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Spirit? What, a plague! |
| Shall a man fear capriches? − You forsooth |
| Must have your love come t'ye, and when he comes |
| Then you grow shamefaced, and he must not touch you: |
| But “Fie, my father comes!” and “Foh, my aunt!” |
| Oh, 'tis a witty hearing, is't not, think you? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, pray thee, do not mock her, gentle friend. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Nay, you are even as wise a wooer too; |
| If she turn from you, you even let her turn, |
| And say you do not love to force a lady, |
| 'Tis too much rudeness. Gosh hat! What's a lady? |
| Must she not be touched? What, is she copper, think you, |
| And will not bide the touchstone? Kiss her, Vince, |
| And thou dost love me, kiss her. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Lady, now |
| I were too simple if I should not offer. |
|  |
| [*He kisses her*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.***  O God, sir, pray away! This man talks idly. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** How shay by that? Now by that candle there, |
| Were I as Vince is, I would handle you |
| In rufty-tufty wise, in your right kind. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** [*Aside*] |
| Oh, you have made him a sweet beagle, ha' y' not? |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** [*Aside*] 'Tis the most true believer in himself |
| Of all that sect of folly; faith's his fault. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** So, to her, Vince! I give thee leave, my lad. |
| “Sweet were the words my mistress spake, |
| When tears fell from her eyes.” |
|  |
| [*He lies down by them*.] |
|  |
| Thus, as the lion lies before his den, |
| Guarding his whelps, and streaks his careless limbs, |
| And when the panther, fox, or wolf comes near, |
| He never deigns to rise to fright them hence, |
| But only puts forth one of his stern paws, |
| And keeps his dear whelps safe, as in a hutch. |
| So I present his person, and keep mine. |
| Foxes, go by, I put my terror forth. |
|  |
| *Cantat* |
| Let all the world say what they can, |
| Her bargain best she makes, |
| That hath the wit to choose a man |
| To pay for that he takes. |
| *Belle piu*, *etc*. |
|  |
| *Iterum cantat*. |
|  |
| Dispatch, sweet whelps; the bug, the Duke, comes straight: |
| Oh, 'tis a grave old lover, that same Duke, |
| And chooses minions rarely, if you mark him, |
| The noble Medice, that man, that Bobadilla, |
| That foolish knave, that hose and doublet stinkard. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** 'Swounds, my lord, rise, let's endure no more! |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** A little, pray, my lord, for I believe |
| We shall discover very notable knavery. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Alas, how I am grieved and shamed in this! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Never care you, lord brother, there's no harm done! |
|  |
| ***Bass.***But that sweet creature, my good lord's sister, |
| Madam Cortezza, she, the noblest dame |
| That ever any vein of honour bled; |
| There were a wife now, for my lord the Duke, |
| Had he the grace to choose her; but indeed, |
| To speak her true praise, I must use some study. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Now truly, brother, I did ever think |
| This man the honestest man that e'er you kept. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** So, sister, so; because he praises you. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Nay, sir, but you shall hear him further yet. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Were not her head sometimes a little light, |
| And so unapt for matter of much weight, |
| She were the fittest and the worthiest dame |
| To leap a window and to break her neck |
| That ever was. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** God's pity, arrant knave! |
| I ever thought him a dissembling varlet. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Well now, my hearts, be wary, for by this |
| I fear the Duke is coming; I'll go watch |
| And give you warning. I commend me t'ye. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***  Oh, fine phrase! |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** And very timely used. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** What now, sweet life, shall we resolve upon? |
| We never shall enjoy each other here. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Direct you, then, my lord, what we shall do, |
| For I am at your will, and will endure |
| With you the cruell’st absence from the state |
| We both were born to that can be supposed. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** That would extremely grieve me; could myself |
| Only endure the ill our hardest fates |
| May lay on both of us, I would not care; |
| But to behold thy sufferance I should die. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** How can your lordship wrong my love so much, |
| To think the more woe I sustain for you |
| Breeds not the more my comfort? I, alas, |
| Have no mean else to make my merit even |
| In any measure with your eminent worth. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo.* |
|  |
| ***Bass.***[*Aside*]Now must I exercise my timorous lovers, |
| Like fresh-armed soldiers, with some false alarms, |
| To make them yare and wary of their foe, |
| The boist'rous, bearded Duke: I'll rush upon them |
| With a most hideous cry. − The Duke! the Duke! the Duke! |
|  |
| [*Vincentio and Margaret run out*.] |
|  |
| Ha, ha, ha! Wo ho, come again, I say! |
| The Duke's not come, i'faith! |
|  |
| [*Enter Vincentio and Margaret*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** God's precious, man! |
| What did you mean to put us in this fear? |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Oh, sir, to make you look about the more: |
| Nay, we must teach you more of this, I tell you; |
| What, can you be too safe, sir? What, I say, |
| Must you be pampered in your vanities? |
| [*Aside*] Ah, I do domineer, and rule the roast. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Was ever such an ingle? Would to God |
| (If 'twere not for ourselves) my father saw him. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Minion, you have your prayer, and my curse, |
| For your good huswifery. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** What says your Highness? |
| Can you endure these injuries any more? |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** No more, no more! Advise me what is best |
| To be the penance of my graceless son. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** My lord, no mean but death or banishment |
| Can be fit penance for him, if you mean |
| T' enjoy the pleasure of your love yourself. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Give him plain death, my lord, and then y' are sure. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Death, or his banishment, he shall endure, |
| For wreak of that joy's exile I sustain. |
| Come, call our guard, and apprehend him straight. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt Alphonso, Lasso, Medice, and Cortezza*.] |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***I have some jewèls then, my dearest life, |
| Which, with whatever we can get beside, |
| Shall be our means, and we will make escape. |
|  |
| *Enter Bassiolo running.* |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** 'Sblood, the Duke and all come now in earnest. |
| The Duke, by Heaven, the Duke! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Nay, then, i' faith, |
| Your jest is too too stale. |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** God's precious! |
| By these ten bones, and by this hat and heart, |
| The Duke and all comes! See, we are cast away. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt Bassiolo and Vincentio*.] |
|  |
| *Enter Alphonso, Medice, Lasso, Cortezza, and Julio.* |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Lay hands upon them all; pursue, pursue! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Stay, thou ungracious girl! |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Lord Medice, |
| Lead you our guard, and see you apprehend |
| The treacherous boy, nor let him scape with life, |
| Unless he yield to his eternal exile. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** 'Tis princely said, my lord. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** And take my usher. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Let me go into exile with my lord; |
| I will not live, if I be left behind. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Impudent damsel, wouldst thou follow him? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** He is my husband, whom else should I follow? |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Wretch, thou speakest treason to my lord the Duke. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Yet love me, lady, and I pardon all. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I have a husband, and must love none else. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Despiteful dame, I'll disinherit him, |
| And thy good father here shall cast off thee, |
| And both shall feed on air, or starve, and die. |
|  |
| **Marg.**If this be justice, let it be our dooms: |
| If free and spotless love in equal years, |
| With honours unimpaired, deserve such ends, |
| Let us approve what justice is in friends. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** You shall, I swear. − Sister, take you her close |
| Into your chamber; lock her fast alone, |
| And let her stir, nor speak with any one. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***  She shall not, brother. − Come, niece, come with me. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Heaven save my love, and I will suffer gladly. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt Cortezza and Margaret*.] |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Haste, Julio, follow thou my son's pursuit, |
| And will Lord Medice not to hurt nor touch him, |
| But either banish him or bring him back; |
| Charge him to use no violence to his life. |
|  |
| ***Jul.*** I will, my lord. |
|  |
| [*Exit Julio*.] |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Oh, Nature, how, alas, |
| Art thou and Reason, thy true guide, opposed! |
| More bane thou tak'st to guide sense, led amiss, |
| Than, being guided, Reason gives thee bliss. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT V, SCENE II. |
| *A Room in the House of Strozza*. |
|  |
| *Enter Cynanche, Benevemus, Ancilla,* |
| *Strozza having the arrow head in his hand*. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Now, see, good Doctor, 'twas no frantic fancy |
| That made my tongue presage this head should fall |
| Out of my wounded side the seventh day; |
| But an inspired rapture of my mind, |
| Submitted and conjoined in patiënce |
| To my Creator, in whom I foresaw |
| (Like to an angel) this divine event. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** So is it plain, and happily approved |
| In a right Christian precedent, confirming |
| What a most sacred med'cine patience is, |
| That with the high thirst of our souls' clear fire, |
| Exhausts corporeal humour and all pain, |
| Casting our flesh off, while we it retain. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Make some religious vow then, my dear lord, |
| And keep it in the proper memory |
| Of so celestiäl and free a grace. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Sweet wife, thou restest my good angel still, |
| Suggesting by all means these ghostly counsels. |
| Thou weariest not thy husband's patient ears |
| With motions for new fashions in attire, |
| For change of jewèls, pastimes, and nice cates, |
| Nor studiest eminence and the higher place |
| Amongst thy consorts, like all other dames; |
| But knowing more worthy objects appertain |
| To every woman that desires t' enjoy |
| A blessed life in marriage, thou contemn'st |
| Those common pleasures, and pursu'st the rare, |
| Using thy husband in those virtuous gifts |
| For which thou first didst choose him, and thereby |
| Cloy'st not with him, but lov'st him endlessly. |
| In reverence of thy motion, then, and zeal |
| To that most sovereign power that was my cure, |
| I make a vow to go on foot to Rome, |
| And offer humbly in Saint Peter's Temple |
| This fatal arrow-head: which work let none judge |
| A superstitious rite, but a right use, |
| Proper to this peculiar instrument, |
| Which, visibly resigned to memory, |
| Through every eye that sees will stir the soul |
| To gratitude and progress, in the use |
| Of my tried patience, which, in my powers ending, |
| Would shut th' example out of future lives. |
| No act is superstitious that applies |
| All power to God, devoting hearts through eyes. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** Spoke with the true tongue of a nobleman: |
| But now are all these excitations toys, |
| And Honour fats his brain with other joys. |
| I know your true friend, Prince Vincentio, |
| Will triumph in this excellent effect |
| Of your late prophecy. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Oh, my dear friend's name |
| Presents my thoughts with a most mortal danger |
| To his right innocent life: a monstrous fact |
| Is now effected on him. |
|  |
| ***Cyn.*** Where, or how? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***I do not well those circumstances know, |
| But am assured the substance is too true. − |
| Come, reverend Doctor, let us harken out |
| Where the young Prince remains, and bear with you |
| Med'cines, t' allay his danger: if by wounds, |
| Bear precious balsam, or some sovereign juice; |
| If by fell poison, some choice antidote; |
| If by black witchcraft, our good spirits and prayers |
| Shall exorcise the devilish wrath of hell |
| Out of his princely bosom. |
|  |
| *Enter Poggio running*. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Where, where, where? |
| Where's my lord uncle, my lord my uncle? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Here's the ill-tidings bringer; what news now |
| With thy unhappy presence? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Oh, my lord, my lord Vincentio, |
| Is almost killed by my lord Medice. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***  See, Doctor, see, if my presage be true! |
| And well I know if he have hurt the Prince, |
| 'Tis treacherously done, or with much help. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Nay, sure he had no help, but all the Duke's |
| guard; and they set upon him indeed; and after he had |
| defended himself − d'ye see? − he drew, and having as |
| good as wounded the lord Medice almost, he strake at |
| him, and missed him − d'ye mark? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***What tale is here? Where is this mischief done? |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** At Monkswell, my lord; I'll guide you to him |
| presently. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** I doubt it not; fools are best guides to ill, |
| And mischief's ready way lies open still. |
| Lead, sir, I pray. |
|  |
| [*Exeunt*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT V, SCENE III. |
| *Cortezza's Chamber*. |
|  |
| *Enter Cortezza and Margaret above.* |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Quiet yourself, niece; though your love be slain, |
| You have another that's worth two of him. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** It is not possible; it cannot be |
| That Heaven should suffer such impiety. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***'Tis true, I swear, niece. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh, most unjust truth! |
| I'll cast myself down headlong from this tower, |
| And force an instant passage for my soul |
| To seek the wand'ring spirit of my lord. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***Will you do so, niece? That I hope you will not; |
| And yet there was a maid in Saint Mark's street |
| For such a matter did so, and her clothes |
| Flew up about her so as she had no harm; |
| And, grace of God, your clothes may fly up too, |
| And save you harmless, for your cause and hers |
| Are e'en as like as can be. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I would not scape; |
| And certainly I think the death is easy. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Oh, 'tis the easiest death that ever was; |
| Look, niece, it is so far hence to the ground |
| You should be quite dead long before you felt it. |
| Yet do not leap, niece. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** I will kill myself |
| With running on some sword, or drink strong poison; |
| Which death is easiest I would fain endure. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Sure Cleopatra was of the same mind, |
| And did so; she was honoured ever since: |
| Yet do not you so, niece. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Wretch that I am, my heart is soft and faint, |
| And trembles at the very thought of death, |
| Though thoughts tenfold more grievous do torment it: |
| I'll feel death by degrees, and first deform |
| This my accursèd face with ugly wounds; |
| That was the first cause of my dear love's death. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***That were a cruèl deed; yet Adelasia, |
| In Pettie's *Palace of Petit Pleasure*, |
| For all the world, with such a knife as this |
| Cut off her cheeks and nose, and was commended |
| More than all dames that kept their faces whole. |
|  |
| [*Margaret seizes the knife and offers to cut her face*.] |
|  |
| Oh, do not cut it. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Fie on my faint heart! |
| It will not give my hand the wishèd strength; |
| Behold the just plague of a sensual life, |
| That to preserve itself in Reason's spite, |
| And shun Death's horror, feels it ten times more. |
| Unworthy women! Why do men adore |
| Our fading beauties, when, their worthiest lives |
| Being lost for us, we dare not die for them? − |
| Hence, hapless ornaments that adorned this head, |
| Disorder ever these enticing curls, |
| And leave my beauty like a wilderness |
| That never man's eye more may dare t' invade. |
|  |
| ***Cort.***I'll tell you, niece − and yet I will not tell you |
| A thing that I desire to have you do − |
| But I will tell you only what you might do, |
| Cause I would pleasure you in all I could. |
| I have an ointment here, which we dames use |
| To take off hair when it does grow too low |
| Upon our foreheads, and that, for a need, |
| If you should rub it hard upon your face |
| Would blister it, and make it look most vildly. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** Oh, give me that, aunt! |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Give it you, virgin? That were well indeed; |
| Shall I be thought to tempt you to such matters? |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** None (of my faith) shall know it; gentle aunt, |
| Bestow it on me, and I'll ever love you. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** God's pity, but you shall not spoil your face! |
|  |
| ***Marg.***  I will not, then, indeed. |
|  |
| ***Cort.*** Why, then, niece, take it; |
| But you shall swear you will not. |
|  |
| ***Marg.*** No, I swear! |
|  |
| [*She seizes the box and rubs her face* |
| *with the ointment*.] |
|  |
| ***Cort.***What, do you force it from me? God's my dear! |
| Will you misuse your face so? What, all over? |
| Nay, if you be so desp'rate, I'll be gone. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Fade, hapless beauty; turn the ugliest face |
| That ever Æthiop or affrightful fiend |
| Showed in th' amazèd eye of profaned light; |
| See, precious love, if thou be yet in air, |
| And canst break darkness and the strongest towers |
| With thy dissolvèd intellectual powers, |
| See a worse torment suffered for thy death |
| Than if it had extended his black force |
| In sevenfold horror to my hated life. − |
| Smart, precious ointment, smart, and to my brain |
| Sweat thy envenomed fury; make my eyes |
| Burn with thy sulphur like the lakes of hell, |
| That fear of me may shiver him to dust |
| That eat his own child with the jaws of lust. |
|  |
| [*Exit*.] |
|  |
|  |
| ACT V, SCENE IV. |
| *A Room in Lasso's House*. |
|  |
| *Enter Alphonso, Lasso, and others.* |
|  |
| ***Alph.***I wonder how far they pursued my son |
| That no return of him or them appears; |
| I fear some hapless accident is chanced |
| That makes the news so loath to pierce mine ears. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***High Heaven vouchsafe no such effect succeed |
| Those wretched causes that from my house flow, |
| But that in harmless love all acts may end. |
|  |
| *Enter Cortezza.* |
|  |
| ***Cort.***What shall I do? Alas, I cannot rule |
| My desperate niece; all her sweet face is spoiled, |
| And I dare keep her prisoner no more: |
| See, see, she comes frantíc and all undressed. |
|  |
| *Enter Margaret*. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Tyrant, behold how thou hast used thy love! |
| See, thief to nature, thou hast killed and robbed, |
| Killed what myself killed, robbed what makes thee poor. |
| Beauty (a lover's treasure) thou hast lost, |
| Where none can find it; all a poor maid's dower |
| Thou hast forced from me; all my joy and hope. |
| No man will love me more; all dames excel me. |
| This ugly thing is now no more a face, |
| Nor any vile form in all earth resembled, |
| But thy foul tyranny; for which all the pains |
| Two faithful lovers feel, that thus are parted, |
| All joys they might have felt, turn all to pains; |
| All a young virgin thinks she does endure |
| To lose her love and beauty, on thy heart |
| Be heaped and pressed down till thy soul depart. |
|  |
| *Enter Julio*. |
|  |
| ***Jul.*** Haste, Liege, your son is dangerously hurt! |
| Lord Medice, contemning your command, |
| By me delivered as your Highness willed, |
| Set on him with your guard, who strook him down; |
| And then the coward lord with mortal wounds |
| And slavish insolency plowed up his soft breast; |
| Which barbarous fact, in part, is laid on you, |
| For first enjoining it, and foul exclaims |
| In pity of your son your subjects breathe |
| Gainst your unnatural fury; amongst whom |
| The good lord Strozza desperàtely raves, |
| And vengeance for his friend's injustice craves. |
| See where he comes, burning in zeal of friendship. |
|  |
| *Enter Strozza, Vincentio brought in a chair,* |
| *Benevemus, Poggio, Cynanche, with a guard,* |
| *and Medice*. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Where is the tyrant? Let me strike his eyes |
| Into his brain with horror of an object. − |
| See, pagan Nero, see how thou hast ripped |
| Thy better bosom, rooted up that flower |
| From whence thy now spent life should spring anew, |
| And in him killed (that would have bred thee fresh) |
| Thy mother and thy father. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Good friend, cease! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** What hag with child of monster would have nursed |
| Such a prodigious longing? But a father |
| Would rather eat the brawn out of his arms |
| Than glut the mad worm of his wild desires |
| With his dear issue's entrails. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** Honoured friend, |
| He is my father, and he is my prince, |
| In both whose rights he may command my life. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***What is a father? Turn his entrails gulfs |
| To swallow children when they have begot them? |
| And what's a prince? Had all been virtuous men, |
| There never had been prince upon the earth, |
| And so no subject; all men had been princes: |
| A virtuous man is subject to no prince, |
| But to his soul and honour; which are laws |
| That carry fire and sword within themselves, |
| Never corrupted, never out of rule; |
| What is there in a prince that his least lusts |
| Are valued at the lives of other men, |
| When common faults in him should prodigies be, |
| And his gross dotage rather loathed than soothed? |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** How thick and heavily my plagues descend, |
| Not giving my mazed powers a time to speak! |
| Pour more rebuke upon me, worthy lord, |
| For I have guilt and patience for them all: − |
| Yet know, dear son, I did forbid thy harm; |
| This gentleman can witness, whom I sent |
| With all command of haste to interdict |
| This forward man in mischief not to touch thee: − |
| Did I not, Julio? Utter nought but truth. |
|  |
| ***Jul.*** All your guard heard, my lord, I gave your charge |
| With loud and violent iteratiöns, |
| After all which Lord Medice cowardly hurt him. |
|  |
| ***The Guard.*** He did, my princely lord. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Believe then, son, |
| And know me pierced as deeply with thy wounds: − |
| And pardon, virtuous lady, that have lost |
| The dearest treasure proper to your sex, |
| Ay me, it seems by my unhappy means! |
| Oh, would to God, I could with present cure |
| Of these unnatural wounds, and moaning right |
| Of this abusèd beauty, join you both |
| (As last I left you) in eternal nuptials. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** My lord, I know the malice of this man, |
| Not your unkind consent, hath used us thus. |
| And since I make no doubt I shall survive |
| These fatal dangers, and your Grace is pleased |
| To give free course to my unwounded love, |
| 'Tis not this outward beauty's ruthful loss |
| Can any thought discourage my desires: − |
| And therefore, dear life, do not wrong me so |
| To think my love the shadow of your beauty; |
| I woo your virtues, which as I am sure |
| No accident can alter or impair, |
| So, be you certain, nought can change my love. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***I know your honourable mind, my lord, |
| And will not do it that unworthy wrong, |
| To let it spend her forces in contending |
| (Spite of your sense) to love me thus deformed; |
| Love must have outward objects to delight him, |
| Else his content will be too grave and sour. |
| It is enough for me, my lord, you love, |
| And that my beauty's sacrifice redeemed |
| My sad fear of your slaughter. You first loved me |
| Closely for beauty; which being withered thus, |
| Your love must fade: when the most needful rights |
| Of Fate and Nature have dissolved your life, |
| And that your love must needs be all in soul, |
| Then will we meet again; and then, dear love, |
| Love me again; for then will beauty be |
| Of no respect with love's eternity. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Nor is it now; I wooed your beauty first |
| But as a lover; now as a dear husband, |
| That title and your virtues bind me ever. |
|  |
| ***Marg.***Alas, that title is of little force |
| To stir up men's affections! When wives want |
| Outward excitements, husbands' loves grow scant. |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** Assist me, Heaven and Art! − Give me your mask; − |
| Open, thou little store-house of great Nature, |
| Use an elixir drawn through seven years' fire, |
| That like Medea's cauldron can repair |
| The ugliest loss of living temp'rature; |
| And for this princely pair of virtuous turtles |
| Be lavish of thy precious influence. − |
| Lady, t' atone your honourable strife, |
| And take all let from your love's tender eyes, |
| Let me for ever hide this stain of beauty |
| With this recureful mask. |
|  |
| [*Putting a mask on Margaret's face*.] |
|  |
| Here be it fixed |
| With painless operation; of itself, |
| (Your beauty having brooked three days' eclipse) |
| Like a dissolvèd cloud it shall fall off, |
| And your fair looks regain their freshest rays; |
| So shall your princely friend (if Heaven consent) |
| In twice your suffered date renew recure; |
| Let me then have the honour to conjoin |
| Your hands, conformèd to your constant hearts. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Grave Benevemus, honourable Doctor, |
| On whose most sovereign Æsculapian hand |
| Fame with her richest miracles attends, |
| Be fortunate, as ever heretofore, |
| That we may quite thee both with gold and honour, |
| And by thy happy means have power to make |
| My son and his much injured love amends; |
| Whose well-proportioned choice we now applaud, |
| And bless all those that ever furthered it. − |
| Where is your discreet usher, my good lord, |
| The special furtherer of this equal match? |
|  |
| ***Jul.***  Brought after by a couple of your guard. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Let him be fetched, that we may do him grace. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** I'll fetch him, my lord; away, you must not go. Oh, |
| here he comes. [*Enter Bassiolo guarded*.] Oh, Master |
| Usher, I am sorry for you; you must presently be |
| chopped in pieces. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Woe to that wicked Prince that e'er I saw him! |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Come, come, I gull you, Master Usher; you are |
| like to be the Duke's minion, man; d'ye think I would |
| have been seen in your company and you had been out |
| of favour? − Here's my friend Master Usher, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Give me your hand, friend; pardon us, I pray. |
| We much have wronged your worth, as one that knew |
| The fitness of this match above ourselves. |
|  |
| ***Bass.***Sir, I did all things for the best, I swear, |
| And you must think I would not have been gulled; |
| I know what's fit, sir, as I hope you know now. − |
| Sweet Vince, how far'st thou? Be of honoured cheer. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***Vince, does he call him? Oh, fool, dost thou call |
| The Prince Vince, like his equal? |
|  |
| ***Bass.*** Oh, my lord, alas! |
| You know not what has passed twixt us two. − |
| Here in thy bosom I will lie, sweet Vince, |
| And die if thou die, I protest by Heaven. |
|  |
| ***Lasso.***I know not what this means. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Nor I, my lord; |
| But sure he saw the fitness of the match |
| With freer and more noble eyes than we. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Why, I saw that as well as he, my lord. I knew |
| 'twas a foolish match betwixt you two; did not you think |
| so, my lord Vincentio? Lord uncle, did not I say at first |
| of the Duke: “Will his antiquity never leave his |
| iniquity?” |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Go to, too much of this; but ask this lord |
| If he did like it. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Who, my lord Medice? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Lord Stinkard, man, his name is. Ask him: “Lord |
| Stinkard, did you like the match?” Say. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** My lord Stinkard, did you like the match betwixt |
| the Duke and my lady Margaret? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Presumptuous sycophant, I will have thy life! |
|  |
| [*Draws*.] |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Unworthy lord, put up: thirst'st thou more blood? |
| Thy life is fittest to be called in question |
| For thy most murth'rous cowardice on my son; |
| Thy forwardness to every cruèlty |
| Calls thy pretended noblesse in suspect. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Noblesse, my lord? Set by your princely favour, |
| That gave the lustre to his painted state, |
| Who ever viewed him but with deep contempt, |
| As reading vileness in his very looks? |
| And if he prove not son of some base drudge, |
| Trimmed up by Fortune, being disposed to jest |
| And dally with your state, then that good angel |
| That by divine relation spake in me, |
| Foretelling these foul dangers to your son, |
| And without notice brought this reverend man |
| To rescue him from death, now fails my tongue, |
| And I'll confess I do him open wrong. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** And so thou dost; and I return all note |
| Of infamy or baseness on thy throat: |
| Damn me, my lord, if I be not a lord. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***My Liege, with all desert even now you said |
| His life was daily forfeit for the death |
| Which in these barbarous wounds he sought your son; |
| Vouchsafe me then his life, in my friend's right, |
| For many ways I know he merits death; |
| Which (if you grant) will instantly appear, |
| And that, I feel, with some rare miracle. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** His life is thine, Lord Strozza; give him death. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** What, my lord, |
| Will your Grace cast away an innocent life? |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Villain, thou liest; thou guilty art of death |
| A hundred ways, which now I'll execute. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Recall your word, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Not for the world! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Oh, my dear Liege, but that my spirit prophetic |
| Hath inward feeling of such sins in him |
| As ask the forfeit of his life and soul, |
| I would, before I took his life, give leave |
| To his confession and his penitence: |
| Oh, he would tell you most notorious wonders |
| Of his most impious state; but life and soul |
| Must suffer for it in him, and my hand |
| Forbidden is from Heaven to let him live |
| Till by confession he may have forgiveness. |
| Die therefore, monster! |
|  |
| ***Vinc.***Oh, be not so uncharitable, sweet friend, |
| Let him confess his sins, and ask Heaven pardon. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** He must not, princely friend; it is Heaven's justice |
| To plague his life and soul, and here's Heaven's justice. |
|  |
| [*Draws*.] |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Oh, save my life, my lord! |
|  |
| ***Lasso.*** Hold, good Lord Strozza! |
| Let him confess the sins that Heaven hath told you, |
| And ask forgiveness. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Let me, good my lord, |
| And I'll confess what you accuse me of: |
| Wonders indeed, and full of damned deserts. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***I know it, and I must not let thee live |
| To ask forgiveness. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** But you shall, my lord, |
| Or I will take his life out of your hand. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** A little then I am content, my Liege: − |
| Is thy name Medice? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** No, my noble lord, |
| My true name is Mendice. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Mendice? See, |
| At first a mighty scandal done to honour. − |
| Of what country art thou? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** Of no country I, |
| But born upon the seas, my mother passing |
| Twixt Zant and Venice. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.***Where wert thou christened? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** I was never christened, |
| But, being brought up with beggars, called Mendice, |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Strange and unspeakable! |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** How cam'st thou then |
| To bear that port thou didst, ent'ring this Court? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** My lord, when I was young, being able-limbed, |
| A captain of the gipsies entertained me, |
| And many years I lived a loose life with them; |
| At last I was so favoured that they made me |
| The King of Gipsies; and being told my fortune |
| By an old sorceress that I should be great |
| In some great prince's love, I took the treasure |
| Which all our company of gipsies had |
| In many years by several stealths collected; |
| And leaving them in wars, I lived abroad |
| With no less show than now; and my last wrong |
| I did to noblesse was in this high Court. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Never was heard so strange a counterfeit. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Didst thou not cause me to be shot in hunting? |
|  |
| ***Med.*** I did, my lord; for which, for Heaven's love, pardon. |
|  |
| ***Stroz.*** Now let him live, my lord; his blood's least drop |
| Would stain your Court more than the sea could cleanse; |
| His soul's too foul to expiate with death. |
|  |
| ***Alph.*** Hence then; be ever banished from my rule, |
| And live a monster, loathed of all the world. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** I'll get boys and bait him out o' th' Court, my lord. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Do so, I pray thee; rid me of his sight. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Come on, my lord Stinkard, I'll play “Fox, Fox, |
| come out of thy hole”' with you, i'faith. |
|  |
| ***Med.*** I'll run and hide me from the sight of Heaven. |
|  |
| ***Pog.*** Fox, fox, go out of thy hole! A two-legged fox, |
| a two-legged fox! |
|  |
| [*Exit with Pages beating Medice*.] |
|  |
| ***Ben.*** Never was such an accident disclosed. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Let us forget it, honourable friends, |
| And satisfy all wrongs with my son's right, |
| In solemn marriage of his love and him. |
|  |
| ***Vinc.*** I humbly thank your Highness: − honoured Doctor, |
| The balsam you infused into my wounds |
| Hath eased me much, and given me sudden strength |
| Enough t' assure all danger is exempt |
| That any way may let the general joy |
| My princely father speaks of in our nuptials. |
|  |
| ***Alph.***Which, my dear son, shall with thy full recure |
| Be celebrate in greater majesty |
| Than ever graced our greatest ancestry. |
| Then take thy love, which Heaven with all joys bless, |
| And make ye both mirrors of happiness. |
|  |
| FINIS |